

<b>Zeitschrift:</b>	Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique
<b>Herausgeber:</b>	Fondation Hardt pour l'étude de l'Antiquité classique
<b>Band:</b>	58 (2012)
<b>Artikel:</b>	The nature and representation of competition in pantomime and mime
<b>Autor:</b>	Webb, Ruth
<b>DOI:</b>	<a href="https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-660862">https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-660862</a>

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## VI

RUTH WEBB

## THE NATURE AND REPRESENTATION OF COMPETITION IN PANTOMIME AND MIME

Pantomime is an interesting test case for the study of spectacles in the Roman Empire. It is a peculiarly Roman Imperial art form, having been created, according to ancient sources, under Augustus by two artists from the Greek world, Pylades and Bathyllus. Pantomime, as it is described to us by the literary and rhetorical sources, was essentially a solo art. The dancer, usually male, told stories drawn from the traditional mythological repertoire through gesture and actions alone, without the use of words. He was accompanied by a choir and musicians, as well as a singer who presented a text giving the story; but, by all accounts, the principal story-telling was done through the dancer's silent gestures.<sup>1</sup>

As a new creation, pantomime was not initially included among the contests at Greek *agônes*, although it did appear among the non-competitive 'fringe' entertainments. However, as Louis Robert and, more recently, William Slater and Jean-Yves Strasser have shown, it did come to acquire the dignity of competitive status in the second half of the second century. Before then, pantomime contests are documented in Italy. In

<sup>1</sup> On the pantomime, see M.-H. GARELLI, *Danser le mythe. La pantomime et sa réception dans la culture antique* (Louvain 2007); I. LADA-RICHARDS, *Silent Eloquence. Lucian and Pantomime Dancing* (London 2007); R. WEBB, *Demons and Dancers. Performance in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass. 2008); *New Directions in Ancient Pantomime*, ed. by E. HALL and R. WYLES (Oxford 2008).

in this paper I first review the evidence for pantomime contests in the West and the East. Here my aim is simply to bring together the available evidence and to provide a fuller picture than is available elsewhere. In approaching the evidence, I was particularly interested in the apparent references to some kind of competitive structure to pantomime performance in first-century Rome and in the fate of pantomime contests in the fourth century, when the epigraphic evidence is lacking and the factions have not yet become involved in the organisation of theatrical entertainment.

The second part of the paper analyses the implications of the introduction of contests in pantomime from the perspective of the performance, asking what impact the element of competition might have had on the presentation of pantomime, as well as on the relationship between dancer, audience, and patron. Pantomime is a particularly interesting case study, both as a Roman creation and because of its very nature, for, unlike other dramatic forms, it was a solo art. The paper concludes with an analysis of victory in the visual representations of pantomimes, suggesting that the figure of the pantomime posed particular problems of representation.

## 1. Historical outline

The earliest use of the term *pantomimos* in Greek epigraphy is to a performance at a public feast by a certain Ploutogenes in circa 80 BCE, who is mentioned in an inscription celebrating the benefactions of a certain Zosimos.<sup>2</sup> Ploutogenes is described as being 'able to delight [or 'enchant'], by his art'<sup>3</sup> but he is

<sup>2</sup> *I.Priene* 113 (ll. 64-66) = E. CSAPO and W.J. SLATER, *The Context of Ancient Drama* (Ann Arbor 1994), V, 22A. See also L. ROBERT, "Pantomimen im griechischen Orient", in *Hermes* 65 (1930), 106-122, 114-115. Given the date, we cannot be sure exactly what was meant by *pantomimos* at this time.

<sup>3</sup> *I.Priene* 113 (ll. 65-66): Τὸν δυνάμενον τῆς τ[έχνης ψυχα] | γωγῆσαι παντομίμ[ο]ν [Πλ]ουτογένην.

included as an example of Zosimos' achievements as a benefactor, and not primarily for his own merits.<sup>4</sup> After this, *pantomimos* is not used in Greek sources (with very few exceptions): high-style atticising authors like Lucian and Libanios prefer the vaguer but classically correct term *orchesis* ('dance'), and inscriptions use various periphraseis to identify pantomime dancers. *Pantomimus* occurs in Latin sources, but the less precise term *histrio* is also used of dancers.

### 1.1. *The West: first and second centuries CE*

The creation of the pantomime is attributed by ancient sources to the reign of Augustus (22 BCE). The importance of the Augustan period in the shaping of Roman imperial culture in the ensuing centuries is well established, and it is likely that Augustus was well aware of the political and cultural potential of the new art.<sup>5</sup> One might expect all the early performances of pantomime in Augustan Rome to have been straightforward displays paid for by a patron, whether in public or in private settings; however, there are indications that pantomime was performed as a competitive art from the outset. These come from one inscription and from literary sources. First, the description of Gaius Theoros (perhaps identifiable with Bathyllus, one of the two dancers credited with the creation of Roman pantomime) as *victor pantomimorum* on a *tessera* confirms the existence of contests of some sort.<sup>6</sup> The literary testimonies are

<sup>4</sup> Later Greek texts and inscriptions use the term 'dance' (ὕρχησις) to designate the pantomime.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, R. BEACHAM, "The Emperor as Impresario. Producing the Pageantry of Power", in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, ed. by K. GALINSKY (Cambridge 2005), 151-174.

<sup>6</sup> *CIL VI* 10115 from Tivoli = *ILS* 5197 = E. CSAPO and W.J. SLATER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), V, 30. O. WEINREICH, *Epigramm und Pantomimus nebst einem Kapitel über einige nicht-epigrammatische Texte und Denkmäler zur Geschichte des Pantomimus* (Heidelberg 1948), 46 and H. LEPPIN, *Histrionen. Untersuchungen zur sozialen Stellung von Bühnenkünstlern im Westen des Römischen Reiches zur Zeit der Republik und des Principats* (Bonn 1992), 218 identify this dancer with Bathyllus. V. ROTOLI, *Il Pantomimo. Studi e testi* (Palermo 1957), 312 and E.J. JORY,

from Tacitus and Quintilian. Quintilian relates an anecdote (*IO* 6, 3, 65) about a witty remark made by the emperor when watching two dancers *contendere*, a verb which certainly implies competition.<sup>7</sup> Tacitus' reference to unrest (*discordia*) resulting from the contest (*ex certamine*) of the *histriones* (i.e. pantomimes) at the games in honour of Augustus held shortly after that emperor's death may also point in the same direction.<sup>8</sup> As William Slater notes,<sup>9</sup> translators and commentators differ markedly in their interpretation of this passage. Slater himself understands that the event was a contest between pantomimes such as that mentioned in the *tessera*, pointing out that *certamen* is the regular Latin equivalent of *agôn*, while Woodman translates the key words as "the actors' competitiveness", implying a less formal rivalry.<sup>10</sup> The translation we choose thus depends to a great extent on our understanding of the organisation of pantomime performances at this period, while this depends in turn on how we interpret this passage. Further difficulties are introduced by Cassius Dio's account of the same event, which also mentions unrest but ascribes this to one dancer's refusal to perform for the fee (*misthos*) on offer, suggesting a straightforward,

"The Early Pantomime Riots", in *Maistor. Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*, ed. by A. MOFFATT (Canberra 1984), 57-66 are sceptical. His adversaries are named on the verso of the *tessera* as Pylades, Nomius, Hylas and Pierus; the first three are known as dancers in the early principate. See SUET. *Aug.* 45, 7 for Hylas and SEN. *Contr.* 3 pref. 10 for Nomius.

<sup>7</sup> See M.-H. GARELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 178.

<sup>8</sup> TAC. *Ann.* 1, 54, 3 Furneaux: *ludos Augustales tunc primum coepitos turbavit discordia ex certamine histrionum*. On the riots see W.J. SLATER, "Pantomime Riots", in *CLAnt* 13 (1994), 120-144: 124, who takes these references as evidence of formal pantomimic contests at this early period. E.J. JORY, *art. cit.* (n. 6), suggests that Tacitus "may loosely have attributed a traditional cause for the riot".

<sup>9</sup> W.J. SLATER *art. cit.* (n. 8), 124, n. 25.

<sup>10</sup> A.J. WOODMAN, trans., *Tacitus. The Annals* (Indianapolis 2004); cf. J.C. YARDLEY, trans., *Tacitus. The Annals: The Reigns of Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero* (Oxford 2008), who translates "rivalry amongst the actors" and the interpretation of M.A. CAVALLARO, *Spese et spettacoli. Aspetti economici-strutturali degli spettacoli nella Roma giulio-claudia* (Bonn 1984), 127 "da rivalità fra gli *histriones*", cited by W.J. SLATER, *art. cit.* (n. 8), 124 n. 25.

paid performance. Such a performance could, of course, involve a competitive element, but Dio, who would have been thoroughly familiar with the idea of pantomime competitions, makes no mention of this.<sup>11</sup> He adds the further information that the dancer's failure to appear prompted the tribunes to convene an immediate meeting of the Senate to approve the extra funds.

Moving on to the reign of Nero, Tacitus also alludes indirectly to pantomime contests when, speaking of the celebration of the first Neronia in 60 CE, he notes that the pantomimes had returned (from banishment) but were not allowed to compete in sacred contests.<sup>12</sup> This does not, of course, exclude competitive performances of other kinds. In addition, the well-documented existence of bands of supporters, or 'cliques', attending dancers also implies some sort of competition, although this may have taken the form of rivalry among dancers for employment.<sup>13</sup>

Taken together, these pieces of evidence do suggest some kind of competitive form to pantomime contests from the very beginning of the art in Rome. The surest indication is the description of Theoros as victor in *CIL VI* 10115. As we have

<sup>11</sup> DIO CASS. 56, 47, 2: καν τούτω τὸ πλῆθος, τῶν δρχηστῶν τινος μὴ ἐθελήσαντος ἐπὶ τῷ τεταγμένῳ μισθῷ ἐς τὸ θέατρον ἐν τοῖς Αὐγουσταλίοις ἐσελθεῖν, ἐστασίασε· καὶ οὐ πρότερον ἐπαύσαντο ταραττόμενοι πρὶν τοὺς δημάρχους τὴν τε βουλὴν αὐθημερὸν συναγαγεῖν, καὶ δεηθῆναι αὐτῆς ἐπιτρέψαι σφίσι πλεῖόν τι τοῦ νενομισμένου ἀναλῶσαι. The suggestion of E.J. JORY, *art. cit.* (n. 6), that this first disturbance was then followed by further disturbances when the performance took place makes it possible to reconcile the two accounts, but there is no mention of a second disturbance in Dio.

