

Fabio Barry

The House of the Rising Sun: Luminosity and Sacrality from Domus to Ecclesia

The poem *In praise of the younger Justin* (566/567 AD) was the last flowering of Latin panegyric-epic in Byzantium, written by Corippus, court poet to Justin II (r. 565-578). In one passage, the poet offers this ekphrasis of the Emperor's throne-room in the recently completed Sophia Palace:

There is a hall within the upper part of the palace
That shines with its own light as though it were open to the clear sky
And so gleams with the intense luster of glassy minerals,
That, if one may say so, it has no need of the golden sun
And it ought really be named the 'Abode of the Sun'
So pleasing is the sight of the place and still more wondrous in appearance¹.



Fig. 1. Emperor Justinian with Halo, Detail of Presbytery Mosaics (c. 546 AD), S. Vitale, Ravenna.

One commentator has taken these words at face value to mean “a kind of solarium, with walls and perhaps roof of glass.”² Instead, the poet means a chamber sheathed in glass mosaic (“vitrei... metalli”), indubitably vaulted not glazed, and abounding in such gleaming reflections that the room *seemed* to illuminate itself. It was a throne-room worthy of the Sun himself and the emperor Justin, we are to understand, is that Sun. This interpretation is more than confirmed by the permutations on the theme that pervade the rest of the poem: Justin acceded to the throne at dawn and light filled the palace at his acclamation; his father Justinian (**fig. 1**) was “the light of the city and the world”; Justin’s royal limbs emit light; the “imperial palace with its officials is like Olympus. Everything is as bright... shining with light”; Justinian overshadows the empire as the sun eclipses the stars; the Great Consistory “gleams with a mosaic sun”; a “glorious light shone from the inner chambers and filled the entire Consistory” before “the emperor came forth”; the Avar ambassadors shuddered on entering the throne-room because “they believed the Roman Palace was another heaven”; “the sun shone out from a clear sky... another clear light [i.e. Justin] had increased this brilliant light [i.e. the sun]...; New Rome shone and the lovely palace vied with heaven itself”; even Justin’s throne is “proud with gold and jewels, having its own light without the sun”; and when we see Justin himself, “like the



Fig. 2. Hagia Sophia, Nave (532-7 and later), Istanbul

holy light, his appearance surpassed all gems and gold, his angelic eyes equalling the stars in heaven... he cast terror into the people by his appearance, and his eyes flashed: like when the golden sun... illuminates the whole world with the glory of his radiance.”³

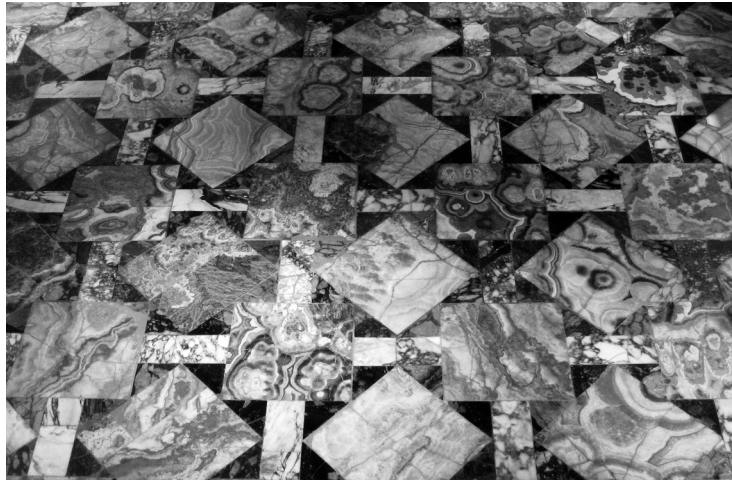
Justin’s appearances seem divine epiphanies and the Palace might be easily mistaken for a church. Indeed similar imagery fills the contemporary ekphraseis of Hagia Sophia (fig. 2) by Paul the Silentiary (563) or Procopius (c. 554/560), and Corippus himself could not be more explicit in making the parallel: “There are two wondrous things imitating the glorious sky, founded with the guidance of God, the venerable temple and the glorious building of the new Sophianae. This is the hall of the emperor and this of God.”⁴ And the impact of all this splendour on the barbarian Avars, now supposedly cowed into suing for peace, brings to mind the well known account of Russian ambassadors entering Hagia Sophia in 987, that they were converted on the spot because it seemed a heaven upon earth such that even the angels had descended from the gold mosaics to celebrate the liturgy.⁵

The transference of the properties of temple sanctuaries into audience halls, exported through the material imagery of brilliance and luminosity, was already of great antiquity. Both

environments aspired to reflect a divine domain, whether pagan Olympus or Christian Heaven. As this essay will show, the idea that richly appointed palatial or religious interiors were so luminous that they shone “with their own sun” was a perduring topos that purveyed not simply an aesthetic of brilliance, but announced a microcosm assured by a local sun and sacralised by light.

The motif of the ruler’s domain as Palace of the Sun must stretch back to the Pharaohs, who regarded themselves as living gods, and especially to Akhenaten (d. 1336/1334 BC) who monopolised religious devotion upon the Aten (sun-disk) and titled himself its only true son. From at least Homer’s description of the Palaces of Alcinous and Menelaos, poets imagined palaces clad in fiery bronze, glowing ivories, and flashing with amber or flaming with jewels (*Od.* 4.43-46, 7.81-133). Moreover, in the *Odyssey*, when Telemachus bursts into the Palace of Menelaos it is exactly this sort of display that moves him to exclaim that surely the palace of Zeus on Olympus must be this way.⁶ Each palace must be *thauma idisthein*, “a wonder to behold,” and the corollary was that seeing was believing.

Fig. 3. *Opus Sectile* Floor in Alabasters, Africano, and Pavonazzetto Marbles, from the Domus in the Horti Lamiani, Rome, (mid- first century AD?) now Musei Capitolini, Rome



The same ambition no doubt explains the gypsum floors and walls of Minoan palaces, and the flaming porphyry and sunny alabasters that clad the palaces of Ptolemaic Egypt.⁷ Indeed, when Lucan imagines (*De Bello Civili* 10.5.111-126; c. 65 AD) the abode of the last Pharaoh, Cleopatra (r. 51-30 BC), he emphasizes the shimmering fabrics, the gleaming marbles, the gilded ceiling, that even “alabaster was laid all over the hall to trample,” and that that all this made it the “very image of a temple” (“ipse locus templi... instar”) in which the queen reigned as a goddess. Statius, in fact, describes the palace of Venus in identical language (*Silv.* 1.2.145-157). Cleopatra’s throne-room now lies at the bottom of the modern harbour at Alexandria, but we can imagine its floor from Ptolemaic fragments like the pavement at Suk el Wardma or, better still, those in Roman mansions like the Domus of the Horti Lamiani (**fig. 3**).⁸ Such paving was itself descended from temple interiors like that of Khafre at Ghiza (c. 2520-2494 BC), where striding across the glowing floor must have seemed like treading on sun-filled cloud.⁹

Marble or mosaic floors, walls clad in polished stuccoes imitating polychrome masonry, or equally polished frescoes reaching up to gilded rafters quickly became ingredients, singly or together, for the well appointed, Hellenistic home and palace. This taste was inherited by the Romans of the later Republic as the borders of empire expanded beyond Europe and quickly became de rigeur for Rome’s most beautiful homes, and in succeeding generations its imperial palaces. Whatever the patterning, once the marbles had been set edge-to-edge to form sheer surfaces, a laborious process of polishing ensured that they would seem a piece and reflect like giant mirrors. The house of the lord and master must really shine, and when a VIP was expected the marbles received as much spit and polish as the family silver (Juv. 14.59-63).

This hall of mirrors raised the household onto another plane. The most exalted patrons from the emperor down were happy to become temporary gods by permanently basking in the shimmering reflections

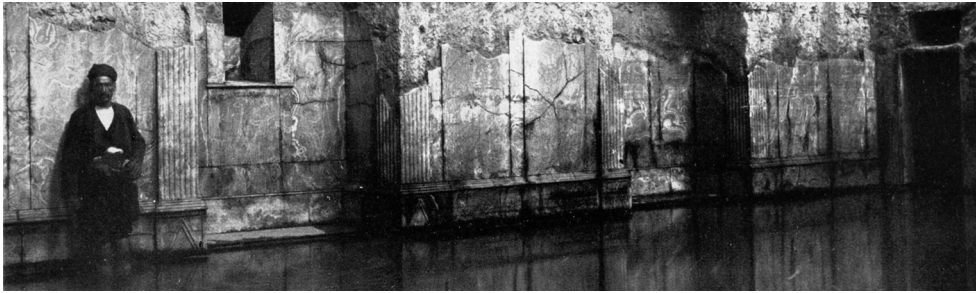


Fig. 4. Baths “of Pasa Ilica”, Pergamon (Bergama Izmir), Turkey, (Hadrianic?)

that suggested they haunted solar abodes (**fig. 4**). The master of the house was the light of his home. So palpable was this notion that when Annia Regilla, wife of the billionaire magnate-cum-rhetorician Herodes Atticus and the very “light of his home,” expired prematurely around 160 AD, her husband “altered the appearance of his house in her honor by making the paintings and decorations of the rooms black by means of hangings, dyes, and Lesbian marble, which is a gloomy and dark stone” (**fig. 5**).¹⁰

The most opulent homes once more looked up to divine palaces, like that of Cupid described by Apuleius (c. 125 – c. 180) in the *Golden Ass*: a royal palace, constructed not with human hands but by divine arts. For you will know from the moment you enter that you are looking at the resplendent and appealing residence of a God... all the walls are constructed from solid blocks of gold glowing with their own brilliance, so that the house creates its own daylight even without the sun’s permission: thus the rooms, thus the colonnades, thus even the doors do themselves blaze¹¹.

