APl 62-3 Allegedly on an Equestrian Statue for Justinian

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Abstract   This article treats two anonymous epigrams (*APl* 62-3) preserved in the so-called *Anthologia Planudea* which, according to the lemma, were both inscribed on the same equestrian statue of the emperor Justinian I placed in the Hippodrome of Constantinople. Scholars have identified this statue with the one dedicated after a Persian victory and still surviving in the 8th century CE. The paper argues that not only do the two poems concern two different and separate objects, but also that just *APl* 63 could refer to a statue (and not necessarily the famous one accepted by most scholars), whereas *APl* 62 seems to allude to a smaller object belonging to the category of imperial luxury gifts.

Keywords   Anthologia Planudea. Barberini ivory. Epigram. Imperial gifts. Justinian I.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 The Two Poems. – 2.1 Anon. *APl* 62 = *LSA*-492: Text and Translation. – 2.2 Anon. *APl* 63 = *LSA*-493: Text and Translation. – 2.3 The Questions. – 2.4 Analysis of the Texts. – 3 Theories and Attempts at Identification. – 4 Two Epigrams for Two Different Objects. – 5 Conclusions.

1 Introduction

The *Anthologia Planudea* (*APl*) preserves two anonymous epigrams which appear to celebrate a victory of the Emperor Justinian I over the Persians. Both poems, addressed to the emperor, first introduce the details of the gift, then present the donor. The text of the epigrams is that printed by Beckby (1967-68, vol. 4, 336), with one minor adjustment at line 3 of the first poem:[1]

2 The Two Poems

2.1 Anon. *APl* 62 = *LSA*-492: Text and Translation

εἰς στήλην Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλέως ἐν τῷ ἱπποδρόμῳ

Ταῦτά σοι, ὦ βασιλεῦ Μηδοκτόνε, δῶρα κομίζει
    σῆς Ῥώμης γενέτης καὶ πάις Εὐστάθιος,
πῶλον ὑπὲρ Νίκης, Νίκην στεφανηφόρον ἄλλην,
    καὶ σὲ μετηνεμίῳ πώλῳ ἐφεζόμενον.
ὑψόσ᾽, Ἰουστινιανέ, τεὸν κράτος· ἐν χθονὶ δ᾽ αἰεὶ   5
    δεσμὸς ἔχοι Μήδων καὶ Σκυθέων προμάχους.

(on a stele of the Emperor Justinian in the Hippodrome)

These gifts, o Mede-slaying king, brings to you
Eustathius, father and son of your Rome:
a horse over a Victory, another crown-bearing Victory,
and yourself seated on the horse swift as wind.
May your power be on high, Justinian! May a chain
hold the champions of the Persians and Scythians forever on
                                 [the ground.

2.2 Anon. *APl* 63 = *LSA*-493: Text and Translation

εἰς τὸ αὐτό

Πῶλον ὁμοῦ καὶ ἄνακτα καὶ ὀλλυμένην Βαβυλῶνα
    χαλκὸς ἀπὸ σκύλων ἔπλασεν Ἀσσυρίων.

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[1] I consider the two mentions of νίκη as personifications of Victories in both cases: therefore, instead of πῶλον ὑπὲρ νίκης, Νίκην (Beckby), I changed the segment into πῶλον ὑπὲρ Νίκης, Νίκην. Translations throughout are my own, unless otherwise stated.

ἔστι δ' Ἰουστινιανός, ὃν ἀντολίης ζυγὸν ἕλκων
    στῆσεν Ἰουλιανὸς μάρτυρα μηδοφόνον.

(on the same)

The bronze shaped from the Assyrian spoils
together with the horse and the emperor and Babylon ruined.
It is Justinian, whom Julian, dragging the yoke of
the East, erected, as Mede-slaying witness.

2.3 The Questions

In this article I aim to answer the following questions:
1. Were these epigrams inscribed on the same object? If so, what kind of object is it?
2. If the two poems do not refer to the same object, to what objects do they refer respectively?
3. To which occasion(s) do these inscriptions refer? Do they refer to the same victory?

2.4 Analysis of the Texts

In order to answer the questions outlined above, in this section I will provide a close analysis of the two poems. My commentary will offer philological, linguistic and historical remarks on both epigrams.

2.4.1 Anon. *APl* 62: Commentary

Let us start with *APl* 62: this epigram is also included (no. 83) in the so-called Sylloge S (known as *Sylloge Parisina*),[2] featuring 115 epigrams according to its main and most complete witness, S or Sˢ (Paris. Suppl. gr. 352), which dates to the 13th century; the Sylloge is also preserved in abridged form in another manuscript, B (Paris. gr. 1630, mid-14 century), where *APl* 62 appears as no. 41 of the selection. It is likely that S, compiled before the *Anthologia Planudea*, derives from the anthology of Cephalas.[3]

Lemma the first epigram is presented by its lemma as concerning a statue (στήλη) set up for the Emperor Justinian I in the Hippo-

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2 See Maltomini 2008, 29-47.
3 Maltomini 2008, 45.

drome of Constantinople. The lemma seems to imply that the poem was originally inscribed on this statue. However, such titles are not as ancient as the epigrams themselves and are not the work of the original author: thus, their reliability is often disputable and uncertain. The epigram does not name the object which is its subject. In the Sylloge S the lemma is omitted.

1 Ταῦτά σοι   this *incipit* routinely opens poems and is common epigraphic style as well.[4] A 'shortened' form of the *iunctura* can also be featured at the beginning of a line in dedicatory poems, though not accompanied by the enclitic pronoun: see, e.g., Jul. Aegypt. *AP* 6.12.3* ταῦτα φέρει. Much later the expression ταῦτά σοι will be consistently used in the same metrical *sedes* by Theodorus Prodromus (11th century CE) in his *Epigrammata in Vetus et Novum Testamentum*.[5] One may finally compare the anonymous poem *App. Anth.* 3.256.1* Cougny Ταῦτά σοι, ἐσθλὰ νοῶν, Εὐφήμιε, ἐσθλὰ χαράττει.

  ὦ βασιλεῦ   Justinian is addressed as βασιλεύς in, e.g., Jul. Aegypt. *AP* 9.445.1; see also Anon. *AP* 1.3.3; Anon. *AP* 1.11.3 (Justin II, 6th century).

  Μηδοκτόνε   the compound is a *hapax*, probably modeled after Μηδοφόνος *vel sim.*, for which see note and discussion below *ad APl* 63.4.

  δῶρα κομίζει   in poetry the *iunctura*, which is particularly dear to Nonnus,[6] is always positioned in clausula.[7] The words δῶρον/δῶρα[8] are used in reference to any kind of material object, from statues to stelai and reliefs, from statuettes to paintings and icons:[9] a good example comes from the first couplet of an epigram by Agathias Scho-

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[4] For the use of this phrasing at the beginning of a line see *TAM* II 443.6-10 (Patara, Lycia, imperial age, prose funerary inscription); *SGO* 17/08/01.13 [l. 111] (oracle of Apollo at Patara, Sidyma, Lycia, 3rd century CE).

[5] See *Gen* 20b.1*; *2Reg* 155b.1*; see also *Jud* 99b.2*, as well as *carm. hist.* 16.202*; 42.54*.

[6] See *D.* 4.260* δῶρα κομίζων; 11.128* δῶρα κομίζεις; 16.106* δῶρα κομίσσω; 37.103* δῶρα κομίζων; 777*; 42.396* δῶρα κομίσσειν; 416* δῶρα κομίσσω; 47.80* δῶρα κομίζεις.

[7] See A.R. 1.419* δῶρα κομίσσω; 4.1705* δῶρα κομίσσειν; *Orac. Sib.* 12.167* δῶρα κομίζων; Diosc. XLII fr. 1*r*, 16 Heitsch = 17* Fournet δῶρα κομ[ί]ζῃς; Paul. Sil. *S. Soph.* 341* δῶρα κομίζων; Anon. *AP* 1.10.18* δῶρα κομίζει; Anon. *AP* 9.460.1* δῶρα κομίζεις; *SEG* XXVI 1215.3* (Cordova, Hispania, ca. 125 CE?) δῶρα κομί[ζ]ειν.

[8] It will be sufficient to take a look at Book 6 of the *Anthologia Graeca*, which collects dedicatory epigrams, to observe that in the rich, if sometimes inconsistent, gift terminology employed in votive epigrams, the word δῶρον is by far the most common term for any kind of devotional gift in epigrammatic poetry (44x; see also Zon. *AP* 6.22.4 = *GPh* I 3443 ἀντίδωρον). More generally, this trend endures routinely down to the late Byzantine period, both in literary and inscriptional epigram (Drpić 2016, 153). In *AP* 6, synonyms encountered very seldom are δώρημα, δόμα and, foremost, δόσις (4x). The words γέρας (14x) and ἀνάθημα/ἄνθημα (11x) are equally rare.

