

GREEK PROPORTION

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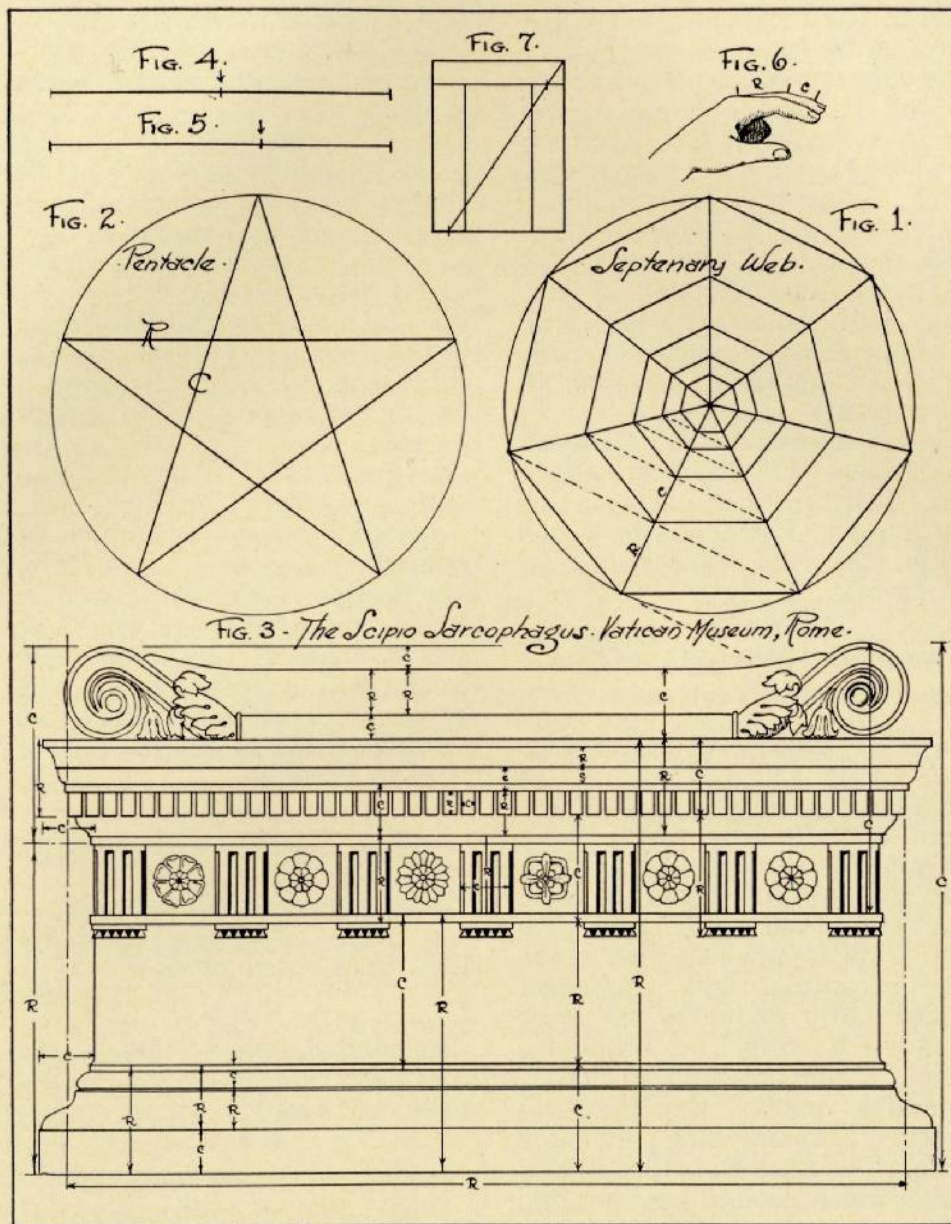
Correlative Rectangles.

ARCHITECTURE and music as well as the sciences, at their beginning were astrological. Music, in this age was associated with the universe, and the orbits of the heavenly bodies. It took the moon four weeks to travel its orbit. Mercury 12, Venus 32, Sun 52, Mars 98. In order to simplify, the remaining orbits are omitted. At this time the earth was thought to be the center of the universe and the sun, moon and planets to move around it, and the orbital numbers have influenced music from the earliest times to the present day.

