ATTIC GREEK ATTITUDES TOWARD CHILDREN'S DEATH: DEPICTIONS ON FOURTH CENTURY GRAVE STELAE

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ABSTRACT

ATTIC GREEK ATTITUDES TOWARD CHILDREN'S DEATH:
DEPICTIONS ON FOURTH CENTURY GRAVE STELAE

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Attic Greek tombstones of the fourth century which depict children help reveal Greek attitudes regarding their children. Previously, scholars believed that the Greek child played a minor or even insignificant role in Greek society. The child's less elaborate burial and the Greek practice of exposing infants supported this theory. However, literary evidence contained in epigrams and epitaphs, as well as gravestones depicting children during the fourth century refutes this argument. Infants and young children are frequently portrayed on stelai. The boy's head from the Kresge Art Museum is an example of a figure from this type of monument. Children add an extraordinary pathos to these scenes and indicate that the Greek child was indeed loved and cherished.

To my family,
for their love and understanding

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CHAPTER 1

DEATH IN CLASSICAL GREECE

"We should not mourn overmuch for those who are dear to us. They are not dead; they have only gone before on the road that all must travel. Some day we too shall come to the same inn, to spend the rest of time in their society."[1] Funerary ideas about death in ancient Greece are much different from those of today. The Greeks not only believed in different gods, but also thought of death as a process. While modern society believes that the dead go directly to the next world, the ancient Greeks believed that the soul had to make a transition from earthly to otherworldly, and this process took a considerable amount of time. Precise rituals and preparations were performed before the body could be buried. The Greeks beliefs about death and the afterlife in Hades were ambiguous. Though the Greeks believed that the spirit existed after death, they also believed it had no influence or power over itself or others. The spirit was only allowed its memories of earthly life.

The gods, who were little help to the journeying Greek soul, had no control over an individual's fate. The Greeks believed that the gods were immortal and had no concept of death; therefore, the Greeks also believed that the gods were unable to look upon death. Purification, ritual lament and a show of wealth were important to release both the grief of the living and the spirit of the dead. Therefore, the deceased's relatives were obligated to provide a proper burial with correct purification rituals; this granted the

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dead soul peace in the afterlife.

Since the Greeks believed death was an inevitable evil, they accepted their own demise. Greeks thought that in Hades their spirits had no power or influence. Their existence would continue, however distasteful and dismal. Homer's Odyssey expresses this cheerless attitude as the ghost of Achilles says to Odysseus, "Do not speak lightly of death to me, great Odysseus. I should wish to be attached to the soul as the serf of another, of some landless man with meagre resources, rather than be lord of all the dead."[2] Any life, even the life of a serf, was considered better than the existence of a dead soul in Hades. The soul's existence was limited to remembering the joy and sorrow of earthly pleasures and pains. The consolation of death was that the Greeks would rejoin their deceased loved ones.

Sometimes the living sent messages to the next world through the newly departed. In Euripides' play Hekabe[3], Polyxene, who is about to die, asks her mother if there is a message for Priam. But it is unclear why the Greeks would wish to do this, as they thought the dead were mindless and not capable of actually communicating. N.J. Richardson writes that they "...have no strength or real life."[4] When Odysseus calls upon the ghosts, only the prophet Teiresias retains his full intellect.[5] Ghosts flittered about Hades with no care or understanding of the living world. Shadows of the people they once were, they had no substance or hope.

By the fifth century, the Greeks held varying thoughts

about death. Literary sources are scarce, but Robert Garland, summarizing Plato's thoughts, writes, "...the majority of dead, all those, that is, who are judged to have lived a neutral life remarkable neither for its goodness or badness, are conveyed in boats to the Acherusian Lake, where they dwell, undergoing purification, until such time as they are sent back to be born again as living creatures."[6] * The Greeks, then, believed that death was a change in the state of the soul.

Only those who died on the battlefield or as heroes could hope for a different existence after death. The spirit of a hero was thought to have supernormal power and was given a special funeral. These souls, instead of going to Hades, were taken by boat to the Elysium Plain; there they could continue a peaceful and tranquil existence. These heroes were also given special funeral processions and speeches. The names of those who died in a common battle were inscribed on a public monument as a special tribute. This monument would also be adorned with a carved relief depicting their heroism.

Ordinary Greeks hoped for some rewards in the afterlife, but they realized their outlook was bleak. Epitaphs indicate this ambivalence.

> "...If the good receive a prize in the underworld,
> You now, I know, enjoy first place with Pluto and Persephone."[7]

* It is uncertain if the general Greek public subscribed to this notion.

and

> "If piety finds favor with Persephone,
> Fortune, through death, grants this reward to you."8

Though such rewards were hoped for, the majority of epitaphs say nothing about the afterlife.

> "Had you, by fortunes escort, attained maturity,
> We all foresaw in you, Macareus, a great man,
> A master of the tragic art among the Greeks.
> But now, in death, your reputation does remain
> For temperance and virtue."9

Greeks held a wide variety of attitudes and feelings about death and continued existence. Although they are thought to have lived life to the fullest and to have had an exquisite sense of beauty, their concept of death was, by comparison, empty and meaningless. W.K.C. Guthrie feels that the Greeks sought immortality through procreation, living on through their children.[10] G. Lewis Dickinson writes, "There is no suggestion anywhere of a personal existence continued after death; the dead live only in their deeds; only by memory are the survivors to be consoled."[11] Consolation lies not in death, but in life. Those left behind kept the memory of the departed alive by remembering the deceased's deeds and accomplishments. Dickinson sums this up, "...seek consolation for death, if anywhere, then in life, and in life not as it might be imagined beyond the grave, but as it had been and would be lived on earth..."[12] The living linked the past and the future.

The funeral and interment of the body was most important to the transition of the soul. Without a proper

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funeral, the soul could not descend to Hades and was stranded between the earth sphere and the netherworld. It was not only unthinkable, but illegal to leave a relative unburied. For such an offense one would pay a heavy fine and lose status. Charles Gulick writes, "Without burial, it was believed that the unfortunate spirit of the dead must wander in eternal unrest, visiting with reproach his neglectful kinsmen."[13] Fear, not of the dead, but of the gods' vengeance, prompted the relatives to fulfill their duties. Though powerless, the dead became upset if these neglectful kinsmen came near the grave. Garland writes, "Certainly the dead retained the use of their senses enough to be able to perceive when a friendly or hostile presence approached their graves."[14] The dead possessed some status among the the living, however minor.

The Greeks followed three distinct procedures when a person died. First, they laid out the body, a ceremony called the prothesis; next, they carried the body to the cemetery, a procession called the ekphora; finally, they buried the deceased. Each procedure was considered a means to help guide the soul from one life to the next.

In performing the prothesis, first the eyes and mouth of the deceased were closed. Garland suggests that this released the psyche from the body; a third century inscription from Smyrna supports his theory.[15] A woman member of the immediate family was responsible for thoroughly washing and anointing the body, which was then dressed in white; if the person had been newly married,

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wedding attire was used. The deceased's bed served as the bier; it was wrapped in a bier-cloth (stoma) and decorated with ribbons and garlands. A chin strap, probably made of linen, was placed around the body's head to prevent the mouth from sagging open. Later, a pillow placed under the head served this same purpose. Only the deceased's head and feet were left exposed; the feet pointed towards the door, indicating the last journey of the soul.[16] An obol, placed in the deceased's mouth, provided passage money. The deceased would give this to the ferryman, Charon, as payment for his soul's journey over the river Styx to Hades.

The deceased's head was decorated with a wreath which could be made of metal. However, wreaths of laurel, myrtle, olive and parsley were common. Aristophanes writes that wreaths were given "for having fought their contest with life."[17] The Greeks took great care to ensure that the funeral proceedings were performed in grand style.

Greek legislation prohibited the prothesis from occurring outside; it took place indoors or possibly in the household courtyard. H. Blumner states that "care was taken that the sun should not shine on the corpse, since even the sun god must not pollute himself by the sight of a dead body."[18] A cypress branch over the door indicated to others that a family member had died. A bowl of water was left at the door for mourners to purify themselves.

The prothesis could last for many days in early Greek society. The funeral of Achilles lasted seventeen days; Hector's lasted nine, and Patroklus' two. However,

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restrictive legislation from Solon in Classical times shortened funerals; usually the body was buried within three days. While this diminished the grand proceedings and exorbitant expenses, it benefited the community by improving sanitary and hygienic conditions.

After the body was laid out, lamentation, at which women mourned in accordance with set rites, commenced.[19] Women sang the dirge while men repeated the refrain; this lasted the whole day. As relatives and friends came to pay their last respects, the chief mourner, usually the wife or mother, stood at the head of the deceased while the others stood around the bier. Funerary plaques and vases indicate that men entered from the right with their right arm raised while the women either touched the body or, more frequently, raised their arms to tear their hair or hit their heads. Alexiou says, "...the violent tearing of the hair, face and clothes were not acts of uncontrolled grief, but part of their ritual indispensable to lamentation throughout antiquity."[20] These laments came in two forms; one, a prepared dirge, had specific funerary laments; the other, the goos, was a lament sung by relatives and friends about the deceased in which the family and friends shared stories about the deceased's life and their bitterness at his loss. Professional mourners were sometimes hired to participate in the prepared dirges, making the funeral appear large and grand. The Greeks believed the deceased could see his funeral and the outpouring of grief his mourners displayed.

