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Constantinople from Nuremberg Chronicle 1491; image is a woodcut by Michael Wolgemut (1434–1519)

The urban language of early Constantinople

The changing roles of the arts and architecture in the formation of the new capital and the new consciousness

Gordana Fontana-Giusti

The complexity and elusiveness of the history of art and architecture in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages have been acknowledged most notably through the work and legacy of Alois Riegl.¹ More recently, this subject was addressed in the book by Hans Peter L'Orange,² who studied the relationship between the arts and the broader values of the period. Equally, a more profound and multifaceted approach is required within architecture, its theory and its historiography building upon the exemplary work of Krautheimer and Ćurčić.³ This chapter will focus on the status of architecture, related arts and the change of consciousness in the fourth century AD in the context of the new capital – Constantinople, the imperial seat for over a millennium, that had survived destructions, and social upheavals, Crusades and assault, resulting in emergence and disappearance of many art and architectural works.

Focusing on early Constantinople (c. AD 314–c.337) and the status of the arts and architecture at the time, the analysis observes the city that had managed to regenerate and redefine itself several times. The chapter argues about the way in which this was possible and made achievable by incorporating arts and the knowledge of antiquity into the running of the everyday life of the Empire. The new capital city has in this way contributed to the formation of a new mind-set in the early Middle Ages.

In the Preface to his collected seminal works on Constantinople, contemporary historian and probably the most prolific scholar on Constantinople Cyril Mango (b. 1928) states that the Byzantine capital and its history were never clearly delineated.⁴ In constructing the city's history, the scholarship had to draw from stories, chronicles, the lives of the saints and theological treatises of the period, while being indebted to the European connoisseurs and travellers who had observed, taken notes and sketched in the course of their journeys. Mango

argues about the fragility and scarcity of documents and adds that most of the time we are only imagining this ancient capital.⁵ In his works Mango was filling this lacuna as he made the city his focus in the same way in which Krautheimer and Ćurčić have contributed to the architectural history of Byzantium.

The making of Constantine's *Polis*

The city was part of the imperial project of building the new capital – the New Rome – by reconstructing the small ancient town of Byzantium, chosen by Constantine following the military victory over his rivals in AD 312. This victory in the battle at Milvian Bridge has been linked to Constantine's legendary vision of the cross as the sign in which he was to succeed.⁶ The vision was followed by the Emperor's Edict of Milan in AD 313 authorising the licence for Christians to worship freely.⁷

According to William C. Morey, Constantine 'was a man of wider views than Diocletian, and had even a greater genius for organization. The work which Diocletian began, Constantine completed.'⁸ Morey argues that it was Constantine who had decisively shaped the Roman imperial project by giving it the final form in which it had exercised its great influence upon modern governments. In other words, through the variety of institutional engagements on different levels, spanning military victories to urban design, Constantine had shaped the legacy of the Roman Empire. It was not so much the early imperialism of Augustus, Morey argues, as the later imperialism of Constantine that had an impact on the subsequent empires of medieval and early modern Europe. The role of Constantine was therefore one of statesman, political reformer and originator of the new Roman capital city.

Historical documents record that on 8th November 324 the city limits were established on the edge of the Bosphorus.⁹ The emperor had apparently overseen the city's official dedication in a series of ceremonies in the new urban core.¹⁰ According to the available documents, the process of rebuilding the 'New Rome' was completed on 11th May 330, five and a half years after the initiation in a burst of building activity.¹¹ Little is known about this 'instant city' and a great deal remains speculation. The physical evidence is fragmentary, as the remains and ruins that were left at the end of the fifteenth century were gradually absorbed into the fabric of the modern metropolis. We know that monuments and streets with numerous palaces were built during these five and a half years,

as Roman advanced building technology had been fully applied. The techniques of creating large-span viaducts and aqueducts were in place, as was the science of building roads, fortresses, palaces and bridges.¹²

Constantinople was a complex, multi-dimensional city; initiated by the pagan ritual it was placed under the protection of the tutelary Fortune even though the city was to embrace Christianity.¹³ In this respect there are competing streams of interpretation based upon the claims of different historiographers. Some argue that the city was supposed to be Christian in its dedication, while others have related it unequivocally to Rome's pagan tradition. A re-examination of historical documents leads to the conclusion that while religious concerns were indeed the underlining component in determining the plan of the city, the city of Constantine was never meant to be exclusively for Christians.¹⁴ In other words, religious concerns were an important but not the only defining element of urban design. The main objective was to create a capital for all inhabitants that would celebrate the imperial rule and provide stability for the Empire spreading east.

The role of the new capital

During the second decade of the fourth century new structures and ostentatious public spaces were superimposed by Constantine's architects upon the existing city of Byzantium – a medium-sized local urbanity with some building work undertaken by the Emperor Severus. These included the Severan wall that delineated the protected core of the city. Constantine had a new wall built and laid out the city on a larger scale, adorning it with novel monumental buildings. The building of the 'New Rome' is described in one of the chronicles:

He renewed the original walls of the city of Byzas and made many additions to them which he joined to the ancient walls and he called the city Constantinople. He also completed the Hippodrome which he decorated with bronze statues and other embellishment, and made in it a *loge* for the emperor to watch (the games from) in imitation of the one in Rome. He built a big palace near the said Hippodrome and connected it with the *loge* of the Hippodrome by an ascending staircase called *cochlias*. He also constructed a big and very beautiful forum and set up in a centre of it a tall column of purple Theban stone worthy of admiration. At the top of this column he set up a big statue of himself with rays on his head, which bronze statue he had brought from Phrygia. The same Emperor Constantine removed from Rome the so-called Palladium and placed it in the forum that he had built underneath the column (bearing) his statue:

this is stated by some inhabitants of Byzantium who have heard it by way of tradition. He had also offered a bloodless sacrifice and confessed the name Anthousa on the Tyche of the city he had renewed.¹⁵

The urban design thus involved the symbolic reconnection with Rome by means of the Palladium, the enhancement of the city plan, the building of grand imperial buildings and the redesign of public spaces of the new capital. The public squares were in most cases completed with the placement of statuary.

The questions that this chapter addresses are: on a general level, what did the formation of the new capital achieve? What kinds of investments in the arts and practices had the creation of this city incorporated? What were the architectural methods used in the making of the institutions such as the Christian Church and the Empire within the city space? What was the role of the statuary in this respect and within a wider epistemological context? What were the effects of this approach upon the city space and the new urban psyche?

The imperial investment in the arts and architecture of the new capital

The making of the new capital meant a sweeping break from the traditions of the old empire. The city of Rome was packed with memories of paganism and relics from the republic. Constantine desired to radically renew the empire and to give it a novel well-positioned centre.¹⁶ The new capital was considered better placed for defending Roman territory, as the site of the old Greek colony, in the confines of Europe and Asia. This site was regarded favourably for commerce as its port had deep water facilities. Above all, the city was planned for the establishment of a system of government that was considered superior. The formal character of this system was drawing from its Graeco-Roman tradition but also from the experiences of the nearby, long-standing Oriental empires.

It has been understood that the natural function of the old city of Byzantium was to be a doorkeeper to the Black Sea and to tax any related trade. However, the customary assertions about the city's special geographical position and its advantages need to be put under scrutiny.¹⁷ Apart from the exaggerated claims about the conveniences of its location, a number of drawbacks were suffered by the city, such as exposure to attacks from the hinterland, and a lack of sufficient sources of drinking-water. More alarmingly, the new capital did not immediately attract a significant population.

