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MURAL PAINTINGS IN GREEK AND ROMAN SANCTUARIES

ERIC M. MOORMANN

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CONTENTS

PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
1 PAINTINGS DESCRIBED IN ANCIENT TEXTS	7
Greek Temples	8
Roman Temples	16
Literary Descriptions of Temple Decorations	27
The Temple of Juno in Carthage	29
A Temple in Liternum	35
Conclusions	39
2 PAINTINGS FOUND IN PUBLIC TEMPLES OF THE GREEK WORLD	43
3 PAINTINGS FOUND IN PUBLIC TEMPLES IN ROMAN ITALY	47
Republican and Imperial Temples in Rome	47
Republican Temples in Italy	49
Imperial Temples in Italy	61
Public Temples in Pompeii	69
The Temple of Apollo in Pompeii	71
Conclusions	82
Appendix: The Portico of the Temple of Apollo in Pompeii	84
4 PAINTINGS IN PROVINCIAL ROMAN TEMPLES ACROSS THE ALPS	87
Britain	88
The Low Countries	90
Germany	93
Switzerland	96
France	97
The Iberian Peninsula	108
The Balkans	109
Conclusions	109
5 THE EASTERN HALF OF THE EMPIRE AND NORTH AFRICA	111
6 PAINTED SHRINES DEDICATED TO THE ROMAN EMPEROR	119
Three Centres for Imperial Cult in Herculaneum	119
The Macellum in Pompeii	137
Imperial Cult in Misenum	139
Silvanus and Caracalla in Ostia?	140
Hercules and Marcus Aurelius in Sabratha	144
The Severi in Bulla Regia	145
The Tetrarchs in Luxor	146
Conclusions	147

7	ROMAN SHRINES HOUSING NON-ROMAN CULTS	149
	Shrines for Isis	149
	The Temple of Isis in Pompeii	149
	Isis in Rome?	162
	A German Outpost: Mainz	163
	Mithras and His Grottoes	163
	Rome	164
	Ostia	168
	Other Mithraea in Italy	176
	Mithraea Across the Alps	177
	Mithraea in the East: Huarte, Dura Europos and Caesarea	179
	A Private Shrine to Sabazios in Pompeii	183
	Other Shrines for 'Small' Cults	184
	Conclusions	186
8	DURA EUROPOS: A CASE-STUDY	189
	Bel or Allat?	189
	Bel and Zeus	190
	Zeus Theos	193
	Adonis	193
	Gadde	193
	The Synagogue	194
	The Church	199
	Conclusions	201
9	FINAL REMARKS	203
	Wall Systems	203
	Figural Elements	204
	Location of Wall Paintings	205
	Conclusion	206
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	207
	Index of Ancient Text Sources	227
	Index of Names, Places and Subjects	229
	Colour plates	237

PREFACE

This book is the result of an enlargement of my study for my inaugural address at the Radboud University at Nijmegen and a conference at the German Archaeological Institute at Rome, both of which took place in 2003. Other presentations were given in Austin, Texas; Berlin, London and Oxford. Some elements have been published in Dutch in *Een goddelijk interieur. Geschilderde decoraties in heiligdommen in de Romeinse wereld* ('A Divine Interior. Painted Decorations in Sanctuaries in the Roman World,' 2003). While preparing this paper, I discovered so much useful information that I became convinced that a collection of known and unknown facts and notions concerning painted temple decorations would not go amiss, thus resulting in this publication.

I would like to thank several friends and colleagues: Claudine Allag, Alix Barbet, Nicole Blanc, Sible de Blaauw, Frederick Brenk, Ton Derks, Lucinda Dirven, Hélène Eristov, Michał Galikowski, Rüdiger Goggräfe, Carmen Guiral y Pelegrín, Olaf Kaper, Roger Ling, Paul Meyboom, Stephan Mols, David Rijser, Leonard Rutgers, Filli Rossi, Benjamin Rous, Tesse Stek, Marie José Strazzulla, Volker Michael Strocka and Miguel-John Versluys for important information and suggestions after reading the whole or sections of this text. They and others offered additions and corrections as well as images. Thomas Fröhlich, Director of the Library of the German Institute at Rome, authorized the reproduction of antiquarian images from Mazois and Steinbüchel. The Superintendent of Pompeii, Pier Giovanni Guzzo, and the Superintendents of Ostia, Anna Gallina Zevi and Margherita Bedello Tata, kindly gave permission to study relevant monuments at Pompeii, Herculaneum and Ostia. Mrs Bedello Tata also provided photographic material. Vincent Hunink critically assessed and improved my translations from Greek and Latin as well as my observations about the literary testimonies. Heather van Tress kindly read the first draft and helped polish my English. John Clarke read one of the last versions and made suggestions for many improvements. Finally I thank Isabelle Vella Gregory who was my severe editor of the final version.

Amsterdam and Nijmegen, January 2011

Introduction

The ancient practice of decorating sacred buildings differs greatly from that in previous cultures and contemporary or later ones, where sanctuaries are recognisable from exterior and interior alike as such.¹ The architecture, form, building elements and decoration (e.g. paintings) betray at first glance where the visitor is - in an Egyptian temple, in a Catholic cathedral, in a Protestant church, in a mosque or a Buddhist temple. An image of the god or saint in the façade informs the viewer about the god or saint venerated here. In the case of an icon-forbidding religion, there may be a token like the Holy Cross or the Star of David or the presence of an architectural feature like a minaret. The interior of the shrines also plays a significant role in helping to identify the purpose and religious affiliation of the building from the moment worshippers enter and address the gods and saints within the building. We recognise the mihrab in the mosque, the altars in most other religious buildings, the statues, icons and mural decorations displaying the venerated persons and their entourage. In the latter case, the iconographical programmes or schemes may be fixed so that the definition of the specific figure worshipped is not immediately clear, but an attentive look will soon reveal who is presiding there.

When we turn to Antiquity, we see that the exterior of 'classical' Greek and Roman temple is recognisable immediately thanks to typical features like the stylobate, peripteros, podium and façade. This does not hold true for many other shrines that both architecturally and in the sense of decoration often do not differ notably from houses.

Decorations in painted form within religious complexes of the ancient world have not yet been studied as a genre – if this word can serve to indicate the specific case – and I hope that this book will fill a gap. Current research on exterior decorations of religious buildings in general shows a major interest in the sculpted decorations, which became fashionable in the Greek and Etruscan worlds in the early sixth century BC and in Rome, especially from the late Republican era onwards, than in the paintings and mosaics on walls and floors.² Such adornments and revetments - preferably in marble, but even those in limestone and terracotta - and, especially, sculptural decorations (including those in terracotta) have a stronger visual appeal to the person approaching the sacred building.³ City states, Hellenistic kings and generals, Roman emperors and other prominent personalities in the ancient world wanted to demonstrate their pretensions to the community of gods and citizens and the erection of sacred buildings was a good way to show their positive feelings to all. In the Greek world competition between poleis surely played an important role: the tyrants on Sicily, for example, were the men who ordered the monumental temples in Syracuse, Akragas and Selinous. Other clear examples of architecturally impressive sacred monuments in an urban context are the above-mentioned canonical Greek temples, Etruscan

¹ An impressive holistic overview of cult buildings in the Europe, Asia and the Americas from the Neolithic to the end of the fourth century AD is given in Wightman 2007. Following his wish to put together all types of sacred architecture from many cultures, most chapters are kept neatly separated from each other, each discussing a specific geographic or cultural area. The last chapters, however, address general problems like sacred space and identity and the meaning of cult buildings. See also pp. 899-904. For ancient and early

Christian cult buildings, see De Blaauw 2007.

² E.g. for the latter group Hänlein-Schäfer 1985, 69-78; cf. the works cited in the following notes.

³ For terracotta decorations in Etruscan, Italic and Roman temples in Italy, see, for instance, almost all contributions in I. Edlund-Berry, G. Greco and J. Kenfield, eds., *Deliciae Fictiles III. Architectural Terracottas in Ancient Italy: New Discoveries and Interpretations*, Oxford 2006.

and Latial shrines in towns like Veii and Satricum, and Roman temples from the late Republic, culminating in marble constructions of the Augustan period in Rome itself, e.g. the Temple of Apollo in Circo, excellently reconstructed by Alessandro Viscogliosi,⁴ the Temple of Apollo Actiacus on the Palatine known mostly from literary sources,⁵ and the complex of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augustum.⁶ In Rome, the swift transition from temples with terracotta, painted and stucco decorations to marble ones is particularly evident. As a result earlier temples were considered old-fashioned and poor. However, some temples were deemed to be important because of their antiquity and ritual significance and were thus not seen as old-fashioned.

