

Handout for Seminar of Daniel Boyarin

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Plutarch (ca. 46-120 a.d.) writes of ideal wifely behavior:

A wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband's friends in common with him. The gods are the first and most important friends. Therefore it is seemly for a wife to fear [*sebesthai*] and to know only the gods that her husband honors [*nomizein*], and to shut the outer door against all *periergoi thrēskeiai* and *xenai deisidaimoniai*.

Ἰδίουσ οὐ δεῖ φίλους κτᾶσθαι τὴν γυναῖκα, κοινοῖς δὲ χρῆσθαι τοῖς τοῦ ἀνδρός· οἱ δὲ θεοὶ φίλοι πρῶτοι καὶ μέγιστοι. διὸ καὶ θεοὺς οὐκ ὁ ἀνὴρ νομίζει σέβεσθαι τῇ γαμετῇ καὶ γινώσκειν μόνους προσήκει, περιέργοις δὲ θρησκείαις καὶ ξέναις δεισιδαιμονίαις ἀποκεκλειῆσθαι τὴν αὐλειον. [Plutarch *Coniugalia praecepta* 140d].

Plutarch's Life of Alexander 2. 5-6:

But concerning these matters there is another story to this effect: all the women of these parts were addicted to the Orphic rites and the orgies of Dionysus from very ancient times (being called Klodones and Mimallones), and imitated in many ways the practices of the Edonian women and the Thracian women about Mount Haemus, from whom, as it would seem, the word “*thrēskeuein*” [θρησκεύειν] came to be applied to the celebration of immoderate and *periergoi* [overwrought, taking needless trouble, superfluous]¹ ceremonies.

πολλὰ ταῖς Ἡδωνίσι καὶ ταῖς περὶ τὸν Αἴμον Θρηύσαις ὅμοια δρώσιν, ἀφ' ὧν δοκεῖ καὶ τὸ θρησκεύειν ὄνομα ταῖς κατακόροις γενέσθαι καὶ περιέργοις ἱερουργίαις

Philo Judaeus

Let him not be inscribed with the *eusebeis*, for he has wandered from the way of *eusebeia*; thinking it [*eusebeia*] *thrēskeia* as opposed to *hosiotēs* [anti *hosiotētos*], and giving gifts to the unbribable one who will never take them and flattering the unflatterable, the one who welcomes [all] that which belongs to the genuine class of *therapeia*—the genuine class being the soul bearing simply and solely truth—while he rejects counterfeit ones.

μετ' εὐσεβῶν ἀναγεγράφθω· πεπλάνηται γὰρ καὶ οὗτος τῆς πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ὁδοῦ, θρησκείαν ἀντὶ ὀσιότητος ἠγούμενος καὶ δῶρα τῷ ἀδεκάστῳ διδοὺς οὐδέποτε ληψομένῳ τὰ τοιαῦτα καὶ κολακεύων τὸν ἀκολάκευτον, ὃς γνησίους μὲν θεραπείας ἀσπάζεται—γνήσιοι δ' εἰσὶν αἱ ψυχῆς ψιλὴν καὶ μόνην θυσίαν φερούσης ἀλήθειαν—, τὰς δὲ νόθους ἀποστρέφεται. [Quod deterius potiori insidiari soleat 21].

Having mustered in the plain at Ptolemais, Judeans with women and children kept imploring Petronius, first for the sake of their ancestral laws [*tōn patriōn nomōn*] then for their own

sakes. . . .But while they were putting forward the law and the ancestral custom [*ton nomon kai to patrion ethos*], and how it would not be lawful to place any representation of God—let alone of a man—in the shrine itself or even in some ordinary place in the countryside, Petronius seized upon [this] and declared, “But surely in my case, is not the law of *my* master to be guarded? For after transgressing it and sparing you, I shall rightly perish. The one who sent me, and not I, will make war with you; I myself, just like you, am under orders. At this, the rabble shouted that they held themselves ready to suffer for everything for the sake of the law. After he had quelled their outburst, Petronius said, “Will you then make war on Caesar?” The Judeans declared that they offered sacrifice twice a day for Caesar and the Roman people, but if he wants to set up the images, he will need first to offer up as a sacrifice the entire nation of Judeans—and they presented themselves ready for the butchery, children and wives included. Amazement and sympathy went into Petronius at these [words], both for the *anuperblētou thrēskeias* of the men and for their ready, *etoimou parastematos* disposition toward death (BJ 2 192-198).

