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The Date of the Arch at Orange

L'arco di Orange costituisce uno dei monumenti più imbarazzanti nella storia dell'architettura e della scultura romana.

P. Mingazzini¹

The monumental arch at Orange (ancient Arausio) in northern Provence (fig. 1; 2) has been a subject of debate ever since it was first freed from the thirteenth century *enceinte* and restored by the architect Auguste Caristie between 1807 and 1825². Controversy is understandable. The arch is either a monument unparalleled in design and in architectural and sculptural decoration for its date, or one whose dedicatory inscription (CIL XII 1230) has been incorrectly reconstructed and accepted by generations of scholars. The physical anomalies of the monument are startling. Although dated to the late first century B. C. or early first century after Christ by all who have restored its inscription, the arch is a free-standing triple fornix of triumphal type, a form unknown among dated monuments until the Severan arch of the early third century at Rome and not attested with any certainty before the second century³. The architectural decoration and the style of the sculptured panels, as well as the double attic, are equally unusual and difficult to assign to the Augustan or Julio-

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¹ MINGAZZINI 1957, 193.

² CHATELAIN 43-44; 46-48; L'arc I 12-13. Prince Louis-Francois de Conti had done some restoration in 1721, as had others in 1722 and 1780. Caristie finished his work on 25 July 1825.

³ Such possible comparanda as the arch of the Forum at Cosa or the arch at Medinaceli in Spain are too little known to be dated with conviction.



1 Arch at Orange, north face.

Claudian period. The dedicatory inscription is even more controversial since its actual text cannot be seen on the monument but must be restored by assigning letters of the Roman alphabet to clamp holes that run across the architrave on the north face of the arch without evidence of counter-sinking into the surface of the architrave.

Even before the restoration of the arch, classicists and antiquarians had assigned it to an extraordinarily wide range of dates: dedication was proposed for the time of Marius, of Q. Domitius Ahenobarbus, of Julius Caesar, and of Augustus⁴. After the restoration, historians of art and archaeologists began to consider the dating required by the architecture and sculpture of the arch, and advanced a new set of hypotheses. Frary, an architect, in 1835 assigned the architecture to the late Empire; Prosper Mérimée, inspector-general for the Service des Antiquités, also in 1835, compared the arch to monuments of the reign of Marcus Aurelius; Jules Maffei (ca. 1848) proposed the reign of Hadrian as the most suitable to the arch's ornament but was disputed by

⁴ CHATELAIN 56–68 with references.



2 Arch at Orange, south face.

the Provençal archaeologist Courtet, who accepted Mérimée's date; Vitet, reviewing Courtet's work in 1859, proposed instead the early Antonine period; Pelet, in his 'France Monumentale' (1857), had changed his earlier preference for a Hadrianic date to one early in the reign of Septimius Severus⁵. It is interesting that no early architect or archaeologist could find any convincing physical evidence to suggest a date for the arch prior to the second century after Christ.

The most widely accepted date proposed, during the reign of Tiberius, was first suggested in 1857 by Charles Lenormant, and was soon reinforced by a reconstruction of the dedicatory inscription advanced by Alexandre Bertrand. This reconstruction was subsequently accepted by Hirschfeld and provided the text published as CIL XII 1230⁶. Since 1880 the majority of scholars has accepted this date on the basis of the

⁵ CHATELAIN 68–70.

⁶ C. LENORMANT, *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres* 1, 1857, 232–249; A. BERTRAND, *Bull. Soc. Nat. Antiqu. France* 1880, 202–203.

supposed inscription⁷. In 1962, after a major restoration of the arch, a team of French scholars published a collaborative investigation of the arch that accepted the Tiberian date⁸. Only the Italian scholar Paolino Mingazzini continued to object in print that a Julio-Claudian date was far too early for the sculptural and architectural style⁹. Mingazzini was directly challenged by Bianchi-Bandinelli¹⁰ and his objections, though important and disturbing, have been ignored. Since 1970, scholarly opinion has favored interpreting the sculpture of the arch as a Gallic variation on hellenistic Greek, specifically Pergamene, prototypes, and assigning it an early first century date, following Bianchi-Bandinelli and the French scholars who collaborated on the 1962 publication¹¹. But the hypothesis has yet to be convincingly and sufficiently demonstrated with reference to dated comparanda. The architecture and the inscription of the arch have been little considered since 1962.

In fact, the controversy remains unsettled and deserves reopening. In light of the problems that arose in a recent attempt to restore, by the same methods used over a century ago at Orange, the similarly attached inscription of the Maison Carrée at Nîmes¹², and because of the uncertainty of the inscriptional text, a new investigation of the inscription, the architecture, the sculpture and ultimately the date of the arch at Orange is now required.

I. THE INSCRIPTIONS¹³

During the freeing of the arch from the city walls in 1811, a bronze letter L was reported found at the foot of the north face of the monument. This led to the supposition that an inscription in bronze letters must have been attached to the face of the arch by means of dowels. A number of reconstructions of the possible text was proposed by the method of assigning letters of the alphabet to the various patterns formed by the numerous clamp holes that pit the architrave on the north face (fig. 3)¹⁴. In 1862, Herbert published a plan of the holes accompanied by a proposed

⁷ Indeed, P. COUJSSIN, *Revue Arch.* ser. 5, 19, 1924, 29–54 attempted to justify a date even earlier from the lack of certain types of armor, especially the La Tène III sword, that he believed the warriors portrayed on the arch ought to carry. His argument has been refuted.

⁸ *L'arc I*, esp. 155–158.

⁹ MINGAZZINI 1957, 193–201 and MINGAZZINI 1968, 163–167.

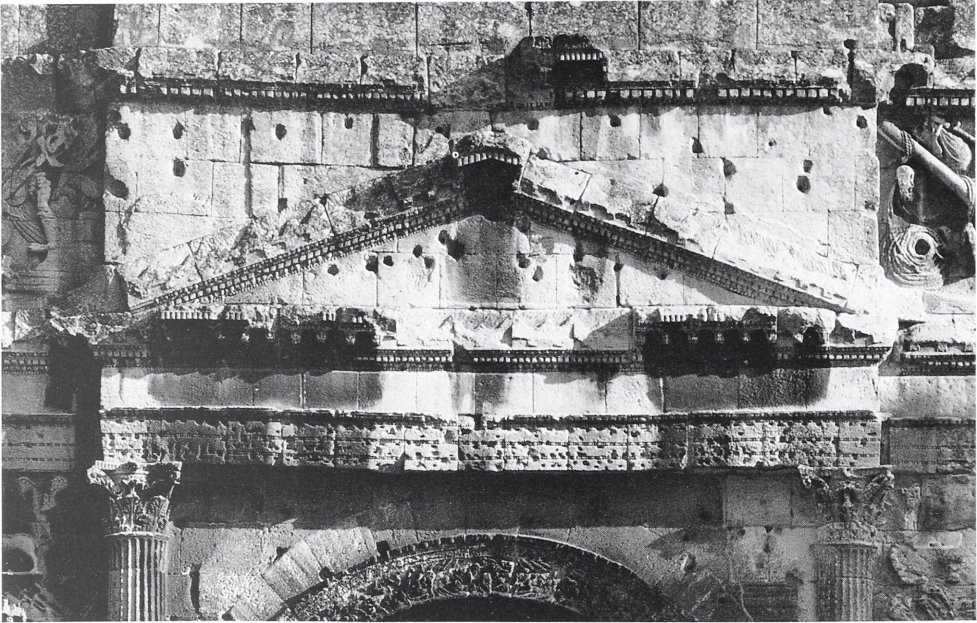
¹⁰ R. BIANCHI-BANDINELLI, Rome. *La fin de l'art antique* (1970) 144–149.

¹¹ GROS 56 and note 6; G. GUALANDI, *L'apparato figurativo negli archi augustei*, in: *Studi* 130 note 88. Recent handbooks of Roman art, including D. E. STRONG, *Roman Art* (1976) 117 and MARTIN HENIG (ed.), *A Handbook of Roman Art* (1983) 67, accept a Julio-Claudian date virtually without discussion. So well established is this opinion that some scholars have employed comparison to the arch at Orange to date other Roman monuments to the Julio-Claudian period (e. g., F. S. KLEINER, *Mélanges École Franç.* Rome 89, 1977, 673, on the fragmentary remains of the arch at Avignon).

¹² R. AMY and P. GROS, *La maison carrée de Nîmes* (1980) 177–194.

¹³ This history of the reconstruction of CIL XII 1230 follows, in roughly equal parts, those provided by PIGANIOL (*L'arc I* 143–145) and by CHATELAIN 80–85. See also the commentary provided by SCHÖNE in CIL XII 1230; also LENORMANT *op. cit.* (note 6) 232, and *Comptes rendus* 25, 1882, 19.

¹⁴ In particular, the text proposed by Pelet in 1832 was influential, even though its second line was incomprehensible and assigned more letters to the inscription than there are clamp holes on the arch. *L'arc I* 142–144.



3 Clamp holes on the architrave of the north face.

text which was incomprehensible. De Saulcy, in 1866, proposed a text that was at least readable:

TI CAESAR DIVI AVGVSTI FIL DIVI IVLI NEP COS IIII IMP VIII TR POT XXIII

However, this text required more clamp holes than exist on the arch if it were attached there. Bertrand's more conservative suggestion, made in 1880, preserved the beginning proposed earlier by Pelet and attempted to fill only the extant clamp holes on the center of the north face of the arch:

AVGVSTI F DIVI IVLI NEPOTI AVGVSTO

This text was checked by Schöne, at Hirschfeld's direction, in 1888 and accepted as the text for CIL XII 1230. With the appearance of the twelfth volume of the CIL, hypothesis came to be regarded by many as fact, and Bertrand's text has been accepted by the great majority of scholars since that time, the most important subsequent acceptance being that of Amy and Piganiol in 1962¹⁵.

An investigation of the clamp holes themselves, and of the architrave course of the arch's north face, must raise doubts. Two separate questions need to be answered: (1) do the clamp holes on the architrave in fact reveal the location of an inscription, and (2) if so, does the pattern of holes permit the reconstruction of its text with any assur-

¹⁵ L'arc I 145-147 (by PIGANIOL) and 152-153 (by AMY). See also A. PIGANIOL, *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres* 1954, 20-21; B. FORLATI-TAMARO, *Arch. Class.* 11, 1959, 92. Most recently F. S. KLEINER, *The Arch of Nero in Rome. Archaeologia* 54, 1984, 47, while acknowledging that the decoration of the arch at Orange appears completely unlike usual Julio-Claudian work, states that '... the monument is, however, securely dated on epigraphical grounds to c. A. D. 20-26'.

ance of accuracy. The first question can be answered with some certainty since the phenomenon of series of clamp holes running across the entablature of a monument into which letters were clamped without being counter-sunk into the stone, hence leaving no legible pattern, occurs elsewhere in Narbonese Gaul (e. g., the Maison Carrée, and the Temple of Augustus and Livia at Vienne)¹⁶ and must be regarded as nothing extraordinary among Roman monuments in Provence. Nor is the location of the inscription on the three-fascia architrave (rather than on the frieze, where it would more usually appear) unparalleled, although such architrave inscriptions were usually late additions to a facade (e. g., the Severan restoration commemorated on the architrave of the Pantheon at Rome) and all known examples outside Provence date to the second century after Christ or later. Attempts to explain the series of clamp holes at Orange as something other than the remains of an inscription in attached bronze letters have not been convincing¹⁷.

