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A COMPANION TO ANCIENT MACEDONIA

Edited by

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Hellenistic and Roman Art, 221 BC–AD 337

Rachel Kousser

1 Introduction: Approaches to Macedonian Art under the Roman Empire

Macedonia in the late third century BC was a wealthy and artistically vibrant region of the Hellenistic world. It possessed luxurious palaces, architecturally sophisticated theaters, impressive temples, and grandiose tombs for the warrior elite and the royal family. Without a major source of marble, its cities nonetheless contained numerous examples of high-quality marble sculpture, and its metalworking – in bronze, silver, and above all, gold – was unsurpassed. Macedonia's distinctive painted tombs attest to its artists' command of the most up-to-date techniques in drawing and coloration, for instance foreshortening and chiaroscuro.¹ Also, while some areas retained their traditional rural character, the region had by now a number of well-appointed cities: Pella, the royal capital, Dium, the religious center, the important port of Thessalonica, and the royal foundations of Philippi and Cassandria. In sum, Macedonia possessed a visual culture commensurate with its political importance as one of the major Hellenistic monarchies. It shared some common artistic features with rival empires (for example its descriptive and beautifully detailed ruler portraits on coins), while at the same time retaining certain distinctive visual forms and stylistic predilections of its own, such as a disjunction between the decorative facade of a building and its internal structure.

By the early fourth century AD Macedonia looked very different.² It had by that time been part of the Roman Empire for some 500 years, and it possessed many of the

¹ S.G. Miller, *The Tomb of Lyson and Kallikles: A Painted Macedonian Tomb* (Mainz 1991).

² The best general discussions of Roman Macedonia are F. Papazoglou, 'Quelques aspects de l'histoire de la province de Macédoine', in H. Temporini and W. Haase (eds.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.7.1 (Berlin 1979), pp. 302–69 and F. Papazoglou, *Les villes de Macédoine à l'époque romaine* (Paris 1988); see also J. Vanderspoel, chapter 13.

characteristic appurtenances of Roman civilization: technologically sophisticated bath buildings, amphitheaters for gladiatorial games, luxury villas and imperial portraits. Several of Macedonia's cities had attained the highest status possible for a Roman town, that of colony, and all of its free inhabitants were Roman citizens after the passage of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of AD 212 (a law promulgated by Caracalla that gave Roman citizenship to all free inhabitants of the empire). Its largest city, Thessalonica, had become an important seat of provincial administration and an imperial residence in the late third to early fourth centuries under the Tetrarch Galerius, who endowed it with an ornate triumphal arch, a palace and a hippodrome for chariot racing. And while it had long hosted one of the earliest Christian communities in Europe – visited by Saint Paul in about AD 50 – it would soon possess as well an array of Christian churches, with complex architectural plans and lavish mosaics.³

What explains this transformation of Macedonian art during the Hellenistic and Roman periods? As the preceding paragraphs suggest, it was an extensive and thoroughgoing process in the region, which had significant implications for its inhabitants' lived experience. Also, given Macedonia's influential role – as the first of the great Hellenistic empires to fall to Rome, then as an important point of contact between the Greek East and Latin West, and finally as a major center of the Late Empire – it is significant as well for the broader development of Roman and Late Antique art.

In recent decades, scholars have paid considerable attention to cultural transformations such as those outlined here, asking questions such as: How did they happen? Who was involved? What nonetheless remained unchanged, and why?⁴ When these questions were first extensively examined beginning in the 1970s, scholars tended to focus on what was termed 'Romanization', that is, the adoption of Roman cultural practices by conquered peoples. Some, for instance M. Bénabou, saw this as a conscious strategy formulated by the Romans, intended by them to facilitate imperial rule, and imposed by force if necessary.⁵ At the same time, Bénabou characterized adherence to prior local customs (for example, traditional religion) as a form of cultural 'resistance' to Rome. Other scholars have argued for a much less intentional and programmatic development. In their view, Romanization was less a conscious strategy promulgated by imperial administrators than a spontaneous process initiated by aspiring local elites: as Brunt put it, 'Provincials Romanized themselves'.⁶

³ On the Christian monuments of Thessalonica, see E. Koukoutidou, N. Kolaidou and A. Tourta, *Wandering in Byzantine Thessaloniki* (Athens 1997); for the Late Antique era in Macedonia more generally, see C.S. Snively, chapter 26.

⁴ For example, M. Bénabou, 'Résistance et romanisation en Afrique du Nord sous le Haut-Empire', in D.M. Pippidi (ed.), *Assimilation et résistance à la culture Greco-Romaine dans le monde ancien* (Paris 1976), pp. 367–75, P.A. Brunt, 'The Romanization of the Local Ruling Classes in the Roman Empire', in D.M. Pippidi (ed.), *Assimilation et résistance à la culture Greco-Romaine dans le monde ancien* (Paris 1976), pp. 161–73, G. Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge 1998), J. Webster, 'Creolizing the Roman Provinces', *AJA* 105 (2001), pp. 209–25.

⁵ Bénabou, 'Résistance et romanisation en Afrique du Nord'.

⁶ Brunt, 'Romanization of the Local Ruling Classes', p. 162.

