

## Martial Valor of the Roman Emperors as Divinity on the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias

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*The marble reliefs of the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias celebrate war, victory, and the martial valor of the Julio-Claudian emperors through visual representations of military trophies, martial divinities, and the subjugation of barbarian enemies. However, the Roman goddess of martial valor, Virtus, is conspicuously absent from the visual program of the Sebasteion. Because Virtus played a fundamental role in the political and military rhetoric of the Julio-Claudian emperors' visual narratives in Rome, and because the sculptors of the Sebasteion were likely using recognizable Roman templates for its relief panels, I argue that at least one, if not two, of the four goddesses identified as Roma ought to be identified as Virtus (the Greek goddess Andreia). The appearance of Virtus on the Sebasteion would complete the themes of conquest, victory, and imperial military excellence and would convey to the people of Aphrodisias a political message of safety, protection, and peace in Aphrodisias, visually guaranteed by the virtue of the Julio-Claudian emperors.*

The celebration of the emperor as the leader of the world and the guarantor of Augustan peace in Roman art lined not only the streets of Rome, but also the streets of her provincial polities, especially among those like Aphrodisias that looked toward Rome as friend and ally. When Caesar ascended to power, an opportunity for an alliance originated between the city of Aphrodite, Aphrodisias, and the dictator, who claimed divine pedigree from the goddess. Sometime before Caesar's assassination, Aphrodisias secured a treaty with Rome; and Caesar himself sent a golden Eros to Aphrodisias to be housed in the Temple of Aphrodite as an act of good faith.<sup>1</sup> In a letter written in 39/8 B.C.E. to one of his personal agents in Aphrodisias, Octavian personally considered the Aphrodisians to be his allies and guaranteed their safety, likely on account of the city's resistance against the invading Parthians between 41 and 39 B.C.E.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, Aphrodisias was granted freedom, tax exemptions, and asylum rights, thereby strengthening Aphrodisias' relationship with the future emperor.<sup>3</sup> Sometime in the 30s B.C.E., C. Julius Zoilos, a freedman of Caesar and the Aphrodisian agent of Octavian, dominated the political landscape of Aphrodisias as *stephanephoros* for ten years, priest of Aphrodite and of Eleutheria for life, as well as ambassador to Rome, having likely participated in the resistance against the Parthians.<sup>4</sup> His political and military accomplishments were documented on his self-devised mausoleum constructed in Aphrodisias, the reliefs of which not only celebrated his personal virtues, *andreia* (Latin *virtus*) and *timē* (Latin *honor*) among them, but also his relationship to Rome, attested by the appearance of the enthroned goddess Roma in the monument's frieze. Before his death in the early 20s B.C.E., Zoilos began the construction of a new Temple of Aphrodite, evidenced by a dedicatory inscription on the lintel of the cella.<sup>5</sup> Although Zoilos unfortunately never had the opportunity to consecrate the temple, the people of Aphrodisias continued the project, ultimately dedicating the temple to the

emperor Tiberius.<sup>6</sup> Sometime after the death and apotheosis of Augustus, the Aphrodisians resolved to monumentalize the street running east-west in front of the temple, adding two marble porticoes flanking the street, known as the Sebasteion (Latin *Augusteum*). However, construction on the project continued throughout several principates and was not completed until the reign of Nero. According to the extant inscriptions of the Sebasteion, the complex was dedicated to Aphrodite, to the divine emperors (*Theoi Sebastoi*), and to the people (*demos*).<sup>7</sup> The façades of the north and south buildings were decorated with marble panels carved in high relief on three storeys, each depicting a single figure or a figural group that created a marble tapestry of historical, myth-historical, and mythological narratives. Although the panels do not convey any singular visual program, the themes of war, victory, and the emperors' martial accomplishments make it clear that the iconography of the monument celebrates the *virtus*, or martial excellence, of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. And because the goddess of military valor and glory, *Virtus*, often appears on public victory monuments erected during the Julio-Claudian period to symbolize



