

Portrait Bust of a Young Lady of the Time of Justinian

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THE METROPOLITAN Museum has recently acquired the marble bust of a young lady (Figures 1–5, 8, 10) said to originate in the region of Constantinople.¹ The bust is made of very fine-grained white marble, the texture closely resembling that of a variety of marble found in several quarries in the neighborhood of Dokimion in Phrygia.² Its total height is 53.0 cm. (20 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.). The head measures from chin to crown 22.0 cm. (8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.), and the face (from chin to hairline) is 15.5 cm. (6 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.) high. The width of the bust at the shoulders is 27.5 cm. (10 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.), that of the head at the level of the eyes (including the hair) is 18.0 cm. (7 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.). Head and bust were carved originally from one block of marble. When found, the head was broken diagonally across the lower part of the face, through the mouth. The two sections have been joined to make a perfect fit, and only a few missing chips along the break have been filled in. The bridge and tip of the nose are missing. Some insignificant chips are missing from various parts of the head, neck, and drapery, and the surface

of the bonnet has flaked off here and there. There are some incrustations on parts of the garment, the hand, the neck, and the head, and there are also a few root marks. The entire surface has been finely polished, giving the marble an alabaster-like sheen. Even the top of the scroll, which the lady is holding, the bonnet, and the garment at the back have this polished finish. Only around the bottom edge of the bust and on the underside of the bonnet at the back do some rasp marks appear.

The bust is cut at the right side so that the right shoulder and the entire right arm are missing. At the bottom, it is cut in line with the lower end of the scroll. Both these cuts were made with a saw, so they cannot be accidental breaks. At the back, the bust is hollowed out, with a shallow protuberance left in the middle toward the lower edge. The surface of the back, both of the hollowed part and of the framing edge, has been treated with a fine chisel. In addition, there are marks of a coarser tool on the bottom edge. On the underside,

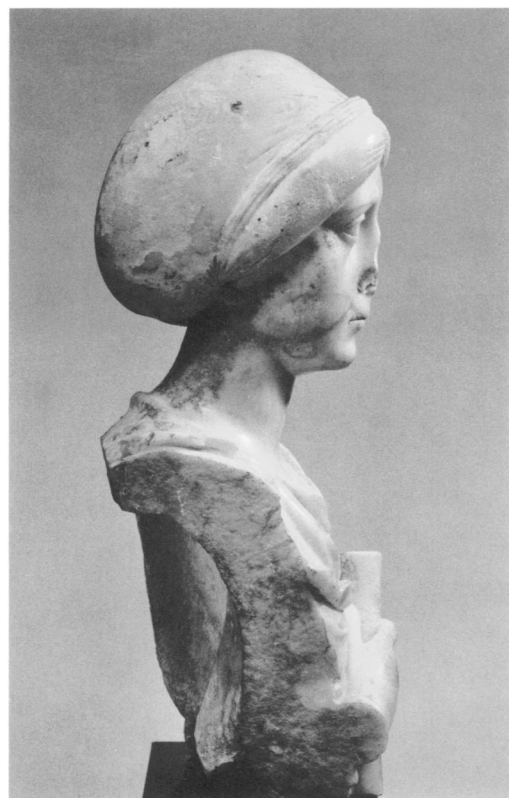
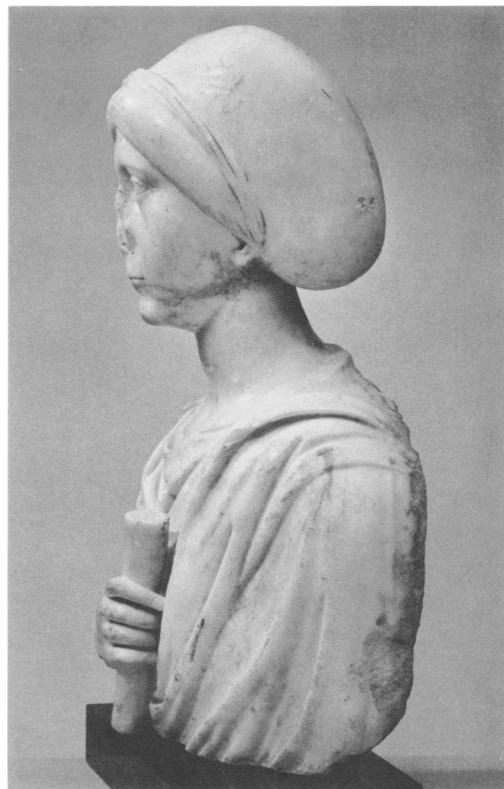
1. I am indebted to Mr. William H. Forsyth, Research Curator in Charge of the Medieval Department and The Cloisters for entrusting me with the publication of the piece. He gave me all available information and all facilities for an examination of the original sculpture, and he had the photographs reproduced here made by the Museum's photographer. See also his article "Byzantine Bust of a Woman," *Burlington Magazine* 109 (1967) pp. 304–306, figs. 55, 56. I should also like to express my thanks to the various colleagues and photographic archives that contributed the

photographs of comparative material, especially to Dr. H. Sichtermann of the German Archaeological Institute in Rome.

2. Michael Ballance (Eton College) kindly sent me a sample from one of these quarries, and the Metropolitan Museum had this analyzed together with a sample from the bust. The result of the analysis is the certainty that the two samples do not come from the same quarry. This does, however, not exclude the possibility that the bust was made of marble from one of the other quarries in the neighborhood.



FIGURE 1
Portrait bust of a
young lady. The
Metropolitan Mu-
seum of Art,
Cloisters Fund,
66.45



FIGURES 2-5
Views of the
Metropolitan Mu-
seum's portrait bust



FIGURE 6
Bust of a woman from a sarcophagus in Tarragona. From A. Garcia y Bellido, *Esculturas Romanas de España y Portugal*, no. 274, pl. 227

a little behind the lower end of the scroll, is a deep circular hole (more than 3 cm. [$1\frac{1}{8}$ in.] deep) with the remains of a metal pin still in position.

The bust cannot have had its present shape originally. First of all, there must have been a foot. As it is now, we must assume that after the surviving part was sawn off it was fixed to some kind of base by means of a dowel. When and why the right arm and shoulder were sawn off is difficult to conjecture: we will have to return to this question when we have examined the sculpture in more detail.

The bust is the portrait of a young lady. She wears a tunic³ and a mantle that is draped over the greater part of her body and envelops the left arm completely.

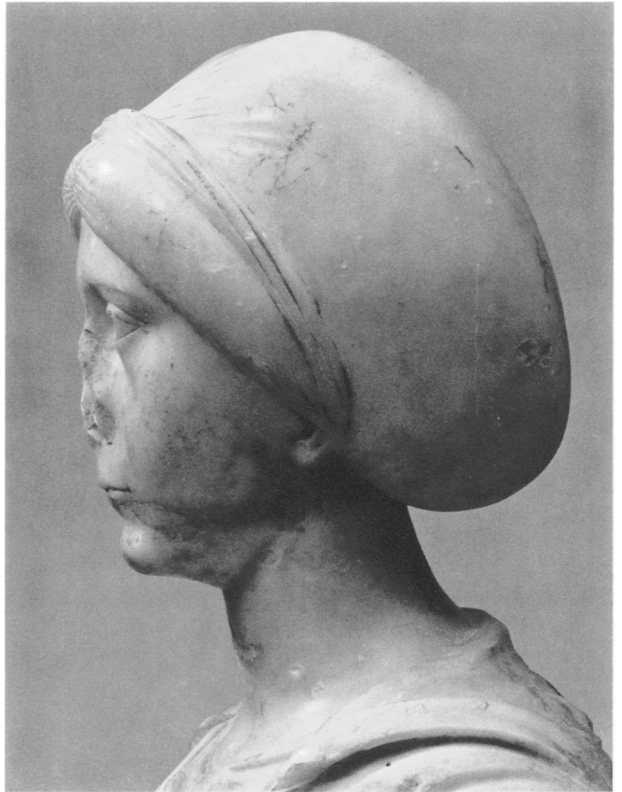
3. It is possible that the tunic was a long-sleeved one, but the edge of a garment around the wrist could also belong to the mantle.

The drapery is arranged in softly modeled folds, some of which are gently curved. Only here and there a harder line appears (for instance, on one of the V-folds below the neckline). In her right hand, which has thin, elegant fingers, the lady holds a book scroll. On her head, which rises from a long, slender neck, she wears a scarf of a thin silk-like material that covers her entire hair like a bonnet, leaving only the earlobes showing. The ends of the scarf are wound around the head like a wreath, in a tightly twisted roll, and disappear behind the ears; they were obviously tied and tucked under at the back. In the center above the forehead the scarf is held by a clip to prevent it from slipping onto the forehead. We can see outlined beneath the scarf two heavy plaits of her coiffure which were pulled up from the nape of the neck to the crown of the head, where they were probably turned under. Between them is a very shallow indentation. In front, the hair forms a thickish roll that frames the forehead in a flat triangle. The long, oval face shows extremely delicate modeling. The parts below the eyes, around the nostrils, and below the mouth should be noted in particular. The eyes with their gently curved lids are set under almost straight brows. The pupils are rendered by large circular cavities (1 cm. [$\frac{3}{8}$ in.] in diameter), and the irises have not been indicated. In contrast to the fine modeling of the cheeks, the lower lip, and the chin, the parting of the lips is indicated only by a rather schematized line.

