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ON THE CENTRAL GROUPS OF THE
EASTERN FRIEZE OF THE PARTHENON.

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[Read November 23rd, 1892.]

It is now nearly thirty years since I put forth before this Society the best conclusions I could then arrive at respecting the assignment of functions and titles to the leading figures in the central groups of the Eastern frieze of the Parthenon. Much had previously been written on this subject; much has been written since, both in England and Germany. It is because some of the latest views, advanced and even accepted with much confidence, appear to me among the least satisfactory of all, that I have been induced to recur to the inquiry.

On reconsidering my former Paper in our Transactions (Vol. V, New Series), I find that certain of the conclusions which I rested in must, under constraint of more complete research, be unconditionally renounced. Still I abide by far more than mere salvage from wreck of a theory; and while advancing some entirely new elucidations, I can all the better stand by a large proportion of what I set forth before, as being now furnished with additional arguments and illustrations which confirm them.

It will be well in a Paper like the present to deal with the subject directly; disencumbering it of

controversy, and dispensing with particular criticism not only of the theories which scarcely merit serious confutation, but even of such as that of Professor Michaelis, of which the counter theory now set forth, if of any value at all, will give an account of the pretensions.

Few words should suffice to justify the assumption that the magnificent sculptured frieze which is carried entirely round the cella of the Parthenon, is an idealized representation of the grand procession of the Panathenaic festival. What could be more appropriate and natural than that the greatest national festival in honour of the tutelary goddess of Athens, should furnish the subject of decoration for the largest at once and most finished and magnificently embellished of her temples? We have numerous notices of this celebration, and its details are conspicuous and recognizable in the sculptures, although in typical, in place of realistic reproduction. Here we find direct intimation of the sacrifices of sheep and kine, competitions of charioteers and of musicians, processions of maidens and of men advanced in years, all offering opportunities for graceful, dignified, and animated treatment; then especially a display of youthful vigour in the parade of cavalry, which was always a leading incident and attraction of the spectacle.

Some observations are due to the properly artistic treatment of the work. The lowness of the relief was a condition imposed by the steep angle at which it was to be seen at a height of 40 feet from the narrow ambulatory of nine feet. Even so it is certain that when the slabs were once in place, they

must have been presented at considerable disadvantage. It is equally certain that the sculptor did not, on that account, forego elaborating certain effects which told admirably when the reliefs were still as near the eye as we now see them, however conscious that they were destined to be all but lost when in position. So it was that he lavished all the resources of his art on the backs of nude figures in the pediments; so also on the exquisite delicacy of the drapery about the bosoms, laps, and feet of the Triad of Fates, which, after the statues were once raised into place, remained at a height of fifty feet invisible to all mankind, until Lord Elgin again enabled us to see them exactly—except for the ravages of time and abuses of barbarism—as they had been seen by Pericles and Aspasia.

Phidias allowed himself all liberty in modifying, not only the costume and equipments of the Athenian youth, but also their relative proportion to their steeds. From the limited dimension at command—less than four feet and a half—if the men and horses were to be in natural proportion to each other, the riders would be too diminutive for general dignity, and for display of that settled expression of their features which is so effective. The alternative was adopted of reducing very considerably the natural scale of the horses.

The difference is most observable and is perhaps even offensive, in one group of a horse standing at perfect rest, and a youth beside it. In the general groups, the difficulty is alleviated by the lively action of the horses, rearing, prancing, thrown back on their haunches, or with all feet off the

ground at once. These positions allow of some degree of increase of size, and at the same time exhibit a relation to the seat of the riders, their sway and balance, which is so truthful as to cause any other anomaly to be condoned or rather overlooked. So far is this the case, that the gross disproportion is often unrecognized till attention is drawn to it: it is still more exaggerated and quite conspicuous in the Phigalian frieze.

Again, it will be observed that the horsemen are advancing in ranks sometimes even ten deep; from space to space, the full broad flank of the file leader's horse is displayed, with great relief to the crowded composition; the forehead of each horse beyond being shown successively in advance, one beyond the other. We are thus, in effect, presented with an oblique view of the long front of the rank. But the perspective conditions of such a view are disregarded. The heads of all the riders near and remote are on the same level, as if on that of the spectator's; but, nevertheless, the hoofs of the remoter horses touch the base line of the slab as distinctly as those of the nearest.

The same management is applied in the important groups on the Eastern front. Here, again, it is plain from the manner in which the thrones of seated figures advance one beyond the other, that they are to be understood, all anomalies notwithstanding, as seated in a line at right angles to the ground-line and to the axis of the advancing procession.

The separation of groups which are to be recognized as distinct or isolated, is intimated by a convention which is familiar in the art of later ages, but

has never been more artfully or daringly employed. That immediately adjacent figures turn backs to each other, is sufficient notice not only of different interest or occupation, but even of separation by considerable distance; so an interval is assumed and allowed for spontaneously when pedestrians manifest no regard for prancing horses, which on realistic interpretation would be all but in contact with them.

