

## GREEK LOVE AT ROME

It has long been a commonly held belief among classicists that traditional Romans frowned upon male homosexuality and associated it with the influence of Greek culture.<sup>1</sup> There have always been exceptions to this belief,<sup>2</sup> but when Paul Veyne published the following remarks in his 1978 article 'La famille et l'amour sous le haut-empire romain', his views were quite heterodox:

Il est faux que l'amour 'grec' soit, à Rome, d'origine grecque: comme plus d'une société méditerranéenne de nos jours encore, Rome n'a jamais opposé l'amour des femmes à celui des garçons: elle a opposé l'activité à la passivité; être actif, c'est être un mâle, quel que soit le sexe du partenaire passif.<sup>3</sup>

Four years later he expanded upon these points:

Rome did not have to wait for hellenization to allow various forms of love between males. One of the earliest relics of Latin literature, the plays of Plautus, which pre-date the craze for things Greek, are full of homosexual allusions of a very native character... This is the world of heroic bravado, with a very Mediterranean flavour, where the important thing is to be the ravisher, never mind the sex of the victim. The same principles ruled in Greece; but, going one better, they tolerated, even admired a romantic habit that scandalized the Romans. This was the supposedly Platonic love of adults for *epheboi*, the free-born youths who frequented the gymnasium, where their admirers went to watch them exercising naked. In Rome the place of the free-born *ephebos* was taken by the favourite male slave.<sup>4</sup>

While an insistence on the central significance of the distinction between active and passive behaviour can be found in many discussions of Roman sexuality both before and after Veyne's articles appeared,<sup>5</sup> on the question of Greek influence Veyne's arguments appear not to have gained acceptance. Scholars continued to assert that for Romans 'homosexuality' or 'male same-sex love' was 'Greek'.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For illustrations of the argument, see below, n. 6. I here use the increasingly controversial word 'homosexuality' only by way of reproducing common scholarly assertions regarding ancient culture. Otherwise I avoid the abstract: apart from the essentialising implications of the term that I find problematic (see Section IV), the word has an unpleasant history of marginalising uses with resonances of clinical pathology.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wilhelm Kroll, 'Römische Erotik', in Andreas Karsten Siems, *Sexualität und Erotik in der Antike* (Darmstadt, 1988), p. 93: 'Bei einer Sitte, die sich so leicht von selbst einstellt, auf fremden Einfluß zu schließen, ist mißlich' (the article was originally published in *Zeitschrift für Sexualwissenschaft und Sexualpolitik* 17 [1930], 145–78); Richlin (1992), p. 223: 'While it cannot be denied that erotic epigram has a Hellenistic form, the Greek and Asiatic influence on Roman pederasty must be seen as an augmentation, not as the basis.'

<sup>3</sup> Veyne (1978), p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> Veyne (1985), pp. 28–9. I quote from the English translation published in the 1985 collection *Western Sexuality*. The original article, 'L'homosexualité à Rome', appeared in *Communications* 35 (1982), 26–33. Veyne oversimplifies the relationship between Plautus and Greek culture; see Gruen (1990), pp. 124–57, for a more detailed discussion.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., A. E. Housman, 'Praefanda', *Hermes* 66 (1931), p. 408 n. 1; Gonfroy (1978); Boswell (1980), pp. 74–6; Lilja (1983); N. M. Kay, *Martial Book XI: A Commentary* (London, 1985), p. 127; T. P. Wiseman, *Catullus and his World: A Reappraisal* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 10–11; Richlin (1992, 1993); Cantarella (1992).

<sup>6</sup> L. P. Wilkinson, *Classical Attitudes to Modern Issues* (London, 1978), p. 136: 'In the early Republic the Romans' attitude to homosexuality was that of most non-Greeks; it was a Greek idiosyncrasy which they despised...'; J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Romans and Aliens* (London, 1979),

Perhaps this was partially due to the unfortunate paucity of supporting evidence in either of Veyne's articles. Eva Cantarella filled that gap in her 1988 book *Secondo natura: La bisessualità nel mondo antico*, arguing the point at greater length and providing reference to the ancient sources. Writing of a passage from Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, Cantarella observes:

Cicero, in his moralistic invectives, does not condemn homosexuality as such: he condemns only one particular form: pederasty, in the Greek sense of the term—making love to freeborn boys. And it is this misunderstanding—the absolutely mistaken idea that the Romans lumped homosexuality together with pederasty and condemned both—that has given rise to the myth that Roman manliness meant strict heterosexuality.<sup>7</sup>

Cantarella thus reasserts the distinction drawn by Veyne between male homosexual behaviour as a whole, which was never thought by Romans to be a Greek custom, and pederasty (in the specifically Greek meaning of romantic and sexual affairs with free-born youth),<sup>8</sup> which was. Yet the distinction still seems not to have taken hold, and the idea that for Romans 'homosexuality' was 'Greek love' obviously lingers among classicists.<sup>9</sup> Section I of this article attempts to explode that notion by providing support for Veyne's and Cantarella's contention that only pederasty, not male homosexual experience as a whole, is associated with Greece in the Roman sources. In Section II, taking the point further than either Veyne or Cantarella did, I consider the extent to which this association was actually made, offering a review of the sources that contradicts claims such as Cantarella's to the effect that 'for the Romans, pederasty was "the Greek vice"'.<sup>10</sup> I will demonstrate that Roman images of the Greeks—even the most negatively biased ones—failed to give prominence to the tradition of *paiderastia*. In Section III, I will further explore the central reason for the Roman identification of pederasty as an alien practice: not the younger partner's sex but his free-born status, because of which pederastic relationships constituted a traditionally disapproved behaviour often called *stuprum*. Others (Veyne and Cantarella included) have made this point, but I wish to highlight a fact that has not received adequate emphasis in the scholarship: pederasty was only one among several

p. 225: Cicero believed that 'homosexuality...could not have originated spontaneously in Rome; it must have been caught like an infection from abroad, from Greece'; Verstraete (1980), p. 227: 'The pervasive Hellenization of Roman society in the second and first centuries B.C. mitigated the traditional hostility towards homosexuality and homosexual relations'; MacMullen (1982), *passim*; H. D. Jocelyn, 'Concerning an American View of Latin Sexual Humour', *Echos du monde classique/Classical Views* 29 (n.s. 4) (1985), pp. 13–14: 'For the average upper-class Roman the reality [of "pederasty"] was something Greek and rather distasteful, even when the love object was a slave or a foreigner' (although Jocelyn uses the term 'pederasty', he clearly means male homosexual behaviour as a whole); Dalla (1987), p. 10: 'Il *mos Graecorum* diviene così sinonimo di omoerotismo e pederastia...'; J. P. Hallett, 'Roman Attitudes toward Sex', in M. Grant and R. Kitzinger (eds.), *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean* (New York, 1988), II.1274: '... Roman society of the second century B.C. thought of male homosexuality as a Greek custom'; Hallett (1989), p. 223: 'republican Roman references to male same-sex love as a Greek import'.

<sup>7</sup> Cantarella (1992), pp. 97–8. I quote from the English translation of her book, published four years after the original appeared.

<sup>8</sup> This is the sole referent of the term 'pederasty' in this article.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Edwards (1993), p. 94, writes of 'Roman claims that homosexuality was a Greek practice which was adopted in the later republic by some Romans'. In 1991 I delivered a paper that began by arguing in some detail the point made by Veyne and Cantarella, and the audience's responses suggested to me that the notion of 'Greek love' had not in fact been laid to rest.

<sup>10</sup> Cantarella (1992), p. 97.

varieties of *stuprum*, and the ancient sources consistently fail to single it out as being any more reprehensible than other forms of *stuprum*. In fact, I will provide evidence suggesting that pederasty was less problematic for Roman cultural traditions than was adultery. In Section IV I offer concluding remarks, attempting to explain these perhaps surprising facts.

# I

As many scholars have demonstrated, Roman systems for representing and evaluating male sexual experience were organized not around the distinction between heterosexual and homosexual behaviour but around the distinction between the insertive and receptive role in penetrative acts, traditionally labeled the 'active' and 'passive' roles respectively.<sup>11</sup> Veyne's incisive phrase accurately summarizes the outlook regularly offered by Roman texts: 'To be active was to be male, whatever the sex of the compliant partner.'<sup>12</sup> All of the evidence supports, moreover, Veyne's and Cantarella's arguments that this attitude is a native characteristic of the Roman cultural tradition independent of Greek influence. There are numerous contemporary allusions to male homosexual activity in Republican Rome that testify to this outlook—in speeches by Cato the Censor, Scipio Aemilianus, and Gaius Gracchus;<sup>13</sup> in fragments of the poet Lucilius<sup>14</sup> and of such dramatists as Afranius,<sup>15</sup> Novius,<sup>16</sup> and Pomponius;<sup>17</sup> and in numerous Plautine jokes.<sup>18</sup> These last are especially revealing in their earthy and knowing tone. Although his plays are adaptations of Greek comedies, Plautus makes reference to the realities of sexual experience between males in so comfortable a manner as to suggest that those realities were a fact of life quite familiar to his audience, as familiarly Roman as the references to food, topography, military and political themes, and indeed heterosexual behaviour that are found throughout his plays. Rather than poking fun at bizarre foreign practices, Plautus' sexual jokes invite knowing chuckles.<sup>19</sup> Later writers, too, such as Livy and Valerius Maximus, clearly understand the coexistence of homosexual and heterosexual activity and, more importantly, a disinclination to assign evaluative

<sup>11</sup> See above, n. 5. While the terms 'active' and 'passive' do not necessarily reflect either the psychological or the physiological realities of penetrative acts, they do accurately reflect the usual ancient representations of those acts. See further Edwards (1993), pp. 72–3.

<sup>12</sup> Veyne (1985), p. 29; cf. above, n. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Cato fr. 212, 213, 222 Malcovati; Scipio fr. 17 Malcovati; Gracchus fr. 26–8 Malcovati.

<sup>14</sup> Definite allusions to male homoerotic desire or activity include (following Marx's numeration) fr. 23, 296–7, 895–6, 967, 1058, 1138–42, 1186; probable allusions include fr. 173, 276–7 (cf. Apul. *Apol.* 10), 418–20, 866–7; and possible allusions include fr. 72, 74, 278, 1267.

<sup>15</sup> Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.100) notes the following: 'togatis excellit Afranius; utinam non inquinasset argumenta puerorum foedis amoribus.' Afranius fr. 32 Ribbeck ('praeterea nunc corpus meum pilare primum coepit') is clearly in the voice of an adolescent youth, and in light of Quintilian's comment, which is not directly substantiated by any other of the surviving fragments of Afranius, the context of this fragment may well have been homoerotic. It deserves mention that the *togatae* were not based on Greek originals, instead bringing Roman and Italian life directly to the stage.

<sup>16</sup> Novius fr. 19, 20–21 Ribbeck.

<sup>17</sup> Pomponius fr. 75–6, 125–6 Ribbeck. It is noteworthy that Pomponius dedicated an entire Atellan farce (the *Prostibulum*) to a male prostitute who services male citizen customers (see especially fr. 148–9, 151, 153 Ribbeck).

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., *Asinaria* 703–5, *Captivi* 867–8, *Casina* 437–514, 963–5, *Curculio* 33–8, 473–82, *Mostellaria* 722–3, *Pseudolus* 767–89, 1169–237, *Rudens* 1073–75.

