Positions and Professions in Palmyra

Edited by *Tracey Long* and *Annette Højen Sørensen*

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Abstract

The volume, Positions and Professions in Palmyra, is the result of a two day workshop organised by the Palmyra Portrait Project. It brings together leading experts in the fields of Roman period portraiture, dress and culture of the Near East, inscriptions and epigraphy and symbolism as expressed in art and reliefs of the region, in order to address questions of status, profession and self-representation of the dwellers of Palmyra. In particular, the question of how the men and women perceived profession as an indicator of status, if at all and if so, when, where and how. Within the context of the tomb, familial links seemed on the surface more significant than professions enjoyed in life, with notable exceptions of a few physicians, military personnel, caravan men and others. Choice of language also makes an obvious affiliation with local rather than imperial culture, yet bodily gestures could be more universal. Women, who did not work, are shown sometimes resplendent in jewellery, other times not, expressing status through wealth and symbolic attributes, body language and domestic position. Priests are a common exception to the rule, and evidently viewed the priesthood as a social position rather than a vocation. Inscription and reliefs outside the tomb also shed light on how the living dealt with and regarded work and profession as a signifier of social position: and imagery, language choice and location demonstrates yet another layer of how profession was regarded and expressed.

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Introduction

Tracey Long and Annette Højen Sørensen

The papers in this volume, 'Positions and Professions in Palmyra' are the result of a two part workshop organized by Annette Højen Sørensen and Tracey Long in 2014 at the University of Aarhus under the auspices of the Palmyra Portrait Project (PPP) and generously funded by the Carlsberg Foundation. We devised the workshop with the intention of exploring how different types of status were expressed within the archaeological record of the desert city from the first to the third centuries and its eventual downfall; both through inscriptions and visual, artistic means.

We are particularly grateful to our esteemed contributors, all of whom represent expertise in Palmyra and the Near East or in the interpretation of the kind of material found there. The Palmyra Portrait Project is the brainchild of Professor Rubina Raja, Aarhus University. The portraiture that is the core of the project from the ancient city of Palmyra is prolific. Whether in the form of funerary loculus reliefs, sarcophagus boxes and lids or honorific statues, nowhere else outside of Rome herself is there such an abundance of portrait material. The city flourished for just under three hundred years, so this is a quite remarkable collection of work. The style of the portraits is also unlike anything seen anywhere else in the ancient world and thanks to the painstaking work by some of the earliest scholars of iconography and style, each piece is generally dateable. Some can be dated to the exact year. This makes identifying trends simpler. Much of the material is the result of burial practice, with tomb towers and hypogea containing a honeycomb of tombs capped off with slab-like square reliefs with a carved image of the deceased, or banquet scenes and decorated sarcophagi bearing images of the dead.

What makes the people of the city of Palmyra of particular interest is not only the diversity and vast amount of surviving evidence available to study, but its location on the borders of two vastly different and powerful empires, of Rome and Parthia, and whose fortunes oscillated between the domineering presence of these two. Add to this, the independent and proud status of the Palmyrenes, who travelled widely and traded with distant lands. As a result, messages of position and profession are complicated. Sometimes plainly expressed, sometimes ambiguous in the extreme, only through careful study can we hope to capture some of the intended meanings in their words and imagery. Some of the material, such as the enigmatic and elusive funerary portraits, is of a complexity and style seen nowhere else.

Yet today these portraits are scattered across the museums, private collections and art and artefact markets across the globe. Tragically, we know that some have even been destroyed or lost as a result of the conflict in Syria. As such, studying them can at best be an anecdotal affair, with possible gaps in the evidence. It was the pressing need for them to be brought together into one location, to be made accessible as a research tool, which inspired the project to track them down and bring them into one central digitalised location.[1] The current situation in Syria is an unexpected and tragic instigation that has made the gathering of this precious archive even more relevant than ever before. But there are also the advances in portrait scholarship in tandem with the capacity to computerise the collection that make its creation pertinent at the present time.

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1. Kropp and Raja, 2014.

Over recent years, the study of ancient portraiture has made significant developments. Studies of the material in the past had a tendency to focus on named, male or divine images. Faces that were generic were overlooked as goddesses or because they were not of an elite figure. In addition, Greek portraits carried layers of meaning in the body not present in the head, as with the Discobolus or the Doryphorus, and over time these inevitably become separated. Add to this the modern and problematic definition of a portrait as needing to resemble the individual represented and the subject was fraught with difficulties. However, these problems have been addressed in notable and important monographs that have dealt with Greek and Roman portraits, little known Hellenistic portraits, those of the non-elite, females and those from the provinces.[2] Work has built on that of major contributors such as Malcolm Colledge, and provided new theories and ideas that can be applied to the material from Palmyra. It is in the new spirit of the study of ancient portraits that we can re-assess the colossal corpus from this strategically and culturally important city, a notable omission from the recent scholarship.

Advances in technology has meant that a computerised system of collating and storing the material could be designed and developed specifically to contain each single portrait. In addition, all possible information of that object or portrait could be registered, from measurements to detailed descriptions, inscriptions, dates, references, current and original location and links to photographs and images. As such, the database could be used to cross-reference and search for all manner of information. Nothing like this has been done before, and it is ideally suited to absorb the myriad variety of the evidence. At present there are around 3,000 portraits in the database, almost double what the team originally anticipated were 'out there'. These include honorific statues, carved sarcophagi and covers, and probably the best known and most prolific portrait type in Palmyra, the loculus relief bust. The digitalised nature of the data-

base has also meant that it could be constantly fed and edited by all contributors, and even as it grew, fascinating patterns and statistics have come to light that we could not have envisaged before now, some of which are shared in the papers which follow.

Palmyra has been a subject of great interest to scholars of the Near East for well over a century for so many reasons. The inscriptions from Palmyra have been collected and published separately since the 19th century.[3] These have included tariffs and other publicly displayed civic information besides honorific inscriptions pertaining to public statues and more personal funerary examples, and remain an invaluable resource attempting to construct a image of how the citizens of the city viewed themselves. Subject matter as well as choice of one or more different languages demonstrates cultural tensions and political expression.[4] But the art of Palmyra, and particularly the portraits of its people, has attracted relatively little attention until now. Notable exceptions to this has been the works of Harald Ingholt and Malcom Colledge, whose books of respectively 1928 and 1976 remain the most significant on the subject to the present date.[5] There have been important contributions, such as Heyn's article of 2010,[6] which studied the complexity of gestures found in the loculus reliefs. These have added depth and context to material, but have been based on a smaller corpus of portraits. As it currently stands, the database represents the largest single collection of Palmyrene portraits ever compiled by some considerable margin.[7] As noted above, these come from the museum collections of the world, private and commercial galleries and those that remain *in situ*. But one of the most important resources for the project, and indeed the reason for the generous funding from the Carlsberg Foundation and involvement from the team at the University of Aarhus, has been the In-

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2. For example, Walker 1995; Fejfer 2008; Dillon 2010; Alexandridis 2010; Trimble 2011; Davies 2013.

3. CIS 1851-1951; Hillers and Cussini 1996; Yon 2012.
4. Edwell 2008.
5. Ingholt 1928; Colledge 1976.
6. Heyn 2010.
7. Kropp and Raja 2014 has a more comprehensive discussion of the significance of the PPP and its contribution to the scholarship of the art of Palmyra.

gholt Archive that contained over 1,000 photographic images of portraits, many of which now no longer exist in any other known publication or resource.[8]

Running alongside the compilation of the database has been a series of conferences, lively and stimulating lectures, seminars and workshops, set up to explore the wider context of Palmyra with a primary focus on art, portraiture and the people of the city. As noted above, the present volume includes papers given on the subject of 'Position and Profession in Palmyra' in 2014. Collaborators and guests of the project who are experts in the field of Palmyra and the Near East or of interpreting ancient material from other cities and regions were invited to offer their views on the subject of how the people of Palmyra expressed certain values in their portraits and inscriptions and of how they selected aspects of their individual lives or gender, familial contact and other factors to construct a view of themselves. In this case, of how they negotiated social and cultural factors of importance in relation to themselves and their family and peers. This included whether or not to include one's profession in inscriptions on funerary portraits, altars or other display contexts. If so, what does it add, if not, why would the subject choose to overlook such an important aspect of their lives in the construction of a monument, altar or other source pertaining to them and their families. As well as something as specific as a 'profession' or vocation that has the potential to add distinction to an individual, there is the matter of 'position', a very general term intended to embrace all factors of representation involved in the expression of individual aspirations, affinities and collaborations. This is a complex matter. As well as deliberate choices available to the subject (or the commissioner of the piece), there were conventions to be observed and the same visual language to be addressed. Changes can be seen taking place over time, such as the increasing popularity of the banquet scene, which saw a steady rise towards the latter period of production. In loculus reliefs, changes in facial features or the length of
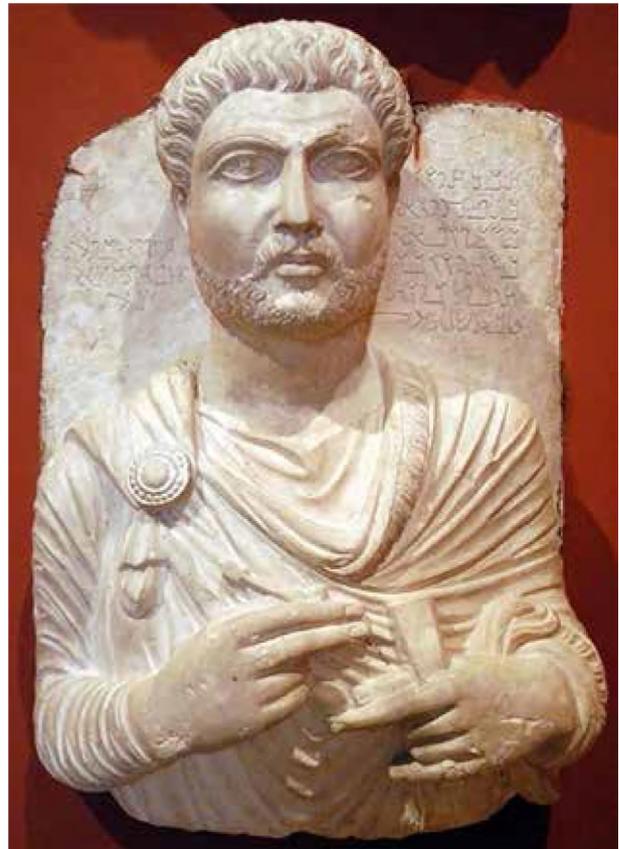
Fig. 1: A loculus relief of Hairan the Beneficiarius displaying the tools of his office. State Hermitage Museum inv. no. 8840; CIS II, 4292, PS19, Ingholt Archive. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

the bust also changes, with early portraits extending to the waist. After this time, the bust becomes reduced until it shows the upper chest only. Are these mere indicators of fashion and tastes or is some other factor identifiable, such as visual changes in the political climate and reflected in the tomb?

Very few professions are actually mentioned in the many inscriptions found in relation to the many limestone portraits and votive reliefs and most portraits also remain elusive in relation to attributing professions to the people of Palmyra. One example out of the many professions existing in Palmyra which may be distinguished clearly in the iconography is that of the priests who are portrayed as performing priests wearing the characteristic modius or having it beside

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8. Ingholt Archive. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. See also, Raja and Sørensen 2015a; 2015b.

Fig. 2: A relief of a rider in Persian costume. Taimarsu. PS1173. Location Unknown. Ingholt Archive. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

them on the side on a pedestal. (See Krag fig. 9 and Raja figs. 10-18).

As we will see, one profession which might have been more visible in society on the same level as priests and caravaneers were the men employed in the army – combatants and non-combatants: cavalrymen, camel riders, archers and administrative officers. The first portrait with relation to the military administration is of Hairan, who was a Beneficiarius – which was a non-combatant employed in the administration. He is holding a stylus and a book-roll and these two attributes might allude to his office (fig. 1). The book-roll held by nearly 200 other male portraits could thus also allude to some kind of public office.

To compare – the number of men holding a stylus is rare – and we only see 7 examples in the database. Moving out into the battlefield, we find the representation of archers or sons of archers. There are also representations of 21 men holding swords within the database. In the first example we see a relief depicting Taimarsu who is a horseback riding figure wearing 'Persian' over-trousers and with an inscription saying that his father was an archer (fig 2.) – most probably he was either riding a horse as Taimarsu does, or riding a camel like the anonymous archer carrying a sword, whip and his quiver on the back seen in Cussini fig. 1.

Other personnel perhaps related to the military could be the three people at the base of the sarcophagus seen in Long fig. 3 from the Tomb of Maqqai. On the lid a reclining male is seen in a Persian dress and wearing a mantle over his tunic and if we look closer at the sarcophagus itself we may observe three males, one of which is holding a horse and carrying a quiver. In his left hand he holds a sword – the person in the middle is holding a cone and a sword and is standing in front of an architectural structure crowned by the priestly modius on both sides. He is wearing a mantle and Persian trousers like the reclining man on the sarcophagus lid and could be the same man – and he is clearly the central figure of the scene. The last male is holding a bow and has a quiver on his back. Whether they represent gods or men in relation to some religious action is difficult to discern but the iconographic aesthetics seem to point in the direction of the military.

Another relief with a similar iconography is seen in Seland fig. 2 – where it seems we could also be dealing with parts of a sarcophagus. The attendant to the left is this time holding a camel and spear while the person to the right is holding a sword in his left hand and a cone in his right. Over his right shoulder a wreath on a piece of textile is sort of floating in the air. Both are wearing Persian dress and the camel seems to be wearing a saddle and a shield.

The last example of the same type of motif shown here is the famous sarcophagus in the garden of the Palmyra Museum depicted in Curtis fig. 15. The scene on the sarcophagus centres (not in the picture) around an offering, where a man with a wreath, the main person, is flanked by two of these floating pieces of textile; the one to the right is crowned by a modius. If we

Fig. 3: A rider in Parthian outfit. Bel sanctuary, Ingholt Archive. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

Fig. 4: Rider wearing (a long sleeved tunic and holding attributes possibly connecting them with the cavalry of Palmyra, PS119; The Archaeological Museum of Istanbul, Ingholt Archive. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

take a look at the figure on top of the sarcophagus we will see that he is reclining with his sword beneath him and that it is not his wife sitting at the end of the sarcophagus lid – but his horse is standing in the position she would normally occupy. So yet another horse owner in Persian outfit with long sleeved tunic, mantle, trousers and a sword. His attendant is standing next to the horse.

If we move into the actual action of horseback riding, one such scene is depicted in Curtis fig. 6, and another figure in action is seen above in fig. 3 – these two reliefs are probably votives but with the same iconography as seen before – one of the riders has a quiver or bow but both are horseback riding and wearing their Persian outfit. The man in Long fig. 5 and in the present figs. 4-5 wears a long sleeved tunic and a mantle like the equestrians seen before. They have a horse,

a sword and a whip and could thus again possibly be associated with the cavalry of Palmyra. In Long fig. 6 we may observe the cavalry man Apollinaris Vibius with his horse, his sword, whip, long sleeved tunic and mantle[9] and again on the right this man is wearing a long sleeved tunic and a cloak and is clutching his sword and dagger.

Similarly the votive in fig. 6 shows the horse-riding god in trousers and with a quiver. The votive relief in fig. 7 depicts the gods Arṣû and Azîzû riding on a camel and a horse. The camel riding god Arṣû has bare legs, unlike the horseback riding god Azîzû who

9. Incription: 'Apollinaris Vibius cavalry squadron Herculiania Aelius Montanus, his heir'.

Fig. 5: Rider wearing long tunics and holding attributes possibly connecting them with the cavalry of Palmyra. The Snite Museum of Art, Indiana. Ingholt Archive (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

wears a long garment.[10] As a further matter of interest this relief carries an inscription separate to the dedication that mentions a sculptor. This direct reference is exceptionally rare. If we consider Cussini figure 1 as well as the present figure 8 we may note the camel in the background and that the man to the left has sword, whip, and quiver – he also has a long sleeved tunic, but his mantle is different to the ones worn by the horseback riders.

The man in figure 8 is not holding a sword but a book-roll and he is wearing a himation. He may not be

a person connected to the army, but rather to the caravan trade with his book roll and packed camel in the background. In Seland fig. 3 and the present fig. 9, we again see a camel-back rider in action, with bare legs and a quiver on the back of the camel – one has a shield and both seem to be equipped for military action.

Lastly, if we furthermore consider the famous relief now in Cleveland[11] – again one gets the impression that the equestrians wore a different set of clothes from the camel riders – that is, the equestrians wore the Persian outfit with long sleeved tunic, trousers and a mantle – whereas the camel riders only occasionally had long sleeves and mantle but always bare legs. Only in one instance have we shown a camel associated with a Persian-dressed male; but then he is not seen actually riding the camel. Military personnel are thus as we have shown represented in three main ways – as non-combatants, as equestrians wearing Persian outfit and as camel riders with bare legs. The significance of costume in the promotion of position is pointed out by Curtis, Davies, Krag and Long. Raja focuses on the signifficance of representing oneself wearing priestly attire, while Cussini and Gnoli stress the lack of professions in the inscriptions of Palmyra and Seland delves into the use of the camel as a military and pack animal.

The papers presented in this volume cover a range of topics that address the above issues. They have been grouped to reflect connecting themes: the first section addresses the iconography of portraiture from two different perspectives, from gesture and use of the body to female adornment. Glenys Davies offers a fascinating glimpse of how gesture and posture can assist in determining cultural values and aspirations in both male and female funerary loculus busts. The paper takes as its starting point Roman Republican and freedman reliefs and sets out to determine if affinities between these and the Palmyrene funerary reliefs can be found and if so, what the implications of this might be. Of particular emphasis is uses of gesture, and Davies notes that some at least are specific to Palmyra, such as the outward facing palm. Others originate in

10. Damascus Museum, storeroom; Please note the naming of the sculptor in the inscription: 'To 'Arṣû and 'Azîzû the good gods who reward, Ba'lai has made [this], son of Jarhibole, priest of 'Azizu the good and merciful benevolent god, for his safety and that of his brothers; month Tisri', the year xxv. Let Iarhai, the sculptor, be remembered'. Translated by Rostovtzeff 1932, 109; Hvidberg-Hansen 2007; see Cussini and Gnoli, this volume.

11. Cleveland Museum of Art, Procession of nobles, inv. 1970.15.

Fig. 6: The horse riding god in long trousers, PS1178, Palmyra Museum, Ingholt Archive. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).
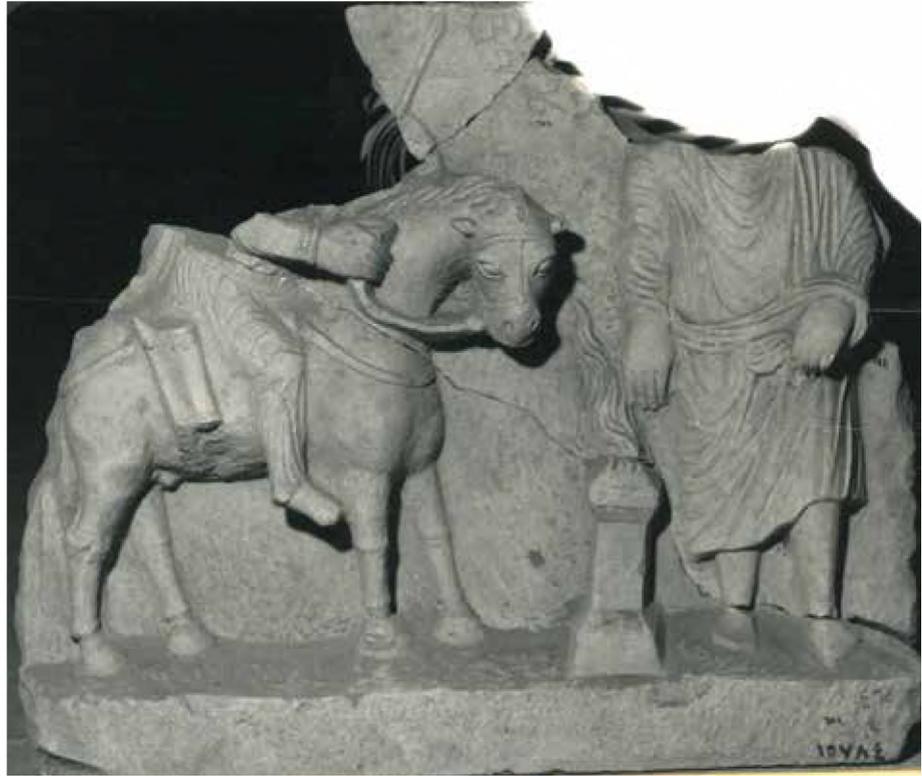

Fig. 7: The riding gods Arṣû and 'Azîzû. Damascus Museum storeroom, CIS II, 3974, PAT 0320, PS22. (Photo: © National Museum of Damascus/ F. O. Hvidberg-Hansen).

Fig. 8: A loculus relief of a male with a camel in the background, possibly associating himself with the caravan trade rather than the military. PS649, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

Fig. 9: A relief of a camel rider with bare legs and weapons. PS1159. Palmyra Museum, Ingholt Archive. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

Greece or Rome. These, and arm positioning, are seen as having several connotations and meanings rather than one in particular. The 'arm sling' pose adopted by many males is identified as a localised version of the ideal Greek citizen gesture, more in line with Eastern and Asia Minor cities than Rome, and yet demonstrably more assertive than the Greek originator.

With regard to the female portraits, Davies notes the widespread use of the so-called Pudicitia type arm and hand gesture, observing the gender specific use, and also that this ambiguous pose generally represents the same general connotations as the armsling pose in males. It is representative of correct female behaviours of the elite and wealthy. The complexity and subtlety with which the Palmyrenes used gestures is demonstrated through the discussion of couples, or more accurately, groups of two adults, and the echoing and touching gestures they adopt to indicate a relationship, whether marriage or of blood.

Finally, banquet scenes are used to show how hierarchy could be displayed through position within a specific display convention. Originating in the Greek world rather than Rome, once again Palmyrenes used an existing format and adapted it to their own particular situation. Women might be seated and veiled, thus demonstrating their lower status to the reclining, dining male. But they might also be depicted reclining beside males or alone. Davies concludes that it is apparent that artistic models were adopted from across the empire. Whether or not they reflected actual appearance or real gestures and postures is not clear, nor is to what extent the Palmyrenes re-interpreted them for their own use. Unlike the conscious

choice of costume, there may not have been the same degree of awareness of the adoption of gesture.

Signe Krag, in her paper on jewellery worn by females, takes the stance that it was heavily tied up with aspects of identity. The quantity and ways in which it is worn is unlike anything seen anywhere else. The use of jewellery changes greatly over time. The style of earrings changes from, for example, clusters of grapes, to the ubiquitous 'dumbbell' style. There is also a general increase in the amount of pieces worn to such an extent that these factors provide a useful dating tool. New elements such as pendants worn on the forehead over the headdress also begin to emerge in the second century and become increasingly common.

Krag makes the case for jewellery as a symbol of wealth and social status, and this is why it is included in the funerary portraits, even being presented in jewel caskets from which it overflows. The case is also made that jewellery had the added effects of purveying meaning to the viewer. Items such as keys gave off very particular symbolic messages, even if it is no longer clear to us what these meanings were. The use of colours and inclusion of jewellery, combined with the architectural settings and other precious objects, added to the visual richness within the tombs.

As well as these matters is the consideration that the amount and type of jewellery worn came in time to replace the humbler distaff and spindle once proudly held in the left hand and takes over the task of conveying appropriate female behaviour. Instead, Krag makes the compelling argument that women gradually come to wear the jewellery 'for themselves', at a time of increasing social influence of women, culminating in the rise of Zenobia. They could own property, have wealth of their own, and this social shift is reflected in personal adornment.

Jewellery as a functional part of costume is discussed in detail. The design of brooches especially are unique to the city and add a local twist. Such is the increase in the amount of necklaces worn in the second century that the whole upper torso is required for their display and thus affects the style of the loculus bust. One piece unique to Palmyrene women is the

bust necklace. It is not clear what the busts represent, but Krag observes they are of predominantly female figures and may represent ancestors or a city goddess, thus reflecting status onto the wearer.

Finally, it is noted that wearing no jewellery whatsoever was another way in which status and position could be expressed. Mourning females tend to wear no or very little jewellery, and especially where a mother accompanies the daughter, the latter wears the most pieces as if to draw attention to her, thus highlighting an alternative use of jewellery and an astuteness in its use as signifier of display and status.

The next papers concern costume and the many instances of the Parthian outfit that occur in portraits of males. Vesta Curtis discusses its significance in the wider region as well as how it is worn in Palmyra itself. It is, as she notes, completely alien to the Roman world of fashion, and, for that matter, to the Palmyrene tradition. It consists of a trouser suit of baggy pants and tunic. It might also have a belt, coat or other garments, such as soft boots. It could also be exquisitely embroidered in rich detail. It in fact originated in the Parthian East and became the 'haute-couture' of the non-Roman East. Curtis explains the costume had long been in use in the region, first appearing in Achaemenid art in the mid-sixth century BC, and was worn by males engaged in outdoor pursuits or religious contexts. Under the Arsacid dynasty it became a costume of prestige, being adopted by kings.

In Palmyra itself, we can be sure that such elaborate costume was worn because of textile fragments found in tombs. The trouser suit here seems restricted to a few garments, consisting of a round neck knee-length or shorter tunic, baggy trousers and leggings tucked into boots with a short himation clasped at the shoulder by a brooch. There are variations, but this basic outfit is most often represented in the funerary portraits and statues of the city. In banquet scenes, reclining figures and serving boys both wear the outfit. Unique to the city are details such as belts of plaques mounted on leather straps tied with a bow, slits in the sides of tunics and all tunics without fail are belted. Of great interest is the significance of belts, which Curtis notes in the Iranian tradition are usually

a symbol of kingship or rank. We also see, though much more rarely, the long overcoat.

She concludes that the Parthian costume was a highly desirable outfit that reflected rank and prestige, an exotic non-Roman costume of the East associated with the Caravan trade. It demonstrated choice; not all males elected to wear it. It could be used in a religious or secular context, and was frequently worn by priests. It was a status symbol of wealth and luxury and the trade with Parthia and beyond, the more elaborate the embroidery or detail, presumably the wealthier the subject who wore it.

Tracey Long's paper focuses more specifically on how Parthian costume was worn in Palmyra and what it reveals as an ideological signifier of status in a funerary context. The funerary portraits represent the wealthy elite of the city, and the choice of costume was a conscious decision taken to add a layer of important meaning to the way they wished to be represented; and an indicator of cultural, social and political affiliations. This might lean towards Rome, or distinctly away from it, or be distinctly Palmyrene.

Long notes that costume was one factor amongst many that make up the overall image of the deceased and should be interpreted accordingly, along with the face, hair, posture, attributes and inscription that contribute to the complete portrait. But it was always loaded with meaning. Gender and convention are other factors that might impact on a funerary portrait.

What is apparent is that the costume was worn by professional men, whether riders and caravan merchants or military personnel. It was not worn in the same way as the himation and tunic, the civic 'business' suit. It was also worn by children in funerary reliefs, a phenomenon rarely if ever seen outside the city.

Use of the Parthian costume in Palmyra became more widespread over time, its adoption more commonly seen in banquet scenes in the third century before the production of funerary portraits abruptly halts. The use in such a context is interesting, and Long concludes that in the act of dining and reclining, the subject wears not only his most luxurious outfit, but he is choosing in his leisure time to reflect a

more Eastern aspect, in the same way as Romans sometimes removed the toga at moments of otium and dined in Greek attire in their own homes. Luxuria and the exotic clearly meant looking east. As such, the use of the costume as 'local' is made more intimate and personal.

Finally it is noted that priests wear the costume more frequently in banquet scenes in the third century. The tone of these reliefs and sarcophagi become increasingly secular, with religious objects being replaced with cups and bowls, the accoutrements of dining, and signifying the use of Parthian costume as symbolic of wealth and high rank.

Eleonora Cussini and Tomasso Gnoli both look at epigraphic evidence to determine if profession is expressed in inscriptions and if so, how this is done. Both conclude separately that context is the determining factor. Whereas Cussini's focus is on the expression of specific profession, Gnoli concentrates on position, ethnicity and matters of representing self-identity.

Cussini notes that the total of surviving inscriptions that contain mention of a profession is fifteen; a very small number in the abundant corpus. These are most frequently to be found in funerary settings. Of the professions and business activities that we know must have taken place, very few are attested. Some people chose to express profession through tools or objects included as background elements, though we cannot always discern to what they referred, others referred to activities and educated status through inclusion of schedulae.

Of those professions specifically noted in inscriptions, Cussini provides examples of sculptors, scribes and the 'pious butcher', a baker and physicians. The latter is attested by archaeological evidence that shows skeletal evidence of healing processes most likely attended by physicians. The context of their inscriptions also highlights considerable personal wealth and elevated status, and Cussini hypothesises that the richly decorated *House of Achilles* in Palmyra may well have been owned by such a man.

The paper concludes that including one's occupation was not considered important within the funer-

ary sphere. In other contexts, such as the tariff, profession was included as a functional aspect. Value and qualification were not based on profession, but rather on social position. However, dedicatory religious contexts seem to have necessitated an inclusion of 'mundane' activity.

Gnoli observes that vocation or profession is rarely addressed in inscriptions within the city. Funerary inscriptions also rarely encroach beyond basic personal data of the deceased. By overlooking the mention of public or religious offices held and focusing instead on specified 'crafts' performed by artisans, he notes only twenty three instances out of the thousands of epigraphic examples that survive. Starting with the Tariff inscription, Gnoli identifies mention of guilds of silversmiths and goldsmiths, leatherworkers and also probably wheat-sifters, metal workers, and even artichoke growers. There is speculation about some translation, but all are connected with craft guilds and associated with artisan-type occupations. These societies should not be confused with the drinking societies identified in Palmyra, who identify themselves with quite different language. Yet in this formal and arbitrary context, Gnoli explains, these references do very little to assist in our understanding of constructed identity or self-representation, and they are restricted by a narrow date, AD 258. What is interesting is that these guilds are unlikely in his view to have had any influence, yet they are mentioned in this brief window and in this specific context. Certainly, no single person decided to define himself through acknowledgement of membership of such a group in their funerary inscription, or after this date.

Within the tomb itself, very few instances occur where family connection overlaps with occupation, in each case that of 'master craftsman' or physician. Like Cussini, Gnoli concludes that the expression of an occupation was of very little or no importance or consequence within the funerary context, or even outside of it. This 'reticence' is compared with Roman practices, with the case of Ravenna offered by way of example, where it was customary to mentions one's occupation in any funerary inscription. The difference, it is concluded, is attributable to cultural specificity. The argu-

ment is offered that Palmyra was, by the nature of its unique geographical, tribal and political circumstances, culturally distinct. Certainly, Palmyrenes who died a long way from home were at pains to connect themselves with their home-land in funerary inscriptions.

Gnoli elaborates that this cultural distinction owes its origins to Palmyrene society being nomadic in nature. A city built from the traditions of desert life, of tribal and agnatic structures. Occupations were more fluid, and not considered the defining characteristic of an individual. Shepherds might go to sea, farmers might become potters or fishermen, and expertise was distributed depending on need. It would seem then that perhaps no individual was identified solely by his profession in Palmyra, but 'know-how' was instead a shared societal phenomenon and other factors were more important to include in funerary inscriptions.

Eivind Seland investigates the caravan trade from the unique perspective of representations of camels in reliefs and mosaics not only in Palmyra but in Petra and across the region. Despite the fact that they were so integral a part of desert life, outside of Palmyra depictions of them in the iconographic record are relatively rare. Seland's paper asks if such depictions can be used as evidence of caravan trade and other related professions. Also explored are recent theories on the impact of trade on the city, and the relatively low-status of trade as a profession and thus as an aspect of life largely lacking in the data.

The mercantile activities and trade of the region brought in considerable individual wealth and taxes, and it was made possible in the East by, as Seland notes, the ship of the desert: the camel. Studies of merchant activity have tended to focus on routes and distribution, but not on the 'mechanisms' by which it took place. So by turning to iconographic imagery of camels, we may not be able to determine scale or importance, but perhaps instead something of status and practicalities.

