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Nicolette Lathouris April 10, 2018

In Formam Deorum: Venus, Virtue, and Portrait Nudity

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Abstract

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Funerary portraits of Roman women in the guise of Venus were especially popular in the first and second centuries. These statues contained both the realistic portrait heads of the deceased and the idealized body of the goddess. As such, they were often depicted as partially nude or fully nude. This thesis seeks to explain how it was acceptable for non-imperial women of social standing to portray themselves as nude within the realm of art. Rather than analyzing these statues through a strictly aesthetic framework, I consider the ways in which they functioned as expressions of sexuality and virtue. First, I establish the importance of Venus in the context of Roman identity due to her role as ancestress to the Julio-Claudians. Then, I consider the social expectations of these women with respect to their roles as mothers and wives. Finally, by expanding upon methodologies of how to interpret Roman funerary art *in formam deorum*, I argue that there existed a negotiated balance within these portrait types, in that they were statements of both female sexuality and matronly virtue. These two forces, though seemingly contrastive, did not invalidate the other, but rather served to strengthen the sexual and moral messages of these portraits. Portrait nudity of women in the guise of Venus was legitimized by the pervasive influence of the goddess to the empire at large. Tracing the legacy of Venus throughout Roman history, beginning with Julius Caesar's establishment of the cult of Venus Genetrix in the first century BC and continuing on to the production of Mars and Venus mythological group portraits in the late second and early third centuries demonstrates the longevity of her importance to Roman women.

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INTRODUCTION

In his *Historia Naturalis*, Pliny the Elder recalls a tale of Praxiteles, the famed Greek sculptor of the fourth century BC.

> The artist made two statues of the goddess, and offered them both for sale: one of them was represented with drapery, and for this reason was preferred by the people of Cos, who had the choice; the second was offered them at the same price, but, on the grounds of propriety and modesty, they thought fit to choose the other. Upon this, the Knidians purchased the rejected statue, and immensely superior has it always been held in general estimation.[1]

The concept of honorific nudity in art and its consequence for the study of ancient virtue cannot be discussed without consideration of Venus, the Roman goddess of love, sex, and fertility. As patron deity of the city, Venus exerted extensive influence upon various aspects of Roman life, her image unescapable and role pervasive. Love elegists lauded her, temples were dedicated to her, and women commissioned private funerary portraits *in formam deorum*. Beginning with the Julio-Claudian clan, imperial ideology was carefully calibrated in order to reaffirm and legitimize their divine lineage. Caesar established the cult of Venus Genetrix and erected a temple in her honor in 46 BC, and Augustus made sure to maintain and expand upon this legacy, perhaps most notably, by commissioning Vergil's *Aeneid*, which emphasized the ancestral relationship between Augustus and Aeneas, the Trojan hero and son of Venus.

Ultimately, Venus was a female divinity, and as such her attributes reflected particularly womanly qualities. She represented an ideal beauty, often depicted nude or semi-nude, and embodied the social expectations of marital devotion and maternalism. Roman women of social substance, reaching as far as the empress Livia herself, sought to depict themselves in the guise

[1] Pliny, *HN*, 36.4.

of Venus, to varying degrees. Although it should be noted that Roman empresses never represented themselves with the nude body of Venus. Often times, it was likely their husbands or children who commissioned funerary portraits in order to commemorate their honor, due to the fact that women tended to die earlier than men.[2] Without projecting a modern perspective on the relationship between nudity and virtue, how might this tension between physically desirability and matronly ideals have been reconciled by Roman woman who sought this association? More specifically, to what extent was the commissioning of funerary portraits in the guise of Venus an example of an expressed female sexuality?

Interest in Venus in classical scholarship is not a new endeavor. For decades, scholars have contemplated her reputation in Roman mythology and meticulously deliberated her portrayal in the *Aeneid*. Reasearch has been conducted on theories of female sexuality and nudity, most notably by Larissa Bonfante (1989), Diana E. E. Kleiner (1996), and Eve D'Ambra (1996). This thesis seeks to expand upon their work on female portrait nudity. It will analyze how Roman women actively engaged with the goddess through artistic means, and what this revealed about Roman constructions of virtue. Such a feminist approach requires; first, a consideration of Venus' role at large as a goddess of the city and ancestress to the imperial family; second, an exploration of the social expectations of women in Rome with respect to the body and its function; and third, a theoretical discussion of the conceptual body and a visual study of women *in formam deorum*. Doing so will allow me to negotiate the role of nudity as an expression of sexuality and beauty or the physical representation of female virtue.

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[2] Diana E. E. Kleiner, "Women and Family Life on Roman Imperial Funerary Altars," *Latomus* 46 fasc. 3 (July-September 1987): 548-9.

DESCRIPTIONS

Due to the enormity of the task of covering the deep-rooted connections between Venus and Rome, understanding the breadth of her influence with respect to honorific funerary art requires looking at the different media which she appears in, or at the very least, inspires. While this thesis will consider works on a larger scale, such as the Ara Pacis, the Temple of Venus at Hadrian's Villa, and the Temple of Venus and Roma in the Forum Romanum, in order to conduct a social study of the intersections of virtue, nudity, and art, private funerary works created primarily during the imperial era must be examined. Undoubtedly inspired by the public images of empresses, the iconography of these funerary monuments must be understood as not unrelated inventions, but rather evidence of a the wider-ranged influence of Venus on the imperial family and private sphere.[3]

In the scheme of Roman sculpture, the *kline* monument is rather rare.[4] An invention of the imperial period, most *kline* monuments date specifically from the Flavian period to the Late Antonine period. Their functions varied, serving as sarcophagus lids as well as the actual vessel that held the remains of the dead. Of *kline* monuments, one will be considered in this analysis. It is a Flavian-period sarcophagus cover, on view in the Pio Celementino gallery in the Vatican. It features a female figure as a sleeping Venus, a metaphor often used to denote the eternal sleep of death. While she lies on her back more so than her side, her pose is comparable, with the ankles crossed, chest and abdomen exposed, and left arm bent with the right outstretched and

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[3] Susan B. Matheson, "The Divine Claudia: Women as Goddesses in Roman Art," in *I, Claudia*, ed. Diana E. E. Kleiner, (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1996): 182.

[4] Henning Wrede, *Consecratio in formam deorum: vergöttlichte Privatpersonen in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz am Rhein: Von Zabern, 1981), 8.

relaxed. She is seemingly more bare as her drapery slips well beneath her navel. Slightly later in date is the funerary relief of Ulpia Epigone, who was a Trajanic freedwoman. It is technically not of the *kline* type, but rather a free-standing monument that contains similar reclining imagery. Made of Luna marble, the relief is housed in the Museo Gregoriano Profano in the Vatican. Her garment is draped just along her waist, leaving her chest and abdomen completely bare. Her right hand is placed modestly, and her ankles are crossed, propped on a *cista*, or matron's basket which would have held wool working tools representative of the duties of the matron.

