

Peter Cornelius Bol (ed.), **Die Geschichte der antiken Bildhauerkunst, Band III. Hellenistische Plastik.** In cooperation with Martin Flashar, Wilfred Geominy, Ralf von den Hoff, Ursula Mandel, Hans-Hoyer von Prittwitz und Gaffron, Ellen Schraudolph, and Christiane Vorster. With a contribution by Rudolf Känel. Publisher Philipp von Zabern, Mayence 2007. Text volume 452 pages with 138 illustrations, plates volume 440 pages with 932 illustrations.

The subject of the double volume to be reviewed here is Hellenistic plastic art. It is the third publication in an elaborate series that was initiated by Peter Cornelius Bol and co-financed by the Förderstiftung Liebieghaus and the City of Frankfurt on the Main. The topic of the first two volumes, published in 2002 and 2004, is early Greek sculpture and the works of the Classical period, respectively. In the first volume of the series (there p. VII), it was already stated that the publication was addressed to interested laypersons and lovers of the arts who wanted to deepen their knowledge of ancient sculptural art. According to the publisher, the intention of the series and, explicitly, that of the volume presented here is »to describe formal features with the intention to educate the sense of viewing and examining them, as well as to explore their change and evolution during the succeeding generations« (vol. III, p. IX).

With regard to the Hellenistic period, this is no easy endeavour and Bol is fully aware of the difficulties involved: problems arise from the lack of a generally accepted absolute chronology, which is due to the small number of firmly dated monuments; the chronological and regional limits of a still only rudimentary relative chronology; the geographic expansion of Greek culture and the entailing confrontation with new cultural and visual impressions as well as the stylistic pluralism that can be observed in Hellenistic times.

The aim of the series as explained by Bol reveals by its confinement to formal-aesthetic and stylistic-historical aspects an attitude characteristic of sculptural research

in the first half of the twentieth century. This was already noted by the reviewers of the first double volume (W. Martini, *Bonner Jahrb.* 201, 2001, 549; K. Junker, *Am. Journal Arch.* 108, 2004, 469; A. Stewart, *Gnomon* 76, 2004, 723 f.). Concerning Hellenistic times, Christian Kunze's dissertation (*Zum Greifen nah. Stilphänomene in der hellenistischen Skulptur und ihre inhaltliche Interpretation* [Munich 2002]) has given new impulses to stylistic research in the last few years (see the review by V. M. Strocka, *Bonner Jahrb.* 205, 2005, 373–379). Kunze's intention was, however, to show »that the formal changes considered do not only correspond to the non-binding taste of the time or follow formal-aesthetic ideas«, but »also make apparent those contents which allow phenomena of plastic arts to be related to those of other cultural domains« (Kunze op. cit. 11). This, however, is decidedly not the concern of the work published by Bol (see p. IX).

As in the case of the first and second double volume, a number of archaeologists could be won to participate. Some of them (Flashar, Geominy, Mandel, and Vorster) were already authors in the two preceding parts. As in the earlier volumes, the periods under discussion are here, too, divided into smaller chronological units, so that the following sequence of chapters evolves: *Die Plastik der Diadochenzeit* (Ralf von den Hoff); *Der Einfluss griechischer Skulptur im frühhellenistischen Italien* (Rudolph Känel); *Die allmähliche Verfertigung hellenistischer Stilformen (280–240 v. Chr.)* (Wilfried Geominy); *Räumlichkeit und Bewegungserleben. Körperschicksale im Hochhellenismus (240–190 v. Chr.)* (Ursula Mandel); *Beispiele hellenistischer Plastik der Zeit zwischen 190 und 160 v. Chr.* (Ellen Schraudolph); *Die hellenistische Plastik von 160 bis 120 v. Chr.* (Hans-Hoyer von Prittwitz und Gaffron); *Die Plastik des späten Hellenismus. Porträts und rundplastische Gruppen* (Christiane Vorster); *Formenspektrum, Themenvielfalt, Funktionszusammenhänge. Beispiele späthellenistischer Skulptur* (Martin Flashar).

The time spans covered in the chapters are of different length and fluctuate between thirty and ninety years. This means that the system based on a division by generation as announced by Bol in the introduction is not strictly applied. The duration of the individual generations is calculated in some cases with thirty years (Schraudolph), in others with forty (von den Hoff and Geominy), or even fifty years (Mandel). Sometimes historical aspects are taken into account, for instance in the contribution by von den Hoff »Die Plastik der Diadochenzeit«. The author furthermore places the stylistic tendencies observed by him into a larger framework by pointing out historical and social changes, and he shows, among other things, the innovative role played by the rulers and the urban elite in the formation of style. In other cases, the historical situation is described in a brief introduction as, for example, in the paper by Schraudolph (p. 189 f.). But there are also authors who refrain from elucidating the historical framework and the criteria on which the duration of the period under

discussion was based (Geominy, von Prittwitz und Gaffron, Mandel).

