

EDITED BY
CLEMENTE
MARCONI

≡ The Oxford Handbook of
GREEK AND ROMAN ART
AND ARCHITECTURE

Contents

Front Matter

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Dedication

Acknowledgments

Abbreviations and Spelling

Contributors

Introduction: Advocating a Hermeneutic Approach

Clemente Marconi

Pictures from the Inside

Greek and Roman Theories of Art

Deborah Steiner

Greek and Roman Architectural Theory

Mark Wilson Jones

Greek and Roman specialized Writing on Art and Architecture

Francesco De Angelis

Greek and Roman Images of Art and Architecture

Maryl B. Gensheimer

Greek and Roman Art and Architecture in the Making

Greek and Roman Artists

Rainer Vollkommer

Greek and Roman Architects

Henner Von Hesberg

The Patronage of Greek and Roman Art

Eric R. Vamer

The Patronage of Greek and Roman Architecture

Bonna D. Wescoat

The Materials and Techniques of Greek and Roman Art

Kenneth Lapatin

The Materials and Techniques of Greek and Roman Architecture

Pier Luigi Tucci

Ancient Contexts

The City in the Greek and Roman World

Jamieson C. Donati

The Functions of Greek Art

Olga Palagia

The Functions of Roman Art

Paul Zanker

Buildings, Images, and Rituals in the Greek World

Joannis Mylonopoulos

Buildings, Images, and Rituals in the Roman World

Richard Neudecker

The Roman Reception of Greek Art and Architecture

Rachel Kousser

Roman Art and Architecture in the Provinces and beyond the Roman World

Natalie Kampen

Post-Antique Contexts

The Post-Antique Reception of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture

Lucia Faedo

The Historiography of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture

A. A. Donohue

Conserving Greek and Roman Architecture

John H. Stubbs

Displaying Greek and Roman Art in Modern Museums

Beth Cohen

Greek and Roman Art and the Debate about Cultural Property

Margaret M. Miles

Approaches

Connoisseurship

Adolf H. Borbein

Formal Approaches

Christian Kunze

Iconographical and Iconological Approaches

Comelia Isler-Kerényi

Sociohistorical Approaches

Burkhard Fehr

Gender Studies

Caroline Vout

Anthropological Approaches

Gloria Ferrari

Theories of Reception

Michael Squire

Semiotics TO Agency

Tonio Hölscher

End Matter

Index

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(p. iv)

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Dedication

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Acknowledgments

The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture

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(p. x)

(p. xi)

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(p. xii)

(p. xiii)

Abbreviations and Spelling

After much thinking, the decision was made to standardize the transliteration of Greek personal and place names, using the more common Latinized form as a default. In general, the transliteration is according to the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd ed., which is easily available for reference in libraries and online. There are a few exceptions, but this is the rule throughout the volume.

Since this book is not intended only for specialists in Greek and Roman art history and classics, I have not abbreviated the names of ancient authors; for the sake of consistency, I have transliterated their names and abbreviated the titles of their individual works according, again, to the system used by the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th ed. Where the *OCD* does not suggest abbreviations, the titles have been presented in full.

Periodical titles are not abbreviated. Footnotes have been avoided, in order to have a smoother presentation; occasional clusters of references in the text are the unhappy consequence of this decision.

The following abbreviations appear in the text for encyclopedias, corpora, and other frequently cited reference works.

<i>ABV</i>	Beazley, J. D. 1956. <i>Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters</i> . Oxford: Clarendon.
<i>Add</i> ²	Carpenter, T. H. 1989. <i>Beazley Addenda: Additional References to ABV, ARV², and Paralipomena</i> , 2nd ed. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
<i>ANRW</i>	H. Temporini and W. Haase, eds. 1972-. <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> . Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Abbreviations and Spelling

ARV ²	Beazley, J. D. 1963. <i>Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters</i> , 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon.
BAPD	Beazley Archive Pottery Database (www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/pottery).
BNP	Cancik, H., et al., eds. 2002–2010. <i>Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World, Antiquity</i> . Leiden and Boston: Brill.
CEG	Hansen, P. A. 1983–1989. <i>Carmina Epigraphica Graeca</i> , 2 vols. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter.
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> . 1863–. Berlin: Georg Reimer.
EAA	<i>Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica, Classica e Orientale</i> . 1958–. Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana.
(p. xiv) FrGrH	Jacoby, F., ed. 1923–1958. <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Berlin: Weidmann; Leiden: Brill.
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae, consilio et auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Germanicae editae</i> . 1873–. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
KdA	Vollkommer, R., ed. 2001–2004. <i>Künstlerlexikon der Antike</i> . Munich: K. G. Saur.
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> . 1981–. Zurich: Artemis.
Para	Beazley, J. D. 1971. <i>Paralipomena: Additions to Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters and to Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters</i> . Oxford: Clarendon.
PMG	Page, D. L. 1962. <i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> . Oxford: Clarendon.
RE	Pauly, A. F., G. Wissowa, W. Kroll, et al., eds. 1883–. <i>Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> . Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller.
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> . 1923–. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben; Leiden: Brill.

Abbreviations and Spelling

<i>Syll</i> ³	Dittenberger, W. 1915–1924. <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , 3rd ed. Leipzig: S. Hirzel.
<i>ThesCRA</i>	<i>Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum</i> , 8 vols. 2004–2012. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum.
<i>VS</i>	Diels, H., and W. Kranz, eds. 1964. <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 11th ed. Zurich and Berlin: Weidmann.

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Introduction: Advocating a Hermeneutic Approach

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Abstract and Keywords

This book brings together scholars of various generations, nationalities, and backgrounds and their perspectives on Greek and Roman art and architecture. Thirty chapters are organized into five sections, exploring Greek and Roman ideas about art and architecture, as expressed in texts and images. It discusses the social, political, and cultural functions of Greek and Roman images and buildings; what the Greeks and Romans learned from other cultures, especially Egypt and the Near East, regarding production of images and buildings; and the notion of “ancient art theory.” The book introduces the theory of mimesis, the ideas of philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, and how images are related to built environments and rituals. It considers the different approaches used in the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture, from connoisseurship and formal analysis to iconography and iconology, social history, gender studies, anthropology, reception theory, and semiotics and agency.

Keywords: art, architecture, buildings, Greek, iconography, iconology, images, rituals, Roman, theory of mimesis

Here we are emphasizing a dimension that is generally ignored by the dominant conception that the historical sciences have of themselves. For the historian usually chooses concepts to describe the historical particularity of his objects without expressly reflecting on their origin and justification. He simply follows his interest in the material and takes no account of the fact that the descriptive concepts he chooses can be highly detrimental to his proper purpose if they assimilate what is historically different to what is familiar and thus, despite all impartiality, subordinate the alien being of the object to his own preconceptions. Thus, despite his scientific method, he behaves just like everyone else—as a child of his time who is unquestioningly dominated by the concepts and prejudices of his own age.

(Gadamer 2004, 397)

The Oxford Handbook Series offers an important opportunity to examine the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture at a critical time in its development. In the past few decades, this area of investigation has been characterized by an ever-increasing range of approaches, under the influence of various theories and fields of study within both the humanities and the social sciences, from the study of literature, history, and philosophy to that of archaeology, anthropology, and sociology. The scope of this handbook is to explore key aspects of Greek and Roman art and architecture and review the larger theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and directions of research in this field.

More precisely, this volume consists, after this general introduction, of thirty essays organized thematically and divided into five sections: "Pictures from the Inside," "Greek and Roman Art and Architecture in the Making," "Ancient Contexts," "Post-Antique Contexts," and "Approaches." These sections address, respectively, Greek and Roman ideas about art and architecture, as expressed in both texts and images (chapters 1 through 4); the production of art and architecture in the Greek and Roman world and the various agents and media involved with it (chapters 5 through 10); the ancient (p. 2) contexts of use and reception of Greek and Roman images and buildings and their social, political, and cultural functions (chapters 11 through 17); the post-Antique contexts of reuse and reception, including institutions such as academia and museums (chapters 18 through 22); and finally, the main modern approaches in this field of study and its successive engagement, over time, with connoisseurship, formal analysis, iconography and iconology, sociology, gender studies, anthropology, reception theory, and semiotics (chapters 23 through 30). This thematic organization and division into sections is in keeping with the hermeneutical approach to art, particularly the phenomenological hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002) and with Gadamer's ideas that a work of art cannot be separated from the totality of its interpretations and that interpretation is an understanding that is historically situated (Gadamer 2004; for a good introduction to hermeneutics and art theory, see Davey 2002). Hence the particular emphasis throughout this volume on historiography, not only as a chapter of the larger intellectual history but as an essential and critical moment of disciplinary self-reflection toward a development of historical consciousness.

In the beginning, it may be useful to clarify the intended readership for this book. Readers are supposed to be, in the first place, graduate students who are developing a particular interest in the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture; they represent the future of this field, and the main purpose of this handbook is to offer guidance, by introducing them to critical aspects of the subject and to the various modes of inquiry that have directed the discipline from its origins, including some considerations about possible future directions.

A volume like this, which intends not only to explore central features of Greek and Roman art and architecture but also to subject to critical scrutiny the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of this discipline, may also be of some value for our colleagues, those involved in the academic practice of art history, archaeology, and classical studies and those engaged in the professional practice of curating collections and writing art criticism. However, with this comes a major caveat. As the editor of this volume, I sought contributions from senior scholars, who have been playing a critical role in shaping the field, and from younger scholars, who will play an equally important role in defining the discipline for future generations. At the same time, I made a point of inviting colleagues from a range of different countries and academic traditions, in order to provide as comprehensive and wide-ranging a discussion as possible. However, by no means should this volume be taken as a state of the field or an attempt at investigating it in its full breadth.

There are several reasons for this, beginning with the obvious disproportion between the physical limitations of a volume like this and the richness of the field of study of Greek and Roman art and architecture. It may be argued that this discipline, like the wider field of art history, was a key institution in the construction, consolidation, and shaping of national identities in Europe and North America between the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries (Rampley et al. 2012), even more so, in the case of Greek and Roman art and architecture, because of the deep engagement that several modern nations have had since then with classical antiquity (Stephens and Vasunia 2010). As a (p. 3) result, the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture has been marked by a variety of approaches, bound with the different social, political, and cultural developments within individual countries. These approaches are so deeply entrenched in today's academic consciousness that one can still find expressions of strong sentiments concerning one's scholarly tradition and/or perspective; the more insular the tradition, the more it is presented as the sole viable option. In this, the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture has the same problem as the art history of later periods, namely, the dominance of the national paradigm and the fact that most scholarship on the history of art and architecture continues to be conducted within the framework of the nation-state.

Our age of cultural globalization, however, is witnessing an increase in transnational and cross-cultural contacts, inevitably accompanied by a decrease in the uniqueness of once-isolated communities. Within this framework, the purpose of this volume may be seen as bringing together scholars of various generations, nationalities, and backgrounds who have agreed to contribute to this project, voicing their perspectives in one and the same language (translations, inevitably a work of interpretation on the part of the translator, have been systematically reviewed by the authors and accepted as faithful representations of their ideas) and according to the same format. In so doing, the authors

were given free rein by their editor, except for the indication of the titles of their chapters, a full description of the general outline of the project and its intellectual aims, and some advice about the articulation of the discussion, aiming at consistency throughout the volume, namely, the need to accompany the treatment of each subject with both historiographical considerations and a final reflection about possible future directions in the specific field of study. As a result of that freedom, the reader will immediately notice how opinions may considerably diverge, concerning the same issues and also on larger theoretical and methodological considerations, from one chapter to the next. In fact, emphasis on openness has been from the outset the main goal of the editor, as was bringing the pluralism of approaches in our field to the fore, certainly not pursuing one particular universal theory and unified narrative, which would systematically obscure what it attempts to illuminate. On the other end, the coherent rationale underlying the entire project should appear evident, as should the fact that the individual chapters contribute to the construction of a whole.

Handbook

By laying emphasis on key aspects of Greek and Roman art and architecture and on theoretical and methodological considerations, this handbook is evidently interested neither in a purely encyclopedic account of its subject nor in a factual approach. The general tendency for introductions, companions, and handbooks on Greek and Roman art and architecture is to concentrate on the “historical narrative,” presenting readers with a number of monuments and images set within their historical and social backgrounds. These publications can be invaluable, including a new spate published in recent years.

(p. 4) Yet it may be noted that at times in these works, the emphasis lies on “just” the facts, without an interest in addressing the larger interpretive framework and in defining and explaining the criteria that have guided the selection of the evidence presented and the structuring of the historical narrative.

One need only mention, as an example, the case of Greek and Roman artists. We have countless pages concerning architects, sculptors, and painters, hardly balanced by a discussion of the sources and methods used to reconstruct their biographies and oeuvres, let alone references to the more general art historical and anthropological question about agency and the makers of art and architecture: whether the person or persons responsible for the material fabrication of the works, the ones sponsoring or promoting those products, or the social and cultural environments within which those works appear and function (these problems are debated here in chapters 5, 6, and 23; see, in general, Preziosi and Farago 2012, 8). In a few words, the exposition of the “historical narrative”

and “facts” is not always accompanied by an act of acknowledgment or self-reflection concerning the interpretive process behind them.

It may be argued that this factual approach is coherent with an inclination toward an atheoretical/antitheoretical position often found in our field (about this position, see especially chapters 25, 26, 28, and 29). In our literature, one can find enough criticism against theoretically driven interpretation, often presented as subjecting Greek and Roman art and architecture to the service of ideologies bred by modern concerns (see, e.g., Boardman 1993, 2).

Some may observe that such criticism represents an inevitable reaction to the excesses of abstract theorizing that has characterized art history generally and, in recent decades, also the field of Greek and Roman art history. However, it may be added that in our field, this atheoretical/antitheoretical mindset has a long history, rooted in Positivism and thus reaching back well beyond the neoconservative trends of the past few decades (as suggested by Stewart 1997, 5-7). Furthermore, it reflects the pride of the Positivist era for its substantial contribution toward the definition of that body of evidence that we now identify with Greek and Roman art and architecture, through large-scale excavations at critical sites such as Olympia, Delphi, Pompeii, and the Roman Forum and the production of monumental studies and series of publications, from the *Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* to the corpus of Roman sarcophagus reliefs.

Today we take that body of evidence for granted, so much so that recent approaches (mis-)guided by the model of the natural sciences tend to regard it as an innocent quantitative base for qualitative judgments, apparently ignoring its being the result of an act of interpretation. The determination of that body of evidence was the result of a laborious process, which could only be initiated and accomplished, to a good degree, in an age that worshipped objectivity, saw facts before everything else, and thought that the accumulation of knowledge concerning those facts would ultimately produce an objective reconstruction of the past.

Not by chance, the king of all self-professed, atheoretical empiricists in our field is Carl Robert (1855-1920), one of the key figures of the period between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see especially chapters 25 and 28). In the preface to the volume (p. 5) (*Archaeologische Hermeneutik*) that was meant to outline the principles for the correct understanding and interpretation of ancient images, and which is full of negative comments against symbolic interpretation, both religious and political, regarded as unwarranted projection of modern concerns (something to think about for some modern proponents of an atheoretical/antitheoretical position), Robert wrote: “I have come to the principles outlined in this volume in a purely empirical way. I'll leave to those

with a philosophical mind the task of organizing those principles into a system” (Robert 1919, i).

Today, more than ever, we should regard with skepticism such an atheoretical/antitheoretical position. Among the reasons is the irremediable sense of distance and isolation that this position has been attaching to the field of study of Greek and Roman art and architecture in comparison with its neighboring disciplines, including the wider fields of art history and archaeology. For art history, one need only consider the growing engagement with critical theory and with disciplinary self-reflexivity over the course of the second half of the twentieth century (e.g., Belting 1987; Bryson, Holly, and Moxey 1991). Similarly, beginning in the late 1950s, the field of archaeology has been characterized by an ever-increasing level of theoretical reflection and critical self-scrutiny, as a result of the successive stages of Processualism and Post-Processualism (Trigger 2006). Since the late 1970s, this transformation has had an effect on Greek and Roman archaeology, finding expression in several introductions to the subject published in recent years (e.g., Alcock and Osborne 2012). Among the introductions to the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture published in the last few decades, only one shows a comparable level of reflexive awareness about theory and methodology (Borbein, Hölscher, and Zanker 2000).

There are two additional reasons for atheoretical/antitheoretical positions to be regarded with suspicion. The first is that, as Kant wrote, “Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind” (*Critique of Pure Reason* A 51/B 75; Kant 1998, 50–51; Davey 2002, 444). The first part of this dictum applies well to abstract theorizing, but the second is no less appropriate for the position under discussion. The second is that in adopting a hermeneutical approach, the possible interpretations of a work are endless, while our interpretation is inevitably shaped by our horizon of expectation and prejudgments. It is thus only inevitable that different generations and cultures will read the sources differently, as different questions, prejudices, and interests will move them (Gadamer 2004, xxix; in application to Greek and Roman art, see especially Hölscher 2006, 19–20) and, we may add, so long as those sources will matter to them. With its pluralism, this volume intends to bring testimony to the fact that the field of Greek and Roman art and architecture is no exception to this principle.

Greek and Roman

In discussing together Greek and Roman art and architecture, this volume wishes to make a strong case against the trend toward excessive specialization characteristic of the humanities, including our discipline.

(p. 6) The art and architecture of the Greeks and those of the Romans are best discussed together for two reasons strongly emphasized throughout this handbook (and on which, see especially Borbein, Hölscher, and Zanker 2000, 9; Hölscher 2006, 14). One motive is that much of what we know now of Greek culture is a result of its reception and transmission by the Romans; we now see Greek art and architecture first through Roman eyes. The other reason is that Greek culture is an essential component of Roman culture; it is hard to understand, let alone interpret, Roman art and architecture without having an understanding of their Greek counterparts. Unfortunately, in our field, there has not always been recognition of these two basic facts; what is worse is that the relation between Greek and Roman art and architecture has come to be framed in terms of competition between academic disciplines. This is a regrettable situation that reminds us of Goethe's famous pronouncement that disciplines can self-destruct in two ways: either because they linger on the surface of things or because of the excessive depth to which they carry their examinations (see Settis 2006, 13).

Some readers may be wondering about the use of the expression "Greek and Roman" in lieu of "classical" for the title of this handbook. In fact, while in this volume, in accordance with English usage, the term "Classical," with the initial capital letter, is maintained as a reference to the specific time in Greek history roughly corresponding to the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, the term "classical" is instead used with parsimony, usually within quotes, and mostly in reference to the reception of Greek and Roman antiquity in Western culture.

This approach is at odds with the recurrent use of the term "classical" in the titles of general introductions and reference publications on Greek and Roman art and architecture and on archaeology, particularly during the second half of the twentieth century, and with a suspicious increase during the past few years (in an ominous direct proportion to the increase of postmodern attacks against the "classical"). One may mention encyclopedic works such as the *Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica, Classica e Orientale* (1958-), comprehensive surveys such as *The Oxford History of Classical Art* (Boardman 1993), or the already mentioned *Classical Archaeology*, published in its second edition less than two years ago (Alcock and Osborne 2012).

The different approach to the term pursued in this volume should be taken not as a call for the dismissal of "classical" in our field but as a provocation, in line with the quote opening this introduction; we too often tend to use terms and concepts to describe the historical particularity of our objects without expressly reflecting on their origin and justification.

It may be useful to consider that the use of the term "classical" in reference to Greek and Roman art and architecture as a whole has a long history, which goes back to the

nineteenth century and some of the pioneer writers of art history in Germany. One may mention the work of Wilhelm Lübke (1826–1893), professor of architecture at the Berlin Bauakademie. In his *Geschichte der Architektur*, first published in Leipzig in 1855 and one of the first attempts at synthesizing the history of the subject from antiquity to modern times, Lübke used the term “classical” as a comprehensive definition for the architecture of the Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans, which is featured in the second section of his work. The opening section of the work consists of a discussion of the architectures (p. 7) of India, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt, collectively presented as the “Precursors” of classical architecture, which did not manage to reach beyond the boundaries of their individual nations and lands, in terms of their impact within the larger development of world’s architecture, attaining that lasting influence that was instead characteristic of “classical” architecture and was ultimately a result of the Greek genius, a proposition that comes straight from Hegel’s *Aesthetics* and his view of Greek art and architecture as the actual existence of the “classical” ideal. In his *Grundriß der Kunstgeschichte*, published in 1860, Lübke applied a similar line of thinking to the presentation of the development of the figural arts, asserting once more the universality and eternal validity of the “classical” Greek and Roman world.

