

THE CLASSICAL TROPHY:  
FROM RITUAL OFFERING TO REGAL ORNAMENT

by

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## THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: The Classical Trophy: From Ritual Offering to Regal Ornament

This thesis examines the transformations of meaning, function, and variations of anthropomorphic forms as the trophy evolves from its Greek origins on the battlefield to its broader use on numerous monuments, royal palaces, and civil buildings throughout Europe. The ephemeral nature of the materials used in its creation, the contingency of its location, and its ritualistic character are integral components of the trophy in ancient Greece. In its development over time, however, the use and meaning of the trophy became increasingly fluid, taking on a variety of forms that plot on a spectrum of meanings and functions that ranges from the specific to the generic. The anthropomorphic trophy, still a strong and prevailing symbol of victory today, eventually became a faint echo of what it once was, expanding far beyond the strictly defined votive of the past.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The word *trophy*<sup>1</sup> originates with the Greek *τρόπαιον* (*tropaion*), also known as *tropaeum* in Latin. *Τρόπαιον* stems from the Greek root *τροπή* meaning *turn*.<sup>2</sup> The term was applied to the temporary structures erected by Greek soldiers on the battlefield to indicate where a defeated enemy had turned to flee, marking the place where victory had been achieved.<sup>3</sup> The original trophies were constructed by nailing or hanging a fallen soldier's armor to a tree trunk or a wooden stake that was placed atop a mound; a breastplate was situated at the trunk's front, a shield and sword were affixed to its side, and a helmet was used to crown the assemblage. In positioning the armaments in such a way that they mimicked the appearance of a warrior, the trophy assumed an anthropomorphic shape. An account of this practice, which is one of the most detailed references made to the creation and appearance of the trophy, is found in Virgil's *The Aeneid*,

Aeneas-anxious though he is to give // his comrades rapid burial, and  
though // his mind is much distressed by Pallas' death- // first pays the  
gods a victor's vows beneath // the morning star. He hacks the branches  
off // a massive oak, around all sides, then plants it // upon a mound of  
earth; this tree he dresses // in glittering arms, the spoils of Chief  
Mezentius- // a trophy meant for you, great God of War. // To this Aeneas  
fastens helmet crests // dripping with blood, the warrior's shattered

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<sup>1</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary defines trophy as, "A structure erected (originally on the field of battle, later in a public place) as a memorial of a victory in war, consisting of arms or other spoils taken from the enemy, hung upon a tree, pillar, etc. and dedicated to some divinity. Hence applied to similar monuments or memorials in later times." OED Online. September 2011. Oxford University Press, s.v. "trophy, n."

<sup>2</sup> W. Kendrick Pritchett, *The Greek State at War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 2:252. See also Karl Christian Woelke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Tropaions" (PhD diss., Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 1911), 129.

<sup>3</sup> Pritchett, *Greek State at War*, 2:252 and Woelcke, "Tropaions," 129.

shafts, // the breastplate smashed and pierced through twice-six times; // upon the left he ties the shields of brass // and hangs the ivory scabbard from the neck.<sup>4</sup>

Virgil's narrative draws attention to both the ritualistic and dedicatory qualities of the trophy by describing the precedence of the devotional act over Aeneas' own desires (to bury those he lost in the battle) and emotions (the distress he felt having lost someone dear to him) and in characterizing the trophy as an object symbolic of their triumph that was then offered to the God of War. Furthermore, Virgil's language evokes the image of a man as he details the trophy's creation; Aeneas "dresses" the trunk in his opponent's armor as if it was a human soldier, and then he places the scabbard around "the neck" of this emblematic warrior. It is not any soldier, though; it a vanquished foe whose damaged armor is freshly coated in blood and bears the marks of every blow suffered on the field of battle. In Virgil's portrayal of the trophy, the structure is not only made in correspondence to the human form but contains remnants of actual human blood, which further emphasizes the anthropomorphic nature of the trophy.

This thesis examines the transformations of meaning, function, and variations of anthropomorphic forms as the trophy evolves from its Greek origins on the battlefield to its broader use on numerous monuments, royal palaces, and civil buildings throughout Europe. The ephemeral nature of the materials used in its creation, the contingency of its location, and its ritualistic character are integral components of the trophy in ancient Greece. In its development over time, however, the use and meaning of the trophy became increasingly fluid, taking on a variety of forms that plot on a spectrum of

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<sup>4</sup> Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (New York: Bantam Dell, 1971), 11.2-15.

meanings and functions that ranges from the specific to the generic. The anthropomorphic trophy, still a strong and prevailing symbol of victory today, eventually became a faint echo of what it once was, expanding far beyond the strictly defined votive of the past.

This thesis organizes the chapters by periods: after Chapter I's introduction, Chapter II treats Greek origins; Chapter III examines Roman and Medieval appropriation; and Chapter IV considers the re-birth of the trophy in the Renaissance. Within these chapters the thesis will investigate three distinct trophy types: 1) The Battlefield Trophy, featuring the trophy as a central figure, remains specific to its place regardless of its ephemerality or permanence; 2) The Permanent Monument, featuring the trophy as a distinctive attribute of victory and no longer as the central figure, remains tied to the celebration of specific victories, while not regulated by time or place; and 3) The Ornament, featuring the most generic and abstract of the three types of trophy, carries no temporal regulations, location contingencies, or subject restrictions, allowing it to remain in a constant state of flux. These three types, as they are explored over time, illustrate the progression of the anthropomorphic trophy along the spectrum from a rigid denotation to a fluid interpretation.

## CHAPTER II

### ORIGINS

As Greek society transitioned from the Archaic age, when communities were “obsessed with personal prowess and personal excellence,”<sup>1</sup> to the Classical age, a time when the search for knowledge and the meaning of the human condition reigned supreme, so did its artwork. Two kraters in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, each from the 8th century BCE (Figs. 1 and 2), are representative of the expression of excellence (*areté*) commonly found in grave markers of the Archaic period. The works,



**(Left) Fig. 1:** Attributed to the Hirschfeld Workshop, Terracotta Krater, Greek, Geometric, ca. 750-735 BCE, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY (Photo: Author)

**(Right) Fig. 2:** Attributed to the Workshop of New York MMA 34.11.2, Terracotta Krater, Greek, Geometric, late 1st quarter of the 8th century BCE, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY (Photo: Author)

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Stewart, *Classical Greece and the Birth of Western Art* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 26.; While the idea of personal excellence and its focus on the heroic world of the warriors and their equipment is present in both Archaic and Classical Greece, the Archaic was not, as will be seen in the Classical, also focused on the search for knowledge.

with their depictions of men riding chariots and shield-wielding warriors, appear to portray the military exploits of the deceased or may even illustrate the traditions to which the men belonged. These sorts of artwork, in which the excellence of the individual is proclaimed, and not his heroic, self-less contribution to the collective society, slowly lost ground around the beginning of the Persian Wars. Jerome Jordan (J.J.) Pollitt states,

The victory over the Persians in 480 B.C. [Plataea] played a vital role in shaping the state of mind which is inherent in Early and High Classical Greek art. It was the catalyst which transformed the groping humanism of late Archaic art into the Classical style.<sup>2</sup>

After the Battle of Marathon in 490 BCE and the final defeat of the Persians at the Battle of Plataea in 480/479 BCE, the art of Athens and other Greek societies looked to civic discourse for its subject matter. The arts, including poetry, drama, philosophy, sculpture, architecture, and painting, attempted to create harmony and a message of victory and societal unity. Provoked by the virulent corruption of Sparta's commanding officers after their success at Plataea, the other Greek city-states sought to petition Athens to lead the newly formed alliance of the Greeks in their final strike against the Persians.<sup>3</sup> This alliance, now known as the Delian League, allowed Athens to take control of the Aegean societies, establishing the Athenians as "freedom's champions"<sup>4</sup> a position they were "keen to exploit..."<sup>5</sup> Andrew Stewart states that in this period "four key assertions about Athens and Athenian identity emerge.... The city is Greece's (1) universal refuge and (2) benefactor, and its citizens are (3) 'earth born' and (4) true-blue Ionian (in contrast to the

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<sup>2</sup> J.J. Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Stewart, *Classical Greece*, 66.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*



Dorian Spartans).”<sup>6</sup> These elements coincided with a change in the dynamic of Greek politics that made Athens the political center of the Aegean. The works featured in this chapter show a progression in the depiction of victory: initially connected to a generic and collectively Greek identity, it came to be connected to a specifically Athenian identity, a trend that continued in the later Athenian victory monuments.

Created in 450-440 BCE, the *pelike* (a variation of an amphora) by the Trophy Painter (Fig. 3) is representative of the new revolution in art. The *pelike* features a winged Nike decorating a battlefield trophy.<sup>7</sup> Standing with one foot forward to balance her slightly raised backfoot, the Nike wears a *peplos* that flows over and around her body in the Classical style of Greek drapery.<sup>8</sup> Leaning forward, she raises her arms to punch a nail-hole into a tree trunk in front of



**Fig. 3:** The Trophy Painter, *Nike setting up a trophy*, Red-figure *pelike*, 450-440 BCE, Greek, Classical Period, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Photo: Author)

<sup>6</sup> Stewart, *Classical Greece*, 68.

<sup>7</sup> For discussions concerning the earliest form of the trophy on pottery see: Pritchett, *Greek State at War*, 2:246; Woelke, “Tropeiaion”; Andreas Jozef Janssen, *Het Antieke Tropeiaion, with a Summary in English* (Ledeberg/Gent: Erasmus, 1957); and Gilbert Charles Picard, *Les Trophées Romains: Contribution à l’histoire de la Religion et de l’Art triomphal de Rome* (Paris: Université de Paris, 1957); Daughter of Styx and Pallas, Nike aided Zeus in the Battle of the Titans establishing her as a symbol of victory and a favorite of Zeus’.

<sup>8</sup> L.D. Caskey and J.D. Beazley, *Attic Vase Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1963), 66-67; Stewart defines a *peplos* as “a long woolen gown, usually girdled.” *Classical Greece*, 319.

her to secure the helmet to the trophy. The trophy consists of a *hoplon* shield (ornamented with an eye), a *chitoniskos*, a corselet, a Corinthian helmet, a sword and a spear.<sup>9</sup> The Classical ideal of *symmetria* is portrayed through the extension of the spear beyond the Nike's wings and through Nike's leaning forward, both effectively balancing the composition.<sup>10</sup>

The erection of trophies that the Boston *pelike* shows is an established battlefield tradition that originates in the Archaic period.<sup>11</sup> Not merely a symbol of victory, the trophy, as indicated by Tonio Hölscher, delineates the honor which is accorded to those who erected it, and the gods who aided those who were victorious.<sup>12</sup> Hölscher argues that these early battles (prior to the Persian Wars) “rarely had any irreversible consequences, such as the annihilation of the enemy or annexation of the enemy’s territory,” therefore

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<sup>9</sup> Stewart defines a *hoplon* as a “rounded shield made of a wooden core and outlined in bronze measuring 3-4 feet in diameter and carried on the left arm with leather straps affixed to the inside center of the concave core,” a *chitoniskos* as a short version of a *chiton* which is a “linen shift or tunic, usually girdled at the waist.” The *chitoniskos* was usually worn by men conducting laborious activities such as farming, hunting, or while at war. *Classical Greece*, 317.

<sup>10</sup> Stewart defines *symmetria* as a “‘measuring together’ or proportion, commensurability of parts, a proportional system.” *Classical Greece*, 320.