Roman portrait types in the form of Venus cannot be discussed without acknowledgement of their Greek predecessors. Free-standing sculptures of Venus' Greek counterpart, Aphrodite, were almost always fully draped during the Classical Athenian period. However, full drapery did not necessarily imply coverage and modesty. Andrew Stewart holds that "artfully deployed clothing only increases female allure."[5] Kenneth Clark critically notes that to study the evolution of Aphrodite before the time of Praxiteles, one must not look for "absolute" nudity but rather those portraits that feature drapery clinging to the body.[6] Clearly, a certain level of sensuality was still ascribed to those statues that were fully clothed.

By the 5th century BC, portrait nudity took foot, and the presence of drapery was less prominent. However, there is a lull in this tradition of Aphrodites in the 4th century, as cult activities decrease as well.[7] Although there are many Classical and Hellenistic Aphrodite types

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[5] Andrew Stewart, "Hellenistic Freestanding Sculpture from the Athenian Agora, Part 1: Aphrodite" *Hesperia* 81 no. 2 (Apr.-June 2012): 312.
[6] Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 75.
[7] Stewart, "Hellenistic Freestanding Sculpture," 279.

that provided the inspiration for Roman adaptations, the Capitoline and Medici types are the most relevant to this thesis. Andrew Stewart has placed the origins of the Capitoline type in an Athenian context, due to the fact that the *loutrophoros*, or bathing vessel, placed beside the surprised Aphrodite was an exclusively Attic vase.[8] Rather than reaching for her cloak in response to an intruder during her bath as seen in most Knidian types, the Capitoline Venus swivels towards the onlooker with the upper body leaning forward and head turned, adding a sense of spontaneity. And while the Capitoline's head resembles that of the Knidia, its body is slimmer.[9] As for the Medici type, it is considered by many as a variant of the Capitoline, often times replacing the bathing vessel for a dolphin.[10] This places the setting in an outdoors context. Its body is fleshier and more round, but still evokes a similar feeling of surprise to the intrusion. Stewart points out that the Medici type's hand is a bit further from her genitals than the Capitoline, perhaps realizing the third party even sooner.

Sculptures of Venus have often been categorized by a type, inspired by the Aphrodites of the Classical and Hellenistic periods. One such work is the statue of "Venus Felix," a second century AD Roman copy of the Greek original which now belongs to the Pio Clementino gallery in the Vatican. She is accompanied by her son Eros who is now missing his arms. It has been argued that these figures are both portrait heads, with the main figure reminiscent of Faustina the Younger. The inscription reveals that one Sallustia and Helpidus dedicated this statue to "happy" Venus. Unlike the *kline* monuments, she stands upright and wears the diadem of

[8] Stewart, "A Tale of Seven Nudes," 17.
[9] Andrew Stewart, "A Tale of Seven Nudes: The Capitoline and Medici Aphrodites, Four Nymphs at Elean Herakleia and an Aphrodite at Megalopolis," *Antichthon* 44 (2010): 20.
[10] Stewart, "A Tale of Seven Nudes," 17.

Venus. Replacing the typical Flavian hairstyles of the *kline* monuments are Venus locks resting along her shoulders. The drapery sits very low on her hips, with her now-missing left arm gathering the rest of the fabric. While her ankles are not crossed, her left knee is at a slight bend, revealing her hip and thigh.

The Museo Nazionale Archaeologico in Naples contains a portrait of a Flavian woman as Venus from c. 117-138 BC. The left arm is confidently placed on her hip, with her right arm clutching the fabric. The rest of the drapery falls just beneath her pubic bone, exposing her upper body in its entirety. As such, neither of her hands gestures to protect her modesty like that of the *kline* portraits, allowing her nudity to seem quite overt. This differs from the portrait of a woman as Venus Genetrix at the Museo Osteinse. Dating to the Trajanic/Hadrianic period, it has been argued that this woman is Sabina. Despite being fully clothed, her drapery slips off her left shoulder and caresses the curves of her body clearly revealing the anatomy beneath. This range of nudity demonstrates how the guise of Venus took on many forms.

Varying greatly from the commanding nature of the Naples Venus is the Capitoline Venus. The Musei Capitolini contains a Roman adaptation of the Greek original, portraying a completely nude Venus attempting to cover her breasts with her right hand and groin with her left. Presumably caught just after bathing, Venus shares her base with her dress draped on top of a *loutrophoros*. A second century AD copy in the Louvre shows the same scene, however beside Venus is Eros. The Capitoline's Halls of the Horti Lamiani features the Esquiline Venus, who, like the Capitoline Venus, is fully nude and whose drapery is folded beside her. The late Flavian portrait of a woman as Venus from Copenhagen's Ny Carlsberg Glypotek evokes the

Capitoline type. Fully nude and donning a Flavian hairstyle, she is portrayed with veristic features which contrasts the idealized body. So unlike the previous Venuses which literally depict the goddess, this sculpture is of a matron.

Examples of fully-nude Venuses took on alternative forms. These types include the dynamic Venus Kallipygos of the late first century BC, who peers over her shoulder as she draws up her drapery. The Fréjus type from 30-40 AD at the Vatican depicts a woman, argued to have the head of Sabina, in the guise of Aphrodite. Her breast is rendered fully bare as she plucks the drapery off her shoulder. This motif, known as *anakalypsis*, implies a nuptial setting.[11]

The notorious love affair between Venus and Mars is recalled by Demodocus, a poet in the court of Alcinous in Book VIII of Homer's *Odyssey*. This divine union inspired an entire funerary portrait statue type between husbands and wives. A portrait of a man and woman as Venus and Mars in the Museo Nazionale contains features that have been attributed to either Marcus Aurelius and Faustina the Younger or Commodus and Crispina. Dating to 180-192 AD, this statue depicts the man in heroic nudity and the woman, in the guise of Venus, with partial nudity. She lovingly gazes towards her husband as she embraces him. A portrait group of Mars and Venus originally found at Ostia from the mid-second century AD shows the woman fully dressed, wearing a crown while her husband bears a helmet, staff and drapery that only covers his upper body. A variation of this group type from 120-140 AD depicts the woman fully dressed and her husband fully nude. It has been hypothesized that this statue was reworked in 170-175 and probably originally showed Hadrian and Lucilla, the wife of Lucius Verus. A fragment from a

[11] Stewart, "Hellenistic Freestanding Sculpture," 299.

group statue at the Museo dei Fori Imperiali dating to the early Augustan period shows the remains of a male neck being embraced by a hand, reminiscent of this Venus and Mars imagery. Lastly, a Roman marble copy of the fourth century Greek bronze original of Aphrodite of Capua, now in Naples at the Museo Nazionale Archaeologico, depicts a partially nude Venus with her arms outstretched, presumably in place where Mars would have stood.