In his publications, the use that Lübke made of “classical” was clearly ambivalent, the term not only denoting the specific contribution of the Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans to the general development of art and architecture but also connoting its superior status in comparison with other ancient cultures, as the very foundation of Western culture. This reminds us of the fact that “classical” is no innocent word but one loaded with associations that go well beyond the original meaning of the Latin word *classicus* (literally, a citizen belonging to the highest *classis* of taxpayers) from which it derives (see especially Tatarkiewicz 1958; Settis 2006, 56–66). In denoting value, “classical” means first-class, the best of its kind, and a perfect and acknowledged model; in denoting a chronological period, it can refer to the ancients, namely, “Graeco-Roman” antiquity, as in Lübke’s case, or designate, more specifically, the Greek world in the fifth and fourth centuries; in denoting a historical style, it refers to post-Antique, particularly modern authors who prefer to conform with ancient models; finally, in denoting an aesthetic category, it refers to authors and works marked by general qualities such as harmony, moderation, and balance.

Needless to say, Lübke’s association of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman art and architecture under the same rubric and the use of the term “classical” to define that category were in line with the monolithic image of Graeco-Roman antiquity that was being codified by universities, art academies, and museum collections over the course of the nineteenth century, a process in which the use of the term “classical” helped in making Greek and Roman antiquity into the dominant one and its teaching the cornerstone of elite (and in

the long run, middle-class) education in Western countries. This placing of Greek and Roman art and architecture on the pedestal was very much in agreement with the general tendency of Western civilization of the time to use “classical” culture as a weapon to claim its superiority over other civilizations and legitimize its hegemony over the rest of the world (Settis 2006; Elkins 2007; Stephens and Vasunia 2010).

This is why, in our markedly multicultural environment and after the postmodern destruction of the paradigmatic status of “classical” antiquity, we can no longer do with this faultless and unchallengeable image of the Greek and Roman past, even though some colleagues may still consider this “classical” vision as a welcome legitimization, even promotion, of their profession (as particularly argued by Settis 2006, 83) or contend that their use of the term “classical” is only a convenient, neutral label (Borbein, Hölscher, and Zanker 2000, 8).

(p. 8) In this regard, this handbook is not only interested in exploring the exchanges of the Greeks and Romans with other cultures, particularly Egypt and the Near East, at the level of the production of images and buildings (interchanges addressed in crucial chapters, including 2, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, and 17, and thus not treated in separate essays but incorporated within the main discourse as a means of emphasizing their significance). Its goal is that of proposing a more balanced picture of Greek and Roman art and architecture, from within and in their relationship with us, expressly acknowledging their remoteness, alienness, and otherness (certainly more than Hegel thought of it), instead of their identity with our own culture (hence the emphasis on modern reception, particularly in chapters 18 through 22 and 29, and anthropological approaches, in chapter 28); not considering their qualities as timeless and perpetual but as historically determined as regards both their production (hence the emphasis on patronage in chapters 8 and 9, on functions and interactions with ritual activities in chapters 12 through 15, and on sociohistorical approaches in chapter 26) and their later reception; and proposing a general approach to the material that is more in tune with the discourse on the art and architecture of other periods and geographical areas of the world. In this last regard, we hope the next generation will find this volume useful (also through its systematic critique) toward the writing of the history of Greek and Roman art and architecture along the lines of global art history (see Elkins 2007; Zijlmans and Van Damme 2008). For sure, in our increasingly multicultural, global world, we simply can no longer afford, in our field, to perpetuate cultural stereotypes such as that of the “classical” (as advocated instead by Osborne and Alcock 2012, 1–2). The fact of the matter is that Greek and Roman art and architecture still represent a significant component of the cultural identity of the globalized world, and they really do not need to be set on the pedestal where they were marginalized by earlier generations of scholars in order to face the challenges of the present and the future.

Here is one last comment on the association of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman art and architecture under the same rubric of “classical,” which some may see as an advantage of that term (e.g., Hölscher 2006, 14). References to Etruscan culture are found throughout this volume, particularly as regards its relevance to the development of Greek and Roman art and architecture and historiography. On the other hand, the decision has been made not to focus specifically on the Etruscans based on the idea that this culture was certainly not the only one, among the non-Greek and non-Roman cultures of antiquity, to have an effect on Greek and Roman art and architecture. One may remain within the boundaries of the Italian peninsula and refer to another volume within this series, the *Oxford Handbook of Pre-Roman Italy*, edited by Francesco de Angelis and Marco Maiuro.

Art and Architecture

“Art” and “architecture” refer in this volume to the wide range of images and buildings produced in Greek and Roman antiquity, without distinguishing between “artistic” and “nonartistic” works, while at the same time acknowledging the importance, historically, (p. 9) of aesthetic and qualitative judgment in both the shaping of the discipline and the determination of its objects.

Indeed, architecture is an art, according to the modern, European system of classification of artistic production (which placed architecture alongside painting, sculpture, music, and poetry) and earlier attempts at categorization (Kristeller 1990; Shiner 2001). Accordingly, “art” can refer to both images and buildings, as in much of the literature on ancient Greece and Rome, particularly the anglophone corpus. The distinction made here between art and architecture is coherent with its increased occurrence in the course of the twentieth century, explained chiefly as a difference in the training of artists and architects (Fernie 1995, 326). In this volume, however, the distinction is really meant to lay emphasis on architecture and the built environment (a field of inquiry that should be more prosperous, in association with the Greek and Roman world, yet has suffered from the higher degree of excessive specialization in recent decades) and counteract the widespread trend in recent years toward aestheticizing Greek and Roman images, which generally starts from dissociating them from the urban and built environment to which they once belonged, and their actual archaeological context.

Unlike the art histories of several other geographical areas and periods, the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture is characterized by its close proximity and, in its best expressions, deep engagement with archaeology. In fact, depending on the academic tradition, some may argue that the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture is a

subfield of Greek and Roman archaeology and can hardly be separated from it. A case in point is the already mentioned *Klassische Archäologie: Eine Einführung* (Borbein, Hölscher, and Zanker 2000), structured around that idea and in which, for example, essays on formal analysis and technology are associated with essays on field archaeology and historical topography. That approach reminds us of the fact that as an academic discipline, Greek and Roman archaeology was deeply interwoven, in its origins, with art history, and it reflects the tradition, in many European countries—first and foremost Germany—of associating the study of the artistic and material culture of the Greek and Roman world under the same heading of archaeology. The rationale often provided for that association is the idea that the division between archaeology and art history is predicated upon a modern, formalist definition of “Art”—“art” with a capital A and in the modern sense of “Art for Art’s sake,” as a form of expression autonomous from the practical interests of life—which does not apply to Greek and Roman antiquity, in which what corresponds to that term was inseparable from other practices (see, e.g., Borbein, Hölscher, and Zanker 2000, 8–9; Hölscher 2006, 13–14). This last argument is undeniable, and it is confirmed by ancient authors, who, as best argued by Paul Oskar Kristeller, were far from inclined to detach the aesthetic qualities of works of art from their intellectual, moral, religious, and practical function or content (Kristeller 1990, 174; compare chapter 1 below).

In more general terms, it may be argued—from a Euro-American perspective, which is responsible for the discourse on Greek and Roman art and architecture—that defining an artifact as a work of art (or architecture, in the case of a building) and experiencing it aesthetically depend on a process of abstraction, consisting of selecting only on (p. 10) the basis of aesthetic quality as such and ignoring the extra-aesthetic elements that cling to it and thus disregarding everything in which a work is rooted, including its original context of life, the functions that gave it significance, and, finally, the significance of its content (Gadamer 2004, 74, where the process is called “aesthetic differentiation”; see also Elkins 2006).

On the other hand, it may be noted that experiencing a work of art aesthetically (some would say as an aesthete) is far from the goals of historical study: the historian has a different orientation to the works of the past, in that he or she is trying to discover something about the past through them, considering it as more or less of a weakness to regard a work as a work of art: “A work of art is a whole, self-sufficient world. But the interest of the historian knows no such self-sufficiency,” seeking to understand phenomena in their unique and historical concreteness (Gadamer 2004, 331). Hence the troubled relationship between art history and aesthetics, often presented in terms of a binary opposition between a historical and an ahistorical approach to images (Somaini 2012). This contrast has led to more recent calls, such as the one from W. J. T. Mitchell,

for a close integration between art history and aesthetics (Mitchell 2005, 338), an integration that some now see as an imperative for the discipline of art history (Preziosi and Farago 2012, 44–45).

Last but not least, we should avoid the fallacy of criticizing the use of the term “art”/“artist” in reference to Greek and Roman antiquity because of the lack of equivalents to our term “art” in Greek and Roman lexicons (on *technē/ars*, see chapter 1). This fallacy is predicated upon the naive proposition that in understanding history, we must leave our own concepts aside and think only in the concepts of the period that we are trying to understand, without realizing that to think historically means mediating between the ideas of the past and our own thinking and that in interpretation, to try to escape from our own concepts is simply impossible (Gadamer 2004, 398). In keeping with this line of thinking, one would argue that it is not only legitimate but also inevitable that we use the term “art” in reference to the “art” (or “visual culture”/“visual art,” two terms more in vogue in recent years but no less innocent and in danger of being used naively and ahistorically than “art”; Preziosi and Farago 2012, 48) of the Greek and Roman world.

To this we may add that in application to Greek and Roman “art,” the notion of it by modern scholarship has developed over time, as an inevitable reflection of evolving modern ideas about “art.” “Art” is in fact neither a universal category nor a neutral designation but a historical construction specific to a time and place and dependent on particular cultural and social conditions (Barasch 1985–1998; Kristeller 1990; Shiner 2001; Elkins 2007; Preziosi and Farago 2012).

It is certainly not by chance that our field has come to a fuller appreciation in more recent years of the wide realm of images and buildings created in the Greek and Roman world, laying increasing emphasis on their meaning and function and on their strong connection with the wider culture and material history of Greek and Roman antiquity (contrast Robertson 1975, xii–xiii, with Smith 2002). In fact, one may posit a direct correlation with the emergence of visual studies and its rejection of the preliminary distinction in art history between the “artistic” and the “nonartistic” on the one hand and its call for considering the entire domain of images on the other. The development is (p. 11) presented as a shift from the history of art to the history of images and as a new focus on the cultural meaning of the works rather than on their aesthetic value (Bryson, Holly, and Moxey 1994; Holly and Moxey 2002; Bal 2003; Dikovitskaya 2005; Rampley 2012; but see Bredekamp 2003 for a different take on the objects and directions of traditional art history, far less elitist than how they are pictured by the proponents of visual studies). One could also see in this the influence of an age of artistic production like ours in which the distinction between art and nonart objects has become less

perceptually evident (Somaini 2012, 21, with literature). This is because, yet again, “in the human sciences the particular research questions concerning tradition that we are interested in pursuing are motivated in a special way by the present and its interests. The theme and object of research are actually constituted by the motivation of the inquiry” (Gadamer 2004, 285).

The decision made in designing this handbook to focus on Greek and Roman art and architecture while disengaging it from a larger discussion of the archaeology of these two cultures may seem outrageous to proponents of the idea that “classical art history is archaeology or it is nothing” (Whitley 2012, 595). This proposition comes along with the reference to the “pure, aesthetic realm of classical art history” (Whitley 2012, 579) presented as being dominated by a purely aesthetic appreciation of Greek and Roman artworks and with little interest in their original historical, social, and cultural context.

Those, like the editor of the present volume, who are against purely formalistic and aestheticizing agendas, care for the cultural heritage of the source countries for Greek and Roman art and architecture and are against the looting and illegal trafficking of antiquities—unethical, unlawful and, furthermore, an important source of revenue for organized crime (see chapters 21 and 22)—can only be sympathetic with such statements, however biased they may look. At the same time, however, facing such statements, we have to acknowledge that we are dealing with an egregious misperception/misrepresentation of an entire field of inquiry, possibly driven by excessive specialization. The various directions, beyond the purely aesthetic, that the field of Greek and Roman art history has been taking since its constitution, including a deep engagement with the works’ archaeological and their historical, social, and cultural context, are hard to miss.

This handbook should make that point clear and also open anglophone readers to essential trends within the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture in languages different from English. In fact, one of the main problems brought to the fore by the recent transnational trend in art history, beyond national frameworks, is the ignorance of the work of authors not well enough known outside of their original home territories, as a function of linguistic (in)competence (Rampley 2012).

A State of This Volume

Anthropologists, after Marvin Harris, make use of two neologisms coined by linguist Kenneth Pike, “emic” and “etic,” to categorize two different perspectives for viewing and (p. 12) interpreting cultural phenomena (Harris 1968 and Harris 2001): the internal (“emic”) viewpoint of the members of the cultural community under observation and the

concepts and categories which they apply to their own lives and the world in which they live and the external (“etic”) viewpoint of the anthropologist, who does not belong to the culture that he or she is investigating and describes and understands that culture according to his or her own logic. From this perspective, much of this handbook should be regarded as an etic/analytic/cross-cultural view of Greek and Roman art and architecture, and it would only seem fair to start with the emic/indigenous/local one.

Accordingly, part I, “Pictures from the Inside,” addresses Greek and Roman ideas about art and architecture, with equal consideration for the written and artistic record.

Chapter 1, by Deborah Steiner, focusing on images, questions the very notion of “ancient art theory” and takes into account not only the theory of mimesis and the ideas of philosophers such as Plato or Aristotle but also the wider field of Greek and Roman literature and epigraphy, exploring the different types of issues that many ancient sources more readily explore in reference to the products of artistic craft: the material nature of those objects, their impact on viewers, and the function and contexts framing the use and reception of artifacts.

Chapter 2, by Mark Wilson Jones, the pendant essay on architectural theory, begins by questioning the traditional understanding of theory as having priority over practice and then launches into a systematic analysis of Vitruvius’s treatise *De Architectura* and this architect’s theory, particularly his ideas about the principles of *symmetria*, *eurythmia*, and *decor*; as a necessary corrective to a merely text-based approach, the second part of the chapter is devoted to the design of ancient buildings, providing important insights about the theories underlying their construction.

As an essential complement to the first two essays, chapter 3, by Francesco de Angelis, explores the extraordinarily rich and diverse forms of writing about art and architecture in the Greek and Roman world, with a particular emphasis on the specialized writing produced by the practitioners of the arts themselves, an essential point of departure and frame of reference for much of the ancient and post-Antique conceptions and discourses about art and architecture.

In these first three chapters, images and buildings are already taken into consideration; however, the purpose of chapter 4, by Maryl B. Gensheimer, is to point attention to representations of images and buildings in Greek and Roman art and architecture. These representations are precious documents for the self-understanding of artists and architects and the reception of their works, and they have been too often neglected in the past within the context of a purely logocentric approach to the Greek and Roman reception and reflection about art and architecture.

Part II, “Greek and Roman Art and Architecture in the Making,” addresses the production of images and buildings, and in giving precedence to the producers over their materials and techniques, it echoes Thomas Aquinas’s differentiation between the *eternal* substance of an object and its accidental, external *appearance* (for the application of this differentiation to art historical discourse, see Preziosi and Farago 2012, 40).

(p. 13) This part of the book starts with a discussion of the persons responsible for the material fabrication of the works—respectively, artists (chapter 5, by Rainer Vollkommer) and architects (chapter 6, by Henner von Hesberg)—laying emphasis on the problems involved in the reconstruction of their specific contribution and more generally their oeuvre and on their social standing. The precedence given to artists and architects in this section should be taken not as a statement about their role as primary agents responsible for the appearance of the works but as a tribute to historiography, which gives precedence to that idea.

The next two chapters take into consideration those whom some may regard as primary agents, in discussing the patronage, financing, and sponsorship of art (chapter 7, by Eric R. Varner) and architecture (chapter 8, by Bonna D. Wescoat). Here, more than elsewhere, the decision to discuss together the Greek and Roman world has proved particularly fruitful, as these two essays clearly highlight not only the significant differences between those two cultures as a result of different political and social systems but also the extent to which in the Roman period, the new conditions of production have influenced the ancient authors’ presentation of the patronage and sponsoring of art and architecture of the earlier, Greek times.

Likewise, the adoption of a long-term perspective has proved particularly illuminating as regards the materials and techniques of art (chapter 9, by Kenneth Lapatin) and architecture (chapter 10, by Pier Luigi Tucci), through which ideas were transformed into appearances. By pointing to the long tradition concerning the analysis of this essential aspect of the production of images and buildings and its significant progress in recent years, this section reminds us of the essential role that technical and scientific analysis has always played within the field of study of Greek and Roman art and architecture, and from the very beginning, particularly thanks to its deep engagement with archaeology.

Part III, “Ancient Contexts,” moves attention back from the agents or forces responsible for the coming into being and appearance of art and architecture to the functions to which these works were put and their ancient reception. Obviously, a full reconstruction of these contexts is impossible, and for those who are so naive as to use this fact as an ax against contextual approaches and as a key for advocating an aestheticizing agenda, we may note that the work of the historian (including the historian of reception) is that of

trying to discover something—not everything—about the past through its texts and material remains (Gadamer 2004, 331; see also chapter 29).

Chapter 11, by Jamieson C. Donati, sets the stage by introducing the concept of the urban environment. This was certainly not the only context for the use and reception of art and architecture, but it was certainly a very important one and too often neglected by an armchair art history born and developed exclusively in libraries, photo libraries, or museums and dissociated from urban and architectural history and archaeology, along with the relevant contexts. The chapter does not limit its purview to monumental architecture, but with its holistic approach, it points attention to the wide variety of buildings produced in the Greek and Roman world, starting with residential housing.

(p. 14) The purpose of the next two essays is to analyze the wide variety of functions of images in the Greek (chapter 12, by Olga Palagia) and Roman world (chapter 13, by Paul Zanker). The emphasis is in both cases on sculpture and painting, exploring, in the case of Greek art, the functions of these two media in religious and civic contexts: depicting the divine, commemorating and honoring men and women, and embellishing sacred architecture—that is, until the ascendancy of the Macedonian kingdom, when art was systematically introduced for private use. It is from this private dimension, namely, the decoration of houses and villas, that begins the discussion of the functions of Roman art, which then moves to images and monuments of public self-representation, from the Late Republic to the Principate, and ends with a discussion of the art of the citizens in the Imperial period, focusing on sarcophagi and mosaics.

The next two chapters bring the discussion of the uses of images a step further, by exploring the relationships among built environments, images, and rituals, the last being an essential dimension of public and private life in both the Greek and the Roman world. The essay on Greece (chapter 14, by Joannis Mylonopoulos) devotes particular attention to religious contexts of the Archaic and Classical periods, laying emphasis on altars and temples, considered in their articulation and original functions.

The discussion of the Roman material (chapter 15, by Richard Neudecker), from the Republican to the Late Imperial period, takes into consideration not only sacred spaces and architecture but also public spaces and buildings and houses, exploring how Roman buildings managed, through their architectural forms and figural decoration, to create an appropriate setting for the performance of ritualized acts full of meaning for contemporary society.

The following two essays (chapter 16, by Rachel Kousser, and chapter 17, by Natalie Kampen) analyze the ancient reception of, respectively, Greek and Roman art and architecture. The first one discusses the Roman interaction with Greek art and

architecture, which, it is argued, was varied, pragmatic, and widespread. Particular emphasis is placed here on the cultural practices that framed this interaction, most significant among them being the Roman looting, collecting, and theorizing of Greek art and the copying and adaptation of Greek styles in new Roman works. The second essay, one of the last contributions by a beloved colleague who is sorely missed, focuses on the art and architecture in the Roman provinces and beyond the Roman world. Here the emphasis is on historiography and on exploring the major methodological issues of past and current scholarship: from the traditional interpretation of the style in the art of the Roman provinces in relation to the “Graeco-Roman” style, and the concurrent application of the categories of center, province, and periphery, to more recent discussions not only of iconography and social interpretation but also of location, function, patronage, and viewer response.

Part IV, “Post-Antique Contexts,” explores issues of reception, as a historical phenomenon, in which artists, architects, and institutions—namely, governments, academia, and museums—have played a critical role in transmitting, while at the same transforming and reinterpreting, the images and monuments of the Greek and Roman past.

Chapter 18, by Lucia Faedo, offers a general introduction to the reception of Greek and Roman art and architecture from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, with a (p. 15) focus on Italy, a country that played a critical role, particularly in the Early Modern era. This essay lays emphasis on the essential role played by artists and architects within this process.

With chapter 19, by A. A. Donohue, we move into the institutional sphere, particularly the academic tradition, with an overview of the modern historiography of Greek and Roman architecture, in its relationship with the ancient historiography on the one hand and the trajectory of modern intellectual history on the other.