Ἰουδαῖοι δὲ μετὰ γυναικῶν καὶ τέκνων ἀθροισθέντες εἰς τὸ πεδῖον τὸ πρὸς Πτολεμαῖδι καθιέτευον τὸν Πετρώνιον ὑπὲρ τῶν πατρίων νόμων πρῶτον, ἔπειτα ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν. ὁ δὲ πρὸς τε τὸ πλῆθος καὶ τὰς δεήσεις ἐνδοῦς τοὺς μὲν ἀνδριάντας καὶ τὰς στρατιὰς ἐν Πτολεμαῖδι λείπει, προελθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν καὶ συγκαλέσας τὸ τε πλῆθος καὶ τοὺς γνωρίμους πάντας εἰς Τιβεριάδα τὴν τε Ῥωμαίων διεξήκει δύναμιν καὶ τὰς Καίσαρος ἀπειλάς, ἔτι δὲ (194.) τὴν ἀξίωσιν ἀπέφαινε ἀγνώμονα· πάντων γὰρ τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων ἔθνων κατὰ πόλιν συγκαθιδρυκῶν τοῖς ἄλλοις θεοῖς καὶ τὰς Καίσαρος εἰκόνας τὸ μόνους ἐκείνους ἀντιτάσσεσθαι πρὸς τοῦτο σχεδὸν ἀφισταμένων εἶναι καὶ μεθ’ ὕβρεως. Τῶν δὲ τὸν νόμον καὶ τὸ πάτριον ἔθος προτεινομένων καὶ ὡς οὐδὲ θεοῦ τι δείκηναι, οὐκ ὅπως ἀνδρός, οὐ κατὰ τὸν ναὸν μόνον ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ἐν εἰκαίῳ τινὶ τόπῳ τῆς χώρας θέσθαι θεμιτὸν εἶη, ὑπολαβὼν ὁ Πετρώνιος „ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ἐμοὶ φυλακτέος ὁ τοῦμοῦ δεσπότης νόμος“, ἔφη· „παραβάς γὰρ αὐτὸν καὶ φεισάμενος ἂν ἀπολοῦμαι δικαίως. πολέμησει δ’ ὑμᾶς ὁ πέμψας με καὶ. οὐκ ἐγώ· καὶ γὰρ αὐτός, ὡς περ ὑμεῖς, ἐπιτάσσεται.“ πρὸς ταῦτα τὸ πλῆθος πάντ’ ἐβόα πρὸ τοῦ νόμου πάσχειν ἐτόίμως ἔχειν. καταστείλας δ’ αὐτῶν ὁ Πετρώνιος τὴν βοήν, „πολεμήσετε, εἶπεν, ἄρα

Καίσαρι;“ καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι περὶ μὲν Καίσαρος καὶ τοῦ δήμου τῶν Ῥωμαίων δις τῆς ἡμέρας θύειν ἔφασαν, εἰ δὲ βούλεται τὰς εἰκόνας ἐγκαθιδρύειν, πρότερον αὐτὸν δεῖν ἅπαν τὸ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος προθύσασθαι· παρέχειν δὲ σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐτόιμους εἰς τὴν σφαγὴν ἅμα τέκνοις καὶ γυναιξίν. ἐπὶ τούτοις θαῦμα καὶ οἶκτος εἰσήκει τὸν Πετρώνιον τῆς τε ἀνυπερβλήτου θρησκείας τῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ τοῦ πρὸς θάνατον ἐτοίμου παραστήματος. καὶ τότε μὲν ἄπρακτοι διελύθησαν.

