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Edited by Søren Dietz & Signe Isager



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Box 511
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Fax (+1) 203 945 94 9468

The drawing reproduced as cover illustration represents Kristian Jeppesen's proposal for the restoration of the Maussoleion, in particular of the colonnade (PTERON) in which portrait statues of members of the Hecatomnid dynasty said to have been carved by the famous artists Scopas, Bryaxis, Timotheos, and Leochares were exhibited.
Drawing by the author, see p. 173, Abb. 5, C.

Propertius and the *monumenta* of Actium.

(IV, 6 as a topographical source)

Jacob Isager

The monuments at Actium

Augustus celebrated his victory at Actium by founding the city of Nikopolis near the scene of the battle and the local temple of Apollo Actius. This new city soon took a central position in the north-western coastal area of Greece not least because of a synoicism, or forced migration, of the inhabitants from city-centres in the area into the newly established City of Victory. The revival, on grander scale, of the Actia, the quinquennial games in honour of Apollo Actius, also added to the distinction of the city.

North of the city a precinct (*temenos*) was laid out for the celebration of the games. Eventually, a stadium, a gymnasium and a theater were built there; their huge remains still dominate the landscape. On the hillside above this precinct a colossal rostral monument with as many as 40 rams was erected as the first and most important official war monument in the area. This memorial faced south with a magnificent view of the other, “living” victory memorial, the city itself, and of the scene of the battle and of the island of Leucas in the distance. According to Strabo (7,7,6) and Dio Cassius (51,1,3) both the *temenos* and the memorial on the hill were sacred to Apollo. Another war memorial consisting of ten ships from the enemy fleets was established in a boathouse-like structure at Antony’s former campsite across the straits of Actium near the ancient temple of Apollo Actius now refurbished by Augustus.

The rostral monument, with its Latin dedicatory inscription, on the former campsite of Augustus was excavated early in this century. Recent investigations by

Photios Petsas and William Murray¹ deserve special mention for the renewed interest their work has aroused in the site. They have provided new evidence concerning this memorial, most notably its ram-sockets, from whose size and form we can gain an idea of the shape and number of the bronze rams originally inserted in the monument. 23 sockets have been located and measured. Murray’s studies of the scattered blocks bearing letters of the extensive dedicatory inscription in Latin have afforded a better understanding of the wording of this inscription. It appears that the gods Mars² and Neptune are named, a fact which accords with Suetonius (*Aug.*18,2) who tells us that the campsite was dedicated to Mars and Neptune and adorned with naval spoils. But the intriguing question of Apollo’s role in relation to the monument remains unsolved.

Finally an excavation of the monument begun in 1995 under the direction of Konstantinos Zachos of the Ephoria of Ioannina has brought to light much new evidence concerning the monument’s construction and plan.³

These investigations, as well as my own visits to the area, have inspired me to the following new reading of Propertius’ Actium-elegy (4,6), which in its turn, through the poem’s relation to the site, may contribute to a better understanding of the locality and its place in the mind of the Romans. Further, my interpretation offers some suggestions concerning the relation between Apollo Actius and Apollo Palatinus and their iconography.

NOTE 1

W. S. Murray and P. M. Petsas, *Octavian’s Campsite Memorial for the Actian War*. TAPS Vol.79, Part 4, Philadelphia, 1989.

NOTE 2

There is only evidence for the letters R and T, and the T is dubious.

NOTE 3

I am most grateful to dr. Zachos for informing me concerning his investigations of the memorial.

The Actium-elegy of Propertius

Propertius presents this poem to the reader as a Roman *aition* in the tradition of Phileas and Callimachos. The setting is the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine and in the beginning of the poem the poet assumes the role of a *vates* and priest, who together with a chorus (of fellow poets, as becomes clear at the end of the poem) makes a sacrifice in connection with a festival for Palatine Apollo⁴. Very quickly, however, the poem moves to a new setting, which constitutes its longest section. This setting is Actium and in the description of the battle between the fleet of Caesar Augustus and that of Cleopatra (and Mark Antony, who is not mentioned in the poem⁵) which follows, the poet stresses the role of Apollo Actius whose intervention leads to victory (lines 15–86). The poem then returns to the Palatine to a banquet following the sacrifice. A leading role is thus given to Apollo and only indirectly in the comparison between Apollo and Augustus does the poem show itself to be an eulogy of Augustus.

Many scholars⁶ have explained the central role of Apollo in this poem by suggesting that the poem is written as a hymn in the manner of Callimachos. Francis Cairns has gone further and shown that the elegy not only imitates a hymn in general terms, but is also to be understood as a *μυθικός ὕμνος*, a hymn which narrates a myth or legend about the god who is being celebrated. Moreover, the Actium-poem tells a story, “in which the god’s power to assist his friends and to punish his enemies is exemplified”.⁷

A comparison between Virgil’s vision of the battle on the shield of Aeneas (*Aen.* 8,675–713) and Propertius’ version offers us one fruitful method for establishing the characteristic elements of Propertius’ description of the battle and explaining his intentions. The poem of Propertius is dated to 16 BC and his debt to Virgil seems evident. The question of how far he succeeds in his *aemulatio* has received vari-

ous answers according to scholars’ personal aesthetic or ideological views.⁸

In her short analysis of the poem Margaret Hubbard⁹ points out the differences between Virgil’s description of the shield of Aeneas and Propertius’ description of the events at Actium. Virgil aims at action, Propertius at stillness. Propertius opens with a description (ecphrasis) of the site of the battle; this description is interrupted by

NOTE 4

For the traditional picture in Greek and Roman literature of the poet as *vates* – as priest of Apollo –, cf. Nisbet and Hubbard, *A commentary on Horace: Odes. Book 1*, Oxford 1970, 347–349. In *Carm.* 1,31, Horace presents himself – *patera* in hand – as a *vates* of Apollo on the occasion of the dedication of the new temple of Apollo on the Palatine: *Quid dedicatum possit Apollinem/vates? Quid orat de patera novum / fundens liquorem...* For the choric *ἑγώ*-figure and the possible blendings of poet, chorus and choregus in mythical hymns, see F. Cairns (1984), 139–143.

