

A New Painting of Calypso in Pliny the Elder¹

ANTHONY CORBEILL
University of Virginia
corbeill@virginia.edu

In Book 35, chapters 147-148 of his *Natural History*, Pliny the Elder offers valuable information on female painters from the Greek and Roman worlds². I reproduce below the Teubner text of Mayhoff 1897, followed by my own translation:

1 — This short note was inspired by the piece cited in the bibliography by Jerzy Linderski, who presented a characteristically acute critique of my ideas *in nuce* while simultaneously offering encouragement. His support of this paper says more about his qualities as a scholar and colleague than the fact that I respectfully dedicate it to him.

I also thank Gil Renberg for sharing material in advance of publication and Jacqueline Fabre-Serris for suggesting publication in *Eugesta*. Finally, the notes below acknowledge my debt to the careful and thorough reports of the journal's two referees.

2 — For bibliography on all these figures but Iaia see Kansteiner 2014: 4.767-768 = #3571, which dates them to the period between 300 and 150 BC; for Iaia, see Kansteiner 2014: 5.445-446 = #4054. Known female painters not in Pliny include Helena, who depicted the battle of Issos (Kansteiner 2014: 4.245 = #3052), and Anaxandra, daughter of Nealkes (Kansteiner 2014: 4.727-728 = #3518). Renberg (forthcoming) adds Hermione, a self-identified painter from a second century AD epigram (Geagan 2011: 309 = V591); cf. too *Anthologia Palatina* 6.355 [Leonidas]. Two frescoes from Pompeii and now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples depict women painting on *tabulae* (PPM 4: 75 [V. Sampaolo] = Helbig 1868: 341, #1443; PPM 5: 414 [I. Bragantini] = Helbig 1868: 342, #1444).

Pinxere et mulieres: Timarete, Miconis filia, Dianam, quae in tabula Ephesi est antiquissimae picturae; Irene, Cratini pictoris filia et discipula, puellam, quae est Eleusine, Calypso, senem et praestigiatores Theodorum, Alcisthenen saliatorem; Aristarete, Nearchi filia et discipula, Aesculapium. Iaia Cyzicena, perpetua virgo, M. Varronis iuventa Romae et penicillo pinxit et cestro in ebore imagines mulierum maxime et Neapoli anum in grandi tabula, suam quoque imaginem ad speculum... pinxit et quaedam Olympias, de qua hoc solum memoratur, discipulum eius fuisse Autobulum.

There were also works of women painters:

A. Timarete, daughter of Micon: 1) a Diana at Ephesus, a panel painting in a very old style³;

B. Irene, daughter and student of the painter Cratinus: 1) the girl who is at Eleusis [presumably Kore], 2) Calypso, 3) an old man and the conjurer⁴ Theodorus, 4) Alcisthenes the dancer;

C. Aristarete, daughter and pupil of Nearchus: 1) Asclepius;

D. Iaia of Cyzicus, who never married, painted works at Rome when Varro was a young man both with a brush and with a graver on ivory: 1) portraits of women mostly, 2) an old woman in Naples depicted on a large wooden surface, 3) a self-portrait done with a mirror;...

E. a certain Olympias painted as well. Our only record of her is that Autobulus was her student.

For convenience of reference, my translation lists in tabular form each of what appear to be five women artists. It is likely that the comprehensive Pliny will have included every female painter and any of their associated work known to him, especially considering that for the final figure listed, “somebody named Olympias”, he provides only her name and that of a student, with no works attached. Even though the precious information provided here is well known, I wish to show that a reassessment of Pliny’s Latin text offers an additional intriguing detail about the artistic production of one of them, namely, Irene, a painter who seems to have flourished in the mid-third century BC⁵.

3 — Jex-Blake and Sellers 1896: 171 and n. 11, following the hesitant suggestion of Brunn 1859: 2.300 (“etwa in streng archaisirendem Styl?”), translate *antiquissimae picturae* as “of very archaic style” (cf. Croisille 1985: 99). An apt parallel for this meaning of *pictura* can be found at Cic. *orat.* 169: *antiquissima illa pictura paucorum colorum*, referring to an early Greek style of painting with only four colors (cf. Jex-Blake and Sellers 1896: 96-97). Rackham 1952: 369 translates “the extremely archaic panel picture”, which conflicts with Timarete’s probable Hellenistic date (Brunn 1859: 2.300, Kalkenstein 2014: 4.768) and is difficult to reconcile grammatically.

4 — For the translation “conjurer” (*praestigiator*), see Linderski 2003: 88-89.