Chapter 20, by John H. Stubbs, leads into an apparently different ground, namely, the restoration and preservation of Greek and Roman architecture. These have always played an essential role in the process of reception of ancient monuments, deeply affecting both their survival and their appearance, hence the difficulties and complexities involved in making choices concerning the conservation of buildings.

With chapter 21, by Beth Cohen, the discussion moves to the development of museum display environments for Greek and Roman art, from the Early Modern period to the present, emphasizing how museum display affects the ways ancient artworks are perceived. Under consideration are “permanent” displays in the encyclopedic museum,

the museum devoted to ancient art, the archaeological-site museum, and the college/university museum.

Chapter 22, by Margaret M. Miles, represents an inevitable complement and conclusion of this part of the book, addressing today's discussion about the proper ownership of Greek and Roman art. This debate has on one side those writing about the impact of looting on the study of the past and arguing for further legislative efforts to reduce it and on the other side those arguing for more free-wheeling acquisitions to be made of art on the market regardless of provenance and for keeping tight possession of what is already in museums. The conclusion is that looting is a significant, worldwide problem that needs to be addressed and that it has had a substantial impact on how we study Greek and Roman art and architecture.

Part V, "Approaches," addresses the larger theoretical implications, methodologies, and directions of research in the field of study of Greek and Roman art and architecture. In particular, this part of the book surveys the various approaches in their order of appearance over the years, as a result of the ever-increasing opening of the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture to a variety of theories and academic disciplines. A selection was necessary, and under scrutiny here are connoisseurship (chapter 23, by Adolf H. Borbein), formal analysis (chapter 24, by Christian Kunze), iconography and iconology (chapter 25, by Cornelia Isler-Kerényi), social history (chapter 26, by Burkhard Fehr), gender studies (chapter 27, by Caroline Vout), anthropology (chapter 28, by Gloria Ferrari), reception theory (chapter 29, by Michael Squire), and, finally, semiotics and agency (chapter 30, by Tonio Hölscher).

Needless to say, many of the perspectives and concepts discussed in this last part of the book represent the framework for much of the discourse presented in the preceding parts and chapters, but the aim here is to pursue a higher level of theoretical discussion and reflection, not in terms of abstract theorizing but always in application to the understanding of specific works or of historical problems. It is especially this part of the book (p. 16) that quite evidently foregrounds the pluralism of approaches in our field and reveals the effort of the editor not to pursue one particular universal theory and unified narrative. My hope is that this volume has succeeded in doing so.

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Greek and Roman Theories of Art

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines Greek and Roman theories of art, paying particular attention to images, the notion of “ancient art theory,” the theory of mimesis, and the ideas of philosophers including Plato and Aristotle. Citing book 19 of the *Odyssey*, it explores the material nature of the products of artistic craft, their impact on viewers, and the function and contexts framing the use and reception of artifacts. It considers the reasons for the apparent absence of “theories of art” in ancient Greece and Rome and analyzes a number of objects and texts concerning objects. It also discusses the material and affective dimensions of ancient aesthetics, along with the representational (and epiphanic) nature of art and its capacity to access an invisible reality or ideal. Finally, the chapter looks at the artist’s role in fashioning the image and the sources of the “vision” or mental apprehension informing his work.

Keywords: aesthetics, ancient art theory, ancient Greece, ancient Rome, art, artifacts, images, philosophers, theory of mimesis

In book 19 of the *Odyssey*, in the interview between Penelope and the disguised Odysseus, the “beggar” fashions a story relating a fictitious encounter between the Cretan persona he has adopted and the hero. So vividly does the tale bring the missing Odysseus to mind that the queen, hearing what the poet styles “lies equivalent to the truth” (*pseudea... etumoisin homoia*, 203), begins to weep. Seeking to determine the veracity of the speaker, she asks for some more-than-verbal proof to substantiate the narrative. In his subsequent description of the cloak and tunic worn by Odysseus on that occasion, her interlocutor also recalls an ornament fastened to the outer garment:

Godlike Odysseus wore a purple, woolly cloak, two-fold. And on it was a pin of gold fashioned with double sheathes, and the front part of it was a work of

intricacy; a hound held in its forepaws a dappled young fawn, preying on it as it struggled; and all were wondering at it how, although they were golden, it preyed on the fawn throttling it. And the fawn, struggling [or “panting”] with its feet, tried to flee. And I perceived the shining tunic about his body. Like to the dried-out skin of an onion, so softly sheer it was, and it was shining like the sun. And indeed many women were closely viewing it. (225–235)

This episode succinctly brings together the two chief topics on which my discussion focuses. Because, for reasons that the introductory section addresses, the title of this chapter proves something of a misnomer for much of antiquity, I first treat the different types of issues that many ancient sources more readily explore and that the passage from the *Odyssey* already foregrounds: the material nature of the objects that the artist/craftsman fashions, their impact on viewers, the function of products of skilled artistry, and the contexts framing them. But visible in the Homeric description is a second set of questions (not unrelated to the first), to which modern scholarship has frequently paid much more attention, not “aesthetics” narrowly construed (this understood as a “sensational,” perceptual response to artistic objects) but the term’s broader embrace of (p. 22) problems concerning mimesis, idealization, and art’s accessing of a suprasensible reality; following the characterization of Odysseus’s falsehoods as sharing some quality with the truth, the brooch that so persuasively simulates life and the diaphanous cloak that suggests the skin beneath offer visual counterparts to the verisimilitude of the verbal construct. The larger aim of my contribution—necessarily selective and with an emphasis on Greek material of the Archaic, Classical, and Early Hellenistic periods—is, then, both to recast the chapter’s title as a question (what accounts for the seeming absence of what we might recognize as “theories of art” in the ancient world?) and to offer close readings of several objects and texts concerning material goods teasing out the theoretical issues that may be derived from these.

Theories of Art?

First, why might a search for theories as currently understood misdirect? Beginning simply with semantics, and as discussions regularly point out, the Greeks and Romans had no single term that corresponds to our “work of art” or category in which to place what Paul Oskar Kristeller styles as the “fine arts” or “beaux arts” (Kristeller 1990, 165). (Kristeller’s writings have been the object of much recent and generally dissenting scrutiny. Among those who challenge his views, see Halliwell 2002, the essays in Platt and Squire 2010, and Porter 2010; note, too, Tanner 2006. For older attempts to recover just such an ancient *Kunsttheorie*, see particularly Schweitzer 1934; Schweitzer 1953;

Grassi 1962; and Sörbom 1966. For more recent overviews of ancient aesthetics, I have drawn particularly on Halliwell 2002 and Porter 2010. For painting in particular, see Rouveret 1989.) Without a firm boundary between “artist” and “craftsman” or between a strictly aesthetic object and one designed for more utilitarian purposes (Pliny’s account of painters and sculptors in his *Natural History* chiefly anticipates modern privileging of the aesthetic over the functional), many products aimed simultaneously to exhibit artisanal skill, to delight the senses, and to fulfill often humdrum ends: not just shields, greaves, chariots, and drinking cups but also household *pithoi*, the frequently oversized jars that served to transport and contain foodstuffs (many were also reused as containers for the dead), which already in Geometric Greece might be lavishly decorated with figural scenes in relief and delicately fashioned volute handles; even a plowshare (see Hesiod, *Op.* 422–429) might be counted as a work of high artistry. There is no word, even, in Greek and Roman lexicons equivalent to our term “art.” For the Greeks, there was *mousikē*, “high” culture that included instrumental music, poetic word/song, and dance, and there was *technē* (*ars* in Latin), a craft or skill that might be transmitted and taught and whose exercise placed an individual among the *dēmioergoi* (the term used by Homer at *Od.* 17.383 for “public workers,” individuals marked out by their itinerant status and hiring themselves out for pay) or *banausoi*. Following this, there is little, at least for much of the Archaic and Classical periods, that would grant the “artist” or his enterprise the status that they came later to enjoy; as Xenophon remarks, “for, to be sure, (p. 23) the artisanal crafts, as they are called, are spoken against, and are, naturally enough, held in utter disdain in our states” (*Oec.* 4.2–3) (Neer 2002; Tanner 2006; and Steiner 2007 variously treat the issue).

But semantics can be misleading. It has become commonplace to point out that just because the Greeks lacked a word for something doesn’t mean that it didn’t exist or couldn’t be recognized and made a topic of inquiry, reflection, and debate. An ancient viewer, Greek or Roman, knew very well when he or she encountered a “work of art” and, responding to its visible and other sensate properties, had a ready set of terms and aesthetic criteria for assessing it. A well-known scene in Herodas’s fourth *Mime* illustrates the point, while demonstrating that audiences had no difficulty in accommodating the several hermeneutic categories to which a “view-worthy” object might simultaneously belong. On a visit to a shrine of Asclepius to make offerings, dedicate a *pinax*, and pronounce prayers for the future, two women (depicted by Herodas in all their petit bourgeois naiveté) encounter a series of *agalmata*, dedications set up by earlier petitioners at the shrine, and comment on the distinctive properties of some objects. Kokkalē begins by remarking on the beauty of the works and goes on to wonder which craftsman made a particular piece, noting as she does the material from which it is fashioned, perhaps marble here (*tis ēra tēn lithon tautēn/tektōn epoiei*, 21–22), and who

dedicated it. A second object, showing a boy squashing a goose, draws attention for its lifelike qualities; so realistic is it, Kunnō remarks, that “if it were not stone, you would say it was about to speak” (32–33). The women freshly marvel at the loveliness, lifelikeness, and skilled execution of other pieces. A painting by Apelles recommends itself, naturally enough, for its *grammata*, or “lines” (73), and Kunnō urges punishment for whoever, once he has taken the requisite close look (77), does not “gaze in astonishment” at the works of this celebrated painter. Issues of beauty, skill, provenance, verisimilitude, and audience perception and response, as the second section here details, all belong to the vocabulary available for the definition, discussion, and evaluation of artistic works.

If “art” was there, then what of the “theories” it might generate? Herodas’s text proves freshly illuminating here. The discussion between Kunnō and Kokkalē occurs within the context of their visit to a shrine, a type of “sacred visiting/viewing” that the Greeks termed *theoria*. Two points follow from this. First, ancient discussions of art are centrally concerned with the viewer’s encounter with the work, and no aesthetic object exists independent of its audience and context (witness the women of Odysseus’s account perusing the brooch; *ethēēsanto* is cognate with *theoria* and evokes the intense spectatorship that works of art and other types of visual spectacles elicit). And second, these artifacts are socially embedded; their viewing is never autonomous, an end in and of itself, but proves indistinguishable from other activities, frequently religiously oriented, although often also with a political dimension when a civic space or occasion frames the image or building, that accompany the encounter.

More than this, the work of art aims to prompt an audience to interact with it, to realize what might be described as its incipient “performativity” (here I draw on Day 2010, 69–73, who lucidly analyzes the scene and the women’s reperformance of the original dedication. I would only add that if the poem was designed for group or solo recitation (p. 24) before an audience, perhaps at a *symposion*, then the process of reenactment continues in the present and future of the work’s performance). Kokkalē’s admiration of the first votive prompts her question concerning its origins, and this in turn generates Kunnō’s reading of its inscribed *grammata*; enunciating these, she not only recalls the initial votive act, commemorating and celebrating the individual who set up so fine an image and the artists who created it (the names come complete with patronymics, in the manner of epigraphic texts), but also reactivates the power of the object to solicit divine attention and favor. She goes on to add a prayer of her own, requesting that “Paiōn be propitious both to these men [the artists] and to Euthiēs [the donor] because of these beautiful works” (25–26); this is a petitionary formula that finds its reprise in the prayer uttered by the temple attendant on the two visitors’ behalf as the *theoria* draws to its end: “Paiōn, may you look kindly on these women for their beautiful offerings” (82–83). In this utterance, the aesthetic, ethical, and religious merge imperceptibly as the beauty (visual/

moral) ascribed to the works of art now characterizes the larger dedicatory act that the women have performed and grants them an *agalмата*-like status as they become, like so many votives that depict worshippers in the act of making dedications, fresh objects worthy of the god's (and our) attention. It is this social and, more particularly, religious (Platt 2010 and 2011 offer helpful statements of this) "embeddedness" integral to so many crafted goods and their role as objects designed to generate certain actions and responses on the frequently collective viewers' part that offer one way of accounting for the want of self-standing theoretical discussions of "art" in our ancient sources.

Material, *Technē*, and Sensation

The shrine that Kunnō and Kokkalē visit is a crowded place, with votives of various kinds filling the site. Dedicating an object is a competitive enterprise, as donations jostle for space and compete for the attention of both the divinity and the viewer, whose spectatorship, commentary, and decipherment, if the work is inscribed, renew the efficacy of the original votive act. What, then, were the aesthetic properties that drew an audience's eye, stopping a visitor in his or her tracks and eliciting the desired closer look? As the passage cited at this chapter's start illustrates, evocations of objects of high artistry in sources from the Archaic period on give us, as it were, a ready checklist of such elements; these include both the factual dimensions of the object—the material with which the artist works, the techniques deployed—and, a product of these, the sensuous, synesthetic response experienced by the viewer, which authors regularly describe as composed of two chief sensations: *thauma* (wonder, astonishment) and, omnipresent in an earlier Odyssean passage detailing a silver image overlaid with gold (6.229–237), *charis*, a polysemous term referring at once to grace, favor, gratitude, charm, and delight, which can further merge into sentiments of love and yearning. (In privileging *thauma*, I follow Neer 2010; for him, too, desire in its various manifestations is fundamental to the (p. 25) artistic enterprise, although he prefers the terms *pothos* and *himeros* to *charis*, which has a broader sphere of reference. Also very illuminating on wonder and this erotic dimension is Kurke 2012 and 2013. For other treatments of *thauma*, see Philipp 1968, 8–9, 10, 19; Pollitt 1974, 189–191; Prier 1989, from a chiefly textual point of view; Pugliara 2002, 8–12, 62–66.) Recovering "theories of art" for much of antiquity thus involves reorienting our modern-day focus: in place of abstract discussions, the sources provide accounts of material and of *technē* and of affective, emotional response (for a very compelling discussion of this strand in Greek aesthetics, see Porter 2010 and the many previous discussions by that author cited in his study). As the juxtaposition of these texts with the products of contemporary artists, sculptors, and

metalworkers reveals, the materialist and “sensationalist” bias of these descriptions takes its cue from real-world artifacts and from these objects’ insistence on the technical accomplishment they exhibit and their vigorous efforts toward audience bedazzlement and appeal.

With the passage from *Odyssey* 19 in mind, we might begin with the ancient focus on the material and artisanal dimensions of crafted objects. Holding primacy of place in the description of the brooch is its manufacture out of gold; for the cloak and tunic, texture compels attention, the first woolly (and purple, the luxury dye of choice), the second soft and, in the expanded account of the simile, like the sheer, superfine, and (tantalizingly) multilayered but transparent onion skin. From the Archaic period on, inscriptions, seemingly gratuitously, invite viewers to register the material from which artifacts are made: a votive discus of the sixth century announces itself fashioned of bronze (*CEG* no. 391), and a tripod from fifth-century Athens (Athenaeus 6.232d) follows suit, with *chalkos* placed in verse-initial position in the epigram (compare *PMG* fragm. 581, where the image on the Phrygian Midas’s tomb declares herself at the outset a *chalkē parthenos*); the stone base for a bronze statue pauses to mention that its words are written on stone (*CEG* no. 429; see below). Following the primacy of material, Pliny’s *Natural History*, the work that yields the earliest extant history of statuary and painting and chronicles the succession of sculptors and painters in the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods, introduces these individuals in the course of a broader discussion of metals, stones, and clay (Osborne 2010 makes this point in the context of a different argument).



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Fig. 1.1 Attic red-figure *oinochoe* attributed to the Group of Berlin 2415, from Capua. Athena modeling a horse in clay. C. 470–460 BCE. Ceramic. Height 21.5 cm. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung inv. F 2415.

(Photograph by Ingrid Geske, © Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung/Art Resource, New York, ART186738.)

Artists also call attention to the media in which they work and to the palpable qualities of these: an Attic red-figure *oinochoe* in Berlin dated to c. 470–460 (figure 1.1), showing Athena fashioning a statue of a horse (ARV² 776.1, 1669; *Para* 416; *Add*² 288; BAPD 209569), not only, in self-referential fashion, depicts an act of manufacture but also draws attention to the substance from which the vessel is fashioned and to the artist’s innovative technique. Placing a three-dimensional lump of unpainted raw clay at the goddess’s feet ready for application to the horse’s

muzzle, the painter gives his *oinochoe*’s surface texture and depth and makes emphatic the goddess’s selection of the same material as the mortal maker of the object (for this point and detailed discussion, see Cohen 2006, 110–111). Such self-advertisement is the stock-in-trade of individuals competing in the crowded ceramics marketplace: when late-sixth-century potters and painters replaced the “neck” *pelike* (whose (p. 26) neck was fashioned separately and then attached to the body of the pot so as to form a ridge) with the single-piece variety, rich palmette motifs encircling the neck where the joint would have occurred draw the viewer’s eye to the location of the innovative design, creating the momentary illusion that the joint still existed. Examples include the neck *pelike* in the Hermitage of c. 510 (St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum 615: ARV² 1594.48; *Para* 507; *Add*² 389; BAPD 275006) and an exactly contemporary pot in Boston (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 1973.88: *Add*² 396; BAPD 4437). (For discussion of the change, see von Bothmer 1951, 47.)

The combination of media, colors, and surfaces exhibited by several of the artifacts just cited calls attention to other factors in the creation of works calculated to generate a

“thaumatic” and desirous response: variegation or patterning, ornamentation, and luminosity (for these properties, see also Day 2010, 255–258; note also Kurke 2012 and 2013; and Neer 2002 and 2010). Together, these create the effect evoked by the adjectives, and cognate nouns and verbs, repeatedly used regarding finely crafted articles, *daidalos* and *poikilos*. The first applies to works fashioned by divinities and supremely skilled artisans in epic song—the ensemble of Achilles’s armor forged by Hephaestus (*Il.* 19.13), the diadem that adorns Pandora (Hesiod, *Theog.* 581, the necklace combining gold and amber (p. 27) beads given by Eurymachus to Penelope (*Od.* 18.295)—and, while primarily indicating the complex character of the object, may also invest it with a more sinister property, suggestive of illusionism, a divergence between surface appearance and what lies behind; witness Pandora’s “daedalic veil” (Hesiod, *Theog.* 574–575) (the most detailed treatments remain Frontisi-Ducroux 2000 and Morris 1992, 3–69). The second, found in Homeric descriptions of embroidered textiles (*Od.* 18.293), in Alcman’s account of a cunningly wrought golden bracelet shaped like a snake (Alcman 1.67), and in Anacreon in regard to the “parti-colored” sandals worn by a Lesbian hetaera (Anacreon 358.3), refers not only to the heterogeneous quality of articles combining diverse elements but also to that “*luminosité bigarrée et... scintillement*” that makes them iridescent, luminous things (Frontisi-Ducroux 2000, 465; see also the discussions in Neer 2002 and 2010). Homer’s term *sigaloenta*, with *lampros* by way of reinforcement, gives Odysseus’s tunic just such a “shimmering sheen” (Neer 2010, 113; see also Neer 2002, chaps. 1 and 2, on this “twofold” quality or *poikilia* in vase painting), and this brilliant sparkle belongs also to the famous golden votives dedicated by the Deinomenids at Delphi: in Bacchylides’s phrase, “gold shines forth with flashings from the highly/high-wrought tripods [*lampei d’hupo marmarugais ho chrusos,/ upsidaidaltōn*] standing before the temple” (3.17–20). Cognate with the expression *marmarugē* is the Greek term for marble, *marmaros*, the material of choice for so many sculptors on account of its superlative brilliance, sparkle, and translucence (Neer 2010 offers a particularly evocative discussion of the merits of the stone). The epigraphic record ascribes the same gleaming property to countless votive goods. Granting, as I think we should, the etymological association between *agalma*, the term with which inscriptions most commonly describe the object they accompany, and *aglaos*, *aglaizō*, and *aglaia* (for detailed analysis, see Day 2010, esp. 91–92), the texts make the radiance and brilliance of the donation essential to its efficacy and appeal to divine and human alike. The opening lines of an inscription, albeit unique in the epigraphic repertoire in its use of the verb *aglaizō*, underscore the link as the putative viewer questions the text on a bronze statue base (CEG no. 429):

Skillful voice of the stone, say who placed this *agalma* bestowing *aglaia* on Apollo’s altar.

