



FIGURE 1. Close-up of Laocoön's abdomen from *The Laocoön Group*. Image provided by, and reproduced with permission of, the Vatican Museums, Ufficio Immagini e Diritti, with special thanks to Rosanna Di Pinto and Filippo Petrigiani.

Still Life

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In memory of Roberto Calasso (1941–2021)

And so it was in the Heraion that the story of Zeus's first betrayal, the origin of all vengeance, began. To betray Hera, Zeus chose one of her priestesses, the human being who was closest to her, the one who kept the keys to the sanctuary: Io. In her looks and in her dress, Io's duty was to re-create the image of the very goddess she served. She was a copy endeavoring to imitate a statue. But Zeus chose the copy, desiring that minimal difference which suffices to overturn order and generate the new, to generate meaning. And he desired her *because* she was a difference, *because* she was a copy. The more negligible the difference, the more terrible and violent the revenge.

—Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*

Flesh and Stone

We may be moved as well as troubled by the blurring of the line that allegedly separates sculptural bodies from living bodies, animate corpora from inanimate stones. There is far more to this blurring than the alleged naturalistic realism of classical sculpture in Greece and Rome.

There is far more to the sculptural body than the canons of Greek imitation allow. Calasso captures the mythic qualities of this blurring with rare elegance and insight. In his telling, a goddess inspires a statue, and her priestess endeavors to imitate the divine im-

age in stone. The priestess is thus a copy of a statue that is, in turn, an imitation of the divine. At precisely this point, we meet the mythic turnabout that “suffices to overturn order”—literally “to disarticulate the order” (*disarticolare l’ordine*), in Calasso’s fine phrasing.¹ The god prefers that modicum of difference that distinguishes the mortal copy from the immortal she imitates.

Desire is born *because* of such a difference, because of such illicit imitation. This complex interplay between copies and imitations, statues and bodies, gods and human beings and their amours, will prove to have inspired some complicated desires indeed.

A tradition of strikingly equivocal aesthetics was generated by this ancient insight. This aesthetics was grounded in desire, to be sure, but it was a desire uncertain of its referent, and uncertain—on reflection—of what it really wants. Here we encounter one of the most fertile points of intersection in ancient Greek philosophy and writing about art. Plato expressed strong doubts (most famously in the *Phaedrus*) about writing’s ability to render the *movement* of thought in a manner true to lived philosophical experience. And yet many subsequent philosophers operating in a Platonic idiom will demonstrate a nearly obsessive interest in writing about statues that do not move as if they were animate, alive. For such philosophers, the soul was what animated the body, thereby making it move. A statue, by definition, was soulless. Yet the Greek philosophers will regularly discuss their statues in apparent violation of that philosophical truth. In moving the

THE BODY IN PAIN IS HERE DEPICTED AS A SOURCE OF MORAL INSIGHT AND AESTHETIC PLEASURE

viewer, these statues appear to usher in movement. Zeroing in on the complex of bodily and sculptural forms that incited divine desire and, according to Calasso, culminated in divine vendetta, ancient theology and art criticism alike were destined to be uncertain enterprises. Nonetheless, Aristotle plunged ahead, despite his mentor’s reticence, and thereby produced one of the defining texts in the early Greek canon of aesthetics and art history.

In the *Poetics*, Aristotle was so bold as to propose writing about the most movable art form then available: that is, stage drama, which was effectively the cinema of its day. Aristotle himself underlined the oddity of the situation. Drama, he observed, is etymologically related to the verb for “doing” (*draô*). Drama, unlike epic poetry, *shows* things rather than *tells* them. That is why Aristotle believed drama to be such a rich site for ethical reflection: if myth is the soul that moves the body of the action on stage, then drama is quite literally where the action is. Thus, as Hegel would later argue, a culture’s entire “ethical substance” may come into view on stage. Far more than a theater of ideas, the dramatic arts were where the audience met embodied ethical action (*praxis*).

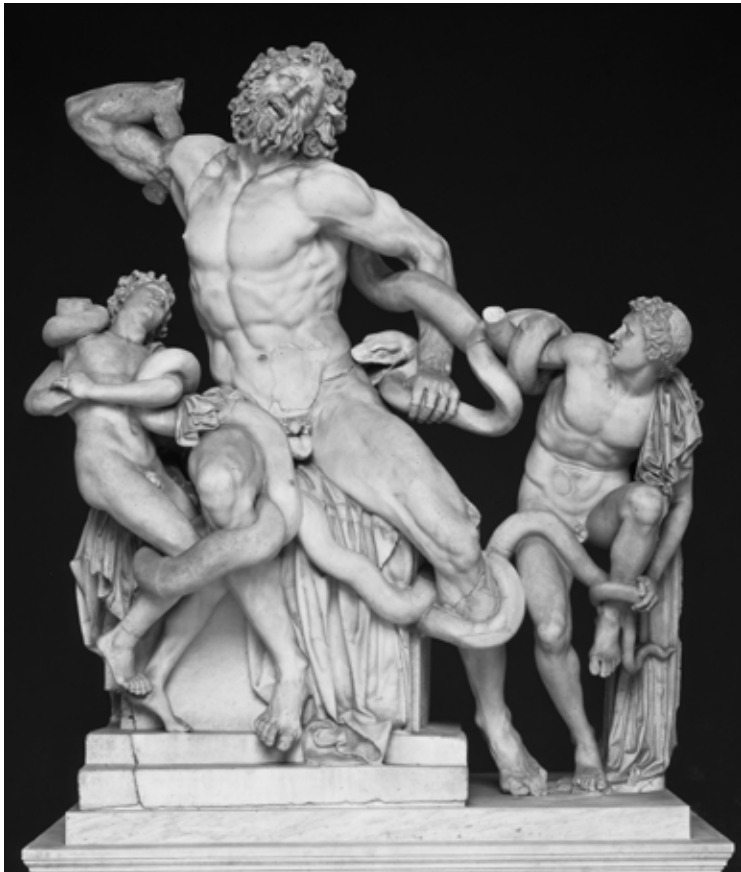


FIGURE 2. *The Laocoön Group*. Image provided by, and reproduced with permission of, the Vatican Museums, Ufficio Immagini e Diritti, with special thanks to Rosanna Di Pinto and Filippo Petrigiani.

