D.6. MARBLES

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D.6.1. PARIETAL OPUS SECTILE

The revetment of walls using slabs of marble or other colored stone material (crustae: CIL VI.10237; Sen. Benef. 4.6.2, Dial. 1.6.4, Epist. 86.6; Plin. NH 35.3, 36.48; Ps. Quint. Decl. 9.17), often of varied sorts and arranged so as to form geometric shapes or complex figured motifs, was known as incrustatio in antiquity; this we know from numerous literary sources (Varro Men. 533; Proc. Dig. 8.2.13.1; Paul. Dig. 50.16.79.2) and inscriptions (CIL III.6671, IX.451, XII.935).

Today, however, the expression commonly used is ‘parietal opus sectile’.¹

The custom of lining walls with slabs of marble, already widespread in the Hellenistic world from the second century B.C. (Plin. NH 36.47), is documented in Rome from at least the first century B.C., as again attested by Pliny (NH 36.48: Primum Romae parietes crusta marmoris operuisse totas domus suae in Caelio monte Cornelius Nepos tradit Mamurram). Since what Pliny writes of here probably took place at the end of the Gallic Wars (51 B.C.), when Mamurra, praefectus fabrum and friend of Caesar, was very greatly enriched, we may date the introduction to Rome of the technique of parietal revetment in marble to around the middle of the first century B.C.²

This dating seems to be confirmed by a passage in the Menippean satire of Varro, written between 45-43 B.C. (Varro Men. 533). It is in this period, therefore, that panels began to take the place of the painted socles typical of pictorial styles I and II, often executed in imitation of the more costly polychrome marble revetments.

A profound change came about, probably in the Augustan age, with the massive exploitation of marble quarries (above all lunense, but also giallo antico, pavonazzetto and africano, which appear abundantly in the great monuments of Rome, such as the Forum of Augustus). It is unfortunately rare to find the most ancient remains of wall revetment in simple slabs, because marble was a readily recyclable material, rarely surviving the sacking that inevitably followed abandonment. However, several extant Augustan monuments (in addition to the Forum of Augustus with the temple of Mars Ultor, mention must also be made of the Temple of Concord) attest the widespread use of marble wall revetment in plain panels during that period, although it was primarily employed for the decoration of monumental public buildings.

The increasing diffusion of marbles between the Augustan and Flavian ages led to the wider use of marble revetments, not just for most walls but also for floors, which had previously been created with other stones or in mixed materials. Probably in this period the use of wall decorations in simple marble slabs became widespread in private homes as well, even in “middle class” houses, as seen in numerous examples in the Vesuvius area (among these note the House of the Relief of Telephus at Herculaneum).³


² Guidobaldi 1989 (as n. 1) 62.

³ In the same period, beginning with the reign of Claudius, according to Pliny (NH 35.3), another type of wall decoration developed, made with stone or stone-like material, the so-called interraso marmore. This technique, apparently similar to opus sectile, is characterized by an intarsia of marbles and vitreous pastes inserted into a support of slate or other material (usually limestone or white marble), hollowed out purposely to take the crustae. On this subject, see M. Bonanni, “Interraso marmore (Plin., NH 35.2): esempi della tecnica decorativa ad
Revetments consisting of simple slabs become ever more elaborate from the second century onwards: evidence of this are great monuments such as the Pantheon and, in private architecture, the Villa Adriana at Tivoli. In these examples it is already evident that the panels are better delimited and the internal arrangement is enlivened with geometrical intarsia, or by moldings or simple raised edging.

Simple slabs continued to be used in parietal revetments until late antiquity, but ever more frequently alternating with a type of intarsia with complex motifs. These could be geometrical or with animal and human figurations, in accordance with a taste whose expression reaches its zenith in the last decades of the fourth and the fifth century A.D., with the extraordinary examples of the Basilica of Junius Bassus on the Esquiline and that of the so-called ‘Building outside Porta Marina’ at Ostia. In these, the figured compositions, in arrangements that are also symbolically complex, predominate over the smooth parts or the simple geometric sections.

In the excavation of an ancient building, it is very rare to find in situ marble wall coverings surviving whole. This is chiefly due to the depredations in the periods following the abandonment of the monument, but is sometimes the result of collapse due to factors such as lack of maintenance (bear in mind the weight of the marble slabs themselves, positioned vertically) or to natural disasters (fires, earthquakes, etc.).

It is much more usual, therefore, that the presence of marble wall revetments in an archaeological excavation is documented indirectly or must be reconstructed on the basis of clues. The traces left by the slabs in the mortar in which they were set and the holes of the metal clips used to anchor the slabs to the walls, as well as the numerous fragments and splinters of the slabs themselves, frequently found in the excavated soil, mark the presence of revetment panels. These fragments, however, although sometimes present in the excavated stratigraphies in quantities much greater than other more “canonical” classes of material (such as pottery, metal items, glass, etc.), are on the whole ignored. Even if they are recorded in the publication of an excavation, they are normally included in very broad categories, such as that of ‘non-sculptural marble elements,’ or even more generically as ‘construction materials.’ It is obvious that in this way further study of the overall corpus is hampered; not only is direct information on the decoration lost, but also indirect information on the function and the qualitative level of the rooms.

Such an example is the Villa of Horace. The fragments of small stone crustae—marble and non-marble—presented here are only a minuscule quantity compared with the exceedingly abundant material recovered in the course of Pasqui’s excavations of 1911-14. Those finds, at the moment of excavation (or, rather, of unearthing), were included among the construction materials or mixed up indiscriminately (and then stored) with the simpler architectonic or sculptural elements, together with the shapeless splinters, large slabs, steps, brackets etc.

The only information on these materials is supplied by Lugli, who, in the rapid listing of the finds from the excavations of the villa, also mentions “many crustae of colored marbles for the covering of socles and many fragments of moldings in rosso antico, giallo antico, bardiglio and in various marbles.” Some of this material was put together by Pasqui on four panels and displayed in the old Antiquarium in Licenza, without even a generic mention of their provenance.

 Principally for this reason and because of the impossibility of reconstructing the stratigraphies to which they belonged, we have preferred to forego detailed analysis of this material. It has only recently been divided up, classified and stored in some thirty boxes, today held inside the storehouse of the Soprintendenza Archeologica per il Lazio at the Santuario di Ercole Vincitore in Tivoli (fig. 1).