<sup>19</sup> So too Verstraete (1980), p. 232; Veyne (1985), pp. 28–9 (cited above); and Cantarella (1992), pp. 99–100. MacMullen (1982), p. 488, argues for precisely the opposite view.

significance to the distinction between homosexual and heterosexual behaviour as such, to have characterized the Rome of the past that they so conspicuously venerated.<sup>20</sup>

Thus a Roman man was acting like a 'real man' as long as he played the active role, with males or females indiscriminately. But, as Veyne and Cantarella observe, doing so with free-born Romans, whether male or female, was prohibited by traditional standards of behaviour. What, then, were the acceptable outlets? Plutarch suggests in his *Roman Questions* that 'it was neither disreputable nor shameful for the men of old to love [male] slaves in the bloom of youth (as can be seen even today in comedies), but they absolutely refrained from free boys',<sup>21</sup> and all of the evidence points to the validity of the distinction.<sup>22</sup> Roman cultural traditions always accepted men's sexual use of male slaves and prostitutes as unexceptional and normal, indistinguishable on moral grounds from their use of female slaves and prostitutes.<sup>23</sup>

Yet there lingers among classicists a usually unspoken argument to the effect that this state of affairs can be causally linked to the sweeping transformations of the Roman cultural landscape that resulted from contact with Greece over the course of the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. But the proposition that the acceptance of relations between masters and their male slaves was a borrowing from Greek culture contains two fatal weaknesses. In the first place it is liable to criticism in modern terms as ethnocentric and homophobic: why should we require 'proof' that another cultural tradition 'tolerates' homosexual behaviour as our own does not? Rather, as Veyne asserts, 'What needs explanation is not Roman tolerance but contemporary intolerance.'<sup>24</sup> Secondly, if we accept this proposition of Greek influence we must

<sup>20</sup> E.g. Livy 8.28 (on the *lex Poetelia de nexis*, which he dates to 326 B.C.; cf. Val. Max. 6.1.9); Val. Max. 6.1.6, 6.1.10, 8.1.abs.12, 8.1.damn.8.

<sup>21</sup> τοῖς παλαιοῖς οἰκετῶν μὲν ἐρᾶν ὦραν ἔχόντων οὐκ ἦν ἄδοξον οὐδ' αἰσχρὸν, ὥς ἐτι νῦν αἰ κωμωδίαι μαρτυροῦσιν· ἐλευθέρων δὲ παίδων ἰσχυρῶς ἀπείχοντο. (Plut. *Rom. Ques.* 101.288A).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Cantarella (1992), p. 104: 'To sum up, homosexuality in itself was neither a crime nor a socially reproved form of behaviour. Carrying on with a slave (so long as he did not belong to somebody else) was accepted as normal behaviour, as was paying a male prostitute.' This attitude entailed the related assumption that the distribution of physical role was aligned with the power-differential between master and slave, the master playing the active role and the slave the passive role. Allusions to a reversal of roles include Sen. *Epist.* 47.7 (a characteristically scandalized description of a slave who is 'in cubiculo vir, in convivio puer') and Martial 3.71 (a characteristically teasing jab: 'mentula cum doleat puero, tibi, Naevo, culus, / non sum divinus, sed scio quid facias').

<sup>23</sup> It is worth noting that a common word meaning 'prostitute', *scortum*, is neuter and thus lacks specific reference to the gender of the person denoted; he or she is a thing to be used. (See Walde-Hofmann s.v. for the etymology of the noun, which originally denoted 'pelt' or 'hide'.) The key to acceptability in making use of prostitutes was to avoid the appearance of excess: see Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.31–5 and ps.-Acro *ad loc.* for a well-known anecdote regarding Cato the Elder. Another pertinent tradition concerning Cato involves his expulsion of L. Quinctius Flaminius from the Senate after a scandal involving a prostitute whom Livy identifies as a Carthaginian named Philippus (Livy 39.42–3; cf. Plutarch, *Cato Maior* 17, *Titus Flaminius* 18). But as Boswell (1980), pp. 68–9, Lilja (1983), p. 31 n. 71, and Cantarella (1992), pp. 101–102, have pointed out, Philippus' sex is an irrelevant detail. Indeed, Livy himself indicates that there is an alternative tradition according to which the prostitute was female (cf. Val. Max. 2.9.3, Sen. *Contr.* 9.2), and another testimony to the incident fails to specify the prostitute's sex and simultaneously makes quite clear the issues most important to Cato: *libido* and *voluptas* (Cic. *Sen.* 42). Thus it is my argument that Cicero's comments on the use of *meretrices* at *Cael.* 48 ('quando enim hoc non facitatum est, quando reprehensum, quando non permissum, quando denique fuit ut quod licet non liceret?') could just as well apply to the use of male prostitutes.

<sup>24</sup> Veyne (1985), p. 28. He had made the point in his 1978 article as well: 'Ce qui est surprenant n'est pas la bisexualité, mais son interdiction' (Veyne [1978], p. 51).

imagine a pristine Roman culture that frowned upon all homosexual experience evolving over the course of only a few generations into one which simply assumed the concurrent presence of males and females as normal objects of men's desire.<sup>25</sup> The unlikelihood of so swift and sweeping a transformation is obvious.

Apart from the question of actual borrowings (either of behaviour or of attitudes), there remains the proposition that, whatever the historical realities, Romans themselves understood male homosexuality to be a Greek custom.<sup>26</sup> But the evidence that has been adducted in support of this proposition will not withstand scrutiny. This evidence falls into two classes, which I will examine in order: (i) Greek linguistic borrowings having to do with sexual experience between males, such as the nouns *cinaedus* and *pathicus*, referring to penetrated males, and the verb *pedicare*, meaning 'to penetrate anally'; (ii) the explicit testimonial of ancient sources that speak of 'Greek custom' (*mos Graeciae*, *mos Graecorum*, or similar phrases) in connection with male homoerotic behaviour.

### *Linguistic evidence*

J. N. Adams makes the point in an especially forceful way:

Forms of perversion ... tend to be ascribed particularly to foreign peoples, and those perversions may be described by a word from the foreign language in question. Various words to do with homosexuality in Latin are of Greek origin... But the sexual organs and ordinary sexual behaviour did not attract loan-words.<sup>27</sup>

Apart from the fact that the identification of male homosexual behaviour as a 'perversion' in opposition to 'ordinary sexual behaviour' does not correspond to the views regularly offered by Roman texts, the specific implication of Adams' observation is unfounded. Latin contains so many Greek loan-words pertaining to so many different spheres of human activity that without further corroborating evidence, we cannot put much interpretive weight on any single linguistic borrowing or group of borrowings. Does the existence of *phallus* or *moechus*, for example, signal a Roman identification of the penis or adulterers with Greece? By themselves, loan-words like *cinaedus* and *pathicus* prove nothing with regard to Roman assumptions concerning male homoerotic experience.

Indeed, there are no indications that the Greek origin of these borrowings impinged upon the consciousness of speakers of Latin. On the contrary, in one of the *Priapea*

<sup>25</sup> By way of illustration of this assumption, it will suffice to cite a few items of evidence taken almost at random. A graffito from the Domus Aurea in Rome reads as follows: 'quisquis amat pueros, etiam sin(e) fine puellas, / rationem saccli non h(a)bet ille sui' (Heikki Solen, 'Un epigramma della Domus Aurea', *RF* 109 [1981], pp. 268–71; cf. Lilja [1983], p. 101). The close parallel with *CLE* 2153 from Rigomagus (Remagen) in Germany suggests that the notion expressed was something of a commonplace, and graffiti like these (as well as those scratched on the walls of Pompeii, for which see the selected list given at Boswell [1980], p. 57 n. 44) provide a glimpse at elements of society that were least likely to be phil-hellenising. Two widely different but equally Roman poets will serve to illustrate the prevalence of such assumptions in the literary sources. In the course of his vigorous attempt to make Epicurean philosophy meaningful and appealing to Roman readers, Lucretius represents those who are most likely to arouse sexual passion among men as being either boys or women (Lucretius 4.1052–7, 'sive puer ... seu mulier'), and in his programmatic introductory poem, Ovid describes the proper subject matter of Roman love elegy as 'aut puer aut longas compta puella comas' (*Amores* 1.1.20). For extended discussions see Boswell (1980), pp. 61–87; Lilja (1983); Richlin (1992); and Cantarella (1992).

<sup>26</sup> So Edwards (1993), p. 94.

<sup>27</sup> Adams (1982), p. 228. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 123, and similar arguments offered by MacMullen (1982), p. 486; Hallett (1989), p. 223, and Edwards (1993), p. 94.

(3.9–10) the use of the verb *pedicare* is represented as an instance of ‘speaking plain Latin’ (*Latine dicere*),<sup>28</sup> an idiom referring to the use of direct, non-euphemistic speech (as speakers of English apologise for using ‘Anglo-Saxon words’).<sup>29</sup> Thus, even though the verb *pedicare* has its origins in Greek, by the time of the *Priapea* it could be understood as a thoroughly, indeed excessively, ‘Latin’ word. Nowhere in the sources, moreover, do we find a hint that *cinaedus*, *pathicus*, or *pedicare* were perceived by native Latin speakers as being foreign terms needing explanation.<sup>30</sup> In short, when a Roman spoke or wrote of a *cinaedus*, he would no more have thought of Greece than a twentieth-century American thinks of France when she opens the door to her *garage*,<sup>31</sup> and the verb *pedicare* no more suggested ‘Greek’ practices than did the native Latin verbs *fellare* and *irrumare*.<sup>32</sup>

Set against these Greek borrowings, moreover, is a tradition of native Latin colloquialism regarding male homosexual behaviour. The verb *cevere* denotes the movements of a male who is the receptive partner in anal intercourse,<sup>33</sup> and although its etymology has not been firmly established, it is certainly not a Greek borrowing.<sup>34</sup> Also noteworthy are various Latin metaphors, not deriving from Greek, whose very existence suggests a general familiarity with the realities of sexual experience between males: these include the use of *caedere*, *percidere*, or *subigere* for *pedicare*<sup>35</sup> and of the noun *pullus* (‘young animal, chick’) to refer to a youth loved by a man. The latter usage dates back to Republican times,<sup>36</sup> and Festus relates an amusing anecdote by

<sup>28</sup> ‘simplicius multo est “da pedicare” Latine / dicere’ (*Priap.* 3.9–10).

<sup>29</sup> For the phrase *Latine dicere* or *Latine loqui* see *OLD* s.v. *Latine* (2.b). (Its application is not limited to sexual language: see, for example, *Cic. Phil.* 7.17.7–8.)

<sup>30</sup> MacMullen (1982), p. 486, claims that such borrowings as *pedico*, *pathicus*, *catamitus*, and *cinaedus* ‘had to be explained to contemporary readers as novelties’, but gives no evidence on these words, merely listing in a note further Greek words that in fact fail to support his argument. A concept that evidently did require explanation was *philosophia*: that the word itself needed to be glossed may be inferred from *Cic. Tusc.* 1.1 (‘studio sapientiae, quae philosophia dicitur’) and *Sen. Epist.* 89.4 (‘philosophia sapientiae amor est et adfectatio’), and the entire enterprise of *philosophia* is often associated with Greece (see Petrochilos [1974], pp. 186–96).

<sup>31</sup> See further Boswell (1980), p. 28 n. 52, where he aptly compares *fiancé*.

<sup>32</sup> It is worth noting that *pedicare* is not even restricted to homosexual anal intercourse. Martial three times applies the verb *pedicare* to the anal penetration of a woman (11.78.5–6, 11.99.1–2, 11.104.17), as do a frankly detailed graffito found at Capua (*CIL* 10.4483 = Diehl 508) and (albeit obliquely) *Priap.* 3.7–8. For *irrumare* and *fellare*, also used in both heterosexual and homosexual contexts, see Werner Krenkel, ‘*Fellatio* and *irrumatio*’, *WZR* 29 (1980), pp. 77–88; Amy Richlin, ‘The Meaning of *irrumare* in Catullus and Martial’, *CPh* 76 (1981), pp. 40–46; and Adams (1982), pp. 125–34.