5 — Linderski 2003: 87-91, arguing against the traditional mid-fifth-century dating that identifies her father Cratinus with the comic poet (for further bibliography see n. 2 above and Croisille 1985: 247-248). Referee 2, however, makes the intriguing observation that two of Irene’s subjects--Theodorus with a generic *senex* and Alcisthenes the dancer – suggest a connection with the theater and therefore may support an identification of Irene’s father with the dramatist.

Pliny specifies that three of these five women are daughters of established male artists, while a fourth, Olympias, seems to owe her inclusion in the list to the fame of her otherwise unknown male student, Autobulus. And yet, despite the clear masculine bias that dominates this catalogue, I wish to nuance the claim made in the popular handbook *Women in the Classical World* that the artists “seem to have worked on the same sorts of subjects as their male contemporaries”⁶. Granted that depictions of Diana, Kore, and Asclepius are ubiquitous in ancient art and so would have been the subject of many works created by men, it is nevertheless suggestive that the subject matter listed by Pliny here involves predominantly female figures⁷. The only two examples of male humans being portrayed involve a conjurer and a dancer – characters that offered public entertainment rather than those that have achieved fame through politics or war. Indeed, the one remaining male, the god Asclepius, was a curative deity likely as important to women as to men, and so his presence in the catalogue rather than more popular and daunting deities such as Jupiter, Mars, or Neptune also intrigues⁸. Outside of these three figures, the only male remaining is the anonymous “old man” painted by Irene. I fear, however, that he will not be with us for long.

Jerzy Linderski has discussed various difficulties associated with the transmitted text of this passage, in particular the interpretation of its first sentence. A chief item of dispute involves the precise number of painters that Pliny lists here⁹. The relevant portion of the text, underlined above, treats Irene, daughter of Cratinus. Since the nineteenth century, scholars of Pliny and of ancient art history have alternated over whether the *Calypso* of this sentence was in the accusative or nominative case, both options being possible for this single morphological form¹⁰. Fröhner seems to have been the first to interpret *Calypso* as accusative, offering three reasons in particular¹¹. First, if *Calypso* were a nominative name, she would be the only artist in Pliny’s catalogue without a qualifying

6 — Fantham *et al.* 1994: 168. The translation of Pliny that these editors offer does not in fact follow Rackham’s Loeb edition as they claim. Given the book’s popularity, it should be corrected in one particular, namely in the attribution of a painting of an “old woman” to Irene. Even if *senem* did belong in Pliny’s original text (which, I shall argue, is unlikely), it doubtless refers when not qualified further to a man and not a woman. This usage conforms with the meaning that the singular form of *senex* has everywhere else in Pliny and with the fact that he uses exclusively *anus* to signify an old woman (three of which occasions describe artworks).

7 — It is also possible that “the girl who is at Eleusis” represents a female initiate to the mysteries (see Linderski 2003: 86 n. 16). Since no visual representations of female initiates survive, this would further distinguish Irene’s work from that of male artists.

8 — Asclepius’s relative popularity among men and women is impossible to determine but see the cautious remarks of Renberg 2017: 1.280 n. 19.

9 — Linderski 2003: 83–87.

10 — Linderski 2003: 83 n. 2 concisely summarizes and critiques the various views.

11 — Fröhner 1889: 15.

apposition, be it a designation of parentage or place of origin or, failing that, an admission of ignorance (as with Olympias). Second, Fröhner observes that the name *Calypso* is attested only as a slave name, making her profession as painter less likely¹². His third point is a positive one: if *Calypso* represents the accusative form – which is how I have rendered it in the translation above – she represents a subject of art attested elsewhere (Plin. *nat.* 35.132; Dio 48.50.4). In this case, she would join company with the other figures painted by Irene – “the girl at Eleusis”, an old man, a conjurer, and a dancer.

If *Calypso* is construed as being in the nominative case, by contrast, then the meaning of the passage changes considerably:

*Irene, Cratini pictoris filia et discipula, puellam, quae est Eleusine;
Calypso, senem et praestigiatores Theodorum, Alcisthenen saltatorem.*

Irene, daughter and student of the painter Cratinus, [painted] the girl who is at Eleusis; **Calypso** [painted] **an old man and** the conjurer Theodorus [and] Alcisthenes the dancer.

With a simple change of punctuation, this interpretation of the text reduces Irene’s known corpus of four (or, less likely, five) paintings to one, and creates a sixth female painter, Calypso, to whom are ascribed what seem to be two genre scenes.

