THE ATHENIAN AGORA

VOLUME XXXV

FUNERARY SCULPTURE
THE ATHENIAN AGORA
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VOLUME XXXV

FUNERARY SCULPTURE

BY

JANET BURNETT GROSSMAN

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF CLASSICAL STUDIES AT ATHENS
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY
2013
For my esteemed teacher, mentor, and friend,

Evelyn B. Harrison,

with everlasting admiration and gratitude

ἀνθρωπὸς ὁς στείχεις : καθ’ ὁδὸν : φρασίν : ἀλλὰ μενοῖν :
stéthi kai óiktiron : sêmu Thrásoos : idón.

O passer-by on the road, having other intentions with your mind, stand and pity, while you look at the marker of Thraso.

—tombstone from Athens, ca. 540–530 B.C. (CEG 28)
(trans. M. A. Tueller)
CREATING IMAGES of our idealized selves is a hallmark of ancient Greek art, and this is beautifully realized in ancient Greek funerary sculpture. I am honored to introduce the present volume by Janet Burnett Grossman on the Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman funerary monuments from the ancient Agora (marketplace) of Athens. Like the author, I was a student of the late Evelyn Byrd Harrison at the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, who had published other sculptures from the Agora: Portrait Sculpture (Agora I, 1953), and Archaic and Archaistic Sculpture (Agora XI, 1965). This volume is a testament to Prof. Harrison’s continued inspiration for countless students and colleagues over a span of five decades, and her students and colleagues still benefit from her wise words and compelling insight.

Sculptures found in the Athenian Agora may not be among the most famous works of Greek art, but they have a very high value as original works from a period that has left us precious few such monuments. Most sculptures that we know from ancient literary sources have met a fate worse than the Agora sculptures, being reused as building material or chopped up as fill. We can only imagine what would have been. Dr. Grossman’s work contributes to our corpus of extant works as she brings to us nearly 400 examples found during the 81 years of excavations in the Athenian Agora from 1931 through 2011.

The fragmentary examples from the Agora have all been reused and none have come from tombs, yet they are known to be of funerary purpose by comparisons with other extant funerary sculptures. This corpus is highly instructive since it encompasses a much wider range of types, styles, and subjects than would have been found in any one grave site. In Chapter 2, the heart of this volume, Dr. Grossman discusses all aspects of Athenian funerary sculptures, using catalogued examples from the Agora for illustration. Here is the best of what we have learned from Prof. Harrison: that isolated sculptures, even the reused and badly damaged fragments from the Agora, may have much to tell us about ancient lives and customs. Thus Prof. Harrison’s legacy lives on through all of her students and colleagues, in their scholarship and in their thinking about art and life; that legacy is exemplified in the work of Janet Burnett Grossman, who here brings so many anonymous sculptors back to life.

Linda Jones Roccos
New York City
PREFACE

The object of this study is to bring together in one volume all the sculpted funerary monuments, of the Classical through Roman periods, that were discovered during the excavations of the Athenian Agora from 1931 through 2011. The sculpted funerary monuments of the Archaic period were published in Agora XI (1965) by Evelyn B. Harrison. No new fragments that can be identified as belonging to Archaic gravestones have been discovered since then, and thus no monuments of that period are included here.

In terms of structure, the book moves from a general to a specific treatment of the topic. Since funerary sculpture has a long tradition of treatment as a special subject within the field of sculpture studies, I begin with an overview of past research on Attic funerary sculpture (Chapter 1). A chapter on funerary sculpture from Athens and Attica follows (Chapter 2). And, finally, a chapter on the sculptures found in the Agora (Chapter 3) serves as an introduction to the catalogue (Chapters 4–6).

I should like to express my gratitude to the many scholars who have helped me in this endeavor, but especially to the late Evelyn B. Harrison for offering me the initial opportunity to publish the gravestones of the Classical period as my doctoral dissertation for the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Her confidence in my abilities gave me courage to undertake such a large project. I hope that this volume proves worthy of that trust and will serve as a type of commemoration to Prof. Harrison and her lasting influence on scholarship in ancient sculpture.