Fig. 5. Baths, Villa Sileen, Al-Khoms, Libya, (second century AD)



The man to beat in this game, however, was not Cupid but the Sun himself. The goal, mediated by the materials and illuminations, was to transform the interior into a mirage of light that seemed to emanate from the ruler himself. This widespread perception was stoked by the epideictic oratory and poems churned out by court literati, who often borrowed their plaudits from earlier descriptions of temples.¹²

Kantorowicz has methodically traced the idea that Roman and Byzantine emperors, eventually Louis XIV (the “Sun King”) and even Napoleon, were happy to be considered the rising suns that illuminated their cities and kingdoms.¹³ The Roman Emperor was lauded as the rising sun, the *Oriens Augusti*, because this title clinched the moment when sunbeams flood the world ridding it of darkness. It was



Fig. 6. Columns in Numidian Marble and Gilded Columns with Jewelled Buds, Detail of Fresco, East and South Walls, Room 14 ("Triclinium"), Villa A ("Villa of Poppaea"), Oplontis, Italy (mid-first century BC/AD?)

also said that in the emperor's power this moment became everlasting, signifying his "rising in timeless perpetuity," and therefore implied an "*imperium sine umbris*, an empire in which the Sun does not set." From Caesar onwards, these same emperors expected posthumous divinization, so it was fitting that in this world too they live like gods. It can only follow that such rulers must live in houses that competed with that of Helios-Sol himself and on a scale so huge that they were visible entire only to his supernal eye.¹⁴

Perhaps no emperors took up the gauntlet with greater gusto than Nero (r. 54-68) and then Domitian (r. 81-96). Nero's lust for light meant that his new palace, the Domus Aurea (64-68 AD), was entirely south-facing so it would be flooded with sunlight from dawn until dusk.¹⁵ Nor was he content with sheathing the entire edifice in marble, for it was famously studded with gems (fig. 6), looking back to

those eastern tents pitched on gilded columns and dripping with blazing jewels, erected from the Persian kings to Alexander at Susa.¹⁶ All Nero's brilliant encrustations identified him as Sol-Helios, the new Sun that would heal Rome after the disastrous fire of 64 AD, and the Domus Aurea as his proper abode, a gilded house and a Sun-Palace.¹⁷

The equally demented Domitian, on the other hand, was the author of the equally vast Domus Flavia on the Palatine (81-92 AD). Although Suetonius says that Domitian forestalled assassins by lining his Palace colonnades with *Phengites* (because he could "see in its brilliant surface the reflection of all that went on behind his back") this scurrilous anecdote only marginalizes the material's solar aspirations.¹⁸ Others lamented that Domitian thought himself a new Midas, "that everything become gold and stone at [his] touch" (Plut. *Popl.* 15.5). *Phengites*, Pliny says, was "a stone as hard as marble, brilliant and translucent, even in those parts that were streaked with yellow veining." In an earlier temple built of the stuff, "even when the doors were shut, it gleamed like the day... since it was as though the light was enclosed within, rather than transmitted from the outside."¹⁹ Summing up the entire palace, Martial announces that here, "the day sees nothing brighter in the whole world... sated with the hidden light of the rising sun... [it is] a house equal to heaven."²⁰ He means all parts of the palace but especially the *Aula Regia* (Audience Hall) and *Triclinium* (Banqueting Hall) that lay at its heart, overwhelmingly grandiose constructions premeditated to rival the scale of temples precisely because they presented Domitian as a living god.²¹ It is in the Triclinium that Statius famously catalogues the panoply of exotic marbles and imagines that he must have entered heaven itself.²²



Fig. 7. Nilotic Scene, Glass Opus Sectile, from the Iseum at Kenchreai, now in the Archaeological Museum, Isthmia, Greece (c. 360/375 AD)



Fig. 8. Glass Opus Sectile Imitating Marble Revetment, from Villa of Lucius Verus, Acquatraversa, near Rome, now in the Museo nazionale Romano di Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome (161/169 AD?)

It remains to be said that the glories of the Byzantine home had been putting Menelaus to shame since the fourth century AD²³, and that in the sixth not just Corippus, but an anonymous epigram still lauds “the bright house” of the Emperor Justinian in the same glowing terms, as “a marvel for the sun to view at its rising,” because “never before when he mounted his celestial path did he see such beauty on earth.”²⁴ Moreover, at the other end of the Mediterranean even the Vandal dynasty that Justinian was just about to annihilate subscribed to the same imagery. Their compliant court poet, the aptly named Luxorius, enthuses

(523/530 AD) that the “Audience chamber of the King [Hilderic] at Anclae [Carthage] gleams, wondrously made by art, labour, skill, riches, wealth. From here the sun itself captures the rays that it could give it. You would believe that another day is [born] in the marbles.” Luxorius deemed the light in Hilderic’s palace so intense, in fact, that it seemed to melt the floor: “the unclouded pavement seems to be thickly spread snow. When your feet stand upon it, you would think they could sink into it.”²⁵

Hardly any revetted interior survives but the shock effect of all this splendour can still be appreciated through the eyes of the Chinese diplomats who infiltrated the empire’s eastern borders in late antiquity. Used to jade and other hardstones but certainly no marble architecture, when these stupefied newcomers came face to face with marbled palaces, they could only conclude that their “kingposts” were of coral, their walls of “opaque glass,” their pillars of lapis lazuli, and their pedestals of crystal.²⁶ It is ironic that these Asian interlopers mistook marble for glass, for marble revetment achieved the acme of radiance precisely when it was replicated in coloured glass. Such vitrine revetments have been retrieved from the Iseum at Kenchreai (c. 360/375), where intricately inlaid Nilotic scenes and figures of philosophers are framed by intarsiated pilasters and sit over high dados, whose glass is mixed to imitate marble veining (fig. 7).²⁷ But the practise must have been reasonably widespread for fragments have been retrieved from the Villa of Lucius Verus (r. 161-169) just outside Rome, others are known from archaeological notes, and ancient authors attest to their wider use (fig. 8).²⁸

Analogously, in the exedra of the Aula of the Domus outside the Porta Marina at Ostia (c. 393/394 AD), brickwork (*opus mixtum* or *opus compositum* to be precise) is simulated in marble right down to its mortar joints (fig. 9).²⁹ Such humility came at an exorbitant price and if precious materials only signal social status only by conspicuous consumption, as some scholars automatically assume, then making bricks out of marble was brazen to the point of decadence. A more sympathetic answer again resides in the manifestation of luminosity. Whoever the patron of this stately home, he was so influential that his residence now blocked

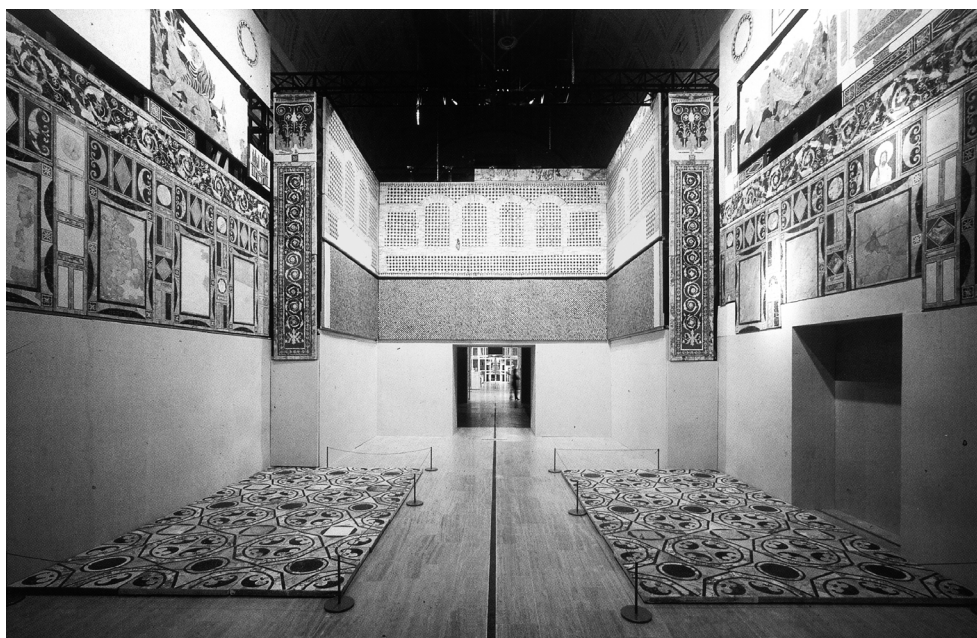


Fig. 9. Hall from the Building (Domus) Outside the Porta Marittima, Ostia (393/394 AD), as reconstructed in the Exhibition Aurea Romana, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (2000)

the Porta Marina, and with it access to the seashore, thereby effectively turning the Decumanus into his front drive. The Aula was most likely the audience room for this grandee. It would have been the stage for the *salutatio*, or dawn greeting to the aristocrat from friends and clients, a practice which had not ceased with the Republic but persisted until the eclipse of empire. Thus, when Ammianus castigated the nobility for their moral decline, only about thirty years before the Ostia Aula was built, he singled out the *salutatio* sycophants that “admire the rows of columns hanging on the towering facade, and the walls gleaming with the remarkable colors of precious stones, and exalt these noble-men above mortals.”³⁰ In short, the patron probably wished to sustain the usual conceit that his hall was envied by the sun and, although he was neither god nor Emperor, wished to be “exalted above mortals” (as Ammianus protested) and needed a home fit for a hero. Such super-human but not quite blasphemous magnificence may, in fact, be the gist of Nero’s much earlier quip about the Domus Aurea: “Finally I begin to live in a house worthy of a man.”³¹

