

Antonio Corso

Toward a new interpretation
of Roman art
Course of 12 lectures

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ISBN: 978-618-5383-47-3

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Introduction

The chapters collected in this book are the transformation of lectures delivered in the Department of Art History of the Lomonosov Moscow State University between 2016 and 2019.

I am very thankful to Prof. Nadezda Nalimova and to Prof. Tamas Kisbali for their very kind invitations. Thanks are also extended to the other members of the Art Historical Department for the dialogue we had during my stay in Moscow.

While at Moscow I delivered lectures concerning issues of Greek art, then I focused problems of Roman art and finally I analyzed several moments of the 'after-life' of ancient art during the middle age.

In this book, the lectures concerning Roman art are published: in the following pages I suggest ideas and interpretations which are original and not yet entrenched in the current bibliography.

Thus they forward proposals which I hope will elicit discussion in the scholarly community which is interested to these fields of research.

In fact, Roman art is analyzed from new points of view: the status of artists in this society, the importance of treatises such as those of Vitruvius and Pliny, the notion of the *videndae artes* in the Roman *oikoumene*, the theory that contemporary works of art are superior to those of classical Greece, the slow decline of the concept of visual arts as mimesis and finally the survival of classicistic patterns and iconographic themes even after the establishment of the *civitas Christiana* are re-considered with emphasis given to new or over-looked data and ideas.

My chapters on these themes are hopefully a starting point for a deeper study of these problems rather than conclusive essays.

Thus let me please hope that these pages will be not redundant, but will constitute a small progress in our understanding of an artistic civilization which offered a sort of visual grammar of patterns to all the following civilizations and thus is absolutely crucial for the history of Europe, of north Africa and of the near East.

Athens 19 April, 2021

Antonio Corso

Lecture 1.

The passage from a plurality of arts to a unified concept of art

The notion that visual arts are a unitary field may have been clear already in the archaic period, because there were artists who were both sculptors and painters (for example Bupalos) or sculptors and architects (for example Theodoros of Samos). This concept became clear when Plato theorized the existence of the εικαστικη τεχνη. This notion will be deepened even more with the early Hellenistic art critics who usually write treatises about both painting and sculpture. It becomes obvious when Horace speaks of *videndae artes* and it will be even more clear when in late antiquity, art becomes transcendent with Plotinus and comes from God, in other words the different materials become less important

Lecture 2.

The birth of the opinion that marble statues were not colored in classical Greece

This is a long process. It may be the result of the Platonism which slowly slowly suggested a transcendent and unmaterial concept of art. The ideas in Plato are colourless. However this notion comes to a head when the philosopher Carneades asserts that marble statues already exist inside the block of marble, you have just to remove the superfluous material. This notion of marble sculpture overcomes the mimesis which is no longer necessary. Painting also becomes superfluous, if sculptures already exist in quarries. The first assertion that marble statues were white is in Lucian, *Amores*

concerning the Cnidian Aphrodite. After him, it becomes quite widespread.

The admiration for the whiteness of the marble becomes topical.

Lecture 3

The rise of an idealized concept of classical Greek art during the Roman period

During the Roman period, the works of art of classical period become *opera nobilia* and are imitated and reproduced continuously. These *opera nobilia* often are thought to reproduce a gallant mythology, full of heroines in love, of heroes who have no other concerns than to win their loved ones, full of Erotes, naked Aphrodites, naked Nymphs etc. In other words it becomes an art of pleasure. You enjoy watching these gallant episodes in your villa or in public spaces. When the Christians begin writing, they adopt this notion of classical art as art of pleasure, and through them it becomes a current idea until the rococo.

Lecture 4

The theory that visual arts decayed and are dying throughout the Roman period

The theory that visual arts declined probably is already clear in the epigrams of Posidippus, who puts the peak of bronze sculpture with Lysippus, some time before his own flourishing period. This theory becomes topical with the growing classicism of the middle Hellenistic times. We can see it in our sources of the Roman period. According to Cicero, *Brutus*, bronze sculpture peaked with Polycleitus, some time ago. According to Vitruvius,

architecture, regarded a rational construction based on the reciprocal relations of measures, no longer exists. It is dead. The most radical notion that visual arts are dead is in Pliny. Even in Pausanias, you have the feeling that visual arts are dead.

Lecture 5

Vitruvius and his impact on architecture

Vitruvius probably was the first who wrote an extensive treatise about all aspects regarding architecture. Before him, the Greeks wrote treatises about specific buildings. Varro wrote a treatise about architecture but just with one book. Thus Vitruvius reflects the tendency to write manuals which is typical of late republican times and is also in keeping with the practical attitude of Romans. He is a purist and wants to restore the notion of architecture as a harmonic result of measures relating each other. His influence was noteworthy, he is cited by Frontinus, Pliny etc., but in the substance the Romans abandoned slowly slowly the modular concept of architecture.

Lecture 6

Architectural drawings

The notion of architecture as project leads to the practice of architectural drawings. They may have existed already in archaic times and in classical ones because we have literary and epigraphic testimonia referring to them, but they are visually known from the 4th century BC. They are projects, layouts of buildings in legal documents, documents of property, the free, artistic drawing is not very diffused, but it is known in some cases.

Lecture 7

Artistic personalities in the Roman world: Timomachos of Byzantium and the beginning of the Caesarian classicism

Many scholars assert that Roman art is anonymous, but this is hardly true. Ancient writers refer to important artists who are at the beginning of specific styles: Timomachus of Byzantium is at the beginning of the Caesarean / Augustan classicism, he was beloved by Caesar, his pictures were inspired by the Attic tragedy, especially by Euripides, who was very popular at the time. When the Roman art turns to baroque, we have again two strong personalities who create the Neronian baroque: Famulus, painter who painted the domus aurea, and Zenodorus, who made the colossal statue of Nero. Finally, the new style of Trajan is also indebted to a strong personality: Apollodorus of Damascus.

Lecture 8

When ancient art became anonymous again

Ancient art becomes anonymous when it becomes transcendent: if the real artist is God, it is not worthy to remember the imperfect translator of the divine beauty into the material. This process begins with Flavius Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 6. 19, who says that visual arts respond to the *phantasia*, not to the *mimesis* and are transcendent. It is not a chance that in the Severan period we have a dramatic drop in signatures of artists and in mentions of them. This leads to the notion of sacred art in the age of spirituality, when art is divine, derives from divine beauty, thus artists are only artisans.

Lecture 9

An assessment of Pliny on ancient visual arts

Pliny the Elder traveled a lot, thus we may suppose that he knew many great masterpieces with his own eyes. He also read the treatises of early Hellenistic art critics such as Xenocrates, Antigonus of Caristus, Douris of Samos etc. Finally he digested the specialized language of art critics which he uses a lot. Words as *rhythmus*, *quadratus*, *symmetria* etc. are used by him with competence. In other words, his competence in visual arts was good. He was able to distinguish between the style of a master - Polycleitus for example - and that of another master - Myron - of the same age. His competence is superior to that of Pausanias. For example Pliny attributes the Nemesis of Rhamnus to Agoracritus, Pausanias to Phidias, luckily we have fragments of the original statue and modern scholars, unanymously, decided in favour of Agoracritus.

Lecture 10

The emergence of a new taste in late antiquity

In late antiquity people begin thinking that the visual arts of present times are superior to that of the classical period. Already Martial asserts that the Colosseum is superior to the Artemision of Ephesos, the Mausoleum of Halikarnassus etc. And Statius asserts that the equestrian statue of Domitian is superior to works by classical masters. This idea becomes very popular when Ausonius writes the *Mosella*: the villas along the Mosella river are superior to the Parthenon etc. This trend will become radical with Apollinaris Sidonius: the baths of the villa of his friend Consentius at Narbo

Majus are superior to the masterpieces of Phidias, Praxiteles, Skopas. This trend goes on until the late IXth century.

Lecture 11

The myth of the aeternity of Rome

The myth of the aeternity of Rome has to do with the decline of the rationalistic notion of history established by Thucydides. From Vergil we have again the Homeric notion that the history has been decided from the beginning of the world by the Gods and is thus transcendent. What is decided cannot be changed by humans, who are just characters on the stage and not real makers of history. It is Vergil who first asserts that the destiny of Rome had been asserted many centuries earlier. The same concept is repeated by Livy, then by Lucan, and will become topical in late antiquity (from Rutilius Namantianus onwards).

Lecture 12

The formation of a Christian classicism

The early fathers of Church were against classical culture. However already Athenagoras, *Legatio pro Christianis*, was milder. Then Clement of Alexandria was really very learned in classical culture. With the prevalence of Christianity, we have very competent scholars, as Ausonius, who are Christians but their brains are filled with pagan fantasies. In the visual realm, this trend is clear already with the Constantinian classicism. It leads to the synthesis of classical heritage and Christianity.

Lecture 1. The passage from a plurality of arts to a unified concept of art

The first issue considered in these lectures is the passage from the plurality of arts (many arts) to one unified concept of visual arts in ancient Greece and then in Rome.

In the Greek world usually writers speak about many arts: there is, for example the art of playing *cithara*, art of playing aulos (another music instrument), there is an art of making poems (including art of making elegies, art of making epic poems – and so on with all different types of poems).

Of course there were also practical arts: for example the art of the barber who has his own skill as well. I would like to be short and I won't go on enumerating all possible arts: every skill corresponded to a single art. This is the normal mentality, which is spread very much in the Greek world. As the time goes on there are different arts that come to a head. For example when the oratory gains recognition, the orators had also their own skills – their own art (τέχνη, *techne*, to use the Greek word). And also for example when rhetoric in late classical times, especially in the 4th century BC becomes very trendy and very important, of course there is also the *techne* of rhetoric. And so on.¹

However it is obvious that the arts which are enjoyed by viewing – so called visual arts – which make objects that we see and enjoy seeing, which are made for the eyes (not for the ears for example or for different practical

¹See e. g. A. Roselli and R. Velardi (eds.), *L'insegnamento delle technai nelle culture antiche*, Pisa (2011).

purposes), are usually regarded to share common features and to be sister-arts related one to the other.

So already from archaic times it is likely that they were considered to be closer one to the other than other arts, which appeal to the ears for example or other arts which have practical purposes.

Already in the archaic period we have artists who are specialized in more than one art made to be seen. For example Theodoros of Samos – probably the greatest artist of the archaic period who lived at the court of the tyrant of Samos Polykrates around 540 – 530 BC, the famous architect of the Heraion on Samos (fig. 1) - was not only an architect but was also a bronze sculptor and the first artist we know about who made a self-portrait. He made a portrait of himself in bronze sculpture.² We know that from the epigram 67 of Poseidippos and from Pliny 34. 83. Theodoros of Samos – architect and sculptor – was also a glyptic artist who made engravings on rings. The famous ring of Polykrates – his own lord – was made by Theodoros as we know from Herodotus 3. 41 (see also Posidippus, *Epigrams* 9; Strabo 14. 1. 16. 638; Pliny 37. 4; Pausanias 8. 14. 8; Clement, *Paedagogus* 3. 59 and Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 7. 210-214). So Theodoros of Samos may probably already have thought that his competences in different arts all made to be enjoyed with the eyes were close one to the other. They were sister *technai*.

Other people who had competences in more than one

²See S. Kansteiner, L. Lehmann and K. Hallof, 'Theodoros von Samos', *Der neue Overbeck* (from now abbreviated *DNO*) 1 (2014) 183-202.

single visual art probably felt the same in the archaic period. For example we should consider other two important artists of this period – Bupalos and Athenis.³ They were members of a family of sculptors from Chios. An original work of a member of this family survived and it is the famous Nike of Delos (fig. 2), which is signed by Archermos, the father of Bupalos and Athenis.⁴ Both of them are known also for having been painters of pictures (see Acron, *scholium* to Horace, *Epodi*6). A famous picture of them is related to a very well known quarrel. The poet Hipponax of Klazomenai, who was very poor and very ugly asked to Bupalos to have his daughter as his wife. Bupalos not only rejected his request because he was poor and his ugly face was matter of gossip but also he made a caricature – the first we know - of the face of Hipponax: he made it in painting and he exposed this painting at the Panathenaic Games in Athens (the date is controversial, most probably the Panathenaic games of 534 BC).⁵ So already Bupalos was specialized both in painting and in marble sculpture (he worked in marble, not in bronze). Of course he must have thought that his two specializations, these two skills, were close one to the other.

The relationship between the sister-arts which appeal to

³See K. Hallof, S. Kansteiner and L. Lehmann, 'Bupalos und Athenis von Chios', *DNO* 1 (2014) 120-128.

⁴See K. Hallof, S. Kansteiner and L. Lehmann, 'Archermos und sein Vater Mikkiades von Chios', *DNO* 1 (2014) 114-119.

⁵See A. Corso, 'The Position of Portraiture in the early Hellenistic Art Criticism', *Eulimene* 5 (2004) 11-25.

the eyes and not to other senses must have been also considered probably in treatises by artists, which are known to have been written already in this period: perhaps not yet in the treatise of Theodoros of Samos about the temple of Hera that he built together with his assistant Rhoikos (Vitruvius 7. *Praef.* 12). However we can expect that Chersiphron and Metagenes – architects from Crete –who made a similar treatise for the temple of Artemis at Ephesus (fig. 3), which was endowed with a huge set of sculptures and first of all of *columnae caelatae*(carved drums of columns) (Vitruvius, *ibidem*), wrote both about architecture and sculpture. So these arts had the tendency to be regarded similar.

But the notion of these arts as an even more unified field must have been a matter of discussion in the philosophical schools when philosophy became a very important branch of the spiritual life of Greece in the early Classical period. The discussions that Socrates in the late 5th century BC made with his own companions about different issues which concern human life included also the consideration of visual arts.

Among the Socratic dialogues that were handed down by Plato, the dialogue ‘Sophist’ is particularly relevant to this issue. This dialogue concerns the arts.

In a crucial passage (23. 235 d – 236 c) we have the conceptualization of the art of representing which in Greek is named *eikastike techne*.

[235δ] ἔγωγέ μοι καὶ νῦν φαίνομαι δύο καθορᾶν εἶδη τῆς μιμητικῆς: τὴν δὲ ζητουμένην ἰδέαν, ἐν ὁποτέρῳ ποθ' ἢ μὴ οὔσα τυγχάνει, καταμαθεῖν οὐδέπω μοι δοκῶ νῦν δυνατὸς εἶναι.

Θεαίτητος

σὺ δ' ἄλλ' εἰπέ πρῶτον καὶ δῖελε ἡμῖν τίνε τῶ δύο λέγεις

Ξένος

μίαν μὲν τὴν εἰκαστικὴν ὁρῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τέχνην. ἔστι δ' αὖ
τῆ μάλιστα ὀπότεν κατὰ τὰς τοῦ παραδείγματος συμμετρ
ίας τις ἐν μήκει καὶ πλάτει καὶ βάθει, καὶ πρὸς[235ε] τοῦ
τοῖς ἔτι χρώματα ἀποδιδούς τὰ προσήκοντα ἐκάστοις, τῆ
ν τοῦ μιμήματος γένεσιν ἀπεργάζεται.

Θεαίτητος

τί δ' ; οὐ πάντες οἱ μιμούμενοί τι τοῦτ' ἐπιχειροῦσι δρᾶν;

Ξένος

οὐκ οὖν ὅσοι γε τῶν μεγάλων πού τι πλάττουσιν ἔργων ἢ
γράφουσιν. εἰ γὰρ ἀποδιδούσιν τὴν τῶν καλῶν ἀληθινὴν σ
υμμετρίαν, οἷσθ' ὅτι μικρότερα μὲν τοῦ δέοντος
[236α] τὰ ἄνω, μείζω δὲ τὰ κάτω φαίνονται' ἂν διὰ τὸ τὰ μ
ἐν πόρρωθεν, τὰ δ' ἐγγύθεν ὑφ' ἡμῶν ὁρᾶσθαι.

Θεαίτητος

πάνυ μὲν οὖν.

Ξένος

ἄρ' οὖν οὐ χαίρειν τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐάσαντες οἱ δημιουργοὶ νῦ
ν οὐ τὰς οὐσας συμμετρίας ἀλλὰ τὰς δοξούσας εἶναι καλ
ὰς τοῖς εἰδώλοις ἐναπεργάζονται;

Θεαίτητος

παντάπασι γε.

Ξένος

τὸ μὲν ἄρα ἕτερον οὐ δίκαιον, εἰκός γε ὄν, εἰκόνα καλεῖν

;

Θεαίτητος

ναί.

[236β]

Ξένος

καὶ τῆς γε μιμητικῆς τὸ ἐπὶ τούτῳ μέρος κλητέον ὅπερ εἴ
πομεν ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν, εἰκαστικήν;

Θεαίτητος

κλητέον.

Ξένος

τί δέ; τὸ φαινόμενον μὲν διὰ τὴν οὐκ ἐκ καλοῦ θεῶν εἰκο
ἔναι τῷ καλῷ, δύναμιν δὲ εἴ τις λάβοι τὰ τηλικαῦταικῶν
ὡς ὄραν, μηδ' εἰκὸς ᾧ φησιν εἰκέναι, τί καλοῦμεν; ἄρ'
οὐκ, ἐπεὶ φαίνεται μὲν, ἔοικε δὲ οὐ, φάντασμα;

Θεαίτητος

τί μήν;

Ξένος

οὐκοῦν πάμπολυ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ζωγραφίαν τοῦτο τὸ
[236ξ] μέρος ἐστὶ καὶ κατὰ σύμπασαν μιμητικήν;

Θεαίτητος

πῶς δ' οὐ;

Ξένος

τὴν δὴ φάντασμα ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰκόνα ἀπεργαζομένην τέχνη
ν ἄρ' οὐ φανταστικὴν ὀρθότατ' ἂν προσαγορεύοιμεν;

Θεαίτητος

πολύ γε.

Ξένος

τούτῳ τοίνυν τὰ δύο ἔλεγον εἶδη τῆς εἰδωλοποιικῆς, εἰκ
αστικὴν καὶ φανταστικὴν.

Θεαίτητος

ὀρθῶς.

Ξένος

ὁ δέ γε καὶ τότε ἡμφεγνόουν, ἐν ποτέρῳ τὸν σοφιστὴν θε
τέον, οὐδὲ νῦν πῶ δύναμαι θεάσασθαι σαφῶς,

STRANGER. Then according to the previously
traversed way of division, it seems I indeed now see two

species of imitative art, but I do not yet seem able to understand in which of them the shape we are seeking is to be found.

THEAETETUS. But first divide it for us and tell which specific two you mean.

STRANGER. I see for it the likeness-making art as one of the species. And this especially exists whenever someone produces the creation of the imitation according to the proportions of the example, in length, breadth and depth, and besides this giving back the colors belonging to each one.

THEAETETUS. But do not all imitators undertake to do this?

STRANGER. Not those who produce any of the large works of sculpture or painting. For if they give back the true proportions of beautiful things, you know that the top parts would appear smaller, and the bottom parts larger, than necessary, because seen by us either from a distance, or close-up.

THEAETETUS. Certainly.

STRANGER. Then do not the artists today renounce the truth and produce in their works not the actual proportions, but those which seem to be beautiful?

THEAETETUS. Certainly.

STRANGER. Then is it not right to call that other, which is like, a likeness?

THEAETETUS. Yes.

STRANGER. And that part of imitation around this must be called, as we said before, the art of likeness-making.

THEAETETUS. It must be.

STRANGER. And what? What shall we call that which is like the beautiful in appearance, through means of viewing not the beautiful, but a work of such a size that it would not likely resemble that which it professes to be, if one might be able to see adequately? Shall we not call it, since it appears to be like, but is not, an appearance?

THEAETETUS. Of course.

STRANGER. Then this part is very much throughout the art of painting and imitation in general?

THEAETETUS. How not?

STRANGER. Then indeed might we not most correctly name the art which produces appearance, but not likeness, the art of appearance-making?

THEAETETUS. By all means.

STRANGER. These, then, are the two forms of the art of image-making that I meant, the art of likeness-making and the art of appearance-making.

THEAETETUS. Truly.

STRANGER. But that which I did not then understand, into which the sophist must be placed, I am not yet able to see clearly, since the man is really wondrous and very difficult to observe, since now he has very well and prettily fled to a species impracticable to examine.

No longer many visual arts but one art as a singular: *eikastike techne*. *Eikon* means image. So it is an art of making images. Now the art of making images is considered a unified branch. This art is opposed to another art because this art responds to the mimesis – imitation.

There is another possible art – the fantastic art, the art of making images, which are also images, but not derived from the reality you see. They are images coming from your imagination. This art is named *phantastike techne* and it is the art which doesn't respond to the canon of mimesis which is usually accepted in Greece. It is a little bit out of citizenship in the realm of the accepted arts that Greeks considered dignified. But the *eikastike techne* is entirely inside the world of the accepted arts.

The section 23. 235 e, also specifies that both sculpture and painting are inside the *eikastike techne*. So the *eikastike techne* is a sort of branch, which is *techne* as well, but covered minor branches - *technai*. It is a sort of umbrella-art, which covers others.

The function of this art is the *eidolopoiia* = the making of images, which can be paintings, sculptures, engravings etc. Even the *eidolopoiia* encompasses several specific arts.

In the 5th century we have other evidence that suggests that painting and sculpture became closer, and were considered together in the same problem of representing. First of all, the most prominent painter of the fifth century – Polygnotos of Thasos⁶ - was also bronze sculptor (Pliny 34. 85). And the elder brother of Pheidias⁷ – Panainos⁸ - was a painter. Phidias himself, as we know from Pliny 35. 54 (who probably takes information from Douris), began his career as painter, not as a sculptor. He shifted to sculpture at a later period when he got the huge commissions from Kimon and then from Perikles. Thus in the full classical period we have at Athens a comprehensive consideration of the visual arts.

At this point you understand that this unified notion was conceptually defined in this period in Athens but probably already existed in the archaic period (unfortunately most literature from the archaic period is lost). Probably this concept has to do with philosophical discussions. In fact it implies the development of philosophy as major practice in the Athenian culture. In

⁶See K. Hallof, S. Kansteiner and L. Lehmann, 'Polygnot von Thasos', *DNO* 2 (2014) 671-733.

⁷About Pheidias, see K. Huneke, *Pheidias*, Norderstadt (2016).

⁸See S. Kansteiner and L. Lehmann, 'Panainos von Athen', *DNO* 2 (2014) 766-772.

this period this concept was fixed inside the Socratic circle. However it was already looming with the experience of Polygnotos as both painter and a bronze sculptor as well of Pheidias who was both painter and then sculptor. However this concept was going on to produce one of the most important patterns in discussions about arts of this period: the usual comparison of painters with sculptors which also harks back to the Socratic world.

Xenophon in his *Memorabilia* reports that Socrates paid visits to workshops of artists, engaging in discussions with these masters. He visited the workshop of a great painter of this period, Parrhasios (3. 10. 1-5).⁹ And he visited also the workshop of a sculptor, Kleiton (3. 10. 6): in both cases he inquired about what is imitation, whether these masters imitated only bodies or could imitate also the souls of the sitters, how they could express the *psyche* of someone, how they reproduced the expressivity. All these questions concern imitation both by the sculptor and by the painter. An old theory asserted that the name of the sculptor visited by Sokrates, Kleiton, was a nickname of Polycleitus. However now this idea is out of fashion and we think that he was an unknown Athenian sculptor. So from the Socratic world onwards we begin to have this continuous comparison between sculptors and painters:¹⁰ in fact we must mention also other Platonic dialogues

⁹See H. Mielsch, 'Parrhasios aus Ephesos', *DNO* 2 (2014) 815-853.

¹⁰Evidence in A. Corso, 'Classical', *Eulimene* 3 (2002) 11-36, particularly 14-15.

such as the 'Protagoras' 311 b-c, where he speaks of Polykleitos and his sons. I wish also to mention the sophistic dialog in Doric dialect named *Dissoi Logoi* (double talks), in which (6. 8) the crucial question whether it is possible to transmit *techne* or it is impossible is debated. If it is possible it means that the genial artist can produce excellent students. But if it is impossible even the most genial artist - if there are limitations in this transmission of the *techne* - cannot transmit this *techne* to other people.

The *Dissoi Logoi* favour the conclusion that it is impossible to transmit the skills of an art because Polykleitos had sons who are much inferior to him. Plato in the 'Protagoras' on the contrary is open to this possibility because Polycleitus taught his sons to make bronze sculptures. By that time when the dialog is supposed to take place, the two sons of Polykleitos were still young so they could still become very good artists in bronze sculpture as well.

Comparisons between painters and poets occur in the 'Poetics' of Aristotle (1448 a – 1461 b).

The parallel development of bronze sculpture and painting was outlined in the art criticism when this field became a recognized branch of Greek literature. In particular, Xenokrates of the school of Sicyon who lived around 250 BC, published two treatises respectively about bronze sculpture and about painting, implying that painting and bronze sculpture were considered to be sisters-*technai* which had similar evolutions.¹¹ Both arts

¹¹See J. Tanner, *The Invention of Art History*, Cambridge (2006) 212-220.

were born in what is for us the early 5th century BC – the painting especially with Polygnotos and bronze sculpture with Hageladas. Both developed through the late 5th century BC with the sculptures of Pheidias, Polycleitus, Myron and Pythagoras and with the paintings of Zeuxis and Parrhasios, and both peaked in the age of Alexander – bronze sculpture with Lysippos and painting with Apelles.

The epigram 62 of Posidippus is also relevant: it outlines the progress of bronze sculpture according to a climax which culminates also with Lysippos in the age of Alexander.

Painters and sculptors were probably unified in a treatise by Douris of Samos in the early 3rd century BC. Douris is thought to have written (we have few fragments from him) more or less “lives” of artists. For this reason sometime he is nicknamed the “Vasari” of antiquity.

This concept was probably kept at the middle Hellenistic times when we have a different canon of visual art. This canon is handed down to us by Cicero in ‘Brutus’ 70 but it is thought to come from the middle Hellenistic art criticism and it may hark back to the “Chronikai” by Apollodoros of Athens, a chronographer who flourished a little after 150 BC.¹² This canon is different from the early Hellenistic one, because it places the peak of bronze sculpture no longer in the age of Alexander but in keeping with the new classicism of the period, at the time of Polykleitos (around 450 – 415 BC).

This notion became accepted in Rome during the late

¹²See F. Montanari, 'Apollodoros 7', *DNP* 1 (1996) 857-860.

republican times in the 1st century BC: in fact Cicero in his 'Brutus' 70 endorses it and asserts that Polykleitos in his opinion is just perfect. Thus there is no further development from Polycleitus until Lysippus. Probably the Romans bought this idea together with the neo-Attic classicism, fed by the nostalgia for the golden age of Perikles. Moreover Cicero, defender of republican institutions against the absolutistic monarchy of Caesar, probably did not like the figure of Alexander and the arts developed in the so called age of Alexander, because it was a period when the visual arts served no longer the needs of public institutions but responded to the desiderata of kings. Thus it is likely that there was a political influence on the preference given in late republican times to Polycleitus and to his age.

In Rome during the age of Augustus the unified concept of visual arts is translated to Latin with the expression *videndae artes*. This important cultural reception is found in the first epistle of the second book of Epistles of Horace, vv. 232-244:

gratus Alexandro regi magno fuit ille
Choerilus, incultis qui versibus et male natis
rettulit acceptos, regale nomisma, Philippos;
sed veluti tractata notam labemque remittunt
atramenta, fere scriptores carmine foedo
splendida facta linunt, idem rex ille, poema
qui tam ridiculum tam care prodigus emit,
edicto vetuit, ne quis se praeter Apellen
pingeret, aut alius Lysippo duceret aera
fortis Alexandri voltum simulantia. quod si
iudicium subtile videndis artibus illud

ad libros et ad haec Musarum dona vocares,
Boeotum in crasso iurares aere natum.

Choerilus, who had his crude misbegotten verses
To thank for the golden Philips, the royal coins,
He received, more than pleased Alexander the Great:
But often writers dim shining deeds with vile scrawls,
As ink on the fingers will leaves its blots and stains.
That same king, who paid so enormous a price for such
Ridiculous poetry, issued an edict
Forbidding anyone but Apelles to paint him,
Anyone other than Lysippus to cast in bronze
Brave Alexander's artistic likeness. Yet if you
Applied that judgement, so refined when viewing works
Of art, to books and to those same gifts of the Muses,
You'd swear he'd been born to Boeotia's dull air.

Horace notes that Alexander the Great (disliked by Augustus) paid an enormous price for the ridiculous poetry of Choerilus but also issued an edict forbidding anybody but Apelles to paint him and anyone other than Lysippos to cast him in bronze. The poet of Venosa observes that if you apply this so refined judgment when viewing works of visual arts (*videndae artes*) you have to do the same also to literary works.

This text clarifies that the visual arts were by that time considered even in Rome a unified branch: they are exemplified with the names of Lysippos and Apelles and thus encompass both bronze sculpture and painting.

These names, despite the personal dislike of Augustus for late classical styles – because Augustus preferred the art of Pheidias and Polykleitos (the most famous portrait

of Augustus of Prima Porta (fig. 4) is inspired by the Doryphoros of Polykleitos)¹³ - reveal that the notion that visual arts peaked with Lysippos and Apelles was coming back. And it will remain throughout the whole AD 1st century the standard opinion about visual arts.

This notion was likely to be kept also in the age of Nero, when two artists were very much liked by Nero: not by chance one of them was a bronze sculptor and another one was a painter. The first one was Zenodorus:¹⁴ he delivered the colossal statue of Nero representing him as god Helios (fig. 5). So he was the beloved bronze sculptor of Nero. But Nero had also a beloved painter: Famulus (Pliny 35. 120):¹⁵ he painted the Domus Aurea, the palace of the emperor (fig. 6). So even Nero adopted Alexander the Great's notion to have both a painter and bronze sculptor as his beloved artists: of course that implies that painting and bronze sculpture were considered sister arts.

This consideration of these arts as sister arts is also kept by Pliny the Elder in his Natural History. He devotes three books to the most important visual arts: the 34th book to bronze sculpture, the 35th book to painting and 36th book to marble sculpture. So these visual arts were grouped together in an encyclopedia of 37 books. These books are not scattered one here and one there: they are

¹³See A. Klynne, 'Where to put Augustus?', *AJA* 121 (2000) 121-128.

¹⁴See F. C. Albertson, 'Zenodorus's Colossus of Nero', *MAAR* 46 (2001) 95-118.

¹⁵See P. Meyboom, 'Famulus', *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 54 (1995) 229-244.

grouped together and this is also very important.

In late antiquity it happens that the different materials used by the artists are regarded less important than before because the notion of art now becomes metaphysical. It is thought to come from above, from the sky and thus it is a divine art. This 'Zeitgeist' prepares the so called age of spirituality. These are long processes which take decades because not only *natura non facit saltus*, but human societies do not drop very quickly from one concept to another. But sometimes there are conceptual definitions, which reveal that one notion is mature.

The metaphysical concept of art is clearly enunciated by Flavius Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 6. 19:

καὶ ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος 'περὶ θεῶν' εἶπεν 'ὕμᾶς ἐρήσομαι πρῶτον, τί μαθόντες ἄτοπα καὶ γελοῖα θεῶν εἶδη παραδεδῶκατε τοῖς δευρο ἀνθρώποις πλὴν ὀλίγων: ὀλίγων γάρ; πᾶνυμέντοι ὀλίγων, ἃ σοφῶς καὶ θεοειδῶς ἴδρυνται, τὰ λοιπὰ δ' ὕμῶν ἱερὰ ζῴων ἀλόγων καὶ ἀδόξων τιμαὶ μᾶλλον ἢ θεῶν φαίνονται.' δυσχεράνας δὲ ὁ Θεσπεσίῳ 'τὰ δὲ παρ' ὕμῖν' εἶπεν 'ἀγάλματα πῶς ἰδρῦσθαι φήσεις;' 'ὥς γε' ἔφη 'κάλλιστόν τε καὶ θεοφιλέστατον δημιουργεῖν θεοῦς' 'τὸν Δία που λέγεις' εἶπε 'τὸν ἐν τῇ Ὀλυμπίᾳ καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἕδος καὶ τὸ τῆς Κνιδίας τε καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἀργείας καὶ ὅποσα ᾧδε καλὰ καὶ μεστὰ ὥρας.'

'οὐ μόνον' ἔφη 'ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ καὶ καθάπαξ τὴν μὲν παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀγαλματοποιίαν ἄπτεσθαί φημι τοῦ προσήκοντος, ὕμᾶς δὲ καταγελᾶν τοῦ θεοῦ μᾶλλον ἢ νομίζειν αὐτό'

'οἱ Φειδίαι δὲ' εἶπε: 'καὶ οἱ Πραξιτέλει μῶν ἀνελθόντες ἐσοῦρανὸν καὶ ἀπομαζάμενοι τὰ τῶν θεῶν εἶδη τέχνην αὐτὰ ἐποιοῦντο, ἢ ἕτερόν τι ἦν, ὃ ἐφίστη αὐτοῦς τῷ;'

‘ἕτερον’ ἔφη ‘καὶ μεστόν γε σοφίας πρᾶγμα.’
 ‘ποῖον;’ εἶπεν ‘οὐ γὰρ ἄν τι παρὰ τὴν μίμησινεῖποις.’
 ‘φαντασία’ ἔφη ‘ταῦτα εἰργάσατο σοφώτερα μίμησεως δ
 ημιουργός: μίμησις μὲν γὰρ δημιουργήσει, δεῖδεν, φαντ
 ασία δὲ καὶ ὃ μὴ εἶδεν, ὑποθήσεται γὰρ αὐτὸ πρὸς τὴν ἄ
 ναφορὰν τοῦ ὄντος, καὶ μίμησιν μὲνπολλάκις ἐκκρούει ἔ
 κκληξις, φαντασίαν δὲ οὐδέν, χωρεῖ γὰρ ἀνέκκληκτος π
 ρὸς ὃ αὐτὴ ὑπέθετο. δεῖ δὲ που Διὸς μὲν ἐνθυμηθέντα εἶδ
 ος ὄρᾶν αὐτὸν ζῦν οὐρανῷ καὶ ὥραις καὶ ἄστροις, ὥσπε
 ρ ὁ Φειδίας τότε ὥρμησεν, Ἀθηνᾶνδὲ δημιουργήσειν μέ
 λλοντα στρατόπεδα ἐννοεῖν καὶ μῆτιν καὶ τέχνας καὶ ὡς
 Διὸς αὐτοῦ ἀνέθορεν. εἰ δὲ ἱέρακα ἢ γλαῦκα ἢ λύκον ἢ κ
 ῦνα ἐργασάμενος ἐς τὰ ἱερὰ φέροις ἀντὶ Ἑρμοῦ τε καὶ Ἀ
 θηνᾶς καὶ Ἀπόλλωνος, τὰ μὲνθηρία καὶ τὰ ὄρνεα ζηλωτ
 ἄ δόξει τῶν εἰκόνων, οἱ δὲ θεοὶ παραπολὸν τῆς αὐτῶν δόξ
 ης ἐστήξουσιν.’
 ‘ἔοικας’ εἶπεν ‘ἀβασανίστως ἐξετάζειν τὰ ἡμέτερα: σοφὸ
 ν γάρ, εἴπερ τι Αἰγυπτίων, καὶ τὸ μὴ θρασύνεσθαι ἐς τὰ τ
 ὶων θεῶν εἰδη, συμβολικὰ δὲ αὐτὰ ποιεῖσθαι καὶ ὑπονοοῦ
 μενα, καὶ γὰρ ἄν καὶ σεμνότερα οὕτω φαίνοιτο.’ γελάσα
 ς οὖν ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος ‘ὦ ἄνθρωποι,’ ἔφη ‘μεγάλα ὑμῖν ἀπο
 λέλαυται τῆς Αἰγυπτίων τε καὶ Αἰθιοπῶν σοφίας, εἰσεμν
 ὄτερον ὑμῶν καὶ θεοειδέστερον κύων δόξει καὶ ἴβις καὶ
 τράγος, ταῦτα γὰρ Θεσπεσίωνος ἀκούω τοῦ σοφοῦ. σεμ
 νὸν δὲ δὴ ἢ ἔμφοβον τί ἐν τούτοις; τοὺς γὰρ ἐπιόρκους κ
 αὶ τοὺς ἱεροσύλους καὶ τὰ βωμολόχα ἔθνηκαταφρονεῖν τ
 ὶων τοιούτων ἱερῶν εἰκὸς μᾶλλον ἢ δεδιέναι αὐτά, εἰ δὲ σ
 εμνότερα ταῦτα ὑπονοοῦμενα, πολλῶσεμνότερον ἂν ἔπρ
 αττον οἱ θεοὶ κατ’ Αἰγυπτῶν, εἰ μὴ ἴδρυτό τι αὐτῶν ἄγαλ
 μα, ἀλλ’ ἕτερον τρόπον σοφώτερόντε καὶ ἀπορρητότερο
 ν τῆ θεολογία ἐχρήσθη: ἦν γὰρ που νεῶς μὲν αὐτοῖς ἐξοἰ
 κοδομήσαι καὶ βωμοῦςδὲρίζειν καὶ ἄ χρηθύνειν καὶ ἄ μὴ χ

ρή και όπηγίκα και έφ' όσον και ό τι λέγοντας ή δρωντα
ς, άγαλμα δε μηέσφέρειν, αλλά τα είδη των θεων καταλε
ίπειν τοίς τα ιερά έσφοιτωσιν, αναγράφει γάρ τι ή γνώμη
καίανατυπουται δημιουργίας κρείττον, ύμεις δε άφήρησ
θε τους θεους και το όρασθαι καλως και το ύπονοείσθαι.
' πρός ταυτα ό Θεσπεσίων,

'έγένετο τις' έφη 'Σωκράτης Αθηναϊος άνόητος, ώσπερ
ήμεϊς, γέρων, ός τον κύνα καιτόν χήνα και την πλάτανον
θεους τε ήγειτο και ώμνυ.'

'ούκ άνόητος,' είπεν 'άλλά θεϊος και άτεχνως σοφός, ώμ
νυ γάρ ταυτα ούχ' ώς θεους, άλλ' ίνα μη θεους όμνύοι.'

"It is about the gods that I would like to ask you a
question first, namely, what induced you to impart, as
your tradition, to the people of this country forms of the
gods that are absurd and grotesque in all but a few
cases? In a few cases, do I say? I would rather say that in
very few are the gods' images fashioned in a wise and
god-like manner, for the mass of your shrines seem to
have been erected in honor rather of irrational and
ignoble animals than of gods."

Thespesion, resenting these remarks, said: "And your
own images in Greece, how are they fashioned?"

"In the way," he replied, "in which it is best and most
reverent to construct images of the gods."

"I suppose you allude," said the other, "to the statue of
Zeus in Olympia, and to the image of Athena and to that
of the Cnidian goddess and to that of the Argive
goddess and to other images equally beautiful and full of
charm?"

"Not only to these," replied Apollonius, "but without
exception I maintain, that whereas in other lands
statuary has scrupulously observed decency and fitness,

you rather make ridicule of the gods than really believe in them."

"Your artists, then, like Phidias," said the other, "and like Praxiteles, went up, I suppose, to heaven and took a copy of the forms of the gods, and then reproduced these by their art or was there any other influence which presided over and guided their molding?"

"There was," said Apollonius, "and an influence pregnant with wisdom and genius."

"What was that?" said the other, "for I do not think you can adduce any except imitation."

"Imagination," said Apollonius, "wrought these works, a wiser and subtler artist by far than imitation; for imitation can only create as its handiwork what it has seen, but imagination equally what it has not seen; for it will conceive of its ideal with reference to the reality, and imitation is often baffled by terror, but imagination by nothing; for it marches undismayed to the goal which it has itself laid down.

When you entertain a notion of Zeus you must, I suppose, envisage him along with heaven and seasons and stars, as Phidias in his day endeavoured to do, and if you would fashion an image of Athena you must imagine in your mind armies and cunning, and handicrafts, and how she leapt out of Zeus himself. But if you make a hawk or an owl or a wolf or a dog, and put it in your temples instead of Hermes or Athena or Apollo, your animals and your birds may be esteemed and of much price as likenesses, but the gods will be very much lowered in their dignity."

"I think," said the other, "that you criticize our religion very superficially; for if the Egyptians have any wisdom,

they show it by their deep respect and reverence in the representation of the gods, and by the circumstance that they fashion their forms as symbols of a profound inner meaning, so as to enhance their solemnity and august character."

Apollonius thereon merely laughed and said: "My good friends, you have indeed greatly profited by the wisdom of Egypt and Ethiopia, if your dog and your ibis and your goat seem particularly august and god-like, for this is what I learn from Thespion the sage. But what is there that is august or awe-inspiring in these images? Is it not likely that perjurers and temple-thieves and all the rabble of low jesters will despise such holy objects rather than dread them; and if they are to be held for the hidden meanings which they convey, surely the gods in Egypt would have met with much greater reverence, if no images of them had ever been set up at all, and if you had planned your theology along other lines wiser and more mysterious.

For I imagine you might have built temples for them, and have fixed the altars and laid down rules about what to sacrifice and what not, and when and on what scale, and with what liturgies and rites, without introducing any image at all, but leaving it to those who frequented the temples to imagine the images of the gods; for the mind can more or less delineate and figure them to itself better than can any artist; but you have denied to the gods the privilege of beauty both of the outer eye and of an inner suggestion."

Thespion replied and said: "There was a certain Athenian, called Socrates, a foolish old man like ourselves, who thought that the dog and the goose and

the plane tree were gods and used to swear by them."

"He was not foolish," said Apollonius, "but a divine and unfeignedly wise man; for he did not swear by these objects on the understanding that they were gods, but to save himself from swearing by the gods."

Philostratus lived at the court of emperor Septimius Severus and was especially admired by his wife Julia Domna. He narrates that Apollonius of Tyana paid a visit to the Gymnosophists or naked wise persons of Egypt: in conversation with them he blamed the images of Egyptian deities who are often represented as animals and asserted that the Greek images of deities are much better. The Gymnosophists became very angry and one of them, Thespesion, asked him: do you think that your artists – Polykleitos, Pheidias and Praxiteles - went to the sky, saw the true forms of Zeus, Hera and Aphrodite etc. and translated them to the materials used by them? Or they portrayed the gods in another way? Apollonius replied that these Greek artists shaped the images of gods with wisdom. Thespesion retorted: but you can just figure out how the gods look like through the imitation. Apollonius objects that it is not through the mimesis that the wise image of gods is made but through the phantasia, to be interpreted as creative imagination. He specifies that the phantasia derives inspiration from the sky, from the transcendence, from the divine, in other words from God, because even the paganism of this period is substantially monotheistic.¹⁶ So it derives from this divine inspiration, wisdom and makes shapes

¹⁶See P. Athanassiadi (ed.), *Pagan Monotheism in late Antiquity*, Oxford (1999).

through wisdom. When you reach such a transcended concept of art of course the single matters by which the single works of art are made become much less important than before. This is the beginning of the long tradition which considered all the different visual arts mixed up together because the figure of general technites, who can be painter, sculptor, mosaicist etc., is born. The main resource of these technitai is the sophia. For example the patriarch of Constantinople Photius in 864 praises in his 10th homily (II. 433) the sacred figures made by the mosaicist of the Church of Our Lady of Pharos inside the imperial palace of Constantinople. He calls the artist responsible for these figures technites and specifies that his talent is the sophia. He laughs at the works of the various Zeuxis, Parrhasios, Pheidias and Praxiteles and says that they were just children when compared to this contemporary artist.

This singular notion of art leads to the kanon of the 10 most important artists of antiquity, which includes architects, sculptors and painters, which is given by Tzetzes – a poet of the late 12 century - (Epistles 42 and Histories 8. 191-200) and also leads to the catalogue of miracula mundi (Wonders of the World) which is given in the Codex Vaticanus Graecus 989, p. 110 (dated around 1200), in which the 30 most important works of art of antiquity are listed and sometimes they are paintings sometimes they are architectures sometimes they are sculptures. So here the modern notion of art is entirely clear.¹⁷

¹⁷See A. Corso, *Prassitele* iii, Rome (1991) 117-120; 143-

Lecture 2. The birth of the opinion that marble statues were not colored in classical Greece

In archaic times, stone sculptures - especially of course marble sculptures – usually were colored.¹⁸ This is the result of the aesthetic of the mimesis. The images made by humans must respond to the same rules of the life that we see around. Of course, everything we see all around has colors, so the images we craft, we expose, and we see must have colors. In the archaic period the standard habit is to make statues colored. For example, the so called *Peplos kore* (fig. 7) (in the Museum of the Acropolis of Athens, variously dated around the middle of the 6th century BC) originally was endowed with vivid colors.¹⁹ In most cases these colors disappeared due to long exposition to the atmosphere. So we must imagine how they were colored and there are scholars who have developed the expertise to reconstitute how these statues were colored.²⁰

This aesthetic of the mimesis implies that images have to be similar to the life that we see around. It is also an aspect of a broader concept of mimesis which considers

147 and 158-164.

¹⁸About colors applied to marble sculptures, of course the bibliography is huge. Here I cite only V. Brinkmann, O. Primavesi and M. Hallein (eds.), *Circumlitio*, Munich (2010).

¹⁹See. g. K. Karakasi, *Archaikes kores*, Athens (2017) 145-148, pls. 244-245.

²⁰The best established scholar who specialized in this field is V. Brinkmann, *Polychromoi theoi*, Athens (2007).

what humans do as something taken from the nature: for example, even in poetry Alkman, a poet who lived in Sparta in the 7th century BC, claims to have taken his songs from birds (see Alcman, *frgg.* 25 and 70 Edmonds). So there is no clear gap between the songs of the birds and the songs of Alkman. At least this is the ideology. This attitude is clear already in the first inscriptions that concern sculptors who made statues. For example, Ekphantos (6th century BC) made a statue above a column, which was found in Melos and is now in Berlin. In this inscription, which is a poetic inscription in an elegiac distich, he does not express any pride for having carved the statue but for having painted it: he uses the word “γροφω” which is a Doric variation of “γραφο” and means “I write” but also “I paint”. So, the painting was the operation, which made this statue similar to the nature, which is around and of course was very important.²¹

However, this archaic situation was going to change throughout the Classical period. First of all in the Classical period the colors are no longer bright but become much more tenuous – the process for which Italians use the word *sfumato* (which is however international). The colors become not so strong and so bright.

²¹See K. Hallof, 'Grophon', S. Kansteiner *et alii* (eds.), *DNO*, Berlin (2014) 1, 255-261, particularly no. 353.

Second, an ideology developed against too many colors and this ideology is labeled 'tetrachromatism'.²² This ideology asserts that just four colors can be used. These four colors are yellow, black, white and red. All other colors have no rights of citizenship in serious painting. This tradition was asserted by the school of painters of Sicily and basically is Platonic. One of the most famous dialogues of Plato is the "Phaedo", in which the last hours of Socrates are narrated. Socrates who speaks of the immortality of soul says that beyond the death the souls who deserved better life go to the world of the blessed which is endowed with three out of the four colors I mentioned (white, yellow and red: Plato, *Phaedo* 59. 110 b – 63. 115 a). These tetrachromatic painters do not represent life as it appears because they are against mimesis, they are Platonic. They want to represent the ideal world, the world of the blessed. This world, which is perfect, is beyond the sky, 'hyperuranian', beyond this atmosphere, beyond this life. This tetrachromatic tradition led to many curious phenomena. For example, in the hunting scene represented on the façade of Tomb 2 of Vergina (Philip the II's Tomb) (fig. 8) the sky is white.²³ Also in the Mosaic of Alexander (fig. 9) from the House of Faun at Pompeii, the sky is white.²⁴ This is the white sky of the

²²See J. J. Pollitt, 'Painting in Greek and Graeco-Roman Art Criticism', J. J. Pollitt (ed.), *Painting in the classical World*, Cambridge (2014) 258-301.

²³See, e.g., H. M. Franks, *Hunters, heroes, kings*, Princeton (2012) 5-9, figs. 2-12.

²⁴See, e.g., P. Moreno, *Apelles*, Milan (2001) pls. 1-22.

tetrachromatists, “Platonic” painters.

But Plato delivered another philosophical thought, which was very important: the notion of the ideas. We live in a corrupted world, but there is another world, the *hyperuranian* one. The ideas in this world have no colors (see Plato, *Phaedrus* 27. 247 c and *Epinomis* 981 b). Thus, sculptures which are meant to represent no longer the earthly world as it appears but another, gentle and rarefied one must reveal a reduced importance of colors. In my opinion it is the Platonism, the strongest ideological agency of the ancient world, which slowly brought to the disappearance of color in marble sculptures. Thus the statues compose a sort of gallery of ideas, of mythical beings or divine beings, which are represented in their purity and the purity implies also the absence of colors. This is because they represent subjects not contaminated with the corrupted world in which we live according to the Platonic tradition. This process is very long but leads in the middle Hellenistic times to another idea which blossoms in the world of the Academy, thus in the Platonic school.

The third school of the Academy has as the most important figure Carneades. In 159 BC Carneades went to Rome where he delivered few lectures. One of these lectures is recorded by Cicero in the dialog *De Divinatione* (1.13. 23). Carneades claimed that stone / marble sculptures exist already inside of the blocks of stone / marble and thus the process of making stone sculptures is not mimetic but the discovery of what was eternally there, because the sculptor just removes the superfluous material.

"Carneades used to have a story that once in the Chian

quarries when a stone was split open there appeared the head of the infant god Pan; I grant that the figure may have borne some resemblance to the god, but assuredly the resemblance was not such that you could ascribe the work to a Scopas. For it is undeniably true that no perfect imitation of a thing was ever made by chance" (transl. Loeb).

Cicero is skeptical about that. He is ideologically against this Platonizing way to overcome the mimesis. But you can easily appreciate that if the sculpture is already inside the block of stone / marble, the painting of its surfaces is no longer important. The sculpture is already there, perfect, so why should it be painted?

The second passage in the *De Divinatione* is also important (21. 48 – 49). There are people who on the contrary are followers of Carneades. They are Platonists. They continue the above considered reasoning. We have here their objection to Cicero.

“You also mentioned that myth from Carneades about the head of Pan — as if the likeness could not have been the result of chance! and as if every block of marble did not necessarily have within it heads worthy of Praxiteles!” (transl. Loeb).

So Nature is the real creator of the work. Of course you have to just remove the superfluous material and the sculpture is ok.

“For his masterpieces were made by chipping away the marble, not by adding anything to it; and when, after much chipping, the lineaments of a face were reached, one then realized that the work now polished and complete had always been inside the block”. (transl. Loeb)

Can you find any mention of painting? The Platonism of the 2nd century BC removed the painting from the necessary features of sculptures.

“...Therefore, it is possible that some such figure as Carneades described did spontaneously appear in the Chian quarries. On the other hand, the story may be untrue. Again, you have often noticed clouds take the form of a lion or a hippocentaur. Therefore it is possible for chance to imitate reality, and this you just now denied”.(transl. Loeb)

This is a continuity of this concept. But this idea was not just narrated in the quarries of Chios. It was narrated also on Paros. Here in the quarries of Paros we find the best marble available in antiquity, that taken from the quarries of Marathi on the island of Paros. Pliny 36. 14 reports an information which probably harks back to his main source for these anecdotes which may be Douris of Samos: an art critic of early 3rd century BC. Douris of Samos was basically a peripatetic and was very much inside the world and discussions of the philosophic schools at Athens.

“All these artists(scil.: the school of Chios, Phidias, Agoracritus, Alcamenes and Praxiteles), however, used nothing but the white marble of the isle of Paros, a stone which was known as "lychnites" at first, because, according to Varro, it was cut in the quarries by lamplight. With reference to the marble of Paros, there is one very marvellous circumstance related; in a single block that was split with wedges, a figure of Silenus made its appearance” (transl. Loeb).

So a Silenus was thought to have been found inside a block of lychnites, which craftsmen were trying to cut in

order to use it. So you see that also on Paros already perfectly made sculptures were thought to have existed inside the marble blocks. This way of thinking determines the appreciation of the white surfaces of marble, which becomes very trendy from the neo-Sophistic times onwards. These times are very much influenced by the so-called middle Platonism. Ancient Platonism corresponds to the five academies spanning from Plato to the 5th Academy of the 1st century BC. Then there is the middle Platonism whose main exponent is Plutarch, after which there will be also the neo Platonism from Plotinus in AD 3rd c. onwards. With the middle Platonism the opinion that the worthy visual arts must represent not the corrupted world which appears to us but the perfect reality which is supposed to be above the apparent one, the reality of ideas, blossomed. The ideas, as we have seen, have no color.

In this cultural context, we can place the appreciation of the white surfaces of the Cnidian Aphrodite (fig. 10) in the dialog *Amores*, which is attributed to Lucian. This is not the place to discuss whether this dialogue is by Lucian or not. I believe it is but other scholars argue that it is not by Lucian but only by one of his school and of later times.²⁵

In this dialogue, a group of friends travels to see the Cnidian Aphrodite, which was one of the marvels that everybody was going to see if they could (Lucian, *Amores*, 13–15):

²⁵See J. Jopr, 'Interpretation and authenticity of the Lucianic *Erotes*', *Helios* 38 (2011) 1. 103-120.

“When the plants had given us pleasure enough, we entered the temple. In the midst thereof sits the goddess – she's a most beautiful statue of Parian marble – arrogantly smiling a little as a grin parts her lips. Draped by no garment, all her beauty is uncovered and revealed, except in so far as she unobtrusively uses one hand to hide her private parts. So great was the power of the craftsman's art that the hard unyielding marble did justice to every limb. Charicles at any rate raised a mad distracted cry and exclaimed, "Happiest indeed of the gods was Ares, who suffered chains because of her!" And, as he spoke, he ran up and, stretching out his neck as far as he could, started to kiss the goddess with importunate lips. Callicratidas stood by in silence with amazement in his heart.

The temple had a door on both sides for the benefit of those also who wish to have a good view of the goddess from behind, so that no part of her be left unadmired. It's easy therefore for people to enter by the other door and survey the beauty of her back.

And so we decided to see all of the goddess and went round to the back of the precinct. Then, when the door had been opened by the woman responsible for keeping the keys, we were filled with an immediate wonder for the beauty we beheld. The Athenian who had been so impassive an observer a minute before, upon inspecting those parts of the goddess which recommend a boy, suddenly raised a shout far more frenzied than that of Charicles. "Heracles!" he exclaimed, "what a well-proportioned back! What generous flanks she has! How satisfying an armful to embrace! How delicately moulded the flesh on the buttocks, neither too thin and

close to the bone, nor yet revealing too great an expanse of fat! And as for those precious parts sealed in on either side by the hips, how inexpressibly sweetly they smile! How perfect the proportions of the thighs and the shins as they stretch down in a straight line to the feet! So that's what Ganymedes looks like as he pours out the nectar in heaven for Zeus and makes it taste sweeter. For I'd never have taken the cup from Hebe if she served me." While Callicratidas was shouting this under the spell of the goddess, Charicles in the excess of his admiration stood almost petrified, though his emotions showed in the melting tears trickling from his eyes.

When we could admire no more, we noticed a mark on one thigh like a stain on a dress; the unsightliness of this was shown up by the brightness of the marble everywhere else. I therefore, hazarding a plausible guess about the truth of the matter, supposed that what we saw was a natural defect in the marble. For even such things as these are subject to accident and many potential masterpieces of beauty are thwarted by bad luck. And so, thinking the black mark to be a natural blemish, I found in this too cause to admire Praxiteles for having hidden what was unsightly in the marble in the parts less able to be examined closely." (transl. Loeb)

So, the Cnidian Aphrodite appeared with the natural color of the Parian marble and with no additional color. This is clear from the above quoted passage. Clearly there are two possibilities: either already Praxiteles made the naked part of the body not colored (the naked surfaces may have had a protecting, transparent wax but no color) or by the AD 2nd c. the color had disappeared and nobody bothered to restore it,

so with the exposure of the statue to the atmosphere, the color was lost.

From the aesthetic point of view, it is important that by the AD 2nd c. people admired no longer the painting on the statue but the white bright appearance of the marble's surface. This observation is important, because it shows the turning point in the ancient taste.

This appreciation continues in late antiquity and throughout the Byzantine times. We can argue it from Cedrenus' *Compendium historiarum* 1564, 10-12 B, where he describes the Cnidian Aphrodite which had been brought to Constantinople by Theodosius (Cedrenus gives a chronology in AD 393–394: the last years of reign of Theodosius): he brought this statue with others to the *Lauseion*, which was a sort of museum of ancient idols. Cedrenus provides a catalog of these works of art in the Lauseion.

