

MATERIÁLY

EQUESTRIAN STATUES IN ANTIQUITY: CITY, PEOPLE, MONUMENTS

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NOVÁKOVÁ, Lucia - HRNČIARIK, Erik - DAŇOVÁ, Miroslava. Jazdecké sochy v antike: mesto, ľudia, pomníky. Grékom vlastná forma štátnej existencie – polis, sa najčastejšie prekladá ako mestský štát alebo obec. Pre tento termín sa ťažko hľadá moderný ekvivalent, keďže jeho definícia zahŕňa komplexný spoločenský systém s ohľadom na politické a sociálno-ekonomické aspekty obyvateľov. Gréci pokladali polis za politické a náboženské zoskupenie občanov, ktoré zahrňovalo určité územie. Na výstavbe verejných stavieb, ako aj uskutočňovaní rôznych spoločenských aktivít sa podieľali občania. Práve preto sa v antike zdôrazňovala úloha komunít, ktoré polis priamo definovali. Neoddeliteľnú súčasť gréckej polis tvorilo množstvo sôch predstavujúcich jej obyvateľov, ktoré zdobili verejné priestranstvá. Pohnuté sociálno-historické udalosti postavili do popredia predovšetkým politikov a vojenských veliteľov, ktorým sa stavali oslavné sochy zvyčajne už za ich života. Tento trend sa ešte viac prehĺbil v neskorom klasickej a helenistickom období, kedy so zmenou štátneho zriadenia obcí a macedónskymi vývojmí nastalo rozšírenie vtedajšieho gréckeho sveta. Osobitnú kategóriu sôch vojenských veliteľov potom predstavovali jazdecké pomníky, pre umiestnenie ktorých bolo najreprezentatívnejším miestom srdce gréckej polis, agora. Narastajúci počet jazdeckých sôch v druhej polovici štvrtého storočia pred Kr. je možné dať do súvislosti so zvyšujúcim sa významom jazdy v gréckej armáde, ako aj postupnou snahou o legitimitáciu moci jednotlivcov, štylizovaných podľa aristokratických a napokon kráľovských vzorov.

Kľúčové slová: jazdecký; nápis; pomník; polis; socha;

Keywords: Equestrian; Inscription; Monument; Polis; Statue;

Polis, the form of state existence peculiar to Ancient Greeks, is usually translated as a city-state or community. The term has no modern equivalent, and denotes a complex social system with regard to the political and socioeconomic aspects

of its inhabitants. The Greeks regarded the *polis* as a political and religious association of citizens that controlled a certain territory; it was not identical with the physical settlement of a city (*asty*) or country type (*kome, chora*). The *polis* consisted of three basic components: the inhabitants, the political system and the territory¹. The inhabitants were divided into several social classes and played a key role in the *polis*. The concept of the house (*oikos*) developed concurrently with the development of the *polis*. Its inhabitants formed the basic unit of Greek society. The main features of the *polis* included autonomy (*autonomia*), self-sufficiency (*autarkia*) and at least a partial possibility for citizens to participate in the governance of public matters. Each city had its own political system². Some scholars find the beginnings of the *polis* in the Dark Ages.³ Archaeology attests the development of the *polis* from the Archaic period at the latest. This period is characterised by monumental architecture, new architectural styles and the erection of sacred buildings entirely from stone, which changed the city landscape fundamentally. Planned urbanism brought about a division of public, private and sacred spaces. Greek cities can easily be identified by the typical civil buildings such as *gymnasia*, theatres, *stadia* and temples. The *agora*, a gathering place for citizens from the earliest times, continued to be the social hub.

An important part of life in the city was the accessibility of information – laws, decrees and regulations were made public either in written form or announced by heralds. Many documents have been preserved chiselled on the walls of administrative or sacred buildings. They helped develop an interest in public matters, which every free Greek had to possess. A number of statues (*eikon, andrias*) representing the inhabitants of the *polis* adorned public places and constituted an inseparable part of the city. Some of the statues were simple representations of officers, athletes or priests, and others were more complex sculptural groups personifying institutions or concepts related to administration (*polis, demokratia, demos*).⁴ Most of them have been irretrievably lost and are mostly known from written sources. The art of Ancient Greece reflected contemporary sociohistorical events to a large extent. The Classical period was characterised by the Greeks' struggle for national independence, intensive military conflicts in both the western and eastern Mediterranean, and finally by fratricidal wars that exhausted the entire Greek society. The Greeks portrayed particular historical events in mythological tales, which, in addition to real historical figures, also featured divine and mythical ones. Monuments commemorating military successes of the Greeks filled public spaces in the cities and temples *temenoi*. Most of these are attested in written sources, particularly bronze statues, which used to be recast, and mural or panel paintings.

¹ ARISTOTELES. Politica MCCLXXIVb.

² ARISTOTELES. Politica MCCLXXIXa.

³ SCHÖRNER, Hedwiga. The intra-urban burial inside Greek poleis in Asia Minor. The example of Termessos. In HENRY, Oliver (ed.). Rencontres d'archéologie de l'IFEA: Le Mort dans la ville Pratiques, contextes et impacts des inhumations intra-muros en Anatolie, du début de l'Age du Bronze à l'époque romaine. Istanbul: Institut français d'études anatoliennes, 2011, p. 224.

⁴ NOVÁKOVÁ, Lucia – GÚČIK, Lukáš. Powerful figures and images: Contribution to Personification of Polis in Hellenistic Art. In Iliria International Review, 2014, vol. 2, pp. 241-252.

The artistic representation of specific historical events was not limited to the Greeks of the Classical period. Candaules, the king of Lydia, commissioned Bularchus to paint a picture depicting the defeat of the Magnesians as early as the late eighth century BC. He was said to have paid its weight in gold for it.⁵ Herodotus mentions wooden *pinakes* depicting Darius's army⁶ crossing the Bosphorus on a floating bridge.⁷ For the ancient Greeks, the definition of *polis* was not complete without the community of citizens, who formed its most important part. This is attested by the large number of civil monuments in almost every city which have survived in the form of bases with inscribed information. Honorific statues bearing the names of specific persons were exhibited at *agoras*, in temples *temenoi*, *gymnasia* and theatres. Unlike epigraphical sources, the literary ones note rather limited possibilities of portraying a particular person in public, which served to maintain the desired egalitarian character of Greek society, especially in Classical Athens. Statues were sometimes dedicated to people posthumously.⁸ An example in antiquity is a frequently replicated monument raised in honour of the new democratic system of government in Athens. It was dedicated to Harmodius and Aristogeiton, who murdered the tyrant Hipparchus⁹. According to literary tradition¹⁰, one of the most famous Greek sculptors, Phidias, was indicted for portraying himself and his friend Pericles on the shield of Athena Parthenos.¹¹

Similar indictments were often associated with godlessness and severe punishments followed. However, the indictment of Phidias – which was most likely fabricated – does not prove the impossibility of portraying a particular person during their lifetime. Rather, the problem may have been that he had not obtained formal approval from the representatives of the city.¹² Granting a public portrait was an honour reserved for people for exceptional and praiseworthy deeds (*andres agathoi*), and was usually in the hands of the members of the city council (*bouleutai*). The decisions of the official representatives of the city have survived in many decrees, which describe the entire process starting with the proposal for granting a statue, reasons for the proposal, selection of materials, determining the costs and appointing the person responsible for the execution of the monument.¹³ The statues had typified forms that reflected an idealised im-

⁵ PLINIUS. *Naturalis historia* XXXV, 55.

