The Salvation of the Flesh in Tertullian of Carthage

Dressing for the Resurrection

Carly Daniel-Hughes

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For David Levenson
In gratitude

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Abbreviations

Apul.	Apuleius	
	Flor.	*Florida*
Caes.	Caesar	
	B Gall	*Bellum Gallicum*
Cic.	Cicero	
	Cat.	*In Catilinam*
	Phil.	*Orationes Phillippicae*
Galen		
	UP	*De usu partium*
	Gos. Thom.	*Gospel of Thomas*
	Jos. Asen.	*Joseph and Aseneth*
Jos.	Josephus	
	C. Ap.	*Contra Apionem*
Justin	Justin Martyr	
	Dial.	*Dialogue with Trypho*
Juv.	Juvenal	
Livy	Livy	
Lucian		
	Herod.	*Herodotus and Aëtion*
Mart.	Martial	
	Mart. Perpet.	*Martyrdom of Perpetua*
Ov.	Ovid	
	Ars.	*Ars amatoria*
	Am.	*Remedia amoris*
Plin.	Pliny	
	HN	*Naturalis historia*

Plut.	Plutarch	
	Cat. Maj.	*Cato Major*
	Mor.	*Moralia*
	Conj. praec.	*Conjugalia praecepta*
	Amat.	*Amatorius*
	Quaest. rom.	*Quaestiones Romanae*
	Quaest. conv.	*Quaestiones convivales*
Prop.	Propertius	
Quint.	Quintilian	
	Inst.	*Institutio Oratoria*
Sen.	Seneca	
	Contr.	*Controversiae*
Sen.	Seneca	
	Ep.	*Epistulae*
	Helv.	*Ad Helvica*
Sor.	Soranus	
	Gyn.	*Gynecology*
Suetonius		
	Aug.	*Augustus*
	Cal.	*Gaius Caligula*
	Claud.	*Divus Claudius*
	Tib.	*Tiberius*
Ter.	Tertullian	
	An.	*De anima*
	Bapt.	*De baptism*
	Carn. Chr.	*De carne Christi*
	Cor.	*De corona militis*
	Cult. fem.	*De cultu feminarum I & II*
	Exh. Cast.	*De exhortatione castitatis*
	Fug.	*De fuga in persecutione*
	Idol.	*De idolatria*
	Iei.	*De ieiuno*
	Marc.	*Adversus Marcionem I-V*
	Mart.	*Ad martyras*
	Mon.	*De monogamia*
	Or.	*De oratione*
	Pall.	*De pallio*
	Pud.	*De pudicitia*

	Res.	*De resurrectione mortuorum*
	Scap.	*Ad Scapulam*
	Scorp.	*Scorpiace*
	Spect.	*De spectaculis*
	Ux.	*Ad uxorem I & II*
	Virg.	*De virginibus velandis*
Tib.	Tibullus	
Val. Max.	Valerius Maximus	
Varro		
	Ling.	*De lingua Latina*

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INTRODUCTION

Dress in Tertullian of Carthage

Introduction

> Dress yourselves with the silk of honesty, the linen of sanctity, and the purple of *pudicitia*. Painted in this way, you will have God himself for a lover.
>
> Tertullian, *On the Apparel of Women* 2[1]

During his lifetime, the vaunted "first theologian of the west,"[2] Tertullian of Carthage (approx. 160–220 CE)[3] was caught up in a series of trials inside and outside of his church. In the North African metropolis where Tertullian and his Christian community made their way, *Colonia Concordia Iulia Carthago,* "Carthage," Roman officials occupied the formerly Punic city as its overlords.[4] Tertullian's community was often the target of Roman attention, and drawing away their punitive gaze was a constant concern for him.[5] He was also deeply invested in heated debates with other Christians about some of most essential features of this new faith, most especially the salvation of the flesh; in this regard Basilides, Valentinus, Marcion, and their followers were common sources of concern.

In this contentious and hostile environment, it might seem curious that Tertullian would have the inclination to write repeatedly about matters like Christian dress and adornment. In fact, he not only produced treatises that dealt with men's attire and grooming, women's toilette and dress, as well as virgins' veiling, but also raised these concerns over the course of his career in various contexts.[6] Practices like hair-removal, coiffure design, or how to best wear a head-covering mantle—all matters discussed by this "father of the church"—might strike us modern readers as banal, or at least issues of individual taste and expression. Moreover, we might even presume that defending against Roman power and rival soteriologies would have occupied all of his time—that is, of course, if we think that debates about early

Christian dress were unconnected to those things. The central argument of this book is that, in fact, they were not.

Fashion theorists and historians have noted that across cultures dress and ornamentation are forms of communication that function like interpretative clues, indicating how a body should be read and understood by others, and, too, how that body should be approached.[7] In this way dress and ornamentation work as a language that is often about the body, about what meanings should be ascribed to it and thus to its bearer, and to the community with whom she wishes to be identified. It is, following sociologist Terence Turner, a "social skin . . . the necessary medium through which we communicate our social status, attitudes, desires, beliefs, and ideals (in short our identities) to others . . . it also to a large extent constitutes those identities, in ways to which we are compelled to conform . . . "[8] Dress is inherently social in character, and as a result of this fact, it is always dynamic, given to improvisation and change so that meanings ascribable to particular sartorial performances are inherently negotiable. What dress indicates about its wearer shifts over time and place in response to the cultural space from which it derives its meaning. Meaning is never entirely determined in any moment precisely because clothing has remarkable power to deceive or suppress certain aspects of a person's identity.[9] The concern that clothing can simultaneously reveal as well as mute, hide, or even reject certain aspects of a person's character and/or background, such as gender, class, ethnicity, or vocation, gives rise in fact to greater sartorial complexity—a more elaborate language of dress that produces more and more subtle effects.[10]

In the Roman world, this tension solicited a powerful cultural response to fix dress codes (particularly in the Republic and early Empire)[11] and elucidate other signs (e.g., one's gait or posture, the draping of fabric) to reveal the authenticity or illegitimacy of one's costume. The fact that the Romans proved especially keen observers of sartorial mishaps reveals just how the symbolic value attached to dress actually supports a heightened interest in policing and constraining its "unintended" meanings. Ancient Romans capitalized on the signifying power of dress and bodily adornment, repeatedly accentuating it in literature, art, and of course, bodily performances in attempts to foster particular social identities, or alternately, to undercut the status of others. In the Roman world, this cultural investment in dress reflects the fact that status was negotiated in a scopic regime that demanded constant corporeal displays.[12] At Rome, dress and stylizing the body were privileged indicators of virtue or its lack, and the agendas to which this link could be put were vast.[13]

* * *

Dress in Early Christianity

Ancient Christians likewise harnessed the power of dress for their social and religious agendas. Because dress was often represented in the Empire as a symbolically charged mediator of truth about one's character and virtue when Christians explored what modes of dress would be most suitable for them, they were conceiving what it meant to be Christian. The result, however, was not generally to abandon Roman garb and craft new modes of dress, but rather to revalue existing forms of dress, place them in various literary contexts as Christian ethical and theological concerns, or performatively employ them to mark certain patterns of dress and bodily adornment as their own. In short early Christians employed the symbolic potency of Roman dress in a myriad of ways. This conclusion is perhaps not surprising in that it sits in continuity with recent work in the study of Christianity, which illustrates and explores how Christians wielded, to various productive ends, the discourses and practices of the Roman Empire in which they made their way.[14]

The ways that dress and bodily adornment served Christians in their attempts to articulate self-identity, theological meanings, and relationships within their communities have only recently drawn rich scholarly comment.[15] Once we are attuned to this possibility, however, we find that the earliest followers of Christ deployed dress, and its signification, in diverse ways. Paul, thus, famously employs dress in metaphoric terms to articulate his Christocentric vision of communal identity. In Galatians, he reminds his gentile audience that baptism is akin to "having clothed" themselves "with Christ," a statement that is followed by a claim that this metaphoric garment aligns the whole community of Christ believers: "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).[16] In 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 he offers more specific fashion advice to his Corinthian audience, insisting that women don headgear during moments of prophetic ecstasy and that men, conversely, abandon it (an enigmatic passage that was debated among early Christians for centuries, including most prominently Tertullian's community in Carthage, as we will discover in Chapter 4).

Other early Christian authors, echoing the apostle's moralizing tone, sound notes from Roman ethical discourse beseeching Christian women to avoid the accoutrements of "luxurious" adornment. The author of 1 Peter exhorts Christian wives with the following words: "Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; rather, let your adornment be your inner self with lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight (1 Pet. 3:3–4)."

The quote plays on the notion that "true modesty" discloses itself on the body (a topic covered in greater detail in Chapter 1).

Governing passages, like the one above from 1 Peter, is a broader concern that Christians situate themselves advantageously in Rome's social matrices, revealing themselves to be respectable. A particular trope picked here is the Roman ideal that women's modest dress indicates the moral authority of a man, in this case her husband, who leads the Christian household.[17] Alicia Batten has recently and provocatively suggested that such comments, like we find in 1 Peter as well as in 1 Timothy 2:9–10, reflect male fears about the independent wealth of women within their churches—wealth that women displayed in their luxurious dress.[18] These early Christian epistles indicate that clothing the body played an important role in constituting social and religious identities and had vast implications for the negotiation of power and authority within these contexts.

Still other early Christian texts employ dress rhetorically to articulate Christian identity with a view to "outsiders," exploiting the link between a woman's virtue and that of her community in ways that offered complex and subtle critiques of Roman imperial power. One fascinating instance comes from the concluding sections of the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* (a treatise contemporary with Tertullian's own that I consider again in later chapters). Here we find the editor of the martyrology using dress as a strategic marker of Perpetua's superior character as compared to her exasperated Roman torturers. How she handles her dress, in the moments before her death, shows her to be in control—in cosmic terms—over them. Once pushed into the arena to face her death, she refuses the garb of a priestess of Ceres that her jailers impose upon her. Her refusal is significant. Perpetua refuses to play out their spectacle: she has in mind another.

Marching into the arena with her young female slave, Felicitas (who like Perpetua has recently given birth), the young martyr appears before the crowd. The onlookers, we are told, are horrified by their exposure, particularly their lactating breasts. The crowd reaction implies that the martyrs' persecutors are illegitimate protectors of modesty, and consequently, arbiters of justice. In response the torturers quickly provide the young women with garments.[19] When the horror of the crowd shames her persecutors, she is given a garment to cover her nakedness. At this point, too, Perpetua refuses the role of victim; she manages to negotiate her covering in the midst of her trial, effectively shielding her body, even taking a moment to pin up her disheveled hair. Perpetua's sartorial comportment is part of the narrator's strategy to illustrate the superior nature of Christian virtue over their Roman oppressors.[20] The ultimate rhetorical goal is to demonstrate a shift in authority away from the

Emperor and his temporal power, symbolized by the arena and its officials, to another referent, the Christian God, symbolized by the heroic martyrs, especially the composed Perpetua.[21]

The literary deployment of dress in Perpetua's death scene resonates with the increasing interest early Christians paid to their raiment and bodily comportment in the second and third centuries. This increasing interest is best registered in Tertullian's writings, particularly *On the Apparel of Women 1 and 2, On the Pallium,* and *On the Veiling of Virgins*,[22] the treatises that stand at the center of this study. In these writings dress is certainly also about self-identity, and about establishing Christian identity within the complex and variegated social matrices of the Empire. In Tertullian's writings, however, I suggest that something more is at stake. Dress and the meanings Christians ascribed to it were bound up with debates over the nature of the fleshly body and its endurance after death.[23] Tertullian's treatises on dress are not the aberrant musings of a Christian misogynist (as has been asserted),[24] but instead point to the integral, and contested, meanings the fleshly body could signify for ancient Christians.

Into the second and third centuries, when Christians proliferated various perspectives on the resurrection, as well as Christ's birth and incarnation, human bodies, especially those of "believers," bore a surplus of theological meaning. They became privileged markers of Christian identity, and, more specifically, of alternative perspectives on the salvation of the flesh being debated among them. Because the body took on such symbolic importance, Christian clothing and adornment necessarily did as well. This study maintains that Tertullian's writings represent an important historical moment in Christian deployments of dress as the earliest and most extant treatises on the subject. They offer an intriguing window onto the dynamic and contentious debates over gendered identity and salvation being waged among early Christians.

* * *

Who Was Tertullian of Carthage?

The question naturally arises why Tertullian's treatises on dress have not yet been read in terms of his perspective on salvation of the flesh. The answer is certainly complex, in part a reflection that the formative role dress and adornment played in the Roman Empire has only recently become a subject of serious historical study. Tertullian's treatises on dress, however, have also been understudied due to the enigmatic place that he has occupied in historical and doctrinal approaches to ancient Christian literature. The perception of his

writings as "extremist" over the past century has prohibited scholars (and in some instances continues to prohibit them) from seeing or investigating that connection and its implications for the study of early Christianity, and of critical importance for my analysis, the history of early Christian women as well.

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, "Tertullian," wrote some thirty-two extant treatises, all in Latin (though he also wrote in Greek), ranging from polemical treatises on the incarnation and resurrection to apologies, letters, homilies, and even one oration, *On the Pallium* (the subject of Chapter 2). We know little about his biography except that he lived in the late-second and early-third centuries; he was married, likely a member of the laity,[25] deeply educated in Latin rhetoric and perhaps also law.[26] Despite the fact that only these scattered details about his life have been passed down, few scholars would deny that Tertullian's writings made an indelible mark on Christian thought, especially in the Latin West.[27] His most prodigious efforts went into asserting and defending the salvation of the flesh—a position that he felt was repeatedly under attack on various fronts, Christian and "pagan" alike.[28] Indeed, his unwavering commitment to the endurance of the fleshly body was an important marker in the development of the doctrine of the resurrection, and the incarnational speculations that animated it for Latin-speaking Christians in particular.[29]

Yet the nature of the theologian's legacy has elicited, and continues to elicit, both praise and disdain from his readers. On the one hand, his corpus has long been approached for evidence of doctrinal developments in Christianity,[30] often quite apart from his writings on practical matters. In fact, it is these latter treatises that often contribute to his ill-famed reputation as an enigma: at once a beacon of orthodoxy (insofar as he is usually credited with articulating an early doctrine of the trinity) and a suspect heretic (insofar as he took up with "Montanism" or the "New Prophecy").[31] Further, his infamous diatribes against *paideia*—such as his quip: "what has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"[32]—seem to reveal his cultural disdain, or at the very least an attempt to obscure his obvious debt to an elite education and the influence of Stoic philosophy on his thought.[33] In short, for some scholars Tertullian's writings have appeared to be plagued with inconsistencies—even reflecting for the irrational.[34] Take for instance this neat summary from Jean-Claude Fredouille describing how earlier historians have interpreted, and misunderstood him, over the past century: "a violent man, without taste, happily wise and inconsistent, an obdurate rhetor, extreme in all things whose natural rigorism . . . drove him logically to Montanism . . . "[35]

Such disparaging appraisals indicate why some modern critics have regarded Tertullian's writings on dress with exasperation, seeing the topic as frivolous,

the mark of "heretical" influence, or the product of male politics, even as they note his impact on the development of Latin Christianity.[36] Scholarship, over the past century, has focused most intently on Tertullian's longer, speculative, and polemical treatises viewed as foundational to Christian doctrinal development, marginalizing his treatises on dress (and other "practical" matters). Conversely, I will show that Tertullian's comments on dress, far from being subsidiary, are deeply bound to his conception of salvation. Analysis of them should not be divorced from a richer consideration of Tertullian's theological teachings and perspectives. Studying these treatises in light of his soteriology greatly illuminates—in ways as of yet underappreciated—the thoroughly gendered nature of his theological perspective.[37] At its foundation, then, this study offers an innovative treatment of a key and influential writer in early Christianity, exploring some new questions about his theological positions on the body, gender, and the resurrection. In addition, however, it makes the important point that Tertullian's perspective was developed inside a nascent Christian community and bears the marks, as a result, of debates taking place within it.

* * *

Goal of This Study and Methodological Considerations

In the chapters that follow I offer a close reading of Tertullian's main treatises on women's and men's dress with the primary aim of opening up the uncharted terrain that analysis of dress and its signification hold for the history of early Christianity generally and early Christian women more specifically. Each chapter treats a different treatise—*On the Pallium (De pallio), On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2 (De cultu feminarum 1* and *2),* and *On the Veiling of Virgins (De virginibus velandis),* respectively, casting into fuller relief how and why dress emerges in these writings as a constructive tool for articulating gendered identity and contesting the nature of human flesh as well as the possibility of its transformation.

Chapter 1 begins by establishing the broader social and historical environment in which Tertullian produced his writings on dress. A consideration of Roman literature and portraiture shows that Romans often treated dress and adornment as powerful visual markers of status and power. I argue that this connection emerges out of a Roman moralizing discourse holding that virtue, especially sexual virtue, discloses itself on the clothed and groomed body. Further, we discover that Romans repeatedly expressed concern that dress could be used to deceive others, inciting a competitive spirit that demanded

virtues be tested by the scrutinizing gaze of one's peers and betters. All desired to proclaim sexual virtue and modesty for themselves. Yet what mode of dress, adornment, and bodily displays revealed these ephemeral qualities was always under contestation. This tension over appearance and reality made dress and adornment usable signifiers of power and status—and their opposites—in a host of contexts. Romans variously constructed and employed modest garb and grooming to bolster their political ambitions and social position, or to undermine those of others. In short, clothing and caring for the body in the Empire were a means of situating oneself in its complex set of imperial social matrices—and also a means of manifesting the veracity of one's mode of life on the body.

Chapter 2 elaborates one of the ways in which Tertullian put the connection between dress and decorum to work in constituting Christian identity. *On the Pallium*, a pithy speech to a Carthaginian audience about the merits of the simple tunic (known as the *pallium*) over the Roman toga, has received comparably less scholarly attention than the other writings considered in this study. Yet I argue that the speech deserves deeper analysis precisely because it indicates that dress could be essential to the articulation of Christian identity in gendered as well as ethnic terms. This chapter reveals that dress as a cultural "repository of meaning" in regard to gender renders it usable for different constructive ends in his corpus.[38] Here Tertullian uses Roman conceptions of dress to envision a Christian masculine identity that is distinctively non-Roman. An examination of this speech reveals how Tertullian picks up on the performative potential of Roman oratory and tropes from a Roman moral discourse in order to fashion a kind of Christian masculinity that retains positively coded Roman virtues: courage, discernment, self-control, and avoidance of luxury. In so doing it opens new questions about the construction of Christian identity suggesting, with scholars like Denise Buell, that Christians did use race and ethnicity to configure their status in the Empire,[39] while advancing this discussion to consider the gendered character of such deployments as well as the ways in which they were locally negotiated.

One of the most interesting aspects of this study, however, is what it reveals about the lives and religious perspectives of early Christian women. The final two chapters treat *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2* and *On the Veiling of Virgins* in order to pull back the layers of Tertullian's rhetoric and strive for something of these women's too-long-forgotten points of view to emerge. In so doing, I suggest that his view was but one in his North African community, and it was perhaps not the most dominant. Chapters 3 and 4 consider Tertullian's rhetoric in an effort to "resist" and challenge it. To that end, I put to work a feminist approach informed by insights from post-structuralist and

feminist rhetorical critical analysis.[40] In a recent study, *The Power of the Word,* Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza reminds us that we should not abandon the act of remembering women as integral parts of early Christian history, even as we recognize the inherently androcentric nature of textual evidence for them. It is certainly the case that Tertullian's own agendas leave their mark on his rhetoric and his presentation of the women in his community as a result. Thus, a feminist approach can and should problematize his account by exposing the ideological perspective that gives shape to his representation of women and to communal dynamics more generally.

Schüssler Fiorenza, however, rightly encourages us not to stop feminist historical analysis at this point. Her conclusion offers an argument, in my view, for reading Tertullian "against the grain," or in her words: "to produce knowledge that recovers wo/men as historical agents . . . [*sic*]"[41] Sharing this intellectual commitment, I strive, where possible, to illuminate the limits of Tertullian's rhetoric and unearth alternative possibilities that he aims to cover up or undercut. What we discover in the process undermines Tertullian's authority by showing other ways of conceiving of dress and adornment perhaps held by the women in his community. In particular I am informed by post-structuralist literary theory—an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of thinkers and approaches—and I treat Tertullian's texts as forms of discourse, or utterances that aim to foreclose difference or alternative perspectives.[42] Post-structuralist theorists variously point out that in any given textual utterance or statement there remain vestiges of "counter-speech," the alternative perspective that the author recites with a goal of co-opting it for his or her own agenda (and never with complete success).[43]

In some instances, Tertullian's rhetoric more successfully conceals possible competing understandings of dress inside his community, such as in the hyperbolic and satirical tone of his homilies *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*, to which I turn in Chapter 3. Here he aims to link women's modest dress to his conception of the salvation of the flesh. To clarify this point, I begin the chapter with a rich account of his understanding of the salvation of the flesh as presented in treatises like *On the Resurrection of the Dead, Against Marcion,* and *On the Flesh of Christ.*[44] I conclude that across his writings woman's flesh comes to signify shame and sordidness, testifying to the need for salvation. In *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2,* I argue, we find Tertullian working out the practical implications of this conception: elaborating upon women's modest dress is the means to inscribe his soteriological vision onto women's flesh.

Given Tertullian's agenda, where the subject women's dress and grooming is largely an instrument in his theological arsenal, his rhetoric strives to

negatively signify the clothing habits of Carthaginian women, erasing from our view what values and ideals adornment might have signified for them. In these two homilies comic tropes and caricatures in which Christian matrons emerge as harlots with extensive amounts of leisure time surely ill reflect women's own perspective on their raiment and grooming. In order, then, to approximate something of their self-understanding in regard to their toilette, I look beyond Tertullian's vitriolic treatises to material artifacts (in particular jewelry, funerary epitaphs, and portraits) and other literary sources in which women's adornment obtains a decidedly more positive significance. Placing this material in conversation with the Christian context in which Tertullian writes, I illustrate that women in Carthage did enjoy some forms of adornment that he disparages. Further, I conclude that their behavior indicates the role adornment could play to establish and secure their social status, prestige, and most especially, familial relationships within their Christian community.

Other of Tertullian's treatises, most especially *On the Veiling of Virgins*, however, retain greater evidence of women's counter-speech, making it even more possible to reconstruct alternative perspectives from Tertullian's own. A rhetorical analysis in this case offers the richest possibilities for a feminist inquiry here because in this treatise Tertullian repeats (however unflatteringly) points of view that he wishes to discount. Using insights from literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, Chapter 4 takes advantage of the "dialogical" nature of this work, and juxtaposes it with the contemporaneous treatise from North Africa, the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* (a text that I maintain was written in part by a Christian woman)[45] as well as the *Acts of Thecla*, a text known to Tertullian's community.[46] I use these treatises to elaborate the theological perspective perhaps shared by Tertullian's virgin opponents about their unveiling and their spiritual vocation, to which it was related.

Chapter 4, too, takes into account more fully that Tertullian's arguments about women's dress are ultimately about bodily performances, and as such, I argue, they take on an especially charged character. Tertullian occupies himself with these matters because he has invested in the potency of women's flesh. How that flesh was clothed and adorned obtained a theological value—but imbuing women's dress with that potency meant that it needed to be repeatedly harnessed *as well as constrained.* Judith Butler's conception of performativity helps to elaborate why containing the signifying power of dress—specifically the veil—becomes a preoccupation for this Christian writer. In her foundational text, *Gender Trouble*, Butler states that gender is "a stylized repetition of acts," or a bodily performance, which functions to

hide its own constructed nature, intimating an enduring, prediscursive sexed subject:

> . . . within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed . . . here is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results.[47]

She employs the term "performativity" to illustrate that the material body is not a "blank and lifeless page" upon which culture writes, but that language, rituals, and performances are the means through which the body is always perceived and its meaning regulated.[48] Butler is interested in showing how repeated performances give the false appearance of an underlying "natural" sex, but might also unsettle that connection. For my purposes her notion of performativity helps us to see Tertullian's investment in the signifying potential of dress as a means to instill a particular gender hierarchy onto women's flesh. I will argue that he does so to solidify a connection between women's fleshly bodies, sin, and death, which proves essential to his view of the salvation of the flesh.

More importantly, Butler's conception of performativity indicates that bodily performances can be the way that significations of the flesh are transformed and undone—or, in this case, that the signification Tertullian has attached to a woman's flesh could be challenged. Speaking about gender as a regulatory norm, in her more recent book *Undoing Gender*, Butler writes: "to the extent that gender norms are *reproduced*, they are invoked and cited by bodily practices that also have the capacity to alter norms in the course of their citation."[49] In other words, bodily performances are variable and not always easily regulated. Alternate performances reveal the instability of any attempt to foreclose the signification of the body. Thus when Christian women refused to perform in the ways that Tertullian proscribed—and I will argue that they likely did refuse—they not only unsettled the gendered hierarchy, they suggested that their bodies might reveal theological possibilities not entailed in his vision of fleshly salvation. This conclusion reminds us that Christian women were also harnessing the symbolic content attached to their dress in the Roman world, suggesting that they enacted their Christian identity in complex and variegated ways. Most importantly, some of these women suggested that their flesh already indicated its salvation, a claim that undercut the gendered logic of Tertullian's soteriology altogether.

While this study of early Christian dress serves to address some nagging issues about the nature and substance of Tertullian's theology of the flesh, its impetus and rationale is to make an original contribution to the history of women in early Christianity. More broadly, it participates in growing interest (particularly in anthropological studies of religion) on the productive, and contested, role dress can play in establishing religious identities for women. Focusing most intensely on Islamic veiling practices, and to a lesser degree conservative Protestantism,[50] feminist scholars have not only illustrated the importance that embodied performance serves for women in carving out and asserting a self-identity, but they have also noted that dressing the body—itself an unstable and manifold signifier—is necessarily "a lived experience full of contradictions and multiple meanings."[51] Historically, scholars of religion have been insensitive to the symbolic place dress performance offers for women (in particular) to negotiate contradictions and meanings, overlooking the possibility that dress, and embodied practice generally, is not imitative of religious identity and culture, but, in fact, productive of it as well. This lacuna results from a theoretical presumption that women's dress has a static meaning, rather than manifold and shifting ones. Further, it assumes that what is said about women's dress (in the case of Muslim women's veiling especially, what has been said about it by Western outsiders) adequately represents its function and meaning for women themselves.

The insight that dress serves as an important locus for women to negotiate, articulate, and contest their religious self-understanding as well as larger worldviews challenges feminist scholars and historians to examine this underappreciated aspect of women's embodied life. This study, then, enriches this larger area of inquiry in the study of religion. It takes as its cue a deeper theoretical—and ultimately ethical—commitment to foreground the histories of those who have had to bear the semiotic "burden of the flesh" more heavily than others. In short, I want to ask: what did women in Tertullian's community do, indeed what could they do, with the semiotic burden that he, like so many church fathers, invested in their corporeal performances?

Asking the question in this way, I mean to be provocative. I am not suggesting that women dressed in a defensive reaction to Tertullian's theological project, or that their modes of dress were necessarily (in every instance) direct attempts to undercut his view of their raiment. Rather I highlight that they were participants and actors in a social context in which their dress bore rich symbolic content, one that Tertullian put to work to mark their flesh as an indicator of human sinfulness. In Carthage, dressing the body was not a subsidiary concern, or even one strictly confined to fashion or social status. In the second and third centuries when Christians

vociferously argued about whether their own God was "enfleshed," and that they would be saved "in the flesh," how could matters as adorning the flesh be cordoned off as such? Instead, we will see that the implications of dressing the body were tied to the performance of proper gender and ethnic identity, and at stake in them was the nature of human flesh and the possibility of its transformation into glorious, resurrected bodies.

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CHAPTER 1

Bodily Displays of Modesty: Or, How to Power Dress in the Roman World

Introduction

> You, [Antony], took up the manly (*virilem*) toga, which at once you exchanged for the womanly toga (*muliebrem togam*). First, you were a vulgar whore, the prices for your shame fixed and it was not a small fee; but immediately Curio intervened, who lead you from the hardships of the prostitute and as if he gave you the *stola*, brought you into a certain and stable marriage.
>
> Cicero, *The Phillipics*[1]

In one of Cicero's infamous denunciations of Mark Antony, the rhetor accuses his opponent of exhaustively pursuing Curio, the son of a consul. The insult plays on a host of literary themes from Roman New Comedy, as Rebecca Langlands has argued in her recent monograph, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome.* Antony, who was in fact financially indebted to Curio (the cost of launching a senatorial career at Rome),[2] is likened to a courtesan whose dubious plots are rewarded with the affections of her suitor so that she obtains a proper marriage. Cicero of course uses the trope to unman Antony—gender inversion enables the rhetor to undercut Antony's self-mastery, to insist that Antony, unlike Cicero himself, is easily drawn off course, duped by the love of money and of lust.[3]

Note how the rhetorical play depends on Antony's costume to enhance the insult. Roman tradition held that upon reaching puberty, a male citizen would exchange his youthful toga (*toga praetexta*) for that of a grown man (*toga virilis*).[4] Antony's toga, however, does not signal his adoption of the rites of Roman masculinity: on him the toga signals his lack of morality. With this

statement, Cicero evokes the Roman tradition in which female adulterers and prostitutes were made to wear the male toga—at least ideally if not in practice.[5] On their female bodies, the toga was an indicator that they could not and did not maintain sexual exclusivity (*castitas*) and modesty (*pudicitia*), those signature qualities of high-standing Roman matrons. Ah, but Cicero taunts, Antony's sexual prowess served him well, improved his station so that in the end Curio made an "honest woman" of him, granting him the *stola,* a tunic that was the quintessential garb of the Roman matron. The joke is a vulgar one made at the expense of Antony's manhood: a Roman senator who should govern from a sense of self-control, from his domination (*imperium*) over all others, is nothing more than Curio's little woman.

This passage from Cicero reveals how Roman moral discourse, particularly in regard to sexual virtue, was deeply gendered and also had political implications: sexual virtue revealed one's sense of propriety, suggested that one would uphold social strictures, and that one knew one's place in society.[6] Yet more importantly for this study, the passage reveals how such logic could also render clothing, and the symbolism attached to it, essential in the display and contestation of virtue in the Roman world. The symbolic significance of Roman dress—a topic that has only recently received thorough attention from scholars[7]—proves essential for understanding why dress appears as a usable commodity in Tertullian's own writings (and those of later Christians) and was, too, a critical constituent of women's religiosity in his community.

What, then, supported the widespread connection between virtue and dress in the Roman world more generally? The answer is that for Romans, virtues such as *pudicitia*, modesty and social propriety, *castitas*, sexual exclusivity, or *pudor,* shame, and their opposite, *stuprum,* indecent fornication, had a conspicuous quality. *Pudicitia*, *pudor,* and the like were figured as regulatory mechanisms that worked from within an individual, policing his or her behavior. Just what constituted evidence of these traits in a person's interactions was often under contestation—making them easy targets in moral invective.[8] Yet Romans maintained that their presence could and should be revealed in certain corporeal "signs." For instance, shame (*pudor*) was identified with the ruddy blush of the cheeks (*rubor*) and a downward glance. And this corporeal performance was deemed necessary for the assertion of honor: a blush or shift of an eye indicated that a Roman man or woman was aware of the constant scrutiny of others and that he or she willingly submitted to it.[9]

Given this conception of virtue—however idealized—as embodied, clothing and adornment—also markers of status—could easily be employed as indicators of a person's character. The connection between dress and virtue played on the notion that inner character was revealed in outward appearance.

Building on the work of previous studies in Classics, I advance the discussion of Roman dress by arguing not only that clothing was part of the grammar of Roman morality, but also that the possibilities entailed in its appropriation in a host of contexts were multiple. This chapter focuses on how Romans exploited dress and adornment rhetorically both in literature and portraiture. It deals largely (though not exclusively) with elite, male representations of dress, many of them textual in nature. In considering them I highlight the cultural significance attached and attachable to particular garments and sartorial performances in the Roman world. I suggest that this discursive context is especially insightful for unearthing Tertullian's strategic agenda in his treatment of Christian dress.

A more recent example helps to explain how the signification of dress depends upon linguistic interventions to create and sustain particular garb as culturally salient. Roland Barthes' foundational study *The Fashion System* (*Système de la Mode*) examines the modern fashion magazine in order to delineate "written clothing" (verbal description) from "image clothing" (pictures and representations) and, too, from the item to which both refer, "real clothing" (the actual garment). In short, his structuralist analysis shows how written clothing—statements like "pleats are a must in the afternoon"—combines with photographs and drawings to imbue the represented garments with meaning, rendering them "fashionable."[10] Roman men, upon whom I largely focus here, of course created nothing like a discourse of "fashion," with its misrecognized economic goal,[11] but they did saturate particular garments and related corporeal markers with a rich cultural meaning that could be used to shore up particular networks of power. This sartorial vocabulary proved culturally productive so that dress and adornment could be put to work in a variety of contexts: political debate, rhetorical competition, moral treatises, portraiture, and of course, in the practice of bodily performance itself.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how dress was entangled in Roman constructions of feminine and masculine sexual and moral virtue, while considering some of the various political and social agendas to which those constructions were put. We begin with an exploration of how moral discourse used dress and adornment to articulate idealized femininity grounded in the notion that female sexuality, and bodies, were deeply in need of vestimentary confinement. The discussion then moves to the related conception of Roman masculinity and dress based on the preservation of male *imperium*, dominance over others. Here I will briefly suggest that Roman oratory, with its stress on bodily performance, was one of the most potent sites for the enactment and contestation of that *imperium* (an important

argument given that Tertullian's only treatise on men's dress is in fact constructed as an oration). The chapter ends by considering how Roman imperial portraiture of women as well as men utilized the symbolic power of dress to articulate power and personae and disseminate these idealized self-images throughout the Empire.

* * *

Part I: Dress and the Roman Woman

Discerning the Matron's Pudicitia

In the Roman Empire, Latin writers found women's sexual morality an especially compelling means of reflecting on and critiquing the political and social landscape. Women's sexual propriety and morality (as it was perceived and constructed by male authors) was often not about women at all, but served as a litmus test, a barometer of social decay that "infested" and threatened the "traditional" Roman way of life. The perception that a dramatic change occurred in Roman society, in the move from Republic to Empire—so often cited by Roman authors—was perhaps corroborated by the fact that new financial and social realities enabled women to inherit property and exert political influence. But tropes about women's failing morality—often revealed in her dress and comportment—also indicate how powerful a tool moral discourse was to establish and justify as natural a particular conception of the *mos maiorum*. In other words, Roman writers rarely offered a window into how Roman women behaved, but instead left evidence of how moral discourse was used to justify male *imperium*, or domination, in a variety of settings.

Roman writers employed a host of strategies to castigate women for their moral failings. Juvenal, for instance, recounts misogynistic tales of women's debauchery and general disdain for Roman cult and state. In his derisive sixth satire, he draws attention to the heights of contemporaneous women's sexual indecency by illustrating how matrons neglect and profane what was once a sacred cult to personified *Pudicitia*. He imagines that women fail to tend the goddess' shrine and that instead they pleasure each other sexually in drunken revelry, even ending their depraved celebration by urinating on the goddess' cultic statue (Juv. 2.6.306–3). Picturing *matronae* who flagrantly defame a sacred shrine—to "Modesty" no less!—with the public exposure of their "shameful parts" is an irony that indicates a deep perversion of that virtue. Evoking this denigration of a cult to Modesty serves as a not-so-subtle

reminder of just how perverse the Empire had become. Indeed, Roman matrons had utter disregard for that quintessential of all Roman virtues. Can *pudicitia* be said to exist at all when women refuse to perform and protect the goddess whose very domain is this sacred virtue?

Alternately, Roman writers trotted out *exempla* of praiseworthy Romans from the glorious past in order to indict those living in the present. This tactic is a particular favorite of Valerius Maximus in his *Memorable Sayings and Deeds.* Take, for instance, this dramatic opening to the work in which the Roman writer offers his audience an astounding vision of "traditional" Roman mores:

> Once a upon a time the use of wine was unknown to Roman women . . . However, so that their *pudicitia* should not be harsh and terrifying but also tempered by a decent sort of kindness—for which their husbands' indulgence they made use of abundant gold and much purple dye—so as to bring about a more stylish appearance they painstakingly coloured their hair red with ashes: for in those days there was no fear of catching the eye of a serial seducer of other men's wives, rather innocently seeing and being seen alike were guarded by mutual *pudor* . . . Indeed whenever some altercation had arisen between husband and wife, they used to come to the chapel of the goddess Viriplaca (Husband-Pleaser) . . . they would take turns saying whatever they had wanted and then go home again in harmony . . . Thus there was *verecundia* (respect) between spouses.[12]

Valerius maintains that ancient Roman women could partake in adornment—selecting items that in his own day (gold, purple, dyed red hair) were repudiated as the costume of prostitutes and foreigners[13]—with no fear of jeopardizing their sexual modesty. The ancient Romans were so rich in this virtue, he imagines, that when adorned, should a woman's eyes meet a strange man's, both were easily shamed and chastened. Husband and wife coexisted so harmoniously that even in a fight—resolved no less in a cultic shrine—they easily recovered their harmonious relationship because they were steeped in the values of polite, Roman society. In ancient Rome, at least according to Valerius, "the power of such regulatory virtues as *pudor* and *verecundia* was so great there was no need for further strictures . . . "[14]

Yet throughout Valerius' *exempla* one cannot escape a repeated tension, Langlands notes, around just what constitutes sexual morality in the present. If *pudicitia* is a virtue that demands constant and careful protection by the male citizen, then male oversight is also fraught with moral ambiguities: how much oversight is too much? What are the limits of authority (*auctoritas*) when it is aptly employed? In the case of women, is modesty a matter of sexual purity, physical intactness, or intent—the desire to protect that

intactness?[15] Valerius then brings us to the concerns that animate much Roman moral discourse and, I argue, easily connect it with bodily display, and hence, dress.[16]

One way in which this tension emerges in imperial sources is the notion that sexual probity can be ferreted out, established, and scrutinized particularly by various performative indicators, outward signs that assured inner character (a logic also at work in the Greek physiognomic tradition with its focus on physiological indicators of virtue as well).[17] In the case of Roman women especially, however, this connection was used to bolster the idea that women were obligated to reveal and repeat their modesty—that it should be legible on their bodies. Such censorial oversight was the special prerogative of a matron's husband to whom she should willingly submit herself for appraisal.[18] But Roman patriarchal logic held too that a virtuous wife reflected back on the status of her husband and her community. In this case, she was called to display her *pudicitia* before all whom she encountered. Langlands explains:

> Roman society demanded that a married woman (and particularly one involved in celebrating the cult of *pudicitia*) must strive to display the quality of *pudicitia* to the rest of the community in her person. Ideally *pudicitia* would shine forth from a married woman; it would turn heads when she walked down the street.[19]

Particular bodily signs were privileged as markers of a virtuous woman, or signals of her shame and chastity, which I have already suggested, included blushing and downcast eyes.[20] Moral virtue was figured as a quality of mind as well as of body. This connection between outer display and inner virtue easily made women's (as well as men's) dress and adornment a matter of interest and comment for a host of Roman writers. They articulated a moral landscape in which bodily comportment and dress were potent indicators of morality and its opposite.

* * *

Dressing the Roman Matron

What then was the costume that signified the quintessential *matrona*?

The *vittae, palla,* and *stola* are readily singled out in Roman literature as indicators of estimable modesty for Roman women. Respectable matrons are said to wear their hair arranged in a *tutulus*, a conical tower of twisted hair bound by *vittae*, woolen bands knotted together forming "beads."[21]

Over their tunics rested a gap-sleeved slip that hung by two signature straps, the *stola*, whose colored hem also distinguished it.[22] That garment in particular was permitted only to the wives of freeborn citizens—a marker of the *iustum matrimonium*, legal marriage to a citizen.[23] A woolen mantle, the *palla*, was then wrapped over a woman's tunic and drawn over her head and shoulders[24]—particularly when she left her *domus,* many writers announce.[25] Valerius Maximus, for example, recounts how Sulpicius Gallus (a Republican consul) expelled his wife for going out uncovered, displaying her head meant for his eyes alone (Val. Max. 6.3.9–10).[26]

These garments were most certainly idealized and did not reflect the daily fashion of Roman matrons under the Empire. Scholars have long noted a significant gap in what male writers reveal about the costume of the matron and what other sources—iconographic and material—suggest about Roman dress practices.[27] Kelly Olson, in particular, has suggested that this costume was ceremonial, perhaps even archaic, being closely linked in fact to the religious garb of the *flaminica Dialis*, chief priestess of Rome, and does not reflect what women actually wore.[28] Olson has argued that much of what Roman writers reveal about women's clothing is "prescriptive." "The literary record describes what the *matrona* should look like and how her clothing should embody her moral stance," she writes.[29] Given the somatic character of Roman morality it is not difficult to understand how Roman dress was readily connected to virtue in Roman discourse. So tight was this link in fact that the term *stolata* could be "employed as a literary shorthand" to denote a woman of moral status—even in the imperial age where there is little indication that women continued to wear the tunic.

