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Review of *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs*, by Ernst Pfuhl and Hans Möbius

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In the 19th century the study of antiquity took the form of monumental publications collecting all known examples of a certain kind: inscriptions, vases, sculpture. In 1860 A. Conze and A. Michaelis conceived a corpus of all Greek gravestones, and Conze himself published four volumes on the Attic grave reliefs between 1893 and 1922, while the Greek stelai from Russia, collected by G. v. Kieseritzky and C. Watzinger, appeared in 1909. In 1904 the task of producing a corpus of East Greek stelai was given to E. Pfuhl, who completed the main text in 1949, just one month before his death. His voluminous manuscript and the copious illustrations were given the final touches by K. Schefold who within the same year sent the material to Berlin for publication. The war intervened and it was only in 1947 that the project was resumed and the task of updating and revising Pfuhl’s work was assigned to H. Möbius. By that time some of the illustrations had been lost and the text itself was considered too comprehensive. The material from Cyprus and Egypt was given to K. Parlasca and his students; Pfuhl’s “Syrian” group was eliminated; other reliefs of dubious funerary nature were relegated to appendices; the Cycladic stelai were left to other scholars and have already appeared in several publications. A different numbering system was established for the catalogue and a great number of monuments was added (some of which have in the meantime appeared in other monographs, e.g., N. Firth, Les stèles funéraires de Byzance gréco-romaine [Paris 1964]). The collection of material was closed in 1974.

Given the staggering magnitude of the work and the difficult conditions of its genesis, the results can only be considered impressive. The book under review is in two volumes, one of text and one of plates; however a second set is forthcoming, containing the catalogue from no. 1128 to (presumably) 2340, at least 22 appendices, indices and a concordance of present numbers with Pfuhl’s original ones, which have been used in their publications by scholars who had access to his manuscript. General comments formulated in the book under review extend also to monuments catalogued in the forthcoming volume, so that reading is made difficult by constant allusions which cannot be checked at present, and by the inability to trace pieces by museum or provenience. In addition, the thoroughness of the coverage cannot now be assessed, since the second installment may include those very items which now seem missing. This review will therefore be limited to an outline of the structure of the corpus and will point out some of the difficulties experienced by this reader.

The corpus includes works from the east coast of the Aegean, the nearby islands (Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Rhodes) and Thrace. Grave monuments from the Anatolian interior, such as the Phrygian door-stelai, the Lydian arch reliefs, the pre-Byzantine stelai from the Tembris valley, the Isaurian facades and the Asia Minor rock reliefs, are included only sparingly, according to the value of the individual piece. Graeco-Persian reliefs are treated more comprehensively but anthemion stelai without figured decoration are omitted. The catalogue includes round altars, "trapeza" and sarcophagi with relief panels. Inscriptions are transcribed without extensive comments.

The work falls into two parts. The first, to which H. Hiller contributed, comprises 101 pre-Classical and Classical monuments, with an introduction and rather extensive catalogue entries, since each stela of that period is an individual work which does not lend itself easily to typological classification. The second part, as far as this volume goes, includes monuments from no. 102 to 1127, dating from the late fourth century B.C. to well into the Roman imperial period. The catalogue proper is now preceded by extensive comments on geographical distribution, periods, representations, meaning (with an Excursus on heroization), technique, tectonics and ornamentation (with an Excursus on funerary altars with relief decoration) typology of individual figures, composition, later history of the gravestones and conclusions. Even within the catalogue each typological grouping is prefaced by general comments, with some repetition. Entries vary, some being extensive, others only approximative. Since most monuments were mass-produced, not all are illustrated, though some are reproduced in sketches and drawings within the text.

Pfuhl’s text has been retained throughout as much as possible, although parts have been eliminated. Some sections were expanded, but additions are kept within square brackets. Since new information at times contradicts Pfuhl’s statements, this system is confusing and more internal coherence would have been desirable. The contribution of several authors has also resulted in different chronological assessments. Thus a single entry may contain Pfuhl’s date, a second suggestion in square brackets and further discussion in a footnote. But chronology is difficult in most cases and the problem is openly stated in the introduction.

