

Stephanie Dimas, Carola Reinsberg and Henner von Hesberg, **Die Antikensammlungen von Hever Castle, Cliveden, Bignor Park und Knole**. Monumenta Artis Romanae, volume 38. Publisher Dr. Ludwig Reichert, Wiesbaden 2013. 239 pages, 7 figures in the text, 114 plates in black and white, 2 plates in colour.

This volume, the last in the series of nine publications of ancient sculpture in English country houses published in the Monumenta Artis Romanae, closes a research enterprise conducted by the Forschungsarchiv für Antike Plastik (Cologne University) for about half a century. It represents a worthy ending but also a direct link back to the early days of the project. In fact, the photography was done and the basic data on the sculpture already collected in the seventies by the original team, Hansgeorg Oehler, Irmgard Hiller and Raoul Laev. The photographic documentation, with its high quality and many views of each object, is the result of a discussion conducted in the seventies on new standards for the presentation of ancient sculpture in scientific publications. This was when Klaus Fittschen and Ernst Langlotz produced recommendations on how to photograph, here in particular Roman portraits and Greek sculpture (Arch. Anz. 1974, 484–494; Jahrb. DAI 94, 1979, 1–17), and Raoul Laev was given the opportunity to demonstrate his skills as a sculpture photographer to the scientific community in an exhibition created for the Eleventh Congress of Archaeology (London 1978). Some of the photographs included in the present publication were already presented in the catalogue accompanying the exhibition when moved to Cologne, »Foto + Skulptur. Römische Antiken in englischen Schlössern« (1980).

In the present volume, the texts are as important as the plates. They belong to recent scholarship with high standards set by the three co-authors and by the two contributors who translated and commented the Latin and Greek epigraphy, Werner Eck and Georg Petzl. Among the authors, Stephanie Dimas made a large part of the work. She produced the passages on the history of the collection as well as of the texts relating to the sculpture in the round and relief-decorated objects of various kinds belonging to the collection at Hever Castle and the whole collection at Knole. In his catalogue texts, Henner von Hesberg offers his expertise concerning the architectural ornament and the columns and capitals at Hever Castle and of the complete collection at Bignor Park. Carola Reinsberg treats the collection at Cliveden, exclusively consisting of Roman relief-decorated sarcophagi. The different authorships are well matched and share a high level of ambition. The result is a work of far more than the basic presentation of the objects. It is well worth the attention of both specialists and students of ancient sculpture.

As the main aim of the volume is to present and discuss the objects, the introductory texts presenting the history of the collection are brief but all the same

full of valuable information about the collectors, the intended places of display of the sculptures within their estates, and the art agents involved in the purchases. The collections treated here represent individual preferences and tastes from different periods. Although belonging to similar contexts – stately country houses –, they mirror very different aspirations and interests, which it is worth underlining, and do not only reflect personal penchants on behalf of the collectors, but may also be understood as representing different or changing paradigms of collecting.

The collection at Knole is the earliest, a typical Grand Tour collection acquired on the Roman art market in the latter part of the eighteenth century (1770–1771). Its main focus is on ancient portraits of famous Greeks and Romans for the interior, and some bronze casts of famous sculptures (such as the Borghese Gladiator and the Crouching Aphrodite), representing the genre of full-scale ideal sculpture, chosen for garden display.

The collection at Bignor Park was created in the early nineteenth century (1806) and is divergent in character from those of most other country houses. It was acquired during visits on the Aegean islands, and is almost exclusively composed of Late Classical and Hellenistic architectural parts and funerary stelai. The non-restored state of the objects as well as the biographical data of the collector clearly demonstrate an archaeological interest coupled with a new kind of scientific interest in the fragment.

The largest part of the volume presents the important collections of Sir William Waldorf Astor, first active at Cliveden (in the eighteen-nineties), and somewhat later and at a much larger scale, at Hever Castle (1903–1906), his new and final family residence. It shows a paradigm of collecting quite different from that expressed at Knole. It is notable how Viscount Astor's collection, although obviously aspiring to present an overview of most of the ancient sculpture genres, »universeller Anspruch«, counts but few ancient portraits. The thematic interest is directed towards classic myths, and the garden has become the main place of display. Ancient architectural elements are used to create the atmosphere of a Roman »ruin landscape« (the so-called Pompeian Wall, albeit free of true Pompeian influence). Various pieces of Roman marble garden furniture fit in the context as does the large number of relief-decorated pieces, funerary urns and altars, a fragment of a triumphal relief, and a large number of sarcophagi. The collector's predilection for the latter genre is evident and all the more underlined by the fact that it had exclusiveness in his earlier period of collecting, at Cliveden.