The head of the lady is slightly turned to the right, but her eyes seem to look straight ahead at the beholder and not at whoever once may have been to her right. The expression is largely centered on the eyes, and yet they are not overlarge or staring and do not convey any otherworldly quality. The head is distinguished by the tenderness of its features, the sweetness of its expression, and by its immensely human quality, which has an immediate appeal.

FIGURES 7, 9
Portrait head of Theodora. Castello Sforzesco, Milan (photo: German Archaeological Institute, Rome)

FIGURES 8, 10
Details of the Metropolitan Museum's portrait bust



FIGURES 11, 12

Portrait head of Ariadne. Lateran, Rome (photo: German Archaeological Institute, Rome)



FIGURES 13, 14

Portrait head of Ariadne. Musée du Louvre

The scroll she holds identifies her as a lady of intellectual ambitions: in general, men of learning are represented holding book scrolls, but there are also many examples of women with this attribute. It seems that originally it belonged to one of the Muses, Polyhymnia,⁴ but was taken over by a large number of women, mainly on sarcophagi, to denote their literary leanings.⁵ Some of the sarcophagi with a woman holding a scroll also show “philosopher” types of men, who are depicted as teaching them; and there cannot be much doubt that the scroll as such is simply a “badge” to denote a claim to intellectual activities. Nearly always, when women on sarcophagi are shown holding scrolls, they have them in their left hands (Figure 6), putting the fingers of their right hands on the tops of the scrolls. Our lady holds her scroll in her right hand, the left arm not being rendered at all. How the scroll is held does not seem particularly significant, and we have one example of royalty represented with this attribute: a coin of Justin II with his wife Sophia shows both of them holding an upright scroll.⁶

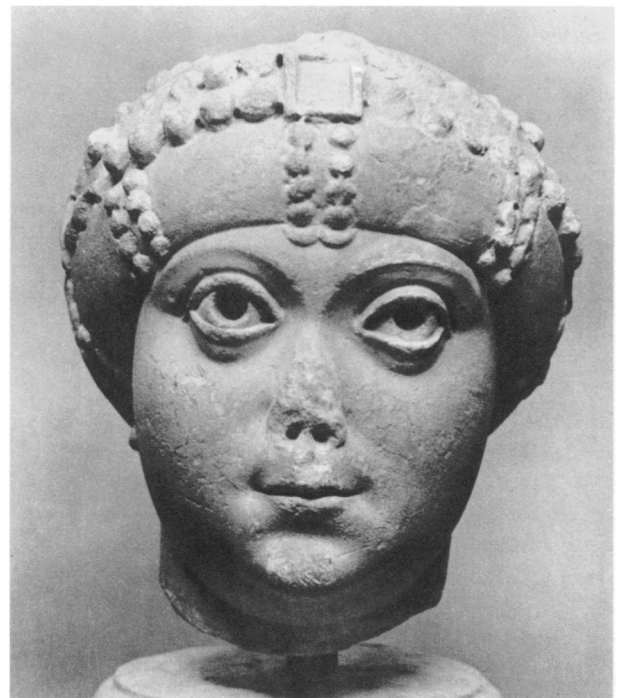
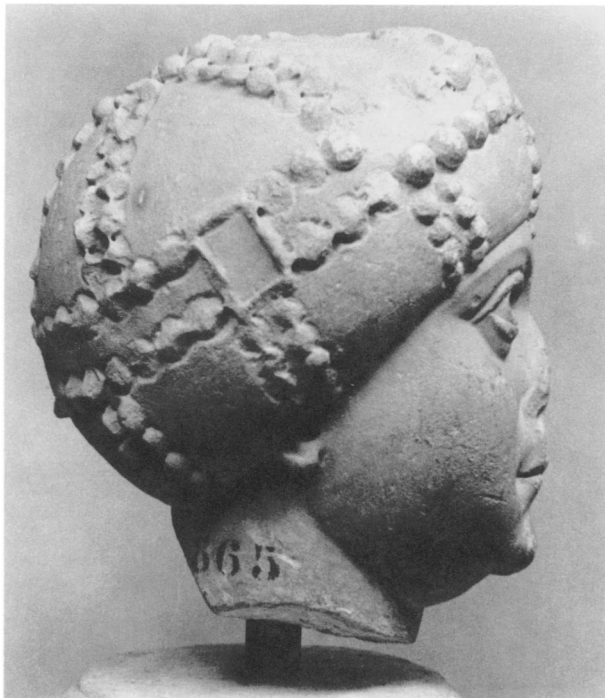
This scroll is the only insigne displayed by the young lady, and it is not one that would give us any indication about the date or the identity of the portrait. Stylistically, however, it appears that the bust is comparable, in varying degrees, only to a group of portraits of early Byzantine empresses.

This group consists of three heads in the Lateran (Figures 11, 12), the Palazzo dei Conservatori (Figures 15, 16), and the Louvre (Figures 13, 14), respectively, which in all probability portray Ariadne, the wife first

4. See examples on sarcophagi, e.g. M. Wegner, *Musensarkophage*, nos. 183, 208, 231, pls. 33 a, 34, 36.

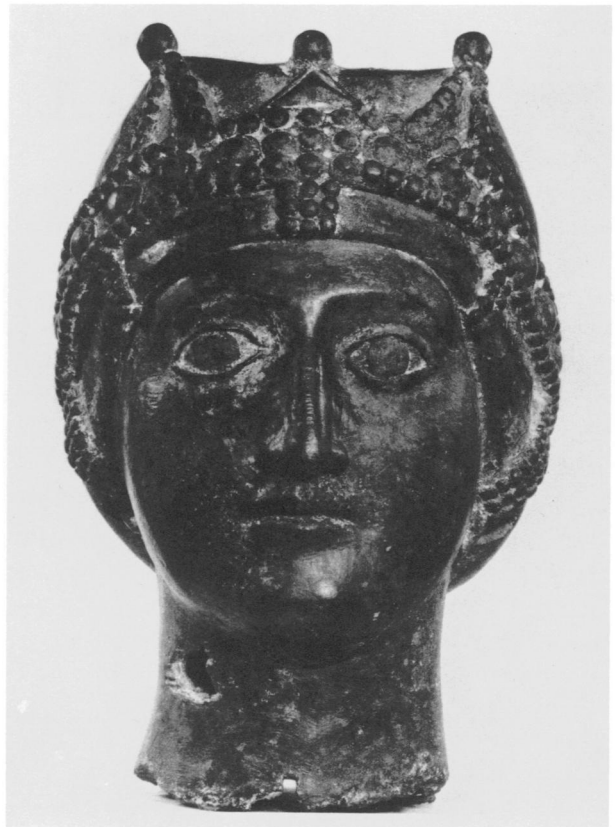
5. Examples are too numerous to be listed in full here. Most of them are on sarcophagi. Cf., for instance, Wegner, *Musensarkophage*, no. 35 (pl. 151 a), no. 116 (pl. 71), no. 133 (pl. 60), no. 135 (pl. 55 a); W. Amelung, *Die Sculpturen des Vaticanischen Museums*, I (Berlin, 1903) Giardino della Pigna Ost IX, no. 65, pl. 96; A. Garcia y Bellido, *Esculturas Romanas de España y Portugal* (Madrid, 1949) no. 274, pls. 226, 227. Further references will be found in Th. Birt, *Die Buchrolle in der Kunst* (Leipzig, 1907) pp. 98, 105 ff.

6. W. Wroth, *Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum*, I (London, 1908) Justin II, no. 26, pl. 11.6; Bellinger, *Dumbarton Oaks*, Justin II, no. 19.



FIGURES 15, 16

Portrait head of Ariadne. Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome (photo: German Archaeological Institute, Rome)



FIGURES 17, 18

Bronze portrait head of Euphemia, from Balajnac. National Museum, Niš

of Zenon, and, from 491, of Anastasius (she died in 515);⁷ a bronze head, possibly of the empress Euphemia, wife of Justin I, found recently in Balajnac near Niš in Yugoslavia (Figures 17, 18);⁸ and the marble head of an empress in the Castello Sforzesco in Milan

(Figures 7, 9), most probably a portrait of Theodora, the wife of Justinian I.⁹ To these portraits in the round may be added a number of ivory carvings on Consular diptychs, showing portraits in medallions on a very small scale of Ariadne (Figure 19),¹⁰ Amalasunta,¹¹ and

7. R. Delbrueck, *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung* 28 (1913) no. 2, pp. 318 ff., fig. 5, pls. 11–13 (Lateran); no. 3, pp. 323–324, pls. 14, 15 (Palazzo dei Conservatori); no. 4, pp. 324 ff., pls. 16, 17 (Louvre). K. Wessel, *VIII Corsi di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina* (1961) pp. 357 ff.; K. Wessel, *Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts* 77 (1962) pp. 246–247. Illustrations especially of the Louvre head are also found in general works, e.g., A. Grabar, *L'âge d'or de Justinien* (Paris, 1966) p. 226, fig. 253. Further bibliography will be found in the two articles by K. Wessel.