Fig. 1. Panel C2: Augustus and Nike with trophy, eagle, and bound captive. Museum of Aphrodisias.

the *virtus* of the emperors, it is reasonable to posit that, of the four iconographically different deities identified as Roma by Smith on the Sebasteion, one (if not two of them) should be considered Virtus, or rather the Greek Andraia.<sup>8</sup>

#### The Themes of Victory and *Virtus*

Panel C2 of the south building is representative of the martial themes that constitute the Sebasteion as a monument of victory and *virtus* of the Julio-Claudian emperors (Fig. 1). Augustus, laureate and depicted in heroic nudity, except for a *paludamentum* clasped at the shoulder, clutches a spear in his right hand and a *tropaeum* in his left hand. The *tropaeum* comprises a helmet, cuirass, military tunic with *pteryges*, greaves, and a shield hanging from behind. Nike, winged and dressed in a heavy chiton and himation, positions the helmet on top of the trophy. Sitting below the trophy is a bound barbarian prisoner of war, whose forlorn visage conveys his peril and fate. Perched below Augustus' right hand is an eagle, which gazes up toward the trophy.<sup>9</sup> Although scenes depicting the emperor and Nike/Victoria together are common in the visual repertoire of art throughout the imperial period, the motif of the barbarian captive bound below a towering trophy derives from the iconography created by Caesar and his moneyers in the 40s to commemorate Caesar's *virtus* from his conquest of Gaul.<sup>10</sup> This trophy/prisoner motif was then reprised by Augustus' moneyers in the 20s, documenting Augustus' *virtus* from his Actian victory.<sup>11</sup> Although it is unlikely that the Aphrodisian artists were replicating a pre-existing work in Rome, they were doubtless drawing on Caesarian, or, more directly, Augustan models of victory, likely through the circulation of Augustan coins that featured bound prisoners coupled with a Roman trophy on the reverse of these issues. In any case, the visual language of this relief is clear: the image of Augustus in heroic nudity and accompanied by Jupiter's eagle is evocative of his apotheosis, granted as a result of his martial excellence, his

*virtus*. Having conquered and subjugated his enemies, Augustus has stripped the barbarians of their arms and armor, thereby allegorically divesting them of their own *virtus*. Not only does victory belong to the emperor, indicated by the presence of Nike, but so does *virtus*, symbolized by the *tropaeum* he fashioned out of his enemies' spoils. The fettered enemy of Augustus is made to appear non-threatening, reinforcing the visual message that Rome's enemies, and therefore Aphrodisias' enemies, have been subjugated by the *virtus* of the emperor.

Not only did the Sebasteion celebrate the victory and *virtus* of Augustus, but also of the subsequent Julio-Claudian emperors. The victory of the emperors is the subject of Panel C9 from the south building (Fig. 2). A semi-nude Nike majestically flies across the panel, carrying over her left shoulder a robust *tropaeum*. The base of the relief contains the inscription *NEIKH ΣΕΒΑΣΤΩΝ*, or "the victory of the emperors." Constructed on a knotted tree trunk, the trophy is composed of a plain cuirass with a simple skirt, a sword in its scabbard attached with a ribbon, and a helmet with a plume. That the trophy



Fig. 2. Panel C9: Nike with trophy. Museum of Aphrodisias.



Fig. 3. Panel C10: Claudius vanquishes Britannia. Museum of Aphrodisias.

which Nike carries represents a physical manifestation of *virtus* is certain, as *virtus* was always represented as the product of victory in Roman military scenes. Therefore, we can imagine that the flying Nike is about to establish the *virtus* gained by the emperors in warfare as a physical emblem of Roman hegemony and provincial security. Smith suggests that, contingent upon the position of the relief, “the victory of the emperors” inscribed on the base alludes to its flanking panels, directing the viewer’s attention toward the martial prowess of Claudius on one relief and of Nero on the other.<sup>12</sup>

Panel C10 illustrates the *virtus* of the emperor Claudius that led to his victory represented by the appearance of Nike on the previous panel (Fig. 3). Claudius, identified by his name and title inscribed on the base (*TIBEPHIOΣ KAAVAIOΣ KAIΣAP*), and wearing only a helmet, balteus, and a *paludamentum*, vanquishes Britannia. Britannia, labeled *BPETTANIA*, is personified by a woman who lies helplessly prostrate on the ground.