In a south-facing hall flooded with light reflected off the Mediterranean, the marbles would have rippled and reflected upon the lord of the house to appoint him all the more (il)lustr(i)ous. The Christian poet Ennodius makes the same parallel when describing a bishop’s house in Milan (c. 503-513): “Two things have established the spirit of this home for eternity: / that it shine either by marbles or the virtue of its master” (“Aedibus ad genium duo sunt concessa per aevum / Si niteant crustis, aut domini merito”: *Carm.* 2.10.1-2). Moreover, it was as commonplace in antiquity as it is today to speak of people who “shine,” are “brilliant” in intellect, or “dazzle” with their speech. The

Manichee Secundinus even flatters St. Augustine that his polished eloquence shines brighter than the marbles in the Palace of the Anicii in Rome.³² By extraordinary coincidence, it was these very marbles that Theoderic would despoil, c. 507-12 AD, probably for his own palace in Ravenna, so that they might become “the joyful witnesses of our government, the sparkling embodiment of our reign, the herald’s call of sovereign power. We show these things with admiration to the ambassadors who can easily identify the sovereign with his residence.”³³

At Ostia, the ultimate agenda can only have been some celestial hyper-reality. Either this hall was so outlandish that even the bricks were made of marble, or its inner light was so strong that fired clay leaked a burning light. Significantly, such intarsiated brickwork would reappear in later palaces of light, the Christian basilicas, for example in the arcade spandrels of Santa Sabina in Rome (422-432; **fig. 10**) and the central, apse vignette in the Euphrasius Basilica at Poreč (530/550).³⁴ Indeed,

the same materials, the same decorative schemes, and the same symbolism was transferred with a minimum of adaptation from the Domus to the Ecclesia.

The more the lustre of empire tarnished, the more the jewelled style of late-antique poetry salvaged motifs from a vanishing world to conjure up edifices that were mirages of flashing gems and marbles.³⁵ The old topoi continued to haunt late antique poetry, and supply nostalgic and eloquent literati like Prudentius (348 — c. 410), Sidonius Apollinaris (c. 430-479/80), and Venantius Fortunatus (c. 535 — c. 605) with raw material for conceptualizing this new breed of construction, the Christian basilica. Every church was now a “Palace of Dawn,” while Christian epithalamia

drew on Statius’ description of Venus’ marbled palace to show that marriages were still truly made in heaven.³⁶ Late antique dreams of heaven, like Prudentius’ rhapsodies, easily collated images from such models and in turn fed Arabic poetry, or both recycled earlier common sources.³⁷ Indeed, little distance separates Nonnos’ neo-Homeric description of the mythical Palace of Lyaïos (c. 470 AD) from contemporary eulogies of churches.³⁸

Concurrently, the conversion of numerous audience halls (*aulae*), domestic or civic and some palatial, into churches ensured a material continuity between the new Christian assembly halls and their secular predecessors.³⁹ Early churches also assumed the royal title of “basilica” (*basilika*, “kingly”) and both church and palace were indiscriminately termed “aula” or “palatium.”⁴⁰ Moreover, in panegyric and theology Christ now acceded to the old imperial title of the *Rising Sun*, “Who had risen again so as never to repeat His setting,” and Who had “rent the darkness of the nether world to shine forth with the light of resurrection.”⁴¹ It naturally followed that His



Fig. 10. *Opus Sectile Spandrels with Faux-Brickwork, Santa Sabina, Rome (422-432 Ad)*



Fig. 11. Apse Mosaic with Titulus, S. Agnese fuori le Mura, Rome (625-38 AD)

feast day fell on Sun-day and that the new churches should face east, towards the sunrise, wherever possible.⁴²

While Pagan temples had been the gods' private houses, embassies for their divine presence, the cult structures of the new Christian religion were places of assembly for communion with God and public fellowship in Christ. In the course of time, the sacrifice came to be made within the church to invoke the God, not outside the temple to placate it. But long before the Eucharistic rite became a diurnal occasion in the church, a communion by light was achieved when the church was filled with those divine illuminations, which were the subject of

countless dedicatory inscriptions (*tituli*).⁴³

The much-quoted but virtually untranslatable titulus in the episcopal chapel of St. Andrew, Ravenna (c. 495 AD), is typical:

Either the light is born here or, made captive, it reigns here freely.
Light exists before [time], whence comes the modern glory of heaven,
Or else deprived [of light] the building engenders the gleaming day
And the trapped radiance glows though heaven is closed off [from view].

Look, the marbles are rejuvenated by the bright rays,
And all stones struck in the starry purple vault.

These gifts resplend by the largess of their donor, [Bishop] Peter.

To him belongs honour, to him belongs merit for composing small things
In such a way that they overcome the large area by compacting the intervals.

Nothing is restrained for Christ. He is master of a well-jointed house
Whose temples stand in the human heart.

Peter is the founder, Peter is the foundation and the hall⁴⁴

"God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5), and *tituli* as well as *encomia*, consecration speeches, and theological texts all proclaimed that the beams flooding the church interiors exorcized the site with their cleansing light. In these divine throne-rooms of the cosmic Basileus the surplus of light reminded the devotee that, "the happiness of the Lord King on His arrival wipes away from the world, like the twilight of the sun, the trembling fear of gaping darkness."⁴⁵ Another titulus, in S. Agnese (625-38; **fig. 11**), Rome, spells this out and (as we might now expect) matches this with the moral splendour of the patron:
The golden painting rises forth from cut minerals [*metallis*]
And at once the day embraces it only to be itself imprisoned;
You might believe the dawn was silently rising from snowy springs
Above the gathered mist, moistening the fields with dew
Or such light as the rainbow creates in the heavens

Or the purple peacock, gleaming with its own colour.
 He who had the power to give limits to both the night and the day
 Driven the darkness away from the tombs of the martyrs
 What is evident to all in a single upward glance
 Bishop Honorius has made this dedicated offering.
 His likeness is marked by his raiment and his gift:
 Wearing a radiant heart, he shines in aspect as well⁴⁶

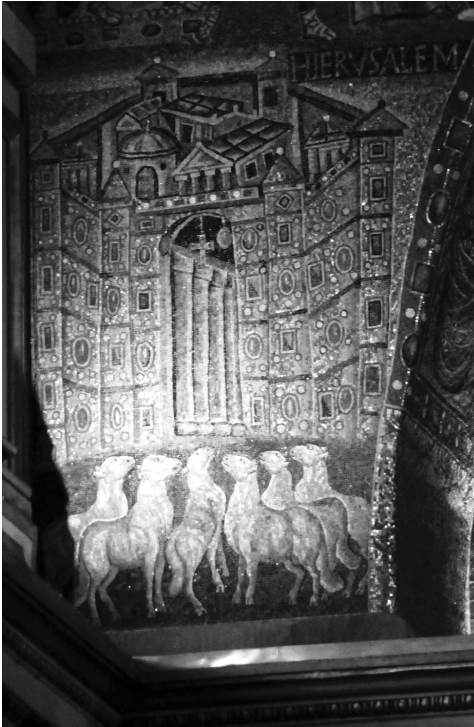


Fig. 12. The Heavenly Jerusalem, Detail of Mosaic Spandrel, Triumphal Arch, Nave, S. Maria Maggiore (432-440 AD)

It hardly needs stressing that the sun's rising stood for the resurrection, and the impenetrable night for death.⁴⁷ This catharsis made shadows flee, and the nocturnal supplement of oil-lamps turned night into day or conjured starry skies in place of local suns.

In vaulted churches, especially in the East, it was the golden mosaics that trapped the sun and reflected its light upon the faithful. Thus the apse inscription (565/78) in of St. Mary of the Blachernae, Constantinople, tells us that Justin the Elder made the splendid temple, of such brilliant beauty
 Dedicated to the Mother of God.
 A radiant light which conquered the dawn was given it by Justin the younger,
 Who reigned after him."⁴⁸

Marble revetments sustained the reflective miasma of mosaic. The old topos that the building "abounds exceedingly in sunlight and in the reflection of the sun's rays from the marbles" that "one might say that its interior is not illuminated from without by the sun, but that the radiance comes into being within it"

(Hagia Sophia: Procop. *Aed.* 1.1.30) lived on and churches studded with marbles again reflected a celestial palace —this time the jewelled walls of the Heavenly Jerusalem (*Revelation* 21:18-21; **fig. 12**). When Avitus (c. 450 — c. 518/526), Bishop of Poitiers, speaks of the new churches he writes that the faithful must "polish with praise the glory of the marbles, from which only jealousy of their size denies the title of jewels"⁴⁹ and laud "the daylight, somehow collected within by man's labour, [so that the church] is alive with the light of so many gleaming minerals." Coffered ceilings, as Paulinus zealously writes of his own church near Nola (401-404), also allowed it to be "arrayed in a new garment purified from old age... behold, you see how great a brilliance emanates from it, as if the church were regenerated, while the ceiling imparts an effect of shimmering waves to its decorations in relief."⁵⁰ Sometimes even tie beams were gilded too.⁵¹ Glowing tendrils of light reached down in the shape of pendent lamps, which twinkled like stars

to fend off the night and once more remind devotees of the true light to which they must aspire.⁵²

