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### Spolia. Damnatio and renovatio memoriae

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## SPOLIA. DAMNATIO AND RENOVATIO MEMORIAE

Dale Kinney

Like most aspects of Roman artistic practice, the introduction of *spolia* occurred in silence. In retrospect it appeared to be an innovation of the Constantinian period, and for centuries it was seen as a purely negative development. Vasari, depending on earlier sixteenth-century commentators, including Raphael, singled out the Arch of Constantine as an egregious demonstration of the demise of artistic capability, evidenced not only by the pathetic efforts of its fourth-century friezes but by its reuse of second-century reliefs, *faute de mieux*.<sup>1</sup> It was not until the twentieth century, in the wake of Riegl, that Hans Peter L'Orange was able to interpret the Arch as a coherent expression of early fourth-century ideas and thereby recuperate it as an authentic work of art.<sup>2</sup> Vasari observed reuse in Constantinian architecture as well. Interestingly, his evaluation of *spolia* in the elevations of fourth-century church basilicas was much less negative; he was more inclined to see the reuse of exotic non-Italian marble and granite column shafts as a sign of residual good taste.<sup>3</sup> But again, it was only in the twentieth century that an art-historical interpreter could define these colonnades as a purposeful aesthetic development.<sup>4</sup>

In the last two decades *spolia* have become a growth field of art history. This trend is part of a general broadening of the discipline beyond its traditional preoccupations with masters and masterpieces, to encompass a much wider variety of production and reception. Thus the newly intensive study of *spolia* has been accompanied by equally burgeoning interest in such matters as the Roman marble trade and the Roman reception of Greek statuary. Some of this scholarship has been brought to bear on *spolia*, but much of it has not. This article situates the origins of *spolia* in the context of some of this recent work and suggests that to do so forces a reconsideration, if not a final rejection, of unexamined assumptions about the way the earliest spoliated monuments were perceived.<sup>5</sup>

This paper originated in the preparation for a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar on *spolia* that I had the pleasure to co-direct with Birgitta Lindros Wohl in 1993. I am grateful to the American Academy for hosting that seminar and to Anthony Cutler for inviting me to give a first presentation of this argument at the conference "Beginning the Middle Ages: Continuity and Change," sponsored by the Pennsylvania State University in 1994.

<sup>1</sup> G. Vasari, *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. R. Bettarini and P. Barocchi, *Testo*, 2 (Florence 1967), "Proemio delle Vite," 14.

<sup>2</sup> L'Orange and van Gerkan.

<sup>3</sup> Vasari (as n. 1) 15.

<sup>4</sup> F. W. Deichmann, "Säule und Ordnung in der frühchristlichen Architektur," *Römische Mitteilungen* 55 (1940) 114–30.

<sup>5</sup> The recent monograph by L. De Lachenal, *Spolia. Uso e reimpiego dell'antico dal III al XIV secolo* (Milan 1995), usefully surveys an enormous range of specific instances of *spolia*, but it does not analyze the concept or delve into the pre-Constantinian background. The same may be said of the—also very useful—article by H. Saradi,

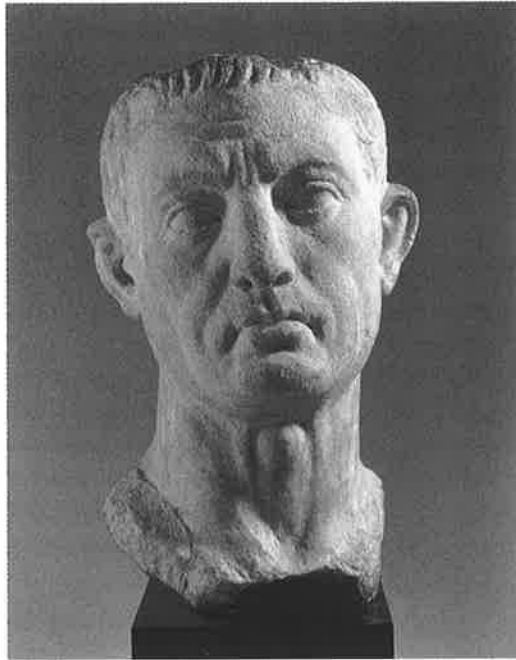


Fig. 1. Portrait recut from an anta capital, Art Museum, Princeton University, the Carl Otto von Kienbusch, Jr. Memorial Collection, 53-25 (photo Museum).



Fig. 2. Portrait recut from an anta capital, rear view, Art Museum, Princeton University, the Carl Otto von Kienbusch, Jr. Memorial Collection, 53-25 (photo Museum).

Definitions form a significant aspect of the problem, for it is increasingly clear that the modern designation *spolia* applies to only one form of a long and varied history of reuse. Any culture that produces artifacts from scarce or laboriously obtained materials is likely to reuse rather than discard them, but even so, the extent of Roman recycling is surprising. Remarkably personal marble objects were reworked for second uses (or users), including grave stelai, ossuaries, honorific inscriptions, and altars.<sup>6</sup> Sleights of carving transformed highly specific artifacts into quite different ones, for example, a female portrait with a big coil of braids into a bearded priest or an anta capital into a frowning man (figs. 1, 2).<sup>7</sup> Art history has not recognized such reuse as *spolia*, partly because the concept is so firmly attached to late antiquity. But even within the Constantinian period, the modern identification of *spolia* is selective. The second-century reliefs with recut portrait heads on the Arch of Constantine (figs. 4, 20)

<sup>6</sup> "The Use of Ancient Spolia in Byzantine Monuments: The Archaeological and Literary Evidence," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 3 (1997) 395–423. I thank Marie-Thérèse Stegeman-Zenner for referring me to the latter publication.

<sup>6</sup> Grave stelai: Blanck, 103–4. Ossuary: Seattle Art Museum, 44.15, a second-century inscription (D M L SALLVSTIO PRO/CESSO P.P.B.M.) over an erased first-century inscription. Honorific inscription: Rome, Capitoline Museums, the name of Constantine over the erased name of Diocletian (W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom*,

ed. H. Speier, vol. 2, *Die Städtischen Sammlungen. Kapitolinische Museen und Museo Barracco* [Tübingen 1966] 69–70, no. 1219). Altar: Rome, Capitoline Museums, 1958, an early fourth-century inscription over an erased first-century inscription (Helbig, 226–28, no. 1421).

<sup>7</sup> Recarved anta capital: Princeton University Art Museum, 53-25 (C. M. Antonaccio, "Style, Reuse, and Context in a Roman Portrait at Princeton," *Archäologischer Anzeiger* [1992] 441–52, dating the portrait ca. A.D. 50–75). Bearded priest: art market, 1960s (Blanck, 53–54, no. A30).



Fig. 3. Head of Constantine, Rome, Musei Capitolini, Palazzo dei Conservatori (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 59.1720).



Fig. 4. Arch of Constantine, Adventus of Trajan/Constantine, detail (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 86.368).

are considered paradigms of *spolia*, as they have been since the sixteenth century, but the term is never applied to the colossal head of Constantine in the courtyard of the Palazzo dei Conservatori (figs. 3, 13), which has long been suspected of recarving and has recently been declared a recut head of Hadrian.<sup>8</sup> We could easily produce a rationale for such distinctions, but that would beg the question of their historical validity. We cannot take it for granted that our own tacit differentiation between *spolia* and other cases of reuse corresponds to any categories that were or would have been recognized in ancient Rome.

Historically, the designation *spolia* belongs to the sixteenth century, when—lacking a pre-existing term for them—the artist-antiquarians who were discovering reused antiquities borrowed the word from the semantic field of war.<sup>9</sup> That the Romans and Italians of the Middle Ages did not leave any other word to apply to these objects suggests that “reused marble artifacts” was an indirect concept in those cultures, rather like the products of recycling (as opposed to the process or its matter, recyclables) in English. Without a proper name they would not figure as a principal subject of discourse. In the Renaissance, by contrast, they

<sup>8</sup> C. Evers, “Remarques sur l’iconographie de Constantin. A propos du remploi de portraits des ‘Bons Empereurs,’” *Mélanges de l’École Française de Rome. Antiquité* 103.2 (1991) 794–99. According to another analysis, the original portrait was of Maxentius: H. Jucker, “Von der Angemessenheit des Stils und einigen Bildnissen

Konstantins des Grossen,” *Von Angesicht zu Angesicht. Porträtstudien. Michael Stettler zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. F. Deuchler, M. Flury-Lemberg, and K. Otavsky (Bern 1983) 55–57.

<sup>9</sup> Alchermes, 167–68.

were constituted as a denoted subset of the newly elevated category of antiquities, and it is as such that they have been carried on into art history. The term *spolia*, in other words, is not only anachronistic with respect to the fourth-century practice of reuse; it is also laden with artistic prejudices and interests specific to a much later period. Because this issue bears significantly on interpretation, I begin with a brief etymological consideration before passing on to the two most familiar forms of *spolia* in late antiquity, architectural elements and figural reliefs.

### 1. *Spolia and Spoliabilia*

Recent studies of *spolia* have emphasized the connotative traces of the word's original meaning, "spoils" or war booty, an extension from "hide," the skin that is stripped from an animal as armor is stripped from a defeated opponent.<sup>10</sup> In modern usage, its relation to art is metaphorical. In antiquity, however, the connection was metonymic or even literal, as *spolia—praeda* or *manubiae*, as they were also called—were often melted down or sold to finance artistic monuments to the victors.<sup>11</sup> Art itself became a common form of *spolia* after Roman armies entered Magna Graecia, and above all in the following century, when the Romans conquered Greece.<sup>12</sup> The first recognized art plunder was at Syracuse in 211 B.C.; the next, at Taranto in 209 B.C., yielded among other trophies the bronze seated Hercules by Lysippos, which was dedicated on the Capitol by Fabius Maximus Verrucosus.<sup>13</sup> Pliny's chapters on art identify many of the Greek masterpieces once on view at Rome as war trophies, including a bronze Athena by Pheidias dedicated by Aemilius Paulus (168 B.C.); a painting by Aristides placed by Lucius Mummius in the Temple of Ceres (146 B.C.); and a bronze Apollo, nearly 13 m tall, taken by Marcus Lucullus from Apollonia (71 B.C.).<sup>14</sup>

Art *spolia* were doubly or even triply potent markers of military success. Their removal left a scar of absence on the conquered city; so it was at Ambracia, whose ambassadors complained that after the Romans looted all of its bronze and marble statues (189 B.C.), Ambraciots were left with "only bare walls and door-posts . . . to adore, to pray to, and to supplicate."<sup>15</sup> At the same time, they added splendor to the city of the victors.<sup>16</sup> To be both ornament and *spolia*, however, artworks had to preserve the memory of their capture. In Rome, the "Hercules of Lysippos" was one among many works of art; the "Hercules from Taranto" was a

<sup>10</sup> B. Brenk, "Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987) 103, develops a metaphorical association with cannibalism; further, Alchermes; Kinney, 53–54.

<sup>11</sup> Strong 1968, 100; Pape, 27–35; Galsterer, 857.

<sup>12</sup> Pape, 1–26; Galsterer, 857–60. On the two thousand bronze statues said to have been taken from Volsinii in 264 B.C. (Plin. *HN* 34.16.34) see Pape, 139, n. 69; Waurick, 9–10, 42–43; Galsterer, 858.

<sup>13</sup> Syracuse: Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 25.40.1–3; Plut. *Vit., Marc.* 21. Taranto: Plin. *HN* 34.18.40; Plut. *Fabius Maximus* 22.6; Pape, 6–8, 151, no. 3; Waurick, 6–12, 43; P. Moreno, *Vita e arte di Lysippo* (Milan

1987) 237–57.

<sup>14</sup> Athena of Pheidias: Plin. *HN* 34.19.54 (ed. H. Le Bonniec, 216, n. 7; cf. Pape, 14, 161–62); painting of Aristides: *ibid.*, 35.8.24 (ed. J.-M. Croisille, 146–47, n. 2; cf. Pape, 16, 18–19, 154; Isager, 119; Galsterer, 859–60); Apollo from Apollonia: *ibid.*, 34.18.39 (ed. Le Bonniec, 192, n. 1; cf. Pape, 23–24, 150, no. 1).

<sup>15</sup> Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 38.43.5; cf. 38.9.13–14 (trans. E. T. Sage, 148–49, 30–33); Plin. *HN* 35.36.66; Blanck, 68; cf. Guberti Bassett 1991, 92; Galsterer, 859. Polybius warned about the hatred this effect could produce among those who were plundered: *Histories* 9.10.

<sup>16</sup> Strong 1968, 100; Pape, 41–54, 69.