<sup>33</sup> One might have expected to find *cevere* being used to describe the motions of an anally receptive female or male equally, since the verb’s original meaning is simply ‘to move the buttocks’ (cf. the grammarian Probus’ testimony: ‘cevere est clunes movere, ut in canibus videre est, qui clunes agitando blandiuntur’, *GLK* 4.37.8). Yet *cevere* is in fact only attested of males (see Adams [1982], pp. 136–7), but this may well be a result of the incomplete nature of our sources. One intriguing graffito from Pompeii reads ‘Quintio(s) hic fuitit ceventes’ (*CIL* 4.4977). Commentators assume that the *ceventes* are male and that *futiere* stands for *pedicare* (cf. Adams [1982], p. 119), but I see no reason to reject the possibility that the *ceventes* are women being penetrated *a tergo*, either vaginally or anally.

<sup>34</sup> See Ernout-Meillet and Walde-Hofmann s.v. There is in fact no Greek verb comparable in meaning to *cevere*.

<sup>35</sup> Adams (1982), pp. 145–9. For further examples see the discussion at Richlin (1992), p. 288.

<sup>36</sup> See the sources cited at *OLD* s.v. *pullus*. This colloquial usage is remarkably close to the modern gay slang ‘chicken’, and a man whom Ausonius calls *feles pullaria* (*Epigr.* 77, pp. 340–41 Peiper) could today be called a ‘chicken hawk’. (For a possible parallel, cf. *pullarius* at Petr. *Sat.* 43.8, although the word is a conjectural emendation of the MS reading *puellarius*).

way of illustration that is simultaneously amusing and revealing. Q. Fabius Maximus, consul in 116 B.C. and censor in 108 B.C., was given the cognomen Eburnus ('Ivory') because of his fair complexion, but after suffering the misfortune of being struck by lightning on his buttocks, he was further nicknamed 'Jupiter's chick' (*pullus Iovis*), as if having been anally raped by the king of the gods.<sup>37</sup> The dry, one might almost say campy, humour implied by this nickname bespeaks a comfortable, home-grown familiarity with the facts of male homosexual behaviour among Fabius' contemporaries much like that which obviously characterised Plautus' audiences.

### *Explicit ancient testimonia*

As Veyne and Cantarella have insisted, those Roman texts that explicitly identify certain sexual practices as 'Greek', simultaneously implying disapproval,<sup>38</sup> refer not to male homosexual behaviour as a whole but specifically to the Greek tradition of *paiderastia* or pederasty: romantic and sexual relations with free-born young men that came equipped with an entire array of expectations and conventions, including an educational and sometimes specifically philosophical overlay.<sup>39</sup> But neither scholar provides support for this contention by means of a comprehensive review of those sources that point to 'Greek custom' in this regard, and I here offer such a review in order to demonstrate the validity of their thesis.

Among the Greek customs that Cornelius Nepos enumerates in his preface is the fact that 'it is considered a matter of praise in Greece for young men to have had as many lovers as possible' ('laudi in Graecia ducitur adulescentulis quam plurimos habuisse amatores', pr. 4),<sup>40</sup> and the same writer elsewhere reports that in his youth Alcibiades was 'loved by many, in the custom of the Greeks' ('ineunte adulescentia amatus est a multis more Graecorum', *Alc.* 2.2). In the fifth book of his *Tusculan*

<sup>37</sup> 'pullus Iovis dicebatur Q. Fabius, cui Eburno cognomen erat propter candorem, quod eius natis fulmine icta erat. antiqui autem puerum, quem quis amabat, pullum eius dicebant' (Festus 245.23–7). For details concerning this Fabius, see *RE* 111. Richlin (1992), p. 289, suggests that he was not literally struck by lightning but possessed some sort of birthmark on his buttocks.

<sup>38</sup> As Cantarella (1992), p. 102, observes, passages such as Polybius 31.25.2–5 bear on attitudes toward extravagance and luxury rather than 'homosexuality' (pace Edwards [1993], p. 95 n. 104, although at pp. 176–8 she casts her discussion in terms of 'luxury'). Other ancient sources describing the incident (for which see also Diod. 31.24 and Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 4.4) clearly specify the object of Cato's displeasure: cf. Plut. *Cato Maior* 8.2, κατηγορῶν δὲ τῆς πολυτελείας; Diodorus 37.3.6, κατηγορῶν τῆς ἐπιπολαζούσης ἐν τῇ 'Ρώμῃ τρυφῆς; Athenaeus 6.109 (274F–275A), ἐδυσχέρανε καὶ ἐκεκράγει, ὅτι τινὲς τὰς ξενικὰς τρυφὰς εἰσάγαγον εἰς τὴν 'Ρώμην. To use Athenaeus' terms, what Cato saw as foreign (ξενική) was not homosexuality but precisely the luxury (τρυφή) exemplified by indulgence in expensive caviar, boy prostitutes, female prostitutes, etc. (Diodorus 37.3.5 adds costly wine and skilled chefs to the list.)

<sup>39</sup> See especially Dover (1978) and Halperin (1990) for the traditions and conventions of *paiderastia*.

<sup>40</sup> Valkenaar's emendation of the MS reading *Graecia* to *Creta* has been adopted by Nipperdey (Berlin, 1879), Malcovati (Turin, 1944), and Marshall (Leipzig, 1977), but it is a needless conjecture. Nepos' statement is applicable not just to Crete but to classical Athens, Sparta, Thebes, and other Greek city-states. The Loeb translator, J. C. Rolfe, prints *Creta* and offers a translation that obscures Nepos' point: 'In Crete it is thought praiseworthy for young men to have had the greatest possible number of love affairs.' On Cretan pederasty, see Dover (1978), pp. 185–96; Jan Bremmer, 'An Enigmatic Indo-European Rite: Paederasty', *Arethusa* 13 (1980), p. 287 (where Nepos is said to make an observation on the custom in 'Crete', with no indication that *Creta* is a conjectural reading found in no manuscript); Bernard Sergent, *Homosexuality in Greek Myth* (translated by Arthur Goldhammer, Boston 1986), pp. 7–39; and R. B. Koehl, 'The Chieftain Cup and a Minoan Rite of Passage', *JHS* 106 (1986), pp. 99–110.

*Disputations*, Cicero presents Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, as an example of a man who was profoundly unhappy because unable to trust any of those whom he loved, even though he was lucky enough to have enjoyed many friends and 'had, in the custom of Greece, certain young men joined to him in love' ('haberet etiam more Graeciae quosdam adulescentis amore coniunctos', *Tusc.* 5.58).<sup>41</sup> In a fragment of the fourth book of Cicero's *Republic* we find the observation that 'it was a matter of reproach for young men if they did not have lovers' ('opprobrio fuisse adulescentibus, si amatores non haberent', *Cic. Rep.* 4.3),<sup>42</sup> and the next continuous piece of text presents the words of Scipio, associating the Greek gymnasia with sexual encounters involving young men.<sup>43</sup> Cicero establishes a connection with Greek gymnasia once again at *Tusc.* 4.70, where he speaks of relationships to which he gives the curious label *amor amicitiae*: 'This practice seems to me to have its origin in the gymnasia of the Greeks, where such love-affairs are freely allowed' ('mihi quidem haec in Graecorum gymnasiis nata consuetudo videtur, in quibus isti liberi et concessi sunt amores', *Tusc.* 4.70).<sup>44</sup>

In each of these passages we encounter a distancing gesture: these love-affairs occur *more Graeciae* or *more Graecorum*; they are freely permitted in Greek gymnasia. The implication is clear. However urbanely and dispassionately Cicero and Nepos may write, this kind of relationship was subject to some sort of disapproval at Rome. Indeed, Nepos explicitly observes that the Greek practices he cites are accounted notorious, undignified, or dishonourable among Romans<sup>45</sup> and Tacitus reports Roman objections to Nero's institution of games on the Greek model that include a condemnation of love-affairs associated with the gymnasia:

Ancestral customs, gradually abandoned, were being thoroughly overturned by an imported licentiousness, so that whatever was capable of being corrupted and of corrupting was visible in the city, and young men were becoming degenerate with foreign pursuits, indulging in the gymnasia and idleness and disgraceful love-affairs.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>41</sup> The tone with which Cicero writes of Dionysius and his love affairs is important. He takes this kind of sexual behaviour for granted, indeed appropriating the 'Greek custom' for his own purposes with no hint of disapproval. The fact that Dionysius was involved in erotic affairs with these young men functions merely as a further support for Cicero's argument: even though he loved them, he did not trust them. A telling parallel is to be found at *Off.* 2.25. Here he illustrates Dionysius' suspicious nature by means of a different example (due to his fear of knives, he had his hair singed rather than cut), but he adds the further instance of Alexander of Pheres, who did not trust his wife. Cicero treats Dionysius' love for his *adulescentes* no differently from Alexander's love for his wife, apart from the observation that the former is in conformance with *mos Graeciae*.

<sup>42</sup> The line is preserved by Servius *ad Aen.* 10.325. Servius understands the words to apply to Greece in general, but the Loeb editor (Clinton Walker Keyes, 1928) suggests that this pertains specifically to Sparta, given what follows. On Spartan 'licence' in this regard, see also Martial 4.55.6-7 ('aut libidinosae / Ledaes Lacedaemonos palaestras').

<sup>43</sup> 'iuventutis vero exercitatio quam absurda in gymnasiis! quam levis epheborum illa militia! quam contractiones et amores soluti et liberi! mitto Eleos et Thebanos, apud quos in amore ingenuorum libido etiam permissam habet et solutam licentiam' (*Republic* 4.4).

<sup>44</sup> *Amor amicitiae* refers to male friendships with philosophical airs but clearly they can include a sexual element, for Cicero later drily asks why no one ever loves an ugly youth (*deformem adulescentem*) or a beautiful old man, and points out that everyone knows what the poets mean when they speak of Jupiter and Ganymede or of Laius and Chrysippus (4.71).

<sup>45</sup> 'quae omnia apud nos partim infamia, partim humilia atque ab honestate remota ponuntur' (pr. 5).

<sup>46</sup> 'ceterum abolitos paulatim patrios mores funditus everti per accitam lasciviam, ut quod usquam corrumpi et corrumpere queat in urbe visatur, degeneretque studiis externis iuventus, gymnasia et otia et turpes amores exercendo...' (Tac. *Ann.* 14.20). For a similar prejudicial view of Greek gymnasia as being associated with pederastic pursuits, cf. Plut. *Rom. Ques.* 40.274D,



But, following Veyne and Cantarella, I am arguing that Tacitus' 'disgraceful love-affairs' (*turpes amores*) associated with Greek gymnasia were specifically pederastic and that they were disgraceful only because the younger partner was free-born, not because he was male.<sup>47</sup> In fact, each of the sources cited above demonstrably concerns relations with free-born young men. On the question of age, all of them explicitly refer to *iuventus*, *adulescentes*, *adulescentuli*, or *adulescentia*. As for the issue of status, Alcibiades was of course free-born, and in the passage from the *Republic* Scipio makes explicit reference to *ingenui* ('mitto Eleos et Thebanos, apud quos in amore ingenuorum libido etiam permissam habet et solutam licentiam', *Rep.* 4.4). Cicero's discussion of *amor amicitiae* in the *Tusculans* (4.70) incorporates an approving citation of a line of Ennius that is specifically concerned with the behaviour of citizens: 'Nudity amongst citizens is the beginning of disgrace' ('flagiti principium est nudare inter civis corpora')<sup>48</sup>—*inter civis*, the poet writes, not *inter mares*. The remaining passages (Nepos' preface, Cicero's reference to Dionysius' love-affairs with *quidam adulescentes*, and Tacitus' discussion of young Romans corrupted by foreign influence) do not explicitly designate that the younger partners are free-born, but there is good reason to believe that Roman readers would have made that assumption. Firstly and most importantly, it has already been argued that a Roman writer would have no cause to represent sexual relations between men and male slaves as a Greek custom since such activity was an undisputed fact of Roman life from the earliest times. Secondly, the Greek tradition to which Nepos refers in his preface (commending *adulescentuli* who have had numerous lovers) is without a doubt the same *mos Graecorum* that he mentions in his life of Alcibiades (2.2), according to which he was courted by a number of *erastai*, and these lovers were as free-born as was Alcibiades himself.<sup>49</sup> Similarly the *consuetudo* whose origin Cicero locates in Greek gymnasia (*Tusc.* 4.70) is precisely the *mos Graeciae* to which he refers later in the same treatise (*Tusc.* 5.58) in his discussion of Dionysius of Syracuse. Finally, the gymnasia to which both Cicero and Tacitus make pointed reference were patronised by free men and not by slaves.