5. For both, see Becatti 1969 and Guidobaldi, Porta Marina (as n. 1).
In the present study, therefore, only the material coming from the 1997-99 excavation seasons is discussed, with the exception of some fragments of capitals from pilasters and slabs with relief decoration from the excavations of Pasqui, now displayed in the Museum at Licenza (figs. 2-4). These fragments, taken together, lead us to conclude that there was a decorative program of considerable value at the villa.

In the catalogue that follows, all those elements presumed to belong to parietal coverings are analyzed, namely molded slabs or those with relief decoration, pilasters, and moldings, but also simple slabs. This term is taken to cover all the whole or fragmentary marble elements worked simply, in such a way as to have one or more flat faces.\(^7\)

In addition to specific information about the find-spots,\(^8\) the pieces under discussion are supplied with details of measurements (thickness, maximum and minimum dimensions, weight); type of marble (with complete identification in the case of the colored ones, and more generically in the case of the grey and white ones); and relative disposition and treatment of the flat surfaces (principal faces, edges). The dimensions are expressed in centimeters in the case of linear dimensions and are to be taken as indicative, except in the case of the thickness, which is always taken to the nearest millimeter, even for the thinnest crustae. The weight, where measurable,\(^9\) is expressed in grams, and taken to the nearest 10 gr, except for the smallest crustae.

### D.6.1.1. Catalogue

#### Capitals (Ca)

**Greco scritto**

- **Ca-1.** Inv. 75230
  Pilaster capital of Corinthian inspiration
  Chipped along the edges. Broken on the two upper corners, just above the volutes. Back of the panel polished, edges finished with fine-ended chisel.
  Dimensions: 29 x 25.5 x 2.3

- **Ca-2.** Inv. 75231
  Pilaster capital, of Corinthian inspiration
  Whole example, slightly chipped along the edges. Back of the slab polished, borders finished with fine-ended chisel.
  Dimensions: 29 x 23-24 x 2.3

- **Ca-3.** Inv. 62976
  Pilaster capital, of Corinthian inspiration
  Example in three fragments, reassembled. Back of the slab polished, borders finished with fine-ended chisel.
  Dimensions: 30 x 20 x 1.4

**Grey, medium-grained marble**

- **Ca-4.** Inv. 62973
  Pilaster capital, of Corinthian inspiration
  Whole example, slightly chipped along the edges
  Back of the panel polished, borders finished with fine-ended chisel.
  Dimensions: 29.5 x 20-28 x 2

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8. These indications are missing from the lists with reference to examples Ca-1/4 and Lm-12/14, discovered during Pasqui’s excavations 1911-1914, because the exact find spots are unknown.

9. The fragments now housed in the museum have not been weighed, because of the practical difficulties involved in removing them from the supports on which they are displayed.
The examples Ca-1/4, probably to be attributed to the decoration of a single room, unfortunately not identified, were summarily published by Lugli, who included a photograph of them.\textsuperscript{10} The same pieces have recently been reexamined, also rather rapidly, by Reggiani.\textsuperscript{11}

Analogous capitals, with central calyx and lateral leaves serving as volutes, are attested at Ostia and datable to the last years of the first and the first decades of the second century.\textsuperscript{12} There are also rather precise analogies with an example from the Museo Nazionale Romano,\textsuperscript{13} datable to the age of Hadrian; in this example, the morphology of the central calyx, which has expanded extremities, is similar to that of the present ones. The type of relief and the structural characteristics are different, however; they are rather more simplified in the Licenza example.

On the basis of analogies, dating to between the last decades of the first and the first years of the second century seems plausible.

\textbf{Pilasters (Le)}

\textit{White, fine-grained marble, with greenish veining (Pentelic?)}

\textbf{Le-1. Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001}

Broken on all sides. One face seems to preserve traces of molding. The tool marks are no longer recognizable because of the corrosion of the surface.

Dimensions: 4.4 x 2.2 x 0.7; weight: 20

\textit{White, medium-grained marble}

\textbf{Le-2. Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 428 fig. 11}

Broken on all sides. The surface is molded, with the form of a segment of circle (diameter 4.8) and fillets (width 1), and is polished; the back face (in contact with the wall) is smoothed.

Dimensions: 7.3 x 7.3 x 1.5; weight: 380

\textbf{Le-3. Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 414}

Broken on all sides. Two matching fragments, similar to the preceding ones. Molded polished surface, reverse face smoothed.

Dimensions: 16 x 6.2 x 1.2; weight: 575

\textbf{Le-4. Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 414}

Broken on all sides. Similar to the preceding ones. Surface molded and polished; reverse face smoothed.

Dimensions: 7.4 x 7.2 x 13; weight: 190

\textbf{Slabs molded and/or with relief decoration (Lm)}

\textit{White, fine-grained marble}

\textbf{Lm-1. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 220, VH 019 (figs. 5 and 11)}

Broken on two sides. Two flat and smoothed faces, of which the one at the back still shows the raised bit left by the saw cut and traces of the mortar used to fasten the slab to the wall. Upper edge polished, in which there are two holes for metal clips (diameter 0.5 and depth 1.1; diameter 0.7 and depth 2.2). The different dimensions and the closeness of the two holes probably indicate maintenance work on the wall covering, or else reuse of this slab.

Dimensions: 10.8 x 7.6 x 3.6 (max)–1.9 (min); weight: 640

\textbf{Lm-2. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 220 (fig. 11)}

Broken on four sides. Upper edge polished, one face molded with two \textit{cymae reversae} and smoothed.

Dimensions: 8 x 3.7 x 2.2; weight: 170

\textsuperscript{10} Lugli 1926, col. 566, fig. 47 A-B.

\textsuperscript{11} In \textit{Sabinis}, 46-47, figs. 2-5.

\textsuperscript{12} Pensabene, 144-145, nos. 579-581, tab. LV.