Now we come to the crux of the aesthetic problem. While stage drama is indeed a dynamic art form, sculpture is not. Sculpture stops the flow, rendering (at best) bodily motion in the form of a body at rest.² If aesthetics should be ambivalent about any kind of writing, then, it would presumably be writing about statues. Yet, as I have already noted, the ancient philosophers did a great deal of just that.³ Among the most encyclopedic of them was the Roman, Gaius Plinius Secundus (or Pliny the Elder, 23–79 CE), a man so curious about the nature of things that he took a ship to witness the eruption of Mount Vesuvius—and lost his life there as a result. His vast encyclopedia, the *Natural History*, of which thirty-seven books survive, dedicated significant attention to sculpture in the penultimate book. But Pliny’s reasons for doing so will seem strange to most modern readers. Book 36 announces itself as a study of stones; and for Pliny, statues are one of the forms that stone⁴ may take. His interest in statues concerns the grain of the marble, the color and chiasm of the stone, the texture of the chiseling—in short, the overwhelming *materiality* of what had been rendered, mainly by predecessor Greek artists.⁵ Here, for example, is what Pliny says about the renowned Laocoön Group (fig. 2): “[I]n the palace of General Titus, a work superior to any painting and any bronze. Laocoön, his children and the wonderful clasping coils of the snakes were carved from a single block in accordance with an agreed plan by those eminent craftsmen Hagesander, Polydorus and Athenodorus, all of Rhodes.”⁶

What Pliny tells us here is as significant as what he does not. He tells us where the statue is housed (*in Titi imperatoris domo*). He tells us that it is the finest figural image in comparison to any other painting or bronze statue (*opus omnibus et picturae et statuarum artis praeferendum*), though modern readers of Pliny have been mystified by the number of times he says the same thing about other statues. His art history hinges on superlatives. Pliny also tells us that the piece was carved from a single block (*ex uno lapide*) of marble.⁸ And then he names the three artists who carved it together.

What Pliny does not tell us is what accounts for this sculptural group's raw emotional power. We know Laocoön's story mainly from Virgil (*Aeneid* 2:56–324), who reports that he was the doomed Trojan priest who alone understood the danger presented by the monumental horse that the Greeks had left behind when they abandoned their beachhead in the Dardanelles. He urged the Trojans not to bring the horse into the city. The god Neptune (Poseidon), now intent on Troy's destruction, issued a marine serpent out of the waves in order to strangle the priest together with his sons. The Trojan witnesses to this horror misinterpreted it to imply that Laocoön had been punished for impiety rather than for his prescience.⁹ The sculptural group depicts the father and his two sons very near the end of their tragic struggle; the thickly muscled figure of Laocoön, beautiful even in his dying, dominates the center of the composition.

Viewed as a piece of classical art, the Laocoön

Group may be read, as Pliny does, as a high-water mark in the history of the Greeks' naturalist idealism—there is no other painting or sculpture quite like it. It manages its effects by inviting us to see the sculptural body as a real body, and Laocoön's pain as real pain. In this, its effects may seem very similar to those enacted on the Greek tragic stage. The body in pain is here depicted as a source of moral insight and aesthetic pleasure.¹⁰ The strangeness of that intersection of emotional registers impressed Aristotle a great deal.

In what follows, I would like to examine three moments in the long history of this complex aesthetic blurring of the distinction between the sculptural body frozen in stone and the animate body of flesh and bone. An initial prompt to my current interest here is curatorial: in the early modern period, we witness a curious turnabout through which sculptures were placed on public display as if they were living bodies, and human bodies were placed on public display as if they were statues. By electing to proceed through three "moments" here, I am attempting to mirror the dramatic preference for showing over telling, though I am aware that there are more words than images in this essay. In so doing, I also hope to trace a movement—several movements, in fact. One will involve tracing the subtle interplay between Greek and Roman conceptions of mortality, divinity, theology, and desire. Calasso already gestured in this direction. A more challenging and complex movement will trace the intersections between classical

aesthetics, ethics, and politics, one animated by this very slippage between sculptural and animate bodies. This movement will unfold as the essay proceeds through its three moments.

Moment One

Pliny was one of those unusual intellects who made connections few others saw; he viewed the natural world from an oblique angle. When Pliny looked at a statue, for instance, he saw a rock quarry. Here is the somewhat unexpected, but altogether rousing, beginning to book 36 of his *Natural History*:

It remains for us to deal with the nature of stones [*lapidum natura restat*], or, in other words, the prime folly in our behavior [*praecipua morum insania*]. . . . For everything that we have investigated up to the present volume may be deemed to have been created for the benefit of mankind. Mountains, however, were made by Nature for herself [*montes natura sibi fecerat*] to serve as a kind of framework for holding firmly together the inner parts of the earth, and at the same time to enable her to subdue the violence of rivers, to break the force of heavy seas and so to curb her most restless elements with the hardest material [*durissima sui materia*] of which she is made. We quarry these mountains and haul them away for a mere whim; and yet there was a time when it seemed remarkable even to have succeeded in crossing them.¹¹

Pliny observes that, not so long ago, Hannibal's crossing of the Alps in order to invade the Italian heartland had seemed almost a miracle, but that the Romans

of his own day quarried these same mountains for a thousand types of marble (*mille genera marmorum*), and without giving the matter a second thought.

Hannibal's unnatural feat enabled him to violate what Pliny regarded as a natural border and nearly brought down the Roman Republic. The contrast with Pliny's own age is startling:

Headlands are laid open to the sea, and nature is flattened. We remove the barriers created to serve as the boundaries between peoples [*evehimus ea quae separandis gentibus pro terminis constituta erant*], and ships are built especially for marble. And so, over the waves of the sea, Nature's wildest element [*saevissimam rerum naturae partem*], mountain ranges are transported to and fro. . . . When we hear of the prices paid for these vessels, when we see the masses of marble that are being hauled about, we should each of us reflect, and at the same time think how much more blessed [*beatior*] people lived without them. . . . When we think of these things, we feel ourselves blushing prodigiously with shame before our predecessors [*antiquitatis*].¹²

Pliny appears to be linking a natural argument to a moral argument, as the Roman Stoics were wont to do. He believed that mountains and other such natural boundaries were nature's way of keeping peoples apart from one another. Mountains served virtually the same principle in this account as the Tower of Babel did in the Hebrew Bible: they accounted for, and helped to maintain, distinctions within the flux of human diversity. Roman engineers were violating all such natural borders—slicing through mountain

ranges, slicing through open seas, all to glut a ravenous and inexhaustible appetite for marble.

The same might be said for the Roman empire and its legions. This is the moral argument that Pliny draws from his natural approach to stone. The empire's legions sliced through mountains and seas just as surely as the engineers had done; the empire also violated all of the borders traditionally separating various peoples from one another. Pliny seems aware of Augustus's famous quip, reported in the next generation by Suetonius (ca. 69–122 CE), that he had "found [Rome] built of brick, and left it in marble" [*ut iure sit gloriatus marmoream se relinquere, quam latericiam accepisset*].¹³ Pliny sees nothing in this fact worth bragging over.

The moral position Pliny is developing is subtle and is couched in somewhat murky prose. It would be easy to conclude, and many of Pliny's more memorable observations confirm, that he was a Stoic believer in decadence, the idea that nature's laws see to it that animating powers fade with time. Human bodies are born of clay and die as stone. Moral and political decadence follow this same pattern. In making these connections, Pliny was making the same kind of argument that cost Cicero his life. The end of the Roman Republic was the end of liberty and the beginning of citizen enslavement. The Caesars were autocrats wielding power beyond the natural boundaries of restraint by the rocky forces of sentiment and Senate alike. But by then, the imperium was a fait accompli, so Pliny makes the argument quietly. He condemns luxury and appetite, rather than the acquisitive

THE BODY THAT DOES NOT CHANGE WOULD NEED TO BE MADE OF STONE

people whose luxurious appetites they were. And he does so in the sacred name of the ancestors, as well as the virtues of a Republic that had not yet become imperious.