Restoration of the text, however, is impossible. The clamp holes on the north architrave form more-or-less square and rectangular patterns across the architrave, and this suggests letters of the Latin alphabet, which are predominantly square in outline in the upper case and that hence would leave a square or rectangular pattern of clamp holes when removed. Even letters like C and O were designed by the Romans as a circle within a square. Since at Orange the letters were not countersunk into beds carved into the stone (as was the usual practice in Roman inscriptions), restorers must attempt to discover patterns of holes that indicate specific letters. Unfortunately, no consistent patterns of attachment for the letters can be demonstrated on the arch.

Piganiol and Amy proposed a text, expanded from CIL XII 1230, that would fill all visible holes on the north face of the arch and more. Careful consideration of the holes on the architrave discovers, however, that in order to attach this text to the extant holes, it is necessary to assume that, among the vowels, the letter A was attached in four different clamp patterns, E in six different patterns, I in two patterns, O in seven patterns and V (as either vowel or consonant) in five. Among the consonants extensive variation in pattern must be permitted to restore M (three patterns), N (three), P (four), R (five), S (three), T (three) and X (three); in addition both D and F reveal two patterns of clamp holes¹⁸. These variations in the patterns of individual letters are those admitted by Amy and Piganiol. Closer investigation reveals that in fact to attach this text to the extant holes requires six variant patterns for A, four for S, four for T, and four for X. Clearly, the proposed text cannot be assigned to the clamp holes with any certainty. But it must be realized that the fault does not lie in Amy and

¹⁶ L'arc I 143–144. – AMY and GROS *op. cit.* (note 12) 177–178.

¹⁷ Architrave inscriptions also include those of the temple of Antoninus and Faustina in the Roman Forum, the temple dedicated to Hadrian at Ephesus by P. Quintilius, and the arch of Marcus Aurelius at Tripoli (MINGAZZINI 1968, 165–166). A typical attempt to explain the Orange clamp holes as something other than dowel holes for bronze letters is the suggestion advanced by FORMIGÉ (and later retracted) that the dowels might have carried decorative swags rather than letters (*Revue Arch.* 2, 1910, 3). See also CHATELAIN 85–86; S. REINACH, *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres* 52, 1909, 513–518.

¹⁸ A chart of these various patterns is provided by AMY (L'arc I 152), but he draws very different conclusions from the evidence by avoiding altogether the question of the likelihood of such great variation in clamp hole patterns; PIGANIOI, however, expresses some dismay (L'arc I 145).



4 Architrave of the south face.

Piganiol's text *per se* as opposed to any other. Rather, it is a simple fact that no text so far proposed can be shown to attach its letters into the clamp holes in consistent patterns. Nor need scholars expect absolute consistency; variations in the exact points at which letters were clamped into stone can be seen on the more usual countersunk inscriptions, for example on the Augustan arch at Susa or the Trajanic arch at Benevento. At Orange, however, doubt must be raised by the extremely high number of variant patterns required by the inscription as restored since there is no apparent reason for so many variations in the clamping patterns of individual letters.

More important to assigning a date to the arch at Orange is the fact that, since so many letters of the Latin alphabet are of square or squarish pattern, quite a number of different letters might well be assigned to roughly similar patterns of clamp holes if we admit that some variation in the clamping of individual letters was allowed and even probable. Under the circumstances, the problem of the text of the Orange inscription clearly becomes insoluble. Any number of texts could be assigned to the existing clamp holes since no reliable method for limiting the letters assigned to the patterns has been discovered¹⁹. No text can be shown to be definitive, or even much

¹⁹ As shown by the problems encountered by Amy in attempting to restore the inscription of the Maison Carrée by the same method employed at Orange: AMY and GROS *op. cit.* (note 12) 177–178; L'arc I 152–153.

more likely, than any other. Hence CIL XII 1230, as well as Amy and Piganiol's expansion of it, must be regarded as hypothetical. The implication is apparent: the arch at Orange cannot be dated by its inscription.

The study of the architrave undertaken by Amy and Piganiol demonstrated one fact about it that deserves further consideration. While it is unusual that the inscription at Orange was attached to the architrave while the frieze course was left mostly blank, careful observation of the profiles of both courses permitted Amy and Piganiol to demonstrate that the blank frieze had been intentionally cut back and smoothed, as if to erase an inscription²⁰. However, the projection of the architrave's upper cornice, just beneath the frieze, is great enough that, when Amy tried placing bronze letters on the frieze and then looking up at them from ground level, the lower part of the inscription so placed was hidden from view by the projection of the cornice²¹. In contrast, on the south face of the arch where the frieze is decorated with figures of Romans and Gauls in low relief, the cornice does not have such a wide projection (fig. 4). The projection of the cornice on the south is only 9 cm, while that on the north side projects almost 16 cm²². The frieze of the north face, therefore, is not preserved in its original condition but has been carefully erased at some time subsequent to the erection and decoration of the arch. Whatever inscription was attached to the north architrave was probably set in place after this removal of an earlier inscription from the frieze. The face of the architrave on the north side of the arch has also been smoothed to receive the inscription after the lines of bead-and-reel moldings that separate the three fascias had been carved²³. The clamp holes must be all that remains of an afterthought, an inscription hurriedly added to the arch when it became apparent that cutting back the frieze made it unsuitable to show off an inscription²⁴. Once the sequence of events is established it becomes clear that the arch at Orange must have endured two separate dedications²⁵.

Since no text for the dedication can really be restored, and since the architrave inscription would provide no more than a *terminus ante quem* for the construction of the arch, it is now essential that all attempts to reconstruct the text of this inscription be foregone and other methods applied to establish either a relative or an absolute date for the arch.

Less attention has been paid to a second series of inscriptions that occurs on the arch (CIL XII 1231) although these are legible. On the shields carved in the panels of trophies over the side fornices on both the north and south faces of the arch were

²⁰ L'arc I 148.

²¹ L'arc I 149.

²² L'arc I 22–23; these measurements were confirmed by the present author on 5 September, 1983, at the arch in Orange.

²³ L'arc I 23–24; 148–151, esp. figs. 4; 55–56.

²⁴ Cf. L'arc I 149–151, in which PIGANIOL finds extreme difficulty in justifying his contention that the architrave was purposefully chosen when the arch was constructed to receive a tripartite inscription with the titulature of Tiberius above the central passageway of the north face, and dedications to Germanicus and Drusus on either side over the flanking fornices. He is forced ultimately to avoid the question of contemporaneity of architrave inscription and arch.

²⁵ As most earlier scholars had assumed, including BERTRAM *op. cit.* (note 6) 203, FORMIGE *op. cit.* (note 17) 3, REINACH *op. cit.* (note 17) 517–518, and COUJSSIN *op. cit.* (note 7) 29–30.



5 BODVACVS inscription in situ.
(CIL XII 1231)



6 JVDILLVS and AVOT inscription in situ.
(CIL XII 1231)



7 SACROVIR inscription in situ (CIL XII 1231).



8 Detail of SACROVIR inscription in situ (CIL XII 1231).

inscribed the names of various Gallic chieftains who fought against the Romans and were defeated²⁶. Of the names preserved in full, two – MARIO and DACVRDVS – are otherwise unattested, but the other two – SACROVIR and BODVACVS – occur on other inscriptions²⁷. It is tempting to identify this SACROVIR with Julius Sacrovir, the Aeduan chieftain who fought against Tiberius (TAC. ann. 3, 40) and that identification is consistent with the context of the trophies which clearly commemorate Roman campaigns in Gaul. But there is no real evidence to assign a date for the erection of the arch itself based solely on the occurrence of this one name; it can only be regarded as providing a *terminus post quem*. Yet it was precisely on this basis that the assignment of the arch to Tiberius' reign, and the first Tiberian reconstruction of the dedicatory inscription, were made²⁸. There is no corroborating evidence for such a date for the arch in historical data or in architectural and sculptural comparanda. Indeed, the elongated letter forms in which the chieftains' names are written (fig. 5–8) are not characteristic of Julio-Claudian inscriptions. It was with the Severans that a taste for somewhat more elongated letters began to appear, although official inscriptions continued to follow the earlier tradition of squarish letter forms (e. g., CIL VI 1033, the dedication of the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum). The letter forms on the shields at Orange are closer in shape to the letter forms of Severan

²⁶ A total of eleven names or fragments of names may still be seen. The names and their locations: North, left: CATVS (or CAIVS), BENE(?), (. . .)OSRE. – North, right: BODVACVS, VAVNE (same shield). – South, right: SACROVIR, MARIO, DACVRDVS, (. . .) VDILLVS and AVOT (same shield), (. . .)S(. . .)FE, AV(. . .), (?)DIX. – CHATELAIN 50–58; L'arc I 88–93 and figs. 39–40; J. WHATMOUGH, *Dialects of Ancient Gaul*. Ph. D. dissertation, Univ. of Michigan (1949) vol. 1, 115–116.

²⁷ SACROVIR = CIL XIII 3071. 5619. 5833. 10010 (n. 1701). – BODVACVS = CIL XII 3205. 3475.

²⁸ CHATELAIN 58; L'arc I 91.

commemorative inscriptions (see, for example, CIL VI 220. 1052. 2104; or X 6569)²⁹. Certainly, in the absence of a reliable text for the dedicatory inscription, the occurrence of the name SACROVIR provides no acceptable evidence for assigning an absolute date in the reign of Tiberius to the arch at Orange.

II. THE ARCHITECTURE

At first glance the architecture of the arch seems as ambiguous as its dedication; indeed, if the arch is assigned to the reign of Tiberius its architectural form and some of its decoration are anomalous, lacking any clear parallel among contemporary monuments. Two problems are immediately apparent: the arch is a triple fornix monument, and it carries a double attic (see fig. 1–2). Neither element is otherwise known in free-standing arches of the first century after Christ. It has become normal to cite the arch of Augustus in the Roman Forum, erected in 19 B. C. to replace a single fornix arch of ten years earlier, as the earliest free-standing commemorative arch of triple fornix design, and as a satisfactory predecessor for the design of the arch at Orange³⁰. But the two monuments have, in fact, virtually nothing in common. The *arcus Augusti* was not a true triple fornix arch at all. Rather, it was a single-bay arch flanked by post-and-lintel annexes. The *fasti consulares* and *triumphales* were originally inscribed on the piers of the arch; its design was intended to provide sufficient visible space for their display. This system bears no resemblance to that of the arch at Orange³¹.

No other free-standing arch of triple fornix design is known in Roman architecture with any certainty of dating before the second century after Christ. While the design of a large central vault flanked by two narrower and lower vaulted passages is known from city gates at least as early as Augustan times³², this does not provide any direct evidence for the use of the system in commemorative arches of the same period. Honorary arches of the Augustan age were invariably single fornix in plan (one might cite, for example, those of Aix-les-Bains, Aosta, Rimini and Susa), and this persists as the usual plan for such monuments well into the second century³³. In Rome itself single

²⁹ For illustrations: A. E. GORDON, *Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy* (1983) pl. 47, no. 72 (CIL VI 220); pl. 46, no. 72 (CIL VI 1052); pl. 49, no. 71 (CIL VI 2104); pl. 48, no. 74 (CIL X 6569). Compare these to the letter forms on the shields at Orange (figs. 5–8). On the development of such letter forms, see J. E. SANDYS, *Latin Epigraphy*² (1927) 47–53.

³⁰ E. NASH, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome* 1² (1968) 92–101. For a clear coin representation, see BMC Rom. Rep. II, p. 50, no. 4477.

³¹ On the display of the *fasti* see A. DEGRASSI, *Fasti Capitolini* (1954) 1–20. Recently scholars have tended to reject the comparison of this arch to a true triple fornix arch: GROS 60 and F. SEAR (*Roman Architecture* [1982] 216) specifically deny any formal comparison to the arch at Orange, although both still accept a Tiberian date for the latter.