⁶ HERODOTUS. *Historiae* IV, 88.1.

⁷ SUMMERER, Lâtife. *Picturing Persian victory: the painted battle scene on the Munich wood*. In IVANTCHIK, Askold – LICHELI, Vakhtang. *Achaemenid culture and local traditions in Anatolia, southern Caucasus and Iran. New discoveries*. Leiden: Brill, 2007, pp. 3-30.

⁸ CICERO. *Tusculanae Disputationes* I, 15.34.

⁹ THUCYDIDES. *Historiae* VI, 56.

¹⁰ PLUTARCHUS. *Vitae Parallelae* XXXI, 2.

¹¹ HARRISON, Evelyn B. *The composition of the Amazonomachy on the shield of Athena Parthenos*. In *Hesperia*, 1966, vol. 35, pp. 107-33.

¹² NOVÁKOVÁ, Lucia. *Grécky portrét – medzi ideálom a skutočnosťou*. In HALÁSZOVÁ, Ingrid – HRNČIARIK, Erik. *Portrét v toku dejín. Štúdie k teoretickým, historickým a socio-kultúrnym aspektom dejín portrétu*. Trnava: Filozofická fakulta Trnavskej univerzity v Trnave, 2018, pp. 6-17.

¹³ NOVÁKOVÁ, Lucia. *Tombs and burial customs in the Hellenistic Karia*. *Universitätsforschungen zur prähistorischen Archäologie* 282. Bonn: Rudolf Habelt, 2016, pp. 91-113.

age rather than characteristic features of a particular person.¹⁴ Greeks' idealised self-image can also be observed in their belief in their own superiority over other nations. This idea was particularly valid in the Classical period.¹⁵

The tumultuous socio-historical events spotlighted, above all, politicians and military commanders, to whom honorific statues were usually built during their lifetimes. This trend became even stronger in the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods, when the new system of government led to the expansion of the Greek world. Pausanias mentions a bronze statue of the Athenian statesman Pericles, which stood on the Athenian Acropolis.¹⁶ It is highly likely that the statue was made by the sculptor Kresilas in the second half of the fifth century BC.¹⁷ Another person, besides the Tyrannicides (*tyrannoktonoi*), who had their statue placed at the Athenian agora¹⁸, was general Conon. In the fourth century BC, influential men were politicians and orators (Philocrates, Aeschines, Demosthenes) as well as professional military commanders (Iphicrates, Chabrias, Timotheus, Chares of Athens).¹⁹ The statues from the former group resembled self-possessed men, scholars and philosophers, while generals were portrayed in a way that enhanced their bravery and vigour. This was probably also true of earlier monuments. The victory monument in Delphi built in honour of the Spartan victory at Aegospotami (405 BC)²⁰ consisted of a sculpture with general Lysander crowned by Poseidon.²¹ This work, raised while Lysander was still alive, could have been the Spartan answer to the monument of eponymous Athenian heroes celebrating their victory at Marathon. It was sculpted by Phidias and in addition to gods and a number of mythical figures also depicted the Athenian general Miltiades.²²

Miltiades was also portrayed along with his colleague Callimachus²³ in the most celebrated painting in Athens which depicted the Battle of Marathon.²⁴ The Agora in Sparta was adorned with statues of defeated Persians and their allies, including Mardonius and Artemisia of Halicarnassus.²⁵ According to Pausanias, building statues to living persons was nothing unusual: "*It is always the same; the Ionians merely follow the example of all the world in paying court to strength.*" The monument of eponymous heroes (*eponymoi*) at the Athenian agora consisted of statues

¹⁴ COHEN, Beth. The Non-Greek in Greek Art. In SMITH, Tyler Jo - PLANTZOS, Dimitris. A Companion to Greek Art. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012, pp. 472-476.

¹⁵ HALL, Jonathan M. Ancient Greek ethnicities: towards a reassessment. In Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, 2015, roč. 58/2, pp. 15-29.

¹⁶ PAUSANIAS. Graecae descriptio I, 25.1; PAUSANIAS. Graecae descriptio I, 28.2.

¹⁷ PLINIUS. Naturalis historia XXXIV, 7.

¹⁸ DEMOSTHENES. Orationes XX, 70.

¹⁹ HANSEN, Mogens Herman. Rhetores and strategoi in fourth-century Athens. In HANSEN, Mogens Herman. The Athenian ecclesia II: a collection of articles 1983-1989. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 1989, pp. 25-72.

²⁰ PAUSANIAS. Graecae descriptio X, 9.7.

²¹ WALTER, Uwe. The Classical Age as a Historical Epoch. In KINZL, Konrad H. A Companion to the Classical Greek world. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2006, pp. 1-15.

²² PAUSANIAS. Graecae descriptio X, 10.1.

²³ PAUSANIAS. Graecae descriptio I, 15.3.

²⁴ NOVÁKOVÁ, ref. 12, pp. 6-17.

²⁵ PAUSANIAS. Graecae descriptio III, 11.3.

of both mythical characters and mortals already in the late fourth century BC. These included Antigonus I Monophthalmus and his son Demetrius Poliorcetes (307/6 BC), later replaced by the statues of Ptolemy III Euergetes (224/23 BC) and Attalus I of Pergamon (200 BC).²⁶ Equestrian monuments represented a special category of statues of military commanders, and were most suitably placed at the *agora*, the heart of the Greek *polis*. The increasing number of equestrian statues in the second half of the fourth century BC had to do with the growing importance of cavalrymen in the Greek army, as well as with the gradual efforts to legitimise the power of individuals, stylised after aristocratic and later royal models. These statues drew on earlier sculpture traditions along with new artistic impulses, which were also arriving to ancient Greece from more distant regions. One of them was the traditional Middle Eastern motif of a victorious fighter stabbing an enemy lying under horse hooves.²⁷ The motif was relatively quickly adapted in the Greek world.