The light of the early church was, like Creation, a generative light; like Pentecost, a revelational light; and like Ascension, an eschatological light. In the eyes of Paulinus of Nola (c. 354-431), this brilliant plasma reverberated around the interior renewing and regenerating itself (he says “novat et novatur”), to become trapped in matter and assure the faithful that the numen remained in residence.⁵³ When Avitus, again, consecrated the church of St. Peter at Tarentaise, he even called it “a prison of light.”⁵⁴ Such light foretold the final reward, union in the blaze of glory that was the Godhead, and the earliest surviving panegyric of a church, Eusebius’ exegesis of the church at Tyre (c. 317 AD), explains its internal splendour as matching that of Christ’s resurrected body (or the garments of salvation).⁵⁵ The faithful were clothed in light, just like the masses basking in the reflections from highly polished marbles at the baths, and in this baptismal light they rediscovered themselves purified and reborn in Christ.⁵⁶

At the threshold the outside world faded to grey and any human calendar was eliminated to make way for the teleological apparition of the heavenly.⁵⁷ In fact, the consecration ceremony eventually programmed every church to become an unveiling of heaven (“apocalypse”), when the full glory of God would be exposed rather than known only through a glass darkly.⁵⁸ Moreover, as bright as the physical light and its reflections were, they could only advertise the superior light of faith and anticipate its ultimate consecration at the Resurrection, when the new, spiritual sun would blot out the old, physical one.⁵⁹ Then the eternal church would descend, empty save for light because it “had no need of sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (*Revelation* 21:23).

Фабио Барри
(St. Andrew's University, Edinburgh)

Дом восходящего солнца. Светоносность и сакральность от Domus к Ecclesia

Эта статья прослеживает роль устойчивого топоса светоносности дворцовых и церковных интерьеров, «как если бы внутри них самих сияло солнце». Данный топос не просто свидетельствует об эстетике сияния, но сообщает об определенном внутреннем микрокосмосе со своим солнечным сиянием и сакрализованым светом. Подобного рода примеры встречаются как в панегирике Стация, посвященном Триклинию Домициана, так и в экфрасисе Святой Софии, оставленном Павлом Силенциарием.

Начиная с Микенской эпохи, самые роскошные дома пытались имитировать дворцы богов, будь то обитель Зевса на Олимпе, или же покои Эроса, Афродиты, или же — самое главное — Дворец Солнца. Начиная с дворца Алкиноя, описанного Гомером, и заканчивая дворцом царицы Кандакии у Валерия Полемиа, изображение древних поэтов рисовало интерьеры из огненной бронзы, сверкающей белизной слоновой кости, задрапированные в радужные ткани, мерцающие янтарем и драгоценными камнями, словно раскаленные угли. Или же, позднее, — залитые светом покои из мерцающих мозаик и мрамора. Каждый дворец был *thauma idisthein*, «дивен на вид», представляя собою сияющее видение неземной красоты, в которое трудно было поверить, не увидев. Материалы, из которых были сооружены дворцы, ценились не только за свои светоотражающие качества, но и за художественные ассоциации, которые они будили, а также за ассоциации с природными стихиями. Пол в тронном зале Клеопатры — «самый образ храма», в котором правительница царила, подобно богине, — был выложен медовым алебастром с извилистыми прожилками, идти по которому было равносильно скольжению по напоенным солнечным светом облакам.

В целом, богатое, сияющее убранство растворяло очертания интерьера в миражах света, который, казалось, исходил и от самого правителя. Наиболее высокопоставленные придворные, включая самого императора, были только рады играть роль временных богов, постоянно купаясь в сверкающих отражениях, словно бы намекающих на то, что они — насельники солнечных обителей. Эти распространенные образы и сравнения имели дальнейшее хождение в эпидиктических ораторских и поэтических произведениях, неустанно выходящих из-под пера придворных поэтов, которые, как правило, заимствовали свои вос-

торженные панегирики из более ранних описаний священных храмов.

Канторович систематично и наглядно продемонстрировал, что римские и византийские императоры, а в Новое время — Людовик XIV («Король-Солнце»), и даже Наполеон Бонапарт, поощряли, когда их сравнивали с восходящим солнцем, озаряющим пределы их владений. Императора превозносили как восходящее солнце *Oriens Augusti*, — в этом величании содержался образ, указывающий на момент, когда первые лучи раннего восходящего солнца пронизывают и разрывают мглу, окутавшую землю. Также указывалось на то, что данный элемент является неотъемлемой и постоянной характеристикой императорской власти, знаменуя «восход во вневременной вечности». Отсюда логически следовало и именование римской империи как *imperium sine umbris* — империи незаходящего солнца. Начиная со времен Цезаря, римские императоры посмертно причислялись к сонму богов, из чего вполне логично вытекало, что и в этой жизни они должны жить, как боги.

Пожалуй, ни один из императоров так не упивался сознанием данного факта, как Нерон, а затем и Домициан. Неронов *Domus Aenea* стал тем самым знаменитым дворцом Солнца, купающимся в солнечных лучах с восхода до заката. Позолоченный, облицованный мрамором, усеянный драгоценностями... Подобным же образом помешанный Домициан, как новый Мидас, облицовал свой не менее обширный дворец полупрозрачным фенгитом золотистых оттенков; Триклиний «был напоен сокрытым светом восходящего солнца ... [став] домом по образу небесной обители.»

В шестом веке это не помешало императору Юстиниану именовать себя *Lux Urbis et Orbis* — «свет городу и миру», — а свой дворец провозгласить «Олимпом», где его окружали *candidati* в снежно-белых одеждах и дворцовые стражи, уподоблявшиеся небесным воинствам. Даже в карфагенском дворце династии Вандалов, который Юстиниан собирался уничтожить, «само солнце ловило свои лучи» в тронном зале и, «словно бы возрождалось в мраморе на следующий день». Поразительный эффект, производимый этими утраченными интерьерами на зрителей, мы можем осознать, ознакомившись с описаниями китайских дипломатов, которые проникли в восточные границы империи в эпоху поздней античности. Привыкшие к облицовке из нефрита и других полудрагоценных камней, но никогда не видевшие мраморной архитектуры, ошеломленные пришельцы изумленно лицезрели мраморные дворцы. В итоге они заключили, что имперские покои были сооружены из коралла, лазурита и хрусталя.

Мраморная облицовка достигала пика своих светоотражающих возможностей, когда была воспроизведена в цветном стекле. Подобным образом, в зале из сооружения за пределами *Porta Marina* в Остии (ок. 393/394 г. н.э.) кирпичная кладка имитируется

в мраморе. Из чего следовало, что либо зала столь прихотлива, что даже и кирпичи в ней сделаны из мрамора, либо же внутренний свет покоев настолько силен, что обожженная глина ярко сияет. В сознании заказчика – патриция подобного рода ходы наводили на стойкие ассоциации с литературной традицией (топосах о светоносном доме), уходящей корнями в эпоху Гомера и постоянно обновляющейся и воспроизводимой в экзотических описания сказочных дворцов в странах восходящего солнца. В залитом солнцем зале, выходящем на южную сторону и отражающем блики вод Средиземного моря, мерцание мрамора одновременно сообщало владельцу роскошных хором сияние и доблесть. Мы и по сию пору упоминаем о людях, которые «всех затмевают собой», «блистают умом или остроумием» и «слепают красотой». То же самое было и в древности: когда Секундий восхваляет блаженного Августина, то пишет, что отточенное красноречие последнего сияет ярче, чем мрамор во Дворце Аникии в Риме. Через сто лет после постройки залы в Остии поэт Эннодий Павийский проводит параллель, еще более многозначительную оттого, что «две характеристики способствовали утверждению в вечности [дома (т.е. церкви) в Милане]: ее сияние во мраморе и в добродетели наставника. «

К четвертому веку, новый род сооружений, — церковь — уже успел присвоить себе имперский титул «базилика». Одновременно гимны и богословские сочинения, прославлявшие Христа, начали величать его уже устоявшимся имперским титулом Восходящего Солнца, «восставшего вновь, чтобы уже не заходить никогда» и «разорвавшего тьму преисподней дабы воссиять миру светом воскресения». Топос вновь пользуется популярностью как в жанре экфрасиса, так и в эпиграфике, уверяющей, что церкви «излучали свой собственный дневной свет» или даже были «узилищами света». Украшенные мрамором, они служили отражением небесных покоев — в данном случае, драгоценных стен Небесного Иерусалима. Как провозглашает одно величание за другим, вечный восход солнца теперь указывал на воскресение Христа, уничтожившего непроницаемую ночь смерти. Теперь яркое свечение и отражения материального света были символом, предвосхищавшим его превращение в нематериальный свет веры в ходе конечного Воскресения, когда новое, духовное, солнце упразднит солнце земное. Тогда на земле воцарится вечная церковь, осиянная изнутри, поскольку «не имеет нужды ни в солнце, ни в луне для освещения своего, ибо слава Божия осветила его, и Агнец есть свет его» (Откровение 21. 23).