Linderski, in elaborating on Fröhner’s suggestion that Calypso is painting and not painter, draws particular attention to the noun *senem*. Before turning to the details of his argument, however, it is necessary to consider an alternative reading for this word that Linderski does not address¹³. In opposition to the remainder of the tradition on the passage, the *codex Bambergensis* M.V. 10, from the first third of the ninth century (B), contains the seemingly nonsensical *sinem*. Reynolds characterizes B as a manuscript “of outstanding quality, which... must stand very close to the ancient exemplar whose *notae* it carefully reproduces”¹⁴. Its evidence, accordingly, should not readily be discarded. *Sinem*, in fact, does have a plausible claim of representing the Latin accusative of the proper noun *Sinis*, the name of a mythical bandit slain by Theseus. Although the Latin accusative form seems not to occur in extant classical Latin, the Grecizing *Sinin* does appear once, where it is restored by plausible

12 — Linderski 2003: 84 n. 7 qualifies this claim, noting the freedwoman at CIL VI 7680 and a probable occurrence of the name at IG 14.1648, where freeborn status is unclear (Solin 1982: 1.402-403).

13 — Linderski 2003: 85 n. 10 notes the reading of B only in passing. I am grateful to Referee 1 for suggesting that I include a discussion of this variant, for confirming that the rest of the tradition has only *senem*, and for pointing out the likely reading of *Sinin* in Statius.

14 — Reynolds 1983: 311.

conjecture in Statius¹⁵. The possibility of accepting the reading *Sinem* on the evidence of B, or of emending to *Sinin*, depends upon the grammatical status of *Calypso*. If the latter name is read as an accusative, as most scholars accept and as is argued in more detail below, one would have to imagine Pliny juxtaposing inelegantly the Grecizing *Calypso* with the morphologically Latin form *Sinem*. If one sidesteps this problem by supposing that the reading of B conceals the Greek form *Sinin*, or if one chooses the unlikely interpretation of *Calypso* as nominative, then one is faced with the difficulty of explaining the otiose *et* (on which see below; I am assuming that “Sinis and the conjurer Theodorus” could not belong to the same composition). The most efficient solution, therefore, is to construe B’s *sinem* as a copyist error of an earlier *senem*.

If one acknowledges the unlikelihood that *sinem/Sinem*, the reading of B, offers access to Pliny’s original text, then it still remains to account for the presence of the reading *senem* that the rest of the tradition transmits. Who is this “old man” that Pliny mentions immediately after Calypso’s name, and how is the reader meant to construe the ensuing conjunction *et*? In a manner uncharacteristic of Pliny’s practice when listing works of art elsewhere, this old man lacks an epithet – such as a personal name, place of origin, or occupation. If we restrict ourselves to those places in which Pliny lists the elderly as subjects of particular pieces, all but one elaborate on the person’s status: one is designated, for example, as “an old man with a lyre teaching a boy”, another as “an old woman carrying torches”¹⁶. As a result of this lack of distinguishing epithet, most scholars conclude that the old man does not of himself constitute a work of art. Accepting this interpretation, however, does not make the sentence any clearer, as one must now decide among three further options. First, *senem* could be construed as an epithet describing Theodorus together with *praestigiator* – “the old conjurer Theodorus”. Such a construction, however, understanding *senex* not as a noun but as an adjective with accompanying noun and proper name, makes *et* otiose¹⁷. A second possibility treats the word as an adjective, but one describing not Theodorus but Calypso. By this reading, the text attributes to Irene a painting of

15 — Stat. *Theb.* 12.575; I rely upon the evidence presented in Pollmann 2004: 84 and Hall 2007: 1.341. This conjecture of Bernartius 1595: 2.132-133 is printed in all modern editions that I have consulted.

16 — Plin. *nat.* 35.100: [*tabula*] *senis cum lyra puerum docentis*; 35.78: *anus lampadas praefereus*. See too 34.67: *senex Thebanus* (“the old man from Thebes”); 35.25: *pastoris senis cum baculo* (“the old shepherd with his staff”); 35.147: *Neapoli anum* (“the old woman from Naples”); 36.32: *anus ebria* (“the drunken old woman”). A possible exception occurs at 34.60: [*signum*] *senis unum* (“a single statue of an old man”), but even here the location of the statue at the temple of Fortuna Huiusce Diei seems to be specified.

17 — See, for example, the absence of conjunction in the close parallel at Cic. *Att.* 4.16.3: *ioculatorem senem illum*.

Calypso as an old woman. This view, while making perfect sense syntactically, seems highly unlikely since there are no known references, visual or textual, to Calypso's old age – in the *Odyssey*, after all, she tempts Odysseus to stay with her by offering to share with him her immortality (7.256-257). A third option, adopted in my translation, construes *senem* as an independent old man who constitutes part of a tableau featuring Theodorus the conjurer. This interpretation accords well with the typically masculine gender of the substantive *senex*, and provides a natural construction for the conjunction *et*¹⁸.

