

Basilius and his diptych again: career titles, seats in the Colosseum, and issues of stylistic dating

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1. The problem

The Uffizi in Florence and the Castel Sforzesco in Milan each possess one panel of a consular diptych that identifies its honorand as follows: *Anicius Faustus Albinus Basilius v(ir) c(larissimus) et in(l)ustris ex com(ite) dom(esticorum) pat(ricius) cons(ul) ord(inarius)*. The offices and titles listed are: ex-count of the domestics, patrician and ordinary consul. The top register of the front (Florence) panel shows Basilius in full consular regalia holding *mappa* and cross-surmounted sceptre, with Roma to his left placing one hand on his right shoulder; the lower register shows racing chariots, a scene from his consular games (fig. 1). In contrast to this thoroughly conventional iconography, that of the rear (Milan) panel is unique (fig. 2): a winged victory seated above a spread eagle, holding up a shield that bears the consul's portrait together with an acclamation no less unique: *bono rei public(ae) et iterum* ('for the good of the state again').



Fig. 2. Milan Basilius (ARTstor).

Fig. 1. Florence Basilius (ARTstor).