

FINE ARTS

Book Notes

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Ancient Works of Art from the Ludwig Collection. I: Early Clay Sarcophagi and Vases. Catalogue and Detailed Studies

[“Antike Kunstwerke aus der Sammlung Ludwig. I: Frühe Tonsarkophage und Vasen. Katalog und Einzeldarstellungen”]

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Mainz: Philipp v. Zabern Verlag (in commission), 1979; 251 pp., numerous ill.

In this richly illustrated volume the relatively young Museum of Ancient Art in Basle publishes one of the largest private collections of ancient art to have been assembled in Germany after the War, which now is on loan to the Basle Museum; it is only a small section of the great Ludwig Art Collection in Aachen. The bulk of the catalogue texts have been written by R. Lullies, the author of the catalogue of the first public exhibition of the Ludwig Collection in Kassel in 1968. He has revised the old entries and added new ones (cf. the concordance on p. 251). Only a few entries have been written by other specialists. The majority of the objects are Attic vases of the later sixth and fifth centuries BC, 15 black-figure and 30 red-figure and white-ground; about a third are new acquisitions not yet included in the 1968 catalogue. Each object is given a detailed description, art-historical classification quoting comparanda and literature, and a bibliography of the piece itself. Short interpretatory remarks, in general restricted to the more factual side, are included in the description. There is an appendix added of five essays by different authors on some of the most important items in the collection, two of them in English; two had already been published in the Basle journal “Antike Kunst”.

For its figural decoration the Mycenaean clay coffin from Boiotia (No. 2), to which an essay in the appendix by E. Vermeule is devoted (p. 201 et seq.), is more interesting than the slightly older Cretan one (No. 1). The extraordinary Protocorinthian dinos with stand (No. 9) analysed by J. Boardman (p. 206 et seq.) is accompanied by two fine late Protocorinthian jugs (Nos. 10–11). Among the Attic black-figured vases a hydria with the

wedding of Peleus and Thetis from the circle of the Antimenes painter (No. 25) is more interesting than the amphorae by the Amasis painter (No. 19–20). About the finest piece is a big red-figured dinos with Zeus in a chariot among the Olympian gods by the Berlin painter. Its detailed treatment by R. Lullies (p. 212–28) gives valuable information on the dinos in general and on the Berlin painter. The Apollo here can be compared with his representation on two other vases by the same painter (Nos. 40 to 41). Other interesting red-figure pieces are the calyx craters with gigantomachy and amazonomachy by the Niobid painter and the Group of Polygnotos I (Nos. 51–52). Two white-ground lekythoi (Nos. 60–61), now in Würzburg, are described by E. Simon in the appendix (p. 229 et seq.); a finer example (No. 62) is by the Achilles painter. Noteworthy is also a 4th century Kabirion cup (No. 32) with an Iliupersis parody on the one side and unidentified scenes with men in chains, perhaps Prometheus or the like, on the other. Among the new acquisitions in the Ludwig Collection are mainly Italiote and Etruscan vases, and also a group of later Phrygian jugs described by M. Schmidt. The same authoress deals also with the iconography of the Laocoon myth on an early Lucanian bellcrater (No. 70; cf. p. 239–48). Some classifications in the Kassel catalogue have been altered, for instance the blackfigured amphora (No. 30) is now recognized as Boiotian; a subgeometrical crater (No. 63), formerly taken to be Boiotian, is now identified as Etruscan. To judge from the photographs it seems surprising that a black-figured eye-cup (No. 66) should be Etruscan imitation, not Attic work.

The well-printed catalogue is valuable for the detailed descriptions, stylistic analyses, up-to-date references and especially for the excellent photographic presentation of all the pieces in this precious collection.

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