

Surviving the Storm: Two Families of the *Laudatio Turiae* and the Civil Wars

Josiah Osgood's book, *Turia: A Roman Woman's Civil War* (Osgood 2014), uses the *Laudatio Turiae* inscription as a way to provide a glimpse into the life and experience of a Roman woman during the late Republic, especially the civil wars between Caesar and Pompey as well as those of the Second Triumvirate (49-31 BCE). The *Laudatio Turiae* is an invaluable source for the study of life in the civil wars, as it shows several aspects of Roman society, including social upheaval, reconciliation between members of opposing factions during civil strife, as well as Roman views of gender in the Late Republic. Additionally, the *Laudatio Turiae* presents both a personal and domestic perspective of the civil wars, as opposed to the largely political focus found in most of the ancient literary sources. To that end, Osgood does well to use the *Laudatio Turiae* to make up for the way that many ancient authors neglected the perspective of women in their histories by reconstructing the life of the dedicatee, identified as Turia (though there is no proof that is her actual name), and placing Turia alongside the depictions in the ancient sources of other women during the civil wars.

Turia is not alone in the inscription, however, but is featured alongside several other recurring family members, including her unnamed husband (the author of the inscription), her unnamed sister, and her sister's husband (and one of the few named figures on the inscription), Gaius Cluvius. Instead of focusing on Turia alone (hereafter referred to as "the wife"), this paper will use the *Laudatio Turiae* in a manner similar to Osgood and attempt to reconstruct partially the lives of all four individuals, tracing their experiences through both civil wars, showing how the author and his brother-in-law, Gaius Cluvius, find themselves on opposite sides of the conflict, as well as the author's return to Rome around 42, and ending the discussion at the conclusion of the civil wars in 31. Such a study reveals a family's experience navigating the civil

wars, such as how the wife of a fugitive (and proscribed) husband was left to defend her family's estates and advocate dutifully for her husband, how the husband himself desired to be restored by the Roman government, and how two brothers-in-law could retain their familial bond even after they had apparently sided with different factions during the Second Triumvirate. Furthermore, the *Laudatio Turiae* reveals much about the political climate of Rome after the civil wars, such as the danger, fear, and confusion caused by the proscriptions, and the later hostility shown toward Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. While the *Laudatio Turiae* yields a great deal of information, much of the original content is lost or corrupted, leaving many details unknowable, such as the identity of the author and much of the chronology of events on the inscription. Throughout my discussion, I will offer speculations at times on some of these details, such as a possible candidate for the author's identity, C. Antistius Vetus, and details surrounding the careers of both himself and Gaius Cluvius. In the end, although the *Laudatio Turiae* has left scholars with many unanswered questions, it offers a valuable and personal perspective outside the political narrative of the ancient sources.

Bibliography

Osgood, Josiah. 2014. *Turia: A Roman Woman's Civil War*. Oxford University Press.