Given Pliny's dates (23–79 CE), it may be tempting to consider the topic of early Christian iconoclasm here, since the early Jesus movement was much inspired by Stoic imagery and vocabulary and its general distaste for degenerate luxury. One luxury item especially concerned early Jesus followers: *sculpture*. The eastern Mediterranean's early scriptural monotheists engaged in a veritable war on images that was waged with particular venom against sculpture in the round. Sculptures were to be treated as if they were real bodies, pagan bodies that needed to be killed if their demonic power were to be neutralized. So they were decapitated, mutilated, buried, drowned. I will return to that matter again.

But Pliny's dates remind us especially of how he died. In essence, he was murdered by a mountain, suffocated by the ash and toxic fumes issuing forth from the vast eruption on Mount Vesuvius. Pliny had been observing the eruption as a natural phenomenon that combined his interests in minerology, fire, and natural force. Volcanoes offer an opening into the

WINCKELMANN MADE AESTHETIC LOSS THE NECESSARY STARTING POINT AND THE GRIEVING PROMPT TO NEOCLASSICAL DESIRE

nether regions, which are far more dynamic and unstable than the surface (the terra firma). They throw up rocks as light as air, and gases as smothering as the sea. Pliny intended to observe things from a safe distance, aboard ship in the Bay of Naples, but then he received an imploring letter from a friend, Rectina, whose villa lay in the direct line of approaching fire. Pliny thus ordered galleys fitted out to save his friends as well as others in the vicinity. He landed at Stabiae and dined with his friend Pomponius, attempting a show of calm on behalf of his distraught charges. But he stayed too long; the pumice, ash, and other fiery elements approached, and the fumes overwhelmed him. His scattered friends found Pliny's body three days later, dressed as they remembered him.¹⁴

While Pompeii had been haphazardly excavated after 1748, sponsored first by Don Carlos, then king of Naples, more scientific excavations were initiated by the Italian archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli (1823–96) in 1860. Italy, we may recall, was in the process of national formation in that same decade, eventually cobbling together a fledgling nation out of the peninsula's disparate parts (parts which Pliny seemed to

worry ought not mix). It is Fiorelli, an arch-Italian nationalist as critical of empire as Pliny had been, whom we have to thank for the thorough organization of the massive site into nine regions, inside each of which every block and street was numbered. Places and find-sites could now be identified with great precision.

And so, strangely enough, could the Pompeiian people. Where others saw a quarry, Fiorelli saw statues. It was he who developed the technique of pouring cement into the cavities created by the human and animal bodies who had been buried in the ash in 79 CE, then gradually disintegrated over the millennia. These human bodies created a hollow in the earth, a sort of ceramic mold, which mirror image Fiorelli turned to stone, in much the same way that ancient Greeks had cast bronze statuary. This is surely one of the most haunting kinds of statue imaginable (fig. 3), crude memento mori equal in emotional power to the Laocoön Group. That we place such bodily images in museums today speaks to something more than the history of curatorial display. It also bears a complex relationship to mortality, theology, and desire, ideas toward which



FIGURE 3. Pompeii Museum, Pompeii, Italy, ca. 1900s. Crude memento mori equal in emotional power to the Laocoön Group. Photo Credit: HIP / Art Resource, NY.

I will gesture (and, admittedly, only gesture) at the end of this essay. Desire for a body is one thing, desire for a body in perpetuity is something else again. Greek myth and theology alike display a deep awareness of this dilemma. The body that does not change would need to be made of stone.

Moment Two

The Laocoön Group was discovered by Vatican architects and engineers while digging the foundation for a new building on the Esquiline Hill in Rome, in

1506. The papal architect, Giuliano Sangallo, along with his son Francesco and Sangallo's friend Michelangelo, all went to witness the exhumation. All were dumbfounded, though Sangallo is the one reported to have identified the artifact as the Laocoön Group, based on Pliny's description. Michelangelo's (1475–1564) presence at this disinterment is suggestive, given my interest in copies and originals, and the varying desires they may elicit. Michelangelo had famously carved a deliberate forgery of a sleeping Cupid in 1496 that he then "antiqued" and sold as an

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original; Vasari reports this story as one of the things that accounted for Michelangelo's early fame, and his first invitation to Rome. The story would inspire some later theorists to see the Laocoön Group as another forgery by Michelangelo's hand.¹⁵

Be that as it may, Pope Julius II (Giuliano della Rovere, 1443–1513) brought this sculptural group to the Vatican and installed it in his Renaissance sculpture garden on the Belvedere. More than two centuries later, the so-called father of neoclassicism and art history, Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68), would see it there. Remarkably, he had already written about it in what quickly became the great manifesto of neoclassical aesthetics, his *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Artworks in Painting and Sculpture* (1755). It now seems clear that Winckelmann had set his gaze, ironically enough, on a bronze copy of the marble original, one housed at the Dresden Art Gallery.¹⁶ It was to inspire the single most celebrated phrase Winckelmann ever put in print:

The exquisite and universal characteristic of the Greek masterpieces is, finally, a noble simplicity and quiet grandeur [*eine edle Einfalt, und eine stille Größe*],

as much in the pose as in the expression. Just as the depths of the sea remain calm always, no matter how wildly the sea's surface may rage, even so the expression in Greek figures demonstrates in the midst of whatsoever violent emotion a grand and serene [*große und gesetzte*] soul.¹⁷

Gazing on a volcano, Pliny had been impressed by the contrast between the serenity of the terrestrial surface and its raging depths. Gazing on the sea, Winckelmann reversed the quotient, marveling at the sea's calm depths, despite its raging surface. Pliny too saw the sea as a raging place and thought it an unsuitable element for transporting the stillness of stone. Winckelmann took the stillness of depth even further, refusing to admit that Laocoön was screaming, insisting instead that the artists had depicted a "resigned groan." A scream, Winckelmann appeared to insist, was simply and purely unclassical (fig. 4).

This passage has raised one inescapable question for most subsequent readers: "Why he should have chosen this particular group as an example of the very qualities it lacks, is no easy question to answer."¹⁸ The answer, I believe, is that Winckelmann viewed sculptural bodies as if they were real bodies, and used this premise to capture what he viewed as their spiritual essences in lofty flights of rhetorical fancy.