<sup>12</sup> TAC. *Ann.* 14, 21, 4: *redditi in scaenam pantomimi certaminibus sacris prohibebantur*. See M.L. CALDELLI, *L'agon Capitolinus. Storia e protagonisti dall'istituzione domiziana al IV secolo* (Roma 1993), 74; M.-H. GARELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 189, suggests that they may have performed at the *Iuvenalia*.

<sup>13</sup> Another function for cliques is suggested by V. DANIELSON, "Artists and Entrepreneurs. Female Singers in Cairo during the 1920s", in *Women in Middle Eastern History*, ed. by N.R. KEDDIE and B. BARON (New Haven-London 1991), 292-309: 302. The author attributes the emergence of "cliques of supporters" or "courts" to the singers' need to counteract the presence of rowdy elements in the audience.

seen, the interpretation of Tacitus' reference to a *certamen* at the *ludi Augustales* is complicated both by difficulties of translation and by Dio's version of events (in which, if anything, the contest is between dancers and patrons and, perhaps, between tribunes and Senate). In addition, both authors were writing well after the events, as was Quintilian. These pantomimic contests can perhaps be compared with the competitions for best comic actor documented for the Republican era.<sup>14</sup> Alternatively, they may on occasion have been more spontaneous contests of the type described by Macrobius (*Sat.* 2, 7, 7-8), speaking of the occasion at which Publius Syrus challenged other mimes to a contest during games given by Caesar.<sup>15</sup>

These uncertainties, however, point towards the range of forms which competition could take: informal rivalry for resources and patronage, semi-formal competitions organised within the context of paid performances, and, as occurs in the second century (if not earlier), formal competitions within the context of the agonistic festivals in East and West.

### 1.1.1. Pantomime in the western *agônes*

Greek-style games were introduced in Naples (the Sebasta) in 2 CE, but there is no trace of pantomime contests being held there until the reign of Trajan. The Capitoline games, established by Domitian in 86, were the first Greek-style contest in Rome itself to become a long-lasting celebration. The *agôn musicus* included contests for Greek and Latin orators, citharodes,

<sup>14</sup> E.J. JORY, *art. cit.* (n. 6), and P.G. BROWN, "Actors and Actor-Managers at Rome in the Time of Plautus and Terence", in *Greek and Roman Actors. Aspects of an Ancient Profession*, ed. by P. EASTERLING and E. HALL (Cambridge 2002), 234 both citing PLAUT. *Amph.* 64-67 and *Poen.* 36-39, where the actions of *favatores* are criticised.

<sup>15</sup> The historical value of this story is dubious, given the late date of Macrobius' anecdote, combined with the fact that it seems to confuse this occasion with that described at 2, 7, 1 and by SUET. *Jul.* 39, at which Laberius was forced by Caesar to appear on stage but given 500,000 *sesterces* to restore his status as a knight.

cithara players accompanied by choirs, and solo cithara players without vocal accompaniment,<sup>16</sup> heralds, comic and tragic actors, *aulos* players and poets.<sup>17</sup> As Caldelli argues, given Domitian's opposition to pantomime and the absence of any mention of pantomime in the sources, it is unlikely that it figured among the official contests at the foundation of the games.

The question therefore arises of when pantomime came to be introduced into *agônes* in the West. The earliest pantomime to be securely documented as a victor in such contests is Marcus Ulpius Augusti libertus Apolaustus (one of the many Apolausti), a freedman of Trajan who was crowned in unspecified games and also won what seems to be the overall contest between winners in all theatrical disciplines (*dia pantôn* in Greek).<sup>18</sup> The contest in which he triumphed is not named in the inscription, but Leppin proposes the Sebasta at Naples and argues that pantomime contests were introduced to this *agôn* between 103 and 117 CE.<sup>19</sup> It is interesting to note that, as we have seen, Tacitus makes a point of stating that pantomimes were not allowed to compete at sacred contests during the reign of Nero; the way in which he phrases this remark (using the imperfect *prohibebant*) suggests that, by the time he was writing (in the last years of the first century and the beginning of the second), the situation may well have changed.

In the specific case of the Sebasta at Naples, the existence of pantomime contests appears to be confirmed by the principal speaker in Lucian's dialogue, *On the Dance*, 32 (probably composed before 165 CE), according to whom one city in Italy of Chalcidian origin had already admitted pantomime among the contests or, more literally (and more ambiguously),

<sup>16</sup> SUET. *Dom.* 4, 9 see M.L. CALDELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 68-69.

<sup>17</sup> These specialities are recorded in inscriptions, see M.L. CALDELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 12).

<sup>18</sup> CIL VI 37841 (CIL VI 10114 = ILS 5184). See H. LEPPIN, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 205; J.-Y. STRASSER, "L'épreuve artistique διὰ πάντων", in *Historia* 55 (2006), 300; V. ROTOLI, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 317; M.L. CALDELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 31.

<sup>19</sup> H. LEPPIN, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 174 and 205.

had “added it as an adornment to their contest”.<sup>20</sup> This raises the question of whether the Neapolitan Sebasta were really the only western contests to have admitted pantomime as a competition by Lucian’s day (rather than as a hired fringe entertainment). Lucian’s speaker certainly implies that this was the only exception to the usual exclusion of pantomimes at the time, but I believe it would be dangerous to place too much weight on this remark by a fictional character in a work whose date, plausible as it is, is based on probabilities, particularly given that this character is the creation of an author who is notoriously difficult to pin down.<sup>21</sup>

By the late second century, several other victors in sacred contests are known in western contexts: P. Aelius Pylades (Pylades III), a freedman of Hadrian, and his pupil L. Aurelius Pylades (Pylades IV) describe themselves as *hieronicae* in an inscription recording their erection of a building or monument in Genoa.<sup>22</sup> Pylades IV is also the subject of an honorific inscription from Puteoli which mentions four victories. One Apolaustus is recorded in *CIL* X 3716 = *ILS* 5189 as victor in two sacred contests and as an overall victor on one occasion (under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus).<sup>23</sup> After this, other Apolausti are mentioned in Latin inscriptions as sacred victors

<sup>20</sup> LUCIANUS, *Salt.* 32: ἐῶ λέγειν ὅτι πόλις ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ, τοῦ Χαλκιδικοῦ γένους ἡ ἀρίστη, καὶ τοῦτο ὥσπερ τι κόσμημα τῷ παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἀγῶνι προστέθεικεν. On the date of this treatise see D.S. ROBERTSON, “The Authenticity and Date of Lucian *De Saltatione*”, in *Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway on His Sixtieth Birthday, 6 August, 1913*, ed. by E.C. QUIGGIN (Cambridge 1913), 180-185.

<sup>21</sup> L. ROBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 2), 121 notes that it would not be surprising if Lucian failed to mention contests that existed in Rome, which, unlike Naples, lay outside the Greek cultural area. C.P. JONES, *Culture and Society in Lucian* (Cambridge Mass. 1986), 72 also notes Lucian’s selective treatment of the pantomime’s Roman history. See also H. LEPPIN, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 174.

<sup>22</sup> *CIL* V 7753. H. LEPPIN, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 286-287. V. ROTOLI, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 318.

<sup>23</sup> See M.L. CALDELLI, “Ancora su L. Aurelius Augg. lib. Apolaustus Memphius Senior”, in *Epigraphica* 55 (1993), 45-57; H. LEPPIN, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 207 notes that it is not certain that this Apolaustus is a dancer, although the name is strongly associated with pantomimes.

and victors in the *dia pantōn*.<sup>24</sup> Later still, an unnamed pantomime during the reign of Caracalla won a prize at the Palatine games and may be referred to as a victor at the Sebasta on the severely damaged inscription recording his career.<sup>25</sup>

Another unnamed dancer, celebrated in a Greek inscription from Magnesia (*I. Magnesia* 192, see below) dated to the period 176-180 CE,<sup>26</sup> is credited with victories at the Eusebeia at Puteoli (founded by Antoninus Pius) and is said to have 'pleased [audiences] in? Roman games' (ἀρέσαντα διὰ ἀγώνων / Πωμαῖων). The date at which pantomime contests were introduced into the Eusebeia is unclear, particularly if we retain a certain scepticism regarding the use of Lucian's *On the Dance* as a historical source. More intriguing is the reference in the inscription to Roman 'contests' or 'games'. The formulation, discussed in detail by Slater and Strasser, is unusual. Slater proposes "the *certamina* among the great pantomimes that caused such trouble for law and order in the theaters of the capital".<sup>27</sup> Strasser suggests that the odd phrasing, which continues καὶ τειμηθέντα ("and honoured"), followed by the names of Antoninus, Commodus, Verus and Faustina as the source of the honours (the formulation makes clear that the last two were both deceased at the time the inscription was written), implies a non-competitive performance in the context of *ludi*. There remains the possibility of a contest organised within such a context, as suggested above. However, if the dancer in question did win a prize of some sort, it is strange that the vocabulary of victory is not used in connection with his

<sup>24</sup> *CIL VI* 10117 = *ILS* 5190 (L. Aurelius Augg. lib. Apolaustus Memphius (Senior) = Apolaustus V): see M.L. CALDELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 77-78 and *art. cit.* (n. 23).

<sup>25</sup> First published by M. SORDI, "L'epigrafe di un pantomimo recentemente scoperta a Roma", in *Epigraphica* 15 (1953), 104-121. See H. LEPPIN, "Zur anonymen Pantomimen-Inschrift aus Rom", in *Epigraphica* 51 (1989), 29-46; M.-H. GARELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 229-231.

<sup>26</sup> W.J. SLATER, "Inschriften von Magnesia 192 Revisited", in *GRBS* 37 (1996), 195-204; J.-Y. STRASSER, "Inscriptions grecques et latines en l'honneur de pantomimes", in *Tyche* 19 (2004), 175-212: 188-194.

