

some time in the 30s B.C., thus explaining the change of *praenomen*.²² The dating of his term by Fadić to 27–25 B.C. is too late for the person mentioned by Propertius, who served as the governor from 30 to 29 or 28 B.C. However, the dating of Tamphilus Vála's proconsulship, according to the existing evidence, leaves too much space for speculation, not to mention that his career spanned the turbulent period of Roman history when the rules of the *cursus honorum* were not necessarily obeyed. It is difficult to date his age from his term as *IIIvir monetalis*, as it was not a part of the official *cursus*,²³ and there is the additional problem with this identification, as this college numbered four and not the usual three people in the late 40s B.C. The date of Vála's term as a moneyer is also disputed, and can only be roughly dated to the period 43–40 B.C.²⁴ Thus it is impossible to determine whether he was the 'Praetor' or not, and to date his proconsulate with more precision.

Therefore, this small piece of evidence from Propertius and the inscription from Zadar has enabled us to establish evidence of an independent provincial command in Illyricum, after Octavian's campaigns of 35–33 B.C. and before the Augustan settlement of 27 B.C. It corresponds with the existing contemporary evidence for the foundation of an Augustan colony in Iader and the building of its city walls.²⁵ Cnaeus Baebius Tamphilus Vála Numonianus, the earliest governor of senatorial Illyricum known by name, cannot be completely ruled out as the 'Praetor', but there is also not enough evidence to identify him as the lover of Cynthia.

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²² I. Fadić, 'The name of Proconsul Cn. Tamphilus Vála on a Well of the Iader Forum', *Arheološki Vestnik* 37 (1986), 409–34; id., 'Cneius Baebius Tamphilus Vála Numonianus – 'Builder' of the Forum, Patron of Iader and the first proconsul of Illyricum', *Histria Antiqua* 5 (1999), 47–54. Cf. T.P. Wiseman, *New Men in the Roman Senate 139 B.C. – A.D. 14* (Oxford, 1971), 246, no. 285.

²³ H. Mattingly, *Roman Coins*² (London, 1960), 29; H.A. Grueber, *Coins of the Roman Republic in the British Museum* (London, 1970), lxiii–lxiv (from the assumption based on scant evidence that this required a minimum age of 27).

²⁴ K. Pink, *The Triumviri Monetales and the structure of the Coinage of the Roman Republic* (Numismatic Studies 7) (New York, 1952), 43 (43 B.C.); M.H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge, 1983), 96, 522–3 (41 B.C.); H.A. Grueber (n. 23), 570–1 (40 B.C.).

²⁵ CIL 3.2907; 3.13264, cf. Wilkes (n. 9), 207–8; G. Alföldy, *Bevölkerung und Gesellschaft der römischen Provinz Dalmatien* (Budapest, 1965), 78–9.

PRIAPIC PLACES OF WORSHIP (PETRONIUS 133.3 vv. 1–4)

Nympharum Bacchique comes, quem pulchra Dione
diuitibus siluis numen dedit, inclita paret
cui Lesbos uiridisque Thasos, quem Lydus adorat
†semper flauius† templumque tuis imponit Hypaepis¹

4 semper flauius B: semperfluus R: septifluus P cum ceteris: uestifluus Turnebus alii alia

¹I am grateful to CQ's anonymous referee and Elizabeth Scharffenberger, James Uden and Katharina Volk for helpful criticism. All remaining errors in fact, interpretation and presentation are entirely my own responsibility.