Women conveying Venus motifs was not limited to portrait statues. A relief from the tomb of the Haterii from the early second century AD contains a temple in the upper right corner, depicting a nude statue figure in a typical Venus pose. A first to second century AD freedman relief of a potter and his wife, now in Richmond at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, illustrates the man performing work, probably in pottery or vase painting. His wife, while clothed, bares her right shoulder as her drapery slips off. Kleiner argued that the palm fan she clutches in her left hand might be another attribute of Venus, using a statue of Venus Victrix at the British Museum holding a palm branch as comparanda.[12] The employment of this motif was even used by members of the imperial family. A sardonyx cameo of Livia at the Kunsthistorisches Museum depicts the empress as a priestess of Divus Augustus. Dating to the early Tiberian period, Livia holds a portrait bust of her deified husband. Her drapery slips off her left shoulder while she bears the wheat stalks and poppies of Ceres. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts has a contemporary cameo of Livia as Venus Genetrix, which employs this Venus motif of the falling drapery. This cameo is the earliest surviving image of an empress in the guise of a goddess, making the choice of Venus the more crucial as Livia is adopted into the Julian family

[12] Kleiner, *I, Claudia*, 91-2.

according to the will of Augustus.[13] Beside her is a portrait bust, whose identity has been debated as either Tiberus, Augusts, or Drusus.

Evidence of women invoking Venus in funerary art is not restricted to the existing sculptural record. Built by her husband, a Trajanic freedman named M. Ulpius Crotonensis, the tomb complex of Claudia Semne contained an inscription regarding at least five sculptures that had existed in antiquity, three of which were statuettes that depicted Claudia in the guise of Fortuna, Spes, and Venus: "FORTUNAE, SPEI, VENERI ET MEMORIAE CLAUD. SEMNE SACRUM" (*CIL* VI 15593). The tone of this inscription has been interpreted differently by scholars, who have debated the nature of the association between Claudia Semne and these three goddesses. However, less important is the exact translation of this inscription and more crucial is the evidence that Claudia Semne had been depicted as Venus. These three statuettes were accompanied by a life-sized portrait bust in relief on a triangular pediment, thought to have been placed above the door way, and smaller-scaled *kline* monument that was set atop her burial.[14] The tomb complex at large consisted of a garden with a vineyard, a well, and a dining area used in honor of the dead (*CIL* VI 15593).

Abascantus, a freedman official to the emperor Domitian, is said to have honored the memory of his deceased wife, Priscilla, by likening her to the shape of four goddesses, one of which was Venus. An epigram written by the poet Statius of the first century AD was dedicated to the deceased Priscilla, lauding her on account of her beauty.

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[13] Kleiner, *I, Claudia*, 184.

[14] See H. Wrede, "Das Mausoleum der Claudia Semne und die bürgerliche Plastik der Kaiserzeit" in Mitteilungen," in *RM* 78 (1971): 125-66. Also H. von Hesberg, *Monumenta i sepolcri romani a la loro architettura* (Milan: Longanesi, 1994), 213.

> Soon you are made anew into various semblance: here shines Ceres in bronze, here the Cnosian maid, in that clay is Maia, Venus (no wanton) in this stone. The deities accept your beauteous features without complaint.[15]

It is interesting that Statius modifies the nature of Priscilla's assimilation to the goddess. She exhibits a beauty impressive enough to have been acknowledged by Venus, but without any connotation of sexual immodesty. In fact, Statius expresses admiration for Priscilla's status as an *univera*, or woman of one man. It is interesting, then, that the fact that Priscilla was previously wed before Abascantus does not deter from Statius' praise of her devotion to her husband.

> Your birth was splendid, your aspect pleasing as a husband could desire, but greater the dignity came from yourself – to know one bed only, to cherish one flame.[16]

In this way, Statius points out the ways in which Priscilla displayed her female virtues. They consisted of her marital commitment to Abascantus as well as her appealing physicality.

VENUS AND THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

Tensions among Venus' various roles are not limited to the study of these private works. In order to properly understand the reasons in which she grew so popular in the context of funerary monuments for women, a consideration of her greater function in the Roman imagination is necessary. In the *Aeneid*, Vergil's portrayal of Venus vacillates between assuming a matronly role as the mother of Aeneas and embodying the characteristics of the goddess of

[15] Statius, *Silvae*, 5.1.232-235, trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 329.
[16] Statius, *Silvae*, 5.1.53-56.

love.[17] For instance, she exhibits a sense of motherly love in her concern for the dangers that confront Aeneas, affectionately referring to him as *meus Aeneas* (1.231). Her compassion extends beyond the wellness of her son, as she laments the perils afflicting the rest of the Trojans (1.238-1.241). Intent on killing Helen in a fit of rage and frustration, Aeneas is soothed by his mother's words (2.594-2.620). Venus' character, however, shifts when recounting the story of Dido's late husband, Sychaeus. An analysis of her word choice reveals the ways in which Venus makes use of the vocabulary of love elegy in order to explain their marriage.[18] Here, I rely on the astute analysis of the Latin by Edward Gutting. Sychaeus is described as *magno miserae dilectus amore* (1.344). Dido's commitment to her husband is unwavering, which is precisely why Venus seeks to replace her conjugal love for Sychaeus with erotic love for Aeneas in order to aid the Trojans.[19] This use of erotic language is not limited to Dido and Sychaeus. Venus even explains the crime of Pygmalion in terms of love, describing his greed as *auri amor*, or a "love of gold" (1.349). The contrast between these two personas highlights the duality of her character in Augustan poetry. Perhaps then, it is not unusual for Venus to exhibit both ideals of matronly and sexual love.

I look to the works of Lucretius and Ovid to supplement this consideration of how Venus was perceived by Roman authors. The use of the term *Venus* by Lucretius is somewhat ambiguous, as its meaning vacillates between a physical and later divine sense.[20] Although in

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[17] Edward Gutting, "Venus' Maternity and Divinity in the Aeneid," *Callida Musa: Papers on Latin* Literature 61 (2009): 41.
[18] Gutting, "Venus' Maternity and Divinity in the Aeneid," 45.
[19] Edward Gutting, "Marriage in the *Aeneid*: Venus, Vulcan, and Dido," *Classical Philology* 101 no. 3 (July 2006): 265.
[20] Robert D. Brown, ed. *De Rerum Natura*, by Lucretius (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987), 238.

certain contexts, the meaning of the word is strictly physical, literally translating to "intercourse."[21] Even so, there exists evidence of Lucretius employing Venus in order to serve a Roman purpose. His poem on Epicurean physics begins with an evocation of the goddess, which might seem ironic given that Epicureans rejected the power of the gods and physical forms of pleasure. However, by placing himself in a strictly Roman setting, the goddess takes on her form as ancestress. In fact, her character is reworked so that she might take on a more "allegorical representation of either the creative forces in nature or pleasure."[22] In this way, ancient writers were not obligated to choose between her seemingly opposite connotations.