**D.6. Marbles**

**Lm-3.** Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 220, VH 019 (figs. 5 and 11)
Broken on four sides. One face flat and smoothed; upper edge with traces of fine-ended chisel (perhaps indicating a reworking of the artifact). The face, molded with fillet and *cyma reversa*, is polished.
Dimensions: 11.6 x 9 x 2.5; weight: 450

**Lm-4.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1200 (fig. 11)
Broken on two sides. Two of the original edges remain, both vertical and finished, one with a gradine and the other smoothed. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and decorated with rectangular panelling, bordered with a double molding (fillet, *cyma reversa*). The back face, smoothed, preserves traces of the mortar (grey with volcanic elements in it) used to fasten the slab to the wall.
Dimensions: 11.5 x 10.5 x 2.5; weight: 1830

*White, medium-grained marble*

**Lm-5.** Sector IV.2, Area 23, SU 4201 (fig. 12)
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and molded (with fillet and *cyma reversa*) and the other smoothed.
Dimensions: 17.5 x 5.9 x 2.2; weight: 1120

*Greco scritto*

**Lm-6.** Sector I.5, Area 38, SU 822, VH 072 (figs. 6 and 12)
Broken on three sides. A curvilinear border worked with marteline. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and the other smoothed. On the right margin is still visible part of a circular motif, cut with the chisel.
Dimensions: 9.6 x 7.4 x 1.5; weight: 380

**Lm-7.** Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 424, VH 021 (figs. 7 and 12)
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is decorated with three curvilinear concentric grooves, and the opposite one is polished.
Dimensions: 10.5 x 6.9 x 1.2; weight: 190

**Lm-8.** “Surface find” (fig. 12)
Broken on all sides, surface very corroded. Two flat faces, of which one is decorated with two straight grooves, of different widths (0.1 and 0.7), and a curvilinear groove (width 0.5); the opposite face is polished.
Dimensions: 9.8 x 5.5 x 2.1; weight: 240

**Lm-9.** Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 285, VH 073 (figs. 8 and 12)
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and decorated with a rectangular panel, of which one corner survives, bordered by a molding (fillet and *cyma reversa*). The back face is just rough-hewn.
Dimensions: 10.5 x 9 x 1.8; weight: 285

**Lm-10.** Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 448, VH 069 (figs. 9 and 13)
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and decorated with lozenge-shaped concentric panels, bordered by simple grooves of varying widths (0.3–0.7). The back face is just rough-hewn.
Dimensions: 8 x 9.2 x 1.5; weight: 280

**Lm-11.** Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 400 (fig. 13)
Broken on three sides; only a border is left, bevelled and finished with chiselling. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and decorated with straight and parallel grooving; the opposite face is smoothed. Traces of mortar on the decorated surface and the type of workmanship observed on the only surviving border indicate reuse of the slab of which it was a part.
Dimensions: 8.5 x 6.6 x 1.1; weight: 86

**Lm-12.** Inv. 75227
Slab in two fragments, recomposed, broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which the back one is smoothed and the front one has relief decoration. The decorated area seems to have been divided into metopes (of dimensions which cannot be reconstructed), delimited by an astragal (height 1.1); the only surviving
Metope is decorated with two crossed shields and bordered at the bottom with a pelta.

Dimensions: 24 x 29 x 1.5

Lm-13. Inv. 75228
Slab in two fragments, recomposed, broken on three sides. Only one of the original borders is left, worked with the chisel. Two flat faces, of which the back one is smoothed and the front one has relief decoration. The decorative area, bordered at the bottom with an astragal (height 1.1), is divided into rectangular metopes of various sizes (28.5 x 22.5, 13.5 x 22.5), decorated respectively with a shield and hexagon with inflexed sides.

Dimensions: 52 x 35 x 1.8

Lm-14. Inv. 75229
Broken on all sides. One face flat and one moulded, both polished. On the vertical side of the slab, from bottom to top: cyma reversa, astragal, strip, astragal with cyma recta. Part of a slab molding, decorated with panels.

Dimensions: 20 x 22.5 x 2.1

The examples Lm-5/14 belong to a typology of parietal revetment panels that was fairly widespread in imperial Roman times, but has not so far been the subject of an overall study. The scarcity of attestations of elements in situ or of finds associated with datable stratigraphies has meant that such items have been attributed to a very wide chronological span, ranging from the early imperial age all the way to the paleo-Christian period, as we shall see.

If we analyze the data in our possession in chronological order, we observe that slabs similar to those presented here are still visible in situ at Pompeii, in the base of the lararium of the House of Caecilius Iucundus.18 At Ostia, numerous fragments of slabs of greco scritto with decoration in rectangular panels and inscribed lozenges with inflexed sides come from the late first century strata of the of the Thermae of the Swimmer.19 Other examples are known in Rome, in the domus over the Sette Sale and at the Villa dei Quintili (unpublished example displayed in the antiquarium), at Luni, and at the Villa di S. Vincenzo near Cecina.18 From these data it seems clear that the artifacts under examination were already widespread at the beginning of the imperial period, perhaps as early as the first half of the first century. Similar dating is also suggested by the marble revetment, so far unpublished, of some public buildings of the forum of Carsulae, in Umbria (consisting of two different series of bardiglio slabs with decoration very analogous to those above), whose dating seems no later than the Flavian period.19

Another indication of the antiquity of these slabs is their very frequent presence in parietal revetments of late antiquity, where they are clearly recycled. Note, for instance, the domus of the Nymphaeum of Ostia, where the fountain is lined with slabs decorated with simple rectangular panels in greco scritto, visibly cut and adapted to new use.20 Also at Ostia, in the e Ambientali (Rome) vol. I 1981, vol. II 1983, vol. III 1986, vol. IV 1992.