The key to understanding how Roman writers employed these garments, as well as the arts of adornment (which were said to signify a lack of moral character), is to keep in view the symbolic role that clothing held. In the case of the idealized costume of the Roman matron, the *vittae*, *palla*, and *stola* entailed notions of sexual exclusivity, submission, and commitment to a construction of traditional values that the Roman writers who called on them wished to promulgate, or mock, in the case of satirists, to various ends. Judith Lynn Sebesta has uncovered some important meanings that might have been associated with women's headgear in particular. She points out that woolen fillets adorned anything signified as "religious pure," a sacrificial victim for instance, so as to demarcate its "inviolability."[30] Thus the *vittae* that wrapped the hair indicated a woman's sexual exclusivity to her husband. Varro reveals this logic when he says that the *tutulus*, a conical hairstyle ideally worn by the matron, is a metaphor for the citadel of the city: a matron's twisted hair protects her head, guarding her sexuality just

as the citadel guards the city against hostile intrusions (*Ling.* 7.44).[31] The head-covering *palla* too could be envisioned as a "seal" or a boundary, an indication of her sense of shame that shields her from the gaze of other men.[32]

Intrinsic to this symbolism is the notion that a woman's head and hair are visible indicators of her sexual potency—a view reflected most clearly in ancient medical thought. Medical writers often held that a woman's mouth and throat and her uvula and vagina were related sets of organs, even in terms of their physiology.[33] For instance, the medical writer Soranus warns that a woman's vocal exercises should be modulated so that they do not dry up her menses because the air following in and out of the larynx could "detract" from the flow of blood from the "neck of the womb" (*Gyn.* 1.4.22). Galen goes even farther, asserting that the anatomical features of a woman's sexual organs match those of her mouth; the clitoris is like the uvula protecting the larynx (Gal. UP 15.3).[34] Given this connection, it is not difficult to see how the long and flowing hair could likewise become easily associated with "unbounded" sexuality with a desire that was unchecked, where "bound" hair could symbolize just the opposite.[35]

The symbolism of the matron's garments considered here suggests that women's sexuality without the disciplines of law and comportment portends disruption and even danger.[36] Further, this signification maintains that the internal mechanisms of shame and modesty are necessary to police a woman's sexuality, and in turn the evidence of those "internal" mechanisms should be discernable in her dress and bodily comportment. Understood in this way, we can see the idealized matron's costume as a means of "binding" or "containing" the matron, by sartorially distinguishing her from the rest of society as the sexual property of her husband. But also I would suggest that binding could be extended in the practice of wearing the garb itself—not only in literary descriptions, but even as it was envisioned in portrait statues. Take for instance this portrait type known fittingly as the *Pudicitia* pose. Popular in the Republic and variously in the Empire (it was replaced by another veiled type, the Herculaneum woman, in later centuries, as we will see), the statue subject is cocooned by the *palla.* Her body is not only totally consumed by its voluminous folds, but her closed posture also completes the effect that she is restrained by a deep sense of modesty (fig. 1.1).[37] In these portrait images we meet a woman practiced in the display of her modesty.

* * *

Figure 1.1 *Pudicitia* Portrait Statue, Roman Imperial (Rome, Capitoline Museum)

The Rhetoric of Adornment

Given that a woman's modest and simple dress were conceived as the regulation of her sexuality, and thus, her modesty, it is little wonder that adornment could indicate precisely the opposite, her love of fornication (*stuprum*) and adultery (*adulterium*), or her immorality. We find a common trope in Roman imperial literature in which women's modest dress could signal halcyon days from Rome's staid past, while women's adornment revealed the depravity that marked its present. Central to these claims was the notion then that, in adorning, a woman actively rejected her subordinate role in society, and worse, that rather than conceal her disruptive sexuality she sought to draw men toward it.[38] The heroines of Roman moralists were those women who were said to disregard the cosmetic arts altogether and to appear the more beautiful for it. Seneca the Elder, for example, champions his mother Helvia's

loveliness as authentic precisely because she paints herself in *pudicitia* alone (*Dial.* 12.16.4). Because sexual morality was seen as essential to a woman's reputation and her social status, Roman writers could argue that women who did anything to jeopardize it—even subtly—were acting reckless and were deserving of a punitive response.

In a list of exemplary declamations, Seneca also includes a fictive case in which a man returns from a trip to discover that his wife, though petitioned for sex three times by another man, remained faithful to him. The husband, however, accuses her of adultery upon learning that the suitor had left his wife his fortune on account of finding her *pudica*, chaste. Seneca has his most favored interlocutor, Porcius Latro, defend the decision of the husband by arguing that she has committed *stuprum* not in the act, but in her failing to establish her *pudicitia* effectively. Her appearance, in other words, somehow indicated compliance with the suitor's demands.[39] Latro, playing the part of the embittered husband, asks his wife: "Do you think that you are offering evidence of *pudicitia*, if all you have done is to refuse to commit *stuprum*? . . . For a woman the only honour is *pudicitia*: thus she must take care both to be and to seem *pudica*."[40] He suggests that she *must* have solicited the attention, given the suggestion of *impudica* in her appearance, if not her deeds, for the suitor to approach her—and continue doing so, even leaving his fortune to her! Following this logic the jurist Ulpian reports that a man who rapes a woman dressed as a slave or prostitute is less, or in some cases not at all, culpable for that act.[41] Here, certainly, we see the class-bias of Roman moral discourse: the notion that slave and lower-class women should police access to their bodies—and therefore assert their modesty—is not entertained at all. Indeed, an adorned matron is imagined to have aligned herself with "the open bodies of slaves and prostitutes," willingly forfeiting her higher status.[42] A matron's modesty—revealed by her rejection of adornment and studied simplicity—emerges in Roman inventive and moral discourse as the foundation of just social and political arrangements. For this reason, any attempt that a woman might make to jeopardize it through appearance (however subtle) should be punishable by law.

In this way, women's excessive toilette and ostentatious garb—variously defined of course—were easily presented as rejections of, and a threat to, Roman mores. Maria Wyke explains that this link is based on "a conceptual pattern in which the regimen of the body is thought to parallel the regimen of the state, excessive care for the body is treated as symptomatic of the softening of the state's moral fibre."[43] Women's perceived denial of customary modes of dress and adornment served as a powerful rhetorical weapon for cataloguing the "depravities" of imperial life. The rhetoric of adornment was especially

useful in critiquing and reflecting on the "Orientalization" of the Empire—the result of cultural contact and shifting boundaries, particularly with Rome's Greek-speaking subjects. Of all the nations, the Greeks were denigrated most vociferously as effeminate, and their bodily habits suspect.[44] Such connections were premised on the insidious connection between women and foreigners and relied on the establishment of women's status as quintessentially "other" than the Roman male.[45] Thus when Pliny fulminates against the intrusion of *luxuria* into Roman society, after military campaigns in the Greek east, his language is gendered: such accoutrements soften and destroy the austere *simplicitas* of Roman life.[46] In fact what is most troubling about a man's adornment, we will see below, is precisely its ability to feminize him.[47]

Roman writers, therefore, built their critique of adornment on this link between women and foreigners so that women's apparent use of such foreign goods was seen as an explicit threat to their already marginal Roman status.[48] Women who drape themselves in Coan silk, a nearly sheer and supple fabric from the Greek island of Cos, earn repeated reprobation from male writers like the Stoic Seneca for destroying the austere, Roman way of life.[49] Other writers worry about the dangers of cosmetics to mutate and transform the body: Juvenal claims that these tools of beautification wipe away a woman's "ethnic" heritage. In his infamous sixth satire, he blames Roman women's licentiousness on their admiration for the Greeks and accuses them of making themselves over "from a Tuscan to a Greekling."[50] A similar complaint appears in Propertius' poem about his painted lover, Cynthia:

> Now you even imitate the dyed Britons
> and you play games by wetting your head with bright dyes?
> As nature made it, that is the right style for everyone
> Belgian color is disgusting (*turpis*) on Roman lips.[51]

We should not be surprised then to learn that makeup was often described as a bodily marker of non-Romans. For instance, Caesar points out that the Britons paint themselves blue, and Pliny notes similar practices amongst other foreign peoples.[52]

Even when writers recommend women's adornment, particularly the cosmetic arts, as necessary accoutrements of the successful female lover, like the poet Ovid or Pliny the Elder in the *Natural History*, they nonetheless participate in this Roman logic that sees women's sexuality in negative terms, as Amy Richlin has shown. They argue that cosmetics are necessary because a woman needs the tools of *cultus* to domesticate and tame her *materia*, "raw material."[53] The tools of the lovers' trade promise enhanced beauty (*forma*),

but even the work required to make a woman attractive is involved, labor-intensive, and pretty disgusting stuff. Ovid imagines in his poem, "The Cure for Love," for example, that discovering a woman applying these "poisons" (*venena*) at her dressing table is enough to turn a man's stomach (*Ars.* 3.211–4). Many of the ointments used for beautification were also used as poisons, leading numerous Roman authors to make the connection between the noxious character of cosmetic "remedies" and the female bodies upon which they were applied.[54] "Latin invective insists that makeup itself is horrible and must be covering something horrible," writes Richlin.[55] Thus some Latin writers imagined that makeup was simply a mode of trickery aimed at hiding the terrible secrets of a woman's flesh. This connection, Richlin aptly notes, is based on negative associations of women's genitalia in particular. For instance, Richlin cites the anonymous author of the *Priapea*, Latin poems in honor of the God Priapus, who reports that his lover's vagina was "rougher and hairier than bears/ looser than Median or Indian trousers . . . swarming [with] worms."[56] This quote reveals just how repugnant, animalistic, and in need of cultivation, a woman's sex and, thus, her body were as viewed by some men in Rome. This conception of a woman's body also enables a connection between a woman's "free use" of the cosmetic arts and her "free use" of her genitalia based precisely on the idea that both aimed to deceive, even consume, male lovers in the hideous dangers of her sex.[57]

Yet writers like Ovid also suggest that though these practices of beautification reveal evidence of the inescapable grotesqueness of women's bodies, they are precisely necessary signs of culture for a Roman woman.[58] In this way, the slippage between what was "good *cultus*" and what was excessive *ornatus* (adornment) was elusive, open to be exploited rhetorically to denigrate a woman, or those associated with her. But it should also be noted that male writers were not the sole ones to capitalize on the symbolic power of "good *cultus*." Grooming was not in fact universally derided, and for women, such toilette, ornamentation, and luscious garb were critical factors in their self-fashioning, and signaled exalted social status.[59] We should keep in view, then, that the discourse I trace here derived largely from elite men, and does not reflect the meanings women would have ascribed to their beautification and self-fashioning. In Chapter 4, I elaborate upon this alternative perspective on dress in an effort to consider why women in Tertullian's own community enjoyed luxurious toilette and garb, and too, why he considered such practices a threat to his own agendas, even in a cultural context where antiadornment rhetoric loomed large.

* * *

Part II: Dress and the Roman Man

Discerning a Man's Virtus

We have seen that Roman writers variously championed a matron's corporeal display of modesty based on the idea that this virtue—and related traits (like *castitas* and *pudor*)—indicated her deeply held sense of her proper place in society. A man's sexual virtue, his sense of *pudicitia*, was also highly valued. On account, however, of the gendered nature of Roman moral discourse, the construction of male "virtue" took on a different complexion: it did not reveal itself as the concealment of a chaotic sexual potency, but rather as the performance of his self-control and his right to dominate those below him, both sexually and otherwise.[60] In this context sexual "transgressions," or acts in which a man did not pursue his *imperium*—for instance, playing the passive role, in a sexual encounter, falling headlong after some lower-class women, and such—were seen as problematic because in them a man betrayed the proper social order.[61]

For this reason, sexual virtue was often employed in Roman invective as a means to assert one's own political authority and to undercut another's. In other words, the connection between a man's sexual self-restraint and his fitness to govern suggests why charges of sexual impropriety, as Catherine Edwards notes, "were a fundamental part of the political vocabulary of the elite of ancient Rome."[62] Under the Republic, Cicero, as we have already seen, found accusations of *impudicitia* an especially handy tool to castigate opponents.[63] Take, for instance, another telling example from one of his speeches. Here he fulminates against that usurper of the Senate, Catiline:

> On this side fights *pudor*, on that wantonness; on this *pudicitia*, on that *stuprum*; on this loyalty, on that deceit; on this a sense of duty, on that wickedness; on this level-headedness, on that madness; on this honesty, on that disgrace; on this continence (*continentia*), on that lust (*libido*); on this side, finally, justice, temperance, courage, prudence and all virtues battle with injustice, extravagance (*luxuria*), cowardice, rashness, with all the vice . . . [64]

Cicero argues that the positively coded virtues, which are aligned with *pudicitia*: sexual restraint, fidelity, truthfulness, and bravery, make for an estimable member of Roman society. But Catiline takes pleasure in exhibiting their heinous opposites, the vices: lust, lack of restraint, deceit, and love of luxury. Indeed, Cicero's list implies that the possession of sexual virtue was connected to all the others and that its possession was the marker of good political leadership.[65]

Similarly in Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars*, lurid tales of the emperor's sexual intrigues and debaucheries often serve the biographer's larger theme of drawing out the societal dangers that result from vesting sole authority in one man. In Suetonius' history we can track the relevant success of the emperor and his policies by what this author reveals of his sexual escapades. Perhaps the most loathsome plague on social propriety in his *Lives* is the emperor Caligula who comes to embody the heights of imperial decadence and unrestraint (*incontinentia*) in his taste for luxuries, his extravagant building projects,[66] and especially his sexual proclivities:

> He (Caligula) spared neither his own *pudicitia* nor others. He is said to have taken up with M. Lepidus, the pantomime Mnester, and various hostages, in trade of mutual *stuprum*. Valerius Catullus, a young man of consular family, announced loudly that he sexually defiled (*stupratum*) Caligula, and that Caligula had exhausted his body in their sexual encounters. On top of incest with his sisters and his most notorious love for the prostitute Pyrallis, he did not hold back from illustrious women.[67]

Caligula's sexual dalliances point ominously to his incapacity to govern the state. The emperor is guilty of nearly every form of *stuprum* Suetonius can imagine. Aside from debauchery of sexually assaulting *matronae*, Caligula trades in more toxic sexual exchanges. His first act of indiscretion, an act of mutual *stuprum*, included playing the receptive role to men who had already degraded themselves to Caligula's penetration.[68] What is worse, these men are disreputable characters: actors and foreigners! Actors, in this case pantomimes, were often indicted by Roman writers for parading their bodies shamelessly before public view.[69] And foreigners, a category that could include actors, were often seen to symbolize the antithesis of Roman ideals of manliness.[70] To this list of disreputable lovers (*infames*) Suetonius adds a prostitute, Pyrallis. Although she is a licit outlet for Caligula's sexual activity, what is intended to shock is his maniac and consuming love (*amor*) for a woman who should at best provide an uncomplicated and discreet opportunity for sexual release.[71]

Cultivating and displaying *pudicitia* was an indication that the emperor would protect social hierarchies, would diligently maintain certain societal boundaries and structures of power between men and women, free and slave, domestic and foreign, reputable (*fames*) and nonreputable (*infames*).[72] A means to regulate social interaction, modesty in rulers and politicians could be rendered a shield against perceived moral breakdown that could occur when social distinctions were not adequately preserved and supported. What

renders Caligula's *impudicitia* especially egregious is its public character. The offense here lies not just in his sexual debauchery, but also in the fact that Caligula seems unconcerned or unaware of his role as moral exemplar and a guardian of the mores of his subjects. Here we have an emperor who flaunts his *stuprum* before his subjects, who is unable, incapable, of producing evidence of his own shame (*pudor*). With such emperors as models, Suetonius asks, whose *pudicitia* is safe?—a question at the heart of which lies deep concern about the maintenance of particular social and political hierarchies.

* * *

Dressing the Roman Vir

Sexual dalliances—or rumors of them—could jeopardize a man's virtue, but preserving modesty, we have discovered, involved more than the avoidance of particular types of behavior: it was the concerted cultivation and display of it. As with the virtue of the matron, that of the Roman man likewise incorporated the notion that modesty should be revealed on the body and, thus, through dress and austere grooming. For this reason, a man's toilette drew even greater ire (and greater restriction) in Roman literature. We will find no poets inviting men to enlist servants in greasing their bodies with exotic unguents, curling their golden locks, or wiping circles of rouge on their sanguine cheeks as a means to secure affection as was the reported custom of catamites and other undesirables. Ovid himself even advises men to observe the simplest form of grooming: neat nails, clean breath, and a well-draped toga (*Ars.* 1.505–24). The critique rested on the notion that adornment was fundamentally about making oneself the locus of another's pleasure (*voluptas*)—a highly suspect goal for the Roman *vir* who should (ideally) be the subject and not the object of that pleasure.[73] Craig Williams notes:

> We frequently encounter descriptions of effeminate men walking delicately, talking in a womanish way, wearing loose, colorful, feminine clothing (including the *mitra* or Eastern-style turban), overindulging in perfume, curling their hair, and above all depilating themselves, particularly on the chest and legs. If a man does these things, he is not only making himself look more like an idealized woman but he is also displaying excessive concern for his appearance, a kind of self-absorption that was stereotypically associated with women.[74]

The coiffed man was called soft (*mollis*); he cared for his body as though it was meant for another's enjoyment. Especially charged were practices such as

hair-removal, the use of lotions and perfumes being seen as "signs" that a man spent his time becoming an object of pleasure.[75] As in the case of the matron, particular hairstyles, too, were identified as appropriate signs of masculine decorum, or its opposite. In a foundational article on Roman pederasty, John Pollini has argued that a particular "feminine" hairstyle, with long flowing hair draped over the neck, cut shorter from the ears and around the face in a set of sickle-shaped curls, was considered the preferred coiffure for the sexually desirable slave boy. For this reason, curled hair and a clean-shaven face were often read as the marks of servitude. On a grown man, they could be read as indicators of suspect sexuality too.[76]

Coupled with stories of a man's sexual immorality, we often find examples of luxurious and suspect grooming as well as dress. Accounts of the tyrant Caligula for instance, include in the list of indiscretions that he had questionable fashion sense.[77] Pliny the Elder reports that the emperor had a predilection for pearl-covered sandals (HN 37.6.17). From Suetonius we discover that he often appeared tricked out in women's shoes and jangling bracelets. On days he was feeling especially frisky, the Roman biographer adds, he liked to dress as a god or goddess: one day Jupiter and the next a frolicking Venus (*Cal.* 52). Even when toga-draped, he could not manage to walk without tripping over its questionably long folds (*Cal.* 35.3).[78]

While hair-removal and sweet-smelling fragrances were presented as unsuitable for the Roman *vir,* he should nonetheless take pride in his appearance. A scratchy and unkempt beard is in just as poor taste, says a mocking Martial to a gruff statesman (*Mart.* 2.36). In this way, the discourse of adornment was equally mutable when applied to a Roman man as to a Roman woman, asking him to walk a delicate balance: he must be more cultured than the barbarians from Gaul, with their crude habits and tastes, but he was also said to be more sober than the opulent and effeminate Hellenes.[79] In other words, he should strike a balance between too much grooming (womanish) and too little (barbaric). The effective performance of masculinity then was a complex negotiation that demanded that a man agonize over his posture, gait, voice, and his dress. This negotiation revealed just how easily claims to masculinity could be contested and challenged.

Dress, critical to the display of a matron's modesty, also played an important role in a man's assertion of his virtue. And just as women's dress was symbolic, that of the Roman man was too, so much so "that the state of being 'loosely belted' (*discinctus*) became the metaphorical equivalent to having an effeminate lifestyle."[80] The symbolism of Roman clothing likewise offered numerous opportunities for the display of class status and the moral authority that attended it. A man might sartorially mark his rank and class with a

gold amulet, *bulla.* Shoe-boots were said to be preferred by senators and equestrians wore the gold ring.[81] But it was the toga that most often symbolized the consummate garb of the freeborn, Roman man. While satirists like Juvenal complained of the garment's heaviness (Juv. 11.203), to wear the toga was generally indicated as a privilege.[82] The value lent to this garment rested on its association with the rites and privileges of citizenship: this garb was worn by Roman male citizens only, various striped versions of it would single out men of high office or be worn only on ceremonial occasions.[83]

Of course, like the dress of the Roman woman, there is a gap between Romans' assertion of the toga as the consummate dress of the virtuous man and the evidence that it was a largely ceremonial and not everyday garb.[84] Yet its connection with the pageantry of the Roman state attached to the garment notions of status and Roman character so that depicting a man as *togata* (toga-clad) implied his high status, just like the term *stolata* might refer to a woman's staid modesty.[85] Jonathan Edmondson, for instance, notes: " . . . Roman authors and Roman rhetoricians throughout the late Republic and early Empire continued to appeal to the toga and *stola* as emblematic of moral probity and civic mindedness."[86] And it was not simply the possession of the toga, but how a man wore it that could confirm or deny those characteristics. For this reason, Latin rhetorical handbooks, like Quintilian's *Institutes of Oration*, to which I will now turn, educated young statesmen on precisely how to manage the garb in ways that might heighten their speeches' persuasive power.

* * *

The Case of the Rhetor's Toga

Maud Gleason's well-known study of Greek and Latin oratory, *Making Men*, maintains that for men of the curial class, rhetorical training entailed the pedagogy of the body, which included gait and movements (*actio)* as well as the pitch and tenor of the voice (*pronuntiato*).[87] Rhetorical exercises, she concludes, had the aim of constituting a male body as one that bore the characteristics associated with high birth.[88] More recently, Erik Gunderson has argued that Latin oratory, as opposed to Greek writings of the Second Sophistic (the foci of much of Gleason's analysis), is the site where managing the body emerged as a constant preoccupation for men to enact their self-mastery.[89] This conclusion indicates that the corporeal and performative nature of Latin oratory made it the most potent locus for men to claim masculinity or deny it from others. I raise this point here not only in an effort

to consider how a man's dress and comportment were integral to the corporeal pedagogy of Latin rhetoric, but also to point forward to the ways in which Tertullian appropriates this connection in his treatment of men's dress. In fact *On the Pallium*, his sole treatise devoted to that topic, is constructed as an oration (importantly the only speech in his entire corpus), and this is so precisely because, as I will argue in the next chapter, it aims to establish a Christian masculinity and denigrate that of the Romans. Oratory, in other words, offered the richest possibilities for the Christian writer to pursue these related goals.

In terms of Latin oratory, the most influential figure is certainly Quintilian. His handbook, *The Institutes of Oration,* preserves the richest catalogue of "corporeal knowledge" that rhetorical training aimed to instill in its male subjects.[90] In that work, Quintilian sets out to constitute a rhetor's body as "a body made for reading,"[91] which would reveal him to be a "good man" (*vir bonus*), a man of moral authority.[92] And part of that revealing occurred through his comportment of the toga. Preparing his male students to win a rhetorical argument, Quintilian reminds them that they need not only to have knowledge of important cases, the proper forms and parts of a good speech, but also know how to conduct their bodies, including negotiating their clothing during their vocal deliveries.[93] The teacher proffers a mind-numbing list of bodily protocols: holding out the hands to act out a part of the speech is good, except when the arm reaches too high in the air and distracts his audience (*Inst*. 11.3.118). The head must be stiff and emotion conveyed with a raised eyebrow or an appropriately timed flaring nostril. But never should he flap his lips, bite, or lick them (*Inst.* 11.3.74–83). And these gems of wisdom refer only to the upper body! He has more advice for the placement of the feet and pace of walking.

Then Quintilian advises his students about dress and grooming with the following words that warn against "excessive" adornment:

> With regard to dress and grooming (*cultus*), there is no special garb peculiar to the orator, but his appearance is more conspicuous (than that of other men). It should be distinguished and manly (*splendidus et virilis*) . . . for excessive care with regard to the toga, shoes, or hair is as reprehensible as too much carelessness.[94]

Yet what appears at first as a simple comment on dress segues into another set of complex bodily mannerisms that a student must learn, including managing the many folds of the toga while still looking "distinguished and manly."[95] Quintilian tells his male pupils how they might manipulate the toga in bodily

performance for various dramatic purposes. The teacher is clear that the orator wears the garment for the audience's pleasure; indeed, everything the orator does places him under the public eye. He should be aware of the constant watching, but not too aware as to court admiration too slavishly.[96] Such comments reveal the orator to be in a precarious position—he must persuade his audience but not seem to be an object of their pleasure—a difficult, if not arbitrary, distinction that made rhetoric an especially precarious, though necessary, means for the assertion of Roman masculinity.

About the toga, Quintilian opines that the rhetor should secure a smart and flattering fit, with the *sinus*, the rounded fold of the toga that held the excess fabric, at the knee (*Inst.* 11.3.140). At the beginning of the speech, he should maintain full command over the garment (*Inst.* 11.3.144). If it slips, he is best to pick it up from the ground lest he appear like some boorish rustic (*Inst.* 11.3.149). But as his body heats up and the argument gets going, he may throw the tunic over his shoulders. At the end of the oration, he may want the toga to crumble and slide in disorder as his face, painted with sweat, and his hair, disheveled, communicates the force of his emotions and the merit of his arguments (*Inst.* 11.3.147–8). Thus the proper comportment of the national costume could expose him as a fraud, or lend him power and authority and secure his status and the merits of his arguments. Indeed, Quintilian reveals how the appropriate use of one's dress could be an arsenal in negotiating power and authority—and he was not alone in this assessment, as my consideration of imperial and civic portraiture below will demonstrate.

* * *

Part III: The Emperor's and Empress's "New" Clothes

Augustan Deployments of Dress

The rich symbolism attached to Roman dress made it not only a useful tool in invective, but as the example from Quintilian suggests, also provided Romans with an opportunity to establish their status and authority. One of the most vibrant media for exploiting clothing's symbolic power was portraiture, and into the early centuries of the Empire, Romans availed themselves of it in honorific statuary and public monuments.[97]

Roman portraiture was formulaic and repetitive: for instance, statues had little variance in costumes, or body types, with men generally nude, cuirassed, toga-clad, and women, *palla*-clad or with Greek *peplos*. Further, the subject very often held the same expected set of poses: grasping at a torch or cornucopia,

holding out a scroll or *patera* (a small dish for pouring libations). On top of a formulaic stone body, the master sculptor would then affix the head, the distinctive and signature part of the statue, using paint to help further secure the idealized likeness of his subject.[98] The reiterative quality of portraiture—which included its presentation of ideal dress—made it rhetorically viable. It relied on a recognizable visual language to communicate particular ideals to viewers. Portraiture capitalized on the widespread notion, which we have been tracing in this chapter, that virtue discloses itself on the body. In this way, it often presented an idyllic corporeal moment, an image, which could communicate a complex set of messages about a person's character and station, enabling Romans to present themselves in terms that they wanted to be seen and remembered. Roman portraiture reveals just how ubiquitous and far-reaching were deployments of dress in the Empire.

The reign of Rome's first Emperor, Augustus, indelibly shaped the ways in which Romans would exploit the portraiture to support their political and social designs. In his foundational study of the Augustan visual program, Paul Zanker demonstrated that the new regime used portraiture to fashion the imperial family as secure and prolific, while also striving to connect that regime with Rome's mythic past. Augustus framed himself as the protector of the *mos maiorum*, the ways of the ancestors. He took possession of this role first by supporting the cults of the "old" Roman gods, and second, through the regulation of sexual morality of elite Roman families.[99] This second part of Augustus' program seems to have included ordinances regarding dress. Suetonius notes that, for instance, the emperor legislated that male citizens don the toga inside the walls of Rome (*Aug.* 40). In his own portraiture, Zanker notes, Augustus preferred honorific images that presented him in at sacrifice or prayer, with head covered, and toga-clad.[100]

The most successful means, however, for Augustus to envision this paternal role was through artistic propaganda in which he was shown to be the head of a deeply pious household bent on protecting the Roman mode of life. This logic applied particularly to the first lady of the Empire, Livia.[101] Associated with the private sphere of the household, her presence in Roman imagery seemed to invite Augustus' subjects into the imperial house.[102] And following Roman patriarchal logic, by visually assessing her virtue, Augustus' subjects learned something more deeply about his governance and character. Concerning the regime's idealized image of womanhood, Judith Sebesta writes: "Devoting the fertility of her body to her husband and her labors to her household, she was to waste neither the 'wealth' of her fertility nor her energies . . . She was to be as fertile as Tellus, industrious as Lucretia, impregnable as Roma."[103] Livia, it seems, was savvy enough to pursue this very persona herself by using

her own funds to support traditional cults of Rome's matrons, to Pudicitia, goddess of modesty as well as to Concordia, goddess of marital harmony. Livia's strategy, in fact, persuaded Roman subjects of her matronly virtue: in Roman Egypt couples unknown to the empress even named her in their marriage contracts as the benefactor of their unions and protector of their children.[104]

These images of the first family were extended and propagated through the use of portraiture.[105] To illustrate this point, I want to consider what ranks among the most monumental usages of the imperial family in the Augustan era: the south frieze of the *Ara Pacis Augustae*. Commissioned by the senate in 13 BCE on Rome's Campus Martius, the "Altar of Augustan Peace" is a massive altar that celebrates Augustus' successful military campaigns in the West.[106] It is one of the few historical monuments erected during the whole of the Roman Empire in which women and children appear with the emperor, priests, and civic officials.[107] Surrounded on all four sides with life-size friezes, the altar visually juxtaposes the putatively public and private realms—state and house—with rich symbols of Rome's mythic origins, including goddesses Roma and Tellus/Ceres, Romulus and Remus, as well as Aeneas. The goal was to establish Augustus as the guarantor of Roman peace and prosperity and to that end visually fuse the state and his imperial house.[108] What is of particular interest, however, is how the presentation of the royals' dress and bodily comportment served to present the family as the harbinger of Augustus' religious and moral reforms, thereby authenticating the new peace promised by his regime.[109]

On the famous south frieze, members of Augustus' family blend together: what would draw the attention of the viewer would be the presence of women and children with public officials (fig. 1.2).[110] The frieze includes them—an unprecedented move in Roman art—to give the broad impression that Augustus is the head of a prodigious household and that his household is guardian of all others. This visual rhetoric also relies on the inclusion of the fecund goddess on the southeast panel.[111] Evoking iconography of fecund mother goddesses, like Ceres and Tellus, her falling strap and ample bosom also recalls Venus, the divine ancestor of the Julian line. This "polysemic" image fits with the artistic program of the other panel friezes that elicit referents to Rome's storied past (Aeneas, Roma, Mars), and inserts Augustus firmly into the role of protector of the *pax romana,* the "Roman peace" (an essential claim after years of civil war).[112]

Of interest to me, however, is that costumes are part of the visual strategy of this monument, differentiating classes of priests, soldiers, emperor, Romans from non-Romans, women from men, and family from nonfamily. On the south frieze certain members of the royal family are conspicuously veiled,

Figure 1.2 Ara Pacis Monument, South Frieze (Rome, Ara Pacis Museum)

including Marcus Agrippa, who leads the group, Augustus' wife, Livia,[113] and his adopted son, Tiberius, signaling their solemnity and respect for the gods as they approach the sacrifice. The representation of women's dress here differs importantly from the men's, whose togas indicate their Roman status. Livia's costume, as well as that of the other women on the frieze, is nondescript and modest (it is not clearly indicated as Roman, which could include the *stola*). There is little reason to think that these voluminous garments reflect the fashion protocols of the day (there is no evidence that Augustus officially mandated that matrons return to wearing the *stola*, though scholars often make that assertion).[114] Instead, what is more likely is that the monumental frieze plays with the symbolic meaning attachable to women's garments. Their dress contributes to their presentation as fecund matrons who are deeply pious as well as modest.[115] In fact, Elizabeth Bartman has noted that the soft and swooping garments help to idealize their images, particularly when compared to the "realism" of the male figures on the altar, evoking (in Augustan classical style) mythic referents of goddesses or the Vestal virgins.[116]

The men, of course, don the imperial toga. Their toga rests in swooping, circular lines that fall just above the knee. These folds, the *sinus*, would hold the excess fabric that was gathered in a bunch at the waist, forming the *umbo.* That knot held the garment in place as well as provided material for ready

head covering on religious occasions, especially sacrifice.[117] Marcus Agrippa, *capite velato,* leads the procession to the sacred altar, and behind him walks Tiberius who tugs at his *umbo*, loosening it to draw it over his head. The men's veiling showcases their devotion to the gods while also asserting the depth of their Roman pedigree. They are wearing, in other words, a national costume that serves, as with the imagery of the imperial women, to render the imperial family the quintessential representatives of the Roman people and their way of life. Caroline Vout writes: " . . . it is the dignity of the figures in their national costume, the dignity of the imperial family, the dignity of Rome which is stressed."[118] The ability for portraiture to communicate such ideals about the imperial family inspired continued deployments of dress in this medium in later centuries as well.

* * *

The Later Roman Empire

The imperial and civic elites of the second and third centuries continued to capitalize on the rhetorical possibilities of portraiture for establishing their public personas. Costumes and portrait styles varied depending on the context. In terms of men's portraiture—which I will consider first—the toga remained a preferred garb precisely because of its national and ceremonial character. Its symbolic power made it standard on Roman funerary iconography: men wanted to be remembered as honored citizens.[119] It is also why imperial portraiture continued to utilize this garment even during the expansion of imperial cult when other portrait styles, which more readily suggested divinity (in the form of nude or seminude heroes and gods), became popular.[120] Despite the repetitive nature of the *togatus* type, however, the imagery could express subtle and nuanced messages through the drape of the garb and the position of the portrait subject. Two examples here drawn from the Flavian and Hadrianic dynasties, respectively, will suffice to show how the toga could be manipulated to present a complex set of referents about its subject (figs. 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5).

Glenys Davies has noted that into the later Empire the size and massive folds of the toga continued to expand. While this fact might reflect changes to the toga as the result of its increasingly ceremonial status,[121] it also extends some of the visual potency of the *togate* image. Davies notes that the massive size of the garment and the subject's outstretched arms give the impression of power and dominance.[122] This fact emerges most clearly when compared with contemporaneous portraiture of women, in which their bodies are

Figure 1.3 *Togatus* Portrait Statue of Emperor Titus (Vatican City, Vatican Museum)

tightly bounded and closed, such as in the *Pudicitia* type considered briefly above (fig. 1.1). In this image of the emperor Titus, the numerous folds of his toga rest in lovely bold swoops, and his *umbo* stays neatly in place (fig. 1.3).[123] The appearance of control is furthered by the way he gesticulates with his hands.[124] The emperor appears to address his audience and is little bothered by the folds and drapery, which remain obediently on his body. Titus' marble body opens itself to his subjects, poised and imposing. The rhetorical effect of this image depends on how Romans thought about portrait statues. In discourses about them, they often imagine that these stone objects blur the lines between human and divine, between flesh and marble.[125] The emperor and his image were often seen to be one and the same. This is so precisely because statues and images were counted on to mediate and define the relationship between the Emperor and his subjects: what his image entailed, then, was what they knew and understood about him.[126]

Figure 1.4 *Togatus* Portrait Statue of Hadrian (Rome, Capitoline Museum)

In this case, the message revealed in the deep lines and heavy drapery of Titus' toga is that his *imperium* over them is real and justified.

In another image of a *togate* emperor, Hadrian, we see how a man's dress could signify a complex set of ideals, including complex notions of ethnicity and identity (fig. 1.4). At first glance, the emperor appears to wear the *pallium,* a squared-off garment that was associated with aged philosophers and poets, and more generally as the consummate dress of the Greeks.[127] A superior garment in Tertullian's estimation for the expression of masculinity, we will discover, the *pallium* was generally reserved for portraiture of Greek intellectuals, such as in an imperial era image of the great Greek orator, Demosthenes (fig. 1.5). It would be remarkable in a sense if, in his imperial portraiture, Hadrian rejected the national costume of Rome, the toga, for this other "Greek" garment (indeed, despite his reputation as Grecophile, only one statue of the Emperor as *palliatus* is extant).[128] However, in Hadrian's portrait,

Figure 1.5 *Palliatus* Portrait Statue of Demosthenes, Roman Imperial (Vatican City, Vatican Museum)

Greek elements, such as a beard and a squared-off garment, suggest the mastery of Greek *paideia*. But these items are domesticated by sure visual clues of the emperor's *romanitas:* his toga. The clearly distinguishable *umbo* and *sinus* indicate that he wears it, and not the Greek *pallium*. Further, his veiled head (a practice observed by Romans and not Greeks during sacrifice) likewise establishes his piety for the gods of Rome. In other words, Hadrian's image incorporates elements of Greek culture, but suggests that his Roman status dominates them.

Imperial women, likewise, continued to play an integral role in the visual programs of later regimes—though the portrait styles would vary from one regime to the next. For instance, the Flavian dynasty preferred nude and voluptuous Venus Victrix for its imperial women—(an image rarely used for the modest Julio-Claudians) to emphasize their fecundity, sexuality, and, importantly, carefully displacing them from any association with the affairs of state.[129] Yet the visual alignment of imperial women with the virtues of the

ideal Roman matron—modesty, piety, and the like—continued unabated into late antiquity.[130] As we saw with Augustus, the empress and other imperial women were integral in expanding the moral persona of the emperor himself. Her modesty in this sense is accrued to the emperor as Vout explains: "Feelings evoked by his wife, mother or sister . . . enhance or destabilize our understanding of him."[131] Once again, dress, in this case the head-covering *palla,* proved a stable element in the communication of sexual modesty and marital harmony—ideals, we have seen, that were considered necessary indicators of a ruler's self-governance and fitness for power.

Into the second and third centuries, stylized images of empresses commonly connected them with the goddess of modesty, *Pudicitia*, along with other similarly matronly virtues. Such images variously indicated not only that the empress was an exemplary Roman matron, but also cast her role—and that of the imperial lineage to which she was connected—in mythic and cultic registers, stressing her importance to Roman identity and way of life.[132] In spreading this message, coinage proved a particularly good medium given its ubiquity. Thus we find a common motif in imperial coinage in which the empress appears on the obverse and the goddess, *Pudicitia*, or a related attribute, on the reverse. This denarius, dating to the reign of Hadrian, features Sabina, diademed on the obverse (figs. 1.6a and 1.6b). The juxtaposition of the empress with this virtue represents a visual fusion so that the empress seems to manifest this virtue itself.[133]

Figure 1.6a and 1.6b Obverse and reverse of a Roman *denarius*. Sabina diademed with veiled *Pudicitia* (American Numismatic Society)

American Numismatic Society. Acc.#1944.100.45583.

The alignment between empress and modest virtue could be fused even more tightly through portrait images, particularly because they allowed for a richer deployment of dress and posture, for instance, as we have seen in the *Pudicitia* style (fig. 1.1). Into the second century, that type with its guarded and closed posture was exchanged for other related styles, especially the small and large Herculaneum styles[134]—portraits of women wrapping their bodies and often their heads, with voluminous, feminine drapery. The large Herculaneum woman type, an example featured here of the Empress Faustina the Elder, makes a careful statement about a woman's fecundity, revealed in the folds below her waist that form a "gentile triangle."[135] But they also indicate the subject's grace in the way she handles her mantle, which creates a wall of fabric that blocks off her body from the viewer's full appraisal of it (fig. 1.7).

Figure 1.7 Large Heraculaneum Type Portrait Statue of Faustina the Elder (Vatican City, Vatican Museum)

To a modern viewer this image might seem confused: an inconceivable mixture of being guarded and modest, in the fact that the garment blocks off the subject's body as well as reveals it by the way in which the clingy fabric hints at the shape of her sex. The way in which the subject manipulates her *palla*, however, is part of the complex message that this portrait type could send: "a finely tuned balance between the 'contradictory' signals of modesty, wealth, and bodily display . . . ideally suited to representing the beautiful, desirable and fertile woman who is also modest and a credit to her (wealthy and important) family."[136] Not surprisingly, this style was popular in images of imperial and elite women alike—a reminder that it was not only the imperial house that could and did exploit the portraiture in establishing their personas.[137]

The rhetorical subtlety and flexibility of portraiture made it a potent locus for Romans for the employment of what were rich possibilities for the signification of dress in the Empire. And it is worth noting that images of modestly clad women and toga-clad men, particularly into the second and third centuries, covered the Empire, including its vast provinces.[138] In the decades in which Tertullian penned his treatises to Christians about their dress, such portraiture dominated the civic landscapes, revealing once again how dress was used to establish moral authority and status in the Roman world. Clothing was a powerful medium, in other words, in the articulation of character and authority—a medium of which Tertullian also availed himself to make modest virtue the Christians' own. In the chapter that follows, we consider one such instance in which he puts to work the conceptions of dress and comportment that we have considered here to fashion a winning Christian masculinity.