No wonder that one of the Charites carries the name Aglaïa and that Hesiod makes her wife of Hephaestus (*Theog.* 945–946).

Two works, one notional, the other still visible today, exhibit this sought-after combination of patterned heterogeneity, luster, and ornamentation. At *Nem.* 7.77–79, Pindar visualizes the Muse creating a song that takes the form of a (victory) wreath or diadem: the goddess “glues together gold and white ivory with the lily flower taken up from the dew of the sea.” Paying due attention to the method of fabrication, the application of glue—Daedalus’s invention in some later accounts—the poet details the heterogeneous materials, each of a different color, texture, and light-refracting quality; the result is the same type of headband that Pindar, on another occasion when he reifies his song, succinctly styles *pepoikilmenan* (*Nem.* 8.15). With the reference to coral in the periphrastic (p. 28) “lily flower,” the metaphor also points the audience toward that vivid orange-red gloss, now often termed “coral red,” that vase painters from c. 530 BCE used on their pots and that gave their products a heightened brilliance and sheen.

The much-cited seventh-century BCE bronze statuette dedicated by Manticlus, probably at the Theban Ismenion and now in Boston (Museum of Fine Arts, Francis Bartlett Collection 03.997), wears a fillet displaying the variegated complexity of the Pindaric conceit (my account follows closely that of Day 2010, 258). The several types of incisions that form the zigzag pattern decorating the band would have required the use of three different tools, while the fillet offers just one of the many ornamental features that this self-styled *agalma* exhibits. The inscribed hexameter epigram, soliciting a “*charis*-filled” response from Apollo (*CEG* no. 326), contributes to the patterning: beginning at the knee and running up one thigh and down the other before reversing course, it describes two horseshoe-shaped lines (and retraces the shape of the bow the statuette might once have carried) moving in opposite directions. This ornamented figure might itself have served as adornment, attached to one of the opulent Orientalizing bronze tripods that became (as the “high-wrought” Deinomenid tripods cited above suggest, Bacchylides’s adjective perhaps a reference to these attachments) dedications of choice at Greek sanctuaries from c. 700 BCE on (for the statue as tripod attachment, see Papalexandrou 2005, 84–86). Complete with legs decorated with figural motives, bowls with elaborate handles, and protomes featuring Sirens, griffins, lions, and other intricately worked beasts with metallic inserts for their gleaming eyes, these were among the most precious objects an individual might present to a god. No wonder that when Homer first introduces Hephaestus at his forge, the god is fashioning magical versions of these, self-moving objects with wheels of gold; still to be attached are the *ouata... daidalea* (*Il.* 18.373–379).

The tripods on Olympus represent the category of works of art on a further score: the vessels are, in the formulaic phrase repeatedly found regarding such artifacts, *thauma*

idesthai (377). The same expression occurs in the context of a second article forged by Hephaestus, here coupled with the *charis* that is no less frequently assigned to such wondrous products. In Hesiod's account of the golden circlet that crowns Pandora, the divine artisan "fashioned on it many *daidala*, wondrous to see, wild beasts... of these he put many on, and much *charis* breathed upon it all, wonderful" (*charis d' epi pasin aēto/thaumasia; Theog.* 581–584). Once again, the marvel and delight garnered by these literary objets d'art find their counterparts in the epigraphic repertoire: inscriptions declare the votives and monuments on which they are engraved "wondrous to look upon" (*thaumaston prosidēn; CEG* no. 19) and, in examples too numerous to list, announce themselves filled with grace (*charien, chaire, chairoso*, etc.; Day 2010, 232–280, includes numerous examples and analyses). On pots and images—the Phidian Zeus, for which see below, perhaps the best known of these—the Charites themselves appear, not just narrative elements or attributes but instantiations of the objects' features and impact.

But perhaps no other piece of artistry better displays the qualities and sensations that viewers prized than the scene reserved by Hephaestus for the penultimate band of Achilles's shield, which adds fresh properties to the attributes already listed: (p. 29)

And on it the very famous one with crooked limbs was elaborately crafting a *choros*, like to the one that once in broad Knossos Daedalus fashioned for lovely-locked Ariadne. And there the young men and girls who bring many oxen to their parents were dancing, having their hands upon one another's wrists. And of these, the girls had fine garments of delicate linen, and the youths had chitons that were well-spun and softly glistening with oil; and the girls had beautiful diadems and the youths had golden knives [hanging] from belts of silver. And at times they were running on well-skilled/understanding feet, very smoothly, as when a potter who is seated tests the wheel fitted to his hands, to see if it runs; and at others they were running in rows up to one another. And a great throng was standing about the desirous chorus taking delight.

(*Il.* 18.590–604)

At the very outset of the passage, the verb *poikille*, used uniquely here in place of the blander *poiēse, etitheī*, or *eteuxe* which describe the creation of the other rings, signals that this band constitutes the epitome of Hephaestus's artisanal powers. As also suits the opening term, radiance is writ large in the scene; the sheen of the oil-anointed linen joins with the brilliance of the metals used for the maidens' diadems and the youths' golden knives and silver belts. As noted above, the luminosity of this and other works of art includes the shimmer that makes the objects seem to shift before the viewer's eye. The

swift gyrations of the dancers and the patterning that results from the interchange of lines and circles realize just such a kaleidoscopic motion and play of moving light.

The movement so foregrounded on the shield is a property that appears repeatedly in other contemporary and later accounts of works produced by master craftsmen, both divine and human. Whether we look to the statues of Daedalus, to which our sources assign the ability to get down from their pedestals and run about, or to the works produced by Rhodian craftsmen, images “in the likeness of living beings that walked” (Pindar, *Ol.* 7.52), artists of myth and legend sought to make viewers believe that the figures they fashioned were on the point of moving. Real-world images and crafted objects fuel the poetic and mythical imagination: the posture of the kouros with one foot advanced, the gesture of the Acropolis korai who seductively twitch their hems between pinched fingers as they prepare to take their more delicate steps, the ribbon drapery that seems to billow in the wind on Paeonius’s Nike and other stone figures dressed in such diaphanous garments all are devices that serve, like the golden wheels on Hephaestus’s tripods, to invest these (momentarily) immobile objects with the potential to self-propel. Even a building might seem to be capable of movement: in Pindar’s eighth *Paeon*, the fabulous third Delphic temple constructed by Athena and Hephaestus possesses *rhuthmos* (fragm. 52i.68 Snell-Mahler), a term that describes not just the structure and patterning of the building composed of bronze and gold but also the “flowing motion” that a dancer exhibits (for discussion of the term, see Rutherford 2001, 219; Porter 2010, 438–439; Power 2011, 78–79, emphasizing the choreographic implications; particularly helpful is Philipp 1968, 47, for whom *rhuthmos* refers to “the totality of a building, and thus points to its inner movements, to the way this movement lets itself be read off the interrelations of the different parts of the building”). (p. 30)

Should the impression of life and movement in the choral scene have caused his audience to forget that this is a manufactured object, Homer recalls the presence of the craftsman with the simile used of the dancers’ spins. Not only does the “run” of the potter’s wheel draw attention to the chorus’s smooth and speedy steps, but that wheel, “fitted to” the hands of the *kerameus*, introduces the property of *harmonia*, (I owe this observation to Kurke 2012 and 2013; on visual manifestations of *harmonia*, see Bundrick 2005, 140–196), the process of “fitting together” integral to all the arts, poetic, visual, choreographic, and musical (see Plato, *Phd.* 86c). The name Harmonides suits (or “fits”) the Iliadic carpenter, “who knew with his hands how to create many *daidala*” (*Il.* 5.60), and *arariskō* figures in the account of Odysseus building an object that demands the most intricate form of craftsmanship, his raft (*Od.* 5.245). Nor is the potter’s *palamē* unconsidered here. Standing in the same verse-final position as the “knowing feet” of the dancers in the previous line, it both creates a parallel between these body parts that are

the site of the dancer/potter's expertise and introduces what seems to be the preferred term for the individual engaged in creating a work of skilled artistry (compare *Il.* 15.411; Hesiod, *Theog.* 580; Pindar, fragm. 52i.65 Snell-Mahler; compare also [Hesiod], *Sc.* 219, 380; in fifth-century Greek, *palamē* succinctly designates a crafted object or work of art). In some genealogies, Daedalus is the son of one Eupalamus.

The visualization of the dancers closes with mention of the viewers internal to the scene, whose response models that of the poet's current audience. The delight that the assembled throng takes in the spectacle goes hand-in-hand with the adjective applied to the chorus; *himeronta*, a heightened form of the *charis* found on so many other occasions, signals not just the loveliness of the dancers but the still stronger sentiment of desire that the youths and maidens instigate, the quasi-erotic attraction exercised by so many works of art (Praxiteles's Cnidian Aphrodite most notoriously), which forms part of the *terpsis* that the occasion affords. It would only reinforce the scene's erotic aura that this performance looks very like a courtship dance, where the youths act as suitors competing for girls "bringing in many oxen" (Lonsdale 1993, 278).

Following the description of these internal spectators, a notorious textual crux occurs: both the non-Vulgate tradition and Athenaeus's reference to the Iliadic passage at 5.180, c-d, 181 a-d, include an additional phrase introducing the bard who accompanies the chorus with song and music: *meta de sphin emelpeto theios aoidos/phormizōn*. Leaving aside the many persuasive arguments recently advanced for preserving these additional verses (Revermann 1998), the presence of the bard also makes for a neat "settling of scores": just as the poet can represent within the compass of his poem the divinity crafting his products—and a god, in a move that shocked our attentive commentators, whom Homer further cuts down to size when he imagines Hephaestus taking for his model Daedalus, a mortal artisan—so Hephaestus then turns the tables and fashions a performing poet. The question of the presence or absence of sound and song as part of the visual representation can be framed more broadly: for all of Simonides's notorious (although possibly apocryphal) dictum styling art as "silent poetry" and poetry as "painting that speaks" (Simonides *ap.* Plutarch, *Mor.* 346f), artists and craftsmen working in many media take pains to suggest that their products emit sound, music, speech, and song and to make these taciturn objects into clamorous presences. (p. 31) Rhapsodes and choruses of dancers/singers on painted pottery open their mouths in the act of song, and inscriptions on the vases feature words or lines of poetry coming from the singers' mouths, prompting viewers to reanimate the scene by voicing the words aloud. An oversized Proto-Attic neck amphora from Eleusis of c. 670–650 BCE (figure 1.2) (Eleusis, Archaeological Museum 2630), famous for a depiction of the blinding of Polyphemus on its neck and the Gorgons' pursuit of Perseus on its body, runs the full gamut of sonic registers. While the giant opens his mouth as though to cry out in pain as the stake enters

his eye, and the lion on the band below distends its jaws so as to roar, the protome cauldrons that substitute for the Gorgon sisters' heads feature the same open-mouthed griffins and lions that adorned the metal versions of these supremely resonant vessels, credited in myth and anecdote at least with the power to issue sound and prophetic speech.



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Fig. 1.2 Proto-Attic amphora ("Eleusis Amphora") from Eleusis. On the neck, blinding of Polyphemus; on the shoulder, a lion attacking a boar; on the body, the Gorgons chasing Perseus. C. 650 BCE. Ceramic. Height 1.44 m. Eleusis, Archaeological Museum.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

The penultimate band on Achilles's shield, finally, supplies such an endlessly suggestive and paradigmatic crafted object because it directs us toward an additional framework through which the Greeks conceptualized artistic production. As recent studies have shown (Power 2011; Kurke 2012 and 2013), it is no mere happenstance that this capstone representation exhibits a dancing chorus; instead, Homer chooses (p. 32) this activity because its features and affect stand in such close relation to those exhibited

and solicited by the work of art and because it permits the poet to showcase in most concentrated form what a craftsman should, ideally, achieve. The reasons for the equivalence between choral performances and *agalmata* depend both on the broader functions of *choreia* and on those internal attributes that secure fulfillment of at least one among the performers' allotted roles: as with so many artistic products of the Archaic, Classical, and post-Classical periods, framing choral dance and song is the ritual occasion at a sacred space, a context in which, following the self-descriptions that choruses in lyric and drama include (see Euripides, *Phoen.* 220–221, for a particularly clear equation of statue, dancer, and votary), groups of youths and maidens present themselves as offerings to divinities. Echoing the terms that inscriptions on votives deploy, they invite the gods to receive their grace-filled performance, take delight in it, and bestow favor in return (particularly good on this overlap are Day 2010 and Depew 2000).

To see, then, the properties prized in works of art at their most heightened and intensified, we might look to accounts of choruses in the epic, hymnal, lyric, and dramatic repertoires. A chorus is, from its outset, a supremely artisanal object. Not only do a set of factual terms (“weaving,” “cutting,” “fitting together”) describe the activity of the chorus leader as he arranges his dancers in formation (see Calame 1997), but members of parthenic choruses are adorned much in the manner of works of art, decked out in the same brilliant garments and exhibiting the same jewelry and polychrome sandals displayed by sculpted korai (perhaps imagined as participants in the processions and choral performances essential to so many ritual acts). Radiance is also a *sine qua non* of a richly ornamented dancing group, whose sparkle emanates with particular intensity from the feet that execute the steps. Like Bacchylides’s iridescent tripods, when the chorus of Phaeacian youths dances to Demodocus’s song, it is the “gleamings of their feet” (*marmarugas... podōn*, *Od.* 8.264–265) that command Odysseus’s attention (compare *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 201–203). As heterogeneous individuals joined in a single circle or line, these choruses are, no less than crafted objects, fresh manifestations of the process of assemblage and of the aural-cum-visual *harmonia* that results; in an expression that refers as much to the choral ensemble as to just the vocal element, the Homeric hymnist of Apollo celebrates the performance of the chorus of the Deliades, “so beautifully is their song put together” (*houtō sphin kalē sunarēren aoidē*; *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 164). Consistent with this larger affinity between chorus and work and art, *charis*, *thauma*, and desire are the emotions that choral performances elicit. A witness to the celebrated performance of the Delian dancers, taking in both the Deliades and viewers, “would see the *charis* of all and he would delight his heart [*idoito charin, terpsaito de thumon*] as he looked upon the assembled company” (153); just a few lines on, the chorus members are designated as “this great wonder” (*tode mega thauma*; 156), a description that recalls the “awe-full” sensation experienced by Odysseus (*thaumaze de thumō*; *Od.* 8.265) as he gazed in wonder at the twinkle-toed Phaeacians dancing to Demodocus’s song. Particularly striking is one additional property common to several *agalmata* already cited and to choruses, albeit uniquely maiden ones: even as the (p. 33) epigraphic messages emanate from artifacts that broadcast their metallic or lithic character, so do parthenic singers possess voices materialized and metalicized (I owe this point to Power 2011, 105–110). From the Homeric suggestion that the archetypal Muses are equipped with vocal faculties that, like other manufactured objects, are unbreakable and even forged (*phōnē d’ arrēktos, chalkeon... ētor*; *Il.* 2.490) to Pindar’s *parthenoi* at Delphi who “sing... with a voice of bronze” (*Paeon* 2.101 Snell-Mahler), sound reified and everlasting characterizes both works of art and choral singers.

Verbalized Art

If the socially and more particularly religiously embedded character of commentary about art tends to occlude “theorizing” in the ancient sources, then accounts of Phidias’s Olympian Zeus prove a signal exception to the norm: Strabo, Dio Chrysostom, Pliny, Cicero, and Quintilian are just some among many authors who use this outsize chryselephantine statue as a springboard for raising questions concerning the representational (and epiphanic) nature of art, its capacity to access an invisible reality or ideal, the role of the artist in fashioning the image, and the sources of the “vision” or mental apprehension informing his work (for most of the ancient sources on Phidias’s Zeus, see Overbeck 1868, 125–136; see too Lapatin 2001, 79–86). Routinely, these and other sources also embed their analyses within comparisons between the powers of visual and verbal artists, variously aligning and contrasting the evocative and “energistic” capacities that words and images possess. Among these ancient responses to Phidias’s oeuvre, the text that forms the starting point for this section’s discussion seems resolutely to turn its back on such theorizing, even as it deprives the *theoria* that serves as its notional frame of any sacred or “theoretical” character (among recent treatments of the poem, see Kerkhecker 1999, 147–181; Acosta-Hughes 2002, 288–294; Petrovic 2006; Prioux 2007, 114–121; Hunter 2011, 252–258). Ostensibly an encounter between an overly verbose expert and an individual about to depart for Olympia in order to view Phidias’s celebrated image, Callimachus’s sixth *Iamb* (fragm. 196 Pfeiffer) pushes the materialist approach explored above to an absurdist extreme and in so doing, albeit through the back door and as much by conspicuous omission as by direct engagement, addresses many of the key “aesthetic” concepts that can be traced back to Archaic texts.

If proof is needed for the ancient preoccupation with materiality and the (literal) nuts and bolts of artistic facture, *Iamb* 6 demonstrates the point in spades. Following the opening emphasis on Phidias’s *technē* (*ha techna de Pheidia*, 1), which in this instance can refer both to the work of art itself and to craftsmanship, this “monstrous display of erudition” (Hutchinson 1988, 26) treats the questioner to a barrage of dry-as-dust technical details. In what must be a deliberate flaunting of the poetic agenda advanced by the *Aetia* prologue, where Callimachus famously admonishes the Telchines for assuming that aesthetic products or *sophia* can be judged by “the Persian chain” (18), a quantitative approach that privileges height, bulk, and breadth over all other aesthetic values, (p. 34) the exegete details in uncritical fashion the supersized dimensions of each element of the Phidian ensemble. Where other authors dwell on the overwhelming impact of the image’s monumentality and explicitly deem a computational approach inadequate for conveying its majesty (e.g., Pausanias 5.11.9; compare Pliny, *HN* 36.18), the iambic

speaker's numerical litany and relentless harping on scale paradoxically cut the image down to size, treating each component (base, throne, divine figure, the Horai and Nike topping it) in piecemeal fashion, a mode of exegesis that prevents us from seeing the awesome whole.

No less absent than any acknowledgment of the point of the image's vastness, an indicator of the incommensurability of gods and men (fundamental for this is Gordon 1979), is consideration of the second cardinal property regularly attributed to divinity: its epiphanic luminosity, here conveyed by the sculptor's choice of gold and ivory for the image and enhanced by the reflective pool of olive oil in a black limestone basin located in front of it. Gold and probably ivory, too, feature in the lacunose poem, but the exegete's chief concern is to calculate these metals' astonishing cost (48). That this heavy-handed materialism skirts parody finds affirmation in Lucian's burlesque dialogue *Zeus Tragoedus*, where preferential seating goes to the images of gods made of the most costly metals, for all that this surface plating may cover over the colonies of mice inside (8).