More recently, scholars have questioned the 'Romanization vs. resistance' model and have aimed for more nuanced, locally specific descriptions of the transformations wrought by Roman conquest.⁷ They have stressed provincials' active and selective response to imperial paradigms, and have emphasized occasions where Roman and local practices were combined to form a new synthesis.⁸ This new model, often termed 'hybridization' or 'creolization', seems particularly appropriate to Macedonia. After all, it is clear that Roman conquest had a transformative effect on Macedonian art, but it did not replace the pre-existing visual culture with a purely Roman one. Instead, Macedonian art of the Hellenistic and Roman eras remained visually distinctive, an intricately layered mixture of indigenous and imported features. Also, it incorporated elements not only from metropolitan Rome but also from nearby regions such as northern Turkey, the Balkans, and as far away as Egypt.⁹

But while this 'creolization' model can usefully be applied to Macedonia as to other Roman provinces, it is important to keep in mind as well what made the region distinctive. Three factors are particularly significant: first, Macedonia's historical position as the earliest major Hellenistic kingdom conquered by the Romans, second, the region's geographical position as a critical intermediary between the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire, and third, its military and strategic position as a launching pad for the defense of the Danube provinces during the Late Empire. These factors are worth noting because they help to explain the eclectic and cosmopolitan character of Macedonian visual culture, its experimental nature, and its influential role both in the development of Roman art during the Republic and in the formation of Late Antique art.

In evaluating the evidence for Macedonian art of the Late Hellenistic and Roman eras, it is important to note two factors that have biased the preserved archaeological record.¹⁰ The first concerns the historical experience of Macedonia in the second and first centuries BC.¹¹ During this period, Macedonian rulers fought a series of wars with Rome largely on Macedonian soil. What was not destroyed in the wars was then largely looted, with extraordinary thoroughness, by the Romans. Following this, Macedonia in the Late Republic was again a major theater of war; it formed the refuge first of Pompey against Caesar, and then of Caesar's assassins Brutus and Cassius against Octavian and Mark Antony. In consequence of this troubled history, the Late Hellenistic and Republican material record in Macedonia is very limited although inscriptions, literary texts, and a few high-quality preserved artworks suggests its original importance. The evidence for the Roman imperial era is by contrast better

⁷ For example, Woolf, *Becoming Roman*.

⁸ Webster, 'Creolizing the Roman Provinces'.

⁹ See below, n. 45 (Turkey and the Balkans) and n. 56 (Egypt).

¹⁰ For the evidence and its biases more generally, see P.J. Rhodes, chapter 2 and K. Dahmen, chapter 3.

¹¹ For the history of Macedonia in this period, see A.M. Eckstein, chapter 12 and J. Vanderspoel, chapter 13.

preserved; Roman Macedonia was raided, especially in the Late Antique period, but it was never subject to looting on the scale of the Roman conquest.¹²

A second factor biasing the preserved evidence for Hellenistic and Roman Macedonian art is the region's natural resources.¹³ Macedonia is extraordinarily rich in metals, especially precious metals, while relatively poor in the quintessential classical architectural and sculptural material of marble. Rare preserved remains of metal-working suggest the considerable achievements of Macedonian art in this medium but mostly – since metal was valuable and could be re-used – it has been lost. Marble by contrast has survived in greater quantities, but was used only in a rather limited way in architecture; sculpture, especially of the Hellenistic era, tended to be small-scale, since the material had to be imported. We have consequently to imagine a much richer sculptural production in metal than is now preserved and at the same time to adjust our expectations for architecture; due to the cost of transport, large-scale marble temples were necessarily extremely rare in Macedonia.

With these biases in mind the preserved archaeological record of Macedonia becomes easier to understand. We have limited but impressive remains from the Late Hellenistic era: coins, a few sculpted works in marble and bronze, and the last of the great series of painted Macedonian tombs. These remains need to be supplemented with inscriptions (describing for example the erection of now-lost statues in bronze) as well as literary accounts of the triumphs of various Roman generals for a full picture of the cultural production of the period. For the *Provincia Macedonia*, the evidence is richer. For sculpture, we have a full range: imperial and private portraits, votives, funerary reliefs and cult statues. In architecture – made largely of bricks and mortar and thus both durable and hard to re-use – we have baths and theaters, villas and palaces, fora and temples. Painting is, as always, less well preserved, but there exists an impressive series of mosaics primarily from domestic contexts and some small-scale painted tombs from the third century AD onward help fill out the picture. In all, we have a rich and varied visual record for the Roman imperial era and a limited but suggestive one for Late Hellenistic/Republican Macedonia.

A few words concerning the definition of 'Macedonian art' are also necessary. The boundaries of Macedonia fluctuated considerably during the Hellenistic and Roman eras so that a definition based on them will inevitably be somewhat arbitrary. At the same time, Macedonia had as well an influence on art well outside its borders, for example through commissions of its monarchs in southern Greece, and through emulations of its art in Rome and Italy. I have consequently chosen to define my subject rather broadly, including not only works created in Macedonia by Macedonians but also monuments commissioned by Macedonians but set up elsewhere, as well as those created within the region for Roman as well as local patrons. This broad definition seems to me best in order to do justice to the full scope and influence of Macedonian art.

¹² On Late Antique Macedonia, see C.S. Snively, chapter 26.

¹³ On Macedonia's natural resources, see C.G. Thomas, chapter 4.