Linderski employs textual criticism to offer yet another solution: he neatly dodges the problem of this old man by denying his textual reality. The *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* lists two common alternatives from antiquity for the accusative of *Calypso*¹⁹. Of these, the Latinate *Calypsonem* has four extant attestations. Quintilian tells us that he does not prefer this Latin formation, despite its having the endorsement of Julius Caesar, since contemporary usage (*consuetudo*) favors the Grecizing accusative *Calypso*²⁰. This precious evidence provides strong support that Quintilian's slightly older contemporary Pliny would also have employed the accusative form *Calypso* in his text. And outside Quintilian, the Grecizing accusative has four more extant occurrences in Latin literature, including a probable one in Ovid²¹. Linderski conjectures that the text was altered when an overly meticulous scribe glossed the *Calypso* that was in Pliny's original text with the more common form of the accusative used in later antiquity, *Calypsonem*, and that the form *Calypsonem* was subsequently incorporated into the text itself²². Then, at some point before the beginning of the ninth century, the date of our oldest codices (V and B), the form *Calypsonem* was miscorrected to *Calypso senem* (or, in the case of B, to *Calypso sinem*)²³. Linderski therefore proposes deleting *senem/sinem* as an intrusive gloss, thereby restoring the original reading of *Calypso* as accusative²⁴. A passage from the fourth-century Latin grammarian Charisius caps the argument with the kind of rare kismet that cannot but bring joy to the laboring philologist:

18 — Referee 2 suggests a plausible context for this scene (see note 5).

19 — ThLL *Onom.* vol. II 113.38-44 (F. Reisch).

20 — Quint. *inst.* 1.5.63; for details of Caesar's views see Garcea 2012: 235-237.

21 — Ov. *Pont.* 4.10.13.

22 — For a history of the vicissitudes in the declension of *Calypso*, see ThLL *Onom.* vol. 2 113.25-44; Linderski 2003: 84-86.

23 — Reynolds 1983: 311 dates B to "the first third of the ninth century" and V to "c.800". The dates provided by Mayhoff (1897: iv-v) have been changed in light of later research.

24 — Kalkmann had already anticipated this solution in one concise sentence (1898: 182 n. 1: "Ich... vermuthe, dass geschrieben war *Calypso* mit der Correctur *nem*, was als *senem* in den Text kam und durch *et* mit dem Folgenden verbunden wurde").

'Didun'... ut refert Plinius, consuetudinem dicens facere... 'hanc Calypso'.
(Char. gramm. p. 162.6-11 Barwick = Plin. dub. serm. frg. 60 Mazzarino).

"*Didun*" [is understood by some as the accusative of *Dido*,]... as Pliny states, saying that usage determines [also the accusative form] *hanc Calypso*.

Contemporary usage during the time of Pliny, then, dictates the accusative form *Calypso*. Pliny's use of the Grecizing genitive form *Calypsus* at *nat.* 3.96 provides additional evidence that he would not have written *Calypsonem*²⁵.

The steps reconstructed by Linderski from what Pliny originally wrote to what the majority of the codices have transmitted can be presented schematically as follows: *Calypso* (accusative) > *Calypsonem* ("corrected" accusative) > *Calypso senem*. I reproduce his emended text and apparatus here (accompanied by my translation):

Irene, Cratini pictoris filia et discipula, puellam, quae est Eleusine, Calypso [senem] et praestigiatores Theodorum, Alcisthenen saltatorem.

*Calypso probavit, senem damnavit L[inderski]*²⁶

Irene, daughter and student of the painter Cratinus, [painted] the girl who is at Eleusis [and] Calypso as well as the conjurer Theodorus and Alcisthenes the dancer.

One final point requires elucidation: the function of *et*. Linderski notes in a parenthetical aside that with his emendation "*et* now conjoins and opposes... two different subject matters", namely, two young female figures and two male performers²⁷. He does not cite explicit parallels from Pliny or elsewhere for this function of the conjunction, although it does seem possible; I would propose instead, however, deleting *et* alongside the now condemned *senem*.

Linderski's argument has placed it beyond any reasonable doubt that the Calypso of Pliny's text is a painting. Building upon this conclusion, however, I would like to propose an alternative form of manuscript corruption that, while less indebted to the testimony of our grammarians, nevertheless strikes me as more plausible palaeographically and, of greater importance, it brings Irene's painting of Calypso in line with the few other depictions of the nymph that are known from antiquity. Visual representations of Calypso are limited presumably because, as literary

25 — Linderski 2003: 86 n. 12.

26 — I have slightly emended the apparatus at Linderski 2003: 87 at the suggestion of Referee 1.