8. D. Srećević and A. Simović, "Portrait d'une impératrice Byzantine de Balajnac," *Starinar* n.s. 9–10 (1958–1959) pp. 77 ff., French summary pp. 86–87; K. Wessel, *JdI* 77 (1962) pp. 247–248.

9. R. Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) no. 1, pp. 310 ff., figs. 1 a, 1 b, 4, pls. 9, 10; K. Wessel, *JdI* 77 (1962) pp. 240 ff., figs. 1, 2, with previous bibliography. The head has been illustrated in several general works, all of which we cannot list here. Some of

them are quoted in the article by K. Wessel, cited above. Some additional bibliography may be found in M. Bonicatti, *Studi di storia dell'arte sulla Tarda antichità e sull'Alto Medioevo* (Rome, n.d.) pp. 198 ff. (fig. 255). See also H. v. Heintze, *Römische Porträt-Plastik aus sieben Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart, 1961) pp. 18, 20, pl. 48.

10. In the Diptychs of Clementinus in Liverpool, Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 16, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 15; Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 339, fig. 13a; of Anthemius, formerly Limoges, Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 17, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 16, Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 339, fig. 13b; of Anastasius, Berlin, Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 20, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 17; London, Victoria & Albert Museum, Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 20, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 18; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 21, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 21; Verona, Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 19; Delbrueck *RM* 28 (1913) pp. 339–340, figs. 13c–e.

11. Diptych of Orestes, London, Victoria & Albert Museum,

Theodora (Figure 20);¹² the ivory panels in Florence (Figure 21) and Vienna, showing the full figure of an empress, probably again Ariadne, once standing, once seated;¹³ and finally the mosaic portrait of Theodora in San Vitale in Ravenna (Figure 24).¹⁴

The imperial character of all these portraits is assured by their headdress. This consists of a scarf of thin material covering the hair entirely,¹⁵ and in most cases a bonnet made of stiffer material, to which a more or less elaborate crown is attached. Ariadne in the Palazzo dei Conservatori wears only the scarf to which the diadem is fitted, and the same appears to be the case with the bronze head from Balajnac.¹⁶ The portraits in

Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 32, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 31, Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 341, fig. 13g. On the attempts to identify the marble portraits of Ariadne and the two ivory portraits cited below in note 13 with Amalasunta, see S. Fuchs, *Kunst der Ostgotenzeit* (Berlin, 1944) pp. 66 ff.; see also K. Wessel, *JdI* 77 (1962) p. 244, note 27.

12. Diptych of Justinus (540), Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, no. 34, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 33, Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 341, fig. 13h, K. Wessel, *JdI* 77 (1962) p. 254, fig. 9a.

13. Delbrueck, *Consulardiptychen*, nos. 51, 52, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, nos. 51, 52; Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 341, figs. 14, 16 (here still as Theodora, as against his later view in *Consulardiptychen*, text, pp. 201 ff., especially p. 204), Wessel, *JdI* 77 (1962) pp. 250–251, figs. 5a, b. Of other illustrations of these ivories I should like to refer only to the excellent reproduction of a detail of the Florence panel in A. Grabar, *L'âge d'or de Justinien* (Paris, 1966) fig. 318 (opposite p. 277).

14. No detailed bibliography of this famous work is necessary. For discussions on the portrait value of this mosaic and on the headdress, see the works quoted in notes 7–13. See also G. Rodenwaldt, *JdI* 59–60 (1944–1945) pp. 96 ff. Of the numerous color reproductions of the panel I should like to mention in particular those in A. Grabar, *L'âge d'or de Justinien* (Paris, 1966) figs. 172, 173.

15. The marble portraits of Ariadne show two very stylized small locks emerging from under the scarf in the center of the forehead, in addition to which the heads in the Lateran and in the Louvre have some ornamental-looking strands of hair at the nape of the neck.

16. The most detailed and, in my opinion, the most accurate description of the headdresses of these women is given by Delbrueck in his article in *RM* 28 (1913). He distinguishes clearly between the scarf of thin material and the bonnet of stiffer stuff. Wessel, in his discussion in *JdI* 77 (1962) does not make this distinction but speaks generally of a “Kronhaube.” In particular, he seems to think that the front hair of Theodora in the Milan head is uncovered, which would mean that the piece of cloth covering the hair at the back and over the ears is an extension of the bonnet. This interpretation would give the bonnet a very peculiar shape and would also make the rendering of the front hair very difficult to explain. A comparison between the relevant details of the new Metropolitan head and the Milan one seems to make it fairly certain that Delbrueck's distinction between the scarf and the bonnet in the Milan headdress is correct. Wessel (p. 252) also



FIGURE 19

Ivory Consular diptych of Clementinus, detail of the left wing. Liverpool Museum (photo: Giraudon)



FIGURE 20

Ivory Consular diptych of Justinus, detail of the right wing. Berlin Museum



FIGURE 21

Portrait of Ariadne, detail of an ivory panel. Museo Archeologico, Florence (photo: German Archaeological Institute, Rome)

the round apart from the Milan one have the earlobes uncovered. The coiffure, as outlined under the scarf and bonnet, shows the front hair forming a thickish roll, smooth in most cases, but sectioned, as if arranged in very stiff narrow waves, on the Milan head, and the mass of the hair gathered in the nape of the neck and taken up to the crown: divided in two parts, probably plaits, in the Lateran and the Louvre Ariadne and the Milan Theodora, whereas no such division can be seen in the Ariadne in the Palazzo dei Conservatori and the "Euphemia."

The identification of the portraits of Ariadne and Theodora was established in a brilliant article by Richard Delbrueck in 1913.¹⁷ His results have, in the main points, been accepted by K. Wessel, who re-examined the problems involved in two recent studies,¹⁸ and have also been adopted by most other scholars who have had occasion to refer to these portraits in one or another context.¹⁹ The date assigned to the head from Balajnac by D. Srejović and A. Simović seems to be the only possible one, and hence their identification will also have to be accepted. The problems arising from the shape of the crowns worn by these empresses have no bearing on our present argument, and their identification is relevant only so far as it affects chronology.

A bonnet or scarf covering the entire hair without a diadem or crown is not part of imperial costume but occurs on portraits of other women, both in the sixth century and earlier. Delbrueck has referred to examples such as Serena on the diptych in Monza²⁰ (beginning

of the fifth century), Juliana Anicia in the Vienna Dioscorides manuscript²¹ (beginning of the sixth century), and various representations on mosaics. Whereas this kind of headdress seems to be the exception in earlier centuries, it appears to become the rule in the sixth century, where it is worn, for example, by the ladies of Theodora's court in the mosaic in San Vitale (Figure 24), by female saints in the archepiscopal chapel in Ravenna, by the Virgin in the apse mosaic in Parenzo, and on a number of ivory book covers.²² The closest parallel to the type of scarf worn by our young lady appears, however, on a portrait head in Toulouse (Figures 22, 25–28), which, to judge from the photographs at my disposal, is hardly later than the time around 400.²³ Even the way the scarf is gathered in the center above the forehead seems to be similar. But in spite of this striking similarity of the headdress, the two portraits are in general style and in the treatment of facial details, such as the eyes, so different from each other that they cannot be contemporary.

The headdress, then, taken in isolation, does not lead to a closer dating of our portrait. The same is true of the coiffure, which is a variant of one worn by women from the time of Constantine onward right into the sixth century at least.²⁴ Thus, in order to substantiate our assertion that the Metropolitan portrait bust is contemporary with the portraits of sixth-century empresses listed above, we have to examine other details.

The form of the pupils of the eyes is very similar to that seen in the three marble portraits of Ariadne:

states that Theodora's hair on the mosaic in San Vitale is uncovered in front and at the back (what he means must be "at the sides"): an examination of several color reproductions suggests that Delbrueck's description of the headdress (p. 344) is the correct one, and that here, too, we have a scarf covering the entire hair and, in addition, a bonnet over the top of the head.

17. *RM* 28 (1913) pp. 310 ff. The results of this study seem to be valid still today except for the identification of the empress in the ivories in Florence and Vienna (see above, note 13) as Theodora, a view which he corrected himself in his later standard work on the Consular diptychs (*Consulardiptychen*, nos. 51–52, text, pp. 201 ff., especially p. 204).

18. *VIII Corsi di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina* (1961) pp. 351 ff.; *JdI* 77 (1962) pp. 240 ff. These articles resulted only in some modification of detail, but basically reconfirmed Delbrueck's original views. Some of these modifications do not seem to me to be improvements, for instance, when he would like to date the model of the portrait of Theodora in San Vitale (on the strength of the development of the form of the "Kronhaube") around 527

(*JdI*, p. 252), whereas he virtually retained Delbrueck's date of the marble head in Milan (*RM* 28 [1913] p. 348: preferably 538; Wessel, p. 255: about 540). All the same, these articles have real merit, because they disprove the various erroneous theories set up in the nearly fifty years that had elapsed since Delbrueck's basic treatment of the subject.

