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FROM THE CAPITOLINE HILL TO THE LOUVRE: THE JOURNEY OF A RELIEF OF MITHRAS

Abstract

The history of the Borghese Collection is closely linked to the establishment of the Louvre in Paris and the history of both of them includes a small story about a magnificent relief. The relief represents the god Mithras in the act of killing a Bull; it was found on the Capitoline Hill and testifies to the cult of Mithras in the religious and political center of Ancient Rome. The relief was included in the Borghese Collection and remained attached on the north façade of the main building of Villa Borghese until the sale of the bulk of the collection to Napoleon in 1808. Once in Paris, the relief was placed in the Hall of the Four Seasons of the Musée Napoléon, later to become the Louvre. Now it is still part of the Louvre collection and can be admired in the branch of the Museum in Lens.

Keywords: Mithras, tauroctony, Borghese Collection, Capitoline Hill, the Louvre

INTRODUCTION

This study is part of wider on-going research into the evidence related to Mithras from the Capitoline Hill and especially the items preserved in the Capitoline Museums in Rome¹.

1 I would like to thank Dr. Eloisa Dodero and Prof. Gaius Stern for the fruitful exchange of ideas and for their useful suggestions.

The history of the Borghese Collection is closely linked to the establishment of the Louvre in Paris (Fabrèga-Dubert 2009). The history of both of them includes a small story about a magnificent relief that represents the god Mithras in the act of killing a Bull. The present study is an attempt to understand its history (Fig. 1).

DESCRIPTION AND DATING THE TAUROCTONY OF THE BORGHESE COLLECTION

This white marble relief is one of the biggest, possibly the biggest known. It measures 2,54 m in height and 2,65 m in breadth.

Mithras is represented in the usual position and attire, killing the bull in a grotto. The dog is licking the wound of the bull, the serpent crawls in the lower part of the scene and the scorpion bites the bull's testicles. On the left, Cautes "clasps with his left hand the ears" rising from the bull's tail and "lifts with the right hand his torch" (Vermaseren 1956: 176). On the right, Cautopates holds his torch pointed downwards. Both the *dadofori* (torchbearers) are standing and are not cross-legged.

On the left, perched in a cavity of the rocky vault, stands the raven (restored as an owl)².

On the left, above the top of the grotto, Sol, wearing a flying shoulder cape, drives the *quadriga*. He is preceded by "a naked child with an upraised torch (*Phosphorus*)" (Vermaseren 1956: 176). On the right, Luna, holding a billowing veil, "descends in a *biga*" (Vermaseren 1956: 176), originally probably pulled by bulls (horses are almost universally results of restorations)³. She is also driven by a naked child holding "a torch pointed downwards (*Hesperus*)" (Vermaseren 1956: 177). Between the two groups stand "three twisted trees" (Vermaseren 1956: 177).

The relief around the main scene is open and a light source, when placed behind it, could have given a luminous effect to the representation.

The relief was restored many times and often quite badly. For example, the head of Mithras is not original; in all probability the god used to look back-

2 See the description of Cumont (1896: 193), Vermaseren (1956: 177).

3 Ibid.

wards. The right arm of Mithra was restored together “with a great part of the dagger, the left arm and a part of his right leg; the front part of the bull’s head; the heads and torches of both torchbearers, moreover the left leg of Cautopates and his left hand with a bunch of grapes, the right leg of Cautes; the greater part of the dog and a part of the serpent; the head of Sol and the foremost part of his horses; the head of Luna; the heads of the two children” (Vermaseren 1956: 177).

This relief has a significant inscription on the bull’s neck and body and on the lower border of the relief (the plinth)⁴:

Closed to the bull’s wound:

NAMA

SEBESIO

On the body of the animal:

DEO•SOLI INVICTO•MITRHE

on the plinth:

C •CAUFIDII•IANUARIUS //////////////⁵

On the body, there are further letters not yet interpreted definitely:

NAM////////NE CS⁶

Cumont proved that the graffiti on the thigh are modern,

AMYCUS•SERONESIS; M. •ANTONIUS•AL •TERIUS⁷

Likewise, the graffiti of the same type on the body of the bull and on the femur and the garment of Mithras are more recent. According to Fröhner, they are no longer visible, with the exception of BONONiensis (CIL VI 30819), which may be another way to read *SERONESIS*.