2 The End of the Macedonian Monarchy and the Origins of the *Provincia Macedonia*

In the second to first centuries BC, the Romans imitated, appropriated, and selectively adapted Macedonian visual culture, especially the court art of the Antigonid monarchy. There is scant evidence, however, for the reverse, that is, for the Romanization of Macedonia at this time. The Romans' enthusiasm for Macedonian art was fueled by close contact between the two regions, initially through their wars, which occupied much of the first half of the second century BC, and then through the complex process of incorporating Macedonia into the Roman Empire. From the Macedonians, the Romans learned new modes of self-presentation for their leaders and for wealthy private citizens; they gained models for victory monuments and the ritual celebrations surrounding them, and they saw, in the palaces of the Antigonid kings, attractive precedents for an elegant and luxurious way of life.

The Macedonians by contrast did not choose to emulate the styles of their Roman antagonists and overlords. They largely adhered to traditional forms in depicting the gods, adorning the living and burying the dead. For their part, the Romans made few alterations in Macedonian material culture at this time. The most significant exception is the construction of the Via Egnatia, the central route that connected the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire and was supported by military camps and Roman administrative posts along its length. The history of Macedonian art in the second and first centuries BC, then, centers on the monuments of the last Antigonid kings, Roman emulations and appropriations of them, and a conservative Macedonian visual culture coupled with a few high-profile Roman interventions such as roads and army bases.

Let us begin with one of the best preserved and most influential of these Antigonid commissions, a coin of Philip V, who was king from 221 to 179 (plate 22).¹⁴ It is the first coin portrait of a Macedonian ruler since that of Demetrius Poliorcetes in the early third century BC – Philip's immediate predecessors had preferred to decorate their emissions with the images of gods – and this fact on its own testifies to the king's determination to break with the past and to present a more aggressive, charismatic image of himself. That image is, moreover, distinctly different from those of other rulers of the time.¹⁵ It boasts none of the tokens of divinity popular with Hellenistic monarchs, and it depicts Philip as a mature bearded-male rather than as a clean-shaven youth. This is quite striking; we have portraits of over 50 different Hellenistic rulers, of whom only 4 are depicted with beards.¹⁶ Since Philip came to the throne at a youthful 17, his numismatic image was not necessarily an accurate transcription of his actual appearance. Instead, it may perhaps have been intended to emphasize his maturity at a time when young monarchs were particularly vulnerable to attack.

¹⁴ M.J. Price, *Coins of the Macedonians* (London, 1974), pp. 28–9, R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*, (Oxford 1988), pp. 112–13.

¹⁵ On monarchs' portraiture, see Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*.

¹⁶ Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*, p. 46 n. 2.

In other ways, the coin portrait of Philip V is more closely aligned with those of his fellow rulers. He wears a diadem – the ribbon tied about his head that is the one invariable sign of Hellenistic kingship – and has the loosely curled medium-length hair typical of most monarchs after Alexander the Great. Philip's eyes are large and deep-set and his nose is prominent, straight and narrow. His features overall give the impression of an energetic ruler, mature and formidable.

The Roman emulation of the Macedonian king's image attests to its power in the visual culture of the time. This is particularly clear in the portrait of Philip V's antagonist, the Roman general T. Quinctius Flaminius, reproduced on coins issued shortly after his defeat of the Antigonid monarch (see plate 23).¹⁷ On the coins, Flaminius appears very similar to Philip V: mature, with curly medium-length hair, a short beard, deep set eyes, and a prominent nose. The connections are sufficiently striking that the artist must surely have known Philip V's coins just as he knew the coins of Alexander the Great, whose image of Nike, goddess of victory, he used for the reverse.¹⁸ At the same time, this was not a simple case of copying but of adaptation for particular circumstances. On the reverse the coin artist substituted a palm branch, symbolizing victory on land, for the ship's mast on Alexander's coins. He also gave the Roman general his proper title in Latin by identifying him as T. Quinctius. And for the portrait of Flaminius on the obverse, we see numerous variations that alter our impression of the image as a whole. The diadem was omitted, of course, since Flaminius was not a king. The features, too, seem more 'Roman' than those of Philip – the nose more prominent, almost beaky, the cheeks more hollow, the hair chaotic and beard scraggly.¹⁹ Overall, Flaminius looks older, less idealized, and more physically distinctive than Philip V; this is the more noteworthy since the Roman general was only about 30 at the time, and so appeared to the Greeks as a cultivated and handsome man (Plut., *Flaminius* 5.5–6).

The image of Flaminius is our first closely dated Roman portrait of a living individual and as such has an outsize importance for the history of art. Yet it implies already a clear and well-established idea of what a Roman portrait should be, one that emphasized a close almost unflattering physical descriptiveness even while emulating Hellenistic royal precedents.²⁰ It was likely commissioned by Flaminius himself (as indicated by the use of Latin on the coin), but executed by a Greek artist (as suggested by the close resemblance to Philip V's portraiture as well as the artist's

¹⁷ Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*, p. 126, M.R. Alföldi, 'Der Stater des T. Quinctius Flaminius', *Numismatische Zeitschrift* 98 (1984), pp. 19–26.

¹⁸ Price, *Coins of the Macedonians*, pl. XI.60.

¹⁹ On images of Romans in the second century BC, see Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*, pp. 126–30.

