CHAPTER THREE

A TEST CASE: THE SECULAR GAMES OF 17 B.C.

1. Celebrations

Thus far, I have tried to trace the constituent concepts of the concepts of Roman ‘gods’, exploiting Roman history as a quarry (so to speak) in order to corroborate my argument. No doubt, many historians will feel that this use of history is arbitrary and that the constituent concepts I have argued for were applicable only because I had chosen such an ahistorical and apparently selective approach. In order to counter this objection, I now intend to reverse my procedure. Instead of reaching back from a specific concept to the historical phenomenon, I propose here to take a specific, historically dated and well documented event as my starting point and to demonstrate how the same conceptual approach can again lead to a satisfactory description of the concepts of divinity involved. The historical phenomenon I have chosen as a test case is the Augustan Secular Games of 17 B.C., first of all because of its pivotal role in the religious history of Rome, and secondly because of its uniquely rich documentation, which comprises the proceedings of the Games, coins, the records of various historians and antiquarians, and of course Horace’s famous hymn, which was performed on this occasion. Since I am convinced that Horace’s hymn actually reflects the poet’s personal, unofficial interpretation of the event, which differs markedly from the one the organizers of the Games had in mind, this chapter is subdivided into two sections, the actual celebrations of the Games, as planned by the organizers, and Horace’s Carmen Saeculare. Given the topic of this book, my argument will concentrate on the way in which gods were conceptualized during the Games.

When Augustus decided to organize the Games in 17 B.C., one of his motives was undoubtedly the desire to mark the end of decades of civil war and the beginning of a new era of peace and prosperity. He could have done so by establishing a novel temporal focus in the same vein as Sulla and Caesar had established the Ludi Victoriae Sullae
and *Ludi Victiae Caesaris* in 81 B.C. and 46 B.C. respectively. But the conceptual focus Augustus had in mind was different. While Sulla and Caesar had intended to mark their own achievements and by extension that of their *gens* and its foundress, Venus, Augustus wanted to signal a new *era*. While Sulla’s and Caesar’s actional frame were the Civil Wars, Augustus’ perspective was Roman history in its entirety. This explains why the two dictators sought no historical legitimacy for their new creations, while Augustus set out to anchor his Games deeply in the Roman past, reaching back to the beginning of Roman democracy and out to the Greek world. For whatever account we choose to follow, the sources unanimously declare that Augustus’ Games were already the fifth in a row, whose beginning is variously placed in 509 or 456 B.C.\(^2\) As for the ideological scope, the participation of exclusively Greek deities such as the Moeræ and Ilithyia, the sacrifice *Achívo ritu*, and the local connection of the Games to a place called Tarentum, alongside other indications, clearly demonstrate that Augustus was concerned with a merger of Greek and Roman elements into a new Augustan *oikoumene* of cult.\(^3\)

Notwithstanding the claim of a long tradition, the historical truth is that the only verifiable candidate for Secular Games prior to those of 17 B.C. were those held in 249 B.C. (called *Ludi Tarentini* in the sources), and these were markedly different in nature. They were perhaps not even Secular Games at all, but were wrongly interpreted as such by a biased, although early, tradition.\(^4\) Nevertheless, if we want to examine to what extent the Secular Games of 17 B.C. were actually derived from this tradition, the Games of 249 B.C., officially the third Games, must serve as a starting point, for nothing is known about the fourth Games, which would have been hold in 149 B.C. The information we possess on the Games of 249 B.C. is ultimately drawn from Valerius Antias, the second- and early first-century historian.\(^5\) I follow the reconstruction by Nilsson:\(^6\) the Games were organized following an

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\(^1\) Bernstein 2007, 231f.

\(^2\) According to Augustus’ reckoning (postulating a cycle of 110 years) the first Games took place 456, while another tradition places the first Games even earlier, in 509 or 504 B.C., cf. Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 156–164; for the notion of *saeculum* see Feeney 2007, 145–148.

\(^3\) Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 118f.

\(^4\) Kienast 1999, 223f.

\(^5\) The relevant passages are conveniently collected in Pighi 1965, 43–55 [Zosimus] and 59–66 [Verrius Flaccus].

\(^6\) Nilsson 1920, 1705.
omen and subsequent consultation of the Sibylline oracle. Their ritual focus was the nocturnal sacrifice of a black bull to Dis and a black cow to Proserpina, offered on a subterranean, normally covered, altar in an area of the Campus Martius called Tarentum. After the Games, the altar was buried again. Besides, a lectisternium (a food offering in front of the image of the god, placed on pillows) to Dis and, correspondingly, a sellisternium (the same, but with the divine image placed on ‘chairs’) to Proserpina were held. In addition, the performance of a cult song is on record. The Games lasted certainly for three nights, presumably including daytime activities of some kind.

Augustus envisioned the creation of a new concept of ‘Ludi Saeculares’ based on a tradition that included the Games of 249 (and 149?) B.C. In order to minimize arbitrary or hazardous changes of the tradition, a specialist was called into service, the famous jurist Ateius Capito. His employment shows how determined the ruler was to mould his new concepts on a well-founded tradition. Had he wanted to blindly imitate tradition, or on the contrary to abandon tradition completely, a legal expert would have hardly been necessary. But to serve his cause of legitimately deriving new concepts from older ones, no profession was better suited than that of a jurist.