15. Pensabene, 155 no. 637, interpreted as a pilaster capital.


Nymphaeum of the Erotes, there is a slab of greco scritto decorated with a lozenge, inserted almost as an emblem in the very homogeneous parietal revetment in white and grey marbles, underneath the apsed niche of the wall at the back.\(^{21}\)

Numerous whole or fragmentary examples of such artifacts, perfectly analogous to those just described, are found reused in the catacombs and other paleo-Christian buildings. These have been published in various volumes of the Corpus della Scultura Altomedievale.\(^{22}\) They are generally interpreted as plutei and dated to the first half of the sixth century on stylistic grounds, on the basis of presumed analogies with the decorative motifs found on the slabs of the presbytery enclosures from Constantinople surviving in many Roman churches, in particular at S. Clemente.\(^{23}\)

The proposed chronology can be contested for a number of reasons. First, the moldings that frame the slabs are of classic type, completely different from those found on artifacts of Byzantine provenance or tradition, which have a characteristic band sloping obliquely outwards,\(^{24}\) unknown in Roman architectonic sculpture. The dimensions of the slabs, too, in particular the height (between 25 and 95 cm) and the thickness (mostly of 2-3 cm, but also of 0.5 cm), seem too reduced to belong to plutei (see, for a comparison, the dimensions of the series of S. Clemente, of a homogeneous thickness between 5.5 and 7 cm and heights varying between 113.5 and 117 cm).\(^{25}\) Furthermore, some details of the decoration, for instance the urceus which appears on a panel from S. Lorenzo fuori le mura,\(^{26}\) or the peltae on a fragment from SS. Giovanni e Paolo,\(^{27}\) do not belong to the Byzantine iconographic repertoire, as the authors of the volumes of the Corpus themselves observe. On the other hand, the Byzantine slabs have some decorative elements that are wholly absent in those examined here, in particular the fleur-de-lys endings to the corners of the lozenges and the constant presence of an internal motif.\(^{28}\)

It seems evident at this point that the chronology of the fifth to the sixth century proposed in the Corpus must perhaps be taken as that of the reuse of the pieces. We cannot exclude the possibility, in fact, that the widespread reuse of these slabs in paleo-Christian architectural complexes was in some way encouraged by the contemporary diffusion of the Byzantine slabs, which have in common with ours the taste for the geometric division of the surface and the simplicity of the ornamentation.\(^{29}\)

Another issue to be resolved is the use of the slabs with relief decoration in parietal revetment.\(^{30}\) A

\(^{21}\) Pensabene, 348, fig. 4.

\(^{22}\) Marble slabs with geometric decoration in square panels or lozenges are attested in Rome in the catacomb of Felicitas (U. Broccoli, Corpus della scultura Altomedievale VII, 5. La Diocesi di Roma. Il suburbiu. I [Spoleto 1981] 107, tab. XI, n50: “white Greek marble,” thickness 3 cm), attributed to the restoration by Symmachus (498-514 A.D.); in the coemeterium lordanorum (ibid., 112-114, tab. XIII, n56: “white Greek marble,” thickness 0.5 cm), attributed to the intervention of Vigilius (538-555 A.D.); in the catacomb of Priscilla (ibid., 134-136, tab. XXI, nos. 95-97: serpentino and white Greek marble, thickness 2.5-3), believed to be part of a floor covering and dated to the pontificate of Giovanni I (523-526 A.D.); at S. Lorenzo fuori le mura (ibid., 213-215, 220-221, tab. XLIV, XLVI, nos. 157, 159-162: white marble, thickness not measurable and height 37 cm), attributed to the end of the sixth century; in the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo (A. Melucco Vaccaro, Corpus della Scultura Altomedievale VII, 3. La Diocesi di Roma. La II regione ecclesiastica [Spoleto 1974] 132-133, tab. XXXIV, nos. 81-85: white marble, thickness 3-4 cm), dated to the sixth century.

\(^{23}\) Barsanti and Guiglia Guidobaldi, passim.

\(^{24}\) Barsanti and Guiglia Guidobaldi, 80-81.

\(^{25}\) Barsanti and Guiglia Guidobaldi, 119-121, tab. I-IV.

\(^{26}\) Broccoli (as n. 22) 213-215, tab. XLIV, n157.

\(^{27}\) Melucco Vaccaro (as n. 22) 132-133, tab. XXXIV, XLVI, nos. 81-851.

\(^{28}\) Barsanti and Guiglia Guidobaldi, 155-176, figs. 242-251.

\(^{29}\) The hypothesis would have to be verified by a systematic study of this class of product, which at this point is a desideratum.

\(^{30}\) Assuming that this is the only possible use. A more exhaustive study could, for example, determine which of these panels, if any, have holes for the insertion of clips or other clear indications of
primary classification seems possible on the basis of the dimensions. Slabs up to 40 cm high, varying in length (cf. for instance our \textit{Lm-12/14}) and between ca. 1.5 and 2 cm thick (such as \textit{Lm-5/14}), were probably used as a fascia for dividing horizontally, above the socle,\textsuperscript{31} or else as a fascia running along the top. The same spatial arrangement survives, much later, in the highly refined decoration in \textit{opus sectile} of the ‘Building outside Porta Marina’ at Ostia. Here the slabs with incised decoration are substituted by complex marble intarsia, in which the motif of the horizontal band decorated with \textit{peltae}, lozenges or discs is repeated twice in its entirety.\textsuperscript{32}

Another possible use for slabs of these dimensions is for revetting architraves or jambs (in particular for the fragments with a decoration of rectangles linked together in a series, although this is not attested at Licenza).

Larger slabs (one meter or more in height and 2.2-2.5 cm thick, such as \textit{Lm-1/5}) may have been used in the lower or central part of the wall. These would be set next to each other (particularly when more complex sculpted architectural elements, such as capitals, are present in addition to the panelling), or they would alternate with pilasters.

\textbf{Moldings (C)}

\textit{Bardiglio}

\textbf{C-1. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 288}

Broken on two sides. One face is polished and molded with \textit{cyma reversa}, the upper and lower bases and the back face are smoothed.

Dimensions: 11 x 3.3 x 2.8-2.4; weight: 220

\textit{White fine-grained marble}

\textbf{C-2. Sector VI.1, Area 24, SU 6007}

Broken on two sides. One face is molded, with two \textit{cymae reversae}. The considerable

\textbf{corrosion of the surfaces prevents analysis of the tool marks.}

Dimensions: 8.1 x 2.2 x 1.3-2.2; weight: 170

\textbf{C-3. Sector VI.1, Area 24, SU 6007}

Broken on two sides. One face is polished and molded with \textit{cyma reversa}, the upper and lower bases are smoothed. The back face does not survive.

Dimensions: 5 x 3.2 x 2.3; weight: 87

\textbf{Giallo antico}

\textbf{C-4. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1242 (fig. 13)}

Broken on two sides. The molded face (with two \textit{cymae reversae}) and the opposite one are polished, the upper and lower bases are smoothed.