In sum: no ancient source ever claims that indulgence in or approval of male homoerotic desires or activities was learned, borrowed, or imported by Romans from Greece. The only practice that was associated with Greece was the peculiarly Hellenic tradition of pederastic relations with free-born youth: Cicero's *consuetudo*, born in the Greek gymnasia, is not homosexuality but pederasty. The distinction is crucial, although often blurred or simply disregarded in modern scholarship.<sup>50</sup> If the Greek

quoted below, n. 71; and probably Sil. Ital. *Pun.* 14.134–8: 'ite, gregem metite imbellem ac succidite ferro... / pigro luctandi studio certamen in umbra / molle pati docta et gaudens splendescere olivo / stat, mediocre decus vincentum, ignava iuventus.'

<sup>47</sup> It is worth noting that the collocation *turpis amor* is elsewhere used of a relationship with a female prostitute (Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.111–112) and of the passion that might induce a woman to poison a man (*Rhet. Herenn.* 4.23).

<sup>48</sup> On the Roman resistance to nudity amongst male citizens, see also Cic. *Off.* 1.129, *De Orat.* 2.223–224; Plut. *Cat. Maior* 20, *Rom. Ques.* 40.274A–B.

<sup>49</sup> Aeschines (1.138–9) attributes to Solon Athenian traditions that prohibited slaves from being the lovers of free boys. Cf. Plutarch, *Amatorius* 751B.

<sup>50</sup> For example, Lilja (1983), p. 112, at first appears to make the point argued here, but then inconsistently writes that Cicero's discussion in the *Tusculans* represents his 'opinions on the origin of and different traits in homosexuality' (p. 123; cf. also pp. 50, 107). So too Edwards (1993), p. 94 n. 99, citing Lilja, asserts that Cic. *Tusc.* 4.70–1 is 'on homosexual relations as a peculiarly Greek practice'. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 96: 'A taste for homosexual relations might be associated with the "Greek" literary life.' I would argue that only a taste for pederastic relations might be so associated.

cultural heritage had included, for example, a tradition of publicly courting other men's wives, and if Romans had displayed an awareness of, or had been influenced by, that tradition, it would be meaningless to speak of a Roman association between Greece and 'heterosexuality'. Equally groundless is the assumption that Romans understood 'homosexuality' to be 'Greek love'.

## II

The distinctively Hellenic tradition of pederasty could, however, be identified as a Greek cultural artefact alien to Roman traditions. But to what extent, and with what tone, was this identification actually made? Paul Veyne writes that Greek pederasty 'scandalized' Romans,<sup>51</sup> and Eva Cantarella asserts that 'for the Romans, pederasty was "the Greek vice"',<sup>52</sup> yet neither scholar supports the claim with ancient evidence. What, in fact, is the tone of Roman allusions to pederasty as a 'Greek custom'? Do Roman references to 'the Greek way' or 'Greek custom' inevitably denote pederasty?<sup>53</sup> Conversely, do explicit Roman references to pederasty regularly represent the practice as 'the Greek way' or, more polemically, as 'the Greek vice'? To what extent was pederasty appropriated by those Roman texts that contribute to the production and reproduction of anti-Greek sentiment? In short, what is the evidence that pederasty was 'Greek love' for Romans?

Cicero and Nepos, as we have seen, point to pederasty as a Greek custom. Could pederasty thus be coded as 'the Greek way'? A review of the extant occurrences of such phrases as *more Graeciae* or *more Graecorum* provides a clear answer: no. A wide variety of Greek customs other than pederasty are identified with the phrases. Cicero speaks of drinking at parties 'in the Greek way' and of a universal Greek practice regarding statues of honoured men,<sup>54</sup> and elsewhere points out to his Roman jury that it is 'the custom of the Greeks' for witnesses in trials to swear before an altar that their written testimony is true.<sup>55</sup> Other practices that Cicero identifies with labels like *mos Graecorum* are the use of oratory for the purposes of entertainment or praise; the tradition of *scholae* or expositions by a teacher; the carrying of water by women; the dedication of silver tables to the ἀγαθοὶ θεοί; the erection of a *tropaeum* as a sign of victory for the moment only, and not for a perpetual memorial; and the exclusion of honourable women from men's dinner parties.<sup>56</sup> Livy similarly writes of the role of the herald at Greek assemblies as well as of the Greek customs of giving palm

<sup>51</sup> I quote from the published translation (Veyne [1985], p. 29). Veyne himself wrote 'que les Latins avaient en horreur' (Veyne [1982], p. 28).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Dalla (1987), p. 10, cited in n. 6 above.

<sup>53</sup> Cantarella (1992), p. 97.

<sup>54</sup> *Verr.* 2.1.66, 'fit sermo inter eos et invitatio ut Graeco more biberetur' (this refers to the Greek practice of *πορνίβειν*); *Verr.* 2.2.158, '... apud omnis Graecos hic mos est, ut honorem hominibus habitum in monumentis eius modi nonnulla religione deorum consecrari arbitrentur.'

<sup>55</sup> *Balb.* 12, 'cum quidam apud eos [sc., Athenienses] qui sancte graviterque vixisset testimonium publice dixisset et, ut mos Graecorum est, iurandi causa ad aras accederet...'

<sup>56</sup> *De orat.* 2.341, 'ornandi causa Graecorum more'; *Tusc.* 1.7, '... ut iam etiam scholas Graecorum more habere auderemus'; *Tusc.* 5.103, 'aquam ferentis mulierculae, ut mos in Graecia est'; *N.D.* 3.84, 'in quibus quod more veteris Graeciae inscriptum esset "bonorum deorum" (cf. Val. Max. 1.1.ext.3, 'in his more Graeciae scriptum erat bonorum deorum eas esse'); *Inv.* 2.69, 'cum Thebani Lacedaemonios bello superavissent et fere mos esset Graeciis, cum inter se bellum gessissent, ut ii qui vicissent tropaeum aliquod in finibus statuerent victoriae modo in praesentiam declarandae causa, non ut in perpetuum belli memoria maneret, aeneum statuerunt tropaeum'; *Verr.* 2.1.66, 'negavit moris esse Graecorum ut in convivio virorum accumberent mulieres' (cf. Nepos, pr. 6-7).

branches to athletic victors and using olive branches in the context of supplication.<sup>57</sup> Sallust has Caesar observe that while at one time the Romans had adopted 'the Greek custom' (*Graeciae morem*) of punishing citizens who had committed capital offences with beating and death, the later *lex Porcia* forbade such punishment.<sup>58</sup> Other sources identify as 'the Greek way' the holding of deliberations in theatres; a type of ephebes' exercise; aspects of the cult of Ceres at Rome and of Juno among the Faliscans; certain types of tombs, torture devices, and games; and even stylistic and orthographical conventions such as the use of double negatives or writing double consonants.<sup>59</sup>

In sum, there were many *mores Graecorum*; pederasty was but one, hardly singled out or coded as 'the Greek way'. It deserves mention, too, that nearly all of the sources just surveyed offer an ethnographic observation of Greek custom, not a xenophobic sneer. When Nepos and Cicero identify pederasty as *mos Graecorum* or *mos Graeciae* they too are simply making objective ethnographic comments,<sup>60</sup> and there is no reason to believe that their Roman readership would have detected any moralising nuances in the phrases.

Furthermore, Cicero and Nepos are describing pederasty in its native cultural context. It is significant that when Roman writers allude to pederastic relationships in a *Roman* milieu—even when they adopt a heavily moralising tone—they generally fail to point fingers in the direction of Greece,<sup>61</sup> although they could count on a considerable amount of anti-Greek sentiment to be present in their readership.<sup>62</sup> This is true of allusions both to romantic affairs and to mere physical encounters, which one might expect nonetheless to evoke some comparison to the Greek tradition. Some illustrations follow.

<sup>57</sup> Livy 32.20.1, 'sicut Graecis mos est'; 10.47.3, 'translato e Graeco more'; 29.16.6, 'ut Graecis mos est' (cf. Pliny, *N.H.* 11.251, 'antiquis Graeciae in supplicando mentum attingere mos erat'); cf. 36.28.4–5, also on suppliants: 'quae moris Graecorum non sint'.

<sup>58</sup> 'sed eodem illo tempore Graeciae morem imitati verberibus animadvortebant in civis, de condemnatis summum supplicium sumebant' (Sall. *Cat.* 51.39).

<sup>59</sup> Front. *Strat.* 3.2.6, 'in theatro, ubi ex more Graecorum locus consultationi praebebatur' (cf. Tac. *Hist.* 2.80); Festus 262.57, 'rutrum tenentis iuvenis est effigies in Capitolio ephebi more Graecorum harenam ruentis exercitationis gratia'; Val. Max. 1.1.1, 'Cerique, quam more Graeco venerari instituerent, sacerdotem a Velia...peterent' (cf. Festus 237.11); Ov. *Am.* 3.13.27–28, 'more patrum Graio velatae vestibis albis / tradita supposito vertice sacra ferunt'; Petr. *Sat.* 111.2, 'positum in hypogaeo Graeco more corpus'; Apul. *Met.* 10.10, 'nec rota vel eculeus more Graecorum tormentis eius apparata iam deerant'; Suet. *Nero* 12.3, 'instituit et quinquennale certamen primus omnium Romae more Graeco triplex, musicum gymnicum equestre, quod appellavit Neronia' (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 14.20, 'quinquennale ludicrum Romae institutum est ad morem Graeci certaminis' and Stat. *Theb.* 6.5–7, 'Graium ex more decus: primus Pisaea per arva / hunc pius Alcides Pelopi certavit honorem / pulvereumque fera cinem detersit oliva'); Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.247, 'licet Terentius Graeco more dixerit "agrum in his regionibus meliorem neque pretii maioris nemo habet"'; 3.691, 'epitheton ad inplendum versum positum more Graeco'; 11.213, 'more Graeco epitheton incongruum loco posuit'; Festus 293.33, 'quam consuetudinem Ennius mutavisse fertur, utpote Graecus Graeco more usus, quod illi aequae scribes ac legentes duplicabant mutas...'

<sup>60</sup> The gesture is thus intrinsically no different from Valerius Maximus' reference to *προσκύνησις* as *mos Persarum* (4.7.ext.2) or from Sallust's allusion to Numidian customs in physical exercise as *mos gentis illius* (*Jug.* 6.1).

<sup>61</sup> The reaction reported by Tacitus (above, n. 46) does not exactly constitute an exception, for it is directed at the importation of practices that are distanced as foreign (cf. *accitam lasciviam* and *studiis externis*).

<sup>62</sup> It is well known that Roman attitudes toward Greece were complex, ranging from lively distrust to outright scorn but generally coupled with a grudging admission of the great cultural achievements of the Greece of old. See, e.g., Petrochilos (1974), Gruen (1990), Gruen (1992), and Edwards (1993), pp. 92–7.

