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Herennius Pontius: The Construction of a Samnite Philosopher

This article explores the historiographical traditions concerning Herennius Pontius, a Samnite wisdom-practitioner who is said by the Peripatetic Aristoxenus of Tarentum to have been an interlocutor of the philosophers Archytas of Tarentum and Plato of Athens. It argues that extant speeches attributed to Herennius Pontius in the writings of Cassius Dio and Appian preserve a philosophy of “extreme proportional benefaction” among unequals. Such a theory is marked by Peripatetic language and concepts, which suggests that these speeches derive from a single Peripatetic source, probably Aristoxenus. The reception of Aristoxenus’ description of Herennius Pontius among Greeks and Romans is sharply divided. Greek theories of ethics among unequals such as those of Aristotle and Archytas, which aim for moderation, can be distinguished from that attributed to Herennius Pontius, which is circumstantial and stipulates extreme responses to extremes. Romans, in particular Appius Claudius Caecus and Sulla, espouse proverbial wisdom strikingly similar to the theory of “extreme proportional benefaction” associated with Herennius Pontius. Such comparisons suggest that starting in the late fourth century BCE, Romans and Samnites may have held shared ideological principles, as defined against Greek cultural paradigms. Scholars are thus prompted to consider Herennius Pontius as a starting point for a much larger inquiry into shared ideology among non-Greeks in Italy during the Hellenistic period and beyond.

I. INTRODUCTION: ENCOUNTERS AMONG THE SAGES

Starting in the mid-fourth century BCE, philosophers and biographers who wished to appropriate the life and thought of Plato (ca. 427–347 BCE) to their

This article was written at Stanford University and completed at the Center for Hellenic Studies. It owes a debt of gratitude to several colleagues who helped me to improve it, especially Brad Inwood, Monte Johnson, Mariska Leunissen, Grant Nelsestuen, and Greg Thalmann. The anonymous referees from *Classical Antiquity* provided valuable criticism and supportive encouragement. Tom Habinek proved once again crucial in guiding a wayward ship into harbor. I thank them all.

own purposes propagated astonishing stories of Plato's travels and interactions with non-Greek wisdom-practitioners and their communities: the earliest include a playful discourse featuring a *xenos* from Chaldaea who visits Plato on his deathbed, written by Plato's own secretary Philip of Opus and probably composed within a decade of Plato's death.¹ Another particularly fascinating and enigmatic story about Plato's encounters with foreign "philosophical" wisdom-practitioners purports to recount a visit between Plato and two other philosophers, the mathematical Pythagorean Archytas of Tarentum (b. between 435 and 410 BCE and d. between 360 and 350 BCE) and, strikingly, a Samnite named Herennius Pontius.² The original text from which this story is derived, the fragmentary *Life of Archytas* by Aristoxenus of Tarentum (ca. 375–ca. 300 BCE), is focused on Archytas, and Plato's appearance at the speech goes generally unremarked, which is perhaps surprising. For Aristoxenus, to be sure, the function of Plato's appearance is to demonstrate the importance of Archytas, who is figured as a worthy opponent of Plato in the competition for wisdom.³ But it is also potentially significant that this story preserves tantalizing hints of the presence of a non-Greek philosopher who interacts with the more famous Greek sages. In the most detailed version of the story, preserved by Cicero in *On Old Age* (11.39–41),⁴ Herennius Pontius, like Plato, is ancillary to the main account: the speaker

1. On this story and the larger implications for our understanding of the activities undertaken by the associates and students of Plato following his death, see Horky 2009 and Dillon 2003. Stories involving agonistic competition between wisdom-practitioners are likely a product of the early to mid-fourth century BCE and are epitomized by Plato's illustration of the competitions between Socrates and the sophists Hippias of Elis in the *Hippias Minor* and Protagoras in the *Protagoras* (among others). For a useful general study of the rise of this literary-philosophical *topos*, see Nightingale 2000. In general, such stories might be reflective of the circulation of wisdom in larger cultural networks that bridge ethical and linguistic divides, on which see Tell 2007 and Martin 1993.

2. Cf. Mele 2000, with particular reference to Archytas F A9a Huffman (Cic. *Sen.* 11.41). In this article, I refer to Herennius Pontius as a "philosopher" in the loosest sense, that is, as a wisdom-practitioner who espoused a series of identifiable and distinctive doctrines about wisdom. We should be careful not to confuse Herennius Pontius' "philosophy," however, with school philosophy such as that identified with the Academy, Lyceum, or the Pythagoreans. Cicero calls the Samnite philosopher "C. Pontius Samnis," although, as I will suggest, this name might be in error. All extant sources that name the philosopher call him "Pontius," although Livy (9.1.2, 9.3.4, 9.3.13, 9.15.4), Valerius Maximus (7.2.ext.17) and the Livian tradition (Flor. 1.11.10; *De vir. ill.* 30.4; Oros. 3.15.3) refer to him as "Herennius Pontius." This tradition treats "Herennius" as the *praenomen* and "Pontius" as the *gentilicium*. The Livian tradition is likely to be correct, as is suggested by the Oscan evidence for "Herennius" as a *praenomen* (Rix 2002: 139–40 lists nine instances [s.v. **hefrens**], also three as a *gentilicium* [s.v.v. **hefrennis**, **hereiis**, **herenni(s)**]; cf. Salomies 1987: 73–74 and Schulze 1904: 82) and "Pontius" as a *gentilicium* (Rix 2002: lists six instances [s.v. **πομπτιες**], no instance as a *praenomen*; cf. Salomies 1987: 107). It becomes likely that Cicero was being careless by attributing the son's name (Gavius Pontius) to his father. Accordingly, in this article I will refer to the philosopher as "Herennius Pontius" and his son, the *imperator*, as "Gavius Pontius."

3. We should note, however, that such competitions in performances of wisdom in the fourth century BCE were not always, or simply, a zero-sum game, as the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* attests. Cf. Graziosi 2001: 68–72.

4. The source for the story is said to be Nearchus of Tarentum, who claims he heard the story from his elders. As Huffman 2005: 329–30 notes, Plutarch's version of the *Life of Cato the*

of this portion of the dialogue, Cato the Elder, only makes reference to him at the conclusion of the description of Archytas' speech on pleasure. He does so, moreover, chiefly in order to provide two further pieces of information: that the story was passed down via oral transmission,⁵ and that it took place before the battle of the Caudine Forks (321 BCE).⁶ This information indicates that this story originated in Tarentine historical sources, which had preserved the oral transmission, and that it was appropriated by the annalistic tradition. By locating the speech in the consulships of Lucius Camillus and Appius Claudius Crassus Inregillensis, Cicero (or his source) establishes a date for the speech of Archytas, 349 BCE, and provides us with an illustration of the ways in which Romans could have placed information derived from Greek sources in a new context that made it meaningful for Roman readers.⁷

While it is unclear what residual value Cicero himself would have gained from referring to the Samnite Herennius Pontius as a philosophical interlocutor of Archytas of Tarentum—one reason, as Carl Huffman has suggested, would be to reinforce the ideological position that the Greek Pythagoreans had influenced Italic peoples⁸—this story stimulates us to consider the real possibility that non-Greek Italian wisdom-practitioners not only existed in the mid-fourth century BCE but also participated in the cultural transmission of philosophical ideas together with Greek philosophers. At least four important problems arise out of this possibility: first, can we articulate the traditions of practical philosophy associated with the enigmatic Samnite Herennius Pontius?⁹ Second, if so, through what sources were they handed down, and in what ways did the transmission modify any original doctrine? Third, how did the discourse of Samnitic wisdom distinguish itself from Greek philosophy of Magna Graecia in the fourth century BCE? Finally, what was the role—either real or imagined—that Samnite wisdom-practitioners played in the development of a history of philosophy at Rome?

Elder (2.3), the only other extant version of this story, modifies the account of Cicero (or accounts similar to Cicero's not extant?) in order to Platonize the story of the visit to Archytas: there is no mention of the Samnite Pontius or Archytas, and the denunciation of pleasure made by Nearchus is clearly derived from the *Phaedo*. In addition to these qualities, other aspects of the account betray Plutarch's Platonizing tendencies: Cato is meant to learn from Nearchus, who is called a "certain Pythagorean *xenos*." The tradition of foreign *xenoi* as teachers who serve to enlighten is as old as Plato (e.g. *Sophist*, *Statesman*, *Laws*) and is adapted in subsequent Platonist dialogues (e.g. the dialogue involving the Chaldean *xenos* by Philip of Opus).

5. *Nearchus Tarentinus . . . se a maioribus natu accepisse dicebat.*

6. *Haec cum C. Pontio Samnite, patre eius a quo Caudino proelio Sp. Postumius T. Veturius consules superati sunt. . .*

7. The dating is problematic; as several scholars have noted (e.g. Huffman 2005: 330; Powell 1988: 279; Mele 1981: 69–70; Salmon 1967: 121n.3), it is unlikely that Plato would have been fit to travel to Tarentum in his late seventies.

8. Cf. Huffman 2005: 328–29, citing Cic. *Lael.* 13 and *Tusc.* 4.2–3 (following Powell 1988: 187). Note that at *Tusc.* 4.2 Cicero refers to Pythagoras initially by dating him according to consulship, just as he does with Plato, Archytas, and Herennius Pontius in *de Senectute*.

9. "Samnite" in this article denotes Oscan-speaking peoples who lived in Samnium. On this designation, see Tagliamonte 1996: 6–7 and Salmon 1967: 28–33.

These questions, I suggest, are significant because they offer us avenues for pursuance of the reconstruction of non-Greek systems of philosophy and wisdom-traditions that have been overlooked by historians of ancient philosophy. The reconstruction of non-Greek wisdom gives us a window into the larger issues of cross-cultural interaction, especially among elites, as well as comparative cultural ideologies.¹⁰ In the course of this article, I will attempt to answer these questions and to demonstrate that we can successfully determine some aspects of non-Greek practical philosophy in Italy during the fourth century BCE shared by Samnites and Romans. I will argue three main points: first, that later historical traditions that preserve speeches of the Samnite practical philosopher Herennius Pontius are likely to originate in late fourth-century BCE Greek historiography that arose in Magna Graecia, namely the biographical writings of the Pythagorean/Peripatetic Aristoxenus of Tarentum; second, that while the philosophical positions attributed to Herennius Pontius are described in terms and structures that are essentially Peripatetic, the theory of “extreme proportional benefits” ascribed to him can be distinguished from both the ethical positions of Aristotle and the Pythagorean Archytas of Tarentum; finally, that the practical philosophy attributed to Herennius Pontius substantially resembles a theory of friendship advocated in the *Sententiae* of the Roman philhellene Appius Claudius Caecus (consul 307 and 296 BCE), whose ideas about wisdom, while apparently influenced by the Tarentine Pythagoreans, also deviate in important ways. The results of such a study are significant: Herennius Pontius, the Samnite philosopher, was considered to have advocated a distinctly non-Greek theory of ethics that was consonant with the ideas of one of the earliest wisdom-practitioners in Rome, Appius Claudius Caecus. While it would be speculative to suggest that there is “influence” going from Samnites to Romans or vice versa, we can nonetheless detect the transmission of shared practical philosophy about friendship and enmity between Romans and Samnites around the turn of the third century BCE.

