

CSCP Support Materials

Teaching Support Publication

for

WJEC Eduqas Latin GCSE  
Component 3B: Roman Religion

University of Cambridge School Classics Project

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## Introduction

This booklet of sources on Entertainment and Leisure is intended to support teachers and students preparing for Component 3B of the WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Latin.

### Important notice: the purpose and status of this booklet

The purpose of this booklet is to provide teachers with a wide range of sources for their teaching. It should therefore be considered only as a teaching support publication. Such booklets are not intended to be definitive catalogues of sources which may be used in the examination and students should not attempt, nor be encouraged, to 'rote learn' the sources contained within. Although examiners may use some of the sources in the booklets, other similar sources may also be used in the GCSE examination.

Likewise, teachers should feel under no obligation to study any or all of the sources contained herein with their students.

### Relevant Stages of the Cambridge Latin Course

The *Cambridge Latin Course* and the accompanying Teacher's Guides contain primary source material, together with explanatory texts, to support this topic:

#### *Book I:*

Stage 1: Houses in Pompeii

Stage 4: The forum

Stage 7: Roman beliefs about life after death

#### *Book II:*

Stage 19: Isis

#### *Book III:*

Stage 21: Aquae Sulis

Stage 22: Curses

Stage 23: Sacrifices, divination and Roman state religion

#### *Book IV:*

Stage 32: Mithraism

## **Gods and goddesses**

<b>Roman god/goddess</b>	<b>Function</b>
Jupiter	King of the gods, god of the sky and of weather
Juno	Queen of the gods, goddess of marriage & childbirth, goddess of the family
Minerva	Goddess of wisdom, practical skills
Neptune	God of the sea, of earthquakes, patron of horses
Venus	Goddess of love, beauty and desire
Mars	God of war, violence and bloodshed
Diana	Goddess of the moon, of the hunt, of chastity, of childbirth, of all animals
Apollo	Sun-god, god of healing, god of prophecy, music and the arts
Ceres	Goddess of agriculture , harvest and fertility
Vesta	Goddess of the hearth and of fire. The Vestal Virgins tended her temple in Rome
Mercury	Messenger of the gods, god of commerce, god of travellers
Vulcan	God of fire and metal-working. Maker of Jupiter's thunderbolts
Pluto	King of the Underworld and of the dead
Bacchus	God of wine, celebration and the theatre



**Bacchus on Mt. Vesuvius**

**Ovid, *Amores* III.2, 43-56**

*Ovid describes a procession of the gods' statues at the Circus Maximus.*

But now here comes the procession - let your minds and your tongues be silent! It's time for applause- the golden procession is coming! In first place is Victory, carried on outstretched wings. Come here, goddess, and give me success in love! Let those who trust the waves so much applaud Neptune! There is nothing for me at sea: my land holds me captive. Soldier, cheer for Mars! I hate weapons: peace is enjoyable, as is finding love in peace. Let Phoebus come for the fortune-tellers, Phoebe for the hunters! Minerva, gather support from the hands of craftsmen! Country dwellers, stand up for Ceres and young Bacchus! Boxers please Pollux, horsemen please Castor! Yet I cheer for you, charming Venus, and the powerful boy with a bow.

## Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman antiquities* II. 67

The virgins who serve the goddess were originally four and were chosen by the kings according to the principles established by Numa, but afterwards, from the multiplicity of the sacred rites they perform, their number was increased of six, and has so remained down to our time. They live in the temple of the goddess, into which none who wish are hindered from entering in the daytime, whereas it is not lawful for any man to remain there at night. They were required to remain undefiled by marriage for the space of thirty years, devoting themselves to offering sacrifices and performing the other rites ordained by law. During the first ten years their duty was to learn their functions, in the second ten to perform them, and during the remaining ten to teach others. After the expiration of the term of thirty years nothing hindered those who so desired from marrying, upon laying aside their fillets and the other insignia of their priesthood. And some, though very few, have done this; but they came to ends that were not at all happy or enviable. In consequence, the rest, looking upon their misfortunes as ominous, remain virgins in the temple of the goddess till their death, and then once more another is chosen by the pontiffs to supply the vacancy. Many high honours have been granted them by the commonwealth, as a result of which they feel no desire either for marriage or for children; and severe penalties have been established for their misdeeds. It is the pontiffs who by law both inquire into and punish these offences; to Vestals who are guilty of lesser misdemeanours they scourge with rods, but those who have suffered defilement they deliver up to the most shameful and the most miserable death. While they are yet alive they are carried upon a bier with all the formality of a funeral, their friends and relations attending them with lamentations, and after being brought as far as the Colline Gate, they are placed in an underground cell prepared within the walls, clad in their funeral attire; but they are not given a monument or funeral rites or any other customary solemnities. There are many indications, it seems, when a priestess is not performing her holy functions with purity, but the principal one is the extinction of the fire, which the Romans dread above all misfortunes, looking upon it, from whatever cause it proceeds, as an omen that portends the destruction of the city; and they bring fire again into the temple with many supplicatory rites, concerning which I shall speak on the proper occasion.