27 — Linderski 2003: 86.

scholars have long hypothesized, the nymph's mythical persona is likely a creation of the Homeric poet, who invented her affair with Odysseus as a convenient way of accounting for seven of the ten years that Odysseus needed in traveling between Troy and Ithaca – as a result, “she has no place in myth independent of the *Odyssey*”²⁸. In accordance with this limited literary function, it is unsurprising that the representations of Calypso that do survive, both literary and visual, concentrate almost exclusively on Odysseus's departure from her²⁹. According to Rafn's entry “Kalypso” in the *Lexicon Iconographicum*, visual images of Calypso's role in the Odysseus myth fall into two main types. In the first, for which five certain examples are extant, the nymph is standing. In two of these she is unaccompanied, while in the remaining three she stands beside Odysseus as he sits on the shore of Ogygia (the earliest example of this type is reproduced at Figure 1)³⁰.



Figure 1: Lucanian red-figured hydria showing Calypso with the seated Odysseus (Paestum, c. 390-380 BC; Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 81839. Phot. DAI Rom 72.1900)

28 — Heubeck *et al.* 1988: 73.

29 — Exceptions known to me are *LIMC* “Hesperides” 36 (Rafn 1990: 5.1, 948: “explained by her parentage and her dwelling place in the Western Mediterranean”) and perhaps *LIMC* “Kalypso” 1 (although the presence of Hermes, and the similarity of his pose here with that in *LIMC* 4, suggest a common Homeric reference; see image in Rostovtzeff 1919: 151).

30 — Standing alone: *LIMC* 1 (in presence of Hermes), 2; standing with Odysseus: *LIMC* 5-7 and perhaps 11.

In the second general type, Calypso sits, seemingly alone³¹. The most clearly attested example of the nymph seated survives in Pliny's verbal description earlier in Book 35 of a painting by Nicias:

[Nicias] fecit et grandes picturas, in quibus sunt Calypso et Io et Andromeda; Alexander quoque in Pompei porticibus praecellens et Calypso sedens huic eidem adscribuntur (Plin. nat. 35.132).

Nicias made large paintings as well, including a Calypso, an Io, and an Andromeda; also ascribed to him are the fine Alexander in the Portico of Pompey and a **seated Calypso**.

It is generally assumed that the seated example is contrasted with the first Calypso attributed to Nicias, which without further details would seem to belong to the standing type³².

In light of this parallel for the motif of the seated Calypso, I propose to read *Calypso sedentem* ("Calypso sitting") for the transmitted text at 35.147. The resultant text and translation read as follows:

Irene, Cratini pictoris filia et discipula, puellam, quae est Eleusine, Calypso sedentem, praestigiatorem Theodorum, Alcisthenen saltatorem.

sedentem Corbeill: senem (sinem B) et codd.

Irene, daughter and student of the painter Cratinus, [painted] the girl who is at Eleusis, a **seated Calypso**, the conjurer Theodorus, [and] Alcisthenes the dancer.

Five points speak in favor of this proposal. First, the addition of *sedentem* provides Calypso with an epithet, like most of the other works listed by Pliny in this passage such as the dancer Alcisthenes or the old woman at Naples; the single exception to this pairing of name and epithet is in Pliny's description of Aristarete's painting of Asclepius. The absence here can be attributed to the nature of the god; in the entry on "Asklepios" in the *Lexicon Iconographicum*, Holtzmann notes that the majority of the god's representations are identical, and that among these Asclepius rarely participates in any type of narrative³³. In support of this contention is the

31 — See perhaps *LIMC* 4, where Rafn 1990: 5.1, 946 conjectures that the missing Calypso from the Tabula Odysseaca is "supposedly in a seated position", although a thorough discussion of this relief notes that "nothing indicates whether this figure was sitting or standing" (Weitzmann 1941: 71); other possibilities, listed by Rafn 1990: 5.1, 946 as only conjecturally depicting Calypso, are *LIMC* 9, 10.

32 — Jex-Blake and Sellers 1896: 157; Croisille 1985: 239, with discussion.

33 — Holtzmann 1984: 865 ("Dans la plupart... l'effigie d'A. est la même"; "une absence presque complète de représentations narratives"). Holtzmann records only two painted representations of the god (Paus. 4.31.12; Plin. nat. 35.137), omitting from his catalogue Pliny's testimony here.

fact that, of the four remaining mentions by Pliny of artworks depicting the god Asclepius there also does not occur a distinguishing epithet whereas, as we have just seen, Pliny's other mention of Calypso differentiates between standing and sitting versions³⁴.