II. ETHNICITY AND ETHICS: THE SPEECHES OF HERENNIUS PONTIUS RECONSIDERED

The issue of non-Greek philosophy in Italy has not been vigorously discussed outside of the traditions of the history of philosophy in modern Italian scholarship.¹¹ The seminal study for this discussion of non-Greek philosophers is Alfonso Mele’s detailed and important article “Il Pitagorismo e le popolazioni

10. On this topic, see especially Dench 2003: 304–308 on “inclusivity” in the cultural behaviors and philosophical ideals of South Italians.

11. In addition to Mele’s seminal article (1981), he revisited this topic in Mele 2000; generally, Mele has been followed by Tagliamonte 1996: 25–28. This topic is also investigated, although only inasmuch as it pertains to our knowledge of Archytas, by Huffman 2005: 329–30.

anelleniche d'Italia" (1981), in which he sought to examine the Peripatetic and Pythagorean traditions of non-Greek philosophers in Italy in light of what we can reproduce of the historical context of fifth- and fourth-century Italy. His conclusions were striking indeed: Mele proposed that the Tarentine Pythagorean (i.e. Archytas) political ideology, with its emphasis on the Laconian politico-military "leveling" (ὁμαλότης) to which Aristoxenus of Tarentum refers in his *Life of Archytas*, provided Samnite communities with a "natural interlocutor" for the problems of social organization that faced especially the elite classes.¹² These problems of social organization for the Samnitic peoples stem from changes in politico-military organization from rule by "kings and chiefs" (βασίλεις καὶ δυνάσται) until the end of the fifth century BCE to a communitarian organization (κοινὴ πολιτεία), something closer to the Laconian mixed constitution that was adopted by the influential Italian League, which was guided by Tarentum during the first half of the fourth century BCE.¹³ The consequences of such a reading for our understanding of Samnite history and society are potentially many and great, but they do not come without nagging problems of source interpretation. Crucially, Mele assumes that Aristoxenus' account can function objectively as a source of information about Samnite peoples, an assumption that, as we will see, is frustrated by other illustrations of Italian "barbarism" in other fragments of Aristoxenus' writings. Moreover, the source for our information about the rule of "kings and chiefs" to which Mele appeals as evidence for fifth-century BCE political organization among the non-Greeks in Italy is problematic, since it too comes from a Peripatetic, Dicaearchus of Messana, whose position vis-à-vis the history and ideology of Pythagoreanism must be examined in the light of the appropriations of wisdom-traditions among the earliest historians and biographers of Western philosophy.¹⁴ To be sure, while it is debatable to what extent the information about the Pythagoreans preserved by the Peripatetics actually refers to sixth- or fifth-century BCE history in Italy, we can be confident that these figures—who vied with one another over the methods and contents that constituted the history of philosophy—give us insight into the normative value of Italian philosophy for elite intellectual culture in Athens during the second half of the fourth century BCE.

Just as the Pythagoreanism of the Greeks in Italy cannot be easily extracted from the complications presented by Peripateticism, so too non-Greek philosophy in Italy must be seen in the light of its ideological value for those figures which

12. Mele 1981: 95. For a useful study of the principle of "leveling" in Archytas' philosophy, see Huffman 2005: 504–505 and 515.

13. Mele 1981: 92–96. It should be added to Mele's account that Strabo (5.4.12) mentions a colony of Laconians that joined with the Samnites, which apparently led to a sort of Samnite philhellenism. Interestingly, Strabo goes on to suggest that this story might have been "fabricated by the Tarentines," who wanted to manufacture a shared ideology with the Samnites, whose powerful military was a constant threat to Tarentum. Cf. Dench 2003: 302.

14. For Dicaearchus' life of Pythagoras, see White 2001: 210–14.

appropriated it in their histories of philosophy. It is worth investigating this value by examining the definitions of “Italian” or “barbarian” philosophy made by those Peripatetics who were interested in the history of philosophy in the Italian peninsula, most notably Aristotle and his student Aristoxenus of Tarentum. The earliest extant descriptions of “Italian” philosophers are preserved in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* (1.5.14–6.1, 987a10–31 and 1.6.10, 988a26), *Meteorologica* (1.6, 342b30), and *On the Heavens* (2.13, 293a20). In these passages, Aristotle does not clearly differentiate between Greek and non-Greek philosophers: he confuses the “Pythagoreans” (οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι) and “so-called Pythagoreans” (οἱ καλούμενοι Πυθαγόρειοι) with the philosophers he calls “Italian” (οἱ Ἰταλικοί) or “those who live round about Italy” (οἱ περὶ τὴν Ἰταλίαν), as Gabriele Giannantoni has recently argued.¹⁵ It is difficult to say for certain what precisely Aristotle understood by “Italy.” The accounts of Herodotus (3.136 and 138), Thucydides (8.91.2), and Aristotle’s student Theophrastus (*Hist. plant.* 5.8.1) provide us with the context for Aristotle’s thought: to the east, “Italy” bordered on or included Tarentum, and what followed was most likely considered Iapygia; to the west, “Italy” was bordered by Latium and likely extended at least to Poseidonia.¹⁶ Whether or not this area included the city-states that were under Samnite control after 350 BCE is unclear, in part because neither Aristotle nor any other philosopher refers to the Σαυνῖται as such. Pseudo-Scylax’ *Periplus*, a compilation of historical nuggets and geographical descriptions from the mid-fourth century BCE,¹⁷ is the earliest text to describe the Σαυνῖται and their geographical location within the Italian peninsula,¹⁸ although there is no evidence that Aristotle knew of this account.¹⁹ On the other hand, Aristotle had heard of the Lucanians, and in *On Marvelous Things Heard* (95, 838a10), he mentions their hegemony at Cumae in northern Campania without further comment.²⁰ His student Aristoxenus of Tarentum, who also had knowledge of the history and precepts of Pythagoreanism as transmitted (probably) via oral testimonies in Tarentum,²¹ lamented the “barbarization” (ἐκβεβαρβάρωσθαι) of Poseidonia after the conquest of the Lucanians (around 400 BCE), which, in his opinion, led to the corruption of musical and theatrical culture there.²² Such sentiments were

15. Giannantoni 2000: 287–91. Cf. Huffman 1993: 31–34.

16. On this subject, see especially Musti 2005: 73–77.

17. For the dating, which features a *terminus ante quem* in the 330s BCE, see Shipley 2008: 282.

18. Cf. Tagliamonte 1996: 3–6. Generally, on the term Σαυνῖται, see Tagliamonte 1996: 7–13.

19. It should also be noted that the associate of Plato, Eudoxus of Cnidus (F 319 Lasserre), refers to the peoples “near Iapygia and bordering on the Umbrians” as the Φελλεσσαῖοι, an otherwise unknown *ethnos*.

20. Aristotle, to be sure, was unlike many of his contemporaries and students, in that he was not demonstrably bothered by the presence of non-Greeks in the development of philosophy. See Horky 2009: 74–79.

21. Huffman 2006: 107 and 2008: 106 follows the *Suda* in proposing that Aristoxenus received training in Tarentum in his youth and with the Pythagorean Xenophilus at Athens.

22. Aristoxenus F 124 Wehrli = Ath. *Deipn.* 14.632a. On the increased military organization and presence of Lucanians in Campania at the end of the fifth century BCE, see De Juliis 1996: 237–38.

not unheard of in philosophical circles within the Greek world.²³ In Philip of Opus' dialogue involving the visit of the Chaldean Stranger to Plato, the sages joke about the failure of the "barbarian ear" to properly comprehend musical rhythm and pitch; likewise, in their own respective philosophical dialogues, Plato's associates Heraclides of Pontus and Aristotle both analogize ethnicity with ethics.²⁴ We might term this relationship "ethnoethics," by which we mean a correlation of ethnic cultural practices (especially those related to the tools of *paideia*, e.g. music, dancing, gymnastics, etc.) with generic ethical behaviors and modes of conduct.²⁵ It is a reasonable speculation that when Aristoxenus lamented the corruption of Poseidonian musical and theatrical culture, he was lamenting more generally the growing influence of the "barbarian" Lucanians on personal and political ethics among Greek city-states in Magna Graecia.

And so, when we examine in the surviving fragments of Aristoxenus' *Life of Archytas*²⁶ the speech of Archytas to Plato, we are surprised by the presence of the Samnite Herennius Pontius, father of the famous general Gavius Pontius who commanded the Samnite forces in the embarrassing surrender of the Romans at the Caudine Forks in 321 BCE.²⁷ In the speech of Archytas, the emphasis rests fully on the proper execution of personal moderation (in the face of desire and pleasure) for the sake of the preservation of the state (Cicero *On Old Age* 12.40–41 = Archytas F A9a ed. Huffman):

From this source [i.e. pleasure] are born betrayal of the fatherland (*patriae proditio*nes), from this the overthrow of the state (*rerum publicarum eversio*nes), from these secret conversations with the enemy. To sum up, there is no crime, no evil deed which the lust for pleasure does not

23. When Athenaeus, who preserves this fragment half a millennium later, associates the barbarization of Poseidonia with the loss of a noble and philosophical musical culture in his own Greek world, his sentiments are not far from those of Aristoxenus himself. Athenaeus, to be sure, does not see this "barbarization" to extend to the Persians of the sixth century BCE; he cites, for instance, the historian Dinon's description of the nobility of the Persian songs composed in the time of Cyrus the Great (633d2-e6 = FGrHist 690 F 90).