19. See the bibliography in the articles by K. Wessel cited in note 18, and in the relevant chapter of M. Bonicatti's book, quoted in note 9.

20. Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 335, fig. 11; *Consulardiptychen*, no. 63, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 63.

21. Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) pp. 337–338, fig. 12; P. Buberl, *JdI* 51 (1936) pp. 121 ff., fig. 12; *id.*, *Die byzantinischen Handschriften* (Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der illuminierten Handschriften in Österreich, N.F. IV, pt. IV, 1) p. 27, pl. 5.

22. To cite only one of several examples: the diptych in Berlin, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 137, pl. 42.

23. See Appendix, pp. 35 ff.

24. Cf. Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) pp. 326 ff.



FIGURE 22

Detail from a portrait head of a woman. Musée St.-Raymond, Toulouse (photo: Michel Labrousse)

large circular hollows, without a surrounding incised line. In the case of the Ariadne portraits, the hollows are deeper, and they were certainly originally inlaid with glass paste or a similar substance.²⁵ No trace of an adhesive is visible on the eyes of the Metropolitan lady, and my general impression is that the shadows created by these hollows were sufficient to evoke the illusion of irises and pupils, without the aid of any filling. The diameter and the depth of the hollows are comparable to the pupils of the Milan Theodora, which have, however, a little wedge on the upper side to denote the highlight, and which are furthermore surrounded by an incised line indicating the iris. This latter form of pupils and irises occurs frequently already on portraits throughout the fourth century and occasionally even earlier, whereas the form of the pupils seen in the Ariadne heads appears in nearly all of the few portraits in the round datable with any reasonable degree of certainty to the sixth century or the end of the fifth.²⁶ The mouth of the Metropolitan lady, with its lips firmly pressed together, may be compared to the mouth of Ariadne, especially in the Louvre version. The triangular depressions at the corners of the mouth,

which are found in both portraits, occur also in the Milan head, which has, however, fuller lips. Similar in all five heads is the modeling around the mouth and in particular the groove separating the lower lip from the chin. The area surrounding the eyes is modeled with much greater delicacy on our present portrait than on any of the imperial ones, but we may point to the rather deep groove that outlines the upper lid against the flesh fold above, to be noticed in all five heads.

These details link the Metropolitan lady with the marble portraits of Ariadne and Theodora. But the modeling of the facial details and the delicate surface treatment are comparable only to the Milan Theodora. We should notice in particular the rendering of the faint depressions leading from the nostrils toward the corners of the mouth; the swellings and depressions below the eyes; the area of the chin with the slight swelling on the underside; and the play of light and shade on the surface, which gives life to both these faces. Furthermore, only in these two heads is the material of the scarf realistically rendered, as we can see especially on the part where it is tautly drawn over the heavy hair behind the ears. Compared with the Milan and the Metropolitan heads the portraits of Ariadne appear like lifeless masks, summary and coarse in the execution of detail.

But there are also marked differences between the two sculptures. The Milan head portrays a mature woman displaying the signs of approaching old age, noticeable above all in the slightly hollow cheeks and the heavy bags below the eyes. The Metropolitan bust, on the other hand, is the portrait of a young woman with full cheeks and the fresh and clear complexion of youth. But it is not only this difference in age that causes the contrast between the two portraits. The Metropolitan bust is the portrayal of a young woman not encumbered with any burden of rank or office, showing, in its freshness of concept and natural rendering of detail, hardly a trace of the stylization that characterizes late Roman and early Byzantine portraiture. Both the sweet physical beauty and the appealing earnestness of the sitter's mind have been

25. Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 323, describes traces of a white adhesive in the cavity in the right eye of the head in the Palazzo dei Conservatori.

26. See, e.g., the portraits from Ephesus, J. Inan and E. Rosen-

baum, *Roman and Early Portrait Sculpture in Asia Minor* (London, 1966) nos. 198 (pl. 185, 1-2), 200 (pl. 186, 3), and 202 (pl. 186, 4-5); and the portraits probably of Leon I, father of Ariadne, V. Poulsen, *Meddelelser fra Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* 13 (1956) pp. 41 ff., *Byzantion* 25-27 (1955-1957) pp. 509 ff.

brought out with the skill of a truly great portrait artist who seems to have been unhampered by the rules of convention. The Milan head is also the work of an artist of high quality and is a true likeness of a particular individual, not the rendering of a type or the personification of an idea.²⁷ But the subject is an empress, wearing the insignia of her office and displaying in the expression of her face the majesty of her elevated position. Thus we see in this portrait a certain degree of stylization, especially in the rendering of the eyes and their surroundings. But even this seems to be the portrayal of reality, not a device of artistic convention. We know of Theodora that she was extremely aware and proud of her exalted position, and thus she would have adopted a stern and somewhat forced expression as something natural to her. Procopius says that her glance was always stern and tense.²⁸ It would appear, then, that the differences between the two portraits are due mainly to the different status of the sitters. What might appear at first glance as abstract stylization in the Milan portrait is in fact as much the representation of reality as is the ease and naturalness of forms that give the Metropolitan bust its distinction. In both works we can observe a breaking away from the rigid conventionalism prevailing in the portraits of Ariadne and, in a different manner, also in the bronze head of Euphemia, and the awakening of a somewhat sublimated feeling for the realities of the individual human countenance and character.

No parts of the statues to which the portrait heads of the empresses of the first half of the sixth century once belonged have survived. Thus we cannot know whether observations made with regard to the style of the heads would also apply to the drapery style. Not many sculptures in the round dating from the sixth century

have survived, and there are few enough from the fifth century. Thus, in order to evaluate the drapery style of our bust we will have to consider reliefs in ivory and silver as well as paintings and mosaics.

The outstanding qualities of the drapery style of our bust are the fluid softness of the modeling, the almost entire absence of hard lines and grooves, the delicacy and refinement of the surface finish, and the natural fall of the drapery over the shoulder and across the chest. None of these qualities appears in the toga statues of officials from the time of Theodosius down to the Justinianic era, and even the relative softness of the draperies of the Aphrodisias *chlamydati* appears hard and wooden by comparison.²⁹ We have to go a long way back in the history of Roman sculpture to find a similar rendering of drapery folds, and it is among works showing "classicistic" tendencies that we find the closest parallels for the style of our bust. We may compare, for instance, the Hadrianic tondi on the Arch of Constantine,³⁰ and some of the reliefs of the Ara Pacis.³¹ The differences are, however, as obvious as the similarities, and even if the bust had survived without its head one would not have thought of a date in the earlier Roman imperial period. In spite of the meticulous rendering of detail, the Metropolitan bust appears flatter, less voluminous than even the Ara Pacis reliefs. And above all, the treatment of the drapery along the surviving left side with its rather incongruous vertical lines seems different from that on any piece of sculpture made within an uninterrupted development of classical tradition. However, the fact that the rendering of the drapery folds across the chest and on the left shoulder so obviously reflects a Graeco-Roman tradition seems to show that we are in the presence of one of the various classical "revivals," or,

27. And certainly not "nur Symbol der kaiserlichen Macht, ein Götzenbild, das angebetet werden will," as H. v. Heintze, *Römische Porträt-Plastik aus sieben Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart, 1961) p. 18, says.

28. Procopius, *Historia Arcana* 10: γοργόν τε καὶ συνεστραμμένον αἰεὶ βλέπουσα.

On Theodora, see C. Diehl, *Byzantine Empresses* (New York, 1963) chapter III (a translation of the corresponding chapter in *Figures byzantines* [Paris, 1906], this being a condensation of *Théodora, impératrice de Byzance* [Paris, 1904]); W. Schubart, *Justinian und Theodora* (Munich, 1943) pp. 50 ff.; B. Rubin, *Das Zeitalter Justinians*, I (Berlin, 1960) pp. 98 ff. For the "official" face of an emperor in office cf. the description of Constantius II's entry into Rome in Ammianus Marcellinus, Book 16, 9 ff.: "Augustus . . . talem se tamque immobilem, qualis in provinciis suis visebatur,

ostendens. Nam et corpus perhumile curvabat portas ingrediens celsas, et velut collo munito rectam aciem luminum tendens nec dextra vultum nec laeva flectebat tamquam figmentum hominis. . . ."

29. For late toga statues see Kollwitz, *Oströmische Plastik*, pls. 24–29, 31–33; J. Inan and E. Rosenbaum, *Roman and Early Byzantine Portrait Sculpture in Asia Minor* (London, 1966) no. 244 (pl. 177, 3, Aphrodisias), no. 202 (pl. 177, 4, Ephesus), and the bust of a togatus from Ephesus, no. 201 (pl. 184, 2); for the Aphrodisias *chlamydati* see Inan and Rosenbaum, nos. 242 and 243 (pl. 178, 1–2, text with further bibliography pp. 179 ff.).

