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BY

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B.A., University of New Mexico, 2008
M.A., Comparative Literatures and Cultural Studies, University of New Mexico, 2012

THESIS

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Lee, and my sister, Tequila Jane.

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Lorenzo Garcia, Jr., and Assistant Professor Tanya Ivanova-Sullivan.

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ABSTRACT

The Romans of the Classical Era (circa 100 B.C.E. to 15 C.E.) had a social, religious, and legal structure that was vastly different from that of modern Western societies. On account of this difference and especially due to the influence of the Christian religion, many Roman concepts have been misunderstood and mistranslated. This thesis analyzes the Latin word **pius** along with its nominal and adverbial derivatives in ancient literature to try to understand how the concept actually worked in Roman cognition. Perhaps due to the fact that words like "pity," "pious," and "piety" all derive from **pius,** the way it is translated into English often reflects less an understanding of how the Romans used it and more and understanding of the way in which Christians used it. The poets Catullus and Vergil and the historian Livy are the chief sources for this analysis.

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Introduction

The Problem with Pius

The Latin adjective **pius** is among the most difficult to translate into English because it represents an underlying cultural norm which does not exist as a semantic frame[1] in English. From it and its derivatives we have inherited words such as "pious" (**pius**), "piety" and "pity" (**pietas**), but they are rarely sufficient for translation. In English, this cluster of words essentially exemplifies a one-sided cultural frame involving duty to one's god ("piousness") or a state of suffering caused by duty to that god ("piety") – suffering that requires sympathy ("pity").[2] As this thesis sets out to demonstrate, this one-sided cultural frame is definitely not the case in Latin.

A dictionary like Lewis and Short's *A Latin Dictionary* tries, in an exceptionally small space, to define the word **pius**. Despite how old the book is and despite that it was based on an even older German example, *Wörterbuch der Lateinischen Sprache* by Wilhelm Freund,[3] it is methodologically sound and furthermore internally consistent. Freund's *Wörterbuch* itself is subtitled, "nach historisch-genetischen Principien mit steter Berücksichtigung der Grammatik, Synonymik, und Altertumskunde Nebst mehreren Beilagen linguistischen und archäologischen Inhalts" or "according to historical-genetic principles with continuous

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[1] Croft and Cruse: 2004, 8. "A speaker produces words and constructions in a text as tools for a particular activity, namely to evoke a particular understanding; the hearer's task is to figure out the activity those tools were intended for, namely to invoke that understanding. That is, words and constructions evoke an understanding, or more specifically a frame; a hearer invokes a frame upon hearing an utterance in order to understand it."

[2] Vaan 2008: 468. In English, the word ultimately takes its meaning from duty to the Judeo-Christian god. As I understand pity, it reflects the early Christian ideas of asceticism. Individuals would cast off the needs of the body (food, clothes, money, property, *et cetera*). Further, it may reflect the idea of helping the poor. I do not know if one idea is the extension of the other, but it is clearly pre-historic. It remains very well attested in Italic languages and may even be cognate with an extremely old Indo-European root that forms words in the cluster *purus* ("clean").

[3] http://www.richardwolf.de/latein/freund.htm

consideration of the grammar, synonymy, and archaeology along with various inserts of linguistic and archaeological content" (my translation). The principles of scientific methodology were applied to these dictionaries with great effect. Since this thesis will deal specifically with the word *pius*, it is appropriate to reproduce the entire entry.[4]

pius (written PIIVS, Inscr. Viscont. Monum. Degli Scip. tab. 6, n. 1; cf. Cic. Quint. 1, 4, 11), a, um (voc. pie: o crucifer bone, lucisator Omnipotens pie, Prud. Cath. 3, 1.

—Comp. only magis pius; cf. Charis. pp. 88 and 130 P.

—Sup.: piissimus, used by Antonius, and condemned by Cicero, as: verbum omnino nullum in linguā Latinā, Cic. Phil. 13, 19, 43; but freq. in the post-Aug. per., e. g. Sen. Contr. 4, 27 med.; id. Consol. ad Polyb. 26 med.; Tac. Agr. 43; Curt. 9, 6, 17; Flor. 4, 7, 15; Inscr. Orell. 418 et saep. From rare form PIENS, found in inscriptions, Murat. 1624, 4; Mus. Ver. 129, 3 Maff., is derived another form of the sup., PIENTISSIMVS, Inscr. Orell. 200; 203; 3592), adj. etym. dub.; often referred to τίω, τιμάω, that acts according to duty, dutiful; esp. that performs what is due to the gods and religion in general, to parrents, kindred, teachers, country; pious, devout, conscientious, affectionate, tender, kind, good, grateful, respectful, loyal, patriotic, etc. (of persons and things): si quis pius est, Plaut. Rud. prol. 26: uxor pia et pudica, id. Am. 5, 1, 33: Capus ... pium ex se Anchisen generat, Enn. ap. Philarg. ad Verg. G. 3, 35 (Ann. v. 31 Vahl.): (deos) piorum et impiorum habere rationem, Cic. Leg. 2, 7, 15; id. Rep. 6, 15, 15: di meliora piis, Verg. G. 3, 513: poeta, Cat. 16, 5: pii vates. Verg. A. 6, 662; cf.: pio vatis ab ore, Ov. F. 3, 326.

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[4] The *Oxford English Dictionary* is furthermore a revised edition of Lewis and Short's *A Latin Dictionary*. The entries are similar.

—So as subst. freq. pii, of the departed, the blessed: piorum sedes, Cic. Phil. 14, 12: arva piorum, Ov. M. 11, 62: cf. Bentley on Hor. C. 3, 4, 6.

—Of things having reference to religion: far, Hor. C. 3, 23, 20: tura, Ov. H. 7, 24; 21, 7: luci, sacred, holy, Hor. C. 3, 4, 6: pia et aeterna pax, a conscientiously kept and eternal peace, Cic. Balb. 16, 35: Poeni homines immolare pium esse duxerunt, id. Rep. 3, 9; cf. Ov. Tr. 1, 2, 96: ore pio, id. M. 7, 172; so, quosque pium est adhibere deos, id. F. 4, 829.

— As subst.: pium, i, n.: stabit pro signis jusque piumque tuis, justice and equity, Ov. A. A. 1, 200; id. H. 8, 4.

—Of respectful, affectionate conduct towards parents, etc.: pius in parentes, Cic. Off. 3, 23, 90: pius Aeneas, on account of his filial love for Anchises, Verg. A. 1, 220; 305; 378; 4, 393; 5, 26 et saep.; cf.: seniorque parens, pia sarcina nati, Ov. H. 7, 107; id. M. 7, 482: pius dolor, Cic. Sest. 2: impietate pia est, she is affectionate (towards her brothers) through want of affection (for her son), her sisterly triumphed over her maternal love, Ov. M. 8, 477: quo pius affectu Castora frater amat, id. Tr. 4, 5, 30: metus, of a wife for her husband, id. M. 11, 389: bellum, waged for one's country or allies, Liv. 30, 31; 39, 36; Sil. 15, 162.

— Transf., in gen. Honest, upright, honorable (very rare): pius quaestus, Cato, R. R. praef.

— Benevolent, kind, gentle, gracious (postAug.): clementia patrem tuum in primis Pii nomine ornavit, M. Aurel. ap. Vulcat. Gallic. in Avid. Cass. 11: pius enim et clemens es, Dominus Deus, Vulg. 2 Par. 30, 9; id. Ecclus. 2, 13.

—Pius, a title of the emperors after M. Antoninus, on coins and inscrr.; v. Eckh. D. N. 7, p. 36; 8, p. 453; Inscr. Orell. 840 sq.

—Poet., of a wine-jar: testa, my kindly jar, = benigna, Hor. C. 3, 21, 4.

—Hence, adv.: piē, piously, religiously, dutifully, affectionately: pie sancteque colere deos, Cic. N. D. 1, 20, 56; 1, 17, 45; id. Att. 6, 7, 1: memoriam nostri pie inviolateque servabitis, id. Sen. 22, 81: metuo ne scelerate dicam in te, quod pro Milone dicam pie, id. Mil. 38, 103: pie lugere, id. de Or. 2, 40, 167; Ov. H. 15, 153.

—Sup.: quod utrumque piissime tulit, Sen. Cons. ad Polyb. 34, 4.

It should be noted how logically this entry is organized. Such organization confirms Charles T. Lewis' dedication to Freund's original principal of "historical-genetic principles" (as noted above). It is so well organized, in fact, that a network diagram made of radial categories[5] could be created from the information contained within. However, the entry alone will suffice in this instance because one goal of this analysis is to synthesize a network diagram based on intense study of *pius* in primary texts.

The dictionary offers many possible words and periphrases to translate *pius*: "that acts according to duty," "dutiful," "pious," "devout," "conscientious," "affectionate," "tender," "kind," "good," "grateful," "respectful," "loyal," and "patriotic." Those are the simple definitions from the first summary paragraph. Subsequent paragraphs provide further possibilities. *Pia pax* should be translated as "conscientiously kept … peace." Subsequently it becomes clear that *pius in parentes* means "respectful, affectionate conduct towards parents." Furthermore, a woman can be *pius* (here the author wants "affectionate") toward her brothers; a wife can be *pius* towards her husband; and so forth.

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[5] Lakoff 1999: 91

Perhaps unintentionally to add confusion into the mix, **pius** can also mean "honest,"

"upright," "honorable" and then later even "benevolent," "kind," "gentle," and "gracious."

In one of his poems, Horace once used this curious adjective to describe his jug of wine,

which the authors have rendered as "my kindly jar."[6]

The authors of the dictionary did not even make the attempt to translate some

concepts – they merely provided an example. In the section subtitled "of things having

reference to religion" are found *far* (grain) and then *tura* (plural of *tūs*, incense). It seems a

bit difficult to make an attempt to give grain and incense *human* qualities such as "pious" or

"devoted" or "honest." The reader of a Latin text is then forced to think up something far

afield, perhaps something as simple as "good" or as marked as "sacred."

The casual reader of Latin who has used this dictionary to define *pius* will now find

himself or herself in a quandary. What does *pius* really mean? A better way to state the

question might be: What is the core definition of *pius*? Based on its orthography, we might

guess that it is related to the English word "pious." That turns out to be true – they are

etymologically related. "Pious" is easy enough to understand, but it will soon become clear

that "pious" is probably the least useful way to translate *pius.* A further complication arises

when we take into account the English reflex "pity" from the abstract nominal form *pietas*.

"Pity" and "piousness" seem irreconcilable and perhaps even antithetical. This analysis sets

out to demonstrate that the historical relationship of these two words in Latin culture

proves that these two contradictory words come from a common ancestor.

Thus the semantic range of *pius* seems wide and variable. How can one simple

adjective have such an expansive semantic field? It seems upon summary inspection that

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[6] Horace (Marshall) 1911: 79 (*Odes* 3.21)

two possibilities exist. The first possibility is that the Romans did not have a strong grasp of the meaning of this word, an explanation that seems unlikely because the word has a continuous history of use from the time of archaic Latin inscriptions down to religious and philosophical writings at the very end of the Empire (and, naturally, beyond into the Christian era). The second possibility is that English speakers do not have a firm grasp of the meaning of the word. This seems to be a more likely scenario, given that Latin is a foreign language that naturally developed sometime around 2,500 years ago. Unfortunately, the dichotomy is not easy to settle since for the most part there are no native speakers of Latin. Linguists often comment that there are no Romans left who can be interviewed for their native insight into their own language, making a thorough and detailed inspection of the literature the best method for resolution of this translation problem.

The more important issue, however, is not that the Romans lived such a long time ago, but rather that their culture was fundamentally different from anything that likely exists in the modern world. Truly, the Romans did lend their cultural heritage (itself often borrowed and adapted from Greece, Etruria, Gaul, Egypt, and so on) to Western Civilization: examples include law, medicine, philosophy, and architecture. Yet among the very many institutions that have been inherited from the Romans, there is one missing that is particularly important: religion. Roman religion, for the most part, simply vanished from the cultural milieu of early antiquity. It was replaced wholesale by Christianity – not without a fight, of course, but in a short period of time, the Roman Empire converted itself into the Holy Roman Empire. This fact – that Roman religion was laid to rest sometime after the year 300 C.E. – seems significant in the understanding of words like *pius* and *pietas*. It also helps to explain why "pious" and "pity" – the English reflexes of those two words – are so

conceptually different from each other and both generally serve as inadequate translations for their parent terms.

The ultimate goal of this analysis, then, is to provide an understanding of the Latin word *pius* in relation to its "untranslatability" into English. In order to do this, two basic questions need to be answered. First, how did the Romans understand and use the word *pius*? This will be accomplished through close readings of primary Latin texts (with confirmation from secondary sources and translations) from a variety of authors using a variety of analytical methods familiar to both philologists and linguists. The second question is, what is the difference between Roman culture (specifically its religion) and modern Western cultures (specifically the English speaking varieties) that causes such cognitive dissonance in translating the word *pius*? This will be accomplished by aggregation of ideas mainly from secondary sources that attempt to elucidate modern concepts of ancient Roman culture and religion.

Methodology and Sources

In the following chapters, the authors to be covered specifically are Catullus, Vergil, and Livy. I propose that these authors adequately represent the "golden" era of Latin literature before the advent of Christianity. Catullus seems like the irreverent poet, casting off social norms and eschewing religion – an assumption that turns out to be quite the reverse. Vergil seems to be the pinnacle of Roman myth writers, but scholars are actually split between two ideas: he was the poet laureate of Rome who believed deeply in his writings or he was an oppressed artist who subversively expressed himself through subtle political jabs at the Augustan regime. Finally, Livy can be easily perceived as a political lackey, writing nothing but nationalistic propaganda in favor of Rome. In fact, scholars are

also split on his position, but today's dominant research indicates that he was rather good at subjective historiography – at least within the context of his own reality.

In the end, it does not really matter which authors were chosen for this analysis. The point of this analysis is to determine what the *possible* uses of **pius** and its derivatives are. Whether or not the truth statements of Catullus, Vergil, and Livy are in fact true is irrelevant to the construction of the full semantic domain of **pius**. Pertaining to such a goal, this analysis would have been more complete by including *all* the usages of **pius**. However, in the interest of time and resources, I feel that these three authors provide a sufficiently wide cross-section of classical Latin literature to provide a thorough analysis.