<sup>11</sup> For information regarding the origins of the trophy see: Pritchett, *Greek State at War*, 2:246-275; Woelke, “Tropaions”; Janssen, *Het Antieke Tropaion*; and Picard, *Les Trophées Romains*; For the earliest noted examples of the trophy see Homer, Hersiod, Musaeus, and Juvenal, *Homer’s Batrachomyomachia, Hymns and Epigrams: Hesiod’s Works and Days, Museaeus’ Hero and Leander, Juvenal’s Fifth Satire*, trans. George Chapman and Richard Hooper (London: J.R. Smith, 1888), *Batrachomyomachia*: 229-232, “Down to our waters; who, not knowing the sleight // To dive our soft deeps, may be strangled straight, // And we triumphing may a trophy rear, // Of all the Mice that we have slaughter’d here.”; and Homer, *The Iliad of Homer*, trans. Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 10: 314-468; Pritchett states that “the earliest [trophy] example, although the word is not explicitly used, is surely in the *Doloneia*, where after killing Dolon, Odysseus and Diomedes erect a kind of trophy in honor of Athena.” *Greek State at War*, 2:249; This reference is, in my opinion, incorrect if citing the *Doloneia* as the first mention of the trophy, for the spoils Pritchett refers to are not a dedication but a promise for dedication to Athena if she aids Odysseus and Diomedes in their quest for the horses of Rhesos. In removing the spoils from their placement in the Tamarisk bush Odysseus would be violating a sacred offering, therefore the first trophy is at the end of the *Doloneia* when Odysseus dedicates the spoils to Athena at the sterns of the ships of the Argives, including those spoils captured in the raid on the Thracian camp.

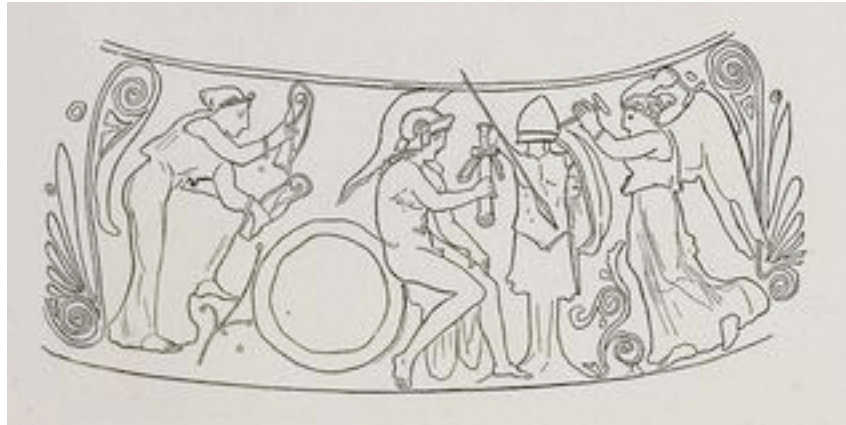
<sup>12</sup> Tonio Hölscher, “Transformation of Victory into Power,” in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome*, ed. Sheila Dillon and Katherine E. Welch (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 29.

making it “all the more important to establish a monumental sign that made victory manifest and, moreover, visible over great distances and lasting into the future.”<sup>13</sup> After the flight of the enemy from the battlefield the victors would erect a trophy to mark the place where victory had been achieved. The trophies created on the battlefield represented specific events in specific places; places which were (by the very act of contestation) at the topographical periphery of the *polis*. The importance of the site is acknowledged in the building of the trophy, maintaining the tradition that victory is bestowed upon those who control the battlefield. In her article “One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity,” Miwon Kwon states “Site specific work...focused on establishing an inextricable, indivisible relationship between the work and its site, and demanded the physical presence of the viewer for the work’s completion.”<sup>14</sup> Kwon’s relation of the site to the work and the work to the viewer, though developed for contemporary art, is also operative in the building of the trophy. The early trophies, constructed out of wood and armor on the battlefield and involving the pouring out of libations, required the presence of not only a viewer, but the active participation of the viewer to consummate the dedication (or offering) of the trophy to the gods. A squat *lekythos* from the British Museum features a warrior actively completing the dedication of the trophy through his participation in its erection (Fig. 4). In the center of the image is a warrior seated next to his shield with his arm extended forward, offering a sword to the Nike, seen raising her hand to drive a nail into the trophy to secure its materials, standing opposite him and the trophy.

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<sup>13</sup> Hölscher, “Transformation of Victory,” 29-30.

<sup>14</sup> Miwon Kwon, “One Place after Another: Notes on Site Specificity,” *The MIT Press* 80 (Spring 1997), 86.



**Fig. 4:** Nike erecting a trophy, watched by a seated warrior and a woman, Red-figure squat *lekythos*, 400 BCE, Athens, Greek, Classical Period, The British Museum, London, England (Photo: Line drawing published in Reinhard Kekulé's *Die Reliefs an der Balustrade der Athena Nike*, Stuttgart, 1881.)

The specificity of the trophies not only lay in their site but also in the materials used.

Victorious warriors would dedicate the collected weapons from the battlefield in offerings at home in the temple, or at the site of the battle, in the form of an anthropomorphic trophy. The very act of erecting the trophy is directly tied to victory, for without the flight of the defeated, the victorious warriors would not have the opportunity to gather enemy weapons in order to erect the dedication. As such, they belong to the category of votives, or votive offerings, dedications made to express gratitude for divine favor or promises of dedications to be made in return for future divine intervention.<sup>15</sup> Examples of wartime offerings are abundant in Greek literature. Pausanias, for instance, describes a shield dedicated by the Spartans on the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. He writes, “The temple has a golden shield; from Tanagra // The Lacedaemonians [Spartans] and their allies dedicated it, // A gift taken from the Argives, Athenians, and Ionians, // The tithe

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<sup>15</sup> An example is found in Homer, *Il.* 10.460-468. Odysseus promised the spoils from the *Doloneia* to Athena in return for her aid in capturing the swift-footed horses of Rhesos.

offered for victory in war.”<sup>16</sup> This type of dedicatory exchange may have been the impetus for the dedication of war spoils at the site of battle.

Upon dedication, the trophies become ephemeral records of victory that were neither meant to be permanent nor allowed to be renewed or removed. As a dedicatory object the trophy was considered inviolate, which Xenophon indicates in his account of the loss of Agesilaos to Iphikrates.<sup>17</sup> He writes, “Wherever there were any fruit-trees yet standing, he [Agesilaos] cut them down to show that he was master of the field. But the trophy erected by Iphikrates remained inviolable.”<sup>18</sup> W. Kendrick Pritchett also argues that trophies should be seen as having a “powerful psychological value,”<sup>19</sup> for because of their inviolability and construction in contested territory, trophies are constant reminders of one’s defeat or victory, making them “instruments of publicity for advertising the prowess of the victor.”<sup>20</sup> Michael Sage sees trophies as having two types of value, one psychological and one social.<sup>21</sup> He believes the psychological value stems from the erection of the trophy and the prestige conferred upon the victor. The social value refers to the tradition that victory was attained not through the annihilation of other Greeks, but

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<sup>16</sup> Pausanias, *Pausanias’ Description of Greece, with an English Translation*, Vol. 2, trans. W.H.S. Jones, Henry Arderne Ormerod, and R.E. Wycherley (London: W. Heinemann, 1926), 5.10.4. See also: Judith M. Barringer, *Art, Myth, and Ritual in Classical Greece* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 13.

<sup>17</sup> Xenophon, *A history of my times*, trans. Rex Warner (London: Penguin Group, 1966): 4.5.1-10. In the Battle of Lechaemum in Corinth, the hoplites of King Agesilaos of Sparta were routed by the peltasts of Iphikrates and the Athenians hoplites of Callias. Agesilaos, who had thought his battles won in the region of Corinth, responded by burning fruit trees to “make it clear that no one was willing to march out and oppose him,” yet he left the trophy unscathed. Xenophon, *My times*, 4.5.10.

<sup>18</sup> Xenophon *Hell.* 4.5.10; quoted in W. Kendrick Pritchett, *The Greek State at War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 2.258-259.

<sup>19</sup> Pritchett, *Greek State at War*, 2:273.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:273.

<sup>21</sup> Michael M. Sage, *Warfare in Ancient Greece, a sourcebook* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1996), 100.

only in the flight of the defeated from the battlefield. This tradition reflected the Greek's relative disinterest in killing their own,<sup>22</sup> exhibiting their ability to concede what would usually be a short-lived victory in order to reduce loss of life.<sup>23</sup> This psychological value can be seen in the idea articulated by Miwon Kwon that the viewers (both those who assembled the trophy and those who witness its remnants on the battlefield later) are completing the work, for without the memory of the act of assembling the trophy from battlefield spoils, or the act of viewing the remnants of the assembled trophy, the work has not completed its function. In acknowledging communally a loss or victory the community reinforces a sense of fellowship. The psychological and social impact of the trophy is closely connected to the memory of a community.

James Mayo, author of *War Memorials as Political Landscape*, a book which focuses in part on the social purposes of war memorials, postulates that war memorials combine both elements of sentiment and utility, which can be perceived with the correct combination of human and societal values.<sup>24</sup> In this respect, memorials help form a community's identity, through the psychological response of witnessing the commemoration of one's dead, and the social response of forming a cohesive unit of mourning. The act of commemoration, seen in the erection of the battlefield trophy, ties it to the realm of memorials, where it celebrates the victor and memorializes the dead for a community. In his book *War Memorials*, Arnold Whittick states that "the principal

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<sup>22</sup> While Greece was not a unified country, they were unified in their race and cultures against outside ethnicities.

<sup>23</sup> Sage, *Warfare*, 100.

<sup>24</sup> James Mayo, *War Memorials as Political Landscape: The American Experience and Beyond* (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1988), 6-7.

purpose of a memorial is to stir remembrance, and to keep alive and ever before us what is commemorated.”<sup>25</sup> It was during the Persian Wars that trophies transition from ephemeral to permanent, sliding along the spectrum from the specific to the relative. The Greeks began to erect trophies of marble and bronze at both the peripheral battle-site and at the urban core. The Persian War transition of the trophy, from ephemeral to permanent, engenders the permanent renderings of the trophy in later Greek-on-Greek warfare. In a narrative given by Diodorus Siculus, a 1st century BCE Greek historian, he cites reports opposing the erection of a bronze trophy by the Thebans in their defeat of the Spartans at Leuctra in 371 BCE:

For hatred between Greeks should only last until the moment of victory, and punishment only until the enemy is subdued. For whoever revenges himself on those who have been conquered and are appealing to the reasonableness of the conqueror is no longer punishing his enemy, but rather commits an injustice against human weakness. One could cite in relation to the harshness of opponents of this type the sayings of the men of old, ‘Man, do not be presumptuous, but know yourselves.’ Remember that fortune is king in all things. So the ancestors of the Greeks ordained that trophies for victory in war should be constructed of whatever wood was available and not in stone. Was this done so that these trophies should last but a short time and that these memorials to enmity should then disappear?<sup>26</sup>

The trophy at Leuctra, erected in bronze, is considered to be the first permanent battlefield trophy to be erected against another Greek city-state. This transition signals a change in the attitudes of the Greeks towards one another and their growing need for expressions of dominance in an unstable society. Sage posits that while the less durable

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<sup>25</sup> Arnold Whittick, *War Memorials* (Glasgow, UK: Robert Maclehose and Co. Ltd., 1946), 6.

<sup>26</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *Universal History*, 13.24.3-6; quoted in Michael Sage, *Warfare in Ancient Greece: A Sourcebook* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1996), 102.

wooden form of the trophy may have been the norm, permanent monuments (trophies) were erected in territories where more direct control was needed.<sup>27</sup>

Significantly, the trophy at Leuctra comes in the wake of the Persian Wars and the commemorations of the Battle of Marathon (490 BCE). 6,400 Persians died at Marathon, while the Athenians lost only 192 souls, and the Athenians commemorated their victory by erecting a traditional wooden trophy. Yet it was not the only trophy erected in this place, nor was the battle commemorated only at Marathon. According to Eugene Vanderpool, the archaeologist who discovered the remains of the trophy at Marathon, there would have first been an “impromptu one [trophy] composed of enemy armor and weapons hung on a tree trunk,”<sup>28</sup> and that it was approximately thirty years later (around 460 BCE) that a permanent “commemorative monument was also set up on the plain of Marathon”<sup>29</sup> having “the form of a tall free-standing Ionic column on top of which a trophy of marble was displayed.”<sup>30</sup> Although Vanderpool argues that the column was constructed during the same period as the Periklean building campaign on the Athenian Acropolis of the second half of the 5th century BCE, it more likely occurred during the time of Kimon, son of Miltiades, who, along with his brother Peisianax, commissioned

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<sup>27</sup> Sage, *Warfare*, 102; The use of the ephemeral trophy on the battlefield, and not a permanent trophy, is heavily documented in the Peloponnesian Wars. It does not appear that permanent trophies later replaced the ephemeral forms on the battlefield until the Battle of Leuctra.; The building of permanent monuments on the battlefield is something that will also be seen in the Roman Empire with the building of trophies on the borderlands.