The ekphora, the second step in burial process, was the procession of the body through town to the cemetery. Before Solon's reforms, the dirges were long and loud. The route to the cemetery took the mourners throughout the city; this showed the community how well the relatives were taking care of the deceased. Solon's reforms forced the mourners to walk in silence and follow a direct route to the cemetery. Male relatives and friends led the procession carrying weapons; the body followed in a horse drawn carriage; the women walked behind the body. Solon limited the number of females to the nearest relations. Frequently, women close to the deceased cut off their hair as a public sign of grief.

Since the sun could not shine on the corpse, the procession began before sunrise. Although Solon's regulations attempted to diminish the grand proceedings, Garland writes that, "If unchecked, the mourners did not proceed in silence to the cemetery, but would make frequent halts at street corners so as to attract the maximum amount of attention."[21] The need to make a show of wealth did not diminish. Flautists, though possibly limited to ten, played as the body was taken to the cemetery. Pall-bearers were often hired; if, on the other hand, the deceased belonged to a special group, such as musicians, actors or philosophers, his colleagues would convey the body.

Interment of the body took two forms; inhumation and cremation were equally acceptable during Classical times. Coffins varied; some were box-like; others were oval; some were even made of terra-cotta tiles. The burials themselves

also varied; the poor had simple coffins which were buried together in large graves, while the wealthy had individual graves or family plots.

The Greeks, as in many other cultures, buried objects with the deceased. When a person was cremated, the objects were burned or broken with the body. The ashes were then gathered and interred. When buried in a coffin, the deceased's personal and sentimental objects were placed with him. A deceased woman might have had vases, oil flasks, jewelry and even a mirror buried with her. A child might be buried with its favorite rattle or cart. Musicians were always buried with their instruments, and athletes with a strigil. The quality of goods in the grave diminished as time passed. Garland writes, "A progressive deterioration in the quality of goods deposited in the grave is detectable from the Classical period onwards..."[22] However, this does not mean the Greeks were less interested in the welfare of the dead. Solon's reforms sought to limit the amount of goods that might be placed with the deceased. Less public attention given to funerals decreased the need for a grand show of wealth and expensive goods. People turned more to the needs of the deceased. Because only the nearest relatives could come to the funeral, people were now, in keeping with Solon's reforms, more able to stay within their means. The quality and quantity of grave gifts then declined, although not the intentions of the givers.

Offerings to the deceased were made on the third, ninth, thirtieth days, after one year and also at certain

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festivals, such as the Anthesteria. After the burial, men and women left the cemetery separately; the men stayed to complete the burial. The mourners then began a series of purifications; the mourners who were close to the deceased washed in clean water, and the entire house, including the furniture, was washed in sea-water and hyssop.[23]

Three days of fasting were followed by a funeral banquet, called the perideipnon, where a place was set for the deceased. At this banquet, the mourners comforted one another and reminisced of happy times spent with the deceased.

On the ninth day, mourners gathered at the tomb to give sacrifices and offerings. Margaret Alexiou writes that these offerings included "milk, honey, water, celery, Pelanon (a mixture of meal, honey and oil) and Kollyba (the first fruits of the crops and dried and fresh fruits)."[24] The sacrifice of small animals was also permitted. These gifts were accompanied by prayers and ritual supplications. Women decorated the tomb with ribbons and garlands and said additional prayers.

The thirtieth day marked the end of public mourning; at this point, the Greeks believed that the soul was peacefully at rest. Mourners visited the deceased during some festivals, especially the Nekysia, a day devoted to the dead, and on the anniversary of the deceased's birth and death. The Greeks thus remembered and took care of their dead. Shade trees were planted and the graves were decorated with wreaths and ribbons. They believed that

visiting the grave was helpful to the dead.

Although the Greeks believed in an afterlife, no religious service was performed, and priests were unnecessary in burying the dead. Blumner writes, "There does not appear to have been any other ceremonies connected with the funeral, nor did it bear a specially religious character..."[25] Garland writes, "At least some priests were forbidden all contact with the dead."[26] While it was a religious occasion, priests were not present because relatives were responsible for taking care of the dead and guiding the soul to the next life. Prayers helped ease the soul through the transition to Hades, but once the soul arrived, prayers were unnecessary. The Greeks treated their dead with the utmost respect, reverence and piety, and their determination to help the soul journey to Hades was strong and sincere.

In general, children were buried much differently from adults. Their burials were less expensive and the rituals were less complex. To some scholars, this indicates that the Greeks cared less for their children. Greeks may have become hardened to a high infant mortality rate and to premature death due to sickness or accident. Nevertheless, gravestone reliefs, epitaphs and epigrams provide ample evidence that the Greeks cared deeply and sincerely for their children.

CHAPTER 2

THE DEATH OF A CHILD

In today's society the death of a child can overwhelm even strangers with sadness, and the burial of these children reflects the emotional state of the mourners. For the Greeks, too, the death of a child was painful and disturbing. But how the Greeks felt about their children, especially those under age six, has been much debated. Some, like R. Hertz and E. Eyben, state that a high infant mortality rate caused the Greeks to become hardened to the death of a child; Greek parents may have stood somewhat apart from their children to lessen the emotional impact of a premature death. Others, especially H. Bolkestein, feel that Greek children were looked upon more affectionately. Depictions on tombstones, in inscriptions of epitaphs and epigrams provide evidence that the Greeks did indeed care for their children.

The burial of a child was similar to that of an adult, except it was done with less apparent care and expense. The burial of infants and young children was entirely different from the burial of adults. These children could be buried within the city limits, but unlike adults; should a child and grown relative die at the same time, they could be buried together outside the city. Rules for interring children were quite lenient, possibly to spare the parents additional grief. Adult burials within the city of Athens ended by 500 B.C., but burials of children were considered

exempt from this prohibition. It was presumed that children did not create problems with sanitary conditions.

The most common burial containers for children were clay vessels. According to Robert Garland, "...The principal shapes being coarse-ware pithoi, hydrai, and amphorai, occasionally with incised decoration but often left plain."[27] The child was placed in the pot; if the child was larger, the pot was broken to fit the child and then reassembled. Grave gifts would be placed both inside the pot and in the grave with the child.

During the Classical period, children were often buried in clay tubs, one inverted over the other to form an inexpensive version of the adult sarcophagus. These were often brightly painted both inside and out. Grave offerings were almost always included, often in miniature. Kurtz and Boardman write, "...some vessels which looked like infant burials were found filled with small vases and since there was scarcely room even for an infant these were possibly offerings."[28*] Another method of burial required the placement of clay tiles or pipes over the body; this method was reserved for older children. The grave offerings were positioned around the body, clay tiles were placed over the corpse, and earth was used to cover the entire grave.[29]

There were no standardized burial containers; many types of pots were used. Hydrai, pithoi and amphora,

*They also write, "Offerings, often miniatures, lay inside or outside the burial pot, since the pit was large enough for the pot and a few offerings."

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especially the Chian Amphora, were frequently used for child burial during the Classical period. After the child was placed inside, the mouth of the pot was sealed using a stone or clay. The objects given at the funeral, the positioning of these objects, as well as the positioning of the body itself indicates the care taken in burying the child.

There are an abundance of children's graves in Athens, which documents the high infant and child mortality rate. Because children were exempt from funerary legislation, they could be buried in a number of places, including within the city walls, in courtyards or even under floors. In the Agora, a child was buried beneath a building with his pet piglet.[30] In Classical times children were generally buried with their families in designated plots. They could be buried in adult graves, no doubt some with their mothers, but extraordinary care was taken to insure that the adult was not disturbed in any way. There are instances in which infants were interred together in a specified area. These infant cemeteries have been found at Eleusis, Anavyssos, Thorikos and Pharelon.[31]

Ancient literary sources indicate that the cremation of infants was an accepted, though limited, practice. Because very little evidence remains, it is difficult to determine the extent to which infant cremation occurred. Kurtz and Boardman write, "...in most cases the soft skeletal remains were probably reduced to imperceptible bits by the fire."[32] Compounding this problem, remains of infant cremations are difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish from burnt

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offerings to the deceased. Both rituals would have taken place in the cemetery; burnt offerings to the adult dead included small animals and birds, whose burnt skeletal remains bear striking resemblance to those of cremated infants. Ancient sources, such as Pliny, state that children were not cremated until after the teething stage. Although infant cremation was an accepted practice in Athens, it was certainly limited. Garland cites traces of infant cremation dating to the fourth and third centuries B.C. in the Athenian Agora. He says, "...(they) may perhaps be connected with the death of those infants who had been exposed by their parents or who simply died prematurely."[33]

A wide assortment of objects have been found in the graves of children. These items include rattles, dolls and toy carts, which were favorite toys of the deceased. Ordinary gifts, such as lekythoi, amphorae and cups were sometimes done in miniature for the child. Another such offering was a small spouted pot called a feeder, which was used as a child began eating solid foods. Included in the grave offerings, the chous was a juglet given to the child at the festival of the Anthesteria. The second day of this festival was called the Choes, in which each three year old child was given a wreath, a chous, and a small cart. This presentation marked the child's entrance into the Greek religious community. Most of these choes date to the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. The scenes painted on them depict children pulling carts or playing games. Some also have funerary scenes such as children playing in front of a

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stele. A miniature chous was placed in infant and toddler graves to make up for what they had been deprived of by premature death.

The Ancient Greeks cared for the child itself; not what he would be, but what he was. Hopes for the future were placed on him, but the joy of the child as he lived every day was most important. The burial of a child was done with less expense not necessarily with less care, than that of an adult. Less preparation and ritual were performed not because the infant dead were considered less important, but, rather, because they were thought to be close to the gods. They had not existed long enough to be brought into the Greek community; they were still close to the underworld from which they came. Plutarch says, "...(there is) no need for funeral rites because their souls depart immediately to their proper habitation and have no portion of earth or earthly things."[34] The infant's soul therefore did not need the community's ritualistic lamentation as guidance in descending from the earthly realm to Hades. Knowing that the child's soul quickly made its way back to Hades consoled the parents, just as today's Catholics are comforted in the belief that children go straight to God because they have no sin.