The methodology employed here will essentially be a subjective glance at the context of a series of passages from these three authors. Some contexts are longer or shorter as necessary or limited by the length of the text.

For the purpose of searching texts and compiling statistics, the texts of these authors came from the Packard Humanities Institute[7] and The Latin Library.[8] Searches were performed primarily using Diogenes software[9] and Numen – The Latin Lexicon.[10] Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own. For the sections of text quoted in this thesis, all passages are taken from specific published editions, i.e., Goold's updated edition of Postgate's translation of Catullus (Loeb), Goold's updated edition of Fairclough's Vergil (Loeb), and Foster's translation of Livy (Loeb).

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[7] http://latin.packhum.org/
[8] http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/
[9] http://www.dur.ac.uk/p.j.heslin/Software/Diogenes/
[10] http://latinlexicon.org/

A Summary of Pius in Roman Authors

Table 1: Adjectives & Adverbs	pius	%	pie	%	impius	%	impie	%
Caesar	0		0		0		0	
Catullus	7	2.1%	0		6	2.9%	0	
Cicero	35	10.4%	24	70.6%	74	36.1%	11	64.7%
Lucretius	1	0.3%	0		0		0	
Propertius	13	3.8%	0		2	1.0%	0	
Tibullus	6	1.8%	1	2.9%	8	3.9%	0	
Varro	2	0.6%	0		1	0.5%	0	
Vergil	38	11.2%	0		14	6.8%	0	
Horace	13	3.8%	0		20	9.8%	0	
Livy	21	6.2%	4	11.8%	12	5.9%	3	17.6%
Ovid	140	41.4%	1	2.9%	41	20.0%	0	
Petronius	2	0.6%	0		1	0.5%	0	
Pliny Secundus	2	0.6%	0		3	1.5%	0	
Apuleius	11	3.3%	1	2.9%	4	2.0%	1	5.9%
Juvenal	1	0.3%	0		0		0	
Martial	27	8.0%	0		6	2.9%	0	
Pliny Caecilius	6	1.8%	1	2.9%	0		1	5.9%
Suetonius	6	1.8%	1	2.9%	4	2.0%	1	5.9%
Tacitus	3	0.9%	0		2	1.0%	0	
Cato	1	0.3%	0		0		0	
Plautus	2	0.6%	0		5	2.4%	0	
Terence	1	0.3%	1	2.9%	2	1.0%	0	
Totals	338		34		205		17	

Table 2: Nouns	pietas	%	impietas	%	piaculum	%
Caesar	1	0.2%	0		0	
Catullus	3	0.7%	0		0	
Cicero	150	36.3%	5	33.3%	2	3.1%
Lucretius	3	0.7%	0		0	
Propertius	3	0.7%	0		0	
Tibullus	0		0		0	
Varro	1	0.2%	1	6.7%	2	3.1%
Vergil	22	5.3%	0		3	4.7%
Horace	5	1.2%	0		2	3.1%
Livy	22	5.3%	0		31	48.4%
Ovid	74	17.9%	2	13.3%	1	1.6%
Petronius	1	0.2%	0		0	
Pliny Secundus	7	1.7%	0		4	6.3%
Apuleius	16	3.9%	0		3	4.7%
Juvenal	0		0		1	1.6%
Martial	11	2.7%	0		0	
Pliny Caecilius	36	8.7%	3	20.0%	2	3.1%
Suetonius	11	2.7%	1	6.7%	1	1.6%
Tacitus	20	4.8%	1	6.7%	5	7.8%
Cato	0		0		6	9.4%
Plautus	22	5.3%	2	13.3%	1	1.6%
Terence	5	1.2%	0		0	
Totals	413		15		64	

Above are two frequency tables of the nouns, adjectives, and adverbs related to

pius.[11] Some Roman authors used ***pius*** and its derivatives frequently, while others hardly

ever or never used it at all. This is a distribution summary based on searches using the

Packard Humanities Institute's Latin corpus. Many lesser known authors, especially authors

whose extant works are fragmentary and who are mainly commentators, antiquarians, and

philologists (e.g. Gellius), have been left out of the reckoning.

Verbs in the ***pius*** family (***pio, impio, expio***) are not represented here because the

bulk of useful information from the nouns, adjectives, and adverbs alone is sufficient to

perform this analysis.

The words in these charts also prove that their usage goes back to the very

beginnings of Roman literature as demonstrated by the comic playwright Plautus (*floruit*

circa 200 B.C.E.). Although not represented in these tables, the fragments of Naevius (circa

270-201 B.C.E.) further reveal a few usages that he probably wrote down around 235 B.C.E.

Excluding the evidence from inscriptions, this family of words must therefore predate Latin

literature. Furthermore, the full range of words in use in Plautus (including the abstract

pietas, the negated versions ***impius*** and ***impietas***, the diminutive ***piaculum***, and the

denominative verbs ***pio, impio, expio***) indicates that this word family had a history in the

language long enough to bloom into a functional family tree.

One surprising fact is that neither Caesar nor Augustus was fond of the ***pius*** family of

words. In fact, Augustus is not represented in the tables above at all because of their

paucity. Cicero, on the other hand, tends to represent a very large percentage of the usages

of the ***pius*** family. One might wonder whether this is simply a function of the *volume* of his

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[11] This data was aggregated from the Packard Humanities Institute's Latin Corpus.

extant works. This is quite possible in the case of Augustus, whose entire extant corpus is a mere 6,000 words long. However, both Caesar's and Cicero's works are voluminous. Cicero represents the larger of the two – exactly how much larger has not been calculated. A quick guess reckons approximately 50,000 words for Caesar and 250,000 words for Cicero. Nonetheless, despite the five-times larger corpus, the relationship of usage is clear. Caesar was not fond of using the words in the *pius* family, whereas they were some of Cicero's favorite words. This would change slightly if this thesis included the verbs – a preliminary study of the verbs has indicated that Caesar (and Livy) used the *participles* much more frequently than the nouns or adjectives.

The *pius* adjectives (including the negatived *impius*) are represented in large part by the Augustan poets. In fact, they alone account for nearly 60% of the usages of *pius* in Latin (although they represent a much smaller percentage of the Latin corpus as a whole). Ovid was particularly enamored with *pius* as an adjective – whether because it was metrically useful, useful in descriptions of Greek myths – or both – is an interesting question for scholars of Ovidian poetics.

A fact that does not come as a surprise is that a technical writer like Vitruvius is not represented here. This seems to be the case because of the fact that the scope of the *pius* word family deals mainly with varying sociological relationships between individuals, the state, and divine powers. The same is true of other technical writers. Cato, who was primarily concerned with correct agricultural procedure, did not use the *pius* words often. Although Cato was known as a great orator, very few of his speeches have survived and thus all that remains are his technical writings.

On the contrary, Livy, whose corpus is one of the largest of all the Roman writers (perhaps a million words extant or more), employs the *pius* family of words relatively rarely. His body of extant work seems to be quadruple (or more) that of Cicero, while at the same time his usage of the words represents half that of Cicero. Furthermore, Livy is sometimes known as the foremost authority on Roman religious matters. As stated in the introduction, *pius* has always been assumed to hold a special religious significance. The evidence of Livy's sparing usage seems to indicate that it is not as widely used in religious contexts as once presumed.

Cicero was particularly fond of the abstract noun *pietas*. It is sometimes said that Latin represents a type of language that employs fewer abstract concepts than a language such as ancient Greek. As Coleburn has stated, "Roman writers preferred, as a rule, to convey their meaning in concrete terms – and in particular to put the meaning into *verbs*, whereas English tends to put the meaning into nouns."[12] Perhaps this can help explain why Cicero used *pietas* so much more frequently than other Roman writers. More than anyone else, Cicero was trying to emulate (and often translate) Greek philosophical works. However, this hypothesis does not explain why Lucretius, who was also in a sense emulating Greek philosophical thought, used it ever so sparingly.[13] Furthermore, Cicero rarely used the concrete idea contained in *piaculum* whereas Livy used it more than any other writer.

On the whole, instances of *pius* and its derivatives in the extant Latin corpus are fairly common and have been well established in the language since at least the time of

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[12] Colebourn 1987: 55. It should be noted that this edition is a reprint. Nobody seems to know exactly when the original was published, although the earliest editions seem to suggest the mid-late 19th century.
[13] Lucretius was famously trying to use native Latin words and grammar (which he considered limiting) to recreate Greek ideas. If he were also trying to recreate Latin's taste for concrete verbal ideas, his avoidance of abstract nouns may have been a conscious effort.

Naevius and inferentially much earlier. Although not numerically ranked, both **pius** and

impius appear as two of the essential 1500 Latin words necessary for basic understanding of

the language according to Paul Bernard Diederich.[14] Accordingly, whatever **pius** actually

meant, the assumption can be made that it was an important concept in Roman culture.

The Origin and History of Pius

Most Latin inscriptions are undated, but the dictionary entry for **pius** indicates an

old inscriptional form of the word with the spelling *PIENS*. At first glance, this form might

suggest some sort of participle from the verb **pio**. Unfortunately, the verb **pio** is a 1$^{\text{st}}$

conjugation verb with an "a"-grade theme vowel and the great bulk of this class of verbs is

denominative, meaning the verb itself was formed from the nominal idea contained in **pius**.

The adjectival suffix *–ens* almost exclusively indicates a participial form. This form is difficult

to explain if it is not a false orthography.

Another old inscriptional form gives *PIIUS*. The doubling of the "i" vowel suggests

that the word was sometimes spoken with a consonantal glide, as in "pi-yus".

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[14] Diederich, *The Frequency of Latin Words and their Endings*, http://users.erols.com/whitaker/freq.htm.

Catullus

Catullus came from a wealthy family[15] whose hometown, Verona, in 88 B.C.E. had been granted the status of Roman citizenship after the Social Wars. His was the first generation after those tumultuous times to enjoy the "unity" of the Italian peninsula. It seems he relocated to Rome early – perhaps at the age of twenty or around 62 B.C.E. This placed him squarely as a contemporary of Lucretius, Cicero, and Caesar. In fact Caesar was a family friend.[16] Catullus wrote at the beginning of the Classical era – the time of "modern" (meaning "standardized") Latin. Moreover, his neoteric[17] poems – with only a few exceptions – seemed to show less interest in Greek mythology than later Augustan poets. Like many "nugatory" poets of the age, he seemed to push back boldly from traditional Roman conservativeness – and likewise from its martial nature. For the most part, his poems thematically fall into four categories: love poems, *ad hominem* attack poems, poems of sorrow, and hymns to marriage.

Catullus used the adjective ***pius*** seven times in extant poetry. He was only thirty years old when he died, so it is unlikely that his understanding of the semantic domain of this adjective changed drastically during his brief ten-year career as a poet. Based on previous usages by other writers, it seems that none of his usages are novel, except perhaps the usage in poem 16.

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[15] Conte 1999: 142–143

[16] Suetonius (Edwards) 2000: 33 (*Julius Caesar* 73)

[17] Conte 1999: 136–142. Neoteric (from the Greek *neoteroi*) refers to Catullus' generation of poets who adopted lofty Alexandrian styles while rejecting standard Roman themes: the state, war, and Roman history. Their poems were lighter and more personal, reflecting a lifestyle freed from the expectation of public duty.

Gender Roles and Sexuality

Since there is no way of knowing the actual chronology of his poems, it seems easiest to address his usages in order of appearance, starting with poem 16.

Pedicabo ego vos et irrumabo,
Aureli pathice et cinaede Furi,
qui me ex versiculis meis putastis,
quod sunt molliculi, parum pudicum.
nam castum esse decet <u>pium</u> poetam   *5*
ipsum, versiculos nihil necesse est;
qui tum denique habent salem ac leporem,
si sunt molliculi ac parum pudici,
et quod pruriat incitare possunt,
non dico pueris, sed his pilosis   *10*
qui duros nequeunt movere lumbos.
vos, quod milia multa basiorum
legistis, male me marem putatis?
pedicabo ego vos et irrumabo.
(Catullus 16)

Catullus has occasionally been accused of obscenity – by modern readers and by ancients alike. This poem demonstrates how he was able to lash out against his critics.

I'm going to ass-rape you both and face-fuck you,
Aurelius you faggot and you sissy Furius.
You thought I was a little shameful for my little verses
because they're a little bit girly. It's ok
for the ***pius*** poet himself to be modest,
even if it's not necessary for the little verses.
In short they have wit and humor,
even if they are little girly and not modest enough.

> They can cause something to itch –
>
> I'm not talking about "the itch" for boys, but for
>
> these hairy men who can no longer make their
>
> cocks hard. You, because you've read about
>
> my many thousands of kisses, you thought that I
>
> wasn't masculine? I'm going to ass rape you and
>
> face fuck you both.

This poem, among one of Catullus' most lewd, presents a "macho" reaction that is typical of the Roman stereotype of manliness. The context of the poem clearly displays some elements of sexuality, but more importantly the foundation of the poem is rooted in socially constructed gender roles. In his book *Roman Homosexuality*, Craig Williams pointed out critically that the Roman male was expected to be the "inserter" or "penetrator" – not just physically but in all walks of life. He wrote, "First and foremost, a self-respecting Roman man must always give the appearance of playing the insertive role in penetrative acts, and not the receptive role."[18] So, a Roman man was expected to assume that role emotionally. Since it was considered socially inappropriate for a man to play the "passive" role in sex or love, Catullus, appearing to be the passive sexual or emotional partner in an earlier poem, needed to assert his dominance.

Based on the typical semantic domain the adjective **pius**, it seems quite out of place here. Often it is used in religious or ritualistic contexts. Assuming that Catullus was not coining a metaphorical usage – for example, the **pius** poet is expected to be a *morally pure* poet – then this odd usage must be part of the normal semantic range of **pius**. Perhaps by

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[18] Williams 2010: 18

broadening its presumed domain to include not only religious bonds enforced by ritual but also social contracts such as gender roles, sense can be made of this atypical usage.