But I have to point out another detail, or rather principle of treatment of bas-relief, which seems not only to have been original with Phidias, but so far as I am aware, has never been imitated or re-invented; nor has it, to my knowledge, even been noticed by critics, however sensitive several have shown themselves of the beauty to which it contributes.

The full value of this principle is dependent on the extent and complexity of the composition to which it is applied.

The sculpture on the shorter western frieze at the rear of the cella expresses generally scenes of preparation. The groups on the long north and south flanks have a certain very distinct parallelism, and are justly interpreted as two divisions of the procession advancing simultaneously as if toward the eastern—the chief front of the temple, as representing the point of the culminant interest of the festival. Of course, there is no suggestion of a cavalcade having ever paraded on the actual acropolis.

Of the two flanks, the northern, of which the aspect was towards the more open and spacious area of the acropolis, was distinguished by the richer and more complex composition. This begins at the

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north-west angle with a reminiscence of the motives of the west frieze,—two unmounted horses with attendants, and a youth whose girdle is adjusted by a companion. We then reach the cavalcade, which advances first in moderate and then in quickening motion. The pace slackens again as we reach the procession of chariots; of these there are nine, each with four horses abreast, and shielded men associated with the youthful drivers. Again we have gradation of excitement; the first chariots are at rest; others are in lively motion; others in advance are checked, and so the transition is eased to a close crowd of pedestrians in ranks of five. These are preceded by musicians with lyres and pipes sounding in concert. We then come to men bearing trays and water jars, following sheep and kine for the sacrifice; one refractory animal is introduced causing excitement midway in the train.

The groups on the south frieze are for the most part simpler, but still have a marked general correspondence in elements and sequence with the procession on the north.

Now it is most worthy of observation that on both flanks the sculptor regulated the execution of his design with exclusive or at least uncompromising regard for effect as seen by spectators who followed it from the direction of the Propylæa eastward; that is, in agreement with the represented movement of the cavalcade. This could only be done at the expense of considerable sacrifice of its effect as taken in the reverse direction from the front of the temple towards the back; but this was accepted in favour of the great advantage gained

for the spectators, who moved onward as if in spontaneous sympathy with the festal train. By disregard of the aspect from the east he was enabled to finish the profiles of heads of both horses and riders with a sharp edge against the plain background of the slab. The low relief rises easily from an obtuse angle at the rear of the figures, and is distributed with marvellous skill and economy, but is not brought down to the original level by easy gradation in each group. Sharper edges are obtained by a cut-off steep descent with a decisive outline. We have only to move along in front of the frieze from the east westward to be sensible of the offence in this aspect of a succession of hard square sections.

It is with like consideration for the spectator from the west that a variation is given to the series of riders in profile, by one being occasionally introduced who looks back, and thus turns full face to a comrade who is following on, and towards the advancing spectator.

The distinctive treatment did not apply to the shorter friezes of the two fronts of the cella, which are naturally approached directly through the porticos, and contemplated from the positions precisely opposite to them; here the treatment is similar to that of relief on a coin or medal.

The procession which advances along the north and south flanks of the cella is not represented as turning the corners to be continued on the eastern frieze. Here trains of maidens are indeed in movement from either side towards the centre, but so gently, and with such regard to officials who are

giving attention to their order and array, as to appear awaiting the commencement of a ceremony.

The slab immediately over the grand portal, through which the statue of the goddess in ivory and gold would be visible, bears a remarkable subject which it will be necessary to return to. On one side a richly and heavily draped priestess—so we must style her—is concerned with two young attendant girls; close to her, but with back turned, so as to indicate a different scene, a priest receives a folded mantle from a boy. On either side of this pair, intermediate between it and the group of officials and trains of Attic maidens on either side, we have—the immediate subject of this Paper—a series of seated figures of a scale colossal relatively to all others on the frieze, and thus manifestly representing divine or heroic beings. They are as high, seated, as the others are erect. This is the same distinction that Homer notes between gods and mortals on the shield of Achilles.

A spirit of calm tranquillity reigns in these groups which contrasts with the lively movement of the cavalcade, towards which they respectively are turned, while at the same time the expression of serious concentration in the features of the Athenian youth, is in harmony with the dignity of these sacred personages who are awaiting their approach.

The same principle of correlation with variety, of which we have already noted examples, obtains between these groups to the right and left of the centre.

In each set the first figures are a god and goddess

engaged with each other and comparatively isolated from the rest, who in each case again are so closely associated by arrangement of seats and occupation, as to imply some near relationship in local mythology and ceremonial tradition.

