

CONSPICUOUS CONCEALMENT:
**An Investigation into the Veiling of Roman Women, with Special
Reference to the Time of Augustus**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the material included in this dissertation has not been submitted for a degree in this or any other university, and that it is my own work.

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ABSTRACT

Although there is much evidence for the practice of female veiling in the Classical world it has for the most part been ignored.

Evidence for the veiling of Roman women is found in many sources. Ancient lexicographers list many names for veils that these women wore. Each of these veils was particular to the context in which they were worn and by whom they were worn. The plenitude of veiling terminology as well as the specialized nature of these veils alerts the reader to the importance that the Romans attributed to the veil, suggesting that it formed an important part of their culture and this is described in visual and literary terms by ancient artists and writers.

From discussions on modern veiling it is possible, through the application of a comparative methodology, to create models that can elucidate the Roman system. From anthropological studies undertaken on modern veiling cultures, it can be appreciated how notions of 'honour' and 'shame,' a belief in the evil-eye, the polluting force of the female body and the use of the veil as a means of sexual communication influenced Roman veiling. In this way it becomes possible to understand how the veil became a marker for the positive forces of femininity and for the containment of the negative influences. The veil became a signifier of sound gender relations. The fact that this vestimentary code is able to generate meaning in the minds of observers is because it works in conjunction with a rhetorical system of dress.

The practice of veiling is therefore viewed by the Romans in a positive light, and its disruption is understood by them as a cause for concern. This concern was especially apparent during the late republic. The dissolution of the traditional forms of government was in some ways problematized in terms of gender, with women's abandonment of

their traditional roles and their incursion into the public sphere being of specific importance. In order to remedy this, attempts were made by the new regime of Augustus to promote a return to what were seen to be traditional gender relations. This programme of moral reform made use of both formal, legalistic decree (the Julian marriage laws) and more propagandistic constructions (the public works of art). In this process traditional symbols assumed a high degree of salience. Because of its power to signify the beneficial and appropriate status of the female body, one of the most important of these symbols was the veil.

In this dissertation the artistic and literary manifestations of veiling and its social and political significance are discussed with specific reference to the Augustan period.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Bucol. Eins.</i>	Bucolica Einsidlensia
<i>Char. Call.</i>	Chariton, <i>Callirhoe</i>
<i>Digest.</i>	Justinian <i>Digest</i>
<i>Gal. De usu part. corp. hum.</i>	Galen, <i>De Usu Partium Corporis Humani</i>
<i>Fest.</i>	Festus, <i>De Verborum Significatu</i>
<i>Liv.</i>	Livy, <i>Ab urbe condita</i>
<i>Mart. Epig</i>	Martial, <i>Epigrammata</i>
<i>Serv. Aen.</i>	Servius, <i>In Vergilii Aeneidos Libros</i>
<i>Tert. De vir. vel.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De virginibus velandis</i>
<i>Vulg. Exod.</i>	Latin Vulgate, <i>Exodus</i>

Otherwise all abbreviations follow those found in the *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd Edition (Hornblower, S. and Spawforth, A. (eds) (1996) Oxford University Press (Oxford)). I have given the titles of journals in full.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	iii
Abbreviations	v
Contents	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction: A Brief Overview of Discussions of Female Veiling, Both Ancient and Modern	1
Chapter 2: The Anthropological Context: Sexuality, Honour, and Shame	17
Chapter 3: The Veil as a Marker of Social and Religious Status at Rome	39
Chapter 4: Defining the Veil	55
Chapter 5: The Moral Reforms of Augustus and Their Influence on Veiling	85
Chapter 6: The Case of Sulpicius Gallus	101
Chapter 7: The Veil in Augustan Art	115
Chapter 8: Conclusion	139
Appendix 1: Terms for Veils Found in the Lexicographical Sources	145
Appendix 2: List of Illustrations	149
Bibliography	205

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF DISCUSSIONS OF FEMALE VEILING, BOTH ANCIENT AND MODERN

‘You are able to discern nothing of a matron except her face.’
matronae praeter faciem nil cernere possis (Hor. Sat. 1.2.94)

Horace is describing the practice of female concealment, whereby women cover all of their bodies except the face, and touches on a topic of great concern to many modern scholars. The destruction of The World Trade Centre and the inception of the United States of America’s ‘War on Terror’ have dramatically increased the frequency of discussions in the popular press on the Islamic practice of female veiling. In this context the veil is recognised in almost exclusively Islamic terms, which inform most of the scholarship in the field. While direct references to this custom in the ancient texts relating to Roman society are rare, rarer still are modern discussions of these scant classical examples. This dissertation will concern itself with a topic largely ignored by Classical scholars: the veiling of women in the ancient Roman world.

In the light of current interest in the modern veil, it has become unfeasible to begin any discussion on the veil or inquiry into its significance without first addressing the slew of scholarship on the veil in its Islamic context. These works inevitably engage in discourses with feminist ideals and either justify or condemn female veiling. There is a trend amongst modern scholars to rationalize the use of the veil in terms of how it serves to confirm the sexuality of the female body. Accounts in the popular media, such as a

recent one entitled *Jihad on a G-string*,¹ claim that Islam not only acknowledges but even fears the sexual power of women as being so strong that it could, if not contained behind a veil, lead men to their ruin. These superficial analyses often ignore the complex social values and beliefs that underlie the attribution of negative power to female sexuality and instead focus entirely on the fact that at least these cultures see women as active sexual beings.

Other writers have taken the opposite approach, and view the veil almost exclusively through the lens of Western feminism.² In cases such as these the veil is interpreted as a sign of patriarchal hegemony and is grouped with women's backwardness, subordination and oppression—a perspective in which all women who veil are treated as a monolithic entity. Proponents of this approach state, rather hyperbolically, that 'there are surely a hundred million ways in which the veil is disempowering to women', and that the veil weakens women and prevents them from confronting uncomfortable daily experiences.³ These diatribes against the veil and what it is assumed to represent often employ a paternalistic and didactic tone that is intended to further the mission of unveiling women.⁴

Scholarly works that genuinely attempt to investigate practices of veiling without pushing an ideological agenda are few and far between. El Guindi's monograph on the subject manages to some degree to extricate the veil from the areas of Women's Studies and Religious Studies and to place it in the larger framework of the anthropology of dress.⁵ The utilization of neutral theories of veiling other than the usual gendered ones mean that scholars like El Guindi are able to speak about the veiling practices of men, which in turn serves to enlighten the primary topic of female veiling. El Guindi's work, and to a lesser extent Abu Odeh's,⁶ are able to inform our ancient study remarkably well as they both place the veil within the context in which it is worn today. Therefore we are

¹ Magardie 2006.

² Ahmed 1992: 87.

³ Abu Odeh 1993: 30.

⁴ Authors such as Leïla Babès clearly link the veiling of Muslim women with their oppression, and insist that the veil must be abandoned in the quest for female liberation (Babès 2004:117).

⁵ El Guindi 1999.

⁶ Abu Odeh 1993: 27; El Guindi 1999: 143.

not merely informed that a rise in religious conservatism in Egypt during the 1970's saw a rise in the use of the veil but rather are given an opportunity to understand the political context of these two occurrences, and can therefore better understand how the veil might act as a barometer of social flux and anxiety at any given point in history.

El Guindi's work shows the value of understanding the veil not only as a sartorial signifier but also as an indicator of the structure of the society in which it is used. Understood in this way, the veil is observed to operate on both macro and micro levels. Individual women may be seen to be 'choosing' to veil while a general trend towards this choice is observed on a macro scale. Marshall and Stokes offer a sound theory as to how this movement towards sartorial conservatism operates in modern North African states.⁷ They have noted that when a new ruling group, whose position is often dependent on a nationalist movement, attempts to legitimise its power after a period of political crisis or revolution they often rely upon the selective affirmation of tradition to engender loyalty amongst the populace to the changes made by the elite.⁸ Those in power are most likely to employ these strategies when they are insecure in their power, a phenomenon that is especially frequent after protracted periods of civil war. Marshall and Stokes have identified three factors that are directly related to the elite's commitment to tradition, a commitment that is reflected in national sartorial habits. These factors are: the degree of political instability that attends the elite's assumption of power, the level of political fragmentation within the elite and the extent of 'ethnic revitalization', a term which refers to the heightening or strengthening of traditional ethnic commitment.⁹ These three factors are of specific relevance to the discussion of veiling in the Augustan Principate.

This is not to say that information from other cultures, such as Marshall's and Stokes' theory or the honour/shame model (to be discussed further in the following chapter), should replace material which is missing from the Roman sources, but rather that, as Llewellyn-Jones has shown in his study of the veil in Ancient Greece, it is possible for

⁷ Marshall & Stokes 1981.

⁸ Marshall & Stokes 1981: 627.

⁹ Marshall & Stokes 1981: 629-631.

such sources to provide hypotheses, working models or methods for interrogating the ancient veil.¹⁰ The reader might protest that in our age, in which Western media and culture is so ubiquitous, any veiling society is too extensively infiltrated by the culture of the industrialized West to be useful in informing a study of the ancient world. However it is often the social conflict caused by rapid change that enables us to compare them to the Roman world after the period of the civil wars, during which time the structure of Roman political life was radically altered. Therefore studies such as that of Marshall and Stokes on the effects of de-colonization on veiling practices serve as useful foils to an analysis of early Augustan Rome. Moreover in cultures such as these, female lifestyles and the male control thereof tend to resist change most strongly. For example, Prem Chowdhry has shown in his study of gender relations in rural India how women are often discouraged from modernizing or allowing modern ideals to alter their lives and especially their veiling habits.¹¹

In addition to period-specific studies, there are many phenomena that are constant and intrinsic to the nature of the veil and examination thereof can directly inform any analysis of veiling irrespective its context.¹² However, while there might be abundant information on modern veiling to enlighten this study, the very useful work that has been done on other ancient veiling cultures should not be ignored. Caroline Galt's 1931 study of the veil was the first to argue that what is now regarded as an 'oriental' custom was the prevailing custom in ancient Athens.¹³ However she failed to further elaborate on this initial claim and restricted her investigation to iconographic issues and representations of 'the mantle dance'. The evidence for this dance is taken mostly from artistic evidence (vase painting, murals, statuettes, and relief art), and the dance seems to

¹⁰ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 12.

¹¹ Chowdhry 1994.

¹² A case in point is the veil's function as covering garment and how such concealment affects social interactions. Murphy has clearly shown how the practice of veiling among the Tuareg facilitates interaction in what would otherwise be socially fraught situations (Murphy 1964: 1271). Conversely veiling matters least in front of individuals who lack proper social identities within the Tuareg group and likewise those who lack status are most lax in observing the protocols of veiling, something which holds true of other veiling cultures. Llewellyn-Jones (2003: 141) notes how the practice of veiling in Ancient Greece seems tied to status and as a result slaves or persons of low social rank seldom veil and if they do it is generally a carefully calculated move towards social advancement.

¹³ Galt 1931.

have been performed by groups of veiled women: either wives performing for their husbands or courtesans dancing for audiences. It was only much later that Llewellyn-Jones did his valuable work on the practice of female veiling in Greece, extending the scope of his study from the archaic period to Hellenistic times.¹⁴ However the Greek veil, associated as it is with the practice of female seclusion, is not one and the same as the Roman veil and seems to have been much more extreme in practice. Llewellyn-Jones has shown how women in the Greek world might cover not only their heads but also their faces, leaving only their eyes showing, and in the case of the *τεγίδιον* veil the woman might peer through small eyeholes.¹⁵ However this was not the norm amongst Roman women who, as this thesis will attempt to prove, generally covered only their head and hair from public view.

The analysis of Greek veiling in terms of *αἰδώς* undertaken by Douglas Cairns shows that although Greek and Roman veiling differ in practice, the motivating forces behind it are often similar in origin. Cairns draws attention to the dynamics of self-consciousness and self-protection in actions of veiling, noting that veiling can manifest self-awareness as an affect (shame) or as a disposition (modesty).¹⁶ Both of these factors are manifest in the case of Roman veiling and, as with their Greek counterparts, inform our understanding of both male and female veiling.

Given the current interest in the Middle East and its attitude towards women, it is not surprising that issues of veiling have gradually filtered into the ambit of Classical studies. What is remarkable, however, is that these issues took so long to be addressed in any systematic way. Little enough work has been done on the Greek veil and to date no proper study has been undertaken on Roman practices, with most mentions of the Roman veil being discussions of its significance in Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians¹⁷ or restricted to clothing catalogues which simply state that a 'mantle' was

¹⁴ Llewellyn-Jones 2003; Llewellyn-Jones 2002.

¹⁵ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: figures 14, 69, and 70.

¹⁶ Cairns 2002: 75.

¹⁷ Oster 1988: 485.

used 'to veil her (a matron's) head when she went out in public' without properly discussing the impact of this statement.¹⁸

Edward Said's renowned study of the phenomenon of Orientalism is crucial for understanding why Classicists have for so long ignored the pervasive presence of the veil in ancient literary and artistic sources.¹⁹ As we see from reports in contemporary media and in the accounts of travellers from the first half of the last century, the veil is often understood in connection with several other institutions considered symptomatic of the moral and social outlook of Islam and the East.²⁰ El Guindi notes that the veil is seen to form part of the dissolute matrix that includes the harem, the eunuch, female seclusion and polygamy: a conglomeration of institutions that signal, for Western observers, the moral and cultural degeneracy of the 'Orient'.

There is a persistent bent throughout the tradition of European art and literature to associate the Orient with sexual promise, sensuality and sexual threat.²¹ Painters from the nineteenth century such as Gérôme, Ingres, and Delacroix, with their paintings of lush scenes of 'harem life', helped to cement these connections between the veil and sex firmly in the minds of their European audiences. In these images the veils do little to conceal the bodies of the female subjects as they are often transparent or in the process of being discarded. Jean-Leon Gérôme's work, *An Almeh with Pipe*, dating from 1873 (Figure 1), is a typical example of this Orientalist trend in European art.²² This painting shows a woman gazing suggestively out at the viewer from behind her veil which entirely envelops her face while provocatively leaving her breasts partly exposed. Rather than using the veil as a tool of concealment these artists have employed it to stimulate sexual interest. Psycho-analytic theorists, such as J. C. Flügel,²³ have theorized that garments like the veil sexualize their wearers despite their obvious concern with discouraging this. Flügel suggested that areas of the body which are the most rigorously

¹⁸ Sebesta 1994: 84.

¹⁹ Said 1979: 190.

²⁰ Smith 1912.

²¹ Said 1979: 188.

²² The sexual eroticism of this is compounded by the fact that an *almeh* was in fact a Moroccan dancing girl.

²³ Flügel 1930: 53-67; also Llewellyn-Jones 2001: 233.

concealed tend to be those most often fetishized. Thus Fredrick Arthur Bridgman's painting from the late nineteenth/ early twentieth century entitled *On the Terrace* (Figure 2), showing a moment of unveiling, is so sexually suggestive because the observers realize that what they witness is a moment of illicit exposure. In discussing the use of the veil in the ancient context we shall have to explore how this quintessential characteristic of the veil manifests itself and how Roman women might have utilized instances of exposure and concealment to express personal sexuality.

Llewellyn-Jones has referred to the above phenomenon as 'the veil of sex',²⁴ but in the contemporary setting we more readily encounter what can be dubbed 'the veil of oppression'. In this case the veil is still closely joined to the notion of oriental Otherness, an Other who is no longer enticing but has become entirely threatening. Newspaper headlines, often quoting prominent politicians, declaim the hostile nature of the veil.²⁵ The veil in this context becomes a representation of the oppression visited upon women in countries like Saudi Arabia and Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. This process thereby serves to associate the veil with terrorism and places it in direct opposition to the Western (American) values of liberty and democracy. Terrorism and its bedfellow Islamic fundamentalism are seen in the modern media as a theocratic wave overwhelming all that the West holds dear.

In the contexts of both sexual licence and female subjugation, the veil has negative associations attached to it. When one considers this, the motivation behind avoidance of the subject by Classicists becomes clearer. Until the latter half of the last century there seemed to be a general trend amongst Classical scholars to gloss over anything in the ancient world that was too obviously sexual.²⁶ Many seemed reluctant to associate 'the grandeur that was Rome' with anything as inherently improper as female sexuality²⁷ and

²⁴ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 5.

²⁵ For example a headline detailing the French government's efforts to abolish the practice of veiling in schools is entitled 'Something Aggressive about Veils, says Chirac' (Henley 2003).

²⁶ For example the Loeb translation of Catullus 32 shows only ellipsis marks where the Latin reads 'prepare nine consecutive screws for us' *paesque nobis novem continuas fututiones*, and elides away any mention of the poet's state of sexual arousal.

²⁷ From the second half of the previous century onwards there has been a marked change in this regard, with many books being published on the subject of women in classical society. Cf. Pomeroy 1975; Foley

as undemocratic as the veil. The veil is seen by contemporary society as too political a garment to be associated with the Classical world as, once too exotically sexual, it is now too restrictive and oppressive.

The timing of these shifts in cultural understandings of the ‘meaning’ of the veil have meant that at no time has it been appropriate to discuss it. However, after the sexual revolution of the nineteen-sixties Classicists, like scholars in other disciplines, expressed a new interest in the lives of women. Sarah Pomeroy wondered ‘what the women were doing while men were active’.²⁸ Pomeroy contested that the male texts simply omitted women as they were written by males for a male audience and her study recognised the falsity of the manner in which women were represented in tragedy and epic. These sources did not tell the modern reader anything about women directly; rather they reflected how the men of the ancient world conceptualized women. Instead she used sources from outside of the Classical canon. In this thesis I will do likewise, using evidence from the historians, legal works and art to help build a more cohesive understanding of women, what they wore (and were understood as wearing) and why. More recently authors such as Joshel and Wyke,²⁹ acknowledging the truth of Pomeroy’s assertion regarding male-authored texts and their masculine bias, have used this bias to investigate how the textual woman was used not only as a reflection of male attitudes to women but also as a cipher for male action.³⁰ Through this relationship women become metonyms for men and for Rome through a process of association which, as Joshel observes, also reflects backward onto the women who are the objects of these texts.³¹ However the dynamics of this relationship are not static.

1981; McAuslan and Walcot 1983; Cantarella 1987; Wyke 1987; Dixon 1988; Fantham and Lefkowitz 1989; Pomeroy 1991; Fantham, Foley, Kampen, and Shapiro 1994; Rabinowitz and Richlin 1993; Hawley and Levick 1995; McManus 1997; O’Gorman 1997; Loven and Strömberg 1998; Nussbaum and Sihvola 2002; Skinner 2005.

²⁸ Pomeroy 1975: ix.

²⁹ Joshel 2002: 165; Wyke 2002: 193.

³⁰ Thus an attack on the chastity of a plebeian girl (Verginia) is in fact an attack on the men of the plebeian class.

³¹ Joshel 1995: 71.

Elizabeth Cowie observes that the values and definitions of women are produced by and are not inherent in social structures.³² Therefore any meaning that is generated through the depiction of women is also at the mercy of societal change. The modern understanding of women is likewise at the mercy of these social forces and has also influenced those studying the ancient world. Before the mid-twentieth century any interest in sexuality in the ancient world was focused on men and specifically on the practices of Greek pederasty.³³ This trend is most notable in Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, in which ancient manifestations of female sexuality are sidelined in favour of Greek and Roman homosexuality.³⁴ Later that century these investigations of sexuality began to incorporate the feminine manifestations and Amy Richlin's study of sexual humour and sexual aggression in Roman comedy explored the relationship between the sexes.³⁵ This work formed part of a larger interest in ancient female sexuality with many scholars then beginning to publish in the field.³⁶ Unfortunately since it became acceptable to speak of women and sex, therefore making the eroticism of the Orient a proper subject of study, the East has assumed the new connotations of terror and cruelty.

In both of these cases the veil becomes a metonym of the violent, oppressive, carnal and othered female. The notion of otherness is not one that we are overly ready to associate with Rome as its empire and the republic remain the ideal upon which Western civilization has shaped itself. For instance the head of the USA's legislature is called the Senate and when new states overthrow old regimes they signal the introduction of democracy by renaming themselves republics. The Roman architecture of power is commonly associated with any government building.³⁷

As a result of this process the only references to veiling amongst Roman women are footnotes in a broader examination of female dress, and even these discussions are normally placed well towards the back of a volume once more important matters (such

³² Cowie 1978: 49-63.

³³ For an example of this see Licht 1932. For a more up to date account of this see Dover 1978.

³⁴ Foucault 1986: vol. 3 (trans. Hurley).

³⁵ Richlin 1992b.

³⁶ Halperin, Winkler, and Zeitlin 1990; Winkler 1990; Richlin 1992a; Hallet and Skinner 1997; Wyke 1998a; Wyke 1998b; McClure 2002; Langlands 2006.

³⁷ Dyson 2001: 57.

as the correct fastening of the toga, the varieties of men's cloaks and the dress of Roman boys) have been fully dealt with.³⁸ Even when we encounter these rare mentions of veiling the word 'veil' is often scrupulously avoided. Instead we are informed that Roman women might wear a 'mantle',³⁹ a 'kerchief'⁴⁰ or even (intriguingly) a 'cloth for the head'.⁴¹ However within this body of work we do find the occasional article that in some way seeks to explain, and often to explain away, the veiling of women in Rome.

Perhaps we would do well to first put to rest Ramsay MacMullen's contention that by the early first century A. D. Roman women of the more affluent and powerful classes no longer veiled themselves in public.⁴² In many instances MacMullen's reasoning seems odd and at times even contradictory, a case in point being his choice of the figure of Eumachia in Pompeii as the first example of the public presence of wealthy and powerful women. He uses her dedication of a building to a workman's association and her role as *sacerdos publica*⁴³ as a basis for arguing that such women would not have covered their heads in public.⁴⁴ This argument is entirely baseless as the only extant representation of Eumachia, which was found in the very building whose dedication supposedly precluded her from displays of female modesty, shows her as veiled (Figure 3). In arguing his point MacMullen seems prone to using sources that may not reflect the reality of the situation but rather those that have inherent limitations, either stylistic or rhetorical. He quotes Tacitus generally on the power that imperial women held to devise political policy and influence matters of state,⁴⁵ and uses the flaunting of modish hairstyles on terracotta statuary from Smyrna as evidence for women leaving their hair

³⁸ Wilson 1938.

³⁹ Wilson 1938: 148.

⁴⁰ Wilson 1938: 151.

⁴¹ Wilson 1938: 151.

⁴² MacMullen 1980: 209.

⁴³ 'Eumachia the public priestess, the daughter of Lucius, in her name and that of Marcus Numistrius Fronto, her son, made this vestibule and covered passageway of Concordia Augusta and Pietas with her own money, and she also dedicated it', *Eumachia L. f. sacred. publ. nomine suo et M Numistri Frontonis fili, chalcidicum, cryptam, porticus Concordiae Augustae Pietati sua pecunia fecit eademque dedicavit* (ILS 3785).

⁴⁴ MacMullen 1980: 209.

⁴⁵ MacMullen 1980: 216. This is not to deny that Tacitus does attribute great political power to certain women. For example, when writing of Livia he notes how 'the woman had to be served', *serviendum feminae* (Tac. *Ann.* 1.4). However it is not feasible to ignore Tacitus' rhetorical intent and his historical bias, and to accept his characterization of Roman women as accurate.

uncovered.⁴⁶ Art of any sort should never be taken as a true indicator of reality. When women are veiled in public statuary this makes a rhetorical statement about chastity and morality but were they to be veiled in terracotta statuettes the viewer would see little besides the representation of the veil that conceals the real image beneath. It is to prevent this confusion regarding interpretation of sources that throughout this work an effort will be made to contextualize sources and to use the correct methods for interpreting each one.

Others are less hesitant to allow for the possibility that Roman women might have veiled, but often these admissions form part of a broader dialogue about dress. In her discussion on the truth of the notion that adulteresses went dressed in togas and that matrons were always modestly attired, Olson suggests that the use of the veil in the literary sources is often prescriptive in nature. Literature, she postulates, tends to describe *matronae* according to how they should look and not as they actually did look.⁴⁷ Although this is an issue that needs to be borne in mind it does not preclude the slippage of rhetoric into reality and does not properly account for the legal record that deals with more concrete matters. We must consider laws such as those stipulating that a man has committed a lesser crime if he harasses a woman who is dressed not in the clothes of a matron but in those of a prostitute (*Digest* 47.10.15.15).⁴⁸

Judith Sebesta gives the fullest accounts of veiling and does not shy away from linking veiling in the Arab and the Roman world.⁴⁹ She argues convincingly that for the Romans hair was a locus of sex in that it stood for the genitals.⁵⁰ Because the genitals must be hidden their meanings are displaced onto the head where what they connote can be publicly displayed. Hair is particularly useful in this regard since, as a signifier, it acts on metonymical level. As a metonym hair stands for the ‘whole’ person, hence the

⁴⁶ MacMullen 1980: 217.

⁴⁷ Olson 2002: 392.

⁴⁸ Although Olson does mention laws such as these, she is too hasty to conclude that since they allow for matrons to wear the clothing of prostitutes women were therefore not usually dressed in the traditional garb of respectable women.

⁴⁹ Sebesta 1994: 48.

⁵⁰ Thus the Roman rites that marked the sexual maturation of both boys and girls involved hair: in the case of boys, the cutting of the beard, and in the case of young women, the binding of their hair.

shearing of a Vestal's hair displayed the transition of her whole being from one state to another. It can at the same time stand for another body part, hence the genitals and their sexual maturation. The sexualization of the hair was not entirely arbitrary since hair on the head was associated with pubic hair and the advent of hair on the genitals, and the new sexualization thereof meant that the hair on the head also underwent a change in status. It is for this reason that the heads of women must be treated differently to those of men.⁵¹ Thus the veiling of the head is seen as the guarding of female sexuality while at the same time publicly proclaiming its presence. Levine argues that hair should be seen not only as a *locus eroticus* but as a *locus* for the statement of social attitudes regarding the proper desired relationship between nature and culture.⁵² Thus when a young man shaved his beard and dedicated it to the household gods he performed an act of separation which connected his sexual maturation with his role as a mature male (the role of citizen-soldier) and when a woman donned a veil she like her brother became a protector of the future of the *familia* with her weapons of reproductive sexuality. Sebesta also shows that the Romans problematized female sexuality, moving it from one *locus* to another to allow for the transferral of female chastity and inviolability onto a wider structure. This work forms the starting point for our expansion of this argument; however it is brief and stands alone in a vast area of inquiry.

Although Sebesta's work is very useful, it is not comprehensive and there is as yet no further work of great significance that has expanded our understanding of the field. More common are discussions of how the dress of men was presented in art and literature in an idealized form and in order to understand how the same forces were at work in the case of womens' dress we will have to utilize the models that have been developed with regard to their more muscular counterparts. Caroline Vout argues that in spite of the Romans' willingness to understand themselves as the 'toga clad race', *gens togata* (Verg. *Aen.* 1.282), they did not commonly employ this item of clothing.⁵³ Instead we should understand monuments such as the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, upon which all men are clad in togas (and the women wear veils), as a rhetorical statement about the

⁵¹ Sebesta 1997: 533.

⁵² Myerowitz Levine 1995: 85.

⁵³ Vout 1996: 204.

imperial family. If the toga is the signifier of the traditional *vir* and all that this denotes, then deviations in dress are as important as examples of orthodoxy—for by examining what variance signifies we can more closely understand its opposite ideal.⁵⁴ This approach is equally applicable to the dress of women so by re-examining the dress of the *meretrix* we can see the image of her foil, the honourable *matrona*, who, as I shall demonstrate later, veiled her head.

Despite the contemporary and ancient significance of the veil as a particularly feminine garment, discussions of male veiling at Rome are by far the more common in the scholarly literature. Nevertheless, despite this effort to ignore the feminine manifestation of the phenomenon, the writers of these works often have to rely on the more common mention of veiling by women to illuminate their research.⁵⁵ For example, Richard Oster uses Plautus' description of women veiling during childbirth: 'she calls on the immortal gods, as women in childbirth are accustomed to do, with clean hands and a veiled head so that they might be of help to her', *ut solent puerperae/ invocat deos immortales, ut sibi auxilium ferant,/ manibus puris, capite operto* (*Amph.* 1092-4) and Juvenal's ironic treatment of women veiling before sacrifice: 'she stood before the altar, she did not think it shameful to veil herself before a musician', *stetit ante aram nec turpe putavit pro cithara velare* (6. 390-2), as evidence to support his argument regarding the use of male devotional head-coverings in Corinth during the time of Paul.⁵⁶ Heinrich Freier, in his monograph on the term *caput velare*, like Oster generally uses female veiling to elucidate the male practice.⁵⁷ The Vestal Virgins, marriage practices and women in devotional settings are exceptions to the practice of ignoring women in connection with the veil. Freier is more than happy to describe, at immense length, the veils of the *flaminica*, the *regina sacrorum*, the Vestals and the bride; however his treatment of female veiling, aside from these specialized examples, is virtually non-existent.⁵⁸ Although he is content to devote an entire chapter to the 'veiled head' in non-specialized

⁵⁴ Stone 1994.

⁵⁵ Oster 1988: 504.

⁵⁶ Oster 1988: 502-503.

⁵⁷ Freier 1963.

⁵⁸ Freier 1963: 39-101; 128-132.

settings, he does not mention women once in this account – choosing rather to discuss in depth how men might cover their heads when afflicted by tonsillitis or toothache.⁵⁹

As was suggested above, this gap in scholarship can be attributed to the specific moral quality that the veil embodied in the eyes of Classicists: before the later part of the past century the veil was too ‘sexy’, afterwards it was too ‘oppressive’. Although we might lament this attitude for leaving this area uncharted, its cause can be clearly understood.

In terms of a semiotic understanding of dress, our clothing is always ‘saying’ something; and although it is possible to alter our accent or lie in this language of dress, it is not possible to remain silent. In speech the meaning of words depends entirely on the context in which they are spoken, and the same is true of clothing. The meaning generated by dress is always defined by a specific time and place, and since these conditions shape the value of fashion we are able, if enough is understood about this costume, to reconstruct information that is lost to us regarding the ancient world. It is apparent to any contemporary observer that fashion and clothing remain a means of communication. We are often able to tell a person’s occupation, gender and social status by looking at the clothes that they wear. Clothing and fashion, read as instruments of communication, are cultural phenomena. Indeed a culture’s unifying ideologies can be read through the sartorial practices of that culture. This dissertation will attempt to use the clothing, and specifically the veil, of the ancient Romans as a system of signs by means of which we will ‘read’ the culture of the Augustan Principate.

Lurie has noted how individual items of clothing act in a similar fashion to words in spoken language.⁶⁰ This language forms what Roland Barthes has termed a ‘vestimentary code’.⁶¹ This code, or language, is like all other such systems: arbitrary in nature, and so for example there is no logical reason why a white toga should advertise magisterial candidacy, or why a veil (which in some cultures is worn by men) should embody matronly virtue. The reason that the vestimentary code is able to generate

⁵⁹ Freier 1963: 28.

⁶⁰ Lurie 1981: 3.

⁶¹ Barthes 1983.

meaning in the minds of the observers is because it works in conjunction with a 'rhetorical system' of dress that serves to make the random nature of the former appear natural. While Barthes was thinking specifically of the writing in fashion magazines when he developed his theory of the 'rhetorical system', this theory is equally applicable to the sartorial influences expressed during the reign of Augustus in the form of formal decree, artistic imagery and literary propagandizing. We can therefore use Barthes' theories to determine how Augustan cultural rhetoric created and dictated the meaning derived from the clothes that women wore.

While Barthes has analysed how the 'rhetorical system' aims to naturalize the relationship between signifier and signified, he does not account for the manner in which this process is received and adopted by the readers of the cultural artefacts of fashion. John Fiske has noted how women's magazines introduce young women to a particular prevailing ideology of femininity and argues that, while these texts present sets of meanings of femininity to women in ways that are appealing to them, they ultimately serve the interests of the dominant patriarchy.⁶² Fiske's model is applicable to the gendered dynamics of female fashion in Augustan Rome. Multiple texts, both iconographic and literary, can be seen dictating the fashion for female veiling to Roman women in such a way that they might accept it in accordance with the ideals of the new establishment. It is by means of these texts that the meanings of the vestimentary codes were established and the ideals of the rhetorical system, as reflected in art and literature, were able to translate themselves into daily life.

However, as Caroline Vout has noted, 'a study of Roman dress is . . . not a study of the clothes themselves but of the images of clothes'; and because actual items of clothing, unlike monumental descriptions of them, have not in general survived from the ancient world, we cannot be primarily concerned with what Roman women wore but with what they perceived themselves as wearing.⁶³ Our artistic evidence is further skewed towards the representation of sartorial ideology because of the very public nature of Roman art.

⁶² Fiske 1990: 180.

⁶³ Vout 1996: 206.

We must therefore assume that the representations of clothing that we have at our disposal are heavily steeped in the Augustan ‘rhetorical system’, a system which was conscientiously developed by the *Princeps* to be translated into a readily understandable ‘vestimentary code’ to embody in art and literature the virtues of the new regime.

The more canonical sources such as epic poetry, while of some use, inform only a small part of this study. As the analysis of clothing involves the examination of artefacts that are produced by an entire culture, the work of lawyers, visual artists and writers of ‘lesser’ literatures will be examined. These texts serve to create a coherent history of Rome which moves from the idealized past through a state of recent moral decline and finally to the achievement of a new golden age. Often the bodies of women are understood to be the route of this passage. Thus, while in the days of the early republic women were chaste and protected male honour;⁶⁴ in the late republic they were wanton and like Clodia endangered the state.

The dawning of the Augustan age saw a return to the idealized morality of the past and new emphasis was placed on chastity and the veil was the signifier of this renewed virtue. This dissertation will explore the reasons for this importance being afforded to the veil and how its significance was utilized in the political, social, artistic and literary contexts, with especial attention being paid to its manifestation during the reign of Augustus. Because of the scarcity of work in this field, it is necessary to first establish a number of points. In the course of doing so the question of the reasons for women’s veiling will have to be addressed and some attempt made at positing social and political reasons for this custom. The following chapter is an attempt to explain some of the reasons why the Romans thought the veil to be important and what elements influenced the degree of significance attributed to it.

⁶⁴ The figures of Verginia and Lucretia epitomize this.

CHAPTER 2

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTEXT: SEXUALITY, HONOUR AND SHAME

Before discussing the manifestations of the veil in Augustan art and literature, some broader anthropological and socio-cultural reasons for veiling must be suggested. Because our information regarding the ancient veil is scarce and our sources exclusively male—and therefore seldom interested in accurately recording the lives of women—it will be necessary to include whatever anthropological information is available from modern studies on the topic to supplement this analysis. This approach is not entirely novel and its efficacy in informing our understanding of the ancient world has been shown in the study of ancient housing, slavery, studies of gender and sexuality and Greek dress.¹ Therefore a variety of ethnographic, sociological and anthropological studies on modern veiling practices will be used throughout the present examination of the ancient Roman tradition. This entails an exploration of social constructions such as 'honour' and 'shame' and an exploration of ancient beliefs in the evil eye, the polluting force of the female body and how the veil is used by its wearer as a means of sexual communication.

It might seem contradictory that a garment that seeks to regulate the sexuality of women of the upper classes might at the same time allow these women to express highly individual forms of eroticism. As a symbol of productive femininity, and by serving as a signifier of the female sex in general, the veil is naturally imbued with a degree of sexuality.² The term sexuality is an imprecise one that is often left undefined or used to

¹ Cf. Cartledge 1985; Evans-Grubbs 1989; Winkler 1990; Treggiari 1991(a); Nevett 1999; Llewellyn-Jones 2003.

² Haskins 2002: 3; Bristow 1997: 1. For the problems associated with the term sexuality in the Roman context see Habinek 1997: 23-43.

denote different things by the same author. In this dissertation I will use the term sexuality to refer to sexual desire and/or the differently sexed body, according to the context. However the strict covering of the head and hair beneath the veil sexualizes these hidden parts of the female anatomy that have no practical sexual function. The psychiatrist J. C. Flügel has argued how certain parts of the body that have no specific sexual allure become temporarily associated with the erotic.³ This most often occurs with regard to parts of the body that are systematically concealed and thus momentary glances of these otherwise taboo areas become especially sexual. That the veil was a sexual object to the ancient Romans is confirmed in Tacitus' description of Poppaea Sabina. This historian describes how 'she rarely went out in public, and then only with a part of her face veiled, lest she sate the gaze of men, or because it became her to do so', *rarus in publicum egressus, idque velata parte oris, ne satiaret aspectum, vel quia sic decebat* (Tac. Ann. 13.45). Tacitus depicts Poppaea Sabina as possessing a high degree of sexual awareness, which is emphasised by her skilful use of the veil. This is a calculated attempt to taunt her audience with the pretence of feminine modesty. She is able to transmit sexual information despite the visually restrictive nature of her garment and her apparently submissive position in society. Poppaea's sexuality is here fully *active* but working in conjunction with this is the ideal of *passive* female sexuality. This passivity is seemingly embodied by her veiled modesty, and because of her apparent naïvety as regards her own sexuality (the inaccuracy of which is clearly shown in Tacitus' account) it has become eroticized.⁴ Thus the appearance of sexual artlessness is used in a sexually sophisticated manner.

The words used by Tacitus and the way in which he structures his sentence illuminates this dichotomy. Tacitus' description of Poppaea's veiling might seem a typical example of what Sullivan has termed the 'weighted alternative' but the ancient author does not employ the usual construction of 'sive...sive', 'incertum', 'utrum...an', or 'alii...ceteri'.⁵ Instead he uses 'vel', an expression that Sullivan maintains expresses genuine doubt and in which the disjunctive force is weaker than in the normal Tacitean

³ Flügel 1930. See page 6.

⁴ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 287.

⁵ Sullivan 1976: 313.

alternative.⁶ This would suggest that Tacitus' own grasp of Poppaea's motivations for veiling is limited, and that he does not find the second explanation that much more likely than the first. This uncertainty is reflected in his use of the word '*decebat*', which gives Poppaea two seemingly contradictory motivations with the same word. In the context of this passage this word can be read in one of two ways or perhaps in both ways at once. '*Decebat*' can either be translated as 'it was comely', or as 'it behaved'.⁷ In short this word implies both that Poppaea was more attractive when wearing the veil, and that she wore it because it was proper for her to do so. Thus Tacitus gives weight to motivations of 'passive' modesty and to 'active' attention seeking. The synchronized action of these forces is characteristic of the veil.