Greek cities in Anatolia, which came under the rule of Achaemenid kings, maintained close contact with the *poleis* in the Greek mainland as well as with their close neighbours.²⁸ Cultural exchange was accelerated by the migration of eastern Greek artists and craftsmen, who came to mainland Greece under the pressure of the Persians. It was helped by the fact that the Athenians- to justify their power demands in the eastern Mediterranean- promoted science and art for the newly created concept of *Ionian migration* that emanated from Athens.²⁹ Anatolians' efforts to gain autonomy – whether cultural, political or religious – increased with the arrival of Persians. The Greeks, especially under the influence of historical events following the *Ionian Revolt*, started to emphasise their distinctiveness from those they called barbarians (*barbaroi*). Anatolians, on the other hand, typically emphasised their identity through a combination of native, Greek and even Persian cultural elements. Cultural diversity was nothing new in Anatolia. Archaeological, literary and epigraphical sources attest to the presence of a bilingual population and the long-time existence of mixed Greek-Anatolian communities.³⁰ The aristocratic society in Athens at the end of the Archaic period was not much unlike them. In the period when the Greeks manifested their military and cultural dominance over the Persians through stories depicted on public monuments, Anatolian tombs showed military scenes of a very different type.³¹ Scenes from mural paintings or reliefs decorating *sarcophagi* portrayed the victorious Persians or victorious soldiers in Persian armour. The sarcophagus from

²⁶ PAUSANIAS. *Graecae descriptio* VI, 3.16; Shear, Theodore Leslie, Jr. The Monument of the Eponymous Heroes in the Athenian Agora. In *Hesperia*, 1970, vol. 39, pp. 145-222.

²⁷ NOVÁKOVÁ, Lucia. Antik dünyada Anadolu'da ölüm. Ölenin arkasından kötü konuşulmaz. In *Aktüel arkololoji* 2018, pp. 72-83.

²⁸ CRIELAARD, Jan Paul. The Ionians in the Archaic period. Shifting identities in a changing world. In DERKS, Ton – ROYMANS, Nico. *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity. The role of power and tradition*. Amsterdam archaeological studies 13. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009, pp. 37-84.

²⁹ MAC SWEENEY, Naoise. Separating fact from fiction in the Ionian migration. In *Hesperia*, 2017, vol. 86, pp. 379-421.

³⁰ CRIELAARD, ref. 28, pp. 37-84.

³¹ NOVÁKOVÁ, ref. 12, pp. 72-83.

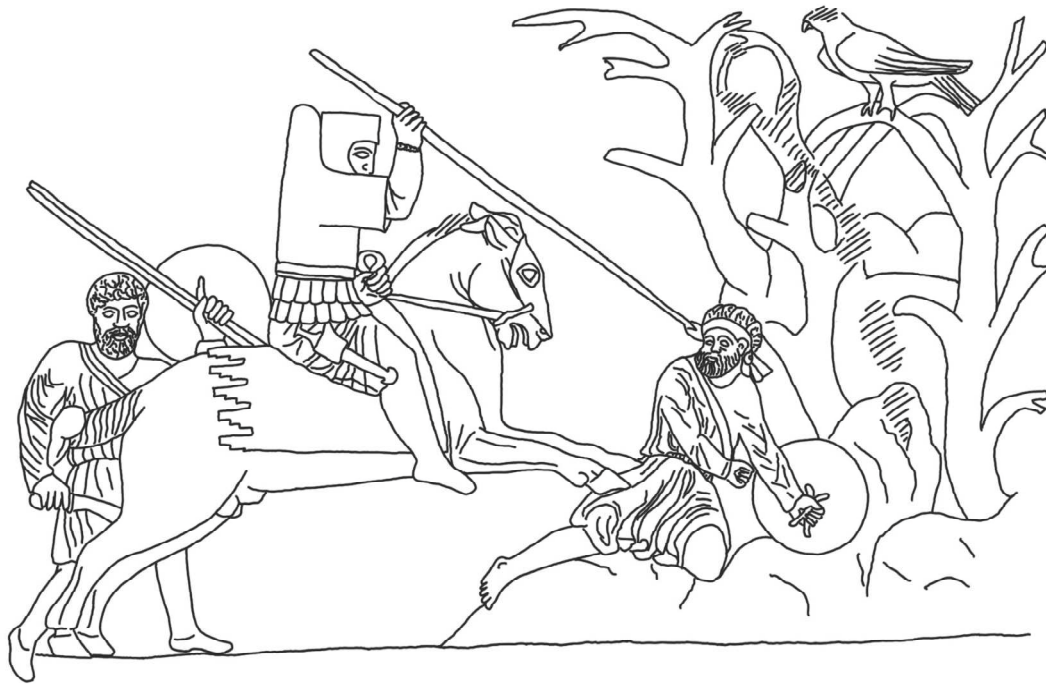


Fig. 1. The battle scene on the shorter side of the so called Çan Altıkulaç sarcophagus. The dramatic contrast in costume and pose between rider and opponent, probably Greek, seems to have been intended to emphasize the different ethnicity. Çanakkale Archaeological Museum.

Drawing: Andrej Sabov.

Çan Altıkulaç depicts a figure in Greek costume, defeated in battle by an enemy in Persian armour (fig. 1). The motif of the victorious rider was used on the classical funerary steles in mainland Greece, which drew on earlier sculptures. This is where the beginnings of equestrian sculptures, commemorating the bravery and heroism of Greek soldiers in battle, can be found. However, equestrian statues in public places had a longer tradition in the Greek world, a tradition that went back to the Archaic period.³² Horses had been an expensive and prestigious commodity since the Bronze Age, and were usually possessed by members of higher social classes, in particular the aristocracy.³³ It was an important requirement for being included in cavalry regiments and for participating in equestrian competitions. The archaic funerary steles (fig. 2) depicting cavalymen in wider Greek world probably belonged to the members of the equestrian class (*hippeis*). The equestrian statues on the Athenian acropolis were usually donated by the bereaved in remembrance of the dead. Other finds may be identified as divine, heroic or human figures. In the Classical period, the motif of a cavalryman fighting an enemy was common on the funerary steles of those who had died defending their homeland (*andres agathoi*).

³² EAVERLY, Mary Ann. *Archaic Greek Equestrian Sculpture*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996, p. 33.

³³ CARSTENS, Anne Marie. To bury a ruler: the meaning of the horse in aristocratic burials. In KARAGEORGHIS, Vassos - MATTHÄUS, Hartmut - ROGGE, Sabine. *Cyprus: Religion and Society from the Late Bronze Age to the End of the Archaic Period*, Möhnese: Bibliopolis, 2005, pp. 57-76.