Her expression demonstrates her anguish and despair. Her drapery, loosely clinging to her body, exposes her breasts, analogizing her vulnerability as a defeated adversary of Rome. The visual language of the emperor’s conquest of the “other” is transparent: the *virtus* of Britannia has been expunged by the commanding emperor as he pins Britannia down with his knee. The scene emphasizes his own martial *virtus* displayed on the battlefield against the Britons, whose country was conquered by Claudius in 43 C.E. The conquest of Britannia also gives us a terminus post quem of 43 C.E. for this relief.<sup>13</sup>

Pendant to the Claudius relief and bisected by the Nike relief is Panel C8, which is demonstrative of the *virtus* of the emperor Nero in action (Fig. 4). Nero is named by the partial inscription that suffered an erasure after his *damnatio memoriae* in 68, which reads: “Nero Claudius Drusus Emperor Augustus Germanicus” (*[NEPOM[I]] KAAVAIOΣ APOYΣOΣ KAIΣAP ΣEBATOΣ ΓEPMANIXOΣ*). Nero lifts the figure of Armenia (labeled *APMENIA*) from the ground with his hands. The emperor is depicted in heroic nudity and wears a *paludamentum*

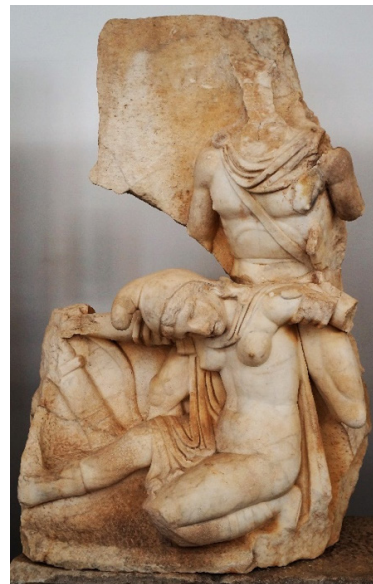


Fig. 4. Panel C8: Nero vanquishes Armenia. Museum of Aphrodisias.

clasped at his right shoulder, a balteus supporting his sword in a scabbard, and a helmet.<sup>14</sup> The personification of Armenia is depicted as a nude and incapacitated barbarian to underscore her vulnerability and her submission to the emperor. She wears only a Phrygian cap, boots, and a cloak around her neck. Her quiver and bow have been removed and placed next to her lifeless body. The visual message of the relief is clear: Armenia, bereft of her *virtus* that defended her people against the Roman invasion between 58 and 63 C.E., has been conquered and subjugated by the emperor's *virtus*. Nero's *virtus* has secured Roman victory over Armenia, bringing her into the domain of Nero's empire. Subsequently, Nero was hailed as *imperator* by his armies, supplications were held, as well as a triumph, and statues and victory arches were decreed to him in response to his victory over Armenia, the theme of which spills onto Panel C9.<sup>15</sup>

Not only do these panels that depict Augustus, Claudius, and Nero in scenes of military conquest and victory substantiate the visual program of the Sebasteion as a celebration of the martial excellence of the Julio-Claudian emperors, their *virtus Augusta*, but so did seven more extant panels: three featuring Nike with trophy or