Dimensions: 10.7 x 3.2 x 2.8; weight: 380

\textbf{C-5. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1242 (fig. 13)}

Broken on two sides. The molded face (with two \textit{cymae reversae}) and the opposite one are polished, the upper and lower bases are smoothed. The back face still has the raised bit left by the saw cut and traces of mortar used to fix the molding to the wall. It is not perpendicular to the lower edge of the molding, but slightly inclined, forming an acute angle with it.

Dimensions: 4.7 x 3.2 x 1.6-2.1; weight: 87

\textbf{C-6. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1242 (fig. 13)}

Broken on two sides. The molded face (with two \textit{cymae reversae}) and the upper base are polished, the lower base and the back face are smoothed. This last, which still shows the raised bit left by the saw cut, is not perpendicular to the lower edge of the molding, but slightly inclined, forming an acute angle with it.

Dimensions: 5.2 x 2.6 x 1.9-2.4; weight: 65

\textbf{C-7. Sector VII.1, Area 25, SU 7001 (fig. 13)}

Broken on two sides. All the faces, including the molded one (with two \textit{cymae reversae}),

\textbf{31. Donati (as n. 18) 331-332.}

\textbf{32. Becatti 1969, 95-96, tab. LIII.}
are smoothed; the back face, furthermore, is not perpendicular to the lower edge of the molding, but slightly inclined, forming an acute angle with it. On the upper edge there is a circular hole (diameter 0.45, depth 1.3) for the insertion of a metal clip.

Dimensions: 17.5 x 4.2 x 2.5; weight: 480

**Rosso antico**

**C-8.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1200 (fig. 13)  
Broken on two sides. The molded face (with two *cymae reversae*) is polished, the upper and lower bases are smoothed. The back face does not survive.  
Dimensions: 4.7 x 3.4 x 1.05-2.1; weight: 52

**C-9.** Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 400 (fig. 13)  
Broken on two sides. The molded face (with two *cymae reversae*) is polished, the upper and lower bases are smoothed. The back face does not survive. On the upper base there is a circular hole (diameter 0.5, depth 1.2) for the insertion of a metal clip.  
Dimensions: 5.4 x 2.8 x 1.2-2.1; weight: 72

**C-10.** Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 200  
Broken on two sides. The molded face (with two *cymae reversae*) and the lower base are smoothed, while the upper one shows traces of being worked with a gradine.  
Dimensions: 11.5 x 3 x 4; weight: 420

**C-11.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1220  
Broken on two sides. The molded face (with two *cymae reversae*) and the upper base are polished, the back face and the lower base are smoothed.  
Dimensions: 7.5 x 3.5 x 2.9; weight: 170

The moldings, which served to divide the marble revetment into horizontal panels, are always characterized here by the most thorough workmanship; the two bases are smoothed or polished, and the external face molded with fillet and *cyma reversa*. The back face is generally smoothed but may be just rough-hewn, vertical or slightly oblique (in some cases, even sharply inclined), probably with the intention of helping the layer of mortar behind to adhere better. In some cases (cf. C-5) there is a raised bit, due to the saw cut; this shows clearly that these elements were cut from slabs of great thickness. Among the examples presented here, the moldings in *giallo antico* (C-4/7) and *rosso antico* marble (C-8/11) predominate; rarer are those in white marble or *bardiglio* (C-1/3). It must be emphasized that *giallo antico* and *rosso antico*, which are generally the materials most frequently used for making such artifacts, are found in almost canonical association with slabs of white or veined marble, and, respectively, with *cipollino* or *giallo antico*, which are also those most often found at “Horace’s villa” (see below).

**Fillets (Li)**

**Palombino**

**Li-1.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001  
Broken on two sides: one side is flat and polished. Two edges are ground and slightly bevelled.  
Dimensions: 4.5 x 0.4 x 0.6; weight: 12

**Giallo antico**

**Li-2.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001  
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished. Two smoothed edges, worked with fine-ended chisel but not ground, slightly bevelled.  
Dimensions: 2.3 x 1.5 x 0.9; weight: 26

**Li-3.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001  
Two similar fragments. Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished. Two smoothed edges, worked with fine-ended chisel, but not ground, slightly bevelled. Made from a pre-existing small panel (or fillet), because the visible surface of the panel—indicated by the

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34. On this, cf. Bruto and Vannicola (as n. 1).
inclination of the edges—is smoothed, while the reverse is polished.

Dimensions: a) 2.2 x 1.4 x 0.6; weight: 18; b) 4.3 x 6.1 x 0.7; weight: 86

**Li-5.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on two sides, two original edges survive, ground and slightly bevelled.
Dimensions: 5.2 x 1.7 x 0.7; weight: 25

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**Pavonazzetto**

**Li-6.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001 (fig. 14)
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished. One edge is ground and slightly bevelled and one is worked with marteline and finished with fine-ended chisel where it joins with the adjacent element. The different type of working of the two opposite edges indicates that the fillet was created by working a larger slab, of which one of the original borders was retained.

Dimensions: 2 x 5.4 x 0.8 ; weight: 43

**Li-7.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished. One edge is ground and slightly bevelled and one worked with marteline and finished with fine-ended chisel where it joins the adjacent element. Like the previous fragment (**Li-6**), it was probably reworked from a pre-existing slab.

Dimensions: 3.6 x 2.8 x 0.6 ; weight: 32

**Rosso antico**

**Li-8.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001
Broken at the two ends. Two flat faces, of which one is polished. The edges are ground and slightly bevelled.

Dimensions: 1.5 x 0.3 x 0.4; weight: 6

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**Elements for parietal intarsia (T)**

**Pavonazzetto**

**T-1.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001 (fig. 14)
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Edges slightly bevelled and finished with fine-ended chisel. Belongs to a *crusta* originally triangular or rhomboid in form.

Dimensions: 1.7 1.3 x 0.6; weight: 10

**Giallo antico**

**T-2.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001(fig. 14)
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Edges slightly bevelled and finished with fine-ended chisel. The *crusta*, irregularly triangular in shape, has one (or possibly two) sides curvilinear in line and a third side approximately straight.

Dimensions: 2.3 x 2.5 x 0.4; weight: 8

**T-3.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001 (fig. 14)
Irregular edges, which are not enough to determine the overall shape of the *crusta*. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Edges slightly bevelled and finished with fine-ended chisel. Fairly regularly triangular in shape, with two sides slightly inflexed.