Fig. 2. The grave statue of a young equestrian, dated back to ca. 520 B.C. From the Themistoclean wall. Kerameikos Archaeological museum.

Photo: Lucia Novakova.

An example of the heroisation of the deceased is the costly monument for Dexileus, which can be precisely dated thanks to its inscription (fig. 3). The young cavalryman died in the Corinthian War in 394/393 BC, when Eubulides was archon. The inscription revealing his age was likely to remind his fellow citizens that he had died too young to participate in the anti-democratic revolt installing the ruling of *Thirty Tyrants*, which involved the members of the oligarchy. A similar motif is found on an early fourth century tombstone of a fallen soldier, which – probably like the Dexileus stele – occupied an honourable place in the Athenian cemetery (*demosion sema*). A parallel to the depiction on Dexileus' monument can be found on a stele from Yalınızdam (fig. 4), which is dated a few decades later.³⁴ The motif of the victorious cavalryman was not the only element that Anatolian and Greek art had in common. Characteristics of classical art in both Anatolia and mainland Greece were the combination of mythological and historical figures, sometimes accompanied by deities. The attempt at realism – either social or naturalistic – reflected in the works of art produced by the Greeks inhabiting Anatolia and their neighbours, was, to a certain degree, in contrast to the idealising art of mainland Greece. The desired egalitarian nature of Greek – or Athenian – art was a rather exceptional phenomenon in the Eastern Mediterranean.³⁵

Scenes depicting particular historical events are associated with the Anatolian tradition, even though they often contain elements of the Middle Eastern canon

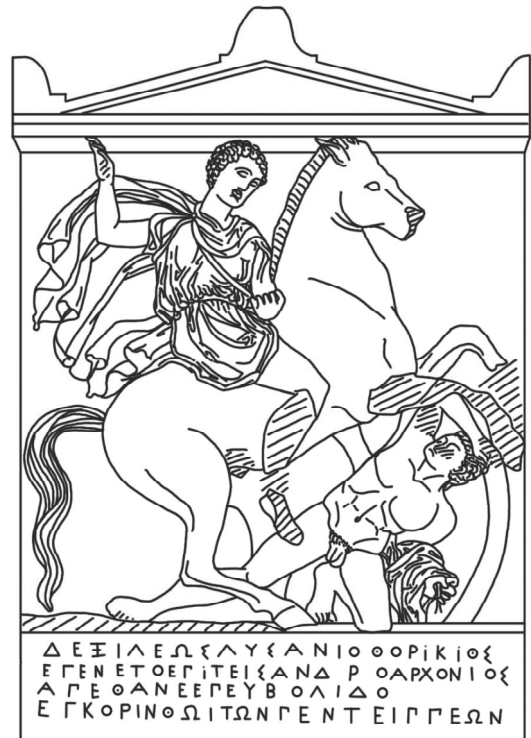


Fig. 3. The grave stele of Dexileos, made from Pentelic marble. The relief shows the deceased on horseback, triumphing in battle over an enemy. The monument has been dated to 394/393 B.C. Kerameikos Archaeological museum.

Drawing: Andrej Sabov.

³⁴ ŞARE, Tuna. *Dress and identity in ancient Anatolia: the seventh through fourth centuries BCE*. PhD. Diss., The State University of New Jersey, 2011, p. 174.

³⁵ NOVÁKOVÁ, ref. 27, pp. 72-83.

(scenes depicting sieges of cities and subjugated enemies).³⁶ The battle scenes on the murals in Tatarlı can be a reference to the battle between Persians and Scythians at Zela (513/12 BC),³⁷ noted by Strabo.³⁸ The upper frieze adorning the podium of the Nereid Monument (390-380 BC) reminds one of the scenes on Neo-Assyrian reliefs depicting the siege of a city or a train of subjugated enemies. The frieze is understood in the context of the battles between dynasties during the unification of Lycia.³⁹ The monument, sculpted by Greek artists, reveals a native tradition: the depicted cities can be identified on the basis of particular monuments. A few centuries later, pan-Hellenic motifs, traditionally symbolising Greek victory over barbarians, adorned the tomb of the Carian satrap Mausolus, who employed the most renowned Greek artists of his time. The walls enclosing the *Heroon* of Trysa were decorated with scenes of sieges of cities combined with Greek mythological tales.⁴⁰

Equestrian statues differed from other Greek civil monuments. The favourite sculpture representing *demos* crowning a citizen, which is attested in epigraphical sources, seems to have been an exceptional form of honour that the unique sociopolitical conditions gave rise to.⁴¹ Citizens participated in the building of civil buildings as well as in many social activities.

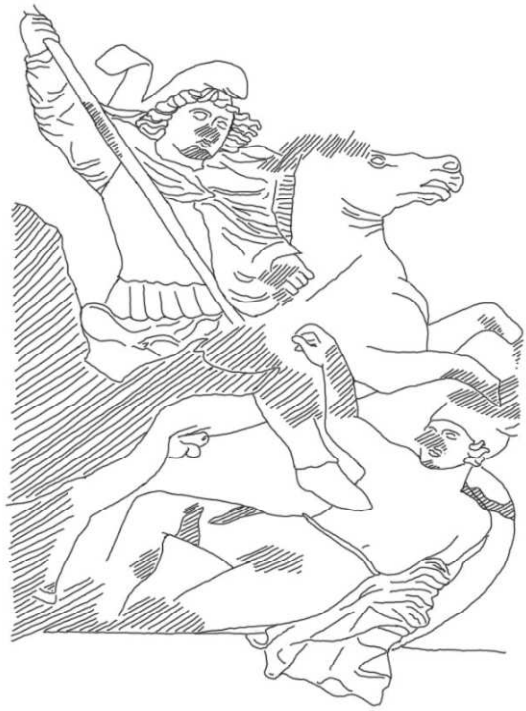


Fig. 4. Yalңызdam stele with a mounting warrior with an upturned bashlyk provides a parallel to the so called Dexileos stele from the Athenian Demosion sema. Dated back to the fourth century B.C., a few decades after the Dexileos stele. Antalya archaeological museum. Drawing: Andrej Sabov.

³⁶ ŞARE, Tuna. The sculpture of the Heroon of Perikle at Limyra: the making of a Lycian king. In *Anatolian Studies*, 2013, vol. 63, pp. 55-74.