Camels were not a common motif in Roman iconography, even in Palmyra. Yet there are instances of dromedaries in the East and North Africa, where it was better suited to the arid climate, and Bactrian

camels in Anatolia, the two humped variety being more suitable in wet and mountainous conditions.

Camels appear in reliefs, sculpture and mosaics in two main forms, and they can be separated by considering form and context. Not all are caravan beasts. Seland provides evidence of a group of three camels identified by Ingholt as not being a caravan. Such camels, wearing reins and saddles with embroidered saddle rugs, shields and weaponry, are clearly not caravans, but animals used for military activities. So much of the art of Palmyra is funerary, and Seland observes that, although many of the elite may have benefitted financially from the caravan trade, they did not consider commercial activity worthy of sufficient status to be included in portraits or reliefs. However, the more elevated military association and affiliation with 'pastoral wealth' was made. Add to this, the 'standardisation' of depiction associated with military imagery, and Seland makes a strong case for the representation of military animals.

Regarding mercantile beasts, the argument is made that such imagery was used to honour traders and those associated with it rather than including the act of trade and trade activities itself. Despite the attractiveness of wealth, the actual process of how it was accumulated was less appealing to include in imagery than the reflection of the wealth itself, and the status it afforded.

Outside of Palmyra and the tomb context, a mosaic from Deir-al-Adas depicts a caravan of four camels and a driver. They are attached by reins from bridle to saddle and are loaded with pack saddles containing amphorae and other portable methods of goods. Thus we are able to see the mechanics of how goods were transported across long distances and desert terrain. The image and others like it are used to demonstrate the different status levels of those involved, from the lowly driver to the higher-status military personnel who are likely to have accompanied such a caravan. A depiction of a caravan and driver at the city-side entrance to Petra reminds locals and visitors to the Nabatean capital of the importance of nomadic life and the caravan trade to their kingdom.

Returning to Palmyra, it is noted that only one third century depiction shows a caravan camel in a funerary image. An elite male stands with one arm around a ship and the other around a camel, a direct indication of trade from land transferred to the sea. The man or his heirs could have chosen from a number of motifs to make a gesture of wealth and status, but they have not. Despite it being an isolated example, this shows that at least by the third century, the direct involvement in the caravan business was no longer regarded as a stigma of low status.

Seland concludes that not all camel depictions are of the caravan trade, they also reflect military and nomadic lifestyles. The depictions we do have of the trade reflect the people associated with it; of handlers, aristocrats, organisers and investors, military personnel and others. They do indeed arguably reflect a difference in ideology and identity different from other Hellenistic-Roman cities, justifying the sobriquet of caravan city.

Rubina Raja gives an overview of the priestly representations and sets out to explain them as a distinct group of their own within the wider repertoire of the Palmyrene funerary portraiture. Having collected all portraits of priests registered in the database of the Palmyra Portrait Project this contribution aims at giving explanations as to why so many Palmyrene men were depicted as priests in their funerary portraits. She notes that one in five adult males were depicted in this way – a huge percentage that eclipses all other represented roles. As well as these, there are ex-priests, who have grown head and facial hair and don the ordinary clothes of their fellows, yet display the cap signifying their once held position on a pedestal. Clearly, it was considered a crucial aspect of one's life that should be included in a funerary portrait. Also noted is the increase in priestly portrayals at the height of production, the middle of the second century. As the rate of production begins to slow, so does the rate of priest images.

Raja's line of argument takes us to the conclusion that because priesthoods were held within families and extended upon male members within such families, priestly representations held a certain importance within the grave sphere, since they were direct expres-

sions of family and therefore societal status. As we have seen, professions and vocations were a rare aspect of the person shown in the funerary portrait. As such, the position of priest was clearly not regarded as a profession or vocation.

In summary, the contributions to the workshop of positions and professions in Palmyra have brought together exciting ideas from very different evidence. We will see that social and cultural position could be constructed and expressed both visually and epigraphically. Context plays a part, as does the unique geographical and cultural position of the city of Palmyra itself; within the heart of the desert, within the sphere of Roman and Parthian influence and the wider trade-route cities. Conscious decisions of representation through artistic means and the written word have been carefully chosen to construct an impression of the individual within a distinct society in order to demonstrate standing amongst peers and to other community dwellers. Some chose to refer directly to the profession or vocation with which they were associated. Yet others, by far the vast majority, have selected to dismiss this in favour of expressing position through gesture, jewellery, clothing, attributes and animals, inscriptions of familial links and affection and name. More broadly, it will be demonstrated that an eclectic range of evidence can be brought successfully together and interpreted to provide a satisfying, if incomplete, image of attitude to work and status in this most urbane of desert cities.

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The Body Language of Palmyra and Rome

Glenys Davies

This paper focuses on the poses and gestures used in the funerary relief sculpture (primarily portrait busts) of Palmyra in the light of some of my other work on body language as represented in Roman art.[1] I am very much indebted to Maura Heyn's study of the gestures used on Palmyrene reliefs, which was based on a much better knowledge of the material than mine, and which raised most of the questions considered here.[2] My aim is to build on Heyn's observations and analysis by considering further the difference between 'gesture' and 'body language', the ways in which gender is indicated by pose and gesture, and the use of body language to indicate superior and subordinate status (in relation to gender). The paper also investigates further the similarities and differences between the Palmyrene portraits and the portrait reliefs from late republican and early imperial funerary contexts in Rome and its environs (often referred to as 'freedman reliefs'):[3] what might the sig-

nificance of such affinities be, and should they be interpreted as indicating influence from Rome on the periphery of her empire? What implications might there be for the expression of ethnicity and Romanisation?

Gesture and body language

One of the most noticeable features of the Palmyrene portrait reliefs is that, although they do not usually represent full-length standing figures, they do include both arms with the hands prominently placed in front of the torso, which is shown from just above the waist up: they are not 'busts' in the usual sense of including only the shoulders and tops of the arms. This is a characteristic shared with the funerary reliefs from Rome, although there it is usually only one hand that is presented in this way, the other being hidden from sight. The arms and hands in both cases are held in a variety of ways which encourage the modern viewer to look for the 'meaning' of these 'gestures'. But, as Maura Heyn has shown in relation to the Palmyrene reliefs, there is no evidence for the existence of a detailed sign language, with each hand gesture having its own significance: rather, she suggests, the pointing gestures made by men, as seen in fig. 1,[4] were intended simply to draw the viewer's attention, either to the attribute held in the other hand, or to the figure as a whole.

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1. I am very grateful to Tracey Long, Annette Højen Sørensen and Prof. Rubina Raja for inviting me to take part in the workshop and contribute to this publication: I had not previously considered the Palmyrene reliefs in my study of body language in Roman art, and welcomed the opportunity to investigate them further. I would also like to acknowledge my debt to Prof. Malcolm Colledge, who taught me Roman Art many years ago – and inevitably included some Palmyrene art in his course.
2. Heyn 2010. Heyn created a database of 867 funerary portrait reliefs from which she is able to provide statistical information. My observations are based on a much smaller range of examples.
3. Heyn also suggests such a comparison. For comprehensive catalogues and illustrations of the Roman reliefs see Kleiner 1977 and Kockel 1993.

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4. BM ME 125022: limestone bust of an unknown man carrying a leaf, AD 150-200.

Fig. 1: Limestone relief from Palmyra with bust of an unknown man carrying a leaf, in the British Museum, ME 125022, AD 150-200. (© Trustees of the British Museum).

Fig. 2: Limestone relief from Palmyra with bust of a woman with raised right hand, palm facing the viewer, carrying a spindle and distaff in her left hand, named as Ala daughter of Iarhai in the inscription, British Museum, ME 125695, dated AD 113-4. (© Trustees of the British Museum).

Some of the hand postures used on both the Palmyrene and the Roman reliefs could reasonably be interpreted as gestures with a specific meaning: this applies for example to the gesture of the hand held raised and open with the palm facing the viewer (see fig. 2)[5] on Palmyrene reliefs, which Heyn identifies as a gesture of worship.[6] The *dextrarum iunctio*, or right hand clasp, used to unite male and female figures on the Roman reliefs also belongs in this category of meaningful gesture, as it seems to be a sign used to show that the two people in question identified themselves as a legitimately married couple. Both gestures would appear to be culture-specific: the palm-out gesture is not used on the Roman reliefs, or the *dextrarum iunctio* on the Palmyrene reliefs.

5. Figure 2 represents one of two reliefs in the British Museum using this gesture: this is BM ME 125695, a limestone bust of a woman carrying a spindle and distaff in her left hand, named as Ala daughter of Iarhai in the inscription, dated AD 113-114. It is also illustrated in Colledge 1976, pl. 63. The other relief in the British Museum (BM ME 125203) appears as Heyn 2010, 633 fig. 1.

6. Heyn 2010, 632, 636-637. This interpretation is based on the use of disembodied hands, represented palm out, on a series of non-funerary reliefs (altars and votive reliefs) showing that hands were a part of the body which had a particular

importance in the religious sphere. (For the background to this gesture see Choksy 1990). Heyn suggests that when a single hand (the right) is held in this way on the funerary reliefs it is designed to draw attention to the subject's involvement in ritual activities. Of the 18 examples she has identified using this gesture, all are women except one.

Fig. 3: Full-figure relief from the Via Statilia, Rome, with the man wearing a toga (?) draped with an arm sling and a woman in the Pudicitia pose. Capitoline Museums/ Centrale Montemartini, inv. 2142, 75-50 BC. (© K. Anger DAIR 2001.2051).

Apart from these gestures, however, the arrangement of the arms and hands on both sets of monuments should be seen not so much as gestures with quite specific meanings as characteristic forms of body language with more generalised, and, indeed often multiple, connotations. I shall examine this concept in more detail in relation to two of the most com-

mon poses used on the Palmyrene reliefs: the hand supported by a sling of drapery for men, and the so-called Pudicitia pose used for women.

The arm-sling pose

Many of the men represented on the Palmyrene reliefs wear drapery (presumably the *himation/pallium* rather than a toga) arranged in such a way that it forms a sling in which the right arm, bent at the elbow, is held with just the hand emerging from the folds (see figs. 1 and 9).[7] The hand is usually held open and relaxed, with the fingers lightly curled and resting on the bunched folds which cross the chest diagonally to pass over the left shoulder. It is always the right arm and hand which are held in this way: an element of variation can be introduced by making the fingers grasp the drapery more firmly, or by extending the index finger or the first two fingers of the right hand, but it is usually the fingers of the left hand which are used to introduce variety by extending one or more fingers, or by holding an attribute.

A very similar use of the arm sling and the emerging right hand can be seen on most of the men on the Roman reliefs (such as illustrated here in figs. 3, 4 and 5).[8] It is difficult to tell what garment is being worn here, but it is generally assumed to be the toga,[9] worn

7. According to Heyn (2010, 634) 251 out of the 323 male portraits in her database have their right arm in a sling.
8. The gesture used on this type of relief was discussed in Brilliant 1963, 49-50, figs. 2.1-2.3. See also Kockel 1993 and Kleiner 1977 for further examples. Kleiner and Kleiner 1980-1 discusses the full-length versions of the Roman arm sling togate statue, including the relief from the Via Statilia, in the Capitoline Museum, previously Museo Conservatori Braccio Nuovo inv. 2142, now on display in the Centrale Montemartini museum (fig. 3): this also appears in Kleiner 1977, 201-202, no. 11 and Kockel 1993, 94 no. B1. For fig. 4 (relief with L. Ampudius Philomusus in the British Museum inv. 1920,02201, 15BC-AD 5) see Kleiner 1977, 229 no. 59 and Kockel 1993, 157-158 no. J3; for fig. 5 (relief of L. Vibius in the Vatican Museums, Museo Chiaramonti inv. 2109, 20-10 BC) see Kleiner 1977, 234-235 no. 69 and Kockel 1993, 180-181 no. L7.
9. Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 45 points to the uncertainty about which garment the man on the Via Statilia relief (fig. 3) is

Fig. 4: Marble relief from Rome (near Porta Capena) with three half-figures, two women and a man, in the British Museum inv. 1920,02201, 15 BC-AD 5. The inscription names the freedman L. Ampudius Philomusus. (© Trustees of the British Museum).

with a form of draping that appears to have been usual in the late Republic but which was replaced under Augustus by a more voluminous form of toga with more complex and looser draping round the body. This new form of draping allowed the right arm more freedom to gesture. From the time of Augustus onwards togate statues and togate figures on reliefs wear this imperial form of the toga and adopt typical poses that place the right arm either bent at the elbow with the forearm held out in front of the figure, or held to the side: holding the arm bent at the elbow with the forearm across the torso then becomes a rare pose for toga wearers.[10] Quintilian, in his handbook on oratorical practice, devotes a substantial part of book 11

to the gestures the orator should make with his hands.[11] The right hand should be the more active, with the left playing only a secondary role. Writing in the first century AD, Quintilian also comments on the restrictive nature of the toga worn in earlier times (when Cicero was practising oratory): this would appear to agree with the form of toga worn on the Roman funerary reliefs.[12]

By the time the Palmyrene reliefs started to be made (in the middle of the first century AD) the imperial-style toga, and the more expansive poses that went with it, was the norm in Rome (at least for statues of Roman men): the arm-sling style of drapery with its more restricted movement of the right arm was a short-lived fashion, seen mainly on funerary reliefs of the late Republic and Augustan period.[13] It may even, indeed, have been associated especially

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wearing: it is accepted as the toga by Goette 1990, 108 Ab 16 and Kockel 1993, 94-95 B1, who considers the question of this early style of toga on pp. 15-19. Kleiner 1977, 158-159 also identifies the garment worn in this and other reliefs as the toga, but points out it was 'based ultimately on a Greek statuary type'. Bieber 1959, 384-5 includes it without question in her discussion of Roman men in the *himation/palliati*; but in Bieber 1977, 132 she allows for the possibility some of these reliefs depict the toga, but still maintains most wear the *pallium*.
10. See Davies 2005 and 2010.

11. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* XI.3.85-107.
12. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* XI.3.143.
13. For the different styles of draping the toga depicted in art and their chronological development see Goette 1990: the statues and full-length figures in relief wearing the earlier arm-sling style of toga are in his catalogue as list Ab, with 119 examples and are discussed on pp. 26-27. He dates all to 1st century BC (the latest are 'early Augustan').

Fig. 5: Marble relief from Cesano (outside Rome) with half figures of L. Vibius and Vecilia Hila in the Vatican Museums, Museo Chiaramonti inv. 2109, c.20-10 BC. (© Faraglia DAIR 43.429).

with freedmen who celebrated their new status by wearing the toga, but wore it in the older style: as many of them were of Greek origin they may also have preferred a form of dress more familiar to them as *himation* wearers. It seems unlikely that Palmyrene men and their sculptors chose these old-fashioned Roman images as a model for their own behaviour and to express their identity.

The arm-sling form of draping the *himation* (or *pallium* as it was known to the Romans) was, however, the norm in the eastern part of the Roman Empire and was already well-established as the usual dress of the Greek citizen in both honorary and funerary art.[14] The

right arm confined by the drapery folds with the left arm held by the side, also covered with the himation, was the dress and pose of the exemplary citizen in the Greek world: there it seems the reticence and modesty implied by the pose was seen as having a positive val-

14. The arm-sling statue type appears to have originated in the

4th century BC with statues of Aeschines and Sophocles, which were posed with the left hand on the hip, a more swaggering pose than the one which became more common, especially in funerary contexts, with the left arm hanging by the side: see Bieber 1959 and Bieber 1977 chapter 11. This was only one way in which the himation could be worn: Smith 1998, 65-66 identifies two broad unchanging types used for statuary in the Roman imperial period, one the arm-sling type and the other one in which the himation was draped in a thick roll diagonally across the body, leaving the right arm free to gesture.

ue for those who identified themselves as involved in civic activities.[15] Indeed, it is highly possible that the arm-sling way of draping the toga was adopted at Rome in the late Republic, and by freedmen in particular, as a Romanised version of the established Greek form of dress. But, once the new form of toga was introduced under Augustus as the standard dress for elite Roman men, forms of dress which confined the arms in drapery and so restricted movement were associated at Rome with women: thus Roman toga-wearing men were distinguished from women and foreigners (especially Greeks) not only by their dress but also by their more open poses and dominant body language.[16]

So what did the Palmyrene men intend to convey when they adopted the arm-sling pose on their funerary reliefs? In adopting this form of dress and pose they were aligning themselves with elite residents of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire, more specifically citizens of the various cities of Greece and Asia Minor, who identified themselves as Greek citizens rather than Romans.[17] The dress and pose were associated with the civilian good citizen. The Palmyrene version of the pose, however, was not quite the same as the traditional stance inherited from Classical and Hellenistic Greece – or, indeed the pose used for the figures on the Roman funerary reliefs – in that the left arm was not left hanging by the side, covered in drapery, but was made visible and active, raised to above waist level and performing a gesture or holding an object. The individual gestures and objects may not

in themselves have been especially meaningful, as Heyn argues,[18] but collectively they represent not only a form of body posture that is different from the Greek model but also one which is more assertive. By making the left hand more active and visible they negate or at least weaken the modest and reticent image.

Pudicitia

The usual pose used for women on the Palmyrene portrait reliefs is one where one arm is raised from the elbow and held to the side of the face or neck (see figs. 6, 7 and 8):[19] a similar pose can also be seen on the full-length Roman relief from the Via Statilia (fig. 3) and the relief of L. Vibius and his wife Vecilia Hila (fig. 5).[20] This is often referred to as the Pudicitia gesture,[21] but while this is a convenient shorthand label it is misleading for two reasons. First, the term is used for a wide range of variations of the pose, which should perhaps not be seen as a single motif with a single 'meaning'. Secondly, the label 'pudicitia' itself imposes a specific meaning and limits other possibilities: once we have identified the label and its meaning no more need be said.[22]

A statue type widely used for portraits of women

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15. For a discussion of this pose as a demonstration of modesty and self-control (*sophrosyne*) in Athenian society see Zanker 1995, 43-48.

16. Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 49-50 suggests that making Romans visibly distinct from Greeks was a major intention of the Augustan change in toga style: the new style also encouraged body postures which communicated dominance and command rather than modesty and reticence. For the concept of dominant body language see Collett 2004, 36-70: chapter 2 'Dominant Tells'.

17. Smith 1998 discusses a number of instances in which the subject as a Roman citizen with a Greek background chose to be represented in the Greek pallium rather than the toga.

18. Heyn 2010, 640-641.

19. According to Heyn's statistics, some 71% of the female figures on the Palmyrene reliefs adopted this pose (187 out of 262 images): Heyn 2010, 634-635.

20. Unlike the hand held in the arm sling used for the male figures either arm may be raised: this applies not only to the Palmyrene reliefs but also to the Roman reliefs and statues.

21. Heyn 2010, 635 refers to the pose adopted by Palmyrene women as 'similar to the *pudicitia* gesture in Rome': Colledge 1976 does not use this term for the gesture displayed by the Palmyrene relief busts.

22. Heyn 2010, 635 questions whether the Palmyrene gesture 'had similar connotations of modesty and fidelity' to the Roman, and quotes Aldrete 1999, 65 n. 48 who says the pose was 'the only approved gesture available to women' and 'emphasized their modesty and subordinate attachment to a male'. Heyn questions whether the motif would have had the same 'concomitant social baggage' when used at Palmyra, but as I shall argue below this interpretation of the Pudicitia pose in Roman contexts is far too simplistic.

Fig. 6: Limestone relief from Palmyra with bust of a woman with her right arm raised to hold her veil, named in the inscription as Malkat daughter of Aid'an, British Museum, ME 125023, AD 150-200. (© Trustees of the British Museum).

in the early Roman Empire has been called Pudicitia for a long time.[23] The pose of this type is characterised

goes back at least to the mid-eighteenth century. Alexandridis 2004, 261 identifies the Pudicitia as one of the most popular statue formats for portraits of Roman women: in her appendix 2.2.23 she lists 127 statues under seven variant types. The statue format was especially popular in the western half of the Roman Empire in the early imperial period.

23. Haskell and Penny 1981, 300-301 in discussing the statue in the Vatican known as 'Pudicity' suggest this identification

Fig. 7: Limestone relief from
Palmyra with bust of a woman
with her left hand raised
to her cheek, named in the
inscription as Aqme daughter
of Habazi, British Museum,
ME 125024, third century AD.
(© Trustees of the British
Museum).
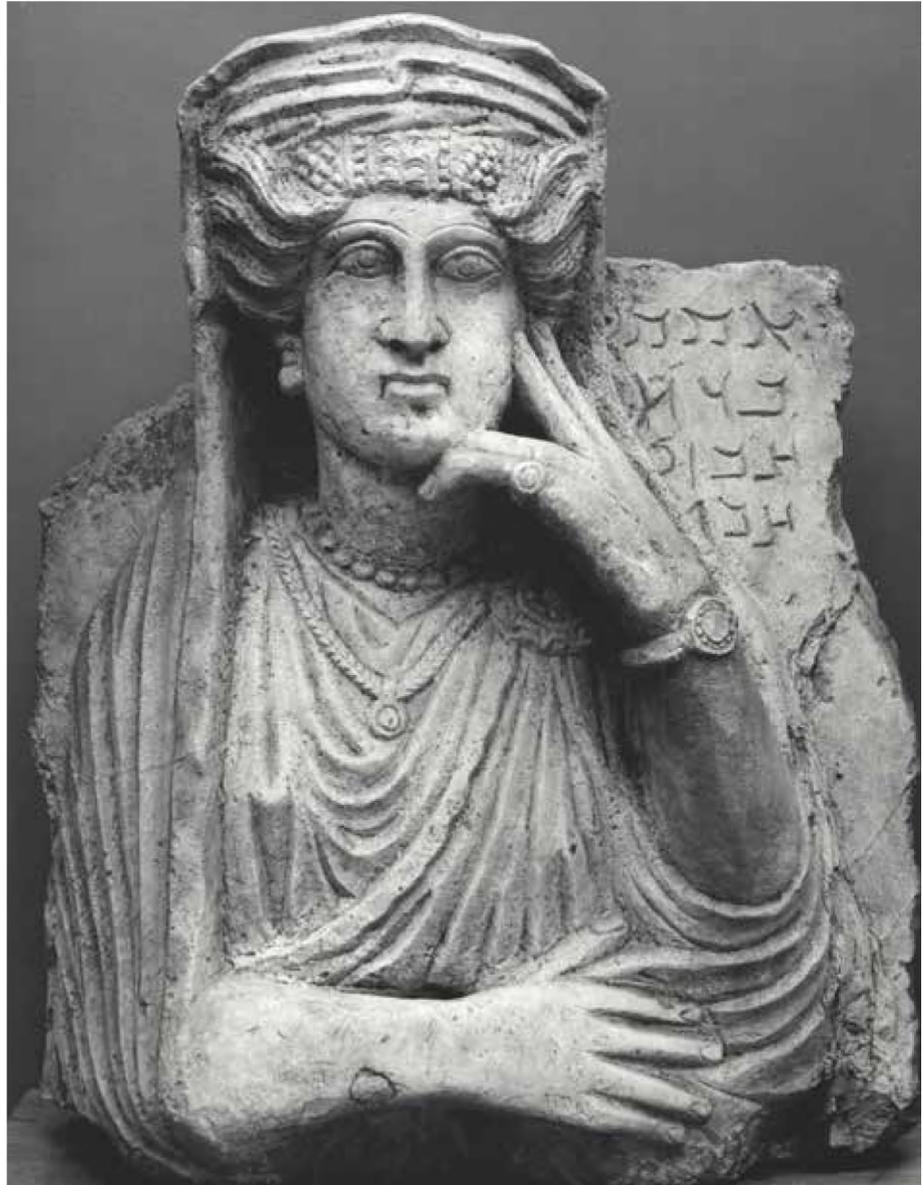
by a standing figure with one arm held horizontally
across her torso at waist level and the other bent up at
the elbow, which rests on the hand of the lower arm:
the hand of the raised arm is held close to or touching
the edge of her veil near her face or neck (see the fe-
male figure in fig. 3 and the woman on the right of fig.
5). There is in fact no positive evidence to identify this
pose with the personification or concept of Pudicitia.[24]

Like the men's arm-sling pose its use for sculpted im-
ages of women originated in the Greek world and it
was used in the Hellenistic Greek east for both honor-
ific and funerary images of women.[25] It was adopted at

24. See *LIMC* VII, 589-592: the earliest identifiable image of

the personification of Pudicitia is the seated figure holding out
her veil on the frieze of the Forum Transitorium in Rome (c.
AD 90). Pudicitia also appears on Roman coins of the mid
empire, but there is no consistency in the pose adopted.
25. For the early development of the type see Dillon 2007, 74.

Rome and in parts of the western empire especially for funerary statues, with the characteristic pose of the arms adapted also for seated figures. Its heyday was in the earlier imperial period, but unlike other standard statue types used for women it was not much used for empresses.[26] Although the statues all adopt a stance which is recognisably the same type, the placing of the raised hand and the carriage of the body can be varied in ways which give very different impressions of the woman portrayed, from glumly resigned to flirtatious. It is not simply an indicator of moral rectitude. The arm gestures of many Palmyrene women represented on the reliefs approximate to this pose, although here too there are several variations on the position of the raised hand, and the lower arm is often not held as far across the body at the waist: this means that the other hand is usually visible and may hold an object or a piece of the cloth of the mantle (as is the case with figs. 6 and 8).

The pose is often said to express female modesty, by which is meant sexual fidelity rather than self-effacing qualities. Even if the label Pudicitia was correctly applied to the pose, this term is rather more complex in meaning than the trite translation 'modesty' implies. Pudicitia was not merely a matter of remaining physically faithful to your husband: it also involved moral standing and public reputation, which were displayed by behaving in an appropriate way for a re-

spectable matron.[27] The label is only useful if the complexity of its connotations is appreciated. A deeper understanding of these connotations can be gained by analysing the body language of the pose and its variants. Holding the arms close into and across the body is seen in modern body language terms as defensive, expressing a desire to place a barrier between the self and the outside world represented by the viewer, and is a pose still today adopted more often by women than men.[28] The raised arm often touches, fingers or even grasps the edge of the veil worn over the head, suggesting a veiling gesture (see fig. 6 for a figure who looks as if she might be in the act of veiling,[29] also the seated female figure on fig. 10: the women represented in figs. 3 and 5 hold the veil but do not seem to be manipulating the drapery). It was this implication the figure was veiling herself that lent credence to the idea that the gesture alludes to female modesty, as the modest woman covers herself up when confronted by strangers, but it should also be pointed out that veil manipulation was not always performed as a gesture of modesty.[30] The raised hand, however, does not always touch and draw attention to the veil: it may rather rest on the cheek (as in fig. 7 – see also Vecilia Hila's index finger on fig. 5), which

Dillon suggests that the Pudicitia was the most common format for portrait statues of women in the Hellenistic period and for women on Hellenistic grave reliefs from the mid-2nd century BC onwards: she also discusses two well-known Hellenistic statues Diodora (Dillon 2010, 87-89 fig. 38) and Kleopatra, whose statue stood alongside that of her husband Dioskourides on Delos (Dillon 2010, 89-90, figs. 39-41). The development of the type is also discussed in Bieber 1977 chapter 11.

26. Davies 2013 argues that the statue types used for women of the imperial court in the western part of the Roman Empire at least adopted statue types with more open postures: the only certain representation of an empress in the Pudicitia type is a statue of Sabina in Vaison. It is interesting that the type does not seem to have been considered appropriate for statues of Livia, despite (or perhaps because of) its popularity at the time for statues of other women.

27. Langlands 2006, 23, 37, 72-74. Much of this book involves discussion of the various ramifications of the term Pudicitia and the concept of modesty: she suggests that Pudicitia's meaning is not consistent. Although primarily associated with women it could also be seen as a positive quality for men.

28. Wex 1979, 74 and 76, 128 and 132 reproduces photographs of women seated and standing adopting arm poses very like the Pudicitia stance. See also Collett 2004, 71-103: chapter 3 'Submissive Tells'.

29. Figure 6 is a limestone relief in the British Museum (ME 125023) representing Malkat daughter of Aid'an, dating AD 150-200.

30. For a discussion of veiling and the veiling gesture see Llewellyn-Jones 2003: the Roman use of the Pudicitia pose is discussed on pp. 172-173. A notorious example of veiling being used for reasons other than modesty is Poppaea, wife of Nero, who according to Tacitus would partly veil her face so as to tantalise the viewer – or because she thought it suited her to wear the veil that way.

Fig. 8: Limestone relief from Palmyra with the bust of an unknown young woman with her right hand raised to her neck. British Museum, ME 125016, AD 150-200. (© Trustees of the British Museum).
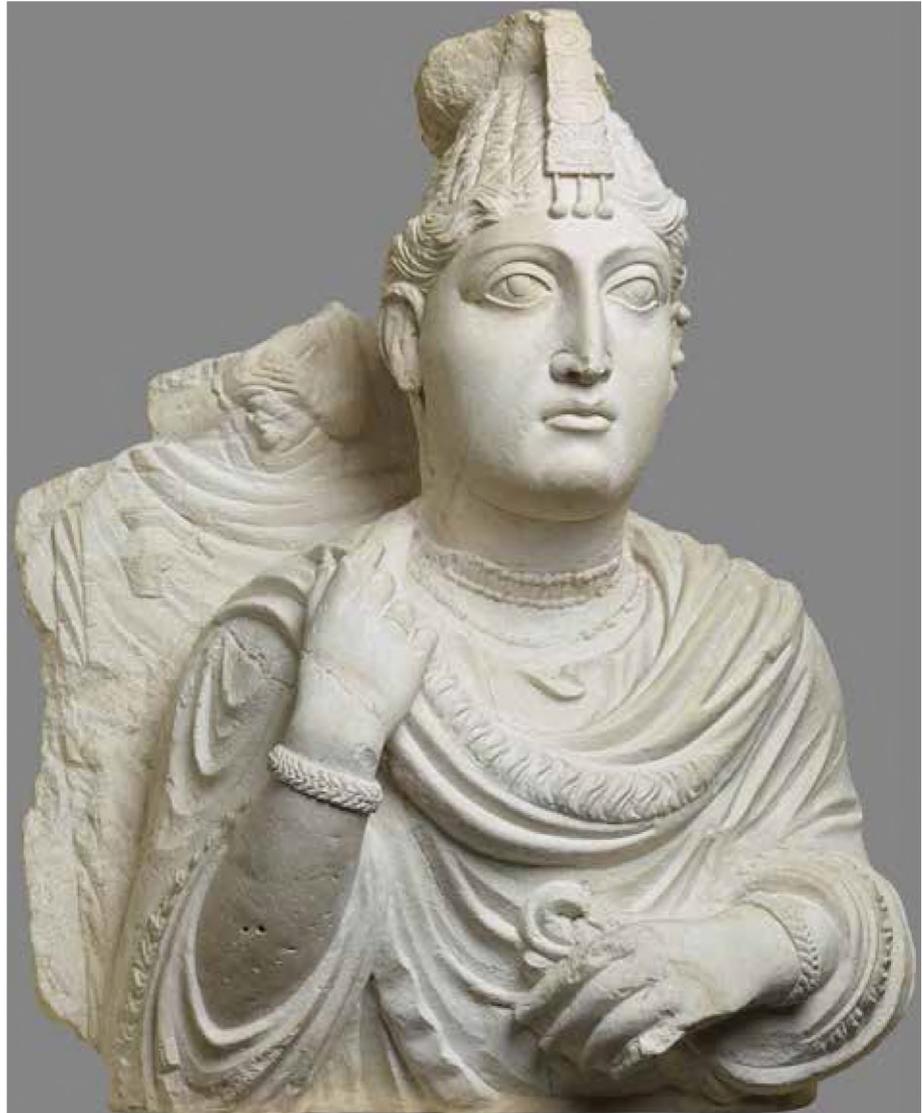
has been interpreted as an allusion to mourning,[31] or it may rest near the neck or collarbone (see fig. 8, where no veil was worn but the hand rests on the drapery round the shoulders).[32] The raised hand is often held in an ostentatiously elegant way which also serves to show off bracelets on the wrist as well as drawing the eye to the necklaces worn by the figure: this can result in an almost flirtatious effect, at least to modern eyes, as this is a pose used in modern glamour photography to draw attention to the delicate skin at the base of the

31. Figure 7 represents a relief in the British Museum (ME 125024), representing Aqme daughter of Habazi, dating to the third century AD. For the mourning interpretation of the motif see Dillon 2007, 74 who suggests this may have been the implication of some (but not all) of the earliest Greek representations of the pose, and Heyn 2010, 637; Colledge 1976, 139. A similar interpretation has been given for seated Roman funerary statues with the chin resting on the hand, but there is little to support this as the usual or universal meaning of the gesture.

