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## Late-antique reworking of the Ara Pacis?

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In 1994 I published *Tradition in late antique sculpture* (Aarhus University Press) [henceforth Hannestad], comprising two parts: in the first, I investigated the phenomenon of the reworking of older monuments, particularly state reliefs, in the late Roman period; in the second, I outlined "The sculptural scenery of late antiquity", arguing that the production of traditional sculpture, mainly 'copies', continued for much longer than is generally thought. In the first part, the Ara Pacis Augustae comprised the chief case study, and I proposed that the processional frieze in particular had been reworked more or less radically in post-Augustan times, with a major (and final) restoration occurring around A.D. 300, perhaps under Maxentius. The reception of the book showed that the topic is a sensitive one likely to give rise to strong feelings, and particularly in the case of A. Claridge in this journal.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, the book by D. A. Conlin, *The artists of the Ara Pacis* (Chapel Hill, NC 1997), has appeared; she discusses some of the problems which I raised (pp. 47-52, 55) while concentrating on the processional frieze.<sup>2</sup> The accounts of Claridge and Conlin provide the occasion for me to return to some of the disputed points.

Much effort has been invested in recent years in restoring the Ara Pacis in its building next to the Mausoleum of Augustus. In view also of its rôle as perhaps the most important single monument of Rome it needs to be asked whether the reliefs we see are genuinely Augustan in their present state (apart from the accepted post-antique restorations of some parts), or should we take into account regular care in later Roman periods including some major restorations?

Both Claridge and Conlin include much relevant reference material for evaluating the tool marks in evidence on the monument, in particular those made by the rasp, the serrated scraper, and the chisel (claw or bullnosed). One should not be surprised to find marks of such tools on the final surface of an important Augustan state monument. But one detail puzzles both scholars: the eye markings found on several heads, ranging from a single, lightly drilled hole for the pupil to a single incised section of a circle (or loop) for the iris (fig. 2) or to two concentric ones for the iris and pupil. Some heads lack plastic marking of the eyes. Conlin is willing to accept these carvings (already noted by Bonanno<sup>3</sup>) as later additions, while Claridge writes "In my view the particular shapes are a bit strange for any period. To play devil's advocate, they could be Augustan" (*JRA* 1997, 449). However, the range of shapes of eye markings (and also those with no eye markings) found in the Ara Pacis reliefs is well attested and occurs simultaneously in dated portraits of the Tetrarchic and Constantinian period,<sup>4</sup> but not in any other.

My aim, however, has not been to date the tool marks *per se* as evidence of late-antique reworking. I have tried to demonstrate that the location of such tool marks can be a clue. When such tool marks, still crisp, occur on areas such as faces which seem to have been smoothed down to a lower level compared to weathered and protruding parts such as hair and wreaths, it seems that something has happened there since the Augustan sculptors finished their work. It also seems odd that the channels of the drapery are much better finished than the ridges, which are often scored by crude tool marks. Claridge writes (448):

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- 1 Some have accepted my general thesis, others were hesitant, while A. Claridge (*JRA* 10 [1997] 447-53) was negative, discussing the problems related to the Ara Pacis in some detail.
  - 2 Conlin carried out her work in close contact with the restoration teams working on the Ara Pacis.
  - 3 A. Bonanno, *Roman relief portraiture to Septimius Severus* (Oxford 1976) 25, 32-33 (Hadrianic).
  - 4 Hannestad, *Tradition in late antique sculpture* 54-58 with references. A. Claridge drew (as her fig. 1) a series of 12 eye markings of the Province reliefs of the Temple of Hadrian, but they are much restored in recent times and not relevant to the discussion.