Cedrenus mentions “The Cnidian Aphrodite of white stone, naked, shielding with her hand only her pudenda, a work of Praxiteles of Cnidus”.

Let us not consider here a problem of this testimony. Cedrenus says that Praxiteles was Cnidian: did he get the citizenship of Cnidus for the Cnidian Aphrodite? In any case, the statue is admired for its white stone. So you can see that this enduring appreciation of the white marble is kept in Byzantine times. Then it continues in later times. For example, Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 8. 378 again insists on the white marble of the Cnidian Aphrodite.

Only in the early 19th century, Quatremere de Quincy will assert that the thesis that marble statues were shown

with the color of the marble was wrong.²⁶

However, as I hope to have shown with the above quoted passages, this notion existed already in antiquity and was the result of a long process. The driving force toward this concept of statues was the Platonism, which conveyed a gentle, celestial and superior image of statues by making them sorts of ideas shaped in the round. And the statues indeed became galleries of ideas. This concept of white statues is one of the aspects, one of the faces of a more general concept: the concept that these works of art are outside the history. They are everywhere in eternity, in the *ubique et semper*. They are eternal forms as the Platonic ideas. Thus they can be admired forever. Here we catch the process which brought Classical art from specific artistic periods inside the history and society to something which is eternal and above the times. This is the result also of the Platonism but also of the classicism in the general meaning of this word.

There is another aspect, which I wish to suggest. The establishment of the notion that ancient marble sculptures were white may have been also in part determined by the Roman habit to make a lot of copies of these masterpieces.

From the 2nd c. BC to AD 2nd c., thousands of copies of these works were carved throughout the Roman world.²⁷ These copies were often not painted and left

²⁶See M. Quatremere-de-Quincy, *Le Jupiter Olympien*, Paris (1814).

²⁷See A. Anguissola, *Supports in Roman marble sculpture*, Cambridge (2018).

white.

It is necessary to add some specifications to this statement. Throughout the middle and late Hellenistic times, painted copies were still numerous, but their number diminishes and the number of marble copies left white increases as we go toward the Roman middle imperial times, when, in the Antonine period, painted copies become very rare.²⁸

Of course, it is likely that most ancient persons saw many copies and never saw the related originals and only small elites could afford travelling to see the originals. So this circumstance may have created a public in Roman imperial times which saw these styles through Roman copies in white marbles which stood everywhere (in baths complexes, in basilicas, in sanctuaries of course, in *fora* etc.) but never saw the related classical originals. Thus in many cases these statues were probably appreciated by this public as having white surfaces without colors. This public opinion may have also contributed to the notion that Classical statues in marble were white.

Another factor, which may have contributed to this concept, is the renown in Roman imperial times of colored marbles. Roman patrons could dispose of a wide selection of colored marbles for their sculptures.²⁹ Of course these colored marbles were not painted. This habit to use continuously colored marbles may have also

²⁸About this process, see A. Anguissola, *Difficillima imitatio*, Rome (2012).

²⁹See, e.g. M. L. Anderson and L. Nista (eds.), *Radiance in Stone*, Rome (1989).

led to the notion that painting of marble was redundant, that it was not of good taste. So when Pliny says in 35.133 that Praxiteles praised the statues which were finished by painter Nikias more than the other statues indeed conveys a habit which may have been no longer fashionable. Thus this is another factor which may have contributed to the disappearance of painting from marble sculpture.

There is another issue which is relevant to our topic. In Roman Imperial times the workshops of marble sculptures produced no longer very few statues as it was done in the Classical Period. They were producing an industrial quantity because the building policy with all the statues required as ornaments demanded much more sculptures than in previous times. Of course this industrial production implied also that these *ergasteria* have to work very quickly, which is why, at least in my opinion, very often marble sculptures in Roman imperial times are done too quickly. You can realize that they are not refined very carefully everywhere in every part. This being in a hurry to deliver as many statues as they could of course implied also the decline and disappearance of painting on statues. So it is obvious that if these workshop had to deliver for the villa of Hadrian near Tibur for example 400 marble statues, they could not carve carefully each of these statues. If they did that even when the patron was the emperor, they certainly carved even more quickly statues required by privates or local administrators. So even this industrial rather than artistic quality of a lot of marble sculpture in Roman imperial times and also of copies may have contributed to the

decline of colors applied to sculptures.

So white marble statues are the result of many trends: a philosophical one, social agencies which affect the Roman imperial habit of making sculptures and there is also an evolution of taste, which is clear from Lucian onwards.

So all these factors together lead to this result. This result, the notion that the marble sculptures of the Classical period were white, will last at least from the period of Lucian (around AD 160) until around 1800. This is an extremely impressive phenomenon, which was produced by a lot of factors.

Question:

When this practice of painting sculpture disappeared from the Roman art itself (we know for example the perfectly painted statue of Augustus from Prima Porta and many other examples)?

It disappears according to the genres, to the types of sculptures. It disappears first of all in Roman copies from classical originals, which were not painted in several cases already in the 1st century BC. Other classes of marble sculptures, which are not copies continue to be painted. For example, it has been proved beyond any doubt that Trajan's column (fig. 11) was painted.³⁰ This issue about the Aurelian Column is debated (fig. 12)³¹. Of course, in these cases people had to see figures from very far away. So these monuments had to be painted.

³⁰See C. Conti (ed.), *Lectures on Trajan's Column*, Rome (2016).

³¹See J. Scheid and V. Huet (eds.), *Autour de la colonne Aurelienne*, Paris (2000).

We see nearly nothing on the upper friezes of these columns because their colors disappeared. However few sarcophagi were painted, and the standard Attic sarcophagi appeared with the surfaces of their white marbles.³² So the habit of leaving white marble appearances responds to a taste and it is born in the eastern part of the Roman Empire rather than in Rome. Probably it blossomed in Attic workshops of the Antonine period. The production of copies is the driving class of materials which imposed this taste. This taste had philosophical and ideological roots. In Lucian's time it was already ripe at least in the east. In Rome the Etruscan and Italic tradition of painting stone surfaces probably delayed the spread of this 'new' taste from the east. Which is why in the Roman west we have painted sculpture also in AD 2ndc. but it is a declining phenomenon. Sculptures that followed the Italic tradition in municipal centers often reveal the persistence of the painting of sculptures, especially in areas which had no marbles but only limestone (for example in Noricum, in Gallia, in Britannia etc.). This fact is due also to the Celtic tradition of painting stones. So areas characterized by strong Celtic traditions are less influenced by the trends coming from the elite quarters of the Greek society of the neo-sophistic age.

³²About all these issues, see I. Elsner, *Art and Rhetoric in Roman culture*, Cambridge (2014).

Lecture 3. The rise of an idealized concept of classical Greek art during the Roman period

While usually at least in European culture of 19 and 20 centuries there was a very widespread idea that history is a progress, a constant progress – so we go toward the better -, in antiquity this was not the dominant opinion. The widespread opinion was that the golden period, the best time was in the past. For example, in the *Iliad* Nestor – a very old man, the king of Pylos who was there and remembered a lot past generations - says that the warriors of previous generations were much better than the warriors of today (see *eg* Homer, *Iliad* 11. 105-848).

There is the decline in the arethe (value). The notion that there is a constant decline in human value was of course fixed by Hesiod with his succession of ages (Hesiod, *Works* 110-201).

There were a Golden Age, a Silver Age, then the Age of bronze, then that of heroes and in the end the Iron Age which is the worst possible age and which in the opinion of Hesiod will foreshadow even the worst age, which has still to come at his time. This notion that the best period is something behind us, something in the past leads to a sort of nostalgia and this nostalgia becomes very topical especially in Athens in the late 5th century BC after the period of Pericles. Already not very long time after Pericles in the end of the 5th century BC, Thucydides writes his History and reports the talk of Pericles in 430 BC in front of the burial monument where the Athenian warriors who fell in battle in the war against Sparta were buried (Thucydides 2. 34-46). This historian lavishes great praise to Athens of the period of

Pericles with the famous words ‘we are lovers of beauty with the good purpose’ (Thucydides 2. 40. 1) and ‘we search for wisdom without softness’ (*ibidem*). Here we find a praise of Athens of 30 years before. (this nostalgia for the golden period of Pericles is shown also in many funerary monuments with their representations reminding the sculptures of Parthenon)³³.

So the Parthenon becomes a zenith of artistic production which everybody tries to imitate.

In this period not by chance we have the beginning of the archaistic trend with Alkamenes whose creations are somehow archaistic³⁴. This nostalgia for the period of Perikles becomes very deeply felt in the Athenian culture of Late Classical times when for example Isokrates opposes continuously the Great Athens of what is for us the 5th century BC with the great personalities as Perikles, Pheidias etc. with the depressing period of his own life³⁵. It should be noticed that this period (Isokrates’ time) wasn’t that bad from the point of view of economy or political power because Athens after the restoration of See League in 378 BC was again a superpower of the time³⁶ but in terms of spiritual

³³See eg R. Osborne, ‘Democratic Ideology, the events of war and the iconography of Attic funerary Sculpture’, D. M. Pritchard (ed.), *War, democracy and culture in classical Athens*, Cambridge (2010) 245-265.

³⁴See eg I. Arce, ‘A replica of the Hermes Propylaios by Alkamenes’, *Annual of the Department of Antiquities* 53 (2009) 265-273.

³⁵See eg J. S. Codoner, ‘El ‘Panatenaico’ de Isocrates’, *Emerita* 69 (2001) 7-53.

³⁶See J. Cargill, *The second Athenian league*, Ann Arbor

creativity and spiritual energy. The Athenian cultural environment became very mean, without the capability to understand the new times. It is for example remarkable that when a great figure as Alexander conquered the huge empire from Danube to Indus, in Athens nobody is able to understand that a new world has been created.³⁷ Alexander believed to be the new Achilles and Demosthenes called him the new Margites.³⁸ Margites was a very ridiculous person, despised by everybody.³⁹ So the most prominent Athenians do not understand the new times and feel a great nostalgia for good times of the past.

This retrospective attitude comes to a head during the Hellenistic period.

The Hellenistic period sees first of all the birth of a new literary genre which didn't exist before: the descriptions of ruins, for example the description of the ruins of Corinth destroyed by Lucius Mummius in 146 BC⁴⁰. So a learned public enjoys seeing the ruins of the city as something picturesque. Another poet describes the ruins of Amphipolis destroyed by Sulla because this city sided with Mithridates⁴¹. Thus we see in these cases a retro attitude and a desire to contemplate what was left of the

(1979).

³⁷See T. Howe, 'Athens, Alexander and the Politics of Resistance', *The Ancient World* 44 (2013) 55-65.

³⁸See Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 160; Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 23 and Harpocration, s. v. Margites.

³⁹See A. Gostoli, *Margite*, Pisa (2007).

⁴⁰See *Anthologia Graeca* 7. 297; 493; 9. 151; 284.

⁴¹See Antipater of Thessalonica, *ibidem* 7. 705.

glory which was Greece: a past glory which no longer exists. This attitude influences very heavily the art criticism.

Already Posidippus in one of his epigrams fixed that zenith of bronze sculpture in the age of Lysippus, the generation before his own.⁴² This is very important.

This retro attitude peaks with the birth of the neo-Attic school which wants to resurrect the glory of the great Attic art of the 5th century (of the time of Pericles and a bit later): this new generation of neo-Attic sculptors creates a lot of imitative works beginning from around 156-153 BC.⁴³

From that moment this imitation of the styles of 5th century becomes very topical. This attitude unfortunately doesn't survive well in Greek texts of Hellenistic times because they are lost. We have just fragments for example of the treatises about bronze sculpture or painting made by Xenokrates around 260 BC⁴⁴ or by Antigonos of Karystos about 230 – 220 BC.⁴⁵ We have not even the treatises about architecture written by Hermogenes around 200 BC⁴⁶ and certainly we have not the chronicles by Apollodoros of Athens of

⁴²Posidippus 62 AB.

⁴³See Pliny 34. 52: see F. Coarelli, *Revixit ars*, Rome (1996).

⁴⁴See B. Baebler, 'Auf der Suchenach Xenokrates', *Seminari romani di cultura greca* 5 (2002) 137-160.

⁴⁵See T. Dorandi, *Antigone de Caryste*, Paris (1999).

⁴⁶See S. Rambaldi, 'Note sul lessico architettonico di Vitruvio e la tradizione grecadi Ermogene', *RdA* 23 (1999) 72-81.

mid second century BC.⁴⁷ These are all lost and so we have to find the echoes of these opinions in later writers. First of all, I wish to address the *Laterculi Alexandrini*.⁴⁸ They are a notes book dated around 110 BC. from Alexandria, written by a schoolmaster who provides information to his own students. He lists the names of the best-established architects, sculptors of gods (*ἀγαλαματοποιοί*), sculptors of human subjects (*ἀνδριαντοποιοί*) and painters. Not by chance all these artists (except one, Phyromachus) are of the 5th or 4th centuries – only one is later than the age of Alexander the Great: this Phyromachus who probably flourished in the 3rd c. BC.⁴⁹ But he is an exception. So already in the teaching at Alexandria of the late 2nd century BC we find the notion that the classical period is the zenith of the visual arts.

This opinion is accepted in Rome already around the middle of the 1st c. BC. It is reported by Cicero in the *Brutus*.⁵⁰ Cicero exposes the progress in the two leading visual arts, *viz.* bronze sculpture and painting. The bronze sculpture progresses from the archaic works of Kanachos which are quite rigid and are not yet perfect to

⁴⁷See B. Bravo, *La Chronique d'Apollodore*, Leeuven (2009).

⁴⁸See B. Hebert, 'Attische Gelehrsamkeit in einem alexandrinischen Papyrus? Bemerkungen und Vorschläge zu den Künstlerkanones der *Laterculi Alexandrini*', *Tyche* 1 (1986) 127-131.

⁴⁹See F. Queyrel, 'Phyromachos', *RA* (1992) 367-380.

⁵⁰See Cicero, *Brutus* 18. 70-71. See D. C. Innes, 'Phidias and Cicero', *CQ* 28 (1978) 470-471.

these of Kalamis, then to the works of Myron which are more perfect, finally to the perfect statues of Polykleitos. This Argive sculptor represents the zenith of bronze sculpture according to Cicero who of course reports the opinion of one quarter of the Hellenistic art criticism. Then Cicero writes also about painting in the same passage asserting a similar progress even in painting. Polygnotus and others were already noteworthy but in painting the peak of this progress is placed not in the 5th century but in the age of Alexander with Apelles. So he mixed up two different opinions: the opinions which placed the peaks of visual arts respectively in the ages of Polykleitos and Phidias and of Alexander and Apelles who was the beloved painter of Alexander. After that of course everything declines. Pliny gives a different opinion in bronze sculpture but gives a very similar one in painting. In bronze sculpture Pliny 34. 49-52 sees a constant progress in bronze sculpture with Phidias, Polykleitos, Myron and Pythagoras of Rhegion. However, the real perfection is reached with Lysippos in the age of Alexander so we have here an idealization of Greek art with this series of masters and especially with Lysippos. From the time of the book of Bernard Schweitzer “Xenokrates of Athens” which was published in 1932 everybody agree that this notion harks back to the art critic Xenokrates in the 3rd century BC.⁵¹ We argue from the epigram 62 of Posidippus of Pella, of the early 3rd c. BC, that the progress of bronze sculpture from Kanachus to Hageladas to Polykleitos and finally to Lysippos who represents the peak of this

⁵¹See B. Schweitzer, *Xenokrates von Athens*, Halle (1932).

art, was already accepted in that period. Thus it is clear that this opinion really goes back to the first half of the 3rd century BC. This Hellenistic theory was still accepted in Roman times and it leads to the idealization of the period of Greek visual arts which for us coincides with the 5th and 4th centuries BC but especially of the age of Alexander. The same progress is emphasized by Pliny also in painting (Pliny 35. 54-97.) In painting we have the beginning with Polygnotus then we have progress with Zeuxis and Parrhasius in the late 5th century BC but again even in painting the peak is placed in what for us is the 4th century BC – that is in the age of the school of Sikyon and especially with the most important student of the school of Sikyon, viz. with Apelles. He was the painter of the Aphrodite Anodyomene (fig. 13) as well as of portraits of Alexander the Great (fig. 14) and of many other works. This opinion also harks back to Xenokrates but the fact that it was accepted for a long period in the Roman society from Cicero to Pliny shows how much the cultural elite of Rome endorsed this idea and thought that the perfection both in bronze sculpture and painting had been reached in the Age of Alexander. Then this opinion is supported also by Quintilian who was a professor of rhetoric in the school of liberal arts established by the emperor Domitian in Rome and who wrote around AD 90. He writes (*Institutio oratoria* 12. 10. 3-9):

‘ The first great painters, whose works deserve inspection for something more than their mere antiquity, are said to have been Polygnotus and Aglaophon, whose simple colouring has still such enthusiastic admirers that they prefer these almost primitive works, which may be

regarded as the first foundations of the art that was to be, over the works of the greatest of their successors, their motive being, in my opinion, an ostentatious desire to seem persons of superior taste. Later Zeuxis and Parrhasius contributed much to the progress of painting. These artists were separated by no great distance of time, since both flourished about the period of the Peloponnesian war; for example, Xenophon has preserved a conversation between Socrates and Parrhasius. The first-mentioned seems to have discovered the method of representing light and shade, while the latter is said to have devoted special attention to the treatment of line...(The contour, the silhouette of the figure by which you can understand also the third dimension).

For Zeuxis emphasized the limbs of the human body, thinking thereby to add dignity and grandeur to his style: it is generally supposed that in this he followed the example of Homer, who likes to represent even his female characters as being of heroic mould. Parrhasius, on the other hand, was so fine a draughtsman that he has been styled the law-giver of his art, on the ground that all other artists take his representations of gods and heroes as models, as though no other course were possible. It was, however, from about the period of the reign of Philip down to that of the successors of Alexander that painting flourished more especially, although the different artists are distinguished for different excellences. Protogenes, for example, was renowned for accuracy, Pamphilus and Melanthius for soundness of taste, Antiphilus for facility, Theon of Samos for his depiction of imaginary scenes, known as

φαντασίαι (we spoke yesterday about the phantastike techne – creation of the fantastic works which are not an imitation of the reality. He refers to this type of art now), and Apelles for genius and grace (“grace” of course translates Greek technical word charis which was an important feature of the art of Apelles), in the latter of which qualities he took especial pride. Euphranor, on the other hand, was admired on the ground that, while he ranked with the most eminent masters of other arts, he at the same time achieved a marvelous skill in the arts of sculpture and painting (he was also a writer).

The same differences exist between sculptors. The art of Callon (Callon was a bronze sculptor of the Severe Style from Aegina where a great school of sculpture flourished) and Hegesias (Athenian sculptor of the same period) is somewhat rude and recalls the Etruscans, but the work of Calamis has already begun to be less stiff, while Myron's statues show a greater form than had been achieved by the artists just mentioned. Polyclitus surpassed all others for care and grace (Polyclitus' art as we have seen was the peak of the bronze sculpture for Cicero but now Quintilian does not agree at all with Cicero: please be careful with what he is going to say), but although the majority of critics account him as the greatest of sculptors, to avoid making him faultless they express the opinion that his work is lacking in grandeur. For while he gave the human form an ideal grace, he is thought to have been less successful in representing the dignity of the gods. He is further alleged to have shrunken from representing persons of maturer years, and to have ventured on nothing more difficult than a smooth and beardless face. But the qualities lacking in

Polyclitus are allowed to have been possessed by Phidias and Alcamenes. (So Quintilian disagrees and he finds a lot of shortcomings in Polyclitus' works. So the Canon of Cicero's Brutus is no longer applied in the age of Quintilian).

On the other hand, Phidias is regarded as more gifted in his representation of gods than of men, and indeed for chryselephantine statues he is without a peer, as he would in truth be, even if he had produced nothing in this material beyond his Minerva at Athens and his Jupiter at Olympia in Elis, whose beauty is such that it is said to have added something even to the awe with which the god was already regarded: so perfectly did the majesty of the work give the impression of godhead. (But let us now be very careful because the peak is shifted to Late Classical time). Lysippus and Praxiteles are asserted to be supreme as regards faithfulness to nature. For Demetrius is blamed for carrying realism too far (Demetrius of Alopeke looked for not the aesthetic of the likeness but for the aesthetic of the veritas, the truth. He sought to copy the reality not to imitate the reality, which is not good for the critical opinion forwarded by Quintilian. This harks back to the Aristotelean concept that the reality must be imitated but not copied⁵²), and is less concerned about the beauty than the truth of his work.

So the sculpture peaks with two figures of the 4th century – Lysippos no doubt for bronze sculpture and Praxiteles for marble sculpture. However this canon

⁵²See Aristotle, *Physics* II 2, 194a21; *ibidem* II 8, 199a17; *Meteorology* IV 3, 381b6.

does not last for a very long time after the age of Domitian because beginning from Hadrian we have an archaistic trend which sees the perfection in the art of the 5th century BC again. So for example we have much more copies of the bronze works of art of the 5th century BC in *Villa Hadriana* of Tivoli than copies of the masterpieces of Late Classical times. We find in this villacopies of the Mattei type of Amazon (fig. 15) which is usually thought to be the copy of the Amazon of Pheidias set up in Ephesos. So, we see that a perfection of art in Hadrianic times is collocated again in the period which for us is that of Polykleitos and Pheidias.⁵³ But the archaistic trend moves the notion of the perfection toward even earlier periods in the Antonine times. In this period (the age of Pausanias basically) we see that the model becomes Polygnotus, viz. the age of the statesman Kimon of Athens around 470-460 BC.

So, it is even moved to the Severe Style. The Severe Style gives the great notion of art because in this period they do not like very much the notion of art imitating reality but (I spoke yesterday about that) they like an art which gives the sense of majesty and grandeur and sense of the divine. This is a holy art and this art of the early period looked more sacred than later arts. The Colonna copy of the Knidian Aphrodite (fig. 16) is of Antonine times⁵⁴ as we argue from many features, still it shows

⁵³See E. Calandra, *OltrelaGrecia*, Naples (1996) 256 and M. Barbanera, 'Le Amazzoni di VillaAdriana', E. Calandra (ed.), *Adriano e la Grecia*, Rome (2014) 127-134.

⁵⁴See A. Corso, *The art of Praxiteles* ii, Rome (2007) 16-18.

how even the Late Classical model is made much more austere in this period because the surfaces are simplified. So, a lot of stylistic details of Late Classical times are lost. Thus, Pausanias while he devoted so long time in describing the paintings of Polygnotos at Delphi (10. 25-31), is very quick when he mentions the works of Lysippos and Praxiteles. No doubt he found these classical masters much inferior to their predecessors.

Another component of this idealization of visual arts of Classical Greece is the notion that these classical arts satisfied the senses and were hedonistic arts: arts of pleasure. The notion that the art of Classical Greece was an art of pleasure blossomed especially in AD 2nd century with the Neo-Sophistic movement. This movement leads to the notion that the perfect society was the society of New Comedy represented by the comic poet Menander. That was already fixed in the Hellenistic criticism. Aristophanes of Byzantium wrote: 'O Menander! O life! Which of you imitated the other?'⁵⁵ with reference to the circumstance that Menander represented eternal characters of the human society.

Ovid wrote:

Dum fallax servus, durus pater, improbale vivens, et meretrix blanda, Menander erit (Ovid, *Amores*. 1. 15. 17-18)

The servant who makes many mistakes, the austere father who wanted to punish his son, the prostitute who tries to pick up clients are regarded eternal characters

⁵⁵*Aristophanes of Byzantium*, on Syranus' Hermogenes 2, 23.

and thus Menander's poetry will also be eternal ("while the tricky slave, the hard father, the shameless procuress live, as well as the alluring prostitute, Menander will exist"). This culture leads to the idealisation of late classic society as the golden period of the courtesans. In this period the figures of famous courtesans such as Lais and Phryne are regarded the symbols of a society which was very much devoted to pleasure.⁵⁶ We see this nostalgia especially in the works of two writers. One writer is Athenaeus who in *Deipnosophistae*, particularly in the 13th book, represents this idealized golden period of the *hetaerae*. The gossip is reported that Lais when old dedicated her mirror to Aphrodite saying: 'I wish not to look on myself as I am and cannot look on myself as I once was' (*AnthologiaGraeca*6. 1). The inscription on her tomb was thought to report the specification that she had all Greece below her feet because she had so many lovers (*ibidem* 7. 218-220). Phryne of course was the symbol of the appeal of courtesans in Late Classical Athens. So even the works of sculptors and painters are seen as evidence of this art of pleasure, which is why works representing naked Aphrodite and Eros are privileged. For example the Cnidian Aphrodite by Praxiteles was very much celebrated in the period going from Lucian to Athenaeus (yesterday we read "the *Amores*" attributed to Lucian where the Cnidian Aphrodite is regarded a great masterpiece because it represents this art of pleasure).⁵⁷

⁵⁶This is clear particularly in the books 12th and 13th of Athenaeus.

⁵⁷See Corso (note 54) 146-176.

The Anodyomene Aphrodite of Apelles is also admired.⁵⁸ It was lost because the time corrupted this masterpiece but a copy made by the painter Dorotheus allowed an appreciation of this masterpiece.⁵⁹ The Erotes of Praxiteles were also admired and recognized to represent love as suffering.⁶⁰ This devotion to pleasures is argued also from representations of works of art in Anacreontean poems. These poems were attributed to Anacreon but they are in fact of the advanced Roman Imperial times: a picture evoked in one of these poems represents the beautiful girl that the poet want to love while other poems focus heroines of the mythical past falling in love. The whole picture puts on the fore a world dominated by Eros and Dionysos.⁶¹ and it is in keeping with the life program recommended in Plutarch, *De Alexandri fortuna aut virtute* 2. 3: 'Eat, drink and love. Other things are nothing'. Thus, the arts of the Late Classical period in the Neo-Sophistic times are thought to suggest this hedonistic ideal. This notion had an impact also on the condemnation the Classical Greek art by the Fathers of the Church. Of course, they do not like all these representations of deities because these deities in their opinion are first of all false and thus they are meaningless from an ontological point of view.

⁵⁸*Locus classicus* is Athenaeus 13. 590 f.

⁵⁹See Pliny 35. 91.

⁶⁰See A. Corso, 'Love as Suffering', *BICS* 42 (1997-8) 63-91.

⁶¹See *Anacreontea* 1; 2; 3; 5; 7; 10; 13; 17; 18; 19; 20; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 32; 35; 36; 39; 40; 41; 45; 47; 49; 50; 51; 55; 56; 61.

However, Church's fathers often attack these works of art as immoral, because they represent courtesans as Phryne, androgynous figures as Ganymedes, etc. So already around AD 170 the Christian writer Tatian wrote the pamphlet *Oratio contra Graecos*. Tatian in chapters 33-35 attacks works of art created by famous Greek masters not very much from the point of view of ontology - for the reason that they represent false deities -, but especially because they are immoral. In other words, these Fathers of the Church accept the deformed hedonistic notion of Classical art provided by Neo Sophists and thus condemn Classical art as immoral.⁶² These opinions are repeated by the Christian writer Athenagoras who is more moderate (*Legatio pro Christianis* 15. 1 – 27. 2) but especially by Clement of Alexandria who attacks the Cnidian Aphrodite and the practice of the *agalmatophilia*, viz. the love of distinguished men for statues especially of Aphrodite and Eros.⁶³ For example the Cnidian Aphrodite had been a target of at least three lovers.⁶⁴ Other statues, especially of Erotes, were also objects of love for men.⁶⁵ Needless to say, the Church's fathers condemned the *agalmatophilia*. This condemnation by the Fathers of the Church is due to their acceptance of the Neo Sophistic

⁶²See my article 'Attitude to the visual Arts of classical Greece in late Antiquity', *Eulimene* 2 (2001) 13-51

⁶³See Clement, *Protrepticus* 4. 47-51.

⁶⁴See A. Corso, 'The Cnidian Aphrodite', G. B. Waywell (ed.), *Sculpture and Sculptors of Caria and the Dodecanese*, London (1997) 91-98.

⁶⁵See especially Pliny 36. 20-22.

notion of Classical art as art of pleasure. This notion is going to last for very long time until middle Byzantine times. For example Tzetzes is very interested to naked Aphrodites.⁶⁶ Eros' rule of the world is also explored again. For example Tzetzes describes an Eros who holds in one hand a dolphin, symbol of his rule on the sea, and in the other hand a flower, which symbolizes his dominion on the Earth. So he rules everywhere and having the wings – he rules also the Air. Thus he is the most powerful of the gods.⁶⁷ So the notion of Classical Greek art as a sort of beautiful garden where beautiful Erotes chase appealing Nymphs which is so obvious in Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassic times, harks back to the neo-sophists through the Fathers of the Church. Only the Romantic period will change this sweet and gentle notion of ancient art.

Questions:

How about the attitude to the pre Classical art that we call Archaic art?

It wasn't at all liked in the 1st century BC and AD 1st century because as we have seen the peak for visual arts was placed in later periods. However it is revaluated and prized in the Late Antonine period. This interest is clear in Pausanias and in Athenagoras. Pausanias 2. 4. 5 writes that the works of Daedalus perhaps are not very pleasant to be seen but they are full of spirituality. So the fact that they are so archaic and that they are so essential and austere makes them appealing because in this period there are pilgrims who do not want just to admire a work

⁶⁶See Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 8, *historiae* 195. 368-380.

⁶⁷See Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 5, *historiae* 11. 502-511.

of art which is beautiful but a work of art which expresses also spirituality, the divine epiphany of the represented deity. This is the reason why the art tourism became a sort of pilgrimage⁶⁸. An interest toward archaic imagery is revealed even by Christian writers, especially by Athenagoras, *Legatio Pro Christianis* 15. 1-27. 2.

In the same period Egyptian art was also re-evaluated⁶⁹, as all arts which were not very mimetic: this change of taste has to do of course with the change of aesthetic values and with the substitution of the *phantasia* to the *mimesis* (Philostratus, *Apollonius Tyanensis* 6. 19).

⁶⁸About the notion of the deity's epiphany into his statue, see especially Callistratus, *De statuis* 3. 1.

⁶⁹See e.g. R. Tomber, 'Hadrian and Egypt', T. Opper (ed), *Hadrian*, London (2013) 112-119.

Lecture 4. The theory that visual arts decayed and are dying throughout the Roman period

During the centuries of ancient classicism (1st c. BC – AD 2nd c.) visual arts were generally thought to have peaked in Greece in the period which we call late classical: the 4th c. BC.⁷⁰

The logical consequence of this widespread opinion is that visual arts were thought to have decayed after the age of Alexander the Great.

The notion of decadence of visual arts after the late 4th century BC may have been already outlined in the Hellenistic art criticism.⁷¹

However, this notion is clearly stated in the Roman period especially by two authorities: Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder.⁷²

The success of this theory in Roman times is due to three phenomena which blossom from the late Hellenistic times.

First of all, the antiquarian taste, the love for everything which is past and the opinion that the past was better

⁷⁰See, e. g., A. F. Stewart, 'Alexander, Philotas, and the Skeletos', P. Schultz and R. von den Hoff (eds.), *Early Hellenistic Portraiture*, Cambridge (2007) 123-138.

⁷¹This conclusion had been already reached by Schweitzer (note 51) and is the prevalent opinion even today (see e. g. S. Settis, 'La nascita (in Grecia) dell'arte', P. Clini (ed.), *Vitruvio e l'archeologia*, Venice (2014) 13-31).

⁷²About the assertion of this theory by Pliny, see J. Isager, *Pliny on art and society*, London (1991).

than the present.⁷³ This feeling is fed by the nostalgia for the glory which was Greece.⁷⁴

Second, the taste for ruins: it reveals the desire for contemplation of a remote past which is now in ruins.⁷⁵

The third phenomenon is aesthetic and it has to do with the fact that works of art of the present are regarded inferior to works of art of the age which for us is the Classical period.⁷⁶

These three phenomena convey the notion that there is a general decline of the visual arts and sometimes that they are entirely dead, which is why we should contemplate the past.

These feelings have the consequence that since we can no longer create great masterpieces because we are living in the age of decadence, we should at least copy the creations of the past which is why the market of copies flourishes so much from the first century BC until the AD second century. During these centuries, several

⁷³See e. g. L. Jones, 'Memory, Nostalgia and the Roman Home', M. Garcia Morcillo (ed.), *Ruin or renewal?: places and the transformation of memory in the city of Rome*, Rome (2016) 183-211.

⁷⁴See A. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, Cambridge (2012).

⁷⁵See C. Edwards, 'Imaginer les ruines dans la Rome antique', D. Nelis (ed.), *Lire la Ville: fragments d'une archéologie littéraire de Rome antique*, Bordeaux (2014) 257-273.

⁷⁶See A. Corso, 'L'anticlassicismo nel gusto e nella critica d'arte da Roma a Costantinopoli', *NumAntCl* 39 (2010) 423-446.

thousands of copies of masterpieces of the 5-4th centuries BC had been carved.⁷⁷ Copies from classical Greek original creations became ubiquitous in the Roman Empire.

The announcement that architecture is dying - either in clear decline or already dead - is clearly stated by Vitruvius in his introduction to the sixth book of his treatise *De Architectura*, 4-7.

Vitruvius dedicated his treatise to Augustus. However, he was already old when Octavian was proclaimed Augustus in 27 BC. He accomplished most of his career with Caesar⁷⁸ and his model of architecture is still that of middle Hellenistic times, of the period of Hermogenes, from around 230 to 190 BC.⁷⁹ He despises the architecture of his period because the proportional relations among parts of buildings, which demand that all features of an architectural complex bear measures which are multiples or sub-multiples of the given measure are no longer respected by Roman architects. Thus, he believes that they are just builders and not

⁷⁷See, e. g., A. Anguissola, 'Copie di capolavori: il canone greco per un pubblico romano', S. Razmjou (ed.), *Una statua per la pace: Le sculture di Penelope: da Persepoli a Roma = A statue for peace: The Penelope sculptures: from Persepoli to Rome*, Teheran (2015) 53-60.

⁷⁸See J. Oksanish, *Vitruvian man*, New York (2019).

⁷⁹See L. Haselberger, 'Visualizing asperitas: Vitruvius (3.3.9) and the 'asperity' of Hermogenes' pseudodipteral temple', *JRA* 28 (2015) 371-391.

architects because the *commodulatio*, which is the Latin translation of the Greek *symmetria*, *id est* the institution of harmonic relations among the components of a building is no longer followed by the architects of his own 'Zeitgeist'.

The passage Vitruvius 6. *Praefatio*4-7 is the following:

‘4. I therefore feel myself under infinite obligations, and am grateful to my parents, who, adopting the practice of the Athenians, took care that I should be taught an art, and one of such a nature that it cannot be practiced without learning and a general knowledge of the sciences. Since, then, by my parents' care, and by the instruction of masters, I had the means afforded me of acquiring knowledge, and was naturally delighted with literary and philosophical subjects, I laid up those stores in my mind, from the use of which I enjoy the advantage of wanting no more, and the value of riches consists in having nothing to wish for. But some thinking, perhaps, lightly of these things, suppose those only are wise who have plenty of money. Hence, may, aiming at that end alone, have, by the aid of their assurance, acquired notoriety from their riches.

5. But I, Cæsar, have not sought to amass wealth by the practice of my art, having been rather contented with a small fortune and reputation, than desirous of abundance accompanied by a want of reputation. It is true that I have acquired but little; yet I still hope, by this publication, to become known to posterity. Neither is it wonderful that I am known but to a few. Other architects canvass, and go about soliciting employment, but my preceptors instilled into me a sense of the propriety of being requested, and not of requesting, to be entrusted,

inasmuch as the ingenuous man will blush and feel shame in asking a favour; for the givers of a favour and not the receivers, are courted. What must be suspect who is solicited by another to be entrusted with the expenditure of his money, but that it is done for the sake of gain and emolument.

6. Hence the ancients entrusted their works to those architects only who were of good family and well brought up; thinking it better to trust the modest, than the bold and arrogant, man. These artists only instructed their own children or relations, having regard to their integrity, so that property might be safely committed to their charge. When, therefore, I see this noble science (here is a crucial passage - A.C) in the hands of the unlearned and un-skilful (very strong words - A.C.), of men not only ignorant of architecture, but of everything relative to buildings, I cannot blame proprietors (landowners - A.C) who, relying on their own intelligence, are their own architects; since, if the business is to be conducted by the un-skilful, there is at least more satisfaction in laying out money at one's own pleasure, rather than at that of another person.

7. No one thinks of practicing at home any art (as that of a shoemaker or fuller, for instance, or others yet easier) except that of an architect; and that because many who profess the art are not really skilled in it, but are falsely called architects. These things have induced me to compose a treatise on architecture and its principles, under an idea that it would be acceptable to all persons'.

Thus, according to Vitruvius, the makers of buildings of late Republican and Augustan Rome are no longer

architects, but just builders, because they no longer follow the standard rules of architecture which are the adoption of the *symmetria = commutatio*, and the following of the right *dispositio* (disposition) of the elements of a temple, for example, in their own places as it was handed down by Greek architects. On the contrary, they were making new inventions which Vitruvius disapproves: for example, creations of capitals which are not Doric, nor Ionic, nor Corinthian but mixed.⁸⁰ He condemned these hybrid capitals in 4. 1. 12: ‘Other sorts of capitals are however placed on these columns, which, differing in proportion, and standing on a different sort of shaft, cannot be referred to any other class’.

Equally moldings of crowns of buildings which had been not handed down by Greek architects do not meet the approval of our architect.

See 4. 2. 5:

‘The Greeks never placed dentils below the *mutuli*, because the feet of common rafters cannot be below those of principal rafters. For a design must be anomalous, when that which ought to be above the principal rafters is placed below them. The ancients, therefore, neither approved nor used *mutuli* nor dentils in the cornices of their pediments, but *coronæ* simply; because neither principal nor common rafters tail on the front of a pediment, neither can they project beyond it, their direction being towards

⁸⁰See J. Herrmann, ‘Composite capitals’, P. Pensabene (ed.), *Decor: decorazione e architettura nel mondo romano*, Rome (2017) 351-362.

the eaves. Their opinion, therefore, evidently was, that a distribution would not be correct in a copy which could not exist in the prototype.’

He doesn’t like these features. He believes that builders who adopt them are not worthy of the name of architects.

Thus Vitruvius conveys a clear notion of decadence in the field of architecture.

Bronze sculpture also declined, according to Pliny the Elder. This writer in the section of book 34 devoted to bronze sculpture asserts (34. 51-52) that bronze sculpture stopped to exist (*cessavitars*) in the years 296-293 BC. He adds that bronze sculpture revived again (*rursusolympiade clvi revixit*) - in the years 156-153 BC but with much less value than in the past (*cum fuere longe quidem infra praedictos*: these new bronze sculptors were much inferior than the previously mentioned, *id est* those from Phidias to Lysippus). Thus this revival of bronze sculpture does not mean that it attained the same level as Lysippus, for example. They were, in his opinion, much inferior. Pliny also reports a decline in this specific art.

This decline has to do with the general theory of the visual arts, which was introduced by Hellenistic art critics and was accepted also at Rome, that any art has a biological life as a human life or animals’ lives. It begins, it grows up, it has a peak, it declines and then it dies. Thus arts are interpreted in biological terms. At the times of the author, bronze sculpture, being in such a great decadence, is thought to be unable to deliver good quality works, even if an artist himself, as a person, would be potentially a good one. For example, Pliny 34.

46-47 says that the bronze sculptor beloved by Nero, Zenodorus, who made the statue of Nero as a colossal Helios, in the centre of Rome, was not inferior to anybody of the old times.⁸¹ In other words, Zenodorus was not worst that Polykleitos, Lysippus etc. as individual artist but he could non deliver a statue of the quality of those famous sculptors of the past because the art of bronze sculpture was dead:

‘This statue (scil.: Nero’s Colossus) has shown that skill in bronze-founding has perished, since Nero was quite ready to provide gold and silver, and also Zenodorus was counted inferior to none of the artists of old in his knowledge of modelling and chasing. When he was making the statue for the Arverni, when the governor of the province was Dubius Avitus, he produced facsimiles of two chased cups, the handiwork of Calamis, which Germanicus Caesar had prized highly and had presented to his tutor Cassius Salanus, Avitus’s uncle; the copies were so skilfully made that there was scarcely any difference in artistry between them and the originals. The greater was the eminence of Zenodorus, the more we realize how the art of working bronze has deteriorated’.

This decadence in the opinion of Pliny is not applied just to visual arts but has a broader meaning. He says that the earth is tired (“*the ground being exhausted*”) in book 34. 2. So, since the earth is tired, you can do very little because it is the whole nature which is in decline.

The father of Seneca the philosopher, Seneca the

⁸¹About Zenodorus, see F. C. Albertson, ‘Zenodorus’s “Colossus of Nero”’, *MAAR* 46 (2001) 95-108.

rhetorician, wrote (*Controversiae*1. *Praefatio*1-24) that even Rome was in decline. Seneca father wanted a restoration of the republic, he didn't like the emperors and he saw the transformation from the republic to the *principatus*, to the rule of the *princeps*, as a form of decline of Rome.

Since nature is declining the arts are also declining: the junction of *natura* and *ars* in Roman culture is frequent.⁸² The same Rome is declining. Everything is falling apart. This is the pessimistic philosophy which is applied also to bronze sculpture.

Painting is also thought to be declining. Pliny 35.1 asserts:

'I shall begin then with what still remains to be said with reference to painting, an art which was formerly illustrious (in the remote past it was good - A.C.), when it was held in esteem both by kings and peoples, and ennobling those whom it deigned to transmit to posterity. But at the present day, it is completely banished in favor of marble, and even gold'.

Thus painting is thought to be dead. It has vanished. Painting is also dying. Pliny refers to paintings of pictures. He regards wall painting, which is so widespread in the Roman world, a vulgarization of this art. It is a second-rate genre of painting. It is no longer really an art, it is just artisanal. Pliny not only does not like wall painting but he reveals prejudice also against mosaics because the mosaics, which are so widespread

⁸²See A. Darab, 'Natura, Ars, Historia. Anecdotic History of Art in Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*', *Hermes*142(2014) 2. 206-224.

in the Roman world, are also regarded a second-rate genre of painting. So, when he says that painting is dying, he means the painting of pictures, *pinakes* in Greek, *tabulae pictae* in Latin language. That is the only really noble painting for him.

There is another reason why painting is dying: because Pliny is a supporter of tetra-chromatic tradition (see especially 35. 50):⁸³ this was an ideology which established that only four colors can be used in painting. They are white, yellow, red and black (it is controversial if it is really black, very often it is a dark vine color). These are the colors which in the Platonic tradition (see Plato, *Phaedo* 110 c – 111 c), characterize the world of the blessed beyond our earthy life. Thus the tetra-chromatism basically is a way to overcome the mimesis of earthly appearances which are copies of the real, transcendent world, thus are not worthy. On the contrary you can try to make a truly wise painting, which at least copies the ‘originals’, the world of *ideas* in the world of the blessed. Clearly this ideology is against illusionism in painting. However from around 290 BC the tetrachromatic tradition no longer existed because the most prominent painters used many colors and mixed them, trying to be as much illusionistic as they could. Thus the illusionism which deceives the viewer is condemned by a traditionalist and classicistic criticism in the name of the ‘true art’, which is characterized by wisdom and which copies ‘originals’ in the world of *ideas* and not the deformed and corrupted copies of the world where we live.

⁸³See J. J. Pollitt, (note 22) 288-301

This Platonic prejudice was still adopted by Pliny and in a crucial passage he writes that all the great artists of the past (Apelles, Aetion, Melanthius and Nicomachus) used just four colors, while now many colors are imported even from India at great expenses: the decadence of the art has also a moral flavor.

Pliny 35. 50:

‘Four colours only were used by the illustrious painters Apelles, Aetion, Melanthius and Nicomachus to execute their immortal works - of whites, Melinum; of yellow ochres, Attic; of reds, Pontic Sinopis; of blacks, atramentum - although their pictures each sold for the wealth of a whole town. Nowadays when purple finds its way even on to party-walls and when India contributes the mud of her rivers and the gore of her snakes and elephants, there is no such thing as high-class painting. Everything in fact was superior in the days when resources were scantier. The reason for this is that, as we said before, it is values of material and not of genius that people are now on the lookout for.’

So, the art is in moral decadence.

In the Hadrianic-Antonine times there is an archaistic trend which gives emphasis to masterpieces of the period of the Severe style, sometimes of the archaic period, and lavishes praise even on works attributed to Daedalus.⁸⁴ Whoever asserts this taste may not nourish a very good opinion of the arts of his own ages. For example, Lucian of Samosata when he describes the

⁸⁴See M. D. Fullerton, *The archaistic style in Roman statuary*, Leiden (1990).

beautiful girlfriend of emperor Lucius Verus - the girlfriend was named Panthea, from Smyrna - he wrote that in order to express her beauty, a painter as the ones which existed in the remote past, such as Apelles and Aetion, would be needed (Lucian, *Imagines* 7)⁸⁵:

He describes her beauty by saying that she has the smile of Aphrodite Sosandra of Calamis (fig. 17), a severe style sculptor, no by chance, she has the cheeks of the Athena Lemnia of Phidias (fig. 18) and so on with further comparisons with masterpieces of a remote past: these examples clarify the outstanding beauty of the girl. Lucian asserts the decadence of painting even more clearly in his pamphlet *De mercede conductis potentium familiaribus* 42:

‘I should gladly have requisitioned an Apelles, or Parrhasius, or Aetion, or Euphranor to paint it, but since it is impossible nowadays to find anyone so excellent’.

The widespread opinion that visual arts are dying feeds both the market of copies and also the art tourism.⁸⁶

Young and wealthy men who have been educated in the best schools make a sort of a grand tour in order to see the most important masterpieces: so, for example they travel to the Acropolis of Athens to see the Parthenon (fig. 19), the Athena Promachos (fig. 20), the Athena Parthenos (fig. 21), the Athena Lemnia and so on, then

⁸⁵See B. [Bäbler](#), ‘How to Flatter an Imperial Mistress : The Image of Panthea in Lucian’s *Imagines*’, P. Bosman (ed.), *Intellectual and Empire in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, London (2019) 189-201.

⁸⁶See J. Elsner, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and early Christian antiquity*, Oxford (2005).

they go to Cnidus and there they see the Cnidian Aphrodite. The *Amores* attributed to Lucian report a moment of this grand tour: a group of young men travel to Cnidus to admire the Cnidian Aphrodite. The same notion of the ancient grand tour implies that the visual arts have decayed: since you can no longer have great works of art in present times, you should admire what was great in the very remote past.

The admiration toward the great works of the past and the absence of an interest toward the works of the present are clear also in writers of the Severan time: for example, Athenaeus in the *Deipnosophists* never refers to works of the present but he is full of admiration for the great masterpieces of especially late Classical times. So, again he must have thought very little of the visual arts of his own times.

But let us move forward and ask why Constantine and his successors brought so many works of art to Constantinople.⁸⁷ Why bother to move the Heracles of Lysippos and many other masterpieces and bring them to Constantinople if they thought that much better works could be made? It is clear that in the AD 4th c. there was still this notion that contemporary visual arts are not equal to those of the past. There was still a sort of a complex of inferiority toward classical Greece.

At this point we should enquire when this complex of inferiority toward classical art faded. During the AD 4thc. the taste was shifting and moving toward a

⁸⁷About this issue see A. Bravi, *Griechische Kunstwerke im politischen Leben Roms und Konstantinopels*, Berlin (2014).

different, and more positive, appreciation of contemporary monuments. The first clear indication that the visual arts of the present are regarded better than these of the Greek past by a part of the Roman society is by Ausonius in his '*Mosella*'. Ausonius wrote this poem in 371-372. In the *Mosella*, vv. 287-340 he describes buildings and villas which dot the landscape along the Mosella river. In one passage he goes as far as to assert that these buildings are not inferior to the Parthenon and other marvels of 'ancient' Greece. So, you realize that a new theory was born, that works of art of the present are not worst than those of the past.⁸⁸

Thus we arrived to the beginning of Late Antiquity when the appreciation of classical Greece shrinks and the complex of inferiority toward the masterpieces of classical Greece is restricted only to one component of the society, it is no longer shared by the whole society. This was a pluralistic period from the religious point of view (because there are pagans and Christians) but also from the point of view of taste. There were learned persons who still believed that contemporary arts were no good and the classical ones were great but others asserted that they preferred contemporary, beautiful halls full of colors with mosaic, stuccos, wall paintings and etc. Both tastes coexisted in the same period (see more details in the lecture 5.2: The coming to a head of a new taste in late antiquity).

Needless to say, with the prevalence of Christianity, the taste of people who believed that contemporary

⁸⁸About this new theory and the importance of the '*Mosella*' see Corso (note 76) 423-446.

Churches and palaces were much more beautiful than monuments of the past, also prevails, which is why the appreciation of ancient art was not so strong throughout the high middle age.

The complex of inferiority toward the visual arts of antiquity, of the pagan past, resurfaces in the late middle age.

First of all, through the reading of Aristotle, *Metaphysica* 1013 a – 1014 b, who praises Polykleitos, the notion of Polykleitos as excellent artist is retained by Averroes, *Aristoteles metaphysicorum libri xiii cum Averrois commentariis* 5. 2. The authority of Averroes explains the circumstance that Polykleitos is then exalted also by Saint Thomas from Aquinum (*In metaphysicam Aristotelis commentaria* 5. 3. 387-388), by Saint Albertus Magnus (*Metaphysica* 16. 1-2), also by Dante Alighieri in his Divine Comedy and also by minor poets such as Guido Guinizzelli, for example, an Italian poet of the 13th century and also at Pisa in the Chronicle of Saint Catherine, where we find the word “*Polikretior*”, which means “more beautiful than usual, admirable”, derived from the name of Polykleitos in Aristotle.⁸⁹ No one of these scholars and poets ever saw real works of Polykleitos but they thought that the authority of Aristotle was enough to imagine that this great artist of the past was much better than those of present times.

This complex of inferiority is found also in the Greek

⁸⁹Details about these citations can be found in F. Zoellner, ‘Policretion manu’, P. Bol (ed.), *Polyklet*, Mainz am Rhein (1990) 450-472.

middle age, beginning from the 10th century. The first who shows again this complex of inferiority toward the Greek past of the Classical period is Constantinus the Seventh Porphyrogenetus, who writes in AD 933 his book *De Thematibus*, in which he describes the Eastern Roman Empire. He forgets that great masterpieces of the classical past no longer existed and he still mentions the Cnidian Aphrodite as the glory of Cnidus as if she still stood there (*De thematibus* 1. 14. 37; *De administrando imperio* 21). Of course, the Cnidian Aphrodite was no longer there but he wanted to forget it. The notion that the classical past no longer existed is refused. It exists again in his own brain. This complex of inferiority toward the classical past after Constantinus the Seventh becomes a full river of admiration for the classical past.

Around 1090, Georgios Cedrenus lavishes his admiration towards the works of Lysippus, Praxiteles, Phidias which were once in Constantinople and burned with the great fire in 476 AD. With this fire, he says, the ἀγλαΐα, the shining glory of Constantinople was lost (*Compendium historiarum* 351 c). So, ancient art becomes a sort of lost paradise, lost forever. There were scholars from Byzantine elite who were sad for that (Zonaras 14. 24. 2. 52 d; Manasses, *Descriptio imaginum* 1. 75 s; Tzetzes, *Epistulae* 42 etc.) This trend leads to another phenomenon.

You know that already in Hellenistic times, there was a catalogue of the marvels of the world – the *Miracula Mundi* of the Ancient World - probably compiled by the early Hellenistic poet Callimachus. They were usually seven, sometimes six, sometimes eight, but in the 13th

century they become thirty. There is a catalog of the 30 marvels of the world (*Codex VaticanusGraecus* 989. 110). And they are all ancient masterpieces. Many of these ‘marvels’ were lost by the time but the same fact that they were Greek or Roman monuments was a guarantee that they were marvels.

So, you can see that we are here at the birth of a notion which was going to shape the modern classicism from the Renaissance onwards: that all antiquity is a marvel. That idea is the consequence of the above mentioned complex of inferiority toward antiquity. This notion leads Tzetzes to the compilation of a catalogue of the ten most important artists (*Epistulae*42). No one of these artists is younger than the period of the Alexander the Great because the end of the classical period would coincide with the end of the great art.

In Roman times this notion was inside a general philosophy of decadence and even in the Greek culture of the late 12th and 13th century there is a general philosophy of decadence, in which this complex of inferiority should be included. The desolation of present times when compared to those of ancient Greece is clearly stated by emperor Theodorus II Laskaris after a visit paid to Pergamum (*Epistulae*217. 107-108 f).

This middle-Byzantine complex of inferiority gave a crucial contribution to the flourishing of modern classicism.

Lecture 5. Vitruvius and his impact on architecture

This lecture concerns Vitruvius, who is the writer of the most important ancient literary work about architecture, which was handed down from antiquity.⁹⁰ Vitruvius was his name (you know that the Romans had three names: *praenomen*, *nomen*, *cognomen*). The *cognomen* (the last of these three names) was probably Pollio, because a writer, who wrote a summary of the work of Vitruvius in the AD 3rd c., Marcus CetusFaventinus, records Pollio as Vitruvius' *cognomen*.⁹¹ The first name (praenomen) is not known; the restoration of the *praenomen* of Vitruvius suggested by many scholars during the Renaissance (Marcus is the most successful) has no documentary basis from antiquity.⁹²

Vitruvius lived in the 1st century BC. In this treatise he wrote about himself in several passages, so we can reconstruct the outline of his life. He was probably from

⁹⁰ About Vitruvius, see L. Sontheimer, *Vitruvius und Seine Zeit: Eine Literar- Historische Untersuchung*, London (2020) with previous bibliography.

⁹¹ See CetusFaventinus, *De diversis fabricis architectonicae* 1. 1. About this author, see M.-T. Cam, *Abrégé d'architecture privée*, Paris (2001).

⁹² For the restoration of the praenomen Marcus, see e. g. A. Rohatsch, 'Die "Technische Gesteinskunde" des Marcus Vitruvius Pollio und ihre Bedeutung bis in unsere Tage', C. Jäger-Klein et alii (eds.), *Fabrica et ratiocinatio in Architektur, Bauforschung und Denkmalpflege: Festschrift für Friedmund Hueber zum 70. Geburtstag*, Vienna (2011) 129-140.

Formia— a harbor between Rome and Naples - because we know from inscriptions that the *gens Vitruvia* (the family to which he is supposed to have belonged) was rooted in that town.⁹³ He became *scribaarmamentarius* of the army of Julius Caesar⁹⁴. The *scribaarmamentarius* was the head of the administrative department of the army of Caesar. For this reason he had to follow the army of Caesar, as we know from him, in northeastern Italy: he remembers the attack by Caesar of a fort in Alpine Mountains.⁹⁵ He also writes about the siege by Caesar of Massalia in 49 BC.⁹⁶ He also went to Asia Minor where he could see the great Ionic temples and Halicarnassus.⁹⁷ Then we suppose in 47 BC he went back to Italy via Athens and the Achaia, the north coast

⁹³ See M. Nocita, 'La gens Vitruvia e Formia. Testimonianze epigrafiche e letterarie', *Formianum: atti del Convegno di studi sui giacimenti culturali del Lazio meridionale*, Marina di Minturno (2000) 117-122.

⁹⁴ See e. g. *De architectura* 1. praefatio 2; 2. 9. 15 and 10. 16. 11. About the life of Vitruvius, see A. Corso, 'Vitruvio, ovvero dell'armonia dell'universo tradotta nelle opera umane', *NumAntCl* 42 (2013) 389-412.

⁹⁵ See 2. 9. 15 and A. Corso, 'Territorio e città dell'Italia settentrionale nel *De architectura* di Vitruvio', *Archeologia Veneta* 6 (1983) 49-69.

⁹⁶ See 10. 16. 11 and J. Cesar, *Le Siège De Marseille*, London (2020).