Postgate's translation of this is a bit outmoded and perhaps out of place: "For the sacred poet ought to be chaste himself, though his poems need not be so."[19] Goold updated Postgate's Loeb edition of Catullus in 1988, but meticulously noted that he was "taking care to preserve the style of the original translations"[20] from 1913. "Sacred" in this context makes too many assumptions about the poet Catullus, poets in general, and the role of poets in Roman religion, none of which frankly seem to make sense (except perhaps in some Romantic revisionist's estimation). Some of the questions raised by "sacred" are: Were Roman poets considered "sacred?" Did Roman poets have a place in religion rituals? Did Catullus consider himself a "sacred" poet or a poet in the "sacred" tradition? The questions are valid, of course, but based on what is known about Catullus, Roman poets, and Roman religion in general, the easiest subjective answer appears to be "not likely," making "sacred" an inappropriate choice in this context.

A final note on the **pius** poet: it is possible that this usage is an epithet, perhaps a calque[21] from a Greek example, something like an original *sebas poieita*. Greek poets were much more tied to Greek identity and religion than their Roman equivalents.

Authority and Rank

> *Quis hoc potest videre, quis potest pati,*
> *nisi impudicus et vorax et aleo,*
> *Mamurram habere quod Comata Gallia*

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[19] Catullus (Postgate) 1988: 23
[20] Catullus (Postgate) 1988: i
[21] In linguistic jargon, a *calque* is otherwise known as a *loan translation*. A calque happens when the individual words of a phrase or compound are translated into the target language. An English example is *skyscraper*, which becomes *Wolkenkratzer* in German (*Wolken = clouds*, *kratzer = scratcher*).

habebat ante et ultima Britannia?

cinaede Romule haec videbis et feres?   *5*

et ille nunc superbus et superfluens

perambulabit omnium cubilia,

ut albulus columbus aut Adoneus?

cinaede Romule, haec videbis et feres?

es impudicus et vorax et aleo.   *10*

eone nomine, imperator unice,

fuisti in ultima occidentis insula,

ut ista vestra diffututa mentula

ducenties comesset aut trecenties?

quid est alid sinistra liberalitas?   *15*

parum expatravit an parum elluatus est?

paterna prima lancinata sunt bona,

secunda praeda Pontica, inde tertia

Hibera, quam scit amnis aurifer Tagus:

nunc Galliae timetur et Britanniae.   *20*

quid hunc malum fovetis? aut quid hic potest

nisi uncta devorare patrimonia?

*eone nomine urbis o **piissimi**,*

socer generque, perdidistis omnia?

(Catullus 29)

This is an insult poem, directed at a certain Romulus (a sobriquet of Julius Caesar)

for supporting the general Mamurra. Interestingly enough, this is the poem that Suetonius

was referring to when he noted, "As for Valerius Catullus, whose verses about Mamurra had

done lasting damage to his [Caesar's] reputation..."[22] The main problem here is that the

reading **o piissimi** is a conjecture for the manuscript reading **opulentissime**.[23]

> Who can watch this? Who can put up with this
>
> except a shameless, greedy gambler?
>
> Who can tolerate that Mamurra has
>
> what long-haired Gaul and farthest Britain once had?
>
> Oh, boy-toy Romulus, do you watch these things and put up with them?
>
> And now will he walk around everyone's beds, proud and overflowing, like a
>
> whitish dove or like Adonis?
>
> Oh, boy-toy Romulus, do you watch these things and put up with them?
>
> You are a shameless, greedy gambler.
>
> In the name of this, O one and only general,
>
> were you in the last island of the west,
>
> so that that over-fucked cock of yours
>
> might squander twenty or thirty million bucks?
>
> What else is this perverse freedom?
>
> Has he squandered and devoured too little?
>
> His good inheritance is torn to shreds,
>
> and also his favorable windfall from Pontus,
>
> and then finally his third from Spain,
>
> which the gold bearing river Tagus knows.
>
> He (the river?) fears this for both Gaul and Britain.
>
> Why do you favor this evil man?
>
> And can he do nothing except devour sumptuous inheritances?

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[22] Suetonius (Edwards) 2000: 33 (*Julius Caesar* 73)

[23] Ellis 1876: 23. "There is much in this conj. that is attractive, for it would not only easily explain the corruption *opulentissime* we might suppose *o piissime* first became *o pientissime*, then *opulentissime*, as Mr. J. L. G. Mowat has suggested, but would be, as a piece of irony, highly effective as applied to the loving father and son-in-law who were ready to support each other in the worst schemes to secure domination. Yet the arguments against it (summarized by Munro, pp. 102, 103) are so cogent as to have determined its rejection by most recent editors except Riese."

> And in the name of this, O most **_pius_** men of Rome,
>
> father-in-law and son-in-law, did you destroy everything?

Assuming that the emendation is correct, Catullus calls the two men, namely Caesar and Mamurra, **_pius_** ironically. Since they were the leaders of the military at the time, their upper class membership (Senatorial and Equestrian respectively) automatically made them **_pius_** by nature. Nonetheless, Catullus detailed the outrageous ways in which Mamurra squandered resources of his inheritance, his pillaging in Pontus (the lower rim of the Black Sea), and in Spain. According to Cornelius Nepos (by way of Pliny the Elder[24]), Mamurra was fabulously wealthy and used his wealth to build for himself the first house made entirely of marble. The problem with reading **_pius_** here is that Catullus rarely – if ever – employs irony in his poetry. His invective is straightforward and plain, and his jokes are crass and puerile. The original reading **_opulentissime_** (or perhaps **_opulentissimi_**), aside from metrical ambiguities, seems to make sense in the context of the poem. For now, the reading of **_pius_** in this poem will remain spurious and doubtful.

Inclusion and Exclusion

> *Egnatius, quod candidos habet dentes,*
>
> *renidet usquequaque. si ad rei ventumst*
>
> *subsellium, cum orator excitat fletum,*
>
> *renidet ille. si ad **pii** rogum fili*
>
> *lugetur, orba cum flet unicum mater,*   *5*
>
> *renidet ille. quicquid est, ubicumquest,*
>
> *quodcumque agi, renidet. hunc habet morbum,*
>
> *neque elegantem, ut arbitror, neque urbanum.*

---

[24] Pliny (Bostock) 1855: 36.7

quare monendum est te mihi, bone Egnati.

si urbanus esses aut Sabinus aut Tiburs   *10*

aut pinguis Umber aut obesus Etruscus

aut Lanuvinus ater atque dentatus

aut Transpadanus, ut meos quoque attingam,

aut quilubet, qui puriter lavit dentes,

tamen renidere usque quaque te nollem: *15*

nam risu inepto res ineptior nulla est.

nunc Celtiber es: Celtiberia in terra,

quod quisque minxit, hoc sibi solet mane

dentem atque russam defricare gingivam,

ut quo iste vester expolitior dens est,   *20*

hoc te amplius bibisse praedicet loti.

(Catullus 39)

The poem essentially details a man whose teeth are brilliantly white – a man who smiles in good times and bad – anytime, anywhere – even at funerals. The joke happens to be that only a man who brushes his teeth with urine could have such white teeth, and since only people from Celtiberia have such a practice, the man must be a Spanish Gaul. In essence, the poem is a racist portrait of a man from an outlying province.

Egnatius, because he has white teeth,

smiles everywhere. If his seat in court comes up,

when the speaker elicits wailing, he smiles.

If there is wailing at the funeral pyre of a ***pius*** son,

as a bereft mother mourns her one and only, he smiles.

Whatever it is, wherever he is, whatever is done, he smiles.

Illness has him, not taste – in my opinion – not cleverness.

For this reason, good Egnatius, I must give you some advice.

If you were a cultivated Sabine or Tiburian

> or a slick Umbrian or a fat Etruscan
>
> or a swarthy and toothy Lanuvian
>
> or a Transpadane – since I'm calling out my own (people) –
>
> or whomever you please, who washes his teeth clean,
>
> nonetheless I would not wish you to smile continuously anywhere:
>
> nothing is more absurd than an absurd joke.
>
> Even now you are a Celtiberian: in the Celtiberian land,
>
> what each man pisses, with that he is accustomed
>
> to brushing his teeth and red gums early in the morning,
>
> so that that the more polished your tooth is,
>
> that amount of piss I assume you have swallowed.

In this poem, *pius* is used in a nearly prototypical fashion. It occurs in the context of a funeral or in other words a religious rite. A parent and a child (a mother and her son) are present. The son is *pius*, and as such he is undergoing the traditional burial ritual – a wailing female relative and a funeral pyre. The only difficulty here is deciding whether or not the son was *pius* in general or merely towards his mother. The difference might be negligible; perhaps he was both. Unfortunately, since the context of the adjective here is seen through a very small window of Egnatius' life, a bit of speculation about his social status in Rome is in order.

Egnatius does not seem to understand the structure of Roman society and is therefore clearly an outsider. He smiles when others weep, he smiles at a *pius* son's funeral, and indeed he smiles so much that Catullus believes that he is ill. Catullus lists a whole series of Italian ethnicities – all thoroughly Romanized by the time of the writing of this poem: Roman, Sabine, Tiburtine, Umbrian, Etruscan, Lanuvian, and Transpadane. Catullus seems to be saying to Egnatius, "You are a foreigner who doesn't fit into the social structure

of Rome. Your custom is to brush your teeth with urine and that marks you as an outsider."

In the larger context, Catullus is marking the *pius* son's funeral by drawing attention to how

impius Egnatius acts while he is there. A rough correlation might therefore have been drawn

between a person's *pietas* and his or her ability to fit into the Roman social milieu. By

extension, a person's *pietas* might have been be equated with his or her *Romanitas* or

Latinitas.

Through this interpretation, the function of *pietas* is starting to become clearer. It

was not simply a personal attribute that could be put on and taken off like a piece of

fashionable clothing, but rather it was an integral part of the everyday life of a Roman. He or

she was perceived through an ever-present social lens.

Mythology and Divine Circumstances

Poem 68 is the only poem of Catullus that contains two uses of *pius*. However, this is

problematic because of the long disputed nature of the poem[25] – is it one poem or is it

three? It has variously been sliced and recombined as the scholarship progresses.

Regardless, the first instance of *pius* occurs in what is now known as 68b, while the second

occurs in 68c. The poem is quite long (some 160 lines long) so only the immediate context of

the two instances of *pius* will be analyzed.

nil mihi tam valde placeat, Ramnusia virgo,
quod temere invitis suscipiatur eris.
*quam ieiuna **pium** desiderat ara cruorem,*
docta est amisso Laudamia viro,   *80*
coniugis ante coacta novi dimittere collum,
quam veniens una atque altera rursus hiems
noctibus in longis avidum saturasset amorem,

---

[25] Tuplin 1981

> *posset ut abrupto vivere coniugio,*
>
> *quod scibant Parcae non longo tempore abesse,*   *85*
>
> *si miles muros isset ad Iliacos.*
>
> (Catullus 68b)

The immediate context is this: Catullus is addressing this poem to several unnamed

goddesses about the way in which his friend Allius helped him. Basically, during the time of

Catullus' greatest sadness after some recent break-up, Allius let Catullus move into one of

his personal residences and take a mistress there. In the passage above, Catullus is

comparing his mistress to Laodamia (whose husband Protesilaus, a suitor of Helen, went to

Troy). Catullus diverges from his own short story to relate the entire myth.

> It is not pleasing to me at all, maiden of Rhamnus,
>
> that by chance you will be taken up unwillingly.
>
> The hungry altar desires so much ***pius*** bloodshed –
>
> Laodamia was taught this by her lost husband,
>
> forced once already to release the neck of her new spouse,
>
> as one winter and then another comes again,
>
> she would have to satisfy her eager love during long nights,
>
> so that she could live with a broken marriage,
>
> because the Fates know he will be away not long,
>
> if a soldier goes to the walls of Troy.

Catullus does not often make lengthy allusions using mythological themes, but in

this particular poem he does. **Pius** in this poem sits in a typical context, right in the middle of

a religious ritual. Despite this, the usage is somewhat unusual. The adjective normally refers

to a person who acts with **pietas**, but in this case it is modifying *bloodshed* or perhaps even

sacrifice. Closer inspection of the surrounding words reveals that the *altar* is in fact a

metaphor for the will of the "heavenly ones" – those who desire bloodshed. This makes

sense – altars naturally do not have desires because they are objects.[26] In other words, they

have no agency. It is not until slightly later that the "Rape of Helen" is revealed to be the

root cause of this situation. Laodamia is about to lose her new husband Protesilaus to the

Trojan War because he was one of the suitors of Helen. According to his pact with Menelaus

and Agamemnon, he must protect Helen – despite that he just took Laodamia as his new

wife. The *bloodshed* that the *gods* desire, then, is an object bound up as part of the complex

deal made between the gods. Ultimately, Hera and Athena are angry over losing a beauty

contest to Aphrodite. Their desire is to punish Paris, and hence all of Troy's and Priam's

realm. In order to carry out that wish, they must enlist the Greeks to carry out the attack.

The *bloodshed* then is a metaphor for the death of the Greeks and Trojans in upcoming

savage war. The deaths of the soldiers are metonymous with war, and so in a circuitous leap

using metaphors and metonymies, Catullus is really applying the term **pius** to war. War itself

is a type of all-or-nothing social contract – all of the members of a community must agree to

attack a neighbor in order to regain or recapture something that was lost (or in some cases,

to acquire something new). War as a social contract is internally binding, not externally

binding. The two parties in war do not make an agreement – in fact a war between two

parties is precisely the breakdown of agreements between communities. Nonetheless, the

community that makes up each party during a war is in agreement internally to carry out

the war. **Pietas** in the context of war is a normal, binding, social agreement.

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[26] Extreme caution must be taken with this statement. Roman religion was heavily influenced by animistic ideas. For the most part the Romans attributed spiritual embodiment to living things but whether they believed the transference to non-living objects was feasible or natural is unclear.

In the next fragment from poem 68c, Catullus has just finished relating the story of Laodamia and the Trojan War. He prepares to conclude the poem by reiterating his thanks to Allius.

> *hoc tibi, quod potui, confectum carmine munus*
>
> *pro multis, Alli, redditur officiis,* 150
>
> *ne uestrum scabra tangat rubigine nomen*
>
> *haec atque illa dies atque alia atque alia.*
>
> *huc addent diui quam plurima, quae Themis olim*
>
> *antiquis solita est munera ferre **piis**.* 160
>
> (Catullus 68c)

This fragment slips briefly into a religious prayer, after giving advice to avoid the certain pollution of Catullus' hand.