We may ask why this image is so confusing. To begin with, we only know very few instances of patrons of temples (or a part of them) and what they intended with their commission. Many texts mention the erection of a temple after a battle, for example, or as thanks to good fortune bestowed on the patron, or the reasons why a polis built a particular sacred monument. However, no text explains why the result of these dedications is exactly that building with those particular elements. At the same time, ancient sources give very little information about the practical process of temple construction and the rationale behind the choice of the architectural and decorative elements. As a result, when we approach a Greek or Roman temple, preserved by lucky circumstances, we can almost never see for which god the monument had been erected. The architecture itself is not particularly helpful. In the case of monumental sanctuaries the dimensions and the presence of columns and sumptuous façades, flights of steps and monumentality are part of the sacred, but they can also be found in other building types.⁷ Smaller sanctuaries even lack these features. Architecture is thus not the only characteristic to define the temple as such, but in many cases forms the first recognisable aspect. The impressive chain of temples on the northern rim of the plateau of Agrigento, the gigantic ruins of Temples A to G in Selinous (how illustrative these labels are!), and even the Erechtheion and the Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens do not immediately allow the viewer to determine to which gods these buildings had been dedicated. The situation is not particularly more illuminating if we take into account the sculptural decoration from these temples, now mostly preserved in parts and far from the buildings themselves in museums. Why a giant Medusa in the pediment of the Temple of Artemis in Corfu, why two Trojan Wars in the pediments of the Temple of Athena Aphaia in Aegina (Athena is present here, but is not taking part in the fights), why Herakles on the metopes of the Temple of Zeus in Olympia? In most cases an explanation is to be found after a painstaking process of analysing the not so obvious mythical and historical connections associated with a particular site. It is not until the construction of the Parthenon that we encounter a monument in Hellas displaying a sculptural programme that connects every element to the goddess. Directing his or her gaze to the west pediment, the visitor who had arrived through the Propylaea could see who the 'boss' was on the hill: unmistakably Athena triumphing over her mighty uncle Poseidon. As to the interior of the classical Greek and Roman temple, one may expect that the cult statue made clear who was living here – and this turns out to be the case at Athens or Olympia – but we remain in the dark about the remainder of the decoration of the naos or cella, conceived as the house of the god. The ancient visitor

⁴ A. Viscogliosi, *LTUR* I (1993) 49-54 mentions Greek paintings still visible at the time (see Pliny, *NH* 35.99); Viscogliosi 1996. Gurval 1995, 115-119 on the political impact of Sosius' temple. For Greek Sicily see Marconi 2007.

⁵ P. Gros, *LTUR* I (1993) 54-57 lists the rich materials and works of art mentioned in the sources. See also Gurval 1995, 111-131 and the works of art mentioned *passim* (see index at p. 323-324) as well as Hekster and Rich 2006. On the temple's polychromy, see Zink 2009.

⁶ A new, colourful reconstruction was presented in 2002 on the occasion of the exhibition on polychrome marbles in Rome: *I marmi colorati della Roma imperiale*, exhibition

catalogue, Rome 2002, 109-122. On the temple V. Kockel, *LTUR* II (1995) 289-295, esp. 291 and Ganzert 2000, 103-110. In general on Augustan sacred buildings see Gros 1976. On the increasing use of marble see also Pensabene 2007, XVII-XX. This monograph comprises a thorough study of the consumption of marble in Ostia.

⁷ For Greek temples see the manuals by Hellmann 2002, 2006; Spawforth 2006; Lippolis, Livadiotti and Rocco 2007; Marconi 2007. For the Roman temples see Gros 1976; 1998. These studies contain more detailed information and bibliographies on all sites mentioned in this book.

to the temple was generally excluded from the adyton and the cella and while the modern visitor may have such access, the interior arrangement of a temple still does not help clarify which deity was once worshipped there.⁸

This book will survey all the evidence with the aim of determining whether painted decoration is specific to temples as a distinct group of religious buildings. I will also examine whether there is a relationship between the iconography and the deity worshipped in a particular temple. Furthermore, I will examine to what degree paintings were similar to the marble decorations in sanctuaries and elsewhere, and if the murals differed from paintings found in the private sphere.⁹ Can we establish a typological sequence of building type, god and decoration? As will become evident in the course of this study, there are mainly two answers to these questions, depending on the character of the sanctuary. Greek and Roman temples lack, by and large, interior decorations displaying a unified iconographic programme. Instead they prefer the kind of decoration that we may call 'wallpaper' and that is also seen in other types of buildings. Shrines related to the mystery cults, on the other hand, display decorative programmes that aim at unity, or, at the very last, seek to illustrate some of the basic tenets held by those who congregated in these buildings. It is for this reason that I have chosen to focus on Mithraea in Chapter 7.

The Gallo-Roman temple at Elst (the Netherlands) has formed the starting point of my reflections gathered in this study: it is a complex situated next to Nijmegen, the city where I work, and it is one of the subjects I have studied for many years. The remains were discovered under the Gothic church that had been partly destroyed in September 1944 during the Battle of Arnhem. The ruins were subsequently studied before being restored and reused. Fragments of a panel decoration in the cella survived: a dado with marble imitations and ornaments like thyrsos supported a system of red panels, whereas candelabra embellished the black zones separating them (fig. 36-37). This form of mural decoration is known from different types of buildings - temples, public spaces and houses.¹⁰ If the Elst fragments had been found out of context, the connection with a religious building would have been far from evident. We must take into account, however, that the panels themselves could contain figural scenes which were specific for the room they adorned. Apart from plain red pieces, no fragments of figural elements have been found. The marble imitations in the dado enhanced the function of the building as a temple; many examples are also known from private spaces.

We can conclude, for the moment, that in light of their iconography the Elst wall paintings were not at all inspired by the function of the building. Apparently, then, the decorators of the temple either had not received specific instructions or there was no such specific decorative scheme available. Perhaps it was simply self-evident to them to employ a modest scheme in a cult room where the focus would be the cult statue. The important point, however, is that the temple at Elst is not an isolated case. In fact, it is precisely the lack of figurative elements that this temple has in common with numerous temples in other parts of the Greco-Roman world, and it is this rather intriguing phenomenon that is at the core of this study.

Consequently, this study presents a collection of painted decoration in temples in the Greek and Roman

⁸ E.g. Elsner 1995. I will not enter into the specific iconographic programmes of the sculpted decoration. As to the iconography of Greek temples see Knell 1990 and Schultz and Von den Hoff 2008. On cult statues see Martin 1987 and T. Hölscher, *Kultbild, ThesCRA IV* (2005) 52-65. On the notion of the house of the gods, see Wightman 2007, 905.

⁹ See Muth 1998 and De Angelis, Muth and Hölscher 1999. On various aspects of temples see also *Cahiers Centre G. Glotz* 8 (1997). C. Keybold, *Tempel, ThesCRA IV* (2005) 106 has some notes on interior decoration of temples; there are many references to figural scenes, but these are mainly wooden panels and rarely murals.

¹⁰ With reference to Temple II, Bogaers 1955, 134 notes [my translation]: "After what has been said before, finally it can be put forward in respect to the paintings in Temple II that apparently there existed no relationship between the temple building and the type of murals found in the cella. Nothing can be found in the decoration on the walls that refers to the sort of building to which it belonged. The motifs of the paintings are independent from the decorated room and the cult connected with it." He refers in his note 8 to Drack 1950, 9 for a similar remark, but there nothing of the kind can be found.

world and investigates whether these murals are specific to this group of buildings, be it in a formal or iconographical sense. Much information can be derived from the remains of religious buildings in towns like Pompeii, Ostia and Dura Europos and the numerous fragments of plaster found in excavations all over the ancient world. As a matter of fact, few buildings can be studied *in situ* and, therefore, all the wall plaster fragments are important – miniscule as they may be. Even though the evidence is relatively plentiful and deriving from all parts of the ancient world, it has never been studied systematically, let alone comprehensively. The archaeological evidence can be supplemented by ancient texts, which fall into two categories. First, we have the shorter or longer descriptions of, and references to, temples in the Greek and Roman historical and ‘encyclopaedic’ texts (e.g. Plutarch and the Elder Pliny), descriptions of Greece (e.g. Pausanias) and technical books (Vitruvius). In some cases poetic evocations, like Propertius’ description of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine, can also be informative. Second, there are descriptions of imaginary monuments in poetic texts, cast in the shape of *ekphraseis*, which may illustrate our reconstructions of ancient temple decorations. The first chapter is dedicated to this category of sources, the written material, where I also discuss to what extent texts can enrich our knowledge.

Extant examples of temple decorations¹¹ are investigated in this study and the question of whether they corresponded with the function of the building will be addressed wherever relevant. I shall mainly focus on murals in cellae, but the outer walls and portico decorations of sacred complexes are also taken into account. I exclude paintings on wooden panels, hung on the walls or exhibited on easels, the *pinakes*, which often were very famous and are frequently recorded in the literary sources.¹² I also exclude the polychrome decoration of architectural features like metopes, triglyphs, revetment plaques and acroteria.¹³ This study discusses exclusively wall paintings and mosaics found in the same context as the paintings. Besides, some examples of mosaics have been found in temples that do not (or no longer) possess painted wall decorations, e.g. the Temple of Zeus in Olympia,¹⁴ but the examples encountered while carrying out this research were in most cases of little value.

