
Mika Kajava


The world-famous "Ares Ludovisi" does not represent the god of war. Hafner’s study is an intriguing example of how the analysis of a detail of an ancient statue or statue group can change the interpretation of the whole piece. In this case the thing that absorbed his attention during an exhibition in Rome (1992) was the peculiar way in which the figure’s shield was placed against a rock. Hafner comes to the interesting conclusion that the sitting man represents Jason on Lemnos where he is held back by Eros. The love of Hypsipyle prevented him from continuing the adventurous voyage to Colchis.

The Venice meeting of 1994 was a continuation of the successful Congress "Venezia e l’Archeologia" of 1988 (RdA Suppl. 7, 1990). The papers printed in the Acts largely concentrate on the antiquarian market in Venice during the past centuries, with special reference to the links between local antiquarians and foreign collectors. Other themes include the diaries and descriptions by European travellers and scholars who came to Venice to admire the local treasures, as well as the influence which the classic works preserved in Venice had on European art and sculpture. As for the concrete results of the congress, the reader may note with particular delight that it was decided to found an international "Comitato Veneto-Europeo". The purpose of this project is to promote the study of the antiquities of Venice and to illuminate the contacts between local and European collectors. The Comitato has also decided to produce a full documentary corpus of the ancient objects that have passed through Venice during the last centuries. One only wishes that the enterprise can be carried out as soon as possible. There is no doubt, however, that the fine result will be what La Serenissima deserves.

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