A second supporting argument centers on the present participle *sedentem*. Pliny often employs the verb *sedere* ("to sit") to characterize a work of art: of the thirteen instances of this present participle in the *Natural History*, ten describe a figure in a painting or sculpture³⁵. It is worth mentioning as well in the context of the verb *sedere* that our literary evidence from the imperial period uses Calypso as an *exemplum* of one who mourns a lost love³⁶. This conception is post-Homeric, since in the *Odyssey* Calypso, although at first resistant, ultimately accepts the will of Zeus and helps Odysseus plan for his departure. As an example of the changed view, Propertius describes the nymph as she sits weeping alone by the seashore after Odysseus has left. The pose that Propertius envisions is of Calypso seated: "for many days she sat (*sederat*), grieving, her hair disheveled"³⁷. Scholars have well documented Propertius's debt to visual art in constructing his mythical allusions, and it is possible that here too he has an artistic example in mind while writing these lines³⁸. Indeed, the conceit of the grieving goddess creates a memorable framing device for the visual artist: just as our first sight of the hero Odysseus in Homer sees him sitting on the shore of Ogygia in tears (*Od.* 5.151-153), so too the Hellenistic conception figures Calypso in the same pose after Odysseus's protracted sojourn on the island has ended³⁹.

A third attraction of this emendation is that it is palaeographically easy. I offer here one possible reconstruction, principally *exempli gratia*. The original reading, *sedentem*, appeared in an early manuscript in an abbreviated accusative form, e.g., *sedentê*. A misreading of the abbreviated accusative [ê] became confused with a ligature for *et*. Subsequent to this misunderstanding, the resulting *sedent* made little sense and so was changed to *sedem*, an alteration perhaps aided by the close resemblance of *nt* and *m* that is found in several early scripts⁴⁰. At this point, *senem* is

34 — Plin. *nat.* 34.73, 34.80, 35.137, 36.24.

35 — Paintings: Plin. *nat.* 35.27, 96, 109, 125, 132, 136; sculpture: 34.31; 36.25, 26 (*bis*). Among all occurrences in Pliny of the specific form *sedentem*, six of seven describe an artwork.

36 — In addition to Propertius, see Ov. *ars* 2.125-142, Apul. *met.* 1.12.6, Hyg. *fab.* 243.7.

37 — Prop. 1.15.9-12: *Ithaci digressu mota Calypso / desertis olim flevrat aequoribus; / multos illa dies incomptis maesta capillis / sederat, iniusto multa locuta salo.*

38 — For Propertius's allusions to visual art, see Kessner 1938 and Valladares 2005.

39 — On the motif in the visual arts of Odysseus weeping on Ogygia see Touchefeu 1968: 192-196.

40 — See, e.g., the early ninth-century *codex Bambergensis* M.V. 10, as reproduced in Jex-Blake and Sellers 1896 opposite the title page (an example occurs at the end of the second line). In the absence of ThLL for the lemmata *sedes* and *sedeo*, I have done a PHI search (vol. 5.3) of *senem* and *sed-*

conjectured for the syntactically nonsensical *sedem* to credit Irene with a painting of an old man. Schematically, this reconstruction can be represented as follows:

sedentê > *sedent et* (*ê* interpreted as *et* ligature) > *sedem et* (*nt* confused with *m*) > *senem et* by conjecture.

Such a conjecture of *senem* would not be so difficult for an attentive scribe, since the genre figure of the old man had been mentioned several chapters earlier, in 35.100, and that of the old woman, here the *anus* from Naples painted by Iaia, appears in the next sentence.

A fourth and final advantage of reading *sedentem* is stylistic. Our *senex*, the old man over whose syntax scholars have registered continual disagreement, now disappears from the record. In his stead we have an admirable double chiasmus in asyndeton (*Calypso sedentem, praestigiatorem Theodorum, Alcisthenen saltatorem*). Chiasmus as a stylistic device obviates the need for the now lost conjunction *et*, and offers an elegant *variatio* by which Pliny can elsewhere be shown to enliven the bare lists that pervade Book 35 and other sections of his encyclopedic work⁴¹. Fifth and finally, adding the accusative epithet *sedentem* as a modifier of *Calypso* places beyond doubt that Calypso is a painting and not a painter, a claim still repeated in the literature, including Croisille's Budé of 1985⁴².

Since I have demonstrated the likelihood that Irene is the painter of a seated Calypso, can something be made of this small addition to our knowledge of ancient art? The only female practitioners of the fine arts that Pliny mentions in his work are these women painters⁴³. Their uniqueness is further enhanced by the fact that, in contrast with how Pliny depicts professional women elsewhere, the author here casts no aspersions on the achievements of these painters⁴⁴. Indeed, in his only assessment of their individual qualities, he praises the speed of Iaia's production and comments that, as a result of her skill at portraiture, she fetched greater prices than her two best contemporary male portraitists⁴⁵.

entem and found no other example in the available critical editions for manuscript confusion between these two words. This negative evidence does not of itself, however, invalidate the conjecture posited.

41 — Few bare lists are presented in the manner we have here, since more often the practice is to list items in polysyndeton (using *et* or *item*; e.g., 35.99); parallels do occur in Book 35, however, e.g., 93 (*megabyzi... pompam, Clitum cum equo ad bellum festinantem, galeam poscenti armigerum porrigentem*) and 106 (*Antigonum regem, matrem Aristotelis philosophi*).

