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Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture

Adolf Furtwängler (1853–1907) was a prominent German archaeologist and art historian specialising in classical art. He was appointed assistant Director of the Königliche Museen zu Berlin in 1880, a position he held until 1894 when he was appointed professor of Classical Archaeology in Munich. He is best known for developing the *Kopienkritik* approach to studying Roman sculpture, which he introduces in this volume first published in 1885 and translated into English by Eugenie Strong in 1895. *Kopienkritik* is a methodology which assumes that Roman sculptures are copies of Greek originals, and that by studying the Roman copies the original Greek sculpture can be reconstructed. This approach dominated the study of classical sculpture in the twentieth century and remains influential despite repeated criticism. Furtwängler compares the styles of known classical Greek sculptors with Roman statues to uncover the original sculptor in this defining example of the *Kopienkritic* approach.

Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture

A Series of Essays on the History of Art

ADOLF FURTWÄNGLER
EDITED BY EUGENIE STRONG

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MASTERPIECES OF GREEK SCULPTURE

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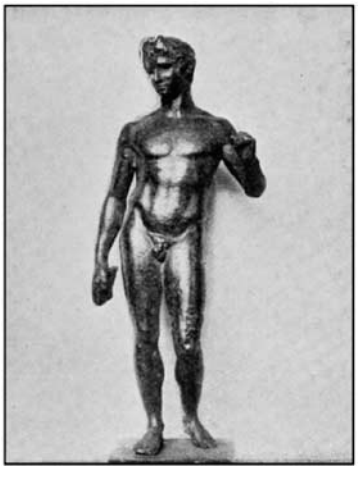
To HEINRICH BRUNN
& ERNST CURTIUS
In Respectful Devotion

AUTHOR'S PREFACE



ANY unprejudiced attempt to form, from the text-books now in use, an estimate of the state of our knowledge of the history of art among the Greeks will force us to own with shame that we appear to know and to utilize the monuments far less than did Winckelmann in his day. Winckelmann's History of Art is wholly based upon a fresh and personal observation of the monuments, of which he makes a constant and extensive use. Our more recent histories of art are wont to take into consideration only one and the same small group of monuments, an accidental section of the mass of what has been preserved. Ever since Brunn laid with a master hand the foundation for the history and the characterization of the Greek artists, so far as these can be gathered from the traditions of the ancients, writers have for the most part been content to repeat what he established, only perhaps adding an occasional 'selected' monument to trim, as it were, the fabric of his weaving. Still it was quite justifiable to be thus prudent and cautious in dealing with the monuments, so long as we only painfully groped our way amidst the wealth of remains, without knowing how they should be utilized: it was certainly better to limit investigation to the little which was ascertained, than to venture without stay or support upon the ocean of what actually exists.

Modern science, however, has afforded us a stay which enables us to keep steadily in the direction of our goal. Any one who understands how to observe the monuments, and who is willing, with indefatigable ardour, to test afresh and compare all forms, may nowadays, by means of photography, which helps to fix the individual objects, obtain a picture of Greek art far more richly coloured than the pale and meagre image we have hitherto possessed.

I know that many fellow-scholars are engaged upon these lines, and it is only by combined effort that we shall be able to advance. Each must bring what contributions he can. The investigations which I publish here are all closely interconnected; their ultimate object is to gain from the monuments a new and solid foundation on which to build a history of statuary among the Greeks, for, before undertaking to

draw from the monuments—as has long been my ambition—a new presentment of this history, the way must be smoothed by isolated inquiries.

The first of the essays, that on Pheidias—containing the identification of the Lemnia—was the external inducement to the publication of the other sections, most of which had been written previously. Starting from the Lemnia, the inquiry extends to the whole circle of Pheidias and to the Akropolis, the chief scene of his activity; thence it passes on to his more independent contemporary Kresilas, and from him harks back to Myron. Myron affords a transition to Peloponnesian art, and the inquiry passes naturally on to Polykleitos. The powerful effect exercised by the creations of the latter upon the Attic artists of the fourth century leads accordingly to Skopas, Praxiteles, and Euphranor, and finally to a glance at Lysippos. Some special tendencies of Skopas and Praxiteles are followed out more in detail in the next section on the Venus of Milo, while the chapter on the Belvedere Apollo reverts from the creations of the fourth century to those of the Pheidian epoch. The method of investigation is throughout the inductive, which passes step by step from one conclusion to another. Much which belonged together has thus inevitably been wrenched apart; but this fault may be rectified by the index, which will enable the student readily to put the material together in its systematic historical order. The museographic index will also be welcome to the reader.