In order to discern how Capito developed the Secular Games in conceptual terms, I will begin with those concepts that remained unchanged, i.e. concepts underlying the model Ludi Tarentini which were either unnecessary or impossible for Capito to modify without abandoning the concept of Secular Games altogether. These may be tentatively called the constituent concepts of the concept of Secular Games of 17 B.C. There were six such constituents. First, there was the consultation of the Sibyl. Second, there were nocturnal sacrifices. Third, sellisternia were held. Fourth, there was the location of the ceremonies, the so-called Tarentum, in the Campus Martius, at the bank of the Tiber. Fifth, a hymn was sung. Sixth, the duration of the Games was presumably a triduum (a period of three days).

While these six constituent concepts of Secular Games in their general form were common to both the Games of 249 B.C. and 17 B.C., these six constituent concepts were, of course, themselves formed from specific constituent concepts, and it was here, i.e. on the level of the constituent concepts of the constituent concepts of the ‘Ludi Saeculares’, that Capito intervened. For instance, both Games were founded on a Sibyline oracle, but the earlier oracle was given after a bad omen, while the latter was simply arranged by the Quindecimviri in order to bring it into line with the earlier occasion (see below).
Furthermore, the sacrifices of 249 B.C. were offered in the Tarentum at night with a black bull and cow as sacrificial animals, while in 17 B.C., sacrifices were performed in the Tarentum and elsewhere (Capitoline temple, Apollo’s Palatine temple) by night and day, with various kinds of victims and bloodless sacrifices, among them also a bull and a cow (whose color is not specified, but was presumably white). On the other hand, while the Games of 249 seem to have witnessed both lectisternia and sellisternia, only the latter are on record for the Augustan Games. Even more important in our context, though, is the replacement of the two deities to whom the Games of 249 were dedicated (Dis, Proserpina) by seven deities of the Augustan event (in order of appearance: Moerae, Iuppiter, Ilithyia, Iuno, Terra Mater, Apollo and Diana). This replacement shows with all desirable clarity that the concepts of specific gods were not constituent of the concept of ‘Ludi Saeculares’. In Capito’s thinking, any god could be legitimately worshipped during the Secular Games, as long as the six basic constituents, consisting of a Sibylline oracle, nocturnal sacrifices, lectisternia/sellisternia, Tarentum, hymn, and triduum, were retained. It also shows that ritual foci such as the Secular Games could exist without a direct attachment to specific gods.

Here it is advisable to pause for a moment and to consider the importance of the proceedings of the seventh Games, held by Septimius Severus in 204. As in the case of the Augustan Games, the proceedings of the Games have been preserved. At a number of places, the Severan proceedings record details that are omitted from the Augustan proceedings. Scholars from Mommsen on have fleshed out details of the Augustan Games from information drawn from their successor, assuming that the Augustan record was less detailed but based on exactly the same ritual sequence. If we agree that concepts are constantly derived and imitated rather than copied, we must stress the arbitrariness of such an approach. In fact, it is usually impossible to tell whether the Severan Games developed a specific conceptual point of the Augustan Games into a new direction, or whether the

7 ‘Replacement’ is the right word even if we follow Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 119 in her assumption—based on information about the Severan Games—that a preparatory sacrifice (sacrum hostiae praecidaneae) was offered to Dis and Proserpina on the day preceding the actual Games. This sacrifice, if performed in 17 B.C., was scarcely conceived of as constituent of the Games.

8 Pighi 1965, 137–194.
proceedings of the Augustan Games are simply careless in reporting accurately the ritual sequence.\(^9\)

During the Augustan Games, seven gods were invoked. Some of them, such as Iuppiter, Iuno, Apollo and Diana, had been well known for centuries in the capital, and were as such conceptually rather fixed. Others such as the Moeræ, Ilithyia and Terra Mater (here not to be confused with Tellus), had never or only very sporadically enjoyed worship in the city. This distinction has to be born in mind when we now turn to the way in which divine concepts were conceptualized during the Games.

Space: Traditional gods had traditional spatial foci of worship. The Augustan Games took part of these foci into account. Iuppiter and Iuno received both their sacrifice and prayer in front of the Capitoline sanctuary, as did Apollo in his newly erected Palatine residence. The Moeræ and Ilithyia had no sanctuary in Rome. This and their apparent Greekness made them natural occupants of the Greek-sounding Tarentum.

More difficult is the question of Diana and Terra Mater. Diana had a famous temple on the Aventine. Why was she worshipped not there, but in Apollo’s residence on the Palatine? And is Terra Mater, as the goddess appears in the proceedings, really to be identified with the age-old Roman Tellus (as most scholars believe)? If so, why was she not worshipped in the latter’s temple, which was situated somewhere north or north-west of the later Colosseum? True, Diana’s and Tellus’ temples would not have been particularly close to the area of the Tarentum. But neither was the Palatine temple of Apollo. Nevertheless, the latter formed the center of the rituals performed on the third day of the Games. One may want to argue that Diana had a cult statue in the Palatine temple, and that it was only legitimate to venerate her there. But her position in Apollo’s temple was merely that of a parhedros. And apart from everything else, if she received honours because of her presence in the Palatine temple, why were not honours paid to Latona too, who was a parhedros of Apollo in the same temple?\(^10\)

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\(^9\) Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 153 with n. 428 admits the problem.