<sup>27</sup> W.J. SLATER, *art. cit.* (n. 26), 203.

performances in Rome. In addition, the verb *ἀρέσκω* does not appear in association with victory in other inscriptions.<sup>28</sup> It seems, therefore, that his Roman appearances were not competitive in any sense of the word, but were sufficiently well received for the emperors to give him special honours.

Finally, *CIL X 6219 = ILS 5187*, although it does not record participation in a particular contest, is an interesting indication of the importance of victory to artists and of the religious practices of dancers. The inscription simply records the fulfillment of a vow to Mercury Invictus by L. Aurelius Apolaustus Memphius (usually identified as Apolaustus V, see above) in the late second century.<sup>29</sup>

The epigraphic evidence from Italy therefore shows that pantomime was introduced gradually from the reign of Trajan and only into a few Greek-style *agônes*. While pantomimes were able to compete in some of these festivals, at others they were still excluded from competition and able only to perform as hired acts, part of the festival 'fringe', although particularly successful performances might be rewarded with special honours, as in *I.Magnesia 192*.

### 1.2. *In the East: second to third centuries*

*I.Magnesia 192* is also the earliest epigraphic evidence for pantomime contests in the East.<sup>30</sup> The unnamed artist (whose

<sup>28</sup> It occurs in the epitaphs of a female mime, Chrysopolis, *IK-Klaudiu Polis* 17 (= *SEG* 36, 1139) and a "Bacchic dancer", *IK-Klaudiu Polis* 83 (= *SEG* 36, 1138). It is also used of the impromptu performance of the daughter of Herodias at Herod's feast in the *New Testament, Matthew*, 14.6. The Latin equivalent, *placuit*, is found in *CIL XII 188 = ILS 5258*, the epitaph of the twelve-year old Septentrio, who danced at Antibes. Again, there is no question of contests.

<sup>29</sup> See S. EVANGELISTI, "Testimonianze epigrafiche relative ad attori e a spettacoli scenici nel *Latium adiectum*", in *Scienze dell' Antichità* 12 (2004-2005), 655-667: 661-662.

<sup>30</sup> See L. ROBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 2); W.J. SLATER, "The Pantomime Tiberius Iulius Apolaustus", in *GRBS* 36 (1995), 263-292; J.-Y. STRASSER, *art. cit.* (n. 26); G.W. BOWERSOCK, "Aristides and the Pantomimes", in *Aelius Aristides between Greece, Rome, and the Gods*, ed. by W.V. HARRIS and B. HOLMES (Leiden-Boston

discipline is given the unusual title of 'rhythmic tragic poetry') won victories in the West and in the East, at the Epheseia and the Leukophryena at Magnesia itself. Further contests are added to the list by the inscriptions from Delphi and from Ephesos honouring the dancer Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos, studied by Louis Robert and, more recently, by William Slater and Jean-Yves Strasser. The inscription from Delphi (*FD* 3.1, 115) refers to the first ever pantomime contest at the sacred games at Pergamon, the *Olympia Kommodeia Sebasta koina Asias*. Two other inscriptions, *IK-Ephesos* 2070 and 2071, also honouring the same Apolaustos and originally belonging to a single statue base, give further information. *IK-Ephesos* 2071 mentions an eiselastic victory at a contest whose title is lost but restored as the Pergamon victory by both Slater and Strasser, and a further sacred victory at the first ever pantomime contest at Thebes (also under Commodus). *IK-Ephesos* 2070 also includes a mention of a silver crown given to Apolaustos at the Aktia at Nikopolis ("for the sake of honour", *τιμῆς χάριν*). Strasser suggests that the dancer performed as a paid act at this festival and was granted a crown as a special honour to recognise the quality of his performance. His career thus illustrates a variety of types of performance and is particularly interesting, like the Magnesia inscription, as an illustration of the evolution in the opportunities open to dancers (from Italian contests to the East, from the consolation prize of special honours after a particularly successful paid performance to 'proper' victory in a sacred contest).<sup>31</sup> The long, incomplete lists of grants of citizenship, statues and memberships of *boulai*

2008), 69-77: 74-75 cites a mid-to-late second-century inscription from Sparta (*SEG* 11, 838) as a further example of early participation by a pantomime in international thymelic competitions. The performer in question, Theodosios, is however defined as a *tragôdos* from Sidon, and I do not see any reason to count him as a dancer, rather than as a tragic actor (or possibly a singer, as documented in later periods).

<sup>31</sup> This crown is not mentioned in the inscription from Delphi. Slater takes this as evidence that this inscription is earlier. Strasser argues to the contrary that, once Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos had won a real victory at a sacred contest, this ersatz crown was no longer worth recording.

granted to this dancer also show how widely disseminated the dance was in the East by the late second century. The presence of several cities known as the sites of significant festivals suggests that Apolaustos performed there as a 'fringe' act and was granted these privileges as another sort of consolation prize.

More difficult to interpret is the elaborate epitaph of the dancer Krispos, who was originally from Alexandria but who died at Heraclea Pontica (*IK-Heraclea Pontica* 9). The inscription, dated to the second or third century, claims that he "took the first crown for rhythmic tragedy" ( $\tau\eta\varsigma\ \dot{\epsilon}\nu\rho\theta\mu\varsigma\ \tau\rho\alpha\gamma\omega\delta\iota\alpha\varsigma\ \sigma\tau\epsilon\varphi\varsigma\ \lambda\alpha\beta\omega\varsigma\ \tau\delta\ \pi\rho\tilde{\omega}\tau\varsigma$ ). Several interpretations are possible, including that the prize referred to was not "the first" at a particular contest but was the dancer's first prize, won just before his death.<sup>32</sup> It is also possible, given the highly poetic language of this particular inscription, that the crown is metaphorical and that  $\pi\rho\tilde{\omega}\tau\varsigma$  here is to be understood in terms of quality ('the best') rather than chronology.<sup>33</sup> Even if the mention of the crown is not to be taken literally, its presence is an important indication that the vocabulary of victory in sacred contests could now be associated with dancers.

One final piece of papyrological evidence adds to the picture in an unexpected way. *P. Flor.* I 74, dated to 181 CE, is a contract for the hire of two *pantomimoi* (the only occurrence of the word in the Egyptian documents) to perform for five days in the village of Ibion Sesymbitheos at an unspecified festival. The contract states that the dancers are to bring their "entire orchestra of musicians and others" ( $\mu\epsilon\theta'\ \eta\varsigma\ \dot{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\tau\epsilon\ \sigma\mu\varphi\omega\eta\iota\alpha\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\sigma\eta\varsigma\ \mu\omega\sigma\iota\kappa\tilde{\omega}\nu\ \tau\epsilon\ \kappa\alpha\tilde{\lambda}\ \ddot{\alpha}\lambda\omega\varsigma$ ) and are to receive the sum of

<sup>32</sup> This is the solution preferred by J.-Y. STRASSER, *art. cit.* (n. 26), 206-207.

<sup>33</sup> On the use of the verb  $\sigma\tau\epsilon\varphi\alpha\eta\omega$  simply to mean "to honour", see W.J. SLATER, "Deconstructing Festivals", in *The Greek Theatre and Festivals. Documentary Studies*, ed. by P.J. WILSON (Oxford 2007), 21-47: 34. On the use of the Latin *primus* to express the exceptional quality of a performer (applied to a person) see M.L. CALDELLI, "Varia agonistica Ostiensia", in *Epigrafia romana in area adriatica. Actes de la IXe Rencontre franco-italienne sur l'épigraphie du monde romain, Macerata, 10-11 novembre 1995*, a cura di G. PACI (Pisa 1998), 225-247: 237, n. 29.

36 drachmas per day, along with bread and oil. At the end of the section specifying the payment, the impresario adds that the dancers are to be given two drachmas “for the price (or value) of the crown” ( $\delta\pi\epsilon\varrho\tau\mu\eta\varsigma\tau\omega\delta$  [σ]τεφάνου). Wilcken, who was the first to suggest the reading [σ]τεφάνου, pointed out the possible connection with the practice recorded in other papyri of offering a “crown”, or sometimes an amount of money in lieu of a crown, as a gift from subjects to their rulers.<sup>34</sup> He concluded, however, that the wording in this particular case implied that a real crown was given to the dancers, the cost of which was borne by the impresario. The inclusion of this item among the payments to be made to the dancers is a further indication that this “crown” or “wreath” is not simply connected to the festivities in general but is specifically linked to the dancers and to their performance. The mention of the sum of two drachmas may be a way of stipulating the cash value of the prize, as in some agonistic inscriptions; alternatively, the wording may imply that the dancers were to supply the crown and to be reimbursed, the cash value being added to their payment.<sup>35</sup> Of greater interest, however, is the question of how the crown related to the dancers’ performance. Marjaana Vesterinen’s suggestion that the dancers were to stage a contest as part of their performance is intriguing, as it shows how competition might be integrated into a paid performance (even in

<sup>34</sup> U. WILCKEN, “Zu den Florentiner Papyri und den Leipziger Papyri”, in *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 4 (1908), 423-486: 452. The original editor of the papyrus, G. VITELLI, had been unable to decipher the text at this point. Wilcken’s emendation is reproduced by M. VANDONI, *Feste pubbliche e private nei documenti greci* (Milano 1964) no. 17, 32-33. On the crowns as gifts to the rulers, see U. WILCKEN, *Griechische Ostraka aus Aegypten und Nubien*, Vol. I (Leipzig-Berlin 1899), 295-302.

<sup>35</sup> Where the value of prize-crowns is stipulated in inscriptions a genitive of price or value is used, sometimes with  $\alpha\pi\omega$ . See, for example, H.J. METTE, *Urkunden dramatischer Aufführungen in Griechenland* (Berlin-New York 1977), II C 2. The expression  $\delta\pi\epsilon\varrho\tau\mu\eta\varsigma$  occurs in *P. Oxy.* 5058, l. 21 relating to a sale of land, translated as “in respect of the price”, but the context does not help to illuminate the Florence papyrus. I am grateful to both Jocelyne Nelis-Clément and Pierre Ducrey for discussion of this point.

such a relatively humble context as an Egyptian village festival).<sup>36</sup> It is also an indication that the conception that pantomime was a competitive discipline was widespread by the end of the second century.

