The originality of Kaschnitz

Karl Johns

Classical archaeology is a field associated more with incremental additions and emendations to a nearly universally known corpus of art and architecture than with bold flights of original thought. At the very least, Guido Kaschnitz made a mark in this tradition by analyzing ancient Roman portraiture as art instead of contenting himself with data for iconography, dates and places of origin. After first studying epigraphy and archaeology in his native Vienna under Eugen Bormann and Emil Reisch with a dissertation about the vases from Kerch, it seems significantly to have been the lectures of Max Dvořák which kept alive the questions raised by Alois Riegl in the *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie* and related essays. Kaschnitz will remain a significant figure for having reconciled the original definitions of the history of art to the expanding volume of material and the changing knowledge of perception and reality.[1] In a review of the 1927 edition of the *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie*, and in his later lectures he developed Riegl's conception of human creativity as it chooses and to some degree forges expressive possibilities and articulated this position as well as further distinctions quite clearly. One chapter of these lectures which we present here, offers an easily accessible example of his approach in going beyond an exclusively empirical registration of facts and figures.[2] The Italian peninsula in prehistory and antiquity offers a particularly appealing area for examining the contentious issue of local, regional and national styles, and aside from such a comprehensive survey, Kaschnitz also made an ambitious study, left unfinished at his death, involving a wide-ranging study of all art around the Mediterranean until the end of antiquity.[3]

Guido Kaschnitz has been badly misrepresented to the English speaking audience as a 'radical formalist' whose work is 'hardly read by classical

[1] Guido Kaschnitz, Die 'Kertschervasen'. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der spätattischen Vasenmalerei, doctoral dissertation, University of Vienna, 1914.
[2] Guido-Kaschnitz-Weinberg, "Alois Riegl, Spätrömische Kunstindustrie," *Gnomon*, vol. 5, no. 4-5, April-May, 1929, pp. 195-213 and reprinted in Kaschnitz von Weinberg, *Kleine Schriften zur Struktur*, Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1965, pp. 1-14. Later critiques of Riegl by Ernst Garger, Jozef Bodonyi and Ernst Gombrich are largely inspired by the points first made here.
[3] Guido Kaschnitz, "Italien mit Sardinien, Sizilien und Malta," *Handbuch der Archäologie im Rahmen des Handbuchs der Altertumswissenschaft, vierte Lieferung, Die Denkmäler. Jüngere Steinzeit und Bronzezeit in Europa und einigen angrenzenden Gebieten bis um 100 v. Chr.*, Munich: Beck, 1950, pp. 311-397 is solidly empirical. Guido Kaschnitz, *Mittelmeerische Kunst. Eine Darstellung ihrer Strukturen*, Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1965, 555 pp., 164 plates provides a clear survey of his ideas with very many examples.

archaeologists'. His catalogue of ancient sculpture in the Vatican storage rooms is most certainly used by classical archaeologists and no director of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Rome can be said to be ignored by their colleagues.[4] A short biographical appreciation was published by his wife, the celebrated novelist and poet Marie-Luise Kaschnitz, and the posthumous collected edition of most of his writings was also well received in North America.[5] Other testimonials written upon his death at the age of 67, and the work of his students particularly in the field of Roman portrait busts and sarcophagi record the effect of his publications on those subjects.

The questions surrounding Roman art and its relative originality had been among the favorite topics of the earliest Austrian art historians, and the conception of 'structure' emerged in various forms quite early on. Even in his monumental study of ancient Roman art, Franz Wickhoff seems affected by the Impressionism of the period.[6] By the time of his later writings, Julius Schlosser identified this as an obsolete intellectual phase and delineated a very idiosyncratically refined neo-idealistic point of view using the term expressionism.[7] Then alongside Otto Pächt, Kaschnitz became the person to most consistently develop the ideas of Riegl's *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie* for the following generation. During the period after 1945 when there was something of a general retreat into a flat-footed empiricism, Kaschnitz did not avoid such larger questions as the relation of form to content, the relative quality of art, the local, tribal and national styles and conceptions of space, as well as topics such as the originality in Roman art, which are all inevitably necessary to a larger synthesis. Today, the direction of his work seems as inevitable as the renewed scholarly reassessment of Islamic art which gained momentum during his lifetime. Earlier research and scholarship was bound within narrow chronological constraints, disregarded most of the historical evidence, and had been bound by the Romantic idea of freedom. Among other things, Kaschnitz offered a decisive critique of the idea of 'Grundbegriffe', the inadequacy of pairs of concepts such as the limitation to vision and touch as too fixed, static, extraneous and superficial for tracing the development of art. He showed how it is necessary to

[4] Guido Kaschnitz-Weinberg, *Sculture del Magazzino del Museo Vaticano*, Monumenti Vaticani di Archeologia e d'Arte, vol. 4, Rome: Bardi, 1936-1937.

[5] Marie Luise Kaschnitz, 'Biographie des Verfassers', Guido Kaschnitz von Weinberg, *Kleine Schriften zur Struktur*, Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1965, 228-239. Margarete Bieber, "A Monument for Guido Kaschnitz von Weinberg," *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 71, no. 4, October 1967, 361-386.

[6] Franz Wickhoff, *Römische Kunst (Die Wiener Genesis)*, Berlin: Meyer & Jessen 1912, 224 pp., and available in other editions including the English translation by Mrs. Strong.