It is generally not unproblematic to choose a framework supported by the length of a generation, as was already noted in regard to the first volume (see Martini op. cit. 549 and, in particular, K. Fittschen, *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* 255, 2003, 5 f.). This holds true especially if one takes into account Kunze's realistic estimation of dating possibilities in Hellenistic sculpture. He emphasizes that one should consider it a success establishing »in view of the state of research, a ratiocinate limitation to a period of fifty years« (p. 23).

The system selected does not allow the authors to follow certain sculptural categories, such as portraits of rulers, portraits of philosophers and orators, cult images etc., and their changes over a longer period. Only for the Late Hellenistic period a different approach was taken, because »the repertory of images and formal means of composition of different epochs deliberately chosen by artists as well as sponsors causes in the art of sculpture a bewildering multitude of depiction, thus impending or even questioning the applicability of the methods of style analysis based on the scheme of development.« The combined treatment of certain groups of monuments for the period of 120 to 30 B. C. – the portraits and the mythological groups by Vorster (p. 273–331), and the classicizing trends by Flashar – has a very positive effect on the presentation, especially since Vorster also explains the larger cultural connections which, due to the declared goal of the publication, are not always mentioned.

Since this is the third volume of a series, the authors were obliged to follow the guidelines of the preceding ones. This means that here, too, footnotes are lacking, and for additional information on specific problems the literature references of the illustrations must be consulted (this was already criticized by Martini op. cit. 549, Fittschen op. cit. 2 and Stewart op. cit. 723), which are not always equally detailed. The brief commentaries on the listed literature supplied by some authors are in this case very helpful.

As to be expected, the contributions of after all seven authors in this presentation of the sculptural arts in the Hellenistic period did not always arrive at a uniform result. Form-analytical descriptions and comparisons with other sculptures, for example, are given differing amounts of space by the various authors. Whereas Schraudolph, for example, keeps it deliberately brief (p. 190), elsewhere form analysis plays a main role, often in a complicated language permeated with new word creations (see the contribution by Mandel on the sculptural art of the second half of the third century).

Another consequence of the large number of authors is that the sculptures under discussion are not always assessed and dated in the same way. The publisher is aware of this problem and, justifiably, does not see it as his goal »to standardize opinions and to achieve a completely homogeneous presentation« (p. X). Hopefully the non-specialist, to whom this publication is mainly addressed,

does not become confused by the different opinions expressed by the professionals, which are reflecting an ongoing discussion in archaeological literature. Only two examples shall be singled out here:

Schraudolph, for example, in the discussion of the group of the Hanging Marsyas (p. 235 f., esp. p. 236) combines the statue of the Skythian – known only by one Roman copy – with the type of the so-called Red Marsyas and compares both with figures of the Gigantomachy frieze of the Pergamon altar. She considers the type of the so-called White Marsyas a »neo-classically calmed version of the Red one«. Mandel, on the other hand, sees the »White« Marsyas as the older creation, which is to be associated with the statue of the Skythian (p. 149 f.).

A similar case is the well-known statue of Athena Parthenos from the so-called library on the acropolis of Pergamon. Whereas von Prittwitz und Gaffron (p. 253) follows the prevailing opinion of the archaeological literature that the statue is to be reconstructed with only a spear in her left hand, Schraudolph adopts Martha Weber's hypothesis (Jahrb. DAI 108, 1993, 103–107) that, regarding the attributes, the statue largely follows the original and, therefore, should be seen with shield, serpent and spear, as well as with Nike in the open right hand. Furthermore, the preserved block of the base is to be reconstructed with additional ashlar on the left and the right (p. 218 f.).

In comparison with these differing opinions, the contrasting assessments by Geominy (p. 79 f.) and von den Hoff of sculptural works of the time around the turn to the third century are more serious, because here a fundamentally different evaluation of stylistic phenomena and development is apparent. Geominy, who vehemently supports the ideal sequence of stylistic development, i. e., a linear development scheme, as the only acceptable principle (p. 75; on that, cf. Kunze op. cit. esp. 20–23), presumes that even after the grave luxury prohibition by Demetrios of Phaleron grave reliefs were still created for non-citizens in Athens. He even claims that the production of grave reliefs continued into the third century, which means that he at the same time eliminates one of the few already fixed points for dating the sculpture of that time. On the other hand, von den Hoff (p. 9 f. and 12) justifiably questions the linear development of sculpture so far into the third century postulated by Geominy and interprets the stylistic differences observable in the monuments in the sense of a stylistic pluralism.

The large text volume, which well fulfils the publisher's declared aim of presenting the accomplishments of stylistic research in Hellenistic sculpture to the interested reader, is accompanied by a separate, rich volume of plates. Although the illustrations assembled here are not all of the same high quality (see, for example, figs. 6–8, and 11) and occasionally somewhat small (see, for example, figs. 10, and 15), it is much to be praised that the sculptures under discussion are usually shown from different view points. Together with the text volume,

the reader is thus offered an extensive, representative compilation of Hellenistic sculpture. (I thank Ingrid Keller for the English translation.)

Saloniki

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