NOTE 5

There seems to be an agreement among the Augustan poets on disguising the fact that the war had been a civil one by the omission of all mention of Antony. The first to mention Antony by name in connection with Actium is Virgil (*Aen.* 8, 685).

NOTE 6

Much has been written about the Actium-poem of Propertius and there exists a variety of, in some cases, very different and conflicting interpretations. For a long time it was read as serious pro-Augustan poetry, but during a period in the 60s and 70s it was dismissed as a Horatian and especially a Vergilian pastiche and the verdict on it was harsh: “...one of the most ridiculous poems in the Latin language.” This is the opinion of G. Williams *JRS* 52, 1962, 43, and in *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford 1968) 51: “Propertius is generally judged to have written a thoroughly bad poem”. J. P. Sullivan suggests that the author intended a “parody of court poetry”, of such poems as Horace’s ode on

Cleopatra, and perhaps of the Actium section in Book 8 (675ff) of the *Aeneid*. He sees it as the climax of Propertius’ *recusatio* in Book 4: “Neither Propertius’ heart nor his talents are engaged in this poem” (J. P. Sullivan, *Propertius* (Cambridge 1976) 146. Cf. p.71: “the long and strange elegy on Octavian’s victory at Actium which scholarly opinion characterizes as, to be charitable, somewhat below the level of Propertius’ best work.” and p.145: “This poem has been almost universally condemned as frigid by critics.” M. Hubbard (*Propertius*, London 1974) is less severe in her judgment (p.136): “There are probably few readers of Propertius who find 4.6 their favourite poem; its restraint and the disciplining of fancy necessary in a poet attempting to write of Actium after Vergil make it seem something of a cold *tour de force*, for all its incidental beauties. But it provokes a reluctant admiration for all that.” In recent years the view on Propertius’ Augustan attitudes in Book 4 has changed and the studies of F. Cairns (*Propertius and the Battle of Actium* (4,6), in *Poetry and politics in the age of Augustus* (Cambridge 1984) 129–168) have especially contributed to a better understanding of the Actium poem in its Hellenistic and Roman context. For the recent contribution by R. A. Gurval see note 37.

NOTE 7

Cairns (1984) 137.

NOTE 8

Cf. note 6, Cairns (1984) Appendix II (pp.165–167), and Hubbard (1974) 136.

NOTE 9

Hubbard (1974) 135f.

Nereus' arrangement of the fleets in two opposing crescents. We do not hear about the process, only the result. More silence follows, which, eventually, is broken by the arrival of Phoebus, but even this is not the signal to begin the battle. The action is further suspended, while Apollo addresses Augustus. When he has delivered his speech Apollo begins to shoot his arrows, while Augustus with his *hasta* is described as his second. Already in the next line we hear the outcome of the battle: thanks to Phoebus Rome wins and the woman (Cleopatra) pays her penalty. Her power lies broken in the Ionian Sea:

Vincit Roma fide Phoebi: dat femina
poenas;
sceptra per Ionias fracta uehantur aquas.

"Rome wins by the faith of Phoebus: the woman pays her penalty; her shattered sceptre is floating in the Ionian waves."

Virgil is much more explicit, painting the battle in vivid colours. The sea boils as the two fleets clash together. The war rages with fire and blood.

Una omnes ruere ac totum spumare
reductis
690 conūsum remis rostrisque tridenti-
bus aequor.
Alta petunt; pelago credas innare
reūlsas
Cycladas aut montis concurrere
montibus altos,
tanta mole ūiri turrilis puppibus in-
stant.
Stuppea flamma manu telisque ūola-
tile ferrum
695 spargitur, arua noua Neptunia caede
rubescent.
...
700Saevit medio in certamine Ma-
uors
caelatus ferro, tristesque ex aethere
Dirae,
et scissa gaudens uadit Discordia
palla,
quam cum sanguineo sequitur Bel-
lona flagello.

"All onward dash; the watery plain, by oars and trident beaks, is lashed to foam. They plow the brine; you'd think the Cyclades uptorn were floating there, or, hills on hills, together rushed; in bulk so vast those stately ships engage! By hand or sling, the missile steel, and blazing tow, are hurled; Neptu'nian fields are crimson with their gore..."

And Mars, of bossy steel, amid the carnage raves; grim Furies from the sky: glad Discord walks the deck in tattered robe; Bellona follows with her blood-stained scourge." (Pierce 1879)

Hubbard does not discuss further the difference in the two poet's approaches, but she does imply that Propertius focuses more on the results of the battle, that is peace.

In the concluding part of his elegy Propertius expands on the peace-theme, mentioning among other topics the *foedus* with the Parthians. Virgil on the other hand finishes his battle description with Augustus' celebration of a triple triumph and depicts the Emperor sitting on the threshold of a temple of Apollo, presumably the Temple of Apollo Palatinus¹⁰.

Apollo plays a leading role in both descriptions, but there are great differences in the ways that the two poets include the god in their mutual theme, the battle of Actium.