The death of a child was painful to the parents, and fellow Athenians sympathized with their pain. In contrast, Robert Hertz writes, "The death of a new-born child is, at most, an infra-social event, since society has not yet given anything of itself to the child, it is not affected by its

disappearance and remains indifferent."[35] Greek gravestones, epitaphs and epigrams refute Hertz's theory.

Although Athenian families were small because of a high infant mortality rate, contraception and sterility, Athens may well have had a normal population distribution, according to the research of A.W. Gomme.[36] The infant mortality rate was higher than today's, due to the lack of medical knowledge. While infants were born at the normal rate, complications during pregnancy and birth increased the death rate of both mothers and infants, in Gomme's opinion. Other scholars have disagreed with Gomme's theory. Emil Eyben writes, "...large numbers of people who did desire children were confronted with sterility, miscarriages, or an appallingly high infant mortality rate."[37] The support for his argument lies in his translation of a line by Aristotle, which Eyben interprets to say, "Most children die before their seventh day."[38] Gomme, on the other hand, translates this same passage from Aristotle as saying that the majority of infants who die, do so within the first week; this reading supports Gomme's theory that the infant mortality rate was not extraordinary. Unfortunately, the meaning of an author can be lost through translation and even create inaccurate assumptions such as Eyben's.

Because the possibility of women dying in childbirth was high, birth was considered a serious undertaking. If a child was too big for the birth canal, both mother and child usually died. If there were problems with bleeding after the birth, the mother gave her life for her child. Because

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these women gave their lives to create another, they were honored as heroines.[39]

There is little information about contraception. There is mention of Potions and the rhythm method, as well as magical practices which were believed to prevent pregnancy, are mentioned briefly in ancient sources. However, abortion is mentioned more frequently because men, who wrote the majority of literature at this time, also performed the abortions. Emil Eyben writes that there were many ways to induce abortion. "Certain bodily exercises-e.g. excessive jumping, carrying heavy loads, constricting the body, loud sneezing (!)-were held to be effective."[40] Potions, sharp instruments and superstition were also engaged. Exposure was seen as an alternative in Athens.

The extent of the exposure of children in Athens is much debated. Some scholars, such as Eyben, think it happened regularly, possibly to to keep down the population; others believe that by the Classical period, it happened only infrequently. The right to expose an infant was limited to the first few days after birth. The Amphidromia, the naming day of an infant, occurred five to ten days after the infant's birth; the community celebrated, and gifts were given to both mother and child. At the Amphidromia the father declared the child his own and gave it a name. Blumner writes it was, "...to welcome and dedicate with religious rites the newborn child and what name they shall give it."[41] Children who were not claimed could still be brought up, but they had no legal claim to their father's

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inheritance or status. When the father had little money, girls were more likely to go unclaimed than boys. However, if a father had a number of boys and did not want his land and inheritance split, the boy also could remain unclaimed. The father also had the right to rid himself entirely of the infant by exposing it.

There many reasons for exposing infants, but the most common one was malformation. A malformed infant was thought to be a bad omen for the entire household. Socrates says, "We must look at our offspring from every angle to make sure we are not taken in by a lifeless phantom not worth rearing. Or do you think that your child must be reared in any case and not be exposed?"[42] Spartan people demanded that all malformed infants be exposed; a committee would examine the child and declare it fit, or require it to be exposed. The Athenian father made this choice; he decided the fate of his child. It appears exposure was not something the Greeks did without considerable thought of the consequences. Once the decision was made, "The mother had to abide by her husband's decision, even though the exposure of her child...was undoubtedly a hard blow," says Emil Eyben.[43]

In the late 1800's, G. Glotz and others believed that infant exposure was used as a population control, specifically performed by professionals, but recent evidence has disproved this hypothesis. Bolkestein writes, "...the assumption frequently made, that the Athenians regularly got rid of a certain number of their children by exposure, must be absolutely eliminated."[44] Glotz interprets an ancient

Greek passage to say that a professional woman buried exposed infants. Bolkestein refutes this, interpreting these words to mean a woman who performs purification rites or or who carries a vase to the grave.[45] Literary sources indicate that exposure did indeed occur, though no evidence has been found concerning its frequency in Classical Athens. Poseidippos, a comedy writer, in a now famous phrase, says, "If you have a son, you bring him up, even if you're poor, but if you have a daughter, you expose her, even if you're rich."[46]

Because ancient Greek society was dominated by men, girls were more often exposed than boys. Since adolescent girls would need a dowry, they were considered a burden to their fathers. A son, on the other hand, could be given a share of his father's estate to manage. While too many sons could split the estate into small portions, some died in wars or on journeys; the number of heirs might be only one or two. A small family was desirable; if too many children were born, the father dealt with them as he would.

A child fated to exposure could be killed immediately by drowning or strangulation, but often it was abandoned by a slave or midwife. The parents were too emotionally distraught to do it themselves. According to Eyben, the child was often placed in a basket or earthenware pot and taken to the temple or other frequented place. There, the infant might have had a better chance of being found and raised. A token from the parents, such as a piece of jewelry or cloth, was left with the child. This served as

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both a recognition piece, if the child was raised by others, and also as a grave gift or offering. But realistically, as Eyben says, "...it is a fact that many - perhaps the majority - did not survive. They succumbed to hunger or cold or both, or were devoured by dogs or birds of prey."[47]

Thus, according to both literary sources and some scant archeological evidence, the Greeks did expose some infants. During the Classical period, it was an accepted practice, but not a frequent one. The Greeks probably believed that this practice was best for both themselves and the child. The Greeks profound love for their children is especially evident in the tombstones and epitaphs done for their children.

CHAPTER 3

THE ROLE OF CHILDREN IN CLASSICAL GREECE

Greek tombstones depicting children have a universal appeal, evoking an emotional response from the observer. Many reliefs capture the child's confusion over the death of a loved one. Tombstones picturing a child reaching for his mother or laying his head in her lap, show the mother and child sharing eternally a last intimate moment. Such reliefs portray not only the strong bond of love, but also the despair that this love can survive only in stone.

Aside from their emotional appeal, Greek stelai can be categorized in variety of ways, such as in type of framing or style of letter, mode of inscription, or variety of subject matter in figurative representations. Christoph W. Clairmont groups stelae according to framing, type of capital, and type of entablature.[48] The categories observed in this study concern the scenes depicted in relief on these monuments. Different facets of Greek life were shown on the tombstones. How frequently a particular scene is depicted would suggest its relative importance by comparison with other scenes.

Typically, a Greek citizen would be buried in a large family vault, where a name would simply be added to the monument stone. Children buried their parents with their grandparents or other relations. In the event of an unusual or unexpected death, however, when the family and friends were deeply sorrowed, a special monument might be erected as

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a sign of special affection: for a man who had died in battle or at sea; for a woman who had perished in childbirth; and especially for someone who had died as a child or as a young person before marriage. The most sorrowful of premature deaths was that of a girl who had not reached the marriage bed, and of the young man who had not fulfilled his promise. Small children and even babies were given special recognition by grieving parents. That the epigrams about the infant Hermonax, who is stung to death by bees[49], and the toddler Corax, who fell and died[50], were written at all indicates the depth of feeling the adult Greeks could hold for their children. These feelings were overwhelming and the sadness was difficult to overcome.

A number of scenes occur frequently on gravestones concerning children. Most of these scenes can be placed in one or another of five distinct categories: (1) infant with mother, (2) child with a single man or woman, (3) family scene, (4) child with heroic nude, and (5) a single figure, either of a boy or a girl. Everyday Greek life is prominent in these categories. The gravestones allow the modern observer a glimpse of the life of ancient Greek children; the epigrams and epitaphs provide further clues concerning ancient Greek attitudes toward children and their role in society.

An unusual gravestone, a fourth century monument from Athens, shows a woman apparently in the throes of labor (Plate 1). Attended by two women, she falls back onto a seat

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as her birth pangs begin. A man stands to the left with his face averted from the scene. This type of stele was undoubtedly reserved for women who died in childbirth, and thus given heroic status.

> Who is dead? A heroine. How and when? With the weight of a child in her womb she (died in) travail (and) buried it.51

A monument was created specifically to commemorate this type of death, indicating the importance of bearing children. The tragedy was heightened if the child also died.

Much more frequently, tombstones portray a swaddled infant held by a servant standing near the seated deceased mother. (Plates 2-4). This may also depict a woman who died in childbirth. However, it is difficult to determine whether the infant died with the mother or if the servant shows her the babe she will never know. The child being offered to the mother or the mother receiving the infant indicates that the infant may also have died (Plate 4, figure 1).

Plate 5 includes obvious examples of a mother and child dying together. Plate 5, figure 1 depicts a seated Ampharete holding her grandchild in her arms. The inscription reads:

> Here I hold my daughter's child, the beloved one, which I used to hold on my knees when, living, we beheld the rays of the sun, and now, dead. I hold the dead child.52

Even in death, they have the solace of each other's company. The representations of a child seated on its mother's lap suggests that they died at the same time.