But a *reductio ad absurdum* and demonstration of how a Telchines-like approach to art and its assessment wholly fails to convey the nature of the object of scrutiny form only part of the iambographer's agenda here. For many readers, Callimachus's composition seeks deliberately to upend an account of visual mimesis already apparent in the passage cited at the start of my discussion and endlessly played out in Hellenistic ekphrastic epigrams, one among the several genres parodied in the iambic composition. Where the marvel of Odysseus's brooch and of other *daidala* in Archaic and later texts depends on their capacity to simulate life, their exhibition of a vividness so persuasive that viewers respond by emotional engagement with the work, the iambic expert systematically denies the Zeus image the two prime vivifying markers detailed above: motion and voice. Far from looking as though he were about to rise from his throne and unroof the temple, as in Strabo's well-known account (8.3.30), Callimachus's Zeus remains obstinately stationary, its want of mobility reinforced by the detailed account of pedestal and throne that quite literally ground the static god. And where the thirty-six Hellenistic and later epigrams on Myron's cow endlessly flirt with the notion that the heifer seems about to moo (*mukasthai*), Callimachus's Phidian Zeus, by contrast, preserves silence throughout. Granted, the Horai topping the throne remark "that they do not fall short by so much as a peg of the women [the Charites on the throne's other side] who are one fathom high" (43-44), but this "who's tallest" contest, with its indirect discourse and comic ventriloquism, acts rather as an exposure of the trope. (Here, though, Callimachus may have his cake and eat it, too: the envoi at the poem's end must be pronounced by the statue itself, speaking through the medium of its epigram; and yet, typically, such commands to

viewers to depart occur not on cult images but on sepulchral monuments. Zeus is absent, indeed.) (p. 35)

In its strenuous denial of verisimilitude and focus on pure surface, the account presented by *Iamb* 6 also neatly sidesteps—even as the expression “the *daimōn* itself” (*autos d’ ho daimōn*; 37) pointedly gestures toward—the central problem articulated already in fifth- and fourth-century discussions of images, these in no small part sparked by efforts of image makers increasingly to evoke inner life or *ēthos* in their painted and plastic representations and to use surface and surface effects as a screen for “showing through” (*diaphainei*; so Xenophon, *Mem.* 3.10.5; note also Odysseus’s skin, visible through the diaphanous material of the cloak) what lay beneath. In the familiar account given by Xenophon of Socrates’s encounters with the painter Parrhasius and the sculptor Cleiton, the “works of the soul” in the first instance and the unseen anatomy of the subject of the statue maker’s image, its muscles and sinews, in the second are conveyed through visible expression, features and pose (*Mem.* 3.10, 1–8; the text is a touchstone for many discussions of ancient theorizing about art; for the passage, see particularly Philipp 1968, 58–59; Rouveret 1989, 14–15; Zeitlin 1994, 192–193; Halliwell 2002, 122–124; and Neer 2010, 156–157, who draws particular attention to the expression *diaphainei*). For the Platonic Socrates, this same potential of painted or sculpted surfaces to body forth the essence of their subjects and, correlate with this, an image’s verisimilitude or simulation of life (so *zōtikon* at *Mem.* 3.10.6) prove anything but a cause for celebration; rather, as the philosopher explains in the *Cratylus*, images that achieve too high a degree of mimetic fidelity to their originals and whose artists realize this (impression of) inner life to its fullest degree risk dangerously confounding likeness and identity. In an attempt to demonstrate that a copy “must not by any means reproduce all the qualities of that which it portrays,” the speaker goes on to cite an *eikōn* (painting or painted statue) that amplifies the representational powers of the image maker, giving him the animating powers of a Daedalus or a Hephaestus:

If there were two things, such as Cratylus and an *eikōn* of Cratylus, if someone of the gods were to make it with regard to your color and shape just as painters do, but also were to make all the internal qualities like yours... and were to place inside the movement and *psuchē* and thought such as you have... and were to stand this other thing close to you, would there then be Cratylus and an *eikōn* of Cratylus, or two Cratyluses? (432b–c)

Cratylus’s admission that we would seem to confront two of himself allows his interlocutor to carry his point: an image identical to its model is no image at all but a living duplicate. Euripides’s *Helen* wonderfully anticipates the fantasy, exploring the

vertiginous and even fatal consequences of that doubling (for the *Cratylus* passage and discussion of the *eikōn* in the *Helen*, with bibliography, see Steiner 2001, 45–56, 68–74).

And yet the refusal to grant life and representational powers to the image inventoried in *Iamb* 6 may work to opposite effect. Where one critic sees in this description of the Zeus statue “a sacrilegious exposure of its cultic aura,” for another, its very inadequacy expresses Callimachus’s demonstration of “both the frustrations of ekphrasis (which must always fall short in its attempts to translate visual experience into verbal description) and the impossibility of conveying divine encounters in human terms” and the consequent need for a direct, experiential encounter with the image (Porter 2010, 488; Platt 2010, 207–208; see also Platt 2011, 225, within an extended discussion of second (p. 36) Sophistic responses to the Phidian Zeus, 224–235, on which my account has drawn). Since gods almost never manifest themselves to men in visible form and our attribution of human bodies to them, as Xenophanes already observes (VS 21 B15), is a fallacy, a statue that shuns all relation to the living original would, in the manner of aniconic images, better serve the “higher” function that visual representations could play, furnishing “icons” or symbols of an otherwise imperceptible reality. This is the very role ascribed to Phidias’s Zeus by Dio Chrysostom in his twelfth *Oration*, a speech delivered in 97 CE at Olympia before the image itself. In the defense that the sculptor is made to give of his enterprise, man-made *sēmata* offer a means of accessing the divine, serving as a kind of steppingstone to an otherwise hidden realm. Incapable of knowing the form that gods actually take, men “attach a human body to a god as a container of wisdom and reason... and in their perplexity seek to indicate that which is invisible and unportrayable by means of something portrayable and visible, using the function of a *symbolon*” (59). Nor need the privileging of technique and measurement, which demonstrates Phidian *akribeia*, his exactitude in handling the statue’s dimensions, be a stumbling block to the work’s signifying powers in some ancient commentators’ accounts; rather, the orientation of Callimachus’s *Iamb* anticipates the view articulated by Maximus of Tyre, for whom the best way of honoring the gods is through “the precise craftsmanship [*technēi de akribei*] of the artist” (*Dial.* 2.3, with Platt 2011, 230).

Apparent in the chiasmic structure combined with the “adversative” *de* in the iambic poem’s opening line, “Elean is the Zeus, the artwork Phidian” (*Aleios ho Zeus, ha techna de Pheidia*), is the related set of aesthetic issues with which discussions of the Zeus at Olympia regularly engage: the sources of the artist’s power to apprehend an invisible reality and the nature and origins of his artistic conception. Where Callimachus here seems to set the god of Elis and Phidian *technē* in relations of opposition (Hunter 2011, 252, notes how the local and unprecedented epithet “humorously downgrades the majesty of the Panhellenic Zeus to that of a local divinity”), even antagonism, the two

terms that the phrase separates, divinity and the artistic creation that men undertake, are more frequently combined. So Homer, Pindar, and many other sources imagine craftsmanship as a gift of the gods, something typically bestowed by Hephaestus and Athena on mortal artisans and prerequisite for all acts of *poiēsis* (so *Od.* 6.229–237; compare Pindar, *Ol.* 7.50–51; on Callimachus’s own treatment of the issue elsewhere, see Acosta-Hughes 2002, 290–291). For all that this is the position that Callimachus himself embraces in the *Aetia* prologue and elsewhere, in this deliberately (self-)parodic *Iamb*, the poet seems more to adhere to the notion first visible in fifth- and fourth-century accounts, where *technē* can indicate a skill that stands independent of and opposed to innate genius or divine inspiration (O’Sullivan 1992).

For those who came after Callimachus and who may, in part, be critiquing his composition’s orientation, the iambic speaker betrays his mistaken approach toward Phidias’s work from this opening statement on. In the view of later authors (and of some composers of ekphrastic epigrams on this and other works or art, e.g., *Anthologia Graeca* 16.81: “Either the deity came to earth from heaven, showing you his likeness [*eikōn*], Phidias, or you went in order to see the god”), the wellspring of the image is not so much (p. 37) artistic technique, for all that this may play an auxiliary or promoting role, but the sculptor’s quasi-visionary and/or mental apprehension of his model, a topic on which the Callimachean exegete remains resolutely mute; so, in Dio’s Stoic-inflected account, it is the artist’s innate conception or *huponoia* of the divine that allows him to fashion his Zeus, while Maximus of Tyre, in the discussion cited above, uses the (again) Stoic notion of *phantasia*, of which the image serves as a secondary manifestation, a *mimēsis* in the Platonic sense, to describe the “mental presentation” that Phidias’s piece transmits. (For *phantasia* as a type of mental visualizing, see Watson 1988, esp. 38–95, and 1994; note also Zeitlin 2001 and Halliwell 2002, 305–312. Beyond the scope of this discussion are the reworkings of this and other terms used in ancient discussions of aesthetics and *mimēsis* in Plotinus and other Neoplatonists). *Phantasia* also appears as the prime mover behind the Zeus for Apollonius of Tyana, who famously replaces the *technē* broadcast in the opening line of *Iamb* 6 with this very different faculty; here, in distinction to Maximus, *phantasia* (which can reproduce “that which it has not seen”) stands contrasted with *mimēsis* (which reproduces the visible) and does not so much produce an image at several removes from its divine original as make divinity manifest in the manner of an epiphanic vision (Philostratus, *VA* 6.19.20; see Platt 2009 for discussion of the passage and earlier bibliography). Cicero offers his own version of this tradition of Phidian mental imaging: for him, the sculptor “did not look at any person whom he was using as a model, but in his own mind there dwelt a surpassing vision [*species... eximia*] of beauty; at this he gazed and all intent on this he guided his artist’s hand to produce a likeness of the god” (*Orat.* 8–9).

The catalyst behind Phidias's apologia for his Zeus in Dio Chrysostom, where the sculptor grants that he took his inspiration from Homer's account of Zeus at *Il.* 1.528–530, signals one further concern also native to Callimachus's *Iamb.* Here, in the manner of the ekphrastic tradition informing the work, the poet offers a revisionary account of the sometimes complementary and sometimes polemical powers of verbal and visual media (see Simonides's apothegm cited above). If, following the common pattern of Hellenistic epigrams showcasing works of art, the text can actually trump the powers of the sculptor or painter, then our speaker will have spared his pupil a long trip abroad; this verbal viewing of the image renders autopsy redundant. But a further convention of Hellenistic ekphrases is also at work here, where authors feature the artifacts in their texts to declare their own poetological and hermeneutic principles and, by drawing on the descriptive and evaluative terms common to visual and literary craftsmanship, use their viewing of the image as a model for how to read and appreciate the surrounding poem. (This point is argued in detail by Goldhill 1994; see also Platt 2002; Sens 2005; Männlein-Robert 2007. As I go on to suggest, Callimachus turns this practice very much on its head.) Just as, in this account, Phidias's Zeus emerges as a totally inadequate depiction of its subject, so the instructor's exposition demonstrates how poetry should, according to Callimachus's own aesthetic criteria, neither be composed nor assessed. The failure of the representational power of the cult statue corresponds to the inadequacy of the poem, which engages its broader audience no more than Phidias's image (p. 38) would were a viewer to approach it with ruler, measuring square, and account book in hand.

Callimachus's open-ended treatment of the theoretical questions signaled above permits a return to my point of departure and to the materialist and affective dimensions of ancient aesthetics as earlier described. On the one hand, the analogy between the image and the text that Hellenistic epigrams so often feature is reinforced; the "anagraphic" aspect of the composition, whose verbal-cum-inscriptional conclusion draws attention to the words' physical shape and form, is also a material, surface object, inviting a reading that conforms with the description of the statue supplied by the exegete, all focused on externals ("the boundaries between stone and scroll are quite permeable and migration across them is easy"; Bing 1998, 34). On the other hand, everything in the poem has exposed the inadequacies of this approach and suggested that a quantifying description dependent on treating a work of art, visual or poetic, as a physical entity cannot give us access to its true merits, impact, or deeper meaning. The polyvalent nature of ancient aesthetics, with its simultaneous awareness of the three concurrent aspects of artistic practices and their products, which are at once material, representational, and emotionally engaging, already manifests itself in Odysseus's verbal account of his brooch and cloak: a surface and haptic marvel that dazzles viewers, to be sure, but also a *symbolon* that forecasts the doglike hero's triumph over his human prey (for the canine

Odysseus, 20.13–16; for the suitors as fawns, 4.35–40) and whose signifying powers move Penelope one step closer to the reunion with her long-lost spouse.

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the theory of Greek and Roman architecture. It begins by considering the traditional understanding of theory as more important than practice before turning to a discussion of Vitruvius's treatise *De architectura* and his theory on architecture, particularly his ideas about the principles of *symmetria*, *eurythmia*, and *decor*. It then explores the design of ancient buildings and the theories underlying their construction. It shows that theoretical aspects of architecture emerged in ancient Greece and Rome over the course of the Classical and Hellenistic periods, which were consolidated by Vitruvius in his treatise. The chapter concludes by highlighting how theory related in a meaningful way to practice.

Keywords: ancient buildings, ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, *De architectura*, *decor*, *eurythmia*, *symmetria*, theory, Vitruvius

“Putting theory into practice” is a familiar phrase. It brings with it the unspoken presumption that the theory underlying a body of knowledge or activity has priority over its practical application. Such priority is substantially antihistorical, however. It is telling that the Roman architect-author Vitruvius began his treatise *De architectura* with wording that places theory *after* practice. The opening two sentences announce: “The architect should be equipped with knowledge of many branches of study and varied kinds of learning, for it is by his judgment that all work done by the other arts is put to test. This knowledge is the child of practice and theory” (*fabrica et ratiocinatione*, Vitruvius, *De arch.* 1.1.1, trans. Morgan 1914; Gros 1982, 670; on the second term, see Courrént 2011, 27–31).

For disciplines such as architecture in traditional cultures, theory represents an intellectual framework embracing abstraction, hierarchy, and method for the purpose of guiding practice and associated discourse. Theory may catch up and march ahead to commanding heights, or it may even fly off on an autonomous trajectory, but this takes

time. First, the nature and substance of a practice have to gel sufficiently for its qualities to become the subject of comment, of discussion, of speculation, and finally of theorizing. Indeed, practice anticipates theory in the development of most human endeavors. Nor is there any clean divide between doing a practice and reasoning about it. There is, after all, thinking in making (Sennett 2008), while recent architects and architectural commentators describe modes of creativity that, far from the application of set norms or principles, admit inspiration and invention engendered by the design process itself (Pallasmaa 2005; Charrington and Neva 2011 ; Wilson Jones 2014, ch. 9).

Early Greek responses to visual culture were concerned primarily with practical and technical qualities: material, value, skill, precision, and (where relevant) lifelikeness (see chapter 1). Notable “art objects”—ranging from all manner of high-end offerings to funerary goods and military equipment—deployed these to induce a sense of wonder, amplified (p. 42) perhaps by heroic or divine associations and by scale, be it gigantic or miniature. The histories of Herodotus (fl. mid-fifth century BCE) are peppered with comments about offerings and other objects that were thought worthy of mention primarily on account of their exceptional workmanship. Such is the case for the gift given by the Egyptian pharaoh Amasis to the sanctuary at Lindus, his own corselet of embroidered linen, cotton, and gold, the wonder of which lay in each thread being spun from 360 strands (Herodotus 3.47; Pliny, *HN* 19.2, who cites 365 strands; Shaya 2005, 431–432). During his visit to Egypt, Herodotus was struck by the effect of fine workmanship in monumental buildings, noting the form of pillars (e.g., ones shaped like palms or human figures), along with their fabrication, as when “of white stone very precisely fitted together” (2.148, trans. A. D. Godley).

The passage in the *Iliad* celebrating Achilles’s shield (see chapter 1) shows that this mentality goes back as far as we have literary testimony, while in the *Odyssey*, we learn how Odysseus’s son Telemachus encountered the palace of Menelaus near Sparta, wonder-struck. It seemed to him that the great hall, or *megaron*, was “lit by something of the sun’s splendor or the moon’s.” He exclaimed, “The whole place gleams with copper and gold, amber and silver and ivory. What an amazing collection of treasures! I can’t help thinking that the court of Zeus on Olympus must be like this inside” (*Od.* 4.71–75).

In Archaic and Classical Greece, temples constituted the primary locus for monumental architecture. Being not just houses for the gods but also offerings to them, the temple demanded more care, effort, and consideration than any other kind of building (Wilson Jones 2014). The ancient Greek conception of *technē* (a craft, expertise, or skill) went on to put emphasis on measurement and exactitude in the service of control, reliability, and teachability toward a beneficial end (Pollitt 1974, 32–37; Angier 2010, 5, 7, 22). This is of further relevance for the art of monumental building, inasmuch as measurement,

regularity, and exactitude facilitated processes of construction, the stability of the result, and its aesthetic quality. The functional dimension of architecture grounded theoretical issues, and it is no accident that *technē* and the root *tek-* (as in *tektonic* in German and *tectonic* in English) grew out of the vocabulary of carpentry and building (compare Chantraine 1968, 1100, 1112; Porphyrios 1998, 34–37; Angier 2010, 3).

At the same time, the repeated deployment of a limited palette of building types and the stylistic conventions enshrined in the “orders” (Doric, Ionic, Corinthian) favored the comparison of like to like and a critique of parallels and distinctions with a view to improvement and so, too, the formulation of theory. The mechanism by which desirable qualities emerge out of usage rooted in practicalities is captured with precision by Cicero:

Columns support the lintels of temples and their porticoes, but this does not mean that their dignity is inferior to their utility. It was certainly not the search for beauty, but necessity, that has fashioned the celebrated pediment of our Capitol and other religious edifices. But to tell the truth, once the principle had been established of collecting the water either side of the roof, dignity came to be added to the utility of the (p. 43) pediment, so much so that even if the Capitol were to be set up in the heavens, where it should not rain, it could hardly have any dignity without its double pitch roof.

(*De Or.* 3.180)

In ancient Greek and Roman culture, there was arguably no concerted “theory of art” in the modern sense (see chapter 1). And although there was no matching Greek term for “theory” as such, it is intriguing, in view of preceding remarks, that the term *theoria*, signifying contemplation—a necessary precondition for the elaboration of theory—earlier could mean both going to a sanctuary and beholding the wondrous offerings and temples there (Marconi 2004, 224). In any event, theoretical aspects of architecture did emerge over the course of the Classical and Hellenistic periods, later to be consolidated by Vitruvius. Theory also related in a meaningful way to practice, as we shall see below.

Vitruvius and Other Sources

Although no more than scraps of ancient Greek architectural theory survive, an ample view of the field is provided by Vitruvius’s treatise, a compendious work in ten books composed between 30 and 10 BCE (key editions in English include Morgan 1914; Howe and Rowland 1999; Schofield and Tavernor 2009). This represents far and away our

prime written source on both Greek and Roman architecture. Whereas the latter depended on the former in many respects, it differed in others; suffice it to recall the Romans' use of concrete, arches, and vaults; their preference for Corinthian at the expense of Doric; their greater attention to function and performance and the harnessing of resources and technique in the service of what might be called the "imperial building machine" (Wilson Jones 2000b, esp. 155; Ward-Perkins 1981; Taylor 2003; Lancaster 2005). By contrast, ancient Greek and Roman architectural theory was, differences of emphasis aside, one and the same. In their comments regarding architecture, a similar appreciation for materials, scale, and precision unites, at a distance of more than seven centuries, Homer and Pliny the Elder. As will become clear, certain ideas of Plato, Polyclitus, and Pythagoras find themselves recast by Roman writers, including Vitruvius, who cites each of them. His theoretical disquisitions are saturated with Greek terms and concepts, understandably given his dependence on Greek specialist literature. Indeed, in the preface to the seventh of his ten books, Vitruvius acknowledges only three Latin sources devoted to architecture and related material (Fuficius, Varro, and Publius Septimius) as against dozens of Greek ones (Gros 1990, lxxv-lxxiv; Romano 1987, 66-76, 101-108; Courrént 2011, 43-50). The treatises Vitruvius lists (*De arch. 7 praef.*), the great majority of which are lost in their entirety, may be grouped (p. 44) according to the following broad and not mutually exclusive categories (the spelling of ancient names is according to Vitruvius's text):

Subject	Author
a. Painting and perspective	Agatharchus, Democritus, Anaxagoras
b. <i>Symmetria</i> and proportion	Silenus (Doric)
	Philo (temples)
	Arcesius (Corinthian capital)
	Nexaris, Theocydes, Demophilos, Pollis
	Leonidas, Silanion, Melampus, Sarnacus, Euphranor
c. Individual temples	Theodorus (Heraion at Samos)
	Chersiphron and Metagenes (Artemision at Ephesus)
	Pytheos (Temple of Athena at Priene)
	Ictinos and Carpion (Parthenon)
	Theodorus of Phocaea (Tholos at Delphi)
	Hermogenes (Artemision at Magnesia)
	Arcesius (Asclepieum at Tralles)
d. Other buildings	Philo (Arsenal at Piraeus)
	Satyrus and Pytheos (Mausoleum at Halicarnassus)
e. Machinery, engineering	Diades, Archytas, Archimedes, Ctesibios, Nymphodorus, Philo, Diphilos, Democles, Charias, Polyidos, Pyrros, Agesistratos

Geometry and mathematics, both of which were crucially important for ancient architectural practice, no doubt played an important part in works concerned with perspective, proportion, and mechanics (a, b, and e above). Works on individual buildings

(c and d) are also likely to have contained explanations and digressions of a theoretical and/or mathematical nature. In fact, two of Vitruvius's greatest influences, including in the realm of the architectural applications of mathematics, appear to have been Pytheus (fl. mid-fourth century BCE) and Hermogenes (fl. early second century BCE), both of whom were leading architects whose treatises focused on the famous Ionic temples that were their masterpieces, respectively, those of Athena at Priene and Artemis at Magnesia (Gros 1978; Wesenberg 1983; Hoepfner and Schwandner 1990; Hellmann 2002–2010, II: 96–108). There are also authors whom Vitruvius used, although he did not name them (Courr nt 2011, 46–50). In fact, an educated ancient architect could have learned theoretical principles from a panorama of sources, including philosophical discussions by the likes of Plato and Aristotle; sculptors' treatises such as Polyclitus's *Kanon*; specialist works on the other *technai*, such as medicine (Angier 2010). For all we know, a lost work such as Scamone of Mytilene's *On Inventions* may have embraced architectural (p. 45) inventions, too, and with that some theoretical discussion. Roman authorities contributed encyclopedic works, especially those by Varro, Vitruvius, and Pliny the Elder, while works by Cicero contain pertinent reflections, as we have seen.

