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# The Tomb of Tarpeia

Jaclyn Neel

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# The Tomb of Tarpeia

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## OUTLINE

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- I. Scholarship on Tarpeia
- II. Tarpeia: traitor or hero?
- III. Parallels for the tomb of Tarpeia
- IV. Rites to Tarpeia
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## TEXT

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- 1 There are two primary difficulties for anyone wishing to argue that Tarpeia was worshipped: the first lies in the prevailing opinion of surviving Latin sources that she was a traitor, and the second is that even those authors who say that she had a tomb disagree over its placement.<sup>1</sup> Thus the majority of scholarship ignores the possibility of such cult honors. The difficulty with their position is that the Roman historian Lucius Calpurnius Piso, in a lost historical work that is quoted by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, explicitly claims that Tarpeia did receive cult: *χοὰς αὐτῇ Ῥωμαῖοι καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ἐπιτελοῦσι, (λέγω δὲ ἃ Πείσων γράφει)* (“the Romans perform liquid sacrifices to her each year – I relate what Piso writes”).<sup>2</sup> In this paper, I argue that Piso’s evidence should not be dismissed. My argument proceeds in four parts: (I) I first situate the worship of Tarpeia in contemporary scholarship on her myth. (II) Next, I argue that the Pisonian tale of Tarpeia as a hero (or at least as a figure worthy of worship) was more prevalent than scholars have thought. (III) I then suggest some parallels to Tarpeia’s tomb, culminating in (IV) an alternative outline of Tarpeia’s worship; due to the extremely scanty evidence for Tarpeia’s tomb, this section will by necessity be speculative.

## I. Scholarship on Tarpeia

- 2 That Tarpeia received some form of cult has been suggested before, often in connection with her iconography. Several scholars argue that

Tarpeia was originally a goddess, and that it is this divine Tarpeia who was worshipped.<sup>3</sup> Ancient authors, however, always refer to Tarpeia as a human, and this includes the authors who refer to her cult; indeed, our best evidence specifies that the cult site was Tarpeia's tomb. Thus, while euhemerism is not an impossible explanation for how Tarpeia's worship began, it is not supported by the surviving evidence nor does it adequately explain the persistence of Tarpeia's cult into the historical period; thus, euhemerism plays little role in this paper. Others have suggested that Tarpeia was a human sacrifice.<sup>4</sup> A more notorious suggestion, that Tarpeia was worshipped by the Vestals, was put forward by Theodor Mommsen in his commentary on Philocalus' 4<sup>th</sup>-century CE calendar. Despite the age of this suggestion, it still carries weight: Tara Welch, in her recent and wide-ranging study of Tarpeia, states that Tarpeia's worship was "refuted convincingly" by Kurt Latte's rebuttal of Mommsen in 1960,<sup>5</sup> and therefore chose not to pursue the idea of a cult to Tarpeia.<sup>6</sup> It is thus worth revisiting both Mommsen's evidence and Latte's counter-argument in greater detail; in my view, neither scholar convincingly made his case.

3 Mommsen indeed did not present an argument. A fourth-century work, the calendar of Philocalus, states in its entry on Feb. 13, *Virgo · Vesta · Parentat*, without mention of Tarpeia;<sup>7</sup> Mommsen, in his commentary, asserts "*videntur autem eo die inferiae publicae factae esse Tarpeiae* (Dion. 2.40), *quas ei utpote et ipsi virgini Vestali consentaneum est obtulisse Vestales*" ("Moreover, on that day public funerary rites seem to have been made to Tarpeia (Dion. [Hal.] 2.40), which naturally the Vestals offered her, since it is generally agreed that she herself was a Vestal virgin"; emphasis mine).<sup>8</sup> He ties this statement to the beginning of the *parentatio*, or mourning period for the dead, on the same day, which was noted in a different calendar from a century later.<sup>9</sup> No further discussion is offered. Mommsen seems to have thought that the Dionysius passage, quoted briefly above, spoke for itself.<sup>10</sup>

4 Latte correctly noted that Mommsen's source, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, never mentions that Tarpeia was a Vestal;<sup>11</sup> this information comes from other sources, such as Varro and Propertius.<sup>12</sup> Although Mommsen may have assumed that the discrepancy did not matter, I have elsewhere argued that the "Vestal version" was an

option rather than a requirement of Tarpeia's story.<sup>13</sup> Authors who do not mention a Vestal Tarpeia were not necessarily thinking of a Vestal Tarpeia. There is thus little reason to follow Mommsen's assumption that the Vestals would sacrifice to Tarpeia the traitor because she was a Vestal. However, it is important to note that some texts named the first Vestal – living under Numa – as Tarpeia.<sup>14</sup> Robin Lorsch Wildfang and Meghan DiLuzio have argued that this first Vestal, rather than the Romulean-era Tarpeia, was the object of the Vestal's cult at the Parentalia;<sup>15</sup> although this suggestion is certainly more understandable, it is not well supported by the evidence, which clearly associates the tomb and libations with the Tarpeia who died under Romulus.<sup>16</sup> Charles King, moreover, cogently argues that the Vestal rites at the Parentalia must be a later addition to the Roman calendar, due to the fact that Cicero disapproved of Caesar's public funeral (as opposed to the private or even semi-public<sup>17</sup> rite of the Parentalia).<sup>18</sup> In King's view, public cult personnel participating in the Parentalia would make this distinction meaningless.

5 Similarly, it must also be noted that Rome had multiple festivals of the dead,<sup>19</sup> and Dionysius does not mention at which festival Tarpeia received her libation – if indeed the libation was connected to a festival in the first place, a point to which I return below.<sup>20</sup> However, Latte's dismissal goes too far in rejecting Tarpeia's cult: he also claims, without argument, that "das Opfer ist von der Umformung der Novelle [of Scylla and other women] nicht zu trennen; sie ... ist also sein eigentum" and that "auf dem Kapital konnte wirklich kein Grab liegen."<sup>21</sup> The first of these claims is questionable, and the second is patently incorrect, as I will show shortly. Latte's own explanation, that Tarpeia's story derived from a trophy, has itself been repeatedly proven false.<sup>22</sup>

6 Tarpeia's story shows obvious parallels to the treasonous women of Greek history, as Welch and others have shown.<sup>23</sup> Some of these women were well-known in antiquity; some continue to be well-known today; most were, like Tarpeia, eponyms or aetiologies of some sort. They were not all worshipped. Thus Latte's statement that worship is inseparable from the Greek plot is difficult to understand; his assertion that it was Piso's invention is taken up below. It is likewise untrue that there were no graves on the Capitoline, although burial there was illegal for much of Rome's history. Archaeologists

working on the Capitoline have found archaic tombs on both the northern and southern summits of the hill,<sup>24</sup> and Romans themselves seem to have been aware of burials in the area of the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus.<sup>25</sup> In sum, while I agree with Latte that Mommsen's interpretation of the rites has no factual basis, I disagree with his refutation. Rather, I believe that we must accept the clear statement in Piso/Dionysius of Halicarnassus that Tarpeia received libations.

## II. Tarpeia: traitor or hero?

- 7 Tarpeia's characterization as a traitor has been a major impediment to the belief that she received worship. This characterization is found in ancient authors from the Republic to Late Antiquity, and hardly represents a minority view. It is important to note, however, that there is a significant distinction between Greek authors who discuss Tarpeia and Latin authors who discuss Tarpeia. The two Greek authors who discuss Tarpeia in detail, Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus,<sup>26</sup> provide access to a rich tradition of alternative stories that is largely lacking from the Latin authorities; Latin-language authors of the imperial period primarily follow Livy.<sup>27</sup> Their reuse of Livian vocabulary suggests that their accounts derive from his, and more importantly from a single source that Livy used. Rather than representing a consensus, these imperial Latin authors instead show a flattening of the historical tradition.
- 8 Livy's account shows awareness of a broad group of stories regarding early Rome that existed in the late Roman Republic. This tradition is preserved at least in part in Livy, Dionysius, and Plutarch.

(a) Consilio etiam additus dolus. Sp. Tarpeius Romanae praeerat arci. Huius filiam virginem auro corrumpit Tatius ut armatos in arcem accipiat; aquam forte ea tum sacris extra moenia petitur ierat. Accepti obrutam armis necavere, (1) seu ut vi capta potius arx videretur (2) seu prodendi exempli causa ne quid usquam fidum proditori esset. (b) Additur fabula, quod volgo Sabini aureas armillas magni ponderis brachio laevo gemmatosque magna specie anulos habuerint, pepigisse eam quod in sinistris manibus haberent; eo scuta illi pro aureis donis congesta. (c) Sunt qui eam ex pacto

tradendi quod in sinistris manibus esset derecto arma petisse dicant et fraude visam agere sua ipsam peremptam mercede.<sup>28</sup>

To this plan a trick was added too. Spurius Tarpeius commanded the Roman citadel. Tattius paid off his unmarried daughter with gold to allow armed men into the citadel; by chance at that time she had gone outside the walls to seek water for rites. Allowed in, they killed her by burying her in weapons, either so that the citadel would seem to have been captured by force rather [than treachery] or in order to make an example of treachery, i.e. that there is never any good faith for a traitor. The story is added on that because the Sabines commonly had golden armbands of great weight on their left arms and jeweled rings of great beauty, she had asked them for what they had in their left hands; she was showered with shields<sup>29</sup> instead of golden gifts. There are those who say that she had tried to betray them for contracting “what was in their left hands”, meaning weapons; when she was discovered to be double-dealing, she was repaid with her own price.

- 9 Livy’s account itself clearly refers to at least four previous sources: (a1-2) a narrative that runs from the beginning of 1.11.6 to 1.11.7, and includes two options for Tattius’ motivation in killing Tarpeia (*seu... seu*); (b) a second, marked by *additur fabula*, in 1.11.8; and (c) a final *sunt qui* in 1.11.9.<sup>30</sup> The later authors who follow this account, however, relate at most two versions, and in particular the version related to treachery. Valerius Maximus most explicitly adopts the version in which Tarpeia’s death is a punishment for treachery, as well as most explicitly copying Livy’s language:

Romulo regnante Spurius Tarpeius arci praeerat, cuius filiam virginem aquam sacris petitem extra moenia egressam Tattius ut armatos Sabinos in arcem secum reciperet corrupit, mercedis nomine pactam quae in sinistris manibus gerebant: erant autem in his armillae et anuli magno ex pondere auri. loco potitum agmen Sabinorum puellam praemium flagitantem armis obrutam necavit, perinde quasi promissum, quod ea quoque laevis gestaverant, soluisset.<sup>31</sup>

When Romulus was king Spurius Tarpeius commanded the citadel. Tattius paid off his [Tarpeius’] unmarried daughter, who had gone to seek water for rites outside the walls, to let him and the armed

Sabines into the citadel. The price she named was “what they carried on their left hands”; for there were armbands and rings of a great weight of gold on these men. Having gained access to the place, the troop of Sabines killed the girl, who demanded her price, by burying her in shields, as if this fulfilled the terms because they carried these on their left arms as well.