Llewellyn-Jones has noted that the allure of the veil operates simultaneously on these two levels. Contrasting a film still from the 1920's of Natasha Rambova playing Salome (Figure 4) holding her veil seductively and self-consciously over only the lower part of her face while she stares confrontationally at a presumed male viewer with an eighteenth-century engraving by Jean-Jacques Lequeu (Figure 5) that shows a young nun exposing her breasts by lifting her wimple, Llewellyn Jones describes how the veil performs this balancing act that spans notions of naïvety and self-awareness.⁸ In the case of the 1920's still the transparent veil does nothing to conceal her body but instead its presence highlights the total exposure that is to come. In some cases the woman in question is both exposed and concealed simultaneously. In Figure 6, a postcard from French Algeria, we see an example of this. In this image the subject adheres to the most rigid of Islamic veiling codes save only that her breasts are completely exposed. The clearly pornographic intent of this image is clear when we consider its audience, presumably French soldiers, and the manner in which it so successfully removes the female subject from discourse with the male observer. This woman's face is covered and thus her identity is irrelevant and determined only by her breasts. On the other hand, the nun in Figure 5 lifts her veil in such a fashion that the viewer is uncertain of the intention behind the gesture; indeed her gaze is such that it is unclear whether or not she

⁶ Sullivan 1976: 313 n. 6.

⁷ Although in the Tacitean context Lewis and Short 1975: *s.v. decet*.

⁸ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 284.

is aware of the viewer or to what ends she thus exposes herself – whether maternal or sexual.

In all three of these images the veil assumes such great importance because of its role in arresting (and most often interrupting) the gaze of the viewer. The veiled woman is the object of the male gaze, with the man as the ‘looker’ and the woman as the ‘looked at’. Thus ‘men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at’.⁹ That neither party is entirely passive in this process is made clear in one of Philostratus’ *Erotic Epistles*. The author of this letter, responding to a woman who has asked him not to look at her, states ‘you tell me not to look, I charge you not to be looked at’, *κελεύεις μοι μὴ βλέπειν κάγω σοὶ μὴ βλέπεσθαι* (26). The act of being seen is made the responsibility of the woman and itself becomes an action. Thus neither women who are veiled (refusing to let themselves be looked at) nor those who unveil (engaging in the discourse of vision) are passive recipients of the gaze. Therefore any woman who is unveiled is consenting to be looked at and in doing so suggests that she may also consent to other things. Morales has noted how in both Greek and Roman art the eye is often associated with the phallus, with phalluses often depicted as having eyes.¹⁰ Persius, writing of a man, ‘worn out by his ejaculating little eye’, *patranti fractus ocello* (1.18), transfers the verb *patro*, particularly appropriate to the penis, to the eye.¹¹ Adams interprets this transferral of characteristic as being facilitated by the belief that the defects of desire and of orgasm could be seen in the eye and thus the eye can take on aspects normally reserved for the genitals.¹² Since the male gaze is so explicitly sexual, any woman who submits herself to it is often understood as agreeing to a sexual encounter and thus the veil is used as a tool to protect women from this interaction.

As a sexual organ the eye is given unusual power. This sexual power is easily converted into more sinister energy with penetrative power and as such has to be contained and

⁹ Berger 1972: 47.

¹⁰ Morales 2004: 31.

¹¹ Though the definition of *patro* given by Lewis and Short, ‘to bring to pass, execute, perform, achieve...’ (1975: s.v. *patro*), does not necessarily refer to any sexual act, this word commonly infers the achievement of orgasm. Cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.5.84.

¹² Adams 1982: 143.

protected against. The result of this is a belief in the evil eye. The idea of the evil eye is a common consequence of sexual power being attributed to the gaze especially when, as we shall see, sight is understood as being based on physical contact. The victims of the evil eye are liable to be both human (adults and children) and non-human (livestock and crops). Indeed, as Lydiardopoulos has noted, the very fact of being visible exposes one to attack from others.¹³

When studying this phenomenon two processes need to be examined: the process of casting the evil eye and that of preventing bewitchment. In cultures, modern and ancient, in which there exists a belief in the evil eye a division exists between those who possess it as an intrinsic part of themselves and those who only possess it for a short period. Among the Abruzzi of modern south-west Italy a division is made between the evil eye proper, the gaze of a person who injures with some knowledge of their deed, and *gettatura*, the gaze of a person who is born with the evil eye and who injures unwillingly,¹⁴ both of which are of significance to our study. In all cultures in which this belief exists, the evil eye is inextricably linked with the notion of envy and thus any emotion of envy is liable to result in a casting of the evil eye. Therefore any object which is liable to evoke such an envious reaction requires protection in some way. Virgil, for example, writes in his *Eclogues* how ‘some eye is bewitching my tender lambs’, *nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat agnos* (*Ecl.* 3.103). Children are seen as being especially susceptible to the influence of fascination and require extra protection.

In order to understand why specific items are used as protection against this baleful influence it would be best to first understand how the mechanisms of the evil eye were understood to operate. Ancient theories of sight are more haptic than the modern understanding of the workings of the eye. Morales explains how by a process of emanations ‘seer and seen...actually touch each other’.¹⁵ Thus sight was understood, as with the modern theory of the gaze, as an interactive process. The pupil, being most reactive to changes in light, is the most varying part of the eye and thus the part most

¹³ Lydiardopoulos 1981: 223.

¹⁴ Lydiardopoulos 1981: 223.

¹⁵ Morales 2004: 29.

likely to draw attention to itself. The ancient explanation for the apparatus of the evil eye therefore involves the pupil. Galen understood that the pupil was a hole through which light moved – thus enabling sight. However he believed that light did not come from an outside source but emanated from the brain and was let out through the pupils (*De usu part. corp. hum.* 10.6). This theory is shown (by the accounts of Plutarch, Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius) to be the one that carried the most weight in the ancient world (and thus the one that was most readily believed by the Romans). The host of the dinner party in Plutarch's convivial discussion of the evil eye notes how the breath, smell, speech or gaze can be equally harmful (*Mor. Quaest. Conv.* 5.7), thus associating ocular power with other things that radiate out from a person. Plutarch then draws on Democritus' atomic theory and describes how all living bodies give off particles, the most active discharge of which passes through the eye. These particles then assault the object of the gaze as if they were blows. Any maleficent emotion, such as envy, therefore taints the particles that are emitted from the body with their malignant influence, causing great harm to person or possession.

Some of the most common charms against such contamination involve things that are worn on a person or adorn a prized possession. Thus in Hungary children wear a red ribbon to protect themselves,¹⁶ a practice which seems closely aligned with the Roman custom of adorning children, women and sacred objects with woollen fillets. In most countries the bride is generally thought to be especially susceptible to bewitchment and is therefore protected by the bridal veil. The Roman *flammeum* served this same purpose and protected the bride during her transition from one household to another, during which period she moved out of the protective influence of one Lar but had yet to come under the shelter of another. Why should the veil be especially useful in this regard?

In the simplest terms, the veil is of assistance since to some degree it makes its wearer invisible. For example, it is believed even in modern Italy that children should not be carried uncovered in the street because their youth needs to be concealed lest it attract any envious gaze. Beauty is also thought to attract the evil eye, making women

¹⁶ Lydiardopoulos 1981: 226.

especially vulnerable. Heliodorus expounds on this when one of his characters describes the symptoms of the love-sick Charikleia as being caused by the evil eye attracted by her prominence in a recent festival and made malicious by envy of her beauty (3.7). The attractiveness of women is most likely to be the source of envy in situations or cultures in which women are understood as economic assets. In cultures such as those of the Mediterranean, Northern India and the Near-East no bride price is paid but instead marriages are formalized by the transaction of dowry. Thus women become understood as economic assets that, while needing to be displayed to emphasise status, also need to be protected in the same way that livestock or children might from the ill effects of envy.¹⁷ In certain parts of Tunisia veiling is not seen as a sufficiently effective measure against the evil eye. Here women and children are believed to be especially susceptible and, while women are secluded inside the house and under veils to protect them from harm, old clothes and dirt disguises the attractiveness of children.¹⁸

The veil not only hid its wearer from the sight of others but, in accordance with the ancient theories regarding sight and the evil eye, formed a physical boundary which protected women from the evil eye's poison shafts (*πεφαρμαγμένα βέλη* (Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Conv.* 5.7)). The nature of the workings of other charms against the evil eye corroborates the notion that an apotropaic item may act as a kind of armour that absorbs the force of the aggressor's gaze. Thus Aeneas is ordered to veil when sacrificing 'in order that no hostile face intrude in some way between the sacred fires in honour of the gods and upset the omens', *ne qua inter sanctos ignis in honore deorum/ hostilis facies occurrat et omina turbet* (Verg. *Aen.* 3.406-409). Aeneas creates a barrier between his act of devotion and the influence of the gaze of his enemy by veiling.

In many modern societies amulets are worn that serve to attract attention away from the wearer and to draw the eye, thus making the charm the object of the malicious stare. Thus a piece of coral that is worn about the neck might pale once exposed to the evil eye, whereas a bead or stone might break and thus allow the man or woman in question

¹⁷ For veiled women indicating the status of the men to whom they are attached, see the following chapter.

¹⁸ Teitelbaum 1976: 64.

to escape. One of the most common charms against the evil eye works on the basis of 'like cures like' and can consist of an amulet in the shape of an eye or of an eye-like pattern woven or embroidered onto linens, carpets and clothing.¹⁹ This motif may be much simplified; becoming representative of an apotropaic idea rather than looking like an actual eye. Thus the eye motif found on Persian carpets may consist only of a triangle or of the squarer design found in Figure 7. When such designs are found on veils they serve to attract attention away from the wearer and onto the veil, which in turn absorbs the effects of the evil eye. Accordingly the veil conceals the wearer from sight and acts as a physical barrier to the harms caused by sight.

However the veil does not only serve to exclude the emanations (visual and otherwise) of others but also to contain those of the wearer. While the veil protects women from outside threats it also contains the woman within it and protects men and society from the danger posed by the feminine. As Tertullian acknowledges when he describes how the veil 'neither allows your eyes beyond it nor admits other in' *nec tuos emittat oculos nec admittat alienos* (*De vir. vel.* 16.6), the purpose of the veil both denies visual contact to the onlooker while at the same time preventing women from looking out.²⁰ Female sexuality and *luxuria* pose a threat to the *virtus* of the state and the individual.²¹ This dangerous womanly force is accredited to the basic female weakness which manifests itself as a lack of self control. This dearth of discipline is apparent not only as a psychological weakness but also as a general physical condition.

For the ancient Romans a woman's body is 'leaky' in that her physical boundaries are porous, pliant, and mutable.²² This notion seems common to both Greeks and Romans. In both cases the woman is deemed a mobile unit as both are societies that practise patrilocal marriage. Moving between the fixed boundaries of the self-contained *domus*, women pose a threat to the integrity of men's property and physical integrity. This movement in space is translated into physiological and psychological fluidity; because

¹⁹ Lydiardopoulos 1981: 227.

²⁰ This quotation is discussed in more detail below.

²¹ Wyke 2002: 209.

²² Carson 1990: 153.

women have no control of their physical boundaries they are prone to shrink, swell, and exude. The most obvious example of such emission is menstrual fluid. Roman writers list at length the harm that is caused by contact with what Columella calls ‘obscene blood’, *obsceno cruore* (*Rust.* 10.1.1). Pliny warns that ‘coitus at this time is deadly and contaminating for the man’ *coitusque tum maribus exitiales esse atque pestiferos*, and that menstrual blood can put bees to flight (‘it is certain that when their hives are touched bees flee’, *certum est apes tactis alvariis fugere*), and induce abortions (‘having been touched, mares suffer miscarriage’, *equas...tactas abortum pati*) (*Plin. HN.* 28.77-79). Women do not pollute only through direct contact as their physical boundaries are fluid enough so that they are able to cause harm with only a glance, this visual contact being the cause of blight amongst new vegetative growth as ‘if she is menstruating, even her gaze will kill new growth’ *si vero etiam in menstruis fuerit, visu quoque suo novellos fetus necabit* (*Columella, Rust.* 11.3.50). The veil, by covering the head which symbolizes the genitals, allows these corruptive forces to be contained and prevents them from disrupting society. The veil therefore acts not only as a barricade to outside influences, but also as a ‘lid’ which seals off the polluting forces of femininity.

Because vision is so highly sexualized, any attempt to affect the dynamics thereof can slip from the realm of gender—that is the categories of masculine and feminine—and into the sphere of sex. Therefore a woman’s veiling is an acknowledgement of her sexual vulnerability and is an attempt to protect this awareness. This modesty can therefore also become sexual and fetishized. In his novel *Callirhoe*, Chariton describes the final meeting of Chareas and Callirhoe in highly sexualized terms. Chareas enters a room and sees his long-lost love at rest, however ‘although she was veiled, his spirit was stirred by the way she breathed and looked and he was uplifted’ καὶ κεκαλυμμένην εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς ἀναπνοῆς καὶ τοῦ σχήματος ἐταράχθη τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ μετέωρος ἐγένετο (*Char. Call.* 8.1.7). The sight of Callirhoe arouses Chareas even though he cannot truly see her. Chariton, writing in the Greek-speaking area of the empire, was obviously aware of the fact that a display of αἰδώς and σωφροσύνη on the part of a woman was seen as a sexual ‘turn-on’, and that αἰδώς was one of the tempting gifts which Hephaestus gave to Pandora as part of her armoury of female charms (*Hes. Op.*

70). A similar sexual dynamic was surely at work in the Roman world, evidence of which is found in both Livy's and Ovid's renditions of the tale of Lucretia. Lucretia is described as being engaged in the womanly activity of wool-making when she is overwhelmed with worry for her husband and 'she stopped, burst into tears, and let go the stretched out fillet and hid her face in her lap; this became her, so too her modest tears', *desinit in lacrimas inceptaque fila remisit, / in gremio voltum deposuitque suum. / Hoc ipsum decuit: lacrimae decuere pudicam* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.755-757). Here Lucretia displays the sexually desirable quality of modesty, which the concealment of her grief-stricken face demonstrates.²³ It is these feminine qualities that Tarquin later fantasizes about and he is driven to desire primarily by the thought of her incorruptible virtue and modesty, 'her beauty, the snowy colour of her blonde hair, and her loveliness (which was also present although it had not been created by art) pleased him: her words and her voice and the fact that she could not be corrupted also pleased him', *forma placet niveusque color flavique capilli, quique aderat nulla factus ab arte decor: / verba placent et vox et quod corrumpere non est* (Ov. *Fast.* 2. 763-765).

In order to understand why an expression of modesty on Lucretia's behalf could have been so appealing to Tarquin it is essential to first gain an understanding of a matrix of social ideals that governed (and still governs) interpersonal action in the ancient Mediterranean. Anthropologists and sociologists have long drawn a distinction between cultures that enforce social mores by way of guilt and those that do so via the processes of shame.²⁴ The culture of ancient Rome appears to have adhered to the latter model. This is not to suggest that this definition of Rome as a shame culture excludes all expression of guilt. These two categories are useful in describing general cultural trends. Shame cultures rely on external sanctions for socially unacceptable behaviour whereas guilt cultures entrust this to an internalized notion of sin.²⁵ Shame by definition requires an audience of others, either real or imagined, to ridicule or reject the transgressor. Guilt does not require this as the only jury that a guilty person requires is his or her own

²³ Ovid, like Tacitus (*Ann.* 13.45), uses a form of *decet*, allowing for the dual interpretation of Lucretia as both attractive and modest, with one feature implying the other. See page 19.

²⁴ Piers and Singer 1953.

²⁵ Dodds 1951: 17.

conception of the guilty self, and confessing (thus attaining an external audience) may even lessen the burden of guilt.²⁶ The ancient Romans had no word equivalent to the English 'guilt' with its sense of moral inadequacy. Instead, as Elizabeth Wilhelm-Hooijbergh has noted, the two words that come the closest in meaning, *peccatum* and *culpa*, were linked to deed and fact respectively with little allusion to the personal emotion.²⁷

It is precisely this characteristic of pre-Christian Rome that results in Augustine's argument for the culpability of Lucretia who he claims is guilty of adultery by virtue of the fact that she felt guilt at having been complicit through lust (*De civ. D.* 19.1).²⁸ This is not the established Roman interpretation but one that has been affected by the Christian ideology of sin. Ovid offers a more traditionally 'Roman' explanation for Lucretia's suicide. Lucretia gives evidence of the cause of her despair as, while she relates the tale of her rape to her father and brother, 'her matronly cheeks reddened' *matronales erubuere genae* (*Ov. Fast.* 2.828). She mourns all the more because, as she says, 'I myself shall speak of my unhappy disgrace' *eloquar infelix dedecus ipsa meum* (*Ov. Fast.* 2.826). It is the knowledge that her misfortune must be presented to an audience that motivates Lucretia's subsequent actions. She insists upon suicide in order that the audience of future women not find in her example an excuse for unchaste behaviour. Tarquin displays an equal knowledge of the Roman system of sanction by means of shame in his machinations of extracting a degree of acquiescence from Lucretia and threatens to kill a slave and put him by her bed in order that all might think that such a man had adulterated her. The threat to which she finally submits is that of infamy (*Ov. Fast.* 2.810). Threat of public shame, even in death, moves her to compliance.

For the Romans to have a sense of shame was to have a sense of the presence of others. The main vehicle for this was *pudor*, self-conscious shame. Because of the public

²⁶ I am not suggesting that these distinctions are absolute, indeed any culture will contain elements of either shame or guilt culture, but I argue that in Roman society the fear of shame was a greater motivator than a sense of guilt.

²⁷ Wilhelm-Hooijbergh 1954.

²⁸ For a discussion of Augustine's interpretation of the myth see Donaldson 1982: 21-39.

orientated nature of shame, sensitivity to *pudor* was able to protect one. Thus ancient writers often discuss sensitivity to *pudor* as though it was able to conceal undesirable parts of the self from public scrutiny—as if it were an item of clothing. According to Apuleius ‘*pudor* is like a garment, the more worn out it is, the more it is held in contempt’ *pudor enim ueluti uestis quanto obsoletior est tanto incuriosius habetur* (*Apol.* 3). The author of the *Historia Augusta* tells us how that which Heliogabalus did ‘he did without any veil of *pudor*’, *quae faceret, sine ullius pudoris velamento* (*Heliogab.* 11.4). These writers show us how the term *pudor* has two slightly different senses; the first of these corresponds to what we say when we say ‘I feel ashamed’, the other corresponds to having a sense of shame and a sensitivity to social displeasure. Cairns describes this when he notes the difference between affect (shame) and disposition (modesty).²⁹ The emperor Heliogabalus apparently had neither as he did not attempt to cloak his deed and was thus not ashamed of a shameful action. He therefore cannot have had a sense of shame while, according to Pliny the Younger, men who are sensitive to shame are naturally to be trusted more as they are less likely to commit dishonourable deeds. Thus he interprets the blush as a sign of the youthful Trajan’s goodness as Trajan was not removed from the opinions and judgements of those he ruled (*Pan.* 2.8) and he was a part of society.³⁰ Just as the Romans were able to recognise *pudicitia* in a woman they were able to identify someone in the grip of *pudor*. The blush, silence and downcast eyes were for them the signifying features of this emotion. Someone who is experiencing this emotion, while being present, attempts to absent themselves by such removal from social interaction as silence and the averted glance signify a momentary withdrawal from social contact.³¹

These signs of social withdrawal are the most essential to our understanding of how shame influences the use of the veil. That *pudor* is so frequently likened to concealing clothing, and most often to the veil in particular, allows an appreciation of how important this garment was in the maintenance of this social phenomenon. Indeed the feminine personification of *pudor* is *pudicitia*—a virtue that is personified by the image

²⁹ Cairns 2002: 75.

³⁰ For a worthwhile discussion of blushing see Barton 2002: 212-234.

³¹ Kaster 1997: 7.

of a veiled woman. Unlike the masculine manifestations, feminine *pudor* and thus *pudicitia* is inextricably linked to sexual activity. The reasons for this may be found in the fundamental pair of contrasting social dynamics of 'honour' and 'shame' that unite all areas of the ancient and modern Mediterranean.

The simplification of motivation for social action into a strict division between honour and shame is problematic. Such generalization asserts that these two motivations are behind most human action but fails to take into account any social ideals and virtues that were constructed by the processes of abstracted thought, such as the virtues promulgated by the reasoning of the Stoic philosophers. In so doing the honour/shame model fails to account for much of the interaction that takes place in a society as complex as that of ancient Rome. This is partly due to the persistent 'primitivization' by anthropologists of the cultures studied when formulating this framework. While this means that the model is of limited value when embarking on a comprehensive study of all ethics that determine relations it is still very useful in cases in which an actual programme of purposeful primitivization/archaism has taken place. Augustus' attempts to restore the practices of the ancestors meant a forced return to antiquated and simplified gender relations.

The honour/shame model has been developed by anthropologists who, while studying modern Mediterranean societies, observed that in these cultures honour and shame are directly related to distinctions of sexuality and gender.³² These two moral values represent the bestowal of public esteem upon an individual and the respective sensitivity to this esteem.³³ Honour was the reward for successful power-brokering amongst men in Rome and was derived from maintaining intact the shame, chastity and sexual purity of female kin. The responsibility for preserving female shame lies not entirely with the women themselves but is largely placed under the auspices of their male relatives. When men are unsuccessful in this task they are shamed as the moral status of their womenfolk affects their power relations with other men.

³² Gilmore 1987: 3.

³³ Pitt-Rivers 1965: 42.

Gilmore has asserted that because the honour/shame ideal affects both inter- and intra-gender relationships it must be regarded as a 'total social fact', one of the fundamental *mores* that shape the nature of the society in question.³⁴ Because of its essential role in defining the nature of a society's power and gender relations the honour/shame model is essential to our understanding of veiling in Rome. Indeed female veiling is a predicted side-effect of a situation in which this moral model is dominant, as is the sexualized division of space into categories of public and private.³⁵ The shame of women is often idealized, as is male honour. In a culture which idealizes female shame, when the integrity of male honour (which is linked to the safety and impenetrability of the male body) or the integrity of the state (which protects male honour) is placed in danger the natural reaction is to claim that female shame has in some way been violated.

In this context 'honour' is essentially the means by which men (seldom women) negotiate social status. In this setting honour is therefore equal to social status and vice versa.³⁶ Pitt-Rivers has argued that in societies in which there exists a hierarchy of honours the person who submits to precedence of others recognises his own inferiority.³⁷ This social inferiority is understood as especially dangerous because there is an intimate relationship between honour and the physical person. The body and the space that surrounds it therefore assumes great importance in the maintenance of honour. As a result any physical affront is an affront to honour as it penetrates the 'ideal sphere' surrounding a person. Consequently in many cases involving the committal or removal of honours in daily life the body, and especially the head as a metonym for the body, is affected. For example, in ancient Rome the ceremony of manumitting a slave involved capping him with the *pileus*: the cap that served as a mark of his new status as a freedman. This pattern persists even across the gender divide and goes some way in explaining why the head, and the covering thereof, assumes such great significance in 'honour' societies.

³⁴ Gilmore 1987: 5.

³⁵ Gilmore 1987: 5.

³⁶ For a broader discussion of social status, see the following chapter.

³⁷ Pitt-Rivers 1965: 19-78.

It is necessary to first investigate how the feminine virtue of shame relates to the masculine ideal of honour in order to comprehend how the veiling of women assumed greater importance than that of men³⁸. In ancient Rome, to have a sense of honour was to have a sense of shame.³⁹ Cicero helps us to understand the benefits of shame when he explains how:

‘They are terrified not so much by fear and punishment, which is decided by the laws, as by shame, which nature has given to man as some fear of justified vituperation...so that shame no less than fear keeps the citizens from wrongdoing’

nec vero tam metu poenaeque terrentur, quae est constituta legibus, quam verecundia, quam natura homini dedit quasi quendam vituperationis non iniustae timorem...ut pudor civis non minus a delictis arceret quam metus (Cic. Rep. 5.4).

For men the emotion of shame is valued as a virtue not as a necessity, and the Romans had no equivalent of the Greek concept of νέμεσις that was the return for a violation of the terms of αἰδώς. Unlike male shame, male honour was ethically neutral. In other words it was an inborn characteristic of the sex and thus all men theoretically possessed it. Conversely male shame was ethically positive in that it was an admirable quality, but not something with which all men were born. Thus, while honour was considered to be the necessary state of a citizen, shame was a virtue towards which he should strive. Conversely for women honour was a highly regarded virtue but was not a requisite of their sex. A woman did not stop being a woman if she had no honour; this was only occasioned by a loss of shame typified by a concern for sexual purity. Thus female shame may be described as ethically neutral but female honour as ethically positive. In the same way that women without shame lost all social importance in that they ceased to be women, so men without honour ceased to be men. Moreover, despite the

³⁸ At least in the Roman context this was the case. We shall however see that this does not hold true in all cultures.

³⁹ Barton 2002: 212.

commendable nature of the ethically positive virtues, there are certain points at which each virtue becomes inappropriate to the other sex. Honour, in the guise of the pursuit of precedence and the willingness to offend other men, is purely male whereas shame in the shape of sexual purity is the exclusive province of women.

In situations such as these the division of labour regarding honour and shame corresponds to the division of roles within the family. The virtue expressed in sexual purity is delegated to the women (the wife, mother, sisters, and daughters) and the virtue of defending female shame to the males. Thus women have no honour as the responsibility thereof is handed over to their male kin. Pitt-Rivers has noted how a situation such as this results in a notion of female fragility that correlates directly to the lack of honour amongst them.⁴⁰ Thus a woman should avoid all contact that might expose her to shame as she cannot be expected to succeed in this situation if she is unsupported by male authority. This system of thought resulted in a state of affairs in which Roman women were ideally under the *potestas* of a man—either father, husband, brother or tutor.⁴¹ Since it was the husband's and father's duty to shield the shame of the women under his protection, any adultery or *stuprum* on the part of these women reflected upon the man as he, by his error, had allowed this exposure.

This results in zealous defence of female sexual purity by a woman's male kin, with the consequences of such attitudes being actions such as the killing of Verginia by her father to prevent the loss of her shame and his honour. Livy makes this correlation very clear when he has Icilius, Verginia's fiancé who refuses Appius Claudius' right to Verginia, plead for him to 'let *pudicitia* at least be safe' *pudicitia saltem in tuto sit*, and states that if Verginia's father 'yielded to this man's claims, (another) match must be sought for his daughter. In my efforts to claim the freedom of my fiancée I will give up my life rather than my duty' *sibi si huius uindictiis cesserit condicionem filiae quaerendam esse. me uindicantem sponsam in libertatem uita citius deseret quam fides* (3.45.11).

⁴⁰ Pitt-Rivers 1965: 46.

⁴¹ Crook 1967: 113.

An insistence upon the virginity of the bride is an identifying feature of societies in which male honour is related to female shame. Pitt-Rivers explains this reasoning as displaying an unwillingness to become a ‘retro-active cuckold’.⁴² The reasons are more practical. In societies such as Rome, honour is a hereditary quality and equally the shame of a mother could be transmitted to her children. Thus when Cassius of Parma taunts Augustus with the insult that ‘your maternal meal came from a crude bakery in Aricia; this a banker from Nerulum kneaded with his hands stained by exchanging money’ *materna tibi farina est ex crudissimo Ariciae pistrino: hanc finxit manibus collybo decoloratis Nerulonensis mensarius* (Suet. *Aug.* 1.4), he is leveling a very grave affront, one which does not only impugn the emperor’s mother but by extension Augustus’ own honour. It is for the same reason that Lucretia blushes in the presence of her male kin; it is a sign of recognition that her role as holder of chastity and therefore male shame has been disrupted by her rape. Lucretia’s blush acts as veil in describing her modesty and shame—the natural state of responsible femininity. Macrobius claims that ‘natural philosophers assert that nature, when modesty is compromised, spreads blood before herself like a veil’ *dicunt etiam physici quod natura pudore tacta ita sanguinem ante se pro velamento tendat* (Macrob. *Sat.* 7.11.5).

In order to avoid insults such as those given to Augustus and to Lucretia’s and Verginia’s relations, and to avert the accompanying social sanctions, some way had to be found of ensuring that women’s (ethically neutral)⁴³ shame was protected—thus preventing their slipping into a state of shamelessness. A tale dating from nineteenth century Europe tells of a young girl whose shame was sacrificed to an older man to whom she gave up her virginity. Thus shamed she took to the streets dressed as a man. As she had lost the qualifying characteristic of her sex she had to assume that of the other; since she no longer had shame she chose to make her plight an issue of honour and by adopting male dress she allowed herself to take up the masculine attribute of ethically neutral honour. She dressed as a man until she found her defiler and forced him

⁴² Pitt-Rivers 1965: 50.

⁴³ As was shown on page 31, the term ‘ethically neutral’ describes the virtue of shame typified by sexual purity that is considered to be the qualifying state of the female sex

to marry her, whereupon she again assumed woman's dress.⁴⁴ A woman who loses her shame loses the characteristics of her sex—she forfeits the benefits of male protection. This notion is clearly a reflection of the ancient Roman tradition that had prostitutes and adulteresses dressed in the masculine toga. If a woman without shame is made masculine to the point that she loses her identity as a woman and thus dresses as a man, perhaps the contrasting practice amongst men (the assumption of the veil) may inform an understanding of how female dress represents feminine qualities. In other words, if a woman dressing as a man allows her to enter into the realm of male action and thereby makes her masculine then a man taking up a woman's garment must also assume certain feminine qualities.

Within modern veiling cultures there exists, because of the public awareness caused by notions of honour and shame, a disparity between the public demonstration of sexual morality and actual practices. For example, in a study of Iranian women and their veiling it has been observed that while some women feel that it is not moral to even show their faces to prospective spouses many still have sex before the marriage is officially consummated. Indeed women's own perceptions of the uses that their bodies are allowed depended on the extent to which these actions are visible to others. Women could therefore control the physical but private manifestations of their sexuality more easily than the public ones (such as dress and manner of gait).⁴⁵ The veil may therefore act as a 'disguise' for otherwise inappropriate behaviour, and strict compliance with veiling regulations may indeed be rewarded so that a woman who is always modest in her dress may be allowed certain freedoms that women who 'need to be watched' are not. The notion of being watched is central to any punishment for a lapse in shame on the part of women. Just as male honour is most badly disturbed when an offence is committed against it in front of onlookers, so too are violations of shame among women. Indeed Muslim men involved in honour killings are often more concerned with a public perception of dishonour than with the actual truth of the woman's conduct and for this reason women are not only punished for acts of adultery but also for being the victims of

⁴⁴ de León 1912.

⁴⁵ Bauer 1985: 123.

rape. These women are seen to have lost their shame, and thus their kin are seen to have lost their honour.

Stories such as those of Lucretia and Verginia show how a violation of feminine chastity, even by rape, is in fact a prelude to an attack on the physical and political integrity and thus the honour of men. After Verginius has killed his daughter he has effectively removed the cause of threat to himself. For Verginius there is no longer a focus in his home for Appius' lust and he states that he is now able to defend his body as he had defended his daughter's 'from other violations by that same man he would defend his own body with that same spirit that he had defended his daughter's' *ab alia violentia eius eodem se animo suum corpus vindicaturum quo vindicaverit filiae* (Liv. 3.50.9). Verginia's chastity had signified her (and hence her father's) protection from assault, but once this virtue has been compromised her father's body becomes endangered.⁴⁶

Women like Lucretia, in their roles as *custodes domorum*, are not only protectors of the home but also through their person embody the *domus*. Literature seldom shows these female paragons as voluntarily leaving the protection of their home. Both Livy and Ovid never describe Lucretia as setting foot outside of the home. Lucretia appears rather to be fixed in every scene: she sits and spins wool with her maids, she is pinned to her bed by Tarquin and she addresses her father and husband only after they have been summoned to her while she stays at home. Verginius, the father of Livy's heroine Verginia, goes so far as to describe his daughter as a domestic fixture and once she has been killed 'there is no longer a site in his house for Appius' lust', *non esse iam Appi libidini locum in domo sua* (Liv. 3.50.9). In descriptions of this sort, women and their chastity are seen as affording protection to the *domus* that should render this space inviolate.⁴⁷ In opposition to the virtue that Lucretia displays in protecting her home with her chastity stands the example of the king's daughters-in-law who stay at home drinking wine, an activity seemingly associated with adultery in the Roman mind, while 'no sentinel was at the

⁴⁶ Donaldson notes how this relates to the notion of 'transferred pollution', whereby a woman's family becomes tainted by her rape (1982: 23).

⁴⁷ Joshel 2002: 176.

door', *custos in fore nullus erat* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.738). The actions of these women imperil not only the house but their sexual purity which is in turn a symbol of the domestic space.

The ideal figures of femininity are those who remain always in the domestic space but this ideal could not have stood up to practical considerations and even respectable women must on occasion have ventured into public and it is the veil which allowed them to do so in a way that did not threaten their modesty. A woman is able to guard her home and her sexuality, which the home embodies, by putting around her the portable walls of a veil. There exists in most veiling cultures, both ancient and modern, a symbolic correlation between the house and the veil. Figure 8, which shows an Afghan woman's *burqaa* and traditional Arabo-Islamic latticework, describes in visual terms how parts of the house are symbolized by veils worn by women. In ancient terms this connection is most easily seen in linguistic phrasing. The veil known as the *τεγίδιον*, which was popular in the Greek parts of the Empire during Hellenistic times, takes its linguistic root from the word for roof, *τέγος*. The *τεγίδιον* is therefore a 'little roof' that women wore on their heads. Latin terms for the veil or for veiling, such as *velo* and *velamen*, are used in certain contexts to denote screens, coverings and curtains and a Roman woman is therefore able to carry part of her house with her and to remain concealed in her proper domestic sphere even when entering the public eye.

The ideas of chastity, the *domus* and the Roman veil therefore become inextricably interwoven. The veil and the walls of the house protect the woman who remains within them and her adherence to these spatial codes allows for their continued safety. However all of these forms of protection are ultimately tools for the preservation of male honour. In this scenario the respective social emotions of honour of the husband and the shame of the wife form a symbiotic whole.

The veil acts as protection against attacks upon a family's honour by protecting the virtue of its women but this metaphor can be extended so that the veil also serves to represent the integrity and honour of the state. For a clear illustration of this ideal we

need to turn our attention to Homeric Epic. This association is facilitated by the use of the word κρήδεμνον that is used throughout the *Iliad* to refer to the veils worn by the noble women of Troy.⁴⁸ However this word has a meaning beyond that of ‘veil’ and can be used to denote ‘city-walls’ or ‘battlements’.⁴⁹ The word κρήδεμνον is therefore used to great effect when Andromache tears this garment from her head upon seeing the torment of Hector’s body at the hand of Achilles.⁵⁰ Andromache is suddenly left unprotected by the death of her husband and she acts out the threat that this vulnerability brings by removing the symbolic tokens of his protection. The secondary meaning of κρήδεμνον allows Andromache’s action to be read as portending the fall of the city. Troy, like the women who inhabit it, will lose the protection of its walls and will also therefore be open to rape. The motif of the veil as a wall or physical barrier that protects virtue, however, is not limited to the Greeks. As we shall see in later chapters, the Latin tradition is even more explicit about the relationship between the ideas of civic safety and a woman’s head.⁵¹ Indeed Tertullian talks of the veil as a defensive wall when he exhorts women to protect their sexuality and to ‘put on the armour of modesty, surround yourself with a rampart of chastity, cover your sex with a wall in order not to allow your eyes beyond it nor admit others in’ *indue armaturam pudoris, circumduc vallum verecundiae, murum sexui tuo strue, qui nec tuos emittat oculos nec admittat alienos* (*De vir. vel.* 16.6).

In using the word *sexus* to describe what the veil must cover, Tertullian affirms the connection between the veil, gender and sexuality. The word *sexus* is variously used to denote either gender, i.e. male and female, or the sexual organs. Thus it is clear that the veil allows for a degree of sexuality by advertising a woman’s gender. It also protects the shame of the woman concerned by guarding her sexual organs and preserving her chastity and thus maintains male honour. While the following chapters concern themselves with the uses to which the veil was put during the Augustan period, this chapter has attempted to explain some of the reasons why the veil was such a powerful

⁴⁸ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 22.405-407; 468-72.

⁴⁹ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 131.

⁵⁰ Hom. *Il.* 22.442-472.

⁵¹ See the discussion of the *tutulus* in Chapter 5.

medium for the Augustan message. As will be shown, the resolution to promote veiling along with other 'traditional' miscellany was a result of the political climate following the civil wars. The veil was considered 'traditional' for deeply-rooted anthropological reasons and the cultural backdrop of an honour/shame culture meant that female veiling was readily accepted and understood as proper for Roman women.

CHAPTER 3

THE VEIL AS A MARKER OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS STATUS AT ROME

Clothes act as a system of signs that are able to create meaning within a culturally specific semiotic framework.¹ Just as a contemporary observer is able to discern from a person's dress their social status, age, gender and occupation so too can the dress of the Romans tell us much about the status and rank of those who wore it and the nature of public life. The visual language of clothes soon infiltrated itself into the Latin language itself as verbal and visual signifiers became one when an article of clothing came to stand for the status or rank itself; for example the right to stand for office was called the right of *latus clavus* and incorporation into the rank of *equus* was termed the *ius anuli aurei*.²

The veil, as the definitively female garment, in the case of women was the primary tool of this sartorial communication. While the Roman toga was the exemplar of male dress the evidence of the ancient sources depicts the veil as a garment that helped to define the sex of the one who wore it,³ one that men assume when masquerading as women, as Clodius is accused by Cicero of doing during his infiltration of the *Bona Dea* ritual (*Har. Resp.* 43-44). During Cicero's second invective against Catiline the orator again offers us evidence of the nature of the veil when he notes how Catiline's effeminate associates are 'clad in veils, not togas', *velis amictos, non togis* (*Cat.* 2.22). Cicero's repeated use of the veil to stress unmanly behaviour suggests that it was a powerful marker of womanliness in the Roman mind.

¹ For the semiotics of dress see pages 14-16.

² Olson 2006: 189.

³ Cf. Nonius, who says that the *palla* was the garment of the respectable matron who was not supposed to appear in public without it (Non. 862. L.)