> This finished gift – as much as I could finish it – is given
>
> to you in song for your services. Don't let my scabby ulcer touch
>
> your name, not this day, not that day, not one day, nor another day.
>
> May the gods add to it as much as possible, which once was the
>
> job of Themis to carry the gifts to the ***pius*** ancients.

This passage is highly reminiscent of the formulaic style of ancient Roman ritual songs (***carmina***) such as the *Carmen Arvale*. "The Carmen Arvale is a processional hymn of the *Fratres Arvales* 'Arval Brothers', an ancient priesthood said to have been founded by Romulus... it seems clear that the hymn celebrates the rustic origins of the city of the Romans, calling on Mars (Marmor) to protect them from destruction, a theme which can also be recovered from the Iguvine Tables of Umbrian."[27]

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[27] Baldi 1999: 213

In his edition, Postgate chose to translate **piis antiquis** as "pious ancients." This is probably one of the few times when "pious" was appropriate because in English the adjective has a lexical restriction which limits it to describing people who are dutiful *to God*. Additionally, this passage also indicates the famous **do ut des** maxim made famous by Marcel Mauss:[28] "I give so that you will give." Themis was the "gift-bearer." She gave gifts (perhaps here **munus** is better translated as "consideration") to men in exchange for their **pius** behavior. This additional role of "exchange" is not present in the highly Christianized semantic field of the word "pious." The Christian God, unlike Roman gods, is no longer expected to play a part in the **do ut des** interaction. If making a prayer out of need or desire and granting a prayer out of kindness is common in Christian dogma, the missing piece of the puzzle is the *offering* or the *sacrifice* – and definitely not figurative sacrifice. Killing an animal, spilling its blood, and burning its fat are parts of the ritual that no longer play a role in Christian rituals. On the contrary, **pius** ancients entered into a binding deal with their gods. They made a request, gave up something to the gods, and received something in return. The modern idea of "pity" did not play a role – the gods did not grant gifts out of mercy or kindness, but rather because they were receiving a benefit. Bartering with the gods is one of those long-lost rituals that hinders a modern understanding of the way in which **pietas** operated in Roman culture.

In fact, the idea of Christianity's correctness and righteousness is so prevalent that in one breath the prominent scholar Robert Ogilvie gave contradictory statements on the Christian-ness of pagan Rome and their non-Christian rituals of exchange. Concerning them Ogilvie wrote, "It is at once a dignified and a trusting relationship. A god, because he is a

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[28] Mauss 1967

god, is entitled to the best that man can offer and a man can only do his duty and hope for

divine favour. At its finest it is not significantly different from the Christian's relationship

with his Maker."[29] This is not an objective opinion given current scholarly understanding of

the religious and social modes of Rome (and Greece for that matter). Ogilvie's statement

almost apologetically preceded his cogent idea on the subject in the very next line: "The

Romans, however, also had another approach to the god. They vowed or promised that, *if* a

god performed a certain request, then they for their part would make an offering in return.

The vow was a contractual relationship and the sacrifice ceased to be a free-will offering

and became instead the fulfilment of a covenant." His views in the second quote coincide

fairly precisely with Mauss' ***do ut des*** anthropological tenet. His previous statement must

reflect the revisionist and romantic idea that "Romans were just like us."

Friendship or Love

Catullus used ***pius*** in two other poems. First to be analyzed is poem 73, a short

poem advocating a certain mode of thought in matters of love or friendship.

> *Desine de quoquam quicquam bene uelle mereri*
> *   aut aliquem fieri posse putare **pium**.*
> *omnia sunt ingrata, nihil fecisse benigne*
> *   immo etiam taedet obestque magis;*
> *ut mihi, quem nemo gravius nec acerbius urget,*   5
> *   quam modo qui me unum atque unicum amicum habuit.*
> (Catullus 73)

At first glance it would appear that in this poem there is none of the expected

religious context that is often associated with ***pius***.

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[29] Ogilvie 1969: 37

> Stop wishing to be entitled to anything from anyone
>
> or thinking that anyone can become ***pius***.
>
> All this is unacknowledged – there is nothing
>
> less loathsome and more hurtful than to act kindly.
>
> Me! I whom nobody drives more forcefully nor bitterly
>
> than he who held me as her one and only lover.

Above is my interpretation of the poem as a warning against infidelity. Below is Postgate's translation.

> Leave off wishing to deserve any thanks from any one, or thinking that anyone can ever become grateful. All this wins no thanks; to have acted kindly is nothing, rather it is wearisome, wearisome and harmful; so it is now with me, who am vexed and troubled by no one so bitterly as by him who but now held me for his one and only friend.[30]

In fact the ambiguity caused here by Latin's disuse of personal anaphoric or deictic pronouns makes the general context of this poem difficult to interpret. Furthermore, Latin prefers that the conjugated verb mark the subject rather than a personal pronoun (which is missing in this and in most cases). Latin verbs of course do not reveal gender in their conjugated forms, so it is up to the reader to infer "he" or "she" from the context. In English, a simple "he" or "she" would have sufficed, but Catullus seems to have intentionally blurred the lines – "someone" and "nobody."

Postgate has decided that the person who is the object of the poem was a man, but there is no reason to assume that. Looking carefully at the Latin, it will be noticed that in line six, the demonstrative pronoun ***qui*** seems to be referring to a male antecedent. Yet,

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[30] Catullus (Postgate) 1988: 152

that reading is merely an interpolation. Other scholars – Birt, Otto Skutsch, as noted by Goold/Postgate[31] – interpolate it as *quae*, which would make the object-person a woman. In either case, a noun that has the potential to determine the gender of the object is in the same line, *amicum* ("friend" or "boyfriend"). Unfortunately, several complications thus arise. It cannot be assumed that Catullus was strictly heterosexual – based on some of his poems especially to Juventius, if they are assumed to be biographical, he was not. Secondly *amicum* as used by most Roman poets is ambiguous as to its tone. Sometimes it refers to an actual friend (or ally) and other times to a "boyfriend" or "lover" (similar to most modern continental European languages).

Resolution of this poem's ambiguity is important in at least one way: it would help to determine the intensity of the relationship between the subject-person and the object-person. Clearly the context shows that this is an interpersonal relationship, but of what sort? Is the relationship sexual or non-sexual? The question, for now and likely forever, will remain a matter of opinion.

Nonetheless, the relationship is important even in its current ambiguous state because it seems to imply that *pius* can be used in a context completely devoid of the normal and expected semantic realms: religious, ritual, and familiar. The implication of an extended domain related to social-sexual bonds is that the concepts that underlie *pius* and *pietas* might have been related to a broader, more comprehensive social-control mechanism in the Roman community.

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[31] Ibid.

Lovesickness and Remedy

Poem 76 is essentially a prayer to the gods for the removal of Catullus' lovesickness. It is a somewhat long poem, but since it coincidentally includes both the words *pius* and *pietas* (and a number of other marked terms), the context of the entire poem should be taken as a whole.

Siqua recordanti benefacta priora voluptas	
* est homini, cum se cogitat esse **pium**,*	
nec sanctam violasse fidem, nec foedere nullo	
* divum ad fallendos numine abusum homines,*	
multa parata manent in longa aetate, Catulle,	*5*
* ex hoc ingrato gaudia amore tibi.*	
nam quaecumque homines bene cuiquam aut dicere possunt	
* aut facere, haec a te dictaque factaque sunt.*	
omnia quae ingratae perierunt credita menti.	
* quare iam te cur amplius excrucies?*	*10*
quin tu animo offirmas atque istinc teque reducis,	
* et dis inuitis desinis esse miser?*	
difficile est longum subito deponere amorem,	
* difficile est, verum hoc qua lubet efficias:*	
una salus haec est. hoc est tibi pervincendum,	*15*
* hoc facias, sive id non pote sive pote.*	
o di, si vestrum est misereri, aut si quibus umquam	
* extremam iam ipsa in morte tulistis opem,*	
me miserum aspicite et, si vitam puriter egi,	
* eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi,*	*20*
quae mihi subrepens imos ut torpor in artus	
* expulit ex omni pectore laetitias.*	
non iam illud quaero, contra me ut diligat illa,	
* aut, quod non potis est, esse pudica velit:*	

> *ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum.*　　　　　　*25*
>
> 　*o di, reddite mi hoc pro **pietate mea**.*
>
> (Catullus 76)

In addition to ***pius*** and ***pietas***, it should be noted that this poem contains a number of words marked particularly for a ritualistic prayer. Of note are ***violasse sanctam fidem, foedere, divum, numine, fallendos, divum, di,*** and ***puriter***.

> If any pleasure belongs to a man remembering earlier good deeds,
>
> while he thinks that he is ***pius*** and he thinks he has not violated sacred trust
>
> and does not think he defiles (himself) by using the authority of the gods to
>
> trick people, then many ready joys remain in this long life time for you,
>
> Catullus, from this thankless love.
>
> However much people are able to say or do nice things well for anyone,
>
> these things have been said and done by you. All these things entrusted to a
>
> thankless heart have been lost.
>
> Why then, why would you torture yourself more?
>
> Why don't you hold steady to your rational mind and then – from where you
>
> are – bring yourself around and stop being wretched despite the reluctant
>
> gods?
>
> It's hard to set aside suddenly a longtime love, it's hard, but this is what you
>
> should do at all costs. This [course of action] is the one safe deed: You must
>
> achieve this. You have to do it, whether it's possible or not.

> Oh gods, if it's in you to have compassion, or if for anyone ever you brought a final service at the very moment of death, behold me being miserable and if I led my life correctly, rescue me from this disease and this curse, which creeping like a numbness into the lowest parts of my limbs has thrust out pleasures from my whole heart.
>
> I don't want that anymore, that she loves me in return, or (because it's impossible) that she wants to be pure. I really want to be strong and set aside this offensive sickness.
>
> Oh gods, give this back to me in exchange for my ***pietas***.

Although earlier in this analysis it has been demonstrated that **pius** and its derivatives can be used outside a religious context, here it is clear that it also belongs squarely in this domain. Postgate has taken a slightly surprising turn by translating **pius** as a substantive "true friend" – this seems slightly out of place given the nature of the surrounding context. Later he returns to language appropriate to the religious domain by translating **pietas** simply as "piety."[32]

Catullus has used this sort of language before in previous poems – love is a sort of sickness that must be cured. Rubino stated this succinctly: "Catullus wants desperately to be cured of the sickness that has brought him to the edge of death."[33] It seems that the only way for Catullus to cure it is to make a deal with the gods by commanding them (notably in the imperative) to "give this back to me in exchange for my devotion." Thus the questions remain as to what kind of exchange is being made here and how it is being carried out.

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[32] Catullus (Postgate) 1988: 155–156
[33] Rubino 1975: 289

The exchange is one that seems to be necessary – in line 12 the gods are described as **invitis**, "unwilling" or "reluctant." Catullus seems to be operating under a sense of remorse for calling the powers of the gods into question. It would appear that Catullus has been down this path before – according to Rubino, in poems 51, 72, 73, 77, 85, 87, and 109.[34] In still other poems, Catullus has blamed the gods for his problems as if they had taken a personal interest in his love life. Now, however, he seems to realize that (presumably) his long-time love interest, Lesbia, is acting against him under her own free will and not under the influence of the gods. Their unwillingness to lend a hand in the largely chaotic world of sexuality and love, he finally understands, is because he has not performed the proper rituals to make them more eager. Instead of blaming the gods, he needs to go through the propitiations necessary to win the gods' favor.

Catullus details the ritual in exacting detail – and by all accounts, according to a familiar and normal Roman formula. First, it must be carried out by a person with the right credentials – in this case, a person who is **pius**. Specifically, a person who 1) *has not violated the sacred trust* and 2) *has not used the authority of the gods to trick people.* From this poem alone the exact meaning of "sacred trust" is unlikely to be recovered, but taken in this context and from others like it, it seems similar to a "good faith"[35] clause in contractual language. In essence, the idea is to use the exchange system between humans and gods to carry out positive, good, or balanced deeds. This is an important distinction because negative, evil, or unbalanced requests were well known in Catullus' Rome – mainly in the

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[34] Ibid.

[35] "Good faith is a term that refers to the way people in a contract act towards one another. It is often used in relation to employee-employer relationships; good faith would cause employer and employee to treat one another respectfully." http://www.ehow.com/facts_7658645_goodfaith-clauses-agreements.html

form of curse tablets and other nefarious incantations. Presumably Catullus is arguing that using such devices for the purposes of causing turmoil falls outside the purview of "sacred trust."

Next, Catullus must essentially "do and say nice things." This sentiment is directed not at just the gods but at "anyone." Perhaps the idea of *being a nice person* is another aspect of being **pius** – after all, **pietas** is not just a relationship between a person and his deities but between a person and society.

Next in the ritual – and more specifically towards the gods – Catullus has to stop blaming them for his problems. In the animistic-ancestor-cult religion of the Romans, The Fates (the *Moirae* to the Greeks and later the *Parcae* in Ovid) played little role in the day-to-day functions of nature, especially according to the "old religion" described by Livy.[36] This helps to explain why Catullus must not blame these deities, for they have no direct interest in his life nor control over it. Instead he must follow the properly prescribed rituals of propitiation to make the exchange fruitful so that each party may receive something of value.