I have been fortunate to have the support of successive directors of the Agora excavations, T. Leslie Shear Jr. and, most particularly, John McK. Camp. His encouragement at a crucial juncture kept me going and enabled me to complete the volume. For general inspiration, advice, and various contributions, I thank Norbert Baer, Johannes Bergemann, Judith Binder, Bob Bridges, Andy Clark, Jens Daehner, Sheila Dillon, Ifigenia Dionisiou, Susanne Ebbinghaus, Jasper Gaunt, Ken Hamma, Mary Louise Hart, Ian Jenkins, Nikolaos Kaltsas, Kris Kelly, Günther Kopcke, Carol Lawton, Minna Lee, Claire Lyons, Karen Manchester, Jean-Luc Martinez, James McCredie, Elizabeth Milliker, Mette Moltesen, Jennifer Neils, Olga Palagia, John Papadopoulos, Richard Posamentir, Bernard Schmaltz, Tina Salowey, Andreas Scholl, Roland R. R. Smith, Karen Stears, Mary Sturgeon, John Traill, Marion True, Marjorie Venit, Bonna Wescot, and Alessia Zambon.

The three anonymous reviewers of the manuscript did a thorough and meticulous job for which I am extremely grateful. Outside reviewers have a thankless, yet vital role in the publication of scholarly work. I have attempted to incorporate their suggestions in the hope of making this a stronger and more useful book. I, however, am solely responsible for the final outcome.

Every writer needs a good editor and I have had the advantage to have some of the best in the Publications Office of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. I would like...
to acknowledge Andrew Reinhard, Carol Stein, Michael Fitzgerald, Karen Donohue, and especially Timothy Wardell, for their endless patience and assistance. Carol Stein was exceptional in her dogged pursuit of accuracy, for which I am profoundly appreciative. A note of gratitude is owed to the proofreader who assisted with the translation of the inscriptions.

I owe much to the splendid staff of the Agora excavations, particularly Craig Mauzy, manager and photographer; Jan Jordan, secretary; Sylvie Dumont, registrar; and Angelique Sideris, photographer. Over the 20 years that I have spent on this material, they have been infinitely tolerant and proven themselves to be true colleagues. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Giorgos Dervos who, always with good humor, a willing spirit, and a strong back, found the sculptures that I needed to examine on innumerable occasions.

Research in Athens was made possible with the support of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, a Kress Publications Fellowship, and six Staff Education grants from the J. Paul Getty Museum. A systematic search for relevant bibliographic material was last conducted in November 2011.

Finally, there are three people key to the process that led to this publication that I wish to honor here. First of all, I want to thank my husband, Peter, whose support, encouragement, and wise counsel I could rely upon always. Secondly, Marion True, the individual who urged me to consider the Institute of Fine Arts for graduate studies. The decision to follow her advice led to Eve Harrison and, eventually, to the volume that you hold in your hands. Lastly, my dear son, Christopher, who years ago, when I first tentatively embarked on the scholarly path, exhorted, “Go for it, Mom!”

Spokane, Washington
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BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS


BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS


ABBREVIATIONS OF PERIODICALS, LEXICA, AND CORPORA

AA = Archäologischer Anzeiger
AAA = Archäologische Anzeigen von Athen
AbbMainz = Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz
AgoraPicBk = Excavations of the Athenian Agora. Picture Book
AION = Annali dell’Istituto universitario orientali di Napoli
AJA = American Journal of Archaeology
AJAH = American Journal of Ancient History
AM = Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Institutes, Athenische Abteilung
AM-BH = Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung, Beilage
AnnRom = Analecta Romana Instituti Danici
AnnArchStorAnt = Annali del Seminario di studi del mondo classico, Sezione di archeologia e storia antica
AntK = Antike Kunst
AntPl = Antike Plastik
ArchDelt = Archaiologikón Δελτίων
ArchEph = Archäologische Ephemeris
ARV2 = J. D. Beazley, Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters, 2nd ed., Oxford 1965.
BAb = Bulletin antike beschauend. Annual Papers on Classical Archaeology
BAC = Bulletin archéologique du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques
BCH = Bulletin de correspondance hellénique
BICS = Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
BMCR = Bulletin of the Canadian Society for Classical Research
BSA = Annual of the British School at Athens
CJ = Classical Journal
CJQ = Classical Quarterly
CR = Classical Review
CVA = Corpus vasorum antiquorum
 GettyMus = The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal
Gnomon = Gnomon. Kritische Zeitschrift für die gesamte klassische Altertumswissenschaft
GRBS = Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies
GRBM = Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Monographs
HSCP = Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
IG = Inscriptiones graecae
IJCT = International Journal of the Classical Tradition
IA = Isrâfîlî Fûrûsân
IJARCE = Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt
Jd = Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts
JdEHE = Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Ergänzungsheft
JHS = Journal of Hellenic Studies
JRS = Journal of Roman Studies
JSAC = Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians
Jew = Journal der jüdischen Geschichte
KL = Klio. Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft
LGPN = Lexicon Greek Personal Names
MAAR = Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome
MedArch = Mediterranean Archaeology. Australian and New Zealand Journal for the Archaeology of the Mediterranean World
MemLinc = Memorie. Atti della Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche
MüJbb = Münchener Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft
MusHelv = Museum Helveticum
NumAntCl = Numismatica e antichità classiche. Quaderni tici
ci
ÖfA = Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut
PA = J. E. Kirchner, Prosopographia attica, 2 vols., Berlin 1901–1903.
PAPS = Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society
RA = Revue archéologique
Reg = Revue des études grecques
RhM = Rhömisches Museum für Philologie
RM = Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung
ScaNT = Scienze dell’antichità: Storia, archeologia, antropologia
SEG = Supplementum epigraphicum graecum
SIMA = Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology
TAPA = Transactions of the American Philological Association
WürzJbb = Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft
GLOSSARY