[9] See, e.g., *SGO* 01/09/03.3 (εἰκών, probably a statue, Kaunos, Caria, early 3rd century BCE); *GVI* 125.1 = *SGO* 09/06/10 (στήλη, Nicomedia, Bithynia, ca. 2nd century); consider also *GVI* 650.6 = *SGO* 09/08/01 (funerary monument, Prusias ad Hypium, Bithynia, 2nd

lasticus, *AP* 1.36 = 17 Viansino = 6 Valerio = *SGO* 03/02/51, on an image dedicated by Theodorus the illustrious, twice proconsul, in which he is depicted receiving the *insignia* of office from the archangel (Ephesus, 6th century):

> Ἵλαθι μορφωθείς, ἀρχάγγελε· σὴ γὰρ ὀπωπή
> ἄσκοπος, ἀλλὰ βροτῶν δῶρα πέλουσι τάδε

The painting itself is described as δῶρα (l. 2). However, the employment of δῶρον/δῶρα in association with verbs such as κομίζω, φέρω (and compounds, particularly πρός), ἄγω (and compounds, particularly πρός) meaning specifically 'to bring' in addition to the idea of 'donating',[10] occurs almost exclusively in reference to objects of small size.[11] Especially the phrasing 'bringing gifts'[12] is routinely employed

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century); *SGO* 16/51/02.3-4 (statue for the pancratiastes Telesphorus, Synnada, Phrygia, 238-244 CE) πανρατίου νείκης γέρας εἰκόνα τήνδε λαβόντα | χαλκῆν.

10   The verbs routinely used in dedicatory (and funerary) inscriptions particularly concerning statues, carry along just the idea of 'offering' and 'donating'/'erecting': ἵστημι and compounds; τίθημι and compounds (particularly ἐπι- and ἀνα-); ἠγείρω; ὀπάζω; πορεῖν.

11   I have found very few exceptions, and they all refer to churches 'brought as gifts': Anon. *AP* 1.11.1-2 Τοῖς σοῖς θεράπουσιν ἡ θεράπαινα προσφέρω | Σοφία τὸ δῶρον (church of the holy Anargyri in the property of Basiliscus, second half of the 6th century, Constantinople); *BEIÜ* III, no. IT31, ll. 1-3 (Church Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio or 'La Martorana', Palermo, Sicily, ca. 1143, external façade, inscription almost completely lost) Ἐγὼ μέν, ὦ Δέσποινα, Μῆτερ, Παρθένε, | δῶρον μικρόν σοι [τόνδε ν]αὸν προσφέρω | Γεώ[ργιος σὸς οἰκέτ]ης πολλῷ πόθῳ; *BEIÜ* I, no. 152, l. 2 (Church Maria Pantanassa, Mistra, 15th century, epigram in the central dome of the western gallery above the narthex) κομίζω σοι δῶρον νεὼν τ[όνδε; compare also the already mentioned above Anon. *AP* 1.10.18 (church of Saint Polyeuctus, 6th century, Constantinople) δῶρα κομίζειν (the meaning is that Anicia Juliana has raised marvellous churches for the saints).

12   a) Use of κομίζω, φέρω (and compounds), ἄγω (and compounds) *vel sim*., with special focus on votive epigrams: Leon. *AP* 6.355.4 = *HE* XXXIX 2206 ἁ λιτὰ ταῦτα φέρει πενία; Nicarch. *AP* 6.285.9-10 = *HE* II 2745-6 παντός σοι δεκάτην ἀπὸ λήμματος οἴσω, | Κύπρι; Anon. *AP* 6.42.3 (a fig, an apple and water offered as gifts to Pan) γέρα [...] κομίζων; Strat. *AP* 11.19.4 = 99 Floridi (offerings to the dead) αὐτοὺς πρὶν τύμβοις ταῦτα φέρειν ἑτέρους; Leon. Alex. *AP* 6.324.3 = *FGE* III 1874 Νύμφαις ταῦτα φέροι τις; Jul. Aegypt. *AP* 6.12.3 (small objects like nets offered as gifts to Pan) ταῦτα φέρει (already quoted above, *ad* l. 1 Ταῦτά σοι); Agath. *AP* 5.276.1-2 = 6 Viansino = 82 Valerio (woman's sort of veil/head-dress) Σοὶ τόδε τὸ κρήδεμνον, ἐμὴ μνήστειρα, κομίζω, | χρυσεοπηνήτῳ λαμπόμενον γραφίδι; *AP* 6.41.5-6 = 65 Viansino = 10 Valerio εἰ δ' ἐπινεύσεις | τὸν στάχυν ἀμῆσαι, καὶ δρεπάνην κομίσω; *SGO* 20/05/04.1 (mosaic, 536 CE, Apamea, Syria, cathedral renovated by bishop Paul) τὴν ποικίλην ψηφῖδα Παῦλος εἰσάγει; *SGO* 21/23/05.1 (mosaic, 6th century, Gerasa, Palestine, church of the Saints Peter and Paul) [† ἢ μά]λα θαύματα καλὰ φέρ[ει ἐμὸ]ς ἱεροφάντης; *BEIÜ* II, no. Ik12, ll. 9-10 (icon, 11th-14th century, Freising, Germany) κανστρίσιος ταῦτά σοι προσφέρων λέγει | Μανουὴλ Αἰσύπατος τάξει λεβίτης; *BEIÜ* II, no. Ik14 (icon, 11th-13th century or ca. 1300?, Ohrid, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) Τὰ σὰ προσάγω σοί, κόρη παναγία, | Λέων σὸς οἰκτρὸς οἰκέτης, Θ(εο)ῦ θύτης; *BEIÜ* II, no. Me90, l. 1 (cross, 12th century, Venice, Tesoro di San Marco) Καὶ τοῦτο γοῦν σοι προσφέρω πανυστάτως; *BEIÜ* III, no. BG4, l. 4 (architrave, 1079/80, Sofia, Bulgaria) καὶ τῶνδε σοι, Δέσποινα, σηκὸν προσφέρω. b) Use of δῶρον/δῶρα (προσ)φέρω/προσάγω: Antip.Thess. *AP* 6.249.3 = *GPh* XLV 315 Ἀντίπατρος

in inscriptions bound to offering/presentation gifts of (relatively) small size for the emperor, usually luxury objects (in ivory mostly, like diptychs, i.e., presentation objects sent by newly appointed consuls as gifts to a few senators, high-ranking officials, colleagues and friends, but also cups, pyxides),[13] but maybe paintings and images and icons as well. It is the conventional terminology used in relation to donations in votive epigrams, which becomes more codified in Byzantine dedicatory epigrams for religious objects.[14] The Paris Philoxenus diptych (no. 29 Delbrueck, 525 CE) carries two iambic lines in Greek divided between the two panels: τουτὶ τὸ δῶρον τῇ σοφῇ γερουσίᾳ | ὕπατος ὑπάρχων προσφέρω Φιλόξενος.[15] The Dumbarton Oaks Philoxenus diptych (no. 30 Delbrueck) offers two more iambics: τῷ σεμνύνοντι τοῖς τρόποις τὴν ἀξίαν | ὕπατος ὑπάρχων προσφέρω Φιλόξενος.[16] All three of the Justinian diptychs (nos. 26-8 Delbrueck), issued for his consulship in 521, carry an elegiac couplet in Latin addressed to unspecified senators: ***Munera*** *parva quidem pretio sed honoribus alma* | *patribus ista meis **offero** consul ego.*[17]

Therefore, in *APl* 62.1 the mention of δῶρα in association with κομίζειν (gifts brought over to the emperor) may point to a small object.

2 Ῥώμης γενέτης   ruling out the option that here it is a sort of fond address, like in *SGO* 18/01/02.6 = *LSA*-623 (statue of the Pamphyliarch Solymius, Termessos, 3rd century?) πᾶσιν ὁμῶς ἀστοῖς ἤπιον ὡς γενέτην, Ῥώμης γενέτης must be a poetic rendering of *pater civitatis*[18]

Πείσωνι φέρει γέρας; Greg. Naz. *AP* 8.166.4-5 πῶς σὺ Μάρτυσι δῶρα φέρεις / ἄργυρον, οἶνον, βρῶσιν, ἐρεύγματα; Jul. Aegypt. *AP* 6.28.8 δῶρα φέρει; *SGO* 05/01/25, l. 4 (statuette, 1st-2nd century, Smyrna) δεσποίνη τε φέρω τοῦτο τὸ δῶρον ἐγώ; *BEIÜ* III, no. IT11 (two fragments of a stone plate, 8th/9th century?, Museum of the Church San Lorenzo Maggiore, Naples) [Δῶ]ρον προσάγω, Χ(ριστ)έ | οἶκον ἁγίων Κύρ[ου] καὶ Ἰωάννου· | δι' ὧν ἐμὴν αἴτησιν ἐκτενῶς δ[έχου]; *BEIÜ* II, no. Me108, ll. 5-6 (reliquary, 14th century, Trabzon, Turkey) ὡς δῶρον ἁγνὸν τῇ πανάγνῳ προσφέρει | ἐν τῷδε ναῷ τοῦδε τοῦ Μελᾶ ὄρους; *BEIÜ* II, no. Te6, ll. 7-8 (canopy fabric, 14th century, Meteora, Greece) Μεθόδιός σοι ταῦτα, Χ(ριστ)έ, προσφέρει | δῶρον φέριστον κἂν πόρρω τῆς ἀξίας.