The relief is dated to the 2nd century BC (Vermaseren 1956: 177) and according to Cumont to the beginning of the 3rd century BC (Cumont 1896: 105).

4 CIL VI 719; 30819; MMM II No. 62 i. e. Cumont (1896: 105); Vermaseren (1956: 177)

5 CIL VI 719; Vermaseren agree about the first two inscriptions, but for the third suggests: C(aii) Aufidii Ianuarius [et...Vermaseren (1956:177).

6 A. Héron de Villefosse read so that there may have been an a after nam, then there is place for 6 letters and then ne (or ve). These letters are old, while cs are more recent. That was noted by Ch. Huelsen in CIL VI 30819. Vermaseren read nam/a/ necs, see Vermaseren (1956: 177)

7 CIL VI 30819, after Vermaseren *SERONE(N)SIS* Cumont (1892: 96), Cumont (1896: 105).

IDENTIFYING THE TAUROCTONY'S MITHRAEUM

The ancient relief comes from a *mithraeum* located in the religious heart of Rome on the Capitoline Hill. There is some evidence about the discovering of this piece from the 1500s and it has been the object of passionate descriptions.

The first evidence that the relief was known to Roman humanists is the signature (?) of Marco Antonio Altieri (1450–1532). Marcus Antonius Alterius (de Altieriis) was a member of a prominent family of the Roman municipal aristocracy, a pupil of Pomponio Leto and possibly a member of his *sodalitas*. He has been also an important *conservatore* of the municipality of Rome (1511–?) (Asor Rosa 1960; Modigliani 2020). It is not surprising that the inscription of Altieri was believed to be authentic; he was used to such forgery, like the epitaph found on the via Appia, preserved today at the Museo Nazionale Romano⁸.

The oldest drawing of the tauroctony was made by Amico Aspertini between 1531–1535 (London, BM, P&D, Aspertini Skb. I, fol. 39 v – 40 r, 40 r. A). He represented Mithras as Hercules, who was indeed a more familiar subject to him, but in this way he unknowingly evoked the assimilation of these two deities, as was usual for the ancients⁹. The position of Hercules looking forward instead of backwards may have inspired the bad restoration of the head of Mithras.

Then, the Dutch antiquities scholar Martinus Smetius (Martin Smet), who stayed in Italy between 1545 and 1551, studying antiquities and collecting transcripts of inscriptions (his work was published in 1588 by Justus Lipsius [Lajard 1828: 5–6; Vagenheim 2018: 1]), was very clear in locating this relief in a cave in the Capitoline Hill. Smetius described it in this way: *Sub Aracaeli, in ea Capitolij parte, quae Aquilonem spectat, templum subterraneum est, ubi Mithrae simulacrum perelegans est et magnificum, superiori non absimile, licet infinito maius et alicubi mutilum capitèque truncatum. Stant utrique viri duo, supra quos stellae singulae, Oriens scilicet et Occidens* (Smetius 1588: fol. 21, n. 15)¹⁰.

8 Lajard believed that the inscription on the thigh was authentic, see Lajard (1828: 32–35). About this epitaph, see Modigliani in the previous note.

9 About the rule of the cult of Hercules in the iconography of Mithras, see Martini (1915: 57–78), Ceci, Martini [in press].

10 Translation: Under [the church of] Araceli, in this part of the Capitol that looks North, there is an underground temple in which one finds a superb figure of Mithra, of very elegant workmanship, similar to other [bas-reliefs of Mithras], but infinitely bigger and several parts were mutilated and the head is missing. On each side is placed a male figure with single stars above, i.e., East and West.

In c. 1554, Waelschapple relates that this relief was *in Capitolio in crypta anno (15)48 aperta denuo* (On the Capitoline Hill in a cave open again in 1548) (Henzen CIL VI, n. 719; Cecchelli 1938: 139–140).

Another Dutch scholar of antiquities, Pighius (Pigge, Steven Wynkens), visited the same cave a few years later and saw the relief as well and had it drawn (Lajard 1828: 6).