The continuation of this same passage makes the strategy, and its seductiveness, abundantly clear. Winckelmann zeroes in on Laocoön's lower abdomen, running his curatorial eye over the tensed flesh to highlight the emotionally dense juxtaposition of rag-

ing surfaces and the lingering calm at depth (fig. 1).¹⁹ Many have noted the homoerotic tensing captured by the prose and by this visual strategy; this statue mesmerizes and attracts as intensely as any that Pliny described (see note 5 for his scandalous story involving the Aphrodite of Cnidus).²⁰ Going further still, Winckelmann insists that had the statue not been rendered in the nude, then half of its sensual power would be lost to us.²¹

The Vatican Museum opened to the public in 1792. By then, Winckelmann (who had curated its very first “Profane Museum”²² in 1767, shortly before his murder in Trieste) had sold his way of seeing the Laocoön Group in Europe. Vatican visitors thus literally came to see what Winckelmann had seen, in the very ways in which he had seen it. The irony of Winckelmann’s success in promoting this highly sensual neo-classical vision involved some subtle new desires that it had unleashed, not least of them being the desire for possession. In 1796, after General Napoleon’s forces in northern Italy had reduced Venice and the Papal States to humiliating surrender, the general did something unprecedented. The Treaty of Tolentino is the first modern peace treaty in which one hundred works of art were listed for expropriation to Paris, such expatriation being a central condition of the peace. Eighty-five of these hundred works of art were classical statues housed at the Capitoline and Vatican Museums. In blurring the boundary between sculptural bodies and real bodies, then, Winckelmann’s aesthetics had ironically contributed to turning the

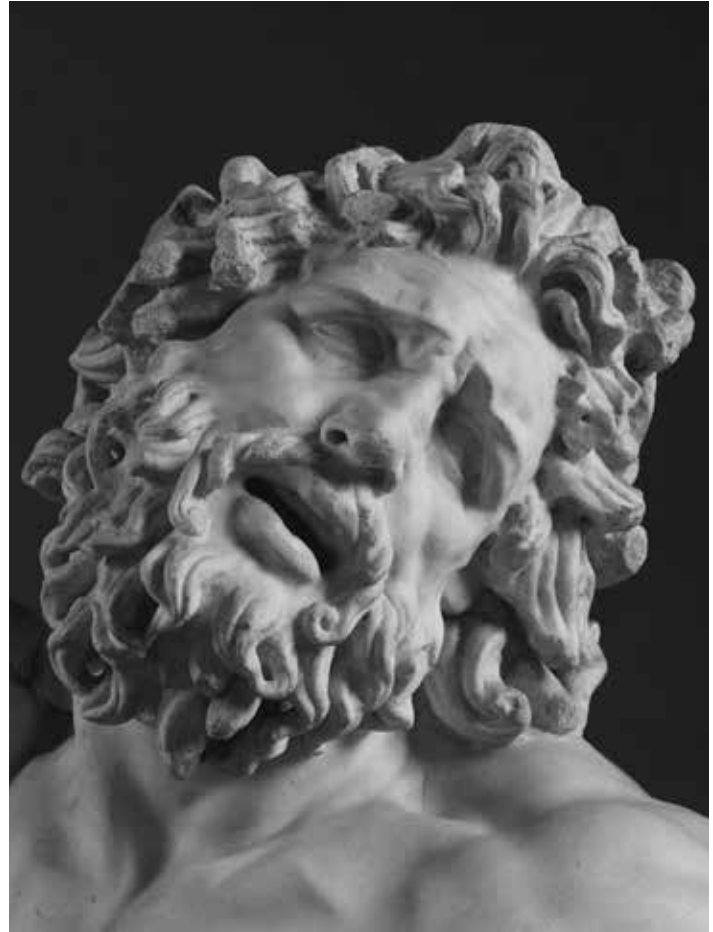


FIGURE 4. Close-up of Laocoön’s face from *The Laocoön Group*. Image provided by, and reproduced with permission of, the Vatican Museums, Ufficio Immagini e Diritti, with special thanks to Rosanna Di Pinto and Filippo Petriagnani.

French into grave robbers and the Vatican Museum into an empty tomb.

In Winckelmann's aesthetic musings, mourning became electric. If his 1755 *Reflections* was the manifesto that marked the neoclassical movement, then his 1764 *History of the Art of Antiquity* marked the first aspiration toward the archaeological and historical study of ancient art, managed by tracing its developmental stages. In this work, Hegel was to see the birth pangs of historicism. "In any case *Winckelmann* was already inspired [*begeistert*] in a way by the ancient perspective [*Anschauung*] on the Ideal, through which he has opened up a new sense [*Sinn*] with which to view art. . . . Thus Winckelmann is one of those in the field of Art [*Kunst*] who comprehended how to tap into a new organ, and entirely new ways of seeing, for the spirit [*Geist*]." ²³

A new sense? A new organ? Perhaps. What I wish to mark is Winckelmann's new sensibility, one grounded in the paradoxical sensualism of stone and the erotics of sculptural gazing. Here is his remarkable parting image at the end of the 1764 *History*:

I have in this history of art already gone beyond its set bounds, and although contemplating the collapse of art has driven me nearly to despair, still, like someone who, in writing the history of his native land, must touch upon the destruction that he himself has witnessed, I could not keep myself from gazing after the fate of the works of art as far as my eye could see. Just as a beloved [*So wie eine Liebste*] stands

on the seashore and follows with tearful eyes her departing sweetheart [*ihren abfahrenden Liebhaber*], with no hope of ever seeing him again, and believes she can glimpse even in the distant sail the image of her lover—so we, like the lover, have as it were *only a shadowy outline of the subject of our desires* remaining [*nur einen Schattenriss von dem Vorwurfe unsrer Wünsche übrig*]. But this arouses so much the greater longing for what is lost, and we examine the copies we have with greater attention than we would if we were in full possession of the originals. In this, we are often like individuals who wish to converse with spirits and believe they can see something where nothing exists. ²⁴

Unlike Vasari, Winckelmann preferred the ancients to the moderns; only by imitating them, he insisted, could modern artists become inimitable. ²⁵ Very like Pliny, then, Winckelmann took decadence for a natural law; classicism's virtues were tied to their fragility and shortness of life.

Placing himself in the role of a young woman gazing on the horizon, and the classical statue in the role of the lost lover, Winckelmann made aesthetic loss the necessary starting point and the grieving prompt to neoclassical desire. The ship was doing the very work Pliny condemned: transporting marble to sate the taste for imagistic luxury. The sea's surface, home now to the turbulence of natural forces and human emotion alike, was nevertheless as attractive as Laocöon's abdomen . . . and for similar reasons.

Moment Three

The Laocoön Group was repatriated, along with all but one of the other looted objects (a monumental granite urn), after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo in 1815. In these same years, a newly discovered sculptural group would attract even more complicated aesthetic, erotic, and political attention.

The two pedimental sculptural groups that graced the Temple of Aphaia on the island of Aegina²⁶ (just south of Athens) were rediscovered by four amateur artists (1811), then sold at auction (1812), then published in an exhaustive study by the painter Johann Martin Wagner and the philosopher Friedrich Schelling (1816), then restored by the noted neoclassical sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1816–18), then installed in a museum specifically built to house them (1830), which was later Nazified (1934–36), then de-Nazified (1946), such that the statues were derestored (1966), and then reinstalled in the Glyptothek Museum just in time for the Munich Olympics (1972). I can think of no other classical sculptural group with an equally complex biography.²⁷

Four aspiring young artists, two of them British (Charles Cockerell and John Foster) and two Bavarian (Carl Haller von Hallerstein and Jakob Linckh), traveled together to the island of Aegina to sketch what they believed to be the ruins of a temple to Panhellenic Zeus. Their intention was to reconstruct visually what the temple had looked like when it was not a ruin. That desire—the attempt to make wholes out of

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fragments—was to be a centerpiece of Romanticism as it was of neoclassicism.