victory wreath (C14, C20, C21); Tiberius with bound barbarian captive (C16); an unidentified Julio-Claudian emperor with trophy and captive (C18); the god of war Ares (C32); and an unidentified cuirassed emperor wearing a *paludamentum*, ready for battle (C33).<sup>16</sup> Because the iconography of the Sebasteion reliefs commemorate the *virtus* of the Julio-Claudian emperors through their foreign conquests and martial accomplishments, we should expect that the goddess of the emperors' military excellence, *Virtus* (the Greek *Andreia*), be present within the programmatic composition of this victory monument. Just as *Andreia* appears on the Monument of Zoilos, equipped with a shield, a balteus to carry a sword, and a helmet, in order to allegorize the *virtus* of Zoilos as patron and war hero of Aphrodisias (Fig. 5), a similar representation of *Andreia* would also be appropriate for the Sebasteion in order to represent the *virtus* of the emperors.<sup>17</sup> Two military goddesses do appear on the façade of the south building; however, Smith identifies both as *Roma*, thereby portraying *Roma* on the Sebasteion four times and of four different *Roma*-types. Four representations of *Roma* would make the goddess the second most depicted figure on the Sebasteion (after *Nike*, the high number of which is not unusual, especially in the east), outnumbering



Fig. 5. Monument of Zoilos, ca. 30s B.C.E. *Andreia* carrying a shield on the left. Zoilos, middle, crowned by *Timē*, right. Museum of Aphrodisias.

Aphrodite and the Julio-Claudian emperors, to whom the Sebasteion was dedicated. The high number of Romae, in conjunction with her four completely disparate appearances, on a single monument is unprecedented in Roman art. Therefore, it is worth considering that at least one (if not two) of these four diverging representations of “Roma” should be ideologically and functionally Virtus/Andraia. Moreover, the absence of Virtus would be conspicuous on an imperial victory monument memorializing the martial excellence of the Julio-Claudian emperors. And the proximity of the Monument of Zoilos, which features Roma and Andraia together, lends credence to the likelihood that both Roma and Andraia were both represented on the Sebasteion, rather than four Romae in various idiosyncratic guises.

#### The Panels of Roma

Of the four representations of the goddess of Rome, two are unequivocally Roma, as one is identified by an inscription and the other is represented by the canonical Julio-Claudian seated-Roma type. Next to Panel C8, which depicts Nero and Armenia, are the goddesses Roma (labeled *PQMH*) and Ge (labeled *TH*)



Fig. 6. Panel C7: Roma and Ge. Museum of Aphrodisias.



Fig. 7. Panel D49: Roma, seated next to a shield. Museum of Aphrodisias. Courtesy of the Aphrodisias Excavations Project.

on Panel C7 (Fig. 6).<sup>18</sup> Roma towers above Ge, the personification of the earth, who reclines below. Roma is dressed according to the Hellenistic city-goddess type with mural crown and scepter in contrast to her military disposition as helmet-wearer in representations of the goddess in Rome and the west. Her mural crown comprises five towers that rests upon her long, parted hair. Her long chiton with sleeves envelopes her entire body and is tied with a belt high on her torso, just below her bosom. Roma carries a scepter in her right hand and stretches her left toward the right arm of Ge, possibly representing a *dextrarum iunctio*. Ge, semi-nude, carries a cornucopia filled with an abundance of fruit onto which a small child clings. Although there are no extant parallels to this scene from Rome, the iconography recalls the Kalenus denarius of 70 B.C.E. that depicts four labeled divinities. This denarius not only features the jugate heads of Honos and Virtus on the obverse, but, on the reverse, a standing Roma and Italia are depicted in a *dextrarum iunctio*.<sup>19</sup> The iconography of Panel C8 is also reminiscent of the Northeast and Southeast Panels of the Ara Pacis, which feature Roma and Tellus Italiae, respectively, both in separate frames, but together within the same visual framework on the eastern wall. However, the Roma from the Northeast Panel of the Ara Pacis is a seated-Roma type,

typical of the Julio-Claudian era.