It is concerning the appropriate identification of these individual powers, and the reasons for their presence, that controversy has been rife ever since James Stuart first copied the slabs while still in their place on the temple.

The investigation is open to be prosecuted on two lines; presumptive titles may be inferred from consideration of what attributes occur, and of the characteristic expression and association of the figures; and then from suggestions obtained by study of the traditions connected with the national festivals in honour of the goddess Athene.

After a discussion which has been continued actively for now well over a century, it is certainly high time that the problem involved approached a definite solution. It cannot be said that certain progress has not been made, but the true heart of the matter has never been touched, speculation has wandered vaguely, and if for any reason, it has been chiefly because the all-important guiding principle has never been recognized and distinctly formulated. This is, that we are bound to credit the designer with some intention, appropriate to the occasion, not only in the selection of divine or heroic personages to be represented, but also in the division of them into two parties, which he marked by their symmetrical disposition as so manifestly correlative. To satisfy this condition is a severe requirement, but

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I propose to show that it is not beyond the competence of accurate analysis.

The general conclusion to which this will prove to lead up, is that the frieze which so conspicuously embellished the chief temple of Athene and embodied the incidents of the greatest national festivals, as it was expressive at large of the honour due to the goddess on the part of the collective Athenian people, so it especially involved a commemoration of the amicable union after ancient rivalry, of Athens and Eleusis, on which the truly national, the Pan-Athenaic unity, had its foundation.

The title of Panathenæa explains itself. The festival was an extension on elaborate scale every fourth year, of the more moderate annual Athenæa. That its institution was ascribed by some to Theseus, by others to Erichthonius, implies in either case derivation from obscure antiquity; it had doubtless passed through various developments before Pericles was the author of certain additions to its splendour and interest.

But there was still another festival dedicated to the goddess, which having reference to the unity of the Athenian state, especially commemorated the traditional incident of its original consolidation. The interest that was attached to this is attested by a serious contemporary witness. It was the celebration of the Sunoikia to which Thucydides adverts in a very important passage of his history. "Attica," he says, "from the times of the earliest kings down to Theseus comprised a number of towns, each having its own public offices and officials, all acting independently, and only when under stress of

some alarm, concerting measures with the kings; sometimes they were even at war amongst themselves, as the Eleusinians under Eumolpus were once at war with Erechtheus and Athens. Theseus, when he became king, by combined exercise of intelligence and considerable power—in fact we understand between negotiation and compulsion—brought the country into order, abolished the separate tribunals and offices of the other townships, and uniting all in a single corporation or Council hall, obliged them to occupy the city in common as it now exists” (*ξυνώκισε πάντας*). “It was due,” he continues, “to this concentrated authority and combined occupation that Athens became the great city it has continued ever since.”¹

The early date of this change, by whomsoever effected, is to be inferred from the fact that the Homeric catalogue quite exceptionally mentions no other city or town of Attica but Athens. Nevertheless, Thucydides was aware, not only of traces about the country of the earlier state of things, but also of a lively sentiment and fixed tradition of the alteration and its importance. “The Athenians to this day,” he says, “celebrate collectively the commemorative festival of Sunoikia (of joint or combined settlement)”; a festival which he notes as dedicated to Athene, thus bringing it into direct connection with the Panathenæa to which its purport had natural relation, and which came on only a few days later.

The work was indeed a great work; it enabled Athens to hold its own against the encroachment of Bœotia on the one hand and the jealousy of Sparta

¹ *Aristoph. Schol. Pac.*, 1019. *Plut. Thes.* V, 24, 25. *Paus.* VIII, 2.

on the other. It served also as a model for that still wider scheme of comprehension under a central city by which Athens after the Persian war gave the Hellenic world an unprecedented interval of general internal peace and prosperity.

We shall see that the sculptural enrichments of the Parthenon take equal cognizance of both festivals, while the traditional exploits ascribed to Theseus their common founder, against Amazons and Centaurs, supply subjects for the metopes.

The reference of the historian to the traditional wars between Eleusis and Athens, is peculiarly significant. Eleusis remained in historic time the same centre of the most impressive religious sanctities which it appears to be as an independent city, in the ancient so-styled Homeric hymn. From the influence allowed to its priestly families at Athens, it would seem that Eleusis gained favourable terms or asserted its claims afterwards successfully, however these were reconciled with the natural claim to predominance of the ancient priestly families attached to the sanctuaries and rites of the Athenian acropolis. On the frieze, at least, we shall find that their heroic or dæmonian representatives take common part and interest in the national glories, an acknowledgment of intimate alliance, while still they are naturally grouped apart.