Still, despite these initial difficulties, the city had managed to prosper due

to the enormous effort and significant imperial investment. The nature of this investment was diverse, including people's skills and knowledge about the arts, the latest building technology and the direct supply of treasures such as the ancient statuary. The transfer of knowledge also included the concentrated sum total of learning and practice of the Liberal Arts and architecture as developed in Late Antiquity.¹⁸

The learning of the liberal arts centred on the *egknklios paideia*, 'the customary, general education'.¹⁹ The more specialised knowledge of architecture was based on the actual practice and related commentaries.²⁰ Indeed, the position of architecture and its discourse is not clear, as it was not the art but *techne*.²¹ There are few ancient records on architecture in general, and the only remaining text is the one by Vitruvius.²² Although we do not have direct evidence that would link this treatise to the making of Constantinople, it is probable that Vitruvius' book (or another one of a similar kind) was available and in use. *De architectura* was a useful manual for the dissemination of Roman architecture throughout the Empire. Vitruvius, a Roman architect and engineer (c. 80 BC–c. 15 BC) had introduced a number of Greek architectural concepts such as order, arrangement, eurhythmy, symmetry, propriety and economy, and had compiled ancient mathematical knowledge such as that of Philo of Byzantium of the second century BC. Philo's work incorporated *Isagoge* – an introduction to mathematics, *Mochlica* – on general mechanics, and *Limenopoeica* – on harbour building. It is likely that other commentaries on specific temples were still circulated in the fourth century separate from Vitruvius'. These sources of knowledge would be involved and directly relevant for the building of Constantinople.²³

The investment was equally significant in respect of the imported technology coming directly from the old capital. The young and ambitious builders, architects and artisans were taking advantage of alluring salaries and exemptions from the taxes legislated by the Emperor if they were to join the building effort in Constantinople.²⁴ The exemplary Roman structures at the time that could have served as models would include the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine, completed in 312. This was the largest edifice to be constructed, combining the features from Roman baths such as those of Diocletian.

In addition to this investment, treasures such as numerous statuary that were shipped over from Rome and elsewhere were the most direct and instant contribution to the making of the new capital. The lavish statuary marked imperial power and equipped the city with numerous significations. The central and changing role of the statuary will be addressed later on.

The configuration of the city space, its streets and its architecture

Constantinople made use of the existing city plan of Byzantium whose main features were left in place. The Emperor's intentions were to extend the city utilising the functioning elements. Constantine's architects had therefore retained the two main squares of the Graeco-Roman, largely Severan city: the Strategion (nearby modern Sirkeci station) and the Tetrastoon (to the south of Hagia Sofia) that were linked by the north to south street. The architects of the new capital also decided to extend the east to west colonnaded street, believed to be built by Severus, thus making it the main artery that came to be known as Mese. Constantine's own Forum, where the famous Porphyry Column stood, was sited just outside the ancient city walls on the axis to the Mese.²⁵

Constantine's architects traced the outline of the new city over the old one, even if the former remained largely unbuilt and uninhabited. This meant that the principal street was projected to run straight from the Milion to the Capitol along a distance of 1850m. At the Capitol the Mese branched: one segment of it extended into the northwest past Constantine's mausoleum in the Church of the Holy Apostles, the other southwest to the Golden Gate of the Constantine walls. The only transversal north to south street that can be traced with a degree of certainty ran from the Golden Horn.²⁶

The Mese was thus the first artery that was subsequently followed by a series of colonnaded streets in the manner of Greek *stoa*e that generously adorned the city space. The city's monumental development was exemplified further in *emboloi* – small roads with colonnades and shops that led up to a central street. These, together with *Tetrastoon*, a columned porch around the courtyard, the Basilica, the Baths of Zeuxippos and the Hippodrome, were the main features in the Constantinian plan. The streets from the old plan were either completed or rebuilt, thus providing the new city centre with the relevant imperial institutions.

The old Tetrastoon was redesigned and dedicated to Constantine's mother Augusta Helena, and named Augusteion. The silver statue of Augusta was placed at the square.²⁷ The Augusteion's scale was grand: estimates range between 1,750 and 3,500 square metres. This large *chora* – like public space in the heart of the city was thus best suited for ceremonial public functions.²⁸ As such, Augusteion remained the place of attraction, natural convergence and gathering.

As mentioned above, the city did not suddenly break from its pagan past; two temples (dedicated to Rhea/Kybele and to Tyche/Fortuna) were also erected by Constantine and his architects in this area.²⁹

The liturgy, its set-up and the early churches

The Basilica of early Constantinople was inherited from the Severan period. It was initially designed as a rectangular peristyle court accommodating a public library, the university and the court of law. For Constantine, the change in liturgy was inevitable, due to the newly established position of the church whereby a permanent and unchangeable liturgy was required. Historians have argued that it was because Constantine viewed himself as God's vicar on earth; consequently God became seen as the Emperor of Heaven. Hence the liturgy became a ceremony performed before the Lord or before his representative, the Bishop. Krautheimer and Ćurčić describe it:

the bishop, clad in garments of high magistrate, entered the church in solemn procession, preceded by the insignia of his official rank, candles and book. Flanked by his presbyters, he was seated on a throne, the *sella curulis* of a Roman official.³⁰

It is important to remember that the basilica was the structure best suited for the new liturgy because it contained a big covered meeting hall of the tribunal. Here the magistrate and his assessors would sit on a podium next to a shrine that sheltered the effigy of the Emperor. Originally Roman justice was dispensed only in the presence of the Emperor (or his substitute, the effigy). By an extended analogy the priest did the same, and the set-up became the *mise-en-scène* for Christian liturgy with the podium becoming an altar space.³¹

However, hardly anything remained of Constantine's church buildings in the new capital. In addition to the Severan basilica, the first Hagia Sophia and Hagia Irene were built, but were replaced in the sixth and the eighth centuries respectively. Hagia Irene reputedly stands on the site of a pre-Christian temple and is believed to be the first church in the capital built by Constantine's architects. Hagia Sophia, built next to the Emperor's palace, was later famously replaced by Justinian. The first Hagia Sophia was a large basilica with double aisle and galleries. It was short and wide, and had an atrium and perhaps a propylaeum. The edifice probably resembled the Basilica of Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and was built with the expertise and technology similar to that applied to the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine in Rome.

There are no traces of the fourth-century Church of the Holy Apostles, replaced in 536 by Justinian's church. According to Eusebius, the Church of the Holy Apostles rose in the centre of a wide courtyard, surrounded by meeting halls, baths and pools. It was designed on the basis of the cross. The ceiling

was gilded and coffered, covering all four arms, while the walls were wrapped with marble. According to this source, a drum, well lit through bronze gridded windows, rose over the crossing, and was apparently surmounted by a conical roof. Below this drum stood the sarcophagus of Constantine, apparently flanked by piers inscribed to the Twelve Apostles. The sarcophagus stood within an enclosure where the liturgy was held at the altar. Thus the building was the mausoleum of the Emperor and a martyrium dedicated to the Apostles.³² Over the years the central position of Constantine's sarcophagus became inappropriate, as the relics of the apostles were brought in in 356 to 357. The Emperor's remains were later removed into a separate, adjoining mausoleum of a traditional plan, circular and domed. *Apostoleion*, as it became known, was a martyrium, as were the Basilica at the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the Holy Nativity at Bethlehem and the tomb of St Peter.³³ In its plan the Church of the Holy Apostles was innovative. The martyrium, rather than being hidden underground or appended to the nave and aisles of a basilica as at Bethlehem, became the very core of the structure. Krautheimer and Ćurčić argue that a new type of martyrium has thus emerged, a self-sufficient structure centred on the focus of worship.