Finally, one iconographic document linking pantomime and victory (and thus contests) exists for the third century. This is a terracotta roundel found at Orange, now in the Musée d'Archéologie Nationale, St-Germain-en-Laye, which shows a male figure holding a mask with closed mouth in his raised right hand and a thyrsus in the other.<sup>37</sup> He is accompanied by a smaller figure holding a palm frond and an object that may be a scroll. At ground level there is a representation of a water organ. The roundel also bears a relief inscription with the words *NICA PARTHENOPAEE*. Parthenopaeus was clearly involved in a formal contest whose prize is represented by the palm.

### 1.2.1. Pantomimes as overall victors

An important additional point is that several pantomimes are to be found among the victors of the *dia pantōn*, the final contest pitting the victors of various genres against each other. The earliest example is the victory of Marcus Ulpius Apolaustus (see above, note 18), probably at the Sebasta and probably in the reign of Trajan. The second two lines of the brief inscription read *coronatus adversus histriones / et omnes scaenicos artifices XII* i.e., as Leppin suggests, he defeated twelve fellow victors in other arts to win the overall prize (having first defeated the other *histriones*, i.e. pantomimes). Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos is another. Strasser's study of the *dia pantōn* lists five or six pantomimes as overall victors, compared to five *aulos* players and four actors of comedy and tragedy combined (at least one of whom

<sup>36</sup> M. VESTERINEN, *Dancing and Professional Dancers in Roman Egypt*, PhD. Diss. (Helsinki 2007), 61.

<sup>37</sup> Illustrations in M.-H. GARELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 1), fig. 6 and E. HALL and R. WYLES, *op. cit.* (n. 1), fig. 0.1.

is qualified as *pais*).<sup>38</sup> Within the small sample of surviving records, pantomime was therefore relatively well represented in this category of contest, at least in Rome and Naples, implying that it enjoyed particular popularity among the public.

### 1.2.2. Mime

The situation regarding mime is less clear. The main evidence for the existence of competitions in mime is *IK-Tralleis* 110, a statue base dated by Robert to the end of the second century or the beginning of the third, celebrating Flavios Alexandros Oxeidas from Nicomedia. The artist is described as *Asionikes*, that is a victor in the Asian Games, and as having won eighteen victories in Asia and twenty-six in Lycia and Pamphylia, which suggests a wide diffusion of mime contests.<sup>39</sup> Bassus, a performer whose art is not specified, is also described as *Asionikes* in an inscription probably dating to the third century that was found backstage at the theatre at Aphrodisias.<sup>40</sup> Other performers named in these inscriptions are described as Nemean victors (1, 3.ii) and Olympic victors (1, 4), but, once again, their disciplines are not stated (although the name *Philologos* suggests a mime).<sup>41</sup> The epitaph for the mime actress Kurilla mentions the “crowns of glory”, *doxēs* ... *stephanous*, that she won on stage,<sup>42</sup> but, as in

<sup>38</sup> Strasser prefers to interpret the titles *tragôdos* and *kômôdos* in these inscriptions as referring to ‘artistes lyriques’. Although it is attractive on etymological grounds, this interpretation seems to push the predominance of ‘singing actors’ too early and does not take into account the fact that the same artist can be called both *tragôdos* and *hypokritês* (cf. I.E. STEPHANES, *Διονυσιακοί Τεχνίται. Συμβολές στην προσωπογραφία των θεάτρων και της μουσικής των αρχαίων Ελλήνων* [Heraklion 1988], no. 924, Euarchos, who is described both as *kômôdos* and as *hypokritês palaias kômôdias*). See further B. LE GUEN, “Le palmarès de l’acteur-athlète. Retour sur Syll.<sup>3</sup> 1080 (Tégée)”, in *ZPE* 160 (2007), 97-107.

<sup>39</sup> L. ROBERT, “ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΟΣ”, in *REG* 49 (1936), 235-254: 245-246.

<sup>40</sup> CH. ROUECHÉ, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias in the Roman and Late Roman Periods* (London 1993), 18 (1.5.iv) = *IAph2007*, 8.20.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. the *biologos* (i.e. mime) Tib. Claudius Philologus Theseus in *IK-Ephesos* 1135.

<sup>42</sup> Peek *GVI* 672, *SEG* 12, 325.

the case of the dancer Krispos, the lack of precision makes it unclear whether these are real prizes or a metaphorical expression of success.

### 1.3. *The fourth century*

In his study of the Greek and Latin inscriptions in honour of pantomimes, Jean-Yves Strasser suggests that pantomime was never truly established as a competitive discipline (with the exception of certain regions like Syria). He uses the third-century inscriptions from Ostia honouring M. Aurelius Pylades, who is not described as *victor* but is said to have been “commended” (*probatus*) by the emperors Valerian and Gallienus, to show that contests were not widespread. The impression that pantomime contests flourished briefly in the late second and early third centuries, only to disappear, is certainly encouraged by the epigraphic evidence studied by Strasser. But a lack of inscriptions does not necessarily mean that a phenomenon ceased to exist, particularly as the ‘epigraphic habit’ wanes. What is more, there is evidence to suggest that pantomime continued to be a competitive discipline up until the sixth century, although this evidence is not easy to interpret.

In this respect, it is unfortunate that the situation in the fourth century is less than clear. The evidence comes mainly from Antioch, always a thriving centre for the theatre and the home of the games at Daphne.<sup>43</sup> Pantomime and mime dominated the stage (along with *tragôdoi*, presumably now singers of excerpts, and kithara players). The nature of the sources, however, makes it extremely hard to extract any definite information about the organisation of the shows and the role of competition. Critics of the theatre, like John Chrysostom, are

<sup>43</sup> See J.H.W.G. LIEBESCHUETZ, *Antioch. City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford 1972), and E. SOLER, *Le sacré et le salut à Antioche au IVe siècle apr. J.-C. Pratiques festives et comportements religieux dans le processus de christianisation de la cité* (Beyrouth 2006), esp. 82 ff. M. CASELLA, “Les spectacles à Antioche d’après Libanios”, in *AntTard* 15 (2007), 99–126.

interested primarily in stressing the moral harm done by watching mime and pantomime and are generally unconcerned about the economic aspects of the shows (although Chrysostom does allude to this on occasion, in order to criticise the waste of resources involved). The documentary evidence that exists from the *Theodosian Code* shows that the financing of spectacles and the management of performers were the main preoccupations of the authorities.

There is no doubt that musical *agônes* survived throughout the fourth century. For Rome, Caldelli is able to trace the history of the Capitoline Games up to the middle of the fourth century.<sup>44</sup> In the East, John Chrysostom confirms the continued existence of competitions for citharodes and *tragôdoi* in *On the Priesthood* 5, 1, when he discusses the challenges involved in public speaking, comparing the attitude of the preacher's audience to that of the audience of a competition, who have not come to learn but to take sides for or against the speaker and to derive pleasure from the performance, as when they watch *tragôdoi* or *kitharôdoi*. Chrysostom's use of the analogy shows that he expected the example to be familiar to his readers.

However, it is hard to define with any certainty the place of pantomime in the games or to understand the nature of the pantomime performances that we do hear about. Two passages in Libanios' 64<sup>th</sup> Oration, the *Reply to Aristides on Behalf of the Dancers*, do seem to suggest that pantomime contests continued. At *Or. 64, 58* he refers to spectators sitting as judges (*κριταί*) of the dancers, while at *Or. 64, 93* he refers to arguments between spectators who disagree ("fighting with words" and not with their hands) about the relative merits of particular dancers.<sup>45</sup> Though they are not conclusive, these remarks do seem appropriate to spectators at a contest.

<sup>44</sup> M.L. CALDELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 112-113.

<sup>45</sup> LIB. *Or. 64, 92* ὅταν γὰρ διηρημένοι ταῖς σπουδαῖς, οἱ μὲν ὡς τοῦτον, οἱ δὲ ὡς ἔκεινον, οἱ δὲ ὡς ἔτερον, βοήν μὲν ἐγείρωσι τραχεῖαν, συμπεσόντες δὲ ἐρίζωσι προτιθεὶς ἔκαστος τῶν ἄλλων ὃν ἥρηται τὰ χεῖρες μὲν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἔχοντες διὰ τὸ

Another important indication of the competitive nature of pantomime in fourth-century Antioch is to be found in Libanios' allusions to the dancers' supporters or 'claques' in his orations on political matters, in which he displays an attitude towards dance that is very different from that of his 64<sup>th</sup> oration.<sup>46</sup> The most famous of these speeches is the speech on the Riot of the Statues that followed an attempt by Theodosius to raise taxes in 387. Libanios blames the unrest and seditious behaviour on supporters who "place the dancers above the sun, the moon and the clouds themselves" (*Or. 19, 28*). These groups of supporters are said elsewhere to be paid by the dancers (*Or. 41, 7*), who have themselves received a payment from the city (*Or. 26, 24*). The existence of such groups, which recall the 'claques' of the early empire, suggest fierce competition between dancers, but the questions raised in the discussion of the earlier period apply equally to fourth-century Antioch. It thus remains unclear to what extent this competition took the form of contests and to what extent it was an informal competition for resources (here, it is interesting to compare the experiences of Libanios himself, as set out in his *Autobiography* [*Or. 1*], in which rivalry between sophists was carried out both in formal contests and in conflict in daily life, including an attempt to silence Libanios himself by witchcraft).

The most significant argument for the continuation of competition in pantomime throughout the fourth century is perhaps the clear association of dance, competition and victory in fifth-century sources (see below). The attachment of pantomimes and mimes to the factions at some point in the fifth century certainly implies that their performances were competitive. It seems unlikely that competition in pantomime (and mime) disappeared in the fourth century, to be reinstated later; but, of course, this scenario is not entirely impossible.

σωφρονεῖν, λόγῳ δὲ μαχόμενοι διὰ τὸ ἐρρῶσθαι. The example is given to support the argument that the dance does not make spectators weak.