- 1 Corippus *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* 1.97-102: “est domus interior tectorum in parte superna / luce sua radians ut aperto libera caelo / conspicuo vitrei splendens fulgore metalli / dicere si fas est, rutili non indiga solis / vel solis dicenda domus, gratissima visu / et facie <plus> mira loci.” Unless otherwise specified, all translations are mine. I am grateful to Paul Gwynne for reviewing this passage and correcting the translations of the *tituli*.
- 2 Averil Cameron ed. and trans., *Flavius Cresconius Corippus. In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris Libri IV*, The Athlone Press: London 1976: 133 at ll. 97f.
- 3 Corippus *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* 1.30-200; “lux sacra palatia complet” (1.363); “lux urbis et orbis” (1.250); “et lumen membris regalibus auxit” (2.90-91); “imitator Olympum / officiis Augusta domus. Sic Omnia clara / [...] luce corusca” (3.179-181); “atria... sole metallorum splendentia” (3.191-192); “adytis radiavit ab imis / inclita lux, et concistoria tota replevit. / Egreditur princeps” (3.211-213); “credunt aliud Romana Palatia caelum” (3.244); “iubar axe sereno / emicuit [...] clara coruscantem lux auxerat altera lucem [...] nova Roma nitebat, / certebantque ipsi iucunda palatio caelo.” (4.96-102); “sedes, auro gemmisque superba, / lumen habens sine sole solum” (4.115-116); “sacri luminis instar / illius aspectus gemmas vincebat et aurum, / angelicis oculis exaequans sidera caeli [...] terruit incessu populos, oculisque refulsit: quails... sol aureus [...] mundumque inluminat omnem / lucis honore suae.” (4.245-245). Trans. Averil Cameron, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus*.
- 4 Corippus *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* 4.285-288: “inclita praeclarum duo sunt imitantia caelum, / consilio fundata dei, venerabile templum / et Sophianarum splendentia tecta novarum. / Principis hace, haec aula dei.”
- 5 Samuel H. Cross and Olgerd P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian text* (Cambridge MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1953): 111.
- 6 Hom. *Od.* 4.72-75: “Can you believe your eyes? / the murmuring hall, how luminous it is / with bronze, gold, amber, silver and ivory! / This is the way the court of Zeus must be, inside upon Olympus. What a wonder!” Cf. Lucian *Dom.* 3: “No doubt it was fitting for Homer’s island boy to be astounded at the house of Menelaus and to compare its ivory and gold to the beautiful things in heaven because he had never seen anything so beautiful on earth,” Loeb ed. trans. A. M. Harmon.
- 7 For Minoan floors: Stefanis N. Chlouveraki, “Exploitation of Gypsum in Minoan Crete,” in *Interdisciplinary Studies on Ancient Stone*, ed. Lorenzo Lazzarini (Padua: Bottega d’Erasmus, 2002), 25-34. For faux-marble Minoan floors: Ethel S. Hirsch, *Painted Decoration on the Floors of Bronze Age Structures on Crete and the Greek Mainland* (Göteborg: P. Åström, 1977); Ethel S. Hirsch, “Another Look at Minoan and Mycenaean Interrelationships in Floor Decoration,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 84, no. 4 (1980): 453-62. Cf. marbled dado of the “Throne Room” at Knossos in Arthur Evans and Joan Evans, *The Palace of Minos. A Comparative Account of the Successive Stages of the Early Cretan Civilization as Illustrated by the Discoveries at Knossos* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1921). For similar marbled dados at Tiryns (c. 1360 BC) and Pylos (c. 1300 BC): Gerhart Rodenwaldt, *Die Fresken des Palastes* (Athens: Eleutheroudakis und Barth, 1912): 2: 23-29; Mabel L. Lang, *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia. Volume II: The Frescoes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966): 2: 164-69.
- 8 For fragments of alabaster from Ptolemaic pavements at Kôm ed-Dick and Kôm el Shokafa, as well as an alabaster/porphyry/granite floor from Wardiyan: Wiktor A. Daszewski, “Die Fußboden-Dekoration in Häusern und Palästen des griechisch-römischen Ägypten,” in *Palast und Hütte. Beiträge zum Bauen und Wohnen im Altertum von Archäologen, Vor- und Frühgeschichtlern.*, ed. Dietrich Papenfuss and Volker M. Strocka (Mainz am Rhein: Zabern, 1982), 399ff. and figs. 13-15. For the pavement from the

- Horti Lamiani: Maddalena Cima and Eugenio La Rocca, eds., *Le tranquille dimore degli dei: la residenza imperiale degli Horti Lamiani* (Venice: Marsilio, 1986), 61-63.
- 9 "The reflective surfaces and glowing floor must have seemed unfamiliar and awe-inspiring to people who were used only to matt surfaces on such a large scale. In addition, the use of light-white for the floor with a dark (granite in shadow) ceiling is an inversion of the black-floor, light-ceiling composition. This seems likely to be a deliberate contrast (both combinations are found in Sahure's mortuary temple), possibly emphasizing the alien nature of the former spaces as opposed to the theme of the microcosm of the visible world": Kate Spence, "Red, White and Black: Colour in Building Stone in Ancient Egypt," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 9, no. 1 (1999): 116; Mark Lehner, *The Complete Pyramids* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997): 124.
 - 10 Philostr. *VS* 556: An altar inscription calls Regilla (IG III 1417; Walter Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1983): 2 (Inchriftenkatalog), 160, no. 47.
 - 11 Apul. *Met.* 5.1: "domus regia est, aedificata non humanis manibus, sed divinis artibus. Iam scies ab introitu primo dei cuiuspiam luculentum et amoenum videre te diversorium... totique parietes solidati massis aureis splendore proprio coruscant, ut diem suum sibi domus faciat licet sole nolente: sic cubicula, sic porticus, sic ipsae valvae fulgurant."
 - 12 E.g. Antipater of Sidon (2nd century BC) says of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus: *Anth. Pal.* 9.58.7-8). Such odes couple the idea of solar brightness with the notion of buildings so large that they could be visible to the sun. Cf. Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, with its description of the God entering his temple in a blaze of light.
 - 13 Ernst H. Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti — Lever du Roi," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963): 117-35. For the continuing medieval comparison of kings to the rising sun: Geneviève Bührer-Thierry, "Lumière et pouvoir dans le haut Moyen Âge occidental: célébration du pouvoir et métaphores lumineuses," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen Âge* 116, no. 2 (2004): 521-56.
 - 14 See particularly E. Baldwin Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956): 45-50, 56-58, 130-40, 166-78.
 - 15 It was rigorously oriented to the cardinal points: Jean-Louis Voisin, "Exorient sole (SUÉTONE, Ner. 6). D'Alexandrie à la Domus Aurea," in *L'Urbs. Espace urbain et histoire (Ier siècle av. J.-C. — IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.)* (Paris/Rome: CNRS/École Française de Rome, 1987), 509-43.
 - 16 Suet. *Ner.* 31: "In ceteris partibus cuncta auro lita, distincta gemmis unionumque conchis erant" ("in other parts everything was covered with gold and studded with gems and pearls"); Tac. *Ann.* 15.42.1. Cf. Cima and La Rocca, eds., *Tranquille dimore*, 124-27. An attempt to reconstruct the revetment pattern is in Giorgio Rocco, "Alcune osservazioni sul valore architettonico della antica decorazione parietale: la Domus Aurea di Nerone," *Palladio* 1, no. 1 (1988): 121-34, esp. 128-30. See also the fragments of agate veneers found in a domus, probably an imperial property, on the site of the Villa Patrizi at Porta Pia: Roberta Belli Pasqua in Maxwell L. Anderson and Leila Nista, eds., *Radiance in Stone: Sculptures in Colored Marble from the Museo Nazionale Romano* (Rome: De Luca, 1989), 109 and figs. 44-56.
 - 17 This theory was first propounded in Hans P. L'Orange, "Domus Aurea, der Sonnenpalast," *Serta Eitremiana SO Supplement* 11 (1942): 68-100; repr. in Hans P. L'Orange, *Likeness and Icon: Selected Studies in Classical and Early Mediaeval Art* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1973): 292-312. It is resumed in David Hemsoll, "The Architecture of Nero's Golden House," in *Architecture and Architectural Sculpture in the Roman Empire*, ed. Martin Henig (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1990), 10-38, esp. 28-33; Edward Champlin, "God and Man in the Golden House," in *Horti Romani*, ed. Maddalena Cima and Eugenio La Rocca (Roma: Bretschneider, 1998), 333-44. As Champlin shows, Toynbee and Boethius