Another important point is the status and function of the sanctuaries. All examples mentioned thus far belong to the group of large, public and/or official temples, mostly related to the gods venerated in and by the polis and the state, whereas citizens shared the public functions offered to these gods and carried out in front of the temple’s entrance.¹⁵ The situation is different for semi-public or private cults practiced by private persons or groups of Greeks and Romans. The most intimate scale is that of the household shrine, e.g. the Roman *lararium*, consisting of a mobile or fixed altar with images and statuettes of the household gods. Here the patron and the members of the family brought modest offerings and performed prayers, hoping for their protection. This subject is excluded from my study since these cults belong to the private sphere of a family. A somewhat bigger scale

¹¹ I use here and elsewhere ‘temple’ to refer to a cult building, but am aware of the implications of the term.

¹² One may think of the numerous instances recorded by Pliny in Book 35 of his *Naturalis Historia*, for the greater part dedicated to painting. The reason in singling out many painters must be that their works are on display in public and religious buildings (in Pliny’s case, Roman monuments). A good overview is found in Isager 1991, 125-131 (great masters), 135-136 (‘The Second Best’). See also Bergmann 1995 on famous *pinakes*. Cf. the case of *pinakes* in the Temple of Aphrodite in Arados (Syria) by Pheidias, visited by Saint Peter (Liverani 2005).

¹³ E.g. terracotta plaques serving as metopes in the Temple of Apollo in Thermos (see Koch 2000) and those from Cerveteri, Falerii and Viganella (Roncalli 1965, 49-54). For Greek

terracotta elements Winter 1993 is fundamental. Cf. also the proceedings cited in note 3.

¹⁴ Salzmann 1982, 63, 117-118, pls. 71.5-6, 72.1-2: mosaic in the pronaos of *tesserae* and pebbles. It shows panels with a Triton and fish, probably applied in the first half of the third century BC. Since the images do not have any connection with the sanctuary and its occupant, the floor decoration may be seen as a modern carpet of the time and may have been a votive offering. Hellmann 2002, 260-261 mentions lozenges in the *tholoi* of Epidauros and Delphi, reflecting the ceiling cassettes and mosaics in Olympia discussed here, Lykosoura (Temple of Despoina) and Xanthos (Letoon B: small depictions of the attributes of Artemis and Apollo).

¹⁵ These are the principal features of a classical temple. See Klauck 1995, I, 35-37.

is that of the *Kultvereine*, who came together in *scholae*. These centres for veneration were normally included in a house, occupying a (formerly) private room. It could be that these spaces were regularly used in daily life by the inhabitants of the complex and only adapted during ceremonies. This means that, as opposed to the grand temples, the cella was used for prayer and offerings, for the cult practice, and that people used the room actively. Examples discussed here include shrines for the emperor's cult (Chapter 6) and the synagogue at Dura Europos (Chapter 8). More or less similar are the sanctuaries of mystery cults like the Isea and Mithraea, examined in Chapter 7. These sanctuaries share some of the special features listed for private cults: position within an existing house and use of the cella for cult practices. These differences may urge specific measurements in the sense of interior design and, in our case, of painted decoration. In these categories the cella is no longer the house of the god and can be compared with the cult room in Christian, Muslim and other sanctuaries, where the believers come together to pray.

On the basis of the observations made thus far, I have subdivided the book into nine chapters focusing on specific types of sanctuaries and/or particular features. The first chapter presents a collection and discussion of paintings recorded in ancient written sources. The following four chapters are devoted to the monumental, 'classical' shrines connected with public life in the towns of ancient Greece and Italy and the Roman provinces, including buildings used as the houses of the gods. Chapter 6 is dedicated to the shrines for the cult of the Roman emperors, which are, strikingly perhaps, not grand at all, but modest *sacella* created by specific groups of citizens or soldiers. Chapter 7 examines sanctuaries of a more private character, used for mystery cults where believers came together to worship these gods, bring offerings and share meals. Chapter 8 concentrates on Dura Europos, a town along the eastern border of the Roman Empire, where we find a rich dossier of shrines with specific decoration. Some conclusions drawn from the various enquiries are collected in Chapter 9. Within the chapters, the treatment is more or less chronological per town (Rome, Pompeii) and area (Italy, France).

Finally, it must be pointed out that there are substantial differences as to the length of the descriptions, discussions and analyses of the various monuments. These differences result from the archaeological material itself. Most temple complexes could only be treated much more summarily than I had expected when I started this research, which is especially the case with the temples in the provinces of the Roman Empire, for which reason inevitably large sections of chapters 2 to 5 have a rather descriptive character. The knowledge of the Pompeian cases – and hence the bibliography pertaining to it – is so much larger than that about the temples in the Roman provinces that, as a result, Pompeii dominates. The same is true for the group of Mithraea and for the towns of Herculaneum, Ostia and Dura Europos.

1 Paintings Described in Ancient Texts

The ancient sources do not abound in lengthy descriptions of painted decoration in shrines. Most records are no more than short references focusing on the artists themselves rather than their work or on technical details of their work. That does not mean, however, that these references are without interest for this investigation. These texts tell us about the prestige such paintings could have had and about their relative rarity or peculiarity. The sources can be divided into two categories, the first including information about real buildings (still extant or lost) and the second focusing on fictitious temples which only appear in literary texts. The latter category is represented by the genre of *ekphrasis* (see *infra*). The discussion focuses on the former category.

Textual sources provide information on:

1. artists
2. iconography
3. gods and their sanctuaries
4. patrons
5. technical details, including the first use of specific techniques.

Authors like Pliny and Pausanias are mainly interested in the oldest and/or the best, as well as peculiar details in images and technique. Historical accounts highlight the patrons of temple building or restoration. Therefore, the texts in general do not cover all aspects we are looking for simultaneously. That means that we know disproportionately much more about one single detail within a shrine and relatively little about the shrine as a whole. From the set of texts one gets the impression that temple decorations were unimportant except when showing specific imagery, the result a famous hand (either from an artist or in a technical sense) or decorating a particular sanctuary. All texts refer to monumental public temples, none describes shrines of private cults.

The location of the paintings, for example in the pronaos (προνάος), inside the naos (e.g. *interiores parietes*), on the outer walls, on the courtyard walls (παστάς, περίβολος), is rarely mentioned. Even the terms ἐν or in (in), ἐνταῦθα (here) are not conclusive, as 'in the temple' means most probably 'in the sanctuary' and not specifically 'within' the temple building.

It is striking that in *De Architectura* Vitruvius, our main written source on the construction of temples in antiquity, does not describe the interior decoration of the buildings in question, apart from the architectural features, in Books 3-4 (*On Temple Building*) and 7 (*On Painting*).¹ Vitruvius keeps silent because these data were either insignificant or were such common knowledge that they had no need of being recorded.

These introductory remarks may appear to diminish the value of the written sources, but they are included to indicate the limitations with which we have to deal. In fact, several texts instruct us about aspects we cannot learn from the archaeological remains, such as the work by prestigious artists and motifs chosen by patrons.

¹ Vitr., *De Arch.* 4.4. speaks about smoothing the walls' blocks.

GREEK TEMPLES

The most important Greek temples of the Archaic and Classical periods were constructed in limestone or marble. Ornaments and structural elements, such as capitals and epistyles, were painted, and we are rather well-informed about the shape and appearance of the cult rooms' interior walls. These walls were covered by a layer of white stucco that could either suggest a smooth wall or isodome masonry.² The cult statue of the god(s) who might have lived there dominated the space.

In this discussion on sources about paintings in Greek temples, special attention is paid to the iconographical programmes and the position of the decorations. As mentioned before, the numerous wooden *pinakes* are not taken into account, nor are coloured terracotta decorations like plates and roof ornaments; the focus lies on the fixed decorations.³ The literary sources describe various examples of painted Greek temples, although even here large monuments receive greater attention than smaller shrines.⁴

One of the oldest monuments with paintings mentioned in the sources, its only virtue being its antiquity, is a temple in Alphoneia with paintings by Kleanthes and Aregon, who are listed among the inventors of the *skiagraphia* by Pliny. Strabo also records the iconography, but we lack mention of, or reference to, the venerated deity and thus the themes cannot be analysed in detail:⁵

ἐν δὲ τῷ τῆς Ἀλφειονίας ἱερῷ γραφαὶ Κλεάνθους τε καὶ Ἀρήγοντος ἀνδρῶν Κορινθίων, τοῦ μὲν Τροίας ἄλωσις καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς γοναί, τοῦ δ' Ἄρτεμις ἀναφορομένη ἐπὶ γρυπός, σφόδρα εἰδόκιμοι.

In the temple of Alphoneia there are paintings by Kleanthes and Aregon from Korinth. The first shows the Capture of Troy and the Birth of Athena, the second Artemis carried up by a griffon. They are very famous.

The world-famous chryselephantine cult statue by Pheidias in the naos of the Temple of Zeus in Olympia stood behind a limestone fence decorated by Panainos, a brother or nephew of the artist.⁶ These works are mentioned in several sources thanks to the importance of Pheidias and the eminence of the temple itself. The scenes showed myths in which the region Elis and the regional superhero Herakles played an important role. Strabo is our oldest source about this project and he calls Panainos a nephew, being the son of Pheidias' brother Pleistainetos:⁷

πολλὰ δὲ συνέπραξε τῷ Φειδίᾳ Πάναινος ὁ ζωγράφος, ἀδελφιδοῦς ὦν αὐτοῦ καὶ συνεργολάβος, πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ξοάνου διὰ τῶν χρωμάτων κόσμησιν καὶ μάλιστα τῆς ἐσθῆτος· δείκνυνται δὲ καὶ γραφαὶ πολλαὶ τε καὶ θαυμασταὶ περὶ τὸ ἱερὸν ἐκείνου ἔργα.