In architecture the early temple was a microcosm, the world or universe on a small scale, the lower parts represented the earth and the upper parts the heavens, and man and the gods were placed between. The front elevation of Scipio's tomb in a noticeable degree presents this symbolism; the lower parts the earth, the scrolls at top the heavens and on the frieze the triglyphs as symbols of buildings or temple fronts have reference to man while the rosettes may well be taken as symbols of the sun gods. The triglyph belongs with the Doric column and should not be used apart from the column unless as on the Scipio tomb its purpose is symbolic. The triglyph is an echo of the columination above which it is rightly placed. It is generally understood that the triglyph is the head of a beam and the scrolls represent a bed; the bed refers to sleep and sleep is a type of

death; and to the righteous death is but the glorious transport to Paradise. But a new thought based on facts is a help to symbolism.

Early architecture had symbols like the Septenary web and the Pentacle Figs. 1 & 2. These figures were sacred because in a nature worshipping age they symbolized the universe, and the ratios of points and lines in these cosmic figures appear to have influenced the proportions of monumental designs. Scipio's tomb has its average length in relation to its height as R is to C on the symbols, these ratios are of frequent occurrence both here, Fig. 3, and on the Parthenon. We do not know by what method the designers arrived at these ratios. They might have been revealed by the old problem of dividing the line. The bisected line. Fig. 4, is faulty for the eye soon tires of measuring the equal distances each side of the center. Pleasing variety is introduced when the line is broken at a point away from the center but not too near the end Fig. 5. These unequal lengths are to each other as the radius is to chord in an angle of 36 degrees. These ratios of radius to chord were often used in ancient structures. It appears that the lines which form the elements of geometrical figures were thought to be in all places in harmony with each other and by some law of affinity to belong together and so were used to determine measurements in design. Again these ratios might have been drawn directly from nature as we find



them illustrated in the joints of the hand Fig. 6.

Again the proportions of Scipio's tomb appear to have been fixed by the oldest rule in architecture, the law of the post and lintel. In Fig. 7 the diagonal line which regulates the relations of post and lintel starts at the ground line at the center of one of the posts,

runs through the top center of the opposite post above the outer edge of which it turns to form the top of the lintel. When thus drawn the rectangles forming the faces of the posts and lintel are correlative, they belong together, and may be used as posts and lintel, or one post and the lintel may proportion a sarcophagus

design; or again where the portico, front of the Parthenon, is treated as posts, we have the entablature and pediment as the correct lintel; and on the Greek Doric capital the abacus when cut to form two posts has the echinus as the proper lintel. (Illustrated and explained in October article.) On the Classical monuments the front elevation of Scipio's tomb, in harmony with the architectural divisions, presents a series of rectangles all faultless according to this scheme.

Scipio's tomb like the Parthenon was influenced by the most ancient law of architectural proportion and like the Parthenon its detail shows aesthetic proportions of the highest character.



Symbolic Meaning of the Scipio Rosettes.

The decorations of the Byzantine, Celtic and Gothic rosettes often had a meaning and the sun, moon, earth and air were among the subjects symbolically treated.

In Classical Art where the ideal was beauty the decorations were free from symbolism but there were exceptions and symbolism is apparently found for the cross is always a symbol. A cruciform design, a conventionalized flower, decorates one of the beautiful rosettes ornamenting Scipio's tomb. The cross embodied in this design was a natural Pagan cross, a symbol of the Sun, for Scipio's tomb, a Roman work, was erected before the Christian Era.

In early times the number four was associated in a mystic way with the sun which was thought to have four motions, up and down during the day, and below the horizon, down and up and one of the earliest sun symbols was a cross dividing a circle into four

parts. In Genesis the sun was created on the fourth day and in Revelation it was one-third darkened at the sound of the fourth trumpet.

On the remaining rosettes the rose in the middle zone with petals alternately opened and closed suggests summer and winter or day and night, symbols of life and death. They are also symbols of time and time refers back to Janus the old Roman god of time, who in addition to other duties conveyed the prayers of men to the ears of the gods.

Seymour writes "Above a thousand years before Christ, the cross was already a religious emblem of frequent employment." In Italy, near Bologna, the cross is found on ancient burial urns, and the most ancient coins of the Gauls were circular with a cross in the middle and the cross with equal arms has been thought to represent the four rivers in Paradise.



"What you need is an electric bath," said the doctor.

"Not for me," said the patient. "My uncle got drowned in one of them things in Sing Sing."



Remember, when driving, the wind can't go through your windshield, but you can.



Broke:—"I've lost my new car."

Flush:—"Why don't you report it to the Sheriff?"

Broke:—"He's the fellow that took it."



Small Boy—(to visitor) "Have you got a wife?"

Visitor:—"No, Sonny, I haven't."

Small Boy:—"Then who tells you what to do?"