The seated-Roma type is found on a relief from the Sebasteion; however, the image of the goddess has been almost completely erased, likely for a re-purposing that never occurred. Yet, there exist enough contextual elements within the scene to secure the identity of Roma on Panel D49 (Fig. 7).<sup>20</sup> The contour of the erasure demonstrates a seated figure, doubtless Roma, with her legs turned in three-quarter view toward the viewer. The height and shape of the contour of the head suggests that Roma was wearing a helmet, likely crested. A partial diagonal erasure in the upper right suggests that an attribute of the goddess was also eliminated, most likely the goddess' scepter or a spear. The only ascertainable attribute of Roma is the round shield, only partially erased at the lower right-hand corner of the relief. The shield rests against the contour of the base upon which Roma was seated, thereby substantiating the identity of the figure as the goddess Roma. The seated-Roma type was not unprecedented in Aphrodisias. This type also appears on the Monument of Zoilos in the same programmatic frieze as Andreia (Virtus)



Fig. 8. Monument of Zoilos, ca. 30s B.C.E. Roma, seated next to a shield. Museum of Aphrodisias.



Fig. 9. Panel C24: Virtus/Andreia with barbarian captive. Museum of Aphrodisias.

and Timē (Honos) (Fig. 8). The composition of Roma on the Monument of Zoilos is analogous to the contour of Roma on Panel D49, suggesting that the Monument of Zoilos may have been used as the primary model for the seated-Roma type on the Sebasteion. If the Aphrodisian sculptors of the Sebasteion were drawing on local templates, such as the Roma panel suggests, then the artists would have also been conscious of the allegorical image of Andreia, who stands adjacent to Roma on the monument as the personification of Zoilos' military valor gained during the Parthian incursion that ended in 39 B.C.E. Therefore, creating a monument that recognizes the military victories of the Julio-Claudian emperors from their own foreign wars without acknowledging their *virtus*, or martial excellence, through the image of Virtus/Andreia would be unreasonable. Thus, there remain two military goddesses illustrated on the Sebasteion who Smith suggests are both Roma. However, at least one (if not both) ought to be considered Virtus/Andreia, whose appearance on a Roman monument celebrating the emperors' martial valor in warfare is expected.

The Panels of Virtus/Andreia

Panel C24 depicts an armored goddess with captive slave (Fig. 9).<sup>21</sup> The goddess is dressed as an *imperator*, wearing a helmet, a cuirass with a gorgon flanked by two heraldic griffins, a short tunic with ornamented *pteryges*, and laced boots. An emperor's *paludamentum* is clasped at the shoulder and hangs from the neck in the same fashion as Augustus, Claudius, and Nero above. She wields a spear in her right hand and a shield in her left.<sup>22</sup> To her right kneels a bearded barbarian captive. He wears an animal-skinned cloak, tied around his neck, and gazes up toward the towering military goddess above. As Smith correctly states, there are very few parallels of any kind for cuirassed females in general, and I would add, none from the Julio-Claudian era. Smith suggests that the goddess is Roma, as he argues that a local audience would immediately recognize a goddess wearing Roman imperial armor as Roma.<sup>23</sup> However, I disagree, since this typology of Roma is not the contemporary Julio-Claudian Roma-type, nor is the type which already exists at Aphrodisias. The type with which the Aphrodisians would have been most familiar is the seated-Roma type, corroborated by the representation of the enthroned Roma on the Monument of Zoilos and on Panel D49 of the Sebasteion – a Roma who does not wear a cuirass but rather a long chiton with right breast exposed. And, although Panel C7 substantiates the claim that the Aphrodisians had artistic license to manipulate the contemporary Roman iconography of Roma, Roma as *imperator* and captor is unprecedented in the visual rhetoric of Roman military scenes. Roma is never depicted as a military general as if she has witnessed battle firsthand, nor does she ever wear the traveling imperial *paludamentum* like Virtus occasionally does in victory scenes, namely because Roma never goes to nor comes from battle in Roman iconography. Virtus, however, often returns to Rome from battle with the victorious emperor and is closely associated with the prisoners of war in Roman military scenes,



Fig. 10. Dupondius of Caracalla, 210 CE. Virtus, with helmet and spear, standing next to a trophy and barbarian captive. British Museum.