Plates 6-7 show infants in loose wrappings, extending themselves towards the deceased mother. These scenes are

especially touching as the lively, squirming child reaches trustingly towards the mother he has lost. In Plate 6, the mother accepts with open arms the child being given to her, which indicates that the child died with his mother. However, the mother in Plate 7 does not even recognize the child extended to her; a possible interpretation is that though she died, her child survived.

Another representation depicts a child not yet able to walk, reaching for an extended toy or pet held by the deceased adult. Plate 8, figure 2 shows a monument erected to Mnesagor and her little brother Nikochares. Mnesagor holds a bird out to her brother who reaches for it. The inscription clearly states that they died together, perhaps suffering the same illness. Other representations (Plate 8 and 9) of this scene show the child sharing a joyous moment playing with the deceased adult. In these scenes, it is difficult to determine if both died. Later in the Hellenistic Age, children alone and even infants alone, become a focal point on grave stelai (Plate 10).

These reliefs show that children were accepted and loved from birth. The epigrams also support this.

> I was weeping for the death of my Theionoe; yet, because of my hopes for her child, lighter were the griefs with which I moaned in Harmony. But now envious Fate has bereaved me of the infant as well,- alas, child, I am cheated even of you, all that was left. Persephone, listen to this, at a father's lamentation: lay the child on the bosom of its departed mother.
> Bianor53

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"Children are a woman's prayer,"
Polyxo cried. Then she gave birth
To three boys. Through her belly's tear,
A midwife slid them onto earth
The children lived; dead was their mother.
God gave them life and killed another.
Antipater of Thessalonica54

My house was shaken and collapsed; only by bed-chamber stayed erect, the walls shaken but upright. As I cowered beneath them, my ill-starred birth-pains came upon me, and I joined to the earthquake a second cause of fear. But Nature herself was midwife to my travail, and we both saw together the sunlight above the earth.
Antiphilus55

A blind and childless woman, who prayed that she might either recover her sight or bear a child, gained both blessing. For not long after she was brought to bed, as she never had expected and on the same day saw the sweet light of day for which she had longed with all her heart. Both her prayers were heard by Artemis, the deliverer in childbed and the bearer of the white-rayed torch.
Antipater of Thessalonica56

This inscription, product of Diodorus' art, tells that I was carved in mournful memory of one who died before her time in travail. She perished giving birth to a boy, and Milas took the child , and wept for his blooming Athenias who lift lamentations for the women of Lesbos and her father Jason. But you, Artemis, had no care but for your game-slaughtering hounds.
Diodorus57

When mother and child died, they were buried together. If the child lived, but the mother died, she was honored with an elaborate burial because she died having given her life for her child.

The second scene motif shows a child offering an object to a seated deceased man or woman. There are four basic types of this scene. The first depicts a child giving a box or object to the departed; the second shows the child near but not touching the deceased; the third depicts the

deceased touching the child to receive some gift or shaking hands; and the fourth shows a child leaning against the deceased's lap.

Plates 11-14 depict a child presenting an object, or more frequently a box, to a seated deceased adult. The box possibly contained the deceased's jewelry; the child offers it so the woman can choose her favorite piece. This domestic scene was common to the life of a Classical Greek woman. The monument shows the intimate moment when a servant or daughter brings jewelry to her mistress or mother. In Plate 12, a servant offers a gift to her mistress, but the seated woman does not reach for and is unable to accept the gift. Plate 13 is an especially fine example because the woman reacts to the child's offering; she has removed a fan and ribbons from the opened box.

Another scene shows an adult, either standing or sitting, interacting with, yet not touching, a child (Plates 15-19). These domestic scenes reflect the growing interest in the child. A child provided Greek parents with a link to a future that they could not personally experience. Children comforted their parents in old age and were duty-bound to provide their funeral.

Plates 15 and 21 show the child waving a goodbye to the deceased mother, a final parting remembered in stone. Plate 17 shows a mother handing an object to her son. The mother may be handing her son all the knowledge and understanding she will never be able to give him because of her untimely death.

A scene motif showing the deceased touching or shaking the hand of a child captures an emotional moment between parent and child (Plates 20-24). Plate 23, figure 2, shows a traditional handshake between the deceased mother and the living daughter; but the scene is unusual because the daughter holds her infant in her arms. The daughter may be showing her mother a grandchild that she was not permitted to see in life. Plate 24 depicts a deceased man entertaining his child with a bird. There is a captivating charm about the child grasping his father's finger, his father holding a bird out of reach in his other hand. The centuries have not diminished the importance of the relationship between parent and child.

The final type of scene in this category shows a standing child leaning against the knees of its deceased mother (Plates 25-27). Plate 26 shows a nude young boy, not more than two or three years old, reaching up and looking directly at his mother as if begging her not to die and leave him. The mother looks gently downwards and holds him in a final embrace. In Plate 27, this beseeching look on the child's face reappears, this time on a girl. Probably younger than the boy, she looks upward to her mother, trying to experience all she will never see nor feel again. A vase shaped gravestone (Plate 25, figure 2) depicts a seated mother, a young girl reaching to touch her mother's hand. An infant clings to the girls dress, possibly sensing his mother is being replaced by his older sister.

The concern for children reflected in these various

domestic scenes also found expression in words, as in the following epigrams.

> The house fell in from top to bottom, but much more lightly on the infant son of Zephyrus. Even a ruin spared childhood. O ye boastful mothers, see how even stone feels maternal affection.
> Bianor58

> A child was peering from the edge
> Of a tiled roof - Death does not have
> Terrors for youth. Behind the ledge,
> Its mother bared her breast which gave,
> Life twice to one who lipped the grave.
> Parmenion59

> A Ram with crumpled horns was rushing fiercely to butt Calyptra's little boy, who had strayed from his mother, when the boar of Heracles, breaking his tether, buried his tusks in the ram's belly and gave the child its life. Is it because he remembers Hera's cruelty that Heracles pities children of tender age?
> Philippus60

> Cleodemus, Eumenes' boy, is still small, but tiny as he is, he dances with the boys in a little company of worshippers. Look! he has even girt on the skin of a doppled fawn and he shakes the ivy on his yellow hair. Make him big, Theban King, so that thy little servant may soon lead holy dances of young men.
> Antistius61

Thus in Bianor's epigram, even a stone feels maternal affection, and in Philippus' epigram, a child is saved from violent death by a wild boar. In Parmenion's verse, a mother faced with her child's possible death becomes extremely resourceful in finding a way to save her child.

Family scenes on gravestones, many containing children, were popular in Classical Greece. The deceased on these stelai are rendered in three positions: lying on a couch or bed; sitting while others stand around him or her; and standing, usually shaking one of the relatives hands. The family scene is frequent and important in Classical Greece.

A happy home life was treasured; being married and raising a family were thought to constitute an idyllic life. However, when an adult died, the surviving adults' grief often caused them to overlook the child's needs, as is shown in many of these reliefs (Plates 28-35). These family scenes show how rich a man was in the love his family had for him. Children's inclusion on these reliefs emphasized the number of people who loved the deceased.

The deceased lying on a bed or couch is an early type of subject for grave stelai. These show the deceased semi-reclining, holding himself up on one arm (Plate 28-29). The wife sits beside him on a chair, often with her head bent in sorrow, sometimes offering the deceased a box. The rest of the family stands behind her; sometimes just the deceased's children (Plate 28, figure 2) or his grown children and grandchildren (Plate 29, figure 2) stand around him. These scenes are often crowded, and children do not interact with the deceased; they are present to indicate the size and stature of the deceased's family.

Other representations show the family surrounding the seated deceased (Plates 30-33). Often the spouse shakes hands with the departed while their children look on (Plate 30, figure 2; Plate 32; figure 1 and 2; and Plate 33, figure 4). Other reliefs show two women, who may have been mother and daughter, shaking hands (Plate 31; Plate 32, figure 1 and 3); these scenes may portray the idea that the deceased's memory was passed on to future generations through their children. Plate 32, figure 4 shows a deceased

woman shaking hands with her husband; two young children cling to her, trying to gain her attention, but she looks outward, unseeing. In Plate 32, figure 2, a nude boy slumps ignored in the corner of the gravestone, overcome with grief. The children in Plate 30, figure 1, and Plate 31 are relegated to the background, having nothing to do with the deceased.

Another type of stele depicts the dead standing, shaking hands with a relative. The handshake, not the child, is the central focus of the monument (Plate 34-35). The child reaches a hand up to the deceased, trying to get attention, but the deceased is occupied with the handshake or is contemplating his state.

Plate 36, an unusual stele, depicts a seated deceased woman surrounded by her children; no adult is present. A small infant pushes against her mother's chest trying to get a final glimpse of her face. A nude male child, perhaps eight or ten years old, stares at his mother as he leans against her knee. Behind him in the foreground, another nude male child, perhaps under a year old, looks upward as he crawls towards his mother. Two adolescents males stand beside him, right arms raised, staring directly at their mother. Because the mother holds a lively infant, and because no other adults are present, this scene is quite unusual. All five children focus their gazes on their mother, who may find comfort in leaving such a powerful legacy: four male children and a healthy infant daughter. This unique example was probably designed especially in her

memory.

In the majority of these scenes it is true that the children do not interact with the deceased adult, but this evidence in itself does not necessarily imply that the Greeks were at all indifferent to their offspring. On the contrary, parents who lost their children were known to have grieved so severely as to bring about their own deaths; in one extreme case, a mother killed her infant rather than suffer the agony of its unexpected death.