While Augustan love elegists generally accepted the Julio-Claudian claims to descent from Venus, they tended to depict the goddess in a rather immoral way, perhaps because of their distastes for the imperial regime. Virgil and Livy readily emphasize the divine lineage in their works. In contrast, Propertius portrayed Venus as an envious goddess who possessed the capacity to behave treacherously against Rome. In his *Elegy* 4.4, Propertius explains how Venus is to blame for Tarpeia's betrayal to the Trojans. His abuse towards and distrust of Venus implies that she was used as the means through which he scorned the Julians.[23] Ovid ridicules the goddess' indiscretions with Mars in his *Arms Armatoria* 2.561-590. Her extra-marital affair with Anchises is a crude reminder of how the Julians came to be in *Amores* 2.14. The sense of morality, or lack thereof, exhibited by Venus was reevaluated and consequently reproached in order to satisfy the goals of the love elegists.

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[21] Brown, *De Rerum Natura*, 315.
[22] Elizabeth Asmis, "Lucretius' Venus and Stoic Zeus," *Hermes* 110 (1982): 458.
[23] Carol U. Merriam, *Love an Propaganda: Augustan Venus and the Latin Love Elegists* (Bruxelles: Editions Latomus, 2006), 54-56.

The deep-rooted connection between Venus and Rome exists in various imperial public monuments. The *Ara Pacis Augustae* was purposely erected on the west side of the Via Flaminia, one of the major road ways of the city, so as to ensure visibility by those entering Rome. Commissioned by the Roman Senate in 13 BC as a celebration of Augustus' recent triumphs in quelling the borders of Spain and Gaul, the *Ara Pacis* was officially consecrated in 9 BC. The altar was unique for its time in that it portrayed imperial women and children.[24] This symbolic statement about family was representative of Augustus' political efforts concerning marriage and family-building. The initial reform came in 29 BC, with a law that encouraged respectable marriages and penalized celibacy. Supplemented by the *lex Julia* and *lex Papia Poppaea* in 9 BC which concerned issues of adultery and celibacy, Augustus' marriage laws sought to strengthen the moral integrity of the new state.

The eastern wall of the *Ara Pacis* contains a panel depicting three figures that draw upon iconographies of Tellus, or Mother Earth, Ceres, and Venus. A complimentary panel shows the goddess Roma adorned in her armor. While some scholars have argued that Pax herself is featured in the first panel, as would seem most appropriate for this altar, a more convincing "polysemous" interpretation has been put forth that places greater importance on Venus due to the resemblance of her iconographic attributes to comparable statues and reliefs.[25] Karl Galinsky's argument held that the central figure is mostly Venus Genetrix, who is seen assuming her role as *genetrix* to the two infants she cradles, and more broadly, to the Julio-Claudian family. Anne Boothe furthers this interpretation by considering the Temple of Venus Genetrix in

[24] Diana E. E. Kleiner, "Women and Family Life on Roman Imperial Funerary Altars," 545.
[25] Karl Galinsky, "Venus in a Relief of the Ara Pacis Augustae," *American Journal of Archaeology* 70 no. 3 (July 1966): 229.

the Forum of Caesar and its established cult of worship as a precedent for the association between the Julians and Venus Genetrix.[26] While Galinsky problematized the employment of various motifs belonging to deities apart from Venus through this argument of multiplicity, what is most crucial to the contents of this thesis is the way in which the presence of Venus, the ancestress, unifies the *Ara Pacis* into an inherently Augustan, and therefore Roman, monument.

Venus' interaction with the two infants is quite intimate. They lay on her lap and tug at her breasts, perhaps in an attempt to be fed. With respect to her duality in the *Aeneid* as previously discussed, Venus takes on her matronly role in this relief. The iconography of her breasts and fallen drapery resembles statues and reliefs of Venus Genetrix, further supporting this argument.[27] The cameo of Livia as Venus Genetrix, just slightly later in date than the *Ara Pacis*, offers comparanda to this notion of matron and empire. She too contains drapery slipping off her shoulder, and according to Kleiner, holds the bust of her son Tiberius, [28] thus evoking her status as mother and empress.

Venus' influence extended beyond the Julio-Claudian clan. Part of Hadrian's architectural projects for Rome included the erection of the Temple of Venus and Roma, located on the eastern end of the Roman Forum. It was probably dedicated by Hadrian between 135 and 137 AD, and later finished by his successor, Antoninus Pius, sometime between 140 and 145 AD. It stood near the site of Nero's Doma Aurea and colossal bronze statue, on the Velia Hill. With its fifty foot-high columns, it rivalled the size of the Pantheon and

[26] Anne Booth, "Venus on the Ara Pacis," *Latomus* 25 fasc. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 1966): 878.
[27] Galinksy, "Venus in a Relief," 233.
[28] Kleiner, *I, Claudia*, 184.

the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Despite its very Roman location in the heart of the city, the Temple of Venus and Roma adapted very Greek styles of architecture. Unlike the typical Roman temple that was constructed upon a high podium, this temple sat on a low stylobate and followed a *pseudodipteral* plan, making it accessible from all sides. The temple's Hellenistic influence, also seen in its employment of a joint dedication, reflects a larger shift in the context of Rome's waning influence as the center of the Roman world by the time of Hadrian's rule.[29] In fact, Hadrian spent more than half of his reign away from Rome.[30] Elements of the Greek tradition pervaded the nature of Hadrian's empire beyond the city walls. He bestowed privileges on Athens, inaugurated the Panhellenion, and completed the Temple of Zeus Olympios. In fact, ninety-four altars were erected in Athens in his honor.[31] It is interesting, then, that the "Greekling" emperor chose to dedicate one of his major contributions to the Roman architectural landscape to Venus and Roma, not only the most Roman of goddesses, but presumably the goddesses depicted on the eastern wall panels of Augustus' altar of peace. Despite belonging to the adoptive emperors of the second century ruling some hundred years after Augustus, Hadrian made a distinct effort to align himself with the Julio-Claudians. Interestingly, Hadrian purposely fashioned himself in the guise of Mars, the divine consort of Venus, at the time that the Temple of Venus and Roma was inaugurated.[32] In fact, this date fell on April 21, 121 AD, the "birthday" of Rome with respect to its founding by Romulus on the

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[29] Suna Güven, "A Vision of Imperial Unity: The Temple of Venus and Roma," *METU JFA* 10 (1990): 23.

[30] David Watkin, *The Roman Forum* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 53.

[31] Anna S. Benjamin, "The Altars of Hadrian in Athens and Hadrian's Panhellenic Program." *Hesperia* 32 (1963): 57.

[32] Güven, "A Vision of Imperial Unity," 19-30.

same day in 753 BC. By establishing the cult of Venus and Roma in the capital, Hadrian was proclaiming himself both protector of Venus and the Julio-Claudians, and philhellene.