³² For example, the city gates at Fano, Nola, and Spello – all Augustan – reveal three-bayed systems. Also, the probably Augustan 'Arch of Gallienus' in Rome was originally a three-bayed gate. NASH *op. cit.* (note 30) vol. 1, 115, fig. 119.

³³ J. PRIEUR, *Les arcs monumentaux dans les Alpes occidentales*, in: ANRW II 12, 1 (1982) 442–450; 460–468; J. B. WARD-PERKINS, *Roman Imperial Architecture* (1981) 171–174; 179 (on Rimini); S. DE MARIA, *La Porta Augustea di Rimini*, in: Studi 73–91; KÄHLER 404 (Aosta); 411 (Rimini); 412 (Susa); 414 (Aix-les-Bains).

fornix arches included the first arch of Augustus in the Forum, the arches of Drusus and Germanicus in the Forum of Augustus, arches of Tiberius in the Forum and of Claudius spanning the Via Lata, the still-extant Arch of Titus, and the so-called Arch of Domitian on the Clivus Palatinus³⁴. The triple fornix *Arcus ad Isis* illustrated on the 'Haterii' reliefs was probably a three-bayed gate into the sanctuary of Isis and Serapis in the Campus Martius designed by Domitian, and not a free-standing honorary arch³⁵. The tradition of single fornix commemorative arches continued, attested primarily by coins, with the entrance arch into the Forum of Trajan³⁶ and the late 'Arco di Portogallo'³⁷. Outside Rome, all examples of honorary or commemorative arches are single fornix well into the second century. In Italy one may cite the four arches in the vicinity of the forum at Pompeii, and the arches of Trajan at Ancona and Benevento³⁸. There are almost no securely dated commemorative arches outside Italy except those in North Africa, and the only one of those that was ever dated before the late second century after Christ – the so-called 'Arch of Trajan' at Timgad in Algeria – has now been shown conclusively to date between the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus³⁹.

Even among the arches of Gallia Narbonensis the arch at Orange is unique. Those at Glanum, Carpentras and Cavailon, usually dated to the Augustan period or earlier⁴⁰, are all single fornix (except for Cavailon, which was quadrifrontal). Hence, if we accept the Tiberian dating for the arch at Orange, either it is an aberration in the design of such monuments that was not repeated for a century and a half, or we are forced to assume that every trace of its genealogy has disappeared from the archaeological and artistic record. Neither is acceptable.

Design is by no means the only architectural element of the arch that casts doubt upon a Tiberian date. The double attic is also unique in a free-standing arch, although it does appear occasionally in arched gates (such as the 'Porta dei Borsari' at Verona). Its very uniqueness renders it undatable. Although the double attic is unparalleled, and gives the arch at Orange a distinct appearance of top-heaviness, with the exception of that one element, the mass and proportions of the monument are similar overall to those of the Severan arch in the Roman Forum, although the arch at Orange is on a somewhat smaller scale⁴¹. The extraordinary height of the Orange arch is due solely to the presence of the second attic.

³⁴ NASH *op. cit.* (note 30) vol. 1, 92–95 (Augustus); 401 (Drusus and Germanicus); 131–132 (Tiberius); 102–103 (Claudius); 133–135 (Titus); 114 (Domitian). – See also D. SCAGLIARINI CORLAITA, La situazione urbanistica degli archi onorari nella prima età imperiale, in: *Studi* 36–43 on the Augustan arches.

³⁵ NASH *op. cit.* (note 30) vol. 1, 118–119.

³⁶ NASH *op. cit.* (note 30) vol. 1, 450. – J. C. ANDERSON JR., *Historical Topography of the Imperial Fora*. Coll. Latomus 182 (1984) 142–143.

³⁷ NASH *op. cit.* (note 30) vol. 1, 83. – KÄHLER 388–390.

³⁸ Pompeii: KÄHLER 409–411; E. LARocca, M. and A. DE VOS, *Guida archeologica di Pompei* (1976) 107; CORLAITA *op. cit.* (note 34) in: *Studi* 44–46. – Ancona and Benevento: KÄHLER 403–406; M. E. BLAKE and D. T. BISHOP, *Roman Construction in Italy from Nerva through the Antonines* (1973) 264–265; 283–284; 293–294.

³⁹ WARD-PERKINS *op. cit.* (note 33) 394–395.

⁴⁰ GROS 55–60; KÄHLER 416–417; 421–422; GUALANDI *op. cit.* (note 11) 128–134; KLEINER *op. cit.* (note 15) 47.

⁴¹ The overall similarity in volume and proportions – except for the height given by the double attic at

Details of architectural decoration at Orange are suggestive of a later date. On the narrow faces of the arch the floor of the engaged pediment is broken back and spanned by an arch making a niche over the central panel (fig. 9–11). Such a composition with the illusion of an aedicula in the tympanum is unknown in architecture in the Julio-Claudian period or earlier. The system does occur in the fantasy architecture of Second style painting at Pompeii (e.g., Room 16 of the Villa dei Misteri) and may well be derived from theatrical *scaenae frontes*. In architecture in stone, however, such arched entablatures appear first in Hadrianic and Antonine monuments, the best known examples being the colonnade that surrounds the Canopus at Tivoli and the Temple of Hadrian at Ephesus. In later architecture we associate the design in particular with the 'peristyle' courtyard of Diocletian's palace at Split⁴². Whether the system had been employed prior to Hadrian or not, there is certainly no example in extant architecture. Hence, the use of the feature on the arch at Orange is inconsistent with a date ca. A. D. 21–27; it is rather a strong indication of a much later taste and date⁴³.

The architectural ornament of the arch as a whole is eclectic. As Gros observed, one of the most remarkable elements common to Provençal arches is the system by which the engaged columns that frame the fornices sit over individual pilasters that descend to the ground where they are finished in a true base or plinth⁴⁴. This system is different from that known on most early arches outside Provence. In the Augustan arches at Aosta, Rimini and Aix-les-Bains, the engaged columns stand on a high podium, resembling a plain socle, that runs all the way around the monument and is never broken out under the individual columns⁴⁵. Hence the arches at Orange, Glanum and

Orange – can be seen by comparing the measurements given in the table below. Sources: BRILLIANT 45–53 and pls. I; V. – L'arc I 19–40 and II, pls. 4–6. All measurements are given in meters:

	ROME	ORANGE
width of attic	23.27	19.75
depth of attic	11.20	8.05
height to top of attic	20.88	18.50
height – central fornix	12.17	8.87
height – side bays	7.69	6.48
width – central fornix	6.70	4.95
width – side bays	2.95	2.70
height of entablature	2.05	1.85
height of columns	7.07	6.40
height of capitals	1.02	0.79
height – entablature + attic	7.59	8.60

⁴² WARD-PERKINS *op. cit.* (note 33) 456 fig. 309.

⁴³ AMY seems to see no inconsistency in the presence of these arcuated entablatures on a 'Tiberian' monument, merely remarking that the form is unusual (L'arc I 22; 30); nor does GUALANDI *op. cit.* (note 11) 130–134 comment on the chronological problems presented by them. KLEINER *op. cit.* (note 15) 48 simply calls this arcuated lintel '... an extraordinarily precocious appearance of this motif in the West', echoing Amy. But the earliest comparandum available with a moderately secure date anywhere in the Roman world is the entablature of the second century Tomb of the Caetennii in the Vatican cemetery: WARD-PERKINS *op. cit.* (note 33) 1136, fig. 68.

⁴⁴ GROS 58. – KÄHLER 419. – L'arc II, pls. 108–109.

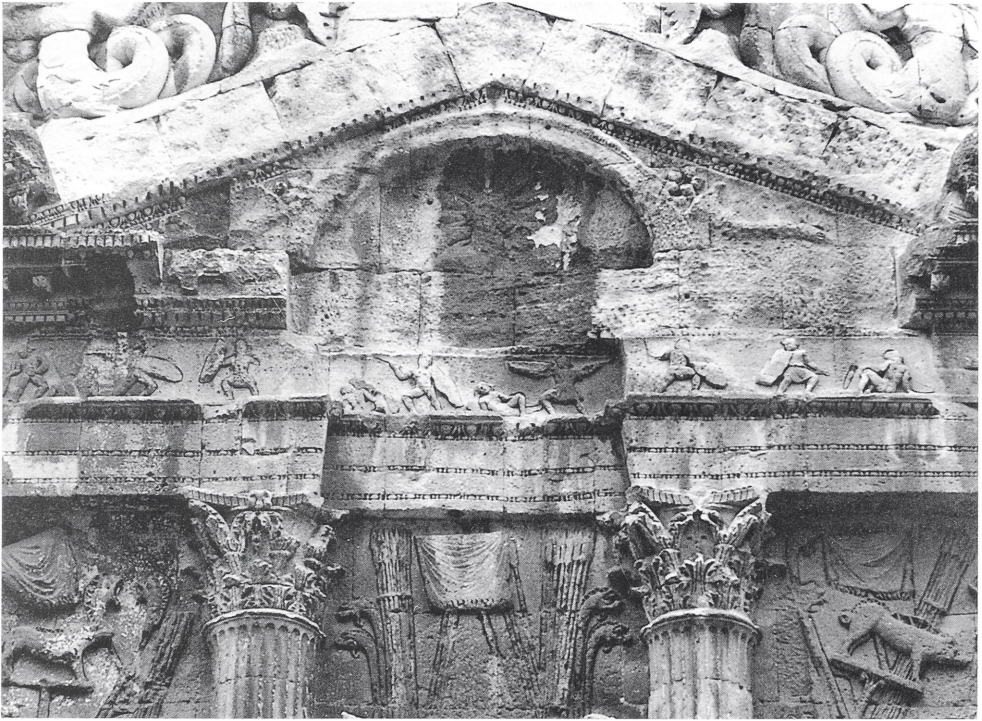
⁴⁵ GROS 58 and PRIEUR *op. cit.* (note 33) 442–450; 460–468; Cf. DUVAL in: L'arc I 155; G. A. MANSUELLI, *Archivo español de arqu.* 27, 1954, 93–94; 120–121. A compromise system seems to have been tried at Susa, where the plinth runs the length of the narrow flanks of the arch, but not across the broader faces. The articulation of the columns themselves, however, is similar to that at Aosta: PRIEUR *op. cit.* (note 33) 451–454 and pl. V.



9 Arch at Orange, narrow east face.

Carpentras (the arch at Cavaillon does not employ this system) articulate the lower part of the surface of the arch in a manner quite different from that of the majority of Augustan monuments. Perhaps more significant, the Provençal system of pilasters beneath the engaged columns is known outside Provence on only one other monument prior to the third century after Christ: the much restored 'Arco dei Gavi' at Verona. The arch of the Gavii is so heavily restored and so little studied that no secure dating is possible. Scholarly tradition assigns it to the first century after Christ, but on no certain grounds⁴⁶. It is unique among north Italian arches and as anomalous (if it

⁴⁶ KÄHLER 413 regarded the arch as Augustan, a position he fails to explain. In his earlier consideration of this arch (*Röm. Mitt.* 50, 1935, 207), Kähler avoids the questions of the plinths beneath the engaged columns and offers no absolute evidence for dating the monument.



