

## The Desire for the Undesirable: Mimesis and Martial's Eunuch in Epigrams VI.67

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The satirist Martial lived in Roman Spain in the second half of the second century during the time of Domitian, one of the first Roman rulers to have legislated about eunuchs. Many of Martial's *epigrammata* refer to illicit sexual activities, and some involve sexual encounters with eunuchs. His epigram at VI.67 "*Cur tantum eunuchos habeat tua Caelia, quaris, Pannyche? Volt futui Caelia nec parere,*" can be read as, "Do you ask, Pannicus, why your wife Caelia has only eunuchs about her? Caelia loves the flowers of marriage, but fears the fruits." This is a legitimate text for analyzing mimesis in Roman satire about eunuchs. In Roman society, eunuchs could be slaves, servants, clerks, or officials, although Martial is writing too early for there to have been special court positions reserved for eunuchs.<sup>1</sup> Looking at alleged behaviours and sex lives of eunuchs during the reign of Domitian through literature, the most evident is the contradiction of eunuchs being both sexless and also ideal sexual partners. There are three main cases for Mart. VI.67 as art imitating life. Language, Roman notions of paternity, and real or perceived breach of acceptable power dynamics, all parse the paradox of eunuchs as both asexual and desirable.

First, Roman family values were rigidly centered around paternity and were intolerant of women's extra-marital affairs. Latin literature also illustrates certain Roman understandings of feminine pleasure and seemingly disregard feminine pleasure as an aspect of sex.<sup>2</sup> The very existence of Mart. VI.67 shows that feminine pleasure was a topic of intrigue if not of critical examination, and further fragments from Martial, Juvenal, and others reveal attitudes and acceptable sexual practices for Romans. These sources intersect to form a picture of sexual liberation, albeit one that is the subject of satire.

While Martial's fragment stemmed from satire and commentary on the lustful nature of both Caelia and the stock-character anonymous eunuchs, this does not mean that eunuchs were not involved in affairs of pleasure. Martial provides this himself in *Ep.* VI.2 (addressed to Domitian): "You now forbid both, Caesar, and promote future generations, whome you desire to be born without illegitimacy. Henceforth, under your rule, there will be no such thing as a eunuch or an adulterer; while before, oh sad state of morals! The two were combined in one." This is playing directly into the Roman stereotype of eunuchs as sexually-depraved and synonymous with "adulterer." "Oh sad state of morals" leaves Martial's reader knowing judgment is taking place, and that the proper position is against adultery. While Martial was unlikely referring to a *common* phenomenon of women and eunuchs having consequence-free sexual relations, the poem elucidates Roman understandings of eunuchs, sexual desirability and pleasure, and the anxieties of paternity and power in sex.

#### Language

The core of this poem is that the wife of Pannicus, Caelia, wants sex but not pregnancy. Immediately readers are faced with paradoxes and questions which tailored to a Roman audience. Does Caelia intend to avoid intercourse? Does she want intercourse but only with the guarantee that it will not result in pregnancy? Is it the eunuch aesthetic which attracts Caelia? Eunuchs in Roman literature were frequently the subject of harsh invective. A valid role of the eunuch is given elsewhere in Martial's *Epigrammata* at III.82.15–17 "*digiti crepantis signa nouit / eunuchus et delicatae sciscitator urinae / domini bibentis ebrium regit penem* (the eunuch knows well the signal of his snapping fingers and coaxes out the delicate urine as he manages the tipsy penis of his drunken master)".<sup>3</sup> This instance references an actual (if hypothetical) eunuch, with an appropriate servile relationship to a master. However, the argument could also be made

that the word “eunuch” is used as a derogatory epithet to emphasize the degrading and emasculating job. This instance introduces the essence of the problem with terminology around eunuchry.