for example, on the so-called Triumphator Relief from the Arch of Titus and on the Triumph Relief from the Medinaceli group, as well as on several issues of imperial coins.<sup>24</sup> If we consider a dupondius minted by Caracalla that depicts Virtus with spear towering over a fettered captive below, then the composition of the coin can be attributed to a common iconographical source that also influenced the military program of Panel C24 (Fig. 10).<sup>25</sup> On Panel C24, Virtus has manifested herself from the conquest of Rome's foreign enemies and from the victory of the emperor – a motif that became increasingly common in the martial corpus of Roman iconography. The fact that Virtus is often represented with the prisoners of war, whether it be a singular composition such as one depicted on the dupondius or a triumphal scene like on the Medinaceli Reliefs, lends credence to a Virtus/Andreia identification for Panel C24. Admittedly, the iconography of this military goddess is a departure from both the Roma and Virtus types of any period. Her singularity can only be explained by craftsmen of the eastern provinces, who created a Virtus/Andreia type from the martial elements which they knew existed in the visual repertoire of military scenes from Rome, namely a goddess with military experience, theoretically having just come from battle dressed in her cuirass, helmet, and a traveler's *paludamentum*.<sup>26</sup>





Fig. 11. Panel C17: Aphrodite crowned by Virtus/Andreia. Museum of Aphrodisias.

Panel C17 depicts two goddesses (Fig. 11).<sup>27</sup> The goddess on the right wears a short Amazonian tunic, belted at the waist, that bares her right breast. She does not wear a helmet on her head, despite the fact that every other attribute is martial, including her *balteus* to support her sword (not depicted), open-toe boots, the spear in her left hand, and a small round shield that rests by her side. With her right hand, she crowns a goddess on the left with a laurel wreath, who wears a heavily draped peplos and himation. The visage of the laureate goddess does not seem to possess any portrait features, but is rather idealized, which would, therefore, eliminate a Julio-Claudian family member as the identification of the figure. Smith suggests that she is an Aphrodite-Venus type, despite the lack of sophistication given to her image as the city's patron deity. As for the Amazon goddess, Smith posits that the type is suitable for Aretē, Andreia, or Roma in the Greek east. However, we can immediately rule out Aretē because the Amazon type with martial characteristics is not suitable for Aretē, who is only depicted as a matronly figure in Greek

art and never as an Amazon warrior.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the type is only suitable for Andreia or Roma. The relief was incorporated into the façade of the third storey of the south building, which was completed during the principate of Nero.<sup>29</sup> And even though the goddess possesses every attribute of the Roman goddess Virtus, except for her helmet, a Neronian date of the goddess does present the possibility that Roma is represented here, since Roma co-opted the image of Virtus during Nero's reign, attested by Neronian coinage. However, it is unusual for both Roma and Virtus to be depicted without a helmet. For Roma, there is no comparandum, as she always wears a crown or helmet. However, for Virtus, there is precedent. First, the Andreia from the Monument of Zoilos possesses no evidence that she wore a helmet on her head, despite the destruction of her visage (Fig. 5). Andreia's helmet was once placed on a pedestal next to Zoilos, attested by the extant outline of the helmet, thereby becoming a comparandum for the helmet-less goddess on Panel C17. Moreover, a series of coins minted by Galba depicts Virtus, labeled *VIRTVS*, wearing an Amazonian costume and carrying a parazonium in one hand and a *victoriola* in the other, without a helmet (Fig. 12).<sup>30</sup> Mattingly states that the Galban Virtus also wears a cuirass; however, the contours of Virtus' outfit suggests a tunic.<sup>31</sup> As for the context of the composition, either Roma or Virtus for the identification of the Amazon goddess would be unusual, at least in Rome, because neither goddess is known to crown anyone other than the emperor, much less another female. Erim suggests that the goddess is a composite Roma-Virtus, who crowns a Julio-Claudian family member.<sup>32</sup> However, it seems unlikely that the Aphrodisians would consciously conflate the two goddesses, as they already possessed discernable prototypes for both goddesses, neither of which was used to create the image of this Amazon divinity. Smith suggests that Aphrodite is crowned by Roma as a general reference to her role as foremother to the emperors, as well as a possible allusion to the Parthian incursion between Aphrodisias and