32. Figure 8 represents a limestone relief with the bust of an unknown young woman in the British Museum, ME 125016, AD 150-200.

neck and the elegance of the hand gesture.[33] This perhaps is the implication of the hand gesture seen on the Palmyrene portrait of a young woman illustrated in fig. 8: she does not wear a veil but nevertheless holds her right hand up to the side of her neck, seemingly grasping the drapery round her shoulders and drawing attention to both the bracelet round her raised arm and the necklace round her neck. A similar gesture can be seen in the right hand figure on the Roman relief in the British Museum (fig. 4): although she is not veiled she raises the fabric draped round her shoulders with her right hand, which is completely covered so that only its outline can be discerned. The female figure on the full-figure relief from the Via Statilia (fig. 3) in fact displays elements of all three aspects of the raised arm: although she is grasping her veil in her raised hand her hand is held close to her neck in a way that emphasises her feminine grace and her forefinger nearly touches her chin.

The raised-arm pose (whether we call it Pudicitia or not) is gender-specific both in Rome and Palmyra: it is only used in Roman art for men who are categorised with the feminine other, such as defeated barbarians.[34] Here the defensiveness of the Pudicitia arm gesture is used to emphasise the submissiveness of the defeated enemies, but it also equates the vanquished with the female gender. As a posture it ex-

presses something to do with femininity, presumably seen as a good quality for women though not for adult men. Heyn suggests that on the Palmyrene reliefs the gesture takes over from the attribute of the spindle and distaff, a symbol of domesticity and female industry, but there is little to suggest that the gesture referred specifically to this aspect of the female ideal.[35] Rather, the gesture suggests behaviour appropriate to women of elite status and wealth in much the same way as the arm-sling pose adopted by men suggested the good citizen. The male arm-sling and female Pudicitia poses go together in both Palmyra and Rome (see figs. 3 and 5 for explicit pairings on the Roman reliefs where they provide an image of the exemplary citizen and his well-behaved wife).[36] But is there any indication in the body language of the Pudicitia pose with its more closed posture and the hint at veiling that the woman represented accepted her subordinate role as a woman and acknowledged her submission to her husband? Or was the gendered difference in pose neutral?

Although two instances of the Pudicitia pose on the Roman reliefs are illustrated here (figs. 3 and 5) this pose is in fact not at all usual on the funerary reliefs with half figures: the pose adopted by Vecilia Hila, Vibius' wife, is an exception. The pose is never used for men but it is not used as such a strong gender identifier as it is at Palmyra. On the relief of Ampudius (fig. 4) the wife on the right adopts a pose that has something in common with the Pudicitia pose, but the daughter on the left grasps her drapery in a manner similar to that of the male figures, albeit with the

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33. Wex 1979, 70-71: 'another frequently observed position in women: the hand used as an ornament, almost like a brooch across the breast. A position of humility that strongly signals the lower part of the sex oriented hierarchy'. Goffman 1979, 31 in relation to the modern images he illustrates in his figs. 29-36 describes self-touching (all by women) as 'conveying a sense of one's body being a delicate and precious thing'.
34. The pose was used for one of the captives on the column bases of the arch of Septimius Severus in Rome, and a statue of a barbarian in Naples Archaeological Museum; it was also used for a funerary relief of a Gallus (eunuch priest of Cybele). Colledge 1976, pl. 71 illustrates a Palmyrene relief of a standing young male figure in the Pudicitia pose (in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. 822): the pose may have been adopted to express the modest demeanour expected of the young. The figure Colledge illustrates in pl. 91 as possibly representing a eunuch in fact has been convincingly shown to be a young woman (Cussini 2000).

35. Heyn 2010, 632 and 636 suggests the changeover happened at the end of the 2nd century. Cussini 2005 argues for some Palmyrene women having a more public profile than was previously supposed (as they were honoured with statues and inscriptions) and also owning and managing property, and points to other attributes associated with them in the portrait imagery apart from spindles and distaffs such as keys and jewellery boxes, which hint at the management of wealth and household management which went beyond the traditional domestic task of wool working.
36. Bieber 1977, chapter 11 also treats them together, as male and female equivalents often used together.

other hand. Many of the women on the Roman reliefs have one hand emerging from a sling of drapery, and it is often the right hand, identical to the pose adopted by men (though unlike the men they may instead hold the left hand in a drapery sling).

Body language and relationships

The fact that some of the women on the Roman reliefs adopt poses similar to those of the men may suggest that within this social group at Rome there was less concern to differentiate the body language of men and women than there was at Palmyra. Roman reliefs indeed sometimes use similar gestures to indicate a connection between two figures, both when only two figures are shown and to distinguish a couple from the others when several figures are represented in a row.[37] The use of virtually identical hand gestures emphasises the accord between the two figures and their unity as a couple. This 'mirroring' phenomenon has been observed in the modern world: two people who feel in harmony with each other will adopt the same pose, and will change pose at the same time. Although the Roman examples usually involve married couples, the same gestures may also be used for two people who are related in other ways, such as two sisters.[38] The relationship which appears to have mattered most on the Roman funerary reliefs, however, was marriage. The close connection of a male and female figure could be indicated in one of three main ways, by turning the otherwise frontally placed figures slightly towards one another, by using the *dextrarum iunctio* (right handclasp) gesture to link them,[39] and

the use of similar poses, especially the placing of the hands, so the two figures appear to echo one another.

As the majority of the Palmyrene funerary reliefs depict a single figure, and their arrangement in their respective tombs is for the most part unknown, it is impossible now to rediscover or reconstruct similar connections between images of spouses or other related figures. There are however a smaller number of reliefs which show a pair of figures, and on one of these (fig. 9)[40] there appears at first sight to be complete equality between the male and female figures: she adopts the arm-sling pose of the male figures and like the male figure beside her both hands are held in front of her, clenched in a similar manner. But on closer inspection the male figure slightly overlaps the female, who is therefore behind him; she is veiled and holds a spindle and distaff in her left hand, whereas he holds a scroll. Their seemingly 'equal' partnership is subtly undermined. Heyn concludes from her study of the Palmyrene reliefs with two adult figures that they did not routinely use similar or echo gestures to identify family members or married couples.[41] It is perhaps significant that the relief illustrated in fig. 9 has a Greek inscription giving the names of the pair represented as Viria Phoebe and C. Virius Alcimus: the names are Roman rather than Palmyrene, and their shared *nomen* suggests they may be brother and sister or *coliberti* (i.e. freed slaves). They were not necessarily a married couple.

Although there is no sign of the *dextrarum iunctio* on the Palmyrene reliefs, a few reliefs do use another gesture to indicate a close connection between two family members: one puts one arm round the shoulders of the other with the hand resting on the shoulder furthest away. Heyn lists eight instances of this motif, four of them representing a 'mourning woman' with

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37. See Kockel 1993 catalogue nos. A6, B3, B4, E2, G4, G6 and G13 for male-female pairs.

38. The assumption is that these are married couples, although this is not explicitly stated in the accompanying inscriptions. The woman normally adopts the 'male' pose with the right arm in a sling of drapery. For an example with two women adopting this pose, see Kockel 1993, K16: both women are called Calpurnia, and their faces as well as poses are almost identical: they are thought to be sisters.

39. For the use of the *dextrarum iunctio* gesture to link a pair of figures on the Roman reliefs see Kockel 1993 nos. A7, E5, G7,

G9, K3, L1, L20, N15, O4 and O68. For the motif on other Roman monuments see Davies 1985.

40. Limestone relief in the British Museum (ME 125036) with two half-figures in the same pose, the woman on the left and man on the right. See Colledge 1976, pl. 76 (AD 100-150). This is listed in Heyn 2010 in appendix 3, no.3. Heyn lists double busts in her appendices 2 and 3, a total of 33 reliefs.

41. Heyn 2010, 639.

Fig. 9: Limestone relief from Palmyra with two half-figures in the same pose, the woman on the left and man on the right, named in the Greek inscription Viria Phoebe and C. Virius Alcimus in the British Museum, ME 125036, AD 50-150. (© Trustees of the British Museum).

her arm round her son in one instance, a daughter in two instances, and an unknown other woman in the fourth.[42] The other four instances represent a woman putting her arm round another woman, a woman with a man (in both cases the relationship is unknown), a brother with a sister, and an uncle with a nephew.[43] She also cites one relief on which a woman extends her

arm to touch her husband on the elbow.[44] Touching gestures at Palmyra therefore were used to emphasise familial relationships, but although touch could be used between married couples it was more likely to be used to link other blood relations, especially between two generations.[45] The arm round or hand resting on the shoulder of a companion is a gesture also used at Rome, sometimes in conjunction with the *dextrarum*

42. The relief with a mourning mother putting her arm round her son is in the American University Museum, Beirut: see Colledge 1976, pl. 65; Heyn 2010, 638-639 fig. 6, app. 2 no. 1. The other three reliefs are listed as Heyn 2010 app. 2 nos. 3, 4, and 6.
43. Heyn 2010, 639 and app. 3 nos.5, 17, 1, and 24 respectively: this last example (with uncle and nephew) is also illustrated on p. 634, fig. 3. In addition Heyn 2010, 639 mentions a relief where a father may have had his arm round his daughter (app. 3 no. 25).

44. Heyn 2010, app. 3 no. 10: in the Louvre.
45. Colledge 1976, pl. 72 illustrates a full-figure relief which includes a standing woman placing her arm round the shoulders of a standing male figure beside her, Colledge identifies the scene as a nurse with three children, in which case the relationship is a close one between an adult and children, but it is not a relationship by blood.

Fig. 10: Limestone relief from
Palmyra with a 'funerary ban-
quet' scene, British Museum
ME 132614, AD 200-273.
(© Trustees of the British
Museum).

iunctio, although this is not common on the half-fig-
ures reliefs, and, as at Palmyra, parents sometimes put
their arms round their children.[46]

One other type of Palmyrene relief on which con-
trasting gendered body language can be seen is the
banquet scene, seen here in fig. 10.[47] These scenes dis-
play a clear distinction between dominant male and
subordinate female postures: men recline and women
sit, often performing a veiling gesture. Their seated
position signals their subordinate position in relation
to the male, and their veiling gesture suggests their
fidelity to him. This kind of funerary banquet scene,
with reclining male and seated female figures, was
also well-known in early imperial funerary art at
Rome, but it did not originate there: like the arm-
sling and the Pudicitia poses it came to Rome from
the Greek world. The complicated question of the im-
plications of such scenes for our understanding of ac-
tual dining practices in Rome have been investigated
by Roller, who concludes that the Romans observed a
posture hierarchy when it came to dining, with the

46. The representation of the *dextrarum iunctio* with one partner
placing their left hand on the other's shoulder appears on
other monuments such as ash chests and grave altars, but it is
not usual on the half-figure reliefs (an exception is Kockel
1993, no. L19, and one unusual relief, no. F12 shows a wife
reaching across to touch her husband): parents have their
arms round children on two reliefs, Kockel 1993 nos. M1 and
M2. For this use of touch as a gesture between husband and
wife and parents and children in Roman art see Kampen 2009,
104-122.

47. This example is in the British Museum (ME 132614), AD
200-273. Other examples are illustrated in Colledge 1976, pl.
61 and 62: both are in the Louvre and show the woman
frontally, but adopting the same pose as on the British

Museum example; also pl. 98, where she sits more in side view
and raises her right hand rather than her left to her veil, and
pl. 100 with children standing in the background.

most important/highest status people reclining, less important sitting, and the lowest status (servants) standing, but that despite their secondary status in Roman society women did routinely dine reclining beside their husbands.[48] As far as Rome was concerned the funerary banquet scenes reflect an outmoded morality, possibly inherited from Greece. Normal practice may have been different elsewhere in the empire: was it also considered correct for women to dine reclining in the eastern provinces of the empire, and what was the practice at Palmyra? Women could be shown reclining on their own (or only accompanied by servants and children) on funerary reliefs both at Palmyra and at Rome, but they may not be represented as actually dining when they are shown in this position, and they are not usually accompanied by men.[49]

Conclusion

A comparison of the body language represented on the Palmyrene funerary reliefs with those from Rome raises a number of questions. Do these images reflect the body language used in everyday life, or do they use artistic models taken over from elsewhere without them having much to do with the lived experience of the people represented? If the latter, did the various body postures retain the same meanings, or were they understood differently? Both the Romans of the late Republic and the Palmyrenes of the mid-imperial period appear to have adopted certain artistic models (such as the Pudicitia statue type) from the Hellenistic Greek world,[50] but to what extent did they re-inter-

pret them to suit their own circumstances? I would suggest that there are sufficient differences between the Roman, Palmyrene and original Greek versions of the gestures and body postures considered in this article to suggest that the reliefs did reflect to some extent actual body-language practice in these three cultures, and that what we can see is differences, in Bourdieu's terms, in the *habitus* of the three groups expressed through their bodily *hexis*:[51] thus the choice of pose and the precise details may not be particularly meaningful in each individual instance, but collectively they reveal something of the attitudes and the behaviours of a social group. Thus at Palmyra there was felt a need to emphasise gender differences through pose, while at Rome (on the so-called 'freedman' reliefs) gender differences in pose were not so important, but marital relationships were considered significant. Within the socially acceptable repertoire of poses and gestures available each individual had a small degree of choice, just as they did in opting for the costume they were to be depicted wearing: the clearest example of this is the double relief illustrated in fig. 9 with the same hand gestures adopted by both the figures, Greek inscription and Roman names. Costume, however, is likely to have been more a matter of conscious choice made to express the subject's cultural and ethnic identity: the same degree of awareness may not have applied to the choice of pose, but that does not make it any the less revealing. Finally, it should be borne in mind that the Roman reliefs considered here were made over a comparatively short time-span, albeit at a time when Roman society was changing rapidly, whereas the Palmyrene reliefs were made over a period of more than two centuries.

48. Roller 2003 and 2006.
49. For Palmyra see Colledge 1976, pl. 107 – although this figure reclines she does not have a cup or other objects that would suggest dining; Roman examples can be found on ash chests and grave altars: e.g. altar of Julia Capriola in the Museo Nazionale Romano: she reclines holding a cup in one hand and has a small table with more items on it in front of her.
50. For an honorific portrait statue (full-length, in the round, but unfortunately now headless) found at Palmyra see Colledge 1976, pl. 126.

51. See Bourdieu 1990, 52-70, and for bodily behaviour and gender in particular also Bourdieu 2001. The social groups in question do not comprise the whole of the population at Rome or Palmyra, but classes within them: the affluent but sub-elite class at Rome which was largely composed of freedmen and their families, and the leading families at Palmyra who had sufficient wealth and status to build monumental tombs.

Changes over time in the body language represented on the Palmyrene funerary reliefs is an aspect not considered here: that is a subject for future research.

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Changing Identities, Changing Positions: Jewellery in Palmyrene Female Portraits

Signe Krag

Introduction

The elaborateness of Palmyrene portraits is striking and they offer a unique glimpse into the local portrait tradition during an era of increasing Roman influence. The portraits which were located inside funerary buildings surrounding the city, draw attention and affect their viewers through for example the use of arm and hand gestures as well as different executions of drapery. However, this is also the case with jewellery worn by Palmyrene women. The large quantity of jewellery worn by the women is characteristic of the Palmyrene portrait tradition and only few parallels can be found outside of the city. Jewellery is a strong part of the female identities expressed in the portraits and the main aim of this article is to investigate jewellery and position in female portraits from Palmyra. The changes in jewellery, what it did in the portraits, and how it was used, especially together with the female body and clothing, will be examined.

Previous Research

In the typologies of H. Ingholt and M. A. R. Colledge concerning Palmyrene portraits, they both included observations on changes in jewellery.[2] The items of jewellery which proved to be especially advantageous

in the dating of Palmyrene portraits were the brooches and earrings. H. Ingholt divided the portraits into three overall groups, group I (AD 50-150), group II (AD 150-200), and group III (AD 200-273).[3] The jewellery ascribed to group I is small circular earrings worn along the rims of the ears, bunches of grapes and trapezoidal brooches.[4] In group II he placed earrings with horizontal bars, dumbbell-shaped earrings, no earrings, trapezoidal brooches, circular brooches and geometric-shaped brooches, and ascribed to group III are dumbbell-shaped earrings, circular brooches and geometric-shaped brooches.[5] In his book from 1976 M. A. R. Colledge divided brooches and earrings into further categories and used them in his overall typology.[6] Moreover, other scholars such as D. Mackay, M. Gawlikowski, J. Chehade, B. Deppert-Lippitz, L. Palmieri and G. Zenoni have expanded further on the typologies on jewellery of H. Ingholt and M. A. R. Colledge.[7] Therefore a decent impression of the typological changes in jewellery is established. Nonetheless, it has to be underlined that typologies are strong simplifications of the actual diversity of jewellery in Palmyra which can, for example, be observed in brooches and necklaces. In Palmyra jewellery is found in a large variety of appearances and often it finds individual combinations in the various portraits. Therefore, the ty-

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1. The data on the Palmyrene reliefs I address in this article is from the Palmyra Portrait Project database. The Palmyra Portrait Project is directed by Rubina Raja, Aarhus University. The project, and my position as a PhD Scholar, is generously financed by the Carlsberg Foundation.http://projects.au.dk/palmyraportrait/.
2. See Ingholt 1928; Colledge 1976.

3. See Ingholt 1928.
4. Ingholt 1928, 91-92.
5. Ingholt 1928, 91-92.
6. Colledge 1976, 255.
7. Mackay 1949; Gawlikowski 1966a; Chehadé 1972; Deppert-Lippitz 1987; Palmieri 2010; Zenoni 2010.

Fig. 1: Stele with female and girl, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1085 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

pologies are not very useful in the investigation of the variety of jewellery, but only to understand the overall chronological changes.

Changes in Jewellery

It is suggested that female portraits cannot be dated based only on the amount of jewellery worn, and more research on the different types of jewellery is needed.[8] In this article I do not aim to refine typologies; instead I want to explore why the jewellery repertoire changes, how it is used and which role it possesses in the portraits. Scholars claim that an increase in the jewellery worn by women occurred during the 2nd century AD analogous with an increase in the finances of the city through rising trading activities.[9] Nonetheless, large amounts of jewellery can be observed in the early stelae portraying women and re-

veal that jewellery held a prominent position already in these early period portraits (fig. 1).[10] However, in the early loculus reliefs dated to the 2nd half of the 1st century AD the amount of jewellery worn by women decreased (fig. 2).[11] Only during the 2nd century AD the amount of jewellery worn again increased, but the frequency of portraits with larger amounts of jewellery also grew and this became more intense in the 3rd century AD (fig. 3).[12] Thus, large amounts of jewel-

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8. Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 188; Heyn 2012, 440.

9. Seyrig 1936; Mackay 1949, 170; Morehart 1956-1958; Deppert-Lippitz 1987, 180; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 187-188; Palmieri 2010, 38.

10. Chehadé 1972, 75. Early stelae, see Tanabe 1986, 298, no. 267, 300, no. 269; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 211, no. 210; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 84, no. 42.

11. From the 2nd half of the 1st century AD are two dated female loculus reliefs, see Ingholt 1928, 52-54, PS 30; Ingholt 1966, 464, fig. 6; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 42-43, no. 1-2. Early loculus reliefs, see Ingholt 1928, 52-54, PS 30; Ingholt 1966, 464, fig. 6; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 166, no. 169, 222-223, no. 218; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 42, no. 1, 43, no. 2; Rumsey 2009, 97.

12. See Ingholt 1928, 69-73, PS 43, 131-132, PS 374; Abdul-Hak 1952, 229-231, no. 20; Tanabe 1986, 290, no. 359; Schmidt-Colinet 1992b, taf. 73b; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 182, no. 183; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 126-128, no. 81-83; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 163, cat. 215, fig. 177; Pasinli 2001,

Fig. 2: Loculus relief with Abînâ, AD 96, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1057 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

Fig. 3: Loculus relief with female, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1069 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

lery are already witnessed in the early stelae, but only from the latter 2nd century AD the phenomenon spread to a majority of the female portraits. It can indeed partly be ascribed to an increase in finances during the 2nd and 3rd centuries, as argued by other scholars.[13]

In the early stelae, women are wearing earrings, necklaces, brooches, bracelets and ankle clasps.[14] Moreover, in these early portraits, a further part of the female adornment is a decorated band or cloth worn across the forehead. In the first loculus arm clasps and finger rings first occurred.[15] During the 2nd half of the 2nd century AD, the types of jewellery changed which

continued throughout the 3rd century AD.[16] Chains and pendants decorated headgear or hair, and small pendants can be attached in the hair on one or both sides of the headgear or across the front of the ears (fig. 4).[17] Thus, new types of jewellery were added continuously during the period of production. Some of the jewellery types worn by women in the early stelae and early loculus reliefs are argued to hold a Greek or

cat. 217.

13. Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 188; Heyn 2012, 440.
14. See Tanabe 1986, 298, no. 267, 300, no. 269; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993 211, no. 210; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 83, no. 40, 84, no. 42.
15. See Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 166, no. 169, 222-223, no. 218; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 121-122, no. 77; Rumsey 2009, 97.

16. Portraits from AD 150-200, see Ingholt 1928, 135, PS 401, 135-136, PS 408; Parlasca 1990, 142-143, abb. 16; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 95, no. 52; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 53, cat. 62, fig. 164. Portraits from AD 200-273, see Ingholt 1928, 85-86, PS 52; Wartke 1991, 77, cat. 6; Schmidt-Colinet 1992b, taf. 34, 35; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 170, no. 173; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 124, no. 79; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 77, cat. 102, fig. 203.
17. Ingholt 1928, 142, PS 448; Parlasca 1990, 142-143, abb. 16; Wartke 1991, 79, cat. 8; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 232, no. 225, 243, no. 236; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 110-111, no. 67; 150, no. 114; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 77, cat. 102, fig. 203.

Hellenistic character such as the necklace with a row of pointed pearls, the necklace with small pearls shaped as acorns, or the earrings in the shape of bunches of grapes.[18] In the 2nd half of the 2nd century AD, these types fell out of use and types observed across the entire Roman Empire came into use that may include more stones and can especially be seen used in Palmyrene brooches and necklaces.[19] Similar changes in jewellery types during the 2nd century AD are observed across the entire Roman Empire for example in Britain, Fayum, and Italy.[20] Thus, from the evidence, it can be deduced that the changes in jewellery in the portraits were highly influenced by an exchange and transmission of ideas between Palmyra and areas they came into contact with.[21] The changes in types of jewellery can also be witnessed in the graves and jewellery placed as grave goods find strong equivalents in the portraits.[22] This further suggests that the jewellery worn by women in the portraits were inspired by items of jewellery worn by women in the Palmyrene society.

Prestige and Changing Female Roles

The quantity of jewellery worn by women in their portraits is an indication of their wealth. M. Heyn argues that the portraits of women wearing larger amounts of jewellery are supposed to display the wealth of their family and thus the amount of jewellery worn is a direct visual reference to the wealth of the individual portrayed.[23] It can safely be assumed that jewellery

Fig. 4: Female head, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1091 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

was used in female portraits to signal wealth and prestige, and to establish a position through these aspects that strengthened the social status of the women portrayed. This can further be witnessed in stelae or small reliefs with reclining women where jewellery can be depicted in jewellery boxes, and in reliefs with reclining women the box can be held by female servants (fig. 5).[24] In these reliefs, the social position of the

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18. Higgins 1961, 155-156, 169; Pfeiler 1970, 13-59; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 70; Palmieri 2010, 35, 37-38, 43; Zenoni 2010, 48-52. See notes 9, 10 and 13.

19. Higgins 1961, 181; Pfeiler 1970, 61-103; Palmieri 2010, 37-43; Zenoni 2010, 48-52. See note 15.

20. Pfeiler 1970; Chehadé 1972, 94. See for example Higgins 1961; Stefanelli 1992; Doxiadis 1995; Borg 1996; 1998; Johns 1996; Walker and Bierbrier 1997; Boatwright 2005; Carroll 2012; Roberts 2013.

21. Also see Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 72; Palmieri 2010.

22. For a broather examination of jewellery in Palmyrene female portraits, see Krag (forthcoming, chapter 5).

23. Heyn 2008, 178; Heyn 2012, 440-441. Other scholars claim

that women are used to increase the prestige of their husbands and families (Bartman 2001; D'Ambra 1996, 2000). See also Mackay 1949, 170; Deppert-Lippitz 1987, 180; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 151, 187-188; Palmieri 2010, 38.

24. Abdul-Hak 1952, 229-231, no. 20 (the large box might be

women is strongly underlined through the additional display of jewellery. Moreover, traces of pigments are sometimes found on items of jewellery and suggest that they were produced in expensive metals and they

wanted to include this aspect in the portraits (fig. 6).[25] Furthermore, a few portraits hold evidence that stones were inlaid in brooches, necklaces, pendants or finger rings, and elements can be attached to, for example,

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for female utensils and jewellery); Kraeling 1961-1962, 14-18, pl. XIV; Tanabe 1986, 464, no. 438; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 86, no. 44, 134, no. 88; Ingholt Archives, PS 1096.

25. Ingholt 1928, 84-85, PS 51, 144, PS 462, 147, PS 483; Tanabe 1986, 395, no. 364; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 121-122, no. 77; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 164-165, cat. 218, fig. 205.

earrings.[26] When larger quantities of jewellery in female portraits became more common during the end of the 2nd century AD, the display inside of funerary buildings had generally altered. An increase in different types of portrait versions such as sarcophagi, banqueting reliefs, wall paintings, freestanding sculpture and stelae brought different ways of portraying individuals and created different experiences.[27] This might suggest that the increase in jewellery worn by women during the late 2nd century and the 3rd century AD was further encouraged by the increasing change and competition in the display.[28] Thus, a strong awareness of position and display within the funerary buildings is evident in the changing portraits in which jewellery also came to hold a strong role. Therefore, adornment in female portraits increased the power of the display and women came to draw strong attention through the jewellery they wore.[29]

Moreover, the increase in jewellery reflects changing ways in expressing identity in Palmyrene funerary portraits. The rise in the amount of jewellery in the individual portraits is by A. Sadurska argued to display a rising female emancipation in Palmyra, as symbols of the household, the spindle and distaff, went out of use roughly at the same time.[30] Furthermore, women increasingly became owners of sections of funerary buildings and gained more influence in these matters.[31] The argument of A. Sadurska is very convincing; however, in research on women in antiquity, the term emancipation is ambivalent and unjustified. What can be deduced from the Palmyrene archaeological material is that the position of women in the society grew stronger when the previous importance

Fig. 6: 'The Beauty of Palmyra', Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 2795 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

of tribes in epigraphy shifted to an increasing importance of the individual families during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.[32] During this period, women received increasing power in society and they are recorded as sellers and buyers of sections of funerary buildings, or heiresses of these, and moreover smaller religious dedications by women increased.[33] It appears that when the importance of family units, of which wom-

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26. See for example Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 110-111, no. 67, 121-122, no. 77. Attached to earrings, see Ingholt 1928, 134-136, PS 404, PS 408.
27. See Ingholt 1928; Colledge 1976, 58-87; Parlasca 1984a; Parlasca 1988; Tanabe 1986; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993; Sadurska and Bounni 1994.
28. Reclining women, see Abdul-Hak 1952, 229-231, no. 20; Schmidt-Colinet 1992b, taf. 72a, 72c, 72e, 73b.
29. See also Olson 2008, 96-97.
30. Sadurska 1996, 286.
31. See Cussini 1995; 2005.

32. Decline in inscriptions referring to tribe and clan, see Colledge 1976, 20; Dijkstra 1995, 152; Dirven 1999, 25; Yon 2002, 66-72.
33. Legal affairs, see Cussini 1995; 2005. Altars, see Dijkstra 1995, 127-128, 151-153.

Fig. 7: Female in mourning attire accompanying her daughter, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1025 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

en were an important part, increased so did the importance and roles of women in other aspects of society.

Women without Jewellery

Women portrayed without jewellery is rarely seen and even smaller girls are frequently wearing jewellery.[34] 16 portraits, excluding sarcophagi boxes, portray women without jewellery (fig. 7).[35] In several of the portraits women are portrayed together with their children and in these scenes the mothers can wear no items of jewellery.[36] These portraits indicate that there are other ways to gain prestige and position in the portraits; in this case it was the children themselves. The women depicted in an act of mourning identified by their exposed chest with scratches, often accom-

34. See Ingholt 1928, 20-22, PS 2; 75-77, PS 46, 130, PS 363; Higuchi and Izumi 1994, 78-79, pl. 49; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 68-69, cat. 95, fig. 17; Meischner and Cussini 2003, 102-103, no. 3.

35. See Ingholt 1928, 62-63, PS 37, 75-77, PS 46, 119-120, PS 252, 120, PS 260, 139, PS 424; Starcky 1955, 41-42, pl. XIX, no. 1; Tanabe 1986, 367, no. 336; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993,

45-46, no. 4, 132, no. 86; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 127-128, cat. 168, fig. 162, 163-164, cat. 216, fig. 195; Charles-Gaffiot et al. 2001, 345, no. 154; Heyn 2010, 646, app. 2, cat. 6; Ingholt Archive, PS 851, PS 937, PS 939.

36. 10 of the portraits are with family, and 5 of these are mourning mothers. See Ingholt 1928, 75-77, PS 46: 119-120, PS 252, 120, PS 260; Starcky 1955, 41-42, pl. XIX, no. 1; Tanabe 1986, 367, no. 336; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 132, no. 86; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 163-164, cat. 216, fig. 195; Heyn 2010, 646, app. 2, cat. 6; Ingholt Archive, PS 937, PS 939.

pany their deceased children and seldom wear jewellery.[37] In few portraits they can wear a brooch and perhaps earrings, but most often they do not wear jewellery.[38] When the mourning mothers accompany their daughters, the latter always wear more items of jewellery.[39] In this way, jewellery was used to bring attention to the deceased daughters in the display. It can thus be deduced that attention could sometimes be brought to the primarily deceased through the amount of jewellery they wore, and that the adornment of women accompanying their deceased children was less significant. In these portraits, the jewellery was used to signal wealth, but certainly also to visually highlight the deceased person; the individual commemorated.

Positions on the Body

Jewellery was increasingly displayed on the torso which includes numerous necklaces running across the neck and chest, and the brooch. In the early Palmyrene portraits the necklaces were placed high on the chest, but they expanded to a larger area of the torso during the 2nd century AD (fig. 8).[40] The upper necklaces are often simpler than the necklaces that are situated further down on the torso. The necklaces sit-

uated lower on the torso are large and more time was certainly devoted to carve these necklaces revealing the awareness of display in the portraits.[41]

One necklace is highly significant. It is a long necklace composed of a wide chain with large links or oblong beads and has several medallions attached portraying small busts. So far it only occurs in 14 female portraits and all are dated to the 3rd century AD (fig. 8).[42] The busts are mostly women inferred from the draping of their clothing and they have indications of breasts. In Palmyra miniature busts are also encountered on the headgear of priests.[43] A small bust of a boy, an adult male or a priest is often portrayed on the front of the priestly headgear (fig. 9). M. Gawlikowski suggests that the small bust on the priestly headgear represent ancestors.[44] But did the small busts have the same meanings in male and female portraits, and is this evidence of a female religious participation? Only men are portrayed on the priestly headgear, but on the necklaces worn by women almost only women are depicted, and they appear to hold different meanings. Furthermore, armless busts frequently occur on the lower part of sarcophagi in the funerary sphere and these are of family members identified by epigraphy.[45] The female busts on neck-

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37. On mourning women in Palmyrene funerary portraits, see Krag (forthcoming, chapter 4); Krag and Raja 2016.