[7] Schlosser addressed the subject many times, including Schlosser, "Über einige geschichtliche Voraussetzungen der mittelalterlichen Kunstsprache," *Hermann Egger Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag am 7. Dezember 1933*, Graz: Leykam, 1933, 13-33. His use of the term expression and expressiveness is inspired by that of Benedetto Croce, *Estetica come scienza dell'espressione e linguistica generale*, Milan: Sandron, 1902 and later editions.

discover the principles within the art itself rather than imposing categories from without. In his work he frequently demonstrates this with the example of space which functions as more than a quality enshrouding individual form – as it had with Riegl. He introduces wider parameters and also does not omit the metaphysical aspect inherent in all art and the entire panoply of its developments. The present chapter discussing 'the problem of originality in Roman art' comes from posthumously published lectures about Roman art held originally at the university at Frankfurt am Main, apparently in the 1950's – since he elsewhere refers to the war in the past tense and to the renewed possibilities of travel to some of the archaeological sites.[8] While his published articles and books can seem densely written and elusive to some, his university lectures are quite clear and unpretentious.[9] They offer an introduction to his approach, and the chapter chosen here should reveal that it is something not properly described as 'formalist'. Even on a more superficial plane within the European academic system of the time, it is certainly significant that he broke down the rather artificial distinction between archaeology and art.

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[8] These lectures were published in four volumes as Guido Kaschnitz von Weinberg, *Das Schöpferische in der rõmischen Kunst*, *Zwischen Republik und Kaiserreich*, *Die Grundlagen der republikanischen Baukunst* and *Die Baukunst im Kaiserreich*, 1961, 1961, 1962 and 1963 respectively.

[9] Contrary to what has recently been said about Kaschnitz, the leading American specialist recommends these lectures: William L. MacDonald, *The Pantheon Design, Meaning and Progeny*, Cambridge MA; Harvard University Press, 1976, 136.

Guido Kaschnitz Weinberg, 'The problem of originality in Roman art'[10]

Form and content

Although I already attempted to summarize the characteristics of Roman art which strike me as essential at the beginning of last semester, I would now like to make a few more general comments on this topic which has always animated historians of ancient art most vividly.

      This question always tends to revolve around that of originality in Roman art. The time is long past that all art made from the republic and beginning of the imperial period in Rome itself but especially in the immediate surroundings and the Campania was seen as the creation of Greek classicism, and Romans were only admitted to have shown a few creative capacities in the field of purely technical construction such as bridges or aqueducts, or occasionally naturalistic portraiture. A modified interpretation according to which Greek art was taken up by political and economic Roman patrons at the beginning of the imperial period to somehow serve the new leaders of the world, to express and glorify the new ideas and goals of what was ultimately a completely different social order, can also not do justice to the question since the content of a work of art cannot be separated from its form. If Greek art was in fact used to express Roman ideas at the beginning of the imperial period, then there must also have been very thorough-going changes in the formal organization of this art. If we assume this, then the nature of the question is completely changed. Did the Greek artists, who were undoubtedly present in Rome in great numbers, change the creative order of the art of their own accord due to the suggestive force of their new Roman surroundings? In other words, did they somehow assimilate to the new symbolism or functions or change the structure of their forms by accepting local Italic-Roman formal principles and experience such an internal transmutation that they became the best interpreters of the Roman spirit? None will doubt that such a transformation must be profound. It was not merely a question of showing people wearing the Roman toga rather than the Greek *himation*, and Roman deeds of war, ceremonies and sacrifices in relief sculpture, but rather of how formal compositions express the new spirit, as alien as it was to the Greeks? If form and content are unified as we have proposed, or even identical, then even if it was being viewed by a Greek, the Roman character must also express itself in the composition of form, so that the Greek artists would not only take up the Roman subject matter, but the sculptural structure, the relation of body to space, as

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[10] Guido Kaschnitz von Weinberg, *Das Schöpferische in der römischen Kunst*, Römische Kunst, vol. 1, chapter 4, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1961, 51-73, translated and edited by Karl Johns. To retain something of the original flavour, we have again left some of the longer sentences undivided.

different as it is to that in Greece, would also need to be adjusted. This challenge
becomes clear to us when we consider that the form itself, the organization of the
sculptural composition and conception of space, is an essential part of the content
and expresses the rules governing the world view of the new Roman society.
Sculptural quality and the artistic structure of space must also provide reflections of
the physical and psychological organization of the people and society being
depicted if they are not to appear as simple foreign translations in an artistic
language alien to the Roman character. In fact this is not the case. Anybody
comparing the reliefs of the Ara Pacis to Greek sculpture will admit that although
the artists were undoubtedly Greek, the forms express a completely new spirit that,
however often this is asserted, cannot be explained as simple classicism. The formal
structure itself, and the relation of bodies to space express something completely
new and not Greek. It is in fact not possible to find artistic precedents for the reliefs
of the Ara Pacis in the east, Greece or Hellenistic Asia Minor. Unfortunately, we
have little to compare from the late Hellenistic period in the actual Greek areas and
nothing at all from the 1st century BC. If we compare the frieze of Lagina (western
Asia Minor from about the end of the 2nd century BC), to the reliefs on the Ara Pacis,
then the profound difference between these two works becomes very clear, and
though they are separated by about a century, nobody will suggest that in the
overall development they in any way relate to one another.

   With such an extraordinary lack of comparable Greek monuments, such a
juxtaposition can never be satisfactory. It would be necessary to consider the entire
Greek development following the classical period and see whether there are
tendencies toward such trends in later Hellenistic art, approaching such formal
constellations that would be typically Roman.

Italic-Roman urban design

It becomes necessary for these reasons to again recall the essential characteristics of
Roman formal organization. Armin von Gerkan has studied certain aspects of
Roman architecture in these terms.[11] He began with the assumption that Roman
architecture is fundamentally different from Greek architecture and sought to
discover the particular characteristics of the former, as well as how they illuminate
the new conception.