24. On this subject, see Horky 2009: 94–96 with n.188 and Thorp 1991: 66–68, who might have reconsidered the significance and extent of "ethnoethics" in Aristoxenus' moral philosophy if he had accounted for F 124 Wehrli. On the correlations between ethnicity and music, see Martin 2003: 153–59. The best study on the implication of ethnicity in ethics for Greek philosophers remains Sassi 1988 (esp. pages 104–16).

25. Hall 2002: 218 details how ethnicity, as a geographical construction, is implicit in ethics in the writings of Aristotle and of the Hippocratics: "the word *ethe* can mean 'manners,' 'customs,' 'disposition,' or 'character,' but in earlier Greek literature it tended to have a spatial connotation ('accustomed places,' 'abodes,' or 'haunts'), and that this connotation still underlies Aristotle's employment of the term is strongly suggested by the fact that he glosses the distinction between barbarians and Hellenes with an identification based on geography—those who dwell in Asia and those who dwell in Europe. We are, in other words, back to the environmentally deterministic theories of *Airs, Waters, Places*..."

26. Huffman 2008: 106n.12 (citing F 30 Wehrli) suggests that Aristoxenus' father Spintharus may have been the source of his information about Archytas.

27. For a very useful account of the role played by Herennius Pontius in Livy's description of the surrender, see Oakley 2005: 68–70.

drive us to undertake. Debauchery, indeed, and adultery and all such shameful behavior are aroused by no other allurements than those of pleasure. And, although nothing more excellent has been given to man than intellect, whether it be by nature or by some god, there is nothing so opposed to this divine benefaction and gift than pleasure. For, neither is there a place for moderation (*temperantia*) where desire is master (*libidine dominante*), nor is virtue able to gain any foothold under the tyranny of pleasure (*in voluptatis regno*). In order to make this better understood, he used to tell people to picture someone spurred on by the greatest bodily pleasure that can be perceived. He was of the opinion that no one would have any doubt that, so long as he was enjoying himself in this way, he would not be able to think about anything, to achieve anything by calculation (*ratione*), anything by deliberation (*cogitatione*).²⁸

Generally, Archytas' speech to Plato and Herennius Pontius emphasizes the importance of personal self-control for conduct of the city-state. This is in keeping with Archytas' complementary roles as philosopher and *stratēgos autokratōr* in fourth-century Tarentum; in the Archytan paradigm for practical ethics, philosophy—and the basic abstract principles of “calculation” (λογισμός/*ratio*) and “moderation” (σωφροσύνη/*temperantia*)—can and should be applied to the political realm in order to preserve the city-state. Likewise, as a passage attributed to Spintharus of Tarentum (Aristoxenus' father) attests, Archytas believed that moderation must be practiced at home, in the *oikos*, in one's dealing with the negligence of slaves.²⁹ In general, one aspect of the Tarentine Pythagorean philosophical system that made it attractive to Roman philosophers such as Cicero was its attention to the application of reason and individual ethics to political and economical supervision.³⁰

While no other descriptions of Plato's interaction with Archytas in 349 BCE survive, there are remarkable traces of the continuation of the story of Herennius Pontius in historical writings, particularly those texts of Roman history that derive from a source at least as old as the second century BCE, and likely older, as I will argue. It is notable that speeches ascribed to Herennius Pontius during the political and military affair at Caudine Forks in 321 BCE survive in no less than five historians: Dionysius of Halicarnassus (16.2.2–4), Livy (9.3.4–13), Valerius Maximus (7.2.ext.17), Appian (3.4.3–5), and Cassius Dio (F 36.11–14). In the opinion of S.P. Oakley, the accounts of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Appian, and Cassius Dio may derive from an earlier source, to which Livy also likely had access.³¹ Compositionally, Dionysius, Appian, and Dio each structure their

28. Translation by Huffman, slightly modified.

29. See Archytas F A7 Huffman (= Iambl. VP 197–98 and Aristoxenus F 30 Wehrli).

30. Archytas F A7 Text E Huffman (= Cic. Rep. 1.38.59). Cicero himself has Scipio and Laelius praise Archytas for realizing that anger and calculation (*ratio*) are at odds and that they must be mediated by “counsel” (*consilium*). *Consilium* here is likely to be related to Archytan *cogitatio*, or “deliberation,” as Huffman has translated F A9. Both passages can be reasonably assumed to derive from the same text of Aristoxenus, the *Life of Archytas*.

31. Cf. Oakley 2005: 69–70: “Comparison with the surviving parallel narratives allows us to illustrate the skill with which [Livy] has constructed this important scene. Appian (*Samm.* 4.6–13) provides us with a set-piece debate between Gavius Pontius and his father, with formal speeches

accounts as a formal debate, in contrast to the account of Livy, in which the wisdom is disseminated *per litteras*. Such a formal set-piece in the Greek historians is imitative of Thucydidean style, which, in the case of Dio, was noted by Photius and has been well-recognized among scholars.³² Moreover, there are several ways in which the accounts of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Livy, Valerius Maximus, and Appian are in agreement with that of Dio. All historical accounts of the affair at the Caudine Forks narrate a story in which an aged Herennius Pontius is called to Caudium by his son, the general Gavius Pontius, in order to advise him on what to do with the captured Romans. In each of these versions, Herennius Pontius proposes two avenues for resolving the situation, both considered “extreme” by the historians: either they should free the Romans and let them go unpunished, or they should kill the Romans immediately. In the sources where speeches attributed to Herennius Pontius exist, the general Gavius Pontius agonistically replies to his father that they should practice moderation—take a “middle course” (*media via*) and avoid “extremes” (ὑπερβολαί)³³—in order to humiliate the Romans and to avoid censure.³⁴ When Herennius Pontius hears this, he responds by weeping³⁵ or by predicting the violent retribution of the Romans for the embarrassment suffered at the hands of the Samnite military.³⁶ Like other “warning figures” from Greek epic, tragedy, and historiography, Herennius Pontius is a foreigner whose forethought, while exemplary, is ignored, and the rejection of his advice is later discovered to be a fatal mistake for the Samnites.³⁷ Unlike Archytas, Plato, or other philosophers who advocated a life of temperance, Herennius Pontius advocates *extreme* courses of action, either of which (it is implied in all treatments) would have profited the Samnites far more than the middle course.³⁸

But is the Samnite Herennius Pontius treated as a philosopher? The fragmentary account of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in which there survive only parts of speeches of Pontius and his son, preserves no external descriptions of the elder statesman. Appian simply describes him as an old man who has limited mobility

being given to each; and, since surviving fragments of D. H. (16. 2.2–4) and Dio (F 36.11–14) show that they too included this full exchange of views, this debate perhaps had its origin in some of the late annalistic sources shared by [Livy] and D. H.”

32. Phot. *Biblioth.* 71. Cf. Millar 1964: 42 with n.2 and Gowing 1992: 46 with n.25 (incl. bibliography).

33. Appian calls the two options ὑπερβολαί and later criticizes the Romans for not treating the Samnites moderately (μέτριον), whereas Livy appeals to the “middle course” (twice: *medium consilium* and *media via*). Only fragments of the speeches remain in the accounts of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Cassius Dio, so we cannot know whether they would have emphasized the extreme-versus-moderate course of action.

34. According to Appian’s version (3.4.4): “ὥς δ’ ἂν καὶ Ῥωμαίων τι τοῦ φρονήματος περιέλοιμι καὶ τὰ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους ἀδιάβλητος εἶην...”

35. In Appian’s version: ταῦτα τοῦ Ποντίου λέγοντος ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐδάκρυσε...

36. In Livy’s version, Herennius Pontius responds in direct discourse: “*ista quidem sententia*” inquit “*ea est, quae neque amicos parat nec inimicos tollit*” etc.

37. Cf. Oakley 2005: 68–69, with bibliography.

38. Here, I depart from Mele 2000: 438–40, who believes (without evidence) that Herennius Pontius adheres to the Archytan paradigm of “*vita semplace e moderata*.” The evidence suggests quite the opposite.

and needs to be brought by carriage,³⁹ and he may assume that the story is already well known, in which circumstance the emphasis would fall on his unique crafting of the speeches. Livy and Cassius Dio, however, are more suggestive. Livy calls Pontius *longe prudentissimus* (9.1.2) and describes the “force of mind and judgment” as flourishing (*vigebat vis animi consilii*); likewise, and importantly, Cassius Dio emphasizes the practical wisdom (φρόνησις) that comes with old age and experience.⁴⁰ These character descriptions of Herennius Pontius, then, only tenuously reference any theoretical philosophy, but the emphasis falls on the practical aspects of his wisdom: in the accounts of Livy, Appian, Valerius Maximus, and Cassius Dio, Pontius makes explicit appeal to the discussion of *benefits* (*beneficial/εὐεργεσίαι*), a topic that should be considered “philosophical” in the sense that it appealed both to personal ethics and politics.⁴¹ The most philosophical version of the speeches of Herennius Pontius is presented by Cassius Dio (8.12):

Disagreements (αἱ διαφοραί) are ended by benefits (εὐεργεσίαις). The greater the intensity of enmity to which a man has come, when he unexpectedly chances upon (παρὰ δόξαν τύχη)⁴² preservation instead of retribution, the more willing he is to abandon the latter and the more happy to yield to the former. And the greater the hatred of people at variance (in some way or another) with one another, when they have passed from friendship to enmity (ἐκ φιλίας ἐς ἔχθραν), the greater the love of people (ἐπὶ πλεῖον . . . φιλοῦσι) who, after a state of disagreement, have benefited (in some way or another) and are treated well by their benefactors. Now, the Romans desire greatly to excel in war, and at the same time they honor excellence; and so, forced by the nobility of their soul, they gain success in both, since, in all circumstances, they devote themselves to repay like for like in extremes (σπουδάζοντες αἰεὶ τὰ ὅμοια τοῖς ὁμοίοις καθ’ ὑπερβολὰς ἀμύνεσθαι).

In this fragment, Herennius Pontius advocates the liberation of the Roman soldiers, on the premise that, by giving the benefit of preservation to their enemies, the Samnites will themselves become beneficiaries of a deep political friendship with Rome.⁴³ What is striking in this fragment of Pontius’ speech is the proposition that

39. Originally, he only describes the old man Pontius as having been carried (φερόμενον ὑπὸ γήρως), but when he is carried away from Caudium, Appian mentions the carriage (ἐπιβὰς τῆς ἀπίνης) to which Livy refers (*senex plaustro . . . advectus*).