As our prime window onto so much lost knowledge, Vitruvius's treatise will always remain the starting point for investigating both Greek and Roman architectural theory. This being so, it makes sense to identify the concepts he adopts before going on to seek signs of them for earlier periods. In short, we are obliged by the vicissitudes of survival to work backward.

Our starting point represents a problematic authority, however. The limitations and failings of *De architectura* are considerable. The structure and sequence of the text lack clarity, and several passages—especially those on theory—are confusing or in direct contradiction with one another. Information required to complete a chain of instructions is frequently missing; anachronisms and historical inaccuracies are common; the writing is stodgy; the level of technical and scientific knowledge is unremarkable (Soubiran 1969, xxxviii–xlvi; Gros 1975 and 1988; Callebaut 1989; Wilson Jones 2000b, 34–35). In the present context, it is noteworthy that many of the criticisms directed at Vitruvius concern difficulties stemming from the necessary reliance on Greek terminology. In the fifteenth century, Leon Battista Alberti set the tone for some modern critiques when he complained that Vitruvius “writes neither Greek nor Latin and as far as we are concerned he need not have written at all since we cannot understand that kind of writing” (*De re aedificatoria* 6.1; Krautheimer 1963, 42–43; Romano 1987, 7–9). This being as it may, we must treasure everything that Vitruvius wrote on Greek theory, while being ready to accommodate contradictions and gaps and make adjustments in the light of what we can glean from other sources and archaeology. Yet—although it is not a central concern here—there are reasons to rehabilitate Vitruvius, bearing in mind the totality of what he was

trying to achieve (Geertman and de Jong 1989; *Le projet de Vitruve* 1994; Gros 1997; Wilson Jones 2000b, 35; McEwen 2003). Gems of enduring validity pepper the dull prose, and who knows, but some of these may have been his own. My personal favorite concerns the reflections with which he closes book 6, the last of those dedicated to architectural design (book 7 concerns finishes, while books 8 through 10 concern hydraulics, timekeeping, machinery, and engineering):

All kinds of men, and not merely architects, can recognize a good piece of [architectural] work, but between layman and the latter there is this difference, that the layman cannot tell what it is to be like without seeing it finished, whereas the architect, as soon as he has formed the conception, and before he begins the work, has a definite idea of the beauty, the convenience and the propriety that will distinguish it.

(Vitruvius, *De arch.* 6.8.1, trans. Morgan 1914)

Vitruvian Theory

Vitruvius affirmed three fundamental prerequisites for a successful piece of architecture (*De arch.* 1.3): *firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas*, applicable not just to building (*aedificatio*) (p. 46) but also to chronometry (*gnomonice*) and engineering (*machinatio*). *Firmitas*, often rendered in English as firmness, stands for strength, durability, soundness of materials, and quality of construction. *Utilitas* is utility, fitness for purpose. *Venustas* is beauty, everything to do with visual delight. Vitruvius also describes six key principles of design (*De arch.* 1.2): *ordinatio*, *dispositio*, *eurythmia*, *symmetria*, *decor*, and *distributio*. Several characteristically opaque aspects of his writing are bound up with this list and subsequent discussion. This occurs before that of the three prerequisites rather than the other way around, as one might expect. The six principles do not relate as pairs to the three prerequisites, as one might also expect. None of these principles bears much on *firmitas*, and conversely, the concept of decorum (*decor*) finds no home among the three prerequisites. Moreover, concern for *firmitas* and *utilitas* recurs in *De architectura*, yet neither of these prerequisites is discussed in a way that might be called theoretical. For example, Vitruvius shows regard for utility in his account of basilicas (*De arch.* 5.1.5–8) when recommending the advantages of certain arrangement or when he allows designers to modify ideal solutions in the light of the scale of a project and the constraints of the site and budget (*De arch.* 5.6.7, 6.2.1–4). However, he attempts no systematic treatment

of utility, such as categorizing types (e.g., concerning function, comfort, construction, or cost).

By contrast, Vitruvius is careful to provide definitions of his six principles, albeit often unsuccessfully. Their Greek origin is clear, since he supplied Greek equivalents for three of them (*taxis* for *ordinatio*, *diathesin* for *dispositio*, and *oikonomia* for *distributio*), while *eurythmia* and *symmetria* are in themselves Greek. (Meanwhile, *decor* finds a Greek equivalent in *prepon*, although this is not mentioned.) As for the translation of these terms into English, the nearest-sounding equivalents can be false friends. *Symmetria*, for example, is not symmetry in the modern sense of a mirror image. With this in mind, the Greek, Latin, and English equivalents of the six principles may be set out as follows:

Greek	Latin	English
<i>taxis</i>	<i>ordinatio</i>	order (especially in plans, e.g., regularity)
<i>diathesin</i>	<i>dispositio</i>	arrangement (especially of parts, components)
<i>eurythmia</i>	—	visual effect of proportion, rhythm, and technique
<i>symmetria</i>	—	mathematical proportion or harmony
<i>prepon</i>	<i>decor</i>	propriety (decorum)
<i>oikonomia</i>	<i>distributio</i>	economy (sensible use of resources)

These terms divide between processes of design and the attributes they produce (Watzinger 1909, 202–203; Ferri 1960, 50–52; Scranton 1974; Geertman 1994; Callebat 1994, 36–37). Thus, *ordinatio* would be the process of calculation giving rise to *symmetria*, *dispositio* the process of composition giving rise to *eurythmia*, and *distributio* the process of evaluation giving rise to *decor*. (p. 47)

Act of design	Attribute of result	Nature of conception
<i>ordinatio</i>	<i>symmetria</i>	the project as number form aimed at mathematical harmony
<i>dispositio</i>	<i>eurythmia</i>	the project as composition aimed at visual harmony and balance
<i>distributio</i>	<i>decor</i>	the project as appropriate to its social, physical, and economic context

In this way, a tripartite scheme emerges, as for the three departments of architecture (*aedificatio*, *gnomonice*, and *machinatio*), the three prerequisites of good building (*firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas*), and the three main columnar styles or orders (Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian). Indeed, the magnetic pull of the triad, a recurrent topos of ancient epistemological classification, seems to have been behind this scheme, and this goes a long way toward explaining the omission of other pertinent concepts such as those just mentioned. In effect, then, *symmetria*, *eurythmia*, and *decor* represent the key design principles that underpin Vitruvian theory (Schlikker 1940; Gros 1982, 663). As such, each merits drawing out in turn with reference to both Greek ideas and the cultural framework to which the architecture of antiquity belonged.

***Symmetria* and the Principle of Mathematical Harmony**

Concern for round dimensions and proportions is a general characteristic of ancient architecture all around the eastern end of the Mediterranean as it is portrayed in texts; suffice it to recall the biblical tradition for the Temple of Solomon (*Kings* 1:6-7). Such concern finds its most complete expression in the concept of *symmetria*, the most important element of Vitruvius's theory. He used it abundantly, eighty-four times, to be precise (Callebat and Fleury 1995), sometimes giving it quite strong emphasis (e.g., *De arch.* 3.1.1, 6.2.1, 6.8.9). In addition, treatises in the most numerous category referred to in book 7 concern "the laws of *symmetria*" (category b in the list above). This was not some Vitruvian idiosyncrasy, for *symmetria* was a prominent philosophical and artistic concept from the Classical period (Pollitt 1974, 16-22, 160-162; Knell 2008, 30-33; Gros

1989; Wilson Jones 2000b, 40–43). *Symmetria* denotes the coming together of measure (from *syn-*, as in synthesis, and *metron*), in effect signifying mathematical harmony. This embraced commensurability (whole-number relationships) and equilibrium both mathematically and in a more general sense (the term was also applied to social, political, and marital relations). Proportion is often used similarly today, and in popular usage, it is often treated as synonymous with ratio, that is to say, the mathematical relationship (p. 48) between different measures (e.g., length and width). This, however, is just one aspect of a multilayered concept. *Symmetria* embraced commensurability and harmony in terms of not just ratio but also number, measure, and shape (Wilson Jones 2000b, 40–43).

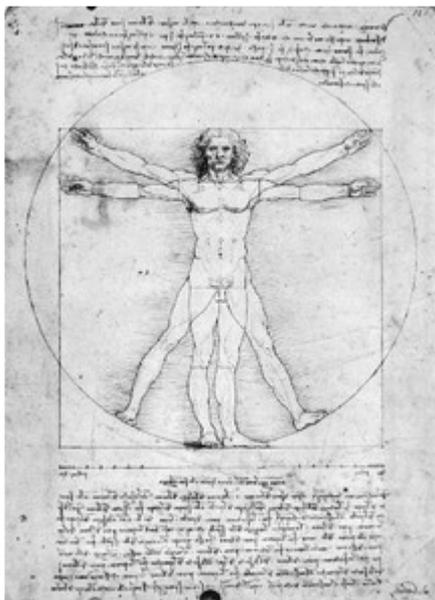
Vitruvius presented the model of the human body as the ultimate exemplar of mathematical harmony in the opening passage of his third book, dedicated to theory and the layout of temples: “The design of a temple depends on *symmetria*, the principles of which must be most carefully observed by the architect. ... Without *symmetria* and proportion there can be no principles in the design of any temple; that is if there is no precise relation between its members, as in the case of those of a well-shaped man” (*De arch.* 3.1, trans. Morgan 1914).

Vitruvius set out a series of points substantiating this contention. With arms outstretched, the ideal man fits into a circle centered at the navel and also within a square, since the arm span equals the body height, both of which correspond to six multiples of his foot (figure 2.1). This and other units of measurement (finger, palm, and cubit) were derived from the members of the body, which interrelate simply one to another. The face takes up one-tenth of the total height, the head takes up one-eighth of the height, and so on:

Vitruvius concluded by commenting that Greek mathematicians and philosophers took the body as a source of number theory, investing 6 and 10 with special significance because the body is 6 feet tall and has 10 fingers and toes. In sum, the perfect body exemplifies the way in which number, measure, ratio, and shape could participate in creating mathematical harmony. In his emphasis on *symmetria*, Vitruvius doubtless followed the lead of Greek authorities, including Arcesius, Pytheus, and Hermogenes. The ultimate source for this tradition, however, which may have been known to Vitruvius directly or by other routes, was the famous *Kanon* devised by the sculptor Polyclitus. From the writings of Galen in the second century CE, it seems that this work “described in great detail, like a workshop manual, a set of proportions to be used by sculptors” (Pollitt 1974, 15). The aim was to achieve beauty through the commensurability (*symmetria*) of all the parts of the body to one another (Galen, *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 5.425; Raven 1951; Pollitt 1974, 14–22; Berger 1990; Moon 1995; Rykwert 1996, 104–110; McEwen 2003, chap. 4).

Principal dimensions of Vitruvian Man and their interrelations

		a	b	c	d	H
a	face height, hand length	1	4/5	3/5	2/5	1/10
b	head height		1	3/4	1/2	1/8
c	foot length			1	2/3	1/6
d	chest height, cubit or length of forearm				1	1/4
H	total height, arm span					1



Click to view larger

Fig. 2.1 Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), The Vitruvian Man, Study of the Human Body according to Vitruvius, ca. 1492. Pen and brown ink, brush and some brown wash over metalpoint on paper. Height 33 cm. Venice, Accademia inv. 228.

(Photograph © Scala/Art Resource, New York, ART10269.)

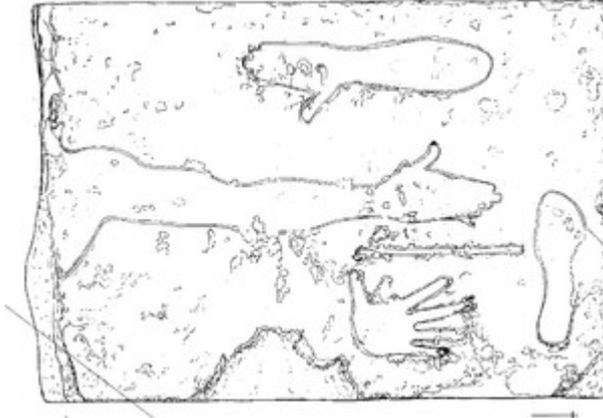
Of course, Vitruvius did not expect architects to imitate Nature mimetically, as painters and sculptors should, but rather to proceed by analogy. *Symmetria* reflected a cosmic order that reduced ultimately to whole numbers and perfect geometry according to Pythagorean (p. 49) and Platonic ways of thinking. This conviction derived from the observation of natural phenomena, including, famously, that harmonies pleasing to the ear correspond to mathematical intervals. Pure geometry also played

a key role; Plato invokes a kind of beauty associated with “straight lines and circles and the plain and solid figures that are formed out of them by turning-lathes and rulers and measures of angles.” He affirmed these figures to be “not only relatively beautiful like

other things, but... eternally and absolutely beautiful" (*Phlb.* 51c). Nearly identical sentiments may be found in Roman writers such as Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.10.46). What is more, advanced mathematical proofs could provide corroboration. In *On the Sphere and the Cylinder*, Archimedes deployed infinitesimal calculus for the first time to prove that the surface areas and volumes of cylinders, cones, and spheres of the same diameter were linked by ratios such as 1:1, 4:1, and 3:2. He expressed particular satisfaction in discovering that this *symmetria* had always existed, although it had gone undetected (Martines 1989, 4; compare Heath 1921, 234–250).

At the same time, deliberation on what constituted a *technē* put emphasis, as already noted, on measurement and exactitude, that is to say, mathematical objectivity. A passage in the Hippocratic corpus asserts that "where correctness and incorrectness each have an exact measure/standard, surely there must be a *technē*" (*On Technē* 5.30–32; Angier 2010, 5). (p. 50)

It is thus clear that Vitruvius drew on concerns that preoccupied philosophers, mathematicians, and sculptors at least as far back as the mid-fifth century BCE. Similar concerns must also have been important to architects, although written testimonies from this time do not survive, and to a certain extent, we have to rely on archaeological evidence and deduction (Coulton 1975; Coulton 1977; Berger 1984; Hoepfner 1984; Mertens 1984). Of singular interest, then, is evidence of another kind testifying to the relevance of the perfect-body tradition for the regulation of units of measure used for building and allied trades. This evidence survives in the shape of two anthropomorphic metrological reliefs of probable (but not definite) fifth-century BCE date, one in Oxford, the other in Piraeus, having only recently been discovered on the island of Salamis (figure 2.2). The Oxford relief, shaped like a pediment, is substantially complete and shows the upper part of a man's body, with arms outspread and the "floating" or disembodied imprint of a single detached foot (Wesenberg 1974). The Salamis relief is less complete, but it similarly shows the head turned to the side (unlike the many Renaissance interpretations of Vitruvian Man, of which Leonardo da Vinci's (figure 2.1) is only the most famous. It must also have featured the full arm span, and it is otherwise of interest for not just a disembodied foot but also a disembodied forearm/cubit and palm, along with a single foot rule (Dekoulakou-Sideris 1990; Wilson Jones 2000a; Stieglitz 2006; Wesenberg 2008).



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Fig. 2.2 Metrological relief from Salamis.

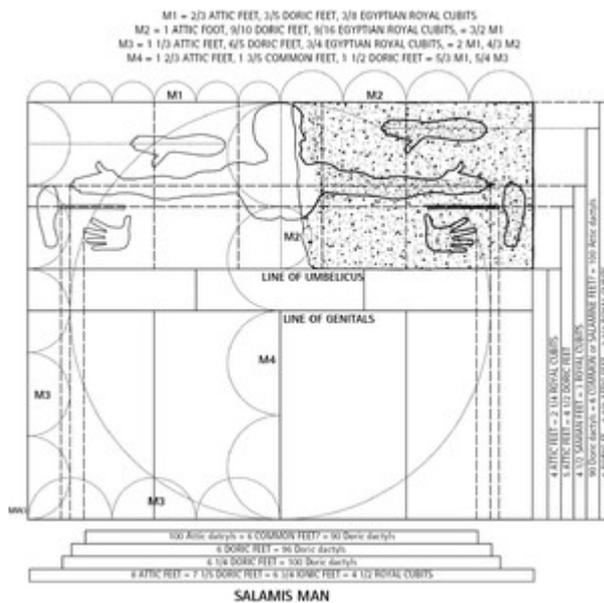
(Drawing by author and Manolis Korres.)

Apart from associated semantic implications, the Salamis relief seems to have constituted an instrument of concordance among different metrical systems. In ancient Greece, there existed a variety of metrical standards, of which three stand out as the most widely used: in ascending magnitude, the “Attic” foot of about 294 millimeters,

the “common” foot of about 306.5 millimeters, and the “Doric” foot of about 327 millimeters (Bankel 1983; Wilson Jones 2000a; Hellmann 2002–2010, I: 44–49). The first of these is present on the Oxford relief, while the second and third appear on the Salamis relief. At the same [\(p. 51\)](#) time, the placement of the outlines on the latter together with the dimensions of the block itself implicate the Attic foot (which may perhaps have been featured on the lost left half). Presuming, as seems highly likely, that the arm span measured 6 Doric feet, the width of the whole block would simultaneously have corresponded to 8 Attic feet and $7\frac{1}{2}$ Doric feet and also, perhaps not by chance, $4\frac{1}{2}$ Samian cubits/Egyptian royal cubits (figure 2.3). This confirms what some scholars have deduced from time to time (although not everyone is in agreement), that these units related one to the other by neat ratios such as 9:10 and 5:8. In point of fact, this may not always have been the case, given the presumably independent origins of the various standards. Bearing in mind that the Salamis relief was in all likelihood commissioned by a collective authority and put up on display in a public place such as an agora, what is significant in all this is the institutional effort to reconcile or “massage” these units in the cause of commensurability and so order, harmony, and convenience. Thus, Vitruvian Man can be seen to belong to a long-standing tradition, allowing us to appreciate why Vitruvius should choose to open his treatment of temple design with a description of the human body that to modern eyes might appear to be purely theoretical in the sense of being separate from practice. The bodily outline of Salamis Man was a theoretical construct at the same time as it was a metrical standard of practical utility.

Eurythmia, the Principle of Visual Harmony

Whereas *symmetria* had to do with abstract beauty and order, *eurythmia* had to do with visual beauty and the relationship between composition and aesthetic pleasure (Pollitt 1974, 143-154). Just as *symmetria* formalized a diffuse prior concern for commensurability, so—probably also around the mid- to late fifth century BCE—*eurythmia* formalized notions about visual appeal otherwise expressed by terms including *charis* (charm), *euschemosyne* (gracefulness), *harmonia* (ordered fittingness), and *rhythmos* (rhythm, shape, pattern) (Bundrick 2005, 141; Porter 2010, 59). According to Diogenes Laertius (7.4.6; Pollitt 1974, 134), the sculptor Pythagoras of Rhegium (originally from Samos, fl. early fifth century), was the “first to aim at *rhythmos* and *symmetria*.” The prefix *eu-* combined with *rhythmos* denoted “the quality of being well-shaped.”



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 2.3 Salamis Man, a tentative reconstruction.

(Drawing by author.)

By contrast with other words signifying pleasing appearance that might be applied to living beings, *eurythmia* conveyed a sense of fine crafting, as with something carefully honed or well fitted. Early appreciation of skill and technique in joinery and metalwork such as Achilles’s shield has already been noted, and similar values applied to architecture. A passage in the *Iliad* likens tightly fitted masonry to the ranks of armed warriors: “As

when a man knits together the wall of his lofty house with close-fitting stones, keeping out the force of the hot winds, so did the helmets and bossed shields fit together, shield against shield, helmet against helmet, man against man” (*Il.* 16.211-215; Onians 1999, 10-12). Given the etymological affinity already noted between *technē* and (p. 52) *tektōn* (carpenter or builder), it seems “fitting” that a Homeric use of the word *harmonia* appears in the context of woodworking skills, meaning the (precise) joining or fitting

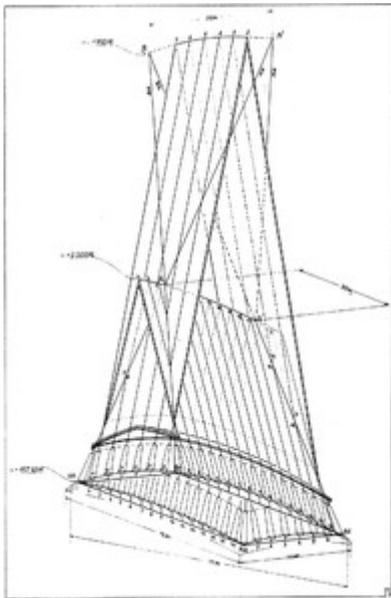
together of timber elements (*Od.* 5.248; Bndrick 2005, 140). *Eurythmia* inherited this mantle; the intimation of technical skill and precision underlies the way the term was used in conversation between Socrates and the armorer Pistias (Xenophon, *Mem.*, 3.10–12; see Pollitt 1974, 143–144). In response to the philosopher’s wish to know why his breastplates commanded a higher price than those of his competitors, Pistias replied, “Because, Socrates, those which I make are better fitting,” going on to comment, “that which fits is well-shaped.”

