



Winckelmann

MASTERPIECES THROUGHOUT THE
VATICAN MUSEUMS



EDIZIONI MUSEI VATICANI

Life and works of Johann Joachim Winckelmann: chronology

Annaligeria Caffo

- 1717** Born on December 9th in Stendal, Prussia, only son of master shoemaker Martin and Anna Maria Meyer
- 1733-35** After primary school attends the *Lateinschule* in Stendal
- 1735-36** Studies at the *Köllnisches Gymnasium* in Berlin
- 1736-37** Enrols at Salzwedel Grammar School, near Stendal
- 1738-40** Studies at the University of Halle, where he undertakes in-depth studies of theology, law, aesthetics and classical antiquity, but also medicine, physics, and natural sciences
- 1740-41** Tutor to the Grollmann family in Osterburg, north of Stendal
- 1741** Moves to the University of Jena, where he studies natural science, in particular medicine, anatomy, physics, mathematics; undertakes a study trip to Paris, but is forced to break it off through lack of funds
- 1742-43** Tutor to the Lamprecht family in Hadmersleben, near Magdeburg
- 1743-47** Co-Rector of the *Lateinschule* in Seehausen, where he teaches Latin, Greek, Hebrew, logic, history, and geography. Studies English and Italian
- 1747** Death of his mother (March 8th)
- 1748-54** Librarian to Count Heinrich von Bünau in Nöthnitz, near Dres-

den. Here at last he has access to the Count's large collection of classical texts and engravings from the ancient world, and starts to come into contact with people who will determine his future choices

- 1750** Death of his father (February 6th)
- 1751** Meets Cardinal Alberico Archinto, Apostolic Nuncio in Dresden, who takes him under his protection and encourages him to convert to Catholicism and move to Rome. He forms a close friendship with the Father Confessor to King August III, the Jesuit Leo Rauch who makes it possible for Winckelmann to travel to Rome, financing the journey and assuring him a monthly income for several years
- 1752** Brief stay in Berlin and Potsdam to view Frederick II's collections; moves further towards the decision to travel to Rome
- 1754** From October to the following September stays in Dresden; studies the city's important collections and learns the theory and practice of art in the studio of the painter Adam Oeser, in whose house he lives. Frequents intellectuals and scholars, including the court physician Giovanni Ludovico Bianconi. On June 11th makes his conversion in the hands of Cardinale Archinto
- 1755** In Dresden publishes *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (*Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture*). On September 24th he sets off for Rome, arriving there on November 18th or 19th. Here he forms valuable friendships with men of letters and artists, including Anton Raphaël Mengs and the sculptor Johannes Wiedewelt, and comes into contact with the most senior figures in the Church, such as the Cardinals Domenico Passionei and Alessandro Albani
- 1756** In Dresden publishes the essays *Sendschreiben über die Gedanken* (*Letter on Thoughts*) and *Erläuterung der Gedanken* (*Comment on Thoughts*). Begins a correspondence with Baron Philipp von Stosch (1691-1757), possessor of an important collection of engravings. Begins work on *Reifere Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Alten in der Zeichnung und Bildhauerkunst* (*Maturer Thoughts*)

on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture), published posthumously and still in fragmentary form in 1811. He works to the manuscript *Ville e Palazzi di Roma* (so called “manuscript 68”, conserved in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale)

- 1757** Works in the library of Cardinal Archinto and lives in an apartment on the top floor of the Palace of the Chancellery
- 1758** Goes to Naples for the first time and visits Portici, Caserta and the excavations at Pompeii, Herculaneum and Paestum. On 3 May Pope Benedict XIV Lambertini dies; on July 6th Clement XIII Rezzonico becomes Pope. In September Winckelmann goes to Florence to study Baron Philipp von Stosch’s jewel collection and compiles its catalogue raisonné, and studies Etruscan culture while drafting his history of ancient art. On 30 September Cardinal Archinto dies
- 1759** Returns to Rome and becomes Librarian to Cardinal Alessandro Albani, leaves his lodgings in the Chancellery and moves to Palazzo Albani at Quattro Fontane. Publishes various essays in Leipzig: *Erinnerung über die Betrachtung der Werke der Kunst* (*Memoir on the Observation of Works of Art*), *Von der Grazie in den Werken der Kunst* (*On Grace in Works of Art*), *Beschreibung des Torso im Belvedere* (*Description of the Belvedere Torso*), *Beschreibung des Apollo im Belvedere* (*Description of the Belvedere Apollo*), *Anmerkungen über die Baukunst der alten Tempel zu Girgenti in Sizilien* (*Remarks on the Architecture of the Ancient Temples of Agrigento in Sicily*); *Nachrichten von dem berühmten Stoschischen Museo in Florenz* (*News about the Celebrated Stosch Museum in Florence*)
- 1760** In Florence publishes the *Description des Pierres Gravées du feu Baron de Stosch* with a dedication to Cardinal Albani
- 1761** Is named a member of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome, the Accademia Etrusca in Cortona and the Society of Antiquaries in London
- 1762** In Leipzig publishes the *Anmerkungen über die Baukunst der Alten* (*Remarks on the Architecture of the Ancients*). Makes a second visit to Naples and the excavations in Campania, and publishes his first work on Herculaneum, *Sendschreiben von der Herculianischen*

Entdeckungen (Letter on the Herculanean Discoveries). Meets Friedrich Reinhold von Berg, Count of Livonia, to whom he dedicates the essay *Abhandlung von der Fähigkeit der Empfindung des Schönen in der Kunst und dem Unterricht in derselben* (Treatise on the Capacity for Sensitivity to the Beautiful in Art and the Method of Teaching It)

- 1763** On April 16th is named *Commissario* of Antiquities, and on May 2nd becomes *Scriptor linguae teutonicae* at the Vatican Library
- 1764** Third visit to Campania; in Dresden publishes the *Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculianischen Entdeckungen* (News of the Most Recent Discoveries in Herculaneum) and his most important work, the *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (History of the Art of Antiquity)
- 1765** Is named a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Göttingen. Frederick II offers him the post of librarian in his Royal Library and Cabinet of Medals in Berlin, but the agreement comes to nothing because of disagreement over the salary
- 1766** In Dresden publishes *Versuch einer Allegorie, besonders für die Kunst* (Essay in Allegory, Especially on Art)
- 1767** Goes again to Campania, publishes in Dresden *Anmerkungen über die Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (Remarks on the History of Art of Antiquity) and in Rome the *Monumenti Antichi Inediti*
- 1768** In April undertakes a journey to Germany in company with the sculptor Bartolomeo Cavaceppi with the intention of visiting some of the main centres of European culture. After brief stays in Augsburg and Munich, in Regensburg he decides to go back to Italy by way of Vienna. In Trieste he has his fatal meeting with the criminal Francesco Arcangeli who, meaning to rob him, wounds him in his room at the *Locanda Grande*. Winckelmann dies on June 8th in great pain, which does not stop him dictating his will, naming Cardinal Albani heir to his possessions and manuscripts. His funeral was celebrated in San Giusto Cathedral where he is buried