40. Cass. Dio F 36.14. Cf. Mele 2000: 439, although it is important to note that Mele does not discuss Cassius Dio’s speech.

41. Inwood 2005: 71–72 argues for the value of the discussion of benefits in moral philosophy.

42. The term παρὰ δόξαν is significant in historical writing that has been influenced both by Thucydides and by Peripateticism. It appears in Demetrius of Phalerum’s *On Fortune* (F 82A Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf), and, at the beginning of his *Histories* (1.1.4), Polybius states that τὸ παράδοξον τῶν πράξεων is his theme.

43. Compare Plutarch’s discussion of the proper treatment of enemies (i.e. with kindness) in *How to Profit by One’s Enemies* (*Mor.* 90e5–91c2).

the Romans always render like for like *in extremes*: extreme kindness, then, will result in kindness returned. Because the fragments of the alternate speech—in which Herennius Pontius apparently advocated the mass slaughter of the Roman troops—do not survive, we cannot know how Cassius Dio would have treated this situation in the light of the general statement about the Roman penchant for extremity. But what does survive is the warning to his son not to “insult” (ἀτιμασθῶσιν) the Romans, since, if the insult is extreme, the Romans will repay the insult with extreme violence.⁴⁴ What we have, then, is essentially the invocation of a form of justice in which extremes will beget extremes.⁴⁵ Cassius Dio’s presentation of Herennius Pontius’ speech to his son clarifies what Livy’s account, with its slightly more hackneyed treatment of “extremes” and “middle road,” has not: the “middle” road of initially enslaving the Romans and later striking up a peace treaty, in this case, appears to the young general as the way of moderation; but to the Romans, who are natural extremists, it is simply an offensive insult.⁴⁶ The exemplary lesson of Pontius’ speech lies in the realization that what appears to be the middle road to the victor appears nonetheless as an extreme offense to the vanquished.⁴⁷

The philosophy of benefits ascribed to Herennius Pontius by Cassius Dio is unique in antiquity: for example, Plutarch’s *How to Profit by One’s Enemies* only suggests that, at the level of individual competition, one may effectively vanquish his enemies by outdoing him in “care, usefulness, magnanimity, kind deeds, and benefits” (ἐπιμελείᾳ χρηστότητι μεγαλοφροσύνη φιλανθρωπίας εὐεργεσίας).⁴⁸ Other philosophical discussions of benefits also focus on the personal relationships that can be secured by their bestowal: while Cicero’s appeal to the proper apportionment of benefits to recipients engenders a practical political philosophy that is closer (but certainly not parallel) to the “like deserves and should be proportionate with like” philosophy attributed to Herennius Pontius,⁴⁹ Seneca’s emphasis on the interpersonal role of benefits, an emphasis that derives from his Stoic antecedents in Chrysippus, Cleanthes, and possibly Hecaton,⁵⁰ is less clearly

44. Cass. Dio F 36.14. Similar sentiments can be found in Appian’s account (3.3), where Herennius Pontius emphasizes the dangers of committing *hubris* against the Romans.

45. In this sense, Herennius Pontius’ wisdom takes the form of a “like-to-like” principle, which recalls archaic wisdom-traditions of the Presocratics Parmenides, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and Philolaus, among others.

46. Remarkably, this speech’s implicit lesson runs counter to the moralizing tendencies of Dio’s narrative voice, which (at F 39.5) argues in favor of maintaining due measure and moderation and (at 50.2–3) claims that those who lack *logismos* will rush into extremes.

47. This claim is reiterated in another fragmentary speech that lacks a speaker at Cass. Dio F 57.79.

48. Plut. *Mor.* 88b9–11.

49. Cic. *Off.* 1.42: *Videndum est enim, primum ne obsit benignitas et iis ipsis, quibus benigne videbitur fieri et ceteris, deinde ne maior benignitas sit quam facultates, tum ut pro dignitate cuique tribuatur; id enim est iustitiae fundamentum, ad quam haec referenda sunt omnia.*

50. For a full analysis of the sources, see Chaumartin 1985: chs. 1–3, but also see the important correctives of Inwood 2005: 67–73.

related to the account of the speech of the *prudentissimus* Samnite in the kindred accounts of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Livy, Appian, and Cassius Dio.⁵¹ The speeches ascribed to Herennius Pontius, then, afford us a tradition of discussing benefits that is independent of the Academic and Stoic paradigms that informed the political philosophies of both Cicero and Seneca, and all of this is suggestive evidence for a non-Stoic, likely Peripatetic, treatment of benefits that is preserved in the writings of the aforementioned historians.

Where might we find such a tradition that so strongly invokes Herennius Pontius as a wisdom-practitioner who stands as an exemplary figure for Romans? Livy's ascription of superlative *prudentia* and Cassius Dio's of φρόνησις to Pontius go far in suggesting the practical wisdom attributed to the Samnite, but they do not call him a *sapiens*. Only Valerius Maximus' account is so explicit. In a section identified as "Things Wisely Spoken or Done," Valerius gives exempla for the type of good fortune that rests entirely in the mind. Here, wisdom-practitioners are distinguished by their ethnicity, whether "Roman" and "foreign," and Herennius Pontius is exemplary of the latter (Val. Max. 7.2.ext.17.):

The Samnites too paid no small price for a similar mistake [to that of the Carthaginians] in that they neglected the salutary counsel of Herennius Pontius. Preeminent in authority and practical wisdom (*auctoritate et prudentia ceteros praestans*), he was consulted by the army and its leader, his own son, on what should be done about the Roman legions which had been shut in at the Caudine Forks. He replied that they should be dismissed unharmed. The next day, asked the same question, he said that they should be wiped out, so that either the favor of the enemy should be earned by a grand benefit (*ut aut maximo beneficio gratia hostium emeretur*), or their strength broken by a crushing loss (*aut gravissima iactura vires confringerentur*). But the thoughtless rashness of the victors spurned either course of expediency (*sed improvida temeritas victorum ... utramque partem spernit utilitatis*). Sending the legions under the yoke, it fired them to their own destruction.

Oakley suggests that, given certain discrepancies in the telling of the story between this version and that of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Livy, Appian, and Cassius Dio, it is possible that Valerius Maximus derived his version from an independent tradition. Each historian's account (except for Dionysius of Halicarnassus', which is too fragmentary to tell) emphasizes the practical wisdom of Herennius Pontius, especially vis-à-vis the bestowal of benefits, which functions for the sake of securing long-standing alliances with the Romans.⁵² Valerius Maximus,

51. Seneca discusses benefits bestowed in war in a way that relates to Herennius Pontius' speeches only once (*Ben.* 3.6.2), but his account is overly vague: *Nostri maiores, maximi scilicet viri, ab hostibus tantum res repetierunt, beneficia magno animo dabant, magno perdebant.*

52. For Cassius Dio, see above. Livy (9.3.10) has Herennius Pontius emphasize the possible value of establishing *perpetuam pacem amicitiamque* by means of the conferral of *beneficium*;

moreover, figures Pontius as a *sapiens alienus* alongside Socrates, Solon, Plato, Xenocrates, Thales, Themistocles, Aristotle, Anaxagoras, Hanno, and others. While certain passages from the foreign *exempla* can be traced back to Pompeius Trogus and Cicero, as Bloomer has acutely noted, the presence of so-called minor historians as sources for Valerius Maximus' wise actions and sayings should not be overlooked.⁵³ And although we cannot be absolutely sure what the ultimate provenance of Valerius Maximus' knowledge of Herennius Pontius was, there is good reason to speculate that the ultimate source here too is, unsurprisingly, the Peripatetic Aristoxenus of Tarentum, whom Valerius cites as a source for information (as *Aristoxenus musicus*) about Xenophilus, Aristoxenus' teacher, in Book 8.⁵⁴ Valerius need not have had a direct knowledge of Aristoxenus: surely both Cicero and Dionysius of Halicarnassus had access to the writings of Aristoxenus, and it may be significant that the latter too, when citing the Peripatetic philosopher, refers to him as Ἀριστοξένος ὁ μουσικός.⁵⁵ It is indeed most unfortunate that the account of Herennius Pontius in the 16th book of Dionysius' histories does not survive, except for a tantalizing fragment of the speech that advocates total destruction of the Romans by the Samnites.

A hypothetical picture of transmission that develops looks something like this: an original account, which ascribes to Herennius Pontius speeches that develop an ethical theory of benefits, was written by Aristoxenus of Tarentum (whether the *Life of Archytas* or another text is uncertain), and while this tradition was available to Livy, Cicero, and Valerius Maximus in some form (and perhaps through a single intermediary source earlier than Dionysius but later than Aristoxenus), these authors chose not to elaborate upon the Greek philosophical elements of Herennius Pontius' speeches. The other accounts of Herennius Pontius' speeches—those of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Appian, and especially Cassius Dio—also derive from the same Aristoxenian tradition, but they demonstrate a Peripatetic heritage that links them more closely with philosophical concepts familiar to readers of Aristotle. It may be significant that those authors who have preserved the philosophical aspects of Herennius Pontius' speeches are Greek, whereas the authors writing in Latin extract or minimize philosophical paradigms and terminology almost entirely.

III. PERIPATETIC CONTEXTS FOR HERENNIUS PONTIUS' PHILOSOPHY OF BENEFITS

Appian depicts (3.3) him as drawing a strong distinction between extreme benefit and extreme punishment (εὐεργεσίας ἢ κολάσεως ὑπερβολή).