   Von Gerkan begins with the not completely constant but frequently
regulated design of Italic cities which are often identical with the planned designs of
Roman military foundations. According to this scheme, the basic Italic urban design
is based on two main streets, the *cardo* and the *decumanus*, which form an axial cross
at right angles. These streets intersect at the center of the city which is taken up by

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[11] Armin von Gerkan, *Griechische Städteanlagen. Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung des
Städtebaus im Altertum*, Berlin-Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1924, 123 ff.

an open square, its forum, where the most important religious and political buildings are all located – the temple of the highest divine triad, Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, the *curia*, the *regia* and the place for popular gatherings. This system of coordinates calls for a surface equally long and wide with parallel edges and enclosed by the walls of the city.

Italic cities are axial and centralized with a middle point providing the center of private, religious as well as public life. The entire design is subjected to a scheme unrelated to the natural needs or the given geographical configuration, but instead reflects a strict and centralized organization, coinciding with the Italic and later the Roman religious and military organization. Von Gerkan also finds the same system expressed in the fundamental unit of the private house, where, as he tells it, the *decumanus* corresponds to the axis of the atrium and the *cardo* to the *alae* with the function of the atrium comparable to the role of the forum for a military outpost or city.

I would like to add something to von Gerkan's observations which strikes me as important and relevant to the character of this functional plan. We have seen that the design of the Italic cities is preconceived into the smallest detail and determines the placement of every single house. Its point of departure is also not the individual houses as corporeal forms, but rather the ground plan. This surface scheme derives from the science of surveying and drawing borders as it had been particularly cultivated in Italy since the earliest times. These borders are drawn on the basis of a limitation of the surface and the bonding to a predetermined, usually orthogonal axial system. Originally, the *templum* was probably also nothing more than a delineated piece of field containing a hut, possibly on the narrow side to accommodate the augurs in making their observations. The most essential aspect of this visually formational activity lies in delineating a parcel of land, in some sense removing it from the chaos, and consecrating it. We shall later be returning to this type of active shaping.

Symmetry and axiality

As von Gerkan has also discovered, symmetry and axiality provide fundamental qualities of the Italic-Roman organizational approach. As an example of how significant these guiding principles were for the later imperial period we need only recall the so-called 'imperial type' of the Roman baths. While the late republican period built baths with simple sequences of spaces as we see in cities such as Pompeii – presumably funded by private businesses on a smaller scale – the earliest known baths to be erected for the emperors in Rome already show full-blown symmetrical and axial designs corresponding to the scheme we have seen in cities and military towns in the Italic period. Axial symmetry of the architectural forms is taken to such an extreme in these designs that spaces are doubled to provide a mirror image even when the additional space has no function. We might even

assume that the compulsion to pedantically complete such a mirrored scheme must have created difficulties in the practical use of such facilities. In the imperial baths, the emphasis on a dominant central axis had a particular significance. We can also see the same tendency toward symmetry in the villas from the imperial period. One need but to recall the Domus Augustana on the Palatine or the Golden House of Nero. In sculpture, primarily relief carving, this propensity toward orthogonals, symmetry and axes is not so obvious at first. Only in the art of the later imperial period do the strong accents and rigid, hieratic arrangements become increasingly apparent, as in the reliefs from the Arch of Constantine.

I would like to add another observation to these fundamentals of Roman imperial architectural composition as Armin von Gerkan has emphasized, and refer to the particular formal goals and the actual formal object of Roman art. If we ask ourselves what the original Roman and Italic contribution was to the development of European art, then we will not be satisfied to note a simple predilection for a certain axial and orthogonal urban scheme or the preference for compositions with a strong axis. These are certainly important symptoms of given goals of a particular artistic volition, and seem to point to something more essential. In his book, von Gerkan also did not primarily intend to completely define the character of Roman art on the basis of those peculiarities of Roman planning and formal tendencies. He was more interested in distinguishing the characteristics of Roman architectural planning from Greece and Hellenistic culture, demonstrating most importantly that the greatest amount of what had been considered Hellenistic in the east was in reality a Roman transformation of late Hellenistic art.

Spatial formation

However, if we look beyond individual symptoms in order to discover the actually creative contribution of Roman and Italic culture to the development of European art, then in the purely formal realm we find the fact that Roman art became the first to directly give form to space. Our emphasis is on the direct shaping of space. It has long been known that Roman art found space to be particularly important. The studies by Gerhard Rodenwaldt broke ground in this regard. Yet Rodenwaldt also conceives the Roman space more as something created by the shapes of the surrounding volumes. All sculpture creates space, artistic space in which the sculpture exists be it carved in the round or architecture conceived in sculptural terms. This is a type of space emanating from all sculpture, yet however loose a sculpture or painting might be, the body is the aspect that has been given shape while space emerges secondarily as a result of the form of the bodily volume in a pose suggesting it. This interaction is reversed in Roman art and we see the opposite of the usual relationship of body to space. If we consider an example from the architecture of the middle imperial period such as Pantheon for instance, then we see that the body surrounds the space in the manner of a shell. Space is not

emanating from the corporeal form as it is the case with a Greek temple, but is surrounded and in this way modeled by it. In this case, the corporeal form only plays a part to the extent that it provides the containment of the space while its further consistency, extension or form is not suggested to the viewer. Those qualities have no significance, and the outside form of the body is of no interest. The corporeal shape becomes the subservient element of the formational process, characteristically appearing here as an amorphous wall – also a technical invention of the Romans and only explainable by the fact that they felt a need to model space with a neutral medium. One might ask what should then become of sculpture? To some degree, sculpture remained a pictorial mode taken over from the Greeks, and was increasingly relegated to the borders of the spatial form with the statues being placed either at the walls or into niches. They were made flatter and their expressive effect limited to the frontal view. Later on, the sculpture nearly disappears completely, and sculpture, reliefs and stucco are replaced by wall paintings and mosaics completely subjected and subordinated to the spatial enclosure.