Virgil is, in fact, the first in extant Latin literature to describe Apollo with the appellation *Actius* in connection with the battle of Actium, and he highlights Apollo Actius most effectively by giving the god an entire line in the middle of his description, thus marking him out as the one responsible for the battle's turning-point and the flight of the enemy (704-706):

Actius haec cernens arcum intendebat
Apollo
desuper: omnis eo terrore Aegyptus
et Indi,
omnis Arabs, omnes ūertebant terga
Sabaei.

NOTE 10

720 *Ipse sedens niveo candentis limine Phoebi/dona recognoscit populorum aptaque superbis/postibus; incedunt victae longo ordine gentes*, "Augustus, throned in Phoebus' marble porch, surveys the gifts of nations, hangs them on the shining portals near. In grand review the conquered tribes pass on!" (Pearce 1879)

The triumph was celebrated in 29 BC and the Temple of Palatine Apollo was inaugurated in 28 BC. The Temple of Apollo Sosianus (in campo) situated close to the triumphal road would be a more sensible place for Augustus reviewing the captives, but Apollo Palatinus would be the first place to enter the reader's mind and thus it is an example of *licentia poetica*. Since Propertius reflects Vergil, Propertius in making the Temple of Apollo Palatinus the setting for his poem, may confirm, that Virgil had this temple in mind.

“But Apollo of Actium saw; and high on his vantage-point he already bent his bow. In dread of it, every Egyptian, the Indians, every Arab, and all the host of Sheba were on the point of turning in flight.” (Jackson Knight 1956)

Apollo Palatinus is presumably the god referred to in Virgil’s description of Augustus seated on the threshold of a temple of Phoebus receiving gifts and fastening them to the lintel posts. Virgil is not very specific in his topographical indications, but by mentioning the fastening of the gifts to the lintel posts and by only naming Leucates (the Temple of Apollo on the southern promontory of the island of Leucas close to Actium)¹¹ to locate the *Actia bella* he alludes to his description of the site of Actium in Book 3 of the *Aeneid*, where Aeneas before leaving Actium fixes Abas’ shield on the door-post of, – the reader may assume – the temple of Apollo Actius. In Book 3 Virgil relates Aeneas’ travels in the waters between Italy and Greece and here he uses topographical names more precisely. As Aeneas and his men sail north from Zakynthos they pass Cephallonia and Ithaca and reach the headland of Leucates with Apollo “held in dread by sailors”, *formidatus nautis* (3, 275). They then seek Apollo and come upon a little city nearby.¹² After thanking Juppiter and erecting altars Aeneas and his men hold “Trojan games on the shore of Actium” (3, 280: *Actiaque Iliacis celebramus litora ludis*.) It has been suggested that Virgil in a sort of poetical contamination blends Apollo Leucadius and Apollo Actius into one¹³, but Virgil judges the two Apollos very differently, and he would have had no intention of fusing them into one¹⁴. The reader will easily understand that Aeneas is only taking a bearing on the well known promontory of Leucas, then passing by its cliffs and reaching a small town on the mainland near the sanctuary of Apollo at Actium. This town is the mythical forerunner for Nikopolis, “the City of Victory”, built after the battle of Actium.

Thus it appears that Virgil in his descrip-

tion of the Battle of Actium in Book 8 marks the topographical setting by using the designations *Actia bella* (8,675) and *Leucates* (8,677) only as hints of the topography of Actium. He uses them together with the remark on Augustus’ fixing gifts to the door-posts as codes, that refer back to Aeneas’ stay at Actium in Book 3, where he celebrates the *Actia*; the games were in fact renewed and initiated in another context and given a new importance after Augustus’ foundation of Nikopolis. In this example of narrative economy Virgil through his references most ingeniously fuses Aeneas and Augustus into the same person at the same time as he unites the present, the past, and the future by relating the battle of Actium to mythical events from the time of Aeneas, events which also anticipate and presage one of the results of the battle: the Victory Games held every fourth year at Nikopolis.

In his study of the Actium-poem of Propertius¹⁵ Cairns concludes his discussion of the two poets’ accounts of the battle by pointing out the reasons for their divergences. As he sees it, they lie in the differences between epic and elegy, epic being more direct, specific and full; Virgil goes into detail. That may be true as far as the battle description is concerned, but in Virgil the battle transpires in an epic/heroic seascape with no connection to any specific locality. We seek in vain for exact topographical information, although this may be due to the fact that Virgil is describing a work of art, the shield relief.

Propertius, on the contrary, is more specific in his topographical references, and, as I hope to demonstrate, his description of the area of Actium allows the reader to create a vision of the actual landscape and its monuments.

The Temple of Apollo Palatinus in Rome is given as our topic in the opening of Propertius’ poem, which is set in the area of the temple, but only one line is left for the presentation of this temple well known to the Roman public and already described by Propertius in Book 2 (31).

NOTE 11

Virg. *Aen.* 8, 675–677: *In medio classis aeratas, Actia bella/cernere erat, totumque instructo Marte uideres/ferere Leucaten auroque effulgere fluctus*, “In the centre could be seen the bronze-plated fleets battling at Actium. All Leucate, in a ferment of moving martial array, came into view” (Jackson Knight 1956). For Apollon Leucates/Apollo Leucadius represented in the coinage of Nikopolis, see note 43.

NOTE 12

Virg. *Aen.* 3, 274–277: *Mox et Leucatae nimbose cacumina montis/et formidatus nautis aperitur Apollo./Hunc petimus fessi et paruae succedimus urbi;/ancora de prora iacitur, stant litore puppes*, “Presently there appeared before us the cloud-capped headland of Leucate, and Apollo’s temple on the mainland promontory which seafarers hold in dread. Being weary, we put in to land and cast anchors from the prows. The sterns made a line along the beach. We walked up to the little city” (Jackson Knight 1956).