10 Arcuated entablature on east face.

has been correctly restored) among first century monuments as is the arch at Orange. Among more securely dated arches, the system of lower column articulation used at Aosta appears on Flavian (Arch of Titus), Trajanic (the arches at Ancona and Benevento), and Antonine (the 'Porte noire' at Besançon in eastern France) monuments. The system used in Provence becomes the rule only with the arches of the reign of Septimius Severus (both in the Roman Forum and at Leptis Magna) and occurs regularly thereafter (e. g., Caracalla's arch at Djemila and his arched gateway at Reims). Again, the arch at Orange, while consistent with practice in Narbonese Gaul where all the other extant arches must be dated only by reference to the supposed date of the arch at Orange, is unique among arches when it is dated to the reign of Tiberius⁴⁷. Details of architectural decoration at Orange show the same variety. The molding profiles of the arch are flatter than those usual in Augustan monuments, but resemble moldings typical of the later second and early third centuries⁴⁸. The use of scrolled vegetation to decorate the surface of pilasters and archivolts is common to Provençal monuments but unknown at Aosta, Rimini or Susa⁴⁹; it is a standard type of decora-

⁴⁷ On the arch at Besançon, see A. GRENIER, *Manuel d'archéologie gallo-romaine* (1929) 560–564 and fig. 220; KÄHLER 415–416. – On the gate at Reims: GRENIER 564–567 and fig. 221; KÄHLER 421.

⁴⁸ Compare GROS 64 with the moldings illustrated by BRILLIANT, pls. 23 (b, c) and 25 (a, b) to observe the similarities between the Orange moldings and those of a Severan arch.

⁴⁹ GROS 64; PRIEUR *op. cit.* (note 33) pls. I–IV; KLEINER *op. cit.* (note 15) 49.



11 Arch at Orange, narrow west face.

tion in Flavian architecture and enjoyed revivals in Hadrianic and again in Severan monuments (where it appears on the *Porta Argentariorum* and the arch at Leptis)⁵⁰. Such decoration is also present on the Antonine arch at Besançon⁵¹. Augustan comparanda offered by Gros for this floral carving – such as the stucco decoration of the *oecus triclinaris* of the House of the Cryptoporticus at Pompeii or the exterior peri-

⁵⁰ P. H. V. BLANCKENHAGEN, *Flavische Architektur und ihre Dekoration* (1940) 90–92; D. E. STRONG, *Late Hadrianic Architectural Ornament*. *Papers Brit. School Rome* 31, 1953, 121; 125; 140–141. – For Severan examples: M. PALLOTTINO, *L'Arco degli Argentarii* (1946) 57–72; M. F. SQUARCIAPINO, *Sculture del Foro Severiano di Leptis Magna* (1974) 167–170; J. B. WARD-PERKINS, *Archaeology* 4, 1951, 226. – BRILLIANT, fig. 2.

⁵¹ GRENIER *op. cit.* (note 47) 563; S. REINACH, *Bas-reliefs de la Gaule romaine VII* 1 (1918) 5–28, no. 5270.

style's soffit at the temple of Bel at Palmyra – are in fact carved in lower relief than at Orange and produce less effect of chiaroscuro. The deeply cut floral patterns at Orange are much more similar to those of the later monuments, particularly the Severan examples⁵².

Decorative carving of the archivolt at Orange leaves the lower edges of the voussoirs plain, a decorative accent missing from Augustan arches and from the 'Arco dei Gavi', and which is therefore unparalleled in first century architectural ornament on commemorative arches⁵³. At Orange, as in second and third century arches, the archivolt never spring directly from the pilaster capitals (as they do at, for example, Susa and Rimini) but from richly profiled impost blocks whose decoration continues into the fornices. This decorative scheme is common in painted architecture of the Second Pompeian style, but does not occur in stone until later; the same is true of the coffering of the vaults at Orange, a feature known in Second style painting but in architecture only appearing in the later second century⁵⁴. The capitals of the Orange monument are reminiscent of those of the Tiberian temple of Castor in Rome, but such capitals recur in Hadrianic and in Severan monuments in Rome (including the Septizodium and the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Forum), where they are virtually indistinguishable from their Augustan predecessors⁵⁵. The irregular form of bead-and-reel carving on the architrave at Orange is due to the flattening necessary to attach letters of the inscription added to the entablature and so must postdate the decoration of the rest of the arch. In the decoration of the upper attic, the anthemion decorating the cyma of the socle is of a Flavian type often repeated in Severan monuments⁵⁶, and the shape of the eggs in the egg-and-dart moldings is like that of the eggs on the 'Porta dei Borsari' at Verona, which is perhaps Claudian⁵⁷.

On balance, the architectural elements – plan, elevation and proportions, decoration and carving – lead to two broad conclusions about the arch at Orange: (1) while it has clearly been altered at some point subsequent to its erection, as the history of its inscription indicates, the alterations did not significantly affect the architecture of the monument; and (2) the architecture is marked by an eclecticism that recalls not Augustan or Julio-Claudian classicizing architecture, but rather those periods in which earlier forms of decoration were revived and sometimes confused. The later part of the reign of Hadrian and from then on through the Severans seem the most likely. The evidence simply will not permit various features of the architecture of the arch to be assigned as early as A. D. 21–27. Furthermore, the elements of this arch that could perhaps be Julio-Claudian (capitals, molding profiles, some elements of floral carving) are precisely those that were commonly revived on later monuments.

⁵² Cf. GROS 70.

⁵³ GROS 60.

⁵⁴ K. SCHEFOLD, *La peinture pompéienne*. Coll. Latomus 108 (1972) 228–231; GROS 63.

⁵⁵ GROS 73 holds that the capitals are Julio-Claudian, but cf. STRONG *op. cit.* (note 50) 139–141. In a detailed review of the carved capitals of Provençal monuments, F. S. KLEINER (*Gallia Graeca, Gallia Romana and the Introduction of Classical Sculpture in Gaul*. *Am. Journal Arch.* 77, 1973, 379–390, esp. 385–386) found no late Republican, Augustan, or Julio-Claudian capitals that exactly paralleled those at Orange. Gros seems to have been unaware of Kleiner's survey.

⁵⁶ *L'arc I* 149–150; on the anthemion: CH. LEON, *Die Bauornamentik des Trajansforums* (1971) 130–132.

⁵⁷ KÄHLER 413; also H. KÄHLER, *Gnomon* 36, 1964, 825.

The architecture of the arch at Orange would best fit the series of arches that begins with the Arch of Septimius Severus in Rome and includes the North African examples, although we must certainly acknowledge the clear influence of Gallic taste in the close similarities in detail between Orange and the other Provençal arches as well as the Antonine 'Porte noire' at Besançon. The eclecticism of this arch is very much that of architecture in the later second and early third centuries after Christ, and while this is indefinite evidence for dating the monument, it is suggestive⁵⁸.

III. THE SCULPTURE

Certain elements in the sculpture that decorates the arch at Orange may offer corroboration for the dating suggested by the architecture of the monument. The similarity of many of the individual sculptural elements of the arch to those of other Provençal arches, both those still intact and those known only by fragments – such as the 'Arc admirable' and the 'Arc du Rhône' at Arles, the reliefs of the Musée Lapidaire in Vienne that may have adorned an arch on the right bank of the Gere, and the reliefs of the arch in the Rue Geline at Avignon – is clear, but the lack of any absolute dating independent of comparison to the arch at Orange renders these remains useless to an inquiry into the date of the Orange monument itself. While the style and derivation of the sculpted zones – the panels of *armilustria* and *navalia* above the side fornices, and the faces of the upper attic in particular – of the arch at Orange have caused more discussion than the other elements that need to be considered in dating this arch, certain technical features and iconographic elements remain to be discussed⁵⁹.

The panels above the side fornices on both north and south faces of the arch portray heaps of armor, undoubtedly intended to represent the *spolia* of Roman conquests in Gaul (fig. 12–16). No clear distinction is made on these panels between Gallic and Roman types of equipment, although such distinctions might be expected to have remained in Augustan or Julio-Claudian times. The armor worn by soldiers on the frieze course of the south face and on both reliefs of the upper attic is much the same as that in the *spolia* panels. The helmets are, for the most part, of the Coolus type which may have been of Italic origin⁶⁰ and later adopted in Gaul or of original Gallic invention⁶¹, but which certainly appears on Roman battle reliefs and in military sites of all dates. An officer and a centurion on the attic reliefs of the south face wear Imperial Gallic helmets with a peak-like flange across the brow and an overlapping neckguard that completely covers the ears. Such helmets cannot be positively identified with any particular type of Roman helmetry⁶². Perhaps the oddest feature of the

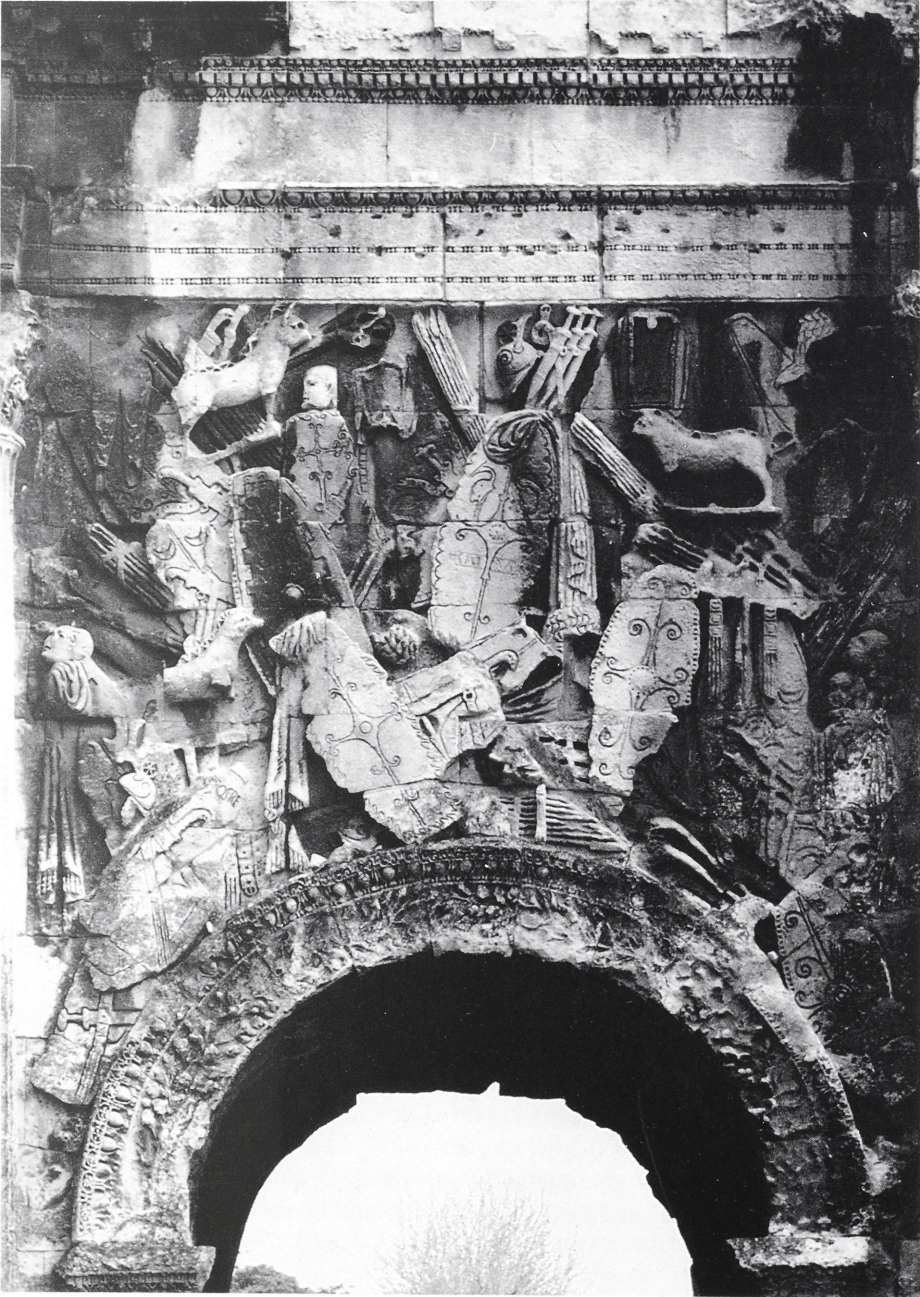
⁵⁸ STRONG *op. cit.* (note 50) 140–141, and LEON *op. cit.* (note 56) 130–131 discuss the eclecticism of architectural decoration as a characteristic of late Hadrianic, Antonine and Severan architecture.