13   In his correspondence Symmachus refers to consular diptychs as 'gifts' (*dona*): see *Ep.* 2.81, sent to Nicomachus Flavianus in 393/394; see also *Ep.* 7.76, directed at the same time to several addressees designated collectively as *fratres*, namely his standard 'cover letter' to acquaintances who were not intimates.

14   For the culture of donation in antiquity, with a particular focus on Late Antiquity, see at least Davies, Fouracre 2010; Satlow 2013.

15   "I, Philoxenus, as consul bring this gift to the wise Senate".

16   "I, Philoxenus, being consul bring this gift to someone who is important in rank and character" or "for a man who matches greatness of character to greatness of rank".

17   "These gifts, little indeed in value but rich in honors, I as consul offer to my senators".

18   For the poetic version of the civic office of πατὴρ τῆς πόλεως, on which see at least Roueché 1979, see *LSA*-2081, l. 5 (architectural block with verse epigram to Apollinarius, later 5th to earlier 6th century) ᾧ πίσυνος γενέτης Ἀπολινάριος Στρατονίκης; *SEG* XXXVI 1099, l. 4 (Sardis, 5th-6th century) Μ[εμ]νόνιος πάτρης γενέτη[ς] νῦ[ν]; see also Agath. *AP*

rather than *praefectus Urbi* (Mango 1986, 117 fn. 314). Poetic render-ings are always modeled after the original and very close to it.[19] Barris-ters were regularly appointed as *defensores* and *patres civitatum*, who administered law and finance in the municipalities. Of these two mag-istrates, the *pater* was the junior (see McCail 1970, 150, on Agathias).

Ῥώμης […] πάις   see the honorific inscription for the proconsul Anatolius (Robert Hellenica IV, 63, ca. 375 CE) ἀνθύπατον Ῥώμης ἄνθος εὐκτιμένοιο.

3   πῶλον ὑπὲρ Νίκης   the phrase should not be understood in the sense that the horse was donated 'for', 'because of' the victory, as in official, standard formulas like ὑπὲρ νίκης καὶ σωτηρίας καὶ διαμονῆς (see Anon. *APl* 72.1 = *LSA*-498, on a statue of Justin II, ca. 566?; Suk Fong Jim 2014, 624-7; see also *LSJ*, s.v., II.4.), which are convention-al language for dedicatory inscriptions. Rather, here the expression seemingly indicates that the horse is represented hovering 'over', 'above' (see *LSJ*, s.v., I.) a (personification of) Victory, a symbol of God's favour that accompanied all the early Byzantine emperor's movements and campaigns.[20] Employing the adjective ἄλλην to mark the presence of a further Victory is not meant to stress here that "there was (at least) one other already in the hippodrome" (Camer-on 1977, 42 fn. 3): the need to specify that *this* Victory is a 'further' one is actually a reference to the fact that one Victory is already in-cluded in the same artwork below the horse and just mentioned be-fore in the same line of the poem (πῶλον ὑπὲρ νίκης). Νίκην is accom-panied by ἄλλην, so that the adjective implies that there is 'another' Victory incorporated in the artwork in addition to the one over which Justinian's horse stands. This would also prove – or, at least, make a strong case for understanding – that the meaning of ὑπέρ in the same line is not 'for' or 'because', but actually 'over', 'above'. To my knowledge, there are no images like this, depicting a Victory placed under the 'imperial' horse. The closest evidence could be provided by the famous Barberini ivory (no. 48 Delbrueck), where the figure of a woman lying on the ground under the horse, usually identified as the personification of the earth because of the bag of fruits held

9.662.5 = 48 Viansino = 26 Valerio πατήρ […] πόληος (Agathias is said to be 'father of the city' in an epigram commemorating the renovation of a latrine at Smyrna); *SGO* 18/01/02.1 = *LSA*-623 (statue of the Pamphyliarch Solymius, Termessos, 3rd century?) ἕρμα πόληος.

19   See, e.g., Anon. *APl* 70.2 = *LSA*-497, where πολίαρχος definitely designates the *praefectus Urbi*, or *SGO* 02/09/09.3 = ala2004 41 = *IAph2007* 8.608 = *LSA*-225 (statue for the *praeses* Dulcitius, Aphrodisias, 450 CE) where πρῶτος στρατίης, applied to Va-lerianus, is presumably a poetic adaptation of *princeps officii*, chief of the governor's bureau of civil servants; hence, the line probably means that Eustathius was not on-ly a native of Constantinople, but also an official exerting his role of *pater civitatis*.

20   See McCormick 1986, 100-30.

in her arms, is present in the central panel[21] (unless one improbably identifies this female figure as another Victory). However, one may infer that the image of the statue from our poem may be linked to another equestrian representation of Justinian on a multiple *solidus*, where a Victory 'leads' the equestrian statue of Justinian. The medal in question (ca. 534 CE?) is a gold one weighing 36 *solidi* (164g), discovered in 1751 and now lost after being stolen from the Cabinet des Médailles in 1831, although an electrotype of it survives. The reverse shows Justinian riding a richly-dressed horse whose harness recalls that of the horse on the Barberini ivory. In front of him – but on a slightly lower level – is a Victory holding a palm and a trophy under her left arm. Another analogous representation may come from the reverse of a 3 *solidi* medallion (no. 1967.256.2) issued in the reign of Magnentius (350-351 CE) and struck at Aquileia where, on the right, a figure on horseback (the emperor) offers his hand to a bowing turreted female figure (Tyche or a personification of the city of Aquileia) on the left, in front of the horse, holding a wreath or, more likely, a scroll and a cornucopia. This was probably conventional iconography, for it is paralleled by a medallion representing Constantius approaching a kneeling Britannia extending her arms before the city gates of Rome.

Νίκην στεφανηφόρον   for a formal literary parallel of the *iunctura* see Plut. *Sulla* 11.1; the iconographic pattern is routinely found on artworks and evidence is countless. Once again, the Barberini ivory could provide a very good artistic parallel for this as a contemporary piece: on the left side panel a superior military officer – a general who took part in the victorious campaigns commemorated by the ivory? – or a consul,[22] in clothing and equipment comparable to those of the emperor, advances towards the emperor himself and carries a statuette of a Victory on a pedestal holding in turn a wreath, probably like the Victory on the central panel.[23] We can imagine the Victory leaning from above towards the emperor in order to put the wreath on his head.

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21   For a parallel see the famous silver *Missorium* of Theodosius I (ca. 388 CE) preserved in Madrid and presenting below the groundline of the imperial scene a reclining *Tellus*.

22   So Delbrueck 1929, 190.

23   Cristini 2019, esp. 505-9, suggests also the possibility that this figure presenting the emperor with a statuette of Victory represents the Frankish king Clovis I, who was appointed with the honorific consulship and possibly received the diptych in 508, when it arrived at Tours in Gaul as a diplomatic gift together with a Byzantine embassy. If so, the emperor featured in the central panel would not be Justinian, as scholars widely agree, but Anastasius, according to the interpretation of Delbrueck (1929, 193-5), who was the first to make this identification.

4   μετηνεμίω   a very rare compound, elsewhere attested only in Theodorus Prodromus (*Carmina historica* 79.12; *Epigrammata in Vetus et Novum Testamentum* Jos. 87b.4).

πώλῳ ἐφεζόμενον   same *iunctura* in Anon. *AP* 1.52.2.

5-6   ἐν χθονὶ δ' αἰεὶ | δεσμὸς ἔχοι Μήδων καὶ Σκυθέων προμάχους what these lines suggest is that the artwork donated by Eustathius probably included a classical *calcatio colli* representation, that is, it showed a victorious general treading upon his vanquished enemy. This certainly is a generic image familiar from Roman triumphal imagery of many decades past. The image's dramatic tenor and pervading sense of urgency are beautifully captured by these final lines. In such scenes, which also appear regularly on late Roman coins, the parade of captives in chains arrived through the streets of the city into the hippodrome, where they were compelled to perform the traditional rite of submission (*calcatio colli*) at the feet of the emperor:[24] "It was a scene which the Byzantines were used to seeing depicted in art and literature in a standardised form and one which they came to witness more often in ensuing decades".[25] According to Grabar (1936, 130), the iconography of the mounted emperor standing above a captive or a barbarian dates back to the 1st century CE, and precisely to the reign of Titus. Croke (2008, 451-2) collects several literary and artistic parallels (see also Croke 2008, 450; 454-5), of which the most remarkable and representative are certainly that featured in the central panel of the Barberini ivory (upper and lower register), and that on the north-west face of the base of the obelisk of Theodosius I set up in the Hippodrome in 390 CE, with barbarians standing facing each others in two opposite rows and bearing offerings on their knees in the lower register. However, these two famous examples do not present a proper *calcatio* scene, as in both cases the barbarians are not represented as captives, but as bearing tribute and thus acknowledging imperial supremacy.[26] A *calcatio* representation

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[24]   McCormick 1986, 57-8; 96.