## Temples



**Temple of Vesta, Rome**



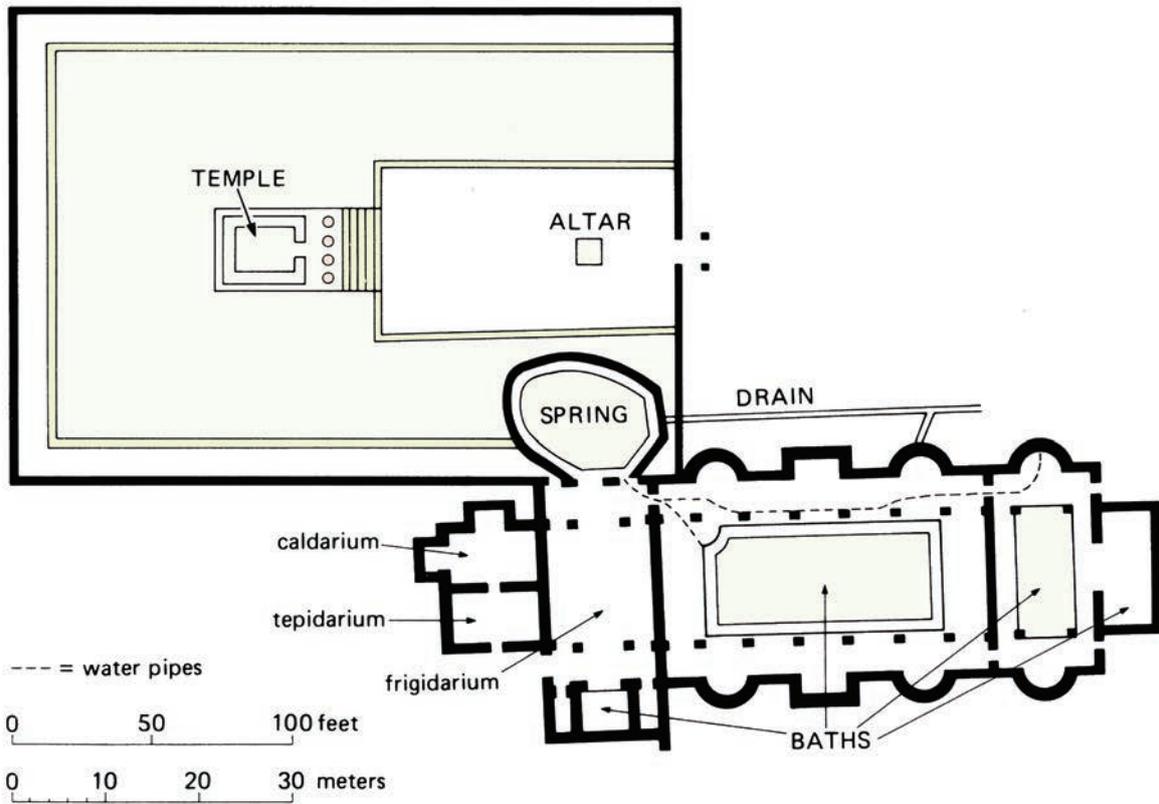
**Reconstruction of temple of Vesta**



**The Pantheon, Rome**



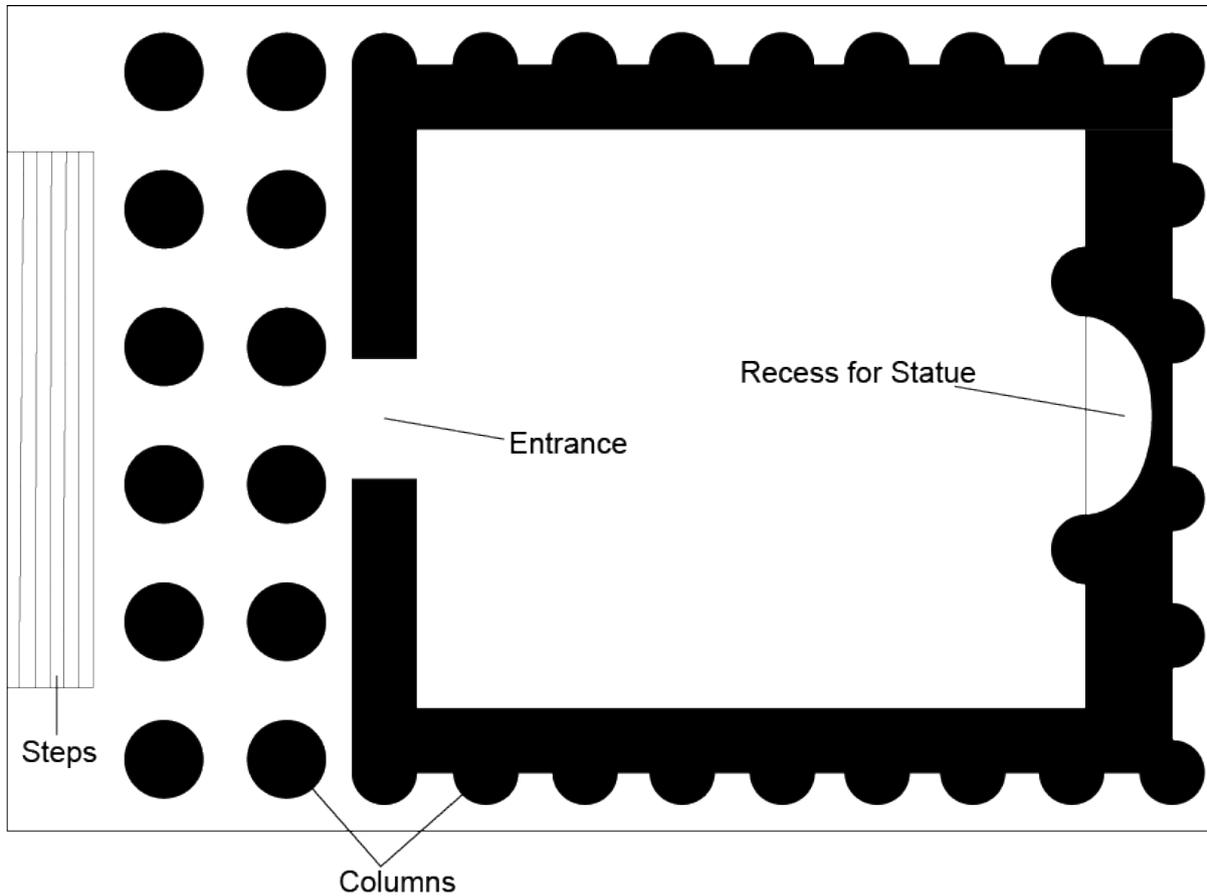
**Maison Carree, Nimes**



**Plan of temple and baths complex in Aquae Sulis, Bath**



Temple of Apollo, Pompeii



A plan of a typical Roman temple

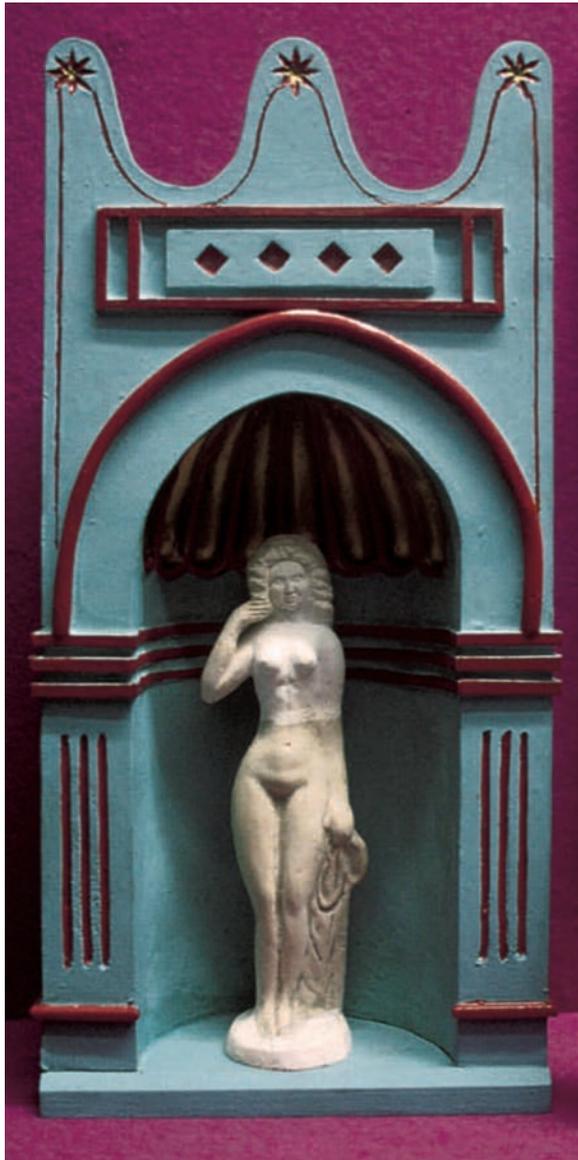
## **Sacrifices and offerings**



lares and penates



Lararium



**Reconstruction of a domestic shrine of Venus with original pipeclay statuette**

### **Inscription from Italy**

Tullia Superiana takes pleasure in keeping her promise to Minerva the unforgetting for giving her her hair back.



**Sculpture of a sacrifice**

**The official positions held by the emperor Augustus included religious duties:**

I have been Pontifex Maximus, augur, a member of the College of fifteen for performing sacrifices, a member of the college of seven for conducting religious banquets and a member of the Arval brotherhood.

*(res Gestae: VII)*



**The emperor Marcus Aurelius as Pontifex Maximus leading a procession before a sacrifice, Rome**

## Personal worship

The most sacred, the most hallowed place on earth is the home of each and every citizen. There are his sacred hearth and his household gods, there the very centre of his worship, religion, and domestic ritual.

(Cicero, *De Domo Sua* XLI, 109)

## Martial, *Epigrams* X.92, 1-10, 12-18

*Martial hopes that the new owner of his farm will treat the gods with respect.*