> A mother who had laid on the pyre her third child after losing the others too, reviling insatiate Death, on giving birth to a fourth sorrow would not wait, nourishing uncertain hope, but threw the child alive in the fire. "I will not rear it," she said. "What profits it? My paps, ye toil for Hades. I shall gain mourning with less trouble."
> Menecrates of Smyrna62

> Clearista mourned her last for a child too early dead, and beside the tomb she ended her better life; wailing with all the fullness of a mother's grief, she could no longer relax her straining breath. Wretched women, why do you give yourselves such full measure of lamentation that you weep your way even to the grave?
> Bianor63

> Who has not endured the worst,
> Lamenting one among his sons?
> In four days, Poseidippos lost
> His hopes and all four boys at once.
>
> The father wept away his sight;
> Now all are held in a common night.
> Apollonides64

The next category of gravestone scenes depict a child with a heroic nude figure or with a fully clothed woman. This type of relief monument was very common in the Classical Age, when the human body came to be fully appreciated on the aesthetic level and as a main vehicle inspiration sculptors and painters. Johansen says that in

this type of representation a heroic man is accompanied by a slave boy who "...sometimes (carries) his master's cloak, his palaestra requisites or other parts of his equipment, and not infrequently (abandons) himself to grief over his (master's) death with less reserve than would become a free man."[65] These heroic male figures are depicted in a variety of contraposto poses (Plates 37-42). The young servant boys often carry an object such as a strigil or cloak. The dead master regards his servant with some fondness; Plate 41, figure 1, shows the deceased placing his hand on the boy's head. Plates 37 and 38 are different from the usual scene; the father looks at the deceased young man with sadness. At the young man's feet a small boy sits in a fetal position, his head on his hands in an attitude of mourning. This type of fetal position of the boy is discussed in the Appendix. Plate 40, figure 2, shows the deceased bouncing a ball on his leg to entertain the child at his feet. Such activity involving the deceased is rare.

The counterpart to the male heroic nude relief shows a woman with a young slave girl holding her jewelry box or some other small object owned by the woman (Plates 43-46). These scenes contain similarities to Plates 11-14, in which a deceased woman sits rather than stands, and a slave girl brings the deceased a gift. Plate 44 shows a woman holding a bird above a young girl; this differs from scenes in which women and children do not interact. Plate 24 shows a deceased parent entertaining his child with a bird; this provides evidence that Plate 44 depicts a mother and

daughter rather than a woman and slave. Plate 46 is unusual because the deceased cups the child's head with her hand; the dead are usually not able to see and react to the living. As the girl holds the box out to her, the deceased woman stares outward as if not realizing that she holds the child's head. These motifs demonstrate that the Greeks cared about and grew very fond of their young child servants.

> You have stolen Euander's Hymnis, ever his darling and delight, born in the house, nine years old, a maiden of winning ways; implacable Hades, why send so early doom to one who must anyway be yours hereafter?
> Crinagoras66

> A little child fell from a little ladder in Diodorus' house, and tumbling head-first broke a fatal vertebra: when he saw his lord coming, he stretched forth his baby hands at once. Earth, never lie heavy on the bones of the infant servitor. Corax was two years old; be gentle to him.
> Diodorus67

The willingness of the Greeks to include children on their grave monuments reflects their affection and concern for children in general.

The final category depicts children who have died. The Greek Anthology has many heart rending passages about children who have died before their time. These epigrams beautifully express the Greek feeling and attitudes towards these children.

> Not yet were thy tresses cut, nor had the monthly courses of the moon driven a three years' space, O poor Cleodicus, when they mother Nicasis, clasping thy coffin, wailed long over thy lamented grave, and they father Pericleitus; but by unknown Acheron thou shalt flower out the youth that never, never returns.
> Anonymous68

Ever insatiable Charon, why have you stolen Attalus, a mere child? Was he not yours even if he had died old?
Bianor69

From the murderous Persians Perseus brought back a murderous fruit which caused the death of Theognostus' child.
Anonymous70

Looking on the monument of a dead boy, Cleoetes son of Menesaechmus, pity him who was so beautiful and died.
Anonymous71

Sit beneath the poplars here, wayfarer, when thou art weary, and drawing nigh drink of our spring; and even far away remember the fountain that Simus sets by the side of Gillus his dead child.
Nicias72

Ho! passer-by; even if thou art in haste give ear a moment to the grief of Botrys that passeth measure. An old man now of four score years, he buried his boy of none, a child already speaking with some skill and wisdom. Alas for thy father and alas for thee, dear son of Botrys; with how many joys untasted thou perished!
Asclepiades73

You have killed the infant Hermonax, savage pack of bees, as he was crawling in search of your combs. One whom you had so often fed, alas, you have slain with your stings. If we caution against the lairs of snakes, be taught by Lysidice and Amyntor not to praise bees either; in them too there lies a better weapon.
Antipater of Thessalonica74

A boy was setting up a wreath
On his stepmother's tall stone tomb.
He hoped her ashes had become
More kindly; but they caused his death.

The stone fell down and killed the creature.
Stepmothers never change their nature.
Anonymous75

The Greeks did in fact erect monuments that show how much children were loved and grieved over. Epitaphs expressing sorrow over the death of a child are common. were common.

I am the monument set up by Osthilos to his son Oligerdas, who brought him grief by his loss.76

Truly beautiful is the monument which her father erected over Learete dead; for we shall not see her again alive.77

Cylon placed this monument over his two dead children as a memorial of fond affection78

As you behold the tomb of..., perished child of Menesaechmus, mourn how fair he was, he died79

I died when a child; not yet did I reach the flower of my days, but came beforehand to tearful Acheron. Her father, Cleodamus, son of Hyperenor, and her mother Corona placed me here as a monument to Thessalia, their daughter.80

Here over Lyseas his father Simon erected this monument81

This tomb to Naausimachus his loving mother set up82

Callaeschrus, the father, set me as the monument on the grave of Lysicles83

I am the monument set up to beloved Megacles by his father, and alongside the beloved daughter lies dead84

This tomb of Chaeredemus his father Amphichares erected, mourning the death of a brave son85

To...Phanocrite, his mother, has erected this monument as a token of affection for her dead child86

Father, we both blame you because, after dying a little while before us (?) you then took both of us away from our mother. You did not pity our mother's unhappiness though she got no good from you (us?)87

Who died a grievous death in travail and left her husband with a motherless child in the house88

She was seven years old when Fate and an earthquake deprived her of sweet daylight89

Hades malformed and malignant from birth snatched him away90

> What profit to labor over children and to esteem them, if we are to have not Zeus but Hades to decide on their fate91
>
> Philostratus, son of Philoxenus
> Your father's father's name you bore.
> But to your parents "Chatterbox",
> Once their joy, now mourned by all.
> By a daimon you were carried off.92

Girls were often depicted with animals such as dogs, (Plate 48-51) birds (Plate 47 and 53), and a goose (Plate 52). Presumably because these creatures were of everyday life, so they might be a comfort in the life hereafter. Although these children never smile, they have a certain charm and delicacy all their own. Plate 47, figure 1, is an exceptionally beautiful example showing a girl holding a bird. Her face and hair are shown with the precise beauty of a child. She is perhaps four to six years old; her bent head may indicate her sorrow at leaving her parents. Generally, these girls either face outward (Plate 47, figure 2; Plates 48, 49, and 53), or pay attention to their animals (Plate 47, figure 1; Plates 50-52). The parents and loved ones may have been comforted at thus seeing their children as they were in life.

The way of depicting boys was similar to that of depicting girls, except that invariably the boy will be shown with a dog (Plate 54-57). He plays with the dog with his right hand; in his left hand he will sometimes hold a toy such as a stick with a round wheel at the bottom (Plate 54, figure 2; and Plate 55, figure 2), or a little hammer (Plate 56, figure 3). The boys are sometimes shown nude (Plates 54-57), possibly to recall, poignantly, the heroic

nude type: an image of full manhood.

A final example of children appearing on a gravestone (Plate 58), shows a nude boy shaking hands with a young girl. It repeats the Classic Greek handshake motif, which generally signifies the living saying good-bye to the dead. While the inscription is obscure, this scene may have comforted the parents; perhaps the children are greeting each other in the hereafter, and they may walk together throughout eternity.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

The death of a Greek child was painful not only to the family but to the community. Their literature contains numerous references to children and the unhappiness caused by their death.

> Hermes Messenger of Persephone, whom usherest thou thus to the laughterless abyss of death? A cruel fate snatched Ariston from the fresh air at seven years old, and the child lies between his parents. Pluto delighting in tears, are not all mortal spirits allotted to thee? Why dost thou strip the unripe grapes of youth?
> Anonymous93

The idea of "stripping the unripe grapes of youth" is reflected in today's phrase "only the good die young," and the question is still asked, "Why did he have to die so young?"

The Greeks blamed and accused death for taking their beloved ones so early; today's community makes excuses for death, saying "God must have wanted him," or "The child is in a better place now." However, the love of a child is universal to both cultures. In 1987, Cecilia Cichon, the lone survivor of the fated flight 255, received an outpouring of love from the entire United States and even foreign countries, as did Jessica McClure, a toddler who survived 54 hours trapped in a well.

This overwhelming concern for children can be seen not only in Greek epigrams and epitaphs, but also in the gravestone reliefs of children. The Greeks' love of simplicity is especially prevalent in reliefs containing

children. Even during the Classical period in Greece, where more complex compositions were sought, the innocence and domesticity of scenes depicting children is evident. Babies reaching up to their mothers (Plates 8-9) and children leaning into their parents' laps (Plates 24-27) are simple compositions that draw an immediate emotional response from the observer. These scenes are poignant in their simplicity, eliciting a strong response to the tragedy that has occurred.