This kind of legacy by Constantine corresponds to his general goal for the adoration he was aiming to establish for both the Church and the Empire. Subsequently, during the later fourth and early fifth centuries, we find many churches that have copied this arrangement, including the plan with its connotations of the True Cross, the dedication to the Apostles and the centrality of martyrdom.³⁴

The secular structures

The impact of Constantine's Holy Apostles and other buildings is impossible to determine, as nothing of the palaces, colonnaded streets or public buildings attributed to Constantine has survived.

Modelling the Church, the Empire and the mores of the imperial life

Constantine believed that one of the imperfections of the old empire was the fact that the emperor was not sufficiently esteemed and cherished. For this reason,

and in addition to his large-scale building project, he adopted the insignia of adoration on his personal clothing such as the diadem and the elaborate rich robes of the Asiatic monarchs.

This is not a minor point, since the roles of ornament and splendour that were deployed in the framing and representation of imperial power need to be acknowledged. Constantine and the protagonists of his ideology of the new Christian state did not consider the robes to be simply luxuries of clothing as did wealthy Romans. In establishing the practices and ceremonies for the new religion, they embraced a different attitude drawn mainly from the Old and the New Testaments. Constantine's priests and courtiers understood the question of robes within the philosophy of the Scriptures. As in ancient Israel, the primacy of clothing had a metaphysical significance associated with the Hebrew concept of *chabod*, which means splendour, glory and honour, but also importance. Biblical tradition attributed the institution of priesthood to Aaron who was the one who wore the 'glorious garment' (*beget chabod*) (*Sirach 45.9*).³⁵ This association between robe and priesthood, between clothing and service to God, is embedded in the biblical tradition as God Himself 'clothed with honour and Majesty,/who coverest thyself with light as with a garment' (*Psalm 104.12*).³⁶

Closely connected with God's garments is His dwelling place, His habitation – the Ark of the Tabernacle that Moses founded with Aaron's priesthood. Robes and homes come together for a priest, and the Ark was built at the same time as the priestly robes were made (*Exodus 39*). Furthermore, Solomon's legendary construction of the Temple represented the crowning achievement of this outlook: the House of God was associated with His *chabod*, with his glory.³⁷

There are scholarly works on the parallels between the project of Constantine's and Solomon's construction of the Temple,³⁸ in particular in relation to Constantine's undertakings in Jerusalem.³⁹ Krautheimer and Ćurčić remind us that, layman though he was, and baptised probably only on his deathbed, Constantine considered himself not to be Solomon but 'the thirteenth Apostle, Christ's vicar on earth – an aspect of the Divinity incarnate, the Invincible Sun, the Sear of Justice'.⁴⁰ Constantine believed that he had been divinely appointed to lead Christ's Church to victory and to preside in person at Church Councils that he had convened in Nicea in 325. He pressed for the settling of dogmatic controversies, and used the machinery of government to implement decisions of the Councils. Constantine employed the unlimited means of the imperial power to raise the standing of the Church. By the time of his death in 337 this well-constructed interpenetration of ecclesiastical and imperial power had been achieved.⁴¹

The historical significance of the First Nicean Council was in being the earliest to attain consensus in the Church through an assembly representing all of Christendom.⁴² In pursuing his project, Constantine had included the adoption of the Old Testament while reorganising the court on a thoroughly Eastern model. His oriental-style court consisted of officials who surrounded the Emperor and were raised to the rank of nobility.⁴³ The establishment of the rank of nobles with their privileges and duties was of strategic importance to the longevity of the Eastern Roman Empire.

The legacy of employing the nobility for the benefit of the state has subsequently been adopted by many courts in Europe. The chief officer of the court was the grand chamberlain who was in charge of the imperial palace. The chancellor had a duty of supervision of the court officials. He also had to receive foreign ambassadors (an institution that had been invented under the Byzantine Empire).⁴⁴ The quaestor drew up and issued the imperial edicts while the treasurer-general had to control the public revenues. The master of the privy purse had to manage the Emperor's private estate and the two commanders of the bodyguard.

While the concept of responsibility that comes with high rank (*noblesse oblige*) had already existed during the time of Homer, the *topos* had here reinstated itself within the Christian tradition.⁴⁵ In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus endorses the concept by saying, 'From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded' (Luke 12.48). Constantine may have been inspired by the Gospels and he may have felt that it was his duty to put into practice the suggestion from Luke and other evangelists.

The city and its mythic legacy

The Trojan Homero/Virgilian connection is not accidental either. The correlation is likely because the new capital was peculiarly situated in the proximity of the ancient city of Troy, saturated with the myths of Aeneas and the narratives of the Graeco-Roman past.⁴⁶

In this context, the gesture of bringing back to Asia Minor the legendary Palladium – a wooden statue (*xoanon*) of Athena Pallas, allegedly stolen by Odysseus and Diomedes from the citadel of Troy and taken to the future city of Rome by Aeneas – is a striking parallel. It opens up a space for the hypothesis that Constantine was not simply going east, but *returning* to the East. The idea of home-coming is the stronger narrative compared to the idea of relocation.

Following this logic, Constantine could be seen as the emperor who brought the people of Rome back to their legendary roots in Asia Minor.

The fact that he chose to place the mythic Palladium under his own celebrated Porphyry Column in his forum suggests the importance this myth had for Constantine personally. The actuality that it was subsequently ravaged, probably by the crusaders in 1204, suggests that the fight and the strife for legitimacy over this mythic ancestry had continued for centuries after the presumed Palladium's return by Constantine.

Constantinople was therefore a uniquely complex and multifaceted urban and imperial entity. It drew from the myths, arts, knowledge and technology of the ancient Greeks and Romans, incorporating the principles of their achievements within what was projected to be the heart of the Christian Empire. In doing so, the city embodied the old traditions in a novel way believed to be suitable for the new capital.

Constantinople never gave up on its symbolic and religious traditions either, as the saga of the wooden *xoanon* and numerous other statues testify. The religious buildings of all denominations, be it the temples to Kybele, Fortuna, Haghia Sophia or the Haghia Eirene, were part of a large imperial building campaign involving both the pagans and Christians. In this respect Constantine's city crucially established Christianity not as a conquering force but as one religion, albeit dominant, among many.⁴⁷

The temples and the churches were both positioned in the city centre although detached from the Augusteion and from each other. This arrangement was meant to provide for a variety of religious buildings and sacred spaces, as well as for their safe detachment from the flux of urban life and from each other. The precarious balance was struck by the careful disposition of the series of discrete temples, monuments and their surrounding precincts.⁴⁸

Constantinople therefore provided a ground and created the space within which the Emperor's vision about religious freedom could come to life following the 313 Edict of Milan that was the official guarantee and the inspiration for these developments. Without the actual conditions provided on the ground of Constantinople, the legislation might not have gained its lasting credibility.

This accommodation of different ethnicities and religious cultures was an important part of Constantine's plan. Decisively, the common formal features for all were found in the architectural language of Late Antiquity. All spaces of the capital were determined by using this language that included rich marble towering columns, arches, complex brickwork structures, and a variety of vaults and domes – all prime features of Roman imperial architecture. Typically this

language included another central element in the creation of public spaces: the statuary.

This style of building did not remain intact for long. New concerns emerged as both social and private life gradually moved inward. The fact that churches such as Haghia Eirene and Haghia Sophia were later rebuilt in a different manner suggests that their ancient form was no longer considered adequate. Above all this applied to interiors that were increasingly used for meditation and prayer. As such they required a certain design and appearance that could correspond to the heavenly landscape of Christianity – a particular quality that architects of the Justinian era strived to capture.