² See the succinct but rich overview in Hellmann 2002, 97-98, 229-262. On paintings in Greek temples see also Scheibler 1994, 138-152.

³ Cf. Winter 1993; Koch 1996 and 2000; Hellmann 2002, 254-255.

⁴ See SQ and *Recueil Milliet* 1985. Concerning this work and the information given in these sources see H. Eristov, RA 1987, 109-123.

⁵ Strabo 8.3.12.343c (= SQ 382; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 62). Mentioned by Roncalli 1965, 54; Scheibler 1994, 55-56; Koch 1996, 23. They might have been table paintings. Cf.

also G. Bröcker, *Künstlerlexikon der Antike* 1 (2001) 78 s.v. Aregon (probably sixth century BC); R. Vollkommer, *ibid.*, 413 s.v. Kleanthes (seventh century). On *skiagraphia* Pliny, NH 35.15 and the modern authors mentioned.

⁶ The latter seems more plausible. Koch 2000, 72-74 considers them brothers and Panainos is described as the polychrome painter of the Zeus Olympios. On Panainos: Völcker-Janssen 1987; Scheibler 1994, 145. See also Thomas 1976, 47, 51, 80, and W. Ehrhardt, *Künstlerlexikon der Antike* 2 (2004) 180-181.

⁷ Strabo 8.3.30 (SQ 698; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 165).

The painter Panainos, a nephew and collaborator of Pheidias, helped him a lot in colouring the statue, especially its garments. Many admirable paintings by him are also shown all over the sanctuary.

This illustrates the importance of the persons who were responsible for the polychromy of statues. Pliny writes that Pheidias was considered as the painter, but the following is more probable:⁸

praeterea in confesso sit LXXX tertia fuisse fratrem eius Panaenum qui clipeum intus pinxit Elide Minervae, quam fecerat Colotes, discipulus Phidiae et ei in faciendo Iove Olympio adiutor.

Moreover, let it be admitted that in the eighty third Olympiad there was a brother of Pheidias, Panainos, who painted the inside of the shield of Minerva at Elis that was made by Kolotes, a disciple of Pheidias who was his assistant, when he made the Zeus Olympios.

Finally, we have important remarks by Pausanias in his long description of the Temple of Zeus:⁹

ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ δὲ ἐρύματα τρόπον τοίχων πεποιημένα τὰ [δὲ] ἀπείργοντά ἐστι. τούτων τῶν ἐρυμάτων ὅσον μὲν ἀπαντικρὺ τῶν θυρῶν ἐστίν, ἀλήλιπται κυανῷ μόνον, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ αὐτῶν παρέχεται Παναίνου γραφάς. ἐν δὲ αὐταῖς ἐστὶ μὲν οὐρανὸν καὶ γῆν Ἄτλας ἀνέχων, παρέστηκε δὲ καὶ Ἡρακλῆς ἐκδέξασθαι τὸ ἄχθος ἐθέλων τοῦ Ἀτλαντος, ἔτι δὲ Θησεύς τε καὶ Πειρίθους καὶ Ἑλλάς τε καὶ Σαλαμίς ἔχουσα ἐν τῇ χειρὶ τὸν ἐπὶ ταῖς ναυσὶν ἄγκραις ποιοῦμενον κόσμον, Ἡρακλέους τε τῶν ἀγωνισμάτων τὸ ἐς τὸν λέοντα τὸν ἐν Νεμέᾳ. καὶ τὸ ἐς Κασσάνδραν παρανόμημα Αἴαντος, Ἴπποδάμειά τε ἡ Οἰνομάου σὺν τῇ μητρὶ καὶ Προμηθεὺς ἔτι ἐχόμενος μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν δεσμῶν, Ἡρακλῆς δὲ ἐς αὐτὸν ἤρται· λέγεται γάρ δὴ καὶ τότε ἐς τὸν Ἡρακλέα, ὥς ἀποκτείνει μὲν τὸν αἰτὸν ὃς ἐν τῷ Κανκάσῳ τὸν Προμηθεά ἐλύπει, ἐξέλοιτο δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν Προμηθεά ἐκ τῶν δεσμῶν. τελευταῖα δὲ ἐν τῇ γραφῇ Πενθεσίλειά τε ἀφιεῖσα τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ Ἀχιλλεὺς ἀνέχων ἐστὶν αὐτήν· καὶ Ἑσπερίδες δύο φέρουσι τὰ μῆλα ὧν ἐπιτετράφθαι λέγονται τὴν φρουράν. Πάναϊνος μὲν δὴ οὗτος ἀδελφός τε ἦν Φειδίου καὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἀθήνησιν ἐν Ποικίλῃ τὸ Μαραθῶνι ἔργον ἐστὶ γεγραμμένον.

At Olympia there are fences made in the form of walls and serving as shutters. The shutter opposite the doors of these fences has only been painted blue; the other parts have paintings by Panainos. One of them shows Atlas supporting heaven and earth; Herakles is standing next to him wanting to take over Atlas' burden. Furthermore, there are Theseus and Peirithoos, and Hellas and Salamis. Salamis holds in her hand the ornament made for the top of a ship's bow. Furthermore, one of Herakles' deeds, the Nemean lion, Ajax's unlawful act against Kassandra, Oinomaos' daughter Hippodameia and her mother and Prometheus still bound in fetters, while Herakles approaches him. For it is also said that Herakles killed the eagle who tormented Prometheus in Caucasus, and freed Prometheus himself from the fetters. The last painting shows Penthesileia expiring and Achilles holding her in his arms. And two Hesperids carry the apples which they had to keep. This Panainos was a brother of Pheidias and there is a painting of Marathon by him in Athens inside the Stoa Poikile.¹⁰

We can deduce that there were three sets of three stone panels surrounding the small space in front of the cult statue. The paintings adorned the outer sides, namely those seen by people who entered the naos. Herakles was the protagonist in the first, two women are shown in the last of the trios, the scenes in the middle have no single theme in common. It is a matter of discussion whether these scenes formed a coherent iconographical

⁸ Pliny, NH 35.54 (= SQ 1094; Recueil Milliet 1985, no. 167).

¹⁰ The last work is also mentioned by Pliny, NH 35.57 (= Recueil Milliet 1985, no. 164).

⁹ Paus. 5.11.4-6 (= SQ 696; Recueil Milliet 1985, no. 166).

programme. Wilhelm Völcker-Janssen published a very plausible analysis in which he shows how the ideology of the Sophists determined the tenor. In this view, men should respect the limits of their domain, as shown by the mythical examples. Zeus, the deity of the temple, did not act in these stories, but symbolised the rules human-kind had to respect. The hieratic pose of the cult statue and the distance between it and the viewer expressed this notion. When the winning athletes received their crown just in front of the statue, they were exposed to these values. The decoration was adapted to this special function of the temple and its significance was tied to this specific context.¹¹

Panainos is also mentioned because of the use of a peculiar technique he used to decorate the interior walls of a temple of Athena in Elis:¹²

Elide aedis est Minervae in qua frater Phidiae Panaenus tectorium induxit lacte et croco subactum, ut ferunt; ideo, si teratur hodie in eo saliva pollice odorem croci saporemque reddit.

At Elis there is a temple of Minerva where it is said that the brother of Pheidias, Panainos, used plaster treated with milk and saffron; therefore, even today if you rub saliva with your thumb on that stucco it gives the smell and taste of saffron.

Olympia's Temple of Zeus and the Parthenon in Athens are examples of the most expensive category of temples.¹³ They form an exception in comparison with the more numerous (and now largely lost) temples constructed with cheaper materials like wood and mud brick and decorated with plaster and painting. This is also true for most of the Etruscan and Italic temples of the Archaic and Republican times, their foundations and terracotta revetments often represent the only remains that can be studied.

If we may believe Plutarch's *Life of Themistokles*, this Athenian politician restored the Telesterion in the Attic village of Phlyai, which had been destroyed by the Persians.¹⁴ Themistokles forged a relationship with the family of the Lykomidae, who venerated Demeter. The poet Simonides, a friend of Themistokles, composed an epigram on his behalf. Plutarch tells that the *pastas* contained paintings:¹⁵

ὅτι μέντοι τοῦ Λυκομιδῶν γένους μετεῖχε, δηλὸν ἐστὶ· τὸ γὰρ Φλυῆσι τελεστήριον, ὅπερ ἦν Λυκομιδῶν κοινόν, ἐμπρησθὲν ὑπὸ τῶν βαρβάρων αὐτὸς ἐπεσκεύασε καὶ γραφαῖς ἐκόσμησεν, ὡς Σιμωνίδης ἱστορήκεν.