Eurythmia also bridges between proportion and form. There is still a mathematical component, for Vitruvius says that *eurythmia* is found when “the members of a work are of a height suited to their breadth and of a breadth suited to their length, and when they all respond in accordance with *symmetria*” (*De arch.* 1.2.3), but there is a subjective aspect, (p. 53) too. *Eurythmia* operated in proportions for visually sensitive indicators such as column slenderness, which for this reason did not in practice always correspond to neat numbers, as might be expected on the grounds of *symmetria* alone (this is especially true of Doric temples). Vitruvius relates that architects could opt to leave *symmetria* aside for the sake of *eurythmia*, as, for example, when gauging the so-called optical refinements (*De arch.* 6.2.5). Such delicate inclinations, taperings, curvatures, and other deviations from the straight and regular were introduced piecemeal probably from the mid- to late sixth century BCE onward (Haselberger 1997), going on to become characteristic of temples of the Classical period, above all the Parthenon (figures 2.4 and 6.1). By virtue of their subtlety along with the care and precision necessary to execute them (requiring individual stones to be cut ever so slightly out of square and perfectly matched to their neighbors), the refinements would seem to epitomize the qualities of grace and perfect fit inherent in the concept of *eurythmia*. A final aspect that is pertinent in this regard concerned the use of refinements to correct, persuade, and even deceive vision to positive effect. Whether the principle of “correction” was first developed for architecture or for sculpture and painting is hard to say, but it was evidently of general interest around the time the Parthenon was built and then occupied by Phidias’s colossal Athena Parthenos (figure 30.1). Plato’s *Sophist* has the Eleatic Stranger remark of the work of sculptors and painters working on gigantic artworks: “If they were to reproduce the true proportions of a well-made figure, as you know, the upper parts would look too small, and the lower too large, because we see the one at a distance, the other close at hand. ... So artists, leaving the truth to take care of itself, do in fact put into the images they make, not the real proportions, but those that will appear beautiful” (235d–236a, trans. F. M. Cornford).

Presumably transposing from one of his Greek sources, Vitruvius applies similar logic to the proportions of entablatures and other architectural elements (*De arch.* 3.5.8–9).

Another first-century BCE writer, Geminus, confirms the relevance of *eurythmia* to this doctrine when stating: “The goal of the architect is to make the work visually *eurhythmic*, and to discover what is needed to counteract the distortions of vision, not by aiming at equivalence or *eurhythmy* in accordance with truth, but at these things relative to vision” (Geminus, *Opt.* 28.11–19; Porter 2010, 443 with translation; *emphasis added*).

***Decor*, the Principle of Appropriateness**



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 2.4 Exaggerated visualization of Parthenon refinements.

(Drawing by Manolis Korres.)

Decor is decorum, propriety, or appropriateness, subject to a hierarchical view of the world in which everything was ordained by custom (*consuetudine*) and authority (*auctoritas*). From such a viewpoint, each aspect of a building should accord with its social, religious, and economic status (see chapter 15). This principle goes to the heart of the Vitruvian project, for one of his chief aims, declared in the preface to the first book along with his

dedication to Augustus, was that the leader of the civilized world should raise the standard of architecture sponsored by the Roman state to a level befitting its power and [\(p. 54\)](#) [\(p. 55\)](#) position. Salient characteristics in this regard include size, cost, and the use of materials, especially those that were not only expensive but also conditioned by association, perhaps with royalty or rulers (porphyry for example, like kindred imperial purple, was not for the ordinary Roman, no matter his budget, without official dispensation). That this was important for Augustus himself is clear from his boast that he found Rome built of brick and left it built of marble (Suetonius, *Aug.* 28; Cassius Dio 56.30.3).

Architectural propriety was of wide concern to ancient societies, given their hierarchical nature and the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of pharaohs, kings, aristocrats, and the priesthood (e.g., Trigger 1990; Schwandner and Rheidt 2004). Greek democracies, too, upheld fundamental distinctions between the sacred and the profane that would be reflected in passages such as those cited by Cicero and Vitruvius. It can be conjectured that this aspect of the reception of architecture became increasingly important in the Hellenistic and then the Roman context, when the social norms governing the relational comportment of individuals of hugely varying wealth became a matter of great importance given the social mobility brought about by commerce and conquest. Aristotle—who tutored the young Alexander the Great—devoted attention to *megalorepeia*, magnificence, as part of an extensive discussion of the moral values and obligations at issue in appropriately balancing social and political status (*Eth. Nic.* 4; Morris 1996; Hakkareinen 1997).

Vitruvius illustrated the principle of decorum via a series of examples. Outside and inside should correspond, so that a building with a grand interior should have a grand exterior. Types of columns should suit the program, so that temples dedicated to Minerva, Mars, and Hercules should be Doric, “since daintiness would be inappropriate” (*De arch.* 1.2.5). Mixed and hybrid columnar styles should be avoided, as the details of one are not appropriate to another (*De arch.* 1.2.6). Types of houses should suit the social standing of the occupants. Materials should be chosen according to availability; fir is the best timber for certain uses, but if it is hard to obtain, then other species may be used (*De arch.* 1.2.8). Doric columns were allowed different proportions according to the setting, “for the dignity which should characterize them in temples of the gods is one thing, but their elegance in other public works is quite another” (*De arch.* 5.9.3). Vitruvius did not make use of the Greek equivalent *prepon* (propriety), evidently because *decor* and the notion of decorum were perfectly familiar to his Latin-speaking audience. Cicero, for example, also took it for granted that a vestibule should be proportioned according to whether it stood in a house or in a temple (*De or.* 2.320).

In various parts of his treatise, Vitruvius preoccupied himself with the origins and derivation of architectural form, for this had a bearing on decorum and also with his own stricture that architects should be able to provide explanations for the formal and ornamental traditions to which they subscribe (1.1.5). The question of origins was important, since it justified architectural form in terms of ancestry and association. We have already seen Cicero (*De or.* 3.180) treating this topic thus in his discussion of the dignity of the Capitoline temple and its pediment, and in accordance with the principle of propriety, ancient architects resisted diluting the authority of the pediment by using it inappropriately, which is to say, in contexts other than sacral or funerary. The etymological link between *decor* and the modern word “decoration” similarly leads us

back to the ancient rule that the sacred ornaments fitting for temples and sanctuaries should not be transposed inappropriately to other contexts. It is of further (p. 56) interest that in its earliest known uses, the term *kosmos* signified ornament, before going on to denote the world or universe, along with intimations of cosmic order (Koerner 1985, 28; Marconi 2007). Diogenes Laertius (8.48; compare VS 28 A 44) relates that it was Pythagoras who gave the name *kosmos* to the world, on account of its order and beauty. The idea of “mere ornament” is a modern relegation; in antiquity, there was nothing mere about it.

When ancient writers looked back to the origins of art and architecture, they perforce indulged in conjecture, as when seeking to account for the three main columnar conventions or “orders” (as they came to be known in the Renaissance): Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. Their emergence goes back long before surviving discussions, so it is understandable that theoretical constructs were retrojected onto the past to fill voids in the historical record, along with much postrationalizing and tidying.

A recurrent topos centered around notions of evolution and progress that have found much favor in modern times, especially following Darwin’s discoveries in the mid-nineteenth century. In the second century BCE, Philon of Byzantium included in his treatise on military engineering comments on the incremental convergence toward perfection, citing “ancient buildings that are extremely unskillful” and explaining how the orders and their details had subsequently been honed to perfection “by trial and error... and by all sorts of experiment” (*Bel.* 50–51; Marsden 1971). Vitruvius followed Philon’s lead and discussions by Stoic philosophers when he imagined early experiments in construction going back to remote times. Eventually, progress led to houses rather than huts, on foundations, using brick or stone, and with roofs of wood covered with tiles (*De arch.* 2.1.3–7). Later in this fourth book, he famously explained how aspects of timber construction were perpetuated in stone in Doric temples. Having disposed tie beams over the top of the walls of a structure (perhaps a temple):

Ancient carpenters... cut off the projecting ends of the beams, bringing them into line and flush with the face of the walls; next, as this had an ugly look to them, they fastened boards, shaped as triglyphs are now made, on the ends of the beams.... Hence it was in imitation of the arrangement of the tie-beams that men began to employ, in Doric buildings, the device of triglyphs and metopes between the beams.

(*De arch.* 4.2.2, trans. Morgan 1914)

It is typical of the nonsystematic nature of Vitruvius’s treatise that he presents elsewhere an entirely different kind of etiology. In the preceding chapter, in fact, he had told how

the first Doric temple, the Temple of Hera built by Dorus, the progenitor of the Dorians, at her Argive sanctuary, had chanced to be in this style (*De arch.* 4.1.3). There is nothing here to justify the choice and the ensuing tradition save for the identity and significance of the patron (elsewhere, Vitruvius supplies comparable explanations connected with real or mythic events). We do not find anywhere in Vitruvius's text any art historical analysis of a modern kind. He is clear about his fellow Romans' debt to the Greeks; however, given his reverential position toward all things Greek, he gives little idea that they themselves borrowed, although writers such as Diodorus Siculus (1.97.5–6, Pollitt 1990 15; see also 1.61 and 1.98.5–9) expressed the conviction that the arts arose in Egypt before progressing to Greece and then Rome. The question of cultural influences and meanings is significant for (p. 57) any discussion of the origins of architectural form, and as regards the triglyph-and-metope frieze, only in small measure can it be explained in terms of construction (Barletta 2001; Barletta 2009; Wilson Jones 2002). Egyptian, Near Eastern, and Mycenaean influences all played their part in the coming into being of the orders, along with artistic habits established during the Geometric period, not to mention other pertinent factors, including construction, symbolism, and identity (Rykwert 1996; Wilson Jones 2002; Wilson Jones 2014).

Principles in Concert

Space has been dedicated to the concepts of *symmetria*, *eurythmia*, and *decor/prepon* primarily because of their impact on Vitruvius's treatise, which remains our chief source for understanding the thinking behind ancient architecture. It is important, however, to recall the numerous other factors bearing on architectural design that he touches on, though not in an expressly theoretical or rigorous manner, including all manner of guidelines and advice relating to everything from the preparation of lime mortar to the detailed design of the orders.

Vitruvius's tendency not to balance different sides of an issue together in one place makes it hard for the reader to visualize how *symmetria*, *eurythmia*, and *decor/prepon* might work in unison, which they can indeed do. One of his characteristic guidelines, that relating to the spacing of colonnades, illustrates this point. In book 3, he briefly runs through the main options classified according to the ratio of the intercolumniation, the gap between adjacent columns, to the column width or diameter (*De arch.* 3.3.1–10). These options range from *pycnostyle*, where the intercolumniation equals 1.5 diameters, through *systyle* (2 diameters), *eustyle* (2.25 diameters), *diastyle* (3 diameters), and *areostyle* (3.5 or more diameters). The gravitation toward neat numerical values is

consistent with achieving *symmetria*, which was also fostered by others of his guidelines, for example, the slenderness ratios recommended for the columns themselves. Vitruvius reported, however, that *eustyle* was deemed particularly attractive, especially by Hermogenes, for whom, presumably, visual proportion, *eurythmia*, took precedence over abstract proportion (the intercolumniation being not so neat numerically). Vitruvius omits to note that densely packed *pycnostyle* was the noblest and most costly solution, suitable for the grandest temples in line with the principle of *decor*, but this is evident from patterns of imperial practice. In short, all three key concepts could cohabit in the mind of the designer, who had the job of balancing these principles in determining the just solution for a specific commission. Nor is consideration of *firmitas* absent, for timber beams were assigned to the loosest spacing, given that the span was too great for stone. As for *utilitas*, Vitruvius expresses reservations about *pycnostyle*, since in his view, columns this dense impeded circulation, besides generating excessive shadow (*De arch.* 3.3.3).

It is no accident that Vitruvius demonstrates the soundest understanding of how his principles and prerequisites could come together in practice when describing the one project he claimed as his own, the Basilica at Fanum (*De arch.* 5.1.6; Pellati 1965; Wilson (p. 58) Jones 2000b, 45–46). His account starts with a simple dimensional specification: the main hall measures 120 feet by 60 feet; the aisles are 20 feet wide; the main columns are 50 feet tall and 5 feet wide, and so on. Thus, simple ratios reverberate throughout (see the matrix below), while at the same time, the main space fits a double square, and most dimensions are multiples or fractions of 10 or 6, the numbers he had singled out as “perfect.” This amounts to a textbook *symmetria* reminiscent of Nature’s model, the perfect human body, which the architect should imitate by means of analogy:

Principal dimensions of the Basilica at Fanum								
	2 feet	2½ feet	5 feet	18 feet	20 feet	50 feet	60 feet	120 feet
2 feet	1	4/5	2/5	1/9	1/10	1/25	1/30	1/60
2½ feet		1	1/2	5/36	1/8	1/20	1/24	1/48
5 feet			1	5/18	1/4	1/10	1/12	1/24
18 feet				1	9/10	9/25	3/10	3/20
20 feet					1	2/5	1/3	1/6
50 feet						1	5/6	5/12
60 feet							1	1/2
120 feet								1

Vitruvius went on to describe the disposition of the columns, which allowed the reader to gauge the rhythm of solid to void and so the proportion and *eurythmia* of the colonnades. Further details follow that bear on the aesthetic experience, such as the nature of lighting and material finishes. The final paragraphs address *decor* to some extent but also issues associated with *firmitas* and *utilitas*. He describes how loads from the trusses were transferred directly to the columns and how care was taken not to obstruct the view of the tribune or the circulation in the aisles. He emphasized how costs were reduced by the giant order (as opposed to two stories of orders), together with the forthright expression of the timber superstructure. But he was careful to remark that the huge columns made the result sumptuous and dignified all the same. The project—albeit perhaps an idealized version of that which was actually built, rather as the famous sixteenth-century architect and Vitruvianist Andrea Palladio “corrected” his own projects in his *Quattro libri*—

reconciles different principles in unison, thus representing a paradigm of the Romans' approach to architectural design.

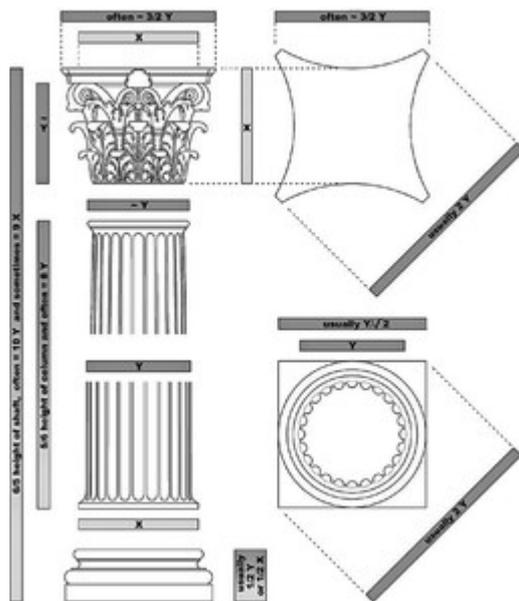
Practice and Theory

To what extent did theory and the real world of practice mirror each other? It must first of all be admitted that Vitruvius's recommendations frequently fail to match (p. 59) reality. A case in point is his idea that gender affected the choice of *genus* or order, with Doric suiting the temples of male or martial deities and Corinthian suiting those of female deities (*De arch.* 1.2.5). Yet several important early Doric temples were erected to Hera (including Dorus's supposed prototype at the Argive Heraion), while Vitruvius's own patron Augustus adopted "virginal" Corinthian for his temple of warlike Mars Ultor (Avenger). Rather than actual practice, such a scheme mostly likely reflects intellectual constructs of the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods (Gros 1988; Gros 1995).

At other times, Vitruvius gets to the spirit if not the letter of ancient design. Take the Corinthian capital; he says its height should equal the lower diameter of the shaft on which it sits, an exemplary proposition in terms of *symmetria*. Some Hellenistic and Republican capitals do fit this ratio, although they constitute a small minority. Much more significant was another 1:1 rule that operated in some two-thirds or more of all ancient Corinthian capitals: the equality between the height of the capital and the cross-sectional width of its abacus (figure 2.5). This relationship could prevail while other proportions flexed in the interest of variety in appearance—which was indeed considerable (Wilson Jones 1991). In his discussion of the perfect body, Vitruvius made no mention of variation, yet it seems highly likely that sculptors such as Polyclitus were concerned to reconcile an ideal mathematical order with human diversity in subordinate proportions along with physiognomic traits, hair type, and so on.

This dance between rule and variety characterized the design of the Corinthian column as a whole in the Imperial period (Wilson Jones 2000b, chap. 7). It was orthodox practice for column heights to measure six-fifths the height of the shaft, which often corresponded to multiples of 4 or 5 feet (e.g., 20, 25, 30, or 40 feet). Meanwhile, commensurable ratios governed other relationships (figure 2.5). The Temple of Mars Ultor presents one of the most common schemes, applied at a suitably magnificent scale; the 50-foot shafts combine with the base and capital to make columns 60 feet tall, 10 times their diameter, which is to say, also 10 times that of the perfect body in the Vitruvian/Polyclitan scheme. Here is another epitome of *symmetria*, while other Corinthian columns had equally appealing, yet different, subordinate proportions.

A comparable dance between rule and variety characterizes Doric temples of the Classical period. Look at the elevation of a hexastyle temple of fifth-century date and then look at another, and then another, and yet again. Each will be different, especially in its details, yet all will also be similar and instantly recognizable as members of a group of relatives.



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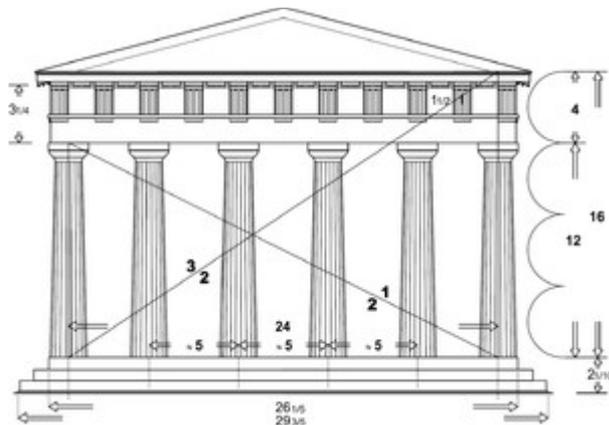
Fig. 2.5 Proportions of an orthodox Roman imperial Corinthian column.

(Drawing by author.)

Dozens of scholars have detected metrical and proportional relationships that attest to some method or other, although interpretations and emphases vary (Coulton 1975; Berger 1984; Hoepfner 1984; Mertens 1984; Wilson Jones 2001). Whatever the design strategy used, it must have been easy to transmit (Coulton 1983), and it must have guaranteed the conformity and viability of a project without being so rigid as to generate clones (copying was hardly ever

an option). Again, the indications that Vitruvius supplied get close to what actually transpired, and yet they miss. According to him, Doric (p. 60) temples and porticoes should be set out on a modular basis. He recommended that the architect take the width of the stylobate (the platform on which the columns stand) and divide it by a suitable number (depending on the number of columns) to yield a module corresponding to half the column diameter. This module (*embater*) was then to be used to generate the dimensions of other components, such as the width of the triglyph, which took one module (*De arch.* 4.3.2–4). In point of fact, Greek architects, I contend, started with the triglyph width, which they tended to make a simple number (p. 61) of dactyls or digits (one-sixteenth parts of a foot). This is why nominal triglyph widths often correspond to multiples of 20, 25, 30, and 40 dactyls—be it noted a virtually identical pattern in digits to that which Roman shaft lengths fit in feet. At the same time, commensurable ratios were applied, according to taste, to relationships of height to width, whether for the overall composition or details such as triglyphs, metopes, and capitals. In short, *symmetria* was achieved using a commonly agreed and yet flexible design method of “modulated

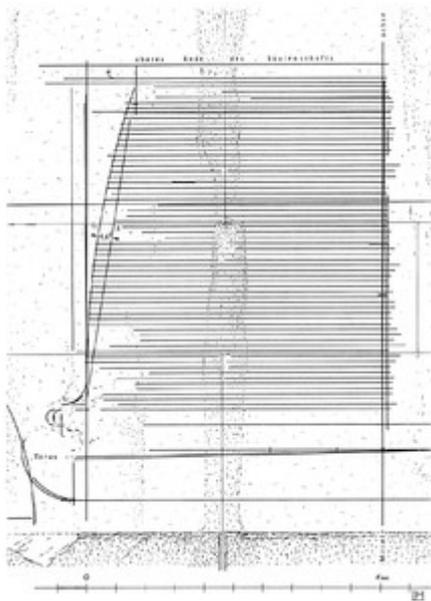
proportions” (Wilson Jones 2001; Wilson Jones 2006). For example, the ratio 2:1 might operate between two dimensions equivalent to 24 and 12 modules, one of width and one of height, respectively, as occurs, in fact, at Sunium (figure 2.6).