- had rejected L'Orange's theory, demoting Neronian Sun-symbolism from attempted theocracy to innocuous metaphor. However, on his return from Greece in 67 AD, Nero did dedicate his racing crowns to the Sun by arranging them around the Obelisk in the Circus Maximus, originally from Heliopolis and made of red Aswan granite. Nero had been supposedly born "just as the sun rose, so that he was touched by its rays almost before he could be laid upon the ground" (Suet. *Ner.* 6.1: "tantum quod exoriente sole, paene ut radiis prius quam terra contingeretur"). Cf. Oleg Neverov, "Nero-Helios," in *Pagan Gods and Shrines of the Roman Empire*, ed. Martin Henig and Martin King (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1986), 189-94; Pilar Fernández Uriel, "Nero, Alter Apollo: La divinización del "Princeps" en la ideología neroniana," in *Héroes, semidioses y daimones*, ed. Jaime Alvar, Carmen Blázquez, and Carlos G. Wagner (Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 1992), 159-73.
- 18 Suet. *Domit.* 14.4. Note that the columns were of Numidian marble. Domitian is Juvenal's target when he disparages a "Dominus" who builds a banqueting hall, supported on Numidian columns to catch the winter sun (7.182-183: "Numidarum fulta columnis / surgat et argentem rapiat cenato solem").
 - 19 Pliny *HN* 36.46.163: "lapis duritia marmoris, candidus atque tralucens etiam qua parte fulvae inciderant venae, ex argumento phengites appellatus. Hoc construxerat aedem Fortunae... quare etiam foribus opertis interdiu claritas ibi diurna erat alio quam specularium modo tamquam inclusa luce, non transmissa."
 - 20 Mart. *Epigr.* 8.36.4, 9-10, 11: "Clarius in toto nil videt orbe dies... arcano satietur lumine Phoebi / nascentis... domus par coelo." The palace was built in 81-96 AD.
 - 21 Domitian was the first and last emperor to decree his official title be "Dominus et Deus." In the Aula Regia, the niches were filled with colossal statues of divinities in basalt. Only Domitian himself would have been enthroned: Manfred Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott. Herrscherkult im römischen Reich* (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1999): 119-32. For the Triclinium remains: Sheila Gibson et al., "The Triclinium of the Domus Flavia: A New Reconstruction," *The Papers of the British School at Rome* 42 (1994): 67-100; Pierre Gros, *L'Architecture Romaine de la fin du III^e siècle av. J.-C. à la fin du Haut-Empire* (Paris: Picard, 2001), vol. 2 (Maisons, palais, villas et tombes): 252-61.
 - 22 Stat. *Silv.* 4.2.10-11, 20-22: "Mediis videor discumbere in astris / cum Iove [...] Stupet hoc vicina Tonantis / regia, teque pari laetantur sede locatum / numina" ("I seem to be dining with Jupiter amongst the stars [...] The neighboring Temple of Jupiter the Thunderer is dumbstruck by it, and the gods rejoice that you are lodged in an equal abode"). On this passage: David W. T. Vessey, "Mediis discumbere in astris: Silvae IV.2," *Acta Classica* 52 (1983): 206-20; Katherine M. Coleman, *Silvae IV* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1998): 88-93; Carole E. Newlands, *Statius' Silvae and the Poetics of Empire* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 266-71.
 - 23 Themistius says (384 AD) that Constantinople is filled with "he who builds a vestibule, or bedroom or presentation hall, he who makes himself a house with seven or nine rooms, and there are also those who have the walls and pavements adorned with Spartan, Libyan or Egyptian marbles and make Menelaus look lacking in taste, he who had covered the walls of his palace with silver and gold": Orat. 18.223a; Wilhelm Dindorf, ed., Themistii Orationes (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1961), 271. Pseudo-Codinus extolls the rich marbles of the Palace of Lausus: Raymond Janin, *Constantinople byzantine: développement urbain et répertoire topographique* (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1964): 123, 379.
 - 24 Anth. Pal. 9.811; Loeb ed., trans. W. R. Paton.
 - 25 Lux. *Carm.* 90: "In Anclas; in saluatorium domini regis. / Hildrici regis fulget mirabile factum / Arte, opere, ingenio, divitiis, pretio. / Hinc radios sol

ipse capit quos huc dare possit. / Altera marmoribus creditur esse dies. / Hic sine nube solum; nix iuncta et sparsa putatur. / Dum steterint, credas mergere posse pedes.” Morris Rosenblum, *Luxorius. A Latin poet among the Vandals* (New York/London: Columbia University Press, 1961): 164-65, 250-251. Luxorius lived 480/490 – c. 534 AD, Hilderic was Vandal king of North Africa 523-530 AD.

- 26 Descriptions of Aelana (Elat), Antioch-on-the-Orontes and Constantinople: *Hou-Han-Shu*, chs. 86, 88 (5th Century AD); *Wei-liao* (before 429 AD); *Chin-shu*, ch. 97 (7th Century AD); *Chiu-t'ang-shu*, ch. 198 (mid-10th Century AD); *Hsin-t'ang-shu*, ch. 221 (mid-11th Century AD) in Friedrich Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient: Researches into their Ancient and Mediaeval Relations as Represented in Old Chinese Records* (Shanghai/Hongkong: Kelly & Walsh, 1885): 35-96.
- 27 Leila Ibrahim et al., *Kenchreai: The Panels of Opus Sectile in Glass* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976): esp. 208-19 and drawings XVI-XIX, XXVII-XXX, XXXIV A-XXXIV B, LIII A-LIV. Over a hundred panels were recovered, which would have covered a total wall area of 150 m². Dated there to c. 370/375 AD, and to c. 360 AD in Robert H. Brill, *Chemical Analyses of Ancient Glasses*, 2 vols. (Rochester NY: Corning Museum of Glass, 1999): 1: 63.
- 28 Alexander Nesbitt, “On Wall Decorations in Sectile Work as used by the Romans, with Special Reference to the Decorations of the Palace of the Bassi at Rome,” *Archaeologia* 45, no. 2 (1880): 267-96; Barbara Bacchelli et al., “Nuove scoperte sulla provenienza dei pannelli in opus sectile vitreo della collezione Gorga,” in *Atti del II colloquio dell'associazione italiana per lo studio e la conservazione del mosaico, Roma, 5-7 dicembre 1994*, ed. Irene Bragantini and Federico Guidobaldi (Bordighera: Istituto Internazionale di Studi Liguri, 1995), 447-66. The central section of the Scenae Frons in the Theatre of Scaurus had some sort of glass cladding: *HN* 36.24.114; Henri Lavagne, “Luxuria inaudita’: Marcus Aemilius Scaurus et la naissance de la mosaïque murale,” in *Mosaïque: recueil d'hommages à Henri Stern* (Paris: Editions Recherches sur les civilisations, 1983), 259-64. For a wall panel with an aquatic scene (1st century AD): Donald B. Harden, *Glass of the Caesars* (Milan: Olivetti, 1987): 32-33 (cat. no. 10). Statius describes walls “shining with figures in vitreous variety” (Appendix 1.8); S.H.A. *Firmus Saturninus Proculus et Bonosus* 3.2: “Much was said of the riches of [Firmus, general of Zenobia]. For it is said that he fitted his house with glass quarries fixed [to the wall] with bitumen and other substances” (“De huius divitiis multa dicuntur. Nam et vitreis quadraturis bitumine medicamentis insertis domum instruxisse perhibetur”). Nesbitt (275-276) also refers to a now-destroyed room “in a palace between the gate of San Sebastian and that of St. Paul in Rome” where figurative glass opus sectile occupied the wall above a marble dado (the site, the Vigna Alfieri, is visible in Lanciani’s *Forma Urbis*, sheet 46, bottom left). Other fragments of glass opus sectile found in Egypt and Rome are catalogued in Ibrahim et al., *Panels*: 262-65. For a Christian example with a Chi-Rho and St. Thomas (c. 300/350 AD): Harden, *Glass*: 34 (cat. no. 11).
- 29 Regio III, Insula VII, no. 8. Becatti considered the complex to be the seat of some college (and this particular chamber a Christian cult-room), but Frazer and Guidobaldi have persuasively argued that it was a private Domus, or to be more precise, since it sat on the ancient coastline, a maritime Villa: Giovanni Becatti, *Edificio con opus sectile fuori Porta Marina* (Rome: istituto poligrafico dello Stato, 1969); Alfred Frazer, “A Critical Review,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 75 (1971): 319-24; Federico Guidobaldi, “La decorazione in opus sectile dell’aula,” in *Roma aurea. Dalla città pagana alla città cristiana*, ed. Serena Ensoli and Eugenio La Rocca (Rome: Bretschneider, 2000), 251-62. Comparable domus types can be found in Giovanni Becatti, “Case ostiensi del tardo impero - I,” *Bollettino d’arte* 33, no. 2 (1948): 102-28; Giovanni Becatti, “Case ostiensi del tardo impero - II,” *Bollettino d’arte* 33, no. 3 (1948): 197-224; Federico Guidobaldi, “L’edilizia unifamiliare nella Roma tardoantica,” in *Società romana e impero tardoanti-*