- 10 Valerius relates only Livy’s (b) version. The degree of borrowing in this passage is exceptional, and Tara Welch has analyzed it in detail;<sup>32</sup> it is also present in Silius Italicus,<sup>33</sup> Florus,<sup>34</sup> and Servius’ commentary on the *Aeneid*. While these authors have not copied Livy, their reuse of his language goes beyond sharing the basic outline of the plot (girl, Capitoline, gold, and left hands). This can be seen by the avoidance of synonyms or near-synonyms (e.g., *sinistris* rather than *laevis*; *obruere* rather than a compound of *premere* or *abdere*; *virgo* rather than *puella*; in Servius, *scuta* rather than *clipeos*) and the similar structure of the story between Livy and the prose authors. Silius’ tale is simple; Tarpeia is a girl who betrays Rome for gold. The other two Latin authors offer more complexity. Florus, like Livy, presents two options for Tatius’ motivations, but unlike Livy he does not provide any other narratives (that is, he relates Livy’s versions [a2] and [b]). Servius, in contrast, discusses Tarpeia twice, in comments on *Aeneid* 1 and 8. The comment on the eighth book is similar to Florus’ account and relates Livy’s (b) version.<sup>35</sup> His note in the first book, however, also shows familiarity with Ovid’s brief reference to Tarpeia in the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>36</sup> Ovid’s account does not agree with any of Livy’s four versions, and Servius does not try to reconcile them. The accounts of Tarpeia that we have in post-Augustan Rome, thus, relate a compressed version of Livy’s Tarpeia. This version focuses on the clever ambiguity of “what the Sabines wore on their left arms” and depicts Tarpeia only as a traitor. None of these later Latin accounts include Livy’s versions (a1) or (c), and they also omit reference to water – a fact which may have been important to the cult site, as discussed in section IV below.
- 11 Although Livy does not promote the version in which Tarpeia tries to save Rome, it nonetheless appears in his account,<sup>37</sup> and this version is related in more detail and attributed to Piso by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Only Dionysius adds the additional detail that Tarpeia’s tomb received some sort of cult practice, but he obviously thinks that

this information is important:<sup>38</sup> he draws attention to the fact by first noting that there is disagreement among Roman sources at this juncture, then “quotes” Piso, and finally reiterates why he prefers Piso’s version. This emphasis is important, because Dionysius was not a naïve historian: he does not blindly follow Piso, nor does Piso always disagree with earlier writers.<sup>39</sup> Instead, Dionysius prefers the account that he thinks is most likely.<sup>40</sup> Ancient ideas of what is probable differ from modern ideas; however, there is no reason to reject what Dionysius reports about archaic Rome given what we know about his writing choices. He was aware of Piso’s position as a censor and, as a Greek living in Rome, he understood the role that censors performed; he perhaps took the moral role of censors<sup>41</sup> into account in believing Piso that Tarpeia received some form of sacrifice and in basing his interpretation of her story on Piso’s account.

- 12 At this point, it is useful to examine Dionysius’ evidence in more detail. Although Tarpeia’s story runs from 2.38.2 to 2.40.3, for reasons of space I am reproducing only the last section:

τάφου τε γὰρ ἔνθα ἔπεσεν ἠξίωται τὸν ἱερώτατον τῆς πόλεως κατέχουσα λόφον, καὶ χοὰς αὐτῇ Ῥωμαῖοι καθ’ ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ἐπιτελοῦσι, (λέγω δὲ ἃ Πείσων γράφει) ὧν οὐδενὸς εἰκὸς αὐτὴν, εἰ προδιδούσα τὴν πατρίδα τοῖς πολεμίοις ἀπέθανεν, οὔτε παρὰ τῶν προδοθέντων οὔτε παρὰ τῶν ἀποκτεινάντων τυχεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἴ τι λείψανον αὐτῆς ἦν τοῦ σώματος ἀνασκαφὲν ἔξω ρίφῃναι σὺν χρόνῳ φόβου τε καὶ ἀποτροπῆς ἔνεκα τῶν μελλόντων τὰ ὅμοια δρᾶν.<sup>42</sup>

For there where she fell, she was honored with a tomb set on the most sacred hill of the city, and the Romans perform liquid sacrifices to her each year – I relate what Piso writes – which it is unlikely she would have gained from anyone if she had died betraying her country to the enemy, neither from those who were betrayed nor from those who killed her. Instead, in time they would have dug up any part of her body that was left and thrown it away to inspire fear and ward off anyone who would act similarly.

- 13 Scholarship on this passage has largely confined itself to noting the Roman chauvinism of Piso’s information, rather than engaging with its content. Piso is “patriotic”;<sup>43</sup> he rationalizes;<sup>44</sup> he morally purifies.<sup>45</sup> Yet these statements seem to dismiss the option



that Piso's evidence reflects reality: that is, they are uninterested in the possibility that Piso's evidence records an alternative living tradition about Tarpeia, rather than clever reasoning.<sup>46</sup> As Elizabeth Rawson argued almost a half century ago, Piso's work is not especially rationalizing, although the fragments we have suggest a strong interest in topography that is in keeping with his censorial stature.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, the story of Tarpeia as it is transmitted is no more rational or moral in Piso than it is in Fabius Pictor: the only distinction between the two lies in Tarpeia's characterization and subsequent tomb. As we see in other stories told about early Rome, such as the death of Remus, the creation of the *lacus Curtius*, or the authority granted to Servilius Ahala, multiple competing and contemporary versions were not unusual.<sup>48</sup> Thus it is not necessary to suggest that "Piso altered the tale by the time honored ancient historiographical method of τὸ εἰκόσ ... in order to harmonize the myth" with the offerings;<sup>49</sup> rather, Piso may represent an understanding of Tarpeia that was held in the Rome of his day, even if that understanding was also rejected by other Romans.<sup>50</sup>

- 14 Interpretation of this passage hinges on four points which have been overlooked by critics who deny or ignore the possibility of cult honors.<sup>51</sup> First, Dionysius is not unique in suggesting that Tarpeia's tomb was monumentalized.<sup>52</sup> It is also suggested by Propertius and Plutarch, and to a lesser degree by Festus (whose evidence is discussed in section IV) and perhaps even Varro and Servius, who all speak of the buried Tarpeia as the eponym of (at least part of) the Capitoline. Moreover, Piso's account does, in fact, appear in Livy; it is not emphasized by him, but neither is any other version of Tarpeia's story.<sup>53</sup> Second, the continuing use of "Tarpeian mount" or "seat" (*mons Tarpeius* or *sedes Tarpeia*) to refer to the Capitoline (and often, by extension, to Jupiter Optimus Maximus) strongly implies that the name did not recall heinous activities;<sup>54</sup> contrast, by way of example, the *vicus Sceleratus* which memorialized the abhorrent behavior of Tullia, or the refusal to countenance the *nomen Tarquinium* in Rome after the expulsion of the kings.<sup>55</sup> This poetic use seems rather to recall Varro's more anodyne statement that the entire hill was a memorial to Tarpeia.<sup>56</sup> Third, the idea that libations would be given at a person's tomb fits well within Roman burial practice, as known from Pompeii and elsewhere; in other

words, we do not need to invent new ritual practices to accommodate Dionysius' evidence.<sup>57</sup> Nor is aetiology incompatible with worship; in fact, recent studies on aetiology have emphasized its ties to ritual behavior.<sup>58</sup> And lastly, the information that we have does not clearly indicate when the libations at Tarpeia's tomb began or when they stopped. Although Dionysius' phrasing suggests that he is quoting Piso directly, he is not; Piso wrote in Latin, so Dionysius' words are, at best, a paraphrase. This paraphrase raises important questions about how to interpret the libations at Tarpeia's tomb, which will be pursued in sections III and IV below.

- 15 Thus, we can conclude that (a) Piso's version of Tarpeia was known outside of Dionysius' research, and (b) the libations that are described may have continued for some time. It is important to accept Piso's evidence as reflective of reality, rather than an attempt to gloss over an unsavory aspect of Rome's history. Piso's work suggests that he was interested in factual accuracy,<sup>59</sup> moreover, he had to be able to defend his arguments to contemporary Romans. If Tarpeia truly did not receive libations and Piso claimed that she did, his audience would be aware that he was lying. Yet from the little we know about his life, Piso was known for his scrupulous honesty and severe discipline.<sup>60</sup> These characteristics seem difficult to reconcile, and it is considerably more likely that there was a tomb of Tarpeia than that a censor would lie so obviously about such a minor matter when he could easily have followed the narrative of his predecessors such as Fabius Pictor.

### **III. Parallels for the tomb of Tarpeia**

- 16 Although Greeks like Dionysius worshipped exceptional humans after death as heroes, Roman practices are generally considered to have been different. The reality is a bit more complex; we know that family members did engage in ritual practices such as regular libations and other offerings<sup>61</sup> at the tomb of deceased relatives on the one hand, and on the other hand we have examples of a small number of deified demigods who unequivocally did receive cultic honors at Rome: Romulus, for example, and Hercules. Both of these men were believed to have been born to divine fathers; the situation is different for Acca

Larentia, whose worship is also well attested and whose divine parentage appears to be non-existent.<sup>62</sup> We do not need to call these figures “heroes”, but it is clear that Romans did have at least a theory of humans who became gods due to exceptional benevolence.<sup>63</sup> These examples seem to be confined to a single period of Roman history: its foundations.

- 17 Perhaps the closest parallel to Dionysius’ words about Tarpeia comes only a few chapters later, where he describes rites that take place at the tomb of Titus Tatius on the Aventine. The information on Tatius’ burial immediately follows the description of Tatius’ death by stoning, which Dionysius attributed to Licinius Macer.<sup>64</sup> This information is unusual, and may have had contemporary relevance: Macer was usually believed to be writing in the time of Sulla,<sup>65</sup> an era in which Roman generals faced stoning as a form of field mutiny, and this form of death may be reflected in early first-century imagery of Tarpeia buried by shields:<sup>66</sup> it is possible that crushing as a form of death was viewed as broadly similar. Dionysius writes:

Τάτιος μὲν οὖν τοιαύτης τελευτῆς... θάπτεται δ’ εἰς Ῥώμην κομισθεὶς ἐντίμῳ ταφῇ καὶ χοὰς αὐτῷ καθ’ ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ἡ πόλις ἐπιτελεῖ δημοσίᾳ.<sup>67</sup>

Tatius, then, died in this way... and he was buried in Rome, where he was granted a venerated tomb. Every year, the city performs libations to him at public expense.

