

In the Shadow of Antinous

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A MARBLE TORSO in The Metropolitan Museum of Art¹ is illustrated here twice (Figures 1, 2). At first glance, one may hesitate to recognize the piece, even though the view is the same. The difference demonstrates the extent to which the photography of sculpture implies interpretation. This torso has been praised by Schuchhardt² as an excellent Roman copy of an outstanding Greek original from the penultimate decade of the fifth century B.C. Schuchhardt also said that it represents a youthful athlete, perhaps performing a libation, and he saw in its style Polyclitan precision combined with Attic proportions. Recently Ionian affinities of the torso have been emphasized by another scholar.³ No exact replicas are known, but L. Curtius⁴ would like to see in it an echo of the bronze youth from Pompeii. Gisela Richter⁵ took it to be closer to comparable sculptures, one in Rome and one formerly in Darmstadt, to which two others may now be added.⁶ The latter appear among works attributed to the School of Polyclitus in a recent publication,⁷ where a copy of the Dresden Boy is considered as a possible replica of

our piece.⁸ A technical peculiarity of the New York torso not previously interpreted provides a key to its function: while the surface of the obverse is highly polished, numerous traces of the rasp remain on the unpolished flanks and reverse.⁹ The statue was evidently carved to be placed in a niche.

The last point, together with the fact that the torso cannot be traced as a precise copy of any identified Greek work, recalls the bronze youth from Pompeii, whose eclectic nature is generally recognized and whose classification as an original Roman work is accepted.¹⁰ The idea that the New York torso may belong to the same category is confirmed by a closer examination. Some elements of the torso hark back to the severe style: the basic scheme of the anatomy already occurs on the Omphalos Apollo. The stance, on the other hand, is post-Polyclitan of the late fifth century B.C.¹¹ A direct comparison, however, reveals that the spirit differs totally from Greek art. While the modeling affects old-fashioned simplicity, the lines and contours display a sophisticated pattern in which volume is

1. Acc. no. 17.230.21. Height 83.8 cm. G. M. A. Richter, *Catalogue of Greek Sculptures in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1954), p. 38, no. 55, pl. 48 a-c; in addition to bibliography cited there, see W. Schuchhardt, *Gnomon* 30 (1958) p. 489, and *Die Epochen der griechischen Plastik* (Baden-Baden, 1959) pp. 72-73, figs. 60-61, p. 86; D. Arnold, *Die Polykletnachfolge, Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts*, 25. *Ergänzungsheft* (Berlin, 1969) pp. 89-90, note 326, p. 266.

2. Schuchhardt, *Epochen*, p. 86.

3. Arnold, *Polykletnachfolge*, p. 89, note 326.

4. L. Curtius, *Römische Mitteilungen* 45 (1930) p. 23, note 1.

5. Richter, *Catalogue*, p. 38. Statue [restored] in the Palazzo Doria, Rome: P. Arndt and W. Amelung, *Photographische Einzelaufnahmen antiker Sculpturen* (Munich) no. 2660. Torso formerly in the collection of Baron Heyl: E. Langlotz, *Galerie Helbing Sale Catalogue*, 1930, no. 8, pl. 7.

6. One formerly in the art market in Florence (*Einzelaufnahmen*, no. 380); the other in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (*Einzelaufnahmen*, no. 59).

