

Prolegomena to a Study of the Economics of Roman Art

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This article proposes a series of fundamental questions concerning the economic aspects of the production of works of art in the Roman world, focusing chiefly on “high-end” production. The first and last of the five questions addressed serve as a chronological framework: (1) When did war booty and extortion cease to be important sources of the supply of works of art and give way to “normal” markets? (2) In what sense did clients provide artists with patronage? (3) What were the market mechanisms for meeting the demand for works by well-known artists, and what were the effects of the demand for works by famous artists of the past? (4) Was there an integrated empire-wide market in works of art or in the more or less precious materials that artists used? (5) When the Roman economy began its slow fragmentation and disintegration in the third century—a process that was still going on 400 years later—what were the effects on the production and distribution of works of art? Answering these questions with the normal methods of economic history helps show where some of the biggest challenges are for historians of Roman art.¹

INTRODUCTION

In this article, I propose a framework for the study of the economics of Roman art—only a framework, not a definitive set of answers, for the study of Roman art, if not of ancient art more generally, has lagged somewhat behind some other art historical fields in this respect.² And our evidence, material and textual, is often so slight that many questions have to be left open.

To keep the discussion within reasonable limits, I list at once some topics that I exclude from consideration here. One of these is the social status of artists, though that is relevant to what I have to say about artistic patronage. A number of scholars, most recently Stewart, have explicated this matter, at least in outline;³ thus, we know that there were a few well-to-do amateurs, both male and female, but for the most part nothing, or nothing much, distinguished the social status of artists from that of artisans.⁴ Visual artists saw themselves as *technitai* or *artifikes* (which does not mean that they were all social equals);⁵ they would not, I think, have understood the modern

¹ Alan Cameron, Maria Luisa Catoni, Emily Cook, Francesco de Angelis, Rachel Kousser, Bert Smith, and Andrew Wilson generously gave me information and advice. None of them is to be held responsible for the result. An earlier version of this paper was given at the Oxford Roman Economy Project conference “The Economics of Roman Art” (Oxford, 2011). All translations are my own. I hope that readers will join the discussion on AJA Online (www.ajaonline.org).

² For some work on other premodern periods, see Cavaciocchi 2002; North 2011. A classical archaeologist can still write that “in antiquity, there was no direct link between supply and demand” (Poblome et al. 2004, 29).

³ Stewart 2008. Calabi Limentani (1958, esp. 43–55) laid much of the groundwork.

⁴ The attitude of upper-class Roman Greeks is nicely illustrated in Plutarch’s *Pericles* (2): no well-bred (*euphuēs*) youth would desire to be Pheidias or Polycleitus.

⁵ Coarelli (1996, 522–25), however, has demonstrated that Latin “ars” is nearer to “art” than Greek “techne” is.

distinction between artist and artisan.⁶ This matter has been extensively debated.⁷

In every category, a substantial proportion of *artifices* were slaves or freed slaves. Some prospered, a few grew rich. Very occasionally, a successful artist was on close terms with members of the upper social elite—or rather, some rare members of that elite, most notably Hadrian and L. Licinius Lucullus, regularly consorted with artists. I leave to one side the question of individual artists vs. workshops, which from an economic point of view is relatively inconsequential, though not entirely so.⁸

One other matter I leave aside, with greater reluctance, is the question of consumption choices. Why did Romans with money to spend buy objets d'art rather than, say, landed property? And why this kind of object rather than that kind? (To what extent did demonstrating artistic knowledge become a social marker, akin to the possession of a good literary education?)⁹ And what were the mechanisms by which taste and fashion were formed at different social levels—how, in other words, were artistic consumption choices determined? Pliny (*HN* 33.139), writing about silverware, proposes to explain swift changes in taste by “the inconstancy of the human race,” but we should be able to do better than that. These are not by any means new questions,¹⁰ and some of them have received careful attention in recent times¹¹—but there is much more to say. The difficulty is that anything like a full discussion would require an entire chapter of social history, a new history of Roman taste, and the time to write it.

Closely related to the problem of consumption choices is the matter of what we can call “mediation,” the rise of both art dealers and connoisseurs.¹² But we do not have enough evidence to write a meaningful history of this phenomenon. The related matter of collecting, however, and in particular its prevalence and its impact on the market, deserves further study.¹³

As to what is or is not to be counted as a work of art in this discussion, I wish above all to avoid drawing an arbitrary frontier that will distort the conclusions. And there are so many categories that might be either included or excluded, from high-quality glassware to funerary reliefs, from parade armor to geometric mosaics (these are often categories about which little can be said in economic terms). Classical art historians often seem to use the term for decorative or functional categories of objects whose modern equivalents we do not normally consider to be works of art,¹⁴ and if we are going to study Roman “visual culture,” that is clearly a wise approach. In this case, however, it seems best to concentrate on what was movable and collectible, but without excluding other works of high prestige, such as ambitious building projects. The more ambitious architects must certainly not be excluded. They raise interesting problems closely linked to other themes that are developed here.¹⁵ But I also plan to pay some attention to commoner objects that were intended to be major elements of domestic decoration, such as the more run-of-the-mill wall paintings, for to do otherwise seems to mean setting up a barrier that might be quite harmful.

Should we suppose that for an economic historian the production and commercialization of works of art can be anything more than a rather trivial sector of the economy? The subject seldom appears in books about the Roman economy. Yet if we count architecturally ambitious building programs as works of art, as we should, such neglect is clearly misguided. Noteworthy expenditures were involved, and in Rome and other cities large numbers of workers were employed (it required 36,000 man-years to build the Baths of Caracalla, to take an extreme case).¹⁶ Furthermore, one can make a case for supposing that the cities of the Roman empire, especially in Italy and the Greek world, were by any standard crammed with works of

⁶For this distinction, see, e.g., Forster's (1907) *The Longest Journey*: “the artist is not a bricklayer at all, but a horseman, whose business it is to catch Pegasus at once, not to practise for him by mounting tamer colts” (18).

⁷To my mind, the most interesting recent contribution is Tanner 2006, 141–204; see also Tran 2011, 124–28.

⁸On this topic, see, e.g., Donderer 1989, 40–1; Goodlett 1991; Maischberger 1997, 161; Ling 2000, 93–100; Mattusch 2002, 107–9; Esposito 2009; Kristensen and Poulsen 2012.

⁹See Koortbojian (2002, 175–76) and Tanner (2006, 250–61) for some suggestive considerations.

¹⁰Bianchi Bandinelli 1950; Becatti 1951.

¹¹Stewart 2008, 143–72. Fuchs (1999) is also particularly useful in this respect. Greene (2008) has made interesting proposals about Roman consumption more generally.

¹²Cf. North 2011, 501–2.

¹³On the Republican period, see for the time being Corchia

2001. For the Hellenistic precedents, see Stewart 1990, 2:63. For Imperial times, see Strong 1973; Bartman 1991; Dwyer 2012. For late antiquity, see Stirling 2005, esp. 91–137.

¹⁴According to Stewart (2008, 1), “we are potentially dealing with,” under the heading of Roman art, many kinds of material, including coins, moldmade terracotta lamps, and military parade helmets.

¹⁵It would clearly be a mistake to omit what must often have been very expensive artifacts that were not exclusively utilitarian (on the costs of building, see Russell 2013, 24–7). According to Nervi (1965, preface), “architecture is and must be a *synthesis of technology and art*” (emphasis original). I recall having once heard Nervi tell Oxford students that there are two kinds of architects, the artists and the engineers; he placed himself in the engineer category.

¹⁶DeLaine 1997, 193.

art. It was not only Rome itself.¹⁷ By the Late Republic, aristocratic villas are assumed to house picture collections.¹⁸ The Villa of the Papyri contained at least 85 statues—63 in bronze and 22 in marble (including herms)—among other things,¹⁹ while the well-known villa, or rather palace, at Chiragan near Toulouse seems to have accumulated at least 200.²⁰ Many much more modest houses, in some parts of the Roman empire at least, contained objets d'art of various kinds.²¹ The manuscripts of Pliny's *Natural History* (34.36) say that there were "still" 73,000 statues—that is, bronze statues—in public places in Rhodes, "and no smaller number are believed still to exist at Athens, Olympia and Delphi." This figure, like many other numbers in manuscripts of ancient authors, must be mistaken. The editor Karl Mayhoff emended it to 3,000. Paleographically speaking, 1,073 would be a better emendation, but in any case the point is clear that after 300 years of Roman imperialism there were still very many left.²² A recent survey of the sculptural landscape of the Roman Near East brings out its richness and complexity.²³

Economic historians of the Roman empire, like other economic historians, are nowadays largely focused on growth, performance, and, in line with the current passion for the New Institutional Economics, institutions. (New Institutional Economics maintains, broadly speaking, that social and legal norms have crucial effects on a society's economic performance, and it is the chief theoretical standpoint in such mainstream publications as the *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*.)²⁴ This work forms the background for the following discussion, which traces the operation of markets (for both objects and labor) and in addition considers whether we should think of the economy of the Roman empire as "integrated"—or rather, in what ways and to what extent it was integrated.

¹⁷ There, the most extraordinary number, perhaps not to be trusted, is the 3,000 statues that M. Scaurus (whom we shall meet later) is said to have displayed on a temporary stage in 58 B.C.E. (Plin., *HN* 34.36). Chevallier (1991, 132–77) provides a rough account of where works of art could be seen in the capital.

¹⁸ Hallett (2005, 433) gathers the evidence.

¹⁹ Mattusch 2005.

²⁰ Bergmann 1999; see also Stirling 2005, esp. 49–62; Hannestad 2012, 97–100.

²¹ To this extent at least, Mayer (2012) must be right.

²² "MLXXIII" (= 1,073) would be much easier as a correction of "LXXIII." The final "M" in the preceding word "etiamnum" will at one stage have been a "suspended" stroke over a "V." Later the words were wrongly divided. There is virtually no chance that Pliny wrote "MMM." See Mattusch (2002, 109) on the vast numbers of bronze statues that have perished.

²³ Eliav et al. 2008.

²⁴ Scheidel et al. 2007.

My questions are then the following, the first and last providing a chronological frame for the others. (There is scarcely any need to remind readers of the more general historical framework in which the term "Romans" went from being the name of the citizens of a single city-state to being a proper designation for many, later on practically all, of the inhabitants of a large empire—and the focus of economic history must, as far as possible, be on the whole empire.)