Dimensions: 2.9 x 2.6 x 0.35; weight: 7

**T-4.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001 (fig. 14)
Broken at one end. Two faces flat, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Edges slightly bevelled and finished with fine-ended chisel. The small *crusta*, irregular in shape, has one straight side, one slightly curvilinear and one sinusoidal.

Dimensions: 3 x 1.2-1.9 x 0.41; weight: 9

It is difficult to determine whether the *crustae T-1/4*, characterized by their particular shape and extreme thinness (between 0.35 and 0.6), can be attributed to decoration in complex-motif *opus*...
sectile or to interraso marmore.\textsuperscript{35} However this may be, the thickness, while not a definitive proof,\textsuperscript{36} is an important indication for assigning such fragments to parietal decoration.

**Slabs (La)**

**Bardiglio**

**La-1.** Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 231
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished.
Dimensions: 5.9 x 3.5 x 1.2; weight: 40

**Breccia corallina**

**La-2.** Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 231
Broken on three sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one rough-hewn; the latter still has the raised bit left by the saw cut.
Dimensions: 9 x 6 x 2.1; weight: 170

**La-3.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001
Broken on three sides. Two flat faces, with no identifiable tool marks on account of the wear of the surfaces. One edge survives, ground and slightly bevelled.
Dimensions: 3.2 x 2.5 x 0.4; weight: 20

**Cipollino**

**La-4.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on three sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and one smoothed; one edge, worked with marteline and bevelled, survives.
Dimensions: 4.5 x 8 x 1.5; weight: 170

**La-5.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and one smoothed; two borders, worked with marteline, finished with fine-ended chisel and slightly bevelled, survive.
Dimensions: 6.1 x 7.6 x 1.1; weight: 150

**La-6.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Three fragments, broken on all sides, belonging to the same slab. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and one smoothed; no original edge survives.
Dimensions: a) 2.1 x 4 x 1; weight: 70; b) : 5.5 x 4.1 x 1; weight: 80; c) 5.2 x 1.5 x 0.9; weight: 70

**Giallo antico**

**La-7.** Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 231
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and one smoothed.
Dimensions: 5.5 x 4 x 1.3; weight: 43

**La-8.** Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 288
Broken on three sides. Two flat faces, of which one is polished and one smoothed. Only one original edge survives, ground and slightly bevelled.
Dimensions: 3.5 x 1.7 x 0.65; weight: 25

**La-9.** Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001
Nine fragments with two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished; no original edges survive.
Dimensions: 0.45-0.9; weight: 340.

**La-10.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished; no edge surviving.
Dimensions: 3.4 x 2.5 x 0.45; weight: 35

**La-11.** Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218

\textsuperscript{35} See note 1.

\textsuperscript{36} It is known that crustae of very elaborate and unusual forms are also found on floors (particularly the highly refined ones with complex motifs, whose production begins in the time of Nero). Such crustae are very similar to those used for wall decoration, whose greater thinness may also have served – in the case of the prefabricated tiles – to ensure that the mortar provided more secure fastening during mounting.
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished; two original edges survive, worked with chisel and slightly bevelled.
Dimensions: 1.8 x 3.3 x 0.7; weight: 40

Greco scritto

La-12. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished; none of the original edges survive.
Dimensions: 13.5 x 11.5 x 1.6; weight: 430

La-13. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished; none of the original edges survive.
Dimensions: 4.3 x 2.2 x 1.25; weight: 80

La-14. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed an the other rough-hewn; two original edges survive, right-angled one to the other, ground and slightly bevelled. Corner of a revetment slab.
Dimensions: 3.9 x 4.8 x 1.1; weight: 90

La-15. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one rough-hewn; none of the original edges survive.
Dimensions: 3.7 x 4.5 x 1.1; weight: 50

White medium-grained marble

La-16. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 231
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed, with traces of whitewash, and one is polished, with remains of grey-beige mortar containing pozzolana elements.
Dimensions: 9.2 x 6.2 x 1.4; weight: 120

La-17. Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 412 (fig. 14)
Broken on two sides; two original edges survive. One edge is ground, slightly bevelled; the other edge has a regular undulate profile, worked first with marteline and subsequently ground on its upper half, nearer to the exposed face. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished, both with traces of mortar, perhaps indicating reuse of the slab.
Dimensions: 22.4 x 3.8 x 1.7; weight: 340

La-18. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 231
Broken on three sides, one edge surviving, curvilinear and worked with marteline. Two flat faces, of which one is polished, with conspicuous traces of grey-beige mortar containing pozzolana elements and ferrous oxide sediment (probably due to the presence of fastening clips). The other face, smoothed, has traces of whitewash painted on with a brush (the brush-strokes are evident); in some areas, small patches of violet pigment are present.
Dimensions: 18 x 15 x 1.8; weight: 520

La-19. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 231
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished.
Dimensions: 19.7 x 7 x 1.8; weight: 480

La-20. Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 412
Broken on all sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one simply rough-hewn, on which can be seen traces of grey-beige mortar containing pozzolana elements.
Dimensions: 18.5 x 10 x 1.4; weight: 260

La-21. Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 412
Thirty-five fragments belonging to a single slab. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Edges worked with marteline and finished with flat-ended chisel, only in the upper half nearest to the exposed face.
Dimensions: max. 16.5 x 15 x 3.3; min. 1 x 1 x 2.5; weight: 3450

La-22. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 320
D.6. Marbles

Broken on two sides. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. One original edge survives, ground and slightly bevelled.
Dimensions: 7.5 x 8 x 2.5; weight: 220

La-23. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 261
Three slab fragments. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one rough-hewn; no edge survives.
Dimensions: a) 4.5 x 4 x 1.9; b) 2.8 x 2.9 x 1; c) 7.2 x 6 x 2.9; weight: 670

La-24. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 288
Broken on one side. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Two original edges survive, of which one is ground and slightly bevelled, and the other is smoothed with fine-ended chisel.
Dimensions: 7.1 x 4.2 x 2; weight: 150

La-25. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 261
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one rough-hewn; no edge survives.
Dimensions: 8 x 6.3 x 1.4; weight: 340

La-26. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 261
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one rough-hewn. Broken on two sides; only one original edge survives, worked with fine-ended chisel.
Dimensions: 8 x 6.2 x 1.3; weight: 310