Marius, you who admire and desire the quiet life, the citizen who gives ancient Atina such pride, I give you these two pines, the best of a foreign wood; these Fauns' oaks; and altars to Jupiter the Thunderer and bristling Silvanus, set up by the inexperienced hands of my farm manager, altars which have often been stained by the blood of a lamb or kid. I also entrust the virgin goddess to you, the mistress of the sacred temple; Mars, too, my patron deity, whom you see as a guest of his chaste sister; and the laurel grove of delicate Flora, where she fled when Priapus was chasing her. Whenever you soothe all these kind gods of my little property, whether you do it with blood or with incense, you will say: 'Look, although he is away, Martial is alongside me making a sacrifice with his right hand. Imagine that he is present and give to the both of us what one of us has wished for.'

## The importance of Ritual

It is a general belief that without a certain form of prayer, it would be useless to immolate a victim, and that, with such informality, the gods would be consulted to little purpose. And then besides, there are different forms of address to the deities, one form for entreating, another form for averting their anger, and another for commendation.

We see too, how that our supreme magistrates use certain formulae for their prayers: that not a single word may be omitted or pronounced out of its place, it is the duty of one person to precede the dignitary by reading the formula before him from a written ritual, of another, to keep watch upon every word, and of a third to see that silence is not ominously broken; while a musician, in the meantime, is performing on the flute to prevent any other words being heard. Indeed, there are memorable instances recorded in our Annals, of cases where either the sacrifice has been interrupted, and so blemished, by imprecations, or a mistake has been made in the utterance of the prayer; the result being that the lobe of the liver or the heart has disappeared in a moment, or has been doubled, while the victim stood before the altar.

(Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* XXVIII.3)

## **Taking the auspices before a battle**

The soldiers were filled with confidence in both divine and human aid and, with one voice, demanded battle. It annoyed them that the battle had been postponed to the following day. They hated to wait a day and a night. In the middle of the night, the consul quietly got up and sent the keeper of the sacred chickens to take auspices. There was not one group of men in that camp which had not been infected by the lust for battle. The highest and the lowest ranks were equally eager. The general saw the flaming zeal in his soldiers; the soldiers saw it in their general. This zeal, which burned in everyone, reached even those men who handled the taking of auspices. For, although the sacred chickens would not eat, the chicken keeper dared to lie about the omen and announced to the consul a very favourable omen. The consul was pleased and announced in public that the auspices were excellent and that they would be acting under the direction of the gods. He then gave the signal for battle.