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CHAPTER 2

The Clothing that Maketh the Christian Man: Tertullian's *On the Pallium*

Introduction

> Rejoice, *pallium*, and exult! A better philosophy has deigned you worthy, from the moment that it is the Christian whom you started to dress.
>
> Tertullian, *On the Pallium*[1]

When Tertullian composed his short oration, *On the Pallium*, he took advantage of the rich symbolic possibilities that dress offered for the construction of Christian identity.[2] This speech offers a defense of the squared-off tunic, or *pallium,* over the stately Roman toga. Yet it lacks explicit theological discussion or extensive biblical citations (Genesis, however, makes a brief appearance) and, thus, might seem an unlikely member in the corpus of a polemical Christian writer whose prose is generally saturated with biblical language and turns of phrase.[3] The discussion of Roman views of dress taken into consideration in the previous chapter suggests some intriguing hints at Tertullian's rhetorical agenda in producing it. This chapter will show, in fact, that men's dress served him in fashioning a complex masculinity at a time when the perceived threat of Roman domination and persecution of this minority community greatly undermined their power and social respectability. A close reading of the speech will demonstrate how subtle and versatile Tertullian's appropriation of men's raiment could be in this regard.

* * *

On the Pallium: The Intersections of Gender and Ethnicity in Early Christianity

Before embarking on my treatment of this oration, however, it is critical to elaborate why the speech has not been read in light of early Christian constructions of masculinity, and the possibilities entailed in doing so. Compared with Tertullian's other writings, *On the Pallium* has received considerably less scholarly attention. The speech has generally suffered from disregard by scholars of early Christianity precisely because it is filled with tales drawn from obscure mythological scenes, natural history, and anecdotes of estimable and disreputable *viri*.[4] As a result, some scholars have wondered whether the speech can be classified as Christian, and even, whether Tertullian penned the treatise at all. Other scholars have seen the speech as brazen and deeply anti-Roman in that it mocks Roman dress at the time when Tertullian's Christian community faced persecution, though brief and sporadic.[5] Is that move not, they have asked, tantamount to treason?[6] Like Tertullian's infamous *Apology*, *On the Pallium* is often considered evidence of his seething animosity toward the trappings of the "pagan world," such as luxury, philosophy, social prestige, and political or military offices.[7] Such claims, however, are unable to account for Tertullian's repeatedly nimble and often nuanced displays of elite *paideia* throughout his corpus, and especially this speech, including technical rhetorical skill, legal knowledge, engagement with philosophy (especially Stoicism, as we have seen), and familiarity with Greek as well as Roman literature.[8]

On the Pallium reveals Tertullian's ability to produce a solid oration in the classicizing style of the Second Sophistic.[9] This oration suggests that Tertullian holds a rather more complex relationship with various discourses of elite Rome than some scholars have attributed to him. This treatise is steeped in Roman conceptions of dress and comportment, which are put to use here in service of constructing a Christian identity suited to the Carthaginian context. As such the purported speech belies a neat dichotomy of Christian and non-Christian, or Roman and anti-Roman, by which it is often categorized. *On the Pallium* is evidence of the very malleability of such ascriptions in early Christian contexts, and too, of the ways in which Christian identity was mutable and locally negotiated.

Recently, scholars of classics and early Christianity have built on the insight of postcolonial and anthropological theorists that ethnic identities are multiple, overlapping, and fluid—implying notions of place, language, custom, and religiosity—and have argued that this understanding of identity has dramatic implications for how we read early Christian literature.[10] Denise Kimber Buell, in her groundbreaking study *Why this New Race?,* identifies a

set of strategic deployments of ethnicity, what she calls "ethnic reasoning," in a host of ancient Christian writings in which the language of peoplehood (*genos, ethne,* and *laos,* for instance) could articulate what it means to be Christian.[11] The fixed and fluid nature of ethnic categories enabled Christian writers, like Justin Martyr, Origen, the author of the *Epistle to Diognetus,* to construct identities that were at once universal (everyone could be Christian) and distinctive (Christians possess the one true faith).[12]

Tertullian features only briefly in Buell's study as a Christian whose ethnic reasoning resists casting Christians as a "third race" or a "new nation." He prefers instead to present them as the "true" and only one.[13] She is certainly correct that Tertullian legitimizes (particular) Christians as the only righteous people: all others, whether Jews, "heretics," or Romans, emerge as agents of the diabolical, false nations with unseemly gods, customs, and/or lineages.[14] But an exploration of *On the Pallium* (a treatise that Buell does not discuss) demonstrates that Tertullian's use of ethnic reasoning could be more variable, and more importantly gendered, than her depiction of it suggests.[15]

This chapter, ultimately, shows that Tertullian's attempt to establish the superiority of Christian identity depends on the gendered logic connected to Roman conceptions of ethnicity. Given the interconnection of these categories in the Roman world, an exploration of how Tertullian simultaneously deploys them illustrates just how productive they could be in fashioning Christian masculinity. Interestingly, however, he does so in ways that restricted certain cultural impulses associated with masculine virtue in the Roman world. To illustrate these points I not only juxtapose Tertullian with foundational studies on Greek and Roman masculinity, I also think more critically about the ways in which Roman discourses of masculinity provided a rather complex, even contentious, set of resources for the production of Christian identity in anti-imperial, or non-Roman, terms.

As scholars like Stephen Moore, Janice Anderson, Matthew Kuefler, and Colleen Conway have demonstrated, Christians did not simply appropriate existing constructions of masculinity; they also shifted and recast them.[16] Some articulations of masculinity—Tertullian's included—belied Roman constructions for various reasons. For instance, Christian men rejected marriage and household, military service and civic duty in favor of asceticism, celibacy, and even imprisonment. In so doing, they navigated an identity that aimed to preserve a kind of Christian masculinity, even as it also retained virtues and sensibilities more readily defined as "feminine"—passivity, patience, and sexual modesty.[17] Such gendered performances certainly proved multiform and contested in the early centuries of Christianity. Yet I will suggest that though Tertullian's comments fit this model, they also opened up a

discursive space for the reinscription of particular, positive aspects of elite Roman masculinity in Christian terms in ways that preserved the gender hierarchy upon which elite masculinity had relied. In fact, Tertullian's rhetoric so successfully anticipates the construction of Christian masculinity in late antiquity, as Matthew Kuefler has illustrated, that we might even read Tertullian's little-studied treatise, *On the Pallium,* as an instance of one of his more enduring cultural legacies.[18] At the chapter's end, in fact, I entertain this enticing possibility.

* * *

Establishing the Pallium's African Pedigree

In his recent commentary, Vincent Hunink argues that *On the Pallium* was likely delivered orally before a mixed audience in Carthage.[19] But I suggest that much like Tertullian's letters to the Emperors (he penned at least two)[20] the speech was directed to a largely Christian audience. Like those infamous apologies, this oration conceives of a larger audience—in this case, elite Carthaginian men.[21] It is difficult to imagine, though recently scholars like Hunink have tried, that an audience from the streets of Carthage would come to hear this (debut?) oration by a *pallium*-clad Christian rhetor. The most telling clue about its audience can be found in Tertullian's claim that ends the speech (with which I began this chapter): the *pallium*'s worth is increased precisely because it hangs from the shoulders of Christian men (*Pall.* 6.2.5). This statement indicates the rhetorical force of all that has come before: the merits of this simple garb define what it means to be a Christian man—and consequently, also severely undercuts what it means to be a Roman one (even if such a thing could be said to exist at all). The oration, then, is a consideration, both humorous and biting, of how Christian men in Carthage might present themselves to and preserve their masculine identity in the face of their Roman colonial overlords.

My argument here is that the logic of Tertullian's oration rests on moving the positive masculine associations linked in Roman discourse with *romani viri* ("Roman men") to Christian men. He does so by rendering the *pallium* and the toga indicative of the dispositions and character of these two identities, which Tertullian will constitute in opposition to each other. Rhetorically, this argument develops in stages, and it depends initially on using ethnic categories, African and Carthaginian in particular, to unsettle Roman claims to *virtus* and *imperium.* Thus right at the outset of this speech Tertullian

plants his feet firmly on Carthaginian soil. He indicates that the *pallium* recalls a time of African independence before the rule of Rome:[22]

> You, who have always been leaders of Africa, men of Carthage, noble of old and blessed today, I am glad that you live in such happy times that you can find both the time and the pleasure of censuring clothing! This is the sort of pursuit of peace and plenty. All is well on the part of the empire and on the part of the sky. However, in the past you too wore clothing, tunics, differently . . . [23]

These first lines of the speech mock the *pax romana*, the idea that with Roman conquest of the provinces came "peace" for its new subjects. Tertullian teases that all such peace has brought is leisure—the luxury of changing clothing from *pallium* to toga: "all is well on the part of the Empire and on the part of the sky"—indeed![24] What was this tunic that occupies Tertullian's discussion and how was it different from the Roman toga? A simple squared-off tunic (unlike the round-edged toga), the *pallium* was worn without a belt and fell just past the knees; the garment would sit on the left shoulder, exposing perhaps a man's chest or the linen tunic that he wore beneath.[25]

He notes that the *pallium* can be related to the tunics worn by the ancient African priests of Aesculapius: "Its equivalent today is <what is worn by> the priests of Aesculapius, who have also become yours. This is the way the twin town close by used to dress, and wherever else in Africa there is a Tyrus [*sic*]."[26] The cult of Aesculapius offered a usable reference for Tertullian because of its weighty presence in Carthage—the games held in the god's honor represent the largest of the colony's religious festivities. He appeals to it, however, not because of this cultic association but because the priests adopted a local form of dress: they preserved the ancestral dress of the Tyrian or pre-Roman, Phoenician colonies of Africa.[27]

But is Tertullian's claim that this squared-off tunic was once the garment of all African men verifiable (*Pall.* 1.3.1)? Farther on in the speech he admits that the garment is Greek! (*Pall.* 3.7.2). Authenticating the origin of the garment is not the goal here, it would seem. Rather, he selects the garment due to the vast possibilities for signification it entails. This kind of tunic was associated with particular professions, including philosophers as well as some ethnic groups, especially Greeks, but Roman pictorial representations also commonly present the garment as the dress of African men.[28] For these reasons, it could be seen as African, but more broadly, as non-Roman—which, it turns out, is what most recommends the *pallium.* On the other hand, the toga was figured in Latin literature and artistic representations as

the national garb of the *romani.* In reality, the toga was designed for stately occasions and not everyday wear—a privilege that belonged to the *pallium*, other tunics, cloaks, and trousers.[29]

Roman artistic representations in the imperial period keep the image of the *romani* as Vergil's acclaimed "toga-clad race" alive.[30] In the early centuries of the Empire, Romans rarely represented themselves as *palliati* in portrait statues, preferring instead to appear as *togati.* Mary Harlow even indicates that the Latin expression *a toga ad pallium* (from the toga to the *pallium*) "implied a sinking from a higher position to a lower one."[31]

Tertullian of course inverts this logic in the speech.[32] He even cites the expression *a toga ad pallium* at the end of his oration to head off the idea that the mantle is a marker of demotion: " . . . take all ignominy of the master of fighting and the gladiators: they perform in the toga! This, surely, will be the outrage in the maxim 'from toga to *pallium*,'" he exclaims.[33] The line recalls the fact that gladiators, very often slaves and war captives, were grouped with actors and prostitutes as *infames,* people without dignity. As a result, these men obtained significantly reduced legal rites and privileges.[34] This comment appears as a part of the speech in which the Christian rhetor elucidates the disgraceful heritage of this coveted garment. His defense of the *pallium* represents a valorization of it that was necessary precisely because the toga was generally seen as the indicator of Roman pedigree, and was the rightful garb of the citizen.[35]

Given the heavy symbolic meaning that these two garments hold, T. Corey Brennan argues that *On the Pallium* is not really about wearing the *pallium* at all. He suggests that Tertullian did not aim to get Carthaginian men to take up this kind of tunic, but rather to follow the course of life that it represents—a simple one that turns out at speech end, of course, to be Christian.[36] Brennan goes farther in his analysis to suggest it would be remarkable for Tertullian to expect Carthaginian men, in a thoroughly Romanized province, to reject the toga, a distinguished marker of their Roman status, their citizenship.[37] Yet, as I already have suggested, what is more remarkable is to imagine that Carthaginian men were regularly accustomed to wearing the toga and not the *pallium*. Discussing Tertullian's oration, Caroline Vout explains this point:

> . . . we cannot assume that most Romans were still toga-clad. In practice, to have worn the *pallium* instead of the toga could not have been an overtly anti-Roman statement. Yet **to say** that you did might have been [*sic*].[38]

Vout reminds us how Roman sartorial discourses worked: very often discussions about clothing were not about clothing alone, or even primarily, as we

saw in Chapter 1. Clothing signified moral character, it indicated a person's status and virtue; in this case, as Vout notes, it also signaled an ethnic and national identity.[39] These connections were all variously built on Roman moral discourse, which held that outer appearance registered inner virtue. Applied to dress the logic indicated: what could be said about a man's clothing could be said about the man. Tertullian exploits this thinking here, using the ascription of African and Carthaginian to the *pallium* as a means to symbolize an identity distinguishable from Roman masculinity. But African identity, I will argue, proves not to be the one ultimately constituted and held up for emulation in this speech.

It should be noted that other scholars, like David Wilhite in his study *Tertullian the African*, have seen the assertion of the *pallium's* African heritage differently. According to Wilhite, it is as an indication that he did not see himself as Roman.[40] On this reading, *On the Pallium* shows Tertullian declaring that the simple tunic was a means for Africans, particularly the new elites (the Latinized middle class), to declare "ethnic loyalty" with the Africans of Carthage and to resist the Romanization that the toga represents.[41] While Wilhite is certainly correct that the treatise reveals hostility toward Roman imperial power, the claim that Tertullian writes from an African subject position is more difficult to support. First, following scholars like Buell and others, ancient conceptions of ethnicity were malleable and not necessarily bifurcated (as Wilhite himself admits).[42] Many provincial elites in the Empire ascribed to themselves "Roman-ness" while also maintaining other, often overlapping, ethnic identities (Greek, Libyan, Scythian, and the like) in terms of their language, customs, religious affiliations, or family lineage.[43] One clear example of this multiform identity comes from funerary encaustics in Roman Egypt. Describing these portraits, Janet Huskinson writes: " . . . hairstyles, dress, and jewelry reflect Roman imperial fashions, but religious imagery is traditionally Egyptian and names and inscriptions are usually Greek."[44] For these elites, identity incorporated aspects of their Egyptian heritage that did not necessarily entail a rejection of Roman and Greek elements as well.[45]

This malleable and multiform conception of ethnicity proves more insightful, I suggest, not only for conceptualizing Tertullian's own self-identity (a Latin- and Greek-speaking elite from Africa), but also, more importantly, for elaborating the social context in which he employs ethnic categories. By evoking the *pallium*'s African heritage, in other words, Tertullian is not simply repeating an existing African and Roman binary. Instead, he uses ethnic categories in order to construct a binary with the eventual goal of replacing the African side of this equation with a new referent, Christian men. Ethnicity is

part of his rhetorical strategy that works ultimately to unman Roman *viri*, and to prop up in their place Christian ones.

Indeed, the opportune nature of Tertullian's appeal to the *pallium's* African pedigree is most dramatically revealed in another section of this speech. Here the Christian rhetor considers the garment's association with a Hellenistic heritage only then to ascribe problematic (i.e., effeminate) associations with that ethnic identity to the toga, and its wearers, freeing up the *pallium* to be the garb of better men.[46] Thus as the speech progresses, Tertullian no longer recites the African heritage of the *pallium*, but instead notes that it has a Greek origin, but also Roman pedigree: "It is to be sure, more Greek, but as far as the word is concerned, it belongs to *Latium* by now."[47] He then adds that the tunic was worn by that Roman Republican who hated all things Greek, Cato the Elder:

> Consequently, the very man who sentences the Greeks to be removed from town,[48] but who as an old man had become instructed in their letters and language, this same Cato used to bare his shoulder at the time of his administration of justice and so favored the Greeks no less by wearing his *pallium*.[49]

The example of Cato most especially heads off criticism about the Greek origins of the garment, and thereby, the implication that it represents every sort of pompous, effeminate luxury for which the Greeks are associated in Roman discourse.[50] Here we find Tertullian involved in a complex maneuver. He pulls on Roman conceptions of masculinity—conceptions that are seen as antithetical to the feminizing Hellenes—to insist that the *pallium*, a Greek form of dress, does not encompass those negative significations. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the staunch Roman censor, Cato the Elder, chose the garb as his own. Indeed, Tertullian reminds his audience the very word, *pallium,* is Latin (the Greek term being *himation*) indicating the suitability of this garb ("it belongs to *Latium* by now").[51] This move, it should be noted, reveals just how composite Tertullian's construction of Christian masculinity proves to be in this speech, and how deeply informed it is by Roman ethnocentrism.

To rescue the *pallium* for his own project Tertullian cites a list of "Greek" and, thus, "effeminate" bodily practices loved by men who do not wear it: nude wrestling, covering the skin with sand and muck, or eating a restricted diet of dry goods (*Pall.* 4.1.1–2).[52] But what is worse, Tertullian decries, men who enjoy these habits also depilate their hair: " . . . the resin is so rapacious at the arse (*rapax a culo resina)*, the tweezers are so ravenous at the chin (*furax a mento volsella*)."[53] This insult of course plays directly on the idea that depilation is a practice enjoyed by those who are penetrated: it is feminizing. Depilation suggests a desire to give up the privilege of sexual domination because it feminizes

the body. In this case, Tertullian intimates that hair-removal "changes" the male body, making the orifice of the mouth and the anus objects of penetration.[54] (Tertullian likewise disparages this practice as unfitting Christian men in *On the Apparel of Women 2.*)[55] Such practices, he continues, mimic the habits of uncivilized hirsute Numidians (*Pall.* 4.1.2–3).[56] This last comment reveals once more that Tertullian's ethnic reasoning shares in a Roman perspective that pitted the Romans against the barbarians and Hellenes. This Roman ethnocentric logic, in other words, allows him in a speech apparently praising "African" identity to cast some Africans, Numidians, as primitive barbarians.

By disassociating certain "Greek" bodily practices from the men who wear the *pallium,* Tertullian wrests the *pallium* away from a connection with effeminate behavior that is associated with its Greek ancestry. To this end, Tertullian decries Greek-like effeminate habits yet he expands the association between the *pallium* and Greek *paideia* because of its positive association as a marker of status and class. In this way, Cato the Elder fits Tertullian's multiple rhetorical interests perfectly. Suspicious of the Greeks, Cato was also a beneficiary of Greek philosophical learning.[57] The man famously called for Carthage's own destruction; but here he is remembered for protecting against any adulteration that might destroy the austere Roman way of life.[58] Cato chose for himself a style of dress, the *pallium*—worn bare-chested without a tunic beneath, as was common for philosophers[59]—to announce his intellectual pedigree (as opposed to civic pedigree signified by the toga) and his love for simplicity (and thus avoidance of suspect grooming habits). Tertullian's goal here is not only to preserve the virility of the *pallium* but also to deny it to the toga—and, thus, to the Roman masculine identity it represents.

* * *

The Toga's Disgraceful Roman Heritage

On the other side of this sartorial equation stands the toga. Just as Tertullian works mightily to salvage the *pallium* and ascribe to it a positive signification, so too he disparages the toga by insinuating its heritage is of ill repute. This tactic includes reminding his putative Carthaginian audience that the men who wear this garb are in fact colonializers who behaved grievously in this African province. He proffers a short list of Roman officials, proconsuls and generals, each of whom has a tragedy associated with him so familiar to his audience that he need only mention their names. Remember, he says, Lepidus (a *triumuir* who burned the city) or the Gracchi (always an ill-omened pair whose colonial policies failed miserably),[60] and what of Pompey (he apparently

destroyed indigenous shrines and set up his own)? Or, Tertullian persists, remember those proconsuls who had the grand idea to surround our fair city with walls (*Pall.* 1.2.3)? But the biggest insult in recent memory, he saves for last, when he recalls how the Romans repeatedly stalled the establishment of the colony, a reference to the battles and delays that marked Rome's attempt to dominate and root itself in the Northern part of Africa (*Pall.* 1.2.3).[61] After all of these injustices, Tertullian taunts, you still want to be identified as Romans?

The offense compounds, Tertullian continues, for the Romans have duped their subjects—the toga, it turns out, is not even Roman! "O how far did it wander!" Tertullian mocks, "From the Pelasgians it came to the Lydians and from the Lydians to the Romans, in order that it would cover the Carthaginians, starting from the shoulders of the 'higher people'!"[62] The barb plays on Roman notions that gaining the toga—a right of passage for young boys and for those obtaining political office—is a sign of "higher status," and given that the toga indicated citizenship, it was a sign of the Roman's higher status as well. But Tertullian undercuts that logic here to show that Romans have no claim to pedigree. The toga was "stolen" from the Lydians, the ancestors of the ancient Greeks,[63] and the Romans have the audacity to claim what they appropriate as their own, he charges.

Tertullian's most persistent strategy, however, is to present the act of donning the toga in terms of "change," but change that moves against and contrary to nature. Thus Tertullian traces the history of civilizations[64] followed by animal kingdoms,[65] all with the view to the fact that change is an inevitable part of the ebb and flow of natural history.[66] But change, he reminds his audience, is only good insofar as it corresponds to two criteria: necessity and goodness. The toga, of course, meets neither of them. Consequently neither does the change brought to Carthage by their Roman overlords, as Tertullian reveals in this mocking accolade:

> But antiquity now means little, if our own days are confronted with it. How much of the world has been changed in this period? How many towns have been produced or enlarged or refounded by the triple virtue of the current government? Now that God favors so many *Augusti* at the same time, how many census lists have been transcribed, how many people removed, how many orders given their former splendor, how many barbarians excluded? Really the earth is now the well-cultivated estate of this government . . . [67]

In his analysis of *On the Pallium*, Paul McKechnie has argued that Tertullian includes this little encomium as a carefully scripted proclamation of his

continued support for Rome. On his reading Tertullian backs off the political implications of his arguments against the Roman toga that have come before.[68]

What is more probable, however, is that Tertullian makes a jest at the expense of the imperial house.[69] The "triple virtue" of "so many *Augusti*" is likely a reference to Africa's own Septimus Severus and his two sons, Geta and Caracalla, who were notorious for the murderous intrigue that plagued their reign.[70] Given the satirical discussion of Rome's history in Carthage that comes before, Tertullian's declaration that great peace and prosperity brought about Rome's practice of shifting populations and transporting them strategically throughout the Empire ("how many people removed . . . how many barbarians excluded!") emerges as a not-so-subtle barb at their colonial policies in Africa as well. In this context, Rome's claims to ensure lasting stability sound like a misguided notion because the audience now knows that history records the sufferings of inevitable change.

Change in dress, Tertullian argues, is of course a part of human history; new fabrics and styles come into use, and change in fashion is to be expected. But change is also dangerous. Indeed, if not put into the proper direction, in accordance with nature, change can become perversion. Here, then, the assertion that the toga represents just such a distortion is bolstered once more by gendered logic.[71] Wearing the toga for the "African" man is akin to donning effeminate raiment, to wearing clothes that belie their masculine "nature." Through a series of obscure mythological and historical events, Tertullian builds this connection. Take for instance, he states, Achilles, the double dresser who hid out in Scyrus dressed as a maiden so that he might not be recognized and taken to war. Ah, but he could not forever hide his true nature; once a sword was shown to him, he slipped into military garb and just in time—for he was growing to be an expert at attracting men's eyes (*Pall.* 4.2.1–5). Or, he adds, what of that other hero, Hercules? Out of love for Omphale he traded in his club and lion-skin, preferring to drape himself in her luscious gowns (*Pall.* 4.3.1–8).

Aside from heroes whose dress perverts nature, Tertullian names a disdainful boxer named Cleomachus reported to have enjoyed the penetrated role and likely changed his apparel to match (*Pall.* 4.4.1–2).[72] In his camp, we find philosophers who dress like dandies (*Pall.* 4.7.1–2)[73] and even pompous Egyptian and Assyrian kings, who reveled in frivolous, feminine costumes (*Pall.* 4.5.1).[74] Lest Romans get too much pleasure from such references, they should recall that they are not free of such shameless types either: "Yes, we must keep silent, lest even they start muttering about some of your Caesars, who are no less a disgrace . . . "[75] And who could forget that most famous

Macedonian, Alexander the Great, who, though conqueror, quickly fell victim to the softness of his own captives. He could not wait to take off his weighty and imposing armor and trade it for some silky Persian pants (*Pall.* 4.6.3)![76]

What then is the point of these vulgar and humorous tales of cross-dressing *semi-vir*? At the conclusion Tertullian brings his audience to the main point of the speech: clothing communicates a man's soul, his disposition, and his character to those around him.[77] Indeed, here we have a clear evocation of Roman conceptions about the interrelationship of outer appearance and inner disposition that up to now has only been implied. To adorn his body, to wear ostentatious and delicate clothes, a man shows an amazing disregard for his modesty (*modestia*). Tertullian declares: "Such clothing therefore, that estranges from nature and modesty, deserves sharply fixing gazes, pointing fingers, and exposing nods."[78] With this comment Tertullian appeals to the prevalent Roman notion that moral subjectivity demands a constant submission to the discerning gaze of others. He reminds his audience that peers are standing ready, their eyes drawing down always: "threatening, sexual, regulatory, penetrating, shaming, controlling, admiring, imitative . . . "[79]

This rhetorical move participates in the larger goal of making the toga an object of public shame. Tertullian continues this line of thinking with a mockery of current fashion trends in Carthage that suggest moral peril and total chaos. Surely, it cannot be good, he prods, that once-retiring matrons play the whore by enjoying ostentatious dress, and others participate in civic cults only for the love of costumes; they have no deep piety that compels them (*Pall.* 4.10.2). Carthage is overrun by people bent on disguise, he scolds.[80] The lowliest of men, too, who deal in corpses and prostitutes, proudly wear equestrian's rings and senator's togas (*Pall.* 4.8.4–10.1). This confusion, he argues, is the result of change—change that represents a deep perversion—a disruptive change that is, in short, also applicable to taking up the Roman toga.

Thus we arrive at Tertullian's critique of the toga as the preferred garb of half men. Tertullian imagines a man dressing in the toga: the garment is wrapped about the body and the folds are placed in careful order. But as soon as a man begins to move, the dreaded garment shifts, leaving him to pick it up, remake the *umbo*, or cast the fabric over the opposite shoulder (*Pall.* 5.1.4). Where Quintilian indicates that the skilled orator can use the movements of his toga intentionally to strengthen his performance, Tertullian treats the drapery of the toga as a busy nuisance.[81] McKechnie aptly describes the rhetorical impact of Tertullian's humorous portrait: "The insinuation is that the luckless citizen, who ought, as a Roman, to be a master of the world, isn't in the least control of what's going on."[82] Tertullian asks his audience: "Now

I will interrogate your conscience: how do you feel in a toga: dressed or oppressed? Is it like wearing clothes or bearing them?"[83] Even the shoes that attend the toga squeeze the feet with their tight leather (*Pall.* 5.2.4).

Juxtaposed with this perverted mode of dress, Tertullian extols the merits of the *pallium.* Ah, but how simple this garment is to manage. Indeed, a man does not even need to manage it at all. He simply throws it on with or without a tunic underneath, and he might even forgo the belt. His shoes, too, do not constrict; he can wear sandals or even go barefoot (*Pall.* 5.2.3). His depiction of the *pallium* plays on the Stoic ideal of simplicity, particularly the notion that whatever is "natural" is sufficient—anything else, any additional garb, reveals suspect enjoyment of *luxuria.*[84] Against this vision of the simple tunic, how can the fussy folds of the toga compete?

* * *

Personifying the Pallium

The height of the speech strives to link the *virtus* of the *pallium* to the Christian mode of life.[85] To do so Tertullian personifies the *pallium* and lets the garment speak and extol its own virtues (*Pall.* 5.4.2).[86] This rhetorical technique most dramatically elicits consideration of what effect this kind of strategic move had if Tertullian in fact performed this speech. The moment at which the *pallium* speaks, in other words, Tertullian himself suddenly becomes the very embodiment, the very icon of the masculinity the garment is meant to reveal. In this case, the content of the *pallium*'s speech showcases Christian masculinity, as would Tertullian's embodied display of it—a display that would have been deeply informed by the masculine calisthenics that comprised Latin oratory.

In the previous chapter, I discussed Maud Gleason's foundational study of the gendered character of Roman technical rhetoric: she argues that such performances were the mode by which men of the curial classes manifested their masculinity, thereby displaying their cultural and political capital.[87] The importance placed on performance in rhetorical handbooks, as we have seen, is not surprising in a landscape where moral integrity as well as class status were linked to bodily appearance and decorum. For Gleason, the goal of rhetorical performance was to make a particular construction of elite masculinity appear the product of birth, a right of the curial class. She writes: "In a value system that prized rhetorical skill as the quintessential human excellence, and in a society so structured that this perfection could only be achieved by adult males, arbiters of rhetoric were also arbiters of masculine deportment."[88]

More recently, Eric Gunderson has suggested that Latin oratory in particular was constituted around managing the bodily calisthenics of the orator. This context, as opposed to the Greek writings of the Second Sophistic that occupy much of Gleason's analysis, might be better suited to Tertullian's own. Gunderson argues that rhetorical handbooks, like that of Quintilian, focused on constituting a rhetor's body as "a body made for reading."[89] The teacher of rhetoric leads his male students through a disciplinary regime designed so that their performance reveals them to be *viri boni* (good men).[90] "The body of the orator is good to the extent that it betrays itself to be a mere vessel, given its virtue and value by the soul of the good man of which it is the bearer," Gunderson explains.[91] Ancient rhetorical performance was a site in which claims to masculine virtue were established, authenticated, or rejected.[92] That this oratorical gymnastics included the comportment of the toga suggests that by orating *palliatus* (*pallium*-clad), the rhetor already symbolized a transformation and critique of Roman claims to true *virilis*—a critique that in fact builds on the connection between performance and status that governed Latin rhetoric.

Of course, it is important to recall here that there is a gap between the text before us, *On the Pallium*, and the recovery of its possible performance. Perhaps Tertullian's speech is only a fictive, imagined display? Or, perhaps behind this inscription lies a performance? In either case, we can see how personifying the *pallium* unsettles Roman virility in ways that could be extended in the oral delivery of this speech. Tertullian imagines himself dressed in the *pallium*, moving about and speaking in ways that allow his "performance" to manifest the very kind of masculinity that his entire oration has constructed. When the *pallium* takes center stage it is the civic duties, the offices of Roman men, that come under indictment. The *pallium* calls out proudly:

> I owe nothing to the forum, neither the election ground, nor the Senate-house . . . I have no reason to play the judge, the soldier, or the king . . . My only activity concerns myself; I do not have any care, except for this: to have no care. A better life can be enjoyed in seclusion than in the open.[93]

The duties of state office and military exploits—those coveted markers of Roman *virilis*—are denigrated, indeed, unmanned. These are the hobbies of men who seek out notoriety. Those who occupy those offices are now suspiciously implicated in a perversion of the "natural" order that Tertullian has outlined before.

The charge against *togati*—now clearly identified as Roman statesmen—mounts as the *pallium* trots out some horrendous examples of their ambition and gluttony. The most egregious character is one Vedius Pollio, a wealthy

friend of Augustus, who in anger fed his own slaves to his dear fish. What is worse, his rapacious appetite compelled him to fry up the fish so as to ingest the servants himself![94] The lesson from such a tale is that men who wear the toga, and who extol themselves as the embodiment of Roman greatness, are incapable of controlling their appetites. The toga wearer is rhetorically stripped of moral authority and marked with the stains of luxurious and unmanly indulgences. The *pallium's* speech, thus, allows Tertullian to invert the well-known phrase "from toga to *pallium*." What kind of indignity could this move really portend given the shamelessness of the *togati*, he inquires? The contrast between the *togati* and the *palliati* is, in fact, so stark that the *pallium* imagines itself as "a most wise medicine" (*medicamine sapientissimo*) for the contagion that the former inflicts on public life. It secures the preservation of harmony and well-being (*Pall.* 5.5.1).[95] Merely to think of the garment, the *pallium* suggests, causes immorality itself to turn red with shame (*improbi mores . . . erubescunt*) (*Pall.* 6.1.3).[96] That *palliati* can solicit shame reflects the idea that those wearing the garb are the legitimate arbiters and censors of moral decorum. It is a claim that inverts the notion that Roman men are ideally the guardians of morality. The note sounded here harkens back to Cicero's own denigrating remarks about his political enemies, Catiline, Antony, and the like.[97] The assertion of one's own authority has as its counterpoint the utter humiliation of another's.

* * *

Hail the Pallium-Clad Christian Men!

As the oration shifts back into Tertullian's voice for the final comment, the dichotomy that separates the *pallium* and toga—and the men who don them—is established. In this moment, Tertullian fully reveals the rhetorical goal that has guided his argument all along: to pit Christian against Roman, to wrest *virilis* from Roman men, and through an appropriation of the *pallium*, lay it on the shoulders of Christian men themselves. All the attributes of the *pallium* turn out to be rightly theirs. Tertullian closes the speech with these telling words: "Rejoice, *pallium*, and exult! A better philosophy has deigned you worthy, from the moment that it is the Christian whom you started to dress."[98] These comments indicate just how potent a signifier dress could prove to be in the negotiations of power between Romans and Christians—and the gendered logic that could support and promote them.

Though a largely understudied treatise, *On the Pallium* reveals through close analysis that its message is not idiosyncratic in early Christian literature,

as its scholarly readers from the turn of the past century have often presumed.[99] In his study of Christian conceptions of gender, *The Manly Eunuch*, Kuefler implies that while the earliest Christian writers produced a cacophony of perspectives on gendered identity, we find in the late antique period the emergence of a broader and pervasive ideological shift in ancient constructions of masculinity. For Kuefler, Tertullian rightly represents, and even anticipates (standing on the cusp of the late antiquity), that very sea change. He exemplifies a rhetorical use of manliness that served the Christianization of the Empire into the fourth century.[100] "Masculine privilege," writes Kuefler, "rewrote itself as Christian privilege."[101] Kuefler's argument reminds us that claims to power had a gendered component in Roman discourse—and Christians, like Tertullian, proved adept at wielding this logic as part of their ethnic reasoning and various other rhetorical strategies to constitute and legitimate Christianity in the Roman Empire. Tertullian's rhetoric, in other words, was variously picked up and developed by later Christian writers who articulated a new kind of "manliness."

We might describe, indeed some early Christian scholars have, this Christian reframing of masculinity a rather "queer" undertaking—in that this articulation revealed, and, in fact, depended on the malleability of masculinity and femininity as shifting, unstable cultural constructs.[102] In this case, Tertullian's reconfigured masculinity encompassed virtues, like patience and even submission, which were once conceived of in Roman gender ideology as feminized.[103] This new Christian masculinity also entailed a rejection of political privilege in favor of seclusion: "A better life can be enjoyed in seclusion than out in the open," Tertullian's *pallium* announces.[104] This conclusion is repeated in other treatises where Tertullian likewise discourages Christian men from entangling themselves in military service, public office, and the like—the once championed activities of the Roman *vir*.[105] The endurance of martyrdom and suffering are emphasized repeatedly, but engaging in war is despised; total chastity over moderate self-control for men, and not just for women, is made mandatory.[106]

Here we see notions of masculinity as the (acquired) manifestation of total self-control, and self-governance is made to stretch and incorporate within it subordination to God and the admirable act of enduring—rather than refusing—to submit the body to pain and suffering.[107] It is, in the end, a notion of masculinity that manages to hold onto male privilege and female subordination, always relying on various mechanisms to do so to displace, subsume, or even keep at bay the femininity upon which this new Christian masculinity relied.[108]

Tertullian's constitution of Christian masculinity sat ill at ease with the trappings of state and Empire when compared to the elite Roman conception it appropriated. Yet his rejection and subsequent reclaiming of particular aspects of Roman masculinity anticipated the very ideological groundwork that advanced, according to Kuefler, the Christianization of imperial institutions and Roman culture. Tertullian participates—as one of the earliest and most innovative advocates—in the construction of a Christian masculinity that ultimately rejected Roman heritage, while also insisting that Christianity embodied its fulfillment. And men's dress proved a critical vehicle for the advancement of that goal.[109]

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CHAPTER 3

Why Is She the "Devil's Gateway"? Debating Adornment in Christian Carthage

Introduction

> Don't you know that you are an Eve? . . . Don't you know that you are the Devil's Gateway? (*diaboli ianua*) All too easily you destroyed so easily God's image, man (*imaginem dei hominem*). Because of your deed (*meritum*)—namely, death—even the son of God had to die! . . . And still you have in mind to be adorned (*adornari*) over your tunics of skin?
>
> Tertullian, *On the Apparel of Women 1*[1]

While men's dress was a means for Tertullian to envision Christian masculinity in ethnic terms, women's dress had further reaching, theological implications that made it an especially heated point of discussion in Tertullian's corpus. Indeed, *On the Apparel of Women 1 and 2* are largely responsible for his infamous—and continually debated—moniker, "misogynist."[2] It is little wonder, when Tertullian opens them with the oft-quoted barb that accuses his female audience of being the "Devil's Gateway." Scholars have long puzzled over these treatises, at times doubting their theological merit. They are also often unable to connect his degrading remarks about women in them to his seeming commitment to the salvation of women and men alike, espoused in writings like *On the Soul* (*De anima*) and *On the Resurrection of the Dead* (*De resurrectione mortuorum*).[3] This chapter, however, will read those treatises together with *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2* in order to show that far from being a detour on his long journey to shore up his soteriology, these writings on women's dress are caught up in it.

On the Apparel of Women 1 and *2* are two short homilies in which Tertullian complains vociferously about Christian women's toilette, garb, and jewelry and extols the value of modest raiment. His objections to Christian women's practices of dress and grooming will sound familiar. They resonate with the writings of Roman moralists and poets, examined in Chapter 1, who decried Roman women's waning modesty. Those writers claimed remorse at the sad state of Roman morality that revealed itself (or so they asserted) in the sartorial pageantry and elaborate adornment of Roman women. Tertullian, too, worries about the ostentatious character of Christian women's garb. But, we should be careful here in drawing too tight a parallel: there is a new direction to which the Christian writer puts the antiadornment rhetoric, one that frames Roman discourses about dress and morality in a soteriological register. By adorning, Tertullian claims, a Christian woman indicates a dangerous ignorance about her redemption: she refuses to display contrition and humility—the very traits she must perfect if she has any hope of achieving that better state, of securing her salvation (*Cult. fem.* 1.1.1).

What weaves itself through Tertullian's rhetoric in these homilies on women's dress is the profound association between women's flesh and shame, a connection that the first part of this chapter will elaborate.[4] In the flesh, Christians are both proximate to, and deeply divided from, their creator: the crudeness of the flesh renders Christ's willingness to be born and die in it a brazen act of divine love, as Virginia Burrus has recently explained.[5] But there is something more here that serves to raise the stakes for women's dress, something often missed by scholars of Tertullian's treatises,[6] an insidious logic that renders women's fleshly bodies more deeply stained by mortality than men's. This link lends the practice of women's dress a theological potency, one that enables him to inscribe his vision of the redeemed flesh onto the modestly adorned bodies of Christian women. For this reason women's fleshly bodies come to be more deeply stained by mortality than men's own so that their performance of modesty—through dress—comes to exemplify the very doubleness that signifies human flesh.

Importantly, however, the chapter does not close with Tertullian's derisive view on women's dress and ornamentation. In the final section of the chapter, I illustrate that his fears about women's garb reflect the economic disparities and consequent power struggle within his own church precisely because it boasted women of means. Indeed, his vitriol in these treatises likely reflects his frustration and inability to secure the kind of gender performance he seeks, one that clearly establishes women's subordination to Christian men, and to God. To this end, the chapter concludes with a discussion of

material remains and literature that reveal another, more positive assessment of women's toilette and ornamentation, in order that Tertullian's perspective is unsettled. As noble Romans, Christian women in Carthage, particularly matrons and widows, would have enjoyed and cultivated an art of self-fashioning, and lavish dress, coiffure, and jewelry, as a crucial part of their self-expression, which they did not likely relinquish, much to Tertullian's chagrin.