acanthus: Leaf motif used in the crowning elements of grave markers; refers to a prickly herbaceous plant (genus Acanthus) that is widespread in the Mediterranean area.

acroterion (pl. acroteria): Decorative element at the apex and corners of a pitched roof; seen on pedimental funerary stelai

anakalypteria: Small architectural enclosure with a flat top lined with antefixes

anakalyptesis: Female gesture of imminent unveiling; signifies married status

anakalypsis: Ritual unveiling of a bride during the wedding ceremony

anta (pl. antae): Termination of the side wall of a building, similar to a pilaster

antefix: Decorative upright tiles set along the edges of roofs; some grave markers were carved in the form of a small architectural enclosure with a flat top lined with antefixes

anthemion (pl. anthemia): Crowning element on a grave stele, carved in the form of vegetation, usually a combination of palm fronds and acanthus leaves

apotropaic: Averting evil

architrave: Beam resting on the capitals of columns; the lowest part of the entablature

arkos (pl. arktos): Greek for “bear”; the Arkteia was a ritual of Artemis in which girls performed in a bear-like manner

Artemis: Virgin Greek goddess of the hunt, wild animals, and childbirth

Athena: Virgin Greek goddess of wisdom, warfare, and arts and crafts

Bildfeldstelen (pl. Bildfeldstelen): German term for a type of grave stele with a recessed figural panel, usually carved in low relief

bookroll: Papyrus roll containing a literary text

canellus: Plant stalks

chiton: Long or short belted garment of thin fabric, often buttoned at the shoulders and arms

chlamys: Short cloak fastened on one shoulder

chthonic: Referring to the earth or the underworld

claw chisel: Metal toothed tool used for the removal of the outer layers of the stone; the sides of grave-stones were typically finished with the claw chisel

criss: Armor that covers the body from the neck to the waist.

deme: One of 139 political districts within Attica

demos: The public burial ground for Athenian war casualties

demotic: Name of the deme to which a citizen belonged; frequently included in a funerary inscription

dexiosis: Handshake gesture symbolizing connectedness

diphros (pl. diphroi): Low, backless stool

ekphora: Funerary procession in which the deceased was carried from home to the cemetery

ephebe: 18- to 20-year-old youth who has entered his obligatory military training

epistyle: Greek for architrave

greave: Piece of armor for the lower leg

gryphon: Mythological hybrid creature combining features of a lion, a raptor, and a snake

hanging sleeve: Motif seen on children and young women in which one side of the body is enveloped in a cloak that hangs over the arm in a broad swath of fabric

herm: Stone pillar with sculpted head and erect phal- lus used to mark boundaries or crossroads

Hermes: Greek god of travel and commerce, messenger of the gods, and guide of the soul of the deceased to the underworld

himation (pl. himatia): Heavy, woolen outer garment (cloak) formed of a rectangular piece of cloth worn wrapped around the body

Horos lock: Boy’s ritual hairstyle in which the head is shaved except for one long lock of hair

Hymettian marble: Marble quarried from Mt. Hymettos; fine grained, pale gray to blue gray

Isis: Egyptian goddess of motherhood, children, and magic

kalathos: Woven basket with flaring mouth, often used for storing wool

kanoun: A basket used in sacrificial rites; young maidens carrying such baskets in religious festivals were called kanephoria

kerykeion: Staff of a messenger with two snakes intertwined at the top; Hermes used his kerykeion to guide the dead to the underworld

kistos: Rectangular box or chest

kithara: Large stringed musical instrument

kline (pl. klineai): Bed or dining couch

klismos (pl. klismoi): Chair with a back

kolpos: Pouch of fabric that falls over a belt

kore (pl. korai): Greek for “maiden”; statue of a standing young woman who is modestly dressed; in the Archaic period such statues marked the graves of young women
GLOSSARY