As for the Temple of Venus at his villa complex in Tivoli, it stands as yet another connection between the imperial family and monuments in honor of Venus. Unlike the Temple of Venus and Roma and the *Ara Pacis*, the Temple of Venus at Hadrian's Villa was part of a private imperial building project. On the eastern valley of the complex stands the remains of the temple in the Doric order. Its architectural inspiration has been thought to derive from a Doric tholos found on Knidos. It is this tholos that scholars have postulated originally housed Praxiteles' famous work that had sparked the squabble between Knidos and Kos.[33] The Doric temple at Hadrian's Villa sheltered a Roman copy of Praxiteles' Knidian Aphrodite. This demonstrated Hadrian's tendency to revive the tradition of Greek design and apply it to the Roman imperial landscape. The structure consisted of a semi-circular colonnade that hugged the tholos, wherein the statue stood. In this way, the monument was really more of a shrine than it was a temple.[34] Considering his interest in channeling the Julio-Claudian lineage, it is understandable, then, that Hadrian would erect not one but two different monuments dedicated to the ancestral goddess of Rome. Recent work in Hadrianic numismatics corroborates this notion that Hadrian reinvented his self-image in such a way as to identify himself with Romulus, founder of the city according to one version of myth. Because of internal rivalries with his senators, Hadrian recognized that to maintain the integrity of his legacy, he

[33] William L. MacDonald and John A. Pinto, *Hadrian's Villa and Its Legacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 58-9.
[34] MacDonald and Pinto, *Hadrian's Villa*, 60.

had to advertise himself on imperial coins as the new Romulus, and therefore the crucial link between early Rome and its revitalized successor.[35]

Thus, there lies a certain power in emperors choosing to channel Venus specifically in both their public and private building programs. Her symbolic significance shaped the way in which emperors constructed the city and cultivated their own legitimacy. As mother to Aeneas and ancestress of the city, Venus' role as *genetrix* was emphasized through these imperial monuments. This is not to say that as a result, her role as the goddess of beauty and fertility was neglected. Rather, her prominence within the imperial sphere only complemented these additional aspects, allowing for a certain duality of character to exist. This is precisely the reason why I will argue why non-imperial women sought to depict themselves *in formam Veneris*.

VIRTUE AND ITS SOCIAL FUNCTION

Now that the importance of the connection between Venus and the Roman architectural makeup and imperial imagination has been established, it is important to evaluate ancient perceptions of the female body with respect to its social functions. Understanding the expectations bestowed upon non-imperial women will shine light on the reasons why, for instance, the husbands of Claudia Semne and Ulpia Epigone chose to commission funerary portraits of their wives in the guise of Venus.

[35] Evan Haley, "Hadrian as Romulus or the Self-Representation of a Roman Emperor," *Latomus* 64 fasc. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 2005): 978-80.

The quintessential image of Roman female virtue comes from Book 1 of Livy's *History of Rome*. Livy, who was writing during the Augustan period, dedicated three chapters to narrating the rape of Lucretia, the wife of consul Collatinus. While besieging the city of Ardea in the late sixth century BC, a dispute arose among his fellow comrades concerning whose wife was deserving of the highest praise. Collatinus proclaimed Lucretia most superior (1.57.7). The men rode off back to Rome to confirm Collatinus' assertion. Sure enough, while the wives of the rest of the men indulged in feasting and luxurious activities, Lucretia was found late at night dutifully attending to her wool work (1.57.9). She was awarded "wifely virtue," as spinning was the archetypal work of the matron.[36] But when Collatinus invited his companions to stay at his home as guests, including members of the Tarquin family, Sextus Tarquinius, the then-king of Rome, violated Lucretia, incited by her beauty and purity (1.57.10) Despite rejecting his advances on account of her virtue, Tarquin deemed her honor lost (1.58.5). Lucretia subsequently committed suicide, choosing an honorable death over a shamed life. In other words, while she physically had been assaulted, morally she remained innocent.[37] Her rape precipitated the end of the Roman monarchy, as Collatinus aided in expelling the last of the Tarquin kings after his wife's suicide. Not unlike the duality of Venus as explored earlier in the *Aeneid*, Lucretia exhibited beauty through *forma* and marital fidelity through *matrona*, the very characteristics that inflamed Tarquinius. Thus, engrained in the Roman moral code, a woman could simultaneously exhibit both of these elements of female character. Frequently mentioned in the context of Roman foundational myths, the rape of Lucretia served as a model

[36] Rebecca Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 87.
[37] Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 93.

for Roman women. Early on in the Roman imagination, Lucretia's suicide set the moral standard for female conduct according to the concept of *pudicitia*, or sexual morality.

For married women, the level of *pudicitia* they exhibited was evaluated by the public. It was essential for women to cultivate a symbolic image of themselves that appropriately displayed the wifely virtues which they possessed. Only once a community witnessed and attested to one's modesty and chastity could their *pudicitia* be confirmed. In this way, *pudicita* was rooted in public display and socialization, in fostering a sense of communal praise.[38] This is due to the fact that a certain level of contest existed among women in showcasing their greatest virtues.[39] This sense of competition surely resonates with the rape of Lucretia, and the trend of needing to rate matronly values. Once women were awarded honors and benefactions, bestowed by their city and family in the forms of, for instance, honorific statues and annual banquets, their impressive displays of female virtues served as *exempla* towards which other women could work. Perhaps the honors dedicated to an empress, like a widely-circulated coin, might inspire non-elite women to accomplish such deeds in hopes of also achieving public recognition.

The presentation of *pudicitia* brings into question perceptions of female sexuality. In probing this issue, one must recognize the inherent bias present in the ancient record. Attitudes towards sex functioned as a response to a male gaze, whether it be that of narrator, artist, or husband.[40] The ambiguities apparent in Roman materials therefore threatens to obscure our

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[38] Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 52.
[39] Emily Ann Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives, Public Personae* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 174.
[40] Suzanne Dixon, *Reading Roman Women* (London: Duckworth & Co., 2001), 34.

understanding of sexual behavior, necessitating a nuanced analysis of the role of women. But first, at the most basic level, women were expected to rear children and remain chaste in their marriage, as dictated by a society led by *paterfamiliae*. They were leaders of the domestic sphere, the space in which they could perform their duties as *materfamilias*. Along with the notion of chastity came compliance, in that women were expected to yield to the wishes of their husbands, while suggestion of the reverse would have been met with ambivalence.[41] Although social norms and imperial legislation suggested that neither husband nor wife engage in illicit sexual activities, it is safe to say that in practice, a double-standard did occasionally exist. Negative stereotypes in literature ridiculed the "desiring" woman, associating her with decadence, self-indulgence, and hyper-sexuality. Ancient materials interested in the topic of female sexuality usually fell under the genres of social satire, dramatized love elegy, and humorous gossip.[42]

This is not to say that marriages were strictly social obligations that provided no outlet for personal freedoms. Rather, women could utilize their accepted positions to display their virtue. The property of married woman and their freedom to manage it was protected by Roman law, although this was done in close accordance with a male relative. Typically, it was expected that the mother would bequeath her property to her own children or husband. [43] In doing so, she was providing support for her family in more legal terms. Thus, reciprocity was still encouraged between husband and wife when it came to the concerns of family finances.