42 — Croisille 1985: 256-257.

43 — Baldwin 1981: 19; Vons 2000: 76-77.

44 — Vons 2000: 80-81.

45 — Plin *nat.* 35.148: *nec ullius velocior in pictura manus fuit, artis vero tantum, ut multum manipretis antecederet celeberrimos eadem aetate imaginum pictores Sopolim et Dionysium* ("No one had a quicker hand in painting, and she had such artistic ability that she far surpassed the most celebrated portrait painters of her time, Sopolis and Dionysius, in the monetary value of her work").

Baldwin has further shown that Pliny's opinion of these women is in keeping with extant assessments of female artists by other ancient authors, where they are credited with equal, and occasionally superior, status to men⁴⁶. Since no example of the work of any of these women is known to survive, perhaps the only way in which we can reconstruct the reasons for their special status is through their choice of subject matter. Art historians of Rome have alerted us to the predominantly passive poses adopted by women in the visual arts – one thinks of Ariadne sleeping, Andromeda enchained, wandering Io –, and so it is interesting to note that, according to our sources, these accomplished female artists chose in contrast themes that present women in what appears to be a positive light – a girl from Eleusis (Kore, or perhaps a human initiate), the goddess Diana, an old woman, a self-portrait; in fact, we are told that Iaiá's very specialty was female portraits. And as noted above, the two exceptions to pictures of women in Pliny's list portray not male heroes but a dancer and conjurer, men occupying the fringes of society, especially of Roman society.

So what does this review tell us about the only remaining known subject, our new painting of *Calypso sedens*? Does this ancient portrayal present an aggrieved woman, as the tradition of the male Roman poets describes her? Since there does not survive a certain image from antiquity of a seated Calypso, I offer here as an aid to our imaginings a reproduction of Draper's painting of Calypso reclining on her beach, back to the viewer (Figure 2).

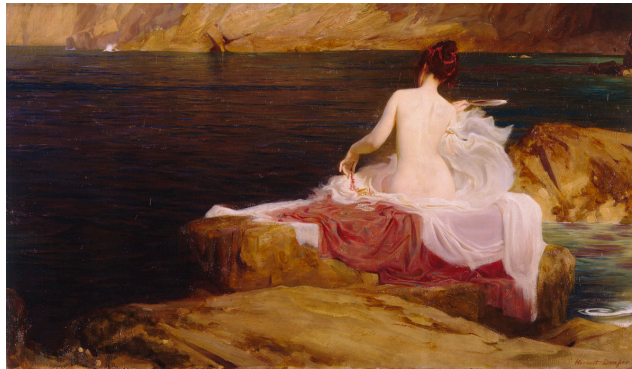


Figure 2: "Calypso's Isle", Herbert James Draper (1897).
Image courtesy of Manchester Art Gallery
(accession n° 1919.25)

46 — See esp. Plut. *mor.* 243A, with the discussion of Baldwin 1981.

There is of course no way of knowing for certain, but let us imagine Irene's considerations while choosing such a pose. Calypso is alone, claiming status as a work of art unaccompanied not only by a man but by a great epic hero. She is seated and pensive – a woman occupying the kind of “pregnant moment” that Bettina Bergmann has discussed for a set of paintings in Pompeii's House of Jason⁴⁷. The idea of a seated Calypso has textual as well as visual resonance. As noted above, it provides a nice foil to the initial impression of the seated and weeping Odysseus, but simultaneously it also recalls visual imagery of Calypso's female counterpart, Penelope, herself waiting patiently back in Ithaca. The well-known image of Penelope sitting in her “thinker” pose exceeds by far all extant ancient representations of her, whether she is depicted alone or in a group⁴⁸. As with our imagined Calypso, the viewer is seduced by Penelope's body language to decipher its ambiguity, as the gesture simultaneously calls up images of deep thought and grief⁴⁹. Perhaps Irene means to recall Penelope in Calypso's new role and so compare the two situations by having the beautiful and magical mistress reflect the pose of the patient and faithful wife. It is then left up to the viewer to decide what Calypso may be thinking.

I would like to conclude by confessing my sole regret in presenting this argument. If what I have offered has proven to be at all persuasive, it prevents Prof. Linderski from realizing his wish that, unlike Odysseus, he will himself spend immortality with Calypso in the apparatus criticus of a future edition of the *Historia naturalis*⁵⁰. But even a great scholar cannot change destiny, and it is Calypso's destiny to sit and, alas (or is it not “alas”?), to do so alone.