kouros (pl. kouroi): Unmarried youth; in the Archaic period statues of kouros marked the graves of young men
lekythos (pl. lekythoi): Tall cylindrical vessel with a narrow neck, flaring mouth, and one handle
libation: Liquid offering (such as wine) to the gods or the dead
loutrophoros (pl. loutrophoroi): Large elongated vessel with a high neck, flaring mouth, and two handles
melon hairstyle: Female hairstyle in which hair is brushed back and parted symmetrically into a horizontal series of separate strands
metric: Resident noncitizen; an immigrant
naiskos (pl. naiskoi): Small templelike structure with pedimental roof
opisthosphendone: Headband composed of a piece of fabric that is narrow at the ends, broad in the center
overfold: The top of a peplos or chiton that is folded over at the neckline to create a double layer of fabric on the upper torso
paterae: Circular ornaments resembling plates; shallow saucerlike vessels used for pouring libations
patronymic: Father’s name, frequently included in a funerary inscription
Pentelic marble: Marble quarried from Mt. Pentelikon; fine grained, white with micaceous layers
peplos (pl. peploi): Sleeveless woolen garment formed from a rectangular piece of fabric, pinned at the shoulders, frequently belted, and open on one side
peribolos: Family burial plot within the cemetery
petasos: Broad-brimmed hat worn by travelers, including Hermes
phialai: Wide, flat bowls without handles or stems, often with raised central bosses, used for ritual libations; they could also be used for drinking
plectrum: Implement for striking a lyre or kithara
pointed chisel: Metal tool struck with a mallet and used to rough out a sculpture; creates a network of small dimples; the backs of gravestones were characteristically left with a rough-picked surface created by the pointed chisel
press folds: A pattern of lightly carved lines on the clothing of sculpted figures indicating that the fabric had been folded
prothesis: Ritual mourning period when the deceased is laid out before the burial rites
pulvini: Cylindrical cushions or bolsters at the sides of an altar
rasura: In an inscription, letters or spaces deliberately chiseled away or otherwise removed in antiquity
rasp: Filelike tool with sharp raised points used to smooth the surface of stone sculptures; creates a fine network of scratches that overlap and go in all directions
sakkos: Sacklike cloth haircovering
shoulder cord: Band in the form of a figure eight used at the shoulders to hold a dress in place
siren: Mythological figure with the body of a bird and the head of a woman
sistrum: Egyptian musical instrument used in religious rituals; a type of rattle
situla: A pail; a bucket-shaped container
sophronistes: An elected official representing one of the 10 tribes of Athens, responsible for supporting, supervising, and disciplining 18- and 19-year-old young men enrolled in the two-year military and civic training program that was required for Athenian citizenship
sphinx: Mythical winged monster with a woman’s head and frequently chest, and a lion’s body
stele (pl. stelai): Rectangular vertical stone slab used to mark burials; often sculpted and inscribed with the deceased’s name, patronymic, and demotic
strigil: Metal implement used by men after exercising to scrape oil, sweat, and dirt from their bodies
taenia (pl. taeniae): Ribbon or band; long taeniae were tied ritually around funerary monuments; the horizontal flat band separating the top of a stele or naikos from the slab below
trapeza/mensa: Large, low grave marker in the shape of a rectangular box
tunic: Basic garment of varying lengths worn by Romans, usually underneath a cloak; formed from one rectangular piece of fabric
Venus ring: Horizontal crease on the neck; a sign of good health
xoanon: A carved cult image, possibly planklike
THE STUDY OF ATTIC FUNERARY SCULPTURE

This chapter is an overview of studies having funerary sculpture as their primary focus.1 I am not concerned here with the works, nearly equal in number, that deal with Greek and Roman funerary beliefs and rituals.2 While this is a related topic, it is beyond the scope of this catalogue. Even within the area of funerary sculpture, I have further narrowed the list of works cited here, focusing on those which have been of the greatest use to me in my research on funerary sculpture from the Athenian Agora. I do not claim that this is a comprehensive accounting.

For all practical purposes, present-day research on Attic tombstones begins with the monumental work of the 19th-century German scholar Conze. Conze classified in rough chronological order all of the Attic grave reliefs known as of 1911, from the Archaic through Roman periods, and in addition to figural stelai and naiskoi, included funerary lekythoi, loutrophoroi, and plain stelai with decorative tops.3 In the 20th century, Clairmont continued the collection of Attic grave stones, publishing them in a multivolume work.4 Clairmont, however, produced more than simply a catalogue, since his aim was to consolidate older scholarship with newer. On one hand, he honored the corpus of Conze by adding entries, and on the other hand, he expanded the effort by analyzing the iconography in sociological and anthropological terms.