Aside from the fact that the sculpture enters into the shell structure of the new architecture and becomes a subordinate part of a larger whole, and this seems to effect a concomitant change in its own structure. If we consider the formal organization of the Tellus relief on the Ara Pacis, then the hard and metallic quality of the forms is most striking. Corporeal form does not have an effect of material protuberance, but it appears more as if the forms came about as hard shell-like enclosures of the stone. Amorphous material seems to take the place of the space. There is an effect of materialized interior spaces cut from the general space in this manner and assuming shapes.

I would be giving a very misleading image of the entire development of Roman art if I did not clearly qualify what I have just been saying. One should not overlook the fact that art of the Roman imperial period was also strongly bound to traditions and had very conservative characteristics. Temples and official architecture were tenaciously designed with the Greek post and lintel elements well into the 3rd century, while *peripteroi* and halls with colonnades completely in the Greek manner continued to be built beside the Pantheon and the imperial baths all around Rome during the 2nd century. Similar observations can be made with sculpture in the round and reliefs where copies and adaptations of purely Greek sculpture still provided the majority of 2nd century work. This characteristic is significant in its own right for the history of art and reveals that there was still a feeling for the tectonic approach even when vaulted architecture was becoming more widespread, and on until the columns and beams were integrated in a subservient place to the architecture based on space.

Artistic form and intellectual content

We have already said that the intellectual content of the art works is closely related to their structural organization, and can even be seen as identical with the principles of artistic form. Today, we are not yet in a position to judge the actual symbolic content of the forms themselves beyond the most rudimentary level. Whether we like it or not, we are therefore essentially limited to the pictorial content [Bildaussage], explaining what is commonly referred to as the subject matter of the art work. In Roman art, this content is less related to the absolute beauty of form in itself, not as we tend to say aesthetically oriented, but it includes a moral and conventional aspect which corresponds to the dignity of distinctive Roman class consciousness. For this reason, the Romans had less use for the idealized form of the human body and its functions. Naked heroes are replaced by citizens clad in a toga representing their social rank or official role. We can clearly feel the beginning bifurcation of the traditional unity of meaning and form. In this context, the impressive drapery folds of a toga no longer represent a beautiful form in itself but express the dignity of a legally defined rank which is intimately related to official or civic functions. Form is in some sense the hieroglyph of an idea or institution which does not directly relate to it in its character as form. Similarly in Roman art, the natural beauty of expressive movement becomes gesture, and is strictly related to social conventions – even defined politically with content bound to ceremonies as we see it in the scenes of sacrifices or rhetorical addresses of a ruler to the people or to an army.

Allegorical images of meaning

The bifurcation of meaning and form is nowhere as striking in Roman art as in the field of allegory and symbolism. It is necessary to realize that the Romans lived within a rigorously defined moral, religious and political order. Although this organization was based on the quotidian realities, its imagery was not developed from data of the senses but instead defined in the purely intellectual and reasoned terms.

Romans considered art to always be the sensual expression of an idea that is completely clearly defined in its content and ramifications. As we have noted, these concepts were generally based on political and related religious and moral ideas. This is the reason that they are manifested almost exclusively in the official works of art, initiated by the state or emperor as official reliefs or coins, and in some sense at least commissioned by the senate although often with the character of a political statement or document for the edification of the populace. This is the place where allegories and symbols embody or provide images of abstract ideas or the meaning of historical actions, and it is original to Roman art since Greek art did not have allegory. In the history of art, allegory is defined as 'the pictorial visualization of an

image, relation among images or concepts otherwise eluding description. The primary means is the use of personification'.[12]

We know many examples of such subjects [Sinngehalte] which were given post hoc allegorical forms. I would mention *concordia* (harmony), *fides* (faith, reliability, fidelity), *liberalitas* (beneficence), *aequitas* (equanimity). All of these concepts of qualities were ultimately applied in official contexts with political figures or organizations such as the senate, the emperors or the army. References are made to the *liberalitas* of the emperor when a monetary gift is proffered to the army or a civic group. The *concordia Augustorum* is conjured when the views of two emperors are shown as being in agreement. Personifications serve in fixing these concepts artistically, usually on the basis of transformations of Greek female clad statues and always appearing in an unreal, shadowy existence appropriate to their abstract nature and purely conceptual origins – very different from the corporeal and individual Greek images.

Whether they appear as statues, relief sculpture or on coins, it is clear that these images constitute a form with a completely unprecedented meaning. These images are not valuable in and of themselves, no longer form an indivisible unity with their intellectual content, and now appear as little more than a conventional sign recalling something more essential, this being the idea. Although we do no more than allude to its nature and dimensions, this realization is particularly important not merely because it illuminates the polarizing process of form and intellectual content in Roman imperial art but furthermore reveals the foundations of a creative attitude which was to later lead into the development of late antique and early Christian art.