[25]   Croke 2008, 451.

[26]   For further literary allusions to *calcatio* illustration see also *APl* 39 = II Giommoni = *LSA*-476 by Arabius Scholasticus (on an icon of Longinus, *hyparchos* in 537-539 and 542 CE and *magister militum* in 551 CE at Constantinople), with Giommoni 2013; Procop. *Aed.* 1.2.12 (on the equestrian statue of Justinian in the Augoustaion = *LSA*-2463, 543 CE?) προτεινόμενος δὲ χεῖρα τὴν δεξιὰν ἐς τὰ πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον καὶ τοὺς δακτύλους διαπετάσας ἐγκελεύεται τοῖς ἐκείνῃ βαρβάροις καθῆσθαι οἴκοι καὶ μὴ πρόσω ἰέναι ("stretching forth his right hand toward the rising sun and spreading out his fingers, he commands the barbarians in that quarter to remain at home and to advance no further" [transl. Dewing]; in this case the *calcatio* allusion could have a real reference, for Russian pilgrims to the city mentioned that the colossal bronze horseman was complemented in front by a bronze group of three 'pagan' kings placed on shorter columns and pedestals, kneeling before it and holding tribute in their hands; these

is also present on the lower register of both panels of the so-called Halberstadt diptych,[27] for an eastern consul (perhaps Constans, eastern consul in 414 and *magister militum per Thracias* in 412): different scenes of captives – two of the men have their hands bound together in chains behind their backs – together with their women and babies are shown. Further examples, including scenes of homage to the emperor, come from the Arch of Galerius of Thessaloniki. On the external face, among the reliefs on the right pillar moving through the octopylon to exit the city towards Adrianople and to the hippodrome and palace, Persian prisoners, including female and young prisoners aboard a wheeled cart, are represented as part of a *pompa triumphalis*. Moreover, in the lowest register of the internal passageway that offered access to the city's palace and hippodrome, a throng of gift-bearing Persians marching is depicted: among these, a female figure supposed to be a Sasanian queen because of her tall headdress can be spotted.[28]

It is possible that some aspects of *APl* 62 were invented, as well as some of *APl* 63 (the representation of Babylon). In Christodorus' ekphrasis (*AP* 2.398-400) it is claimed that Pompey was represented treading upon Isaurian swords, but one may doubt that Pompey was ever represented as specifically conquering Isaurians. In *APl* 62 the names of his enemies (Persians and Scythians), like that of Babylon in *APl* 63, if not represented, were perhaps inscribed on the statue-base. More likely, the "champions of the Persians and Scythians", as well as the possible personification of Babylon in *APl* 63, were imagined by the scholar-poet's timely expertise. Given the historical circumstances, they simply had to be mentioned, as in the following epigram by Agathias (*AP* 9.641 = 44 Viansino = 31 Valerio), composed to celebrate the construction of a bridge over the river Sangarius (ca. 562 CE):

Καὶ σὺ μεθ' Ἑσπερίην ὑψαύχενα καὶ μετὰ <u>Μήδων</u>
 <u>ἔθνεα</u> καὶ πᾶσαν <u>βαρβαρικὴν ἀγέλην</u>,

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apparently survived until the late 1420s, but were removed sometime before 1433: see Cameron, Herrin 1984, 262-3; Majeska 1984, 237; 240); Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.50-1 (on the equestrian statue of Domitian), quoted in full below, *ad* (2) *APl* 63.1 Βαβυλῶνα.

27 On which see Cameron 2015, esp. 258-62.

28 See Hunnell Chen 2021, 190-1 and Figs. 9.16 and 9.17. One may compare similar scenes featuring the emperor and the submitted peoples in a suppliant attitude, which must have been just ordinary in celebrative art of this sort. On the arch's left external face the top two panels present mirrored scenes of tetrarchs receiving a male Persian suppliant, while the captured Sasanian imperial family looks on (see Hunnell Chen 2021, 189-90 and Fig. 9.15). In addition, the reverse of a medaillon inscribed "Victoria Persica" and minted in 298 at Siscia in honour of Galerius after his critical victory at Satala unusually shows a kneeling Persian woman and child together with a standing male suppliant approaching the emperor on horseback: both the male and female figures' arms are outstretched in a pleading gesture (see Hunnell Chen 2021, 192 and fig. 9.18).

Σαγγάριε, κρατερῇσι ῥοὰς ἀψῖσι πεδηθεὶς
οὕτω ἐδουλώθης κοιρανικῇ παλάμῃ·
ὁ πρὶν δὲ σκαφέεσσιν ἀνέμβατος, ὁ πρὶν ἀτειρὴς   5
κεῖσαι λαϊνέῃ σφιγκτὸς ἀλυκτοπέδῃ.

You too, Sangarius, after proud Hesperia and the Persian
peoples and all the barbarian crowd,
with your currents bound by strong arches,
in this way you are enslaved by the royal hand.
You who were previously inaccessible to boats, you who were formerly
[indestructible,
lie tight-fettered in chains of stone.

The first couplet of the poem may contain an allusion to Justinian's conquest of Italy, as well as his victories over the Persians and the Vandals. The same goes for the following poem (Anon. *APl* 72 = *LSA*-498, ca. 566?) on a statue of Justin II (l. 2) dedicated as a reward for his good rule, where possibly the city of Constantinople was depicted, too:

Ἄλλον ὑπὲρ νίκας ἐναρηφόρον ἔνδοθι Σούσων
ὁ θρασὺς ἀνστήσει Μῆδος ἄνακτι τύπον·
ἄλλον ἀκειρεκόμας Ἀβάρων στρατὸς ἔκτοθεν Ἴστρου
κείρας ἐκ κεφαλῆς βόστρυχον αὐσταλέης·
τὸν δ' ὑπὲρ εὐνομίας ἐριθηλέος ἐνθάδε τοῦτον   5
ἐξ ὑπάτου μίτρης στῆσεν ἄνασσα πόλις.
ἔμπεδος ἀλλὰ μένοις, Βυζαντιὰς ἔμμορε Ῥώμα,
θεῖον Ἰουστίνου κάρτος ἀμειψαμένα.

The insolent Mede will erect another statue
wearing spoils within Susa for the emperor's victory;
the army of the unshorn-haired Avares will erect another one far from
the river Istros shaving the curls from their sunburnt heads;
for his successful good order the imperial city
erected instead this one here after he held the crown of the consulate.
But may you stand stable in the ground, fortunate Byzantine Rome,
having repaid the divine power of Justin.

Finally, at line 4 of Jo. Barb. *APl* 38 = VIII Giommoni = *SGO* 20/11/03 = *LSA*-484, on an εἰκών (likely a statue) of Synesius Scholasticus erected in Berytus on occasion of a victory in battle, it is plausible that personified representations of Nike and Themis are meant. Nonetheless, it is not clear – and there is no evidence – whether these female figures were included in the artwork: the fact is that the public of Constantinople, Berytus and other major eastern cities were accustomed to the sort of triumphal scene described by the anony-

mous poet of *APl* 62 and John Barbucallus. They looked at an image and saw in its details confirmation of their ideas about imperial power. Therefore, if not actually represented, the barbarians of *APl* 62 were certainly perceived as an unavoidable and essential part of the object and of imperial self-representation imagery anyway.

6 Μήδων καὶ Σκυθέων for the association of Persians and Scythians a precise and perfectly matching, though very late, parallel comes from the epitaph for Basil II (d. 1025), buried in the church of St John the Evangelist near the Hebdomon (ll. 15-16): καὶ μαρτυροῦσι τοῦτο Πέρσαι καὶ Σκύθαι, | σὺν οἷς Ἀβασγός, Ἰσμαήλ, Ἄραψ, Ἴβηρ ("and this is witnessed by the Persians and the Scythians, and with | them the Abasgians, the Ismaelites, the Arabs and the Iberians").

2.4.2 Anon. *APl* 63: Commentary

Lemma the expression εἰς τὸ αὐτό only indicates that the theme treated in *APl* 63 is the same as *APl* 62.

1 ἄνακτα Justinian is styled ἄναξ also in Jul. Aegypt. *AP* 7.592.1. More in general, ἄναξ is seemingly the formal title used in official honorific inscriptions to address or mention the imperial power.[29]

ὀλλυμένην Βαβυλῶνα the *iunctura* occurs also at Ps.-Luc. *Philopatr.* 29 Βαβυλῶνα ὀλλυμένην.

