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Review of *Age of Spirituality: A Symposium*, edited by Kurt Weitzmann

Dale Kinney

Bryn Mawr College, dkinney@brynmawr.edu

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Occasionally, a statuette is described as hollow or solid cast, but in most instances nothing is said, so that the reader must conclude that the author does not know how the piece was made. In her discussion of no. 45, Leibundgut points out that both the scale and the handling of the drapery indicate that the arm was taken from another prototype, but she does not discuss the methods by which Roman bronzeworkers assembled their wax models, nor does she refer to those studies which have dealt with this topic (D.K. Hill, *Hesperia* 27 [1958] 311–17 and G. Roeder, *Ägyptische Bronzefiguren* 1956, 519–27). Close scrutiny of the lifesize statuette could certainly have yielded some information on technique, but nothing is offered to enrich the contributions already made by scholars such as D.L. Haynes (*RömMitt* 67 [1960] 45–47). Thus, although the bronzes are beautifully presented in these volumes, they might still richly reward the scholar who studies them from a technical point of view and can subject them to x-ray examination or compositional analyses.

ELLEN REEDER WILLIAMS

ART DEPARTMENT
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20052

AGE OF SPIRITUALITY: A SYMPOSIUM, edited by Kurt Weitzmann. Pp. viii + 174, figs. 90. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in association with the Princeton University Press, Princeton 1980. \$25.

The 9 essays in this book, with an introduction by Professor Weitzmann, were originally delivered in November 1977 at a symposium sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum in conjunction with the great exhibition *Age of Spirituality*. According to the preface, “the speakers were chosen from various fields and asked to select topics related to the major realms [Imperial, Classical, Secular, Jewish, Christian] into which the exhibition was divided” (p. vii). The division into “realms” was a controversial aspect of the exhibition and of its posthumous catalogue (see A. Cutler, *AJA* 85 [1981] 238–40). It is therefore interesting to see how the *Symposium* does and does not bear out that division.

The first two essays are called “introductory” (p. vii). A. Momigliano sketches the afterlife of Gibbon’s thesis of decline and fall, and concludes with three propositions of his own: 1) fall can occur without decline; 2) “the replacement of paganism by Christianity” was the crucial process of late antiquity, while 3) the distinguishing feature of the period is the existence of an autonomous religious structure, the church, as a “state within the state.” P. Brown defines the social context of late antique art: civic, public, secular. Most art arose in contexts that Christianity was unconcerned or not empowered to affect, and Christian art itself, viz. churches and their ornamentation, was strikingly material and specific, hardly “otherworldly” or “abstract.”

The next two symposiasts address the “Imperial realm.”

H.-G. Beck surveys the role of Constantinople in late antiquity, and finds that it was primarily an administrative and political center, much less a religious, cultural or artistic one. B. Brenk purports to give a chronological overview of the adoption of imperial iconography into Christian art. The range of his examples, restricted geographically largely to Italy and in medium largely to sculpture, seems curiously narrow for his purpose, and this reader was often bemused by the elliptical argumentation.

Two authors treat the “Classical realm.” I. Ševčenko, in a masterly article, defines the classical element in Greek literature, broadly distinguishing three phases: the early apologists, who addressed their pagan opponents with classical forms in a fire-with-fire technique; the fathers of the 4th century, whose classical usages stemmed from their own classical education and literary aspirations; the classicists of the 6th and 7th centuries, whose works can be defined against the foil of new, purely Christian literary forms like the *kontakion*. G. Hanfmann demonstrates “The Continuity of Classical Art” with a broad range of diverse examples. Although continuities in subject matter are indisputable, it struck this reader that in form nearly all of the objects illustrated look unmistakably late antique. The author does not discuss or acknowledge this disjunction.

The three remaining essays all pertain to the “Christian realm.” In a curious inversion of his title, “Christology: A Central Problem of Early Christian Theology and Art,” M. Shepherd demonstrates that Christian theology can rarely be perceived in art before the reign of Justinian. The post-Justinianic period—presumably more fruitful, on the evidence presented by students of iconoclasm—is barely discussed. R. Krautheimer reassesses the design of S. Stefano Rotondo against the foil of his essentially genetic model of the origin of Christian building types. The Christian basilica is a late strain of an ancient architectural genus, a natural modification of a civic and imperial type inherently suited to its new Christian functions, whereas the centralized Christian “double shell” represents the artificial transplant of an exotic genus native to late antique palatial architecture. S. Stefano Rotondo, whose design cannot be traced to any organic development, is a “beautiful freak,” and a failure on functional grounds. E. Kitzinger surveys the nature of Christian imagery from the 3rd century to iconoclasm, and distills three epochs, of beginning, expansion and “potentiation.” The earliest art is “signitive”: densely allusive, meaningful far beyond the modesty of its formal pretensions or appeal. During its expansion, Christian art becomes public, explicit, self-sufficient, “normalized in Greco-Roman terms.” Finally, the image acquires a power beyond allusion or representation; it shares the potency of what it portrays, be it holy person, holy event, or holy place.