the Parthians in 40 B.C.E., where a reference to Aphrodite as the Julian ancestress would be appropriate.<sup>33</sup> However, the Amazon goddess as Virtus does not preclude this hypothesis, but, in my opinion, rather amplifies Aphrodisias' role in their resistance of the Parthians made possible by the *virtus*, or rather the *andreia*, of Aphrodisias' brave warriors (Zoilos included), who risked their lives to defend their city from Rome's marauding adversaries. This accords with the fact that this victory-themed monument was also dedicated to the people of Aphrodisias, in conjunction with Aphrodite and the divine emperors. Long, however, suggests that the two goddesses are to be identified as Livia and Roma, respectively, because, as she asserts, the context demands that it is Roma, because Virtus crowning Livia would be inappropriate.<sup>34</sup> However, her argument hinges on the assumption that the left figure is Livia, but the lack of physiognomic features of Livia preclude this identification. Moreover, the crowning of Livia by either Roma or Virtus with the laurels of victory would be contextually illogical. Instead, Aphrodite crowned by Andreia with a laurel wreath symbolizing Aphrodisias' military victory over the Parthians is not

inconceivable. Andreia may be understood as conferring her military protection and her gift of *virtus*, or martial valor, on Aphrodite, the patron goddess of the city whose military strength deflected a Parthian invasion between 41 and 39 B.C.E. – the city's greatest military victory. In any case, the iconography of the goddess undoubtedly derives from the typology of the Roman Amazon warrior-woman for Virtus, the prototype of which was originally conceived by Marcus Claudius Marcellus – the founder of the cult of Virtus in the third century B.C.E.<sup>35</sup>

### Conclusion

Panels C7 and D49 are doubtless images of Roma, the former labeled and the latter represented as the canonical seated-Roma type from the Julio-Claudian period. Because Roma is already represented twice in two disparate forms, it would be unusual and unprecedented to have Roma in Panel C24 and in C17 as two new forms of Roma, totaling four completely incongruent images of Roma without visual consistency or common attributes. Therefore, it is more likely that either Panel C24 and/or Panel C17 represent Virtus/Andreia, whose image would have been familiar to the Aphrodisians, as she was depicted on the Zoilos Monument between Roma and Zoilos. However, the iconography of the goddesses of Panels C24 and C17 does not perfectly correlate with the Julio-Claudian Virtus, nor with the Julio-Claudian seated-Roma type, although many of the physical elements belonging to Virtus are present. The goddess on Panel C24 wears a short tunic underneath her cuirass, which is conventional to the standard iconography of Virtus. Besides her spear and helmet, the prisoner of war at her side alludes to a Virtus (Andreia) identification. As for the goddess on Panel C17, she wears an Amazonian tunic that bares her right breast and carries a spear and balteus to support her sword, suited for Virtus alone. The goddess is also depicted in a *Standmotiv* – the prevailing physical state of Virtus since the creation of her image during the Republic. It is, however,



Fig. 12. Aureus of Galba, 69 C.E. Virtus on reverse. British Museum.

interesting to note that Timē from the Zoilos Monument is represented bare-breasted and crowning Zoilos with her right hand, analogous to the goddess on Panel C17, who crowns Aphrodite with her right hand. That the artist of Panel C17 used the Monument of Zoilos as a model and conflated the iconography of the two goddesses, Andreia and Timē, is not impossible. In any case, the goddess in question is unlikely Roma and more likely Virtus/Andreia as imagined by a Greek sculptor with limited comparanda, based on the current typologies of Roma and Virtus from the Republic and from the Julio-Claudian era.