The young men cleared the overgrowth and the lines of the temple foundation, and on the third day they began pulling an impressive cache of sculptural fragments out of the ground. Their sketching expedition had thus become an excavation. One month later, the four men carted their treasures off to Athens and, unable to agree among themselves as to where the treasures should reside (London or Munich, perhaps, but surely not Paris), they agreed to sell the entire collection as a group at auction. Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria (1786–1868), well aware that the rivalries among the European gunpowder empires had taken a strange aesthetic turn after the Treaty



FIGURE 5. The West Pediment of the Temple to Aphaia on Aegina, restored. Photograph by Renate Kühling. State Collections of Antiquities and Glyptothek.

of Tolentino, was determined to obtain this sculptural group at all costs. He sent an artist friend then living in Rome, Johann Martin Wagner (1777–1858), to Greece to purchase the group and—due to the maritime disruptions caused by the Napoleonic Wars, and the British blockade of the eastern Mediterranean—Wagner was the only man who made it in time. He eventually brought the sculptural fragments to a warehouse in Rome, where he wrote up his *Report* with the luxury of time and close proximity, and with the assistance of Friedrich Schelling's (1775–1854) impressive command of the classical literary sources. Wagner also enlisted his friend Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844) to “restore” the group. This involved carving replacements for missing limbs and adding lost shields, swords, and spears, all in order to make these scattered sculptural bodies whole again. The sculptural fragment was thus reanimated (figs. 5–6). Crown Prince (now King) Ludwig erected an assemblage of buildings for his new museum complex in Munich. The Königsplatz boasted a full-scale imitation of the Propylaea, monumental gateway to the Athenian Akropolis, flanked by two neoclassical build-

ings, the Glyptothek and the Antikensammlungen. The north side of this complex, dedicated to Ludwig's vision of an “Athens on the Lser,” remained open.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, he determined to flesh out what he viewed as another architectural fragment in the city that had served as his first power base. He commissioned four new buildings on the north end of the Königsplatz: his Munich Chancellery, the Munich National Socialist Party headquarters, and two faux Doric temples he referred to as “Temples to the Heroes” (*Ehrentempel*n).

As the temples were being erected on the Königsplatz, Hitler ordered the exhumation of sixteen friends who had died in his failed 1923 Munich Beer Hall Putsch, so that their remains could be reinterred in bronze sarcophagi inside the *Ehrentempel*n. Sixteen ancient Greek statues, ancient warriors now rendered whole, and the fragmentary remains of sixteen proto-Nazi foot soldiers, had been brought into direct architectural and political conversation. Each year on the anniversary of the Beer Hall Putsch, the sixteen names were read at roll call, each call receiving the collective response “*Hier!*” More than an exercise



FIGURE 6. The East Pediment of the Temple to Aphaia on Aegina, restored. Photograph by Renate Kühling. State Collections of Antiquities and Glyptothek.

in Winckelmannian neoclassicism, the aesthetic link joining sculptural bodies to human bodies was now deemed to have political consequence. It is here that neoclassical aesthetics and modern politics, with their even more deliberate juxtaposition of sculptural and human bodies, came to generate deeply tangled desires and vendettas.

The *Ehrentempel*, Hitler's Chancellery, and National Socialist Party headquarters all miraculously survived intensive Allied bombing in the summer of 1944, though the Glyptothek suffered a direct hit (the sculptures had been removed to a monastery for safekeeping). The bodies of Hitler's former brothers-in-arms were quietly removed and returned to their original sites of burial. The *Ehrentempel* were dynamited in 1946 (a German film clip of the detonation is available on YouTube).²⁸

At this point, it was observed that Thorvaldsen's restorations had operated according to a logic eerily similar to that of Hitler's architects: more than simply making a whole out of fragments, these acts of *Ergänzungen* had been managed in such a way as to elide the difference between different time periods,

most notably classical antiquity and the present day.²⁹ Thorvaldsen had famously boasted that you would be unable to tell what was ancient and what was modern on the restored Aegina marbles. Hitler intended to make it seem as if the Königsplatz had always been home to Nazi Party headquarters. So the same logic that called for de-Nazifying the Königsplatz now called for the derestoration of the Aegina marbles. Consequently, the statues were dismembered, all of Thorvaldsen's limbs and other accoutrements taken for dead, and buried. The sculptural bodies, returned now to their original state of decomposition, were then placed on display for an Olympic audience in 1972, where they remain to this day (figs. 7–8).

Plato, in the very midpoint of the *Phaedrus*, describes Socrates saying something that seems very strange for a rationalist to say. "It would take a god to say what the soul is, Socrates observes, but human beings are especially adept at saying what things are like."³⁰ Human beings, in other words, are image-making creatures, and the images they make aim at similitudes. It is worth noting that the topic of this dialogue was erotic desire, morphing into psychology,



FIGURE 7. The West Pediment of the Temple to Aphaia on Aegina, derestored. Photograph by Renate Kühling. State Collections of Antiquities and Glyptothek.

and that this precise pivot point, where the dialogue takes its dramatic turn, is what prompted Socrates's remark. Image-making, it would seem, can be revelatory and uplifting—if there is sufficient desire in the undertaking. The problem, of course, hinges on determining the right kind of desire, the kind that may prove to be generative of such elevating image-making. Modern ethnonationalist desires, by contrast, appeared to be aiming at a different kind of image-making, when they were not engaged in actual iconoclasm. In this blurring of the line separating sculptural bodies from real bodies, the ancients from the moderns, we meet a deliberate mingling of aesthetics and politics with a very complicated pedigree.

Polychromatics, Paganism, and Forbidden Desire

In the decade prior to the discovery of the Aeginetan sculptures, the Parthenon marbles had been removed to London by Lord Elgin (1766–1841), in a campaign that lasted a full decade (1801–11). It is striking to re-

alize that Winckelmann never saw them, so perfectly do they seem to capture the neoclassical ideal to which he devoted his passions. Nor, for that matter, had he even heard of the Aegina marbles.

Unlike the Parthenon marbles, which had remained in their pedimental niches, exposed to rain and sunlight for millennia, the Aeginetan sculptures had tumbled from their perches in an earthquake and had long been buried underground. Their sudden exhumation in 1811 revealed something quite remarkable: namely, the surprising ancient practice of painting marble statues. Whereas Winckelmann distinguished the Greek arts of painting and sculpture—and presumably imagined Greek painting primarily as vase painting—we now know that these arts were combined in antiquity. The ancient Greek artists carved their marble statues, then painted them in brilliant blues, greens, reds, and yellows. The revelation of what might now seem a kitsch sensibility in the palette of ancient sculptors would have been (and was) shocking to eyes trained in certain can-



FIGURE 8. The East Pediment of the Temple to Aphaia on Aegina, derestored. Photograph by Renate Kühling. State Collections of Antiquities and Glyptothek.

ons of neoclassicism. The Greeks sculpted in bronze with copper and gemstone inlays, they constructed monumental statues made entirely of gold and ivory plates, they painted their marbles. The ancient artists may well have seen this all as making sculptural bodies more vibrant, more desirable, more alive. If early modern neoclassicism can seem consumed, like Hera and Zeus, with questions of copies, simulacra, and difference, then the ancients appear to be interested in sculptural animation, and the means whereby color can serve the interests of such aliveness.