⁵⁹ MINGAZZINI 1957, 196–201 and MINGAZZINI 1968, 163–167. *Contra*: BIANCHI-BANDINELLI *op. cit.* (note 10) 144–149. On the similar sculptural elements of fragmentary arches in Provence, see KLEINER *op. cit.* (note 15) 49–50. Recent followers of Bianchi-Bandinelli include A. V. GLADISS, *Röm. Mitt.* 79, 1974, 17–87; GUALANDI *op. cit.* (note 11) in: *Studi* 126–135; and GROS 55–58.

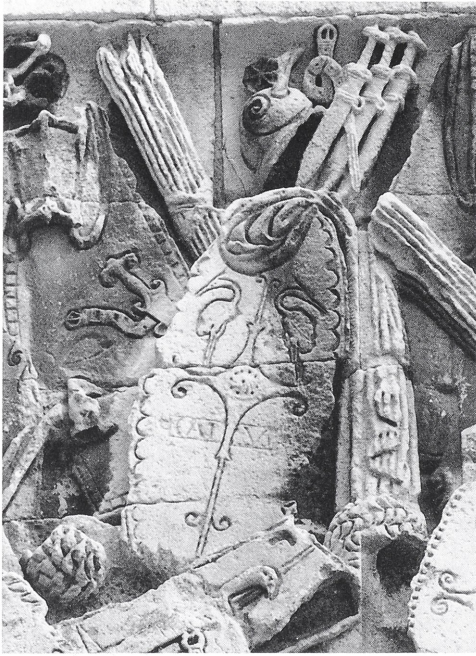
⁶⁰ L'arc I 77–88. – On the Coolus helmet as Italic or Etruscan: F. COARELLI, *Un elmo con iscrizione latina arcaica al museo di Cremona*, in: *Mélanges offerts à J. Heurgon* (1976) 157–179.

⁶¹ H. RUSSELL ROBINSON, *The Armour of Imperial Rome* (1975) 27–29.

⁶² L'arc II, pl. 28; ROBINSON *op. cit.* (note 61) 89; 151.



12 Armilustria panel, northeast side.



13 Armilustria panel, northeast side, detail.



14 Armilustria panel, southeast side, detail.

Orange helmets is a flowing horsetail crest attached to them, which is unparalleled for helmets of the first century after Christ, but is introduced later, although it never became common⁶³.

The shields shown in the *spolia* panels are of a type that was commonly regarded as Gallic; there are general, but not specific, resemblances to the types of shields carried by Gauls in Pergamene sculpture, but the resemblance to shield types shown on the 'tropaeum Traiani' at Adamklissi or on Antonine battle sarcophagi is just as strong. It should be remembered that there is absolutely no evidence of direct influence on Provençal art from Pergamon or other Greek sources, as Kleiner has demonstrated⁶⁴. The decorations on the shields include rosettes, crosses, and stars that cannot be closely paralleled on any monument earlier than the reign of Trajan, when the same devices appear on the shields of the Roman *velites* on his Column⁶⁵.

Less frequent types of armor are equally surprising if the arch is to be regarded as Tiberian. Swords, both those in the *spolia* panels and those carried by soldiers in the

⁶³ ROBINSON *op. cit.* (note 61) 140. The flowing crest is known elsewhere (for instance, on the battle reliefs of the Severan arch in Rome: see BRILLIANT pl. 47 b), but is never a common decoration.

⁶⁴ KLEINER *op. cit.* (note 55) 389–390. Cf. PICARD and HATT in: *L'arc I* 83–84. – For Gallic shields on Antonine sarcophagi, see B. SISMONDO RIDGWAY, *Gauls in Sculpture*. *Arch. News* 11, 1982, 100–102, figs. 25–27.

⁶⁵ Even PICARD and HATT admit this anachronism with a Tiberian date (*L'arc I* 84). Compare the Orange shields to those of the Column of Trajan, for instance in the panel (108) showing the death of Decebalus: F. BOBU FLORESCU, *Die Trajanssäule* (1971) pl. cxvi; also well illustrated in STRONG *op. cit.* (note 11) 150, fig. 87.



15 Armilustria panel, southeast side.

battle frieze, are those always typical of the Roman centurion. It is worth noting that the long sword (the so-called 'La Tene III' type) typical of Gauls in the first century is completely missing from the arch; hence no certain evidence for dating is provided by the swords⁶⁶. The *carnyx*, or dragon's crest trumpet, is much in evidence; and while the types of *carnices* known on Roman monuments have so far eluded all attempts at chronological arrangement (the same is true of the horses' bridles and saddles), the closest parallel to the *carnices* at Orange occurs on the fragmentary relief of *spolia* from the Severan 'Porta Argentariorum' at Rome⁶⁷.

The officer on the south attic relief at Orange appears to wear a true chain mail tunic

⁶⁶ COUJSSIN *op. cit.* (note 7) 150–152.

⁶⁷ L'arc I 86–87; compare D. HAYNES and P. HIRST, *Porta Argentariorum* (1939) 37, fig. 21. The chronological classification of *carnices* was attempted by P. LAURENT and CH. DUGAS, *Revue Études Anciennes* 9, 1907, 51 and pl. vi.

but with *pteryges* replacing the commoner short sleeves and with a broad belt. The general design of this tunic is known from military grave stelae of the first century (e.g., that of Vonatorix now in Bonn) but representations seldom clearly reveal the individual links of the chain mail⁶⁸. Chain mail is rendered at Orange by drilled holes with occasional suggestions of a circle around the hole. This is similar to the system employed on the Column of Trajan⁶⁹. Chain mail is rendered more clearly on the 'tropaeum Traiani'⁷⁰ and on the Arch of Septimius Severus in Rome, but the similarity of rendering to that at Orange is marked⁷¹. In general, the chain mail and armor shown on reliefs after the middle of the second century tend to imitate closely that shown on Trajanic and Hadrianic monuments. In the process of copying, however, it becomes increasingly inaccurate in the third and fourth centuries⁷². The auxiliaries of the Arch of Septimius Severus at Rome have equipment similar to that seen on monuments of the early second century, and there chain mail is represented by series of holes drilled over the surface of the shirt with a ring cut around the circumference of each hole. The same equipment, shown in much the same manner, appears on the carvings at Orange⁷³. The similarity of the representation of armor and equipment at Orange to that of Trajanic and later monuments, and the lack of any convincing parallel prior to the second century, are abundantly clear.

Directly above the four panels of armor were placed panels, of which three survive, that show the spoils of naval warfare: ships' prows, aplustria, oars, masts and mast-heads, keels and so forth (fig. 17–20). The appearance of these has caused perplexity since no one has advanced a convincing theory to explain why such naval *spolia* should appear at all on such a monument, particularly since the Roman navy was never involved in an important engagement after Actium (it tended to be used only for transport and supply). Despite the eagerness of scholars to connect the arch with Augustan or Tiberian events, it has usually been concluded that these naval *spolia* represent no particular event but are intended, along with the armor, to be symbolic of conquest on land and sea by the emperor⁷⁴. Clues for dating the *navalia* are few.

⁶⁸ ROBINSON *op. cit.* (note 61) 158–159, pl. 452 (the Vonatorix stele).

⁶⁹ FLORESCU *op. cit.* (note 65) pls. xxix; xxxi; xli; cxvi.

⁷⁰ F. BOBU FLORESCU, Monumentul de la Adamklissi Tropaeum Traiani (1960) 406–412, figs. 180–184; I. A. RICHMOND, Papers Brit. School Rome 35, n. s. 22, 1967, 34–35. – JOHN W. EADIE, The Development of Roman Mailed Cavalry. Journal Rom. Stud. 57, 1967, esp. 167, argues that chain mail was only introduced into the Roman army during the reign of Hadrian, and that the 'tropaeum Traiani' is therefore a clumsy anachronism. His argument is rejected by ROBINSON *op. cit.* (note 61) 169, with strong evidence to the contrary. True chain mail does seem to appear on a late Etruscan ash urn in Volterra (GUARNACCI mus. no. 270 = TLE 390) well before the time of Hadrian, but the date of its adoption by the Roman cavalry remains uncertain; the evidence of the Volterra urn was brought to my attention by Prof. E. H. Richardson.

⁷¹ See L'arc II, pl. 28, or ROBINSON *op. cit.* (note 61) fig. 31; compare to BRILLIANT, pls. 78c and 81.

⁷² ROBINSON *op. cit.* (note 61) 170 and pls. 476–479, fig. 177. Compare to earlier tunics also illustrated by ROBINSON, pls. 463–470.

⁷³ L'arc II, pl. 28. There have been few if any finds of true chain mail that can be securely dated before the reign of Hadrian. Literary descriptions are mostly of leather tunics with attached chains (e.g., VERG. Aen. 3, 467) during the first century; but two lines from SILIUS ITALICUS (Pun. 5, 140–141) may imply that true chain mail could be seen among the Roman cavalry by the time of Trajan: *Loricam induitur tortos huic nexilis hamos / Ferro squama rudi, permistoque asperat auro.*

⁷⁴ DUVAL in: L'arc I 94–106, esp. 95–96. At the same time Duval makes the assumption that naval symbols



16 Armilustria panel, northwest side.

Naval motifs are uncommon in Roman art. Naval *spolia* are certainly known from the frieze of the portico that surrounded the temple of Athena Polias at Pergamon but those *navalia* are utterly dissimilar in detail to those of the arch at Orange⁷⁵. The closest parallels in sculpture are a second century relief in the Museo Torlonia that shows the arrival of ships at the port of Ostia⁷⁶, some fragments from an arch dis-

would not have appeared on monuments after the Augustan period. If the symbolism of the naval *spolia* is that of general conquest, his position is untenable since various emperors portrayed themselves as conquerors; if the symbolism is specific, Duval is unable to attach the *navalia* to any event during the reign or previous military career of Tiberius. Besides, naval spoils do occur, although totally irrelevant, on the Imperial period trophy at St. Bertrand-de-Comminges deep in continental Gaul: ESPERANDIEU XI (1907) nos. 7654, 7656.

⁷⁵ L'arc I 96, fig. 42. – A. CONZE, *Alterthümer von Pergamon. Das Heiligtum der Athena Polias* (1885) pl. XLIV; J. CHARBONNEAUX, R. MARTIN and F. VILLARD, *Grèce hellénistique* (1973) 58, fig. 55.

⁷⁶ L'arc I, fig. 43.