<sup>28</sup> Eugene Vanderpool, “A Monument to the Battle of Marathon,” *Hesperia* 35, no. 2 (Apr. – Jun., 1966): 105.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>30</sup> Vanderpool, “Marathon,” 106; For images of the remains found refer to Vanderpool’s article. A reconstruction of the column, sans the trophy and Nike, can be seen at the Archaeological Museum of Marathon in Greece; The column is also mentioned by Pausanias. “A trophy too of white marble has been erected.” Pausanias, *Pausanias’ Description of Greece, with an English Translation*, Vol. 1, trans. by W.H.S. Jones, Henry Arderne Ormerod, and R.E. Wycherley (London: W. Heinemann, 1926), 1.32.5.



the Painted Stoa in the Agora of Athens, which also commemorated the Battle of Marathon.<sup>31</sup> The column, probably capped by both a trophy and a Nike, was erected to commemorate the victory and losses of Marathon, bearing a permanent reminder of Athenian power at its contested borders, or periphery. More importantly even, the second trophy at Marathon stood in a permanent, non-deteriorating form, combining the specificity of the battlefield site with the relativity of unmoored time, changing an ephemeral marker of victory, one created for that day by those who participated, to a permanent monument erected by others who did not necessarily fight in the battle. Permanence and distance enhanced the trophy's commemorative value. Vanderpool states that "this trophy [the marble trophy] was one of Athens' proudest monuments. Aristophanes refers to it three times 'and always as striking the deepest chord of Athenian patriotism.' Kritias, the sophist, speaks of Athens as 'the city that set up a fair trophy at Marathon.'"<sup>32</sup>

The slightly later Periklean building campaign on the Athenian Acropolis is a prime example of the intertwining of victory imagery and propaganda, for, as Jeffrey

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<sup>31</sup> Vanderpool, "Marathon," 102; Stewart, *Classical Greece*, 104.

<sup>32</sup> Vanderpool, "Marathon," 102.; This trophy, and other victory monuments, is only one of many created during the Persian Wars. The Athenian Treasury at Delphi (ca. 490-480 BCE) was erected in celebration of the victory at Marathon with trophies fashioned of Persians weapons constructed on the southern wall, which were later replaced with bronze statues of the Eponymous Heroes of Athens. Stewart, *Classical Greece*, 154; The Nike of Kallimachos, created shortly after Marathon, is described by Jeffrey M. Hurwit as a "winged figure, marble with a necklace of bronze and perched atop a tall, inscribed Ionic column.... represented as if descending from heaven to proclaim the news of the victory at Marathon." *The Athenian Acropolis: History, Mythology, and Archaeology from the Neolithic Era to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 130; Additional permanent trophies erected after the Battle of Salamis and the Battle of Plataea are noted by Pausanias 1.36.1 and 9.2.6. William C. West, III notes that "there is some topographical evidence that the trophy of Salamis was similar to that of Marathon. Travelers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries... suggest that the trophy of Salamis was a column monument." "The Trophies of the Persian Wars," *Classical Philology* 64 no. 1 (January 1969), 15; The Marathon trophy is indicative of the commemorative works created just prior to it at Delphi and on the Acropolis of Athens, and after at Salamis and Plataea. It serves as an example of the changing role of commemoration in Greek society.

Hurwit states, “the entire Acropolis was transformed into a vast and intricate dissertation on Victory itself.”<sup>33</sup> The Temple of Athena Nike (Fig. 5), located on a bastion at the entrance to the Acropolis, portrays multiple scenes of Athenian victory with the use of trophies upon its frieze and parapet. The original structure, a small *naiskos* and an altar, was destroyed in 480/79 BCE by invading Persian armies, yet was rebuilt in the form of the current temple no later than 420 BCE,<sup>34</sup> with the parapet completed between 421-415 BCE. And while the temple should be considered as part of the Periklean campaign there is some question as to whether the parapet belonged to the original design.<sup>35</sup> The temple and its parapet would have been visible to anyone entering the Acropolis of



**Fig. 5:** Temple of Athena Nike, Acropolis, Athens, East Face, ca. 420 BCE, Greek, Classical Period (Photo: Courtesy of the University of Oregon Libraries, Department of Classics and the Lowenstam Collection of Ancient Western Art and Archaeology.)

<sup>33</sup> Hurwit, *The Athenian Acropolis*, 153.

<sup>34</sup> Hurwit, *The Athenian Acropolis*, 160.

<sup>35</sup> Jeffrey M. Hurwit, *The Acropolis in the Age of Pericles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 188.

Athens, a destination for citizens and visitors alike. The temple frieze illustrates both history and myth, including, on the north and west, battles between Greeks, on the east images of gods and goddesses both seated and standing, and on the south, very likely, the Battle of Marathon (Fig. 6).<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Pemberton posits that the frieze, not unlike those of the Parthenon and the Hephaisteion, comprises a “single programmatic harmony,” illustrating victory through battle.<sup>37</sup> The west has been interpreted as representing many different battles, including an Athenian victory over Sparta. Facing the entrance of the Acropolis, its narrative greeted visitors, portraying Athenian strength in the face of opposing Greek forces.<sup>38</sup> Pemberton identifies it (the west frieze) as the Athenian victory



**Fig. 6:** Temple of Athena Nike, Acropolis, Athens, ca. 427-424 BCE, British Museum, London, England, (Detail) South frieze featuring Battle of Marathon (Photo: Courtesy of the University of Oregon Libraries and Professor Emeritus A. Dean Mckenzie.)

<sup>36</sup> Hurwit, *The Athenian Acropolis*, 212; Olga Palagia, “Interpretations of Two Athenian Friezes,” in *Periklean Athens and its Legacy: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. Judith M. Barringer and Jeffrey M. Hurwit (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 186; and Evelyn B. Harrison, “The Glories of the Athenians: Observations on the Program of the Frieze of the Temple of Athena Nike,” in *The Interpretation of Architectural Sculptures in Greece and Rome*, ed. Diana Buitron-Oliver (Washington: Trustees of the National Gallery of Art, 1997), 109-125.

<sup>37</sup> Elizabeth Pemberton, “The East and West Friezes of the Temple of Athena Nike,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 76, no. 3 (Jul., 1972): 304.

<sup>38</sup> Palagia, “Interpretations,” 186.

of the general Myronides (a general of the Battle of Marathon) over Corinth at Megara in 458 BCE.<sup>39</sup> The north frieze, although almost completely damaged, has been identified with the Trojan and Boeotian Wars.<sup>40</sup> The south frieze has been consistently identified in modern scholarship as depicting the Battle of Marathon on the basis of the use of Persian dress.<sup>41</sup> Pemberton suggests that for Perikles and the other planners of the Acropolis, the representation of the Battle of Marathon “gave Athens moral foundation for her hegemony,” and its “implied Athenian defense of Ionia.”<sup>42</sup> The temple is nevertheless an expression of memory meant to remind the viewer of Athenian sacrifice and victory. Whittick states that, “the value of this [type of] expression of victory and triumph which seeks to glorify a state and its people, is that it exhilarates by stirring feelings of patriotic pride in achievement.”<sup>43</sup>

The parapet of the Temple of Athena Nike displays the use of trophies as symbols of victory. Hurwit describes it thus:

Instead of forming a continuous progression around the top of the bastion, each side of the parapet was discrete and self-contained; taken together, they were purposefully repetitive. Thus to someone standing below the northwest corner of the bastion on the way up the Acropolis ramp, two Athenas would have been visible simultaneously, and the theme of victory would have been clear.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Pemberton, “The East and West Friezes,” 304-305 and Palagia, “Interpretations,” 186.; Olga Palagia sees the trophy, which stands in block *i* of the west frieze, representing Hoplite armor, therefore the battle must be historical in nature.

<sup>40</sup> Palagia, “Interpretations,” 186.

<sup>41</sup> Palagia, “Interpretations,” 186; Hurwit, *The Athenian Acropolis*, 212; and Pemberton, “The East and West Friezes,” 304.

<sup>42</sup> Pemberton, “The East and West Friezes,” 310.

<sup>43</sup> Whittick, *War Memorials*, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Hurwit, *The Athenian Acropolis*, 213.

This analysis is in agreement with Rhys Carpenter and William Dinsmoor's reconstructions of the parapet.<sup>45</sup> Dinsmoor identifies three different types of trophy on the parapet: the *hoplite* trophy, which was identified through its use of the *hoplon* shield, helmets and greaves and represents a trophy raised in battles between Greeks; the Persian trophy, which included sleeved chitons, lunate shields, swords, and phrygian caps; and the Naval trophy, which included the beaks of ships.<sup>46</sup> The three sides (west, south, and north) contain each all three types of trophies, as well as both a Nike/Bull scene and a Nike/Altar scene. Each of the trophies is either in the midst of being decorated by a winged Nike, or already decorated. On the southern side of the parapet is the fragment of a Nike and Athena decorating a presumed trophy (Fig. 7). Athena sits facing the Nike who reaches out in a gesture that both Dinsmoor and Carpenter connected to the decoration of a trophy.<sup>47</sup> The "wet" drapery typical of the Classical period flows over the bodies of both goddesses, defining form and movement. This work, as well as the others of the parapet, was designed to evoke both the Classical ideal of the human form and the Athenian role as victors and protectors of Attica. The combination of the motif of the trophy with the cult of Nike, which is also seen at Marathon, suggests a developing iconography for an accepted symbol of victory. Hurwit states that the parapet was "the visitor's introduction to the iconography of the Classical Acropolis - the initial statement

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<sup>45</sup> William Bell Dinsmoor, "The Sculptured Parapet of Athena Nike," *American Journal of Archaeology* 30 (Jan.-Mar. 1926): 1-31 and Rhys Carpenter, *The Sculpture of the Nike Temple Parapet* (College Park, Maryland: McGrath Publishing Company, 1971).

<sup>46</sup> Dinsmoor, "The Sculptured Parapet of Athena Nike," 23. Dinsmoor's analysis shows 3 trophies on the west and north of the parapet, and 6 on the south. Each of the 3 types of trophies is represented on each side, but doubled on the south to form a cohesive pattern.

<sup>47</sup> Dinsmoor, "The Sculptured Parapet of Athena Nike," 24-25 and Carpenter, *Nike Temple Parapet*, 57-59.





**Fig. 7:** Temple of Athena Nike, Acropolis, Athens, ca. 420 BCE, Acropolis Museum, Athens, (Detail) South parapet relief featuring Athena and Nike decorating a *tropaion* (Photo: Courtesy of Jeffrey M. Hurwit)

of its pervasive theme of victory.”<sup>48</sup> The use of the trophy as an iconographic symbol of victory marks the trophy’s further transition from the specific to the relative, moving it away from the site specificity of the battlefield into the center of Greek society, effectively unmooring the form from both time and place transforming it from Battlefield Trophy to Permanent Monument. The frieze, as it is interpreted by Pemberton, Palagia, and Hurwit, recognizes specific events in the history of Athenian warfare and specific myths. Although there are some differences of opinion as to which battles the friezes depict (the experts agree only on the identification of the Battle of Marathon on the south frieze), all agree that the program relates battles which resulted in victories for Athens. Although three different types of trophies are illustrated on the parapet, they form a cohesive pattern, suggesting, for the first time, that the trophy is now a symbol of victory

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<sup>48</sup> Hurwit, *Age of Pericles*, 188.

representative of a past battlefield tradition and is no longer part of the localized process of victory, making it a generalized symbol of victory. As the tradition of the trophy changes from one of a ritualized erection of momentary and specific materials to that of a generalized symbolic motif on a commemorative monument, its shift is parallel to the change in ideals and ambitions of the societies which it represents.