In the same way that the dress of a Roman male citizen revealed his status so the dress of his wife or daughter would also reflect it. The veil acted as indication of his wealth and status in two fundamental ways. The most obvious means by which it did so was by the display of costly materials. The ancient sources abound with suggestions that veils could be items of great monetary worth. Virgil lists 'a *palla* stiff with gold and designs, and a *velamen* edged with saffron acanthus', *pallam signis auroque rigentem et circumtextum croceo velamen acantho* (*Aen.* 1.648) as being among the treasures rescued from Troy. Plautine comedy displays the worth of veils when cheating husbands take them from their wives to give to their mistresses. These veils are gifts of great worth that are shown as having value similar to that of gold jewellery.⁴ Sumptuary laws, which aspire to control displays of wealth, lay down restrictions with regard to the number of veils which are allowed to be on display at funerals⁵ and often associate these items with the colour purple,⁶ which, as a sign of great wealth, was restricted in its use to persons of high social status.⁷

The practice of wearing veils of such a costly nature is an uncomplicated display of wealth. In these situations the wealth of the family of the woman who is veiled with such expense is on public display and outsiders are immediately alerted as to the family's status, but the veiling of women also achieves this end by the more subtle process of conspicuous consumption. This process accounts for the occurrence of the sumptuary laws that place limits on veiling as a too ostentatious display of wealth.⁸ Horace draws a distinction between working-class or slave women who do not wear the veil and their respectable counterparts who do, when he derisively compares a 'toga-wearing maid' (*ancilla togata*) to a reputable woman (*Sat.* 1.2.63). Slave women are never (as far as I have been able to ascertain) spoken about as veiled and women who are excluded from being economically active in terms of production are most often shown as veiled. From the construction of the Classical veil we are able to imagine that it, like the toga, would

⁴ Plaut. *Men.* 526. This situation drives the plot of Plautus' *Menaechmi*.

⁵ Cic. *Leg.* 2.23.59.

⁶ Liv. 17.9.

⁷ The wearing of a purple toga was a privilege limited to the emperor.

⁸ Cic. *Leg.* 2.23.59.

have been a difficult garment to wear and women are often depicted as arranging and righting the position of their veils.⁹ When veiling is socially and/or legally enforced upon women irrespective of rank, the difficulty of performing meaningful work is clearly seen. Female Pakistani fieldworkers have developed the practice of holding their veils across their faces by tucking one end into their mouths while they use both their hands to gather crops.¹⁰ This situation is obviously not ideal and it is doubtful whether women who did such work in ancient times would have been veiled. The Roman veil can be seen to act, in a lesser degree, like the Chinese practice of foot-binding: by effectively hobbling its womenfolk a family is able to comment on the fact that they have no dire need of the income that these women might produce.

As will be discussed when examining the terminology of veiling, there are circumstances in which men assume the veil. There are two specific factors that influence veiling amongst men: the desire to create social distance and the need to supplicate those who are socially superior.

The most readily recognisable of the instances of veiling to show deference is that of supplicants. Supplicants are veiled because of the need to recognise the social precedence, and therefore the greater honour, of those from whom they beg favour. The law laid down for supplicants in Livy 1.32.6 states that

‘a legate, when he comes to the borders of those from whom satisfaction is sought, with a veiled head (that is a veil of wool) says ‘listen Jupiter, listen borders’—and he names whatever people there are—‘let righteousness listen. I am a public messenger of the Roman people’

legatus ubi ad fines eorum venit unde res repetuntur, capite velato filo—lanae velamen est—‘audi, Iuppiter’ inquit; ‘audite, fines’—cuiuscumque gentis sunt, nominat—; ‘audiat fas. ego sum publicus nuntius populi Romani.

⁹ Plaut. *Cist.* 114. See for example the discussion of the veil-gesture in the following chapter.

¹⁰ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 125.

In this case the legate must be veiled to ensure his own protection by proving his vulnerability and that he poses no threat to those whose territory he enters. This principle is echoed by the freedman at Trimalchio's dinner who declares his free status by noting that 'I am a man among men, I walk about with my head unveiled', *homo inter homines sum, capite aperto ambulo* (*Sat.* 57.3). He is thus able to advertise that he now has honour in that he is no longer required to recognise his own inferiority to his master. More importantly, in veiling Livy's envoy also shows his supplication before the gods. He acknowledges that the current transaction must be negotiated under the aegis of Jupiter, the sacred boundaries and divine law and that he is inferior before these. This practice is mirrored by the use of the *kippah* by Jewish men, the purpose of which is to acknowledge the presence of god 'above us' (*Talmud Kiddushin* 31a). This use is reflected in the etymology of the Yiddish word for head covering, 'yarmulke', which comes from the Arabic, *yira malka*, which means 'awe of the King', and is thus an acknowledgement of social as well as religious superiority.

Both men and women outside of the priestly castes veil when they pray or make sacrifices. Plautus offers us a rare example of this practice amongst women of the laity when he describes how a woman 'calls on the immortal gods as women in childbirth are accustomed to do, with clean hands and a veiled head so that they might be of help to her', *ut solent puerperae/ invocat deos immortales, ut sibi auxilium ferant,/ manibus puris, capite operto* (*Amph.* 1091).¹¹

This procedure is more often attested to in the context of male devotional practice and Virgil offers us many such examples.¹² His Trojan exiles recall how 'we veiled our heads before the altar in Phrygian robes', *capita ante aras Phrygio uelamur amictu* (*Virg. Aen.* 3.544).¹³ They do this in accordance with the injunction of the prophet Helenus who orders them to veil their hair and bids him to 'may your descendants maintain their religious purity by observing this practice' *hac casti maneant in religione*

¹¹ See page 13.

¹² The most likely reason for this is that the vast majority of texts recording such action concern themselves only with the deeds of men.

¹³ See page 23.

nepotes (Verg. *Aen.* 3.406-409). This ritualistic veil is therefore being read by Aeneas as being a matter of *lex sacra* for pious Romans and could only be abandoned at the risk of offending the gods and reducing the efficacy of prayer or sacrifice.¹⁴ Virgil's Aeneas is the model of a pious leader and his representation subtly echoes the religious policy of Augustus. Aeneas as Rome's first father makes sacrifices with his head veiled and this ensures the future prosperity of Rome and thus Augustus the *pater patriae* is publicly depicted as doing the same. Before the settlement of 27 B. C. Augustus appears most often in statues that display the republican tendency towards nude honorific portraits¹⁵ but after the *respublica restituta* Augustus is habitually shown veiled in his toga (Figure 9A). These statues put the Augustan virtue of piety on display while at the same time avert the difficult question of Augustus' political power and the visual representation thereof; in these statues he is clearly the moral ruler of Rome.

In certain circumstances unbound hair, rather than the more traditional veil, can signal an act of religious devotion. Petronius writes of how one of Trimalchio's dinner guests bemoans the ills of the time by comparing them unfavourably with the past by saying 'before, stola-clad matrons went up the hill with bare feet, with dishevelled hair, with pure minds, and begged Jove for rain. And so at once it poured down in bucketfuls', *antea stolatae ibant nudis pedibus in clivum, passis capillis, mentibus puris, et Iovem aquam exorabant. itaque statim urceatim plovebat* (*Sat.* 44.18). Here the desperation of the citizenry is shown by the matrons' abandonment of the traditional liturgical dress. They expose themselves, thus making themselves vulnerable before the god, in order to gain his pity. The matrons show the extremity of the general despair by casting aside the social *mores* and exhibiting the threat to the society that birthed these customs of dress.

Despite the fact that the practice of religious veiling seems entirely involved with the numinous, the act of veiling before the gods also reflects on its use as a signifier of social hierarchy. Plutarch suggests that the Romans veil as a mark of respect for their gods and that by veiling themselves in prayer they humble themselves (*Mor. Quaest.*

¹⁴ Oster 1988: 500.

¹⁵ Zanker 1990: 128.

Rom. 266). Lucius Vitellius, the father of the later emperor Vitellius, is said by Suetonius to have been the first man to recognise Caligula as a god when he veiled himself in his presence (*Vit.* 2.5). This action, while displaying a religious purpose, is also a statement with regard to the relative eminence of the two men concerned. The freedman present at the dinner held by Petronius' Trimalchio uses his unveiled head as an assertion of his respectable status as a Roman citizen. His statement of pride therefore concerns the fact that he is now a man of some rank who no longer veils in homage to all men but is their social equal.¹⁶

For the ancient Romans veiling before another man was often a mark that he possessed greater honour than the one veiled. This occasional relationship between men of unequal rank is reflected on a far larger scale in the relationship between the sexes. Women (who have no honour only shame) are in an inferior position to any man who is honourable.¹⁷ Women veil as a response to the need to protect their shame and we can therefore suppose that male veiling as a result of shame has a similar motive.

Men also commonly veil to create social distance between the veiler and an audience. In cultures such as Rome veiling is a necessarily social action as it is the consequence of a social system in which social roles require the presence of witnesses in order to be properly acted out. Honour can, for example, only be irrevocably impugned by actions committed in the presence of witnesses and thus honour and shame are of entirely social importance. A man is able to protect these social relationships and interactions through aloofness, removal and reserve. For example Kaster has noted how the emotion of *pudor* requires first the realization of standing exposed before an audience.¹⁸ Indeed many Roman writers note how blushing, and thus *pudor*, is provoked by public settings. Seneca notes how 'some men—even the most constant—break out in a sweat in the gaze of the public' *quibusdam etiam constantissimis in conspectu populi sudor erumpit* (*Ep.* 11.2). The remedy for this situation that decreases honour and produces shame is to first

¹⁶ Plutarch concedes that unveiling in front of another man is an act of friendship amongst the Romans (*Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 266).

¹⁷ Thus in many cases it is not required to veil in the presence of men without honour such as slaves.

¹⁸ Kaster 1997:3.

remove oneself from the gaze of the audience and then to distance oneself from the situation. The simplest way of achieving both such things is to be veiled.

This practice is so common amongst the Tuareg of North Africa that male veiling has become routine and honourable men are seldom seen unveiled. In such a case where male rather than female veiling is normative, sensitivity to shame is the dominant motivator. Since amongst the Tuareg expressions of ethically positive male shame are more common and more highly valued than they were in Rome, veiling has become a male practice. Tuareg men cover their faces to introduce distance between their selves and social others.¹⁹ This practice allows the wearer to remain aloof from the perils of social interaction while still partaking in it and in so doing allows him to protect his shame. It does not matter whether this interaction occurs between those known to each other or amongst strangers as a Tuareg pulls the veil highest amongst those who are most intimately known to him. In doing so he decreases his vulnerability to others by symbolically removing himself from the interaction and when asked to explain the custom a Tuareg will simply respond by saying that it is shameful to show his mouth.²⁰ Freudian psychology gives female symbolism to the mouth in its openness to penetration and so the veil serves to protect this shame from the knowledge of other men. Just as amongst Roman men veiling represents a process of feminization, a Tuareg woman will often draw her shawl across the bottom half of her face when confronting her father in-law. Thus women can approximate the veiling practice in a highly specific and intensive form—thereby distilling the essentials of the gesture.

Veiling not only facilitates social action, but also allows actors to comment on it. Cairns uses the figure of Achilles to explain this phenomenon.²¹ Achilles appears veiled on many red-figure vases such as that in Figure 10. Here the veiling is a signal of the hero's wrath as he creates social distance between himself and the other Greeks as a marker of his dishonour. Moreover the veiling serves to hide the shame that he feels at having been bested in his dispute against Agamemnon. While I have found no example of Achilles'

¹⁹ Murphy 1964: 1257.

²⁰ Murphy 1964: 1257.

²¹ Cairns 2001: 20.

veiling mentioned in the *Iliad*, images of this seem to be an attempt to render in the artistic medium Achilles' removal of himself to his tent. Thus an artist uses the feminine costume of the veil to represent the feminine state of seclusion that are both attempts by the hero to protect the womanly emotion of ethically neutral shame from exposure. In a similar Roman example Livy recalls how during the Second Punic war an irate Decius Magius, a prominent supporter of Rome from Capua, was arrested and while being led through the streets with his head uncovered he constantly yelled abuse, drawing into question the honour of the onlookers (23.10.8-9), but once his head was covered he became silent as it was no longer necessary to protect himself from shame by a show of aggression and he was able to withdraw himself from circumstances which might cause shame.²²

Linked to the practice of veiling in anger is that of veiling in times of humiliation or vulnerability—and most specifically immediately prior to death. As we have seen, the physical body is inextricably linked to a man's honour and a woman's shame. Therefore any action that impinges upon the sovereignty of the physical being is automatically an affront against these qualities. This practice is similar to that of veiling in anger as it also removes the actor from an undesirable social situation and allows him to criticize the circumstances in which he finds himself. The closest linking of these two causes of veiling occurs when it occurs as a prelude to suicide. After the bungling of his duty to oversee the corn supply Lucius Minucius exposed the severity of the famine that Rome faced. Livy recalls how then 'many plebeians [...] threw themselves into the Tiber with veiled heads' *multi ex plebe [...] capitibus obvolutis se in Tiberim praecipitaverunt* (4.12.11). These men are not only expressing a sense of despair but are also making two very emphatic statements by means of their veiling. Primarily they remove themselves from the public gaze to shield themselves from the shame that will be accrued by the imminent harm to their beings because of their suicide. They also veil to show

²² Even if Decius Magius' head was covered merely to hide him from public sight, the fact that he falls silent after he is covered nevertheless shows that he no longer feels aggression to be necessary.

displeasure at the situation that has arisen because of the mismanagement of the food supply and to hide the shame that is a result of their bodies being harmed by hunger.²³

To have a sense of one's own vulnerability to shame was a morally positive equivalent to possessing an ethically neutral sense of honour. Thus we need to distinguish between the sensitivity to *pudor* and the manifestation of the emotion. A Roman who possessed honour had to be aware that honour was vulnerable to attack and that he should therefore take steps to protect it. Examples of veiling such as those offered in preceding paragraphs are a result of attempts to protect and disguise the *pudor* that results from being disgraced. These men use the veil to protect shame in much the same way as an honourable matron might, but there are cases in which men assume the characteristics of feminine dress not so much to protect shame but as a sign that, like women, they are without even ethically neutral honour. Such a man displays his shame and does not make any pretence of putting it out of the sight of the audience (while in the case of Achilles the very purpose of his veiling is to absent himself from the sight of society). Veiling out of fear is one such example of dishonourable veiling. Quintilian relates with much scorn the tale of an orator who performed ridiculous antics for the entertainment of the jury. This wretched man,

‘Who, when a bloody sword was brought forth by the prosecution by means of which he was attempting to prove a man had been killed, suddenly fled from the benches as though terrified, and when he had to plead his case, he peeped out from the crowd with his head partially veiled’,

qui, cum esset cruentus gladius ab accusatore prolatus, quo is hominem probabat occisum, subito ex subselliis ut territus fugit, et capite ex parte velato, cum ad agendum ex turba prospexisset (Inst. 6.1.48).

²³ For other example of veiling prior to death cf. Liv. 1.26; Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.37; Suet. *Vit.* 2.5. Suetonius also recounts how Julius Caesar, as he was about to die, ‘covered his head with his toga, and at the same time, with his left hand drew down its lap to the lowest part of his legs, in order that he might fall more decently, with the lower part of his body also veiled’ *toga caput obvoluit, simul sinistra manu sinum ad ima crura deduxit, quo honestius caderet etiam inferiore corporis parte velata (Jul. 82.2).*

Quintilian's attitude towards this man whom he considered laughable makes quite clear that by veiling from fear (even though it was only pretended) the man evoked such strong feelings of disdain that he lost his honour in the eyes of the writer.²⁴

These examples of male veiling help us to understand the various ways in which the veil was used as a marker (indicating a woman who possessed the requisite modesty) and a protector (ensuring she was removed from the public/male gaze). Men who veil are in effect breaking the dress code that is the sartorial signifier of honour. This practice is a result of some action inducing a feeling of inferiority on the part of the veiled man and can in itself result in criticism. What then are the consequences for a woman who violates the dress code that is the signal of her shame?

If the veil acts as a symbol of masculine honour then any woman who violates the trust of the burden of protecting this honour must no longer be allowed to display the sartorial symbols of those whose expectations she has disregarded. Women who are no longer useful as producers of legitimate offspring are therefore placed outside of the protection of their male kin that is afforded by the use of the veil. Both prostitutes and adulteresses were therefore dressed in a toga. This dress did not signify that its wearer had been granted the sexual freedom allowed to men but rather that she by her actions had forfeited her role as a sexually mature woman in society.²⁵ The protection afforded by proper sexual conduct as reflected by proper dress would be provided at all stages of a woman's life but the form in which this was manifested would not remain constant and a woman might change her costume depending on the various stages of her life. Thus not all females wore the veil and some only assumed it at a certain point.

To mark out these stages there existed a more ritualized practice of veiling to create social distance than that which was practiced in anger or shame. These ceremonial uses of the veil usually involved rites of passage that occurred at various intervals during a person's life. It is possible to divide these rituals into three distinct types: ceremonies of

²⁴ In this passage Quintilian is also expressing disdain for his colleague's oratorical practices.

²⁵ Cf. Mart. 2.39; Juv. 2.69; Cic. *Phil.* 2.18.44.

separation, transition and incorporation.²⁶ Any rite may contain elements of all three types depending on the occasion and whether it occurs in isolation or as part of a system of rites. At this juncture a distinction must be made between rites of passage and those of consecration. While both involve social separation, rites of consecration such as Aeneas' veiling and unveiling while making his sacrifice in *Aeneid* 3.406 leave him fulfilling the same social role as before he had veiled while conversely veiling during rites of passage entails a shift from one social condition to another.

These shifts occur most often at various points in the male and female life-cycle. Thus when a Roman girl marries she assumes one veil and when she becomes a matron she takes up another and when widowed she puts on a third type. These initiation rituals may involve a temporary exclusion from the community or they might entail permanent separation or inclusion or both. Thus the bride's temporary veiling both separates her from her family and incorporates her into that of her husband. Her then-permanent veiling excludes her from the view of others but shows her inclusion into her husband's household. Similarly the 'veiling' of a sacrificial victim simply sets that which is consecrated aside in preparation for their incorporation into the realm of the dead. Veiling during such periods of transition both displays the liminality of the participant and also protects her during this period of uncertainty.

Whether a woman was veiled or not depended greatly upon the point that she had reached in her life cycle and what rites of passage she had undergone. Many veiling societies highlight progression through the various stages of female life by means of the veil. South African Muslims do not veil very young girls but as they grow older and participate more in social life veiling becomes more usual up to the point at which menarche is reached and veiling becomes mandatory. This practice effectively mirrors the girl's progress towards sexual maturity, both highlighting and concealing her increased sexual availability. Figure 11, showing four generations of Iraqi women, displays the variation of extremes in veiling found in various states of sexual maturity. The youngest girl goes completely unveiled while her elder sister, to her right, wears a

²⁶ Van Gennep 1977: 166.

temporary veil that covers only her head. The next figure to the right is the eldest of the women and her face is entirely shadowed by her veil. The woman who wears the face-veil is a prospective bride and her total veiling highlights her sexual maturity even while it emphasises her social invisibility.²⁷ Young girls are unveiled because they are effectively sexless, an ideology which was reflected in the dress of Roman girls. That Roman girls were unveiled prior to marriage is attested to in numerous sources. Ovid, for example, describes the virginal Daphne and remarks how ‘a *vitta* bound her hair that was unrestrained by any order’, *vitta coercebat positos sine lege capillos* (*Met.* 1.477). Here Daphne’s state of extended childhood is reflected by the fact that she does not veil her head or bind her hair with the six *vittae* that signify a married woman.

While Ovid’s Daphne is noticeable more for what she does than for what she wears, Roman girls, besides having their heads uncovered, wore clothing which at a later point in life would have advertised them as prostitutes or adulteresses. Cicero, in the *De haruspicum responsis*, shows us in typically superlative style how unacceptable transvestism was to the ancient Romans by corresponding the wearing of woman’s clothes by P. Clodius Pulcher with an act of gross immorality.²⁸ Yet this practice is only corrupt in Clodius’ case because he has reached sexual maturity, while before puberty it was usual for children of both sexes to be dressed in the same clothing and both boys and girls wore the *toga praetexta*. This practice appears to have ancient origins which are attested to by the fact that the original wedding ceremony of *confarreatio* required toga-clad children of both sexes to escort the bride to her husband’s house. This homogenous dress for boys and girls appears to have fallen out of fashion towards the end of the republic. Our most numerous depictions of it come from the time of the Principate²⁹ and it would seem that Augustus sought to revive this practice in the same way that he promoted the veil. Being made of wool, the *toga praetexta* reflects both sexual and religious purity. Although wool was by far the most common material for Roman garments it was nevertheless endowed with apotropaic and ritual significance.

²⁷ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 216

²⁸ (*Har. Resp.* 43-44) Although Cicero, as is usual in Roman rhetoric, is quite likely exaggerating the moral outrage of this action, the fact that he does so suggests that the connection between immorality and transvestism would have been available to his audience.

²⁹ For example, the young girl on the north side of the *Ara Pacis* wears a toga.

The *praetexta* garments of priests and magistrates, who performed religious rites such as taking the auspices, had to be made of wool, a substance which was also used in purification rites such as those of the Luperi.³⁰

While a boy ceased to wear his *toga praetexta* at puberty, when he put on the white *toga virilis*, the evidence suggests that girls put off their togas only when they were wed. Propertius, writing ‘later on, when the (toga) *praetexta* yielded to the marriage torches and another *vitta* bound my caught-up hair’ (4.11.33-34), attests to the fact that any change in a woman’s sexual status is reflected primarily through a change in her costume and especially in the adornment of her hair and head. Propertius’ statement seems to imply that upon reaching puberty girls were immediately wed yet this cannot always have held true. Indeed, while girls of the elite classes seemed to have been wed during their early teens, the daughters of the less-privileged seemingly married at about eighteen years of age.³¹ What then would unmarried girls who were also sexually mature wear? From Horace’s quotation (*Sat.* 1.2.63) we may assume that, like a respectable matron, a girl of higher social status of marriageable age would not, unlike the *ancilla*, wear the toga of the young child. We may assume that after a certain age, even if the girl was not married, the toga was no longer appropriate and became the mark of a prostitute. Plautus depicts Selenium as wearing an *amiculum* despite the fact that she is unmarried (*Plaut. Cist.* 114). Ancient Greek inscriptions attest to the practice of offering up the clothing of young women to Artemis at the time of their first menstruation in order to bring them under the virgin goddess’ protection.³² This sartorial sacrifice implies not only a change in sexual status, but also a change in dress. Arnobius offers us evidence for a similar practice amongst the Romans when he writes of how later Romans have deserted the customs of old and asks of them ‘do you offer up the little togas of girls to Fortuna Virginalis?’, *puellarum togulas Fortunam defertis ad Virginalem?* (*Adv. nat.* 2.67). This ceremony of dedication was similar to a boy’s dedication of his toga to the household Lar. The sources are unclear as to what a girl in the process of sexual maturation would wear but one garment is mentioned by Nonius which would possibly

³⁰ Sebesta 1994: 47.

³¹ For an extended version of this argument cf. Hopkins 1965; Shaw 1987.

³² Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 218.

have been put on after the toga had been put aside. He writes of the *strophium* which is 'a short sash which binds the swelling of a girl's breasts', *strophium est fascea* (sic) *brevis quae virginalem horrorem cohibet papillarum* (Non. 863. L).

Whatever the case may be, the transition to full sexual maturity occurred in marriage, a ceremony in which the bride was ritually veiled as a symbol of her now active sexuality. After this important act of veiling her public modesty would become mandatory. The *flammeum*, which was the colour of a flame, was associated with the hearth of the bride's new home, which she was expected to tend in her role of *custos domi*.³³ The colour of the veil associated the bride who wore it with the goddess Vesta, the personification of the hearth flame. This association brought with it implications of fertility as well as chastity.³⁴ The concept of fertility as associated with the hearth fire is attested to in various myths. For example, while Servius Tullius owed his parentage to a phallus that came out of the hearth, fire was for Dionysius of Halicarnassus the purest of divine things and thus fire was given to virgins because they, like the fire, are pure, ὅτι πῦρ μὲν ἀμίαντον, παρθένος δ' ἄφθαρτον, τῷ δ' ἀγνοτάτῳ τῶν θείων τὸ καθαρώτατον τῶν θνητῶν φίλον (*Ant. Rom.* 2.66.2). The *flammeum* thereby associates the bride with the iconic *matrona*, Vesta, who is, like fire, both *casta* and *mater*. The unveiling of the bride upon reaching the inner sanctum (the bedroom) of her new home was a prelude to sexual contact and is supported by the ancient idea that the *veil* is symbolic of the hymen. The Christian bishop Tertullian, writing long after Augustus, insists that virgins should be veiled because it is only right that one should 'impose a veil on the outside on her who has a covering on the inside', *Impone velamen extrinsecus habenti tegumen intrinsecus* (*De virg. vel.* 12.1). The removal of the *flammeum* is therefore done in anticipation of the removal of the hymen. Tertullian insists that not only should the head of women be concealed but that they should 'wear a veil from head to loins', *ad lumbos a capite reveleris* (*De virg. vel.* 17.4). The long external veil therefore provides protection to her chastity and the veil of a *matrona* served as a guarantor of her chastity.

³³ For the full significance of this veil see Chapter 4.

³⁴ For the paradoxical nature of this association see Beard 1980: 24.

Depending on the context in which it is used, the veil may serve as a tool by which both men and women may comment on their social status. The practice of occasional veiling amongst men indicates a degree of hesitance and unease (thus also subservience) in interaction with either the gods or other men while the habitual veiling of women indicates a perpetual condition of deference to their male relatives. In this case the veil serves as a barrier of protection to her potentially destructive sexuality and shelters her male kin from any attack upon the legitimacy of their offspring. Therefore the use of the veil by a woman indicates her status of sexual maturity and serves to ensure the productive use thereof.

In conducting a study of the veil a number of factors will have to be closely examined. Most importantly it will have to be established that there did indeed exist a culture of veiling in Rome. Attention will be paid to the manner in which Augustus used the veil as one symbol of a matrix of phenomena that were intended to indicate a return to that old time morality and in doing so the reasons for the veil being so appropriate a tool for the conveyance of this message will be interrogated.

CHAPTER 4

DEFINING THE VEIL

Roman veiling is part of a tradition that is ubiquitous in the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean and Near East. There is evidence for veiling amongst the Sumerians, the Hittites, Neo-Hittites, Hebrews, Persians and Assyrians.¹ The earliest mention of obligatory veiling for women is found in Babylonian law codes that prescribe which classes of women are to be veiled when going out in public.² More complete are the Assyrian records, dating from between 1450 and 1250 BCE, which go into great detail about which women may veil and which may not.³ The laws differentiate on grounds of class (noble women as opposed to concubines and servants), sexual integrity (respectable widows, married women and their daughters versus prostitutes) and citizenship (Assyrian versus foreign captives). Law XL from the Assyrian Code is as follows:

‘Neither wives of Lords nor widows nor Assyrian women who go out onto the streets may have their heads uncovered...The daughters of a lord...whether it is <with> a shawl, robe or mantle, must veil themselves...When they go out onto the streets alone, they must veil themselves. A concubine who goes out on the street with her mistress must veil herself...A prostitute...must have her head uncovered on the street; she must not veil herself. Her head must be uncovered.’⁴

This law not only distinguishes between who may wear the veil and who may not but also suggests in the mentions of various veil items that different groups of women would

¹ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 6.

² Brooks 1923: 188.

³ Driver and Miles 1935.

⁴ Driver and Miles 1935: 407-8.

cover themselves with different veils. In this legal code we begin to see the great significance that these cultures placed on veiling. This importance is expressed in the harshness of the penalties to be inflicted on those who either went about veiled when they should not, or who did not report such violations of veil law. The frequency of such laws in the areas surrounding the Mediterranean suggests that the cultures of the Classical world might have shared this custom of veiling or at the very least might have been influenced by it. While it is perhaps unwise to go so far as some have in suggesting that Classical civilisations were in fact colonies of the Near East⁵ it is vital that we recognise that these influences affected Roman society.

More immediate influences than these can be found in the cultures of the Etruscans and the Greeks. A number of the Latin names for veils that are examined below are taken directly from Greek. The word *mitra*, although incorporated into Latin with the adjective *mitratus* and the diminutive *mitella*, comes undiluted from the Greek noun *μίτρα*, which is likewise used to denote a Lydian or Phrygian turban. A subtler and more completely assimilated example of the Greek influence on Roman veiling can be seen in the Latin noun *calautica* (veil) which can be plausibly linked with the Greek word *καλυπτήρ*, *καλύπτρα*.⁶ Llewellyn-Jones identifies *καλυπτήρ* as one of the three central Greek veil words, being a 'standard form of the veil that might have covered much of the body'.⁷ Of course not all Latin words for veils are taken from Greek but some do become associated with Greek terms. For instance the *ricinium*, which is completely Roman in origin, is later associated with and takes on a name derived from the Greek *μαφόρ(τ)ιον*.⁸ These examples would suggest that at least some Roman veils shared certain characteristics with Greek ones. It is plausible that the *calautica* was an adaptation of the Greek *καλυπτήρ* and that the *ricinium* bore a resemblance, whether in application or appearance, to the *μαφόρ(τ)ιον*.

⁵ Whitley 1991.

⁶ Walde and Hofmann 1938: s. v. '*calautica*'.

⁷ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 32.

⁸ Cf. 'a *ricinium*, which is now called a *mafurtium*' *ricinium, quod nunc mafurtium dicitur* (Non. 869. L).

When assessing the influence that Etruscan veils might have had on the later Roman tradition we must bear in mind that, although Latin literature occasionally gives us a clue about Etruscan matters such as the development of some initially Etruscan forms of dress, we are still dealing with two distinct cultures.⁹ That said, the earliest garments of the Romans seem to have been taken from Etruscan prototypes and in some cases endured until the late imperial period. The most notable of these is the toga, which was a development of the rounded all purpose cloak: the Etruscan *tebenna*.

The names of most female garments have been lost but, on the basis of later depictions thereof, we are able to recognise the trend towards veiling evident in the Roman period. The earliest of these items to be found, appearing in the seventh century, is what Larissa Bonfante has termed a ‘raincoat’ mantle.¹⁰ The ‘raincoat’ veil covers most of the body as well as the head, leaving only the arms, feet and face exposed (Figure 12). The majority of the depictions of women dating from the seventh century show them wearing this garment, suggesting that it was the dominant form of female dress. In the sixth century a new type of veil, closely resembling the Roman *palla*, gained prominence. This veil appears to have been less tailored than earlier examples, being a large piece of cloth, often decorated with designs around the edges (Figure 13), which was pulled over the head and not secured in place (Figures 12 and 13).

Considering the context in which Roman society developed, it would be very surprising to discover that it was not a veiling culture. Yet, despite the plenitude of textual evidence that survives, many scholars are convinced of the relative liberation of Roman women as compared to their Greek counterparts—supposing that women such as Poppaea Sabina would not have veiled themselves. However the evidence suggests that this is not the case. Plutarch tells us explicitly that in Rome ‘it is more usual for women to go out in public with their heads veiled and for men to go with their heads uncovered’
συνηθέστερον δὲ ταῖς μὲν γυναῖξιν ἐγκεκαλυμμέναις, τοῖς δ’ ἀνδράσιν

⁹ Bonfante 1971: 277.

¹⁰ Bonfante 1975: 46. This seems a strangely anachronistic term that perhaps displays a reluctance to acknowledge veiling, especially since the Etruscans are traditionally associated with sexual egalitarianism. For this reason I will refer to it as a ‘raincoat veil’.

ἀκαλύπτοις εἰς τὸ δημόσιον προῖεναι (Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267).¹¹ Indeed the very proliferation of words for veils and veiling indicate to us that this was an important issue amongst the Romans. As with Eskimos and snow, the more one sees of a specific phenomenon the more likely one is to have many names for the subtle variations thereof. For this reason amongst the cultures of the Arab world there is no single word that means ‘veil’ and each type of veil has its own specialized lexis with every minute variation being accounted for.¹² Often what English speakers might generally call a ‘veil’ has various component parts and each part has its own name.

In his study of the headdresses of Maltese women, Dionisius Agius noted that veils can be defined by various criteria.¹³ They can be identified according to the fabric from which they are made, their colour, the pattern with which they are decorated, their draping, how they are constructed, the type of person who wears them and the setting in which they are worn. The same holds true in the case of ancient Rome where only certain priests and priestess used some veils and the use of others was dictated by context, social position, marital status and age. Amongst the Romans, however, acts of veiling were not only denoted by mentions of specific names of veils but we are also often alerted to them by the use of certain phrases such as the use of a verb for covering that takes nouns such as *caput* as its object.

This is not unique to Latin but seems to be a habit in veiling cultures. When the text of the Koran mentions veiling it is likely in most instances that greater emphasis be placed on what is to be ‘covered’ than what it is to be covered with.¹⁴ The Greek habit is even more pronounced, the best known example of this being in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians when he demands of a woman ‘let her be covered’ (1 Corinthians 11.6), but

¹¹ There are some problems regarding this statement of Plutarch’s and these will be discussed at a later point (Chapter 6). However, this is still a sound example of the ancient discussion of the veiling of Roman women.

¹² The nearest thing to a general veiling term is the word *hijab*. However *hijab* does not only suggest veiling but suggest acts of screening and partitioning as well as certain spiritual institutions such as the sacred separation or divide between two worlds or spaces. The same word is also used to describe the protective amulet that children wear, the approximate equivalent of the Roman *bulla*.

¹³ Agius 1997: 107-26.

¹⁴ E. g. ‘tell the believing women to lower their gaze and conceal their genitals.... and to draw their veil (*khimar*) over their bosoms’ (Koran 24. 31 trans. Irving, T.B.).

does not explicitly state that it should be a veil with which she is covered. The same holds true in secular texts. We saw in Plutarch (*Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267) that no specific veil was mentioned and there are scores of examples where κάλυμμα or a cognate veil word is lacking, and occasionally even the noun κεφαλή is missing with it simply being assumed that the reader would understand.¹⁵ Therefore when we attempt to develop some sort of typology for Roman veils we have to include these set phrases and attempt to categorize their usages. The comparative paucity of examples of definite ‘veil words’ when compared to the instances of these ‘veil phrases’ would suggest that the latter, like the veils themselves, had specific textual applications.

The majority of the available veil words come to us through the works of ancient lexicographers. Writers such as Varro (and Verrius Flaccus whose work he abridged) show an active interest in veiling. Although lexicographers go some way in helping us to define some aspects of veil words, their works are generally inadequate in helping us to understand what these veils looked like. As is evident from Appendix 1, we are often confounded by statements such as ‘a *rica* is what we call a *sudarium*’ *rica est sudarium dicimus* (Non. 865 L) with no explanation of either term. This problem is further compounded by the fact that even when we are offered more detailed descriptions these only serve to describe what the items looked like or how they were used at the time of writing. Thus the *ricinium*, which Festus describes as entirely square and bordered with a purple band (Fest. 343 L), might at the time of Varro have been entirely different in appearance while still being known by the same name.¹⁶

This process is complicated by the fact that ancient clothing terminology was open to a larger degree of flexibility than is possible today.¹⁷ This flexibility is accounted for when we consider the nature of ancient clothing. Roman garments generally consisted of large pieces of cloth of basic shape that were draped on the body and held in place by pins and could therefore be adjusted and altered according to need. For example the word *pallium*

¹⁵ Cf. Plut. *Aet. Rom. Grae.* 267C; *Caes.* 739C-D; *Brut.* 991F; *Cic.* 885C.

¹⁶ This complication is less likely when dealing with ritual garments as they are often more symbolic and thus their appearance more formalized.

¹⁷ For this phenomenon in the Greek context see Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 25.

is used to describe many different garments and must therefore not be taken as indicating any specific item of clothing. It seems to have been a generic clothing term signifying a 'general covering garment'. Items of clothing could be used in non-sartorial contexts. For instance Propertius describes a *pallium* being used as a coverlet: 'then I complain that the *pallia* do not cover the whole bed' *tunc queror in toto non sidere pallia lecto* (4.3.31). Furthermore items that were generally used as clothes for the body could as need dictated be used as veils.¹⁸ For example, the images of Augustus fulfilling priestly roles depict the emperor with his toga pulled up over his head to serve as a veil (Figure 14). This convention, along with the preference for describing the action rather than the veil itself, often prevents us from being able to accurately ascertain which type of veil was being used. This is compounded by the fact that the Romans seem to have adapted these general covering items into many different and distinct veils. For instance many separate veils are defined by the lexicographers as constituting some sort of *pallium*.¹⁹ To cater for these realities, in many cases we shall have to interpret in which instances veiling is implied.

In order to achieve this we first need to identify what a veil is and what counts as veiling. In the process we shall have to examine what comparative veiling cultures include under this heading. The Arabic term *hijab* is often used as shorthand for the whole practice of veiling and includes the ideals of privacy, seclusion and separation. This word is also generally used to imply the type of dress that a woman who wears the veil might wear as well as the state of being veiled.²⁰ *Hijab* cannot however be used to describe the state of a woman who wears the appointed modest attire but does not cover her head. Consequently we are able to construe that *hijab*, or 'the state of modest dressing', does not simply refer to what we would understand the veil to be but to a whole sartorial system. This confusion arises from a misunderstanding of the way that veiling cultures define what veiling is. Arabic has various terms for veils that are worn on the head (such as *khimar*, *lithma* and *niqab*) but the language also has words for veils that conceal the body but not the head. These body-veils form part of the institution

¹⁸ Ov. *Fast.* 3.363; *Bucol. Eins.* 1.47.

¹⁹ For examples of this see Appendix 1.

²⁰ El Guindi 1999:69.

of *hijab* and, like the head-veils, are prescribed by Arabo-Islamic veiling codes.²¹ Amongst South African Muslims the most common of these body-veils is the *jilbab*, a long gown that is worn over other clothing. Yemeni women take this practice one step further. Here the outdoor veil, *sharshaf*, consists of three parts: a long pleated skirt that is worn over the dress beneath, a waist length cape covering the head and shoulders and a transparent face-veil.²² It is therefore apparent that the institution of veiling is not simply the covering of the head but also includes the veiling of the body. It is therefore likely that within veiling cultures any ritualized feminine dress which denotes modesty and morality may form part of the matrix of which the head veil is but one part.