As we face the portal, the Eleusinian group is on our left. We have already recognized the isolated group of Zeus and Here, titles which have never been questioned since they were assigned by Visconti in 1816. A youthful female figure stands by Hera in such a position of attendance upon her, as alone

goes far to identify her as Hebe—Hebe, whom both Naucydes and Praxiteles stationed by their statues of her mother.² There are plain indications behind her of wings for which there is no authority in literature; but the Sosias vase of fine style exhibits an inscribed Hebe with wings.³ Hebe, in the *Iliad* V, 72, as specially attached to Here, puts her chariot together.

The alternative would be to accept the figure for Nike, Victory, as proposed by Visconti in 1816, and favoured recently by Michaelis; but the appropriate position of Victory would be by Zeus not by Here. The head of the figure in very good preservation was recovered in recent excavations on the acropolis, and identified and attached in true position by Dr. Waldstein. Her raised left hand rests on her head at the back, and by pose and gesture she links the more sedate assessors with the general composition.

The next four figures are arranged in a manner to imply an intimate sympathy with each other; this agrees with the natural interpretation of their characteristics, as distinctly Eleusinian. The second, a female of matronly aspect, is marked by the large torch which she holds, her symbol on the great Eleusinian bas-relief and vases, as the Demeter of the Mysteries (*Theophrast. Charact.* IV, &c.). Here again, in common with several archæologists, I follow Visconti, and also in the identification of the youth before her, as Triptolemus. With both feet off the ground and embracing one knee, he sits

² *Pausan.* 2, 17; 5.—8, 9; 3.

³ See also Plate VII, Gerhard Vasenb., 1, for group of Zeus, Here and winged Hebe.

rocking or rather balancing himself on his seat; such is the sculptor's symbolical substitution for the winged and serpent-drawn car on which, in other representations, we see him despatched by Demeter on the philanthropic mission of distributing the seed of bread-corn to the nations of the earth. The remaining figures are a pair of young men; they are seated back to back, but their fraternal or close friendly relation is expressed by one leaning his arm familiarly on the shoulder of the other as he turns his head to look in the same direction towards the advancing votaries. That the pair, thus united, are to be regarded as having also some special relation to Eleusis, is proved by the knees of one passing on either side of those of Demeter. It would be unworthy to ascribe this collocation to a mere accident or to a compromise enforced on the sculptor to enable him to pack his figures somehow—anyhow—in a given restricted space. They are paired by their proportions, and grouped in a manner to suggest as ingeniously as significantly, that they are colleagues upon equal and friendly terms in exercise of contrasted functions.

I retain my settled conviction that they represent Kerux and Eumolpus—Herald and Chanter. These were the heroic eponymous ancestors of the priestly families of Eleusis, familiarly known in the history of Athens. The boots of the foremost of them, the petasus on his lap, and the drill hole indicating that he held some short object in his right hand—it may easily have been a caduceus—are appropriate to the Herald—the Kerux. Why then object, it may be said, to style him Hermes at once? This would leave

us to seek, what were not so easily found, a god as associate of like dignity to Hermes, of like relation to Demeter, and independent of demonstrative attributes. Phidian sculpture, again, is above all things Homeric, and anything but Homeric would be a booted Hermes. We read in the *Odyssey* when Zeus gives him his commission:—

“Thus said he and not uncompliant was herald Argeiphontes

There at once under his feet did he bind on his beautiful sandals,

Ambrosial, golden, which bore him equally over the moist wave,

And over the measureless land along with the wafting breezes.”

We have now to follow forth the analysis which will demonstrate that the groups on the right hand of the centre, which are manifest as sculpturally correlative to those on the left, are no less correlative as in principle they should be, by their significance, have as intimate relations among their members, and collectively are as identified with the most sacred traditions and hereditary priesthoods concentrated about the temple of Athene Polias on the Athenian acropolis, as those on the other side are with the Telesterion of Eleusis.

Again, the first figures are a god and goddess placed together in marked independence of the others, and so far asserting some superior importance. But here, by a significant interchange, it is the goddess who, dignified and composed, looks directly forward while the god turns to her with a certain deferential air.

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It was left to Professor Welcker (1852) to recognise the god as Hephæstus; the hint of the lameness of the artizan god is given by the manner in which he props himself on a staff under his right arm. With like regard to tradition and avoidance at once of an unhandsome detail, the Cecrops of the pediment is seated on the coils of a serpent instead of himself ending in a serpentine tail in accordance with the legend and representations on the vases. So Polygnotus in his picture at Delphi substituted a symbol for an ungraceful detail by showing the heroine Erigone, who hanged herself, seated in a swing.

We shall be led up to the most satisfactory identification of the sceptred goddess associated with Hephæstus by following forth another very significant clue.

The four intimately grouped figures beyond Hephæstus are seated on stools which, by their arrangement, are to be understood as in a row fronting the line of the procession. The two first are occupied by gods—an elder and a younger in conversation, the others by two female figures who direct their looks in common towards the advancing votaries; a beautiful nude boy leans familiarly against the knees of the foremost, who extends her arm over his shoulder and points in the same direction.