Two drawings of the tauroctony are connected to this work of Pighius: that by Anonymus Pighianus (active 1550–1555), who illustrated the *Codex Pighianus* (ms. lat. fol. 61, fol. 2r Berlin, Staatsbibliothek),¹¹ and that by Anonymus Coburgensis (1550–1555) for the *Codex Coburgensis* (HZ II178 Coburg, Veste Coburg, Kupfrstichkabinet).¹²

A cave in Capitoline Hill with a relief also appears in the writings of the artist Flaminio Vacca (born in 1538 and died during the papacy of Clemens VIII, 1592–1605)¹³ (Golzio 1937). He mentioned the memories of his master Vincenzo de Rossi (1525–1587), in Rome from 1536–1541 to the early 1560s. Between 1555 and 1556, he made the monument of Pope Paolo IV for the Audience Hall of the Conservatori right on the Capitoline Hill, which was set in 1558 but destroyed a month after, following the death of the Pope (Giannotti 2017). According to Vacca, in a cave on the Capitoline Hill, on the side of the church of Aracoeli, de Rossi saw the portrait of Europa on the bull/Jovis. Probably it was the body of the god Mithras who, without his head and dagger, looked like a woman in the darkness of the cave. According to de Rossi, the relief was on a wall along the way that led from the Arch of Septimius Severus through the *mons Tarpeius* (the entire hill was so called at that time) and may have been still detectable at the time of Vacca, if the ruins of the Capitol had not hidden it¹⁴.

Unlike Smetius and Pighius, de Rossi and later Vacca did not recognize the figure of Mithras. However, the relief should have been well known and admired at that time, since in the 1560s, both Pirro Ligorio and Étienne Du Pérac reproduced this tauroctony¹⁵. Likewise, a drawing by an artist of the circle

11 https://iconographic.warburg.sas.ac.uk/vpc/VPC_search/record.php?record=56385; in this drawing is the indication: *In Cripta Subterranea Capitolina* (in Capitol underground cave).

12 https://iconographic.warburg.sas.ac.uk/vpc/VPC_search/record.php?record=43966; Bober (1957: pl. XXXVII, fig. 85).

13 The life of Flaminio Vacca, see Golzio (1937). His mention of the relief, see Vacca (1594: 12).

14 Concerning the testimony of Vacca reported by Montfaucon, see Lajard (1828: 7–9). For the original text of Vacca, see Vacca (1594: 12).

15 For Ligorio's works, see BNN, Ms XIII B 7, fol. 011 v, B. For Du Pérac's works, see Paris, Louvre, Cabinet des designs, Illustration, book 3, inv. 26419 r, B.

of/copyist of Ligorio or circle of Onofrio Panvinio can be dated to the second half of the 16th century.¹⁶ Ligorio transcribed the inscription on the body of the bull with the name of the god and probably saw the monument still “inside” the Capitoline Hill, as he wrote, *In opera dentro al monte capitolino dedicato da li antichi in un’ speleo over grotto*¹⁷. According to Henzen and Cecchelli, he wrote also, *In antique spelaeo sub monte Capitolino ad huc suo loco non motus*, which means that at the time of Ligorio, the relief was still in the cave¹⁸.

The presence of a cave inside the Capitoline Hill dedicated to a cult of the god Mithras appears to be attested to by very ancient legends, such as that of St. Sylvester and another of the place where Julius Caesar was killed¹⁹. The toponym *lo perso* (the Persian) used by Ciriaco di Ancona and by the Sylloge Signoriliana refers to this place²⁰. The position of this cave on the Capitoline Hill is controversial, but sources from the mid-16th century onwards that point to an underground place next to the Aracoeli related to a mithreum multiply, like in the case of the story of friar Callisto da Mantova of 1550. He tells about his visit to a cave beneath the church of the Aracoeli, where he saw “a white bull caught by the horns by a man in horseback” (Tucci 2019: 133–134).