How are we then to decide which elements of a Roman woman's dress should be included under the term veil? Common to all sexually mature Roman women was their use of the *tunica* that, like the man's tunic, was worn beneath the other garments. It does not appear to have been a petticoat but rather a sort of 'house-dress' over which a respectable matron would wear a *palla* or other type of covering garment. This interpretation is supported by the many descriptions of women wearing only girl *tunicae* while at home or working about the house. Apuleius' Fotis does her cooking in her *tunica*, 'she was neatly dressed in a linen tunic' *ipsa linea tunica mundule amicta* (Apul. *Met.* 2.7.8), while Propertius' Cynthia has at least one decorative and lovely *tunica*: 'I was stupefied: she had never seemed more lovely to me, not even when she, in a purple tunic, went thither to tell her dreams to chaste Vesta' *obstipui: non illa mihi formosior umquam visa, neque ostrina cum fuit in tunica, ibat et hinc castae narratum somnia Vestae* (Prop. 2.29b.26). As we see the design of the women's tunic does not appear to have had a formalized pattern other than generally being long with a wide skirt. This 'under dress' is no more related to veiling than the clothing (in many cases fashionable Western dress) that a South African Muslim woman might wear under her *jilbab*.

We need instead to examine the garments which were more symbolic than the *tunica* and less susceptible to changes in fashion. One of these garments is the *stola*, which a

²¹'O prophet, tell your wives, daughters, and believing women to put on their *jilbabs* so that they are recognised and so thus (*sic*) not harmed' (Koran 33.59 trans. Irving, T.B).

²² El Guindi 1999:103.

Roman matron wore over her tunic. This was a long sleeveless garment with narrow straps over the shoulders.²³ The *stola*, like the *jilbab*, was a symbol of sexual morality. Ovid demonstrates this when suggesting that his poetry is inappropriate for the ears of chaste women: ‘Be far away, signs of modesty, you thin *vittae*, and you the long dress with its straps, which covers the arch of the feet’ *este procul, vittae tenues, insigne pudoris, / quaeque tegis medios, instita longa, pedes* (Ov. *Ars am.* 1.31-32).²⁴ The *stola* is not simply a symbol which conveyed the chastity of the married woman but also protected her from undue sexual attention.²⁵

The combined force of the veil and the *stola*, being the typical dress of the *matrona*, defends her against harassment. We see this protection codified by Ulpian in a law dealing with actions of insult that states that

‘if someone importunes young women, if they are dressed in the clothing of a slave girl, the action is deemed less offensive: and much less so if the women are in prostitutes’ dress as opposed to the matron’s clothing’
si quis virgines appellasset, si tamen ancillari veste vestitas, minus peccare uidetur: multo minus, si meretricia veste feminae, non matrum familiarum vestitae fuissent (*Digest.* 47.10.15).

Veils are particularly useful in identifying honest women and distinguishing them from women who are open to sexual advance. For example a law was passed in Arles and Avignon in the fourteenth century that made it illegal for prostitutes to wear veils as they were deemed the dress of honest women.²⁶ Some feminist scholars have noticed a similar phenomenon in contemporary Arab society where an unveiled woman who is accosted on the street is often chided for her dress even by those who intervene on her

²³ Cf. ‘those whose toes a flounced garment covers’ *illas / quarum subsuta talos tegat instita veste* (Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.28-29.). There has been much debate over whether the *institae* were straps that went over the shoulders or flounced bands sown onto the lower half of the dress. All of the artistic evidence supports Bieber’s argument (1931: 56-62) for the prior as there are many depictions of the straps of the *stola* but none of this supposed flounce.

²⁴ The *stola* is often referred to as the ‘long dress’, cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.13-14.

²⁵ Cf. Zanker 1998: 165.

²⁶ McGinn 1998: 209.

behalf.²⁷ However this is not so when the woman is veiled as in these cases a woman's sense of 'untouchability' seems to be far greater and she is more likely to object overtly to such advances. In addition to this, men who witness veiled women being harassed are more likely to confront the man pestering her with accusations of impiety and shamelessness than to berate her. The protection offered by the veil and general modest dress forms part of *hijab* and we should perhaps begin to consider that the *stola* along with the veil might have formed a comparable matrix in the Roman mind. Therefore, while we might concede that the *stola* is not strictly a veil, we will have to consider that it is not altogether separate from it either. The *stola* and the veil are interconnected and form part of a larger socio-cultural institution.

As was demonstrated in Ovid *Ars Am.* 1.31-32, the *vittae* were also considered to be signifiers of matronly virtue. These woollen bands were worn by any woman whose sexuality was a matter of either private or public import. The *vittae* were worn by brides, Vestal virgins, *matronae* and *matres familiarum* and in all these cases served as signifiers of sexual containment.²⁸ These *vittae* were so distinctive of these classes of women that they were able to serve as metaphors for the state that they denoted. For example, Ovid writes of the 'honour of the *vitta*' *vittae honore* (Ov. *Ars am.* 3.485) when discussing the state of matrimony and when a character in Plautine comedy needs to be disguised as a matron it is suggested that she be dressed 'in the manner of matrons, with her hair arranged, and tresses and *vittae* and let her pretend to be your wife' *ex matronarum modo, capite compto, crinis vittasque habeat, adsimuletque se tuam esse uxorem* (Mil. 796).²⁹ These *vittae* appear to have been worn in a slightly different way by brides and Vestals when compared to the style in which married women wore them. In both instances they were made of wool and hung down in loops from the head of the wearer. Their use by matrons appears to have been an issue of senatorial decree in the fifth century,³⁰ which Sensi interprets as compelling the matrimonial link to become

²⁷ Abu Odeh 1993: 29.

²⁸ The hair of freeborn girls was also bound with a single *vitta*, a practice that was related to their mothers' use of the *vittae* for protective purposes but not exactly equivalent

²⁹ Cf. Sebesta 1994: 49.

³⁰ *vetustisque aurium insignibus novum vittae discrimen adiecit* (Val. Max. 5.2.1).

visible.³¹ Varro attests to this practice (*Ling.* 5.61) when he comments on the importance of the binding of the head and hair in the marriage ceremony.

It was especially important that this binding was done with wool. The Romans generally used woollen bands to mark out things that were ritually pure or in some way connected to the gods;³² the lintel of a bride's new home was decked with fillets of wool, as were the heads of Vestals, sacrificial animals and altars. Presumably this quality of purity and sacrosanctity transferred itself onto the head of the matron, bride, vestal or *puella ingenua* who wore the *vittae*. It is plausible that the purity that the *vittae* denoted was sexual purity as the sexual status of the above-mentioned women would have been of specific import to their male affines and to the integrity of the state. If this is the case then the protection of the head and hair offered by the *vittae* mirrors the general protection afforded by the veil. Myerowitz Levine has noted how sexual activity is often mapped onto the hair that is not only a *locus eroticus* but also the locus of the social attitudes towards the sexualized body.³³ Therefore the hair is not only covered by the veil but as a metonym for the genitals is bound and constrained by the purifying woollen *vittae*. The binding of the hair is not in itself an example of veiling but is inextricably linked to the reasons for the latter practice. For this reason the *vittae* will form part of our examination of the general custom.

Another item of dress that shares many qualities with the *vittae* is the *infula*. Like the *vittae* the *infula* is made of wool and is used to bind the hair. Servius describes the *infula* as a type of diadem from which red and white ribbons hung: 'an *infula* is a band like a diadem from which ribbons hang down on all sides: most of which are broad, most of which are twisted with white and red' *infula fascia in modum diadematis, a qua vittae ab utraque parte dependent: quae plerumque lata est, plerumque tortilis de albo et cocco* (Serv. *Aen.* 10.538), an interpretation supported by Isidore: 'however an *infula* is for the most part broad, mostly twisted with white and red' *infula autem plerumque lata*

³¹ Sensi 1980-81: 60.

³² Sebesta 1994: 48.

³³ Myerowitz Levine 1995: 76-130. This shifting of action from one part of the body to another was discussed in greater detail when we examined the cultural motivation for veiling in Chapter 2.

erat, plerumque tortilis, de albo et cocco (*Etym.* 19.30.4). The use of the *infula*, unlike the *vittae*, is generally restricted to a ritualistic or sacerdotal context. *Infulae* are worn by sacrificial victims, priests and asylum seekers and, like the *vittae*, have protective properties as described by Seneca who believed that one ‘must take refuge in philosophy; this activity is seen as an *infula*, not only by the good, but also by those who are somewhat bad’ *ad philosophiam ergo confugiendum est; hae litterae, non dico apud bonos sed apud mediocriter malos infularum loco sunt* (*Sen. Ep.* 14.11.2-3). The *infula* was a fillet of white wool that was coiled around the head at least five times, the ends of which fell to the shoulders in long loops (*vittae*).³⁴

These coils have been the subject of some controversy with some scholars arguing that they are symbolic of the *seni crines* of brides.³⁵ This argument is reliant on the idea that Vestals would not themselves have had hair which could be plaited in the same way as that of the bride so we must address the debate surrounding the nature of the *seni crines*. A quote from Festus states very definitely that the hairstyles of brides and Vestals resembled each other: ‘Brides are adorned with the *seni crines* because this is the oldest fashion. Vestal virgins wear the same style, <since this style ensures brides’?> fidelity to their husbands’ *senis crinibus nubentes ornantur, quod [h]is ornatus vetustissima fuit. Quidam quod eo Vestales virgines ornentur quarum castitatem viris suis* (*Fest.* 454 L). Although this text is problematic two things are evident: that the *seni crines* denoted chastity and that brides and Vestals wore this hairstyle. In the case of a bride this hairstyle is generally thought to constitute six plaits, perhaps arranged on top of her head, but this cannot have been true in the case of the Vestals. There are a number of depictions of Vestals in which the priestesses are shown with closely cropped hair. As we see in Figure 15, the locks that escape from beneath these priestesses’ *infulae* have not merely come loose from a more elaborate hairstyle but are quite clearly cut short,³⁶ and ancient sources describe Vestals dedicating their newly cut tresses by hanging them on what Festus calls the hairy tree: ‘the tree on which the cut hair is hung was called the

³⁴ La Follette 1994: 57.

³⁵ For the contrasting argument see Dragendorff 1892: 281-302.

³⁶ There are many depictions of Vestals wearing their hair long; however these images are more reflective of the contemporary artistic styles than of reality. The sculptures that portray longhaired Vestals assimilate them with the important women of the day. La Follette 1994: 57.

capillatam or the *capillarem*’ *capillatam vel capillarem arborem dicebant, in qua capillum tonsum suspendebant* (50 L).³⁷ The Vestals would not have had enough hair to form the elaborate bridal coiffure so the similarity in styles observed by Festus could only be achieved by *infulae* taking the place of actual hair. Both the *seni crines* and the woollen fillets serve the purposes of shielding and containing that are also characteristic of veils and words like *infulae* are often used in an instrumental sense alongside verbs like *velare*. Livy goes so far as to describe a fillet that is worn by an envoy as ‘a woollen veil’ *capite velato filo lanae velamen est* (1.32.6).³⁸ The protection offered by the veil to the head of a bride or Vestal is mirrored by that of the hair-bindings that she wears beneath it.

There is one more style of adornment that shares certain qualities with a Roman woman’s veil. The *tutulus* was the hairstyle of the *mater familias* and the *Flaminica Dialis* and appears to date from the late sixth and early fifth centuries, a time of Etruscan domination.³⁹ This hairstyle was perhaps achieved by dividing the hair into sections and then arranging these sections atop the head thus forming a conical bun that sat on the crown of the head. Festus describes how this coiffure was then bound fast with ‘a red/purple *vitta*’, *quod fiat vitta purpurea innexa crinibus* (484 L). These *vittae* served the same purpose as those belonging to the matron but it is not their protective quality that interests us so much as that of the entire hairstyle. The conical shape of this hairstyle is equated to a boundary stone;⁴⁰ a resemblance that Sebesta notes is not accidental as these *metae* had sacred and protective qualities. Varro confirms this protective quality of the *tutulus* when he attempts to explain its etymology in terms of guarding and safety. He suggests that the name comes either from *tueri* (to protect) or from *tutissimum* (safest), ‘they were called *tutuli* either because they were for the protection of the hair, or because that which is the highest in the city, the citadel, was called the safest’ *dicebantur tutuli, sive ab eo quod id tuendi causa capilli fiebat, sive ab eo quod altissimum in urbe quod est, arx, tutissimum vocatur* (Varro. *Ling.* 7.44.7-8).

³⁷ Cf. Plin. *HN.* 16.235.

³⁸ Cf. Liv. 24.16.18.

³⁹ Sensi 1980-81: 61-64; Sebesta in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 49.

⁴⁰ Varro. *Ling.* 7.44.5.

As we have seen above, elaborate hairstyles and adornments often serve as defences for the hair, but what has so far not yet been touched on is the chance that they might serve a general protective purpose. Varro links the protection offered by the binding of the hair to the protection of the city and its most sacred precincts. This association of the female head and what covers it with the protection of the city and social group is central to the issue of veiling. Issues surrounding the proper use of feminine sexuality are central in Roman thinking with regard to the integrity of the state.⁴¹ Periods of national crisis were often explained as being caused by the laxity of women's sexual morality.⁴² Therefore anything that protects that morality is beneficial to the state. This idea is clearly illustrated by the practice of representing personifications of cities as wearing a crown resembling the walls of their city. For example the personification of the town of Salona, seen in Figure 16, wears the battlements on her head thus protecting herself and by extension the city. In the same way the *tutulus* safeguards this powerful sexual potential by confining that which is the metonymic locus of a woman's sexual power: her hair.

The *vittae*, the *infulae* and the *tutulus*, while not strictly speaking constituting veils, demonstrate certain qualities that allow us to interpret them in a similar way to how we shall interpret the veil. But before we begin to analyse those nouns that indicate certain varieties of veils we first need to examine those instances where these words are not used but the action of veiling is still understood.

Heinrich Freier has identified the seven most common terms that indicate veiling in his doctoral thesis. By far the most frequent of these, with fifty-seven occurrences in Latin literature,⁴³ is the noun epithet (with the epithet being either the infinitive or particle form) *caput velare*. In thirty-four of these cases this phrase is in the ablative singular, *capite velato*, but in only two of these instances is there any elaboration on this. Livy describes an envoy making an entreaty with his 'head veiled with a fillet' *capite velato*

⁴¹ Joshel 1995: 68

⁴² For example, Vestals are most often accused of breaking their vows of chastity in times of crisis, such as the Punic Wars, when the state appears to be under threat. Cf. Staples 1998:138.

⁴³ Freier 1963: 34.

filo (Liv. 1.32.6)⁴⁴ and Quintilian relates the story of the ridiculous antics of an orator when he partially veiled his head to feign fear in court, *capite ex parte uelato* (Quint. *Inst.* 6.1.48). This would seemingly indicate that the Romans effortlessly understood what was meant in the other instances. The phrase is more readily qualified with mention of an instrument of veiling when not used in the ablative⁴⁵ but in many of these cases the phrase is qualified because the means of veiling is unusual, for example the use of bay leaves for veiling: ‘the prophets ordered them to veil with green bay leaves’ *viridi lauro velare imperant prophetae* (Fest 254 L).

The phrase *caput velare* is generally used in liturgical settings and indicates sacrifice and prayer, dedication or the expression of devotion to a deity.⁴⁶ This is not immediately clear in some of the available examples. For example Velleius Paterculus’ discussion of the death of Scipio in which he writes that Scipio’s ‘body was carried out with the head veiled’ *corpus velato capite elatum est* (2.4.6) or when Suetonius notes how Lucius Vitellius, the father of the emperor Vitellius, ‘did not otherwise dare to approach the emperor than with a veiled head’ *non aliter adire ausus esset quam capite velato* (*Vit.* 2.5). Outside of a devotional setting *caput velare* is used when slaves are manumitted, upon entering the underworld, when addressing an emperor and during the foundation of cities. Upon closer assessment we see that while these examples are not strictly liturgical, they are afforded a greater sense of religiosity by the use of *caput velare*. Thus Lucius Vitellius veils in front of the emperor to show the respect normally afforded to a god: an action entirely fitting within the context of the emperor cult. According to Freier’s definition the particularity of the examples and the fact that the term is only qualified when an unusual item is used as the instrument of veiling shows that *caput velare* is the term for ‘ritual veiling’, a term (and action) which it would not have been necessary to further explain to a Roman audience.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Livy perhaps explains so carefully what the envoys veiled with because in mentioning the fillet he departs from the usual *caput velare* construction (discussed below) that does not specify the means of veiling. This does not therefore imply that the veiling of envoys was unusual but merely that Livy used an unusual construction to describe it.

⁴⁵ Serv. *Aen.* 5.755.3; 8.276; 11.77; Fest. 229. M. ; Verg. *Aen.* 3.545; Liv. 24.16.18; Ov. *Fast.* 3.363; *Bucol. Eins.* 1.45-47; Sen. *Ag.* 583; Sen. *Herc. Fur.* 355; *Oct.* 702.

⁴⁶ Freier 1963: 35.

⁴⁷ Freier 1963: 35.

While *caput velare* is by far the most common of the phrases indicating veiling, there are several more and each is used in a slightly different context. The verb *operire*, to cover or conceal, is used almost exclusively in conjunction with the noun *caput* when describing veiling. This phrase is used by Plautus as a replacement for *caput velare*. For example, in *Amphitruo* he describes how ‘women in childbirth are accustomed to call on the immortal gods with clean hands and a veiled head to bring them aid’ *solent puerperae invocat deos immortales, ut sibi auxilium ferant, manibus puris, capite operto* (*Amph.* 1093-4). While we may suspect a slightly ironic tone on Plautus’ behalf the devotional setting is still clear. While *caput operire* may carry some of the same weight of *caput velare* it is as often used to designate devotion as it is to denote murder or suicide,⁴⁸ a usage which may be reminiscent of the use of *caput velare* at moments of death. The compound *adoperire* is used in exactly the same way as *operire*. Festus uses *velare* to designate the habit of the Italians of his time and explains this habit as being based on Aeneas’ veiling, an action which Festus uses *adoperire* to describe. He writes:

‘for the Italians veil their heads after Aeneas’ example, because, when he was praying to his mother Venus on the shore of the Latin territory, lest, having been recognised by Ulixes, he disrupt the sacrifice, he veiled his head, and in this way he escaped the notice of the enemy’

nam Italici auctore Aenea velant capita, quod is, cum rem divinam faceret in litore Laurentis agri Veneri matri, ne ab Ulixo cognitus interrumperet sacrificium, caput adoperuit, atque ita conspectum hostis evitavit (Fest. 432 L).

The inverse of *caput operire* is *caput aperire*: to uncover the head. Just as the previously mentioned noun epithets were used to describe the way in which Romans covered their heads in religious settings so *aperire* describes the Greek practice. Scholars have noted a fundamental difference between Greek and Roman sartorial ideologies. The Roman psyche had an obsession with the notion of proper symbolic dress for both sacred and secular occasions while Greek clothes were characteristically either utilitarian or

⁴⁸ Freier 1963: 36.

ornamental.⁴⁹ Thus to describe the opposite of the Roman practice of religious veiling the opposite word is used and so even though *aperire* is the inverse of *operire* it still carries some liturgical connotation.

Caput obnubere, ‘to veil the head’, is occasionally used in poetry for veiling during sacrifice but never in prose. Instead its most common usage is to denote the veiling of the bride during the marriage ceremony. *Obnubere* is a compound of *nubere*: to veil or to be married. Therefore *obnubere* not only denotes veiling but also denotes the marriage itself and so explains the frequency with which this phrase appears in connection with marriage. Freier notes that verbs such as *involvere* and *obvolvere* tend to be used when encountering death or the dead⁵⁰ but there are a number of other verbs (that occur too rarely to be able to draw any meaningful conclusions as regards their usage) that may be used to indicate veiling when combined with *caput*.⁵¹ Furthermore the subject of all of the verbs that we have discussed need not be *caput* but when used in poetry they may take objects such as *os* (mouth or face), *tempora* (the temples), *coma* (hair), *vultus* (face) or *vertex* (neck).

Phrases such as these, which are comprised of a verb of covering and a noun designating some part of the head, are generally used when some sort of ritual action is being discussed. For this reason *caput velare* and the like are used more often to describe male veiling than would at first seem reasonable in a context in which women most often veiled. However I shall not ignore the use of the veil by men because the masculine adoption of a feminine custom seems to distil the most essential characteristics of the more common practice. This allows us to understand why men cover themselves at specific times while women do so all of the time. Unfortunately even when women are discussed these phrases seldom tell us anything about what the subject uses to veil and in order to get a better idea of this we will need to look at some nouns that signify the specific types of veils that women wore.

⁴⁹ Oster 1988: 493.

⁵⁰ Freier 1963: 38.

⁵¹ Specifically the verbs *obducere*, *tegere*, *circumdare*, *religare* and *induere*.

By far the most common of the veil words that we encounter is *palla*. This is such a common word for a veil that it has seldom been understood as such. Indeed, although Isidore clearly defines a *palla* as ‘a four-sided pallium, a feminine garment’ *palla est quadrum pallium muliebris vestis* (19.25.2), some have curiously attempted to explain a *palla* as a type of tunic.⁵² Aiding in the confusion of these Classicists is the very adaptable nature of ancient dress: as we saw above many ancient garments were simply large unshaped pieces of clothing that were draped around the body.⁵³ Therefore the *palla* might not always have covered the head but might have occasionally been allowed to hang loose about the neck. More typical are descriptions that suggest that the *palla* was used to conceal women from sight. Horace describes how the *palla* with which women envelop themselves is one of the many things that obscure one’s view: ‘enveloped in a *palla*, a horde of things which begrudge you getting a clear view’ *circumdata palla, / plurima quae inuideant pure apparere tibi rem* (*Sat.* 1.2.99-100).

If we are to believe Plutarch’s statement (*Plut. Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267) that Roman women went about in public with their heads covered, then we may reasonably assume that it was the *palla* that was used. The *palla* is repeatedly described as being characteristic of an honourable woman of whom Horace writes that ‘you are able to discern nothing of a matron except her face’ *matronae praeter faciem nil cernere possis* (*Hor. Sat.* 1.2.94). The *palla* seems to have been a garment that was used primarily in public as Varro describes the *palla* as being one of the garments that is worn above (we may deduce that this means *above* the other clothes) and is openly visible.⁵⁴ Here Varro makes the public nature of the garment clear when he notes that of the word *palla* is derived from the term for ‘publicly’, *palam*:

‘of the things that go above, from which they are called “little items of clothing that go on top”, unless this is so because they say the same thing in Oscan. Of the

⁵² Becker 1886: 438.

⁵³ Cf. Wilson 1938: Plate 94. Although the veracity of reconstructions of how ancient garments might have been draped is doubtful we can use these to speculate as to their general dimensions.

⁵⁴ Cf. also Serv. *Aen.* 1.648. *significat autem tunicopallium, quod secundum Varronem palla dicta est ab inrugatione et mobilitate, quae est et circa finem huiusmodi vestium, ἀπὸ τοῦ πάλλειν.*

other sort there are two kinds and the first, because it is worn in public, is called the *palla*'

alterum quod supra, a quo supparus, nisi id quod item dicunt Osce. alterius generis item duo, unum quod foris ac palam, palla (Varro. *Ling.* 5.131).

From these three sources we are able to infer three things: firstly women veiled in public, secondly women were almost entirely concealed by their veils and thirdly the *palla* was clearly visible. The *palla* must therefore have been the veil that concealed women and was therefore, unlike the women themselves, visible to all.

As the general veil of Roman women, the size, quality and colour of the *palla* appears to have changed slightly according to fashion but its general appearance and usage seems to have remained the same. The overwhelming majority of artistic representations of this garment show it as falling to half way down the lower leg and were we to use only public statuary as our source for the appearance of the *palla* we would assume that it changed little over time. The image of the woman in Figure 17 dates from the republican period (second century) while the figures that wear *pallae* on the processional frieze of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Figure 9A) were sculpted in the period between 13 and 9 BCE but in both instances the *pallae* are of the same length with no discernible decoration. Our literary evidence makes it clear that this was not the case and so we should not accept Becker's claim that some 'articles of dress always remained the same (since) monuments of art reflect similarity in dress throughout ages'.⁵⁵ It is more accurate to attribute this uniformity in style to the proclivity for idealization in the case of Roman art. Thus images of clothes may remain unaffected while the clothes themselves are influenced by the changing fashions.

The *pallae* that we saw in Figures 17 and 9A were plain, unadorned with embroidery and apparently made of wool.⁵⁶ This was not generally the case and it seems that the *palla* could, like most items of dress, vary widely in terms of quality and magnificence.

⁵⁵ Becker 1886: 431.

⁵⁶ Wilson 1938: 149.

Many of the references to this garment suggest that it could often be an item of great value; Virgil describes how Aeneas brought with him from the ruins of Troy ‘a *palla* stiff with embroidery and gold’ *pallam signis auroque rigentem* (*Aen.* 1.648) and Statius writes of ‘a smooth pin of yellow jasper and gold fastened a Spartan *palla*’ *fibula rasilis auro Taenariam fulva mordebat iaspide pallam* (*Theb.* 7.658-9). When detailing the debate surrounding the repeal of the *Lex Oppia* in 195 BCE, Livy quotes Valerius who denounces men who wear purple and do not extend that same privilege to their wives:

‘and when you as a man are allowed to use purple for a covering garment, will you deny the mother of your family a purple dress, and will your horse’s blanket be more beautiful than your wife’s dress?’

et cum tibi viro liceat purpura in uestem stragulam uti, matrem familiae tuam purpureum amiculum habere non sines, et equus tuus speciosius instratus erit quam uxor uestita? (Livy. 34.7)

The eventual repeal of this law, despite the resistance offered by Cato the Elder, suggests that the opposition to it must have been great. It is plausible therefore that the right to wear purple, having been hard won, would have been enjoyed by those women who would have been able to afford this luxury. No matter the colour or style of the *palla*, it was (like the *stola*) defined by ancient writers such as Nonius as the dress ‘of an honourable woman’ *palla est honestae mulieris* (Non. 862 L) without which it was improper for them to appear in public.

The *palla* was not the only veil that a woman might wear but it does seem to be one of the few whose use was not prescribed by any circumstance other than being out in public. Likewise the *palla* appears to have had little constraint as regards who wore it except that she should be chaste and married. As we shall see, however, many of the Latin terms for the types of veils imply a context and specify the status of the women who wore these garments.

The *ricinium* is one such veil. This word is spelt by some as *recinium*⁵⁷ but this does not indicate that the veils in question are distinct as both spellings are defined by two different authors by the same term.⁵⁸ Nonius writes that a *ricinium* is that ‘which we now call a *mafurtium*’ *ricinium, quod nunc mafurtium dicitur* (Non. 869 L) and Servius makes their identical natures clear when he notes ‘however the person who is veiled with a *ricinium* is called *recinus*, from the fact that the *ricinium*, which is commonly called a *mafurtium*, is thrown back over the back’ *recinus autem dicitur ab eo, quod post tergum reicitur, quod vulgo maforte dicunt* (Serv. *Aen.* 1.282.3). In terms of appearance this veil is described by Nonius as being ‘a short female cloak’ *palliolum femineum breve* (Non. 869 L) and by Festus as being square and ‘bordered with a purple band’ *praetextam clavo purpureo* (432 L). Both Servius (*Aen.* 1.282.3) and Varro describe the *ricinium* as worn ‘thrown back’, either thrown over the back or with each end thrown over the other, *ab reiciendo ricinium dictum* (Varro. *Ling.* 5.132). However the *ricinium* is primarily understood as a head veil, hence Isidore’s statement that ‘it is over the head of a woman’ *inde et super caput mulieris est* (Isid. *Etym.* 19.25.4) and its association with the *maforte* (the Greek μαφόρτης).

From these descriptions it is difficult to imagine how the *ricinium* would have looked, other than being square and praetextate. In many instances the *ricinium* seems to be associated with funerals and mourning. Cicero, quoting from the Twelve Tables, assumes this connection when he notes how these laws limited the number of *ricinia* allowed at funerals to three:

‘for as boys we learnt the Twelve Tables as a necessary poem, which now no-one learns. Therefore, for restricting luxury to three *ricinia*, a small purple tunic, and ten flute players, it does away with an excess of lamentation: ‘therefore let women not tear their cheeks or wail at funerals.’

discebamus enim pueri XII ut carmen necessarium, quas iam nemo discit. Extenuato igitur sumptu tribus reciniis et tunica purpurea et decem tibicinibus,

⁵⁷ Cf. Cic. *Leg.* 2.59.6; Fest. 342 L; Varro. *Rust.* 3.17.1.3.

⁵⁸ Cf. Allen 1978: 51-52 for the effects of *r* on the vowel quality of *e* and *i*.

tollit <nimiam> lamentationem: 'mulieres genas ne radunto neve lessum funeris ergo habento' (Cic. Leg. 2.23.59).

Nonius quotes Varro's *De Vita Populi Romani* saying that 'as a result of which, women in adverse times and in mourning, when they then lay down all delicate garments and luxury that had later become fashionable, take up the *ricinium*' *ex quo mulieres in adversis rebus ac luctibus, cum omnem vestitum delictiorem ac luxuriosum postea institutum ponunt, ricinia sumunt* (Non. 869 L). From this evidence Sebesta has argued that the *ricinium* was, like the toga *pulla*, the mourning garment of men and was most likely made of dark coloured wool.⁵⁹ While the evidence for this claim might be insufficient for a definite conclusion we could supplement our understanding of the Roman item with evidence regarding its Greek counterpart (the μαφόρτης/μαφόρτιον), the most common colours of which seem to have been either black or white.⁶⁰ It does appear likely therefore that the *ricinium* may have had a darkish hue when used in the context of mourning. Seneca writes how 'the ancestors set down for women a year for mourning not in order that they mourn for that long, but that they not mourn for longer' *annum feminis ad lugendum constituere maiores, non ut tam diu lugerent, sed ne diutius* (*Ep.* 63.13) and we may conjecture that it was during this year that Roman women might have worn *ricinia*.

A garment seemingly related to the *ricinium* is the *rica* or the *ricula*. Wilson has used Nonius' statement that 'a *rica* is what we call a *sudarium*' *rica est sudarium dicimus* (Non. 856 L) as reason for interpreting the *rica* as kerchief, a word which (while it does imply covering) does not convey the full force of veiling. Nonius' interpretation of the *rica* is not in keeping with the evidence of the other ancient sources. It is doubtful whether Euclid's concealment of himself with a *rica* when he visited Socrates (described by Gellius to illustrate the dedication that some show to philosophical pursuits, in which he 'dressed in a long woman's tunic, wearing a colourful *pallium* and with his head

⁵⁹ Sebesta 1994: 50.

⁶⁰ CPR. Vol. 5. Doc. Vindob G39847.44.874-879. Πεκλόμ φρουρός μαφόρ(τιον) μελανόν Ἰῶνις Ἰσιδώρο[υ] μαφόρτι(ον) λευκόν Τατιανός Ἰσιδώρου κολόβιον λευκόν Μαρία Τιμαγένης μαφ[ό]ρ(τιον) λευκόν Θαρῆ Μουσῆτος μαφόρ(τιον) μελανόν; POxy. Vol. 1. Doc. 109.6. μαφόρτια λευκά 2.

veiled with a *rica*’ *tunica longa muliebri indutus et pallio versicolore amictus et caput rica uelatus* (Gel. *NA.* 7.10.4)) would have been effective had he used what we would interpret as a kerchief. The *rica* is mentioned often along with the verb *velare* and/or the noun *caput* making its interpretation as a veil the most accurate.⁶¹

The *rica*, or the diminutive *ricula*, is defined by Festus as ‘a small *ricinium* made like a little *pallium* that is used on the head’ *parva ricinia, ut palliola ad usum capitis facta* (Fest. 342 L). We should however not suppose that the correlation between the *pallium* and the *rica* means that they are identical garments as Gellius describes how Euclid wore both a *pallium* and a *rica*. However most *pallia* were four-sided, a fact that helps us to clarify a contradiction apparent in Festus’ description that asserts that the *rica* is square but also apparently tripartite. How this is the case is unclear but perhaps it was fastened to the head with other pieces of fabric that Titius interprets as being part of the *rica* in much the same way that modern Muslim women secure certain veils. Determining the colour of the *rica* is also problematic because there are three different descriptions of its hue. Festus writes that it is a ‘purple garment’ and then immediately quotes Granius who describes it as not only being made of ‘white wool’ but also being dyed a ‘blue colour’:

‘a *rica* is a four-sided, fringed, purple garment which the wives of the *flamines* use as a little *pallium*. Others say it was made of pure white wool, which freeborn young women, whose mothers and fathers were still living, who were citizens, made and that it was dyed a blue colour’

rica est vestimentum quadratum, fimbriatum, purpureum, quo flaminicae pro palliolo utebantur. alii dicunt, quod ex lana fiat sucida alba, quod conficiunt virgines ingenuae, patrimae, matrimae, cives, et inficiatur caeruleo colore (Fest. 369 L).

The Roman perception and classification of colour is different to that which we have today and as a result what the Romans call purple could be anything from a deep red to a

⁶¹ German. *Arat.* 123; Gel. *NA.* 7.10.4; Var. *Ling.* 5.130; Fest. 342 L.

light brown. It is therefore possible that the word *caerulus* could perhaps be described as purple although this is not very likely as the colour seems to have tended towards green more than red.⁶²

Despite these difficulties we are able to arrive at an estimation of the general size of the *rica* and how it was worn. The *rica* is defined almost exclusively with the use of diminutives: Festus defines them as ‘small *ricinia*’ and twice calls them ‘little *pallia*’ (Fest. 342, 368 L).⁶³ Those who wear the *rica* are seldom described as covering their whole body as they might with the *palla* or any of the larger veils and instead the *rica* seems to have covered only the head of the wearer. We might interpret figures such as that of the woman in Figure 18 as wearing what we may assume to be a *rica* since it is too short to be a *ricinium* or a *palla* and is not wrapped around her in any way, appearing instead to sit directly upon her head. It is impossible to identify this figure’s role, be it priestly or otherwise, which highlights the difficulty associated with determining the group of women who might have used the *rica*. As often seems to be the case, we have a number of contradictory statements.⁶⁴ *Ricae* are variously described as being worn by the wife of the Flamen Dialis⁶⁵ and as being made (and presumably worn) by freeborn girls whose parents are still alive: ‘which young freeborn girls, with mothers and fathers who are citizens and still living, make’ *quod conficiunt virgines ingenuae, patrimae, matrimae, cives* (Fest. 369 L). The claim of liturgical usage does seem plausible when one considers that it was worn during sacrifice and Varro’s bogus etymology links it with *ritus*, meaning ceremony or custom, because ‘women, when they make sacrifices according to the Roman custom, they veil their heads’ *rica ab ritu, quod Romano ritu sacrificium feminae cum faciunt, capita velant* (Varro. *Ling.* 5.130). However, that this

⁶² Clarke (2003: 47) agrees with this and defines the colour range of *caerulus* as ranging from sky blue through blue-green, blue-black to black.

⁶³ Cf. Fest. 342 L.

⁶⁴ ‘Indeed Granius says that it is a band for woman’s head with which the wives of the Flamens are crowned in place of a vitta’ *Gran<ius> quidem ait esse muliebre cingulum capitis, quo pro vitta flaminica redimiatur* (Fest. 342 L); ‘the rites of the wives of the Flamen Dialis are almost the same, they say that she observes other ones differently, for example, that she wears a robe that has been dyed and that she has a twig from a healthy tree in her rica’, *eaedem ferme caerimoniae sunt flaminicae Dialis; <alias> seorsum aiunt obseruitare, ueluti est, quod venenato operitur, et quod in rica surculum de arbore felici habet* (Gell. *NA.* 10. 15. 27).

⁶⁵ Fest. 369 L.

veil was the attire of the *flaminicae* is contradicted by Festus who says that the wife of the Flamen constantly wore the *flammeum*, *flammeo...quod eo assidue utebatur flaminica*, bridal veil, as a sign of lifelong fidelity (Fest. 79 L).

Scholars have discussed the *flammeum* to a far greater extent than the other veils. The acceptance of this veil over the others may perhaps be explained by the fact that it is entirely ceremonial and bears a relation to the wedding veil of Christian/Western wedding ceremonies. Therefore it is easy for scholars to view the *flammeum* in the same light that they do the decorative lace of a contemporary bride's veil. However the *flammeum* played a far greater role in the wedding ceremony than the modern veil does. The idea of a Roman bride was inextricably linked with her use of a veil. For Festus the bride was one who was clouded over with a veil: 'because the heads of brides are covered with the *flammeum*, which the ancients called to cloud over' *quia flammeo caput nubentis obvolvatur, quod antiqui obnubere vocarint* (Fest. 174 L). The *flammeum* was so central to the very idea of marriage that the verb *nubere*, 'to veil oneself', also means 'to be married'⁶⁶ and thus this verb is only used of women. The connection between these two verbs emphasises the importance of the veil during the change of status from girl to wife. It appears that at first both the husband and the wife shared this shift in sexual status. An Etruscan relief, dating from the sixth-century BCE, shows the bride, the groom and a figure that is either a priest or an attendant, all with a large fringed veil draped over them.⁶⁷ This would suggest that the *flammeum* developed from a covering that was used to shield the bridal couple but later came to be used only by the bride.

A fresco (Figure 19) dating from the Augustan period suggests that the bride might have put on her veil some time before the wedding ceremony—perhaps in the privacy of her own bedroom. In this painting the bride sits on her bed, hiding beneath an enveloping veil, while the *flammeum* lies on the bed next to her. She appears to be taking counsel from a goddess, perhaps Venus. It is unclear as to when this veil was removed but it

⁶⁶ Oxford Latin Dictionary 1976: s.v. 'nubere'.