⁹⁷ See 2. 8. 8-15; 3. 2. 6-7; 4. 1. 4-7 and 3. 1; 5. 9. 1; 7. praefatio 16 and 5. 5-7 and 10. 2. 11-15. See K. K. Jeppesen, 'Did Vitruvius ever visit Halikarnassos?', *Anadolu* 22 (1981-1983) 85-98.

of the Peloponnesus, because he remembers even in details several monuments of these regions.⁹⁸ He went also to Numidia again with the army of Caesar.⁹⁹ He doesn't write about what he did after the death of Caesar, but he writes that he got his retirement pension thanks to the pressing made by the sister of Octavian, Octavia toward her brother.¹⁰⁰ It looks strange that he needed the authoritative pressing of this lady in order to keep his salary. Thus scholars speculated that perhaps she sided with Marc Antony in the period between the death of Caesar and victory of Augustus at Actium.¹⁰¹ His mentality indeed is typically Caesarian: while the *nobilitas* which supported Octavian did not like the *mercatores* (merchants), and the *publicani* (collectors of taxes), on the contrary Vitruvius wrote specific prescriptions for the houses of these professionals.¹⁰² He also likes Hellenistic architecture of absolutistic

⁹⁸ See A. Corso, 'Vitruvius and Attic monuments', *BSA* 92 (1997) 373-400.

⁹⁹ See K. Jeppesen, 'Vitruvius in Africa', H. Geertman and J. J. de Jong (eds.), *Munus non ingratum*, Leiden (1989) 31-33.

¹⁰⁰ De Architectura 1. praefatio 2-3.

¹⁰¹ About the problems of Vitruvius' life, see P. Gros, *Vitruvius Pollio De l'architecture*, Paris (2015).

¹⁰² See e. g. De Architectura 6. 5. 2: F. Coarelli, 'La casa dell'aristocrazia romana secondo Vitruvio', Geertman (note 99) 178-187.

monarchs¹⁰³ and this taste is also in keeping with his service under Caesar. So he has not completely assimilated the Augustan ideology. Probably for this reason he was not charged of any building decided by Augustus and by his circle at Rome. However he was charged of a relatively second rate architectural enterprise: the basilica at Fanum Fortunae (Fano), a small town the Adriatic coast.¹⁰⁴ We know from Frontinus¹⁰⁵ that after the publication of the *De Architectura* he collaborated with Agrippa for the invention of a new type of pipe to carry water. This collaboration probably took place around 15 BC. He must have died around 10 BC.

His *De Architectura* is a treatise in 10 books and was published, according to the greatest living scholar of Vitruvius, Pierre Gros, between 27 BC to 23 BC.¹⁰⁶ It is dedicated to Augustus and it is probably the first organic treatise of architecture, which had been ever written. In the Greek world there were treatises about single architectural works, for example, the treatises of Theodoros and Rhoikos about the Heraion of Samos,¹⁰⁷ and of Chersiphron and Metagenes about the

¹⁰³See Corso (note 98).

¹⁰⁴ See *De Architectura* 5. 1. 6-10. See P. D. Scotton, 'The Basilica at Fano', L. Cavalier et alii (eds.), *Basiliques et agoras de Grèce et d'Asie Mineure*, Bordeaux (2012) 25-90.

¹⁰⁵Frontinus, *De aquaeductu Urbis Romae* 1. 25. 1-2.

¹⁰⁶See note 101.

¹⁰⁷ About Greek architects and their treatises, see H. Svenson-Evers, *Die griechischen Architekten*

Artemision at Ephesus, of Iktinos and Karpion about the Parthenon, of Pytheos about the temple of Athena at Priene (fig. 22), again of Pytheos and Satyros about the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus (fig. 23), of Hermogenes about the temples of Dionysos at Teos (fig. 24) and of Artemis at Magnesia (fig. 25). However these books were all about specific temples. There were also treatises, which gave optimal configuration about specific types of a building. For example there was a treatise of a certain Silenus about the Corinthian order.¹⁰⁸ There was another one - the name of its author is corrupted in the manuscript tradition of Vitruvius, but it is restored as Arcesius - about the Doric order.¹⁰⁹ But they were again about single branches of the architecture, not about the whole architecture. The first treatise about the whole architecture was written by Varro, as we know from Vitruvius himself, in the context of his nine books about the liberal arts: one book focused architecture. This book, which treated the whole architecture, must have not described the matter in details.¹¹⁰ So very few years after him Septimius, a friend of Cicero, wrote a treatise on architecture in two books.¹¹¹

However Vitruvius may have been the first who wrote a detailed treatise on architecture in many books.

archaischer und klassischer Zeit, Frankfurt (1996).

¹⁰⁸De Architectura 7. praefatio 12.

¹⁰⁹See *ibidem*.

¹¹⁰See *ibidem* 7. praefatio 14.

¹¹¹See *ibidem*.

In the first book he gives the generalities of architecture, moreover he specifies which type of knowledge the architect must have (chapters 1-3), then he writes of cities in general terms: how to orient a city, how to put zoning, where to place the public buildings, where to establish the religious buildings, where to found temples of specific deities, the impact of winds on the grid of cities (chapters 4 – 7). He makes a digression about the Tower of the Winds (1. 6. 4) (fig. 26) – a monument which still survives -,¹¹² which he must have admired when he was in Athens.

In the second book he writes about materials and constructions. Vitruvius is old when he writes his treatise, and sometimes he reflects uses of the past rather than of the present. For example, where he writes about bricks, he still refers to those dried by the sun (3. 1-4), he does not write about baked bricks, which were already the standard of his time, and he is still anchored to the Greek tradition of making them. He does not report innovations of his own age. He gives also great importance to the use of wood in constructions (9. 1-14) and remembers the siege of *Larinium* in the Alps by the army of Caesar, which he seems to have witnessed.

The third book begins the consideration of temple architecture. In chapter 1, he provides the proportions of the human body which he regards perfect because the various members of the human body bear measures which are multiples and submultiples of the same basic measure which in Latin is named *rata pars*: thus the

¹¹²See P. A. Webb, *The Tower of the Winds in Athens*, Philadelphia (2017).

harmony of the whole organism results from measures in relation one with the other. This notion applies not only to the human body but also to buildings. So the beauty of buildings is due to the concept which Vitruvius defines with the Latin word *commodulatio*, which is the translation of the Greek *symmetria*: *commodulatio* is the relation of the adopted measures one with the other because they all stem from *therata pars*, which is the single modulus.¹¹³

Then he enumerates the types of temples (chapter 2): the *templum in antis*, with projecting pillars at the sides of the front, the *prostyle* one, with columns in front, the *amphiprostyle* one, which has columns both behind and in front, but not on the sides. These types are followed by the *peripteral* temple, with columns along all four sides, by the *pseudodipteros*, which has the same size of the dipteral temple but it has no columns in the middle between the outer columns and cella, then we have the dipteral temple, with two rows of columns around the four sides, and then we have the *hypaethral* temple, which has the central cella opened to the sky, not covered by a roof. So then he gives the different types of proportions between the columns and intercolumniations (chapter 3): of course columns can be

¹¹³ See P. Gros, 'La géométrie platonicienne de la notice vitruvienne sur l'homme parfait (De architectura III, 1, 2-3)', Idem, *Vitruve et la tradition des traités d'architecture: fabrica et ratiocinatio: recueil d'études*, Rome (2006) 447-457.

displaced very far one from the other or very close. So there is the *pyknostylos* which has narrow intercolumniations, then there is the *systylos* which has little larger intercolumniations, there is *diastylos* which has much larger intercolumniations and it was trendy in Hellenistic times. This disposition was adapted, for example, in the Altar of Pergamon (fig. 27). Then there is the *araeostylos*, in which the intercolumniations are so large that cannot support a stone entablature, but only wooden one, and finally there is the *eustylos* – the “beautiful” style - which is the one that was created and recommended by Hermogenes, the great architect who projected in western Asia Minor Ionic temples between 230 –190 BC and who is the true model of Vitruvius (as above stressed, Vitruvius’ architectural conception is still very indebted to the architectural tradition of the Hellenism of Asia Minor).¹¹⁴

Then in the fifth chapter he gives details about how to make the bases, shafts and capitals of Ionic columns as well as the entablatures. He reports about the Ionic order in detail because this order is in his opinion the most important. As it will become clear in the fourth book, the Doric order is not regarded by Vitruvius as good as the Ionic order. Vitruvius’ prescription of the *entasis* or convex curve for the shaft of the column corresponds closely to the visual representation of this feature in a drawing carved on stone in the Didymaion near Miletos

¹¹⁴ About Hermogenes, see L. Haselberger, *Der Pergamonaltar und der Architekt Hermogenes: Schatten, Raum und Wahrnehmung*, Darmstadt (2020).

(fig. 28) which dates around 250 BC:¹¹⁵ this fact confirms the Hellenistic roots of the Vitruvian prescriptions. Vitruvius gives details also about the flutes of the Ionic column and the entablature: the architrave of the Ionic order must have three ribbons, the so called three *fasciae* to use the Latin word. The running frieze must be continuous and have above the *cymation*, then the teeth or *dentils*, the *simae* and the pediment. Prescriptions are provided for all these elements of the Ionic order.

In the fourth book (first chapter), he treats the Corinthian order which for Vitruvius is basically a capital.¹¹⁶ The author's standard Corinthian capital is close to those of the temple of Athena Alea at Tegea by Skopas (fig. 29).¹¹⁷ At that time the Corinthian capital was endowed, perhaps for the first time, with three orders of leaves, while it had just two orders of leaves in earlier examples, for example in the temple of Apollo at Bassae (fig. 30) made by Iktinos.¹¹⁸ Moreover in late classical times Corinthian capitals become endowed with spirals and concave abaci with a flower in the middle. This

¹¹⁵See A. Corso, *Il disegno nell'architettura antica*, Venice (2018) 74 with previous bibliography.

¹¹⁶ See D. Scahill, 'The Origins of the Corinthian Capital', P. Schultz and R. von den Hoff (eds.) *Structure, image, ornament: architectural sculpture in the Greek world*, Oxford (2009) 40-53.

¹¹⁷See E. Oestby et alii (eds.), *Tegea I and II*, Athens (2014).

¹¹⁸ See F. A. Cooper, *The temple of Apollo Bassitas. 1, The architecture*, Princeton (1996).

configuration of the Corinthian capitals becomes standard in the second half of the 4th century BC. It is likely that Vitruvius followed the prescriptions of the above mentioned treatise about the Corinthian order which he cites 7. *Praefatio* 12.

Then he moves to the Doric order: he believes (chapter 2) that this order developed from wooden, primitive temples and that triglyphs were placed on the heads of the beams which projected from the roof: his testimony is at the basis of the long accepted doctrine that Doric architecture was wooden at the beginning and then it was transformed into stone. The wooden beginning of the Doric order is a very controversial matter. There are both scholars who accept this theory and others who don't.¹¹⁹

Vitruvius asserts that the first Doric temple was that of Hera at Argos (1. 3) (fig. 31).¹²⁰ The Vitruvian model of Doric temple has columns which are more slender than in the Classical period (chapter 3): this fact led modern scholars to conclude that the standard early Hellenistic Doric temples of western Asia Minor became normative

¹¹⁹ For the position of the skeptics, I cite only B. Barletta, *The origins of the Greek architectural orders*, Cambridge (2001), for that of the supporters of this theory, see M. Wilson Jones, *Origins of classical architecture: temples, orders and gifts to the gods in ancient Greece*, New Haven (2014).

¹²⁰ About the Heraion of Argos, see C. A. Pfaff, *The architecture of the classical temple of Hera*, Princeton (2003).

in the tradition handed down by our author: the temple of Apollo at Claros (fig. 32) in its phase of the 3rd century BC has been thought to be particularly close to the Vitruvian prescriptions.¹²¹ He prescribes also a larger intercolumniation in the middle of the front in order to allow an easy access to the temple during the ceremonies. This feature is more typical of Roman temples than of Greek ones. However it has some antecedents also in the Doric order adopted in the Greek world: for example it is found already in the late 5th century BC in the temple (or portico?) of Demeter at Thorikos. (fig. 33)¹²² However there are also prescriptions given by Vitruvius and concerning the Doric order which look rather theoretical. The most obvious example is his recommendation that in the Doric frieze the triglyphs should not be placed in the angles but that *semi-metopia* or small metopes should go to the corners (3. 5). This prescription is due to the need to sort out the problem of corner triglyphs: the triglyphs should be placed in the axes of the columns and thus should not be in the very corners. Vitruvius thinks that the ‘half-metopes’ are a solution to this issue. However half metopes at the corners of buildings are very rare in built architecture.¹²³ Thus this prescription

¹²¹ See J.-C. Moretti and L. Rabatel (ed.), *Le sanctuaire de Claros et son oracle*, Lyon (2014).

¹²² See R. F. Docter (ed.), *Exploring Thorikos*, Ghent (2018).

¹²³ For rare adoptions of semi metopes at the corners, see for example the internal burial chamber of Svestari in Thrace of the early 3rd c. BC (M. Čičikova, ‘Thrakische

is just a theoretical principle.

However Vitruvius had followers because for example the Caesarean architects who built the Basilica Julia at Corinth (fig. 34) adopted half-metopes in the internal corners of this building.¹²⁴ This fact makes it clear that this solution enjoyed some success. The success of the Vitruvian half-metopes can be seen mainly during the Renaissance, Baroque and Rococo where so many classicistic architectures have the half-metopes in order to follow Vitruvius. Half metopes in the European classicistic architecture can be seen for example in several 18th c. buildings of St. Petersburg.

Vitruvius suggests also that the temple is opened to the west and not to the east because he believes that the altar must be addressed toward east. He has of course in his mind the altar with steps, which was trendy in Asia Minor between late classical times and the period of Ara of Pergamon.¹²⁵

In chapter 6, he gives prescriptions about the gates of temples. The Vitruvian model of gate is regarded close to the gate of temple found in the Asklepeion of Athens,

Beiträge zur Architektur und Dekoration des königlichen Grabmals mit Karyatiden aus Sveštari', *Thracia* 16 (2005) 263-274) and the 'Nicchioni' of Todi in the age of the second triumvirate (D. Maschek, 'Die "Nicchioni" von Todi. Ein Monument der legio XXXXI nach der Schlacht von Naulochus', *RM* 119 (2013) 139-168).

¹²⁴See Scotton (note 104).

¹²⁵ See A. Scholl, 'Olympiou endothen aule' – Zur Deutung des Pergamon altars als Palast des Zeus', *Jdl* 124 (2009) 251-278.

which probably dates back to the early years of the 1st century BC, before the sack of Athens by Sulla.¹²⁶ Thus even in this section, our architect is still Hellenistic.

Vitruvius with his treatise addresses a Roman audience, thus he devotes chapter 7 of the fourth book to the Tuscan type of temple which was the traditional temple of central Italy and which in Rome had an important example in the temple of the Capitoline Triad – Jupiter, Juno and Minerva – on the Capitolium with three different rooms or *cellae* for the three worshipped deities. This temple was not peripteral but had columns only in front (fig. 35):¹²⁷ it is well known that frontal configurations are typical of sacred architecture of central Italy. Concerning Tuscanic temples he may report previous prescriptions by Varro who, with his antiquarian interests, may have stressed the importance of the Tuscanic order and especially of the temple of the Capitoline Triad on the Capitolium. This temple had been restored after the fire of 89 BC but the main features of the original building had been preserved.

In the 5th book he treats the architecture which responds to the concept of the *opportunitas*, that is to the public needs of the city, *id est* the civic architecture.

In chapter 1, he takes in consideration the square and still prescribes the disposition of the gladiatorial games

¹²⁶This gate is still unpublished.

¹²⁷ See A. Sommella Mura, 'Un frontone di età arcaica per il tempio di Giove Capitolino', *Rendiconti Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia* 89 (2016-2017) 277-298.

in the forum although in his time gladiatorial games were already taking place in amphitheatres: this recommendation is explained with the old age of the author who still retains functions which were typical of the past. Amphitheatres had been built especially in Campania already from the late 2nd century BC.¹²⁸ However an amphitheater had been built also in Rome by Statilius Taurus in 29 BC (fig. 36):¹²⁹ thus when Vitruvius published his *De Architectura* this typology existed also in Rome. So the attribution of this function to the *forum* was no longer valid, but perhaps our architect remembered the lavish gladiatorial games provided by Caesar to celebrate his triumph when he entered Rome in 45 BC and which took place in the Roman *Forum*.¹³⁰ So even in the 20s BC he may have been still nostalgic of the good old days of Caesar and this possibility would explain the absence of prescriptions for the amphitheatres.

Then he gives prescriptions for the basilicas which could have different configurations. Even the measures of these buildings are multiples or submultiples of a modulus. The basic type of basilica that he prescribes has three aisles and the central part is elevated, with a

¹²⁸ See J. – C. Golvin, *L'amphithéâtre romain et les jeux du cirque dans le monde antique*, La capelle (2012).

¹²⁹ See A. Moraci, 'Edificio per spettacoli o magazzini? Sulle strutture attribuite all'anfiteatro di Statilio Tauro nel Campo Marzio meridionale', *Ostraka* 27 (2018) 77-91.

¹³⁰ Plutarch, *Caesar* 55. 1-6.

double order of columns. In 1. 6-10 he illustrates the basilica projected by himself at *Fanum Fortunae* on the Adriatic coast of Italy (fig. 37). This basilica is archaeologically unknown, but he gives so detailed prescriptions that it is restored in drawings by modern scholars.¹³¹ This basilica was endowed with a peristyle and on the side opposed to the entrance, there was the *Aedes Augusti*, *id est* the shrine destined to the cult of Emperor Augustus. So Vitruvius may have contributed to the consideration of the basilica as a place where the Emperor is worshiped. In other words the basilica became a center of worshiping of the *Princeps*. This type of basilica became popular in the decades which go from around 25 BC until AD 10–15.¹³² In particular, the basilica *Julia* of Corinth which was decided in the entourage of Caesar – Corinth had the official title *Colonia Laus Iulia Corinthiensis* and was established by Julius Caesar - probably was made by architects close to Vitruvius. The vertical section of this basilica is very close to that of the Vitruvian basilica of *Fanum*.

Our architect after the basilica discusses the theatre (chapters 3-9). The theater in his opinion must have sounding vessels, *id est* bronze vases named *echeia*, which amplify the sound coming from the stage. He also provides the optimal disposition of the *echeia*. These *echeia* were not typical of Roman theaters but once again he follows an Eastern model, precisely the theater of

¹³¹See S. Gozzoli, 'Vitruvio e la basilica di Fano', *SCO* 56 (2010) 111-130.

¹³²See Scotton (note 104).

Corinth¹³³ and he asserts that the *echeia* from this theater of had been brought by Lucius Mummius to Rome and dedicated in the temple of the Moon in Rome (5. 8).¹³⁴ He provides the two layouts of the Greek theater and of the Latin theater (he uses the word “Latin” and not “Roman”) (6. 1-2 and 7. 1-2). In the Latin theater, a row of steps is placed in the middle of the *cavea*, thus in axis with the front of the stage: this disposition is in keeping with the neo-Attic visual culture which likes architectures where the various elements are in axial relations one with the other. Moreover in the Latin theater the *orchestra* has only a semicircular configuration because in theatrical performances of the time the chorus no longer has the important role which is found in the plays of the tragic and comic poets of the Greek classical past. As the result of this feature, the Latin theater becomes a unified architectural body, no longer composed of the scattered elements which formed the Greek theater. In his treatment of the Greek theater (chapter 7), he prescribes features which had been typical of the Hellenistic theater: his model of

¹³³ See D. Scahill, 'The Hellenistic Theatre at Corinth', R. Frederiksen et alii (eds.), *The architecture of the ancient Greek theatre*, Athens (2015) 193-202.

¹³⁴ About the removal of *spolia* from Corinth by Lucius Mummius and their dedications in Roman and Italian sanctuaries, see J. Kendall, 'Scipio Aemilianus, Lucius Mummius, and the Politics of Plundered Art in Italy and Beyond in the 2nd Century B.C.E.', *Etruscan Studies* 12 (2008-2009) 169-181.

Greek theater has been dated around 150 BC.¹³⁵The Greek theater which is closer to the Vitruvian model is that of Knidos (fig. 38):¹³⁶ this observation is in keeping with the prevalence of models from Asia Minor in the prescriptions of our author. In the Vitruvian Greek theater a *cuneus* of the cavea is in axis with the stage, moreover the cavea does not join the stage but instead there is some space between two sides because the two entrances are not yet covered as they are in the model for the Latin theater.

Vitruvius after having written a lot about the theater which occupies most of his 5th book, discusses the so called *post scaenam porticus*, the porticos which are behind the stage (chapter 9). He provides details for a *quadriporticus*, *id est* for a peristyle - a courtyard surrounded by the columns behind the stage - because he privileges the example of the *quadriporticus* behind the theater of Pompey in Rome (fig. 39).¹³⁷

In chapter 10 he discusses the baths. In the age of

¹³⁵See H. P. Isler, 'Vitruvs Regeln und die erhaltenen Theaterbauten', Geertman (note 99) 141-153.

¹³⁶ See D. Pastutmaz, 'Knidos im Licht der jüngsten Ausgrabungen: Der Theater-Dionysos tempel-Stoa-Komplex', F. Rumscheid (ed.), *Die Karer und die Anderen*, Bonn (2009) 533-538.

¹³⁷ See A. Monterroso Checa, *Theatrum Pompei*, Madrid (2010) and Idem, 'Teatri detti "greci", detti "latini" e Vitruvio. Archeologia nell'architettura teatrale del libro V', Clini (note 71) 95-114.

Vitruvius they became one of the beloved areas for entertainment in Roman Italy. The model for the Vitruvian disposition of baths is close to that of the Stabian baths in Pompeii (fig. 40), which date around 70-60 BC.¹³⁸ Of course in this case Vitruvius privileges the Italian late-Hellenistic architectural experience, because monumental baths are regarded *Italica consuetudo*.

In chapter 11 he discusses the *gymnasia*. He does not use the word *gymnasium* but he refers to *palaestrae* which are the most important component of a *gymnasium*. He prescribes a double row of columns on the north side of the *palaestra* because it is colder. This disposition has been found in the gymnasium of Priene (fig. 41) and in other gymnasia in Asia Minor of the 2nd century BC:¹³⁹ once again middle Hellenistic architecture of Asia Minor is the *paradeigma* and the *exemplum* privileged by Vitruvius. The Vitruvian gymnasium has both gymnastic and didactic functions: this observation also reflects the multi-purpose status of Hellenistic *gymnasia*. Outside the *palaestra* there are the *xystus*, a roofed promenade, open air walk-ways and the stadium, which are also essential components of the *gymnasium*.

Chapter 12 is devoted to harbors: the Vitruvian prescriptions depend mainly from the Roman contemporary experience in making artificial harbours

¹³⁸ See M. Trümper *et alii*, 'Stabian Baths in Pompeii', *RM* 125 (2019) 103-159.

¹³⁹ See A. Corso, 'The Gymnasia', M. Lagogianni-Georgakarakos (ed.), *Hadrianus*, Athens (2018) 146-150.

even where the coast is not suitable, thanks to the use of the pozzolana.

The sixth book is devoted to the private architecture. He discusses (chapters 3-5) the basic type of Roman house, characterized by the entrance, the *atrium* – the core of the house – with its *impluvium* for the collection of water, the *tablinum* which is the office of the *dominus* (where he has his archive of *tabulae* to do his business), the *cubicula* (bed-rooms) and the *hortus*: the garden. This ‘middle republican’ model of house became larger in order to serve the needs of affluent owners when the Greek influence became stronger. Thus the standard *domus* became endowed also with a peristyle: a rectangular area surrounded by porticos which included a garden with a fountain. Even *atria* became endowed with columns which characterized the tetrastyle and Corinthian types of *atrium*. Moreover several dining rooms, used in different seasons, also with columns, became in use and are prescribed by Vitruvius.

He also describes the standard features of the Roman villa (chapter 6) and a Greek model of house (chapter 7) which has been identified with the middle Hellenistic standard house known with many examples on Delos (fig. 42).¹⁴⁰

In the 7th book he gives prescriptions of how the architecture appears, thus he provides a lot of information about wall paintings and the mosaics. He also gives the terminology for the different types of

¹⁴⁰See A. Corso, 'La casa greca secondo Vitruvio', *Archeologia Veneta* 21-22 (1998-1999) 37-49.

mosaics which is still used today.

In the 8th book he speaks about water and aqueducts, in the 9th book about clocks.

The 10th book was devoted to the *machinatio* or to different types of machines. Vitruvius takes advantage of his previous experience in the army of Caesar and devotes much of this book to war machines.

It is possible to argue from this survey that Vitruvius aimed at giving a complete picture of architecture, which is why nobody in Roman imperial times attempted to do it again. Vitruvius is cited with great honor by Frontinus (1. 25. 1-2) and by Pliny the Elder (1. 16; 35 and 36). Probably in the AD 3rd c., Cetus Faventinus gave in one book a summary of the sections of the treatise of Vitruvius which could be useful in the field of private architecture. Vitruvius is cited often for prescriptions about *villae* by Rutilius Taurus Aemilianus Palladius in his *Opus agriculturae* (1. 8-40; 6. 11-12 and 9. 8-12 and 15) probably in the AD 4th c. and he is regarded the most important authority on architecture by Isidorus in his *Etymologies*, especially in his 15th book, which is entitled *De aedificiis* (see especially 15. 2-4; 8. 13; 16. 1-3; 17. 7 and 19. 9-10 and 17).

Then he is loved in the Carolingian period especially by Einhard, the biographer of Charlemagne, who got a manuscript of Vitruvius.¹⁴¹

Then he became the highest authority of architecture

¹⁴¹ See S. Schuler, *Vitruv im Mittelalter. Die Rezeption von "De architectura" von der Antike bis in die frühe Neuzeit*, Köln (1999).

from the 15th century until the neo-classicism,¹⁴² which is why he is so important for the European culture.

Questions:

Could you please clarify the term *symmetria* in relation to architecture and sculpture?

Symmetria of course is derived from *metron*, which means unity by which you define the measures. And *syn-* (*cum* in Latin) means together. So it is a system of measures, which are related one with the other. This concept is important in architecture, in sculpture and also in painting. There were treatises about the *symmetria*: for example the Kanon by Polykleitos must have provided details about how the human body should be composed with multiples and sub-multiples.¹⁴³ However the kanon of the human body given by Vitruvius is not that of Polycleitus. His kanon responds more to the slender one of Lysippos who provided a new *symmetria* as we know from Pliny 34. 65: in Vitruvian kanon the head is 1/10 of the height of the body while in Polykleitos' one it is around 1/8. Vitruvius may have adopted the Lysippos' model. Euphranor also wrote a treatise which in Pliny's translation is named *De symmetriaetcoloribus* (35. 129). Vitruvius translates the Greek word *symmetria* as *commodulatio* (3. 1. 1), but Pliny uses only the word *symmetria*(34. 65).

What is the main objection against the wooden origin of the Doric order?

¹⁴²See P. N. Pagliara, 'Vitruvio da testo a canone', S. Settis (ed.), *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana*, Turin (1986) 3. 3-85.

¹⁴³See A. Stewart, 'Nuggets', *AJA* 102 (1998) 271-282.

Barbara Barletta wrote a book about the origins of Greek temple architecture¹⁴⁴ where she rejected the Vitruvian explanation. She says that the measures given by Vitruvius are not suitable to wooden structures. She also thought that it is not possible that the triglyphs were the coverings of the beams because the frieze in the Doric order is below these beams. She provided also smaller details in support of her theory. I think these reasons are not convincing because when the temple was translated from wood to stone, the roof may have been moved up. Thus in my opinion the explanation given by Vitruvius is still acceptable. Pausanias 5. 16. 1 still saw in the opisthodomos of the temple of Hera at Olympia (fig. 43) a wooden column and whoever does not believe Vitruvius thinks that it was not an original wooden column which survived from the Heraion of the 7th century BC but that it was set up more recently with the purpose of lending support to the fictitious theory about wooden origin of the Doric temple, when it was conceived. In my opinion this explanation is not convincing.

Why he estimates Ionic order more than Doric?

Vitruvius 4. 3. 1, reports the opinions of Pytheos and Hermogenes that the Doric order should be avoided because it has the problem of the corner triglyph: triglyphs should be in axis with columns but at the same time should be placed in the corners of the temple, these two prescriptions contradict one the other. So these Hellenistic architects thought that the Doric order is disharmonic.

¹⁴⁴See note 119.

The Corinthian order was not an independent order but just a capital when the treatises of Pytheos and Hermogenes – respectively to be dated at 350-340 and at 320-190 BC – had been composed and Vitruvius adopts their theory. The adoption of the Corinthian order for columns of the peristasis of a temple dates after Hermogenes: the first known examples are the Hellenistic Olympieion of Athens and the temples of Zeus at Olba in *Cylicia aspera* and at Salamis on Cyprus, all to be placed around 160 BC.¹⁴⁵ Even in these Hellenistic cases, the Corinthian capital is inserted in an architectural grammar which is still Ionic. The creation of a Corinthian order with proper types of bases and entablatures which are no longer the Ionic ones is due to the architects of Augustan Rome.¹⁴⁶

Vitruvius published his treatise at the very beginning of the Augustan rule, at the time he was old and not very receptive of new architectural models. His whole model of architecture comes from Hellenistic Asia Minor. He admired Pytheos and Hermogenes who despised the Doric order: this is in keeping with his Caesarean ideology, which idealized the absolutistic monarchies of the Hellenistic East.

¹⁴⁵See T. Mavrogiannis, 'The temple of Zeus Olympios at Salamis and the temple of Zeus at Olba', S. Rogge at alii (eds.), *Salamis of Cyprus*, New York (2019) 509-544.

¹⁴⁶This is the conclusion of P. Gros, *Aurea templa*, Rome (1976)

Lecture 6. Architectural drawings

The activity of the architect in antiquity as the maker of the project¹⁴⁷ is especially testified by architectural drawings.¹⁴⁸ We have drawings made by architects who were responsible for projects of buildings.¹⁴⁹ Sometimes the architects used to tell their craftsmen working on specific elements of the architecture to do it in a certain way by incising these patterns into the walls which were to be built.¹⁵⁰ There are several of these examples. It is probable that architectural drawings were already included in treatises dated in the archaic period, of Theodoros and Rhoikos about the Heraion of Samos, Chersiphron and Metagenes about the Artemision of Ephesos, etc., because it is very unlikely that they could explain only by words details of decorative patterns of these buildings to patrons who were not professional architects.¹⁵¹ For example Polycrates, the patron of the Heraion of Samos or Croesus, the patron of the Artemision of Ephesos may have needed drawings in order to understand descriptions of details of these

¹⁴⁷See A. P. Matthaïou, ‘Ὡς ἂν ὁ ἀρχιτέκτων κελεύη. Ο ἀρχιτέκτων στην πόλη των Αθηνών τον 5ο και 4ο αι. π.Χ.’, Κώστας Ζάμπας, Βασίλης Λαμπρινουδάκης, Ευαγγελία Σημαντώνη-Μπουρνιά, Aenne Ohnesorg (eds.), *Αρχιτέκτων: τιμητικός τόμος για τον καθηγητή Μανόλη Κορρέ*, Athens (2016) 99-113.

¹⁴⁸See Corso, (note 115).

¹⁴⁹ See Corso (note 115) 71-108.

¹⁵⁰ See Corso (note 115) 53-58.

¹⁵¹ See Corso (note 115) 15-26.

colossal temples in the above mentioned essays. These rulers were not professional architects, so they had to see something visual in order to realize what they were going to fund. In Attic inscriptions of the 5th century, related to the architectural program made by Pericles and also by politicians after Pericles,¹⁵² we have probable references to architectural drawings, but we are not certain that drawings are mentioned because the words used derive from the verb *γράφω* which may mean I write or I make drawings or I paint.¹⁵³ So, we do not know whether these inscriptions refer to short written reports that architects must submit to public authorities or if they were making drawings to show their projects to public administrators or if they even made some paintings of the buildings they were to build. These texts are somewhat ambiguous.¹⁵⁴ So, we have to rely more to the archaeological evidence and especially to drawings in building sites.

The first considered drawing is the representation of the front of the temple of Athena at Priene, which survives in the wall of the cella in the same temple (fig. 44).¹⁵⁵

¹⁵²About the building program of Athens in the late 5th c. BC, see T. L. Shear, Jr, *Trophies of victory: public building in Periklean Athens*, Princeton (2016).

¹⁵³See G. Marginesu, Le "azioni" degli architetti nell'Attica classica ed ellenistica, *RA* 2015. 1. 3-22 and Idem, *Il costo del Partenone: appalti e affari dell'arte greca*, Rome (2020).

¹⁵⁴ See Corso (note 115) 151-156.

¹⁵⁵ See Corso (note 115) 71.

Many architectural drawings survive from the temple of Apollo in Didyma (*Didymaion*) which is around 50 kilometres from Miletos. Most of these drawings, in a building which had several phases, have been assigned by the German scholar Haselberger to a phase of Didymaion which is dated around 250 BC.¹⁵⁶ They have

¹⁵⁶See L. Haselberger, 'Werkzeichnungen am Jüngerren Didymaion', *IstMitt* 30 (1980) 191-215; Idem, 'Berichtüber die Arbeit am Jüngerren Apollontempel von Didyma', *ibidem* 33 (1983) 90-123; Idem, 'Die Bauzeichnungen des Apollontempels auf Didyma', *Architectura* 13 (1983) 13-26; Idem, 'Die Werkzeichnung des Naiskos im Apollontempel von Didyma', W. Hoepfner (ed.), *Bauplanung und Bautheorie der Antike* 4, Berlin (1984) 111-119; L. Haselberger, 'Die antiken Bauzeichnungen an den Tempelwänden des Apollon-Heiligtums in Didyma', *NürnbergerBlätterzurArchäologie* 5 (1988-1989) 31-33; Idem, Aspekte der Bauzeichnungen von Didyma, *RA* 1991. 1. 99-113; Idem and H. Seybold, 'Seilkurve oder Ellipse? Zur Herstellung antiker Kurvaturen nach dem Zeugnis der didymeischen Kurvenkonstruktion', *AA* 1991. 2. 165-188; L. Haselberger, 'Antike Planzeichnungen am Apollontempel von Didyma', W. Hoepfner (ed.), *Frühe Stadtkulturen*, Berlin (1997) 160-173; L. Haselberger, 'Architectural likenesses: models and plans of architecture in classical antiquity', *JRA* 10 (1997) 77-94 and Idem, 'Old issues, new research, latest discoveries,' Idem (ed.), *Appearance and essence: refinements of classical architecture – curvature*, Philadelphia (1999) 1-68; moreover. P.

been detected mostly on walls of the internal courtyard and on a wall of the pronaos of the temple.

In a drawing we have the indication of the sizes of elements of a half of the entablature (fig. 45): it reveals how the pediment should be constructed.¹⁵⁷

In another drawing the profiles of the moldings below the horizontal sima are indicated (fig. 46).¹⁵⁸

Another very important drawing shows how the *entasis* was made:¹⁵⁹ this suggestion looks in keeping with the proportions assigned to the *entasis* by Vitruvius 3. 3. 13 and thus suggests that Vitruvius depends for this prescription from the Hellenistic tradition of Asia Minor. Another drawing from Didymaion provides the example of the shaft of a column which bears the *entasis* and its tapering in the upper section (fig. 47).¹⁶⁰

Another drawing probably represents the horizontal section of semi-column (fig. 48).¹⁶¹

Another drawing probably represents the horizontal section of a quarter of column (fig. 49).¹⁶²

Another drawing teaches how to make a flower through a series of circles (fig. 50), which determine the definition of this pattern.¹⁶³

Heisel, *Antike Bauzeichnungen*, Darmstadt (1993) 167-183.

¹⁵⁷See Corso (note 115) 72.

¹⁵⁸ See Corso (note 115) 73.

¹⁵⁹ See Corso (note 115) 74.

¹⁶⁰ See Corso (note 115) 75.

¹⁶¹ See Corso (note 115) 76.

¹⁶² See Corso (note 115) 77.

¹⁶³ See Corso (note 115) 78.

Let us now consider the tradition of architectural drawings in Egypt. In Egypt, the tradition of architectural drawings was very strong already from 3rd millennium BC.¹⁶⁴ It was made both on papyri and also in drawings on walls and of course, they refer to types of architectures which are very different from the Greek ones.

In a drawing from the *Iseum* of Philae dated in late Hellenistic times the base of a column is represented with concentric circles indicating where the shaft of the column had to be placed (fig. 51).¹⁶⁵

Still in the *Iseum* of Philae and in the same period, the vertical section of the column with the so-called sofa capital is drawn (fig. 52)¹⁶⁶.

Still in the same period, we have a drawing from the sanctuary of Horus at Edfu, which represents the upper end of two flutes of column with a fillet in the middle (fig. 53).¹⁶⁷

Other Hellenistic examples come from Asia Minor where there was also a very long tradition of architectural drawings made in clay tablets.¹⁶⁸

Two Hellenistic drawings on clay tablets come from acropolis of Susa and are now in the Louvre. One may represent a part of a house (fig. 54),¹⁶⁹ while the other drawing may represent the so-called Hellenistic temple

¹⁶⁴ See Corso (note 115) 54.

¹⁶⁵ See Corso (note 115) 80.

¹⁶⁶ See Corso (note 115) 81.

¹⁶⁷ See Corso (note 115) 82.

¹⁶⁸ See Corso (note 115) 55.

¹⁶⁹ See Corso (note 115) 83.

of Susa (fig. 55):¹⁷⁰ it represents a courtyard, two rectangular rooms divided by a stair in the middle.

In the very late Hellenistic times we have additional architectural drawings from Egypt. In one drawing from the temple of Mandulis at Bab al-Kalabsha in Nubia, a capital is drawn as seen from the lower face (fig. 56).¹⁷¹

In the same architectural context and in the same age, a drawing represents a typical palm capital (fig. 57).¹⁷²

In a quarry in Gebel Abu Foda around the same period, a sofa capital is drawn (fig. 58).¹⁷³

In the same context and in the same period, a drawing represents Hator capital (fig. 59).¹⁷⁴

In the same period a drawing was made on the Mastaba 17 of Meidum (fig. 60): it represents the vertical axis of a pyramid and its inclination: perhaps the no. 2 pyramid of the northern group of Meroe is drawn.¹⁷⁵

Of course Egypt is the country of papyri, so it is hardly surprising that drawings of buildings have been found on papyri.

An AD 2nd c. papyrus from Oxyrhynchus gives the layout of a house with the single rooms (fig. 61):¹⁷⁶ the plan of the house is part of a contract to sell the house.

Another AD 2nd c. papyrus from Oxyrhynchus preserves one of the most beautiful drawings which survived from

¹⁷⁰ See Corso (note 115) 84.

¹⁷¹ See Corso (note 115) 85.

¹⁷² See Corso (note 115) 86.

¹⁷³ See Corso (note 115) 87.

¹⁷⁴ See Corso (note 115) 88.

¹⁷⁵ See Corso (note 115) 89.

¹⁷⁶ See Corso (note 115) 90.

the Greek and Roman world (fig. 62):¹⁷⁷ a Corinthian capital supports an architrave and the frieze with the acanthus pattern. Coulton who published this drawing observed that the proportions between capitals, columns, architrave and frieze are found nowhere in the real architecture and thus suggested that it is an artistic representation of a fantastic architecture, a free drawing and not a copy from a real building. In that case it would be, to use the words of Plato, *φανταστικητεχνη*. It is dated around AD 140. If we accept the conclusion of Coulton, we would have a free artistic drawing.¹⁷⁸

In Hadrianic - Antonine times, architectural drawings have been detected also in the Syrian region: in the Ionic temple of Bziza in Lebanon, the representation of a half pediment has been recognized (fig. 63).¹⁷⁹

On the same temple, another drawing represents the profile of the upper part of the entablature (fig. 64): it also dates in the mid of AD 2nd c.¹⁸⁰

Other architectural drawings have been found in Baalbek: in the Julio-Claudian period, the diagonal sima of the southern section of the real pediment of the temple of Juppiter is represented on the podium of the same temple (fig. 65).¹⁸¹

In the Antonine period, the vertical section of the roof

¹⁷⁷ See Corso (note 115) 91.

¹⁷⁸ See J.J. Coulton, 'Papyri illustrated in the plates', *Oxyrhynchus, a City and Its Texts*, London (2007) 296-306, particularly 304- 306.

¹⁷⁹ See Corso (note 115) 92.

¹⁸⁰ See Corso (note 115) 93.

¹⁸¹ See Corso (note 115) 94.

and entablature of the fountain of Bacchus at Baalbek is drawn (fig. 66):¹⁸² so, probably it is a copy of a real architecture.

In the same Antonine period and in the temple of Bacchus, another drawing has been detected (fig. 67): it bears geometric patterns which perhaps were destined to be represented on the floor in *opus sectile* of the temple's courtyard.¹⁸³

In the Trajanic period, another drawing has been made and was found in the courtyard of the temple of Juppiter (fig. 68): it may represent the plan of a theatre.¹⁸⁴

Another drawing has also been detected in the same sanctuary of Juppiter and dates in the period of Philip the Arab: it represents the Antonine exedra in the NW section of the hexagonal courtyard of Baalbek (fig. 69), thus a real architecture of the same complex¹⁸⁵.

Finally another drawing of the same age from the same sanctuary represents a barrel vault (fig. 70) and it is exactly the reproduction of a real barrel vault in the same complex.¹⁸⁶

In the early AD 2nd c., the vertical section of the shaft of a column was drawn in the terrace of the theatre of Pergamon (fig. 71) and is thought to represent a column of the Hellenistic Ionic temple on the same terrace. This Hellenistic temple in fact was remade in the AD early 2nd century and so probably it fixes on the ground a

¹⁸² See Corso (note 115) 95.

¹⁸³ See Corso (note 115) 96.

¹⁸⁴ See Corso (note 115) 97.

¹⁸⁵ See Corso (nota 115) 98.

¹⁸⁶ See Corso (note 115) 99.

memo of how the shaft of the vertical section of the column of the old temple was looking in order to make it again faithfully.¹⁸⁷

In the same period and on the same terrace we have also a drawing reproducing how the entablature of the same temple in its Hellenistic phase (fig. 72) looked like:¹⁸⁸ probably again a memo for the reconstruction of the temple.

Several architectural drawings have been found in Rome. The abacus of the Corinthian capital of a pillar, dated in the Hadrianic age, has been drawn south of the Mausoleum of Augustus (fig. 73) and represents the lower face of the capitals of the pillars in the pronaos of the Pantheon of the Hadrianic phase.¹⁸⁹

In the same context, south of the Mausoleum of Augustus, and in the Hadrianic period, the pediment of the pronaos of the Hadrianic Pantheon was also drawn (fig. 74)¹⁹⁰.

Drawings were made also as tools for the building of amphitheatres.

A drawing of a barrel vault of an external arcade of the large Amphitheatre of Capua (fig. 75) was detected on the pavement of this complex and probably dates in the Hadrianic / Antonine times.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷See Corso (note 115) 100.

¹⁸⁸See Corso (note 115) 101.

¹⁸⁹See Corso (note 115) 102.

¹⁹⁰See Corso (note 115) 103. See also L. Haselberger, 'Ein Giebelriss der Vorhalle des Pantheon', *RM* 101 (1994) 279-308

¹⁹¹See Corso (note 115) 104.

On the same building and probably in the same period, geometric patterns were drawn, probably memos for the adoption of these decorations on the monument (figs. 76-77)¹⁹²

Another drawing has been recognized on the amphitheatre of *Pola* in *Histria*. An external arcade of this amphitheatre (fig. 78) which is dated to the time of Vespasian is drawn, probably as a memo of how it looked like, made with compass.¹⁹³

Another type of the architectural drawings which is used in the Roman period is cut on marble tablets which are movable and could be brought anywhere they needed them. The architects carried their tablet and made, for example, a volute on a building exactly as it is drawn on the tablet.

A fragment of a marble tablet bearing the drawing of a volute comes from *Africa Proconsularis*: unfortunately it is uncertain in which city it was found because it comes from a collection. It is now in the Antiquities museum of Bern in Switzerland (fig. 79).¹⁹⁴ In any case, it testifies to the existence of portable drawings which could be brought by the architect wherever he was going.

In Roman times, there was another type of the drawing: that which represents maps of cities or of parcels of towns. Often these drawings were made for the reason of taxations. They are the result of the very efficient bureaucratic taxation system which existed in Rome.

¹⁹²See Corso (note115) 105-106.

¹⁹³See Corso (note115) 107.

¹⁹⁴See Corso (note115) 108.

Probably for the first time in history, the Romans made very detailed maps of whole cities which also could allow exact requests to landowners of how much they had to pay.¹⁹⁵

The main bronze map of Rome was kept in *tabularium* and has not survived, but we have several maps in marble, some partial, some more complete.¹⁹⁶

A map of the AD 1st century represents the temple of the *Castores*, the Roman name of the Dioscuri, the Tiber river running down, probable *horrea* (repositories - places to store things), *tabernae* (bars) and a portico (fig. 80). Possibly there was one more place to store things just between the portico and the Tiber. The temple of the *Castores* is also mentioned by Vitruvius 4. 8. 4, who says that it is one of the temples, which have the entrance and the *pronaos* on a long side, and not on a short side.¹⁹⁷

We have other examples of these Roman maps.

In one map we see either *horrea* or *tabernae*, again, with the names of the owners (fig. 81): an important detail, of course because it is functional to the taxation of these

¹⁹⁵See Corso (note 115) 59-60.

¹⁹⁶See R. Meneghini and R. Santangeli Valenzani (eds), *Formae Urbis Romae*, Rome (2006) particularly 30-39 e 166-171; E. D'Ambrosio et alii, 'Nuovi frammenti di piante marmoree dagli scavi dell'aula di culto del 'Templum Pacis' ', *BullComm* 112 (2011) 67-76; R. Tucci, 'The Marble Plan on the Via Anicia', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 81 (2013) 90-127 and F. Filippi (ed.), *Il Campo Marzio*, Rome 2015, 62, 133 and 383.

¹⁹⁷See Corso (note 115) 109.

land-owners.¹⁹⁸

In another map we have *tabernae* (fig. 82).¹⁹⁹

There are also maps commissioned by privates. One of these maps displays the plan of a small mausoleum - a funerary and monumental tomb - which had all around, probably, trees, moreover buildings on both sides and had a small grove behind with areas which may have been water pools. The road serving the mausoleum was also represented. This probably is a map commissioned by the owner of its funerary *naiskos* for reasons of pride because he patronized a very beautiful funerary monument, whose grandeur is shown by the map (fig. 83).²⁰⁰ Hülsen attempted a visual reconstruction of how this mausoleum looked like (fig. 84).²⁰¹ Thus you can appreciate the grove all around with a road to go there and people admiring. This map has been a tool in order to advertise the land-owner, his pride and money. The map is probably to be dated in the Neronean period and thus reminds the pride of Trimalchio in the *Satyricon* of Petronius when he specifies that he was about to make a very massive tomb for himself.²⁰² The same pride may be at the basis of this type of maps.

Another map with inscriptions reveals that the social

¹⁹⁸See Corso (note115) 110.

¹⁹⁹See Corso (note115) 111.

²⁰⁰See Corso (note115) 112.

²⁰¹See C. Hülsen, 'Piante icnografiche incise in marmo', *RM* 5 (1890) 46-63, particularly 56, fig. 5.

²⁰²See A. Mehl, 'Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft, Totenglauben: die "Igeler Säule" bei Trier und ihre Grabherren. Mit einem Anhang: das Grab des Trimalchio', *Laverna* 8 (1997) 59-92.

background of these type of maps is constituted by freedmen (*liberti*). The owners of the tombs displayed on this map are *liberti* of the Claudian family and they also wanted a map showing how impressive their monumental tombs were (fig. 85).²⁰³Hülßen reconstructed also this funerary complex (fig. 86).²⁰⁴ There are other maps of *horrea* or *tabernae* (fig. 87).²⁰⁵ One of these maps was collected in Umbria and does not survive, but a manuscript of the 17th century from the Ambrosian library in Milan bears a modern copy of this drawing: even in this map *horrea* or *tabernae* were drawn with the names of the owners. A peristyle was also displayed (fig. 88).²⁰⁶

The largest surviving map of the ancient world is the *Forma Urbis Romae*, created after the big fire in Rome in AD 193 by Septimius Severus and which probably copied the bronze original which was kept in the *tabularium* of Rome. It adorned the northern room in the temple of *Pax* (Peace), which was made originally by Vespasian but was changed a lot by Septimius Severus. More than 100 fragments of this map survive (fig. 89).²⁰⁷

Another map represents a parcel of Rome which can be identified with a part of a complex of ancient Rome which still survives: an *exedra* in the forum of Augustus

²⁰³See Corso (note 115) 114.

²⁰⁴See Hülßen (note 201) 49, fig. 1.

²⁰⁵See Corso (note 115) 116.

²⁰⁶See C. Brancatelli, *Antiquae Amerinorum lapidum inscriptiones*, Ambrosian Library, Milan, folium 29.

²⁰⁷See bibliography in note 196.

with the near arch of Germanicus (fig. 90).²⁰⁸

Maps represented also other cities of the Roman world. A clay map of the city of *Aguntum* (fig. 91) in northern Austria survives. This map represents the theatre, probably, the curia, the main square with the temple of Isis and the forum.²⁰⁹

Maps may also have represented aqueducts: a stone map of an aqueduct, now lost, specified the route of the aqueduct through the possessions of several landowners, whose names are provided and with indication of the times when they can tap the water (fig. 92): *ab hora secunda ad horam sextam etc.*²¹⁰

There are architectural drawings also in mosaics. A mosaic preserves the drawing of a bath whose many rooms are indicated with numbers (fig. 93). This mosaic was represented on the floor of the entrance room of the same bath in Rome. Its function probably was to guide the clients of the bath to specific rooms.²¹¹

Another map in a mosaic shows a funerary complex. It represents the entrance, the courtyard or garden, a series of pillars with the gate in the middle indicated with a circle, finally the proper funerary room which had two places for the *stela*. The names of the owners are specified and suggest a date in the Severan period (fig.

²⁰⁸See Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani, (note 196), *Formae Urbis Romae, cit.*, particularly 30-39 and 166-171.

²⁰⁹See Corso (note 115) 120.

²¹⁰See Corso (note 115) 121.

²¹¹See A. Bouet, 'La mosaïque de la via Marsala à Rome (Regio V)', *Métra* 110. 2 (1998) 849-892.

94).²¹²

Sometime drawings on mosaics reproduce the plans of famous buildings as sort of souvenirs. An example of this practice is found in the house of mosaics at Luni: the *circus maximus* of Rome is reproduced in a mosaic which dates in the AD early 5th century (fig. 95).²¹³ This glorification of an important monument of Rome is in keeping with the glory lavished on Rome in the same years by Rutilius Namantianus in his *De reditusuo* 1. 63-66:

Fecisti patriam diversis gentibus unam;
profuit iniustis te dominante capi;
dumque offers victis proprii consortia iuris,
urbem fecisti, quod prius orbis erat.’

‘You (Rome) made one homeland of different populations, being submitted by your rule was useful even to unjust people, and you offered to the vanquished the association to your rights, you made what was before the world just one city’.

We have also free drawings which may not have had a practical function. A drawing on a wall from Pompeii (fig. 96) represents a round building which can be a fountain or a pavilion or also an aviary because round buildings provided with nets in order to keep the birds inside existed in the Roman world (Varro, *De re rustica* 3. 5. 17-18). It is unclear whether this drawing ever had

²¹² E. Salza Prina Ricotti, ‘I giardini delle tombe e quello della tomba di Antinoo’, *Rendiconti Pontificia Accademia Archeologia* 76 (2003-2004) 231-261, particularly 233-234.

²¹³ See F. Marcattili, *Circo Massimo: Architetture, funzioni, culti, ideologia*, Rome (2009) 267, cat. no. 85.

any use.²¹⁴

Another probable free drawing from Pompeii represents a capital (fig. 97):²¹⁵ this capital is not reproduced anywhere in the house in which this drawing has been made, thus probably it is just a free drawing.

Another type of architectural drawings is constituted by drawings made by the fans of the gladiatorial games. These fans are probably rude, just hooligans, of course these figures are very basic: these incisions include a lintel which has been thought to represent the temple or an exit attached to the amphitheater of Smyrna and images of a temple: perhaps the fans prayed the gods for the victory of their team.²¹⁶ These drawings have no architectural dignity, but are just graffiti. However they testify to the popular diffusion of drawings.

Architectural drawings are known also thanks to literary *testimonia*.

Vitruvius mentions architectural drawings in several passages of his *De architectura*:²¹⁷ he wrote that there were drawings made by architects, representing plans, vertical sections as well as the third dimensions of

²¹⁴See M. de Vos, 'I 4, 5. 25 La Casa del Citarista', G. Pugliese Carratelli and I. Baldassarre (eds.), *Pompei pitture e mosaici* i, Rome (1990) 117-177, particularly 148, no 53.

²¹⁵See M. de Vos, 'I 9, 13 Casa di Cerere', Pugliese Carratelli and Baldassarre (note 214), ii, 172-229, particularly 222-223, no. 77.

²¹⁶See R. S. Bagnall, R. Casagrande-Kim, A. Ersoy, C. Tanriver and B. Yolaçan, *Graffiti from the Basilica in the Agora of Smyrna*, New York (2016).

²¹⁷See Corso (note 115) 27-37 with a complete catalogue of Vitruvian passages concerning architectural drawings.

buildings: these representations were called respectively *ἰχνογραφία* (drawing of plan), *ὀρθογραφία* (drawing of the vertical section) and *σκηνογραφία* (drawing of the third dimension) (1. 2. 2).

An architect must provide these three types of drawings. Vitruvius endowed his treatise with ten drawings, but nine out of ten did not survive, only a drawing of his rose of winds preserved in the manuscript tradition may derive from the original edition of the treatise.²¹⁸

Drawings are mentioned by Frontinus who wrote that he ordered the accomplishment of drawings of aqueducts of Rome (*De aquaeductu Urbis Romae* 1. 17. 3-4): the previously considered drawing of an aqueduct may derive from one of the drawings decided by Frontinus.

Drawings made in order to build houses are also mentioned in the written tradition: Cicero, *Ad Quintum fratrem* 2. 6. 3 reports about the architectural drawing of a *domus* of his brother Quintus.

Architectural drawings made for villas are mentioned by Pliny the Younger, *Epistulae* 5. 6. 13: he refers to *formae pictae*, a definition which implies that these drawings were also coloured.

An architectural drawing of the temple of Venus of Rome was sent by Hadrian to Apollodorus of Damascus (Dio Cassius 69. 4. 2-3) and when Apollodorus criticized this drawing, Hadrian is told to have ordered to kill this architect.

²¹⁸See P. Gros, 'Les illustrations du «De architectura» de Vitruve: histoire d'un malentendu', Idem (ed.), *Vitruve et la tradition des traits d'architecture*, Rome (2006) 363-388, particularly 368-369.

Writers of military matters, especially Hyginus, report about drawings of Roman military camps: these drawings were important tools in order to understand the dislocation of the bodies of the army and of weapons inside the camp. This is the reason why Hyginus provides information about drawings of these camps in several passages (see Hyginus, *De munitionibus castrorum* 2; 3; 11; 15 and 23). Moreover, he attached drawings to his treatise which was written the period of Trajan: see *ibidem* 2, 11 and 15). Unfortunately, these illustrations do not survive.

Similar drawings can be also found in parallel genre of writers of poliorcetic matters. Apollodorus of Damascus published a poliorcetic treatise in which he reported about drawings of military tools attached to his treatise (see Apollodorus, *Poliorcetica* 137). Perhaps he derived the idea to publish his book with illustrations from Vitruvius. This tradition to publish books about poliorcetics with drawn illustrations continued until middle Byzantine times (see Heron of Byzantium, *Parangelmata poliorcetica* 1. 198-199; 10. 209; 12. 214; 13. 216; 14. 217; 15. 219; 16. 220; 17. 222; 19. 224; 22. 228; 25. 232; 27. 237; 41. 280; 42. 251; 44. 254; 47. 260; 48. 261; 49. 262; 51. 266; 52. 267; 54. 271; 55. 274; 57. 276).

In conclusion, the many architectural drawings known both from visual and from written documents show how important the project was as the preliminary moment of the building process and thus reveal the rationalistic concept of building from classical Greece until late antiquity.

Question: What was the exact function of drawings on the walls of a temple? Were they real projects or they just depicted the architecture that already existed?

Probably the architect made project drawings on papyri in Hellenistic times and in Roman imperial times on parchments as we know from Gellius 19. 10. 1-4. Drawings of specific parts on walls of buildings probably were 'copied' from the general project of the architect by craftsmen in order to do their work in keeping with the requirements of the general project. Since sometimes these incisions have been detected behind the plasters on these walls and thus became invisible once the building was finished, at least in most cases they were made during the building process and not after the completion of the architecture.