Actually, Giovanni Severano, a source from the first half of the 17th century, tells that during the construction of a new loggia by the Aracoeli, that is the portico of Palazzo Nuovo, at the time of Pope Clemens VIII (1603), many stones

16 Roma, Città del Vaticano, BAV, *Codex Ursinianus*, fol. 121 r, A.

17 Translation: “Inside the Capitol Hill dedicated by the antique peoples in a caving or cave”. The drawings of Ligorio, Du Pérac and of the anonymous draughtsman of the drawing of *Codex Ursinianus*, see ensus. [bbaw. de/detail?eadb_frame=EZDB_5f6330b8d87da&easydb=rss709a739br4kksv20pnbnt17&detail_grid=CS_MonumentViewer&grid_id=9807&table_id=68&select_id=158026&currframe=EZDB_5f632f454b101&cid=deta il_CS_DocumentViewer&parent_select_id=158026](https://www.bbaw.de/detail?eadb_frame=EZDB_5f6330b8d87da&easydb=rss709a739br4kksv20pnbnt17&detail_grid=CS_MonumentViewer&grid_id=9807&table_id=68&select_id=158026&currframe=EZDB_5f632f454b101&cid=deta il_CS_DocumentViewer&parent_select_id=158026), accessed on 17.09.2020).

18 Henzen CIL VI, n. 719; Cecchelli (1938: 140).

19 Relating the life of Pope Sylvester I and how he defeated the dragon that lived in a grotto in the *mons Tarpeius* (Capitol), Duchesne writes that this story could be connected with the cave on the Capitoline Hill, where the Louvre Mithras relief was kept. See Duchesne, *Lib. Pont.* I, CXI note n. 1. The legend of St. Sylvester and this relief, see also Henzen in CIL, VI, n. 719, Cecchelli 1938: 157–173, and Luciani (2018: 607–625).

20 Henzen in CIL, VI, n. 719; The presence of this toponym in a document of Giovannangelo Amati (A. S. C. anno 1456, 31 mai prot. 253) reported by Lanciani with some doubt (Lanciani 1913: 209) is due to a reading error. See Tucci (2019: 134, note 72). Confirmed to me by Dr. C. Falcucci in charge at the Archivio Storico Capitolino, where this document is preserved.

were found near some walls and one of them was engraved with “Mithras” (Severano 1630: 27)²¹.

We do not know whether it was the tauroctony, but it is possible.

At the end of the 19th century another relief of Mithras was found on the Capitoline Hill. Much smaller than the Borghese/Louvre tauroctony, the relief was not highly regarded and it was reused as the step of a staircase at via delle Tre Pile (Visconti 1873. Lanciani 1873). As already suggested by Colini, I believe that the two reliefs belonged to the same mithraeum, the presence of several cult images in the same temple being widely attested²². It is very likely that a mithraeum in the political and religious center of Rome could have had more than one relief with Mithras *tauroctonos*²³.

Recently, Tucci has proposed room no. 21 of the house beneath the Aracoeli as the location of the mithraeum (Tucci 2019: 134–135). However, Severano’s testimony about the positioning of the cave clearly suggests that the mithraeum was at least partially destroyed by the foundations of the Palazzo Nuovo²⁴.

21 On one of this was sculpted the image of Mithras, i. e. the Sun represented by the Persian like a lion that weakens the bull horns. Severano knew the words of Statius in *Thebaide* Lib. I: *seu Persaei sub rupibus antri / indignata sequi torquentem cornua Mithram*. He knew also the words of the commenter to Statius: *Est enim in Spelaeis Persico habitu, leonis vultu cum thiara, utriusque minibus bovis cornua comprimens*. For the extract, see Raffei (1821: 138). Fra’ Callisto describes the same image and the same was drawn by Amico Aspertini in 1531–1535 (London, BM, P&D, AspertiniSkb. I, fol. 39v–40r, 40r. A. (Census. bbaw. de/detail?eadb_frame=EZDB_5f6b96013686b&easydb=ju2qmhdsbs1bm6jp848s0cvi00&detail_grid=CS_DocumentViewer&grid_id=15179&table_id=82&select_id=56201&currframe=EZDB_5f6b95815d0f2&cid=detail_CS_MonumentViewer&parent_select_id=56201, accessed on 23.09.2020).

22 See Colini (1938: 259) who take the example of the Mithraeum of *Palazzo dei Musei* (today called Mithraeum of Circo Massimo), that he excavated. Two tauroctonies were found in the Mithraeum of Dura Europos as well, see Vermaseren (1956: 62–65).

23 Alternatively, Lanciani and Visconti thought that the small cave the staircase led to could be a small, private mithraeum, even though they admitted there was no other evidence (see above). Furthermore, Lanciani wrote that there were four mithraea on the Capitol Hill, one called *lo perso* and noted by Vacca, where the bigger tauroctony was found, the second described by Severano and two other found after the end of the 16th century (Lanciani 1913: 209–210).