* * *

Part I: Saving the Flesh

> It is unfitting, I repeat, unfitting that God should abandon to destruction for eternity the work of his own hands! Why do you reproach those matters of the flesh that look to God, those things that have hope in God? . . . I would venture to say if these things had not befallen the flesh (*si haec carni non accidissent*), the entire force of God's beneficence, good-will, grace, mercy, would be for nothing.
>
> *On the Resurrection of the Dead*[7]

The salvation of the flesh was very much on the mind of Christians in the second and third centuries, perhaps, as Caroline Walker Bynum has suggested, as a result of the fact that Christians faced sporadic persecution, often hearing tales of horrific deaths faced nobly by their "brothers and sisters in the Lord." Persecution and martyrdom were not unknown to Tertullian either. He wrote repeatedly of the bravery of the men and women who died for their faith.[8] He knew too about the famed, heroic death of the Carthaginian woman, Vibia Perpetua, who died with her slave Felicitas in the arena, and often admonished women in his church to follow her example in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua*, a martyr act that was making its way around Carthage (and one that I discuss more fully in the following chapter). In this context, he maintained passionately that despite the crude nature of their fleshly bodies, baptized Christians could be assured that their bodies and souls would rise together to be restored and perfected in the kingdom (*Res.* 14.7–11 and *An.* 40.1–4). They could count on this fact, he happily noted, because Christ himself was born in the flesh, died, and then was raised in it (*Marc.* 3.8.7).

Tertullian's voice, however, was but one in early Christian debates about salvation. Other Christians suggested that Christ's body was made of some purer, more rarified stuff than mere flesh, and that the savior had an astral or spirit-like body (*Carn. Chr.* 1.2–4 and *Marc.* 3.11.1–9). At issue is the notion that Christians would obtain some better body in the resurrection, leaving off

their flesh as they ascended into the kingdom. For Tertullian this idea was scandalous: it threatened a radical violation of the integrity of the self.[9] Thus he taunts his favorite rival, Marcion: if soul and rude flesh are not raised together, then how is it that a human being is redeemed at all (*Marc.* 3.8.7)? Tertullian's dismay at Marcion's apparent denigration of the flesh reflects the competing philosophical systems, Stoicism and Platonism, respectively, that informed their thought. Stoic materialism is so deeply written into Tertullian's anthropology that it is difficult to comprehend his intransigent commitment to the flesh without reference to that philosophical position.

* * *

Knitting Together Soul and Fleshly Body

In the winding treatise *On the Soul,* we find Tertullian articulating most clearly his indebtedness to Stoic metaphysics (e.g., *An.* 5.2–6).[10] It reveals his understanding of the prophetic—in particular, as Laura Nasrallah has recently shown, his conception of how visions, prophecies and the like are epistemologically reliable.[11] What is of interest here, however, is the connection—between his conception of the soul and the resurrection of the flesh—which Tertullian makes explicit by advising readers to peruse this treatise alongside *On the Flesh of Christ* and *On the Resurrection of the Dead.*[12] I examine this link as it emerges in *On the Soul* and is developed in the ensuing treatise *On the Resurrection of the Dead*, I examine here in order to deepen our understanding of his conception of the self. This discussion is also essential for articulating why and how women's dress gets entangled in this theological vision.

On the Soul is replete with diatribes attacking the dualism of material versus immaterial that defined the Platonism of Tertullian's day (e.g., *An.* 6.1–2 and 9.2).[13] For those holding to this philosophical system the categories material and immaterial applied to the flesh and soul. Material was understood as corrupt and mortal, and immaterial, unchanging and eternal. From this philosophical perspective, the fleshly body could be viewed as merely accidental and not an essential part of the self, where the soul was seen as the enduring and immortal aspect. For a Platonically informed Christian, Tertullian charges in a host of writings, the salvation of the "self" would seem to have little to do with the flesh at all (e.g., *Carn. Chr.* 5.5).[14]

Holding fast to Stoic materialism, however, Tertullian conceived of the human person as an entity comprised of both soul and body knitted intimately together.[15] Stoics did not differentiate between material and immaterial, insisting instead on a metaphysic in which all things are corporeal—that

is, "bodies" acting upon one another (*An.* 6.4–7). In this philosophical scheme, the soul is merely an invisible body, whereas the flesh is more dense and visible. For Tertullian, these two parts are closely wedded. They are fused in the moment of human conception: "We state that both [parts] (namely *anima* and *corpus*) are conceived, and formed, perfected, and born together so that no interval occurs in conception, thereby setting up a prior place [for either of them] (*in conceptu quo locus ordinetur*)."[16] He goes on to elaborate the generative process through which this equanimity is assured, explaining that the male seed itself contains the generative stuff of soul and body together that is then planted in the womb (*An.* 27.5–6).[17]

Thus not only are soul and body intimately bound to one another at the moment of conception; given their interconnection they share a deep likeness. Earlier in the same treatise, we discover that the invisible soul infuses the whole of the visible body (*An.* 5.2).[18] With help of a vision of the soul from a Christian female prophet, Tertullian confirms that the soul conforms exactly to the shape of the body that it pervades, containing all the appendages, eyes, ears, mouth and the like, that distinguish the outer contours of the fleshly body as well (*An.* 9.7–8). This logic extends to sexual difference, too, which in Tertullian's view is not some accidental property of the flesh alone, thus discarded with the corruptible flesh at death, as a Platonist might conclude, but a distinction that pertains to soul and flesh alike (*An.* 36.1–2).

Indeed, this distinction even applies to the first couple, Adam and Eve, the latter—whose soul and flesh was created secondarily—implies a kind of creative hierarchy that shores up male priority. Tertullian explains:

> . . . certainly there is a witness of this principle from the beginning itself, when the male was formed earlier (*masculus temperius effingitur*), for Adam was first (*prior enim Adam*), and the female was formed some considerable time later (*femina aliquanto serius*), for Eve came after (*posterior enim Eva*).[19]

Given Tertullian's anthropology, where flesh and soul are wedded, the implication of this statement is profound and far-reaching. In fact, he has just suggested that a qualitative difference pertains to male and female fleshly bodies and souls that reflects and thus supports a gender economy figured in a hierarchal mode.[20] Established by God in creation, this difference is revealed on the flesh, but it is not a marker of the flesh alone. Thus sexual difference is not accidental and will not collapse back into some former, Edenic unity; instead, it persists even into the afterlife.

* * *

Resurrecting Soul and Fleshly Body

We can already see how the anthropology articulated in *On the Soul*, directed as it is to a consideration of prophecy and ecstasy, soon opens onto larger questions about the possibility and nature of human salvation. It is not surprising, then, that Tertullian wrote *On the Resurrection of the Dead* soon afterward to address these issues. The interconnection of flesh and soul informs this writing as well, in particular the argument that redemption must apply to both parts of the self. This must be the case, he surmises, given that one component of the self cannot even be said to act without the other: "the flesh (*caro*) is washed so that the soul (*anima*) might be pure. The flesh is anointed so that the soul might be consecrated . . . " he writes.[21]

Given this intimate harmony between the soul and flesh, how can one part of the self be punished or rewarded without the other (*An.* 40.1–4 and *Res.* 14.8–11)? How, Tertullian continues, could God abandon entirely flesh and blood, molded with his own hands, animated by means of his own breath (*Res.* 7.1–13)? The very same flesh will obtain salvation with the soul—at least for the baptized Christian (a less glorious fate awaits the unbaptized sinners). In the fullness of the resurrection, the essence of the flesh will change, Tertullian argues, from corruption to incorruption. Through addition of *spiritus*, the flesh and soul will be spirit-imbued (*Res.* 50.4–7). But the substance of flesh and soul will endure into eternity—the flesh even retaining its organs, sexual, digestive, and the like, though in heaven these organs will not be used (*Res.* 61.1–7).

It is worth noting how this claim shores up the gender hierarchy established in *On the Soul*: if the corporeal markers of sexual difference remain forever, then necessarily so do the deeper psychic ones as well. Thus men and women do share a point of origin in Adam—being that male and female alike can trace the "seeds" of their soul and body back to him, the *fons naturae* ("origin of human birth"). But Tertullian has also indicated in *On the Soul* that a fundamental difference, a difference that is figured in terms of inferiority, obtains to Eve. And this difference, Tertullian maintains, must likewise adhere to the resurrected state as well—and thus, informs the possibility and pursuit of salvation in the present moment.

There is another discursive thread here that also has implications for how Tertullian employs women's dress in service of his theological vision: the inherent crudeness of the flesh. In fact, whatever goodness belongs to this stuff derives not from its substance, but from what is lent to that substance by the divine, first in creation and later in the incarnation. In *On the Resurrection of the Dead*, for instance, Tertullian explains that in crafting the first human

person God acted as a potter fashioning the flesh from simple, earthen "clay," breathing into that nondescript matter and filling it with soul. His hot breath worked as a kiln and rendered a "sordid (*sordentis*) and dead element (*iacentis elementi*),"[22] into harder, vivified, and ensouled fleshly body (*Res.* 7.3–8). God's breath, or *afflatus*, did improve raw flesh, animating it; nevertheless *afflatus* is only like, and not the same as, God's own *spiritus* (*An.* 11.1–6.). In creation, then, the flesh is wedded to a changeable soul.

In this way, Tertullian can explain why sin has no origin in God. Further, he can insist that Adam was capable of sin and managed to communicate that "stain" to the rest of humanity materially from the "seeds" of his own flesh and soul (*An.* 27.7–9 and 40.1–2). In this postlapsarian moment, Tertullian insists that the stain of sin weighs on every soul and fleshly body. As a consequence, death is the horrible violence that now awaits this pair. Though the soul and flesh were united in creation, death intervenes to rip them unnaturally apart (*An.* 52.2–3). Soul and flesh will only be reunited again in the glory of the resurrection (*An.* 58.8), and baptism into Christ's death becomes a means to experience something of that promise now, a means to prepare oneself in soul and body for the promise of the "spirit" (*spiritus*) that will imbue and perfect them to a state of sinlessness (*An.* 40.1–2 and *Bapt.* 4.1–5).

But carnal needs and desires, aging, illness, death, and then finally rot and dissolution leave their marks on the flesh. For Tertullian these corporeal signs reveal a deeper, more pervasive corruptibility of the human condition that results from sin (*Res.* 51.6). He asserts: "Behold: the flesh is the axis point of salvation (*adeo caro salutis est cardo*)."[23] Thus he reminds Christians that the flesh is not only an indicator of their inner disposition; it is also the privileged signifier of their sinfulness. The threat of mortality, which plagues soul and flesh, makes itself known on the fleshly body. This idea easily converges with the notion that sexual difference, as revealed in the flesh, reflects a much deeper distinction, at once somatic and psychic, between men and women. The implication is dramatic for understanding the negative significance of women's flesh throughout Tertullian's corpus.

* * *

Shaming Women's Flesh

In Tertullian's soteriological scheme, a woman's flesh—most particularly her genitalia, those "shameful parts," semiotically rich markers of her difference—indicate human deficiency. It is her connection to the processes of birth, in

particular, that comes to associate her fleshly body more closely with the looming threat of corruption and mortality that Christ's daring incarnation and death has to absolve. The link between women and the flesh, however, is also established more subtly in his writings. For instance, spirit and flesh are often gendered male and female so that a woman comes to exemplify the ambivalent status of human flesh as sacred and shameful rather than a man.[24] Thus treatises like *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2* are not unique among his writings for imagining that women are somehow more "fleshly." This connection emerges throughout his thought. He writes, for instance, that the flesh is the "bride" of the soul (*Res.* 63.2–3).[25] Underlying this connection is the notion that a woman's flesh is associated with procreation, which is linked to death, the very signifier of sin.[26] Birth initiates the person into the process of dying: "there is a shared debt between birth and death," Tertullian explains in *On the Flesh of Christ*, "the natural cause of death is birth (*forma moriendi causa nascendi est*)."[27] For Tertullian, this statement reveals that in being born sinless, Christ also saved humanity from death. But this economy of salvation also aligns procreation, death, and sin so that a woman's flesh is especially negatively charged.[28]

The connection of birth, death, and sin are also born out in the ferocity that attends the two processes. In fact, the rupture of an infant from its mother's womb foreshadows the trauma of death, the moment when soul and flesh are rent: "the very operation [i.e., sin] of death (*operatrix mortis*) . . . is a violence (*vis est*)," Tertullian explains.[29] So great is the terrible force of birth that he makes the startling claim that upon issuing forth from Mary's womb, Christ "opened up" her body, changing her from a virgin to a wife (*Carn. Chr.* 23.4–5).[30] Take, for example, this barb aimed at Marcion. Tertullian attacks him for undermining the reality of Christ's nativity, and then subjects his rival to a vivid account of the nasty vagaries of birth and gestation that occupied Mary's own flesh:

> Start from that birth you hate, attack the foulnesses (*spurcitias*) of the genital elements in the womb: the disgusting coagulations (*foeda cogula*) of fluid and blood and the flesh being nourished for nine months from that same muck (*ex eodem caeno*). Decry the womb day to day restless, heavy, anxious . . . You are horrified at the infant shed (from the womb) with its impediments . . . Certainly Christ loves that person who was curdled in the filths (*immunditiis*) of the womb, the one brought forth through the shameful parts (*pudenda*) and nourished by organs of ridicule (*ludibria*).[31]

Tertullian's lurid depiction of birth allows him to "displace" the shame of the flesh onto Marcion, when in fact he himself revels gloriously in it.[32]

In parturition, the foulness of the flesh emerges in the trials and tribulation of birthing: writhing organs, cramping and unsettled womb, fluids that pour out and move through the mother, shit and blood.[33] He even likens the mother's womb to a sewer, a latrine. Jennifer Glancy notes: "Vocabularies of moral deficiency and human waste overlap with the vocabulary of gestation and birth . . . Wombs are dirty places, and womb-bearers are dirty people."[34] The infant wallows in refuse (*ex eodem caeno*), feeds on it, and is ushered forth from it—but the mother's flesh, her womb, her shameful parts, are the site of all that impurity.

In the context of Tertullian's soteriological scheme, however, this categorization of Mary's flesh—this "gutter talk," as Glancy rightly deems it[35]—serves two important theological purposes. First, birth foregrounds the crude nature of the flesh, thereby indicating the very necessity of its salvation. Burrus helps to elucidate the logic that would have Tertullian trotting out these gruesome corporeal displays: "For ancient Christians, the abjection of the flesh went hand-in-hand with the exaltation of divinity."[36] Tertullian, therefore, ruminates on the sordid nature of the flesh in order to reveal more starkly the miraculous nature of Christ's redemptive act. In taking on the flesh, Christ involves himself in human shame.[37] Christ's "shameless" act of "love" is the only means to render the sordid flesh—that which decays and rots and is consumed with fulfilling bodily needs—into something worthy of the incorruptible kingdom (*Res*. 50.2–5 and *Carn*. *Chr.* 16.4).[38] Tertullian stresses the corruptible and sordid nature of the flesh precisely to manifest Christ's graciousness in daring to be born and to die in it.[39]

But in order for Christ's redemptive act to work, the filth associated with human birth must be displaced entirely onto Mary and, implicitly, onto women as well. Though in his birth Christ unseals her womb, he actually remains a virgin himself (*Carn*. *Chr.* 20.7).[40] Christ's divine nature is in no way compromised by his willingness to be born in human flesh (*Carn*. *Chr.* 3.5 and 5). He is quickly disentangled and washed free of the gunk and filth of the sordid womb that fed, nourished, and sustained him those long months, while Mary's body leaks it from her breasts and her vagina (*Marc*. 3.11.7–9 and *Carn. Chr.* 4.1–3). Christ easily escapes the bloody and cramped womb unscathed, but Mary it seems, cannot. Glancy thus concludes: "For Tertullian, Mary's unclean *uulua* [uterus] is thus the matrix of redemption."[41]

Tertullian's soteriology, then, is built on the claim that Christ is freed from the vagaries of birth—a freedom that protects him from the stain attached to them.[42] This declaration has broader implications for the prescriptions that Tertullian will place on men and women too. Indeed, men

have nothing to "conceal," he explains in his treatise *On the Military Crown,* because they are made in the image of Christ (with an evocation of Paul's comments in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16, an intertext that he capitalizes on in *On the Veiling of Virgins*, we will discover). Men need not wear the laurel crown, he explains, because "Christ is the head of the Christian man. He is as free as even Christ is (*liberum quam est Christus*), having no obligation to be covered . . . "[43] A man's freedom results from the fact that no humility is incumbent upon Christ, after whom he is modeled. Christ's death unmoored the stain of sin from the flesh, his virginal flesh promises the very glory of heaven itself. What garb, indeed, could improve on that (*Cor*. 14.3–4)? Yet a woman's flesh is not made in the image of Christ. Women have, like Mary, absorbed shame in their flesh—the price paid to preserve Christ's purity and his redemptive power. Their fleshly bodies stand, it seems, on the other side of the redemptive equation from Christ and men's own, as a testimony to the necessity of salvation. And this signification of women's flesh, I will argue, is what animates Tertullian's employment of modest dress in *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*.

* * *

Part II: Theologizing Modest Dress

> What value does your effort to ornament your head supply concerning your salvation (*ad salutem*)? Why is it not possible to leave your hair undisturbed, at one point binding it, at other loosening it?
>
> *On the Apparel of Women 2*[44]

On the Apparel of Women 1 and *2* are easily read together—and it seems they were transmitted that way in early Christian circles. In terms of genre, they may in fact be homilies, delivered perhaps by Tertullian himself—though that fact remains only speculative.[45] We should also be dubious about whether Tertullian intended them strictly for a female audience—given their tone, it is difficult to imagine a woman would comply with the advice offered in them or that she would willingly perform her shame and degradation. Alternatively, we can imagine that he is on the defensive, as is often the case in his treatises, most of them polemical. But it also seems likely, as is often the case in androcentric texts, that Tertullian writes about women to agonize over male sexuality and identity, providing theological and symbolic meaning to women's dress that "naturalized" their inferior and subordinate position and conversely raised that of men in the community.

The messages for Tertullian's male audience entailed in a treatise about women's dress include a warning about the threat that adorned women pose to men's status within the community, as well as an attempt to solicit their concern about the kind of "appearance" women make outside of it. An effective performance of modesty, as we have seen in earlier chapters, was the way to garner respectability in the Roman world. This idea held that a modest woman reflected back the superior moral constitution and status of the men around her. In other words, Tertullian implies that men gain social leverage by heeding his call and encouraging women to take up "poorer garb," and conversely that they lose honor and hard-won respectability when they do not. In what follows, I unpack Tertullian's argument in these two treatises, looking closely at the ways he deploys Roman notions of dress and connects them to his theological vision, and, thus, draw out the deeply gendered logic that serves this agenda.

The first speech deals largely with women's jewelry and the second with cosmetics and clothing—together what Tertullian labels *ornatus,* or "ornamentation," as opposed to *cultus,* those habits of grooming necessary for a woman's general upkeep (*Cult. fem.* 1.4.2). Both treatises participate in the antiadornment tropes that we have come to expect from Roman moralists. In them, Tertullian laments that Christian women shirk the staid heavy dress of the matron that they used to cherish; they have cast off their matronly tunics, *stolae*, and the accompanying head-covering mantle, trading in these garments for delicately textured fabrics, brightly colored and elegantly embroidered (*Cult. fem.* 2.12.1). They forgo the *vittae*, woolen fillets that delicately wrap a woman's hair. In place of these bands, they prefer ornate towers of hair, embellished with henna-colored wigs (*Cult. fem.* 2.6.1 and 2.7.1). Their ears, necks, and arms gleam with dripping pearls and diamonds (*Cult. fem.* 1.9.3). Their faces are stained with rouge and their eyes with coal (*Cult. fem.* 2.7.3). How can these Christian women be distinguished from common whores, he decries finally (*Cult. fem.* 2.12.1–3)?

What differentiates Tertullian's rhetoric, however, from contemporaneous Roman deployments of women's adornment is that it is put in service of his soteriology: "salvation . . . is mainly constituted in the display of modesty (*salus . . . in exhibitione praecipue pudicitia statuta est*)," he writes.[46] The performance of modesty (*pudicitia*) through dress is not simply the mark of a superior female morality, but also evidence that a woman admits the erotic danger of her flesh and then willingly conceals it.[47] Both of these short treatises are joined by Tertullian's insistence that women's moral decrepitude is revealed on their fleshly bodies. An uncovered head, a painted face, a silver slipper, are all corporeal signs that entail terrible threats to their male gazers

and to themselves: "why are we a source of danger to another (*alteri periculo*)?" he asks feigning camaraderie with his putative female audience?[48] Tertullian's argument can readily be simplified as follows: if men's flesh needs no decoration, as he explains in *On the Military Crown*, because it shares the glorious image of Christ's own, women's flesh, the indicator of human shame, is simply unworthy of it. "Exaltation is incompatible with those who profess humility (*professoribus humilitatis*)," he exclaims.[49]

This idea that ornamentation is unnecessary, indeed ill-suited, to women's fleshly bodies, emerges also in the terminology he employs to define the arts of beautification. He has no trouble at all with *cultus* because he proclaims that these arts maintain a woman's pleasing appearance. Tertullian clarifies: "we call that which is necessary for a woman's grace *cultus* (*cultum dicimus quem mundum muliebrem vocant*), but *ornatus* that which leads to a woman's dishonor (*immundum*)."[50] *Ornatus* generally referred to the adornment of the person with items considered unnecessary, jewelry for instance, and was often the ready target of Roman moralists who deemed it the opposite of a woman's proper *cultus* and more suitable to a prostitute.[51] Good *cultus* versus bad depended largely on the rhetorical interests of the author who applied this terminology.[52] The ointments and accoutrements that Ovid deems essential to good *cultus*, for instance, certainly rank outside Tertullian's definition of it. As we will see later, women's adornment is derided, but it is also assumed to be necessary for and desired by women of means. Tertullian, however, aims to limit women's ornamentation based on the notion that their flesh is unworthy of decoration, limiting as a result their expressions of rank and status.[53]

Within the antiadornment rhetoric of Roman writers, then, there are contradictions about what constituted proper grooming habits. Tertullian follows a standard argument when he states that good *cultus* includes the necessary accoutrements that cover over the inherent disorderliness of the female body.[54] This logic is revealed in the adjectives that Tertullian ascribes to *cultus* and *ornatus,* respectively, namely, *mundus* and *immundus*, which indicate cleanliness and squalor but can also imply order and disorder.[55] Tertullian builds his argument on a conception that the female body "needs," to quote Richlin, "to be fixed," cleaned up, smoothed over, made "neat."[56] Such endorsements for grooming, however, concern the most minimal and "simple" toilette. We will not find in these homilies recipes or protocols for the proper use of creams and ointments that we encountered in Ovid or Pliny. Indeed, for Tertullian that type of grooming promises a deception of cosmic proportion, an argument that he clarifies by elucidating the origins of the cosmetic and metallurgic arts.

He recalls in the first homily (a narrative recounted in Genesis and elaborated in 1 Enoch) that women drew angels, the "watchers" (minions of Satan)

to earth by means of their appearance—a troubling confounding of two realms that yielded horrific results. Through the angel's introduction of the "foreign" cosmetic arts, women who use them in fact conspire to further confound God's created order through the continued use of that which is alien to that order (*Cult. fem.* 1.2.1–5). I will return momentarily to the question of adornment, deception, and disorder that surfaces here—critical as it is to the soteriological framework at play in both homilies—but I want to note that while Tertullian highlights a woman's foulness and the repugnance of her arts of beautification, he resists the notion that good *cultus*—Christian *cultus*—implies deception (*Cult. fem.* 2.5.2). A Christian woman's minimal toiletries are markers of status, indicators of her *pudicitia*—a modesty that outstrips its "gentile" counterpart (*Cult. fem.* 2.1.3).

Christian modesty, then (echoing Roman moral discourse), involves conspicuous bodily displays: "It is not enough for Christian *pudicitia* to *seem* to be true—it must be *seen* to be true (*pudicitiae christianae satis non est esse verum et videri*). It (your *pudicitia*) should be so great that it emanates from your soul to your clothing and shines forth from your thoughts to your face," the Christian writer declares.[57] The quote rings eerily familiar—recall that Seneca's interlocutor, Porcius Latro, accuses a wife of adultery because she appears to be *impudica*, though she never engaged in *stuprum* itself, saying: "For a woman the only honour is *pudicitia*: thus she must take care both to be and to seem *pudica*."[58] Tertullian is making a similar claim about the necessity for the cultivation of sexual virtue in regard to a woman's appearance. But he extends the logic, shifting the stakes of the performance of modesty: a Christian woman's very salvation hangs on her willingness to recite that virtue in her dress and comportment (e.g., *Cult. fem.* 2.3.2).

* * *

In the Devil's Dressing Room: Adorning a Corpse?

To return to the point above: how and why do these treatises link deception, disorder, and adornment, and to what end? We have seen that Tertullian deploys Roman moralizing discourse, with its connection of adornment and deception, to shame Christian women into displaying modesty. But he transforms the significance of that association so that adornment indicates a woman's tenuous soteriological status. Here again that initial barb, the infamous line "you are all Eves . . . You are the Devil's gateway," with which I began the chapter, in fact indicates the rhetorical agenda of these homilies.

The comment serves to frame the entire antiadornment diatribe in terms of a woman's sin and the possibility of her salvation. Thus, on the heels of that insult, he continues asking that his audience imagine Eve, the penitent sinner, moments after her destruction, gazing happily at her reflection in the mirror, craving to drape herself in the accoutrements of luxury. The scene appears absurd, even brazen, and Tertullian is quick to make the link with women's own habits of adornment, which now appear equally audacious. "Look," he states, "all these things [arts of adornment] are the impediments of a damned and dead woman (*damnatae et mortuae mulieris*), as if arranged for a funeral procession (*quasi ad pompan funeris constituta*)."[59] This comment uncovers the logic that informs Tertullian's denigration of women's adornment altogether. He argues that such arts are tantamount to decorating something that is dead and dying. Why beautify your flesh, he rails, a thing that primarily indicates sin and shame? Why not seek to transform it—through *pudicitia*—rather than accentuate it through adornment?

These questions loom large in Tertullian's conception of cosmetic arts as deeply "unnatural," even at their point of origin. He explains that they were introduced in a second creation, at the behest of a rival agent: "for who would instruct how to change the body (*corpus mutare*) except the one who with malice transformed the character of humanity?"[60] In the first homily, we remember, he lays their creation at the feet of randy angels who shared these deadly and perverse arts with humanity, a point that emerges in the second homily as well (*Cult. fem.* 1.1.2 and 2.10.3). In other words, beautification arrived with the advent of sin. Adornment is simply a marker of that disorder that besieged God's creation and was so profound that Christ died to rectify its effects. Participating in adornment, then, a woman makes herself, her flesh, an agent of the Devil. She draws herself and all those around her into his clutches, deeper into the death that she helped to unleash.

Tertullian stresses this point again when informing women that elaborate grooming is like reveling in corruption. He asks: what of your created body endures the constant tweezing and cutting of your hair? He then considers the deleterious effect of hair-dye on the natural hair: "in fact the strength of these poisons (*medicaminum*) really damages hair . . . "[61] What, in other words, is all her grooming if not changing her body—changing, in fact, so that it contributes to and forecasts her own destruction? The adorned woman is perilously close to rot, best suited, as we saw earlier, to pageantry of a funeral (*Cult. fem.* 1.1.3). And in the second homily, he adds that the jewels she enjoys are in reality chains—rendering the flesh heavier and more burdensome—binding her to a horrid fate (*Cult. fem.* 2.10.2). Can she really imagine that decorated as such, her body is anything like the dry and arid flesh of the martyrs

(*Cult. fem.* 2.13.4)? Adornment renders the flesh soft, but modesty makes it more solid, more like the resurrected body, steely and unchanging.[62]

The notion that adornment portends social disruption is a trope familiar from Roman writers. Latin authors, we remember, worried about the introduction of cosmetics, hair-dyes, and exotic fabrics into Roman life. They commented extensively about the dangers of luxury items such as jewels and exquisite fabrics. They mused that the taste for such finery would damage Roman mores and would irreparably alter the austere Roman way of life.[63] The accumulation of luxury items was often attributed by Roman traditionalists to the influence of "foreign" and altogether softer cultures.[64] Thus Pliny the Elder contrasts Romans' proclivities for *luxuria* to the simplicity of nature, then lays blame on the Greeks for the intrusion of these fineries into Roman life.[65] But it was the luxury displayed on women's bodies that seemed to most deeply indicate social upheaval and change. We have seen how Valerius Maximus, for example, idealized chaste women from Rome's arcane past to show that the Republic offered political harmony now absent in the Imperial Age.[66] Women's adornment in much of the Roman sources we have examined served to highlight moral crisis.[67]

Tertullian also participates in the gendered logic of Roman moralizing, but now the connections between women's dress and moral status are framed theologically. Adornment in Tertullian's homilies is likewise marked as "foreign," that is non-Roman, but the marker now implies a cosmic referent, the Devil himself. In fact, it is difficult to miss how Tertullian continually ascribes ethnic tags to the trappings of *ornatus* and *luxuria*. Foreign and domestic distinguish unnatural from natural, diabolical from divine. Thus what is most reprehensible about hair-dye is that with it a woman remakes her hair into something that it is not: now her hair boasts the bright colors of a Gaul or a German, tomorrow it is changed to match the coloring of another race (*Cult. fem.* 2.6.1). When trotting out elaborate wares before his audience, Tertullian imagines these adorned women draped in Chinese silks and fabric woven of Milesian wool and then dyed by Tyrians in incandescent shades (*Cult fem.* 1.7.1).[68] Their fingers too are covered with golden rings from Parthia (*Cult. fem.* 1.1.3 and 1.7.2). Dripping with foreign luxuries, a woman makes herself "unnatural," he taunts (*Cult. fem.* 2.5.3).

For Roman writers, such comments would be used as evidence of the influence of "other" cultures on the "traditional" Roman way of life—that is, a fictive past in which women were "firmly" situated under the *potestas* of their fathers and husbands. But here this connection between "foreign-ness" and adornment, between natural and unnatural modes of grooming, is supported by the notion that at its root a woman's flesh is a clear threat to

Christian men's salvation. In other words, the theological significance that Tertullian has attached to women's flesh, as the privileged indicator of human sordidness, raises its potency in practice and makes it a site for potential chaos. Evoking that danger is precisely what supports his arguments against ornamentation and in favor of concealment through modest dress.

* * *

Perfecting Pudicitia before the Eyes of Men and God

> Go forth already having been preserved by the beauty potions and the ornaments of the prophets and the apostles . . .
>
> *On the Apparel of Women*[69]

Let's return to a quote that I cited earlier, this time, however, giving the full context in order to render Tertullian's gendered logic in these treatises even clearer. "Salvation," he proclaims in the second homily, "and not only that of women, but also that of men, is mainly constituted in the display of modesty (*salus, nec feminarum modo sed etiam virorum, in exhibitione praecipue pudicitiae statuta est*)."[70] Tertullian is not suggesting that the performance of modesty in dress is equally incumbent on Christian men as it is on Christian women, though he does mention his disdain for men's adornment in this homily as well (*Cult. fem*. 2.8.1–3). Indeed, adornment proves an effort at "pleasing," a hobby unfitting Christian women and men alike. And in the case of men, aiming to make the body pleasing is an especially abhorrent undertaking that undercuts the superior status of his "Christ-like" flesh that Tertullian establishes.[71] But it must be noted that Tertullian's preoccupation here is with women's dress—the comment about men's dress merely emerges as a reminder of a general repugnance he holds toward adornment, the very enemy of Christian *pudicitia* and moral "*gravitas*"—two concepts that imply, it turns out, different social implications for women and men in practice. That his writings are concerned primarily with women's adornment, however, reflects the fact that her flesh, and not his, is soteriologically charged.[72] In other words, it demands the enforcement of sartorial discipline precisely because it places Christian men in grave moral danger—a view that reflects not only the significance Tertullian attaches to women's flesh, but also the gendered conception of the visual that is bound with and supports that semiotics.

Tertullian elaborates this argument by conceptualizing women's adorning as a moral threat to men. He maintains that when a man exhibits a lust-filled gaze, the moral fault rests not only on him, the one seeing, but also on her,

the adorned object seen. To make his case he considers Matthew 5:28 in which Jesus warns men about the dangers of lust in the eyes (". . . everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery in his heart"). In Tertullian's rereading this verse implies, however, that the one seen is also complicit. Indeed, it is a proof-text that being seen in ostentatious garb is sinful:

> For he (the male gazer) perishes the minute he lusts (*concupierit*) for your beauty (*formam*) and commits at that moment what he desires. And you have been a sword (*gladius*) to him so that you will be freed from sin (*culpa*), but not free from ill will (*invidia*).[73]

The adorned woman has laid herself open to the charge of adultery, *stuprum*, precisely because she has not made sure of her unequivocal display of modesty (*Cult. fem.* 2.1.2). Tertullian explains that her negligence renders her complicit in the very crime of *stuprum*. She is likened to the owner of an estate who complains about a robbery, though he never locks its doors or takes care to protect it (*Cult. fem.* 2.2.4).

Certainly, then, Tertullian imagines modest dress as a kind of protection against the contagion of lust (*concupiscentia*) that could be catalyzed in the visual exchange. What is more intriguing, however, is how he evokes materialistic conceptions of vision in order to compound a woman's shame in this erotic encounter. For many in the Roman world sight was conceived of as a jarring contact between eye of the beholder and object striking it. Some philosophers preferred a theory of intromission where images, *eidola*, (Latin *simulacra*) are sent off an object and impress themselves like a stamp on the eye of the beholder. Others argued for a theory of extramission where the eye itself was figured as active, sending out rays that hit the object, grasping it. There were other possibilities as well that held elements of both intromission and extramission where light, air, or spirit act as a medium aiding in the production of sight.[74] Tertullian, interestingly, does not appeal to a singular conception of the visual economy in his writings when cajoling women to dress modestly. In fact, *On the Veiling of Virgins* will present us with another opportunity to reflect more deeply on his deployments of the visual—and what those deployments suggest about his signification of women's flesh.[75]

In *On the Apparel of Women*, Tertullian is not interested in articulating the precise mechanics of vision—what is critical for his argument is that vision implies touch. To this end, he exploits the visceral and tactile quality of the visual in order to vest a woman's act of being seen with moral significance.[76] Here his conception of seeing picks up on Stoic notions of vision, which

attached greater agency to the object seen than others. According to Stoic thought, vision is accomplished by means of *pneuma* forming a cone with its base resting on the object of sight and point extending into the eye. The image was carried along this cone reaching the eye and striking it like a rod, or in this case, a sword (*gladius*).[77] Plutarch writes that this kind of encounter—*eidola* or *simulacra* hitting the eye—can be such a powerful force of pleasure in the gazing lover that it catalyzes the production of sperm.[78] But for Tertullian pleasure elicited by a woman's flesh is negatively coded—a sign of death and rot, of sordidness, her flesh threatens a man's very redemption. Thus the gaze presents a horrible intrusion for a male "lover"—the heinous object of his sight casting off little films that hit him violently, penetrating him—surely a monstrous violation for one whose body is in the image of Christ's virginal flesh! Being seen, then, a Christian woman effectively makes her male gazer party to her sin and shame.[79]

Just at the point when Tertullian's insults have reached their height in the well-worn accusation that Christian women look remarkably like whores, he pivots to end with a stirring encomium to Christian women's modesty—an encomium that stresses how pleasing modest bodily display is to God, the ultimate possessor of the discerning gaze. If *ornatus* portends the rot and decay of the flesh, he surmises, then shining *pudicitia* signals the possibility of its redemption. At work in this idea, of course, is the notion that women must perform and reiterate their shame through its modest concealment. Tertullian has strived here to make their modest dress a "sign" of the very shame that he has inscribed on their fleshly bodies.

Tertullian ends his second homily by contemplating the transformative force of Christian *pudicitia* with the rhetorical technique of *ekphrasis*. A trick of technical oratory, *ekphrasis* involves painting a detailed picture for one's audience with words. Of this device, Georgia Frank writes:

> . . . visibility, as a rhetorical effect, was believed to have profound moral implications and consequences. Unless the orator could make members of the audience see—and thereby feel—a distant event, any moral lessons inherent in the story would be lost.[80]

In this ekphrastic moment, Tertullian verbally drapes every Christian woman within earshot with the trappings of modesty. His rhetorical technique solicits in his audience the kind of exaltation achieved in the perfection of *pudicitia*:

> Go forth therefore made-up with the ointments and the ornaments of the prophets and the apostles, whiteness being drawn from your simplicity (*simplicitas*), from your blush modesty (*pudicitia*); paint your eyes with shame and

> your mouth with silence; plant in your ears the word of God; tie around your neck the yoke of Christ. Submit your head to your husband and you will be well adorned; occupy your hands with spinning; keep your feet at home and you will please yourself better than with gold. Dress yourselves with the silk of honesty, the linen (*byssino*)[81] of sanctity, and the purple[82] of *pudicitia*. Painted in this way, you will have God for a lover.[83]

Tertullian imagines *pudicitia* to indicate a woman's sense of shame and contrition. The tropes here resound harmoniously with that of the Roman moralists who similarly fantasized about silent, demure wives sitting alone at home happily spinning their togas, women who never had to fear the early arrival of their husbands. These men would always "discover" their wives to be totally without reproach.[84] But the ekphrastic moment has women placing themselves in the position of the "discerning" male gazer (indeed, we will discover in *On the Veiling of Virgins* that gazing is a male prerogative in Tertullian's tightly controlled visual economy). She, with Tertullian, and with God himself, stands outside, looks down and visually assesses her own modestly adorned flesh. She must perform a double-role: spectator and object seen. For Tertullian this move functions to inscribe women into a moral discourse in which their subjectivity is constituted by male viewers.

In a now classical essay on the "nude," John Berger describes a similar kind of "self-splitting" as essential to the experiences of women. Portraits of female nude—a notoriously popular subject in European oil painting—Berger indicates demand this dual positioning from their female viewers:

> . . . men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object—and most particularly an object of sight: a vision.[85]

This dual positioning, as in Tertullian's logic, facilitates a kind of subjectivity that is divided, reliant on seeing oneself as precisely "a vision" belonging to an imagined other, a male other.[86] For Berger, such a position exemplifies the paradoxical role that Western art has prepared for its female objects. Indeed, he reveals this move to be a kind of dehumanizing violence.

Yet the question persists as to whether Berger's analysis of European paintings can adequately be extended to the cultural context in which Tertullian's evocation of this self-splitting is set. In other words, for Berger there is something relentlessly gendered about the visual economy of Western art—an economy that never imagines men as objects.[87] The moral landscape of the

Roman world, however, conceived that making oneself into "a vision" was necessary for the constitution of moral subjectivity.[88] Morality was negotiated in a scopic landscape where visual scrutiny was understood to constitute the elite as moral persons. Shadi Bartsch explains:

> . . . all in turn judged and were judged, all occupied the position of both subject and object. The very exemplarity of those in the spotlight also rendered them more vulnerable to the scrutiny of those who looked upon them.[89]

Being seen, however, was a queer subject position indeed in a culture in which penetration and corporeal wholeness defined masculine subjectivity. These were the quintessential male prerogatives.[90] But the scopic landscape in which morality was determined and confirmed demanded male and female alike make themselves available to be intruded upon by the gazes of others. Thus ancient visual economies had a way of confounding gender binaries[91]—which, we will discover in *On the Veiling of Virgins,* Tertullian repeatedly strives to police. What he draws on in all of his treatises on women's dress, however, is that true virtue demands corporeal display.

Roman writers imagined that the truly virtuous matron should be ready at any moment to be "caught" by the judicious gaze of her husband, and prove worthy of him. Tertullian, however, suggests that God is the quintessential overlord, looking down on his contrite and virtuous "loves." Tertullian employs *ekphrasis* in *On the Apparel of Women 2* to throw his audience momentarily into the subject position, lest they forget who is always watching them. The message entailed in this rhetorical moment neatly summarizes the force of the entire treatise: not only must Christian women be sexually virtuous, they must also perform their virtue; they must reveal it on their flesh before men and God. Modesty now has a theological stake attached to it. A Christian woman's performance of sexual virtue is her admittance and willing submission to those who gaze upon her—to men and God. Tertullian has rendered modest dress the recitation of a woman's shame through its constraint,; the manifestation of his soteriology is inscribed on her fleshly body.

In effect, Tertullian's rhetoric about women's dress secures his theological perspective and shores up the gender economy in which women fall under men—a gender scheme, which I have argued, is deeply embedded in his construction of salvation. In *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*, Tertullian appeals to women's dress to advance this agenda, giving the impression that women who adorn are shameless, and in need of moral guidance. It is hard to imagine such hyperbole would persuade a female audience, and perhaps, it was not aimed to win their compliance, but to discredit them and cajole

the men around them. Can we go farther in this conjecture: is Tertullian's rhetoric an attempt to undercut women's adornment because in practice it was a threat to his theological vision? Further, if Christian women enjoyed adornment, what meanings might they have attached to it?