Several years ago, this well-established fact of polychromatic Greek art returned to the popular media as if it were a radical new discovery. Sarah Bond, an assistant professor of classics at the University of Iowa who has become closely associated with this idea, has circulated her work mainly via blogs, social media, and online arts publications (such as *Hyperalergic*), as well as in a popular article for *Forbes Magazine*.³¹ She has reportedly received sharp criticism, violent threats, and more.

But the idea is not new, even in its twenty-first-century iteration. The Glyptothek Museum sponsored a special exhibition in 2003 titled *Bunte Götter: Die Farbigkeit antiker Skulptur*, which has been traveling almost continuously around the world ever since, visiting well over twenty locations on three continents, and including landmark shows at the Vatican Museums (2005), the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul (2006), the National Archaeological Museum in Athens (2007), Harvard's Sackler Museum (2007–8), the Getty Villa (2008), the Ashmolean Museum (2015), and the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City (2016–17). Most of the larger venues produced stunning catalogues and online displays; the original Glyptothek concept was published in an expanded version in 2017,³² when US scholars began to make public hay of the idea. It can often seem as if ancient Greek statues, treated once again almost as if they were real bodies, are being asked to carry more cultural weight and meaning than they can bear.³³

It may help to approach this matter from an

GIVEN THE RECENT DEBATE GENERATED BY THE PROPOSAL OF POLYCHROMATIC GREEK ART, THE QUESTION BECOMES: HOW WAS THIS ALL FORGOTTEN, AFTER BEING SO WELL-KNOWN?

oblique angle. After all, the fact that Greek art was polychromatic, and elaborately so, was well-known in the very period when Martin Bernal (see note 33) claimed that such ideas and images were being suppressed by academic classicists. The concluding chapter of Wagner's *Report on the Aeginetan Sculptures* was titled "On the Painting [*Bemalung*] of the Figures and of the Temple,"³⁴ since he recognized that the Greek architectural elements were painted, much as the statues inside them were. Schelling, for his part, made extensive use of the definitive study of Greek polychromatic art, Antoine Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy's *Le Jupiter Olympien*, published the previous year (1815). Quatremère was clear and emphatic: "Almost always we have looked upon these sculptural monuments in gold and ivory as exceptional works [*ouvrages d'exception*], or as accidental and occasional [*productions de caprice*]. I am out to prove that this taste reigned supreme for twelve centuries [*douze siècles*]." ³⁵ Given the recent debate generated by the proposal of polychromatic Greek art, the question becomes: How was this all forgotten, after being so well-known?

The previous director of the Glyptothek Museum, Raimond Wünsche, has written most insightfully about these matters. Since the painting on the Aeginetan sculptures was far more visible when Wagner saw them two hundred years ago than it is now, Wünsche utilized state-of-the-art UV photographic and fluorescence techniques to determine the extent of the surface coverage by the paint. The results are genuinely astonishing (figs. 9–10).³⁶ In Wünsche's view, the marble served very much as a canvas on which Greek artists painted. The effects are riotous and decidedly far from anything recognizably neoclassical; they are neither "simple" nor "still." So again the question impresses itself upon us: If this was so well-known in the nineteenth century, then how did this knowledge come to be lost? Perhaps a related question is more urgent: What knowledge came to replace it? Once more the subtle flow of influence between Greek originals and the countless copies they have generated disturbs the theoretical waters.

Wünsche's answer is as simple as it is far-reaching. Quatremère de Quincy's books are all lavishly illustrated with chromolithographic illustrations (fig. 11).



FIGURES 9. The Kneeling Archer (Paris?), polychromatic reconstruction. Photograph by Renate Kühling. State Collections of Antiquities and Glyptothek.

That was the common practice in the nineteenth century. But by the early twentieth century, black-and-white photography had replaced chromolithographs as the mainstay of illustration in art historical textbooks. Thus the color was literally drained from our more bookish displays of Greek statues. To put it simply, the concern with blackness and whiteness in Greek art was a decidedly twentieth-century concern. Such photographs were capable of generating de-



FIGURE 10. The Kneeling Archer (Paris?), polychromatic reconstruction. Photograph by Renate Kühling. State Collections of Antiquities and Glyptothek.

sires all their own, to be sure. But the anima of classical sculptural representation had been lost; here, if anywhere, we are confronting the premier twentieth-century exorcism: a still life.

This essay began with a jarring sculptural observation: “The more negligible the difference, the more terrible and violent the revenge.” Using Calasso’s prescient comments as a guide here, I wonder what more we might make of his understanding of



FIGURE 11. *Le Jupiter Olympien* chromolithograph. From Antoine Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy's *Le Jupiter Olympien, ou, L'Art de la Sculpture Antique considéré sous un nouveau point de vue*. Paris: De l'Imprimerie de Firmon Didot, 1815.

lo's tragic predicament, if we imagine the statues in question polychromatically. A woman endeavors to imitate a statue in order to become a copy of what the statue represents. A god prefers the copy to the statue, and thus the mortal woman to the divine prototype. The preference is based on a desire, and the desire is prompted by a difference. What kinds of difference are in play here—the difference separating the copy from the original (think of Pliny, or Michelangelo)? the difference separating the artwork from the viewer (think of Winckelmann, mourning toward the horizon)? the difference separating the person from the god (think of Greek art as a whole)? Now erase the color, reduce the images to black-and-white, and see that the difference is not as great as it was presumed to be. Violence erupts (think of Nazism, at the very least). When bodies die, they turn inanimate, turn to stone. This was the tragic moment captured by the Laocoön Group. Winckelmann's aestheticizing (and eroticizing) of this moment would be translated into very different German less than two centuries later. The still life is one thing; it is still life. The stilling of life is something else again; there is no color in it. I am haunted by the fact that this suggestive English term is decidedly different in Italian (*natura morta*), in French (*nature morte*), and in Greek (*nekrê physê*): "dead nature" rather than "still life."

When Johann Martin Wagner learned that his king planned to build a new neoclassical museum to house the Aeginetan sculptures, he drafted a proposal for the modern sculptural group that would eventually be placed in the modern pediment of this

modern temple dedicated to ancient art (we should recall that the very name *mouseion* means “shrine to the Muse” in Greek). Among these figures, one of them stands out especially today: it is a sculpture depicting a painter who is painting a statue. The mirror phasing here is nearly Freudian (if not Lacanian) in its complexity: polychromatic sculpture as the suppressed childhood memory of neoclassical aesthetics.