But it is clear that he was member of the Lykomidae family, for he restored the mystery shrine at Phlyai, which was a common property of the Lykomidae, when it had been burnt down by the barbarians, and he embellished it with paintings, as Simonides has told us [fr. 222 B⁴].

It is reported that the paintings remained visible for a long time:¹⁶

ὁ δὲ Ἀπόλλων οὗτός ἐστιν ᾧ τὰ Θαργῆλια ἄγουσι, καὶ διασφάζεται Φλυῆσι ἐν τῷ δαφνηφορείῳ γραφὴ περὶ τούτων.

¹¹ For all sources cited hereafter see also *Recueil Milliet* 1985, nos. 165-167.

¹² Pliny, *NH* 36.177 (= *SQ* 1097; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 168: where this type of technique is referred to). See Koch 2000, 28 on this technique.

¹³ Boersma 1970, 166-200 gives a useful list of most temples of the sixth and fifth centuries BC, also indicating the presence of possible decorations. As to the porticus of the Telesterion,

stucco decoration on the stairs and walls is known from the time of the Peisistratides (p. 185).

¹⁴ Bloedow 2005, 22, esp. note 15.

¹⁵ Plut., *Themistocles* 1.4 (= *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 192c); cf. the thorough commentary in the edition by Carena et al. 1983, 223-225 (with bibl.); Boersma 1970, 197.

¹⁶ Athen. 10.424f (= *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 192d).

That is the Apollo, for whom they hold the Thargelia and in the Daphnophoreion at Phlyai, is still extant a painting with that theme.

Since the work of art is referred to in a dialogue about drunkenness, there must exist some relationship with that vice, possibly on the basis of the Thargelia.¹⁷

We get a much clearer idea of the paintings from a third-century Christian author, Hippolytos. He reports that Plutarch had described the decorations elsewhere, but what he recounts seems to be a series of graffiti-like images. The described door of the temple could also contain a relief in wood or an incision or an inlaid niello image on bronze:¹⁸

ἔστι δὲ παστὰς ἐν αὐτῇ, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς παστάδος ἐγγεγραπται μέχρι σήμερον ἢ [τὰ τῶν] πάντων τῶν εἰρημένων λόγων ἰδέα. πολλὰ μὲν οὖν ἔστι τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς παστάδος ἐκείνης ἐγγεγραμμένα - περὶ ὧν καὶ Πλούταρχος ποιεῖται λόγους ἐν τοῖς πρὸς Ἐμπεδοκλέα δέκα βίβλοις -, ἔστι δὲ <ἐν> τοῖς πλείοσι <ἄλλοις> καὶ πρεσβύτης τις ἐγγεγραμμένος πολίος, περωτός, ἐντεταμένην ἔχων τὴν αἰσχύνην, γυναῖκα ἀποφεύγουσαν διώκων κυνοειδῆ. ἐπιγράφεται δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ πρεσβύτου· Φάος ῥυέτης, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς γυναικὸς †περεη† Φικόλα. ἔοικε δὲ εἶναι κατὰ τὸν <τῶν> Σηθιανῶν λόγον ὁ Φάος ῥυέτης τὸ φῶς, τὸ δὲ σκοτεινὸν ὕδωρ ἢ Φικόλα, τὸ δὲ ἐν μέσῳ τούτων διάστημα ἀρμονία πνεύματος <τοῦ> μεταξὺ τεταγμένου. τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τοῦ Φάο<υ> ῥυέτου τὴν ῥύσιν ἄνωθεν τοῦ φωτός, ὡς λέγουσι, δηλοῖ κάτω· ὥστε εὐλόγως ἂν τις εἴποι τοὺς Σηθιανούς ἐγγὺς που τελεῖν παρ' αὐτοῖς τὰ τῆς Μεγάλης Φλειασίων ὄργια.

There is in that spot a courtyard, in which until nowadays there are painted images of all things mentioned before. There are many paintings in this courtyard – they have also been discussed by Plutarch in his ten books against Empedocles – and amongst other [paintings] there is a bald old man with wings whose sex is erect and who pursues a fleeing, dog-like woman. Next to the old man is written Φάος ῥυέτης, next to the woman: †περεη† Φικόλα. According to the words of the Sethiani, Phaos Rhuetes is the light and Phikola the dark water, whereas the conjunction between them is the harmony of the breath that has been placed in the middle. The name Φάος ῥυέτης could indicate the stream of light from above, as they say, so that someone might rightly say that the Sethiani participate in the Orgies of the Great Goddess of Phlyai nearby, among themselves.

The term †περεη† Φικόλα is entirely unknown, it is not to be found in the LSJ and is probably a conjecture. Hippolytos explains the figures as symbols of the light and the dark water which is the harmony of the *pneuma*. Despite the ambiguity of this description the conclusion is that the decoration has a tenuous connection with the function of the building and the venerated deities, showing some facets of the cult.

In the Theseion at Athens, founded by Kimon in 476-475 as the last resting place of the remains of Theseus on the western side of the Agora (it could have been built earlier and been given a new function after the victory near Skyros), Mikon and Polygnotos painted large figurative scenes on three walls, which may be the three interior walls of the naos seen from the door in the fourth wall. The iconography seems to be the main reason why Pausanias describes them, apart from the artistic reputations of the artists.¹⁹

¹⁷ Scheibler 1994, 142-143 also mentions Paus. 6.6.11 but this text refers to Temesa.

¹⁸ It is a periphrasis by Hippolytos in his *Refutatio omnium haeresium* 5.20.6-7 (Sandbach 1967, 23, fragment 24 from *Eis Empedoklea*). The text is taken from Marcovich 1986, 194-195.

¹⁹ Paus. 1.17.2-3 (= SQ 1086; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 117). Barron 1972; Thomas 1976, 39, 50-51, 78, 80; Kasper-Butz 1990, 173-174; Walker 1995, 57-58; J. Neils, *Theseus, LIMC*

VII (1994) 939-940 (the painting at p. 940 no. 227). For the area not far from the Aglauros grotto on the East Slope of the Akropolis, see Walker 1995, 21-22; Hoepfner 1999, 227; Bloedow 2005, 32-33. Hölscher 1973, 61-62, 71-72 sketches the importance of Theseus as an Athenian hero. On the artists see U. Koch-Brinkmann, *Künstlerlexikon der Antike* 2 (2004) 272-274 (Polygnotos) and W. Ehrhardt, *ibid.* 82-84 (Mikon).

γραφαι δέ εἰσι πρὸς Ἀμαζόνας Ἀθηναῖοι μαχόμενοι. πεποιήται δέ σφισιν ὁ πόλεμος οὗτος καὶ τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ ἐπὶ τῇ ἀσπίδι καὶ τοῦ Ὀλυμπίου Διὸς ἐπὶ τῷ βάθρῳ. γέγραπται δὲ ἐν τῷ τοῦ Θησέως ἱερῷ καὶ ἡ Κενταύρων καὶ [ἡ] Λαπιθῶν μάχη· Θησεὺς μὲν οὖν ἀπεκτονῶς ἐστὶν ἤδη Κένταυρον, τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις ἐξ ἴσου καθέστηκεν ἔτι ἡ μάχη. τοῦ δὲ τρίτου τῶν τοίχων ἡ γραφή μὴ πυθομένοις ἂ λέγουσιν οὐ σαφής ἐστι, τὰ μὲν που διὰ τὸν χρόνον, τὰ δὲ Μίκων οὐ τὸν πάντα ἔγραψε λόγον. Μίνως ἡνίκα Θησέα καὶ τὸν ἄλλον στόλον τῶν παίδων ἤγεν ἐς Κρήτην, ἐρασθεὶς Περιβοίας, ὥς οἱ Θησεὺς μάλιστα ἠναντιοῦτο, καὶ ἄλλα ὑπὸ ὀργῆς ἀπέρριψεν ἐς αὐτὸν καὶ παῖδα οὐκ ἔφη Ποσειδῶνος εἶναι, ἐπεὶ <οὐ> δύνασθαι τὴν σφραγίδα, ἣν αὐτὸς φέρων ἔτυχεν, ἀφέντι ἐς θάλασσαν ἀνασῶσαί οἱ. Μίνως μὲν λέγεται ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἀφείναι τὴν σφραγίδα· Θησέα δὲ σφραγιδά τε ἐκείνην ἔχοντα καὶ στέφανον χρυσοῦν, Ἀμφιτρίτης δῶρον, ἀνελθεῖν λέγουσιν ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης.

There are paintings of the Athenians fighting against the Amazons. This war had also been depicted on the shield of the Athena [Parthenos] and the base of the Olympian Zeus. In the shrine of Theseus the battle of Centaurs and Lapiths has also been painted. Theseus has already killed a Centaur and for the others the fight is still a draw. The painting on the third wall is not clear to those who ignore the legend, on the one hand by the effects of time, on the other hand because Mikon has not painted the whole story. When Minos brought Theseus and the other young people to Crete, he fell in love with Periboia and while Theseus strongly opposed him, Minos accused him in anger and said that he was not the son of Poseidon. For he would not be able to bring back the signet ring Minos was then wearing when he threw it into the sea. It is said that after these words Minos flung the ring away. They say that Theseus rose up from the sea with that ring and a golden wreath, a gift of Amphitrite.

