

# A NEW FRAGMENT OF AKROPOLIS 683

(PLATE 65)

AKROPOLIS 683, the little kore with the pointed red shoes, has not suffered for lack of attention in recent years. Payne gave her some much-needed kind words, pointing out that she is "a far better work than many of the statuettes, even than one or two of the large korai."<sup>1</sup> Chr. Karouzos furnished a convincing explanation for the fault Payne could not excuse, "the clumsy and confused scheme of the skirt."<sup>2</sup> Lastly, A. Raubitschek has offered the kore a base and a dedicator.<sup>3</sup> Still there was something that she needed perhaps more than any of these, something that the Agora excavations fortunately have been able to supply.

High up on the north slope of the Akropolis in a Turkish deposit overlying the Panathenaic Way there came to light in 1939 a small scrap of Pentelic marble showing the edge of the kolpos of a thin chiton with rippled folds, overlapping a smoother surface below.<sup>4</sup> The stylization of the crinkly folds is archaic. The convex surfaces and the curved line of the fold show that the fragment comes from the back of a kore, where the edge of the kolpos arches over the buttocks.

The number of Attic korai that wear the simple chiton without a mantle over it is small, for such a figure presents the sculptor with a difficult problem. The bloused and crinkled upper part of the full linen dress neither reveals the lines of the body clearly nor substitutes strong lines of its own. Most makers of korai preferred the small diagonal mantle, whose wealth of sharp vertical folds formed the mainstay of their composition. Of the few existing korai dressed in the simple chiton only No. 683 lacked precisely the part represented by our fragment. That it belonged to her and

<sup>1</sup> H. Payne and G. M. Young, *Archaic Marble Sculpture from the Acropolis*, p. 34, pl. 59, 1-3

<sup>2</sup> *B.S.A.*, XXXIX, 1938-39, pp. 103-105. Karouzos compares 683 with Sikyonian bronze mirror-supports, in which the skirt is held up at one side without displacing the vertical folds at the center. These folds are needed to give a stable axis to the figure. The other chiton-korai from the Akropolis hold the skirt up in the center. Karouzos believes that the sculptor of 683 was himself a Sikyonian.

<sup>3</sup> *B.S.A.*, XL, 1939-40, p. 24, no. V; *Dedications from the Athenian Akropolis*, pp. 313-314, no. 292. He assigns to this kore the larger of two cuttings on a flaring pillar-base, E.M. 6348, *I.G.*, I<sup>2</sup>, 620, with the inscription "Lysias dedicated first-fruits to Athena. Euarchis dedicated a tithe to Athena." The apparent date of the letters, last decade of the sixth century, would fit the style of the kore. The marble is also similar, and what is left of the cutting fits the plinth. Thus there is nothing positive against the attribution. Only the fact that so little of the cutting is actually preserved prevents certainty.

Inv. S 1131. Found March 21, 1939. Height of fragment 0.088 m., width 0.11 m.

*Hesperia*, XXIV, 3

to no other was apparent as soon as one compared the marble and the strangely soft and fussy treatment of the surface. The ripples of the upper part of the chiton are made with a gouge that is very much narrower than the furrows, so that two or three cuts make up the width of the groove.<sup>5</sup> This produces a soft, wavering effect. The folds in the skirt are accompanied by chisel-lines that cut into the flesh, but their ridges are soft. Abrasive marks are prominent on the smoothed portions of the skirt. The fragment joins exactly, and though it does not fill the lacuna entirely it completes the profile, so that the rest can be accurately supplied in plaster.

The result (Pl. 65)<sup>6</sup> is what we might have restored in imagination, except that our imagination is never quite adequate to the completion of an ancient work of art, however unpretentious. Even Langlotz's apposite phrase "kräftige Tiefenentwicklung"<sup>7</sup> hardly prepares us for the abrupt way the buttocks jut out from the small of the back. And yet this is precisely what had to happen. The line of the back in profile now becomes an unbroken succession of balanced curves, swinging in and out with a rhythm that makes artistic sense of the arbitrary proportions of the figure. These proportions can hardly be accidental. The figure as a whole is consistent enough to persuade us that the artist had a definite type in mind, one of those fast-maturing girls of southern stock who develop adult forms before they are grown to full height. The luxuriant hair, not tamed into waves or braids or tresses but springing out in an independent mass above the forehead and on the nape of the neck, is true to this type. So too, perhaps, are the naively showy red shoes that have earned this kore among Greeks of today the nickname of *Χωριασπούλα*, the Country Girl. Those who date the work near the end of the sixth century B.C. cannot be far wrong.<sup>8</sup> Is it too far-fetched to say that in the early days of the democracy a certain demotic flavor appears in Athenian art? Surely there are traces of it in the vase-paintings.

Whether or not there is a conscious realism in his choice of type, our artist betrays an intense interest in naturalistic effects in details. So in the hair he has abandoned ornamental patterns in order to give the impression of the mass and in the dress

<sup>5</sup> Casson, *The Technique of Early Greek Sculpture*, p. 191, gives a very detailed description of these grooves.