1. When did war booty and extortion cease to be important sources of the supply of works of art and give way to "normal" markets?
2. In what sense did clients provide artists with patronage?
3. What were the market mechanisms for meeting the demand for works by well-known artists, and what were the effects of the demand for works by famous artists of the past?
4. Was there an integrated empire-wide market in works of art, or in the more or less precious materials that artists used?
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PLUNDER AND THE FORMATION OF A MARKET

When did war booty and extortion cease to be important sources of the supply of works of art and give way to "normal" markets? We should not of course draw too stark a contrast between plunder and the market, since a lot of plunder must always have been promptly sold, but peaceful supply and demand eventually came to dominate. What needs attention here is the phase when plunder and forced appropriation diminished somewhat in relative importance. A normal art market, in this sense, may of course involve exploitation, crime, and skullduggery of various sorts—as indeed the history of art expropriation, art dealing, and art collecting over the last 300 years has amply demonstrated.

The long history of Rome's plundering of works of art has now been discussed again by Holz.²⁵ Seizing the enemy's movable goods was an integral part of Roman warfare, and however we imagine the appearance of Rome in the fourth century B.C.E., it must already have been affected by depredations in Etruria before the major wars of conquest began in 327 B.C.E. From that date until 16 C.E., Roman armies plundered Italy and later the whole Mediterranean world and its

²⁵ Holz 2009. The foundation was laid in Pape 1975; see also Miles 2008, 44–104.

hinterland with only minor interruptions, and they continued to do so at frequent intervals after that date. A vast amount of destruction was involved as well as depredation. Outside the Greek world especially, the raw materials were sometimes of more interest to the conquerors than any aesthetic or symbolic value that the objects possessed.²⁶

Since what was attractive to Roman taste was from an early date mainly Greek, opportunities diminished once Sulla and later Lucullus and Pompey had completed their Mithridatic Wars; only Egypt of the major Hellenistic states had yet to be invaded. The civil wars of 49–31 made the Greek world vulnerable again. Thus, the support some Greek provincials had given to M. Antonius gave Octavian an excuse to remove various treasures to Rome after his victory.²⁷ Egypt in 30 and Judaea under Vespasian were the last places with immense quantities of desirable artistic plunder to be carted away.²⁸ It remains an open question whether the wars of Trajan and the Severan emperors in Mesopotamia brought much artistic wealth deep into the Roman empire.

The expropriation of works of art continued to some extent under the Roman peace. To how great an extent is a harder problem than is normally recognized. One difficulty is to know how far to believe Cicero's (*Verr.* 2.4.1) charges on this score against Verres: "There was no silver vase, no vase made in Corinth or Delos, no gem or pearl, nothing made of gold or ivory, no statue . . . no painting . . . in the whole of Sicily that Verres . . . did not carry off if he liked it."²⁹ The absurdity of these words is seldom if ever recognized. Such

²⁶ Even after the capture of Alexandria, Octavian melted down the golden vessels "of everyday use" seized in the palace of the Ptolemies (Suet., *Aug.* 71).

²⁷ See Pausanias (8.46), who justifies this with a long list of precedents, showing that by his time such behavior was widely disapproved.

²⁸ For Egypt, see Cass. Dio 51.4, 51.17; Suet. *Aug.* 41. For Titus' triumph, see Joseph., *Bj* 7.132–52.

²⁹ It would be possible to take a radical view of the fourth *Verrine*. For its legal strangeness, see Alexander 1984, 534. Perhaps Verres really did, as he claimed, pay C. Heius of Messana for works allegedly by Myron, Praxiteles, and Polycleitus. They are unlikely to have been genuine (Fuchs 1999, 46–7). Actually, Cicero (*Verr.* 2.4.8–14) admits that he did—the only dispute was about whether the price was a fair market price. Verres clearly defended other acquisitions in the same fashion. Weis (2003), Miles (2008), and Holz (2009, 197–98) believe every word Cicero says on this subject, as indeed do many others who are unfamiliar with Cicero's style of invective. I have no doubt that Verres did extort some works of art from the Sicilians, but the reactions Cicero played on in Rome resulted partly, I suggest, from the fact that an active art market was a relatively new phenomenon. For an example of his trying to transport his audience back into the past, see Cic., *Verr.* 2.4.56–7.

charges took on a routine character in the last years of the republic (cf. the vague allegations Cicero hurled against L. Calpurnius Piso, the possible proprietor of the art collection at the Villa of the Papyri),³⁰ which reflects an interesting degree of upper-class disapproval of rapacious expropriations. But all that was expected in practice was probably a degree of moderation.³¹ M. Aemilius Scaurus, the wealthy aedile of 58 B.C.E., extorted the paintings of the famous Sicyonian painter Pausias from the city of Sicyon in payment of its debts (Plin., *HN* 35.127), and we should assume that this was a fairly common procedure under the Late Republic. Another kind of appropriation occurred when the younger Cato was sent to annex Cyprus, also in 58: he sold off all the bronze statues there—presumably those that had belonged to the last king—except one statue representing his hero Zeno, together with valuable vases, furniture, and gems, ostentatiously reserving the proceeds for the Roman state.³² The short-term effect on the art market must have been dramatic. Yet another kind occurred in Italy itself during the Sullan and triumviral proscriptions.³³

Augustus and Tiberius made some attempt to protect the provincials in the peaceful provinces from Roman officials: how much they succeeded is part of a wide and difficult question about provincial administration under the emperors. Greek cities probably were safer than they had been,³⁴ but the emperors themselves could be dangerous. When Augustus obtained the Aphrodite Anadyomene of Apelles from Cos, something fairly oppressive may have been going on.³⁵ Having plundered Alexandria, he did not need to despoil old Greece, but while giving back two statues by Myron that M. Antonius had taken from Samos, he kept one for himself.³⁶ And there are many unanswered questions: how, for example, did he obtain the archaic statues from Chios that adorned the facade of the Temple of Apollo Palatinus (Plin., *HN* 36.13)? The disastrous fire of 64 C.E. in the capital almost inevitably caused a great wave of imperial depredation

³⁰ Cic., *Prov. cons.* 6–7; *Sest.* 94.

³¹ And it may be that Caesar's extortion law of 59 attempted to interfere with such practices, but there is no evidence.

³² Plin., *HN* 34.92; Plut., *Cat. Min.* 36, 38.

³³ Neudecker 1988, 115.

³⁴ However, the problem of expropriation persisted in the fourth century (*Cod. Theod.* 8.15).

³⁵ Strabo (14.657) writes that "they say that the Coans got a remission of 100 talents of taxes due in exchange for the painting." The sum seems large, but not for an original by Apelles; however, its condition may not have been good (Plin., *HN* 35.91).

³⁶ Bowersock 1965, 86. It is worth noting that Augustus put both these works on public display, but my concern here is with how works of art were acquired, not why.

to replace lost works. After a lengthy catalogue of bronze sculptures, Pliny writes that “among all the works I have mentioned, all the most famous have now been dedicated by the emperor Vespasian in the Temple of Peace and other buildings of his, after they had been brought to Rome by the violence of Nero and arranged in the privies (or “orgy chambers”) of the Domus Aurea.”³⁷ The “violence of Nero” may at first glance seem to be an allusion to Nero’s actions after the fire, as described by Tacitus (*Ann.* 15.45): agents were sent to Asia and Achaëa, and they even appropriated statues of the gods. Greek writers give details.³⁸ But in fact we know Nero’s confiscations began even before the fire.³⁹ In the elder Pliny’s time, it seems, Romans still thought it quite natural if somewhat excessive that the city of Rome should take statues from provincial cities for public display in Rome; by Tacitus’ time, the next generation, attitudes may have changed a little.

So when did Romans actually start paying for works of art?⁴⁰ In the mists of antiquity no doubt, and we should imagine Etruscan and Campanian as well as Roman artisans fulfilling Roman commissions in the fourth century B.C.E.⁴¹ The question is rather when the “normal” market effectively began to dominate. The arrival of booty from the Etruscan Wars (311–264 B.C.E.), from the conquest of the Greek cities in the south and in Sicily (327/6, 302–241 B.C.E.), and most of all after the sack of Syracuse (211 B.C.E.) probably stimulated demand at Rome as well as feeding it. It must also have refined that demand by familiarizing Romans, especially some influential members of the senatorial elite, with high-quality Greek productions.

³⁷ Plin., *HN* 34.84 (the last element is most likely just another anti-Neronian libel).

³⁸ Paus. 5.25.8, 5.26.3, 10.7.1 (500 bronze statues from Delphi), 10.19.2; Dio Chrys. 31.148–49 (but they do not specify the occasion). It should be remembered that Nero also relieved Achaëa of its direct taxes.

³⁹ Paus. 9.27.3. One of Nero’s emissaries, the freedman Acratus, tried to remove paintings and sculptures from Pergamon, but the city prevented him (Tac., *Ann.* 16.23); this was before or during Barea Soranus’ governorship of Asia, which has to antedate 64 (Thomasson 1972–1990, 2:2, 19).

⁴⁰ Churchill (1999, 97), in a useful article about booty, incorrectly infers from Polybius (18.35.9) that if Scipio Aemilianus had wanted to obtain and retain any booty after the fall of Carthage legitimately, he would have had to purchase it; the “buying” that Polybius referred to was probably buying from other Romans who had looted desirable property. There is, as far as I know, no other evidence for the sort of buying that Churchill envisages.

⁴¹ This is not merely conjectural. Rome’s first silver coins were designed by Campanian Greeks, and Latium and Etruria had been importing high-quality artifacts since Archaic times. See Camporeale (2011), who, however, does not consider the question of booty.

Plutarch’s (*Marc.* 21) story that M. Claudius Marcellus, the despoiler of Syracuse, boasted that he had taught the Romans to admire Greek art must be apocryphal, but it is quite a good metaphor.⁴² Livy (26.32.4) writes that Marcellus deposited his principal spoils in his Temple of Honos and Virtus, where all could see them,⁴³ but it is equally important that Polybius (9.10.13) records that the booty taken from private Syracusan owners went into the private houses of Romans (he had probably seen some of it).⁴⁴ Many other developments, including Fabius Pictor’s decision to write in Greek and Plautus’ adaption of Greek comedies for a Roman audience, attest the spreading cultural prestige of things Greek.⁴⁵

The enormous growth in Roman public and private wealth after the Second Punic War marked a new phase. A further proliferation of honorific statues in Rome is well attested.⁴⁶ Smith has hypothesized that it was in the first half of the second century that Greek artists started making “republican” portraits of upper-class Romans.⁴⁷ The Athenian sculptor Timarchides seems to have executed a statue of the god for the restoration of Rome’s Temple of Apollo in 179–178 B.C.E.—the first attested marble cult statue in Rome⁴⁸—and the censors who were responsible may have been the first to turn to a reputed and presumably quite costly foreign artist to carry out such a commission. This may well not have been Timarchides’ only commission in the capital.⁴⁹ In the following years, architects and sculptors

⁴² Plutarch also claims that Marcellus’ artistic spoils made him popular with the “people,” not the senators. On the importance of the Syracusan plunder, see Neudecker 1988, 5 n. 29.