The material treated in this book consists for the most part of antique copies, since, except for the well-known few though splendid exceptions, the best creations of antiquity survive only in copies. True, to the number of these exceptions—original works of first-rate artists—I add one at least (Plate XVII.); yet the multitude of other masterpieces whose traces are here followed are still known only at second hand.

The increasingly rich discoveries of original works on Greek soil have lately somewhat thrown into the shade the study of the copies, for which we are mainly indebted to Italy, not to the advantage of our science. The original sculptures from Greece are, with those rare exceptions to which I have already alluded, works of the second or even inferior rank. The Roman copies, on the other hand, have preserved that pick from the masterpieces of the classical epoch which pleased ancient taste and connoisseurship in the times of highest culture. It is the pick of the best and the most famous that antiquity possessed. Among these copies it is that we must look for the masterpieces mentioned by the authors, for the statues that made epochs or initiated movements. Were we to possess only copies of the noble creations of a Raphael, a Michelangelo, or a Rembrandt, these would certainly be better worth one's study than the hosts of other originals of the time.

It is manifest from this that our first duty is accurate examination and criticism of the extant copies. This kind of study is as yet only in its infancy; but it is precisely here that photography is of invaluable assistance, and by its aid we may hope to make rapid progress. Above all, an almost painful accuracy is required. The older works dealing with our store of copies suffer almost throughout from obscurity as to what is to be really regarded as a copy. No adequate distinction is drawn between copies and adaptations or even figures which are merely similar. Formerly, indeed, relatively little was known of the existence of actual close copies, and for the

most part only few late reproductions or variants were believed in. Two mistakes in particular were very frequently made: either actual copies of one and the same original were taken for different modifications or variants of one 'type'; or else copies of quite different originals were taken for later copyists' variations of one original.

As regards principles and method in the criticism of copies, many rules might be laid down—yet I have never been able to see any use in talk about method, much less in boasting about it. Rules would never embrace, even remotely, the whole range of possibilities presented by reality. Method can be shown only by application. The researches in this book show by numerous instances what are the requisitions I think necessary for the criticisms of copies, and how I think copies should be dealt with (cf. Index under COPIES). Just a few remarks may however be in place.

In the more delicate appreciation of the copies, all of course depends on a right discrimination between what is derived from the original and what is added by the copyist. This point will always be a rich mine of error in inquiries of this kind; yet a long familiarity with the monuments, and a sense sharpened thereby, will preserve one from at least gross mistakes. Further, it is above all important that the monuments should not be torn out of their setting. Any inquiry concerning the masterpieces of antiquity must, if we would avoid error, be made only in a wide connexion. The individual work must be replaced in the environment which conditioned it, and through which alone it can become intelligible; and in our inquiry concerning any single monument we must keep all the others to which it is akin steadily in view. This procedure alone can guard us from the errors which must necessarily arise from the dilettante habit of isolating works, and connecting them arbitrarily with the names of artists. Finally, I may add, I have made it my first and most natural rule to discuss only those works of art which I have myself examined. In the relatively few cases where this was not possible I have specially noted the fact. Ocular examination can, however, be at times replaced by good photographs; but the illustrated works, and the large one by Clarac in particular, are as good as useless for our purpose. It is of course my wish that my readers should be in a position to compare for themselves as many originals, casts, and photographs as possible. The illustrations in the book reproduce the most important and least accessible monuments.

At first many will doubtless think I have been too bold in my attributions of extant works to celebrated artists. But on deeper familiarity with the actual objects these doubts will vanish more and more. I can at any rate say for myself that I have, I believe, been sufficiently critical of my own conjectures, and that I have scarcely allowed one to stand that has not been practically laid aside and tested by repeated trials, and has approved itself in a wider connexion. But it may be further objected that it is not yet time, while we are still so behindhand in the knowledge of the general development of the separate forms, to inquire into the individualities of the several artists. The study of these forms, however—in so far as it touches upon the efflorescence of plastic art and so soon as it enters into more delicate distinctions—is inseparable from—nay, even identical with—the inquiry into the individualities to

whom precisely this or that particular development of form is due. Only the general pervading features of this development must be assumed throughout as the solid basis of the inquiry. It were indeed much to be desired that this basis should be effectively laid down once and for all in some special treatise, since unanimity even in this respect is still lacking among scholars.