In his second Catilinarian, delivered to an assembly of the Roman people, Cicero condemns Catiline as a lover of free-born youth:

Has there ever been so great an enticement of young men as there is in him? He himself loved some of them most disgracefully (*turpissime*); served the love of others most shamefully; promised to others the fulfillment of their lusts and to others their parents' death—not only encouraging them but also assisting them.<sup>63</sup>

While the orator's words are laden with shock and disparagement, he does not point a finger at *mos Graecorum*. The moral condemnation of pederastic relationships that is conveyed by Cicero's adverb *turpissime* can also be detected in Valerius Maximus' narrative of incidents illustrating the value placed by Roman traditions on the sexual integrity (*pudicitia*) of the free-born of both sexes. Valerius relates several stories of sexual relations between men and free-born youth (e.g. 6.1.7, 6.1.10), but nowhere mentions 'Greek ways'. Likewise when Livy writes of the Bacchanalian scandal of 186 B.C. (39.8–19) he portrays Roman anxiety concerning the initiation of young men under twenty years of age by means of sexual penetration; and xenophobia contributes a great deal to the outrage and anxiety that Livy describes. But the historian establishes no link between the two factors. The anti-Greek sentiment in his account is directed not toward the sexual initiation of young men but toward the importation of foreign religious rites.<sup>64</sup> The sexual exploitation of young male initiates is never singled out as an aspect of the foreignness of the cult, nor indeed is the same exploitation of female initiates. All of it is illicit and disgraceful behaviour (*stuprum*), none of it particularly Greek.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, various Roman allusions to the war-time rape of free-born boys, girls, and women make no attempt to single out the rape of young men as bearing any special relationship to *mores Graecorum*.<sup>66</sup>

Throughout late Republican and Augustan love poetry, no specific association is made between the love of boys and Greek traditions. Aulus Gellius (19.9) preserves poems composed by Valerius Aedituus, Porcius Licinus, and Q. Lutatius Catulus (all of whom were active in the late 2nd and early 1st centuries B.C.), and these poems are addressed to both female and male partners with Greek names: Aedituus writes to a Pamphila (19.9.11) and Catulus addresses verses to a Theotimus (19.9.14). But the object of Licinus' poetic attention is of unspecified gender (19.9.13), and the imprecision is revealing. All of this neoteric love poetry is inspired by Greek models, and all of it has a Greek feel, whether the beloved is male or female. The homosexual, and most likely pederastic, love-affair of Catulus' poem is not singled out as being more indebted to Greek traditions than the others. Similarly, Catullus' poetry presents its readers with two relationships disapproved by traditional Roman standards: one with the free-born youth Juventius, the other with the married woman

<sup>63</sup> '... quae tanta umquam in ullo iuventutis inlecebra fuit quanta in illo? qui alios ipse amabat turpissime, aliorum amoris flagitiosissime serviebat, aliis fructum libidinum, aliis mortem parentum non modo impellendo verum etiam adiuvando pollicebatur' (Cic. *Cat.* 2.8).

<sup>64</sup> The consul Postumius opens his address to the assembled citizenry on a note of fearful warning with regard to foreign gods (39.15.2–3; he returns to the theme at 39.16.8). For other indications of Roman feeling against foreign religious practices, consider the incidents summarized in Val. Max. 1.3 ('De Superstitionibus') as well as one of the laws proposed by Cicero in his *De Legibus*: 'separatim nemo habessit deos neve novos neve advenas nisi publice adscitos' (2.19; cf. 2.25–6).

<sup>65</sup> Consider the phrase 'stupra promiscua ingenuorum feminarumque' (39.8.7; cf. 39.8.5–6, 39.13.10, 39.15.12). It is telling that Livy writes 'ingenuorum feminarumque' rather than, for example, 'adulescentium feminarumque'. This underscores what is so disgraceful in the entire affair: not the initiates' gender but their free-born status. See Section III for further discussion of *stuprum*.

<sup>66</sup> See below, n. 84, and cf. the texts quoted in nn. 85–6.

whom he calls Lesbia.<sup>67</sup> The relationship with Juventius is on the model of Greek *paidierastia*, yet Catullus does not capitalise on that fact by endowing the Juventius poems with more of a 'Greek' colouring than he gives the Lesbia poems.<sup>68</sup> Virgil's second *Eclogue* (on Corydon's love for Alexis) is neither more nor less Greek in feel than his tenth (on Gallus' love for Lycoris). Propertius compares his love for Cynthia to Jupiter's passion for Semele and Io but also for Ganymede (Prop. 2.30.29–30). And in Roman texts that compare the love of *pueri* with the love of women or *puellae*,<sup>69</sup> there is never a hint that the former owes more to Greek traditions than does the latter.

We have thus seen that, when writing about Greek culture and Greek historical personages, such authors as Nepos and Cicero make the same observation that modern scholars have made (with an objectivity that many scholars ought to have emulated): pederasty, but not male homosexual behaviour as a whole, was a specifically Greek institution. But we have also seen that Roman texts represent pederasty as only one among many Greek customs, and that descriptions of pederasty in a Roman context consistently fail to point to the corrupting influence of Greek culture. What of Roman representations of the Greek tradition in its native context? How quintessentially 'Greek' was pederasty? Cantarella claims that Romans considered pederasty 'the Greek vice', but no such phrase has survived from the ancient sources.<sup>70</sup> Significantly and perhaps surprisingly, when Roman writers indulge in invidious comparisons of their ancestral traditions with those of Greece, they very rarely cite pederasty—which would be a powerful weapon in a modern cultural conflict—in the list of the shortcomings and vices attributed to that culture.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> There is no reason to doubt that Juventius is free-born: cf. Chester Louis Neudling, *A Prosopography to Catullus* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 94–6. In contrast with Catullus' liberties stands the fate of a certain Valerius Valentinus, who had been condemned by public opinion for having written a poem on his relationships with a free-born boy (*puer praetextatus*) and a free-born girl (*ingenua virgo*) (Val. Max. 8.1.abs.8; cf. RE 372, where the incident is dated to ca. 111 B.C.). Valerius Maximus offers no hint to the effect that the relationship with the *puer* was thought to be more 'Greek' than the relationship with the *virgo*.

<sup>68</sup> Indeed, it could be argued that of the two relationships it is the heterosexual one that is endowed with more of a Greek colouring: not only does he give Clodia, and not Juventius, a Greek pseudonym, but he appropriates a Greek lyric poem to represent what appears to be his first encounter with her (Catullus 51).

<sup>69</sup> Plaut. *Truc.* 149–57; Prop. 2.4.17–22; Ovid, *Ars* 2.683–4; Juvenal 6.33–7.

<sup>70</sup> When Cantarella writes 'the Greek vice' ('il vizio greco') in inverted commas, one receives the impression that she is translating a Latin phrase. But a search of the PHI disk for *viti-* in conjunction with *Graec-* turns up no such phrase. And when *vitium* is indirectly attributed to Greeks, we read not of pederasty but of stylistic flaws (Cic. *De Orat.* 2.18, 'hoc vitio cumulata est eruditissima illa Graecorum natio'; Sen. *Rhet. Contr.* 1.2.22, 'hoc autem vitium aiebat Scaurus a Graecis declamatoribus tractum, qui nihil non et permiserint sibi et impetraverint') or of the unnecessary and luxurious uses to which that decadent nation has put the gifts of nature (Plin. *N.H.* 15.19 on olive oil: 'usum eius ad luxuriam vertere Graeci, vitiorum omnium genitores, in gymnasiis publicando').

<sup>71</sup> One exception has already been cited, Tac. *Ann.* 14.20: 'degeneretque studiis externis iuventus, gymnasia et otia et turpes amores exercendo.' In the same vein, according to Plutarch (*Rom. Ques.* 40.274D), the Romans thought the gymnasia and palaestrae to be the most important factor in the 'enslavement and softness' (δουλεία and μαλακία) of the Greeks, since they gave rise to 'much ennui and idleness, mischief, pederasty, and the ruin of young men's bodies by sleep, strolling about, rhythmic exercises, and strict diets' (πολὴν ἄλυν καὶ σχολὴν ἐντεκούσας ταῖς πόλεσι καὶ κακοσχολίαν καὶ τὸ παιδεραστεῖν καὶ τὸ διαφθεῖρειν τὰ σώματα τῶν νέων ὑπνοῖς καὶ περιπάτοις καὶ κινήσειν εὐρύθμοις καὶ διαίταις ἀκριβέσιν). But it is worth noting that in both texts the primary emphasis is not so much on sexual issues *per se* as on questions of discipline (note Plutarch's *μαλακία* and Tacitus' *otia*; and Plutarch adds that the pursuits of the gymnasia and palaestrae were thought to induce young men to turn from the life

Perhaps the closest equivalent to the phrase 'Greek vice' is found in verbs like *graecari* and *pergraecari*, 'to act like a Greek', but these words suggest a hedonistic indulgence in food, drink, and love (often in the company of female prostitutes) without a hint of pederasty.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, in the overwhelming majority of Roman condemnations of Greek decadence we hear not of pederasty but of *levitas*, untrustworthiness, softness, or luxuriousness.<sup>73</sup> Likewise the disdainful allusions to shiftiness, frivolous, pleasure-loving *Graeculi* scattered throughout Roman texts never specify or even imply pederastic inclinations as a characteristic trait of Greeks.<sup>74</sup> Of Roman writers who describe the influx of luxury from the East in the 2nd century B.C., some make no reference to sexual issues,<sup>75</sup> but even those who do so fail to focus on pederasty. Sallust, for example, writes of *stuprum* in general and two particularly outrageous embodiments of the offence: men playing the passive role in intercourse, and women being free with their favours.<sup>76</sup> Juvenal's third satire is an especially prodigious monument to Roman bigotry with regard to Greeks, but even here pederasty is not singled out as a Greek vice. Rather, we read of their suspect versatility (3.73–80, a passage including the celebrated dictum 'omnia novit / Graeculus esuriens'), their talents for flattery, acting, and toadying (3.86–108), and their selfish monopoly of patrons to the detriment of native Romans (3.119–125). In the midst of this catalogue Juvenal does write of Greeks' sexual behaviour (3.109–112), yet the outstanding characteristic of the *Graeculus* is not his interest in young men but rather his uncontrolled sexual appetite. He will pounce on matron and maiden, bridegroom and son, or, failing these outlets, even his patron's grandmother.<sup>77</sup>

Nepos' treatment of Greek pederastic traditions is especially illustrative. Far from passing over *paidēraistia* in a shocked or censorious silence, he includes it in his prefatory discussion of Greek customs (pr. 4, discussed above) and then makes of military discipline: ὅφ' ὧν ἔλαθον ἐκρύνετες τῶν ὅπλων καὶ ἀγαπήσαντες ἀνθ' ὀπλιτῶν καὶ ἱππέων ἀγαθῶν εὐτράπελοι καὶ παλαιστρίται καὶ καλοὶ λέγεσθαι.) Also significant is the unemphatic position of the reference to pederasty in each passage; it is represented as one among several associations of the gymnasium and palaestra.

<sup>72</sup> Plaut. *Bacch.* 742–3 ('atque id pollicetur se daturum aurum mihi / quod dem scortis quodque in lustris comedim, congracem'), 812–13 ('propterea hoc facio, ut suadeas gnato meo / ut pergraecetur tecum, tervenefice'), *Most.* 22–4 ('dies noctesque bibite, pergraecamini, / amicas emite liberate, pascite / parasitos, obsonate pollucibilibiter'), 64–5 ('bibite, pergraecamini, / este, ecfercite vos, saginam caedite'), 959–61 ('triduum unum est haud intermissum hic esse et bibi, / scorta duci, pergraecari, fidicinas tibicinas / ducere'), *Poen.* 602–603 ('liberum ut commostrarem tibi locum et voluptarium, / ubi ames, potes, pergraecere'), *Truc.* 86–7 ('peperisse simulat sese, ut me extrudat foras / atque ut cum solo pergraecetur milite'); Hor. *Sat.* 2.2.10–11 ('si Romana fatigat / militia adsuetum graecari') with Porphyrio *ad loc.* ('aut luxuriari aut Graeco more ludere').