\(^10\) Prop. 2.31.15. Zos. 2.5.2 saw the problem and included Latona among the gods who were worshipped on the third day. Besides this, there are discrepancies between the text of the oracle and the worship of both Apollo and Diana. According to the oracle, Apollo should receive the same sacrifice as Iuno (i.e. a cow), but the proceedings mention various cakes; and Diana is not mentioned at all in the oracle as a deity who participates in the Games, cf. Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 145, 224.
These and other questions can be answered if we try to understand how Capito conceived of the Tarentum. Whatever the actual etymology of the word, I am convinced that he interpreted the place symbolically as Greek territory. The key to the spatial aspect of divinity here is the dichotomy of the foreign/Greek spatial foci of nocturnal deities situated in the Tarentum, i.e. outside the pomerium, and the domestic/Roman spatial foci of daylight deities located inside it. As a consequence of this dichotomy, the gods worshipped in the ‘Tarentum’ had to be as foreign/Greek in appearance as possible. This explains why the Moeræ were worshipped in the Tarentum, rather than their Latin equivalent, the Parcae. It also solves the problem acutely posed by Schnegg-Köhler, of why Ilithyia is not mentioned here in her Roman form as Mater Matuta, who apart from her functional similarity, had her own temple very close by, in the Forum Boarium (i.e. inside the pomerium). The same reasoning prevents us from identifying Terra Mater, worshipped in the Tarentum, with Tellus as worshipped in her intra-pomerial temple: the Terra Mater of the Games is (or better, is conceptualized as being) thoroughly Greek (i.e. gē mātēr), not the ‘Roman’ Tellus. Finally and most importantly, it explains why Diana is not worshipped in her Aventine temple: the latter was situated outside the pomerium, as was the Aventine hill as a whole. That is the reason why she was connected with Apollo’s Palatine temple. The notion of the Tarentum as foreign/Greek territory, in which foreign/Greek gods were worshipped, can also explain why the two blood sacrifices to the Moeræ and Tellus Mater, both performed at the Tarentum, were the only ones performed according to ‘Greek rite’ (Achivo ritu; according to the proceedings, Ilithyia did not receive a blood sacrifice, but various sorts of cakes).

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12 For the location of the Tarentum outside the pomerium see Coarelli 1997, 131.
13 This dichotomy which pervades the whole Games was rightly thrown into high relief by Feeney 1998.
15 *Pace* e.g. Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 118, but rightly seen by Feeney 1998, 29f.
16 *Acta* C 91, 115, 134 [Schnegg-Köhler]. Schnegg-Köhler’s conjecture in line 119f. (based on the Severan inscription) according to which Iuno too received a sacrifice Graeco ritu, is unwarranted, cf. Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 68f. Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 140 is inaccurate when she points to the connection of the cult of Iuno in the inscription with the ‘Greek rite’. The latter applied to Iuno Regina, who had arrived from Veii and as such was worshipped on the Aventine hill (i.e. outside the pomerium!), not on the Capitol (cf. Wissowa 1912, 191). Furthermore, on a coin from Spain, which explicitly
One might counter that, historically speaking, Apollo was the Greek god *par excellence* in the Roman pantheon. So why was he counted among the group of Roman domestic gods? Although there is no doubt about Apollo’s Greekness in historical terms, this characteristic is irrelevant to the current context. Here, he was conceptualized as a predominantly Roman god. After all, he served as the chosen patron of the Roman emperor and as the symbol of a new Roman post-war world order. Apollo was only Greek to the extent that Rome was a Greek foundation. The historical approach is here thoroughly misleading. It is not Apollo’s historical Greekness that matters, but his conceptual potential as a Roman god.

The reason why many scholars have overlooked the spatial dichotomy is the fact that they unwittingly interpreted the proceedings in the light of Horace’s *Carmen Saeculare*. As will be shown in the next chapter, Horace did everything in his immense poetic powers to blur the dichotomy and make even the Greek deities, which were conceptualized by Capito as such, look Roman. He referred to the Moerae as Parcae, assimilated Ilithyia to Diana and Iuno, and transformed Terra Mater into Tellus.\(^{17}\)

Time: With regard to the nocturnal sacrifices, the phenomenon is common in Greece, though apparently restricted to certain groups of divine concepts such as chthonic gods and heroes.\(^{18}\) The nocturnal sacrifice to the Moerae during the Games can be explained by the fact that they were considered to be children of the goddess Night since Hesiod at least, and could thus be easily addressed by nocturnal rituals.\(^{19}\) Furthermore, Ilithyia, though not particularly associated with night in Greece, appears as parhedros of the Moerae in literature at least since *Pindar*\(^{20}\) and in representational art on Athenian black-figure vase paintings.\(^{21}\) Chthonic gods were generally worshipped at night in

\(^{17}\) Hor. *carm. saec.* 13–16 [Ilithyia], 25–28 [Parcae], 29–32 [Tellus], cf. the next section.

\(^{18}\) Stengel 1920, 149–151.

\(^{19}\) Hes. *Th.* 217.

\(^{20}\) Pin. *Nem.* 7.1–3 al.

Greece, as I have mentioned above, and so were Dis and Proserpina in Rome at the Games in 249 B.C. Ilithyia’s nocturnal worship is not surprising, therefore, since she was a deity of childbirth and nursing. To the same category belongs Terra Mater, who, apart from her chthonic nature, may perhaps be identified with Greek Demeter, who herself was worshipped in nocturnal ceremonies in Greece.

Personnel: Major personnel foci for the formation of divine concepts during the Games were the Quindecimviri, mentioned repeatedly, and among them most notably Augustus and Agrippa. Only the latter two performed sacrifices and offered prayers on behalf of the community, and therefore only they served as personnel foci of the divine concepts addressed. Augustus’ seniority is marked by the fact that he alone offers the nocturnal sacrifices and is the first to offer sacrifices to Iuppiter and Apollo/Diana. By contrast, following a convincing conjecture by Schnegg-Köhler, the sacrifice to Iuno on the second day was reserved to Agrippa alone.