La-27. Sector I.3, Area 37, SU 412
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one rough-hewn; no edge survives.
Dimensions: 14 x 6 x 1.1; weight: 132

La-28. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 320
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Broken on two sides; two of the original edges survive, of which one is worked with marteline and one is worked with fine-ended chisel.
Dimensions: 12.6 x 9.7 x 2; weight: 310

La-29. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Broken on three sides; only one edge survives, worked with marteline and finished with flat-ended chisel.
Dimensions: 5.4 x 4 x 1; weight: 240

La-30. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Broken on two sides; two edges, worked with marteline, survive at right angles to each other, on which are visible traces of mortar.
Dimensions: 11.6 x 10 x 1.4; weight: 410

Pavonazzetto

La-31. Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001
Two fragments belonging to the same slab but not joining. Broken on three sides. Two flat faces of which one is polished and one smoothed. One edge survives, first worked with a marteline and then half-ground, towards the visible face of the slab, to permit better adhesion to the next slab.
Dimensions: a) 8.5 x 6.9 x 0.8; b) 7.3 x 5.8 x 0.8; weight: 360

La-32. Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001
Broken on all sides; no original edge survives. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished.
Dimensions: 3.4 x 2.3 x 0.7; weight: 19

La-33. Sector I.2, Area 50, SU 320
Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and the other polished. Broken on three sides; only one original edge survives, ground and slightly bevelled.
Dimensions: 9.6 x 5.4 x 1.05; weight: 110

La-34. Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218
Broken on all sides, no original edge surviving. Two flat faces, of which one is smoothed and one polished. Dimensions: 5.4 x 3 x 1.6; weight: 120

**Portasanta**

La-35. Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001

Two flat faces, one of which is polished, with many traces of mortar (perhaps indicating reuse of the fragment) and one is smoothed; no edge survives. Dimensions: 5 x 5.7 x 1.2; weight: 67

**Rosso antico**

La-36. Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7001

Broken on all sides, no edge surviving. Two flat faces, on which no traces of tool marks can be identified due to the worn condition of the surfaces. Dimensions: 1.6 x 2.5 x 0.4; weight: 12

D.6.1.2. Conclusions

On the basis of the marble types here present, the principal observation is that the variety is rather limited; there is in fact a prevalence of white or veined marbles (particularly Lunense), grey (bardiglio) and colored of the commonest types (giallo antico, pavonazzetto, cipollino, etc.).

Among the white marbles, fine-grained ones that may come from Carrara, and medium-grained ones, which are on the whole imported from the Aegeo-Anatolian area, are especially predominant. Among the latter, fragments characteristic of Proconnesian and Parian marble have been frequently identified as well.

Of the commonest colored types, absolutely the most abundant are the giallo antico, pavonazzetto, and cipollino, which are among those most widespread and most often used in revetments from the earliest years of the empire, and the “greco scritto” marble, with white or grey ground, of the type from Tunisia that was introduced slightly after the beginning of the imperial age. Another marble found at the villa, but not in abundance, is breccia corallina. Surprisingly rare, however, is portasanta, one of the most widespread marbles from the early imperial age onwards.

The complete absence of Egyptian red porphyry and Greek green porphyry (used with a certain lavishness from the last decades of the first century) must be noted, as well as the so-called breccia “verde antico di Tessaglia,” which was exported only from the time of Hadrian onwards, of the “broccatello di Tortosa” and of the “fior di pesco” marbles, which were also mostly used in late imperial times.

As for the working techniques, the slabs are mostly characterized by having one face polished, which was intended to be visible. The opposite face sometimes shows the same treatment; more frequently, it is simply smoothed or left rough, with clear signs of the wire-saw cutting. The marks left by this instrument are easily recognizable: there is a series, more or less serried, of parallel lines, slightly oblique or curvilinear. On some slabs a raised bit, more or less thin, can be seen; this indicates the furthest point reached by the saw. To break off a slab, it was enough to reach 0.5-1 cm from the lower end of the block (2-3 cm for the thicker slabs), in order that the cut part could be separated with relative ease; this would leave a sort of listel with an irregular surface at the base.

Most of the fragments have clean cuts, with edges polished and slightly bevelled; in at least one case an undulate edge was found. The use of undulate joints is certainly not new in Roman architecture: note those of the granite columns of the Pantheon, of the Temple of Venus and Rome or of the Basilica Ulpia, or the columns revetted with marble crustae of irregular undulate shapes, such as found in the Fossa Traiana of Ostia. Examples such as these attest the very high specialization of Roman craftsmen in the cutting and working of these materials. The aim of this technical artifice was to make the join of two differently patterned elements as pleasing to the eye as possible. Such manipulation was often necessary

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after some technical problem had occurred, such as breaking during transport or mounting, or in those cases in which only reused and/or waste (i.e., not homogeneous) marble was available. Undulate joints in wall or floor revetments, particularly for the joining of slabs of homogeneous colour and type, seems so far to be little documented. They have been found particularly at Brescia, in the floor of the left cell of the Capitolium and at Capua, in the floor of a domus of late antiquity that is largely made up of recycled material. Again at Brescia, they are found in the parietal revetments, still unpublished and under study by the present author, of the Roman theater, probably to be attributed to a decorative phase of the Flavian period, contemporary with that of the Capitolium already mentioned.

Overall, the chronology of the slab fragments we have presented would seem, in synthesis, not to go beyond the middle of the second century and may perhaps be earlier by several decades (i.e., belonging to the Flavian period), given the absence of the inserts of porphyry and the presence of other technical characteristics, such as the typology of the cuts, which are always very clean.

D.6.2. Pavements in opus sectile

Whereas many of the rooms in the so-called Villa of Horace show obvious traces of mosaic pavement, the remains of sectilia pavimenta are quite scarce. As is well known, this kind of flooring came into use as early as the first century B.C., when marble was not yet employed and when the patterns were small. Its use continued until late antiquity with the development of more or less complex decorative patterns and with the employment of various kinds of marble.42

D.6.2.1. Pasqui excavations, 1911-1914

In the case of the earlier excavations at the Villa of Horace, the only relevant published notice is given by Lugli, who mentions a fragmentary pavement “with slabs of palombino and white marble, combined in a cross pattern” originating in “atrium A” (i.e., Area 8) and “from room B1,” (i.e., room 7). These were subsequently detached and reintegrated by Pasqui on a panel that was long stored in the Licenza museum. Following the reorganization and remodeling of the old Antiquarium at Licenza, in the early 1990s, this panel—together with a great deal of other material found in the Villa of Horace—was transferred to the storehouse of the Archaeological Superintendency of Lazio at the Santuario di Ercole Vincitore in Tivoli, where it is found today.