After yet another spell of impotence the *Satyrica*'s main protagonist Encolpius kneels on the threshold of a shrine to Priapus and prays to the god for release from his affliction (Petr. 133). As a parody of elevated hymnic language and form the poem works perfectly.² All the archetypal elements of a Roman prayer are present:³ the address using a series of relative clauses,⁴ a listing of the homes of the deity, the wish for the god to be present and to listen favourably to the request, the ritual claim of purity and the request for forgiveness. But the question why Encolpius singles out Lesbos, Thasos and Hypaepa specifically as centres of Priapic worship has so far not been adequately answered. The latest commentator on this poem, E. Courtney, concludes that besides the possibility that some coins from Lesbos may show Priapus 'otherwise nothing is known of a cult of him there, on Thasos or at Hypaepa'.⁵

But should they be real cultic centres? I would like to suggest that Petronius chose these names for comic purposes. He 'sets his traps and waits to laugh when his victim [Encolpius] falls into them'.⁶ The author here again trips up his anti-hero Encolpius by putting in his mouth a seemingly devout and respectful address to the fertility god, which on closer examination is anything but. This reading, if accepted, has important implications for the role Priapus may have played, or failed to play, at the end of the *Satyrica*.

First, why is Lesbos *inclita* (v. 3)? Because of Sappho, of course. Sappho's Lesbianism makes it ironic that the ithyphallic god should be honoured on the island.⁷ This interpretation is perhaps supported by the juxtaposition of *Lesbos* with *uiridis* (which of course grammatically belongs to Thasos).⁸ Thasos then is a lame pun⁹ on *θίασος* ('religious guild, confraternity'¹⁰). Of many proposed conjectures¹¹ Turnebus' *uestifluus* for the unmetrical *semper flauius* is attractive,¹² since this adjective emphasizes the effeminate, luxurious dress of the Lydians.¹³ Alternatively,¹⁴ the combination of Hypaepa and Lydia may point to the river Pactolus (so, for example, too Ov. *Met.*

¹ Text as K. Müller (ed.), *Petronius: Satyricon Reliquiae*⁴ (Munich-Leipzig, 1995).

² For a fine discussion see H. Kleinknecht, *Die Gebetsparodie in der Antike* (Stuttgart, 1937), 189–91.

³ For the formulae of prayer see G. Appel, *De Romanorum Precationibus* (Giessen, 1909); see also E. Courtney (ed.), *The Poems of Petronius* (Atlanta, 1991), 36–7, for more specific references to Appel's study.

⁴ Cf. E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos. Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede* (Leipzig, 1913), 168–76.

⁵ Courtney (n. 3), 36.

⁶ G.B. Conte, *The Hidden Author. An Interpretation of Petronius' Satyricon*, trans. E. Fantham (Berkeley, 1996), 27.

⁷ For arguments and references supporting the notion of 'lesbian Sappho' in antiquity, not as the fiction of a later age, cf. R.G.M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace Odes, Book II* (Oxford, 1978), 216–17.

⁸ A parallel is *mascula Sappho* (Hor. *Ep.* 1.19.28).

⁹ For more puns, lame or otherwise, in the *Satyrica* cf. J. Elsner, 'Seductions of art: Encolpius and Eumolpus in a Neronian picture gallery', *PCPhS* 39 (1993), 30–47, at 32.

¹⁰ LSJ s.v. 2; for a *θίασος τῶν Πριαπιστῶν* in Gortyn cf. H. Herter, *De Priapo* (Giessen, 1932), 61.

¹¹ For further references and other emendations see Courtney (n. 3), 36.

¹² R.G.M. Nisbet, 'Four conjectures on Catullus 64', in id., *Collected Papers on Latin Literature*, ed. S.J. Harrison (Oxford, 1995), 386–9, at 388, entertains the possibility that this is the right emendation.

¹³ For similar expressions cf. *Eleg. Maec.* 77–8 (Hercules enslaved by Omphale, queen of Lydia), *Lydia te tunicas iussit lasciua fluentes / inter lanificas ducere saepe suas*; Prop. 3.17.32 (said of Bacchus), *et feries nudos ueste fluente pedes*.

¹⁴ I owe this point to the anonymous referee.