It is remarkable and characteristic of imperial Roman art that allegorical personifications of the type we have been mentioning were related to very naturalistic depictions of historical occurrences, things that actually happened. Among the reliefs on the arch of Titus on the Velia in Rome, the triumphal procession of the emperor after his victory over the Hebrews, a subject which actually occurred, is reproduced by the artist with such a degree of naturalism or even realism, that a modern art historian, Franz Wickhoff, was able to speak of the depiction of atmospheric aerial space, and did not shy away from comparing it to the effects of modern illusionism, such as in the paintings by Velázquez. If we consider the relief panels with the triumphant emperor, we find purely allegorical personifications amid what is obviously an historically accurate depiction, figures such as the goddess *Roma*, the genius of the senate and the figure of *Nike*. They do not appear in the manner of invisible viewers like the gods on the eastern frieze of the Parthenon, but rather in the closest possible personal and dialectical relationship to the people of the actual narrative. *Roma* leads the team of horses before the triumphal car toward the capitol and the genius of the senate accompanies the car while *Nike* crowns the emperor. This close combination of allegorical figures with an

[12] Johannes Jahn, *Wörterbuch der Kunst*, 5th ed., Stuttgart: Kröner, 1957, 'Allegorie', 16-17.

historical narrative illuminates the character of this form of naturalism which has always been seen as typical of Roman art. All of the official pictorial cycles decorating the monuments and architecture of the imperial period are nothing other than *res gestae*, reports of perfected deeds on the part of the government or institutions of the emperor. Their meaning is the same as the classic text immortalized by Emperor Augustus in his testament, the *Monumentum Ancyranum* [present day Ankara, AD 14], or further summarized in the inscriptions accompanying images on coins which in a more abbreviated form say the same as the large monumental inscriptions. This includes the *pietas Augusti*, *clementia Augusti*. It also includes the *liberalitas Augusti* or in reference to historical deeds *adventus Augusti* when the emperor was returning from battle, *liberalitas restituta* when he at least in name returned the freedom of the senate after the governance of a tyrant, *Armenia et Mesopotamia in potestatem populi romani redactae* following the recapture of Armenia and Mesopotamia or *consensus exercitus* to stress the good relations with the army. All of these catchwords with a possibly specific political, constitutional or moral idea, exactly as on the coins, might equally well have been expressed by allegory, personification or naturalistic pictographic script. In the latter case, then the divine or allegorical figures intrude into the process of the narrative in order to clarify the idea of the image as it might not emerge from the naturalist representation of the action. On the arch of Trajan in Benevento, the completely naturalistic scene of the Emperor Trajan departing for war includes the figure of Jupiter himself lending the emperor his lightning bolt for use against the enemies in battle to make it apparent that this is a just war pleasing to the gods as deputies of the world order. *Italia* appears as a newly crowned woman escorting the emperor at the gates of Rome where the love of the entire citizenry supports and accompanies him through the entire dangerous undertaking. The same mode of representation also occurs on the other side of the arch where we are shown the return of the emperor from his victories in Asia. Again, the conquest of new regions for the empire would not be possible to depict naturalistically, and the subjugated nations of Armenia and Mesopotamia are brought before the viewer as personifications while the locality of the war is also denoted by the two river gods, the *Euphrates* and the *Tigris*.

Such examples of a mélange with allegorical and naturalistic modes of representation are very abundant in Roman art. If we pursue this pictorial conception further, it emerges that the Romans largely viewed the visual arts conceptually and as determined by intellectual values. Abstract, intellectual conceptions were to be expressed visually, and all means should be applied as they were available at any given time. This means that intellect or *ratio* assumes the most important place with form expressing ideas in a more subsidiary role, but also that the Roman approach to art is able to avail itself of all possible sources – primarily Greek forms in this instance – in order to express their own original ideas. It is similar to the way in which Roman meaning was expressed in the Greek language,

that Greek meters and metaphors were taken from Greek poetry or the visible forms of Greek divinities used to express different intellectual subjects.

Intellect and spirit is given concrete appearance through form

Since the creative will is primarily guided by intellect or rationality, we can conclude that form will assume abstract and intellectual conceptions in the course of the structural development. This relationship presents the diametrical opposite to the creative process typical of Greek art. While the Greeks developed their forms from the artistic structuralization of corporeal and sensual nature, and its intellectual content emerged as an emanation or sublimation of the artistic expression, Roman art began with the intellectual content and only then sought to lend it substance in corporeal form. This means that it is not of paramount importance whether the forms conveying its meanings were Greek, whether Greek artists worked to realize these ideas or if the traditional Italic forms emerged with a somewhat Hellenized appearance. It is more important for the intellect in consuming the Greek artistic heritage to generate its own structure of sensual expression by adopting what might be the least sensual medium, namely that of space. As a primary object in the process of giving form to things, space becomes the artistic symbol of intellect or spirit in architecture, and the meaningful expressions of the ideas congeal along its borders with its images entering into its all-encompassing form. Just as this occurs with the inherited Greek forms from an artistic world long dead in its structural roots, so also did Roman naturalism lose its direct observation of nature and in late antiquity yield to an exclusively expressive pictorial world or increasing reduction to a mere system of signs. The main goal of art is to infuse natural forms with spirit [Vergeistigung]. This is achieved by integrating the image into that structural symbolism of shaped space which itself is nothing other than the sensual and artistic realization of the late antique intellectualizing world view.

Summary basic characteristics of Roman formal organization

This leads us to the end of the first section of this general survey. We have enumerated and briefly explained some of the basic characteristics of Roman art as discussed in scholarship. For the moment, I would like to quickly repeat them and proceed to the actual subject of this introduction, the question of continuity in the development of ancient art, primarily of Greece and Rome.

      Allow us to recall some of the fundamental aspects of Roman formal organization as we have observed. We have mentioned:

1. Symmetry and axiality and the emphasis on a main axis as it results from symmetry and becomes the dominant feature of an entire composition.

2. The direct shaping of space. Instead of corporeal form, absolute space becomes the medium of form. The forms in their limited volumes are created in a process of delineating or cutting them out from the endless space.

3. An unprecedented relationship arises between humanity and art. The objective confrontation of the viewer and the art object as it was essential to the sculptural conception of the Greeks, is replaced by a direct relatedness between the two. While the Greek temple existed objectively and related only to itself, the new form of spatial architecture opens itself to the viewer, induces them to enter and thus identify with the spatial experience.