* * *

Part III Adornment, Status, and Identity among Roman Women

> Elegance of appearance (*munditia*), adornment (*ornamenta*), apparel (*cultus*)—these are the woman's badges of honor (*insignia*); in these they rejoice and take delights: these our ancestors called 'women's world' (*mundus muliebrem*).
>
> Livy[92]

We have seen that Tertullian disparages adornment in any form as an indicator of a woman's sordidness and a moral danger to men inside her community, and in so doing maximizes the moralizing discourse that linked outer appearance to inner disposition for his own rhetorical gain. Yet it is important to contrast the negative assessment in which Tertullian participates with other views that held toilette and ornamentation were suitable and even anticipated practices for well-to-do women. This perspective of women's adornment, evidenced both in literary and especially material artifacts, provides, I maintain, a more rounded picture of women's adornment than the derogatory vision we get in *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*. Tertullian's hyperbolic rhetoric aims at obscuring women's perspective on their dress, grooming, and jewelry from our view. It is my intention here to try and recover something of it.

We saw in Chapter 1 that elite women could participate in the performance of modesty with restrained and austere toilette and simple dress in order to obtain power and prestige, as Livia, for instance, famously did, but we should not assume that the cultivation of this virtue disqualified all adornment and toilette. Practices of dress and grooming were significant and meaningful for Roman women, as the quote from Livy attests. They were the "art" (*ars*) of women alone, "woman's world" (*mundus muliebris*); the cultivation of beauty (under the right circumstances and with circumspection)[93] was considered a proper occupation for the respectable woman. Further, material artifacts of various sorts indicate that women enjoyed fashioning themselves as an assertion of their wealth and status.[94] Poorer women, too, might imitate the fashions of the rich, with false or glass stones and gems, and dyeing cheaper fabric to give it a pleasing hue.[95] We should suppose, then, that Christian

women were also studied in self-fashioning and that this fact animated Tertullian's attempts to appropriate their garb to his own ends.

In the Roman world, a wealthy woman was expected to advertise her station through her grooming and raiment. Elizabeth Bartman has shown, for instance, that the elaborate hairstyles featured in Roman portraiture, massive curls swirled together at impossible heights or elaborately wrapped braids, were worn by women of rank.[96] Artifacts, including hairpins and golden nets, are in evidence in women's graves as well as in portraits, suggesting that these items helped to secure these elaborate styles.[97] Wigs, dyes, and other embellishments, too, could be a part of a woman's style, and a wealthy woman would have worked diligently to keep on top of changing hair fashions, and would have had slaves, or a retinue of them, for the sole purposes of helping her pull off an elaborate coiffure. Indeed, ornate coiffures are commonly featured in imperial and elite women's portraiture, as loops of braids indicate on this Flavian period portrait bust (fig. 3.1). Bartman's discussion reminds us, in addition, that when Roman moralists advised matrons to wear the *vittae* ribbons and head-covering *pallae*, they presented an idealized, even archaic, view of women's coiffure that would not conform to women's hairstyles.

In the same way, Tertullian's comments on hair fashion—though disparaging—likely indicate common practices among women of his own community. He queries:

> Why can you not leave your hair at rest (*quiescere non licet*)?. . . at one moment tying it up, at another letting it loose . . . Some women prefer to tie it up in little curls, while others let it fall down flying every which way (*vagi et volucres*), with a false simplicity (*non bona simplitate*). You attach, besides, I cannot comprehend what enormities of sewn and woven false hair . . . [98]

Such comments reflect the fact that hair was especially privileged as a marker of a Roman woman's beauty, likely owing to the connections between hair and sexuality (as I will elaborate in the chapter that follows).

For this reason, women would often advertise their enjoyment of hair arrangement by commissioning funerary epitaphs in which hairbrushes, combs, and mirrors would be featured, accoutrements of *mundus muliebris,* those arts of beautification associated with the world of women. Leslie Shumka has argued that women wanted to be commemorated with such images to indicate they excelled in the performance of femininity, and had the time and leisure to do so. Alternately, these epitaphs might indicate the deceased women's professional role as an *ornatrix*, a slave woman in charge of a mistress' entire toilette. In either case, this motif suggests certain women

Figure 3.1 Female Portrait Bust, Roman Imperial (Flavian) (Rome, Capitoline Museum)

derived pleasure from "maintaining a look" or securing that of others. Women, however, were careful to avoid showing make-up and cosmetics in funerary imagery, registering an awareness of the cultural notion that such arts are aligned with deception.[99] Despite this cultural view in which toilette is derided as a sign of a woman's frivolity and deceptiveness, there is evidence that beauty regimens were used by women to maintain an elegant appearance. White and blemish-free skin was upheld as the paramount cosmetic goal.[100] But poor sanitation and diet, as well as harsh skin treatments, the most devastating certainly being white lead, could combine to ravage a woman's complexion.[101] Remedies were necessary to combat harm done to the skin: powders and creams formed from ash or fat, honey, and various vegetables or herbs in combination, notes Kelly Olson.[102] Failing these treatments, women might use *alutae*, little patches of soft leather that covered over any unsightly imperfection.

Such beauty regimens reflect the larger fact that this characteristic was courted as a sign of prestige and high birth, and this attribute was tied to the goddess of love, Venus, herself. Eve D'Ambra considers a series of imperial and elite portraitures in which noble women, including empresses, appear in nude or in clingy gauzy fabrics sliding down their rounded hips.[103] In the case of imperial portraiture of this type, the beauty of the empress reflected back positively on the emperor himself. Because aesthetics and virtue were so tightly linked in the Roman world, the display of beauty was also a display of power.[104] Thus, built into Roman ideals of femininity was an inherent tension that a woman appear beautiful, that her beauty at once accorded her respect and admiration, yet at the same time it could be used to deny her authority, to cast her as frivolous and deceptive. Despite this tension, however, there is good evidence that well-to-do women sought out and performed their femininity and class status through the arts of *cultus*.

We recall that Tertullian is aware that the cultivation of beauty is a requirement and expectation of the higher class; he does not suggest that abandonment of *cultus*, but rather aims more for its moderation.[105] In a moment of concession, in fact, he admits that women cannot really give up ornamentation altogether—their class obligations might demand that they continue to perform the sartorial requirements associated with women of their station—though he would rather they resist: "if some of you, because of wealth, birth, or your former station," he writes, "are compelled to appear in public in ostentatious dress (*pompaticas*) . . . at least be moderate in this manner."[106]

Jewelry, too, could be considered appropriate even by the standards of Rome's most committed conservatives.[107] For instance, Valerius Maximus calls jewelry a woman's insignia, or her badge, and he states that earrings "announce" that a woman is legally married.[108] This item comes, he claims, even before the *vittae*, the woolen bands a matron ideally wrapped around her head.[109] His comments are born out by material remains: earrings are attested in artistic, funerary portraiture, such as the one featured here on this painted linen shroud from Roman Egypt (fig. 3.2). Here, as in other images (notably the encaustic Fayum Portraits), the deceased woman appears adorned with jewelry indicating her wealth and station.[110] Portrait statues can be found with small holes on the earlobe upon which earrings could be attached.[111] In fact earrings are by far the most ubiquitous jewelry in both material remains and portrait images.[112] Their popularity is owing to their practicality: they would not inhibit movement, as rings or a large necklace might.

Earrings, along with rings (bands for marriage),[113] necklaces, headgear (like golden netting), mirrors, and bracelets are also attested inside women's graves, especially if the deceased were newly married or betrothed. Andrew Oliver

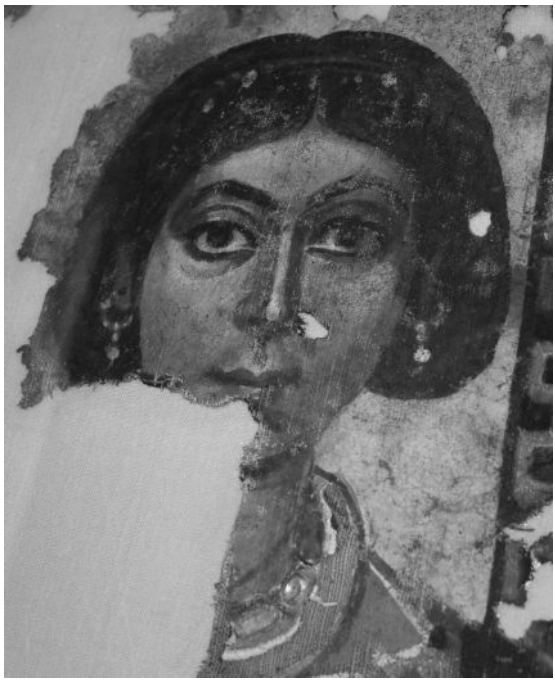

Figure 3.2 Egyptian Funeral Shroud, Painted Linen of a Woman Third–Fourth Century CE (Vatican City, Vatican Museum)

suggests that this practice of dressing the dead was part of Romans' mourning rituals in which a father symbolically bestowed part of the wedding dowry on his dead child, in the form of some prize jewels or other personal possessions, a doll, mirror, and garments, a new gown, and golden-leaf crown. Adorned for mourners, a deceased girl would solicit the recognition of, and consolation for, her father's grief at this young life cut short.[114]

Gold was the preferred metal for Roman jewelry, though less wealthy persons did settle for silver.[115] In these metal settings, gems imported from Arabia, Egypt, and India would be placed. Pearls were considered the most decadent, and were the most coveted. Derided by naturalists like Pliny as a sign of moral corruption among Roman women, in fact, in the Empire pearls obtained positive valance, particularly among women, as laws changed permitting only the mothers of children to wear them. Christiane Kunst has argued that a matron's pearls were compared to the public honors and glories

that men obtained in their political and military feats. Her pearls indicated that she completed her civic duty of bearing children.[116] There is evidence, too, that Roman women lobbied for the right to wear jewelry as a mark of their noble station. Following the Punic Wars, women, says the historian Livy, fought to have the *Lex Oppia* repealed, a set of laws that limited the amount of wealth a woman could display in her dress, including gold and dyed cloth. Ultimately, Roman women were successful in their appeal, even winning support from Roman men who agreed that their displays of wealth could advertise "Rome's eminent position among other towns."[117] Given the value of pearls, in particular, it is little surprise that we find them represented in funerary portraits.

Jewelry was most often given to a girl with her wedding dowry, along with slaves, clothing, and other items related to her toilette, like a mirror, for her use during marriage, but they were also obtained as gifts from men in her family. For this reason, jewelry, in particular, is associated with married women—a fact that suggests Tertullian's comments against it were targeted largely at that group. In fact, matrons often passed jewelry items along as an inheritance for daughters or female friends.[118] Since jewelry commonly came from a woman's natal family, her ornamentation could also indicate her high birth, and for obvious reasons, a husband, wishing to maintain a domestic hierarchy, might attempt to curtail it. He might worry that her jewelry announced her lineage to be more prosperous and respected than his.[119]

Ria Berg has suggested that jewelry not only identified women of means, but was also used as a kind of cash reserve in times of crisis; jewelry was seen as a kind of family treasury. Easily transportable and liquid, it was a good means for storing one's wealth.[120] This fact is born out by the simple style of Roman jewelry in which stones or metal are presented with little ornamental decoration, and often inscribed with their weight. Berg suggests that this artistic style reveals that the material itself is valued over the craftsmanship entailed in producing it.[121]

Because married women were very often in possession of the domestic jewelry box, or the right to use items kept in it, they had access to potentially vast financial resources.[122] Berg's comments shine a light on some of Tertullian's rhetorical barbs, particularly in his first homily. He ends it with a charge that in Carthage, "a large inheritance (*patrimonium*) is brought forth from a little purse (*loculis*); from one thread hangs a million sesterces; a delicate neck is encircled with [the wealth of] forests and islands."[123] Underlining such comments is the possibility that when a Christian matron wore her jewelry, she rather dramatically advertised her high status—which proved

inconvenient for Tertullian's desired goal of establishing and maintaining a gender hierarchy in his *ecclesia*.

* * *

Wealth and the Women of Christian Carthage

I have already demonstrated in the second part of this chapter how Tertullian seized upon the link between morality, status, and women's dress in the Roman Empire to promote his theological agenda. The discussion of *mundus muliebris* above, however, posits a counterview that ornamentation was a marker of beauty, status, and power for well-to-do women. This discussion opens up the intriguing possibility that Tertullian invested in hostile rhetoric about women's dress precisely because such women were a sizable group within his community.

Behind *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*, it seems, lay a real concern that when matrons in Christian Carthage adorned they advertised their noble station, indicating perhaps that their status exceeded that of their husbands and other men in their community.[124] This notion is corroborated by other instances in which Tertullian writes to married and recently widowed women, which suggests that they have considerable financial resources. For example, he commonly evokes the subject position of slaveholder when addressing women, implying that his audience is more familiar with the logic and practice of slaveholding than that of being enslaved. For example, when explaining in *Letter to His Wife* (*Ad uxorem*) why women should not marry non-Christian men, Tertullian draws this analogy to slavery:

> Is it not that even among the gentiles (*nationes*) the most severe of the masters (*severissmi domini*) and the most diligent in discipline (*disciplinae tenacissmi*) prohibit their own slaves from marrying outside their house? Lest they advance (*excedant*) in lewdness (*lasciviam*), forget their responsibilities and give away to strangers things that belong to their masters (*dominca*)?[125]

His argument serves to suggest that women who marry outside of the community are like these slaves, squandering God's resources by devoting themselves to the worldly concerns of their "gentile" husbands. In *On the Apparel of Women* 2, an appeal to a slave master comes in handy—as Tertullian tries to explain why cosmetics are dangerous even though God gave the resources and human ingenuity to make them. Don't cunning masters often leave out items to test their slaves' loyalty, he asks? Thus, if the slave does not take an

object, then the owner can be assured of his trust (*Cult. fem.* 2.10.5). Such examples are meant to persuade on the logic that these women understand how to cajole their slaves and protect against them.[126]

Other hints suggest that Tertullian has well-to-do matrons in mind in much of his moralizing. When he writes to women about marriage, he intimates that these are women with a great deal of social mobility and leisure time. Women who marry non-Christian men are encouraged to dress lavishly and entertain with their husbands at fancy dinner parties, to attend theaters, and to spend the day in leisure at the baths.[127] Combined with archaeological studies that indicate North Africa under the Roman Empire entertained a growing new elite community, these comments lead to the conclusion that a sizable number of Christian women were drawn from this emerging social class.[128]

In a culture that provided limited opportunities for women to enact their rank, dress and adornment offered a critical outlet for their self-expression, and there is ample evidence that women put these tools to work for various reasons. We should, as I have been suggesting, anticipate the same would be true for Christian women. There are countless reasons why they would don handsome clothing and ornamentation, and indeed, too, why they would *not* see such practices as incommensurate with their religious life. This point is perhaps the most telling for it reveals that Christian women's self-fashioning reflects a more complex and composite Christian identity than Tertullian's construction of Christian feminine modesty allowed. Did they wear pearls to signal their maternal status, given that these precious gems were the special marker of motherhood? Did they adorn to indicate the status of their natal families or to signal that they had secured a marriage of high rank? If so, then such sartorial performances undercut Tertullian's view that when a woman becomes a Christian, her garment should reveal only her piety and the moral integrity of her religious community, avoiding all other markers of differentiation that would distinguish her from other Christians.

Or, did matrons understand their raiment as a mark of their honor, one that they hoped to wield in the church? Could it be that Tertullian faced serious ecclesiastical challenges from matrons and widows of high birth? Indeed, he admits in *Letter to His Wife* that the Christian men of Carthage are, as a group, of lesser means than women in the community (*Ux.* 2.8.1–9). This admission is put in the service of persuading women of means to marry beneath their station, to give up, willingly, the prestige that their higher rank might have afforded them in the church. Similarly, we have seen that in *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*, Tertullian exhorts women to curtail their elaborate dress (or shames men to assist in that endeavor).

Considering the larger cultural context in which women's adornment was practiced, we should infer that Tertullian's homilies were composed in a defensive posture, rather than from a position of strength. His heated rhetoric aimed to shut down the possibility that women's toilette and ornamentation indicated their social respectability, honor, and positive values associated with their familial ties and station. In them, Tertullian attempts to limit the multiple and contested meanings that could be communicated by women's dress, to mark their raiment in ways that only shore up his theological project, his view of salvation. Yet taking into account that women in Carthage were dressing—and adorning—in a myriad of ways serves as a critical reminder that Christian women's self-understanding of their religious commitment and theological values also varied greatly in this community, as it surely did in many others. Thus when we turn, in the following and final chapter, to another of Tertullian's polemical treatises on women's dress, *On the Veiling of Virgins*—one that focuses on women's unveiling—we discover that Tertullian's theological agenda faced challenges from a variety of quarters. Most irksome to him, in fact, were those Christian women, virgins, whose unveiling suggested that they had mitigated sin and shame altogether through their sexual chastity. It was a repeated threat that undermined the knotty equation between sin and female flesh upon which his conception of salvation was built.

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CHAPTER 4

Shaming the Virgins' Flesh: A Contest over Veiling

Introduction

> Wear the armor of your shame (*pudor*); surround yourself with a rampart of modesty (*verecundiae*); construct a dam for your sex, which does not emit your eyes or admit the eyes of a stranger. Drape yourself in woman's clothing (*habitum mulieris*) in order that you might protect your virginal status (*statum virginis*).
>
> *On the Veiling of Virgins*[1]

In *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2,* Tertullian railed against women of means—particularly matrons—who dressed in a manner that indicated their social rank and wealth. He used this opportunity to argue that a woman ought to dress modestly in order to shore up the connection between a woman's flesh and her inherent shame, and in so doing, to limit the positive values that women themselves likely ascribed to their precious raiment and jewelry. A similar logic prompted Tertullian to write to female virgins in his community. These women, too, refused to dress in the way that he wished. But in this instance, it was not that they rejected simple garb, elaborate coiffures, and other forms of ornamentation, but instead, that they chose to uncover their heads once inside the *ecclesia*.

In the early third century, tensions over this issue reached a breaking point.[2] En masse—or so Tertullian claims—strong-willed virgins cast off their veils *(velamenes*), or the Roman *pallae*, woolen mantles worn over tunics that could be drawn over the head.[3] Tertullian twice addressed this issue earlier in his career. These earlier attempts—one contained in a short section of a treatise, *On Prayer* (*De oratione*),[4] and the other, written in Greek (though no longer extant)[5]—however, proved unsuccessful from his vantage point: virgins continued

to unveil unabated. In a last ditch response, Tertullian penned *On the Veiling of Virgins* (*De virginibus velandis*), his longest extant discussion of this issue in which he presents unveiling as a dangerous lapse in Christian women's modesty. What is remarkable about this treatise—and what has gone without sustained comment by its contemporary readers—is that it reveals how Tertullian, and the virgins, understood veiling and unveiling to be connected to alternate visions of the salvation of human flesh. Covering and uncovering of the head had become contested theological acts in Christian Carthage.

This chapter argues that in *On the Veiling of Virgins* we not only encounter an exhortation that virgin women don the veil, but also one side of a debate between Tertullian and his virgin opponents. He argues that the veil is like a military encasement that protects against the intrusion of lust transmitted through the male gaze. Wearing a veil, he avers, a virgin embodies the twin virtues of humility and modesty (*Virg*. 3.5 and 16.5). Performing these virtues is incumbent on her—as it is on all Christian women. Despite her chastity, he insists, her flesh still exhibits shame. Her veiling, then, becomes a recitation of her sinfulness, a rhetorical assertion that folds a virgin's head covering neatly into his soteriological program. Importantly, too, this move establishes a distinction among women's offices in the community, the virgin and widow, self-identities that were in practice considerably more malleable.[6]

Yet in this vitriolic treatise, we also catch a glimpse of Tertullian's declared opponents, the uncovered virgins. We do not have access to women's own arguments about their unveiling because they are embedded in Tertullian's rhetoric and pressed in the service of his agendas. Nonetheless I suggest that reading against the grain of this treatise, and in conversation with other early Christian texts, most especially, the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* (a contemporary text that comes from Tertullian's own Carthage), a counter-view emerges. In particular, I argue that while Tertullian sees veiling as an indicator of a virgin's shame, women, who claimed the title "virgin," understood their unveiling as a sign that their sexual continence unmoored that link. At stake in this debate were rival understandings of sexual chastity and bodily piety, concepts inextricably tied to the very salvation of the flesh. Women's unveiling, we discover, rattled the foundations of Tertullian's theological program—and it presented a challenge that he could not fully overcome.

* * *

The Bible Tells Me So

At the outset of this treatise, Tertullian laments that certain virgins in the *ecclesia* were forcibly removing the veils of others. These unveiled virgins

apparently insisted that uncovering was the proper marker of perpetual chastity. The problem that Tertullian faced, as he admits, is that his virgin opponents had both custom—it was standard for female virgins in Carthage to go without a veil—and scriptural arguments from 1 Corinthians 11 on their side (*Virg.* 3.1 and 4.1–2). Further, he also intimates that the community supported the virgins' practice, or at least, did not seek to prohibit it. In *On the Veiling of Virgins*, Tertullian's primary task, then, is to constrain and limit the semiotic possibilities of a virgin woman's flesh via veiling, thereby forcing it to conform to his soteriological perspective.

In hyperbolic fashion, Tertullian begins by feigning sympathy with the newly "denuded" virgins, arguing that these chaste women, once "forcibly" unveiled, faced a horrid onslaught of glaring and multitudinous eyes (*Virg.* 3.3). This act of undressing their heads is a violation: "Every public exposure is the experience of sexual violation (*stupri passio est*) to a good virgin . . . Oh damned hands able to take off the garment dedicated to God! . . . You have denuded the girl by means of her head! (*denudasti puellam a capite*)" (*Virg.* 3.7–8). This move establishes the contours of Tertullian's rhetoric to refigure unveiled chaste women as sexually degraded and licentious, undercutting their claims to exalted status resulting from their chastity. But he cannot stop there; he must also challenge their assertion that scripture supports their view. To that end, Tertullian invests in some exegetical gymnastics.

The bulk of *On the Veiling of Virgins*, in fact, is occupied with scriptural interpretation. This fact reveals the virginal opponents to be sharp-witted hermeneutes, particularly of 1 Corinthians 11:2–16, and illustrates the integral role that this letter played in early Christian debates about ethical and practical matters.[7] In that enigmatic biblical passage, the apostle Paul addresses whether Christian men and women should cover their heads when praying or prophesying. Paul concludes that a man (*ἀνὴρ*), "made in the image and likeness of God," is not required to cover, while a woman (*γυνὴ*), "made in the glory of God," should cover (*κατακαλύπτεται*) her head (1 Cor 11:6). Though scholars continue to debate precisely what is meant by the verb *κατακαλύπτο,* "to cover up," in the context of 1 Corinthians—a veil or long hair?—for Tertullian and his virgin challengers the passage was understood to mean the head-covering *palla*.[8] The virgins' argument was simple: the passage does not say that *virgins* are required to veil, but rather, women are. And that term, they argued, refers to wives because when Paul wishes to single out virgins (say in 1 Cor 7:25), he names them directly, using the term for virgin, *παρθένος,* and not the term for woman, *γυνὴ* (*Virg.* 4.1–2). We can go farther in lending support to the virgins' reading of this passage, even if Tertullian does not. For Paul also evokes Genesis 2:21, in which God fashions Eve from

Adam's side, writing: "for man (*ἀνὴρ*) was not made from woman (*γυνὴ*), but woman for man" (1 Cor11:9). An astute reader of Genesis would recall that following this remarkable creation, God presents Adam and Eve as the paradigmatic marital couple: "they become one flesh" (Gen 2:23). Paul's Genesis intertext, then, would lend support to the notion that 1 Corinthians 11 is directed to married women in particular. Further, the cultural association of the *palla*, as the marker of a *married* woman in the Roman Empire, could also serve to make this link for the Carthaginian community.[9]

Tertullian, however, extends Paul's injunction by offering a kind of gloss on the Genesis passage, serving to unsettle the marital interpretation of Genesis 2:23. He argues that from the beginning, Eve was called "woman," just as gospel writers called Mary "woman" (*Virg*. 5.4–7 and 6.1–6). Yet both Eve and Mary were virgins first, and only later did they become wives. He makes this argument to insist that woman, *γυνὴ*, and the Latin translation of that term, *mulier*, refers to a general category under which virgins also fit. Virgin (*virgo*), wife (*uxor*), mother (*mater*), and widow (*vidua*) are terms that only refer to stages in a woman's life, but as a group remain part of the ontologically whole category "woman" (*mulier*) (*Virg*. 4.7). At this point in his argument, Tertullian effectively collapses distinctions between categories of women so that virgins lose any claim to special honors for holding a unique role. (Though we will see that distinctions among women remain important for his argument, but only insofar as they are markers of sexual status.)

Tertullian facilitates this move of identifying virgins with married women by jumping from 1 Corinthians 11 to Genesis 2. This hermeneutical door was left open by Paul, as we saw, when the latter insisted that men's uncovered heads and women's covered heads reflect the hierarchal order of creation, where women fall below men because they are made in man's image, while men are in the image of God. Building on Paul, Tertullian mobilizes his reading of the Adam and Eve story in order to naturalize a hierarchy of creation. He also insists that this hierarchy must be made manifest in Christian life and practice. Here we reach the main rhetorical force of *On the Veiling of Virgins*. His appeal to Genesis introduces the categories of "natural" and "unnatural" into this debate. With a deft citation of 1 Corinthians 11:3, Tertullian offers this harsh condemnation of his bare-headed virgin opponents, railing against them for having transgressed God's order, by claiming that they are monstrous:

> If 'man is the head of woman,' then [he is the head] of the virgin. From where does the woman who is married come? Unless the virgin is some third type (*tertium genus*), a monstrosity (*monstruosum*) with a head of its own?[10]

Particularly loathsome to Tertullian is that unveiled virgins draw attention—indeed visual attention—to themselves when they unveil. Such a performance undercuts their "natural" subordination in creation: they are called on not to display glory and honor, but to manifest humility. Tertullian insists that humility is the natural state of all women: " . . . the necessity of humility (*necessitas humilitatis*) obtains [to her] with her womanhood."[11]

His argument also establishes veiling for women by means of a related point: unveiling is properly the privilege of Christian men. In *On the Veiling of Virgins*, he makes this case succinctly: "Behold two different names, man and woman, in every instance; two laws dependent on each other, this one ought to be veiled, that one ought to be uncovered" (*Virg.* 6.5). We might recall from the previous chapter that in *On the Military Crown*, again by appeal to Paul's discussion of head covering in 1 Corinthians 11, Tertullian insists with the apostle that men—made in the image of Christ—are "free," thus they are not beholden to their military leaders or the Emperor. This point leads Tertullian to maintain that Christian men must reject the laurel crown as a sign of military victory (*Cor. Mil.* 14.1–2).[12] Indeed, Tertullian insists that head coverings of any kind are dangerously blasphemous. When a man wears one, he wrongly implies reverence for deaf and dumb idols.[13] A Christian man, he argues, has no need to humble himself. Reborn in the image of the virginal Christ, his free head indicates the promise of future glory in heaven.

Tertullian has no related concern, however, that a woman be spared the performance of her humility. In fact, the notion that Christian men's dress should indicate their liberty in Christ naturalizes women's subordination to men—that conclusion we can easily draw. More central is that Tertullian's categorization of men's uncovering serves to ascribe potent theological significance to female virgins' head covering. In other words, men's veiling comes up in *On the Veiling of Virgins* not only in response to Paul's letter (where men's head covering is also considered and rejected),[14] but also primarily because in considering it he again clarifies that men's flesh does not have the same negative soteriological meaning attached to it that women's does. By asserting that men should enact the freedom that accrues to them as a result of their Christian status by uncovering, he renders women's veiling a means to indicate her shamefulness. In so doing, however, virgin's veiling becomes not only a testament to this dangerous quality, but also emerges as a necessary means to constrain it.

* * *

An Unfolding Soteriology

Tertullian's argument in favor of instituting virgins' veiling is governed by the same soteriological framework that structured his treatment of women's modest dress in *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*. Yet in *On the Veiling of Virgins*, he makes this connection even more explicitly. The necessity that virgins' veil in the present moment reflects the evolving nature of God's revelation. He indicates this connection at the opening of this treatise when he appeals to what Laura Nasrallah has called "a periodization of history" in which "the spirit is particularly active in the present . . . "[15] He opines that the Christians of his day lived in an age where they were experiencing new revelation through the "Paraclete," or "helper," a title claimed by a Christian prophet in Asia Minor,[16] who with his fellow female prophets, Maximilla and Prisca, was said to have ushered in a new period of charisma (*Virg*. 1.6).[17] Veiling, then, is a practice, a kind of Christian discipline (*disciplina*), bound up with experiencing more fully God's revelation in the here and now—what all Christians are called to do at what Tertullian sees as an especially spiritually potent moment.

Tertullian's appeal to a "periodization of history" undercuts his opponents' argument that unveiling is the custom for virgins at Carthage (*Virg*. 1.2 and 2.4). In other words, he argues that while it is true that veiling was perhaps not necessary before, it is incumbent on all Christian women in the present moment. His argument thereby masks the innovative character of his command that virgins cover up. The unfolding of God's creation, he continues, explains why new disciplines are necessary. Creation is a seed that is planted and grows, a pattern that is revealed over time. It matures and becomes more apparent as believers near the fullness of divine revelation, he explains:

> Look how creation (*ipsam creatura*) little by little advances like germination: . . . likewise it is with justice—for justice of God and creation are the same: first justice exists in a rudimentary form, nature being in fear of God, then through the law and prophets grows into infancy, and then through the gospel moves forward into adolescence, but now with the Paraclete settles into full maturity (*componitur in maturitatetm*).[18]

As the coming of Christ draws nearer, church practice (*disciplina*) should aim to manifest more intensely that maturation of God's revelation in the life of the Christian community. "Little by little discipline might order, arrange, and discipline might lead to perfection (*ad perfectum perduceretur disciplina*)," Tertullian proclaims (*Virg*. 1.6). Discipline is the means by which the community comes to experience God's presence in this corruptible world.[19]

Christians must demonstrate the coming of divine perfection and signify its unfolding on their fleshly bodies. We saw a similar argument being advanced in *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2* where a Christian woman's modest dress was said to both reveal her contrition and humility and point forward to the future possibility of perfection (*Cult. fem.* 1.1.3 and 1.2.4). In the context of *On the Veiling of Virgins*, revelation functions as a call for all women, including virgins, to cover their heads. Tertullian singles out veiling as the performance of humility and modesty to which all women, most especially "holy virgins" (*sanctae virgines*), are called (*Virg.* 2.5 and 9.3). Like women's modest dress, veiling too is aimed at mitigating the potent threat of women's flesh. Additionally, however, in *On the Veiling of Virgins,* Tertullian makes the repeated claim (which I will explore later in the chapter) that veiling is especially necessary to protect against the moral dangers that infect the community when a virgin's erotically signified head is on display.

The notion that revelation evolves and should be realized on the body makes contemporaneous Roman discourse about the links between sexual virtue and bodily display once more a useful part of Tertullian's rhetorical arsenal. Roman writers often imagined sexual virtues, like modesty (*pudicitia*) and chastity (*castitas*), and emotional states that attend them, especially shame (*pudor*), as conspicuous embodied signs. A blush (*rubor*) and a down-turned countenance were special markers of a matron's moral disposition.[20] We also saw that for these Roman writers, modest dress and grooming—particularly the use of the head-covering *palla* and avoidance of luxurious accoutrements—could be figured as indicators of inner moral uprightness, indicators that they aimed to regulate the threat of their sexual potency.

This link between outer appearance and inner disposition, therefore, makes dress usable for Tertullian because that conception fits so neatly with his anthropology—in which the body functions as an index of soul. In *On the Apparel of Women 2* he argues that Christian virtue must be manifest in bodily displays: "It is not enough that Christian modesty (*pudicitiae christianae*) seems to be true; it must be seen (*videri*) to be true."[21] In *On the Veiling of Virgins* the association between appearance and moral character converges with his conception of the unfolding of revelation so that he not only challenges claims of innovating (given that virgins' unveiling was standard in his community), but also so that he can scrutinize the virgins' unveiling as a moral lapse at a theologically potent moment. Thus he maintains: if the virgins were truly virtuous, they would not hesitate to highlight that moral authority through the performance of modest dress. His articulation of feminine modesty resonates with that of Roman moralists who imagined that if a woman was truly chaste,

she should always be ready to "be caught" by the juridical gaze of her husband and, thereby, secure his approving assessment of her unwavering sexual virtue.[22] Chastity is true only insofar as this state is revealed on the modestly adorned body, he charges. But by uncovering, the virgins resist the logic that sexual virtue is indicated by that kind of bodily display—and that is precisely what makes them a "threat" to Tertullian's theological perspective. The questions remain then: what might the virgins have been indicating about the status of their flesh by unveiling? And can we glean something of the virgins' rationale in Tertullian's attempts to shut down that practice?

* * *

Reading the Unveiled Virgins

"In reality," writes literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, "any utterance . . . always responds (in the broad sense of the word) in one form or another to others' utterances that precede it."[23] In other words, all authors are dependent on the speech of others, on what has been said before. For Bakhtin, this double-voiced character informs all literary speech acts, even as an author might try to suppress the "dialogical" nature of language, and speak with univocal authority to create the impression that he has crafted the world of discourse as new and that he can control speech and its effects. Here, however, I take Bakhtin's insight in a considerably more limited direction. His conception of the dialogical nature of all utterances entails possibilities for assessing Tertullian's unintended citations of the virgins' speech in *On the Veiling of Virgins*.

Bakhtin notes that some genres or modes of speech admit their dialogical character more than others, most especially the modern, "polyphonic" novel developed in Dostoevsky's fiction. Of course, Tertullian's speech does not represent the kind of "novelness" that Bakhtin relishes in the Russian author, a form of writing in which language and its limits are embellished: "what Dostoevsky's characters *say* constitutes an arena of never-ending struggle with another's words, in all realms of life and creative ideological activity."[24] So replete is the struggle that Dostoevsky allows his own authorial voice to be embedded in it, rather than to loom authoritatively above it. Tertullian certainly does not give reign to such ideological competition in his writing—at least not intentionally.

Nonetheless, as a polemicist Tertullian does inscribe the views of his opponents in his treatise in an attempt to control meaning—in this case the signification of head covering—by reshaping it as an indicator of shamefulness. But in reformulating the signification of the veil (hereby making virgins into

harlots!, as we will see), Tertullian must recite the counter-speech to enact his reconfiguration. In other words, his tactic finds him caricaturing and mocking an earlier perspective and position, likely because it was the familiar, even the majority, view for his audience, as we have seen. As a result he leaves the footprints of this counter-speech from which we can approach the perspective of women who did unveil.

Tertullian attempts to challenge the oppositional view—that as a result of chastity a virgin's flesh does not signify sexual potency or sinfulness (*Virg.* 10.5 and 11.6). As a result of sexual continence, it seems some virgins argued that they could unveil (*Virg.* 4.1–5 and 7.2). Indeed, this claim also registers competing notions about women's offices within this community that complicate, and perhaps even belie, Tertullian's assertions that virgins and widows occupy totally distinctive offices, determined by virtue of their sexual status. Central, however, to Tertullian is to undercut the notion that sexual continence, as a form of embodied piety, could serve as a marker of spiritual authority, of transformation—a view, interestingly enough that we find in other early Christian literature.

* * *

Chastity and the Body in Early Christianity

The cultural context, in which this debate between Tertullian and the unveiled virgins takes place, held the view that the body was "under-determinative" of gender. This notion opened up the possibility that the body could shift through embodied practice so as to signify differently over the course of one's life.[25] As we saw in Chapters 1 and 2, this conception of sexual difference could be used to fuel male concerns that certain bodily practices could undermine their masculinity and align them with women. The malleability of the body supported the notion that masculinity was an achieved state that demanded corporal discipline and comportment—gender was in a real sense a "practice." This perspective also supported a gender ideology prominent in the ancient world where maleness resides above femaleness. Early Christians, too, participated in this logic, casting a woman's spiritual progress as a move from femaleness to maleness, and sometimes further to a sexless and genderless ideal.[26]

For example, in the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*, Jesus claims: "I will make her [Mary] male" (ⲉⲉⲓⲛⲁⲗⲁⲥ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩⲧ) in order to shut down the complaints of male disciples who wish to expel Mary Magdalene from their midst (*Gos. Thom.* 114). Mary has progressed beyond the presumptive limits of her femininity; Jesus explains that her place among the apostles is secured.

More recently Karen King has shown that this gendered construction of spiritual advancement did not always figure progression as a move from femaleness to maleness in Christian texts. In a different Coptic gospel, the *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, Jesus' message, conveyed through his most "beloved" disciple, Mary, envisions the transformation toward enlightened knowledge as a move away from sexual difference altogether. The advanced disciple strives toward the ideal genderless and sexless human archetype within every person, called the "perfect human" (ⲛⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲗⲓⲟⲥ).[27] The trope of the Christian women turned into "honorary sexless males," reflects a notion that spiritual progression is manifest on the fleshly body—and it is a motif that proved especially useful in the discursive constitution of Christian identities, as many scholars have shown.

What is intriguing for our purposes is that one of the clearest instances of this motif can be found in a treatise very close in chronological and geographical proximity to Tertullian and his putative virgin opponents, the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*. This text is a pastiche of sources, including Perpetua's prison diary (which I presume to be her own here), visions from other prisoners jailed with her, and the editorial efforts of a Christian who purports to have witnessed the events.[28] The martyrology tells the tale of Vibia Perpetua, who was a well-to-do woman martyred in the company of her female slave, Felicitas, and three Christian brothers. Given the association of this text with the "New Prophecy," a movement with which Tertullian was also enamored, and the fact that it was composed during the height of his career, in the year 203, it has been postulated by some scholars that the church father himself was responsible for the editorial task.[29] I do not, however, rely on this argument, not only because we cannot assert it definitively, but also because it matters little for my larger interest in extrapolating from it a view of salvation, gender, and the body that illuminates alternative understandings of the body in Christian Carthage.

In a foundational feminist reading of the *Martyrdom*, Maureen Tilley notes just how rife with somatic descriptions this text proves to be: "unusual," she writes, "in the positive attention given by women to their own bodies."[30] Perhaps this investment on Perpetua's part reflects the simple fact that she is a new mother, still nursing her infant son, when she comes to prison? Might it also be the case, following Tilley's suggestion, that we can read her diary as evidence that she conceived of her religious identity within a discursive framework that identified women as more "fleshly"?[31] Perpetua's diary, which covers the period of her imprisonment and trial, suggests this fact. In this part of the narrative, Perpetua implies that her impending martyrdom facilitated her spiritual advancement in ways that were registered on her fleshly body.

In the course of her diary, we find Perpetua repeatedly calling attention to her bodily affections: weeping over family and relatives, sharing a meal, praying, nursing her son, and then experiencing "relief" when God delivers her from that task by drying up her breasts.[32] Even her dreams and visions are filled with somatic action: she speaks, enjoys miraculous food, prays, and in one stunning moment, appears "as a man" in a loincloth, a hard-body gladiator who successfully faces down an Egyptian opponent:

> My clothes were stripped off, and suddenly I was a man (*facta sum masculus*). My seconds began to rub me down with oil (as they are wont to do before a contest) . . . I put my two hands together linking the fingers of one hand with those of the other and thus I got hold of his head. He fell flat on his face and I stepped on his head."[33]

This passage has understandably received a great deal of feminist commentary,[34] but here I juxtapose it with Tertullian's treatise *On the Veiling of Virgins* in an effort to gain a richer understanding of how some virgins in his community might have understood their chastity, revealing, too, how as transformative embodied practices martyrdom and chastity could be linked.

One common interpretation of Perpetua's dream holds that her appearance as a male gladiator represents—in gendered terms—her heightened spirituality acquired as a result of her impending heroic death. Her maleness, too, enacts Christian conceptions of martyrdom as an athletic contest, a marathon, a gladiatorial battle in which Christians fight not against Rome, but Satan, in which heroic death is the true "prize."[35] Indeed the "dark" Egyptian, Tilley and others have argued, provides a stand-in for the demonic. Perpetua steps on his head and defeats him. Perhaps stepping on his head is a reference to the evil serpent from the Garden of Eden. When God expelled the first human couple from Eden, he cursed the evil reptile by saying: "I will put enmity between you and the woman. . . . he will strike your heel, *and you will strike his head*" (Gen. 3:15).