³⁷ SUMMERER, Lâtife. From Tatarlı to Munich: The Recovery of a Painted Wooden Tomb Chamber in Phrygia. In DELEMEN, İnci- CASABONNE, Olivier - KARAGÖZ, Şehrazat - TEKIN, Oğuz. *The Achaemenid Impact on Local Populations and Cultures in Anatolia (sixth - fourth centuries B.C.)*. Papers presented at the International workshop Istanbul 20-21 May 2005. Istanbul: Turkish institute of archaeology, 2007, pp. 129-156; SUMMERER, Lâtife. *Imaging a Tomb Chamber: The Iconographic Program of the Tatarlı Wall Paintings*. In DARBANDI, Seyed Mohammad Reza - ZOURNATZI, Antigoni. *Ancient Greece and Ancient Iran: Cross-Cultural Encounters*. First International Conference, Athens, 11-13 November 2006. Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2008, pp. 265-299.

³⁸ STRABON. *Geographica* XV, 3.15.

³⁹ JENKINS, Ian. *Greek architecture and its sculpture*. Cambridge: Harvard university press, 2006, pp. 195-196.

⁴⁰ BENNDORF, Otto - NIEMANN, George. *Das Heroon von Gjölbасchi-Trysa*. Wien: Holzhausen, 1889, pp. 40-46.

⁴¹ ISAGER, Signe - KARLSSON, Lars. A new inscription from Labraunda. Honorary decree for Olympichos: I. Labraunda No. 134 (and No. 49). In *Epigraphica Anatolica*, 2008, vol. 41, pp. 39-52.

Communities, which defined the polis, played an important role in antiquity. Full citizens, selected on the basis of a property census, performed liturgy (*leiturgia*), compulsory public services, at their own expense in ancient Greece. In a narrower sense, the liturgy meant financing various public projects such as constructing buildings. High ranking officers such as *archons*, but also *cleruchs* and *ephebes*, were exempted from this obligation. A known form of liturgy was *choregia*, the responsibility to prepare theatre performances. An even more expensive form was *trierarchia*, the duty on selected citizens to fund the construction of a warship known as a *trireme*. Initially, the acceptance of financial commitments was associated with great prestige, but later it was considered a burden. The exemption from the liturgy had become one of the public honours given to citizens for various achievements. Despite the emphasis put on equality between citizens in the Classical period, the cities honoured their inhabitants for useful deeds. In this way, the achievements of individuals – referred to as benefactors (*eurgetai*, *andres philotimoi*) – were highlighted.⁴²

In the following period, the importance of *euergesism* increased⁴³ and became one of the main sources to fund public life. Citizens were rewarded with honorific inscriptions, which often stated their other achievements (the granting of a statue, a wreath, a public announcement, seats in the first row at cultural or sporting events, etc.).⁴⁴ The transformation of Greek society was closely related to historical events. The sociohistorical changes in the fourth century BC had a fundamental significance for the entire Greek world, as they led to a new form of government, which was concentrated in the hands of a single man. Traditional Middle Eastern motifs (hunting, feasting, and horse riding), adopted in line with Greek artistic practices, were quickly adapted in royal iconography. One of the first Greek rulers who understood the significance of such portrayals for their own propaganda was Alexander the Great. He surrounded himself with accomplished artists, who may have contributed to this understanding.⁴⁵ New trends in royal portrait art, such as the equestrian portrait, were introduced by the sculptor Lysippos.⁴⁶ Although none of his original statues have survived, one can get an idea of his work from a number of replicas in various materials and sizes, as well as from depictions on the works of glyptic art and on coins. Velleius Paterculus writes that “Alexander the Great prevailed upon Lysippus, a sculptor unexcelled in works of this sort, to make portrait-statues of the horsemen in his own squadron who had fallen at the river Granicus, and to place his own statue among them.”⁴⁷

⁴² HANDS, Arthur Robinson. *Charities and Social Aid in Greece and Rome*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1968, pp. 62-65.

⁴³ DANKER, Frederick W. *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Fields*. St. Louis: Clayton, 1982, s. 36-38; MA, John. *Statues and Cities. Honorific Portraits and Civic Identity in the Hellenistic World*. Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 153-162.

⁴⁴ MA, ref. 43, pp. 5-23.

⁴⁵ PLUTARCHUS. *Vitae Parallelae* IV, 2.

⁴⁶ POLLITT, Jerome Jordan. *Art in the Hellenistic Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 20-5.

⁴⁷ VELLEIUS PATERCULUS. *Historiae* I, 11.3.

The statues of cavalymen, placed in public places, which had previously been war monuments for the dead, now became the symbols of military victories for the living. An example of this is the sculpture in Dion, Macedonia, which glorified both Alexander's military success and the bravery of the fallen soldiers. This bronze monument, composed of twenty-six life size statues, became a prototype for the later costly monuments that honoured the ruler as a victorious commander.⁴⁸ In this sense, the cavalry regiments led to battle by Alexander himself played a certain role. The decisive role in the majority of battles was played by the members of the elite cavalry of the Macedonian army (*hetairoi*). It was from this body of cavalymen that Alexander's bodyguards (*somatophylakes*) were recruited. Several of them (Lysimachus, Perdiccas, Ptolemy of Lagus) sought to become his successor (*diadochoi*), with varying degrees of success. The bronze statue from Herculaneum dated from the first century BC gives us an idea of how Alexander's equestrian statue from Dion may have looked. It depicts him on horseback, with a raised sword in one hand and the reins in the other. Alexander's equestrian portraits can be reconstructed from reliefs and mosaics, often replicas of earlier paintings, which depicted dramatic moments of battles. Historical scenes accentuating the brave deeds of individuals were important motifs in both mural and panel painting. Pliny mentions a painting depicting a battle of Alexander with Darius III, commissioned by Cassander and painted by Philoxenus of Eretria.⁴⁹ This picture has survived in the form of the famous Alexander Mosaic found in the House of the Faun in Pompeii.

Apelles painted Alexander's companion Cleitus heading to battle on horseback, as well as his officer Neoptolemus, also on horseback fighting against Persians.⁵⁰ He was also the painter of an equestrian portrait of Antigonos I Monophthalmus, with a three-quarter view, which concealed the subject's defect.⁵¹ The practice of building monuments for rulers and important people in the form of equestrian statues became more common in the Hellenistic period (fig. 5). As these were usually costly bronze monuments, often gilded (*chalke epichrysos*) or silvered, they have survived exclusively in written – literary and, in particular, epigraphical – sources. Their form had to do with an idealised picture of the victorious leader who – like Alexander the Great – stood at the head of the army and conquered his enemies. Individuals honoured in this way were usually rulers, members of royal families, or their close officers, in inscriptions referred to as the ruler's "guests" or "friends" (*philoï*).⁵² They were commonly chosen from the members of local elites, and played a significant role in establishing a close relationship between the ruler and the members of municipalities. Official documents from the Early Hellenistic period that were issued by Anatolian Greek cities add to what we know about equestrian statues becoming an integral part of official royal portraits. Honorific statues, ordered by the elected representatives of the *poleis*, were usually related

⁴⁸ STEWART, Andrew. *Faces of Power. Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics*. California: University of California press, 1994, p. 127.