Not long after Winckelmann’s shocking murder in Trieste, Goethe penned a short but book-length encomium to him, one that offered a surprising way of exploring the complexity of his neoclassical desires, and the passions they had so quickly kindled in others. For Goethe, the issue was essentially religious in nature: Winckelmann made himself over as a pagan to appreciate pagan art more fully. Winckelmann, Goethe opined, was virtually the reincarnation of an ancient pagan, “insofar as that may be said of anyone in our time” (*eine solche antike Natur war, insofern man es nur von einem unserer Zeitgenossen behaupten kann, in Winckelmann wieder erscheinen*).³⁷ This was particularly the case when Winckelmann turned his attention to ancient sculptures depicting gods (such as Apollo) and priests or priestesses (such as Laocoön).

The implications of Winckelmann’s pagan self-rendering were several, and surprising in many respects. Using Calasso as our guide once again, we will note that the statue was an imitation of the goddess, and the priestess an imitation of the statue. Playing a game of visual “telephone,” each imitation in the series presumably generated a discrete and subtle difference that, in turn, generated complex

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cross-currents of desire. Avoiding the sexualization of sculptural bodies that so vexed Pliny, Zeus chose the priestess over the prototype who was his wife. The mythic progeny engendered by this choice was violent and vengeful. Christians would later read all of this as a morality tale: seductive images of false gods spell disaster. This was decidedly not Winckelmann's—nor Goethe's, nor Ludwig's, nor Wagner's, nor Schelling's, nor Hitler's—view of the matter.

Winckelmann's aesthetics permitted the Greek gods to be real, in their way, and the sculptural imitation of them to be perfect, in its way. He would have had little need, then, to reflect on the duplicities of difference, and less desire to worry about Hera's harsh revenge. The fact that he was converting to Roman Catholicism as he completed his *Reflections* on Greek sculptural imitation in 1755 is one complex personal juxtaposition worthy of further consideration. The fact that he curated such sculptures in the new context of a "Profane Museum," inside the Apostolic Palace itself, just one decade later is another. Here is Goethe's conclusion on the matter: Winckelmann's "pagan spirit" (*heidnisches Sinn*) was unsullied by his "so-called conversion to Catholicism," since "being a pagan from birth [*als einen gründlich geborner Heiden*], his Protestant baptism had not been able to turn him into a true Christian."³⁸

There is thus another question lurking beneath the rippled surface of these pagan and Christian juxtapositions. *What kind of desire is this?* Clearly, it is a type of forbidden desire. The pagan body, only nominally forbidden to Christian theology, was to gener-

ate complex and generative passions all its own in early modern Europe. The history of the flirtation with such forbidden desires, inspired by such abject and forbidden sculptural bodies, seems an important and underappreciated aspect of early modern aesthetics. It all hinges on the subtle and not-so-subtle blurring of the boundary between sculptural and animate bodies that I have been tracing through these three moments. Given the choice, early modern and other neoclassical aesthetes preferred the (polychromatic) sculptural copy. The more forbidden the pagan form, the more subtle the sculptural differences, the more intense and manifold that desire. ■

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Notes

The epigraph for this article is from Roberto Calasso's *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, trans. Tim Parks (New York: Vintage, 1993), 24. I have emended the translation somewhat in consultation with Calasso's *Le nozze di Cadmo e Armonia* (Milan: Adelphi, 1988), 38. Given Calasso's passing on July 28, 2021, I dedicate this essay to his memory.

¹ The phrase is "che basta a *disarticolare* l'ordine" in Calasso, *Le nozze di Cadmo e Armonia*, 38 (see also Calasso, *Marriage*

of *Cadmus and Harmony*, 24). The word *disarticulate* calls other sculptural features to mind—not least the statue’s tendency to break at its thinnest or most protuberant points. The order of the human body is disrupted by mutilation, a tragic reality that links the fortunes of sculptural and human bodies even more intimately. Io’s intimate proximity to Hera is thus the source of her desirability . . . and of her undoing.

2 I take this artful distinction from Farred, *In Motion, at Rest*.

3 See Jones, *History of Greek Sculpture*.

4 For more on the transition from rock to stone through human intervention, see Plate, *History of Religion*.

5 To be sure, Pliny includes other, less stone-cold kinds of commentary in his *History*. In referring to the Aphrodite of Cnidus, carved by Praxiteles, Pliny expresses his wonder once again at the superlative qualities of this stone statue even over the bronzes for which Praxiteles had been better known. Like the Laocoön, Pliny claims that this Aphrodite is superior to any other artwork in the world (*in toto orbe terrarum*), and he remarks further upon how many people traveled to Cnidus merely to see it. The city owes its fame entirely to this statue, he observes, housed now in a shrine (*aedicula*) built strictly to enhance its public viewing. “The statue is equally admirable from every angle. They say that a man fell in love [*amore captum*] with it, and in disgrace of night embraced the image [*simulacro cohaesisse*], which lustful act [*cupiditatis*] left a stain behind [*indicem maculam*].” Pliny, *Natural History* 36.4.21 (Eichholz, *Pliny: Natural History*, 16–17). Clearly, the line separating the sculptural body from flesh and blood could become very blurry when desire was aroused.

6 Pliny, *Natural History* 36.4.37 (Eichholz, *Pliny: Natural History*, 28–31).

7 Eichholz’s decision to translate *statuariae* as “bronze” may seem odd, given the apparently obvious juxtaposition of painting and sculpture in this passage. The most preeminent Greek statues were molded in bronze, and widely copied in marble by the Romans. Eichholz believes that Pliny is thus struck by the exceptional quality of a marble sculpture that manages to capture so much tragic motion and emotion, affects that were more easily managed in bronze or other multimedia sculptural forms, such as the

monumental chryselephantine statues of Zeus at Olympia and of Athena at Athens.

8 Given the complexity of the design, that would have been noteworthy. We now know that the piece was assembled from five separate pieces of marble.

9 Alternative versions of Laocoön’s myth render the serpentine strangulation as a punishment for his marrying when he should have remained a celibate, or else for the hybristic decision to have sex with his wife in Poseidon’s temple. As Calasso notes, erotic desire is the not-so-hidden subtext of much ancient sculpture, as well as much ancient writing about it.

10 Scarry, *Body in Pain*, initiated a line of inquiry that culminated in Richter, *Laocoön’s Body*.

11 Pliny, *Natural History* 36.1.1 (Eichholz, *Pliny: Natural History*, 2–3).

12 Pliny, *Natural History* 36.1.2–3 (Eichholz, *Pliny: Natural History*, 2–5), translation slightly emended.

13 Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 2:28 (Rolfe trans., 166–67).

14 The main source for this account comes from his nephew, Pliny the Younger (61–100 CE), in a letter written to his friend, the Roman historian, Tacitus (56–ca. 120 CE). See Radice, *Pliny the Younger: Letters and Panegyrics*, 424–35.

15 See Vasari, *Lives*, 312, 315–17 (“modern works, if only they be excellent, are as good as the ancient”). See also Catterson, “Michelangelo’s Laocoön”; and Shattuck, “Ancient Masterpiece or Master’s Forgery.”

