

Part of the Pantheon:

Personifications as Representations of Piety in Roman Triumphal Monuments

In addition to the customary pantheon of Olympic gods, personifications were a type of cosmology included in architecture. Personifications of personal virtues as well as human-like representations of nature can and should be interpreted as references to piety. Margrete Bieber argued that *Virtus*, and *Honos* were military gods because they were given human like forms and prayed to, to manifest these qualities into the devotee. I suggest that this idea can be applied to all personifications of abstract qualities, including the river gods seen on triumphal monuments such as the Column of Trajan, and the Arches of Titus and Septimius Severus. Like the sacrificial scenes, the human like representations are meant to be a symbol of the emperor's piety in triumphal monuments because they assisted the emperor in Rome's dominance through their participation in war. Personifications such as *Pax*, *Honos*, *Virtus*, and the river gods such as *Danuvius*, will be examined as military gods who helped amass the qualities needed or assisted in safe passage for the Romans to be victorious. In addition to triumphal monuments, numismatic evidence will be examined to identify the personifications and their usage. *Pietas*, herself, will be an example, only seen in numismatics, to help demonstrate the role of personifications as forms of piety. This paper will conclude that personifications in numismatics and architecture were valued and worshiped as gods, making their images on triumphal monuments a representation of piety and their veneration.