24 See also Arata (1997: 146); Arata (2010: 47).

THE JOURNEY OF THE TAUROCTONY

The construction of Palazzo Nuovo on the Capitoline Hill started from the Portico (*nuova loggia*) in 1603, but the work was interrupted by the death of Pope Clemens VIII in 1605 (Benedetti 2001: 27–31).

In his comments about the illustrations of Cartario, Lorenzo Pignoria said that he saw the tauroctony on the Capitol Hill *nella piazza di Campidoglio* (in Campidoglio square) in 1606 and reproduced its inscriptions adding for the first time “AMYCUS SERONESIS”. Perhaps, thanks to the new display of the relief on the square after it was taken out of the dark cave, the inscription was easier to decipher (Pignoria 1615: 505).

It is possible that the walls of the mithraeum, discovered and destroyed in the early 17th century, were originally linked to the more recent phase of a still existing room with niches, accessible from the courtyard of Marforio²⁵, whose function is still debated and that has been referred to by Francesco Paolo Arata as the *Sacellum* for *Juppiter Conservator* or a private building²⁶.

No image of the relief displayed on the Capitoline piazza has yet been found, thus suggesting that the tauroctony did not remain there for long; however, there are several images of the Palazzo Nuovo during its construction, such as the plan of the building with the caption “PORTICO” (fig. 2, B. A. V. Chigi P. VII, 13 f. 5v. -6r, see also Benedetti 2001: 18, fig. 25) and Greuter’s 1618 engraving showing Piazza del Campidoglio with the foundations of Palazzo Nuovo in front of the Marforio fountain²⁷.

In 1617, Josse de Rycke (Ricquius) reported that in the grotto of Mithras on the Capitoline Hill, reliefs with the image and inscription of the god were found²⁸.

At that time, the relief certainly was no longer displayed in the square. Presumably, during the papacy of Paul V (born Camillo Borghese and pope from

25 See also Colini (1938: 259) reported by Vermaseren (1956:176).

26 For the use of this *Sacellum*, see Tucci (2019: 134 and no. 71) and Arata (1997: 131–162), Arata (2010: 53–60). P. Mazzei instead identifies this hall as the Mithraeum itself, see Mazzei (2019: 608–618), but it is indeed very narrow and could not have housed the huge tauroctony of the Capitol.

27 See Ensoli Vitozzi, Parisi Presicce 1991: fig. 18 at p. 30 and Benedetti 2001: 30, fig. 34.

28 “*Persici MITHRAE specum fuisse etiam in Capitolio, præter Tabulas Marmoreas laceras cum effigie & inscriptione eius Dei in cauerni sibi sub terraneis repertas, mihique in Vrbe tum agenti saepius confpectas*” (Rycke 1617: 153).

1605 to 1621), the relief was transferred to the new villa (Fig. 4) of his nephew Scipione Borghese outside Porta Pinciana, where the Galleria Borghese is located today, to be mounted on the north façade of the main building (*casino nobile*) (Lanciani 1913: 209).

In 1650, in his description of Villa Borghese, Manilli mentioned this relief along with four other big reliefs on the north façade of the *casino nobile* (Fig. 5). He alluded to it as *La statua grande dell' Agricoltura* (Henzen CIL VI; 719), missing its connection with Mithras (Manilli 1650: 44). In 1700, both Montelatici (1700: 162) and Filippo Del Torre (1700: 159) referred to a Mithras relief on the north façade of the *casino nobile*. One century later, Zoega not only listed the relief still in Villa Borghese, but also reported that it came from a cave in the Capitoline Hill and transcribed the inscription (Zoega 1817: 148).

Therefore, at the beginning of the 1700s the Capitoline tauroctony became part of the Borghese collection and remained in the Villa for almost a century until the sale of the bulk of the collection to Napoleon in 1808.