Translations of Mart. *Ep.* VI.67 frequently translate *eunuchos* as “priests of Cybele” and the word *galli* as “eunuch.” This is a mistake; these are not interchangeable words. The words are slippery: naturally, slang and discourse are lost to us, but there are a myriad of terms used in literature to describe people neither female or male. *Spadones, castrati, eunuchos, thilbias, heterai, cinaedi, galli, hermaphrodite*, the list of Latin, Hebrew, and Greek terms used to describe intersex people goes on and on. Martial aptly uses all the expected vocabulary that insinuates a eunuch or emasculated man. Throughout his 12 *Epigrammata*, he uses *gallus* nine times, *spado* eight times, and finally *eunuchus* five times.<sup>4</sup>

Typically, and observably in the poetry of Martial and Juvenal, *eunuchus* referred to someone whose testicles were surgically removed. The paradox with a eunuch having sex is unclear without first clarifying what is meant by eunuch. Further, when discussing eunuchs having penetrative intercourse the satirists/poets are implying that the eunuch had been castrated shortly after puberty and therefore could have an erection despite being sterile.<sup>5</sup> Similar to epithets targeting virility or masculinity, eunuch could also be used in reference to a non-eunuch as an insult.<sup>6</sup> In “Anxieties of the Castrator,” George Devereux states something at once obvious but worthy of repetition: “Analysis of cursing shows that the malediction one hurls at ones enemy invariably reflects the cursers own major fears or anxieties.”<sup>7</sup> Rigid Roman masculinity held that any single feminine attribute could effeminize the whole man and corrupt his character irreversibly. In this sensitive environment, the literature reflects living anxieties of men whose masculinity was threatened by the existence of a gender spectrum.

The possibilities given above in the non-exhaustive vocabulary list imply, in no particular order, a boy or man who was either fully-ablated (removed penis and testicles), fully-castrated, hormonally-imbalanced, celibate, infertile, asexual, or homosexual. In other words, fundamental to the characterization of a eunuch is their implicit sexless-ness and in the Roman cultural conception of sexuality. Principally, that they would never father children. Eunuchs were thought to be entirely sexless, which gives rise to dissonance between their perceived asexuality and stereotypical sexual deviance. A concrete example of this contradiction is given by another Roman satirist, Juvenal: “There are girls who adore unmanly eunuchs—so smooth,/ so beardless to kiss, and no worry about abortions!”<sup>8</sup> This is strikingly similar to Mart. *Ep.* VI.67 in indicating the sexual desirability of eunuchs, and to the joy of Caelia, their infertility. Martial and Juvenal both write about eunuchs as lovers, which narrows down the type of eunuch about which they are referring. Again, a eunuch who could have an erection (and ejaculate) must have been castrated after puberty.<sup>9</sup> The possibility that this was a practice is guaranteed because Domitian specifically legislated against the practice. A common origin story of eunuchs follows the theme of a handsome youth who is pushed or pulled away from their families in hinterlands and castrated before puberty. This would more closely result in a distinct hairless appearance as Juvenal describes in terms of beardlessness. The Galli, referenced elsewhere in Martial, practiced adult castration but, this was a religious sect and is not representative of the eunuchs to which Martial referred in VI.67.

Unclear language regarding Roman gender construction leaves behind few clues with which to understand the role of eunuchs in Roman sexual relationships.<sup>10</sup> There was certainly an aesthetic to eunuchs, as examples throughout the *Epigrammata* make fun of women’s attraction to effeminate eunuch softness and beardlessness. There is also the underlying tension of anxiety

from male writers, whose identity and power are threatened by the sexual appetite of women and the possibility for castrated men to satisfy it. This literature is masculine production for masculine consumption. The language around eunuchs show them as attractive, especially by married women, and introduces complications reconciling infertility with sexual desirability and fascinating complexities with ideas of paternity and fatherhood hindering Roman sexual confidence.

### Paternity

In the words of Walter Stevenson, “the term patriarchy has been stretched beyond recognition in the last few decades.”<sup>11</sup> With this in mind, it is clearer to refer to paternity, as this is closer to the notion that Romans struggled with regarding fertility and fatherhood as markers of male power in the household. Mart. *Ep.* VI.67 and Juv. *Sat.* VI.366-78 clearly demonstrate the idea that eunuchs could perform sexually without fathering a child. Their infertility was key to their function in the later Roman and Byzantine worlds to prevent hereditary positions and nepotism, but at the time of Domitian their perceived sexual aptitude was a threat to the masculinity of *veri viri*, or real men. Early Latin literature reflects this anxiety before and during the time of Martial and Domitian: the father’s fertility was at the core of the Roman household. This concept structures the genius of the head-of-household, the *paterfamilias*.<sup>12</sup> The identification of fatherhood as essential to Roman culture is further found by Augustus claiming *pater patriae* in 27 BC.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, eunuchs could only fit into the Roman family system either as a foil to fertile fathers or as a threat to their dominance of the household. Not only is there the dissonance of a “less manly” man being a more desirable sexual partner, if sexual potency is parsed as the core of Roman power, but eunuchs should have been eradicated from access to power and proximity to the wives of influential men.<sup>14</sup> This was not the case.