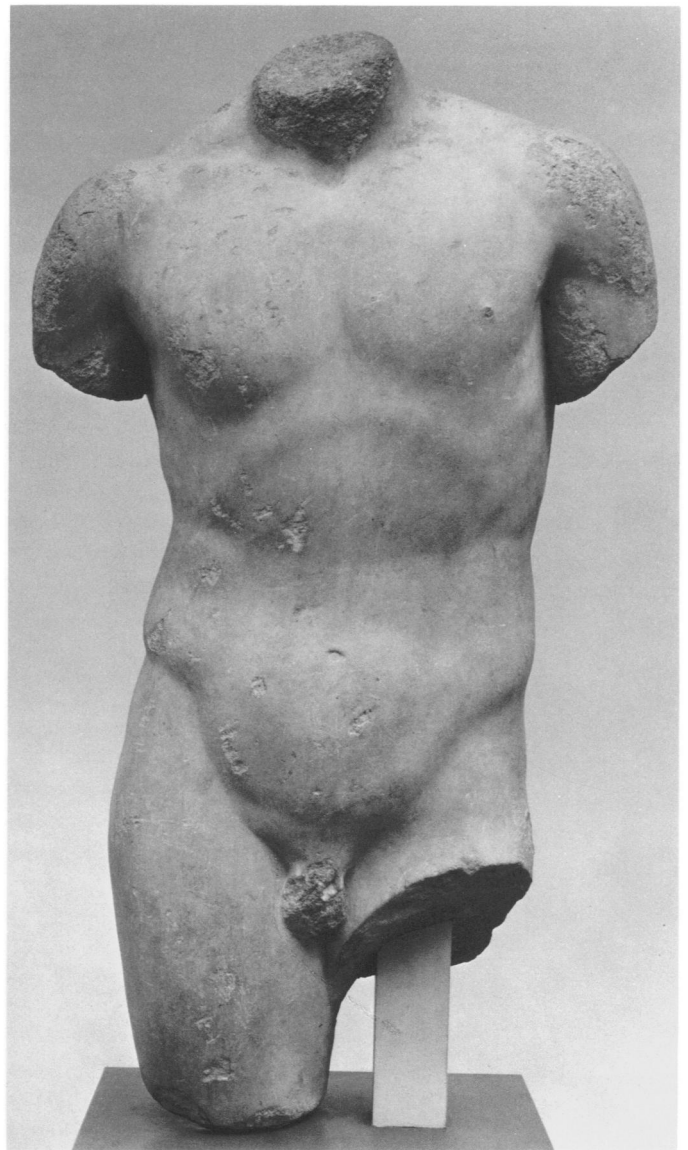
7. Arnold, *Polykletnachfolge*, p. 266.

8. Arnold, p. 261, no. 18. The replica in Berlin: C. Blümel, *Römische Kopien griechischer Skulpturen des 5. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1931) pp. 21-22, no. K 156, pl. 41. The modeling and pattern of the muscles are different.

9. Battering the grain of the grayish, Asia Minor marble (not Parian, as suggested in the *Catalogue*), the sculptor produced a thin but hard "skin."

10. A. Rumpf, "Lychnouchoi," *Critica d'arte* 4 (1939) p. 17; Arnold, *Polykletnachfolge*, pp. 96-97, note 360.

11. Compare especially the Dresden Boy: one replica has the head turned to the right (Arnold, *Polykletnachfolge*, p. 261, no. 14).



FIGURES 1, 2

Torso. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 17.230.21

neglected. Greek tradition is here reinterpreted by the neoclassical school; the torso obviously stands in the shadow of the Stephanos youth.¹² While the image of a beautiful Greek youth is evoked, this is only an appearance. The charm of a Greek ephebe lies partly in his modesty. In contrast, the beauty of the New York youth is glamorous rather than fresh, and no modesty

is evident—the head, which was bent forward, suggests rather a self-conscious introversion.

Effeminate delicacy is combined here with the awkward charm of a “Narcissus” who, though still very young, is already tired. For such a person Antinous inevitably comes to mind, and a comparison with the usual statues of Hadrian’s favorite affirms the identifi-

12. See most recently W. Fuchs, *Die Skulptur der Griechen* (Munich, 1969) pp. 150–152.

cation. The New York torso seems to be a reduced replica of the Antinous Farnese in Naples (Figure 3).¹³ Comparison of the two pieces suggests a third: the so-called Hermes-Antinous in the Salone of the Capitoline Museum (Figure 4).¹⁴ The identification of this statue

as Antinous has generally been denied because the head differs so radically from the recognized types.¹⁵ As the head is broken and the break is masked, the possibility of a modern restoration exists.¹⁶ The body, however, goes together with the statue in Naples and the torso in

13. Fuchs, pp. 151–152; A. Hekler, *Die Bildniskunst der Griechen und Römer* (Stuttgart, 1912) pp. 250a, 251–253 (captions for 250 a and 250 b should be interchanged); arms and legs are restored and the surface has been repolished, as A. Di Franciscis kindly confirms.