²⁰ Portraits from Delos, likely of Roman or Italian traders and dating to the period about 166–80 BC, have a similarly descriptive if not even more unflattering appearance, suggesting that Flaminius' image was not a one-off image but rather expressed a consensus about how Romans should look; on the Delian portraits, see Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*, pp. 126–7.

apparent difficulty in forming Latin letters).²¹ The combination is emblematic for much of early Roman art, which brought together Greek artists and Roman patrons to create monuments stylistically anchored in the Greek past but expressing something very new and characteristically Roman – in this case, the aspirations of a Roman general to vie with the most charismatic Hellenistic rulers while still promoting his language, his military achievements, and his distinctive, almost homely, appearance.

Similar aspirations are expressed in the monument of Aemilius Paullus at Delphi, although here we have to do not with an emulation of Macedonian art but with the intentional and clearly advertised appropriation of it (see figure 25.1).²²

The monument was originally commissioned by Perseus shortly after he succeeded his father Philip V as ruler of Macedon in 178; it is known as Paullus' monument due to the Roman general's subsequent appropriation of it. In Perseus' time, the monument seems to have formed part of a series of sculptures and inscriptions intended to highlight the Macedonians' achievements set up within high-profile locations at the important Panhellenic sanctuary at Delphi. These included an inscription detailing Perseus' proclamation of debt amnesty and other benefactions as well as others that reproduced letters and treaties of his illustrious ancestor Demetrius Poliorcetes.²³ These reminders of the power and benevolence of the Antigonid monarchs were to be accompanied by a gilded statue of Perseus set up near the Temple of Apollo (Plut., *Aemilius Paullus* 28.2), and thus in competition not only with the gilded statues of earlier Macedonian kings – Alexander I and Philip II were both commemorated in the sanctuary in this form – but also with nearby statues of Perseus' fellow monarchs of the second century BC Prusias of Bithynia and Eumenes II of Pergamon.²⁴ Perseus' dedications at Delphi, then, seem intended to present him as the culmination of a long line of illustrious Macedonian rulers, as well as a formidable power within second century BC politics. Since the king himself visited the sanctuary to consult the Delphic oracle in 174, his personal involvement with these commissions seems likely, and it should be understood as part of his energetic attempt to improve the reputation of the Macedonian monarchy in the eyes of the Greeks.²⁵

²¹ The fact that Flamininus' name on the coin is given in the genitive – as was typical for the individual responsible for the emission – constitutes additional evidence supporting his responsibility for the coin: Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*, p. 126, Alföldi, 'Stater des T. Quinctius Flamininus', pp. 21–5.

²² Delphi, Archaeological Museum. A. Jacquemin and D. Laroche, 'Notes sur trois piliers delphiques', *BCH* 106 (1982), pp. 191–218, H. Kähler, *Der Fries vom Reiterdenkmal des Aemilius Paullus in Delphi* (Berlin 1965).

²³ On the proclamation, see Polybius 25.3; for the treaties, which are second-century copies of third-century inscriptions, see A. Jacquemin, D. Laroche and F. Lefèvre, 'Delphes, le roi Persée et les Romains', *BCH* 119 (1995), pp. 125–36, F. Lefèvre, 'Traité de paix entre Démétrios Poliorcète et la confédération étolienne (fin 289?)', *BCH* 122 (1998), pp. 109–41. The substance of the treaties clearly dates them to the third century, but the letter forms are second century, indicating that these are copies made by Perseus of earlier inscriptions.

²⁴ S.G. Miller, 'Macedonians at Delphi', in A. Jacquemin (ed.), *Delphes: Cent ans après la grande fouille* (Athens 2000), pp. 263–81.

²⁵ On the visit, see Livy 41.22.5–6.