The statuary, its role, prestige and subsequent demise

From its early beginnings in the fourth century the city of Constantinople contained a great number of ancient statuary previously not seen in other medieval cities. This has been referred to by a number of sources from Zosimus onwards. Recently the statuary of Constantinople was studied and addressed by Sarah Bassett.⁴⁹ Bassett claims that the creation of the collection of effigies was consciously planned and conceived by the Emperor and his advisers. She argues the point with inspirational eloquence; the attention to statuary had been very significant at the time of Constantine, and Bassett's claim remains a strong possibility. However, Bassett fails to present the final, conclusive evidence about the statuary being brought into the city on Bosphorus as part of this preconceived plan.

The acquired effigies of Constantinople have included the pre-fourth-century antiquities that were transported from the cities and sanctuaries of the Roman Empire to the newly founded capital. Believed to be organised in a series of related groupings spread throughout the city's public spaces, the sculptures of antiquity were apparently brought in in an attempt to create a 'civic identity' for the new city. As such, they were showing the city's history, the achievements of its founder and the magnificence of the Roman Empire.

In doing so, these instantly produced public spaces aimed to show off their prestige and to explain their unique urban pre-eminence. In this process the displacement and repositioning of the statuary, I would argue, demonstrate, confirm and follow the logic of the returned Palladium placed under Constantine's column.

Memory and the role of statuary and loci in rhetoric

The role of statuary within the city needs to be reviewed further. In doing so I shall refer to two separate theoretical sources and point out their relevance for an enhanced understanding of the role of statuary in urban space. One approach is relevant for our comprehension in respect of statues and memory; the other is instrumental to the overall insight into the emergence of the statuary in early antiquity and its role for the so-called bicameral mind.

There is little dilemma about the fact that statuary has been highly important in Antiquity. Effigies were often part of buildings, while they were equally indispensable as free-standing compositional items that articulated the quality of public spaces in ancient cities. The development of architecture and of sculpture is closely and inextricably linked, sometimes symbiotic and at other times a contest. The statuary was traditionally made for deities such as patrons of the city/polis, or for illustrious men – the practice was more associated with the Roman period. The effigy would be placed in the core of the city in order to address the sacred precinct important either for worshipping the divine or for paying respect to the ancestors and city founders. The statuary of *lupa* with Romulus and Remus adorned ancient Rome at every corner, as did the statues of Constantine and his mother Helena adorning early Constantinople. The public spaces with dedicated sculptures were the places of gathering and worship, especially during the days of the calendar when communities came together and evoked the ancestral past. The mechanism of how this phenomenon actually functioned in respect of memory could be best described by reference to the work of Frances Yates.⁵⁰ By looking at her text that explored the relevant ancient sources, it is possible to extrapolate Yates' ideas beyond the places of the house, as she had it, and to extend them into the urban context.

In Antiquity, argued Yates, memory was understood as the guardian of all knowledge. It was seen as the treasure house of inventions and its overall keeper, a function even more significant prior to the invention of the institution of the library.⁵¹ The art of memory centred on the description of the artificial memory outlining its bi-partite spatial structure containing places or backgrounds (*locis*) upon which the images (*imaginibus*) are set and memorised. Yates argued that the character of the images and that of the backgrounds must differ and be distinguishable and clearly visible. A well-outlined, distinct and balanced composition is crucial for maintaining its content within memory.⁵²

Following this line of reasoning about images placed upon the background of houses, it could be extrapolated that the statuary may have played an

analogous role as memorable images in the city, where the public squares acted as backgrounds.⁵³ In this context, especially memorable would be those statues that are conspicuous and that adhere long in our minds such as objects of exceptional history, size, distinction, beauty, or even exceptional ugliness. The statues collected for the New Rome would have fulfilled these requirements, because they were as a rule distinct for their splendour, provenance and high value. This would suggest that by means of their presence the statues were able to trigger memories related to the history of the Graeco-Roman world from whose regions they originated.

Furthermore, we need to consider not only the Palladium and the ancient statuary, but equally so the Christian relics. The documented travels by Constantine's mother Helena into the Holy Land and subsequent donations of the relics she brought back, including parts of the wooden cross of Christ and the relics of the Apostles, are of relevance here. The ancient statues and subsequently the Christian relics housed within the Constantinopolitan churches were essential for the new capital, as they provided the sites in the city space where memory could be exercised. The nature of this mechanism of 'con-memoration' was linked to the state of mind that was shaped in rituals, speeches and acts of dedication, rather than in creating archives.

The Emperor's urban project had therefore included and planned for the functioning of memory with the main roles being given to the effigy, to the relics housed in churches and to the overall configuration of the city space, the latter derived as the sum of layers of the newly positioned urban elements carefully superimposed upon the Severan grid.

Even if only intuitively, Constantine and his architects knew that the old Rome could not be right for the new state of mind, as it was saturated with its own significant places and its distinctive configuration embedded in the people's psyche. Constantine's *grand projet* on the Bosphorus included a careful rewriting of history and laying down conditions for the future. For the spatial inscriptions of this project the Emperor required a less inundated urban context.

The role of statuary in the urban setting of the New Rome was therefore essential. On the level of cultural history it provides a significant marker in the process of the development of human consciousness. This role of effigy has not often been considered within wider philosophical and epistemological context as it has usually been appreciated for its aesthetic and representational values. In order to highlight the epistemological role further I shall refer to the works of scholars who have maintained a profound interest and theoretical focus in this respect.

The emergence of the new consciousness

The statuary was revered because it was believed that effigy had certain properties for the human psyche of which the named art of memory could be just a trace. In that sense, where does the statuary of the new imperial capital stand in this process?

We shall briefly look at the selected texts that refer to both: the history of human mind and the history of sculpture. The relevant texts include a book by the American psychologist Julian Jaynes, who worked within this field in the 1970s, and of the contemporary theorist Iain McGilchrist. Jaynes defined the emergence of consciousness in his highly speculative book about early Mesopotamian statuary and the bicameral mind.⁵⁴ Thirty years later McGilchrist has elaborated on the divided brain and the making of the Western World in his seminal book comprising decades of his research.⁵⁵

Jaynes argues that the ancients did not always possess the power of introspective thinking; instead, they probably heard hallucinatory voices coming from the effigies, which they interpreted as those of their gods, king or chief. This interpretation points towards the origins of statuary as auditory, i.e. the effigies were not only looked at but listened to. In the course of the development of Western culture, the auditory aspect has gradually been lost as the vision overwhelmingly took over. The American psychologist argues that the change from the mode of thinking (which he called the bicameral mind) to consciousness (interpreted as the self-identification of interior mental states) occurred over a period of centuries about 3,000 years ago and was due to the development of metaphorical language and the emergence of writing.

Jaynes relates this phenomenon to the Mycenaean Greeks and uses Homer's *Iliad* as an example where the main characters act in response to the voices they hear (usually from their gods). Jaynes argues that the process of transformation of the human mind that followed took centuries. This implies that a large part of Antiquity was dominated by this underlying conversion of human consciousness. Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman statuary would therefore be implicated in this process.

According to Jaynes, voices and the bicameral mind were gradually ceasing to function so that in Late Antiquity the voices coming from statues gradually unfolded, transformed and flattened into another category: writing. Due to the invention and the practice of writing, the role of the auditory voice became replaced by the visual sign. From then onwards human consciousness that was

previously tuned to speech and hearing became more adjusted to writing, signs and images. Consequently, the art of rhetoric that was concurrent to speeches, symposia and auditory functions was modified for the visual functions. Within this economy of transformation, the role of statuary was pivotal as it embodied (or was believed to embody) both the fading voices and the visual properties that were gradually gaining in prevalence. This phenomenon may explain why antiquity paid so much attention to the statuary and applied such skills into their making.