Pausanias goes on to mention the alternative stories about Theseus and it is not clear whether he alludes to some representations. However, the paintings described clearly reflect the dedicatee and formed a real thematic cycle. The first wall showed the battle between the Athenians and the Amazons in Attica, the second one the Centauromachy, and the third wall contained a rather obscure episode, never represented in the works of art hitherto known, namely a conflict between Minos and Theseus before their arrival in Crete. The relationship between the 'occupant' of the temple, the patron and the scenes is clear: the images stress the greatness of the city and of Theseus.²⁰ Kimon was the man who had fought for peace after the Persian Wars here represented, as so often in the fifth century BC, in the metaphor of the Centauromachy and the Amazonomachy. With the third theme he (or Theseus in his place) announced Athens' thalassocracy. Only the most outstanding and most famous artists of the time were good enough to immortalize this iconographic programme. The temple became a victory monument for the great Kimon himself and for the city just like, some decades later, the Periklean Parthenon would be for Perikles in a much more spectacular way.

Polygnotos and Mikon also executed murals in the Anakeion, a temple for the Dioskouroi on the northern slope of the Akropolis of Athens. After mentioning statuary groups of the twins and their sons Pausanias briefly describes the decorations:²¹

²⁰ On Kimon and Athens see Bloedow 2005. On the Minos episode Kasper-Butz 1990, 173: the find of the ring was hailed by contemporary authors. Cf. Moreno 1987, 61-65. On this theme in iconography see Ciardiello 2005.

²¹ Paus. 1.18.1 (= SQ 1058; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 118). Reinach observes in a note that Brunn and Overbeck situated the painting in the Theseion, namely on the fourth wall.

Cf. the commentary by F. Chamoux in the Budé edition of Pausanias, vol. I (Paris 1992) 184-185: the ubication would correspond with that of the Theseion. The theme of the Dioskouroi and the Argonauts had been previously depicted on a religious building, i.e. two metopes on the Treasury of Sikyon in Delphi around 560 BC.

ἐνταῦθα Πολύγνωτος μὲν ἔχοντα ἐς αὐτοὺς ἔγραψε γάμον τῶν θυγατέρων τῶν Λευκίππου, Μίκων δὲ τοὺς μετὰ Ἰάσονος ἐς Κόλχους πλεύσαντας· καὶ οἱ τῆς γραφῆς ἡ σπουδὴ μάλιστα ἐς Ἄκαστον καὶ τοὺς ἵππους ἔχει τοὺς Ἀκάστου.

Here Polygnotos painted, as a pertaining theme, the wedding of the daughters of Leukippos; Mikon painted the men who sailed with Jason to Kolchos. The main points of interest of the painting are Akastos and the horses of Akastos.

It is interesting that Pausanias points out the connection of the heroes venerated here and the adventures they were involved in, indicating that the scenes were chosen for these reasons.

Pausanias also describes some sanctuaries for Dionysos in the vicinity of the Theatre of Dionysos. The fifth-century Temple of Dionysos on the slope of the Acropolis possessed a very large chryselephantine cult statue of the god by Alkamenes. Its interior contained programmatic paintings showing stories from the life of the god. Pausanias describes them at length:²²

γραφαὶ δὲ αὐτόθι· Διόνυσος ἐστὶ ἀνάγων Ἥφαιστον ἐς οὐρανόν· λέγεται δὲ καὶ τάδε ὑπὸ Ἑλλήνων, ὥς Ἥρα ῥίψαι γενόμενον Ἥφαιστον, ὃ δὲ οἱ μνησικακῶν πέμψαι δῶρον χρυσοῦν θρόνον ἀφανεῖς δεσμοὺς ἔχοντα, καὶ τὴν μὲν ἐπεῖτε ἐκαθίζετο δεδέσθαι, θεῶν δὲ τῶν ἄλλων οὐδενὶ τὸν μὲν Ἥφαιστον ἐθέλγειν πείθεσθαι, Διόνυσος δὲ - μάλιστα γὰρ ἐς τοῦτον πιστὰ ἦν Ἥφαιστῳ - μεθύσας αὐτὸν ἐς οὐρανὸν ἤγαγε· ταῦτά τε δὴ γεγραμμένα εἰσι καὶ Πενθεὺς καὶ Λυκοῦργος ὧν ἐς Διόνυσον ὕβρισαν διδόντες δίκας, Ἀριάδνη δὲ καθεύδουσα καὶ Θησεὺς ἀναγόμενος καὶ Διόνυσος ἡκῶν ἐς τῆς Ἀριάδνης τὴν ἀρπαγὴν.

There are paintings showing Dionysos bringing Hephaistos to heaven. The Greeks tell the following story. Hera had thrown down Hephaistos after his birth and he, hating her, sent her as a gift a golden throne with invisible chains. When she sat down, she was bound. None of the gods was capable of persuading Hephaistos, apart from Dionysos – for Hephaistos trusted him very much. He made him drunk and brought him to heaven. In addition to these scenes there are also Pentheus and Lykourgos punished for the offences they had done to Dionysos, a sleeping Ariadne and Theseus departing [from Naxos], as well as Dionysos coming to take Ariadne away.

The first scene is well-known in figurative arts, especially in Archaic vase painting, and it might be true that Pausanias had to explain the lame god riding on a mule to his readers, as no contemporary parallels were available. In contrast, the other figures firmly belonged to the repertoire of imperial art and here seem to form a series of framed images depicting consecutive episodes from Dionysos' life. Theseus, singled out here, would have had a special place by virtue of his obvious connections with Athens.

Plutarch speaks of γράφαι which cost 90 talents and were placed in the Temple of Athena in Plataea after the Battle of Marathon:²³

οὕτω δὲ διαλλαγόντες ἐξεῖλον ὀγδοήκοντα τάλαντα τοῖς Πλαταιεῦσιν, ἀφ' ὧν τὸ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἀνωκοδόμησαν ἱερὸν καὶ τὸ ἔδος ἔστησαν καὶ γραφαῖς τὸν νεὼν διεκόσμησαν, αἱ μέχρι νῦν ἀκμάζουσιν διαμένουσιν, ἔστησαν δὲ τρόπαιον ἰδίᾳ μὲν Λακεδαιμόνιοι χωρὶς δ' Ἀθηναῖοι.

²² Paus. 1.20.3 (= *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 392, with a datation to the period of Lykourgos, 338-326, on p. 308 note 2).

²³ Plut., *Aristides* 20.3 (SQ, no. 636; Muller-Dufeu, no. 803).

Settling the conflict in this way they took eighty talents from the [booty to give to the] inhabitants of Plataea with which they built the sanctuary of Athena, erected the cult statue and embellished the temple with paintings, which up to now remain in an excellent state, and the Spartans erected a trophy for themselves, as did the Athenians separately.

Pausanias gives some extra information, namely the names of two famous artists, the themes depicted, and the location:²⁴

γραφαὶ δὲ εἰσὶν ἐν τῷ ναῷ Πολυγνώτου μὲν Ὀδυσσεὺς τοὺς μνηστήρας ἤδη κατειργασμένος, Ὀνασία δὲ Ἀδράστου καὶ Ἀργείων ἐπὶ Θῆβας ἢ προτέρα στρατεία. αὐταὶ μὲν δὴ εἰσὶν ἐπὶ τοῦ προνάου τῶν τοίχων αἱ γραφαί.

The paintings in the temple show Odysseus after slaying the suitors, by Polygnotos, and the first campaign of Adrastus and the Argivians against Thebes, by Onasias. These paintings are on the walls of the entrance hall.

The mention of Polygnotos and Onasias, omitted by Plutarch, might be a local attribution made to enhance the importance of the paintings. The place where these paintings were located, namely outside the cella, could imply that they were executed as frescoes and not as wooden pinakes. The topics chosen illustrated the vengeance of the Greeks against the Persians (Odysseus against the suitors) and the collaboration of all Greeks against a common enemy, here the Kadmeioi at Thebes who had penetrated the house of the Greeks.²⁵ Athena Areia is not represented at all, but she has an implicit connection with the Theban saga by giving permission to bury the fallen soldiers in Attica.²⁶

Furthermore, there were paintings by Polygnotos at Thespiiai, restored by Pausias with a thin brush after the victory over the city by Alexander the Great in 335 BC. Their subject is unknown:²⁷

Pamphilus quoque, Apellis praeceptor, non pinxisse solum encausta, sed etiam docuisse traditur Pausian Sicyonium, primum in hoc genere nobilem. Bryetis filius hic fuit eiusdemque discipulus. pinxit et ipse penicillo parietes Thespiis, cum reficerentur quondam a Polygnoto picti.

Similarly, Pamphilos, the teacher of Apelles, would not have painted only encaustics,²⁸ but it is reported that he instructed Pausias from Sicyon, who was the first famous one in this genre. This son of Bryes was his student. He personally painted with a thin brush the walls at Thespiiai that, once painted by Polygnotos, at that time were in need of restoration.²⁹

Pliny is the only source to transmit the name of Aristokleides as the man who adorned the exterior walls of the Temple of Apollo in Delphi:³⁰

²⁴ Paus. 9.4.2 (= SQ 1059; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 123; for the observation about frescoes).