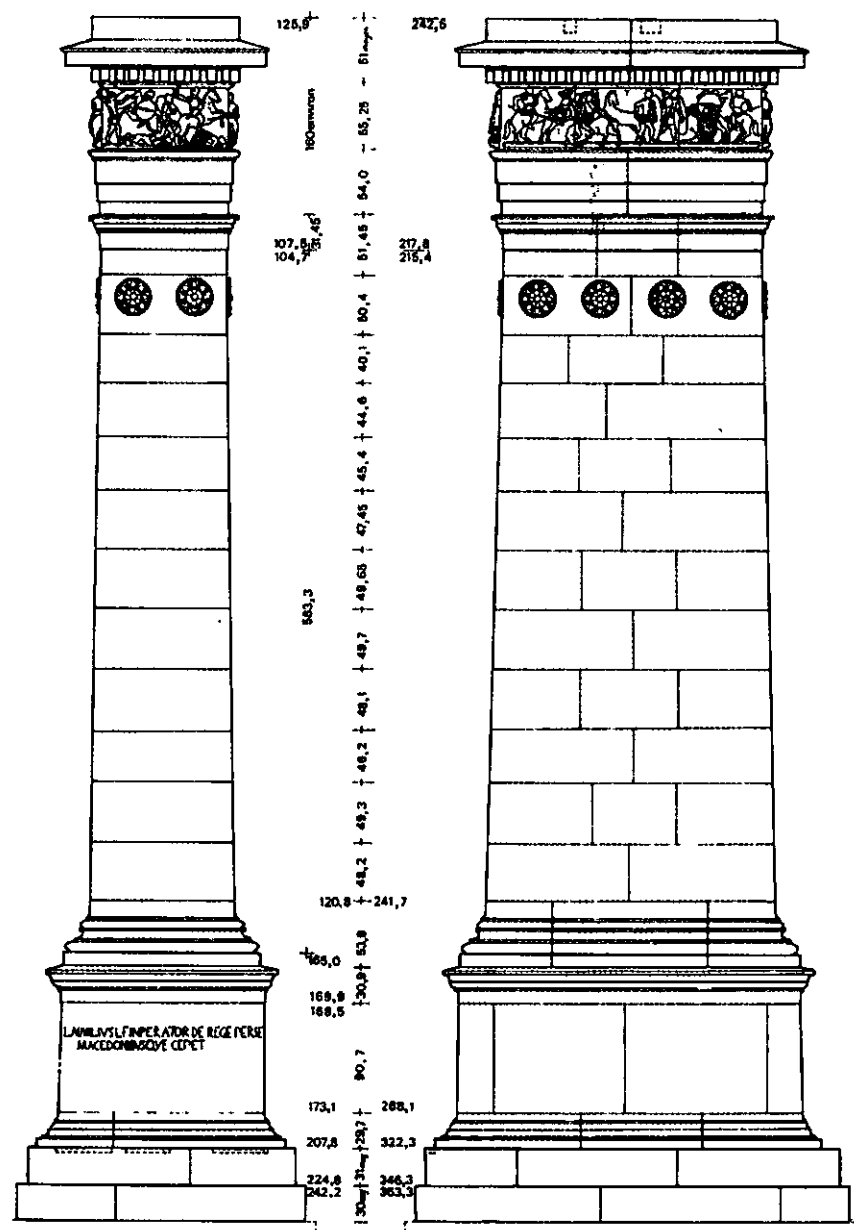


Figure 25.1 Reconstruction drawing of monument of Aemilius Paullus, about 167 BC

At the time of Perseus' defeat by the Roman general Aemilius Paullus in 168, however, his project remained unfinished. Also, it was subsequently completed in a manner strikingly at odds with what the Macedonian king had intended. During a visit to Delphi shortly after his victory, Paullus ordered his own portrait set up upon the base intended for Perseus' gilded statue since 'it was only proper that the conquered should

give way to the conquerors'.²⁶ He had the original Greek dedication excised and a new one in Latin inscribed that proclaimed in a few succinct, blunt words Paullus' defeat of Perseus and appropriation of his monument.²⁷

The Roman general was also likely responsible for other aspects of the work's final form. While the base of the monument was clearly commissioned by Perseus – as the still partly visible dedication in Greek attests – Paullus probably added the 8-meter-tall pillar on which his statue stood as well as the relief sculptures which decorated it.²⁸ These sculptures, running in a continuous frieze along all four sides of the pillar monument, seem to depict the Romans' decisive victory at Pydna in 168 in the war against Perseus. This is indicated not only by the Macedonians and Romans shown fighting on the relief (each with their characteristic shields, round for the Macedonians and oblong for the Romans) but also by the presence of a riderless horse (plate 24). According to literary sources the Battle of Pydna began when a runaway horse escaped from the Roman army lines and was pursued by both sides.²⁹ The relief thus likely depicts this famous historical incident, thus giving an air of specificity and verisimilitude to what is otherwise a rather generic battle scene.

The pillar of Aemilius Paullus, like the coin of Flamininus, is a key monument within the history of Macedonian and Roman art. It demonstrates, first of all, Perseus' attempt to rehabilitate the kingdom of Macedonia in the memory of the Greeks by recalling the benefactions of his ancestors as well as his own achievements. Its subsequent appropriation by Paullus offered a different historical narrative, one centering on Roman military victories and the very prominent and explicit dishonoring of Antigonid memory. As such, Paullus' monument testifies to the importance of such works of art as political statements – no contemporary visitor to Delphi would be left in doubt as to who was now in charge – but also as sites for the creation and preservation of historical memory. Even some three centuries later, Plutarch knew that the monument had originally been intended for Perseus and then usurped by Paullus; he also knew the anecdote of the runaway horse, perhaps from seeing the monument during his time as a priest of the Temple of Apollo there.³⁰ In this way, the pillar of Aemilius Paullus helped to keep memories of the Roman victory over Macedonia vivid and concrete long after the wars were over and the region had been integrated into the Roman Empire.

²⁶ The story is preserved, with minor variants, in Polybius (20.10.2), Livy (45.27.7), and Plutarch (*Aemilius Paullus* 28.2); the quote is from Plutarch.

²⁷ T. Mommsen (ed.), *Inscriptiones Latinae antiquissimae ad C. Caesaris morte* 1² (Berlin, 1893–1986), no. 622.

²⁸ This is suggested by the different color of the marble used for the pillar (pure white) as opposed to the base (bluish) as well as the different system of dowels in each case (Jacquemin and Laroche, 'Notes sur trois piliers delphiques', pp. 207–12). In addition, the relief sculptures likely depict the Roman victory at the Battle of Pydna, which would make them appropriate for a monument commissioned by Paullus but not by Perseus.

²⁹ Slightly different accounts of the incident are given in Livy (44.40.4–10, 41.3–5) and Plutarch (*Aemilius Paullus* 18.1). See also P. Christesen and S.C. Murray, chapter 21.

³⁰ On Plutarch and Delphi, see D.A. Russell, *Plutarch* (London 2001, originally published 1973), pp. 12–17.