The Peloponnesian War and its subsequent aftermath, wherein the *poleis* of Greece were never to fully recover or end fighting, resulted in an opening for the domination of Greece by Macedonia<sup>49</sup> and later Rome. The art created during this age, specifically in the time after Alexander the Great (336-323 BCE), is known as Hellenistic. Gone were the days of the “intimacy and independence of the Hellenic [Greek] poleis,”<sup>50</sup> as cities were increasingly dominated by private, luxurious homes and public monuments to monarchs.<sup>51</sup> These, in turn, attracted new settlers to these centers of civilization, where “inevitably they broadened, distorted and vulgarised it.”<sup>52</sup> Susan Woodford argues there are three distinguishable trends in the art of the 4th century BCE, 1) a push for naturalism and the use of emotion and mood, 2) an increasing specialization amongst artists, and 3) the rise of abstract ideas and personifications, such as Peace and Madness.<sup>53</sup> Permanent monuments abound in this time period, examples of which

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<sup>49</sup> The Lion of Chaironeia, featured in John Boardman’s *Greek Art*, was erected over the tomb of the Greeks defeated in the Battle of Chaironeia against Philip II of Macedonia. The lion represents a further type of victory monument, being seated directly on top of the defeated as if to stamp out any further uprising. John Boardman, *Greek Art* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., Publishers, 1964), 144.

<sup>50</sup> Susan Woodford, *The Art of Greece and Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 60-61.

<sup>51</sup> Earlier, classical poleis discouraged the display of wealth and power by one person so as to avoid the rise of tyrants.

<sup>52</sup> Susan Woodford, *The Art of Greece and Rome*, 60-61.

<sup>53</sup> Woodford, *The Art of Greece and Rome*, 61.

include the Acropolis and Altar of Pergamon and the Nike of Samothrace (Fig. 8).<sup>54</sup> Pollitt suggests that the Acropolis of Pergamon, which was covered with images of defeated Gauls, was the attempt by the Pergamene ruler Attalos I to create a monument that would be to the Hellenistic age what the Acropolis of



**Fig. 8:** Nike of Samothrace, ca. 200 BCE, Paris, Musée du Louvre (Photo: Author)

Athens was to the Classical Age.<sup>55</sup> These monuments suggest a continued tradition in the Greek world of displaying the prowess of a community, and now specifically, a monarch, through permanent monuments. This transition of the monument, one which glorifies the monarch, becomes increasingly conventional in the period of the Roman Empire. The trophy, along with many other Greek ideals and symbols, was appropriated wholesale by the Romans to enhance their propaganda.

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<sup>54</sup> The Nike of Samothrace, ca. 200 BCE, created to commemorate the naval victories of the Rhodians over Antiochos III, is representative of the Hellenistic Baroque style in the “carved, billowing furrows of her drapery and the massive feathers of her wings.” J.J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 114; The work is “shown alighting on the forepart of a ship, and was set in the upper basin of a fountain to commemorate a victory at sea.” Boardman, *Greek Art*, 216; The anthropomorphic trophy, while still seen in the Hellenistic age, is no longer a heavily used motif in the construction of victory monuments.

<sup>55</sup> In ca. 228 BCE Attalos I defeated the invading Gauls of Asia Minor, securing the power and territory of Pergamon. The sculptural program of the Pergamene Acropolis and the Altar of Zeus expressed the might of Pergamon through its representation of the dignified enemy, creating a victory that bespoke the strength of the Pergamonese in their quelling of an enemy who was considered strong and brave, lending a respect to the enemy. Woodford, *The Art of Greece and Rome*, 66-69 and J.J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, 81-110; Boardman, in reference to the Altar of Zeus, states, “The fullest dramatic use is made of swirling drapery, but the main force is lent by the vigorous carving of muscles and the writhing, tense bodies. If this alone were not enough to convey the horror of the struggle the faces too were carved with expressions of extreme anguish.” *Greek Art*, 211-213; This new idea of a victory monument, one which portrayed the strength of the enemy, is used in the Roman period to enhance the virtues of generals and the Imperial house.



## CHAPTER III

### APPROPRIATION

As infighting amongst the Hellenic kings grew, so did the presence of the Roman army in Greece, ending in the subjugation of each of the Hellenic kingdoms in the course of the 3rd-2nd century BCE.<sup>1</sup> As the Romans dominated Greece, they expressed themselves through permanent structures meant to portray their success and the empire's might.<sup>2</sup> The adoption, or appropriation, of the trophy by the Romans came during a "phase of aggressive and extensive imperialism that culminated in the claim to worldwide rule...and in this context *tropaea* assumed primary significance."<sup>3</sup> In their appropriation of the form, the Romans continued the use of the trophy as a dedicatory object, aligning it with their votive idea of *Do ut Des* (*I give that you might give*).<sup>4</sup> In works created during the Roman empire, the focus is centered not on the gods, but on generals and later the

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<sup>1</sup> Woodford, *The Art of Greece and Rome*, 89.

<sup>2</sup> Consul L. Aemilius Paullus was given command of the Roman army in their battle against the Macedonian king, Perseus, and in 168 BCE Paullus defeated Perseus at Pydna. Perseus and his family fled, only to be captured and later forced to march as prisoners in Paullus' triumph in Rome. During his sojourn in Greece, Paullus visited Delphi where he came upon a monument to be dedicated to King Perseus. "Paullus immediately ordered that the monument should be converted into a memorial to himself and to the Roman victory at Pydna, noting that 'it was only proper that the conquered should give way to the victors'." Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, 151-156 and Plutarch, *Aemilius Paullus*, 28, quoted in Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, 156; This appropriation of a defeated's monument is a prime example of the Roman need for expression of power in subjugated lands. The monument, with a pillar base, displays a frieze detailing the events at Pydna, rendering it a historical account of the battle. Topping the pillar and frieze is an equestrian statue with Paullus astride a horse rearing up on its hind legs. For an image see Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, 155, fig. 162.

<sup>3</sup> Holscher, "Transformation of Victory," 32.

<sup>4</sup> Valerius Maximus, a 1st-century CE Roman historian, states, "in the ancient religious institutions, prayer was used when something was entrusted to the gods, the vow when some entreaty was made of them, the public thanksgiving when a vow was repaid." Val. *Memorable Deeds*, 1.i; quoted in Naphtali Lewis and Meyer Reinhold, ed., *Roman Civilization: The Republic and the Augustan Age, Selected Readings* Vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 138. Valerius Maximus wrote nine books titled *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* in ca. 30 CE. When speaking of the "ancients," Valerius is most likely referring to the Greeks and Etruscans.

victorious emperor. In usurping a symbol of Greek victory the Romans were expressing their dominion over Greece. It is not only the act of setting up a trophy that declares victory for the Romans, but also the act of erecting a permanent trophy, which would remain a constant reminder of Roman dominion.

Throughout the Republican and later Imperial era the Romans erected permanent trophies in conquered lands. After the Battle of Chaironeia (86 BCE), Sulla, victorious general of the Roman army, erected two trophies on the plain of the Kephisos Valley of mainland Greece. Sulla's use of the trophy was an act of domination over the peoples of Greece, not only in the act of erecting it after victory, but also in his appropriating the traditional image of his defeated opponents for Roman use. John Camp discusses one of the trophies found at Chaironeia, attributing it to the battle of 86 BCE through inscriptions found on it and its location.<sup>5</sup> Camp connects it with the account in Plutarch's *Lives*:

Sulla writes that there were but fourteen of his soldiers missing, and that two of these returned towards evening; he, therefore, inscribed on the trophies the names of Mars, Victory, and Venus, as having won the day no less by good fortune than by management and force of arms. This trophy of the battle in the plain stands on the place where Archelaus first gave way, near the stream of the Molus; another is erected high on the top of Thurium, where the barbarians [Mithridates' forces] were environed, with an inscription in Greek, recording that the glory of the day belonged to Hemoloichus and Anaxidamus.<sup>6</sup>

Located on Isoma Hill, the trophy carries an inscription dedicating it to two soldiers (heroes of the battle), Hemoloichus and Anaxidamus, yet the section concerning the gods

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<sup>5</sup> John Camp, Michael Ierardi, Jeremy McInerney, Kathryn Morgan, and Gretchen Umholtz, "A Trophy from the Battle of Chaironeia of 86 BC," *American Journal of Archaeology* 96, no. 3 (Jul., 1992): 445-448.

<sup>6</sup> Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans, Sulla*, trans. by John Dryden and Arthur Hugh Clough. (New York: The Modern library, 1932), 561.

has not survived.<sup>7</sup> Camp describes the trophy as having an “unfluted marble column and a torus base,”<sup>8</sup> and connects it to a stone panoply found at the monastery of Skripou at Orchomenos.<sup>9</sup> He describes the trophy as an “over-life-sized corseleted torso... It is identifiable as a trophy because the corselet rises from a smooth cylindrical shaft.”<sup>10</sup> The erection of a stone trophy by the Romans in a style similar to that of the Athenian monument at Marathon recalls the intertwining of the specific (at the battlefield) and the relative (a monument erected at a period much after the battle) that is seen at Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea.<sup>11</sup> Although the trophy has now transitioned to a permanent form, it is still characterized as a battlefield trophy as it remains specific to its site and retains the sacred significance of the dedication of an ephemeral battlefield trophy.

According to Alan Borg in his book *War Memorials*, ancient memorials are dominated by power and war, stating that

He who is victorious in war achieves victory in war, but the reverse of this - he who is in power achieves victory in war - is neither self-evident nor historically accurate. Perhaps this is why most ancient art is devoted to asserting that the second statement is true, for its main theme is the inevitable and unremitting victory of the ruler in war, and the humiliation and death of his enemies.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Camp, “Trophy,” 445-448. Camp surmises that the missing inscription was probably located on a lower block, now missing, although there is evidence of it from the existence of a dowel hole on the underside of the upper block.

<sup>8</sup> Camp, “Trophy,” 448

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 449. For an image of the trophy see Camp’s article.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 449.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 449. Although when comparing Camp’s description of the trophy to that of Vanderpool there are inconsistencies such as Vanderpool’s suggestion that the trophy was topped by a statue of Nike holding a trophy.

<sup>12</sup> Alan Borg, *War Memorials: From Antiquity to the Present* (Great Britain: Leo Cooper, 1991), 1.

The trophy as a permanent monument becomes a theme in the aggrandizement of the generals and emperors of Rome. This is seen throughout the Roman world, including Pompey's victory monument in the Pyrenees at the junction of the Via Domitia and what later became known as the Via Augusta. As Pliny recounts, "he [Pompey] crossed over to the West, and after erecting trophies in the Pyrenees he added to the record of his victorious career the reduction under our sway of 876 towns from the Alps to the frontiers of Farther Spain."<sup>13</sup> In his *Geography* Strabo states that some "assert that the spot where the Trophies of Pompey stand is the boundary between Iberia and Keltica,"<sup>14</sup> which, if true, demonstrates the empire's need to display not only the battle prowess of the individual general, but also the strength of the empire along its borderlands, letting those who crossed its boundaries know who the authority was in that region.<sup>15</sup>

Likewise carrying the message from the capital to the border lands (or from the core to the periphery) a coin from approximately the same time period, and commissioned for Julius Caesar, features a trophy being decorated by Nike (Fig. 9).



**Fig. 9:** Coin of G. Julius Caesar, 49-44 BCE, Museo Nazionale Romano-Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Italy (Photo: Author)

<sup>13</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. by H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938): 7.26.

<sup>14</sup> Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo, Literally translated with notes in three volumes* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1903): 4.1.3.

<sup>15</sup> Holscher, "Transformation of Victory," 33.

This coin would have been disseminated amongst the empire's population, spreading the message of Caesar's victory throughout the empire and beyond.