Works Cited

- Baldwin B., (1981), “Germaine Greer and the Female Artists of Greece and Rome”, *Echos du monde classique* 25: 18-21.
- Bergmann B., (1996), “The Pregnant Moment: Tragic Wives in the Roman Interior”, in N. Kampen (ed.), *Sexuality in Ancient Art*, Cambridge 1996, 199-218.
- Bernartius J., (1595), *P. Statii Papinii opera quae extant*, Antwerp, 2 vols.
- Boucher J.-P., (1965), *Études sur Properce: Problèmes d'inspiration et d'art*, Paris.
- Brunn H., (1853, 1859), *Geschichte der griechischen Künstler*, Stuttgart, 2 vols.
- Corbeill A., (2004), *Nature Embodied. Gesture in Ancient Rome*, Princeton.

47 — Bergmann 1996.

48 — Hausmann 1994.

49 — Corbeill 2004: 77-80.

50 — Linderski 2003: 86.

- Croisille J.-M. (ed.), (1985), *Pline l'Ancien, Histoire Naturelle, Livre XXXV*, Paris.
- Fantham E. et al., (1994), *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text*, Oxford.
- Fröhner W., (1889), "Kritische Analekten", *Philologus* suppl. 5: 1-96.
- Garcea A., (2012), *Caesar's De analogia: Edition, Translation, and Commentary*, Oxford.
- Geagan D., (2011), *Inscriptions: The Dedicatory Monuments*, Princeton, Athenian Agora 18.
- Hall J. B., (2007), *P. Papinius Statius, Thebaid and Achilleid*, Cambridge, 3 vols.
- Hausmann C., (1994), "Penelope", *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*, Zurich, 7.1, 291-295; 7.2, 225-233.
- Helbig W., (1868), *Wandgemälde der vom Vesuv verschütteten Städte Campaniens*, Leipzig.
- Heubeck A., West S. and Hainsworth J. B., (1988), *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey, Volume I: Introduction and Books I-VIII*, Oxford.
- Holtzmann B., (1984), "Asklepios", *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*, Zurich, 2.1, 863-897; 2.2, 631-667.
- Jex-Blake K. and Sellers E., (1896), *The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art*, London.
- Kalkmann A., (1898), *Die Quellen der Kunstgeschichte des Plinius*, Berlin.
- Kansteiner S. et al. (eds), (2014), *Der Neue Overbeck. Die antike Schriftquellen zu den bildenden Künsten der Griechen*, Berlin and Boston, 5 vols.
- Keyssner K., (1938), "Die bildende Kunst bei Properz", *Würzburger Studien zur Altertumswissenschaft* 13: 169-189.
- Linderski J., (2003), "The Paintress Calypso and Other Painters in Pliny", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 145: 83-96.
- Mayhoff C. and Jan L., (1897), *C. Plini Secundi Naturalis Historiae Libri XXXVII*, Vol. 5: *Libri XXXI-XXXVII*, Leipzig.
- Pollmann K., (2004), *Statius, Thebaid 12: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, Paderborn.
- PPM = I. Baldassarre and G. Pugliese Carratelli (eds.), (1990-2003), *Pompei, Pitture e Mosaici*, Rome, 10 vols.
- Rackham H., (1952), *Pliny, Natural History Books XXXIII-XXXV*, Cambridge, Mass.
- Rafn B., (1990), "Kalypso", *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*, Zurich, 5.1, 945-948; 5.2, 600.
- Renberg G., (Forthcoming), "Dedicatory Paintings in Greek Religion: An Initial Assessment", in J. Tae Jensen et al. (eds.), *Aspects of Ancient Greek Cult II: Sacred Architecture-Sacred Space-Sacred Objects*, Copenhagen, Monographs of the Danish Institute for Mediterranean Studies 1.

- (2017), *Where Dreams May Come. Incubation Sanctuaries in the Greco-Roman World*, Leiden and Boston, 2 vols., Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 184.
- Reynolds L. D., (1983), "The Elder Pliny", in L. D. Reynolds (ed.), *Texts and Transmission. A Survey of the Latin Classics*, Oxford, 307-316.
- Rostovtzeff M., (1919), "Ancient Decorative Mural Painting", *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 39: 144-164.
- Solin H., (1982), *Die griechischen Personennamen in Rom. Ein Namenbuch*, Berlin and New York.
- Touchefeu O., (1968), *Thèmes odysseens dans l'art antique*, Paris.
- Valladares H., (2005), "The Lover as a Model Viewer: Gendered Dynamics in Propertius 1.3", in R. Ancona and E. Greene (eds.), *Gendered Dynamics in Latin Love Poetry*, Baltimore, 206-242.
- Vons J., (2000), *L'image de la femme dans l'oeuvre de Pline l'Ancien*, Brussels, Collection Latomus 256.
- Weitzmann K., (1941), "A Tabula Odysseaca", *American Journal of Archaeology* 45: 166-181.