The panel (fig. 10) measures 40.5 cm x 42.0 cm and contains a fragment of pavement in small format, consisting of squared tiles, 14.5 cm per side, set into the pavement with an axis of rotation of 45° in accordance with a design generally denoted Q.45 Due to the limited space afforded by the panel, only five complete tiles are preserved, of which the central one is palombino and four are made of a fine-grained white marble with blue veining. Each side of the central tile is contiguous to one of the sides of the tiles in white marble.

This ensemble was the original nucleus of the pavement, which repeated the same pattern over most of the surface of the floor. When the panel was created and the tiles were repositioned (set on a bed
of plaster), the empty spaces and frame were filled in with eight foreign triangular pieces, of which four are made of a white-veined marble, two of palombino and two of greco scritto. These eight tiles were disposed without respect for what can be assumed to have been the floor’s original pattern.

The decorative motif of this pavement is the simplest of all known motifs. It is at the very boundary of the definition of the term opus sectile as it is commonly understood, since it is made of materials that are essentially the same color.

We do not know whether the pavement has been correctly reintegrated. In any event, such a sectile can be easily associated with the checkerboard pattern well known in the late Republic, especially in versions that are not entirely made of marble (e.g., slate and palombino in sharp chromatic contrast). Such versions are documented in the famous frescoed triclinium of the Villa of the Mysteries and in the house of Holconius Rufus in Pompeii. At Rome, it is found in the House of Augustus on the Palatine and in the Domus Pactumeiorum. At Tivoli, it is found in the mensa ponderaria.

The association of palombino with white marble is rather interesting and could furnish evidence for dating the pavement. The presence of marble with non-marble materials in the context of a pavement laid at one time in a single phase sets the date back to somewhere between the Augustan age and the later Julio-Claudian period. Also noteworthy is the fact that the association of palombino with marbles of soft colors, such as white or dull gray, might seem unusual because of the lack of contrast that results from the juxtaposition of the two materials. But in fact this occurs with some regularity in several pavements datable to the last decades of the first century B.C. and to the first decades of the first century A.D. Among the examples that may be cited, there is a sectile from the Caserma di Via Anicia in Rome, with the exact same checkerboard design as the Licenza fragment, mainly executed with white marbles. At Ostia, there is the pavement from the tablinum of House C of the Casette Repubblicane, with a central rectangle surrounded by triangles of palombino and “gray-veined” marble. From Herculaneum comes the sectile of tablinum 5 of the Casa dell’Atrio a Mosaico, with hexagons in palombino and pavonazzetto. At Pompeii there are two examples: the pavements (now lost) of tablinum h and of the ala of the Casa Anonima (R.VI.XV.14), and that of room h in the Casa di Cornelio Diadumeno.

All these floors have hexagons of palombino with triangles in bardiglio. Bernard Frischer, in a personal communication, notes that there is a contradiction about the findspot of the sectile fragment from “Horace’s Villa.” As mentioned above, Lugli put the findspot in Areas 7-8. But in Pasqui’s catalogue of the finds (see Frischer, G.1.12), preserved in the archive of the Archaeological Superintendency of Lazio, the same panel (“quadro con campione di pavimento a riquadri di palombino e di marmo bianco combinati a croce,” i.e., “panel

46. Guidobaldi 1994, 112.
47. Guidobaldi and Olevano, 228, tables 2 and 3.
49. Guidobaldi 1994, 249, fig. 29.
52. Guidobaldi 1994. See also Guidobaldi and Olevano, 231-234.
53. Guidobaldi 1994, 113 and table M.
55. Guidobaldi and Olevano, 233.
56. Guidobaldi, Trucchi and Olevano (as n. 48), 52, fig. 17.
with sample of pavement with squares of *palombino* and of white marble combined to form a cross”) is assigned to the property of Caponetti, parcel 1213 in the 1910 cadaster. But parcel 1213 does not overlap the residential part of the site where Areas 7-8 are located (see Frischer, B.1.9). Instead, it corresponds to the quadriporticus, garden and part of the bath complex. Adding to the spatial ambiguity is the fact that, as with all the finds from the Pasqui excavation, we have no information whatsoever about the exact location and depth, let alone the stratigraphic context of the findspot. Nor can we tell whether the fragments were found in situ or not. In other instances where there is a contradiction between Lugli’s report and the documentation of Pasqui’s excavation, it has always turned out that Lugli was in error. In this case, that would exclude the residence as the findspot. Hence all we may safely conclude is that the villa had this flooring somewhere in the bath complex or quadriporticus sometime during the period 30 B.C. to 80 A.D.

**D.6.2.2. Excavations 1997-2001**

In the recent investigations, the areas excavated have not yielded remains of *sectilia pavimenta* nor of tile impressions. From the excavated stratigraphy, however, there are several interesting finds worth mentioning, including fragments of *palombino* tiles whose shape cannot be reconstructed (Sector VII.1, Area 24, SU 7034) and triangles of slate (Sector I.5, Area 38, SU 834) which, judging from their thickness (1.5 cm to 2.0 cm), belonged to a floor rather than a wall revetment. These fragments might allow us to hypothesize the presence of other *opus sectile* pavements made entirely or partially of non-marble elements and, presumably, dating between the second quarter of the first century B.C. and the Augustan age.\(^\text{57}\)

Finally, several fragments of triangles of *giallo antico* (Sector I.7, Area 35, SU 1218) and of fine-grained white marble (Sector I.5, Area 38, SU 834) have been found. These are difficult to interpret because the fragmentation does not allow us to identify their type and dimensions and, as a result, their purpose. One cannot, in fact, establish with certainty whether these were used in a lost *sectile* pavement or whether they were used as inserts in a black and white mosaic such as those present all over the site.

*Editor’s Note: The text of this contribution was submitted in 2000 and has not been changed to reflect publications that appeared between 2001 and 2006.*

\(^{57}\) Guidobaldi and Olevano, 239.
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**D.6. Marbles**


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