²⁵ Thomas 1976, 69-70, 73, 78-79. Cf. Scheibler 1994, 143 who speaks about a paradigmatic intention of the old sagas.

²⁶ Moreno 1987, 43-45. Cf. Scheibler 1994, 143. On Onasias R. Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon der Antike* 2 (2004) 154-155.

²⁷ Pliny, *NH* 35.123 (= SQ 1062 and 1760; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 124). For Pausias Koch 2000, 104; I. Scheibler, *Künstlerlexikon der Antike* 2 (2004) 199-200.

²⁸ On encaustics Koch 2000, 41-46.

²⁹ The subjunctive *reficerentur* seems to suggest that Pausias would not like to touch the great works of Polygnotos, but had to, as they were in decay. Otherwise no subjunctive would seem necessary.

³⁰ Pliny, *NH* 35.138 (= SQ 2151; *Recueil Milliet* 1985, no. 535). Cf. G. Bröker, *Künstlerlexikon der Antike* 1 (2001) 86. Scheibler 1994, 141 and fig. 66 (artist's impression of these decorations).

hactenus indicatis proceribus in utroque genere non silebuntur et primis proximi: Aristoclides qui pinxit aedem Apollinis Delphis.

Until now I have pointed out those who were extant in both genres of painting [pencil and encaustic painting; see previous quotation], but now those who follow them must not pass in silence: Aristokleides who painted the temple of Apollo at Delphi [etc.].

The building phase to which the works of Aristokleides belong must be the second one, namely after 330 when the shrine was rebuilt after having been destroyed by an earthquake in 373 BC. Polygnotos had decorated the previous temple.³¹

Greeks adorned the walls of the Athena temple at Syracuse with paintings, probably on wooden panels and therefore outside the scope of this study, by order of the city's tyrant Agathokles. We know about their existence thanks to a severe accusation of Verres by Cicero in his second *Verrina*:³²

pugna erat equestris Agathocli regis in tabulis picta praeclare; iis autem tabulis interiores templi parietes vestiebantur. Nihil erat ea pictura nobilius, nihil Syracusis quod magis visendum putaretur. Has tabulas M. Marcellus cum omnia victoria illa sua profana fecisset, tamen religione impeditus non attigit; iste, cum illa propter diurnam pacem fidelitatemque populi Syracusani sacra religiosaque accepisset, omnis eas tabulas abstulit, parietes quorum ornatus tot saecula manserant, tot bella effugerant, nudos ac deformatos reliquit.

There was a cavalry battle of king Agathokles excellently painted on panels; the interior walls of the temple [of Athena] were clad with those panels. There was nothing nobler than this painting, nothing that was thought to be more worth seeing at Syracuse. M. Marcellus did not touch these panels, restrained by religion, although he had profaned all things by that victory, but this man here, although he had accepted all those holy and religious things because of the long peace and fidelity of the people of Syracuse, took off all those panels which had formed the adornment of the walls for so many centuries and had escaped so many wars, leaving the walls nude and deformed.

Agathokles had assumed power after the death of Alexander the Great in the East and used these representations to support his claim on Sicily. These works of art, therefore, were important for him personally and for the prestige of his city. The decorations were located in the cella. Apparently Verres could take the paintings off easily and carry them to Rome as illegal booty. It is unknown where they were exhibited thereafter, but the accusation implies that Verres had not dedicated them in one of Rome's temples or public buildings. As a matter of fact, it was not the first time that a commander had stolen precious paintings from a sacred space.

Two sources to be explored within the framework of this study are inscriptions and papyri. Inscriptions mention the presence of paintings in two temples in Delos. An inventory of temples and their possessions, dated to 156/155 BC, reveals that the Aphrodision, the Temple of Aphrodite, contained nine painted ceiling panels

³¹ Pliny, *NH* 35.59: *hic Delphis aedem pinxit* (he painted the temple in Delphi). As to Delphi, I leave out the decorations in the Lesche of the Knidians, also by Polygnotos (Paus. 10.25-31; see Scheibler 1994, 52-54, 143-144; Hellmann 2002, 254, compared with painted stoai in Athens, Sikyon

and Sparta).

³² Cic., *Ver.* 2.4.122. Cf. Scheibler 1994, 141; Holliday 2002, 78. On Marcellus and Syracuse Östenberg 2009, 80-81, 208-211; Miles 2008, 61-68, 115-116. Miles 2008 on the *Verrinae*.

in the prostoon: πίνακας ὀροφικοὺς ἐννέα. Their presence in a type of entrance room implies that these were wooden panels that were set into shallow niches or frames.³³

A dedicatory inscription speaks of the redecoration of the Serapeion C by Theophilos:³⁴

Θεόφιλος Θεοφίλου
Ἀντιοχεὺς μελανηφόρος τὴν κονίασιν
τοῦ παστοφορίου καὶ
τὴν γραφὴν τῶν
τε τοίχων καὶ τῆς
ὀροφῆς καὶ τὴν ἐ[γ-]
καυσιν τῶν θυρῶν
καὶ τὸν προμύχθους
τούς ἐν τοῖς τοίχοις
καὶ τοὺς ἐπὶ αὐτοῖς σανίδας
ἀνέθηκεν Σαράπιδι, Ἰσιδι,
Ἀνούβιδι, Ἄρποχράτει,
ἐπὶ Ἰερέως Σελεύκου
τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου
Ῥαμνουσίου.

Theophilos, son of Theophilos, from Antioch, melanophoros, has dedicated to Sarapis, Isis, Anubis and Harpokrates the whitewash of the pastophorion and the painting on the walls and the ceiling and the encaustic decoration of the doors and the bearing beams in the walls and the wooden planks above them, during the priesthood of Seleukos, son of Andronikos, from Rhamnous.

As to dating, the year 112/111 can be deduced from the last three lines. The pastophorion must be an assembly room for the cult assistants within the sanctuary. Apparently the interior walls were a simple white while the wooden elements were more colourful. The dress of the *melanophoros* – literally: wearing black – indicates a function and the membership of a specific cultic association.³⁵

ROMAN TEMPLES

Most descriptions of Roman mural decorations in ancient sources are concerned with mid-Republican temples, either constructed and painted or re-decorated after a triumph. These paintings belong to what was called *pictura triumphalis*, the genre we have just encountered in Syracuse. The literary testimonies are mostly short and the single decorations are almost never recorded in more than one source. Fabius Pictor is the great exception to this rule, as we will see. In the following discussion they are presented in a chronological order.³⁶

³³ Durrbach and Roussel 1935, no. 1417, side A, column 2, lines 17-18 at p. 59 as element in an inventory list; quoted in Alabe 2002, 258. See extensively Prêtre 2002, 199-238. There is confusion about this 'Aphrodision', as there were two of them (Prêtre 2002, 120, 232). Cf. Hellmann 2002, 255.

³⁴ Roussel and Launey 1937, 223-224 nos. 2085-2086. No. 2085 was found in the Serapeion itself in 1881, 2086 was brought to Italy in the fifteenth century and is now in the

Museo Maffiano at Verona (= Ritti 1981, 59-60 no. 24). The texts are identical. Partly quoted in Alabe 2002, 258. As to Serapeion C, this must be the largest of the three Serapeia known at Delos, see Prêtre 2002, 233.

³⁵ See Ritti 1981, no 46.

³⁶ Cf. Hölscher 1978, 344-346; Hölscher 1980, 352-355; Holliday 2002; Östenberg 2009, 248-261; S. Tortorella in Bragantini 2010, 113-125.

In the section about Roman painting Pliny starts with the introduction of wall painting in Italic temples outside Rome. One might think of the famous terracotta revetments, often painted in many colours:³⁷

iam enim absoluta erat pictura etiam in Italia. Exstant certe hodieque antiquiores urbe picturae Ardeae in aedibus sacris, quibus equidem nullas aequae miror, tam longo aeuo durantes in orbitate tecti ueluti recentes. Similiter Lanuvi, ubi Atalante et Helena comminus pictae sunt nudae ab eodem artifice, utraque excellentissima forma, sed altera ut virgo, ne ruinis quidem templi concussae. Gaius princeps tollere eas conatus est libidine accensus si tectorii natura permississet. Durant et Caere antiquiores et ipsae fatebiturque quisquis eas diligenter aestimaue- rit nullam artium celerius consummatam cum Iliacis temporibus non fuisse eam appareat.

Painting had already reached perfection even in Italy. Today there are surely paintings older than [the existence of] Rome at Ardea in holy shrines that I admire even more than others as they have been preserved for such a long time, as if they were painted recently, although they lack the protection of a roof. The same is true for Lanuvium where Atalante and Helen have been painted by the same artist, side-by-side, nude and both of beautiful shape, the former being shown as a virgin. They were even not damaged by the collapse of the temple. The emperor Gaius tried to cut them out, burning with desire for them, if only the nature of plaster had allowed it. At Caere there are even older paintings and a person who carefully examines them will confess that none of the arts was brought to perfection more quickly, since it becomes clear that this art had not existed in the times of Troy.