<sup>46</sup> I prefer to attribute this difference to the genre and function of the speeches rather than to see it is a sign of a change of heart on Libanios' part.

#### 1.4. Fifth and sixth centuries

For the mid-fifth century, the evidence linking pantomimes and victory is mainly iconographic. A series of contorniate medallions, originally from Rome, bear representations of figures in long robes, standing in poses very similar to that of Parthenopaeus on the Orange terracotta, but holding crowns or palms in their raised right hands (Pl. 6.1). They are accompanied by a variety of different, smaller figures, and sometimes by inscriptions containing the words *NICA* or *VINCAS* or representations of palms.<sup>47</sup> The long robes induced Alföldi to make the identification with pantomime dancers, and this identification is supported by the names when they are given: both Karamallos and Margarites are among the names of dancers mentioned by John Malalas.<sup>48</sup> That competition was a regular part of pantomimic performance in the later fifth century is also suggested by the account of the performance in Nonnus' *Dionysiaka* (19, 136-286). As a poetic description involving mythological characters it is far removed from the realities of the period, but the fact that the performance is conceived as a contest between two dancers does suggest that this format was familiar to Nonnus and his audience.

It is above all with the association of the dancers with the factions that competition comes to the fore in the fifth and sixth centuries. The exact date at which the factions took over responsibility for all types of entertainment is not clear (the

<sup>47</sup> A. ALFÖLDI und E. ALFÖLDI, *Die Kontorniat-Medaillons* (Berlin 1976-1990), 2. Teil, Nr. 227 (= Kat.-Nr. 378), Taf. 157, 5.6; 228 (= Kat.-Nr. 466), Taf. 189, 6; 229 (= Kat.-Nr. 470), Taf. 190, 6; 230 (= Kat.-Nr. 474), Taf. 191, 1-3; 231 (= Kat.-Nr. 459, 465, 471-472), Taf. 187, 9, 189, 1-5, 190, 7-8; 232 (= Kat.-Nr. 478) Taf. 192, 1. See also E.J. JORY, "The Drama of the Dance: Prolegomena to an Iconography of Imperial Pantomime", in *Roman Theater and Society. E. Togo Salmon Papers I*, ed. by W.J. SLATER (Ann Arbor 1996), 1-27: 6-8.

<sup>48</sup> JOH. MALALAS, *Chronographia* 15, 12 (p. 386 Dind.). A. ALFÖLDI, *op. cit.* (n. 47), Nr. 227 (see Pl. 6.1), bears the inscription *Urani nica* above the figure, and the word *unio* or *iunio* beneath, which M.-H. GARELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 234 suggests may mean "pearl".

process was no doubt gradual and uneven). Many of the documents recording mimes and pantomimes as members of factions are themselves difficult to date. The one datable reference which gives a *terminus ante quem* is John Malalas, *Chronographia* 15.12, recording the gift of dancers to the factions by the Consul Longinus in 486.<sup>49</sup> Later references to the pantomimes as members of factions come from Procopius of Caesarea, *Secret History* 9.5, and Cassiodorus.<sup>50</sup>

The other documents, whose precise date is hard to determine, are extremely intriguing. One, which is particularly significant for the theme of competition, is the curse from Apheca in Syria. It requests supernatural aid against Hyperechios, the dancer of the Blue faction, who was about to perform the next day. The person who commissioned the curse attempts to “bind” the dancer’s body (we can compare the graphic representations of charioteers’ bodies being bound from circus curse tablets) and also to prevent his chorus from singing and his supporters from cheering for him.<sup>51</sup> As well as being further proof of the place of dancers within the factions, this curse is precious evidence both for the intensity of competition and for the devotion of supporters.

Finally, there is a fifth- or sixth-century ivory comb from Egypt, now in the Louvre (E 11874),<sup>52</sup> decorated with three

<sup>49</sup> A. CAMERON, *Circus Factions. Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford 1976); CH. ROUECHÉ, *op. cit.* (n. 40), 45.

<sup>50</sup> On Cassiodorus and the riot of 509 in Rome see R. LIM, “The Roman Pantomime Riot of A.D. 509”, in “*Humana Sapit*”. *Études d’Antiquité tardive offertes à Lellia Cracco Ruggini*, éd. par J.-M. CARRIÉ et R. LIZZI TESTA (Turnhout 2002), 35-42.

<sup>51</sup> First published by A. AUDOLLENT, *Defixionum tabellae: quotquot innotuerunt tam in Graecis orientis quam in totius occidentis partibus praeter Atticas in Corpore inscriptionum Atticarum editas* (Luteciae Parisiorum 1904), nos. 15 and 16 as a circus curse. Hyperechios was identified as a dancer by L. ROBERT, *Études épigraphiques et philologiques* (Paris 1938), 99-102. English translation in J.G. GAGER (ed.), *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (New York-Oxford 1992), 51-53.

<sup>52</sup> See M.-H. RUTSCHOWSKAYA, “Le Peigne d’Helladie”, in *Études coptes* 7 (2000), 235-244.

figures (Pl. 6.2). The middle figure is a woman with short hair in a long dress, with a scarf worn diagonally across her body. She raises her right hand, while her left hand holds the scarf at hip level. To her left is another female figure with an open mouth, standing in a very similar posture, but wearing a simpler version of the same costume with no scarf. To her right is a male figure in a short sleeveless tunic, placing an object on a table or stand. On his right foot he wears a sandal with a long sole,<sup>53</sup> his left foot (visible from the reverse, which is as finely carved as the front) is bare. His mouth is also open. The scene is identifiable as pantomime from the following details: although the face is slightly damaged, the mouth of the central figure is closed; the scarf she wears can be identified as the *pallium*, used by dancers and present in other representations; the sandal worn by the male figure is a representation of the *scabellum* or *kroupeza*, which played an important part in establishing the rhythm of the dance. The central figure can therefore be identified with fair certainty as a female pantomime dancer (also attested by sixth-century epigrams), accompanied by two members of her chorus of singers and musicians. The connection with victory and contests is to be found in the object held in the dancer's raised right hand which, although damaged, appears to have been a crown, and in the inscription on the front and back of the comb, which reads: NIKA H ΤΥΧΗ / ΕΛΛΑΔΙΑΣ on the front and KAI ENETΩΝ / AMHN on the verso, associating Helladia firmly both with the idea of victory and with the Blues. The relationship between the comb and the inscription is not clear: the inscription is carefully written, but was added after the decoration was finished. Whether the female figure was intended to represent Helladia (*API* 284 seems to refer to an image of her in Constantinople) or whether it was a generic representation to which the name was added later is impossible to say.

<sup>53</sup> See LIB. *Or.* 64, 95 on the protruding sole of this sandal.

Although depictions of and allusions to mime are relatively frequent throughout Late Antiquity, there are far fewer indications of a competitive context for the performances. Groups of mimes, however, were also attached to the factions, as is clear from an inscription from the theatre at Aphrodisias acclaiming the “fortune of the Greens and the mimes of the Greens” (*IAph* 2007, 8.104).

### 1.5. *Other sources*

The sources mentioned above are fairly secure references to victory and contests involving pantomimes. Some allow us to be sure that pantomime contests were on the programme at particular festivals at particular periods; others, like the Orange terracotta or the contorniates, simply tell us that pantomime dancers were associated with the idea of victory (represented by crowns and palms). Significant, too, are the inscriptions backstage at the theatre at Aphrodisias. These are over the entrances to rooms and name the occupant, or rather his equipment: each one names the performer in the genitive case with the noun + epithet combination διασκεύη ἄμαχα in the nominative, seeming to reserve the space for the “unbeatable equipment” of the performer.<sup>54</sup> These particular performers’ specialities are not given (although, as suggested above, Philologos, the “Olympic victor”, may well have been a mime, as these artists were particularly associated with speech). As Charlotte Roueché notes, the choice of adjective implies victory and competition. It also tells us something about the performers’ view of their costumes and props (and possibly, in the case of dancers, masks): these have their own qualities that contribute to the performer’s victory. These modest inscriptions therefore shed a potentially interesting light on the representations of

<sup>54</sup> *IAph* 2007, 8.16 (Αὐτολύκου διασκεύη ἄμαχα Νεμεακοῦ ἄμαχα); 8.17 (Καπυρᾶ διασκεύη ἄμαχα καὶ Φιλολόγου Ὀλυμπιονέκου); 8.18 (Νεικάνορος διασκεύη ἄμαχα). On the terminology and the problems of interpretation see CH. ROUECHÉ, *op. cit.* (n. 40), 19–21.

dancers (or tragic actors, for that matter) holding up masks.<sup>55</sup> Such images may not simply serve to accentuate the paradox of the actor and the contrast between his real and assumed identities, but may also, or perhaps primarily, be a display of the power of the equipment. In this context, it is interesting to note the parallel between the mask held aloft on the Orange terracotta and the crown held up on the contorniates.

### 1.6. Summary

Several different kinds of competition emerge from this survey and, although my primary interest is in the pantomime within formal contests, all these phenomena are potentially relevant. Firstly there is the general rivalry between artists for recognition by audiences and for patronage. Then there is the semi-formal type of competition that seems to have existed in early imperial Rome (and in republican Rome, in the case of comic actors). Finally, there is the formal competition of the *agônes* or *certamina*, whether these were sacred contests or *themides* offering cash prizes.<sup>56</sup> These are all very different phenomena, belonging in principle to different models of organisation of spectacles: rivalry for patronage would occur where artists are hired, as in Roman *ludi*, and also where artists are hired for private celebrations, like Zosimus' feast (n. 2 above), or in the paid fringe performances at agonistic festivals. Formal competition, where the artist performs as an independent competitor,

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, British Museum, GR 2001-12-11-1 (bone statuette) and D 253 (terracotta statuette). M.-H. GARELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 1), figs. 3 and 5. See also the ivory plaque from Trier showing a dancer holding up a set of masks in his right hand and a lyre (possibly to be understood as a stage prop) in the other (Berlin, Staatliche Museen, inv. 2497), R. WEBB, *op. cit.* (n. 1), fig. 6.