Two more categories of personnel foci have to be considered, the matrons and the boys and girls who performed Horace’s song. Their number of 110 clearly reflects the number of years of an Augustan saeculum. The participation of their full number was needed for the efficacy of the Games. The matrons are attested to have celebrated the sellisternia on the Capitol after the first and third nights, and presumably also after the second, although a relevant entry is missing in the Augustan proceedings. The function of the matrons as personnel foci is further enhanced if we relate to the Augustan Games the information of the Severan proceedings that the matrons actually performed their own sacrifices during the sellisternia.

The last group of personnel foci were the boys and girls who performed Horace’s song. Their focal function is particularly marked by the fact that their parents had to be still alive (patrimi et matrimi). The point of this stipulation, though also found elsewhere in Roman cult,

22 Hadzistelliou-Price 1978, 209: “Sacrifices and rites to kourotrophoi gods are generally like those of the Chthonians.”
23 E.g. Paus. 7.27.10.
24 For a detailed discussion about the members of the college during the Games see Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 201–215.
is not clear. It has been interpreted as a mark of distinction, in order to set off a specific group of children untouched by death and grief.28

Besides, the focal function of the choral singers is highlighted by their number 27. This number is connected both to the 27 cakes offered earlier in the day to Apollo and Diana, and to tradition, which transmits the same number of participants for similar choirs of maidens in 207 and 200 B.C. (but ordered by the pontiffs [sic!]).29 I do not think there is much meaning behind Capito’s numerical constructs apart from the fact that they formed a convenient way to stress the focal function of particular conceptual groups.

Iconography: The most important feature is the dichotomy of aniconic and iconic worship, reflecting faithfully the dichotomy which we have observed in space (extra-pomerial/intra-pomerial) and time (night/day). For the Greek Moerae and Ilithyia had never been venerated in Rome before; nor had Terra Mater, if we refrain (as we should) from identifying her with Tellus. This can only mean that they were worshipped in the Tarentum without a cult statue. By contrast, the remaining diurnal deities were all worshipped at temples which naturally included their cult statues.

Other iconographic foci, apart from the cult statues in the temples involved, were of course the divine statues worshipped during the sellisternia. The proceedings do not give any details, but we know for certain that only female deities were worshipped in sellisternia and lectisternia are not mentioned in the Augustan proceedings. The absence of the latter in the Augustan Games is as inexplicable as is the strange reference to two ‘chairs’ of Iuno and Diana (respectively) in the lectisternium performed on the Capitol after the first night.30 One is left to wonder whether the two statues of Iuno and Diana actually reflected the same iconographic type of these goddesses.

Function: In terms of function, Capito initiated a remarkable expansion of the scope of functional foci of the gods that were worshipped. In 249 B.C., tribute was paid only to gods associated with the single functional focus of the underworld (Dis, Proserpina), but the Games of 17 B.C. had as a leading principle the dichotomy of function, parallel to the other dichotomies already referred to: chthonic, foreign gods

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28 Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 93.
30 Acta C 102 [Schnegg-Köhler].
of destiny, birth, and fertility (Moerae, Ilithyia, Terra Mater) were countered by heavenly, domestic gods of male and female adulthood combined with supreme political power (Juppiter, Iuno) as well as prophecy, art, and symbolism of the new regime (Apollo). I stress the fact that the deities involved were ‘conceptualized’ in this manner by Capito, because, as Scheid correctly observes, historically speaking, at least the Moerae were no chthonic deities.  

Nevertheless, these gods were only partly conceptualized as functionally separate. If we look at the prayers recorded in the proceedings, it appears from their wording that they differ from each other only in minor details. This is the reason why the proceedings often refer to their contents in a rather terse fashion as cetera uti supra.  

It is important to note the complete lack of functional focalization in the prayers of the Augustan Games. This is due to a partial identity of functions of all the gods invoked: for whatever their specific functions, they coincided in their ambition and effort for the welfare and permanence of the city of Rome.

Ritual: It is impossible to enter into a discussion of all the ritual foci mentioned in the proceedings. Besides this, the relevant material has been ably collected by Schnegg-Köhler in her edition of the text. I will work selectively, concentrating on sacrifices alone. Much could be said about other ritual foci such as purifications, sellisternia, processions, theatrical and other performances, but I am confident that my restriction will not bias the overall picture.

The proceedings record sacrifices to seven deities. To these may perhaps be added an expiatory sacrifice (hostia praecidanea) to Dis and Proserpina the day before the actual ceremonies, about which (if it is in fact historical) nothing is known.  