30. A. Giuliano, *Arco di Costantino* (Milan, 1955) figs. 9–16.

31. G. Moretti, *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Rome, 1948) e.g., text, p. 17, fig. 7; and the Tellus relief, pl. 17.

perhaps more properly, of a style that owes its continual existence to local workshop traditions in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, and especially in Asia Minor, the natural hinterland for Byzantium as Italy had been for Rome in previous centuries. One of these waves of classical “revivals” occurred in the period of the Theodosian dynasty, and from this period we have reliefs in marble as well as in ivory that are closer to the style of our bust than the Hadrianic or Augustan reliefs quoted. Some of the Ravenna sarcophagi display this “classicizing” trend,³² and we have also a few reliefs from Constantinople showing a similar drapery style.³³ Closer parallels are provided by ivory carvings datable around 400, such as the Trivulzio panel with the Marys at the empty tomb (Figure 23). A similar tendency toward classicism in the rendering of drapery can also be observed in some ivory carvings and silver works of the first half of the sixth century: the much-quoted and well-known London archangel³⁴ is a case in point, and of the silver works dated by hallmarks we may refer to the plate with “Theocritus” in the Hermitage,³⁵ and to the figure of Venus in the Anchises plate, also in the Hermitage,³⁶ both of the time of Justinian. These works are all more or less isolated pieces, forming a minority within the bulk of sculpture in every possible medium known from Constantinople. But with all the efforts in recent years to establish a valid picture of early Byzantine court art, we are, as regards sculpture, faced with the fact that the most representative pieces of this art, which must have existed, have perished, the majority of what has survived being mediocre and rustic in the extreme.³⁷ All the same, the few pieces in the field of the minor arts that display this classicizing style show that Constantinople benefited from artistic traditions still existing in various centers of the eastern empire. Thus, we can see, for instance, in a portrait bust probably of Constantinian date from Ephesus, a

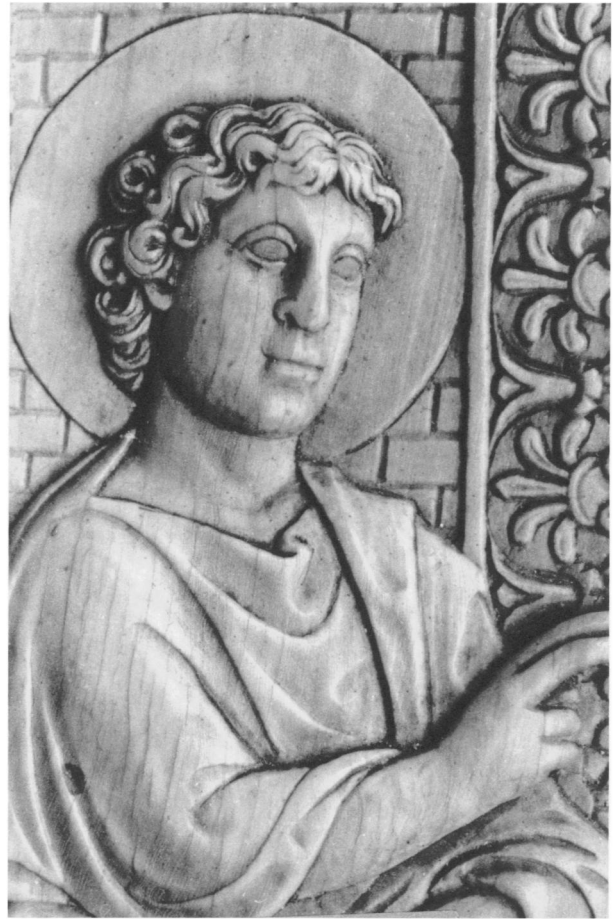


FIGURE 23

Angel, detail from the Trivulzio ivory panel. Castello Sforzesco, Milan (photo: Dr. A. Schug)

drapery style that is perhaps more akin to our Metropolitan lady than any of the works quoted so far,³⁸ and at the same time totally different from contemporary Roman works. Another bust from Asia Minor, of uncertain date, but probably of the fifth century, also displays a remarkably “classical” drapery style, un-

32. See good reproductions in A. Grabar, *L'âge d'or de Justinien* (Paris, 1966) figs. 286, 288, 290, 293.

33. M. Bonicatti, *Studi di storia dell'arte sulla Tarda antichità e sull'Alto Medioevo* (Rome, n.d.) figs. 237, 240.

34. Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 109; for its date in the time of Justin I see A. A. Vasiliev, *Justin the First* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies I, 1950) pp. 418–426.

35. Erica Cruikshank Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies VII, 1961) no. 9, p. 70; L. Matsulevich, *Byzantinische Antike* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929) pp. 4, 112, no. 4, pls. 31–32.

36. Erica Cruikshank Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps* (Dumbarton

Oaks Studies VII, 1961) no. 16; L. Matsulevich, *Byzantinische Antike* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929) pp. 3–4, 22–31, no. 3, pls. 3–4.

37. For this “rustic” character of Byzantine sculpture see A. Grabar, *Sculptures byzantines de Constantinople (IV^e–X^e siècle)* (Bibliothèque archéologique et historique de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie d'Istanbul, XVII, Paris, 1963).

38. J. Inan and E. Rosenbaum, *Roman and Early Byzantine Portrait Sculpture in Asia Minor* (London, 1966) no. 187 (pl. 101, 2); W. Oberleitner, “Beiträge zur Geschichte der spätantiken Porträtplastik aus Ephesos,” *Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Instituts* 47 (1964–1965) pp. 5 ff., figs. 1–5.

FIGURE 24
Detail from the
Theodora mosaic
panel. Church of San
Vitale, Ravenna
(photo: Anderson)



paralleled in contemporary sculpture from the West.³⁹

Of the very few works of secular court art of the time of Justinian, the mosaics in San Vitale in Ravenna are the most important. If we wish to compare these mosaics with our bust we have to consider, of course, the difference of medium above all. But even so, I think we cannot fail to notice the close similarity in drapery style between our bust and the young ladies of Theodora's court, especially the girl third from the right, one of the four ladies depicted in full (Figure 24). In the illustration, I have deliberately chosen a section equivalent to our bust, and in my opinion, the drapery style, if translated into sculpture, would be very similar to that of our new portrait. Moreover, the hand looks like a direct adaptation of the mosaic hand to sculpture.

Is our new Metropolitan bust really a bust, that is, was it originally conceived as a bust? I do not think so, although I am aware of the fact that I cannot definitely prove this point. First, we have established that the cut surface on the right side is not an accidental break, but was produced by a saw, and the same is true for the

underside. Secondly, the rear is not worked in the way normal for a bust, there is no central support, and the tool marks seem odd. There have been known instances of a statue recut into a bust, or at least suggestions have been made that this might have been the case. One of these is the bust of a togatus, probably of the fifth century, in the National Museum in Athens, published by Kollwitz as recut from a statue.⁴⁰ Dr. V. G. Callipolitis of the National Museum kindly examined the piece for me, sent me photographs of the rear, and expressed the opinion that the tool marks on the rear were made by modern tools. This, to judge by the photographs, seems to be very likely correct,⁴¹ and here we would have a case of modern reworking. The Constantinian bust in Ephesus, quoted above, may also have been originally part of a statue: here, too, the central support normal with ancient busts is absent, and in this case, the recutting would have been done in antiquity, since the piece was found in the excavations in its present state.⁴² Another such case may be the bust of a chlamydatus from Sebastopolis in the museum in

39. J. Inan and E. Rosenbaum, *Roman and Early Byzantine Portrait Sculpture in Asia Minor* (London, 1966) no. 107 (pl. 184, 1).

40. Kollwitz, *Oströmische Plastik*, p. 91, no. 18, pl. 41, Cavvadias no. 423.

41. The present state of the bust differs from that seen in the

reproductions in Kollwitz, *Oströmische Plastik*: the missing right shoulder and side is now restored in plaster whereas the plaster at the rear has been removed.

42. See, on the problem of recutting, W. Oberleitner (article quoted above in note 38), p. 8; fig. 4 shows the rear view.

Tokat, also cited above.⁴³ Here, too, there is no central support, but the spot where it should have been is outlined. This bust, like the Metropolitan one, has a small metal pin on the underside for fixing it onto some kind of a pedestal. There are no records in the small provincial museum of Tokat to show how the piece came into the museum's possession, but since Sebastopolis is very close to Tokat it is likely that it was a chance find. In any case, if this bust was recut from a statue, the work would have been done in antiquity. A possible explanation for such a procedure could be that the statue was broken at one time and that the lower part was damaged to such an extent that rather than piece it together again the undamaged upper part was made into a bust. But since all the pieces quoted are comparatively late it is difficult to figure out a likely date for this reworking.