The boy has a fillet round his head—a usual symbol of sacred function; and indications of a pair of wings appear plainly behind, and his lowered hand firmly clutches a long rod. This was formerly assumed to be a sceptre, but has been certainly recognised by Professor Michaelis as the long stem of

a sunshade—a parasol. On this point there is no room for question. The forms of the scalloped marble above exactly repeat those of the parasol held over the satrap on the Lycian frieze; the ribs in either case must have been represented by colour; the line of the stem continued would touch their centre.

The position of this umbrella shows that it is not held in the service of protecting the goddess or heroine from the sun; it must be regarded therefore as an attribute or symbol. It is in fact the so-called Skiron, a sunshade which had a conspicuous place in an Athenian festival. One of the Attic months (= June) was Skirophorion, the month of the procession of the parasol, a screen against the solar rays, of which Athena was honoured as the inventress. The Eteoboutadae, or reputed descendants of Boutes, brother of Erechtheus, who were in historic times hereditary priests of the Erechtheum, where Pausanias saw their inscribed genealogy, had charge of the symbol. The festival of Athena Skiras⁴ fell on the twelfth day of the month Skirophorion, when the priest of Erechtheus carried the sacred symbol in procession from the acropolis to a certain place called Skiron, the traditional scene of a battle between the Eleusinians and the Athenians under Erechtheus (*Pausan.* i, 36, 4). He was accompanied by the priestess of Athene Polias, who was also of the lineage of Boutes, and by the priests of Poseidon and Helios, the Sun. The participation of the priest of

⁴ *Isocrat. Panath.*, 78-476. *Plato Menex.*, 239. *Pausan.*, I, 36, 3, &c. *Hygin.*, 46. *Schol. Eurip. Phæn.*, 861. *Herod.*, I, 30. *Meurs. de Regg. Athen.*, II, 8, 10, &c

the Sun in a festival of the sunshade explains itself; that of the priest of Poseidon was manifestly due to the connection of the god with the sanctuary of the Erechtheum, where he had an altar in association with those of Erechtheus, Boutes, and Hephæstus.

From these considerations I can only conclude that the winged boy wearing the priestly fillet and with the sacred symbol, is the dæmonian hero Boutes. The wings with which he is equipped are further confirmation of this title, corresponding as they do with the legends which make him the centre of a number of well-fledged personalities. One of his sisters—Philomela—was transformed into a nightingale; another—Procne—into a swallow; and the husband of one of them into a hoopoe. Oreithyia, sister of his wife, was bride of the winged Boreas, whose twin children were the winged Zetes and Calais, and who conferred wings on Musæus (*Paus.* i, 22, 7).

Passing then intermediately to the two conversing gods, the first was recognised by Visconti as Poseidon, and this earliest ascription has scarcely ever been challenged since. I do not quite understand the gesture of his left hand, but otherwise his vigorous form befits the patron of the stalwart oarsmen of the city and port—τὸ ῥυπαπαί of Salamis. His companion may be cordially accepted as Apollo, a title only rarely and feebly objected to since it was proposed by Gerhard in 1840. The smooth cheeks and brightness of aspect and contrasted elasticity of movement are characteristic.

As associated here with the Poseidon and Boutes of the Skirophoria, he assumes the special character

of sun god,⁵ which was probably emphasized by some wreath or other ornament of metal, of which the drill-holes for attachment are remaining.

So far then we have found that the assessors—divine or heroic—of the festival on this side, are selected with as special reference to the most sacred and primitive worships of the acropolis of Athens, as on the other side to Eleusinian traditions and sanctities. In this manner it was that the design was made expressive of that sentiment of harmonious combination, that interest in patriotic organization and unity, which was carried back with gratitude to the hero Theseus.

We have still to give consideration to the two female figures, the protectresses of Boutes. They have the appearance of sisters, and their attachment to Boutes refers us to the daughters of Erechtheus. The lists enumerate six of these, but a pair—Protogeneia and Pandora—had especial honours from the tradition that they gave themselves up as voluntary sacrifices to frustrate an invasion of the territory of Attica. The Atthis of Phanodemus is cited (Suidas v. *παρθένοι*) and is good authority, for the prevalence of the tradition, and their worship was mentioned in the *Monotropos* of Phrynichus, a writer of the Old Comedy. The Atthis of Philochorus again, a very considerable authority, is referred to (Harpocration v. *ἐπίβοιον*, and *Etym. Magn.*) for the statement that whenever a cow was sacrificed to Athene it was incumbent that a sheep should be offered to this Pandora.

