The Cults of Cisalpine Gaul As Seen in the Inscriptions

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The Cults of Cisalpine Gaul as Seen in the Inscriptions

A DISSERTATION

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To
Professor John Strayer McIntosh, Ph.D.,
My Teacher, Colleague, and
Benefactor
PREFACE

The general purpose of this dissertation is to present in an orderly manner the inscriptive evidence bearing on the pagan cults of Cisalpine Gaul with some interpretation, where desirable, of that evidence. In addition to the classification of gods in terms of their local origin, wherever the prevalence of a given cult made it feasible I have distinguished between early and late, or authentic and modified or contaminated, forms of that cult. The preservation of such distinctions has sometimes involved the discussion of distinct cults of the same deities under two or more chapter headings, and in every case inscriptions have been presented where they seemed essentially to belong without regard to the fact that the form of appellation might include the names of gods treated under other headings. For example, Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Jupiter Dolichenus, and Jupiter Poennisus appear respectively under the Roman, Oriental, and Celtic groupings.

Somewhat greater latitude of discussion has been allowed in the case of some cults which are, wholly or in the main, restricted to Cisalpine Gaul; where the evidence for this region seems merely to square with the evidence elsewhere the treatment has been more summary and statistical. Certain generalizations which might have been offered in an introduction have been included, for convenience, in the chapter on Dedicants and their Social Groups. Part of the conclusions there set down may be summarized in these statements: that the largest number of dedications are inscribed to the Roman gods; that the numbers range downward in order as given through Greek, Celtic and Italic (of equal prominence), and Oriental gods to deified abstractions, syncretistic conceptions, and Divi; that women make a larger proportion of their offerings to the Italic gods (among which are included several important female deities) than do men, and Roman gods are in especially high favor with slaves; and that Jupiter, Mercury, Hercules, the Matrons, Silvanus, Minerva, and Mithras are, in descending order, the gods most often worshipped.

The statement of the provenance of inscriptions follows the running titles of the Corpus of Latin Inscriptions, which localize them sufficiently for our purpose. Except where ambiguity would arise thereby, references to the fifth volume of that work have been made
by number only, to other volumes by volume and number, in both cases without the abbreviation CIL. Reproduction of the epigraphical form of inscriptions is, of course, only approximate; where, however, significant features are not reproduced they are described.

The classification of gods, with few exceptions, and, to some extent, the order of treatment follow the plan of Wissowa's Religion und Kultus der Römer, which admirable and indispensable work, needless to say, has been consulted constantly. Begun under the direction of Professor Gordon Laing, the dissertation has benefited throughout by his criticisms and suggestions. Where matters of etymology are involved, assistance has been given in some instances by Professor Carl Darling Buck.

J. C. M.
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CHAPTER I

ROMAN GODS

JUPITER

EARLY CONCEPTIONS
diovis

Of all the inscriptions to Jupiter in Cisalpine Gaul, the two which offer the clearest evidence of an early date bear a surprising resemblance. They appear in Dessau, Inscr. Lat. Select. II 1, as (a) 2992

(a)
TAMPIA.L.F
DIOVEI

(b)
TAMPIAI
DIOVEI

and (b) 2993; only the latter is given in the Corpus of Latin Inscriptions, where it is said to have been inscribed on an ornate stone found near Patavium, commemorating a gift to the god by feminae gentis Tampiae1 or, less definitely, Tampiae mulieres.2 Like (b), on the top of a column, but at Aquileia in this instance, is inscription (a).3 Dessau comments on (b) thus: Fortasse hic quoque fuit "Tamuria L. f.,” and cites Pais.4 The initial D and the termination -ei in the name of the god, in the case of (b) the termination -ai in the designation of the dedicants (if it be correct), and the antique form of the letters,4 taken together, place the inscriptions well back in the republican period.5

JUPITER DIANUS

In the study of Roman religion, special interest attaches to the persistence in later times of original and indigenous ideas. Accordingly, in our analysis of the cult of Jupiter in this district, we are concerned to know what traces are left of the primitive Roman conception of him as a god of the sky and its phenomena, in spite of the growing sophistication of thought and the successive layers of superimposed foreign strata that tended to obscure it. The cult-title

1 I 1435.
2 V 2799.
3 Pais, CIL suppl. Ital., n. 593.
4 Mommsen ad loc.
5 The nom. in -ai occurs in the S. C. de Bacch. of 186 B. C. (P 58), where however it is probably archaistic. For gen. and dat. sg. in -ai in inscr. see Diehl, AlLat. Inschr., index, p. 77. While the evidence from this spelling as to the date of our inscr. is not
conveying the most general expression of this conception is contained in an inscription of Aquileia (783). The apex over the O of DIANO, having the later simplified form, dates the inscription at some time in the Early Empire, the first century preferably.⁶ The word Dianus, whether as epithet or otherwise, is not found elsewhere; but, as regards etymology,⁷ probably belongs with Varro’s Group⁸ (Diovis, Diespiter, dei, dius, divum, sub dio),⁹ to which may be added: dies, Dialis, Diana, Zeus, Skr. dvâs ("sky") etc.,—all from a root meaning "to shine."¹⁰ Jupiter Dianus becomes, on this hypothesis, Jupiter in his capacity as god of the light of day or of the bright sky.

But there is no unanimity as to the significance of Dianus here. Orti¹¹ thought it either a local title (fantastically connecting it with Dianium, a maritime "castle in Spain," or with an island in the Tyrrhenian Sea—despite the discovery of the inscription in Cisalpine Gaul), or a title reflecting a wild tale of an amour of Jupiter, in which the god is represented as having assumed the form of the maiden goddess for a purpose quite inconsistent with his disguise. Henzen¹² presumably considered the inscription to be in honor of Jupiter and

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⁶ Christiansen, De Apicibus et I Longis Inscr. Lat., p. 4.
⁹ Cf. sub Iove, Hor. Carm. i 1. 25; madidum Iovem, Mart. vii 36 1.
¹⁰ Walde, Etym. Wrtbuch., s. v. deus.
¹¹ Bull. dell’Inst., 1839. 130.
¹² Orelli-H. 5622.