The core of the ritual consists of a prayer. Catullus asks that the gods have compassion for him under the condition that he lives his life **puriter**, "correctly." Again, this is a fairly difficult concept to recover. **Puriter** quite literally means "free from stain" – in fact, according to Vann the adjective **purus** is very likely related to **pius** in the Indo-European parent language[37] and furthermore is possibly related to the verb complex **putare**, "to cleanse." In terms of Catullus' life, **puriter** must mean something other than the extant English cultural idiom "free from stain" – that is, in terms of sexuality and bodily pollution

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[36] Davies 2005
[37] Vaan 2008: 468

(which is likely a concept taken from the Bible and from pre-Biblical near-Eastern cultures, i.e., not Roman). It seems likely from Catullus' previous poems on the subject that he is not referring to his sexual purity or chastity (a concept which, in Rome at least, did not apply to males).[38] *Puriter* must refer to "free from stain" in the Roman context, that is, according to the proper, time-honored rituals of ancient Roman traditions. In other words, carry out the socially acceptable sacrifices and uphold proper propitiations and divinations. Roman religion was essentially not focused on a person's *moral* actions but rather a person's *ceremonial* actions. As Ogilvie states:

> "This noble and appealing philosophy, with its insistence on the rationality of the natural order which anticipates the way in which modern scientific laws have restricted the irrational intervention of God, made traditional religion intellectually respectable. The same set of religious formulae and procedures could be accepted as valid by a naive and illiterate slave and by a highly sophisticated man of education. They might justify them in different ways but they accepted them because, in the last resort, they worked. A logical consequence was that almost everything that anybody did was – in theory at least – a religious act which had to be attended by the proper religious ceremonies. To drive a nail into a piece of wood required not only a good nail, a good hammer, and good co-ordination of hand and eye but also a well-tried ritual..."[39]

The next step in Catullus' formula involves offering a reason for his request: "I really want to be strong and set aside this offensive sickness." It appears to be part of this ritual to offer some form of validation for the request – Catullus is reaching towards his inner virtue,

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[38] Williams 2010: 97–101
[39] Ogilvie 1969: 20

perhaps to demonstrate to the gods that he is both willing and able to receive their

assistance.[40]

Finally, Catullus, having apparently carried out the ritual request in both emotional

and ceremonial terms, commands the gods to do their job in exchange for his devotion (or

as Postgate's translation prefers, his "piety").

Summary of Catullus

After a careful analysis of the ways in which Catullus uses *pius*, it seems to be the

case that he knew that the word fit into a much wider semantic domain compared to its

normally assumed religious context. In addition to this religious context, it also plays a part

in gender-roles, sexuality, authority, social inclusion and exclusion, mythology, friendship,

and rituals of mediation. It is therefore no wonder that native English speakers have a hard

time translating this complex of words from Latin. The English reflexes of *pius* are definitely

restricted compared to the parent language. More importantly, in terms of the interactions

of society and religion, English-speaking countries are vitally different. Catullus naturally

knew his own culture and demonstrates a full range of meaning, whereas English translators

tend to struggle with the ideas due to the limitations of their society and religious beliefs.

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[40] Perhaps Catullus is trying to tell us that the power of the gods is based on the internal determination of his own human spirit. A psychologist could give this poem a reading that attributes Catullus' wish to save himself knowing (perhaps on a subconscious level) that the gods are merely the imaginings of his culture's long-standing traditions.

Vergil

Vergil was born in Mantua – about 50 miles inland from Venice – in 70 B.C.E. Like both Catullus and Livy he was not strictly a Roman, although by the time he was born the majority of the Italian peninsula had been unified and granted citizenship rights. How he was educated and where is anybody's guess, but as with most literate Romans, he must have come from a family with enough wealth to have him educated in philosophy and rhetoric. It seems likely, based on the contents of his work both stylistically and referentially, that he was also educated in Greek culture and the Greek language.

The *Aeneid* is Vergil's longest and most famous work, although he also wrote the *Eclogues* (a collection of idylls, also known as the *Bucolics*) and the *Georgics* (a poetic "farmer's almanac"). The *Aeneid* is often considered the national poem of Rome and Vergil Rome's poet laureate. Of all extant Latin writings, the manuscripts of the *Aeneid* are among the oldest and most complete. Owing to his popularity in Roman culture, there is essentially no doubt that the versions we have today are fairly exact replicas of what Vergil wrote. As it is, the *Aeneid* is the only text qualified for analysis here, as the other Vergilian works contain virtually no traces of the adjective ***pius*** or its derivatives.

Pius Aeneas

The adjective ***pius*** occurs about forty times in the *Aeneid*, most often as an epithet of Aeneas, that is ***pius Aeneas***. Aeneas is the hero of the *Aeneid*, a Trojan warrior who escaped from Troy after it fell to the Greeks. His epithet is specifically a Homeric epithet, one that relates to the personality of the recipient, but also one that creates a phonetic bond with the recipient's name for metrical purposes in oral poetry. Although the *Aeneid* is

not technically oral poetry, it is written in the hexameter of its orally transmitted

progenitors, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The epithet is used dozens of times to refer to

Aeneas.

Most interpretations agree that Aeneas is *pius* because he obeys the Olympian gods

(Jupiter and others), respects his household spirits (the *Penates*), honors his father

(Anchises), establishes a legacy for his son (Ascanius) and constitutes a new homeland for

his people (Alba Longa). Scholars disagree whether or not he should be *pius* in respect to his

consort Dido, although this analysis will examine that detail later in this chapter.

Below I have excerpted a typical usage of the word *pius* as an epithet of Aeneas.

> *Praecipue **pius** Aeneas nunc acris Oronti,*
> *nunc Amyci casum gemit et crudelia secum*
> *fata Lyci, fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum.*
> (*Aeneid* 1.220)

It is interesting to note the nominative case of *pius Aeneas* here and in most other

instances. In other case forms, the effect is quite different because of the strange mixture of

Latin and Greek declensions and the changes in vowel length, especially from the

nominative to the accusative. The simplest and most straightforward accusative rendering

would be *Pium Aenēan*. The prosody of the epithet then changes along with the metrical

form (originally *Pius Aenēās*) making it impossible to fit into the same place in the meter.

> "First **pius** Aeneas especially laments the fall of eager Orontus, then the fall
> of Amycus, and then the merciless **bad fortunes** of Lycus – fellow traveler –
> and brave Gyas and brave Cloanthus".

It should be noted that this occurrence of *pius* is used closely in position near *fata*. While this is not, strictly speaking, a collocation, it is still interesting how Vergil's use of religious language ebbs and flows. Take note of these other marked words in the contextual vicinity: the word *spem* occurs in line 209; immediately following this passage, Venus (the divine mother of Aeneas) addresses Zeus. Venus' god-speech is infused with notable religious words such as *fatis* (line 239), *fata* (line 239), *fortuna* (line 240), *infandum* (line 251). In fact, a close analysis reveals that all the uses of *pius Aeneas* occur in religious contexts and god-speeches. This point seems to contradict my supposition about translatability, because if true then these words should be found only in religious contexts. However, in point of fact, since Rome's social, religious and governmental institutions were unified, all communal interactions were inextricably linked.

Nonetheless, in the passage above, Aeneas is in fact *pius* because he is weeping over his fallen companions. It is his duty to protect the soldiers (and their families) living under his influence. In English, it is perfectly acceptable to be "pious to God" but never for a god to be "pious to one's subjects" as this relationship implies in Latin. This demonstrates immediately how "pious" is not acceptable as a translation because the semantic fields of *pius* and "pious" do not match.

While "pious" is difficult, there are other words that might prove more suitable, for instance "dedicated" and "loyal." Yet, all senses of "loyal" refer to faithfulness to one's superior ("to the president" for example) or to some abstract concept ("to the goal") and rarely to one's subordinates. In this case, "dedicated" might work better, if only it carried a stronger sense of duty or obligation.

A Prayer to Ward Away Evil

There are other examples of *pius* that are more straightforward, if only ambiguous.

> *'O Regina, novam cui condere **Iuppiter** urbem*
>
> *iustitiaque dedit gentis frenare superbas,*
>
> *Troes te miseri, ventis maria omnia vecti,*
>
> *oramus, prohibe **infandos** a navibus ignis,*   525
>
> *parce **pio** generi, et propius res aspice nostras.*
>
> *Non nos aut ferro Libycos populare **Penatis***
>
> *venimus, aut raptas ad litora vertere praedas.'*
>
> (*Aeneid* 1.522)

As with many passages dealing with religious aspects of Roman life, this passage is

heavily marked with religious language.

> "Oh Queen, to whom **Jupiter** gave [the ability] to found the city with
> compassion and to govern the proud [lands] of this people, we miserable
> Trojans – carried on winds [across] all the seas – we beg you – keep the
> **unspeakable** fires away from the ships, spare this *__pius__* clan, and closely turn
> your attention to our troubles. We did not come either with sword to re-
> settle our **household gods** nor to direct stolen property to the shores. "

First, notice again how prominent religious words are proximal. Second, in this

passage *pius* applies to a collection of people (*genus*, "race" or "nation") who are in *Aeneas'*

care. This seems to be a synecdochical relationship where Aeneas is the leader "part" of the

group "whole." Here the word "loyal" seems sufficient, but the context seems to indicate

that "god-fearing" or "pious" or even "chosen" could work, too. This ambiguity is difficult to

reconcile. Are these people *pius* because they belong to *pius Aeneas* or for some other

reason? Perhaps, in the context of the larger poem, *pius* in this case could be translated as

"chosen" because the fate of these Trojans is to eventually hand down their legacy to the future Romans – Romans who, of course, end up dominating the Western world. The Fates, Jupiter and in fact all the gods know that fate is undeniable. This particular passage is striking because it takes the form of an imprecation by Dido to the goddess, Juno. Juno hates Aeneas (and always has), but even she eventually relents to the force of fate.

A Trustworthy Deity

Another problem arises when we realize that *pius* applies to the immortals as well as to mortals.

> *'spero equidem mediis, si quid **pia numina** possunt,*
>
> *supplicia hausurum scopulis et nomine Dido*
>
> *saepe uocaturum. sequar atris ignibus absens*
>
> *et, cum frigida mors anima seduxerit artus,*
>
> *omnibus umbra locis adero. dabis, improbe, poenas.'*
>
> *(Aeneid* 4.382)

The context has a few religious key words but it also seems to point to something more sinister: it resembles a curse, a species of prayer for fulfilling destructive intentions.

> "I certainly hope that you – in the middle of the rocky reefs – if the **gods** can [be considered] ***pius*** [to do] anything [at all] – [I hope that] you will drink in torments and [that] you will often call out with the name 'Dido.' When not at your side, I will chase [you] with black fires and, when cold death tears your limbs away from your soul, I will be there in those places as a phantom. I will give you, bastard, your just desserts."

In this passage in book 4, Dido, queen of Carthage and lover of Aeneas,[41] is truly

unhappy that he is leaving forcibly under the orders of Jupiter. Contextually, there are

several ways to take ***pia numina***. Without saying anything meaningful about this phrase as a

whole, ***numen*** by itself is difficult to translate. In its most basic sense it seems to refer to the

authority of a god, but by metonymy it can also refer to the child of a god[42] and the god

itself, as it seems to do here. Assuming this is true, then how to construe the adjective?

What exactly are "pious gods" or "loyal gods" or "dedicated gods"? The explanation is

fascinating. In modern terms, gods are all-powerful beings who have no obligations to

anyone except themselves. The ancient Romans, on the other hand, felt that the gods were

"contractually" obligated to provide dispensations in exchange for sacrifices. This is

sometimes referred to as ***do ut des***, otherwise known as the reciprocity principle.[43] For the

purpose of this argument, it is sufficient to note that Roman religious language is both

archaic and formulaic.

Still, based on the story of the *Aeneid* thus far, the fact that Dido has fulfilled her

expiatory obligations is well supported. The gods are bound by the religious pact that allows

pius to be translated as "trustworthy." Unfortunately for Dido, there are several details of

Roman society that work against her, namely and primarily that she is not a Roman. Of

course, neither is Aeneas – at least not literally – but rather he seems to be an allegorical

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[41] See Vergil (Lombardo) 2005: 4.160–172, where this relationship is articulated. In Dido's mind, she is his ***coniunx*** or "common law wife." Vergil implied that the pair were married in a somewhat traditional ceremony: ***coniugium uocat***, "she calls it marriage."

[42] Virgil (Fairclough) 1999: 4.94 In this passage, Dido says to Venus, "Both you and your boy (a great and memorable ***numen***) are bringing back [will bring back] truly outstanding praise and full spoils, if one was beaten by the trickery of two gods." The ***numen*** is in apposition to either the pair of deities as a whole or perhaps specifically the boy (in this case, Eros).

[43] Mauss 1967. Roughly translated it means, "I give so that you may give," or more commonly ***quid pro quo*** and "tit for tat."

figure standing for the ***princeps*** Augustus.[44] Dido, then, might be likened to a foreign born

queen, a Medea or a Cleopatra,[45] a nearly stock villain character in the Roman cultural

consciousness. If this is an acceptable inference, then it is logical to assume that Roman

gods would favor their own worshippers.[46] An entire book chapter (or even a book!) could

be written about the cultural-linguistic complications in this scene, but one final comment

on the subject is critical: in some forms of Roman marriage (especially among the rich and

elite), a wife could divorce her husband simply by leaving his house and returning to her

paterfamilias (who was usually her father, but in Dido's case it was likely her estranged

brother, Pygmalion). Dido, therefore, was not and never could have been "family" to

Aeneas, and therefore was not a recipient of his ***pietas***.[47] There can be no doubt that ***pia***

numina is one of the most vexed usages of the adjective ***pius*** and thereby provides a clue as

to why so many have called ***pius*** untranslatable.

A Ritual Object

Still, there is a further complication in that none of the previously mentioned English

candidate words for ***pius*** have the non-anthropomorphic meaning that ***pius*** has.

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[44] Moseley 1925: 399

[45] Ogle 1925: 261–270. There is some dispute about this. Ogle is arguing not for a monstrous, foreign-born queen, but rather a contemporary Roman *matrona*. Nonetheless, it still seems clear that Vergil composed Dido's character as if by allegory.

[46] Although this is not necessarily the case, since Romans were fond of adopting foreign gods and lending out their own, so that the logic here might itself be mired in the subjectivity of Western-Christian ideals about religion.

[47] Vergil (Lombardo) 2005: 4.496. Dido calls Aeneas ***impius*** – at least, by context it must be assumed that this substantive refers to Aeneas because she does not invoke his name, just his character. This is the only time ***impius*** is used to refer to Aeneas. Based on all of its other instances (***impius Furor, impius ille [Pygmalion], impius Tydides*** [Diomedes]***, impia Fama, impia Tartara, impia arma***), it seems rather to mean something like "cursed" or "murderous."