Hölscher discusses other permanent monuments erected by the Romans along their borderlands which he has dubbed "territorial monuments,"<sup>16</sup> including Caesar's trophy at Zela, Octavian's monument at Actium, the tribute to Augustus in La Turbie, and Trajan's trophy in Adamklissi, Romania.<sup>17</sup> This "abstract imperialism"<sup>18</sup> reminded those who passed of the respective territory's subjugation to the Republic, and later, the Empire. As Hölscher writes,

Sulla's Chaironeia trophy implied rule over the entire "Greek" world, Pompey's Pyrenees trophy opened the way to the whole Iberian Peninsula, extending the Sullan concept of Rome and Greece into a universal concept from East to West. The Nikopolis [Actium] monument implied the reunification of the eastern and western part of the empire, while the *tropaeum Alpium* [at La Turbie] presupposed the knowledge of the vast extension of those mountains and its multiple populations.<sup>19</sup>

The gradual evolution from battlefield trophy to permanent monument is evident in the *tropaeum Alpium*. Located on the Col de La Turbie in southern France and at the highest point of the Via Julia, the *tropaeum Alpium* (Fig. 10), or Trophy of the Alps (Trophy of Augustus), stands as an immense edificial reminder of both Roman victory and Roman peace. The trophy celebrates the victory of Augustus over the people of Gaul

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<sup>16</sup> Holscher, "Transformation of Victory," 33.

<sup>17</sup> William L. MacDonald relates a further landscape trophy found in Scotland. This structure, only known to us through drawings created by Alexander Gordon for his book *Itinerarium*, possibly held inscriptions and dedications to victory and may have been constructed around the time of the building of the Antonine Wall considering its proximity. "There was once, for example, a domed rotunda, a military trophy or shrine to victory, in southern Scotland beside the River Carron, dating from the second half of the second century [CE]...Known later as Arthur's Oon." William L. MacDonald, *The Pantheon: Design, Meaning, and Progeny* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 100.

<sup>18</sup> Holscher, "Transformation of Victory," 33.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-34.

between 25-14 BCE and was erected and dedicated to Augustus and the victory in 7-6 BCE by the Senate and People of Rome. Supposed to have stood over 50 meters in height, it has a high, square podium topped by a round, 24 column structure surmounted by a statue of Augustus.<sup>20</sup> A frontal inscription states:

To the Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of the divine Julius, Pontifex Maximus, proclaimed Emperor for the fourteenth time, and invested with the seventeenth Tribunician Power, from the Senate and Roman people, because under his leadership and auspices, all the Alpine people from the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea have been subjugated to the power of the Roman people.<sup>21</sup>



**(Left) Fig. 10:** *Tropaeum Alpium*, ca. 7-6 BCE, La Turbie, France (Photo: Author)  
**(Right) Fig. 11:** (Detail): Bound barbarians (Photo: Author)

<sup>20</sup> Centre des Monuments Nationaux, *Trophée d'Auguste*, Visitor's Guide, August 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

On either side of the inscription are bas-reliefs of anthropomorphic trophies with “barbarians” chained to the branches (Fig. 11). The inclusion of prisoners reminds the viewer of both the supreme power of the empire, but also the role of the conquered within its borders. This structure represents a further stage in the transition of the trophy, for the Trophy of Augustus, although erected near the site of battle between the Roman and Alpan peoples, is more categorically, as structured here, a permanent monument and not a battlefield trophy. Standing as a permanent reminder to those who pass along the Via Julia, the monument enhances the prestige of the victor in its size, materials, and inscription. The transition lies especially in the nature of the structure, which uses trophies as adornments and not as the central motif of the work. This change in the use of the form moves this trophy along the sliding scale of the spectrum from the specific towards the relative. In monuments like this, the trophy has become a signpost to be delivered and exhibited wherever victory has been established. Instead of gathering materials from the site of the battle to erect a trophy as the early Greeks had, the Romans are essentially sending the motif of the trophy to the battlefield. The relationship of the materials to the site is generic.

The transition of the trophy into a motif which decorates the permanent monument is a result of its decentralization, as is seen in the *Arc de Triomphe d'Orange* (Triumphal Arch of Orange) (Figs. 12 and 13), built on the Via Agrippa in Orange, France between the years of 10-14 CE in honor of Augustus and victors of the Gallic Wars. Appropriated and reconstructed by Emperor Tiberius in honor of Germanicus and the latter's victory over the German tribes in the Rhineland, the arch features multiple bas-





**(Left) Fig. 12:** *Arc de Triomphe d'Orange*, ca. 14 CE, Roman, Orange, France (Photo: Author)

**(Right) Fig. 13:** (Detail) Bound captives and trophy (Photo: Author)

reliefs of trophies, naval victories, and spoils taken in battle. The arch, although retaining images of specific events, is fully unmoored in time and place, with neither site-specificity nor motif-specificity.

The Gemma Augustae (Fig. 14) dates to the same period as the original construction of the *Arc de Triomphe d'Orange*. Augustus, featured as Jupiter (the Roman equivalent of Zeus), is surrounded by the personification of Roma (seated to his right atop arms and armor and carrying a spear), Italia (seated with a child to his left), Oceanus and Oikoumene (holding a laurel crown or *corona civica* above Augustus' head).<sup>22</sup>

Opposite Augustus is Tiberius, his adopted son, alighting from the chariot accompanied by Victoria (Nike). In the lower panel soldiers are raising a trophy to signify the victories

<sup>22</sup> Paul Zanker, *The Power of the Image in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1990), 230-232.



of Tiberius (who is represented in the lower panel with his insignia, the scorpion, upon the shield hanging from the trophy). Below the trophy are two captive barbarians, with two more dragged from the opposite side.<sup>23</sup>

The work signals the continued tradition of the battlefield trophy, and of the idea that through its erection victory is attained.

Significantly, while the trophy as a motif



**Fig. 14:** *Gemma Augustea*, ca. 10 CE, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

has become generic in works like the arch in Orange and the Trophy of Augustus at La Turbie, it retains some of its action-based specificity.

In the triumphs initially granted to generals and then later implemented by victorious emperors, captives were literally bound at the foot of a trophy created out of actual weapons.<sup>24</sup> In her book, *The Roman Triumph*, Mary Beard states, “The triumph, in other words, re-presented and re-enacted the victory. It brought the margins of the empire to its center, and in so doing celebrated the new geopolitics that victory had brought.”<sup>25</sup> Beard also translates and relates a passage from Polybius, a 2nd-century

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<sup>23</sup> Zanker, *The Power of the Image*, 232.; Zanker states that the figures dragging the barbarians are personifications representing Spanish and Thracian troops, both groups Tiberius would later conquer in the North.

<sup>24</sup> Mary Beard describes triumphs as “those famous parades through the city of Rome that celebrated Rome’s greatest victories against its enemies...To be awarded a triumph was the most outstanding honor a Roman general could hope for. He would be drawn in a chariot-accompanied by the booty he had won, the prisoners [barbarians tied up] he had taken captive...through the streets of the city to the Temple of Jupiter [Roman equivalent for Zeus] on the Capitoline Hill, where he would offer a sacrifice to the god [another form of a trophy?].” *The Roman Triumph*, (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 1.

<sup>25</sup> Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 32.

BCE Greek historian, describing the triumph as “a spectacle in which generals bring right before the eyes of the Roman people a vivid impression of their achievements.”<sup>26</sup> The maintenance of political power depended on the people’s ability to remember the victories of their leaders, therefore the re-creation of victory through monuments at both the battle site and Rome enables a constant reminder of the leading political figures. For imagery of this type the leaders of Rome fully transitioned the trophy, placing it into a catalogue of images to portray the might of the emperor both in ephemeral and permanent form.

The *Tropaeum Traiani* or Trophy of Trajan (Fig. 15) in Adamklissi, Romania, constructed in 109 CE, was erected by Emperor Trajan to commemorate his victory in the Dacian wars. Situated in Dobruduscha, in the low country 50 km from the Black Sea and 22 km from the Danube, the monument stands on a high plateau near a mausoleum (possibly for a general) and a shrine containing a large altar.<sup>27</sup> Dedicated to Mars Ultor, the god of war, the trophy

consisted of a massive cylindrical nucleus, about 40m in diameter and surmounted by a cone. From the tip of this arose a hexagonal tower-like structure with two identical dedication inscriptions, which brought the building to a height equivalent to the diameter, 40m. Running around the top of the cylinder was a row of 54 1.58m high metopic panels with scenes from the Dacian wars...above which was a parapet with fields displaying bound Dacian prisoners of war. The tower was crowned with the monumental trophy itself, 4.75m high. At its foot were two bereaved Dacian women with a pinioned man between them.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Polybius; quoted in Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 31.

<sup>27</sup> Niels Hannested, *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* (Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1986), 172-173.

<sup>28</sup> Hannested, *Roman Art and Imperial Policy*, 173. For images of the *Tropaeum Traiani* please refer to: Hannested, *Roman Art and Imperial Policy*, 171-173 and Brian Dobson, “The Empire,” in *Warfare in the Ancient World* ed. General Sir John Hackett (London: Sidgwick and Jackson Limited, 1989), 207-213.

Neils Hannedsted suggests that the trophy was built by the soldiers of the Dacian wars which explains the correct details of weapons and body armor in the metope panels. As part of the same propaganda campaign, but aiming at a metropolitan audience, rather than a border-land audience, Trajan erected a column (Fig. 16) in his newly-built library complex in Rome. While the Trophy of Trajan at Adamklissi shares the same specific/relative attributes as the Trophy of Augustus, the Column of Trajan is an embodiment of the relative/generic, for while it marks a specific period of the Dacian Wars it deploys the



**(Above) Fig. 15:** Reconstruction of *Tropaeum Traiani*, Adamklissi, Romania (Photo: Courtesy of Cristian Chirita and Wikimedia Commons)  
**(Right) Fig. 16:** Column of Trajan, ca. 113 CE, Rome, Italy (Photo: Author)



trophy generically as a symbol of victory.<sup>29</sup> Just as the *Arc de Triomphe d' Orange* carries specific battle imagery, the Column features imagery specifically related to the Dacian Wars. On its tortal frieze the emperor is speaking to his troops, forts are being constructed, battles are waged, and prisoners are taken. The column becomes relative though, as it loses both time and site specificity. Along the spectrum that extends from the specific to the generic its use of the trophy motif, like the personification of victory that stands between the narratives of the Dacian campaigns, is generic (Fig. 17). Additionally, the base of the trophy is decorated with the form of the trophy as piles of arms and armor, further illustrating how the relative and the generic have coalesced to form a distinctly Roman style of the trophy, one that portrays victory as a means of exhibiting the virtues of the emperor. The display at Rome, of imagery related to its campaigns, enabled the Imperial house to assure the Roman people of its right to rule and of the virtues of the emperor.<sup>30</sup> The column depicts scenes of *clementia* and *pietas*, delivering a streamlined message of virtue to the public.

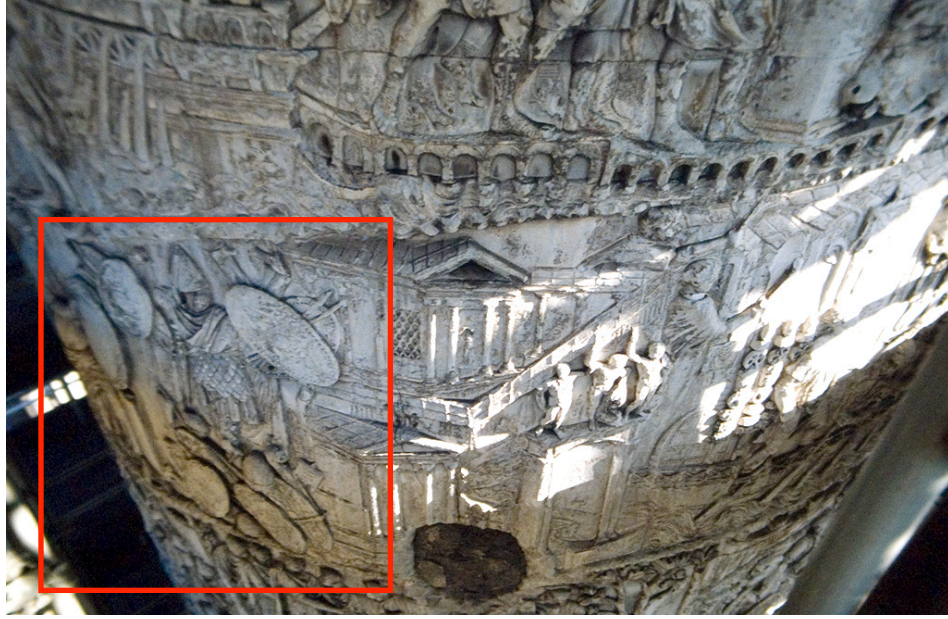
The trophy, after Trajan and by the end of the High Imperial period, was no longer a site specific sacred offering, but an abstract symbol, one representative of victory. Yvon Garlan states that by this period “the trophy was tending to lose its

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<sup>29</sup> In his essay “The Empire,” 207: Brian Dobson asserts that at least one particular detail of the trophy in Adamklissi is neglected for a more stylized representation of warfare on the Column of Trajan in Rome. Dobson states that when fighting in foreign lands the Roman army would adapt to the new fighting styles with different forms of armor, including the use of a “special protective armor [worn] on the exposed sword arm” so as to protect the legionary from the two-handed scythe wielded by the Dacians. According to Dobson (and confirmed by my own analysis of images of the column) the armor worn on the sword arm is not shown on the Column of Trajan, leading one to believe that while commemorating the victories of Trajan, the column stood as a testament to the virtues and power of the emperor. See image in *Warfare in the Ancient World*, page 213, where, on the Trophy at Adamklissi, a Roman legionary is battling a Dacian carrying a two-handed scythe. The addition of body armor on the sword arm can clearly be seen in this image.