Conflict between the sexuality and impotence of eunuchs continues elsewhere in Martial, as in that direct address to Domitian (“...under your rule, there will be no such thing as a eunuch or an adulterer...”)<sup>15</sup> Here, Martial jests on the sexual depravity of Rome by saying that eunuchs were sexually involved with mistresses, the wives of influential Roman men. To forbid eunuchs and adultery would indeed promote future generations (more fertile men) and prevent children born out of wedlock but the interesting idea of course is that eunuchs would be adulterers. On one hand, Martial addressed Domitian’s legislation to prohibit castration within the empire.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, this legislation can be paired with Mart. *Ep.* VI.67 to show a growing anxiety towards the very existence of eunuchs and their perceived growing influence over Roman culture.

The episode of Clodius at the Bona Dea illustrates a certain lack of control over Roman sexuality. The famously charismatic Publius Clodius Pulcher joined Pompeia, wife of Julius Caesar, during the sacred rites of the Bona Dea by disguising himself as a woman.<sup>17</sup> This incident fed Cicero for years, as he poured a seemingly endless stream of accusations of lechery against Clodius. Caesar divorced Pompeia, supposedly as a direct result of the scene, under the claim that his wife should be above all suspicion. Without any involvement of eunuchs, this is the same story in different words which Martial and Juvenal put into poetry. A charming man woos the not-unwilling wife of a prominent Roman, and though the underlying anxiety of the story reveals a man’s shortcoming to hold his wife’s attention. Yet, it is the woman and her theoretical partner who are rebuked.

At this point it is relevant to note that Emperor Domitian had two special relationships (of which Martial was aware) which directly contradicted his legislation against castration and affairs. The first is that one of Domitian’s lifelong confidants was the eunuch Earinos. Book 9 of

*Epigrammata* is rife with poetry about Earinos, and the Roman poet Statius also published poetry about Earinos (specifically, about his hair.)<sup>18</sup> What is known of Earinos is the standard eunuch backstory. He was sent from his home in Pergamum to Rome as a boy, where he was castrated *before puberty* to preserve his boyish good-looks.<sup>19</sup> If this detail is true, it would explain Earinos being castrated before Domitian banned the practice (conveniently absolving the emperor of hypocrisy), and also it would mean that Earinos was not sexually prolific. His role at Domitian's court was as cup-bearer, and Domitian's sincere affection for him was proved by granting early manumission, when Earinos was between 16-18 years old.<sup>20</sup> Martial exhausted all possibilities for word-play on the name "Earinos" and his associations with Ganymede, Pergamum, and Aesculapius, but there is no direct abuse towards Earinos' sexual behavior. This was either to maintain a mild sense of decency and respect toward Domitian, or because there was enough understanding that accusations would not stick, because of the *type* of eunuch that Earinos was. As a eunuch castrated before puberty, Earinos would unlikely have been able to engage in penetrative sex as an active partner.

Diverting slightly from Domitian is an account from Philostratus on Emperor Hadrian's favourite eunuch. Favorinus of Arelate (Arles) was a highly educated eunuch from Gaul, who travelled extensively through Rome, Italy, and had journeys through Greece. It is likely that Lucian's *The Eunuch* was based on Favorinus. The relationship between Favorinus and Hadrian and Earinos and Domitian differs slightly in that Favorinus did not stay on good terms with Hadrian, and his criticism of Hadrian led to banishment. Tellingly, the punishment was not worse. Unlike Earinos, Favorinus was born a eunuch although this does mean that they shared nearly lifelong infertility.<sup>21</sup> Favorinus' popularity did not save him from expostulation, and thematically, he was accused of adultery.<sup>22</sup> A quote attributed to Favorinus appropriately goes:

“there are three paradoxes in his life: though he was a Gaul he led the life of a Hellene; a eunuch, he had been tried for adultery; he had quarrelled with an Emperor and was still alive.”<sup>23</sup>

Naturally, this topic could be expanded to include other famous eunuchs and even the notorious relationship between Nero and Sporus.