Βαβυλῶνα this is probably best visualised as a traditional *calcatio colli* carried out with due ceremony in the hippodrome (see above, *ad APl* 62.5-6 ἐν χθονὶ δ᾽ αἰεὶ | δεσμὸς ἔχοι Μήδων καὶ Σκυθέων προμάχους). For the representation of Babylon (likely) as a woman featured in a probable *calcatio* illustration one may compare Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.50-1 (on the equestrian statue of Domitian) *vacuae pro cespite terrae | aerea captivi crinem tegit ungula Rheni*. Personifications of Persian cities or territories[30] are shown in the Arch of Galerius in Thessaloniki (third panel from the top on the arch's left external face, entering the adjacent hippodrome and palace): these are female figures holding cornucopias and sceptres, perhaps the very geographic zone forfeited in exchange for the return of Narseh's family according to the terms of the Treaty of Nisibis (see Hunnell Chen 2021, 189-90 and Fig. 9.15).

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29 See Anon. *AP* 15.45.3 = *LSA*-507; Anon. *APl* 46.1; Anon. *APl* 70.1 = *LSA*-497; Anon. *APl* 72.2 = *LSA*-498; Anon. *APl* 335.1 = *LSA*-503; Anon. *APl* 344.3 = *LSA*-499; Anon. *APl* 348.3 = *LSA*-502; Anon. *APl* 350.3 and 7 = *LSA*-502; Anon. *APl* 360.3 = *LSA*-500; Anon. *APl* 366.4 = *LSA*-505.

30 For city personifications in ivories see Cameron 2015.

2 Ἀσσυρίων   for the Assyrians = Persians see, e.g., Theaet. Schol. *APl* 221.10 = V Giommoni and *APl* 233.4 = VI Giommoni; Anon. *AP* 9.810.2 = *LSA*-2770.

3-4 ἀντολίης ζυγὸν ἕλκων | στῆσεν Ἰουλιανὸς μάρτυρα μηδοφόνον this way of rendering poetically and adapting to the verse the official titles and appointments is typical in late antique honorific epigrams: see Leont. *APl* 37.3-4 = XV Giommoni = *LSA*-477 (on a στήλη of Peter Barsymes, whose ἀρχαί – appointments – as *praefectus praetorio Orientis* [twice, in 543-546 and 555-559] and honorary consul are represented) ἀντολίης πρώτη καὶ διχθαδίη μετὰ τήνδε | κόχλου πορφυρέης καὶ πάλιν ἀντολίης; *SGO* 18/08/02.1 = *LSA*-639 (on a statue of Zenon, *magister utriusque militiae per Orientem*, dedicated by the city of Sagalassus, 447-451 CE) Ἥλιον ἀντολίης ἡγήτορα καρτερόθυμον.

ὅν [...] | στῆσεν   this phrasing, which consists of the use of the noun of the honorand in the accusative depending on the verb ἵστημι, and which is routinely found in honorific inscriptions for statues,[31] proves the fact that our epigram clearly refers to one of those.

4 μάρτυρα   needless to say, in honorific epigrams people, places and things of all sorts are 'witnesses' to the deeds or the work of the person praised. A few late antique examples are collected by Giommoni (2013, 138-43); to these it is worth adding the following: firstly, an inscription for the general and emperor's late father Theodosius the Elder, whose στήλη in Ephesus acts as μάρτυς to his virtues (*SGO* 03/02/24 = *LSA*-722, 390 CE):

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31   Several late antique examples can be listed: see, e.g., *SGO* 18/03/01 (Olbasa, imperial age); *SGO* 19/02/01 (Antiochia, Cilicia, ca. 1st century); *SGO* 08/01/08.1 (honorific inscription for Maximus, poet, Cyzicus, 2nd or 3rd century CE); *SGO* 18/01/08 = *LSA*-625 (Termessus, Pamphylia, ca. 212 CE); *SGO* 18/01/02.1-8 = *LSA*-623 (statue of the Pamphyliarch Solymius, Termessos, 3rd century?); Kaibel, *Epigr. Gr.* 905.5-6 = *I.Cret.* IV 323 Guarducci = Robert Hellenica IV, 89-94 = *LSA*-785 (honorific inscription for the governor Marcellinus, Crete, circa 4th c. CE); *SGO* 02/09/11.1-2 = *ala2004* 33 = *IAph2007* 5.120 = *LSA*-183 (Eupeithios, Aphrodisias, 4th century); *SGO* 02/09/17.3-4 = *ala2004* 31 = *IAph2007* 3.8 = *LSA*-150 with 151 (statue monument of Oikoumenios, *praeses Cariae*, Aphrodisias, later 4th century CE); *SGO* 03/02/14.1-4 = *LSA*-730 (Messalinus, Ephesus, 4th-5th century); *SGO* 02/09/04.1 = *ala2004* 36 = *IAph2007* 4.310 = *LSA*-224 (Anthemius, Aphrodisias, 405-414 CE); *SGO* 02/09/10.2 = *ala2004* 88 = *IAph2007* 5.18 = *LSA*-186 (Eugenius, Aphrodisias, 6th century); *SGO* 02/09/09.5-6 = *ala2004* 41 = *IAph2007* 8.608 = *LSA*-225 (honorific inscription for Dulcitius, *praeses*, Aphrodisias, mid-5th c. CE); *SGO* 18/08/02.2 = *LSA*-639 (Sagalassus, 447-451 CE); *SGO* 19/19/01 (Rhosos, Cilicia, "spät"); Anon. *AP* 15.45.1-4 = *LSA*-507 (statue of the charioteer Julian, Constantinople, 6th century); Anon. *AP* 15.48.2-3 = *LSA*-506 (statue of the charioteer Uranius, Constantinople, 6th century) βασιλεὺς στῆσε [...] | Οὐράνιον; Anon. *APl* 341.2 = *LSA*-349 (statue of the charioteer Porphyrius, Constantinople, 6th century) ἕστησαν [...] Πορφύριον; *SGO* 03/02/08.3-4 = *LSA*-727 (Ephesus, 550 CE); Mich. Gramm. *APl* 316.5-6 = *SGO* 05/04/01 = *LSA*-663 and *LSA*-2494 (on an icon of Agathias Scholasticus); *SGO* 22/19/01 ('Amra, Nabataea-Arabia, "datum umbestimmt"); *SGO* 22/42/03 (statue of the governon Sabinianus, Bostra, Christian age).

Εὐδικίης, μώλοιο, σαωφροσύνης, ἀρετάων
μάρτυς ἐγὼ στήλη Θεοδοσίῳ τελέθω.

In an honorific inscription for the proconsul Eustathius on his statue base (*SGO* 05/01/09 = *LSA*-516, Smyrna, 4th-5th century) the statue traditionally speaks in the first person and declares that it testifies to the good and noble things that he did, as well as those that the assembly did for him in return:

εἰκὼν Εὐσταθίοιο πέλω, φίλος· εἰμὶ δὲ μάρτυς
ἀμφοτέρων κραδίης πα[ν]ετήτυμος, ὅσσα μὲν αὐτὸ[ς]
βουλὴν ἐσθλὰ ἔοργε πονεύμενος, ὅσ‹σ›α δὲ βουλή
ἀνθυπάτων τὸν ἄριστον ἀμείψατο κυδαίνουσα.

In Agath. *AP* 1.36.5-6 = 17 Viansino = 6 Valerio, already quoted above, the picture of Theodorus the illustrious, portrayed while receiving the *insignia* of office from the archangel, testifies to his gratitude, for he faithfully had the archangel's grace toward him painted in colours:

τῆς δ᾽ εὐγνωμοσύνης μάρτυς γραφίς· ὑμετέρην γὰρ
χρώμασι μιμηλὴν ἀντετύπωσε χάριν.

An epigram by Michael the grammarian (*APl* 316 = *SGO* 05/04/01 = *LSA*-663 and *LSA*-2494) on an icon of Agathias Scholasticus claims at lines 3-4 that his hometown, the city of Myrina, gave him this portrait as a testimony of his love and his own literary skill:

[…] καὶ πόρε τήνδε
εἰκόνα, καὶ στοργῆς μάρτυρα καὶ σοφίης·

The motif endures up to the Byzantine era and also appears in two epigrams already quoted above in reference to the specific use of verbs like κομίζω and φέρω in votive epigrams or inscriptions for small objects:

BEIÜ II, no. Me28 (France, before 1204)
Καὶ πρὶν ὑπούργει τὸ τρύβλιον Δεσπότῃ
κείνῳ μαθητὰς ἐστιῶντι τοὺς φίλους
καὶ νῦν ὑπουργεῖ τοῖς μειλιγμοῖς Δεσπότου·
μαρτυρεῖ τοῦτο δῶρον εἰσειργασμένον.