As for the remaining sacrifices, their existence and ritual details have been thoroughly noted by scholars, while their actual nature has been somehow ignored: Roman sacrifices can be conveniently divided into three groups, 1. supplicatory sacrifices, petitioning the future well-being of the worshippers; 2. expiatory sacrifices;
sacrifices, ordered as punishment for unfulfilled obligations towards the deity; and 3. lustrations, atoning for unfavourable omens or portents.\textsuperscript{34} The sacrifices performed during the Games of 249 B.C. were clearly lustrations, since they atoned for a frightening omen (lightning),\textsuperscript{35} while the sacrifices of the Augustan Games were supplicatory throughout, as is made abundantly clear by the accompanying prayers, which do not refer to atonement or earlier religious violations. Although Zosimus wants us to believe otherwise, the Augustan Games had nothing to do with atonement vis-à-vis a deity, and in any case, the detailed planning of the Augustan Games implied a long period of preparation, which would scarcely accord with an act of atonement.\textsuperscript{36}

If we look at the actual items sacrificed, the dichotomies we have observed continue with the ritual foci, if we assume, with support in the Severan proceedings and the text of the Augustan Sibylline oracle, that the sacrificial animals offered to the Moerae and to Terra Mater were black, while those offered to Iuppiter and Iuno were white. This dichotomy was, of course, not Capito’s invention, but was ancient and is attested elsewhere, both in Italy and in Greece.\textsuperscript{37} Likewise, the sacrifices of two white bulls to Iuppiter and of a white cow to Iuno were conventional. Meanwhile, the whole burnt offering of a pregnant sow to Terra Mater, as mentioned in the Augustan proceedings, does not, as normally claimed, point to an identification with Roman Tellus (although it must be admitted that the goddess is connected with this animal).\textsuperscript{38} Rather, in accordance with what has been said above about the Greek nature of Terra Mater, the pig should be connected with Greek Demeter (Roman Ceres), whose favorite victim it also was.\textsuperscript{39} Besides, two sets of sacrifices were offered to the Moerae, nine female

\textsuperscript{34} For the difference between expiatory rites and lustrations see Krause 1931, 239f.
\textsuperscript{35} Zos. 2.4.1, supported by Verrius Flaccus ap. Schol. \textit{Hoe. carm. saec.} 8.
\textsuperscript{36} Zos. 2.4.2 gives a very vague reason for the Augustan Games (‘…when some unpleasant things happened…’) in order to bring them into line with earlier Games; this is not based on historical information. For a discussion of this passage cf. Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 226f., who also suggests (p. 201 n. 3) that the proceedings may have reported the reason in line 52. Anyway, even if such a reason was officially proclaimed, it served to assimilate the Augustan Games to their predecessors and would not deserve any credibility beyond that.
\textsuperscript{38} Krause 1931, 252–255.
lambs and nine female goats. Zosimus informs us that they were offered on three altars, which implies that each Moera received three lambs and three goats.\textsuperscript{40}

Other deities were honoured during the Games not with blood sacrifices, but with different kinds of cakes: the Ilithyiae, Apollo and Diana. Of these, the latter two of course belong together. A bloodless offering to Apollo and his sister has been duly commented on as an inexplicable oddity.\textsuperscript{41} As in the case of the Moerae, the impression remains that these ritual foci of the two deities are created not according to the logic of the Games (assuming that there was such a logic) but according to priestly constraints. We should not overlook the fact that—as the prayers in the proceedings monotonously repeat—all the ritual foci were based on, or were supposed to be based on, the ‘books of the Quindecimviri’.\textsuperscript{42} This claim is often not taken very seriously by modern scholars, because it undermines the cherished notion of the essential novelty of the Augustan Games, but it nevertheless seems more likely that ritual foci of other gods, as written down in these books, were transferred to Apollo and Diana than that foci which so patently contradict the little we know about the ritual foci of these two deities in Rome were simply invented by the Quindecimviri, who were an otherwise highly conservative priestly body. Even under the assumption that Apollo and Diana were conceptualized as the \textit{dei penates} of Augustus’ Palatine residence (in contrast to, say, the state gods Iuppiter and Iuno), they would not necessarily have received bloodless sacrifices; and in any case, such an explanation is null and void in the case of the Ilithyiae. Despite all this, the case of Apollo’s and Diana’s ritual foci is instructive from another point of view: for in theoretical terms, what really constitutes the difficulty in this case is the fact that these ritual foci cannot be derived in conceptual terms from other known concepts. Here we encounter a break, a broken chain of conceptual derivation of which we possess only one single link, namely the ritual foci of Apollo and Diana. We have reached the limits of the conceptual approach.

A word about numbers. The Ilithyiae, Apollo, and Diana are said to have received three sets of nine cakes. In order to make this number congruent with the number of gods worshipped, it is tempting to sug-

\textsuperscript{40} Zos. 2.5.3 with Scheid 2005, 99.
\textsuperscript{41} E.g. Feeney 1998, 31.
\textsuperscript{42} Cf. the frequent expression \textit{uti vobis in illeis libreis scriptum est}, e.g. \textit{Acta} C 92, 105, 117 etc. [Schnegg-Köhler].
gest a triad of Ilithyiae and to add Latona to the group of Apollo and Diana (Latona was worshipped in the Palatine temple of Apollo as a parhedros of her son, as was her daughter Diana). By doing so, we could distribute the cake offerings evenly: each Ilithyia would receive three cakes of each set, and so would Apollo, Diana and Latona.

If we interpret the Games as a novel conceptualization of earlier Games, the question arises: Who benefited from this innovation? At the center of the Games stood Augustus, followed by Agrippa and the college of the Quindecimviri, all of whom may have financed parts of the Games in exchange for a considerable increase in prestige. Equally important is the absence during the Games of the remaining priestly colleges, most notably those of the pontiffs and augurs. The significance of the Quindecimviri at this time is further highlighted by the fact that Agrippa, the second man in the state (he had married Augustus’ daughter Iulia in 21 B.C. and Augustus had adopted their two sons shortly before or after the Games in 17 B.C.), was not a member of either the pontifical or the augural college (though Augustus himself was). If we assume that the Games were meant as an event embracing all citizens of Rome and reaching out to the Greek world, this absence of the two most traditional Roman priestly colleges is even more striking. We may speculate about the reasons of this shift of power, but the identity of its beneficiaries, i.e. the new ‘Augustan’ élite, is beyond doubt.