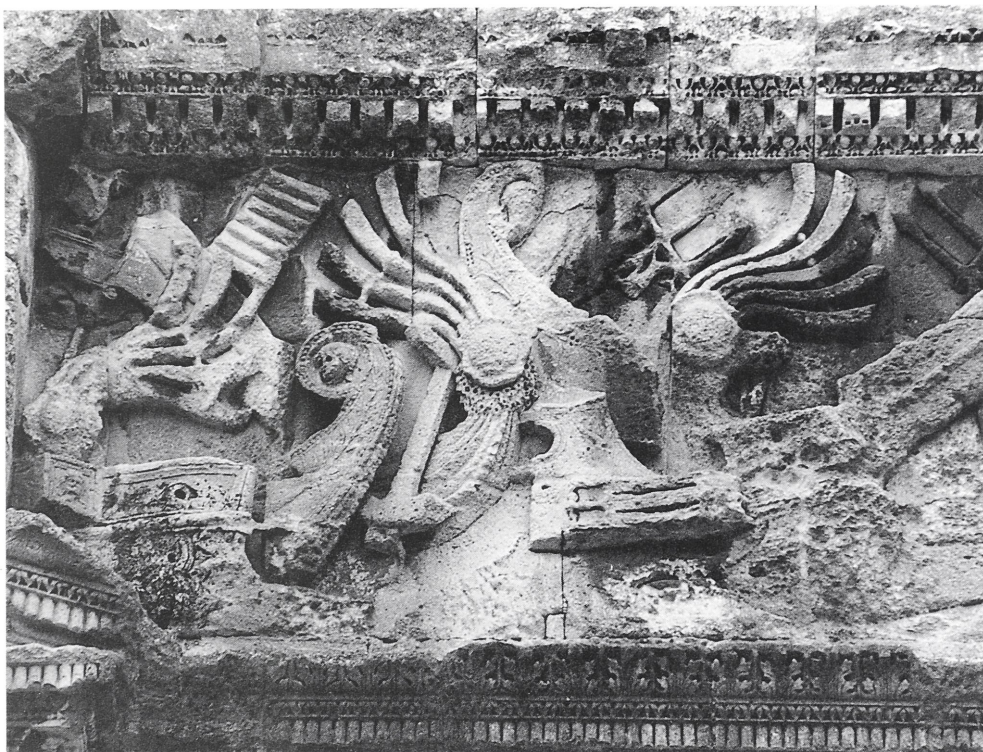


17 Arch at Orange, southeast face, detail.

covered at Poitiers and dated uncertainly to the late first or early second centuries on which the ships' prows are very similar in detail to examples at Orange⁷⁷, and the four well known plaques of naval *spolia* in the Museo Capitolino in Rome. On these last the forms of prows, keels, oars and anchors are all similar to those at Orange. These plaques have been dated by scholars to the reigns of Trajan or Hadrian, but the discovery of a fragment of the same frieze in the Porticus of Octavia during excavations in the 1930s has led to a general reassessment of their dating⁷⁸. Duval thought

⁷⁷ ESPERANDIEU, I, no. 1405.

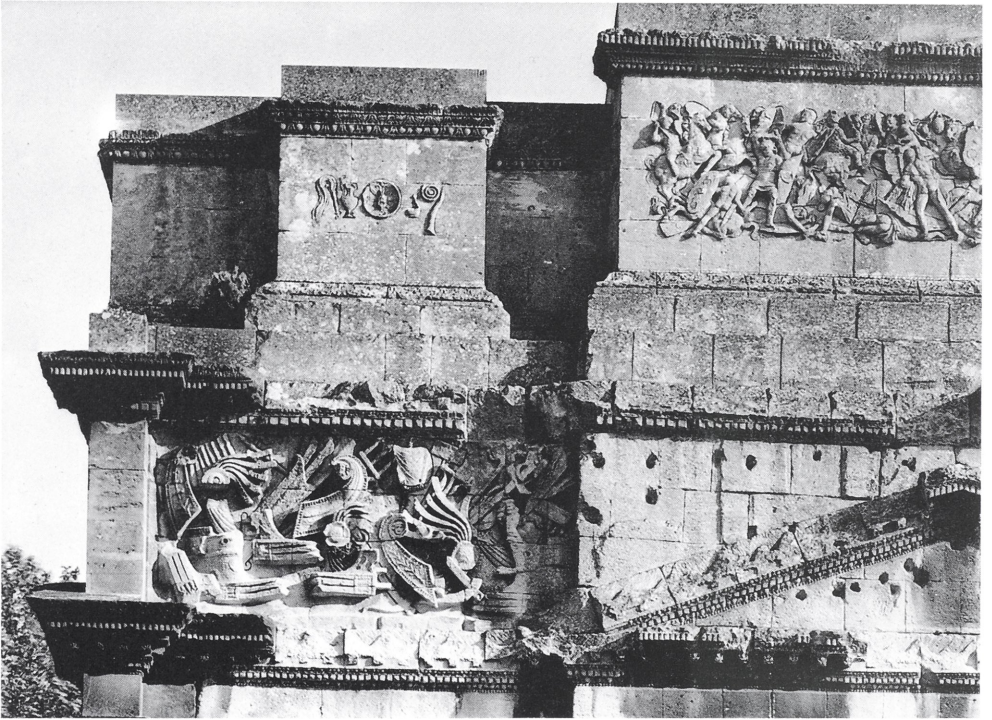
⁷⁸ F. MOLL, *Das Schiff in der bildenden Kunst* (1929) pl. B-iv, no. 119; J. CROUS, *Ein antiker Fries bei Sebastiano del Piombo*. *Röm. Mitt.* 55, 1940, 65-69, figs. 2, 3, pl. I, both favored an early second cen-



18 Navalia panel, southeast side.

that their similarity to the Orange examples should demand a re-dating of them to the early first century, but the patent insecurity of the dating of the arch itself renders his argument doubtful. Rather the Capitoline reliefs, whether Augustan or later, should provide nothing more than a *terminus post quem* for the naval carvings of the arch. Two further elements common to both *armilustria* and *navalia* at Orange are remarkable. First, the manner, in which these trophies fill the irregular fields provided for them on the arch all the way out to and over the edges of the field (giving the impression that there are no frames for the panels at all) is surprising. In the *armilustria* panels especially, the space in which they are set is an odd one and could have been filled with architectural decoration, as was the frame of the central fornix. Instead, those spaces above the side fornices are filled with arms, and with *navalia* above them, which creates a tension between central and side arches. The lack of a frame for such *spolia* panels is not classical. The trophies that decorated the temenos of Athena Polias at Pergamon are carefully and neatly framed⁷⁹ and those panels seem to provide the pattern for such Roman trophies as those on the base of the Column of

79 See CONZE *op. cit.* (note 75) pl. XLIV; CHARBONNEAUX et al. *op. cit.* (note 75) fig. 55; L'arc I, fig. 42.



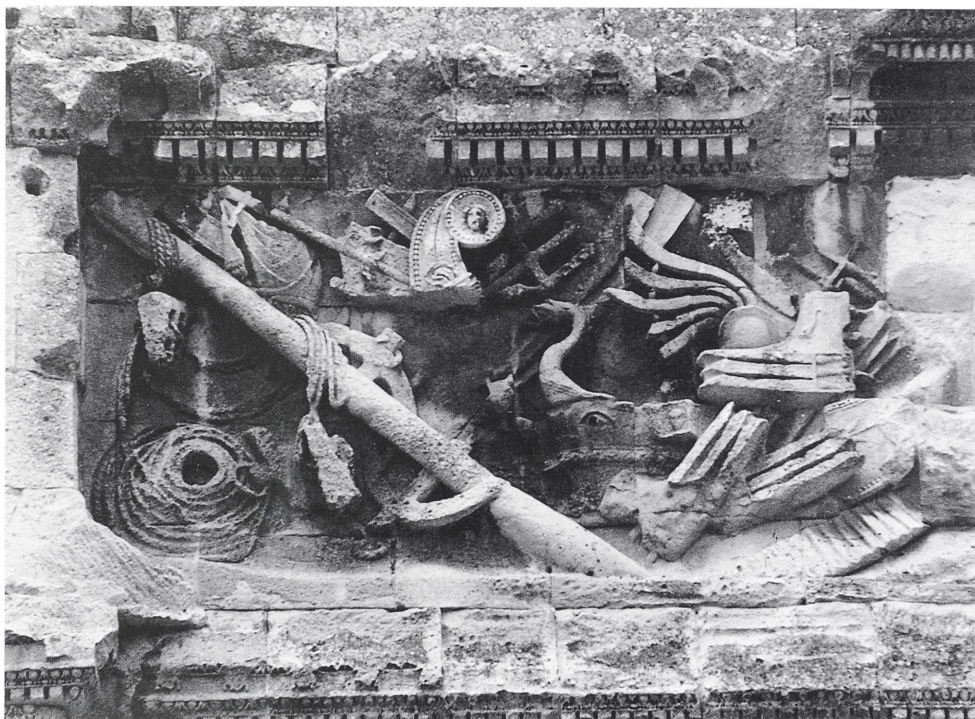
19 Navalia panel, northeast side.

Trajan. On the Trajanic monument all four sides are neatly divided into two zones to make rectangular panels like those at Pergamon, and many of the elements clearly rest on the ground lines in both upper and lower zones⁸⁰. Indeed, so great is the semblance of orderliness that the artist may well have copied them from armor actually piled up in these arrangements. On the arch at Orange, both in the *armilustria* and in the *navalia* panels, such orderly representation is lacking; the elements in the reliefs are piled helter-skelter, one on top of the other and giving an overall effect of a random pitching up and down. Some elements even seem to disappear a bit at the edges (fig. 12; 15; 16). The confusion recalls the multiple planes and superimposition of elements common to Antonine and later sarcophagi and other late battle reliefs⁸¹. Second, the *spolia* panels are all carved in extraordinarily high relief. The trophies from Pergamon, the *navalia* panels in the Museo Capitolino, and the arms on the base of the Column of Trajan are carved in relatively low relief on a smooth ground⁸². The extraordinary depth of the carving at Orange provides strong effects of chiaroscuro to the panels which is emphasized by deliberate roughening of the relief

⁸⁰ FLORESCU *op. cit.* (note 65) pls. B, C, D, E.

⁸¹ RIDGWAY *op. cit.* (note 64) 100–101, figs. 25–27.

⁸² See notes 78, 79, 80 above.



20 Navalia panel, northwest side.

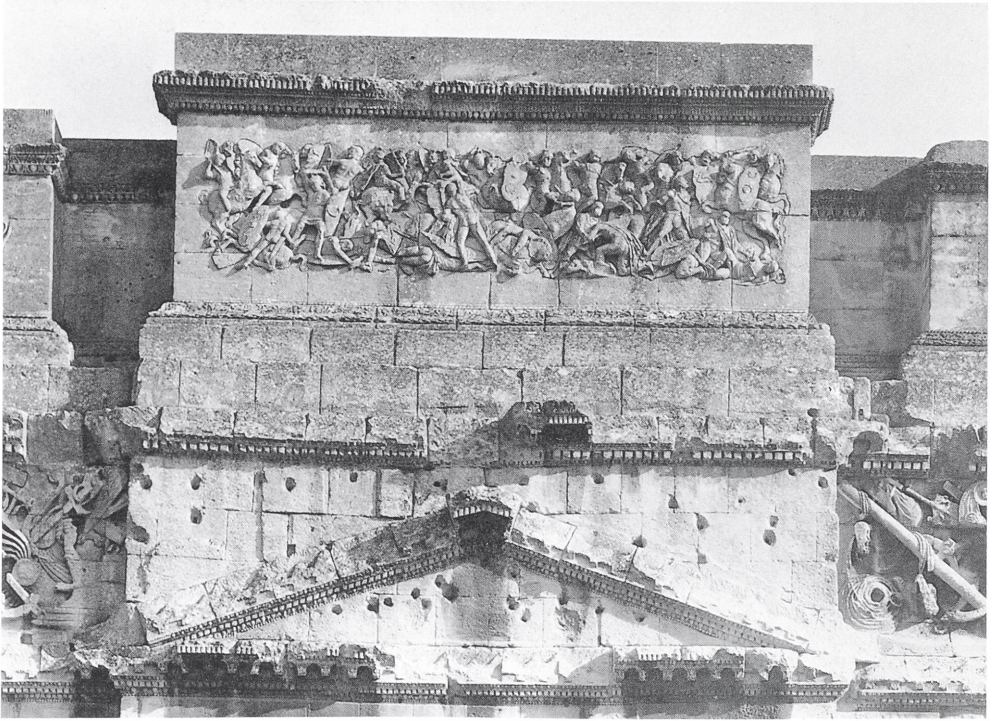
background, presumably to catch and cast shadows. This rough ground in turn causes the arms themselves to stand out. The shields and oars with their decoration simply incised appear flat and bright, while the helmets, animal standards and ships' prows are strongly plastic. The contrast is striking (see fig. 12 and 18) and dramatic. Clearly, this is unlike the reliefs of the Column of Trajan; it is even more unlike the aesthetic construction of Julio-Claudian relief⁸³. The closest parallel can be found in the similar roughening of the background in the panoramic battle reliefs of the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum, although there the idea was probably to suggest stony ground⁸⁴.