As Elizabeth Castelli notes, Perpetua's culminating vision, her final one, completes a process in which she, introduced to the reader as a nursing mother and daughter, slowly cuts off social ties that were connected to her matronly status.[36] She rejects her father and his authority; she even relinquishes her child. These acts enable Perpetua to create a new set of bonds, and a new social identity: confessor, comforter, and fellow martyr, which are identified in her telling with masculine virtues, strength, courage, and emotional moderation. On this reading, the dream in which Perpetua is a gladiator stripped naked (rather the opposite of the modest garb Tertullian would impose upon

Christian women), throws into high relief the possibility that martyrdom is a spiritual discipline that marks the flesh and reconfigures social relationships. Further, her gladiatorial fantasy comes at a point in the narrative in which Perpetua's breasts have dried up (perhaps as a result of emaciation). In a culture, however, in which leaking breasts indicate a fluid constitution, Perpetua's reference to her dried up breasts might better be read, as Stephanie Cobb suggests, that she has transformed her body into the hard, steely flesh of the masculinized Christian martyr.[37]

For Perpetua, then, the signification of the flesh can shift as a result of bodily discipline, in this case martyrdom, so that the indicators of femininity, and even eroticism, erode with it: "My clothes were stripped off," she writes, "I was a man." For many early Christians, chastity was thought to have this potential too. It is important to note that in late antiquity, virginity and martyrdom were discursively related because both acts could be read as efforts to extirpate bodily passions, the tug of sexual arousal or the misguided "fear" of physical harm and demise.[38] They were, in other words, demonstrations of *apatheia*, passionless character, disciplines designed to prepare the Christian for the resurrected life, and as such also imitative of Christ's bodily suffering and endurance.

Thus another text from a slightly earlier period, the *Acts of Thecla,* plays with the idea that chastity and martyrdom coexist as related spiritual disciplines, ones that are, in fact, registered on the flesh. Gail Streete, in fact, argues that this text participates with the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* in the notion that the female body is "a visible symbol of the power of God . . . " Both texts indicate the martyrdom and chastity are revealed on the flesh, and as such, imagine this disciplined flesh to signify God's ultimate authority.[39] For our purposes it is intriguing to note that in this text, the heroine Thecla professes life-long celibacy, which not only saves her from a series of harrowing potential martyrdoms, but also invigorates her to *baptize herself* in the midst of her trials! At the end of the treatise, she embodies this new lifestyle choice by transforming her look to a more masculine style: she cuts her hair and dons a man's cloak.[40] For our purposes it is intriguing to note that in this text the heroine with whom Tertullian finds himself embattled may have appealed to Thecla's example as imitative of their own vocational calling and the rights it lent them. In his treatise *On Baptism*, he grumbles about women in his own community who follow Thecla's example and baptize themselves apart from the oversight of a male cleric![41] The possibility that Tertullian's comments are directed to a smaller group is enhanced by that fact in *On the Veiling of Virgins,* he insists that virgins, like all women, are prohibited from baptizing as well as preaching (*Virg.* 9.2).

A Hellenistic Jewish novel about the Hebrew patriarch Joseph and his Egyptian bride, Aseneth, is also worth citing to elaborate the virgins' perspective on this unveiling. In it Aseneth's *head* comes to indicate the transformative results of intense religious discipline. As we will see, the head itself was considered especially charged with erotic significance in Greek and Roman culture.[42] Aseneth rejects idolatry, destroying the idols that have decorated her quarters. After a dramatic period of fasting and extensive prayer, Aseneth is greeted by an angel of God who emerges in her private residence. Taking a look at this Egyptian princess turned Hebrew bride, the angelic visitor says: "Remove the veil from your head, and for what purpose did you do this? For you are a chaste virgin today and your head is like that of a young man."[43] It is not so much that these texts suggest that women became "men," but rather that they rhetorically employ gender reversals as a means to illuminate a larger notion that spiritual practice could reconstitute the flesh in dramatic and positive ways. In other words, these texts variously assert that sexual chastity, and martyrdom, to which it was linked, could "revise" the semiotic content of the flesh.[44]

The examples of Thecla, a virgin, along with that of Perpetua, a martyr and mother, are of critical importance because Tertullian and his audience knew of their stories. Further, these two texts serve to elaborate how the virgins in Tertullian's community might have understood their chastity to be encoded on the flesh and to indicate their spiritual acumen. A few points, however, need to be clarified in order to articulate more fully my argument here.

First in placing these two figures together, Perpetua and Thecla, I aim to interrupt Tertullian's "textualization of virgin flesh" in his treatise, a rhetorical strategy that frames virginity in terms of sexual impenetrability.[45] This point is critical for demonstrating the distinction between Tertullian's construction of "virginity," and that of the "virgins" themselves, a perspective that resonates with what we find in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* and the *Acts of Thecla*. In regard to *Acts*, Virginia Burrus has argued that this text may give us richer purchase on the perspectives of Christian women about their chastity, given its "gynocentric" focus.[46] We cannot assert that this text was composed by and circulated only among women. Yet its narrative interests and focus on its female heroine offers a dramatic contrast, Burrus notes, when set against the erotic textualization of virginal flesh that we find in male writers, Jerome, Ambrose, and I am suggesting, Tertullian. Indeed, in the *Acts of Thecla*, we do not find the heroine consumed with "resisting her sexual desire," in an effort to retain "inviolability," the role scripted for virgins by these male authors. Instead, in the *Acts* Thecla's immediate concern is escaping a patriarchal household, and the misguided desires of her masculine

adversaries, and enjoying, as a result, her ascetic vocation and attachment to Christ alone.[47]

There is an additional point, however, about Christian women's perspectives on their virginal vocation that I try to foreground by placing Thecla together with Perpetua. The notion that virgins existed as a category apart from other celibate women is not clear, more specifically, there is no reason to imagine that virgins and widows were distinguishable in early Christian communities, including Tertullian's own. Charlotte Methuen notes that the Greek (xØra) and Latin (*vidua*) words for "widow" could indicate a vast variety of women: those who continued to be married but refrained from sexual relations, those whose husbands had died, or those who never married at all.[48] Methuen shows that offices of women, married and nonmarried, retained a kind of fluidity, defined by a shared sense of purpose, and exhibited by their sexual chastity. Similarly, Susanna Elm has noted that even in the fourth century the category of "virgin" retained its malleable character; this class could be comprised of women who were once married but had taken a vow of celibacy.[49]

The semantic fluidity of the titles virgin and widow in this period provides further context for why I read the *Martyrdom of Perpetua*, the story of a chaste martyr, *and mother*, to illuminate the virgins' understanding of their vocation. The mother Perpetua, just as the virgin Thecla, could be viewed as an exemplar of chaste discipline and model office-holder. During her time in prison, her martyrology variously stresses, Perpetua was strong in the face of bodily temptations: she gave up her role as a mother, facing her own death bravely, emerging as a teacher and mentor of fellow Christians. She was remembered as an inspiring leader whose death exemplified her spiritual acumen and the hope of future glory. Her sexual status as mother, in other words, would not prevent virgins from seeing her as an exemplum for their own spiritual discipline and piety.

Further, the fact that the titles virgin and widow were not exclusive in early Christian communities opens up the possibility that in Carthage, too, various kinds of women might have claimed the title virgin. If this is the case, we might also suppose that many kinds of women were unveiling as well.[50] The possibility that virgins could include married or widowed women may be registered in Tertullian's hyperbolic charges about the virgins' duplicitous unveiling practices. These so-called virgins, he rails, enjoy sexual intercourse and yet uncover in church in an effort to feign sexual purity (*Virg.* 12.4–5).

In the end, the stories of Perpetua and Thecla serve to highlight what may have sustained the virgins' unveiling. There is an assertion here that "virginity" is a category to which a woman aspires, not which one has and is in danger

of losing. The women in Carthage who took the title "virgin" in fact may have implied in doing so that their ascetic discipline could transform their flesh. Their uncovering served to indicate a powerful rewriting of the flesh, from sin to glory, and it was a glory that they claimed to possess now.

* * *

Sexualizing the Virgins

Drawing out women's alternative perspectives about virginity, and thus the practice of unveiling, to which it was linked, indicates that it is Tertullian who distinguishes between virgins and widows in terms of sexual status. Evidence of this rhetorical move is readily apparent in *On the Veiling of Virgins*. For instance, Methuen points out that Tertullian laments the presence of a "virgin widow" in his church, a young woman who, wrongly in his view, counts herself among members of that esteemed office (*Virg.* 9:2–3).[51] Methuen suggests that in this statement Tertullian aims to limit women's access to this office, one on par with that of the presbyters and deacons.[52] This move is certainly the effect of his rhetoric. Yet I am suggesting that Tertullian's effort to differentiate virgin and widow emerges as a result of a more complex and productive tension tied to his semiotics of female flesh. Up to this point in the treatise Tertullian has insisted on women's putative sameness, on their obligation to perform "humility" (*Virg.* 4.7), yet when he turns to a discussion of ecclesiastical offices of the virgin and the widow, boundaries are drawn (*Virg.* 9.1–3). Thus Tertullian not only limits which women can occupy the office of widow, he also undercuts the veracity of the related position, virgin. Now any violation of "intactness" undercuts a woman's virginal status, and with it, her claim to the transformative power of sexual chastity. Potential violations, he warns, abound.

In Tertullian's rhetorical machinations, he claims that unveiled virgin women have opened themselves to sexual degradation. Their mode of dress is a sign of their utter depravity, a dangerous and provocative display of their sordidness. Tertullian builds this argument on the ancient notion that a woman's head indicates her genitalia. He capitalizes on the notion that a woman's head is a metonymic sign for her genitalia to insist that bodily disciplines like chastity do not in fact transform the flesh in the dramatic way that his opponents' behavior implies. He mounts this argument by appealing to the mortal dangers introduced into the Christian community when women display their heads visually before men, the Devil, and God himself, as we will see. To do so Tertullian calls not only on existing materialistic conceptions of sight and seeing, which figure those acts as tactile and potentially erotic

exchanges, as he did in *On the Apparel of Women 2*, but he also compounds the shame of that visual exchange by capitalizing on the notion that a woman's head is erotically signified.

In Chapter 1 I illustrated that in Roman and Greek sources a woman's head, hair, and mouth were often treated as indicators of her sexuality, more especially of her genitalia.[53] This logic emerged in medical writings, which often insisted on the physiological verisimilitude of the mouth and throat with the uvula and vagina. Latin writers, like Ovid, also associated a woman's head and face with her genitals when they linked foul-smelling unguents and make-up with the rotting, unpleasant odor of her "shameful parts."[54] Make-up covers and hides the foulness of women's bodies, specifically that most problematic of bodily parts, her vagina, playing on what Amy Richlin notes is an "overwhelming negative" conception of that organ as "smelly, dirty, wet, loose."[55] Modest ideals of a woman's clothing also picked up on the idea that her head and hair, as indicators of her sex, were in need of concealing as well as binding. Flowing hair could be seen as the indicator of uncontrolled sexuality[56] and, thus, a matron's conical hairstyle and the ribbons that were part of her headgear could be read as signs of her bodily inviolability. Taking this logic to its extreme, a veil, which covered the hair and head, could be likened to a "covering" over a woman's genitalia. The second-century rhetor Lucian, for example, describes the moment that the groom lifts the bride's veil as the breaking of a seal, a symbol of the rupture of the bride's hymen (*Herod.* 5).[57]

In a similar move, Tertullian offers a neat analogy between a woman's covered head and undergarments, or perhaps even the hymen, that cover her genitalia. He writes: "Impose a veil externally on her who has a covering internally. Let the upper parts be covered on her whose lower parts are not nude (*cuius inferiora nuda non sunt*)."[58] When addressing the women of the community directly at the close of his treatise, he proclaims: "the whole head is woman (*totum caput mulier est*)."[59] He marks the entire head, including the neck, as signaling a woman's sexual potency.[60] He confirms this point with an anecdote about an unfortunate Christian sister who wore a too-short veil and was accosted by a lecherous angel who sneered at her: "It is too bad that you do not unveil yourself from your head down to your groin so that the freedom of your neck (*cervicum libertas*) is not a waste!"[61]

Tertullian mobilizes this link between a woman's head and her genitalia—between her uncovering and her inherent shame—so that virginal purity itself comes under siege. He even goes so far as to accuse unveiled virgins of bearing and concealing bastard children (*Virg.* 14.8)! Mary Rose D'Angelo nicely summarizes how his rhetoric functions to undercut the virgins' status: "Thus Tertullian manages to insinuate a warning that the virgin's supposed sign of

the honor of sanctity, her free and unveiled head, actually puts her in danger of sexual slavery and degradation."[62] The implication here, of course, is that the virginal office is robbed of its ecclesiastical authority.[63]

Earlier I compared Tertullian's appropriation of the virgin's fleshly body with that of later writers, like Jerome and Ambrose. While burdening the female flesh with undue semiotic content joins their theological projects, there are some critical distinctions in the direction to which these significations are put in their writings. For Ambrose or Jerome virgins are symbols of purity and redemption; their sexual inviolability emerges as a marker of their exalted status. The intact virginal body served these writers metonymically, as Burrus has shown, to indicate the pure bride of Christ, the pure unadulterated Church in which they, as mentor and guides of their virgin charges, play an essential role.[64] Conversely, for Tertullian the virgins' implicit eroticism—which the virgin aims to deny by means of her chastity—only makes their visible presence in the community all the more problematic.[65] As Dyan Elliot has recently suggested, the virgin woman is a threat for Tertullian precisely because her sexuality goes dangerously unchecked and unsupervised.[66] Yet it is important to note that Tertullian himself recites her sexuality, marking her flesh as such and insisting on it. This move functions in his writings to highlight the constant threat of her bodily violation in order not to exalt her, but to impress shamefulness more deeply onto her flesh, and with it onto all women's.

* * *

The Dangers of the Libidinous Gaze

Casting a woman's head as an indicator of her depravity, Tertullian compounds the charge that unveiled virgins are sexually degraded by employing contemporaneous materialistic understandings of sight and seeing. In *On the Apparel of Women 2*, Tertullian also evoked the threat of the penetrating gaze to shame his female audience into wearing modest garb. In *On the Veiling of Virgins,* he again appeals to a materialistic conception of sight, though in this case contemporaneous ideas of the evil eye, *fascinus* (or in Greek φθόνος), indicating that the virgins' denuded heads are a mark of their potential sexual degradation.

We have already seen that Roman and Greek writers in the Empire variously figured seeing and being seen as tactile encounters, either transferring the image through the medium of *pneuma* that strikes the eye, or through little films *(eidola* or *simulacra*) that skim off the object seen and stream into the eyes of the viewer.[67] I have suggested that Tertullian took advantage of Stoic conceptions that images are transferred through cone-shaped *pneuma* in

order to accuse ostentatiously dressed women of violating the men who see them: their image strikes his eye like the piercing stab of a sword (*Cult. fem.* 2.2.4). At the same time, he also threatened that God's omnipresent gaze loomed over them in order to insist that women ought to cultivate and display their humility (*Cult. fem.* 2.7.2–3). In *On the Veiling of Virgins*, Tertullian extends the notion that Christian women's morality is produced and sustained by their willing submission to the male gaze, whether from diabolical, human, or divine sources. Critical for Tertullian, in articulating his visual economy, is the ancient notion of the evil eye, which held that a gaze carries emotional and psychic force for the object or viewer.

In the most extensive ancient discussion of the evil eye, the banquet dialogue in Plutarch's *Moralia*, this kind of look is said to move out from one person toward another, bringing with it bad fortune, even death, to the one seen. The Greek writer defends the potency of vision by arguing that emanations aroused by anger or jealousy can stream out from the envious gazer's eyes. This gaze can then stir up psychic disturbance in the person who has been seen, as Plutarch explains:

> Envy (ὁ φθόνος), which naturally roots itself more deeply in the mind than any other passion, contaminates the body too with evil . . . When those possessed by envy of this degree let their glance fall upon a person, their eyes, which are close to the mind and draw from it evil influence of the passion, then assail that person as if with poisoned arrows.[68]

For Plutarch even the gaze shared by lovers can reach into the soul and cause a traumatic disturbance (*Quaes. conv.* 681 c). Envy uses the eyes to inflict harm, testifying to the capacity of sight to transgress the limits of the body. Plutarch indicates that through the medium of *pneuma* this gaze strikes its victim "like poisoned arrows."[69] As Shadi Bartsch notes, in this conception of the evil eye " . . . it is now the corpuscular emissions from the eyes of the person doing the looking rather than from the body of the beloved that may be described as metaphorical weapons . . . "[70] The threat from the evil eye is precisely its ability to penetrate and to disturb. Vision extends itself beyond the body in order to intrude upon another.

For Romans the term *fascinus* could signify not only the evil eye, but also the phallic symbol that was variously used to circumvent its constant threat.[71] Such a connection is necessitated by the power of the envious gaze to violate its object of sight. The phallus appeared on wind chimes that hung above doorposts, signs that adorned the lintels of shops, as well as amulets worn about children's necks. These objects aimed to divert the envious gaze and

stave off its harmful effects. For instance, resting over a Pompeian bakery was a terracotta relief with a large phallus in the center, surrounded by the hopeful phrase: "HIC HABITAT FELICITAS," meaning "Good luck resides here."[72] What did the phallus have in common with the evil eye so that it could be thought to guard against its effects? The apotropaic capacity ascribed to the phallus, Bartsch writes, reveals a "homeopathic reasoning: against something that penetrates, use something else that penetrates."[73]

In this treatise, Tertullian capitalizes on this penetrative capacity of the gaze. It pierces the soul and mind of the person seen. But what differentiates his treatment of *fascinus* from other contemporaneous conceptions is that he indicates that God and the Devil are its most potent sources:

> For there is something even among the nations . . . what they call *fascinus*, the most unhappy fate of too much glory and praise. This we sometimes interpret as being from the devil (*diabolo*), and other times, we attribute *fascinus* to God who judges arrogance, exalting the humble and laying low the elated (*deo deputamus, illius est enim superbiae iudicum*).[74]

While the *fascinus* of the "gentiles" (*apud ethnicos*) concerns the gaze of other persons, Christian *fascinus* concerns the gaze of divine as well as diabolical forces.[75] The unveiled virgin is always being watched, Tertullian warns, and always in danger of attracting demonic attention, and at the same time, of incurring the withering and censorious glare of her own God (*Virg*. 7.7). Her denuded head is the cause of her damnation. God's punitive gaze only intensifies her shame.

Indeed, Tertullian imagines that the gaze operates on a number of levels, all of which inform and constitute the virgins' moral subjectivity. The dangers of desirous looks feature in mundane encounters in the life of the *ecclesia*. Being seen is "pathic": it is likened to playing the penetrated role in sexual intercourse. The male gaze intrudes on her. Recall that Tertullian rails at the opening of *On the Veiling of Virgins*: "Every public exposure is the experience of sexual violation (*stupri passio est*) to a good virgin."[76] Indeed, what does the erotic look do if not strike and penetrate its object, like so many poisoned arrows? Being seen is a "kind of copulation" of the soul.[77] A man's gaze falling upon a virgin's naked head stirs up a desire upon which she *will* act:

> . . . he is titillated (*titillatur*) by pointing fingers, while she is too loved, and she becomes hot, being among constant embraces and kisses. Her forehead hardens, shame (*pudor*) wears away; it relaxes and learns to desire another form of pleasing.[78]

The virgin's moral resolve lessens as the gaze melts and opens to a tingling thrill. Soon she forgets her shame (*pudor*): a look unleashes sexual fantasies and increases the desire to be desired. But key to this argument is that Tertullian insists that this erotic spectacle occurs under the watchful eyes of the divine—in an effort to heighten the moral stakes of any and every visual encounter in which a woman finds herself.

In Chapter 3, I suggested that in contemporaneous deployments of the visual by Latin and Greek writers, the agency attached to seeing and being seen often confounds the typically gendered categories of actor and agent.[79] Such elision, especially in Roman sources, often emerges as a kind of apprehension about the masculinity of those who present themselves to public view: the rhetor, actor, gladiator, or Stoic philosopher.[80] But Tertullian ascribes moral agency to both object and subject in a rigidly gendered mode: the virgin's gaze does not "sexualize the man."[81] "Seeing and being seen belong to the same lust (*eiusdem libidinis*)," he writes.[82] Yet the female virgin always stands as object opposite the male gazer in this gendered equation. And the gaze, whether from men, the Devil, or God—that is, whether desirous or censorious—always ultimately shames its object.

In her analysis of Augustine's deployment of the rhetoric of shame, Elizabeth Clark argues that the gaze works to feminize, or make its object passive, which is part of its regulatory power. Of Augustine's deployment of God's shaming eye, Clark writes: " . . . imagining the eye of God is ever on us, we avoid shameful behavior . . . It encourages *both* sexes to develop the mechanism by which the omnipotent male gaze feminizes its object of vision."[83] Tertullian participates in this perspective, but with an important difference. He appeals to God's omnipotent gaze in order to police the gendered implications of his use of materialistic treatments of sight and seeing.

To clarify this point, let us return to the passage in *On the Apparel of Women 2*, which I bracketed in Chapter 3. In that treatise, Tertullian threatens that a woman's image can pierce the eyes of her gazer, a representation that certainly troubles the idea of being seen as a "passive" act (*Cult. fem.* 2.2.4). We might expect him to explain that the stain of that visual encounter then only, or primarily, degrades the male viewer, in that he is the victim of the visual assault. But he manages even here to constrain the potential gendered implications of that visual exchange in which the object seen, her image (*simulacra*), inflicts itself upon the male gazer. He argues that the act of being seen adorned is spiteful and, as such, this act attaches moral shame to her as the visual object because God, who possesses the omnipotent gaze, is ultimately always watching her (*Cult. fem.* 2.7.2–3). In other words, God's censorious eyes alone are capable of instilling shame and degradation.

His construction of this gendered visual hierarchy in which God's gaze rests on top allows him to employ materialistic conceptions of sight in order to degrade Christian women. And in so doing he also manages to strip them of the agential role that those same conceptions might otherwise allow. In other words, not only is she incapable of "sexualizing the man," she is stripped of her role as gazer altogether. This move participates significantly in advancing his theological perspective in which women's flesh—marked more profoundly than men's by the stain of sin—functions as the manifestation of human sordidness. Signified as the site of human shame, a woman is incapable of shaming another with her eyes.

Thus, Tertullian offers up the veil as protective gear for the Christian woman, a defense against the penetrating eyes of Christian brothers, of the Devil, and of God. Proclaiming the power of the veil, he exclaims: "Wear the armor of your shame (*indue armaturam pudoris*), the rampart of your modesty (*verecundiae*), erect the wall of your sex, which does not emit your eyes or admit the eyes of a stranger."[84] His gendering of the visual landscape draws the virgins' veiling more deeply into his soteriological scheme—a scheme in which women's flesh indicates the need for Christ's redemption. A virgin's veil, therefore, diverts the gazes that would compound her inherent shame. Wearing the veil, she stops short the erotic potency of her flesh and guards her brothers against the contagion of sin that the sight of her flesh might unleash. The veil also protects the virgin against God's censorious gaze and its harsh indictment, and even its threat of utter damnation.

What happens, however, if these virgins refuse to veil? In the introduction to this study, I indicated that Tertullian's insistence that virgin women participate in this bodily performance makes his theological artifice vulnerable. Vulnerability is inscribed into bodily performance because it necessarily encompasses within it its own negation, its opposite, as Judith Butler rightly notes.[85] Butler's point highlights why, in fact, Tertullian's debates with the virgins took the nasty course that they did, and why, too, he felt compelled (even though on the losing side of this communal debate) to return to the topic on various occasions. At stake, in short, is the very theological program that he has constructed and attempted to attach to the virgin's bodily inviolability. Tertullian reads these women's veiling in a soteriological register: it is a protection of their virginity resulting from human sordidness. It is incumbent on them now because Christians draw ever closer to redemption of their souls together with their flesh.

To render the veil the indicator of a virgin's shame, ironically, entails within it its own undoing. Though Tertullian utilizes polemical speech to constrain and limit the signification of a woman's barren and unveiled head,

outside and beyond his speech, there remains the shifting and not easily constrained performance of dressing the head and body. Dress, as we have seen, has subversive potential because it is always subject to improvisation—say, removing the veil or not wearing one at all. The possibility of improvisation always threatens to expose the precariousness of this move. I have shown that Tertullian's own rhetoric can be mined for examples of such contestations, instances of "counter-speech." This tension in Tertullian's writing reveals the impossibility of closing off the semiotic possibilities of the body, itself a shifting and unstable construct.

Dress, as an extension of the body, is likewise resistant to foreclosure, and as such provides a fecund site for the proliferation "of contradictions and multiple meanings."[86] To keep this theoretical perspective in view we are made more aware that Christian women's unveiling could obtain various meanings for the women who performed it, and for those who interacted with them. In Tertullian's rhetoric women's unveiling is at once a productive opportunity to advance his theological agenda and a challenge to it, ever threatening to expose its constructed nature. It retains its potential to offer up alternative significations of female flesh. Unveiling their heads inside the *ecclesia*, sexually chaste women revealed again and again that their fleshly bodies signified in ways that this Christian writer could not contain.

* * *

Epilogue

Dress and Salvation in Tertullian of Carthage

> In those things where we work, in them let our joy reside. In those things in which we take glory, in them let us hope. Certainly, a Christian will glory in the flesh, but only after enduring lacerations for Christ's sake (*sed cum propter Christum lacerata duraverit*) so that in these things *the spirit* will be crowned (*spiritus in ea coronetur*) not so that the eyes (*oculos*) and sighs (*suspiria*) of adolescents be drawn after it [*the flesh*].
>
> *On the Apparel of Women* 2[1]

In his second homily on women's dress, Tertullian reminds Christian women that indeed glory in the flesh *will be* theirs. The stress, however, remains on the future joy they will obtain, one that is spiritual and not simply fleshly in nature. Such a statement might strike us as odd for a Christian thinker with a penchant for defending the salvation of the flesh against a cache of less carnal soteriologies offered by Marcion or Valentinus, among others. Yet, as we have discovered, this comment registers the deep and productive ambivalence that the fleshly body—especially the female fleshly body—occupies in his thought. The flesh, he tells his female audience, who he imagines are skilled in the arts of adornment, is merely poised to receive the glory of the spirit in the resurrection, but it is not in possession of it now. The "absence" of *spiritus*, in fact, suggests rather than luxurious and festive raiment, mourning gear better suits the Christian woman. For what, indeed, this side of future glory would support their elaborate attempts to embellish the flesh, he asks (*Cult. fem.* 1.1.2)?

This study has placed Tertullian's comments on dress, directed to men and women alike, in the broader context of the Roman Empire. Doing so has illustrated that in the Empire stylizing the body was central to claiming legitimate power and authority. Dress and its signification were, for this reason, essential to Christian negotiations of these qualities as well.[2] Tertullian of Carthage's writings on dress, rather than being isolated ravings of a "rigorist,"[3]

emerge here as an attempt to appropriate Rome's sartorial discourses in order to manifest his view of salvation and gendered identity on the clothed bodies of Christian women and men.

In Chapter 2, I drew attention to Tertullian's appropriation of Christian dress in his treatise on men's dress *On the Pallium.* Highlighting the rhetorical strategies employed in this "oration," I suggested that the symbolic nature of dress in the Roman world offered Tertullian a useful opportunity for creatively imagining Christian masculinity in non-Roman, anti-imperial, terms. This argument provides a new avenue of inquiry for considering the role that dress and its signification played as early Christians articulated their identities and worldviews in the Roman Empire. It reminds us of the local flavor such articulations could take—in this case the Roman colony of Carthage. It points out, too, the discursive intersections between gender and ethnicity that adept rhetoricians like Tertullian could employ in articulating what it meant to be a Christian man in that environment.

Yet most centrally, as the opening quote to this epilogue suggests, this study has unearthed the thoroughly gendered logic that supports Tertullian's writings on women's dress. Pursuing this writer through the dark and (what other scholars have seen as) obscure spaces of his thought,[4] I have discovered a view of women's fleshly bodies bent on solidifying the connection between that body, death, and sin. We might recall those words that Tertullian throws at his female audience in *On the Apparel of Women 1*—words that I hope to have shown prove not an isolated slip, or an aberrant outburst, but a clear demonstration of the deadly significance of female flesh: "You are the Devil's Gateway . . . You destroyed God's image, man . . . On account of your deed, that is death, even the son of God had to die! And still you have in mind to be adorned (*adornari*) over 'your tunics of skin'? . . . these things are the impediments of a damned and dead woman (*damnatae et mortuae mulieris*), as if arranged for a funeral procession."[5] Women's fleshly bodies are perilous indicators of destruction and demise; decorating them is akin to the celebration of a corpse arranged for its own funeral, an impediment, my opening quote suggests, to the glorification of that flesh promised in the resurrection.

This equation between female bodies and death has proved so successful in Christian soteriological economies (generated by Christian men) that it has been doomed to various repetitions throughout the history of Christian thought from the patristic period into the modern one. For example, feminist theologian Tina Beattie finds this game being played in the writings of Hans von Balthasar composed only decades ago.[6] Following his "theo-drama" into the pits of hell in which Christ is said to travel, Beattie concludes: "Mud.

Ordure. Chaos. Leprosy. Phlegm. But above all, 'the quintessence of the sin of the world . . . ' The female body is not in hell, she is hell. She is that rapacious, consuming power against which Christ must pit his masculinity, his divinity and his transcendence . . . only her total destruction will allow her release."[7] In Balthasar's theo-drama, the female body is swallowed up, consumed by Christ's subduing of "death" in the crucifixion and resurrection, as well as in his repeated (violent) disciplining of "sin" and "heresy" in his "bride," the Church. Balthasar's vision of salvation depends on the oblivion of the female body, Beattie demonstrates, just as, I suggest, Tertullian's vision of the body's redemption requires his relentless shaming of female flesh.

This conclusion indicates that the debates over the nature of human salvation could impress themselves upon early Christian life and practice, could shape debates over communal identity and religious authority. It is not that Tertullian's writings on dress—particularly women's dress—then are separable from his theological debates about the incarnation and resurrection, but instead, that they are a means to extend and enact that vision. Yet they were also the place in which he encountered the limits of his theological project. Dress, in short, was a tool that Tertullian could wield to advance that vision. But it was a double-edged one.

* * *

Dress and Salvation for Early Christian Women

Here we reach the second major point that can be drawn from my analysis: early Christian women, too, variously rejected and mobilized, by means of their sartorial performances, the symbolic burden that "fathers," like Tertullian, inscribed on their bodies. For this reason, I have not stopped at viewing dress as simply another mechanism in the patristic arsenal that attempted to control female sexuality.[8] I have aimed here to offer a resistant reading that unsettles Tertullian's rhetoric, and reconstructs alternate points of view embedded within it. Looking, too, for counterperspectives in contemporary material artifacts, where possible, I have attempted to complicate the picture of this early Christian community, and too, imagine that inside of it the nature of Christian identity and the character of salvation were multiple.

Chapter 3, we saw, placed Tertullian's comments with other material artifacts related to women's adornment to draw out another, more positive, view on this bodily practice. These materials were used to argue that Tertullian's understanding of modest dress was, in fact, not the most dominant within his community. Christian women in Carthage, as in the rest of the Empire,

I suggested, would have donned jewelry with pride, fashioned themselves in accord with the aesthetics of their day, and with the protocols and resources befitting their class. Their adorning indicated a construction of Christian femininity in which honor and status—resulting from wealth and domestic station—ought to be displayed inside the church. Such a construction of Christian feminine subjectivity lay far beyond the constraints of humility and subordination offered to Christian women by Tertullian. It is little wonder that this Christian writer perceived women's alternative modes of dress as a threat to his theological agenda.

Tertullian likewise encountered a challenge from virgins whose vision of their religious identity sat uncomfortably with his insistence that they exhibit their shame by covering their heads. In Chapter 4 I argued that these virgins proudly displayed their denuded heads, as a sign that they were sanctified in Christ. Their "pure" flesh indicated the wondrous possibility of human transformation promised in this new faith, a salvation that was now in their possession. Tertullian's debate with these virgin women reminds us that differing views of salvation exhibited themselves in Christian dress and comportment, and reflected varying conceptions of bodily piety, of what possibilities it entailed as a mechanism for spiritual enhancement.

Dress theory and conceptions of performativity served, too, to emphasize the idea that multiple perspectives on the fleshly body and its adornment coexisted in Tertullian's community. In particular, in Chapter 4, I used these theoretical insights to illustrate why Tertullian could not delimit the semiotic possibilities that women's dress might obtain. As anthropologists remind us, clothing can "materialize social and political statuses, convey and consolidate identity, mediate social relations and not only reflect social change but also create it . . . "[9] The act of adorning the body, of composing a look, is in practice more subtle in its interpretive impact than Tertullian's rhetoric suggests. When we read against Tertullian's rhetoric we are reminded that dress, as an extension of the body, resists total semiotic foreclosure.[10]

Thus, when early Christian women dressed, just as other women in the Roman Empire did, they could do so to communicate a variety of things: kinship ties, social and economic status, ethnicity, and religious vocation—and not simply, as Tertullian suggests, sin and shame.[11] Indeed, the contradictory and multiple significance of dress prompts us to assume that Christians, and non-Christians, who interacted with these women would necessarily interpret their clothing negatively, as Tertullian suggests they did.[12] Though Tertullian invests women's flesh with the theological burden of sin, the fact that women took up alternative forms of dress and that their dress signified in multiple ways serves importantly to interrupt his gendered logic. Ultimately, whether

adorning their bodies with the honors of rich jewelry and the marks of *cultus,* or uncovering them by going without a *palla,* these women variously drove a wedge into the knotty equation of female flesh with sin and death that motivates Tertullian's rhetoric. In so doing they suggested that their flesh was an indicator of glory, of salvation, and of a promise that was theirs now.

* * *

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Notes

Introduction

1. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.13.7 (SC 173: 170–71).
2. This phrase comes from the title of Eric Osborn's study, *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
3. See the extensive discussion about the dating of Tertullian's treatises by Timothy Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 30–56.
4. For a discussion of the political context of North Africa, see David Wilhite, *Tertullian, the African: An Anthropological Reading of Tertullian's Context and Identities* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), especially 27–35.
5. Tertullian writes on a number of occasions indicating that his community faced persecution; his corpus includes a letter to martyrs in prison and numerous discussions about the spiritual efficacy of the martyr's death, including the *Apology*, *A Letter to the Martyrs*, and *On Flight in Persecution*; see the brief discussion of martyrdom in Carthage in Wilhite, *Tertullian, the African,* 31–35.
6. Aside from four treatises devoted to this issue, discussed below, he also comments on it in other treatises as well, including *On Prayer*, *On Idolatry*, *On the Military Crown* and the *Apology*. For a summary of his writings on dress, see Susan Calef, *Rhetorical Strategies in Tertullian's De Cultu Feminarum* (Diss. Notre Dame, 1996), Chapter 3. Where relevant, these passages will be discussed in the course of my analysis.
7. Here I follow Alison Lure's definition of dress, as follows: "The vocabulary of dress includes not only items of clothing, but also hair styles, accessories, jewelry, make-up and body decoration"; see *The Language of Clothes* (New York: Random House, 1981), 4–5.
8. Terence Turner, "The Social Skin," reprint in *Reading the Social Body*, ed. Catherine Borroughs and Jeffrey D. Ehrenreich (Des Moines: University of Iowa Press, 1993), 16; see also Karen Tranberg Hansen, "The World in Dress: Anthropological Perspectives on Clothing, Fashion, and Culture," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004), 372–73.
9. Lure, *The Language of Clothes*, 24–25.

10. In his classic study of the development of "fashion" in modern France, Daniel Roche argues that this discourse, aimed at "staving off imitators," lead to the production of finer and finer details in sartorial performance and style; see *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime,* trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), especially 5 and 56–57.
11. Jonathan Edmondson, "Public Dress and Social Control in Late Republican and Early Imperial Rome," in *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture,* ed. Jonathan Edmondson and Alison Keith (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 23–26.
12. See Shadi Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality, Self-Knowledge, and the Gaze in the Early Roman Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 115–82.
13. For example on women's adornment and its relationship to political discourse, see Maria Wyke, "Woman in the Mirror: The Rhetoric of Adornment in the Roman World," in *Women in Ancient Societies: An Illusion of Night*, ed. Léonie J. Archer, Susan Fischler, and Maria Wyke (London: Routledge, 1994), 134–51.
14. See, for instance, Laura Salah Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church Amid the Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Benjamin Dunning, *Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).
15. Some examples include: Aideen M. Hartney, "'Dedicated Followers of Fashion': John Chrysostom on Female Dress," in *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World*, ed. Lloyd Llewellyn Jones (London: Duckworth, 2002), 243–58; Rebecca Krawiec, "'Garments of Salvation': Representations of Monastic Clothing in Late Antiquity," *JECS* 17 (2009): 125–150; Stephen Davis, "Fashioning a Divine Body: Coptic Christology and Ritualized Dress," *HThR* 98:3 (2005): 335–62; Kristi Upson-Saia, *Early Christian Dress: Gender, Virtue, and Authority* (New York: Routledge, 2011); T. Corey Brennan, "Tertullian's *De Pallio* and Roman Dress in North Africa," in *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 257–70; Alicia Batten, "Neither Gold nor Braided Hair (1 Timothy 2.9; 1 Peter 3.5): Adornment, Gender, and Honour in Antiquity," *NTS* 55 (2009): 484–501 and see Batten "Clothing and Adornment," *BTB* 40 (2010): 148–59, for an especially helpful bibliography; Calef, *Rhetorical Strategies in Tertullian's De Cultu Feminarum*. Leslie Shumka, additionally, considers the comments of Clement of Alexandria on dress in his *Pedagogus* in great detail in her study, *Designing Women: Studies in Representation of Femininity in Roman Society* (Diss. University of Victoria, 2000), especially Chapter 1. For a consideration of ancient materials related to dress (including biblical and early Christian), see especially Harry Maier, "Kleidung II," *das Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 19 (2002), 1–60.
16. See the discussion of clothing imagery in the Pauline corpus, Jung Hoon Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus* (London: T&T Clark/

Continuum, 2004). Kim argues that Paul readily employed clothing imagery to delineate his ideals within a context where dress was an indicator of vice and virtue. Thus wearing Christ as a garment signaled a transformation in one's life in ethical and practical terms. Kim's analysis, however, does not employ theoretical insights from anthropology and performance theory that marks other recent studies of dress in early Christian materials; see the review of this title by Dietmar Neufeld in *BTB* 36 (2005): 114.

17. See 1 Pet 3:7. A similar logic is expressed in the discussion of qualifications for the bishop, part of which reads: "he must manage his household well . . . he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil," (1 Tim 3:4, 7). On this trope in later Christian literature, particularly the sermons of John Chrysostom, see Hartney, *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World,* especially 248–49.
18. Batten, "Neither Gold nor Braided Hair," passim.
19. Rebecca Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), especially 72; on men's dress, see Craig Williams, *Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), especially 129.
20. *Mart. Per*. 18 and 20 in *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, ed. Herbert Musurillo, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 125–26 and 128–29.
21. Perpetua's actions, in fact, might have been read by consumers of this text as a rejection of the "mythic" symbolism in which the Christians were adorned as officiants of Ceres and Saturn. The staging, Kathleen Coleman suggests, attempts to position Perpetua and her companions in terms of the "annual sowing and reaping" of the harvest, insofar as they evoked the gods who oversaw "death and renewal," and at the same time, their cultic garb would render their deaths as fitting sacrifices for these deities. Coleman indicates that this scene does not simply represent a Christian denunciation of Roman idolatry, but in fact, reflects a broader Roman jurdical practice in which the imperial regime used the arena to envision the emperor as a "verifier of myth." This practice was designed to confer power and authority of the emperor over his subjects, while also, through this "charismatic" strategy "compensating" the audience for that authority; see "Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Enactments," *JRS* 80 (1990), especially 44–73.
22. See, for example Ter. *Apol.* 6.1–2, *Idol.* 19, *Cor.* (especially *Cor*. 5), and *Or.* 20–22.
23. See Davis, "Fashioning a Divine Body," 335.
24. See note 36 for references.
25. Timothy Barnes argues that Jerome erroneously labeled Tertullian a "priest," since Tertullian in fact never refers to himself as such, and on two occasions indicates that he is laity, see Ter. *Cast.* 7.3 and *Mon.* 12.2; cf. Barnes, *Tertullian*, 3–12 and 13–21.
26. The once-popular assertion that Tertullian was the same person as the second century CE jurist, Tertullianus, whose findings are recorded in the *Digest* is now

largely disputed. David Rankin has suggested that while there is no evidence to view Tertullian as a jurist, his knowledge of Roman law implies that he may have been a legal advocate whose rhetorical training in defending various legal claims could be mobilized rhetorically in service of various theological debates with fellow Christians; see David Rankin, "Was Tertullian a Jurist?" *StPatr* 31 (1997): 335–42. For an assessment of Tertullian's familiarity with and use of technical rhetoric, see Robert Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric and the Art of Tertullian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), passim.