The more deeply we penetrate into that selection of antique masterpieces which undoubtedly survives in our extant copies, the more forcibly are we impressed by the individuality of the great artists of the best period. I venture to hope that, beyond the circle of specialists, the general reader—for the book is intended for him also—will see reason to modify his conception of the antique, and will grant that it includes a far greater range of individual development than has hitherto been supposed. It is true that the great distinction between ancient and modern culture still holds good: the untrammelled, free individuality, at once the strength and the weakness of modern artists, was quite foreign to antiquity. The ancient artist clung to established types of far-reaching influence. He obeyed laws and rules in his treatment of bodily forms and of attitude—and for this the book affords evidence step by step—which he modifies and alters, extends and fashions after new inspiration, but which yet impart to his whole production a something inevitable, typical, known by rule. It is this that brings about that unique effect of the antique which Goethe sums up in the words, 'These great works of art have been brought about in the same wise as the operations of nature. Everything arbitrary, everything self-conscious, disappears: there is Necessity, there is God.' But to penetrate into the whole mystery of individuality, and to learn to recognize there also the divine necessity—this was reserved for the moderns.

A. FURTWÄNGLER.

BERLIN, *October* 1893.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE task of editing a book like the present, which has been received almost with acclamation by scholars of all schools, has been a responsible one, and I am quite conscious that I may have succeeded after all in satisfying neither the student nor the general reader. The one, preoccupied with detail, will perhaps complain of the omissions, while the other, in search only of a vivid impression, may be repelled by the length and depth. Two main alterations in the plan of the book must be noted at once: the two passages treating of archaic art (pp. 675—732, pp. 250—257) have been omitted, partly owing to their fragmentary nature, and partly because the author contemplates the publication of a series of essays upon the archaic art of Greece in which these his first sketches will be worked up and expanded. In the second place, the long and difficult chapter on the temples of the Akropolis (for the scholarly translation of which I am indebted to Miss Margaret Alford) has been printed as an Appendix, for it seemed best not to interrupt the sequence of the artistic inquiry with an Essay which, though it bears closely upon Pheidias, is mainly of historical and topographical interest. For the rest, I have made it my aim, as far as possible, to disengage the author's arguments from all such controversial matter as might cumber or obscure them. For instance, it seemed to me that the claims of scholarship would be fully satisfied if the numerous theories put forward from time to time to discredit the Pheidian authorship of the Parthenon sculptures, or the fluctuations of opinion with regard to the Kresilaian Diomede or the Myronian Perseus, were relegated to footnotes which should provide the learned and the curious with all necessary references. On the other hand, when Professor Furtwängler crosses swords with champions like Dörpfeld on the subject of the 'Opisthodomos,' or Löschcke on the date of the Trial and Death of Pheidias, we feel that contact with such opponents' arguments strikes fire from his own, so that all passages of this kind have been faithfully preserved. The same may be said of the chapters on the 'Venus of Milo' and the 'Apollo of the Belvedere,' and above all of the whole Essay on the Akropolis temples, for here

again argument and controversy are so closely interwoven that to shorten the latter would be materially to weaken the former. In these chapters, therefore, the only alterations are those that have been introduced by the author himself. These and a number of smaller omissions and additions made by him throughout the whole of the book call for no special comment; they will be easily detected and appreciated by the reader acquainted with the original. The majority were necessitated either by subsequent literature or by subsequent discovery. The portions of the German edition that were printed as 'Nachträge' have been inserted in their proper place in the text, while every effort has been made to give references to the literature that has appeared since the publication of the German book a year ago. In my revision of the translation generally, I have ventured upon compression wherever this was possible without injury to the sense, while in one or two instances I have left rather more to the imagination of the reader than is usual in a German work of this nature. Thus, after the exhaustive analysis of the forms peculiar to Myron given on pp. 165—202, it seemed unnecessary to repeat them in detail, in the case of each single statue or head which the author in a concluding section (XIII.) has grouped about this artist. Professor Furtwängler has himself found time in the midst of his various occupations to bestow a general supervision upon the English edition; nor is it necessary to say that no editorial alterations have been introduced without his express sanction, while not a few have been planned in consultation with him.