- 18 There are two important similarities between Dionysius’ description of Tatius and of Tarpeia. First is his suggestion that these two characters were honored (ἐντίμῳ, ἡξίωται), in contrast to their relatively negative depiction in most other authorities. The second is the language Dionysius uses to describe their rites, which is almost identical: χοὰς... καθ’ ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ... ἐπιτελεῖν. This is a rare description in Dionysius’ work, as discussed in more detail at the end of this section. Aside from the difference in gender, the only variation in language is Dionysius’ reference to the city (ἡ πόλις) performing Tatius’ rites, compared to the vaguer “Romans” (Ῥωμαῖοι) who carry out Tarpeia’s. It is likely that the latter description is more than *variatio* and implies that only a subset of Romans carried

out Tarpeia's rites; this may also be implied by the lack of reference to public expenditure (δημοσίᾳ) on Tarpeia's rites, unlike Tatius'.

- 19 It is not clear where Dionysius found the information about Tatius' rites; although he may have continued to use Macer, this is not guaranteed. This uncertainty yields three outcomes: either (1) Dionysius had firsthand experience with these rites, a possibility discussed in more detail below; (2) Dionysius continued to use Macer; or (3) Dionysius used a different source, writing in either (a) Latin or (b) Greek. Both options (2) and (3a) have similar conclusions for this paper: Dionysius translated the information that he received from his source text into Greek. Dionysius is, where he can be checked, an accurate reporter; however, there are occasions where he silently adds details from his own knowledge.<sup>68</sup> It is therefore within keeping with Dionysius' practice to assimilate Roman practices to other Roman practices that he found similar. Option (3b) suggests a similar conclusion, but with the direction reversed: whereas (2) and (3a) suggest that Dionysius has taken Piso's words about Tarpeia and applied them to Tatius, (3b) suggests that Dionysius found a Greek-language description of Tatius' rites and felt that they were a suitable representation of Piso's description of Tarpeia. All three options show that Dionysius perceived a relationship between Tarpeia's tomb and Tatius' tomb.
- 20 Another notable feature of Dionysius' description of both tombs is his use of the present tense (ἐπιτελοῦσι, ἐπιτελεῖ) to describe the rites. Scholars have assumed that he does not report events from his own time.<sup>69</sup> Yet at least in the case of Tarpeia, Dionysius' description lacks enough verbs to allow us to place his information temporally with confidence:<sup>70</sup> he describes the rites in the present tense, but also ascribes these words directly to Piso. In this case, we know that Dionysius was using a Latin-language author, Piso, as his source; this was perhaps also true in the case of Tatius with Macer. To take these verbs as a present tense transmitted from the original source rather than Dionysius' own, as all commentators do, depends on Dionysius' precision in translating.<sup>71</sup> Dionysius, who lived and worked in Rome, could easily have changed either author's words into a past tense if required, and he does use a mix of past and present tenses elsewhere to represent the different status of archaic and contemporary sites.<sup>72</sup>

The possibility that his present tense reflects an active rite in his own time should remain open.

- 21 Dionysius seems to think of Tarpeia's tomb and Tatius' tomb along similar lines: he uses almost exactly the same words to describe the rites paid to them. This similar description is found only in Dionysius, although there is some evidence that he did not invent it:<sup>73</sup> Diana Spencer has argued that Varro too saw a connection between the groves and quarries of the Capitoline and the Aventine, locations that are linked to both Tarpeia and Tatius.<sup>74</sup> Both of Dionysius' passages report the existence of libations to a deceased mythological Roman in the present tense, and both of the deceased Romans could be considered to have died under treasonous circumstances. In Greek culture, these are characteristics of the hero cult; it is therefore notable that Dionysius avoids this language in his description of Tarpeia and Tatius, perhaps indicating his understanding that Romans understood these cults differently from Greek heroes.<sup>75</sup> Unlike Tarpeia's tomb, however, we do have other suggestions that Tatius' tomb continued to be recognized into the last years of the Republic: Varro offers Tatius' burial place, and particularly the fact of his violent death, as part of his etymology of the Lauretum.<sup>76</sup> This brief discussion suggests that Tatius' tomb was still visible in Varro's day, since Varro does not use words such as *ante* to indicate a situation that was no longer true. If Varro could have seen Tatius' tomb, it is likely that Dionysius could as well; Varro died only a few decades before Dionysius wrote the *Roman Antiquities* and Dionysius offers no indication that the tomb had recently been destroyed or decommissioned; indeed, Plutarch also uses the present tense to discuss the tomb of Tatius.<sup>77</sup> Christopher Hallett, moreover, has suggested that Tatius' tomb may have inspired the design of Augustus' Mausoleum.<sup>78</sup> If correct, Tatius' tomb would not only have been visible, but also quite relevant in Dionysius' time.
- 22 Although there is no positive evidence that Tarpeia's or Tatius' worship continued into the first century BCE, there is likewise no positive evidence that it had stopped. It is thus possible that Dionysius was reporting on a practice that he had heard about in more recent times as well as in the time of Piso. Although the argument that I present in the following pages assumes that Tarpeia and Tatius were worshipped in at least the late second and early first

centuries BCE, when Piso and Macer were active, I have therefore not ruled out the possibility of a longer period of ritual activity. Indeed, Dionysius does elsewhere report on rites that were not being practiced. He explicitly rejects the idea, which he attributes to Polybius, that there was a tomb to Pallas on the Palatine and that there were continuing rites for Pallas in his own day. This denial uses similar language to what we have seen him use with Tattius and Tarpeia:

ἔγὼ μέντοι οὔτε τάφον ἐθεασάμην ἐν Ῥώμῃ Πάλλαντος οὔτε χοᾶς  
ἔμαθον ἐπιτελουμένας οὔτε ἄλλοτῶν τοιοῦτοτρόπων οὐδὲν  
ἠδυνήθην ἰδεῖν.<sup>79</sup>

I at least have seen no tomb for Pallas in Rome nor have I learned of libations being made to him nor have I been able to observe anything else like that.

23 These three tombs are the only tombs in his surviving work whose rites are described with the words χοᾶς ἐπιτελεῖν, and indeed they mark the only three uses of χοᾶς in Dionysius' surviving work; therefore they seem to constitute a special category that comprised only Tarpeia, Tattius, and Pallas. This category, based on what Dionysius says about Pallas, may have involved first-hand knowledge: he emphasizes that in Pallas' case he was not able to see or observe rites, using two visual terms, which suggests that he may have had visual knowledge of the other rites he discussed.<sup>80</sup> Although claims to autopsy are common in the first book of Dionysius,<sup>81</sup> they are less common in the following books,<sup>82</sup> and critics have noted that there is a qualitative difference in the first book of *Roman Antiquities*.<sup>83</sup> He certainly does not mention all surviving monuments that he could have seen; for example, although the *lapis niger* in the Forum is connected with the death of a variety of early Roman figures,<sup>84</sup> Dionysius does not mention it explicitly. Similarly, he does not mention personally viewing the *sororium tigillum* although according to Livy this still existed in contemporary Rome.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, he does state that other monuments *have* disappeared: for example, the "lake" of the Lacus Curtius was filled up, though its name remains.<sup>86</sup>

24 The fact that Dionysius does not say that he saw the tomb of Tarpeia need not mean that he did not; his far more assertive denial of Pallas' tomb and rites could have been repeated for both Tattius and Tarpeia.

Since Tatius' tomb seems to have been preserved until Plutarch's day, and Tarpeia's is perhaps mentioned by Propertius, we should take Dionysius' present tense at face value, and assume that this tomb, or a monument believed to be her tomb, did exist in the late first century BCE. This may, but need not, mean that rites of some type also continued to be carried out at this late date. Livy's silence on this tomb is not surprising; he is reticent on the topic of worship, and does not mention (for example) the cults of either Acca Larentia or Romulus at the time of their deaths, although both cults are well known from other ancient authors.

- 25 It must be equally emphasized, however, that Tarpeia's libations need not have been a *public* ritual, as suggested by Mommsen and dismissed by subsequent scholars (see above, section I). Dionysius' evidence does not require that, and he elsewhere does clearly indicate when sacrifices are publicly funded: for example, in the similar case of Titus Tatius, discussed above. Instead, it is possible that only a subset of Romans worshipped Tarpeia; indeed, as modern scholarship on Roman religion has increasingly emphasized, individual choice played a major factor in the city's rituals.<sup>87</sup> Dionysius' Ῥωμαῖοι need not be understood as "the Roman state", but rather as "(some) Romans", whose identities may have been too diverse to elucidate in detail.<sup>88</sup> Given the themes of her myth, Tarpeia may have received libations primarily from women and foreigners, whose rites were less likely to attract the attention of the wealthy men who wrote Roman histories.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, the libation-only offering might suggest that participants in this cult were of lower social status. Charles King suggests, on the basis of Propertius 2.10, that incense and a libation would have been the expected offering from Rome's poor, who could not afford a blood sacrifice.<sup>90</sup> We also cannot rule out the possibility that Tarpeia's cult site was dedicated unofficially<sup>91</sup> or was re-situated during the destruction of the Capitol under Sulla or the Flavians.<sup>92</sup> It is possible that the active worship of Tarpeia continued for some time outside the frame of reference of the literary elite. The paucity of information regarding her rites means that arguments about the nature and workings of the cult must by necessity be speculative; however, given the many occasions on which Romans worshipped the dead, it is equally speculative to tie her rites to a particular festival and specific cult personnel, as argued by Mommsen and others.<sup>93</sup>