14. Hekler, p. 214; W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom*, 4th ed., edited by H. Speier, vol. 2 (Tübingen, 1966) no. 1424.

15. For the heads see C. Clairmont, *Die Bildnisse des Antinoos*, (Rome, 1966); for complete statues see P. Marconi, *Monumenti antichi* 29 (1923) pp. 162–300; in general see also F. de la Mazu, *Antinoo, el último dios del mundo classico* (Mexico, 1966).

16. E. La Rocca, who checked the break, believes that the head is genuine and belongs to the body.

FIGURE 3
Antinous Farnese. The National Museum, Naples (photo courtesy the National Museum)

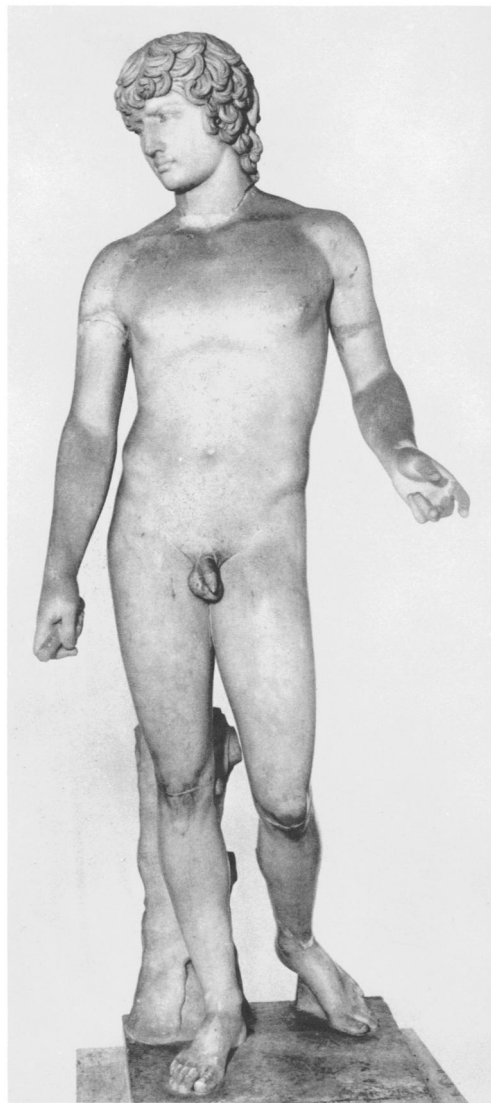
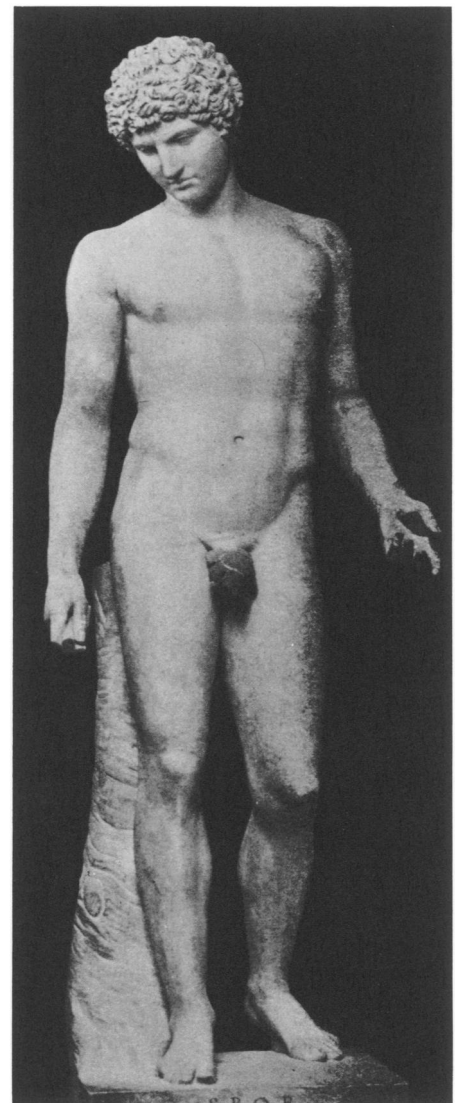