53. Bloomer 1992: 104–108, 144–46.

54. Val. Max. 8.13.ext.3 = Aristoxenus F 20b Wehrli: *biennio minor Xenophilus Chalcidensis Pythagoricus, sed felicitate non inferior, si quidem, ut ait Aristoxenus musicus, omnis humani incommodi expers in summo perfectissimae doctrinae splendore extinctus est.*

55. D. H. *de composit. verborum* 14 p. 49 U. -R. = F 88 Wehrli.

There is evidence that links the philosophical analysis of benefits in the speeches ascribed to Herennius Pontius to early Peripateticism. The traditions that illustrate the significance of benefits for the proper conduct of an individual or a city-state are as old as Plato and Xenophon, but they receive clear and distinctive treatment among the Peripatetics, as Brad Inwood has argued.⁵⁶ The best illustration of this is a pseudo-Aristotelian letter to Philip of Macedon, in which “Aristotle” attempts to convince Philip that to pity the unfortunate—a bestowal of benefits—is the mark of civilized behavior, while to exercise anger is “barbaric” ([Arist.] *Epistle 4* in *Aristotelis Privatorum Scriptorum Fragmenta* ed. Plezia):

Most philosophers have claimed that bestowing benefits is godlike (τὴν εὐεργεσίαν θεῶν ἰσόμειρον παρῆσχεύασαν). For, simply put, the giving and interchange of favor holds together the lives of men, some giving, some receiving, and some giving back in return. That is why it is noble and just to pity all those who are undeservedly unfortunate . . . pity being a mark of the civilized soul, and hard-heartedness a mark of the uneducated; for it is shameful and wicked to gaze upon excellence suffering misfortune (ἀτυχοῦσαν). Hence I also praise my friend Theophrastus who says that favor should be no grounds for regret and brings noble rewards in the form of praise from those who are benefited. That is why sensible men ought to bestow favor on many, reflecting that, apart from the good repute, there will be a service which can be repaid if fortunes should be reversed (ἐν ταῖς μεταβολαῖς τῶν πραγμάτων). And even if all beneficiaries do not repay the favor, at least one of them will. So try to be ready and eager with your benefactions (πρόθυμος . . . ταῖς εὐεργεσίαις) and restrained in your anger (ἔποχος τοῖς θυμοῖς); for the former is regal and civilized (βασιλικόν τε καὶ ἡμέρον), and the latter barbaric and hateful (βάρβαρόν τε καὶ στυγερτόν) . . .⁵⁷

“Aristotle” advocates the giving of benefits to virtuous people who have suffered misfortune on the grounds that fortunes can be reversed, which is precisely the lesson being taught in Cassius Dio’s version of the speeches of Herennius Pontius. Moreover, “Aristotle” emphasizes the role of benefits in sustaining political alliances during the fourth century BCE⁵⁸; they function as mechanisms for political allegiance here and elsewhere, as a variety of other letters addressed to Alexander the Great and Philip of Macedon by both Aristotle and the Platonist

56. Inwood 2005: 65–69.

57. Translated, with slight modifications, by Brad Inwood. All other citations of the epistles of “Aristotle” come from this edition.

58. In this sense, the writer/s of the *Epistles* to Philip of Macedon are expanding upon Aristotle’s description of the relationship of a king to his subjects at *EN* 8.1.1, 1155a6–10 and 8.11.1, 1161a10–14.

Speusippus attest.⁵⁹ But the most extensive study of benefits during the second half of the fourth century BCE is Books 8 and 9 of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle develops a holistic description of the role that bestowal and acceptance of benefits plays in the establishment of friendship (φιλία). While Aristotle does not discuss benefits vis-à-vis the civilization/barbarism nor the friend/enemy paradigms—both of which are implicit in the accounts of Herennius Pontius—he does propose theories of *proportionate benefaction* similar to those encountered in the speech of Herennius Pontius as developed by Cassius Dio, and, as we will see, by Appian.

We will recall the gnomic phrase expressed by Herennius Pontius in Cassius Dio's account of the situation at Caudium: “the greater the hatred of people at variance (in some way or another) with one another, when they have passed from friendship to enmity, the greater the love of people who, after a state of disagreement, have benefited (in some way or another) and are treated well by their benefactors.”⁶⁰ In Dio's version, Herennius Pontius' argument on the proportioning of benefits goes something like this: generally speaking, the hatred of peoples who are in a state of enmity is proportionately equivalent to the love of those same peoples, once they have come into a relationship of friendship. Herennius Pontius shifts from the general rule to the particular case of the Romans: “the Romans desire greatly to excel in war, and at the same time they honor excellence; and so, forced by the nobility of their soul, they gain success in both, since, in all circumstances, they devote themselves to repay like for like in extremes” (σπουδάζοντες ἀεὶ τὰ ὅμοια τοῖς ὁμοίοις καθ' ὑπερβολὰς ἀμύνεσθαι).⁶¹ Romans, who are extremists in war and in excellence, will be either the greatest friends, or the greatest enemies, since the “nobility of their soul” (ἡ γενναιότης τῆς ψυχῆς) compels them to repay like for like proportionately. We see something similar, although with important distinctions, in the description of unequal friendships⁶² in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (8.8.5, 1159b1–9):

Moreover, it is in this way that unequals may most nearly become friends: they can be made proportionate (ἰσάζονται ἄν).⁶³ Equality and likeness

59. [Arist.] *Ep.* 2.1 (πρὸς εὐεργεσίαν); *Ep.* 3.3 (διὸ πειρῶ τὴν ἀρχὴν μὴ εἰς ὕβριν ἀλλ' εἰς εὐεργεσίαν κατατίθεσθαι . . .); Speusippus F 156 Isnardi Parente (letter to Philip).

60. Cass. Dio F 36.12.

61. *Ibid.* Appian (3.4.3) also preserves a similar description of the proportionate-benefit theory of friends/enemies. See below.

62. Generally, on unequal friendships in ancient thought, see Konstan 1997: 93–95.

63. I have translated this term as “make proportionate” because of what follows in Aristotle's argument: the point isn't that unequals can become equal to one another, but that unequals *can achieve friendship* through a kind of “proportioning” in which the worse person can render a “return” that is proportionate to the superiority of the better person. Cf. *EN* 8.13.1, 1162b2–4: τοὺς ἴσους μὲν κατ' ἰσότητα δεῖ τῷ φιλεῖν καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς ἰσάζειν, τοὺς δ' ἀνίσους τῷ τὸ ἀνάλογον ταῖς ὑπεροχαῖς ἀποδιδόναι. Unequal relationships are often found in the household, e.g. between father and son, husband and wife, etc., of which the latter pair is expected to be “proportional.” On this subject, see Price 1989: 171–73.

are friendship, especially when likeness occurs among those who are similar in excellence. For, being stable in themselves, they also remain stable with regard to one another, and they neither request nor give base services, but they prevent them, so to say; for it is characteristic of good men neither to go wrong themselves nor to let their friends do so. Wicked men, however, have no steadfastness, since they do not even remain similar to themselves. . . .

Aristotle here wishes to make clear that it is possible for those who are not equal because of circumstances to become friends by means of a proportioning. Since, in the case of the battle of the Caudine Forks, circumstances have placed the Romans in a position vastly inferior to that of the Samnites, according to Aristotle's philosophy, it would still be possible for them to become friends by means of a proportioning.⁶⁴ What would this proportioning look like, and how could it be implemented?

Surprisingly, in expounding theories of friendship between persons, Aristotle did not consider the transition from enemy to friend.⁶⁵ This is a remarkable fact given the significance that one might assign to discussing "enemies" as a means to develop theories of friendship. In fact, discussion of enmity is notably lacking in Aristotle's ethics, despite a robust tradition of theorization about the relationship of friendship to enmity in philosophical and sophistic writings of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, including Greek tragedy.⁶⁶ It may well be the case that Aristotle felt that the discussion of enmity, which could be related to the discussion of "opposites," would be more appropriate for a work on metaphysics, theater, or politics.⁶⁷ It would seem fruitful, moreover, to examine the problem

64. There is no reason to assume that either the Romans or the Samnites would be considered "unstable" or, worse, "wicked" with regard to excellence in any of the accounts of the Battle of the Caudine Forks.

65. Aristotle only approaches this subject when discussing, in the *Politics* (4.9.6, 1295b24–29), how community is a relationship based in friendship; proof of this, he claims, is that human beings are not willing to share in a community (κοινωνεῖν) with enemies, not even on a journey. What follows is interesting for establishing the analogy between the mechanics of personal and political friendships as described in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: "In fact, the city-state desires to consist of men both equal and similar as much as possible, and this state subsists especially in the middle classes; the result is that, by necessity, this city-state is best governed that consists of those elements out of which, we say, the natural composition of a city exists." To be sure, it is a curious fact that in the *History of Animals* (esp. 9.1, 608b26–609a3) Aristotle does discuss the possibility that animals at war with one another could become "tamed" and something like "associates" (σύνεδρα) if they were not required to compete over resources. I owe this point to Mariska Leunissen.

66. Cf., e.g., Antipho Soph. DK 87 B 49; Gorg. DK 82 B 11a; Pl. *Lys.* 213a6–c9. On the relationship between friend and enemy in Theognidean poetry, see Konstan 1997: 49–52. For a discussion of like-to-like and the attraction of opposites in Homer, Hesiod, Plato, and Aristotle, see Price 1989: 5–9. The relationship between friendship and enmity is a relatively common theme in the writings of the Greek tragedians Sophocles and Euripides, on which see especially Dover 1994: 180–84.

67. The subject of attraction of opposites (*EN* 8.8.6–7, 1159b12–24), such as between a rich and poor man, a knowledgeable and an ignorant man, and the lover and loved (ἐραστής και ἐρώμενος),

of friends/enemies as presented by Herennius Pontius with appeal to Aristotle's treatment of "extremes," about which he has a great deal to say in the *Politics*; but Aristotle does not explicitly discuss this topic vis-à-vis friendship/enmity.⁶⁸ Indeed, Aristotle remains surprisingly quiet on this important issue. There may be other reasons for the absence of treatment of the relationship between friends and enemies in Aristotle's writings: discussion of the transition from enemy to friend would likely require an analysis of how friendships develop, about which, as John Cooper has noted, Aristotle has little to say.⁶⁹ With regard to our study, however, we can identify two interests shared by the various speeches attributed to Herennius Pontius and the writings of Aristotle: (a) the nature of proportioning between unequals, and (b) the place of benefits within the establishment of a friendship among unequals.