<sup>56</sup> As W.J. SLATER, "Deconstructing Festivals", in *The Greek Theatre and Festivals. Documentary Studies*, ed. by P.J. WILSON (Oxford 2007), 21-47 points out, the difference between the two categories may not always have been great in practice as the prizes won in sacred contests had a monetary value. The ideological difference, however, is particularly clear in Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos' inscriptions.

is characteristic of Greek or Greek-style contests. As we have seen, there are various phenomena that fall between these two extremes, such as special honours paid to successful paid performers, and various models of competition within paid performances, as indicated by *P. Flor.* I 74 and by the identification of dancers in Late Antiquity as belonging to factions that paid them a salary.

Pantomime itself is a particularly complex example of cultural appropriation and re-appropriation. Created in Rome by Greek artists, using Greek traditions (perhaps combined with the Roman *ludus talarius*) and a Greek repertoire of stories, it spread to the East, where it became dominant by the fourth century, if not before. As has long been established, in the East, pantomime contests were introduced into recent Imperial festivals first, suggesting a Roman addition to Greek traditions. However, the story of pantomime contests in Italy suggests a still more complex phenomenon. Pantomime, an art perceived as Greek, appears to have been introduced first into Greek-style contests in the culturally Greek city of Naples. This innovation, seen through Roman eyes, may thus have seemed peculiarly Greek, even if it had at the time no precise parallel in culturally Greek areas.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, as we have seen, there are indications that an element of competition was an integral part of pantomime performance right from its beginnings in Augustan Rome. It may be significant that the traditional founders of the art are said to be two in number (Pylades and Bathyllus), perhaps implying that competition between dancers (as well as rivalry) existed from the very outset.<sup>58</sup> It is certainly also possible that competition in artistic disciplines was perceived to be a characteristically Greek feature, so that its presence in the

<sup>57</sup> In discussion, however, Kathleen Coleman made the very interesting suggestion that the model for pantomime contests in Augustan Rome may have been the very Roman gladiatorial contests.

<sup>58</sup> DIO CASS. 54, 17, 5 (cit. next n.) characterizes the relationship between Pylades and Bathyllus as rivalry. E.J. JORY, *art. cit.* (n. 6), notes the anecdotes preserved by Macrobius concerning Pylades' artistic rivalries with other dancers.

pantomime was understood as entirely suitable. Competition in this context may have taken the form of a staged contest between two hired (or slave) performers (and not simply rivalry between two artists understood to be acting as free agents).

If pantomime was indeed associated with competition from its very beginnings, this association might help to explain the importance of the pantomimes' *claques* in the early Empire, as well as the persistence of disturbances at pantomimic performances. I also wonder whether it might be possible to take a step further and to ask whether pantomime may not have been conceived at the outset as an essentially competitive discipline, precisely in order to create and encourage the type of rivalry between groups of fan which came to typify the pantomime of the early Empire. According to Cassius Dio, Pylades was said to have defended the people's violent divisions over dancers on political grounds, pointing out to Augustus that it was to his advantage if the people spent their time and energy on dancers.<sup>59</sup> Did Augustus need to have this lesson given to him by a dancer, or did he recognise the potential of the dance from the outset? If so, we might add to John Jory's insightful remarks on the artistic qualities of the pantomime, which encouraged violent rivalries among fans (the representation of the passions and the concentration on a single performer), the deliberate fostering of a competitive element.<sup>60</sup> Competition may thus have existed within, and been characteristic of, the dance, well before the dance was admitted into formal competitions.

To return to the presence of pantomime in formal *agônes*, its admission into the western contests, first securely documented under Trajan, is a logical development. In the Greek East, the epigraphic evidence provides a glimpse of a parallel process, whereby the dance moved from a fringe event to a competitive

<sup>59</sup> DIO CASS. 54, 17, 5: δθενπερ πάνυ σοφῶς ὁ Πυλάδης, ἐπιτιμώμενος ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐπειδὴ Βαθύλλω ὁμοτέχνω τέ οι ὅντι καὶ τῷ Μαικήνᾳ προσήκοντι διεστασίαζεν, εἰπεῖν λέγεται ὅτι “συμφέρει σοι, Καῖσαρ, περὶ ἡμᾶς τὸν δῆμον ἀποδιατρίβεσθαι”.

<sup>60</sup> E.J. JORY, *art. cit.* (n. 6).

discipline at the end of the second century. Tiberios Ioulos Apolaustos at the Aktia and the unnamed dancer of the Magnesia inscription in Rome were not involved in competition, but were honoured for the performances they gave. Such honours, reflecting popularity with audiences as well as imperial approval, must, as William Slater has noted, have been an important step towards the integration of pantomime, and then mime, into the formal agonistic programme of festivals.<sup>61</sup> The rapid success of pantomimes in the overall victors' contests, once they were admitted into these contests, further suggests that this development took place in response to audience demand. This development also seems to have taken place at a time when the traditional disciplines of tragedy and comedy were declining in popularity (although, as Christopher Jones points out here and elsewhere, tragedy, at least, was never fully eclipsed).<sup>62</sup> Simon Price's analysis of Imperial festivals as a Greek way of engaging with Roman power suggests that the pantomime contests were not necessarily perceived as a foreign imposition.<sup>63</sup> The fact that Christian emperors, or even the ascetic pagan Julian, felt unable to put an end to theatrical performance is a powerful indication both of how much influence the will and expectation of audiences had on the provision of shows and of the limits on the authorities' power to effect

<sup>61</sup> W.J. SLATER *art. cit.* (n. 56), 45: "we should not insist... on too strict a dichotomy between familiar formal festival categories and the artists on the fringe. This is I think particularly important in explaining the movement away from formal drama to mime and pantomime".

<sup>62</sup> C.P. JONES, "Greek Drama in the Roman Empire", in *Theater and Society in the Classical World*, ed. by R. SCODEL (Ann Arbor 1993), 39-52. Lucian's favourable comparison of the dancer's grace to the tragic actor's grotesque appearance and movements may hint at the reasons for such a preference.

<sup>63</sup> S. PRICE, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984), 89 mentions pantomime briefly, along with gladiatorial shows, as new elements which do not mean that imperial festivals were "strongly Roman in flavour and out of keeping with traditional festivals". If this can be said of the gladiators and wild beast fights which are the centre of Price's interest here, it can be said all the more plausibly of the "rhythmic tragic dancing" of the pantomimes, whose formal title linked it to centuries-old traditions.

change against popular demand. There was, however, clearly opposition to the rise in popularity of pantomime in the East in the second century. Lucian's *On the Dance* is framed as a dialogue between a fan of the dance (who does most of the talking) and an opponent. Aelius Aristeides' lost speech against the dancers has recently been interpreted by Glen Bowersock as a reaction against the incorporation of pantomime into contests.<sup>64</sup> Galen's complaints about the statues and honours granted to pantomimes and charioteers are also well known.<sup>65</sup> All of these may simply be responses to the general rise in popularity and visibility of pantomime, rather than specifically to its competitive status.

One further aspect to be considered is the status of the dancers, and here there is a distinct difference between East and West. Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos in the East appears as a free agent in his inscriptions. The western Apolausti, by contrast, are freedmen or are "transported" (*provectus*) by emperors and sent out to various parts of the Empire.<sup>66</sup> It is this type of situation, in which the performer is obliged to perform, that we see in Late Antiquity in both East and West, both in the legislation concerning performers of all types and in the mention of the dancers 'presented' to the factions by the consul Longinus, which suggests that the model of free participation in competition represented by Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos was short-lived, even if pantomime contests continued.

## 2. Pantomime, competition and performance

The first question to be addressed is whether there was any difference between a pantomimic dance presented as a paid *epideixis* and a competitive performance. The only indication

<sup>64</sup> G.W. BOWERSOCK, *art. cit.* (n. 30).

<sup>65</sup> GAL. *De praenotione* 1, 13, in *Opera Omnia*, ed. C.G. KÜHN (Leipzig 1827, repr. Hildesheim 1964-1965), vol. 14, 604, ll. 9-14.

<sup>66</sup> See *CIL XI* 3822 = *ILS* 5192, with M.L. CALDELLI, *art. cit.* (n. 23).

of a tangible difference might be the reference in Quintilian (6, 3, 65) to a contest in the form of a danced "dialogue". The way in which the anecdote is told suggests that such a performance would be familiar to his readers: he refers to the dancers competing "with alternating gestures" (*alternis gestibus*), and Augustus' witty remark, calling one performer the "dancer" (*saltator*) and the other the "interrupter" (*interpellator*), implies some kind of 'call and response' structure with short bursts of dance from each dancer in turn. How did such duos function in what we conceive of as essentially a solo art? One possibility might be purely technical: a sequence of difficult movements which the other dancer had to surpass. Another is narrative: an improvised dialogue between two characters from a myth which could be one of the scenes of seduction, so often evoked by ancient sources as typical of the pantomime, or a scene of rivalry and competition, such as those listed by Libanios (see below). We might compare the practice of declaimers who would sometimes present their speeches in pairs, one arguing each side of a case.

Here, the artistic possibilities would be shaped by the organisation and by the specific form taken by the competition. In the hypothetical case of competition within a paid performance (such as may have existed under Augustus, for example), the whole performance could have been choreographed in advance, with two or more solos by different dancers (or a duo, as implied by Quintilian) representing two scenes or a series of scenes from a single myth (in marked contrast to the normal pantomimic practice whereby a solo dancer embodied or suggested all the characters). This might conceivably also be the format of the show put on by the two dancers hired in *P. Flor.* I 74. In a fully agonistic setting, however, in which the performers participated freely as individual artists, each would have presented an individual piece, presumably unrelated to the others.