NOTE 13

Cf. Gagé (1936) 46–51, *idem* (1955) 505.

NOTE 14

See M. Pachalis, Virgil’s Actium–Nikopolis, *NIKŌPOLIS* 1, Preveza (1987), 56–69 and E. Kraggerud in *Virgil, Aeneiden. Annan og tredje bok*. Tangen 1985, 137–139. Cf. Jucker, *Gnomon* 45 (1973) 426 and Franke (1976) 159–163.

NOTE 15

Cairns (1984), 167.

After the introduction, a *descriptio* (15ff.) follows:

Est Phoebi fugiens Athamana ad li-
tora portus
qua sinus Ioniae murmura condit
aquae,
Actia Iuleae pelagus monumenta ca-
rinae,
nautarum uotis non operosa uia.

“Receding inland lies the haven of Phoebus on the shore of the Athamanes. In a place where the gulf stills the roar of Ionian waters, the sea stands as a memory of the Iulian warship’s (victory) at Actium and presents an non-laborious passage for sailors who ask for help.”

The text is very condensed and it is not possible to give a satisfactory translation employing all the possible connotations of each word. But written in the form of an ecphrasis (*Est Phoebi..*) the text uses a set of key words to give a precise topographical vision of the site of Actium

(*Phoebi...portus*) placed on the Epirote coast (*Athamana ad litora*) at the entrance to the Ambracian gulf which creates a safe harbour for sailors. The ecphrastic style is underlined by a piling up of nouns in apposition to each other functioning as catchwords for the reader’s visual memory (17): *Actia Iuleae pelagus monumenta carinae*¹⁶. This area and the sea that surrounds it (*pelagus*) exhibits *Actia monumenta* of the (victorious) Iulian ship. The sea keeps alive the memory, but the word *monumenta* points to other well known features of the Actian landscape: the rostral monument on Augustus’ former campsite and his monumental dedication of 10 ships placed in the building near the Temple of Apollo Actius. The city of Nikopolis also stands as a monument of victory itself and there may well have been other memorials not known to us today.

When Propertius uses the expression *nautarum uotis non operosa uia* for the *Street of Actium* leading to a safe harbour he seems to recall as a contrast Apollo Leucates *formidatus nautis* – “dreaded by sailors” – in

Virgil (*Aen.* 3, 275). In fact, the huge rostral monument on the hillside above Nikopolis might have given a vision as impressive as, but more comforting than, the white cliffs of the promontory of Apollo Leucates.¹⁷

In this way Propertius draws a topographical sketch of the area of Actium in four lines as the backdrop for a battle of world wide importance (19): *Huc mundi coiere manus...* Yet the scenery that the poet presents is not Actium in 31 BC, but Actium and the city of Nikopolis with its monuments as it appeared when Propertius wrote his poem, presumably in 16 BC. By using the device of narrative economy Propertius thus creates directly in the reader’s mind the landscape of Actium, in contrast to Virgil who aims at a more subtle and less precise vision of it. Both authors, but Propertius in particular, refer not only to Actium as the scene of the battle but to Actium (and Nikopolis) as a locality geographically well established in the Roman mind with its games and monuments.

After his presentation of the scene of the battle and a moralistic description of the two adversaries which leaves the reader in no doubt of the outcome of the battle, Propertius again proffers an accurate description of the situation at Actium. Now it is the confrontation of the two fleets, lying in a formation of two concentric arcs (*geminos...in arcus*), a formation assumed to be historically correct:¹⁸

Tandem acies geminos Nereus luna-
rat in arcus / armorum

“At length the sea god had arched the line into a double crescent and the water was quivering, coloured by the flash of arms.” (Hubbard 1974)

Then Apollo appears on the scene and a lightning bolt strikes (30). The god does not appear with loose flowing hair and a lyre of tortoise shell, playing peaceful music (31–32: *non ille attulerat crinis in colla solutos/aut testudineae carmen inerme lyrae*), but with the countenance with which he

NOTE 16

The text presents difficulties, especially *pelagus*, and may well be corrupted.

NOTE 17

Cf. Cic. *ad Att.* 5, 9, 1: *...sed Leucatum flectere molestum videbatur.*

NOTE 18

Dio Cass. 50, 31, 5; Plut. *Ant.* 66, 4. Cf. M. L. Paladini (1958) 41 who also points out that the chronological sequence of events is the same in Propertius, Plutarch and Dio and further (p.44) that Propertius is much more orthodox than Horace (*Carm.* 1, 37) in his description of the battle.

looked upon Agamemnon or as he appeared when he killed the Python (33–35), of whom the gentle muses were afraid (36: *serpentem, imbelles quem timuere lyrae*).¹⁹

Propertius stresses that Apollo was not dressed up as *citharoidus*. This may seem a rather superfluous observation, but I think that the poet may again be referring to the geographical setting, namely the setting of the poem at the Temple of Apollo Palatinus, where the cult statue (as well as other statues) depicts Apollo with the cithara. The essential message is that the Apollo of Actium was not identical with the one reproduced in the statue(s) in the Palatine temple.

This brings us to the distichon that concludes the description of the battle (67–68):

Actius hinc traxit Phoebus monu-
menta, quod eius
una decem ūicit missa sagitta ratis.

“The Actian Apollo received his *monumenta* from this, because one arrow from him conquered ten ships.”