BEIÜ II, no. Te6, l. 2 (Meteora, Greece, 14th century)
ὡς μαρτυρεῖ τὸ λύθρον ἐν τῇ φιάλῃ

Especially in Byzantine epigrams for sacred objects the offering 'testifies'/'witnesses', e.g., devotion. As Cameron (1973, 91) states,

"it would be superfluous to cite examples of so common a theme".[32] However, I do think it is possible to track down the original model for this pattern, at least when it is used in epigrams dedicated to 'Persian' subjects. For it is quite striking that the same 'witness' theme appears in an ekphrastic epigram by Alpheus of Mytilene dating back to the early imperial age commemorating Themistocles and the victory of the Greeks over the Persians in the Battle of Salamis (*AP* 7.237 = *GPh* VI 3542-7):

> Οὔρεά μευ καὶ πόντον ὑπὲρ τύμβοιο χάρασσε
>   καὶ μέσον ἀμφοτέρων μάρτυρα Λητοΐδην
> ἀενάων τε βαθὺν ποταμῶν ῥόον, οἵ ποτε ῥείθροις
>   Ξέρξου μυριόναυν οὐχ ὑπέμειναν ἄρη·
> ἔγγραφε καὶ Σαλαμῖνα, Θεμιστοκλέους ἵνα σῆμα   5
>   κηρύσσῃ Μάγνης δῆμος ἀποφθιμένου.

> Carve on my tomb the mountains and the sea,
> and between them the son of Leto as witness
> and the deep stream of the perennial rivers, which at the time
>   [with their currents
> did not resist to Xerxes' army of thousand ships.
> Carve Salamis too, so that the people of Magnesia
> proclaim the tomb of the dead Themistocles.

Alpheus' poem can be situated in and reflects the historical context of the resumed hostilities against the eastern enemies during the first centuries CE. As a matter of fact, Greek victories over the Persians are not a surprising topic in epigrams in any age.[33] From the Hellenistic age, epigrams glorify contemporary events, in particular wars

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32 For the pattern is massively exploited particularly in epigrams from the *Garland* of Philip: see Parmen. *APl* 222.4 = *GPh* XV 2627 (the statue of Nemesis at Rhamnous, bearing witness to Attica of victory and of art); Crin. *AP* 9.283.3 = *GPh* XXVI 1919 = 26 Ypsilanti (mountains and rivers as witnesses of the victories by Germanicus over the Celts); Id. *AP* 9.419.4 = *GPh* XXIX 1938 = 29 Ypsilanti (Pyrenean waters attest the fame of Augustus); Antip. Thess. *AP* 9.238.1-2 = *GPh* LXXXIII 535-6 (the bronze statue of Apollo by Onatas bears witness to Zeus and Leto of their beauty); see also Antip. Sid. *AP* 7.427.3-4 = *HE* XXXII 398-9 (the tombstone features four dice which represent, μαρτυρέουσι, the throw called 'Alexander'); Anon. *AP* 15.10.1 (the sea and the waves should testify a shipwreck).

33 As for late antique epigrams, see what Pierre Chuvin communicates to Francis Vian *per litteram* (speaking of Nonn. *D.* 27.299-300 "save the future helper of the Athenian battle [sc. Pan], | who shall slay the Medes [sc. Μηδοφόνον] and save shaken Marathon"): "ces épigrammes jumelles témoignent de la popularité dont les guerres médiques ont joui dans l'Antiquité tardive à cause des conflits contre les Sassanides" ('these twin epigrams [sc. Theaetetus Scholasticus *APl* 221 and 233] testify to the popularity that the Persian Wars have enjoyed in Late Antiquity on account of the conflicts against the Sassanians').

against the Persians and their various successes, by exploiting literary images drawn from the classical past. The epigram, which addresses a fictitious passerby/reader and 'instructs' them on how to build up the suitable funerary monument for Themistocles, features the so-called 'witness' theme: Apollo has to be depicted as μάρτυς of Themistocles' deeds. This is not surprising *per se*, for a god is conventionally called upon as a universal witness,[34] thus any representation of the deity, whether a statue or a relief or a painting, is 'entitled' to take up the same task, being their closest reflection. Alpheus' epigram then appears to be the earliest evidence, and thus the archetype, of the 'witness'/μάρτυς theme for ekphrastic poems on a 'Persian' subject such as *APl* 63, *pace* Cameron. Therefore, we can argue that in *APl* 63, concerning a 'Persian' topic, the motif is used because it was programmatic and dictated by the rules of celebratory poetry on that particular subject.

μηδοφόνον the use of Μηδοφόνος becomes significantly frequent in late antique Greek poetry,[35] likely because the metaphor implied by the compound became a symbol of the supremacy of the Eastern Roman Empire over the Persians.[36] By pointing to a particular trait or attribute of the person depicted, the inscribed name specifies the role in which that person is called upon to appear and act through the medium of his/her image. To name in this instance means not simply to identify but to address, appeal to, petition, and indeed conjure up words filled with power (in this case, over the barbarian enemy).

3 Theories and Attempts at Identification

Both poems offer a list of the items found in their respective object(s). *APl* 62 seems to offer slightly more detailed information on the subject. At first sight, both epigrams may appear disappointingly plain, simply providing an inventory of the elements represented. This impression, however, is misleading. The technique of filling the verse

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34 See Gullo 2023 on Aristodic. *AP* 7.189.2 = *HE* II 773 ὄψεται ἀέλιος.

35 See Bass. *AP* 7.243.2 = *GPh* II 1592; Nonn. *D.* 27.300; Paul. Sil. *S. Soph.* 138; Id. *APl* 118.1 = 10 Viansino (on Cynegeirus); Theaet. Schol. *APl* 233.7 = VI Giommoni (on the statue of Pan supposedly dedicated to the god by Miltiades; consider also Theaet. Schol. *APl* 221 = V Giommoni, on the statue of Nemesis at Rhamnous); Anon. *APl* 46.2 (ca. 614 CE); Anon. *APl* 63.4 (6th c. CE); *GVI* 1466.6 = *GG* 191 (Salamina, mid-3rd c. BCE); *IG* II² 3158.4 (Attica, 1st c. CE). Whitby 2003 notes that compounds in -φόνος are typical in late antique encomiastic epigrammatic poetry: see also Anon. *AP* 9.656.1 Ἀναστασίοιο τυραννοφόνου βασιλῆος and 3 Ἰσαυροφόνον μετὰ νίκην (on the Chalke, the imperial palace of Anastasius).

36 On this see now Giommoni 2019, 276-87.

with a pile of words connected by conjunctions is skilfully employed. This rhetorical device allows an author not only to create a sort of 'poetic' catalogue: it also produces an effect of abundance through a hurried rhythm and the quick succession of words, thus conveying, and enabling the visualization of, the various images represented. In addition, the condensation of a considerable amount of information into a few lines provides the appropriate literary counterpart to the accumulation of multiple items in the material object.

Most scholars agree that both poems refer to one and the same statue. For example, for Cameron (1977, 45) "the content of *APl* 62 certainly seems to bear out the contention of the lemmata that both 62 and 63 adorned the same statue; Eustathius' statue, like Julian's was equestrian, of Justinian, and in commemoration of a Persian victory".[37] More recently Giommoni (2019, 284 and fn. 55) also believes, like Cameron and Mango (1986, 117 fn. 313),[38] that both poems were engraved on the same equestrian statue of Justinian located in the Hippodrome of Constantinople. The statue has been identified with the one dedicated after a Persian victory (μετὰ τὴν νίκην Μήδων) in the area of the Kathisma and described in the *Parastaseis* (§ 61, Cameron, Herrin 1984, 138-9; 251) as still surviving in the eighth century.[39] However fascinating this identification sounds, no other source states that the equestrian monument in the Hippodrome was dedicated by Julian, and *APl* 63 itself would be the only extant evidence to testify that.[40] Croke (1980, esp. 194), provides an alternative explanation for the relationship between the two poems and the statue. He argues that first *APl* 63 was composed to be inscribed on the base of an equestrian statue of Justinian, erected by

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[37] See also Cameron 1977, 46: "Yet on balance it is probably easier to accept two prefects erecting one statue in (perhaps uneasy and so in the end unmentioned) collaboration than two apparently identical monuments commemorating apparently identical achievements". Anticipating that the lemma of *APl* 63 (εἰς τὸ αὐτό) implying that both poems were engraved on the same stele is correct, Mango (1986, 118 fn. 318) wondered whether Eustathius and Julian were the same person who was first appointed city prefect of Constantinople and then *praefectus praetorio Orientis*. This sounds like an awkward thesis, as already highlighted by Cameron (1977, 45). As an alternative, Mango suggested that one and the same statue was dedicated by two officials, which is perhaps the most obvious interpretation.

[38] See also Greatrex 1998, 185 fn. 37; Schulte 1990, 133.