The number of illustrations, which in the portion chosen for translation was only 162 (including the plates), has been raised to 207. These 45 fresh illustrations have been selected on the same plan as that already pursued by the author, to bring into notice new or almost forgotten monuments. In their arrangement I have tried to convince the reader of what great results might be achieved with the help of a collection of casts, comprising not merely a few representative works, but all or nearly all the extant products of classical art whatever their period, and supplemented by a complete series of photographs. From the three statues reproduced side by side on page 87, it must surely appear that their attribution to one and the same artist is no matter of guess-work or of facile intuition, but the reasoned result of such a comparative study of form as is possible only in some comprehensive collection of casts as at Dresden or Munich. In like manner I trust that the full illustrations in the chapter on the Amazons (pp. 128—141) will enable the reader to take in at a glance less obvious but essential differences which, when we have only memory to trust to, are apt to become merged and hidden in external resemblances of type and dress. In this connexion my thanks are due to the Marquis of Lansdowne and to Mr. Astor for allowing the finest copy in existence of the Polykleitan Amazon to be worthily published (Plate VIII.)

The very few illustrations which in the German edition were still repeated from former publications have now been replaced from photographs—of the originals, wherever this was possible, or at any rate of casts when, as in the case of so many Italian galleries, bad lighting and other causes often make photography impossible. The Bologna head (Plate III.) has again been reproduced only from the cast, for in spite of the trouble so courteously taken by the Director of the Museo Civico, Professor Brizio, the stained condition of the marble has made it impossible to obtain a negative

sufficiently good for reproduction in photogravure. I had also hoped to replace the poor illustration of the once celebrated Hope Athena at Deepdene by a plate from the original. Having failed, however, to obtain from the present occupant of Deepdene so much as an answer to my applications for permission to photograph the statue, there was nothing for it but to repeat the illustration taken from the *Ancient Specimens* (Fig. 27). In the matter of illustration generally, I have to thank Mr. A. S. Murray for the special facilities accorded to me for photographing in the British Museum, Mr. Barclay V. Head for his assistance in the preparation of the plate of coins (VI.), Dr. Paul Herrmann of Dresden for the fine new negatives of the Lemnia (Plates I., II.*, and III.) In addition, Herr F. Bruckmann of Munich and M. A. Giraudon of Paris have generously allowed me to reproduce a number of their photographs. Of the new plates there are three to which I should like to call special attention: the superb head from Beneventum in the Louvre (Plate XIV.), which should rouse us to a sense of what precious relics of the ancient *statuaria* may still lie hidden in our museums; the 'Aberdeen head,' that exquisite fragment in our own British Museum which escaped so curiously long the eye of both connoisseurs and archaeologists, and in which I think it not too bold to recognize an original from the hand of Praxiteles (Plate XVIII.); finally, the grand and presumably original head of the Skopasian Meleager, which, though it has already been well reproduced in the *Antike Denkmäler*, deserves to become known amid the grace of its Roman surroundings (Plate XV.)

By the courtesy of the author and of his English translator, Mr. James F. Muirhead, I have been enabled to refer throughout to the English edition of Professor Helbig's *Museums of Classical Art in Rome*, and I trust that this book, which will appear almost simultaneously with the present one, will give a fresh impulse to the unprejudiced study of the treasures of those Roman galleries to which, as Professor Furtwängler shows, we must still go if we would find or restore the ancient 'masterpieces.' The late Bishop Wordsworth, during his travels in Greece, likened the country, from the point of view of what remained and did not remain, to a manuscript torn indeed and defaced, but 'not yet, like Rome, a palimpsest.' Now it is precisely this fact that it is a palimpsest that still secures to Rome its archaeological preeminence, for, with the exception of a fragment recovered of late years here and there, the record which we are trying to decipher has been forgotten or destroyed in its native land. The very beauty and uniqueness of these fragments as works of art blind us to their incompleteness as evidence, but if we wish to gain some idea of the whole story it is to Rome that we must go, and there accustom ourselves to spell it out through the mistaken interpretations and ignorant glosses of the copyists.

Per casus varios, per tot discrimina rerum
Tendimus in Latium.

But it would be an error to suppose that Italy, *la mère savante de toute Renaissance*, is only fruitful in copies. There is the Ludovisi throne—in which the infant art of relief seems to have reached at a bound the limit of its accomplishment—and now at last we are in a position to place side by side with the Hermes itself an original from the hand of the master whom the consent of ancient connoisseurs ranked with Praxiteles. In archaeology, unfortunately, we cannot pick and choose;

all that we can do is to make the most of what has been thrown up from the wreck of Time, but 'where are they painted that are lost?' It was therefore only natural that for a time at least we should regard the Hermes as supreme, if only because he was solitary; yet whoever will compare him—soft, self-involved, with lips just parting as vague voluptuous languors steal over him—and the Meleager of Skopas, with that look all outward and upward of some inspired 'pilgrim of eternity,' will gain some idea of what we must have lost through the accidental eclipse of this great genius.