Ancient statuary was therefore not just representing the status of and giving legitimacy to the city. The effigy was profoundly important for the minds and understanding of the citizens. The statues were addressing people's knowledge of the world and of themselves (*gnothi seauton*).⁵⁶ In that sense the striving towards naturalism and liveliness that is evident in the progress and maturity of the ancient statuary were most probably attempts to reach out to the voices that were already vanishing during the Late Antiquity.

This explanation may be instrumental in understanding why the subsequent early Christian direction towards the abstraction in sculpture and arts in general could be interpreted not as inferior or lacking in liveliness, but rather as a mark of the newly found self-confidence coming from within. The new faith in its confidence did not need to reach out to the voices of the effigy as it was searching for pronouncements from within oneself, from within the subject. In doing so, as it has been noted, early Christianity established and affirmed the category of the subject.

This strategically important turn inward that would mark the lives of individuals within Western culture for centuries was part of the formation of the consciousness that is based on self-identification with interior mental processes. The evidence from both the Homeric epics and the early drama testifies that this was not always the case. The metamorphosis that occurred is consistent with the emerging rhetorical categories of Late Antiquity concerned with the interpretation of the statuary – the notion of *ekphrasis* being central. Through *ekphrasis*, the writers disclosed the details of the emotions and intellectual experience in observation and contemplation of the individual or groups of statuary.

Historians Cyril Mango and Sarah Bassett have argued that as a result of *ekphrasis* the individual passages in early medieval texts are often 'long on interpretation and short on documentation'.⁵⁷ While this is an understandable claim, this condition is not to be seen as a drawback or a pitiful lack of evidence as these authors seem to imply. Rather, it could be understood as positive evidence about the state of consciousness at the time.⁵⁸ This state of consciousness was

less concerned with the physical materiality of the statuary (proportions, colour, quality of the stone, etc.) and more with the effects it was having upon the mind of the observer. The experience that evokes perceptions, thoughts and feelings in relation to past events was what the effigies were meant to trigger and convey.

In doing so the statues mattered because they were able to make a link to both the perceptive and associative knowledge that formed the ancient human psyche. We have lost the access to that level of perceptive knowledge whose traces the ancient statues still embodied as the essential link to the knowledge of the past. This connection was the reason why Constantine embarked upon the great project of the removal of effigies to the new capital. It was probably still possible and meaningful at the time to try to reach out towards the statues' hidden voices. Today we appear to have lost the ability to recognise these traces that Jaynes struggled to rejuvenate.

The minds of the ancients sensed, understood and operated within this delicate condition; because it mattered to them profoundly, the weighty statues were repeatedly shipped around the Mediterranean. From Egypt to Greece, around the Roman World and back, many of the sculptures ended up in the New Rome not to simply adorn the new capital, but to stand as pointers of the experiences and of the knowledge related to the Mediterranean historical and mythic past. The search for these effects of the statuary most probably achieved its climax here in the city on the Bosphorus in the fourth century.

The context of the gradual demise of sculpture is marked by the rise and institutionalisation of writing, contributing to the emerging category of literature. When the religion based on scripture became finally officially established by Constantine, there was very little left for statuary to do, in an active sense. Its downfall as the epistemological category was inevitable, in the context where letters and literature steadily took over the tasks of memory and rhetoric, and consequently the practices of education, arts and, crucially, religion.⁵⁹

By the fifth and sixth centuries, the statuary in Constantinople became futile – an ornament of the past – clunky, impractical and useless. At the same time, large churches with impressive interiors were built and the Imperial Library and the Scriptorium flourished. Constructed during the reign of Constantine's heir to the throne Constantius II (AD 337–361), the library was believed to have housed approximately 100,000 volumes of ancient texts.⁶⁰ This explains why the practice of collecting statues, having continued to exist for some time after Constantine, ceased soon after. In the sixth century, during the reign of Justinian, the practice of reusing transported effigies had disappeared. The practice of writing chronicles took over. The nature of public life also changed.

Crucially, it became more dependent upon reading, libraries and interior spaces such as palaces and monasteries where the learned congregated to read and interpret texts. The urban spaces of Constantinople turned inward, as the statue gave way to the book and public squares became substituted by salons, while temple precincts were replaced by richly vaulted and complexly domed church spaces.

This condition often raised the question about the so-called 'closing of the mind' that has traditionally been referred to by the historians in relation to Late Antiquity. This belief is gradually losing its former authority in light of recent historical work, as the 'closing of the public life' need not necessarily be interpreted as the 'closing of the mind'.⁶¹

Today, the Constantinopolitan scholarship on arts and architecture is again lively because of the need to address the missing part that art history and its powerful Renaissance studies had traditionally tended to undermine: the wider cultural and epistemological character of Byzantine arts and architecture exemplified in its pivotal role in providing the continuity and transformation of ancient experiences and knowledge. Significantly, this transmission has occurred in the libraries, churches, monasteries and scriptoria of Constantinople, where scholars who lived in this adorned city reinterpreted the events of classical antiquity and wrote about their own experiences. While this process is a wider phenomenon not restricted to the capital, it is important to recognise both the underlining continuity and the transformation of the ancient knowledge that was secured via the arts and architecture of Constantinople.⁶²

The city and its artefacts have acted both as storage and props for the human psyche, its memory and its overall workings. In this sense the urban project of making the new capital was truly grand and multifaceted. Unfortunately, Constantinople's medieval unrivalled influence and supremacy was in part the reason why it was subjected to destruction. The ancient capital presented the most attractive and rich target for both the Crusaders in 1204 and the Ottomans in 1453. Many small artefacts looted, often modelled on ancient statuary, are today on display in various museums.

With regard to the general question about the intercultural transmission in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, it is up to every generation of scholars to discover how deep they are prepared to dig into the subject. As always, this is decided in relation to the present and current views of the future. As one twentieth-century architectural historian has noticed, every analysis seeks only to measure the effects it sets in motion in order to change itself according to

the intervening transformations.⁶³ The certainties that history presents could be read as expressions of repressions. ‘True history’ is not that which presents itself with indisputable ‘proofs’ but that which recognises its own limits and its arbitrariness. The examples of fragments, failed works and unrealised attempts raise issues traditionally suppressed by the completeness of works that have attained seminal status. Errors, demises and erasures often speak more clearly about the difficulties of particular utopias than the grandest of celebrated monuments.

Notes

- 1 The source that is referred to is the seminal work by Riegl, Alois. *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, trans. Jacqueline Jung. New York: Zone Books, 2004; in addition, Curtius, Ernest Robert. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991, still presents a good and reliable twentieth-century synthesis of the work undertaken by previous generations of scholars. Further sources: Brown, Peter. *The Body and Society, Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988; Jacques Le Goff’s work on the body in the Middle Ages. In Le Goff, Jacques. ‘Head or Heart? The Political Use of Body Metaphors in the Middle Ages’, trans. Patricia Ranum. *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, Part Three. New York: Zone Books, 1989, pp. 13–26; Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure*, trans. Robert Hurley. London: Penguin Books, 1987, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 3, and *The Care of the Self*, trans. Robert Hurley. London: Penguin Books, 1990.
- 2 L’Orange, Hans Peter. *Art Forms and Civic Life in the Late Roman Empire*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- 3 Krautheimer, Richard and Ćurčić, Slobodan. *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*. London: Penguin Books, 1986.
- 4 Mango states that we can recall and imagine Istanbul of the 1780s in Melling’s and Choiseul-Gouffier’s albums and we can possibly do the same with respect to Istanbul of Suleyman the Magnificent as captured by Melchior Lorich (Lorck) in the second half of the sixteenth century. Mango, Cyril. *Studies on Constantinople*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1993. Preface.
- 5 In this context Mango mentions the work of Gilbert Dagron. See Dagron. *Naissance d’une capitale*. Paris: Bibliothèque byzantine, Études 7, 1974.
- 6 Before the battle at Milvian Bridge near Rome, Constantine had a legendary vision of the cross revealed to him: ‘this is the sign under which you will win.’ This scene,

known as ‘in hoc signo vinces’, has been depicted in the *Stanze di Raffaello*, 1520, in the Vatican, by Giulio Romano, who was an assistant to Rafael at the time. It also exists as statuary by Bernini (1670) currently also at the Vatican.