Question: How about the decorative details (like acroteria) - how do you think, were they reproduced in drawings during the ancient period?

This is a big problem because we have another word of the submission of the models. These models were prepared by the architects and submitted to the public authorities, in classical Greece usually they were made in view of the public competition which would have selected the architect charged of a building. We have an inscription concerning the temple of Athena Nike at Athens which reports that whoever wishes to make this temple should come in ten days and show the type of a building he wanted to do (see *IG* 1 (3rd ed.) 35 and 64). The standard word for this model was *παράδειγμα*: it was a small, three-dimensional model. Thus it is likely that the candidates for the competition submitted to the

selective committee παραδείγματα, small models of the building to be made.

As far as sculpture is concerned, the word which indicates preliminary small models is προπλάσματα. So, sculptors made the preliminary small model, πρόπλασμα, of the sculpture which had to be carved. Thus there were models, both of architectures, παραδείγματα, and of sculptures, προπλάσματα. Another word which was thought to designate small preliminary models is τύποι, but the meaning of τύποι is controversial and may have indicated generic models.²¹⁹ However the meanings of προπλάσματα and παραδείγματα are certain.

About the terminology of architectural drawings, ύπογραφή designates the preliminary drawing of the building, on papyrus probably. We have an inscription by Hermogenes who dedicates an ύπογραφή of an unspecified temple to the temple of Athena at Priene (*IvPri* 306). Thus the ύπογραφή was the preliminary plan of the building to be made. At the beginning of the 3rd century BC the ύπογραφή of the *Asklepeion* of Delos is recorded (*Inscriptions Delos* 500).²²⁰

Question: About the Egyptian palm column. Are these proportions somehow represented in the Greek or in the Roman world?

These proportions do not reflect the standard proportions

²¹⁹See A. M. Tamassia, 'Ancora sui typoi di Timotheos', *ACI* 13 (1961) 124-131.

²²⁰See M.-C. Hellmann, *Recherches sur le vocabulaire de l'architecture grecque d'après les inscriptions de Délos*, Athenes (1992) 316-321.

of a Greek column, it was not an architectural drawing by craftsmen because it is not exact: the palm capital is not symmetric when related to the shaft of the column. It is a rather impressionistic drawing.

Question: About the map of a city in Austria. Has it correct scale or size?

First of all, the city of *Aguntum* is not completely excavated, so we cannot compare all the buildings of the map with the real ones. However scholars who studied this tablet of clay have argued that for the part of the city which is excavated, for example the theatre, it corresponds quite well. So, it should be exact.²²¹

Question: Just a quick question about these drawings from Pompeii: are they incised drawings or what's the material?

The first mentioned is cut on walls, the second is painted.

- It looks very much like the wall paintings. Do we have a context for these drawings - what is depicted next to it or it is just a single painted wall?

They are not inside wall paintings and are outside any context. The scholar who studied them, Mariette de Vos, decided that they probably are free drawings.²²² The drawn capital is not a drawing in a construction yard because it does not correspond to any capital which was made in this house and also because the flower drawn on the capital is very peculiar, it is not the flower used in the Corinthian order. So, perhaps it is a free drawing.

²²¹See W. Alzinger, 'Das Municipium Claudium Aguntum', *ANRW* 2. 6 (1977) 380-413.

²²²See notes 214 and 215.

But these two drawings are from different buildings?

Are these buildings domestic?

Yes, they are *domus*.

Question: Is a drawing a guide to construction?

We have two long inscriptions which are nearly treatises and which guide the builders toward how to make a building. These inscriptions are:

That concerning the Asklepieion of Delos of the early 3rd century BC: it explains in detail how to make an architrave with given proportions, the frieze with other prescribed dimensions, the sima etc.²²³

²²³ ID 500: – [τ]αῖς πλί[νθοις?] – – ας· τιθέτω δὲ το[ὺ]ς λίθ[ους] – – – – – [π]αλαιστάς· καὶ ἂν τοικοδομήσει σ[τ]ρω[μάτεκ]- [αἰ εὐθυνηρίαν? τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ στρώματ]ος φεύγων ἄρτι λιθίαν τὸ ἐλάχιστον ἡμιπόδι[ον, ποιῶ]- 5 [ν δὲ τὰς ἔδρας τῆς ἐπιχωρίας πέτ]ρας τοῖς νομαίοις ὕψος μὴ ἐλάττους ἔξ δακτύλ[ων καὶ] [πάντων ἐργαζόμενος τὰς βάσει]ς καὶ τὰς ἐπιβάσεις καὶ τοὺς ἄρμους ἀποσσύρας καὶ [ξοῖδ]- [ος, ποιῶν πάντα ὀρθὰ καὶ σύμμιλ]τα· ἀποδώσει δὲ τὴν ἀντοικοδομίαν ἀεὶ κατὰ γένος [τ]- [ῶν κειμένων?· θήσει δὲ τὴν κρηπίδα] ὕψος ὑπὸ τοὺς καταληπτήρας πρὸς τὰ κλίνη τὰ δοθέ[ν]- [τα διαψαμμώσας? τὴν ἂν τοικ]οδομίαν λείωκοσκίνωι ἐσσημένωι, ἄρεστῶς ποιῶ[ν] 10 [τῶι ἀρχιτέκτονι· περιφράξας δὲ] περὶ τοὺς τοίχους καὶ τὰς παραστάδας στήσει κίονα[ς] [τέτταρας ὕψος ποδῶν τετάρ]ων καὶ δέκα σὺνκιοκράνωι, πά[χ]ος τῆς βάσεως ποιῶν [δίποδας καὶ τοὺς σφονδύλους] μὴ ἐλάττους δύο πόδας· ἐπιθήσει δὲ τὰ κιοκράνα ἐπὶ τ- [οὺς κίονας ὅπως ἂν καί? τὸ ἐ]πιστύλιον {ἐπιστύλιον} ἐπιθήσει κύκλωι· ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ ἐπιστυλίου {ἐπιστυλίου} τοῦ [ἐπιτοίχου? ἐπιθήσει μετόπια?] ἔξωθεν λιτά· κατὰ δὲ τὰς παραστάδας καὶ τὸν κίονα ἔ[κ]- 15 [ας τον ἐπιθήσει ἐπιστύλιον δ]ωρικόν,

πλάτος τῶν ἐπιστυλίων πάντων τριημιπόδια [κα]- [ἰ πέντε δακτύλους, λίθων δὲ συμ]φά[νων] ὧν πῶσει πάχος εἰς τὸ ἐντὸς τρεῖς παλαστ[ά]- [ς ἐπιθήσει ἐπ' αὐτοῦ? συνθέσει]εἰς τριγλύφου καὶ μετοπίου· ἀντιθήσει δὲ τ[ῆ]ι τριγλύφωι ἀ[ν]- [τίθημα ὕψος καὶ πλάτος ἀρμό]ζον, μῆκος μὴ ἐλάττω σιν λίθοις χρώμενος διπόδων· [θε]- [ἰς δὲ ἐγγωνίαι? ἐκατέρωθεν? λίθ]ον διάτροχον ἔχοντα τὸν κόσμον τὸν αὐτὸν ἀπ[ὸ] μετ[οπί]- 20 [ου καὶ τριγλύφου? μῆκος ἴσον] τοῖς ἑτέροις, πλάτος δύο ποδῶν παλαιτῆς, ὕψος τρι[ημι]- [πόδιον, λίθους γείσου ἐπιθή]σει, μῆκος καὶ πλάτος τρίποδας δύο δακτύλων, ἀναφορ- [ὰν ποιῶν τὴν καθήκουσα]ν τῶι γείσωι πρὸς τὰ μέτρα τὰ δοθέν τα παρὰ τοῦ ἀρχιτέκτονος· τὰ [δὲ] [ὄπισθεν γεῖσα ἐπιθή]σει τρία μὲμῆκος πενθημιπόδια, τὸδ' [ἔ]ν τριῶν ποδῶν· τὰ δὲ γω- [νίαια πῶσει ἀμφοτέρα? ἔ]χουσα τὸ ἑκότερον μέρος τριῶν ποδῶν καὶ ἡμιποδίου· τὰ δὲ ἀγγελ- 25 [αἶα ἐπὶ τοὺς μακρο]ῦς τοίχους πῶσει μῆκος μὴ [ἐλ]άττω διπόδων, π[ά]χος τοῦ ἔμ- [προσθεν ἡμιπόδιον καὶ π]λάτος ἐπτά παλαιστ[ά]- [φυγ]ῶν δὲ ἀρτι λιθίαν τὸ ἐ[λ] ἀχιστ[ο]ν τρεῖς πα- [λαιστ[ά]- [ς ποιῶν τῶν ἑτέρων] γείσων πλάτος πενθημι[πό]δια, πλά[τος] τοῦ κόσμου παν τὸς συ[γ]- [κεμένου πενθημιπόδια καὶ] τρεῖς δακτυλοὶ· ἐπικόψας δὲ τὸ [γεῖσ]ον κύ[κλ]ωι ὀρθὸν πρὸς τὴν κ[α]- [τα φορὰν τὴν καθήκουσαν], ἀνο[ί]ξει τοὺς ἀετοὺς ἐπ[ὶ] τὸ ἔνπροσθεν γεῖσον καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ 30 ὄπισθεν ἐπιτιθεῖς ἡγεμ[ον]ίους μὲν μέσου μῆκος τετράποδας, ὕψος κατὰ μέσους [τριημιπόδια, κερκιδιαίους δὲ μ]ῆκος πεντάποδας, ὕψος πρὸς τὴν καταφορὰν τοῦ ἀετοῦ, πάχο-[ς πάντων τριπαλάστους· τὰ δὲ μ]έσα τῶν ἀετῶν ἐκ τοῦ ἐντὸς ἐν κοιλαινέτω μὴ ἐλ-[άττω – – – – – καὶ πρὸς τ]οὺς κειμένους ἀντιθήσει ἐκ τοῦ ἐντὸς λίθους τ- [ρεῖς – – – – – , τ]ὰ δὲ πάχη τριπαλάστους, ἐκκοιλαινῶν τὰ μέσα μ35 [ἢ ἐλάττω – – – – – καὶ κατὰ μέσου] τὰν τιθήματος ἐκ τεμεῖ τῶι μελάθρῳ πρὸς

Another inscription is about a building which has been identified as the temple of Zeus Basileus at Lebadia in central Greece (*Inscriptiones Graecae* VII. 3073). This inscription is also extremely detailed, it is nearly again a treatise. It is dated in the late 3rd century BC and it is an instruction manual for craftsmen of that temple.

πλέονόρυτ[η], προσθήσο μεν κατ[ὰ τ]αὐτά. ἐπὶ Πυρρίδου ἄ[ρ]χοντο[ς, μηνὸς Παν- [ήμ]ου ἔκτειάπιόντος, ἠργώνησε Νίκων Νικοκλέους, Νικήρατος Σωσιπόλι[ο]ς, Σῆμ- [ο]ς Νικαγόρου Σύριοι τρισμυρίων τριακοσ[ί]ων. ἔγγυοι· Μένανδρος Πραξι[μέν]- 15 [ου]ς, Διόδοτος Φάνου, Παρμενίων Πολυξένου, Γέρυλλος Π[ύθ]ωνος, Σιμίου, Ἐγ.- ...κκος Ἄμνου, Προστάτης Γλαυκιάδου. [μ]άρτυρες· ὁ ἄ[ρχων] Πυρρίδης. βουλευ[τ(αί)]· [Ο]λυμπιόδωρος Ἐλικάνδρου, Αὐτοκράτης Μνήσιος, Ἀντίγονος Τιμο(κράτου)], Ἐπιθάλης Ἀρ[ι(στοδίκου)], [Ἀντί]γονος : Κριτο(βούλου) : Ἀντίπατρος : Δημητρί(ου). : ἀγορα[ν]όμοι : Φᾶ[νος Διοδότου] : Γλαῦκος Σκύλ(ακος) : [Ἐμμέ]νης : Ζη(νοθέμιδος) : ιδιωτῶν· Εὐδημος : Προστάτης : Θεόδωρος : Ἀπ[ολλό]δωρος : -]ίπολις 20 --- -- -- : Αὐτοκλῆς, Τελέσων, Παρμενίων, Ἀντίγονος, Π-- -- [...]

Lecture 7. Artistic personalities in the Roman world: Timomachos of Byzantium and the beginning of the Caesarian classicism

When we look at and think about Greek art, we usually think about masterpieces such as the Doryphoros (fig. 98)²²⁴ or the Knidian Aphrodite²²⁵, which are attributed to important Greek masters such as Polyklitos or Praxiteles.

On the contrary, when we think about Roman art, we do not think immediately about great artists. However, from the very beginning, Rome attracted important artists who contributed a lot to the styles, which prevailed in the Roman world in different periods.

Already during the monarchic period, to be specific in the period of the fifth king of Rome, Tarquinius Priscus, we know from Pliny 35. 157 that a very renowned Etruscan clay sculptor named Vulca from Veii was asked by this king to make a clay statue of Juppiter for the temple of the Capitoline Triad which will be then inaugurated in one of the first years of the Roman Republic, in the late 6th c. BC.²²⁶

²²⁴See K. Hallof, S. Kansteiner and B. Seidensticker, 'Polyklet', *DNO* 2 (2014) 455-514, particularly 477-489, workno. 9, *testimonia* nos. 1234-1246.

²²⁵See M. Soeldner, K. Hallof, R. Krumeich, B. Seidensticker, 'Praxiteles', *DNO* 3 (2014) 49-209, particularly 51-79, workno. 2, *testimonia* nos. 1855-1888.

²²⁶See C. Weber-Lehmann, 'Vulca', R. Vollkommer (ed.), *Kuenstlerlexikon der Antike*, Munich 2 (2004) 509-510. About the Capitoline temple at Rome, see Sommella Mura,

The appeal of Etruscan visual arts faded in Rome with the collapse of the Etruscan dynasty and so from early republican times the Romans began asking Greek masters to come to Rome to do their works.

So already in the year 493 BC, according to the Roman tradition handed down by Pliny 35. 154, two clay sculptors Damophilos and Gargasos came to Rome and created the clay sculptures which were on top of the temple of Ceres near the Circus Maximus and painted the walls of this temple.²²⁷ These sculptures were probably the akroteria and the frontal pediment. Then, of course, as Rome opened up to the Greek world, the coming of Greek masters to Rome became something normal and not exceptional. This phenomenon was made much easier with the sacks of Greek cities which were conquered by Romans.

The first episode is constituted by the conquest of the city of Syracuse in Sicily, which, according to Livy 25. 40. 2, was “*initium mirandi Graearum artium opera*” – the beginning of the habit of admiring the works of art of the Greeks.²²⁸

Marcellus, who conquered Syracuse, made a triumph and brought several works of art, which were before in

(note 127) 277-298.

²²⁷See S. Kansteiner and L. Lehmann, ‘Damophilos und Gorgasos’, *DNO* 1 (2014). About the aedes Caereris, see F. Coarelli, ‘Ceres, Liber, Liberaque Aedes, Aedes Cereris’, *LTUR* 1 (1993) 260-261.

²²⁸See C. G. Belloni, ‘Inde primum initium mirandi Graearum artium opera’, *Scritti di archeologia*, Milan (1996) 119-153.

Syracuse to Rome.²²⁹ Among these there was a famous bronze statue, the wounded Philoctetes by Pythagoras, a very renowned master of the 5th century BC²³⁰.

So the Romans began associating renowned works of art with renowned masters. This phenomenon of course reached its zenith with the conquest of Corinth by Lucius Mummius in 146 BC, when so many works of art from Corinth and other Greek centres were moved to Rome²³¹.

Then even the sack by Sulla of Athens caused a moving to Rome of many works, which had been exhibited in the Sullan triumph.²³²

Even the victory of Augustus near Actium caused the moving of many works of art especially from Athens, which sided with Marcus Antonius.²³³

So the Romans became used to appreciate works of art of great masters and also to understand that important statues and pictures are due to important masters.

However from the middle Hellenistic period, Greek masters began going to Rome where there were wealthy

²²⁹See A. Erskine, 'Hellenistic Parades and Roman Triumphs', A. Spalinger and J. Armstrong (eds.), *Rituals of Triumph*, Leiden (2013) 37-55.

²³⁰See K. Hallof, S. Kansteiner and L. Lehmann, 'Pythagoros', *DNO* 1 (2014) 576-598, particularly 577-578.

²³¹See J. Kendall, 'Scipio Aemilianus, Lucius Mummius and the Politics of Plundered Arts', *Etruscan Studies* 12 (2008-2009) 161-181.

²³²See I. Pape, *Griechische Kunstwerke*, Hamburg (1975) 21-22.

²³³See A. Celani, *Opere d'arte greche nella Romadi Augusto*, Naples (1998).

and powerful patrons who commissioned important works.

According to the tradition handed out by Vitruvius 3. 2. 5, one of the first Hellenistic masters who moved to Rome was Hermodorus²³⁴, an architect from Salamis (whether he was from Salamis near Athens or from Salamis of Cyprus is controversial), who in the 140s BC made in Rome the temple of Jupiter Stator (fig. 99)²³⁵ inside the *Porticus Metelli*²³⁶ which in Augustan times became the *Porticus Octaviae*,²³⁷ entitled to the famous sister of Augustus. Then Hermodorus, whilst he was in Rome, had students, who began working as architects with him and then established themselves in the Roman market of making temples. The most important of these students may have been Gaius Mucius²³⁸ (Vitruvius 3. 2. 5 and 7. *Praef.* 17), who made the temple of Honos and Virtus²³⁹.

The establishment of dynasties of Greek sculptors in Rome reached its zenith in the 1st century BC.

First of all, we have to consider the dynasty of the

²³⁴About Hermodorus, see P. Gros, 'Hermodoros', R. Vollkommer (ed.), *Kuenstlerlexikon derAntike*, Munich 1 (2001), 303-304.

²³⁵See A. Viscogliosi, 'Juppiter Stator, aedes ad Circum', *LTUR* 3 (1996) 157-159.

²³⁶See P. Ciancio Rossetto, 'Porticus Metelli', *Atlante tematico di topografia antica* 27 (2017) 7-24.

²³⁷See Eadem, 'Porticus Octaviae', *ibidem* 28 (2018) 25-52.

²³⁸L. Loschke, 'Mucius', Vollkommer (note 226) 94-95.

²³⁹D. Palombi, 'Honos et Virtus, aedes Mariana', *LTUR* 3 (1996) 33-35.

Cleomeni, marble sculptors who had this name.²⁴⁰ These marble sculptors were at least two: one “Cleomenes” and one “Cleomenes, the son of Cleomenes” who perhaps was his son.

The first Cleomenes probably is the one who signed the Medici Aphrodite (fig. 100), one of the most famous creations of the ancient world which is kept in the Uffizi museum in Florence²⁴¹. This Cleomenes reused late classical patterns because the Medici Aphrodite is basically a variation of the Aphrodite made by Lysippus²⁴². However he adapted classical Greek patterns to the new, typically neo-Attic love for frontal configurations (the goddess is quite bi-dimensional) which the Roman nobles liked very much. His son probably made in the early Augustan period the portrait of a Roman man which in the past had been wrongly identified with Germanicus but this attribution is now completely abandoned. He is probably Marcellus (fig. 101).²⁴³ However, again a classical scheme, that of the Hermes Ludovisi type²⁴⁴, is adopted. This is the style of Hermes Logios, a very famous iconography, which was adopted for *palestrae* and gymnasia. So statues of this

²⁴⁰About this family of sculptors, see K. Halloff and S. Kansteiner, 'Kleomenes', *DNO* 4 (292-294); S. Kansteiner, 'Kleomenes', *ibidem* 5, 139-142 and Idem, 'Kleomenes', *ibidem* 5, 471-473.

²⁴¹See Kansteiner, *ibidem* 139-140, no. 3733.

²⁴²See R. Cittadini, 'Figure femminili di Lisippo', *BdA* 100 (1997) 55-80.

²⁴³See Kansteiner (note 240) 5. 471, no. 4081.

²⁴⁴See V. Graziou, 'Una testadell'Hermes tipoLudovisi', *ACI* 44 (1992) 297-307.

type could be sold well.

Thus the dynasty of the Cleomeni was one of the most successful in late Hellenistic times in Rome and specialized in the adaptation of classical Greek styles with few changes, which determined new creations.

Another important personality in this period is Pasiteles.²⁴⁵

Pasiteles lived and flourished especially in the second and third quarters of the 1st century BC and made a catalogue of *nobilis opera* in five volumes (Varro in Pliny 36. 39). "*Nobilis opera*" means "renowned works". This catalogue probably was used by sculptors of copies from classical masterpieces in order to select the Classical Greek originals to be copied. So this book was a sort of handbook from which Roman clients could choose: "I want this type", then they go to a workshop which makes a copy of this type. These workshops had casts of the most renowned classical masterpieces, from which they could make copies. Casts of famous statues have been discovered in a workshop of sculptors at Baiae, in Campania.²⁴⁶

The best-established student of Pasiteles was Stephanos.²⁴⁷

Stephanos carved a famous athlete (fig. 102), signed by

²⁴⁵See E. La Rocca, 'Sulla bottega di Pasiteles e di Stephanos' I, L. Cicala (ed.), *Kithon Lydios*, Naples (2017) 875-895.

²⁴⁶See C. Landwehr, 'The Baiae Casts', R. Frederiksen (ed.), *Plaster Casts*, Berlin (2010) 35-46.

²⁴⁷See E. La Rocca, 'Sulla bottega di Pasiteles e di Stephanos' II, E. Mangani (ed.), *Gia to filo mas*, Rome (2016) 207-224.

him. The style is basically the Polyklitan one. But the body is slenderer, a feature which is typically Hellenistic. So the result is eclectic.²⁴⁸ In this period the eclectic philosophy flourished in the context of the Fifth Academy: the Academic philosopher Philo of Larissa taught in Athens and asserted that the best can be reached by choosing patterns from different sources.²⁴⁹ This proceeding is described in the treatise *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4. 6. 9 attributed to Cicero: the author writes that you can take the head of Polyklitos, the arms of Praxiteles, the chest of Myron and form an ideal statue with this collage. So a statue or a picture or a literary work becomes a collage of the best that you take from the different sources. This thought explains also the theoretical character of so many prescriptions of Vitruvius because very often the buildings suggested by Vitruvius never existed. These are eclectic theories based on the adoption of patterns from different buildings, put all together and you have a perfect temple or a perfect palaestra, a perfect bath and so on. However, of course, this perfect bath or this perfect basilica never existed.

However the greatest personality of the period of Julius Caesar is certainly Timomachus of Byzantium. The section of Pliny's encyclopedia (35.136) devoted to him is full of specifications:

“Timomachus of Byzantium, in the time of the Dictator

²⁴⁸See J. H. Kroll, ‘Another early classical Apollo from Athens?’, *Acta 13th International Bronze Congress*, Portsmouth (2000) 96.

²⁴⁹See C. Brittain, *Philo of Larissa*, New York (2001).

Cæsar, painted an Ajax and a Medea, which were placed by Cæsar in the Temple of Venus Genetrix²⁵⁰, having been purchased at the price of eighty talents; the value of an Attic talent being, according to M. Varro, equivalent to six thousand denarii²⁵¹. An Orestes, also by Timomachus, an Iphigenia in Tauris, and a Lecythion, a teacher of gymnastics²⁵², are equally praised; a Noble Family also; and Two Men clothed in the pallium, and about to enter into conversation, the one standing, the other in a sitting posture²⁵³. It is in his picture, however, of the Gorgon, that the art appears to have favoured him most highly».

The “*Medea*” became quite famous. It is described in ephrastic epigram as one of the landmark masterpieces²⁵⁴, which began a new classicism.

²⁵⁰Venus was regarded the ancestor of the dynasty of Julius Caesar and the temple of Venus Genetrix was in the Forum of Julius Caesar: see A. Delfino, *Forum Julium*, Oxford (2014).

²⁵¹The very high value of this picture reveals the high consideration of this painter in his own time: see R. Di Cesare, ‘Per una visione economica della pitturagrecia’, G. Marginesu (ed.), *Studi sull’economia delle technai*, Rome (2019) 75-91.

²⁵²This subject was appropriate to the setting of this picture in a gymnasium.

²⁵³The latest pictures listed by Pliny look to be the typical characters of the new comedy, whilst the previous ones - Ajax, Medea, Orestes and Iphigenia in Tauris – appear inspired by tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides.

²⁵⁴See S. Kansteiner and B. Seidensticker, ‘Timomachos’, *DNO* 4 (2014) 742-755, *testimonia* nos. 3537-3563, about

Timomachus painted pictures inspired by Classical Greek tragedies and comedies. This type of pictures has two features. First of all, it is, of course, classicistic because it implies the theorization that the sources of inspiration are in the Classical period, especially in tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides. And second, it is Atticistic, because Attic sources of inspiration are privileged. This observation is in keeping with the prevalence in this period of the Atticistic style also in rhetoric and oratory, versus the Asianic style, derived from Asia Minor, which prevailed one generation earlier and which is still, for example, liked by Vitruvius.

The Medea is thought to have been reproduced with wall paintings from Herculaneum and Pompeii (Naples, National Archaeological Museum, nos. 8976-7) (fig. 103)²⁵⁵: the room represented in these paintings is rectangular, open in front, the back wall is specified as well as the two sides of the room. This interpretation of the internal space as a box is typical of theatrical stages, thus probably it is theatrically inspired.

This period was characterized by Jerome Pollitt as sealed by a «theatrical mentality»²⁵⁶. In fact this theatrical mentality influences visual arts. In the above mentioned wall paintings you see Medea with a very sad but also angry expression. You can see her eyes looking very staring and sinister and the unaware children, who

the Medea 747-754, nos. 3544-3561.

²⁵⁵See M. Schmidt, 'Medeia', *LIMC* 6 (1992) 386-398, particularly 388-389, nos. 10-11.

²⁵⁶See J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, Cambridge (1986) 4-7.

are still playing and look innocent. This contrast conveys a sense of *pathos* which is typical of the tragedy. Do not forget that in this period there were attempts to resurrect the Greek theatre (*locus classicus* is Horace, *Ars poetica* 54-284).

Another great personality who flourished in the period of Augustus is handed down by Pliny 35. 116. The manuscript tradition does not give a certain reading of his name: someone reads Studius as the name of this painter and others read Ludius²⁵⁷. However his specialization is absolutely clear from the words of Pliny. He created the painting of landscapes. Of course, paintings of landscapes existed even before but they were usually landscapes as backgrounds of human figures. There were no landscapes, which had the dignity of being represented alone, without any action or any human figure which justified their representation. On the contrary, Ludius or Studius introduced exactly the representation of landscapes “per se” and not justified by other subjects. This notice of Pliny is connected by a long critical tradition with the trend of representations of landscapes, which pervades the Augustan art from around 20 BC. In particular, the villa of Livia *Ad Gallinas albas* is endowed with the most impressive of these painted representations of landscapes. You can see in the wall painting from this villa, birds on trees in a green landscape (fig. 104). This may have been a new genre, which was created by a very powerful personality²⁵⁸.

²⁵⁷See R. Ling, ‘Studius’, *Vollkommer* (note 226) 2. 427.

²⁵⁸See S. Settis, *La villa di Livia*, Milan (2008).

The Julio-Claudian period is also not without important artists. First of all, there were great architects who created the standard type of the imperial palace.

For the *Domus Aurea* we know the names of Severus and Celer²⁵⁹. Thus the *Domus Aurea* is due to an important couple of architects who created a new style of architecture: no longer a monolithic palace as, for example, the Macedonian palaces were, rectangular with two large double peristyles, which included gardens.

On the contrary, the notion of palace which is suggested by Severus and Celer is much different. It consists of a series of pavilions and buildings, which are scattered in the green with also a lake (where the Colosseum is now there was a lake): basically it is a natural landscape in which several buildings are placed, opened to the green. This accomplishes another recommendation of ancient rhetors: the integration of *ars* and *natura*²⁶⁰. *Natura* and *ars* are often opposed (for example, Varro, *De re rustica* 1. 57) but they can also compose a synthesis. This notion of imperial palace scattered in many places in a very large green area will be imitated with many later examples. For example, the imperial palace in Constantinople was endowed with a similar disposition: a very large park with pavilions, hunting parks, small palaces – one for winter, one for summer, according to the disposition to the winds -, churches, etc. The Sarāyi of the sultan - for example Topkapi - is of a similar type: a building here, a building there and so on. This new,

²⁵⁹See L. F. Ball, *The Domus Aurea*, Cambridge (2003).

²⁶⁰See M. B. Galan, 'Ars et natura', *Tarraco Biennial*, Tarragona (2015) 119-127.

scattered type of palace is the invention of this couple of architects.

Nero is also very important for other reasons. He also commissioned important works to a bronze sculptor and a painter.

The important bronze sculptor is named Zenodoros.²⁶¹ When he began working for Nero, he was already famous because he made a statue of Mercurius for the sanctuary of this god in the region of Arverni in Gallia: this was a colossal bronze sculpture. Then Nero commissioned from him a colossal statue of Helios, placed in front of the entrance of the *Domus Aurea*.

The *Domus Aurea* is notoriously painted with a lot of representations, which usually are classified as typical of the fourth style, according to the catalogue of Roman styles of paintings given by Mau²⁶². These paintings reveal the dissolution of tectonic principles and the free dispositions of architectural and figurative patterns without any principle which exists in the reality: for example fantastic patterns one above the other occur in these paintings. In other words, it is a fantastic art, based on the *phantasia*, creative imagination, and not on the *mimesis*, the imitation of the reality. This type of decoration existed already in late Hellenistic times and it is condemned by Vitruvius 7. 5. 1-7, because it is against the law which restricts the representation to what is likely (see Horace, *Ars Poetica* 1-8).

However these representations of fantastic patterns are

²⁶¹See E. Thomas, 'Zenodoros', *DNO* 5 (2014) 558-564.

²⁶²See A. Mau, *Geschichte der decorative Wandmalerei in Pompeji*, Berlin (1882).

adopted in the *Domus Aurea*. According to most scholars these wall paintings are due to a painter who was beloved by Nero, painted the *Domus Aurea* and probably was named Famulus (Pliny 35. 120: the reading Famulus should be preferred to Fabullus). However, Pliny attributes pictures, not wall paintings to Famulus. So it is difficult to attribute the wall paintings and the paintings in the ceilings of the *Domus Aurea* to Famulus.²⁶³ Moreover, Pliny admires Famulus and it is extremely unlikely that such a classicist art critic as Pliny would have liked the fourth style of painting, which is very well known also from its large adoption in Pompeii (fig. 105)²⁶⁴.

In my opinion, Famulus made pictures which did not survive and which may have been of a completely different style, much more inspired, probably, by the pictures of the age of Alexander, because the latter was the model of Nero²⁶⁵.

Another personality which shaped and changed dramatically the visual culture of the Roman world is Apollodorus of Damascus.²⁶⁶ He was a military engineer who made the bridge on the Danube by which Trajan invaded Dacia. He also wrote a *Πολιορκητικά* treatise, which is based on war machines, on how to make a siege

²⁶³See Meyboom (note 15) 229-244.

²⁶⁴See G. Tabacchini, 'Architettura e architetture nella pittura romana', Y. Dubois (ed.), *Pictores per provincias 2*, Basle (2018) 423-431.

²⁶⁵See M. A. Levi, 'L'idea monarchica fra Alessandro e Nerone', *Neronia 1977*, Clermont-Ferrand (1982) 31-39.

²⁶⁶See G. Calcani (ed.), *Apollodorus of Damascus*, Rome (2003).

and other tactics and strategies in war. He is also very famous for having created the model of the *Forum Trajani* (fig. 106), which was going to be imitated in other cities. For example, the excavations of the metro in Thessaloniki led to the discovery of two opposed exhedrae as in the *Forum Trajani* and thus probably betray the adoption of patterns of the Trajan square of Rome in this Macedonian city.

He created a model based on a central peristyle: the proper *Forum Traiani*²⁶⁷. In the centre there was the *Equus Traiani*, the equestrian statue of Trajan in gilded bronze. Thus Trajan was in the very centre of this space. Apollodorus promoted a large adoption of curvilinear patterns: the entrance side of the *Forum Traiani* is curved. Probably Apollodorus was influenced by the Syrian architecture, where curved lines are often found. Moreover there were in this forum two exedras, which also emphasized this curvilinear interpretation of the square. The Basilica Ulpia was also endowed with two sides curved. And then from the Basilica Ulpia you could go to the space which displayed two libraries: the Greek and the Latin library.²⁶⁸

In the centre, between the Greek library and the Latin library, there is the Trajan's column: it confirms the curvilinear style and aesthetics conveyed by Apollodorus of Damascus. It is a *ColumnaCentenaria*,

²⁶⁷See E. Bianchi and R. Meneghini, 'Il cantiere costruttivo del foro di Traiano', *RM* 109 (2002) 395-417.

²⁶⁸See J. Packer, 'The west library of the forum of Trajan', R. T. Scott (ed.), *Eius virtutis studies*, Washington (1993) 420-444.

because it is 100 feet high and is externally covered by a ribbon of reliefs which narrates the Dacian wars all around from bottom to top. It is a very original creation. Before, there was not a similar monument.²⁶⁹ Thus in the cultural environment of Apollodorus of Damascus a new type of building was conceived, which associated architecture and sculpture and which was going to be imitated by other emperors. I mention here the Aurelian column which was also set up in Rome by Commodus, the column of Theodosius in Constantinople which unfortunately didn't survive, destroyed in the early XVIth century, and the column of Arcadius also in Constantinople, which also did not survive and was demolished in the 18th century. The problem of how it was possible to see the upper part of Trajan's column was in issue for a very long time but modern studies of the two libraries led to the conclusion that there were upper stages on the two libraries at the sides of the column. Thus probably there were also terraces, so you could go very close to the upper part of the column and see it. Beyond the area with the column and the two libraries, there was another curvilinear space also framed with columns and beyond that the successor of Trajan, Hadrian, made the temple to the *DivusTraianus* dedicated to the cult of Trajan and Plotina²⁷⁰. This model of forum with these curvilinear patterns was

²⁶⁹See C. Conti, *Saggi sulla colonna Traiana*, Rome (2016).

²⁷⁰See P. Baldassarri, 'Templum Divi Traiani et Divae Plotinae', *Rendiconti Pontificia Accademia RomanadiArcheologia* 89 (2016-2017) 599-648.

going to set a dramatic change in the planning of new cities and from now onwards the new cities will have all a lot of semicircular spaces and exedras, as we can see, for example, in Syrian cities as well as in new buildings created in Baalbek, in Palmyra, etc. The forum of Trajan began a new taste, which was destined to an enduring success.

Apollodorus of Damascus is also very renowned for Trajan's Markets which are just above one exedra of Trajan's Forum. They are above the eastern exedra of the peristyle of Trajan's Forum and so they form a semicircular complex which is disposed in different terraces which are divided by via Biberatica (the name is medieval, but it may go back to ancient times), which is the road where you drink because many buildings which opened to this road were *tabernae*²⁷¹. The emphasis given to this function implies also, of course, a hedonistic mentality.

We do not know whether the friezes of Trajan's column also hark back to the design and project of Apollodorus of Damascus. It is at least possible because the Bridge on the Danube, which was made by Apollodorus, receives great emphasis in the frieze of the column. Moreover the column has one feature, which has been thought to respond to the mentality of an artist from a province, not from Rome or Italy. This pattern is the clear sympathy which is shown in this frieze toward the Dacians. The defeated are represented whilst escaping without any hope to defend themselves, whilst the

²⁷¹See M. Bianchini, 'Quirinale. Mercati traianei', *Bollettino di Archeologia* 16 (1992) 145-163.

Roman knights chase them full of weapons and well armed. The great dignity of the king of the Dacians Decebalus, who is represented in the act of killing himself, is especially noteworthy because it betrays a sympathy towards the vanquished which is typical of the Greek and Roman *humanitas*.

Another feature of the column is the *horror vacui*: there are not empty spaces in the relief. This is also in keeping with the same trend in the Roman sarcophagi which exactly in this period begin to become a very fashionable genre.

The expressions of soldiers and other represented figures usually show a sense of serenity which harks back to the classical period, so that a spiritual classicism has been detected in the Trajan's column²⁷².

Trajan's column is full of representations of architectures and this also lends support to the fact that whoever made the project was also an architect. This, of course, would have been the case if this artist was Apollodorus.

On the frieze of this column, battles are represented, with visual *schemata* which hark back to Pergamon representations of battles but with trees and hills in the background and without any sense of pathos in the expressions of the figures, which are typical of the Pergamene original works (I refer especially of course to the Gigantomachy of the Altar of Pergamon and to the large and small Pergamene offerings). So the Pergamene

²⁷²See especially R. Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rom*, Munich (1970) 238-249. About Trajan's column, see F. Coarelli, *La colonna traiana*, Rome (1999).

schemata of battle have been filtered through a classicistic mentality, which shows the distance of the narrator from the narrated matter. The details of the architectures are also often specified: they show types of buildings for cold weather with diagonal roofs and not peripteral. The maker of the drawings of the Trajan's column's frieze represented several architectures. So it is possible to realize that the Dacian architecture is clearly represented in realistic terms. Thus it is fair to conclude that the Trajan's column represents the starting point of a new style, characterized by the filling of the space with many figures, by the love for war episodes and for detailed representations of landscapes and by the distance of the artist from the episode narrated.

The latest of the great personalities, which characterized the Roman visual culture, is no doubt Zenon who was the architect of the theatre of Aspendos (fig. 107) in Pamphylia²⁷³. According to Vitruvius 5. 6. 1-7. 2, Greek and Latin theatres had different layouts. The Greek theatre was a composition of scattered elements, which were not united. The Latin theatre of the period of Vitruvius is more unified but it is Zenon who conceived and brought this tendency of the elements of the theatre to form a unified body to the extreme consequence. Thus he brought this trend to completion, as it is possible to argue from the surviving three floors of the stage and from the porticus *in summa cavea* which also survives.

This concept of the theatre which was created probably around AD 170, was going soon to be adopted by

²⁷³See E. Raming, 'Zenon (V)', *Vollkommer* (note 226) 2. 532-533.

Herodes Atticus with his Odeum made in Athens (fig. 108), south of the Acropolis, which is also a unified building and where also the stage survives on a very high level even if it is smaller because the area was already full of monuments²⁷⁴. So the notion of the theatre as one solid body was imitated very soon after the setting of this very original interpretation given by Zeno.

After the Antonine period, Roman art will become rather anonymous.

Questions

In your opinion, which could be the sources of inspiration for such a form like Trajan's column, bearing the ribbon of narrative reliefs on its shaft?

This is complex question. Of course at the beginning there are triumphal columns and arcs, which were erected for triumphing generals in Rome²⁷⁵. Usually these columns were not carved, but the arcs sometimes were endowed with historical reliefs. Moreover we know that often painted representations of battles, which were displayed during the triumphs, were attached to supports and showed what really happened during the wars.²⁷⁶ I believe that this may have been a source of inspiration. However we shouldn't always try to find a source of inspiration. Very often we have to accept originality and in my opinion the Trajan's period is one

²⁷⁴See M. Korres, *The Odeion Roof of Herodes Atticus, Athens* (2015).

²⁷⁵See P. Gros, *L'architecture romaine 1*, Paris (1996).

²⁷⁶See I. Bragantini, 'Roman Painting', Pollitt, (note 22) 302-369, particularly 305-306.

of the most original periods in the ancient world. So I believe that it is possible that it was just invented *ex nihilo* (from nothing).

Regarding the boom of curvilinear patterns in architecture from the Trajanic period onwards, these features had been used a lot in Roman villas and baths already in late Republican times: thus their growing predilection is a slow process.

The Trajan's column was imitated throughout the Middle Ages because Trajan was thought to have been saved from hell (see Jacopus da Varagine, *Legenda Aurea* 46). According to this tradition, Pope Gregory the Great managed that Trajan was saved from perpetual pain, because of the kindness shown by Trajan toward a poor widow (Dio Cassius 68. 10 and D. Alighieri, *Purgatory* 10. 73-94).

You were talking about the following concept: the perfect creation can be composed from the most perfect parts taken from different sources. When this idea emerged for the first time in the ancient art criticism?

The principle to take the best from many sources had been enunciated already by Zeuxis with the picture of Helen, inspired by the most beautiful girls of Croton: each one was endowed with an excellent part and these features, collected together, were given to the painted Helen.²⁷⁷

The theory that you can make an excellent work of art as a collage of patterns taken from different works appears

²⁷⁷See F. De Angelis, 'L'ElenadiZeusi a Capo Lacinio', *Rendiconti Lincei* 16 (2005) 151-200.

for the first time in the treatise, which in the past was wrongly attributed to Cicero (now it is called pseudo-Cicero), named *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4. 6. 9 (around 90 – 80 BC). This author recommends not to follow the eclectics, because he says that Lysippus taught Chares (the master of Colossus of Rhodes) not to make statues as they recommend: taking a head from the style of Myron, a chest of that of Polykleitos and arms from the art of Praxiteles, but to make a coherent and stylistically homogeneous statue. However this idea has its origins in philosophical circles: it harks back to the teaching in the Fifth Academy in Athens around 90 BC and in particular to that of the philosophers Antiochus of Ascalon and Philo of Larissa.

Some of the most talented Roman young men, such as Varro e Cicero, learned philosophy from them at Athens: then they both brought this eclectic mentality to Rome.

Cicero became an eclectic philosopher because he said that no philosophical system is good in all. So you have to take something from Platonism, something from Aristotelism, something from Stoicism etc. Only the Epicureanism was set aside, because for Romans an austere life had to be recommended, thus life had to be devoted to virtue, not to pleasure. However, these Roman wealthy men were just saying that, not following it in their real lives: Varro for example had villas in Baiae, in Casinum, at Reate etc.

This philosophical mentality peaked in late republican times.

Lecture 8. When ancient art became anonymous again

In the previous presentation I have not spoken of many other important personalities, such as, for example, Apollonios, son of Nestor, who made the Torso of Belvedere (fig. 109), which is a very well-known statue in the Vatican museums.²⁷⁸ So there are many personalities, which are revealed especially by the signatures. We have a record number of signatures of sculptures especially from the 1st century BC until the AD 2nd century. However, it is difficult to say a date, but from around the time of the Empire of Septimius Severus there is a clear drop of the signatures of the sculptors. Most statues are not signed by their own carvers. This is quite remarkable. Moreover, only few writers speak of sculptors of the Roman period. We mentioned before Vitruvius, Pliny etc. From now onwards there are very few mentions even in literary records of personalities. This drop in mentioning masters is also referred to the masters of Classical Greece. In the period of Severan times we have still few mentions of masters of Classical Greece, for example, in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus, in the “Life of Apollonius of Tyana” of Philostratus, in the “Statues” of Callistratus. However, the most important ekphrastic work of this period is the “Eikones” or “Imagines” of Philostratus, which is the description of the pictures

²⁷⁸About the Belvedere Torso and Apollonios of Nestor, see H. Meyer, ‘Doch Prometheus? Zum Typus des Torso von Belvedere und seiner antiken Wirkungsgeschichte’, *Boreas* 30/31 (2007-2008) 25-39.

which Philostratus claims to have been in a pinacothèque, or art gallery near Naples. They are all anonymous. This sets a changing attitude towards works of art. Philostratus never says who made the pictures he describes. This trend is also followed by his follower, a younger exponent of the same family whose name is Philostratus Junior who also wrote another set of “Eikones” and who also never mentions the masters, the painters of these creations. So this art even in literary descriptions becomes anonymous. Why does it become anonymous? Several explanations are possible. These explanations should not be seen one against the other, they should be considered not as “aut....aut” but «et... et», they are all equally valid, they all contribute to the decline of the artist.

The first explanation is philosophical. In a presentation of few days ago we have seen a passage from the “Life of Apollonius of Tyana” of Philostratus in which he claims that the works of art, especially the representations of deities should not respond to the mimesis, to the imitation but to the “phantasia”, to our imagination. And he claims that this “phantasia” harks back, is inspired from above, it has a divine inspiration, to use a standard Latin expression that occurred in this period –*instinctu divinitatis*²⁷⁹ – from a sort of inspiration suggested by the deity. So basically the real artist is God. You will say: “They are pagans,

²⁷⁹See M. Mayer, 'Instinctu divinitatis mentis magnitudine', M. Cassia (ed.), *Pignora amicitiae: scritti di storia antica e storiografica offerti a Mario Mazza*, Rome (2012) 2. 183-208.

they believe in many gods”. Yes and not. They are pagans, but they are pagans in a Platonic way. Whoever of you has read the dialogue “Timaeus” of Plato knows that the gods are emanations of the unified figure of the demiurge god, of the Creator of everything. So, basically the gods are emanations of a unified divine entity that Manilius in the Tiberian period defined (*Astronomica* 2. 82) “*ratio quæcuncta gubernat*”²⁸⁰– a sort of universal and transcendent reason, *ratio*, that governs everything, which is in control of everything. So, even the late paganism is basically monotheistic. This transcendent concept of art was going to be expressed in the most clear possible way by Plotinus in his “Enneads”.²⁸¹ So, art becomes sacred. God is the real and the only perfect artist. This implies also a devaluation of the real artist. He becomes no more than just a poor artisan who is making imperfect copies of the real perfect shapes which are transcendent. So this translator of the absolute beauty into a very relative beauty who moreover, of course, makes mistakes, because he lives in a world which is despised in the late paganism and in the late Platonism as a place of corruption and mistakes, clearly enjoys a diminished status and he is no longer worthy to be remembered.

But there are other reasons which explain the disappearance of the artist.

²⁸⁰See F. –F. Lühr, *Ratio und Fatum: Dichtung und Lehre bei Manilius*, Frankfurt M. (1969).

²⁸¹See O. Kuisma, *Art or experience: a study on Plotinus’ aesthetics*, Helsinki (2003).

The second reason which, however, is related to the first reason is that the number of liberal arts is reduced. The liberal arts as defined by Varro were nine:²⁸² not only the four arts of the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music) and not only the three arts of *trivium* (grammar, dialectic and rhetoric) but medicine and architecture were also included. The inclusion of architecture among the liberal arts is very important. The liberal arts were going to become from nine to seven. This process is clearly appreciated in the work of the early AD fifth century which is named “*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*” by Martianus Capella.²⁸³ He focuses the wedding of Philology and Mercurius. In late antiquity Hermes or Mercurius becomes very important as it is argued by the Hermetic literary production.²⁸⁴ So according to the late antique mentality Mercurius or Hermes in Greek, becomes the ultimate, remote source of any industriosity in the human world and even of philology. That fact explains why Philology and Mercurius marry. Philology has nine maids: the liberal arts. Each one teaches to Mercurius, to the groom her own art. But after the first seven and when it is the time of Medicine and Architecture, Mercurius is very tired, so the last two are sent away. So through the veil

²⁸²See A. Duso, *M. Terenti Varronis de lingua Latina*, Hildesheim (2017) 15-16.

²⁸³See M. Bovey, *Disciplinae cyclicae: l'organisation du savoir dans l'oeuvre de Martianus Capella*, Trieste (2003).

²⁸⁴See W. Scott, *Hermetica*, Oxford (1924-1936).

of this narration, the liberal arts (*artesliberales*) from nine become seven, and they will be seven throughout the whole Middle Age. It is redundant to explain this change with the diminution of the status of the architect who is no longer the intellectual who makes the project but the master builder. This change in the status of the architect is coherent with the fact that even great creations and architectural complexes of late antiquity often do not have names of architects recorded. Do you know, for example, the architect of the arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum (fig. 110)?²⁸⁵ No. Do we know the architect of the Palace of Septimius Severus on the Palatine?²⁸⁶ No. However we know the names of the architects of the *Domus Aurea*, Severus and Celer,²⁸⁷ we know the name of the architect of the Domus Augustana, made by Domitian on the Palatine, Rabirius,²⁸⁸ but the architect of the Severan imperial palace on the same hill is not known. Do we know the architect of the Septizodium, one of the marvels of Severan Rome, which monumentalized the facade of Mt. Palatine toward the Circus Maximus (fig. 111)? No, it is not recorded.²⁸⁹ I might mention several other impressive

²⁸⁵See A. V. Villanueva, 'L'arco di trionfo di Settimio Severo a Roma', *RM* 120 (2014) 267-311.

²⁸⁶See S. S. Lusnia, *Creating Severan Rome: the architecture and self-image of L. Septimius Severus (A.D. 193 - 211)*, Brussels (2014).

²⁸⁷See L. F. Ball, *The Domus Aurea and the Roman architectural revolution*, Cambridge (2003).

²⁸⁸See N. Sojc (ed.), *Domus Augustana*, Leiden (2012).

²⁸⁹See E. V. Thomas, 'Metaphor and identity in Severan architecture: the Septizodium at Rome between "reality and

monuments of the period. The personality of the architect is no longer remembered because architecture was losing its status of liberal art (*arsliberalis*).

However there are other reasons for this important intellectual change.

The third reason (as I said these reasons are “et, et, et”, not “aut, aut, aut”, each of them only partly explains this phenomenon) is that in this period the Roman Empire is conceived in a different way from the previous period. In the previous period it was a sort of a constitutional monarchy. Before Vespasian it was even not a monarchy because there was just a *princeps* who was not an emperor, officially at least. From the *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani*, of course, it became even formally an Empire.²⁹⁰ However it was a constitutional monarchy. There were the consuls, there was the Senate, so most emperors tried to have a balance of power to combine all these institutions, each one having its own slice of the power. Especially the Antonine emperors tried not to abuse their power.

But from the Severans onward the Empire becomes an absolute monarchy, the Senate can decide very little and it is even forced to accept emperors it dislikes as, for example, Maximinus Thrax who was even unable to write in correct Latin because he was very rude: of

"fantasy" ‘, S. Swainetalii (eds.), *Severan culture*, Cambridge (2007) 327-367.

²⁹⁰See L. Capogrossi Colognesi and E. Tassi Scandone, *La Lex de Imperio Vespasiani e la Roma dei Flavii*, Rome (2009).

course, the senators could not stand him.²⁹¹

So, the absolute Monarch becomes the only authority to which the building is attributed. The architect, or in the case of sculptures, the sculptor, or in the case of paintings, the painter, is no longer allowed to enjoy a slice of the glory the emperor because the emperor is a God: as you know, emperors were deified.²⁹² He becomes also a transcendent figure. And so everything must be attributed to him. He is an absolute entity that nobody can criticize, who can do everything as the Platonic Demiurgos. So, nobody, of course, can take pride of a building that he promotes. It should be attributed only to him.²⁹³ He is also, you know, *semper vincens*, so he wins always, he is *semper triumphans*, he always triumphs.²⁹⁴ This is not true: in fact especially in late antiquity he loses a lot of battles. These expressions are just propaganda. So in this context with the passage from the *principatus* to the *dominatus*, to use the standard expression by which the late empire is defined,²⁹⁵ the personality of the artist loses much of his

²⁹¹See A. Lippold, 'Der Kaiser Maximinus Thrax und der römische Senat', *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium* (1966-1967) 73-89.

²⁹²See A. Chalupa, 'How Did Roman Emperors Become Gods? Various Concepts of Imperial Apotheosis', *Anodos* 6/7 (2007-2008) 201-207.

²⁹³M. Kulikowski, *The triumph of empire*, Cambridge (2016).

²⁹⁴See L. Borhy, 'Constantius toto orbe victor triumfator semper Augustus', *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 40 (2000) 35-44.

²⁹⁵See G. Vitucci, 'Fra principato e dominato', *Scritti*

previous status. But there is another factor that contributes to this notion. This factor takes place especially during the period of the so-called Military Anarchy: the fifty years which go from the death of Alexander Severus assassinated in 235 to the rise of Diocletian to the throne in 284. During these 50 years we have an impressive series of emperors, each one lasting usually for a short period.²⁹⁶ The only one who lasted for 15 years is Gallien, the so-called protagonist of the Gallienic Renaissance, who was fascinated by the philosophy of Plotin.²⁹⁷ In this period, an impressive decline in learning and in the education of children takes place, so the cultural transmission from one generation to the other shrinks, especially after the invasion of Herulians and Goths in the 260s who destroyed also the Artemision of Ephesus, Athens and many other places.²⁹⁸ In the eastern part of the empire, the *ephebia* was the basic institution which provided children with gymnastic and military training as well as with a cultural education: in this period the institution of the *ephebia* declines and the gymnasia often are no longer repaired or rebuilt.²⁹⁹ In this context of dramatic decline of the

minori, Tibur (2005) 228-233.

²⁹⁶See J. B. Tsirkin, 'Once again about "Military Anarchy"', *Gerion* 28 (2010) 1. 141-156.

²⁹⁷See C. Grandvallet, 'Le prince et le philosophe: Gallien et la pensée de Plotin', *Cahiers Numismatiques*, 39,152 (2002) 23-45.

²⁹⁸See the essays collected by K. –P. Johne cum aliis (eds.), *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, Berlin (2008).

²⁹⁹See C. Laes and V. Vuolanto (eds.), *Children and everyday life in the Roman and Late Antique world*,

cultural heritage, of culture, even the memory that there was the great past characterized by great artists shrinks and fades: it is hardly casual that during these 50 years we have fewer mentions of Phidias, of Praxiteles and others renowned artists of classical Greece than in previous periods.³⁰⁰ So in this period the memory of the golden age of the great artists fades and often disappears from the collective knowledge: it remains confined only to few schools. This is another situation which favours anonymity in art.

Finally the last reason is the spiritualistic climate of the people. Late pagans sometimes travelled, but much less than before, to see the Zeus of Olympia (fig. 112), the Athena Parthenos (fig. 113) and other masterpieces of the classical past. But they were much less interested to the style and artistic skills of the artist than to the value of the statue as epiphany of a deity. In other words, they were pilgrims rather than scholars or tourists. This rise of the sense of sacredness of images implies also the diminution of the interest for the styles of single artists.³⁰¹ It is hardly casual that few signatures of artists in the AD 3rd century survive.

In the AD 4th century we have a partially different situation. We have teaching schools that are restored because the situation in the Roman Empire is much

London (2017).

³⁰⁰See A. Corso, Praxiteles. Fontiletterarietardoantiche, Rome (1990).

³⁰¹See the essays collected by I. Elsner and I Rutherford (eds.), *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman & early Christian antiquity: seeing the Gods*, Oxford (2005).

better that in the period of the Military Anarchy.³⁰² We have renowned writers who often write again about great masters of the past. Renowned scholars as Himerius, Libanius, Julian the Emperor, Ausonius etc. do write about classical artists as a part of their cultural heritage. However, few clarifications are needed. First of all, these mentions of classical artists are confined mostly to the eastern and Greek language literature. They disappear nearly completely from the Latin world. In other words, in this period the Latin West is slowly disengaging from the Greek classical heritage.

There is another element which contributes to the disappearing of the notion that works art are due to great artists: the decline of the copyist production. The carving, delivery and setting up of Roman copies of classical Greek original statues were very important until the late Antonine time, although already in the Antonine period copies often were much less faithful to their originals than in previous times. They become rare in the Severan times. Only some classes of copies are still produced and exhibited, for example, in the *gymnasia*, portraits of Plato, Aristotle and other important intellectuals are still erected, because they integrate the taught *curricula*. But the most fortunate copyist types of the previous period, for example, the Knidian Aphrodite, the Resting Satyr (fig. 114) etc. are copied rarely in this period. After that age, copying becomes sporadic. We have few copies in places which are very much traditionalist, for example, in Aphrodisias

³⁰²See E. J. Watts, *City and school in late antique Athens and Alexandria*, Berkeley (2008).

we still have new copies around AD 300. However these are exceptions, they are not the rule. When there is an impressive change of the cultural DNA of a society, of course there are places where traditions are still kept. This always happens. However during these decades in most centres the copyist production goes out of fashion.³⁰³

Of course, the Christians also have their own copies, but they are new copies of the best-established icons:³⁰⁴ for example, the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria*, Mary who addresses people to the right path, is copied continuously, for many centuries.³⁰⁵ There is another icon of Virgin *Glykophilousa* who is sweetly kissing Jesus Christ, which was also copied quite often.³⁰⁶ So, copying never disappears but the copies of ancient works by ancient masters do disappear. Moreover, these icons were anonymous; we do not know who made the original. So, this detail also fits the fact that visual arts

³⁰³See A. Anguissola, 'Remembering with Greek Masterpieces: Observations on Memory and Roman Copies', K. Galinsky (ed.), *Memoria romana: memory in Rome and Rome in memory*, Ann Arbor (2014) 117-134.