- co, ed. Andrea Giardina (Rome: Laterza, 1986), 165-237; Carlo Pavolini, "L'edilizia commerciale e l'edilizia abitativa nel contesto di Ostia tardoantica," in *Società romana e impero tardoantico*, ed. Andrea Giardina (Rome: Laterza, 1986), 244, 52-69. Cf. Sanne Lind Hansen, "The embellishment of Late-antique domus in Ostia and Rome," in *Patron and Pavements in Late Antiquity*, ed. Signe Isager and Birte Poulsen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1997), 111-24.
- 30 Amm. Marc. 28.4.12: "ita hi quoque columnarum constructiones, alta fronte suspensas mirando, atque parietes lapidum circumspectis coloribus nitidos, ultra mortalitatem nobiles viros extollunt."
- 31 Suet. *Ner.* 31.2: "ut se diceret quasi hominem tandem habitare coepisse." I take it Nero meant a "real man," even "super-man." Diogenes had famously said that he sought "a man," but had only found boys in Sparta. Grimal interprets the phrase to mean "le seul 'citoyen du Monde'" or the emperor as Cosmocrator living in a palace overlooking a park which was a microcosm of the Mediterranean: Pierre Grimal, "Sur deux 'mots' de Néron," *Pallas* 4, no. 3 (1955): 15-21.
- 32 *Secundini Manichaei epistola ad Augustinum* (PL 42, Col. 574): "for I confess that the marbles of the Palace of the Anicii do not glow with such diligence nor so great industry as your writings shine with eloquence" ("ego nam fateor non tali diligentia nec tanta industria Anicianae domus micare marmora quanta tua scripta perlucent eloquentia"). Written 399 AD. Statius had compared brilliant marbles and mosaics of the baths of Claudius Etruscus to his friend's "shining talent and effort" (*Silv.* 1.5.63-64). Seneca had used the metaphor in the contrary sense to extoll the literary style of Fabianus Papius, that he eschewed "fashionable polish" ("recentis politurae") and did not use "a variety of marbles" ("desit sane varietas marmorum," *Ep.* 100.5-6). Seneca rejected oratory that was too polished ("orationem politam," *Ep.* 115.2). For intellectual brilliance and persons who shine: Hor. *Carm.* 1.5.12; Mart. 10.89.3; Catull. 2.5, 61.189; *Anth. Pal.* 9.399. The Palace of the Anicii lies under the present Villa Medici. For the rich revetments (including glass paste) of the *aula absidata* and grand portico: Vincent Jolivet, Henri Broise, and Marco Rossi, "Rome: Pincio (Jardins de Lucullus). Chronique du chantier 1998," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité* 111 (1999): 481-86; Vincent Jolivet, Henri Broise, and Martine Dewailly, "Rome: Pincio (Jardins de Lucullus). Chronique du chantier 1999," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité* 112 (2000): 432-53.
- 33 Cass. *Var.* 7.5: "Haec nostra sunt oblectamenta potentiae, imperii decora facies, testimonium praeconiale regnorum: haec legatis sub ammiratione monstrantur et prima fronte talis dominus esse creditur, quale eius habitaculum comprobatur." Cass. *Var.* 3.10: "marmora, quae de domo Pinciana." For the revetment remains, which are generous but poorly recorded: Paola Novara Piolanti, "Sectilia parietali dal Palatium Ravennate," in *Ricerche di archeologia e topografia*, ed. Raffaella Farioli Campanati (Ravenna: Girasole, 1998), 533-64; Paola Novara, "Sectilia parietali di ignota provenienza conservati presso il Museo Nazionale di Ravenna," *Archeologia dell'Emilia-Romagna* 2, no. 1 (1998): 153-64.
- 34 Krautheimer, *Corpus*, 4: 72; Kelly, *Motifs*: 2: 263-64, 278-80; Franz Rickert, "Zum Inkrustationsschmuck von S. Sabina in Rom," in *Chartulae: Festschrift für Wolfgang Speyer*, ed. Ernst Dassmann et al. (Münster: Aschendorff, 1998), 263-70; Ann Terry, "The Opus Sectile in the Eufrafrasius Cathedral," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* XL (1986): 152-53, figs. 19-20 ("bricks" in porphyry, serpentine, Phrygian and Numidian). Such patterning was revived in the later Middle Ages and disseminated by manuscript illuminations. Checkered and chevron-patterned brick and stone work would decorate Charlemagne's gatehouse at Lorsch and innumerable Romanesque churches.
- 35 Michael Roberts, *The Jeweled Style. Poetry and Poetics in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1989): esp. 47. The topos of urban

- beauty, as manifested primarily in its marble monuments, assumed prominence in epideictic oratory from the 4th to 6th centuries, "at precisely the time that the ancient structure of the cities was gradually disintegrating": Helen Saradi, "The *Kallos* of the Byzantine City: The Development of a Rhetorical *Topos* and Historical Reality," *Gesta* 34, no. 1 (1995): 37-56, esp. 41-42. For an excellent treatment of 5th-century Rome in particular: Franz Alto Bauer, "Beatitudo Temporum. Die Gegenwart der Vergangenheit im Stadtbild des spätantiken Rom," in *Epochenwandel? : Kunst und Kultur zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*, ed. Franz Alto Bauer and Norbert Zimmermann (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 2001), 75-94.
- 36 Stat. *Silv.* 1.2.145-153 (Appendix 2.10); Sid. *Apoll. Carm.* 2.418-421; Claud. *VI Cons. Hon.* 51-52; Ennod. *Carm.* 1.4. E.g. Claud. *Epith.* 86-91: "Afar shines and glitters the goddess' many-colored palace, green gleaming by reason of the encircling grove. Vulcan built this too of precious stones and gold, wedding their costliness to art. Columns cut from rock of hyacinth support emerald beams; the walls are beryl, the high-built thresholds of polished jasper, the floor of agate trodden under foot" ("Procul atria divae / permutant radios silvae obstante virescunt. / Lemnius haec etiam gemmis extruxit et auro / admiscens artem pretio trabibusque smaragdi / supposuit caesas hyacinthi rupe columnas. / beryllo paries et iaspide lubrica surgunt / limina despectusque solo calcatur achates"). Cf. the Palace of Cupid in Apul. *Met.* 5.1. On the genre: Zoja Pavlovskis, "Statius and the Late Latin Epithalamia," *Classical Philology* 60, no. 3 (1965): 164-77; Michael Roberts, "The Use of Myth in Latin Epithalamia from Statius to Venantius Fortunatus," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 119 (1989): 321-48.
- 37 Finbarr Barry Flood, *The Great Mosque of Damascus. Studies on the Makings of an Umayyad Visual Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2001): 25ff. For enduring tales of the "great pearl": Avinoam Shalem, "Jewels and Journeys: The Case of the Medieval Gemstone called al-Yatimah," *Muqarnas* 14 (1997): 42-56.
- 38 Nonn. *Dionysiaca* 18.67-86 (Loeb ed. trans. W. H. D. Rouse): "While Botrys was yet arranging the feast for Lyaïos, the king of magnificent bounty displayed to Bacchus the artist's hand in the stonework of his hall, from which poured a shining brightness of many colors and shapes like the sun and his reflecting moon. The walls were white with solid silver. There was the lych-nite, which takes its name from light, turning its glistening gleams in the faces of men. The place was also decorated with the glowing ruby stone, and showed wine-colored amethyst set beside sapphire. The pale agate threw off its burnt sheen, and the snakestone sparkled in speckled shapes of scales; the Assyrian emerald discharged its greeny flash. Stretched over a regiment of pillars along the hall the gilded timbers of the roof showed a reddish glow in their opulent roofs. The floor shone with the intricate patterns of a tessellated pavement of minerals; and the huge door with a baulk of wood delicately carved looked like ivory freshly cut."
- 39 For the house-churches that became *tituli* in Rome: Federico Guidobaldi, "Chiese Titolari di Roma nel Tessuto Urbano Preesistente," in *Quaeritur inventus colitur: miscellanea in onore di padre Umberto Maria Fasola* (Vatican City: Pontificio Istituto di archeologia cristiana, 1989), 1:383-96; Federico Guidobaldi, "Roma. Il tessuto abitativo, le domus e i tituli," in *Storia di Roma*, ed. Lellia Cracco Ruggini, et al. (Turin: Einaudi, 1993), 3:60-83. The Domus Sessoriana, the palace of Elagabalus, was converted into S. Croce in Gerusalemme already by the mid-4th century. For a case-study: Beat Brenk, "La cristianizzazione della Domus dei Valerii sul Celio," in *The Transformations of Urbs Roma in Late Antiquity*, ed. V. W. Harris (Portsmouth RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1999), 69-84.
- 40 Isid. *Etym.* 15.4.11. Paulinus of Nola *Carm.* 28.97; cited in Irving Lavin, "The House of the Lord. Aspects of the role of Palace Triclinia in the Architecture of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages," *Art Bulletin* 44, no. 1 (1962): 16-17, with larger discussion. The succession of royal connota-

- tions into early Christian imagery has been challenged in Thomas F. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods. A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993): esp. chs. 2, 4.
- 41 Zeno, *tract.* ix (PL 11, col. 417B); Maximus of Turin, *Homilia LXI* (PL 57, col. 371); cited in Ernst H. Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti - Lever du Roi," *Dumbarton Oaks papers* 17 (1963): 139-40.
 - 42 The *dies solis* (day of the sun) now became the *dies dominica* (the Lord's day). For the same reasons, Christmas day was fixed on 25 December, the Winter Solstice and also the feast day of the Syrian Sol Invictus and the Greek Helios.
 - 43 The principle collection of *tituli* is in Giovanni Battista de Rossi, Antonio Ferrua, and Angelo Silvagni, eds., *Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores, Nova series* (Rome: Pontificum Institutum Archaeologiae Christianae, 1861-1888), and new series, 5 vols., Rome 1922-1971. Cf. H. Leclercq, "Inscriptions," in Fernand Cabrol, ed., *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, 15 vols. (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907-53), 7:cols. 850-1089, esp. 850-905 for the early medieval period. A representative collection of those *tituli* especially regarding divine light is analyzed in Eve Borsook, "Rhetoric or Reality: Mosaics as Expressions of a Metaphysical Idea," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 44, no. 1 (2000): 2-18. Such inscriptions were often gathered into *syllogae* and disseminated throughout Europe.
 - 44 AVT LVX HIC NATA EST AVT CAPTA HIC LIBERA REGNAT / LVX EST ANTE, VENIT CAELI DECUS VNDE MODERNVM / AVT PRIVATA DIEM PEPERERVNT TECTA NITENTEM / INCLVSVMQVE IVBAR SECLVSO FVLGET OLYMPO. / MARMORA CVM RADIIS VERNANTVR, CERNE, SERENIS / CVNCTAQVE SIDEREO PERCVSSA IN MVRICE SAXA. / AVCTORIS PRETIO SPLENDESCVNT MVNERA PETRI. / HVIC HONOR, HVIC MERITVM TRIBVIT, SIC COMERE PARVA, / VT VALEANT SPATIIS AMPLVM SVPERARE COACTIS / NIL MODICVM CHRISTO EST ARTAS BENE POSSIDET AEDES. / CVIVS IN HVMANO CONSISTVNT PECTORE TEMPLA. / FVNDATOR PETRVS, PETRVS FVNDAMEN ET AVLA. Amongst others, previously cited in Laura Lo Prete, "Valore e significato dell'architettura nella cappella di S. Andrea a Ravenna," *Felix Ravenna* 89 (1964): 38-39; John Gage, *Colour and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993): 46; Paul Hills, *Venetian Colour. Marble, Mosaic, Painting and Glass 1250-1550* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1999): 45; Borsook, "Rhetoric," 4. Quite divergent, in my view erroneous, translations are offered by Gage and Lo Prete. *Murex* is a double entendre, referring both to the shape of the vault and the dye extracted from the mollusc.
 - 45 Fulgentius [468-533 AD] *Mithologiae*, I, prooemium: "domini regis felicitas adventantis velut solis crepusculum mundo tenebris dehiscentibus pavores abstersit," cited in Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti," 124.
 - 46 AVREA CONCISIS SVRGIT PICTVRA METALLIS / ET COMPLEXA SIMVL CLAVDITVR IPSA DIES / FONTIBVS E NIVEIS CREDAS AVRORA SVBIRE / CORREPTAS NVBES RORIBVS ARVA RIGANS / VEL QVALEM INTER SIDERA LVCEM PROFERET IRIM [error for IRIS, *nom.*] / PVRPVRE[V]SQVE PAVO IPSE COLORE NITENS / QVI POTVIT NOCTIS VEL LVCIS REDDERE FINEM / MARTYRVM E BVSTIS HINC REPPVLIT ILLE CHAOS / SVRSVM VERSA NVTV QVOD CVNCTIS CERNITVR VNO / PRAESVL HONORIVS HAEC VOTA DICATA DEDIT / VESTIBVS ET FRACTIS SIGNANTVR ILLIVS ORA / LVCET ET ASPECTV LVCIDA CORDA GERENS. Cf. apse titulus, S. Maria in Domnica (c. 817-824): "This house was previously broken down into ruins. Now it glitters properly, decorated with variegated minerals. And behold its ornament shines forth like the sun in its orbit who chases the gloomy veils of hideous night..." (ISTA DOMVS PRIDEM FVERAT CON-