Most commentators think that these *monumenta* designate exclusively the Temple of Apollo Palatinus: the battle of Actium is the *aition* for the foundation of this temple.²⁰

In the light of what I have argued above I would propose another reading:

Propertius underlines the fact that the *Actian* Apollo received his monuments as a result of the battle, because he conquered 10 ships with one shot. This remark has puzzled most commentators and Camps frankly admits that “we do not know anything from other sources about this event”.²¹ This, however, can be explained. I think, that Propertius refers to the second of the two geographical settings established in his poem, that is Actium, a site well-known to the reader, who will call to mind the famous monuments at the site of Actium/Nikopolis, the rostra-monument at the former campsite of Augustus north of Nikopolis and his dedication of ten

ships to Apollo Actius in the building near the Temple of Apollo at the promontory of Actium. Propertius’ remark about the ten ships conquered by Apollo may well be understood as a more specific reference to this dedication, called *δεκαναία*, the Ten Ships monument, by Strabo²². Apart from housing the temple of Apollo, the promontory of Actium was used as a campsite by Antony before the battle. The places chosen for the *monumenta* marked the campsites of the winner and the loser²³ and in both places dedications were made by Octavian to Apollo Actius.

Propertius thus ends his account of the battle with a distichon that mentions the *monumenta* dedicated at Actium, and in my opinion these are identical with the *monumenta*, he described in line 17, the description of the site of Actium. The reference to these monuments constitutes the frame for the account of the battle. But when Propertius refers to the monuments a second time, he gives a double connotation to the word *monumenta* referring both to the monuments at the site of Actium/Nikopolis and to the Apollo Palatinus at Rome, to

NOTE 19
Cf Cairns (1984) 138–139 and 163.

NOTE 20
Some commentators further add as an emendation to Propertius’ reference that the Palatine temple was originally vowed by Octavian after the battle of Naulochus in 36 BC. Hubbard (1974) 135, Camps (1965) 112, and Richardson (1977) 448.

NOTE 21
Camps (1965) 112. Richardson (1977) 452 has the following note on the word *monumenta* in verse 67: “P. seems to allude specifically to the trophy of ten ships, but perhaps he has in mind the rebuilding of the temple at Actium and the temple of Apollo Palatinus as well.” On verse 68 *una decem vicit missa sagitta rates* he has this comment: “This is mysterious...”

NOTE 22
Strabo 7, 7, 6: “Here too, near the mouth, is the sacred precinct of the Actian Apollo – a hill on which the

temple stands; and at the foot of the hill is a plain which contains a sacred grove and a naval station (*νεώρια*), the naval station where Caesar dedicated as first fruits of his victory the squadron of ten ships – from vessel with single bank of oars to vessel with ten; however, not only the boats, it is said, but also the boat-houses have been wiped out by fire”, (Jones 1924). Cairns (1984) 135 presumes that the trophy set up near the Temple of Apollo contained the *rostra* only of the ten captured enemy vessels. He does not refer to the rostral monument on the former campsite of Augustus.

NOTE 23
Cf Tac. *Ann.* 2, 53: (*Germanicus*)... *simul sinus Actiaca victoria inclutos et sacras ab Augusto manubias castraque Antonii cum recordatione maiorum suorum adiit*, “He (Germanicus) took the opportunity to visit the bay famous for the victory of Actium, the spoils dedicated by Augustus and the camp of Antony with their memories of his ancestors”.

whom he then returns. It seems clear that he is hinting at the double identity of Apollo – the Apollo of War and the Apollo of Peace – anticipating the change of scene from war (Actium) to peace (Rome).

Only after this distichon (67-68)²⁴ does Propertius leave Actium and return to the Palatine in Rome (69-70):

Bella satis cecini; citharam iam poscit
Apollo
uictor et ad placidos exiit arma cho-
ros.

“Here stops my poem of war; now the victorious Apollo asks for the cithara and lays away arms for the benefit of a peaceful chorus.”

Apollo resumes his former appearance which was mentioned in distichon 31-32.

Concluding the poem Propertius portrays himself as a member of a group (*chorus*) of poets, who invoke the Muse to inspire them and who also call on Bacchus, who makes Phoebus productive, Phoebus used here as a symbol of poetry. And, finally, with a patera in his hand the poet praises the *res gestae* of Augustus until dawn casts its rays on his wine; in other words the sacrifice is followed by a banquet and a *pannychis*, an all-night symposium.²⁵

The poem accordingly may be read both as a hymn to Apollo and as an encomium to the new era founded by Augustus after Actium. The choice of the hymnic form allows the poet to follow the conventions of a hymn. He begins with a presentation of himself as the priest of Apollo making preparations for the festival of the god. He joins forces with the Muse when he relates the foundation myth of the temple. The poet also employs other conventional hymnic topoi, particularly in his descriptions of the localities where the god is worshipped, and the god’s different guises.

Propertius assigns two roles to Apollo in this poem: one is the thunderbolt-wielding, arrow-shooting Apollo, who brings victory to Caesar Augustus, i.e. the Apollo

of War, who intervened at Actium; the other is the Apollo of Peace from the Palatine, who has put away his arms and is equipped with the cithara. He is the guarantee for peace and a new golden age.

Another important point for Propertius is the accentuation of Apollo and the Muses as sources of poetry. This constitutes the prologue and the epilogue to the battle description.

The two faces of Apollo

The two Apollos of the poem refer to Actium and the Palatine respectively as metonymies for the two localities. If one draws a parallel between Propertius’ rather precise description of the two sites and his description of the two roles of Apollo at Actium and on the Palatine, one might expect that Propertius in his descriptions of Apollo would also reflect specific artistic representations of the god in or near the temples and monuments of the two sites. The question is whether there was a specific iconography, well known to the Roman reader, which pointed to the two localities.