³⁰⁴See B. V. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, sine loco* (2006).

³⁰⁵See J. Folda, *Byzantine art and Italian panel painting: the Virgin and Child Hodegetria and the art of chrysography*, New York (2015).

³⁰⁶See O. E. Etingof, 'Antičnye obrazcy v vizantijskom iskusstve konca XI-XII veka: obrazy Bogomateri Glikofilusy i "Oplakivanie" 'Soobščeniya Gosudarstvennogo Muzeja Izobrazitel'nych Iskusstvimeni A. S. Puškina 9 (1991) 63-82.

become anonymous.

But there is another feature which must be mentioned. Even these few writers in the Eastern Roman Empire (as I said, not in the West) who in the AD 4th century still mention ancient masters do not mention often Roman masters with the exception of Timomachus of Bizantium, a painter of the age of Julius Caesar, who is sometimes still evoked in late epigrams of the Greek Anthology but these exceptions are due to the fact probably that his pictures of Ajax and Medea had been brought to Constantinople.³⁰⁷

There is also another reason which leads to the anonymisation of visual arts. Late antiquity is characterized by a widespread pessimism. There are intellectuals who see that the world in front of them is collapsing. They feel a clear sensation of decadence. Libanius writes at the end of the funeral oration upon Julian the Emperor (R. 623) that Julian contained the pressing of the degenerate age.³⁰⁸ So the past was endowed with great personalities which deserve your admiration and nostalgia. However it is no longer possible that great masters become established in the present circumstances. Of course, there are other people who have different and more optimistic opinions. They believe that contemporary works of art are better than the past ones.³⁰⁹ However these people do not name the

³⁰⁷See F. Brandstätter, *Timomachos, Werke und Zeitalter*, Leipzig (1889).

³⁰⁸See J. Janik, 'Libanius and the Death of Julian', *Classica Cracoviensia* 21(2018) 83-94.

³⁰⁹See especially Ausonius, *Mosella* 298-348.

artists who make the admired contemporary monuments: they are anonymous as most of the new art of this time for the above-suggested reasons: philosophical, religious and cultural, the pervasiveness of imperial patronage. So, for example, when Ausonius praises the villas which are found along the Moselle river, and he opposes them to the enterprise of Ictinos (v. 309), the Parthenon of course, and to other old beauties (vv. 298-348), he mentions the artists of these early monuments of the classical period but does not mention the artists of the new age. The works of this new age are regarded quite good in his opinion, even better than these of the past but they are anonymous or, if they are not anonymous, they respond to the name of the owner who commissioned them, not certainly to the name of the architect or artist who made them.³¹⁰

Thus the outlined process is one of the greatest phenomena that characterise late antiquity. Few artists are still mentioned as authors of late ancient monuments but they are exceptions and confined to the early Byzantine world, not to the Latin world. For example, the Church of St Sophy is the work of Anthemius of Tralles, of Isidorus of Miletus and for the dome of Ignatius.³¹¹ This is an exception due to the fact that Saint Sophy is considered the marvel of the new times.

However, even in the descriptions of St Sophy given by

³¹⁰See A. Göttlicher, *Ausonius' Mosella und das antike Seewesen*, Gutenberg (2013).

³¹¹See V. Hoffmann (ed.), *Der geometrische Entwurf der Hagia Sophia in Istanbul: Bilder einer Ausstellung*, Bern (2005).

Paulus Silentiarius, for example, Anthemius is not mentioned as the responsible for the beauty of the new Church. This beauty is due to Justinian.³¹² So the absolute ruler is the real responsible of the new marvels. Moreover it is hardly casual that of the seven new marvels of Constantinople which were opposed to the seven old marvels, the responsible architects are known only for the Church of St Sophy.³¹³

Sometimes some people have suggested that Julianus Argentarius, who founded the Church of St. Vital at Ravenna was the architect of the church, but he was rather the banker who gave the money for that enterprise, as the name *Argentarius*= banker would suggest.³¹⁴ Thus the suggestion that he was the architect, which harks back to Bovini³¹⁵, is no longer tenable. In Padua the Basilica Saint Justina which was one of the marvels of the city is attributed only to the political patron, Opilio who was *virclarissimus* from 501 to 507.³¹⁶

In this period there is an important ekphrastic literature of the new marvels of the new times (buildings described by the Johannes, Procopius and Choricus of

³¹²See M. L. Fobelli, *Un tempio per Giustiniano: Santa Sofia di Costantinopoli e la Descrizione di Paolo Silenziario*, Rome (2005).

³¹³See G. Becatti, 'Costantinopoli', *EAA* 2 (1959) http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/costantinopoli_%28Enciclopedia-dell%27-Arte-Antica%29/:

³¹⁴See P. Angiolini Martinelli, *La Basilica di San Vitale a Ravenna*, Modena (1997).

³¹⁵See G. Bovini, *San Vitale di Ravenna*, Milan (1955).

³¹⁶See A. Tosello, P. L. Zovatto and G. Fiocco, *La basilica di Santa Giustina*, Castelfranco Veneto (1970).

Gaza, by Procopius of Caesarea in his *De aedificiis* and by Paul Silentiarius) but the artists who made these monuments are not remembered. For example, Apollinaris Sidonius who writes in the 60s of the 5th c., when he goes to visit his friend Consentius at Narbo Majus, describes the baths and the dining room of the mansion of his friend and claims that they were much more beautiful than the works of Phidias, Polycleitus, Praxiteles, Scopas and Mentor (Apollinaris Sidonius, *Ad Consentium*, vv. 500-506). Of course, he does not attribute this mansion to a specific architect.

The main describer of works of art in the West in the AD 6th c. is Venantius Fortunatus, a poet who lived in the Merovingian Court, in Paris. He describes often oratoria, palaces, churches, but he never provides names of architects and of artists of paintings, mosaics, reliefs, etc.

So, in this period the artist does not enjoy a great acclaim, but he will be resurrected with the cultural change which will take place between the 9th and the 10th century: when Aretas of Caesarea and Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus will introduce a complex of inferiority towards ancient Greece. In the early 9th c., in the West we have again an acclaimed architect, Odo of Metz, who was responsible for the Palatine Chapel of Aachen and for the Church of Germigny-des-Prés. Around 1000, Wiligelmus from Modena is the first post-ancient sculptor recorded.

So, slowly the artist becomes established again but the art of Late Antiquity and of the High Middle Ages is an anonymous art because it is sacred art: thus no human can project his shadow on God who is the ultimate

source of beauty, of absolute beauty, nor can the artist take something of the glory of the emperor who is the secular source of anything good in the visual realm.

Questions:

1. Can you say some words about the idea of divine inspiration in connection with Greek artists, for example, with Phidias or other artists who created sacred art? Of course, there had to be an idea of this special inspiration from the sacred source. And what is the difference in comparison with these anonymous artists?

Yes, of course, in the Olympian oration of *DioChrysostomus*, Phidias is thought to have been inspired directly by Homer in order to shape the Zeus of Olympia.³¹⁷ However, especially in Plotinus the ultimate source of beauty is transcendent, so basically the artist is very much diminished. So in the age of spirituality the artist has no longer the status of someone directly inspired by the hyper-uranian perfection. At best he is just an executive. If he is a really inspired person, he can try to translate the absolute beauty of God into the worked material but, of course, the result will be always imperfect. But even when he tries to translate the *desiderata* of the emperor to a specific form, in fact he is very much an executive of the emperor. The space for his own creativity diminishes as we go toward late antiquity. In the context of Christian representations, the

³¹⁷See G. A. Cellini, 'La fortuna dello Zeus di Fidia. Considerazioni intorno al Λογος ολυμπικος di Dione Crisostomo', *Miscellanea greca e romana* 19 (1995) 101-132.

need to follow closely, for example, a sacred story of the Bible diminishes very much the field of creativity of the artist who can just repeat the standard images. That, of course, is going to be exasperated in the Byzantine world.

2. One question. For example, you mentioned Aphrodisias as a place where the copyist traditions remains strong. Is it because of the presence of strong local workshops or what's the reason behind this strong tradition? What is the background?

Basically this phenomenon has three backgrounds: 1. Aphrodisias remained pagan until very late. 2. it had one of the best-established workshop traditions in the Roman Empire. The school of Aphrodisias was known everywhere. Thus these craftsmen were exceptionally proud and they kept signing their works for a long period. The third reason is that in the city of Aphrodite they were particularly devoted to the love goddess, which is why in their capitals they represented the Knidian Aphrodite even around AD 300. Only in the early 7th c., the city changed its name and became Stauropolis.³¹⁸

3. You said that Famulus did not make frescoes in Domus Aurea, these paintings in the fourth style. But I've heard that Famulus covered each wall in this palace. Isn't it correct?

³¹⁸See the whole scientific production of R. R. R. Smith on sculptures of Aphrodisias. Here I cite only his latest book, where a full list of his many previous publications on this issue can be found: *The marble reliefs from the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion*, Darmstadt (2013).

The dominant opinion claims that Famulus made the wall paintings of the *Domus Aurea*, or at least directed them, because many hands have been individuated. Certainly there were many people directed by a master. This is a possibility.³¹⁹ Personally, I am very sceptical because Pliny 35. 119, who is the only ancient testimony about Famulus speaks of Famulus in the context of the painting of pictures not of wall paintings. So, in my opinion, it is extremely unlikely that he painted walls or something similar. Moreover Pliny follows the aesthetics of mimesis, of the naturalistic *veritas*. And I don't see how he could have praised wall paintings of the 4th style, which are completely in contradiction with his aesthetic ideals. But I have to say that mine is a minority's point of view. Most people agree with you, especially after a very authoritative endorsement of this attribution by Mariette De Vos, a Dutch woman who studied in depth the paintings of the Domus Area.³²⁰

4. What about the role of persons who commissioned the works of art, not only the emperors but also people of the lower status, for example, aristocracy?

Yes, very often these people are regarded to be responsible for single works of art. Galla Placidia, for example, in Ravenna promoted so many enterprises although she was not the emperor, but still she was, of course, from the imperial family.³²¹ At

³¹⁹See Meyboom (note 15) 229-244.

³²⁰See M. de Vos-Raaijmakers, 'Nerone, Seneca, Fabullo', *Gli orti farnesiani sul Palatino*, Rome (1990) 167-186.

³²¹See G. Ravegnani, *Galla Placidia*, Bologna (2017).

Padua there was the *VirClarissimus Opilio* who was responsible for this imposing basilica of Saint Justina.³²² In many places there were aristocrats who promoted the monuments of the *civitas Christiana* or sometimes late pagans promoted their own monuments. And this is true. However even in these cases, the artist is not recorded.

5. When did it appear, the phenomenon of aristocratic commissioners? During the period of Septimius Severus?

No, the habit of aristocrats to promote monuments always existed, already in republican times. There were dedications by aristocrats. So, for example, in Augustan times Agrippa was certainly not the emperor (he was the princeps' son-in-law) and he promoted so many monuments.³²³ An aristocrat, Gaius Sosius, promoted the temple of Apollo Sosianus.³²⁴ So, this phenomenon always existed. I don't see this as something new. The new thing is that the personality of the artist is no longer recorded. It does not enjoy a great status. This is true. This is the novelty. But the *nobilitas* always promoted monuments. Think about Herodes Atticus, how many monuments he made everywhere.³²⁵

³²²See G. Cuscito, 'Opilione e le origini del cultomartiriale a Padova', *Memoriam sanctorum venerantes: miscellanea in onore di monsignor Victor Saxer*, Vatican City (1992) 163-181.

³²³See E. LaRocca, 'Agrippa's Pantheon', T. A. Marder (ed.), *The Pantheon*, New York (2015) 49-78.

³²⁴See A. Viscogliosi, *Il tempio di Apollo in circo*, Rome (1996).

³²⁵See M. Korres, (note 274).

6. I didn't catch the idea about Merovingians and the personality of an architect. Could you repeat it, please?

I spoke about Merovingians when I spoke of the descriptions of many architectures, and also mosaics, paintings etc. by Venantius Fortunatus who was the poet of the Merovingian Court. He was born in Northern Italy but he was there because poets need someone who feeds them. And so he is the most important ekphrastic poet of the Latin West of the 6th c., roughly the equivalent in the Latin west of what Paulus Silentiarius, John, Procopius and Choricius of Gaza are for descriptions of monuments in the east. So he describes monuments, very often praising them very much, antique palaces, churches, oratoria, etc. there is a lot of sacred architecture in his poems. But he never mentions the artist. And so he is one of the most eloquent examples of the fact that even the best and the most admired works of this period are not thought to lavish acclaim on an artist, but just on the patron, or, if it is sacred architecture, to be just emanations of the beauty of God, to be just in a way miracles themselves.³²⁶ Very often, you know, the icons are also thought to have been made by Saint Luke who was a painter,³²⁷ according to a

³²⁶See G. Becht-Jördens, 'Venantius Fortunatus und die Renovierung der Kirche St. Gereon zu Köln durch Bischof Carentinus', *KJ* 43 (2010) 57-69 with previous bibliography.

³²⁷See C. M. Boeckl, 'The legend of St. Luke the painter', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 54 (2005) 7-37.

tradition, or to have appeared just miraculously, we do not know how.

Thus, even these legends, of course, had the result to cancel the personality of the real person who painted them because everything evaporated in the sort of a transcendent explanation.

Lecture 9. An assessment of Pliny on ancient visual arts

During the latest lectures I referred several times to information handed out by Pliny. I hope it clearly conveyed the notion that Pliny is a very important source of information for everybody who wants to know the visual arts both in Greece and in Rome³²⁸.

Now it is time to write about Pliny himself and to try to understand why his information is so important. Pliny was born in the north of Italy, precisely in the city of Comum, north of Milan, now near the border between Italy and Switzerland. He came from an equestrian family, that is a family of knights. These knights were not the upper class of Roman society which was the senatorial one, but were of the second most worthy social class in Rome. Pliny was a member of the knights. He was not a member of *nobilitas*³²⁹.

The settlers of Comum have been established there much earlier, at a time of Julius Caesar, and they were composed both of local families with Celtic background as well as of 500 Greek aristocrats, who had been resettled to Comum³³⁰.

³²⁸About Pliny's importance for our knowledge of ancient visual arts, see A. Darab, 'Natura, Ars, Historia. Anecdotic History of Art in Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*', *Hermes. Zeitschrift für klassische Philologie*, 142 (2014) 206-224 and 279-297.

³²⁹About Pliny, his biographica itinerary and his social and cultural background, see R. K. Gibson and R. Morello (eds.), *Pliny the Elder: themes and contexts*. Leiden (2011).

³³⁰About ancient Comum, see G. Sena Chiesa, 'Il

However, we do not know whether Pliny the Elder had a local, Celtic background or if he descended from these 500 Greek families.

He seems to know Greek language and literature quite well, as we argue from his *Naturalis historia* and in particular from his bibliography made mostly of Greek sources, given in book 1. He reveals a deeply felt admiration for everything which is Greek. So, it is not impossible that either from the side of his mother or of his father he descended from one of the Greek families which were resettled by Julius Caesar in Comum³³¹.

We know nearly exactly the date of his birth: it is either AD 23 or 24.

He was born in a wealthy family: He owned properties and villas near Comum and in Etruria, in central Italy, near today Città di Castello³³².

territorio di Comum', Eadem (ed.), *Gli asparagi di Cesare: studi sulla Cisalpina Romana*, Florence (2014) 31-97.

³³¹About the huge presence of Greek heritage in Pliny, see S. Carey, *Pliny's catalogue of culture: art and empire in the Natural history*, Oxford (2003).

³³²See J. Miziołek *et alii*, *The Villa Laurentina of Pliny the Younger*, Rome (2015); *Idem*, 'Reconstructing Antiquity in the 1770s : The Decoration of Pliny the Younger's Villa Maritima in Count Stanislaus K. Potocki's Vision', T. Bartsch (ed.), *Das Originale der Kopie*, Berlin (2010) 223-245; *Idem*, "'In the pure taste of Trajan's century". Preliminary observations on Pliny the Younger's Laurentina', *Światowit* N.S. 6/47 (2006) 25-42; J. J. Rossiter, 'A shady business : building for the

We have his initials on the tile of his villa near Citta' di Castello which has been archeologically excavated³³³.

As the son of a wealthy family, he received a good education at Rome: we argue from his books 34, 35 and especially 36 that he knew quite well the huge collections of Greek works of art which were in Rome at that time.

He had a sister, Plinia Marcella who married a member of the influential family of the *Caecilii*, *Lucius Caecilius Cilo*: she had a son who is Pliny the Younger and speaks a lot of his uncle³³⁴.

He made the so-called *cursus honorum*, that is the career of the most prominent members of the Roman society which implied several military appointments³³⁵. Thus he

seasons at Pliny's villas', *Mouseion* 47 (2003) 355-362; Pierre de la Ruffinière Du Prey, *The villas of Pliny from antiquity to posterity*, Chicago (1994) and R. Förtsch, *Beiträge zur Erschließung hellenistischer und kaiserzeitlicher Skulptur und Architektur*, Mainz am Rhein (1993).

³³³See P. Braconi and José Uroz Sáez (eds.), *L aVilla di Plinio il Giovane a San Giustino: Primi Risultati di una Ricerca in Corso*, Ponte San Giovanni (1999) and P. Braconi, 'Les Premiers Propriétaires de la Villa de PlineleJeune in Tuscis', *Histoire et Sociétés Rurales*, 19.1 (2003) 37-50.

³³⁴About Pliny the Younger and his family, see R. Winsbury, *Pliny the Younger: A Life in Roman Letters*, London (2014).

³³⁵About the *cursus honorum* of Pliny, see R. Syme, 'Pliny the Procurator', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Harvard (1969) 201-236.

fought against the Chauci in the region which is now Holland, extending the Roman empire until the Rhine and the Meuse rivers. Having fought in war with distinction, he was promoted military tribune in *Germania Inferior*. Thanks to his fight against the Chatti, he got the position of *praefectus alae*, 'commander of a wing'³³⁶. He also wrote a treatise on how to throw missiles on horse (*De jaculationeequestri*), but this treatise has not survived³³⁷.

In the period when Nero persecuted important intellectuals, such as Seneca and Petronius, he lived in Rome without covering public offices but worked as lawyer and especially studied. In this period, he wrote a treatise which is called *Studiosus*, 'the Student', a treatise about rhetoric: probably it was a handbook for students to learn all the basic notions in order to become excellent rhetors. His treatise 'About the ambiguity in language' also fits his rhetorical interests. He wrote also three works on historical matters: a biography of Pomponius Secundus, who had been his general and conquered Batavia, the region between the Rhine and the Meuse rivers; a history of the German wars and finally a general history which arrived at least until AD 69. None of these works survived but are listed by Pliny the Younger, *Letters* 3. 5.

After the period of Nero, he became well introduced to emperor Vespasian and his career moved up very

³³⁶See M. Beagon, *The elder Pliny on the human animal: Natural History, Book 7*, Oxford (2005) 3.

³³⁷This information is handed down by Pliny the Younger, *Letters* 3. 5.

quickly: he became *procurator* in *Gallia Narbonensis*, perhaps in *Africa*, in *Hispania Tarraconensis* and probably in *Gallia Belgica*³³⁸. Finally he became prefect of the fleet at Misenum, along the coast of Latium towards Naples, and died in this capacity in AD 79.

Pliny the Younger wrote that his uncle wanted to rescue his friends Rectina and Pomponianus from the famous eruption of Mt. Vesuvius of that year. So, he went to Stabiae, which was also much affected by this eruption. But he was trapped by the pumice, and he died in this way³³⁹.

Since the husband of his sister died still young, he lived the last years of his life with his sister and adopted her son, Pliny the Younger, as his own son. He never married and spent a lot of time studying.

During the last years of his life, in the 70s of the AD I century, he created a great encyclopedia which is entitled *Naturalis Historia* in 37 volumes. He published it either in AD 77 or 78.

Pliny the Younger reports how he was working (*Letters* 3. 5). A slave used to read books to him, then he dictated a summary of the content he just heard to another slave. The first book of this encyclopedia provides summaries and bibliographies of all the other 36 books. The bibliography for each book is divided between Latin authors and writers in foreign languages, in most cases in Greek.

³³⁸See F. Münzer, *Kleine Schriften*, Stuttgart (2012) 441-449 and Syme (note335).

³³⁹Pliny the Younger, *Letters* 6. 16.

The second book concerns astronomy. Then he treats geography and ethnography (books 3 to 6). This section has been heavily used by the archeologists of specific territories and summarizes the happenings and uses of populations. Thus he gives a very good survey of the geography of the Roman empire, mentioning also rivers and other features of these territories.

Then he passes to the anthropology. He writes about the human body and the different populations (book 7). Then he treats the classes of animals, deriving a lot of information from the Aristotelean tradition (books 8 to 11). Then he turns to the vegetals as well as their various uses for agriculture and medicine (books 12 to 27). He also treats pharmacology, magics and forms of life in aquatic context (books 28 to 32). Finally he writes about the minerals. In the 33rd book he writes about precious minerals, such as gold, silver. In the 34th book he writes especially about the bronze and bronze sculpture but also about iron. In the 35th book he writes about earths with different colors, on painting and on everything which is made of clay, included clay sculpture and vases. The 36th book concerns stones and marble and their uses for monuments, sculptures and mosaics.

The 37th book eventually closes this huge encyclopedia, one of the largest works made in antiquity which survived, and concerns gems. This is extremely important for the scholars of gems because Pliny provides a survey of the different types of gems and diamonds used in the Roman world.

As you can understand such a book is a true quarry of information for us. Also, the circumstance that Pliny provides bibliography is very important.

Much of the 34th book is devoted to bronze sculpture and to everything made with bronze. In this context, sculpture, being the most noble branch of the uses of bronze, receives a very huge attention. In the bibliography given in the first book about bronze sculpture he cites his most important sources, which are especially among others Xenocrates and other critics who lived in the first, second and third quarters of the 3rd c. BC, Antigonus of Carystus, another critic who wrote his books in the late 3rd century BC, Duris of Samos who lived in the early 3rd century BC. We have tiny fragments from these works. You should understand that having a summary given by Pliny is very important³⁴⁰.

Pliny gives the chronology of the most important bronze sculptors of the Classical Greece. His chronologies are sometime controversial. For example he believes that the art of bronze sculpture became renowned when Phidias was at his peak, that is in the years 448-445 BC (Pliny 34. 49): these years coincide with the beginning of Pericles program for which Phidias was 'episkopos', a sort of general manager³⁴¹. Bronze sculpture according to him became even more advanced with Polykleitos whose peak date is set by Pliny in the years 420-417 BC.

³⁴⁰About the books concerning visual arts, see Isager (note 72).

³⁴¹About Phidias, see U. Mandel, 'Vielgestaltigund in Bewegung: Der Kosmos des Phidias', V. Brinkmann (ed.), *Zurück zur Klassik: ein neuer Blick auf das alte Griechenland*, Frankfurt a. M. (2013) 202-213. About the building policy of Pericles, see Shear (note 152).

This peak is thought by most scholars to coincide with chryselephantine Hera made by Polykleitos for Argos³⁴². Moreover he believed that bronze sculpture advanced even more beyond Polycleitus with Myron whose peak is given in 420-417. This chronology of Myron is usually rejected by most scholars: it is the same given by him for Polykleitos and is regarded too late³⁴³. I am probably the only scholar who accepts this late peak and believes that probably it is a date of a very late masterpiece of Myron, the Cow of Myron³⁴⁴. He made a renowned cow which was celebrated by a lot of poets of epigrams and was moved to Rome and then to Constantinople. It is probably the only statue which had been set up in Athens, then in Rome and then in Constantinople: that reveals how much this statue has been admired.

After Myron, in the sequence handed down by Pliny, the art of bronze sculpture was thought to have progressed even more with Pythagoras. Most scholars believe that the low date of Pythagoras in 420-417 given by Pliny is wrong because Pythagoras is handed down to have made statues of victors of Olympic games and these victors had been Olympionics much earlier: from 488 to 448

³⁴²About Polycleitus, see T. Lorenz, *Polyklet überlegungen*, Vienna (2009).

³⁴³About the prevailing opinion on Myron, see L. Giuliani, 'Myron und die Kunst des Diskuswerfens', *RM* 122 (2016) 13-43.

³⁴⁴See A. Corso, 'La vacca di Mirone', *NumAntCl* 23 (1994) 49-91.

BC³⁴⁵. I am the only scholar who defends the low peak given by Pliny. I believe that these people forget that the dates of the victories of Olympionics are not necessarily the same dates of the setting up of related statues: sometimes the latter were set up much later. For example, Polydamas of Skotoussa was reported to have been Olympionic in 408 BC but his statue had been made by Lysippos, at least half a century later³⁴⁶. In my opinion the late peak of Pythagoras may coincide with the date of his last work: probably his statue of Philoctetes, made for the city of Syracuse³⁴⁷.

Then Pliny writes of the most important bronze sculptors of late classical times: he fixes the dates of both Euphranor and Praxiteles in 364-361 BC (Pliny 34. 50). Modern scholars accept usually these dates and believe that the peak of Praxiteles coincides with the Cnidian Aphrodite³⁴⁸. The peak of Euphranor may coincide with his painting of the battle of Mantinea which took place in 362³⁴⁹.

³⁴⁵See S. Pafumi, 'Pitagora di Reggio, scultore panellenico', M. Gras (ed.), *Nel cuore del Mediterraneo antico : Reggio, Messina e le colonie calcidesi dell'area dello Stretto*, CoriglianoCalabro (2000) 275-289.

³⁴⁶See G. F. LaTorre, 'Pulidamantedi Skotoussa (Paus. VI, 5, 1-9) : vita e imprese di un atleta eroizzato', C. Masseria (ed.), *Dialogando: studi in onore di Mario Torelli*, Pisa (2017) 207-218.

³⁴⁷About these issues see Pafumi (note 345) and A. Linfert, 'Pythagoras und Lysipp, Xenokrates und Duris', *RdA* 2 (1978) 23-28.

³⁴⁸See Corso (note 54).

³⁴⁹About the controversial date of this painting, see N.

Then Pliny reaches what is in his opinion the real peak of bronze sculpture, which would coincide with Lysippus (Pliny 34. 61-65)³⁵⁰. Lysippus in his opinion has brought bronze sculpture to perfection, by giving a new canon of proportions, with a small head and with a slender body. He reported that Lysippos criticized earlier sculptors, because of the square proportions of their statues: in other words the latter had not conveyed a good notion of beauty. Exceptionally, he cites his source for Lysippus: Duris of Samos³⁵¹.

Pliny follows a sort of biological interpretation of visual arts, he believes that visual arts are born, grow up, have a peak and then decline. As a human life. Scholars in the field asked where this idea comes from. In 1932 a very clever German scholar, Bernhard Schweitzer wrote a book on Xenocrates from Athens in which he gave very good evidence that it comes from Xenocrates, a member of Sicyonian school who wrote two books about bronze sculpture and painting³⁵². Other scholars who studied this topic such as Salvatore Settis³⁵³ and Jeremy

Humble, 'Re-Dating a lost Painting: Euphranor's Battle of Mantinea', *Historia. Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 57 (2008) 347-366.

³⁵⁰About Lysippus see S. Kansteiner, 'Lysipps Statuen des Herakles', *AA* (2020) 1-18.

³⁵¹See N. Koch, *Paradeigma: die antike Kunstschriftstellerei als Grundlage der frühneuzeitlichen Kunsttheorie*, Wiesbaden (2013).

³⁵²See Schweitzer (note 51).

³⁵³See S. Settis, 'La trattatistica delle arti figurative', G. Cambiano (ed.) *Lo spazio letterario della Grecia antica*

Tanner³⁵⁴ accepted that this scheme goes back to Xenocrates and suggested that it had been probably revised by Antigonus of Carystus³⁵⁵.

Thus according to this scheme each visual art has peak and then it declines, which is why Pliny writes very cursorily about sculptors after Lysippos, such as the two sons of Praxiteles, Timarchus and Cephisodotus the Younger who peaked in the years 296-293³⁵⁶ and asserts that in 296-293 BC this art stopped to exist (Pliny 34. 52)³⁵⁷. Bronze sculpture of the early and middle Hellenistic period may have been regarded too realistic and for this reason it may have been thought not to be admitted into the realm of this art. Then Pliny writes that the art of bronze sculpture revived again in 156-153 BC, but he specifies that it attained worse results than in the classical period³⁵⁸. So, he conveys the theory that bronze sculpture was greater in the classical period.

He also speaks of bronze sculpture of his own age. For example, he praises the achievement of Zenodoros who made the famous colossus of Nero as god Helios, the Sun (34. 45-47). He writes that even if he had been a great sculptor, the art of bronze sculpture declined so

2, Rome (1993) 469-498.

³⁵⁴See Tanner (note 11).

³⁵⁵About Antigonus, see Dorandi (note 45).

³⁵⁶About the sons of Praxiteles, see A. Corso, 'Retrieving the Style of Cephisodotus the Younger', *RdA* 37 (2013) 67-80.

³⁵⁷See G. Hafner, 'Cessavit deinde ars ', *RdA* 14 (1990) 29-34.

³⁵⁸See Coarelli (note 43).

much that he could not reach the peak which had been reached in much earlier times, because he believes that the arts have their own biologic cyclus, when they declined even the most talented sculptor cannot reverse this decline. This decline goes above his head. So, he is forced to do works which are not so great. This biological interpretation characterizes the bronze sculpture and fits well a pessimistic notion of visual arts because Pliny thinks that visual arts are either dead or dying (Pliny 34. 47). Toward the end of the book Pliny writes cursorily of sculptures with iron (Pliny 34. 140-141).

The 35th book of the *Naturalis historia* is devoted to the clays which provide colors and thus to painting.

The only genre of painting that he considers being worthy to be treated is that of pictures, because he regards wall painting an inferior genre: the painting of real masterpieces was that on canvas (in Italian language we call it 'pittura di cavalletto'). He is very classicistic and nostalgic of the painting of the classical period. He regrets that the use only of four colors, the so-called 'tetrachromatism' had been abandoned. In his opinion the highly valuable painting was made just with the following four colors: white, yellow, red and black or dark blue (35. 50).

Also, for the painting he follows the same biological track. This art was born, it grew up, it peaked, it went down and it died. It was born basically with Polygnotus (35. 58-59)³⁵⁹. Then this art was thought to have moved

³⁵⁹See C. Roscino, *Polignoto di Taso*, Rome (2010).

up with Zeuxis and Parrhasius (35. 61-72)³⁶⁰.

Pliny provides also the peaks of the most renowned painters. These peaks have been often regarded wrong and too low by modern scholars. The prevailing opinion suggests that he wrongly confused the date of death with the date of peak³⁶¹. However, I gave a different interpretation in my Italian edition of Pliny's books 34, 35 and 36³⁶²: that behind these late peaks there is a notion of life as a continuous research: thus the moment of peak coincides with that of death.

According to Pliny, after Zeuxis and Parrhasius the art progresses even more with some exceptional late classical painters: first of all with Euphranor (35. 128), who was not only an important bronze sculptor, but also a great painter³⁶³.

In late classical times, two schools are thought by Pliny to have come to a head: the Sicyonian school established

³⁶⁰About Zeuxis, see R. F. Sutton, 'The Invention of the Female Nude: Zeuxis, Vase-Painting, and the Kneeling Bather', J. H. Oakley (ed.) *Athenian potters and painters* 2, Oxford (2009) 270-279. About Parrhasios, see A. Rouveret, 'Parrhasios', C. Lévy (ed.) *Ars et ratio: sciences, art et métiers dans la philosophie hellénistique et romaine*, Bruxelles (2003) 184-193.

³⁶¹See P. Moreno, *Pittura greca: da Polignoto ad Apelle*, Milan (1987).

³⁶²See A. Corso, R. Mugellesi and G. Rosati, *Gaio Plinio Secondo Storia natural V: Mineralogia e storiadell'Arte*, libri 33-37, Turin (1988).

³⁶³See A. Latini, 'L'attività di Eufranore', *Annuario Atene*, 79 (2001) 83-101.

by Pamphilus, a painter from Amphipolis (35. 75-77), and the Theban-Attic one, established by Aristides, another important painter (35. 98-100)³⁶⁴. Pliny's preference goes to the Sicyonian school, because he depends on an author, probably Xenocrates, who had been a student of this school.

However he writes also about masters of the Attic school. The 'hero' of the Attic school in the 4th century is Nicias (35. 131-133)³⁶⁵.

He writes also about Nicomachus (35. 108-110)³⁶⁶ and Philoxenus (35. 110)³⁶⁷: both painters settled in the courts of kings of Macedon who paid artists much better than the debt strapped and hugely indebted Greek poleis. However his heroes are from the Sicyonian school. The painter who represents the peak of the art of painting is Apelles (35. 79-97)³⁶⁸. More generally, Pliny praises very much the painting of the age of Alexander. Apelles

³⁶⁴See A. Corso, 'The Education of Artists in Ancient Greece'. *Hyperboreus*18 (2012) 21-53.

³⁶⁵See C. Blume-Jung, 'Panainos, Nikias und Ophelion', K. B. Zimmer (ed.), *Von der Reproduktion zur Rekonstruktion*, Rahden (2016) 91-98 and O. Gengler, 'Le peintre Nikias chez Pausanias et IG II² 3055', *ZPE* 130 (2000) 143-146.

³⁶⁶See E. Thomas, 'Nikomachos in Vergina?', *AA* (1989) 219-226.

³⁶⁷See H. Fuhrmann, *Philoxenos von Eretria: archäologische Untersuchungen über zwei Alexandermosaiken*, Göttingen (1931) and G. Bejor, *Da Zeusi a Filosseno*, Rome (2012).

³⁶⁸About Apelles the bibliography is of course huge. Here I cite only I. Scheibler, 'Bildzeugnisse zum Werk des Apelles?', *AA* (2019) 2. 1-29.

who had been educated in the School of Sicyon before moving to the royal court of Macedon, to Pella and Mieza, where he began making portraits of Alexandre (as Lysippos) is the concern of an exceptionally long section of book 35: his achievements, an impressive number of pictures and anecdotes are duly listed and reported by Pliny. He asserts that the reason why Apelles had been such an exceptional painter relies in his *charis*, the grace: that is the circumstance that he was able to convey images of outstanding grace that cannot be imitated.

After him there are still worthy painters. Antiphilos for example who worked for King Ptolemy First (35. 114 and 138)³⁶⁹ and many others. However, the art of painting after its peak with Apelles is thought to have declined and now to be dead (35. 2). There are even worthy painters in age of Pliny, as Famulus who painted Domus Aurea (35. 120)³⁷⁰. However even recent good painters cannot reverse this trend because it is based on a biological law of nature, which cannot be reversed by humans despite their own talents.

Pliny after the survey on painting writes also about sculpture with clay, beginning with the production of the archaic period (35. 151-160). The author ends the 35th book with a consideration of the different types of earths as well as with specifications of their uses.

³⁶⁹About Antiphilus, see M. Donderer, 'Dionysos und Ptolemaios Soter als Meleager. Zwei Gemälde des Antiphilos', W. Will (ed.), *Zu Alexander dem Großen*, Amsterdam (1988) 781-799.

³⁷⁰About Famulus see Meyboom (note 15) 229-244.

The 36th books concerns stones and marbles. Marbles are regarded the most noble stones and thus receive special emphasis. Pliny begins his treatise with marbles (36. 2-53). Of course, he writes a lot about the use of marble for sculpture and architecture. For marble sculpture he does not follow the biological schema which we have seen in bronze sculpture and in painting, perhaps because he believes that marble sculptures are already inside in the block of marble: you just remove the superfluous materials (36. 14)³⁷¹. So, the marble sculptor discovers statues and does not create them. This activity is entirely independent from the biological proceeding of the art. He asserts that marble sculpture was begun by Dipœnus and Scyllis sons of Dedalus from Gortys (36. 9-10): they moved from Crete to the Peloponnese and made several works there. The Chian school of sculptors – especially Archermus, Bupalus and Athenis - is also regarded prominent for the archaic age (36. 11-13)³⁷².

Of course, he speaks a lot of classical sculpture, especially of the school of Phidias, of Alcamenes and of Agoracritus (36. 15-19), these great marble sculptors³⁷³.

³⁷¹About this issue, see A. Corso, 'Praxiteles and the Parian Marble', D. U. Schilardi (ed.), *Paria Lithos*, Paroikia (2010) 227-236.

³⁷²About the sculptors of Chios, see C. Gallavotti, 'Ipponatte e gli scultori di Chio', *Studi bizantini e neogreci* 14 (1984) 135-142.

³⁷³About Alcamenes, see I. Arce, 'A Replica of the Hermes Propylaios by Alcamenes Found at Qasr al-

However his hero in marble sculpture is Praxiteles (36. 20-24). He regards the Cnidian Aphrodite the peak of marble sculpture: he asserts that Praxiteles went beyond human power in making marble sculpture. He specifies that Praxiteles made in the same time a naked statue – the Cnidian Aphrodite - and a draped Aphrodite. The citizens of Cos chose the draped Aphrodite - *severum id ac pudicum arbitantes* - 'thinking that it was a prudish, moral choice'. On the contrary the Cnidians took the naked one – *immensa differentia famae* – he writes, with a difference of fame which is just huge. He details that Nicomedes, probably the First king of Bithynia with this name, offered to buy the Cnidian Aphrodite, by settling the huge debt of the Cnidians. However the Cnidians refused. Pliny observes that the Cnidians *omnia perpeti maluere, nec inmerito; illo enim signo Praxiteles nobilitavit Cnidum*, 'They, however, preferred to suffer the worst that could befall, and they showed their wisdom, for by this statue Praxiteles made Knidos illustrious'.

He also reports the famous episode of *agalmatophilia*, of love of a young man with the statue³⁷⁴.

Then he informs about other marble masterpieces of Praxiteles: the Eros of Parion was also an object of

Hallābāt', *Annual of the Department of Antiquities* 53 (2009) 265-273, and about Agoracritus, see G. Despinis, *Συμβολή στη μελέτη του έργου του Αγορακρίτου*, Athens (1971).

³⁷⁴ About all these issues concerning the Cnidia, see Corso (note 54).

*agalmatophilia*³⁷⁵.

He also lists the most important works of Cephisodotus the Younger, the elder son of Praxiteles (36. 24)³⁷⁶ and of Scopas (36. 25-28)³⁷⁷.

Then he enumerates the masterpieces of marble sculptors which at the time were kept in Roman collections (36. 32-44). It is obvious after a seminal work of the Italian scholar Adriano La Regina³⁷⁸ that these catalogues of statues in Roman collections depended at least partly on the official state catalogue: it provided entries with numbers, titles of statues, short presentations and also indications of authors.

Then Pliny treats buildings made of marble (36. 44-100) and introduces the notion of Rome as the eighth marvel of the world (36. 101-125), marvel which is much greater than any other marvel.

He provides information not only about Roman architecture, he also writes about some great architectural masterpieces in Greece. He is especially precise about two buildings: the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, for which he gives such a detailed description which is used even now to reconstruct the upper part of the Mausoleum which is lost (36. 30-

³⁷⁵About the Eros of Parion, see A. Corso, *The Art of Praxiteles iv*, Rome (2013) 65-75.

³⁷⁶About Cephisodotus the Younger, see note 356.

³⁷⁷About Scopas, see D. Katsonopoulou and A. Stewart (eds.) *Skopas*, Paroikia (2013).

³⁷⁸A. La Regina, 'Tabulae signorum urbis Romae', R. Di Mino (ed.), *Rotunda Domitiani* Rome (1991) 3-8.

31)³⁷⁹, and the Artemision of Ephesus (36. 95-97)³⁸⁰: even for this temple he gives details of its length, height and of its parts.

Pliny in this book writes also of another important art, which is also made with stones: the mosaic (36. 184-189). He provides the terminology of different types of mosaics. The mosaic does not follow the biological scheme which we saw in bronze sculpture and painting but it is thought to have flourished particularly in the age of Sulla. Pliny mentions as a great marvel a mosaic in the Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste (36. 189) which may be identified with the Nile mosaic (fig. 115)³⁸¹.

Pliny writes also of 'minor' uses of marbles and other types of stones.

He writes also about labyrinths (36. 84-93). The labyrinths in Egypt, at Knossos, on Lemnos and especially that made by Porsenna in Clusium are evoked by the author: the latter building is described in detail³⁸².

The 37th book is also important because it gives a lot of anecdotes about the use of many types of gems.

As you realize, Pliny conveys a mass of information which is extremely useful.

³⁷⁹See K. Jeppesen *et alii*, *The Maussolleion at Halikarnassos*, 7 vols., Aarhus (1981-2004).

³⁸⁰See W. Seipel (ed.), *Das Artemision von Ephesos*, Vienna (2008).

³⁸¹See P. G. P. Meyboom, *The Nilemosaic of Palestrina*, Leiden (2015).

³⁸²See F. Fabrizi, *Chiusi, il labirinto di Porsenna: leggenda e realtà*, Cortona (1987).

Scholars who study Pliny disagree: some scholars argued that the two slaves who read books for Pliny and wrote the summaries dictated by him committed a lot of mistakes, so far to make this encyclopedia often unreliable³⁸³.

Other scholars, including myself, trust Pliny much more and claim that as in any encyclopedia there are few oversights which are unavoidable in any large work.

For example, the date of the death of Mausolus (353 BC) is wrongly confused with that of Artemisia, his wife (351 BC) (36. 30). Zeuxis' picture of Helen made for Croton is wrongly said to have been made for Agrigentum (35. 64). However these mistakes are not so many. Most of his information is reliable and should be used as a tool to reconstruct the Greek and Roman art.

Questions

You mentioned a catalogue of works of art which Pliny used. You said it was a kind of state catalogue. Did it include the sculpture of private collections or only state-owned sculpture?

Antonio Corso: Only state collections were included in this state catalogue. The most important collections are as follows. First the collection of the *Porticus Octaviae*, which was full of statues. Second that in the *Aedes Concordiae* which was also full of statues. Third, the collection of the *Atrium Libertatis* the so-called *monumenta Asini Pollionis*. The status of the *Atrium*

³⁸³See for example O. Palagia, 'Pheidias Epoiesen: Attribution as value judgement', F. A. McFarlane (ed.), *Exploring ancient sculpture: essays in honour of Geoffrey Waywell*, London (2010) 97-107.

Libertatis – whether it was public or private – is controversial. It was on the valley between the Capitolium and the Quirinal Hill which was destroyed by Trajan for making his Trajan Forum, where the statue of the *Libertas*, Freedom, was resettled, because her cult could not be eliminated. So we cannot decide the status of the *Atrium Libertatis*, perhaps it was private.

Then there were works of art also in other areas, in the Roman Forum, in the *Templum Pacis*, in the *horti*, especially the *horti Sallustiani* and *Lamiani*. Another important set of sculptures was set up in the Temple of Apollo Sosianus. Other masterpieces were found on the Palatine and on the Capitolium³⁸⁴. Pliny lived a lot in Rome and learned continuously. We argue from his interest for these collections that he used to go around and look at the statues. His testimony is extremely precious. I do not believe that he derives his knowledge of these masterpieces only from previous written sources. Since they stood in Rome, it is obvious that his experience was also visual in my opinion, which is why his opinion is reliable.

Another aspect about which I have not spoken is his use of technical words which are typical of art criticism. *Quadratus* for example, *lumen* for the painting, these words usually are thought to be translations from corresponding Greek words, but it is not always clear which Greek word is translated. Jerome Pollitt wrote a full book about the equivalence of technical words

³⁸⁴See the entries about these ancient sites of Rome in E. M. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, Rome (2001-2008).

typical of ancient art criticism in Greek and in Latin³⁸⁵. In any case, Pliny assimilated the very specific language of visual arts.

Could you please clarify, what are the other sources about Xenocrates except Pliny?

Antonio Corso: Xenocrates was born in Athens, but he was educated in the school of Sicyon. We have few bases of bronze statues made by him. He moved to Pergamon. However, we cannot identify any of his bronze sculptures. From the visual point of view, he is completely unknown. He wrote two treatises, about bronze sculpture and painting. Pliny cites him in books 34 and 35, thus we believe that Xenocrates conceived the reconstruction of the historical sequence of bronze sculpture and of painting which is provided not only by Pliny but also by Quintilian (12. 10. 1-9): according to this theory, both these arts peak in the age of Alexander. This opinion has been confirmed recently by the epigrams of Posidippus published in 2001. These epigrams have been retrieved in an Egyptian papyrus. Posidippus, *Epigrams* 62 AB, who was contemporary of Xenocrates also contempts works of Canachus of Sicyon as well as of Hageladas, the master of Myron, Polykleitos and Phidias. He even regards the works of Polykleitos not satisfactory. He finally asserts that the works of Lysippos are the best. From Posidippus we know that these opinions really go back to around 270-250 BC³⁸⁶.

³⁸⁵J. J. Pollitt, *The ancient view of Greek art: criticism, history, and terminology*, NewHaven (1974).

³⁸⁶See A. Stewart, 'Alexander, Philitas, and the Skeletos:

Lecture 10. The emergency of a new taste in late antiquity

A late German scholar of Roman art of last century, Otto Brendel, wrote that Roman art is the first pluralistic art of the Western world.³⁸⁷ Of course, even in classical Greece there were different styles: those of Polykleitos, Pheidias etc.,³⁸⁸ but what he meant is that two completely different spiritual worlds and cultural identities co-existed in the same society. One is the Hellenized one which considers the art of Classical Greece the top while the other focuses Roman identity and feels no sense of identification with the Greek visual heritage.³⁸⁹ Here I focus this second attitude, which is known from early imperial times onwards. First of all, it is testified in literary productions, which are at the margins of the Roman establishment, but later it becomes the 'official' point of view of the Roman state. So, slowly-slowly it moves up. A certain negative attitude toward the Greek world was already clear in the literary production of Rome of late republican times. For example, Cicero (*In Verrem* 2. 4 *De signis* 4-5) hides his excellent knowledge of ancient Greek masters. In

Poseidippos and Truth in Early Hellenistic Portraiture', P. Schultz (ed.), *Early Hellenistic portraiture: image, style, context*, Cambridge (2007) 123-138.

³⁸⁷See O. Brendel, *Prolegomena to the study of Roman art*, New York (1979).

³⁸⁸I stressed the pluralism of Greek classical art in Corso (note 10) 1-36.

³⁸⁹I gave a presentation of this issue in Corso, (note 76) 425-446.

sections 4-5 he writes 'in truth, while I have been inquiring into that man's (*scil*: Verres) conduct, I have learnt the names of the workmen (...) their maker was.... (who? who was he? thank you, you are quite right,) they called him Polycletus'. He writes these excuses because he feels guilty to care about Greek works of art which are not worthy of Romans.³⁹⁰ In fact this type of expertise is despised by the Romans who were attached to the *mos maiorum*, the habits of the ancestors. Varro (*De re rustica* 2. *praefatio* 1) writes against the gymnasia of the Greeks because it is better to make physical exercise by cultivating land: this practice accords to the *mos maiorum*, thus Romans do not need gymnasia.³⁹¹ Hellenic refinements are not liked by everybody. The same Vergil writes that others - the Greeks - will be able to make perfect statues by bronze and marble, but the Romans had another duty, they must rule the world:

'tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
Hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subiectis, et debellare superbos.'

(Vergil, *Aeneid* 6. 851-853)³⁹²

Thus works of art become second rate concerns which Romans should despise. This attitude is still not an

³⁹⁰About the *De signis*, see A. Lazzaretti, M. Tulli Ciceronis, in C. Verrem actionis secundae liber quartus (de signis), Pisa (2006).

³⁹¹About the *De rerustica* by Varro, see J. Heurgon and C. Guiraud, *Varro, Economie rurale*, Paris (1978-1998).

³⁹²About Vergil's 'promotion' of an imperialistic ideology, see H. -P. Stahl, *Poetry underpinning power: Vergil's Aeneid*, Swansea (2016).

aesthetic one. Cicero, Varro and Vergil do not write that works of art of ancient Greece are ugly. For example, Cicero once writes (*Paradoxa Stoicorum* 33-38: 'Then are not these kinds of things (*scil.*: works of art of ancient Greek masters) delightful? Granted that they are, for we also have trained eyes'.³⁹³ However Romans should not take care of them, although that by no means implies that they are regarded ugly.

The idea that images of the Roman tradition are much better even from aesthetical point of view gains momentum in the AD 1st century. The first example we have is from the *Carmina Priapea*. This is a collection of poems, which are usually attributed to Priapus, the god of fertility who was depicted with a large penis and whose statues were often placed in *horti* (gardens) in order to scare robbers and thieves from approaching. One of these *carmina* (no. 10), which is dated in the age of Ovid, in the early AD 1st century, writes:

Insulsissima quid puella rides?
non me Praxiteles Scopasve fecit,
nec sum Phidiaca manu politus;
sed lignum rude vilicus dolavit,
et dixit mihi: 'tu Priapus esto'.
spectas me tamen et subinde rides?
Nimirum tibi salsa res videtur
Adstans inguinibus columna nostris.

The same Priapus is imagined to be speaking:

'Why, most foolish girl, do you laugh? Neither Praxiteles nor Scopas has given me shape, nor have I been polished

³⁹³ About Cicero's *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, see J. Molager, Cicero, *Les paradoxes des stoïciens*, Paris (1971).

by the hand of Phidias; but a peasant carved me from a shapeless log, and said to me, 'You are Priapus!' Yet you gaze at me, and laugh repeatedly. Doubtless it seems to you a droll thing the 'column' standing upright from my groin.¹³⁹⁴

The concept of this poem is that the rough piece of wood, which becomes Priapus represents the god more than the works of Praxiteles or Scopas or Phidias because it is more natural, more immediate, more naive in the good meaning of the word, more real-life, it is more social in other words, more spontaneous: for this reason it is also more sacred, because the works of art which are more refined do not favor the epiphany of the god inside, whilst this log really becomes Priapus who is speaking from this piece of wood.

This notion that 'modern' works of the Roman world elicit the viewer more than old monuments in the East of the Mediterranean world, becomes the official point of view when the plebeian Flavian dynasty seizes the Empire with Vespasian. This emperor promoted the building of the Flavian Amphitheatre, which is widely known as Colosseum (fig. 116).³⁹⁵ The poet Martial was invited to write epigrams which praise the new monument. The first of these epigrams is relevant to our focus:

‘Barbara pyramidum sileat miracula Memphis,

³⁹⁴ About the Priapea, see L. Callebat and J. Soubiran, *Priapées*, Paris (2012).

³⁹⁵ About the Colosseum, see R. Rea *et alii*, *Colosseo*, Milan (2017).

Assyriu siactet nec Babylona labor.
Nec Triviae templo molles laudentur Iones,
dissimulet Delon cornibus ara frequens.
Aere nec vacuo pendentia Mausolea,
Laudibus inmodicis Cares in astra ferant.
Omnis Caesareo cedit labor amphitheatro –
unum pro cunctis fama loquetur opus;
(Martial, *de spectaculis* 1)³⁹⁶

‘Let barbarian Memphis keeps silent concerning the
wonders of her pyramids,³⁹⁷

(the pyramids were among the seven wonders of the
ancient world, but now they became nothing)

and let not Assyrian toil vaunt its Babylon,

(the Hanging Gardens of Babylon³⁹⁸ were another one of
the seven marvels, but now they are also despised)

Let not the effeminate Ionians (in contrast to ‘macho’
Romans) claim praise for their temple of the
Triviangoddess;

(even the Artemision of Ephesos³⁹⁹ is despised)

and let the altar, bristling with horns, speak modestly of
the name of Delos:

(who cares of Delos!⁴⁰⁰)

³⁹⁶ About Martial’s *De spectaculis*, see K. M. Coleman, *Martialis, Liber spectaculorum*, Oxford (2006).

³⁹⁷ About the seven wonders of the ancient world, see P. A. Clayton and M. Price (eds.), *The seven wonders of the ancient world*, London (1988).

³⁹⁸ About the Hanging gardens, see S. Dalley, *The Mystery of the Hanging Garden of Babylon: an elusive world wonder traced*, Oxford (2013).

³⁹⁹ About the Artemision, see Seipel (note 380).

Their Mausoleum too, hanging in empty air,
let not the Carians with immoderate praise extol to the
skies,

(even the Mausoleum becomes second rate)⁴⁰¹

Every work of toil yields to Caesar's amphitheater;
fame shall tell of one work for all.'

So, the greatest glories of the Eastern world, even the Seven Marvels (which were catalogued in Alexandria in the early 3rd c. BC perhaps by Callimachus)⁴⁰² become second rate because the Flavian amphitheater is regarded much better. In *De aedificiis* 2-31 Martial explains why it is so great: people go there, see wild animals, in other words it is social, whilst those old buildings are not very useful. We have here the principle of the *utilitas*,⁴⁰³ the usefulness for social life, which is one of the reasons why the Roman monument may have been regarded better than those compared old glories.

The opinion that the new marvels of Flavian Rome are superior to classical Greek beauties becomes well rooted in the period of Domitian. Statius was asked to compose the official poem for the inauguration of the *Equus Domitiani*, the equestrian bronze monument of

⁴⁰⁰ See R. Étienne, 'Autels de Délos', *AA* (2007) 1. 1-28.

⁴⁰¹ About the Mausoleum, see W. Hoepfner, *Halikarnassos und das Maussoleion*, Mainz (2013).

⁴⁰² See note 397.

⁴⁰³ About this value, see J. M. Vidal, *Utilitas frente a Venustas*, San Vicente (2013).

Domitian⁴⁰⁴:

‘Quae superinposito moles geminata colosso
stat Latium complexa forum? Caelone peractum
fluxit opus? Siculis an conformata caminis
effigies lassum Steropem Brontemque reliquit?’

(Stattius, *Silvae* 1. 1. 1-4)

‘What ponderous mass is this that, magnified to twice the
size by the giant
surmounting figure, stands as if with the Roman Forum
in its clasp? Has the work
dropped down completed from the sky? or did the
finishing of it in the
foundries of Sicily leave the hands of Brontes and of
Steropes wearied out?’

Two passages of this long poem are relevant to our
issue. First of all, he writes that this work is better than
bronze statues of Lysippos:

‘Cedat equus Latiae qui contra templa Diones
Caesarei stat sede fori quem traderis ausus
Pellaeo, Lysippe, duci; mox Caesaris ora
Mirata cervice tulit: vix lumine fesso
explores quam longum in hunc despectus ab illo.
Quis rudis usqueadeo qui non, ut viderit ambos,
tantum dicat quos quantum distare regentes?’ (vv. 84-
90).

‘Henceforth let the steed give place that over against the

⁴⁰⁴ About this imposing monument, see M. L. Thomas,
‘(Re)locating Domitian's horse of glory: the Equus
Domitiani and Flavian urban design’, *MAAR* 49 (2004)
21-46.

temple of Dione
 of Latium stands in *Caesaris forum*, the steed which
 men say Lysippus
 hazarded for the lord of Pella, and which anon in
 amazement bore on its back
 a sculptured Caesar. With straining eyes scarce
 couldst thou discern how far below this it falls.
 None so dull but when he has seen both will count
 the horses as ill-matched as their riders.'
 The masterpieces of Lysippus⁴⁰⁵ become second rate
 when compared with the *Equus Domitiani*.
 'Apelleae cuperent te scriber cerae,
 optassetque novo simile te ponere templo
 Atticus Elei senior Iovis, et tua mitis
 Ora Tarans, tua sidereas imitantia flammas
 lumina contempto mallet Rhodos aspera Phoebo.' (vv.
 100-104).
 'Ah, an Apelles were fain to paint thee;
 the old Attic master in a fresh temple to mould thee to
 the semblance of Elean Jove. Soft Tarentum and rugged
 Rhodes,
 in scorn of her sculptured sun-god, would rather have
 pictured the starlike brightness of thine eyes.'
 Even the pictures by Apelles⁴⁰⁶ are not better than this
 masterpiece, even the Zeus of Phidias⁴⁰⁷ does not stand

⁴⁰⁵ About the later fortune of Lysippus, see S. Ensoli (ed.), *La fortuna di Lisippo*, Padua (2017).

⁴⁰⁶ About Apelles, see I. Scheibler, 'Bildzeugnisse zum Werk des Apelles', *AA* (2019) 2. 1-29.