38. See Ingholt 1928, 132-133, PS 378, PS 383, 145, PS 468; Wartke 1991, 72-73, cat. 2; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 76, no. 31; Pasinli 2001, cat. 217.

39. See Ingholt 1928, 132-133, PS 378, 145, PS 468; Wartke 1991, 72-73, cat. 2; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1933, 132, no. 86; Pasinli 2001, cat. 217; Heyn 2010, 646, app. 2, cat. 6; Ingholt Archive, PS 939.

40. Early, see Amy and Seyrig 1936, pl. XLVII; Abdul-Hak 1952, 243, no. 34; Wartke 1991, 72-73, cat. 2; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 211, no. 210; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 70, no. 26; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 98, cat. 133, fig. 173, 144-145, cat. 190, fig. 158. Late, see Ingholt 1928, 147, PS 483, 149, PS 496; Parlasca 1990, 142-143, abb. 16; Wartke 1991, 77, cat. 7; Schmidt-Colinet 1992b, taf. 34, 35; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 182, no. 183; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 126, no. 81; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 77, cat. 102, fig. 203, 146-148, cat. 195, fig. 247.

41. See Ingholt 1928, 147, PS 483, 149, PS 496; Parlasca 1990, 142-143, abb. 16; Wartke 1991, 77, cat. 7; Schmidt-Colinet 1992b, taf. 34, 35; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 182, no. 183; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 126, no. 81; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 77, cat. 102, fig. 203, 146-148, cat. 195, fig. 247.

42. See Schmidt-Colinet 1992a, 120-122. Also see Ingholt 1928, 147, PS 483, 149, PS 493, PS 495; Michalowski 1964, 87-88, no. 20; Sadurska 1977, 153, no. 101; Tanabe 1986, 394, no. 263; Wartke 1991, 77, cat. 7; Schmidt-Colinet 1992b, taf. 34, 35, 72b-d, 72f, 73a-b; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 127, no. 82; Ingholt Archive, PS 987.

43. See Ingholt 1934, 33-36, pl. VIII.2; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 119, no. 75, 145, no. 104; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 108-109, cat. 148, fig. 46.

44. Gawlikowski 1966b, 95.

45. See for example Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 12-13, cat. 3, fig. 239, 37-39, cat. 41, figs. 222-224, 86-88, cat. 120, figs. 231-236, 89-90, cat. 121, fig. 246. See also, Schmidt-Colinet 1992a, 120.

Fig. 8: Female wearing a necklace with medallions, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1054 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

laces could perhaps also be of ancestors? This would give the women a high position in the graves and draw attention to them; both through jewellery and references to ancestors. However, on the sarcophagi both men and women are frequently representing the lineage, but on the necklaces worn by women, the busts are dominantly of women. Thus, it is hard to claim that they hold the same meanings.

The small female busts can wear a *kalathos* or a turreted crown. Gad or Tyche of Palmyra is wearing this type of headgear when she is depicted on tesserae and in religious reliefs.[46] Therefore, it is suggested that the small busts of women on necklaces are representing

46. See Ingholt et al. 1955, no. 207, 277, 278, 280, 418, 419, 426, 510; Parlasca 1984b, fig. 4, 5; Schmidt-Colinet 1992a, 120-121.

Fig. 9: Male priest wearing a modius, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1034 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).
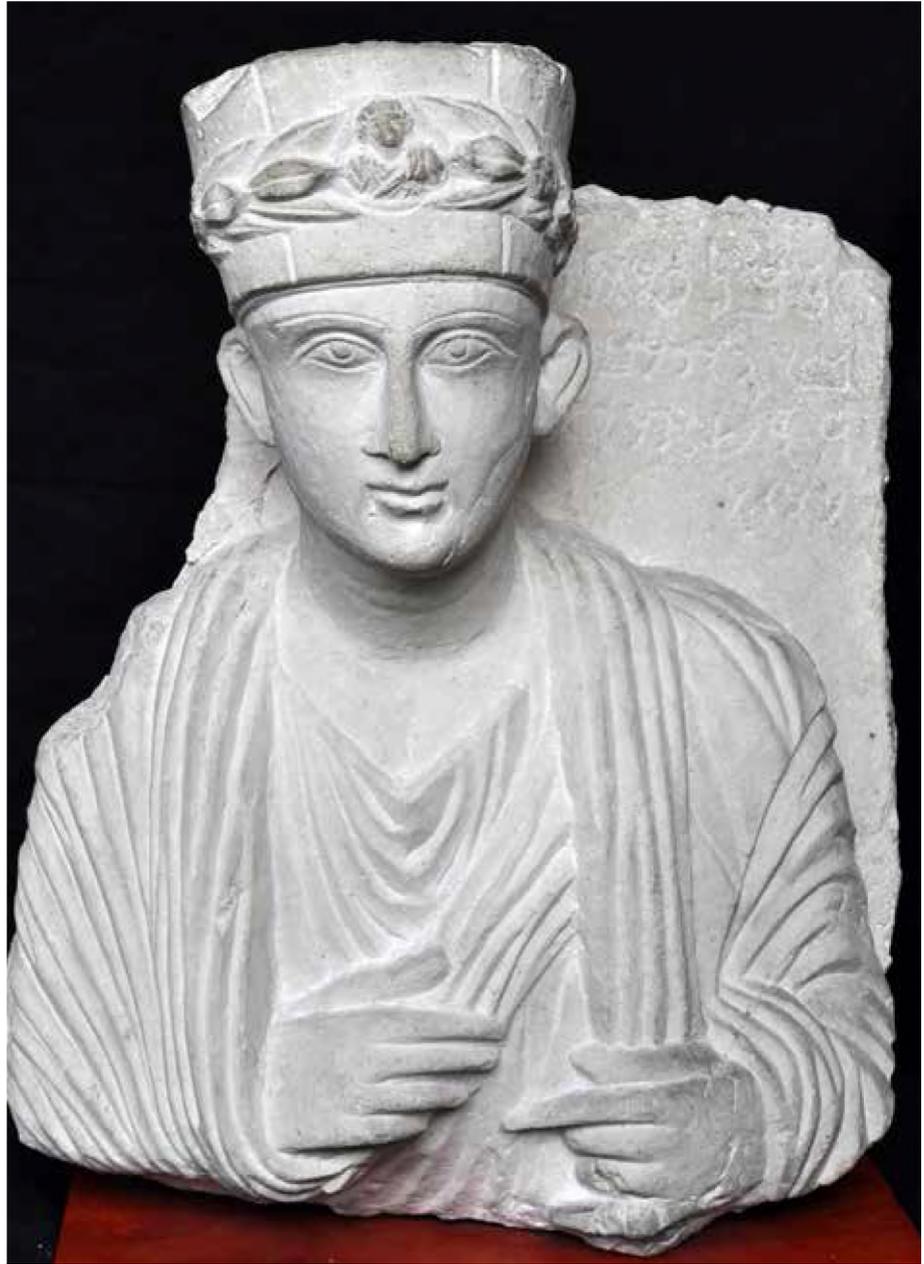
the city goddess of Palmyra.[47] A. Schmidt-Colinet claims that the necklace refers to the profession as an *Agoranomos* in charge of the marketplace and that this was held by one in the family of the woman wearing the necklace.[48] He identifies the small busts as priests

and suggests that they are representations of priests in the family and that women wearing these necklaces could be worshippers or priestesses of Gad or Tyche.[49] However, as pointed out previously the small busts are women, not men. Furthermore, we have no evidence of priestesses in Palmyra, not in sculpture or

47. Ingholt 1928, 145; Schmidt-Colinet 1992a, 121.
48. Schmidt-Colinet 1992a, 121.

49. Schmidt-Colinet 1992a, 121.

epigraphy, and it is highly unlikely that the women wearing the necklaces are priestesses.[50] More likely it is the city goddess of Palmyra represented on the necklaces which underline a Palmyrene identity in these portraits. The necklaces do not indicate that women were involved in religious activities. Instead, the small busts on necklaces represent the city goddess and were worn by women in their funerary display. This established a strong position within the funerary buildings drawing on a local and religious identity.

Jewellery and Clothing

Certain types of jewellery are used in connection with clothing and these types are thus also a part of the clothing.[51] Brooches, headdress chains and headdress pendants are the only pieces that are part of the clothing and furthermore they are produced in a local tradition. Most of the other items of jewellery in the female portraits can frequently be found across the entire Roman Empire and displays the large trading network Palmyra was part of.[52] Thus, a different aspect of jewellery can be inferred when it is used directly with clothing. In previous research on dress in the Roman provinces, it ihas been put forward that it can be used to signal traditional values, ideas and identities.[53] In other regions of the Roman Empire local variations of brooches frequently occur such as in Britannia, Rhine and Moselle rivers, Pannonia and Fayum.[54] Moreover, in other areas where brooches,

headdress chains and pendants are found, they similarly find very local appearances.[55] Thus, jewellery is a strong visual element that can be used to signal local identities.

In Palmyrene portraits women often wear a brooch which secure the himation on their left shoulder. In the period from the 1st century BC to the 3rd century AD, covering the production period of Palmyrene portraits, the appearance of the brooch changed much. Close to 100 different variations of the brooch can be encountered in the portraits of Palmyrene women, but roughly ten overall shapes are inferred.[56] The types are: A) trapezoidal body with a lion, rosette or round finial, B) house-shaped, C) oval or ellipse-shaped, D) figure riding an animal, E) circular enclosing a geometric shape, F) circular enclosing a beaded/plaited inner or outer ring, G) circular enclosing a rosette, H) circular plain, I) circular with circular grooves, J) geometric shape with or without curving sides. B, C, D and G all occur very seldom in the portraits.[57] Furthermore, several of the brooches can hold pendants such as three strings with a pearl or ribbons with keys. The keys are rendered in different sizes; the early keys are P-shaped and later they become straighter, rendered as an L-shape.[58] The keys are claimed to point to women as holders of keys to houses, funerary buildings, jewellery boxes, or to the gates to the afterlife, and no general agreement is reached on their meaning.[59]

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50. A. Sadurska and A. Bounni identifies a woman as a priestess because she stirs in a bowl with a branch and due to her male hairstyle and is thus involved in ritualistic activities (Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 28. See also Sadurska 1996, 286). This is probably not the case as pointed out by other scholars (Kaizer 2002, 237, n. 134; Yon 2002, 169, n. 28).

51. For at further investigation on jewellery used with clothing in Palmyrene female portraits, see Krag (forthcoming, chapter 5).

52. See Higgins 1961, 181; Pfeiler 1970; Palmieri 2010, 37-43; Zenoni 2010, 48-52.

53. Wild 1968; Wild 1985; Johns 1996; Pásztókai-Szeóke 2000; Rothe 2009; Carroll 2001; 2010; 2012; Stewart 2010.

54. See for example Borg 1996; 1998; Johns 1996; Walker and

Bierbrier 1997; Pásztókai-Szeóke 2000; Boatwright 2005; Rothe 2009, 36-37, 54-55; Carroll 2001; 2012.

55. See for example Cumont 1926, pl. XXXI, XXXV, XXXVI, XXXVII, XXXIX, XLI.1; Rostovtzeff 1938, pl. XIV.1; Rostovtzeff et al. 1939, 205-206, pl. XXIII; Deppert-Lippitz 1987, 180; Mathiesen 1992; Dirven 2008.

56. The different types and variations have been found among the portraits in the Palmyra Portrait Project database.

57. For a further investigation of brooches and local markers in funerary portraits, see Krag (forthcoming, chapter 5).

58. Early keys, see Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 33, cat. 33, fig. 136, 44-45, cat. 44, fig. 139; Higuchi and Saito 2001, 28-34, pl. 3-5, 8-10. Later keys, see Tanabe 1986, 397, pl. 366; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 74-75, no. 30, 101, no. 57.

59. Ingholt 1928, 61; Gawlikowski 1966a, 414; Colledge 1976, 70; Drijvers 1982, 720 (keys were intended to open the (gates

In portraits from the 1st century BC to the 2nd century AD, the brooch has a trapezoidal body and the finial is either an animal, a rosette or round (fig. 2).[60] The body of the brooch is decorated with vegetal or geometric patterns and frequently the decoration is surrounded by a beaded panel. The trapezoidal brooch disappeared in the 3rd century AD including the custom of attaching keys to the brooches. Throughout the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, the brooch changed a lot and many different types were used in the portraits. The brooch is often circular and can enclose geometrical figures such as pentagons, octagons, beaded bands or circular grooves (figs. 3, 6, and 8).[61] Moreover, during the 2nd and 3rd centuries strings with pearls were more frequently attached to the brooches that were sometimes used to highlight the left breast below the brooch.[62] In this way, attention was brought to aspects of the female anatomy and sex through the brooch.

Brooches are strong markers of a local Palmyrene identity and they are a strongly individualised element in the portraits. Scholars have noted that brooches found in Palmyra overall are different from brooches found in other locations and that a local production of brooches can be inferred.[63] L. Palmieri, however, points to the use of Greek and Roman elements of decoration such as the acanthus.[64] A. Sadurska and A. Bounni claim in their catalogue from 1994 that the brooch with a figure riding an animal is imported; the brooch can be found in two portraits

from the city.[65] The type might indeed be inspired by Greek predecessors as well as various motifs used as decoration, but both silversmiths and goldsmiths are attested in epigraphy and furthermore unworked glass is found in the city.[66] Therefore, it is likely that jewellery was produced in Palmyra and is seen in for example brooches in the portraits.

Headdress chains and pendants never became widespread in the portraits, but when they are worn by the women, it is in an interaction with the headgear (fig. 4).[67] However, the pendants can further rarely be attached directly to the coiffure.[68] The chains are most often composed of circular pendants joined by beaded elements, but other variants are inferred such as a ribbed band with a central oval pendant, or a chain with small dumbbell-shaped pendants.[69] The central pendants can be circular, oval, rectangular or square and small strings with a single bead can be attached to the lower pendant. More frequently headdress chains and pendants work together with textiles that are in a local Palmyrene tradition. The headband, or sometimes cloth, worn across the forehead is a dominant and characteristic aspect in the portraits and it was in use throughout the entire period the portraits are produced. The headbands were produced in textile as the texture of the fabric is now and then rendered on both sides of the head.[70] Thus, the head-

of heaven); Parlasca 1988, 216-220; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 67; Ploug 1995, 91; Balty 1996, 438; Sadurska 1996, 286; Finlayson 2002-2003, 229; Heyn 2010, 635.

60. See Ingholt 1928, 91; Gawlikowski 1966a; Colledge 1976, 70; Palmieri 2010, 35.

61. See Ingholt 1928, 92; Gawlikowski 1966a, 416; Colledge 1976, 71; Chehadé 1972, 50-54; Palmieri 2010, 35.

62. See Ingholt 1928, 131-132, PS 374, 149, PS 496; Böhme and Schottroff 1979, 3-7, 36-37, taf. II; Wartke 1991, 77, cat. 7; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 243, no. 236; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 95, no. 52; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 96, cat. 129, fig. 186; Heyn 2010, 651, app. 4, cat. 17.

63. Gawlikowski 1966a, 412; Deppert-Lippitz 1987, 190.

64. Palmieri 2010, 38.

65. Abdul-Hak 1952, 243, no. 34; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 159-160, 187, cat. no. 209, fig. 160.

66. Ingholt 1928, 71-72; Higgins 1961, 181-182; Chehadé 1972, 93; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 95; Inv. III, 23, 27.

67. See Ingholt 1928, 79-81, PS 49, 131-132, PS 374, 149, PS 496; Kraeling 1961-1962, 13-18, pl. V, VIII; Wartke 1991, 77, cat. 7; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 182, no. 183; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 100, no. 56; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 57-58, cat. 71, fig. 184, 77, cat. 102, fig. 203, 174-176, cat. 232, fig. 248.

68. See Ingholt 1928, 140, PS 431, 142, PS 448, 143, PS 454; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 232, no. 225; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 110-111, no. 67.

69. See Tanabe 1986, 382, no. 351; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 121-122, no. 77, 127, no. 82.

70. See Ingholt 1928, 55-57, PS 31; Colledge 1976, 62, 70, pl. 63; Wartke 1991, 72-73, cat. 2; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 83, no. 40; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 32, cat. 31, fig. 134; Ingholt Archive, PS 770.

bands were not produced in metal as has previously been suggested but were made of fabric with an embroidered panel, either band or full scarf.[71]

Early textile headbands were plain, but rather quickly vertical grooves divided the bands into plain panels; occasionally the panels are decorated with a cross.[72] In the 2nd century AD, the bands were more often divided into panels by vertical beaded bands and the panels received more elaborate decoration such as floral motifs, vegetal motifs or geometric patterns.[73] In the graves a large amount of textiles, both imported and locally produced, are found and have strong parallels to the patterns in the headbands.[74] Therefore, both headbands and head cloths are also highlighting a local social position such as observed with brooches. C. Finlayson claims that the headbands are references to the tribes or clans that the women belonged to and that these can be divided into 16 different tribes.[75] Furthermore, she suggests that the specific decoration of the headband was passed down through the female line.[76] In the early portraits, only the plain headbands or headbands into panels were in use for a fairly long period of time. But were the necropoleis only used by few tribes in the early period, as only a few types of headband decoration are found? Rather the headbands or head cloths are a further element supporting the increasing elaborateness of jewellery and textiles over time and they mark a local Palmyrene female identity.

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71. See Chehadé 1972, 75; Finlayson 1998, 126-138; Finlayson 2002-2003, 226; Palmieri 2010, 36. Scholars have previously suggested that the headbands were produced in metal, see Mackay 1949, 165; Dentzer-Feydy 1993, 73.

72. For an investigation of head bands in Palmyrene female portraits, see Krag (forthcoming, chapter 5).

73. See Ingholt 1928, 63-64, PS 38; Wartke 1991, 72-73, cat. 2; Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, 182, no. 183; Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 62-63, no. 8, 102, no. 58; Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 34-35, cat. 36, fig. 178, 109-110, cat. 149, fig. 149, 111-112, cat. 153, fig. 228, 143-144, cat. 188, fig. 159.

74. See Pfister 1934; 1937; 1940; Schmidt-Colinet and Stauffer 2000.

75. Finlayson 2002-2003, 224.

76. Finlayson 2002-2003, 224.

Conclusion

In Palmyra jewellery certainly was used to create and establish a position for women in aspects of representing wealth and status. A change from few women wearing large amounts of jewellery, to many women wearing large amounts is evident and new types were introduced continuously. These changes corresponded with an increase in wealth through an expanded trading centre, changing roles for women in the society and the inclusion of new customs and identities. Some women are not wearing jewellery at all or only very few items, and these are often depicted together with their deceased children. Their children are, however, often wearing jewellery, some larger amounts, and in this way jewellery could be used to highlight the primary deceased and the role of the women as mourning. During the 2nd century AD, the necklaces began to seize a larger area of the torso and in the 3rd century AD some of the necklaces could include medallions with busts and these were often women. The necklaces appear to depict the city goddess and thus these necklaces highlight the Palmyrene identity of these women. However, position was not only established through jewellery as an object of wealth. Jewellery, which is used in interaction with clothing, is of a more local character than the rest of the items of jewellery which can, more or less, be observed across the entire Greek and Roman Worlds. Especially the brooch, headdress chains and pendants, as well as the decorated headband or cloth, communicate a local Palmyrene identity. The jewellery established a position for the women wearing these; both in relation to a Palmyrene identity, both in relation to a wider Roman Empire including the large trading realm they became a part of and through which fashions in jewellery also came to be exchanged.

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The Parthian haute-couture at Palmyra

Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis

Fig. 1: Bronze statue from Shami, Iran. (© National Museum of Iran, Tehran).

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to draw attention to a certain type of costume at Palmyra that is associated with Iranian peoples. It is alien to the Roman world of fashion and does not belong to the local Palmyrene tradition. Under the Arsacid Parthians, who by c.100 BC ruled over vast territories stretching from the River Euphrates in the west to modern Afghanistan in the east, this type of costume, which was also worn by the king of kings and his entourage, became fashionable outside the political boundaries of the Parthian Empire, and continued to remain popular for centuries. Palmyrene merchants, who traded with the Partho-Sasanian world in Mesopotamia must have seen these costumes in centres such as Seleucia-on-the Tigris and Vologasia and imported this type of outfit into Palmyra where it became fashionable amongst the wealthy inhabitants of the caravan city.[2]

The Parthian costume[3] is a trouser-suit, which consists of a belted tunic or jacket and trousers (fig. 1). Other items of clothing, such as a long-sleeved coat and a shoulder-cloak are sometimes added. In addi-

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2. See al-As'ad and Schmidt-Colinet 1995, 28 who emphasise Palmyra's close contact in the early Hellenistic period with Seleucid centres along the Euphrates and the Tigris in the East, e.g. Seleucia and Dura, and then later with Parthian-period Hatra.
3. For a detailed discussion of the Parthian costume see Curtis 1988.

Fig. 2a, b: Parthian silver tetradrachm of Phraates IV (38-2 BC) (© Trustees of the British Museum).

tion, royal figures wear either a tall hat (tiara) or a diadem as a symbol of kingship. The trouser-suit appears on Parthian coins (fig. 2) and remains in fashion long after the collapse of the Parthian empire in AD 224 (fig. 3). Just like the Parthian king of kings and the nobility, the Sasanian rulers and their entourages also wore elaborate trousers and tunics. This type of costume became one of the hallmarks of the art of these two Iranian pre-Islamic dynasties. By the first century BC this riding costume had become the haute-couture of the non-Roman east. It was also adopted and worn in a modified fashion as a ceremonial outfit by the neighbouring kings of Commagene.[4] By the late Parthian period its popularity had risen to such a degree that it was commonly shown in a highly decorated and elaborate fashion in the art of Hatra, Dura Europos and Palmyra.

The trouser-suit had its origins before the Parthian period. Belted tunics and trousers were widely depicted in Achaemenid art (c. 550 – 330 BC), where they were worn by male figures in a variety of contexts,[5] in-

cluding hunting scenes, combat scenes, and worshipping scenes. But official royal Persian art does not show the king of kings wearing trousers in ceremonial and religious scenes.[6] However, trousers were worn by Persian satraps and trousers were the traditional costume of a number of delegations who appear on the 6th century BC reliefs at Persepolis. These include Delegations I (the Medes), XI (Scythians, who also present the king of kings with trousers and the long-sleeved coat), and Delegations XIII and XV (Bactrians or Parthians). All these delegations are Iranian speaking peoples, from the east of Iran.[7]

However, it was only with the arrival of the new dynasty of the Arsacid Parthians in the third century BC that this type of costume became the official outfit

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4. Curtis 2001, pl. VI; Errington and Curtis 2011, 11-12, fig. 91.
5. Curtis and Tallis 2005,159, fig. 200, 170, figs. 258-259. In

Greek art Persians are usually shown wearing trousers, e.g. see the so-called Darius Vase in Curtis and Tallis 2005, 107, fig. 48.
6. E.g. see Darius relief at Bisitun and Darius statue from Susa in Curtis and Tallis 2005, 22, 99, figs. 6, 88. The Alexander Mosaic from Pompeii does show Darius III wearing trousers at the Battle of Issus in 333 BC. For Persians wearing trousers, see also the so-called Alexander Sarcophagus in Sidon, Curtis 1998, pl. IIId.
7. Curtis 1998, 66; Curtis 2007, 419-420; 1998; 2000.

Fig. 3: Sasanian rock-relief of Shapur I (AD 240-272) at Bishapur, Iran (© G. Herrmann).

of kings. On the reverse of the earliest Parthian coins we find all the items of the Iranian rider costume in association with the royal archer: the tunic, trousers and the long-sleeved coat (fig. 4). The trouser-suit became one of the hallmarks of Parthian iconography, and Parthian statues, reliefs and small finds show male figures dressed in tunics, jackets, trousers and leggings.

By the beginning of the first century BC the Parthian king wears a jacket and trousers on his coins, and often details such as the royal jacket, trousers and leggings and even belt plaques can be seen on their coins.[8] The large bronze statue from Shami (fig. 1)

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8. Curtis 2003, pl. XXI c-d.

Fig. 4a, b: Parthian silver drachm of Mithradates I (171-138 BC) (© Trustees of the British Museum).

and the marble statuette from Susa in southwestern Iran and Stele I, II and III from Parthian Assur in Mesopotamia show male figures wearing the trouser-suit.[9] On the Shami statue we can see clearly how leggings or over trousers were pulled up at the back and attached to suspenders, which disappeared under the jacket at the back. Numerous examples of the trouser-suit are also known from late Parthian-period reliefs and statues in Iran and Mesopotamia. In Elymais in southwestern Iran a long-sleeved long sash is often worn in addition over the left shoulder.[10] The art of the semi-independent kingdom of Hatra has also produced many examples of the trouser-suit (fig. 5). Here, male worshippers and some of the gods wear elaborately decorated belted tunics which are combined with baggy trousers. Floral and geometric designs running down the centre of the tunic and the

trouser legs and on the hem and cuffs suggest that ornate embroidered textiles were used for these costumes.[11]

The Parthian costume at Palmyra

At Palmyra there are many funerary and religious reliefs – and some statues – showing male figures dressed in the Parthian fashion. In addition, actual finds of textile fragments from Palmyrene tombs suggest that in the first to third centuries AD a large part of the population adopted the Parthian fashion, while others were dressed in the Roman style of the time.[12] The trouser-suit at Palmyra consisted of a round-necked long-sleeved belted tunic – short, knee-length and long trousers and/or leggings. Often a cloak fastened on the shoulder was worn, or a himation was draped

9. Curtis 1993, 63-69, pls. XIX-XXI; von Gall 1988, pl. 4. Examples of leggings further east include statues from Kampyr Tepe and Butkara, see Curtis 1993, pl. XXII a-c.
10. Cf. Curtis 1994, pls. I, III a-d; 1998, 64-65, pls. IIIa-c, IVb; von Gall 1998, pls. 3b, 5a, 7, 8b; Curtis 2000, pls. 9, 10, 11; Curtis 2001,302, fig. 1, pl. IX.

11. Curtis 1998, pl. Iva; von Gall 1998, pl. 10 b-d; Curtis 2000, pl. III.
12. Stauffer 1995, 59. For the 'Parthian Kaftan' as example of an eastern-Parthian tradition, see also Stauffer 2000, 33-35, figs. 34, 39.

Fig. 5: Statue of King Walkash, Hatra (© J. E. Curtis).

around the tunic. Occasionally we find evidence of the long-sleeved coat.[13]

An early example of the Parthian costume occurs on the architectural reliefs of the Temple of Bel.[14] The 'Foundation T' relief shows a headless rider figure looking right and wearing a round-necked (?) long-sleeved belted tunic, a shoulder cloak and wide trousers/leggings (fig. 6). A decorative vertical band with dots (pearls?) runs down the side of the trouser leg. A similar (divine?) rider figure, but turning left, wears an almost identical outfit with a decorative cable pattern band on the side of the trouser leg.[15] Relief decoration on the stone beams of the Bel Temple shows that trousers were also used to dress divine beings. For example, the god Aglibol wears a long-sleeved tunic with a cuirass, a cloak and wide leggings with the ornamental band at the side of the trouser legs rather than in the centre (fig. 7a). Wide leggings with diagonal folds fall over his shoes. The leggings were probably attached to suspenders covered by the tunic and were pulled up at the outside of the thighs.[16] On the so-called 'Offering scene' of the Bel Temple male figures wear a draped himation over long tunics. The legs of two figures on the left are covered with leggings/trousers (fig. 7b). Trousers are also worn on a late first century altar relief from the sanctuary of Baalshamin. Here, the god Malakbel appears with a bushy curly Parthian hairstyle,[17] and next to Malakbel and his chariot stands a dedicant wearing a long sleeved tunic, a draped himation and wide trousers.

An architectural relief from a sanctuary wall in the

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13. Unusual is the costume of a winged figure on a ceiling slab from the Bel Temple. Here, a one-piece trouser-suit covers the sleeves and the legs, but leaves the chest bare. See Tanabe1986, pl.55

14. The temple of Bel was dedicated to the gods Bel, Iarhibol and Aglibol in AD 32, but building work on this sanctuary continued until the middle of the second century AD. See Colledge 1976, 20, 26

15. Tanabe 1986, pl. 139.

16. Such attachments are clearly visible on the relief of the Sasanian king Shapur I (AD 240-272) at Naqsh-i Rajab near Persepolis. See Curtis 1993, pl. XXIId.

17. Collart and Vicari 1969, pl. CVIII, 1-3; Tanabe 1986, pl.180.

Fig. 6: Fragment of rider figure from 'Foundation T' relief, Palmyra (© G. Herrmann).

Agora shows a male standing figure flanked by a lion on each side.[18] He may be the god Ares-Mars who wears a cuirass over his tunic, a cloak and trousers. A relief of perhaps the god Malka shows him in tunic and baggy trousers with curly Parthian-style hair.[19]

Gods are often clad in tunics, trousers and a cuirass at Palmyra (fig. 8). A relief from Khirbet Ramadan near Palmyra shows the gods Aglibol and Malakbel shaking hands.[20] Aglibol wears trousers with a military cuirass while Malakbel appears with belted tunic, cloak and trousers tucked into boots. Both gods have a full bushy hairstyle in the Parthian fashion. The combination of trousers and boots is similar to the outfit of Vologases IV on the second century

AD free-standing rock at Bisitun in western Iran, where the Parthian king of kings holds his right hand over an altar (fig. 9).

Also wearing a trouser-suit is a standing figure at Palmyra identified as Herakles-Nergal. His trousers are baggy with u-shaped folds, and the tunic has a vertical central dotted decorative band.[21]

The Temple of Nebu, which was founded during the first century AD and stayed in use until the fall of the city in the third century,[22] includes a first century relief showing figures clad in tunic and draped himation. All three men wear a priestly cap but only the seated figure has his legs covered with trousers or leggings (fig. 10).[23]

18. Tanabe 1986, pl. 82.
19. Tanabe 1986, pls. 116-117.
20. Tanabe 1986, pl. 111.

21. Tanabe 1986, 134.
22. Bouni and Saliby 1965, 127-8.
23. Colledge 1976, 41, fig. 21; Tanabe 1986, pl. 173.

Fig. 7a, b: Bel Temple beam relief, Palmyra (© J. E. Curtis).

Fig. 8: Relief from Palmyra Damascus Museum (© J. E. Curtis).

Fig. 10: Relief from the Temple of Nebu, Palmyra, Palmyra Museum (© G. Herrmann).

Fig. 9: Parthian relief at Bisitun, Iran (© G. Herrmann).

The funerary art of Palmyra also provides us with many examples of male figures dressed in tunics and trousers.[24] A relief from the tower tomb of Kitôt in the Valley of the Tombs of AD 40 shows the principal reclining figure in the presence of his wife and two sons. Kitôt wears a long-sleeved round-necked tunic, a draped himation and wide trousers with a decorative band; traces of greenish/blue colour were discovered on his trousers.[25] A draped himation over the tunic is often worn by priests at Palmyra. Evidence for this type of over garment is also found at Parthian Assur in the first century AD where it is worn by the standing male figure on Stele III, now in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul.[26] It is also worn by some male figures, probably priests, at Hatra and Dura Europos during the second and third centuries AD.[27]

Banquet reliefs at Palmyra often depict young men in attendance dressed in almost identical outfits to their master. Their costume consists of a belted round-necked, long-sleeved tunic with a decorative band on the neckline, cuffs and hemline, a cloak, tight trousers

24. See also Long, this volume.
25. Colledge 1976, 64-65, fig. 37; Tanabe 1986, pl. 210.

26. Curtis 1993, pl. XXIb.
27. For Hatra, see Safar and Mustafa 1974, pls. 27, 44; Curtis 1994, pl. II b. For Dura Europs, see e.g. paintings from the Private Houses in Perkins 1973, pl. 25.