27. Tertullian was primarily read by Latin-speaking writers, which meant that certain of his works would prove more influential than others. The most famous reader of course is Cyprian. Foundational theological figures like Jerome and Augustine also accessed Tertullian's writings extensively. J. H. Waszink suggests that *On the Soul* would have had a greater impact in the eastern part of the Empire if it were preserved in Greek, particularly as this treatise took up philosophical debates that were of greater interest there; see *De Anima. Edited with Introduction and Commentary* (Amsterdam: J. M. Meulenhoff, 1947), 48.
28. See Osborn, *Tertullian*, 221; see also the more recent study by Virginia Burrus, *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), especially 52–57.
29. Tertullian can be placed in a trajectory of early Christian thought that held to the resurrection as a material regeneration of the human body along with the soul. See, for instance, the study by Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), especially 11 and 21–58.
30. For a comment regarding doctrinal approaches to Tertullian's writings, see Barnes, *Tertullian,* vii.
31. Barnes, *Tertullian,* 17. The epithet "Montanist" did not emerge in Christian discourse in fact until the fourth century, thus, Tertullian never uses it; see Nasrallah, '*An Ecstasy of Folly*': *Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), especially 155–62, and for a discussion of Tertullian's conception of the prophetic, 129–54.
32. Ter. *Praescr.* 7.9.
33. See *An*. 8-10, where Tertullian defends the Stoic view of the soul over and against that of Platonists. In fact throughout his treatise *On the Soul,* Tertullian is indebted to Stoic materialism; see Nasrallah, '*An Ecstasy of Folly,*' 107–109.
34. Osborn, *Tertullian,* 48–50.
35. "*un homme violent, sans goût volontiers sophiste et inconséquent, rhéteur impénitent, extrémiste en tout, qu'un rigorisme naturel . . . a conduit logiquement au montanisme . . .* " Fredouille has in view the magisterial studies from the early part of the nineteenth century by Labroille and Monceaux in particular. See *Tertullian et la conversion de la culture antique* (Paris: Études Augustiennes, 1972), 17.

36. Tertullian's writings on dress continue to solicit debate about the nature and extent of his misogyny, but these debates have not generally extended to consider the theological implications of his negative assessment of women—more specifically, women's bodies. For readings that stress his misogyny and its implications for women's roles in early Christian communities, see Émilien Lamirande, "Tertullien misogyne? Pour une relecture du *De cultu feminarum*," *ScEs* 39 (1987): 5–25; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins. Tenth Anniversary Editions with a New Introduction* (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 55; Margaret Miles, "Patriarchy as Political Theology: The Establishment of North African Christianity," in *Civil Religion and Political Theology*, ed. Leroy Rouner (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), especially 169–77; cf. Karen Jo Torjesen, *When Women Were Priests: Women's Leadership in the Early Church and the Scandal of Their Subordination in the Rise of Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperCollins Press, 1995), 155–78; see also Mary D'Angelo, "Veils, Virgins, and the Tongues of Men and Angels," in *Off with Her Head: The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture*, ed. H. Eilberg-Schwartz and W. Doniger (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 131–64. For contrary readings that challenge the view that Tertullian is misogynistic, or more so than other early Christian writers, Marie Turcan, "Être femme selon Tertullien," *Vita Latina* 119 (1990): 15–21; F. Forrester Church, "Sex and Salvation in Tertullian," *HThR* 68 (1975): 83–101; Elizabeth Carnelley, "Tertullian and Feminism," *Theology* 92 (1989): 31–35; and Barbara Finlay, "Was Tertullian a Misogynist: A Reconsideration," *The Journal of the Historical Society* 3 (2003): 503–25. In my view, these later studies often misread as positive many of his statements about women's bodies and the possibility of their transformation, as I will discuss in Chapter 3.
37. An important exception is Jennifer Glancy, "The Law of the Opened Body: Tertullian on the Nativity," *Hen* 30 (2008): 267–88 and her chapter "Mary in Childbirth," in *Corporal Knowledge: Early Christian Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
38. This phrase comes from Beth Graybill who quotes material culture scholar Grant McCracken, "To Remind Us of Who We Are: Multiple Meanings of Conservative Women's Dress," in *Strangers at Home: Amish and Mennonite Women in History*, ed. Kimberly Schmidt, Diane Zimmerman, and Steven Reschly (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2002), 4.
39. Denise Buell, *Why This New Race?: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).
40. These two types of analyses should be differentiated. In her study, *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1999), Schüssler Fiorenza elaborates upon her rhetorical approach to biblical texts, what she calls in that book, a "rhetorical-emancipatory" mode of reading, which stresses the ethical and political implications of interpretation. This type of analysis, however,

does not necessarily map onto feminist post-structuralist readings, which may or may not take up the ethical charge and instead focus on "the ideological effects" of a text for various ends, often in ways disconnected from theological concerns, see "The Bible and Culture Collective," *The Postmodern Bible* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), especially 254–60.

41. Schüssler Fiorenza *The Power of the Word: Scripture and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2007), 20. She uses the term wo/men in order to "destabilize the category woman" and to highlight the complex nature of domination that includes not only gender, but also class, race, and other factors, 13–14.
42. For a survey of post-structuralist approaches and key figures who fall under this rubric, see the discussion of Barthes, Derrida, and Gadamer in Elizabeth Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), Chapter 7.
43. This theoretical insight is perhaps most associated with Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of "heteroglossia," which Julia Kristeva adapted and extended beyond the analysis of particular genres, as endemic to all utterances; see the introductory discussion in Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London and New York: Routledge Press, 2000), 8–60.
44. Portions of this chapter as well as Chapter 4 appear in an abbreviated form in an earlier article, "'Wear the Armor of Your Shame!': Debating Veiling and the Salvation of the Flesh in Tertullian of Carthage," *SR* 38 (2010): 179–201.
45. Whether this text can be attributed to Perpetua continues to be debated among scholars. See the discussion in Chapter 4.
46. Tertullian makes this point clear in *Bapt.* 17.1-4 where he indicates that women in his church baptize themselves in imitation of Thecla, a practice that he, of course, denounces. See Chapter 4 for further discussion of this passage in terms of virgins' status in Christian Carthage.
47. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 1999), 33.
48. Ibid., 43; see also *Bodies That Matter*: *On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (London and New York: Routledge Press, 1993), 107.
49. Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 52 and see also 42.
50. Studies on veiling in Islamic contexts are multiple, but this insight can be found in the groundbreaking analysis by Fadwa El-Guindi, *Veil: Modesty, Privacy, and Resistance* (Oxford/New York: Berg Press, 1999), as well as Homa Hoodfar, "The Veil in Their Minds and On Our Heads," in *Women and Religion*: *A Reader*, ed. Elisabeth Castelli (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 420–46, and more recently in Saba Mahmood, *The Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005). Studies of dress in Christian, especially conservative Protestant, contexts (Amish, Mennonite) are more limited, but ethnographic collections provide some important insights into the productive role dress plays in these communities; see, for instance, Beth Graybill, *Strangers at Home,* 53–77 as well as the essays

in the volume *Religion, Dress, and the Body*, ed. Lynda B. Arthur and Beth Graybill (New York/Oxford: Berg Press, 1999), many of which treat conservative Protestant communities. R. Marie Griffith's work on evangelical diet culture, and its construction of Christian "womanhood," likewise illustrates the role that Protestantism has played in establishing and promoting gendered and racial ideals of physical beauty in American culture; see *Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). The implications of her analysis could, perhaps, be taken to other questions of Christian women's corporeal expression (and the theological meaning attached to it) within North American Protestantism.

51. Hoodfar, *Women and Religion,* 421.

Chapter 1

1. Cic. *Phil*. 2.44; translation here from Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 306–07.
2. Eleanor Gultz Huzr, *Mark Antony: A Biography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978), 24–25.
3. Langlands, *Sexual Morality,* 306–07.
4. Shelley Stone, "The Toga: From National Costume to Ceremonial Costume," in *The World of Roman Costume*, ed. Judith Lynn Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 20; see also Edmondson, *Roman Dress,* ed. Jonathan Edmondson and Alison Keith (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 26.
5. See Kelly Olson who argues that in practice prostitutes unlikely donned the toga, but the symbolic value of the garment for women indicated sexual licentiousness; see "*Matrona* and Whore: The Clothing of Women in Roman Antiquity," *Fashion Theory* 6 (2002): 396.
6. Langlands, *Sexual Morality,* 17–21.
7. Studies on Roman dress have moved away from earlier attempts to "reconstruct" Roman clothing and look now at the symbolic nature of dress and the ways in which it might have been viewed and/or used by Romans across the social spectrum; this interest, however, is a recent product of Classical Studies; for a neat summary of research in this area, see Jonathan Edmondson and Alison Keith, "Introduction," in *Roman Dress*, 1–17.
8. For example, see the recent discussion of sexual slander in invective, Jennifer Knust, *Abandoned to Lust: Sexual Slander and Ancient Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
9. Shadi Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality, Self-Knowledge, and the Gaze in the Early Roman Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), especially 118; cf. Carlin Barton, "Being in the Eyes: Shame and Sight in Ancient Rome," in *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power, and the Body*, ed. David Frederick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2002), 221; and Simon Goldhill, "The Erotic Eye: Visual Stimulation and Cultural Conflict," in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity,*

the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 159.

10. Recently anthropological approaches to dress have moved away from the "semiotic" focus of Barthes' work, to consider clothing in terms of its materiality; see Karen Tranberg Hansen, "The World in Dress: Anthropological Perspectives on Clothing, Fashion, and Culture," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004), especially 385–86 and essays in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. by Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (New York: Oxford Berg, 2005).
11. See Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System*, trans. Matthew Ward and Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), xi.
12. Val. Max. 2.1.5b (LCL 492: 130–33); translation from Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 127–28.
13. See Kelly Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman: Self-Presentation and Society* (London: Routledge, 2008), 12, 73, and 86–88. The conception of these items—markers of adornment—is based on the connection between those practices and foreigners. To "adorn," in other words, is fundamentally "anti-Roman"; see Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 88 and 92–95 as well as the discussion below.
14. Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 131.
15. Ibid., 167.
16. Ibid., 191.
17. See for instance the study of Polemo in Maud Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 55–81.
18. Barton, *The Roman Gaze,* 220.
19. Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 37.
20. Ibid., 69–73.
21. Judith Lynn Sebesta, "Symbolism in the Costume of the Roman Woman," in *The World of Roman Costume*, ed. Judith Lynn Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 48–49 and "Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality in Augustan Rome," *Gender and History* 9, no. 3 (1997), 535 and 537; cf. Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 39–41. The Vestals may have been portrayed veiled and with *vittae*; see Laetitia La Follette, "The Costume of the Roman Bride," in *The World of Roman Costume*, ed. Judith Lynn Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), especially 57–61.
22. Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 30.
23. Ibid., 27.
24. Different kinds of head coverings, such as the saffron colored, *flammeum*, or the short, *ricinium*, a dark woolen mourning garment, could also be used to distinguish different stages in a matron's life. The *flammeum*, for instance, was worn during the marriage ceremony and the *ricinium*, could signal widowhood; see Sebesta, *The World of Roman Costume*, 48–50. However, how common the latter

garb was, particularly in the imperial period, is debated; see Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 42.

25. For example, see Plut. *Mor.* 267a; cf. also Ter. *Virg.* 2.1.
26. Cited in Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 11; cf. also Sebesta, *The World of Roman Costume*, 49.
27. For instance the foundational article by Ramsay McMullen, "Women in Public in the Roman Empire," *Historia* 29 (1980): 208–18; and more recently, Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 38–39 and 40–41.
28. Ibid., 41.
29. See Olson, "*Matrona* and Whore," 392.
30. Sebesta, "Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality," 535.
31. Cited in Sebesta, "Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality," 537. See also Elaine Fantham, particularly for a discussion of the overlap between the woolen bands (*vittae*) and ribbons or streamers (*infulae*) bound in the hair; the latter being an archaic garb, she argues, especially associated with the vestal virgins; "Covering the Head at Rome: Ritual and Gender," *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture*, ed. Jonathan Edmondson and Alison Keith (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), especially 162–64.
32. See Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones' discussion of "Plutarch's Advice to a Bride and Groom," in *Aphrodite's Tortoise: The Veiled Women of Ancient Greece* (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2003), 161–62.
33. See Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 36.
34. See the discussion in Laqueur, *Making Sex,* 37.
35. Olson notes too that a woman's hair was often considered "the seat of female attractiveness and a locus of feminine sexuality"; see *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 71; cf. Molly Myerowitz Levine, "The Gendered Grammar of Ancient Mediterranean Hair," in *Off with Her Head: The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture*, ed. Howard Eilberg-Schwartz and Wendy Doniger (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 91–96.
36. On Roman writers' negative attitudes to women's sexuality generally, see Suzanne Dixon, *Reading Roman Women: Sources, Genres, and Real Life* (London: Duckworth, 2001), especially 34–35.
37. See Llewellyn-Jones, *Aphrodite's Tortoise,* 172.
38. Maria Wyke, *Women in Ancient Societies*: The Rhetoric of Adornment in the Roman World," in *Women in Ancient Societies: An Illusion of Night*, ed. Léonie J. Archer, Susan Fischler, and Maria Wyke, 134–51. London: Routledge, 1994, 138.
39. Langlands, *Sexual Morality,* 276.
40. Sen. *Contr.* 2.7.9 (LCL 463: 372–73); translation from Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 279.
41. The Digest states: "If someone accosts maidens (*virgines*), even those in slave's garb, his offense is regarded as venial, even more so if the woman be in prostitute's dress and not that of a matron. Still if a woman be not in the dress of

a matron and someone accosts her or abducts her attendant, he will be liable to the action for insult," *Dig.* 47.10.15.15 (Mommsen and Kreuger, 777–78).

42. Amy Richlin, "Making Up a Woman: The Face of Roman Gender," in *Off with Her Head,* 186.
43. Wyke, *Women in Ancient Societies,* 141.
44. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Pliny the Elder and Man's Unnatural History," *G&R* 37 (1990), 93.
45. Richlin, *Off with Her Head,* 201.
46. Wallace-Hadrill, "Pliny the Elder and Man's Unnatural History," 86–93. Wallace-Hadrill notes that Pliny's anti-Greek diatribe also serves his agenda of making Greek science palatable to the Romans, as showing it to be at heart a commendable Roman activity. By ascribing *luxuria* to the Greeks and its opposite, *natura*, to the Romans, Pliny can sell his reluctant Roman audience on the earnest and long-standing Roman interest in natural science—when, in fact, the origins of this disourse are Greek.
47. Richlin, *Off with Her Head*, 203; see also the discussion below.
48. Wyke, *Women in Ancient Societies,* 140; see also Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 88.
49. Coan silk hailed from the Greek island of Cos; see Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 14.
50. Juv. 6.185 (Duff, 3). The passage reads: "She does not think herself beautiful unless she is turned from a Tuscan into a Greekling."
51. Prop. 2.18.23-26 (LCL 18: 114–15); translation from Richlin, *Off with Her Head*, 202–03.
52. Caes. *B Gall.* 5.14.3; see Richlin, *Off with Her Head,* 201.
53. Richlin, *Off with Her Head*, 187–88.
54. On the connection between make-up and poisons, see Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 60; cf. Richlin, *Off with Her Head*, 191.
55. Richlin, *Off with Her Head,* 190.
56. *Priapea* 46 in *Priapea: Poems for a Phallic God*, ed. and trans. W. H. Parker (London and Syndey: Croom Helm, 1988), 139; see Richlin, *Off with Her Head*, 191.
57. Richlin, *Off with Her Head,* 195.
58. Ibid., 186.
59. Leslie Shumka, "Designing Women: The Representation of Women's Toiletries on Funerary Monuments in Roman Italy," in *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture,* ed. Jonathan Edmondson and Alison Keith (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 184–85.
60. Craig Williams, *Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 127 and 135.
61. Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 23.
62. Catherine Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 26.
63. Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 287.

64. Cic. *Cat.* 2.25; translation from Langlands, *Sexual Morality,* 283.
65. Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 284–85 and 316–17.
66. On Caligula's mania and building projects, see Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality*, 168–69.
67. Suet. *Cal.* 36 (LCL 31: 460–61); translation from Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 354–55.
68. Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 355.
69. Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality*, 98–136.
70. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 136.
71. On the status of prostitutes in the Roman world, see Rebecca Flemming, "*Quae corpore queastum facit*: the Sexual Economy of Female Prostitution in the Roman Empire," *JRS* 89 (1999): 38–61.
72. *Infames* were inhabitants of Rome who because of their disreputable profession (acting, playing the gladiator or the prostitute for instance) lost civic and legal rights and responsibilities; see Catherine Edwards, "Unspeakable Professions: Public Performance and Prostitution in Ancient Rome," in *Roman Sexualities*, ed. Judith P. Hallet and Marilyn Skinner (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 66–98.
73. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self,* 29–31.
74. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 129.
75. Ibid., 128–29.
76. John Pollini, "Slave Boys for Sexual and Religious Service: Images of Pleasure and Devotion," *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*, ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003), especially 152–59 (with images).
77. On the toga, see Glenys Davies, "What Made the Roman Toga *Virilis*?" in *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World*, ed. Liza Cleland, Mary Harlow, and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones (Oxford: Oxbow, 2005), 125.
78. See Davies, *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World,* 125.
79. At times the Germans, however, could be used to shame Romans for their use of *luxuria*. For instance in Tacitus' account, they represent rustic par excellence, a reminder of what the Roman people used to be; see Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 328.
80. Anthony Corbeill, "Dining Deviants in Roman Political Invective," in *Roman Sexualities*, ed. Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn Skinner (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 118.
81. On jewelry, see Ann Stout, "Jewelry as a Symbol of Status in the Roman Empire," in *The World of Roman Costume*, ed. Judith Lynn Sebasta and Larissa Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 77; on shoe-boots, see Olson, "*Matrona* and Whore," 389.
82. Stone, *The World of Roman Costume*, 13.
83. Edmondson, *Roman Dress,* 22.
84. Caroline Vout, "The Myth of the Toga: Understanding the History of Roman Dress," *G&R* 43 (1996), 206.
85. Ibid., 214 and on the *stola*, Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 41.

86. Edmondson, *Roman Dress,* 34.
87. Erik Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity*: *The Rhetoric of Performance in the Roman World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 29.
88. Gleason, *Making Men*, 104.
89. On the distinctions between Gunderson's more "textual" approach to his Latin sources as compared with Gleason's sociological models, see *Staging Masculinity*, 9–14.
90. Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity*, 59.
91. Ibid., 62.
92. Ibid., 71.
93. See also the discussion by Davies, *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World,* 122–25.
94. Quint. *Inst*. 11.3.137 (LCL Butler, 316–19).
95. Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity*, 71.
96. Gleason, *Making Men*, 111.
97. Tonio Hölscher, *The Language of Images in Roman Art*, trans. Anthony Snodgrass and Annemarie Künzl-Snodgrass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 2.
98. Peter Stewart, *Statues in Roman Society: Representation and Response* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 47.
99. Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), 167 and 207.
100. Zanker, *The Power of Images,* 102–03.
101. Elizabeth Bartman, *Portraits of Livia: Imaging the Imperial Woman in Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 93; cf. Maureen Bourdeau Flory, "*Sic Exempla Parantur:* Livia's Shrine to Concordia and the Porticus Liviae*," Historia* 33 (1984), 321–22.
102. Natalie Boymel Kampen, "Between Public and Private: Women as Historical Subjects in Roman Art," in *Women's History and Ancient History*, ed. Sarah Pomeroy (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 219 and 226–27.
103. See Sebesta, "Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality," 537.
104. Flory, "*Sic Exempla Parantur,"* 319. Flory cites the study of Egyptian papyri by U. Wilcken "Ehepatronae in römischen Kaiserhaus," *ZPR* 30 (1909): 504–07.
105. Zanker, *The Power of Images,* see 165; see also Sebesta, "Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality," 530
106. Bartman, *Portraits of Livia,* 86.
107. Kampen, *Women's History and Ancient History,* 226–27.
108. See Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome: Volume One, A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 191; also Kampen, *Women's History and Ancient History*, 226.
109. Zanker, *The Power of Images*, on the *stola* in particular see 165 and Sebesta, "Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality," 530. Beth Severy, *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire* (New York and London: Routledge Press, 2003), 108–10.

110. For an interesting perspective on what an "ordinary viewer" might discern of the Ara Pacis reliefs, see John Clarke, *Art in the Life of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-Elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.–A.D. 315* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), Chapter 1. Clarke's analysis confirms Severy's argument that the visual rhetoric does not differentiate closely between specific members of the Julio-Claudian line.
111. The identity of the goddess continues to solicit debate; clearly she is an amalgam of different elements, however, her identity as Ceres, or an earth goddess, like Tellus, seems appropriate given the clear evocation of agricultural fecundity in the panel.
112. Barbette Spaeth argues for the identification of the southeast panel with Ceres, precisely because of these associations, see *The Roman Goddess Ceres* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 127–34. Susan Wood, however, suggests that the figure certainly elicits connections with Ceres, but that she might not firmly represent that goddess alone, see *Imperial Women: A Study of Public Images 40 BC–AD 68* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000), 81. Karl Galinsky makes the compelling argument that the image draws on a host of referents as part of the polysemic visual rhetoric that marked the artistic language of the Augustan age; see *Augustan Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1996), 148–49.
113. Scholars continue to debate whether Livia or Julia, Augustus' daughter, appears with Marcus Agrippa. Julia was married to Agrippa; however, she was also convicted of adultery, after which she did not appear in imperial art. The majority view identifies the figure as Livia; cf. Bartman, *Portraits of Livia*, 86–92; Wood, *Imperial Women*, 104; Diana Kleiner, "Mothers and Sons in Elite and Non-Elite Roman Art," in *I Claudia II: Women in Roman Art and Society*, ed. Diana E. E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 45–46; and Spaeth, *The Roman Goddess Ceres*, 145–46.
114. See for instance Edmondson, *Roman Dress*, 24; Sebesta, "Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality," 531 and for the contrasting view, see Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 33.
115. Bartman, *Portraits of Livia,* 87–88.
116. Ibid., 88–90.
117. Stone, *The World of Roman Costume,* 18; cf. Richardson and Richardson, "*Ad Cohibendum Bracchium Toga*: An Archaeological Examination of Cicero, *Pro Caelio* 5.11." *YCS* (1966): 254–55.
118. Vout, "The Myth of the Toga," 209.
119. Ibid., 213–14.
120. For instance, Caroline Vout notes that Hadrian's portraiture most often presented him in the cuirass; see "What's in a beard? Rethinking Hadrian's Hellenism," in *Rethinking Revolutions through Ancient Greece*, ed. Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 121.
121. On this point, see Stone, *The World of Roman Costume*, 20–24.
122. Davies, *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World,* 122.

123. Ibid., 123.
124. Davies, *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World*, 125.
125. For a rich consideration of Christian responses, indeed anxieties, over this semiotic confusion, see Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: Christians Amid the Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), particularly the chapters on Athenagorus, Tatian, and Clement in part 3 of the book.
126. Caroline Vout, *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 29.
127. A. T. Croom, *Roman Clothing and Fashion* (Charleston: Tempus, 2000 and 2002), 44; cf. Brennan, *Roman Dress,* 262–63.
128. Vout describes a portrait of the emperor as *palliatus* from Cyrene now housed in the British Museum; see *Rethinking Revolutions,* 101–4.
129. Shelley Hales, "Men are Mars, Women are Venus: Divine Costumes in Imperial Rome," in *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World*, ed. Liza Cleland, Mary Harlow, and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones (Oxford: Oxbow, 2005), 138.
130. See Diana Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 238.
131. Caroline Vout, *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 32.
132. A woman could associate herself with modesty not only in statuary, but it seems, even in writing. Interestingly, Plutarch's wife, Timoxenia, apparently penned a treatise on the subject of modest appearance entitled "On Adornment." As a Greek woman living under Rome, her lost treatise would likely set the discussion in terms of Greek tradition—echoing perhaps Plutarch's own nostalgia for Greek culture that marked the Second Sophistic; see *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and A Consolation to His Wife,* ed. Sarah B. Pomeroy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 34. Timoxenia's example suggests that the performance of modesty was not simply "imposed" upon women, and that variously claiming this virtue was a strategic maneuver that could play an integral role in women's subjectivity. The notion that aligning oneself with traditional virtues, like modesty, serves productively in women's religious subjectivity has been made by feminist scholars of Islam, most notably Saba Mahmood, *The Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), especially Chapters 4 and 5.
133. cf. Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 360.
134. Named for two portrait types found at the theater in Herculaneum (thought to be copies of Greek originals), the large Herculaneum woman type had her head covered whereas the small type did not. By the second century, however, artists often combined elements of the two, and the elaborate draping of the *palla* on the large type made it especially popular; see Glenys Davies, "Clothes as Sign: The Case of the Large and Small Herculaneum Women," in *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World*, ed. Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones (London: Duckworth, 2002),

passim. The contention that the portraits represent Ceres and Kore has largely been discounted; see Davies, *Women's Dress,* 232. And on the popularity of this portrait type in the second century, see the study by Jennifer Trimble, *The Aesthetics of Sameness: A Contextual Analysis of the Large and Small Woman Herculaneum Statue Types in the Roman Empire* (Diss., University of Michigan, 1999), especially 68–126.

135. Davies, *Women's Dress*, 236–38. Appearing with Vesta or with the Vestals was also a common strategy in imperial propaganda; see Kampen, *Women's History and Ancient History*, 220–21.
136. Davies, *Women's Dress*, 237. An additional reason for the popularity of this portrait style, Davies has suggested, is that the woman's costume is not identifiable as either Greek or Roman, making suitable for installation across the Empire, see 235.
137. For instance, Jennifer Trimble notes that the female civic patron, Plancia Magna of Perge (Asia Minor), commissioned an image of Sabina in the small Herculaneum woman type, and then placed Sabina's statue prominently near the exquisite gate she constructed. Trimble argues that the portrait-style of the Empress imitates a nearby statue of Plancia that was already installed at the time of the gate's construction. In other words, in this portraiture the Empress imitates Plancia and not the other way around, thereby indicating not only the prominence of this civic matron, but also that she is the putative imperial manifestation at Perge; see *The Aesthetics of Sameness*, 118–21; see also Mary Taliaferro Boatwright, "Just Window Dressing?," *I Claudia II: Women in Roman Art and Society*, ed. Diana E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 66.
138. See Trimble, *The Aesthetics of Sameness,* 68–70.

Chapter 2

1. Ter. *Pall.* 6.2.5 (translation from Hunink, 292). All translations in this chapter come from Vincent Hunink's recent English translation and commentary, *De Pallio* (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben Press, 2005).
2. On the genre of this oration, see Hunink, *De Pallio,* especially 16–17. The best-known parallel for this speech is Apuleius' *Florida*, which was also delivered in Carthage in honor of the statue that the city had erected in the orator's honor. Hunink suggests that Tertullian might have intentionally copied the style of that renowned orator.
3. See Virginia Burrus, *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 53.
4. For a comment on the lack of scholarly interest in this treatise, see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 9–10. A recent exception is T. Corey Brennan, *Roman Dress*, 257–70. Brennan suggests that the treatise is best read as an apologetic tract with the aim of winning the Carthaginians over to Christianity, especially *Roman Dress*, 266–67.

For Brennan, then, the change in garb, from toga to *pallium*, is a rhetorical device that in fact symbolizes a change of heart and allegiance; see more below.

5. For a thorough discussion of historical approaches to this treatise, see Jean-Claude Fredouille, *Tertullien et la conversion de la culture antique*. Paris: Études Augustiennes, 1972, 441–47; see also Hunink, *De Pallio,* 10, and Paul McKechnie, "Tertullian's *De pallio* and Life in Roman Carthage," *Prudentia* 24, no. 2 (1992), 44.
6. For an argument that rejects the idea that this speech would have been understood as "anti-Roman," see McKechnie, "Tertullian's *De pallio*," passim. McKechnie insists that the speech is an example of Roman satire. Tertullian repeatedly discusses martyrdom and persecution as concerns that face his community (see especially *Fug.*, *Mart.*, and *Scap.*; these three treatises all deal with how the Christian community should respond in the face of martyrdom). The *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* also comes from Carthage, and Tertullian indicates that he was familiar with an account of Perpetua's death and a record of a vision in which she was lifted up to heaven (*An.* 45.4). In general, however, we have little evidence upon which to conjecture about the extent of Roman persecution of Christians in North Africa during Tertullian's lifetime and whether this persecution was systematic; see Timothy Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 162–63.
7. See for instance, Dennis Groh, "Tertullian's Polemic against Social Co-Adaptation," *CH* 40 (1971), 14; cf. Barnes, *Tertullian*, 230–31.
8. Robert Sider's work, however, has established how thoroughly versed Tertullian is in technical rhetoric, see especially, *Ancient Rhetoric and the Art of Tertullian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971). For the influence of Greek philosophy and medical traditions on his thought, see Nasrallah, *'An Ecstasy of Folly'*, especially 107–109.
9. Hunink, *De Pallio*, 23.
10. See Caroline Johnson Hodge, "Apostle to the Gentiles: Constructions of Paul's Identity," *Biblical Interpretation* 13 (2005), especially, 271–74; also Buell, *Why This New Race?*. Buell is intentionally self-reflexive about the political stakes of her historical analyses. Thus she uses the terms race and ethnicity interchangeably in order to destabilize insidious modern deployments of them in colonializing contexts, and especially in theological and historical scholarship that supports Christian universalism as opposed to Jewish exclusivity. Building on the work of Ann Stoler, she demonstrates that in modernity such categories have complex histories that undercut any presumption that ethnicity refers to "mutable" or "cultural" characteristics, or race to "immutable" and "biological" ones; see especially, 18–20.
11. Buell, *Why This New Race?*, 2.
12. Ibid., 3 and 10–13.
13. Ibid., 154–56.
14. See his discussion of the "heretics," for instance, Ter. *Praescr.* 13.1–6.
15. Thus my argument is that "gender" cannot readily be separated out from an examination of ethnic identity since the two components were indelibly connected. For instance, a "true" Roman was defined in much Roman moral discourse as a

freeborn male and a citizen—his masculinity was "essential" to his Roman character. Other races, according to the same moralists, were thereby denigrated as "feminine" or not full men; see Williams, *Roman Homosexuality,* 135–37.

16. The study of Christian masculinity includes *New Testament Masculinities*, ed. Stephen D. Moore and Janet Capel Anderson (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003). Colleen Conway's essay in this volume is also elaborated in the recent monograph, *Behold the Man! Jesus and Greco-Roman Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Other titles focus more especially on patristic materials, such as Virginia Burrus, *'Begotten, Not Made:' Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000) and Matthew Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch: Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity, and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). There is most recently, as well, the study by Stephanie L. Cobb, *Dying to Be Men: Gender and Language in Early Christian Martyr Texts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).
17. In terms of how this shift in masculinity is indicated in Christian understandings of martyrdom, see Brent Shaw, "Body/Power/Identity: Passions of the Martyrs." *JECS* 4 (1996): 269–312; see also Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), especially 65–92.
18. See my discussion at the end of the chapter on Kuefler's thesis in *The Manly Eunuch*.
19. See Hunink, *De Pallio*, 22–23.
20. For instance, Tertullian's earliest work, *Apol.,* is cast as an open letter to the "imperial rulers of the Roman people" (*Romani imperii antistites*) and also *Scap.* is written as a letter to the existing pro-consul of Africa, Scapula. Both epistles extol the moral gravity of the Christian community often with extended claims that the Christians are higher minded and better citizens than their non-Christian counterparts. While these treatises represent pleas for ruling officials to protect the Christian community in Africa, their apologetic rhetoric is often aimed at disparaging non-Christian contemporaries in unflattering terms. These treatises were more likely attempts by early Christians to articulate and preserve their identity as distinctive in the face of persecution and religiously diverse civic contexts.
21. Here I follow the incisive remarks of Fredouille who rejects earlier interpretations that sought to read *On the Pallium* as speech that Tertullian delivered after incurring some political or religious insult. He writes: "Le *De pallio* n'est pas un oeuvre 'engagée.' Il est, au sens propre, 'inactuel.' Rien dans les idées qui s'y trouvent exprimées sur le port de ce vêtement n'est susceptible d'être relié à une conjoncture historique ou géographique précise dans la Carthage du III^{e} siècle," *Tertullien et la conversion*, 458.
22. Tertullian may be playing on Apuleius' encomium to Carthage in the *Florida* in the way he opens this oration. When complimenting the cultural pedigree of his native city, Apuleuis exclaims: "Carthage the most venerable instructor of our province; Carthage the muse of heavenly Africa; Carthage the inspiration of the toga-clad people"; Apul. *Flor.* 20.10 in *Apulée. Apologie, Florides* (Vallette, 168–69);

see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 16–17. Tertullian perhaps plays on this encomium, but inverts its logic so that the Carthaginians are disparaged for succumbing to the fashion dictates of their colonial overlords.

23. Ter. *Pall*. 1.1–3 (Hunink, 30–31).
24. For a similar interpretation, see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 70.
25. A. T. Croom, *Roman Clothing and Fashion.* Charleston: Tempus, 2000 and 2002, 51.
26. Ter. *Pall*. 1.2.1 (Hunink, 75).
27. Ibid., 75–76. Apuleius spends considerable time in his Carthaginian oration extolling the city as a supreme location for the worship of Aesculapius; see Apul. *Flor*. 18.41–43 and Brennan, *Roman Dress,* 263.
28. Janet Huskinson, "Elite Culture and the Identity of Empire," in *Experiencing Rome*: *Culture, Identity and Power in the Roman Empire*, ed. Janet Huskinson (London: Routledge Press, 2000), 108–109, also Brennan, *Roman Dress,* 262–63.
29. Vout, "The Myth of the Toga," 211 and Mary Harlow, "Clothes Maketh the Man: Power Dressing and Elite Masculinity in the Later Roman Empire," in *Gender in the Early Medieval World*, ed. Leslie Brubaker and Julia M. H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 49, and on the varieties of tunics and cloaks, see 54–62.
30. Verg. *Aen*. 1.229–96.
31. Harlow, *Gender in the Early Medieval World*, 47.
32. See ibid., 63.
33. Ter. *Pall*. 6.2.3 (Hunink, 63).
34. See Edwards, *Roman Sexualities*, 76–78.
35. See Vout, "The Myth of the Toga," 213–14; cf. Stone, *The World of Roman Costume,* 17.
36. See Vout reads the treatise in the same way, "The Myth of the Toga," 217.
37. Brennan, *Roman Dress*, 263–64.
38. Vout, "The Myth of the Toga," 217; alternately, Edmondson argues that the toga, though ceremonial, was commonly worn in state business, including in the forum, court, and theater. He suggests that in practice the toga and *stola* served to visibly distinguish the classes of Roman society; see *Roman Dress,* 22–26 and 39. Here, however, I am suggesting that at least in Tertullian's lifetime the power of the toga was largely symbolic and ceremonial. In practice, dress did not likely distinguish between citizens and non-citizens with the degree of efficiency that Edmondson finds in the late Republic and early Empire.
39. See Edmondson, *Roman Dress*, 22–26.
40. David Wilhite admits that his study necessarily "reifies" ethnic, African identity over other aspects of Tertullian's self-understanding and subject position. However, his does so in order to correct historical and doctrinal analyses that have ignored entirely the colonial context in which Tertullian lived and wrote; see *Tertullian, the African: An Anthropological Reading of Tertullian's Context and Identities*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007, 36.

41. Ibid., 144–45 and 180. Wilhite builds on archaeological research that suggests Carthage and its outlying areas saw the economic development of a burgeoning Latinized Punic community, the "new elites." These elites, he concludes, are Tertullian's primary audience as he is best counted among their numbers. On North Africa's development under the Romans, see D. J. Mattingly, "Africa, a Landscape of Opportunity?" in *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism*, ed. D. J. Mattingly, *JRA Supplement Series* 23 (1997), 130 and Susan Raven, *Rome in Africa*, new ed. (London and New York: Longman Press, 1984), 94–102.
42. See Wilhite, *Tertullian, the African*, 44, for the rationale of his study, especially 36.
43. See, for example, the study of the Greek geographer, Strabo, from Pontus by Edward van der Vliet, "The Romans and Us: Strabo's *Geography* and the Construction of Ethnicity," *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 257–72.
44. Huskinson, *Experiencing Rome*, 108.
45. Ibid., 121. See also van der Vliet, who uses Cohen's conception of ethnicities as "nested dichotomies." In this case, for Strabo, subject of van der Vliet's study, one's native country as an ethnic identity, i.e., Galatian, is encompassed by one's identity as Roman rather than non-Roman, which was then specified in terms of one's class and political status; see "The Romans and Us," 270–71. His observation is perhaps best summed up by a statement from Simon Goldhill: "In the Roman Empire all are insiders, but some are more insiders than others"; see Review of "Sophistry, Philosophy, and Rhetoric," *BMCR* 6 (1995), 354 cited in Wilhite, *Tertullian, the African*, 47.
46. On Roman conceptions of Greek men as "effeminate," see for instance, Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 135–36.
47. Ter. *Pall.* 3.7.2 (Hunink, 44–45).
48. Tertullian refers to an embassy from Athens that went to Rome in 155 BCE. Cato apparently sent them back worrying that they might corrupt Latin youth; for references to the embassy in Greek literature see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 172.
49. Ter. *Pall.* 3.7.3 (Hunink, 44–45).
50. The Latin writers, such as Livy, Pliny, and Propertius linked Greece with a proclivity for luxury; see my discussion in Chapter 2 on the ways in which certain "luxurious" styles of dress could be used to indict claims to *virilis.*
51. Hunink, *De Pallio*, 169.
52. Ibid., 178.
53. Ter. *Pall.* 4.1.3 (Hunink, 46–47); on alternate translations of this verse as a result of text critical issues, see ibid., 180.
54. See Williams, *Roman Homosexuality,* 129.
55. See Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.8.1–2.
56. See the discussion in Hunink, *De Pallio*, 180.
57. McKechnie reads this *exemplum* as Tertullian's way to reinforce the Greek pedigree of Carthage, "Tertullian's *De pallio*," 56.
58. Tertullian likely has in mind Cato's tenure as a censor during which Cato was known for his diligence; see also Plut. *Cat. Maj.*1.3–6, 16.5–6, and 19.1–2.

Plutarch, however, is restrained in his praise of Cato, presenting the senator as overly pompous and at times cruel, for instance *Cat. Maj.* 7.1.

59. Croom, *Roman Clothing and Fashion*, 51–52.
60. The Gracchi were the first to settle this colony (in the second century BCE), but their attempt was not successful; see Raven, *Rome in Africa*, 54 and Hunink, *De Pallio*, 79.
61. When Julius Caesar was murdered in 44 BCE plans to Romanize Africa were stalled, the colonies of North Africa caught in the fight for succession. Only in 29 BCE, two years after Augustus' victory at Actium, was the Punic city finally settled; see Raven, *Rome in Africa*, 54.
62. Ter. *Pall.* 1.2.4 (Hunink, 31–32).
63. The Pelasgi are the pre-Greek inhabitants of Greece, and the Lydians the ancient inhabitants of Asia Minor; see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 82.
64. See Ter. *Pall.* 2.1.1–7.4. Here we find the singular reference to scripture; the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah are cited along with Vesuvius; see *Pall.* 2.3.2 and 2.4.2-3.
65. See Ter. *Pall.* 3.1.1–7.3.
66. Hunink uses the term "cosmic history," *De Pallio*, 90. Tertullian's apologetic strategy was common in the Roman world where Christians and Jews variously appealed to the antiquity of their teachings and practices in order to claim legitimacy; see, for instance, *Just. Dial.* 7 in which Justin Martyr argues for the efficacy of Christian philosophy over Platonism due to the greater antiquity of its teachings. Also see Jos. *C. Ap.*, especially Josephus' introduction to this treatise where he sets up his defense of the Jews by appealing to the antiquity of their sacred writings, 1.1. For a discussion of such rhetorical strategies in Christian texts consult Buell, *Why This New Race?*, 63–93.
67. Ter. *Pall.* 2.7. 1–2 (Hunink, 38–39).
68. McKechnie, "Tertullian's *De pallio*," 56.
69. Timothy Barnes suggests that this quotation is a parody of formulaic from the propaganda of the imperial regime; see "Tertullian the Antiquarian," *StPatr* 14 (1976), 17.
70. The other option is to read the three Emperors as Septimus Severus, Pescennius Niger, and Didius Julianus who ruled in the year 193 CE. The reference has prompted much speculation about the dating of this treatise and its place in Tertullian's corpus; see discussion in Hunink, *De Pallio*, 133.
71. Ter. *Pall.* 3.3.4–5 and Vout, "The Myth of the Toga," 218.
72. The story of Cleomachus who falls in love with a young boy is also found in Strabo, see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 205.
73. Tertullian jests about Empedocles of Acragas known for wearing a bronze slipper and opposes him to the Cynic, Diogenes; however, the two men lived a century apart; see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 218–20.
74. Tertullian refers to Ptolemy Euergetes and Assurbanipal, who was the last king of Assyria; see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 209.