2. Carmen Saeculare

The Sibylline oracle, which commanded the organization of the Games, also prescribed the performance of Latin ‘piaans’ to be sung by two choirs of young boys and girls. The Latin sources turn these ‘piaans’ into the ‘transgeneric’ term carmen.  

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43 Equally important is the absence during the Games of the remaining priestly colleges, most notably those of the pontiffs and augurs.

45 A word about numbers. The Ilithyiae, Apollo, and Diana are said to could distribute the cake offerings evenly: each Ilithyia would receive three cakes of each set, and so would Apollo, Diana and Latona.

46 For the funding of the Games, Cavallaro 1984, 150–160.

47 For the ‘transgeneric’ term carmen see Putnam 2000, 136–139.
The attempt to define the genre of ‘paian’ is of some interest, because here the difference between the philological and the conceptual approach becomes strikingly clear. Philologists have sought to answer the question of the concept underlying the word ‘paian’ by reviewing and interpreting relevant passages in which the word ‘paian’ and its derivates occur, thus trying to elicit from the material specific ‘meanings’ of the word. These ‘meanings’ were then tentatively related to specific concepts such as period, function, formal elements, addressees etc., in order to find a common denominator between these ‘meanings’. However, the philological analysis failed to solve the dilemma between the normative nature of the word ‘paian’ (as the basis of the philological approach), and the constant and unpredictable flux of what it denotes according to context, i.e. concepts. To illustrate only the most conspicuous aspect of this dilemma, most ‘paians’—including the Carmen Saeculare—were addressed to Apollo, but some, such as the ‘paian’ invoking Poseidon after an earthquake according to Xenophon (beginning of the fourth century B.C.),47 were clearly not.48 Or consider this: almost all early ‘paians’ included the invocation iê or paian or a dialect variant of these, but some again, such as the ‘paian’ of Ariphron to Hygieia (around 400 B.C.), clearly did not.49 To solve this dilemma, there has been an extensive and, I fear, futile discussion of the genre ‘paian’. As long as concepts are considered to be static entities in some sense, so that they can be adequately rendered by language, this approach will not lead to lasting results.

In marked opposition to the philological approach, the conceptual approach does not start from language, but from concepts. In other words, it rejects the idea of common denominators of ‘meanings’ that can be elicited from a specific selection of texts on the basis of the appearance of a shared word such as ‘paian’. It is not concerned with the rather arbitrary relation between language and concept, but with the relation between different concepts, or more specifically, with the constant process of forming new concepts from other, constituent concepts. The most it assumes about language is that every time the same word is used in a different context, this process is actually repeated,

47 Xen. Hell. 4.7.4.
48 Käppel 1992, 43–65; Schröder 1999, 10–49, esp. 32f.
i.e. employment of the same words actually implies the formation of a similar concept out of similar constituent concepts. While the philological analysis has to interpret a ‘paian’ to, say, Poseidon—or, to take another rarity, a ‘paian’ without the constituent invocations iê or paian—as exceptional and ultimately inexplicable, the conceptual approach considers such changes as inevitable and part and parcel of the dynamic process of the formation of concepts. While the philological analysis looks for fixed and common concepts under the blanket of language and speaks, where it encounters inconsistencies, of exceptions, the conceptual approach operates on the premise that concepts are never stable, but are shifting according to their (equally shifting) contextual environment. It interprets the world as a conceptual continuum in flux which is unduly broken up by language into smaller fragments, while the philological analysis actually presupposes that the conceptual world underlying language is itself fragmented, and that language reflects this fragmentation adequately.

After these considerations about the ‘genre’ of Horace’s song, let me now examine the concepts of divinity which it contains. Apparently, the song is dedicated to a number of such divine concepts, some of which were intrinsically relevant to the Secular Games. Normally, the poet does not give only a name to a concept he has in mind. Following the age-old tradition of cult poetry, he also supplies short characterizations. These characterizations can be best analyzed as references to specific conceptual foci of the six constituent concepts of divine entities.

In addition to that, I will examine the question of what led Horace to select these conceptual foci, rather than others, in order to characterize the ‘gods’ in question. I will work on the premise that the poet was normally driven by two criteria, namely tradition and function. By tradition, I mean the fact that a large number of characterizing concepts were actually employed because they were required or suggested by the traditional genre of ‘paians’, but were unrelated to the actual occasion of the performance of Horace’s hymn in 17 B.C. Here it is important to note that the literary genre of ‘paian’ is itself a concept formed from a number of oscillating constituent concepts, which include stereotyped conceptual foci in order to characterize ‘divine concepts’. The concept of ‘paian’ was constantly modified and developed in various directions. By function, I mean the fact that some characteristics which Horace singles out as worth mentioning serve a specific function within the cultic context, in which the ‘paian’ was performed on this
particular occasion in 17 B.C. Normally, the criterion of function is modelled on the criterion of tradition, in the sense that Horace will choose or develop specific traditional characteristics that relate to the circumstances in which the poem was performed. I will highlight a few aspects of the *Carmen Saeculare*, without any claim to completeness.