*spolium*. In fact, the ornamental role seems to have taken over quickly, as art spoils were engulfed by many other objects that were economic and cultural rather than military booty. The birth of an extensive art trade lavished Rome with myriad works of foreign manufacture, including original masterpieces, copies of canonized inventions, and new works made by Greek artists in Attic and Hellenistic styles.<sup>17</sup> With this and other developments, artistic *spolia* slipped into different categories of reception. In Pliny's text, for example, spoliative works of art appear indiscriminately mixed with others still *in situ* or no longer extant, to illustrate his reconstruction of art history. Thus the Athena dedicated by Aemilius Paulus features as a work of Pheidias; the Apollo from Apollonia appears as an example of colossi; and the painting of Dionysus by Aristides exemplifies the high value placed in Rome on "foreign pictures" (and incidentally the discredit to its captor, Mummius, for being ignorant of its worth). By the late empire, the effect of art *spolia* as memorials to military virtue had been diluted by the value of the same objects as testaments to artistic achievement and Roman cultural hegemony.

The taking of artworks became a political rather than a martial prerogative. Following his victory at Actium, Octavian installed in the Curia Iulia a statue of Victory, which "had belonged to the people of Tarentum, whence it was now brought to Rome, placed in the senate chamber, and decked with the spoils of Egypt."<sup>18</sup> The military *spolia* adorning the statue both dissembled and metaphorized its own status as a de facto spoil, expropriated from a city that had lost its political autonomy. Such official spoliation was subject to legal constraints. As proconsul of Sicily (73–71 B.C.), Gaius Verres helped himself to various temple treasures, including cult statues, paintings, and ivory doors; in his prosecution of him, Cicero repeatedly contrasted this illegal *spoliatio* with the legitimate right of spoils due to a military victor.<sup>19</sup> Four centuries later, the same word appeared in legislation directed at magistrates who would strip the marble ornaments from public buildings in Rome in order to reuse them. As Joseph Alchermes pointed out, these fourth-century laws are concerned with preventing despoiled buildings (*spoliatae aedes*), not with the fate or status of the objects removed from them.<sup>20</sup> The columns, capitals, friezes, and other embellishments that might be taken are generically designated by their material (*marmora*) or function (*ornamenta, ornatus*).<sup>21</sup> Theoretically, there was a verbal category *spoliabilia*, but apparently the word was rarely used.<sup>22</sup>

It would be a thousand years before *spolia*, or *spoglie* in Italian, became the normal term for a class of marble artifacts, and then it was synonymous with *anticaglie* (*antichità*), except that it denoted specifically antiquities found in secondary (medieval) contexts. A recently published "Nota d'anticaglie et spoglie . . . nella cipta [città] de Roma . . .," from the time of Pope Julius II (1503–13), begins at St. Peter's, "fatta tutta de spoglie," by which the author means its "colonne bellissime con chapitegli chorinti."<sup>23</sup> Francesco

<sup>17</sup> Galsterer, 860ff; H.-U. Cain and O. Dräger, "Die sogenannten neuattischen Werkstätten," in *Das Wrack. Der antike Schiffsfund von Mahdia*, ed. G. Hellenkemper Salies with H.-H. von Prittwitz und Gaffron and G. Bauchhenss, 2 vols. (Cologne 1994) 2:812–17.

<sup>18</sup> Cass. Dio, *Roman History* 51.22 (trans. E. Cary, 63); Richardson, 103.

<sup>19</sup> Kinney, 53.

<sup>20</sup> Alchermes, 167–68.

<sup>21</sup> *Cod. Theod.* 15.1.19 (a. 376): *non marmorum frustis spoliatarum aedium deformatione convulsis*; cf. 15.1.16, 15.1.25, 15.1.37. Y. Janvier, *La législation du Bas-Empire romain sur les édifices publics* (Aix-en-Provence 1969) 178–79.

<sup>22</sup> E. Forcellini, *Totius latinitatis lexicon* (Prati 1871) 5:605 cites only one example, in a late Christian source.

<sup>23</sup> *Nota d'anticaglie et spoglie et cose maravigliose et grande sono nella cipta de Roma da vederle volentieri*, ed. A. Fantozzi (Rome 1994).

Albertini's Latin guide to Rome of 1510 mentions *spolia*; and Raphael discussed *spoglie* in his letter to Pope Leo X of around 1519.<sup>24</sup> The etymological innovation coincided with the birth of a new genre, the antiquarian guidebook, as well as with the rediscovery of *spolia* by architects, who found that the reuse of ancient elements could dignify their own designs.<sup>25</sup>

The original applications of *spoglie* were tendentious. To see *spolia* implied a power of discernment, the ability to recognize the quality of antiquity in contexts of lesser artistic value. Raphael used *spoglie* to instruct the pope how to distinguish the best among the three phases of Roman art: ancient, barbarian, and modern. His example was the Arch of Constantine, "the composition of which is fine and well done in all that pertains to the architecture, but the sculptures are idiotic, without any good art or design. [The sculptures] there which are *spoglie* of Trajan and Antoninus Pius are most excellent and of perfect style."<sup>26</sup> *Spoglie* entailed a new, imaginative kind of spoliation, the mental stripping of antiquities from their postantique sites of display in order to recollect them in an ideal art world in which "all of the buildings followed one guiding idea."<sup>27</sup> None of this holds for the fourth century, when the concern was not for *spolia* per se but for *spoliatae aedes*, and the concern, while also aesthetic, was ultimately civic rather than historical in the humanistic sense.<sup>28</sup> Despoiled buildings were a disfigurement, an affront to the splendor and beauty that were proper to cities.<sup>29</sup> Fourth- and fifth-century legislation drew attention, not to the reused "pieces of marble" but to the gaps where the marbles belonged, to the "illustrious" and "noble" buildings that were deprived of their ornaments and thus no longer contributing to urban decor.<sup>30</sup>

## 2. Renovated Stones

The reuse of building materials is an obvious and universal practice. In Rome, there were multiple forms of such recycling, ranging from metamorphosis or consumption to intact reinstallation. Much of it was salutary or at least innocuous. Vitruvius claimed that "the strongest burnt brick walls are those which are constructed out of old roofing tiles," because reused

<sup>24</sup> *Opusculum de mirabilibus Nouae & ueteris Urbis Romae editum a Fra(n)cisco de Albertinis . . .*, rpt. in P. Murray (intro.), *Five Early Guides to Rome and Florence* (Westmead 1972); Raffaello, 281, 293, 303. I am here correcting my earlier assertion (Kinney, 54) that *spoglie* was used first by Vasari. I am grateful to Ingo Herklotz for pointing out my error and for prompting me to seek earlier sources (see his review article in *Journal für Kunstgeschichte* 2 [1998] 105). I also thank my colleague David Cast for directing me to several references that I might otherwise have missed. Cast observed that *spolia* also appears in the *Roma instaurata* of Flavio Biondo, first published in 1481.

<sup>25</sup> D. A. R. Moore, "Notes on the Use of Spolia in Roman Architecture from Bramante to Bernini," in *Architectural Studies in Memory of Richard Krautheimer*, ed. C. L. Striker (Mainz 1996) 119–20.

<sup>26</sup> Raffaello, 303: "l'arco di Costantino, il componimento

del quale è bello et ben fatto in tutto quel che appartiene all'architettura, ma le sculture del medesimo arco sono sciochissime, senza arte o disegno alcuno buono. Quelle che vi sono delle spoglie di Traiano et di Antonino Pio sono eccellentissime e di perfetta maniera." Cf. G. Vasari, *Le Vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a' tempi nostri, nell'edizione per i tipi di Lorenzo Torrentino, Firenze 1550*, ed. L. Belloso and A. Rossi (Turin 1986) 100–101; Kinney, 55.

<sup>27</sup> Raffaello, 303: "tutti erano d'una ragione."

<sup>28</sup> For other than aesthetic motivations, see A. Lukaszewicz, "Some Remarks on P. Lond. III 755 and the Problem of Building Materials in the Fourth Century A.D.," *Archeologia* 30 (1979) 119.

<sup>29</sup> Saradi 1995, 41–42.

<sup>30</sup> Alchermes, 168.



tiles were weather-tested.<sup>31</sup> Concrete required aggregate (*caementa*), which for certain parts of a structure could be of nearly any stone, including broken columns and statues, and lime, which was made by burning limestone (or marble).<sup>32</sup> In this way builders were able to consume countless tons of material that might otherwise have been discarded as unusable. But lime was needed for repair as well as for new construction; thus legislation mandating restoration could have the paradoxical effect of creating a demand for *spoliabilia* to feed the lime kilns.<sup>33</sup>

The intact reinstallation of ornamental marbles, especially columns, is recorded from an early period, including well-known episodes involving Sulla and Marcus Scaurus. These appear to have been anomalies, however, which probably accounts for their memorialization. Sulla reputedly took columns from the Athenian Temple of Zeus Olympios to rebuild the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol (83 B.C.). These would have been almost true *spolia*, symbols of a prerogative earned by the dictator's defeat of Athens three years before.<sup>34</sup> The notorious case of Marcus Scaurus, who as aedile (58 B.C.) erected an elaborate temporary theater decorated with 360 marble columns, the largest of which he later moved to his own house, was treated by Pliny as an abuse of public office. These were newly manufactured columns, and the theater a ruse by which Scaurus evaded an unspoken sumptuary taboo.<sup>35</sup> In the Republic—or at least in Pliny's image of the Republic—even the temples were uncontaminated by such *luxuria*. On the other hand, around the same time (54 B.C.) Cicero disparaged Aemilius Paulus' attempt to restore his family's famous Basilica using "the same old columns" under a new superstructure.<sup>36</sup> This was the antithesis of Scaurus' unseemly private ostentation: a lack of grandiosity unbecoming an urban showplace.<sup>37</sup> By the time of Pliny the Basilica had been suitably refitted with new shafts of Phrygian marble.<sup>38</sup>

For the normal practice of reusing marble ornaments there are two principal sources of evidence: legislation and the archaeological record of the quarries. Review of this evidence indicates that it is helpful to distinguish private from public practice on the one hand, and municipal from imperial practice on the other.<sup>39</sup> Obtaining marbles was always most difficult for private builders, who might employ contractors for construction but were often themselves obliged to purchase the materials, especially precious materials.<sup>40</sup> In this market there

<sup>31</sup> Vitr. *De arch.* 2.8.19 (trans. M. H. Morgan, 57; trans. F. Granger, 129, with a different sense). E. J. Phillips, "The Roman Law on the Demolition of Buildings," *Latomus* 32 (1973) 93.

<sup>32</sup> Aggregate: MacDonald, 1:149; Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 116. Lime: Cato, *Agr. Orig.* 38; Vitruvius, *De arch.* 2.5; MacDonald, 1:153.

<sup>33</sup> Lukaszewicz (as n. 28) 115.

<sup>34</sup> Plin. *HN* 36.5.45; Strong 1968, 101; H. Abramson, "The Olympieion in Athens, Sulla, and the Capitulum in Rome," *American Journal of Archaeology* 78 (1974) 160; Pape, 21, 171. Pliny presents it differently, as a functional (and decorous) use of the material; cf. Isager, 183–84. That the columns were actually used on the Capitol is questioned or denied by some modern archaeologists: Richardson, 223; S. De Angeli, in Steinby, 3:149.

<sup>35</sup> Plin. *HN* 36.2.5–6; 36.24.114–15. Pliny acknowledged

that there were no laws against such display; cf. Isager, 146, 200. The columns were later transferred from Scaurus' atrium to the Theater of Marcellus: Asc. *Pro Scauro* 2.45; Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 114.

<sup>36</sup> Cic. *Att.* 4.17: *isdem antiquis columnis*.

<sup>37</sup> T. Frank, *Roman Buildings of the Republic* (Rome 1924) 67–68.

<sup>38</sup> Plin. *HN* 36.24.102. Frank (as n. 37), followed by Richardson, 55, inferred two rebuildings by Paulus, the second a properly grand one financed by a bribe of 1,500 talents from Julius Caesar (Plut. *Vit.*, *Caes.* 29.3; App. *B Civ.* 2.4.26). The Basilica was again restored after a fire in 14 B.C. (Cass. Dio 54.24.1) and once more in A.D. 22 (Tac. *Ann.* 3.72).

<sup>39</sup> Similarly Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 112.

<sup>40</sup> Cato, *Agr. Orig.* 14.1–4; Cic. *Att.* 12.19; Plin. *Ep.* 9.39.

was a demand for reused pieces, which was met legitimately—by salvaging and selling materials from demolished structures—and illegitimately by dilapidating buildings that then remained as eyesores in the public view.<sup>41</sup> As early as A.D. 44, dilapidation seems to have been one of the concerns of the legislation known as the *Senatus Consultum Hosidianum*.<sup>42</sup> Still in the first century, an edict of Vespasian specifically prohibited the demolition of buildings for the purpose of “taking off marbles” (*marmora detrahere*).<sup>43</sup> It also was illegal to make bequests of “articles that cannot be delivered other than by removing or withdrawing them from a building,” namely, decorative marbles, columns, and statues.<sup>44</sup> These rulings were reiterated through the second century and into the third.