[Just before the first charge of the battle, it was discovered that the chicken keeper had lied. He was killed, and the consul then declared that the Romans had done their best to correct the situation.]

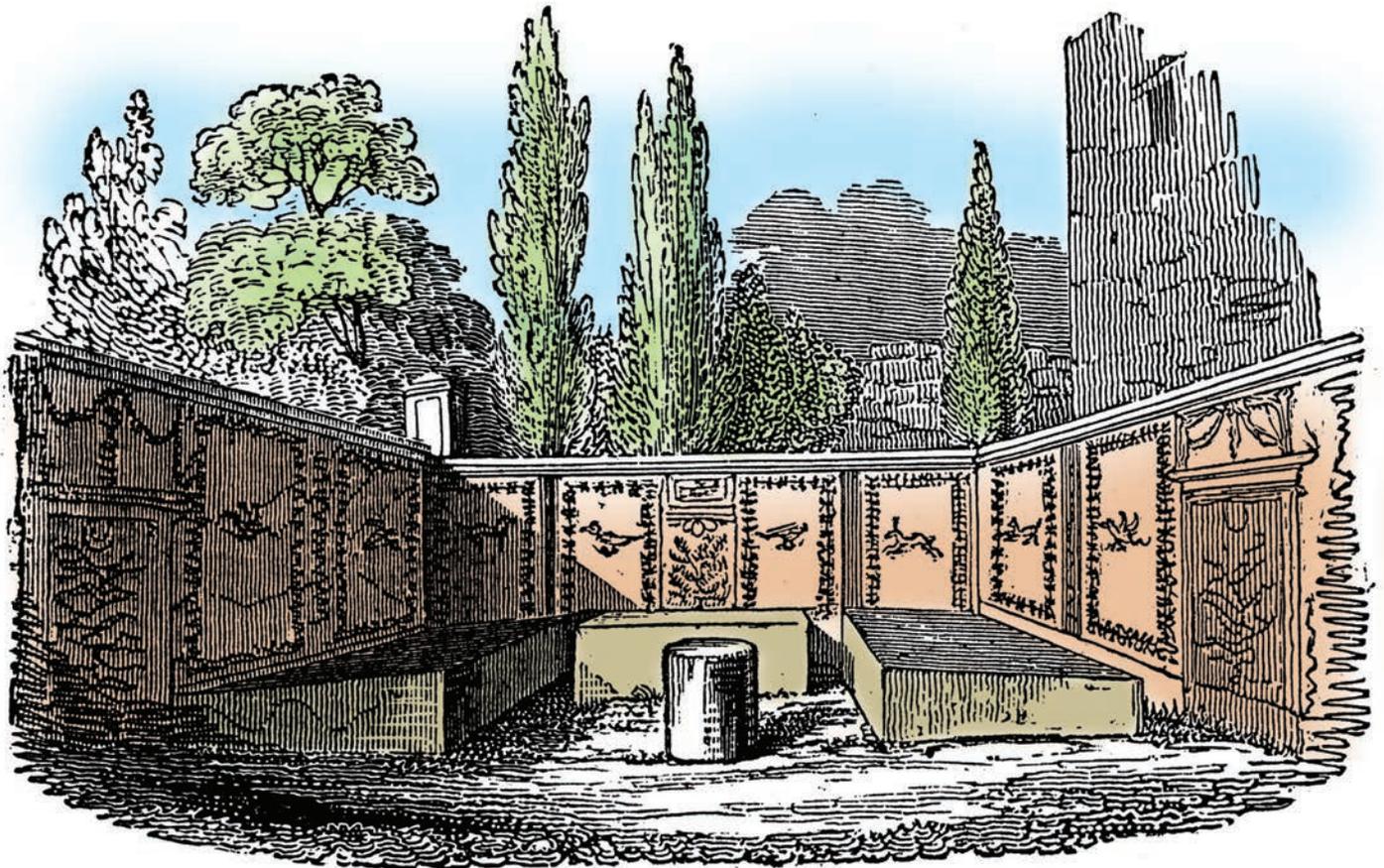
Even as the consul was saying this, a crow cawed, right in front of him, with a loud, clear voice. The happy consul announced that the gods had never been more obviously involved in human affairs, and he ordered the trumpet signal to be played and the war cry to be shouted.