On a more general level, competitive performances in both mime and pantomime imply a fixed form with recognised rules

and norms.<sup>67</sup> The spectators who judged the dancers were therefore using shared criteria and were not simply expressing personal preferences. Seneca's reference to the precise qualities of the movements of Nomius is an example of such judgements, and the presence of the name Nomius among the list of dancers defeated by Theoros/Bathyllus in *CIL VI* 10115 = *ILS* 5197 enables us to link this remark to a competitive context (if indeed the same dancer is referred to). Libanios (*Or. 64, 57*) makes similar remarks about the judgements of audiences in his own day, saying, "We return to this same pleasure (i.e. the dance) and examine the placement of the feet, the sweep of the hands and the harmony of the nodding gestures which you criticize, and generally the elegant appearance of the whole" (ἐπὶ τὴν αὐτὴν τέρψιν ἀναβαίνομεν ἐξετάζοντες θέσιν ποδῶν, φορὰν χειρῶν, νευμάτων & διαβάλλεις εὐαρμοστίαν, ὅλως τοῦ παντὸς εὐσχημοσύνην). In itself, the very possibility of competition in pantomime (and mime) is confirmation that these were demanding arts with their own standards, and that the general characterisation of pantomime as mere lascivious dancing or female impersonation, and of mime as an unstructured free-for-all, are not to be taken at face value.

The existence of competition also implies the search for new spectacular forms and new ways of prompting applause. Several authors mention the impressive athleticism of the dancers and the need for technical precision, including the ability to follow the rhythm of the musicians and to stop dramatically.<sup>68</sup> A competitive

<sup>67</sup> See the definition of *agôn* in R. CAILLOIS, *Les jeux et les hommes. Le masque et le vertige* (Paris 1958), 30: "Il s'agit donc chaque fois d'une rivalité qui porte sur une seule qualité (rapidité, endurance, vigueur, mémoire, adresse, ingéniosité, etc.), s'exerçant dans des limites définies et sans aucun secours extérieur, de telle façon que le gagnant apparaisse comme le meilleur dans une certaine catégorie d'exploits" (my underlining). Caillois' insistence here on a single quality does not apply to the dance, which arguably relied on all the abilities listed (and more), nor does it necessarily apply in the case of sports.

<sup>68</sup> Libanios' remarks on training in *Or. 64, 103-105* emphasise the range and degree of physical and mental skills required by dancers. See also the remarks of LUCIANUS, *Salt. 68, 74*.

context would tend to encourage the development of such technical and spectacular aspects of the dance. However, Libanios' remarks quoted above show that subtle aspects of technique were a matter of comment and of intense interest (ἐξετάζω) on the part of spectators, suggesting that these too would be cultivated. Similarly, the emphasis on the expressivity of the dancers and their ability to embody different characters and evoke a wide range of moods and emotions through their bodies alone are a matter of interest to commentators throughout the history of the dance, so that we may assume, I think, that these aspects of the art were also cultivated. These qualities, and their importance for the success of a dancer, are expressed in the inscriptions celebrating Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos through the use of the term ἀκρίβεια ("precision") to describe his art.<sup>69</sup> It is worth noting that this term appears to be particularly associated with the dance; it is not found, for example, in inscriptions celebrating sophists and rhetoricians.<sup>70</sup> Finally, it is not impossible that the competitive nature of performances was reflected in the stories shown. Several of the stories mentioned by Libanios at *Or. 64, 67-68* are quarrels and contests (Herakles and Nessos, the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon represented through Briseis being led from Achilles' tent, Pelops and Oenomaus, Odysseus revealing the identity of Achilles, Achilles killing Hector) though we need to take into account the fact that here he is providing proof of his argument that the dance dealt with virile subjects. At *Or. 64, 113* Libanios refers to Athena and Poseidon (presumably their contest for the city of Athens) and Paris and Achilles as subjects. There is no suggestion in his speech that the roles were divided between dancers; on the contrary, he, like other authors, emphasizes their remarkable ability

<sup>69</sup> The Latin inscription from Ostia, *CIL XIV 474 = ILS 5233*, celebrates the *peritia* of the unnamed artist. See J.-Y. STRASSER, *art. cit.* (n. 26), 195-196.

<sup>70</sup> See the examples collected by B. PUECH, *Orateurs et sophistes grecs dans les inscriptions d'époque impériale* (Paris 2002). These inscriptions, moreover, contain only one reference to *techne*, which is a conjecture: *IK-Prusias ad Hypium* T15 on pp. 208-209.

to take on a series of roles. As in the spoken *agônes* of classical tragedy and comedy, such depictions of contests and conflict may reflect the agonistic setting of the performances and, as such, may have had a metatheatrical function.

Far more significant is the impact on the relationship between performer and public and that between performer and organiser. The potential relationship between competitor and public is vividly evoked by one of the dreams mentioned by Artemidorus, involving not a pantomime but a tragic actor (*tragôdos*) who dreamt that he killed the audience and the judges just before competing in Rome. In the event, he was defeated, and the dream and its interpretation reveal that the audience members could potentially be seen as adversaries themselves, which suggests that their responses had an influence on the judges' decisions.<sup>71</sup> Further evidence of this is provided by the curse against Hyperechios, which attempts to prevent his supporters from voicing their support.

It might be thought that, as a result of the influence of the audience, the pantomime with the greatest number of supporters, or simply with the most vocal supporters, would automatically win, making any competition a mere formality. The existence of the curse on Hyperechios suggests otherwise. Even if Hyperechios' supporters were in the majority, the person who commissioned the curse clearly felt that there was a chance of his victory being overturned, and this element of uncertainty, which introduces real risk and excitement into contests of all types, is

<sup>71</sup> ARTEM. *Onirocriticon* 4, 33: 'Ηρακλείδης δὲ Θυατειρηνὸς μέλλων ἀγωνίζεσθαι ἐν Πώμῃ τὸν τῶν τραγῳδῶν ἀγῶνα ἔδοξε τοὺς θεατὰς ἀποσφάττειν καὶ τοὺς κριτάς, καὶ ἐλείφθη: οὐ γάρ ἄν τις τοὺς φίλους ἀποκτείνειν ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἔχθρούς. τρόπον οὖν τινα ἐλεγεν αὐτῷ τὸ ἐνύπνιον ἔχθρούς ἔσεσθαι τοὺς θεατὰς καὶ τοὺς κριτάς: ἀλλως τε καὶ οὐκ ἔμελλον αὐτῷ ἀποσφαγέντες οἴσειν ψήφους. M.L. CALDELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 139, no. 33, places this event at the Capitoline games. An agonistic relationship between dancer and audience existed in Augustan Rome according to SUET. *Aug.* 45 (Pylades sent into exile for pointing at an audience member who had criticized him). We have more information about hostile audiences for sophists, thanks to Philostratos, but there the situation is different, in that the audience members were often trained in the same art as the performer.

expressed in the reference to unseen powers that could be prevailed upon to change the course of events. From a more practical perspective, the dancer's performance on any particular occasion could vary in quality in unpredictable ways. Lucian's anecdote about a disastrous performance of the Madness of Ajax, even if it is a total invention, shows an acute understanding of the unpredictability of live performance. Interestingly, Lucian's speaker, Lykinos, places this event, which he claims to have witnessed himself, in what seems to be a competitive context: the performer has supporters (*stasiōtai*), although these are not necessarily a sign of formal competition, and, more significantly, a rival defined as an *antagonistēs* and *antitechnos* (*On the Dance*, 84).<sup>72</sup> The first of these terms certainly implies a competition, although it could simply indicate a rival, particularly as it is not clear in this case whether we are to understand that the rival was present at the performance in question. Either way, the anecdote is an indication both of the risks involved in performance and of the extent to which the idea of competitive relationships between dancers was familiar to a Greek sophist who was apparently writing before the introduction of formal contests in the East.<sup>73</sup>

A further consequence of the transformation of pantomime into a competitive art was the intensification of the devotion of fans and the elevation of dancers to star status. This could occur without the existence of formal contests, as the situation in early Imperial Rome shows, and may have been encouraged by the nature of pantomime dancing, with its solo performer and arousing rhythms and narrative content, as John Jory has suggested.<sup>74</sup> But competition must have added to this phenomenon. When

<sup>72</sup> See E.J. JORY, "The Pantomime Assistants", in *Ancient History in a Modern University 1*, ed. by T.W. HILLARD *et al.* (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1998), 217-221: 220.

<sup>73</sup> The awkward phrasing of this sentence is a reflection of the difficulty of using Lucian as a historical source.

<sup>74</sup> E.J. JORY, "The Literary Evidence for the Beginnings of Imperial Pantomime", in *BICS* 28 (1981), 147-161: 152. See also W.J. SLATER, *art. cit.* (n. 8), 120-144: 128 for analysis of further reasons.

the factions became involved, a different kind of loyalty and identification was added to the mix, creating the explosive situation that gave rise to theatre riots and the sporadic banishment of the dancers in Late Antiquity.<sup>75</sup> Competition would serve to increase both the attention of audiences and the intensity of that attention. These are precisely the qualities that critics like John Chrysostom seem to fear in the relationship between spectator and performer.

Another difference between dance as hired spectacle and as a contest is to be found in the three-way relationship between audience, dancer and patron. A hired act like the *pantomimos* Ploutogenes was a gift to the people and a sign of the patron's generosity, as recorded in the inscription (*I.Priene* 113, l. 65). In this inscription, the patron Zosimos is named in the nominative, while Ploutogenes is the object of his action (hiring). As noted above, inscriptions also describe the relationship between a paid performer and the public as "pleasing", using the Greek verb *aresko*, which can have connotations of subordination. In practice, therefore, the patron was the primary agent and could draw further attention to his or her role by giving an extra fee, or an honorific crown, to the performer in front of the public, an act that constituted a performance in itself.<sup>76</sup> By contrast, the competitor, like Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos, was — in theory, at least — a free agent competing for his own glory who could

<sup>75</sup> It is important to note, however, that theatre riots may have had other underlying causes, as was the case in Alexandria in 412 and Rome in 509. See also D.R. FRENCH, "Rhetoric and the Rebellion of AD 387 in Antioch", in *Historia* 47 (1998), 468-484 on the responsibility of the theatre 'cliques' for civil disorder as a rhetorical *topos* in Libanios and John Chrysostom.