When the photographic campaigns took place in the seventies, the collections were still largely intact. Thanks to the documentation they may still be experienced in this way although an important number of pieces have been sold off since. The only important sale concluded before the start of the project was that

of the Knole Demosthenes, acquired by the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek already in 1929. Although not covered by the documentation campaigns of the Forschungssarchiv, its inclusion in the catalogue was mandatory. The fame of this portrait sculpture goes back to the eighteenth century. At Knole it was the most valued item of the collection and as such held the place of pride at one end of the Great Hall of the manor. This sculpture is amply discussed in the catalogue text but presented by one view only among its plates – the sole piece treated that way in this volume.

The catalogue texts present the pieces by genres, starting with the full-scale sculptures in the round and finishing with the sarcophagi. The texts are thorough regarding archival information and impressively generous in discursive contents. In addition to descriptions and presentations of typological and stylistic parallels, they comprise summaries of the scientific discussion involving the objects, their interpretation, and their contexts. Many pieces have been discussed already, whereas others, such as the formerly unpublished architectural parts, are put to scientific scrutiny in this catalogue for the first time. The texts concerning the latter provide valuable insight into specialized research fields and stylistic discussions pertaining to less widely known categories of objects. Through the review of the antiquities at Hever Castle, the attentive reader may, for instance, learn to detail Roman Corinthian capitals (He 94–104) and follow their development over time. This broad approach to the objects gives the volume a pedagogic value in addition to its primary aim of producing a scientific publication of each piece per se. To demonstrate the structure and contents of these texts, one of them, picked at random, will be presented below in more detail.

After giving the main archival information about the symplegma, with a satyr and maenad or nymph (He 12) – its size, material, place of origin and keeping in former collections, missing and restored parts, bibliography and description, the text turns to a methodologically arguing, contextualizing discussion. Observations made in earlier specialized scholarship, in this case mainly produced by Adrian Stähli (*Die Verweigerung der Lüste. Erotische Gruppen in der antiken Plastik*, 1999) is summarized: Comparison with another two well-preserved replicas of the same type furnishes arguments to suggest a more likely appearance and position of some of the modern restorations added to the group formerly at Hever Castle. The close formal relationship between the replicas speaks in favour of the existence of a common model (or »original«, to use the common terminology). Then a discussion follows on how this model fits the patterns of stylistic development suggested as underlying Hellenistic art. The reader is introduced to various arguments used to tackle the problems of periodization and of finding valid formal criteria for pinpointing stylistic change (full references in notes, pp. 54 f.). The relationship between composition and space is dis-

cussed as well as parallels in the rendering of detail that may link the large number of non-dated sculpture to the few samples (mainly Pergamene monuments), concerning which there is a rather undisputed consensus on dating. Taste for contrast is a criterion recently put forth that applies particularly well to two-figure groups such as the one studied here. The firm, muscular body of the satyr is contrasted with the soft modeling that characterises the nymph. The text finishes with a review of the kinds of rendering that may be used to support a dating within the Roman period. Focus is put on points where differences may be spotted between replicas and on such features that can find parallels in the more firmly dated portrait genre, which means the close study of hair and drapery styles, of how divergently moulded plastic surfaces are linked, and of the shape of the plinth and its mouldings. Finally, the discussion is turned towards the likely original setting and through this to interpretation. Sculptures such as this one may be linked to the gardens of wealthy Roman villas, and are understood as expressing a desire for distraction by alluding to an imaginary, parallel life in lead in the ideal atmosphere created by myth – perhaps not so far from the much later display at Hever Castle, albeit without its accompanying romantic »ruin landscape«.