<sup>6</sup> The photographs are by Miss Alison Frantz. I am indebted to Chr. Karouzos, Director of the National Museum, and Mrs. Karouzos for having the fragment attached and the gaps filled in with plaster by the Museum's sculptor and for permitting the publication of new photographs.

<sup>7</sup> *Die archaischen Marmorbildwerke der Akropolis*, p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> Langlotz, Karouzos and Raubitschek in the works cited above. Payne (*loc. cit.*) places her around 520.

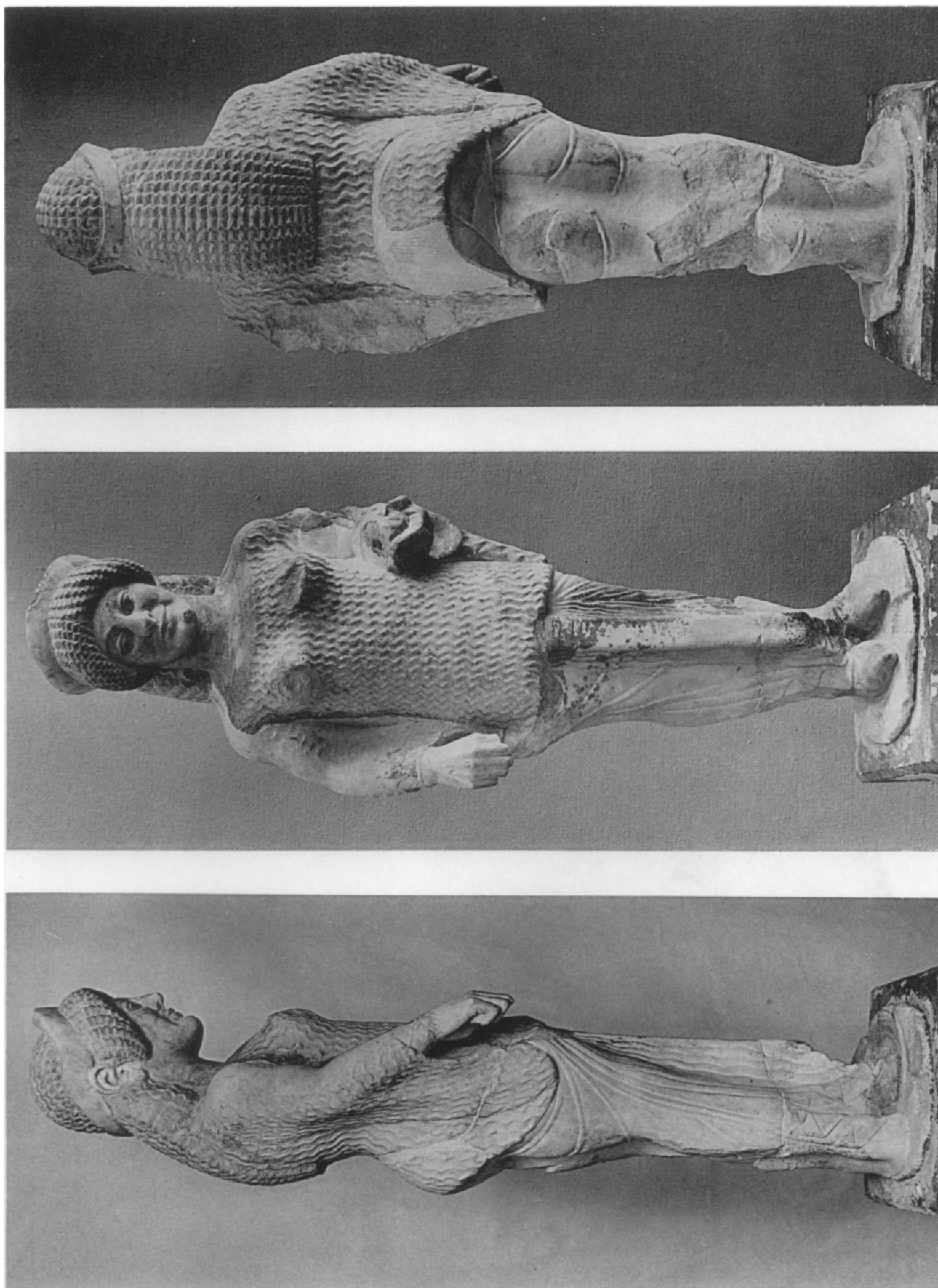
<sup>9</sup> The wavy instead of straight lines used for the edges of the center folds in the kore must have been meant to enhance this effect. They occur also on the famous cup by Peithinos (Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen*, fig. 417); compare especially the part of Thetis's chiton that is held up by her left hand.

he has sacrificed the sharp lines of the conventional composition in an attempt to render the softness of cloth.<sup>9</sup> As Payne suggested, he was not at home in making korai. Even so, had he been willing to follow the rules, he might have produced something that from our point of view would have been more successful. But this was not a time for following rules, and it is to his credit that he chose to take a step forward, however uncertainly.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> I am not sure that we need to make the sculptor a non-Athenian or even to postulate Peloponnesian influence on his work, though the interchange of artists and ideas was so lively at that time that it may be more rash to deny foreign influence than to admit the possibility.



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