⁶⁷ La Follette in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 55.

seems likely that the unveiling was performed once she had reached her new home. The *flammeum* protected the bride during the perilous transition from the house of her father to that of her new husband.⁶⁸ This process entailed moving from the protection of one Lar to that of another. The successful completion of this was marked by her placement of a coin on the altar of her husband's Lar and one on that of the Lar of her new district. It seems likely that the item that was meant to protect her through this transition would only have been removed once it had been completed. It is plausible that the *flammeum* was removed once the bride and groom had crossed the threshold of their new house prior to the consummation of their union. It was at this point that the man removed the *cingulum*, the knotted woollen belt with which the bride bound the *tunica recta*. The *cingulum* protected the chastity of the bride and, as Sebesta notes, 'locked it up' until it was untied by her husband once the couple were reclining on the marital bed.⁶⁹ The *flammeum*, like all veils, also served to protect the chastity of the wearer. It performed a function parallel to that of the *cingulum* and thus they might have been removed at the same time.

The *flammeum* gets its name from its colour (which indicates fiery or flame-like) and it is this attribute of the wedding veil that has been most widely misunderstood. A recent discussion has simply accepted that the *flammeum* was red,⁷⁰ a misconception that arises from one fourth century scholiast, who, in commenting on Juvenal's satires, glossed the *flammeum* as being red to mimic the colour of the blushing bride: '*flammea* are types of garment with which women, on the day of their wedding, cover themselves; for it guards the blood of the blush' *flammea genus amicti, quo se cooperiunt mulieres die nuptiarum; est enim sanguineum propter ruborem custodiendum* (Schol. Juv. Sat. 6.224-26). There are however more numerous earlier, sources which explicitly state that the *flammeum* is closer to yellow than red. Festus describes the *flammeum* as being the same hue as the insignia of the *Flamen Dialis*, 'whose lightning-bolt weapon had the same colour' (Fest. 82 L)—a colour closer to yellow than red. More significantly Pliny tells us

⁶⁸ The veil is used in many cultures to avert the influence of the evil eye. For example amongst Arab cultures even handsome young men might occasionally veil their faces. Cf. Stillman 1998:21.

⁶⁹ Sebesta in Sebesta and Bonfante 1994: 48.

⁷⁰ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 226.

that the *flammeum* was *luteum*, a shade of yellow that he also uses to describe the colour of egg yolk.⁷¹

The association of the *flammeum* with the colour of fire is more symbolic. Festus gives us a clue to the emblematic significance of this colour when he writes how ‘the bride is clothed in the *flammeum* in order to secure a good omen because it was worn constantly by the Flaminica, that is the wife of the Flamen, to whom it was not permitted to get divorced’ *flammeo amicitur nubens omni boni causa, quod eo assidue utebatur flaminica, id est flaminis uxor, cui non licebat facere divortium* (Fest. 79 L). The Roman bride is therefore seen to associate herself sympathetically with the virtues of fidelity and marriage to one man. This colour also serves to emphasise womanly virtues as it recalls the *flamma*, fire, of the wedding ceremony that was symbolic of the hearth, which the new wife was duty-bound to tend in her role as *custos domi* upon her arrival in her new home.⁷²

While the bride may have shared much of her costume with Vestals they wore very dissimilar veils. Most of the surviving statues of the vestals show them wearing the *suffibulum*, a short white veil bordered with purple and fastened with a pin (*fibula*), hence Varro’s statement that its etymology derives from ‘*sub-figabulum* (fastened below) from *suffigendo* (fastening underneath)’ *ab suffigendo subligaculum* (Varro. *Ling.* 6.21). As we see from Figures 20A and 20B, the *suffibulum* was worn further back on the head than other veils—leaving a portion of the hairstyle visible. Despite these differences Dragendorff sees parallels between the *suffibulum* and the *flammeum*. He uses Festus’ description of the *suffibulum* as bordered with purple, *<s>uffibulum est vestimentum al<bum, praetextum, qua>drangulum, oblongum* (Fest. 474 L), to relate this veil to the colour of the *flammeum*.⁷³ This argument is doubtful since the bridal veil was a yellow colour. He also relates how some Christian writers call a white head scarf a *flammeum* and claims that this proves that the *suffibulum* and the *flammeum* were

⁷¹ Plin. *HN.* 10. 148.

⁷² Upon entering her new home the bride was given a symbolic gift of water and fire. Cf. Var. *Ling.* 5.61; Fest. 87 L; Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 1.

⁷³ Dragendorff 1896:292.

originally identical. It seems highly unlikely that this is the case as Dragendorff has ignored most of the evidence.

Perhaps the causes of this confusion are the similarities that he observes between *matrona* and Vestal. The Vestals, like married women, were required to veil their heads. While the Vestals are not truly married they do seem to have been considered as ‘brides of the state’, taken in marriage via the intermediary of the Pontifex Maximus who saluted the new priestess with the words ‘thus I take you my beloved’ *ita te amata capio* in a version of the ancient wedding ceremony of *manu captio*—the seizing of the bride by force. Moreover the right afforded to husbands by the *lex Julia* to kill their wives and the adulterer was emulated in the punishment of an unchaste Vestal and her seducer. The Vestal’s *suffibulum* is therefore not much different from the veil of any other married Roman women, differing only in appearance not in purpose.

Palla, *ricinium*, *rica*, *suffibulum* and *flammeum* are the most common words for veils but there are a number of words which are used less often and which we are able to define much less precisely such as *calautica* and *carbassus*. The first of these words listed by Nonius is *calautica*, which he says ‘is a feminine covering, which is attached to the head’ *calautice est tegmen muliebre quod capiti innectitur* (Non. 861 L). The etymology of this word is uncertain and Tucker has suggested that it may not in fact be a genuine Latin word.⁷⁴ It is most likely kindred with *καλύπτω*, the Greek verb meaning to cover or veil. The *calautica* seems to have been a more frivolous and perhaps less symbolically significant veil. Mentions of it are most often found in long lists alongside decorative and even slightly foreign and decadent items of dress.⁷⁵ That this veil is mentioned together with pearls and saffron garments suggests that veils could be quite extravagant items, drawing attention to the wearer instead of concealing her. The noun *carbassus* is another term that is often used to mean ‘a veil’,⁷⁶ but its most common meaning is a type of ‘finely woven linen’ and thus by extension a garment made of this linen. A passage by Nonius in which he notes that *capitia* ‘are coverings for the head’

⁷⁴ Tucker 1985: s. v. ‘*calautica*’.

⁷⁵ Cf. Arnob. *Adv. nat.* 5.23; *Digest.* 34.2.25.

⁷⁶ Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 7.34; Non. 868 L.

capitia, capitum tegmina (Non. 870 L) might at first suggest that a *capitium* is some sort of veil but this interpretation is problematic as Varro clearly defines it as a garment very much like a vest as ‘it holds the chest, that is, as the ancients said, it confines it’ *capitium ab eo quod capit pectus, id est, ut antique dicebant, comprehendit* (Varro. *Ling.* 5.131). Another interpretation is suggested by the Vulgate Latin version of the book of Exodus, in which a *capitium* is described as being in the ‘middle’ of a tunic and is implied to be some kind of ‘opening’,

‘you will also make in addition an entirely blue tunic in the middle of which there will be an opening for the head on top and holes in a circle around that cloth, just as is usually done in the hems of clothes, in order that it may not easily be torn’

facies et tunicam superumeralis totam hyacinthinam in cuius medio supra erit capitium et ora per gyrum eius textilis sicut fieri solet in extremis vestium partibus ne facile rumpatur (Vulg. *Exod.* 28.32).

From this passage it would seem that the *capitium* was a neck-hole through which the head passed when a tunic was put. Although we cannot be sure whether the *capitium* was a veil or a vest, it does seem unlikely that it was an opening for the neck as *capitia* are more often mentioned as being items of clothing in their own right.

As has become apparent in the discussion of the various phrases that are used to indicate veiling and the words that are used to denote different veils, some veils are used in specific contexts while there are also many that seem to be ‘all-purpose’ veils used as need dictates. A distinction therefore becomes evident between veiling as dictated by ceremony and that which is done due to circumstance. While certain elements such as concealment and protection are features common to most instances of veiling, the manner in which these features are utilized is flexible. We are therefore able to divide cases of veiling into the two broad categories of ‘ceremony’ which often includes a religious function and ‘circumstance’ which is generally secular.

Veiling during marriage, the veiling of augurs, veiling while sacrificing, praying, founding cities, manumitting slaves, committing suicide and honouring emperors all have religious and ceremonial characteristics. In these cases veiling seems to ensure the success of the undertaking. Thus Aeneas is advised to use a veil to guard against the harmful gaze of his enemies, ‘so that no hostile faces may intrude upon the fires that honour the gods, and disrupt the omens’ *ne qua inter sanctos ignis in honore deorum hostilis facies occurrat et omina turbet* (Verg. *Aen.* 3.406-409), and the bride uses a *flammeum* to safeguard the transition from one *domus* to another. The use of the veil as directed by circumstance overlaps to some degree with the more ritual usage. So the *palla* serves to protect women when they go out in public and the use of the *ricinium* in mourning might have been stipulated by law but both garments appear to have been liable to change according to fashion—something which did not seem to have affected the *flammeum* or the *suffibulum*. In many instances the motivating factor behind circumstantial veiling appears to have been shame and a need to protect this shame rather than the need for protection in and of itself. This hypothesis fits our evidence for veiling in public, in times of mourning, when dying (rather than committing suicide), when dishonoured and when angered. An awareness of such veiling conventions is demonstrated by Ovid’s Lucretia when she, while explaining the circumstances of her rape to her father and husband, ‘is silent for a long time and hides her ashamed face in her clothes’ *illa diu reticet pudibundaque celat amictu/ ora* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.819). Using these two categories we are able to distinguish between the uses to which the veils that we have discussed were put. So the *rica*, the *suffibulum* and the *flammeum* have ceremonial uses while the *palla*, the *ricinium*, the *calautica*, the *carbasus* and the *capitium* were used according to circumstance.

Considering the number of expressions that we have encountered for veiling and when we place the sartorial history of Roman women within the broader cultural geography of the Mediterranean, it seems highly probable that Rome had a culture of female veiling.

CHAPTER 5

THE MORAL REFORMS OF AUGUSTUS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON VEILING

As was demonstrated in the previous chapter from the evidence of veiling terminology the Romans were without doubt a people whose women had the custom of veiling. Augustus' programme of moral reform used the veil (as well as the other elements of female dress) as a marker for the productive and healthy forces of female sexuality as well as those that were considered to be politically destructive. In order to understand why the veil was useful to Augustus in this context, it is necessary to first comprehend the importance of issues of morality in terms of the Augustan political strategy and how the veil was to figure in this.

The improving effort of the Augustan programme of moral reform made use of both formal legalistic decree and propaganda. Together these elements formed a system of unique influence, but it would be wrong to assume that this was a system of guidance into the new ethical order that was masterminded by the Princeps and then imposed as a single coherent plan. For many years before the republic received its final death-blow moralists had been lamenting the ills of state and society.¹ So, even before Augustus appeared on the political field the basic outline of the programme that he was to develop had already been mapped out by the descriptions of the moral shortcomings of the Roman state. Once Augustus assumed power he could then begin to remedy these ills.

A fundamental feature of Augustus' imperial system was the manner in which it combined what had previously been the private realm of the family with an essentially

¹ Zanker 1998: 102. As will be shown the incursion of women into the political sphere was viewed as being generally detrimental to the health of the state.

public system of government—the *res publica*.² Under the republic the distinctions between private and public were theoretically clear. These public spaces are often those in which the government and business of the republic occurred—affairs and spaces in which women ideally had no part.³ Once the republic had come to an end and had been replaced with the imperial system the imperial *domus* and *familia* became of public import. The Augustan laws on marriage and adultery, by regulating areas of life that had previously been under the purview of Roman fathers, provided a conceptual space for the relationship between Augustus and the civic community to be understood as similar to that between *pater* and *familia*.

One of the principles that will require examination is the notion of women embodying the private sphere. Much current scholarship surrounds the dualism evident in the Roman mind surrounding the public and private space. The Romans imposed gender categories on space, for example: public space was considered to be male while domestic space was female. There exists a problem, however, with terms like public and private in that these descriptions are often taken at face value as descriptions of space.⁴ The gendering of spaces seems to have little to do with the presence of male or female bodies within it, but is instead the description of an ideal. The public space in this framework could be defined as a discourse in which the participants (the public persons) are male and elite.⁵ Within this discourse we often find characterizations of maleness and femaleness and definitions of what a female body signifies and which signs should be inscribed on the various categories of female bodies.

Neither these designations nor their definitions are static and they are continually rethought in terms of the current socio-political mode so, as we are specifically concerned with matters closely related to Augustan ideals of public and private, we should be aware of the shift that occurred during this period in terms of these spatial definitions of gender. Beth Severy's study of the family under Augustus seeks to explain

² Severy 2003: 7.

³ Any situations in which women did enter this sphere were depicted as outrageous occurrences that were used to fortify the traditional boundaries.

⁴ Økland 1998: 129.

⁵ Økland 1998: 130.

a shift in these boundaries in terms of Augustus' assumption of the role of patriarch of the state.⁶ Due to his now influential position, what was once familial came into public imagery and discourse and thus as his family became more powerful public commemoration of them as a family followed—and so the ideological lines between public and private began to shift.⁷ It was not only on the conceptual level that this shift occurred. Under Augustus, new forms of worship that focused on the Princeps and his family developed. Because of the nature of Roman religion, this incorporation of the family into the religious context naturally made them also part of the civic community.⁸

With the private sphere having now increased in importance, women (as emblems of this space) correspondingly became more significant. For example, the women of the imperial *domus* achieved greater social prominence because of their ability to act as signs of the stability of the private sphere that surrounded the emperor and they were now able to act as symbols of the moral health of the Princeps' household (and by extension the entire private sphere of Roman life) especially by the dress that they wore when appearing on public monuments such as the *Ara Pacis Augustae*. As Augustus' family was now in some ways occupying public positions in regard to power, representations of women had to reassure observers as to the healthy nature of the emperor's private life. In cases such as these, the chastity of these women became a sign of the security of the city and its political institutions.⁹

Perhaps the most unambiguous reason for this shift in emphasis is the importance that women now played in maintaining the peace that had come after so many years of civil war. Augustus had no male heir and thus there was no obvious candidate available to assume the reins of the government that Augustus had established. Both Livia and Julia, as potential mothers of an heir, now became significant in terms of the continuation of the current form of government and as a result the private sphere, which they dominated,

⁶ Severy 2003: 32

⁷ Severy 2003: 22.

⁸ For example, when Augustus was made *Pontifex Maximus* he did not move to the *domus publica* (the official residence of the *Rex Sacrorum*) near the temple of Vesta on the *via sacra* but rather made part of his own house public (cf. *Ov. Fast.* 4. 949).

⁹ D'Ambra 1993: 87.

grew in importance while at the same time they assumed many of the functions of the male public area. This shift is seen in the public powers granted to Livia, for example the right to act with authority in legal matters without the representation of a tutor¹⁰ and the right to be accompanied by lictors.¹¹ This shift is also evinced by the proliferation of images of Livia who became the first woman to be systematically represented in Roman portraiture.¹²

With Augustus' assumption of the title of *pater patriae* came the implication that Augustus held *patria potestas* over the citizens of the Roman world. This is not to suggest that with this new title that he took on came with any new legal powers, but because of the nature of the imperial system the Empire was now effectively his *domus*, and Augustus ruled over it as a *pater* might a *familia*. This relationship facilitated what Raditsa has called Augustus' 'deep interference into family life'.¹³ The disruption of any family and the disrespect for the *pater familias* that this entailed equated acts such as adultery with acts of treason. Nowhere is this made clearer than within Augustus' own family. The extremity of the punishment meted out to Julia and to her lovers has led many to conclude that the supposed adulteries were in fact disguises for treasonous plots.¹⁴ This need not have been the case as under the new social situation the very act of adultery becomes seditious. This is especially true in light of Augustus' laws concerning marriage and adultery, most notably the *lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis*, the *lex Papia Poppaea* and the *lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus*.

These three laws did not seek to regulate the sexual activity of all Romans but rather concerned themselves with those who were citizens and especially with those of senatorial rank. These laws imposed restrictions according to social class, with greater restrictions placed on those of higher class. Thus senators and their kin were not allowed to marry freed slaves while citizens were not allowed to marry adulteresses or people of

¹⁰ Frascchetti 1994: 105.

¹¹ Bartman 1999: 94.

¹² Bartman 1999: xxi.

¹³ Raditsa 1980: 333.

¹⁴ Syme 1939: 425-428; Bauman 1967: 198-245.

dishonourable profession.¹⁵ The Augustan laws demonstrate the degree to which Roman women, and most importantly their sexuality, could be legally seen to be property of their male kin. This system creates a legal framework for the interpretation of female sexuality as falling under the responsibility of men. A woman's options with regard to marriage were dictated by the status of her father, as were the limitations placed on her sexual activity before marriage. An adoptive father had as much right to kill his daughter as did a biological one. He did however have to hold the official legally defined position of *paterfamilias* and his punishment of his daughter's actions could then serve to exonerate the family as a whole.¹⁶ That the right to mete out such extreme punishment was afforded to the father rather than the husband was due to the fact that by the time of Augustus most married women were not married *in manu* but rather remained under the *potestas* of their fathers who were therefore legally responsible for all actions of their children.¹⁷ The husband was not able to alienate this *potestas* and thus he was not permitted to kill his wife even if he caught her in the act of adultery.

The importance of this dominance becomes apparent when we consider the degree to which the marriages of women of the senatorial classes were used to fulfil the political ends of their fathers and brothers. Augustus' power of *paterfamilias* meant that the marriages of Julia to Agrippa and Tiberius and Octavia to Anthony were in fact alliances between himself and their husbands. The issue of maintaining the chastity and marital virtue of a man's female kin therefore becomes important if he is to negotiate with other men in this way. The advantages that can be gained by protecting female integrity are clear from the role played by Octavia in Octavian's propaganda in the period leading up to Actium. He was able to contrast his chaste sister with the decadent Cleopatra and make issue of Anthony's treatment of so virtuous a Roman matron. This sentiment was unexceptional even amongst families outside of the ruling family. Gardner has noted how Valerius Maximus gives three examples of reprisals by fathers in response to the improper sexual behaviour of their daughters.¹⁸ He records how the Roman knight

¹⁵ Arjava 1996: 77-78; 194-195. Gardner 1986: 256.

¹⁶ *Digest*. 48.23. *Nec in ea lege naturalis ab adoptivo pater separatur*.

¹⁷ For a fuller discussion of the *potestas* of the *paterfamilias* see Gardner 1987: 256; Arjava 1998: 147.

¹⁸ Gardner 1986: 121.

Pontius Aufidianus killed his daughter who had surrendered her virginity to her tutor 'so that rather than celebrate her debased marriage he led her to a cruel funeral', *ita ne turpes eius nuptias celebraret, acerbis exequias duxit* (6.1.3); how P. Maenius killed a favourite freedman who had kissed his daughter: 'he told her that she should bring to her husband not only uncorrupted virginity but also pure kisses', *praecepit ut non solum virginitatem inlibatam, sed etiam oscula ad virum sincera perferret* (6.1.4); and how even a former prostitute, P. Atilius Philiscus, killed his daughter who had been involved in forbidden love affairs (6.1.6). In all of these cases the potential marriages of these women are in some way endangered and their fathers, by their harsh punishments, prevent any further endangerment of their position.

With the veil as the signifier of the principles of constrained female sexuality, its role in distinguishing social position must become important. After Actium and with the construction of what Syme calls the 'New State', the Italian bourgeoisie to all intents and purposes overcame the old *nobiles* and their system of government.¹⁹ Effectively a new 'class' of citizen had been created and in order to ingratiate them completely into all areas of Roman life, Syme notes that 'different "mores" needed to be professed: ...It is not enough to acquire power and wealth: men wish to appear virtuous'.²⁰ The new ruling class therefore needed a new moral code, provided by the Julian legislation, and required a way of overtly displaying this code and thus their status. They did so in various ways, the most immediately apparent of which was the clothing that they might have worn and those that they chose to have themselves depicted wearing.

The purpose of Augustus' legislation regarding marriage and adultery has been much discussed by ancient historians and a number of theories regarding the aims of these laws have been proposed. Des Bouvrie has divided these explanations into four broad categories: the moral, demographic, political and ideological.²¹ Those who argue for the explanation that Augustus was attempting to improve the moral health of the Roman citizenry base their arguments largely on the Roman predilection for associating moral

¹⁹ Syme 1939: 453; cf. also Wallace-Hadrill 1997: 4-5.

²⁰ Syme 1939: 453.

²¹ Des Bouvrie 1984: 95.

and political weakness.²² While this is undeniably true, such arguments do not properly account for why this is the case or why this association gained such power only in the early Empire. Last, Meyer and Brunt all favour a demographic explanation.²³ Such arguments assert that the marriage laws were intended to increase the Italian population which had suffered during the years of war and that the need for public officials implied the need for the increase of the leading class. Galinsky sees the problem as political and argues that Augustus' moral legislation served to ensure Rome's imperial power by making sure that its citizens were morally fit to rule.²⁴ According to this argument, Augustus legislated on private matters in order to ensure the continuation of Roman rule as Rome had to be morally superior to rule others. While Galinsky allows for some intention on Augustus' behalf to actually improve the character of the Roman people, Raditsa afforded him a purely pragmatic motive with no sense of idealism.²⁵ Raditsa contends that Augustus enacted the marriage legislation in order to alienate people from themselves: to distance people from the most intimate decisions regarding their private lives and to detach fathers from the management of their families. Augustus then exploited this dissociation in order that he might rule more freely. On the opposite end of the spectrum is the interpretation of Augustus' aim as highly idealistic. Starr suggests that Augustus enacted his moral legislation as he 'sensed also the need for an ideal about which to rally the Roman spirit'.²⁶ This approach is as flawed as that of Raditsa as neither explains the reasons for the emphasis placed on feminine morality and sexuality.

None of these theories should be considered mutually exclusive. What is more likely is that Augustus' motives stem from political necessities as well as moral idealism—idealism which is manifested most strongly in the hypothetical *lex de pudicitia* which is discussed in the following chapter. The works of literary men and artists support the hypothesis that the Augustan programme was primarily a moral one. Virgil's *Aeneid* devises a morally upright hero as founder of Rome. Aeneas is mindful of family

²² Gardhausen 1896; Ferrero 1906; Lind 1979.

²³ Last 1934: 445; Meyer 1948: 379; Brunt 1971: 558-566. See also Wallace-Hadrill's explanation of the marriage laws in economic terms (Wallace-Hadrill 1981: 58-80).

²⁴ Galinsky 1981: 137.

²⁵ Raditsa 1980: 330.

²⁶ Starr 1954: 44.

obligations, he is respectful of the gods and he is described as inventing the religious rituals that pious Romans were to follow in centuries to come and that the Augustan programme sought to promote. Virgil's Aeneas is a figure distinct from the other heroes of epic. It is neither wily cunning nor pursuit of immortal fame that characterises his actions; rather his behaviour is shaped by moral obligation. Sexual morality was of explicit concern to many writers. As we shall see in the following chapter the Tiberian moralist, strongly influenced by Augustan culture, Valerius Maximus, the author of a collection of moral exempla entitled 'Memorable Deeds and Sayings' *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* places great store in the virtue of *pudicitia* and he devotes an entire book to this theme.²⁷ For Valerius Maximus, *pudicitia* was one of the virtues which formed the 'bases of that happy life which we led under the best leader' *quam sub optimo principe felicem agimus, quoniam fuerint elementa* (2.1 praef), and the author clearly desires that his readers use these examples as models for 'the morals of the present' *praesentibus moribus* (2.1 praef).

Any discussion of morality, and hence veiling, under the rule of Augustus cannot avoid mention of the political climate that existed at the time. Because of the new blurring between the state and the family, public and private, women were to be of great significance in regulating these conditions. This environment, which needs to be viewed in light of the preceding civil wars and what Syme has termed 'The Roman Revolution', was a replacement of the old Roman elite with new men of Italian origin.²⁸ As we saw above, Marshall and Stokes, in examining the emergence of institutionalized veiling in post-colonial nations, have developed three criteria that help us to predict accurately the degree of commitment to sartorial tradition and especially veiling shown by the new ruling classes.²⁹ The position of women in the new regime meant that these factors were often problematized and then resolved through the intermediary of the female figure. To recap, these features are: political instability, fragmentation within the elite and 'ethnic revitalization'.³⁰

²⁷ For the moral nature of the *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* see Skidmore 1996: 53-82.

²⁸ Syme 1939: 8.

²⁹ See Chapter 1 page 3.

³⁰ Marshall and Stokes 1981: 629.

The first of these arises as elites who are insecure in their power are more likely to screen themselves from political attack with the legitimizing ideology of tradition than those who are assured of the full support of the populace. This situation most often occurs when the current political situation has evolved from long and protracted struggle. The security of Augustus' government was only cemented after many years of civil war and even then the Princeps did not lack political enemies who plagued the new regime.³¹ The nature of these enemies, among them Fannius Caepio and Varro Murena, illustrate the fragmentation of the elite. Caepio was a republican and therefore obliged by his political principles to attempt treason while Varro Murena was previously an ally of Augustus and his consular partner. The consequences of the uncovering of this conspiracy leave little doubt as to its seriousness. The execution of a consul while he still held office was an unprecedented event and the extremity of this measure can only be explained by the magnitude of the perceived threat. Syme has used the settlement of 23 BCE as further evidence of the reality of the danger to the Princeps that the senate saw in actions such as this.³² This threat narrowly averted, coupled with Augustus' narrow escape from serious illness, reminded the leading men of the state of the fragility of the new system and brought about an understanding of how important it was that Augustus maintained control. Such fragmentation and treasonous plots made the new elite especially insecure in their power. These circumstances meant that Augustus would have sought to use the rhetoric of tradition to insure his authority. The nature of this rhetoric was shaped to some degree by how the Romans had up till then understood the traditional place of women. Augustus used this pre-existing framework to create a guise of political stability (or at least of legitimate succession) by means of his female kin and their offspring.

The civil wars had also left the Roman elite in a state of fragmentation. Not only were the *nobiles* competing for power with the *novi homines* of Italy but even within the older senatorial families there was division according to sentiment regarding the new regime

³¹ For more general discussions of resistance to emperors and to Roman government cf. Syme 1939: 332-348; MacMullen 1967; Bauman 1974; Scullard 1982: 208-214.

³² Syme 1939: 333-336.

and the dismemberment of certain republican forms. Marshall and Stokes note how war within the elite is most often waged on ideological grounds with overt appeals made to the loyalties of the masses that this rhetoric was presumed to attract. It has been observed elsewhere that the decline of the republic was seen to be caused by a decline in the *mores* and *ius* on which it was founded³³ but it is important to recognise that the blame for this moral decline was laid primarily at the feet of a degenerate aristocracy (and the women thereof).³⁴ Cicero bemoans how ‘by the negligence of the *nobiles* the practice of augury has been abandoned... but at the time of our ancestors religion was so potent that even some generals, with veiled heads and with ritual words, gave up themselves to the immortal gods for the republic’, *neglegentia nobilitatis augurii disciplina omissa [...] at vero apud maiores tanta religionis vis fuit, ut quidam imperatores etiam se ipsos dis immortalibus capite velato verbis certis pro re publica devoverent*, (*Nat. D.* 2.9-10).³⁵ The leaders of the emergent ruling class were able to base their claim to rule on a claim of moral superiority that found its basis in studied antiquarianism. Thus it is in this moral climate that the works of Varro and Verrius Flaccus were written, works which attempt to bring together the religious and social practices of their Roman ancestors of which veiling was but one.

The final contributing factor in the renewed popularity of veiling is what Marshall and Stokes termed ‘ethnic revitalization’.³⁶ This refers to a heightening or strengthening of traditional ethnic commitment. This situation most commonly arises when one group feels itself to be threatened by another group, in which case the former attempts to strengthen what are perceived to be traditional cultural tropes. The Romans understood this threat as coming from the Eastern Hellenized world and the writers of the Augustan period noted how it was by the influence of other nations that Rome had lost her true character. Zanker has seen this bias as being epitomised in the preface of Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ work on the ancient orators in which the decline of Attic oratory and its

³³ Galinsky 1996: 6.

³⁴ Syme 1939: 490-508.

³⁵ Although Cicero here complains primarily of a decline in religious piety, this virtue was not seen as distinct from general morality. Chastity was understood as being integral to piety and *visa versa*. Thus Augustus justified his banishment of Julia with the accusation of ‘violated religion’, *laesarum religionum* (*Tac. Ann.* 3. 24).

³⁶ Marshall and Stokes 1981: 631.

replacement with the lesser Asiatic school is seen as having led the civilized world into a state of extended decline (Dion. Hal. *Vett. cens. praef.*)³⁷ Dionysius' reflections on rhetoric are not only comments on styles of oratory but on a new moral (and pedagogical) style that is reflected in public speaking. Dionysius does however see hope for the expulsion of such exotic amorality and names the leaders of the Roman world, at that juncture (17 BCE) the most obvious example of whom was Augustus, as men of high moral principle who will bring about the extinction of the Asiatic style. Rome did not only pit itself against Asia, but even to some degree against Greece. Augustus' programme of religious reform not only promulgated traditional Roman virtues such as *pietas* but also propagated the worship of more distinctively Roman gods, exemplified by the revitalization and systemization of the cult of the *Lares* and the reinstatement of the *Lupercalia*.

These measures served to bring into being the ideal of a unified Italy (rather than simply Rome) which, united by language, religion, and dress,³⁸ was able to withstand the cultural threat of the East. Nowhere is this trend more immediately evident than in the art of the period. Roman models began to replace Hellenistic ones and the nude honorific statues were replaced by ones that were togate and veiled. This process did not entirely exclude all things Greek but drew on Classical examples rather than later ones. This was not simply an aesthetic judgement but began as a calculated opposition to the Asiatic style so favoured by Anthony. Thus via Augustus' own propaganda the art of the Orient became understood as threatening Roman culture while the art of Classical Greece and the archaism that this entailed became a model for the Empire.

The traditional features that are perceived as being those that are the most directly threatened are most likely to emerge as those most symbolically important to the movement of revitalization. During their occupation of Algeria, France had pursued a policy of coercive assimilation that included a programme of systematized unveiling. Legal attempts were made to force Algerian women to unveil and their refusal to do so

³⁷ Zanker 1998: 239.

³⁸ For a discussion of some of these cf. Wallace-Hadrill 1997:3-22.

became a statement of national identity.³⁹ Marshal and Stokes note how, because a concerted effort was made to weaken the Algerian culture by appealing to women, the veil took on great symbolic relevance for both the French and the Algerians—becoming the symbol of the Algerian Muslim identity that was under threat.⁴⁰ This state was akin to that in Rome during the late republic, during which period women were seen as the main culprits in terms of the adoption of Hellenistic amorality.⁴¹ The women of Rome and their traditional virtues were therefore seen as the section of society that were the most threatened by foreign influences: they were the first foothold for the creeping undermining of Roman values. The veil of Algeria, like the veil of Ancient Rome, became a tool by which communal morality and identity was defined.

As we have already seen, the Romans were inclined to define themselves as a nation through their dress.⁴² By this reasoning any implied breakdown in the supposed nature of their nationhood would entail a change (for the worse) in what they wore. In these terms the rejection of traditional Roman dress was a sign of the abandonment of time-honoured Roman culture and ethics in favour of Hellenistic moral and philosophical relativism.⁴³ This adoption of ‘foreign’ ways, in both public and private realms, was seen as one of the leading causes for the destruction of the republic.⁴⁴ The *luxuria* of the East now became strongly contrasted with traditional Roman virtues even while its imagery was being used by the generals of the late Republic in programmes of self-aggrandizement. While the senate’s conferral of an equestrian statue upon Sulla was the first such instance, it was still tolerable to the Roman audience because the statue was focused primarily upon military gains and the figure astride the horse wore Roman military gear. Until now, Republican Rome had honoured its leaders by means of togate statues but as these men were allowed to come into ever greater power they began to abandon Roman dress altogether and to erect nude honorific statues. While in the Hellenistic mind this nudity was associated with the divine status of the ruler, Zanker

³⁹ El Guindi 1999 : 170.

⁴⁰ Marshal and Stokes 1981: 643.

⁴¹ This is a fairly common theme in Roman literature, going back as far as Cato the elder.

⁴² Verg. *Aen.* 1. 282

⁴³ Sebesta 199: 529.

⁴⁴ Zanker 1998: 1-2.

notes how to most Romans this must have seemed immoral effrontery and an expression of shamelessness.⁴⁵ Thus the abandonment by the leaders of traditional Roman costume became a marker for the growing decadence of the Republic.⁴⁶

To counter the abandonment of Roman dress and the supposed moral decay brought about by the influence of the East, Augustus attempted to regulate clothing in order to promote morality (Suet. *Aug.* 40.5). Suetonius suggests that Augustus was not unaware of the political implications of national costume (when he states that Augustus ‘was also eager to return to ancient appearance and dress’) and made it enforceable when ‘he gave this business over to the *aediles* in order that no-one hereafter should appear in the Forum or Circus unless he had taken off his cloak to put on the toga’, *etiam habitum vestitumque pristinum reducere studuit negotium aedilibus dedit, ne quem posthac paterentur in foro circove nisi positis lacernis togatum consistere* (Suet. *Aug.* 40.5).⁴⁷ Suetonius here records Augustus’ conscientious manipulation of the cultural markers that the Romans used to define their society. Thus Augustus enforces one specific vestimentary code that, through the ideology which he develops with the help of artists and poets, signifies a return to the private and political ethos of the high republic and created that appearance of moral (and therefore political) renewal that allowed him to claim in the *Res Gestae* that he had transferred the Republic from his own power into the control of the senate and the people of Rome: ‘I transferred the republic out of my control, into the power of the senate and the people of Rome’, *rem publicam ex mea potestate in senatus populique Romani arbitrium transtuli* (34).

Under the rule of Augustus, clothing was used to symbolize regime change and the accompanying moral regeneration. Use of clothing in this manner is far from unique and

⁴⁵ Zanker 1998: 6.

⁴⁶ It is undoubted that the women of the Greek world were habitually veiled but this practice did not conflict with the Roman ideal and instead confirmed the virtue of it. Thus when Classical examples are used as the bases of Augustan works of art, the women in these monuments are often veiled (for veiled women in Classical art see Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 85-120). This practice not only ensures the artistic integrity of the source but also allows for a type of moral continuity.

⁴⁷ While it does not seem possible to date these Augustan clothing laws, it is likely that it was enacted at some point between 20 and 10 BCE, once Augustus had cemented his position in terms of the constitution and could therefore turn his attention to matters of culture and morality. For a discussion of a law that was possibly related see Rawson 1987: 83-114.

indeed many contemporary examples exist by means of which we might more fully understand the implication of the ancient model. In both modern and Classical instances specific use has been made of the veil. Before the Iranian revolution the *chador*, an outer wrap that conceals a woman from head to toe, was the customary dress of rural and traditional urban women. When the Shah began his programme of secular Westernization he banned the garment as a symbol of conservative traditionalism and the 'Islamic Revolution' then enforced its use in order to indigenize tradition.⁴⁸ This enforcement of what is understood as a moral tradition bears some resemblance to Augustus' programme of moral legislation.

While the Iranian emphasis on sartorial legislation bears a resemblance to the measures taken by Augustus as recounted by Suetonius (*Aug.* 40.5) and the *leges Juliae*, the case of Egypt during the late nineteen-sixties and seventies more clearly reflects the socio-political climate after the Roman civil wars. The Egyptian example may therefore cast some light onto how female dress became so important in the early Empire. During the nineteen-seventies and late sixties a growing trend towards strict adherence to conservative codes of veiling was noticed amongst young urban female university students who had once again put on the veil after decades of systematized unveiling. El Guindi sees the origin of this trend in the political climate surrounding the defeat of Egypt in the Six Day War in 1967.⁴⁹ This instance of defeat was interpreted by the majority of the population as 'God's will to punish Egypt for the increasing decline in people's morals' and there was a marked increase in instances of divine visitation.⁵⁰ The relative success of the Yom Kippur War was then attributed to the divine influence invoked because the troops had roared 'Allah Akbar' in unison at the moment of attack and the war had taken place during the holy month of Ramadan.

This pattern of near destruction followed by a reversal of fortunes leading to a renewed interest in morality is characteristic not only of Egypt in the later part of the last century but also of Rome during and after the civil wars. After the Roman Republic had

⁴⁸ El Guindi 1999: 129.

⁴⁹ El Guindi 1999: 131.

⁵⁰ El Guindi 1999: 131.

dissolved into civil war people naturally sought the cause of the overwhelming disorder. Like the Egyptians after them they found the origin of their woes in the 'rejection of the gods and the values of their ancestors'.⁵¹ Once peace had been achieved not only was there a renewed interest in religion but the leader responsible for the new prosperity himself became the object of worship. Much of this moral and religious revival was focused on the *mores maiorum* as there could be no healing of the body politic without a return to ancestral virtues. This upsurge in traditionalism is attested to by the dress of the time and indeed dress even becomes a marker of the security of the new peace when Horace lists the toga, 'eternal Vesta' upon whose unquenched flame the safety of Rome depended, the 'shields' which fell from heaven and protected Rome⁵² and the Roman 'name' as the sacred guarantors of Empire: 'forgetful of the shields, the name, the toga, and of eternal Vesta' *anciliorum et nominis et togae oblitus aeternaeque Vestae* (*Carm.* 3.5.10). Like the toga, the dress of women and the virtue that this dress signified ensured the new stability of the state.

Women were considered to be the guardians of private space and as such they were the guardians of the private issue of sexual morality. Because of their importance in this area Augustus too had to pay specific attention to encouraging their return to traditional modes of dress that signified their return to traditional modes of sexual behaviour. This costume included items such the *stola* and the *vittae* but most important was the veil—most often the *palla*.

⁵¹ Zanker 1998: 2.

⁵² Page 1970: 323.

CHAPTER 6

THE CASE OF SULPICIUS GALLUS

Textual sources for the practice of female veiling in Rome are scarce but those that do exist generally relate the practice in some way to the actions of men. In these instances the veil comments on the processes of social interaction that takes place between men but is understood through the intermediary of the female body. This chapter will examine the way in which male authors understood, and in cases misunderstood, women's relationship with veiling. In particular I will be examining two contradictory accounts of the same incident involving the veil and will attempt to explain the reasons for the disagreement.