Domitian’s second special relationship was with his niece, Julia. Their liaison resulted in pregnancy and her subsequent death from an abortion. This feeds into two further possible meanings behind Mart. *Ep.* VI.67; Caelia fears the fruits of becoming illegitimately pregnant and also fears potentially fatal procedures to end pregnancy. The contradictions posed by Latin sources force thinking outside the box. Tacitus reported to his readership that Germanic societies did not need laws regarding the family unit because there was a culturally-imposed prohibition on adultery or abortion.<sup>24</sup> This may be wishful thinking or Tacitus being liberal with the idea of “noble savages.” Either way, it makes a clear point that Tacitus saw a society which contrasted his own Roman world in which the family unit was not supported enough by social habits and instead required legislation to enforce ideal practices. The Julian laws encouraging family-making reveal that there were (perceived) Roman problems establishing and growing citizen families with clear paternity.<sup>25</sup> With the significance of *pater patriae* conflict grew between the importance of fatherhood and the control that men actually had over their families. It seems eunuchs are better sexual partners since there is no risk of pregnancy and there is even a particular aesthetic appeal, which the satirists mentioned in their emphasis of hairlessness.<sup>26</sup> Martial describes non-penetrative eroticism in his other Epigrams, and it would not be satire if his audience was entirely unfamiliar or so uncomfortable with the possibility of sex without penetration. They were infertile; they were the ideal affair partner.



The stories of Domitian and Earinos, Hadrian and Favorinus, Nero and Sporus, and even Domitian and Julia could also be case studies of power exchange dynamics in Roman (Platonic) relationships. Martial has several interesting poems about sexual power play between a mistress and her slave, castrated or not. In fact, he pokes particular fun at Cinna and his wife for having so many children, all of them resembling their household slaves.<sup>27</sup> A possible threat to the Roman man would be eunuchs as better sexual partners because there is the possibility of sex without life-threatening consequences of pregnancy or life-altering consequences of paternity. Although Martial writes about eunuchs as lovers there are no explicit references to penetrative sex. This makes sense, given the very effects of castration. Luckily there is more to sex than intercourse and although Roman sources often dismiss other forms of pleasure, we shall consider them under the assumption that our sources are limited to reflecting perspectives of stuffy moralizing Roman men and are not inclusive of Roman sexual practices as a whole.<sup>28</sup>

Taking into account any sexual limitations of a eunuch, Martial pokes fun at the Gallus Baeticus whose particular proclivity is performing cunnilinctus: “*quid cum femineo tibi, Baetice galle, barathreo?* (what use have you, eunuch Baeticus, for the female cleft?)”<sup>29</sup> Likewise, Apuleius makes a joke where a group of eunuchs, at first mistaken for women, enjoy anal penetration.<sup>30</sup> The perpetual butt of jokes, Martial pits man against myth in another jest: “*Drauci Natta sui vocat pipinnam, conlatus cui Gallus est Priapus.* (Natta calls it his stud’s pee-pee, but compared to that guy, Priapus is a eunuch)”<sup>31</sup> The interesting part of this comparison is the insinuated anatomy. Is Martial suggesting that the Galli were fully ablated? Or just that they were perpetually flaccid on account of hormonal function from removal of the testicles? The humour here fits neatly into the tradition set forth by Catullus and Horace who looked from Callimachus to Hipponax when creating sexual innuendo and sexual themes in poetry.<sup>32</sup>

Performance, role, and position during sex all reflected the social and sexual power of an individual. There is more to the sex acts between women and eunuchs than the subversion of gender roles. It is also the intermixing of different social standings which affected Roman perceptions of sexually active eunuchs. This depends on what the sex act is, and if it would be demeaning for the masculine partner as cunnilinctus was.<sup>33</sup> Roman sources maintain that oral-genital contact was held with special contempt.<sup>34</sup> This is not exclusively a classist perspective from limited sources by and for an audience of landed and literate aristocracy. Graffiti and fresco replicate the theme to maintain oral-genital sex was not fashionable in Roman times.<sup>35</sup> Participants are expected to be ashamed for their supposed foulness. Martial wants Lesbia to drink water after fellating,<sup>36</sup> elsewhere wrote that kissing a fellator is analogous to immersing oneself in dirty bathwater,<sup>37</sup> and that he could not recommend kissing or sharing cups with some people.<sup>38</sup>