While the Greeks considered the death of a child painful and unfortunate, they did practice occasional infant exposure, as presented in Chapter Two. This seemingly cruel and heartless custom was considered necessary, due to malformation, size of family, or sex of the infant; however, it was certainly done as humanely as possible. To ensure that the child had the best possible chance to survive, he was placed in a pot near the temple, where people frequently passed; the child's destiny became the community's responsibility, rather than the parents'.

Tombstones containing children have a universal appeal. While the observer's reaction to the scene should focus on the deceased, the child depicted often captures the attention. These reliefs have stood through thousands of years with thousands of cultural changes, yet people today feel the same sorrow that the Greeks so eloquently portrayed in these monuments. While children can be a positive and renewing influence, the death of a child, touches a universal chord in the observer. The Greeks' despair, anger

and sadness at the loss of a child is manifested in Callimachus' words.

> Me Callimachus, a five year old child whose spirit knew not grief, pitiless death snatched away, but weep though not for me; for little was my share in life, and little in life's ills.
> Lucian94

These gravestone reliefs, epitaphs and epigrams clearly demonstrate the Greeks' profound love and concern for their children. A child, no matter its age, was cherished in the Greek world.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

THE BOY'S HEAD IN THE KRESGE ART MUSEUM

The Kresge Art Museum contains many fine works of art representing nearly all time periods. Its ancient collection, though small, depicts a wide variety of works from Egyptian to Roman. One in particular, a sculpture of a boy's head, is rather striking. It came to the Museum labeled a Roman Boy's head of the Augustan Age, dated to the first or second century A.D. Through studying its physical attributes and comparing it with similar works, additional evidence of the head's date and origination can be identified (Plate 1-2).

According to Kresge Art Museum records, C.W. Warren bought the head on one of his pilgrimages to the Holyland. Although the record indicates that the head came from Palestine, it is possible that it originated elsewhere. Warren and others of his church group acquired numerous items in the early 1900's, which were displayed at Warren's Three Oaks Museum in Royal Oak, Michigan. After his museum closed, Warren donated many pieces to the Natural History Museum at Michigan State University. Records from the Natural History Museum indicate a catalogue number, "65.49" and the notation, "marble head." There was no dating or description of the head. Later, the Kresge Art Museum placed the head in its display of ancient art; its information card added only the dimensions of the head, which are 5 and 3/4 inches wide and 3 and 1/2 inches high.

Upon consideration, the physical attributes of the head point to Attic Greek origin. It is a small sculpture showing a beautifully proportioned head with features reflecting those common in the Classical Age. The expression is sad and melancholy. The eyes, which were once painted, stare listlessly out; the mouth has no hint of a smile. The hair is very curly, similar to that of Hellenistic athletes. Two dowel marks are visible, one in the back of the neck, and the other on the right side of the face, directly below the cheekbone.

The marble, which was once smooth and shiny, is now pockmarked with age; the nose and lips, along with the ears, have suffered the indignity of chipping. The head is broken away at the neck and the chin, and a portion of the right cheek is missing. Despite its damage, the head has the appealing quality of a young child, not more than two or three, beckoning with its sorrowful gaze.

The physical attributes of the Kresge boy's head are irreconcilable with those of the Erotes and cupids of the Hellenistic and Roman ages. Erotes of the Hellenistic Age (Plate 3, figures 1-3) are aggressively positioned, with slanted eyes and overly chubby faces. The later Eros figure (Plate 4) has these same characteristics, but its entire body proportions are exaggerated.

The Kresge boy's head differs in numerous ways from sculptures of children in the Julio-Claudian period, particularly in hairstyle, ears and facial proportions. Roman children, generally, had straight hair with waves at

the bottom, whereas Greek children had flowing curls. The bust of the Roman boy (Plate 5) represents typical physical characteristics of children's sculptures of the Julio-Claudian age. The Roman boy's straight hair with bangs differs radically from the Kresge boy's head of abundant curls flowing asymmetrically. While the Roman boy has somewhat large, distinctive ears, the Kresge boy's head has small, albeit chipped, ears. The Roman boy's thin face and narrow forehead contrasts with the rounded face of the Kresge boy's head. Given these differences, the Kresge boy's head is incompatible with the characteristics of sculptures of Roman age children.

The Kresge boy's head contains numerous similarities to Classical and Hellenistic sculptures and reliefs. The lines of the eyebrows curve in one continuous stroke to form the lines of the nose; this is a common Classical feature. A boy on a grave stele, now located in the National Museum, (Plate 6) shows an older child, perhaps seven or eight years old. The lines in both faces are quite similar; both have the same Classical eyebrow line forming the nose. The top and bottom eyelids are treated the same in both; the top eyelids are somewhat larger, creating the sense of a fold; the bottom lid protrudes just slightly outward to create the reality of an eye. Both have high cheekbones and a distinctive softness around the face. Neither smiles; both appear to be sad and sorrowful.

The Kresge boy's head is also similar to a Hellenistic

girl's head in Rome (Plate 7).* The purposes of the sculptures are different; the girl is smiling, while the boy is melancholy. The girl is probably three or four years old, while the Kresge boy's head is a younger child. Nevertheless, the two are comparable in style. Their eyes are formed in the same manner, using the eyebrow line extended in to the nose line. The girl's nose is not chipped, giving an idea of how the Kresge boy's nose might have looked. The girl's nose is small, slightly wider and rounder than an adult's nose. Her ears, though visible, are still close to her head. The girl's forehead is bare save for a few strands of wispy hair fallen forward; the rest of her hair is pulled back away from her face. The Kresge boy's forehead is also bare; this is generally true of Greek depictions. The Roman boy bust (Plate 5) has bangs over his forehead; Greek sculpture does not portray bangs.

The Hellenistic style is reflected in the tight, unplanned curls of the Kresge boy's head, of which there are many examples in both Classical and Hellenistic Greek sculptures and reliefs. Plate 8, figure 1, represents a youth thought to be done by a follower of Polykleitos; the curls on the youth are quite similar to those of the Kresge boy's head, but they are larger and worked out with greater detail. Also, the eyelids are portrayed in a similar manner, as are the rounded cheeks of both heads.

* Hilde Ruhfel, in her book, Das Kind in der Griechischen Kunst von der Minoisch-Myhenischen Zeit bis zum Hellenismus, calls this child a boy.

The head of an athlete, a copy of the Munich oilpourer (Plate 8, figure 2), provides additional proof that the Kresge boy's head is Hellenistic. The curls on the athlete, tighter due to a shorter haircut, replicate those of the Kresge boy's head. They are free and unplanned, massing closely around the head. Such hairstyles do not exist in Roman sculpture.

In the Classical period, children were portrayed as little adults. During the Hellenistic age, when sculptures of infants were becoming more common, an interest in the naturalistic portrayal of the child's form evolved. The Greek artists found great joy in depicting the child's figure and baby-like proportions. The head of a sleepy child in the Glyptothek, Munich (Plate 9, figure 1), shows a boy with tired eyes, a mass of large curls on his head. The features can be likened to the Kresge boy's head, except that the sleepy child's eyebrows are more delineated.

A Boy with Fox Goose from the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, and the Infant Heracles Strangling Snakes from the Museo Capitalino, Rome (Plate 9, figure 2 and 3), are full figure infants of under one year. Their full, chubby bodies with childlike folds and baby fat are shown in a much more naturalistic way than previously. The Kresge boy's head reflects this beginning interest in that its head is rounded; its eyes, nose and mouth have a pliable quality, giving the impression that the child will grow and mature. Like the Kresge boy's head, the hair on the figures in Plate 9 takes the form of a flowing mass of curls.

A Little Girl with a Garland, in the Louvre, (Plate 10) is important, not for its features, but rather for its positioning. It depicts a young girl, perhaps four or five years old, sitting in a fetal position with her head on her hands and knees, holding a garland. Her mouth is slightly open, as is the Kresge boy's mouth. Their features are similar in shape, although the girl's are more naturalistic.

The right ear of the Kresge boy's head is pierced, which is very peculiar since the left ear shows no signs of a similar hole. The hole is perfectly circular and as worn as the rest of the head. It was probably done when the Kresge boy's head was sculpted; if it was added later, the likelihood of chipping the rest of the ear would have increased. In Roman portraits and busts, the ears of men and women are not pierced, but there are some Hellenistic works with pierced ears -- for example, the turbaned head of Arsinoe II and a head of Cleopatra VII in the British Museum (Plate 11, figures 1 and 2). Also, a youthful Hellenistic girl from the Brauron Museum (Plate 12) wears a chiton and carries a bird in the folds of her dress; her pierced ears at one time held earrings but are now empty. Another example is the figure of a younger girl in the Fethiye Museum (Plate 13). She is perhaps three or four years old, holds a pet bird, and has a perfectly placed hole in each earlobe.

Except for the Kresge boy, pierced ears would seem to occur only in sculptures of females. But then, only the right ear of the Kresge boy's head is pierced, and no other

Greek statue or relief figure, male or female, has been found with just one ear pierced. Perhaps the hole in the Kresge boy's ear was made for an attachment of the figure to a relief, and yet the ear is the least stable part of the head, and is the most easily broken. The hole may have been added later, but not much later because it shows as much weathering as the rest of the piece. This hole, at this time, defies interpretation.

The condition of the marble, its lost lustre, the hair encrusted with dirt and sand, and the face pockmarked by time and weather, indicate that the Kresge boy's head was originally placed outside. It could have been displayed on a pediment or outside relief; it might have been a freestanding sculpture; or it could have been from a grave relief or tomb stele.