However this may have been in the case of our Metropolitan bust, we have here the added difficulty that the right shoulder and arm also seem to have been cut off deliberately. The fact that the head is slightly turned to the right suggests that there should have been something on that side to which to turn, for isolated figures at this late date are usually strictly frontal.⁴⁴ In the Justinianic mosaics in Ravenna we frequently find heads shown full-face even if the persons are depicted walking.⁴⁵ Is it possible that our bust was originally part of a double portrait, perhaps of husband and wife, rendered in a way similar to the double portraits of emperor and empress on Byzantine coins, i.e., with the husband's body shown as if sitting or standing slightly in front of the wife so that her right shoulder and arm are obscured from view by his left shoulder and arm? Since Theodora did not claim the right to appear on coins, we have no examples of this practice from the coinage of Justinian, but there are many examples from the coinage of his nephew and successor Justin II, who was married to Theodora's niece Sophia. The coins show this arrangement whether Justin and Sophia are

represented in full figure, seated on a double throne, or simply as busts, side by side.⁴⁶ There are also coins where Sophia appears in full, covering part of the bust of Justin.⁴⁷ The section of the body appearing in these cases is about the same as the surviving part of our bust. The young lady in the retinue of Theodora on the San Vitale mosaic, which we adduced above as a parallel for the drapery style of our bust, is also very similar to the latter with regard to the section of the body shown: her right arm is partly hidden by the figure of the girl in the white pallium to her right. I know of no double figure in the round in which the bodies are closely attached to one another at the side after the Greek archaic period,⁴⁸ but this may be simply a chance of survival; and the coins prove that the idea as such was not alien to the early Byzantine period. Besides we have, of course, many examples of such groups in relief, on tombstones, throughout the Roman period. If our bust in fact was part of such a group, we still could only conjecture a reason as to why the figure to the right was cut off, but the peculiar line of the cut on the right side could be better explained—an entire figure would have been removed, not just the right shoulder and arm of the present bust. However, as pointed out above, we are in no position to prove any of these theories.

The absence of any insignia makes it impossible to identify the sitter of our portrait. The exceptionally high quality of the work and the nobility of posture and features that characterizes this portrait suggest, however, that the subject was somehow connected with the court circles of Constantinople at the time of Justinian. The Theodora panel in San Vitale may help us to determine at least the milieu from which the sitter came. Theodora is here represented surrounded by her own household: two male officials and her ladies in waiting. The faces of these figures show a high degree of stylization, which is due not only to the exigencies of official court art but also to the medium. But even so there is no doubt that at least the principal figures are

43. See note 39.

44. This rule is, however, not without exceptions; as an example of this see the bust in Tokat, cited above (note 39).

45. For example, in San Vitale Theodora and the two ladies to her left, and many of the holy virgins and martyrs in San Apollinare Nuovo.

46. Seated: Bellinger, *Dumbarton Oaks*, Justin II, no. 25c.3 (pl. 50), dated 565/6; busts: Bellinger, *Dumbarton Oaks*, Justin II, nos. 199.1, 200.1, 200.2, and 200.6 (pl. 58).

47. Bellinger, *Dumbarton Oaks*, Justin II, no. 198.2 (pl. 58).

48. Athens, Nat. Mus., stele (in very high relief) of Dermys and Kittylos, G. M. A. Richter, *Kouroi*, 2nd ed. (London, 1960) no. 11, figs. 76–77. Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 317, suggested the possibility that the Milan head of Theodora might have been part of a statue that had a neighbor to its right “wie bei den Kaiserpaaren auf byzantinischen Münzen.”

characterized as portraits of particular individuals. A comparison between Theodora and the marble head in Milan shows quite clearly, in my opinion, that these are portraits of the same person.⁴⁹ It has been suggested that the two ladies to the left of Theodora represent Antonina, the wife of Belisarius and the “second lady” in the empire, and her daughter Johannina.⁵⁰ The suggestion is attractive, although the age difference between the two does not seem to be that between mother and daughter. The group of five young ladies that concludes the train, shows, as has been pointed out frequently, far less individualization, but in my opinion the attempt to depict five different individuals is not completely lacking. All five, however, are shown as young women compared with Theodora and the two ladies next to her. They have fuller faces with rounded cheeks and fuller lips. Their costumes and jewelry vary from one another: the girl on the extreme right of the panel, partially hidden by the figure next to her, even wears a jewel-studded diadem. The girl in the center of the three in the foreground, whom we have already cited above in connection with the drapery style and the section of our bust, wears no jewelry at all, except for earrings. Her relationship to Theodora seems to be comparable to that of the Metropolitan lady to the marble portrait of Theodora in Milan. Thus it seems possible that the young woman portrayed in our bust could have belonged to the entourage of Theodora. And in this case the scroll she holds might not be quite such a conventional attribute but might denote that this lady had received a literary education and had distinguished herself in the field of learning.⁵¹ The portrait might have been made on the occasion of her marriage, and the work must have been entrusted to one of the best sculptors available in the capital.

Much in the evaluation of this portrait must remain conjecture. But one thing is certain: we are in the presence here of one of the best surviving works of Justinianic court art in the field of sculpture, and the only one of its kind that is undoubtedly of metropolitan

provenance. In recent years much work has been done in an effort to gain more precise knowledge about the art of Constantinople in the first three centuries after its foundation by Constantine. As a reaction to the tendency of previous generations of scholars to attribute the surviving works of art of the fifth and sixth centuries to one or another of the older centers of art in the eastern Roman Empire, such as Antioch and Alexandria, we observe now the opposite trend to assign almost everything of some artistic merit to the capital of the empire. The evidence on which these attributions are based is slender, to say the least, and more often than not it is a subjective aesthetic judgment that has led scholars to their opinions. The sculpture that has so far come out of the soil of Constantinople is to a large extent very mediocre and rustic in appearance (especially after the Theodosian period) and is certainly no testimony to a superior court art. As proof for the existence of the latter we usually find works quoted that were found, and very probably made, elsewhere. Constantinople did not have an artistic tradition of its own: when Constantine transferred his capital to the site, he found there an insignificant provincial town and one that most probably had not quite recovered from the last great disaster under Septimius Severus. In order to give his new capital some luster, he not only removed there works of art from Rome and elsewhere, but also most probably had to induce artists from places with an uninterrupted tradition to work in the new capital. Thus we should not be surprised to find among the artistic output of Constantinople works of different quality and of divergent stylistic trends, ranging from the Balkan provinces to Coptic Egypt.⁵² Some of the surviving hallmarked silver work and illuminated manuscripts of the quality of the Vienna Dioscorides as well as ivory carvings of more or less undisputed Constantinopolitan origin prove that artists from the old established artistic centers of Alexander’s empire also went to work in the new capital. The superb quality of the decorative sculpture in Hagia Sophia and in

49. They also seem to be of about the same age, which, if the Milan head is datable around 540, would be in favor of a date for the San Vitale portrait shortly before Theodora’s death (cf. above, note 18).

50. See, e.g., C. O. Nordström, *Ravennastudien* (Stockholm, 1953) p. 90. The opinion is found repeatedly in works dealing with the Ravenna mosaics.

51. Juliana Anicia, the patrician lady for whom the Vienna Dioscorides codex was made (see above, note 21), is a good example of the role that could be played in the sixth century by a woman of good family and shows also what kind of sitter we might postulate for a private portrait of high quality.

52. See the work by A. Grabar, cited above, note 37. See also J. Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople* (London, 1961).

lesser churches such as SS. Sergius and Bacchus as well as that of the mass-produced articles of church furniture, such as chancel screens and pulpits exported from the capital or rather its “house”-quarries of Proconnesus, prove that by the sixth century Constantinople had outstanding sculptors’ workshops. But with regard to sculpture in the round or even relief sculpture of a nondecorative nature we did not have, so far, a single piece for which a metropolitan provenance was assured. It has been taken more or less for granted that works like the Milan head of Theodora were made in Constantinople, and even the portraits of Ariadne have been attributed to the capital: but in no case has there been conclusive evidence for such an assertion. Our new bust came to the Metropolitan Museum through the art market, so that we do not know the precise findspot nor the topographical context to which it belonged. But a provenance from “greater Constantinople” is assured. And considering its affinities to the one surviving portrait in the round of Theodora and to the Ravenna mosaics that were at least inspired by imperial patronage, we can probably say that at last

53. P. 311. To my knowledge, Delbrueck is the only scholar dealing with this head who makes any mention of the material from which it is made. He also seems to be the only one who states correctly that the dimensions of the head along with those of the three portraits of Ariadne are life-size. Usually we find the Milan

we have a genuine representative of Justinianic court sculpture in Constantinople. This, in turn, brings new certainty to the problem of the provenance of the Milan head: the stylistic affinities between the two portraits are so close that we can safely assume the same workshop for their manufacture, if not the same hand. We have not been able, for the purpose of the present article, to have the marble of the Milan head examined, and I have not seen the head at first hand for quite some time. But I think here, as elsewhere, we can rely on Delbrueck’s observations in 1913,⁵³ that the head is made of fine-grained marble “der mir nicht lunensisch zu sein schien.” Fine-grained marble of a quality that will at all evoke Luna marble is, so far as I know, found only in Phrygia, and this marble is eminently suited to sculpture of refined quality. It does not seem impossible that both pieces were made from marble from the Phrygian quarries.