75. Ter. *Pall.* 4.5.2 (Hunink, 50–51). Caesar here could refer to any number of Emperors who earned a reputation for debauchery; see Hunink, *De Pallio*, 210–11. McKechnie suggests Commodus; see "Tertullian's *De pallio,*" 60.
76. Hunink notes that Alexander was said to wear Persian trousers during his eastern campaign. Tertullian could anticipate that his audience would know this fact and get the joke; see *De Pallio*, 214–15.
77. Groh, "Tertullian's Polemic," 13.
78. Ter. *Pall.* 4.8.1 (Hunink, 52–53).
79. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self,* 118; see also her discussion in 115–82 and Barton, *The Roman Gaze*, passim.
80. Brothel keepers were considered *infamia*—that is, to fall into a legal category that signified a person without *dignitas*, barring them of certain civic rights, including access to civic courts. On the status of persons considered *infames*; see Edwards, *Roman Sexualities*, 66–98.
81. Quint. *Inst.* 11.3.144 and see discussion of the toga in Chapter 1.
82. McKechnie,"Tertullian's *De pallio*," 57.
83. Ter. *Pall.* 5.2.1 (Hunink, 56–57); see the discussion in Hunink, *De Pallio*, 250. For a similar comment about the burdensome quality of the toga, Juv. 3.171; for a consideration of why the toga might have been perceived as especially loathsome, from the perspective of Roman clients (as opposed to patrons), see the interesting discussion of Juvenal as well as Martial, by Michele George, "The 'Dark Side' of the Toga," in *Roman Dress*, 94–112.
84. This sentiment shares much in common with Seneca's complaints on the subject of the toga. Indeed, the critique of the toga owes much to the Stoic ideal of living in simple harmony with nature; see Fredouille, *Tertullien et la conversion*, 466.
85. See Vout, "The Myth of the Toga," 217–18.
86. Personification is common in ancient rhetoric; however, personification of an inanimate object is unknown from other Greek or Roman orations; see Hunink, *De Pallio,* 243. Personifications were very popular tactics in ancient Latin oratory. Rhetors commonly took on alternate *personae*, but this choice of a speaking, inanimate garment is certainly rare. Thus Hunink suggests that Tertullian's rhetorical strategy—that is to say, taking on the persona of the *pallium*—is bit of a dodge. On his reading, Tertullian uses the *pallium* as a mouthpiece to deflect charges that he incites anti-Roman propaganda; see *De Pallio*, 260. My reading, however, offers another possibility.
87. Gleason, *Making Men*, especially, 83–102.
88. Ibid., 104.
89. Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity*, 62.
90. Ibid., 71.
91. Ibid., 61.
92. Ibid., 9; see Gleason, *Making Men,* xxii.
93. Ter. *Pall.* 5.4.2–3 (Hunink, 58–59).

94. According to Hunink, Tertullian cites Pliny, the source of his anecdotes in the speech (see Plin. HN 9.77), *De Pallio*, 272.
95. Hunink, 58–59.
96. Ibid., 62–63.
97. For a discussion of Cicero's extensive use of sexual invective in oratory, see Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 281–318.
98. Ter. *Pall.* 6.4.5 (Hunink, 62–63).
99. See the discussion of earlier approaches to this speech in Fredouille, *Tertullien et la conversion*, 443–47.
100. Tertullian figures in Kuefler's study in numerous locations, for his reading of *On the Pallium,* see especially, *The Manly Eunuch*, 217–18. While I concur with the larger shift that Kuefler identifies in his study, I disagree with his reading of this and other treatises by Tertullian. For instance, Kuefler argues that Tertullian attempts "to link unmanliness and paganism." I suggest that the Christianity is not being opposed to paganism—a term that Tertullian does not use—speaking instead of *romanitas*. Further, I do not support Kuefler's contention that "He [Tertullian] was much more concerned about the effects of clothing on men . . . " as opposed to that of women; see *The Manly Eunuch*, 218. Indeed a central tenet of this study is to show that women's dress accrues a weightier symbolic value than men's for Tertullian because he connects his theology of salvation to it.
101. Ibid., 214.
102. Stephen Moore's work, for instance, offers a well-known example of analysis that is richly informed by the queer theory's notion that sex and gender are unstable, shifting cultural constructions. He uses such theoretical grounding to elaborate the ways in which such constructions are put to work in the constitution of Christian masculinities, past and present; for example, *God's Gym: Divine Male Bodies of the Bible* (London and New York: Routledge Press, 1996) and more recently, *God's Beauty Parlor and Other Queer Spaces in and around the Bible* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).
103. Such as *patientia*. Consult Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch,* 109–11.
104. Ter. *Pall.* 5.4.3 (Hunink, 58–59).
105. Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch,* 37–61.
106. On martyrdom, see Ter. *Fug.*, *Mart.*, and *Scorp.*, and on the military and sexual chastity, see Ter. *Cor.*, *Pud.* and *Mon.*
107. For a discussion of how the apostle Paul's writings reject philosophical ideals of self-mastery, see Dale Martin, *Sex and the Single Savior* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 65–76 and for evidence of Stoic anticipations of this recast masculinity, see Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self,* 164–82.
108. Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch,* 239–44 and for a compelling analysis of the ways in which such disavowals and appropriations of femininity shaped Christological debates of the fourth century (in the writings of Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Ambrose, respectively), see Burrus, *'Begotten, Not Made.'*
109. See Harlow, *Gender in the Early Medieval World*, passim. For Harlow, the shift in dress from toga to *pallium*, and later to trousers, reflected changing cultural ideas

about masculinity itself, in which elite men "assimilated" the clothing styles and habits of those on the "periphery," such as barbarians and non-Romans.

Chapter 3

1. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 1.1.2 (SC 173: 42–44).
2. For readings that support the notion of Tertullian's misogyny, see for instance, Miles, *Civil* Religion, 174; Lamirande, "Tertullien misogyne?," passim; cf. Finlay who argues against reading the "Devil's Gateway" passage as evidence of Tertullian's misogyny; she writes: "Tertullian's rejection of feminine ornament in *De cultu* is based in part on a similar attitude toward the body *as a good thing created by God*, not to be altered with cosmetics, body building, or fancy clothing or garlands" (italics mine); see "Was Tertullian a Misogynist?" 511.
3. For instance, Turcan, who notes discontinuity between Tertullian's unflattering portrait of women in this treatise and his statements about the reality of salvation for men and women alike, see "Être femme selon Tertullien," 15–17.
4. Here I borrow Virginia Burrus' language in describing Tertullian's penchant for the shamefulness of the flesh, see *Saving Shame*, 57.
5. Ibid., 54.
6. My reading challenges other recent feminist analyses of Tertullian's corpus discussed in the introductory chapter. See, for instance, Finlay, "Was Tertullian a Misogynist?," Turcan, "Être femme selon Tertullien," and Judith Perkins, "The Rhetoric of the Maternal Body in the Passion of Perpetua," in *Mapping Gender in Ancient Religious Discourses*, ed. Todd Penner and Caroline Vander Stichele (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2007), 313–32. Both Finlay and Turcan argue that Tertullian's conception of women's flesh, particularly the desirability of that flesh, is standard for male writers in the patristic period. Further, they indicate that these comments should be balanced with other statements in which Tertullian upholds women as prophets or indicates that women and men alike will obtain salvation. Turcan who writes "c'est le femme est l'égale de l'homme aux yeux de Dieu," when discussing the treatise *On the Soul*, a treatise that I will consider below, reaching a different conclusion; see "Être femme selon Tertullien," 17. Perkins makes a different point by suggesting that Tertullian in fact champions the maternal body as shameless, she writes: "Tertullian shows no contempt for the processes of the feminine body," 321.
7. Ter. *Res*. 9.2 and 5 (Evans, 26–29).
8. Tertullian writes on a number of occasions indicating that his community faced persecution; his corpus includes a letter to martyrs in prison and numerous discussions about the spiritual efficacy of the martyr's death; see, for instance, *Fug.* and *Mart.*
9. See Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body*, especially 36–37.
10. Waszink offers an in-depth analysis of Tertullian's use of philosophical treatises in composing *On the Soul*, especially the Stoic medical writer, Soranus now lost *Peri Pysches*; see *De Anima,* 22–38.
11. Nasrallah, "*An Ecstasy of Folly*," 124–54.

12. See, for instance, Ter. *Res.* 55.4 and *Res*. 2.6–7.
13. Nasrallah, "*An Ecstasy of Folly*," 110. Tertullian's relationship with ancient philosophy has occupied much of the scholarship on him; see, for example, Fredouille, *Tertullien et la conversion*, 337–57.
14. In practice proponents of Platonism in this "middle" period proffered a host of positions about the soul and its various components; see the magisterial study of this period by John Dillon, *The Middle Platonists 80 BC to 220 AD* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).
15. On Stoic materialism generally, David Sedley, "Stoic Physics and Methaphysics," in the *Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 382–411.
16. Ter. *An*. 27.1 (Waszink, 38).
17. Waszink notes that this depiction of generation follows Stoic teaching, which suggests that the male seed contains a "psychic" and "corporeal" element; see Waszink, *De Anima*, 344–46. While other Stoic thinkers, like the physician Galen, suggested that men and women alike provided "seed," Waszink suggests that Soranus argued that the male alone produces seed. However, it seems unlikely that Tertullian's account is constrained by Soranus here as this theory of generation proves theologically expedient to establish the equanimity of soul and body. Further, in other treatises, Tertullian appeals to an Aristotelian understanding of conception in order to establish that Christ's "animation" came from the divine, while his flesh alone was formed from Mary's blood; see Ter. *Carn. Chr.* 19.21–3. Thus "scientific" theories are tools for Tertullian to construct his theological anthropology and theory of incarnation rather than as a kind of restrictive canon to which he must remain faithful.
18. Tertullian indicates that he shares his view of the soul with the Stoics in *On the Soul*, stating: "But I, therefore, call on the Stoics . . . who argue clearly that the soul is a kind of body (*corpus animam facile persuadabunt*)," see Ter. *An*. 5.2; cf. the discussion by Waszink, *De Anima,* 128–29.
19. Ter. *An*. 36.2 (Waszink, 52).
20. The notion that the soul is "gendered" is unattested in other Greek and Roman writers. Waszink, *De Anima,* 420. Indeed, Tertullian is rather terse in his presentation of this theory of the simultaneous "gendering" of soul and body, focusing on it only insofar as it does not challenge or disrupt the harmony of these two parts of the self. He writes simply: "they undergo a common event of gender (*communem subeunt generis eventum*)" (*An*. 36.4). The agent here is not specified; see *De Anima*, 421.
21. Ter. *Res*. 8.3 (Evans, 24–25).
22. Ter. *Res*. 6.5 (Evans, 18–19).
23. Ter. *Res*. 8.2 (Evans, 24–25).
24. Blake Leyerle, "Blood Is Seed," *JR* 81 (2001), 32.
25. Catherine Conybeare has recently demonstrated that for Tertullian the union of bride and groom, like flesh and spirit, serves to naturalize the subordination of the "weaker" feminine part to the "stronger" masculine one. Conybeare, "Tertullian

on Flesh, Spirit, and Wives," in *Severan Culture*, ed. Simon Swain, Stephen Harrison, and Jas Elsner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 432.

26. Burrus, *Saving Shame*, 53–54.
27. Ter. *Carn. Chr*. 6.6 (SC 216: 236–37).
28. Glancy, "The Law of the Opened Body," 270–71.
29. Ter. *An*. 52.3 (Waszink, 70).
30. Glancy, "The Law of the Opened Body," 285–87; cf. Geoffrey Dunn, "Mary's Virginity *in Partu* and Tertullian's Anti-Doceticism in *De Carne Christi* Reconsidered," *JTS* 58 (2007), 482–83.
31. Ter. *Carn. Chr*. 4.1–3 (SC 216: 221–22).
32. Burrus, *Saving Shame*, 53.
33. On the problematics of women's menstrual blood in ancient medical and biblical discourse as informing Tertullian's denigration of women's bodies and procreative abilities, see Leyerle "Blood Is Seed," 33.
34. Glancy, "The Law of the Opened Body," 276–77.
35. Ibid., 275.
36. Burrus, *Saving Shame,* 47.
37. Ibid., 54.
38. Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body,* 40–41.
39. Glancy, "The Law of the Opened Body," 286–87.
40. For an elaboration of how this discussion of Mary's penetration and Christ's virginity is situated inside Tertullian's deployment of Paul's Adam and Christ typology, see the discussion of Tertullian in Benjamin Dunning, *Specters of Paul*: *Sexual Difference, Creation, and Resurrection in Early Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), Chapter 5.
41. Glancy, "The Law of the Opened Body," 288.
42. Again my argument here is informed by Dunning's analysis in *Specters of Paul*.
43. Ter. *Cor.* 14.2 (Fontaine, 172–76).
44. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.7.1 (SC 173: 122–23).
45. *Cult. fem*. is comprised of two separate works. In the best textual witness, the *corpus Agorbardinum*, both books are given the title *De cultu feminarum*. But in the earlier *corpus Cluniacense*, the first book is entitled *De habitu muliebris* and the second *De cultu feminarum*; see Marie Turcan, *Le toilette des femmes: Introduction, texte critique, traduction, et commentaire* Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 20. For discussions of the relationship between the two treatises and their genres, see René Braun, *Approches de Tertullien: Vingt-six etudes sur l'auteur et sur l'oeuvre (1955–1990)* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1992), 147–56.
46. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.1.1 (SC 173: 90).
47. It should be noted too that Tertullian does not present *pudicitia* as a virtue suited to women alone. He composed an entire treatise entitled *On Modesty* (*De pudicitia*) in which he exhorted Christian women and men alike to avoid the dangers of fornication and adultery, defending in fact the exclusion of Christians guilty of such acts from the community. This treatise does not deal with dress,

yet it nonetheless offers further evidence of how deeply informed his ethical sense was by Roman moral discourse.

48. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.2.4 (SC 173: 98).
49. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.3.2 (SC 173: 104).
50. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 1.4.2 (SC 173: 62).
51. Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 8.
52. Olson, "*Matrona* and Whore," 399.
53. Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 92–93.
54. Richlin, *Off with Her Head,* 194–95.
55. Ibid., 9.
56. Ibid., 205.
57. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.13.3 (SC 173: 164).
58. Sen. *Contr*. 2.9; cf. Langlands, *Sexual Morality,* 278–79.
59. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 1.1.3 (SC 173: 46).
60. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.5.3 (SC 173: 112).
61. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.6.2 (SC 173: 116). Breakage and searing, as a result of hot irons, was a concern for women who maintained elaborate hairstyles; see Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 73.
62. On Tertullian's image of resurrected flesh as "dry" and "light," see *Iei.* 17.5–6 in which he proclaims that fasting dries out the flesh, allowing it to pass more easily through "the straight gate of salvation," and *Ux*. 1.5.2–3 in which he argues that celibate flesh will rise more quickly—unencumbered with heaviness of body that attends gestation and lactation.
63. For an example of Roman authors connecting luxury and foreigners, see Plin. HN 37.6 and Juv. 6.294–95, and my discussions in Chapters 1 and 2.
64. Maria Wyke, *Women in Ancient Societies,* 141.
65. Wallace-Hadrill, "Pliny the Elder and Man's Unnatural History," *GR* 37 (1990), 86.
66. See Val. Max., especially 6:1, Livy 10.23.7–9 and my discussion in Chapter 2.
67. See my discussion in Chapter 1; also Wyke, *Women in Ancient Societies*, 141.
68. The import of dyed fabrics gave Romans unprecedented options for distinguishing their dress; see Sebesta, *The World of Roman Costume*, 68.
69. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.13.7 (SC 173: 168–71).
70. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.1.1 (SC 173: 90).
71. Matthew Kuefler sees a connection between martyrdom as new mode of "solidery" and *virtus* in Tertullian's rhetoric so that "softening the flesh," through the accoutrements of grooming, threatens one's ability to be a martyr, the quintessential act of the Christian man; see *The Manly Eunuch*, 112–15 and 218–19.
72. cf. Finlay who has argued for verisimilitude between his comments on women's dress and his comments on men's, "Was Tertullian a Misogynist?," 512.
73. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.2.4 (SC 173: 100).
74. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self*, 58–67.
75. I elaborate on this point in Chapter 4.
76. Georgia Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 125.

77. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality,* 65.
78. Plu. *Amat*. 766e cited in Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self*, 71.
79. On sight and the erotic, see Goldhill, "The Erotic Eye," 154–94.
80. Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes*, 20.
81. Literally clothing made of flax.
82. Purple was a popular color for women's and men's dress. Its association with civic power is manifest in the purple stripe of the *toga praetexta* worn by priests and magistrates; see Chapter 2. On Roman women wearing purple, see Olson, *Fashioning the Female,* 26.
83. Ter. *Cult. fem*. 2.13.7 (SC 173: 168–70).
84. Barton, *The Roman Gaze,* 220.
85. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin, 1977), 47.
86. Ibid., 49.
87. Ibid., 54.
88. Barton, *The Roman Gaze,* 216–35.
89. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self,* 131.
90. Evidence of this conception of masculinity in Roman literature and art has been well established; see, for instance, Jonathan Walters, "Invading the Roman Body: Manliness and Impenetrability in Roman Thought," in *Roman Sexualities*, ed. Judith P. Hallet and Marilyn B. Skinner (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 29–43 and Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, especially 163–68.
91. See Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self,* 154–59.
92. Livy 34.7 (*munditiae et ornatus et cultus, haec feminarum insignia sunt*), as cited and translated by Christiane Kunst, "*Ornamenta Uxoria*: Badges of Rank or Jewelry of Roman Wives," in *The Medieval History Journal* 8 (2005), 134.
93. cf. Batten, "Neither Gold Nor Braided Hair," 490.
94. cf. Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 97–99.
95. Ibid., 45–47.
96. Elizabeth Bartman, "Hair and the Artifice of Roman Female Adornment," *AJA* 105 (2001): 1–25.
97. Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 70–76.
98. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.7.1 (SC 173: 122–23).
99. Shumka, *Roman Dress*, 183–84.
100. Ibid., 62–63 and 79.
101. Ibid., 65.
102. Women would also use kohl to darken their eyes and eyebrows, and according to Olson a single brow was the desired look; see ibid., 62–63.
103. Eve D'Ambra, "Nudity and Adornment in Female Portrait Sculpture of the Second Century AD," in *I Claudia II*, 101–14.
104. Ibid., 106–108.
105. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.5.2.
106. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.9.4 (SC 173: 138–39).

107. cf. Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 92–93.
108. Val. Max. 5.2.1; cited in Kunst, "*Ornamenta Uxoria*," 136.
109. On the *vittae*, see Chapter 1 and the discussion by Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 36–39.
110. These funerary portraits earn their title from the location, Fayum, Egypt, where they were initially presented to the public. Dating from the first to the fourth century CE, they were painted on wooden panels that were then placed in linen shrouds that covered the deceased person. For an introduction to these portraits and a consideration of artistic shifts in Egyptian funerary art from the Empire into Late Antiquity, see Susan Walker, "Painted Hellenes: Mummy Portraits from Late Roman Egypt," in *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire*, ed. Simon Swain and Mark Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 310–26.
111. Kunst, "*Ornamenta Uxoria*," 131.
112. Ria Berg, "Wearing Wealth: *Mundus Muliebris* and *Ornatus* as Status Markers for Women in Imperial Rome," *Instituti Romani Finlandiae* (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2002), 28.
113. Ibid., 78.
114. Andrew Oliver, "Jewelry for the Unmarried," in *I Claudia II*, 120.
115. Ibid., 122.
116. Kunst, "*Ornamenta Uxoria*," 137–40; also Berg, "Wearing Wealth," 49.
117. See the discussion by Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman*, 101–104.
118. Oliver, *I Claudia II*, 119; see Berg, "Wearing Wealth," 51.
119. This situation arose under new marriage laws in the imperial period, a marriage without *manus*; see Kunst, "*Ornamenta Uxoria*," 135; see Batten, "Neither Gold Nor Braided Hair," 49; and in regard to Paul's discussion of veiling, see "Clothing and Adornment," *BTB* 40 (2010), 155.
120. Berg, "Wearing Wealth," 57; see Kunst,"*Ornamenta Uxoria*," 135.
121. Berg, "Wearing Wealth," 61; see on jewelry as cash reserves, Kunst, "*Ornamenta Uxoria*," 135.
122. On women receiving jewelry as gifts of gratitude, see Berg, "Wearing Wealth," 53.
123. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 1.9.3 (SC 173: 86–87).
124. For a similar reading of the household codes and condemnations of women's adornment, see Batten, "Neither Gold, Nor Braided Hair," 498.
125. Ter. *Ux.* 2.8.1 (SC 273: 144–45).
126. Tertullian's discussion in *To His Wife 2* indicates that these women were evident in Christian Carthage—though to what extent we cannot know for certain. It may be that Tertullian advertises the presence of wealthy women by writing to them. In so doing he hides the presence of less prestigious people, like slaves; this is a common strategy, Shelley Matthews has argued, which ancient writers used to argue for the respectability of their socially marginalized communities; see her monograph, *First Converts: Rich Pagan Women and the Rhetoric of Mission in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). However, I

suggest below that his comments, coupled with other kinds of material and textual data, indicate the presence of a sizable new elite in Carthage, a group from which Christian women may have been especially drawn; see notes 127 and 128.

127. See the brief discussion of marriage in Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.4.1–2 and also *Ux.* 2.8.1–9. The possibility that noble women were in Tertullian's Carthaginian community is corroborated by materials outside his corpus as well. D. J. Mattingly has pointed to evidence that under Roman rule, Carthage, and North Africa generally, saw the emergence of successful provincials. Commerce and land-holding opportunities, as well as collaboration with the Roman imperial government, enabled the development of a sizeable elite in this Latinized province, "Africa: A Landscape of Opportunity?," 117–39.
128. That members of this new noble class would join the ranks of the Christians is confirmed by a contemporaneous text from Carthage, the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*. The main figure, Vibia Perpetua, is from a respectable Roman family, perhaps with imperial connections. Perpetua's *nomen*, or the name of her *gens*, her natal family, comes from "Vibius," which betrays her background in a family with citizenship and of the decurial class (that is, the status of a military officer in this key Roman colony). Second, the text states that Perpetua was "of high birth (*honeste nata*) and educated (*instituta*) in a manner befitting a matron who is officially married (*matronaliter nupta*)," confirmed by the fact that she is also attended by her slave, Felicitas (*Mart. Per.* 2.1); cf. Brent Shaw, "The Passion of Perpetua," *Past and Present* 139 (1993), 3–4; see also on well-to-do women as converts to early Christianity, Nicola Denzey, *The Bone Gatherers: The Lost Worlds of Early Christian Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007), 40.

Chapter 4

1. Ter. *Virg.* 16.5 (SC 424: 180–81).
2. The dating of Tertullian's writings continues to be debated; however, for the most in-depth consideration of this issue, see Barnes, *Tertullian*, 30–56. He suggests that *On the Veiling of Virgins* was composed in the early third century, after *On the Apparel of Women 1* and *2*. Given the fact that Tertullian repeats arguments in this treatise from earlier works, I presume that it was composed later in his career as well.
3. Ter. *Virg.* 12.4; Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 33–36.
4. Ter. *Or.* 21–2. Earlier in the same treatise, Tertullian also recommends that men do not cover their heads with their cloaks at prayer and that women dress modestly (citing passages from 1 Tim 2 and 1 Pet 3.1–6) (*Or.* 15 and 20, respectively); see my discussion in the previous chapters.
5. At the outset of *On the Veiling of Virgins*, Tertullian mentions that he already argued for the virgins to veil in Greek (*Virg.* 1.1). In *Or.* 21–2, he also offers an abbreviated version of his argument for women's veiling that is found in *On the Veiling of Virgins*; in which case, he raises the issue as critical in the context of communal prayer.

6. See Charlotte Methuen, "The 'Virgin Widow': A Problematic Social Role for the Early Church?" *HTR* 90 (1997): 285–98. See the discussion below.
7. It is interesting, too, that Tertullian spends considerable time interpreting 1 Corinthians 7 in his writings on marriage and widowhood as well, suggesting that the interpretation of Paul's letter was very much a contested issue within this early Christian community; see Ter. *Exh. Cast*., *Mon*., and *Ux*. 2, for instance.
8. cf. also the discussion of Paul's advice on women's head covering by Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), Chapter 9; also D'Angelo, *Off with Her Head*, passim, who assumes that both Paul and Tertullian have in view women's veiling. Regarding the Roman *palla*, see Chapter 2 as well as the succinct discussion by Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 33–36. Throughout the treatise Tertullian uses the term *velamen* "veil," from the verb *velare* "to cover," rather than referring to the Roman term for a woman's mantle, *palla* or *pallium*. I presume that his terminology of "covering" is drawn from Paul's discussion in 1 Corinthians 11. Paul argues that it is disgraceful if a woman prays and prophesies "with her head uncovered" (ἀκαταλύπτῳ τῇ κεφαλῇ), a phrase translated in the Latin Vulgate as *non capite velato*; see 1 Corinthians 11:5. That Tertullian has the Roman mantle in view, however, is clear when he explicitly refers to that garment, complaining that virgins "throw their *pallium* outside" (*Virg*. 12.4 [SC 424: 170–71]). For references to veiling in antiquity, and early Christianity in particular, see Rosine Lambine, *Le voile des femmes. Un inventaire historique, social, et psychologique* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1999).
9. See Chapter 1 and also Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman,* 36.
10. Ter. *Virg*. 7.2 (SC 424: 152–53).
11. Ter. *Virg*. 9.3 (SC 424: 160–61).
12. See Ter. *Cor*. 14.1; cf. also *Pall*. 5.4 and *Idol*. 18 in which Tertullian discourages Christian men from wearing togas with colored bands denoting political office, and *Or*. 15 where he discourages men from praying with their heads covered by a toga.
13. On this point, see especially Ter. *Idol*. 18 and Ter. *Or*. 15.
14. 1 Cor 11:7 and 14.
15. Nasrallah, *'An Ecstasy of Folly,'* 149.
16. The term Paraclete comes from Jesus' farewell discourse in the Gospel of John in which he promises to send a "helper" in his stead to guide his followers, see John 14:15–17.
17. Scholars have often taken this reference to the Paraclete in order to read *On the Veiling of Virgins* as a treatise shaped by Tertullian's commitment to the New Prophecy, or "Montanism." See, for instance, D'Angelo, *Off with Her Head,* 44–45. For a critique of, and alternative to, approaches that divide Tertullian's corpus into "Montanist" and "Catholic" periods, see Nasrallah *'An Ecstasy of Folly,*' especially 97–100.
18. Ter. *Virg*. 1.9-10 (SC 424: 132–33).

19. Torjesen argues that Tertullian borrows the term *disciplina* from the Roman military. The term denoted shared obedience to a common regime; see *When Women Were Priests*, 163. For a discussion of Tertullian's deployment of the term *disciplina* across his writings, see V. Morel "Le développement de la 'disciplina' sous l'action du Saint-Espirit chez Tertullien," *RHE* 35 (1939): 243–65. For Morel, the term is often contrasted with the immutable *regula fidei* and indicates lived, and vibrant, Christian teaching; see "Le développement de la 'disciplina,'" 246 and 248.
20. See Langlands, *Sexual Morality,* 37–38 and specifically concerning the significance of the "blush" (*rubor*) as linked to shame (*pudor*) and moral propriety at Rome; see Carlin Barton, "The Roman Blush: The Delicate Matter of Self-Control," in *Constructions of the Classical Body*, ed. James I. Porter (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 212–34.
21. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 2.13.3 (SC 173: 164–65).
22. Barton, *The Roman Gaze,* 220; see also Langlands, *Sexual Morality*, 11.
23. Quoted from "Speech Genres and Other Essays," in Allen, *Intertextuality*, 21.
24. Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Diaological Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 349.
25. Gleason, *Making Men*, 58–60; see also Diana Swancutt, "Sexy Stoics," in *A Feminist Companion to Paul*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 42–73.
26. Elizabeth Castelli links this gender economy to philosophical and theological discussions informed by Platonism; see "'I Will Make Mary Male': Pieties of the Body and Gender Transformation of Christian Women in Late Antiquity," in *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, ed. Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub (New York and London: Routledge Press, 1991), 31–32. Daniel Boyarin has also argued that this ancient notion of gender transformation is linked to Platonic anthropology, exemplified in the "dualism" of Philo. See *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 59–64 and "Gender," in *Critical Terms in Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 117–35. Other scholars, however, suggest that the notion of gender transformation as manifest in the material body reflects broader ideas in philosophical and medical literature about the malleability of bodies; e.g., Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 11–15 and Maud Gleason, *Making Men*, passim.
27. Karen King argues that the *Gospel of Mary* uses the Coptic term ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ "person," which is the generic, an equivalent to the Greek term ἄνθρωπος. The Coptic term ϭoout in the *Gospel of Thomas* is nongeneric, however, and must be translated as "male"; see *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle* (Santa Rosa: Polebridge Press, 2003), 60–61.
28. For a summary of different perspectives on the issue of dating and authorship, see Ross Kraemer and Shira Lander, "Perpetua and Felicitas," in *The Early Christian World*, ed. Philip Esler (New York: Routledge Press, 2000), especially pages 1051–1058. Kraemer and Lander ultimately argue against identifying the

sections 3–10 (Musurillo) as Perpetua's diary. Similarly, Thomas Heffernan rejects this ascription; see his article, "Philology and Authorship in *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitas*," *Traditio* 50 (1995): 315–25. Heffernan finds the early sections of the martyrology, specifically 3–10, do not satisfy a philological analysis of the ancient genre of diary. He sees Perpetua's character as a fictive construct, which reflects the interests of the author and his community in regard to Christian civic identity; see especially 324–25. Here I follow the perspective outlined by Brent Shaw in his article "The Passion of Perpetua," 3–45 and the more recent analysis of this diary by Elisabeth Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 85–92. Whether Perpetua "penned" the diary herself or not, I suggest that the initial portion of the martyrology bears important insights for alternative views of female flesh and bodily disciplines when compared to Tertullian's.

29. For a reference to this debate, see Shaw, "The Passion of Perpetua," 32n70, and on dating the martyrology, 3n2.
30. See Maureen Tilley, "The Martyrdom of Perpetua," in *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Commentary*, ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (New York: Crossroad, 1994), 831.
31. cf. Perkins' essay in *Mapping Gender*, which argues that the somatic imagery in the text highlights Perpetua's and Felicitas' maternal bodies. She argues that this emphasis is owing to an extant Christian discourse (as evidenced in Tertullian's works) in which maternal bodies and physical suffering are accorded theological values as imitative of Christ's own human flesh. In Perkins' reading, then, Perpetua's repeated accentuation of her own maternal character fits with the larger theological perspective of the martyr act, leading her to see an editorial hand at work throughout the text. Analysis of Tertullian's view of the body in the previous chapter, however, undercuts Perkins' appraisal of his writings as evidence for the valorization of maternal flesh. Here, too, I am suggesting that Perpetua's attention to her own flesh does not highlight her maternity so much as it serves to indicate her spiritual transformation from matron to martyr.
32. *Mart. Perpet*. 6.8 (Musurillo, 114–15).
33. *Mart. Perpet*. 10.10–15 (Musurillo, 118–19).
34. For a bibliography of feminist readings of this text, see Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, 86n74.
35. Castelli, *Body Guards*, 37; see also Cobb, *Dying to Be Men*, 107.
36. Most recently, Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, 85–92.
37. See Cobb, *Dying To Be Men*, 104. Commentators have also noted that the finale of the text reasserts Perpetua's femininity. In fact, stripped naked in the moment of her martyrdom—to the crowd's horror—Perpetua composed herself by drawing her clothing modestly about her and even tying up her disheveled hair. Cobb does not see this shift as evidence of another editor, but as part of complex representation of Perpetua's gendered character, masculine insofar as she represents Christian morality over and against her Roman over-lords, and feminine in

relation to the male martyrs with whom she dies. Other scholars, however, see traces of conflicting understandings of gender inversion and martyrdom; see Shaw, "The Passion of Perpetua," especially 31.

38. See Elizabeth Castelli, "Virginity and its Meaning for Women's Sexuality in Early Christianity," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2 (1986), especially 67–84 and Gillian Clark, "Bodies and Blood: Late Antique Debate on Martyrdom, Virginity, and Resurrection," in *Changing Bodies, Changing Meanings: Studies on the Human Body in Antiquity*, ed. Dominic Monserrat (London and New York: Routledge University Press, 1997), 99–115.
39. Gail P. C. Streete, *Redeemed Bodies: Women Martyrs in Early Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 12.
40. See Castelli, *Body Guards*, 44–45.
41. See Ter. *Bapt*. 17. On the textual problems related to this passage, see Stephen Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 7–8 and 7n20.
42. For a discussion of *On the Veiling of Virgins* as it relates to asceticism and gender performance in early Christian communities broadly, see Upson-Saia *Early Christian Dress*, 61–69.
43. *Jos. Asen.* 15.1–2; trans. Charlesworth (1972: 116–19).
44. Virginia Burrus, "Word and Flesh: The Bodies and Sexuality of Ascetic Women in Christian Antiquity," *JFSR* 10 (1994), 30. Burrus cites an earlier article by Patricia Cox Miller, "The Devil's Gateway: An Eros of Dreams in the Martyrdom of Perpetua," *Dreaming 2* (1992), 62.
45. My wording here comes from Burrus, "Word and Flesh," see 30.
46. See ibid., 45n29.
47. Ibid., 32.
48. Methuen, "The 'Virgin Widow,'" 286–87.
49. Susanna Elm, *'Virgins of God': The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 181–82.
50. Like the Roman authors that I trace in Chapter 1, Tertullian's rhetoric in *On the Veiling of Virgins* claims that veiling protocols were strictly followed among Roman women so that widows and married women, as fitting their social and sexual role, continued to veil inside the church (see, for instance, *Virg*. 9.3, 11.1–9, and 14.1–3). On my reading such passages are prescriptive rather than descriptive of women's clothing practices. It seems likely that veiling was not universally practiced by married women either, a possibility likely reflected in Tertullian appeal to married women at the end of the treatise, to persist in wearing the *palla* (*Virg*. 17.1).
51. Tertullian cites 1 Timothy 5:9 to suggest that only women with one husband and over the age of sixty can occupy the rank of widow. Yet Methuen notes that 1 Timothy's text likewise suggests fluid understandings of this office, and not a fixed ecclesiastical structure; see Methuen, "The Virgin Widow," 290.
52. Ibid., 296.

53. Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 237–38.
54. Richlin, *Off with Her Head*, 190–91.
55. Ibid., 191.
56. See Levine, *Off with Her Head*, 91–96.
57. See the discussion in Llewellyn-Jones, *Aphrodite's Tortoise,* 238–40.
58. Ter. *Virg*. 12.1 (SC 424: 168–69).
59. Ter. *Virg*. 17.3 (SC 424: 182–83).
60. See Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 246–47.
61. Ter. *Virg*. 17.6 (SC 424: 182–85).
62. D'Angelo, *Off with Her Head*, 148.
63. In fact, Tertullian argues that virgins, like all women, are prohibited from preaching and baptizing (*Virg*. 9.1–9).
64. Burrus, "Word and Flesh," 33.
65. Scholars of colonialism have noted a similar erotic tension in the way Western writers and artists represented veiled Muslim women. These women are presumptively off-limits, sexually exclusive, yet are repeatedly sexualized in Western representations. Such representations constitute these women's bodies as rightful outlets for the colonializers' desires. See Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, trans. Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 14.
66. Dyan Elliot, "Tertullian, the Angelic Life, and the Bride of Christ," in *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives*, ed. Lisa M. Bitel and Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 29.
67. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self*, 58–67.
68. Plut. *Quaest. conv*. 681e-f (Loeb Clement and Hoffleit, 1969).
69. Plutarch does mention the potency of *eidola* (images cast off the object that enter the eye), but he ultimately suggests that the agency of the evil eye—what impacts another's soul—comes from the image that penetrates the eye through *pneuma*, see *Quaest. conv*. 683a-b; cf. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self,* 145–46.
70. Ibid., 149.
71. Ibid., 144.
72. Museum of Naples, inv. 27741; cf. the discussion of this and similar phallic imagery by John Clarke, *Roman Sex 100 BC–AD 250* (New York: Harry N. Adams Publishers, 2003), 96–109.
73. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self,* 147.
74. Ter. *Virg*. 15.2 (SC 424: 178–79).
75. Matthew Dickie, "The Fathers of the Church and the Evil Eye," in *Byzantine Magic*, ed. Henry Macguire (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 27.
76. Ter. *Virg*. 3.7 (SC 424: 138–39).
77. Goldhill uses this expression to refer to depictions of the lovers' gaze in Achilles Tatius' novel; see *Being Greek under Rome*, 169.
78. Ter. *Virg*. 14.10 (SC 424: 176–77).
79. Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self*, 94–95.
80. Ibid., 164 and 175; on the rhetor, see Gleason, *Making Men,* passim.

81. D'Angelo, *Off with Her Head,* 147.
82. Ter. *Virg.* 2.5 (SC 424: 134–35).
83. Elizabeth Clark, "Sex, Shame, and Rhetoric: En-gendering Early Christian Ethics," *JAAR* 52 (1991): 221–45.
84. Ter. *Virg.* 16.5 (SC 424: 180–81).
85. Butler, *Undoing Gender,* 50.
86. Hoodfar, *Women and Religion,* 421.

Epilogue

1. *Cult. fem. 2.3.3* (SC 173: 106–07).
2. See, for instance, Harlow, "Clothes Maketh the Man," 63, and my discussion in the Introduction.
3. Fredouille, *Tertullien et la conversion,* 460–61.
4. See the Introduction, n35.
5. Ter. *Cult. fem.* 1.1.2 (SC 173: 42–44).
6. At the heart of her critique is that a number of scholars and theologians see von Balthasar's writings as resource, particularly for a "positive" view of sexuality, however, they have missed how deep the misogyny and violence runs in his thought; see for example, *New Catholic Feminism: Theology and Theory* (London: Routledge Press, 2006), 182. Having laid out these aspects of his thought, Beattie asks this haunting question (one that rings true of my own experiences excavating Tertullian's corpus): " . . . to read Balthasar as a woman, informed by feminist consciousness, is to experience a form of rhetorical sexual abuse that has profound consequences for the ways in which a woman as body might situate herself in the story of salvation. I wonder how many women readers have felt assailed reading some of the quotations in this chapter? Even as I felt compelled to include them for the sake of strengthening my argument, I have felt myself recoiling in dismay . . . " 183.
7. Ibid., 169.
8. Some sociological approaches to dress leave the impression that dress codes are primarily, or perhaps best, understood as a means of social control; see, for example, Beth Graybill and Linda B. Arthur, "The Social Control of Women's Bodies in Two Mennonite Communities," in *Religion, Dress, and the Body*, edited by Linda B. Arthur (Oxford: Oxford Berg Press, 1999), 9–29. But those approaches stop short of extending feminist insights that would have us consider how those existing under social constraints might resist them, or in fact conceptualize them in ways that are ultimately outside the control of those who initiate and attempt to police them. This point has most recently been made by a number of scholars of Islam in regard to women's veiling, which demonstrates local and contextual variance and a resistance to "outside" attempts to delimit or police its symbolic value, see for instance, El-Guindi, *Veil: Modesty, Privacy, and Resistance*, and more recently Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, especially 155–63.

9. Kaori O'Connor citing Jane Schneider, "The Other Half: The Material Culture of New Fibres," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2005), 41. O'Connor's article deals explicitly with the material of dress, cloth, and not acts of dressing.
10. See the Introduction to this study for discussions on dress theory and semiotic approaches.
11. Similarly, Denzey argues that this equation between women and sin is not evident in women's own funerary art or epitaphs in the Roman catacombs. For Denzey, these images of women are important parts of the constructive memory commissioned and preserved by women whose sacred space very often included these intimate burial sites that housed familial tombs. Particularly enticing are Denzey's comments about funerary inscriptions, which are worth quoting: " . . . nowhere do we see any indication from Christian funerary inscriptions that women stood closer to death, not that their flesh had been vitiated by sin." She continues: "In terms of Christian funerary art, the only thing we can say about the connection between women, sin, and death is that we find in the Christian catacombs a remarkably disproportionate number of images of dead women . . . considering that women played active roles as patrons of burial lands, it perhaps comes as little surprise that they are featured prominently in catacomb art as they are"; see *The Bone Gatherers,* 81–82. In a similar vein, Burrus examines the conception of virginity in two texts, the *Acts of Thecla* and a letter to Marcella, which reflect more closely women's own self-understanding (as compared to what we find in patristic writers). See Chapter 4 for my treatment of the *Acts of Thecla* particularly in her article "Word and Flesh," 45–50.
12. Cultural anthropologists, for instance, rightly point out that dress is not simply a performance through which one can determine the "impact" they have on others. Often the constraints of the material garments themselves, the contexts in which they are worn, the people with whom one interacts while in them, can "prevent" this kind of straightforward image production. Dressing the body does, in short, demonstrate an exercise of "agency," but the "intention" behind the act is not the only constituent determining self presentation; see Sophie Woodward, "Aesthetics of the Self," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, 21–39.

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