7 The Edict of Milan states:

When I, Constantine Augustus, as well as I, Licinius Augustus, fortunately met near Mediolanurn (Milan), and were considering everything that pertained to the public welfare and security, we thought, among other things which we saw would be for the good of many, those regulations pertaining to the reverence of the Divinity ought certainly to be made first, so that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred; whence any Divinity whatsoever in the seat of the heavens may be propitious and kindly disposed to us and all who are placed under our rule. And thus by this wholesome counsel and most upright provision we thought to arrange that no one whatsoever should be denied the opportunity to give his heart to the observance of the Christian religion, of that religion which he should think best for himself, so that the Supreme Deity, to whose worship we freely yield our hearts may show in all things His usual favour and benevolence. Therefore, your Worship should know that it has pleased us to remove all conditions whatsoever, which were in the rescripts formerly given to you officially, concerning the Christians and now any one of these who wishes to observe Christian religion may do so freely and openly, without molestation.

From Lactantius, *De Mort. Pers.*, ch. 48. opera, ed. O.F. Fritzsche, II, p. 288 sq. (Bibl. Patr. Ecc. Lat. XI). Department of History: *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, Vol. 4, pp. 1, 28–30.

- 8 Morey, William C. *Outlines of Roman History*. New York, Cincinnati, OH, and Chicago, IL: American Book Company, 1901. Morey based his arguments on reading Eutropius, an Ancient Roman pagan historian of the latter half of the fourth century. Eutropius held the office of secretary (*magister memoriae*) at Constantinople, accompanied the Emperor Julian (361–363) on his expedition against the Persians (363), and was alive during the reign of Valens (364–378), to whom he dedicates his *Breviarium historiae Romanae*.
- 9 Chron. Paschale I, 527–530. Mango, Cyril. *The Art of Byzantine Empire 312-1453 Sources and Documents*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press and Medieval Academy of America, 1986, p. 7.
- 10 For more historical references on Constantinople see: Ostrogorski. *History of the Byzantine State*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986; Mango, Cyril. *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (Ive–VIIe siècles)*, 2nd edn. Études de topographie Byzantine, I–II, Paris, 1990; Mango, Cyril. *Studies on Constantinople*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1993; Mango, Cyril. “The

- Triumphal Way of Constantinople and the Golden Gate'. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 173–188; Mango, Cyril and Dagron, Gilbert (eds). *Constantinople and its Hinterland*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1995. The recent book by Bassett, Sarah. *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, was inspirational and instructive.
- 11 Zosimus. See Mango, *Studies on Constantinople*, op. cit., p. 119.
 - 12 For instance, large-scale aqueducts of a kind built in Segovia (second century AD), Spain and Nimes France (first century AD).
 - 13 Mango, *The Art of Byzantine Empire*, op. cit., and Mango, Cyril. *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome*. New York: Charles Scribner's, 1980, p. 7. n24.
 - 14 For historical sources on Constantinople, see Gilles, Pierre. *De Bosphoro Thracio libri tres De topographia Constantinopoleos*. Lyon, 1561; Leiden, 1632 and 1635; and Gilles, Pierre. *De topographia Constantinopoleos et de illius antiquitatibus libri quatuor*. Lyon, 1561; Leiden, 1661. The latter is Gilles' major work and there are subsequent eighteenth-century Venetian editions with enriched illustration.
 - 15 Chron. Paschale I, 527–530. See in Mango, *The Art of Byzantine Empire*, op. cit., p. 7.
 - 16 The notion of the 'centre' is important for Christians. It has a strong theological relevance as the centre emanates over the whole and holy (note the same origin of the two terms). I am grateful to my student Lindy Weston who has constantly pointed this out in his own work.
 - 17 See Mango, 'The Development of Constantinople as an Urban Centre', in *Studies on Constantinople*, op. cit., pp. 117–36.
 - 18 Curtius, *European Literature*, op. cit., p. 36. The history of European educational institutions could be traced back to the sophist Hippias of Elis, a contemporary of Socrates. He was regarded as the founder of the pedagogical system, whereby a core study was related to various fields of general knowledge (in Greek).
 - 19 Seneca's *Epistle 88* was the *locus classicus* about the arts and education. Seneca had discussed the 'artes liberales' and the 'studia liberalia' – both parts of the *egknklios paideia*. These arts were called 'liberal' because they were worthy of free men. Their purpose was not the achievement of material wealth. Painting, sculpture and other manual arts (*artes mechanicae*) were excluded, while music, being a mathematical subject, had a secured place in the circle of the liberal arts. It could be argued that, by the end of Antiquity, the liberal arts had become the sole authority on learning. Their number had been fixed at seven, and they were arranged in a sequence, which was kept throughout the Middle Ages: grammar, rhetoric, dialectic (the *trivium*), arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy (*quadrivium*), 37.
 - 20 Two dominant theories on the subject of the *artes* are: the patristic (of the early Church Fathers), and the secular-scholastic. In Constantinople they have existed

in parallel. They are not always easily separable, but they differ in their origin. Philo (20 BC–AD 50), a Jewish scholar from Alexandria, had already added Greek learning and philosophy to his Jewish interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, which he did by transforming the Hellenic sages into pupils of Moses. The Christian apologists of the second century, particularly Justin, took over the same idea and handed it down to the theologians of the Alexandrian school. Thus Clement of Alexandria (Titus Flavius Clemens, c. 150 BC–c. AD 215) drew the conclusion that Greek learning was established by God and that Christians needed it in order to understand the Scriptures. The Latin fathers were divided on the subject. Ambrose of Milan (333–397) knew Greek philosophy but opposed it.

- 21 As argued by Riegl in *Late Roman Art Industry*, op. cit. – the fourth and fifth century AD are the least covered periods in the history of arts and architecture.
- 22 Vitruvius. *The Ten Books On Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan. London: Dover Publications, 1960. Vitruvius was possibly *praefectus fabrum* officer in charge of artisans.
- 23 Vitruvius refers to Pytheos among others, a celebrated architect of the temple of Minerva in Priene in Asia Minor, not too distant from Constantinople. In his *Commentaries* Pytheos asserts that architects need to be accomplished in all sciences and arts even if they cannot reach perfection in each of them (Book 1, 12–17). Due to the influence of Vitruvius' treatise and its later dissemination these ideas have subsequently spread into most European languages and architectural theories. See Vitruvius, *The Ten Books On Architecture*, op. cit.
- 24 Mango, *The Art of Byzantine Empire*, op. cit.
- 25 Mango, *Studies on Constantinople*, op. cit., p. 123.
- 26 op. cit., p. 123.
- 27 St Helena, as she is known, has been credited for being the first pilgrim to Jerusalem. Upon her return she brought back the parts of the cross on which Christ was martyred, according to legends.
- 28 *Chora* is a (womblike) receptacle that can hold all and receive all. The concept has been discussed by Plato in *Timaeus* (49–53) in *The Collected Dialogues*, edited by E. Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. Bollingen Series. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989, and Derrida in 'Point de Folie – Maintenant l'architecture'. *AA Files*, No. 12. London: Architectural Association, 1986.
- 29 Zosimus, 'The Building of Constantinople', II, 30–31, in Pollitt. *The Art of Rome 753 BC–337 AD*, 212–213. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- 30 Krautheimer and Ćurčić, op. cit., p. 40.
- 31 Krautheimer and Ćurčić, op.cit., p. 42.
- 32 Eusebius, *The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine*, IV, 15, translation, revised by Ernest Cushing Richardson, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/vita-constantine.asp>.

