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The reconstruction of Antonia Minor on the Ara Pacis

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The Ara Pacis Augustae has been not only analyzed and reanalyzed by generations of scholars; it has been repeatedly recarved, restored, and reconstructed. Commissioned by the senate in 13 B.C. in celebration of Augustus' successful return from the west, and finally dedicated in 9 B.C., the two long exterior sides of the precinct walls that surround the altar proper bear a series of panels depicting approximately life-size figures participating in a processional ceremony. Reconstructed during the 1930s and 1940s, the friezes, known as the North and South friezes, have been of particular interest to scholars since they constitute one of the earliest historical representations in imperial Roman sculpture.

Based on the modern reconstruction, numerous efforts to interpret the factual nature of the ceremony and to identify the figures themselves have produced a multitude of hypotheses.¹ It is the purpose of this note to present evidence, both archival and from the study of the reliefs themselves, that panels 6 and 7 of the South frieze may not belong joined at the figure identified as Antonia Minor, as they are reconstructed today. This has two important consequences. First, it brings into question our understanding of the appearance of the South frieze in its original Augustan form, and, secondly, it may require scholars to reexamine the proposed genealogical schemes often used to identify certain figures of the imperial family group.

The rightmost three panels of the 7 panels that together form the reconstructed South frieze were among the earliest fragments of the altar to be unearthed. Found during renovation of the former Palazzo Peretti in the mid 16th c., the panels show draped figures moving from the viewer's right to left; they include two of the four *flamines*, Marcus Agrippa, and individuals generally identified as members of the imperial family. The panels, along with other reliefs from the Ara Pacis, were purchased in 1569 by Cardinal Ricci di Montepulciano, a representative of the Medici family. Despite the fact that they were prepared for transport to Florence, they remained in Rome until the late 18th c.²

Several artists made drawings of the reliefs while the panels were still in Rome. These illustrations include the roughly contemporaneous Codex Ursinianus in the Vatican and the Dal Pozzo–Albani collection in Windsor Castle, both dated c.1600, and the Bartoli prints, dated to 1693.³ The most accurate of the three collections are the Vatican Codex drawings.⁴ The anonymous Vatican artist drew panels 5 and 6 as joined together at the figure of Agrippa — according to their actual arrangement in the 16th-c. reconstruction. However, panel 7 was drawn as unconnected and independent. The left side of panel 7 is shown in the drawing as a straight, vertical edge which still exists today on the South frieze (fig. 1b). Since this ap-

1 For bibliography on the Ara Pacis, see G. Koeppel, "Die historischen Reliefs der römischen Kaiserzeit V: Ara Pacis Augustae," *BonnJbb* 187 (1987) 152-57; S. Settis, "Die Ara Pacis," in *Kaiser Augustus und die verlorene Republik* (Berlin 1988) 400-26; and most recently see C. B. Rose, "'Princes' and barbarians on the Ara Pacis," *AJA* 94 (1990) 453-67.

2 E. La Rocca, *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Roma 1983) 63-66. The preparation of the panels included the separation of the outer figural frieze from the inner garland reliefs and the removal of a substantial portion of the marble between these two sides from what was originally a single block of stone. For this reason, the original location of the processional frieze panels cannot be determined from the position of the garland panels.

3 Codex Ursinianus: G. Moretti, *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Roma 1948) fig.103, F. von Duhn, *MonInst* 11 (1881) pls. 34-35; Dal Pozzo–Albani Collection: J. M. C. Toynbee, "The Ara Pacis reconsidered," *ProcBritAcad* 39 (1953) pl.29; Bartoli drawings: Bartoli, *Admiranda Romanarum antiquitatum ac veteris sculpturae vestigia* (Roma 1693) pls.14-15. For a complete bibliography on the drawings, see Koeppel (supra n.1) 156.

4 The artists of the Dal Pozzo–Albani drawings as well as the engraver Bartoli have added imaginative details to their illustrations. From a comparison of the drawings to each other and to early 20th-c. photographs and to the reliefs themselves, the Vatican Codex drawings appear to be the least embellished and the most accurate.