Examples from Artemidoros' dream book create the effect that gender is secondary and the primary indicator of the dream's significance is the hierarchical difference.<sup>39</sup> To return briefly to Caesar, the trouble with Clodius's involvement with Pompeia was a class issue, not necessarily a "sex" issue. The idea that Caesar's wife be "above suspicion" was the threat to even himself and led to his divorce, in the public eye, far more than the idea that his wife had been unfaithful. Further, as Artemidoros shows, telling situations of citizens dreaming of sex with enslaved persons are given as perversions of *dominance* and *subordination*, not perversions of masculine and feminine. This difference often but not always aligns with masculinity and femininity, however, masculine attributes and dominance do not necessarily align with biologically masculine subjects.

Finally, it is unavoidable to mention the aesthetic of eunuchs in the context of their sexual

relationships with married women.<sup>40</sup> The beauty of eunuchs is another way in which they were sexually objectified by both male and female Roman society. Artistic tastes shifted from strong, hairy and muscular bodies towards soft, hairless and romantic silhouettes. With this shift, so grew tastes for soft and romantic eunuch partners. Roman nostalgia in the second century BC paved the way for a revival of Hellenization, and soon Romans were grooming citizen youths.<sup>41</sup> Those aesthetic features of young boys were unsurprisingly the same effeminate qualities shared by eunuchs: youthful and smooth skin, long limbs, thick hair. Beauty was compounded by the social similarities— eunuchs and boys were both technically submissive either to a master or pater familias, respectively, and therefore until they began to show tell-tale signs of puberty (like beard growth) they were coveted as passive sexual partners.<sup>42</sup> Seneca the Elder disapprovingly wrote about this practice from the first century BC: “Distinguished men use their wealth to combat nature: they own troops of castrated youths, they cut their darlings, to fit them to submit to their lusts...”<sup>43</sup> The taste for castrated boys/men runs contradictory to the Roman core values of masculine fertility as household genius.

In the words of Devereux, “The more fully one understands a given phenomenon in terms of the nature/individual/inside frame of reference, the less fully one understands it simultaneously in terms of the nurture/society/outside frame of reference, and vice versa, of course.”<sup>44</sup> Roman male and female attraction to eunuchs as sexual partners is fundamentally at odds to Roman definitions of masculinity, which is perhaps why the subject is so comfortably addressed in satire. Despite its clear contradiction, the existence and popularity of eunuchs in the Roman world reflect that there were many levels of sexual behaviour and trends in Roman society.

<sup>1</sup> Into the very Late Roman and finally Byzantine world special posts became exclusive to eunuchs to avoid dynastic complications or the possibility for positions to become hereditary in any respect. Nonetheless there were still instances of eunuch uncles engaging in nepotism for their nephews. More on the fascinating timeline of eunuchs in the Greek, Roman, and Byzantine worlds given in: Walter Stevenson, “The Rise of Eunuchs in Greco-Roman Antiquity,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1995. 495-511.

<sup>2</sup> Central to this paper will be distinctions between intercourse and other types of sexual activity. In this sentence I am using the word “sex” generally and liberally, without any specific implication of penetration or intercourse. This will continue to be the function of the word unless otherwise stated.

<sup>3</sup> Translation provided by Noel Lenski, “Working Models: Functional Art and Roman Conceptions of Slavery,” in *Roman Slavery and Roman Material Culture* ed. Michele George, Vol. 52. University of Toronto Press: 2013. 148.