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[41] Dixon, *Reading Roman Women*, 40.
[42] Dixon, *Reading Roman Women*, 43.
[43] Kleiner, *I, Claudia*, 119.

The status of the wife as protector of the household was respected, which allowed for the fostering of a sense of mutual responsibility and commitment to the domestic sphere.

THE BODY AS A CONCEPT

Much attention has been paid to the phenomenon of funerary portraits containing the idealized body of a goddess and the veristic head of the deceased. What is important about this portrait type with relation to the argument of this thesis is the fact that it often honored women along the lines of their social roles as wives and mothers. With these roles came their associated attributes, such as beauty and sensuality, and devotion and maternal love. Recent feminist scholarship has compellingly grappled with the concept of female portrait nudity, rooted in the understanding that unlike their Greek predecessors, Romans interpreted the body and head as two separate entities.[44] This crucial principle will guide the remainder of my analysis. And through the application of theories on ancient gendered nudity, I hope to demonstrate that woman *in formam Veneris* employed nudity as a convention through which their womanliness was expressed. Venus' fundamental position within the Roman imagination allowed for a negotiated balanced between her two essentially female-related aspects, virtue and nudity, neither one of which negated the other, but rather served to strengthen the whole.

The meaning and use of the word "nudity" as applied in this thesis must first be explained and problematized. In the English language, the terms "nude" versus "naked" have come to connote quite contrastive meanings. Kenneth Clark asserts that "naked" "implies… embarrassment" and the image of a "huddled and defenseless body." Eve D'Ambra supports

[44] Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives, Public Personae*, 300.

this idea that nakedness denotes a sense of shame.[45] In contrast, "nudity" suggests one that is "balanced, prosperous, and confident."[46] Nudity is intentional and symbolic. It is the body in representation, as controlled by the culture that produced it. In other words, Roman attitudes towards nudity were exactly that: Roman. Nudity was never taken at face value, which is why Bonfante's theory of a "costume," a term I will borrow, so aptly works in this discussion of nudity as a cultural conception. What was acceptable in art was considered inappropriate, even disgraceful, in public life. Any form of nudity in real life, whether partial or full, was completely unacceptable for women of social substance.[47] To reveal the body in public was an act attributed to those belonging to the lowest social standing: female slaves and prostitutes. And even so, this is said to have occurred in a particular setting. Prostitutes might wear a revealing dress in the setting of brothels, purposely in reference to the male gaze. As for slaves, ancient sources explained that they were brought to market by slave dealers naked. [48] Thus, even the nakedness of these women of the lowest classes was restricted to certain spatial contexts.

Despite my title containing the very word "nudity," it might seem puzzling as to why I have included in my image catalogue portraits of women fully draped, such as the Ostian Venus Genetrix or the Venus portrait group from the Louvre. I have done so for two reasons; most obviously, because these portraits were specifically in the guise of Venus and as such channeled her iconography, most prominently the fallen and billowing drapery motifs. Second, because

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[45] Eve D'Ambra, "The Calculus of Venus: Nude Portraits of Roman Matrons," in *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*, ed. Natalie B. Kampen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 221.
[46] Clark, *The Nude*, 3.
[47] Hallett, "The Roman Nude," 83.
[48] Hallett, "The Roman Nude," 84.

the notion that a woman who was fully clothed exhibited less sexuality than a completely bare woman is problematic. In fact, scholars like Andrew Stewart recognized that "artfully deployed clothing only increases female allure."[49] Thin drapery that clung to the body was perhaps just as captivating as a woman fully nude. It should be noted, then, that Romans would have used the same word, *nudus*, for both nude and partially nude.[50]

There exists a range in Venus imagery. Some statues of Venus are of the goddess herself, and as such contain both an idealized body and head. On the opposite side of the spectrum are statues with an idealized body and a realistic head. For instance, the Copenhagen Venus contains deep furrows along her nasolabial lines, clear signs of aging, while the head of the Venus Kallipygos is idealized. It must be noted that this is because the former is in the guise of Venus and the latter is a literal depiction of the goddess herself. For those statues belonging to the types of the former, I argue that the disparity in realism does not make the conceptual separation of body and head any less plausible. Rather, it demonstrates the extent to which individuals had freedom in how they chose to portray the image of their most virtuous self.[51] Signs of old age like wrinkles or rounded hips might denote authority and repute while a plump, vibrant face might imply youthful beauty. How might one further explain these differences? R. R. R. Smith has proposed an applicable model through which one can understand the varieties in portrait characteristics throughout second century Roman art without committing a

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[49] Andrew Stewart, Hellenistic Freestanding Sculpture from the Athenian Agora, Part 1: Aphrodite" *Hesperia* 81 no. 2 (Apr.-June 2012): 312.

[50] Christopher Hallett, *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary, 200 B.C. – A.D. 300* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 61-62.

[51] Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives, Public Personae*, 300.

"biographical fallacy" as his says, or reading the image simply at face-value.[52] The variety of head types, and body types for that matter, can be explained by a set of "cultural choices" made by the individuals which allowed for these private funerary statues to project a desired message about a respectable woman's social role and attributes.[53] It is too basic to interpret the iconographies of a portrait as legitimate indications of the subject's real-life. I can apply this method to my own thesis. In the case of reading women *in formam Veneris*, the likeness of the head and body of the woman is of less significance than its expression of female virtues. For instance, what if the bare breasts and abdomen of Ulpia Epigone are interpreted as provocative and immodest? Then this neglects the fact that the resting of the hand on her genitals is an assimilation to the Capitoline Venus type and evocation of the goddess' traits.[54] This assumption inserts a modern bias on a distinctly ancient context. Smith urges modern viewers, then, to utilize all forms of iconographic vocabulary, like clothing type, hairstyle, accessories, and when available, inscriptions, in order to grasp a sense of the portrait's purpose. One must recognize the vocabulary of Venus imagery when interpreting these honorific portrait statues because they are representative of a greater moral meaning.

What about the idealized body? What implications did this have on the projected message of the statue as a whole? While the reasons for using veristic heads are more complicated, the desire to be physically attractive is more straightforward. D'Ambra views the

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[52] R. R. R. Smith, "Cultural Choice and Political Identity in Honorific Statues in the Greek East in the Second Century A.D.*," Journal of Roman Studies* 88 (1998): 60.
[53] Smith, "Cultural Choice," 92.
[54] Eve D'Ambra,"The Cult of Virtues and the Funerary Relief of Ulpia Epigone." *Latomus* 48, fasc. 2 (Apr.-June 1989): 396.

bodies as "depictions of the immortal physique of the goddess," and not simply as a "generalized ideal nude."[55] In antiquity, nudity and the divine went hand-in-hand. Nudity was actually involved in the rituals of the cult of Venus. Because of such a connotation, funerary portraits would have been viewed as acceptable. That being said, it must be reiterated that what was popular in art was not practiced in real-life, which furthers the notion that the body was a cultural and religious construct. I will draw upon Bonfante's and D'Ambra's frameworks because they take into account this distinction, and seek to interpret nudity in art beyond its aesthetic qualities.