To begin with the first constituent concept of this book, space, it is only of secondary importance to characterizing a divine concept in Horace’s poem. Its mention is either self-evident or due to a sense of Romanity in general. For instance, the Roman Lares appear as transferred from Ilion/Troy to Rome,50 and the Roman pantheon is summarized as the gods ‘who look with favour on the seven hills.’51 Such platitudes can be easily assigned to the general stock-in-trade category of the concept of ‘Romanity’, employed thus by all Roman poets. More telling is the case of Apollo and Diana. Both deities are characterized by important spatial foci, the Palatine temple of Apollo, the Aventine temple of Diana, and her sacred precinct on Mount Algidus.52 The proceedings relate that Horace’s hymn was performed in front of the Palatine temple (and on the Capitol), and that it was there that sacrifices were offered to both Apollo and his sister.53 Therefore, the mention of the Palatine temple as a spatial focus of Apollo is due to the specific context of the hymn, i.e. its function in the context of the Games. By contrast, the mention of the Aventine sanctuary and of the sacred precinct on Mount Algidus is either due to hymnic tradition or formed on the principal of similarity, following the reference to the Palatine as the spatial focus of Apollo.54 For as far as we can glean from the proceedings, the Aventine sanctuary of Diana did not play any role in the performances of the Games, still less her precinct on Mount Algidus.55

Similarly, the temporal foci are not dominant as characterizations of divine concepts in the poem. We should mention that Ilithyia is invoked as the guarantor of the 110 years cycle of the *saeculum*.56 This

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50 Vv. 37–44.
51 V. 7.
52 Vv. 65, 69.
53 *Acta C* 139–146 [Schnegg-Köhler].
54 For tradition cf. Hor. *carm.* 1.21 and Catul. 34.
55 *Acta C* 9f. may refer to the Aventine temple, if Mommsen’s conjecture *aed[em Iovis et in Aventino ante D]ianae* is correct, but Schnegg-Köhler 2002, 55f. (who prints another text) is rightly sceptical.
56 Vv. 21–24.
reference is clearly connected with the context of the actual Games, for here Ilithyia (singular) or Ilithyiae (plural) are invoked and receive sacrificial cakes on the second night. The sacrifice to Ilithyiae (plural) had already been required by the Sibylline oracle prior to the celebrations. The actual Games thus followed faithfully the injunctions of the oracle, and Horace followed suit, mentioning duly Ilithyia (singular) in his ‘paian’. However, the poet was confronted with the problem of characterization. For Ilithyia(e) were foreign to the Roman pantheon, without any traditional spatial, temporal or other conceptual foci of their own. Horace solved the problem by creating such foci. As a temporal focus, he chose the Games themselves.

Ritual foci are referred to only once in the hymn, for a good reason. Ritual foci such as sacrifices are normally rather unspecific; in their ordinariness, they are rather uninviting and unpromising to any poetic endeavour. Accordingly, when Horace mentions the sacrifice of white bovines (vv. 49f.), he is unlikely to be interested primarily in the actual sacrificial animals. Rather, he has something else in mind. Before the discovery of the proceedings of the Games, scholars used to refer this bovine sacrifice to Apollo and Diana, but the proceedings show, as their first editor Mommsen with his unrivalled perspicacity immediately saw, that the only gods to whom white bovines could be conceivably sacrificed during the Games were actually Iuppiter and Iuno (Apollo and Diana received cake sacrifices instead, according to the proceedings). The omission of the names of Iuppiter and Iuno is all the more astonishing, when we consider that these two divine concepts happen to be the most significant divine concepts of the official Roman pantheon. Apparently, the specific ritual foci of Iuppiter and Iuno here replaced the divine concepts themselves, a striking case of \textit{pars pro toto} in conceptual terms: the dominant concept is substituted for one of its constituent concepts, i.e. in our case the concept of a characteristic ritual.

This brings us to the last and by far most important form of characterization of divine concepts in Horace’s ‘paian,’ or any cult song for that matter, i.e. functional foci. For instance, Diana is said to be ‘queen of the woods’ and is identified with the moon, the Parcae are

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57 Paradoxically, both forms appear in the proceedings, cf. \textit{Acta} C 115–118 [Schnegg-Köhler].
58 Mommsen 1891a, 602; id. 1891b, 357f., followed by virtually all interpreters.
59 Vv. 1f., cf. 69.
characterized as unfailingly telling the truth,\textsuperscript{60} Ceres is ‘fertile in crops and livestock’,\textsuperscript{61} and Apollo occurs as both a healing and oracular god as well as the god of fine art.\textsuperscript{62} Deities formed from Latin appellatives, such as Fides, Pax, Honos and Pudor and Virtus, suggest by their very meaning specific functional foci.\textsuperscript{63} Most of these characterizations are motivated by tradition, without any immediate function in the specific cultic context of the Games. But the characterizations of Diana and Ilithyia are remarkable.

While the functional foci of her counterpart Apollo are marshalled in elaborate detail, encompassing all his major competences,\textsuperscript{64} Diana is described as protectress of forests and divine emanation of the moon.\textsuperscript{65} This is hymnic etiquette,\textsuperscript{66} but disturbingly irrelevant to her existence in the city and meagre in terms of functional focalization, given that in Horace’s hymn she features on a par with Apollo.