Since then, Bergemann has taken up the process of tabulating funerary monuments by creating an electronic database of over 2,700 examples, with more than 3,200 images of grave reliefs of the late 5th and the 4th centuries B.C.5 The database is available only by subscription through Projektt Dyabola, a commercial venture built and maintained by the Biering &

2. On Greek funerary beliefs and rituals, see Alexiou 1974; Vernant 1981; Gnoi and Vernant 1982; Garland 1985; Sourvinou-Inwood 1995; Steranović 2009. Vernant and his associates at the French Anthropological School of Antiquity (Centre Louis Gernet, Paris) have been particularly influential in recent scholarship on death rituals in antiquity. His writings, in original French, are now collected in Vernant 2007. On Roman funerary beliefs and rituals, see Edwards 2007, pp. 5–9, esp. nn. 25–28, for studies published between 1971 and 2004. See also Hope 2009, p. 3, n. 2, for further studies, but esp. pp. 151–181, on cemeteries and funerary monuments. For a recent work that focuses on the analysis of Latin literary texts pertaining to death rituals, see Erasmo 2008. On the limitations of the analysis of burials as a basis for explaining cultural practices of a given society, e.g., burial rites and customs, see Binford 1971. For a theoretical study using role theory, componental analysis, evolutionary political theory, information theory, and structural-functional theory to illuminate the social dimensions of mortuary practices, see Saxe 1970. Pearson (1999, pp. 27–32) dissects the theories and methods of both Binford and Saxe. On contextual analysis of burial practices in the Roman period, see Pearce 2000.
3. Die attischen Grabreliefs (Conze 1893, 1900, 1906; Conze et al. 1911–1922) lists 2,158 monuments in the index, which does not include some additions that were not assigned individual numbers and a few fragments with no numbers.
Brinkmann company of Germany. Most research libraries make the program available, but the cost is prohibitive for the independent scholar. According to Bergemann, over 160,000 individual entries in the database allow rapid access to complex, iconographic, epigraphic, social, chronological, and geographic aspects. The program, however, is now more than 10 years old and relies upon outdated technologies and paradigms of interaction. A web-based database of Attic funerary sculpture of all periods would be a more useful enterprise for future research; ideally, this would be a central database where current discoveries could be entered by any researcher as they are found.

In 1931, Diepolder addressed the problem of relative chronology by comparing a select number of grave reliefs to securely dated sculptures, thereby establishing through stylistic analysis a decade-by-decade sequence for their production. While his chronology is problematic for the 4th century B.C., the sequence still provides a basis for establishing the relative chronology of Attic Classical grave stelai. The 4th-century chronology remains a difficult issue, despite other efforts to refine it; this was the primary focus of a dissertation by Lygkopoulos, but his arguments are almost exclusively stylistically based, with sculptures fitted into five-year dating spans, and his scheme is ultimately unconvincing. In my opinion, the best that we can achieve is a relative chronology in quarter-century spans.

Mid-20th-century scholarship was concerned with discovering the religious meaning of gravestones and identifying which figures represent the dead and which the living, as we see in studies by Van Hall, Johansen, and Himmelmann-Wildschütz. Van Hall investigates the origin and the religious meaning of the Greek stele, believing that the influence of hero cults is partly responsible for an idealized representation of the dead. It is her opinion that most of the scenes depict the unity of the dead with living members of a family.

Johansen concentrates on problems of interpretation by reviewing past hypotheses, and offers his view that the monuments show the union of the dead with living members of the family in a sphere beyond time and place. Johansen imputes a moral element to the iconography in accord with the idea expressed by Aristotle that the dead are “better and mightier,” (βελτίονες και κρείττονες) than the living. Himmelmann-Wildschütz thought that the element of union was overstated by Johansen and concentrated instead on the differences between the figures of the deceased and those of the living as indicators of the gulf separating the living from the dead. The heroic detachment of the deceased is purportedly evident in the iconography, most often revealed, in his opinion, by the direction of the figures’ gazes, which are not fixed on the survivors.