Concerning the former (a), Aristotle is quite clear: in order to preserve a friendship between unequals, the superior person should receive a larger share of honor and the inferior person should receive a larger share of profit. Such a proportioning, which Aristotle refers to as proportioning "according to worth" (κατ' ἀξίαν)⁷⁰ distinguishes between two types of reward and things for which each reward is the proper response: honor is the gift appropriate for excellence and benefaction (τῆς μὲν γὰρ ἀρετῆς καὶ τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἡ τιμὴ γέρας), whereas the advantage bestowed by the superior man is a "protection from lack/deficiency" (τῆς δ' ἐνδείας ἐπικουρία τὸ κέρδος) for the inferior man.⁷¹ The proportioning that preserves friendship between a superior and an inferior,

is dismissed for discussion because it is likely to be incidental (κατὰ συμβεβηχός) rather than formal (καθ' αὐτό). Aristotle then suggests that opposites might actually seek not one another, but the mean between them, which he considers the Good. As such, he draws analogies with dry and wet, hot and cold, etc., which form the basis for his dismissal of this subject in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle's theory of opposition is more thoroughly treated in *Metaphysics* I (10.4.8–10.7.12, 1055b1–1057b34). In the *Poetics* (14, 1453b14–22), Aristotle claims that tragedy deals with actions either terrible or pitiable between friends, enemies, or neither. It would initially appear that Aristotle was challenging the popular opinion of seeing friendship and enmity as opposites. In the *Eudemian Ethics* (3.7, 1233b30–34), for example, Aristotle argues that friendship is the mean (μεσότης) between enmity and flattery on the grounds that "the man who readily and in all respects attends to [another man's] desires is a flatterer, whereas the man who offers resistance to all [another man's desires] is full of enmity; the man who neither follows nor resists every pleasure [of another man], but only [follows] what is manifestly best, is a friend." But Aristotle soon (1234b1) goes on to clarify that the mean itself is "more opposite" (ἐναντιώτερον) to the extremes than the extremes are to one another. For a useful recent discussion of the difference between "formal" and "incidental" friendships in Aristotle's writings, see Nehamas 2010: 219–20.

68. In general, Aristotle emphasizes how extremities threaten the equality that sustains political communities. In the *Politics* (2.4.8, 1267a13), Aristotle suggests that the greatest acts of injustice come about by means of "extremes" (ἀδικοῦσι γε τὰ μέγιστα διὰ τὰς ὑπερβολάς), and even the person who represents extreme distinction in excellence (κατ' ἀρετῆς ὑπερβολήν) presents a threat to those kinds of political constitutions that emphasize communal equality (*Pol.* 3.8.1ff., 1284a4ff.).

69. Cf. Cooper 1998: 332.

70. If, indeed, that is what is meant at *EN* 8.14.3, 1163b11–12.

71. For a useful discussion of the problems involved in understanding this passage, see Pakaluk 1998: 144–47.

then, involves return for benefits that have been received by the inferior (in the form of honor); those benefits, it may be conjectured, are intended to function as a protection for the inferior man. Benefits thus transferred are one means of protecting the weaker of the two parties from lack or deficiency, the consequence of which is the “proportioning” the two parties according to worth. Aristotle goes on to say that the same applies more generally to the world of politics.

Compare the advice of Herennius Pontius to his son, as presented by Appian (3.4.3):

My son, there is only one cure for great enmity: the extreme, whether in benefaction or punishment (εὐεργεσίας ἢ κολάσεως ὑπερβολή). Now punishments terrify, but benefits conciliate. Know that the first and greatest of victories is to treasure up good fortune; release them all unharmed, without shame or any loss whatsoever, in order that the greatness of your benefaction may be preserved. The Romans, so I hear, are most eager for distinction in honor (φιλοτιμότατοι). But, once they have been made inferior by benefits alone (μόναις εὐεργεσίαις ἡττώμενοι), they will compete with you in regard to favor. You have it in your hands to acquire this benefit of immortal peace.

Appian’s version of Herennius Pontius’ speech is remarkably compact. While it lacks the emphasis on reversal of fortunes that we saw in Cassius Dio’s version, it still retains the characteristics of a philosophical speech preserved by his source. The dynamics, I suggest, are derived from a Peripatetic source, which would naturally place emphasis on the types of gifts appropriate to each party within an unequal friendship. Note for instance that the possible shift from enemy to friend is reflected in the dynamics of inequality among peoples: the Romans, now made inferior, still seek to acquire honor, which, according to Aristotle, is a fitting reward for a superior. In this sense, Herennius Pontius’ speech as preserved by Appian corresponds with Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* by emphasizing the marks of status (superior and inferior) and the consequent rewards that signify and distinguish each status (bestowal of benefits vs. honor) within a relationship proportioned “according to worth.” Pontius adapts Aristotle’s paradigm by arguing that the bestowal of benefits without punishment will not only mark the inferiority of the Romans; it will incite in them the desire to render a beneficial return in the form of a peace, thus restoring them to the higher status they once enjoyed (since only the superior is able to bestow benefits). This peace then would be the “favor” or “benefit” that would, in Aristotle’s terms, “make proportionate” the relationship of superior to inferior to such an extent that they would become, at the very least, friends, and, ideally, something like equals. In the process of shifting the Romans from a position of inferiority to a stable friendship and possible equality, benefaction is the mechanism to be employed by the Samnites.

Given the fact that the speeches of Herennius Pontius as preserved by later historians of Rome share important similarities with Aristotle's theory of unequal friendship, it becomes more likely that each of these later accounts are derived from a Peripatetic source: the best candidate, again, would be Aristoxenus of Tarentum, who, as Carl Huffman has recently argued, illustrated "Pythagorean" ethics in his *Pythagorean Precepts*.⁷² It is worth considering other thematic and topical correlations within the speeches attributed to Herennius Pontius by Cassius Dio and the writings of Aristoxenus. Among other things, both Cassius Dio and Aristoxenus in the *Pythagorean Precepts* (F 41 Wehrli = Stob. *Ecl.* 1.6.18) stress the role that the divine type of *τύχη* plays in limiting what reason could achieve:

Concerning *τύχη* they [i.e. the Pythagoreans] said the following: a part of it is divine (τι δαιμόνιον μέρος), for some inspiration arises from the divine for some people, either for the better or for the worse, and it is clearly in accordance with precisely this that some are lucky (εὐτυχεῖς) and some are unlucky (ἀτυχεῖς). This is most clearly seen when those who do something with no prior planning and at random are often successful, while those who do something after planning in advance and taking correct precautions fail.⁷³

Now, regarding the role that fortune plays in the writings of Cassius Dio, scholars have generally accepted the view of Fergus Millar, who has argued that, in general, the speeches of Cassius Dio are free compositions written by the historian himself, and that the sententious moralizing found there, which "emphasiz[es] the instability of human fortune," is "commonplace."⁷⁴ Human fortune, to be sure, is a ubiquitous theme in the speeches of Cassius Dio, but it is not thereby to be considered "commonplace." Theorization about the role that fortune plays in political life forms a significant thematic *topos* not only among historical writers from Thucydides onward but also, importantly, in the ethical and political doctrine of the philosopher Aristotle and his school.⁷⁵ When we read Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* alongside Cassius Dio, we detect how the relationship between τὸ δαιμόνιον and *τύχη* as described by Aristoxenus is parallel to that described by Cassius Dio in his attempts to describe the relationship between divinity, which aids Dio in his task and is responsi-

72. In two publications: Huffman 2006 and 2008.

73. Translation by Huffman, with minor changes. Aristoxenus may be adapting this theory from Aristotle, who claims (*EN* 9.6, 1179b21–3), "it is clear that natural endowment is not in our control, but it is underlying for the lucky owing to some 'causes divine'—how truly said!"

74. Millar 1964: 76. He describes Dio's speeches in this way (p. 79): "[they] could have been put in at any point in his History at which the relevant moral situation occurred." Millar includes the speech of Herennius Pontius in this group, calling his sentiments "unexceptionable." Gowing 1992: 227–28 follows Millar, quite surprisingly, without consideration of the philosophical elements within the speeches to which he himself makes reference earlier in his book (pp. 30–31).

75. On Thucydides and *τύχη*, see Edmunds 1975 and, more recently, Reynolds 2009: 346–54. For a thorough examination of the role of *τύχη* in Aristotle's metaphysics and ethics, see Buddensiek 1999.

ble for the position that one might attain, and fortune, which is an indicator of success or failure. More specific to our case, Cassius Dio (F 36.10) brackets the Caudine Forks episode with a fortune-based claim: initially, he notes, “so great a turn of Fortune did [the Romans] experience” (ἐς τοῦτο γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἡ τύχη περιστή), and he closes this episode (F 36.22) with the argument that “thus did the Fortune of both peoples turn to the opposite in the shortest amount of time (ἡ τύχη πρὸς τὰ ἐναντία ... περιστᾶσα) ... and she also showed in this situation that she was powerful in all things.” For Dio, the Caudine Forks episode is proof for the argument that fortune is the most powerful force in human existence.

In contrast to the accounts of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Livy, Appian, and Valerius Maximus, the account of Cassius Dio uniquely stresses how τύχη reverses the circumstances of human life.⁷⁶ Such a reference is striking, since Stoicism, to which Cassius Dio regularly appealed, denies the sorts of contingencies that attend fortune.⁷⁷ Indeed, among philosophers, only Aristotle and his students place so much emphasis on the role that τύχη plays in reversals that occur in political history.⁷⁸ If Cassius Dio employs philosophical concepts in describing turns of fortune, we ought to consider the possibility that his source preserved such language⁷⁹ and, moreover, that he did so within a larger preexisting (and non-Stoic) intellectual framework that we might attribute to an original source that possessed Peripatetic tendencies.⁸⁰ Like Demetrius of Phalerum, whose theory of

76. Dionysius (16.2.2), in contrast to Dio, introduces this episode by referring to the lightning that produces “vicissitudes that reverse human fortunes” (καραισμοὶ ... καὶ μεταβολαὶ ... εἰς τὰναντία τρέποντες τὰς ἀνθρωπίνους τύχας), thus positing a Stoic system of causation. In general, Dionysius adheres to a Stoic preference for the principle of divine providence (πρόνοια) over τύχη, on which see Ferrary 1988: 265–76. Dio, on the other hand, refers to τύχη as that which, according to Gowing 1992: 30 with n.36, “could make the difference between success and failure.” Other examples of the political influence of τύχη in Dio’s *Histories*: F 21.1, F 40.37–38, and F 43.4.

77. Cf. Gowing 1992: 30–31 and Inwood 1985: 121–22.

78. E.g. Arist. *Pol.* 5.3, 1302b34–1303a10, where Aristotle describes certain “constitutional revolutions” (μεταβολαὶ τῶν πολιτειῶν) that occur “on account of disproportionate growth” (δι’ αὔξησιν τὴν παρὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον) as “accidental” (διὰ τύχας). It should be noted that Plato, especially in the *Laws* (e.g. 709a1ff., 747c1–d1), and Democritus (e.g. DK68 A67, A68, A70, B3, B119) also include chance in their own descriptions of the mechanisms of political history, although in the latter case, there is room for debate about chance’s causal function (on which, see Taylor 1999: 188ff.). For Demetrius and Aristoxenus, see below.

79. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1.4.1) attacks those predecessors who posited bad fortune (τὸ αὐτοματισμὸν) and unjust chance (τύχη ἄδικος) as the causes of the loss of Greek hegemony. He is certainly referring to Polybius, who regularly employed τύχη and αὐτόματον causatively (cf. Walbank 1957: 16), but it is likely that he is referring to others as well. This terminology originates with Aristotle, who explicitly demarcates the domains of τύχη and τὸ αὐτόματον at *Phys.* 2.6, 197b20–37; interestingly, this terminology is not replicated by any of the extant Peripatetics after Aristotle except once by Theophrastus (*On Sweat* 22 ed. Fortenbaugh).

80. Gruen 1984: 251–55 has argued for the significance of the paradigms of Greek history in the early Roman annalistic historians of the third and second centuries BCE. Notably, he sees the Pythagoreanism of Tarentum as a significant indicator of the “strong pull” that Hellenism was exercising on the Roman elite.

fortune exercised a great deal of influence over Polybius' account of causation,⁸¹ Aristoxenus may have been quite influential for both early and later Roman historiographers, including Cassius Dio. Once again, Aristoxenus' description of Pythagorean ethics seems to be lurking in the shadows behind much more of Cassius Dio's account of Herennius Pontius than scholars have generally recognized.

Nevertheless, we should not be quick to conclude that Aristoxenus' inclusion of the story of Herennius Pontius in the fragmentary *Life of Archytas*—notably, as an auditor to Archytas' speech on the ethics of temperance—justifies the possibility that Pontius himself was a Pythagorean, or that the source of these speeches (wherever they might have appeared) wished to present him as such.⁸² If indeed, as I have suggested, the ethical theories contained in the later speeches of Herennius Pontius originally derive from the account of Aristoxenus, they function to establish a point of view counter to that of Archytas, specifically, and Pythagorean ethics more generally, at least as Aristoxenus imagined them.⁸³ The ethical position developed in the speeches attributed to Herennius Pontius makes use of the technical terminology and basic philosophical mechanisms employed by Aristotle and the writer/s of the Aristotelian *Letters to Philip*, and as such it reveals the Peripatetic superstructure—marked by proportionate benefaction—to which it has been appropriated; but, importantly, it eschews all appeal to temperance or mediation that we find in the ethics of the Pythagoreans, Plato, and Aristotle. Instead, Pontius' ethics—and idealized Samnite ethics, by extension—are based on the principle of extremes: any response to people who are characterized by excellence in war or extreme desire for honor must be extreme, whether extreme in its beneficence or in its aggression. For Herennius Pontius and the Samnites, the supreme danger is in the mean itself.

Remarkably, for the Roman and Greek historians who preserve the speeches of Herennius Pontius, this policy of advocating “extreme proportional benefaction” is demonstrative of exemplary *prudentia* or *φρόνησις*. In spite of the notion that many aspects of the story of Herennius Pontius are derived from Peripatetic ethical theories and the significance of benefits for the preservation of friendships, it is doubtful whether the ascription of practical wisdom to the Samnite *sapiens* can be traced back to Aristoxenus. More likely, I would suggest, Herennius Pontius' advocacy of extreme responses to extremes is indicative of a mode of ethical

81. Polybius (1.4.1) considered *τύχη* to be the force that “leaned” (ἐκλινε) nearly all affairs of the known world to a single end, and he argued (1.1.2) that history's function is to recall the calamities of other peoples in order to learn how to bear “the vicissitudes of fortune” (τὰς τῆς τύχης μεταβολάς). Walbank 1957: 45 notes that this version of *τύχη* is that of the Peripatetic Demetrius of Phalerum (Polyb. 29.21 = F 82A Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf), which Demetrius describes as that “which deals with our lives as a free agent, effecting all things in complete disregard of our calculations and demonstrating its power in things we did not expect (ἐν τοῖς παραδόξοις)” (trans. Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf).

82. Such is the implicit assumption of Huffman 2005: 329.

83. Cf. Mele 1981: 74–76.

behavior that Aristoxenus criticized. After all, part of the project in Aristoxenus' *Life of Archytas* was to distinguish the proper ethics of the Pythagorean from other competitive ethical systems: the ethical theory of Archytas, which emphasizes personal temperance and self-control (σωφροσύνη καὶ ἐγκράτεια) for preservation of the state,⁸⁴ is antithetical to the extreme hedonism promoted by the Syracusan sophistic "voluptuary" Polyarchus.⁸⁵ Moreover, in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, Aristoxenus contrasts the impulsive character of human beings with "a certain self-control and order" (σωφρονισμός τις καὶ τάξις).⁸⁶ If we recall the fact that Aristoxenus lamented the "barbarization" of Poseidonia by the Lucanians, we can more clearly imagine where Herennius Pontius fit into Aristoxenus' description of the proper modes of ethical behavior: like Plato, who was present at Archytas' speech and whom Aristoxenus criticized elsewhere, Herennius Pontius was constructed as a figure whose ethical philosophy was insufficient for the preservation of proper order, symmetry, and harmony within human lives, either at the level of individual human or of collective city-state.

IV. ROME AND THE PRACTICAL WISDOM OF HERENNIUS PONTIUS

It is important, however, to note that this is not how the Romans retold the story of Herennius Pontius: in contrast to their Greek source in the writings of Aristoxenus, the Romans recognized in Herennius Pontius a practical philosopher whose capacity to understand the character of what lay opposite him and to propose a course of action appropriate to the situation exemplified *prudencia*. Given the ethnic diversity of the Italian Peninsula from the mid-fourth century forward and the ends to which Rome went in establishing its hegemony—by means of political alliances as much as through military aggression—it is possible that Romans displayed less xenophobia against Italians than the Greeks of Tarentum, who had had frustrated relations with Lucanians and Samnites for at least a century (in spite of the political necessity for alliances with them).⁸⁷ From the point of

84. Archytas A9 Huffman (Ath. *Deipn.* 12.545a = Aristoxenus F 50 Wehrli). Interestingly, Archytas' ethics are achieved by means of a "leveling" (ὁμαλίζειν; cf. ὁμαλῆς) of the citizens of the state, if we are to follow Huffman in believing that the criticism of the "lawgivers" by Polyarchus refers to the political philosophy of Archytas and/or the Tarentine Pythagoreans. As Huffman 2005: 317 notes, this concept appears nowhere in the political philosophy of Plato, and only in reference to idealistic political reformers such as Phaleas in Aristotle's works.

85. Note that Aristotle too, in the *Eudemian Ethics* (1.4, 1215a35-b2), distinguishes three "ways of living" (βίαι), the philosophical, the political, and the voluptuary (ἀπολαυστικός). When describing the voluptuary life (1.5, 1216a15ff.), he uses Sardanapallus of Assyria and Smindyrides of Sybaris (in Magna Graecia) as exemplars. If Aristoxenus were to have followed his teacher in describing three general types of "ways of living," he likely would have ascribed the philosophical life to Archytas, the political life to Herennius Pontius, and the voluptuary life to Polyarchus. But, in the absence of corroborating evidence, this can only be speculation.

86. Aristoxenus F 33 Wehrli = Iambl. *VP.* 174–75.

87. On the complex history of the Tarentines with the Italic peoples, see especially De Juliis 2000: 21–30. We should not rush to conclusions on this issue, though, since the position of

view of the Greeks, the Romans, too, were “barbarians,” and it is during this period that we see the desire on the part of Romans to secure links between their second king, Numa, and the great sage Pythagoras, who toed the line between Greek and Italian.⁸⁸ Moreover, for the Romans, the greater concern was for an ethical code of behavior that would allow its political agents to respond flexibly to a world of shifting allegiances, to strike up a friendship when the moment required, and thereby to secure good fortune for the future.

In this sense, the *prudentia* ascribed to the Samnite philosopher Herennius Pontius emphasizes the same sorts of concerns as the writings of another “barbarian” wisdom-practitioner from the end of the fourth century BCE: the Roman politician and philhellene⁸⁹ Appius Claudius Caecus (consul 307 and 296 BCE), who also has been linked to fourth-century Tarentine Pythagoreanism, generally, and to the writings of Archytas, specifically.⁹⁰ Only three tantalizing fragments of Appius Claudius Caecus’ gnomic *Sententiae* survive, but they demonstrate a surprising relationship with the speeches attributed to Herennius Pontius.⁹¹ The text (unfortunately problematic)⁹² of one related fragment, as preserved by Priscian (F 2 Blänsdorf = Prisc. *Gram.* VIII.18), is as follows:

Amicum cum vides, obliviscere miserias,
Inimicum, si es commentus, nec libens aequae.

When you see a friend, you will forget your distresses;
Equally, (when you see) an enemy, if you are smart, then, you won’t
(forget your distresses) voluntarily.

The *sententia*, which is composed in Saturnians and appears to be a distich, is remarkably compact, but this characteristic complicates interpretation of it.⁹³

Aristoxenus cannot be said inductively to represent the position of all Tarentines vis-à-vis non-Greek speakers in Italy at the end of the fourth century BCE. Material and historical evidence, to be sure, suggests that Tarentum and the Samnites were allied following the incident at Caudium (cf. Mele 2000: 436–37).

88. On this subject, see Wiseman 2008: 158–66 and Humm 2005: 547–54.

89. On Claudius’ philhellenism, see the extremely careful and rich analysis of Humm 2005: 483–540.

90. Cf. Humm 2005: 527–39.

91. For a good general discussion of the *Sententiae* of Appius Claudius Caecus as a “means of transmitting aristocratic ‘truth,’” see Dufallo 2001: 133 with n.34.

92. On the issues involved in interpreting the text, see Humm 2005: 522 with n.160 and Dufallo 2001: 133n.33, with bibliography. I prefer to follow Ballaira 1968 (also followed by Habinek 2005: 49) and emend *inimicus* to *inimicum*.