4. Forms are not developed as a creative and symbolic organization of that given in nature with the human figure at its core – as the Greeks had done. In Roman culture, forms were generated on the basis of intellectual or rational considerations. Its predominant element is what we describe as the intellectual or spiritual content of a work of art, what is usually called the content or subject matter. Instead of pure form, nature becomes the vehicle for expressing historical narratives – instead of the general and typical natural forms where formal content and subject matter are identical while what we might consider the literary aspect recedes. Form is important to the degree that it serves to interpret actual occurrences and give evidence of a certain intellectual order which dominates the world of the senses while expressing or documenting itself through the sensual media of forms and imagery.

Among these 'fundamental features' of the creative posture, the tendency toward direct shaping of space is the most important and can be considered to be one of the most significant conditions for Byzantine as well as later European architecture. We next assess the degree to which in spite of its completely different creative goals, later Greek art included the beginnings which might be seen as preparatory transitions toward the Roman-Italic spatial formation.

As we know, classical Greek art is based on the rhythmic organization of corporeal forms. The classical temple with the main parts of the three stepped base-like platform, the columns and beams above is composed of individual corporeal parts outwardly unified and self-enclosed by the fundamental idea of weight and its support. The temples and all of classical architecture based on the same principles are sculptural works presenting themselves outwardly as a symbol of humanity striking a balance of the tensions between freedom and necessity in the ideal form of being.

In the course of the 4th century, this classical state of a balanced corporeality began to show clear signs of dissolution. It would be very one-sided to consider what came next, and already began in the 5th century, from the classical perspective and to count any variance from orthodox forms and canonical proportions as nothing but signs of decline. What is most striking in this is a completely changing relationship to space. In classical art, space is by no means a given medium for form. The corporeal figures stand in the space which provides their sphere of being and

they accordingly radiate their character into the space, lending it their qualities but not forming it. In the sanctuaries, the sacred temples and sculptures each stand unto themselves, unrelated to one another and without the organizing principle of an overall plan. Even the individual statues and votive offerings seem to be arranged quite randomly on steps and in halls of the buildings or inside the *cella* with no regard to the proportions or articulation of the architecture. A single work of architecture provides a surprising exception, remarkable among the creations of the classical period, and this is the Propylaea by the architect Mnesikles on the Acropolis in Athens, which we do not see today in the form originally intended. The intention was to make the entrance to the holy precinct of the Acropolis particularly magnificent and monumental. As we say, the plan was not completely realized, partially because of the financial constraints caused by the Peloponnesian war and partially due to resistance from those involved in the religion and ritual who successfully repelled a radical intrusion into the sacred precinct of the temple of Nike. As it was originally planned, the entire facility consisted of a central structure with a façade including six Doric columns and the path leading between two rows of Ionic columns into the entrance hall of the castle whose front almost completely matched that of the northern hall. The outer entrance gate was flanked by two symmetrically facing prostylos-like structures, of which only the left was completed. Two also symmetrical double-naved halls opening onto the precinct of the Acropolis were planned between these and the actual gate.

As we have noted, everything about this design was new and unusual. This is true not merely of the symmetry of the ground plan, of the completely unusual and original composition of numerous architectural parts into a whole, but also, and this seems most momentous, the relation of this new sort of architecture to space. A monumental and embellished gate should by its nature welcome those approaching it, but the other gate designs of the classical period are limited in the manner of the *templum in antis* type to simple architectonically conceived gates. Here in the propylaea, a sort of entrance space is created by the protruding wings to the sides at right angles to the façade of the gate. It at once attracts and draws in those approaching it to continue on the path through the gate in its monumental opulence anticipates the qualities of the sacred *temenos* as a sort of prelude.

The new, almost revolutionary aspect of this design lies in the fact that its effect of creating space does not reside exclusively in a passive existence as with most classical temples, but that the area of the square is generated in a most active way with a certain dynamic aspect of its function in attracting the visitor. Space itself is created along purely tectonic lines by harmonically assembling three temple façades bordering the square to the south. Its tectonic character is also evident in the entire way it has been planned. The individual buildings retain their corporeal individuality, and the manner in which these separate and self-contained buildings are governed by the dominant element of the propylon but joined to a harmonic

unity clearly reveals their function in relating so strongly to one another, explicitly tectonic in the Greek sense.

The Acropolis propylaea by Mnesikles is the brilliant design of a forerunner and did not initially have any influence although it embodied certain tendencies that would predominate a later period. Designs revealing the goal of an outward creation of space are not documented on Greek soil before the 2nd century BC. Among others, these include the monumental altar from Pergamum, where the idea of the 'Mnesiklean Propylaea' is fully realized for the first time. This also includes a front flanked by two protruding sides with steps rising in between so as to enclose a space exerting a force of attraction on those approaching the actual court with the altar. Now this is no longer composed of individual buildings but is joined almost seamlessly onto a single harmonious architectural group.

We sense a nearly more intense and radiating activation of space alongside the inviting effect. Both of these effects are intertwined without cancelling one another so that the result is a tension with a dynamic temper in the space before the altar. We shall be returning to the question of this type of design and the peculiar quality of its effects.