What Bonfante establishes in Greek artistic nudity, D'Ambra applies to a Roman context. Bonfante distinguishes between religious and athletic nudity in a Greek setting. Athletes wore the "costume" of nudity to the gymnasium, inspired by Classical Attic vases showing gods, heroes, and athletes nude. In a ritual context, this "costume" signified the initiation of a youth into manhood. Because initiations were associated with the cult of a divinity, nudity could serve as a mortal man's expressed service to the god.[56] However, nudity for a mortal woman, even if it functioned as a display of sexuality, always bore with it a sense of shame, vulnerability, and defenselessness.[57] This is precisely where D'Ambra bridges her argument.

> For Venus to be a model for matrons, the goddess's role as the mother of all Romans through her bearing of Aeneas and the inception of the Julian line had to be emphasized.[58]

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[55] Eve D'Ambra, "The Calculus of Venus," 219.
[56] Bonfante, "Nudity as a Costume," 548.
[57] Bonfante, "Nudity as a Costume," 561.
[58] D'Ambra, "The Calculus of Venus," 221.

In this way, the employment of nudity in art was reworked and redefined in order to function as an expression of assimilation to the qualities of the divine. As previously mentioned, without the mythological context of these types of funerary monuments, such nudity would never have been accepted. However, with the application of a "costume," the capacity for interpretation shifts. My consideration of imperial building projects that intentionally featured Venus imagery served to emphasize her repute as a crucial force within Augustan ideology.

A discussion of the theory of selective interpretation serves to strengthen my argument about the conceptual separation of body and head. Rachel Kousser uses this notion to explain how mythological group portraits of the Mars-Venus type were accepted by Roman patrons, despite the fact that Venus was the bride of Vulcan. Myths were adaptable and "lent themselves to frequent reinterpretation."[59] In much the same way a Roman audience might look to this genre type for its romantic message about marriage and conjugal love, the selective interpretation of a realistic head with the literal body of Venus would explain how statues like the Copenhagen Venus and the Flavian Naples Venus worked for a Roman audience. The authority of the veristic head controlled the sexuality of the body.[60] The body of the Copenhagen Venus, with respect to its fullness and modest pose, could suggest reproductive capabilities, physical beauty, and modesty all at the same time, afforded by the fact that her head is quite realistic. The application of the theories of a cultivated "costume" and selective interpretation justify this artistic trend of *in formam Veneris* that is rooted in the thoughtful display of nudity.

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[59] Rachel Kousser, "Mythological Group Portraits in Antonine Rome: The Performance of Myth," *American Journal of Archaeology* 111 no. 4 (Oct. 2007): 685.
[60] D'Ambra, "The Calculus of Venus," 229.

Andrew Stewart defends this idea of the coexistence of matronly virtue and beauty, in his terms of "authority" and "allure." There exists a capacity for the simultaneity of these qualities; Roman women did not have to choose between one or the either. The "striking combination" of modesty and sexuality expressed in the same body of work allowed women to display themselves in a way rendered societally appropriate due to Venus' significant role in the Roman imagination. Thus, the tension between nudity and virtue is reconciled by this notion of a carefully negotiated balance between the two. Contextualized by the stature of Venus as the mother of Aeneas, ancestress to the Julian clan, and patron to the city of Rome, the multiplicity of her attributes were available for Roman women to use synchronously in order to communicate both their morality and sexuality.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to explore nudity in Roman art in a societal context rather than an exclusively aesthetic one. I referred to and described depictions of Venus, both public and private, in order to prove her importance to the legitimacy of the state, as well as her desirability in form. I see a negotiated balance between her opposing qualities; motherly virtue and explicit sexuality. To recognize the circumstances of portrait statues *in formam Veneris* is to understand how Roman women expressed themselves by accepting and promoting the roles to which society allotted them. Portrait statues in the guise of Venus could dually worked as representations of the contrastive qualities of the goddess, which functioned to reinforce the whole.

Viewership and reception inform this discussion of how the deceased were remembered and by whom. Given that these monuments were often built by the husbands and children of Roman women, their targeted audience was primarily the families or those who had known the deceased. By the early first century, inscriptions were usually the only part of the funerary monument that was open for the public to read, as tomb complexes were literally shut off from the world. So, it was the imagery itself that facilitated communication between the deceased and their loved ones within the private tomb precinct.[61] This metaphorical engagement was how the memory of the dead was kept alive.

It is important to remember how the idea of the "performance of myth" explains how spectators were actively engaged with the spirit of the deceased through the moral messages of the works of art themselves. Kousser distinguishes the difference between the purposes of Augustan and Antonine portraits, and how they differed according to viewership. While Augustan funerary programs served a political and allegorical function, the later Antonine group portraits were quite private and intimate.[62] They expressed messages of conjugal love of the married couple that would have been known to visitors Most importantly, the highly familiar language utilized in these later mythological group portraits would have rendered them the more legible.[63]

Nonetheless, I argue that the importance of Venus persisted for centuries, from the inception of Venus Genetrix in the first century BC to mythological group portraits in the second

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[61] Paul Zanker and Bjorn C. Ewald, *Living with Myths: The Imagery of Roman Sarcophagi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 178.

[62] Kousser, "Mythological Group Portraits in Antonine Rome," 685.

[63] Kousser, "Mythologoical Group Portraits in Antonine Rome," 689.

and early third centuries AD. A chronological survey outlines how Venus remained a popular goddess for imperial and non-imperial women alike to evoke. While functionality may have shifted over time, with later portraits allowing for greater accessibility in terms of recognizing specific myths, Venus' status as the ancestress to all Romans and the ideal example of all ranges of female virtue persisted.

To quote Kenneth Clark, "the nude is not the subject of art, but a form of art."[64]

[64] Clark, *The Nude*, 5.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

IMAGE CATALOGUE

Figure 1: Statue of the Capitoline Venus. Late second century to first century BC. Rome, Musei Capitolini, inv. 0409. *LIMC* II, 1, 1984, pg. 52. *LIMC* II, 2, 1984, pg. 38. JJ Bernoulli: Aphrodite: Ein Baustein Zur Griechischen Kunstmythologie pg. 223-4. Andrew Stewart: A Tale of Seven Nudes, pg. 12-32.

This is a late Hellenistic copy, originally found between the Quirinal and Viminal hills, near the basilica of San Vitale. Because the *loutrophoros* is an Attic vase, Andrew Stewart places the origins of the Capitoline type in Athens.

Figure 2: Venus Kallipygos. Late first century BC. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 6020. *LIMC* II, 1, 1984, p. 85; *LIMC* II, 2, 1984, p. 76. *Guida ilustrata del Museo nazionale di Napoli* Ruesch, 1911, p. 105 n. 314.

