

ALEX DRESSLER : **Seeing (not) seeing: the phenomenology of deviant standpoint as a function of gender and class in Paulinus of Nola, *Poems* 18.**

Identifying an allusion to classical Greco-Roman poetry in a monologue (or prosopopoeia) of a cowherd by the fourth century Latin poet, Paulinus of Nola (c. 18.276-80), this article explains the emergence of the category of labor as a response to a process of Christian radicalization from the representation of erotic paroxysm in Sappho (fr. 31: “I see nothing in my eyes”), through the classical Latin poets Catullus (c. 51) and Horace (c. 1.13, 22). In view of Paulinus’ renunciation of wealth and repurposing of elite culture for the poor, his reception of Sappho suggests that ancient men of property could recognize the perspectives of their subordinates and resist their own political interests through poetic production, and specifically metapoetics, as a result of the ambiguity of embodiment and sensation posited in the modern philosophy of phenomenology and commonalities of gender and class explicated in post/modern social theory. Attributing the combination of these factors to a “deviation” in “focalization” (D. Fowler) and a “doubling” of “consciousness” (J. Winkler) in the producer of the poem (Paulinus), the article uses the Marxist-feminist concept of standpoint to develop a phenomenological approach to literary history, which promises to recover, not the *experience* of the poor and marginal (or “subaltern”) in ancient literature, but *the form* of their experience, as an “imputation of consciousness” (G. Lukács), which may well be a distinctive mark of literature.

**Mots-clés :**

Catullus – Deviant focalization – Double consciousness – Horace – Labor – Late antiquity – Paulinus of Nola – Phenomenology – Precarity – Prosopopoeia – Reception – Sappho – Standpoint theory