⁴⁹ PLINIUS. *Naturalis historia* XXXV, 110.

⁵⁰ PLINIUS. *Naturalis historia* XXXV, 93-96.

⁵¹ POLLITT, ref. 46, p. 45.

⁵² MA, ref. 43, pp. 5-23.



Fig. 5. The statue of an equestrian officer from Parian marble, found on Melos. The horse is depicted at a gentle gallop, with a support beneath its belly. The rider wears a corselet decorated with a gorgoneion and snakes. In his left hand he holds the reins and makes a gesture of official greetings with his raised right hand. Dated about 100 B.C. National archaeological museum of Athens.

Photo: Lucia Novakova.

to a military victory or the high command of the army. This practice suggests a mutually beneficial relationship between the king, who could legitimise his power in this way, and cities, which gained certain advantages or at least a degree of formal sovereignty.⁵³

The earlier Greek city-states were incorporated into Hellenistic kingdoms in a number of ways. In most cases, granting independence was a privilege that had to be confirmed by a formal act every time a new ruler succeeded to power. Civic institutions often served to support the newly established monarchies. Setting up honorific statues had become part of this process. In exceptional cases, the equestrian statue of the ruler –*eikon*, but also *agalma*– was

placed in the temple,⁵⁴ which meant it was linked to the official cult. An analysis of epigraphical evidence suggests that this practice had already existed at the end of the reign of Seleucus I or shortly afterwards.⁵⁵ The origin and spread of the *ruler cult* is a complex subject that spans a long period and a large geographical area. The spreading of the cult did not mean that the existing religious practice was violently interrupted, but rather that the state cult was transformed with a clear aim – to define the relationship between the cities and their new rulers.⁵⁶ Much of the epigraphical evidence illustrating the mutual relationship between the *poleis* and the king derives from western Anatolia.⁵⁷ Legal acts, and therefore also the

⁵³ SHIPLEY, Graham. The Greek World After Alexander 323–30 BC. The Routledge History of the Ancient World. New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 59-60.

⁵⁴ KOONCE, Kirsten. ΑΓΑΛΜΑ and ΕΙΚΩΝ. In American Journal of Philology, 1988, vol. 109, pp. 108-10; MA, ref. 27, pp. 45-62.

⁵⁵ IOSSIF, Panagiotis P. Apollo Toxetes and the Seleukids. Comme un air de familie. In IOSSIF, Panagiotis P.– CHANKOWSKI, Andrzej S. – LORBER, Catharine C. More than Men, less than Gods. Studies on Royal Cult and Imperial Worship. Proceedings of the international colloquium organized by the Belgian School in Athens. Leuven: Peeters, 2011, pp. 229-291.

⁵⁶ SHIPLEY, ref. 53, pp. 64-65.

⁵⁷ NOVÁKOVÁ, ref. 13, pp. 106-110.

decisions about awarding honours, were recorded in inscriptions chiselled in the walls of public buildings and also commonly those of temples.⁵⁸

Decrees (*psephismata*) were normally issued in several copies and put in different places. Their texts are similar in both terminology and structure.⁵⁹ The first part contained introductory information as an invocation, the dating formula and the reasons for the award. The subsequent part (*epeide*) stated the name of the honoured person (in the case of a royal officer also a description of his relation to the ruler) and listed his merits.⁶⁰ The proposal to build an equestrian statue was often put forward by military commanders or high ranking officers such as *strategoí*. The final part (*dedochthai*) defined the awards and stated the name of the officer who was in charge of providing them. It stated the costs and determined the conditions for recording the decree and its placement in a public place.⁶¹ The costs towards the production of a statue depended on the weight of the metal from which it was made, an equestrian statue being four times heavier than the statue of a human figure.⁶² Statues had fine details to appear alive: eyes were inlaid with glass paste or stones, teeth and nails filled with silver, and lips and nipples with copper. A summary of the most important information was usually incised on the base.

The person honoured with an equestrian statue was often awarded other honours and privileges. For instance, they may have been awarded a gold wreath (*stephanos chrysos*), given the privilege of using prominent seats during sporting events or cultural festivals (*prohedria*), been exempted from taxes or liturgy, entitled to free food at the *prytaneion*, or given preferential entry to the oracle or to official institutions. Some citizens were awarded by burial with public expenses (*tafe demosia*). In some cases, an altar (*bomos*) might have been erected and festivities observed in their honour were entered into the religious calendar, which again testifies to the *ruler cult*. Honours and privileges were also awarded to the relatives and future descendants of the venerated person. Written sources attest that this practice was relatively widespread in different parts of the Greek world. Athenians built more than three hundred, mostly equestrian, bronze statues in honour of Demetrius of Phalerum.⁶³ There is epigraphical evidence of commemorative equestrian statues at the Athenian *agora*. One of them, dated ca.

⁵⁸ ROSEN, Klaus. Ehrendekrete, Biographie und Geschichtsschreibung: Zum Wandel der griechischen Polis im frühen Hellenismus. In *Chiron*, 198, vol. 17, pp. 277-292; WILLIAMSON, Christine. Public space beyond the city. The sanctuaries of Labraunda and Sinuri in the chora of Mylasa. In DICKENSON, Christopher P. – VAN NIJF, Otto M. *Public Space in the Post-Classical Greek City*. Caeculus series. Leuven: Peeters, 2004, pp. 148-155.

⁵⁹ FRIEDERMANN, Quass. Die Honoratiorenschicht in den Städten des griechischen Ostens. Untersuchung zur politischen und sozialen Entwicklung in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1993, pp. 18-26.

⁶⁰ HERMAN, Geoffrey. The Friends of the Early Hellenistic rulers: Servants or Officials? In *Talanta*, 1981, vol. 12-13, pp. 103-106.

⁶¹ FRIEDERMANN, ref. 59, pp. 18-26.

⁶² STEWART, ref. 48, p. 128.

⁶³ DIOGENES LAERTIUS. *Vitae Philosophorum V*, 5.75.



Fig. 6. Gilded fragments of a bronze equestrian statue, probably erected in honour of Demetrios Poliorketes. Athenians erected gold statues of Demetrios and his father Antigonos near the statues of Tyrannicides, honouring them after the bestowal of democracy. National archaeological museum of Athens.