Two dowel marks can be seen on the bottom of the Kresge boy's head. One is in the back of the neck, but does not touch the hair. The other is on the right side of the neck. Because the head was attached very near the right ear, which was pierced, that hole would be barely visible to passerbys. This increases the difficulty in determining why this hole exists.

Nevertheless, the evidence of these dowel marks indicate that the head was attached to something; it was not freestanding, but must have come from some type of relief. The Romans did not finish their statues in the round when they were to be placed on pediments or reliefs. The detail of the boy's hair in both front and back points to Greek

influence, if not Greek hands.

The curly hairstyle and soft, full facial features on the figure of a young man from the Pergamum Altar (Plate 14) can be likened to the Kresge boy's head; moreover, both heads were done almost completely in the round and were attached to the background with dowels. These similarities indicate that the Kresge boy's head is from the late Classical or early Hellenistic period.

The position of the head can be determined by comparing it to sculptures in similar positions and by gathering the existing information from the head itself. The Little Girl with Garland (Plate 10), stretches her head out over her knees and rests her cheek on her hands. The Kresge boy's neck is long; from the side, his neck and head reach out or perhaps over something. The dowel mark on the right side of the Kresge boy's face, below the cheek, indicate that the head was leaning on something. The boy may have been in the same fetal position as the girl, resting his head on his hands and his knees; the chipping on his chin and cheek may have occurred when his head was broken off the relief.

Instances of sculpted children with their heads on their hands indicate that this is an attitude of sorrow or mourning. The Ilissus Stele (Plate 15-16), shows a father mourning his son, shown heroically nude. In the corner, a child sits in the fetal position, his head on his hands and knees, mourning the loss of a loved one. This scene is again repeated in Plate 17, showing another mourning child in the fetal position. The Little Girl with Garland (Plate 10) can

be considered a child mourning because she holds a garland, which is used for decorating the tomb. This fetal position seems to indicate mourning; therefore, the boy's head could represent a child mourning.

The Kresge boy's head contains striking similarities to existing examples of Hellenistic Greek sculpture, but not to Roman sculpture. The physical attributes of the head indicate that the Kresge boy's positioning was similar to mourning children found in existing late fourth century and Hellenistic grave reliefs. Therefore, the boy's head from the Kresge Art Museum most likely came from a Hellenistic grave relief.

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figure 1

figure 2

figure 3

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figure 2

figure 3

figure 1

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figure 4

PLATE 6

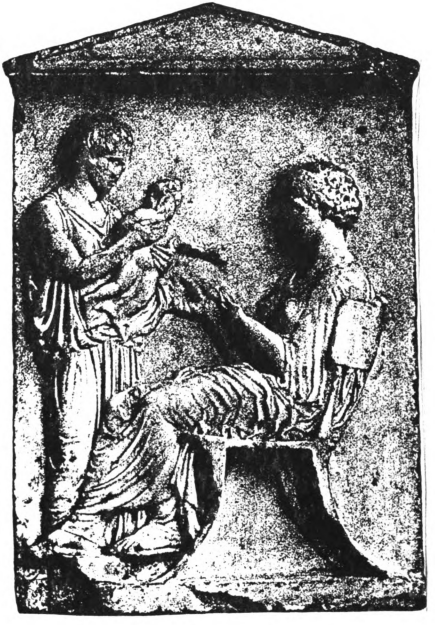

PLATE 7

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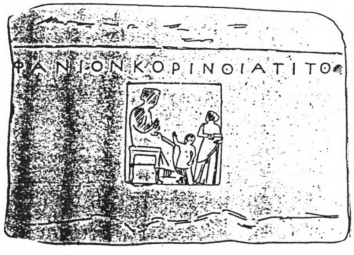
figure 1



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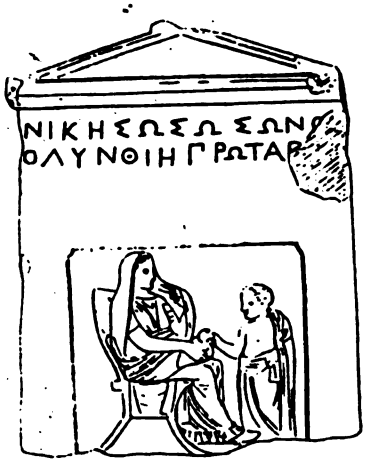

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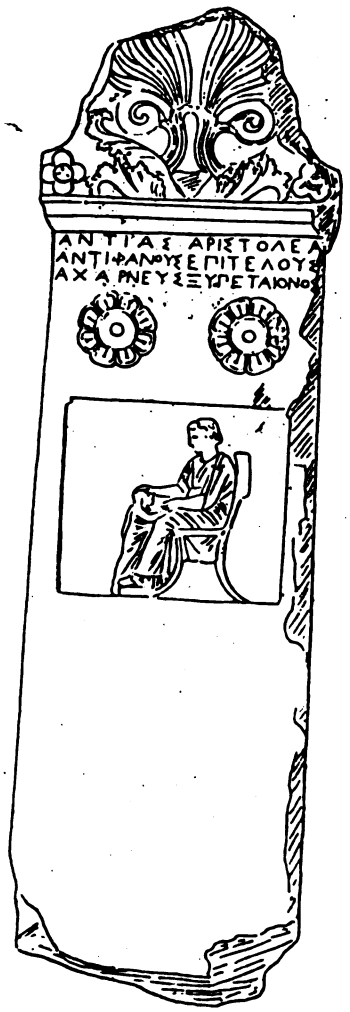
PLATE 25



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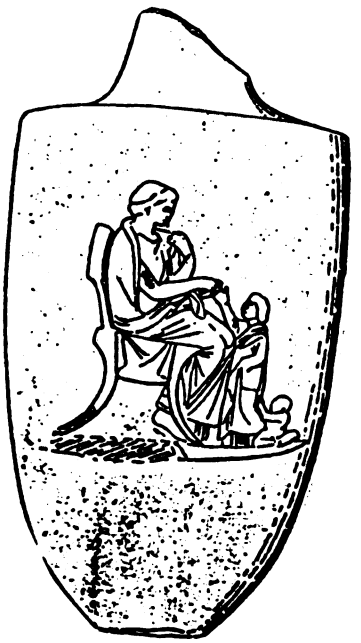

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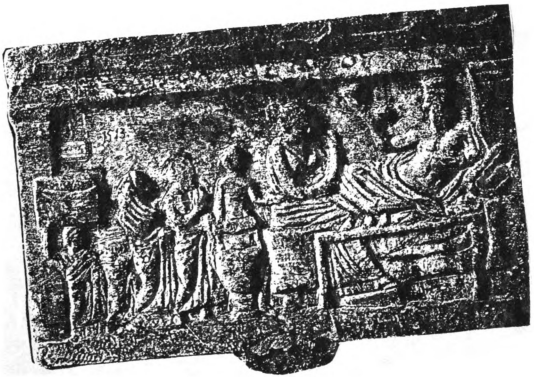

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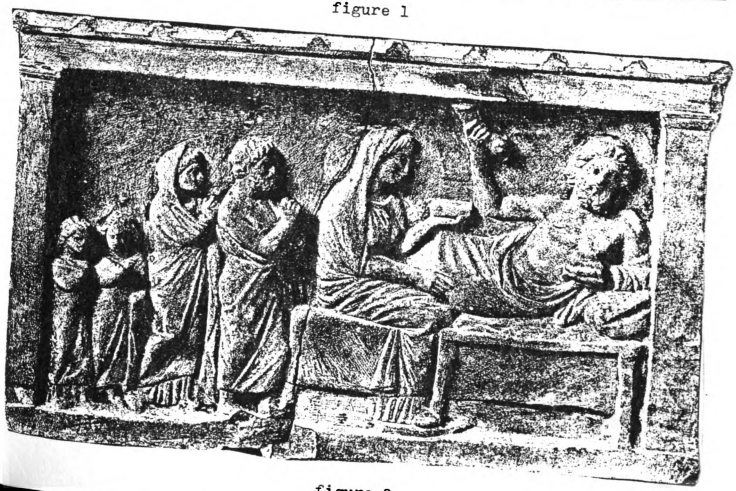

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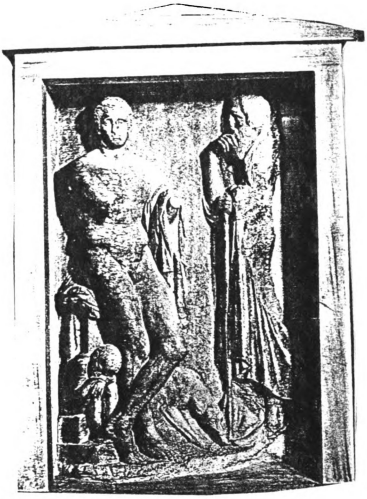

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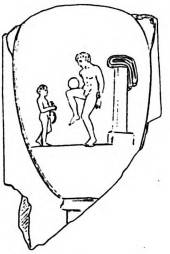