⁴³ For objects he dedicated in other temples, see Walbank (1957–1979, 2:2) on Polyb. 9.10.

⁴⁴ According to Cato (Malcovati 1953, fr. 98), statues from looted temples sometimes ended up in private houses, too. When, in 189 B.C.E., M. Fulvius Nobilior removed from Ambracia “the dedicatory objects, statues and paintings, of which there were a great number, (because the city had been the residence of King Pyrrhus)” (Polyb. 21.30.9), it is very likely that many of them fell into private hands.

⁴⁵ McDonnell 2006.

⁴⁶ Gruen 1992, 118–20.

⁴⁷ Smith 1981, 29. He refers to “officers and businessmen,” but I doubt whether the latter were involved at the very beginning.

⁴⁸ This statement is based on Plin., *HN* 36.35; Livy 40.51.4–6; see also Martin 1987, 50, 57–8; Coarelli 1996, 260, 263; Bravi 2012, 38. For the temple, see *LTUR* 1:49–54, s.v. “Apollo, aedes in Circo” (Viscogliosi). The text of this passage of Pliny is uncertain: it seems to mean that the cult statue in the new Temple of Iuno Regina dedicated at this time was the work of either Timarchides or his son Dionysius. On Timarchides, see Moreno 1994, 1:522–24. For the display of Greek works of art in second-century Rome, see Bravi 2012, 29–58.

⁴⁹ Smith 1981, 30.

from the Aegean probably began to find Roman elite customers on a regular basis,⁵⁰ though identifying their works is notoriously difficult.⁵¹ After the defeat of Macedon in 168 B.C.E., L. Aemilius Paullus asked the Athenians to send him their best painter to prepare paintings for his triumphal procession, and they sent him the polymath Metrodorus (Plin., *HN* 35.135). We can presume that Metrodorus was rewarded. Members of the aristocracy had long needed painters (one thinks of M. Valerius Messalla, consul in 263 B.C.E., and the decoration of the Curia Hostilia, as well as of the tomb of the Fabii),⁵² and it is overwhelmingly likely that by the 180s, if not considerably earlier, they were employing Greeks as well as Italians.⁵³

But no Roman temple looked definitely Greek until after the subjugation of Achaëa. Then Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus (consul in 143 B.C.E.), after his triumph over the Macedonians, built the Temple of Iuppiter Stator in the Campus Martius, Rome's first marble temple, employing the well-known architect Hermodorus of Salamis, whom he must have paid.⁵⁴ The other Greek-looking temple of the period was the one under San Salvatore in Campo, probably to be identified with the Temple of Mars in Circo. Commissioned by D. Iunius Brutus, the consul of 138 B.C.E., it was also built by Hermodorus.⁵⁵ He doubtless received a fee. And the artistic needs of aristocrats such as Brutus who fought wars only in non-Greek lands had to be catered to: it has been reasonably conjectured that Brutus had to purchase the statues he placed in the Temple of Mars.⁵⁶

A key question in all this is when "copies" of well-known works began to impinge in a major way on Roman patrons—copying itself was not, of course, new.⁵⁷

("Copying" is by general agreement an inadequate term for the processes of imitation and adaptation involved, but the terminology is not my concern here.)⁵⁸ The current consensus seems to be that this activity really started to have an effect, as far as statuary was concerned, in the second half of the second century B.C.E.:⁵⁹ the earliest known example seems to be a high-quality copy of Polycleitus' Diadoumenos of ca. 100 B.C.E. found on Delos (fig. 1).⁶⁰ More importantly, that is the period when, as Fuchs has shown, most of the bronzes of the famous Piræus find of 1959 were manufactured: they were imitations found in what was probably a warehouse, where they were awaiting export to Italy.⁶¹ The ship known as the Mahdia wreck, which was carrying bronze sculptures and marble basins, as well as marble columns and many other items, was a vehicle of commerce.⁶² So was the Antikythera wreck, which sank sometime after 70 B.C.E.⁶³

By the time of the Gracchi, there existed a sort of Roman market for many kinds of works of art not only in Rome itself but also in the colonies and other towns in Italy, and especially on Delos.⁶⁴ But the high-end market was of a strange kind, not only because demand was probably inelastic (Brutus was probably going to buy almost regardless of the price), but because supply was still sometimes, until after the annexation of Egypt, thrown into turmoil by the arrival of new floods of booty. That was probably one of the factors that, for a time, kept the prices and status of even the leading artists rather low, in spite of the real passion for Greek art detectable in the Roman elite from about the 80s B.C.E. onward. The financial and political weakness of the Greek cities and their elites

⁵⁰But Plutarch's (*Aem.* 6) story that Paullus included sculptors and painters among the Greeks to whom he entrusted his sons' education is probably a distortion of the fact that Metrodorus, who was summoned to teach them philosophy (Plin., *HN* 35.135), was also summoned as a painter. Of the two young sons of Paullus who had not been adopted, one died just before and the other just after Paullus' triumph. See Walbank (1957–1979, vol. 3) on Polyb. 31.28.2.

⁵¹With respect to the period 200–150 B.C.E., see Coarelli 1990, 641.

⁵²Becatti 1951, 7–8; Gruen 1992, 90.

⁵³When Ptolemy Philometor was in Rome in the winter of 164/3, he stayed with one Demetrius, a *topographos* (Diod. Sic. 31.18), presumably a landscape painter; Valerius Maximus (5.1.1f) refers to him as a *pictor*.

⁵⁴For the temple's Greek appearance, see *LTUR* 3:157–59, s.v. "Iuppiter Stator, aedes ad Circum" (Viscogliosi); Gros 1996, 127–28.

⁵⁵Zevi 1976; Gros 1996, 128.

⁵⁶Galsterer 1994, 860.

⁵⁷For the Hellenistic antecedents, see Ridgway 1984, 8.

⁵⁸Gazda (2002) and Junker and Stähli (2008) summarize the state of the problem.

⁵⁹Welch 2006, 132.

⁶⁰It is illustrated in Stewart 1990, 2:figs. 383, 384; Koortbojian 2002, fig. 83.

⁶¹Fuchs 1999, 9–22. This view has been contested (e.g., in Hartswick 2000), and there is no archaeological context.

⁶²Parker 1992, 252; Coarelli 1996, 317–24. Several bronzes recovered from elsewhere in Mediterranean waters went down in the first quarter of the first century (Mattusch 2002, 110). Demand for works of art was intense in Italy, but production was still perhaps mostly taking place in Greece; later it moved in large part to Italy.

⁶³Parker 1992, 55–6, "Antikythera A."

⁶⁴For the Delian statue of C. Ofellius Fesus by a Timarchides, probably the grandson of the Timarchides mentioned above, and Dionysius, son of Timarchides, Athenians, see Queyrel 1991. It was probably made in the 120s B.C.E.; see also Moreno 1994, 1:552–54. Fuchs (1999, 5) seems to represent the general opinion when she dates the emergence of the Greek-Roman art trade to the last third of the second century B.C.E.; I suspect that such a date is too late.

in this period presumably compelled them to sell off artistic assets from time to time.

No Roman is yet known to have paid the sort of price that King Attalos II of Pergamon had been willing to pay for a single painting, 600,000 denarii (2.4 million sesterces, 100 talents).⁶⁵ It was apparently thought remarkable that the extravagant orator Q. Hortensius, consul in 69 B.C.E., had paid as much as 144,000 sesterces (the equivalent of 6 talents and of the annual subsistence costs of more than 1,000 adults) for a painting.⁶⁶ The first artist to be paid a spectacular price by a Roman, as far as we know, was the painter Timomachus of Byzantium, thanks to Julius Caesar, who paid him some 2 million sesterces (80 talents) for a Medea and an Ajax.⁶⁷ Caesar had set a new standard: Agrippa paid the city of Cyzicus 1.2 million sesterces for two paintings, an Ajax and an Aphrodite.⁶⁸ It is intriguing that economists have recently argued that in the 20th century art prices were “cointegrated” with top incomes,⁶⁹ since very rich Romans undoubtedly grew much richer. It is fairly obvious, however, that in the first century B.C.E.—and in the 20th century C.E.—the determinants of elite expenditure on works of art were a good deal more complicated than the availability of funds among billionaires competing for prestige.

Roman taste was now overwhelmingly Greek, but the prospects for plundering Greeks were coming to an end. Supply and demand now operated in a largely peaceful fashion (with what effects I consider later). But the prices paid by Caesar and Agrippa were never, as far as we know, matched again by persons other than



FIG. 1. Statue of the Diadoumenos from the House of the Diadoumenos, Delos, ca. 100 B.C.E. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 1826 (G. Patrikianos; © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports/Archaeological Receipts Fund).

the emperor. No doubt that is partly because we have no Pliny’s *Natural History* after Vespasian’s reign, but we may also suspect that under the principate only a few of the very rich thought it safe to spend ostentatiously on works of art.

PATRONAGE

What normally interests art historians is how much patrons attempted to control the appearance of what we may call the product.⁷⁰ Here, however, I consider

⁶⁵ Not 600 denarii, as is said in Bravi 2012, 45. The story (Plin., *HN* 7.126, 35.24) may well be apocryphal, but it is not a fatal objection (pace Gruen 1992, 125) that Attalos is unlikely to have been present in person.

⁶⁶ The Argonauts of Cydias (Plin., *HN* 35.130). This could have been at any time between the 70s and 50 B.C.E. Arcesilaus agreed to make a statue of Felicitas for Lucullus for a very large sum that is badly transmitted in *HN* 35.156 (60,000 sesterces is the most likely solution), but Lucullus died before the commission could be fulfilled. Lucullus is said to have paid the equivalent of 48,000 sesterces (two talents) for a copy of a painting by Pausias (Plin., *HN* 35.125). The figure of 500 talents, given as the cost of making a statue of Apollo that Lucullus brought from Asia Minor and set up on the Capitol (Plin., *HN* 34.39), has to be corrupt. On subsistence costs, see Harris 2011, 42.

⁶⁷ Plin., *HN* 7.126, 35.136.

⁶⁸ Plin., *HN* 35.26. The artist is not named. One wonders how Pliny (*HN* 35.70) knew to put a value of 6 million sesterces on a painting of an *archigallus* by Parrhasius, which Tiberius was fond of. It may have been plundered from Ephesus under Sulla and later sold—to Caesar?

⁶⁹ Goetzmann et al. 2011.