At the same time, the monument, and in particular its reliefs, had also a significance within the history of Roman art. The reliefs constitute the earliest preserved sculptures which depict a Roman historical narrative. Presumably executed by Greek artists using well-established visual formulas and in a typically Hellenistic style, the reliefs nonetheless included particularizing details (like the runaway horse) that anticipate the achievements of later Roman monuments such as the Ara Pacis, Trajan's Column and the Arch of Constantine.³¹ Thus, like the coin of Flamininus, the pillar of Aemilius Paullus documents the fundamental importance of Macedonia for the development of a key genre of Roman art.

In the years following the overthrow of the Antigonid monarchy, Macedonian court art became if anything even more important to aspiring Romans. Images from houses and villas in the Bay of Naples show how the Macedonian kings provided models for the ruling elite of Rome at least in their private lives. The Alexander Mosaic from the House of the Faun at Pompeii, the decoration of Room H from the villa at Boscoreale, and the extensive series of sculpted portrait busts from the Villa dei Papyri at Herculaneum offer high-quality Roman versions of major works of Macedonian state art.³² Also, the very form of the Late Republican Roman villa – with its elegant bedrooms and dining areas disposed around immense peristyle courtyards – is indebted to Macedonian precedents, namely the palaces of the Antigonid kings.³³ The Romans became familiar with such palaces through military and administrative service in Macedonia;³⁴ they had also the opportunity to appreciate Antigonid court art when it was paraded through the streets of Rome in the triumphs of generals like Aemilius Paullus (Plut., *Aemilius Paullus* 32.1–34.8). In Italy, they recreated such artworks in order to suggest their military and political aspirations, as well as their knowledge of, and ability to afford, such impressive manifestations of Hellenistic culture.

While Roman art was developing rapidly in this period the visual culture of Macedonia itself remained largely conservative. In sanctuaries, statues of gods, for instance the Aphrodite Hypolympidia at Dium, appear entirely in line with earlier Hellenistic precedents.³⁵ In cities, characteristically Greek architectural forms such as temples, theaters, and gymnasias were maintained although few major new buildings

³¹ D. Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven 1992), pp. 26–7 (Aemilius Paullus monument), pp. 90–9 (Ara Pacis), pp. 212–20 (Trajan's Column), pp. 444–55 (Arch of Constantine).

³² Alexander Mosaic: A. Cohen, *The Alexander Mosaic: Stories of Victory and Defeat* (Cambridge 1997); Boscoreale paintings: R.R.R. Smith, 'Spear-won Land at Boscoreale: On the Royal Paintings of a Roman Villa', *JRA* 7 (1994), pp. 100–28; Villa dei Papyri portraits: Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits*, pp. 70–8.

³³ I. Nielsen, *Hellenistic Palaces: Tradition and Renewal*² (Aarhus 1999), pp. 164–71.

³⁴ On Pella and its palace after the Roman conquest, see M. Lilimpaki-Akamati, 'Recent Discoveries in Pella', in M. Stamatopoulou and M. Yeroulanou (eds.), *Excavating Classical Culture: Recent Archaeological Discoveries in Greece* (Oxford 2002), pp. 83–90. Romans certainly visited and made use of the Macedonian kings' palaces; Aemilius Paullus, for example, gave his sons Perseus' library (Plut., *Aemilius Paullus* 28.11), and made over the king's hunting grounds to his younger son Scipio Aemilianus (Polyb. 31.29.5).

³⁵ D. Pandermalis, *Dion: The Archaeological Site and the Museum* (Athens, 1997), pp. 22–9.

were erected.³⁶ In cemeteries, we have no new 'Macedonian tombs' after about 150 but those that existed continued to be used; the tomb of Lyson and Callicles at Mieza, for example, was created at the end of the third century and eventually housed 19 members of 4 generations of the family.³⁷ The overall impression given by the art of Hellenistic Macedonia after the fall of the kings is one of continuity. What changes is less the character than the quantity and quality of new monuments, which decline precipitously; this is comprehensible given the impoverishment of the region following the wars with Rome, the looting of the country after the fall of the monarchy, and then a series of rapacious Roman governors.

The monuments examined in this section demonstrate the complex dialogue between Macedonia and Rome in the first period of artistic contact between the two cultures. As noted above, this contact did not substantially alter the features of Hellenistic Macedonian art; it did, however, have profound effects on the visual culture of Republican Rome. What the Romans particularly responded to in Macedonian art were representations of power and authority: ruler portraits, victory monuments and palaces. These were well-established genres in Macedonia but less so in Rome so it is not surprising that the Romans found them attractive. The Macedonians by contrast clung to traditional styles and visual formulas, without the interest – or, perhaps, the economic wherewithal – required for a substantive artistic transformation. It is only with the accession of the first Roman emperor Augustus that this begins to change; this development deserves consideration next.

3 Macedonian Art in the Roman Empire

During the first three centuries AD, Macedonian art was radically altered. However, although the region was politically subordinate to Rome, its art did not simply echo that of the metropolis. Instead we see a range of options, from precise copies of Roman imperial portrait heads to divine statues in thoroughly Hellenic style to hybrid works combining features from Rome itself and from other eastern and western provinces together with local styles and visual formats. The result is a visual culture that has connections to those of other regions – above all, to the Danube provinces north of Macedonia, and Turkey and Syria to the east – but which remains distinctive. Macedonian art does not look quite like the art from anywhere else although it partakes of a recognizably Roman visual language. In this it is typical of Roman provincial art, which never coalesced into a homogeneous visual culture but remained instead a collection of interconnected but diversely inflected regional styles.