I have found it difficult to establish rules for determining the deceased individual, in that they cannot be applied to every scene. For example, there is a prevalent belief that figures who are seated are usually the deceased. A survey of gravestones with intact inscriptions, however, reveals that this is not necessarily the case. A case in point is a grave relief in Malibu that depicts a seated woman making the gesture of anakalypsis, associated with married women. From the inscription we learn that she is the mourning mother of the standing, unmarried daughter Mynnia with whom she shakes hands. Here, then, the standing figure is

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8. On the dating of the sculptures in this catalogue, see pp. 52–64, 71.
13. Clairmont (1993, intro. vol., pp. 119–121) touches upon some of these inconsistencies in a section titled “Determining the Deceased.”
the deceased individual. For me, it is the totality of information that a particular gravestone provides that is most important, and this holistic approach is the guiding principle for any given interpretation that I might offer.15

In 1969 Frel attempted to identify specific grave stele workshops by adapting the methodology of Beazley, who structured the study of Attic vase painting.16 Frel’s work has received little critical attention, perhaps because the hand of the sculptor is not easily discernible on reliefs that were executed anonymously with such varying levels of skill. I consider it too speculative to attempt to group the sculptures from the Agora on the basis of workmanship. A major drawback to such an undertaking is that, unlike Greek vases, funerary sculptures were displayed out in the elements, and they have all sustained varying degrees of weathering, which blurs and eventually obliterates toolmarks.

The issue of production was also addressed by Benson, who sought an explanation in the use of pattern books by ancient sculptors to account for the long-noticed repetitiveness of figures in the reliefs.17 Her study analyzed a number of recurring figure types that emphasize the conservative nature of funerary relief sculpture. One such motif is the “hanging sleeve,” exhibited by children, youths, and young women.18 Benson is correct in her assessment that these recurring motifs have traditionally been seen as elements indicating a lesser quality of craftsmanship in relief sculpture than in sculpture in the round. What I have found remarkable, however, in my study of funerary reliefs is the virtually infinite variety and creative use of a set of figure types and motifs by the ancient sculptors of these frequently modest works.

Individual motifs and gestures have been studied by Davies and Pemberton, among others.19 Dēξiōsis, a gesture involving physical contact and interaction between two people, implies solidarity and unity. This is the gesture exhibited most frequently on funerary monuments, including the Agora examples (see Tables 5 and 11, below).20

Other iconographical studies focus on the particular ages and the gender of figures portrayed on Attic funerary monuments. Stears has centered her research on the status of Athenian women by examining both the visual evidence of gravestones and the literary sources on the role of women in funerary ritual.21 The iconography of older women on Attic gravestones is the subject of a study by Pfisterer-Haas; that of old men has been examined by Meyer.22 Representations of children in all types of Greek art have received several treatments in recent years, following Hirsch-Dyczek’s initial study of children on Attic grave-stones.23 A major exhibition on depictions of children in Greek art held at four venues in 2003 and 2004 provided both a focus and a stimulus for research.24

Some scholars have attempted statistical analyses of the iconography of funerary sculpture. For example, a dissertation by Dallas examined costumes on more than 700 Classical Attic grave stelai in order to determine the social identities of the wearers.25 Through costume variations, Dallas designated 13 age groups for male figures and 12 age groups for female

15. Oakley (2004, pp. 213–214) reached a similar conclusion on the issue of determining the deceased among figures visiting tombs depicted on white-ground lekythoi: “It should now be clear that the artisans in both media, the sculptors and the vase-painters, produced stock products whose ambiguity allowed a wide range of customers to find what they wanted in a particular image, and the old question of ‘who is the deceased’ is one that no longer need have a definitive answer for every picture” (p. 214).

16. Frel 1969. On Beazley, see the website of the Beazley Archive (http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/index.htm), especially the section titled “Sir John Beazley and Greek Pottery” under “Resources.”


18. On the “hanging sleeve,” and its relevance to the Agora material, see p. 31.


20. For further discussion of dēξiōsis, see p. 38.


figures. Still, despite the effort and the use of statistical methods, the results produced little that is of practical application. If anything, the study confirms the almost infinite variation in the iconography of a basic set of figure types, costume features, and attributes.

I have benefited from numerous typological studies of funerary monuments. Scholl gathered together all grave stelai of a particular type, the Bildfeldstelen, a humble yet ubiquitous form in the 4th century B.C., and traced the development, function and meaning of these small stelai. His study was preceded by similar typological studies, including those on lekythoi by Schmaltz and on loutrophoroi by Kokula. Möbius provided an invaluable study on the anthemia that crown many grave stelai. Finally, I would also include here Wosch-Méautis’s 1982 work on animals, both real and hybrid, on funerary monuments from the Archaic through the Late Classical periods. These five works have been extremely useful in the identification and dating of fragments from the Agora that belong to these types of monuments, and have laid the foundation for further investigation.