⁷⁰ Cf. Smith 2002, 71–4, 96; Stewart 2008, 32–8.

whether the Roman rich, including emperors, maintained their favored artists, and more generally how clients and artists related to each other economically. All this has to be understood within the known Roman practices of patronage and clientship (clientship in the other sense, the *clientela* sense).⁷¹

As Cornell has pointed out, there is deep ambiguity in the term “patron” (and it might be a good thing if Roman art historians used it with more caution). It may refer to a sort of “Renaissance model” in which an emperor or prince maintains artists who mainly or exclusively work for him over long periods,⁷² or it may simply refer to people who buy things in single transactions. Cornell also maintained that the Renaissance model is not applicable to Rome.⁷³ But since Roman art historians write all the time about “patrons” without saying what they mean,⁷⁴ this matter deserves further investigation.

What happened in the fourth and third centuries B.C.E. can to some extent be conjectured. We must suppose that well-to-do Romans, besides employing independent artisans (some of them certainly immigrants), purchased skilled slaves and sometimes freed them. By this time, *libertini* already formed a characteristic part of Roman social structure.⁷⁵ Skilled craftsmen were needed to erect buildings, make metal and ceramic fine wares, make jewelry, and paint the walls of tombs. We know virtually nothing about how they made their livings.

In the vastly richer new Rome of the second century B.C.E., members of the upper elite seem generally to have taken on the leading artists/architects for one commission at a time. After the decisive defeat of Macedon in 168, as already mentioned, Aemilius Paulus brought the Athenian painter Metrodorus to Rome for a single set of commissions.⁷⁶ Two things are noteworthy about this story: Paullus knew that Athens was home to outstanding artists, but he could only iden-

tify one by asking the city; and there is no indication that Metrodorus prolonged his stay in Rome for long once Paullus’ triumph was over, or that he continued to work for him.⁷⁷ Hermodorus of Salamis, rather differently, may well have stayed in Rome during the decade between the two big architectural commissions mentioned earlier, and after the second of them, but there is no reason to think that any single Roman maintained him between commissions.⁷⁸

By the last generation of the republic, however, the situation seems to have changed to a certain degree. There were more independent artisans than ever before, clearly. We might expect to find the Renaissance model of patronage, if anywhere, in the entourages of the superwealthy and cultivated Cicero and Caesar. Cicero apparently had a close relationship with the architects Vettius Cyrus and his freedman Vettius Chrysippus, but nothing suggests that they worked exclusively for him (though Cyrus’ will made Cicero his joint *heres*).⁷⁹ Cicero’s use of Atticus in the matter of purchasing works of art suggests another reason why the Renaissance model did not take hold: a busy senator delegated the whole matter of acquiring works of art to a friend or friends.⁸⁰ Caesar’s case, meanwhile, is quite odd: from the 50s onward he disposed of innumerable ambitious commissions, but there are no known protégés—partly perhaps because while he was supposedly a “passionate collector” of gems, chased metal work, statues, and paintings, he collected the works of old masters, not contemporaries.⁸¹ One of his two great purchases of contemporary art was the pair of paintings of Medea and Ajax by Timomachus of Byzantium for which he paid 80 talents—but there was, I think, a propagandistic-ideological purpose behind that purchase,⁸² and in any case Timomachus was an established independent painter, not Caesar’s dependant.

Other superwealthy senators may have been different. The sculptor Arcesilaus, who later produced the cult statue of Venus Genetrix for Caesar, is described

⁷¹ Both topics have generated large bibliographies. On patronage, see esp. Saller 1982. On *clientela*, see Brunt 1988, 388–442.

⁷² As to how artistic patronage actually worked in Italy in the 15th and 16th centuries, see Settis 2010. For northern Europe in the 14th and 15th centuries, see Cassagnes-Brouquet 2001.

⁷³ “There is no parallel for the situation in the Italian Renaissance, in which wealthy families attempted to monopolize the services of particular artists to make propaganda for them. Rather, the relationship between artist and patron was, generally speaking, a strictly commercial one: a relationship between producer and consumer, subject to market forces and the law of supply and demand. This can be called patronage only in the most attenuated sense” (Cornell 1987, 26).

⁷⁴ E.g., Dunbabin 1978; Bartman 1991; Conlin 1997; Elsner 1998.

⁷⁵ See esp. Livy 7.16.

⁷⁶ Plin., *HN* 35.135; *RE* 15(2):1480, s.v. “Metrodorus 21.”

⁷⁷ Cf. supra n. 50.

⁷⁸ On Hermodorus of Salamis, see *RE* 8(1):861–62, s.v. “Hermodorus 8.” It is unclear when he constructed *navalia* for the Romans (Cic., *De or.* 1.62), if indeed it was the same man.

⁷⁹ On both Vettii, see Cic., *Fam.* 7.14. On Cyrus, see Cic., *Att.* 2.3.2, 2.4.7; *Q Fr.* 2.2.2. On Chrysippus, see Cic., *Att.* 13.29.1, 14.9.1. On the will, see Cic., *Mil.* 48.

⁸⁰ Cf. the Damasippus referred to in Cic., *Fam.* 7.23.2. The Avianius referred to in the previous section may have been a dealer and/or the freedman sculptor C. Avianius Evander; see also Treggiari 1969, 137.

⁸¹ Suet., *Iul.* 47. On Caesar’s collection of gems, see Plin., *HN* 37.11.

⁸² Harris 2002, 210 (developed without acknowledgement in Bravi 2012, 77–81).

as a “familiaris” of L. Licinius Lucullus,⁸³ which implies that he was active in Rome by the late 60s (Lucullus died insane in ca. 56) and suggests that Lucullus may have supported him. Lucullus was admittedly notorious for being exceptionally hospitable to Greeks.⁸⁴ Perhaps Lucullus accepted him as house guest, as he is said to have accepted the poet Archias.⁸⁵ A. Gabinius, consul in 58 B.C.E., had among his freedmen a painter named Antiochus who had trained outside his household, but since the latter is described as Gabinius’ *accensus* (attendant), the wealthy Gabinius must have maintained him.⁸⁶ The two Greek brothers Tlepolemos and Hieron, one a painter the other a modeler in wax, whom Verres is said by Cicero to have maintained as agents during his depredations in Sicily, may in reality have been staff artists.⁸⁷ According to Cicero (*Verr.* 2.4.54), Verres “possessed,” presumably as slaves, a number of *caelatores* (engravers) and *vascularii* (makers of tableware)—that is to say, craftsmen specializing in producing fine gold and silver plate. Later, M. Antonius took the sculptor C. Avianius Evander, a freedman, from Athens to Alexandria, presumably as a full-time employee.⁸⁸

With the exception of the story about Lucullus, none of this suggests that artistic patronage had even now risen to the level of generosity of literary patronage.⁸⁹ There were two obvious and interconnected reasons: artists worked with their hands, for money, and though aristocrats might dabble they did not immerse themselves in artistic ambitions as some of them had immersed themselves in literary work since the days of Cato the Censor.⁹⁰

We should think of capitalistic enterprise as well as aristocratic patronage. A well-to-do Late Republican woman named Manilia C.f., conceivably a connection of C. Manilius, the freedman-friendly tribune of

66 B.C.E., was the patroness of four freedmen who were mosaicists. They operated a workshop together in or near the capital, and what appears to have been their shop sign survives.⁹¹ Patronage in this case is likely to have meant that Manilia or perhaps her father supplied capital and received profits, not that she monopolized their production for her own benefit.

What changes came with the age of the emperors? It is astonishing how little thought has been devoted to the relationship between artists/craftsmen and the emperors, even those emperors, such as Augustus and Trajan, who clearly paid frequent attention to the visual. The emperor became by far the biggest customer at the top end of the market, and the emperor’s household, a vast ramshackle enterprise covering the whole empire, included numerous *artifices* of every kind, mostly known to us through inscriptions: there were, among others, *museiarii* (mosaicists), *caelatores*, *argentarii* (silversmiths), and *architecti* (who might in some cases be master builders rather than architects as now defined).⁹²

Of course most emperors needed architects. The main Early Imperial text about this topic is interestingly ambivalent: Vitruvius complains at length to Augustus that artists without social influence have a hard time being appreciated, and his complaint seems to reveal that what they aspired to was commissions, not appointments.⁹³ But elsewhere he thanks Augustus for ensuring that he would have an adequate income for life, apparently through an army appointment.⁹⁴ This was probably a common arrangement. Domitian had his long-serving architect Rabirius (Mart. 7.56, 10.71), who must have worked for him for years; Trajan and Hadrian, their Apollodorus (who was eventually put to

⁸³ Plin., *HN* 35.155. On the term, see Treggiari 1969, 224. Verboven (2002, 280) overdoes it when he translates *familiaritas* as “intimacy.” Arcesilaus presumably came back from Asia Minor with Lucullus in 66.

⁸⁴ Plut., *Luc.* 41–2. For Lucullus’ paintings and statues, see Plut., *Luc.* 39.

⁸⁵ According to Cicero’s *Pro Archia* 5, the Luculli “eum domum suam receperunt.” But according to *Pro Archia* 6, Archias was (later?) living with the Catuli. Both statements may have been misleading. The differences between artistic and literary patronage are discussed later in this article.

⁸⁶ See Cic., *Att.* 4.18.4.

⁸⁷ Cic., *Verr.* 2.4.30–1 (“eos iam bene cognitos et re probatos secum in Siciliam duxit”). They came from Kibyra in southern Phrygia.

⁸⁸ Our source is Porphyry’s commentary on Hor., *Sat.* 1.3.90.

⁸⁹ On the latter topic, note esp. White 1975; Wiseman 1982.

⁹⁰ On the “completely isolated” case of the first Fabius Pictor, see Coarelli 1996, 21–4.

⁹¹ The four freedmen Manilii Caiae l., “structores paeimentari,” are to be found in *AÉpigr* 1979.129 (Donderer 1989, cat. no. A 70). The inscription was their epitaph, according to the original editor. It was found at Pantanelle, at the beginning of the Alban Hills.

⁹² *CIL* 6 9647 (*ILS* 7670; Donderer 1989, cat. no. A 65) refers to a *museiarius* who was an imperial freedman and evidently prosperous. *CIL* 6 9151 refers to two architects, one of whom was an imperial freedman of Julio-Claudian date. *CIL* 6 3927 refers to a goldsmith named Zeuxis (famous name) who was a freedman of Livia.

⁹³ Vitr., *De arch.* 3, pref. 3: “eis ultro opera traderentur.”

⁹⁴ Vitr., *De arch.* 1, pref. 2: “cum [tribus aliis] ad apparationem balistarum et scorpionum reliquorumque tormentorum refectonem fui praesto et cum eis commoda [a salary] accipi quae cum primo mihi tribuisti recognitionem per sororis commendationem servasti. Cum ergo eo beneficio essem obligatus ut ad exitum vitae non haberem inopiae timorem, haec tibi scribere coepi.” There may be an allusion here to gifts. For lengthy speculations about Vitruvius’ position, see Gros 1997, x–xix. For a civilian interpretation, see Purcell 1983, 156.

death by the emperor's order).⁹⁵ What we can see in all this is something quite like the Renaissance model. But we are hopelessly ignorant about the identities and statuses of all the great imperial architects of later times.