Evidently a traffic in architectural *spolia* existed long before the fourth and fifth centuries, but it was in the private sphere. Public buildings do not seem to have been afflicted by despoliation; on the contrary, it appears that they were sometimes the recipients of *marmora uel columnae* removed from private sources.<sup>45</sup> When public buildings were damaged or demolished, their recuperable materials went into public storage.<sup>46</sup> The “renovated stones” (*redivivis de publico saxis*) mentioned in one of the fourth-century laws cited earlier would have come from such a publicly maintained deposit. Meanwhile, a huge and complicated system of “imperial quarries” provided a seemingly unlimited supply of fresh marble for any new imperial constructions, whether public (basilicas, thermae) or for the emperor’s own use. After the imperial quarries were reorganized to function commercially, in the late first or second century, inventories of new marbles were created as well.<sup>47</sup> These stockpiles allowed emperors and their representatives to continue dressing grandiose structures with decorative marbles for some time after the quarry system itself began to fail.

Even in times of plenty, marble was sometimes reused unobtrusively, for example, a damaged plaque with an Augustan inscription that was employed as a roof tile on the Pantheon.<sup>48</sup> In the early third century, the pediments of the Porticus of Octavia were rebuilt entirely of reused marble, smoothed to uniformity on the exterior faces but visible from inside as an unseemly welter of fragments.<sup>49</sup> Reuse of this sort, essentially the recuperation of material, is different from the reinstallation of marbles for the sake of their carving, in the same capacity

S. D. Martin, *The Roman Jurists and the Organization of Private Building in the Late Republic and Early Empire* (Brussels 1989) 38–40.

<sup>41</sup> Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.148: *rediviva sibi habeto*; the contractor may keep the used materials. Presumably he could then sell them or reuse them himself in another project.

<sup>42</sup> Phillips (as n. 31) 91–94; Garnsey, 134–36; Sargenti, 272–84; Geyer, 66–67.

<sup>43</sup> *Cod. Iust.* 8.10.2. Garnsey, 193, n. 40; Sargenti, 281.

<sup>44</sup> *Cod. Iust.*, *Dig.* 30.41 (trans. A. Watson, 11): *aedibus detrahatur subducatur*. Geyer, 68; Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 113.

<sup>45</sup> *Cod. Iust.*, *Dig.* 30.41. Geyer, 68.

<sup>46</sup> For demolition there were specialists represented by

the *collegium subrutorum*; MacDonald, 1:144.

<sup>47</sup> J. C. Fant, “The Roman Emperors in the Marble Business: Capitalists, Middlemen or Philanthropists?” in *Classical Marble: Geochemistry, Technology, Trade*, ed. N. Herz and M. Waelkens (Dordrecht, Boston, and London 1988) 151–53; M. Waelkens, P. De Paepe, and L. Moens, “Quarries and the Marble Trade in Antiquity,” *ibid.*, 19; *idem*, “Patterns of Extraction and Production in the White Marble Quarries of the Mediterranean: History, Present Problems and Prospects,” in *Ancient Marble Quarrying and Trade*, ed. J. C. Fant (Oxford 1988) 109–10; Pensabene 1992a, 45.

<sup>48</sup> L. Cozza, “Le tegole di marmo del Pantheon,” in *Città e architettura nella Roma imperiale. Atti del seminario del 27 ottobre 1981 nel 25° anniversario dell'Accademia di Danimarca* (Copenhagen 1983) 110–17; Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 115.

<sup>49</sup> Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 115.

for which they originally were designed.<sup>50</sup> In this respect the portico inside the attic of the Colosseum, which burned and was reinstated twice before 250, appears to mark a significant innovation.<sup>51</sup> The rebuilt colonnade was assembled from partly new and partly reused columns, and sported granite, cipollino, and Proconnesian shafts, Corinthian and composite capitals with cut and uncut leaves, and Attic and composite bases. Five capitals and two bases are datable to the late first and second centuries, including a Corinthian capital that is identical in size and style to the Antonine examples presently on the Arch of Constantine. These older pieces may have been acquired from a marble repository, to supplement what could be manufactured ad hoc between ca. 220 and 245.<sup>52</sup>

The Colosseum portico is the most important local precedent currently known for the mixed spoliated colonnades of Rome's fourth-century Christian basilicas.<sup>53</sup> There is a far more spectacular antecedent, however, in a passage by one of the problematic *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, a two hundred-column quadriporticus added by Emperor Gordian III (238–244) to his family's villa on the via Praenestina. It is said to have had fifty shafts of green-veined cipollino, fifty of granito del foro, fifty of purplish pavonazetto, and fifty of yellow marble from Numidia, presumably distributed in colored blocks around the square.<sup>54</sup> If it existed, this quadriporticus affirmed a taste for the kind of patterned colorism to be seen later in Constantine's basilica at the Lateran. If it was a fiction, the Gordian quadriporticus represents an interesting attempt by a fourth-century author to make contemporary practice seem historical.

The patchwork quality of the Colosseum portico may have had something to do with the fact that the restoration, though duly commemorated on coins and in the biographies of successive emperors, was not a project calculated to bring glory to its sponsors.<sup>55</sup> Empirical and literary evidence suggests that in other contexts the use of marble was unstinting in Rome in the first part of the third century, including unusually large blocks of statuary marble and the most sumptuous colors in architecture.<sup>56</sup> Both Elagabalus (218–222) and Alexander Severus (222–235) are credited with introducing *opus Alexandrinum* made of red and green porphyry, and both are said to have used it extensively in the Palace.<sup>57</sup> "Lampridius" remarked that these precious stones remained in place "to the time of our own memory, but recently [in the late fourth century?] they were dug up and cut out (*eruta et exsecta sunt*)."<sup>58</sup> Presumably they were excised to be reused.

Toward the end of the century, a failure of supply, not just of the rare colored marbles

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 112–20.

<sup>51</sup> Pensabene 1988; *id.* 1993, 758–59; *id.*, in Pensabene and Panella, 120–22.

<sup>52</sup> Pensabene 1988, 58, 62, 64, 68, 69–70.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 70–71.

<sup>54</sup> SHA, *Gordiani Tres* 32.2.

<sup>55</sup> SHA, *Heliogab.* 17.8; *Alex. Sev.* 24.3, 25.3; *Maximus et Balbinus* 1.4. Pensabene 1988, 55. According to a senator quoted in *Maximus et Balbinus*, the restoration was an "old woman's issue" (*aniles res*).

<sup>56</sup> A. Claridge, "Roman Statuary and the Supply of

Statuary Marble," in *Ancient Marble Quarrying* (as n. 47) 151–52. On the other hand, Elagabalus "could not find enough stone" to make a giant column to support a statue; SHA, *Heliogab.* 24.6.

<sup>57</sup> SHA, *Heliogab.* 24.6; *Alex. Sev.* 25.7.

<sup>58</sup> SHA, *Heliogab.* 24.6 (ed. Turcan, 212, n. 139). For a lucid review of the competing theories about the date and authorship of the *Historia Augusta*, see A. Chastagnol, ed. and trans., *Histoire auguste. Les empereurs romains des IIe et IIIe siècles* (Paris 1994) IX–XXXIV. Turcan interprets this particular *vita* as a satire on the reign of Constantine: R. Turcan, *Histoire auguste*, 3.1, *Vies de Macrin, Diaduménien, Héliogabale* (Paris 1993) 71–75.

but of all new materials, seems to have beset the behemoth constructions sponsored by Aurelian (270–275) and Diocletian (284–305).<sup>59</sup> “Massive quantities” of building stone and marble elements, retained from the large Flavian building that was destroyed to make way for the Baths of Diocletian, were reused in the articulated wall overlooking the Diocletianic *nataatio*.<sup>60</sup> Under Maxentius (306–312) the exterior ornament of the relatively tiny “Temple of Romulus” in the Forum was composed almost entirely of reused pieces, including a Severan bronze door and its marble frame, porphyry column shafts carrying Flavian capitals, and a trabeation made of a first-century door jamb turned sideways and topped by an Augustan cornice.<sup>61</sup> The only contemporary carving in the ensemble is the middle block of the cornice, which seems to be a fourth-century imitation of the two first-century blocks to either side.<sup>62</sup> In this case, rather than an economical expedient for stretching a limited supply of new material, *spolia* seem to have been the main event. The ancient pieces are diverse in style and probably, therefore, in origin; they were not inherited with the site, but seem to have been selected for their ability to contribute to the richness of the final assemblage. In these respects—heterogeneity of the parts and opulence of the aggregation—the ornamental entrance of the Temple anticipates the spoliated colonnades of the Christian basilicas to come.<sup>63</sup>

Despite knowledge of at least some of these precedents, the colonnades of the Lateran Basilica (ca. 313–318) and of St. Peter’s (ca. 320ff) are generally regarded as transformative moments in the history of the use of “renovated stones.”<sup>64</sup> Recent interpreters differ, however, in their descriptions of the intentions of the designers or builders, or more precisely over the relation of intention to the material conditions of supply. Were the builders acting over the relation of intention to the material conditions of supply. Were the builders acting of necessity in the face of unaccustomedly bad conditions, or were they exercising aesthetically motivated options in conditions that still permitted freedom of choice? In the first scenario, no newly quarried marble was available; reserves of reusable stones were depleted; the only sources of architectural elements of the scale and quantity required by the new basilicas were public buildings that could not be despoiled. Hence the colonnades were made variegated, assembled from whatever suitable pieces could be found. Aesthetics came into play secondarily, when the elements so collected were set in place.<sup>65</sup> In the second scenario,

<sup>59</sup> L. Lazzarini, M. Mariottini, M. Pecoraro, and P. Pensabene, “Determination of the Provenance of Marbles Used in Some Ancient Monuments in Rome,” in *Classical Marble* (as n. 47) 404–5. The brick industry broke down as well, necessitating the reuse of old bricks to face the concrete Wall of Aurelian; J. B. Ward-Perkins, *Roman Imperial Architecture*, rev. ed. (rpt. Harmondsworth 1985) 415–17.

<sup>60</sup> D. Candilio, “Terme di Diocleziano: Indagini nell’aula ottagonata,” in *Archeologia laziale XII*, 1. *Dodicesimo incontro di studio del Comitato per l’Archeologia Laziale* (Rome 1995) 193–202, esp. 202; cf. Pensabene 1993, 759; *id.*, in Pensabene and Panella, 122.

<sup>61</sup> M. Cima, “Decorazione architettonica,” in *Il “Tempio di Romolo” al Foro Romano (Quaderni dell’Istituto di Storia dell’Architettura 26 [1980], fasc. 157–62)* (Rome 1981) 103–17.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>63</sup> M. Cullhed, *Conservator urbis suae. Studies in the Politics and Propaganda of the Emperor Maxentius* (Stockholm 1994) 52–55. The façade of the “Temple” was rebuilt around the time of Constantine, but the *spolia* seem to belong to the original door; F. P. Fiore, “L’impianto architettonico antico,” in *Il “Tempio di Romolo”* (as n. 61) 74–81, 83, fig. 111; C. Martini, “Opera muraria,” *ibid.*, 96–97, 100. In the sixteenth century, Panvinio read a fragmentary inscription of Constantine on the exterior; *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 6.1 (Berlin 1876) 238, no. 1147.

<sup>64</sup> Exceptionally, Brenk 1996, 58 notes precedents outside Rome, especially in Split, and credits the inauguration of Constantinian practice to Diocletian.

<sup>65</sup> Pensabene 1992a, 47–48; *id.*, “Reimpiego dei marmi antichi nelle chiese altomedievali a Roma,” in *Marmi antichi*, ed. G. Borghini (Rome 1992b) 56; *id.* 1993, 762–65. Elsewhere (Pensabene and Panella, 133–37) the same author suggests a principally ideological motive for using

shortages were not yet so severe; it was still possible to muster sufficient builders, marble carvers, and materials to execute a new imperial construction; but Constantine's designers preferred to build with *spolia* for practical and aesthetic reasons. *Spolia* were cheaper and more quickly produced, and they were more adaptable to the novel demands of the new architectural form that was the Christian basilica.<sup>66</sup> *Spolia* were visually more stimulating, creating "unexpected . . . possibly even shocking" effects for a public that found optical gratification in coloristic and formal inconstancy, or changefulness of parts within the whole.<sup>67</sup>

This debate takes it for granted that the Constantinian colonnades were *spolia* only in the Renaissance sense of the term; in other words, that they were not the products of despoliation.<sup>68</sup> This may be a vulnerable assumption, in view of the near certainty that the same or contemporary builders pillaged the Forum of Trajan to enhance the *varietas* of Constantine's triumphal arch.<sup>69</sup> It is worth asking whether the marbles of Constantine's churches might also have come from *aedes spoliatae*.