M.-L. Fabréga-Dubert has reconstructed the circumstances under which the sale took place and thanks to her research it is possible to confirm that the Louvre tauroctony was not the only Mithraic relief mounted on the façade of the Borghese *casino nobile* (Fabréga-Dubert 2009). As a matter of fact, there were four tauroctonies, two on the north façade and two on the south (Fabréga-Dubert 2009: 83–91). Fabréga-Dubert acknowledged the idea to produce an impression of balance and order through the arrangement of the reliefs on both of the side facades (Fabréga-Dubert 2009: 111–121). The Capitoline tauroctony occupied a prime position, attached on the façade in the private part of the Villa, and was flanked by two representations that archival documents describe as “five figures including two veiled, probably priests, *camilli* etc.” and “two women playing a musical instrument and one child” (Fabréga-Dubert 2009: 83).

The sculptural decoration of the Borghese façade was valued at 300. 000 Francs (Fabréga-Dubert 2009: 50).

As documents studied by Fabréga-Dubert confirm, the relief was split in halves and transported in two crates. In the inventory of the crates prepared for the transport from Villa Borghese in August 1808, the Capitoline tauroctony is described as “the most considerable we know”. One crate (no. 268) contained the upper section of the relief including the top of the cave, the head of the Mithras as well as the *piedouche* of coralline *breccia* from a large bust that had

been on the ground floor of the east façade of the *casino nobile*²⁹. The second crate (no. 238) contained the body of the god, the bull, and the *dadofori*³⁰.

In a letter/report to Napoleon in 1808, the Interior Minister explained that transport by ship was preferred as the coast from La Spezia to France was considered safer and well-defended against enemy vessels. The ships themselves were armed (Fabrèga-Dubert 2009: 320).

As some documents of the time reveal, it was not an easy job to separate the relief of Mithras from the façade. A document of 29 March 1808 describes the operation as rather difficult and reports that a scaffolding was set up to detach the reliefs and later to fill the holes left by them (Fabrèga-Dubert 2009: 505). The following report of 30 March says, *C'est un terrible bloc que ce Mithra dans sa caverne. Il n'a pu encore être descendu aujourd'hui* (It is a terrible block with Mithras in his cave. It cannot be removed today) (Fabrèga-Dubert 2009: 505).

A document of January 1809 attests that both the crates with the sections of the tauroctony were to be shipped from Civitavecchia (Fabrèga-Dubert 2009: 629–630). The two crates were among those stored at Civitavecchia in January 1810 (Fabrèga-Dubert 2009: 691–692). Crate no. 238 was part of the convoy of 7/10 August 1810, crate no. 268 of that of 18 November 1810 (Fabrèga-Dubert 2009: 50).

Once in Paris, the relief was placed in the Hall of the Four Seasons of the Musée Napoléon (Fig. 6, Lajard 1828: 2, n. 2), now the Louvre.

Now it is part of the collection of the Louvre Museum and can be admired in the branch of the Museum in Lens³¹.

29 This crate measured 4'1''6'' x 9'5'' x 2'8'' feet, was 35. 46 ½ *piaster baiocchi* and weighed 6000 roman pound. See Fabrèga-Dubert (2009: 404).

30 This crate measured 6'6'' x 9'8''6''' x 2'9''6''' feet, was 47. 00 ½ *piaster baiocchi* and weighed 14000 roman pound. See Fabrèga-Dubert (2009: 405).

31 The tauroctony of the Borghese Collection, now in the Louvre (Louvre MR 818, n. usuel 1023), 2nd century BC (from <https://www.louvre-lens.fr/work/relief-representant-mithra-dieu-iranien-soleil-sacrifiant-taureau/>, accessed on 1.10.2020).

CONCLUSION

The tauroctony found on the Capitol is one of the most important finds of this type. It is remarkable not only for its dimensions that often surprise viewers but also its provenance: the religious and political hearth of the ancient Rome! The mithraeum played of course an important role and it would be interesting to investigate its relationship with imperial power. If it were possible to confirm Tucci's suggestion that the house under the Aracoeli was an imperial property (Tucci 2019), this mithraeum, which was close to it, could have had a direct connection with imperial power. This cave continued to arouse fascination throughout the Middle Ages and it did not escape the attention of Renaissance scholars and artists who visited the Capitoline grottos.

Its mysterious inscription, linking it to *Sabazios*, another eastern divinity, also worshipped on the Capitol Hill (Gatti 1892a: 343; 1892b: 364), was reproduced many times and it appears even on a false relief that was allegedly found in Tivoli but dated to the late Renaissance by Cumont (Cumont 1892).³²

Only after the beginning of the construction of Palazzo Nuovo was this masterpiece brought to light and deemed worthy to be displayed on the Capitol. Scipione Borghese included it in his collection and it was attached to the north façade of the main building of Villa Borghese, where it continued to amaze visitors in the following centuries.