Painters and sculptors were usually treated differently from architects, so it seems. We seldom hear of them inside the imperial *familia*. When the *Historia Augusta* says that Hadrian had painters "in summa familiaritate," that is unusual, perhaps unique, and remarked on as such.⁹⁶ The writer includes them in a long list of professionals including musicians and astrologers, and Hadrian may well have maintained them.⁹⁷ Arrian (*Peripl. M. Eux.* 2–3) appears to assume that Hadrian had sculptors at his beck and call. When, however, an emperor "summoned" an artist for a big commission—as, for example, in the case of Nero and Zenodorus, who made the emperor's colossal statue⁹⁸—he would obviously pay him on an imperial scale, but there is no reason to think that the relationship would last beyond the single commission. Outside the imperial house, every grand household probably supported some artisans among its slaves and freedmen, as we sometimes know was the case.⁹⁹ The highly skilled but otherwise unknown silversmith Cheirisophus, whose name appears on the Hoby cups (fig. 2), was probably a dependant of the Silius whose name he also wrote there, who must be C. Silius, consul in 13 C.E.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ On Apollodorus, see *EAA* 1:477–80, s.v. "Apollodoros di Damasco" (Bianchi Bandinelli). The death sentence recorded by Cassius Dio (69.4) was needlessly denied in Ridley 1989.

⁹⁶ *Hadr.* 16. *Epitome de Caesaribus* 14.5 may rest on a misunderstanding of information to this effect. It so happens that the tombstone of a painter who was a freedman of Hadrian survives (Giuliano 1953, 264–65 [with photograph]). The text was never reported in *AEpigr.* What is most interesting about it is that P. Aelius Aug. I. Fortunatus was also the emperor's *praepositus pictorum*—this is the only time we hear of this office—and that he was evidently prosperous, since he had his own freedmen and freedwomen. He married at the age of about 18. The term "pictor" can, of course, refer to a painter of interior walls (Calabi Limentani 1958, 153).

⁹⁷ Identifiable Aphrodisian sculptors "enjoyed court patronage" under Hadrian (Toynbee 1951, 30), but this may well have been a matter of particular commissions. The "Flavius" names Toynbee mentions do not attest court patronage under the Flavians but rather the widespread use of the name as an honorific from the fourth century onward.

⁹⁸ Plin., *HN* 34.45–6. The artist(s) may have been summoned from far away; this would explain why, e.g., "the [mosaic] landscape panels from Hadrian's Villa are much closer to contemporary work in Antioch than to that in Rome" (Dunbabin 1978, 6).

⁹⁹ For the evidence from the columbarium of the Statilii, see Blanc 1983, 876–77.

¹⁰⁰ Toynbee (1951, 52) calls C. Silius the "patron" of Cheirisophus. His meaningful name argues that he was a slave or a freedman, not simply a noncitizen.

But portable works of all kinds and qualities will have been produced in innumerable *officinae* and *tabernae* and sold to clients in *tabernae*. The well-known sculpture workshop cum shop at Aphrodisias will have been a version of the kind of enterprise that could be found in any large town.¹⁰¹ The house of the gem cutter Pinarius Cerealis in the Via dell'Abbondanza at Pompeii is another example.¹⁰² The bronzes of the Villa of the Papyri came from at least four local workshops.¹⁰³ But when a painter got a commission, his relationship to his client would not be quite like that of a modern client: for one thing, the client might be referred to as the *dominus* (and might agree by contract to supply especially expensive colors).¹⁰⁴

Cities also needed architects and artists, and once again there were some full-time staff, who tended to be slaves, and a great deal of reliance on the market. That cities sometimes owned artists we know from signed mosaics.¹⁰⁵ Plutarch (*An vitiositas* 3; *Mor.* 498e), on the other hand, alludes to competitive bidding by architects and artists for public contracts, the works in question being temples and colossal statues:

Cities, when they give public notice of intent to let contracts for the building of temples or colossal statues, listen to the proposals of specialists [*technitai*] competing for the commissions and bringing in their arguments [or "estimates"] and models, and then choose the man who will do the work with the least expense and better and more quickly.

Thus the Renaissance model may to some extent be transferable to the Roman world with respect to architects. What we encounter otherwise is, predictably, a mixture of a slave system and a protocapitalist market.

OLD MASTERS

What were the effects of the limited supply of, and the fierce demand for, works in various media by famous artists of the past? We know in principle—indeed in detail, thanks to the work of Zanker and others—what happened when the supply of sculpture and paintings by the famous artists of the past essentially

¹⁰¹ Rockwell 1991. For a more complex account, see Van Voorhis 2012; cf. Trimble 2011, 140–41.

¹⁰² Spinazzola 1953, 2:689–709; cf. Mayer 2012, 54–5.

¹⁰³ Mattusch 2005, 332.

¹⁰⁴ Plin., *HN* 35.30, 44. But the term "dominus" no longer implied a master-slave relationship (Bowman and Thomas 1983, 92).

¹⁰⁵ For a case at Emerita (second century), see Donderer 1989, cat. no. A 50 (plus cat. no. A 83, probably). For a likely case at Beneventum, see *CIL* 9 6281 (Donderer 1989, cat. no. A 61). For a case in Gaul, see Donderer 1989, cat. no. A 86.



FIG. 2. The Hoby cups, from Hoby, Denmark, first century B.C.E. Copenhagen, National Museum (courtesy National Museum of Denmark).

dried up in the Late Republic:¹⁰⁶ everyone resorted to imitations and/or classicizing works. Concrete evidence of this is provided by the large *officina* at Baiae studied by Landwehr and others.¹⁰⁷ The plaster casts found at that site (more than 400 from at least 30 different statues) must have been used to make true-to-scale marble copies of famous and not so famous statues of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E.

No one should doubt that the social elite of both halves of the Roman empire was in awe of the names of the great sculptors and painters of High Classical and Hellenistic times and esteemed the work of other famous craftsmen, such as silversmiths.¹⁰⁸ It is quite wrong to say, as one scholar does, that “the name of a statue’s sculptor seems not to have been a primary consideration of most Roman patrons,”¹⁰⁹ at least as far as the top end of the market is concerned. This more or less informed respect for the great artists of the past raises several historical questions: the one that interests me here is how much the pressure of demand led to the creation of fakes. Some of the copying, imitation, and so on that took place was, so to speak, out in the open,¹¹⁰ but as in any art market there were

entrepreneurs and poorly informed customers, and the potential for fraud was enormous. That is not to deny that good-quality copies could be admired even when they were known to be copies: a copy of Zeuxis’ painting of a hippocentaur was admired in the absence of the original even though it was known to be a copy.¹¹¹ One Apollonius put his name on the head of a Doryphoros found in the Villa of the Papyri;¹¹² he merely said that he “made” the object, and presumably he expected that knowledgeable persons would realize what he had done.¹¹³

Art historians seem generally to suppose that few Romans mistook the copies, imitations, and so on that they could see around them in such abundance for originals.¹¹⁴ There is something to be said for that point of view: upper-class Roman males traveled, and they were to a great extent familiar with a single aesthetic

(1984, 20) argued that “the Romans did not make fine distinctions between original and copy”; the evidence cited in the following notes points in the other direction as far as the elite in the capital is concerned.

¹¹¹ Lucian, *Zeuxis* 3. The original had disappeared, sunk en route to Italy after Sulla plundered it from Athens in 86 B.C.E. By Lucian’s time, the Athenians could not see many original paintings by the great masters of 500 or 600 years before. It is not accurate to say that Lucian described the work “as if it were by Zeuxis’ own hand” (Bergmann 1995, 92). Landwehr (2010) has shown that making a good-quality marble copy of an existing statue was an expensive business and that the product was deemed worthy of respect by wealthy and sophisticated clients.

¹¹² Bergmann 1995, 80.

¹¹³ For a similar case in Rome, an Aphrodite in the Terme, see Smith 1991, 80, fig. 101. But such cases are very rare.

¹¹⁴ Some 19 or 20 full-scale ancient replicas of Myron’s *Diskobolos* exist. See, e.g., Anguissola 2005. The Cnidian Aphrodite of Praxiteles was even more popular (Marvin 1997, 170).

¹⁰⁶ See, e.g., Zanker 1978.

¹⁰⁷ See Landwehr 1985, 2010; Hallett 1995; Frederiksen 2010.

¹⁰⁸ On the continuing lure of the old in Imperial times, see Lucian, *De mercede conductis* 42; *Philops.* 18; *Mart.* 3.35, 4.39; *Petron.*, *Sat.* 83; *Plin.*, *HN* 34.7; *Stat.*, *Silv.* 1.3.47, 2.2.63–72. On old silver, see *Plin.*, *HN* 33.157, 34.47; *Sen.*, *Helv.* 11.3. The silversmith Apelles is discussed later in this article. But the prestige of the other Apelles failed to protect two of his paintings from being vandalized by Claudius (*Plin.*, *HN* 35.94).

¹⁰⁹ Bartman 1991, 77.

¹¹⁰ Important artists sometimes made them. E.g., Zenodorus, under Nero, copied two cups by the fifth-century sculptor Calamis (*Plin.*, *HN* 34.47; see also Hallett 2005, 434). Ridgway

(whereas a modern person may be called on to react to a Japanese print one minute, a medieval altarpiece the next, and a Jackson Pollock the minute after that). One Mamurra (whether he was the historical personage of that name or not scarcely matters) is imagined to have found fault with the statues by Polycleitus on sale in the *Saepta* (Mart., 9.59.12), as well he might. But the probability lies in the direction of much wishful thinking: the incentive to deceive was there, and although there were experts, one could not, as now, easily turn to an acknowledged authority and find out that the possible Titian that has been in the family for generations and might, just might, be the real thing is in reality a mediocre copy.

In the High Empire there was a good deal of tomfoolery in this area, just as one should expect.¹¹⁵ Supply rose to meet demand. Here is Phaedrus:¹¹⁶

Certain *artifices* nowadays succeed in getting higher prices for their new productions if they have inscribed the name of Praxiteles on their marbles, Mys on their polished silver, and Zeuxis on their paintings. So much greater is the favor that biting envy bestows on sham antiquity [*fucatae vetustati*] than upon good new works.

Martial provides plenty of supporting evidence.¹¹⁷ Petronius (*Sat.* 83) mocks those who claim to own works by Zeuxis, Protogenes, or Apelles.¹¹⁸ The credulous property owner in Lucian believes, or at least he pretends to believe, that he owns statues by Myron, Polycleitus, and Critias and Nesiotes.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Perhaps this had started long before. What should we think about the “Praxiteles” (we have the “signed” base, admittedly with a partly restored text) in the Hermes House on Delos (Kreeb 1988, 38–9; Rauh 1993, 226–27)? The best discussion of fakery in Roman art is that in Fuchs 1999, 44–52.