The Palatine

Ancient authors mention several statues of Apollo on the Palatine and none of them can with any certainty be identified as Apollo Actius. When Augustus dedicated the new temple in 28 BC, he was very anxious to minimize reminders of the civil wars and to stress Apollo’s role in a more general way as guarantor of peace and of the *republica restituta*.²⁶

In the interests of identifying the statues of Apollo on the Palatine, it is worth while examining Propertius’ other references to such statues. The Actium elegy (69-70) mentions *Apollo victor* holding a cithara. Propertius 2, 31 refers to the dedication of the *Porticus of the Danaids* close to the Temple of Apollo and in fact may also refer to the dedication of the temple itself. In connection with the porticus a statue is described as “even more beautiful than Apollo himself”. This statue is a marble one por-

NOTE 24
According to Cairns (1984) 133 *monumenta* in these lines refer to the temple at the Palatine.

NOTE 25
Cf. Cairns (1984) 152. A “frivolity” according to Nisbet/Hubbard (See note 4), 411, who point to the literary convention among Augustan poets describing symposia in honour of political events.

NOTE 26
Cf. Jucker (1982) 83.

traying the god “with his mouth open ready to sing and a silent lyra”. Another feature of the *porticus* is an altar around which the four Oxen of Myron are placed. They seem “living statues”.²⁷ Then follows a description of the temple, inside which is a statue of Pythius singing out flanked by his mother and sister.²⁸ It has been generally agreed that a representation of these three cult-statues of Apollo, Artemis and Leto is to be found on the Sorrento base and that the statues were *opera nobilia* from the 4. cent. BC made by Skopas, Timotheos and Kephisodotos.²⁹

Propertius offers no further clues as to the identification of the two Apollos he mentions, even though he does accentuate their different topographical settings.

It is, thus, clear that Propertius’ text does not allow us to distinguish between an Apollo Actius and an Apollo Palatinus. If the statues mentioned by him are representative of the two types, we can deduce that they were both *citharoedi* in so far as they both carried cithara or lyra.³⁰ It takes us a little further when Propertius in 4,1,2 characterizes the Palatine Apollo as *Apollo Navalis*.

References to Actium and Apollo Actius are found on Augustan coinage; representations of Apollo are explicitly designated as *Actius* by the inscriptions ACT or ACTIO. The general motif is Apollo as *citharoedus* with a cithara or lyra in one hand and a plektron or patera in the other, but the depictions of Apollo vary, and they cannot be related to one single statue.³¹

Two series of coins struck at Lugdunum in 15 and 11 BC include two different versions of Apollo both with the inscription ACT, referring to Actium.³² In endeavouring to trace the specific statues behind the coins Zanker³³ relates the Apollo with cithara and patera from the Lugdunum series of 11 BC to the statue of Apollo standing outside the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine (*Apollo Actius*). The Apollo carrying cithara and plektron from the earlier Lugdunum series he connects with the cult statue of Apollo (*Palatinus*) inside the temple.

A coin struck by the moneyer C. Antistius Vetus in Rome in 16 BC³⁴ – the year to which the Actium elegy of Propertius is dated – is exceptional in that it shows Apollo standing beside an altar carrying a cithara or lyra in his left hand and in his right a patera from which he pours a libation onto the altar. On the coin both Apollo and the altar are placed on a high podium decorated along its front with a row of three ship’s beaks (*rostra*) flanked by two anchors. Above and below the base the legend reads APOLLINI ACTIO. Quoting Propertius 2, 31, which mentions Apollo with *tacita lyra* and an altar, and 4, 6, 69 *..citharam iam poscit Apollo* Zanker identifies this statue with the one called Apollo Actius. Here Apollo himself is pouring a thanksgiving and propitiatory offering as an *exemplum pietatis* – a role often played by Augustus; the juxtaposition of Apollo and Augustus seems evident.

I believe that the Actium poem of Propertius provides a further argument in support of Zanker’s suggestion concerning the iconography of Apollo Actius. In the proemium Propertius assigns to himself the

NOTE 27

Prop. 2,31,5-8: *Hic equidem Phoebo visus mihi pulchrior ipso/marmoreus tacita carmen hiare lyra;/atque aram circum steterant armenta Myronis,/quattuor artificis, vivida signa, boves.*

NOTE 28

2,31,15-16: *Deinde inter matrem deus ipse interque sororem/Pythius in longa carmina veste sonat.*

NOTE 29

For the discussion of the origin of the statues, see Zanker (1983). Recently some scholars (Roccas (1989), Flasher (1992)) have suggested that Apollo Palatinus has to be seen as a neo-Attic Augustan concept rather than a copy of a specific Greek original. (Roccas (1989) 583. For the fragments of a colossal cult-statue (H. ca 3 m.) found during Carretoni’s excavation in the area of the Temple, see Jucker (1982)

95 (with Abb. 14-16) who identifies the statue as a *citharoedus*.

NOTE 30

Cf. the description of Apollo as *citharoedus* in Tibullus 2,5,1-10.

NOTE 31

Cf. Trillmich (1988), Zanker (1983), and Roccas (1989).

NOTE 32

In the same way two different Dianas are shown, both with the legend SICIL in memory of the battle of Nauclolochus.

NOTE 33

Zanker (1983) 38, note 47.

NOTE 34

Cf. Zanker (1983) 31-32. Further Trillmich (1988) 522-23.

role of a priest making a propitiatory offering – *sacra facit vates*. The actual performance of the sacrifice is to be taken as a simile for the poet's concerns when embarking on a new theme, the epic³⁵, although he presents himself as a (real) priest. The sacrifice is described in detail with its altars and animals, even though it is meant to be taken metaphorically. In the epilogue (85–86) we are told that the poet will spend the night singing with the patera in his hand. The singing as well as the patera will suggest associations with Apollo.