This offering of a sheep appears to be allusive to

⁵ *Schol. Arist. Eccle.*, 18.

the tradition that to Pandora and her sisters was due the first manufacture of men's garments out of wool. (Suidas v. *προτόνιον*.) The record continues that the *protonion* which they manufactured was a robe that the priestess put on and was transferred to the sacrificing official.⁶

This seems to furnish an example of the numerous parallelisms of ceremonies of Paganism and of the mediæval church. The festival of St. Agnes is celebrated at Rome on the 21st January in the beautiful basilica of Sa. Agnese fuori la Mura. High mass, accompanied by excellent music, is celebrated by the titular Cardinal of the Church, or by a bishop, and is followed by the blessing of two little lambs. These are placed upon the altar decorated with flowers and garlands, and are afterwards handed over to the nuns of a convent in Rome, by whom they are reared for their wool, which is employed in making the palliums distributed by the Pope to great Church dignitaries. The lambs upon the altar repeat symbolically the Athenian sacrifice. The question whether the later ceremony is really derivative from the earlier, or only an independent outcome of natural suggestion, is involved in the general controversy urged with such vivacity between the equally acute and outspoken Dr. Conyers Middleton and the more orthodox but withal paradoxical author of the *Divine Legation of Moses*.

However this may be we appear to be conducted to an explanation of the group of the priest and boy

⁶ Suidas, *ἱματίδιον ὃ ἱέρεια ἀμφιέννυται, ἐπιτίθεται δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἱερείας τῷ σφάττοντι.*

over the great portal. The boy holds up an accurately folded ample robe which shows the same simple scalloped edge as the robes of some marshalls of the procession, and the rumples on the surface of it indicate that it is being received from him, not delivered to him. Further, the priest—by his position marked as a most important functionary—is attired, in contrast to the fully robed priestess, his manifest colleague, in merely a long ungirt tunic, and the inference from his action is natural, that he is about to complete his ceremonial attire and robe himself according to the quoted record as sacrificer; that the mantle he is receiving is in some way exceptional, is expressed very distinctly by the manner in which he appears to scrutinize it.

This folded robe has been very constantly assumed to be the peplus which was wrought on the acropolis and dedicated to the goddess at the Panathenæa; but I am satisfied by the argument as stated. The character of the vestment—the sacred protonion—about to be assumed, confers due dignity on the otherwise commonplace incident.

In the companion group to the left two girls appear to be arriving, and are received by a stately and handsomely-draped female. Each has on her head the little pad (*τύλη*) to relieve the pressure of some objects which, however, are very easily carried. These have the appearance of light trays with flat puffy bundles upon them, and one of them at least has legs as forming a stand or table.

We may be well satisfied to follow K. O. Müller (*De Minervâ Poliad.* 1820) in assigning to these two

sacred serving maidens of the goddess, occupied, as we see them, the titles Trapezo and Cosmo. Hesychius gives us "Trapezo, a certain priestess at Athens," and in Etym. Mag. (sub. v.) we have Trapezophoros (fem.), the table-bearer, who, together with Cosmo, was concerned about the arrangement of the sacred things of Athene. Harpocraton is the common authority of Suidas and Etymol. Magn. for the sacred function of Trapezophoros.

There is a fair ground for assuming that the two superior functionaries are the Archon Basileus and his wife the Basilinna, officials appointed to replace the hereditary kings in sacred duties which could not be abrogated by the suppression of the monarchy. To them with a ceremonial royal title were committed the conservation and celebration of most secret and sacred national rites (Demoth. c. Neær. p. 1370[99]). The Archon Basileus, and thus by natural implication the Basilinna, had charge of the sacred maidens of Athene. (Suidas 823.)

It remains to agree upon the name and the significance of the goddess by whom Hephæstus is seated. After what we have seen we are manifestly guided—nay, manifestly bound—to keep within the circle of, not merely Attic legends, but of those which pertain to Erechtheus and Boutes. The conclusion then may be confidently affirmed that the sceptred assessor of Hephæstus is Ge or Gaia,—that is Earth, and Ge as the equivalent of Atthis,—of the land of Attica,—the pair being not only parents of Erechtheus, but the received mythical progenitors of the Athenian population,—the truest autochthons.

The story need not be textually retold how Hephæstus,—Hephæstus who had an altar in the Erechtheum—foiled in his passion for Athene, gave Erechtheus—otherwise Erichthonius, a different mother. Homer touches on the story in the catalogue of the ships, and with allusion to such a periodical celebration as the frieze represents.

Ge, the Earth, is replaced, in his lines, by the equivalent Aroura, personified arable land,

“But they who the holders were of Athens, well-built city,
 Realm of great-hearted Erechtheus whom on a time
 Athene
 Nurtured, daughter of Zeus—bring him forth did life-
 giving Aroura—
 And gave him at Athens seat in her own abounding
 temple;
 Unto her there with cows and with flocks of sheep do
 service
 The Athenian youths as ever the years are complete
 revolving—
 Menestheus was the leader of these, the son of Peteus.”