Fig. 11: Funerary relief from Palmyra, Damascus Museum (© J. E. Curtis).

with a vertical decorative band in the centre and leggings with v-shaped folds that start just above the knee and end at the ankle. Leggings worn by standing, seated and reclining figures are often combined with a short belted tunic that ends either on the thighs or well above the knee (figs. 11 and 12).[28] In the banquet relief of the Hypogeum of Artaban of the late second century AD the family is shown around the reclining main figure who wears a tunic, draped mantle and trousers. His son (?) who affectionately rests his feet on his father's leg and places his hand on his father's hand, wears a short belted tunic, trousers and wide leggings pulled up at the sides.[29] It is interesting that he has the Iranian name of Artaban.[30] All leggings, usually with a decorated band at the top, were probably attached to suspenders hidden under the tunic (fig. 12a, b).[31]

There are slight differences in the style of Parthian tunics and their decoration at Palmyra. When worn with leggings the tunic is short or knee-length. Tunics are sometimes plain with u-shaped folds but, particularly in the late period, they are elaborately decorated with a band of dotted design (pearls?), scrolls or a floral motif on the cuffs, hems and the centre of the tunic. In the third century decorative bands include vine scrolls; a bird pecking at bunches of grapes and a nude winged Eros figure with a bow.[32] The neckline is sometimes made up of round plaques in the Sasanian style.[33] These tunics are sometimes worn with a belt made up of round plaques mounted

28. See also Colledge 1976, pl. 112; Tanabe 1986, pl. 255 (here the leggings are very wide); pls. 416, 440-443, 448.
29. Tanabe 1986, 229-230.
30. Other Iranian names found in Palmyrene inscriptions include Frahat, Orobazes, Hormuz, Vardanes, Orodes, Mithridates and Tiridates. See Starky 1971, 85, 132. This may have been the fashion of the time.

31. Tanabe 1986, pl. 420: funerary relief from the Hypogeum of Ashtor: Colledge 1976, pls. 74, 99 (NCG 1030 & 1082).
32. Tanabe 1986, pls. 374-380, 389-392.
33. For elaborate necklines of the early Sasanian period, see Curtis 1993, pl. XXIId; Herrmann 2000, pls. 13, 15. For Hatra, see for example Curtis 2000, pl. III; Curtis 2001, pl. X.

Fig. 12a, b, c: Palmyrene reliefs and statues showing figures wearing leggings, Palmyra Museum (© J. E. Curtis).

Fig. 13a, b: Banquet reliefs, Palmyra Museum (© G. Herrmann).

on leather straps and knotted in the centre and ending in a bow. Third century banquet reliefs also show figures wearing slightly flared tunics with slits at the sides. This type of tunic is also seen worn by standing figures (fig. 13). Occasionally, figures in tunics and trousers have also the full Parthian tripartite hairstyle with bunches of curly hair on either side of the head (fig. 14).[34]

34. Colledge 1976, pl. 109; Tanabe 1986, 434-436; see also Long, this volume.

Fig. 14: Banquet relief, Palmyra (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

The Parthian-style tunic at Palmyra is always worn with a belt. This can be in the form of a girdle worn over a cuirass or a long tunic and knotted in the centre. Particularly popular is a looped belt made up of a plain band knotted in the centre with its long ends tucked twice under the waistband, thus creating two semi-circular loops (figs. 11, 13-14). This type of belt is not popular in western Parthia, including Elymais.[35] There, we find girdles knotted in the centre but not with the ends tucked under the waistband. Belts made up of plaques, particularly popular in Parthia, are also represented at Palmyra but are not very common (fig. 15).[36] A belt with plaques is also worn by an unprovenanced statue of a standing male figure in the Aleppo Museum (fig. 16).

In early third century Hatra belts made up of plaques show representations of busts of deities, animals and mythological creatures, and actual belt plaques with such figural and animal representation are known from within Parthia, as well as neighbouring regions (fig. 5).[37] Belts made up of plaques remain an important item of the Iranian costume amongst royal figures and the aristocracy in the Sasanian period.[38]

Belts have a special significance in the Iranian tradition. They are not merely an item of clothing, but are also a symbol of kingship and rank, and they are seen as a bond between a subject and his superior/king. The modern Persian word 'kamar band', Middle Persian kml bnd consists of the words kamar/kamal meaning waist, girdle, belt, and the band meaning

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35. Curtis 1994, pls. I, III; Curtis 2001, pls. VIII-XI.
36. See also Tanabe 1986, pls. 374, 380.

37. Curtis 2001, 304, figs. 2, 306-308, pls. XII-XIV
38. See Curtis 2001.

Fig. 15: Banquet relief Palmyra (© T. Long).

bond, link. In Old Persian a *bandaka* is a subject of the king, someone who is tied to the king.[39]

At Palmyra there are also depictions of another type of garment that is associated with the Iranian riding costume. This is the long-sleeved coat, the *kandy*s (Old Persian kantuš), which is widely depicted in Achaemenid art and continues to be shown in the early Hellenistic period and the early Parthian period when it is usually slung over the shoulders in the Median fashion.[40] From the first century AD onwards it is worn properly with the arms inside the sleeves and representations of this type of overcoat are found within the Parthian empire, as well as neighbouring regions. This type of overcoat is also part of the costume of the originally nomadic Kushan kings of Bac-

tria in the first/second centuries AD.[41] In the second and third centuries AD the long-sleeved coat appears in the art of Parthian Elymais and Hatra,[42] and it is found on the wall paintings of the Roman-period Synagogue at Dura-Europos.[43]

One of the sarcophagi in the tomb chamber of Maqqai,[44] dated to c. AD 229, shows a reclining figure in the centre – probably Maqqai himself – wearing a long sleeved coat over his elaborate belted tunic and trousers – the latter tucked into elaborate ankle boots. Traces of colour found on the reclining figure indicate that the coat was originally red, the tunic was blue with red bands, and the blue trousers had red stripes.[45] On the base of the sarcophagus, placed between the legs of the couch another scene was carved, where three armed men in frontal position are shown, one

39. The Iranian epic of *Shahnameh* or *Book of Kings*, completed in AD 1010 but based on a Sasanian *Book of Kings* and also other written and oral sources, often describes how the king of kings of Iran presented local kings and heroes with a belt as symbol of kingship. See Curtis 2001.

40. See relief of Qizqapan and coins of the Frataraka rulers of Persis in Curtis 2010.

41. Errington and Curtis 2011, fig. 63.

42. Curtis 2001, pls. IX, Xc.

43. Kraeling 1956, pls. XVIII, XIX.

44. Colledge 1976, pl. 102; see Long fig. 3 in this volume.

45. Ingholt 1935, 64; Colledge 1976, 100.

holding a horse. The two outer figures wear flared belted tunics, while the central figure, perhaps once again Maqqai himself, appears in a long sleeved coat. Again, traces of colour have survived,[46] blue used for the long coat, red for the lining and red between two narrow blue bands for the cuffs. The tunic of the central figure was red with a red waistband and a red sword-strap. Red was also found on his shoes and the trousers were red. The other two figures had red tunics, red belts, blue sword straps and blue trousers with a red central stripe.

A long-sleeved coat in combination with tunic and trousers is also worn by a reclining figure on a 'half sarcophagus' from the Tomb of Ailami and Zebida,[47] and a long sleeved coat is also worn in the unprovenanced statue from the Aleppo Museum (fig. 16).

Conclusion

A brief survey of the Parthian trouser-suit at Palmyra has shown that this Iranian costume was highly popular in the religious and secular art of this caravan city. It was not the sole type of costume worn by male figures but its frequent appearance, and the careful execution of various items of this type of clothing and the elaborate textile patterns suggest that it was highly desirable for some wealthy inhabitants to be seen wearing the non-Roman haute-couture of the time which originated in the Partho-Iranian world. The trouser-suit was the exotic costume of the east and as such it was associated the wealth generated through the trade of luxury goods in the Parthian empire and beyond. Regardless of whether the Palmyrenes actually wore these highly decorated tunics, trousers and the long-sleeved coat or not in the hot desert climate of the oasis, it became a status symbol for the wealthy inhabitants of Palmyra, including priests, who chose to depict some of their gods in this type of outfit.

The discovery of silk fragments with elaborately woven and embroidered designs suggests that, in fact, such elaborated textile patterns did exist. They were

Fig. 16: Unprovenanced statue in Aleppo Museum (© V. S. Curtis).

not only used for corpse wrappings but were also made for tunics and trousers.[48] One can only assume

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46. Ingholt 1935, 66; Curtis 1988, 251.
47. Makowski 1983, 182, pl. 52a no. 7; Curtis 1988, 276.

48. Colledge 1976, 102-103, fig. 55; Fluck 2004, 137-151; Fluck and Vogelsang 2004, 1; Stauffer 2000, 34-36.

that the more elaborate the designs, the wealthier the deceased must have been. They also would not have been able to afford the lavish tombs and banquet reliefs if they did not have the means to do so. Contact between Palmyra and Parthian Mesopotamia must have been strong, as Palmyrene merchants exported the Parthian high fashion into their own world which was politically under Roman influence. It is not impossible that the Parthians exported actual items of their fashionable costume. It is also possible that Parthian merchants may have moved to and settled in Palmyra where an active trade with Rome and the Parthian East was generating considerable wealth amongst the merchant population of this caravan city. Although names often reflect the fashion of the time, it is nevertheless interesting that Iranian names such as Frahat, Orobazes, Artaban, Hormuz, Vardan, Orodes, Mithradate and Tiridate occur in the inscriptions at Palmyra.[49] Palmyra and its Semitic population lay outside the political and geographical boundaries of the Parthian empire, but contact with the Parthian world must have been strong enough for merchants to introduce the Parthian costume into Palmyra, and judging by the available evidence, the Parthian hautecouture became very popular in his caravan city.

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49. Ingholt 1936, 94; Starky 1971, 85, 132.

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The Use of Parthian Costume in Funerary Portraiture in Palmyra

Tracey Long

Introduction

This paper will consider the use of Parthian costume in the Palmyrene funerary portraits as a signifier of status within the tomb. I will ask if we can reasonably discern from the evidence a particular context or situation that makes this choice of costume attractive and appropriate and also to establish if we can detect a shift in significance over time. Can we, for instance, see that banqueters came to prefer this mode of dress in any particular context or was its use seen in other formats? Did it mean the same thing or suggest different uses and applications? Did it in fact change from being the costume of religious ceremony in life or death to something more profoundly tied-in with a demonstration of status within the tomb? Was it a costume of profession and *negotium* or of *otium*, wealth and leisure or one that reflected social and political affirmations or all of these? Did it in fact signify the same dichotomy of dress seen in Rome in the early imperial period amongst the wealthier classes, of removing the toga and retiring to one's villa dressed in the Greek tunic as an act of withdrawal from the public domain into one's own personal space.[1] In the case of Palmyra, a removal of Greek attire in favour of Parthian dress. This does not seem wholly unlikely. As Palmyra developed in the first century, its government emerged as a model of Greek institutions like neighbouring cities in the region,[2] with Greek costume being the outfit of civic life. As such, it would represent a deliberate

choice of cultural preference reliant on context, not a blending but a juxtaposition.

The following study draws its statistical material from the Palmyra Portrait Project database that presently contains over 3,000 pieces. This vast and extensive resource allows for a diversity of questions to be asked of the material that were not possible before. Previous studies have been based on anecdotal evidence or much smaller collections that may, with the best of intentions, not have been able to realise the bigger view permitted by the bringing together of every known extant example. Of course, even the database is limited by the unhappy chance of mere survival and therefore the corruption of the complete and accurate picture. But the larger the number of portraits from which to draw conclusions, the more accurate and valid our arguments can be. Statistical data of percentages or the frequency with which certain phenomena occur and at what time period they are more or less popular becomes available.

The Funerary Context

One of the great benefits of the Palmyra material for scholars is the short flourishing of the funerary portrait burial practice within a very specific time period,[3] from 50 CE to 273 CE. Of that material, as a result of previous detailed studies of iconographical and stylistic changes, we have relatively secure dates that allow us to chart changes in practice and priority.[4] But more

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1. Zanker 1990, 31.
2. Edwell 2008, 48. Also Dirven 1999, 19, and Millar 1993, 319-336.

3. Schmidt-Colinet 1987, 214-216.
4. For instance, Ingholt 1928 and Colledge 1976.

Fig. 1: Parthian Costume
worn in a typically Palmyrene
fashion. Ingholt Archive PS73.
Musée du Louvre AO 2000.
3rd century. (© Palmyra Por-
trait Project. By permission of
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

to the point: why is this even important? Because the realm of the dead reflects an ideology, a social convention and aspirations in a far more idealised and constructed format than anywhere else. Of course there had to be a compliance with burial convention and a shared language of iconography to make it relevant and permit it to convey meaning, but this context allowed a great capacity for the expression of intimate and personal values, of sameness but also difference. It is undeniable that there is a distinction between the views expressed in the tomb and those of the public world. Of the surviving evidence, honorific portrait statues of Palmyra, for example, show proportionally more toga or himation-wearing portraits and females in western style garb than in funerary portraits.[5] The language of inscription is also different. In the tomb it is overwhelmingly Palmyrene Aramaic: public inscriptions were predominantly bilingual, although not exclusively so, with Greek being the civic language.[6]

The funerary portraits of Palmyra represented a local wealthy elite in a very different context and each was a one-off to be viewed privately by the family and loved ones within the tomb. Within the limitations of a relatively small space, each was created to represent a real person or multiple people. They were all different, some more so than others, and distinction could be included through combining the myriad styles and motifs available at the time. This could be done through the representation of the face, hair, inclusion of attributes,[7] inscription, gesture and posture. But it could also be done through the choice of costume that contributed a significant layer of meaning.[8] The variety of costume in the Palmyran funerary portraits is a reflection of the fact that costume was an important and active part of the construction of identity realised in the portraits, each one of which was designed either by the deceased themselves or their family to express the personal and social aspirations and values

5. Colledge 1976, 91.
6. Sartre 2005, 294 and 292-293.

7. Long 2013, 99.
8. Bartman 2001, 17.

Fig. 2: Detail of an embroidered tunic. Ingholt Archives. PS1020. Location Unknown. 3rd century. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

of the dead person in this world and the next. For sarcophagus boxes or lids, there was more scope for the inclusion of details, such as full rather than bust figures, with size being less of a restriction. Yet even here, there were conventions of display to be considered.

The format of the loculus reliefs, albeit designed to fill a functional square space, on average 53cm in height, and the banquet scenes, all attest to the difference in self-representation depending on context. We are granted a view of individuals as they wished to be seen by their direct peers and not by the general public. These are more personal, more intimate representations. And as such, the costume they chose to wear in perpetuity has much to say about this side of their carefully constructed sense of self within their community.[9]

Gesture, Choice and Meaning

With regard to the use of portrait costume, whether public and honorific or funerary and more private, we must establish from the outset that no element of representation, costume or gesture, was ever made without consideration of meaning. Whether it was a nod to tradition or convention and a repetition of established motifs, or a deliberate and distinct attempt to demonstrate a particular allegiance, viewpoint or affiliation, costume in portraiture was a highly-charged conveyor of meaning.[10] The female loculus portraits, for example, with imaginative flair through the drapery or handling of the veil, display an array of meanings. For example, the so-called Beauty of Palmyra[11] raises a hand to the veil in a recognised gesture of mourning and restraint,[12] redolent of the Pudicitia female body type, yet also manages a successful conceal-and-reveal gesture,[13] coquettish and alluring yet simultaneously conservative and hidden.[14] In this way we see that even the handling of costume, let alone the choice of garment itself, was pregnant with significance. The important thing to bear in mind at this point is that portrait costume may or may not have actually been worn by the subject themselves whilst living, and as such

9. Butcher 2003, 328.

10. Long 2013, 72.
11. Colledge 1976, 262; Ingholt 1928, 148-149; Raja and Sørensen 2015.
12. Llewellyn-Jones 2003, 85.
13. Trimble 2000, 64.
14. Dillon 2010, 87-88.
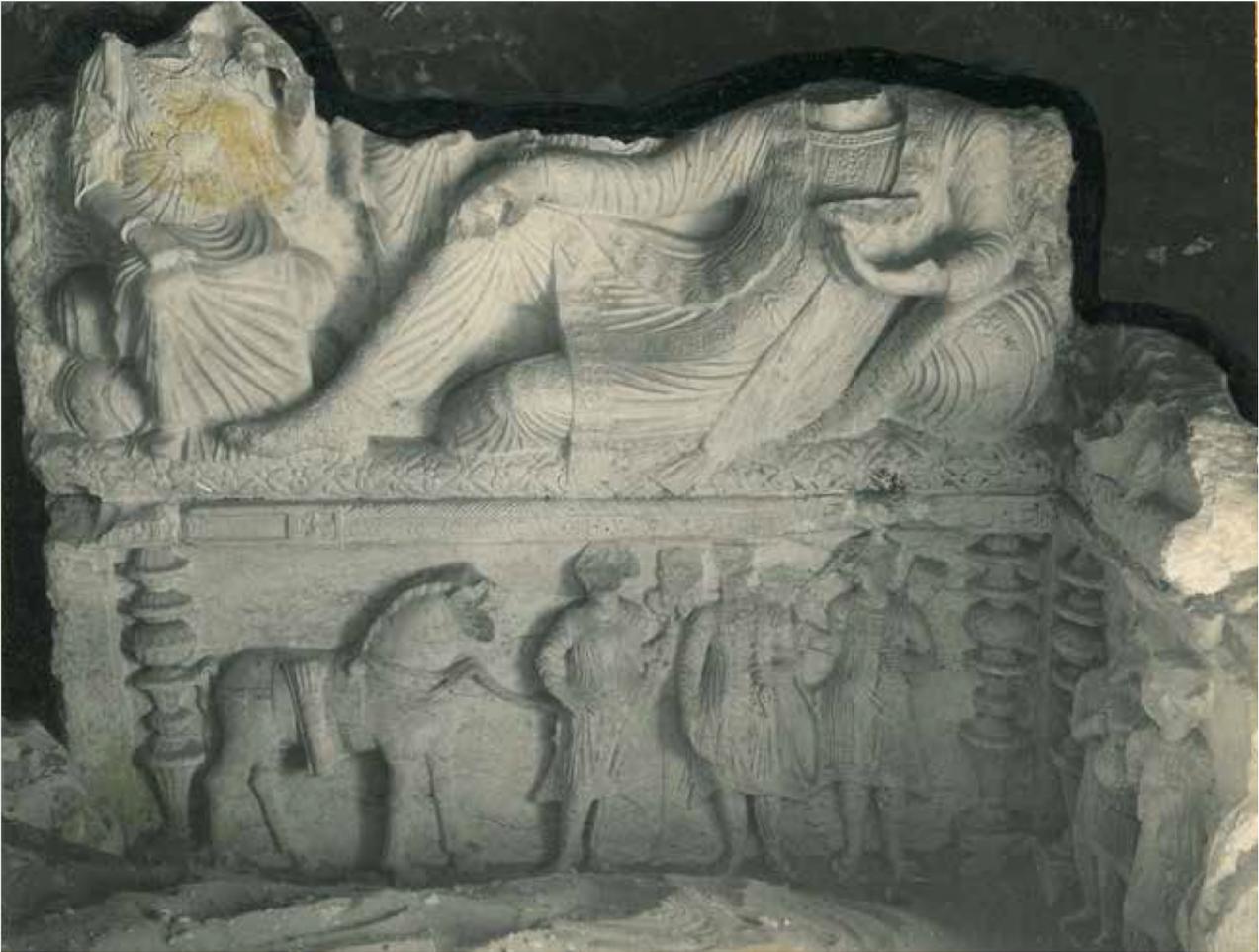
Fig. 3: Figures wearing the Parthian coat. Tomb of Maqqai. 3rd century. Ingholt Archive PS1007/1012/1008. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

represents aspiration rather than reality.[15] But because of the survival of clothing fragments found in tombs, we can be sure that such items really existed and were worn.[16] The point is that the choice of attire made in a funerary portrait was a thoughtfully made decision that reflected an element of status.

Before we continue with our examination of Parthian costume, mention must be made of gender and roles as it has a bearing on the significance of costume choice. In general, male portraiture in the ancient world performed a different function from that of women. Females were regarded as a single social group with minimal legal status who did not perform public roles or function in the same way as men.[17] Nor did they operate in the same public spaces as their male counterparts. They were not subject to the same values, such as prowess or virility. Their portraits needed to reflect these social differences, and thus they are more concerned with reflecting abstract ideals associated with their sex, such as domesticity, beauty, status through wealth, correct deportment and self-restraint.[18] Attributes held in the hands, like

15. Fejfer 2008, 335.
16. Curtis 2000, 33; see also Curtis this volume.

17. Fejfer 2008, 345.
18. Long 2013, 31.

the distaff and spindle, affirmed these qualities.[19] There were many representational elements of overlap with male portraiture, such as participation in dining scenes, sometimes, though more rarely, reclining on the kline itself alone or with a husband,[20] and inclusion in family groups or with spouses occupying equal space. But because of the different social roles of females, the range of costume choice was more limited than it was for males. Hair might be covered by the veil or not, and the veil and himation might be decorated or draped in a plethora of different configurations. As a loose generalisation, women wore combinations of the eastern costume of diadem or headcloth, turban, veil, himation and tunic, but worn in multiple ways. Yet in many ways, this aspect of Palmyrene female portraiture reflects western portrait costume traditions: that costume choice, although restricted to a few key pieces, could be imaginatively draped in a myriad different but conservative ways.

In contrast, we can be more certain that the costume with which we are presented in male portraiture has a specific job to do. There is none of the enigmatic abstraction of females, but the clear and unambiguous message of office, position, profession and cultural signifiers. However, we will also see that this is laden with its own problems of interpretation. Outside of specific attributes of professions, costume also indicates affiliations on a local and wider level. In a city on the cusp of cultural boundaries, especially one with mercantile associations that added frissons of merging priorities and allegiances that changed over time, we will see that the choice of costumes could act as a powerful cultural marker not to be taken for granted.

Parthian Costume and Frequency of Use

The basic elements of Parthian costume worn by males consisted of a knee-length tunic with sleeves worn over trousers and boots.[21] There were varia-

tions.[22] Some garment types were commonly worn across the region. The Parthian costume was exclusively worn by men, male children and male servants. There might also be a chlamys included, or what Colledge refers to as a desert cloak,[23] or a belt, leggings or over-trousers secured at the hip or other additional items such as the overcoat. Trousers might be tucked into soft ankle boots (fig. 1). All these garments could be decorated with exquisite detail, particularly in the third century, as can be seen in figure 2.[24] It was clearly a very practical garment, allowing for free movement and riding. There were variances in garments that seemed specific to communities. For instance, a long coat was sometimes worn over the tunic, but not in Palmyra, except for two surviving examples on the same monument comprised of a sarcophagus relief and lid (fig. 3),[25] and nor was the V neck wrap-over jacket as worn by the well-known bronze statue of a prince found in a temple at Shami.[26] There is also a version of the costume comprised of a decorated tunic with a long mantle draped around the lower body, as seen on an altar with two full figure priests from the third century,[27] and also worn by the standing priest in figure 4.[28] It could be worn with or without trousers,[29] as such I will not be including examples of it in this study, unless the lower half of the figure is visible and shoes or trousers can definitely be seen. This will also mean excluding the loculus busts of priests. Without the presence of trousers or shoes, the tunic and mantle are essentially a version of the Greek outfit, and as such not distinguishable as a costume of Parthian origin. As well as this, Butcher notes

19. Cussini 2005, 26.
20. Schmidt-Colinet 1992, taf.73b. Palmyra Museum.
21. See Curtis, this volume.

22. Curtis 1988, 285-287 and 311-314.
23. Colledge 1977, 133.
24. See also Schmidt-Colinet 1992, taf.41. Palmyra Museum. A tunic with a central stripe embroidered with running animals emerging from circles of foliage. 3rd century.
25. Tomb of Maqqai. Location Unknown. Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek PS1012/1007/1008.
26. Curtis 2000, 26 and Colledge 1977, fig. 121, 50 BC –AD 150.
27. Gawlikowski 1987, 284, pl. 34.
28. See also Sadurska and Bounni, 1994, 174-176, cat. 232, fig. 248
29. Curtis 1988, 282.

Fig. 4: Standing priest, far right, in the barefoot version of the Parthian tunic used in religious ceremonies. The Tomb of 'Alaine. 3rd century. Palmyra Museum. Ingholt Archive PS1017. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

that priests were more likely to wear a 'special dress' of full length tunic over bare feet when performing ceremonies.[30] Therefore it is likely that busts of priests holding the alabastron and bowl, particularly before AD 150 when the type was most popular, are meant to be regarded as wearing this type of outfit. As such, it is not the Parthian costume trouser-suit and will not be included in the statistics of use. Later reclining priests in banquet scenes in a non-religious format, however, are shown wearing the full Parthian costume and these will be included.

The overall breakdown of those wearing the Parthian costume in the entire corpus as it stands so far is as follows:[31]

	50-150	150-200	200-273
Banquet Scene:[32] Reclining Males	38	71	37
in Parthian Dress	14	25	18
with Chlamys	10	20	14
with Mantle	4	5	3
with Coat			1
Percentage in Parthian Dress	37%	35%	49%

30. Butcher 2003, 331.

31. The figures should not be taken as exactly precise. Problems of dating, damage and fragmentation means some evidence may be incorrectly attributed. But the figures assist in the identification of trends over time.

32. There are a total of 109 recorded objects that contain banquet imagery, including sarcophagus covers and boxes and relief carvings. These contain 323 portraits. See section below, *Banquet Scenes and Reclining Figures in Parthian Costume*, for a further breakdown of statistics.

Fig. 5: A male with sword, whip and background horse. Istanbul Archaeological Museum. Inv. 3749/O.M.204 AD100-150. Ingholt Archive PS 119. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

	50-150	150-200	200-273
Loculus Busts: Total non-priest males/ Parthian Dress	24	10	4
In Chlamys	23	5	2
Identifiable as riders	9	4	2
Identifiable as soldiers/ military	2	1	0
Unknown	12	0	0

Let us try and make sense of these figures. Who then wears Parthian costume in Palmyra, how do they wear it, what are they doing and what can it signify? As we

saw, it was worn by those in the caravan business and other riders whose profession is less clear but involves riding and use of the sword or an attribute associated with military activity. There are an additional 8 full figures who wear the same attire but whose context is not known.[33] Of the reliefs, the attributes that accompany such men are of the same nature. Hands may hold whips and sword hilts. Behind them may be positioned horses or camels, as in figure 5.[34] The full figure reliefs may show the same class of items but in a different layout. Here we see the Parthian costume used as a practical garment suitable for riding, as in the figures on the sarcophagus relief, figure 3. Not all caravaneers or riders wear it, but it is seen being worn by the majority. We also see a cavalryman wearing the costume, whose inscription securely identifies him as such (fig. 6).[35] This again attests not only to the practicality of the costume but also indicates that it was worn by others than those on the caravan route but still in a professional capacity.

How do these men wear their garments? In an example in the Palmyra Museum from the Camp of Diocletian of a sarcophagus relief dated to 150-250, two full figures stand side by side wearing knee-length loosely belted Parthian tunics over trousers.[36] Each has a recurring circular pattern at the neckline and long sleeves with embroidered cuffs. The stripe down the front rather than the side of the tunic is the most commonly seen design of the tunic in Palmyra. The stripe of the male on the left has a series of leaf motifs enclosed in squares and separated by rows of beaded bands. That of the right hand male has a row of embroidered rosettes down his front. The hem borders are different. The male on the left sports a row of

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33. For example, standing figure of a male in Parthian dress and sword belt. Palmyra Museum CD 18/77. Gawlikowski 1984, 101-102, fig. 170.
34. Colledge 1976, 247, Heyn 2010, app.6, cat no.9, Albertson 2000b, 144 n. 16, 148–49, pl. 32a.
35. Musée du Louvre, AO 14924, AD 150-200. Inscription translates as 'Apollinaris Vibius cavalry squadron Herculiania Aelius Montanus his heir'.
36. Colledge 1976, 76, pl.143 and Schmidt-Colinet 1992, taf. 69, fig. d. Palmyra Museum 2093/7431.

chevrons, whilst on the right are circles alternating with rosettes and incised squares. The front of the trousers also have stripes different from the others. The left hand male has a pattern identical to that of the hem of his colleague. The right hand male has a vertical row of circles. The trousers are tucked into soft ankle length boots. Each man wears a belt tied at the centre with the ends looped back under the belt. The left hand male grasps the reins of the camel in his right hand and a spear in the left. The right hand male holds an object that is unclear in the right hand and a long sword in the left hand, the belt of which is visible across the body and resting on the hip. The camel is weighed down with fancy goods, a shield and a decorated rug. This is clearly a static but also symbolic scene intended to convey something of the activities important to the subjects. But the delicacy of the costume might in many ways seem impractical. The fine embroidery would easily be damaged in harsh travelling conditions. But in the context of this relief, it is employed to express the wealth and elevated status of the men. Whether such finery was actually worn on a journey is unknown. As we saw above, pieces of fabric has been found in tombs that proved such exquisite embroidery did exist, but that is not the point. The richness of the garments worn by these men in this context, which must have been expensive to make and buy, speaks of their status as heavily tied up with their vocation. It also testifies to the fact that the means of earning a living was a matter to be celebrated in death, and an important facet of self-identity.

Parthian Costume as a Signifier of Status

But why is the outfit so eastern in origin and not Greek or Roman? I offer three possible reasons in response to this: firstly, that the activity of trade and following the caravan routes took place in the east and not the west and so was more appropriate. It was a costume originally designed for practicality by the nomadic Parthians, as V. Curtis explains.[37] Secondly, the costume of himation or even toga were completely
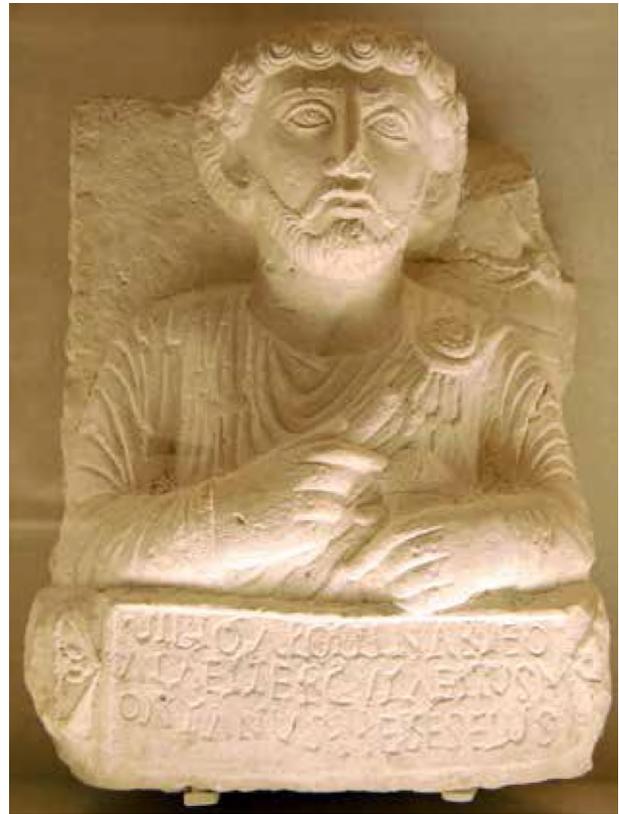
Fig. 6: Cavalryman. Musée du Louvre AO 14924. AD 150-200. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Musée de Louvre).

impractical as travelling clothes. An example of a wealthy Roman in the act of travelling can be seen in the Zoilos Relief from Aphrodisias which shows the freedman of Augustus dressed for travel with a cloak tied about him and a soft wide travelling hat.[38] Although the frieze is earlier than our time period, dating from the end of the first century BC, it shows that the ungainly toga was not worn for travelling, or was at least covered up. In another part of the scene, Zoilos indeed dons the toga in order to be crowned by a personification of the Polis. Thirdly, the himation and toga may have been the costumes of the west, but they were also the ancient equivalent of the business suit, the dress of commerce, public life in the city and also

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37. Curtis 2000, 25; Curtis, this volume.

38. Smith 1993, 35.

Fig. 7: Male wearing an unclasped chlamys. National Museum of Damascus. AD 100-150. Ingholt Archive PS570. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

of ceremony.[39] This is not the arena of the practical merchant, still less of a people who had more reason to identify themselves with the east and had a sense of their own independent status. As such, the Parthian costume reflected a political choice, as indeed to some extent did all costume choices, and whilst this is certainly true, it is also the case that practical and social factors and an identification with communities further to the east are just as relevant in this case, if not more so.