FRACTA RVINIS / NVNC RVTLAT IVGITER VARIIS DECORATA MET-
ALLIS / ET DECVS ECCE SVVS SPLENDET CEV PHOEBVS IN ORBE /
QVI POST FVRVA FVRGANS TETRAE VELAMINA NOCTIS...)

- 47 “The day dies into the night... thus the exiled light mourns and yet is restored back to life again in the whole world, with its ornament, with delight with the sun, the same integral and whole, destroying death, her night” (Tert. *De resur-rect.* 12: “Dies moritur in noctem... Ita lux amissa lugetur et tamen rursus cum suo culto, cum dote cum sole, eadem et integra et tota, universo orbi reviviscit, interficiens mortem suam noctem”); Ambrose’s funeral oration for Valentinian (392): “I seem to see you leaving your body and, having dispelled the darkness of night, arise at dawn like the sun to approach God” (Ambr. *De ob. Valent.* 64: “Videre igitur videor te tamquam de corpore recedentem et repulsa noctis caligine surgentem diluculo sicut solem, adpropinquantem Deo”).
- 48 *Anth. Pal.* 1.3.
- 49 “Expolire praeconiis marmorum dignitatem, quibus gemmarum nomen sola magnitudinis tollat invidia, collectum quodam modo atque inclusum industrie diem emolumento metallorum splendentium luce vegetari, hisque omnibus pompis digne inferri reliquias, quibus mundus indignus est”: *Ep.* 50, in Rudolf Peiper, ed., *Alcimi Ecdicii Aviti Viennensis Episcopi Opera quae supersunt* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1883), 78. For the whole text, with a slightly different translation of this passage: Shanzer and Wood, eds., *Avitus*, 327. Dedication of the church founded by Arigius, c. 500.
- 50 “Aula novos habitus senio purgata resumpsit... ecce vides quantus splendor velut aede renata / rideat insculptum camera crispante lacunar” (*Carm.* 27, ll. 383, 387-388; Goldschmidt, ed., *Paulinus’ Churches*, 54-55). Cf. Ven. Fort. *Carm.* 2.10.11-16: “The resplendent hall is raised on marble columns / and because it remains pure, greater is the grace which shines within it. / Illuminated by glazed windows, it is the first to capture the rays and, thanks to the artist’s hand, closes the day within its ark” (“Splendida marmoreis attolitur aula columnis / et quia pura manet, gratia maior inest. / Prima capit radios vitreis oculata fenestris / artificisque manu clausit in arce diem”).
- 51 “Twin rows of columns support gilded beams and keep up the paneled roof” (“ordo columnarum geminus laquearia tecti / sustinet auratis suppositus trabibus”: Prudent. *Perist.* 11.219-220).
- 52 “Therefore our halls shine, Father, with Thy gifts of noble flames; their emulous light plays the part of day when it has gone, and night with torn mantle flees before it in defeat. But who would not discern that the swift light has its source on high and flows from God?... The lamps gleam out, that hang by swaying cords from every panel of the roof, and the flame, fed by oil on which it floats lazily, casts its light through the clear glass. You would believe that starry space stood over our heads... Thou are the true light of our eyes, the true light of our minds; by Thee we see as in a glass within, a glass without” (“Splendent ergo tuis muneribus, Pater, / flammis nobilibus scilicet atria, / absentemque diem lux agit aemula, quam nox cum lacero victa fugit peplo. / sed quis non rapidi luminis arduam / manantemque Deo cernat originem?... / Pendent mobilibus lumina funibus / quae subfixa micant per laquearia / et de languidinis fota natatibus / lucem perspicuo flamma iacit vitro / credas stelligeram desuper aream / ornatam gemmis stare... / tu lux vera oculis, lux quoque sensibus, / intus tu speculum, tu speculum foris”: Prudent. *Cath.* 5.25-30, 141-146, 153-154). Loeb ed. trans. H. J. Thomson.
- 53 *Carm.* 28.183-184: “it is radiant from the source of piety in the centre and in a miraculous manner it simultaneously renews and is renewed” (“medio pietatis / fonte nitet mireque simul novat atque novatur”: Rudolf C. Goldschmidt, ed., *Paulinus’ Churches at Nola*. (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1940), 82-83. Translation mine.
- 54 “Shining with the skill of the artisans the night is expelled, and burnishes the light into being. By artifice the day is joyfully imprisoned within a luminous prison, from which sad shadows have been evicted after a long sojourn” (“Opificium ingenio nitens expoli noctem, adpolit lucem. Quid diu tristibus

- tenebris arteificio proturbatis laetior intra quondam claretatis ergasolum felici custodia clausus est dies": E. -L. Borrel, "Étude sur l'Homélie prêchée par Saint Avit, au commencement du VI^e siècle, dans la basilique de Saint-Pierre de Moutiers en Tarentaise (Savoie), à l'occasion de sa consécration," *Bulletin du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques. Section d'histoire et de philologie* (1883): 50. On Avitus: Ian Wood, "The Audience of Architecture in Post-Roman Gaul," in *The Anglo-Saxon Church: Papers on History, Architecture and Archaeology in Honour of Dr. H. M. Taylor*, ed. L. A. S. Butler and R. K. Morris (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1986), 74-79; Danuta Shanzer and Ian Wood, eds., *Avitus of Vienne, Letters and Prose* (Manchester: Liverpool University Press, 2002), 3-27.
- 55 *Hist. Eccl.* 10.4.46ff.
- 56 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 2.2.4: "intra conclave succensum solidus dies et haec abundantia lucis inclusae ut verecundos quosque compellat aliquid se plus putare quam nudos" ("Within the heated chamber there is full day and this abundance of enclosed light forces all modest persons to feel themselves something more than naked"). Eusebius characterizes the baptismal light when he speaks of the "pure souls that have been washed like gold by the Divine bath".
- 57 A similar observation underpinned Kant's distinction between Classical and Gothic. In the cathedral, even the light is altered by the stained glass, an invitation to forget the outside world so as better to remember the incorporeal spirit within: Thomas M. Knox, ed., *Hegel. Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 686.
- 58 For a broad history of the consecration ceremony, when excerpts from *Revelation* are read: Raymond W. Muncey, *A History of the Consecration of Churches and Churchyards* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1930). For texts from the 10th century on: Laurence H. Stookey, "The Gothic Cathedral as the Heavenly Jerusalem: Liturgical and Theological Sources," *Gesta* 8, no. 1 (1969): 35-41.
- 59 SS. Cosma e Damiano (526-30): "God's precious hall gleams with bright minerals, in which the precious light of Faith sparkles even more through the physician-martyrs, to the people the sure hope of salvation came, and this place grew because of that sacred honor..." (AVLA DEI CLARIS RADIAT SPECIOSA METALLIS / IN QVA PLVS FIDEI LVX PRETIOSA MICAT. / MARTYRIBVS MEDICIS POPULO SPES CERTA SALVTIS / VENIT, ET EX SACRO CREVIT HONORE LOCVS): Cf. Rodolfo Lanciani, "Degli antichi edifici componenti la chiesa di SS. Cosma e Damiano," *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 10 (1882): 38. Ennod. *Carm.* 2.8.2-3, 8: Xystus "joining the light of life to the worth of the work, established this temple [a chapel attached to S. Lorenzo, Milan]... this man offered this temple which He who will come consecrates" ("et lumina vitae / ad pretium iugens operis haec templa locavit / [...] obtulit hic templum, veniens quod consecrat ille").