This reviewer could find no clear definition of how the catalogue is arranged. Within the basic typological divisions and subdivisions (e.g., standing man/ youth in profile; seated family facing; standing child with animal) the reliefs seem to be listed according to their state of preservation, fragments at the end. The Classical catalogue follows a roughly chronological order, but the Hellenistic-Roman section is neither chronologically nor geographically consistent. Some fragments (e.g., 38, 40, 41) are catalogued according to the extant figure, yet it is obvious that they were once part of more complex scenes; although the origi-
nal composition can no longer be determined, to include such fragments under specific typological headings applying only to the extant figure is statistically misleading. Equally troublesome are complex reliefs in registers or separate panels, which are typologically discussed in different entries, so that a total description and understanding of certain monuments must be pieced together throughout this book and the next. Since catalogue entries for the post-Classical pieces are limited to brief descriptions, it would have been helpful to include references to pages in the main text where the individual monument is mentioned, often with enlightening comments (e.g., no. 155, p. 75). In turn, the introductory sections establish typological divisions which overlap a great deal, so that the same monument can be cited to exemplify different types (e.g., no. 149, under “Rosettenmaiskosten,” p. 52 n. 117, and under “Grabpfleilern,” p. 52 n. 124 [“reich- er”]). A work of this nature is meant primarily for consultation rather than for cover-to-cover reading, but such overlapping and fractioning are confusing.

The plates are mostly of good quality and printed with the usual excellence of the von Zabern Press. In some cases detailed photographs have been added when the total picture deserves closer examination. The size of the illustration is determined by the relative quality, and therefore importance, of the monument, not by its true size, and scale indications are not included although measurements are listed in the catalogue. Each plate contains many photographs identified by catalogue number but not arranged in numerical sequence even when the lay-out of the plate would have permitted it. Thus in reading the introductory sections which only mention catalogue numbers one is forced to search through several plates or to seek information first from the catalogue entry, a procedure which is not made easy by the relative size of the volumes.

It seems ungracious to criticize when one has been offered such an abundance of riches so conveniently gathered together and in such elegant format. Moreover, proper comments can be made only when the total work has appeared, a true monument to the scholars who have devoted so many years of their lives to its compilation.

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It has been more than twenty years since a book-length study of Skopas last appeared, and in the interval surprisingly little discussion of Skopas’s work and style has been published. Stewart’s book meets a vital need, and the briefly apologetic tone of his preface is unnecessary. After introductory remarks on methodology, the book is divided into two main parts and a third entitled “documentation” (testimonia, notes, illustrations, etc.).

Part I deals with the remains of the Temple of Athena Alea at Tegea; named by Pausanias as the architect, Skopas beyond much doubt designed the architectural sculpture also. Stewart begins by describing and analyzing the sculptural fragments in unprecedented detail. In his “select catalogue” and chapter 1 (“technique”), lapses in workmanship are acknowledged, but the spirited defense of the sculpture’s overall quality is rather convincing. Chapters 2 (“composition”) and 3 (“iconography and interpretation”) attempt, with some good arguments—and again with close observation of the fragments—a reconstruction of the sculptural decoration; notable here are the welcome attention to the metopes and the discussion of local mythology and cults. Some uneasiness with fragments 1 and 3 does not shake Stewart’s conviction that they are acroteria, but other possibilities may remain open. In chapters 4 (“style”) and 5 (“Skopas in Tegea”) the artistic personality of Skopas begins to emerge. For Stewart, work on the Tegea sculptures came in Skopas’s mid-career, the 340s; the temple was begun ca. 370 (in my opinion Stewart dates the architecture unduly early).

Chapter 6 (“antecedents”), the first of part II, is an interesting essay on the “rich style” with ( overdue) emphasis on the Argive Heraeum sculptures. The baffling Rospigliosi-type Athena is mentioned as a possible influence on Skopas’s style and, in the following chapter (“early works”), usefully compared with the Hope Herakles, which is gaining proper recognition as a true replica of Skopas’s statue for Sikyon. Skopas’s Apollo “Palatinus” provides obvious points for comparison, but, although Stewart includes the Apollo among “early works,” his discussion is disappointingly brief. Much about Skopas’s career, especially the apparent tension between traditionalism and bold innovation in his style, might be learned by determining the Palatine Apollo’s position in the development of peplos-statues of Apollo from the late fifth century to the Hellenistic period. To the bibliography here, I would add Boucher-Colozier, Libyea 3 (1955) 77-85, and Hermann, AA 1973, 658-63. Another work neglected here, as usual, is the Aphrodite Pandemos for Elis; chapter 7 is dominated rather by the Maenad statue. While I agree that the original of the brilliant Dresden statuette is pre-Hellenistic and, indeed, Skopadic, I would hesitate to date it as early as the 360s and would assign it to the intermediate period covered in chapter 8 (“Skopas in Asia”).

Affirming, with some sensible remarks, the probability that Skopas worked on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, Stewart offers stimulating although inconclusive suggestions about Skopas’s contributions to the Amazon frieze of that monument. Next comes