<sup>4</sup> Thanks to Jennifer Blackwell for counting and finding all instances of related vocabulary as part of her 2003 Masters thesis *Spadones et Castrati: Two Types of Eunuchs in Roman Literature and Law: eunuchus: 3.58.32, 3.82.15, 6.67.1, 8.44.15, 10.91.1 and gallus: 1.35.15, 2.45.2, 3.24.13, 3.81.1, 3.81.5, 5.41.3, 11.72.2, 11.74.2, 13.63.2*

<sup>5</sup> The famous Bible verse Matthew 19:12, “For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother’s womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake,” is not given attention in this paper because it is not timely nor an accurate reflector of contemporary attitudes towards eunuchs or sexuality. Important to note, however, is that this quote was later frequently used to justify monastic celibacy and even different Christian cults who practiced auto-castration, such as the Skoptsy.

<sup>6</sup> Elinor Leiber, “The Hippocratic ‘Airs, Waters, Places’ on Cross-Dressing Eunuchs: ‘Natural’ yet also ‘Divine’ in *Sex and Difference in Ancient Greece and Rome*, 2003. 351-369. This chapter is perhaps too liberal with using the word eunuch to retroactively label individuals, attributing the word to mythological people and using “eunuch” to describe people who possibly suffered a medical condition leading to infertility etc. when they were not described this way by contemporary sources.

<sup>7</sup> George Devereux, “Anxieties of the Castrator,” *Ethos*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1982. 283.

<sup>8</sup> Juvenal, *Saturnae* 6.366-78, trans. Peter Green, *Juvenal: The Sixteen Satires*, London, 1974.

<sup>9</sup> Edward Courtney, *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal*, University of California, Berkeley, 2013. 268.

<sup>10</sup> For resources towards ancient asexuality, hermaphroditism, and third gender: Elinor Leiber, “The Hippocratic ‘Airs, Waters, Places’ on Cross-Dressing Eunuchs: ‘Natural’ yet also ‘Divine’ in *Sex and Difference in Ancient Greece and Rome*, 2003. 351-369; Morales “Transmythology” in *Antigone Rising: The Subversive Power of Ancient Myths*. 121-145; François Lissarague, “The Sexual Life of Satyrs,” in Halperin et al, *Before Sexuality*, 53-81.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Stevenson, “The Rise of Eunuchs in Greco-Roman Antiquity,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1995. 496.

<sup>12</sup> Stevenson, “The Rise of Eunuchs,” 498.

<sup>13</sup> Stevenson, 498.

<sup>14</sup> Stevenson, 498.

<sup>15</sup> Mart., *Ep.* VI.2

<sup>16</sup> Stevenson, 499. From Theodor Mommsen, *Römisches Strafrecht* Graz. 1955. 637, which detailed Domitian’s legislations.

<sup>17</sup> The whole story can be found in Plutarch, *Life of Caesar*, 9-10. 2nd c. AD.

<sup>18</sup> Christer Henriksén, “Earinus: An Imperial Eunuch in the Light of the Poems of Martial and Statius,” *Mnemosyne* 50, 1997. 281. According the Henriksén’s research, little is gleaned about Earinus’ life from Martial, Statius, or even Dio Cassius (who also wrote about the Earinus). What is known and understood, without aetiological detail, is provided.

<sup>19</sup> “According to Statius *Silvae* 70, the castration was performed ‘without a wound’ (*haud ullo concussum vulnere corpus*), which Vollmer suggests means that he was made a *thilbias*) i.e. was castrated without surgery as an infant.” Christer Henriksén, “Earinus: An Imperial Eunuch in the Light of the Poems of Martial and Statius,” 283. “Without surgery” here means by crushing the testicles. More in Shaun Tougher, *Eunuchs in Antiquity and Beyond*. London: Classical Press of Wales and Duckworth, 2002.

<sup>20</sup> Henriksén, “Earinus,” 288. “Manumission earlier than the age of 30, the minimum age prescribed by the Lex Aelia Sentia of 4 AD, was very rare in the imperial household...” From P.R.C. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris*

(Cambridge 1972), 100 ff, “reasons for early manumission could be intent to marry the patron... or any ties of affection...”

<sup>21</sup> It is, of course, unclear the true meaning of this. There are many medical/biological reasons which Roman sources classified as eunuchism, with possible conditions resulting in similar traits as eunuchs being Marfan Syndrome and Reifenstein’s Syndrome. More in: M. Horstmanshoff, “Who is the True Eunuch? Medical and Religious Ideas about Eunuchs and Castration in the Works of Clement of Alexandria,” in S. Kottek and M. Horstmanshoff (eds), *From Athens to Jerusalem: Medicine in Hellenized Jewish Lore and in Early Christian Literature*. Rotterdam: Papers of the Symposium in Jerusalem, 2000. 101-118.