- 33 Krautheimer and Ćurčić, op. cit., p. 69.
- 34 The copies of this arrangement are found at Milan, Ravenna, Ephesus, Antioch, at Gaza and Sichem. The Apostoleion has also made an indirect impact on the formation of basilicas with cross-transepts. The types of plan differ in the East and West; in the East the four arms radiate from the central core, while in the West two lateral arms appear from the longitudinal nave. Krautheimer and Ćurčić, op. cit. p. 70.
- 35 Perniola, Mario. 'Between Clothing and Nudity'. In *Fragments for the History of Human Body*, New York: Zone Books, 1989, p. 237.
- 36 The character of the priestly robe can be represented only by reference to the transcendent, which is essentially 'clothed'; in all its relations with human beings it always veils, covers or clothes its power, because one cannot bear the direct sight of God. God said to Moses, 'you cannot see my face: for man shall not see me and live' (*Exodus* 33.20). Perniola, op. cit., p. 238.
- 37 Perniola, op. cit., p. 238.
- 38 For example, when discussing the appropriateness of celebrating the *Encaenia*, Michael A. Fraser writes:
- September 13 was a particularly appropriate day for the Encaenia. Not simply because it coincided with the anniversary of Constantine's victory over Licinius and his honouring of the heavenly sign but because that day was also one of a wider theological significance. The Martyrium basilica (built by Constantine) is described by Eusebius as the New Jerusalem, predicted by the prophets of old, namely Ezekiel. The implication, in accrediting Constantine with the building of a New Jerusalem, is that a new Solomon has also arisen. Less than fifty years later the pilgrim Egeria will write that the date of the Encaenia was also the day on which Solomon dedicated the temple. The feast of Solomon's dedication commenced on the 10th day of Tishri, the day of atonement, and ended with the feast of Tabernacles. The feast of the Encaenia occurs in this very same season. According to a software application which calculates the Jewish feasts for any given year, in 335 AD the 10th day of Tishri fell on Saturday 13th September.
- 'Constantine and the Encaenia'. *Studia Patristica*, 39, ed. Livingston.
- 39 This project needs to be differentiated from the myth about the 'Donation of Constantine', a forged Roman imperial decree by which the Emperor Constantine supposedly transferred authority over Rome and the western part of the Roman Empire to the Pope. The Western Church has maintained this forgery as truth for centuries, not exposing it fully even after the proof by Lorenzo Valla in the fifteenth century. This account of forgery does not necessarily contradict the account about Constantine bringing the columns to Rome. Constantine had apparently brought a set of columns to Rome and gave them to the original

- St Peter's Basilica. *The Donation of Constantine*, a painting from Raphael's studio, shows these columns in their original location. According to tradition, these columns came from the 'Temple of Solomon', built in the tenth century BC. The columns, now considered to have been made in the second century AD, became known as 'Solomonic'. Constantine is indeed recorded as having brought them from Greece. If these columns really were from one of the temples in Jerusalem, the spiral pattern may have represented the oak tree which was the first Ark of the Covenant, mentioned in Joshua 24:26. The columns have twist-fluting sections.
- 40 Krautheimer and Ćurčić, op. cit. p. 39.
- 41 Krautheimer and Ćurčić, op. cit. p. 39.
- 42 'Council of Nicaea' in *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Its achievements included the agreements about the relationship of Jesus to God the Father, the construction of the Nicene Creed, settling the calculation of the date of Easter, and the spread and implementation of the early canon. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1911. [http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/Council of Nicaea](http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/Council_of_Nicaea) (retrieved 14 March 2010).
- 43 This assertion is supported by Riegl, Alois. *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie – Late Roman Art Industry*, trans. Rolf Winkes. Rome: Bretschneider, 1985; and in Riegl, Alois. *Historical Grammar of Visual Arts*, op. cit., pp. 69–70.
- 44 On the emergence of diplomacy in Constantinople, see Graziano, Vittorio. *Ambasciate d'Italia in Turchia*. Catania: Mediterraneo, 1994, pp. 8–42.
- 45 Homer, *Iliad*, book XII. Sarpedon delivers a well-known *noblesse oblige* speech before attacking the Argive ramparts.
- 46 *Aeneid*, by Virgil, an epic poem about Æneas of Troy; it is composed in the traditional Homeric metre of hexameters. Written during the last ten years of the poet's life (29–19 BC), it celebrates Roman imperial values in the role of its Trojan hero Æneas, who was destined to found a new city in Italy – Rome.
- 47 Other examples of non-Christian edifices include Constantine building the Triumphal Arch in Rome dedicated to pagan gods, etc.
- 48 According to historical evidence and their subsequent interpretation, the population of the Byzantine Empire consisted of diverse peoples. Towards the end of the second century AD the various nations under Roman rule tended to assert their individuality. Mango argues that in the time of Justinian, approximately 560, over 70 languages were spoken inside the capital and throughout the Empire. However, it would have sufficed to know only two languages, namely Greek and Latin, and be able to travel throughout the entire country. The boundaries of the respective languages were often not sharply drawn. It may be argued however that the linguistic boundary ran through the Balkan peninsula along an east–west line; while south of the Mediterranean it divided Libya from Tripolitania. The Balkan lands had a mixed population, but the western half of the Empire was mainly Latin speaking and the eastern half was mainly Greek speaking. These two

were the languages of administration and culture, and almost all educated people in the East spoke Greek, just as all educated people in the West spoke Latin.

Constantinople and its surroundings were therefore administered in Greek, as we observe in the city and on its monuments. Mango. *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome*. New York: Charles Scribner's, 1980, p. 13.

- 49 Bassett, op. cit., p. 1.
- 50 Francis Yates explains the subject by referring to the three main antique sources: *Ad Herennium* by an anonymous writer (sometimes attributed to Cicero); *Ad Herennium Libri IV. De ratione dicendi*. The Loeb Classical Library, ed. T. E. Page, with the English translation by Harry Caplan. Cambridge MA, and London: William Heinemann and Harvard University Press, 1954. The second source is Cicero, Marco Tullius. *De oratore*, trans. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, *Readings in Classical Rhetoric*, ed. Thomas W. Benson and Michael H. Prosser. Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1988. The third source is Quintillian, Marcus Fabius. *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H.E. Butler. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920; *Ad Herennium* is the key text as the other two assume that the reader is already familiar with the artificial memory. Yates, Frances A. *The Art of Memory*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1966, p. 1.
- 51 *Ad Herennium*, 207. The text distinguishes two kinds of memory, one natural, and the other the product of art. The natural memory is that memory which is embedded in our minds, born simultaneously with thought. The artificial memory is that memory which is strengthened by a kind of training and system of discipline ... It is neither more nor less true in this instance than in the other.
- 52 *Ad Herennium*, 209.
- 53 The text entitled *Ad Herennium* dates from the second decade of the first century BC. Addressed to Gaius Herennius, it takes on the subject of Hellenistic rhetorical teachings. It divides the art of rhetoric into four parts: (1) Invention (*inventio*); (2) Disposition (*dispositio*); (3) Delivery (*elocutio*); (4) Memory (*memoria*), and (5) Style (*pronuntiatio*).
- 54 Julian Jaynes (1920–97) was an American psychologist, best known for his book *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*. London: Allen Lane, 1976. He discussed the emergence of consciousness by addressing the stage prior to it, which he called the period of the bicameral mind. In his book Jaynes demonstrates the characteristics common to civilisations around the globe, 165. I am indebted to my former supervisor Mark Cousins for introducing the work of Julian Jaynes to me.
- 55 McGilchrist, Iain. *The Master and Emissary – The Dividing Brain and the Making of the Western World*. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2009. I am grateful to Professor John Onians for this reference.