NOTE 35
Cf. Cairns (1984) 141.

NOTE 36
Vide ThLL s.u. *Acte*
(*Actium, Actius, Actiacus*).

NOTE 37
In his new and very interesting book *Actium and Augustus. The Politics and Emotions of Civil War*, Ann Arbor 1995, Robert Alan Gurval discusses the evidence for the Actium-propaganda and the relationship between Augustus and Apollo. He demonstrates very convincingly that the myth of Actium is a late creation in the reign of Augustus. According to Gurval nothing links the God of Actium or the naval battle of Actium (and of Naulochus) with the dedication of the Temple of Apollo Palatinus in 28 BC. Actium had to be forgotten and only after a distance of fifteen years was a myth of a great battle created.

NOTE 38
Cf. *LIMC* II, 1, p. 436.

NOTE 39
Cf. Hor. *Carm. Saec.* 33–34
and Tibullus 2, 5.

NOTE 40
Jucker (1982) with a reference to Dio 51, 1, 3, and Gros s.u. *Apollo Palatinus* in *LTUR* (Steinby). Already suggested by G. Ch. Picard, *Les Trophées romains*. *BEFAR* 187, Paris 1957, 261.

Given Propertius' often very specific descriptions of sites and monuments, it seems obvious that in the Actium poem he has been inspired directly by a specific statue of Apollo Actius on the Palatine.

The poet's close relationship to Apollo is emphasized in his depiction of himself as the priest of Apollo and this is exactly the point of the prologue and the epilogue. But if we assume that he, in rendering himself in the role of the priest, also has been inspired by the "offering attitude" of a statue of Apollo Actius, thus giving his reader another topographical hint, then the poem contributes to a more precise identification of the iconography of a statue of Apollo Actius at the Palatine.

Seen in the context of the poem, this statue of Apollo Actius becomes the connecting link between its three main actors: Apollo, Augustus and Propertius. The analogy between Augustus and Apollo is well known. Augustus shows himself as an *exemplum pietatis* and on a higher level Apollo assumes the same role. Propertius, as the poet embarking on an epic and laudatory description of the battle of Actium, renders himself as the priest, who through his poetry makes his sacrifice. Thereby he ranks himself with Apollo and Augustus as yet another *exemplum*. This gives the Actium poem an unexpected and very elegant twist. The convivial mood in the epilogue further serves to extol the role of the poet, and does not blur the message of the poem. In no way does it convey the idea of ironical distance or parody which many scholars have proposed.

As to the figure of Apollo with the appellation *Actius* we have the following picture: it is first mentioned in extant Roman literature in Virgil's *Aeneid* and taken over by Propertius in his Actium-elegy from 16 BC. The references to an Apollo Actius are very few and not found in literature contemporary with the battle of Actium, which in itself has received relatively little mention, what there is, occurs mostly in later Roman historiography.³⁶ In Roman coinage *Apollo Actius* is mentioned for the first time in a series from 16 BC and then in the following years.

It seems, then, that Apollo Actius is officially introduced to the mind of the Romans at a safe chronological distance from the battle of Actium with its connotations of civil war. In the year 16 BC he is accepted into Roman iconography. The Actium-elegy of Propertius may confirm the existence and the iconography of a statue of Apollo Actius on the Palatine. A dedication there of such a statue in 16 BC might even be the reason for the writing of this poem and for the use of this motive in a coin series from the same year.³⁷

Actium

Thus, the Apollo Actius(?)/Palatinus at Rome is identified as an Apollo Citharoedus. This may come as no surprise since the iconography of Apollo in Augustan sculpture offers no examples of Apollo the Archer³⁸. The archer Apollo who is described as the main actor in Virgil's and Propertius' vivid descriptions of the battle of Actium finds no expression in the sculptural art of the time. As Propertius writes: after Actium Apollo laid away arms and asked for the cithara... *Citharam iam poscit Apollo victor...* The artists seem to have received the same signals as the poets.³⁹ So it is hardly to be expected, that Apollo the Archer found a home on the Palatine.

What, then, was the iconography chosen for Apollo on the monuments at Actium/Nikopolis? Hans Jucker and Pierre Gros⁴⁰ have suggested that the coin struck in Rome by Antistius in 16 BC shows the rostral monument on the hill-

side north of Nikopolis. My reading of Propertius would suggest that at least a statue of Apollo with patera, like that on the coin, existed on the Palatine, and it does not exclude the existence of a similar statue erected on the campsite monument at Actium/Nikopolis.⁴¹

Karamesine-Oikonomidou's catalogue of the coins from the mint of Nikopolis presents items⁴² showing what seem to be reproductions of a statue of Apollo holding a bow in his lowered left hand and an object identified by her as a Nike⁴³ in his raised right. These reproductions may reflect a cult statue or a statue from the war memorial⁴⁴ and in either case we can infer the existence of a statue of a bow-holding Apollo at Actium/Nikopolis, known, at least, from around 200 AD, as these coin issues are considered to be Severan or later⁴⁵.

The material, that we have at hand now, does not allow us to arrive at a precise knowledge of the iconography of Apollo Actius at Nikopolis. Nor do we know in what ways a sanctuary or monument of Apollo was connected with the Actium memorial dedicated by Augustus. The excavations recently resumed may reveal answers to these questions.

Propertius IV, 6

Sacra facit uates: sint ora fauentia sacris
 et cadat ante meos icta iuūenca focos.
 Cera Philetæis certet Romana corymbis
 et Cyrenæas urna ministret aquas.
 5 Costum molle date et blandi mihi
 turis honores
 terque focum circa laneus orbis eat.
 Spargite me lymphis carmenque recentibus aris
 tibia Mygdoniis libet eburna cadis.
 Ite procul fraudes, alio sint aere noxae:
 10 pura nouum uati laurea mollit iter.
 Musa, Palatini referemus Apollinis aedem:

res est, Calliope, digna fauore tuo.
 Caesaris in nomen ducuntur carmina: Caesar
 dum canitur, quaeso, Iuppiter ipse uaces.