FIGURE 4
Hermes (Antinous?) Capitoline Museum, Rome. From A. Hekler, *Die Bildniskunst der Griechen und Römer* (Stuttgart, 1912)



the Metropolitan Museum. Thus all three sculptures are connected with the shadow of Antinous.¹⁷

The image of Antinous was rightly called the last creation of classical sculpture. The incongruity between the head and the body reveals the taste of the late period, underlining the rhetorical character of this artistic achievement. But the decadent melancholy of a “waking dreamer”¹⁸ persists even in the body alone, as demonstrated by the New York torso. The work recalls another conception of Narcissus:

J’aime . . . J’aime ! . . . Et qui donc peut aimer autre chose

Que soi-même ? . . .

*Toi seul, ô mon corps, mon cher corps,
Je t’aime, unique objet qui me défends des morts.*¹⁹

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17. The miniature replica of the Capitoline Hermes-Antinous in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, is not ancient; it belongs to a group of miniature reproductions of famous ancient sculptures, carved probably in Northern Italy in the seventeenth century. The heads, arms, and legs were carved separately and added to give the appearance of restoration. A partial list, given in *Eirene* 7 (Prague, 1968) pp. 77–79, is here revised and completed:

- (1) Antinous Capitol, The Hermitage: O. Waldhauer, *Die antiken Skulpturen der Ermitage II* (Berlin-Leipzig, 1931) pp. 43–44, no. 154, fig. 45; G. Kieseritzky, *Muzej drevney skulptury*, 4th ed. (St. Petersburg, 1901) no. 285 (head, arms, legs, “restored”).
- (2) Antinous Capitol, estate of E. Brummer, New York (legs and arms missing, head “restored”).
- (3) Herakles Farnese, The Hermitage: Kieseritzky, no. 282 (head, arms, and legs “restored”).
- (4) Variant of the Herakles Farnese, J. P. Getty Museum, Malibu, inv. I 49: *Guidebook*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles, 1956) p. 14 (head, arms, legs, support, and base “restored”).
- (5) Silen carrying the baby Dionysos, The Hermitage: Kieseritzky, no. 291 (both heads, legs of the Silen, legs and right hand of Dionysos “restored”).

(6) Nike Apteros, The Hermitage: Kieseritzky, no. 288 (head and left arm “restored”).

(7) Torso of the Polyclitan Doryphoros, Musée Rodin, Paris: *Eirene* 7 (1968) pls. following p. 78 (head, arms, and legs, now missing, were intended to be “restored”).

(8) Polyclitan torso, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, acc. no. 08.249: L. D. Caskey, *Catalogue of Greek and Roman Sculpture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1925) no. 89 (head, arms, and legs “broken”).

(9) Torso, Detroit Institute of Arts, inv. no. 64.575 (head, arms, and legs, now missing, were intended to be “restored”).

(10) Torso, private collection, New York.

The miniature replica of the Lysippan Apoxyomenos in the Fiesole Museum, (*Antike Plastik* 2 [Berlin, 1963] pls. 60–62) is also modern, but later than our group.

18. J. J. Winckelmann called him “schöner Träumer zwischen Schlaf und Wachen.”

19. Paul Valéry, “Narcisse.” The two last verses were quoted, rather inappropriately, in connection with an early classical marble torso, by L. Curtius (*Jahrbuch* 59/60 [1944/45] p. 29).