This observation leads us to the question of Diana’s functional position within the Games.\textsuperscript{67} She is the only deity of those receiving a sacrifice during the Games that is not mentioned or hinted at in the Sibylline oracle. Besides this, she receives a sacrifice only as parhedros of Apollo in the latter’s Palatine temple.\textsuperscript{68} Then, all of a sudden, she is raised to paramount importance by Horace in his poem, as is made crystal clear by the opening of the hymn: “Phoebus and Diana, Queen of the Woods, radiant glory of the heavens.” Her dazzling appearance here cannot be explained either by a particular popularity or by a fondness for her on the part of Augustus himself (in marked contrast to her divine brother). Rather, it is due to the necessity for balance between the male and female elements within the hymn, in order to ensure offspring and well-being. The point was not kinship relation (for in that case Latona too would have been mentioned), but a deliberate and delicate balance between the sexes, expressed by brother and sister. As such, the dichotomy Apollo/Diana is paralleled by the dichotomy of 27 male and 27 female choir singers. But while a number of Apollo’s

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{60} Vv. 25–28.
\bibitem{61} Vv. 29f.
\bibitem{62} Vv. 33, 61–64.
\bibitem{63} Vv. 57–60, cf. Putnam 2000, 83–85 for a detailed analysis of these deities.
\bibitem{64} Putnam 2000, 86–91.
\bibitem{65} Hor. \textit{carm. saec.} 1f., 35f., 69f.
\bibitem{66} Hor. \textit{carm.} 3.22.1; Catull. 34.9.
\bibitem{67} For Diana in general in Horace cf. S. Rocca in: \textit{EO} II (1997), 353f.
\bibitem{68} \textit{Acta} C 139–148 [Schnegg-Köhler]; see the previous chapter III.1.
\end{thebibliography}
traditional competences could be successfully recruited by Horace for his hymn, Diana’s competences, with the sole exception of fertility, were dauntingly unrelated to the occasion of the Games. For the sake of balance, Horace made her equal to Apollo, whereas in fact she stood behind him both during the Games (during which Apollo’s Palatine Temple was the centre) and in Augustan ideology in general.

As to Ilithyia, her exclusive Greekness posed the problem how to characterize her in Roman terms; Horace chose the easy way by following the Greek precedent and establishing fertility and child-bearing as her functional foci. He did so by adopting the singular Ilithyia and explicitly identifying the goddess with Lucina, i.e. a form of Diana and/or Iuno with similar competences.69

Putnam and others have claimed that Ilithyia in Horace is actually Diana,70 on the basis of the very similar functional foci and the epithet Lucina as characteristic of Diana. This view is mistaken. Ilithyia is assimilated by Horace not only to Diana, but also to Iuno (who not uncommonly appears as Lucina and was herself the major goddess of childbirth, more important in Rome in this function than Diana). However, she is not to be identified with either goddess, since all three deities appear during the Games as clearly distinct entities, each receiving a separate sacrifice and prayer.71 More specifically, as I have shown in the previous section, Ilithyia is clearly marked as belonging to the cycle of Greek deities, since she is worshipped at night outside the pomerium, in the ‘Greek’ Tarentum, in contrast to both Iuno and Diana who are conceptualized as Roman and are worshipped inside the pomerium by day. By forcibly assimilating Ilithyia to Iuno and to a lesser extent to Diana, Horace attempted to create a convincing framework of functional foci for the otherwise purely Greek goddess Ilithyia, not a quite unnecessary and confusing extension of the competences of Diana. The fact that Horace is creating new functional foci for Ilithyia is also illuminated by the second attribute by which the goddess is characterized: genitalis.72 The latter is as transparent in meaning as it is exceptional in its employment as a divine epithet. It serves to express accurately both the particular functional focus and its novelty.

69 Vv. 13–16.
70 Putnam 2000, 61f.
71 Acta C 115–118 (Ilithyia), 119–131 (Iuno), 139–146 (Diana) [Schnegg-Köhler].
72 V. 16.
If we want to characterize the relation between Horace’s hymn and the actual Games as far as divine concepts are concerned, it is fair to say that Horace does everything in his power to blur the fundamental dichotomies as expressed by the Games and to transform them into a.) Roman features and b.) homogeneous praise of Apollo and Diana. He employs various devices to achieve his goals: 1. the complete change of order of appearances of the gods and the omission of direct references to Iuppiter and Iuno; 2. the omission of all references to dichotomies (day/night, Greek/Roman, black/white, extra-/intrapomerial); 3. the transformation of Moerae into Parcae and Terra Mater into Tellus; 4. the functional assimilation of Ilithyia to Iuno and Diana.

It must be immediately stressed that it is not helpful to condemn the poet (with Mommsen) for not rendering the message of the Games, when Horace’s ambition is actually to transform this message.73 Nor is it useful to state (with Fraenkel and Putnam) that Horace made use of his poetic freedom and said what he said as well as possible, and without much reference to what had already been ‘said’ by Capito in the preceding celebrations.74 Even in his rejection of certain concepts, Horace was dependent on Capito’s (and by extension Augustus’) plan throughout; he was deliberately interpreting, i.e. translating, the meaning of the Games. And like many an ambitious translator, he avoided the employment of foreign concepts by smoothing out inconsistencies and redressing balances where he saw fit. As a result, his ‘translation’ was much more Roman and homogeneous than the ‘original’. But it was still a ‘translation,’ for better or worse.

73 Mommsen 1891b, 356–358.
74 Fraenkel 1957, 380–382, for instance 380: “Horace’s song had its being solely in the sphere of poetry, and the only links which connected it with the cult were links of thought”; also Putnam 2000, 130–150, for instance 144: “He (scil. Horace) is exerting a poet’s power not only to imagine what the Roman polis should be but to bring that vision into being by means of his originality, whether in the poem’s grand sweep or in the emphases of bright detail”.