- 56 Delphic oracle, the aphorism 'know thyself' was inscribed in the pronaos of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi – according to Pausanias (10.24.1).
- 57 Bassett writes:
 Consider, for example, the description of the orator Demosthenes (cat. no. 53). In the florid language admired by the age, Christodoros identifies and describes his subject with only passing reference to physical appearance. Instead, the author concentrates on re-creating the orator's mental state by alluding to past historical events. This technique allows Christodoros to infer a state of mind from which the orator's thoughts are duly extrapolated. Far more interpretive than factual, this verse is conceived less as a documentation and more as mutual and emotional evocation of a moment. Indeed, the real subject of Christodoros's poetry is not so much observed physical reality as the ephemera of thought and feeling.
- Fifth-century description of one of the major thermal foundations in Constantinople, an *ekphrasis* on the statuary in the Baths of Zeuxippos by Christodoros describes 81 statues or statue groups. Bassett, op. cit., p. 9.
- 58 Christodoros, a Christian poet in the time of Anastasius I (491–518), was influenced by Nonnos of Panopolis (Cameron, 475). Between 491 and 518 he wrote a poem 'On the Pupils of the Great Proclus', an epic on the Isaurian expedition (497–498) of Emperor Anastasius, poems on the history and antiquities of Constantinople and other places, an exposition on statues in the thermae of Zeuxippos in Constantinople, and epigrams. See Cameron, Alan. 'Wandering Poets. A Literary Movement in Byzantine Egypt'. *Historia* 14 (1965): 470–509; and Stupperich, R. 'Das Statuenprogramm in den Zeuxippos-Thermen'. *Istambuler Mitteilungen* 32 (1982): 210–35; *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. Aziz Sourial Atiya. New York: Macmillan, 1989.
- 59 One of the theoretical difficulties that emerged was the new equalising power of letters. For the Greeks, spirituality and rationality, *muthos* (*mythos*) and *logos*, could coexist without conflict in separate domains. But the idea that *muthoi* could be frozen in a written form and interpreted to make statements of 'truth' (*logoi*) was foreign to the Greeks. As both Freeman and McGilchrist admit, there was resistance to such formations in early Christianity as well, and Christians as much as pagans suffered under Theodosius' decree and imposition of strict rules coming from Ambrose of Milan. They stand in sharp contrast to the practices of Constantine. See Freeman, Charles. *The Closing of the Western Mind: The Rise of Faith and the Fall of Reason*. London: William Heinemann, 2002, 137; McGilchrist, op. cit., pp. 294–5.
- 60 Most Ancient Greek texts were written on papyrus that would have deteriorated in time and had to be transferred to parchment. The project of transcription had been initiated by Constantine, who organised a group of calligraphers to rewrite the texts (such as the Holy Scripture) to parchment.

- 61 See the review by Beard, Mary. Charles Freeman's *The Closing of the Western Mind. Independent*, 14 September 2002.
- 62 The other important Mediterranean city in this respect is Alexandria, well known for its scholars and its library.
- 63 Tafuri, Manfredo. *The Sphere and the Labyrinth. Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s*, trans. Pellegrino d'Acierno and Robert Connolly. Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1987. Paraphrasing from the first chapter entitled 'The Historical Project'.

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Fig. 1 The oldest map of Constantinople from the fifteenth century by Florentine Christoforo Buondelmonte (image in Public domain)



Fig. 2 Constantine, statuary fragments Rome Capitol Museum (Photo Permission Jean-Christoph Benoist)

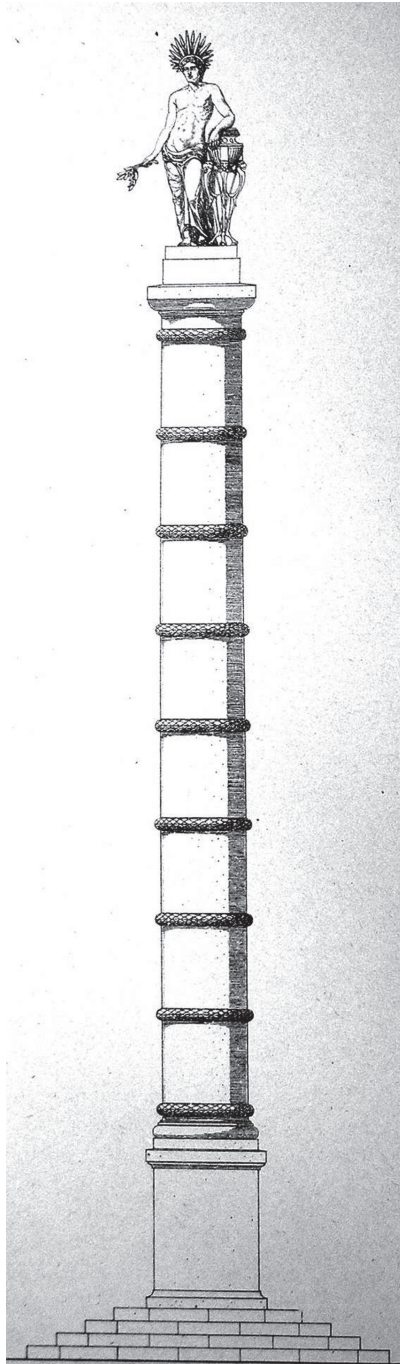


Fig. 3 Constantine's Column as designed (Gurlitt, 1912), image in public domain in USA (Photo permission Marsyas).



Fig. 4 Constantine's column today (Photo permission Sandstein)



Fig. 5 Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine, early fourth century, Rome
(Photo permission MM)



Fig. 6 Kybele Rhea from Nicaea (Bithynia), Istanbul Archaeological Museum
(Photo permission Quartier Latin 1968)



Fig. 7 Nike and a Warrior with Palladium, Paris Louvre (Photo permission Jastrow)



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Fig. 8 The Serpent Column, is an ancient bronze column at the Hippodrome of Constantinople, Istanbul. It was originally 8 m high and was part of an ancient Greek sacrificial tripod from Delphi, relocated by Constantine in 324. (Photo permission Gryffindor)

Fig. 8a One of the heads of the Serpent Column is today in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum. The serpent heads remained intact until the end of the 17th century. (Photo permission Gryffindor)



Fig. 9 Hippodrome of Constantinople as it is today. The Obelisk of Theodosius is in front and the one of Constantine at the back.



Fig. 10 Group of statues now based in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul, II century AD, Appollo kitharoidos is presented centrally with the instrument, the muses are around him (Photo permission Giovanni Dall'Orto)



Fig. 11 Appollo kitharoides detail (Photo permission Giovanni Dall'Orto)



Fig. 12 Appollo kitharoides detail (Photo permission Giovanni Dall'Orto)