The Sebasteion celebrated not only the benevolent relationship between Aphrodisias and Rome, but also the hegemony of the Roman empire under which the Aphrodisians lived. Having been a political and military ally of Rome since the time of Caesar, and most willingly under the principate of Augustus, the Aphrodisians designed the Julio-Claudian panels of the Sebasteion to emphasize the strength of Rome and their approbation of Rome's military success over the course of six decades, giving credit to Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero. The sculptors of the Sebasteion panels seem to possess some knowledge of the contemporary martial iconography created in Rome, but also re-conceptualized many Roman elements in order to be comprehensible to a Greek audience. The thematic formulae of war and victory are clear, both to a Greek and a Roman viewer. However, the identity of each individual may not have been so easily recognizable, hence the addition of labels for each figure. Unfortunately, no label of Andreia survives, unlike her labeled image on the Monument of Zoilos. However, a Roman dynastic monument commemorating war, victory, and the *virtus* of four Julio-Claudian emperors in Aphrodisias without an image of Virtus/Andreia would be exceptional, especially since the Aphrodisians were already aware of the goddess' image on the prominent Monument of Zoilos. Therefore, it seems more likely than not that Panel C24

and/or Panel C17 depicts an Aphrodisian adaptation of the Roman Virtus for their representation of the Greek Andreia. The image of Virtus/Andreia would have harmoniously unified the martial themes of the Roman iconography on the Sebasteion, underscoring the martial capacity of the Julio-Claudian emperors on the battlefield against Rome's barbarian adversaries, and symbolizing a new era of security, freedom, and the *pax Romana* in Aphrodisias, under the protection of their *virtus*.

#### Endnotes:

- 1 Tac., *Ann.* 3.62; Reynolds 1982, no. 4, Doc. 12; Smith 1993, 5 and 13; 2013, 4.
- 2 Reynolds 1982, no. 4, Doc. 10; Smith 2013, 4.
- 3 Reynolds 1982, Docs. 6-13; Smith 2013, 4.
- 4 Smith 1993, 4-10; 2013, 4-6.
- 5 Smith 2013, 6-7.
- 6 Smith 2013, 7, 21.
- 7 Smith 2013, 5-20.
- 8 For example, on the Northeast Panel of the Ara Pacis Augustae, on the Julio-Claudian Medinaceli Reliefs, on the Julio-Claudian reliefs represented on the Boscoreale Cups (Augustus Cup), and on the Neronian Jupiter Column from Mainz.
- 9 See Smith (1987, 101-4 and 2013, 128-31) for a detailed analysis of the relief.
- 10 For example: *RRC* 452/5 (Crawford 1974, 467).
- 11 For example: *RIC* 1<sup>st</sup> Aug. 6.
- 12 Smith 2013, 144.
- 13 See Smith 1987, 115-7 and 2013, 145-7.
- 14 Smith 1987, 117-8; 2013, 141-3. The head of Nero survives, but is kept detached from the relief by the museum.
- 15 Tac. *Ann.* 13.37-41; Dio 57.23.
- 16 Smith 2013: C14: 149-50; C20: 160-2; C21: 162; C16: 152-5; C18: 156-8; C32: 175-6; C33: 176-7.
- 17 See Smith 1993.
- 18 Smith 2013, 139-41.
- 19 *RRC* 403 (Crawford 1974, 413), Pl. 50.7; *BMCR* i.3358-63, Pl. 43.5, ii. 68-9, 72.
- 20 Smith 2013, 271-2.
- 21 Smith 2013, 165-6.
- 22 The shield is not unusual for Virtus, for example, the Virtus from Cancellaria Relief A, from the Aurelian Adventus Relief, and many numismatic depictions of Virtus minted by Commodus and later.
- 23 Smith 2013, 166.
- 24 For the Medinaceli group, see Montfaucon 1717, IV.1, 164, tav. 105.
- 25 *RIC* 4 Carac. 456, 458a-b.

26 Virtus only appears in victory scenes after war has been waged and represents the emperors' martial excellence acquired from their victories.  
27 Smith 2013, 154-6.  
28 See the Aretē from the Library of Celsus at Ephesus, for example. Cf. Strocka 2003.  
29 Smith 2013, 123.  
30 *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Galba 63; *BMCRE* Galba 193-5.  
31 Mattingly 1923, 342 (*BMCRE* Galba 193-5).  
32 Erim 1982, 165.  
33 Smith 2013, 156.  
34 Long 2014, 157-62.  
35 Livy 27.25; Val. Max. 1.1.8.

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