[39] See also Giommoni 2017 on Theaet. Schol. VI.7 = *APl* 233 ὁ Μηδοφόνος, 122 and fn. 232. According to Procop. *Aed*. 1.2.1-12, some years later, in 542 CE, Justinian dedicated in front of the Senate House in the Augoustaion another equestrian statue surmounting a column from the age of Theodosius II (*LSA*-2463), on which see now Boeck 2021. Instead Cristoforo Buondelmonti and Ciriaco d'Ancona identify the emperor moulded with Theodosius (I or II) because of the inscription they spotted carved on the horse (see Stichel 1982, 46). This is also proven by a drawing kept in Budapest University Library (cod. 35 fol. 144*v*).

[40] The lemma attached to *APl* 62 cannot be adduced as strong, reliable evidence.

Julian only:[41] this statue originally commemorated exclusively the emperor's victory against the Persians at Dara (530 CE).[42] According to its dedicatory poem (*APl* 63), the statue included only Persians (*sic*!) in its *calcatio* illustration, presumably represented at the bottom or on the base. Later *APl* 62 was added to the same statue by Eustathius[43] to celebrate another victory, the defeat of the Bulgars by Mundo (the Scythians may be either Bulgars or Huns), also in 530. In other words, the statue was 're-dedicated' to include also the subsequent victory over the Bulgars, but "there is no need to expect that the statue was refashioned to include enchained Bulgars". Therefore, according to Croke, the representation of the barbarians as mentioned in the last distich of *APl* 62 (see esp. l. 6 Μήδων καὶ Σκυθέων προμάχους) is meant to be interpreted as only metaphorically extended (the generic label 'Persians' could mean the Medes, the Seleucids, the Parthians or the Sassanians).[44]

Croke's reconstruction is certainly attractive. It has the principal merit of trying to identify the Scythians mentioned in *APl* 62.6; moreover, if this identification is correct, it would then disclose the occasion which *APl* 62 marks. However, in response not only to Croke's proposal, but to all of the scholarly reconstructions and identifications presented above, it must be noted that the description of the material object in *APl* 62, although not detailed, does not chime at

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41 Cameron 1977, 43, 47, identifies the dedicator of *APl* 63, a certain Julian, with the praetorian prefect of the East (ἀντολίης ζυγὸν ἕλκων) between 18 March 530 and 20 February 531, by assuming also that the victory celebrated is the one over the Persians at Dara in 530 CE, the most famous (and basically the only) occasion on which Justinian's armies actually defeated Persia. He goes further and states that the praetorian prefect Julian should be identified with the contributor to the *Cycle*, the 6th-century epigrammatic collection published by the poet and historian Agathias in the early years of Justin II's reign and to some extent merged into the so-called *Anthologia Graeca* (see also Schulte 1990, 132-3; *PLRE* III/A, s.v. "Iulianus" [4], 729-30). If the praetorian prefect and the *Cycle* poet are one and the same person, *APl* 63 may be the work of the epigrammatist Julian the Egyptian. Nonetheless, if charming, this interesting reconstruction cannot go beyond the mere hypothesis, as there is no further compelling evidence to prove it.

42 The first Persian War fought by Justinian against Kavadh and Chosroes I dates back to 504-532 CE. In 530 CE general Belisarius led the eastern Roman army to defeat the Sassanians in the Battle of Dara (see Procop. *Pers.* 1.13-14.59-73). However, the ensuing peace was actually accomplished only by payment (Greatrex 1998, 213-18). Nevertheless, the victory was massively propagandised. According to the ancient sources, Justinian commissioned John Lydus to compose either a panegyrical poem or, more likely, a historical account (see Lyd. *Mag.* 3.28), which does not survive (see bibliography in Giommoni 2019, 284 fn. 53).

43 For Cameron 1977, 44-5; 46-7, the donor mentioned in *APl* 62.2, Eustathius, was the city prefect in 530-531 CE. (see also see also *PLRE* III/A, s.v. "Eustathius" [1], 469-70). This hypothesis is also difficult to prove and is bound to remain just an idea, as is the attempt to identify the donor of *APl* 63 with the praetorian prefect and epigrammatist Julian the Egyptian.

44 See also Croke 2008, 451; Greatrex 1998, 185 and fn. 37.

all with the one of *APl* 63. If *APl* 63 is the only epigram that should faithfully mirror the setting of the one and only existing equestrian statue originally dedicated by Julian (precisely through *APl* 63), not re-arranged or re-fashioned to later suit Eustathius' further dedication (*APl* 62), as well as the one poem which is most closely bound to the artwork, why then does *APl* 62 'add' further (made up?) items which were not really represented in the material object? It seems then improbable that both poems refer to the same object. On the basis of *APl* 63, the image represented possibly at the bottom of the statue (or on its base) in the so-called *calcatio* illustration is not that of a generic group of barbarians as prisoners in chains, as, e.g., in the bottom register of the Barberini ivory[45] – and as apparently hinted at the last distich of *APl* 62. Yet the latter poem lists specifically (the personification of?) Babylon (l. 1), presumably portrayed as a woman rather than the city itself destroyed to ashes. Secondly, *APl* 62 mentions an equestrian depiction/representation of Justinian enhanced by the presence of possibly two Victories (as that ἄλλην at line 3 of *APl* 62 suggests) represented in prosopopoeia.[46] This detail is omitted completely in *APl* 63, which has no mention at all either of the Victories or, as already pointed out, others captured but the depiction of Babylon. The Victories must have been included in the statue, as they are clearly listed as two of the δῶρα offered by Eustathius in *APl* 62.3. Yet where were the Victories included in the representation, then? What is more, in the first poem (*APl* 62) the literal elevation of the emperor's image, as if riding in midair through the sky above the Victory (*APl* 62.3 πῶλον ὑπὲρ Νίκης), contrasts sharply with the (seemingly) more static image of Justinian himself in the second poem. The suggested subordination to Justinian's image in *APl* 62 conveys the idea of slavery, too: the emperor's barbarian foes remain shackled to the earth, incapable of heavenly ascent, unlike their opponent. Little of these dynamics seems to be recalled in *APl* 63: only the idea of inferiority is also communicated in and by this poem, with Babylon mentioned at the end of the list at line 1, being the

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[45]   Mango 1986, 118 fn. 316, thinks that the Persians and the Scythians, whose mention probably refers to Justinian's military actions in the Caucasus area, were represented by little figures lying prostrate on the ground. However, as we will see further on in this article, the point is not whether they were actually included in the representation: what matters here is that this is what the reader/viewer had to visualise in their mind, helped by other similar iconographic patterns in a close fashion they could be aware of because they had seen them all around in Constantinople and/or presumably elsewhere at the time. Hence the importance of the theory of ekphrasis, according to which the reader's imagination is influenced by 'suggestions' of iconographic models and patterns available. As a matter of fact, ekphrasis gives a psychological or a spiritual truth rather than an accurate description of the object.

[46]   For Mango 1986, 118 fn. 315, "the Emperor was probably holding a globe on which was perched a little Victory with a wreath in her hand".

subdued enemy like the Persians and Scythians in *APl* 62. To make matters worse, the crowd of items offered in *APl* 62 looks excessive for a single statue: whereas it is well possible that the full inventory described in *APl* 63 was actually depicted all together in one statue, it is at least doubtful that a single equestrian statue of Justinian may also be further enriched by two Victories, as well as by a throng of barbarians, unless we think of a statuary group – but, as the stylistic and linguistic remarks have shown, the presence of the formula δῶρα κομίζει (l. 1) suggests a small(er) object. It is possible that here it is all down to ekphrasis playing a crucial role: the power of the mental reconstruction/visualisation of the reader/viewer is fully exploited in the poem, by its claim that a few items of an inventory were depicted while they were not represented at all. However, although ekphrasis does engage a great deal with the reader's response in *APl* 62 and, more in general, the epigrammatic genre's allusiveness and distaste for factual detail may account in part for the (assumed) silence about some items in *APl* 63, the evident discrepancies of artistic detail are far too numerous and macroscopic to believe even that the two epigrams were conceived as *companion pieces* complementing each other and concerning the same object and topic. Therefore, I would suggest that *APl* 62 collects all the real items of an(other) existing work of art (not necessarily a statue) to which the poem is exclusively related. In other words, my guess is that these two inscriptions do not refer to the same material object. I believe, instead, that they were put together and labelled under the same heading by Planudes or a previous source (Cephalas?) only because, at first blush, they seemingly refer to the same artwork. Clearly both poems were perceived as engraved on a statue by their collector(s), as shown not only by their disposition in the *Anthologia Planudea*, but also the placement of *APl* 62 in the main manuscript of the so-called *Sylloge Parisina*, after a group of poems on Eros' statue sculpted by Praxiteles (no. 83; 41 in B, where actually the poem follows two epigrams, *AP* 9.751 and *AP* 9.752, dealing with rings and precious stones). Moreover, especially the image of the emperor elegantly mounted atop his horse, which stands out in and is shared by both texts, evidently recalled to the later epigrammatic collector(s) Justinian's well-known official depiction in connection with an equestrian statue in the Hippodrome, which was perhaps one of the very few, if not the only one, extant examples after the 6th century CE. Hence, whoever compiled the lemmata, particularly that of *APl* 62, put the epigram(s) in relationship with that statue. However, from the lemma attached to *APl* 63 – the vague εἰς τὸ αὐτό – we can only argue that both poems concern the

same topic.[47] The clausula δῶρα κομίζει in *APl* 62.1 – a conventional formula occurring in dedicatory poems – is the most problematic expression with regard to the link between *APl* 62 and a statue for, as shown above, the idea of 'bringing gifts' does not suit an inscription carved on a statue base, but rather one for a smaller art object. In *APl* 63.2 the details on the material of which the artwork consists (χαλκός) and the fact that it was moulded (ἔπλασεν), as well as στῆσεν at line 4 of the poem (see above, *ad* ll. 3-4 ὅν […] | στῆσεν), a common term for indicating the erection of honorific statues, clearly identify the object of the second epigram as a statue, as the so-called 'witness' theme at line 4 also does.