> *'Annam, cara mihi nutrix, huc siste sororem:*
>
> *dic corpus properet fluuiali **spargere** lympha,*   635
>
> *et pecudes secum et monstrata **piacula** ducat.*
>
> *sic ueniat, tuque ipsa **pia** tege tempora uitta.*
>
> *sacra **Ioui Stygio**, quae rite incepta paraui,*
>
> *perficere est animus finemque imponere curis*
>
> *Dardaniique rogum capitis permittere flammae.'*   640
>
> *(Aeneid* 4.634)

> "My dear handmaiden, make my sister [come] and stand here: Tell her to hurry and **purify** her body with river water, and [tell her to] lead the sheep and the ***piacula*** – the ones I pointed out – with her. Yes, let her come, and you as well cover your ears with a ***pius*** wreath. [I have] a plan to carry out the rites sacred to **Stygian Jove**, which I have properly begun and prepared, and to force an end to these concerns of love and to send off a pyre of flame [which will have been caused by] his Dardanian head."

First, notice here how Vergil uses both the adjective ***pius*** and its diminutive ***piaculum***, "a little ***pius***-thing." The religious content is strong: Stygian Jove is Jupiter in conjunction with the river Styx,[48] which is important because the oaths that Zeus (Jupiter) makes by the river Styx are unbreakable.[49] Here, Dido is taking the concept ***do ut des*** to the most unyielding limit of severity. So, then, what exactly are "ritual wreaths?" My interpretation, here using the word "ritual," is not exclusive – but it seems to fit the context of creating the ultimate contractual obligation between a human and a god. Here we get a glimpse into the "dark and black magic" aspects of Roman religion, which incidentally did

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[48] The River Styx is one of the many bodies of water in the underworld. It can sometimes be translated as "The River of Hate."
[49] Blickman 1987: 341–355

not seem to connote the "evil" or "subversive" qualities that they do in Christian religions.

The English words "pious" and "loyal" will not work here because they have no polysemous

senses which indicate that non-anthropomorphic objects can be either "pious" nor "loyal."

In short, these are strictly animate qualities. Using words like "holy" and "sacred" for **pius**

here are inadequate because they seem to indicate the positive experiences of Christianity,

not the ones associated with darkness, binding, and finality. **Pius** here does not necessarily

have a negative attribute, but it does point to certain desperation on the part of Dido,

against which she must perform the *most* archaic and *most* ritualistic sacrifices possible.

After all, Stygian Jupiter is the oldest authoritative form of Zeus we know about. So, it is

necessary for me to conclude that "ritual" is a good way to translate **pius** in this case, and so

its meaning must be a metonymic extension of the prototypical meaning in a radial

category.

Incidentally, **pia vitta** might be translated as "chosen wreath" in the sense that it has

to be "well" chosen as an appropriate implement in the ritual.

Summary of Vergil

There are other usages of **pius** in the *Aeneid* and of course there are its compounds

and derivatives, but the preceding examples are adequate for understanding the way in

which Vergil understood the semantic range of **pius**. Although most of his usages occur in

religious contexts, they have a much broader semantic domain compared to our modern

understanding of its reflexes. The most interesting of these usages that contrast starkly are

the two-way relationships between gods and humans, the negative connotations of the

relationship, and the ritualistic objects involved in the relationship. It would probably be

hard to find any instance of **pius** in the *Aeneid* that was not in a religious context – after all,

the *Aeneid* was somewhat like a religious manual to the Romans much the same way the

Iliad and the *Odyssey* were religious manuals to the Greeks.

Livy

Livy was born in Padua (Latin Patavium, a city about 25 miles inland from Venice) in 59 B.C.E. Although he lived much of his life in Rome, he died in his native city in 17 C.E.[50] He was a philosopher before he became a historian, but his only extant work is *Ab Urbe Condita Libri* ("Books from the City-Founding"). Its importance to the understanding of Roman history, government, and religion are incalculable. Without it, the Romans would be much more mysterious to modern scholars.[51] However, it is important to keep in mind that Livy wrote the bulk of his work during the Augustan age and was probably a friend of Augustus. There is little denying that Livy's histories contain personal and political biases – although their nature is certainly still debatable.

The extant books of Livy are quite few in relation to the number he actually wrote. According to Rose, "[i]t seems probable that after composing CXLII (death of Drusus) Livy himself died,"[52] meaning that he wrote at least 142 books of history about Rome. Of those books, approximately 35 remain. This huge project of Livy's must have lasted decades. It is unknown when he began writing, but it seems likely that he was writing the first five books contemporaneously with Vergil's *Aeneid*. This is borne out in the well-noted similarities that go beyond simple shared cultural myths: the two works share many structural similarities.[53]

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[50] Conte 1999: 367
[51] Plutarch and Dionysius survive as well, but they both wrote from Greek points of view and in the Greek language. Their writings are also much shorter and much less annalistic by nature.
[52] Rose and Courtney 1996: 208
[53] Livy 1945: 96

Therefore, if the latest date for the *Aeneid* is 19 B.C.E.,[54] and the latest date for Livy is 19

C.E., his historical project may have consumed the better part of 40 years.[55]

Moreover, it is a hefty work. It may be the largest collection of extant Latin from any

single author, rivaling even Cicero's catalog. Each book contains roughly between 16,000-

25,000 words (in Latin), giving a total in the neighborhood of a million words. Since only

about 25% of the original remains today, the grand total of words must have been

somewhere close to 2.5 million words. The entirety of the *Aeneid*, by contrast, contains

approximately 60,000 words.[56]

Nevertheless, in the extant portion of this massive work, the words in the *pius* group

are relatively rare. In sum (not counting the verbal forms), they appear a scant 90 times. By

contrast, these words occur in Vergil about 77 times. In other words, Vergil preferred to use

them approximately ten times as often as Livy.[57]

Since Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita Libri* is so massive, this thesis cannot cover all the

different uses of the *pius* group within it. The scope of this thesis will be limited to the first

five books, the foundation books. Since in total the words appear in the first five books less

than ten times, this chapter will carefully analyze every usage.

Summary of Books I-V

The first five books of Livy's work are the foundation books in which the first 360

years of Roman history are chronicled down to 390 B.C.E. From approximately 753 B.C.E to

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[54] Conte 1999: 263

[55] According to Conte, "...at about the age of thirty, Livy devoted himself entirely to his grand historical work." So according to his estimation, Livy was writing *A.U.C.* for about fifty years.

[56] These and the following statistics were derived from three sources: digital copies of the texts came from *The Latin Library*; word counts of those texts were derived using *Numen – The Latin Lexicon*; frequencies were derived from The *Packard Humanities Institute's* Latin library using the *Diogenes* software package.

[57] It should be reiterated at this point that a majority of Vergil's usages were confined to the epithet *pius Aeneas*, so the difference in non-formulaic usage is probably more modest.

about 509 B.C.E., Rome was ruled by Kings. The king list is as follows: Romulus, Numa

Pompilius, Tullus Hostilius, Ancus Marcius, Lucius Tarquinius Priscus, Servius Tullius, and

Tarquinius Superbus.[58] Each king in an almost programmatic fashion added something

unique to the wealth of Roman culture. For instance, Numa is credited with the invention of

the social religion of Rome, whereas Ancus Marcius gave Romans the militaristic aspects of

religion. In addition to having inordinately long reigns (approximately 35 years each), the

fact that each king made a distinct contribution to the substructure of Roman society points

suspiciously to a Greek model of "ideal kinghood."[59] In other words, the Roman kings were

likely a fabrication or an amalgam. This is a reasonable assumption for other reasons –

although Roman clans kept personal histories and the Roman state kept lists of Consuls and

other political-religious documents, Roman history as literature did not exist until Ennius

wrote his epic poem, the *Annals*, in approximately 200 B.C.E. Whether the kings were

fabricated politically (for instance, by Augustus as part of a national program of propaganda)

or through natural cultural processes is unclear.

From 509 B.C.E. to 390 B.C.E., Rome was a Republic. During this early Republic,

however, the government was never perfectly stable. It was generally run by Consuls, but

during certain periods power was variously shared between Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs,[60]

and Military Tribunes. All in all, however, these men were granted power by the Roman

Senate and were themselves Senators. In some sense, the Roman Senate was chosen by the

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[58] Cary and Scullard 1976: 39–42

[59] Ibid.

[60] For the most part, the Decemvirs were a "team" of dictators who took over the government during extreme periods of crisis. For instance, the most famous Decemvirs wrote the *Twelve Tables* around 450 B.C.E.

Roman people, but realistically due to the non-equitable voting system, it was an aristocracy.

In the books about the Republic (II-V), Livy mainly details the internal conflicts between the Patricians (the aristocrats) and the Plebs (the lower classes), and the external conflicts between the Romans and their neighbors (Etruscans, Sabines, and Latins, among dozens of others).

Religious Rituals Associated with War

The first (and only) instance of **pius** in Book I occurs as a ritual procedure "by which a state demands redress for a hostile act."[61] A summary of the context in this passage is important to understand how **pius** functions here.

Tullus Hostilius, third king of Rome, had just died in approximately 640 B.C.E. because he had badly performed secret rites to Jupiter Elicius.[62] "Jupiter was angry; the palace was struck by lightning, and Tullus perished in the flames,"[63] after which Ancus Marcius was "elected" king. His first act was to return Rome to a more religiously conservative era and to reestablish the teachings of his grandfather Numa (who had originally instituted the official Roman cult). Rome's neighbors, the Latins, took this as a sign of weakness and began raiding Roman territory. But Ancus was not a weak leader, and although he desired peace for Rome, he decided the best way to propitiate the gods was to inject martial rituals and procedures into the Roman litany. "Numa had established religious observances in time of peace; Ancus provided war with an equivalent solemn ritual of its own. It was not enough, he thought, that wars should be fought; he believed that they

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[61] Livy (De Selincourt) 2002: 69
[62] Elicius => elicio => "to elicit or evoke omens"
[63] Livy (de Selincourt) 2002: 68

should also be formally declared, and for this purpose he adopted from the ancient tribe of the Aequicolae the legal formalities (now in the hands of the fetials) by which a state demands redress for a hostile act."[64]

The procedure has been recorded by Livy in much the same way a judicial transcript is recorded today. One party (an ambassador) spoke, the other party spoke, a statutory amount of time passed (in this case thirty-three days), then the king made a deal with the gods (in this case Jupiter and Janus Quirinus), the deal was confirmed with the Senate. In the process of confirming this deal with the Senate (at that time more likely "elders") the king made known his deal with the gods to each member. It is the reply of the elders in the following passage that this thesis is specifically concerned about.

> *...inquit ei quem primum sententiam rogabat, "quid censes?"*
> *tum ille: "puro **pioque** duello quaerendas censeo, itaque consentio*
> *consciscoque." inde ordine alii rogabantur; quandoque pars maior eorum qui*
> *aderant in eandem sententiam ibat, bellum erat consensum.*
> (Livy *AUC* 1.32.12.1)[65]

After this passage in the text, the declaration was made formal by announcing it to the enemies (specifically to the Latins in this case) and a spear was hurled by the ***fetiales*** into Latin territory (which was sometimes merely the symbol of their territory).

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[64] Ibid.: 69
[65] Livy (Foster) 1919: 116–118

...He says to the first one whose opinion he was asking,[66] "What do you reckon?" Then he replies, "I reckon these deeds must be sought with undefiled and ***pius*** war, and furthermore I consent and I agree." Then in order the others are asked. As soon as the majority of those who were present went into the same opinion, war was agreed upon.

This thesis will be making comparisons between two separate translations of this text. First is the mostly literal version by Foster, which has: "Then the other would reply: 'I hold that those things ought to be sought in warfare just and *righteous*;[67] and so I consent and vote.'" De Selincourt's version, which is easier to read but is looser with the translation states, "The person thus first addressed replied: 'I hold that those things be sought by means of just and *righteous* war. Thus I give my vote and my consent.'" Therefore both translators agree that "righteous" is an acceptable translation.

An analysis of the context should help provide a more precise translation.

To begin, the question must be asked, although it is perhaps impossible to answer: does the archaic language in this quotation accurately represent an ancient formula or does it represent an "archaized" form that Livy invented? In fact, if it is simply a fabrication on Livy's part, it was a very good one. Although difficult to characterize, it is the position of this thesis that it accords with older Latin in at least five ways (all of which were certainly known to Livy). First, **bellum** is spelled in its archaic form **duellum.**[68] Next, a shift in subject without an antecedent occurs with **ille**. This is reminiscent of language seen in the *Twelve Tables.*[69] Third, the passage shows signs of polysyndeton in the use of **que** repeatedly, **puro**

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[66] I believe there is a double accusative construction here, hence the change in grammar in English.
[67] Italics added for emphasis.
[68] Baldi 1999: 272
[69] Courtney 1999: 13–26

pioque...itaque consentio consciscoque. Fourth, the vocabulary in general is of an antique

nature. All the words that appear in this formula can be traced back to archaic inscriptions

(***quaero***) or Indo-European roots (most notably ***censeo***, ***purus*** and ***que***). Finally, Livy

specifically states that this procedure is "now in the hands of the fetials," who were the

Roman priests in charge of such martial rituals during Livy's time.[70] This means that he

might have had access to the official ritual (in much the same way the Tacitus and Suetonius

had access to Senatorial archives).

However, in favor of an updated or invented quotation is the verb ***quaero*** which

most likely would have been spelled ***quaeso*** in ancient times – although to be fair, this verb

on its own can be connected to the Indo-European root KIS and related to Sanksrit *cish-* ("to

hunt").[71] Nonetheless, whether the formula is authentic or fabricated, Livy seems to have

understood its place in Roman culture and history, and he understood the vintage of the

idea of this ritual.