<sup>30</sup> There is a debate amongst scholars as to who actually erected the trophy, either Trajan, to commemorate his own victories and virtues, or Hadrian, to indicate his right-to-rule as Trajan’s successor.





**Fig. 17:** Column of Trajan, ca. 113 CE, Rome, Italy, (Detail) Trophy  
(Photo: Courtesy of the University of Oregon Libraries, Department of Classics, and the Lowenstam Collection of Ancient Western Art and Archaeology)

historical and topical character and to become the banal symbol of the victorious power, universal and abstract, which Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar and all the emperors believed they possessed.”<sup>31</sup> Across the board, Roman Imperial art achieved a standardized program of representing the emperor and his virtues through the use of mediated imagery,<sup>32</sup> and it did so for the trophy as it did with other forms. This is seen in the continued use of the defeated’s armor when portraying trophies on arches (as is seen on the Arch of Septimius Severus [Fig. 18] where winged victories hold aloft trophies), buildings, and sarcophagi, while the same is true in the displays of trophies and prisoners in the triumphs celebrated by generals and emperors.

<sup>31</sup> Yvon Garlan, *War in the Ancient World: A Social History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1975), 63.

<sup>32</sup> In the use of mediated imagery, or imagery that conveys a message, the Roman emperor focalized his monuments on the political astuteness of himself and his successors, establishing the Imperial house and its right to rule.



**Fig. 18:** Arch of Septimius Severus, ca. 203 CE, Forum, Rome, Italy, (Detail) Winged Victories holding trophies in spandrels (Photo: Author)

The trophy also appears as a generic symbol on sarcophagi of the later Roman period, such as the one found at Portonaccio, Italy (Figs. 19 and 20). This work is of a type most likely produced on speculation and available in workshops for the purchase of any discerning customer and are representative of the image types which illustrate the changing role of the trophy. In the center of the sarcophagus is a face-less general, charging forward on his horse in a manner similar to that used on the Great Trajanic Frieze of the Arch of Constantine.<sup>33</sup> He is faceless so that his head could be customized to represent the buyer or the buyer's deceased loved one. The surrounding composition contains a multitude of figures in the side, front and top panels representing generic scenes of armies, child birth, and marriage. These sarcophagi are representative of the ideals of Roman society and could potentially apply to any buyer. In such a

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<sup>33</sup> Fred Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2007), 227.





**Fig. 19:** Portonaccio Sarcophagus, from Via Tiburtina, Portonaccio, Italy, ca. 180-190 CE, Museo Nazionale Romano-Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome, Italy (Photo: Author)



**Fig. 20:** Marble cinerary urn, Roman, Julio-Claudian period, 1st half of 1st century CE, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY (Photo: Author)

context, the trophy is stripped of any specific meaning other than a general reference to battle prowess and victory. Fred Kleiner states that the “pseudo-biographical sarcophagi...are allegories, not documentaries. They represent the qualities the deceased wished to have remembered, not the actual events of his life.”<sup>34</sup>

The so-called Trophies of Marius<sup>35</sup> (Figs. 21-23) were initially specific and became generic through re-use and re-contextualization. Originally made to celebrate Emperor Domitian’s triumph over the Chatti and the Dacians in 89 CE, the trophies were re-used for the *Nymphaeum* of Alexander Severus (225-235),<sup>36</sup> and are now located on the balustrade of the Campidoglio in Rome. Representative of the programmatic use of *spolia*<sup>37</sup> and the continued iconographic representation of the trophy, Alexander Severus’ re-use of the trophy allowed him to reference the “imperial past and its triumphal heritage.”<sup>38</sup> The use of the trophy as *spolia* is similar to the purchasing of generic sarcophagi, in that the motif of the trophy and other elements of prowess enhances the position of the user without its artist knowing anything of the user’s identity. This theme is seen, interestingly, in the later shifting of the trophies in 1590 to the Campidoglio by

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<sup>34</sup> Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art*, 227.

<sup>35</sup> The name actually originates in the renaming of the Severus *Nymphaeum* in the Middle Ages to the *Trofei di Mario*. The renaming is tied to the belief that Julius Caesar restored the actual trophies of Marius, which had been torn down by Sulla during the Republican era, on the Capitoline Hill (the location of the Campidoglio).

<sup>36</sup> This is according to Samuel Ball Platner, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 409. The *nymphaeum* would have been located in the Piazza Venezia in Rome, just at the foot of the Capitoline Hill. Multiple coins from the period of Alexander Severus depict the *Nymphaeum* with trophies located in the side bays. All traces of Domitian appear to have been removed except it is rumored that there is a quarry mark of Domitian on the underside of one of the trophies and was seen during the Renaissance when the trophies were moved to the balustrade.

<sup>37</sup> Brenda Longfellow, *Roman Imperialism and Civic Patronage: Form, Meaning, and Ideology in Monumental Fountain Complexes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 195.

<sup>38</sup> Longfellow, *Roman Imperialism*, 202.





**Fig. 21:** Balustrade of the Campidoglio on the Capitoline Hill, Rome, Italy (Photo: Author)



**(Left) Fig. 22:** Trophy of Marius, ca. 89 CE, Capitoline Hill, Rome, Italy (Photo: Author)



**(Right) Fig. 23:** Trophy of Marius, ca. 89 CE, Capitoline Hill, Rome, Italy (Photo: Author)

Pope Sixtus V. By shifting the Trophies of Marius to the Campidoglio to represent the church as resurrector of a new Rome, Pope Sixtus V aligned himself and the Catholic church with the emperors of the past.

While the classical trophy in its original form, that of arms and armor hung on a tree, is in eclipse in the Middle Ages, it is interesting to note that a new form of the trophy takes root with the rise of Christianity. Multiple notations of the Cross as trophy appear in Medieval literature, including the writings of Eusebius of Caesarea, a 4th-century CE Roman historian, who recalls the statement made by Constantine concerning his military standard (a cross) and his vision preceding the Battle at the Milvian Bridge in 312 CE. The statement is said to have come directly from the emperor himself: “About the time of the midday sun, when the day was just turning, he said he saw with his own eyes up in the sky and resting over the sun, a cross-shaped trophy formed from light, and a text attached to it which said, ‘By this conquer.’”<sup>39</sup> St. Augustine, a 5th-century CE philosopher and theologian, who, when speaking of the crucifixion of Christ states, “For He was to have that very cross as His sign; that very cross a trophy, as it were, over the vanquished devil.”<sup>40</sup> Later, in the Carolingian period, the small, silver Arch of Einhard,<sup>41</sup> a cross-base, (Fig. 24) refers to itself as “the trophy of the eternal victory.”<sup>42</sup> Located on

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<sup>39</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea, quoted in Jonathan Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 159.

<sup>40</sup> St. Augustine, quoted in Elizabeth Dreyer, *The Cross in Christian Tradition: From Paul to Bonaventure* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 151.

<sup>41</sup> The only remaining evidence of the arch is in a seventeenth century drawing housed in the Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 10440; Einhard, *Charlemagne's Courtier: The Complete Einhard*, trans. and ed. by Paul Edward Dutton (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 63-67.

<sup>42</sup> Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 125-127; Chazelle states, “The arch’s inscription refers to the cross relic... contained either in it in or in the reliquary cross it bore.” *The Crucified God*, 125-126.





**Fig. 24:** Drawing of the lost Arch of Einhard, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. fr. 10440, fol. 45 recto (Photo: Published by Celia Chazelle in *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era.*)

the attic of the arch between two of the Archangels is an inscription in Latin stating: “Ad Tropaeum Aeternae Victoriae Sustinendum Einhardus Peccator Hunc Arcum Ponere Ac Deo Dedicare Curavit.” (Einhard, a sinner, strove to set up and dedicate to God this arch to support the trophy of eternal victory<sup>43</sup>) The now-missing crucifix (which would have surmounted the arch), does indeed bear comparison to the classical military trophy; both involve human forms hung from a “tree,” sharing a message of victory. In connecting the triumphant Jesus and his cross to the triumphal imagery of the early Romans, Einhard’s Arch is reinforcing Charlemagne’s role as the Holy Roman Emperor. Lawrence Nees states, “The work...bespeaks the intimate connection between works of art, their

<sup>43</sup> Dutton translates the inscription as “Einhard, a Sinner, strove to set up and dedicate to god this arch to support the cross of eternal victory,” yet he ignores the use of the word *tropaeum* on the inscription; Einhard, *Charlemagne’s Courtier: The Complete Einhard*, trans. Paul Edward Dutton (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 63.

individual patron's interest, and contemporary issues of broad cultural import."<sup>44</sup> The word "trophy" as it appears in the inscription is now a signifier of victory in the Middle Ages combining political propaganda with Christian religious art. These instances of comparing the cross to a trophy display medieval knowledge of the Roman tradition of erecting trophies in relation to victory and acknowledge the continuance of the tradition. The later resurgence of the anthropomorphic form of the trophy in the 15th century symbolizes the return to classical ideals and the coalescence of the sacred and the secular.

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<sup>44</sup> Lawrence Nees, "Art and Architecture," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol II c. 700- c. 900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 834.

## CHAPTER IV

### RE-BIRTH

The rejuvenation of the anthropomorphic trophy and other classical ideals in the Renaissance is central to the understanding of the life of the motif. In reviving this form of symbolizing victory, the artists and architects of the Renaissance and later periods were in step with their times. In his book *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, Erwin Panofsky states, “the Renaissance was linked to the Middle Ages by a thousand ties;...the heritage of classical antiquity, even though the threads of tradition had become very thin at times, had never been lost beyond recuperation;...there had been vigorous minor revivals before the ‘great revival’ culminating in the Medicean age.”<sup>1</sup> The trophy is a perfect example of what Panofsky is referring to, in that while its use is not prevalent in the time of the Middle Ages, its symbolism was still pervasive enough to endure.

The cultural movement of the Renaissance profoundly affected the literature, arts, and sciences of the early modern period, an example of which is found in comparing the works of Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472) and Vitruvius. Alberti, in his late treatise *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, recognizes the work of the first-century architect, Vitruvius, both for its learned examinations and for its faults. Alberti affirms the brilliance of the works of his ancestors while also acknowledging the need for a continued study of the arts in order to transcend the works of antiquity.<sup>2</sup> In his *Ten*

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<sup>1</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> “Many and various arts, which help to make the course of our life more agreeable and cheerful, were handed down to us by our ancestors, who had acquired them by much effort and care.” Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1988), 2.