<sup>73</sup> For *levitas* see, e.g., the sources cited in Petrochilos (1974), pp. 40–45 (a striking example is Cicero's defence of Flaccus, throughout which the orator draws on the prejudicial sentiment that Greeks are characterized by *levitas*). For Greek frivolity, hedonism, and self-indulgence see also Cic. *Pis.* 22, 42, 67, *Prov. Cons.* 14, *Verr.* 2.2.7; Plut, *Cic.* 5.2. For luxury see, e.g., Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.93–102, and Edwards (1993), pp. 92–7.

<sup>74</sup> For more or less disparaging references to *Graeculi*, none of which contain any allusion to pederasty, see (for example) Cic. *Verr.* 2.2.72, 2.4.127, *Red. Sen.* 14, *Sest.* 110, *Pis.* 70, *Scaur.* 4, *Mil. Cic.* 5.14, 13.33, *De Orat.* 1.47, 1.102, 1.221, *Tusc.* 1.86; Petr. *Sat.* 88.10; Plin. *Epist.* 10.40.2, *Pan.* 13.5; Sen. *Apocol.* 5.4; Sen. *Rhet. Suas.* 1.6.16; Suet, *Tib.* 11.1, 56.1, *Claud.* 15.4; Tac. *Dial.* 3.4, 29.1.

<sup>75</sup> E.g., Livy 39.6.7–9, Pliny, *N.H.* 34.14.

<sup>76</sup> Sall. *Cat.* 13.3, 'sed lubido stupri, ganeae ceterique cultus non minor incesserat; viri muliebris pati, mulieres pudicitiam in propatulo habere...'

<sup>77</sup> Juv. 3.109–12, 'praeterea sanctum nihil f̄aut̄ ab inguine tutum, / non matrona laris, non filia virgo, nec ipse / sponsus levis adhuc, non filius ante pudicus, / horum si nihil est, aviam resupinat amici.'

passing reference to the practice in his biographies of Pausanias and Alcibiades.<sup>78</sup> Nepos' casual treatment of this Greek custom stands in marked contrast to his discussion of music and dancing. The first sentence of his preface anticipates that some of his Roman readers will look down upon his work precisely because it mentions Epaminondas' music teacher and includes among the Greek general's virtues his abilities at singing and dancing; Nepos' justification is that in so doing he is merely conforming with the cultural heritage (*mores*) of his subjects.<sup>79</sup> He rather insistently reasserts this commitment to the notion of cultural relativism in the first sentence of his biography of Epaminondas, adopting a preachy tone that never characterizes his allusions to pederastic relationships.<sup>80</sup> Clearly he expected his Roman readership to be more troubled by Greek *mores* concerning the role of music and dance in the education of the upper classes than by the Hellenic traditions of pederasty.

'The Greek way' did not mean 'pederasty' and a reference to pederasty did not automatically evoke 'Greek ways'. Nor did *paiderastia* play a prominent role in the agonal relationship between Roman and Greek cultural traditions; no Roman sources condemn 'the Greek vice'. Even the more neutral phrase 'Greek love' has no attested equivalent in classical Latin.<sup>81</sup> These are eloquent silences, directly reflecting a lack of preoccupation with pederasty as a Greek practice.

### III

Although the gesture of labelling pederasty as an alien practice was surprisingly rare, and 'Greek love' turns out not to be an ancient phrase, the fact remains that pederastic relationships at Rome were liable to disapproval. Why was this? Others have provided an answer: these relationships violated a traditional code regulating the sexual behaviour of Roman men that marked free-born Romans of either sex as off-limits, designating sexual relations with such persons as illicit behaviour, or *stuprum*.<sup>82</sup> Thus, as Veyne and Cantarella suggest, pederasty was problematised not

<sup>78</sup> *Paus.* 4.1, 'Argilius quidam adulescentulus, quem puerum Pausanias amore venerio dilexerat'; *Alc.* 2.2, 'ineunte adulescentia amatus est a multis more Graecorum'.

<sup>79</sup> Pr. 1-3, 'Non dubito fore plerosque, Attice, qui hoc genus scripturae leve et non satis dignum summorum virorum personis iudicent, cum relatum legent, quis musicam docuerit Epaminondam, aut in eius virtutibus commemorari, saltasse eum commode scinterque tibiis cantasse... non admirabuntur nos in Graiorum virtutibus exponendis mores eorum secutos.'

<sup>80</sup> *Epam.* 1.1, 'de hoc priusquam scribimus, haec praecipienda videntur lectoribus, ne alienos mores ad suos referant, neve ea, quae ipsis leviora sunt, pari modo apud ceteros fuisse arbitrentur.'

<sup>81</sup> See the Appendix for discussion of a manuscript variant (*amore Graecorum*) that would constitute an exception if it were the correct reading; I argue that it is not. One manuscript (Guelferbytanus 294) containing Cicero's discussion of Dionysius cited above ('haberet etiam more Graeciae quosdam adulescentes amore coniunctos', *Tusc.* 5.58) reads *amore Graeciae* instead of *more Graeciae*. But this is obviously a scribal error; the *a* was struck by the hand of a later corrector of the manuscript, and every other manuscript reads *more*, which is universally adopted by modern editors. Nonetheless, while having no ancient models, the phrase 'Greek love' is alive and well in modern scholarship. Consider, for example, the following titles: M. H. E. Meier and L. R. de Poge-Castries, *Histoire de l'amour grec dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1930); Louis Crompton, *Byron and Greek Love: Homophobia in 19th-Century England* (Berkeley, Calif., 1985); Ramsay MacMullen, 'Roman Attitudes to Greek Love', *Historia* 31 (1982): 484-502.

<sup>82</sup> The word originally denoted any shameful behaviour, without specific reference to sexual behaviour (Festus 418.8-18), but the term came to narrow its focus, designating the specific disgrace of violating the sexual integrity (*pudicitia*) of free-born Romans. The notion thus reflects and reconfirms the ideal of the inviolability of the free Roman citizen (whether male or

because it involved boys but because those boys were free-born. The implications of that statement deserve to be explored further. Pederasty was indeed a subset of *stuprum*; but was it represented as being somehow distinct from other instances of that offence because of its homosexual nature?

A striking indifference to the gender of the passive partner informs nearly all of the ancient texts that allude to *stuprum*. Valerius Maximus, recounting various tales of free-born Romans who were the victims or intended victims of *stuprum*, intermingles narratives of male and female victims with never a hint of any significant difference between the two; indeed, in his opening invocation he describes *pudicitia* (the sexual integrity of free-born Romans that is violated by *stuprum*) as 'the pre-eminent mainstay of men and women equally' ('virorum pariter ac feminarum praecipuum firmamentum', 6.1.pr.).<sup>83</sup> In a number of texts we encounter expressions of a fear that victorious armies or generals will rape both males and females among the vanquished free-born, and no meaningful distinction is drawn between what we would label the homosexual and heterosexual incidents.<sup>84</sup> In a similar vein, Cicero expresses outrage over the type of bribery alleged to have been used during the trial of P. Clodius Pulcher in 62 B.C.:

What is more (ye gods, what a thoroughly depraved affair!), nights with certain women and introductions to young noblemen served as additional pay for some of the jurors.<sup>85</sup>

The dismayed exclamation precedes his reference to the sexual use of both matrons and well-born young men, and it casts its shadow of disapproval over each of the two categories equally. Finally, the phrase *coniuges liberique* appears as a stereotyped expression in conjunction with the vocabulary of *stuprum*: the sources often speak of the *pudicitia* of 'our wives and children' or of *stuprum* committed against them.<sup>86</sup> The fact that Roman writers refer to the chastity of their 'wives and children' rather than their 'wives and daughters, and even sons' strongly suggests that by Roman

female) that sets him or her apart from non-citizens and from slaves. Recent discussions of *stuprum* include Dalla (1987), pp. 71–99; Fantham (1991); and Richlin (1992), pp. 224–5.

<sup>83</sup> Fantham, by contrast, argues that 'for our purposes it is useful to separate his heterosexual episodes from the homosexual, and to take them out of order so as to illustrate common elements in the handling of both categories of sexuality' (Fantham [1991], p. 277).

<sup>84</sup> See, e.g., Cic. *Phil.* 3.31, 'matres familiae, virgines, pueri ingenui abripiuntur, militibus traduntur'; *Verr.* 2.4.116, 'adhibitam vim ingenuis, matres familias violatas' (cf. *Verr.* 2.1.62 [*stupra*]); *Fam.* 5.10a.1, 'qui tot ingenuos, matres familias, cives Romanos occidit, arripuit, disperdidit'; Livy 26.13.15, 'nec dirui incendique patriam video, nec rapi ad stuprum matres Campanas virginesque et ingenuos pueros'; *Rhet. Herenn.* 4.12, 'matribus familias et ingenuis sub hostilem libidinem subiectis'; Sall. *Cat.* 51.9, 'rapi virgines, pueros...matres familiarum pati quae victoribus conlubiissent'. Also relevant are expressions of alarm at the prostitution of the free-born that make no distinction between the two sexes. See, e.g. Cic. *Phil.* 2.105, 'ingenui pueri cum meritoriis, scorta inter matres familias versabantur'; Val. Max. 9.1.8, 'lupanari enim domi suae instituto Muniam et Flavian, cum a patre tum a viro utramque inclitam, et nobilem puerum Saturninum in eo prostituit.'

<sup>85</sup> Cic. *Att.* 1.16.5, 'iam vero (o di boni, rem perditam!) etiam noctes certarum mulierum atque adolescentulorum nobilium introductiones nonnullis iudicibus pro mercedis cumulo fuerunt.' On this trial, see also Cic. *Att.* 1.18.3, *Mil.* 87; Val. Max. 9.1.7 ('noctes matronarum et adolescentium nobilium magna summa emptae mercedis loco iudicibus erogatae sunt'); Sen. *Epist.* 97.2 ('atqui dati iudicibus nummi sunt et, quod hac etiamnunc pactione turpius est, supra insuper matronarum et adolescentulorum nobilium exacta sunt'); Dio 37.45–6.

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, Cic. *Cat.* 3.1, 3.23, 4.2, 4.3, 4.24, *Leg. Man.* 66, *Mil.* 76, *Phil.* 14.9, 14.10, *Verr.* 1.14; Horace, *Odes* 4.9.23–4; Livy 39.15.14. The phrase makes an appeal not only to the ideally inviolable category 'free-born' but also to the marker 'dependent', ultimately bolstering the proprietary claims of the *paterfamilias*. It is not coincidental that this phrase makes reference to *liberi*, a word whose origin reveals the division of the *familia* into the slave and free dependants of the *pater*, the *famuli* and *liberi* respectively. See also Treggiari (1991), pp. 309–11.



standards pederasty was a subset of *stuprum* and thus not substantially different from relations with free-born maidens or women. It is clear in any case that the crucial category in all of the allusions to *stuprum* just cited is 'free-born' as opposed to 'slave' and that the opposition between heterosexual and homosexual behaviour is not invoked as a significant analytic tool.<sup>87</sup> *Stuprum* was *stuprum*, whether committed with male or female partners.<sup>88</sup>

Related to this inclination not to represent pederasty as essentially different from any other type of *stuprum* is a tendency in the ancient sources that seems to have passed unnoticed in the scholarship. There is a good deal of evidence to suggest that adultery provoked greater anxiety in Roman men's cultural traditions than did pederasty. For example, when Roman writers inveigh against contemporary decadence and corruption, the sexual offence that they regularly cite as an embodiment of moral decline is not pederasty but adultery.<sup>89</sup> Whenever Cicero catalogues instances of license or immorality in his philosophical works, adultery inevitably makes an appearance in the list, but pederasty never does.<sup>90</sup> So too the champion of chastity most frequently cited in ancient sources is Lucretia.<sup>91</sup> In the sixth book of the *Aeneid* we encounter a list of sinners subject to eternal punishment

<sup>87</sup> It is significant that many of the texts referring to *stuprum* with males emphasise the free-born status, and not the gender, of the passive partner: note the frequency of such qualifiers as *ingenuus* or *nobilis* in the texts cited in nn. 84–5 above. Treggiari (1991), p. 264, accurately notes that 'the Augustan law defined all sexual intercourse with people of either sex who fell under the law [i.e., the free-born] as *stuprum*', but proceeds to make the imprecise claim that the word was 'in general use for any irregular or promiscuous sexual acts, especially rape or homosexuality'. Similarly the *RE* article on *stuprum* (*RE* 2.7 [1931], p. 423) imprecisely claims that the term denotes relations with free women on the one hand and all male homosexual acts on the other: 'S[tuprum] ist demnach der unzünftige Geschlechtsverkehr mit einer freien, anständigen unverheirateten Frau oder von Personen männlichen Geschlechts untereinander...'