The short chlamys or the larger cloak were seen on possible caravan travellers and riders, but there are other variants to the costume. The brooch might be clasped on the left shoulder rather than the much more commonly-seen right shoulder, as in figure 6, above. A very few rider-types have the cloak draped over a shoulder without any brooch at all (Fig. 7), possibly only 3 in total.[40] It is not apparent from the evidence whether the version of the chlamys in such instances has a specific meaning, but it seems clear that there is a general message of sorts being portrayed because males holding riding attributes most frequently wear it in the less orthodox fashion. It may be that this is a cloak of practical outdoor use. Caravaneers, riders and other travelling males do not generally wear their cloaks in the same way that priests or reclining males do. No priest wears a shoulder mantle that is not clasped with a brooch of some kind and all are attached at the left shoulder. This might speak of a more ceremonial aspect to the well-draped chlamys. We will return to this particular point below. But it is also worth noting that the chlamys in the context of the relief could also add dynamic movement to a scene of riders in movement.[41]

The Parthian costume is also worn by male children that occupy the spaces behind parents, again without the chlamys. An example from Istanbul is representative of the type (fig. 8).[42] Here we see the tunic and leggings with stripes as before. It is not clear why children are wearing this rather than the often seen plain long tunic. I know of no other example in the Near East where children wear the Parthian costume. There is no conclusive evidence from the reliefs or inscriptions that suggest these children died young or indeed that they grew into adulthood and donned Parthian costume or that the imagery reflects that they now never will. Thanks to the inscription, this is a rare case when we know a little something of the subject.[43] The central figure is the father and also the father and husband mentioned in another relief. In the other relief, we see the wife and daughter, one of

39. Butcher 2003, 328.

40. See Colledge 1976, 247. Also Palmyra Museum PM 450, Istanbul Archaeological Museum 3714/O.M 164.
41. Colledge 1977, pl. 22.
42. See Colledge 1976, 253, Heyn 2010, app.4, cat no.21
43. Inscription translates as 'Abd'astôr and his son Maqqai'. CIS 4422, PAT 0782.

whom is dressed in mourning for the other. Both are the same size filling equal space. The relevant question is, why is the son only shown in this small size behind the father? Did he die as a child rather than grow to adulthood as we may assume the daughter did? Regrettably, we cannot be sure and the answer is not forthcoming.

Returning to the boy's costume, the tunic has an embroidered neckline and cuffs of circular design. The central vertical stripe has the chevron stripe we have seen before. The waist is belted with a knot that loops under. The trousers are just visible. Costume is little help when attempting to decipher meaning in the cases of children, except to observe that they clearly held down no profession and therefore the costume is restricted to the conveyance of status. By this I mean that the preference to show the child dressed in the costume of the east is indicative of its kudos to certain users over the tunic more commonly seen worn by children in Greek-style dress, but for unclear reasons. The father is dressed in the himation of business and public life, and arguably showing Roman traits through the representation of an unflattering receding hairline, whilst the son is represented in a costume of the east. The attributes held by such children are possibly more suggestive of status. Holding birds, bunches of grapes and circular wreaths suggest abundance and the pastoral life. The bird may also allude to otium and leisure, as a kept pet and plaything. These are items not always exclusive to children, but certainly most common to them, as seen on a sarcophagus in Ostia. The majority of the Palmyrene children in reliefs are full-figure or slightly obscured, front-facing and, in the case of the loculus relief examples, much smaller than the central subject. This style of representation suggests a fusion of east and western iconography. Children as disproportionately small figures are a device seen since the fifth century in Greek funerary carving, as in an example of a stele of a mother with child and holding a tiny baby. The child is depicted as a very small adult.[44]

Fig. 8: Child in Parthian Costume. Istanbul Archaeological Museum. Inv 3745. AD 240. Ingholt Archive PS 276. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

Banquet Scenes and Reclining Figures in Parthian Costume

The final and largest group of Parthian costume wearing figures are the banqueters and their serving boys. Here we will focus solely on those figures who are se-

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44. Walters Art Museum. Late fifth century. Accession number: 23.176.

curely identified as wearing the Parthian costume. Some of these figures are draped to the ankles in a himation over their tunic, and although they may be wearing Parthian tunic and trousers beneath, it is not always clear this is the case, so these will be disregarded for the purpose of clarity.

There are a total of 109 objects that contain banquet imagery, including sarcophagus covers and boxes and relief carvings. Of these, there are 323 total portraits of recliners, seated and standing family members and serving figures, seated females and busts. There are 53 seated females and 8 reclining females, 2 of whom recline in front of a male and 6 who recline alone with or without an attendant where the entire relief survives.

The reclining banquet figure is an ancient and established motif widely used both east and west, especially in the context of the tomb.[45] The exact meaning has been long debated. Zanker, Stewart and others have concluded that such scenes represent the meal of the dead, the ritual within the tomb and a celebration of the deceased's life and family.[46] Iconographic elements in such imagery is usually prescriptive: the deceased leans on the left elbow, propped up by plump cushions on the kline (See figs. 1, 3 and 4). The right knee, if shown, will be bent. In early versions, the figures may be stacked behind each other with only the upper body visible.[47] One of the hands holds a cup or bowl, a piece of fruit or a pine cone. But the issue for us is not so much the overall meaning, but the relevance of the costume the male diner and any servant wears.

The first example we will discuss is amongst the earliest banquet scene known and dates to the earliest period of funerary sculpture, AD 89-110.[48] The iconography loosely represents the most common for banquet scenes of the time. The diners themselves are stacked, the cushions on which they lean are visible

beneath their left elbow. They have chosen to represent themselves in the himation, but the serving boy is a different matter. He wears the full Parthian regalia of belted tunic with embroidered neckline and cuffs. He wears trousers with a central stripe under leggings attached at the hip by the dagger-like attachment. He also wears a plain chlamys over the shoulders secured with a brooch at the right shoulder. He holds a ladle and a jug.

The second example shows a slightly later scene dating to the mid to later period of production (fig. 9).[49] This time, the diner is wearing the Parthian costume as well as his servants. But there are distinctions. The central male is the only one wearing a decorated chlamys. The decorated neck, cuffs, central stripe of the tunic and leggings and the decorated ankle cuffs are all different. The boots are also beautifully decorated. He wears the dagger-like object at his hip. The boys' outfits are notably different. Although they too wear the Parthian costume, the striped decoration is relatively conservative in relation to the central figure. There are rows of pom-poms or circles at the neckline, cuffs, central tunic and legging stripes and the tunic hem. Although the lower half of the boy on the right is obscured by the reclining male, the similarities in the upper half of his costume lead the viewer to believe that the rest of the outfit would have been exactly the same as that worn by his fellow. The boots of the boy on the left appear undecorated. They hold the objects we saw in the previous example, the ladle and ewer and also a bowl. Clearly hierarchy is expressed through the costume decoration. The central male, identified by inscription as Malku, son of Moqimu, is gorgeously dressed. Every aspect of his costume oozes expense and, through this, refined culture and status. The outfits of the boys' are without doubt provided and paid for to further reflect the wealth of Malku. Their dress is more uniform-like than his, being of a simpler design and matching. But why has the main figure decided not to wear the himation and wear this costume instead? And why are the serving boys almost always shown wearing it?

45. Stewart 2008, 161

46. Zanker 2012, 26; Stewart 2009, 254.

47. For example Tomb F, main chamber, east sarcophagus. Colledge 1976, 247, 255

48. Palmyra Museum 1720/6391 Ad 89-110. Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 16, cat. 5, fig. 208.

49. See Danti 2001, 33-40 pl. 37.

Fig. 9: Reclining male with serving boys in matching tunics. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Inv B8902. AD 150-250. Ingholt Archive PS 262. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

The answer is, in my view, tied up with the same use of the costume as we identified in the early caravaneers. We might be safer in assuming that dining is a more appropriate activity in which to wear such beautiful attire, but we can still no more make the assumption that it was actually worn in the dining room than on the desert road. That it is worn in these examples signifies that the patron wished in the private and intimate space of the tomb to express otium, leisure and dining with friends and family: that his cultural affinities lay in the east, an aspect of his life that was viewed as prestigious, not only for the wealth with which it provided him, but possibly for the identification with the caravan trade that we cannot securely prove in this case. Andrade observes that it was a direct interaction with this aspect of their lives and more direct bonds of 'kinship and recipriocity'[50] that we see being negotiated in representations of this kind. It speaks of a successful and fluid negotiation of cultural influences on the crossroads of conflicting ways of life. In this way,

we can see the adoption of the Parthian costume reflecting tensions seen in the bilingual inscriptions of the public spaces, of acknowledging two, even three spheres of cultural influence, and of selecting an aspect of these depending on context.[51] Andrade also suggests that of the languages used in inscriptions by the inhabitants of Palmyra, the use of Aramaic script was considered the more personal and prestigious, not least because it was most frequently used in the confines of the tomb. The choice of costume reflects the higher value placed on this sphere of cultural layer.

We move on to two more banquet scenes from the early to mid-third century. The first shows a scene very similar to the last one, with a luxuriously dressed male in Parthian costume and a single serving boy (fig. 10).[52] The chlamys-wearing male and the more simply dressed youth share the same iconographic conven-

50. Andrade 2013, 178.

51. Andrade 2013, 184. Also 179.
52. Palmyra Museum 1793/6642, AD 239. Sadurska and Bounni, 1994, cat. 193, 145-146.

Fig. 10: Reclining male with an attendant. AD 239. Palmyra Museum. (© Tanabe 1986, No. 437).

tions as before. Only the patterns of the larger male are different. The boy's costume has the same small circular pattern as the previous relief. Instead of a jug or cup, he holds out a *modius* to the diner. This image confirms what we observed previously, that only matters of most importance to the subject are reflected. Here, the male is or was a priest. This and his eastern costume have been chosen to define him in perpetuity.

In the final relief we will discuss, we see another aspect of distinction (fig. 11).[53] The overall iconography is almost identical except for significant details. This time, even the serving boy is wearing an elaborately patterned tunic. Just as before, he wears no chlamys, but the reclining male does. Only the boots are plainer, appearing undecorated. The standing figure also appears to be wearing a sword belt. He has

his hand on his right hip and, although he holds a bowl and is proportionately smaller than the reclining male, he does not appear quite as subservient as the serving boys in the former reliefs. We do not see the Parthian tripartite hair in Palmyra, but here we see a hairstyle on the larger male that is reminiscent of the look. Rather than the top and side bunches, there is a central wavy section with two distinct curly sections on each side. Could this be an even more striking attempt to identify oneself with a culture predominantly of eastern origin? As such, it is an added layer of cultural affinity that links the subject with the east rather than to Greece or Rome.

It would seem that in the dining room at least, the Parthian costume was an option chosen by priests or non-priests as a cultural symbol. It was not the only outfit choice available, the himation and tunic costume is also widely seen. But the fact that it was chosen, and in increasing numbers towards and into the third century, indicates that it was imbued with a social relevance that was seen fit to commemorate with-

53. Palmyra Museum 2253/8113, AD 200-250; Charles-Gaffiot et al. 2001, 344, no. 149. Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek PS 1061; see also Curtis, this volume.

Fig. 11: Reclining male with serving boy in equally lavish costume. AD 200-250. Palmyra Museum. Ingholt Archive PS 1061. (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

in the tomb. Despite the elaborate and unique nature of the embroidered details, some garment elements became standard attire worn together and used repeatedly. No diner is seen without the chlamys, or at least a himation over the shoulder or part of the outfit. In the same way, serving boys are not subject to the same convention and some but not all do not wear the chlamys at all. Perhaps it was incomplete not to have an over-garment draped over the two-piece suit when reclining to dine. No two Parthian outfits are the same with the exception of serving boys, and this differentiation was a trait unique to the Palmyrene funerary portrait. In this way, attention to detail clearly indicates blatant wealth but also an attempt at differentiation, status and cultural ideology. It also links the subject with cultures from further east rather than Rome or the civic institutions of the Greek world. In much the same way that the Romans donned eastern Greek dress to recline to dine in the privacy of their homes, an increasing percentage of Palmyrene males make

the associations with the Parthian east in the tomb, expressing a preference for a perceived luxury and status that looked away from the west.

Why do priests and non-priests alike in the later period increasingly choose to use this style of representation, and why do all perform the same task of dining? Why have the priests in effect lain down on the kline and put aside their religious attributes? Perhaps one reason might be the increasingly secular nature of the portraits, and that status is not confined to the holding of office such as a priesthood, but became related to being primarily a member of the Palmyrene social elite. With an increase in wealth, status and political confidence enjoyed by the Palmyrenes at the turn of the third century,[54] do we witness this inflated sense of their own identity reflected in the portraits? As Edwell notes,[55] Rome came to be ever more reliant

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54. Edwell 2008, 60.
55. Edwell 2008, 62.

on the prowess of Palmyrene auxiliary troops at this time, and this and the special status as a thriving trading city enjoying autonomous rights ensured that the citizens were in a position to enjoy an elevated position of local importance. I would argue that this partly explains the adoption of Parthian costume by local elites of all roles in their funerary portraits. Identity was not tied up with being a Roman colony as it was for some neighbouring communities. Quite the opposite, in fact. The city was spared and preserved as an independent city exactly because of what it had to offer to the Romans. The connection between appearance, costume and political climate might just as easily be demonstrated by considering that following the visit to Palmyra by Hadrian in AD 129, the beard became popular for male adults in funerary reliefs, but there was no increase in the choice of Parthian costume at this time, most likely as the current emphasis lay in reflecting Hadrian's philhellenic tastes and the fact that Palmyra benefitted from his patronage, becoming at this time a free city.[56] The increase in instances of the costume coincided with the burgeoning in confidence as a regional power as noted above that was the beginning of a time of challenge to Rome. As such, at times of cultural manoeuvring, we can chart changes to appearances in funerary portraits of males that reflect an altered emphasis.

Conclusion

It becomes clear that the Parthian costume became increasingly common in Palmyrene funerary portrait art amongst males of all ages. It was the practical garment of the professional traveller and rider but was still shown highly decorated in impractical situations as a symbol of status in reliefs. As it became the predominant outfit of choice in the increasingly popular banquet scene, it also reflected wealth, a political confidence and also the eastern cultural affiliation that the subjects chose to express within the privacy of one's own family and peers, enjoying the trappings and luxury of the dining room and surrounded by

elaborate couches and appropriately dressed serving boys. Choice of costume did matter. One could look east or west, and some, but not all, Palmyrenes chose to increasingly look east, to the source of wealth and in increasing opposition to Rome. Since it first came to be adopted in the region, the outfit had been deliberately selected or eschewed in order to make statements of political and societal membership. But the costume was not without local twists. Male children did not wear the chlamys, only some serving boys did. All reclining diners wear a chlamys or mantle of some kind. Nowhere else is seen the array of decorative combinations.

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56. Edwell 2008, 46-47.

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The Pious Butcher and the Physicians.

Palmyrene Professions in Context

Eleonora Cussini

At the same time as the great events of history were about to hit Palmyra, sweeping away Zenobia's imperial project and leading to her defeat, individual stories and private or official circumstances in the lives of Palmyrene citizens followed their course, as the dated written sources indicate.[1] Among the latest examples, in AD 268, Zabda and his wife Ba'altega, offered an altar because their god had answered to their prayers (PAT 0399). A fragmentary inscription of AD 273, after the Roman conquest, honours a list of participants to the *marzeah* (PAT 2812). They are identified by their names and, in some cases, by their functions or positions. Inscriptions from the tomb of Maliku, dated between AD 267 (PAT 0053, PAT 0054) and AD 273 (PAT 0055), show that the practice of selling portions of the monumental tombs continued, on the brink of the destruction of the city walls, as a consequence of the AD 273 anti-Roman upheaval. These texts allow only a glimpse into individual stories of those mentioned. Regrettably, we do not know the profession nor the age of Zabda and that of Ba'altega, or that of Dadion, Ummu and the other sellers and buyers mentioned in inscriptions from the tomb of Maliku (PAT 0053, PAT 0054, PAT 0055). These significant pieces of information were in fact seldom recorded in the monumental inscriptions.

Overall, the surviving names of professions and

crafts are about fifteen. They are mentioned in the Tariff, in funerary, honorific and dedicatory inscriptions.[2] I would like to analyze here some of the data in their context, focusing on the individual stories of Palmyrenes whose professions are recorded by the

2. *'mn'* 'craftsman' (see below, PAT 0005, AD 148; PAT 0614, AD 148; PAT 0617 and PAT 0618, AD 172); *'sy* 'physician' (see below, PAT 0094, AD 99; PAT 0048 and PAT 0050, AD 213; PAT 0049, AD 214; PAT 0874; PAT 1558, AD 213); *glwp* 'scribe' (see below PAT 1941, AD 62; PAT 0320, AD 113; PAT 1113); *znyh*, *'lymh* 'prostitute' (Tariff, PAT 0259: 47, 126, AD 137); *hyt* 'taylor' (PAT 0259: 139); *hsd* 'reaper' (PAT 2730); *tbh* 'butcher' (see below, PAT 0415); *ktwb* 'scribe' (PAT 2743, AD 243); [*mzbn*]*y nhty' dy hpkyn bmdyt'* 'hucksters' (PAT 0259: 57); *nhtwm* 'baker' (see below, PAT 1458); *sbr* 'teacher' (PAT 1349), *qyny* 'smith' (PAT 0291, AD 258); *tgr* 'merchant' (PAT 1376, AD 81; PAT 0259, AD 137 and other examples). See, in addition, 'banker' τραπεζίτης, in an epitaph from Beth She'arim (Schwabe and Lifshitz 1974, no. 92), Cussini, forthcoming. For a study of Palmyrene professions and functions or positions, Bounni 1990. Some of those entries have been differently interpreted. For example: his *škp'* 'cordonnier' (p. 80) is unattested; his *'sbr'* maitre appareilleur ou tailleur de pierre' (p. 81) is rather interpreted as 'teacher' (PAT 1349: 2); his *'nmzgn'* chef de cuisine' (p. 82) is read in PAT *m'mzgn'* 'the one who mixes (wine in symposia)' (PAT 2743: 9), *qšyš* he considered a synonym of *'pkl'* or *kmr'* (p. 82) probably means 'the elder' (PAT 0862: 2), not necessarily with a religious function. As for his *mšy'n'*, read *ms'n'* 'helpers, assistants' (PAT 2743: 9). Furthermore, among his *Métiers d'ordre social* (p. 84) the terms *mprnsny* (PAT 0095) and *mrbyn* or *mrbyh* (PAT 0839, PAT 2695, PAT 0840 and other examples) rather indicate the legal role of those mentioned (Cussini 2016a). On his *gld* 'garde du corps' (p. 84) see Ingholt 1970-71, 183, see below, note 7. Finally the exact meaning of *bny ptrt'*, (interpreted 'necropolites' p. 85 after Milik 1972, 61), escapes us.

texts. Direct evidence consists of inscriptions and iconographic elements, mostly from funerary reliefs. Additional evidence is indirect.

As a first example, the noun 'sculptor' *glwp* is rarely attested in the inscriptions. In AD 113, Yarhay, whose name is written in smaller size characters and separated from the rest of a dedicatory inscription, *signed* his work of art, a bas-relief on a stone tablet (PAT 0320: 4).[3] A reference to the one who produced the artefact is found in few other texts.[4] An even rarer mention of painters is found in one inscription only, from Dura Europos (PAT 1091, AD 194).[5] Despite the fact they are rarely cited in the inscriptions, sculptors and artists, or other specialized craftsmen operated in workshops around the city and were central figures in the framework of local professions. The Greek loan-word 'mosaic' *psps*, alongside the personal name of a mosaicist, is a new addition to the epigraphic corpus ('Diodotos made this mosaic' *dydts 'bd / psps d'*).[6] The professional name 'mosaic maker' however, remains unattested in Palmyrene Aramaic. Mosaicists, who created the figured panels and the narrative scenes of this and other Palmyrene mosaics, were probably itinerant artists who completed their work with the help of locally trained skilled labour. In conclusion, the outcome of the efforts and craftsmanship of Palmyrene artists came down to us, while their personal names and professional designation, or other lexical items concerning their craft, are rarely or never recorded. The same is true for other professions. Although they are not mentioned in the inscriptions nor presented in iconography, a wide range of professionals and craftsmen were active in the city.

The funerary sculpture provides additional data to the scanty epigraphic references. In some cases the reliefs portray individuals alongside the distinctive tools of their craft. Regrettably, a study of the interplay of the visual representation of professions and the relevant lexical data is not always possible. In general, the attested names of professions are not accompanied by corresponding iconographic elements. Likewise, the funerary busts of professionals, identified as such by tools, items, or by the presence of animals (e.g. dromedaries) sculpted in the background do not mention professional names in the epitaphs. As an example, terms designating caravan leaders, caravan members and merchants, key-figures in Palmyrene economy are found in some inscriptions.[7] Visual representations of individuals whose occupation dealt with caravans are also preserved: an inscribed funerary relief portrays a meharist or a caravan leader, with quiver and whip, and a dromedary in the background (PAT 1328, fig. 1).[8] Or another inscribed funerary relief has two riders mounted on dromedaries (PAT 0988).[9] In both cases, the surviving epitaphs do

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3. See Long and Sørensen, this volume fig. 7 and Gnoli i this volume.

4. In honorific inscriptions: PAT 1941, AD 62; PAT 1410 (fragmentary), or in dedicatory texts: on altar, PAT 1719; on a stele from Dura Europos PAT 1113; from Berenike, Dijkstra and Verhoogt 1999.

5. Ll. 5-7: '... [Also], may commemoration be made of Elahshamash / son of Salat and [...] his son(s?) / who painted thi[s] picture ...' On this inscription and its context, Cussini 2016 b.

6. Gawlikowski 2005. Note Syriac *rṣwp'* 'mosaicist' in the mosaic of Orpheus taming wild animals from the vicinity of Edessa, Healey 2006. Here, as in the Palmyrene case, the artist's signature is placed prominently beside Orpheus' head. The mosaic, bought in 1999 by the Dallas Museum of Art, was returned to Turkey in 2012.

7. See the designations *rb šyrt'* 'caravan leader' (in Greek *synodiarchai*, PAT 0197, or PAT 0294; later *archemporoi*, PAT 0282, or PAT 0288); *bny šyrt'* 'caravan members' (PAT 1373, AD 161 and other examples), or *tgr'* 'merchant' (PAT 0259, AD 137 etc.). The term *glydh* for Ingholt 1970-71, 193-199 'caravan leader' (also Ingholt 1976, 103-105) is problematic. Found on a family banquet group from Maliku's tomb, it identifies Shalman, portrayed behind the reclining Ba'alai. Ingholt interprets it as Shalman's professional designation, in connection to Ba'alai's commercial enterprises. Hoftijzer and Jongeling 1995, 224, 'highly uncertain'. For the inscription, not in PAT, Ingholt 1970-71, 183 (Yon 2013, no. 11a).

8. Palmyra Museum, A 202. A copy of this relief, made in the 1930s, is in Rome at the *Museo della Civiltà Romana*, Gaffiot et al., 2001, 254, no. 143.

9. Gaffiot et al., 2001, 292, no. 200. For other examples, Michalowski 1960, 145, no. 158 (Colledge 1976, no. 143); Yon 1998, fig. 2 (Palmyra Museum, 2093/7431), lower section of a funerary bed, with bas-relief of a man and his attendant,

Fig. 1: PAT 1328 (copy of the relief. © Gaffiot et al. 2001, pl. 143).

not make reference to their occupation. They record their names and patronyms only.[10]

The same lack of professional designations may be observed in other cases: funerary portraits of adult males associated with writing materials such as parch-

ment rolls, *schedulae*[11] and folding wax tablets could represent scribes, preceptors, judges (or other professionals who dealt with writing). That, however, is not confirmed by the accompanying epitaphs. A relief in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek shows a man with a *schedula* in his hand, while an unnamed youth, his servant or a pupil, holds a book-roll case and a polyptychon.[12] The epitaph records his name and genealogy and does not mention his profession (PAT 0679):

> 'Ala[s!] / Yarhay / son of Yarhay / son of Yarhay / (son of) Yadi'bel / (son of) Ya'ut.'

A comparable example may be observed in the relief of Zabda'ateh son of Dionys, which records a Palmyrene and Greek epitaph, with no reference to his profession (PAT 1826):

> GREEK 'Zenobios / son of Dionysos.' ARAMAIC 'Alas! / Zabda'ateh / son of Dionys / (son of) Zabda'ateh.'[13]

The noun *ktwb'* 'the scribe' (or secretary) is found twice: in an honorific (PAT 2743: 7, AD 243)[14] and in a

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holding a dromedary at the halter. PAT 1632: funerary bust of a man and dromedary, damaged text *ḥbl* 'Alas,' Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993, 90, no. 47 = Hvidberg-Hansen 1998, no. 47. Also Michalowski 1960, 157, no. 172: fragmentary relief of a rider on dromedary (Palmyra Museum, CD 98). Colledge 1976, pl. 129: uninscribed relief on monumental base of three seated dromedaries, Ingholt 1936, 83-125 (Sadurska and Bounni 1994, 186, figs. 33, 35, 80, 81). Dromedaries appear also on inscribed tesserae: e.g. PAT 2174 (Colledge 1976, 54, m); PAT 2176, PAT 2177, PAT 2178, PAT 2179, PAT 2239.
10. As an exception: Shalman, but as seen above, note 7, interpretation of the epithet *glyd* is problematic.

11. The term indicates objects associated with male funerary portraits only. They have been interpreted as folded documents, perhaps legal documents, regarding the tombs, as some of them present a brief inscription reading *lbt 'lm'* 'For the house of eternity (i.e. the tomb)'. For a new example of inscribed schedula, to be added to the *corpus*, al-As'ad et al. 2012, no. 33. For an inscribed bust of a man holding rolls not in PAT, Desreumaux and Briquel-Chatonnet 1997, no. 1, see below.
12. Colledge 1976, pl. 75. Other examples portray pupils and not professional scribes: Colledge 1976, pl. 82 (Dentzer-Feydy and Teixidor 1993, no. 221), epitaph lost, shows a writing youth, holding stylus and tablet. On the tablet: the last five letters of the Greek alphabet, in the reverse order, from ω to υ. For a new acquisition to the corpus see the funerary stela of a standing youth with polypticon and the epitaph *'dynt / brh / [ḥ]bl* ''Odainat, his son, alas!' al-As'ad et al. 2012, no. 28.
13. For an image of this and of another relief, PAT 1822, belonging to the same family group, with no further discussion, Bounni 1989, 261, pl. 41 b.
14. Ll. 6-7: 'Remembered and blessed be ... 'Ogailu the secretary.' In addition, the text contains mentions of other officials: 'Zabbay, son of Shu'ada, who was in charge of the

dedicatory text (PAT 1712). The professional designation 'the preceptor (?),' *sbr'*, occurs once in an honorific Greek and Palmyrene inscription (PAT 1349):

> ARAMAIC 'Commemorated be Attiocha / the teacher. Commemorated be Elahsha / son of Dionys' (with Aramaic *sbr'* corresponding to Greek καθηγητής).

A visual representation of the pious butcher is not known. His existence would have entirely escaped us, were it not for a dedicatory inscription (PAT 0415) he offered to the so-called Anonymous God, whose cult developed during the second and third century AD.[15] The deity was worshipped at the source 'Afqa and in the Diocletian Camp area, as shown by hundreds of altars found in both places. As we reconstruct from his dedication, Makkay the butcher, his name only partly preserved, offered an altar to that god invoked, as usual, by the euphemism 'BlessedBeHisNameForever'. The text is partly damaged and the date formula is not preserved. As in numerous comparable texts of this type, a third century dating seems probable.

> 1 *[lbryk] šmh l'lm' ṭb'*
> 2 *['']bd [w]mwd' m[qy] ṭbḥ'*
> 3 *['']l hywh w[ḥy' 'ṯ]th*
> 4 *[wb]nwh [...]*
> '[For Blessed-Be-]His-Name-Forever, the Good / Ma[kkay], the butcher [ma]de [in th]anksgiving / [fo]r his life and [the life of] his [wi]fe / [and] his [ch]ildren [...].'

Although damaged, brief and to some extent stereotypical, the inscription offers some insights into Makkay's life. He was married and had children, although how many he had, their names and ages are not known. Makkay's devoutness to the Anonymous God included his family: when he offered the altar, he mentioned his wife and children. Following his name, recorded without a patronym, is the professional designation, *ṭbḥ'* 'butcher,' found in this inscription only.[16] No information regarding butchers and their trade or, in more general terms, the issue of meat consumption are preserved in the Palmyrene epigraphic corpus. As we know from the inscriptions, at Palmyra meat was eaten in the *marzeaḥ* and certainly in private meals as well. However, references to its preparation or consumption are not recorded. The only occurrence of the noun 'meat' *bšr*, is partly reconstructed in a fragmentary text of difficult interpretation, which probably involved the organization of the *marzeaḥ* and also mentions bread and water.[17] Nothing else is known with regard to Makkay and his professional or private life, apart from the fact he had the necessary means to dedicate an altar to his god. His offering was perhaps an ex-voto, as the wording 'he made, in thanksgiving' may indicate.

A comparable example of devotion to the same god is shown by a baker (PAT 1458). The inscription contains his patronym, while his name is lost. As in the previous case, sometime in the third century, this baker, the son of Bassa, offered a small altar to the Anonymous God:

> 1 *bryk šmh*
> 2 *l'lm[' ']lt['']*
> 3 *dnh 'bd*
> 4 *[.]ln[...]*
> 5 *br bs' nḥtwm'*
> 6 *'l ḥy[why wḥy']*
> 7 *bnyhy*
> 'Blessed-Be-His-Name- / Foreve[r.] [.]ln[...] / son of Bassa, the baker / made / this [al]tar / for [his] life [and the life] / of his children.'

The designation 'the baker' *nḥtwm'*, a loanword from Akkadian *nuhatimmu*, is found in this inscription only. Differently from Makkay, the baker does not mention

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kitchen and Yarhibola, the cupbearer, the one who mixed the wine and all the assistants.' See above, note 2.

15. An aspect of the cult of Baalshamin or of Yarhibol, perhaps inspired by Jewish monotheism, du Mesnil du Buisson 1978; Teixidor 2005, 211.

16. Hoftijzer and Jongeling 1995, 419, citing Widengren 1971, 224 who considers it a loan from Akkadian; differently Kaufman 1974 does not list it as such. In fact, the term is found in Old Aramaic in the Tel Dan bowl, Avigad 1968 and in Official Aramaic, in an ostracon from Arad, Naveh 1981.

17. PAT 2775: [... *b*]*šr wlḥm wm[n ...]* '[me]at and bread and wa[ter ...].' Milik 1972, 184–185, 300–303.

Fig. 2: Pie or leavened bread with almonds or pine-nuts, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 1084 (© Palmyra Portrait Project. By permission of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek).

haps a small pie or leavened bread, with a dome-shaped top decorated by lozenges, probably indicating almonds or pine-nuts (fig. 2). This food appears inside a small container in the hand of women who accompany and comfort the dead, who are also portrayed in the same reliefs.[19] The pie or bread could be interpreted as a symbolic food to be consumed in connection to burial rites or during the period of mourning.[20] It is impossible to say whether it represented a home-made preparation, or involved a professional, such as a baker.

As mentioned above, there are no extant funerary portraits of individuals referred to as butchers and bakers. On the other hand, a person designated as 'the master craftsman' *'mn'* is known thanks to the lower section of a relief, which originally belonged to a family banquet scene.[21] The portraits of Mokimu the craftsman and of his wife Tadmor are carved side by side, underneath a banquet bed (PAT 0005, AD 148):

> RIGHT OF MALE BUST 'Alas! / Mokimu / the master craftsman / son of Nurbel / son of Zabda.' RIGHT OF FEMALE BUST 'Alas! / Tadmor / wife of / Mokimu / son of Nurbel / son of Zabda / the master craftsman.' LEFT OF FEMALE BUST 'Died / the 29th day / of Siwan, / year 459.'