*Books on Architecture* Vitruvius states that the architect “should know a great deal of history because architects often include ornaments in their work, and ought to be able to supply anyone who asks with an explanation why they have introduced certain motifs.”<sup>3</sup> One example is the erection of what Vitruvius calls a trophy by the Spartans after their defeat of the Persians at the Battle of Plataea. He writes,

..and after they won decisively, they set up the Portico of Persians<sup>4</sup> as a trophy of victory for posterity-after, of course, a triumphal celebration glorious for its spoils and booty...There they placed images of the Persian captives, decked out in their ornate barbarian dress, holding up the roof, their pride punished with well-deserved outrage. In addition, by this means enemies might shrink back, terror stricken at the results of Spartan courage. At the same time, the citizens, looking upon this example of battle courage, uplifted by pride, would be prepared to defend their own liberty.<sup>5</sup>

Though this is not an anthropomorphic trophy, Vitruvius uses the term trophy broadly as a way to describe both the traditional method of declaring victory in battle, as well as hinting at the lasting effects a permanent ornamentation has on the people who witness it.

In his section on commemorative monuments Alberti relates examples of how victory was represented in antiquity and what developed out of those representations.

When our ancestors drove back their enemies and extended the boundaries of their empire with armed force, they set up markers,<sup>6</sup> to record their victorious progress and to brand territory gained in battle and distinguish it from that of their neighbors...After that, as a form of thanksgiving, they began to consecrate to the gods a portion of their booty...They also

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<sup>3</sup> Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Ingrid D. Rowland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 22.

<sup>4</sup> According to Pausanias 3.11.3, “The most striking feature in the market-place [of Sparta] is the portico which they call Persian because it was made from spoils taken in the Persian wars...On the pillars are white-marble figures of Persians.”

<sup>5</sup> Vitruvius, *Architecture*, 22.

<sup>6</sup> See Alberti, *Building*, Chapter II for a discussion of these types of “markers”, such as the Trophy of Augustus and the Trophy of Pompey.

decided to take their future reputation into account...This gave rise to displays of spoils, statues, inscriptions, trophies, and other inventions to celebrate their glory.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, Alberti connects the deposit of captured standards and spoils at city gates to the later decoration of said gates and triumphal arches with trophies and other ornamentation symbolic of victory.<sup>8</sup> Yet despite Alberti's awareness of the independent function of the trophy, Renaissance usage of the anthropomorphic piles of arms and armor was primarily ornamental.

Andrea Mantegna's (1431-1506) *Triumph of Caesar* (Fig. 25), created from 1486-1505 and located in Hampton Court Palace in England, was initially created for the Ducal Palace of Mantua. Noted as "the most influential visualization of the Roman victory parade ever,"<sup>9</sup> the work represents Julius Caesar's triumphal return to Rome after the Gallic wars. Mantegna's depiction indicates his knowledge of ancient art and archaeology in his use of trophies, spoils, and military standards. The third panel, titled *The Trophy Bearers* (Fig. 26) portrays a young soldier in the foreground surrounded by various pieces of militaria, including forms of trophies held aloft to indicate victory. This panel of the series is indicative of the use of the iconography of the trophy and its role in portraying the significance of a ruler, or of a victory. Those who displayed it, from the Gonzaga (of Mantua) to later owners, associated themselves with the triumphs of Julius Caesar, who was both a general and a ruler.

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<sup>7</sup> Alberti, *Building*, 238-239.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 265.

<sup>9</sup> Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 154.





**(Top) Fig. 25:** Andrea Mantegna, *Triumph of Caesar*, 1486-1505, Hampton Court Palace, England (Photo: Author)  
**(Bottom) Fig. 26:** (Detail) *The Trophy Bearers* (Photo: Author)



A further example of the ubiquity of the trophy as iconography and ornament in the Renaissance is the equestrian sculpture of Bartolomeo Colleoni (Fig. 27), Captain-General of the Venetian Republic in the 15th century, designed by Andrea del Verrocchio (1435-1488) and completed by Alessandro Leopardi. Standing approximately 13 feet high, the bronze sculpture represents a stern-faced Colleoni riding atop a horse, which lifts its left front leg as if striding forward. While the bronze sculpture was designed by Verrocchio, it was cast after his death by Leopardi, who is also responsible for the base of the monument. Sculpted marble trophies abound on the base, taking both the form of a tree supporting arms and armor (Fig. 28) and a plain cuirass surrounded by piles of arms and armor (Fig. 29). Below the cornice of the base is a band of bronze wrapped around the monument also depicting trophies (Fig. 30). This monument is an example of the strategic use of military trophies as an indication of the honoree's battle prowess and not as references to a specific and marked victory, similar to the idea of the Portonaccio Sarcophagus (Fig. 19). The trophy has transitioned to the strictly ornamental on Leopardi's work, which plots at the generic end of the specific-generic spectrum.

In his book *The Life of Forms in Art* Henri Focillon discusses the elements of ornamental works as they relate to their placement on an artwork, such as sculpture or architecture, and how the ornament creates form as it maintains form.

Even before it becomes formal rhythm and combination, the simplest ornamental theme, such as a curve or *rinceau*...has already given accent to the void in which it occurs and has conferred on it a new and original existence...Ornament shapes, straightens, and stabilizes the bare and arid field on which it is inscribed. Not only does it exist in and of itself, but it also shapes its own environment - to which it imparts a form.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Henri Focillon, *The Life of Forms in Art* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 66.



**(Top Left) Fig. 27:** Andrea del Verrochio and Alessandro Leopardi, *Equestrian Monument of Bartolommeo Colleoni*, ca. 1481-96 CE, Bronze and Marble, Campo SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, Italy (Photo: Author)

**(Top Right) Fig. 28:** Alessandro Leopardi, Bronze and Marble Base (Detail) Tree bearing trophies (Photo: Author)

**(Above Right) Fig. 29:** Alessandro Leopardi, Bronze and Marble Base (Detail) Plain Cuirass (Photo: Author)

**(Below) Fig. 30:** Alessandro Leopardi, Bronze and Marble Base (Detail) Bronze band with trophies, garlands, and griffins (Photo: Author)



Focillon suggests that while an object may have its own form, it takes on a different and therefore new form when ornament is added to it, such as the equestrian statue of Colleoni. Verrochio's original design only included the horse and Colleoni, whereas the final product, completed by Leopardi, has been expanded and enhanced in the use of ornament.

The use of the trophy as ornament extended beyond the secular, reaching to the heart of the Vatican in the building of the Casino of Pope Pius IV (Fig. 31) from 1558-1563. Designed and constructed by Pirro Ligorio, who has been considered as "one of the most knowledgeable classical archaeologists of the sixteenth century,"<sup>11</sup> the Casino is reminiscent of a *nymphaeum*<sup>12</sup> covered in a rich stucco decoration using motifs of antiquity for its ornament. Consisting of four structures surrounding an oval courtyard, the Casino has two entrance gateways situated at the northern and southern ends of the courtyard, both of which are adorned with mosaic renderings of trophies (Fig. 32). Louis Cellauro suggests that Ligorio had both the Academy of Athens and a new Parnassus in mind when he created the Casino, owing to its location on a hillside of the Vatican gardens and its extensive use of antique ornamentation.<sup>13</sup> The equating of a structure created for the head of the Roman Catholic Church to ancient places centered on higher learning and the pursuit of humanism, fits within the broader framework of the Renaissance and a pope's pursuit of aligning himself (and the church) with the learned

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<sup>11</sup> Louis Cellauro, "The Casino of Pius IV in the Vatican," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 63 (1995), 183.

<sup>12</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary defines *nymphaeum* as, "A grotto or shrine dedicated to a nymph or nymphs; (a part of) a building designed to represent this." OED Online. May 2012. Oxford University Press, s.v. "nymphaeum, n."

<sup>13</sup> Cellauro, "The Casino of Pius IV," 184.





**(Top) Fig. 31:** Pirro Ligorio, Casino of Pope Pius IV, 1558-1563, Vatican City, Rome, Italy (Photo: Author)  
**(Bottom) Fig. 32:** (Detail) Trophy on North Gateway (Photo: Author)



**Fig. 33:** Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, 1560-1622 CE, woodcut, (Detail) *Vittoria* (Photo: Published in Casare Ripa's *Iconologia*)

and powerful figures of the ancient past, an idea that will be explored further with the examination of the palaces of the Baroque period.

The conventionalization of the iconography of the trophy was furthered by printed handbooks like Cesare Ripa's (1560-1622) *Iconologia*.<sup>14</sup> Ripa's work includes an emblem for *Vittoria* (Victory) (Fig. 33) who is described as "a young lady cloth'd in Gold; Wings on her shoulders, holding in her right Hand, a Garland of

Laurel, and Olive; in her left, a Palm-branch, sitting upon a Multitude of Trophies of Arms, and Spoils of Enemies of all Sorts."<sup>15</sup> Though Ripa specifically uses the word "trophy," his representation of victory varies from that of the Romans and Greeks in its use of piled arms and armor, as opposed to an anthropomorphic trophy. The depictions listed in Ripa gained currency through repetition and were used to celebrate the victories and other virtues of the princes and kings of Europe.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, trans. by P. Tempest (London: Benjamin Motte, 1709); Created as an emblem book featuring symbols representative of virtues, vices, arts, and sciences, the *Iconologia* enabled artists to work systematically in their approach to ornamentation.

<sup>15</sup> Ripa, *Iconologia*, 50.

<sup>16</sup> Jean Pierre Babelon and Claire Constans, *Versailles: Absolutism and Harmony* (New York: Vendome Press, 1998), 14-15.

In Louis XIV's France the role of the trophy as ornament is elevated beyond that of simple decoration. Louis XIV uses the motif of the trophy in multiple building campaigns, as a way to signify his "*gloire*."<sup>17</sup> Robert Berger suggests that "In all public gestures...Louis XIV sought to enhance his *gloire*, meaning his glorious reputation...Louis understood better than any of the others that architecture - a medium more monumental and more durable than sculpture or painting - could play as important, or even greater, a role in ensuring *gloire* as could a military campaign or a political treaty."<sup>18</sup> Louis XIV understood the necessity to maintain a physical presence (whether in person or in architecture) within his country. One of Louis XIV's greatest architectural achievements is the building of the Hôtel des Invalides (Fig. 34). Designed as an army pensioners' hospital by Libéral Bruant (1635-1697), it allowed injured veterans a place to live. Begun in 1670 the Hôtel consisted of a hospice, convent, hospital, workshops, and barracks. On the main facade (Fig. 35), facing northeast, is a relief of Louis XIV surrounded by an arch with his traditional symbol of the sun and classically inspired trophies. On either side of the arch are dormer windows articulated as trophies (Fig. 36) each with a suit of armor similar to those worn by the military of Louis XIV, as opposed to the traditional form of a Roman cuirass or Corinthian helmet. This same updating in the style of the trophy can be seen in the main courtyard (Fig. 37) where trophies decorate sixty more dormer windows, each with different combinations of weapons, breastplates, cannons, and flags.<sup>19</sup> During construction, France had declared victory in its

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<sup>17</sup> Robert W. Berger, *A Royal Passion: Louis XIV as Patron of Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 5.

<sup>18</sup> Berger, *Passion*, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Francois LaGrange, *The Hôtel des Invalides*, trans. Isabel Ollivier (Evreux: Kapp and Lahure, 2005), 15.





**(Top) Fig. 34:** Libéral Bruant and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, L'Hôtel National des Invalides, Northeast Façade, Paris, France, 1670-1708 CE (Photo: Author)  
**(Above) Fig. 35:** (Detail) Archway featuring Louis XIV and trophies (Photo: Author)  
**(Right) Fig. 36:** Dormer window (Photo: Author)





war with Holland and these trophies “were designed to show that the king was the master of war and peace and was favoured by Victory.”<sup>20</sup> At the core of the Hôtel des Invalides complex is the Church of the Dome, designed and built by Jules Hardouin-Mansart. The exterior of the dome (Fig. 38) is decorated in gilded trophies similar to the works on the arch of the northeast facade, reinforcing Louis XIV’s ability to rule and be victorious.

The building campaign most closely associated with Louis XIV is that of the Palace of Versailles (Fig. 39). Continuous construction of the palace complex took place from 1668 to 1710, under the architects Louis Le Vau and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, the artist Charles Le Brun (1619-1690), and the landscape architect Andre Le Nôtre (1613-1700). The front facade of Versailles is characterized by its pitched roofs,



**(Top) Fig. 37:** Libéral Bruant and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, L’Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris, France, 1670-1708 CE, (Detail) Main courtyard dormer window (Photo: Author)

**(Bottom) Fig. 38:** Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Church of the Dome, L’Hôtel des Invalides, Paris, France, (Detail) Cupola (Photo: Author)

<sup>20</sup> LaGrange, *Hôtel*, 15.