16 I am indebted to Gao Yanping, an important Winckelmann scholar in Beijing, who is currently translating Winckelmann’s *History of the Art of Antiquity* into Chinese, for making me aware of recent scholarship (including her own forthcoming essay, “Laocoön in Copies and the Problem of ‘Stillness’”), which suggests that the copy of the Vatican’s Laocoön Group that Winckelmann saw in Dresden was indeed a bronze. For further evidence of this bronze copy, see Giuliani, “Laokoons Autopsie”; and Kunze, *Joachim Winckelmann*, 106.

- 17** I am using the bilingual edition of Winckelmann's *Reflections*, 32–33, translation emended.
- 18** Butler, *Tyranny of Greece*, 47.
- 19** "Such a soul reveals itself in the face of Laocoön, and not only in his face, even in the midst of violent suffering. The agony [*Schmerz*], which reveals itself in all the muscles and fibers of his body, entirely apart from a close inspection of the face and other parts—this agony one comes to feel oneself, with one's whole being, solely from the painful contraction of his abdomen. This agony, I dare say, nevertheless transforms itself so as to be free of violent emotion [*Wut*] in the face and in the entire pose" (Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 32–33, translation emended).
- 20** See, for example, Davis, "Winckelmann's 'Homosexual' Teleologies"; Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal*, 210–16; and Sweet, "The Personal." In other work on these topics, my concern has been to mark the ways that attention to the "gay Winckelmann," while of unquestionable importance, may distract us from the equally important discussion of the "pagan (and profane) Winckelmann," a figure who is far more consequential for the history of art, of museums, and of religion, in my view. It was this Winckelmann who saw sculptural bodies as real ones, preferring the copy to the original once again. For more on this, see Ruprecht, "Winckelmann and Casanova."
- 21** "Beneath a robe, which the artist might well have provided to Laocoön since he was a priest, his agony would have lost half of its power to move us [*wurde uns sein Schmerz nur halb so sinnlich gewesen sein*]" (Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 34–35, translation emended). Winckelmann added that Bernini even detected the first stiffening of the thigh muscles under the influence of the serpent's bite. I was moved to recall this detail by Saad, "Limb-Loosening and the Care of History."
- 22** Ruprecht, *Winckelmann and the Vatican's First Profane Museum*.
- 23** This comment appears in the early discussion, "Schiller, Winckelmann, and Schelling," in Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics*. See Hegel, *Ästhetik*, 1:92.
- 24** Winckelmann, *History of the Art of Antiquity*, 351; the German

text of the 1764 and 1776 editions may be found in Borbein et al., *J. J. Winckelmann*, 836–39 (emphasis added). This passage is nicely analyzed by Davis in "Winckelmann Divided," esp. 150–55.

- 25** See DeCaroli, "Pursuing the Inimitable."
- 26** For a fuller accounting of the group and its history, together with a translation of the 1816 report, see Ruprecht, *Report on the Aeginetan Sculptures*.
- 27** The recent interest in attending to the "biographies" of art historical objects and other artifacts was initiated by Kopytoff, "Cultural Biography of Things," and has been much popularized in the Greek case by Hamilakis, especially in *Archaeology and the Senses*.
- 28** "Nazi Ehrentempel." Video available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=-47LAmbC-EQ.
- 29** See Diebold, "Politics of Derestoration."
- 30** "We must now speak of the soul's form [*ideas*]. As for what it really is, that would require an utterly divine [*pantôs theias*] speaker, and a very long speech [*makras diêgêsêôs*]. But as for what the soul is like [*eoiken*], a human speaker can describe that, and much more quickly [*elattonos*]" (*Phaedrus* 246a, translation mine). I am using the Greek text in *Plato*, 1:470–71.
- 31** Bond, "Whitewashing Ancient Statues." Of added note are Hanink, *Classical Debt*, 107–16, 245–46 (where Winckelmann appears only as a subheading for "Whiteness"); and Talbot, "Myth of Whiteness in Classical Sculpture."
- 32** Brinkman and Dreyfus, *Gods in Color*, was released in support of the exhibition at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (2017–18). It is interesting to note that the 2010–11 exhibition at the Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm was titled not *Gods in Color* but, rather, *White Lies*.
- 33** At one level, this debate is reminiscent of the classical firestorm created by the publication of Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* in the 1980s. A representative set of contemporary rejoinders to the first two volumes may be found in Lefkowitz and Rogers, *Black Athena Revisited*.

Quite apart from the dizzying (and somewhat suspect) archaeological, etymological, and historiographic details, Bernal's argument hinged on two essential claims. First, the "Afroasiatic roots" of ancient Greek art and culture suggest that these Aegean peoples borrowed extensively from their Egyptian and Near Eastern cultural counterparts in the period during which they were developing the style that Winckelmann and others would later lionize. Second, antisemitic and otherwise racist scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suppressed this clear ancient Greek self-understanding in order to create a myth of Greece's white and Western origins. Bernal was surely correct in the first claim; he was just as surely incorrect in the second. That he expressed surprise at the negative reaction his work received from classicists, who resented the depiction of their discipline as an inherently racist one, seemed as disingenuous as his motives were unclear. The relevant point here is that Bernal made blackness the central issue in classics: he titled his book *Black Athena* rather than *Egyptian Athena*, say, or *Jewish Athena*. Similarly, Sarah Bond ("Whitewashing Ancient Statues") made whiteness and whitewashing the central issues in classical art history. In both cases, the white, black, and colors on the marble are taken virtually as a stand-in for the polychromatics of a people.

34 See Ruprecht, *Report on the Aeginetan Sculptures*, 163–69.

35 See Quatremère de Quincy, *Le Jupiter Olympien*, xx–xxi. It is perhaps relevant to note that Quatremère had earned early notoriety for an essay he drafted to address a question posed by the French Academy in 1785: "What was the status of Architecture in Egypt, and what do the Greeks appear to have borrowed?" (*Quel fut l'état de l'Architecture chez les Egyptiens, et ce que les Grecs paroissent en avoir emprunté?*). Quatremère won a stipend that enabled him to spend two years in Rome, where his decision on an art historical career was confirmed. He later published the essay, notably after Napoleon's failed invasion of Egypt in 1799–1800, and all the new art historical looting for the Louvre these campaigns enabled. See Quatremère de Quincy, *De l'état de l'architecture Égyptiennes*. For more on these remarkable texts, see Ruprecht, *Classics at the Dawn of the Museum Era*, 54–60, 68–75. For more on the Napoleonic and Nazi invasions as political spoliation, see Chamberlin, *Loot!*, 123–87.

36 For this and the following, see Wünsche, "Die Farbigkeit der Ägineten," in *Kämpfe um Troja*, 223–61.

37 Goethe, *Essays on Art and Literature*, 101; and "Winckelmann," *Werke* 12:99.

38 Goethe, *Essays on Art and Literature*, 102, 105; and "Winckelmann," in *Werke* 12:100–101, 105.

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