Lastly, it is hoped that this book, as it exhibits a picture, will also discover a process. Of the exact nature of that process it would hardly be necessary to speak, but for the fact that the copiousness and brilliancy of the achievements of a single critic in the more popular field of Italian art have thrown us in England into a state of naïve commotion akin to that of the ancient Mexicans, when, having never seen a horse, they mistook the troopers of Cortés for a new species of animal. For, as the critic in question never appears without his hobby, the two coalesce, as it were, in our imagination, until we think and speak of that which is nothing but the course and condition of all fruitful inquiry as if it were the honorific appendage of a particular name and the abnormal product of a particular field. On the contrary, the present book is from first to last an example of the inductive method, which, though it has never been applied before on so extensive a scale to the art of Greece, is, in principle at least, as old as Winckelmann. But here observation and comparison do not end in themselves; they rest upon a basis of history and philology, and the result is that we have the reproduction of a development, not merely the recension of a catalogue.

It cannot be denied, however, that the strength and flexibility of our instrument are often strained to the full by the very nature of the material it works in. That material is, as we have seen, not only fragmentary but secondary, while the limitations of sculpture as an art betray themselves in an external uniformity which always impedes, and sometimes baffles, our analytic research of variety. If observation comes upon a gap, theory leaps ahead, like a man's shadow that gets in front of him as soon as he begins to move away from the light. Then there is the constant temptation to explain too much, to impose a large significance upon minute features, as to which we might say in words borrowed from Johnson, 'the dull utterly neglect them, the acute see a little, and supply the rest with fancy and conjecture.' So much for the defects of our 'method.' They know them best who use it most diligently and most skilfully; nor would there be any occasion to insist upon them at all, were it not for the numbers of those to whom, if we may judge from their attitude of barren negation, 'willing to wound but yet afraid to strike,' it would seem as if discretion were the better part of discovery.

It is therefore in a double aspect as matter and method that these Essays are now offered to the English reader, in confidence that what is not final will yet be found fruitful; and—

Was fruchtbar ist, allein ist wahr.

E. S.

November 19, 1894.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

I. P. 95 *sqq.*: *Dioscuri of Monte Cavallo.* In a letter which I received a few days ago, Professor Furtwängler quotes an interesting statement made by Julius Lange (*Thorwaldsen, Fremstilling af Mennesket*, p. 9), to the effect that Canova said of the Elgin marbles in 1803 that only one single antique in all Rome was conceived in their grand style—namely, *the finer of the two Colossi of Monte Cavallo.* I also find it stated by Memes, *Memoirs of Canova* (Edinburgh 1825), p. 291, that 'of the latter (*i.e.* the Colossi), even at a subsequent period of life, he (Canova) made a constant morning study for years, in relation to his own improvement, *and to establish the style of Phidias in the Elgin Marbles*.'—E. S.

II. P. 132, 1. To the replicas of the Kresilaian Amazon should be added a head in the Jacobsen Collection (1073 *a*), poor and much restored, but of value as having on the right side, in the line of the ear and near the crown, the remains of a rectangular support, which once connected the head with the right wrist; this confirms the restoration proposed on p. 132. The head may possibly be identical with Michaelis *o*.

III. P. 346 *seq.*: *The Aberdeen Head.* Lord Stanmore has the kindness to inform me that it is *certain* the head came direct from Greece, and adds: 'All the fragments my father brought with him from thence were placed together by themselves, and this head was among them.'—E. S.

ERRATA.

Page 29, line 4 from foot of page (text), *for* '473' *read* '470.'
,, 42, lines 7, 10, and 17, *for* 'archaic' *read* 'archaistic.'
,, 78, line 9, *for* 'Romani' *read* 'Romano.'
,, 84, note 1, line 3, *for* 'bust' *read* 'best.'

CONTENTS

NOTE.—*A number of the plates of the German edition are now reproduced as text-blocks, while for some of the text-illustrations of the German book plates have here been substituted. Those illustrations, whether plates or text-blocks, which are completely foreign to the German edition, and now appear for the first time, are marked by an asterisk* (*).

LIST OF FULL-PAGE PLATES

LIST OF TEXT ILLUSTRATIONS

INITIAL AND TAIL-PIECES.