At the same time in the course of the 2nd century BC, temples were designed which also testify to the need for a regular and strictly encapsulated form in the existential space of the temple while it remains a sculptural shape. After it had been completely indeterminate in the classical period, this made the existential space of the temple an integrated element within the entire complex. The sanctuary of Artemis Leukophryene in Magnesia on the Meander of about 130 BC provides a typical architectural example of this new sort of spatial creation. The space here is a plastic block within the temple enclosed by colonnades. This creates a strictly axial court with the temple appearing almost like a work of sculpture within an enormous surrounding space. Yet it is not located at the center of the court but instead moved far to the rear. This means that as a sculptural object, the block of the temple recedes in favor of a purely frontal effect of the façade which dominates the space of the court with a dynamic effect recalling the altar from Pergamum. As visitors, we do not receive any of these impressions by walking around the temple to perceive its sculptural character, but are primarily impressed with optic sensations. This results in the surface and optic effects increasingly replacing the sculptural effects. Aside from the greater emphasis on the front as a visual image, this also presents itself in a general migration of the expressive forces away from sculptural and constructive values toward a greater effect of surfaces of architecture, from 'the core into the skin'.

Sculpture shows the same development from the classical to the Hellenistic period. Classical statuary had already assumed a primarily frontal vantage point like the 5th century temples, but as with the temples, it is also necessary to walk around them completely to fully realize their content as sculpture. They are equally microcosmically self-enclosed and do not require framing devices or architectural

background. They generate an artistic existential space as corporeal extension, but this space remains an accessory of their passive being since it is also in no way actively formed by the statue. During the Hellenistic period this relationship to space changed exactly in the way we have observed it in architecture. The Apoxyomenos already radiates its sculptural effect into space, and in the 2nd century BC some sculptural groups are consciously developed entirely in the surface with only a frontal effect, facing the viewer exactly in the manner of the Hellenistic temple façade. Statuary now comes to be placed in a very particular architectural surrounding, enclosing its existential space, along the wall of the architecture so as to heighten its effect of frontality or else placed in a niche with a similar direction or enclosure.[13] In its creation and radiation of space, the Nike from Samothrace is a particularly impressive example of the dynamic character of the baroque phase of late Hellenistic sculpture. She arises from a craggy ravine-like background with a single well calculated viewing angle and seems to conjure a stormy and triumphal movement of boundless spaces of sea and heavens. This is the same conception as in the architecture of the uppermost level of the terrace temple of Kos. At Kos, the building of the temple is placed into the triangular court which provides its background so that the front is aligned with the ends of the lateral colonnades. The visual image has a dominating effect into the distance and generates a projected space with an attracting effect.

These few examples illustrate the change that took place in the development from the classical 5th century into the late Hellenistic period. The attitude of self-isolation and complete sculptural enclosure is abandoned in favor of an increased outward effect creating space. Since the exterior of architecture is the element generating the space, it gains in importance so that its optic effects come to match the role of the sculpturally tactile expressive factors and is concentrated in exclusively frontal views, purely visual images [Schaubild]. Within the Greek sphere, there were of course limits to the possibility of spatial expansion, defined by the Greek order of creativity. Hellenistic formal volition [Formungswille] was inextricably bound to the fundamental elements of its creative structure, the tectonic post and lintel composition. These are the limitations it was impossible to transgress without relinquishing its own character. There was an effort to create space to the extent that these means permitted. This can be seen in the designs for larger interior spaces such as the city hall of Miletus and the colonnaded hall of Delos. Space cannot be modeled with columns, ashlar stone and roof beams which never lose their independent corporeal and sculptural lives. In these most extreme attempts, the space cannot be developed beyond the most liberal interior and intervening space defined by the plastic forms which are unable to relinquish their corporeal nature and can therefore never be reduced to a mere medium for the shaping of space. Hellenistic architects therefore placed elements around the space but were

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[13] The Apoxyomenos is preserved in a marble copy after the original by Lysippus of ca. 320 BC, Vatican Museums [Inv. 1185, Gabinetto dell'Apoxyomenos].

not able to model it. The corporeal and sculptural devaluation of the architecture, its columns and beams can only be driven to a given point. Perspective views radiating into a distance are limited to a sculptural core as their source, and for all their spatial expansion it is always the tectonically organized corporeal form which stands at the center of Hellenistic architecture whether it is a temple or a hall.

　　　In sum we can say that in Greece there was a shift in artistic interests away from the sculptural formation of corporeal figures toward the shaping of space beginning in the 4th, and reaching a climax in the 2nd century BC. This development reached its utmost expansion in the limits imposed by the Greek artistic volition [Kunstwollen], which by nature was unable to replace the corporeal medium with that of absolute space. This and the direct shaping of space was then achieved by the Italic and Roman artists. Their technology of amorphous mortar and dry stone walls gave them a neutral and flexible medium for modeling space. This led the primeval Italic gift and formal mode as it had already revealed itself as the basis for the formal volition in the Etruscan period on into the monumental sphere. Italic-Etruscan sculpture had already been characterized by the use of form as the limiting membrane of a spatial volume, the cubic shell-system. This structure and the accompanying technique were now transferred to monumental architecture and led to the creation of an architecture truly based on space and in the course of the empire, bound for a promising future, increasingly distinguishing itself from Hellenistic-Roman column and architrave architecture. As we have described them, the late Hellenistic architectural developments had a lingering influence. They continued to play a quite important part in the early imperial period, even on into the 3rd century AD, particularly in religious architecture. Like the equally monumental Hercules temple in Tivoli, the most important late republican architectural monument, the temple of Fortuna in Praeneste was conceived on the basis of Hellenistic perspective architecture. Symmetry and axiality clearly define these designs and are not a particular invention of the Italic nations as Armin von Gerkan believed – as we have seen, the late Hellenistic temples such as the Sanctuary of Artemis in Megnesia or particularly the Asklepios temple at Kos are clearly based on axes, and the same is true of frontality. Although we in no way deny that these organizational elements emerged more forcefully in the Roman imperial period than in late Hellenistic art, we should not here consider them as a peculiarly Roman characteristic, but rather as a re-emergence of primeval Mediterranean organizational principles which had been better preserved in the east, especially in Greece, where an irrationalism of living forms broke through the rigid traditions at an early date and only admitted them in a framing function for regulating vivid imagery of the human form. This resurgence of symmetry and frontality in late Hellenistic art is related to the tendencies toward expanding the spatial element without any doubt. Both symmetry and the frontal arrangement are evidence that architecture was assuming a stronger relation to the individual human being. While symmetry in architecture is nothing other than a reflection of the

symmetry of the human form, frontal pictorial effects have the single function of attracting humanity and interesting them in visiting a given building – which would assume a very important place even later in the imperial period. We see this in the marvelous entrance hall to the Pantheon.