The name literally translates to “Venus with the beautiful buttocks,” as seen in the figure’s torsion towards admiring her rear anatomy. Although the Roman copy is marble, its Greek original is thought to have been bronze. It was discovered near the Domus Area in Rome. In the eighteenth century, Carlo Albacini restored the head, shoulders, left arm, right hand, and right calf. This type is also seen in the form of terracotta figurines.

Figure 3: Cameo of Livia and Tiberius. 14-37 AD. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 99.109. Volenweider, Steinschneidekunst, p. 75, n. 62. Kleiner, I, Claudia, p. 184. Megow, 1987, 256, B19.

The identity of the bust has been debated. It was first thought to be of Tiberius, until Vollenweider argued it was a Tiberian version of Augustus. Kleiner and Megow opt for the original interpretation.

Figure 4: Sardonyx Cameo of Livia as Priestess of Divus Augsustus. 14-29 AD. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IXa95. Susan E. Wood, 2000, p. 119.

Livia holds the bust of deified Augustus, therefore dating this cameo to sometime after 14 AD. She wears the costume of either Cybele of Venus Genetrix.

Figure 5: Aphrodite Fréjus. 30-40 AD. Rome, Vatican Museums, Museo Pio Clementino, Gabinetto delle Maschere, inv. 816. Paul Arndt, Photographische, n. 263.

Comparable to the Venus Genetrix types of the Louvre and Naples Museums, this statue is said to contain the portrait head of Sabina, the wife of Hadrian.

Figure 6: Sarcophagus lid with lying female figure, depicted as Venus. 69-96 AD. Rome, Vatican Museums, Museo Pio Clementino, Cortile Ottagono, inv. 878.

Figure 7: Funerary Relief of Ulpia Epigone. Late first to early second century. Rome, Vatican Museums, Museo Gregoriano Profano, inv. 9856. O. Benndorf and R Schöne, Die antiken Bildwerke des lateranensischen Museums (Leipzig, 1867), p. 314-315, n. 44. D'Ambra, The Cult of Virtues and the Funerary Relief of Ulpia Epigone, 392-400.

Ulpia Epigone's gesture evokes that of the Capitoline Venus. The features of her portrait head have been likened to those of Julia Titi. The inscription does not contain any explicit statement about status, common in epitaphs from the second century.

Figure 8: Relief of a Potter and His Wife. First to second century. Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 60.2. Kleiner, I, Claudia, p. 91-2.

Kleiner argues that the palm fan held by the wife might be a motif of Venus Victrix.

Figure 9: Matron depicted as Venus. Late first century to early second century. Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. 711. Hallett 2005, p. 199, Pl. 121 and B327.

The statue's pose evokes the Capitoline Venus. The stark contrast between the realistic portraits and idealized bodies is especially noticeable.

Figure 10: Portrait of a Woman as Venus. 98-117 AD. Rome, Museo Capitolini, inv. 245. Wrede, *Consecratio* 309 Nr. 294.

The woman is unknown. Her hairstyle is early Trajanic in date. Her pose recalls the Melian type.

Figure 11: Relief from the Tomb of the Haterii. Late first to second century. Vatican Museums, Museo Gregoriano Profano, inv. 9997. Emanuel Mayer, The Ancient Middle Classes, p. 130.

The tomb was found along the Via Labicana. The Haterii were involved in building projects during the Flavian period, hence the crane imagery. It is thought that the nude Venus in the niche is the wife of Haterius, Hateria Helpis.

Figure 12: Esquiline Venus. 117-138 AD. Rome, Musei Capitolini, Halls of the Horti Lamiani, Palazzo dei Conservatori, inv. 1141. Ruth Christine Häuber, "Zur Ikonographie der Venus vom Esquilin," KölnJb 21 (1988), p. 35-64. Ridgway, Pl. 83.

The nose has since been restored. Beside the statue is a rose-covered casket and vessel encircled by a snake. Due to this imagery's associations with Isis and Osiris, one theory sees the Esquiline Venus as a priestess of Egyptian gods. Its date is thought to have been Hadrianic, though Egyptianizing iconography would have been likely during the Augustan period as well.

Figure 13: Aphrodite of Capua. 117-138 AD. Naples, Museo Nazionale Archeologico, inv. 6017. *LIMC* II, 1, 1984, pg. 72. *LIMC* II, 2, 1984, pg. 61. Lippold, Griechische Plastik, p. 284 n. 1, plate 101.3.

This marble statue was found at the amphitheater in Capua. In the early nineteenth century, the arms, nose, and part of the drapery were restored. The pose refers to the imagery of Aphrodite admiring herself in the reflection of Ares' shield.

Figure 14: Portrait of a Woman as Venus Genetrix. Second century. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 24. Wrede, *Consecratio* 306 Anm. 36.

This statue is said to be of Sabina, the wife of Hadrian. IT was found in the Sede degli Ausgustali (V, VII, 1-2). The original Venus Genetrix from the temple in the forum is lost, but this statue is in the same pose, with a different head.

Figure 15: Female statue as Venus Felix. Second century. Vatican Museums, Museo Pio Clementino, inv. 936.

An inscription explains that this statue was dedicated by Sallustia and Helpidus to Venus Felix. The head is thought to resemble Faustina the Younger.

Figure 16: Statue of Capitoline Venus. Second Century. Paris, Louvre Museum, inv. 369. Andrew Stewart: A Tale of Seven Nudes, pg. 12-32.

This version of the Capitoline Venus contains Eros beside the goddess rather than a bathing vessel.

Figure 17: Portrait of a Man and Woman as Mars and Venus. Second century. Paris, Louvre Museum, inv. 316. Wrede, Consecratio p. 269-70, n. 195, n 299.

This portrait group was discovered near Santa Maria Maggiore. It originally depicted Hadrian and Sabina, but was later altered. The features and hairstyle suggest that is a late second century portrait of Lucilla, the wife of Lucius Verus.

Figure 18: Portrait of a Man and Woman as Mars and Venus. Second century. Rome, Museo delle Terme, inv. 108522. G. Moretti, 1920 “Ostia,” *Notizie degli Scavi*, 17, Pl. 11.

This portrait group was incorrectly identified as Faustina Minor and Marcus Aurelius. Originally found at Ostia, it actually is of a private couple.

Figure 19: Portrait group of Mars and Venus. Second century. Rome, Musei Capitolini, Palazzo Nuovo, inv. 652. Kleiner, 1981, p. 512-44, especially 537-38.

This was found in the Isola Sacra necropolis at Ostia.

Figure 20: Fragment from group statue of Mars and Venus. Augstuan. Rome, Museo dei Fori Imperiali, inv. 2563a. Rachel Kousser, 2008, p. 48.

This fragment was found at the Forum of Augustus. It corresponds to the visual format of the group portraits, showing the neck and shoulders of Mars and hand of Venus.

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