**(Top) Fig. 39:** Louis Le Vau, Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Charles Le Brun, and Andre Le Notre, Palace of Versailles, Front façade, Main courtyard, Versailles, France (Photo: Author)  
**(Above) Fig. 40:** (Detail) Clock surrounded by works of Girardon and Marsy (Photo: Author)  
**(Right) Fig. 41:** (Detail) Attic trophy (Photo: Author)



gleaming golden ornamentation, and stunning brick work. Covering the attic of the front (Fig. 41) and rear facade (Fig. 43) of the palace are trophies, some diminutive in size (on the front) and others monumental (on the rear). At the center of the courtyard sits the clock (Fig. 40) with Mars and Hercules on either side seated on top of piles of trophies.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Babelon, *Versailles*, 68.



On the rear facade (Fig. 42) stand trophies (Fig. 43) monumental in size in comparison to those on the front facade. When designing the decorative aspects of the front facade Le Vau was limited by the re-use of the original chateau from the time of Louis XIII, but on the garden façade “Grandeur and magnificence now reigned, displacing the showy, picturesque, and colorful qualities of the old courtyard.”<sup>22</sup> It is significant that the trophies on the rear are larger in size in that they are visible from anywhere in the garden that allows a vantage point of the rear facade of the palace.



**(Top) Fig. 42:** Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Charles Le Brun, and Andre Le Notre, Palace of Versailles, Rear façade, Versailles, France (Photo: Author)  
**(Right) Fig. 43:** (Detail) Attic trophy (Photo: Author)



<sup>22</sup> Babelon, *Versailles*, 47.

In the end of the 1670's, "Louis XIV began to figure personally in representations of his glory, as in the painting on the great barrel vault over the Hall of Mirrors, where Charles Le Brun portrayed the bewigged monarch in full command, not only of his armies victorious, against the forces of Holland, but also of the French state and its destiny."<sup>23</sup> To continue the theme of victory in the Hall of Mirrors, Jules Hardouin-Mansart designed gilded trophies for the pilasters (Fig. 44) that separate the windows on the garden side and the mirrors opposite them. These trophies are similar in style and content to those Mansart created for the cupola at the Hôtel des Invalides (Fig. 38). Mansart also created a second motif of the trophy for the Hall of Mirrors (Fig. 45), one that is anthropomorphic in nature. This same type of trophy (Fig. 46) is repeated in the Salon of War, directly adjacent to the Hall of Mirrors. Revetted in marble and decorated with gilded trophies, the room depicts scenes of France's struggles with Spain, Holland, and the Holy Roman Empire.

The architects and designers of Versailles designed a cohesive palace which displayed not only the influence of classicism, but also the ability of the sovereign to plan and execute large-scale building campaigns. These campaigns were, in effect, statesmanship at work, showing the people what great feats of which the crown was capable. The architecture and iconography present at Versailles, as well as at the Hôtel des Invalides, reinforced the impression of domination and power. The motif of the trophy was one key element. In the 18th century Versailles became the established model for other monarchies to imitate.

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<sup>23</sup> Babelon, *Versailles*, 15.



**(Left) Fig. 44:** Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Palace of Versailles, Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, France, (Detail) Gilded trophies (Photo: Author)  
**(Top Right) Fig. 45:** Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Palace of Versailles, Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, France, (Detail) Gilded trophy (Photo: Author)  
**(Bottom Right) Fig. 46:** Charles Le Brun and Antoine Coysevox, Palace of Versailles, Salon of War, Versailles, France (Detail) Gilded trophy (Photo: Author)

On the other side of the English Channel, lies an answer to the question of whether Louis XIV was as victorious and powerful as he would prefer to be seen. In August 1704, at the Battle of Blenheim,<sup>24</sup> John Churchill, the First Duke of Marlborough, defeated the French and Louis XIV in defense of the armies of Holland, during the War

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<sup>24</sup> The town, Blindheim (spelled Blenheim in England), is situated along the Danube in Bavaria, Germany, near the town of Höchstädt.



of Spanish Succession. In reward for his victory, Queen Anne granted the Duke and his wife, Sarah, the manor of Woodstock and the Hundred of Wootton where they could build a home in recognition of his victory.<sup>25</sup> The place (locality) was renamed Blenheim, after the battlefield. Architect John Vanbrugh aimed to create a house worthy of a national hero, making it part castle, part citadel, part monument, and part private home.<sup>26</sup> Situated on the interior courtyard facade (Figs. 47 and 48) are numerous trophies (Figs. 49 and 50) sculpted by Grinling Gibbons.



**(Above) Fig. 47:** John Vanbrugh, Blenheim Palace, Main courtyard, Woodstock, England (Photo: Author)

**(Left) Fig. 48:** (Detail) Front façade (Photo: Author)

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<sup>25</sup> Paul Duffie, John Forster, and Bernie Sheehan, *Blenheim Palace* (Great Britain: Heritage House Group, 2010), 5. The structure and outlying areas were a large work in progress for many years, not only did they have contractual issues with their architects, but they also lost the friendship of the queen, forcing the Marlborough's into exile. Upon their return, the day after the death of Queen Anne, the Marlborough's began construction again under the guidance of architect John Vanbrugh.

<sup>26</sup> Duffie, *Blenheim Palace*, 5.



The motif of victory is continued inside the palace, for in the center of the ceiling of the Great Hall is a painting by Sir James Thornhill featuring the First Duke dressed in a Roman uniform, kneeling in front of Britannia while displaying his plans for the Battle of Blenheim. Surrounding the central panel are trophy “piles”, including *trompe l’oeil* trophies “hanging” on the pilasters surrounding the top niches of the room.<sup>27</sup>

The Duke also commissioned tapestries to cover the walls of his home, many of which depict battles won in the course of the Duke’s illustrious career. In the First State Room hangs the Donauwörth tapestry,<sup>28</sup> which depicts Marlborough preparing his advance toward a hilltop fortress. The borders of the tapestry feature trophies,



**(Top) Fig. 49:** Attributed to Grinling Gibbons, Stone Trophy, Blenheim Palace, Main Courtyard, Woodstock, England (Photo: Author)  
**(Bottom) Fig. 50:** Attributed to Grinling Gibbons, Stone Trophy, Blenheim Palace, Main Courtyard, Woodstock, England (Photo: Author)

standards, contemporary pieces of arms, and other insigniae reflective of victory. An additional example of the use of the trophy as ornament in this home comes from the

<sup>27</sup> For images refer to Duffie, *Blenheim Palace*, 10-11.

<sup>28</sup> This tapestry can be seen in the book by Jeri Bapasola, *Threads of History: The Tapestries at Blenheim Palace* (Oxford: The Alden Press, 2005), 95.

palace chapel, the most prominent feature of which is the monument to the First Duke and Duchess and their two sons. Created out of marble, designed by William Kent and sculpted by Rysbrack, the monument portrays the Duke as a victorious hero dressed in the Roman cuirass and leather belted skirt of the ancient Roman general. Along the sides of the monument and mounted on the pilasters are trophies, also carved out of marble.

What makes the example of Blenheim particularly rich is that the renamed locality becomes a surrogate for distant Blenheim, and the palace erected upon that locality becomes by extension a surrogate trophy. The palace at Blenheim fulfills the role of a dedicatory object raised in thanks for victory, rendering it specific, similar to the column at Marathon and the Trophy of Augustus. Blenheim, as a palace, is unique in its role, for even the Palace of Versailles with all of its elements of victory, was neither created in memory of a single, specific victory, nor located in a place that was a specific (through surrogate) battlefield.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The progression of the trophy from the specific to the generic illustrates the life of a motif and the meanings attached. In leaving the battlefield the trophy changed context, from the politics of the personal (honoring fresh ghosts of those killed on the battlefield and of healing specific wounds through prayers to the divine), to those of the extra-personal (the realm of the propagandists). The ability of this new politics, where the nuances of meaning are sanded down to create a mediation of imagery, speaks to the relation of the symbol's politics to the body politic, that of the emperor to his people, the king to his subjects.

The continuous use of the trophy, both in new forms and in *spolia*, represents an undercurrent in the broader field of the use of forms to create a society's identity. For example, the so-called Trophies of Marius from Chapter III (Figs. 22 and 23) are of importance to periods beyond the Roman age, namely the Renaissance, and arguably the present. In his attempt to create a programmatic harmony symbolizing an all-powerful church, Pope Sixtus V's appropriation of these sculptures symbolized his recognition of the absolute power held by the emperors over their subjects and his use of their symbolism as a pawn in the creation of the image of a new Rome. In their position on the Capitoline Hill the trophies stand as memorials to the gone-but-not-forgotten past of Rome, evoking a sense of the city as a center of power, an empire which expanded quickly and defiantly across the known world, just as Pope Sixtus V hoped the Catholic Church would do. The marble trophies are established signs of victory and defeat,

commemorating the might of the empire, while also illustrating its downfall when dug from the muck of a city in ruin to glorify its new history. Pope Sixtus V declared a new victory for Rome in his recognition of its past glories.

The progeny of the trophy can be seen from royal palaces to civil buildings. Consider, for example, the Ostiense Train Station in Rome, Italy commissioned by Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini just prior to the arrival of Adolf Hitler in May 1938. The station is stark in form, created of travertine marble and mosaic tile in the Fascist style of its day. Stretching across the floor of the portico are mosaics detailing the story of Italy. In a style similar to that of the ancient mosaic work seen at Ostia Antica, ancient port city of Rome, the mosaics feature an image of a trophy (Fig. 51) where an antique suit of armor hangs from the trunk of a tree. Mussolini's appropriation of an ancient symbol is as decisive as that of Pope Sixtus V and the ancient Romans before him. The trophy remains emblematic of not only victory, but also the glories of Rome and all she has to offer.



**Fig. 51:** Ostiense Train Station, Portico Mosaic, ca. 1938, Rome, Italy, (Detail) Trophy (Photo: Author)

The trophy also has a direct relation to contemporary American society. The original seal for the United States War Office was used during and after the Revolutionary war, and was later modified and re-designated as the emblem of the Department of the Army in 1947 (Fig. 52). The official description of the emblem's symbolism comes from the United States Institute of Heraldry wherein it states,

The central element, the Roman cuirass, is a symbol of strength and defense. The sword, *esponton* (a type of half-pike formerly used by subordinate officers), musket, bayonet, cannon, cannon balls, mortar, and mortar bombs are representative of Army implements. The drum and drumsticks are symbols of public notification of the Army's purpose and intent to serve the nation and its people. The Phrygian cap (often called the Cap of Liberty) supported on the point of an unsheathed sword and the motto, "This We'll Defend," on a scroll held by the rattlesnake is a symbol depicted on some American colonial flags and signifies the Army's constant readiness to defend and preserve the United States.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 52: United States Department of the Army, Medal for Military Achievement (Photo: Author)

<sup>1</sup> www.history.army.mil. April 2012. United States Department of the Army and The Institute of Heraldry.

As a descendant of the battlefield trophy, the emblem for the Department of the Army restores part of that original, hallowed meaning, where an emblem, a form, can be recognized as honoring those who were victorious and fought for an idea, whether it is a small farm of olive orchards or a country of people who wish for freedom.

In studying the trophy one can find its imagery everywhere as it defiantly refuses to be lost to time. From its use in specific memorials to those of a generic nature, the trophy issues a lesson in the power of symbolism and memory in our society. Memory acts as a reference for those interested in the past of their community, while also acting as a partner to form a society's collective identity. With the use of forms retained in memory a society can proceed forward allowing for a continuous understanding in reference to a community's past. As Henri Focillon writes, "For, within this great imaginary world of forms, stands on the one hand the artist and on the other hand form itself. Even as the artist fulfills his function of geometrician and mechanic, of physicist and chemist, of psychologist and historian, so does form, guided by the play and interplay of metamorphoses, go forever forward, by its own necessity, toward its own liberty."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Focillon, *Life of Forms*, 156.



## APPENDIX

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