

*Quid vetat Arcadio dictos a monte Lupercos?* Imperial Patronage of the Arcadian Lykaia

Mt. Lykaion was famous in antiquity for its sanctuaries of Zeus and Pan Lykaios and the associated athletic festival, the Lykaia. Rumors of human sacrifice and lycanthropy encouraged a sense of dread and spawned a series of myths and etiologies (Jost 1985). From the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC the Romans began to participate in this activity, going so far as to associate their own origins with Evander of Pallantion (Bayet 1920). A claim to Hellenic origins went hand in hand with Rome's increased involvement in Greece and the Hellenistic world. Accordingly, Evander's hometown gave its name to the Palatine Hill, and he was believed to have instituted the archaic ritual of the Lupercalia. Lupercalia was simply a Latin calque on the Arcadian festival of the Lykaia, both derived from the words for 'wolf,' *lupus* and *lykos* (Wiseman 1995). This interest in Rome's Arcadian origins reached its peak in the reign of Augustus, when Greek and Roman authors used it in a variety of contexts. For Virgil Arcadia was a pastoral paradise and Evander the steadfast ally of Aeneas. Ovid referenced the Arcadian origins of the Lupercalia in his *Fasti*, and in the *Metamorphoses* he recounted the myths of Lycaon, Callisto, and Arcas, all intimately associated with the sanctuaries on Mt. Lykaion. Livy likewise told the story of Evander and the Lykaian origins of the Lupercalia, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who documents a cult of Evander at the Porta Trigemina, exerted much effort in demonstrating the Arcadian pedigree of the Romans. Clearly Arcadia loomed large in Augustan Rome, and the personal interest of the *princeps* himself is documented by Pausanias, who informs us that Augustus brought the cult statue of Athena Alea from Tegea to Rome.

Roughly concurrent with this literary activity came the institution of an epigraphically attested dual festival called *Lykaia kai Kaisareia* at Megalopolis (*IG V*, 2 515B). This celebration seems to have been held through at least the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (*IG V*, 2 463). The

Lykaia were one of the most ancient Greek festivals (Romano and Voyatzis 2014), frequented by athletes from all over the Greek world in Classical and Hellenistic times, and the cognomen of L. Fabius Lycaeus indicates that Romans from Italy likewise eventually participated (*CIL* 5.3133, Vicenza).

Dual festivals honoring Rome are known to have been instituted at many Greek religious sites beginning in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. In imperial times they provide evidence for the institution of emperor worship. While the economic, cultic, and political implications of these festivals for local Greek communities have been adequately discussed in recent studies (Lafond 2006; Camia and Kantiréa 2010), little attention has been paid to the relationship linking elite and imperial Roman culture with the choice to institute a dual festival at a particular sanctuary. Surely imperial sponsorship implies interest on the part of Rome, and the *Lykaia kai Kaisareia* present an ideal case study for examining this negotiation of identities in early imperial Greece and Rome.

I suggest that the institution of this dual festival was inspired by the traditions that derived Rome from Arcadia. Augustus' interest in traditional religion is evidenced by his restoration of sanctuaries, archaic rites, and priesthoods (Scheid 2005); Suetonius even reports his revival of the Lupercalia. It makes good sense to interpret imperial activity at the Lykaia with reference to this same trend. A similar conclusion has recently been drawn concerning Julio-Claudian patronage of Aphrodite, whose cults were associated with the imperial family's descent from Aeneas. Paralleling the temple of Venus Genetrix in Caesar's forum is the identification of Caligula's sister Drusilla with Aphrodite at Epidauros (Camia and Kantiréa 2010). It is accordingly hard to imagine that interest in the Lykaia was not encouraged by Evander's Pallantion and the Lupercalia. This is not to deny the agency of the Greeks, but we do better to

acknowledge the complex relationships linking local elites, Roman *negotiatores* in Megalopolis, and the imperial household. Knowledge and adaptation of the shared Lykaian traditions that bound these groups culminated in the new, cooperative festival.

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