¹¹⁶ Phdr. 5, prol. 3–9. The well-informed knew that there was false Corinthian bronzework on the market (Plin., *HN* 34.12).

¹¹⁷ Martial (4.39) strongly suggests that private collectors in his time really did make implausible claims to possess works by such names as Myron, Praxiteles, Scopas, Pheidias, and Mentor. On silverware by Mys, see Mart. 8.34; see also 12.69. It might be urged that Martial himself was skeptical, but 14.93 and 14.95 seem to show that he was willing to attribute works to Mys and Mentor. The range of media referred to in these passages is striking; see also Fuchs 1999, 45.

¹¹⁸ Commentators have not been alert here, except for Elsner (1993, 32), who noticed that Petronius puns at some length on the artists’ names.

¹¹⁹ *Philops.* 18. Ridgway (supra n. 110) wrongly inferred from the fact that Lucian does not say that these were indeed copies that Romans did not bother much about the distinction between originals and copies; the passage shows the opposite, for Lucian expects his readers to scorn the man who does not know the difference.

Does the material record support such a view? In the nature of things, it can hardly be expected to do so to any great extent, for the question concerns what went on in men’s minds. It seems clear, however, that the “Piombino Apollo” in the Louvre (fig. 3) was made in the first century B.C.E. as a bogus work of the fifth century.¹²⁰ Fuchs has diagnosed a number of other cases of spurious statues, for the most part convincingly.¹²¹ The name of Apelles scratched on the bases of four silver skyphoi from the Casa del Menandro was probably put there to deceive (by reference not to the famous painter but, as Maiuri saw, to a homonymous silversmith of the first century B.C.E. known from Athenaeus).¹²² Homonyms are in fact another part of our problem: there seems to have been another sculptor in the first century B.C.E. who went by the name of Praxiteles.¹²³ On a different level, it is recognized that most of the terra sigillata inscribed “Arreti” was not made at Arretium.¹²⁴

All this is probably the tip of a large iceberg of fraud. There were, as far as we know, few legal repercussions; it is not clear exactly why.¹²⁵ Perhaps it was simply because there were no acknowledged expert witnesses; the concept seems to have been unknown to Roman law. And the task of such hypothetical witnesses would, in any case, have been formidably difficult.

MARKET INTEGRATION

On now to a question that seems more important to economic historians. Was there an integrated empire-wide market in works of art?¹²⁶ Moses Finley’s view that there was little empire-wide integration in the Roman economy has been defended and attacked, and some have proposed compromise views, according to which,

¹²⁰ Ridgway 1967; 1984, 20–1; see esp. Fuchs 1999, 23–8, 40–1. Some work in the course of publication will question this consensus, however.

¹²¹ Fuchs 1999, 47–51.

¹²² Maiuri 1933, 308–10; Künzl 1978, 313–14; Painter 2001, 28 (“there was a flourishing market in fakes [of silver]”). So too Baratte 1986, 84. More evidence of High Imperial fakery of works by famous Greek artists is to be found in *CIL* 6 10038–43, 29796. But most high-quality silver was not signed—e.g., only three vessels out of 108 in the Boscoreale treasure were signed (Baratte 1986).

¹²³ Shear 2007, 231. Shear comments that “we have no way of knowing whether [contemporaries] would actually have been able to tell if the statue had been carved by the fourth-century Praxiteles, and if they could not [and in my view most of them certainly could not] they probably assumed that the sculptor was the famous one” (244).

¹²⁴ Kenrick 2004, 253.

¹²⁵ Mustilli (*EAA* 3:579, s.v. “Falsificazione”) notes the fact but has no satisfactory explanation.

¹²⁶ Tendentally in favor: Métraux 2006, 135.

for example, the degree of integration varied greatly from commodity to commodity.¹²⁷ The context for all this is the ongoing dispute about the performance and sophistication, or lack of it, of the Roman economy in general. One might have expected that the growth of interest in Roman provincial art that has been visible for several decades now would have elicited some attempt at answering the question of an integrated market, but such has not been the case.¹²⁸

What is in question is not an integration of styles—whether the mosaics made in Italy looked like the ones made in Syria, for instance—but an integration of markets such that the market prices of objets d’art in each medium covaried all over the Roman empire or across a significant part of it.¹²⁹ But it is not only the works themselves that we need to consider: there are the separate but related matters of the labor market for artists and the market for the materials that artists used.

What I think we have here is a (possibly rather rare) case of genuine empire-wide integration. This is admittedly to a great extent speculation, since without much more in the way of price data than we actually possess no real economist would be likely to pronounce on the question one way or the other.

First, let us consider some factors that point in the other direction, factors that suggest that markets were overwhelmingly local. The scholars who think there was little economic integration in general seem to have a strong hand, since both transport and information were so slow-moving. The high cost of land transport, especially, has been much commented on (its significance has sometimes been exaggerated).¹³⁰ Not surprisingly, therefore, there was a strong tradition virtually everywhere of local craftsmen more or less satisfying local tastes and demand. In Lucian’s famous *Somnium* (7), when the personification of Sculpture competes with Paideia for Lucian’s attention, one of her arguments in favor of his becoming a sculptor is that in this way he can pursue his career in his hometown, Samosata. Herculaneum and Pompeii were cosmopolitan places a few miles apart, but the stylistic differences between their respective paintings strongly suggest that each was devoted to its local artists, or at

¹²⁷For the whole debate, see Bowman and Wilson 2009, 15–28; Scheidel 2012, 8–9.

¹²⁸Indeed, a typical contemporary production on provincial art such as Scott and Webster (2003) ignores this and all other economic aspects of the subject.

¹²⁹It is certainly relevant, however, to consider how far artistic tastes spread across the entire Roman empire, a question briefly considered in Kousser 2008, 139.

¹³⁰See, e.g., Harris 2011, 281–82, 309–10.



FIG. 3. The Piombino Apollo, discovered in the sea near Piombino, probably from the first century B.C.E. Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. Br 2 (H. Lewandowski; © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY).

least to its painters, while sometimes employing outsiders.¹³¹ When papyri allow us to get a relatively good view of which craftsmen a town in Roman Egypt could support, the range is fairly broad¹³²—but the papyri also refer to itinerant, or at least mobile, craftsmen. A relatively modest Italian town such as Sulmo seems to have provided enough business to maintain a *sculptor statuarius*, a maker of bronze statues (but it is not said

¹³¹Ling 1991, 215.

¹³²Bowman 1986, 108.

that he sold his work only there).¹³³ In many areas of the Roman world, there were vast quantities of locally produced sculpture.¹³⁴ Silverware was in even greater demand, and there must have been silversmiths in every considerable town.¹³⁵

It is in fact surprisingly unclear how much long-distance trade there was in large-scale finished works of art under the Roman empire. A ship that seems to have been bringing a large cargo of bronze sculptures from Greece went down at Punta del Serrone near Brindisi, perhaps at some date in the late second century C.E. It has been hypothesized, not very convincingly, that the works in question had already been broken up and were due for recycling,¹³⁶ but in any case it would be difficult to say that the wreck was proof of a heavy regular trade in bronze sculpture.

Some of the important raw materials that artists needed came from limited areas and seem to have been traded in integrated markets that had already existed on a smaller scale in Hellenistic times. The market for papyrus in the Roman empire offers a rough parallel: it was perfectly integrated, since for some reason no one succeeded in growing the plant commercially outside Egypt,¹³⁷ and there was widespread demand throughout the Roman world. Precious metals, precious stones for making gems, copper, high-quality marble, and artists' colors came from a few sources only, or might do so at any given period. Materials constituted, to varying degrees, a substantial part of an artist's/artisan's costs (not necessarily of the price he was able to command),¹³⁸ so there was at least a significant common factor working on the prices they asked whether they were based in, say, Rome or Athens, or for that matter in Volubilis or Palmyra.

An ambiguous and intriguing passage of Vitruvius' *De architectura* (1.2.8) deserves attention here, even though it lacks explicit geographical referents.

¹³³ *AEpigra* 1980, no. 376; see also Buonocore 1988, no. 1. The younger Pliny (*Ep.* 4.28) presumes that there are competent painters available in a town in northern Italy.

¹³⁴ E.g., it is to be assumed that all or most of the North African statues whose prices are catalogued by Duncan-Jones (1982) were made locally, though not necessarily by locals.

¹³⁵ Baratte (1997, 129) discusses the demand for silverware in Africa.

¹³⁶ De Palma and Fiorentino (2003, 97) observed that there is no certainty that this was a single shipwreck. In their view, the finds run from the fourth century B.C.E. to the third or fourth century C.E., but Mannino (2012) holds that none of them is later than the second century.

¹³⁷ On trade in papyrus, see Harris 2011, 174.

¹³⁸ Duncan-Jones (1982, 126) gathers some evidence that bears on this assertion, but it does not get us very far; see also Painter 1993, 113. For arrangements about the purchase of pigments in documents from Egypt, see Cannata 2012, 603–4.

Wise control of costs will be achieved, he tells us, if the architect does not require materials that are very expensive:¹³⁹

For it is not everywhere that there is a supply of quarry-sand or stone for making concrete or fir or unknotted fir-wood or marble. Different things are found in different places, and transporting them is difficult and costly. . . . You can get round the lack of fir or unknotted fir by using cypress, poplar, elm, or pine, and other such problems are to be solved in a similar fashion.

At first glance, someone might take this as evidence that building materials did not travel far in the age of Augustus. A better conclusion, given Vitruvius' hostility toward extravagance, is that the market for special stone and timber was in fact on the way to a high level of integration, at least in the central areas of the empire. As Russell has demonstrated, however, the long-distance transport of stone was overwhelmingly water transport, by sea or river.¹⁴⁰

As far as artists' colors are concerned, Pliny assumes an integrated market in which three factors cause price variations: shipping costs, the price the middleman has paid, and successful attempts to corner the market.¹⁴¹ Many of the prices Pliny quotes seem strikingly low when one considers how far the materials had to travel to get to Rome, and that is probably a sign of substantial, regular trade. The case of the mineral *armenium*, used for blue pigment, is indicative: Pliny (*HN* 35.47) tells us that the Armenian product cost 300 sesterces a pound (at Rome, that is) until Spanish sources were discovered, which brought the price down to 6 sesterces a pound. It would be fascinating to know whether it is possible to provenance the numerous paint remains found in Pompeii—for example, at I.9.9.¹⁴²

By listing the three factors that determine variations in the prices of colors, Pliny seems to be implicitly contrasting these factors with those that formed the prices of the precious metals that make up the subject matter of the rest of book 33. There is an obvious reason: the production of precious metals and stones was

¹³⁹ The reader should be warned that the most widely used translations translate this passage carelessly.