93. Habinek 2005: 49 refers to the recurrence of this pattern “in which the second verse complicates the proverbial essence of the first” as characteristic of a later proverbial collection entitled the *Disticha Catonis*; it is in the light of this “Latin wisdom literature” that Habinek refers to Plautus’ *Bacchides* (394–97), in which Mnesilochus praises friendship and claims that “it is better to ignore an injury than to fail to return a favor” (*malefactorem amitti satius quam relinqui beneficium*). Habinek convincingly suggests that by the middle of the second century BCE, “Latin wisdom literature” was easy to recognize and marked by this sort of proverbial style. In this sense, it is possible to see the speeches of Herennius Pontius in context of this “Latin wisdom literature” as

Priscian quotes this passage (from Varro) in order to demonstrate that the Latin word *commentus* is equivalent to the Greek term σεσοφισμένος. For Priscian, at any rate, the focus of this passage is to explicate what being *commentus* or σεσοφισμένος means: it is the quality of understanding the difference between interactions with friends and enemies and, moreover, of perceiving that friendship and enmity relate to one another “equally” (*aeque*: note the emphatic placement at the end of the second line in the distich).⁹⁴ As such, responses to friends or enemies require one to either forget, or, “equally,” not to forget, what he has suffered: in the case of seeing a friend, he will forget the distresses that have been effected upon him; in the case of seeing an enemy, he will not forget his distresses willingly because he recalls that his enemy is the cause of them. Thus the quality of being *commentus* involves an understanding of friendship and enmity as proportional (*aeque*) to one another.⁹⁵ This proportioning of friends and enemies, moreover, is ascribed to Appius Claudius Caecus by Cicero (*Cael.* 33), who attacks Clodia in a *prosopopoeia* of the elder statesman by using a comparable proverbial style: *Cur aut tam familiaris fuisti ut aurum commodares, aut tam inimica ut venenum timeres?*

As Michel Humm has suggested, other aspects of the ethical behavior either illustrated in *Sententiae* of Appius Claudius Caecus or ascribed to him by later poets and historians are derived from Pythagorean writings of the fourth century BCE.⁹⁶ This may well be the case, but it is important to consider that, in the third and second centuries BCE, Romans’ appropriation of the figure of Appius Claudius Caecus to their own purposes led to a bifurcation of character: was he a severe Roman who represented Italian/Latin practical wisdom, or was he a pretentious Hellenized Roman whose military incompetence was manifest on the battlefield?⁹⁷ If we are to judge from the evidence presented in the *Sententia* of Claudius and Cicero’s *prosopopoeia* of him, the ethics of Appius Claudius Caecus show less in common with Peripatetic or Pythagorean theories than with the discussion of friendship by Claudius’ enemy, the Samnite Herennius

well as the Peripatetic discussions of friendship likely preserved by Aristoxenus, which suggests that Pontius’ speeches, if they are indeed as old as Aristoxenus, would constitute the earliest extant testament of such “Latin” wisdom-traditions in Greek literature.

94. In this sense, the word *aeque* does double-duty: it refers to the content of the distich (i.e. the relationship between friend and enemy) and signals the form of the distich itself.

95. We see something similar, albeit far less subtle, in a fragment from Ennius’ *Hecuba* (F 84 Jocelyn): *nam cum opulenti locuntur pariter atque ignobiles, / eadem dicta eademque oratio aequa non aequae valet*. Here, the semantic range of *pariter* in the first line is emphasized by *aequa non aequae*, all terms of equivalence. In Euripides’ original (*Hec.* 294–95), there is no explicit appeal to “equivalence” or “proportion” between well- and poorly regarded people: λόγος γὰρ ἔκ τ’ ἄδοξούντων ἰὼν / καὶ τῶν δοξούντων αὐτὸς οὐ ταῦτόν σθένει. Indeed, as Jocelyn 1969: 308 points out, *aequa non aequae* is stylistically inspired by αὐτὸς οὐ ταῦτόν in the original, but the semantics have been changed to reflect how Ennius was responding to “themes of contemporary political debate,” in this case unequal relationships between slaves and free citizens.

96. See especially Humm 2005: 532–36.

97. Cf. Humm 2005: 81–94 and Dufallo 2001: 130–34.

Pontius. In the complex triangulation of Claudius, Pontius, and Archytas—which, incidentally, is analogous to the complex triangulation of Rome, Samnium, and Tarentum—a variety of possible relationships can be drawn; but for Claudius, as a participant in elite convivial communities, an ideological commitment to the dichotomy “Pythagorean/Non-Pythagorean” not only might have been unrealistic, but also politically infelicitous.

This was not the case, though, for those historians and biographers who wrote about the ethics of Appius Claudius Caecus and Herennius Pontius. Aristoxenus of Tarentum advocated a Pythagorean ethics that, like the ethics of Aristotle, was notably quiet on the relationship between friends and enemies. If the theory of “extreme proportional benefaction” among friends and enemies was illustrated in the speech attributed to the Samnite philosopher Herennius Pontius by Aristoxenus of Tarentum, as speculated above, it represented a “barbarian” ethnoethics that Aristoxenus, in his support for Tarentine Pythagoreanism and its advocacy of an ethics of moderation, sought to challenge.⁹⁸ Regardless of Aristoxenus’ position on the ethical theory of the Samnite sage, from Livy (as a certain *terminus ante quem*) forward, the Roman and Greek historians considered the speeches of Herennius Pontius demonstrative of exemplary *prudentia*, in contrast to the lack of foresight of the Romans leaders who were hemmed in at Caudium or to the misapplication of moderation to a situation of extremes as demonstrated by his son Gavius Pontius.

Indeed, no one better understood Herennius Pontius’ theory of “extreme proportional benefaction,” nor applied it in a way more devastating, than the Roman military leader Sulla. This theory was so significant that Sulla had it placed on his epitaph, which, according to Plutarch (*Life of Sulla* 38.6), he composed himself: “no friend ever surpassed him in doing good, and no enemy in doing evil” (οὔτε τῶν φίλων τις αὐτὸν εὖ ποιῶν οὔτε τῶν ἐχθρῶν κακῶς ὑπερβάλετο). Sulla, who was also famous for his celebration of the influence of *τύχη* over his political life, appeals to the extremes (ὑπερβάλετο) with regard to his proportionate treatment of friends and enemies in just the way Herennius Pontius advocates.⁹⁹ One might think that this is simply Sulla adapting what had by the first century BCE become commonplace wisdom, but there is evidence

98. Aristoxenus’ more general position on “barbarians” is difficult to pin down securely and may be motivated by temporary factors such as political alliances, etc. Cf. Dench 1995: 59–60.

99. We might note Plutarch’s summary (*Sull.* 6.5) of Sulla’s description of the role that fortune played in his life, taken from Sulla’s *Memoirs* (ὑπομνήματα), in which Sulla describes how Metellus was a friend proportionately to the extent that he imagined Metellus would have been an enemy: “he writes that, of the undertakings which men thought well-advised, those upon which he had boldly ventured, not after deliberation, but on the spur of the moment, turned out for the better. And further, from what he says about his being well-endowed by nature for Fortune rather than for war, he seems to attribute more to Fortune than to his own excellence, and to make himself entirely the creature of this deity, since he accounts even his concord with Metellus, a man his equal in rank, and a relative by marriage, a piece of divine felicity; for whereas he expected much annoyance from him as a colleague in office, he found him most obliging.” Translated by Perrin.

that Sulla too was fully aware of the provenance of this idea and exploited it to the fullest. Strabo (5.4.11) tells a story of the end of the Samnites, in which Sulla defeated the Samnite forces led by the brother of a certain Pontius Telesinus (a distant relative of Herennius Pontius and his son Gavius)¹⁰⁰ at the battle of Sacriportus in 82 BCE. After capturing three to four thousand Samnites¹⁰¹ and imprisoning them in the Villa Publica of the Campus Martius, Sulla deliberates for three days and finally allows his soldiers to slaughter every single Samnite prisoner. As if this weren't enough, he has all Samnites proscribed. When some people complain of Sulla's "excessive wrath" (ἡ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ὀργή) toward the Samnites, Sulla responds that "not a single Roman could ever lead the peace so long as the Samnites held together as a unified people." Unlike Herennius Pontius' son Gavius Pontius at Caudine Forks, Sulla fully understood and made sure to employ the practical wisdom of the Samnite sage, to disastrous effect.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A *prudētissimus* from Samnium, Herennius Pontius came to be considered exemplary among Romans for his foreign wisdom, but this wisdom was not as foreign as it might have seemed. It was, in effect, a type of practical sagacity employed by the great Roman commander Sulla and coextensive with that of the famous Roman exemplar Appius Claudius Caecus, whose relationship with the Samnites was historically and ideologically codified by the end of the Roman republic: his success in battle over the Samnites was celebrated on the *elogium* that stood at the foot of his statue in the Forum of Augustus.¹⁰² Unfortunately, our knowledge of the ethics of friendship that we can attribute to these two exemplary wisdom-practitioners is limited to what is described above. But if, indeed, the ethical theories of Herennius Pontius and Appius Claudius Caecus came to be considered practical "barbarian" responses to theoretical Greek systems of personal or political ethics, we might see this homology as indicative of the similarities in political philosophies of the Romans and Samnites of the late fourth century BCE, in spite of their volatile political and military relationships. The Samnite philosopher Herennius Pontius thus offers scholars a locus for analysis of comparative intellectual discourses in the early Roman republic, at least insofar as he is figure whose construction is reflective of the concerns that each culture and/or individual writer brought to bear on the discourse of "Greekness." Comparisons of

100. See Salmon 1967: 385.

101. Sulla himself claims that the number was eight thousand (Plut. *Sull.* 28.8).

102. The text (*C.I.L.* 1^{m2}.1 p. 192) reads *complura oppida de Samnitibus cepit*. Plutarch (*Num.* 8.20) in describing the statue of Pythagoras placed in the Roman Comitium during the "Samnite War" (*bello Samniti*, according to Pliny *N.H.* 34.16), calls the sage φρονιμώτατον Ἑλλήνων. We should not see the ascription of practical wisdom to both Pontius and Pythagoras as insignificant. On the practical philosophy of Pythagoras versus the military skill of Alcibiades, see Humm 2005: 557–58.

ethical modes of conduct advocated by Greek, Samnite, and Roman philosophers and wisdom-practitioners, and preserved in the historiographical traditions, could be metonymic for larger and more comprehensive analyses of the similarities that helped construct a sense of shared ideals among non-Greek elites in the changing political environment of late fourth-century BCE Italy.¹⁰³ When scholars do decide to develop such an account of shared ideology among non-Greeks, they will benefit from taking Herennius Pontius as a starting point.

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103. On the possibility of shared ideological systems (especially military) among Romans, Samnites, and Tarentines, see the stimulating study of Eckstein 2006: 138–58.

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