## IV. Rites to Tarpeia

- 26 Aside from the question of Dionysius' accuracy, arguments for the historicity of Tarpeia's tomb must confront the problem that it is difficult to place topographically.<sup>94</sup> Plutarch (who read Dionysius, but disagreed with him) and Festus (whose evidence is harder to decipher) suggest that the story of Tarpeia's tomb lasted through the Augustan transition, but they disagree both with Dionysius/Piso and with each other over its location. Dionysius in the passage quoted above suggests that Tarpeia was worshipped on the Tarpeian rock – the location of which is itself a matter a controversy. The majority of historians follow Peter Wiseman and Filippo Coarelli in locating it on the northeastern slope of the Capitoline, above the Tullianum.<sup>95</sup> This also seems to be the location implied by Propertius and Ovid, in whose poems water plays a significant role;<sup>96</sup> the Tullianum, which lies directly below the Wiseman/Coarelli Tarpeian rock, has been recognized as a source of natural springs,<sup>97</sup> and it was known as a wet location in antiquity.<sup>98</sup>
- 27 Based on Dionysius' description of troop dispositions in the Romano-Sabine wars, this was also his understanding of where the tomb was located: he puts the Romans on the Esquiline and Quirinal, while Tattius camps between the Quirinal and Capitoline.<sup>99</sup> These locations suggest that the major action of this war took place to the north of the Capitoline hill, and would place Tarpeia's tomb on the spur of the Capitoline known as the Arx. Plutarch, in contrast, sets Tarpeia's tomb on the southwestern section of the hill, near the later temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus; this also seems to be the tradition followed by Livy, who sets the Roman troops on the Palatine and the Sabine troops on the Capitoline.<sup>100</sup> Both of these authors thus thought that the main action of the war took place to the south of the Capitoline hill, which marks the alternative location for the Tarpeian rock. Finally, Festus, whose evidence is quite unusual, associates Tarpeia's statue with the temple of Metellan Jupiter, in the later Porticus Octaviae. Although this is similar to Livy and Plutarch in locating Tarpeia's myth at the south end of the hill, Festus uniquely places Tarpeia's statue outside the boundaries of the Capitoline. Propertius seems to speak of a grove, rather than a statue; its location is unclear, but may be more likely to agree with Livy's and Plut-



arch's understanding because of the mention of Jupiter (*antiqui limina capta Iovis* “the captured threshold of age-old Jupiter”; *Iuppiter unus / decrevit poenis invigilare suis*, “Jupiter alone decided to pay attention to her punishment”).<sup>101</sup> However, it is not entirely clear that the Jupiter referred to is Optimus Maximus. This question of which Jupiter is best associated with Tarpeia recurs when examining Festus, and is taken up below. In Varro, the entire hill seems to be named for Tarpeia and no other monument is mentioned.<sup>102</sup> There were, then, at a minimum three mooted locations for the worship of Tarpeia.

- 28 This conundrum is perhaps less problematic than it might seem. Livy does not include a tomb to Tarpeia; indeed, he seems to have purposefully omitted this information from Piso's account. Thus his placement of the war between Romulus and Titus Tatius does not affect our understanding of where her tomb is located. This leaves us with Plutarch and Festus, whose evidence may be reconcilable with a tomb on the Arx, rather than on the Capitol as Pier Luigi Tucci has argued.<sup>103</sup> While arguments in favor of Tarpeia's cult on the Capitol struggle to explain the movement of her cult away from the rock which bears her name, the assumption that the tomb site was on the Arx and near the Tarpeian rock requires only the belief that two authors have made a common mistake.
- 29 Plutarch's passage implies that Tarpeia's burial spot was under the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, rather than on the Arx: τῆς μέντοι Ταρπηίας ἐκεῖ ταφείσης, ὁ λόφος ὠνομάζετο Ταρπήιος, ἄχρι οὗ Ταρκυνίου βασιλέως Διὶ τὸν τόπον καθιεροῦντος ἅμα τὰ τε λείψανα μετηνέχθη (“the hill was named ‘Tarpeian’ since Tarpeia was buried there, until King Tarquin dedicated the place to Zeus and at the same time moved the remains”).<sup>104</sup> It is likely that here Plutarch has confused the Capitoline and the Capitol. It is well-known that writing on early Rome conflates the Capitol and the Arx, probably because, as Tucci has pointed out,<sup>105</sup> by the time that they were writing the archaic landscape had disappeared. In the archaic period, the hill was divided into three sites: two hills (Capitol and Arx) and a valley between them (Asylum), but by the late Republic, the hill was unified by the construction of an artificial platform linking the Capitol and the Arx. Plutarch's evidence reflects this later stage of development,

since he at no point in his narrative of the Sabine wars refers to the Arx, but only to the “Capitoline”, taking the hill as a unit.

- 30 We know from various references in Plutarch’s works that he had read Dionysius, and Dionysius is cited by name at the end of the account of Romulus’ triumph, immediately before the story of Tarpeia.<sup>106</sup> There is thus reason to believe that Dionysius’ account of Roman history was in Plutarch’s mind at this point in the narrative.<sup>107</sup> Dionysius’ account of the building of the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline helps explain the information that we see in Plutarch. First, although Dionysius himself never mentions the removal of Tarpeia’s bones and does not directly explain why the hill changed its name from Tarpeian to Capitoline, he does make explicit reference to both a Sabine war and the hill’s former “Tarpeian” name when he discusses the building of the Capitoline Temple in book 3:

(1) Ἐνεχείρησε δὲ καὶ τὸν νεῶν κατασκευάζειν τοῦ τε Διὸς καὶ τῆς Ἥρας καὶ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ὁ βασιλεὺς οὗτος εὐχὴν ἀποδιδούς, ἣν ἐποίησατο τοῖς θεοῖς ἐν τῇ τελευταίᾳ πρὸς Σαβίνους μάχῃ ... (2) τοὺς δὲ θεμελίους οὐκ ἔφθασε θεῖναι ... πολλοῖς δ’ ὕστερον ἔτεσιν ὁ τρίτος βασιλεύσας ἀπ’ ἐκείνου Ταρκύνιος, ὁ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐκπεσὼν, τοὺς θεμελίους κατεβάλετο ... (3) ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἔμελλε κατασκευάζειν ὁ Ταρκύνιος τὸν ναόν, συγκαλέσας τοὺς οἰωνομάντις ἐκέλευσε τοῖς ἀνδράσι περὶ αὐτοῦ πρῶτον διαμαντεύσασθαι τοῦ τόπου, τίς ἐπιτηδειότατός ἐστι τῆς πόλεως χῶρος ἱερὸς ἀνεῖσθαι καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς αὐτοῖς μάλιστα κεχαρισμένος. (4) ἀποδειξάντων δ’ αὐτῶν τὸν ὑπερκείμενον τῆς ἀγορᾶς λόφον, ὃς τότε μὲν ἐκαλεῖτο Ταρπήιος, νῦν δὲ Καπιτωλῖνος... τοῦτο δὲ οὐ πάνυ ῥάδιον ἦν· πολλοὶ γὰρ ἦσαν ἐν αὐτῷ βωμοὶ θεῶν τε καὶ δαιμόνων ὀλίγον ἀπέχοντες ἀλλήλων, οὓς ἔδει μετὰγειν ἐτέρωσέ ποι... (5) οἱ μὲν οὖν ἄλλοι θεοὶ τε καὶ δαίμονες ἐπέτρεψαν αὐτοῖς εἰς ἕτερα χωρία τοὺς βωμοὺς σφῶν μεταφέρειν, οἱ δὲ τοῦ Τέρμονος καὶ τῆς Νεότητος οὐκ ἐπείσθησαν ... τοιγάρτοι συμπεριελήφθησαν αὐτῶν οἱ βωμοὶ τῇ κατασκευῇ τῶν ἱερῶν, καὶ νῦν...<sup>108</sup>

This king also attempted the construction of a temple to Zeus, Hera, and Athena, fulfilling a vow which he had made to the gods in the final battle against the Sabines... but he did not lay the foundation of the shrine before [he died] ... (2) many years later the third king after him, Tarquin, who was banished from the throne, began to establish

the foundations.... (3) When he was preparing to build the temple, he called together diviners and ordered the men to consult the gods first regarding the location itself, to determine which part of the city was holy and dearest to the gods themselves; (4) and when they indicated that it was the hill which at that time was called “Tarpeian”, but is now called “Capitoline” ... but this was not easy, for there were many altars of gods and demigods a short distance from each other which he would have to move somewhere else... (5) The other gods and demigods yielded their altars to move to a different place, but Terminus and Juventas... were not persuaded ... and so their altars were included within the borders of the shrine and even now [they are there].

- 31 Dionysius claims that the entire Capitoline hill was cleared for the temple, including all of the shrines that had been located in the area with the exceptions of Terminus and Juventas. This description helps explain the confusion we see in Plutarch’s evidence: Dionysius said in book 2 that Tarpeia was buried where she fell and the hill was named after her. This creates a clear landmark, which could be visualized by his readers who were familiar with Rome and the Tarpeian rock. He then says in book 3 that *this* Tarpeian hill was renamed “Capitoline”, and that all but two of the shrines were cleared to make way for the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. This statement does not differentiate between the two summits of the Capitoline hill, and therefore has the potential to cause confusion if we assume that the Tarpeian side of the hill was primarily the Arx. The logical conclusion, which we see reflected in Plutarch’s narrative, is that the shrine of Tarpeia was moved along with other shrines to make space for the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and therefore that the shrine of Tarpeia had been located on the same spot as the shrine of Jupiter. This confusion is especially likely if, as Pelling has suggested, Plutarch was primarily familiar with this evidence from Dionysius.<sup>109</sup>
- 32 Festus’ evidence is a little more complicated due both to the fragmentary nature of the text and to its abridgement of an earlier work written by the Augustan-era author Verrius Flaccus. The surviving work discusses the Tarpeia story twice, albeit in substantially different versions. These differences suggest that even in the second century CE, when the Tarpeia-traitor version was prevalent (as discussed in section II), variants continued to circulate. Although

Festus' text is complete at one of the two entries where he discusses Tarpeia, the degree of abridgement may impede our understanding of its contents. Additionally, as Marie-Karine Lhommé has argued, Festus took the title of *De Verborum Significatu* seriously, and was frustrated when Verrius strayed off topic.<sup>110</sup> These issues are crucial to the interpretation of this passage:

Tarpeiae esse effigiem appellari putant quidam in aede Iovis Metellinae, eius videlicet in memoriam virginis, quae pacta a Sabinis hostibus ea, quae in sinistris manibus haberent, ut sibi darent, intro miserit eos cum rege Tatio; qui postea in pace facienda caverit a Romulo ut ea Sabinis semper pateret.<sup>111</sup>

Some think that there is an image of Tarpeia in the Metellan temple of Jupiter, so called, apparently, in memory of the *virgo* who made a deal with the Sabine army: they were to give her what they had on their left arms, and she would let them in along with their king, Tattius. When he later made peace with Romulus, he made sure that it [the citadel?<sup>112</sup>] would always be open to the Sabines.