It may be here noted that in the *Odyssey*, Athene retires to the house of Erechtheus, as in the *Iliad* she lodges him in her own temple—a proof that the comparatively late double structure which Pausanias described as comprising the two temples—of Athene Polias and of Erechtheus, faithfully continued a tradition which was ancient even in Homeric times.

The vase painters, in agreement with Homer, exhibit Athene receiving the infant Erechtheus from a goddess half emergent from the earth which she personifies. Plato in the *Timæus* (6) assumes the

tradition to be notorious, that Erechtheus was not merely an early king of Athens, but the true patriarch of the Athenians, who as offspring of Ge and Hephæstus, carried up their lineage to the gods. The same story—with frequent interchange of the name Erichthonius—was told by Pindar and Isocrates, and re-copied over and over again.⁷

We have seen, then, that the Panathenaic festival and that of the Synoikism were venerated as instituted by Theseus in primeval times, on the establishment of a vigorous and sympathetic organization, conterminous with the natural boundaries of Attica: we have seen also proofs of its consecration by the harmonized worships appropriate to the respective seats of the traditional enemies, Erechtheus and Eumolpus.⁸

The study of the artistic embellishments of the noble temple which was the centre of these patriotic celebrations, brings home at once to our apprehension and imagination, with what skill and energy and wisdom was effected the union of worships and fusion of administration, which founded the polity that answered through a momentous and glorious history—so Thucydides was convinced—to what he himself has called “the great name of Athens.” (*Thucyd.* VII, 64; III, 15.)

In these central sacred groups of the Panathenaic frieze, interpreted as it seems to me “with modesty

⁷ *Isocr. Panathen.* 218. *Harpocrat.* v. ἀνρόχθονες. *Apollod.* 111, 14, 3. *Pausan.* I, 2.

The orator Lycurgus was of the family of Eteoboutadæ, and his genealogy was carried up to Erechtheus, son of Ge and Hephæstus.

⁸ *Schol. Plat. Parmen.*, 127, A. *Plutarch Thes.*, 24. *Pausan.*, VIII, 2.)

and likelihood enough to lead it," we have a visible commemoration of one of the most fruitful acts of statesmanship in the history of the world, the consolidation under harmonized religious sanction of a territory sufficient to assure the defensive power of Attica, and also to be the basis of her future empire. This stroke of policy is not the less to be accepted as a fact in history, because we cannot attach to it a precise date; nor shall we demur to the inference of Thucydides, that it was the work of a man who combined insight and power,—prudence and vigour,—because tradition veils him under the more than semi-mythic name of Theseus. It is only once in the history of the united—the Panathenaic Constitution, that a sign of weakness is betrayed for a short time in the main seam, and Athens and Eleusis—the several seats of Athene Parthenos and Demeter, were again at variance. This was when the unpatriotic party which gave power to the Thirty Tyrants, made Eleusis its headquarters. Nor could the rancour of religious difference be utterly laid asleep or extirpated. We do not read that the hereditary priestly families of Kerux and Eumolpus—assessors on the frieze of Eleusinian Demeter—denounced the flagitious project of the Sicilian expedition; but they did their best to wreck it, and succeeded by stimulating the cry of profanity against Alcibiades, whose command of it was its one chance of success. So the political downfall of Athens was secured. They were happily less successful in checking the progress of Art, of Morals and Science, albeit it was due to them that Phidias died in prison, that Socrates drank poison, and that Aristotle was driven into exile.

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“Such will be the effects of party,” says Thucydides, on another occasion, “so long as human nature remains the same.” It remains the same to this day; the world is ridiculously further than ever from agreement in religious matters, and it is not in rough scrambles at the present day for political power and emolument, that political union is any more likely to be maintained than honourable consistency in political principles.

NOTE.

The pair of figures recognized here as Kerux and Eumolpus, have been assumed to be at least brothers—usually the Dioscuri—by almost every critic of repute since Stuart. To Michaelis they are Hermes and Dionysus.

Visconti, Welcker and Michaelis are in agreement as to Demeter and Triptolemus.

Leake, with many followers, is in favour of Hebe as in competition with Nike advocated by Visconti, Birch, and again by Michaelis.

The names of Here and Zeus are practically uncontested. The title Hephæstus, which I accept, was proposed first by Welcker, and is supported by Michaelis; but I am alone in naming the associated goddess, Gaia. To Michaelis, following Brunn, she is Athene herself.

The Poseidon of Visconti and the Apollo of Gerhard, are adopted by Michaelis, with whom I am now so far in agreement.