The column shafts in St. Peter's were markedly diverse, comprising several types of marble and granite in roughly even quantities, such that four stones each made up nearly one-quarter of the whole.<sup>70</sup> They may have come from multiple sources. At the Lateran, however, all of the shafts of the outer colonnades were of a single stone, *verde antico* (Thessalian green marble).<sup>71</sup> Forty-two shafts of *verde antico* is a not insignificant number, incompatible with the notion of scrounging in depleted stockpiles.<sup>72</sup> If they were not new, these columns more likely came from a standing building, although not necessarily a public one. They were domestically scaled, ca. 3.5 m tall, as opposed to the monumental granite shafts in the nave, which were nearly 9.5 m tall.<sup>73</sup> They could have been made for one of the many urban and suburban mansions that belonged to the domain of the imperial *res privata*, including the *aedes Laterani* that gave the new basilica its common name.<sup>74</sup> Recent excavations have revealed

columns, with recourse to *spolia* as a necessary means of realizing it.

<sup>66</sup> H. Brandenburg, "Spolia ed elementi architettonici originali nella chiesa di S. Stefano Rotondo e nell'architettura tardoantica a Roma," *Corso di Cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina* 41 (1994) 556–59, 570–71; the same in *Antike Spolien in der Architektur des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, ed. J. Poeschke (Munich 1996) 18–22, 30.

<sup>67</sup> Brenk 1996, 50 ("unerwartet, neuartig, vielleicht sogar schockierend"), 76 ("Ich verstehe unter *varietas* Abwechslungsreichtum"). Though stressing aesthetic motivations, Brenk (59) allows that the initial determinant was need.

<sup>68</sup> Exceptionally, again, Brenk (56): "Höchst wahrscheinlich sind sowohl kaiserliche als auch private Paläste . . . ausgeraubt worden."

<sup>69</sup> Kinney, 57.

<sup>70</sup> Pensabene 1993, 754–55. "Granito bianco" (Trojan granite?), 23%; "saligno [striato]" (Proconnesian marble?), 23%; "granito rosso [rosetto]" (Aswan granite), 22%; cipollino, 22%. These percentages are based

on the number of shafts whose materials were recorded, which is smaller than the total number of shafts (88) originally in the four colonnades.

<sup>71</sup> Gnoli, 162–65.

<sup>72</sup> R. Krautheimer, S. Corbett, and A. K. Frazer, *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, 5 vols. (Rome 1937–77) 5:44–45. Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 169–70. Gnoli, 163 notes that the Lateran is still "la chiesa più ricca di 'verde' che vi sia in Roma." Twenty-four of the columns remain there.

<sup>73</sup> Krautheimer et al. (as n. 72) 5:45, 75, 77, 79.

<sup>74</sup> In the eighteenth century they were believed to have been taken from the Mausoleum of Hadrian; Gnoli, 163–64. Observing their scale, Hartmann Grisar suggested that they might have come "from the original peristyle of the palace of the Laterani"; *Roma alla fine del mondo antico*, 2 vols. (Rome 1930) 2:382. On the historical and topographical questions surrounding the *aedes Laterani*, see P. Liverani, "Le proprietà private nell'area lateranense fino all'età di Costantino," *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Antiquité* 100 (1988), esp. 899–908, reiterated in "L'ambiente nell'antichità," in *San Giovanni in Laterano*, ed. C. Pietrangeli (Florence 1990) 23–28;

a number of aristocratic, possibly imperial, domestic structures in this area. One site—identified by Santa Maria Scrinari as the “villa Anniorum” and by Liverani as part of the *horti* of Domitia Lucilla—contained “a vast garden surrounded by a monumental portico, measuring 27 × 22 m,” whose marble ornament was removed in late antiquity.<sup>75</sup> At the least this garden courtyard is an example of the kind of structure from which the *verde* columns might have come; and it is tantalizing that Santa Maria Scrinari believes it to be the original site of the bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, which certainly was appropriated for the Lateran at some point before or during the early Middle Ages. Her arguments have met considerable resistance, however.<sup>76</sup>

In one of his last articles, Richard Krautheimer argued that it was from the *res privata* that Constantine furnished the columns and other marbles to all of his church foundations, not just in Rome.<sup>77</sup> Among other considerations, extracting marbles from these buildings would have been a relatively simple means to evade the crisis of the public deposits. It may also have been a way to recuperate precious materials from estates that were otherwise disused. The statutes regulating the movement of marble ornaments in private ownership, cited earlier, permitted a private owner to detach such marbles only in order to embellish another of his own houses or to benefit a public work.<sup>78</sup> Constantine’s own legislation, as it is preserved in a single edict in the Codex of Justinian, similarly permitted the transfer of *marmora vel columnas* from the “tottering walls” of one private urban property to another in the same ownership, while forbidding such transfer from an urban property (*civitate spoliata*) to a rural one.<sup>79</sup>

The post-Constantinian legislation protecting marble ornaments resembles the earlier laws in spirit, but it is directed at a different problem.<sup>80</sup> Rather than transfers among private persons for commercial purposes, these laws address the removal of ornaments in bronze and marble by “judges” (*judices*) and prefects in order to embellish new public buildings at the expense of old ones or one city at the expense of another.<sup>81</sup> Both practices have analogies with the Constantinian embellishment of churches, but neither exactly corresponds to it. The taking of marble ornaments by one city from another is also something like the ancient Roman practice of taking art as *spolia*, and this is one reason why earlier jurists declared that the subtraction of marbles was unacceptable: it created ruins, and ruins subvert peace by giving the appearance of war (*nec inimicissimam pace faciem inducere ruinis*).<sup>82</sup> Peaceful cities

*id.*, “Note di topografia lateranense: Le strutture di via Amba Aradam. A proposito di una recente pubblicazione,” *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 95 (1993) 147–49.

<sup>75</sup> V. Santa Maria Scrinari, *Il Laterano imperiale*, vol. 2, *Dagli 'horti Domitiae' alla Cappella cristiana* (Vatican City 1995) 191–213, passage quoted on p. 206; Liverani 1990 (as n. 74) 24.

<sup>76</sup> Santa Maria Scrinari (as n. 75); Liverani 1988 (as n. 74) 896–97.

<sup>77</sup> R. Krautheimer, “The Ecclesiastical Building Policy of Constantine,” in *Costantino il Grande. Dall'antichità all'umanesimo. Colloquio sul cristianesimo nel mondo antico*, ed. G. Bonamente and F. Fusco, 2 vols. (Macerata 1993) 2:509–52. Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 129–31, has proposed other sources, including the public

buildings of smaller cities and buildings with a superabundance of ornament, such as the Forum of Trajan. For the *res privata*, see E. Lo Cascio, “Patrimonium, ratio privata, res privata,” *Annali dell'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici* 3 (1971–72) esp. 99–121.

<sup>78</sup> Above, n. 44.

<sup>79</sup> *Cod. Iust.* 8.10.6, to Helpidius, vicar of Rome, A.D. 321; Sargent, 284; Pensabene, in Pensabene and Panella, 129.

<sup>80</sup> Geyer, 69–73; Alchermes, 175–76.

<sup>81</sup> *Cod. Theod.* 15.1.11, 14, 16, 19, 37.

<sup>82</sup> *Senatus consulta de aedificiis non diruendis, Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, ed. H. Dessau, 2.1 (Berlin 1902) 480, no. 6043; Garnsey, 134; Geyer, 67.

were beautiful, and ornamented buildings were a principal constituent of beauty. By the fourth century, the beauty of the city was an ideological imperative; and municipal officials were caught in the cleft between ideology and the reality of supply.<sup>83</sup> The imperial edicts illustrate, and probably aggravated, their dilemma. They also reflect a modified ideal of beauty in which antiquity conferred aesthetic value.<sup>84</sup> On that point, Roman practice and Renaissance perceptions intersect.

The evidence reviewed in this section—law codes and literary and archaeological *testimonia* pertaining to the use and reuse of architectural materials—provides a relatively homogeneous context in which to imagine the initial reception of Constantinian spoliated colonnades. The fourth-century public was accustomed to the reuse of marble ornaments. It had been going on for centuries and typically was motivated by a desire for ostentation coupled with the inability to procure the necessary elements firsthand. In the distant past—the glory days of the first and second centuries—it had been confined to private patronage and commerce, but the reversals of the third century had forced it into the sphere of public building sponsored by the emperor and the senate. This development did not necessarily predispose the public in its favor or preclude potential connotations of impecuniousness and spoliation. Beat Brenk's proposal that the fourth-century church colonnades were "shocking" may be true in more than the aesthetic dimension.<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, the extravaganzas of mixed marbles created by or attributed to early third-century emperors may have made more uniform displays seem too subdued. The complex cross-axial patterns of colored shafts in the colonnades of St. Peter's may have been viewed as an appropriate, even necessary advance beyond structures like the Gordian quadriporticus.<sup>86</sup>

The Arch of Constantine, with its reused historiated reliefs (fig. 20), cannot be contextualized so easily. Contemporaries must have understood it in the light of two slightly earlier arches that had been decorated in the same way, but twentieth-century interpreters have been forced to do the opposite, reading those monuments by analogy with the Arch of Constantine. Insofar as there was a prior tradition of such reuse, it was associated with *damnatio memoriae*. L'Orange's account of the Arch of Constantine posits a viewer able to avoid this association and to overlook, as Raphael and Vasari could not, the stylistic anachronisms that refer him or her away from Constantine, to the time and deeds of other emperors. In the sections that follow, I briefly describe the two earlier arches and review some of the diverse ways in which sculpture was reused in Rome and its empire prior to late antiquity. My assumption is that these practices, even when no longer current, were constituents of the shared culture that provided the matrix of interpretation for the Arch's original viewers and were determinants of their reactions to it.

### 3. The New Arches

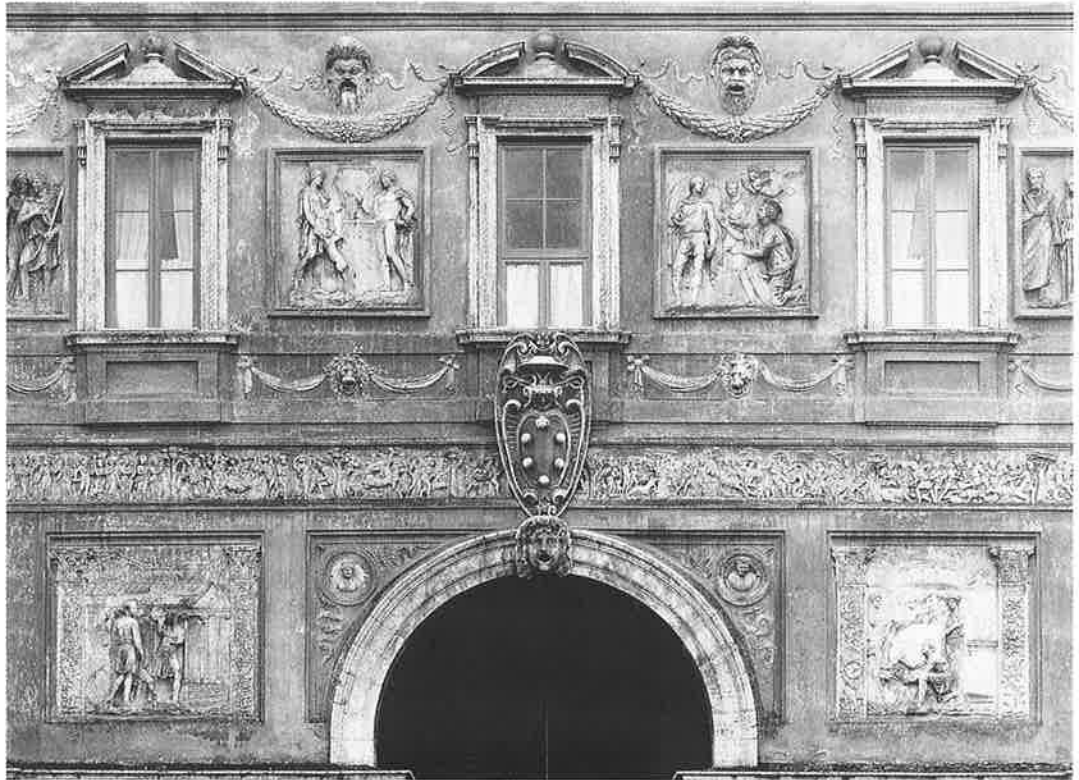
In 1491, just as architects and antiquarians were beginning to speak of the category *spolia*, Pope Innocent VIII cleared away the remains of what has turned out to be a key example of

<sup>83</sup> Saradi 1995, 37–45.

<sup>85</sup> Above, n. 67.

<sup>84</sup> Geyer, 72–73; this is especially evident in legislation of the end of the century, protecting the unused temples.

<sup>86</sup> Pensabene 1993, 754–55.