- 33 Festus identifies a statue of Tarpeia in the shrine of “Metellan Jupiter,”<sup>113</sup> which was located near the Circus Maximus. This shrine was called “Metellan” because of its location in the Porticus Metelli, which was later rebuilt by Augustus and renamed Porticus Octaviae. The 2<sup>nd</sup>-century CE author Festus does not appear to have updated the terminology he found in the Augustan-era work of Verrius Flaccus, and this suggests that the Augustan period may have seen disagreement over the location of Tarpeia’s tomb, grove, or statue.
- 34 Tara Welch has argued that the tortured syntax and extreme hedging of this entry suggest that a statue in the Porticus Metelli may have been assimilated to Tarpeia without being directly related.<sup>114</sup> In her view, “the name [Tarpeia] had become so associated with the traitoress that any others bearing that name were subsumed into her strong presence.”<sup>115</sup> This interpretation is incorrect; stories of other Tarpeiae living at other times continued to exist in Roman historiography. Plutarch tells us that the first Vestal under Numa was named Tarpeia, and Vergil makes a Tarpeia the companion of Camilla.<sup>116</sup> Ana Mayorgas, in contrast, has suggested a different interpretation of the

lemma: rather than explaining a site, it instead explains the phrase *Tarpeiae esse effigiem*.<sup>117</sup> Although her explanation does have the benefit of easing the grammatical difficulty of the passage, it is not clear from her discussion why the saying *Tarpeiae esse effigiem* would exist or what it would mean outside the context of Festus' book, where it clearly refers to a distinct item rather than (for example) a personality or visual type. I have thus followed Lindsay in assuming that the headword of the lemma is "Tarpeiae," and thus that it is the grammar of the clause that is challenging.

35 The double infinitive does not present an insurmountable difficulty in the context of Festus' work. Rather, the syntax suggests that information about Tarpeia's shrine has been purposefully removed, presumably because it was either no longer relevant to the Rome of Festus' day or it interfered with Festus' own project, which seems to have been different from the project of Verrius Flaccus. Festus by his own admission suppressed Verrian information with which he disagreed,<sup>118</sup> and it is not unlikely that this has happened here. The structure provided by Festus often offered two (or three or four) competing aetiological explanations, in the form *quidam... alii* or *qui... vel*: some people think this, but other people think something different.<sup>119</sup> In fact, we see the same structure in the other lemma that mentions Tarpeia.<sup>120</sup> In 496L, we are missing one half of this formula: the *quidam* is there, but not the *alii*. Because the somewhat alphabetical structure of the book requires that "Tarpeia" be kept as a headword, this compression leads to the awkward grammar found today. In other words, Festus (or the copyist of this manuscript) seems to have omitted a section of the text. Since the structure of the entry suggests that Tarpeia's statue is under discussion, it is possible that the omitted information referred to the cult on the Capitol, which for his own reasons Festus felt no need to include.

36 However, Festus' temple site may also be understood differently. The "Jupiter" to whom Metellus dedicated his temple was Jupiter Stator. In Livy's version of the Romano-Sabine wars, a temple to Jupiter Stator was vowed by Romulus soon after Tatius took the citadel. There is thus a logical connection between Jupiter Stator and Tarpeia, and it is possible that this connection was also made by Verrius Flaccus. But Romulus did not, in the end, build a temple to Jupiter Stator; other Romans did. This resulted in two temples of

Jupiter Stator in close proximity:<sup>121</sup> one in the Forum, associated with Romulus, and another in the Porticus Metelli. Festus has perhaps confused these two temples. If so, his evidence would be closer to that provided by Livy and Plutarch in placing the site of Tarpeia's death at the southeastern edge of the Capitoline. In this case, my discussion above regarding Plutarch's confusion of Arx and Capitol would also apply to Festus. This interpretation is made less likely, however, by Festus' other lemma on Tarpeia. The extremely fragmentary entry on the Tarpeian rock reasserts its separateness from the Capitol: *noluerunt funestum locum r... Capitoli coniugi*, "they [the Romans?] did not want a mournful space to be joined [to the] ... of the Capitol."<sup>122</sup> Because the rest of the lemma seems to discuss the punishment of Tarpeia's father, the use of *funestus* here most likely refers to the Tarpeian rock's function as a mode of execution; however, readers may also have thought of Tarpeia's tomb or statue. It is also possible that Tarpeia's statue was moved from an original location on the Arx to the temple of Metellan Jupiter at some point between the Augustan period and Festus' day. This may have involved moving or decommissioning the tomb, an act which was not uncommon.<sup>123</sup>

- 37 This lemma thus provides evidence that a more Pisonian version of Tarpeia was extant in at least the Augustan period, if not in Festus' own day. If some people believe that a statue is a statue of Tarpeia, then Tarpeia must be thought worthy of a statue: in other words, the key issue is not whether this statue actually was Tarpeia's, but whether Tarpeia was the sort of character who was deemed an appropriate recipient of honors. It seems that, to at least some Romans, she was. Taken together, the fragmentary evidence for rites to Tarpeia becomes more substantial: she has a tomb (according to Dionysius, Propertius, and Plutarch), a grove (according to Propertius), offerings (according to Dionysius), and a statue (according to Festus). This certainly sounds like Tarpeia received cultic honors.
- 38 The tomb's existence needs not imply the existence of a "real" Tarpeia,<sup>124</sup> dating back to the time of Romulus, but rather it suggests continuing rituals at a site deemed worthy of respect: perhaps an ancient monument, or a grove<sup>125</sup> as suggested by the *nemus/lucus* of Propertius 4.4.1-3. The rites described by Dionysius are typical of Roman burial practice.<sup>126</sup> Families gathered at tombs at

death anniversaries and festivals to share a meal with the deceased; these practices are not only described in ancient literary works, but have been observed in archaeological remains, such as libation tubes with food residues, at sites throughout Italy.<sup>127</sup> Such liquid offerings suit Dionysius' description of the rites as *χοαί*, an offering typical of the dead in Greek religion.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, burials on the Capitoline are known from the earliest phases of Roman settlement,<sup>129</sup> and could have been a focus of continuing ritual. This is the process that Claudia Moser suggests occurred at the *lapis niger*:<sup>130</sup> the cippus, whose original purpose was obscure, nonetheless continued to be sacred.

39 In some classical Greek writings *χοαί* are associated with the unburied or unmourned dead. This association, taken literally, could explain Dionysius' evidence. For example, Romans building monuments on the Capitoline in the historical period might have discovered one of the bodies from the Latial-era necropolis<sup>131</sup> and relocated this into a tomb, with annual offerings. It is possible that the location of such a monument was described using the adjective *Tarpeius*, based either on a magistrate at the time, the name of the hill, or a *gens* living nearby; over time, this forgettable origin was replaced by a more exciting story about the burial of a traitor (or misunderstood heroine) on the site of the monument. Any rituals at this site would not necessarily take place at a public festival. Some scholarship on the Lemuria has suggested that this festival marked rituals for the "angry" family dead. Fanny Dolansky has argued, following the work of Daniel Ogden and Sarah Iles Johnston in the Greek world, that unmarried women and people who died violently were among those most likely to become *lemures*.<sup>132</sup> The character of the *lemures* is obscure;<sup>133</sup> however, it must be noted that the limited evidence that we possess about the Lemuria does not accommodate the rituals described by Dionysius/Piso. Instead, they appear in Ovid as a primarily household rite that was performed by the *paterfamilias*, who would walk backwards tossing beans over his shoulder.<sup>134</sup> As described by Ovid, the Lemuria does not involve either tomb-side libations or public ceremony.

40 Perhaps more promising as a comparison than the Lemuria, archaeologists in the Forum of Caesar have found Iron Age burials with evidence of ritual activity; the team suggests that the rites were

intended to ensure the goodwill of spirits disturbed by the construction of the Forum.<sup>135</sup> Such a ritual would cohere with the fear that King argues Romans had of the unknown dead, rather than the friendly *Manes* of those whom Romans had known in life.<sup>136</sup> Another option would be the smaller-scale annual rites carried out to deified humans such as Acca Larentia.<sup>137</sup> Much like the rites of the Dea Dia performed by the Arval brethren, Acca's rites were assigned to a specific priest and seem to have been carried out without large-scale ceremony.<sup>138</sup> As Jörg Rüpke has argued in a series of recent works, Roman religion was much more individualized than modern researchers have historically believed.<sup>139</sup> In regard to Tarpeia, this individualization can help explain how Tarpeia could have been remembered as a traitor by one segment of the population while concurrently receiving cult as a person unjustly slain by another group. These two explanations are not mutually exclusive for a society in which religious flexibility was the norm.

- 41 Two works of scholarship also suggest parallels to the development of the Tarpeia myth. Daniele Miano's outline of the development of the Libitina cult also starts from evidence of Piso, preserved in Dionysius. He argues that Piso's discussion of the beginning of this cult cannot be taken at face value: rather, it shows Piso's methodology. Piso began with some known facts, the names of deities, assumed that they were "part of a coherent system," and created a narrative accordingly.<sup>140</sup> For Tarpeia, the problem with this method is that the dedicatee was not divine or the deity was forgotten, a concept that seems unlikely. This would not mean that the Romans stopped paying cult honors to her; instead, they continued her rites based on other rituals with which they were familiar. Claudia Moser, in her work on Republican altars, discusses the enduring sacred status of a place, even when the original reason or deity had been forgotten.<sup>141</sup> Her argument, which uses the *lapis niger* as an example, is relevant to Tarpeia in both mythological time (the era of Romulus) and contemporary space (around the Forum). Taken together, these arguments illuminate the case of Tarpeia: we can assume, with Propertius, that there was a sacred grove, named perhaps after the property of a nearby *gens*; that within that grove there was a sacred space whose sacralization was, like the *lapis niger*, too archaic to understand or forgotten – or that was created due to



construction of new spaces; and that these details were, over time, elevated into a narrative by virtue of the beliefs that isolated facts must be connected, that cults needed to be founded early in the city's history, and that the dead ought to be familiar. While attempts to explain the reason behind the ritual continued, regular libations maintained the space's sense of sacredness.