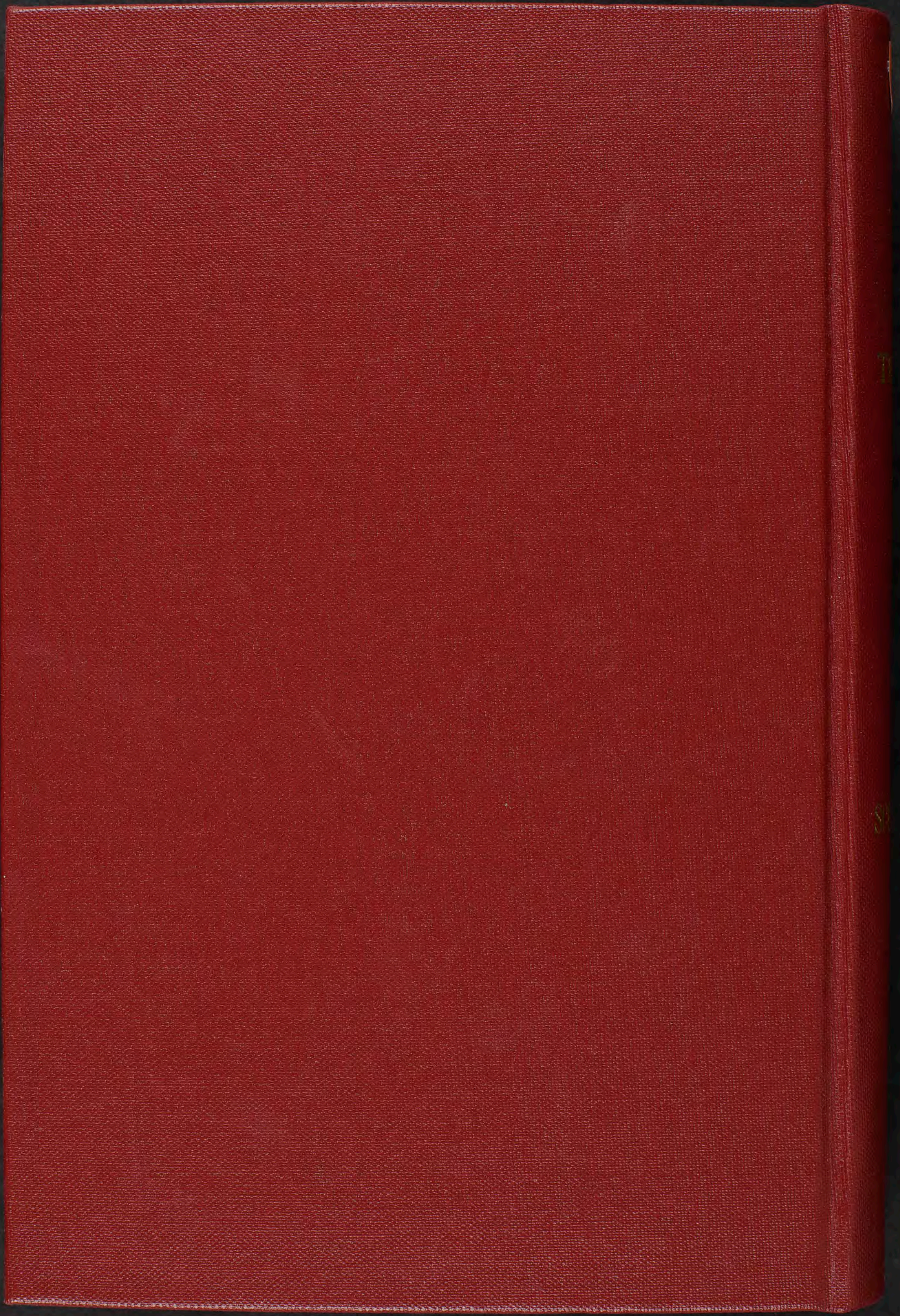
We part company in respect of the final triad which, following K. O. Müller, he names Peitho, Aphrodite and Eros.

The names which I assign—Protogeneia, Pandora, and Boutes—have not been anticipated, nor has the principle of their correlation to the Eleusinian group—the very key of the significance of the entire frieze—though Visconti has been followed by a large majority in names so closely associated with the temple of Athene Polias, as Agraulos, Pandrosos and Erechtheus.—(Stuart, 1762.—Visconti, 1816.—Birch, 1839.—Gerhard, 1840.—Welcker, 1852.—W. W. Ll., first, 1854.—Brunn, 1860.—Michaelis, 1865.)

To Brunn was due the first suggestion that the folded mantle was not the peplus of the goddess, but a garment of the priest, though he did not identify it as the ceremonial *protonion*.

Of recent speculations by Flasch I may content myself with noticing that he names the Eumolpus and Demeter, Apollo and Artemis, and transfers the title of Demeter to the immediate protectress of Boutes, whom he holds, with so many others before him, to be Eros.

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