Despite the difficulties of detachment and transport, it was included in the sale of the Borghese collection to Napoleon. Now on display in the Louvre Lens, it continues to be the focus of the attention for visitors and scholars.

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32 It would not be surprising to find a connection with M. Antonio Altieri, the author of an inscription on the Capitoline tauroctony as well as of a famous false epitaph (see above).

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33 For the different inv. no. see Fabrega-Dubert (2009: 50).

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Fig. 1

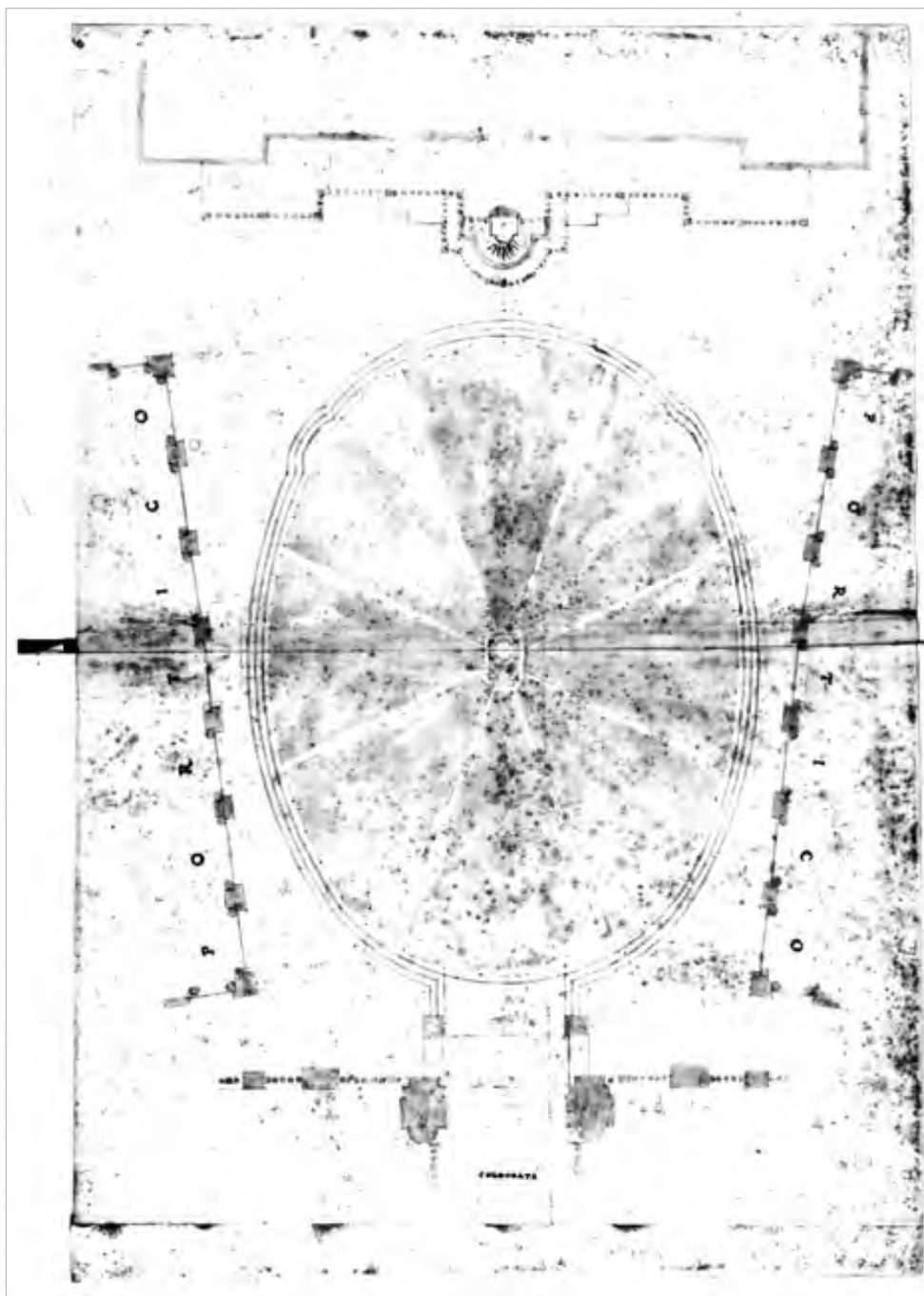


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

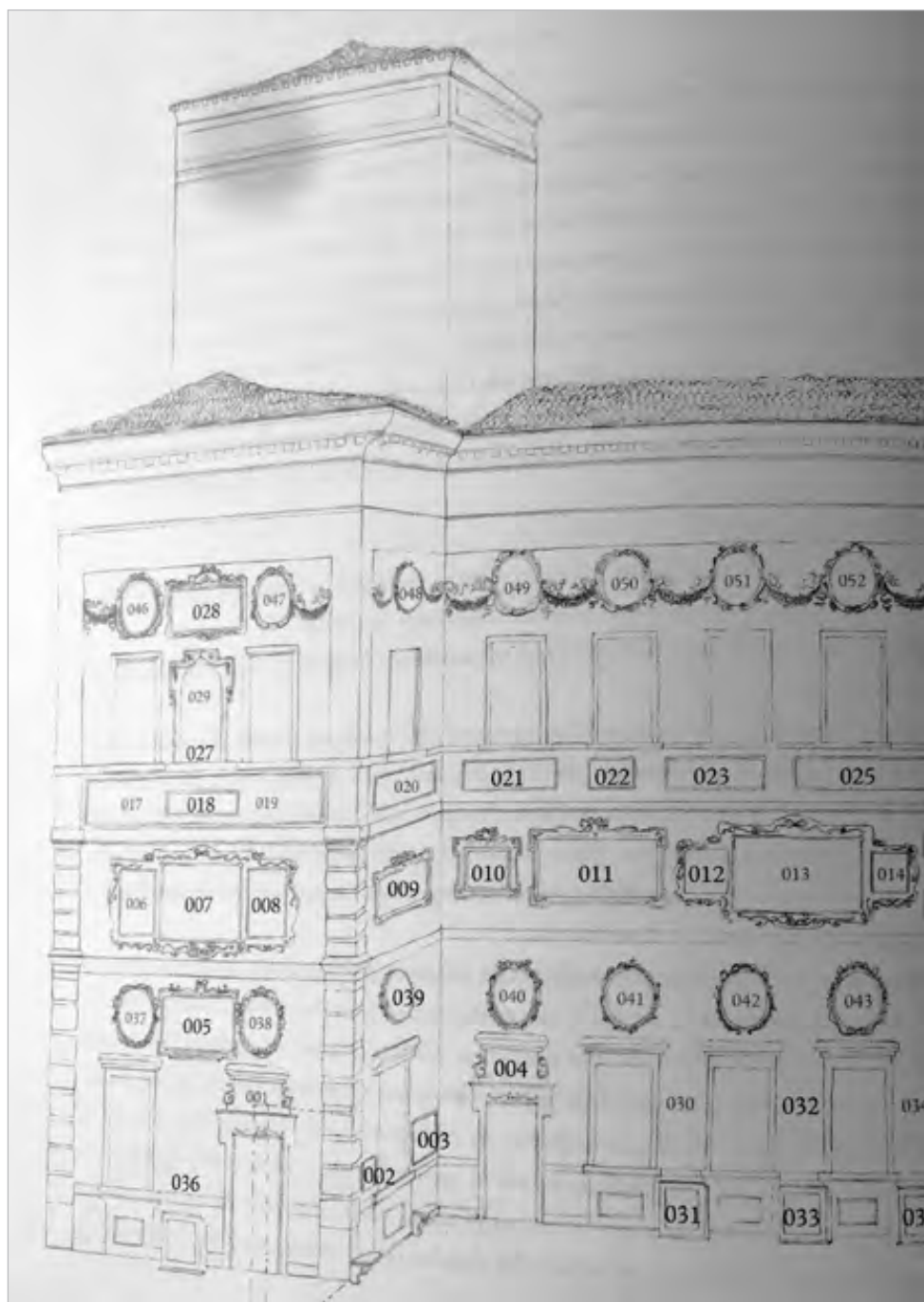


Fig. 5



Fig. 6