The second century AD grave *stele* of Onesimus from the outskirts of Thessalonica offers a good example of Macedonia's distinctive regional style and of the new patrons

³⁶ For example, Pandermalis, Dion, G. Gounaris and E. Gounari, *Philippi: Archaeological Guide* (Thessaloniki 2004).

³⁷ Miller, *Tomb of Lyson and Kallikles*.

who encouraged it (plate 25).³⁸ As the monument's Greek inscription makes clear, Onesimus was a slave – though evidently a well-off and highly successful one – who worked as manager for a large rural estate; his master, Aelius Menogenes, was likely an imperial freedman serving in the provincial administration.³⁹ Onesimus used the monument to commemorate his deceased wife, Neike, as well as himself and his still-living mother and daughter. The emphasis in the inscription is thus on the family as a whole (a source of particular pride for slaves, who had no legal right to marriage) as well as on Onesimus' vocation and his ties to high-ranking individuals in the Roman administration.

The visual format of the *stele* combines bust-length frontal portraits of Onesimus, his wife and their daughter on top with smaller narrative scenes below and beneath them the inscription. The portraits depict the family with up-to-date Roman hairstyles of the later second century AD based on imperial prototypes.⁴⁰ The facial features are rather generic and idealized, although Onesimus' age is alluded to through his lined forehead and hollow cheeks. But the overall impression given by the portraits is of a wealthy, respectable and rather fashionable family of the Antonine era, whose close bonds are intimated through the physical proximity of their images.

Beneath the portraits, whose inspiration goes back to freedmen's funerary monuments from Republican Italy, we have two scenes more closely connected to contemporary Roman artistic practice.⁴¹ On the left, we have a seated woman gazing at a standing female figure in the guise of Aphrodite; the pose and dress are based on a well-known image of the goddess of the late fifth century BC while the hairstyle is Antonine. Such representations of the deceased in the form of a divinity became increasingly popular in the second century AD.⁴² They offered an exalted yet non-specific way to praise the virtues of the departed while also testifying to the patron's cultivated knowledge of Greek art. In this case, commemoration in the guise of Aphrodite suggested the beauty and desirability of Onesimus' wife Neike; the form chosen was a statue type known as the Louvre-Fréjus Aphrodite, popular in the Roman period and seen also in a high-quality reproduction in the round from the sanctuary of the Egyptian gods in Thessalonica.⁴³ The other scene shows Onesimus himself reclining on a dining couch with an elaborate table laden with food before him and a

³⁸ Thessalonica, Archaeological Museum Inv. Nr. 1424, A. Despinis, T. Stefanidou-Tiveriou and E. Voutiras, *Catalogue of Sculpture in the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki* (Thessaloniki 1997), pp. 152–4, with previous bibliography.

³⁹ Despinis, Stefanidou-Tiveriou and Voutiras, *Catalogue of Sculpture*, p. 154 n. 5.

⁴⁰ K. Fittschen and P. Zanker, *Katalog der römischen Porträts in den Capitolinischen Museen und den anderen kommunalen Sammlungen der Stadt Rom* (Mainz 1983–5), 1, no. 59 (for Onesimus), 3, nos. 121–2 (for the female portraits).

⁴¹ On freedmen's funerary monuments, see P. Zanker, 'Grabreliefs römischer Freigelassener', *JdI* 90 (1975), pp. 267–315.

⁴² H. Wrede, *Consecratio in formam deorum: vergöttlichte Privatpersonen in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1981).

⁴³ P. Karanastassis, 'Untersuchungen zur kaiserzeitlichen Plastik in Griechenland I, Kopien, Varianten, und Umbildungen nach Aphrodite-typen des 5 Jhs v. Chr.', *Ath. Mitt.* 101 (1986), pp. 218, 259.

seated woman to his side. Banqueting scenes like this one have a long history in Greek art, going back to the Archaic period; they were adopted with enthusiasm by the Romans and appear throughout the provinces during the imperial era.⁴⁴ Given their widespread popularity in places with very different funeral customs, it is difficult to speak of a specific meaning; in general terms, they could allude to both banquets held in honor of the dead and also hopes for a pleasurable afterlife.

The funeral stele of Onesimus is a typical but particularly thoroughgoing example of the eclecticism of Macedonian art during the Roman imperial period. It combines portrait busts inspired by Roman Republican prototypes, a banqueting scene with Archaic Greek precedents, and an image of the deceased as Aphrodite that used a classical Greek statue type but in a manner characteristic of Antonine Rome. Close analogies can be observed with *stelai* of the Danube provinces, which have frontal portrait busts executed in a similarly static, linear fashion; for the combination of busts with narrative scenes, the best comparisons are with images from northwestern Turkey.⁴⁵ The overall visual effect of the *stèle* is however unlike its Balkan or Turkish parallels, but appears instead thoroughly Macedonian, with close connections to other *stelai* in Thessalonica, Beroea and Philippi.⁴⁶

A similar mingling of Macedonian and Roman forms is visible not only in the funerary realm but also in domestic art and architecture. The Roman villa – originally inspired by the palaces of the Macedonian kings – was in the imperial period adopted as a model for the luxury homes of the provincial elite in Macedonia as it was throughout the empire.⁴⁷ We thus see villas dotting the Macedonian countryside in the second and third centuries AD, and some quite grandiose constructions appear even within towns, where space was more limited.⁴⁸ The Villa of Dionysus from Dium, for example, was located inside the walls of the Roman colony but was nonetheless enormous; it dominated the southern sector of the city and by far exceeded the preserved remains of any other house there (plate 26).⁴⁹ The villa boasted some 60 rooms including 4 colonnaded courtyards, 5 innovative apsed halls, and its own bath complex. While the individual rooms are generally modest in scale their number and variety are striking as is their deployment of the most up-to-date forms of Roman domestic architecture. Particularly impressive is the bath complex, the only private bathing installation yet found in Dium, and a clear sign of the homeowner's wealth and ability to command precious resources – such as running water – for his own purposes.