Having been sent into Judaea as procurator by Tiberias, Pilate by cover of night introduced into Jerusalem, Caesar’s images, called “legionary standards.” After daybreak, this raised a big tumult among the Judeans. For those who were near the sight were shocked at how the laws had been trodden under foot, for they do not deem it appropriate to place a

representation in the city. And in addition to the wrath of those in the city, the people from outside the city streamed together in close order. Rushing to Pilate in Caesarea, they were approaching him as suppliants to carry out the standards from Jerusalem and to guard τὰ πάτρια. Pilate refusing, they prostrated themselves around his house for five days and nights alike endured motionless. On the next day, Pilate sat on the platform in the great stadium and calling the crowd as one who would be willing to answer them truthfully, gave the soldiers a sign by arrangement to encircle the Jews with weapons. The phalanx being arrayed around three-deep, the Jews were speechless at the unexpected sight. Pilate then said that he would cut them down if they would not receive the images of Caesar favorably, he nodded to the soldiers to bare their swords. The Jews, for their part, just as if by preconcerted signal, fell down and bent their necks, crying that they were ready to do away with themselves, rather than transgress the law. Exceedingly amazed by their untempered δεισιδαιμονίας, Pilate ordered to immediately carry out the standards from Jerusalem.

Πεμφθεὶς δὲ εἰς Ἰουδαίαν ἐπίτροπος ὑπὸ Τιβερίου Πιλάτος νύκτωρ κεκαλυμμένας εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα εἰσκομίζει τὰς Καίσαρος εἰκόνας, αἱ σημαῖαι καλοῦνται. τοῦτο μεθ' ἡμέραν μεγίστην ταραχὴν ἤγειρεν Ἰουδαίοις: οἳ τε γὰρ ἐγγὺς πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν ἐξεπλάγησαν ὡς πεπατημένων αὐτοῖς τῶν νόμων, οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀξιοῦσιν ἐν τῇ πόλει δεικῆλον τίθεσθαι, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀγανάκτησιν τῶν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν ἄθροους ὁ ἐκ τῆς χώρας λαὸς συνέρρευσε. ὀρμήσαντες δὲ πρὸς Πιλάτον εἰς Καισάρειαν ἰκέτευσον ἐξενεγκεῖν ἐξ Ἱεροσολύμων τὰς σημαίας καὶ τηρεῖν αὐτοῖς τὰ πάτρια. Πιλάτου δὲ ἀρνούμενου περὶ τὴν οἰκίαν πρηνεῖς καταπεσόντες ἐπὶ πέντε ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας ἴσας ἀκίνητοι διεκαρτέρουν. Τῇ δ' ἑξῆς ὁ Πιλάτος καθίσας ἐπὶ βήματος ἐν τῷ μεγάλῳ σταδίῳ καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τὸ πλῆθος ὡς ἀποκρίνασθαι δῆθεν αὐτοῖς θέλων, δίδωσιν τοῖς στρατιώταις σημεῖον ἐκ συντάγματος κυκλώσασθαι τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις. περιστάσης δὲ τριστικεῖ τῆς φάλαγγος Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν ἀχανεῖς ἦσαν πρὸς τὸ ἀδόκητον τῆς ὄψεως, Πιλάτος δὲ κατακόψειν εἰπὼν αὐτούς, εἰ μὴ προσδέξαιντο τὰς Καίσαρος εἰκόνας, γυμνοῦν τὰ ξίφη τοῖς στρατιώταις ἔνευσε. οἳ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι καθάπερ ἐκ συνθήματος ἄθροοι καταπεσόντες καὶ τοὺς αὐχένας παρακλίναντες ἐτοίμους ἀναιρεῖν σφᾶς ἐβόων μᾶλλον ἢ τὸν νόμον παραβῆναι. ὑπερθαυμάσας δὲ ὁ Πιλάτος τὸ τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας ἄκρατον ἐκκομίσαι μὲν αὐτίκα τὰς σημαίας Ἱεροσολύμων κελεύει.