## V. Conclusion

42 Pier Luigi Tucci, in excavating the Capitoline, has uncovered a monument containing funerary vessels.<sup>142</sup> Although his initial research suggested a connection of Tarpeia, he has reconsidered, because “apparently Dionysios is not reporting what he has seen with his eyes.”<sup>143</sup> Alison Emmerson too thinks it more likely that this tomb belonged to a *vir clarus* and was perhaps a focus of household worship;<sup>144</sup> indeed, the space was found specially demarcated in a late antique house, in accordance with Roman burial practices that venerated tombs even after the family had died out.<sup>145</sup> Yet both arguments seem to be based on the idea that Tarpeia could not have had a tomb. Indeed, Tucci argues explicitly that silence about Tarpeia's tomb, in contrast to the well-attested tomb of Acca, means it could not have existed.<sup>146</sup> Yet in Tarpeia's case, there is no argument from silence: rejecting Tarpeia's tomb and rites means rejecting the evidence of Piso/Dionysius, Propertius, Plutarch, and Festus. We should instead listen to what these authors are telling us, and give credence to the idea that Tarpeia received some form of worship during at least the Roman Republic, and possibly later as well. As Rüpke reminds us, “it is the human, not the god, who sacralizes”<sup>147</sup> – the fact that rites were paid to Tarpeia in itself makes her into an object of cult, even when these rites are performed by a single person or family. Once that happened, the task, for Piso and for those who followed him, was not to explain them away or to ignore them, but to figure out why she was deemed worthy.

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## NOTES

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1 A very early version of this paper was presented at the University of Michigan, and a much more recent version at Carleton University; I thank audiences at both venues for their questions and comments. Laura Banducci and Rachel Bryant-Davies offered helpful feedback as I was working through many of the ideas in this paper; Karen Hersch read the full draft. I am grateful to all three, as well as the journal's reviewers for their insightful comments; errors of course remain my own.

2 Dion. Hal. 2.40.3; all translations are my own.

3 See e.g. Baudou 1995:88n43, with earlier bibliography; subsequently, e.g. Ercolani Cocchi 2004; Mazzei 2005; Marcattili 2014.

4 E.g., LaPenna 1957:115-119, 125-127; Koptev 2012:64n157. Similarly, Gazeau 2018:83 suggests that her death benefitted Rome much as Remus' did.

5 Welch 2015:131n68; similarly, Mayorgas 2022 §16 states that Mommsen's explanation is unlikely, although she believes that Tarpeia did receive honors. Forsythe 1994:155, in contrast, finds Mommsen's idea "plausibl[e]" and Latte's perspective "jaundiced". King 2020:151-152 rejects the connection to Tarpeia, correctly in my estimation.

6 Welch (2015, e.g. 37-38, 249n23, 275) is not alone in this regard. Many scholars working on Tarpeia have emphasized her aetiological connection to the Tarpeian rock or to Tatius' Sabine character, rather than a religious connection to a tomb. See e.g. Poucet 1967:248-249 and 1992:308-311; Stahl 1985:281; Martini 1998:32; Jones 2001:38; Farney 2007:101; Takacs 2008:35-36; Stevenson 2011:178-179; Pausch 2018:292. Gansiniec 1949:23-25; Welch 2015:27; Tucci 2018a:47n60; Emmerson 2020b:64n36; and Buongiorno 2021:114-115n7 question Tarpeia's tomb, although Gansiniec believes there was a non-funerary monument instead.

7 *CIL* 1<sup>2</sup> 1:336.

8 *CIL* 1<sup>2</sup> 1:386.

9 The calendar of Polemius Silvius, *CIL* 1<sup>2</sup> 1:337.

10 See Šterbenc Erker 2010:17. The relevance of this calendar to Roman religion has been called into question by Jörg Rüpke (2015b), who notes that the text “does not offer a reliable basis for the reconstruction of actual roles performed or perceived by contemporaries” (p. 249) and cannot be understood to impose or describe “cultic obligations” (p. 252); the Christian identity of the text’s author (Burgess 2012) likewise poses questions regarding his reliability about and understanding of polytheist rites.

11 Latte 1960:111n2. Scholarship on Vestals has largely followed Latte: see e.g. Staples 1998:144; Dolansky 2011:128-129; Seng 2015:177-178; DiLuzio 2016:216.

12 Varro *LL* 5.41; Prop. 4.4.

13 Neel 2019.

14 See e.g. Plut. *Numa* 9.5, 10.1.

15 Wildfang 2006:59-60, 225-230; DiLuzio 2016:213-214. This point was already raised by Wissowa 1912:233, who thought that Mommsen’s reasoning was only tenable due to ancient confusion between the two Tarpeiae.

16 The point is well explained by Forsythe 1994:155-158: Dionysius both includes worship of a Romulean Tarpeia and the establishment of the Vestals under Numa, which makes it unlikely that he believed that Romulean Tarpeia was a Vestal. Forsythe ascribes Dionysius’ information to Piso based on Lydus *Mens.* 179-80 Wunsch (Forsythe’s own F16), but this attribution is tenuous.

17 As King 2020:130 notes, the ritual was privately performed but regulated by the pontiffs.

18 King 2020:152; cf. Scheid 1993.

19 On Roman funerary festivals, see e.g. Liou-Gille 2007; Dolansky 2011 and 2019; King 2020.

20 See esp. King 2020:174-176 for funerary dedications outside of the festival context.

21 Latte 1960a:111n2.

22 See e.g. Neel 2020, esp. pp. 16-18 and 21-23, with references; the idea was put forth in greatest detail by Gansiniec 1949:23-35 and Picard 1957:107-117.

23 See esp. Welch’s comprehensive Appendix (2015:289-292). The idea is well established: see e.g. Krappe 1929; Poucet 1992:294-295; Forsythe



1994:151-157; Baudou 1995:83-84.

24 See Giardino and Lugli 2001; Lugli et al. 2001; Tucci 2006:66-67, 2013:98-114, 2018a:43-50.

25 See e.g. the story of the “caput Oli”: Liv. 1.55.5, Dion. Hal. 4.59.2; n. 131 below.

26 Tarpeia is briefly mentioned in the Suda (s.v. σφράγις, Τάρπιος), noting Tarpeia’s desire for gold and betrayal of the citadel; Dio’s version (1.3) is different, but too fragmentary to permit comment. On Dio’s independence from Livy, see Urso 2019.

27 Varro (LL 5.41), whose account precedes Livy’s, is obviously independent; Propertius (4.4) depends on at least Varro, and likewise predates Livy. On these accounts, see e.g. Welch 2015:105-124 and 167-204; Neel 2019.

28 1.11.6-9; my outline of the text is added in **bold underline**, while words that I wish to emphasize in advance of the following discussion use underline alone.

29 This is also the story of Polycrite (see e.g. Welch 2015:292), but it is the closest that Livy gets to the women in Welch’s parallels.

30 See e.g. Ogilvie 1965:74-75; Baudou 1995:81-82; Mueller 2014:309-311; Neel 2019:104-106.

31 9.6.1; underlined sections echo Livy. I have omitted the last sentence, which is Valerius’ commentary on the tale.

32 See Welch 2015:217-222; her argument that the rise of *maiestas* trials led to a change in Tarpeia’s cultural role, by which she became the quintessential traitor, is largely convincing. I would add that antiquarian works, of the sort under discussion in my sections III and IV, suggest that the memory of a Tarpeia who was not a traitor persisted as a fact worthy of exploration.

33 *Pun.* 13.841-843: *hostibus arcem / uirgo, immane nefas, adamato prodidit auro / Tarpeia* (“the girl Tarpeia betrayed the citadel to the enemy for much-desired gold, a monstrous crime”).

34 1.1.74: ... *Sabinis proditae portae per virginem Tarpeiam. Nec dolo—sed puella pretium rei quae gerebant in sinistris petierat, dubium clipeos an armillas—illi, ut et fidem solverent et ulciscerentur, clipeis obruere* (“... of the gates betrayed to the Sabines via the girl Tarpeia. And not [betrayed] by a trick! But the girl had asked for what they wore on their left hands as a reward, unclear whether shields or bracelets. They buried her with shields in order both to fulfill the agreement and to give her what she deserved”).

For Florus' dependence on Livy here, see e.g. Forsythe 1994:154n118; FRHist 3.192.

35 *Ad Aen.* 8.348, *nam Tarpeia sedes dicta est a Tarpeia virgine. cum enim Romulus contra Sabinos bella tractaret et Tarpeio cuidam dedisset arcem tuendam, filia eius Tarpeia aquatum profecta in hostes incidit. quam cum hortarentur ad proditionem arcis, illa pro praemio poposcit ornatum manuum sinistrarum, id est armillas. facta itaque arcis proditione hostes ingeniosa morte promissa solverunt: nam scuta, id est sinistrarum ornatum, super illam iacentes eam luce privarunt. quae illic sepulta Tarpeiae sedi nomen inposuit* (“For the ‘Tarpeian seat’ [see below, §14] is named for the girl Tarpeia. When Romulus waged war against the Sabines and gave a certain Tarpeius the job of guarding the citadel, his daughter Tarpeia, having gone out for water, came upon the enemy. When they urged her to betray the citadel she sought as a reward the trappings of their left hands, that is the bracelets. The seizure of the citadel having been achieved, the enemy fulfilled the bargain by an ingenious form of death: for throwing the shields – that is, the trappings of their left hands – over her, they killed her. Buried there, she gave her name to the Tarpeian seat”).

36 *Ad Aen.*1.449, *cautum enim fuerat post proditum hostibus a Tarpeia virgine Capitolium, ut aerei cardines fierent, quorum stridor posset aperta ostia omnibus indicare* (“for there was concern, after the Capitolium had been betrayed to the enemy by the girl Tarpeia, that the hinges were bronze, whose sound could indicate that the doors were open to all”); cf. Met. 14.782 and Neel 2024.

37 *As* 1.11.9; see (c) above.

38 See e.g. Ogilvie 1965:75.

39 See e.g. Dion. Hal. 12.4.

40 In contrast, Livy states that his choices are driven by respect for the age of historical narratives (e.g. 1.55.8); Poucet 1967:16, 74 argues that this makes Livy's work preferable to Dionysius'.

41 See e.g. Rawson 1976:706, who believes that Piso's interests were partially driven by his role letting out censorial contracts.

42 Dion. Hal. 2.40.3.

43 FRHist 9 Piso F7 (Pobjoy).

44 Poucet 1967:248-249; Forsythe 1994:155; Baudou 1995:98; Chassignet 2008:23 suggests a mix of national pride and rationalization, and draws

attention to issues involving the cult statue. Contrast e.g. Rawson 1976:713, who argues that fragments of Piso largely lack rationalization; Delcourt (2005:57-60) argues that this was characteristic of Dionysius' history, which is perhaps what the scholars cited here have noticed.