<sup>88</sup> I do not mean to overlook an obvious and crucial difference between *stuprum* with maidens and *stuprum* with young men: the latter infringed upon gender definitions in that it placed those who would one day be Roman citizens in the passive role associated with women. This kind of concern surfaces, for example, in the comments of Postumius, the consul of 186 B.C., as reported by Livy: 'si quibus aetatibus initientur mares sciatis, non misereat vos eorum solum, sed etiam pudet. hoc sacramento initiatos iuvenes milites faciendos censetis, Quirites? his ex obsceno sacratio e ductis arma committenda?' (39.15.13). So too Quintilian observes that *stuprum* is especially embarrassing to speak of in the courtroom when it is committed against males (*Inst.* 11.1.84, 'illic maior aestus ubi quis pudenda queritur, ut stuprum, praecipue in maribus, aut os profanatum'). What is noteworthy, though, is that such expressions of concern over the forced feminisation of Roman men by means of *stuprum* occur so infrequently. Much more common is the representation—as in Cicero's letter to Atticus—of all *stuprum*, whether with maidens, boys, or women, as an undifferentiated offence.

<sup>89</sup> See, e.g., Hor. *C.* 3.6.17–32, Petr. *Sat.* 55.6.10–11, Juv. 3.45–6, Tac. *Hist.* 1.2. Edwards (1993), pp. 34–62, provides a useful discussion.

<sup>90</sup> E.g., *Fin.* 2.27, *Leg.* 1.43, *Off.* 1.128.

<sup>91</sup> Valerius Maximus begins his catalogue with Lucretia, bestowing on her the not insignificant praise 'dux Romanae pudicitiae' (6.1.1). In Hyginus' list of 'quae castissimae fuerunt' (256), Penelope is the first of several Greek examples, Lucretia the one and only Roman example. Martial uses Lucretia as a figure for the extreme of sexual purity on three occasions (1.90, 11.16, 11.104). And, quite strikingly, the author of the *Declamationes Maiores* attributed to Quintilian has the famous *miles Marianus* (who killed his superior after being propositioned by him) defend his action by citing Lucretia rather than, say, the young Marcellus who was propositioned by Scantinius (Val. Max. 6.1.7), as an example of the value placed by his Roman ancestors on chastity ([Quint.] *Decl. Maiores* 3.11; cf. Calp. Flacc. 3). Petronius provides a boisterously humorous invocation of Lucretia that is likewise in an exclusively male context. When Ascyllus comes at night to make a sexual advance on Giton, Encolpius' boyfriend, he draws his sword with the words, 'If you are Lucretia, you've found your Tarquinius!' ('si Lucretia es, Tarquinium invenisti', *Sat.* 9.5).

in the underworld, and in the company of men who beat their fathers, cheated their clients, or refused to share their wealth, as well as slaves who impiously rebelled against their masters, we find adulterers who had been killed in the act.<sup>92</sup> While the text may well reflect the specifically Augustan campaign against adultery, it remains a striking fact that in a morally weighty scene in the central book of the great Roman epic we find adulterers—not everyone who commits any kind of *stuprum*, and certainly not pederasts in particular—singled out among those who will be punished in the underworld. Moreover, the tragedy of Dido's relationship with Aeneas is closely related to the Roman ideal of the *univira*, and according to the standards of behaviour implied by that term the affair constitutes a significant moral offence (*culpa*, 4.172), close to adultery.<sup>93</sup>

The deeply problematic status of adultery in the *Aeneid* stands in sharp contrast with the comfortable presence of pederastic relationships in the same poem. The erotic experiences of the Italian warrior Cydon correspond neatly to the Greek model of *paiderastia*<sup>94</sup> and thus would be liable to the Roman label *stuprum*, for his boyfriends are surely free-born, yet his experiences are marked neither as unusual nor as liable to reproach. On the contrary, the Roman poet appropriates them so as to heighten the pathetic contrast between Cydon's normally delightful experiences and his miserable situation now.<sup>95</sup> Likewise the pair of Trojan warriors Nisus and Euryalus are cast in the roles of *erastês* and *erômenos*, yet this Hellenised couple is ultimately transformed into a pair of Roman *vir*i whose valorous deed inspires a famous eulogy ('fortunati ambo!' 9.446–449).<sup>96</sup> Whether this enthusiastic praise is centered on their brave deeds alone or on their good fortune in dying together as lovers,<sup>97</sup> what is important for our purposes is that at a climactic moment of his epic, the poet expresses his hopes that Nisus and Euryalus will live in human memory 'for as long as the house of Aeneas inhabits the immovable rock of the Capitol and the Roman father holds sway'.<sup>98</sup> One can hardly imagine a Roman poet inserting such stirring praise of an adulterous couple into his epic.

<sup>92</sup> *Aen.* 6.608–14, 'hic, quibus invisi fratres, dum vita manebat, / pulsatusve parens et fraus innexa clienti, / aut qui divitiis soli incubuere repertis / nec partem posuere suis (quae maxima turba est), / quique ob adulterium caesi, quique arma secuti / impia nec veriti dominorum fallere dextras, / inclusi poenam expectant'.

<sup>93</sup> It is clear from Cicero's defence of Caelius that the prosecution capitalised on similar feelings concerning Caelius' affair with the widowed Clodia. On *univira*, see Gordon Williams, 'Some Aspects of Roman Marriage Ceremonies and Ideals', *JRS* 48 (1958), pp. 16–29.

<sup>94</sup> *Aen.* 10.324–7, 'tu quoque, flaventem prima lanugine malas / dum sequeris Clytium infelix, nova gaudia, Cydon, / Dardania stratus dextra, securus amorum / qui iuvenum tibi semper erant, miserande iaceres...'

<sup>95</sup> We might recall Cicero's similar treatment of Dionysius' love affairs, *more Graeciae*, with *adulescentes* (*Tusc.* 5.58; see above, n. 41).

<sup>96</sup> John F. Makowski, 'Nisus and Euryalus: A Platonic Relationship', *CJ* 85 (1989), pp. 1–15, stresses the representation of the pair as *erastês* and *erômenos* on the Greek model. I would add that the valorising distinctions inherent in the usual Athenian construct of *paiderastia* fade slightly with the Roman poet's remark that the two rushed into war side by side ('pariterque in bella ruebant', 9.182), and practically disappear when the aged and dignified Aletes addresses the two as *vir*i (9.252). In other words, although Euryalus is the junior partner in this relationship, not yet endowed with a full beard and capable of being labelled the *puer* (9.181), his actions prove him to be, in the end, as much of a *vir*—as capable of displaying *virtus*—as is his older lover Nisus.

<sup>97</sup> See Gordon Williams, *Technique and Ideas in the Aeneid* (New Haven, 1983), pp. 205–7, 226–31.

<sup>98</sup> *Aen.* 9.446–449, 'fortunati ambo! si quid mea carmina possunt, / nulla dies umquam memori vos eximet aevo, / dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum / accolet imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.'

A similar pattern is evident in works of a greatly different nature, the *Controversiae* of the elder Seneca and the declamations attributed to Quintilian and Calpurnius Flaccus. Although the historicity of the legal provisions contained within them is doubtful at best, these texts nonetheless provide an indication of what topics held interest for Roman orators, and they reveal a greater preoccupation with adultery than with pederasty.<sup>99</sup> The actual provisions of Roman law confirm the distinction. The Augustan legislation on adultery (the *lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis*) stipulated penalties that ranged from banishment with confiscation of property to death,<sup>100</sup> whereas legal sanctions against pederastic relations appear to have been much less harsh. The elusive *lex Scantinia*, passed some time before the 1st century B.C., seems to have penalised pederastic relationships as acts of *stuprum*, but the penalty was probably a fine.<sup>101</sup> There is, moreover, a significant contrast between the amount of jurisprudential ink spilled on the subject of the *lex Julia* (Digest 48.5) and the scattered and vague references to the *lex Scantinia*. Indeed, certainty about the *lex Scantinia* has proven impossible, and I would argue that this fact is as eloquent as the absence of the phrases 'Greek vice' and 'Greek love' in the ancient sources.

#### IV

I hope to have shown that, in contrast to the smugly knowing reference by a Cambridge dean in E. M. Forster's *Maurice* to 'the unspeakable vice of the Greeks',<sup>102</sup> Roman men's images of the Greeks—even the most negatively biased ones—failed to a surprising degree to give prominence to the tradition of *paidierastia* as 'the Greek way', 'the Greek vice', or even 'Greek love'. Furthermore, I have suggested that pederastic relations, while certainly liable to disapproval by traditional Roman standards of behaviour, may have aroused less anxiety generally than did adultery. These conclusions cause a significant gap to open between the systems for representing male sexual experience that were dominant in Roman culture and those of the modern societies that claim to be the descendants of precisely that culture, and they deserve an attempt at explanation.

One reason for Roman concern with adultery immediately suggests itself: adultery gave rise to questions over paternity, and, more generally, the greater prob-

<sup>99</sup> Cases involving adultery: Sen. *Contr.* 1.4, 1.7, 2.7, 6.6, 7.5, 8.3, 9.1; Calp. Flacc. 2, 31, 40, 48, 49; [Quint.] *Declam. Minor.* 244, 249, 273, 275, 277, 279, 284, 286, 291, 300, 310, 319, 330, 335, 347, 355, 357. Cases involving *stuprum* with young men: Sen. *Contr.* 3.8, 5.6; Calp. Flacc. 3, 20; [Quint.] *Declam. Minor.* 279, 292.

<sup>100</sup> See especially Amy Richlin, 'Approaches to the Sources on Adultery at Rome', in Helene B. Foley (ed.), *Reflections of Women in Antiquity* (New York, 1981), pp. 379–404; Jane F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1986), pp. 127–32; Richlin (1992), pp. 215–19; Cantarella (1992), pp. 142–5; Edwards (1993), pp. 37–42.

<sup>101</sup> On this notoriously shadowy law, see Boswell (1980), pp. 65–9; Lilja (1983), pp. 112–21; Fantham (1991), pp. 285–7; Cantarella (1992), pp. 106–19; and Richlin (1993), pp. 569–71. It is possible that the Augustan *lex Julia* applied not only to adultery but to *stuprum* as a whole and thus included pederasty in its purview, thereby reinforcing the *lex Scantinia* (so, for example, Richlin [1992], p. 224; cf. Digest 48.5.13, 'ne quis posthac stuprum adulteriumve facito sciens dolo malo' and Digest 48.5.35, 'adulterium in nupta admittitur; stuprum in vidua vel virgine vel puero committitur'). But, although those later sources that do mention the *lex Scantinia* are maddeningly unclear as to its specific bearing, they obviously assume that it and the *lex Julia*, while penalising related offences, are distinct and that the *lex Scantinia* is still alive, albeit dormant (see, e.g., Suet. *Domit.* 8, Juvenal 2.36–44).