It is highly likely that the transition from the sculptural approach to the direct shaping of space is closely related to the characteristically Roman world view always beginning with spirit and intellect. In this case it began with political, legal or social institutions and sought its expression in the arts. We have conjectured that shaped space provides a symbolic reflection of the spiritual and intellectual sphere and expresses its ideas.

It is very probable that if we were to study the development of the Greek world view, we would find a certain tendency towards an intellectual sublimation of the mindscape which originally began with the senses and adhered to the senses. This change might reveal itself most clearly in the religious world where the gods increasingly lose their anthropomorphic character and devolve into nothing more than simple symbols of a given philosophical or religious idea. It would be a very important and appealing task to trace this trend in the visual arts, and it should be done at some point. It is not possible for us to dwell on this idea here and we must be satisfied to ponder the differing conceptions of the goddess of victory, Nike in the 5th century and in the Hellenistic period. In the classical period, Nike is closely related to Zeus and Athena as the vehicle and harbinger of victory. By her origins, she is more of an embodiment of an idea, but later became a goddess like all of the others – even if her status remained more modest. She is one of the Olympians and is shown as such on the victory monument of the Messenians and Nafpactians in Olympia descending from heaven and announcing the tidings of Zeus while as a goddess she is shown making sacrifices although in many different guises, including on the famous balustrade of the Nike temple on the Acropolis in Athens. If we compare this range of ideas with those embodied in the Nike from Samothrace for instance, the shift we have mentioned toward abstraction and intellectualization becomes very clear. This is no longer the goddess we see acting in the myth and she is also no longer exclusively a pious votive gift for the gods as in Olympia, but instead she is more a symbol of victory intended to proclaim the success of the Diadochs to all visitors to the island. Although she appears as more of an embodiment of the idea of victory, she is still not a mere personification such as the Roman *Victoria*, and the form still plays a significant role here. The marvelous symphony of wildly agitated, fluttering and billowing drapery, the magnificent form of her proud and youthful body, none of it has an allegorical element, but instead it stridently expresses the triumphant feeling of victory. We can feel here that the beauty of sculptural form still embodies a true value and not a surrogate, although the limits of Greek intellectualization are also apparent as they reveal themselves in the indestructible autonomy of form. How different is the Roman *Victoria*. They use the form in and of itself, and the oft repeated traditional type

becomes a randomly applicable artistic hieroglyph of the idea which the viewer immediately supplies. Even if the Nike from Samothrace could be interpreted as a monument of the imperialism of the Diadochs, this does not rob it of its heroic character and it remains a votive gift to the gods who have delivered the victory. Nothing of this can be found in the *Victoria* figures on the imperial monuments celebrating military victories. The imperial period has transformed the figure into the pictorial allegory of a military success, occasionally repeated symbol of imperial power with an overtly political function. The Roman *Victoria* figure clearly illuminates the process of creative reversal that is so typical of the Roman period. An intellectual idea seeks formal pictorial expression while its values reside exclusively in the idea and not in the beauty of the forms. In Greek art, the content emanates for this beauty of form, and however much late Hellenistic art is inclined to emphasize the intellectual content, and however often this content even includes a programmatic or propagandistic character, the order itself which leads from the sensual form to the spirit or content cannot be reversed in the Greek world. This is a parallel phenomenon to what we see occurring in architecture. We recognize the urge to spatial expansion which can only be interpreted as a symbol of spirit and intellect, yet it cannot free itself from the sensual, sculptural character of the post and lintel construction, and it consists in no more than a projection of these forms. As in sculpture, Roman art reverses this process. Space is given shapes in a direct way while corporeal form is stripped of its autonomous character and serves as a matrix for spatial form which is now the essential aspect.

Greek art also depicted historical narratives although far less than they appeared in Roman art. A famous example, *Alexander in the Battle of Issus* from Pompeii is a mosaic copying an original painting by one of the greatest Hellenistic masters. It seems natural to compare this painting with a Roman image of battle such as Trajan's victory over the Dacians on the arch of Constantine in Rome. Superficial similarities cannot conceal the profound differences in the creative substratum on which the two artists build. In the painting of *The Battle of Issus*, the artist was clearly geared to glorifying the greatest army of the time. He places a moving human and dramatic scene from the battle at the center. Alexander is using a lance to stab a relative and favorite of the retreating Persian king Darius. The image is dominated by a broadly human and distressing scene replete with tragedy and passions. It has a political dimension to be sure, but the human tragic and heroic aspect, the dramatic expression of form, color and composition provide the actual artistic subject of this work, and other associations are secondary. The Battle of the Dacians also depicts a confrontation of the two antagonists at the center, but in spite of this remains a cold, official monument with the artistic idea completely subservient to the political subject which might equally well have been expressed by an allegorical image inscribed 'Victoria Augusti, Imperator invictus', or perhaps Dacia capta'. The official version of the war narrative once again announces the invincibility and power of the imperial authority with no heroic or general human

aspects. This relief served to visualize and monumentally eternalize a national policy, and this was the point of departure for the artist. Again we see the same reversal in the creative process just as it is so apparent in the other examples.