15 Est Phoebi fugiens Athamana ad litora portus
 qua sinus Ioniae murmura condit aquae,
 Actia Iuleae pelagus monumenta carinae,
 nautarum uotis non operosa uia.

Huc mundi coiere manus: stetit aequore moles
 20 pinea nec remis aequa fauebat auis.
 Altera classis erat Teucro damnata Quirino
 pilaque feminea turpiter acta manu;
 hinc Augusta ratis plenis Iouis omine ūelis
 signaque iam patriae uincere docta suae.

25 Tandem acies geminos Nereus lunarat in arcus
 armorum et radiis picta tremebat aqua,
 cum Phoebus linquens stantem se uindice Delon
 (nam tulit iratos mobilis una Notos)
 astitit Augusti puppim super et noua flamma
 30 luxit in obliquam ter sinuata facem.
 Non ille attulerat crinis in colle solutos
 aut testudineae carmen inerme lyrae,
 sed quali aspexit Pelopeum Agamemnona uultu
 egessitque auidis Dorica castra rogis
 35 aut qualis flexos soluit Pythona per orbis
 serpentem, imbelles quam timuere lyrae.

Mox ait: "O Longa mundi seruator ab Alba,
 Auguste, Hectoreis cognite maior auis,
 uince mari: iam terra tua est; tibi militat arcus

NOTE 41
 Zanker 1983, 40 discusses Jucker's suggestion and puts forward as an argument in his favour that the series from Rome for 16 BC only seems to reproduce monuments at Rome, but he concludes: "Beide Interpretationen sind hypothetisch und es bleibt abzuwarten, ob Ausgrabungen einem von uns recht geben."

NOTE 42
 Karamesine-Oikonomidou (1975) Pl. 1 No. 1B; Pl. 28 No. 37; Pl. 29 Nos. 47-49; Pl. 36 Nos. 73-74, 76; Pl. 37 Nos. 90a, 97; Pl. 54 No. 45; Pl. 59 Nos. 20-22; Pl. 61 No. 49; Pl. 63 Nos. 87-88.

NOTE 43
 According to Kraay (1976) 239 "a short straight object which is certainly not Nike". A torch? Franke (1976) 160, who identifies this Apollo as *Apollo Leucadius*, relates it to a unique Trajanic issue with a similar representation of Apollo carrying the inscription ΛΕΥΚΑΤΗΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ (Münzkabinett, Berlin; Franke (1976) Taf. 11, Abb. 3). Cf. Jucker (1982) 97, note 74.

NOTE 44
 Identified as Apollo Actius by Karamesine-Oikonomidou and as Apollo Leucadius by Franke. Cf. Jucker (1982) 238-39.

NOTE 45
 Kraay (1976) 239 and Jucker (1982) 97.

- 40 et fauet ex umeris hoc onus omne
meis.
Solve metu patriam, quae nunc te
uindice freta
imposuit prorae publica uota tuae.
Quam nisi defendes, murorum Ro-
mulus augur
ire Palatinas non bene uidit auis.
- 45 Et nimium remis audent prope:
turpe Latinis
principe te fluctus regia uela pati.
Nec te, quod classis centenis remiget
alis,
terreat: inuito labitur illa mari;
quodque uehant prorae Centaurica
saxa minantis,
- 50 tigna caua et pictos experire metus.
Frangit et attollit uires in milite
causa;
quae nisi iusta subest, excutit arma
pudor.
Tempus adest, committe ratis: ego
temporis auctor
ducam laurigera Iulia rostra manu.”
- 55 Dixerat, et pharetrae pondus consu-
mit in arcus:
proxima post arcus Caesaris hasta
fuit.
Vincit Roma fide Phoebi: dat femina
poenas;
sceptrum per Ionias fracta uehantur
aquas.
- At pater Idalio miratur Caesar ab
astro:
- 60 “Sum deus; est nostri sanguinis ista
fides.”
Prosequitur cantu Triton omnesque
marinae
plausuerunt circa libera signa deae.
- Illa petit Nilum cumba male nixa fu-
gaci,
- 65 hoc unum, iussa non moritura die.
Di melius! quantus mulier foret una
triumphus,
ductus erat per quas ante Iugurtha
uias!
Actius hinc traxit Phoebus monu-
menta quod eius
una decem uicit missa sagitta ratis.
- Bella satis cecini; citharam iam poscit
Apollo
- 70 uictor et ad placidos exiit arma cho-
ros.
- Candida nunc molli subeant conui-
uia luco
blanditiaeque fluant per mea colla
rosae
uinaque fundantur prelis elisa Faler-
nis
terque lauet nostras spica Cilissa
comas.
- 75 Ingenium potis irriteret Musa poetis:
Bacche, soles Phoebus fertilis esse
tuo.
Ille paludosos memoret seruire
Sycambros,
Cepheam hic Meroen fuscaque
regna canat,
hic referat sero confessum foedere
Parthum:
- 80 “Reddat signa Remi, mox dabit ipse
sua:
siue aliquid pharetris Augustus parcat
Eois,
differat in pueros ista tropaea suos.
Gaude, Crasse, nigras si quid sapis in-
ter harenas:
ire per Euphraten ad tua busta licet.”
- 85 Sic noctem patera, sic ducam car-
mine, donec
iniciat radios in mea uina dies.

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