The history of early Byzantine court sculpture still has to be written. The new Metropolitan portrait bust seems to me the first piece known so far that is likely to provide a firm basis for such a history.

head referred to as small. Approximately 15 cm. (about 5¾ in.) from chin to hairline is not large, but certainly a natural size: many women have smaller faces than that. Procopius (*Historia Arcana* 10) describes Theodora as beautiful and graceful, but short: the word he uses (κολοβός) can even mean “undersized.”

Appendix: Portrait Head of a Woman in Toulouse

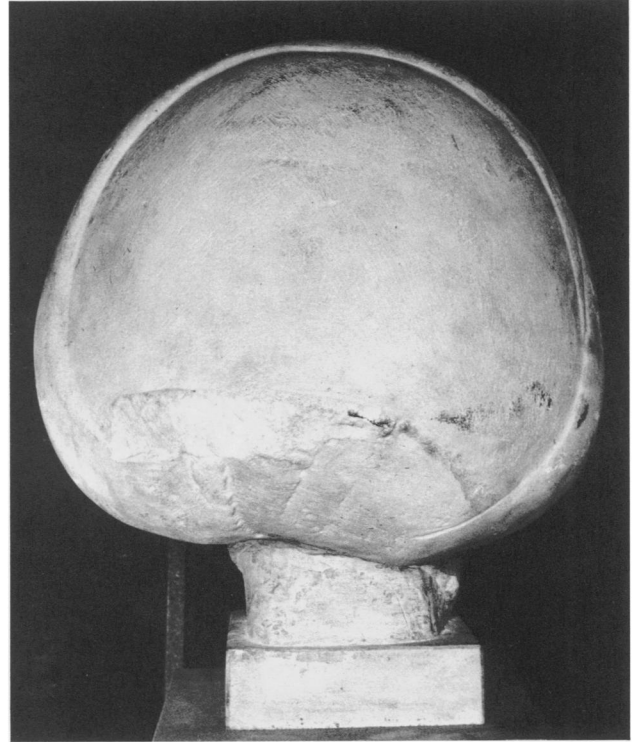
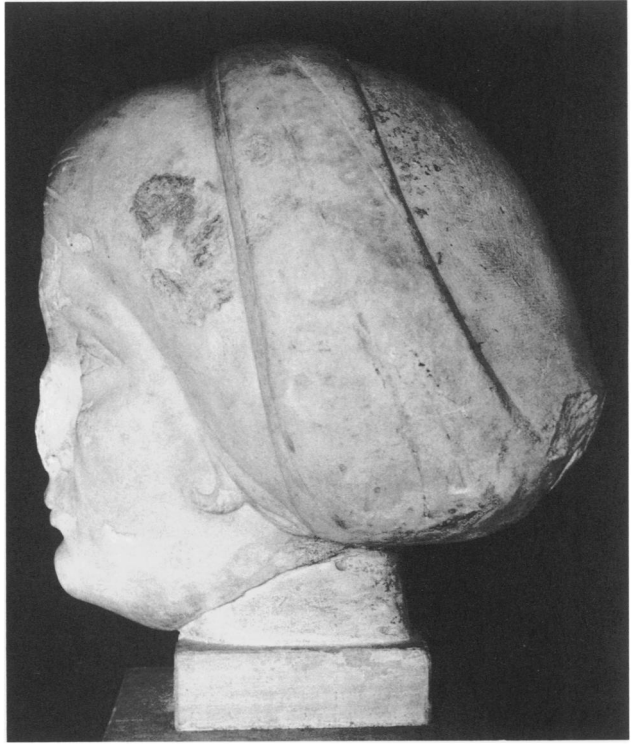
THE MUSÉE St.-Raymond in Toulouse houses a portrait head of a woman of great interest, which is little known (Figures 22, 25–28). It was published by Espérandieu in 1908¹ with only a full-face illustration, and dated in the second century A.D. Richard Delbrueck quoted it in an article on a bronze head of a woman of about A.D. 400 as a contemporary example of the head-dress of the latter.² The head, which had escaped my notice, was brought to my attention by Vera K. Ostoia of the Metropolitan Museum,³ for, on account of this head-dress, the portrait is of interest in connection with the new Metropolitan bust. M. Michel Labrousse, Directeur of the Circonscription des Antiquités His-

toriques de la Région Midi-Pyrénées at Toulouse, had the great kindness to examine the head for me, take new photographs of it, and send me all available information. It is on the basis of M. Labrousse’s photographs and notes that I wish to present here a new evaluation of this important piece of late antique portrait sculpture.

1. E. Espérandieu, *Recueil Général des Bas-reliefs de la Gaule Romaine*, II (Paris, 1908) p. 103, no. 1030.

2. R. Delbrueck, “Bronzener Frauenkopf, um 400 n.Chr.,” *Bonner Jahrbücher* 150 (1950) p. 89 with note 8.

3. I wish to thank Mrs. Ostoia for her generosity in giving me this reference and other information that she had collected in connection with the Metropolitan bust.



FIGURES 25-28
Portrait head of a woman. Musée St.-Raymond, Toulouse (photo: Michel Labrousse)

The description of the head by M. Labrousse reads as follows:⁴

La tête, de provenance inconnue, est conservée dans les réserves et fixée sur un socle qui porte le n° 82 inscrit au crayon. Le cou a été coupé à la base même du menton et la hauteur totale est de 0,31 m, non de 0,36 comme le disait Espérandieu. Le marbre est blanc, à peine jaunâtre, poli et comme lustré. Il ne semble pas d'origine pyrénéenne. L'état de conservation est excellent. Seuls sont abîmés le nez et l'arrière du cou. Quelques meurtrissures se marquent sur les pommettes des joues, au-dessus de l'arcade sourcilière gauche et à la partie supérieure de la chevelure. Toutes les restaurations en plâtre ont été supprimées et les photographies vous donnent l'état de conservation exact.

A mon avis, toute la partie arrière de la chevelure est couverte d'une sorte de bonnet plutôt que deux tresses de cheveux repliées comme le disait Espérandieu.

Nothing is known of the provenance. In the old catalogues of the museum by Ernest Roschach (1865) and Henri Rachou (1912) the piece was listed with the sculptures found in the villa of Chiragan, at Martres-Tolosane (Haute-Garonne).⁵ M. Labrousse doubts the correctness of this assertion and thinks it more likely that the portrait was in one of the private collections that existed in Toulouse in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁶ Indeed, the piece does not have the appearance of local provincial manufacture,⁷ and it seems more probable that it was made in one of the greater art centers. We shall have to return to this point.

The head portrays a young woman, probably not older than thirty, with a full, oval face and striking features. Her narrow eyes are set fairly wide apart and slightly oblique. The eyebrows are raised and form sharp, highly arched ridges. There are prominent flesh

folds between the upper lids and the eyebrows, and finely modeled depressions below the lower lids. The pupils are crescent-shaped with a semicircular dot indicating the highlight, and the irises have been incised in the form of large half-circles. The narrow-bridged nose seems to have been curved and well shaped. The modeling of the cheeks can best be observed in the profile views. The lips are full, the lower lip slightly pouting. The round chin is prominent. The heavy hair is almost entirely covered by a scarf, apparently of thin material, but not thin enough to reveal the coiffure underneath clearly. It seems that the hair was parted in the center: two thin strands of hair on either side of the part emerge in the center of the forehead from underneath the scarf. The mass of the hair is brushed down and to the sides, covering the ears completely. A small portion of the hair over the ears and a short curved lock in front of either ear have been left uncovered by the scarf. At the nape of the neck the hair is divided in two broad flat strands that are laid around the head in such a manner that in the front view they frame the head like a narrow halo. The ends of the scarf are wound around this part and apparently tucked under it. The scarf is pulled rather tight. A thin long clip seems to hold it in position in the center; on either side of this clip thin creases appear. There are also some creases on the portion wound around the head.

We are unable to say whether the head once belonged to a bust or a statue. But the strongly marked asymmetry of the face shows that the head was turned considerably to its left.

The coiffure seems to be a variant of the "turban" type, which was current throughout the fourth cen-

4. I quote from his letter dated December 4, 1967.

5. The following extracts from these catalogues were kindly supplied by M. Labrousse: "Ernest Roschach, *Musées de Toulouse, Antiquités . . . Objects d'art . . .* (Toulouse, 1865) p. 38, no. 79: 79 Tête de femme; marbre blanc. Travail extrêmement barbare; coiffure très volumineuse et si grossièrement traitée qu'on ne peut en déterminer la nature, pommettes très saillantes, menton étroit et anguleux; le nez manque; l'arcade sourcilière est creusée avec une exagération brutale qui se retrouve dans l'évidement des prunelles. Cette tête est certainement un portrait de femme indigène exécuté par un sculpteur réaliste.

"Henri Rachou, *Catalogue des collections de sculpture et d'épigraphie du musée de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1912) p. 52, no. 82: 82 Tête de femme; marbre blanc.—H. 0.47 m. avec le piédestal. Tête plus

grande que nature, extrêmement barbare; coiffure très volumineuse et si grossièrement traitée qu'on ne peut en déterminer la nature; pommettes très saillantes, menton étroit et anguleux. Le nez est restauré au plâtre; les deux joues et l'arcade sourcilière sont érodées; la prunelle est incisée.