Diverse and uneven as they are, these 9 essays are not incompatible, and—assuming that every thesis is true—the reader can distill from them a composite statement about late antique art that is general if not comprehensive. In late antiquity art was a social attribute (Brown). As such, it belonged to a realm or pattern of behavior from which Chris-

tianity initially was detached, or which it actively opposed (Brown, Ševčenko). As the sponsors of art were Christianized, art was Christianized as well, i.e., traditional forms were expanded or adapted to incorporate Christian functions or subject matter (Ševčenko, Krautheimer, Kitzinger). The result was art that is Christian. It is distinguishable from Christian art: wholly new genres, devised for purposes peculiarly Christian and unknown to non-Christian artistic tradition (Ševčenko, Kitzinger). "Classical" art becomes definable too, largely in contradistinction to art that is self-consciously something else (Ševčenko). These distinctions do not coincide exactly with the "realms" of *Age of Spirituality*. The ivory plaque with an archangel in London, "normalized in Greco-Roman terms," is an object profoundly unlike the "potentiated" icon of an archangel that stood next to it in the "Christian realm" (Cat. nos. 481, 483). By collectively suggesting an alternative matrix for these objects, the essays in the *Symposium* nicely complement the *Catalogue*, and also make a substantial independent contribution.

DALE KINNEY

DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ART
BRYN MAWR COLLEGE
BRYN MAWR, PENNSYLVANIA 19010

LA VILLA DEL POGGIO IMPERIALE, by *Gabriella Capecchi, Lucia Lepore, Vincenzo Saladino*. (Collezioni Fiorentine di Antichità 1; *Archaeologica* 11.) Pp. 219, pls. 95, architectural drawings (A-C). Giorgio Bretschneider, Rome 1979.

A collection of antique and would-be antique marble sculpture that goes back to Isabella de' Medici, of which all but 10 of 88 pieces are described as unpublished, sounds almost unbelievable in our time and age. Yet this collection exists and is here published with exemplary care by three Italian scholars. Lepore surveys the history of the collection at the Villa of Poggio Imperiale and publishes the archival documents. Capecchi and Saladino have shared the work on the catalogue of sculpture. Every piece is illustrated usually in two or more views; the photographs by members of the Gabinetto Fotografico are first-rate. Fifteen pages of Concordances and Indices do justice to both historical and art historical aspects of the book.

Known already in the 15th century, the "Villa di Baroncelli" was given in 1565 by Cosimo I de' Medici to his daughter Isabella. It was named "Villa di Poggio Imperiale" when Archduchess Maria Magdalena of Austria acquired the villa and had the architect Giulio Parigi enlarge and restore the building (1622). It then became the residence of the Grandduchesses and Granddukes of Toscana until the mid-19th century. The records of the collection begin with an inventory of 1622, but several pieces acquired in 1584 by Cardinal Fernando de' Medici come from the celebrated collection of classical sculptures in Palazzo Valle Capranica in Rome: the "Lyceian" Praxitelean Apollo no. 2, the Satyr no. 6, the Imperial cuirassed statue no. 18, tenta-

tively identified as Geta by Saladino. An unpublished Artemis of Hellenistic (Alexandrian?) type was drawn by Gerolamo da Carpi around 1550 and a remarkable, quite possibly North African Asclepius (no. 3) may have belonged to Ippolito d'Este in 1568. Substantial additions were made under Maria Magdalena of Austria and Vittoria della Rovere in the 17th century. On the other hand, many items cannot be traced back beyond the 19th century and there are a number of pieces transferred from the Uffizi in recent times. The exciting vision of a Medicean collection which can be taken *in toto* as an expression of Renaissance and Baroque taste in Florence is quickly befogged by uncertainties enveloping the history of many pieces.

The publication of the Poggio Imperiale collection must address itself to two major problems. The first is the presentation and discussion of the material for its interest for ancient sculpture; the second is the history of ancient sculpture in its relation to Florentine culture and art, and more comprehensively Florentine taste. Our knowledge of ancient sculpture, apart from the old pieces mentioned above, may not be overwhelmingly enriched because of extensive restoration and, in some cases, much weathering. The virtually unknown copy of an Erechtheion kore (no. 50), a head of the Lysippan Eros (no. 1), and an interesting togatus, (no. 14), for whom Saladino considers a 4th century A.C. date, are among the unpublished pieces.

The ancients' loss is the moderns' gain. There is real excitement in some of the hybrid statues in which, by virtue of skillful restoration of assorted ancient parts, a unified artistic concept entirely different from the original has been realized. Restored after 1584, a satyr (no. 6) has become a striking piece of mannerist sculpture. Through a "raffinato restauro forse tardo-cinquecentesco," the "Athens"-type Artemis (no. 53) expresses early Baroque intentions. An exuberant head has turned a Roman Victory into an enchanting Rococo *Satyriske* (no. 58). The Amazon with theatrical gesture and emphatic austerity (no. 57) is surely owed to the "intervento moderno" of Neoclassicism.

Quite as interesting is the group of "would-be antiques," a term that seems to me preferable to the authors "pseudo-antiques"; it underscores the constructive intention that inspired the decorative sculptors, who in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries were commissioned both to restore antiques and to provide counterparts for them. The authors do not shirk the tough question "Is it antique?," but they exercise commendable caution and restraint and do not indulge in attributions. Perhaps half of the collection belongs to this "would-be antique" category. There is a rich array of Roman Imperial portraits, a number of them labeled, a copy of the "dying Alexander" (no. 24), and a lively, probably late Baroque *Sokrates Athenaios*, so inscribed. These pieces, some of considerable merit, are largely products of Florentine or Tuscan workshops. Disappointingly, little archival information concerning their authors has emerged. There are payments to G.B. Foggini for repairing the Asclepius (no. 3) in 1716 and for much restoration work by P. Bellini between 1817 and 1821 but only some general references to