4   Two Epigrams for Two Different Objects

APl 62 sounds less formal than *APl* 63, which reflects instead the style of official inscriptions for statues or stelai of high-ranking officers (see, e.g., the use of ἄναξ). In the first poem the dedicatee addresses Justinian in the second person, which is unusual in these poems for Justinian, Justin and their wives. The use of Μηδοφόνος in *APl* 63.4 could be a official 'marker' – the compound is routinely employed in propaganda epigrams, as seen above – while in the first poem one may observe the variant Μηδοκτόνος, which is also a *hapax* (perhaps a coinage of Eustathius himself or of the author of the poem): an original variation by the epigrammatist, possibly meant to frame a less official occasion/performance for the first epigram, which is also slightly longer than usual for this kind of poem (usually only four lines, two distichs: see *APl* 63).[48]

    As for whether these poems refer to the same victory, that is possible – and then the precise event could be easily the defeat of the Persians at Dara, basically the only victory of Justinian over the Medes. However, more likely, they might just celebrate Justinian's self-representation in the long campaigns against the Persians over the years of his reign. What we could infer is that these artworks, particularly the one attached to *APl* 62, may not commemorate specific historical events like the victory at Dara over the Persians, but do indeed celebrate scenes of imperial victory. Roman and Byzantine iconography

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47   In this period the word στήλη designates a statue rather than an honorific monument adorned with reliefs and inscriptions (see Cameron, Herrin 1984, 31), but the lemma of *APl* 62 is relatively relevant and reliable as evidence proving the original destination of the text.

48   Adjectives and epithets work in tandem with iconography. The role of naming is akin to that of invocation. This is precisely how qualitative epithets and images of prominent figures were meant to function. By being named the figure is invoked, appealed to, and summoned to act in a particular capacity.

of Easterners was notoriously stereotyped, and made little attempt to integrate accurate elements of contemporary Persian dress into the visual shorthand they developed to signal the identity of the figures depicted. Thus, Parthians and Sasanians are generally indistinguishable in Roman iconography, with men wearing Phrygian caps and women's hair often coiffed and tucked under the head covering.

As already stated in the previous paragraph, these two poems were certainly not carved on the same object, given the significant differences between the 'descriptions' of the artwork offered by the two epigrams themselves. Only *APl* 63 appears to be the sole suitable candidate as epigram for a statue. Moreover, as already highlighted above, in the second poem the details of χαλκός and ἔπλασεν (l. 2), as well as στῆσεν (l. 4), a common term for erecting honorific statues, and the so called 'witness' theme (l. 4) also direct to and strengthen the hypothesis that *APl* 63 identifies a statue, as the poem presents all the characteristics of an exhibited written document: therefore, we can conclude with a fair level of certainty that *APl* 63 was inscribed as the official inscription on an equestrian statue base, perhaps with a personification of Babylon. We cannot state more than this regarding whether *APl* 63 refers to a statue or a statuary group. However, as already pointed out above, we can certainly rule out that it is the statue of Justinian in the Hippodrome, as it is not recorded anywhere else that it was dedicated and donated by Julian, and *APl* 63 itself would be the only extant evidence to prove that. On the other hand, and for the same reason, it can hardly be the colossal bronze horseman in the Augoustaion representing, according to Procopius, Justinian. *APl* 62, instead, certainly cannot refer to a single statue, given that it mentions the existence of two Victories, one hovering over the horseman, the other placed just below it; the large number of items mentioned may suggest a statuary group, but the language and style of the poem, especially the determining expression δῶρα κομίζει at line 1, definitely single out a different kind of object. *APl* 62 was likely written for a small(er) object donated to the emperor: an ivory,[49] a relief or a painting; this is also indicated by the lesser degree of formality and style shown by *APl* 62 and by Eustathius' appointment as *pater civitatis*, a 'modest' office. In other

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[49] For ivory diptychs used outside of their standard function/purpose see Cameron 2011, 732: "By the end of the fourth century the practice of distributing ivory diptychs was apparently getting out of hand. An eastern law of 384 forbids the use of ivory for any but consular diptychs, and all eastern diptychs we know of are in fact consular. But no attempt was made to curb the extravagance of the more ostentatiously wealthy western governing class. Diptychs were issued by the most junior officials to celebrate even sinecures held by boys, such as the quaestorship. The custom also spread (I suggest) to the commemoration of private occasions. The fact that we now have (at least) three different diptychs commemorating shared family events suggests that they were routine rather than exceptional".

words, for a low-rank magistrate as Eustathius probably was, an object of small dimensions like that to which *APl* 62 seemingly refers would be a more suitable gift to offer to the emperor. Where would this epigram be carved? It is quite a long poem to be inscribed on an ivory or a small object, even on a large-size ivory like the famous Barberini one, whose back faces may provide enough room to bear a personal message.[50] The epigram *APl* 62 tells us that Eustathius wished to present an object featuring mounted Justinian surrounded by Victories and perhaps in the act of treading upon captives as a *doron* to the emperor himself. Whether it was carved on the offering object or not, clearly we should envisage a performance for it. What was then the performance for *APl* 62? We could imagine an oral performance for the epigram perhaps inscribed upon the object, delivered on the occasion of the donation/formal presentation of the gift to the emperor.[51] It is possible that the poems adorning these objects were recited as part of a presentation ceremony. The solemn delivery of these poems could have taken place before an audience. Dedicatory epigrams were performed periodically in other commemorative contexts, too. The poem then became a script for the act of donation, and the vocal recitation of the verses re-staged this act every time it was executed: by reciting the epigram, the reader/viewer would utter and activate the written meaning. Every time the recitation was performed, it did not simply affirm and commemorate the gift, but presented it anew. Performance is here akin to re-enactment. Such a performative re-staging of the original offering acquires a particular force: the effect is then a suspension of all the temporal and spacial distances. Consider the last couplet of *APl* 62, containing a sort of threat to the barbarians, typically put in the imperative or optative moods, expressing wishes or exhortations: every time those lines were pronounced, they sounded as a warning against the enemy.[52] Therefore, one is tempted to go a step further and speculate whether their reiterated performance could have had an apotropaic value to maintain Justinian's supremacy and keep the Persians away from the empire. All these observations do not rule out the possibility that such a poem was inscribed later on a support (not necessarily connected with the original one).

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50   See de' Maffei 1986, 92: "All'interno delle due valve le superfici lisciate a cera, consentivano di includere un personale messaggio".

51   To activate the message by performing an epigram, of course, one did not require a specific ceremonial occasion and setting, though.

52   Justinian's bronze horseman in the Augoustaion faced east as a warning to the Persians. On the imperial gesture see Brilliant 1963, 96-7; 184-5; 196-7.

5   Conclusions

In this article I have tried to clarify to which objects these two poems refer. Contrary to the prevailing scholarly opinion, they refer to neither the famous equestrian statue of Justinian positioned in the Hippodrome as recorded in the *Parastaseis* nor the bronze one surmounting the colossal column in the Augoustaion. They do not refer to the same artwork either. Rather, they accompanied two different objects of art which may have shared some iconographic details and patterns, but which belonged to different material contexts. *APl* 62 probably accompanied an imperial gift of reduced dimensions such as a painting or an ivory offered by the *pater civitatis* Eustathius; *APl* 63 is the official inscription of a statue donated by a high-ranking magistrate, the city prefect Julian, on a formal occasion. Both the lost artworks we can reconstruct thanks to these two poems preserved in the *Anthologia Planudea* – their only extant evidence – shared with the statues of Justinian in the Hippodrome and the Augoustaion the traditional imperial iconography of the horseman.

In view of major losses of ancient monuments and works of art, epigrams represent an invaluable source of information to reconstruct trends in the artistic patronage of the elite. The case(s) analysed in this article call attention to the critical significance of epigrammatic poetry as political poetry, as well as an art-historical and archaeological source, and demonstrate how this rich body of texts can be used to frame our scholarly accounts of art from the archaic age to the Byzantine era.

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