"Ce morceau est monté sur un socle en pierre composé de deux parallépipèdes rectangles superposés. (Cat. 1865, no. 79)."

M. Labrousse adds: "Roschach et Rachou classent cette tête parmi celles qui viennent de la villa de Chiragan, à Martres-Tolosane (Haute-Garonne)."

6. Letter by M. Labrousse, dated December 14, 1967.

7. Delbrueck, *BJb* 150 (1950) p. 89, thought the sitter might have been a Visigothic princess, but this seems to be highly unlikely.



FIGURE 29

Portrait head of a woman. Museo Capitolino, Rome (photo: German Archaeological Institute, Rome)

ture.⁸ In this coiffure, the hair is usually gathered in tresses that cross one another at the back and are wound around the head in one or more layers to form a kind of turban that comes down in front slightly above the forehead. Sometimes, however, the tresses are laid around the head in a manner that resembles the halo-like feature of the Toulouse head. A portrait in the Museo Capitolino (Figure 29)⁹ should be compared in particular. Here, the tresses do not cross at the back, and the center part of the hair is continued along the back of the head. The tresses are, however, so broad that in the profile view the entire back of the head is hidden beneath them. But seen from the front and the rear they form a kind of halo similar to that of the Toulouse head.

The coiffure does not help to date our portrait closely, and neither does the form of the headdress. Delbrueck has pointed out that the earliest examples of this fashion are from around A.D. 400,¹⁰ and no earlier example seems to have come to light since he studied the relevant material. We have seen above that the scarf fashion became more current at the end of the fifth and in the sixth century. The style of the Toulouse head, however, precludes such a late date. The most characteristic features of the face are the eyes and the surrounding area, and the modeling of the cheeks and

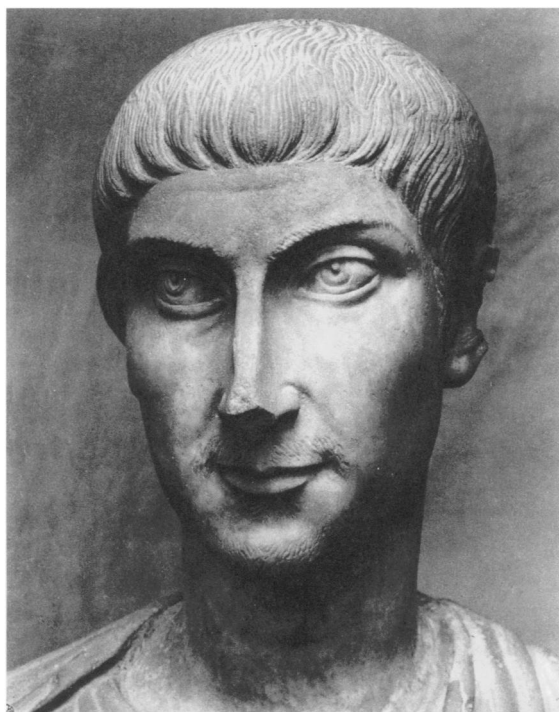


FIGURE 30

Portrait head of a young man. Museo Nazionale, Rome (photo: German Archaeological Institute, Rome)

8. See B. M. Felletti Maj, "Contributo alla iconografia del IV secolo D.C., Il ritratto femminile," *Critica d'Arte* 6 (1941) pp. 74–90, especially p. 76. R. Calza, "Cronologia ed identificazione dell' 'Agrippina' Capitolina," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia, Ser. III, Memorie* 8, II (1955) pp. 107–136, especially p. 118. H. P. L'Orange, "Der subtile Stil, eine Kunstströmung um 400 n.Chr.," *Antike Kunst* 4 (1961) pp. 68–74, especially p. 72. R. Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts*, pp. 46 ff.

9. Salone 57; R. Delbrueck, *RM* 28 (1913) p. 329, fig. 7; R. Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts*, p. 49, fig. 19; B. M. Felletti Maj, *Critica d'Arte* 6 (1941) p. 79, no. 10, pl. 46, 3.

10. See above, p. 28, note 20; further *BJb* 150 (1950) p. 89.



FIGURES 31, 32

Portrait head of Arcadius. Archaeological Museum, Istanbul (photo: Hirmer, Munich)

the area around the mouth. We see here a treatment of facial forms that is different from the strong structure and sometimes highly differentiated modeling characteristic of Constantinian portrait sculpture as well as from both the utter smoothness of certain Theodosian portraits and the delicate and fluid modeling apparent in the Metropolitan bust.

L'Orange has repeatedly studied a group of portraits of the Theodosian period which share characteristics that distinguish them from such sculptures of the period as those on the base of the obelisk or the portrait of Valentinian II from Aphrodisias.¹¹ Combined with a sometimes china-like smoothness of the surface we find here a subtle differentiation of detail

brought about by essentially linear means, noticeable in particular in the treatment of the eyes, in the way in which they are embedded in their surroundings and set off sharply against the cheeks and the forehead, in the thin curved noses, and in the mouths that terminate at the corners in thin lines, a little upturned into a slightly mocking smile. These same characteristics are to be found in the Toulouse head. In particular we should compare the portraits of young men in the Museo

11. H. P. L'Orange, *Antike Kunst* 4 (1961) pp. 69 ff.; *Studien zur Geschichte des spätantiken Porträts* (Oslo, 1933) p. 76; see also G. von Kaschnitz-Weinberg, "Spättrömische Porträts," *Die Antike* 2 (1926) pp. 36–60, especially pp. 54 ff.; C. Albizzati, *Historia* 3 (1929) pp. 422 ff.

Nazionale in Rome (Figure 30)¹² and in the Glyptothek in Munich.¹³ The head of Arcadius in Istanbul (Figures 31, 32)¹⁴ shows similar stylistic features that distinguish it from the portrait of Valentinian II from Aphrodisias.¹⁵ Among the few portraits of women of this period we find this style in the portrait of an empress in Timgad.¹⁶

L'Orange termed this style "subtiler Stil" and saw in it a further development of the "schöne Stil" under Theodosius, to be dated in the time of Arcadius and Honorius.¹⁷ It seems to me that these two styles could well have existed side by side in the period of the Theodosian dynasty. The portraits of Valentinian II and of Arcadius, mentioned above, are at the most ten years apart, and the portrait from Timgad may even be as early as about 370,¹⁸ so that if we consider it as showing the characteristics of the "subtile" style, the latter would appear during the entire last third of the fourth century. However this may be, the Toulouse head seems to belong stylistically to this group and should be dated, therefore, in the last decades of the fourth century and not later than the very beginning of the fifth century.

Since we have no precise data about the provenance of the head, we cannot determine the place of its origin

with any degree of certainty. However, the high quality of the workmanship makes it likely that it was made in one of the artistic centers of the late Roman world, and the fact that it seems to have been in Toulouse for some time before the compilation of the 1865 catalogue points perhaps to the West rather than the East. The only certainty seems to be that we have here one of the masterpieces of Theodosian portrait sculpture.

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12. G. von Kaschnitz-Weinberg, *Die Antike* 2 (1926) pp. 56–57, fig. 12; L'Orange, *Studien zur Geschichte des spätantiken Porträts* (Oslo, 1933) cat. no. 102, figs. 194–195; *id.*, *Antike Kunst* 4 (1961) p. 69, pl. 28, 1–2. B. M. Felletti Maj, *Museo Nazionale Romano, I ritratti* (Rome, 1953) no. 323.

13. C. Albizzati, *Historia* 3 (1929) pp. 422 ff., figs. 13–15; L'Orange, *Studien zur Geschichte des spätantiken Porträts* (Oslo, 1933) cat. no. 101, figs. 192–193; *id.*, *Antike Kunst* 4 (1961) p. 69, pl. 28, 3–4.

14. N. Firath, "A Late Antique Imperial Portrait Recently Discovered at Istanbul," *American Journal of Archaeology* 55 (1951) pp. 67–71, with figs. 1–5; W. F. Volbach, *Frühchristliche Kunst* (Munich, 1958) pls. 56, 57.

15. Inan and Rosenbaum, *Roman and Early Byzantine Portrait Sculpture in Asia Minor* (London, 1966) no. 66, pl. 42, 1–2 (with

further bibliography). Compare especially the profile views, where the difference between the two is most obvious and the stylistic affinity between the head of Arcadius and the Toulouse portrait most conspicuous, for instance in the modeling of the cheeks and the chin.

16. R. Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts*, pl. 89; B. M. Felletti Maj, *Critica d'Arte* 6 (1941) pp. 82–83, no. 25; compare also the head of a woman in Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Poulsen, *Catalogue* (1951) no. 680 a, p. 474, *Billedtavler*, pl. 57; B. M. Felletti Maj, *Critica d'Arte* 6 (1941) p. 82, no. 23, pl. 47, 8.

17. *Antike Kunst* 4 (1961) p. 69; see also his earlier similar statements in *Studien zur Geschichte des spätantiken Porträts* (Oslo, 1933) pp. 76–77.

18. R. Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts*, pp. 192–193.