There are two accounts of the action taken by Sulpicius Gallus¹ who, according to both Plutarch and Valerius Maximus, divorced his wife over the issue of veiling.² Where our sources differ is as to whether this was occasioned by her wearing the veil or by not wearing it. Valerius Maximus relates the fate of the wife of Sulpicius Gallus who he claims 'divorced his wife because he had learnt that she had gone about in public with her head uncovered' *uxorem dimisit, quod eam capite aperto foris versatam cognoverat* (6.3.10). This tale is taken from Valerius Maximus' *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*, a work in which he gives the reader nearly one thousand examples of vice and virtue.

Plutarch also records the tale of Gallus' marital severity but has a vastly different interpretation of his actions. He writes that Gallus divorced his wife 'having seen her drawing her ἰμάτιον down over her head' ἐφελκυσσάμενην ἰδὼν κατὰ κεφαλῆς τὸ ἰμάτιον (*Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267).

¹ His name is variously recorded as either Gallus or Galus. Gallus is a recognized Roman name but the reading of Galus does hold some appeal. While Gallus means simply Gaul, or refers to a rooster, Galus bears a distinct resemblance to *galea* (helmet) and *galere* (to cover with a helmet). I will be using the more common Roman name of Gallus.

² Whether this was Sulpicius Gallus, the consul of 166, or his grandfather, consul in 243, is unclear.

Since Plutarch made reference to Valerius Maximus' text elsewhere in his work,³ it is likely that he used it as a source for this passage. He fails however to make sense of his source.⁴ Having suggested that it was common practice for Roman women to go veiled in public, Plutarch then asks enigmatically (presumably in a rhetorical question) 'were women previously not allowed at all to veil their heads?' ταῖς δὲ γυναῖξιν οὐδ' ὅλως ἐξῆν ἐπικαλύπτεσθαι τὴν κεφαλὴν; His answer would appear to be that indeed (γούν) they were not. By way of explanation he quotes the examples of Spurius Carvilius who divorced his wife on account of her barrenness, Sulpicius Gallus who divorced his wife for veiling herself in public and Publius Sempronius who divorced his wife as she had gone to see funeral games. Only the second story relates in any way to veiling and it seems that Plutarch includes the others simply as examples of marital severity.

All of these passages seem to be taken from the text of *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* with their original order in the text preserved.⁵ Plutarch apparently took great care in selecting appropriate examples; for instance the tale of Spurius Carvilius appears at some remove from the others in Valerius Maximus' text and must therefore have been specifically selected. The cause of the differences in these accounts is therefore not easily accounted for. There exists the possibility that Plutarch was not only borrowing from the text of Valerius Maximus but that they both shared a common older source which recorded these incidents in the same order as found in Plutarch and Valerius Maximus. It is possible that either Plutarch or Valerius Maximus inaccurately recalled the source text's rendition of Gallus' action; however the sources of Valerius Maximus (Livy, Cicero, Varro, and Pompeius Trogus)⁶ make no mention of Sulpicius Gallus and this putative earlier source must remain in the realm of conjecture.

³ Plut. *Brut.* 53.5. Cf. Moles 1983: 249-256.

⁴ Although this single instance is not in itself proof, when taken with the examples discussed in the following paragraph it does appear very likely that Plutarch used Valerius Maximus.

⁵ For these anecdotes in Valerius Maximus see 2.1.4; 6.3.10; 6.3.12 respectively.

⁶ Wardle 1998: 16.

In both cases reasons and motives for the distortion of events are evident. Valerius Maximus wrote in the first few years of Tiberius' reign and it would seem that Livia was still alive at the time of writing as she is referred to in the preface of Book 6:

Whence should I invoke you Pudicitia, most strong bulwark of men and women alike? For you dwell in the hearths set apart for Vesta by the ancient religion, you lie upon the couches of Capitoline Juno, by your constant station do you glorify the summit of the Palatine, sacred dwelling place of the spirits, and the most sacred marriage bed of Julia. By your protection are the signs of boyish youth defended, the pure flower of youth perseveres because of respect for your divine spirit, by your guardianship is the matron's *stola* esteemed: therefore be present and behold the things which you yourself wished into being.

Unde te virorum pariter ac feminarum praecipuum firmamentum, Pudicitia, invocem? tu enim prisca religione consecratos Vestae focos incolis, tu Capitolinae Iunonis pulvinaribus incubas, tu Palatii columnen augustos penates sanctissimumque Iuliae genialem torum adsidua statione celebras, tuo praesidio puerilis aetatis insignia munita sunt, tui numinis respectu sincerus iuventae flos permanet, te custode matronalis stola censetur: ades igitur et <re>cognosce quae fieri ipsa voluisti. (6.praef.).

Here he calls Livia by the name Julia, indicating a date sometime after 14 CE when she was given the name Julia Augusta.⁷ Although most scholars agree that Valerius was writing under Tiberius' reign,⁸ the relatively early date meant that the ideals of the Tiberian period had yet had time to develop. Rather those of Augustus' creation must still have been very pervasive. Indeed, just as Augustus had showed such disapproval for the abandonment of traditional dress by Roman citizens, so Valerius Maximus writes disapprovingly of 'illustrious men who indulged themselves in dress or another style more freely than ancestral custom allowed' *qui ex illustribus viris in veste aut cetero cultu licentius sibi quam mos patrius permittebat indulserunt* (3.6). From the start the

⁷ Dio Cass. 56.46..

⁸ For example, Wardle 1998: 2. For an Augustan date for Valerius Maximus see Bellemore 1989: 67-80.

author makes his intentions clear when he explains his undertaking: ‘for it is necessary to learn what are the bases of that happy life which we lead under the best leader so that their example may also benefit the morals of the present’ *opus est enim cognosci huiusce vitae, quam sub optimo principe felicem agimus, quatenam fuerint elementa, ut eorum quoque respectus aliquid praesentibus moribus prosit* (2.1 praef). The morality that he preaches is, as we shall see, very much in keeping with that promoted by Augustus who is most likely the *optimus princeps* to whom Valerius Maximus refers.

The order in which Valerius Maximus arranges these anecdotes and his thematic grouping thereof aids his didactic objective. The opening chapter of Book 6, the book in which we find the tale of Sulpicius Gallus and his wife, is significantly titled ‘*De Pudicitia*’: a title that sets the tone for the rest of the book. As would be expected from a tract concerning a feminine virtue, women assume a greater degree of textual subjectivity and the book opens with the two most famous tales of this: the narratives of Lucretia and Verginia.

In his preface to book six, Valerius directly addresses the figure of Pudicitia. Despite the text’s interest in deeds of the past he locates his Pudicitia firmly in the present. Langlands has noted how Valerius Maximus uses various devices to emphasise continuity between past and present: ‘the persistence of custom, location and morality’.⁹ Maximus addresses Pudicitia in the present tense (‘you lie upon’, *incubas*), he describes familiar locations (‘the summit of the Palatine’, *Palatii columen*) and makes mention of the imperial family (‘the most sacred marriage bed of Julia, *sanctissimum Juliae genialem torum*). The author also offers us some idea of the themes that will follow by affording female figures, namely Pudicitia and Julia, a degree of agency and makes specific mention of the role of the matron’s *stola* which is celebrated by her guardianship: ‘by your guardianship is the matron’s *stola* esteemed’ *te custode matronalis stola censetur*. By combining issues of gender and dress with the figure of Pudicitia, Valerius Maximus alerts the reader to the thematic setting for the actions of Sulpicius Gallus. This anchoring of the text in the present, despite references to actions

⁹ Langlands 2006: 139.

long past, alerts us to Valerius Maximus' moralizing aim and, by giving Pudicitia dominion over places of national importance such as the *Palatii columen*, Valerius makes it clear that he considers the virtues that the goddess promotes to be of concern to the Roman state.¹⁰ He uses deeds of long ago as positive examples for proposed contemporary action and in this book he is specifically concerned with using the female body as the canvas onto which he projects these actions.

The tale of Gallus and his wife, of unveiling and its consequences, is taken from the third chapter, entitled '*De Severitate*', of Book Six. That Maximus thought Gallus' action harsh is attested to by his use of the adjectives *horridum* to describe Gallus' approach to marital matters and by explaining his *sententia* as *abscisa*. It should however not be judged that Valerius Maximus is disapproving of this or that he is using it as a negative *exemplum* as only a few lines later he writes of the benefits of such strictness: as 'therefore, while this was once what happened to women, their mind stayed away from wrongdoing' *ergo, dum sic olim feminis occurritur, mens earum a delictis aberat* (6.3.12). Indeed Valerius Maximus sees Gallus' stated reason for divorcing his wife as having *aliqua ratio* (6.3.10). In actual fact Valerius Maximus notes that such *severitas* lends itself to the ends of *pudicitia* and he shows this by his explanation of Gallus' reasoning, writing how:

'The law', he (Sulpicius) said, 'sets my eyes as the limit by means of which you may prove your beauty. For them prepare the devices of beauty, for them be pretty, trust yourself to their more definite acquaintance. It is necessary to hold further sight of you, provoked by excessive enticement, in suspicion and as wrongdoing.'

'lex enim' inquit 'tibi meos tantum praefinit oculos, quibus formam tuam adprobes. his decoris instrumenta compara, his esto speciosa, horum te certiori crede notitiae. ulterior tui conspectus supervacua inritatione arcessitus in suspicione et crimine haereat necesse est' (6.3.10).

¹⁰ Mueller 2002: 22.

The rhetorical strategies used by Valerius Maximus to convey his ideological message would suggest that Gallus' stated reasons for divorcing his wife are the inventions of the author and are not genuine quotations. Indeed the language of the passage supports this interpretation. Although the passage above purports to be the very words spoken by Sulpicius Gallus, Valerius Maximus has used language that is typical of the Augustan period and later and it must therefore not be construed as a direct quotation of his sources. In particular the words *supervacua* and *inritationis* do not appear in literature before the Augustan period and *speciosa* is not frequent until after this time while the word *notitia*, apart from one occurrence in Terence (*Heaut.* 1.1.1), does not appear in Latin before the first century.

This is one of the few direct references to the practice of routine veiling amongst the women of Rome or to a law that seemingly required women to be veiled. Valerius Maximus' use of the word *abscisa* to describe Gallus' repudiation of his wife makes it apparent that at the time of writing divorce would not have been an immediate consequence for an act of public exposure. Indeed there is no known law on veiling from the time of Sulpicius Gallus and it is possible that the law that he quotes is an invention of Valerius Maximus' time.

There is some evidence that would suggest that the real-life Sulpicius Gallus used the issue of his wife's veiling only as a pretext for divorce. There are two possible identities for the man about whom Valerius Maximus was writing, Sulpicius Gallus (the consul of 166) or Sulpicius Gallus the grandfather of the former (consul of 243). There are certain elements that commend the elder Sulpicius to us. Living in the mid-third century, he is a rough contemporary of Spurius Carvilius Ruga (consul of 233 BCE) whose divorce was the first recorded one in Roman history and of Publius Sempronius (consul of 232 BCE), whose divorces are also described. Both Plutarch and Valerius group these three men together and view all their divorces as being similarly severe. These calculated similarities would seem to suggest that it was the elder Sulpicius about whom Valerius was writing. If this were the case then it would seem that the reason for the divorce that Sulpicius Gallus gives his wife was indeed the real explanation. This implies that

although it was severe to divorce a woman for unveiling in public, such an action could provoke strong enough outrage to motivate a divorce. The more popular view is that the Sulpicius Gallus to whom Valerius Maximus refers is the more famous consul of 166.¹¹

From Cicero we know that the Sulpicius Gallus, consul of 166, lost his only son (*Amic.* 9.7) and that he bore this loss with ‘greatest courage’ *summa virtute* (*Fam.* 4.6.1). Of his contemporaries, for example Cato the elder and his close friend Aemilius Paullus, he was not alone in suffering such a loss.¹² Both Cato and Paullus are recorded as marrying younger, fertile women and thus having a second chance at fatherhood.¹³ Cato did this after the death of his first wife, while Paullus divorced his wife in order to do so. The reason given by Paullus might equally be described as *abscisa* as he did not offer any suitable grounds for his divorce. From these examples it is possible to hypothesize that Sulpicius Gallus, like his friends, divorced his wife so that he might beget another son. If this was the case then it becomes clear that the unveiling of Sulpicius Gallus’ wife was the excuse that he found to divorce her. This might seem to suggest that veiling was not of such great importance in Roman society but this would ignore the fact that Sulpicius Gallus thought a breach in veiling excuse enough to be a cause for divorce, albeit flimsy. Thus while his action is viewed as extreme by Valerius Maximus it is not viewed as completely irrational but rather as *abscisa*. Therefore, while the younger Sulpicius’ hypothetical action might have been more calculated than that of his grandfather, both of these men show that an act of unveiling could be used as grounds for divorce whatever the real motive might have been.

Despite the fact that during Valerius Maximus’ time the social mores governing veiling appear to have been relaxed, he does not feel obliged to justify why the law limited the sight of Gallus’ wife to him alone or what law it was that did so. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, issues regarding *pudicitia* were of specific concern on public monuments during the Augustan period. The infamous Julian Laws

¹¹ Münzer: *R.E.* s.v. Sulpicius Galus 66.808-811.

¹² In keeping with the precedent set by the spelling of Gallus, with the spelling of Paullus I will also be including the reduplicated l.

¹³ Münzer: *R.E.* s.v. Sulpicius Galus 66.808-811. Cf. Val. Max. 5.10.2

regarding adultery and marriage were inextricably connected with this matronly virtue. Robert Palmer has, however, argued from the literary evidence that there also existed an Augustan law that specifically concerned itself with *pudicitia*.¹⁴ Suetonius explicitly refers to this law when he records how Augustus ‘revised the laws and ratified certain ones afresh, such as one relating to extravagance and to adultery and to *pudicitia*, to electoral corruption and to marriage regulations’ *leges retractavit et quasdam ex integro sanxit, ut sumptuariam et de adulteriis et de pudicitia, de ambitu, de maritandis ordinibus* (Aug. 34.1).¹⁵ Apart from the *lex de pudicitia* these laws are all well known. Aulus Gellius (2.24.14) discussed Augustus’ sumptuary laws in detail, noting how many sesterces could be spent on the Kalends, Ides, Nones or some other festive day, on marriage feasts, and on entertainments. The *lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis* (17 BCE) details exactly what recourse was allowed to a cuckolded husband and the punishments to be meted out on the unfaithful wife and the adulterer, the *lex de ambitu* (18 BCE) penalized bribery by those seeking political office and the *lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus* (18 BCE) limited marriages between the classes.¹⁶ Some scholars argue that the *lex de pudicitia* was not distinct from that concerning adultery, noting that the *Digests* contain no mention of such a law.¹⁷ Considering that each of the others mentioned was a discrete piece of legislation there does not seem to be any reason for Suetonius to have made an exception in this case. Since these laws (listed by Suetonius like the law on *pudicitia*) are well documented, it is doubtful whether the historian would include reference to a law that was not in fact introduced by Augustus.

With the institution of such a law the problem must arise as to how its observance is to be recognized. The tale of Sulpicius Gallus’ wife and the insistence that both *impudicitia* and *pudicitia* are shown in dress demonstrates that this was a viable means of making decisions regarding the moral standing of the woman concerned.¹⁸ The most likely form of dress for showing adherence to the law would have been the veil and in particular the matron’s *palla*. Roman authors often describe this *pudicitia* as being manifest in a

¹⁴ Palmer 1974: 138.

¹⁵ For a full discussion of these laws see Field 1945 and Raditsa 1980: 330-334.

¹⁶ For the motivations and background to Augustus’ moral legislation see the previous chapter.

¹⁷ McGinn 2002: 155.

¹⁸ Langlands 2006: 72.

woman's appearance.¹⁹ Seneca notes in addressing an adulteress that 'you have advertised *impudicitia* with so many proofs, by dress, by gait, by speech, by general appearance', *tot argumentis impudicitiam praescripseritis, cultu, incessu, sermone, facie*, (*Controv.* 2.7.4). These are actions that are likely to encourage a potential seducer and he contrasts them with the *matrona* who wants to put off potential seducers: 'let her go out dressed only so well that she not be unkempt', *prodeat in tantum ornata quantum ne immunda sit*, (*Controv.* 2.7.3). Thus if *impudicitia* is indicated by dress so too is its opposite. A relief taken from an altar in Rome dating from the first century BCE (Figure 21) shows an image of *pudicitia* that is made manifest and placed on display. Here Quinta Claudia, who was suspected of loose behaviour because of her style of dress and the varied ways in which she arranged her hair (*Ov. Fast.* 4.309), pulls the ship carrying the cult statue of Magna Mater from the mud in which it had become stuck. Despite the fact that Claudia's *pudicitia* was traditionally concealed by her flamboyant manner of dress, the artist finds the modest veil the best way to depict a matron of such great virtue. The veil is used by this artist to convey the ideals embodied by the notion of *pudicitia* just as it was used on coins to personify them.

The institution of Augustus' *lex de pudicitia*, as well as the other laws mentioned by Suetonius, most likely dated from some time shortly before 20 BCE. When Augustus had last taken on the morality of Rome (when he held censorial power in 28 BCE) seems to have been the date for the restoration of the various cults of Pudicitia.²⁰ Further evidence for the link between the cult of Pudicitia and a *lex de pudicitia* comes from the time of Domitian. The Flavian emperor's interest in the cult and the inclusion of Pudicitia in the Forum Transitorium seems to have been coupled with a reiteration of the virtue of *pudicitia* in the legal sphere.²¹ Indeed, just as Domitian re-enforced the Augustan laws on marriage and adultery, Martial writes how 'Pudicitia was bidden to enter our homes' *intrare domos iussa Pudicitia est* (*Epig.* 6.7.2.). That *pudicitia* was of thematic interest to the first *Princeps* is shown by the reiteration of the subject during both times in which he held censorial power and the language of Valerius Maximus'

¹⁹ Langlands 2006: 39.

²⁰ Palmer 1974: 138.

²¹ For Domitian and Pudicitia see Chapter 7 pages 123-125.

invocation of Pudicitia (by your guardianship is the matron's *stola* esteemed' *te custode matronalis stola censetur*)²² suggests a legal setting, made more noticeable by the word *custode* (a particularly legalistic word), and supports the notion that the proper dress of a matron played a role in the Augustan laws.²³

The Augustan narratives surrounding the formation of these cults stress certain virtues that were important to worshippers at the shrine of Pudicitia. Livy lists these when he voices Verginia's objections to being banned from the cult of Pudicitia Patricia: 'that she entered the temple both chaste and a patrician, that she had one husband to whom she had been led as a virgin' *et patriciam et pudicam in Patriciae Pudicitiae templum ingressam, ut uni nuptam ad quem uirgo deducta sit* (Liv. 10.23.1). These are the qualities of *pudicitia* and women may have demonstrated theirs by worshipping at the cult site of this goddess. In Figure 22A a worshipper at the shrine of this veiled goddess is shown veiling herself in turn.²⁴ That the veil was worn by goddess and worshippers alike showed that it was an important signifier of this moral virtue; a woman might therefore prove her *pudicitia* by confirming herself to be a veiled worshipper of Pudicitia and by wearing the garment in imitation of the epitome of virtue.

The attention paid by Augustus to the virtue of *pudicitia*, to the manifestation thereof (Pudicitia) and to the theoretical *lex de pudicitia* makes it likely that these factors influenced Valerius Maximus' account of Sulpicius Gallus' reasons for divorcing his wife. Because of the new emphasis placed on the veil during the Augustan period, it does seem likely that Valerius Maximus might have incorporated veiling into his narrative of the past—especially when commenting on the righteousness of *pudicitia* in marriage.

Other Latin sources do not explicitly explain the codes of veiling that would have prompted a reaction such as that of Sulpicius Gallus but instead maintain almost

²² Here the word *censetur* also suggests the office of the censor and his role in deciding on moral legislation.

²³ McGinn 2002: 155.

²⁴ Although the head of the woman in this relief is badly damaged, we are able to ascertain that she is veiled by the bend of her right arm and the drape of cloth that she is lifting in this hand.

complete silence on the topic. Yet often the silence is itself enlightening. Cultural norms and imperatives are often left unexplained as a writer could freely assume that his readership would already possess the knowledge with which to interpret the shared protocols. So the veiling practices of women tend to cause mention only when they go unobserved. We know that Gallus' wife was meant to be veiled because she broke the implicit rule that women are veiled. The little explanation we have of female veiling therefore must come from sources that are themselves outside of the metropolis. Plutarch, speaking as one who is influenced by a culture peripheral to that of Rome, has to explain that amongst the Romans 'it is more usual for women to go out in public with their heads veiled, and for men to go out with their heads uncovered' συνηθέστερον δὲ ταῖς μὲν γυναιξὶν ἐγκεκαλυμμέναις, τοῖς δ' ἀνδράσιν ἀκαλύπτοις εἰς τὸ δημόσιον προίεναι (Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267).

Plutarch writes this in response to the question of why it is that Roman women go unveiled to the funerals of their parents. He suggests the reason that, as it is more common for women to go about veiled, they do the opposite in times of mourning. Whether Plutarch is referencing the Greek or Roman tradition is not explicitly stated, however he does imbed the discussion in that of other Roman practices. When Plutarch references a Greek tradition he unambiguously states so. Indeed he describes how 'in Greece, when misfortune occurs, the women shear their hair while the men keep theirs long because it is customary for the latter to be shorn and the former to have long hair' παρ' Ἑλλησιν ὅταν δυστυχία τις γένηται, κείρονται μὲν αἱ γυναῖκες, κομῶσι δ' οἱ ἄνδρες, ὅτι τοῖς μὲν τὸ κείρεσθαι ταῖς δὲ τὸ κομᾶν σύνηθές ἐστιν (Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267). This Greek tradition, like the veil, involved the head and would therefore create conflict within a narrative involving veiling as they would both act upon the same site. Thus it is safe to assume that Plutarch here discusses a Roman practice.²⁵

The conclusion to which the Greek author comes is itself problematic since Plutarch decides that women do not veil at funerals not because of the reversal of what is

²⁵ MacMullen wrongly assumes that Plutarch speaks of women in the Greek parts of the Empire (1980: 208).

normative in other times but because ‘perhaps it is necessary for sons to honour their fathers as though they were gods and for daughters to mourn as though their fathers were dead’ πότερον, ὅτι τιμᾶσθαι μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρρένων δεῖ τοὺς πατέρας ὡς θεοὺς πενθεῖσθαι δ' ὑπὸ τῶν θυγατέρων ὡς τεθνηκότας (Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267). Plutarch’s primary assumption that Roman women were unveiled at the funerals of their parents is problematic. Nonius quotes Varro’s *De Vita Populi Romani* and says ‘as a result of which, women in adverse times and in mourning, when they then lay down all delicate garments and luxury that had later become fashionable, take up the *ricinium*’ *ex quo mulieres in adversis rebus ac luctibus, cum omnem vestitum delictiorem ac luxuriosum postea institutum ponunt, ricinia sumunt* (Non. 869 L). This suggests that the *ricinium* was the mourning veil of the Romans and Cicero cements our assumption when he connects this veil with funerals. He quotes from the Twelve Tables, explaining how these laws limited the number of *ricinia* allowed at funerals to three (Cic. *Leg.* 2.23.59). Some might argue that, while this might have been the general practice, Plutarch is explicitly discussing the funeral of a father and that perhaps Romans varied from tradition in this instance. This is, however, unlikely as Plutarch’s first suggested reason as to why women go with heads uncovered to these funerals is because they mourn their fathers as dead and indeed it is only sons that mourn them as gods and thus not as they might mourn others. That is to say, Plutarch makes it explicit that women mourn their fathers as dead, as they would any other dead person. We also know that when women mourned the dead they covered their heads. Therefore women must have mourned their fathers as they did any other dead man, with their heads veiled. Plutarch must, by his own logic, be mistaken in his assertion that women went unveiled at the funerals of their fathers.

Allowing for this confusion, how is Plutarch’s account of Sulpicius Gallus’ action to be understood? The context of the two discussions is very different as Valerius Maximus discusses the way in which the veil relates to sexual morality while Plutarch’s interest is with the practice at funerals. Plutarch’s text requires that veiling be understood by the reader as a desirable and normative practice as it was understood to be by males in the Greek world. Plutarch inverts the sense of the examples of *severitas* given by Valerius

Maximus to suit this purpose. He equates the punishment of women for veiling with the other two examples of callousness but neglects to include any sense of the original's didactic quality. It is perhaps the funerary context that causes the confusion in Plutarch's account.

Because Plutarch is dealing with veiling in a funerary context, it is likely that his hypothesis has been shaped by the austerity of the sumptuary legislation regarding veiling at funerals. As was observed in Cicero's quotation from The Twelve Tables (*Leg. 2.23.59*), in a general attempt to curb ostentation (which included a limit being placed on the number of purple garments and flute-players allowed at funerals) a limit was placed on veiling. In this context the veil must be understood as an item of female luxury that is ostentatious and therefore undesirable while in Valerius Maximus it is a tool for the protection of female modesty.

A further more practical reason for this disparity between the two accounts is textual. The Latin phrases for veiled (*capite operto*) and unveiled (*capite aperto*) are textually very similar and are easily confused. That the text of *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* is open to this misunderstanding is shown in the Paris manuscript which reads *quod eam capite operto foris versatam cognoverat*. The Greek expressions for these states are likewise easily confused, being ἀφελκυσσαμένην (unveiled) as opposed to ἐφελκυσσαμένην (veiled) as found in Plutarch's passage. Furthermore the exact statement of the part of the body veiled (κατὰ κεφαλῆς) is unusual and has caused much confusion on its use in other texts among many modern commentators.²⁶ The use of the genitive κεφαλῆς after κατὰ is an unusual expression for something that must presumably sit upon the head. More generally this construction would mean 'down from the head' but when used in conjunction with ἐφελκυσσαμένην the sense becomes 'hanging down from the head' and thus in essence resting upon it. It is not clear whether it emerges from a misreading by Valerius Maximus of an earlier source or by Plutarch of Valerius.

²⁶ For interpretations of κατὰ and the genitive cf. Oster 1988: 486; Murphy-O'Connor 1976: 621.

Despite their contradicting accounts of the same tale, both writers in effect see veiling as a desirable condition. Valerius Maximus discusses the veil in the context of a broader discussion of *pudicitia* in which the veil plays an important part and Plutarch examines it in the context of funerals, a context that is affected by sumptuary legislation even though Plutarch seems unaware of it. Plutarch, because of the cultural divide between Greeks and Romans, might have misunderstood restrictions placed on veiling by laws such as The Twelve Tables and expressed dismay that women were seemingly prevented from veiling. On the other hand, we must be wary of taking Valerius Maximus' version at face value and must consider his stated didactic intent and the influence that the Augustan moral reforms and legislation had on it. Whatever the case may be, both sources share the opinion that women are best veiled and use the same exemplum in different contexts to make this point.

CHAPTER 7

THE VEIL IN AUGUSTAN ART

The previous chapter provided evidence that the textual presence of the Roman veil is more complex than has previously been assumed. This chapter aims to examine the iconography of veiling in the Augustan period and the problems associated with it. Scholars have often misinterpreted evidence provided by artistic sources; for example, those making use of the representations on Greek vases have interpreted these as being faithful descriptions of daily life—ignoring the specific conventions of the medium that disrupt any attempt to depict ‘reality’ faithfully. Since clothing covers so great a portion of the human form its representation must be of constant concern to the artist. Therefore any meaningful understanding of the ‘reality’ of dress, and the veil especially is hindered by the adherence to the iconographical conventions of ancient art which naturally obscure a true reflection of the ‘real’.

Commentators on the art of ancient Greece are certainly not unique in their habit of interpreting art as an exact reflection of reality.¹ Over the years many Romanists have made surprising claims in this regard. W. A. Becker, when attempting to recreate daily life in Rome, confidently states that ‘several articles of dress always remained the same’, an understanding which he reaches from ‘evidence of the unaltered condition of national dress...found in the numerous monuments of art’.² What Becker and so many others have failed to comprehend is that these monuments show only highly idealized reflections of their subjects. Although one of the most striking aspects of Roman art is

¹ In this chapter I shall continue to draw on Greek examples to enlighten the Roman discussion. This is particularly necessary in the artistic context because, while the artistic traditions of these two cultures are not identical, there is a continuum between the Greek and the Roman. This translation of the Greek into the Roman is both a result of the natural interchange of artistic ideas and a consequence of the intentional emulation of the Greek by the Romans due to the notion held by the Romans of the superiority of the earlier Greek art.

² Becker 1886: 431.

its so-called veristic style, which gives the viewer the impression that they are in fact looking at the faces of ancient Rome, these sculptures in fact employ a set of stylistic conventions that serve to give the impression of naturalism.³ We are able to see this system of artistic idealization at work in depictions of Livia which never (bar one example in Barcelona) show her as aged despite the fact that Tacitus describes her as extremely old at the time of her death: 'Julia Augusta died at a very advanced age', *Julia Augusta mortem obiit, aetate extrema* (Tac. *Ann.* 5.1).⁴ This idealization represents the subject to the viewer as the artist wanted. Thus Roman generals in the republican period might have chosen to depict themselves as divine beings after the fashion of the Hellenistic kings. Men such as Sulla (who was the first to do so) had equestrian statues of themselves erected, a practice which although seemingly overly ostentatious to the Roman mind conveyed a strong message of military prowess.⁵ Sulla wished to create an impression of his own military prowess and so he chose a portrait type suited to this aim. Likewise it was desirable for Livia to be seen as a fertile matron (despite the unfruitful nature of her marriage to the Princeps) and so her portraits reflected this even at the expense of accuracy.

The clothing shown in a monument or statue is as rhetorically powerful as the pose or type thereof. Thus if we were to accept the artistic evidence we would be led to believe that Roman men wore only the toga. The reconstructions that are found in works such as Wilson (1938) describe the complicated mechanics of constructing and wearing a toga just as the Romans themselves might have done.⁶ Caroline Vout has convincingly argued that the daily dress of a Roman man tended towards 'tunics, trousers and cloaks' and that what we see depicted in art is not what the Romans really wore but what they wished to see themselves as wearing.⁷ Therefore, because of the public nature of much Roman art, the images of clothing can at no point be understood as separate from the social and political context in which they were created. In order to achieve this understanding it is important to account for the two fundamental forces at work when a

³ Matheson in Kleiner & Matheson 2000: 125.

⁴ This statue dates from the 1st century CE at which time Livia was past middle age.

⁵ Zanker 1998: 7.

⁶ Wilson 1938: Plates 27 and 28.

⁷ Vout 1996: 209.

person looks at a work of art: the affective and the cognitive. The affective component refers to the orientation and force of a person's feelings towards an object whereas the cognitive refers to the meaning that the person associates with the object.⁸ The Romans seemed well aware of these processes so when Galba planned to overthrow Nero he deplored the current state of affairs in a speech made standing behind *imagines* of Nero's victims: 'he ascended the tribunal, with many busts of those who had been proscribed and killed by Nero positioned before him', *conscendisset tribunal propositis ante se damnatorum occisorumque a Nerone quam plurimis imaginibus* (Suet. *Galb.* 10.1). As a result, when we consider representations of veiling in art we must at all times bear the following factors in mind: the rhetorical intent of the source, the feelings generated in the viewers of such works and what they associate with the veil.

In order to understand all three of these factors the history of the iconography of veiling first needs to be understood. A Roman audience, like one today, would have brought to its interpretation of any given text the knowledge of those that had been seen before.⁹ This dialogue between the texts of the present and those of the past gives strength to a rhetorical objective by enabling both the affective and the cognitive forces. By allowing for the association between past and present, this exchange creates a context for the operations of the cognitive force in that the viewer is able to draw on the knowledge of past works from which direction is given to the affective.

The iconography of veiling, like its vocabulary, can be dated back to the times of the Assyrian Empire. In Figure 23 we see an image of veiled women taken from an Assyrian palace relief that dates to about 730 BCE. Images such as this one are reflected in art of the archaic period. When we compare Figures 24 and 25 we are able to see a marked similarity in the way the veil is depicted. In neither case does it cover the face of the wearer nor is it shown as being attached or held in place in any way; instead these veils sit upon the heads of the subjects like strange hats. Perhaps we may discover the reason

⁸ Elder and Cobb 1983: 58.

⁹ Throughout this dissertation I will refer to both artistic and literary works as 'texts' as I am using a similar system to decode both. Therefore to use a different word to refer to each type would be create an artificial distinction.

for this when we examine images in which artists have attempted to depict the veil in a more realistic fashion, covering the face of the wearer and being held in place. Figures 24 and 25 reveal the rather bizarre results of attempts to do so. In these cases the wearer seems to sit under a canopy formed by the veil that she holds over herself with one hand.

These eccentricities are direct results of an artist's attempt to conform to both artistic and social ideals simultaneously. There is an onus on any artist to 'make visible' and the veil is a barrier to this. The endeavour to 'reveal' is further complicated by the idealizing qualities of ancient art. To reveal and idealize seem to have been some of the dictates of the ancient artistic mode and they take precedence over any obligation to reflect 'real life'. In order to achieve some sort of compromise between these two competing realities, artists used a visual equivalent of phrases such as *caput velare*. They suggested acts of veiling rather than showing the figure as veiled. So as to understand how both Roman and Greek artists achieved this we will have to examine what has been termed the 'ἀνακάλυψις gesture'. An exploration of this phenomenon in Greek art will show that the appearance of the matching gesture in Roman art is not without precedence, a phenomenon about which, to my knowledge, no scholarship is available.¹⁰

This name denotes a gesture of unveiling which scholars all too often associate with the ἀνακαλυπτήρια: the ritual unveiling of the bride. Often when this gesture is present scholars have used it interpret various (and unlikely scenes) as evoking the unveiling of the bride.¹¹ The gesture itself can suggest either veiling, unveiling or at times is simply shorthand for 'veil'. The motif is very old and appears in Greek art soon after the seventh century and rapidly becomes a common artistic motif that endures through into the Roman period.¹² In its most unambiguous form it is comprised of a gesture (as found in Figure 26) whereby the subject uses the hand furthest from the viewer to lift a part of her veil up and extend it forward. In the example of Figure 26 this gesture is very pronounced but in later, especially classical, examples it is much reduced and is comprised of a simple touching of the veil. This motif is further simplified over time

¹⁰ For discussions of the 'ἀνακάλυψις gesture' see Galt 1931, Llewellyn-Jones 2002 and Cairns 1996.

¹¹ Cf. Säflund 1970: 105.

¹² Llewellyn-Jones 2002: 99.

until the gesture is no longer even performed with a veil; instead any available piece of cloth is used in its place. So in Figure 27 we see a woman performing the ‘ἀνακάλυψις gesture’ by touching the sleeve of her χιτῶν while another in Figure 28 does likewise with the κόλπος of her χιτῶν.

However the name ἀνακάλυψις is misleading as it leads the reader to suppose that all occurrences of this gesture describe acts of unveiling. This is not in fact the case as in many instances it seems more likely that the subject is veiling herself rather than the opposite. Such an example may be found in Figure 29, a red figure amphora on which the rescue of Leto from the giant Tityos is depicted. In this image the artist has taken great pains to show that this is a moment of veiling. The folds of cloth in which she attempts to hide her head are deep and she lifts her veil far above her head; in addition the artist has furthered his attempt to represent death by showing Leto’s veil falling over her inner-arm. Llewellyn-Jones has used examples such as these to argue convincingly that this gesture is one of either veiling or unveiling and suggests that it should simply be termed the ‘veil-gesture’.¹³ This veil-gesture seems to have been a sort of iconographic shorthand for ‘veil’ and this allows the artist to negotiate a compromise between social reality in which respectable women were veiled and artistic reality in which revelation and visibility are of supreme importance.

This tendency is not limited to Greek art but is manifest in the art of the Roman Empire. Because of the public nature of much Roman art, visibility and recognisability were of supreme importance in order that the rhetorical affect of the image be preserved. Thus the veil-gesture had great utility value to for the Roman artist.

In the same way that the veil-gesture is an artistic marker for the proper sartorial conduct of women, the veil acts as a signifier of the proper sexual conduct of the women who wear it. The Roman personification of the moral state that the veil denotes is Pudicitia, a personification that encompassed a complex milieu of moral (and sexual) ideals.¹⁴

¹³ Llewellyn-Jones 2002: 108.

¹⁴ For the importance of *pudicitia* to the writers and lawmakers of the Augustan period see pages 100-107.

Images of Pudicitia found on coins show her standing or enthroned, putting her hand over her breast, bidding silence with her fingers at her lips and sacrificing at her own altar.¹⁵ In these cases she is always either veiled or in some way fiddling with her veil. This adjustment by Pudicitia of her veil exactly mirrors the veil-gesture found in Greek art. In Figure 30 we see her using the hand furthest from the viewer to raise her veil and extend it forward and we even see the more stylized variation of this theme in Figure 31 in which she merely touches the edge of her *palla*.

This phenomenon is not limited to coins of Pudicitia but was common also in the art of public statuary. In these cases women such as that in Figure 32 are said to be performing the ‘Pudicitia pose’ whereby the arms of the subject were pressed close to the body with the left arm held laterally at waist level and the right bent upwards at the elbow. As in Figures 32 and 3, subjects in this pose often perform a modified version of the veil-gesture, clasping or adjusting their veils. Despite the frequency of this sort of pose in imperial sculpture, Elizabeth Bartman in her study of Livia’s iconography has suggested that wearing the veil was not imperative for Roman women for the simple reason that Livia does not appear veiled in all of her portraits.¹⁶ What Bartman ignores are the more subtle representations of the veil-gesture. Figure 33 depicts the figure of a woman taken from an early Augustan grave-relief. In this context we would expect women to be veiled as nearly all women are veiled on funerary reliefs, but this woman’s head is uncovered. In spite of this, the way in which she clasps the garment is recognisable as a veil-gesture and in this context would indicate a motion of veiling rather than unveiling. Even more apparent is the large amount of loose cloth that hangs in swathes about the neck of the subject. It can safely be assumed that this loose cloth represents part of a garment that is intended for use as a veil. Even in Greek art, even without the accompanying veil-gesture, loose cloth around the neck had been used to indicate the presence of the veil. An image of Artemis (Figure 34) from a belly amphora by the Andokides Painter shows the goddess with cloth hanging loosely at the back of her neck. This cloth is unmistakably a veil that has either slipped or been pushed back. It is

¹⁵ Mattingly and Sydenham, *RIC II*. 1926: p. 388, nn. 406, 407; p. 477-478, nn. 1032, 1033, 1042, 1043.