<sup>76</sup> This is recorded in the case of a pantomime in an inscription from Lagina dated to the second half of the second century (*IK-Stratonikeia* 691) who was given an extra fee by the priest and priestess of Hecate who had hired him. The most striking example of this behaviour is that immortalized in the elaborate mosaic from Smirat in North Africa depicting the presentation of extra money to wild beast hunters by the patron. The mosaic includes the texts of the words uttered on the occasion, with the result that every viewer who read the texts re-enacted the benefaction. See K.M.D. DUNBAIN, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World* (Cambridge 1999), 117, fig. 118.

choose whether or not to grace a particular contest with his presence (even if, in reality, the *Technitai* played a role in organising their appearances). The audience therefore appreciated his skill first and foremost for its own sake, rather than as the sign of the generosity of a third party. The agonothete (or the emperor) certainly played a role in the process, but the primary contact took place directly between performer and audience.

This observation leads to a further suggestion: the organisers of agonistic shows were able to finance the event (by setting up a foundation or contributing from their personal resources), but not to control the outcome. They were responsible for the fact that the event took place, but not (in theory) for the identity of the victors. The sources suggest (although this may be an illusion in some cases) that in the fourth century the individual patrons, or the representatives of the state, took on a more significant role in the shows.<sup>77</sup> If these shows retained their agonistic form in some, if not all, cases, there was potentially a high degree of instability, because the organisers would be unable to dictate the way in which the performance unfolded and they would potentially be eclipsed in the public's mind by the performers. In this situation, two different models coexisted, perhaps in permanent tension: the model of the competition, in which the benefactor merely facilitates the actions of the competitors, who are the primary focus of the audience's attention; and the model of the performance donated as a gift to the public, in which the performers are understood primarily as a sign of the benefactor's agency.

### *2.1. Representing pantomime*

This instability, combined with the perennial ambiguity of the ever-changing pantomime, may well have had an impact on

<sup>77</sup> G. DOWNEY, "The Olympic Games of Antioch in the Fourth Century AD", in *TAPhA* 70 (1939), 428-438, traces the increasing involvement of the authorities in the organisation of these games.

the ways in which dancers are represented. It is noticeable that dancers are almost never represented in the moment of performance.<sup>78</sup> This distinguishes the dance from comedy, tragedy and mime, all of which are represented in performance by the Roman period. Some representations of myths in Roman painting may be intended to show or reflect pantomime, but they do so by showing the mythical characters directly. Once he starts to perform, the dancer becomes invisible.

Where dancers are represented, it is as performers offstage holding their masks or, on the contorniates and the ivory comb, the attributes of victory. The poses are entirely conventional: the pose used to represent dancers on the contorniates, with the right arm raised, the left curving downwards, is exactly the same pose used to represent the victorious athlete in the same medium. The overwhelming association of pantomime with victory on the contorniates, echoed on the comb and, perhaps, even on the Trier ivory, shows how vital an aspect of the dance competition was in the fifth and sixth centuries. The social importance and power of the dancers is recognised in these depictions, but in a manner that is severely circumscribed, and it is interesting to note that in 394 CE the depictions of charioteers, who raised similar problems, and of pantomimes were forbidden to be displayed in proximity to images of the emperor (*Theodosian Code* 15, 7, 12).

## Conclusion

Looking at the phenomenon of competition in pantomime in both West and East, from the age of Augustus to late Antiquity, underlines the importance of competition throughout. Even if the inclusion of pantomime within the fully-fledged

<sup>78</sup> One exception is perhaps the Albizzati terracotta, but this is very schematic. See M.-H. GARELLI, *op. cit.* (n. 1), fig. 4. Another is an extraordinary late antique mosaic from Noheda in Spain showing a dancer in repose and in action. See <http://informes.patrimoniohistoricoelm.es/2010-03/patrimonio.html>

contests of the Greek *agônes* was indeed a relatively short-lived phenomenon, it served as a prelude to a much longer period of competitive performance in late Antiquity and seems to have followed on from existing practices in the West. Various potential models of competition emerge, from informal rivalry between artists to paid performances involving some kind of contest, in addition to the formal contests within the *agônes* in West and East.

The characteristics of pantomime, with its dominant solo dancer and the resulting intensity of the audience's focus on the performer, make it a particularly interesting case-study. As suggested above, an element of competition, as well as introducing audience involvement, introduced an uncontrollable element, shifting the balance between patron, performer and public, reducing the patron's control over the spectacle and increasing that of the audience. As a charismatic individual, the pantomime dancer (far more than the mime actor, the tragedian or the participant in a large spectacle) raised the problem of the patron's role in the events on stage with especial force. For this reason, and not just because of his continual transformations, the pantomime was difficult and maybe dangerous to represent, but this makes the dance a particularly challenging case in the history of the organisation of spectacles.

## DISCUSSION

*J. Nollé:* Wie sollen wir uns die praktische Durchführung eines Wettkampfes von Pantomimen vorstellen? Durften die Wettkämpfer das vorführen, was sie wollten, oder gab es eine thematische Vorgabe durch den Agonotheten oder die Schiedsrichter? Ich könnte mir vorstellen, dass bei den städtischen Agonen lokale Mythen ein beliebtes Thema sein konnten.

*R. Webb:* We would love to know more about the practical organisation of the artistic aspects of the performances and choice of subject matter in particular. In the case of the hypothetical performances paid for by a patron, which may have included an element of competition, we may well imagine that the subject was given to the dancers. Where, as in the case of Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos, they arrived to compete as individuals in a Greek *agôn*, the dancers were presumably free to choose their subject. Here, your suggestion that local myths may have been particularly popular (and thus a sensible choice for a visiting dancer) is very interesting. It may shed light on Lucian's choice to organise his catalogue of myths that dancers should know in geographical order, prompting us to ask whether this organising principle might reflect such practices.

*M.L. Caldelli:* Non sono certa di aver capito bene, ma mi sembra che venga messa in discussione la testimonianza di Luciano a proposito dell'introduzione del pantomimo negli agoni, con la sola eccezione di Napoli e dei *Sebasta*. Mi chiedo se esistano documenti — che io non conosco — che provino con certezza la presenza del pantomimo in agoni diversi da quello napoletano prima del 162 d.C. e dunque inficino il valore di tale testimonianza.

*R. Webb:* I don't know of any such evidence, but the evidence we do have is very fragmentary. What I wanted to say about the use of Lucian is that we should be wary of using his dialogue *On the Dance* as a source of firm chronological data. The statements of his character Lykinos are sometimes taken as straightforward representations of the state of affairs at the time when the dialogue was composed. There are two problems with this use of the text: the dating is plausible but not certain and, most importantly, Lucian's relationship to truth and fiction is extremely complex. We cannot therefore use his dialogue in the same way that we can use a datable inscription.

*M.L. Caldelli:* Anche se non inserito negli agoni, credo che il pantomimo abbia avuto carattere competitivo fin dai suoi inizi (l'idea dei due *inventores* mi sembra un buon argomento, tra gli altri). Tra le competizioni private o semi-pubbliche, per l'Occidente, dove i pantomimi sono per lo più liberti e quelli più famosi, liberti imperiali, penso che possano esserci stati spettacoli dati dagli imperatori per un pubblico ristretto. Penso, per esempio, al caso di Apolausto Senior, noto da numerose iscrizioni, alcune delle quali da mettere in rapporto agli spostamenti dell'imperatore e al suo soggiorno nelle ville (tali i casi delle iscrizioni di Veio e Fondi, sedi di proprietà imperiali). Sembra che il pantomimo abbia seguito l'imperatore durante i suoi viaggi: nelle soste potrebbe essersi esibito in un contesto competitivo, anche se non agonale. L'indagine andrebbe fatta anche per le epoche precedenti.

*R. Webb:* Thank you for this comment, which adds a different dimension, that of semi-private performances for the Emperor, into an already complex picture. It also draws attention to another important factor: the social status of the dancers. The freedmen who followed the Emperor, the dancers who were sent to various parts of the Empire (as in the Latin inscription published by Sordi and Leppin) and many performers of all

types in Late Antiquity were in a very different position from a competitor like Tiberios Ioulios Apolaustos. The social status of the performer, particularly the degree of freedom that he or she had to choose to participate or make demands, must have had a considerable impact on the organisation that went on behind the scenes. It would be interesting to know more about the relationship between the performer's status and the audience's perceptions of and reactions to the show, but on that we can only speculate.

*K. Coleman:* Your remarks about the reception of pantomime performances reminds me of the wild applause by a hired claqué after performances put on by the pantomime troupe owned by Ummidia Quadratilla, the grandmother of one of Pliny's friends (*Epist.* 7, 24, 7). I wonder whether the spirit of rivalry promoted by such claques provided some impetus towards the introduction of formal competitions in pantomime?

*R. Webb:* The case of Ummidia Quadratilla is an interesting one. If we knew more about the particular *ludi sacerdotales* where this incident occurred (see Chamberland in *Cahiers des Études Anciennes* 37, 2001),<sup>79</sup> we would understand the role of these 'claques' better. In general, it is unclear whether informal rivalry of the type you have suggested led to the institution of more formal competitions or whether, as I have suggested here, some degree of formal competition existed in some pantomime performances from the very beginning. In addition, as David Sick has argued (*Classical Antiquity* 18, 1999),<sup>80</sup> Ummidia's ownership of a troupe of pantomimes potentially placed her in an influential position, so that the existence of claquéurs could have been of political and economic advantage to her. This

<sup>79</sup> G. CHAMBERLAND, "À propos des 'jeux sacerdotaux' ('sacerdotales ludi') de Pline le Jeune (Ep. VII.24.6)", in *CEA* 37 (2001), 47-53.

<sup>80</sup> D.H. SICK, "Ummidia Quadratilla. Cagey Businesswoman or Lazy Pantomime Watcher?", in *CLAnt* 18 (1999), 330-348.

adds another level of competition to the picture: competition between owners of slave pantomimes.

*C. Jones:* A further example of the audience functioning as judges would be where Theoderic tells two patricians to determine the selection of a “Green” pantomime *convocatis spectatoribus*, so presumably using the audience reaction to determine the winning candidate.

*R. Webb:* This letter (above, n. 50) tells us a great deal about how factions might select their dancers and in this case, as you say, the audience response seems to have been an important factor. This election was also the trigger for violence that seems to have broken out between members of the Green faction because of the patricians’ failure to respect the will of the majority. It is a revealing example of the tensions surrounding the mounting of spectacles that are normally hidden from view.