Technical arguments concerning the Orange reliefs have been generally ignored in the dispute over the place these reliefs should occupy in the history of sculpture in Gallia Narbonensis, and in Roman sculpture as a whole. The technical problems can be quickly pointed out and assessed (as above), but the larger questions must also be addressed.

First, and this point is accepted by proponents of all the various datings for the arch,

⁸³ G. M. KOEPEL, *The Grand Pictorial Tradition of Roman Historical Representation during the Early Empire*, in: ANRW II 12, 1 (1982) 507–535.

⁸⁴ BRILLIANT, pls. 60a; 61; 66a; 67; 69a; 82a; 83b; 86a; 87 all show this technique of roughening the background.



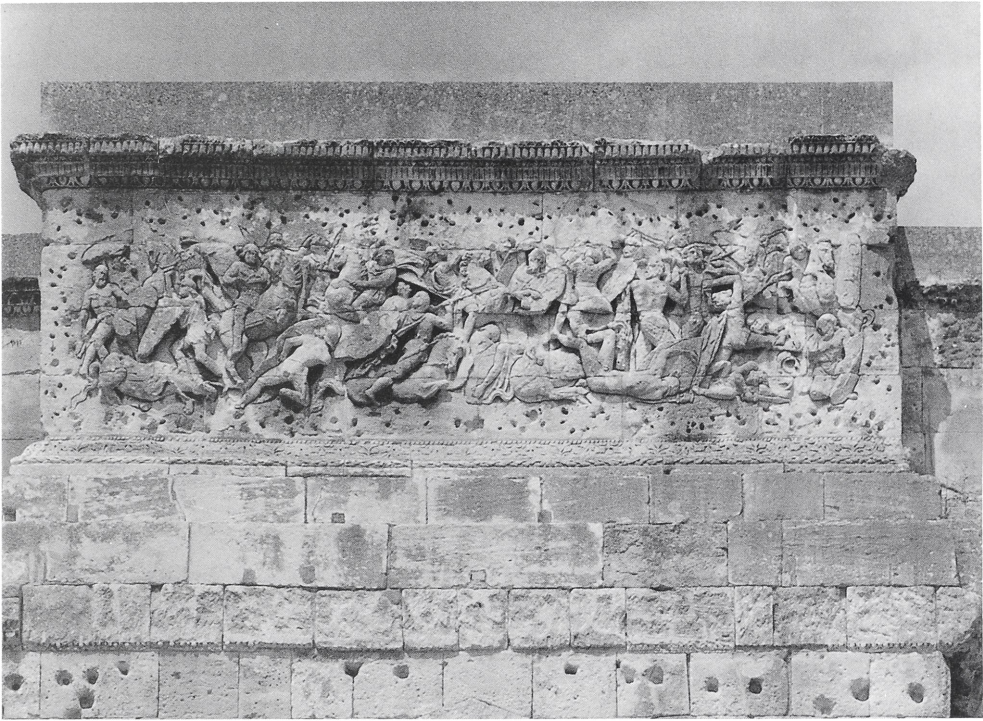
21 Battle reliefs of the north attic.

the composition of the high relief Galatomachies on the upper attic (see fig. 21–22) is clearly derived from the hellenistic, more specifically Pergamene, tradition for Gallic battle scenes. This is no surprise. A glance at hellenistic sarcophagi from central Italy, or at typical Pergamene Galatomachy scenes, that various scholars have compared to the Orange battle reliefs⁸⁵, shows that while there are obvious similarities in the basic composition of the scenes, the densely packed and contorted figures of the Orange panels are not particularly like those in Italian or Greek hellenistic battle scenes, although there can be no question that the Gallic reliefs ultimately derive from sources such as these⁸⁶. But the details of the sculptural composition at Orange are quite different. In relief of the first century after Christ through the reign of Trajan, figures tend to appear in one plane, or in two sharply distinguished from one another. The figure scenes of the Ara Pacis Augustae, of the Cancelleria reliefs, of the arch at Benevento and of the Column of Trajan are all good examples of this point. The ground line or lines are usually very clear on these monuments⁸⁷. Furthermore, superimposition does not occur on Augustan or Julio-Claudian relief (or in other art of the period except for the Gemma Augustea). It is first used extensively on the Column of

⁸⁵ Italian sarcophagi: BIANCHI-BANDINELLI *op. cit.* (note 10) 143–147, fig. 135; also GUALANDI *op. cit.* in: Studi 134 and note 91. – Pergamene comparanda: L'arc I 117–135; COUISSIN *op. cit.* (note 7) 29–54.

⁸⁶ L'arc I 133–135; good examples are given by RIDGWAY *op. cit.* (note 64) 101–103.

⁸⁷ KOEPEL *op. cit.* (note 83) figs. 7; 10; 15.



22 Battle reliefs of the south attic.

Trajan but with a clear separation of the planes still preserved, even to the extent of showing the feet of some figures in the rear plane⁸⁸. Beginning with the Column of Marcus Aurelius and the battle sarcophagi of Antonine date, no clear distinction is made between planes. Hence multiple planes seem to appear in the same composition, frequently enhanced by superimposition⁸⁹. This tendency towards a sometimes bewildering number of planes and of superimposed figures within the same scene can also be seen on the reliefs of the 'Porte noire' at Besançon (usually dated to the reign of Marcus Aurelius), and even more clearly on the relief panels of the Severan arch in the Roman Forum⁹⁰. On the attic panels of the arch at Orange there is a deliberately complicated series of superimposed planes characterized by an apparent confusion of arms, legs and torsoes of warriors. Such a composition is clearly Antonine or Severan or later.

Individual figures and groups on the battle panels at Orange may be compared to those on the Column of Marcus Aurelius and on Antonine sarcophagi. On the south attic frieze a warrior has fallen from his horse and lies, back turned to the viewer, with his legs flung over the back of the fallen horse; this figure is very similar to one

⁸⁸ FLORESCU *op. cit.* (note 65) pls. V; XIII; XXXIX; XLI; LXXXVII show this arrangement clearly.

⁸⁹ RIDGWAY *op. cit.* (note 64) figs. 25–27; BRILLIANT, fig. 70 for Antonine sarcophagi. BRILLIANT, figs. 65; 83; 94; 96 for examples from the Column of Marcus Aurelius.

⁹⁰ Besançon: ESPERANDIEU I, no. 1405. – Severan arch in Rome: BRILLIANT, pls. 61; 88; 90a.

on a third century sarcophagus now in the Villa Borghese⁹¹. The pose of a second warrior on the south frieze, turned in profile to the viewer and striding forward, is repeated exactly on the third century Buoncompagni Ludovisi sarcophagus⁹². On the north frieze, just right of center, a nude warrior with his back turned to the viewer can be seen; a figure in the same pose appears on the Ammendola sarcophagus in the Museo Capitolino, dated to ca. A. D. 160⁹³. The same similarity holds true of larger compositional groups on the friezes at Orange. A study of the figures in the north attic panel reveals close parallels to groups on the well known Battle sarcophagus of the Villa Doria Pamphilj, on which the projection of human figures to the foreground of the relief, especially at the bottom, is generally considered an Antonine characteristic⁹⁴. Scene 99 of the Column of Marcus Aurelius is strikingly similar to the composition of the south attic frieze at Orange, and it has been shown also to be much like the battle panels of the Severan arch in the Roman Forum⁹⁵. Other details in the Orange battle panels, such as the use of a single drilled hole to represent the pupil of the eye of the figures, appear first in the reliefs of the Column of Marcus Aurelius and become common subsequently⁹⁶.

In fact, the sculptures on the arch at Orange all present significant technical and stylistic difficulties if assigned the traditional date of ca. A. D. 21–27. Nor, in fact, does such a dating permit the sculpture of the monument to fit easily into the history of sculpture in Gallia Narbonensis, insofar as that can be ascertained. There is no real evidence in the monuments of Roman Provence for any direct importation or use of Greek hellenistic models in art or architecture; indeed the evidence directly refutes the classification of Narbonese art as a derivative either of Greek models by way of Italy or as an art based directly upon importations from the Greek world⁹⁷. Once it is clear that Narbonese sculptors were not following models from Pergamon or from central Italy but rather were participating in the general tradition of Galatomachies inherited by Rome, and thence the Empire, from Pergamon, it becomes proper to search for the closest formal comparanda available in all Roman sculpture for the Orange panels and to try to date them on the basis of stylistic and compositional comparison. Unless artists in Gallia Narbonensis anticipated, by a century or more, the basic repertoire and technical vocabulary of Roman official relief⁹⁸ the battle reliefs and the *spolia* panels of the arch at Orange ought to date from the mid-second century after Christ or later. This is perfectly consonant with what we know of influences on Roman Gaul, and on Provence in particular, during that time, for both in the pot-

⁹¹ See L'arc I 121–c, no. 14 and II, pl. 100b. Compare to Villa Borghese sarcophagus in B. ANDREAE, *Motivgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den röm. Schlachtsarkophagen* (1956) 28–30.

⁹² L'arc I 121–c, no. 11 and II, pl. 98. Compare to Buoncompagni Ludovisi sarcophagus in H. v. HEINTZE, *Röm. Mitt.* 64, 1957, 69–91.

⁹³ L'arc I 120–c, no. 10 and II, pl. 98. Compare to Ammendola sarcophagus in RIDGWAY *op. cit.* (note 64) fig. 26.

⁹⁴ L'arc I 121–a and II, pl. 98. Compare to Pamphilj sarcophagus in R. CALZA, *Antichità di Villa Doria Pamphilj* (1977) 101 (no. 233) and fig. 233 a–c; also to BRILLIANT 227, fig. 70.

⁹⁵ L'arc I 120–a and II, pl. 97. Compare Column scene 99 in BRILLIANT, fig. 94, and panels of the Severan arch, pls. 60a; 61.

⁹⁶ MINGAZZINI 1968, 166 and pl. 61; BRILLIANT, pl. 62b.

⁹⁷ KLEINER *op. cit.* (note 55) esp. 388–390.

⁹⁸ BIANCHI-BANDINELLI *op. cit.* (note 10) 139–141.

tery industry and in sculpture there is clear evidence of a strong influx of techniques and styles derived from the hellenistic repertoire⁹⁹. Dating of the arch at Orange to the Antonine period or later is also likely in view of the well documented Pergamene 'renaissance' in the Rome of Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. This rebirth of interest in what was by then an old-fashioned tradition deeply affected both the style and the content of Severan art¹⁰⁰. The arch at Orange is as clear a demonstration of this phenomenon as the other great Antonine and Severan monuments of Rome and of the provinces. Certainly the weight of the evidence for the sculpture of the arch points toward such a late date.