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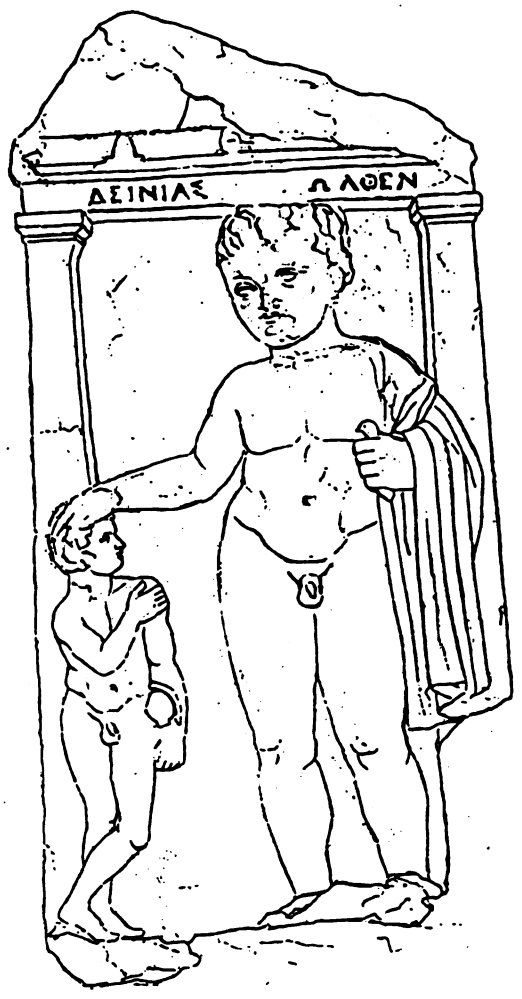

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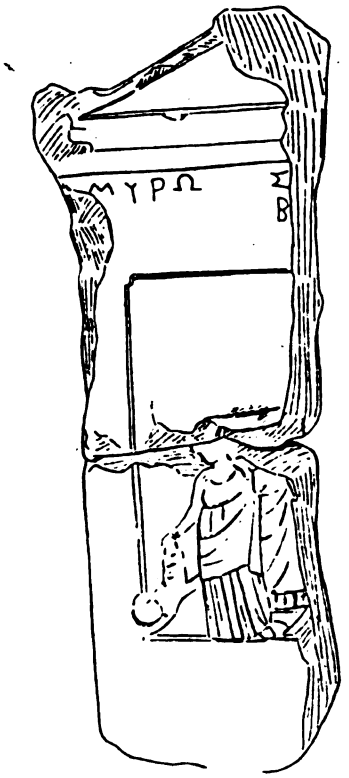

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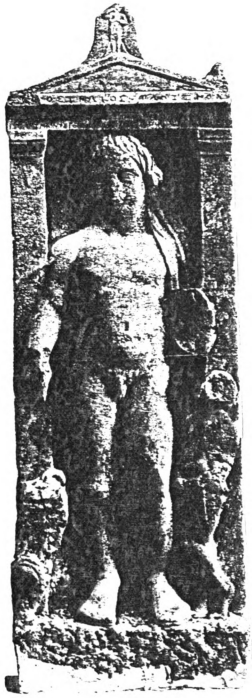

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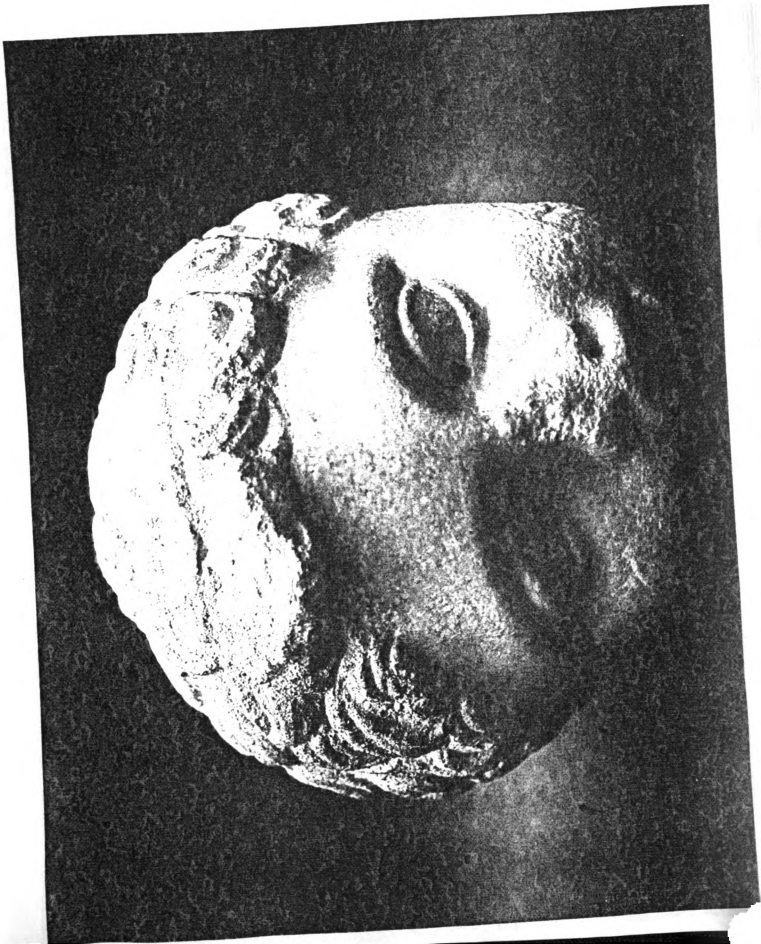

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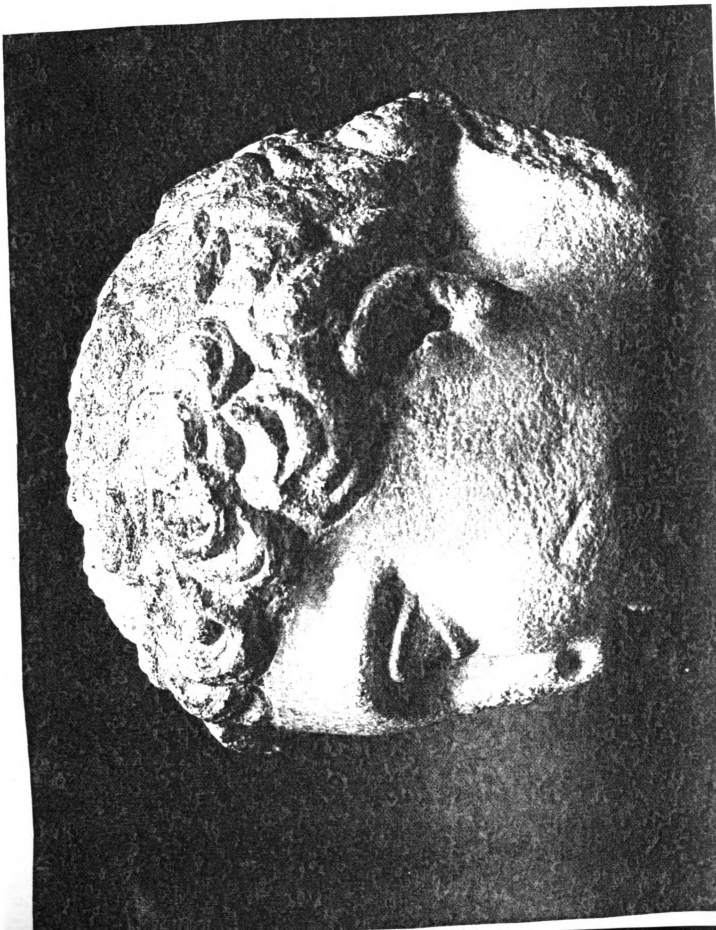

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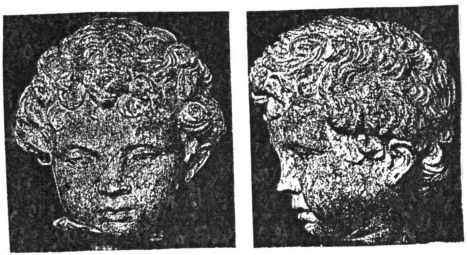

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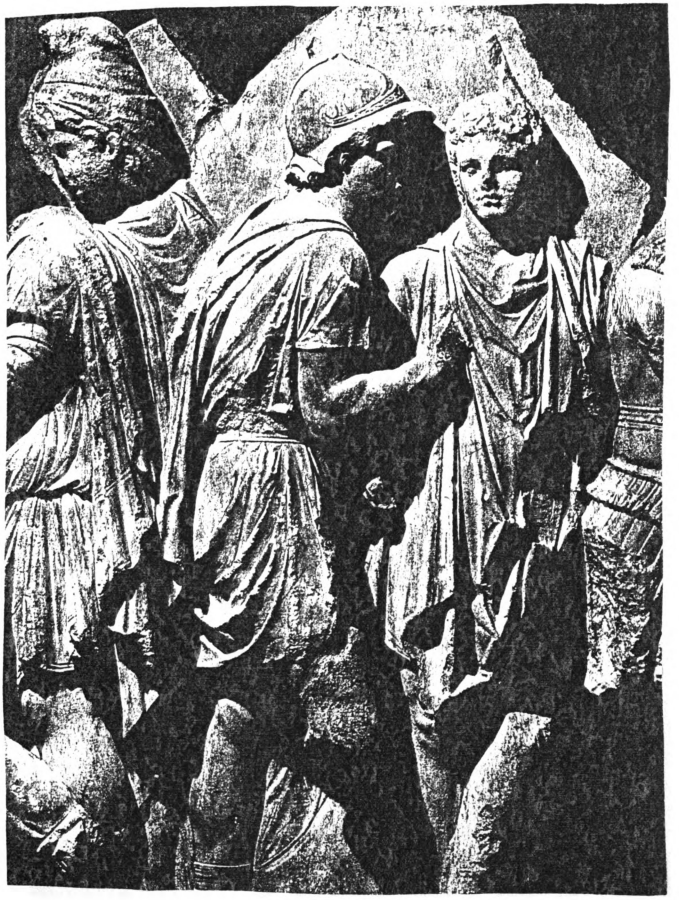

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