*Fig. 5. Villa Medici, garden façade decorated with reliefs from the Arcus Novus (photo Alinari 27523).*



*Fig. 6. Fragments from the Arcus Novus, plaster casts in EUR, Museo della Civiltà Romana (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 74.763).*



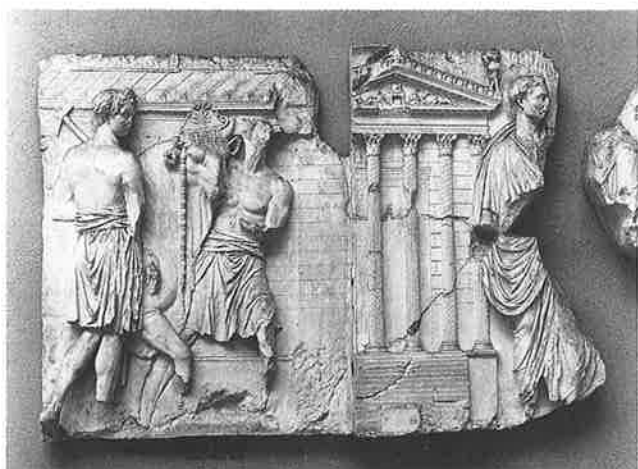


Fig. 7. Sacrifice before the temple of Magna Mater, plaster casts in EUR, Museo della Civiltà Romana (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 77.1750).



Fig. 8. Sacrifice before the temple of Magna Mater, detail (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 77.1751).

the practice, in order to rebuild S. Maria in Via Lata.<sup>87</sup> A generation later, in 1523, excavations around the same site turned up fragments of its relief decoration, including a piece with a female's arm inscribing an oak-rimmed shield (fig. 6). Its location on the Via Lata and the inscription on the shield, *VOTIS X ET XX*, eventually led archaeologists to identify the demolished structure as an "arcus novus" ascribed in fourth-century sources to the joint reign of Diocletian and Maximian and to associate it with the emperors' *decennalia* in 293/294.<sup>88</sup> The recovered ornament is notably diverse. Besides the impressive late antique column pedestals now in the Boboli Gardens in Florence, which may or may not have been part of the arch and may or may not have been *spolia*,<sup>89</sup> it includes a number of first- and possibly second-century reliefs now in tertiary installation on the garden façade of the Villa Medici (fig. 5).<sup>90</sup> By manipulating plaster casts of these pieces in the Museo della Civiltà Romana, Lucos Cozza sorted them into two coherent sets: four fragments depicting statuesque personifications and the writing figure (fig. 6), and two scenes of sacrificial rites in front of the temples of Magna Mater (fig. 7) and Mars Ultor.<sup>91</sup> Two imperial portraits have been recarved in a tetrarchic style, one standing next to the helmeted personification in the first set of fragments (far left in fig. 6), and the other before the temple of Magna Mater (fig. 8). The inscription with the *vota*, which is not an original feature of the shield, is thought to have been part of the same recutting.

<sup>87</sup> De Maria, 312.

<sup>88</sup> Laubscher, 71, 74–77, 103; Koeppel 1983, 79, 102; De Maria, 312–14, no. 94; M. Torelli in Steinby, 1:101–2.

<sup>89</sup> R. Brilliant, "I piedistalli del giardino di Boboli: Spolia in se, spolia in re," *Prospettiva* 31 (1982) 2–17, argues that the pedestals were *spolia* from an unknown work of Gallienus. De Maria, 313 calls their association with the Arcus Novus "molto dubbia." Torelli (as n. 88) proposes that they may have been made for the façade

of Aurelian's Templum Solis.

<sup>90</sup> Laubscher, 71–77, 79–80, 108; Koeppel 1983, 72–80, 98–116, nos. 12–23, 119–24, nos. 26–28; L. Cordischi, "Sul problema dell'Ara Pietatis Augustae e dei rilievi ad essi attribuiti," *Archeologia classica* 37 (1985) 246–65; De Maria, 312–13; D. E. E. Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven, Conn. and London 1992) 144–45, 409–13, figs. 119–20, 376–81.

<sup>91</sup> L. Cozza, "Ricomposizione di alcuni rilievi di Villa Medici," *Bollettino d'arte* 43 (1958) 107–11.

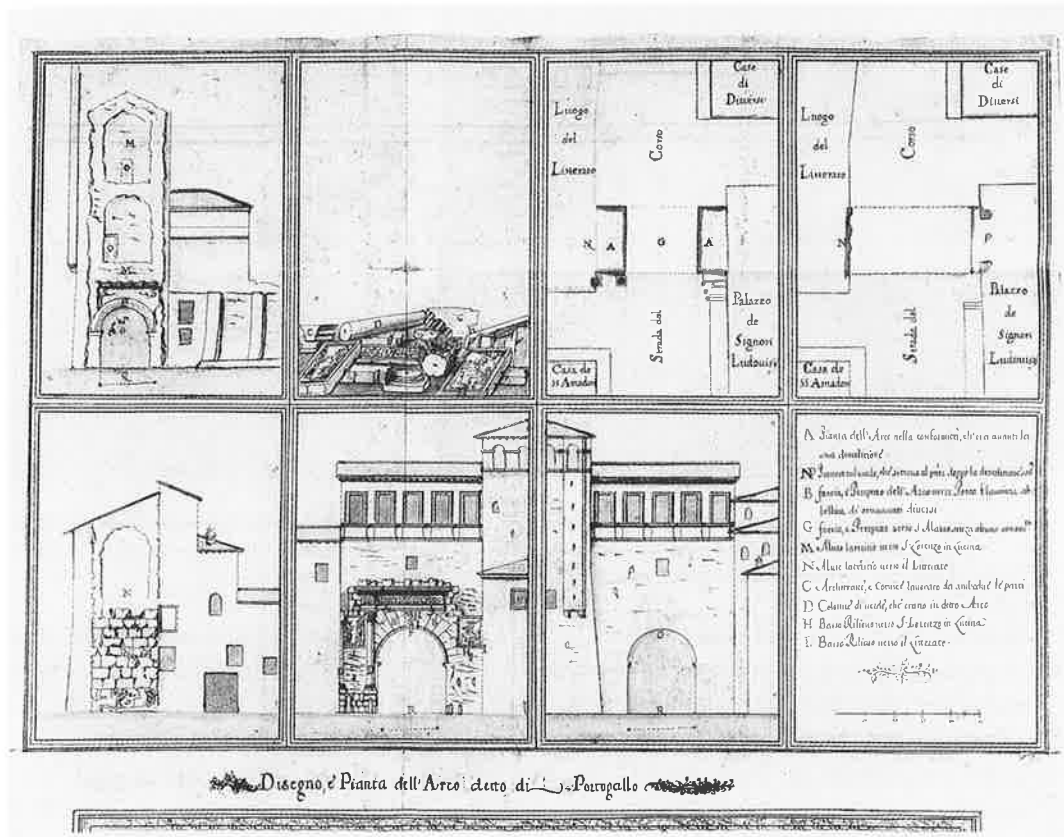


Fig. 9. Arco di Portogallo, drawing by Carlo Fontana, MS Chigi P. VII. 13, fol. 32, detail (photo Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

The prevailing programmatic reading of the Arcus Novus montage originated with Hans Peter Laubscher, who dated all of the early imperial reliefs to the reign of Claudius (41–54), tracing one set to the triumphal arch that commemorated his conquest of Britain and the other, with the sacrificial rituals, to the Ara Pietatis.<sup>92</sup> Neither provenance has been sustained. The Ara Pietatis has been declared a “ghost building,” and the first-century date of the reliefs that Laubscher attributed to the Arch of Claudius is debatable.<sup>93</sup> A meticulous iconographic study by Paul Veyne had already concluded that they could not have been made before the time of Antoninus Pius (138–161), and others have preferred a second-century date on grounds of style.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, one still often reads that the Arcus Novus celebrated Diocletian as “Restitutor Britanniae” through identification, by means of the reused reliefs, with the successful military campaigns for which Claudius earned his triumphal arch.<sup>95</sup> What

<sup>92</sup> Laubscher, 72–74, 86–101, 108.

<sup>93</sup> G. M. Koeppel, “Die ‘Ara Pietatis Augustae’: Ein Geisterbau,” *Römische Mitteilungen* 89.2 (1982) 453–55; *id.*, 1983, 73–78; Cordischi (as n. 90) 264–65.

<sup>94</sup> P. Veyne, “Vénus, l’univers et les vœux décennaux

sur les reliefs Médicis,” *Revue des études latines* 38 (1960) 306–22, esp. 313; F. S. Kleiner, *The Arch of Nero in Rome: A Study of the Roman Honorary Arch before and under Nero* (Rome 1985) 60–61; De Maria, 313.

<sup>95</sup> De Maria, 314; D. Kleiner (as n. 90) 413.



Fig. 10. *Consecratio of Sabina, Rome, Musei Capitolini 1213* (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 29.283).



Fig. 11. *Emperor making a public proclamation, Rome, Musei Capitolini 832* (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 54.41).

might now be called the intertextuality between these arches would make the Arcus Novus a direct precedent for the Arch of Constantine, on which, most scholars agree, a similar but more complex play was established between Constantine's monument and those of three glorified predecessors, Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius. But the intertextuality may be more historiographic than historical, as Laubscher's reconstruction of the spoliated allegory of the Arcus Novus evidently was inspired by L'Orange's seminal reading of the Arch of Constantine.

Before the Arcus Novus there was the so-called Arco di Portogallo, which spanned the via Flaminia (present via del Corso) and was nicknamed for the embassy that occupied a nearby palace in the fifteenth century.<sup>96</sup> It was destroyed in 1662 in order to widen the Corso. It is known principally from the records of Carlo Fontana, who supervised the demolition and left detailed drawings and a long prose account of its structure and materials (fig. 9).<sup>97</sup> On its north side the arch was decorated with green marble columns carrying an entablature with a foliate frieze, and two reliefs; according to Fontana, all of this ornament was reused. Only the reliefs survive. They represent the apotheosis (*consecratio*) of an empress witnessed by her consort (fig. 10) and a public proclamation by an emperor (fig. 11). The imperial portraits have been changed at least twice, once in antiquity and again in the twentieth century.<sup>98</sup> The original portrait was probably Hadrian's, as indicated by the fact that the

<sup>96</sup> M. Bertolletti, in *Rilievi storici*, 21.

<sup>97</sup> Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Chigi P. VII. 13, fol. 32. The description is signed by Fontana and five

others who worked on the demolition.

<sup>98</sup> E. La Rocca, in *Rilievi storici*, 24–26, 28; M. G. Chilosi and G. Martellotti, *ibid.*, 35. The head of the emperor in

empress, whose features were never recarved, has the face of his wife Sabina (d. 136). The reliefs must have been produced for a monument conceived in Hadrian's last years or early in the reign of his successor, Antoninus Pius (138–161).<sup>99</sup> As the recutting of the imperial heads seems to have been done in the third century, Eugenio La Rocca argued that the reliefs were reused on the Arco di Portogallo to represent the consecration of Mariniana, the wife of Emperor Valerian (253–259), and the proclamation of the consecration of his grandson, Valerian the Younger, by Gallienus (258).<sup>100</sup> Mario Torelli, who believes that the arch was constructed later, as part of Aurelian's Temple of the Sun (270–275), has proposed that despite the recarving of the portraits, the reliefs in reuse were intended to commemorate not specific events but generic ones, and that in their new context their immediate referents were topographical.<sup>101</sup>

#### 4. Other People's Statues

The recarving of portrait heads was no novelty of late antiquity. There was a history of transforming portrait statues by recarving, as well as by reinscription, that is, by rewriting or overwriting the inscription on the base; and by recombination, usually by putting a new head on a reused body.<sup>102</sup> Motivations for reusing portraits ranged from personal vanity or aggrandizement to economic impoverishment. In the public sphere, lack of funds was the predominant factor.<sup>103</sup> After surveying the known examples of the reuse of public statuary portraits in the early empire, Horst Blanck observed a clear inverse correlation between reuse and economic well-being. Recycling of statues was frequent at the Greek end of the Mediterranean from the time of Sulla through the first century A.D., abated in the prosperous second century, and recommenced in the straitened third century.<sup>104</sup> The third century was the first time that prolonged economic regression occurred in the western part of the Roman Empire as well as the east. Hans Jucker, who dubbed recarved portraits "palimpsests," observed that "the quantity of third-century portrait heads which are still recognizably palimpsests is astonishingly large."<sup>105</sup>

The reuse of portraits raised several moral issues among Romans, mostly having to do with an ideal of historical truth. The Romans were aggressive managers of history—witness *damnatio memoriae*—but they also prided themselves on its faithful transmission. Cicero wrote, "I detest deceitful inscriptions on other people's statues."<sup>106</sup> Somewhat more than a century

the proclamation scene was altered thrice, including once in 1684 to resemble Marcus Aurelius. The present Hadrianic portrait dates from 1921.