Next, the entire event is predicated on the idea that the recently deceased king,

Tullius Hostilius, had allowed Roman society to slip into a state of laxity. King Numa, as Livy

made clear, established the procedures for peaceful religious rituals. Tullius was so

haphazard with his duties to the gods that Jupiter actually struck his palace with a bolt of

lightning while he was trying to extract a prophecy. No clearer omen could be found in all of

Roman religion: when Jupiter struck a king down, clearly the next king must do something

propitious. Somehow, although Livy did not state it precisely, Tullius did not live up to his

end of the covenant between a Roman king and the king of the gods. Livy did hint that it

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[70] Howatson 2011: 234
[71] See the entry for ***quaeso*** in the Lewis and Short *A Latin Dictionary*.

was a procedural error by writing, "[a]pparently, however, his procedure was incorrect, for not only was he denied any divine manifestation, but cruelly punished for his error."[72]

How does this help any understanding of this procedural usage of *pius*? It seems that Ancus needed to correct an imbalance on a cultural level between the kings Numa and Tullius: peace and war. Numa was too peaceful – Rome was nearly overrun by invaders (in fact, Tullius himself can be interpreted as an invader). On the other hand, Tullius was too warlike ("He had won great glory as a soldier, and reigned thirty-two years"). It was the job of Ancus to reconcile the two positions by including rituals of war as part of the official state religion. Therefore *pius* in this case must be a religious word, since it is juxtaposed with *purus* (itself – as noted earlier – a possible cognate of *pius* by way of the Indo-European parent language). Without even considering the translation difficulties of *purus* itself, it should be enough to accept the translations by both Foster and De Selincourt as "just." However, the translation chosen for this thesis as "undefiled" does seem more appropriate for the context. Foster and De Selincourt's "just" sets up a contrast between law and religion by essentially calling the war "legally and religiously appropriate," but Livy seems to have said nothing specific about law. Rather, the context of the passage has been entirely divine and formulaic in a religious context. Therefore, *purus* is most likely used in a religious domain and its semantics should fall in line with religious concepts of purity and/or accuracy (i.e., being free from error or procedurally accurate). Finally, since the entire procedure was precisely laid out in the Roman fashion as a predetermined conversation, it makes sense that the words used would have been chosen very carefully and precisely in a manner that would uphold the "magical" quality of the procedure. The Romans were quite superstitious

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[72] Livy (de Selincourt) 2002: 68

in their belief in the power of not only *words* but *correct words* and this passage is part of the evidence to support this aphorism.

In terms of war, then, the adjectives **purus** and **pius** must describe not contrasting aspects of two different systems of thought (i.e., law and religion) but rather two aspects of the same system of thought (i.e., religion). **Purus** seems to indicate some sort of properly attained form of war (in terms *accuracy* or *precision*) and **pius** seems to point to the nature of the war in terms of the way it was brought about in accordance with the gods so mentioned previously in the passage (specifically, Jupiter and Janus Quirinus).

Broken Bonds between Peoples and Tribes

The next instance of **pius** in Livy occurs some decades later in the history. As with the previous example, this one is encapsulated inside a speech. However, instead of being part of an official ritual, this one occurs as part of a call-to-arms speech as given by the prominent Volscian commander, Attius Tullius. Livy's background to this speech is important in establishing the context.

494 B.C.E was an eventful year for the Romans. Two major events occurred that year: a multi-front war and the *First Secession of the Plebs*.

According to Livy, several tribes that were formerly under the control of the Roman kings revolted at this time, most notably the Sabines, the Volscians and the Aequians.[73] An aristocrat named Gnaeus Marcius[74] defeated the Volscians at Corioli in 493 B.C.E. and earned the nickname Coriolanus.

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[73] Livy (Foster) 1919: 30.1.
[74] Some sources, Lewis and Short's *A Latin Dictionary* for instance, list his name as Caius. Most sources, including the *Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*, seem to agree on Gnaeus.

The second major event of 494 B.C.E was the *First Secession of the Plebs*. This was a somewhat peaceful revolt by the commoners of Rome who were dissatisfied with the government that had been established to run the Roman Republic. In essence they stopped working in the shops and in the fields – a general strike, so to speak – and forced the aristocracy into granting several important privileges in the government. The four major rights granted were a Council of the Plebs (*concilium*), Tribunes of the Plebs, the right to veto any act passed by the Senate (*intercessio*), and protection against undue bodily harm for members of the common class (*auxilium*).

Unfortunately for the Roman state, the negotiations took so long that the infrastructure of the economy essentially collapsed. By 492, there was not enough food grown or harvested to feed the people. An order was given that the government should go out and buy grain and resell it to the commoners. Coriolanus, bitter about giving any credence to the plight of the Plebs, argued seriously that the Plebs should be blackmailed: give them food only if they would rescind their recent political gains. As retribution for this, Coriolanus was banished from Rome in 491 B.C.E. As revenge, he joined the same Volscians he had defeated the year prior. He held secret negotiations with Attius Tullius to draw the Romans into another war.

This same year, Rome held a series of sumptuous games in honor of Jupiter. At the suggestion of Attius Tullius, Rome invited the Volscians to watch the games. Immediately Tullius sabotaged his own people by telling the Roman Consuls that they could not be trusted. The Senate reacted by banishing the Volscians before the inaugural ceremony.

At this point in Livy's narrative, the idea of social pollution comes to the forefront. "At first they were stricken with a great alarm, as they hurried this way and that to the

houses of their hosts to get their things. But when they had started, their hearts swelled

with indignation, that like malefactors [*consceleratos*] and polluted persons [*contaminatos*],

they should have been driven off from the games at a time of festival, and excluded, in a

way, from intercourse with men and gods."[75] The implication was clear: two very basic

social contracts had been broken by the Roman Senate (but ultimately instigated by Tullius).

Attius Tullius then stood outside town and began a speech to the assembled

Volscians. He made them ashamed that their social contract had been broken. This excerpt

is from the middle of a longer speech.

> *quid eos qui audiuere uocem praeconis, quid, qui nos uidere abeuntes, quid*
> *eos qui huic ignominioso agmini fuere obuii, existimasse putatis nisi aliquod*
> *profecto nefas esse quo, si intersimus spectaculo, uiolaturi simus ludos*
> ***piaculumque*** *merituri; ideo nos ab sede **piorum**, coetu concilioque abigi?*
> (Livy *AUC* 2.38.4.1)

The language here is the same contemporary Latin that Livy uses for most of his

narratives with the exception of some of the vocabulary. It has already been demonstrated

that ***pius*** is a rare word in Livy. Likewise, ***piaculum***, a diminutive derivative, and ***nefas***, an

indeclinable particle or adverb, hardly occur in Livy's work. Furthermore, the nature of the

words and syntax indicate that this is a reconstructed speech, not a period piece. It uses

highly hypotactic structures indicating a large degree of rhetorical training in the age of

Cicero. The use of several subjunctives and compound tenses indicates a much more literate

form of Latin compared to what was likely prevalent during Coriolanus' time. It is important

to note that this event supposedly took place nearly fifty years prior to the writing of the

Twelve Tables.

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[75] Livy (Foster) 1919: 341

> What (about) those who heard the voice of the herald, (those) who saw us departing? What (about) those who were exposed to that shameful throng? What do you all think (they) supposed unless there was something truly unholy which, if we were present in the spectacle, we would violate the games and would deserve ***piaculum***; for that reason were we driven from the seat of the ***pius*** ones, driven away from the gathering and the council?

Attius Tullius' speech was peppered with the language of shame and embarrassment at first, but he quickly turned that sentiment into an angry war cry. Essentially, he was accusing the Romans of taking over the role of being ***pius*** and calling the Volscians ***impius***, thereby in Foster's translation, "we should pollute the games and incur the god's displeasure – for that reason we were being expelled from the seat of the righteous and from their gathering and their council?"[76] De Selincourt took a much more liberal position with his translation: "Is it not obvious that everybody who heard the proclamation, or saw us go, or met this ignominious procession on the road, must believe that there is some dreadful stain upon us, and that we are being expelled from the society of decent men because our presence at the games would pollute them?"[77]

The disparity in the translation in this thesis compared and contrasted with those of Foster and De Selincourt must indicate that there is some sort of disagreement about the core meaning of some of the words in this passage. Foster clearly wants to take this speech in a *religious* context, that is, understanding many words in light of the gods and religious observance, for instance by translating ***nefas*** as "sin," ***piaculum*** as "the god's displeasure" and ***pius*** as "righteous." On the other hand, De Selincourt has not decided to introduce a

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[76] Livy (Foster) 1919: 343
[77] Livy (De Selincourt) 2002: 154

religious tone in *any part* of the speech, including the excerpt. A careful analysis of the speech in its entirety leaves no choice except to agree with De Selincourt. Aside from these three words (**nefas, piaculum,** and **pius**) there is no mention of gods, prayer, or any other religious custom or ritual. In fact, it seems oddly devoid of such language, as if Livy were intentionally trying to convey the idea of godlessness. Moreover, the speech is a diatribe against the Romans and Roman sovereignty.

Therefore, with this analysis in mind, it seems more likely that Livy has introduced a new and nuanced idea into the semantic domain of the word **pius**: social contracts between peoples, tribes, or races. In this episode, the Romans have seemingly established themselves as *decent* people whereas the Volscians have become vilified as people who do not deserve to be part of civilized gatherings and civilized proceedings. This call to arms, in fact, was successful. Attius Tullius and Coriolanus were selected as generals to renew war against the Romans in 488 B.C.E.

A Battle against False Testimony

In 458 B.C.E Rome was still fighting on all fronts. The city was again waging war on the Aequians, Sabines, and Volscians externally, while internally the Tribunes were trying to pass a very important law – the codification and publication of Roman legal statutes (later to be known as the *Twelve Tables*). The conflict between the Senate and the Tribunes had been going on for quite some time. Part of that conflict became personal when Caeso, son of the renowned general Cincinnatus, was falsely accused of murder and tried. A man named Marcus Volscius gave testimony against Caeso that implicated him in the murder. Caeso, a Patrician who felt he was being tried unfairly, posted bail and skipped town. As punishment for this, his father Cincinnatus was stripped of his fortune and forced to live on

a small farm in the country. By 458 B.C.E. – a time when Livy assumed Caeso had already

died of some form of consumption[78] – several family members and former Consuls,

including Capitolinus, were working within the legal system to prosecute Volscius for giving

false testimony.

> *is, quoniam neque Quinctiae familiae Caeso neque rei publicae maximus*
>
> *iuuenum restitui posset, falsum testem qui dicendae causae innoxio*
>
> *potestatem ademisset, iusto ac **pio** bello persequebatur.*
>
> (Livy, *AUC* 3.25.3.4)

The two previous instances of ***pius*** occurred within direct speech (*oratio recta*)

within Livy's narrative. The third and final instance examined in this thesis on the other hand

is not part of a speech, neither direct nor indirect. Despite this, however, Livy seems to be

using it as a fixed phrase (***pio bello***), which echoes the instance in Book I (***pio duello***).

> He (Capitolinus), since neither Caeso could be restored to the Quinctian clan
>
> nor the greatest of (the clan's) young people to the Republic, pursued a false
>
> witness, who had snatched away from an innocent man the ability to plead
>
> his case, by means of a war (that was) in accordance with law and **social**
>
> **duty**.

This usage of ***pius*** is problematic because it is clearly a figurative usage and

furthermore it seems to be idiomatic. Both Foster and De Selincourt seem to have trouble

translating these passages. Foster translates, "Capitolinus, since it was beyond his power to

restore Caeso to the Quinctian family and the greatest of her young men to the state,

waged war, as justice and loyalty demanded, on the false witness who had deprived an

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[78] Livy (Foster) 1922: 2.85

innocent man of the power to plead his cause,"[79] De Selincourt translates, "Capitolinus,

unable any longer to restore Caeso to his family or the greatest of her young men to his

bereaved country, yet honoured the ties of kinship by unremitting warfare against the

perjuror who had robbed an innocent man of the power of defending himself against a false

charge."[80] Foster has translated the phrase by using an epithet instead of adjectives,

choosing a slightly more literal but still oblique translation. On the other hand, De Selincourt

has completely altered the underlying meaning of the Latin by substituting ***justo ac pio bello***

with "unremitting warfare."

On its own the phrase ***pio bello*** has very little meaning – especially since this is a

non-literal usage. As a fixed phrase, assuming it retains some original meaning from the

formula in Book I (***pio duello***) then there is a reference here to war that is properly

sanctioned by some sort of ritualized behavior. Yet there is, in fact, no war or battle

happening. This is a *figurative* war, a war of legalities and abstractions, much the same way

the idiomatic "war on poverty" works in contemporary English.

In essence, Volscius robbed Caeso of his ability to defend himself by lying about

Caeso's participation in a murder. The entire apparatus of state justice – the Roman judicial

system in effect – depended on the truthfulness of witnesses. Any such breach of trust

between the witness and the institution of justice could cause a paradox or a conundrum –

the law simply could not function without at least some semblance of truth or factual

evidence. Therefore perjury, then as now, was a terrible crime because it weakened the

force of the judicial authorities (usually praetors) to carry out justice effectively. In fact

perjury in this case – assuming that Volscius was actually guilty of it – had caused such a

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[79] Ibid.
[80] Livy (De Selincourt) 2002: 224

miscarriage of justice that one of the heroes of the Roman ideal, Cincinnatus, had been

stripped of his entire livelihood unfairly. In such a system, the only acceptable punishment

for perjury was complete destruction of the enemy – i.e., the perjurer – by means of a *pium*

bellum. As established previously in this thesis, a *pium bellum* is one that has the full force

of a binding agreement in Roman religion.

A Violation of the Accorded Rules of Law

The adjective *pius* only occurs in Livy's foundation books three times, all of which

have been examined thus far. Its adverb *pie* occurs three times, twice in the first book and

once in the third. Two of these occurrences are in a collocation that has been seen twice

before: *pie bellum* and *iuste pieque* and do not need to be analyzed again. The third occurs

very shortly after the first (and only) instance of *impie*, which will be examined first.

One of the defining moments in Roman history was the creation of the *Twelve*

Tables. Proposed in 462 B.C.E by Terentilius as a way to protect the Plebs from the

egregious acts of the aristocracy, it took almost a decade of infighting before such legal

codes were written down.[81] In 451 B.C.E, the first ten laws were drafted and in 450 B.C.E.

the final two were finished. During these two years, the normal operations of the Consular

government were suspended while two councils of Decemvirs took over in a succession of

two years. The only Decemvir who served both terms was Appius Claudius.[82] The

Decemvirate, according to Livy, ran the city and its affairs like a tyranny that wished to

remain in power forever. A revolt soon removed the Decemvirate from power and Appius

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[81] Livy (Foster) 1922: 2.33

[82] It is important to note that currently on Wikipedia, this Appius Claudius is referred to as "Crassus." However, Livy never refers to this man as Crassus – those are names reserved for another Appius Claudius, a man who does not become Consul until at least 425 B.C.E. – many years after this Appius Claudius died.