¹⁶ Bartman 1999: 45.

therefore important that these two ways of depicting veiling are taken into account when we address the iconography of the veil in Roman art.

The veil occurs most commonly in Roman art (during both republican and imperial periods) in the funerary context. As we saw above in Nonius (869 L), the *ricinium* was the veil that was used in times of mourning and so it might be reasonable to assume that women such as the one in Figure 35 are wearing this veil. However in many cases the veiled woman depicted on the relief is not shown in a position of mourning but rather as she was when still alive.

We learn from the inscriptions that accompany Roman funerary portraits that nearly every one of these women was a former slave. This fact to some degree influences what the women in these portraits might be expected to wear. The *liberti* who commissioned these portraits display their pleasure in their new status by wearing the toga (thus naming their occupations) and proudly listing their new *tria nomina*.¹⁷ Just as the toga proclaimed the freedom of the *libertus*, his wife's status was also shown by her dress. As slaves they had been allowed no legitimate family and so as freedmen they had no ancestral busts to display. For this reason family, and its associated ideals, is of singular importance in this genre of art. Even amongst the aristocratic classes great importance is afforded to matters of the home and family. For example, the *Laudatio Turiae* places great emphasis on her *domestica bona*, listed as *pudicitia*, *obsequium*, *comitas* and *facilitas* and her skill at wool working (*CIL* 6.1527). The dress depicted in funerary reliefs would be in keeping with these themes and thus we can assume that, in keeping with this, *libertae* are depicted as wearing the *palla*. As the dress that identified a lawfully married woman, the *palla* would act as another indicator of the free status of its wearer who while enslaved could not be legally married.

The styles in which women are depicted as wearing their veils vary. Most commonly the women in funerary portraits are shown in the Pudicitia Pose as seen in Figure 36. The popularity of this pose is perhaps explained by the emphasis that it places on the *palla*,

¹⁷ *CIL* 4. 9574.

the mark of a respectable matron, in that it is tightly wrapped around the body and, by use of the veil-gesture, denotes an act of veiling. Other less popular poses also drew attention to veiling. The Fundilia Type statue seen in the figure on the right of Figure 37 presents a pose dating from the Hellenistic period that typically had the right arm bent at the waist and the left arm lowered with the veil drawn tightly over it. The veil usually covers the head of the subject and hangs down from the left shoulder to waist height where it is held in place by the right hand. While the Pudicitia Pose was popular from the mid-first century BCE until the end of the Augustan period, it would seem that the Fundilia type was first used in Roman funerary art in the final years of Augustus' reign.¹⁸ The figure on the left in Figure 37 provides an example of the third of the more common types found in this genre of art. This woman is an illustration of the Berlin Type, named after a statue in Berlin dating from 400 BCE. The heads of Berlin Type statues are not commonly veiled but instead the veil sits around the neck and is grasped by the left hand at the level of the breasts and then hangs over the right hand that clasps a piece of it. The veil-gesture indicates that although the heads of Berlin type statues are not visibly veiled they are intended to be understood as such. Outside of the sphere of funerary art there exist few images of women that date from the republican period. However this was to change under Augustus during whose reign a new emphasis is placed on depictions of the female form.

Just as the funerary portraits of freed slaves reflected their new social position, so art serves as a reflection of society as a whole. Thus a new visual vocabulary while reflecting on the condition of the state may also serve as an attempt to bring that condition into being. If a people define themselves by what they wear, as Virgil does when he describes the Romans as 'the toga clad race' *gens togata* (Verg. *Aen.* 1.282), it may be assumed that clothing will then become instrumental in a programme which purports to reinstate traditional morality which is reflected by traditional dress. Suetonius suggests that Augustus was not unaware of the political implications of national costume when he states how Augustus 'even supported the return to ancient appearance and dress' and made it enforceable when 'he gave this business over to the

¹⁸ Kleiner 1977: 166

aediles, in order that no-one hereafter should appear in the Forum or Circus unless he had taken off his cloak to put on the toga', *etiam habitum vestitumque pristinum reducere studuit... negotium aedilibus dedit, ne quem posthac paterentur in foro circove nisi positis lacernis togatum consistere* (Suet. Aug. 40.5).¹⁹ The idea of the national dress becomes especially important in view of the late Republican predilection for foreign and Hellenized luxury (especially with regard to dress). Women in particular were accused of this and were regarded as having abandoned the traditional role of *custos domi*, an idea that allied a woman's body to her husband's household.²⁰ A Roman wife was expected to maintain her chastity and preserve her husband's property while bearing children and providing for them all through her domestic endeavours.²¹

This programme was driven by a 'new pictorial language' in which women were used as signs of civic health and morality.²² Augustan propaganda had to a degree created and defined the notion that the civil wars and the fall of the republic bore a relationship to gender and the proper expressions of sexuality, a gender based problematization of the civil conflict.²³ With this link between the public and private having been cemented by Augustus, the tendency to gender the narrative of anxiety regarding the state and understand the responsibility and the remedy for civil strife as lying with women did not end as a result of Augustus' restoration—rather it intensified. Augustan art reinforced a previously minor trend to use the female figure to personify peoples and places and thus represent the subjects of the empire. In these cases the gender of the figure plays an important role in expressing the subjugation of these peoples to Rome.²⁴ Here the suppression of barbarian to Rome is mirrored by the relative status of Roman women to their husbands. Thus nations that acquiesce fully to Roman rule, obeying the emperor as a good wife does her husband, are depicted dressed in matron's garb.²⁵ Following this tradition the unknown tribe personified in Figure 38 wears a very matronly veil and the

¹⁹ For Suetonius' account of Augustus' awareness of the political implications of national costume, see page 94.

²⁰ For a fuller discussion of this, see Pearce 1974.

²¹ Pearce 1974: 17.

²² Zanker 1998: 1.

²³ Severy 2003: 43.

²⁴ Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007: 47.

²⁵ Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007: 49.

woman is returned to her rightful private place within the family just as the tribe is incorporated into the family of the empire, the head of which was Augustus.²⁶ Thus the 'woman' who is potentially harmful when outside of the family is made safe by her return to her correct place.

Once female entry into the political and public sphere of war and the state had been established as ruinous, attempts to remedy this by restoring women to the private sphere inevitably further politicized them. The figure of the emperor's wife Livia and the other women of the Julio-Claudian clan were particularly important in this regard because as members of the ruling house they linked themes of regeneration and renewal to the figure of the *Princeps*.²⁷ Furthermore their images served to secure the impression of legitimate succession since his daughter Julia and Livia were instrumental in terms of his dynastic planning. They therefore conveyed images not only of bounty and chastity but also allowed for the lasting peace of Rome under the Augustan line.

The most effective and inclusive way of conveying these messages was through public works of art that were accessible to a populace of varying literacy. The most important of these monuments is the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, a shrine consisting of a marble altar in a walled enclosure that was erected on the Campus Martius by the senate in honour of Augustus' safe return from Gaul and Spain.²⁸ This monument was the first to represent women and children as participants in a public religious ceremony. Here mortal women are portrayed as near equals of senators and priests thus marking a revolution in the sphere of public art. The altar was dedicated on the 30th of January 9 BCE, the birthday of the empress Livia, and it would be wrong to assume that this was coincidental. Kleiner has noted that, although it was the peace achieved through Augustus' campaigning that the altar ostensibly celebrated, the foundation of the imperial family

²⁶ Another example of this may be found on coins that depict *Judaea Capta* on which Judaea is depicted as a veiled and therefore submissive female.

²⁷ For a fuller discussion of this see Chapter 5.

²⁸ For fuller discussions than it is possible to provide here see Weinstock 1960, Toynbee 1961, Simon 1967, Zanker 1997 and Sebesta 1997.

and the *concordia* thereof were equally important themes of the altar and were the province of Livia rather than her husband.²⁹

The women depicted on the processional frieze on the south side of the altar (Figures 9A and B) are all part of the imperial household and are dressed accordingly. Although not every woman's head is covered by the veil those whose are not, like the central female figure, perform the veil-gesture. Although the identities of the other women on the processional frieze are difficult to clarify because their normally contemporary attributes such as coiffure have been idealized and archaized, the woman depicted in Figure 9C is certainly Livia. Here Livia arrests the eye by breaking the line of the procession and she is the only figure who, along with Augustus, wears both a veil and a laurel wreath. The veil iterates the image of traditional femininity that is conveyed by her downward gaze and her assumption of a slightly modified *Pudicitia* pose. These details along with the eschewal of the fashionable *nodus* hairstyle mean that Livia, like the other veiled women of the *Ara Pacis*, is presented in a far more idealized version than the men. Livia's positioning directly in front of Tiberius with the subsequent male being Drusus further compounds the ideal of sexual virtue (and its corresponding religious virtue) denoted by her veiled head—the signifier of beneficially productive femininity.

These virtues, especially her fertility as shown by the proximity of Tiberius and Drusus, connect her with another veiled figure on this monument. Bartman has noted how the imagery of the *Ara Pacis* encouraged acknowledgement of the 'divine descent' of the women on the processional frieze by including female deities and personifications.³⁰ By virtue of this Livia, as the 'mother' of the state and the Julio-Claudian *gens*, is associated with another veiled figure from the frieze on the southeast side (see Figure 9D). This figure has variously been identified as Venus, Pax, Tellus and Italia. She is surrounded by children, fruit, flowers and animals: all benefits brought about by peace and its accompanying fertility. This imagery clearly associates this full-breasted fecund figure with benefits to the state and makes her specific identification irrelevant. Her veil might

²⁹ Kleiner 1992: 90.

³⁰ Bartman 1999: 88.

at first seem out of place considering the revealing nature of her clothing through which the contours of body are clearly visible. As we saw in Ovid *Ars Am.* 1.31-32, revealing clothing is at odds with the respectable figure of the *matrona* who bears children and ensures the stability of the state.³¹ However in the case of Figure 9D the flimsy garments serve to emphasise these very qualities by revealing breasts heavy with milk and belly slightly swollen with fecundity. Like the images of abundance surrounding her the veil that she wears facilitates this interpretation, identifying her as a *matrona* whose sexuality is at the service of her husband and the state.³² This figure, like all the veiled women on the *Ara Pacis*, describes the manner in which under the new Principate the private was now of benefit to the state and how the Augustan government had reinstated that old time morality, the abandonment of which had allowed for the chaos of the civil wars.

The friezes of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* were artistic manifestations of the Augustan legislation that viewed the public peace and social stability as particularly dependant upon the proper conduct of women in domestic life. Augustus' show of reinstating sexual morality formed part of the pretence of the restoration of the republic.³³ The *Princeps* was attempting to justify and secure his rule by comparing the ills of the recent past with the virtue of what went before and pretending a return to the latter. The Augustan model was the blueprint for many later attempts at creating both the appearance and reality of social and political stability. Emperors such as Domitian distilled the principles of this first programme, thereby informing us as to what the Romans thought were most essential to achieving these goals. It would therefore be sensible to examine an example of this as it will in some ways enlighten our understanding of the role that the veil played in the art of the Augustan period and the cognitive and affective forces that this prototype allowed for in later times.

The Emperor Domitian, the third of the Flavian dynasty, used the Augustan model in an attempt to assert his dynastic right to rule. Domitian's strategy to strengthen the moral

³¹ See page 61.

³² Castriota's discussion of the *Ara Pacis* offers a worthwhile account of the imagery of abundance on this monument (Castriota 1995). However the author completely neglects the role of women of the Imperial household and recalls only mythical women.

³³ See Chapter 5.

fibre of the Romans was painted as a remedy to the excesses of Nero just as Augustus' had been a response to the immorality of the late republic. The Flavian emperor showed a special interest in matters regarding chastity: in 89 he revived the Julian laws on marriage and adultery and in 82 and 83 he executed three Vestals for breaking their vows of chastity. Martial notes how the re-enactment of the Augustan legislation was linked to the figure of Pudicitia when he writes how, with the renewal of the Julian laws, 'Pudicitia was bidden to enter our homes', *intrare domos iussa Pudicitia est* (*Epig.* 6.7.2).

This personification of sexual virtue was always veiled and was a key feature of Domitian's socio-political strategy. Pudicitia also seemed to have been a figure of importance at the beginning of the Empire when the cults of Pudicitia Plebeia and Pudicitia Patricia were renewed under Augustus. The original foundations of both these cults seem to date to the early republic and both were occasioned by some sort of civic crisis. Robert Palmer has convincingly dated the foundation of the cult of Pudicitia Plebeia to a period after many patrician women were convicted of poisoning their husbands.³⁴ These women argued that they had administered strengthening draughts and Palmer has suggested that this medicine might have been intended as an aphrodisiac (a medicine serving the immoral cause of lust). In response to this a new deity was sculptured in the image of Fortuna Muliebris because Fortuna was goddess who could not only protect virginity (Fortuna Virgo), turn hearts from lust (Fortuna Verticordia) and set restrictions upon female sexuality (Fortuna Bonae Spei and Fortuna Virilis), but also remind women of perpetual monogamy (Fortuna Muliebris/Mater Matuta)—ideals inherent in the ceremonial requirements of Pudicitia.³⁵ The cult statue of Fortuna Muliebris, like that of both Pudicitiae, was heavily veiled in garments that Servius Tullius supposedly gave to her for the protection of her *pudor*. The cult of Plebeian Chastity was founded after the senate attempted to ward off disaster by decreeing two

³⁴ An occurrence that Livy likens to a secession of the plebs: 'and so it was recalled from the annals that once at a time of a secession of the plebs...' *itaque memoria ex annalibus repetita in secessionibus quondam plebis* (8.18.12).

³⁵ Palmer 1974: 122.

days of religious observance.³⁶ This occasioned conflict between the patricians and plebeians when Verginia, a woman of patrician birth, married to a plebeian consul had attempted to pray at the shrine of Pudicitia Patricia. She was prevented from doing so on the grounds that she was no longer a patrician as she was married to a plebeian man. As a result of this Verginia established, in her own home, a cult to plebeian chastity that shared all of the characteristics of its patrician counterpart.

The cults of Pudicitia were the exclusive domain of women and no man could be involved in the proceedings. For this reason a woman had to be found by Augustus who might renew these cults. Livia, who was like Verginia a patrician woman married to a (nominally) plebeian man,³⁷ re-established the cult of Pudicitia Plebeia³⁸ while the most likely candidate for the restoration of the shrine of Pudicitia Patricia was Augustus' daughter Julia, a patrician.³⁹ The shrine of Pudicitia Plebeia was situated on the *Vicus Longus* near what was to become the *Forum Transitorium*. The building of this forum was part of the wider building programme initiated by Domitian as part of his *renovatio urbis* in an attempt to inaugurate his position as a restorer of the city and of its morality. We may assume from his advocacy of the cult and (as I argue) his incorporation of the figure of Pudicitia into the friezes of the Forum Transitorium that this shrine, so near to the focus of his public works programme, was rebuilt by Domitian.⁴⁰ An examination of these friezes, and the moral mood that they convey may therefore enlighten the earlier restoration of the cult by Augustus.

The Friezes of the *Forum Transitorium* forcefully convey the theme of moral and religious regeneration. On them are depicted scenes of weaving, the most traditional of domestic virtues, as well as a veiled figure (Figure 22B) that has variously been identified as either Vesta or Pudicitia. I shall argue that this figure is best identified as Pudicitia. The general theme of the friezes seems to be the punishment of improper

³⁶ Liv. 10. 23. 1-10.

³⁷ Augustus, as a member of the Julii was certainly a patrician, but it is likely that in this case his plebeian origins were emphasized for the sake of expedience.

³⁸ Val. Max 7. 1.

³⁹ Palmer 1974: 124.

⁴⁰ D'Ambra 1993: 57.

desire. This is made evident by the depictions of the punishment of Arachne, whose weaving depicted the sexual transgressions of the gods and who was desirous of inappropriate fame for herself. It would therefore be fitting that the goddess whose cult was established as a remedy to feminine desire would be depicted in a work of art that represents the punishment thereof. By contrasting the figure of Pudicitia, who is perpetually veiled, with Arachne we are able to understand the meaning attached to the veil in art. The veil identifies a woman who contains her desire and puts it to proper use as contrasted to one who is destroyed by it.

Monumental works of art such as the *Ara Pacis* and the *Forum Transitorium* are structured in terms of a narrative that enables us to determine the cognitive and affective forces from the context of the 'story'. For other works of art this is not the case and greater emphasis will have to be placed on factors external to the work of art. Within the realm of public statuary, women of the imperial household, and Livia in particular, are the most commonly represented. Although the tradition of Octavia's portrayal in art predated Livia's, the wife of the Princeps, was one of the first Roman women to be systematically represented in art, and in this role she was to survive Octavia by many decades.⁴¹ In her representation as the wife of the emperor she became a figure whose sex, unlike that of the 'wicked' women of the late republic, was neither a social nor a political liability. Through a coherent programme in which her iconography was developed by artists, Livia came to represent the piety of the state and morality of women and as the most publicly visible woman in Rome she became a metonymical signifier for all women. As we have seen, the Romans used the veil as a mark of social status in that it told an outsider whether the woman wearing it was married, a widow, a *materfamilias*, a bride or a priestess. We are able to discern Livia's socio-political image by the language of the clothes worn in various portraits. In order to ensure her public role, Livia was dressed in garments that showed her fulfilling various roles which ensure the continuity of peace and prosperity in Rome.

⁴¹ For the importance of Octavia in statuary cf. Flory 1993: 293.

One of the first functions that we see Livia fulfilling is that of Imperial *matrona*. She appears most often in this role wearing the traditional Roman *palla* that she has used to veil her head. In the period following the settlement of 23 BCE and Augustus' assumption of tribunician power, we see a marked increase in the number of public images of Livia. Events such as the dedication of the *Porticus Liviae* would doubtless have been accompanied by the erection of a statue in her honour.⁴² The hairstyles that she wears in such statues are in keeping with the ideal of a woman who, when not fulfilling a divine function, was always depicted as wearing a *palla*. One of the first hairstyles that we see Livia wearing is the so-called 'nodus,' which was popular amongst the *matronae* of republican times.⁴³ This hairstyle seems to have lost popularity early on in Augustus' reign and must therefore have appeared somewhat 'old-fashioned' when seen on Livia. As Winkes has noted, it seems unlikely that Livia would simply have chosen to be depicted in an unfashionable manner and perhaps it would be more correct to assume that in wearing this coiffure she is associating herself with a political and moral ideal.⁴⁴ Despite the fact that in portraits such as that in Figure 39 her hairstyle and head are clearly visible, allowing us to date the image to about 16 BCE, she is not in fact 'unveiled'. As is apparent from the rear view, there are large swathes of cloth that hang heavily behind her neck. This cloth, with its hood-like contours, is quite obviously a veil that has either been pushed back or is about to be raised—were her hands visible she would surely be making the veil-gesture.

In the public portraiture that survives from Augustus' lifetime Livia is most often depicted in the company of other members of the Julio-Claudian household, acting as the common point of contact between the members that constituted the *domus Augusta* of which Ovid writes, noting how 'that house has nothing of the private about it', *privati nil habet illa domus* (Ov. *Pont.* 2.1.8). Figure 40 has been identified by some as an example of this type of group portrait.⁴⁵ In this case Livia, the female figure on the left, assumes the Pudicitia pose and is heavily veiled in a *palla* making a veil-gesture by

⁴² For a useful discussion of the *Porticus Liviae* cf. Flory 1984: 326-7.

⁴³ Winkes 2000: 32.

⁴⁴ Winkes 2000: 32.

⁴⁵ Pollini 1993: 424.

pulling the edge of her veil up towards her face. In this example her dress has a similar function to the dress and poses of her male counterparts. The equestrian statues and the military dress of male members of the imperial *domus* reflect the military prowess that ensures the integrity of the Empire just as Livia's dress suggests the morality and peace that protects the state from within. Livia's image was often paired not with Augustus and his adoptive sons but with another imperial woman, most often Octavia or Augustus' daughter Julia. Bartman has argued that in portraits such as these the *comparatio* or *similitudo* of rhetoric was evoked whereby the pairing of one figure with another makes a comment on the subjects' character.⁴⁶ Seneca shows how this affect is put to use in literature when he draws a comparison through points of commonality between Octavia and Livia, writing 'Octavia and Livia, one the sister of Augustus, the other his wife, lost their sons who were young men', *Octavia et Livia, altera soror Augusti, altera uxor, amiserunt filios iuvenes* (*Dial.* 3.1). Thus the artistic union of Livia with other Julio-Claudian women (for example in Figure 40) associates women of the entire household with her virtues.

After Augustus' death Livia, while fulfilling the role of the Imperial mother, assumes an even more prominent place in public statuary. From the surviving inscriptions and group portraits of the Tiberian era we are able to discern that the representation of mother and son was by far the most popular.⁴⁷ In the statues in which she appears alongside her son, Livia is generally veiled with the *palla* and thus denotes traditional ideals of motherhood. Furthermore this dress serves to alleviate any concerns regarding her political involvement (such as her connection with the scandal involving Cnaeus Calpurnius Piso).⁴⁸ Showing the empress with her son while dressed in the garments of one who had the domestic virtues, of 'pudicitia, obedience and wool-making' *pudicitia opsequio lanificio* (*ILS* 8394),⁴⁹ repudiates any necessity for concern. The textual evidence for Livia's political involvement, which affords her an extensive role, is not in

⁴⁶ Bartman 1999: 78.

⁴⁷ Bartman 1999: 109.

⁴⁸ Piso was implicated in a charge of poisoning Germanicus Caesar through the person of his wife, Plancina, who was a close friend of Livia. Germanicus stood as a potential threat to her son's power as he had the support of the vast Rhine armies.

⁴⁹ These were virtues traditionally ascribed to good wives in funerary inscriptions.

agreement with what we can observe in the iconography. Therefore we may assume that, as in the time of Augustus, Livia's visual imagery was being used to make a political point. Related to Livia's motherly role is her depiction as a mother in mourning. We know from Cassius Dio (56.10) that Livia was granted a statue at the death of Drusus. This statue is lost to us but a number of images do survive commemorating her loss, the most typical of which is a bronze plaque depicting Livia, Tiberius, and Drusus (Figure 41). The composition of the figures on this plaque is typical of that found in Late Republican grave reliefs and Livia wears the veil: the garment appropriate for the genre.

As we have seen, moral renewal played a large part in the Augustan ideology of the new Rome.⁵⁰ This return to the customs of the ancestors did not limit itself to the sexual sphere but primarily entailed a return to proper religious observances.⁵¹ This programme therefore involved the repair of old temples and the construction of new ones as well as the revival of old priesthoods. The majority of these priesthoods were reserved for Roman men but many were also firmly in the control of women. It is with the latter religious roles that Livia was associated through art. The Vestal Virgins were the most prominent of these priestesses and there seems to have been an artistic campaign to connect Livia with their attributes. Augustus increased the number of honours due to the Vestals and enlarged their ceremonial function in many older religious observances as well as those new ones dedicated to the Julian household.⁵² Livia was granted many privileges normally reserved for Vestals, such as *sacrosanctitas* and the (honorary) *ius trium liberorum*, as well as eventually acquiring the privilege of the lictors' accompaniment.

Livia also shared similar responsibilities with the Vestals. While their task was to act as guardians of the hearth of the state, Livia, as the embodiment of *custos domi*, was the guardian of the hearth on a more private level. Yet in fulfilling this function in the imperial *domus*, Livia's role overlapped with the more public domain of the Vestals. This allowed for an intersection in the public representation of Livia and the Vestals. As

⁵⁰ See Chapter 5 for a full discussion of this.

⁵¹ Zanker 1997: 101-166.

⁵² Bartman 1999: 94.

we shall see later, Livia (like Vesta) was associated with Ceres and this allowed Livia to be depicted, when in the presence of the Vestals, as Vesta herself.⁵³ In these images Livia is dressed in the same clothing as the Vestals and wears the *suffibulum*, which is clearly apparent in Figure 42. This veil, while not the veil of the matron, is associated with the matronly virtues as the vestals were chaste while ensuring the fertility of the state and Livia is therefore able to move freely between these two forms.

After the death of Augustus, Livia officially gained the status of priestess through the cult of the new *Divus Augustus*. It has been suggested that the depictions of Livia as a priestess show her as veiled as a sign that she is performing a specific religious act.⁵⁴ However I would argue that the veil does not specify any act in particular but is rather a more general attribute of a priestess. Of the two priestesses which Festus mentions, the *Flaminicae* who wore the *Flammeum* (Festus. 82 L) and the Vestals who wore the *suffibulum* (Fest. 475 L), both are described as veiled. It would therefore follow that Livia, in acting as the priestess of the deified Augustus, would adhere to the usual practice of the priestesses when performing her religious role and would therefore appear veiled. Figure 43 shows her performing this function as she sits veiled and enthroned gazing at a bust of Augustus. The veil that Livia wears in this image at first glance appears to be a *palla* that she has pulled over her head yet on closer examination we must provide another alternative because beneath it she does not wear the *stola* but rather the Greek χιτών, and it is therefore more likely that Livia wears a Greek veil. Llewellyn-Jones has described this sort of covering as a ἱμάτιον-veil, which was popular in the Greek world for the period from 520 BCE to 200 CE.⁵⁵ This veil would have acted as the Greek equivalent of the *palla* as it was placed over the χιτών just as the *palla* served to cover the *stola*. This Greek garb is unusual for images of Livia that portray her as the *custos domi* but become more common when she assumes religious or divine roles. This may explain why Livia is able to assume Greek dress in her performance of the role of a Roman priestess. In Figure 43 Livia begins to take on divine attributes to herself and comes to resemble Cybele by wearing as she does the mural

⁵³ Bartman 1999: 95.

⁵⁴ Bartman 1999: 103.

⁵⁵ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 54.

crown and holding poppies, Ceres because she holds a sheaf of wheat and Venus Genetrix in that her χιτών is slipping off her left shoulder. She also sits enthroned, a rare pose for a woman other than a goddess.⁵⁶ When Livia, standing alone, is depicted as a goddess the Greek associations become even stronger. Figure 44, in which Livia is shown as the goddess Ceres, shows her in a decidedly Greek style. The drapery of her ἰμάτιον-veil and χιτών are sheer and 'filmy' and follow the Alexandrian Style.⁵⁷ This style, while unacceptable during the empress' lifetime, becomes appropriate once she has been deified.

Another important medium through which an emperor might choose to present himself and his reign is that of coinage. The issuers of coins depicted themselves alongside the virtues with which they wished to be associated. Because of the restrictive scale of the numismatic medium it was seldom possible to use the iconography of veiling, familiar from statuary and public monuments, to convey messages regarding morality and the state. Veils would have obscured characteristics needed to identify the subject, as on coins the primary identifying feature of female subjects appears to have been the hairstyle that they wore.

Although it was under Augustus that women first began to appear on coins, with his sister Octavia being the first to do so, they do not share the ubiquitous presence of those in statuary and monumental art. Despite Livia's repeated appearance elsewhere and her position as the model matron and mother of Augustus' heir, she does not have the same presence on Augustan coinage.⁵⁸ During Augustus' reign representations of abstract deified virtues are more commonly used to convey ideals of female virtue than are the women of the imperial household themselves. As we saw from the public statuary of Livia, she was often associated with the healthy virtues of Demeter/Ceres and this tradition seems to have carried over into the numismatic sphere. So for example in Figure 45, a coin from Panormus in Sicily, we see Demeter veiled with what appears to

⁵⁶ Bartman. 1999:103.

⁵⁷ Bartman 1999: 42.

⁵⁸ Klaus Fittschen's statement that 'she (Livia) was never portrayed on one of his (Augustus') coins' is entirely false (Fittschen 1997: 58) with numerous representations of her surviving, some of which I will discuss below.

be a ἰμάτιον-veil. This depiction allows for the audience to understand the image of Livia through the intermediary of Ceres, both of whom are appropriately veiled and thus express the virtues desirable in a model *matrona*.

After her son's accession Livia becomes far more visible on imperial coinage but the tradition of associating her with a specific personification endures. The coins in Figures 46 and 47 depict the Figures of Salus Augusta and Pietas respectively. In neither case is the empress named but she can be identified not only by her normal iconographical and facial characteristics but also various other elements.⁵⁹ In Figure 46 the name Salus has been appended with Livia's title, Augusta, while in Figure 47 it is her pairing with the name of Tiberius' son Drusus (appearing on the reverse side) that, when combined with the ideal of piety, alerts the viewer to the real-life model of this personification. In both cases Livia's dress is in keeping with the temper of the rhetorical intent and the intended affective force of the coin—thus in both coins she wears the veil. The minting of the coin in Figure 46 very likely coincided with Livia's recovery from a very serious illness, at which time various other honours were also paid to her.⁶⁰ Her guise as Salus is therefore particularly fitting as is the *palla* which hangs loosely around her neck and describes her as a matron again in full control of the *Domus Augusta*, and therefore of Rome. When Livia appears as Pietas it would seem mandatory that she be veiled as any religious action, whether performed by men or women, habitually necessitates an act of veiling. When the person of Livia is combined with that of Drusus it becomes possible to identify the object of this *pietas*. For the Romans the meaning of *pietas* was far more complex than our simple translation 'piety' and included respect and obedience to the gods, reverence for father, emperor and state. In the emperor Tiberius all these elements are combined and both Livia and Drusus therefore perform the proper obeisance before him—and Livia with her veiled head serves as a model for this virtue.

Personifications found on coins however are not always living women in disguise. They can be used rather almost as adjectives that comment on a person or action. From what

⁵⁹ For the appearance and iconography of Livia see Bartman 1999: 3-17.

⁶⁰ Fittschen 1997: 60.

was seen of the various Fortunaes that were worshipped in Rome, it would seem that any figure of Fortuna was most often associated with ideals exclusive to women. This is of course not always the case as is clear from cults such as Fortuna Virilis and Fortuna Primigenia but even in these cults, which seem to be of exclusive concern to males, there still exists a very strong female influence. For instance, the cult of Fortuna Virilis was kept by women and the term *primigenia* suggests not only the first given birth to but also the first to give birth.⁶¹ Thus a viewer would associate any aspect of Fortuna with certain feminine characteristics. In order to ensure that the affective force of these representations is positive, the cognitive force of the veil has to be employed. The veil, long since established as the iconographic signal for female virtue and thus the strength of the Empire, is put to use on coins such as that in Figure 48 and hair that is wild and uncovered is used to indicate the opposite of this, a point made clear in Figure 49 where Tarpeia is shown half buried in shields with her head not merely unveiled but painstakingly depicted as flowing loose and this serves as the embodiment of female endangerment of the state. Conversely, in Figure 48 Tyche (Fortuna) of Antioch is shown with a veil and with Augustus' head on the obverse side of the coin. Here the veil is used to indicate the positive nature of the emperor's victory over the Pisidians and also serves to indicate the benefits that said victory might bring to the Empire, namely stability and fertility. By showing the emperor's head on the same coin as this veiled Fortune he is directly associated with the bringing about of these circumstances.

Although it is certain that Augustus was the first to utilize the signifying power of the veil to convey messages about his reign he was certainly making use of pre-existing models. In the beginning of this chapter some of these were discussed, most of which were taken from cultures distinct from that of Rome. The only 'purely' Roman example of veiling in public art before the time of Augustus came from the funerary reliefs of freed slaves. To corroborate the evidence for Augustus' artistic innovation in the realm of female dress there would need to be seen a marked increase in the frequency of the veil's appearance in art. There is no such trend in funerary art as the genre requires the presence of the veil and so it is just as common in republican as in imperial times.

⁶¹ Palmer 1974: 116. Cf. *Leg. 2.11.28. primigenia a gignendo.*

Furthermore is not possible to make any definite statement as regards the presence of the veil in the public art of the republic or empire because of the infrequency of representations of women in this medium throughout the time of the republic. These pieces of information point to the artists of the Augustan era and, because of the nature of this art, to Augustus himself as initiating the utilization of images of veiled women in Roman art.

It is possible to use examples of male veiling to confirm this assumption. In order to do so, the connection between expressions of *pietas* as shown being made by men and those being made by women needs to be elucidated. Augustus' attempt at a return to the *mos maiorum* meant that so pronounced a relationship was developed between the idea of moral restoration and that of religious regeneration that they became inextricable from one another. The only difference between these two ideals seems to have been the manner in which they were 'gendered'. Just as it was established above how women became signifiers of the moral state of affairs, so images of men came to signify the new religious situation. An example of this is found on the *Ara Pacis* where veiled women embody the moral ideal of controlled and productive female sexuality while the veiled men are shown carrying out religious obligations.⁶² The frieze shown in Figure 9E, taken from the southwest side of the monument, shows the Roman audience the legendary beginning of veiling as religious observance. Here '*pius Aeneas*' is shown with veiled head (a ritual supposedly of his own invention) making a sacrifice upon his arrival on Italian shores. This relationship between the veiled male and religious custom is also made apparent in the body of the emperor himself. Augustus displays his piety and his wife her morality.

If the relationship between these two gendered virtues is as close as these examples would suggest, then it becomes plausible that the frequency of the appearance of the veiled male might coincide with that of the veiled female and it was under Augustus that images of togate men with veiled heads, *togatus capite velato*, became more common. Traditionally the *genius* of the *paterfamilias* had been honoured in the form of a togate

⁶² For a philological study of religious veiling, see Freier 1963: 39-101.

statute and so once Augustus had assumed his paternalistic relationship with the state it became logical for him to be represented in such a fashion. Thus under the Principate a considerable rise in the number of depictions of the state's leading men as veiled is observed. This iconographic fashion, along with its rarer female counterpart, also translated itself into art in the private sphere. After Augustus' artistic campaign images of veiled men and women begin to appear more often on domestic murals and mosaics. Thus it was during Augustan times that images such as that in Figure 50 appear, which shows Aeneas, the epitome of piety, carrying his veiled father on his shoulders. That images such as these were influenced by the Augustan campaign is certain, as it is a copy of a statue group (no longer extant) that stood in the Forum of Augustus. At the same time as Aeneas is shown carrying Anchises, veiled women, for example those depicted in Figure 51, assume a greater presence. In the latter image veiled women observe a scene of healthful fertility in which a mother nurses a child. The restraint of colour and style found in this fresco that decorated a villa on the Tiber in 20 BCE is in keeping with the theme of sexual continence, both of which lead to a more fruitful state.

The artistic evidence discussed in this chapter shows to what extent Augustus developed the politicized representation of the female body and how clothing, and in particular the veil, was used to further his ideological intent. As has been demonstrated, this phenomenon did not limit itself to expression in a single medium but was rather used across the various genres of public art. That this iconography was pervasive and influential is confirmed by the fact that it was taken up in the art of the private sphere.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

From the evidence presented in the preceding chapters, it is possible to conclude that there existed in ancient Rome a culture of female veiling. Veiling practices were not static but were subject to changes in fashion, changes that were in turn shaped by broader social forces. As we have seen, although men did occasionally veil they only did so in very specific circumstances. Women, on the other hand, habitually veiled; at least those of respectable status did so when they went out in public. This was true to the extent that the veil was the most visible thing about a woman as the veil was, unlike the woman herself, visible to all.

As the most publicly visible signifier of an honourable woman, the veil came to stand for the state that it denoted: well-contained and productive female sexuality. This ideal of sexual behaviour became especially important in light of the manner in which the civil wars and the remedies to the ills that had caused them were understood in terms of gender. By understanding a decline in morality as having been instrumental in the collapse of the republic, the Romans assigned a great deal of political responsibility to women. Therefore in order to put this situation to rights the female body had to be still further politicized while at the same time pretending to return to the ways of the past, which situated a woman's body securely in the *domus*. The veil signified the traditional divisions between male and female, public and private, and thus allowed women to be brought into the public realm all the while signifying that the harmful influences of their sex were contained. Thus the veil assumed great importance during the Augustan period when the distinctions between public and private were being eroded. In doing so, not only did the new regime place more importance on women but also the attempt to do so was characterized by a pronounced tendency towards archaism. It is this archaism that attempts to simplify what in the years of the late republic had become very complex gender relations. This meant that the ideas of honour and shame assumed even greater

importance than they had during the late republic and with them so too the veil assumed greater significance because of its ability to protect female shame and thus male honour and the integrity of the state. The notion of male honour is linked to male status as honour is the currency whereby men negotiate social interactions with other men. A woman's sexual purity was ensured as well as represented by her use of the veil. The veil was therefore of great importance in maintaining the social status of her male relatives.

In its role as a marker of sexual purity—and by other means—the veil came to be understood as a definitively female garment. Therefore when men assumed the veil they became in some ways more feminine, both in terms of honour and in terms of their relative social status. The veil served to protect this vulnerable state, a state in which women permanently found themselves. Both sexes showed their subservience and relative inferiority before the gods when they veiled in the liturgical context. In this setting the veil marked the devotee as submitting to the will of the gods and was also able to protect the person while they were interacting with the numinous realm. This protective quality of the veil was also important during various stages in a person's life during which a transition was made from one state to another, when they were removed from the normal protection offered by their place in society. This practice helps to explain the veiling of the bride as well as veiling in times of mourning.

To prove in some way that the Romans did have a culture of female veiling it was necessary to examine their vocabulary of veiling. Indeed the very proliferation of veiling terminology is a strong sign of the prevalence of the practice as it demonstrated that the Romans were concerned enough with veiling to have specific veils that served different purposes. The *palla* was a kind of all-purpose veil that women used when going about in public. Other veils such as the *ricinium*, the *rica*, the *flammeum* and the *suffibulum* had more particular applications. The uses of these veils were limited to certain persons or to certain contexts.

It would appear that veiling in some of these contexts was a matter of increased concern during the time of Augustus. Being so closely related to the ideals surrounding female sexuality the veil was of specific importance when attempts were made to regulate sexual morality. The rejuvenation of what was considered traditional morality was accompanied by a programme of religious renewal, and these two agendas occasionally intersected. This was the case with the cult of Pudicitia, the personification of female sexual virtue whose worship was reinstated under Augustus.