⁴⁴ For the Greek background to these banquet scenes, see A. Effenberger, 'Das Symposium der Seligen: Zur Entstehung und Deutung der Totenmahlreliefs', *Forschungen und Berichte* 14 (1972), pp. 128–63.

⁴⁵ Danube: S. Conrad, *Die Grabstelen aus Moesia Inferior* (Leipzig 2004); Turkey: A. Rüsch, 'Das kaiserzeitliche Porträt in Makedonien', *JdI* 84 (1969), p. 74.

⁴⁶ For examples, see the catalogue in M. Lagogianni-Georgakarakos, *Die Grabdenkmäler mit Porträts aus Makedonien* (Athens 1998).

⁴⁷ On the Roman villa and its provincial iterations, see A. McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World* (Baltimore 1998).

⁴⁸ On country houses, see P. Adam-Veleni, E. Poulaki and K. Tzanavari, *Ancient Country Houses on Modern Roads* (Athens 2003).

⁴⁹ Pandermalis, *Dion*, pp. 51–60.

The decoration of the villa is likewise notable. It is characterized by a lavish use of marble – for columns in the courtyards, for wall and floor decoration, and above all for sculpture – which stands out in a city lacking easy access to good quarries, and where even the temples of the gods have few columns and small-scale cult statues. The villa's sculptures included busts of imperial family members (Faustina Minor and Agrippina) as well as versions of well-known classical statue types: Nike, Dionysus, Hercules. And four marble statues of philosophers were found in the villa, their heads recarved in the third century AD, perhaps with portraits of the villa's inhabitants.⁵⁰ Just as the philosopher statues attested to the cultural aspirations of the villa owner, so too did the presence of a library with bookshelves, a rare component of eastern villas, but present in the best Italian models such as the Villa dei Papyri at Herculaneum.⁵¹ And 'antique' bronze furniture – several centuries old already when the villa was built, about AD 200 – suggests the owner's pedigree and artistic sensibilities; this was also indicated by an immense and beautifully executed mosaic of the Triumph of Dionysus, which decorated a large banqueting hall within the complex.⁵² In all, the villa and its decoration demonstrate the wealth and artistic *savoir faire* of the Macedonian elite during the Roman empire as they adopted Italian villa culture and transformed it to suit their own, regionally distinctive, modes of life.

In the public monuments of Macedonian cities, as in the private sphere of house and tomb, we see a transformation, but one that created a new hybrid culture rather than an exclusively Roman one. Two areas where this is particularly apparent are sanctuaries of the imperial cult and sites for gladiatorial games – two quintessentially Roman institutions reformulated by the Macedonians for their own purposes. In terms of the imperial cult, many Macedonian cities set up temples and statues to the emperors, thus visibly demonstrating their loyalty to and enthusiasm for Roman rule.⁵³ Yet the cult statues they commissioned look like swaggering Hellenistic monarchs or classical gods, rather than the sober togate images popular in Rome itself; their visual forms suggest a reinterpretation of the Roman emperor in terms familiar to the local audience. So, too, gladiatorial games were performed in several Macedonian cities. Their popularity is demonstrated by the many preserved grave monuments of gladiators as well as large numbers of inexpensive terracotta lamps that feature their images.⁵⁴ Yet the games were rarely held in new purpose-built amphitheatres; they

⁵⁰ Pandermalis, *Dion*, pp. 87–90.

⁵¹ On the Villa dei Papyri, see C. Mattusch, *The Villa dei Papyri at Herculaneum: Life and Afterlife of a Sculpture Collection* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 2005).

⁵² A. Kankeleit, *Kaiserzeitliche Mosaiken in Griechenland* (Bonn 1994), pp. 54–5.

⁵³ For example, Thessalonica: V. Allamani-Souri, 'The Province of Macedonia in the Roman Imperium', in D.V. Grammenos (ed.), *Roman Thessaloniki* (Thessaloniki 2003), pp. 98–119; Dion and Philippi: C. Tsochos, 'Religion and Cults of Macedonia in Imperial Times', in E. Lo Cascio and G.D. Merola (eds.), *Forme di aggregazione nel mondo Romano* (Bari 2007), pp. 329–34. On the imperial cult more generally, see S. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984).

⁵⁴ P. Adam-Veleni, 'Entertainment and Arts in Thessaloniki', in D.V. Grammenos (ed.), *Roman Thessaloniki* (Thessaloniki 2003), pp. 263–81. On gladiators in the Roman world, see R. Dunkle, *Gladiators: Violence and Spectacle in Ancient Rome* (Harlow 2008).