In addition to this double portrait, the individual relief bust of Tadmor has survived. It records her AD 148 epitaph, with mention of her husband's profes-

his wife, but his children only. As in the previous case, it is not possible to recover additional information concerning this baker and his work. The only extant references to bread are preserved in the just mentioned text of difficult interpretation (PAT 2775: '[... me]at and bread and wa[ter ...]'), and in a curse accompanying an inscription of foundation of a tomb (PAT 0574): 'And may he not have enough bread and water,' an example of the so-called 'futility curse' of the earlier Aramaic tradition.[18]

Some funerary reliefs have preserved a representation of what could possibly be a baked product, per-

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18. On treaty curses, Hillers 1964. On this curse in PAT 0574, Cussini, 2016 b.

19. E.g., PAT 0021: a mother embracing her son and a small container of this food in her hands, Colledge 1976, pl. 65; or PAT 2813, two children with their mother and another woman, both women hold a cup with this food. Fig. 2: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN. 1084, a woman with a cup showing this food, with detail of almonds.
20. It could represent a dish made of boiled wheat, almonds and raisins consumed after the funeral by the participants, Seyrig 1951, 35, with reference to modern parallels of dish prepared with similar ingredients, documented in the Arab world (*slyqâ*) and in Greece (*kollyva*). In this last case with precise reference to consumption after the funeral. Ploug 1995, 107.
21. Sabeh 1953, 19, pl. I, 2. The relief was purchased by the Damascus Museum from a resident of Palmyra and information on its findspot is not available.

sion. While the banquet scene was placed in a wider area such as an exedra, or in a recess in a hallway, the individual relief of Tadmor sealed her burial niche and it is therefore earlier than the complete banquet group celebrating her son.[22] Her epitaph (PAT 0614) reads:

> On right 'Alas! Tadmor / wife of / Mokimu, son of / Nurbel / the craftsman. / Died the / 29th day' On left 'of Siwan, / year 4.[100] / +40+10+5+2[+2].'

On the basis of the available evidence, it is not possible to say what was Mokimu's area of expertise, or further investigate the role and position of professionals of this type. Although few examples only of Palmyrene professional names survive, it seems likely that workers associated in guilds. Therefore, Mokimu the 'master craftsman' probably belonged to one such association. The existence of guilds is hinted to by a Greek and Palmyrene inscription of 258 CE (PAT 0291) and by a Greek epitaph from Beth She'arim.[23] The difficult Aramaic *qny'* 'association (?)' and the Greek loanword *tgm'* (ταγμα) are found in PAT 0291.[24] It originally accompanied a statue of Septimius Odainat, Zenobia's husband, and was offered by 'the

association of metal-workers in gold and silver' (*tgm' dy qyny' 'bd' dhb' wksp'*). A possible representation of a jeweller, or perhaps of a smith, wielding a hammer, with the inscription 'the treasury of Bel' is found on a tessera (PAT 2042).[25]

Professionals referred to as physicians are known as well. The first instance is found in a group of funerary inscriptions from the same tomb: a physician is the grandfather of Maliku, who built and dedicated the tomb, known as the Hypogeum of Maliku, in AD 120 (PAT 1218):

> 'This hypogeum was built by Maliku, son of / Maliku, son of Nurbel, the physician, for himself / and for his children and for his grandchildren, in their honour / forever. In the month of Nisan, year 432.'

Three AD 213 cession texts from that tomb record the sale of burial spaces. Nurbel 'the doctor' is the two sellers' great-great-grandfather (PAT 0048 and PAT 0050, AD 213; PAT 0049, AD 214).[26] In two instances, PAT 0050 and PAT 0049, the noun *'sy'*, a loanword from Akkadian *asû*, is introduced by the expression *dy mtqr' 'sy'* therefore, 'who is called 'the doctor'.' This specification could also be explained as the nickname of the sellers' ancestor. On the basis of these texts, it is hard to ascertain whether Nurbel was really a physician. However, the occurrence of this professional name referred to him without the specification *dy mtqr'* (PAT 0048), alongside other attestations, including perhaps his funerary stele (see below), point to a real professional designation.[27]

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22. The upper portion of this relief, today in New York, at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, portrays their son Zabdibol and his children: (PAT 0615) 'Zabdibol, son of Mokimu, son of Nurbel, son of Zabda, [so]n of 'Abdai, (son of) [Zabdi]bol. Tadmor, his daughter. Mokimu, his son. 'Alayyat, his daughter.' Mention of Mokimu the craftsman is found in two funerary reliefs of Shu'adel, another son of Zabdibol, PAT 0617 and PAT 0618, AD 172: 'Alas! Shu'adel son of Zabdibol son of Mokimu the craftsman. Died the 3rd day of Kanun, the year 484.' These last epitaphs present the same text with a slightly different layout. It may well be that PAT 0617 was originally part of the family banquet group PAT 0615. PAT 0618 is at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; present location of PAT 0617 is unknown to me.
23. Schwabe and Lifshitz 1974,[2] no. 61: Μημοιόν Λεο / ντίου πατρὸς / του ῥιββὶ Παρ / ηγορίου καὶ / Ιυλιανοῦ παλ / ατίνου απὸ χρυσ / οχῶν. For a discussion of this and other inscriptions mentioning Palmyrene Jews, Cussini, forthcoming.
24. PAT, Glossary, 406; Hoftijzer and Jongeling 1995, 1016-1017, uncertain meaning 'association,' with reference to the discussion by Milik 1972, 160-162. Yon 2002, 99.

25. For a mention of this tessera, RTP 36, Colledge 1976, 55.
26. PAT 0048: 'Julius Aurelius Nurbel and Male, children of Maliku the elder son of Maliku (son of) Nurbel, the physician'; PAT 0050 'Julius Aurelius Nurbel and Male children of Maliku the elder son of Maliku son of Maliku son of Nurbel, who is called the physician,' and PAT 0049 'Julius Aurelius Nurbel and Male [children of] Maliku the elder son of Maliku son of Maliku son of Nurbel, who is called the physician.' Two earlier cession texts (PAT 0044 and PAT 0045, AD 186) by the same Julius Aurelius Nurbel, mention the ancestor Nurbel, without his professional designation.
27. Makowski 1985, 77 considered it a real professional

Three undated epitaphs from the same tomb mentioning Nurbel in two cases, and Maliku in another, confirm that medicine was a profession within this family.[28] The first is an archaic funerary stela portraying a standing man before a *dorsalium*. His epitaph mentions his profession: *'sy'* 'the physician.'[29] The others are two later funerary busts: one portrays Maliku, possibly the son of the previous one,[30] while the last one his son, also named Maliku.[31] The available data on Nurbel and his family from the tomb of Maliku, do not offer more information about their lives and professions. Despite the lack of additional evidence, it seems likely that those referred to as *'sy'*, or *dy mtqr' 'sy'* were actually physicians.

Earlier, in AD 99, a man called 'Abda'astor, son of Nurbel, the physician, built a tomb (PAT 0094). In this case Nurbel's genealogy is preserved as well. Although it occurs in this inscription and not in the previous ones from the tomb of Maliku, he could be the same Nurbel:[32]

'This eternal home was made by 'Abda'astor, son of Nurbel / the physician, son of Kohelu, son of 'Atenur, (son of) Asulay, for himself and for his children. / In the month of Nisan, 410.'
Αβδαασθω[ρο]ν Νουρβηλου
ο [ια]τρος

Here the professional name *'sy'*, which follows the patronym, should be attributed to 'Abda'astor. This is confirmed by the two-line Greek inscription which records the builder's name and, partly restored, the professional name *iatros* in agreement with 'Abda'astor's name.[33] Therefore, the profession would refer to 'Abda'astor and not to Nurbel. From the same tomb is the funerary bust 'Abd'astor's son Buna. In his genealogy, the professional name 'the physician' appears after Nurbel's name, and it could be referred to him or rather to 'Abd'astor, as in the previous inscription:

> RIGHT 'Buna, son of / 'Abd'astor, son of / Nurbel / the physician. / Alas!' LEFT 'Shu'at / Shu'at / and Mezabbata / his daughters. / Alas!'[34]

Another mention is found in the undated epitaph of Habba, the daughter of Male 'the physician' (PAT 0874), from an unidentified tomb. Although data concerning the original whereabouts of her relief are not known, it is likely that she was buried in her husband's family tomb, or in a row of niches belonging to her acquired family. There, traces of her family of origin were not preserved, apart from her father's name and his prestigious professional identity, mentioned in her epitaph. The funerary relief of 'Male the physician' is not known and probably was placed in a different tomb. In regards his portrait, one wonders whether it would have shown any professional tools. The lack of additional genealogical elements makes it impossible to connect Habba's epitaph to other inscriptions mentioning individuals called Male, which was quite a common name in Palmyrene onomastics. Likewise, it is also impossible to set her relief in the

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designation: 'le grand père de Malikhô, fondateur de l'hypogée fouillé par H. Ingholt, était médecin.'

28. It is sometimes unclear whether the professional designation refers to the first one in the genealogical sequence, or to that person's father, since it is placed right after the patronym. Other inscriptions (e.g. PAT 0094) indicate that epithets are referred to the first name, even if they immediately follow the patronym. On this issue, Ingholt 1966, 460.

29. Ingholt 1966, 460: 'Alas! / Nurbel / son / of Maliku / the physician,' not in PAT. Yon 2013, no. 6, suggests to read *ydy'bl* 'Yadi'bel' instead of *nrbl*, with reference to al-As'ad and Yon 2007, 102, n° 1, upon collation of the inscription. However, on the basis of other inscriptions (below) and the reconstructed genealogy, their reading is not entirely convincing.

30. Ingholt 1966, 464: '[M]aliku / [son of Nur]bel / the physician,' not in PAT. Yon 2013, no. 7.

31. Ingholt 1966, 465: not in PAT. Yon 2013, no. 8 'Maliku son of / Maliku, son of / Nurbel / the physician,' the builder of the tomb (PAT 1218) and the grandfather of the two sellers (PAT 0048 and PAT 0050, AD 213; PAT 0049. For an image, Tanabe 1986, pl. 280.

32. In other words, 'Abda'astor would be another son of Nurbel, the brother of the above mentioned Maliku, who built his own family tomb in AD 120 (PAT 1218).

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33. Ingholt 1966, 460 n. 15.

34. Desreumaux and Briquel-Chatonnet 1997, no. 1.

context of a known tomb and to connect her to her husband's family, since his name is not mentioned.

Finally, the professional designation *'sy'* is found in an inscription of different kind: an AD 243 dedicatory text, which records the offer of a banquet hall to the Anonymous God (PAT 1558):

> 'This banquet hall[35] [...] / for Blessed-Be-His-Name-Fo[re]ver, the Merciful / the Good, and for the group(?) of elected ones of the temple / o[f] Bel: Malak, the private (?) physician / son of Mokimu, son of 'Akiba, for him / and for his children and for his children's children and for the satisfaction (?)[36] / of the group, forever. In the month of 8 Nisan, the year 554. / May be remembered before the Merciful, Sa'id / son of Nabuzabad son of Sa'id, his patron/friend.'

In this case the profession of the dedicator is further specified by the adjective *gwy'* a problematic term found here and in another instance only, in a funerary epitaph (PAT 0595). In that case the adjective referred to another professional, a secretary.[37] Therefore, the expression *gwy' 'sy'* could be understood as 'the *personal* physician,' or 'the *private* physician.'[38] Interpretation of this adjective remains open. Whatever his role was in the framework of Palmyrene society, or which type of physician he was, Malak was undoubtedly a wealthy man, who could afford the construction of a banquet hall.

The epigraphic corpus has not preserved additional information concerning Palmyrene physicians. Examples of sets of Roman age bronze and copper medical and pharmaceutical tools excavated in Syria, illustrate the kits used for ancient pharmacopeia preparations (or cosmetic) and medications: forceps, scalpels, spoon and spatula probes, the last ones used for applying medicaments and cauterizing.[39] While other medical tool-kits are known from Syria, none have survived from Palmyra.

Palaeopathological analysis conducted on skeletal remains from Tombs A, C and F, excavated by the Japanese Mission as of 1990, have shown evidence of bone and dental pathologies.[40] The majority of adult males showed signs of polyarticular inflammatory arthritis, while deformation caused by bone fractures and resulting from the healing process were observed as well.[41] A consistent deformation, explained as a serious femur fracture and the result of a rather complex and painful healing process (Sarcophagus-Upper, Pl. 72),[42] could be an indication of a different pathology, an osteosarcoma. A case of what seems to be an osteoma or a benign tumor of the right humerus may be observed in an adult male (M2-2C, Pl. 74).[43] The skull of an elderly man shows traces of a depressed fracture, resulting from a violent blow (L4-0B, Pl. 87). As the palaeopathologists have concluded, it seems likely that he survived his injury.[44] It is impossible to say whether these patients were assisted by a physician, although the malunited fractures show they were treated and had to be immobilized in the healing process.

The surviving archaeological data do not offer any information about the professional life of Palmyrene physicians or where and how they practiced. The epigraphic evidence, which records the dedication of a banquet hall, or the problematic designation *gwy'*, seem to indicate that Palmyrene physicians enjoyed a relevant social status and had a considerable personal wealth. The same applies to members of the families mentioned earlier, who built monumental tombs.

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35. The noun *smk'* is not entirely readable.
36. Naveh 1982: *wlbny bnwhw lšb't'* 'and for the sons of their sons for the seven ones.'
37. PAT 0595: a man who is called 'the trusted counsellor.' On this Cussini 2000. In addition, see PAT 0043: 5, where *gwy'* is a technical term indicating *internal* burial niches.
38. This Malak, a truncated name, could be the father of Amata, known from a funerary bust (PAT 1039: 'Amata / daughter of / Malakel, (son of) / Mokimu. / Alas!').

39. For images, Gaffiot et al. 2001, 333, pl. 88, 89.
40. Nakahashi et al., 2001, esp. 158-161.
41. Nakahashi 1994, 107.
42. For Nakahashi, 1994, 107, the bone broke in two points and it healed in a bent position.
43. Analysis of the other bones did not show other signs of the same pathology, therefore this individual probably suffered from a localized benign tumor.
44. Nakahashi et al. 2001, 160. The internal portion of the skull depression shows it was not opened, and that man died later on, probably of different causes.

Fig. 3: House of Achilles, peristyle court (© Stern 1977).

In this context, reflecting upon the issue of wealth and status, I would like to connect the professional figure of an unknown physician to a richly decorated mansion located in a residential area east of the temple of Bel, excavated between 1939 and 1941. It is generally assumed that the lavish Palmyrene private mansions were the dwellings of the rich mercantile *aristocracy*. However, a striking decorative motif from that domestic context, has led me to think that a different owner, perhaps a physician, could be considered. In terms of comparison, worth noting is the fact that in the second century AD a surgeon or a physician lived in a richly decorated *domus* with mosaic pavements and frescoed rooms (fig. 3).[45] The *domus*,

excavated in Italy, in Rimini, ancient *Ariminum* in 1989, has yielded an exceptional collection of about 150 surgical tools and pharmaceutical vessels indicating that, at least in its last phase, it was the house and the *taberna medica* of Eutyches, a skilled surgeon of probable Greek origin.[46]

The Palmyrene domestic structure known as 'House of Achilles', takes its name after the main narrative panel of the peristyle court, showing Achilles among the daughters of Lycomede.[47] Remnants of the pavement on another side of the same court display an octagonal panel with an enthroned beardless

45. Ortalli 2007 with previous bibliography. On the mosaics Stoppioni 1993, the narrative scene depicts Orpheus taming animals. The building was destroyed by a fire around the half of the 3rd century AD.

46. For a study of the surgical and pharmaceutical tools, Jackson 2003.

47. For a monograph on this and the mosaic of Cassiopeia, Stern 1977. See also Colledge1976, 106; Frézouls 1976, 40. More recently, Balty 2014, unavailable to me as I wrote and submitted this paper.

Fig. 4: House of Achilles, mosaic depicting Asklepios (© Ted Kaizer. By permission of the Museum of Palmyra).

Asklepios, identified in Greek (fig. 4). He holds the snake-encircled staff in his left hand and pours wine on a small altar.[48] The pavement has other octagonal, round and square panels: one with Dionysos and another with the head of Medusa.[49] The figures in the remaining panels are too damaged to be identified. This mosaic is the only surviving Palmyrene representation of Asklepios. At Palmyra, the snake-encircled staff is the attribute of the Canaanite god Shadrafa, portrayed on a relief accompanied by a dedicatory inscription (PAT 0318).[50] The scorpion and the two-headed serpent symbolize his capabilities to heal and protection from poison. His name contains by the root rp' 'to heal' and in this sense could be compared to Asklepios.[51]

It is impossible to reconstruct the complete decorative project of this mosaic pavement, which surrounded the peristyle court adjoining a reception hall. The choice of Asklepios as the subject of one of the figured panels was a meaningful one and perhaps could be linked to the patron's profession. This is ob-

48. H. 1.59 m; W. 1.66 m. For images: Colledge 1976, pl. 141; Stern 1977, 22, figs. 3, 16; Petsalis-Diomidis 2010, pl. II (ph. Ted Kaizer). For a late second-early third century AD mosaic of Asklepios from domestic context in Kos, Petsalis-Diomidis 2010, 26-29.

49. Stern 1977, 23-25. Each is surrounded by eight smaller panels decorated by alternated Solomon knot, chain and geometric and floral motifs.

50. British Museum, inv. 125206, Colledge 1976, pl. 27. Shadrafa is mentioned on tesserae: PAT 2292; PAT 2294; PAT 2296; PAT 2297. Other tesserae display his image or symbols: the snake and the scorpion: PAT 2293, or uninscribed examples: Ingholt et al. 1955, RTP 320, RTP 323, RTP 324, RTP 327.

51. du Mesnil du Buisson 1962; Dupont-Sommer 1976; Gawlikowski, 1990, 2646–2647.

viously a mere hypothesis, since most of the figured panels which contained other significant representations are no longer identifiable. I would not rule out the possibility that one of them could have displayed the patron himself. This was probably the case of another early third century AD mosaic from an unknown Edessean domestic context, inspired by the *Iliad* and combining Homeric characters to real ones, including the owner of the house.[52]

The prominence given to the panel of Asklepios in the Palmyrene domestic mosaic indicates that the house owner held that god in great consideration. The mosaic pavement, conceived for the reception area of the house, open to guests, conveyed an indication of the owner's wealth. It was also a meaningful representation which contained elements illustrating his education, his visual culture and interests, including the portrait of Asklepios, perhaps his protector and maybe, a reference to his profession.

No visual representation of Palmyrene butchers or bakers have reached us. The only exceptions known so far is the funerary bust of a physician,[53] and that of Mokimu, the 'master craftsman' (PAT 0005). Mokimu's relief, however, did not have the function to seal his burial niche. It was part of a banqueting group celebrating the whole family, commissioned by his son, portrayed reclining on the banquet couch. In both cases, there are no peculiar tools associated to the portraits of the physician and of the master craftsman.

The surviving mentions of names of profession in the largest section of Palmyrene Aramaic sources, the funerary content are limited. It derives that it was not felt necessary to represent nor to state one's occupation in the funerary portraits and in the relevant epitaphs. At least three of the extant references to physicians come from cession texts. Those, as we know, were monumentalized extracts from legal documents and they originally contained different types of information, not recorded in the funerary epitaphs. With

few exceptions, names of professions are seldom recorded. In other words, within the context of his family tomb, a person did not feel necessary to be qualified in terms of what he did for living. Different is the case of the Tariff, where references to professions are functional to the indication of taxation imposed on different types of workers. In honorific inscriptions one finds mostly reference to positions, rather than professions, with exceptions represented by merchants, caravan leaders and the like. With regard to dedicatory texts and, specifically, religious dedications, the examples examined may indicate that those offering felt the need to be identified in terms of their mundane role, to mark their individuality and specificity, among hundreds of other devotees. Perhaps this is why Makkay the butcher, or the unnamed baker, or Malak, the *private* physician stated their professions.

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52. Drijvers and Healey 1999, Cm 3, 211, pl. 66 and Cm 4a-b, pl. 67, Jerusalem, Bible Land Museum. For an image and epigraphic discussion, Drijvers and Healey 1999, 213.

53. Nurbel, or Yadi'bel, see above, note 29.

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Professions in Palmyra: A Matter of Ethnicity

Tommaso Gnoli

Syrians outside Syria

There is no better place to start with when studying Syriac identity in the Greek-Roman world than the Venetian little city of Concordia Sagittaria, 60 km to the north of Venice. A group of Syriac soldiers were stationed in that city in the 5th century AD and had their sepulchral gravestones carved in Greek, on which each of them proudly asserted his foreign origins: 'Here lies Aurelios Alexandros, Syriac man, from the village of the Mezianoi, inside the border of the city of Apamea,'[1] 'Here lies Aurelios Makedonios Abbiba, from the hamlet (ἐποίκιον) of Genneos, inside the borders of Apamea,'[2] 'Here lies Aurelios Marianos from the hamlet (ἐποίκιον) of Sekla, inside the borders of Apamea of Coelesyria.'[3] These exemplifications might go on and on, but suffice to say that the best contribution to the toponymy of the land of Apamea derives from this very group of Venetian inscriptions, the meaningful data of which for the historical geography of Syria have been studied by Denis Feissel.[4]

It is astonishing that those Syriac soldiers, who were buried in the so-called 'military' cemetery (*Sepolcreto dei militi*) in the western city of Concordia Sagittaria, treasured their own tiny homelands so much. It is as justifiable to doubt that some of the readers of those gravestones in Concordia Sagittaria might have had any basic knowledge where of Apamea of Coelesyria ever was, as much it is absolutely certain that nobody among them had ever heard about Κώμη

Μεζιανῶν or ἐποίκιον Γεννέος. The problem with those inscriptions is thus a problem of identity self-representation.

Palmyrene Self-identity and Professions

Self-identity is a main concern in modern research in antiquity and does not need any further reflection here. Nevertheless, I start from this concept because I think that the subject of the crafts in Palmyra is first of all a problem of self-identity.

It has always been noted how rare in Palmyra the identification of personalities is by their professions. Recently both Jean-Baptiste Yon and Michael Sommer among others have highlighted thousands of people's reticence to give information about their own professional activities. Indeed their mere personal data and little more are recorded on the stones they carved portraying them, and this pertained even to the institutional offices that many among them had performed during their lives. Thus Yon correctly states that 'Si l'on étudie des inscriptions funéraires, on peut lire des généalogies, on peut reconstruire des familles, mais l'on n'apprend que peu de chose sur les activités que les défunts ont exercées pendant leur vie ... En fait, les renseignements précis sur les activités «professionnelles» quotidiennes sont très épars'.[5] This claim matches with Sommer's view: 'Schon auf den ersten Blick verstört, daß überhaupt nur ein geringer Anteil derjenigen Verstorbenen, die erkennbar der höheren sozialen Strata entstammen, die zu Leb-

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1. *CIL* V 8723 = *IG* XIV 2321.
2. *CIL* V 8728 = *IG* XIV 2327.
3. *CIL* V 8730 = *IG* XIV 2329.
4. Most recent analysis Vannesse 2011; Feissel 1980; 1982. Cf. Zovatto 1946; 1971; Forlati Tamaro 1962, 1977; Bovini 1973.

5. Yon 2002, 99.

zeiten innegehabten Ämter in den Epitaphien erwähnt'.[6]

The publication of both *corpora* on the one side of the Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions of Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonora Cussini in 1995 and on the other side of the Greek and Latin ones by Yon in 2012 makes it easier to estimate how '*épars*' these data actually are.[7] Focusing only on the mentions of crafts – thus ignoring public and religious offices – and disregarding all activities connected with long-distance trade, that are the subject of other specific contributions,[8] the inscriptions that can be taken into account are just 23, to which the Tariff shall be added:[9] Twenty-three texts out of thousands of inscriptions that make Palmyra unique in the eastern provinces of the Roman empire.

Moreover in the range of this scant cluster of Palmyrene inscriptions, some groups of documents shall be defined, that in my opinion further circumscribe the already limited representativeness of this cluster itself.

First of all many of the professions are listed in the Palmyra Tariff. This is an extraordinary document that cannot be considered as typical for the Palmyrene epigraphical *habitus*; more important, it is absolutely not related to the theme of self-identity of the inhabitants of Palmyra.

Collegia

Among these groupings, one can be clearly identified in the four well-known dedications laid by professional *collegia* to Odaenathus or members of his house. We are talking about three Greek inscriptions (*IGLS* XVII/1, 55, 59 and 143) and a bilingual one (*IGLS* XVII/1, 56 = *PAT* 291) dedicated to the λαμπρότατος ὑπατικός Septimius Odaenathus (*IGLS* XVII/1, 55-56 and 143) or to his son Hairan, of equal status, (*IGLS*

XVII/1, 59) by voluntary associations named συμπόσια (*IGLS* XVII/1, 55, 59, 143) or συντεχνία (*IGLS* XVII/1, 56), and *tgm'* in the only Aramaic sample (*IGLS* XVII/1, 56 = *PAT* 291). The latter word is a *hapax* in the Semitic languages and it has customarily been explained as a transliteration from Greek τάγμα, even though it experienced a successive semantic shift making it identical to συμπόσιον.[10]

Almost all the craft associations that laid those inscriptions raise big problems concerning their identification. The only one that can be identified for certain is the association of the goldsmiths and the silversmiths who laid *IGLS* XVII/1, 56: συντε[χνία τῶν χρυσοχ]όων | καὶ ἀργυ[ροκόπων. Quite astonishing for me is the fact that despite such a penury of attestations of both craft-guilds and simple crafts in Palmyra, the dedication *IGLS* XVII/1, 59 has survived, which was laid by a συμπόσιον σκυτ(έ)ων καὶ ἀσκοναυτοποιῶν, i.e. an association of leatherworkers and makers of leather bags for the navigation of the Euphrates, according to the customary interpretation of the latter word, once more a *hapax*, a Greek one this time. It is much more complicated to understand on what the members of the συμπόσιον τῶν ου(α)ννων (*IGLS* XVII/1, 55) or those of the συμπόσιον τῶν κονετ[(*IGLS* XVII/1, 143) worked. Once more we are talking about words that do not occur elsewhere in Greek texts and that show an undoubtedly fault in the writing, as far as the first one is concerned, while the second one is incomplete. We can certainly avoid exploring the explications of these words by now and simply accept the attempts to explain them by other scholars and last systematised by Ted Kaizer in 2002,[11] who proposes to understand ου(α)ννων in *IGLS* XVII/1, 55[12] as 'winnowers', i.e. those who separate the different parts of wheat; while for the other word, probably to be read as κονετοί he proposes three possible different translations: An association of cithara players according to an old hypothesis by Milik, or also an association of

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6. Sommer 2005, 173.

7. *PAT* and *IGLS* XVII/1.

8. Cf. Seland elsewhere in this book, and Seland 2014.

9. A new edition of the Tariff: Shifman and Healey 2014: the old Russian edition of the Tariff has been newly edited by J. F. Healey in the *Supplements* of the *JSS*.

10. *PAT*, p. 418, s.v.; τάγμα: 'body of soldiers, division, and brigade'; 'order, rank': Liddle-Scott, *s.v.*

11. Kaizer 2002.

12. On this word Yon 2007, 410.

metal workers, as Gawlikowski thought, or furthermore the unprecedented meaning of 'artichoke growers.' In this connection, I suspect that all the meanings connected with agricultural life should be considered as highly improbable for reasons that I will explain. On the contrary, it seems clear to me that all these four public dedications are connected with craft-guilds linked to specialised craftsmanship that had to be flourishing and very dynamic in town.

Yet if ever we were able to solve all the philological problems regarding these four documents, I still consider them little meaningful as far as the theme of self-identity of the Palmyrene is concerned: All four date back to 569 Seleucid era, i.e. AD 258 (*IGLS* XVII/1, 55, 59, 143) in the month of April (*IGLS* XVII/1, 56) and they were all carved in the vicinity of the great colonnade (55 was reused in a late wall in the area of the tetrapylon; 56 was carved on the trunk of a column of the great colonnade; 59: is on the console of a column found to the East of the round street that surrounds the theatre; 143: is on column II after the southern corner of the portico C1). However, the titles of Odaenathus and his son Hairan on these dedications may be explained – this being a long debate in which I have participated and do not want to propose here again[13] – it is certain that AD 258 represents an important institutional turning point in Palmyra. The rise of the figure of the *rš dy tdmwr*, δεσπότης τῶν Παλμυρηνῶν who just by then became a λαμπρότατος ὑπατικός, a *vir clarissimus consularis*, came indeed through the *mimesis* of the Greek-Roman institutions (also city ones), but it cannot be considered as the clue of a real internal transformation of the Palmyrene society. The professional συμπόσια, surprisingly dynamic in that year AD 258, will never appear again in Palmyrene epigraphy, neither did they before that year. It would be astonishing if those craft-guilds had had any influence inside the Palmyrene society, given that among thousands of deceased of whom we know names and agnatic relationships, nobody decided to define himself as belonging to one of those voluntary corporations.

Craftsmen and professionals

But this is not enough. If we try to curb the testimonies of crafts and working activities attested in Palmyra to the funerary inscriptions, our already meagre outcome is doomed to wear thin by far: two out of the most meaningful inscriptions under this respect – the one of a butcher (*PAT* 415: *ṭbḥ*), and the one of a baker (*PAT* 1458: *nḥtwm*, from Akkadian *nuḫatimmu*)[14] – are dedications to divinities and they come from the precinct of temples, but from no necropolis. Another testimony is the picture of a sitting man who hits on an anvil on the *recto* of the tessera n. 36, in the collection of Ingholt, Seyrig and Starcky.[15] However it is highly dubious that it depicts the profession of anyone; of the four testimonies regarding sculptors (*glwp*), none comes from a funerary context, as *PAT* 1719 is outside Palmyra; *PAT* 1113 is from Dura Europos; *PAT* 320 is a signature below a dedication laid in the temple of Bel;[16] *PAT* 1410 is a very incomplete inscription in which only the word for 'sculptor' is readable and which was found in the *agorà*. *PAT* 1349 = *IGLS* XVII/1, 38, that is believed to identify a teacher (Aram. *sbr*, Gk. καθηγητής), was seen in ancient times in a very strange position in the peristyle of the temple of Bel, but has never been found again. It honoured a person with a Greek name, a certain Antiochos.

The only texts that can certainly be put forward to claim that in Palmyra existed some occupational identity that overlapped and interfered with family- and clan-identity are four Palmyrene busts, three out of which are preserved at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (*PAT* 614, 617, 618), while another one, *PAT* 5, is now at the National Museum in Damascus.[17] In all these reliefs the word that identifies the profession is one and the same: *'mn*: 'master craftsman', deriving from Akkadic *ummānu*.

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13. Gnoli 2000; 2007a; 2007b.

14. See Cussini, this volume.
15. Ingholt et al. 1955, n° 36: on the obverse: *'nwš[t] '| dy bwlyd ' | mhrdt* 'the treasure of Bel. Bôliada Meherdat'.
16. See Long and Sørensen, this volume fig. 7, and Cussini, this volume.
17. This very man is the only one known by Bounni 1990, 81 and n. 35.

Another example comes from the profession of physician. The latter is the only craft, besides the generic 'craftsman,' to appear three or four times in funerary contexts, below portraying busts. Once it comes with another word, *gwy*, 'private (?)', that rises a number of interpretation problems (*PAT* 874 = *CIS* II 4513; *PAT* 50, AD 213, from S.-W. Necropolis *sy*, from Akkadian *asû*). I cannot solve the problem of the number of the occurrences of *sy*. It has been recorded three times in *PAT*, but Yon has shown that one occurrence of this word has been overlooked by the editors of the *corpus* of the Aramaic inscriptions of Palmyra. Anyway this seems a relative problem, as all those occurrences come from one and the same tomb laid in the South-Western necropolis, and I believe that Galikowsky's hypothesis, also accepted by Yon, to consider the word *sy* as nothing else but a nickname that entered the naming of the family that was buried there is right:

> 'Il est possible que le terme «médecin» ait été utilisé comme surnom par cette famille ... Dans ce cas, le mot s'appliquerait, dans le texte, au père de Yediʿbel et non à ce dernier. On a sans doute une preuve de cet emploi comme véritable «nom de famille» dans le texte VI de la tombe: la généalogie des deux propriétaires se présente ainsi: *ywlys ʾwrlys nwrbl wmlʾ bny mlkw rbʾ br mlkw br mlkw br nwrbl dy mtqrʾ ʾsyʾ* («Iulius Aurelius Nûrbel et Iulius Aurelius Malê, fils de Malkû l'Aîné, fils de Malkû, fils de Malkû, fils de Nûrbel, qui est surnommé le médecin»).'[18]

I suspect that the same might well have happened with the busts of the Metropolitan Museum that show always one and the same word: *ʾmn*. If this was acceptable – but I ignore everything about the history and possible origins of these finds – we might speculate that these two names of crafts: *ʾmn* and *sy*, 'craftsman' and 'physician', are nothing else but elements of the naming of two specific families. This way both the doctor and the craftsmen would disappear from our already scant testimonies of Palmyrene crafts.