**(Livy: *A history of Rome* X.40. 1-5, 14)**

## **A general ignores the auspices**

Claudius Pulcher showed his scorn of religion during a naval engagement off Sicily. When he took the auspices and discovered that the sacred chickens were not eating, he threw them into the sea, saying, 'If they don't want to eat, let them drink': and then he engaged the enemy in a naval battle. He lost the battle.

**(Suetonius, *The lives of the Caesars: Tiberius* II.2)**

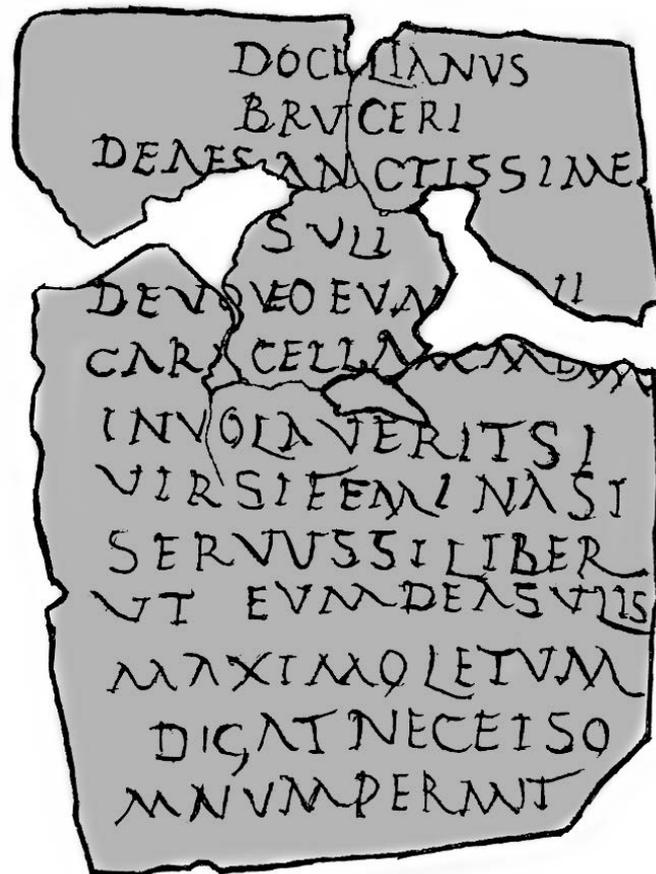


An open-air dining room attached to a tomb outside the Herculaneum Gate, where the relatives could feast with the dead.

## **Curses and divinations**



## Docilianus defixio



Docilianus, son of Brucerus, to the most holy goddess Sulis. I curse him who had stolen my hooded cloak, whether man or woman, whether slave or free, that ... the goddess Sulis inflict death upon ... and not allow him sleep or children now or in the future, until he has brought my hooded cloak to the temple of her divinity.