⁴⁰⁷ About the Zeus of Phidias, see D. Burton, 'The Iconography of Pheidias' Zeus', *Jdl* 130 (2015) 75-115.

comparison with the *Equus Domitiani*. Tarentum and Rhodes are supposed to prefer this new equestrian monument to their old statues (with a probable reference to the Zeus of Lysippus at Tarentum⁴⁰⁸ and to the Colossus of Rhodes by Chares, a pupil of Lysippus⁴⁰⁹). This poet and his audience do not think that Greek classical visual arts are better than some new creations. On the contrary, the new colossal monument in the Roman Forum stands quite well the comparison with the old beauties and with the old masters.

This notion that works of art of antiquity are not better than new ones is not asserted during the Antonine period and the golden period of the neo-sophistic culture which covers most of the AD 2nd and early 3rd centuries.⁴¹⁰ In fact in this period the notion of the prevalence of Greek art and Greek culture is conveyed by the neo-sophistic movement in such a continuous and effective way, that any different idea goes out of fashion. During the age of Hadrian, of Antonine Pius and of Marcus Aurelius who also wrote in Greek,⁴¹¹ even the official culture and Roman emperors accepted the prevalence of the Greek Classical culture of the past.

⁴⁰⁸ See note 405.

⁴⁰⁹ About the colossal statue of Helios by Chares, see W. Hoepfner, *Der Koloß von Rhodos*, Mainz (2003).

⁴¹⁰ About this 'Zeitgeist', see D. S. Richter and W. A. Johnson (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the second Sophistic*, Oxford (2017).

⁴¹¹ About this topic, see E. Bowie, 'Marcus Aurelius, Greek Poets, and Greek Sophists', Bosman (note 85) 142-159.

This is also clear in the Severan period. For example, Septimius Severus had in his own court Philostratus, who of course wrote in Greek,⁴¹² perhaps Callistratus⁴¹³ and other members of the intellectual circle of Julia Domna: this environment is very Hellenized. The superior quality of the Hellenic world is accepted without discussion. This Hellenophile attitude was still accepted after the middle of the AD 3rd century, at the time of Gallien, the Emperor devoted to the philosophy of Plotinus.⁴¹⁴ This philosopher wrote only in Greek, so even in this case we have a Hellenophile attitude.

The view which places the Western and Roman world above the Eastern one, gains momentum with the Tetrarchic reformation of the Empire when the Empire in the east is separated from the Empire in the west. The latter develops its own culture and foreshadows the beginning of an opposition between the Latin world on the one side and Greek world on the other. This phenomenon probably has to do with another opinion, which becomes slowly important and officially accepted: that what is made by north-western populations is better than what is done by south-eastern ones. So, north-western populations are superior to

⁴¹² See K. Jazdzewska, 'Entertainers, Persuaders, Adversaries: Interactions of Sophists and Rulers in Philostratus' Lives of Sophists', Bosman (note 85) 160-177.

⁴¹³ The reason why Callistratus should be regarded a member of this circle has been forwarded in Corso (note 62) 13-51, particularly 17-23.

⁴¹⁴ About this issue, see Grandvallet (note 297) 23-45.

south-eastern ones. This opinion probably harks back to the stoic philosopher Posidonius of Apamea:⁴¹⁵ it is already clear in Caesar when he praises the sense of loyalty, discipline and austerity of Germans (*De bello Gallico* 4. 16-19)⁴¹⁶ and Britons (*ibidem* 4. 20-35 and 5. 1. 8-23).⁴¹⁷ It is also clear in expressions which were used already in the 2nd-1st century BC. For example, already Plautus, *Asinaria* 199 uses the expression '*Graeca fide mercari*' which means "to pay by cash", which implies that Greeks should not be trusted.⁴¹⁸ Livy 21. 4. 9 writes that the *fides* of Hannibal was '*plus quam Punica*' which means that he was a liar and nobody could trust him.

The Carthaginians were despised by Romans for the same reason.⁴¹⁹

So, these populations were regarded the bad ones.

Vitruvius also probably is indebted to Posidonius for his

⁴¹⁵ See A. Lampinen, 'Fragments from the 'Middle Ground': Posidonius' Northern Ethnography', *Arctos* 48 (2014) 229-259.

⁴¹⁶ See C. B. Krebs, 'Borealism: Caesar, Seneca, Tacitus, and the Roman discourse about the Germanic north', E. S. Gruen (ed.), *Cultural identity in the ancient Mediterranean*, Los Angeles (2011) 202-221.

⁴¹⁷ See L. Polverini, 'Cesare e la Britannia', C. Stella *et alii* (eds.), *Studi in onore di Albino Garzetti*, Brescia (1996) 325-339.

⁴¹⁸ About this comedy, see F. Hurka, *Die Asinaria des Plautus*, Munich (2010).

⁴¹⁹ See G. H. Waldherr, 'Punica fides', *Gymnasium* 107 (2000) 193-222.

ethnographic opinions. He asserts (6. 1. 1-12) that the populations in the south are cunning whilst those in the north are brave and ready to fight.

Thus southern populations are despised.

Eastern populatons are thought to be effeminate (Martial, in an above quoted passage refers to *effeminate Ionians*), and to enjoy a too refined life. *Locus classicus* for this concept is Horace, *Carmina* 1. 38, v. 1 where he asserts '*Persicos odi, puer, apparatus*' ('I hate the Persian pomp). So, the east is despised because of its supposed lavish life style.

The notion of the superiority of the north-west upon the south-east becomes important in the period of the tetrarchy when the empire was divided in four parts, and Trier (*Augusta Treverorum*) became the capital of the north-western part of the Empire.⁴²⁰ An imperial court was established in this city and Emperor Valentinian I⁴²¹ invited the Gallic poet of *Burdigala* Ausonius⁴²² to be teacher of his son Gratian. Thus, Ausonius vent to the Imperial court in Trier and in his poem 'Mosella' compared the Roman villas which dotted the valley of the Mosella river with the great marvels, the old beauties of the Greek world which, in his opinion, were not

⁴²⁰ About Trier in antiquity, see F. Unruh, *Trier: Biographie einer Römischen Stadt*, Darmstadt (2017).

⁴²¹ About this Emperor, see M. Herget et alii (ed.), *Valentinian I*, Heidelberg (2018).

⁴²² About Ausonius and the Mosella, see J. Gruben, *D. Magnus Ausonius, Mosella*, Berlin (2013).

superior.

The relevant passage is a landmark for the history of taste, which reveals a deep change of the general thought of what beauty is in the west, especially in the northwest of the Roman Empire (vv. 287-317):

'Quis modo Sestiacum pelagus, Nephelidos Helles
aequor, Abydeni freta quis miretur ephebi?

Quis Chalcedonio constratum ab litore pontum,
regis opus magni, mediis euripus ubi undis
Europaeque Asiaeque vetat concurrere terras?
non hic dira freti rabies, non saeva furentum
proelia caurorum; licet hic commercia linguae
iungere et alterno sermonem texere pulsu,
blanda salutiferas permiscent litora voces,
et voces et paene manus: resonantia utrimque
verba refert concurrens fluctibus echo.

Quis potis innumero scultusque habitusque retexens
Pandere tectonicas per singular praedia formas?
non hoc spernat opus Gortynius aliger, aedis
conditor Euboicae, casus quem fingere in auro
conantem Icarios patria pepulere dolores:
non Philo Cecropius, non qui laudatus ab hoste
clara Syracosii traxit certamina belli,
forsan et insignes hominumque operumque labores
hic habuit decimo celebrate volumine Marcei
hebdomas, hic clari viguere Menecratis artes
atque Ephesi spectata manus vel in arce Minervae
Ictinus, magico cui noctua perlita fuco
Adlicit omne genus volucres perimitque tuendo.
conditor hic forsan fuerit Ptolomaidos aulae
Dinochares, quadrata cui in fastigia cono
Surgit ipsa suas consumit pyramis umbras,

Iussus ob incesti qui quondam foedus amoris
Arsinoen Pharii suspendit in aere templi.
Spirat enim tecti testudine virus achates
Adflatamque trahit ferrato crine puellam.'
'Do you admire the Sea of Sestos, the Strait of Helle,
Daughter of Nephele, where the youth of Abydos died?
Do you admire that sea, bridged from Chalcedon's shore,
A king's great work, where the channel prevents
The continents of Europe and Asia from meeting?
Here are no dreadful storms, no savage battles
With the wild north-western gales. Here you can
communicate
And weave words freely, one to another.
Each charming shore hears healing voices from the other
- Hears voices, nearly touches hands. On either side
Echo brings rebounding words that meet midstream.
Who can unravel the countless styles and fashions,
And explain the builder's plan of every farmhouse?
Even the flying craftsman from Gortys would admire
such work,
Daedalus,⁴²³ who built the Euboean temple,
Whose father-grief stopped him when he tried
To form in gold the fall of Icarus his son.
Likewise from Athens, Cecrops' city, Philo would
admire it,⁴²⁴
And Archimedes in Syracuse praised even by his foes,
Who used his famous skill to aid his city in war.

⁴²³ About Daedalus, see S. Mandalaki (ed.), *Daidalos*, Hiraklion (2019).

⁴²⁴ About Philo, see J. de Waele, 'Das Schiffsarsenal des Philon im Piräus', *BullAntBesch* 68 (1993) 107-120.

Perhaps the builders of the Seven Wonders too,
Celebrated in the Tenth Book of Marcus (*scil.*: Varro),
Exercised here their outstanding workmanship.
Perhaps here the famed skills of Menecrates⁴²⁵
Flourished, and the artist's hand seen in Ephesus,
And Ictinus, on the rock of Athena⁴²⁶,
Whose owl, painted with magic dye,
Lures birds of all kinds, and slays them with a glance.
Perhaps here Dinochares⁴²⁷ will have come,
Who built a palace for the Ptolemies
Whose four-sided cone rises to a point,
And, pyramid-shaped, eats its own shadows.
He once, bidden by the demands of illicit love,
Hung free in air Arsinoe's picture in Pharos' temple;
For a pale agate breathes with the tortoise of the roof
And drags the girl blown with iron-bound hair.'
Philo of Athens was famous for having made the portico
of the Telesterion of Eleusis and the arsenal of Piraeus.

⁴²⁵ About Menekrates, see C. Börker, 'Menekrates und die Künstler des Farnesischen Stieres. Zu Plinius NH XXXVI 34', *ZPE* 64 (1986) 41-49.

⁴²⁶ About Ictinus, see R. B. Schneider, *Der Parthenon-Plan des Iktinos*, Bonn (2002).

⁴²⁷ About Dinocrates, see J. Pieper, 'Der Berg Athos in Riesengestalt. Bedeutungen des Anthropomorphen im Werben des Baumeisters Dinokrates um die Gunst Alexanders', J. Ozols and V. Thewalt (eds.), *Aus dem Osten des Alexanderreiches : Völker und Kulturen zwischen Orient und Okzident : Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indien. Festschrift zum 65. Geburtstag von Klaus Fischer*, Köln (1984) 57-65.

Ausonius refers also to the Artemision of Ephesus, to Ictinus, the architect of the Parthenon, and to Dinochares, the architect of Alexandria.

These famous monuments of the East (the Parthenon, the Artemision of Ephesus, the works of Philo etc.) are now regarded not superior to Roman villas around and along the Mosella river. In this long poem he specifies that these villas are beautiful inside: they have atria full of green, of roses, they have a lot of colors perhaps alluding to mosaics, stuccos and paintings, they appear as a stage, have beautiful facades and compose a panorama, in other words they are beautiful from a scenographic point of view. So, it is the integration of landscape and architectural creation which is important for our poet, it is the scenography of buildings which matters, as well as its internal space, its chromatic involucration of internal spaces and the insertion of the green and the flowers into the architectural composition. These values are not those for which the monuments of the Classical and early Hellenistic periods were appreciated. We find new ideas and aesthetic criteria which are different from those by which creations of the Classical past were evaluated and praised: the proportions, the symmetry, the relations of a part of a work to another are no longer so important. Now a scenographic concept of architecture and the concern for its integration with the surrounding landscape come to a head.

This revolutionary proclamation of Ausonius was not passed unnoticed in the learned society of Rome. A

friend of Ausonius, Symmachus (*Epistulae* 1. 14. 2-4)⁴²⁸ praised him because he liberated the general taste from a complex of inferiority toward the classical Greek world: the Mosella River became more important than the Nile and more famous than the Tiber. The epicenter of beauty in the realm of monuments had migrated to north-west. This notion will become rooted in late-antique Gallic culture and will have followers.

The *carmen* no. 23 of Apollinaris Sidonius⁴²⁹ (*Ad Consentium*) is relevant to our issue. Apollinaris Sidonius wrote this poem around 460. He reports that he paid a visit to his friend Consentius in *Narbo* who entertained him in his *triclinium* where they ate and drank and in his baths. He specifies (vv. 500-501) that ‘*nos tua pocula*’ – your glasses to drink (wine) - ‘*et tuarum Musarum medius torus tenebat*’ (and the middle couch among your Muses kept us). Thus in the dining room of Consentius there where probably images of Muses and the middle couch of this triclinium stood among these figures.

He adds that these Muses were (vv. 502-506)

*quales nec statuas imaginesque
aere aut marmoribus coloribusque
Mentor, Praxiteles, Scopas dederunt,
quantas nec Polycleetus ipse finxit
nec fit Phidiaco figura caelo.’*

⁴²⁸ About Symmachus, see D. Matakotta, *Simmaco*, Florence (1992).

⁴²⁹ About this poet, see G. Kelly and J. van Waarden (eds.), *The Edinburgh companion to Sidonius Apollinaris*, Edinburgh (2020).

These Muses were regarded of a quality (*quales*) that nor Mentor (a toreuta of late 5th century BC), nor Praxiteles, nor Scopas were able to achieve. ‘*Quantas*’ refers to the size: these Muses were of such imposing size that Polykleitos never made similar figures nor they could be created with the chisel of Phidias.

These Muses were thought to be superior to works of old masters. Modern imagery is thought to be better than classical works of art. These colossal figures delighted viewers in the late AD 5th century probably because of their sense of grandiosity, as we argue from the world *quantas*. Moreover these Muses were figures of the internal space and thus in this poem the internal space of the triclinium is also exalted.

The fact that old classical statues no longer elicited the interest of a learned public is explicitly asserted by Zosimus⁴³⁰. This was a pagan historian who wrote around AD 500 his *Historia Nova* in which he recorded what happened in the Roman Empire from 238 until his own age. In his passage 5. 24. 5-6, related to the year 404, he reports about the fire which destroyed much of Constantinople. This fire reached the Senate house of Constantinople which stood near the palace, St. Sophy, and the agora of the *Augusteion*:⁴³¹

‘The fire extended to the Senate-house, which stood before the palace, and was a most beautiful and magnificent edifice. It was adorned with statues by the

⁴³⁰ About Zosimus, see O. Veh (ed.), *Zosimus, Neue Geschichte*, Stuttgart (1990).

⁴³¹ About ancient statues displayed in Constantinople and their topographical contexts, see Bravi (note 87).

most celebrated artists, which had a most splendid appearance, and with marble of such colors, as are not now to be found in any quarries. It is said that, the images which were formerly consecrated in Helicon to the Muses, and in the time of Constantine suffered by the universal sacrilege, having been erected and dedicated in this place, were burnt at the same time, as if to denote the disregard which all men should one day bear to the Muses.'

These Muses probably coincide with the Muses mentioned by Pausanias 9. 30. 1 in the *Mouseion* of Mt. Helicon. Three out of these Muses had been made by Strongylion, three Muses by Cephisodotus the Elder, the father of Praxiteles, and three by Olympiosthenes.⁴³² The group must have dated around 390 BC. According to Zosimus, the loss of such an important set of statues by famous masters met only indifference.

The notion that new marvels may be superior to those of ancient Greece is argued also from descriptions of monuments and images of the late 5th and 6th century. I refer to the description of a large cosmographic mosaic by John of Gaza in the late AD 5th century (*Descriptio picturae cosmicae* 2. 7-44),⁴³³ then to the *ekphraseis* of a clock (*Ekphrasis Horologiou*), as well as of a picture (*Ekphrasis eikonos*), and of the Churches of Saints Sergius (*Oration* 1) and Stephan at Gaza (*Oration* 2) by

⁴³² About this group, see A. Corso, *The Art of Praxiteles i*, Rome (2004) 55-76.

⁴³³ About this description, see C. Cupane, 'Η Κοσμικός Πίναξ di Giovanni di Gaza', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 28 (1979) 195-206.

Choricus of Gaza⁴³⁴. The descriptions of St. Sophy by Paulus Silentarius (*Descriptio Sanctae Sophiae* and *Descriptio Ambonis*)⁴³⁵ are also noteworthy. We have the *De Aedificiis* by Procopius of Caesarea⁴³⁶ who writes in enthusiastic terms about the many monuments built or restored by Justinian throughout the empire. These intellectuals are enthusiastic about these new architectures, mosaics, paintings, and stuccos: clearly these new marvels were regarded superior to ancient works of art. Not only religion changed but taste as well. This taste (as we know from the above mentioned descriptions) now likes a lot of colors and the sense of life and internal space filled with mosaics, stuccos and especially paintings. These writers like the shining and scenographic effect and impact of these buildings as Ausonius liked late Roman monuments along the Mosella river. They forward an aesthetic criterion of evaluation, which is not the most appropriate to appreciate classical works of art, which is probably why they rarely mention them. Only Procopius of Caesarea in *De Aedificiis* 1. 11. 7 mentions old masters of classical Greece but only in order to specify that their works were not superior to the shining appearance and works of art,

⁴³⁴ About Choricus' testimony on imagery, see T. Polański, 'The Mosaic and Painting Decoration in the Church of Saint Stephen of Gaza', *Folia Orientalia* 48 (2011) 183-210.

⁴³⁵ See C. De Stefani, *Paulus Silentarius. Descriptio Sanctae Sophiae; Descriptioambonis*, Berlin (2011).

⁴³⁶ About this book, see C. Dell'Osso, *Procopio di Cesarea: gli edifici, sine loco* (2018).

which decorated the Baths of Arcadius (*Thermae Arcadianae*) in Constantinople.

This attitude was also conveyed in the west by the descriptions of monuments of Venantius Fortunatus (1. 2-14 and 18-21; 2. 3; 8 and 10-13; 3. 6 and 12; 6. 6-7; 8. 19-20; 10. 11 and 11. 26)⁴³⁷. He does not mention ancient masters but he is also enthusiastic about the shining and scenographic appearances of architectures: again his aesthetic criteria were not good to appreciate ancient art.

The opinion that the best creations of 'modern' times are superior to classical Greek beauties is exasperated in the late 9th century.

The crucial passages which leads to this conclusion is found in the 10th homely of Patriarch Photius which is dated in the year 864:⁴³⁸ it is the official eulogy for the inauguration of the Church of Our Lady of the Pharos inside the Imperial palace. The passage which is relevant to this study is 2. 433:

'The pavement, which has been fashioned into the forms of animals and other shapes by means of variegated tesserae, exhibits the marvelous wisdom of the artist, so that the famous Phidias and Parrhasius and Praxiteles and Zeuxis are proved in truth to have been mere children in their art and makers of figments.'

The sense of life and the variety of figures of this mosaic

⁴³⁷ About this poet, see J. W. George, *Venantius Fortunatus*, Oxford (1992).

⁴³⁸ About the Homelies of Photius, see C. Mango, *The homilies of Photius, patriarch of Constantinople*, Cambridge Mass. (1958).

are regarded superior to the works of these renowned masters of the past. Thus our Patriarch confirms the notion that this art, which became ripe in late antiquity and triumphed in Constantinople with churches and palaces was regarded superior to the art of classical past. Photius is the last writer who asserts this opinion because in the early 10th century the most beloved students of Photius - Arethas of Caesarea⁴³⁹ - when he mentions the propylon of Senate House which was on the Forum of Constantine (not the previously mentioned Senate House of the Augusteion), focuses his attention only on the colossal statue of Athena which was set up in front of this propylon and which he identifies with the Athena Promachos by Pheidias (*scholium* to Aristides, *Orations* 50. 408. 701. 710 d).⁴⁴⁰

Thus from the early 10th century a complex of inferiority toward classical Greek monuments resurfaces (see also Arethas, *scholia* to Clement, *Protrepticus* 1. 2; 4. 47 and 4. 51 in which this bishop reveals an interest for the pictures of Apelles, for the Zeus of Olympia, for the Athena Parthenos and for the Cnidian Aphrodite).

In conclusion, the attitude which regards the best contemporary art better than Greek classical art is evidenced from the period of *Carmina Priapea* in AD 1st century until the late 9th century. In the context of this

⁴³⁹ About this bishop, see S. V. Kougeas, *O Kaisareias Arethas*, Athens (1913).

⁴⁴⁰ The issue of the possible removal of Phidias' bronze Athena to Constantinople is controversial: see J. H. Jenkins, 'The bronze Athena at Byzantium', *JHS* 67 (1947) 31-33.

time span there are moments when this is the prevalent taste: the Flavian period and the age from 370 to 870 when Classical art was not appreciated by the leading elites of the societies. However even in these periods there were sometimes few learned nostalgic of creations of the classical past - Zosimus was one of them - who would not agree with the dominant taste of the time. These exceptions do not contradict the general trends of these periods.

Question:

Perhaps this question is not directly related to the topic, but it is possibly related to the processes that you described. We all know the official portraits of the Tetrarchs with their extremely schematic and conventional forms. How can one explain the sudden appearance of such features and this extremely anti-classical (and “anti-realistic”) art in the AD late 3rd century?

First of all we should notice that some of the most important of these schematic portraits are imported and/or made from an imported material, which is extremely difficult to work: the porphyry.⁴⁴¹ This statement leads to the following question: why were they taking porphyry from Egypt rather than, for example, Proconnesian marble which was just near Nikomedia, the capital of Diocletian, and later near Constantinople? This is the crucial question. In this period there is a new

⁴⁴¹ About the use of this hard material and its many implications, see D. Del Bufalo, *Porphyry: red imperial porphyry: power and religion*, Turin (2012).

wave of Egyptomania.⁴⁴² This material conveyed the sacrality of the old habits and old wisdom, which never changed. The Empire of Egypt was regarded often an anticipation of the Roman Empire. This is argued for example from Libanius' funeral oration for Emperor Julian (*Orations* 18. R 623)⁴⁴³ when he says that perhaps the same Moira who terminated the empire of Egypt is now acting against that of Rome. Most late antique historians see history as a succession of empires: from that of Egypt to that of Rome.⁴⁴⁴

The success of the Hermetic literature⁴⁴⁵, which was supposed to forward Egyptian wisdom, cannot be ignored. This is a period when the old Egyptian wisdom is admired. This trend leads to the imitation of schematic Egyptian figures, of the Egyptian art of good old times. This taste for sacrality implies rigidity, an attempt to resurrect an archaic style of representations. Finally the use of the porphyry is beloved also because the color of the purple was the color of the royalty⁴⁴⁶.

Question:

If we agree with the concept that at the Constantine time modern contemporary art is thought to be

⁴⁴² See R. H. Fritze, *Egyptomania*, London (2017).

⁴⁴³ See R. Scholl, *Historische Beiträge zu den Julianischen Reden des Libanios*, Stuttgart (1994).

⁴⁴⁴ This trend is argued by Justin, Orosius, Malalas etc.

⁴⁴⁵ See P. Scarpi, *La rivelazione segreta di Ermete Trismegisto*, Milan (2009-2011).

⁴⁴⁶ About this issue, see R. Garcia et alii, *Emperors and emperorship in late antiquity: images and narratives*, Leiden (2021).

better than the classical one, how can we explain the fact that Constantine took from all his empire to Constantinople hundreds of ancient statues and put them in Hippodrome, in his Forum and other public places.

This complex phenomenon has more than one explanation. First of all an ancient explanation given by Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 3. 54. 3⁴⁴⁷ claims that Constantine wanted to mock the statues of deities, to laugh at them because they were pagan idols. We should abandon this old explanation by Eusebius because it is unbelievable. The inauguration of Constantinople was made through both pagan and Christian ceremonies.⁴⁴⁸ It is likely that Constantine still wanted Constantinople to be shared by both by pagans and Christians and that pagan collaborators of Constantine helped him to arrange the sculpture display of Constantinople.

There is a second reason, an ideological one. Before becoming Christian, Constantine was devoted to Apollo-Helios (Apollo assimilated with Sun) and it is perhaps not a coincidence that many statues were taken from Delphi. The Muses from the sanctuary of the Helicon mentioned in the above quoted passage of Zosimus fit this trend well.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁷ About this biography, see H. Schneider, *De vita Constantini: Über das Leben Konstantins*, Turnhout (2007).

⁴⁴⁸ See A. Cameron, *The foundation of Constantinople. Myths ancient and modern*, Durham (1983).

⁴⁴⁹ See P. Barcelo, 'Constantins Visionen. Zwischen

The society of Constantine's era was still a mixed one and the idea that contemporary marvels were better was still not shared by everybody. There were also pagans around him: for example the anonymous author of the Panegyric of Constantine was pagan⁴⁵⁰. Thus I believe that he wanted just to be ecumenical and to lavish praise both on the old heritage but also on new monuments.

There is a third explanation, which has to do with his Christian belief. Statues removed from sanctuaries and set up in secular context underwent a process of 'de-sacralization'.⁴⁵¹

Finally the dignity of Constantinople as world's capital implied that it had to epitomize the previous beauties of the world which thus must be re-placed there.⁴⁵²

These explanations should not be regarded one against the other, but to be viewed all together.

Apollo und Christus', Idem (ed.), *Humanitas - Beiträge zur antiken Kulturgeschichte: Festschrift für Gunther Gottlieb zum 65. Geburtstag*, Munich (2001) 45-61.

⁴⁵⁰ See K. Enekel, 'Panegyrische Geschichtsmythologisierung und Propaganda: Zur Interpretation des Panegyricus Latinus 6', *Hermes* 128 (2000) 91-126.

⁴⁵¹ About this reason, see C. Lepelley, 'Le musée des statues divines', *Cahiers Archéologiques* 42 (1994) 5-15.

⁴⁵² See Bravi (note 87).

Lecture 11. The myth of the aeternity of Rome

In the Homeric poems and in the cyclic poems we find the notion that the winner of the Trojan War was decided by the gods much earlier than the actual outcome of this war.⁴⁵³ So, we have here a concept, which is usually called with the words millenaristic and teleological⁴⁵⁴ because the history has a τέλος which in Greek is 'the end', 'the outcome'. Everything on earth goes to an end which has been decided in advance. The single human being can't change what has been decided by the gods, long time ago.

However, there is also a rationalistic trend, which can be appreciated especially in 5th century BC, which leads to a conception of history as something determined by purely human factors. Thucydides who established this new concept of human agency says that the outcomes in history are decided by the stronger versus the weaker: this conception is outlined in the Thucydidean dialog between the Athenians and Melians imagined to have taken place in 416 BC (Thucydides 5. 84-111).⁴⁵⁵ The Athenians were much stronger than the Melians, so they killed all Melian adult men and sold women and children as slaves. The gods have no objection to that.

⁴⁵³See A. Bierl, *Time and Space in Myth and Religion*, Berlin (2017)

⁴⁵⁴See J. Rocca, *Teleology in the ancient world*, New York (2017) and G. F. Held, *Aristotle's teleological theory of tragedy and epic*, Heidelberg (1995).

⁴⁵⁵See L. Canfora, *Il dialogo dei Melii e degli Ateniesi*, Venice (1991).

This notion that history is determined by human factors and not by decisions of the gods becomes very well rooted in the later development of historical thought.

For example, Polybius says that the prevalence of Rome is due to the fact that it has the best constitution because it has a monarchic principle - the consuls - an oligarchic aristocratic principle – the Senate - and a democratic one – the tribunes of the plebs and other institutions selected by the population (Polybius 6. 2-58).⁴⁵⁶ So this is the opinion of Polybius in synthesis. Even if the concept of history of Polybius is very different from that of Thucydides, still it is determined by pure human factors. This concept is shared also by Sallustius in the period of the second triumvirate. In this period around 40-30 BC Sallustius says that the prevalence of a state or population upon other populations is due to the moral integrity of the former population. If the corruption reaches a very high level, this population will lose its power inevitably. This notion is epitomized in a phrase attributed by this historian to the king of Numidia Jugurtha: upon leaving Rome, he is told to have exclaimed: 'Urbem venalem et mature perituram, si emptorem invenerit', 'very greedy city and ripe for ruin if it finds a purchaser' (Sallustius, *Bellum Jugurthinum* 35). Sallustius means that a very high level of corruption was going to destroy Rome.⁴⁵⁷

However, from the beginning of the Augustan period

⁴⁵⁶See J.-M. Alonso-Núñez, 'The mixed constitution in Polybius', *Eranos* 97. 1-2 (1999) 11-18.

⁴⁵⁷See L. V. Parker, 'Romae omnia venalia esse', *Historia* 53. 4 (2004) 408-423.

this perspective changes completely. We have again the notion that everything was decided by the gods long time ago. Vergil in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, writes about Aeneas who goes to the Underworld and receives from his father the prediction of the future glory of Rome. So, the Roman rule was thought to have been decided already in the period immediately after the sack of Troy, which was put by ancient chronographers in 1184 BC. (Vergil, *Aeneis* 6. 847-853).⁴⁵⁸

So, many centuries before, the glory of Rome was thought to have been already decided. Humans can't interfere with this agency, with this plan, this program of the gods. The millenaristic teleological conception of Homer is reestablished in full, in order to claim that the glory of Rome, the Empire of Rome is unavoidable because it has been established by decision of the gods. Anchises, Aeneas' father in the Underworld is supposed to have told to Aeneas: 'tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento (hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem, parcere subiectis et debellare superbos' (Vergil, *Aeneid* 6.851-3), "you, Roman, must remember to rule through your legitimate strength populations, these will be your arts, and with your peace to impose your habits, to be merciful toward whoever submits to you and to destroy the arrogant'. Thus the gods decided very long time before that Rome must rule the world. It is necessary to say something about the Roman concept of peace. It is not the irenic peace we are speaking of today but a victorious peace: you submit an

⁴⁵⁸See F. Santangelo, *Divination, prediction and the end of the Roman Republic*, Cambridge (2013).

enemy and thus there is peace. This is the Roman concept of peace.⁴⁵⁹ This is an imperialistic program, which was decided by the gods, long time ago, in the prehistory of times.

This concept that the empire of Rome is unavoidable and will last forever is also clear in the golden shield that Aeneas receives for his fight against the Latins (Vergil, *Aeneid* 8. 626-728). This shield was thought to represent the most important victories which Rome was going to have until the victory of Octavian at Actium against Cleopatra.⁴⁶⁰ The idea that the victories of Rome from 753 until 30 BC could be represented on an object in the late 1180s should be attributed to Vergil and establishes a concept of history which didn't exist in the decades before and which was needed for the definition of the ideology of the Roman Empire.

This ideology of the Empire was also deepened by Livy, who attributes to Romulus (Livy 1. 16) the following phrase: 'abi, nuntia Romanis caelestes ita uelle ut mea Roma caput orbis terrarum sit'. 'Go out, announce to the Romans that the gods want the following: that my Rome is the capital of the world'. The gods established that, it is not a human decision.⁴⁶¹ This concept is even deepened and made clearer in Livy 28. 28. 11, where

⁴⁵⁹See J. Rüpke. *Peace and war in Rome: a religious construction of warfare*, Stuttgart (2019).

⁴⁶⁰See A. Feldherr, 'Viewing Myth and History on the Shield of Aeneas', *Classical Antiquity* 33. 2 (2014) 281-318.

⁴⁶¹See D. Pausch, 'Der Aitiologische Romulus', *Hermes* 136 (2008) 38-60.

Livy attributed to Scipio Africanus Major the following concept. I must say something about the historical context. In Spain there was an attempt to kill Scipio Africanus. Scipio says that someone can kill him but he cannot destroy the 'urbs in aeternum condita' ('the city established for the eternity'): he asserts that Jupiter Optimus Maximus would not allow that the city of Rome founded with the due auspices with the favor of the gods to endure forever is similar to his own weak mortal body. Thus a specific general can be killed, he can also lose a battle, but Rome is going to triumph in any case.⁴⁶²

This is a metaphysical concept of history. History becomes something transcendent, decided by the gods. The humans are only characters who act on the stage, but the outcome is already obvious. This concept was very original in the early years of the Augustan times, I would say even revolutionary and it will last until Machiavelli in the early 16th c. This long duration is due to the circumstance that even Christians have a similar teleological and millenaristic concept. Everything is going to the final *Parousia* of Christ, when the outcome of everybody will be decided. So, Christians took the Roman millenarism and addressed it toward another, different end of history.

This notion was also going to be deepened by Horace in the '*Carmen Saeculare*'. The '*Carmen Saeculare*' was recited by a chorus of girls and boys in year 17 BC,⁴⁶³

⁴⁶²See A. Ferrabino, *Urbs in aeternum condita*, Padua (1942).

⁴⁶³See G. Radke, 'Aspetti religiosi ed elementi politici

when according to the Augustan propaganda, a beginning Etruscan *saeculum* would be a *Saeculum Aureum*, a Golden Century.⁴⁶⁴ Even the concept of a Golden Century is new and shows that - as Vergil asserted in the 4th Eclogue - the *Saturnia Regna*, the kingdoms of Saturn when the golden age flourished in the past according to the myth, were coming back (Vergil, *Eclogae* 4. 6).⁴⁶⁵

This leads to another concept, which is typical of Roman propaganda, one of the most effective propaganda machines which ever existed in history: to the '*felicitas temporum*', *i. e.* to "the happiness of times" (see *e. g.* *CIL* 8. 16526; 23879; 10. 1401; 1656; 1692; 12. 4333 etc.). The '*felicitas temporum*' was thought to have taken place at the time of the kingdom of Saturn. Thus the restoration of this happiness will be defined in the imperial propaganda with the expression '*felicitis temporis reparatio*', *i. e.* the bringing back of that happy time.⁴⁶⁶ Thus Horace asked the Sun: "*alme Sol (...) possis nihil urbe Roma visere maius*" - 'fecund Sun, I hope you will be unable to see anything greater than Rome' (Horace,

nel Carmen saeculare', *Rivista di cultura classica e medioevale* 20 (1978) 1093-1116.

⁴⁶⁴See I. Baglioni, *Saeculum aureum: tradizione e innovazione nella religione romana di epoca augustea*, Rome (2015-2016).

⁴⁶⁵See A. Alföldi, 'Redeunt Saturnia regna', *Antiquitas* 36 (1997).

⁴⁶⁶See R. Tybout, 'Symbolik und Aktualität bei den "Fel.temp.reparatio"-Prägungen', *Babesch* 55 (1980) 51-60.

Carmen saeculare 9-12). So, Rome is the greatest thing that the Sun will ever see.

This metaphysical concept of Rome becomes even stronger in the Julio-Claudian period, especially during the kingdom of Nero. Already Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15. 435, defined Rome '*caput orbis*', i. e. a capital of the whole earth. So, the whole Earth is ideologically unified and submitted to Rome. This concept of course is not reality – there was a lot of land outside of the Roman Empire which was not under Rome – it is again a metaphysical and ideological dogma. The fact that it is not true in reality does not make it less effective as a propagandistic tool.

During the principality of Nero, Lucan changes this concept and makes it even more extreme. Lucan was a Spanish poet and feels nostalgia for the republican freedom: he was against the Empire. In his poem 'Pharsalia' he reveals clearly republican sympathies. For the issue discussed in these pages, he is absolutely crucial. He transforms the concept of Rome as '*caput orbis terrarum*', 'the capital of the earth' into '*caput mundi*' which is something completely different (Lucan, *Pharsalia* 2. 136).⁴⁶⁷ '*Mundus*' is the kosmos. So, Rome becomes not only the capital of the Earth but of the whole kosmos. So, when he says '*caput mundi rerumque potestas*' he means 'the power of everything'. This is an extremely strong statement: Rome is regarded a sort of geometrical center of the universe.

This notion also has to do with the pseudo geographical

⁴⁶⁷See T. A. Joseph, 'Pharsalia as Rome's "Day of Doom" in Lucan', *AJPh* 138 (2017) 1. 107-141.

claim that Italy is a central region of the inhabited world. It is not too cold, not too hot, it is not too much to the west, not too much to the east. This opinion was asserted by Varro in *De re rustica* 1. 2. 1-10⁴⁶⁸ and it is again claimed by Vitruvius 6. 1. 1-12. So, it is an idea well rooted in Roman society of the late 1st c. BC.

The second passage of Lucan (2. 655) is even stronger because he writes that “*ipsa, caput mundi, bellorum maxima merces, Roma capi facilis*”. So, Rome is again claimed to be the capital of the whole world. We feel behind this statement the megalomaniac dream of the greatness of Nero: the notion that Rome is the center of the universe is in keeping with Nero's dream of a universal power.⁴⁶⁹

This concept is expressed also in the visual culture. Throughout the Roman imperial time, personified Rome acquires the standard representation as an enthroned goddess holding a globe in one hand and a scepter in the other. In this iconography, she holds the world in her hand. This fact is extremely important because it makes it clear that the statement by Lucan was part of the official ideology of the state.⁴⁷⁰I forward the famous Roma Barberini, once possessed by the Barberini family in Palazzo Barberini. She holds in her hand a Victory

⁴⁶⁸See A. Le Bris, ‘Encore sur l'Italia picta du temple de Tellus (Varron, RR I, 2, 1)’, *MÉFRA* 119,1 (2007)75-83.

⁴⁶⁹See J. Merten, *Nero: Kaiser, Künstler und Tyrann*, Darmstadt (2016).

⁴⁷⁰See C. Fayer, *Il culto della dea Roma: origine e diffusione nell'impero*, Pescara (1976) and E. Di Filippo Balestrazzi, ‘Roma’, *LIMC* 8 (1997) 1048-1068.

(fig. 117).⁴⁷¹ So, she is, to use the standard words of the Roman propaganda, '*semper vincens*', 'always winning' (see *e. g.* Optatian, *Carmina* 7. 27-30).⁴⁷² This is not true, but it is again meta-historical, ideology. Rome has also a scepter on the other side which gives emphasis to her power and sovereignty.

In late antiquity even if it is no longer true, poets keep advertising the universal power of Rome. We have to take in consideration Rutilius Namatianus, a Gallic poet who lived in Rome after its destruction by Alaric of 410. He left Rome to return to Gaul in 416, 6 years after the sack of Alaric. He was very sad for leaving Rome, where he was a member of the learned society.⁴⁷³ In this poem '*De reditu suo*', 'About his return', he addresses Rome with assertions which are extremely important for the ideological conception of Rome in the propaganda of the time (*De reditu suo* 1. 63-66):

'Fecisti patriam diversis gentibus unam', 'you made just one homeland of different populations', '*profuit multis te dominante capi*', 'being submitted to your rule was of advantage to many'. Then there is an expression, which is absolutely crucial: '*Urbem fecisti, quod prius orbis erat*' what was before the earth you transformed into a city'. The city of Rome represents the whole earth. This

⁴⁷¹See M. Cagiano de Azevedo, 'La dea Barberini', *RIASA3* (1954) 109-146.

⁴⁷²See M. Squire and J. Wienand, *Morphogrammata / The lettered art of Optatian*, Paderborn (2017).

⁴⁷³See É. Wolff, *Rutilius Namatianus, aristocrate païen en voyage et poète*, Bordeaux (2020).

is extremely important and shows that the rhetoric of Rome was not about to fade, even in late antiquity.⁴⁷⁴

This rhetoric of Rome and also the images of Rome with the globe in one hand and the scepter in the other hand of course fade during the period when there is no Western Roman Empire,⁴⁷⁵ but are resurrected in the Carolingian period and even more with the Saxony dynasty, when Otto I established the Sacred Roman Germanic Empire with the privilege of Otto of 961.⁴⁷⁶ This notion becomes very well established especially when Otto III, who was nostalgic of the past greatness of Rome, decided to live in Rome. According to most scholars he took accommodation in the Palace on the Palatine for symbolic reasons. A minority of the scholars disagrees on that but agrees that he lived in Rome:⁴⁷⁷ he commissioned to his court poet Eugenius Vulgarius the following poem (Eugenius Vulgarius, *Sylloga*, Schramm ed., 52-53, no. 33):

Roma caput mundi rerum suprema potestas
terrarum terror fulmen quod fulminate orbem

⁴⁷⁴See D. Hernández San José, 'Urbemfecisti quod priusorbis erat: el crisol romano en los albores de la Edad Media', *Roma y el mundo mediterráneo*, *Alcalá* (2015) 305-326.

⁴⁷⁵About the attitude toward Rome of the time, see S. Ensoli and E. La Rocca (eds.), *Aurea Roma: dalla città pagana alla città cristiana*, Rome (2000).

⁴⁷⁶See E. Garrison, *Ottonian Imperial Art and Portraiture. The Artistic Patronage of Otto III and Henry II*, Ashgate (2012).

⁴⁷⁷See G. Althoff, *Otto III*, Darmstadt (1996).

regnorum cultus bellorum vivida virtus
immortale decus solum haec urbs super omnes'.

'Rome is the capital of the world, the greatest power of
the world,

She scares the earth, she is a thunder which can strike
the earth,

She is object of veneration of kingdoms, the lively virtue
of wars,

She is the only decent entity which is immortal, this city
is above all the others.⁴⁷⁸

This poem is a very imperialistic and conveys a very
strong notion, it sends the message that nobody should
dare to object the emperor.

This concept was topical from the time of Holy Roman
Emperor Conrad II: perhaps he was the first Emperor
who had a seal with the following inscription:

'Roma caput mundi regitorbisfrenarotundi'

'Rome, the capital of the world, holds the power of the
round earth'.

This statement is also very strong and will appear on
imperial seals at least until the time of Emperor Charles
IV of Bohemia.⁴⁷⁹

This notion of course was going to fade with the decline
of the ideal that the Christian world should submit just to
one Emperor. This ideal is still asserted by Dante

⁴⁷⁸ See G. Braga, 'Eugenio Vulgaro', *Dizionario
Biografico degli Italiani* 43 (1993)
[https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/eugenio-
vulgaro_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/eugenio-vulgaro_(Dizionario-Biografico))

⁴⁷⁹ See **Andrea Stieldorf**, *Siegelkunde. Basiswissen*,
Hannover(2004).

Alighieri in his *De Monarchia*, especially in 3. 12-15: in this part of his treatise he justifies the presence of a universal monarchy which leads its citizens to the earthy happiness.⁴⁸⁰

However this ideal in the late middle age is no longer asserted because this universalistic concept of unified monarchy is fading with the establishment of the national states.

Nevertheless it is still sometimes asserted in reference with the continuity from the Roman Empire to the Christian order.

Trajan was thought to be the first Christian Emperor, having been 'saved' long time after his death by Pope Gregory the Great, as it had been asserted by Jacopo da Varazze in his *Legenda Aurea* 46.⁴⁸¹

In the age which goes from the XVth century to the XVIIIth century, the eternal authority of Rome was no longer regarded in terms of effective political power, because the state of the Pope was too weak to reassert the glory of Rome in those terms. The greatness of Rome is rather regarded a phenomenon of a remote past which is no longer operating in present times. That is argued by the standard phrase used to epitomize that past splendor:

'*Roma quanta fuit ipsa ruina docet*'. 'The same ruin teaches how great Rome has been'.⁴⁸²

⁴⁸⁰See R. Imbach and C. Flüeler, *Monarchia*, Stuttgart (1998).

⁴⁸¹Teodor de Wyzewa and Jean-Pierre Lapiere, *Jacques de Voragine, La légende dorée*, Paris (2014)

⁴⁸²C. ParisiPresicce, "'Roma quanta fuit ipsa ruina

This phrase, as far as it is known, had been 'invented' by Francesco Albertini, *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae et veteris urbis Romae*, 1510, p. 75 v,⁴⁸³ and became topical afterwards.

However the myth of the greatness of Rome as political power in present times resurrected in Italy with the movement to the unification of Italy in 19th century.

The most assertive poet of this imperialistic mission of Rome, is Giosue Carducci. In his poem recited on the Capitoline hill in Rome on 21st of April (the birthday of Rome) of 1876, he says:⁴⁸⁴

'Salve, deaRoma! Chi disconósceti
cerchiato ha il senno di fredda tenebra,
e a lui nel reo cuore germoglia
torpida la selva di barbarie'.

'Hi, goddess Rome, whoever does not recognize you, has a brain surrounded by cold darkness and inside himself in his guilty heart a very stagnating barbarian forest is growing.'

Needless to say, this concept of the greatness of Rome will be very much exalted during the golden age of the nationalism in the late 19 century and early 20 century. And of course, it will be very much exalted in the period between the two world wars, when Horace's *Carmen*

[docet"](#), F. Papi (ed.) *Luca Signorelli e Roma*, Rome (2019)42-49.

⁴⁸³L. Amato, 'Francesco Albertini e l'*Opusculum de mirabilibus urbis Romae*', *Acta conventus neo-latini* 14. 1 (2012) 167-176.

⁴⁸⁴L. Braccisi, *Memoria del passato e poesia del nazionalismo*, Rome (2006).

Saeculare became even a song: the text was composed by Fausto Salvatori, the music by Giacomo Puccini in 1919.

Carducci might have addressed his insulting statement against Theodor Mommsen who on the contrary gave a very cold presentation of the Roman Empire explaining also its weaknesses and why it faded and in the end it collapsed. Of course, the most nationalist intellectuals could not like this scientific approach.⁴⁸⁵

So, the myth of Rome as you can see lasted for a very long time and it brought not a rationalistic but metaphysical concept of human agency. Also it prepared the dynamic concept of the history of salvation of the Christianity because even in the Christian belief, human agency is an itinerary going to the last *parousia* of Christ as its ultimate end, which was decided from the beginning of the times. It also influenced the theory of the divine grace by Saint Agostine, according to which human agency does not determine your personal salvation but only the grace of God decides that. Thus according to the saint of Ippona the fate of everybody was also decided in advance: a theory which is indebted to the millenaristic concept.⁴⁸⁶

So, I believe that this new concept of the history is one of the most original patterns of the Roman civilization. The success of this interpretation of history explains why the Greek rationalistic concept of history, which

⁴⁸⁵See A. Giuliano (ed.), *Theodor Mommsen e l'Italia*, Rome (2003).

⁴⁸⁶See A. Trapè, *S. Agostino: Introduzione alla Dottrina della Grazia*, Rome (1990).

prevailed from the late Sophistic period until the late Hellenistic period, became obsolete for a long period.

Questions:

In this concept as far as I understand the city of Rome was crucial, not the Roman Empire in general. How about the time of late antiquity, when other centers, including Constantinople, become important? Was this concept still strong?

Until Rutilius Namatianus who speaks in the second decade of 5th century certainly, it is still strong. After him it is much less asserted. However the recognition of the prestige of Rome is clear in letters made by the king of Italy Theoderic, a Goth, who took care also of the restoration of monuments of Rome. According to scholar Cristina La Rocca, Theoderic did very little.⁴⁸⁷ Sometimes politicians assert the accomplishment of enterprises which in fact are not realized or are made only in part. However, the admiration of Rome is clear also in a poem of Apollinaris Sidonius which had been delivered when he became a bishop and he went to Rome to have this recognition.⁴⁸⁸ A reference to the greatness of Rome in the 5th century is clear in the enterprises of Emperor Majorian who tried to reestablish the geographic extension of the Roman Empire by resubmitting Gallia which had become independent and

⁴⁸⁷See C. La Rocca, *Public buildings and urban change in northern Italy in the early mediaeval period*, London (1992).

⁴⁸⁸R. Behrwald, 'Das Bild der Stadt Rom im 5. Jh.: das Beispiel des Sidonius Apollinaris', T. Fuhrer (ed.), *Rom und Mailand in der Spätantike*, Berlin (2012) 283-302.

Spain.⁴⁸⁹ According to Gibbon he was the last greatest Roman Emperor of the West.⁴⁹⁰ Needless to say the Popes sometimes asserted the superiority of Rome to any other power in the Christianity. The uniqueness of Rome is also very clear in the false Testament of Constantine who was thought to have given Rome to the Pope, which was a fake fabricated probably in the late 8th century by the papal chancery in order to claim that Rome was their own city. The recognition that this testament is a fake was already established by Lorenzo Valla in 1440 in his book '*De falso credita et ementita Constantini donatione*'. Despite the false nature of this document, still it shows the prestige enjoyed of Rome in late Longobardic or early Carolingian times.⁴⁹¹

Moreover the fact that several holy Roman Emperors beginning from Charlemagne were crowned by the Pope means that without this recognition they could not exercise their legal power. The concept that only Rome can give legitimacy to an Emperor will be effective throughout all the Middle age.⁴⁹² Only the sunset of the

⁴⁸⁹G. E. Max, 'Political intrigue during the reigns of the Western Roman emperors Avitus and Majorian', *Historia* 28 (1979) 225-237.

⁴⁹⁰Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter XXXVI, "Total Extinction Of The Western Empire".

⁴⁹¹G. Pepe, *La falsa Donazione di Costantino*, Discorso di Lorenzo Valla sulla Donazione di Costantino da falsarisacciata per vera e con menzognasostenuta per vera, Florence (1992).

⁴⁹²See M. Fleener, *The Significance of the Coronation of*

universalism of the middle age puts an end to this myth. The resurrection and nationalistic climax in Italy in the late 19th century is not something which affects a large historical pattern, it is a very provincial story.

Lecture 12. The formation of a Christian classicism

When the Christians began writing literary works, in the late AD 2nd c., the refuse of pagan imagery was uncompromised. For example, the first Christian writer who speaks about pagan works of art is Tatian (*Oratio ad Graecos*) around AD 170: his refuse of the pagan imaginary is total.⁴⁹³ He does not see a positive side of this heritage. The classical visual world is just condemned.

However, as Christianity progressed towards conquering power and being rooted in the society, of course, it had to compromise and to accept that the pagan world produced many important works of art which had to be respected.

This attitude was made clear in a decree by emperors Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius of the year 382: it is found in the *Codex Theodosianus*, no.16.10.8:

Idem aaa. Palladio duci Osdroenae. aedem olim frequentiae dedicatam coetui et iam populo quoque communem, in qua simulacra feruntur posita artis pretio quam divinitate metienda iugiter patere publici consilii auctoritate decernimus neque huic rei ob reptivum officere sinimus oraculum. Ut conventu urbis et frequenti coetu videatur, experiential tua omni votorum celebritate servata auctoritate nostri ita patere templum permittat oraculi, ne illic prohibitorum usus sacrificiorum huius occasione aditus permissus esse

⁴⁹³See P. Gemeinhardt and H. -G. [Nesselrath](#), *GegenfalscheGötter und falscheBildung: Tatian, Rede an die Griechen*, Tübingen (2016).

credatur. dat. prid. kal. dec. Constantinopoli Antonio et Syagrius cons. (382 nov. 30).

Translation: 'The same Augustuses to Palladius, duke of Osrhoene. By the authority of the public council We decree that temple shall continually be open that was formerly dedicated to the assemblage of throngs of people and now also is for the common use of the people, and in which statues are reported to have been placed which must be measured by the value of their art rather than by their divinity; We do not permit any divine imperial response that was surreptitiously obtained to prejudice this situation. In order that this temple may be seen by the assemblages of the city and by frequent crowds, Your experience shall preserve all celebrations of festivities and by the authority of Our divine imperial response, You shall permit the temple to be open, but in such a way that the performance of sacrifices forbidden therein may not be supposed to be permitted under the pretext of such access to the temple. Given on the day before the Kalends of December at Constantinople in the year of the consulship of Antonius and Syagrius – November, 30, 382'.

In this decree we find the important distinction between the *artis pretium* of the *simulacrum*, which has to be respected, from the *divinitas*, which is condemned by these Christian emperors.⁴⁹⁴

This document reveals that at least a part of the Christian society accepted the new concept that they have to keep the religious contents of pagan works of art apart from their artistic values. This distinction led to the imitation

⁴⁹⁴ About this decree, see Lepelley (note 451) 5-15.

of these works of art, of their *schemata* and of their styles in new creations demanded by the *civitas Christiana*, the Christian community.⁴⁹⁵

This Christian classicism may have been peaked with two monuments which unfortunately are lost.

The first of them was the column of Theodosius set up in Constantinople and the other was the column of Arcadius also in the same city. Both columns unfortunately have not survived.

The column of Theodosius⁴⁹⁶ was set up to celebrate the victory of Theodosius against the German tribe of the Greuthungi,⁴⁹⁷ which crossed the Danube and threatened the same Constantinople. This victory took place in 385 and the construction of this column probably began around 386 (of course, these dates are not absolute) and was certainly finished by 393. This column was the imitation of two columns of Rome of Trajan and of Marcus Aurelius and it was also a spiral one: it was

⁴⁹⁵About this Christian classicism, see P. R. Hardie, *Classicism and Christianity*, Oakland (2019) and B. Kiilerich, *Late Fourth Century Classicism*, Odense (1993).

⁴⁹⁶ About this column, see S. Sande, 'Some new fragments from the Column of Theodosius', *Acta ad archaeologiam et artiumhistoriampertinentia. Series altera*, 1 (1981) 1-78, with previous bibliography and G. Becatti, *La colonna coelide istoriata. Problemi storici, iconografici, stilistici*, Rome (1960) 83-150.

⁴⁹⁷About the movements of Gothic tribes within the Roman empire, see P. J. Heather, *Goths and Romans*, Oxford (1991).

endowed with a ribbon of sculptural relieves going from below to the top.

This column was demolished by Sultan Bayezid II⁴⁹⁸ before 1505 in order to build his famous Hamam in the same spot. In this complex several fragments of this frieze have been found, re-used in the walls of the baths. However, in the years 1479-1480, the Republic of Venice sent to Constantinople Gentile Bellini, a very important painter with assistants,⁴⁹⁹ who reproduced the central part of the frieze with a series of drawings, and specifically the part which goes from the third row to the seventh row of this running frieze.⁵⁰⁰ Thus we can partially appreciate at least the central part of this frieze through these drawings made by the assistants of Bellini. Bellini painted an important portrait of sultan Mehmet II.⁵⁰¹

These drawings are now kept at Paris, Louvre, nos. 4951 and 32264, and were published for the first time by the French scholar, Menestrier in 1702.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁸About this Sultan, see M. Nasuh, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, Tulum (2015).

⁴⁹⁹About this important episode, see C. Campbell, *Bellini and the East*, London (2005).

⁵⁰⁰About these drawings, see E. Müntz, 'La colonne Théodosienne à Constantinople d'après les prétendus dessins de Gentile Bellini conservés au Louvre et à l'École des beaux-arts', *REG* 1 (1888) 318-325.

⁵⁰¹See note 499.

⁵⁰²See C. -F. Menestrier, *Columna Theodosiana*, Paris

In these drawings you see a procession of knights in front of two porticos full of statues (fig. 118), which reveals the importance of the sculptures, which decorated the urban landscape of Constantinople. The identification of the architectural complexes which included these porticoes is a difficult question: from these drawings we understand that this procession of soldiers was outside the walls of the *secunda Roma*. Perhaps Becatti⁵⁰³ was right in identifying this site with the palace of Hebdomon, which was located one mile outside the walls of Constantinople.⁵⁰⁴ Most of these late antique palaces had their own sets of sculptures: these works of art were clearly appreciated as sources of both *auctoritas* and *venustas*.

The procession continues in front of the second portico full of statues. One of them (the 7th from the beginning of the portico at the viewer's left) bears the style of the Capitoline Aphrodite. We can suppose that the original statue of the Capitoline Aphrodite was brought from Rome to Constantinople. The original statue is probably described by Ovid, *Ars amatoria* 2. 613-614:

Ipsa Venus pubem, quotiens velamina ponit,
Protegitur laeva semireducta manu.

'The same Venus, when she lays aside her robes, covers

(1702).

⁵⁰³See note 496.

⁵⁰⁴ About this palace, see A. Taddei, 'Notes on the so-called "Palace of Ioukoundiani" at Hebdomon (Constantinople)', *Hortus atrium medievalium. Journal of the International Research Center for Late Antiquity and Middle Ages*, 20 (2014) 77-84.

her pubes with her bent left hand'

Probably the same statue is also mentioned by Pliny 36. 24 as the work of Cephisodotus the Younger, a son of Praxiteles: it was set up among the *Asini Pollionis monumenta* in the *Atrium Libertatis*.⁵⁰⁵ Other works from Rome, for example a seating Heracles by Lysippus were moved to Constantinople.⁵⁰⁶

The fact that a naked Aphrodite was shown in this portico shows that at least the imperial elite which promoted the column of Theodosius was quite relaxed about pagan imagery. They were not as the monks in Syria who according to Libanius, *Pro templis*, were destroying pagan statues and temples. In this period one of the most influential intellectuals in the imperial circle at Constantinople was a pagan, Themistius.⁵⁰⁷ So there was also a pagan milieu around the emperor Theodosius even if he was a Christian.