Photo: Lucia Novakova.



Fig. 7. The statue of a horse from Parian marble, found in an Antikythera shipwreck. Probably one of a group of four drawings of a chariot. Late Hellenistic period. National archaeological museum of Athens.

Photo: Lucia Novakova.

314/313 BC, was built in honour of a certain Asander of Macedonia.⁶⁴ Another was set up in honour of Demetrius Poliorketes (fig. 6). Carriage statues, usually with *quadriga*, were, in the Greek world, mainly related to the winning of agonic competitions, whether in Olympia, Delphi or Athens (fig. 7). A monument of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa in Athens replaced such a statue, commemorating the victory of the Attalid kings (Eumenes II or Attalus II) in a panathenaic competition. The statue of the Roman general was erected in a prominent place at the entrance to the Acropolis between 27 and 12 B.C. (fig. 8).

Equestrian monuments raised in sanctuaries and temple *temenoi* probably did not differ from the ones built in the cities. Written sources note several statues erected shortly after the death of the gifted general and statesman Philopoemen (183 BC), who commanded the cavalry in the Achaean League. Plutarch notes that the Achaean had a bronze statue built for Philopoemen, depicting him as he kills the tyrant Machanidas, who was about to jump over a ditch during his fight.⁶⁵ The public spaces of the Greek *poleis*, whether they were *agoras*, temples *temenoi* or theaters, were literally full of commemorative statues of prominent personalities. These monuments not only glorified the people themselves, but also created some form of propaganda, testifying to the importance of each *polis*. On the other hand, as it is seen in the case of the *diadochoi* and Hellenistic rulers, it was also a clear testimony to the subordination of *poleis* to individual rulers, despite their proclaimed independence. Often, it is possible to speak about adu-

⁶⁴ Kirchner, Johannes. *Inscriptiones Graecae II et III: Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores*. Berlin: de Gruyter et Socios, 1935. IG II2 450b.

⁶⁵ PLUTARCHUS. *Vitae Parallelae* X, 7.



Fig. 8. A pillar monument on the Athenian Acropolis, dated back between the late third and early second century B.C. It was built to commemorate the victory of Eumenes II in the Panathenaic Games chariot race. A bronze life-size quadriga, probably driven by Eumenes and/or his brother Attalus II., was set on top. Another one, dedicated by the Athenians to Marcus Agrippa, replaced the chariot about 27 B.C. Photo: Lucia Novakova.

lation to the powerful monarchs, especially in the case of Athens, which clearly demonstrates the decline of power and influence of the originally independent and proud city-states of the Classical period. Exposing a large number of sculptures was a deliberative construction of „museums“ below the sky, reminiscent of past glory. Or, on the contrary, these sculptures reminded the present subordination of those whose artistic treasures filled the decks of the Roman ships. They drove the „Greek past“ as prey to the hands of the new masters of the Greek *oikumene*, to the „eternal city.“

An honorific monument celebrating the victory of Aemilius Paullus (167 BC) at the Battle of Pydna (fig. 9) was originally intended for his rival, king Perseus. It was nine metres high and set up on a prominent spot in front of the entrance to the Temple of Apollo in Delphi. Nearby were victory monuments for Eumenes II and Prusias of Bythinia (fig. 10). The pillar base should have originally supported an equestrian statue of an Antigonid king, but in the end represented a Roman general. Traces on the plinth suggest that the horse was rearing. Aemilius Paullus's monument can be considered an early influence of Rome on high Hellenistic art. In the territory of the expanding Roman Empire, equestrian statues could already be found in public places during the mid-Republic. They were regarded as exceptional and prominent forms of monuments. Cicero notes that they were „*maximus honos*“.⁶⁶ However, it was from Hellenistic kingdoms that the Romans really drew inspiration. They depicted their own generals and victorious heroes in positions typical for Hellenistic rulers.⁶⁷ These included equestrian statues. As with Greek equestrian statues, only few such Roman statues have survived. There are only

⁶⁶ CICERO. *Philippicae* V, 41; CICERO. *Philippicae* IX, 13.

⁶⁷ KLEINER, Diana E. E. *Roman Sculpture*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992, p. 35.



Fig. 9. A relief frieze decorating the monument of Aemilius Paulus in Delphi. The frieze depicted the battle of Pydna (167 B.C.). The monument, originally intended to be a base for a portrait of King Perseus, was erected in order to commemorate the Roman victory. A bronze equestrian statue was placed atop a rectangular pillar. Archaeological museum Delphi. Photo: Lucia Novakova.



Fig. 10. An honorific monument of Prusias II of Bithynia at Delphi. At the top stood the statue of king Prusias on horseback. The monument was similar to the pedestal the Monument of Aemilius Paulus, set up about 15 years later. Archaeological museum Delphi. Photo: Lucia Nováková.

around five statues preserved in their entirety (e.g. the statue of Marcus Aurelius on the Capitoline Hill- fig. 11). Larger fragments are more abundant (e.g. the fragment from the statue of Augustus in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens), but the largest group consists of small fragments (e.g. a horse head



Fig. 11. Replica of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, Campidoglio, Rome.
Photo: Lucia Nováková.

from Waldgirmes⁶⁸). Information about their existence has survived thanks to the numerous epigraphical inscriptions on the bases.⁶⁹ The earliest statues appear as early as the fourth century BC. Despite the fact that they saw their boom from around 200 BC, they were already standing on the forum of almost every Roman city in the second half of the first century BC.

In terms of style, there are eight different schemes depicting the cavalrymen. These are usually dressed in armour or *toga*. Some of the Roman statues are dressed in Greek costume, but these occur mostly in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, where the Greek costume was also imperial. The majority of cavalrymen represent the well-known Roman *virtus*, whether they are depicted riding, sitting on horseback holding a javelin, or victorious, i.e. throwing the javelin. They can also be depicted walking with their right hand raised. The size of the statue did not

play a major role, though in the Roman Imperial period it was important that a private statue was not larger than the statue of the emperor. In Roman antiquity, equestrian statues were usually erected for living people. Naturally, in the imperial period, the statues depicted the emperor himself, the senators and other high-ranking officers, and often also *decuriones*, in particular as city patrons.⁷⁰ In the Roman Empire, statues could not be set up in public without permission, which was most often granted by the city committee. A decree was always needed to erect a statue. This was not true for statues erected in sanctuaries, so if we would like to observe stylistic development of equestrian statues in the first three centuries BC, it is these statues we should observe.⁷¹ The decrees granting permission to build statues in public places contain a variety of names such as *statua pedestris*, *statua, biga* and *statua equestris*, and are always linked to a specific place.