## Isis and Mithras

### **Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* XI. 3.11-4.15**

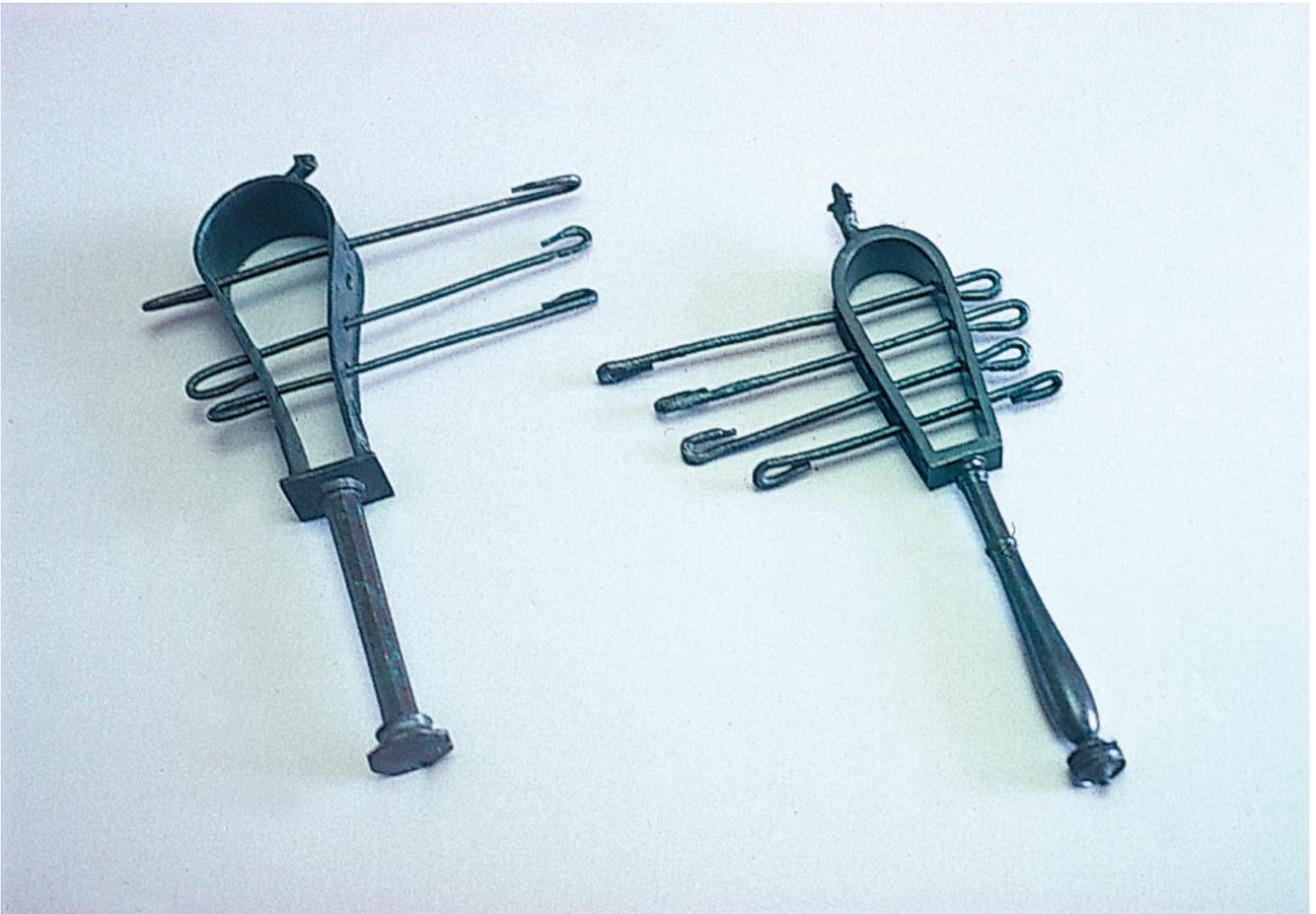
Her hair, which was very long and gently curled, flowed down softly and was scattered all about her divine neck and shoulders. A crown woven from many different kinds of flowers rested on the top of her head, and in the middle, above her forehead, a flat disc shone like a mirror or the bright light of the moon, a sign for who she was. This disc was kept in place by lines of rising serpents, and, above this, upright ears of corn. Her colourful clothing was woven from the best linen, one part gleaming pure white, another bit yellow with crocus flowers, another fiery rose-red. What caught my attention for even longer was her deep black cloak, shining with black lustre and wrapped all around her, running from her right side to her left shoulder where it was tied in a knot like the boss of a shield. Part of it hung down, and the various folds, edges and knots and fringing on the lower hem were billowing elegantly. Woven into the hem (and elsewhere too) scattered stars were glittering and, in the middle of them, a full moon was emitting fiery flames. All around the border of that extraordinary cloak clung a wreath made from all fruits and all flowers continuously bound together.

She was carrying different items, for in her right hand she was holding a bronze rattle, a flat piece of metal curved like a girdle with small rods pushed through the middle, which made a piercing sound when she moved her arm to a triple beat. In her left hand she held a gold bowl shaped like a boat; on the top of the handle, the most visible part, there was an asp rising and lifting its head with its throat swelling wide. On her lovely feet she wore sandals which were woven from leaves of victory palms.

### **LONDINI AD FANUM ISIDIS**

(In London, next door to the temple of Isis)

Inscription found in London



**Two bronze sistra**



**Woman holding a sistrum**



Isis nursing her child, Horus



Mithras slaying the bull



A Mithraeum (temple of Mithras), Rome



Artist's reconstruction of a ceremony in progress