The negative story about Gaius Caligula is the reason Pliny mentions the nude ladies and one might wonder how these heroines were inserted in the decorative system. Probably they were depicted as single, standing figures in independent panels next to each other, displaying their female charms. They might have had some attributes that made them recognisable. It is less plausible to presume that they formed part of figural scenes in which the women play the main rôle, namely the Rape of Helen and the Hunt of the Caledonian Boar. A nude Atalante must refer to the athlete she is in some stories, namely in her wrestling contest with Peleus or the race against Hippomenes. Helen's nudity would of course display her quality as the most beautiful woman on earth.³⁸

In a later chapter in the same book Pliny records the painter of the murals in the temple of Juno in Ardea, Plautius Marcus, who is praised in a short epigram on his work:³⁹

deceat non sileri et Ardeatis templi pictorem, praesertim ciuitate donatum ibi et carmine quod est in ipsa pictura his uersibus:
Dignis dignu' loco picturis condecorauit
reginae Iunonis supremi coniugis templum
Plautius Marcus; cluet Asia lata esse oriundus,
quem nunc et post semper ob artem hanc Ardea laudat.
Eaque sunt scripta antiquis litteris Latinis.

³⁷ Pliny, *NH* 35.17.

³⁸ For nude or scarcely dressed Atalantes in predominately Greek vase painting showing her involved in similar activities see: J. Boardman, *Atalante*, *LIMC* II (1984) 945-947 nos. 60-89. This particular painting referred to in the text is listed on p. 948, no. 93, without explanation. In the commentary (p. 949) Boardman suggests that Atalante participated

in a beauty contest, as we know from Etruscan images. In this context, the explanation in no. 93, that our scene might be Etruscan, seems more suitable, but I do not think that it is the only explanation. I. Krauskopf, Elina, *LIMC* IV (1988) no. 41 also mentions this painting as an Etruscan work of art.

³⁹ Pliny, *NH* 35.115-116 (= *SQ* 2378).

We must not forget the painter of the temple in Ardea, especially because he obtained citizenship there and thanks to a poem that is in the picture itself and runs as follows:

He decorated a worthy place with worthy paintings,
The temple of Queen Juno, wife of the highest spouse:
Plautius Marcus, purportedly born in wide Asia
Whom Ardea now and later always does praise for this art.

These lines are written in ancient Latin characters.

As to chronology Pliny gives no indications about the age of the temples mentioned.⁴⁰ They must be more or less from the same period as the oldest example in Rome, the Temple of Ceres, built on the northern slope of the Aventine next to the Circus Maximus after a *votum* by Aulus Postumius Albinus just before the Battle of Lake Regillus (499 or 496 BC). It is reported by Pliny that Greek artists from Magna Graecia made both the terracotta relief decorations and paintings:⁴¹

plastae laudatissimi fuere Damophilus et Gorgasus, iidem pictores, qui Cereris aedem Romae ad circum maximum utroque genere artis suae excoluerant, uersibus inscriptis Graece, quibus significarent ab dextra opera Damophili esse, ab laeua Gorgasi. Ante hanc aedem Tuscanica omnia in aedibus fuisse auctor est Varro, et ex hac, cum reficeretur, crustas parietum excisas tabuliis marginatis inclusas esse, item signa ex fastigiis dispersa.

Damophilos and Gorgasos were highly praised terracotta makers who were also painters. They adorned the Temple of Ceres in Rome next to the Circus Maximus with both forms of their art, with verses in Greek written next to them in which they pointed out that the work on the right was Damophilos', that on the left by Gorgasos.⁴² Varro informs us that before this shrine everything in temples was Tuscan and it is reported that, when it was refurbished, wall pieces were cut out from here and framed, whereas the statues on the façade were lost.

The text does not give details of the decorations, but implies that the artists could have painted polychrome decorations on all terracotta elements, including the revetment plaques. Apparently, wall decorations were later cut out to be preserved in frames like precious works of art. The three-dimensional figures in the pediment and on the roof must have been lost. In the eyes of Vitruvius the building was old-fashioned, but apparently it was not an Italic temple, as we can deduce from Pliny's remarks.⁴³ The suggestion of the encyclopaedist about the Tuscan character of its predecessors might mean that panels were a new element.

There are four testimonies on the paintings in the cella of the Temple of Salus on the Quirinal hill dating to 304 BC. The reason is that the artist was none other but the Roman *eques* Fabius Pictor, who also signed them. Cicero could have personally seen the paintings he briefly refers to in his *Tusculanae disputationes* 1.2.4:

⁴⁰ Cf. Isager 1991, 118-119.

⁴¹ Pliny, *NH* 35.154 (= *SQ* 616). On the temple see F. Coarelli, *LTUR* I (1993) 260-261. Here a provenance from Tarentum or (more probably) Syracuse is suggested. The written texts are like those on the Treasury of Siphnos or Sikyon in Delphi (so Coarelli). On the paintings Roncalli 1965, 55; Koch 2000, 14.

⁴² Koch 2000, 14 discusses the division of labour. See the epi-

gram of Simonides cited in note 78.

⁴³ Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.3.5 mentions the terracotta statues. In sum, the decoration might have looked like that in the Temple of Mater Matuta in the S. Omobono area (see G. Pisani Sartorio, *LTUR* II (1995) 281-285, esp. 282). Bergmann 1995, 100 sees the framed paintings as art objects to circulate and to be exposed in a *pinacotheca*. Koch 2000, 71-72 discusses the text at length.

an censemus si Fabio nobilissimo homini laudi datum esset quod pingeret non multos etiam apud nos futuros Polyklitos et Parrhasios fuisse? Honos alit artes omnesque incenduntur ad studia gloria iacentque ea semper quae apud quosque improbantur.

Or, if the very famous Fabius received praise for the fact that he painted, do we have to think that not many Polykleitoi and Parrhasioi were to exist even among us? Honour feeds the arts and inspires all to work hard for glory, and things that are rejected by everyone always remain aside.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus might also have known the monument since he came to Rome in 30 BC, where he lived for some twenty years. The Greek scholar writes:⁴⁴

αἱ ἐντοίχιοι γραφαὶ ταῖς τε γραμμαῖς πάννυ ἀκριβεῖς ἦσαν· καὶ τοῖς μίγμασιν ἡδεῖται, παντὸς ἀπηλλαγμένον ἔχουσαι τοῦ καλουμένου ῥώπου τὸ ἀνθηρόν.

The wall paintings were very clear thanks to the lines. They were also agreeable, their freshness being entirely free of the so-called petty wares [rhapos].

Valerius Maximus discusses the reason for the presence of the artist's signature:⁴⁵

illa uero etiam a claris uiris interdum ex humillimis rebus petita est: nam quid sibi uoluit C. Fabius nobilissimus ciuis, qui, cum in aede Salutis, quam C. Iunius Bubulcus dedicauerat, parietes pinxisset, nomen his suum inscripsit? id enim demum ornamentum familiae consulatibus et sacerdotiis et triumphis celeberrimae deerat. ceterum sordido studio deditum ingenium qualemcumque illum laborem suum silentio oblitterari noluit, uidelicet Phidiae secutus exemplum, qui clypeo Mineruae effigiem suam inclusit, qua conuulsa tota operis conligatio solueretur.

But this was even requested by famous men for very modest reasons: for, what did the noblest citizen C. Fabius aim at by inserting his name when he painted the walls of the temple of Salus that had been dedicated by C. Iunius Bubulcus? Exactly this feature failed in the lustre of the family, very well known for its consulates, sacral offices and triumphs. Moreover, his genius, dedicated to a sordid job, did not want this work of his, whatever its worth, to be subject to oblivion; he followed in a way Pheidias, who had inserted his portrait on the shield of Minerva [Athena Parthenos] but if it were destroyed, the whole structure of the work would disintegrate.

Pliny writes the following in his chapter on early paintings in Rome:⁴⁶

apud Romanos quoque honos mature huic arti contigit siquidem cognomina ex ea Pictorum traxerunt Fabii clarissimae gentis, princepsque eius cognominis ipse aedem Salutis pinxit anno urbis conditae CCCCL, quae pictura durauit ad nostram memoriam aede ea Claudii principatu exusta.

The Romans also fully bestowed honour to this art, because the Fabii, a very famous family, took their surname 'Pictor' from it and the first of them with that surname painted the Temple of Salus in the year 450 from the

⁴⁴ Dion.Hal., *ant.* 16.3.2 (excerpt; the place is not mentioned; SQ no. 2374). The word ῥῶπος, translated in LSJ as 'petty', has been frequently discussed: see Rouveret 1989, 272-278, who suggests a mix of lurid and/or ugly colours. Cf. Koch 2000, 95-98 and 186 (translates the word with 'banal').

About the temple: Ziolkowski 1992, 144-148; F. Coarelli, *LTUR* IV (1999) 229-230; Holliday 2002, 31. On Greek texts written next to the figures see also Thomas 1995.

⁴⁵ Val. Max. 8.14.6 (= SQ 2373).

⁴⁶ Pliny, *NH* 35.19 (= SQ 2372).