⁶⁸ RASBACH, Gabriele: Der bronzene Pferdekopf aus der römischen Stadtanlage von Waldgirmes – ein Fund von internationaler Bedeutung. *Hessen Archäologie*, 2009, pp. 78-82.

⁶⁹ ALFÖLDY, Géza. *Römische Statuen in Venetia et Histria: epigraphische Quellen*. Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1984, 3. Heidelberg: Winter, 1984, 160 pp.

⁷⁰ BERGEMANN, Johannes. *Römische Reiterstatuen. Ehrendenkmäler im öffentlichen Bereich*. In Fittschen, K. – Zanker, P. – Bergemann, J. *Römische Reiterstatuen*. Mainz: Zabern, 1990, pp. 4-9.

⁷¹ SCHOLLMEYER, Patrick. *Römische Plastik: Eine Einführung*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005, p. 41.

From roughly mid-Republic, there was a boom in private statues set up in public places (*forum, basilica, theatre* etc.), which led, in 158 BC, to a decision ordering all private statues to be removed and their erection regulated. From then onwards, setting up statues in the *forum* had to be approved by a popular assembly. However, it is unlikely that this practice was introduced in other cities in an equally strict way. It appears, nevertheless, that statues set up by means of a decree commanded respect, which suppressed the building of private statues. Equestrian statues appeared on *fora*, in the East at *agoras*, but we also find them in sanctuaries. They occur rarely in theatres, there is little evidence of their placement in basilicas, and they are also rare in cemeteries.⁷² The placement of equestrian statues in *fora* was important. The area used for senators and the emperor's family members was referred to as *locus celleberrimus*, while statues belonging to the representatives of the city were usually smaller and set up *in foro*.⁷³ This is attested, for instance, by the placement of statues preserved in the *forum* in Pompeii. Larger and more important statues stand near the buildings of the magistrate, while smaller ones are spread along the edge of the forum.

The earliest equestrian statues in Rome date from the second half of the fourth century BC. However, they are known solely from literary sources. Two triumphal columns with consuls C. Maenius and L. Furius Camillus on horseback were built around 338 BC. In 306 BC, another consul, Q. Marcius Tremulus had a statue of himself erected near the Temple of Castor. All three men are known to have achieved military success and celebrated their triumph in Rome. It is interesting that roughly in the same period, an equestrian statue was built for Cloelia, a woman who had long been a historical figure descending from a senatorial family. She had allegedly played a role in the campaign of Lars Porsena after the expulsion of the last Etruscan king from Rome in 510 BC. Cloelia was taken hostage and fled heroically upon a horse. Other equestrian statues from the mid-Republic were reserved for senators and were erected in the *forum* in the *Comitium*. Both Cloelia and Q. Marcus Tremulus were depicted in *toga*, which accentuated their senatorial affiliation.⁷⁴ An important change in the historical practice of placing equestrian statues in the *Forum Romanum* took place in the Late Republic around 209 BC. After recapturing Tarentum, Quintus Fabius Maximus had a private statue of himself erected right next to Lysippos's colossal statue of Heracles, a statue he had brought from his campaign as plunder. Subsequently, other war leaders had statues of themselves erected, for instance Acilius Glabrio (181 BC), who was the first to have his statue gilded.

This led to conflicts between private persons, with dynasties trying to outrun one another in erecting statues, as well as conflicts between private persons and the state. As mentioned earlier, the situation was resolved by removing the statues by censors in 158, and the subsequent passing of the law ordering approval by popular assembly. In terms of artistic representation, republican equestrian statues imitated Hellenistic models. This can be seen in sophisticated details, in

⁷² BERGEMANN, ref. 70, p. 15.

⁷³ ALFÖLDY, ref. 69, p. 65.

⁷⁴ BERGEMANN, ref. 70, pp. 10-13.

particular on the statues of the horses.⁷⁵ Interestingly, in Rome, equestrian statues became extremely popular in this period, while in the east of the empire they continued to be something exclusive that only the “Hellenistic rulers – kings” could afford. Paradoxically, there is little information about the building of equestrian statues in the city of Rome in the Early Imperial period. We know that a few were set up on the *rostra* in the *Forum*. This is the time when Caesar, and in particular Augustus, came up with the idea to place dominant sculpted monuments in the centres of squares (until then they were usually placed along the edges of the *Forum*, as was the case with Pompeii that was previously mentioned). Accordingly, Caesar had a statue of his horse set up in the middle of the *Forum*, which was replaced after his death by an equestrian statue. Augustus⁷⁶ didn’t set up an equestrian statue of himself in the *Forum* either, but instead had himself portrayed as a charioteer in his *quadriga* (in this way symbolising a triumphal procession).

It is important to understand that both Caesar’s and Augustus’s fora were “private” complexes funded from their own sources, which is why their architects (among them Augustus) were not restricted in experimenting. However, *Forum Romanum* remains an old symbol of the “republican” establishment, and the placement of statues there continued to be in the hands of the people, which meant that statues were placed along its edges. In neighbouring cities, however,



Fig. 12. Drawing of Roman Emperors on Horseback. Equestrian statue of Domitian by Jan van der Straet (Engraving, 1587–89). Department of Drawings and Prints, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Credits: The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1949, Source: <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/>

⁷⁵ BERGEMANN, ref. 70, pp. 33-35.

⁷⁶ HANNESTAD, Niels. Roman Art and Imperial Policy. Jutland Archaeological Society, Band. 19. Aarhus University Press, 1988, p. 85.

there is an increase in equestrian statues during this period (mid-first century BC to mid-first century AD). Unlike in the city of Rome, these statues appear, above all, in the *fora* themselves, i.e. in city centres. It was first the Flavian dynasty that put an end to this era, when Emperor Domitian had an equestrian statue of himself set up in the centre of the *forum* (83/84 AD) as a significant symbol of the new – absolute – government, i.e. the occupation of Rome by the Flavian dynasty (fig. 12). Originally, there was a monument in the form of columns built by Augustus. Domitian had the columns moved to the Capitoline Hill, and erected his own equestrian statue in the centre of the public place. In this way, he laid the foundation for one of the most common city-forming elements, which is still in use today.⁷⁷

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⁷⁷ MUTH, Susanne. *Auftritt auf einer bedeutungsschweren Bühne: Wie sich die Flavier im öffentlichen Zentrum der Stadt Rom inszenieren*. In REIZ, Christiane – KRAMER, Norbert. *Tradition und Erneuerung. Mediale Strategien in der Zeit der Flavier*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2010, pp. 490-493.

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