<sup>99</sup> La Rocca, in *Rilievi storici*, 27–28; Torelli 1992, 123–24.

<sup>100</sup> La Rocca, in *Rilievi storici*, 29–30.

<sup>101</sup> Torelli 1992, 118, 122–25, 131. Before the recent exhaustive study of the portrait heads, the arch was dated on the basis of less reliable indicators to the late fifth century: S. Stucchi, "L'Arco detto 'di Portogallo' sulla via Flaminia," *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 73 (1949–50) 122; repeated by De Maria, 325.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Blanck, 23. He calls the first method "metagraphy" and the second "metarrhythmism."

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 112. The other motives he cites are lack of time and the historical circumstances peculiar to the original subject, e.g., *damnatio memoriae*.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 96–105.

<sup>105</sup> ". . . die Menge von Porträtköpfen des 3. Jahrhunderts, die noch erkennbar Palimpseste sind, ist erstaunlich gross"; Jucker 1983 (as n. 8) 59.

<sup>106</sup> ". . . odi falsas inscriptiones statuarum alienarum"; Cic. *Att.* 6.1. Blanck, 14.

later, Pliny complained that “The painting of portraits, used to transmit through the ages extremely correct likenesses of persons, has entirely gone out . . . Heads of statues are exchanged for others, about which before now actually sarcastic epigrams have been current: so universally is a display of material preferred to a recognizable likeness of one’s own self.”<sup>107</sup> The most extended argument against the reuse of portraits can be found in a speech by Dio Chrysostom, roughly contemporary with Pliny (A.D. 70s), directed to the people of Rhodes.<sup>108</sup> The Rhodians had taken to refurbishing publicly dedicated statues in order to reassign them to different honorees. Dio condemned the practice as theft (“whoever gives A’s goods to B robs A of what is rightfully his”) and a form of impiety.<sup>109</sup> His other principal objection is related to Cicero’s and Pliny’s; it was deceitful, and somehow degrading, to pass off the image of one individual as another’s. “The statues of the Rhodians are like actors . . . assum[ing] different rôles at different times . . . at one time a Greek, at another time a Roman, and later on, if it so happens, a Macedonian or a Persian. . . . [W]ith some statues the deception is so obvious that the beholder is at once aware of the deceit.”<sup>110</sup>

Reading between the lines of Dio’s discourse it seems clear, first, that the recycling to which he objected was perfectly legal: the chief magistrate (*strategos*) was authorized to alter the content of a public memorial, so long as it was not a religious dedication; and second, the motivation behind the practice was most often expediency, tinged perhaps with cynicism. The new dedicatees were mostly Romans, powerful foreigners who threatened the Rhodians’ independence.<sup>111</sup> Emperors received new statues, but “commoners” were given recycled monuments, to the dishonor (in Dio’s view) of both the original and the secondary honorees.<sup>112</sup>

Imperial portraits were a special case. On the one hand they were uniquely protected: changing the head of a statue of Augustus for one of Tiberius was grounds for charging a praetor with treason.<sup>113</sup> On the other hand they were recycled from the earliest possible moment.<sup>114</sup> The number of first-century imperial images produced by recutting is startling. Of fifteen known portraits of Nerva, for example, twelve or thirteen are thought to be palimpsests.<sup>115</sup> Except in the case of Augustus, imperial palimpsest portraits were nearly always made from images of previous emperors whose memory had been damned; hence the many heads of Nero refashioned into Vespasian, Domitian, and Titus, and portraits of Domitian recycled for Nerva.<sup>116</sup> Jucker speculated that such discredited portraits were stored up in marble-carving workshops awaiting an occasion for reuse, and that there may even have been specialized *Umarbeitungsateliers*, sculpture recycling centers.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Plin. *HN* 35.2.4 (trans. Rackham, 9:263). Blanck, 114, n. 93; Isager, 115–16.

<sup>108</sup> Dio Chrys. *Or.* 31. On the date: Jones, 133.

<sup>109</sup> Dio Chrys. *Or.* 31.11 (trans. J. W. Cohoon and H. L. Crosby, 17) 81–82, 87, 136.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.155 (trans. Cohoon and Crosby, 157–59) 156.

<sup>111</sup> Dio Chrys. *Or.* 31.43, 47–53, 71, 99, 105–6, 112; Blanck, 97; Jones, 32–34.

<sup>112</sup> Dio Chrys. *Or.* 31.41–42, 108, 150–56. Jones, 29.

<sup>113</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.74. Jucker 1981, 238.

<sup>114</sup> Jucker 1981, 241–42, no. 1 (a portrait of Augustus recut from that of a Ptolemaic ruler); 243–47, no. 3 (a portrait of Augustus recut from a head of Hercules).

<sup>115</sup> Bergmann and Zanker, 380–82; cf. 320: twelve of fourteen are recycled.

<sup>116</sup> Jucker 1981, 238–39, 315; Bergmann and Zanker, 320; specific examples in both articles, *passim*.

<sup>117</sup> Jucker 1981, 248, 295, 301. Bergmann and Zanker, 320 speak of “Steingärten.”

## 5. Appropriation

There were other ways in which history could be rewritten through reuse. At Olympia, Pausanias saw a bronze Zeus dedicated by Lucius Mummius "from the spoils of Achaia" (146 B.C.); another source reveals that this was an older image of Poseidon, opportunistically (and in the author's view, ignorantly and inappropriately) rededicated to Zeus.<sup>118</sup> Elsewhere—at Aulis, Epidauros, Thebes, Thespiai, and Tegea—Mummius added his own name to monuments whose earlier dedications were left legible on the stones.<sup>119</sup> A precedent for this kind of reuse was set by Aemilius Paulus (168 B.C.), who took over the pillar at Delphi that had been intended for an equestrian monument to King Perseus and inscribed it: "Lucius Aemilius . . . *imperator* seized this from King Perseus and from the Macedonians."<sup>120</sup> Götz Waurick called this kind of taking, in which victorious Romans usurped the place of other donors, "appropriation" (*Aneignung*).<sup>121</sup> It was a form of military spoilation, distinctive in that the appropriated work was not removed as booty to the conquering state, but remained as a personal memorial to the victor among the conquered.

Appropriation, like spoilation, was an acceptable means of commemorating military virtue. In other contexts, however, appropriation met disapproval or censure. First-century sources, in particular, cite instances of art appropriation to exemplify the misuse of power by bad emperors. According to Pliny, the *Apoxyomenos* by Lysippos, placed on public display by Agrippa outside his Baths, became a fetish of Emperor Tiberius (A.D. 14–37), who took it away to his bedroom. The Romans raised such a clamor that he had to put it back, "although he had fallen quite in love with [it]."<sup>122</sup> Caligula (37–41) is said to have begun dismantling the chryselephantine cult statue of Zeus at Olympia to have it brought to Rome; the scaffolding collapsed when the statue laughed, portending the tyrant's demise.<sup>123</sup> The same emperor took from Thespiai a marble statue of Cupid "which [was] what people go to Thespiae to see, there being no other reason to go there."<sup>124</sup> Claudius (41–54) repatriated it, but Nero seized it again.<sup>125</sup> Nero, "who . . . considered everything subject to his own unlimited power," was also blamed for "remov[ing] most of the statues on the Acropolis of Athens and many of those at Pergamum."<sup>126</sup>

In a form of appropriation that presaged the later use of *spolia*, the work of art was altered by the intrusion of a new portrait. Under Claudius, two paintings of Alexander by Apelles

<sup>118</sup> Paus. 5.24.4; Dio Chrys. (*recte*: Favorinus?) *Or.* 37.42; *Journal of Archaeology* 82 (1978) 169–71. Waurick, 34.

<sup>119</sup> Waurick, 24–25, 28, 32.

<sup>120</sup> "L(ucius) Aimilius L(ucii) f(ilius) inperator de rege Perse Macedonibusque cepet." Waurick, 14, 31.

<sup>121</sup> Waurick, 31–35; Galsterer, 860. Blanck, 106–7, ascribed these cases of reuse to *Zeitmangel*, a term of office too short to have new statues made.

<sup>122</sup> Plin. *HN* 34.19.62 (trans. Rackham, 175). Pape, 192; R. Neudecker, *Die Skulpturenausstattung römischer Villen in Italien* (Mainz 1988) 97. On the qualities of the statue see A. F. Stewart, "Lysippan Studies 1. The Only Creator of Beauty," *American*

*Journal of Archaeology* 82 (1978) 169–71.

<sup>123</sup> Suet. *Calig.* 57. Blanck, 98, n. 12; Pape, 196.

<sup>124</sup> Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.2, 4 (trans. L. H. G. Greenwood, 2:287).

<sup>125</sup> Paus. 9.27.2–4. *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC)*, 3.1 (Zurich and Munich 1986) 856, no. C, a; Isager, 153–54.

<sup>126</sup> Dio Chrys. *Or.* 31.150, 148 (trans. Cohoon and Crosby, 153, 151). Tac. *Ann.* 15.45, 16.23. Jones, 33. Nero decorated his Golden House with looted statues: Plin. *HN* 34.19.84. M. Bergmann, *Der Koloß Neros, die Domus Aurea und der Mentalitätswandel im Rom der frühen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1994) 9.

were mutilated by having the faces of Alexander cut out (*excisa*) to be replaced by portraits of Augustus. Pliny disapprovingly contrasted this act to the “restrained good taste” of Augustus himself, who had displayed the paintings in his Forum in their original state.<sup>127</sup> Statius described a horse by Lysippos, also made for Alexander, which was fitted with a portrait of Julius Caesar and set up in Caesar’s Forum, probably under Domitian (81–96).<sup>128</sup> Caligula would have put his own face on the Zeus of Olympia, had he succeeded in bringing that statue to Rome.<sup>129</sup> The Colossus of Nero underwent multiple appropriations. Originally Nero’s, its features probably were changed by Vespasian (69–79), who dedicated it as an image of the Sun; Commodus (180–192) cut off the Sun’s head to install his own, adding attributes of Hercules and an inscription celebrating his success as a gladiator; it became the Sun again after Commodus’ *damnatio memoriae*.<sup>130</sup> Presumably the intention of such composites was to glorify the subject of the portrait by identification with the theme or reputation of the work of art. But it is not a given that intentions are fulfilled. Pliny’s treatment of the episode implies that in his eyes the appropriation of Alexander’s paintings for Augustus brought dishonor to everyone involved: the author of the original work, the original subject, the intruded subject, and above all to Claudius, the author of the composite.

#### 6. *Virtual Spolia*: Spolia in re

In an article devoted to the sculptured pedestals possibly from the Arcus Novus, now in the Boboli Gardens, Richard Brilliant coined the phrase *spolia in re* to distinguish the reuse of formal traits and principles—virtual spoliatio—from the reuse of tangible objects (*spolia in se*). His argument was that the Boboli reliefs in their Diocletianic setting were *spolia in se*, elements taken from a possibly unfinished monument of Gallienus (259–268); and in their intended Gallienic context they were *spolia in re*, artifacts of about 260 that deliberately recalled a style prevalent a century before, under Marcus Aurelius (161–180).<sup>131</sup> Whether or not one agrees with these conclusions, Brilliant’s phrase is too good to be left *in situ*. Salvatore Settis has already reused it to characterize the medieval practice of copying seemingly incongruous antique exemplars.<sup>132</sup> I am appropriating it here to designate a peculiarly Roman form of artistic citation in which the cited form visibly retains its own identity while also participating in a new artistic statement with a different subject.

The best examples of this Roman genre are “deified” or “theomorphic” portraits, statues that combine a documentary rendition of the subject’s head with the ideal body of a god or hero. In appearance and intention they are closely related to the composite portraits constructed by appropriation, but they did not entail the actual effacement of another’s statue. The pinched face of Tiberius on a semi-nude, muscular torso (fig. 12) associates the deified emperor with

<sup>127</sup> Plin. *HN* 35.36.94 (trans. Rackham, 9:331). Pape, 163–64; G. Marrone, “*Imitatio Alexandri* in età augustea (nota a Plin. *nat.* 35, 27 e 93–94),” *Atene e Roma* 25 (1980) 40–41; Isager, 120–21.

<sup>128</sup> Statius, *Silvae* 1.1.84–90. Richardson, 144.

<sup>129</sup> Suet, *Calig.* 22. Blanck, 16.

<sup>130</sup> SHA, *Hadr.* 19.13; *Comm.* 17; Cass. Dio, 73.22. J.

Gagé, “Le Colosse et la Fortune de Rome,” *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire* 45 (1928) 110–12; Blanck, 16–18, 108; Bergmann (as n. 126) 9–11.

<sup>131</sup> Above, n. 89.