Claudius was put on trial in 449 B.C.E. for crimes committed during his tenure as Decemvir

by a Tribune named Verginius.

> *omnium igitur tibi, Appi Claudi, quae **impie** nefarieque per biennium alia*
>
> *super alia es ausus, gratiam facio.*
>
> (Livy *AUC* 3.56.4.2)

A major pattern can be seen developing in this passage: most of Livy's usages of

words in the ***pius*** group occur in some form of direct speech, as is the case here.

> I therefore pardon you of all these things, Appius Claudius, which you dared
>
> (to do) ***impie*** and nefariously over a period of two years, one after another.

In this speech, Verginius was willing to forgive almost all of Appius' crimes except

one, which was immediately revealed to be a charge of kidnapping.[83] In order to establish

the context, however, one must take a few steps back to understand exactly what

accusations Verginius was making. Livy did not state the accusations exactly, but rather

implied them based on his previous descriptions of Appius' actions. For the most part,

Appius had suspended the powers of the Roman Senate and had tried to retain power for

himself and the other Decemvirs. He did this through a sort of dictatorial power that was

enforced by an increased number of lictors. Traditionally, each high-level magistrate was

allowed twelve lictors. However, the Decemvirs were each allowed one hundred twenty

lictors – a veritable army of twelve hundred men protecting their power base.

In essence, when Verginius referred to Appius' "impious and wicked deeds,"[84] he

was referring to a hostile, unsanctioned takeover of the agreed upon form of government at

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[83] This is the story of Verginia, the plebeian girl whom Appius Claudius kidnapped and forced to be his sexual slave.

[84] Livy (Foster) 1922: 187

Rome. In other words, the Patricians and Plebeians of Rome had been battling for half a century for power equity, and in one simple *coup d'etat*, Appius Claudius took that away from both parties and enacted a centralized autocracy around his own power base.

It is also interesting to note that, once again, a form of the word **pius** (**impie**) and a form of the word **nefas** (**nefarie**) are collocated. **Nefas** has a fairly simple etymology: it is a compound of **ne** ("not") and **fas** ("speech/speaking/spoken"), **fas** being a very ancient, indeclinable particle related to the very old Indo-European roots from which the Latin verb *for* ("to speak"), the Greek *φημί*, and the Sanksrit *bhā-mi* originated.[85] Other Latin reflexes include **fama** and **fatus**, which are related to binding speeches. Essentially, **nefas** can be broadly translated as "not speakable" as in *nefas est facere aliquem*, "it is unspeakable to do X." The fact that **impie** here is closely collocated with **nefarie** indicates that they stand in some sort of relationship to one another – they both indicate binding relationships which have been violated. Thus, in this passage, Verginius was accusing Appius of violating the bonds firmly established between the people and the government of Rome. In essence, he did not have the binding authority of *anyone* to be the supreme ruler of Rome and therefore his autocracy was not valid according to the basic tenets of Roman society.[86]

All of this is despite the fact that Appius Claudius established – with help from the other Decemvirs – the *Twelve Tables*, the most important Roman law code and probably the legal document with the longest enforced record in all of Western Civilization. In fact, nearly four hundred years later, Cicero and many other Roman writers of the first century B.C.E.

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[85] *OLD*, s.v. **for**.
[86] This bond became a very important concept later as indicated by the omnipresent signature S.P.Q.R. (*Senatus Populusque Romanus*).

were fond of quoting it verbatim. It was the one document that all Roman schoolboys were expected to memorize completely.

Political Reunification

The last usage of *pius* to be examined comes in the form of the adverb *pie*. It occurs temporally near the trial of Appius Claudius, shortly after the opening speech by Verginius. However, it does not happen during the trial but in a scene contemporaneous or shortly following the trial.

As noted in the previous section, Appius Claudius was not tried for political crimes (as is often the case in Rome). Instead, he was tried for the crime of kidnapping of Verginia.[87] Before he could be executed or exiled, he cried out, "I appeal!" The crowd was shocked mainly because the right of appeal was one that Appius had suspended during the Decemvirate and one that he had specifically rallied against. He was seen as a hypocrite. Nonetheless, he was thrown in jail to await his appeal.

Livy likely understood the scene as the symbolic end of this episode of political turmoil in Rome, because immediately following it he begins a scene of "congratulations" by introducing it with a colorful and cinematic *meanwhile*...

> *inter haec ab Latinis et Hernicis legati gratulatum de concordia patrum ac plebis Romam uenerunt, donumque ob eam Ioui optumo maximo coronam auream in Capitolium tulere parui ponderis, prout res haud opulentae erant colebanturque religiones **pie** magis quam magnifice.*
> (Livy *AUC* 3.57.8.1)

There is nothing particularly striking about the way this passage is constructed. Yet, two items are noteworthy. First, the vocabulary chosen adequately reflects (and perhaps

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[87] Livy (Foster) 1922: 192

creates) a mood of peace and harmony. Second, *pie* is used outside of direct speech. Livy

seems to be using it here in a fairly natural manner, indicating that it has no particularly

unusual semantic value.

> At this time, legates came from the Latins and the Hernici to congratulate
> Rome for the agreement between the Patricians and the Plebs -- and to
> bring a gift to Jove, best and greatest, a gold crown of trifling weight, onto
> the Capitol [i.e. the citadel], as their states were by no means rich and they
> cared for their superstitions more ***pie*** than pompously.

The context here is fairly well defined and clear. This passage demonstrates a

religious context brought about by the restoration of the Roman government and the

reunification of the various classes (that is, the Patricians with their Consuls and the Plebs

with their Tribunes). Both Foster and De Selincourt gave no indications of trouble in their

translations of this section. Strangely, however, they both chose to translate the adverb *pie*

by means of the ablative noun "with piety." This translation accords well with the modern

English meaning "piety" – essentially, duty to God. Although Jupiter is not technically the

same as the Christian God, his celestial being in the Roman pantheon is somewhat

equivalent in authority, ability, and representation.

A Call to Arms

A few short decades later, in 403 B.C.E., Rome's government had stabilized to some

degree and it had begun to rise in the ranks as a military power. For the most part the city

had quelled the uprisings of their traditional enemies, the local tribes – the Aequians, the

Sabines, and the Volscians. By now, Rome has begun to touch upon the territory of their

former masters – a much larger and more powerful enemy – the Etruscans. Internally, the

Patricians and the Plebs were still locked in constant struggle but it was balanced in such a

way that neither party gained too much authority. For the most part, Rome was being run

by Military Tribunes with Consular authority instead of by Consuls.

Appius Claudius Crassus (the son of the Appius Claudius mentioned in the previous

two sections) was a Military Tribune who himself opposed the existence of the office of the

Tribunes. On this occasion, Appius was displeased with the way Veii (a disenfranchised

Etrurian city) was being handled. He gave a speech to the other Tribunes about how the

Tribunate had become corrupt and incompetent, having allowed Veii to defy Rome's

authority too often.

> *septiens rebellarunt; in pace nunquam fida fuerunt; agros nostros miliens*
> *depopulati sunt; Fidenates deficere a nobis coegerunt; colonos nostros ibi*
> *interfecerunt; auctores fuere contra ius caedis **impiae** legatorum nostrorum;*
> *Etruriam omnem aduersus nos concitare uoluerunt, hodieque id moliuntur;*
> *res repetentes legatos nostros haud procul afuit quin uiolarent.*
> (Livy *AUC* 5.4.14.1)

The last instance of ***impius*** in the foundation books occurs very near the beginning

of Book V. As with almost all of Livy's uses of ***pius*** and its derivatives, this one occurs within

a speech. One interesting linguistic feature of note is that, once again, a form of ***pius*** is

collocated near a form of ***ius***. In previous iterations, the most common collocation has been

the adjective ***iustus***.

> They (Veii) have rebelled seven times. In peace (time) they were never
> trustworthy; a thousand times they depopulated our fields; they coerced the
> people of Fidenae to revolt from us; they killed our colonists there; their
> authorities went against the obligation of ***impius*** slaughter of our
> ambassadors. In opposition to us they wanted to incite all of Etruria, and

> today they are attempting it; seeking redress our ambassadors were not far
> off from being violated.

The context here does not support a religious reading whatsoever. Nowhere before nor after this passage does Appius Claudius Crassus speak of gods, prayer, rituals, nor any other feature that would indicate a religious semantic domain. It is clear based on this lack of religious context that both the translations of Foster ("impious slaughter") and De Selincourt ("impious murder") are unsupported. Here the meaning is more clearly associated with the unreliability and unfaithfulness of the people of Veii. Specifically, it is the right of ambassadors to travel between city-states without fear of harm from enemies. This is a sort of social contract between tribes and city-states, or as Foster stated, it was "in violation of the law of nations."[88] A translation that favors the relationship between states would be more meaningful, for instance, "unpatriotic," "uncivilized," "unconventional," or "unstately."

Summary of Livy

The limited scope of this chapter must necessarily draw limited conclusions about Livy's usages of the words in the ***pius*** group. Only the instances in the first five books, the foundation books, have been examined here. Although fewer than 35 books remain out of 142, this still represents only a small fraction of the possible ways in which Livy used these words. Nonetheless, some conclusions can be drawn. First, these words rarely seem to be a part of Livy's narrative vocabulary: almost all the usages are either within direct speeches (*oratio recta)* or used idiomatically. Second, they are rare. Third, they almost always occur in the mouths of important historical figures, many of whom seem to exhibit idealized virtues

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[88] Livy (Foster) 1924: 15

(Roman or otherwise, as in the case of Attius Tullius). Finally, and perhaps most importantly,

they only sometimes occur in an overtly religious context. In some passages, for instance,

the relationship of the passage to a religious semantic domain is either non-existent or

connected only slightly because of the cultural ubiquity of gods and divinities in Roman

culture. It would probably be premature to draw any conclusions about how Livy felt about

words in this group, but based on the way he seems to have used them, it seems reasonable

to wonder whether he considered the word *outmoded* or even *archaic*. Livy probably wrote

the foundation books sometime around 20 B.C.E. Perhaps by this time in the post-

Republican age, the bonds created through "social contracts" were somehow attenuated by

changes in Roman culture to such a point that demonstrably old words such as ***pius*** were

considered part and parcel to a world that was no longer particularly relevant to the

somewhat "godless" age of Augustan Rome.

　　　As with Catullus and Vergil, it has become clear through analysis that the words in

the ***pius*** group are not statically locked into a religious context. Their values in translation

must be understood in the context of the Roman culture in which they existed and in the

minds of the Romans who actively used the words to describe themselves and Roman

civilization.

Conclusion

This analysis has explored several different literary contexts of the word ***pius*** in an effort to recreate its semantic frame, which helps to identify its various polysemous senses. These can be summarized:

1) Of a poet who writes in a way acceptable to his readers.

2) Of a leader who acts in a way acceptable to his people.

3) Of a son who acts in a way acceptable to his mother.

4) Of blood that is shed in a way that is acceptable in war.

5) Of a person who acts in a way acceptable to his or her lover.

6) Of a person who acts in a way acceptable to a deity.

7) Of a divine being that engages in a pact with another being, receiving sacrifices in exchange for divine interventions.

8) Of the authority of a divine being involved in the pact.

9) Of a human who upholds the pact, and who guards the household spirits, honors the parents, watches over the people and children, e.g., a pious person, a loyal person, a dedicated person.

10) Of a group of people who are under the protection of such a leader.

11) Of an object that is used in a ritual which invokes that pact. Such an object can be used in varying degrees of elaboration and certitude to effect a tighter or looser bond.

12) Of an object used in the ritual which adequately demonstrates understanding of the pact.

13) Of a war that is sanctioned by an internal agreement of the people carrying out that war.

14) Of a people that has gained the favor of the gods.

15) Of any conflict that is so important to the cultural basis that it can be likened to a war.

16) Of deeds or actions that are endemic to the legal and moral codes of a society.

17) Of a nation's religious duty carried out faithfully.

18) Of a state that does not violate treaties with other states.

A picture is emerging that indicates a prototype for **pius**. It has less to do with religious piety or social dedication than it has to do with alliances, obligations and responsibility. In English-speaking cultures heavily dominated by Christianity, the concept of forming an alliance with a god is unnecessary and therefore – at some point – it simultaneously disappeared from our language and culture. The Judeo-Christian god is an all-powerful deity who has no need for concord. Roman gods, on the other hand, have human failings[89] in abundance: they are lusty, angry, and vengeful. Romans did not see their gods as all-powerful beings, but as animistic forces that needed to be placed under control. The action that puts them under control is known as *religio*, or literally (as Lewis has postulated) "binding back."[90] Therefore anyone or anything **pius** is by definition involved in this contract of controlling the irrational forces of nature.

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[89] Vergil (Lombardo) 2005: 1.60. Yet Vergil describes Jupiter as **pater omnipotens**. How does this accord with Jupiter's actions? Why does Jupiter send Mercury as an **interpres** to force Aeneas to go to Italy? Why does he simply not pick up Aeneas and plop him down on those Lavinian shores? The answer lies in a complicated back-story of Greco-Roman legend, myth and superstition, which unfortunately contradicts the epithet that Vergil ascribes to Jupiter: **omnipotens pater**. Perhaps it is dramatic hyperbole.
[90] Lewis (1969): 944. Interestingly, the same root may refer to words like *lex* ("law").

Final Words

There is often a tendency by translators to capture a one-to-one relationship between vocabulary and grammatical items in two languages. This is understandable because it makes translation an easier process, especially from Latin, a language that is culturally and temporally distant. Yet the process of carrying one word across from language A and depositing it in language B requires a bit more than correspondence – it involves a great deal of interpretation. Often times, translators of living languages are native speakers or can ask a native speaker to interpret on their behalf. This really has to do with the underlying culture – which is why understanding cultural frames is so important. Unfortunately, ancient Rome is such a faraway place and much about its society, civilization, and religion is lost to time. Nonetheless, it is the job of the translator to understand critically Rome and Romans, and furthermore to superimpose modern conceptions in the least invasive way possible. This thesis has endeavored to provide a fairly thorough description of the ways in which ancient Roman authors understood these words that will help translators choose appropriate translations in various contexts.

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