My deductions about the words *ʾmn* and *sy* may either be accepted or rejected, but I think that what is undeniable is the fact that professions did not identify individuals in Palmyra, certainly not after they had died; moreover they were of little meaning also during their lives. To all this I just can add the two dedications on an altar by a butcher and a baker. All those who have dealt with this subject, did it gathering all testimonies of crafts together with institutional, religious and military offices. For the moment I have neglected the latter terminological categories, but my sense is that even if we comprised them, the general picture would change very little. Only connecting all those categories, concentrating *in primis* on long-distance trade, Adnan Bounni was able to write an article, *Métiers et fonctions à Palmyre*, in which however there is a disequilibrium on the side of the *fonction*. Nevertheless also on this side the situation is not actually clear. Even a convinced upholder of Palmyra's 'normality' in the framework of the eastern cities of the Roman Empire, Maurice Sartre, had to admit that:

> 'Si l'existence de la *boulè* n'est pas en cause, J. Teixidor a justement remarqué que les inscriptions de Palmyre ne mentionnaient à peu près jamais de bouleute ... C'est incontestablement un fait étrange quand on constate le nombre élevé de textes mentionnant la *boulè* à Palmyre, ou lorsque l'on compare cette situation avec d'autres villes de Syrie ... Faut-il en conclure que Palmyre comptait une *boulè* sans bouleute?'[19]

The answer to this question is obviously negative. The Palmyrene *boulè* was composed of *bouleutai*, but the latter did not consider it useful to report about this role of theirs on their funerary portraits. For this very reason we do not know anything about almost any personality who carried out specific functions inside the assembly.

Self-representation

In the light of what I have tried to explain until now my position diverges from the approach of a young talented American scholar in his recent monograph *Identity, Community, and State Formation*. While trying to 'map social identities,' Andrew Smith puts the subject

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18. al-Asʿad and Yon 2002, 102.

19. Sartre 1996, 388.

of 'occupational identity' right after 'Palmyrene fam-
ily' and marriage patterns. He describes 'occupation-
al identity' in a frame that in my opinion does not cor-
respond to reality. If the assumption that 'By the
second century AD and perhaps earlier, Palmyra was a
cosmopolitan city supported by a host of individuals
variously occupied. The streets buzzed with activity'
is certainly true and clear, less obvious and on the
contrary quite complicated is the assertion that: 'Im-
portantly for this study, occupation provided a frame-
work for the construction of a social identity above
kinship relations. Occupation also provided a frame-
work for the development of voluntary associations, a
community of like-minded individuals mutually sup-
porting one another.'[20]

Thus, Andrew Smith needs this pretended 'profes-
sional framework' to introduce the religious institu-
tion of the *marzēaḥ*, the latter typical of Palmyra. Actu-
ally, the craft-guilds and the gatherings of the drinking
societies were very different phenomena. They only
share the same translation into Greek of their name,
in both cases συμπόσιον, but also a more technical
word, συντεχνία, is attested for the AD 258 craft-guilds,
as I have already shown. However I think that the
marzēaḥ, diffused in all the Semitic and particularly
Arabic world, shall be understood starting from its
Semitic context and not from the way it was repro-
duced, translated and construed in Greek, as I have
already shown elsewhere.[21] Well, in Aramaic the word
for the drinking societies was always *marzēaḥ*, never
tgm, which on the contrary is attested for the craft as-
sociations in the AD 258 only bilingual inscription of
Palmyra. To sum up: It is not possible to link together
the craft associations of AD 258 and the *marzēaḥ*, let
alone the latter one and the professions that do not
have any association.

While the *marzēaḥ* is eminently a form of religious
aggregation, even though it played an evident social
function inside Palmyrene society, with an evolution
of its role as I have already tried to sketch,[22] the pro-

fessional associations never played any comparable
role in Palmyra and their occurrence in only one occa-
sion in direct connection with the crucial year 258 is
too much circumscribed not to become suspect. I
think that the latter represent an import of association
forms that were alien to Palmyrene society but ac-
quired in imitation of the Greek-Roman habits and
that never asserted themselves, thus leaving behind
extremely scant traces.

Professionals in the West: Some examples

I am perfectly aware that this kind of reconstruction is
mainly based on an *argumentum e silentio* and that it is
very dangerous: one way or another, the discovery of
a text dated back, let us say, to the middle of the 1st
century in which a professional association is attested
will put all this reconstruction in disarray. Yet I do not
think this is likely to happen. What I have called 'reti-
cence' of the Palmyrene to show themselves in their
professional activities or also in their magistrate func-
tions testifies to an evident difference in respect to
other situations, above all western ones, in the Roman
Empire.

A comparison with the easternmost Italic city
apart of Rome can be certainly explanatory. In the
case of Ravenna, it was customary that any deceased
would declare his professional activity during his life
on his gravestone. This example can be explanatory
for an unusually high number of illustrated steles
from Ravenna. If the attestation of 'crafts' connected
to the fleet are broadly prevailing for clear reasons,
references to other professions not necessarily con-
nected to it do not lack indeed. The percentage of
crafts attested on epigraphs is further increased if we
take smaller, closed and limited situations that are less
'international' than Ravenna into consideration, as a
huge study by Alessandro Cristofori on the Picenum
area demonstrates.[23] The difference with Palmyra is
evident and certainly ascribable to cultural reasons.
The singularity of Palmyra, so often postulated but
less clearly explained, is thoroughly evident in this

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20. Smith 2013, 107-108.
21. Gnoli 2016.
22. Gnoli 2016.

23. Cristofori 2004.

very respect. The explanation of the irrelevance of professions in the Palmyrene world might be explained from a socio-cultural perspective and it is a matter of self-identity.

At this point it is useful to turn back to the inscriptions from Concordia Sagittaria, from which we started. In those texts the Syriac soldiers show their pride about their origins from the hinterland of Apamea and in a couple of cases of Antioch. Those places were defined with meticulous precision on their gravestones, which were laid thousands of miles away from their homes, in the fogs of the high Adriatic coast. The Palmyrene who served in Dacia, Northern Africa or elsewhere in the Roman world or even stayed in Rome defined themselves always as Palmyrene, without any further specifications. Daniel Schlumberger described the layout of the settlements in the area N-W of Palmyra in such terms:

> 'nos villages ou hameaux consistent en des groupes lâches de constructions distribuées sans ordre. Cette disposition est dans un contraste frappant avec la concentration qui est de règle dans les villages des plateaux agricoles ou des oasis de la Syrie moderne. Les sites sont de dimensions médiocres. Ils s'étendent rarement sur plus de 500 mètres dans leur plus grande longueur.'[24]

But what is important for us is that he was not able to restore even one ancient toponym for the area he studied. The toponymy of the Palmyrene area is to the greatest extent an empty list for us. So here the Syriac dichotomy is well represented, according to the division that Gertrude Bell fittingly named *The Desert and the Sown*.[25]

The Desert and the Sown: The patchwork of Syrian Identity

The Sown is the area of the great Hellenised cities, with their farmland densely inhabited by people of Aramaic descent who were accustomed to farming; while the Desert are the stony sweeps of the Arabic inland. A land of shepherds, of people perpetually on the move, both to graze flocks or to trade silk and spices. The shepherds have always been co-essential to the Aramaic farmers who supplied the big Greek cities. Both gave ancient Syria its specific unique nature that a long time ago Mikhail Rostovteff condensed in an imprecise however suggestive sentence:

> 'la Syrie a toujours été un pays de transit, où se sont rencontrées et mêlées les trois grands civilisations du Proche-Orient: Babylonie et l'Assyrie, Égypte et Égée. Aussi n'a-t-elle jamais eu la sienne propre. Elle s'est contentée d'une mosaïque d'emprunts.'[26]

Regardless of the outdated features implicit in this picture and that are even clearer in what immediately follows this quotation,[27] Palmyra stays the only example of a completely Arab big city known to us from the Greek-Roman antiquity, with the exception of the Nabatean cities, that however acquired their own characteristics since the beginning of the 1st century BC because of the peculiar history of their people.

Palmyra was not born of the overlapping of different cultures, so some pretended Arabic-nomadic substratum that was superimposed over a non-migratory situation; neither a nomadic society that suddenly decided to turn its structure becoming a settled society. Reality is far more complex and veiled. A tribal society with an agnatic structure that aims at thriving in the closeness of big urban centres cannot do without any centre of gravity for its own economic and trade activities. All this can happen in various ways, which have been studied as far as the ancient Near East is concerned by Michael Rowton, who employed the definition of 'enclosed nomadism' and of 'dimorphic structure' to define this kind of situations.[28] I tell nothing new to the scholars of Palmyra as these concepts have been widely used and divulged by Michael

24. Schlumberger 1951, 11.
25. Bell 1907.

26. Rostovtzeff 1935, 3.
27. The allusion is to the explicit use of the discredited and now unusable term of 'syncretism.' For an updated, original and complex reflection about Syrianness, Greekness etc. in Roman Syria as well as in Palmyra cf. Andrade 2013; in general Aijmer 1995.
28. Rowton 1973a; 1973b; 1974; 1976a; 1976b; 1977.

Sommer.[29] Rowton's studies, that were innovative in the 1970's, gave rise to a series of anthropological investigations that can help shed new light on the real functioning of the Palmyrene society inside the Roman Empire.

Palmyra in the framework of traditional Arabic societies

The study of traditional societies based on agnatic tribal relationships in the Arabic peninsula have been conducted specifically in the underdeveloped inland of Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman by a big team of scholars and have produced remarkable results in recent years. We are talking about important researches in many respects, that shall be used very cautiously however to adapt their paradigms to the ancient world. The main difference between the ancient and the modern arabic societies is that the latter ones upon which these surveys have been conducted, are completely and deeply Islamic, thus they present us with very deep modifications in this respect that cannot be underestimated.

The reading of the fresh works by William and Fidelity Lancaster on the traditional societies in Oman and Yemen (but also those in the north of the Peninsula are mentioned) is of the greatest interest. What is interesting is what they have derived as far as the concept of profession in those societies is concerned. The following quotation regards the people around Ra's al-Jinz on the coast of Oman:

> 'They pointed out that over a lifetime, a man might well move between fishing and herding, and a herder might go to sea for a year ... Individuals learnt the skills of others without formal training, but by observation, common-sense, and practice. A man from a herding family said he had learnt how to make his living by fishing, and a husband and wife who had worked as potters in Bilad Bani bu 'Ali were said to have learnt their skills, neither had been born into potters' families ... Multi-resource economics, a truism for anthropological descriptions of pastoral societies since the 1970s and

extended to settled agricultural Arab tribes, has been less used by archaeologists. Most tribespeople, asked about their source of livelihood, say either what they are doing at that moment or their most reliable source of profits – not the aggregations of assets and options on which they can draw as members of working productive and consuming groups. Attempts to find a definable economic unit for Arab societies have confounded many researchers and is best resolved by Fabietti from research with Shammar bedouin as 'a dynamic unit towards which converge resources from a variety of sectors, procured and organised by mobile individuals belonging to a parental group whose dimensions and composition are not definable *a priori*.' This description is consistent with all the social groups with whom we have worked and about whom we have read and leads into concepts of tribe/*qabila*, family/*aila*, and community/*jama'a*.'[30]

The social structure of Palmyra had to be to a great extent very similar to that of the very small traditional underdeveloped societies of Oman. Small groups based upon family relationships belonging to wider groupings, the tribes, that exerted a lesser influence from an economic and social point of view, conducted complex activities, nevertheless not only activities of subsistence even less non-profit-making. The members of the families were also members of the tribes, that altogether built a community, but no one was recognisable for his/her profession. They all used to share know-hows, which apparently may seem astonishing. Work is always considered as something little specialised, which is true also when, according to our contemporary standards, we should be in the presence of highly specialised jobs such as engineering: The Lancasters explicitly mention a number of different types of water supply systems that were essential to the agricultural activities in dry lands.[31] What actually matters according to the Lancasters is:

> 'Tribal membership conferred jural identity, which gave access to tribal resources for livelihood and prof-

29. Sommer 2005.

30. Lancaster and Lancaster 2012, 108-109.
31. Lancaster and Lancaster 1999. About water supply systems Laureano 2001; specifically on Palmyra and its territory, Meyer 2013.

its, to develop and therefore own resources without denying access to others for subsistence, a requirement to defend resources and rights and thus to bear arms, and the absolute obligations to be generous and to provide protection to all who asked for it.'[32]

Palmyra was for such families that lived scattered around the city, what Dubai or Sharjah represented for the families of western Hajar:

'People in the western Hajar chose their markets according to what they were selling and what they needed to buy. They used Dubai and Sharjah, and to a lesser extent Ajman or Ras al-Khaimah town, for selling live goats for meat, tobacco, charcoal, honey and dairy goods. These places were bigger markets with more buyers and the money realised from sales bought more, as Dubai and, to a lesser extent Sharjah, were where imported goods came into the region by steamship.'[33]

Obviously Palmyrene society was far more complex than the traditional societies of Oman about which the Lancasters report to us; no doubt that the higher classes of that society had lived for centuries in a more or less close contact with other provincial *élites*, that in turn had been more or less deeply Hellenised. What remains is the fact that, if the society that produced the *Notabilat palmyrénienne* was similar to the ones I have just described, then what should surprise are the poor and sporadic testimonies of crafts attested in Palmyra, rather than their total lack.

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32. Lancaster and Lancaster 2010, 210.
33. Lancaster and Lancaster 2010, 227.

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The iconography of caravan trade in Palmyra
and the Roman Near East

Eivind Heldaas Seland

From the early first millennium until the first decades of the twentieth century, camels were the state of the art technology for long-distance transport in the arid parts of the Near East. The animals also provided leather, wool, milk, fuel, and meat, and were near omnipresent in the premodern Levant. Nevertheless camels are conspicuously absent from the iconographic record. Palmyra is an exception in this respect, a number of reliefs representing camels being preserved from the city. This paper discusses if and how these depictions, as well as other examples from the region, can be used as evidence of the caravan trade that was an important economic activity of the city.

Almost 85 years ago, Mikhail Rostovtzeff provided Palmyra, along with Petra, and arguably with less justification, Dura Europos and Jerash, with the epithet of 'Caravan City'.[1] Until today, scholarly agreement has prevailed that a large part of Palmyra's wealth, which eventually enabled the construction of the monumental urban centre of the second and third centuries AD, and the unsuccessful, but nevertheless serious attempt at imperial power in the third quarter of the third century, derived from the role as mediators in the trade with textiles, spices, pearls and gems between the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean.

Five decades after Rostovtzeff, Moses I. Finley published his seminal 'Ancient Economy', where he strongly downplayed the importance of commerce in ancient societies.[2] Finley's model has since fallen on hard times, but in danger of oversimplifying, one could argue that his emphasis on the agrarian basis of the ancient economy and the comparably low status of commercial activities has stood the test of time, while the insistence on the embeddedness of the ancient economy into the general sociopolitical matrix of the ancient world remains highly controversial.[3] Nevertheless, most scholars of the ancient world would agree that long-distance trade was an important part of the Roman economy. Trade gave local and imperial elites access to luxury goods that served as status markers as well as political assets. Trade created large fortunes for individuals and considerable taxes to the state. In the Mediterranean, trade was primarily conducted by sea, in Western Europe along the rivers, but on the arid southern and eastern margins of the empire, goods coming from The Persian Gulf, The Red Sea, Arabia and sub-Saharan Africa were generally conveyed by the Ship of the desert: the camel.[4]

If trade enjoyed only low status this has the unfortunate side effect that data is lacking. In literary sources, trade is generally only addressed in passing, as when the poor slave Gripus, in Plautus' comedy *Rudens,* dreams of one day owning lands, houses, and carrying on trade with large ships himself.[5] The archaeological record reveals patterns of movement and distribution, but arguably less about mechanisms. Notwithstanding a rich record of marketplaces, ports,

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1. Rostovtzeff 1932a; 1932b; 1932c.
2. Finley 1973. Even Finley, however, saw Palmyra as an exception to the general pattern (1973, 59).

3. Bang 2007; 2008; Temin 2001; Silver 2009; Osborne 2002.
4. Bulliet 1975.
5. Plautus, *Rud.* 930-931.

Fig. 1: Monumental base. Palmyra Museum A24/1226. (© Jørgen Christian Meyer).

ships, roads and road-stations, it is hard to determine the relative extent and importance of long-distance trade. Documentary evidence exists in the form of papyri from Egypt, and inscriptions, some of them from Palmyra, with merchants, trade or taxes as its subject. Where reliefs depicting ships have been employed in order to reconstruct ancient ships and ship-technology,[6] no similar studies exist of camels or caravan trade. What can the iconographic record reveal? Perhaps not so much about the scale and importance of trade, but arguably something about status and practical matters.

Camels, much less camel caravans are no central motif in Roman or for that matter Palmyrene art. Some depictions, however, exist. Camels turn up in mosaics, graffiti and reliefs. Camel sculptures were made in life size as well as miniature. The one-humped camel, also known as the dromedary, was the more frequent in the Roman Empire, particularly in North Africa and the Near East. It is not well suited to wet climate and mountainous terrain, and was thus rarely used north of Syria.[7] In Anatolia, the two-humped variety, often referred to as the Bactrian camel, enjoyed a certain importance. It copes well with rain, cold and mountains, but less so with the summer heat of Arabia and North Africa.[8]

The negative case

Reliefs from Palmyra are sometimes employed as illustration of ancient caravan trade, but rarely as evidence. Not all camels were caravan camels, however. In fact most camels in Palmyrene art have nothing to do with caravan trade. In order to tell the difference between a caravan camel and other camels, two aspects need to be considered: Form and context.

Starting with form, the relief shown in figure 1, until the Syrian civil war in the Palmyra museum, but found in the Justinian city wall, and originally belonging to a monument base of the Palmyrene period, shows a line of three camels lying down. As pointed out already by Harald Ingholt in the original publication, this is not a caravan.[9] First, the camels carry harness suitable for riding rather than for leading by the hand. Second, all three camels are supplied with shields right of the saddle, as well as swords or lances on the back side. Third, what we see on top of the camels are not bales of trading goods, but rather riding saddles. Fourth, these camels carry elaborately embroidered saddlecloths, hardly something you would put on a pack animal.

The same is the case with the relief shown in figure 2, found in the Diocletian camp, but also originally part of a monument base. This has sometimes been identified as a caravan leader with his servant.[10] It is

6. Casson 1995.
7. Gauthier-Pilters and Dagg 1981, 102-103.
8. Bulliet 1975, 231-232.

9. Ingholt 1936, 116-117.
10. Sartre-Fauriat and Sartre 2008, 84; Schmidt-Colinet 1995, 81; Smith 2013, 74-75.

not. In this case the saddle is more visible, and we can see that it is covered with the fleece of an animal, probably a sheep, as is also the case with those depicted in figure 1. This is an indication that we are looking at steeds rather than pack animals. The so-called servant (holding the camel) carries a lance in his left hand, and the other figure has a sword, both wear trousers suitable for riding. All these attributes suggest martial activities rather than mercantile. Both wear elaborate clothing in similar style, and there is no clear difference in status between the two individuals.

Besides the presence of weapons, riding equipment and the rich decorative details, there is also the element of standardisation. Most of these camels, including some not shown here,[11] simply look similar. Standardised weaponry and equipment is something normally connected with military organizations, and one possibility would be that these men had affiliation with the *Ala I Ulpia dromedarium Palmyrenorum*, the auxiliary camel corps known from the mid second century,[12] or some other military unit set up with camels. A second explanation for the standardised appearance of the animals is that it is simply the result of

the Palmyrenes having strong ideas about how riding camels should be depicted. If that is the case, however, the men in riding trousers, with weapons, and with riding camels, are likely to have been people who wanted to show their affiliation with a nomadic, aristocratic lifestyle, based on the camel as an animal of war. This is also the likely context of the mounted rider shown in figure 3, who following the work on the so called caravan – or steppe gods by Rostovtzeff, Schlumberger, Weber, and others, should probably be identified as a divinity.[13]

The negative argument also has a functional part. Elite monuments connected to trade are not unknown. Prominent examples include the tomb of the baker Eurysaces outside Porta Maggiore in Rome and the Igel Column in Trier, but arguably these are exceptional. The Palmyrene elite was clearly strongly involved with trade. This is well documented in the so-called caravan inscriptions, but elite members are always honoured there for their help, leadership and benevolence toward traders, never for acting as traders themselves.[14] Most preserved art from Palmyra

11. E.g. Ploug 1995, no 47; Ingholt 1936, pl. 24.2.
12. PAT 1422; Edwell 2008, 51-52.

13. Rostovtzeff 1932b; Weber 1995; Schlumberger 1951, 124-128.
14. Cf. Yon 2002, 171 on the office of *Archemporos,* 'head merchant' employed in two inscriptions.

Fig. 3: Camel rider. Palmyra
Museum. (© Jørgen Christian
Meyer).

stems from funerary settings. Money from caravan
trade was attractive, and members of the Palmyrene
elite wanted it, but when deciding what kind of relief
that should represent them and their families after
they were dead, they did not necessarily want to be
affiliated with commercial wealth or commercial ac-
tivities. In this context it is not surprising that most
camels depicted in Palmyra belong to the high-status
spheres of war and pastoral wealth rather than to the
low-status activity of trade.

The positive case

What then can we glimpse of caravan trade from icon-
ographic evidence? By throwing the net wider and
venturing outside Palmyra we get a number of camel
depictions that clearly belong outside funerary set-

tings and that might not suffer from the same status
bias as the Palmyrene examples.

Figure 4, a floor mosaic from the church of Deir
al-Adas, between Damascus and Bosra, clearly repre-
sents a camel caravan. An inscription dates the mosaic
to 722 that is in the Ummayad period,[15] but the sig-
nificant point here is the technology, which was prob-
ably more or less unchanged since the Palmyrene pe-
riod. Deir al-Adas was never an important place, but
situated on the axis from the Red Sea and the earlier
Nabataean kingdom to Damascus and Antioch, where
we know from literary accounts that camel caravans
were a regular sight.[16] It is placed in the rich agricul-

15. Donceel-Voûte 1988, 53.
16. Galen, *de simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis*, ed. Kyhn
1821, 215. Strabo *Geo*. 16.2.20 (mentioning merchants from

Fig. 4: Mosaic from Deir al-Adas, Syria. Displayed in the theatre in Bosra until the start of the on-going civil war. (© Jørgen Christian Meyer).

tural area of the Hawran, but close to the Syrian Desert, occupied by camel nomads.

The mosaic shows a man dressed in a plain *chiton*, carrying a staff in his right hand. An inscription identifies him as *Mouchasos kamilaris* – 'the camel driver'. In his left hand he holds a rein, leading a caravan consisting of four animals through a landscape with threes or bushes crowned with flowers. The camels are supplied with bells, connected from saddle to bridle, and carrying two containers each in a packsaddle. Real animals of course would need to balance this by a similar load on the other side.

The containers depicted by the artist are not readily identifiable. Those carried by the two first animals have an oblong shape with pointed ends, resembling amphorae, but the characteristic handles are missing. Animal number three carries smaller jars, with clearly visible spout and handle. The more vaguely defined containers on animal four might be leather sacks. Amphorae were standardised, waterproof and manageable packaging for liquid as well as dry goods. They must have been well suited for long-distance transport, as they left repacking unnecessary when changing between different means of transport, such as ships, riverboats, wagons and caravans. The problem, on the other hand, was that they had a relatively high net weight.[17] This needs to be taken into consideration with an animal like the camel, which can carry around

180 kilograms over longer distances, a lot more of course, for short stretches. Nevertheless, judging from our limited evidence, amphorae seem to have been a normal way of loading camels. We know from the archaeological record that Parthian-Sassanian so-called torpedo jars, made of clay from the middle Euphrates, ended up in large numbers in South Asia,[18] and some of these might have carried goods from Palmyra. The use of skins for transport of liquid goods is attested in the tariff inscription from Palmyra,[19] there was a guild of leatherworkers and floating skin makers in the city,[20] and the practice is also well attested in ethnographic records.

The mosaic offers a good impression of what a Palmyrene caravan might have looked like. Mouchasos' caravan was a small one, but the large ones going between Palmyra and the Persian Gulf will have consisted of lots of such small trails of handlers and animals. This was the manageable and easy way of handling a large number of loaded animals.[21] Also the mosaic reminds us that different kinds of people were involved in caravan trade, and they had different positions in Palmyrene society. Camel drivers were probably relatively humble people, but you would also need military men, with a more aristocratic self-perception, like

Arabia Felix, who can hardly have arrived by means other than camel).

17. Will 1992, 262.

18. Tomber 2007.
19. *PAT* 0259.
20. Seyrig 1963, 161-166.
21. Cf. Kloner 1996, 134-135, who reports carvans with one driver per animal in ethnographic accounts from present day Israel and Jordan.

Fig. 5: Mosaic from the Byzantine Church in Petra, Jordan. (© Eivind Heldaas Seland).

the ones with the beautiful riding camels in figs. 1-3, and certainly also elite investors and protectors to whom we shall return below.

Figure 5 is also a mosaic, from the Byzantine church in Petra. Here an animal in unmistakeable agony is pulled by one camel driver and whipped by another. Apart from the depiction of animal abuse, the image is different from the others also because the load here seems to be a tree-trunk. Wood, necessary for house construction, as well as shipbuilding and reparation had to be conveyed over large distances in the arid parts of the Near East. In the same manner as the camels showed in the mosaic with Mouchasos, it reminds us that transport costs connected with caravan trade must have been extremely high.

A second depiction from Petra (fig. 6), which almost certainly has to do with caravan trade, is the life size relief hewn into the living rock near the city-side entrance to the *Siq* in Petra, the 1,2 kilometre gorge that served as one of the main entrances to the Nabataean capital. Unfortunately the relief is heavily eroded, but we can clearly discern a male figure, who leads a string of four camels. The setting at a main entrance

to the city, and very close to the royal tombs, has been an evocative reminder to the Nabataeans and their guests of their nomadic past and the importance of caravan trade for their kingdom.

Both the mosaic from Deir al Adas and the relief from Petra are clearly planned and very elaborate depictions of caravan trade. Examples of more spontaneous depictions, however, also exist, such as the one shown in figure 7, which is from Dura Europos, and thus necessarily contemporary with the Palmyrene caravan trade, as the city was destroyed in AD 256. As in the Deir al-Adas mosaic, we have a line of four animals, connected from bridle to saddle. No saddle is depicted, but it can safely be supposed, as it would be the only possible way of fastening the animals near the humps. Also it seems that the cameleer is riding the first animal, although this is hard to say for sure. These animals are clearly of the two-humped, Bactrian type that one would expect to find in Iran and central Asia, but not in the Syrian Desert and on the Euphrates. Possibly the drawing was made by someone, for instance a Parthian soldier, with experience from areas further east, where these animals were common.

Fig. 6: Relief from Petra, Jordan. (© Eivind Heldaas Seland).

Returning to Palmyra, is there any direct icono-graphic evidence of Palmyrene caravan trade at all? Arguably, among the substantial number of camel im-ages that we have from the city, there is only a single depiction that does not show military camels or other riding animals. Figure 8 shows a relief from the grave of Julius Aurelius Marona (Qasr al-Hayye), dedicated in AD 236, being one of the house tombs outside the Justinian city wall, and now completely empty. Until the civil war, the relief was displayed in the Palmyra Museum. The most conspicuous motives are a ship, to the right, and a male figure in Palmyrene dress, in-cluding trousers fit for riding, in the middle. Arguably the ship should be connected with Palmyrene trade in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, or for that matter in the Mediterranean. What has rarely been pointed out, however, is that on the left side of the relief, there are the legs and reins of an animal.[22] When compared to other reliefs, e.g. fig. 2, it is clear that we are speaking here of a camel and not a horse. While we will never know if the animal depicted was a riding camel or a pack animal, the composition, with one arm on a ship and one arm on a camel, is a very evocative image of the two arenas, the desert and the sea, that Palmyrene merchants operated in. The interesting aspect with this depiction is not that members of the Palmyrene elite involved themselves in trade, that is well docu-mented in the epigraphic record, even if it emphasises protection of trade rather than direct involvement,[23] but that at least one member of this elite actively re-ferred to caravan trade in a funerary setting, where he himself, alternatively his heirs, had the opportunity to directly influence how he should be remembered, and how the family should be represented to succeeding generations. Even though the fortune was built on trade, the owner could have chosen to use military, pastoral, and religious motifs in the grave decoration. Nevertheless, he chose a ship and a camel, signifying that investment in trade did not carry a social stigma in third century Palmyra. This, however, remains an isolated example, showing how ideologically biased the iconographic record will inevitably be.

22. Schmidt-Colinet 1995, 81.

23. Will 1957; Yon 2002, 100-106.

Fig. 7: Drawing of graffito from Dura Europos. (© Rostovtzeff 1932, 212).
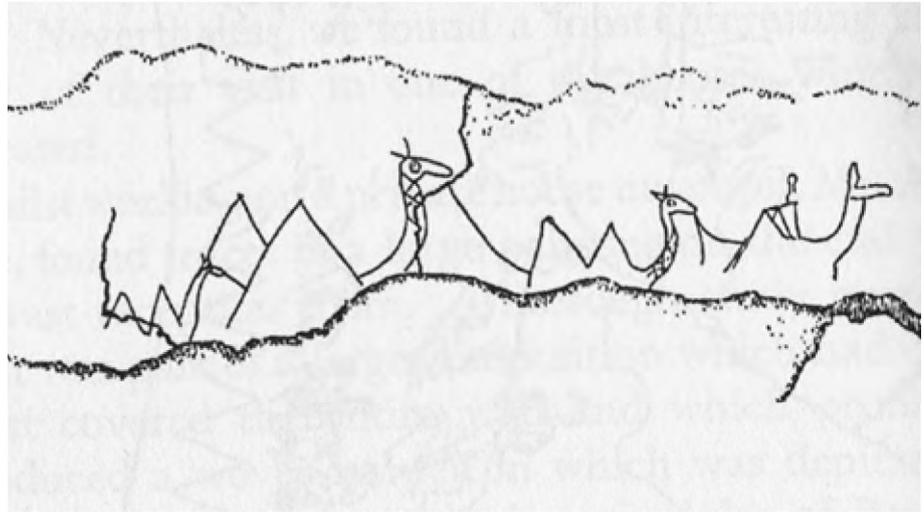
Fig. 8: Relief from Qasr Hayye, Palmyra Museum 1046/2249. (© Jørgen Christian Meyer).

In conclusion, the iconographic material highlights three interrelated points with regard to camels and caravan trade.

First, not all camel depictions are connected with caravan trade. In fact most are not. The camel carries association with nomadic and martial values, as well as with divinities of the desert and steppe, that are far more important in the iconographic record than pack animals.

Second, we do have a few depictions of camel caravans and pack animals. They appear in mosaics showing everyday, pastoral and rural life, and in low profile, low status depictions like the graffito from Dura Europos. This underlines that trade is not simply a question of merchants. There were also animal handlers, soldiers, aristocrats protecting trade, as well as elites organising and investing in trade.

What remains are the spectacular and monumen-

tal exceptions of the sculptures from Petra and the ship-cum-camel relief from the Marona grave. These are few, but nevertheless so evocative, that they do arguably signify that these places, Petra and Palmyra, were indeed something a bit different in terms of ideology and identity than most other in the Hellenistic-Roman world, thus justifying Rostovtzeff's caravan city epithet.

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