<sup>22</sup> Stevenson, “The Rise of Eunuchs,” 503.

<sup>23</sup> Stevenson, 504 from Philostratus *Vitae Sophistarum*, 8.489.

<sup>24</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*. Trans. Alfred John Church. William Jackson Brodribb. Lisa Cerrato. edited for Perseus. New York: Random House, Inc. 1942. 19.2-3

<sup>25</sup> “The earlier focus of a man’s political and military service changed to a broader ethical concept when the aristocracy no longer generally participated in battle. It came to include the denial of excessive pleasures (sexual—with males or females—and otherwise) through self control and applied to the man himself and those within his household.” Tatiana Ivleva, Rob Collins, eds., *Un-Roman Sex: Gender, Sexuality and Lovemaking in the Roman Provinces and Frontiers*. New York: Routledge, 2020. 185. This idea begets the celibacy, denial of pleasure and avoidance of desire in the early Christian moment often found in hagiography.

<sup>26</sup> Blackwell, Jennifer A. *Spadones et Castrati: Two Types of Eunuchs in Roman Literature and Law*. University of Florida, 2003. See chapter 1.

<sup>27</sup> Mart., *Ep.* VI.39.

<sup>28</sup> For this I would like to reference Eva Stehle, “Sappho’s Gaze: Fantasies of a Goddess and Young Man,” *Differences* 2, 1990. 88-125 as argument and evidence towards Roman attitudes against non-penetrative sex acts. Further it should be noted that similarly enough, intercrural sex acts with young boys is also in a grey-area to the ancient mindset. Without drawing a straight line between the Attic Symposia and Juvenal’s dinner parties, I want to offer this as a cross-cultural comparison to consider “what counts” as sex. It is my opinion that Halperin and Richlin have it right with the Priapic paradigm and that other sex acts were either “debased” or not considered, as in sexual relations between women.

<sup>29</sup> Mart., *Ep.* III.81

<sup>30</sup> Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, Stephen Gaselee, ed. 8.26. Analysis in Stevenson, “The Rise of Eunuchs,” 501-502.

<sup>31</sup> Mart., XI.72. Translation from Craig A. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, although I hesitate to translate “gallus” as “eunuch”.

<sup>32</sup> More in Alexander Dale, “A Feast Fit for a Eunuch: Hipponax Frs. 26, 26a, and Martial 3.77.” *Phoenix*, Vol. 71, No. ¾, 2017. 226-227.

<sup>33</sup> Mart., XI.61.

<sup>34</sup> Craig A. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 218-221.

<sup>35</sup> John R. Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking: Constructions of Sexuality in Roman Art 100 B.C. – A.D. 250*, University of California Press, 2001.

<sup>36</sup> Mart., *Ep.* II.50.

<sup>37</sup> Mart., XI.95.

<sup>38</sup> Craig A. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 218.

<sup>39</sup> Suzanne Macalister, *Gender as Sign and Symbolism in Artemidoros’ Oneirokritika: Social Aspirations and Anxieties*, 149.

<sup>40</sup> Shaun Tougher, “The Aesthetics of Castration: the Beauty of Roman Eunuchs.” In *Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages*, ed. Larissa Tracy, Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2013. 48-72.

<sup>41</sup> Blackwell, who cites Cantarella 1992: 120.

<sup>42</sup> Petronius, *Satyricon*, 119.19: “Heu, pudet, effari perituraque prodere fata, Persarum ritu male pubescentibus annis surripuere viros exsectaque viscera ferro in venerem fregere, atque ut fuga nobilis aevi circumscripta mora properantes differat annos, quaerit se natura nec invenit. Omnibus ergo scorta placent fractique corpore gressus et laxi crines et tot nova nomina vestis, quaeque virum quaerunt.”

<sup>43</sup> Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae*, trans. Michael Winterbottom, LCL 464, 440-441.

<sup>44</sup> George Devereux, “Anxieties of the Castrator,” *Ethos*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1982. 290.

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