¹⁴⁰ Russell 2013, 141–200.

¹⁴¹ Plin., *HN* 33.164: “pretia rerum, quae usquam posuimus, non ignoramus alia aliis locis et omnibus paene mutari annis, prout navigatione constiterint aut ut quisque mercatus sit aut aliquis praevalens manceps annonam flagellet” (referring back to sections 158–63). The particular sources range from Spain and Gaul to the Aegean, Lydia, Scythia, Cyprus, Egypt, and India. When he takes up the subject again in 35.29–50, he adds North Africa, Armenia, Cappadocia, and Syria.

¹⁴² Aliatis et al. (2010) provide information about the chemical composition of Pompeian colors, but there is much more work to be done.

in Pliny's time to a considerable extent in the hands of the emperor. This did not mean that his three factors were irrelevant, or that there was no integrated market, but it did mean that one of the determinants of newly mined precious metals was imperial policy, however directly or indirectly it was implemented.¹⁴³

As to how the distribution of marble worked, there has been much controversy. While the emperor controlled many of the quarries from Tiberius' reign onward, some were still privately owned at least as late as the Severan emperors,¹⁴⁴ and there was no centralized "marble bureau" in charge of distribution. Although the emperor sometimes bestowed gifts of marble, market forces operated as well as might be expected in a premodern near-monopoly.¹⁴⁵ And some marbles came to experience very wide diffusion, such as the Proconnesian that was used for blocked-out sarcophagi exported all over the empire.¹⁴⁶ "By the early second century"—such was Ward-Perkins' view—"most of the commoner marbles from imperial quarries became available freely to municipalities and individuals elsewhere [than in Rome]."¹⁴⁷ Pensabene has shown in formidable detail that Syria, Palestine, and "Arabia" (i.e., the Roman province of that name) imported both finished architectonic elements and rough quarry blocks from the marble quarries of Asia Minor and Greece (there was no local marble).¹⁴⁸ He has also shown, partly from shipwreck evidence, that in the late second or the third century Proconnesus exported finished architectonic elements to Sicily.¹⁴⁹ More recently, Friedland has shown that the marble used for statuary on a fairly large scale in Syria and Palestine—at Pnias, for example—was all or virtually all from western Asia Minor.¹⁵⁰ But the material from

these quarries was also traveling westward, and prices must have been determined by widespread demand.

The market for precious and semiprecious stones and for engraved gems will have been somewhat similar, with the difference that some of the stones will have been imported from beyond the frontiers.¹⁵¹ What is striking here is that though much of the expert creation of intaglios and cameos is likely to have taken place in the major cities in workshops like that of the Augustan gem carver Dioscorides,¹⁵² the objects themselves have been found on widely scattered archaeological sites, such as Aquileia and Xanten, and more than 800 have been found in Britain.¹⁵³

But the most intriguing discovery of recent years about the materials Roman artist-craftsmen used concerns the change in the composition of Roman bronzes that apparently occurred in the late first and early second centuries C.E.: more lead, less tin. Lahusen and Formigli demonstrated in great detail when this change occurred (fig. 4) and also, very importantly, that it seems to have happened across the whole empire.¹⁵⁴ Whether this has anything to do with Pliny's (*HN* 34.5, 46–7; cf. 95–6) observations about changes in the composition of the bronze used for statues remains unclear. And it could be argued that what we are dealing with here is simply the diffusion of technical knowledge, knowledge to the effect that tolerable bronze could be made with (cheap) lead instead of (more expensive) tin. But that in turn argues that lead was much cheaper than tin everywhere, including the places where the latter was mined locally and the former was not.¹⁵⁵ Integrated markets, therefore?

So much for materials. As far as the *artifices* themselves were concerned, those at the highest level may well have filled commissions far from home, as we have already seen. These men continued to be mostly Greek.¹⁵⁶ Their fame spread to the "Latin" provinces, so that under Nero we find the Greek sculptor Zenodorus performing a large commission for the Arverni in

¹⁴³ See Hirt (2010) for an exhaustive discussion of the ways in which the emperor and the state administered mines in the High Empire. Dodge's (1991) article is still useful.

¹⁴⁴ Hirt 2010, 84–93. The strongest evidence comes from the legal sources. Hirt (2010, 89) goes beyond the evidence, however, when he claims that "the majority of archaeologically documented quarries undoubtedly remained in private or municipal hands during the Principate." The account offered by Russell (2013, esp. 53) is also unbalanced. The key text is Suetonius' *Tiberius* (19), but there is a whole context of state control of natural resources.

¹⁴⁵ Since quarrying and mining were capital intensive, it probably helped the Roman economy that quarries and mines were concentrated in imperial hands.

¹⁴⁶ Ward-Perkins 1992, 32–5; Russell 2013, 261.

¹⁴⁷ Ward-Perkins 1992, 31; Trimble 2011, 70–1, 114. But many regions still used little marble for architecture.

¹⁴⁸ Pensabene (1997) focused on the Severan period; sometimes imperial largesse was involved, but to a great extent it was a matter of trade.

¹⁴⁹ Pensabene 2003.

¹⁵⁰ Friedland (2012, 21) argues that most of the statuary was

imported fully carved.

¹⁵¹ Casson 1989, esp. 42.

¹⁵² On whom, see Plin., *HN* 37.8; Suet., *Aug.* 50; *New Pauly Online, Antiquity*, s.v. "Dioscorides [2]."

¹⁵³ On Aquileia (and other sites), see Sena Chiesa and Galletti 2009. On Xanten, see Platz-Horster 1987. On Britain, see Henig 1978; Collingwood and Wright 1991, 2423 (where it is noted that 45% of the inscribed gemstones found in Britain are inscribed in Greek).

¹⁵⁴ Lahusen and Formigli 2001, esp. 471–78.

¹⁵⁵ On the major sources of these metals, see Harris 2011, 169. But there is much more to be said.

¹⁵⁶ It is typical that of the 18 silver *caelatores* listed by Pliny (*HN* 33.154–57), all came from the Aegean world. *Architecti* in Rome still came mainly from Greece (Plin., *Ep.* 10.40).

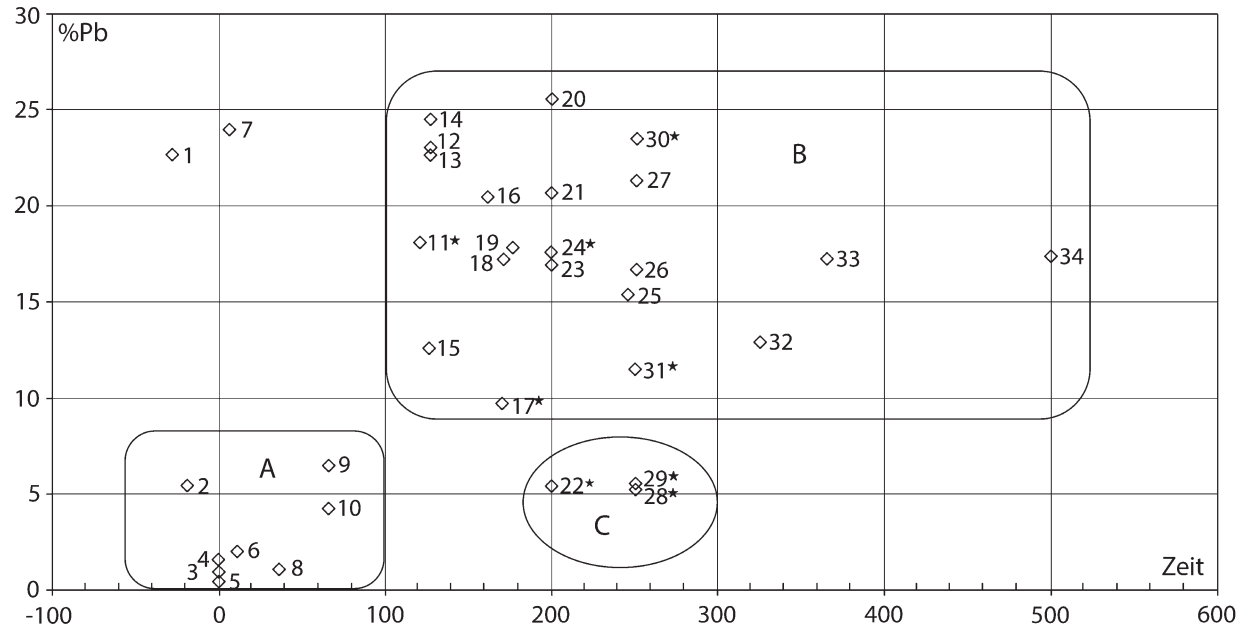


FIG. 4. Changes in the proportion of lead in bronze alloys. The numbers refer to the list of statues in Lahusen and Formigli 2001, 478. Asterisks indicate gilded statues. The slightly anomalous results in Group C are thought to be an effect of the gilding process (Lahusen and Formigli 2001, 472, table 1; courtesy G. Lahusen and E. Formigli).

south-central Gaul. This was the top end of the market: the Arverni paid Zenodorus 40 million sesterces for a colossal statue of their chief deity (“Mercury”), which took 10 years to make.¹⁵⁷ When ambitious North Africans at Zliten, perhaps in Flavian times, wanted splendid mosaics, they presumably had to bring in specialists from outside—probably, so Dunbabin suggests, from somewhere in the eastern provinces.¹⁵⁸ Aphrodisian sculptors worked not only in Greece and Italy but also occasionally in North Africa.¹⁵⁹ This was what the most ambitious craftsmen sought: to be summoned for big commissions to distant parts of the civilized world—thus the boast of a sculptor’s tomb in Rome was that he had “decorated the city and the world.”¹⁶⁰

We might hypothesize that itinerant artists were for the most part either at the upper level of “internation-

ally” famous stars or persons who operated within a fairly restricted radius from their home bases.¹⁶¹ But reality turns out to be more complex, and we sometimes find such men working quite far from home—an Alexandrian mosaicist in Sicily, for example, and a Palmyrene sculptor at Berenike.¹⁶² Such phenomena reflect the ease of travel, the high level of demand for artistic products, and the existence of a cultural koine.

It is worth noting in passing that fine-quality terra sigillata seems to have been one of the few moderately priced products that had the sort of wide geographical spread that the most luxurious commodities could achieve. The penetration of Italian and later Gallic terra sigillata into distant provinces also seems to argue in favor of a widely integrated fine pottery market, though only a relatively small amount of it crossed the west-east divide.¹⁶³ And insofar as branch workshops were involved in pottery production,¹⁶⁴ that should be seen as a further sign of integration.