<sup>102</sup> E. M. Forster, *Maurice* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1971), p. 51. Vivid confirmation of a similar association in French popular belief is provided by colloquial insults of the type *va te faire voir chez les Grecs*, wishing anal penetration on their recipients.

lematisation of adulterous relationships than of pederastic relationships obviously stems from an impulse on the part of Roman male culture to exercise control over women's sexual experience.<sup>103</sup> As for the apparent lack of preoccupation with pederasty as 'Greek', the nature of the Roman concept of *stuprum*, focusing as it does on the question of status rather than gender, suggests an explanation. The categorical distinctions implicit in that cultural code encouraged an understanding of all *stuprum*, whether committed with male or female partners, as a single phenomenon and thus discouraged the identification of pederasty as qualitatively distinct or as meriting particular marginalisation.

This aspect of *stuprum* in turn relates to a central point raised at the beginning of this essay. The cultural patrimony inherited and bequeathed by Roman men discouraged them from drawing meaningful distinctions between heterosexual and homosexual behaviour *per se* in public representations of male sexual experience, and from condemning the latter in and of itself.<sup>104</sup> Rather, as was noted earlier, the crucial distinction was drawn between 'active' behaviour, which was normative for men, and 'passive' behaviour, which was not. On the one hand, as long as men maintained the active role expected of them, it made no difference whether they engaged in homosexual or heterosexual acts. They were, after all, demonstrating desire in the way that 'men' were supposed to experience desire, namely as active (penetrating) subjects. On the other hand, passive men were subject to ridicule, reproach, or worse, but it can be shown that they were not conceptualised as deviant because homosexual,<sup>105</sup> but rather deviant because feminised; and that they were feminised not because they were men who desired men, but because they were men who demonstrated desire in the way that 'women' were supposed to experience desire, namely as passive (penetrated) objects.<sup>106</sup> Roman traditions did not encourage the

<sup>103</sup> On this immense question see, for example, Richlin (1992) *passim* and Edwards (1993), pp. 47–58.

<sup>104</sup> This complicated issue is receiving an increasing amount of attention in studies of sexual experience in classical antiquity. Important contributions to the debate include Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (especially Volume 2, *The Use of Pleasure* [New York, 1985] and Volume 3, *The Care of the Self* [New York, 1986]), Halperin (1990), Boswell (1990), and Richlin (1993). Here I offer a summary of my views; I will discuss the question in greater detail in a revised form of my dissertation, which I am currently preparing for publication. It should be noted that scholars have detected a gradual, deeply-rooted transformation in the realm of sexual morality over the course of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D.: see Veyne (1978); Boswell (1980), pp. 119–36; Aline Rousselle, *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity* (trans. Felicia Pheasant, Oxford 1988); Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self* (trans. Robert Hurley, New York 1986); Boswell (1990), pp. 73–5; Cantarella (1992), pp. 187–210. This new movement, that ultimately meshed with Judaeo-Christian holiness codes to produce a radically different sexual ethic that came to dominate western Europe, emphasized an ascetic approach to the body and thus to sexual behaviour, and reached its logical conclusion in the problematisation of all sexual activity that did not lead to procreation and concomitantly the organisation of homosexual behaviour as a discrete and disapproved realm within the larger area of sexual experience. But this mode of conceptualising sexual experience stands in marked and illustrative contrast with the traditional ethic that was inherited by the audiences and readerships of Plautus, Catullus, and Cicero, with which this essay is concerned.

<sup>105</sup> Hence, as Richlin has noted (Richlin [1992], pp. 91–3, 139; Richlin [1993], pp. 533, 549 with n. 61), we encounter a number of allusions in ancient sources to the possibility that *cinaedi* might also be womanizers or adulterers. It seems to me (*pace* Richlin) that the tone of these references is casual and provides no hint that a womanizing *cinaedus* was thought to be an anomaly. See further Edwards (1993), pp. 63–97.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Veyne (1985), p. 30, for a similar view. Richlin (1993) argues to the contrary: countering the claim that 'homosexuality' is 'so much a modern production that nothing like it can be found in classical antiquity', she sets out to demonstrate that "'homosexual'" in fact describes, in Roman terms, the male penetrated by choice' (Richlin [1993], p. 526; cf. *ibid.*, p.

conceptualisation of 'men who desire men' as a discrete grouping that included both active and passive partners, nor is there any evidence in the ancient sources for the creation of any significant parallel between male and female homoerotic experience.<sup>107</sup>

All of this amounts to arguing that, while there existed in antiquity individual men who, if they lived today, would be called 'heterosexual' or 'homosexual',<sup>108</sup> neither those labels nor the conceptual apparatus that gives them meaning today appear in the ancient sources. Consequently there was little incentive for Roman writers to represent pederasty, simply because it was homosexual, either as outlandish or as essentially distinct from any other kind of *stuprum*. 'Greek love' is a modern invention.

## APPENDIX

The only possible exception to the assertion that no phrase similar to 'Greek love' is attested in classical Latin consists of a textual variant in the manuscript tradition of Nepos. In the biographer's description of Alcibiades' youth ('ineunte adulescentia amatus est a multis more Graecorum, in eis Socrate, de quo mentionem facit Plato in Symposio', 7.2.2), the manuscript tradition is divided between *more* and *amore*.<sup>109</sup> Did Nepos write that Alcibiades was loved by many 'according to the custom of the Greeks' or 'according to the love of the Greeks'? There are several arguments to be made for reading *more* rather than *amore*, but before considering those arguments, it

530: 'I aim to show, first, that men identified as homosexuals really existed at Rome and, second, that their existence was marked both by homophobia within the culture and by social and civil restrictions.') As an initial response, I would register the logical difficulty I find in attributing 'homophobia' to a cultural tradition that (as Richlin herself emphasizes throughout her work) simply assumed as part of human nature the fact that men desire and engage in penetrative acts with boys. To be sure, the ancient sources bespeak an antipathy against *cinaedi*, who are represented as desiring to be penetrated by men; but to describe this as 'homophobic' or as a problematisation of 'homosexuality' is as unhelpful as it would be to describe ancient criticism of female prostitutes or adulteresses as 'heterophobic' or in some way problematising 'heterosexuality'.

<sup>107</sup> For Roman representations of female homoerotic experience, see Hallett (1989). Occasionally an ancient author draws a parallel between male-male and female-female sexual behaviour: at Juvenal 2.49–50, for example, Laronia notes that no woman performs cunnilinctus on another, whereas countless men fellate and are penetrated by other men. But I would note the typical Roman emphasis on activities in this passage and the concomitant problematisation of passive males only, and not their active partners. Laronia's statement, I would argue, is significantly different from a twentieth-century claim that 'There are many gay men, but no gay women'. Furthermore, I find it telling that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* presents its Roman readers with a tortured rejection of female homoerotic desire in the course of the tale of Iphis (9.731–4) yet simply assumes the normalcy of male homoerotic desires (e.g., in the tales of Apollo and Hyacinth [10.162–219] and Echo and Narcissus [3.339–510]). The same poet elsewhere observes in passing that he personally prefers women on practical and admittedly altruistic grounds, but his phrasing is significant: 'odi concubitus qui non utrumque resolvunt; / hoc est cur pueri tangar amore minus' (*Ars* 2.683–4). He does not feel it necessary to disclaim all interest in boys ('minus') and certainly does not attempt any general problematisation of homosexual eros.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Suet. *Claud.* 33, Mart. 11.87.

<sup>109</sup> Guillemin (Paris, 1923), Malcovati (Turin, 1944) and Marshall (Leipzig, 1977) print *more*; Nipperdey (Berlin, 1879) and Winstedt (OCT, 1904) print *amore*. John C. Rolfe (*The Lives of Cornelius Nepos*, 3rd ed., Boston, 1894) simply omits this and the following sentence. Petrochilos (1974), p. 181, quotes Nepos' text with *amore*, but gives no indication of the textual problem; and he imprecisely frames the question in terms of 'homosexual love'. Likewise the *OLD* s.v. *Graecus* simply quotes this passage with *amore*. For scribal confusion of *more* and *amore* we might compare Pl. *Mil.* 1377 ('<a>mores meos') and Cic. *Att.* 6.1.12 ('in <a>moribus est'), although in these cases the more likely reading is *amor*.

is important to note that even if Nepos wrote *amore Graecorum*, what he meant by 'Greek love' was precisely the distinctively Hellenic institution of *paidierastia* in its native cultural context, and not male homosexual behaviour as a whole. The following considerations, however, lead me to believe that Nepos wrote not of 'Greek love' but of 'Greek custom'.

First, a palaeographical argument: one can more easily conceive of a scribe's inadvertently changing *more* to *amore* under the influence of the preceding sequence of letters and sounds ('*amatus est a multis amore Graecorum*') than of the alternative scenario (a change from 'a multis amore Graecorum' to 'a multis more Graecorum'). In this sense *more* is a *lectio difficilior*. Second, we have noted that the phrase *mos Graecorum* and related expressions are to be found in great number throughout the sources,<sup>110</sup> but *amor Graecorum* is nowhere else attested. And third, a reference here to *mos Graecorum* would neatly reproduce a structural pattern found elsewhere in Nepos' work. In the biography of Cimon, he notes a particularly un-Roman marriage arrangement: 'habebat autem in matrimonio sororem germanam suam, nomine Elpinicen, non magis amore quam more ductus: namque Atheniensibus licet eodem patre natus uxores ducere' (*Cim.* 1.2). The *mos* that, combined with love, led Cimon to marry Elpinice is precisely one of the customs that Nepos had singled out in his preface as being contrary to Roman traditions: 'neque enim Cimoni fuit turpe...sororem germanam habere in matrimonio, quippe cum cives eius eodem uterentur instituto' (pr. 4). Likewise in his life of Epaminondas the biographer enumerates the Theban's musical abilities, adding this observation: 'atque haec ad nostram consuetudinem sunt levia et potius contemnenda; at in Graecia, utique olim, magnae laudi erant' (*Epam.* 2.3). Again he is repeating points he had made in his preface: '...cum relatum legent, quis musicam docuerit Epaminondam, aut in eius virtutibus commemorari, saltasse eum commode scienterque tibi cantasse...' (pr. 1); 'quae omnia apud nos partim infamia, partim humilia atque ab honestate remota ponuntur' (pr. 5). In each of these instances, there are clear similarities in diction between Nepos' reference to a Greek custom in his preface and the example that he provides in the individual biography. It is most likely that he similarly wrote *more Graecorum* in his description of Alcibiades' youth, the phrase serving to point the reader back to the preface's observation concerning the value placed by Greek traditions on pederastic relationships ('laudi in Graecia ducitur adulescentulis quam plurimos habuisse amatores,' pr. 4) in the same way that his reference to Athenian custom (*mos*) in the passage concerning Cimon (1.2) refers the reader back to the practice (*institutum*) mentioned in the preface (pr. 4), and in the same way that his description of Epaminondas' musical abilities as 'ad nostram consuetudinem...levia et potius contemnenda' (2.3) reminds readers of the preface's discussion of Greek traditions that are 'apud nos partim infamia, partim humilia atque ab honestate remota' (pr. 5). To paraphrase Nepos' point in the *Alcibiades* passage: Alcibiades was loved by many in accordance with the Greek custom that was mentioned in the preface, to which the reader is now referred.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Marshall in the apparatus to his 1977 Teubner edition adduces *Conon* 3.2, 'ex more Persarum', as a parallel from within Nepos' text.

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