There is evidence that the restoration of this cult was accompanied by a law, perhaps as an accompaniment to the *lex de adulteriis*, that attempted to regulate sexual morality. The most likely way in which compliance with this law was displayed was by dress. A woman's *pudicitia* and *impudicitia* was indicated by her dress and women who veiled were most often praised for their *pudicitia*. It therefore seems likely that in terms of the hypothetical *lex de pudicitia* veiling was made a matter of legal decree. It would seem that it was to this law that Valerius Maximus, the moralist so influenced by the Augustan programme, was referring to when he wrote of Sulpicius Gallus whom he quotes as saying that the law 'sets my eyes as the limit by means of which you may prove your beauty' *meos tantum praefinit oculos, quibus formam tuam adprobes* (6.3.10). In his account of Sulpicius Gallus' actions Valerius Maximus conflicts with Plutarch. Neither source is entirely trustworthy as it would seem that while Valerius Maximus was strongly influenced by the Augustan moral programme and by the legislation Plutarch, because of the funerary context of which he was writing, misunderstood Roman veiling practices.

While statements such as those of Plutarch and Valerius Maximus have been almost completely ignored by scholars, the artistic evidence for female veiling has likewise not been given sufficient attention. Part of the reason for this is a misunderstanding of how the artistic tradition depicts veiling. It has generally been thought that veiling was not the norm amongst Roman women because much of the time women are not depicted with their heads covered by veils. This is not the case as the tradition seems to dictate that the veil be represented as present but not necessarily as covering the head. There are a

number of ways in which an artist might do this. The most common of these methods is by depicting the veil-gesture that entails the subject using a hand (often that furthest from the viewer) to lift a part of her veil up and extending it forward. This gesture is in time simplified to the point that the subject need merely tug up a piece of her garment.

Having identified the significance of this gesture it becomes clear that representations of veiled women are very common in the art of the Augustan period. Because of the generally public nature of Roman art, these images formed an important part of the Augustan programme. By using a visual rather than literary medium, the Princeps was able to reach a far larger audience. He used the female form to convey to this audience the message that the Roman state was once again healthy. To allow for this positive interpretation, images of veiled women were employed. By making use of the veil's signification of the positive qualities of femininity, Augustan artists were able to reassure the public as to the healthy nature of the private sphere that surrounded the man that now ruled Rome as though it were his own *domus*.

This dissertation has attempted to prove that veiling was the standard practice of Roman women and has focused especially on the time of the early empire. I have concerned myself not only with the anthropological significance of this practice but also its socio-political motivations. For the Romans, a breakdown of morality in the family and in the individual led to its collapse in the state. It was in this way that the Romans explained the failure of the Republic, attributing its wider failure to an insidious decay within the Roman household. The programme of cultural regeneration advanced by the emperor Augustus conscientiously propagandized morality and chastity in an attempt to make clear that after the anarchic years of the civil wars Rome once again had a legitimate government. Depictions of veiled women, especially women of the imperial household, came to symbolize the new ethos. This ideological manipulation was an attempt to recreate older ideals of national identity, an identity which, having been fashioned by artists and literary men, soon translated itself into daily life. I examined how during this time the use of the veil, an exemplar of female chastity, was revived and became a

common fixture in both art and literature and how this chaste dress code reasserted the ideal of the *mos maiorum*.

APPENDIX 1

TERMS FOR VEILS FOUND IN THE LEXICOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

Word	Lexicographer	Definition	Translation of Definition
<i>Calautica</i>	Nonius Marc. (537 M) ¹	<i>Calautica est tegmen muliebre quod capiti innectitur.</i>	A <i>calautica</i> is covering, worn by women, which is attached to the head.
<i>Capitium</i>	Nonius Marc. (870 L)	<i>Capitia, capitum tegmina</i>	<i>Capitia</i> , coverings for the head.
<i>Carbasus</i>	Nonius Marc. (878 L)	<i>Carbasus, pallium quo Fluvii amiciuntur vel opulentiae causa, ut sericum, aut lino tenui.</i> ²	A <i>Carbasus</i> , a cloak, with which Rivers are clothed, perhaps for the sake of opulence, as it is made of silk, or from fine linen.
<i>Flammeus</i>	Nonius. Marc (869 L)	<i>Flammeus, vestis vel tegmen quo capita matronae tegunt.</i>	A <i>flammeus</i> is a garment or covering with which matrons cover their heads.
<i>Flammeum</i>	Festus (79 L)	<i>Flammeo caput nubentis obvolvatur</i>	The head of the bride is veiled by a <i>flammeum</i> .
<i>Palla</i>	Nonius Marc. (862 L)	<i>Palla est honestae mulieris vestimentum</i>	The <i>palla</i> is the dress of a respectable woman
<i>Palla</i>	Varro (L.L. 5.131)	<i>Indutui alterum quod subtus, a quo subucula; alterum quod supra, a quo supparus...Alterius generis item duo, unum quod foris ac palam, palla...</i>	One kind of garment that is 'put on' goes below, for which reason it is called a <i>subucula</i> ; the other goes on top, and is thus called <i>supparus</i> ... There are two types of the second kind, one, which is worn in public and openly, is the <i>palla</i> ...

¹ Lindsay's (1903) edition reads *calautice*, however *calauticae*, *clautice*, and *calautica* are also given as opinions. Here I have followed Müller's edition (1888) and used the more common form, *calautica*.

² *Fluvii* is capitalized because it refers to deified rivers.

<i>Palla</i>	Isidore (19.25.2)	<i>Palla est quadrum pallium muliebris vestis</i>	A <i>palla</i> is a square cloak, a woman's garment.
<i>Ricinium</i>	Nonius Marc. (869 L)	<i>Ricinium, quod nunc mafurtium dicitur, palliolium femineum breve.</i>	The <i>ricinium</i> , which is now called a <i>mafurtium</i> , is a short, little cloak worn by women.
<i>Ricinium</i>	Varro (L.L. 5.132)	<i>Antiquissimi amictui ricinium; id quod eo utebantur duplici ab eo quod dimidiam partem retrorsum iaciebant, ab reiciendo ricinium dictum.</i>	The ancients called an <i>amictus</i> a <i>ricinium</i> ; this, which they used folded over, was called a <i>ricinium</i> from <i>reiciendo</i> (throwing back) because they threw back half of it.
<i>Recinium</i> ³	Festus Fragm. (342 L)	<i>Recinium omne vestimentum quadratum <h>i qui XII interpretati sunt, esse dixerunt <togam qua> mulieres utebantur, praetextam clavo purpureo, unde reciniati mimi planipedes.</i>	Those who have interpreted the Twelve Tables, said that the <i>recinium</i> is an entirely square garment, a toga bordered with a purple band, which women use, whence barefooted mime dancers are called 'those who wear the <i>recinium</i> '.
<i>Recinium</i>	Festus (Pauli excerpta) (343 L)	<i>Recinium omne vestimentum quadratum, unde reciniati mimi planipedes.</i>	The <i>recinium</i> is an entirely square garment, whence barefooted mime dancers are called 'those who wear the <i>recinium</i> '.
<i>Rica/ Ricula</i>	Festus Fragm. (342 L)	<i>Ricae et riculae vocantur parva ricinia, ut palliola ad usum capitis facta. Gran<ius> quidem ait esse muliebre cingulum capitis, quo pro vitia flaminica redimiatur.</i>	Small <i>ricinia</i> are called <i>ricae</i> and <i>riculae</i> , as though little cloaks for use on the head. Indeed Granus says that it is a woman's head-band, with which the wife of the Flamen is crowned instead of a <i>vitia</i> .
<i>Rica / Ricula</i>	Festus (Pauli excerpta) (343 L)	<i>Ricae et riculae vocantur parva ricinia, ut palliola ad usum capitis facta.</i>	Small <i>ricinia</i> are called <i>ricae</i> and <i>riculae</i> , made for use on the head like little cloaks.
<i>Rica</i>	Nonius Marc. (865 L)	<i>Rica est sudarium dicimus.</i>	A <i>rica</i> is what we call a sweat cloth.

³ For the variation in spelling see Chapter 4 page 73.

Rica	Festus Fragm. (368 L)	<p><i>Rica est vestimentum quadratum, > fibriatum, purpureum, quo flaminicae pro palliolo, mitrai....existimat. Titi<us>...quod ex lana fiat> sucida alba vest<imentum dici ricam, idque esse> triplex, quod conficiant virgines inge>nuae, patrimae, m<atrimae, cives> tum lavetur aqua pe..... <caeru>leum.</i></p>	<p>The <i>rica</i> is a square, fringed, purple garment, which the wives of the Flamens use in place of a little cloak, turban....he considers. Titius...the <i>rica</i> is said to be a garment, which is made of fresh, white wool, and it is tripartite, which young, freeborn women, whose mothers and fathers are still alive, who are citizens make ...then is washed with water....blue.</p>
Rica	Festus (Pauli excerpta) (369 L)	<p><i>Rica est vestimentum quadratum, fibriatum, purpureum, quo flaminicae pro pallio utebantur. Alii dicunt, quod ex lana fiat sucida alba, quod conficiunt virgines ingenuae, patrimae, matrimae, cives et inficiatur caeruleo colore.</i></p>	<p>The <i>rica</i> is a square, fringed, purple garment, which the wives of the Flamens use in place of a cloak. Others say that it is that which is made of fresh white wool, which young, freeborn women, who are citizens, whose mothers and fathers are still alive, make and is dyed a blue colour.</p>
Rica	Varro (L.L. 5.130)	<p><i>Sic rica ab ritu, quod Romano ritu sacrificium feminae cum faciunt, capita velant.</i></p>	<p>Thus <i>rica</i> from <i>ritus</i> (way), because, following the Roman ritual, when women make sacrifices, they veil their heads.</p>
Suffibulum	Festus Fragm. (474 L)	<p><i><S>uffibulum est vestimentum al<bum, praetextum, qua>drangulum, oblongum, quod in ca<pite virgines ve>stales, cum sacrificant, semper <habere solent, i>dque fibula comprehenditur.</i></p>	<p>The <i>suffibulum</i> is a white, bordered, four-sided, rectangular garment, which Vestal virgins always have on their heads when they make sacrifices, this is caught up with a pin.</p>
Suffibulum	Varro (L.L. 6.21)	<p><i>'is cum eat, suffibulum ut habeat' scriptum. id dicitur ab suffi<g>endo subfigabulum?</i></p>	<p>It is written 'when he goes there let him wear a <i>suffibulum</i>' as it is written. Is it not called <i>sub-figabulum</i> (fastened below) from <i>suffigendo</i> (fastening underneath)?</p>

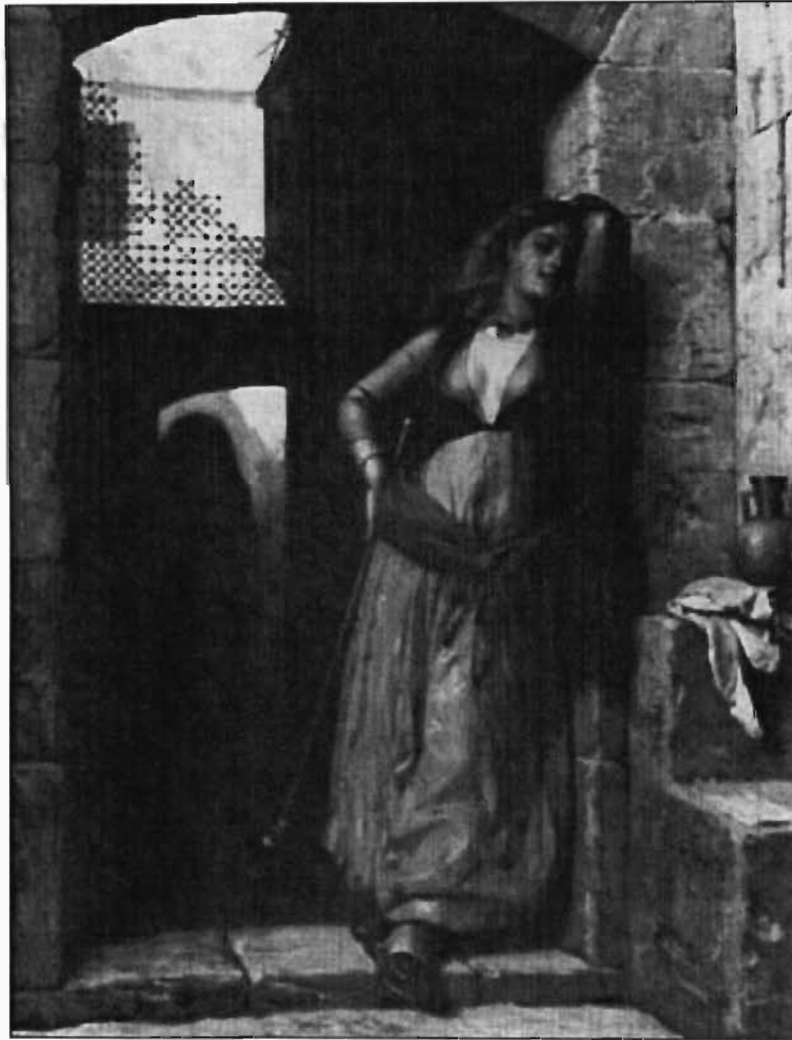


Figure 1: *An Almeh with Pipe* by Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1873 (Fink 2000: Website 1)



Figure 2: *On the Terrace* by Jean-Léon Gérôme, late 19th/ early 20th century (McCormick 2000-2004: Website 2)



Figure 3: Eumachia, 3/2 BCE (Raia and Sebesta 2006: Website 5)



Figure 4: Natasha Rambova as Salome, 1922 (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 164)

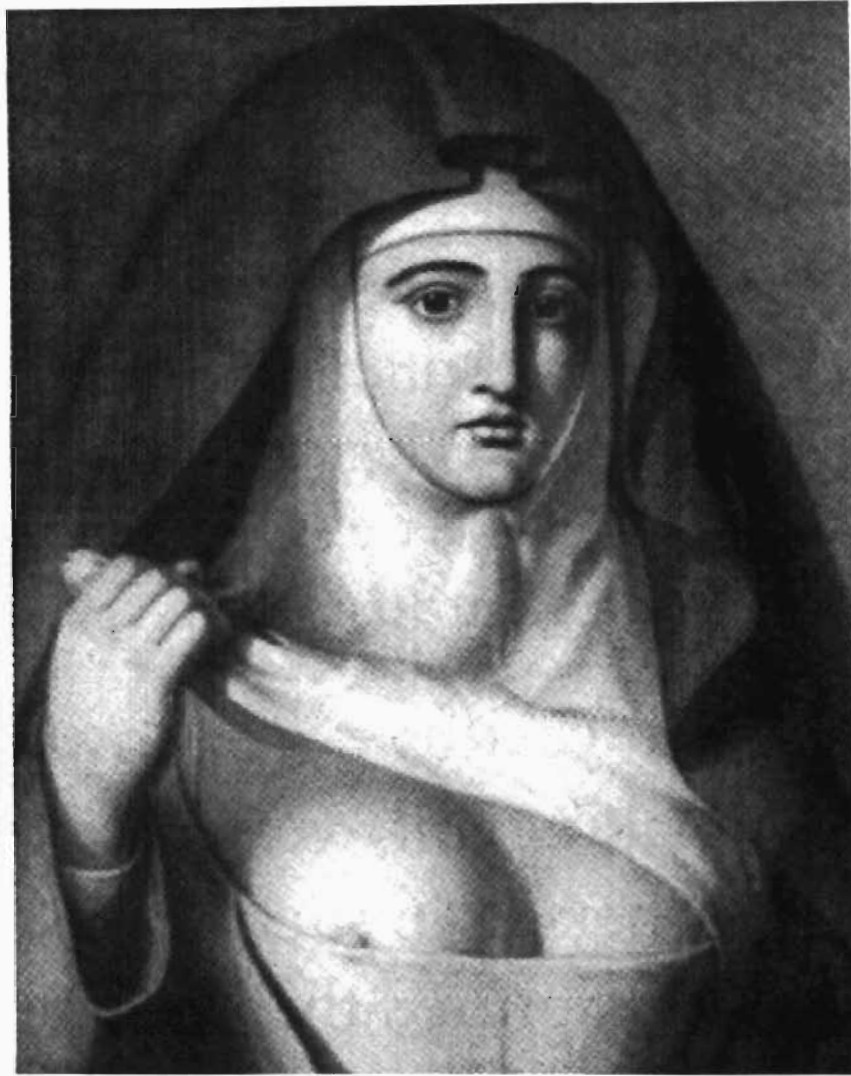


Figure 5: Nun lifting wimple, Eighteenth Century (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 165)



Figure 6: Postcard from French Algeria, 1906 (Morrison 2003: Website 4)

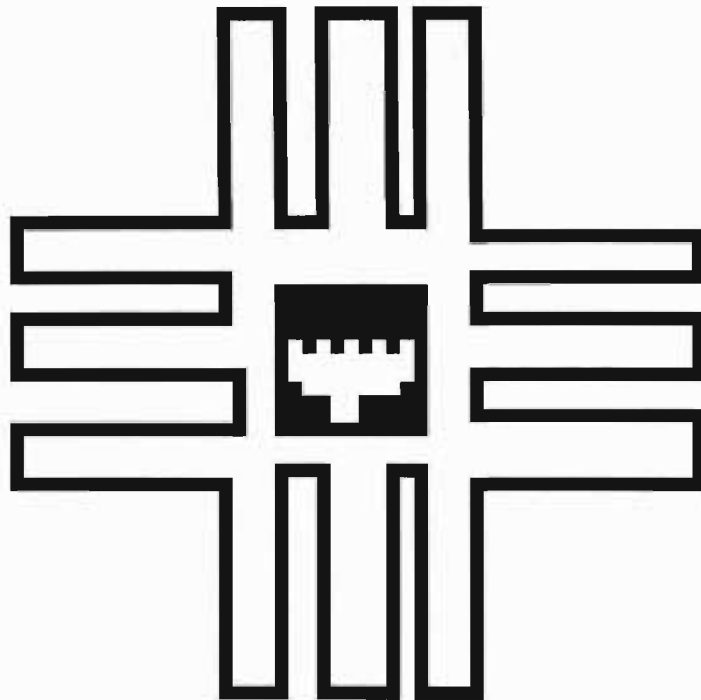


Figure 7: Charm against the evil eye found on Persian carpets (Kalyoncu 1997: Website 6)

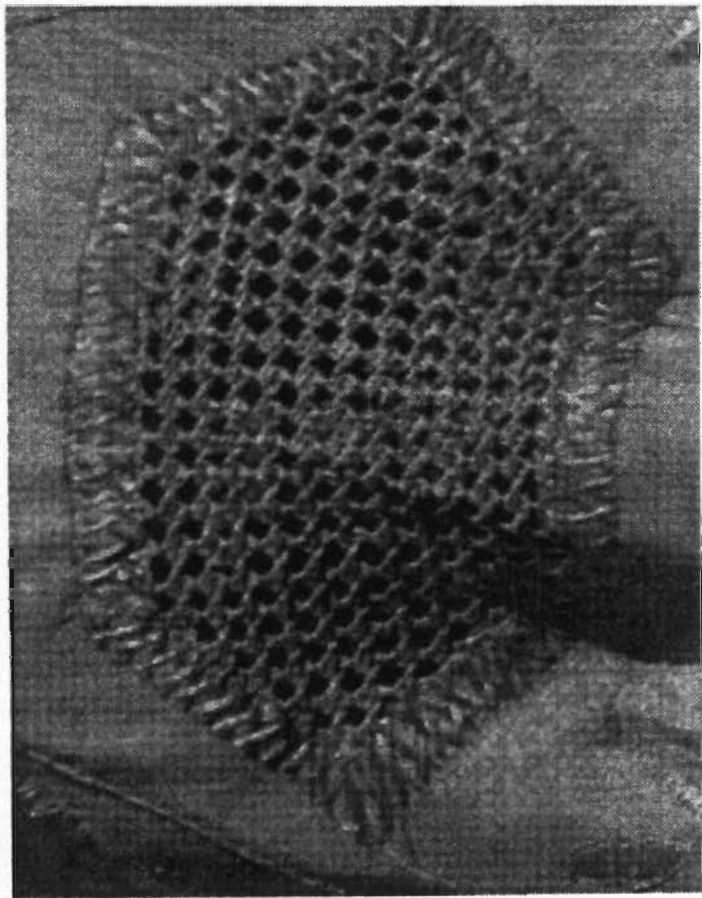
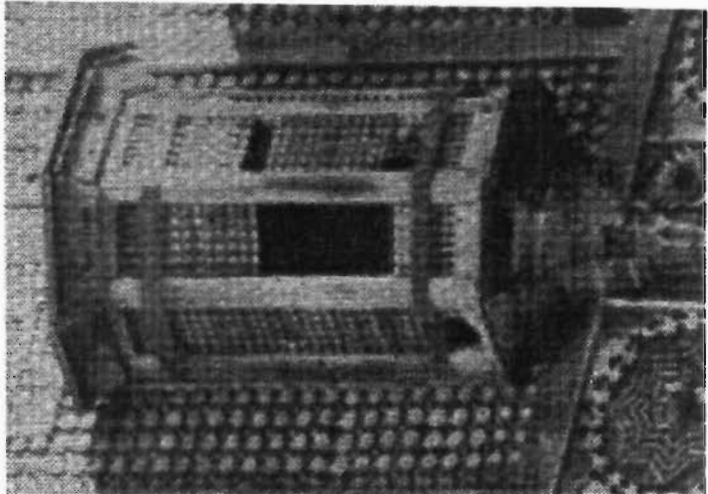


Figure 8: Afghan veil next to Arabo-Islamic architecture (El Guindi 1999: Figure 15)



Figure 9A: Ara Pacis Augustae, South Frieze, 13-9 BCE (Kleiner 1992: Figure 75)



Figure 9B: Ara Pacis Augustae, South Frieze, 13-9 BCE (Kleiner 1992: Figure 74)



Figure 9C: Livia on Ara Pacis, South Frieze, 13-9 BCE (Kleiner 1992: Detail of Figure 75)



Figure 9D: Ara Pacis Augustae, South-East Frieze, 13-9 BCE (Kleiner 1992: Figure 80)



Figure 9E (above): Aeneas on Ara Pacis, South-West Frieze 13-9 BCE (Kleiner 1992: Figure 78)



Figure 10: Achilles veiled, 480 BCE (*LIMC* s.v. Achilleus: 444)



Figure 11: Four Iraqi women (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 146)

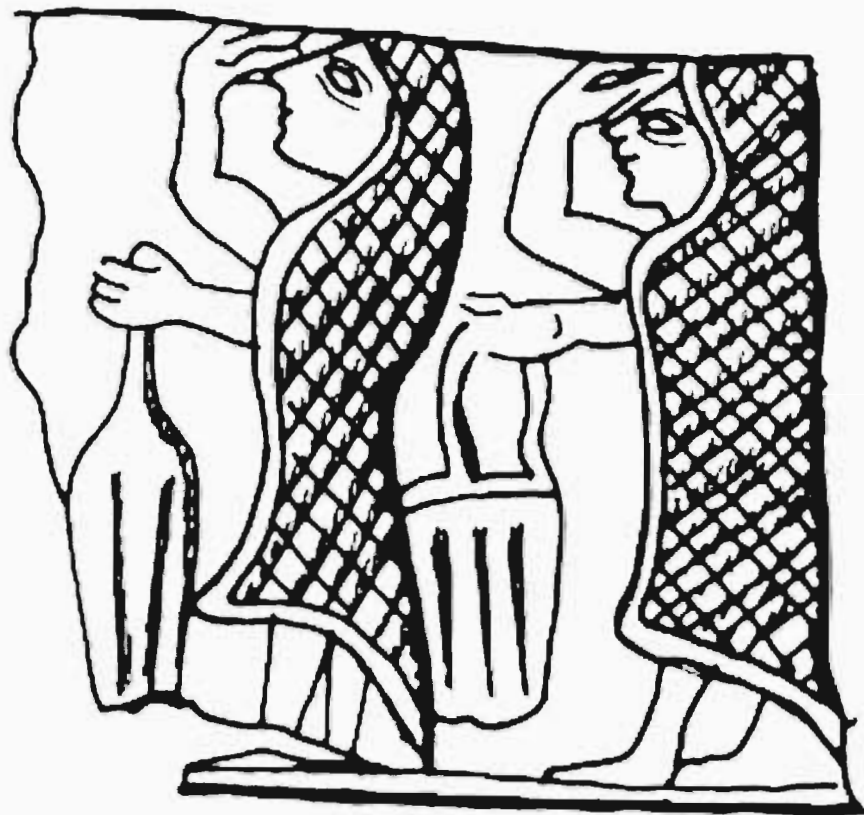


Figure 12: Etruscan women in patterned 'raincoat' veils, 550 BCE (Bonfante 1975: Figure 13)



Figure 13: Fresco of women in 'raincoat' veils, 550 BCE (Bonfante 1975: Figure 75)



Figure 14: Togate statue of Augustus, mid-Augustan (Zanker 1998: Figure 104)



Figure 15: Profile of a Vestal, late Tajaric/ early Flavian (La Follette 1994: Figure 3.4)



Figure 16: Solana crowned with battlements, mid-Fourth Century CE (*LIMC* s.v. Salona 1)

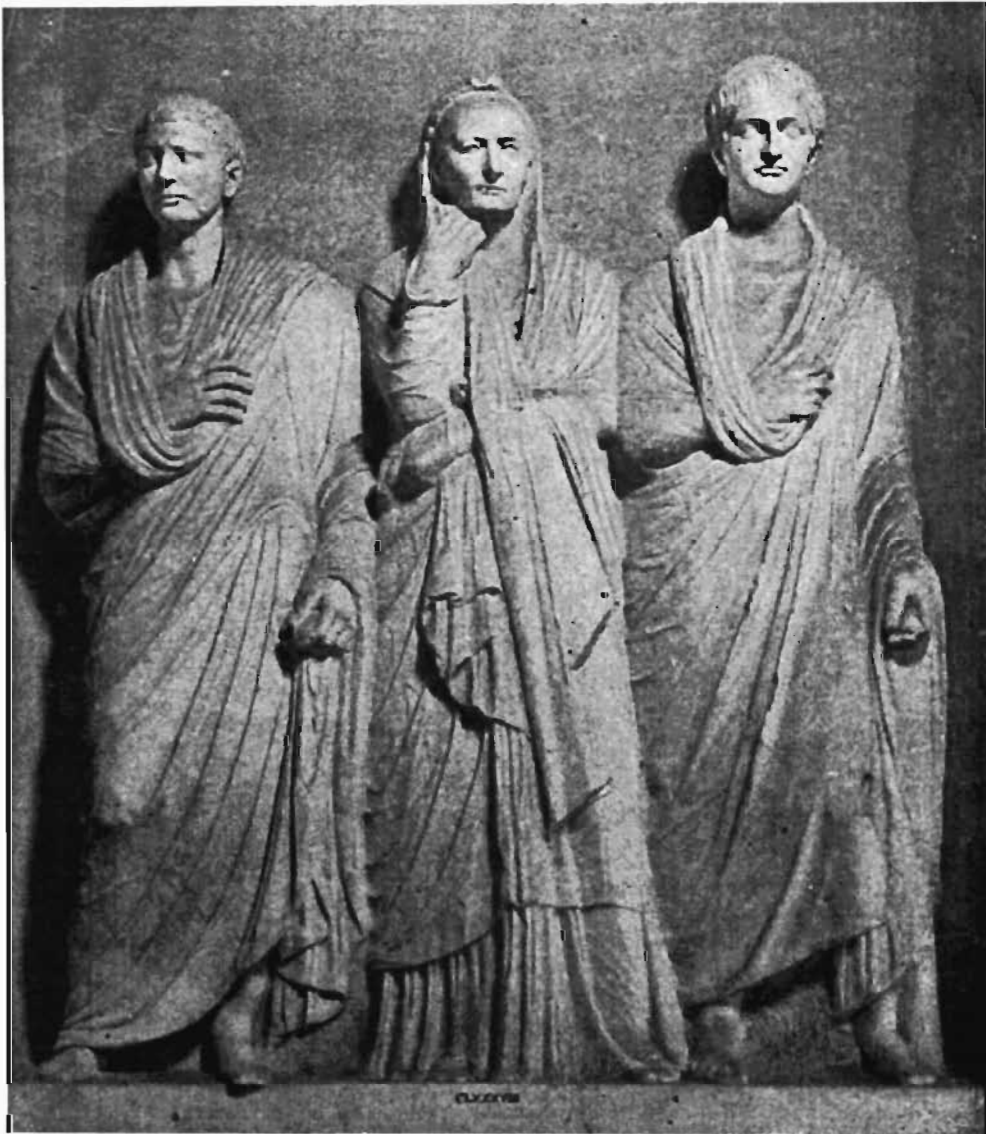


Figure 17: Matron and sons, late republican (Wilson 1938: Plate 88)



Figure 18: Woman in *rica*, first century CE (Strong 1976: Figure 77)



Figure 19: Bride before the wedding ceremony, Augustan (Maiuri 1953: 106)



Figure 20A: HeCE of a Vestal, Trajanic (La Follette 1994: Figure 3.1)



Figure 20B: Detail of Vestal's fillet, Trajanic (La Follette 1994: Figure 3.2)



Figure 21: The Altar of Claudia Syntyche, First Century BCE (McManus 2004)



Figure 22A: Worshipper of Pudicitia, reign of Domitian (D'Ambra 1993: Plate 52)



Figure 22B: Pudicitia, reign of Domitian (D'Ambra 1993: Plate 51)

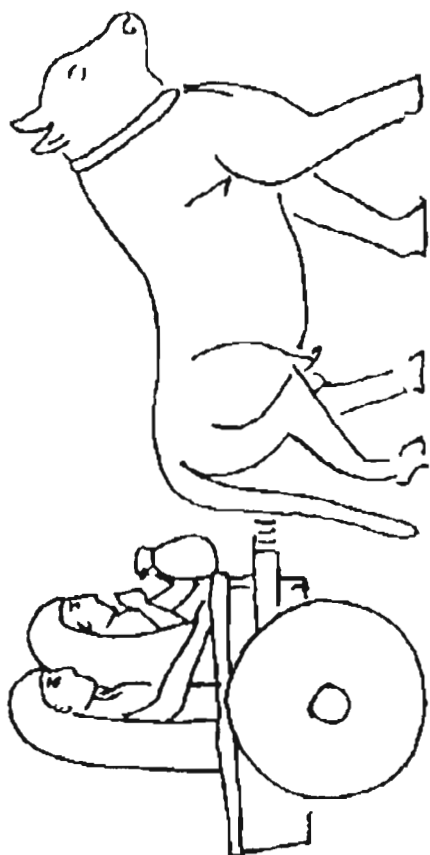


Figure 23: Veiled Assyrian captives, 745-725 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 4)



Figure 24: Helen veiled, 650 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 27)



Figure 25: Clytemnestra veiled, 650 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 28)



Figure 26: Woman making veil gesture, 490-450 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 106)



Figure 27: Woman lifting sleeve of χιτών, 440 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 108)



Figure 28: Woman raising κόλπος of χιτών, 430 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 109)



Figure 29: Leto's rescue from Tityos, 510-500 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 114)



Figure 30: Pudicitia making more pronounced veil gesture, mid-fourth century CE (Mattingly and Sydenham 1981: enlargement of Plate 11)



Figure 31: Pudicitia making less pronounced veil gesture, mid-fourth century CE (Mattingly and Sydenham 1981: enlargement of Plate 11)



Figure 32: One of the Cartoceto Bronzes in Pudicitia pose, early Augustan (Bartman 1999: Figure 51)



Figure 33: Woman performing veil gesture, early Augustan (Kleiner 1977: Figure 41)



Figure 34: Artemis with veil, 530-515 BCE (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: Figure 87)



Figure 35: Woman veiled in funerary relief, 30-13 BCE (Kleiner 1977: Figure 23)



Figure 36: Example of the Pudicitia pose in funerary relief, 75-50 BCE (Kleiner 1977: Figure 11)



Figure 37: Examples of Fundilia and Berlin Types, 13 BCE- CE 5 (Kleiner 1977: Figure 8A)



Figure 38: Ethnos, Julio-Claudian period (Smith 1988: Figure 4)

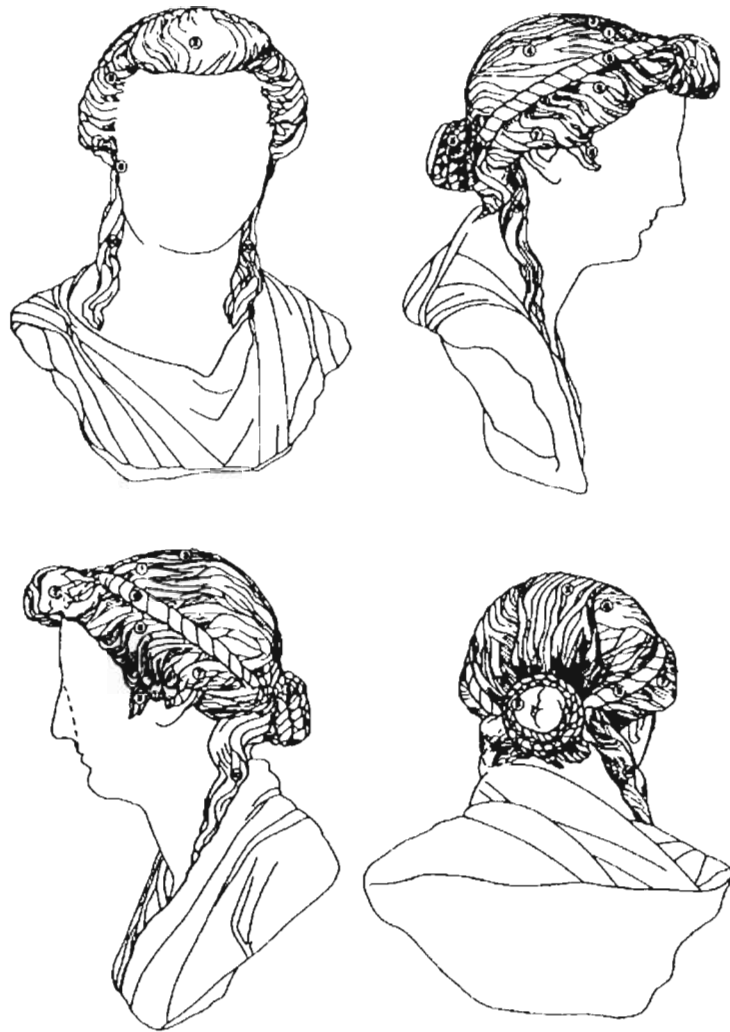


Figure 39: Livia's coiffure and heCE, with veil draped around neck, Augustan (Kleiner 2000: Figure 2.7)

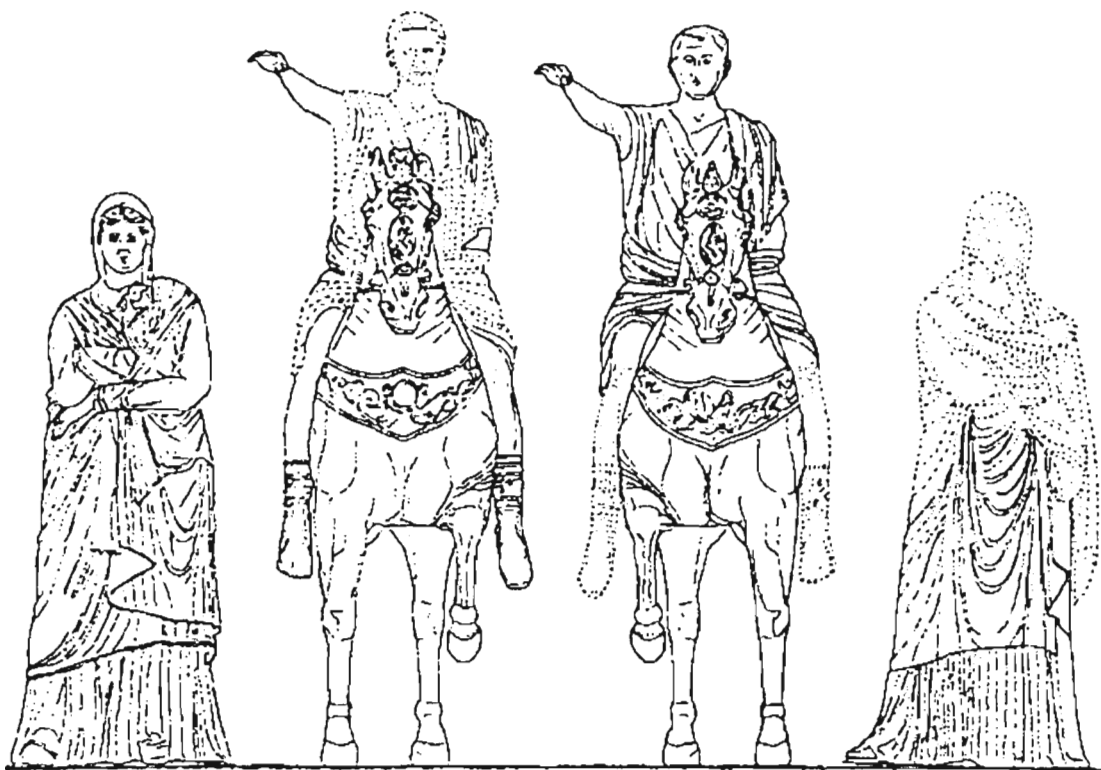


Figure 40: The Cartoceto Bronzes, Early Augustan (Pollini 1993: Figure 1)



Figure 41: Livia with Tiberius and Drusus, before 9BCE (Bartman 1999: Figure 67)



Figure 42: Vestals in relief, Augustan (Bartman 1999: Figure 78)



Figure 43: Livia as Priestess, Tiberian (Bartman 1999: Figure 79)



Figure 44: Livia as Ceres, Tiberian (Bartman 1999: Figure 42)



Figure 45: Augustus and Demeter, Augustan (Sutherland and Kraay 1975: enlargement Number 1088)



Figure 46: Salus Augusta, Augustan (Kleiner 1997: enlargement Figure 8)



Figure 47: Obverse: Livia as Pietas, Augustan (Kleiner 1997: enlargement Figure 10)
Reverse: Drusus the Younger



Figure 48: Tyche of Antioch and Augustus, Augustan (Sutherland and Kraay 1975: enlargement Number 1424)



Figure 49: Tarpeia, Augustan (Sutherland and Kraay 1975: enlargement Number 262)



Figure 50: Aeneas fleeing Troy, mid-Augustan, (Zanker 1998: Figure 156)



Figure 51: Fresco showing veiled women, 20 BCE (Zanker 1998: Figure 223)

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