Another basic work is the 1971 book by Kurtz and Boardman, which concerns itself with funerary ritual as well as commemorative monuments. The work is valuable from my perspective because it contextualizes Attic funerary monuments within the Greek world over a long period of time, from the end of the Bronze Age through the Hellenistic period. It has yet to be supplanted, although other important studies have since been published, especially on ancient Greek funerary beliefs and rituals. An analogous study for the Roman world was published in the same year by Toynbee. It, too, has yet to be replaced, and is the only work that I have encountered that specifically addresses the features of Attic Roman grave-stones within the broader subject of death and burial in the Roman period. A review by Rife in 1997 on the occasion of a reissuance of the book updates Toynbee’s bibliography.

Closterman examined how funerary markers of various types functioned within the periboloi, or family burial plots. She analyzed the relationship between burials and markers in the Corner Terrace of the Kerameikos cemetery and found that commemoration in family tombs did not record all the burial activity in the plot. Instead, some burials were selected for commemoration while others were not. Thus, the image of a particular family that was presented to visitors and passersby was a constructed one. The tomb markers expressed a generalized family ideology more than a specific family history.

An integrative approach to the study of Greek grave monuments was attempted by Clairmont in his 1970 monograph on the correlation of epigrams and figured scenes. In his last publication, he did not waver from the conviction that the inscriptions and figural scenes can be used to interpret each other, despite critical opinion to the contrary.

More recently, a similar impulse to study funerary inscriptions in the context of both monument and site is evident in a collection of essays edited by the epigraphist Oliver. The book is a collaborative effort, with contributions by historians, philologists, archaeologists, and epigraphists. Its aim is to demonstrate how inscribed tombstones can illuminate many areas of the lives of ancient Athenians, from the personal to the political, economic,
and religious. Indeed, inscribed tombstones are valuable historical documents. In my own study of inscribed funerary reliefs, iconography and inscriptions frequently synchronize, but sometimes they do not. In such cases, a holistic approach is essential.

There was a trend in the latter part of the 20th century to view gravestones more as cultural artifacts than as objects of art and ritual. Anthropological and sociological approaches to the study of ancient monuments are represented by the studies of Morris and Nielsen et al.\(^{39}\) Morris studied burials, graves, and markers, to illuminate Athenian ritual and social structure through the lens of modern social theory. Nielsen, along with his colleagues at the Copenhagen Polis Centre, created a database of Athenians recorded on funerary monuments, using it for a statistical study of Athenian demography.

Bergemann conducted an iconographic and sociohistorical investigation of how various classes of Athenian society were portrayed as citizens, metics, slaves, and soldiers.\(^{40}\) Bergemann’s examination of grave enclosures and their reliefs demonstrates that it was a person’s place in genealogy, not personal status, that determined the type, size, and quality of a commemorative monument. Furthermore, funerary reliefs of the 4th century B.C. functioned as public displays of the ideal polis family comprising several generations. The individuals depicted therein were exemplars of civic norms and values, rather than portrait types. His work includes the definition of particular head types as corresponding to certain age categories. Those types have now formed the basis for research in Greek portraiture.\(^{41}\)

Each of these three researchers—Nielsen, Morris, and Bergemann—based some of their conclusions upon a selective use of certain funerary monuments, the relatively few that are complete enough or contain the right kind of information to support their theories. But the majority of funerary monuments are not complete, nor have they been found in their original, ancient locations as markers for specific graves. For me, these are critical limitations that prevent a broad application of these particular social and anthropological theories to Athenian society as a whole.

Individual funerary monuments excavated years ago continue to generate questions that lead to new studies and fresh insights. For example, the well-known stele of Dexileos, set above a cenotaph or heroon in the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens, was built for a young horseman killed in the Corinthian War in 394/3 B.C. It was published by Ensoli in 1987 and then researched some years later by both Closterman and Hurwit.\(^{42}\) Hurwit’s study views the monument in the context of an examination of the meaning and function of nudity in Archaic and Classical Greek art.

The large, enigmatic relief of a riderless horse with a groom, in the time since its excavation in 1948, has inspired various ideas about its original character and purpose.\(^{43}\) The relief has been interpreted in various ways, as revetment of a colossal statue base or as the background to a large naiskos. Most recently, Palagia has suggested that it was a memorial to Phokion set up by his family at public expense in the demosion sema shortly after his death in 318 B.C.\(^{44}\) Palagia finds that the military involvement of the Macedonians in Athens beginning in 322 B.C. had an effect on the style and iconography of Attic sculpture that is exemplified by this grave relief.

