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Ian Jenkins & Kate Morton, *Explore the Parthenon, an ancient Greek temple and its sculptures*. London, The British Museum Press, 2009. Pp. 36. 48 figs. £4.99. ISBN 978-0-7141-3130-6 (Pbk).

Ian Jenkins & Victoria Turner, *The Greek Body*. London, The British Museum Press, 2009. Pp. 144. 130 figs. £19.99. ISBN 978-0-7141-2268-7 (Hbk).

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Explore the Parthenon, an ancient Greek temple and its sculptures presents the temple, its sculptures and history to a younger audience as part of the British Museum's range of books on its collections for children. It discusses the building of the Parthenon, its decoration and surrounding topics, such as the Panatheniac festival, games and procession, in a way that makes them accessible to a younger generation.

Kate Morton uses a stunning mixture of photographs, drawings and CGI to illustrate Jenkins' text. The images of the temple and its sculptures are complemented by photographs of Greek vases showing similar subjects, such as the black-figure hydra used to illustrate chariot racing (p.26).

As well as presenting the sculpture of the temple, *Explore the Parthenon* also provides information on subjects surrounding the building, including details such as the use of the ship in the Panathenaic procession and Perikles' increasing the size of the Athenian cavalry (pp.19 and 24).

Each section of the sculpture of the Parthenon, its metopes, Ionic frieze, pediments and cult statue, is discussed separately, explaining what each one is, what they depicted and where they were located on or in the temple.

Jenkins' discussion of the Ionic frieze presents a very 'child-friendly' version of the scholarly thinking on the subject. He makes no mention of the debate over the details of the frieze, stating only that 'the Panathenaic procession is shown in the Parthenon frieze, which runs right round the temple', full stop (p.22). He makes no mention of Connelly's theory about the peplos scene depicting a sacrifice or Boardman's argument that the cavalymen are the heroized fallen from the Battle of Marathon. Instead he simply explains their appearance saying 'the actual procession contained foot soldiers, but the cavalry look much more exciting on the frieze'.

The history presented in this book is slightly biased towards more recent history, giving only two sentences to the first 1500 years of the Parthenon's existence, but a whole paragraph to the explosion of 1687 (p.34). Presumably the building's later history is more interesting to the book's intended audience than the earlier changes in function.

Jenkins' discussion of Elgin's actions is also rather one-sided, saying that the Parthenon 'suffered further damage' every day and that Elgin and his men 'decided to save as many sculptures as could be removed from the building' (p.35). Again, one assumes this is to reflect the interests of the target audience by explaining how the sculptures came to be in the British Museum.

Despite this simplification of the building's history, obviously deemed necessary for the intended readership, *Explore the Parthenon* presents a sound introduction to the Parthenon and its sculptures.

The Greek Body

The Greek Body discusses the treatment of the body in Greek art through pieces from the British Museum collections. This is not a typical study of Greek art in that it is not an in-depth survey of the depiction of the body, but then it does not pretend to be. Rather, this book provides a lens through which to view some of the pieces in the British Museum collection.

However, the objects discussed are not found exclusively in the British Museum. Certain points made in the introductory chapter are illustrated better by pieces in other museums than by those in the British Museum. For example, the suggestion that an inscription can provide an identity for the formulaic statue such as a *kouros* is better explained using the Kouros of Kroisos from the National Archaeological Museum of Athens (inv. no. 3851), found with his inscribed base, than, for example, the British Museum's own, incomplete, Strangford Apollo (inv. no. 1864,0220.1).

The book begins with a chapter on the body in Greek art, introducing the various concepts explored throughout. This highlights the Greek value of *aretê* and how the sculptures of the nude male body embodied it; the development from the Kouros form borrowed from Egyptian art (p.11) through to the Canon of Polykleitos; the female nude or lack thereof in early Greek art; depictions of mythical figures, or what Jenkins and Turner term 'morphs'; and the later continuation of Greek art under the Romans.

Each of the following chapters begins with a few paragraphs as an overall comment on that section, such as on the use of portraiture in the depiction of the face. What follows is then a selection of examples, each with explanatory paragraphs and glossy photographs. Each image is accompanied by a caption outlining the relevance of the piece to the general discussion as well as the standard information on height, date, provenance etc.

The close-up illustrations used in this book are striking. Alongside the standard photographs giving the whole view of the piece described are full-page close-up shots on different details of the pieces, such as the winged sandals of the 'Farnese Hermes' (inv. no. 1864,1021.1) or the hand of 'Lely's Venus' (inv. no. 1963,10-29.1). The lighting of the photograph of a statuette from Naukratis (inv. no. 1888,1006.1) deserves particular mention. Lit from behind, this image shows the translucence of the stone which is rarely picked up in photography. The image of the statuette of Sokrates (inv. no. 1925,1118.1) picks up the glint of the marble. The full-page close-up of the 'stocky fisherman' (inv. no. 1805,0703.47) shows his 'leather-like skin' (p.132).

The focus of *The Greek Body* book is mainly on Greek sculpture, but references are made to similar techniques or styles used in vase-painting. It does not stick to the popular archaic and classical periods but attempts to illustrate the depiction of the body over a wide timescale, ranging from Cycladic figures from c. 2600-2400 BC to a bronze figure of Hermaphroditos from the first-third century AD. It also refrains from focusing solely on sculptures from Attica, one of the major centres of production, but also demonstrates the wider popularity of sculptural production by including items from Tanagra, Alexandria and Myrina.

It makes a refreshing change for *The Greek Body* to limit its focus on the major, well-known pieces and to highlight some of the smaller, lesser-known pieces in the British Museum's collections. For example, the book makes only minimal reference to the seemingly omnipresent Parthenon sculptures (only three figures feature in the photographs: Illissos and Aphrodite from the pediments and a centaur from the metopes).

Also, several of the pieces are described as being 'thought to have been found in ...'. It makes a change to see pieces for which the provenance is not beyond contention. These objects are on display in the museum, so why should they not feature in its publications?

Overall, *The Greek Body* is like a cross between a scholarly publication and an exhibition catalogue. It does not go into quite enough depth to be considered a research piece, but is more than simply a picture book. This book is more likely to be of interest to those already familiar with Greek sculpture, looking for the lesser known examples, rather than those new to the subject looking for an introduction.