<sup>132</sup> S. Settis, “Continuità, distanza, conoscenza. Tre usi dell’antico,” in *Memoria dell’antico nell’arte italiana*, ed. S. Settis, 3 vols. (Turin 1986) 3:399–410.



Fig. 12. Enthroned Tiberius as Jupiter, Vatican Museums, Museo Chiaramonti 1511 (photo Musei Vaticani, Archivio Fotografico, neg. no. XXXIV.14.74).



Fig. 13. Reconstruction of the colossal portrait of Constantine (after B. Andreae, *The Art of Rome*, trans. R. E. Wolf [New York 1977], fig. 633).

the pose and body type of the cult statue of Jupiter on the Capitol, which was itself an evocation of Pheidias' statue at Olympia.<sup>133</sup> The seated image of Constantine from Maxentius' Basilica Nova (figs. 3, 13) is probably to be taken as a later version of the same idea.<sup>134</sup> Emperors were also represented with the bodies of Mars and of superheroes such as Hercules.<sup>135</sup>

Lesser persons too appeared in theomorphic images, especially commemorative statues made for tombs. Henning Wrede traced this practice to the "traditionless" class of wealthy freedmen who, lacking their own iconography, followed the fashions of the imperial house.<sup>136</sup> The numeric highpoint of the private theomorphic portrait occurred in the second century, after which they declined in frequency in inverse proportion to the rise of mythological

<sup>133</sup> C. Maderna, *Iuppiter Diomedes und Merkur als Vorbilder für römische Bildnisstatuen. Untersuchungen zum römischen statuarischen Idealporträt* (Heidelberg 1988) 27–32, 190–91, no. JT41 (Vatican Museums, Museo Chiaramonti, 1511; posthumous statue of Tiberius as Jupiter from the reign of Claudius); P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro (Ann Arbor, Mich. 1988) 318. There is disagreement over how closely such images conformed to the appearance of the cult prototype. Maderna claims that they were virtually quotations; others hold that they offered only "a general reminiscence"; Niemeyer, 59–60.

<sup>134</sup> Niemeyer, 60–61, 64; Maderna, 26–27, 185–87, no. JT36.

<sup>135</sup> Emperor as Mars: P. Zanker, *Forum Augustum. Das Bildprogramm* (Tübingen n.d.) 19; K. J. Hartswick, "The Ares Borghese Reconsidered," *Revue archéologique* (1990) 269–72, 280 nos. 22–23, 281–82, nos. 27–28. Emperor as Hercules: F. Haskell and N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500–1900* (New Haven, Conn. and London 1981) 188–89, no. 25. Generally: Niemeyer, 62–64, who considers most such works to be echoes rather than quotations of a prototype.

<sup>136</sup> Wrede, 102: "traditionslose"; cf. 93–105, 159–64.





Fig. 14. Roman matron as Ceres, Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, sc. 552 (photo Museum).



Fig. 15. Sallustia's Venus, with Amor, Vatican Museums, Belvedere 936 (photo Musei Vaticani, Archivio Fotografico, neg. no. XXXV.16.65/1).

sarcophagi, which assumed their role.<sup>137</sup> Nevertheless, such statues continued to be set up well into late antiquity; witness the image of an unknown woman as Ceres, whose portrait is datable to the second half of the fourth century (fig. 14).<sup>138</sup> The body is a replica of a Hellenistic statue of which nearly fifty Roman copies still exist.<sup>139</sup>

Some of these *spolia in re* were also *spolia in se*. The portrait-Ceres just mentioned is judged to be a Hadrianic statue, the face of which was recut with fourth-century features.<sup>140</sup> Whether or not the portrait and its body are contemporary, however, the formal impression made by theomorphic statues is the same: pronounced discontinuity, the “union of the incompatible.”<sup>141</sup> The highly specific, mundane portrait heads and the idealized, unreal bodies seem incongruent, even preposterous. It is impossible, especially for an art historian, to see a statue like Sallustia's Venus (fig. 15) as the Roman viewer did. Intellectually, we can easily grasp the work's intention: to flatter all parties, the goddess, the woman (if she is not Sallustia) who is shown with the goddess' body, and the donors, Sallustia and Helpidus, who had the statue

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 74, 131–32, 167, 170.

<sup>139</sup> Wrede, 214–15.

<sup>138</sup> Blanck, 58–61, no. A37; Wrede, 218–19, no. 75 (Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, sc. 552; found in Rome near the Lateran). On the plinth of the statue a Greek inscription records a son-in-law's commemoration of his mother-in-law.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 103 (“die Vereinigung des Unvereinbaren”).

made for "Fortunate Venus."<sup>142</sup> But actually to *see* the flattery is as hopeless as to hear the sound of Latin. The language is dead. Our gaze is analytic and art historical, not integrative.

Theomorphic portraits make the best possible case for a Roman capacity to see thematically. Discrepancies of style and genre must have been signals to imagine unity on another plane. That means, of course, that the discrepancies had to be noticed as well. The work was a visual emulsion in which immiscible elements coalesced.

### 7. *Sculptural Furniture*

The statuary discussed so far—principally portraits or works that were appropriated by fitting them with portraits—comprised only a fraction of the art on public view in Rome. The Roman viewer could encounter daily almost the entire repertoire of Greco-Roman sculptural production, including works by famous masters seized or purchased from Greece, copies or variants of works with special appeal, and new creations in the hellenizing modes received by the Romans as Art.<sup>143</sup> Originals, replicas, variations and new inventions were indiscriminately mixed in eclectic collections that were displayed in temples, porticoes, public gardens, town houses, and villas. Sculptural arrays were also to be seen in public baths, beginning with the Baths of Agrippa (d. 12 B.C.), who set up the *Apoxyomenos* later unsuccessfully appropriated by Tiberius outside his *thermae* in the Campus Martius.<sup>144</sup> There is a consensus in recent scholarship that the criteria employed in forming these collections were most often atmospheric and that the Romans took them to be *Ausstattung*: decorous furnishing that functioned as edifying or simply ornamental ensembles rather than as opportunities for particular aesthetic encounters.<sup>145</sup> In their Roman settings Greek works of art were arranged and perceived chiefly by subject matter, an organizing principle that apparently overrode other categorical discrepancies. Like theomorphic portraits, sculptural arrays accustomed Roman viewers to find meaning in thematic ensembles whose components differed widely in size, date, quality, and style. As in any semantic system, context was a guide to intention, as the meaning of any given ensemble was likely to be appropriate to its location.<sup>146</sup>

Like the objects in modern museums, the constituents of these collections frequently were moved around. Statues in private ownership changed hands or were transferred by their owners

<sup>142</sup> Vatican Museums, Belvedere 936, ca. A.D. 180–200. Wrede, 313–14, no. 306; Haskell and Penny (as n. 135) 323–25, no. 87; P. P. Bober and R. Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture: A Handbook of Sources* (New York 1986) 61–62, no. 16. A base found with the statue is inscribed *VENERI FELICI SACRVM / SALLVSTIA HELPIDVS D.D.: Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 6.1 (Berlin 1876) 139, no. 782. Though usually described as Sallustia-as-Venus, the portrait has also been identified as an "Antonine princess": Bober and Rubinstein, 62. On the meaning of these theomorphic statues for the Roman viewer see Wrede, 105–16, 159–61; E. D'Ambra, "The Calculus of Venus: Nude Portraits of Roman Matrons," in *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*, ed. N. B. Kampen (Cambridge 1996) 219–32.

<sup>143</sup> Above, n. 17.

<sup>144</sup> Pape, 80, 192; Manderscheid, 18, 46, 73, no. 44.

<sup>145</sup> P. Zanker, "Zur Funktion und Bedeutung griechischer Skulptur in der Römerzeit," in *Le classicisme à Rome aux Iers siècles avant et après J.-C.*, ed. H. Flashar (Geneva 1979) 284–89; Manderscheid, 30–46; Marvin 1983, 378–80; *eadem*, "Copying in Roman Sculpture: The Replica Series," in *Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions (Studies in the History of Art 20)* (Washington, D.C. 1989) 31–39; Neudecker (as n. 122) 16, 36–39. For a slightly different view see D. E. Strong, "Roman Museums," in *Archaeological Theory and Practice*, ed. D. E. Strong (London and New York 1973) 255–59.

<sup>146</sup> Zanker (as n. 145) 293–301; Manderscheid, 25–27.

from one decorated residence to another.<sup>147</sup> Statues in the public domain also could be relocated to new sites. Without actually being reuse, these practices established a principle of mobility that may have conditioned perceptions of reuse. In Rome, the literal reuse of sculpture generally is traced to the early third century and is ascribed to economic factors; the Baths of Caracalla (211–216), apparently decorated from the outset with a mixture of new and relocated sculptures, is the best-known case so far.<sup>148</sup> Although this was hardly a low-budget project, Miranda Marvin calculated that the builders made substantial savings by supplementing statues carved ad hoc with older ones assembled from unspecified locations.<sup>149</sup> Caracalla's near successor Alexander Severus is said to have set up statues of great men "taken from everywhere" (*undique translatas*) in the Forum of Trajan.<sup>150</sup> In this case, the motive seems to have been a desire to make a display of existing objects in a celebrated venue, and the historical value of the statues may have recommended them as much as any savings to be realized by reusing them. At the end of the century, the sculptural furnishing of the Baths of Diocletian very likely involved a massive *translatio* of sculpture; unfortunately, too few of its components are known to make a significant tally.<sup>151</sup>

Against this background, Constantine's adornment of the public buildings of his new capital with heterogeneous displays of reused statues seems normal.<sup>152</sup> But the act of bringing those works to Constantinople from other cities, widely noticed by contemporaries, was not.<sup>153</sup> In the third decade of the fourth century, despoiling other cities was the only possible means to amass a quantity of culturally freighted objects sufficient to make Constantinople credible as the empire's new—true—capital.<sup>154</sup> This may have been Constantine's principal goal, but he cannot have been deaf to the military echoes of robbing other cities of their statues.<sup>155</sup> Whether intentionally or not, the undertones of triumphalism were intensified by the fact that the targets of the emperor's appropriations included one of the most celebrated military *spolia* of old Rome, the Hercules taken from Taranto in 209 B.C.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Subject to the laws discussed earlier; above, n. 44.

<sup>148</sup> Manderscheid, 20, 73–76; Marvin 1983, 353–77.

<sup>149</sup> Marvin 1983, 380–81. The percentage of reuse depends upon the disputed stylistic dating of the surviving sculptures: Manderscheid, 73–76, nos. 46–68. Hugo Brandenburg demonstrated that another likely motive for relocating statues to the Baths was to rescue them from older buildings that could no longer be maintained: "Die Umsetzung von Statuen in der Spätantike," in *Migratio et Commutatio, Studien zur alten Geschichte und deren Nachleben. Thomas Pekáry zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. H.-J. Drexhage and J. Sünskes (St. Katherinen 1989) 238. Most of his inscriptional evidence for such reuse in Rome dates after the time of Constantine, however.

<sup>150</sup> SHA, *Sev.* 26.4: *statuas summorum virorum in foro Traiani conlocavit undique translatas.*

<sup>151</sup> Laetitia La Follette found no unquestionable cases of reused material in the Baths of Trajan Decius (249–50), but this was a much smaller undertaking: "The Baths of Trajan Decius on the Aventine," in *Rome Papers: The Baths of Trajan Decius, Iside e Serapide nel Palazzo, a Late*

*Domus on the Palatine, and Nero's Golden House* (Ann Arbor, Mich. 1994) 81–82.

<sup>152</sup> S. E. Bassett, "'Omnium Paene Urbium Nuditate': The Reuse of Antiquities in Constantinople, Fourth through Sixth Centuries" (Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1984); Guberti Bassett 1996, 491–506.

<sup>153</sup> Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.54; Jer. in Euseb. *Chron.* ad ann. 330; Zos. 2.31. C. Kunderewicz, "La protection des monuments d'architecture antique dans le Code Théodosien," in *Studi in onore di Edoardo Volterra*, 6 vols. (Milan 1971) 4:140; C. Lepelley, "Le musée des statues divines. La volonté de sauvegarder le patrimoine artistique païen à l'époque théodosienne," *Cahiers archéologiques* 42 (1994) 10.

<sup>154</sup> Guberti Bassett 1991, 95–96; *eadem* 1996, 505–6.

<sup>155</sup> Guberti Bassett 1991, 92–96.

<sup>156</sup> Bassett (as n. 152) 220–24, no. H-11; Guberti Bassett 1991, 90–91; *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: The Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, ed. Av. Cameron and J. Herrin et al. (Leiden 1984) 101, 214; above, n. 13.





Fig. 17. Erased inscription of Domitian, from Puteoli, University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia, MS4916 (photo Museum, neg. no. NC 35-3325).