While all of the aforementioned publications, with the exception of the corpus of Conze, have concerned only Attic grave monuments of the Classical period, some focus on

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41. See Dillon 2006, p. 10.
44. Palagia 2003, p. 150.
the funerary monuments of the Roman period in Athens. These gravestones have traditionally received less attention, just as the Roman period in Athens in general has been neglected over the years. Interest in Roman Athens began to increase in the 1980s, but scholars are still at a disadvantage when studying Roman Attic grave monuments, because basic studies on the relationship of artistic developments to historical events of the period are lacking.45

After Conze, who included gravestones of the Roman period in his corpus, it was not until the 1950s that Muehsam placed the monuments in chronological order on the basis of the letter forms of inscribed examples.46 This methodology is problematic since letter forms in the Roman period lack consistency over time, and thus von Mook, in the most recent compilation of Roman Attic monuments, has turned to hairstyles to construct a chronology.47

Specialized studies of Roman Attic gravestones include one by Walters that focuses on those depicting women wearing a costume connected to the goddess Isis.48 Another project, conducted by Gray, has gathered together all the known Roman gravestones erected for Milesian residents in Athens.49 Gray’s research is on the identity and Romanization of both citizens and noncitizens in Athens as revealed by the presentation of the Milesians on their gravestones.

Lastly, excavations continue in the city of Athens and its environs, with the ongoing discovery of additional examples of gravestones of all periods. In the 1990s, numerous excavations were done in advance of the tunneling that was required for construction of the underground Metropolitan Railway lines and their stations. Graves were the most frequent discovery during these excavations.50 Markers for some of these graves were found in situ, but usually the monuments were found in later fill. This is the case with five of the grave monuments included in the catalogue that accompanied an exhibition of these recently discovered antiquities.51

The thousands of grave monuments found to date provide essential visual information as representations of the citizens, metics, and slaves of ancient Athens, and serve as important social documents for increasing our understanding of ancient culture in Athens. While funerary monuments are cultural artifacts, and I commend the various historians, anthropologists, epigraphists, and archaeologists mentioned above who use them in their research and to support their theories, my primary interest in them is as works of sculpture. The sculptures included in this catalogue were all found during the excavations of the Athenian Agora and were identified by their excavators as sculpture. None of the monuments was discovered in its original location as a grave marker. By necessity, therefore, they are researched here both as new additions to the corpus of relief sculpture and as funerary monuments.

While the focus of sculpture studies may change over time, according to prevailing scholarly taste and theoretical interests, the work all begins with a researcher and a carved material object.52 Only careful looking without preconceived notions of style, iconography, or use can lead to an understanding of those elements. Currently, the focus is on the historical context and the messages of the sculptural images, which in turn create the style of the

45. See Gray 2002, pp. 33–34. Similarly, while there have been in recent years a number of books and articles on funeral ritual and commemoration in the Roman world, most focus on Rome itself, and not one on Roman Athens. See n. 2, above.
46. Muehsam 1952.
51. Stampolidis and Parlama 2000, pp. 205–206, no. 183, a Roman columnar monument; p. 223, no. 198, a Classical decorative loutrophoros; p. 386, no. 446, a Classical Bildfeldstele; pp. 388–389, no. 447, a Classical naikos; and pp. 385–386, no. 445, a siren. Two additional grave stelai of the Roman period were found in secondary-use contexts as construction material for later graves; see pp. 196–197, no. 179; and pp. 394–395, no. 450.
52. For thoughts on the state of sculpture studies near the end of the 20th century, see Ridgway 1994b.
monuments. Artistic merit is not something independent of its role as a medium of social communication. The goal is to place each sculpture in its proper cultural context so that it may function as a bearer of information from its time. There must be a balance between aesthetic appreciation and factual analysis. This is the approach that I have taken, and these are the goals that I have strived to achieve in my research into each of the sculptures in this catalogue.

As this is the third catalogue of sculpture from the Athenian Agora to be published, it is worth recalling some lines from the author of the first two catalogues (Agora I and XI), Evelyn B. Harrison, on the intrinsic value of sculptures from the Agora excavations:

The publication of sculpture from an excavation such as ours cannot aim either at the critical good taste and restraint of a fine museum catalogue or at the objective accuracy and completeness with which excavated pottery is normally presented. It has to fall somewhere between. We share with the first the advantage that some objects of real esthetic interest are present and the disadvantage that hardly any of the pieces has a context of discovery that can really serve to fix its date. Stone, being a partly re-usable material, is far less apt than terracotta to lie quietly in the bed of its destruction. It is always jumping out, into higher levels and lower uses. . . . A great deal can be learned from studying the pieces in connection with each other and with the ancient history of Athens. Sometimes the gain is for the chronology of style; sometimes it is for our understanding of types, their uses and their meaning. In all cases Athens remains in the foreground. If this fascinating and bewildering mass of stones has any shape at all, it is an Attic shape.53