45 Chassignet 1999:116; cf. Latte 1960b:6, Piso's Tarpeia story is an example of his "Willkür und die Moralisierung"; Welch 2015:87-90 suggests that Piso's aim was to criticize contemporary luxury (similar idea in Latte 1960b:3).

46 Dionysius, on the other hand, is more explicit about his methodological preference for the rational alternative: see e.g. Delcourt 2005:57-60.

47 Rawson 1976:703-704, 706-707.

48 See e.g. Neel 2014:142-174 on Remus, 2015:235-237 on Ahala; Rawson 1976:707, Forsythe 1994:157-170, and *FRHist* 9 Piso F8 (Pobjoy) on the *lacus Curtius*.

49 Forsythe 1994:155.

50 See e.g. Rawson 1976:706 for other obscure religious information found in Piso, which she attributes to his position as censor; cf. e.g. Forsythe 1994:138-139; Miano 2022.

51 See above, n. 5.

52 As realized by e.g. Buongiorno 2021:114 and 118, who attributes the idea to the later annalists; see also e.g. Grimal 1951:204-207; Forsythe 1994:151-157; Baudou 1995:82n13; and the works cited above, nn. 3 and 4.

53 See above, §§8-9; already recognized in e.g. *FRHist* 3.192.

54 I do not wish to suggest that my argument here excludes the possibility that the *mons Tarpeius* is named after another figure or indeed the Tarpeian gens more broadly; however, the family died out in the early Republic and there had been no contemporary bearers that we know of for over a century when the earliest Roman histories were written. From at least Varro (*LL* 5.41) onwards, the *mons* was recognized as derived from Tarpeia. Gansiniec 1949:35-36 argues that the rock used for executions was originally called simply *saxum*, and that the Tarpeian epithet is an addition of the first century BCE; however, the paucity of evidence before the first century makes this claim difficult to prove.

55 See e.g. Livy 1.48.4-7 and 2.2.3, 5-7; Ampolo and Manfredini 1988:317-318 suggest that the entire story of Tarpeia is aimed at explaining these terms. See also Welch 2015:112-124.

56 See *LL* 5.41 and its discussion in Neel 2019:114-117.

57 The evidence for these practices is laid out in most detail in Emmerson 2020b:78-85, but see also King 2020:142-143 and the works cited above, n. 19.

58 See e.g. Pfaff Reydellet 2008; Scheid 2008; Waldner 2014. Similarly, Forsythe 1994:150 emphasizes Piso's interest in religion; Chassignet 2008:39 extends this interest to all post-Catonian annalists.

59 See e.g. Rawson 1976:706-707; Forsythe 1994:229.

60 Cf. *FRHist.* 9 Piso T6, 10, 12-14; Forsythe 1994:13-15, 25-27. Similarly, e.g. Ogilvie 1965:75; Baudou 1995:87; and Mayorgas 2022 §15 argue that Piso is unlikely to have invented the tomb. Miano 2022:167 likewise argues, in a different context but with relevance to Dionysius, that "information transmitted by the antiquarians cannot be taken at face value as historical data, but it also cannot be rejected altogether."

61 A reviewer suggests that this information supports Mommsen's suggestion that Tarpeia was worshipped at the Parentalia; however, as King shows, libations were usually accompanied by other offerings, and the frequency of funeral offerings was far more than once per year (2020:142-147, 151-154). For this reason, King too rejects Mommsen's idea as a late antique invention (p. 151-152; see Rüpke 2015b:254-259 for a different argument toward a similar conclusion). Gansiniec 1949:24-25n65 and 36 rejects Mommsen's argument in favor of Propertius' date of the Parilia, but this suggestion too is unlikely on the grounds laid out by King.

62 See e.g. *Var. LL* 6.23; *Fest.* 206L; *Plut. Rom.* 4.3-5.5.

63 I say "a theory" because it is not clear that any Roman authors who discuss these figures believe that they existed historically, rather than mythologically. A reviewer suggests that Tarpeia was an example of euhemerism, but euhemerism seems to have been absent from Piso's understanding of Rome: see Rawson 1976:703, with examples. King 2020 argues, rather differently, that all *Manes* were considered divine (a not uncontroversial idea: see his discussion pp. xix n2, 2-14, 219n47 for references, and the book's review by Emmerson [2022]). This distinction does affect how Romans would have seen Tarpeia, but the paucity of evidence prevents it from having influence here: either way, it is unquestionable that some characters from early Roman history were worshipped or that some worshipped figures were inserted into early Roman history: the direction of this relationship does not affect my argument.

64 Dion. Hal. 2.52.4, not noted by Marcattili 2011:11-12. *FRHist* 27 Macer F9 includes only 2.52.3 (Tatius' death) as a quotation.

65 See Wiseman 2009:59-80 for a defense of this traditional identification.

66 See Neel 2020:31-33.

67 Dion. Hal. 2.52.5; this parallel has been pointed out by Marcattili 2011:11-12. Dionysius does not mention the location of this tomb, but information is supplied by e.g. Var. *LL* 5.152; Plut. *Rom.* 23; Fest 496L. The location is also discussed by e.g. Poucet 1967:277-288.

68 See Schulze 2000:23-24 for examples.

69 On Tarpeia, see Welch 2015:248, cf. 37-38; Tucci 2018a:47 with n. 60. Others have seen the tomb as a real location, whether or not it was the real burial place of Tarpeia: see e.g. Sanders 1904; LaPenna 1957:114-116, 122-125; Šterbenc Erker 2011:56; Seng 2015. Marcattili 2014 argues that Tarpeia did have an active tomb, but it was not on the Capitoline after the first century BCE. Tatius' tomb has garnered much less attention.

70 E.g., there is no verb in ὧν οὐδενὸς εἰκὸς αὐτήν; the contrafactual is implied.

71 Miano 2022:163-164 argues that Dionysius did his own translations, but cannot comment on his precision.

72 E.g., 1.79.8, discussing the Lupercal: at the time of the twins' exposure, ἦν ... ἐκεῖθεν ἱερός (there was a shrine there) but τὸ μὲν οὖν ἄλλος οὐκέτι διαμένει (the grove no longer remained) in Dionysius' own day. Perhaps more similar, though not about religion, are Dionysius' quotations or paraphrases of Fabius Pictor at 4.15.1 (*FRHist* 1 Fabius Pictor F9: Servius Tullius διεῖλε δὲ καὶ τὴν χώραν ἄπασαν, ὡς μὲν Φάβιος φησιν [divided the entire country, as Fabius says] or Cato at 2.49.2 (*FRHist* 5 Cato F50: Κάτων δὲ Πόρκιος τὸ μὲν ὄνομα τῷ Σαβίνων ἔθνει τεθῆναι φησιν [and Porcius Cato says that the name was assigned to the Sabine people], where the aorist infinitive clearly represents past time).

73 Poucet 1967:282 slightly anticipates this point.

74 Spencer 2018:63. The quarry in Tarpeia's place would be the *Latomiae*, associated with the prison nexus around the Tarpeian rock (see e.g. David 1984; Cadoux 2008); the grove is mentioned in Prop. 4.4.1 and 4.4.3. Dionysius had read Varro, and it is possible that more information about these tombs had been detailed in Varro's work. See *contra* Welch 2015:193-195, who argues that Tarpeia's grove was not real.

75 See Mayorgas 2022 §20, arguing that Dionysius and Piso saw Tarpeia as a Greek heroine (*contra* Latte 1960b:4, who sees no Greek influence in Piso's history). I find this explanation problematic because it does not account for actual hero-cults discussed by Dionysius (e.g., Aeneas' heroon, 1.64.5); Forsythe's (1994:155) description of Tarpeia being similar to Cloelia may be more accurate.

76 Var. LL 5.152; cf. Dion. Hal. 3.43, and, on the Lauretum/Loretum, Plin. NH 15.138; Plut. Rom. 23.3; Fest. 496L. This location has been connected to the rite of the Armilustrum: see Poucet 1967:284-287; Gag e 1976:312-313; Marcatili 2009:433-435 and 2014:80.

77 Plut. Rom. 23.3; see Emmerson 2020a:20-21 on the requirements for consecrating and decommissioning a tomb.

78 Hallett 2021:257.

79 Dion. Hal. 1.32.2. He continues by citing further autopsy: καὶ γὰρ Εὐάνδρῳ θυσίας ἔμαθον ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων ἐπιτελουμένας ὁσέτη δημοσίᾳ καὶ Καρμέντη, καθάπερ τοῖς λοιποῖς ἥρωσι καὶ δαίμοσι, καὶ βωμοὺς ἐθεασάμην ἰδρυμένους ... ("For example, I know that Evander and Carmenta receive sacrifices from the Romans at public expense every year, just like the other heroes and demigods, and I have seen where their altars are set up" [he then goes on to describe the locations].) It is worth noting the distinction drawn here between the divine and non-divine: the nymph Carmenta has altars, and the demigod Evander receives (animal) sacrifice, while Tatius, Tarpeia, and Pallas can only be understood to receive libations.

80 Contrast e.g. Welch 2015:37, suggesting that even Piso had not seen Tarpeia's tomb; Tucci 2018a:47n60 suggests that Dionysius had not seen it.

81 See e.g. his careful description of both the *casa Romuli* and the Lupercal at 1.79 and 1.32 respectively. See also his description of the heroon at Lavinium (1.64.5) or the temple of the Penates in Rome (1.68.1-2), both focused primarily on the location and appearance of the shrine.

82 See e.g. 2.63.3, the worship of Romulus at the temple of Quirinus, certainly ongoing in Dionysius' day; 2.23.5, general worship; 4.22.3, Roman elections.

83 E.g., Schulze 2000, esp. 19, 23-24, and 27-29; Cornell 2023.

84 See e.g. Fest 184L (Romulus or Faustulus); contrast Dion. Hal. 1.87.2 (death of Faustulus). Delcourt 2005:57n75 suggests that the monument appears at

3.1.2 (the death and tomb of Hostus Hostilius), but the monument is simply called a *στήλη* without specifying a color.

85 Livy 1.26.13-14; Dion. Hal. 3.22.8-9.

86 Dion. Hal. 2.42.6.

87 This work has been pioneered by Jorg Rüpke and his “Lived Ancient Religion” project; see, by way of example, Rüpke 2015a and 2016, although his work is ongoing and prolific. Outside of this project, see e.g. Gazeau 2018:44-47 for Propertius’ book 4 as a document of lived religion and King 2020:63-73 on the individuality of funerary cult. See also section IV below, arguing that Tarpeia’s rites do not fit our understanding of other known festivals of the dead.