Fig. 18. Relief with soldiers, verso of figure 17 (photo Museum, neg. no. 58-79900).

say the same of its filiation, the interpretation of the recarving of the images of a Julio-Claudian emperor in order to represent a tetrarch on the Arcus Novus.<sup>158</sup> Perhaps the propagandists who designed these arches aimed at such a positive interpretation; but if we accept that proposition, we must acknowledge that their intentions marked a radical innovation and a repudiation of long-standing associations of the defacement of memorial images with censure and disrespect. We cannot take it for granted that the public would readily have collaborated in their project. Public response to the appropriation of images of admired emperors by their late antique successors would have been determined not only by knowledge of the identity of the emperors originally depicted, but by knowledge of how and whence their images were obtained.

Presumably, historiated marbles became available by the same means as other marble ornaments: by demolition attending urban renovation or following a disaster, and by dilapidation. Imperial monuments might legitimately be dilapidated for the sake of *damnatio memoriae*. When this occurred, the dispossessed ornament could not be reused in its original state, unless it comprised generic or ahistorical representations, like the Domitianic trophies that were set up as ornaments on the third-century "Nymphaeum Alexandri" on the Esquiline (fig. 16).<sup>159</sup> Otherwise the recuperated marbles had to be somehow reworked. They could serve as raw material, like the inscription praising Domitian from Puteoli, now in Philadelphia,

<sup>158</sup> L'Orange and van Gerkan, 190–91; Laubscher, 102: "Der Betrachter konnte die Spolienverwendung sogar positiv, als ein sichtbares Zeugnis für die Kontinuität und das Traditionsbewusstsein des römischen Staates und seiner Repräsentanten, interpretieren."

<sup>159</sup> G. Tedeschi Grisanti, *I "Trofei di Mario." Il Ninfeo dell'Acqua Giulia sull'Esquilino* (Rome 1977), esp. 43, 52–69. Tedeschi Grisanti speculated (43, 68) that the fountain occupied the site of the original Domitianic monument, and the trophies had to be reused because

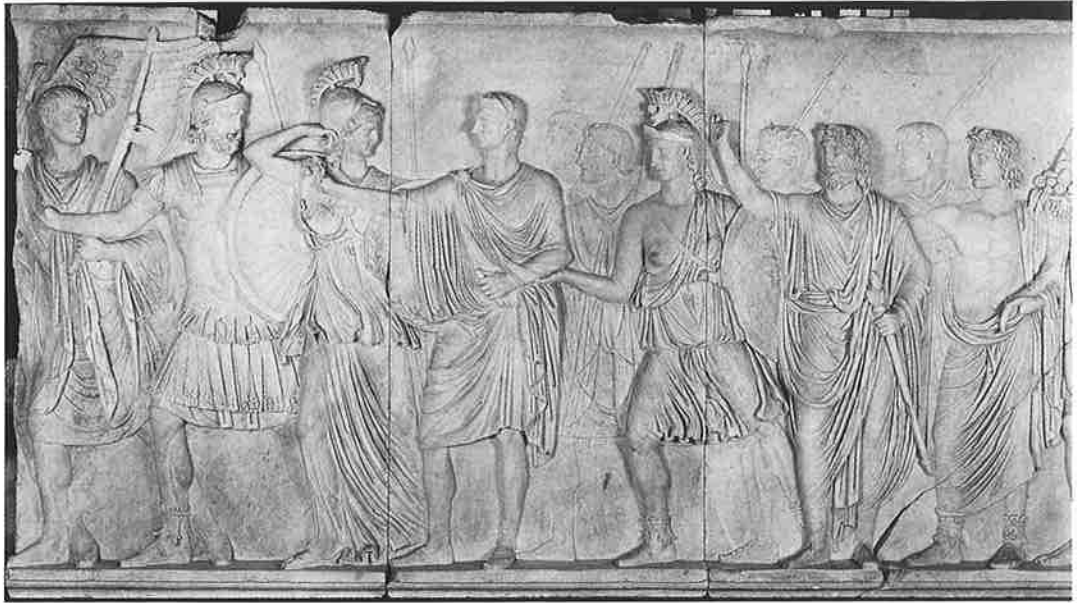


Fig. 19. Domitian/Nerva accompanied by gods and personifications ("Cancellaria Relief"), Vatican Museums (photo Musei Vaticani, Archivio Fotografico, neg. no. XXXIV.25.2).

which was erased (fig. 17) and then carved on the verso with reliefs for an arch of Trajan (fig. 18).<sup>160</sup> Or the original imagery could be altered, as on the well-known "Cancellaria Relief" on which the emperor's head, once Domitian but recut with the features of Nerva, appears awkwardly small as a result (fig. 19).<sup>161</sup> None of the historiated marbles reused on the Arco di Portogallo, the Arcus Novus, or the Arch of Constantine could have been made available by *damnatio memoriae*, yet they were treated like the Cancellaria relief, as if they had been.<sup>162</sup>

The marbles reused on the Arco di Portogallo seem to have been salvaged, as Carlo Fontana's careful description indicates that they had been ruined before they were reused. The green marble columns had been scarred by fire; their worst sides were turned toward the pylons of the arch as if to hide them. Both of the imperial reliefs had been broken, one in three pieces, before being set into the arch.<sup>163</sup> These materials could have been rescued

of ancient prohibitions against moving them. In 1590 the trophies were removed from the ruined fountain to stand on the balustrades of the Piazza del Campidoglio.

<sup>160</sup> Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, University Museum MS4916, from Puteoli; H. Kähler, "Der Trajansbogen in Puteoli," in *Studies Presented to David Moore Robinson on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. G. E. Mylonas (St. Louis 1951) 1:430–39.

<sup>161</sup> Vatican Museums, Museo Gregoriano Profano, 13389–91; G. M. Koeppl, "Die historischen Reliefs der römischen Kaiserzeit. II. Stadtrömische Denkmäler unbekannter Bauzugehörigkeit aus flavischer Zeit," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 184 (1984) 5–8, 28–30, no. 7.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Herklotz (as n. 24) 106.

<sup>163</sup> MS Chigi P. VII. 13 (as n. 97): "[Le] due colonne di uerde . . . poiche ritrouandosi già guaste, e consumate dal fuoco, la parte più offesa, e lacerata è stata collocata uicino al muro, e la parte migliore, e più intiera è stata posta in prospettiva . . . [De]i due Marmi di basso rilievo collocati altre volte in altra fabrica antica . . . uno di essi . . . doue è la figura sedente coll'altra sostenuta in aria . . . [era] posto in opera in tre pezzi con mancamento dell'angolo inferiore . . . e l'altro con la figura in piedi in atto di orare . . . con altri difetti, senza che apparisca segno alcuno, che tali mancamenti siano succeduti doppo, che sono in opera, ma si bene p.<sup>ma</sup> che iui fussero posti." Chilosì and Martellotti (as n. 98) 32–33.

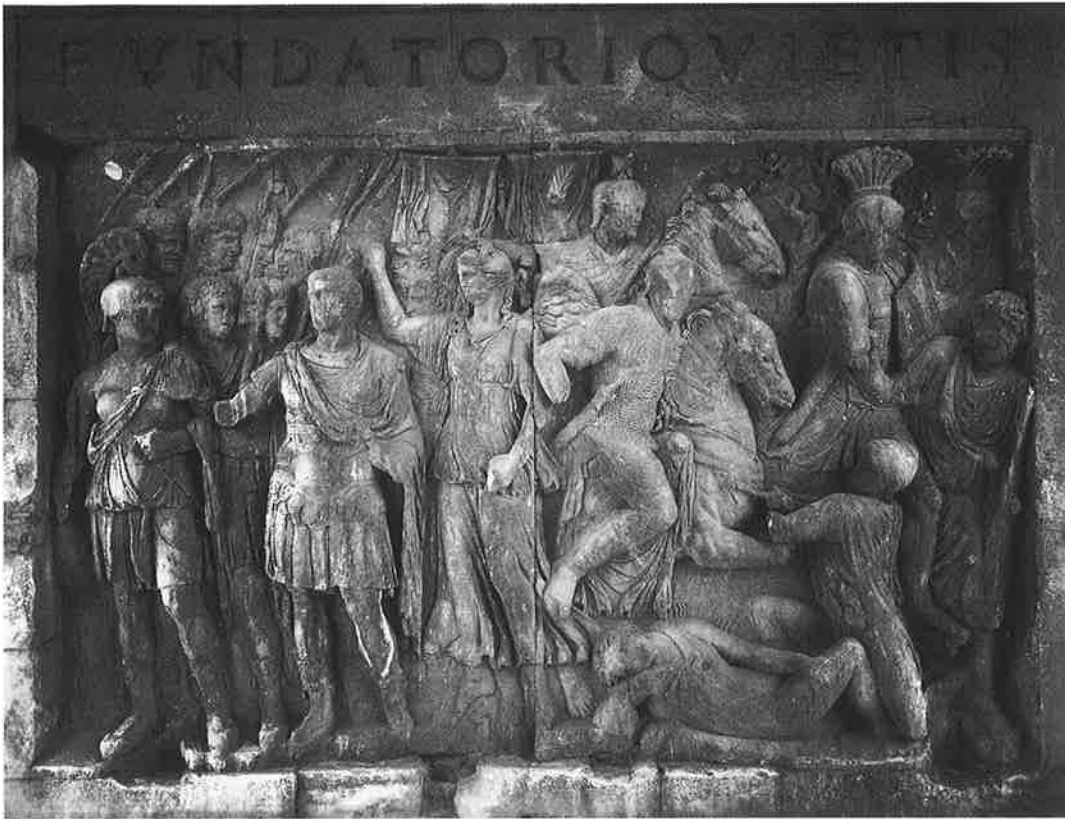


Fig. 20. Arch of Constantine, central passageway, Adventus of Trajan/Constantine  
(photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. 37.328).

directly from their damaged settings to be reused on the Arco di Portogallo, or they could have come from a depot of such reclamations. Either way, their reuse might have appeared to a viewer with knowledge of their origins as a gesture of provident economy, or even as pious renovation, assuming a notion of piety stretched beyond the limits maintained by a Cicero or a Pliny. If the arch was, as argued by Torelli, an element of a new construction as grandiose as the Temple of the Sun, context would have denied any implied motive of poverty and forced viewers to seek a programmatic meaning in reuse.

The case of the Arcus Novus is notably different, in that no one, to my knowledge, holds that its *spolia* came from monuments destroyed or damaged by catastrophe. On the contrary, Laubscher's interpretation entails the survival of at least one of the donor monuments as a point of reference for the spoliage program. According to this scenario, the traveler entering Rome from the north on the via Flaminia would have passed first through the despoiled Arch of Claudius, which, though at least partially denuded, must have been still standing as it was part of the Aqua Virgo, and then, not many paces later, through the "New Arch" to which Claudius' imagery had been transplanted. Recognizing or remembering how the two monuments were related, this viewer would have interpreted the transfer of the images as an act of homage, celebrating both the tetrarchic Augusti and the Julio-Claudian conqueror of Britain. I think it is unlikely that the spectatorial memory actually worked that way, or even that a

tetrarchic propagandist meant it to do so. More probably, in my opinion, the tetrarchic appropriation of Claudian reliefs—regardless of from which monument they were taken—was intended as an act of renovation, through which an artifact considered obsolete was transformed into something relevant and useful. If not *damnatio*, recarving and recontextualization signified *translatio memoriae*, since, unlike paintings by Apelles or a sculpture by Lysippos, imperial reliefs had no independent reputation as works of art to perpetuate the memory of their origin. Historical reliefs were “historical” by virtue of their recognizable portraits and identifying inscriptions, especially when the deeds they represented were ritual or generic. Recutting literally effaced their original referents. Claudius with the face and name of Diocletian was Diocletian. Trajan with the face and epithets of Constantine (fig. 20) was Constantine.<sup>164</sup>

Of course, the viewer’s memory may have resisted the intended *renovatio memoriae*. Romans who were alive when the monuments of Claudius were despoiled would not have forgotten the prior denotation of their images. Such personal, orally transmitted memories would have interacted with the official memory purveyed by the *spolia* in myriad ways, some favorable to the project and others, undoubtedly, not so. Citizens inured to the effects of finite supplies, and the need to quarry the old in order to construct the new, might have accepted the reused reliefs as *spolia* in the modern sense of notable antiquities, whose dignity was somehow communicable to a belated subject by appropriation. Viewers holding to more traditional standards, however, would have seen otherwise; to them the *spolia* might have been indices of breakdown, breakdown of the city and possibly of the social order that had built and once maintained it.

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<sup>164</sup> In a forthcoming publication John Elsner (“From the Culture of *Spolia* to the Cult of Relics: The Arch of Constantine and the Genesis of Late-Antique Forms,” esp. n. 61) will reject this position in favor of an inter-

esting restatement of the interpretation of L’Orange. I am not convinced, but I am grateful to the author for giving me a copy of his stimulating essay in advance.



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