Let us notice also the architectural contexts of these statues: these porticos have Corinthian columns, niches in the intercolumniations and 'classic looking' statues in the niches: the classical grammar of architecture is also

⁵⁰⁵See C. M. Amici, 'Atrium Libertatis', *Atti della Pontificia accademia romana di archeologia. Rendiconti* 68 (1995-96) 295-321. About Cephisodotus the Younger, see A. Corso, 'Retrieving the Style of Cephisodotus the Younger', *Arctos* 48 (2014) 109-136.

⁵⁰⁶See S. Kansteiner, 'Lysipps Statuen des Herakles', *AA* (2020) 1-18.

⁵⁰⁷See L. Faedo, 'Teodosio, Temistio e l'ideologia arcaica', *RM* 105 (1998) 315-328.

very much praised.

A part from these porticos which probably represent one part of the imperial palace of Hebdomon, one mile outside the walls, the frieze represents also the countryside. We find triangular *picturae triumphales* (figs. 119, 120, 121 and 122)⁵⁰⁸ which include a pastoral *idyllion* with a shepherd with his cattle. This episode probably advertized the peace and abundance secured by emperor Theodosius. Another triangular representation has a female seating goddess (*Tellus?*) with bare breasts which also may suggest the fecundity and plenty enjoyed by the lucky inhabitants of the empire. Other female figures (*Tyche? Nemesis?*) in these triangular compositions bear girdles below their breasts and very classicistic draperies and folding. Appealing images of gorgeous young females had often been eloquent advertisements of the *felicitas temporum* in the Roman imperial propaganda and are still adopted by a Christian emperor as Theodosius.

Needless to say, this procession is very indebted to the *pompae triumphales* of the Roman propaganda.

The representation of the vanquished Greuthungi with their long beards and gloomy faces is also indebted to traditional figures of barbarians submitted to Rome:⁵⁰⁹ there are centuries of the visual propaganda of the Roman state behind this frieze.

The other architectures which appear in this frieze also

⁵⁰⁸The interpretation accepted here of these triangular scenes is that of Becatti (note 496).

⁵⁰⁹The bibliography on these issues is huge. Here I cite only R. M. Schneider, *Bunte Barbaren*, Worms (1986).

deserve a mention. We have a gate in the shape of a triumphal arc with Corinthian columns, a gabled building, a gabled portico with arched intercolumniations, another gate with a double arc also with Corinthian columns, another gate with another double arc which is too endowed with Corinthian columns, which seems to be the gate of the harbor, the two porticos which have been already mentioned with statues, two probable prostyle Corinthian temples, one with five columns in the front and the other with three columns in front and five half-columns and niches in the intercolumniations on the long sides, behind which there is an arched portico with two floors.

This frieze derives from the *picturaetriumphales*: they were painted panels with representations, which were exposed during the triumph for the victory of a general.⁵¹⁰

For example, one of the triangular compositions is the typical scene of the trophy with prisoners below.

The triangular scenes derive from the Roman imperial propaganda and are pagan imagery because goddesses are represented: the patrons of the imperial circle had not thought that these patterns should be rejected.

Few years after the setting of the column of Theodosius in the *forum* named after this emperor, in the beginning of the 5th century, another column was set up in Constantinople by Arcadius, the Elder son of Theodosius who inherited the eastern part of the Empire, in the *forum* which was named after this emperor: it was

⁵¹⁰See e. g. P. J. Holliday, 'Roman triumphal Paintings', *The Art Bulletin* 79 (1997) 130-147.

began around 400 and completed in 421 by Theodosius II. The patrons of these two columns wanted Constantinople to be no less prestigious than Rome and so, since Rome had two spiral columns, Constantinople needed to have two spiral columns as well.

The frieze of this column represented another victory, against the army of Gainas, a German head of an army who was very close to capture Constantinople.⁵¹¹ This column lasted more than the column of Theodosius, until 1719 and was drawn several times during the last two centuries of its existence. During this period the column was already damaged, with large fractures, and had to be held with iron ribbons. The most important among these drawings are the Freshfield ones, made in 1574 by an artist who was a member of the delegation sent to Constantinople by the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II: they represent the frieze from three sides (west, south and east). Unfortunately in the north side Turkish houses which were very close to the column made it impossible to draw the column. This album is now in the Trinity College Library at Cambridge.

⁵¹¹ See on this column and its historical context, J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, 'The Gainas crisis at Constantinople in 399. Cover up at Constantinople. The Gainas crisis and the column of Arcadius', D. H. French (ed.), *The Eastern frontier of the Roman Empire*, Oxford (1989) 277-283. Becatti (note 496) 151-264 is crucial for the reliefs. From the architectural point of view, C. B. Konrad, 'Beobachtungen zur Architektur und Stellung des Säulenmonumentes in Istanbul-Cerrahpaşa, Arkadiossäule', *IstMitt* 51 (2001) 319-401.

Thus it has been possible to get a general notion of how the column of Arcadius looked like: it was topped by the statue of Arcadius who held the *labarus* of victory in his right hand.

A reconstruction drawing of this monument has been attempted. Part of the base has survived and the reliefs of the base are represented in the Freshfield album (fig. 123). *Nikai* were represented and held a cross, offering a mix of pagan and Christian imagery. Moreover 'putti', clearly derived from Hellenistic putti held festoons of victory.

At the beginning of the frieze from below, the hippodromus of Constantinople appeared and great emphasis was given to statues adorning this monument:⁵¹² we can argue from this concern that these statues were praised, although in several cases their subjects were pagan.

Another realm in which we can appreciate the Christian continuity of pagan patterns is the adoption of the typology of the round temple with a central layout, whose most famous ancient example is the Pantheon,⁵¹³ for new, Christian architectures. Since it was in Rome, the Pantheon was imitated. One of the most noteworthy new buildings inspired to this Hadrianic 'model' was the

⁵¹²About these statues, see S. G. Bassett, 'The antiquities in the hippodrome of Constantinople', *DOP* 45 (1991) 87-96.

⁵¹³About the Pantheon, see T. A. Marder and M. Wilson Jones, *The Pantheon: from antiquity to the present*, New York (2015).

mausoleum of Saint Constantia⁵¹⁴ but of course the examples after the period of Constantine became very numerous and important. Thus the inspiration by the Pantheon became topical. Another important example is the round Church of Saint Stephan⁵¹⁵ in Rome, which bears basically the same architectural plan.

This classicistic aura can be found also in precious objects. Emperor Theodosius, when he celebrated the 10 years of his empire in 388, commissioned a *missorium*, or silver phiale or patera which is preserved in Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, Gabinete de Antigüedades, no. 1848. 67 and was found in the ancient territory of *Emerita Augusta*, which was capital both of the *Dioecesis Hispaniae* and of the Lusitania province: Theodosius was from Spain. Although Theodosius was a Christian emperor, this vessel bears the representation of Earth personified (fig. 124), who held a horn of plenty and was surrounded by 'putti' representing the καρποί, personifications of the fruits produced by Earth. Earth is represented as a half-naked lady: there is not yet prudery towards the female naked body. The putti are also naked. This depiction of a recumbent Gaia with horn of plenty and karpoi is close to a representation of the same subjects in a cosmological painting which was located either in Gaza or in Antioch and is described by John of Gaza, *Descriptio picturae cosmicae* 2. 7-44: thus it is not impossible that whoever decided the inclusion of this

⁵¹⁴ For this issue, see J. J. Rasch, *Das Mausoleum der Constantina in Rom*, Mainz (2007).

⁵¹⁵ See H. Brandenburg (ed.), *Santo Stefano Rotondo in Roma*, Wiesbaden (2000).

pattern in the scene of the *missorium* took inspiration from this painting.

Moreover, *Gaia* was represented also on the base of the equestrian statue of Theodosius in his *forum* at Constantinople, near his column (*Anthologia Graeca* 16. 65) and a personification with a similar configuration, probably representing *Thalassa*, topped the relief of the column of Arcadius.⁵¹⁶

Another example is the representation of the personification of the Jordan River in the Arians' Baptistery in Ravenna (fig. 125),⁵¹⁷ which of course derives from the classical figures of rivers. Rivers were gods in the pagan imagery and it is quite remarkable that in abaptistery the personification of a river is still accepted.

These examples reveal how much in the most learned quarters of the Christian world there was continuity with the previous pagan imagery, even in representations of gods.

This continuity is also clear in reliefs on Christian sarcophagi. The most eloquent example of this continuity is found in the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, *praefectus urbi* in AD 359, who was also *vir clarissimus*. The sarcophagus was discovered below the Constantinian church of Saint Peter where the sarcophagus was probably set up. He was a very active figure in the period of Constantius. The biblical and Christian subjects evoked on this sarcophagus reveal

⁵¹⁶See note 511.

⁵¹⁷About this baptistery, see T. Bruno, 'Il battistero degli Ariani a Ravenna', *Felix Ravenna* 37 (1963) 5-82.

that Bassus was a Christian. The sarcophagus is kept in the museum of the treasure of Saint Peter, in the Vatican.⁵¹⁸

A naked woman representing Eve (fig. 126) in the sarcophagus clearly derived from the Capitoline Aphrodite because she shields her pubes with her left hand. A scene represents 'putti' harvesting grapes. Figures of Christ and the Apostles are inspired to standard ancient depictions of philosophers. You argue from these reliefs that at least one important quarter of the Christian upper society was sensible to the appeal of classical models. Christianity triumphed also because it was able to appropriate a lot of patterns of the previous pagan world and thus absorbed the previous culture. In this sarcophagus, even the free-standing, Corinthian columns are in keeping with the general classicistic aura and reveal the desire to continue the tradition of the Asiatic sarcophagi with columns.

This is a period when Roman emperors are still surrounded by pagan intellectuals: it should be noticed that Rome in the period was still predominantly pagan.⁵¹⁹

This appropriation of the classical culture by Christians and the creation of a new classical-Christian synthesis were going to determine the fact that several Christian monks, bishops and sometimes even popes will be very learned in the classical heritage of the Greek and Latin world, will save a lot of classical literature and also

⁵¹⁸See E. S. Malbon, *The iconography of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus*, Princeton (1990).

⁵¹⁹See La Rocca and Ensoli (eds.) (note 475).

several ancient monuments by creating museums of pagan statues. These collections existed in Constantinople, in Rome, in Verona and in many other cities.⁵²⁰ They created the premises of a new synthesis, of a new civilization, which saved a lot of the classical heritage.

Questions:

Could you please explain these bucolic scenes in this military context?

They have more than one function. First of all they must show to viewers that the procession of soldiers takes place in the countryside. There is probably a second reason. They advertize the rhetoric of *hesychia*, of being far from cities, very quiet meditative and contemplative. This notion is in keeping with the practice of Christians who abandon cities and go to remote places to be closer to God. Thus probably these scenes have to do with the ideology which sees cities as something corrupting and the countryside as a place which is healthy. Finally views of country-sides with trees, cattle, shepherds and fruit are symbols of abundance and express the notion that the Roman Empire guarantees a joyful abundance to everybody. Not by chance Theodosius promoted the above-mentioned *missorium* from Madrid where the carpoi (fruits) also show the same notion of the abundance. This is all I wanted to say.

⁵²⁰See Lepelley (note 494) and A. Corso, 'Il collezionismo di scultura nell'antichità', G. Fusconi (ed.), *I Giustiniani e l'antico*, Rome (2001) 101-129. For the collections in Constantinople, S. G. Bassett, *The urban image of late antique Constantinople*, Cambridge (2004).

The column of Theodosius had triangular compositions. Am I correct to say that these triangular compositions repeated paintings or something like that?

When Roman generals celebrated their triumphs the *picturae triumphales* were shown with panels revealing sites and compositions which advertized these victories. So, the scholar who studied these drawings in more details than anybody else, Giovanni Beccatti suggested that these triangular patterns are the *picturaetriumphales* represented in occasion of the triumph of Theodosius upon the Greuthungi.

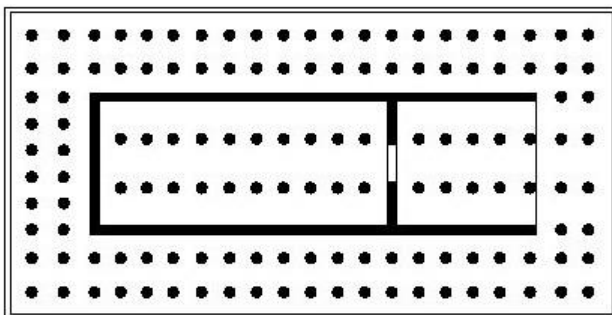


Fig. 1. Plan of the Heraion of Samos, Dypteros no. II.



Fig. 2. Nike of Arkesmos, Athens, National Museum

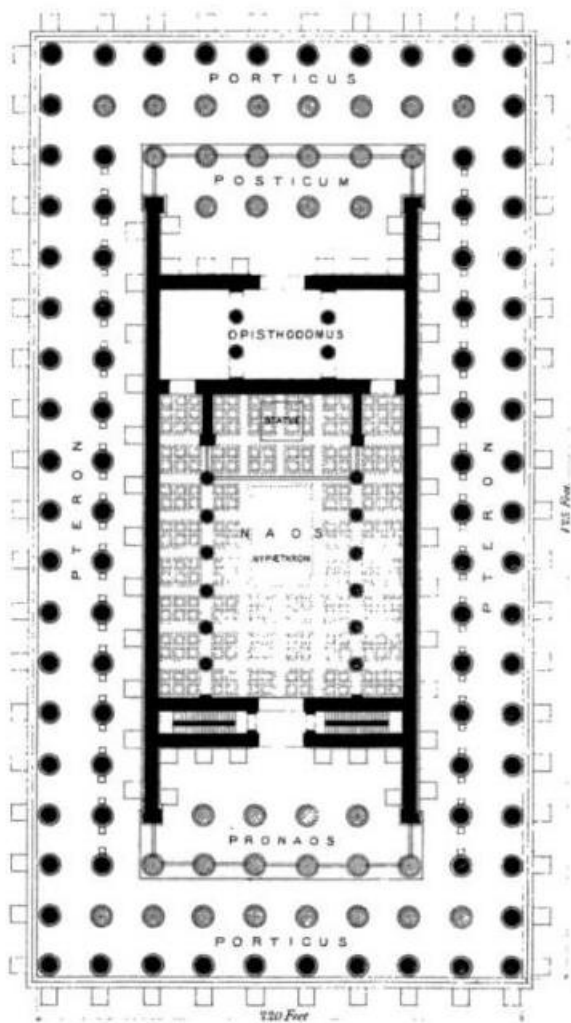


Fig. 3. Plan of Croesus' Artemision at Ephesus.



Fig. 4. Portrait of Augustus from Prima Porta, Rome, Vatican museums.



Fig. 5. Reverse of coin with Colossus of Nero, London, British Museum, department of coins.

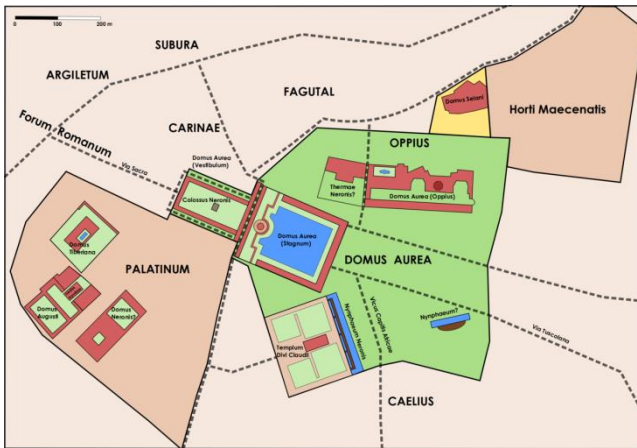


Fig. 6. Plan of the Domus Aurea.



Fig. 7. Peplos Kore, Athens, Akropolis Museum.



Fig. 8. Hunting frieze, Vergina, Royal tomb II, Philip II's tomb.



Fig. 9. Alexander's and Darius' mosaic, Naples, National Archaeological Museum.

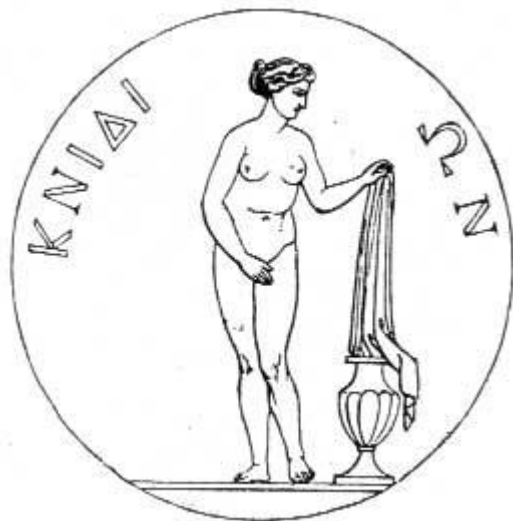


Fig. 10. Cnidian Aphrodite on reverse of coin struck under Plautilla and Caracalla, London, British Museum, Department of coins.



Fig. 11. Trajan's column, Rome.



Fig. 12. Aurelian column, Rome.



Fig. 13. Aphrodite anadyomene, Pompeii, House of the Prince of Naples.



Fig. 14. Alexander keraunophoros, Pompeii, House of Vettii.

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Fig. 15. Mattei Amazon, Rome, Capitoline Museums.



Fig. 16. Venus Colonna, Rome, Vatican Museums.



Fig. 17. Agrippina / Olympias Aphrodite, Rome, Torlonia Museum, regarded by Delivorrias a copy from the Aphrodite Sosandra by Calamis.



\n Fig. 18. Palagi / Dresden Athena, often regarded a copy of Phidias' Athena Lemnia, head at Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico, body at Dresden, Kunstsammlungen, Skulpturensammlung.



Fig. 19. The Parthenon, Athens.



\ Fig. 20. Athena Medici, often regarded a copy from Phidias' Athena Promachos, Paris, Louvre.

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Fig. 21. Varvakeion Athena, Athens, National Archaeological Museum.

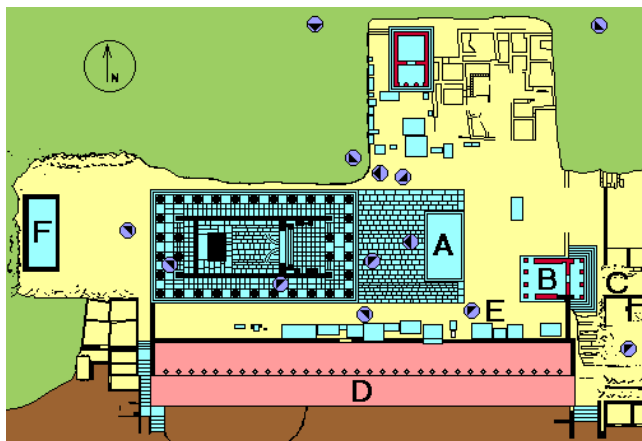


Fig. 22. The temple of Athena at Priene, plan.



Fig. 23. Reconstruction of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus according to Jeppesen.



Fig. 24. Reconstruction of the temple of Dionysos at Teos according to Dr. Uz.

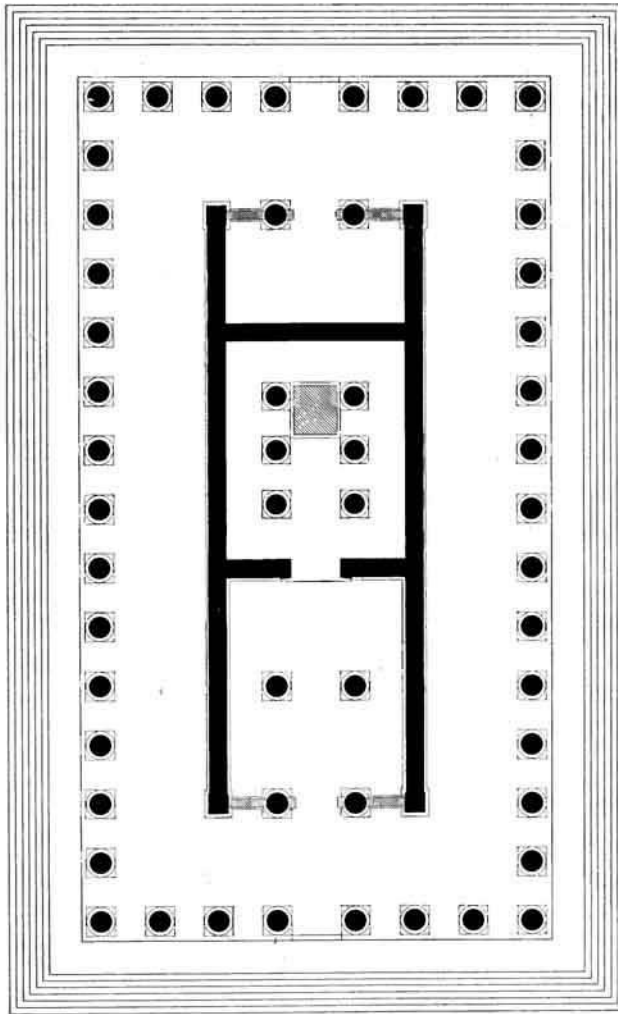


Fig. 25. Temple of Artemis at Magnesia, plan.



Fig. 26. Tower of the winds, Athens.



Fig. 27. Reconstruction model of the altar of Pergamon.

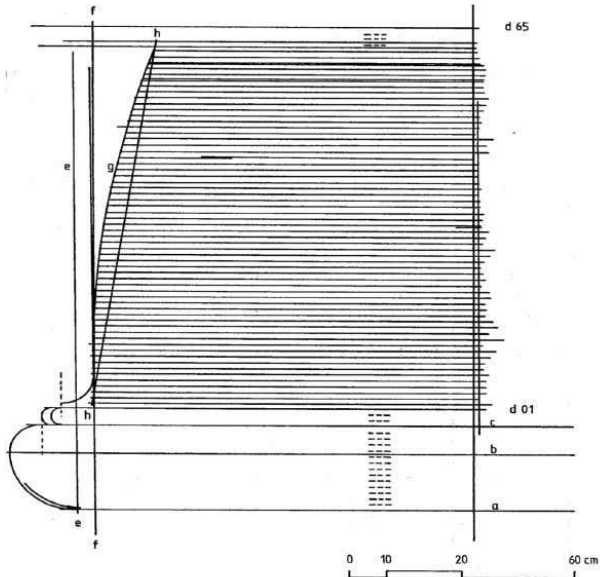


Fig. 28. Drawing of entasis from the Didymaion near Miletus.



Fig. 29. Reconstruction drawing of the cella of the temple of Athena Alea at Tegea.

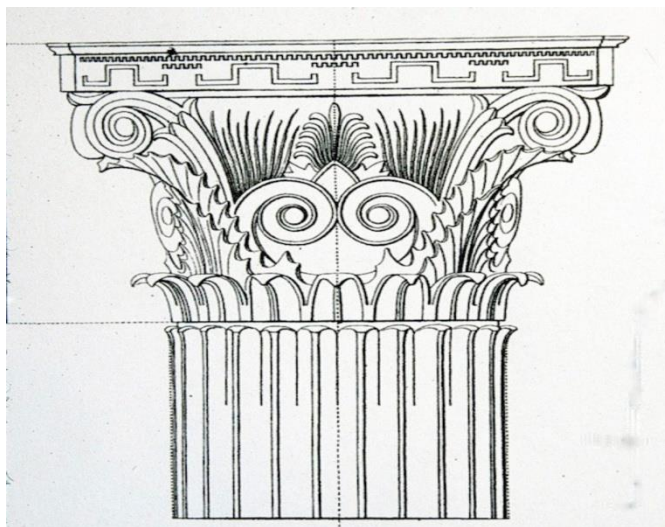


Fig. 30. Corinthian capital of the temple of Apollo at Bassae according to Cockerell.

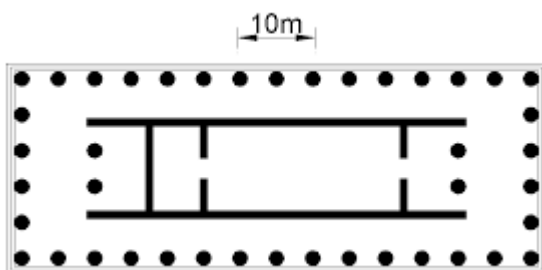
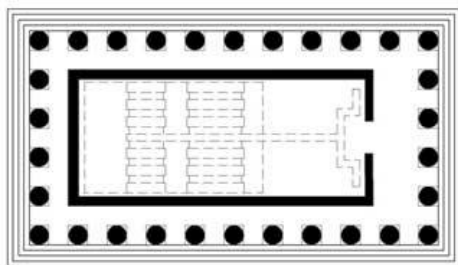


Fig. 31. Plan of the archaic temple of Hera near Argos.

Temple of Apollo in Claros



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Fig. 32. Plan of the temple of Apollo at Claros.

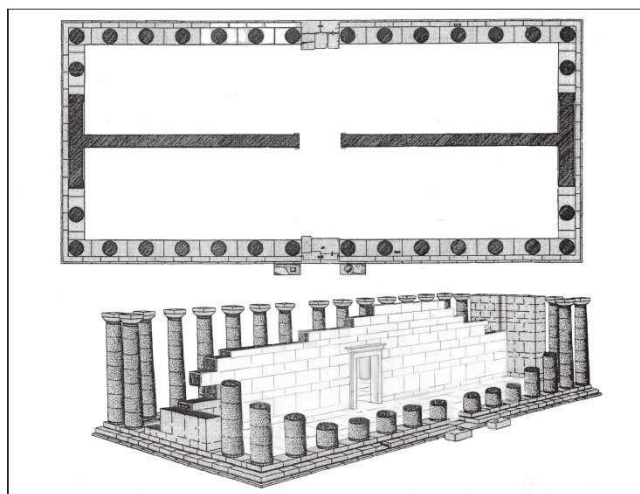
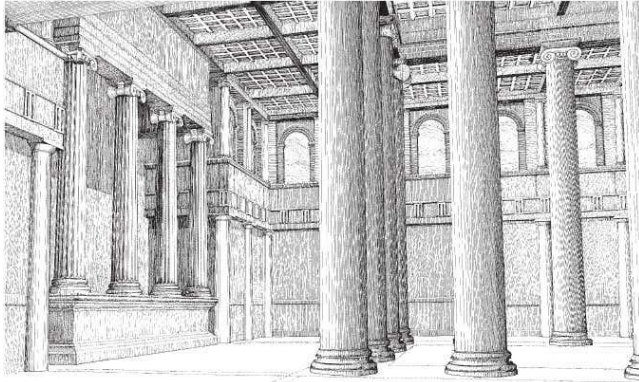


Fig. 33. Plan of the possible temple of Demeter or portico at Thorikos according to Miles.

INTERIOR SOUTH WALL
PHASE I

| Fig. 1. Interior elevation of the south aisle of the Julian Basilica (drawn by the author).



| Fig. 2. Interior perspective, south end, drawn by James Heber, architect of the Corinth excavations.

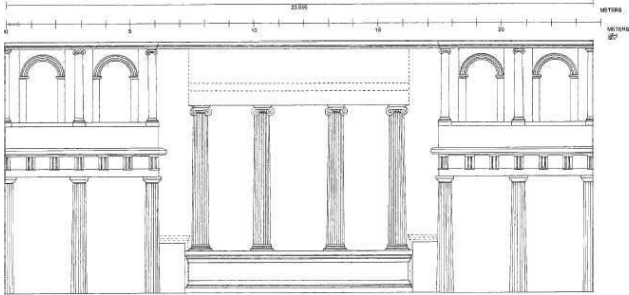


Fig. 34. Interior of the Basilica Julia at Corinth, with half-metopes at corners, according to P. Scotton.



Fig. 35. Reconstruction model of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome.

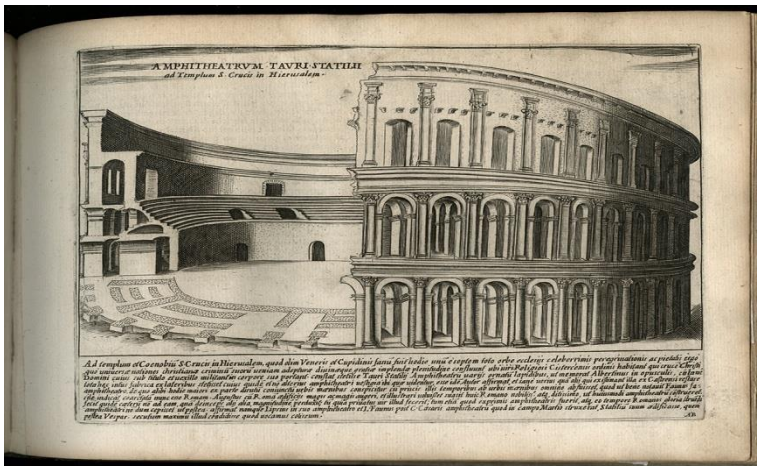


Fig. 36. The Amphitheater of Statilius Taurus drawn by G. Lauro, *Splendore dell'antica Roma*, Rome (1625) *folium 100*.



Fig. 37. Reconstruction model of the basilica of Vitruvius at *Fanum Fortunae*, by the Centro Studi Vitruviani.



Fig. 38. Theatre of Cnidus.

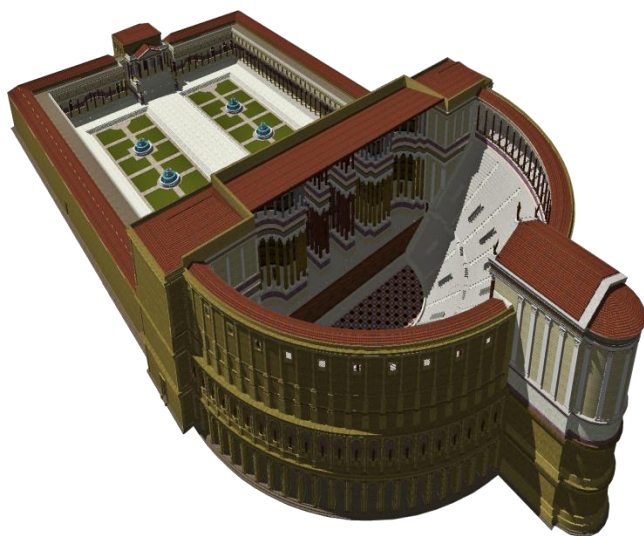


Fig. 39. Reconstruction model of the theatre and porticus of Pompey.

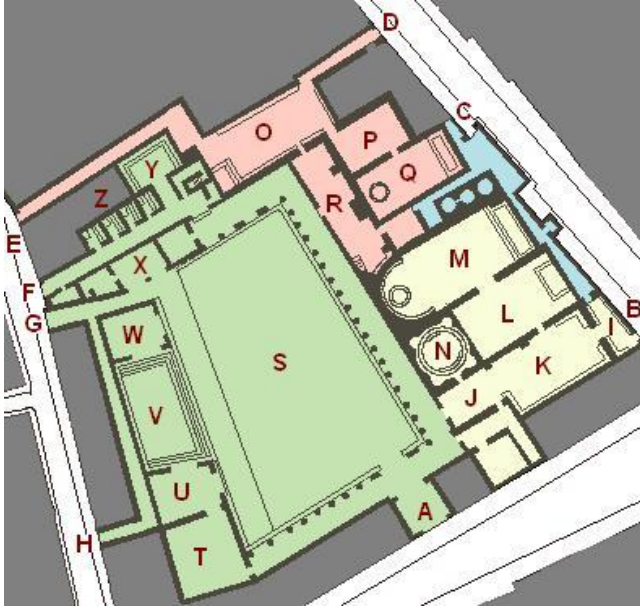


Fig. 40. Plan of the Stabian baths at Pompeii.

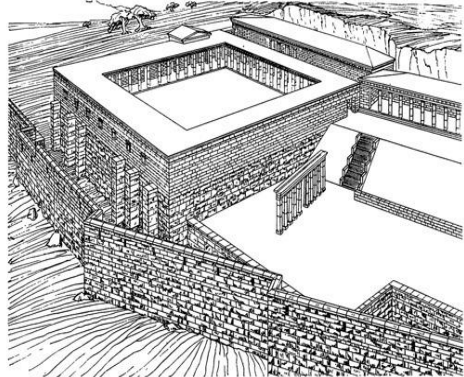
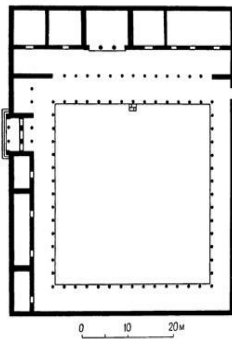


Fig. 41. Plan and reconstruction drawing of the gymnasium of Priene.



Fig. 42. Plan of the house of masks, on Delos.

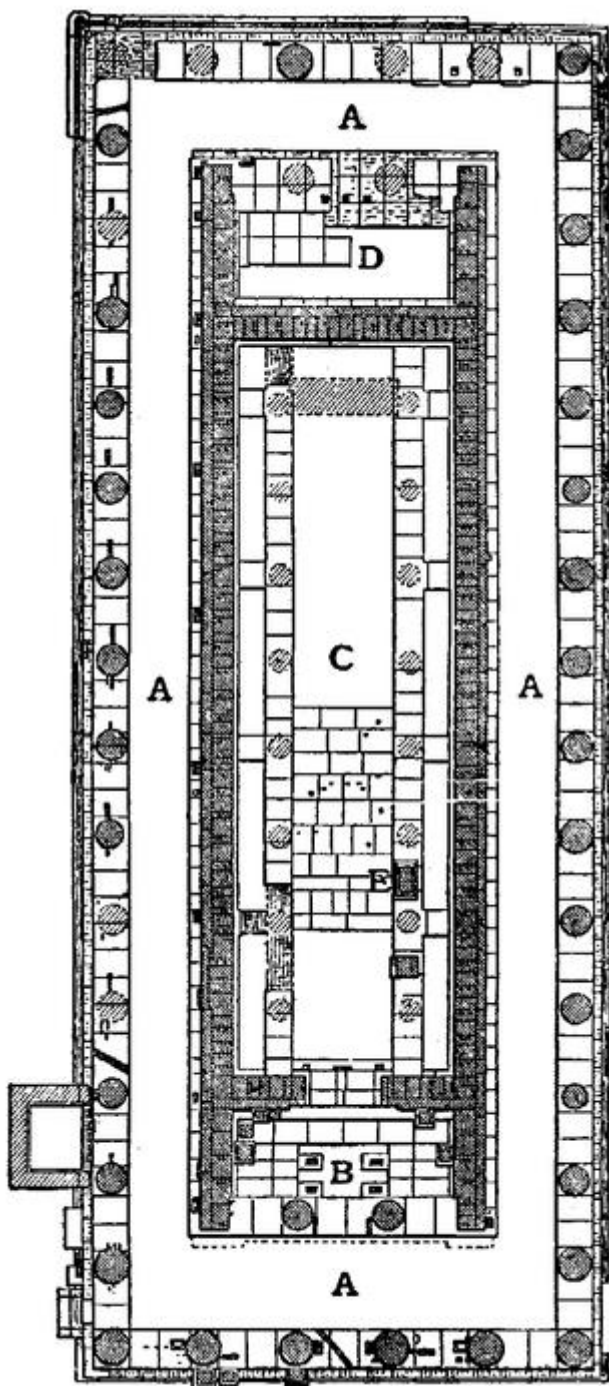


Fig. 43. Plan of the Heraeum at Olympia

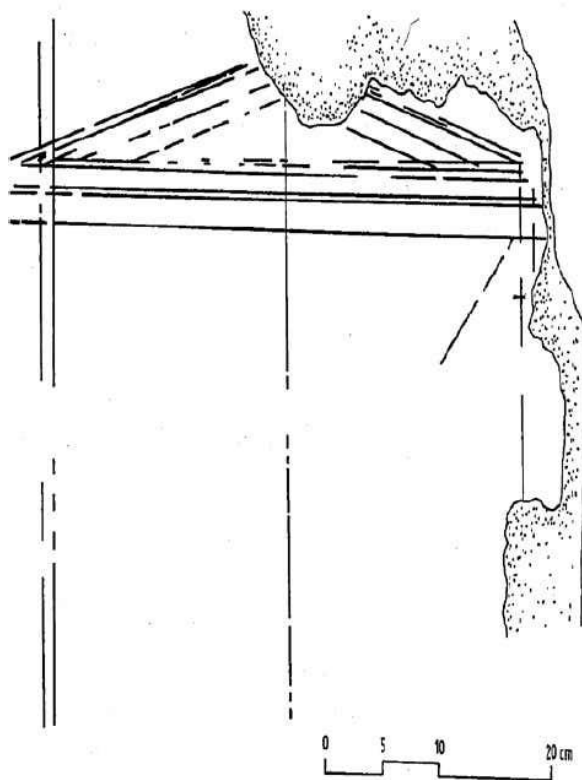
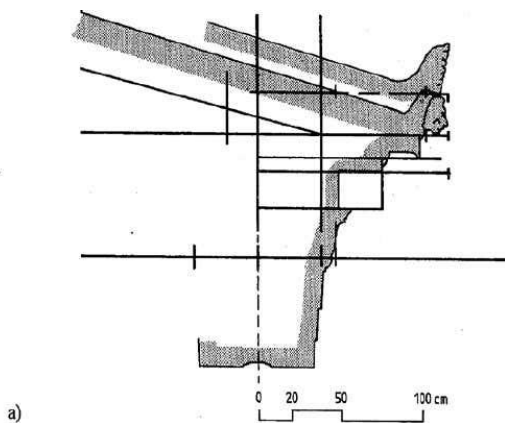
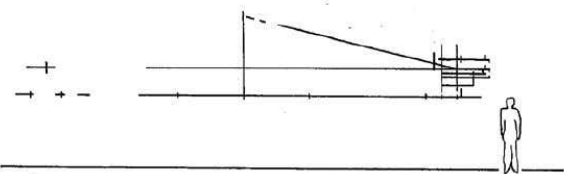


Fig. 44. Drawing from the temple of Athena at Priene.



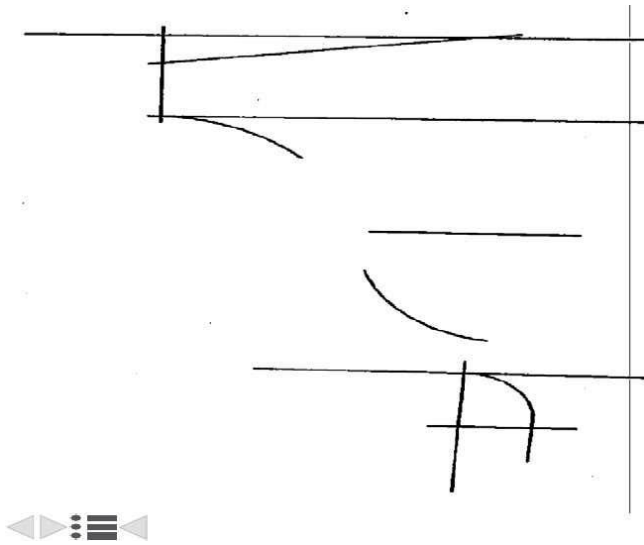
a)



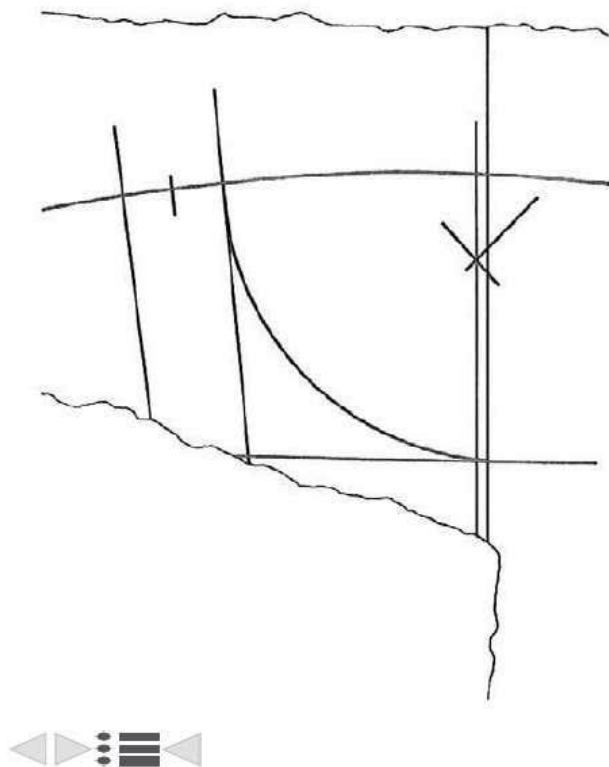
b)

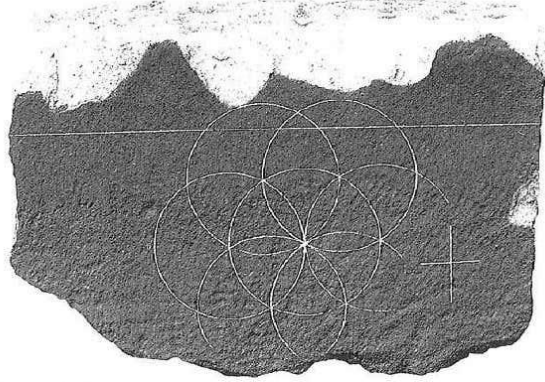


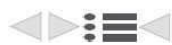
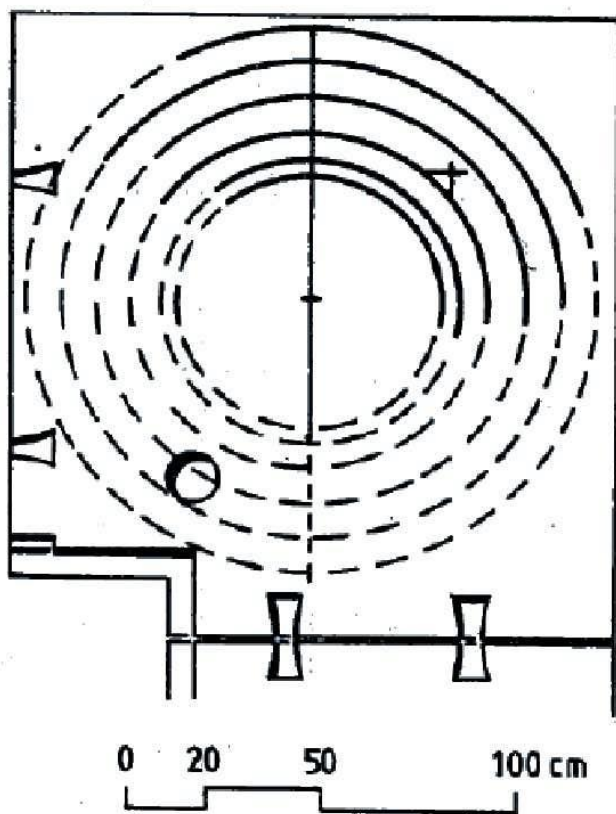
Figs. 45-50. Architectural drawings from the Didymaion.



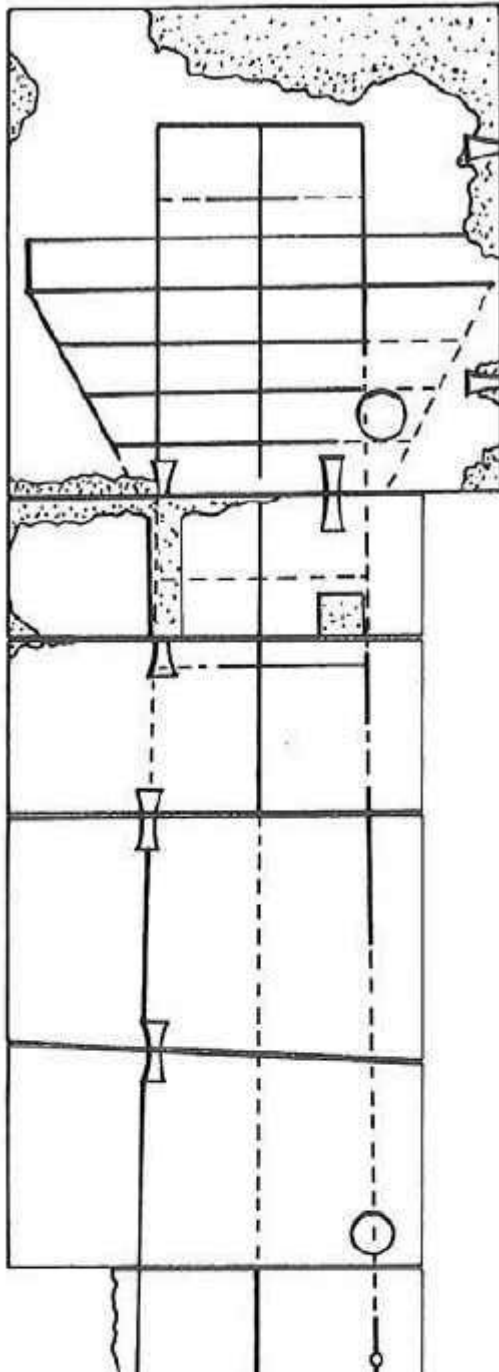








Figs. 51-52. Architectural drawings from Philae, eastern tower.



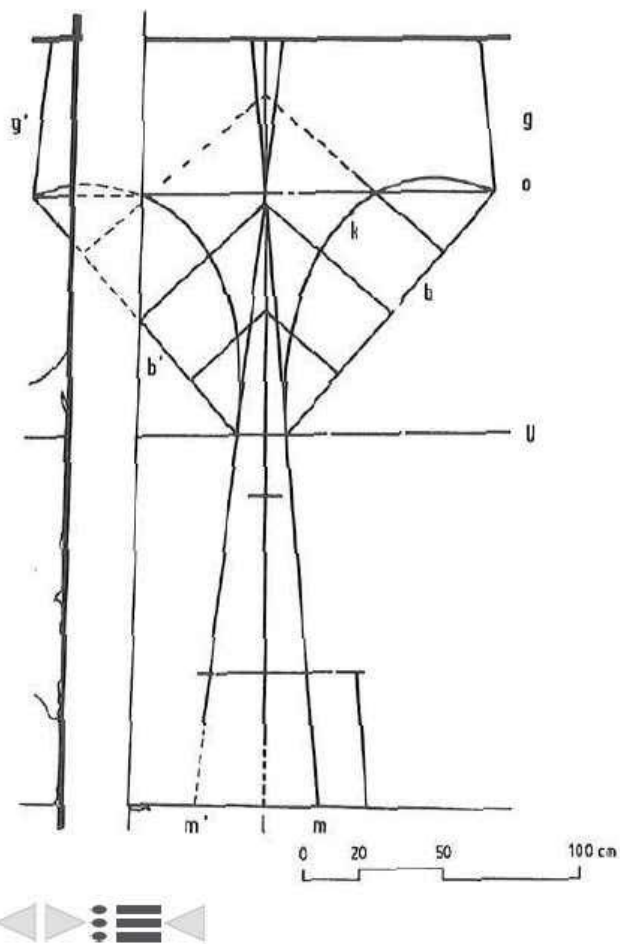
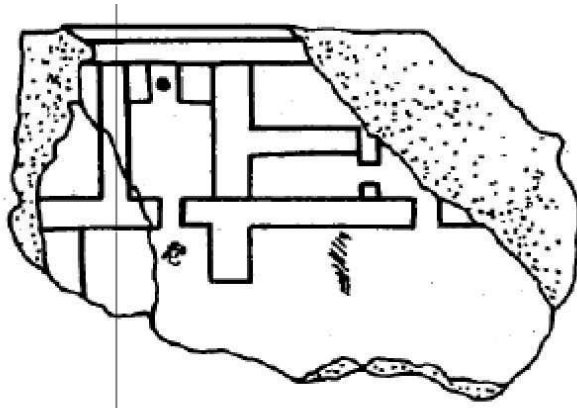
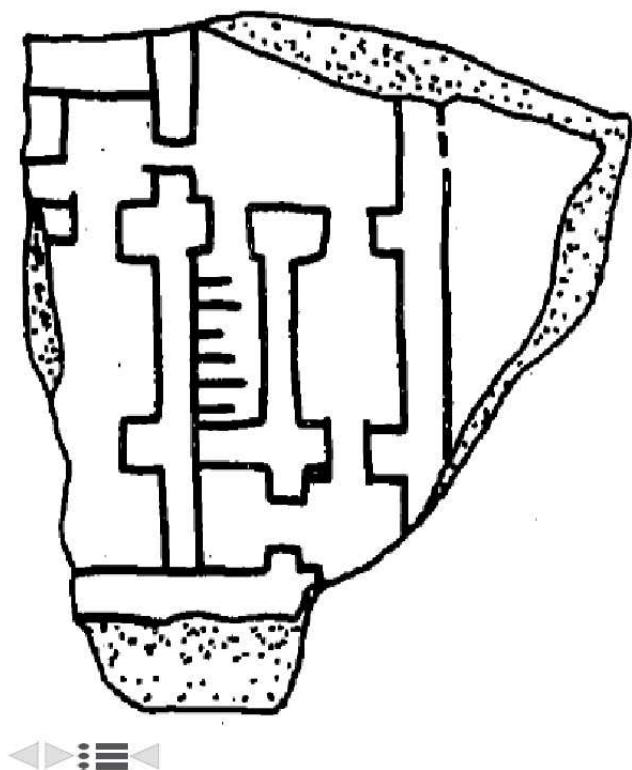
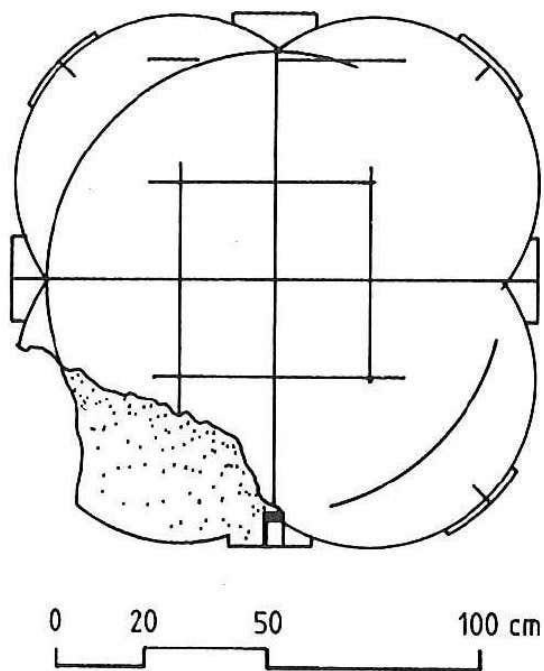


Fig. 53. Architectural drawing from th sanctuary of Horus at Edfu.

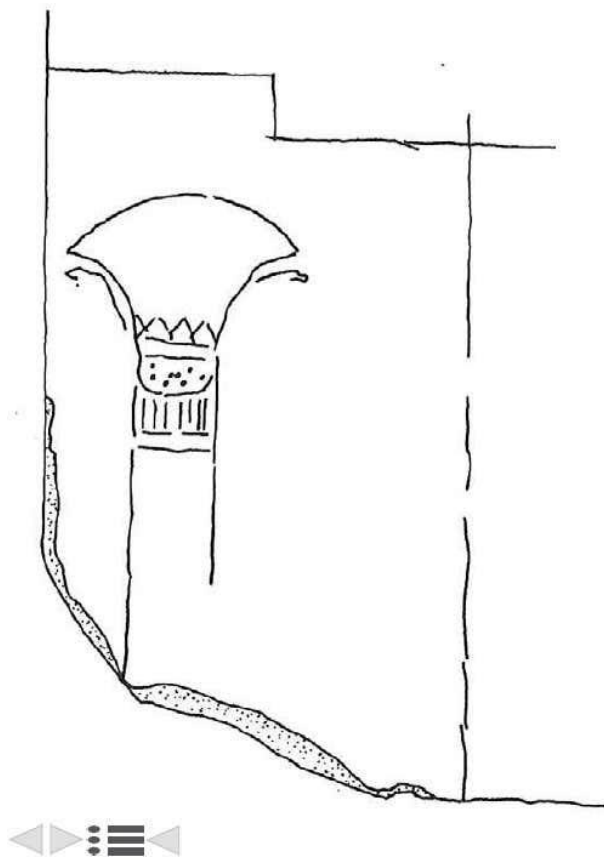


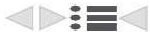
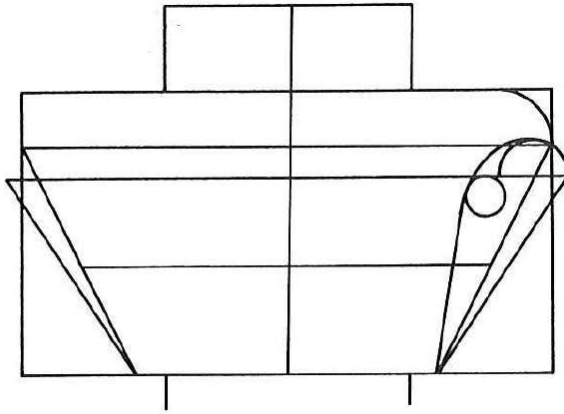
Figs. 54-55. Architectural drawings from the Acropolis of Susa, Paris, Louvre.



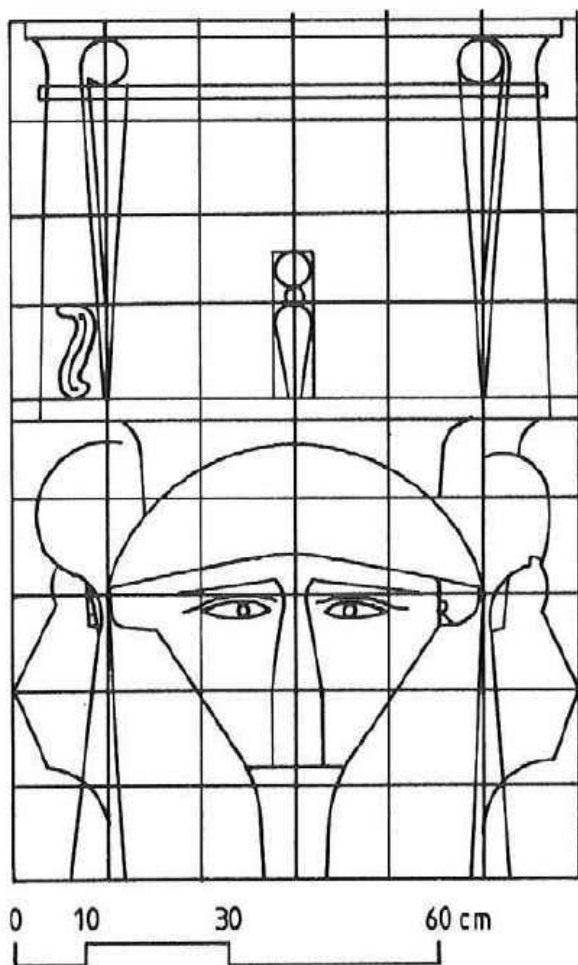


Figs. 56-57. Architectural drawings from the temple of Mandulis at Bab al-Kalabsha in Nubia.]





Figs. 58-59. Architectural drawings from the stone quarry of Gebel Abu Foda.