¹⁵⁷ Plin., *HN* 34.45. An alternative reading would give the price as 400,000 sesterces, but that is less likely. It is possible, as has been suggested, that his home was no farther away than Massilia.

¹⁵⁸ Dunbabin 1978, 18. Mosaicists far from home include one from Puteoli in northern Gaul (near Le Havre) (Donderer 1989, cat. no. A 86), with a local pupil.

¹⁵⁹ Toynbee 1951, 29–30. On Aphrodisian stylistic influence at Lepcis, see Toynbee 1951, 32. But it is now known that the marble there was not Aphrodisian.

¹⁶⁰ “Urbem decoravit et orbem” (*CIL* 6 23083; *ILS* 7711). On an Aphrodisian sculptor named Zeno who says he traveled a lot for his work, see *CIG* 3 6233; *JGRR* 1 258.

¹⁶¹ Such will have been the so-called Mausoleum Workshop active in southern France in early Augustan times, according to Kleiner 1977. On itinerant mosaicists, see Toynbee 1951, 44–7.

¹⁶² For the Alexandrian in Sicily, see Donderer 2008, 38. For the Palmyrene, see Sidebotham et al. 2008, 138.

¹⁶³ Poblome et al. 2004.

¹⁶⁴ Harris 2011, 149.

Thus, there were local markets (I am still using the term in its abstract sense) and also widely integrated markets, but there was yet a third kind of market, the regional one, falling between these two poles.

LATE ANTIQUE DEVELOPMENTS

When the Mediterranean economy began its slow fragmentation in the third century, what were the effects on the production and distribution of works of art? This is an enormous subject made all the more complex by deep disagreements about the Late Antique economy (284–641 C.E.), partly once again because archaeologists and economic historians ask different questions. One should remember, to begin with, that this economic deterioration had a completely different chronology from one region to another: North Africa, for instance, suffered relatively little from warfare in the third and fourth centuries.

Here are some of the problems that deserve further investigation (I mainly limit myself here to the period 284–455); the links between them should be fairly obvious.

The Operation of Supply and Demand in the Fine Arts

Imperial patronage continued, though its modalities are largely hidden from us, and the Theodosian emperors could afford much less than Diocletian or Constantine. Outside the imperial households, the main story has to be that, while there were always rich people, and there were new ecclesiastical patrons, eventually on a vast scale, there was less disposable income than there had been in the High Empire. There was further decline, varying by region, once Constantine's successors began fighting with one another. Demand therefore decreased. According to Stewart, "whatever drove the disappearance of classical naturalism from certain categories of Late Antique art, the supply of materials and skills that fuelled earlier artistic production was simply ceasing to exist."¹⁶⁵ But "simply ceasing to exist" does not tell us enough. Civil wars and invasions between 235 and 285 had certainly disrupted trade in materials and hindered the training and employment of craftsmen, and the same was once again true, on a still wider scale, in the period after the 370s. When sarcophagus production came to an end in Attica ca. 260,¹⁶⁶ it must mainly have been supply, not demand, that faltered. What Henig refers to

as the "sudden decline of the craft of gem cutting in the second half of the third century"¹⁶⁷ may be indicative here: since intaglios were often used for practical purposes, it is hard to suppose that it was severely reduced demand that caused the collapse.

But a decline in demand must have played a very large part. In the west in particular, the urban elite was less able to afford statues, paintings, engraved gems, and other such luxuries (whether this was partly caused by cultural change is a separate question).¹⁶⁸ When we meet evidence for a shortage of architects in the Theodosian Code (provisions of 334 and 344),¹⁶⁹ that is probably because a period of disruption had been succeeded for a time by one of relative peace and prosperity. In fact, the economic decline of the Late Roman empire went in waves. Between waves there could be serious shortages of technically qualified specialists in a variety of fields: the code gives in effect a list of them attached to a provision of the year 337, including artists in diverse media (*Cod. Theod.* 13.4.2). These were architects, painters, statue makers, makers of paneled ceilings, sculptors, mosaicists, silversmiths, makers of fine glassware (*diatretarii*), bronzesmiths, makers of wooden statues, makers of tessellated floors, goldsmiths, and workers in ivory—in other words, almost the entire range of the producers of fine art and architecture. The period in question coincides with the "boom in villas" that Hannestad dates to the years 320–380.¹⁷⁰

Imperial Intervention

The law of 337 exempted all of the above from compulsory public services, and a law of 374 gave much wider privileges to *picturae professores*, if they were free-born.¹⁷¹ Thus, the government intervened in the market for professional skills to a far greater extent than it had ever done before Diocletian's Edict on Maximum Prices. The later of these provisions may also suggest that the prestige of painting had risen somewhat—it is hard to imagine such men being singled out for favors in the earlier empire.

Diocletian's Edict on Maximum Prices was not the last attempt by an emperor to control the prices of materials that were used by skilled craftsmen. Successive emperors tried in particular to lower the price of mar-

¹⁶⁵ Stewart 2008, 168. For the apparent shortage of skills, see also Huskinson 2005, 674. But the maximum pay of a *pictor imaginarius* in Diocletian's Edict on Maximum Prices (a modest 150 sesterces a day) was only double that of a *pictor parietarius*, which suggests that neither was in short supply.

¹⁶⁶ Sodini 1989, 163.

¹⁶⁷ Henig 1978, 21.

¹⁶⁸ For the decline in the number of sculptured sarcophagi in the area of Rome between the periods 300–330 and 330–400, see Cameron 2011, 183–84 (based on Dresken-Weiland 2003).

¹⁶⁹ *Cod. Theod.* 13.4.1 (334 C.E.), 13.4.3 (344 C.E.).

¹⁷⁰ Hannestad 2012, 76.

¹⁷¹ *Cod. Theod.* 13.4.4. Thus, they caught up with the practitioners of the liberal professions, who are dealt with in 13.3.

ble by encouraging the exploitation of private quarries at the expense of the imperial near-monopoly. The earliest known regulation of this kind dates from 320 (*Cod. Theod.* 10.19.1), but since our source is the Theodosian Code, it may be that Constantine was following a Diocletianic precedent. The price had nonetheless risen steeply by 363 (*Cod. Theod.* 10.19.2); it is not clear why. In 393, finally, the government reversed itself, prohibiting the private working of marble quarries (*Cod. Theod.* 10.19.13). How much effect such regulations had is unknown.

Supply and Reuse

Some Late Antique building projects in the capital and elsewhere notoriously made heavy use of marble spolia—in particular, the Arcus Novus of Diocletian and the Arch of Constantine.¹⁷² The database of Late Antique statuary created by Smith and Ward-Perkins shows that this was a widespread practice.¹⁷³ But it was not altogether a new practice, even in the capital—far from it.¹⁷⁴ The question remains: to what extent did this result from a shortage of materials or qualified craftsmen?¹⁷⁵ Church building and the new capital in the east created new priorities.

Art Production and Urbanization

Do texts or material remains tell us whether provincial towns could still provide enough demand to support specialist artisans—in particular, makers of nonutilitarian products? The wave of church building after 312 provided ample work, but how heavily decorated were ordinary churches?¹⁷⁶

Trade Patterns

Huskinson noted that “[o]ne major aspect of the art of this period [193–337] is its increasing regionalism.”¹⁷⁷ Works of high quality could still, however, travel considerable distances in the mid fourth century. The Kaiseraugst silver treasure, which was closed in 351/2, included high-quality vessels made at Trier, Mainz, Naissus, Serdica, Thessalonica, and Nicomedia.¹⁷⁸ Did the silversmiths who made those vessels work for the market or, alternatively, for an imperial official? The

owner may have received some pieces as gifts, but it is improbable that he acquired most of them in that way.¹⁷⁹ Always supposing that long-distance commerce was involved, can we imagine a similar collection 50 or a 100 years later? Villa owners in late fourth-century Gaul and Spain imported a certain amount of statuary from Asia Minor (via Constantinople or Rome?)¹⁸⁰ but can hardly have done so a generation after that.

Anonymity and Fame

Finally, veering back toward social history: anonymity and fame. Whole chapters are written about Late Antique art in which not a single artist is named, for the good reason that all the great works of Late Antique art are, for us, anonymous.¹⁸¹ No surprise there, but perhaps we are missing something, for there are signs of change. Two sculptors from Aphrodisias whom we happen to know about by epigraphic accident reached the rank of *vir perfectissimus* in the early fourth century; one was a *comes*.¹⁸² Smith has proposed that they were not sculptors at all but rather “a new kind of workshop owner,”¹⁸³ but the hypothesis seems unnecessary. When the astrologer Iulius Firmicus Maternus (writing in 334–337), himself a man of high social rank, mentions painters and other visual artists, he seems to assume that they are respectable and can indeed achieve fame.¹⁸⁴ Can all this be reconciled with the wholesale destruction of statuary that took place in Rome, Athens, and elsewhere from the third century onward, much of it for the purpose of building new city walls?¹⁸⁵

FURTHER WORK

More work needs to be done on the Roman forgery of works of art. But the most promising areas for further research concern integration and late antiquity. In particular, further archaeological work modeled on that of Pensabene and Friedland might do much to illuminate and define what I have called regional

¹⁷² For the Arcus Novus, see *LTUR* 1:101–2, s.v. “Arcus Novus” (Torelli) (with bibliography). For the Arch of Constantine, see Elsner 2000, esp. 153–54. For a wider discussion, see Liverani 2004.

¹⁷³ Smith and Ward-Perkins 2012.

¹⁷⁴ Pensabene 2001, 118–19.

¹⁷⁵ Liverani (2004, 432) maintains that “economic and practical reasons” always had “a primary role,” but much more needs to be said.

¹⁷⁶ Textual sources are to be found in Mango 1972.

¹⁷⁷ Huskinson 2005, 695.

¹⁷⁸ Cameron 2006, esp. 697 (reviewing Guggisberg 2003).

¹⁷⁹ Cameron 1992.

¹⁸⁰ Stirling 2007, 314–15.

¹⁸¹ Some of the names on vessels in the Kaiseraugst treasure might be those of the craftsmen, but there is no guarantee (Guggisberg 2003, 181–82).

¹⁸² Roueché 1989, nos. 11–13 (Fl. Zeno and Fl. Andronicus). But the case is complicated, as Roueché points out.

¹⁸³ Smith 2007, 215. Fl. Zeno “signed” a statue found in Rome, and there is no evidence that any ancient person other than the actual master sculptor, or of course a forger, ever did that in antiquity.

¹⁸⁴ See, e.g., Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis* 6.8.1, 8.7.5; cf. Calabi Limentani 1958, 53–5. Thorndike (1913) argued that whatever its debts to earlier works, the *Mathesis* reflects the world of Firmicus’ own time.

¹⁸⁵ On this phenomenon, see Coates-Stephens 2007.

markets, and to trace their survival and decline in late antiquity.

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