88 Lack of the article seems suggestive, although cf. Smyth §1138.

89 See e.g. Schultz 2006:6-8. King 2020:146, 151, and *passim* emphasizes that tombstone rituals were both extremely common and varied in Rome; moreover, such rituals were not necessarily limited to the *familia* of the deceased (p. 145, 152). Šterbenc Erker 2010:18-19 notes the importance of women’s role in death rituals, with reference to Wissowa 1912:233.

90 King 2020:146-147.

91 As, for example, the altar dedicated by the Vestal Licinia: see Cic. *Dom.* 136 (as well as his argument surrounding Clodius’ dedication of the shrine of Libertas more generally). Galvao-Sobrinho 2009 discusses a similar case in the empire; see esp. pp. 136-137.

92 See e.g. Tucci 2005:7-9, 12 and 2013:85-87 for the changes to the Capitoline over time.

93 See above, Section I; I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for inviting me to comment further on this issue.

94 See e.g. Poucet 1967:105-106.

95 Wiseman 1979; Coarelli 1985:80-86. In contrast, see e.g. Paola Mazzei’s magisterial work on the Capitoline (2019:403-404 with nn. 3-4), which follows 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars – and the Soprintendenza di Roma’s tourist signage – in locating the Tarpeian rock near the rear of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. The massive changes to the Capitoline, both in modern times but also in antiquity, render this debate unresolvable to the satisfaction of everyone.

96 Prop. 4.4.48-50; Ov. F. 1.271-272, Met. 14.785-794. See Neel 2024 on the relations of these passages to the atmospheric conditions of the Capitoline.

97 See Fortini 2012; Neel 2024.

98 See the discussions in e.g. David 1984:133, 139-143; Cadoux 2008:205n16, 212; Fortini 2012.

99 Dion. Hal. 2.37.5-38.1; on the locations of the battle between Romans and Sabines, see e.g. Poucet 1967:5-10, 121-135.

100 Plut. Rom. 18.1; Livy 1.12.1.

101 Prop. 4.4.1, 4.4.85-86.

102 LL 5.41-42; as discussed above (§14), the naming of the hill after Tarpeia may belong to the same style of narrative as we see in Piso/Dionysius and in the poets. It is less likely, given the rest of Varro's passage, that the hill would be named for a traitor.

103 Tucci 2018a:47.

104 Plut. Rom. 18.1.

105 Tucci 2005:12; cf. Calderini 1995/1997:136-137n38. *Contra*, Filippi 1998:75-78.

106 Plut. Rom. 16.7.

107 Plutarch used other sources as well as Dionysius; see e.g. Ampolo and Manfredini 1988:xlix-l. However, he had been acquainted with Dionysius' work since youth (Pelling 1979:74).

108 Dion. Hal. 3.69.1-5.

109 See Pelling 1979:83-84 for the likelihood that Plutarch knew much of Roman history only at second hand, via Greek authors.

110 See Lhommé 2018, esp. 186-187.

111 Fest. 496L, s.v. "Tarpeiae".

112 Welch 2015:39 understands *ea* as referring to Rome, rather than the *arx*, while Marcattili 2014 understands it as the Porta Pandana. The ambiguity supports my interpretation of the grammar of this passage, laid out below.

113 Richardson 1992 s.v. "Aedes Iuppiter Stator #2"; cf. Festus 464L. Forsythe 1994:156-157 anticipates some of the points I make regarding this passage, although his overall interpretation is different.

114 Welch 2015:39-42.



115 Welch 2015:41.

116 See Plut. Numa 10.1; Verg. Aen. 11.655-60 (whose relationship to Tarpeia is discussed in Neel 2020:24-27); and above, §4.

117 See Mayorgas 2022 §21, who translates the first clause of the lemma “quelques auteurs croient que les mots *Tarpeiae esse effigiem* s’appliquent au temple de Jupiter situé dans le portique de Metellus.”

118 See Lhommé 2018:187, citing Fest. 496L s.v. “Tatium”: *quod significationem verborum non magis pertinent, quam plurima alia, et praeterita iam et deinceps referentur* (“which does not relate to the meaning of words more than many other [entries], both those already passed over and those which are later referred to”). See also Fest. 228L s.v. “Pictor Zeuxis” for another example.

119 This observation was anticipated by Welch 2015:41, albeit with different conclusions.

120 464L, s.v. “Saxum Tarpeium”; see also e.g. 152L, s.v. “Maximum praetorem”; 372L, s.v. “Sacram Viam”; 382L, s.v. “sodalis”. The phrasing is not uncommon.

121 See on the role of Jupiter e.g. Briquel 1981:138-139; Ziolkowski 1993:217-218; Welch 2015:189-190.

122 Fest. 464L, with Lindsay’s reading; the *r* of the missing word is contested and may be a *c*. The supplementations suggested by Paolucci 2016 do not affect my argument here, since they too reinforce the separation of Capitol and Arx; however, in one of her options this separation is made much stronger: *noluerunt funestum locum R<omanae> vel etiam R<omuli arci> Capitoli coniugi*.

123 See e.g. Carroll 2011:84; Lepetz and van Andriga 2011:119; Emmerson 2020a:20-21; Rüpke 2020:86, 112.

124 Peter Wiseman (pers. comm.) has suggested that Tarpeia may have been a fifth-century woman buried on the Capitoline. Recent work on intramural burial in Rome (Emmerson 2020a; 2020b, esp. 56-68) has suggested that interment within the walls, even within the *pomerium*, was quite possible at this time; thus the question of whether the Arx was included within the pomerial circuit is not relevant to this issue.

125 See the important reassessment of the terms *nemus* and *lucus* in Hunt 2016:126-127, 133-135; n.b. a *nemus* may, but need not be, sacred. Thus Welch’s suggestion that the two are incompatible is not necessarily the case

(2015:193-194). While the term “grove” suggests many trees to a modern ear, Hallett 2021 demonstrates that the term can refer to a small number of trees; see esp. 237-239. Augustus planted large groves of trees as part of his urban revival (Hallett 2021:244-247; cf. 256), which may have inspired Propertius’ phrasing despite the lack of evidence that Augustus planted trees on the Capitoline. See also Rüpke 2020:112 for the incorporation of sacred groves within villa sites; this may be significant regarding the *domus* of the Capitoline discussed in Tucci 2018b and referenced below, §42.

126 One reviewer suggests that they are in fact typical of the Parentalia offerings (cf. Šterbenc Erker 2010:12); however, as King 2020:154-157 points out, funeral rites were made at Rome at multiple points and in multiple festivals throughout the year, including on death anniversaries, and that tomb offerings varied depending on the wealth of the officiant. Indeed, none of the evidence he provides suggests that worshippers offered *only* a libation at a tomb (although see above, §25, for the close connection between offering and status). There is thus limited evidence to support the idea that the offering to Tarpeia was made at the Parentalia, and King 2020:151-152 makes a cogent argument against the idea.

127 See e.g. Carroll 2011:69-70; Lepetz and van Andriga 2011:122-124; Emmerson 2020a:13n46; King 2020 *passim*.

128 See e.g. Casabona 1966:279-298; Burkert 1985:194; Garland 1985:113-115; Johnston 1999:47-50; Patton 2009:33-47.

129 See e.g. Lugli et al. 2000, esp. 309-314; n.b. that these burials were not limited to infants, but included teenagers of both sexes. Emmerson 2020b:60-62 argues that burial restrictions within the city were, in essence, sumptuary rather than religious; see Cic *Leg.* 2.58-69 for the relevant legislation. Key is Marcus’ description *ea non tam ad religionem spectant quam ad ius sepulchrorum* (“these things bear not on religion so much as on the law of burials”). See also ead. pp. 11-13 for burials within the pomerium more generally.

130 Moser 2019:138-140.

131 Tim Cornell (pers. comm. at a conference in 2016) has suggested that this might have been the source of the “caput Oli” tale.

132 Dolansky 2019; cf. Liou-Gille 2007 and King 2020:164-171 for differing opinions.

133 See e.g. King 2020:160-170, who argues that the *lemures* were not the angry dead.

134 Ov. F. 5.429-444.

135 Delfino 2010:168-169, 179; cf. Poccetti 2009:47-48, noting that many dedications are to deities unknown to us.

136 See King 2020:182-184.

137 See e.g. Plut. Rom. 4.3-5.4; Var. LL 6.23.

138 Comparison of Acca and Tarpeia has recently been made by Mayorgas 2022, but her conclusions do not affect my arguments here; see earlier Šterbenc Erker 2010:17-19. A reviewer reminds me that the comparison of Acca and the Lemuria on the one hand, and Tarpeia and the Parentalia on the other, was made as early as Wissowa 1912:233.

139 These arguments have been made prolifically as part of the “Lived Ancient Religion” project; see e.g. Rüpke 2015a and 2016. Gazeau 2018:44-47 argues that Propertius’ fourth book is itself an example of lived religion.

140 Miano 2022:167; cf. Forsythe 1994:28-29 on Piso’s logical thinking and p. 155, Tarpeia is “a clear case in which a poorly understood figure of the distant past was later explained in conflicting ways.”

141 Moser 2019:138-140.

142 See Tucci 2018a:43-50; earlier discussions of this monument in Tucci 2013:98-114, 2006:66-67.

143 Tucci 2018a:47n60; cf. Welch 2015:37. On pp. 46-47 he suggests, following Plutarch, that this monument should instead be on the Capitolium.

144 Emmerson 2020b:64n36 argues that this tomb is best interpreted as an elite man whose burial, postdating the Servian Wall, indicates funerary continuity in mid-Republican Rome. For the permanence of tomb spaces, see Cic. *Leg.* 2.57-60.

145 See Tucci 2018b.

146 See Tucci 2018:47n60.

147 Rüpke 2020:23.

## ABSTRACT

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### **English**

Ancient sources suggest that Tarpeia, a historical-mythological figure whose date varied between the Romulean period and the Gallic Wars, had a tomb on the Capitoline Hill; however, these sources have not been seen as credible by modern scholarship. This article contextualizes Dionysius of Halicarnassus' discussion of Tarpeia's tomb in both the *Roman Antiquities* and modern studies of Roman religion, and suggests the manner in which honors would have been paid to her.

## **INDEX**

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### **Keywords**

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## **AUTHOR**

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Jaclyn Neel