IV. HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

Once the likelihood of a date for the arch at Orange in the later second or early third century is established, it is necessary to investigate the history of Gallia Narbonensis during those times to discover if there are any particularly likely occasions on which such a commemorative arch might have been erected at Arausio¹⁰¹. The two major events of the period that might have inspired such a dedication are (1) Marcus Aurelius' defense of eastern Gaul, which was probably the inspiration for the 'Porte noire' at Vesontio (modern Besançon), an event not directly related to Gallia Narbonensis however; and (2) Septimius Severus' massive military expedition from Rome to Britain in A. D. 207/208. The entire Imperial family accompanied the aging Septimius on this expedition, and the area around Arausio would have made an ideal staging place for the immense undertaking (DIO CASS. 77,11,1-12,5; HEROD. 3,14,2-3). While no ancient source gives the exact route of the army, the great road through Provence and north up the valley of the Rhône was surely the most plausible for so massive a force¹⁰². Some corroboration is provided by a gold medallion of A. D. 207/208 that was struck to celebrate the *adventus* of the emperor to Gaul¹⁰³. The rapidity of the

⁹⁹ M. POBÉ, *The Art of Roman Gaul* (1961) 47-49; A. KING in: HENIG, *op. cit.* (note 6) 184-186.

¹⁰⁰ The evidence is collected by CH. PICARD, *Problèmes de l'art sévérien. Hommages à M. Renard* 3. Coll. Latomus 103 (1961) 485-496. This has been accepted by BRILLIANT 31-34; J. B. WARD-PERKINS, *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 37, 1951, 269-304; and most recently by RIDGWAY *op. cit.* (note 64) 102-103.

¹⁰¹ MINGAZZINI 1957, 199 and 1968, 167 suggested either the early part of the reign of Commodus (as a commemoration of M. Aurelius' campaigns), or early in the reign of Septimius Severus (to commemorate his defeat of Clodius Albinus in A. D. 197). Neither suggestion is supported by our sources: Commodus had opposed and just reversed M. Aurelius' Danubian policy and was hardly likely to have celebrated it in a commemorative monument; Severus was equally unlikely to have commemorated at Arausio (which had probably not supported Albinus) the crushing of Gallic resistance to his rule, in a battle at Lugdunum.

¹⁰² A. R. BIRLEY, *Septimius Severus: the African Emperor* (1971) 190-191; cf. H. HALFMANN, *Itinera principum* (1986) 219; 223.

¹⁰³ F. GNECCHI, *I medaglioni romani descritti ed illustrati* 3 (1912) 73. Inscription = ADVENT AUG GALL PONT MAX TR POT XV COS III, which renders a date of A. D. 207. The medallion showed Severus on a horse, preceded by a soldier carrying a lance and accompanied by two more soldiers carrying insignia. The walls of a city could be seen, and a river flowed beneath the horse's hooves. The medallion, now lost, is accepted as genuine by MATTINGLY (*BMC Rom. Emp.* V, pp. clxxv-clxxvi), by I. A. RICHMOND (*Roman Britain* [1963] 57-58), and by BIRLEY *op. cit.* (note 102) 253. There is also a coin of Geta of A. D. 208 that seems to corroborate this, as it records the (*pro*)FECTION AUG (*usti*), which must be the departure for Britain (*BMC Rom. Emp.* V, p. 386, no. 169).

subsequent march to the English channel (HEROD. 3,14,3) also suggests that the most direct road was taken, and that road led through Arausio and up the Rhône valley.

This *adventus* of Severus and his family to Gallia Narbonensis on their way to pacify the barbaric Picts and strengthen the borders of the Empire would certainly have been a suitable occasion for the dedication of a commemorative arch to celebrate the contribution made by Arausio, as military staging area, to the Imperial expedition. The mixture of traditional Galatomachies on the entablature and attic reliefs with the specific references in the *armilustria* panels to armed barbarians previously defeated by Roman might would neatly recall past Roman triumphs and at the same time celebrate the advantages won by the Gauls from Romanization, advantages now to be inflicted upon Scotland. Furthermore, the inclusion of the naval *spolia* makes more sense in this particular historical context than in any other for, although the navy's role in the expedition was minor, it was essential both for transport across the English Channel and supply, and hence naval trophies would be appropriate to the arch. As a commemoration of the role played by the city of Arausio in the Imperial expedition, this occasion for the erection of a commemorative arch is almost parallel to the circumstances under which the city of Ancona erected an arch during the reign of Trajan, and it is surely no coincidence that at Ancona, as at Orange, the sculptural program of the arch is made up entirely of genre scenes rather than the specific historical representations of triumphal arches such as the Severan arch in the Roman Forum¹⁰⁴. A final consideration for the Gauls may have been to extend an olive branch to the now well-entrenched Septimius, who had had to win his right to absolute power by subduing a rebellion in part Gallic¹⁰⁵.

Hence, we may hypothesize the vowing of the arch in A. D. 207/208, as soon as the Imperial expedition had departed Arausio, and assume its completion and dedication before Septimius' death at York in A. D. 211 (SHA Severus 19,1–2 and 24,2). The arch's decoration aligned Severus' anticipated conquest of the Picts with Tiberius' defeat of Sacrovir, and with Caesar's expedition to Britain. Such reminiscences appear in Severan propaganda of every sort, and are often handled no less blatantly than on the arch at Orange.

The test of this hypothesis must be: can the events subsequent to the erection of the arch offer any explanation for the removal of the frieze inscription and the substitution of another, made of bronze letters hastily clamped onto the architrave? On this point the historical record offers an important possibility. After Septimius' death, his two sons, Caracalla and Geta, accepted a poor settlement with the Picts and returned rapidly to Rome, travelling through Gaul (HEROD. 3,15,8). Their father's body was brought back more slowly and was much revered by the provincials on its return journey (SHA Severus 24,2). Only a few months later, in A. D. 212, the rivalry between the two princes came to a bloody end with the murder and *damnatio memoriae* of Geta at Rome. Dio (78,12,6) describes the savage and bloodthirsty obliteration of

¹⁰⁴ On the occasion for, and sculptural program of, the arch at Ancona, see KÄHLER 403–404; and CIL IX 5894 (its dedicatory inscription).

¹⁰⁵ As suggested by BIRLEY *op. cit.* (note 102) 253.

Geta's memory, which is also given mute testimony by the mutilation of his face and figure on monuments such as the *Porta Argentariorum*¹⁰⁶.

Among other symptoms of Caracalla's pathological determination to stamp out the memory of his brother, several sources mention his decision to murder a number of provincial governors whom he suspected of loyalty to Geta (e.g. HEROD. 4,6,4). In particular, Caracalla decided to ascertain the loyalty of Gallia Narbonensis to himself and set off for Gaul shortly after Geta's murder, probably in the late summer or autumn of A. D. 212, and there executed the *proconsul Narbonensis* for disloyalty. This caused an uproar in the province and Caracalla was resented as a tyrant (SHA Caracalla 5,1–3). Although the *Vita Caracallae* is among the more notoriously corrupt lives in the *Historia Augusta*, this event can be corroborated by external evidence and so is probably factual¹⁰⁷. Herodian's point about the murder of provincial governors (4,6,4) probably refers to the same incident. Caracalla's *profectio* from Rome is confirmed by a coin issue of A. D. 212¹⁰⁸; his presence in Gaul in 212–213 is recorded on an inscription (CIL VIII 4196–7) and by a law, preserved in the Justinianic Code, which was issued by Caracalla on 5 December 212 at Carnuntum (Cod. Iust. 4,29,1). Thus Gallia Narbonensis must have felt the full weight of his paranoia and despotic cruelty.

Even if Caracalla had forgotten the commemorative arch recently erected at Arausio, which recorded in symbolic sculpture, and probably with an explicit inscription, the expedition to Scotland of Septimius, Caracalla and Geta, certainly the people of Arausio would have realized as soon as they heard of the *damnatio memoriae* that Geta's name had to be removed from the inscription of the arch. This alteration must have become an urgent priority – indeed must have been undertaken in panic – when Caracalla's vengeful *profectio* toward Gaul became known. The old inscription may well have been obliterated and the frieze scraped smooth as quickly as possible. A new, perhaps temporary, inscription in bronze letters could have been substituted, held to the architrave (hastily planed to receive it) by clamps alone. The removal of the entire inscription, not just the name of Geta, would have been required by Septimius' deification and may presumably have been undertaken at the same time. Rapid action of this sort is certainly plausible in the circumstances, and it may have saved the people of Arausio from unpleasant reprisals.

While not susceptible of absolute proof through more documentary evidence or direct testimonia, the historical reconstruction of events proposed above has three major virtues: (1) it dispenses with fruitless attempts to reconstruct the text of the arch's inscription from the confusing evidence of clamp holes, (2) it allows the extant and observable evidence of the architecture and sculpture of the monument the weight it deserves in assigning a date, and (3) it provides a specific historical context in which both the arch's dedication and the reasons for its alteration can be explained in harmony with the known history of Arausio and of Gallia Narbonensis.

¹⁰⁶ HAYNES and HIRST *op. cit.* (note 67) 33–39.

¹⁰⁷ R. SYME, *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta* (1968) 34–38, indicates that the *Vita Caracallae* descends into fantasy only after 5, 1–3; T. D. BARNES, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta*. Coll. Latomus 155 (1978) 45; 98 adjudges this passage acceptable as historical evidence; HALFMANN *op. cit.* (note 102) 223; 225.

¹⁰⁸ BMC Rom. Emp. V, p. 373, nos. 95–98; pl. 55, nos. 11 and 12.

Investigation of available historical evidence, then, has confirmed the apparent date implied by the architecture and sculpture of the arch at Orange. Further, assignment of the monument to the latter part of the reign of Septimius Severus, A. D. 207/208–211, with alteration of the inscription done hurriedly in A. D. 212, permits the historical context to offer an explanation for many of the anomalies of the arch. This conclusion appears to be required by the majority of the evidence, and leaves the fewest contradictions unexplained. If this dating of the arch at Orange is accepted, it may turn one of the most embarrassing monuments of Roman art into one of the most valuable monuments of the art and architecture of the Severan age, and of the history of Roman art and architecture in Gaul during the later Empire.

Abbreviations

L'arc I-II	R. AMY, P. M. DUVAL, J. FORMIGÉ, J.-J. HATT, A. PIGANOL and G.-CH. PICARD, <i>L'Arc d'Orange</i> 1–2. Gallia, Suppl. 15 (1962).
BRILLIANT	R. BRILLIANT, <i>The Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum</i> . Mem. Am. Acad. Rome 29 (1967).
CHATELAIN	L. CHATELAIN, <i>Les monuments antiques d'Orange</i> (1908).
GROS	P. GROS, <i>Pour une chronologie des arcs de triomphe de Gaule Narbonnaise</i> . Gallia 37, 1979, 55–83.
KÄHLER	H. KÄHLER, RE VII A (1948) 373–493, figs. 1–24 s.v. Triumphbogen.
MINGAZZINI 1957	P. MINGAZZINI, <i>Sulla datazione di alcuni monumenti comunemente assegnati ad età augustea</i> . Arch. Class. 9, 1957, 193–205.
MINGAZZINI 1968	P. MINGAZZINI, <i>La datazione dell'arco di Orange</i> . Röm. Mitt. 75, 1968, 163–167. 163–167.
Studi	G. A. MANSUELLI, M. PENSA, D. S. CORLAITA, S. DE MARIA and G. GUALANDI, <i>Studi sull'arco onorario romano</i> . Studia Arch. 21 (1979).

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