The text closes with a list of concordances. In parallel with the catalogue numbers attributed to the pieces in the present volume, it contains earlier inventory numbers (extant only for Hever Castle) referring to individual pieces in the record of ancient sculpture in English possession made by Adolf Michaelis (*Ancient Marbles in Great Britain* [Cambridge 1882]), and also links to entries in the *Arachne*, the object database of the German Archaeological Institutes and the Archaeological Institute of the University of Cologne. The links are a novelty. Their appearance in the list invites one to reflect on the future of sculpture publication such as those published in the *Monumenta Artis Romanae* series. It may well be that volumes such as the present one will not be produced in the future, being replaced by new digital media. Print is expensive and printed volumes can never have the same all-inclusiveness as the database (permitting many more photographs for each piece), nor all its potential search functions; however, the potentials of the two media are not the same. The image database does not (or barely) permit the same kind of immediate communication from author to reader that the reflective layout of a printed series of plates may invite to.

Leafing quickly through a printed volume may reward the reader with chance discoveries. Take, for instance, the juxtaposition on neighbouring plate pages of two lion-strigil sarcophagi in the present volume (pls. 82–83, Cl. 1–2). The similarity of the two pieces presented on the plates leaps to the eye. Thus, it comes as no surprise to learn from the text that the two are made from the same kind of marble, that they are considered to have been issued from the same

workshop and to have been produced very close in time (within the same decade). Still there are stylistic differences which are possible to detect thanks to their presentation side by side, which can be further detailed and assessed thanks to the guidance of the accompanying text. It is highly unlikely that an image database could as easily offer the same possibility to train the eye in stylistic reading, or that it will ever be a medium suitable to provide guiding texts such as those offered to the reader by this volume.

On the other hand, the database remains open. If optimally handled, its technique offers constant possibilities for updating and making additions. Already on the day of its issuance, the printed volume suffers from aging due to the length of time of the editing and printing processes. Another delay is imposed by academic reality. Today there is little space for specialists to offer their expertise in tasks such as these in one concentrated effort. The work tends to dilute through the years. In our case, although the volume was printed in 2013, the texts were finished in 2002. The text on the Knole Demosthenes could have benefited from an update. The photograph shows the orator with his hands folded, in keeping with a plaster cast restoration made at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in 1954, which in turn was influenced by a text passage by Plutarch and the find of a pair of folded hands in an excavation at Rome in 1903. Today this restoration is gone. Instead, the sculpture is re-restored as it was known at Knole, grasping a book-roll, an addition that was probably made for the sculpture upon its discovery in the early eighteenth century. Attitudes towards restoration and de-restoration or, as in this case, re-restoration raise questions of identity and authenticity. Which past should take priority? Should the sculpture save the restorations with which it has been known during a long collection history, or should it be corrected, in better conformity with ancient evidence, although as, in this case, no conclusive formal evidence support the new restoration. In fact, the folded hands restored to the Demosthenes in 1954 were moulded from the hands of a curator at the Glyptotek, not from the ancient fragment that did not fit in size (M. Moltesen in: J. B. Grossman / J. Podany / M. True, *History of Restoration of Ancient Stone Sculptures*. Symposium J. Paul Getty Museum, 25–27 October 2001 [Los Angeles 2003] 207–225, esp. 209 f.). Obviously there are more questions to be asked, more stories to be discovered and most importantly, new webs to be woven to interconnect the many catalogues and publications produced.

In the study of ancient sculpture in historical collections, much territory has been gained since the first volume on the riches of English country houses appeared in the *Monumenta*-series in 1986 (G. B. Waywell, *Lever and Hope Sculptures*. *Monumenta Artis Romanae* 16 [Berlin 1986]). The value of publishing historical collections of ancient sculpture is uncontested today, notwithstanding if (and sometimes also

because) the pieces have been altered by modern restorers. Their importance resides both in the contribution that they present to the basic, comprehensive study of ancient sculpture and in the testimony they give on changing attitudes towards the past. The literature in this research field is steadily increasing and is now in need of a better overview. There is no doubt that the field would largely benefit from a structured database with search engines adapted to its own research questions and needs. A good place for such a site would, of course, be the digital archive of the Archne. The present volume gives witness to the progress made in knowledge and in transparency of scientific methodology. It sets a high standard of ambition for the future. The authors should be congratulated for having brought this long-term effort to fruition.

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