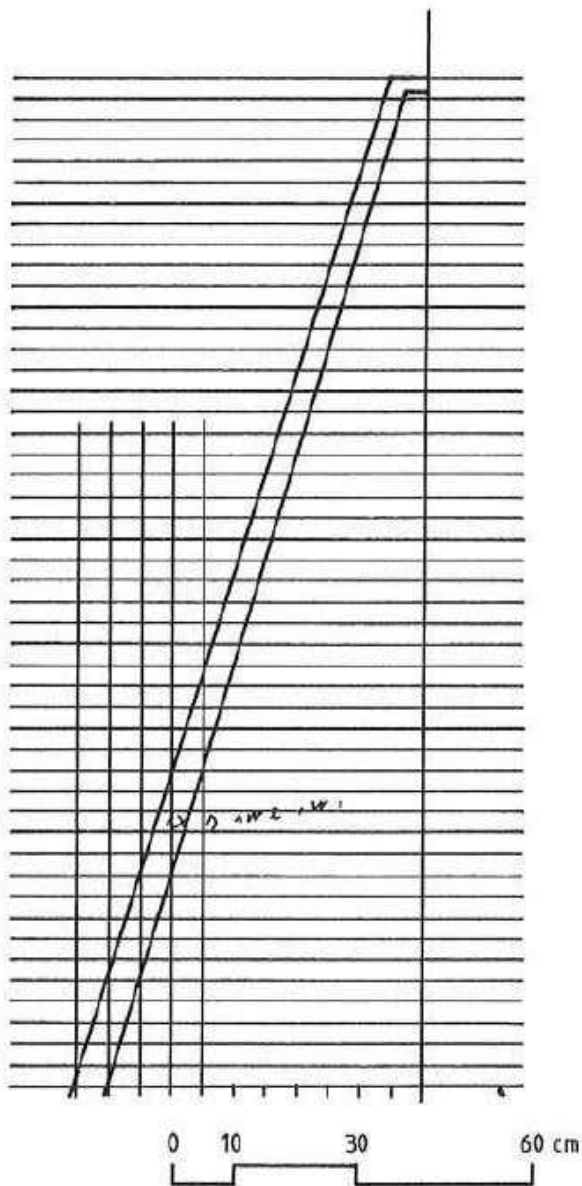


Fig. 60. Architectural drawing from Meidum, Mastaba no. 17.

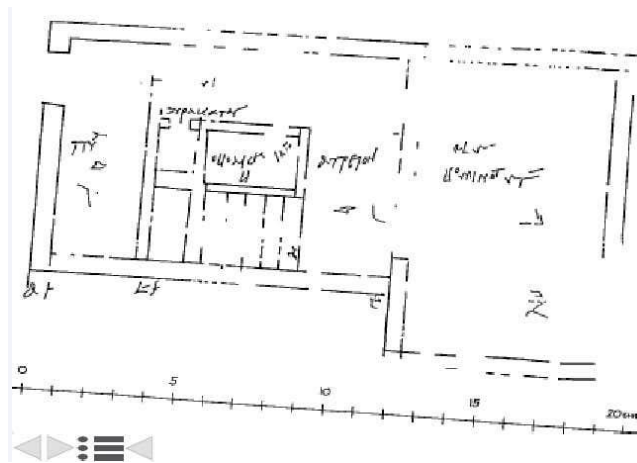
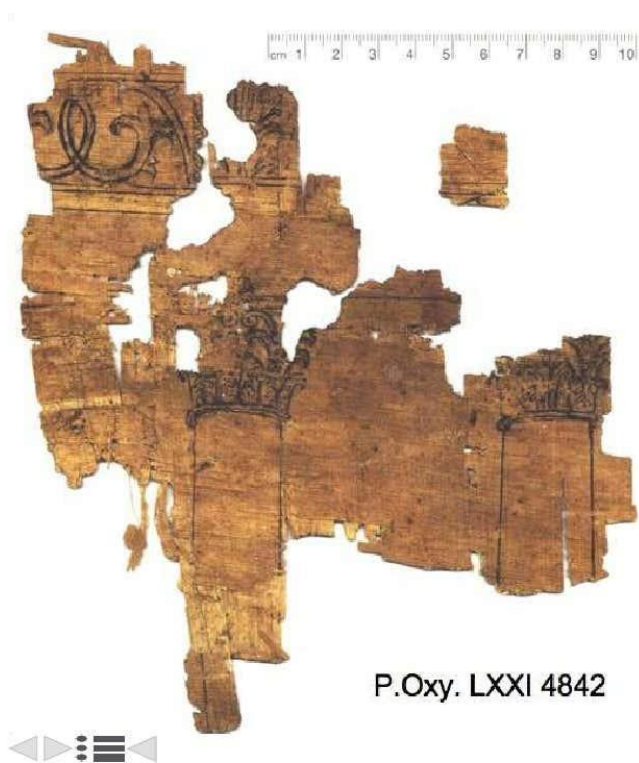
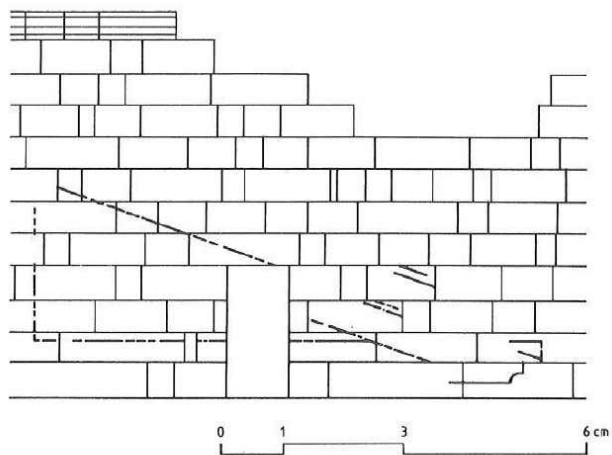


Fig. 61. House on Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 24. 2406.

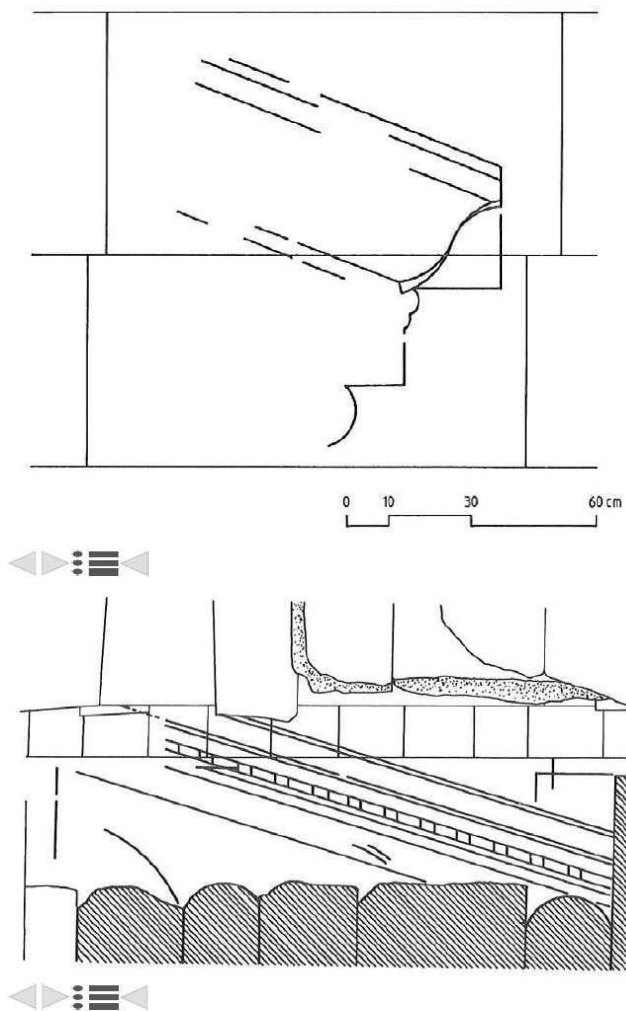


P.Oxy. LXXI 4842

Fig. 62. Entablature with columns on Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 71. 4842.



Figs. 63-64. Architectural drawings on the Ionic temple at Bziza, Lebanon.



Figs. 65-66. Architectural drawings from the sanctuary of Juppiter at Baalbek.

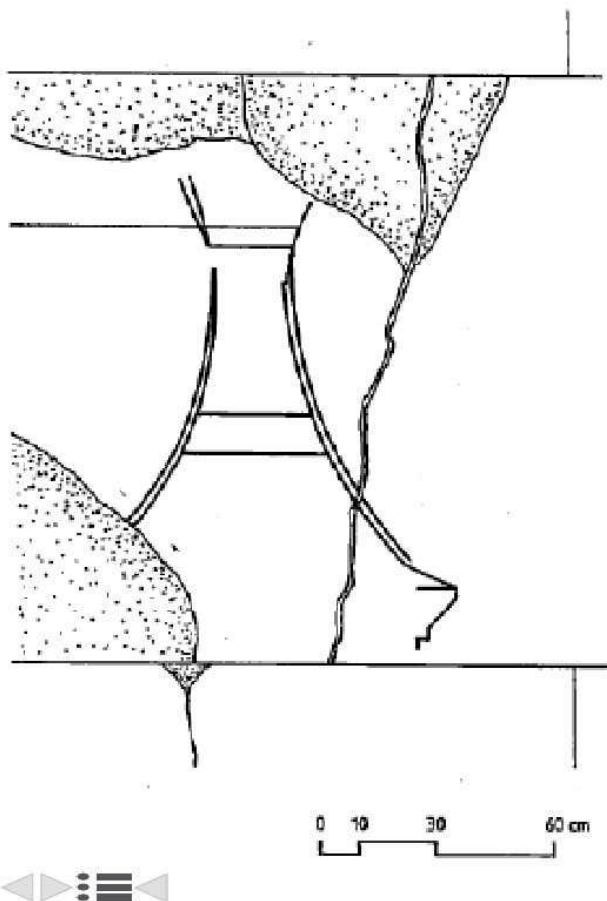


Fig. 67. Architectural drawing from the temple of Bacchus at Baalbek.

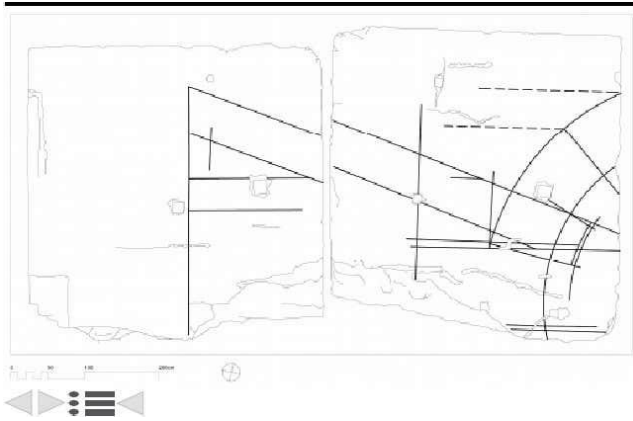
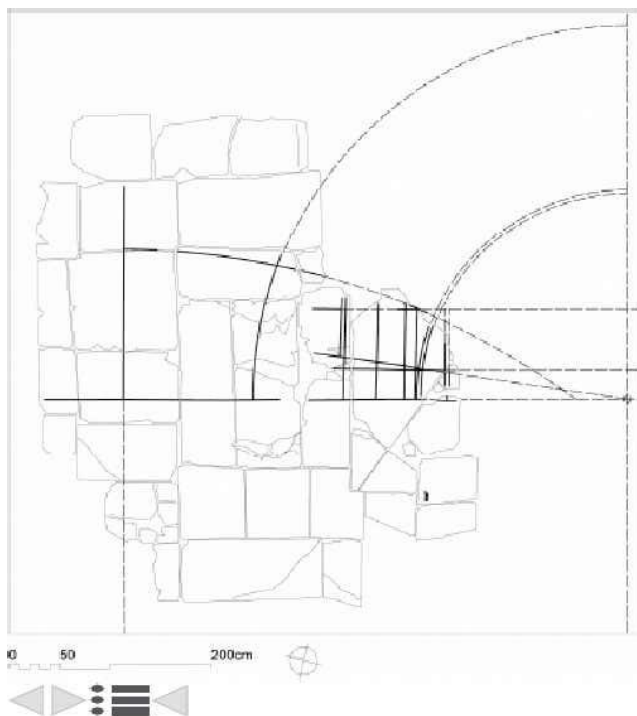
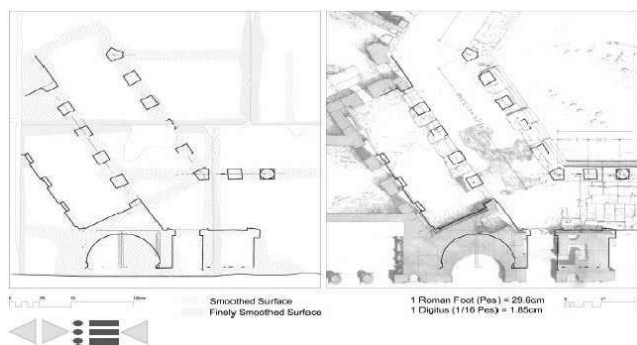
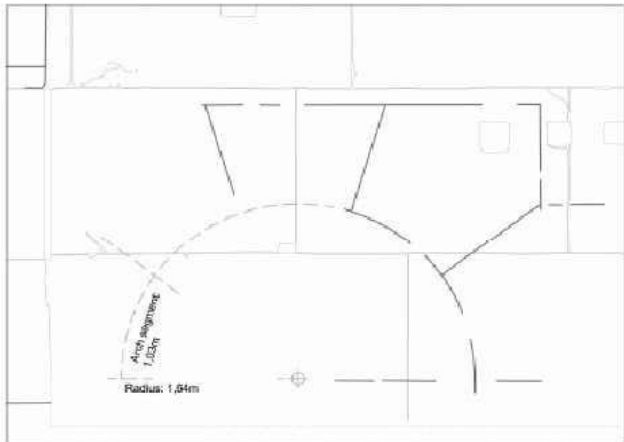


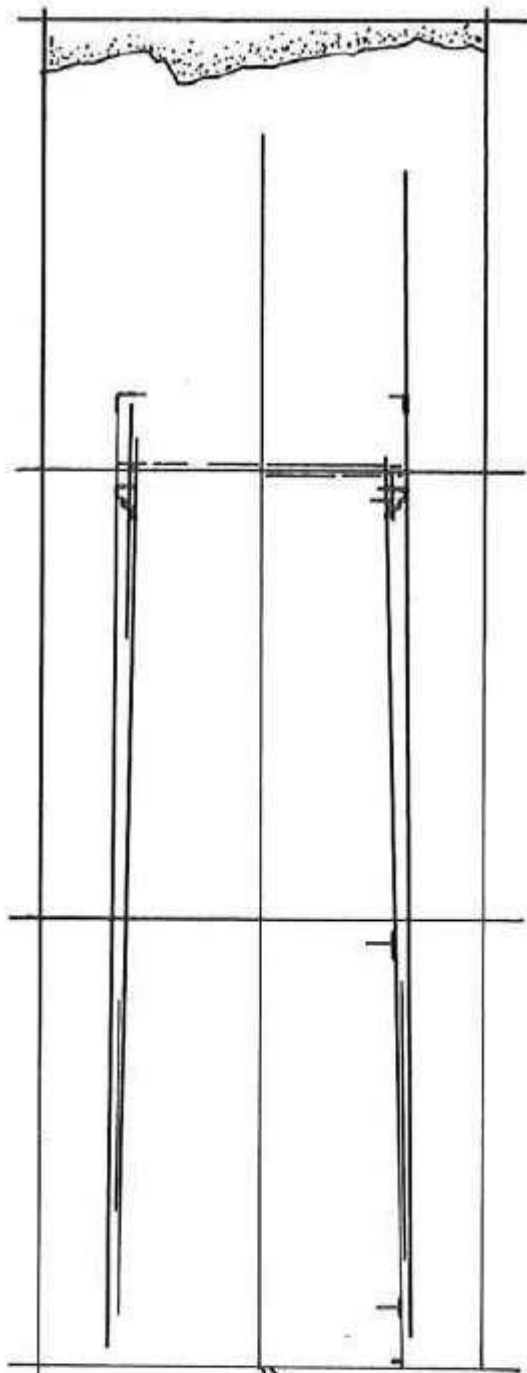
Fig. 67. Architectural drawing from the temple of Bacchus at Baalbek.



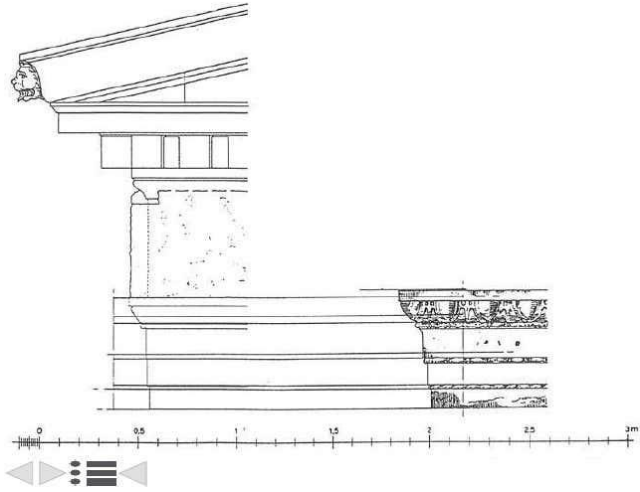
Figs. 68-70. Architectural drawings from the sanctuary of Juppiter at Baalbek.

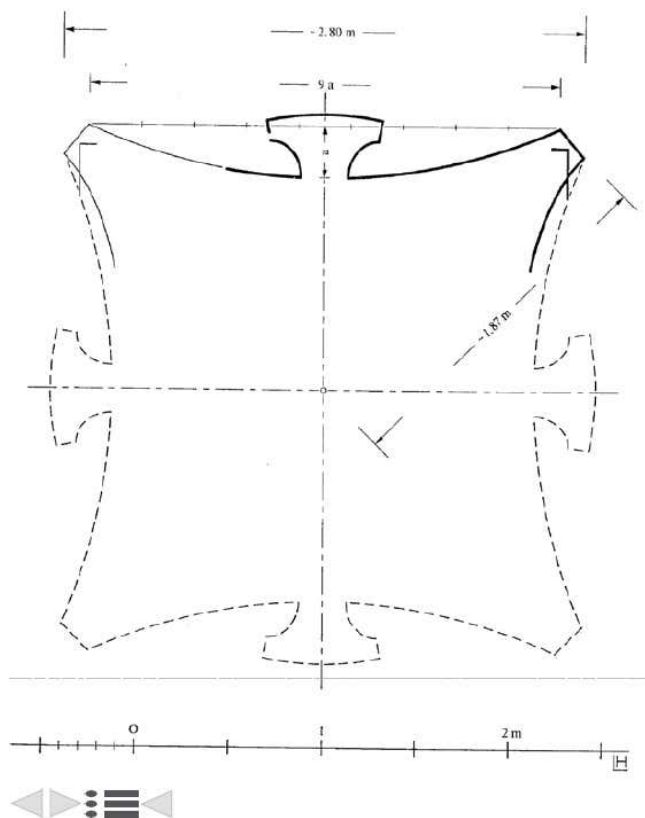




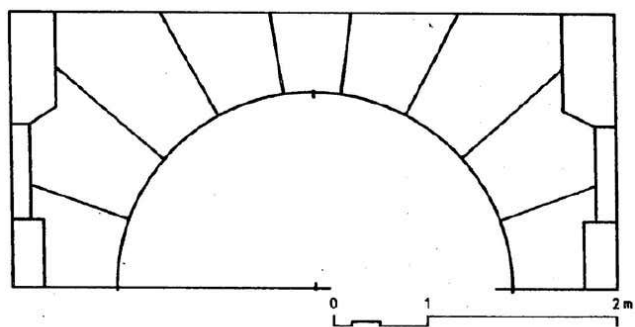


Figs. 71-72. Architectural drawings on the terrace of the theatre of Pergamum.

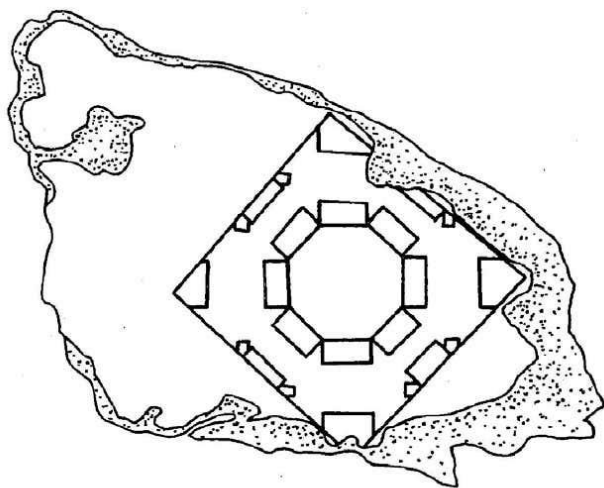




Figs. 73-74. Architectural drawings from Rome, area south of the Mausoleum of Augustus.



Figs. 75-77. Architectural drawings on the large amphitheater of Capua.



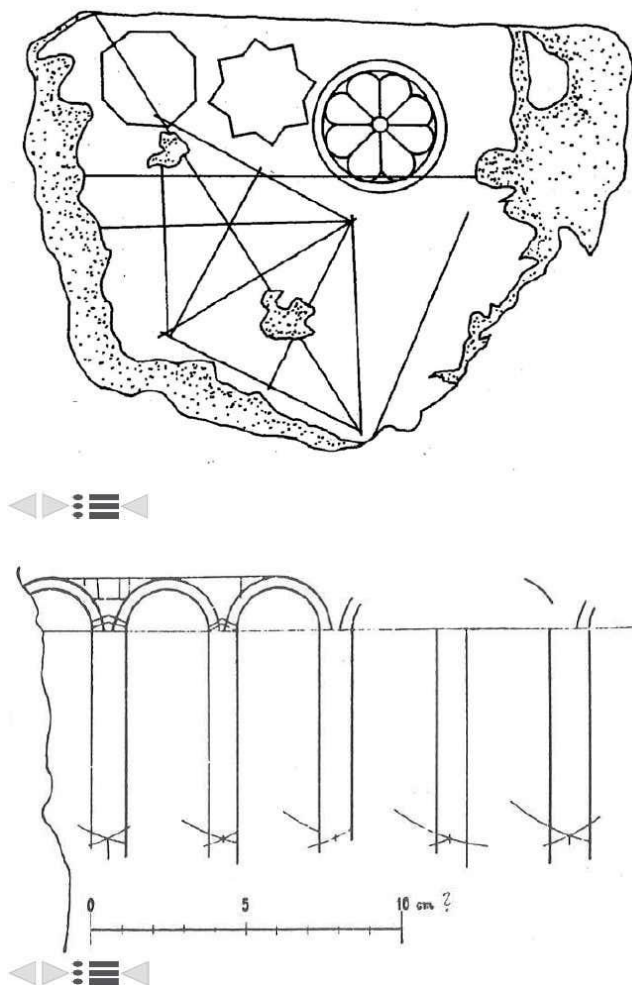


Fig. 78. Architectural drawing on th amphitheater of Pola.

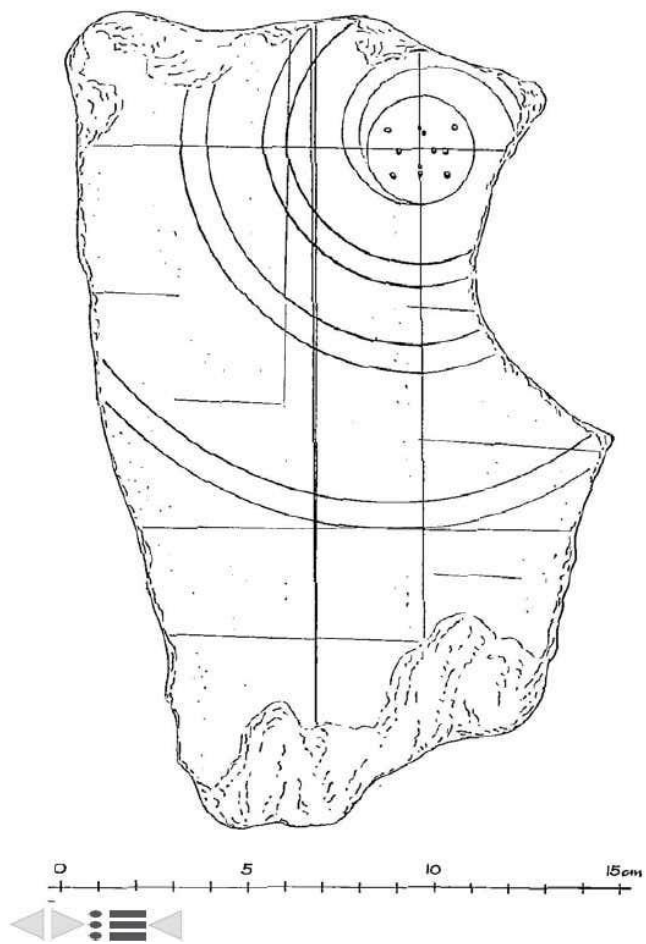


Fig. 79. Architectural drawing on marble tablet in the Antiquities' Museum of Bern.

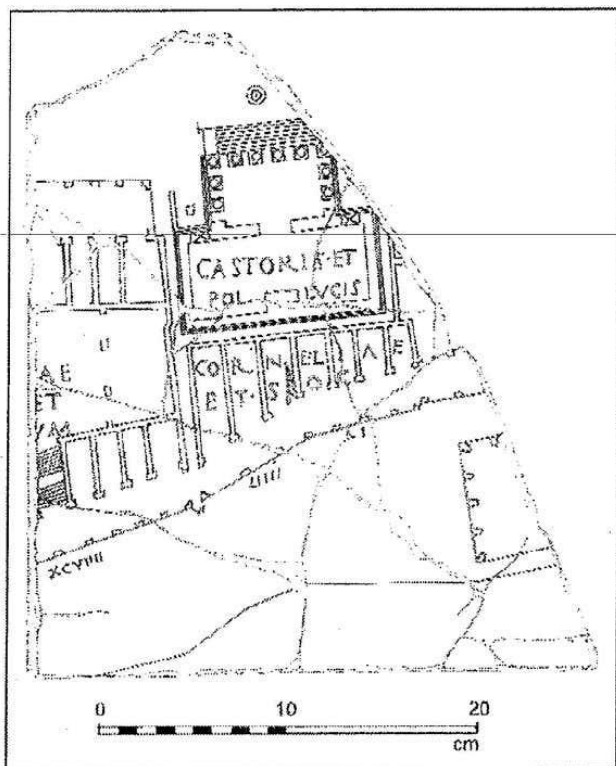


Fig. 80. Plan of the temple of the Castores at Rome, Lapidarium of the Roman National Museum.

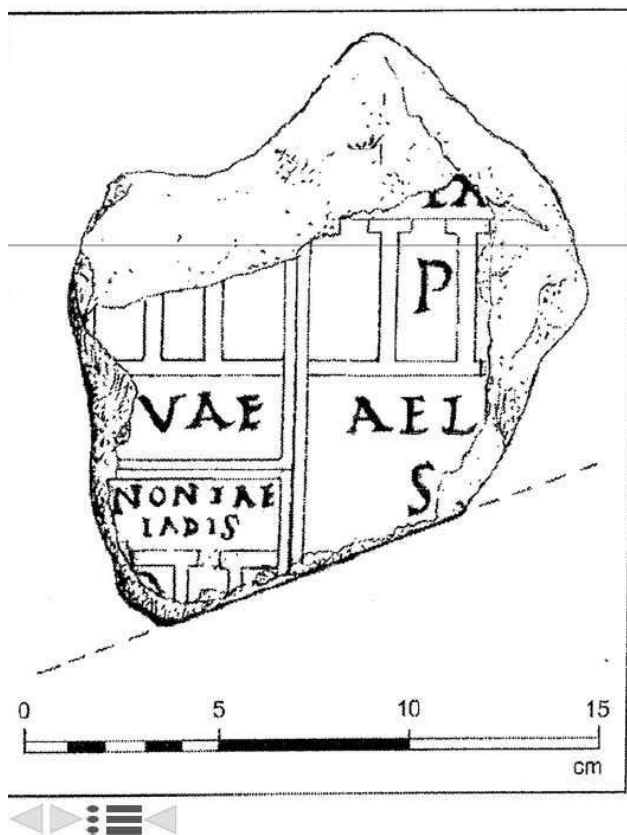
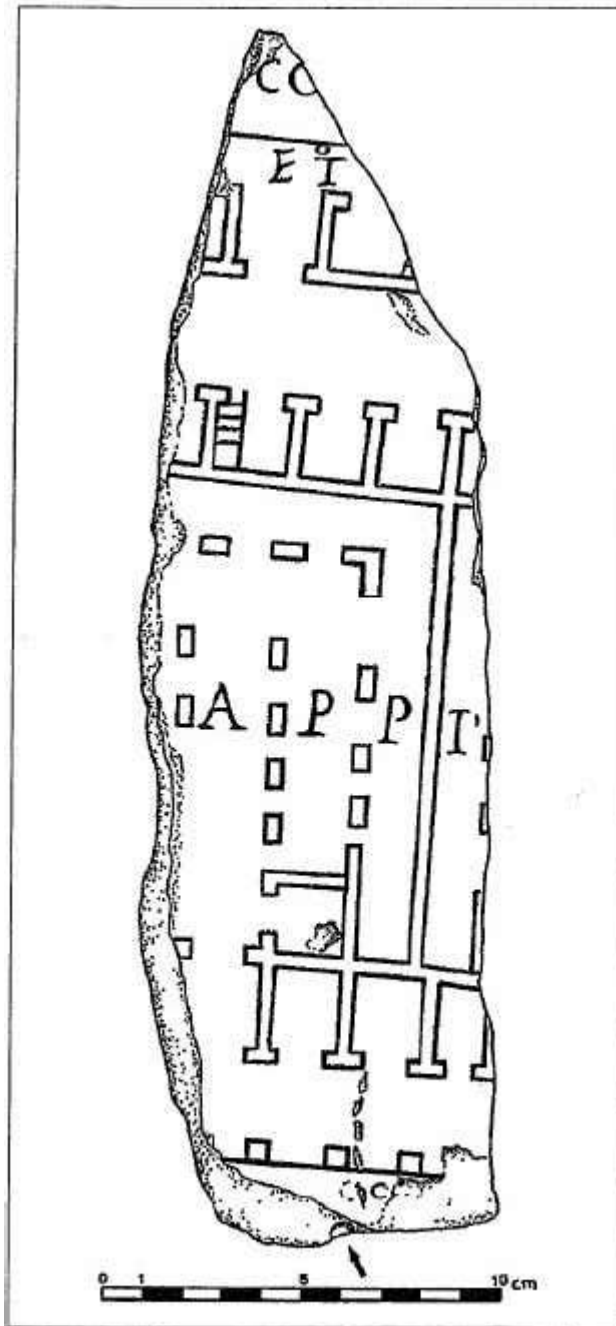


Fig. 81. Plan with tabernae or horrea, Rome, Museo della Civiltà Romana.

Fig. 82. Plan with tabernae, at Rome, Ufficio fori imperiali of the Soprintendenza Beni Culturali of Rome.



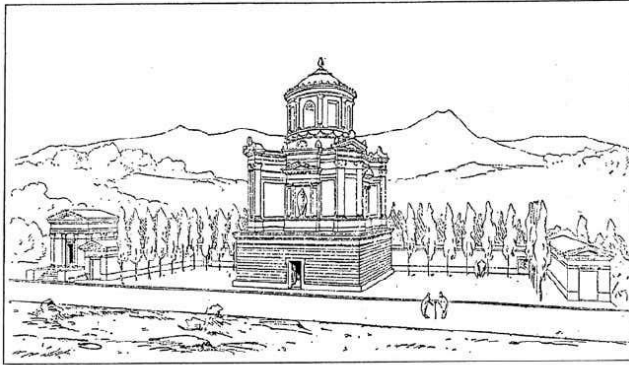


Fig. 84. Reconstruction drawing of how the mausoleum of fig. 83 may have looked like.

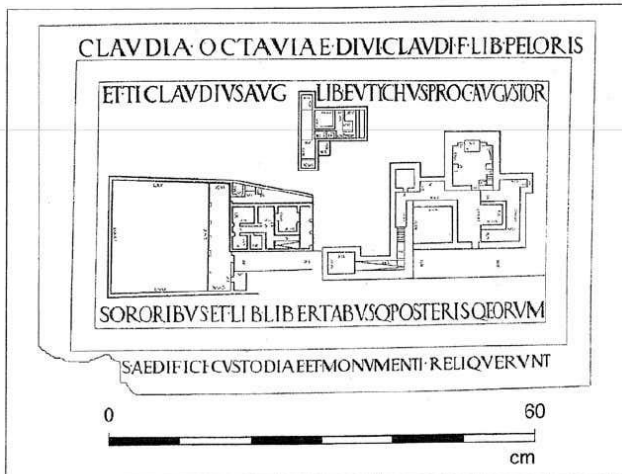


Fig. 85. Plan of funerary complex, Perugia, Archaeological Museum.

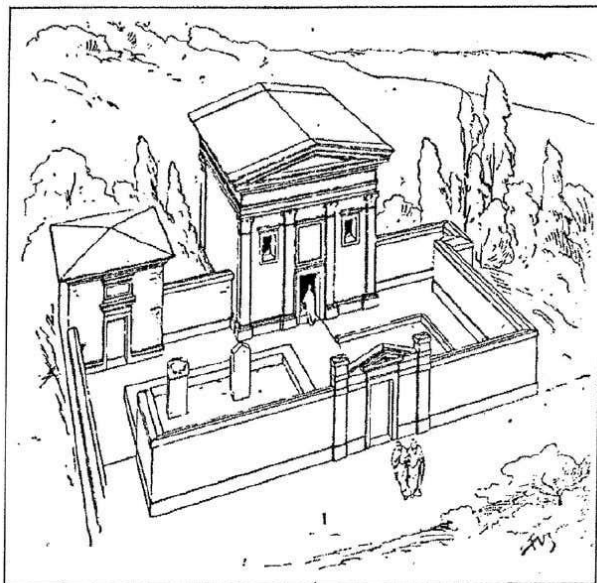


Fig. 86. Reconstruction drawing of how the funerary complex of fig.85 may have looked like.

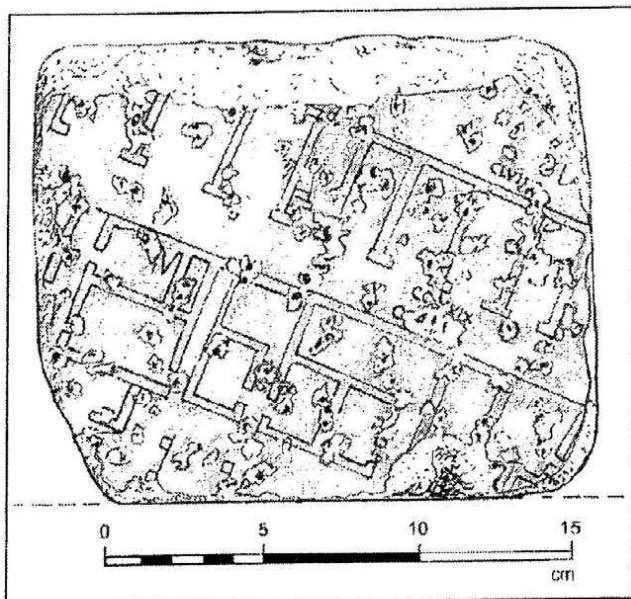


Fig. 87. Plan with *horrea* and *tabernae* from *Portus*, tomb no. 107.

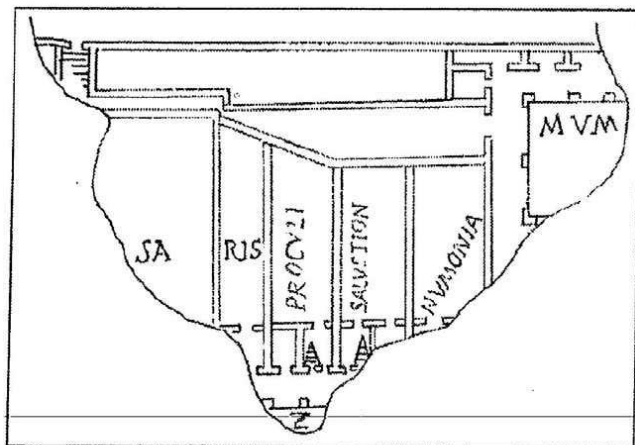


Fig. 88. Plan of rooms for business, in C. Brancatelli, *Antiquae Amerinorum lapidum inscriptiones, folium 29.*

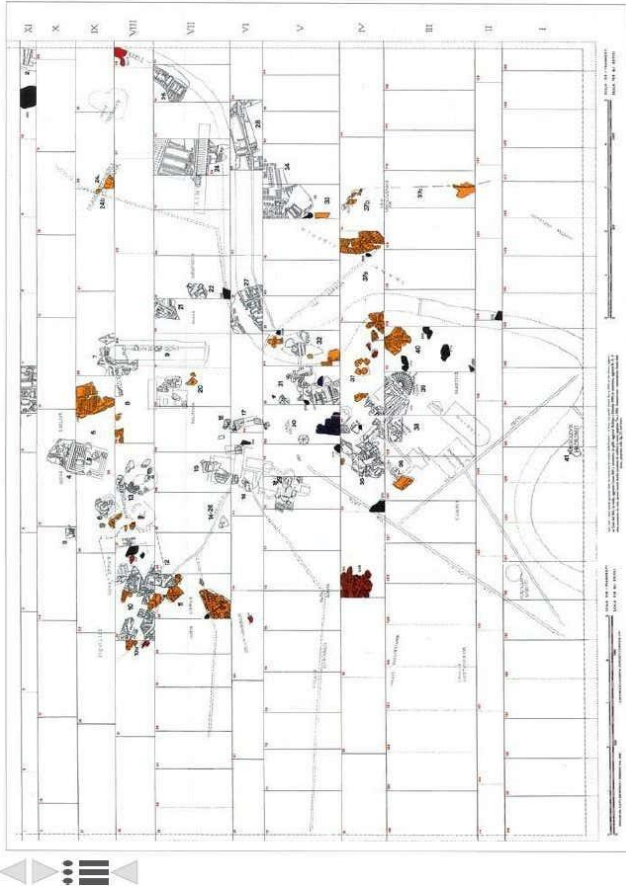


Fig. 89. *Forma Urbis Romae*, Rome, Museum of the Roman Civilization.

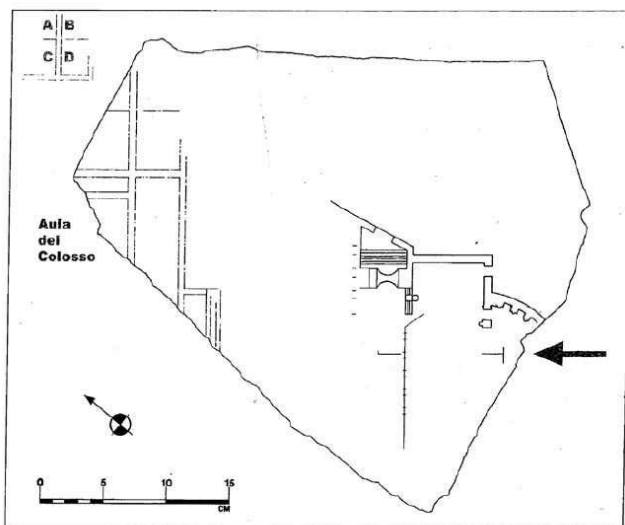


Fig. 90. Plan of parcel of the forum of Augustus, Rome, Ufficio Fori Imperiali of Soprintendenza Beni Culturali of Rome.

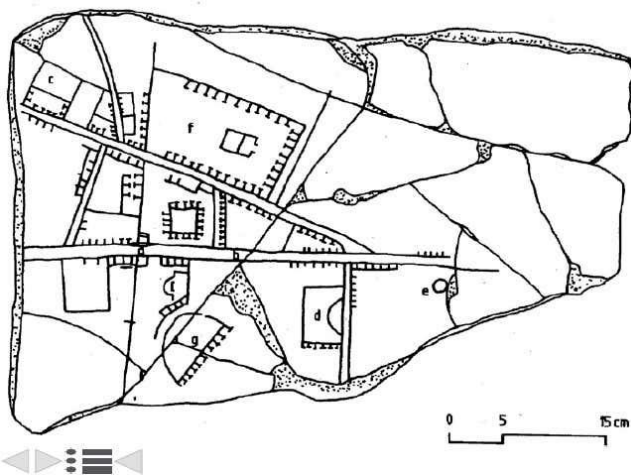


Fig. 91. Plan of *Aguntum*, local Stadtmuseum.



Fig. 92. Plan of aqueduct, once in Rome, in the Church of St. Mary on Mt. Aventine.

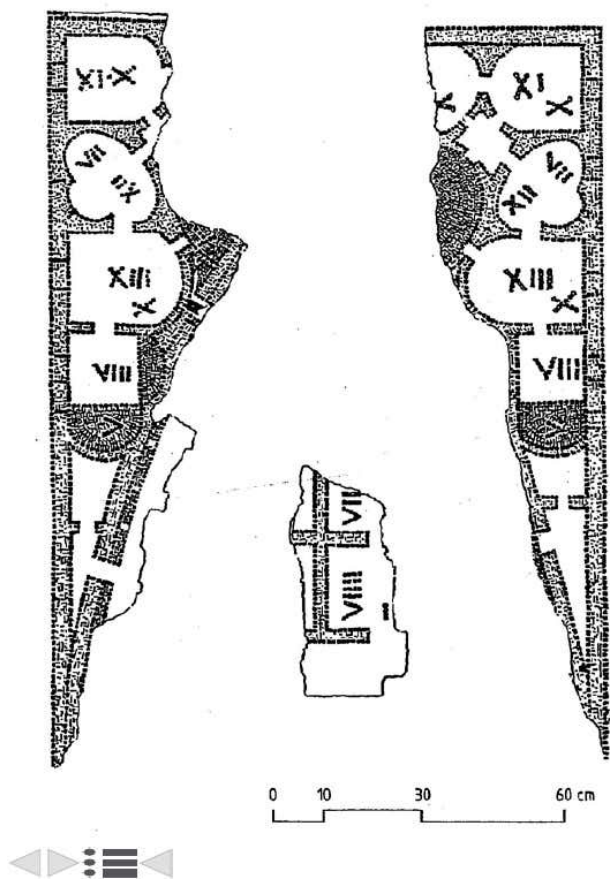


Fig. 93. Plan of baths, Rome, Antiquarium of Mt. Caelius.

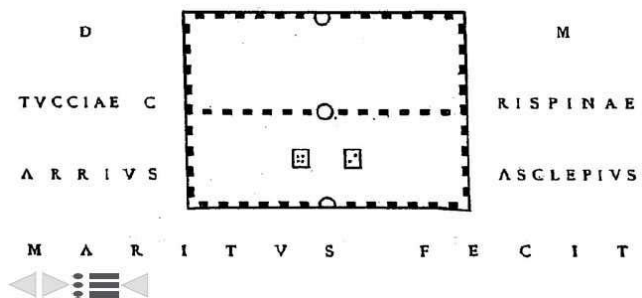


Fig. 94. Plan of funerary enclosure, once in Pacca collection, *CIL* 14. 604-607.

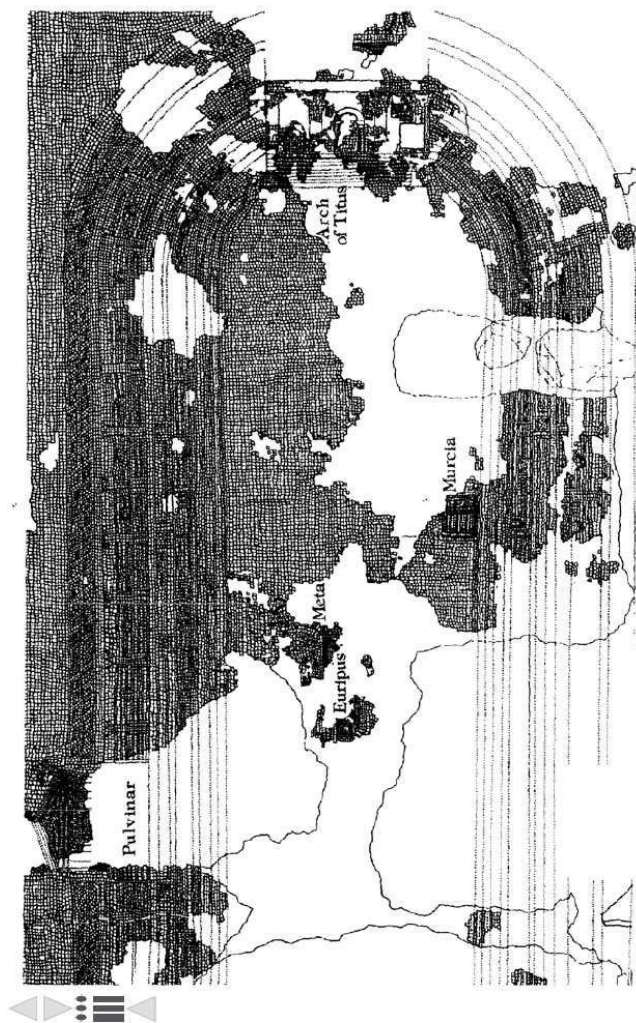


Fig. 95. Plan of Circus Maximus, Luni, House of Mosaics.

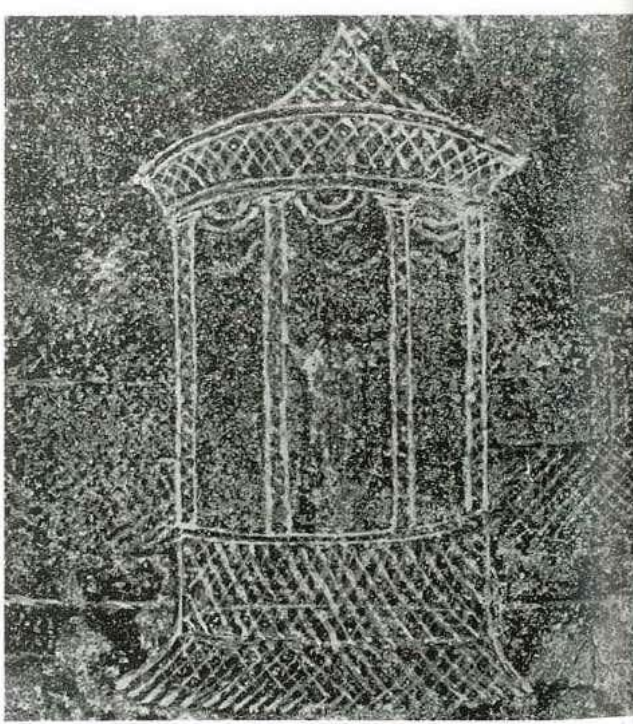


Fig. 96. Drawing of round building at Pompeii, Casa del Citarista.



Fig. 97. Drawing of capital at Pompeii, Casa di Cerere.



Fig. 98. Doryphoros, Roman copy at Naples, National Archaeological Museum.

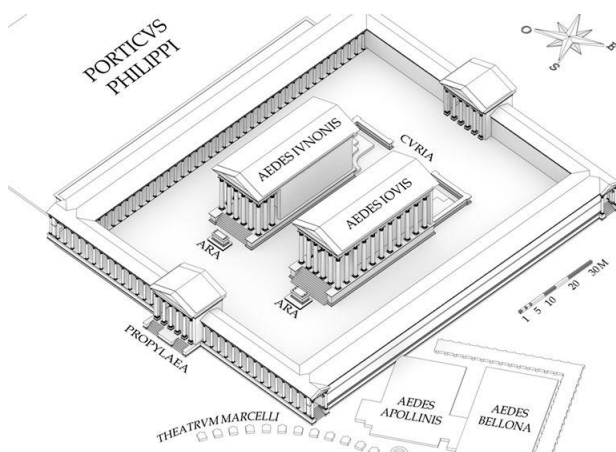


Fig. 99. Reconstruction drawing of the porticus Metelli with the temples of Juno and Jupiter inside.

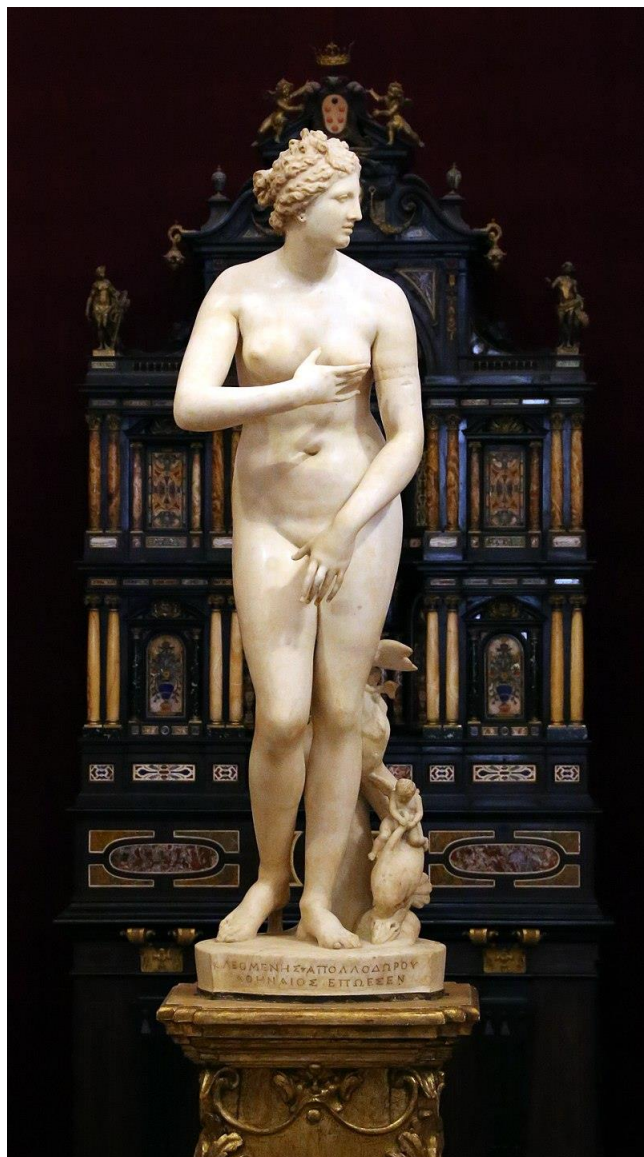


Fig. 100. Medici Aphrodite, Uffizi, Museum.



Fig. 101. So-called 'Germanicus', Paris, Louvre.



Fig. 102. Stephanos, Athlete, Rome, Villa Albani.



Fig. 103. Painting with Medeia, Pompeii, House of Dioscuri.

Fig.

104.

Painted



Fig. 104. Painted garden, from the villa of Livia ad gallinas albas, Rome, Roman National Museum.



Fig. 105. Fourth style's wall painting, Pompeii, House of Vettii.

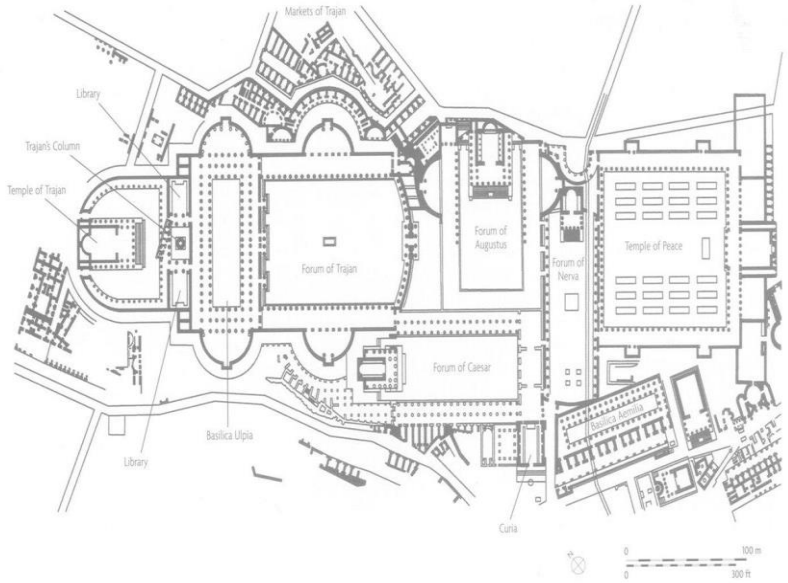


Fig. 106. Plan of Trajan's forum and markets.

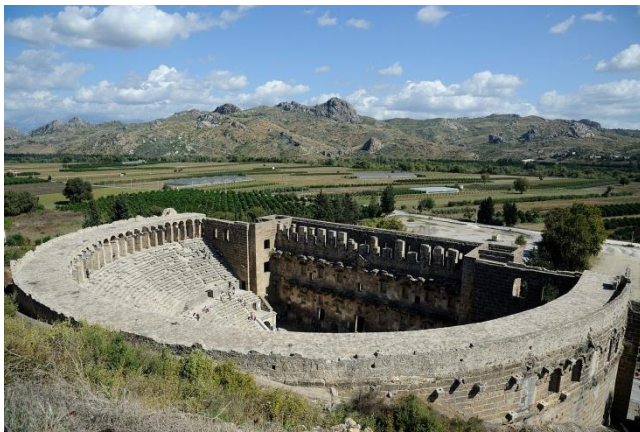


Fig. 107. Theatre of Aspendos.



Fig. 108. Odeum of Herodes Atticus, Athens.

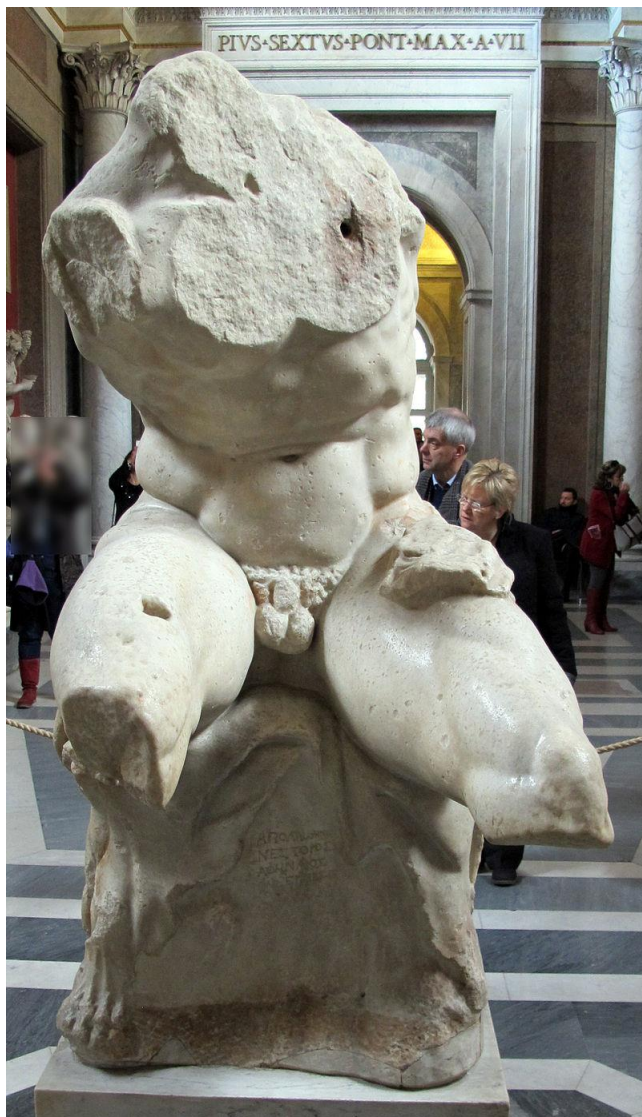


Fig. 109. Belvedere Torso, Rome, Vatican Museums.



Fig. 110. Arc of Septimius Severus, Rome, Roman Forum



Fig. 111. The Septizodium, Rome, reconstruction model by the University of Caen.



Fig. 112. The Zeus of Phidias on a coin of Elis, London, The British Museum, Department of Coins.

Fig. 113. Varvakeion Athena, Athens, National Archaeological Museum.

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Fig. 114. Resting Satyr, Rome, Capitoline Museum.



Fig. 115. Nile mosaic, Palestrina, Museo Nazionale Prenestino.



Fig. 116. The Flavian Amphitheater, Rome.



Fig. 117. Barberini goddess, Rome, Museo di Palazzo Massimo.



Figs. 118-122: Accard drawings, Pari, Louvre.









Fig. 123: Freshfield drawin, Cambridge, Trinity College.



Fig. 124. Theodosius' missorium, Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia.



Fig. 125. Mosaic on the dome of the Baptistery of the Arians at Ravenna.



Fig. 126. Detail of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, Rome, Vatican Museums.

About the Author

Antonio Corso attended his studies in classics and in archaeology at Padua, Athens, Frankfurt and London. He published 190 scientific works which include 14 books and several tens of articles in prestigious periodicals and acts of conferences.

His main specialization is in classical Greek art, especially sculpture, but he studied and wrote a lot also about the continuity of Greek visual arts in the Roman and Byzantine worlds.

He was awarded prestigious fellowships by renowned academic institutions such as the German Archaeological Institute, the British Academy, the European Institutes for Advanced Study (at Budapest), the Onassis foundation, etc.

He delivered papers in many important conferences and was visiting professor in Universities at Moscow and at Nicosia.

His oeuvre is cited around 600 times every year by other scholars.