6.16) and in that case the reading *septifluus* is apt: in the language of epic and tragedy this could easily mean the septuplet delta of 'a Nile'. The overstated periphrasis for the region's major river would thus turn Pactolus, which is not even a Nile-of-the-north, into a Nile and such exaggeration fits the parody of Petronius well. The verb *adorat* then echoes the seven implied mouths of the river.¹⁵ But whichever reading is chosen, Petronius' intent, I contend, is humorous.

Moreover, to add insult to injury, Encolpius says that a shrine has been erected for Priapus in *tuis* ... *Hypaepis* (v. 4). Not much is known of this town (see L. Büchner, *RE* 9.1.195–6), but when it is mentioned its insignificance is often emphasized: *Ov. Met.* 6.12–13 (contrasting the lowly origin of Arachne with her renown throughout Lydia) *quamvis l orta domo parua paruis habitabat Hypaepis*; *ibid.* 11.152 (on the location of Tmolus) *Sardibus hinc, illinc paruis finitur Hypaepis*; *Tac. Ann.* 4.55 (on the unsuccessful attempt of Hypaepa, among others, to be chosen as the site for a temple for Tiberius and his mother) *Hypaepeni ... tramissi ut parum ualidi*.

Small wonder, then, that for a cure of his impotence Encolpius depends on *dii maiores*, Mercury in particular (*Petr.* 140.12), not Priapus.

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¹⁵ G. Fiaccadori, 'Priapo in Egitto (Petronio, *Sat.* CXXXIII 3)', *PP* 36 (1981), 373–8, even suggests emending *Lydus* ... *†semper flauius†* (vv. 3–4) to *litum* ... *septifluum* so as to make the phrase refer to the Egyptian Nile, but this is not necessary.

THE VIRGILIAN REMINISCENCES AT TACITUS *HISTORIES* 3.84.4

Scholars have long noted Tacitus' allusions to Virgil when he describes Vitellius' wandering through the Palace as Rome falls to the Flavians (*H.* 3.84.4):

Vitellius capta urbe per aversam Palatii partem Aventinum in domum uxoris sellula defertur, ut, si diem latebra vitavisset, Tarracinam ad cohortes fratremque perfugeret. dein mobilitate ingenii et, quae natura pavoris est, cum omnia metuenti praesentia maxime displicerent, in Palatium regreditur vastum desertumque, dilapsis etiam infimis servitiorum aut occursum eius declinantibus. **terret solitudo et tacentes loci**; temptat clausa, inhorrescit vacuis; fessusque misero errore et pudenda latebra semet occultans ab Iulio Placido tribuno cohortis protrahitur.

Tacitus had at least two Virgilian passages in mind, possibly three. Schmaus pointed to *loca nocte tacentia late* (*Aen.* 6.265) and *horror ubique animo simul ipsa silentia terrent* (*Aen.* 2.755). Baxter added *nunc omnes terrent aurae* (*Aen.* 2.728) and observed that the two passages in *Aeneid* 2 are closer in context to Tacitus.¹ No one, however,

¹ H. Schmaus, *Tacitus: ein Nachahmer Vergils* (diss. Erlangen; Bamberg, 1887), 22. R.T.S. Baxter, 'Virgil's influence on Tacitus in book 3 of the *Histories*', *CP* (66), 1971, 93–107, at 106. J. Henry, *Aeneidea* 2 (Dublin, 1878), 340, had already caught Tacitus' borrowing from *Aen.* 2.755. R.G. Austin (ed.), *P. Vergili Maronis, Aeneidos, Liber Secundus* (Oxford, 1964), 267, lists re-workings of *Aen.* 2.728 by Lucan 8.5, Silius Italicus *Pun.* 6.58–9, and Juvenal 10.21. He also finds an echo of *Aen.* 2.755 in Valerius Flaccus, 2.41. Seneca also quotes *Aen.* 2.726–9 verbatim at *Ep.* 56.12. Given the currency of these Virgilian phrases, we can safely assume, then, that the