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Fig. 2.6 The Doric temple of Poseidon at Sunium: elevation showing its proportions and modular correspondences

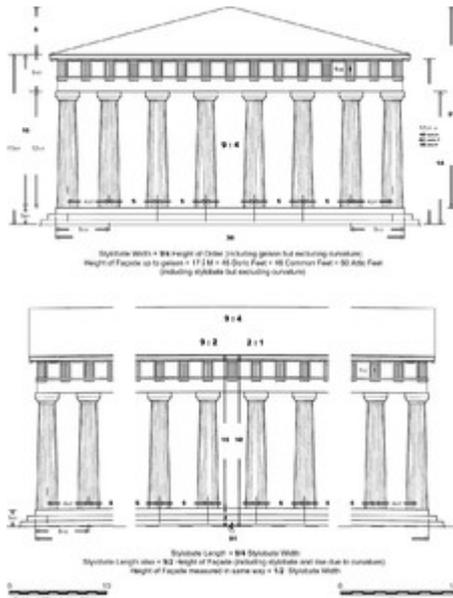
(Drawing by author.)



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Fig. 2.7 Temple of Apollo at Didyma, entasis template.

(Source: Haselberger 1985, 130 fig.)



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 2.8 Parthenon, front elevation (top), without curvature, and truncated flank elevation with curvature (bottom), showing key proportions and modular correspondences in terms of a module of 858.1 mm.

(Drawing by author.)

Simultaneously and precisely (to within a centimeter of error), the Parthenon yields the following:

- 36 modules for the width of the stylobate
- 16 modules ($\frac{4}{9}$ the stylobate width) for the height of the order
- 18 modules ($\frac{1}{2}$ the stylobate width) for the height of the facade, including the steps and curvature
- 50 common feet for the facade, including the geison but excluding curvature
- 45 Doric feet equals 48 common feet and 50 Attic feet for the facade, excluding both the geison and curvature

Doric temples of the Classical period are noted for the combination of a severe, repetitive (and modular) style conjoined with exacting subtle inclinations, taperings, and curvatures. As mentioned, such refinements appear to epitomize the aspect of *eurythmia* that has to do with perfect fit and fine-tuning. Greek and Roman architectural working drawings or templates that survive because they were inscribed in stone illustrate in general terms the practical relevance of theoretically grounded proportional and geometrical abstractions (Haselberger 1997; Haselberger 1999; Wilson Jones 2000b, 50–58, 127–131; Hellmann 2002–2010, I: 37–43). One instance is particularly eloquent with regard to the specific case of entasis, the subtle swelling that (p. 62) characterizes the

diminution of the vast majority of Greek and Roman column shafts. The drawing in question, inscribed on the north wall of the great open-air court of the Hellenistic Temple of Apollo at Didyma, documents one of the chief methods for calibrating the curvature (figure 2.7). A device of breathtaking intelligence, this employed different scales (1:1 horizontally but 1:16 vertically). This meant that the circular arc that was overlaid on a ladder of lines at intervals of 1 dactyl (i.e., 1 foot in reality) would produce a delicate elliptical profile on the shafts as built (Haselberger 1985; Haselberger 1997). (p. 63) (p. 64)

It is apposite to end with a brief glimpse of the way *symmetria* and *eurythmia* were contrived to work together in the Parthenon, the non plus ultra of architectural refinement and sophistication. Attention has been repeatedly drawn to the 9:4 ratio that recurs in the design of this famed structure (e.g., in various essays in Berger 1984; Barletta 2005, 72–74), including the 9:4 relationship between the width of the stylobate and the height of the order. The modular equivalents for these dimensions underscore them by virtue of the whole numbers involved: 36 and 16 triglyph modules, respectively. (The notional module is 858 mm, while the typical executed triglyph width measures 846 mm.)

It is meanwhile intriguing to note that the height of the flanks, including a rise in the region of 122 millimeters (Haselberger 2005) caused by the upward curvature of the substructure (*krepis*), equals 18 modules. This height of 18 modules is half the stylobate width of 36 modules. Such a striking though little noticed correspondence raises the possibility that the designers conceived of the peristyle as a three-dimensional entity *inclusive* of curvature (figure 2.4). Yet at the same time, there is merit in the actual height of the facade measured in the normal way, *exclusive* of curvature. In fact, this yields neat dimensions in terms of all three of the “rival” units that from time to time have been detected in the design and construction of the building: the Attic, “common,” and Doric feet mentioned earlier. Thus, multiple criteria meld in fixing the datum of the crucial division between structure/elevation and superstructure/roof (figure 2.8). It seems that different scholars have concluded in favor of each of these units in the past because each were seeing different facets of the same complex whole.

From all this, it seems that the Parthenon can be likened to a built counterpart of the Salamis relief. Here is *symmetria* in both semantic and literal senses, mathematical harmony and the coming together of measures. *Eurythmia* is present, too, in visually sensitive proportions and in the calibration of profiles and refinements. The curvature in particular—albeit substantially conditioned by that of the pre-Parthenon—was evidently tuned to strike a sweet spot in terms of both *symmetria* and *eurythmia*. All the effort and resources expended to create such a magnificent project in marble meanwhile accords with the principle of *decor/prepon*, this being a temple offered by the Athenians, at the height of their power, to their divine protectress Athena. Perfection and dedication could find no more legitimate cause.

It is reasonable to suppose that Ictinus and Carpius, in the treatise Vitruvius tells us they wrote on the Parthenon, discussed all of the above and more. Rather as the latter presented his basilica at Fanum, but in far greater detail as befitted a monograph, perhaps they began by evidencing the *symmetria* of the Parthenon by recounting its key dimensions. Then discussion would have followed of the advantages of the innovative

layout with its U-shaped cella arrangement and octastyle front, moving on to refinements and technical niceties.

Conclusions

Today the terms “theory” and “practice” are often set as if in opposition or even antagonism, yet in Greek and Roman architecture, there pertained an “embeddedness” (p. 65) (a term also used by Deborah Steiner in chapter 1 above), not only of theory and practice one in the other but also of both within the prevailing social and cultural context. The philosophical underpinning to the concepts of *symmetria*, *eurythmia*, and *decor/prepon* reflected a general worldview that dovetailed with common sense. A number such as 300 has the ring of perfection and inevitability about it, whether we recall the 300 at Thermopylae or the 300-foot diameter of Augustus’s mausoleum. Centuriation characterizes both land parcellation and military units, since, like neat architectural ratios and dimensions, commensurable patterns are easy to work with. The Romans’ habit of standardizing the length of column shafts allowed batches from different quarries to be brought together with minimal fear of misunderstanding. Just as with Doric design in the Classical period, predictable patterns and sizes helped with memorability and comparison and therefore the resolution of fresh variations on any given theme. It was self-evident that the finest materials, workmanship, and refinements befitted temples, the houses of the gods, more than they did the houses of mortals, while it goes without saying that the rich could afford more costly homes than the poor.

In the architecture of Greece and Rome, practice and theory partook of and nourished each other. Theory articulated practice, rendering it graspable and subject to analysis in the cause of improvement and perfection. The thinking behind the theory provided the mental scaffolding by which the fact of building could rise to higher planes, yielding achievements that would shine like lodestars for Western tradition to follow.

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on specialized forms of writing about art and architecture in ancient Greece and Rome, especially those produced by the practitioners of the arts themselves. The discussion begins by considering the meanings and functions of specialized writing, with particular emphasis on the relationship between writing and the artifacts themselves. The chapter then turns to an analysis of the scholarly debate about the nature and function of Greek architectural writings, many of which can be categorized as monographs. It also examines how the writings on art and architecture influenced the self-awareness of artists and architects with respect to the diachronic dimension and concludes by looking at *On Sculpture*, a treatise by Xenocrates of Athens.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architects, architecture, art, artists, On Sculpture, self-awareness, specialized writing, Xenocrates

The written evidence on art and architecture that survives from Greek and Roman antiquity is extraordinarily rich and diverse (Pernice 1969 gives a general overview). It encompasses an impressive array of literary genres, from technical treatises such as Vitruvius's books *On Architecture* to topographically ordered accounts of monuments such as Pausanias's *Periegesis of Greece* and from emulative responses to real and fictive artifacts, such as Posidippus's poetic epigrams or Philostratus's prose *Images*, to speeches that use buildings and works of art as starting points and subjects of their arguments, such as Dio Chrysostom's *Olympic Oration*—and this is not to speak of those texts where discussions of art and architecture are embedded within a broader discursive context, such as Plato's philosophical reflections on the ontological status of the visual arts, the comparison between verbal and visual styles in the rhetorical treatises of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Quintilian, or the sections in Pliny the Elder's encyclopedia on the ways in which different materials are used to produce artifacts and monuments. Moreover, not every ancient category and genre is represented in the extant

body of literary texts; for example, no biographies of artists or antiquarian treatises on votive offerings have been preserved, and we can only recover a vague image of them through scattered fragments. These fragments are themselves part of—and not always easy to neatly distinguish within—a much broader and diverse body of occasional references to art and architecture that range from anecdotes used as *comparanda* to erudite remarks about the meanings of technical terms, down to generic allusions to painting or sculpture (see Becatti 1951; Pollitt 1974; Sassi 1994). In fact, this very ubiquity of more or less cursory mentions in ancient texts is in itself a highly significant phenomenon that testifies to the strength of the impact of art and architecture on the thinking and the imagination of the Greeks and Romans and thereby helps in contextualizing the writings that (p. 71) are specifically devoted to these topics within a wider web of discursive, cultural, and social practices (Tanner 2006).

The Meanings and Functions of Specialized Writing

It might appear almost impossible in the light of this multiplicity to determine what should be included in this chapter. A relatively safe and heuristically productive choice is to focus on what can be considered the “core” texts, that is, those works that were written by the practitioners of the arts themselves (Urlichs 1887; Assunto 1967, 277–280, 315; Philipp 1968, 42–49; Settis 1993). The lists of *auctores*, the authoritative reference texts, in the first book of Pliny’s *Natural History* and especially the catalogs of predecessors set up by Vitruvius (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 11–14; see chapter 2 above) provide a substantial constellation of names that can be easily supplemented with further references from other sources, particularly biographers and antiquarians such as Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus and lexicographers such as Harpocration or the Byzantine *Suda*. Yet even the group of writings thus constituted is less homogeneous than one might think. The divergences are best illustrated by the fact that some of these works, such as Polyclitus’s *Kanon* and the urbanistic treatise by Hippodamus of Miletus, were included among the fragments of pre-Socratic thinkers by Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz (as VS 40 A 1–3, B 1–2; and VS 39 A 1–5, respectively), whereas several other authors feature in the collection of fragmentary Greek historians by Felix Jacoby: Theodorus (*FGrH* 542 T 1), Chersiphron and Metagenes (420 T 1), Pytheus and Satyrus (429 T 1, F 1–2), Theodorus of Phocaea (406 T 1), Hermogenes (481 T 1–2), Arcesius (742 F 9). There is little doubt that such divergent views about the nature of these writings—philosophical, historical, or otherwise—are at least in part a result of the dire

fragmentary state of the tradition. Ultimately, however, their cause is intrinsic to the writings themselves.

The situation is neatly exemplified by Vitruvius's volumes on architecture, which were completed in the 20s BCE and are the only ones of their kind to survive (Geertman and de Jong 1989; Gros 1997; Gros 2006; Schofield and Tavernor 2009; Courrént 2011; see also chapter 2 above). Written by a practitioner of the discipline in the aim of transmitting and discussing its rules and principles (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 1 *praef.* 3: *disciplinae rationes*), this work is indisputably a technical treatise. Even a superficial look at its contents, however, suggests that such a label is the starting point rather than the conclusion of the issue of definition. Book 1, after a theoretical introduction to architecture as a whole, discusses the layout of cities; book 2 is on building materials; books 3, 4, and 5 are devoted to sacred (3, 4) and civic architecture (5), respectively; while book 6 is a treatment of domestic architecture and book 7 of refinements, particularly wall painting; book 8 concerns water, its managements and the relevant structures; book 9 deals with astronomy and time-measuring devices; and book 10 is about machines. (p. 72) The topics treated in the last three books especially appear to be only loosely related to architecture proper and thereby to expand the field in directions that blur its boundaries (quite significantly, these books were not included in Silvio Ferri's anthological edition of Vitruvius, Ferri 1960). Vitruvius himself seems to be aware of this circumstance in his lists of authors, where the writers of treatises on buildings and on proportional principles are kept distinct from those who have dealt with mechanics and engineering (see chapter 2 above and Cuomo 2008). Vitruvius's choices, however, are far from idiosyncratic and are instead rooted in the actual training and practice of Roman architects. So, for example, the role of the *architecti* in the context of the army demanded that their field of knowledge include skills such as the construction of siege engines (see chapter 6 below). The ongoing relevance of such tradition is confirmed by the fact that the only other extant text written by an ancient architect, the epistle on *Siege Warfare* by Apollodorus of Damascus—who worked under Trajan and Hadrian and was responsible, among other things, for the Forum of the former emperor—covers precisely this kind of topic (La Regina 1999; on Apollodorus, see Festa Farina et al. 2001).

In other words, the difficulties entailed by definition attempts reside in the first place with the nature and the historic specificity of the ancient *technai* or *artes* (see chapter 1 above). The point here is not simply to issue a healthy reminder against anachronistic projections onto the past of modern assumptions regarding the notion of art (or architecture, for that matter). More important for our purposes is the fact that already in antiquity, the definition of an "art" through writing—the establishment of its disciplinary boundaries, as it were—was subject to shifts and changes that depended on several

factors and whose full import often risks escaping us. For example, Vitruvius's inclusion of mechanics and engine building in his vision of architecture might have been an innovation from the point of view of the literary genre, but it was not as radical as one may think. Already, Herodotus (3.60), when mentioning the three great works by which the Samians excelled among all Greeks (*tria... megista hapantōn Hellēnōn exergasmēna*), listed works of engineering and architecture alike: the water tunnel designed by Eupalinos of Megara (dubbed *architektōn* by the historian), the pier of the island's main harbor (not credited to any particular individual), and the Temple of Hera built by Rhoecus, whose partner and (perhaps) relative Theodorus not coincidentally features in Vitruvius (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 12) as the author of a writing about this very temple. The confluence of the tradition of mechanical texts into book 10 of Vitruvius thus simply carries further on a long-perceived contiguity between the two domains. Instead, his treatment of houses in book 6 possibly was much more revolutionary. The evidence about ancient architects' writings on domestic buildings is scanty at the very best. None of the many Greek predecessors mentioned by Vitruvius himself appears to have dealt with the topic. The main possible exception is Hippodamus of Miletus, the fifth-century planner of the urbanistic layout of the Piraeus, whom our sources call *architektōn* and *meteōrologos* (Harpocration, s.v. *Hippodameia*; Hesychius, s.v. *Hippodamou nemesis*). His treatise included discussion of private buildings (Aristotle, *Pol.* 1330b 21), but its general perspective appears to have been one of political theory more than of construction; the fact that Hippodamus was read by Aristotle, who talks about him as an author (p. 73) *peripoliteias*, but was ignored by Vitruvius might be more than a mere coincidence. It is moreover possible, indeed likely, that one of Vitruvius's few Roman predecessors—the obscure Fuficius and Lucius Septimius and especially Marcus Terentius Varro, the great polymath of the Caesarian age (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 7 *praef.* 14)—already had included houses in his treatment of architecture; but this would merely push slightly back in time the change, not deny the innovativeness of the change as such, which must have been tightly connected with the importance of the private sphere in the Roman world (on the problematic nature of Vitruvius's account of Greek houses, see Kreeb 1985; Raeder 1988; Milnor 2005, 94–139; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 190–196). In sum, ancient writings on art and architecture were conditioned by established ideas and practices concerning these fields and also contributed in turn to reinforcing or modifying them.

Varro's own discussion of architecture occupied one of the nine books on *Disciplines* with which he established his own system of knowledge, including grammar, dialectics, rhetoric, music, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, medicine, and architecture (Hübner 2004; Hadot 2005). Varro's attempt ultimately did not survive the test of time: the canon of the liberal arts that Late Antiquity handed over to the Middle Ages did not include medicine and architecture (Hadot 1984; see also Maffei 1991). Well beyond modern

issues of classification, Varro's case lays bare the stakes crucially entailed by the writing of technical treatises in Greek and Roman antiquity, namely, the assessment of the epistemological and sociocultural status of a given discipline in relation to the other branches of knowledge. Decisions such as Vitruvius's one about what to include—and subsume—under the heading of architecture have clear hierarchical implications. On a related level stand his preoccupations about the appropriate intellectual background of the architect: “He should be a man of letters, a skillful draughtsman, a mathematician, familiar with historical studies, a diligent student of philosophy, acquainted with music, not ignorant of medicine, learned in the responses of juriconsults, familiar with astronomy and astronomical calculations” (*De arch.* 1.1.3).

This passage introduces a long discussion about the degree to which the architect needs, and can realistically be expected, to master skills typical of other arts and partitions of knowledge. In this context, Vitruvius's polemic against Pytheus, the fourth-century architect of the Temple of Athena at Priene and one of his most influential literary predecessors, is particularly interesting, because it suggests that this kind of concern is almost connatural to the genre of the technical treatise: “And therefore Pytheus, one of the old architects, who was the designer of the noble temple of Athena at Priene, says in his commentaries that an architect ought to be able to do more in all arts and sciences than those who, by industry and experience, have advanced individual arts to the highest renown. But that is not in fact established” (1.1.12).

Vitruvius goes on (1.1.13–17) by amply elaborating on his final cautionary note in this passage and by circumscribing and qualifying these encyclopedic ambitions through a detailed discussion of what kinds of knowledge were actually useful for, and could realistically be expected from, an architect. Vitruvius's pragmatically oriented critique of the utopian ideals put forward by Pytheus, however, should not mislead us into overlooking that these two authors of architectural treatises, despite their chronological, (p. 74) geographical, and cultural distance, ultimately share the same preoccupations about the position of their specific knowledge in relation to other disciplines, to other bodies of knowledge. Even more important, this agenda was not restricted to architects; sculptors and especially painters were no less interested both in promoting their own craft and in assessing its place in the system of knowledge in their writings—indeed, *through* their writings. The painter Pamphilus of Amphipolis provides an emblematic example:

Pamphilus was the first painter highly educated in all branches of learning, especially arithmetic and geometry, without the aid of which he maintained art could not attain perfection. He took no pupils at a lower fee than a talent.... It was brought about by his influence, first at Sicyon and then in the whole of Greece as

well, that children of free birth were given lessons in drawing, that is painting on boxwood, and that this art was accepted into the front rank of the liberal sciences.

(Pliny, *HN* 35.76–77)

The words with which Pliny recounts this success story, whose verisimilitude is corroborated by the tacit reception of some of Pamphilus's principles by none other than Aristotle in his *Politics* (1338), are characterized by a tone that resonates with the pride exuding from Pamphilus's contemporary Pytheus and in all likelihood goes back to Pamphilus's own writings (see below).

Therefore, in spite of all the changes that specialized artistic and architectural writings might have undergone over time, some aspects are likely to have played an important role with a certain degree of invariance. It is important to keep in mind, in this respect, that writing almost constitutively belonged among the typical skills of craftsmen (as briefly acknowledged in Harris 1989, 48). Without overemphasizing the well-known semantic coincidence of the notions of "writing" and "painting" in the verb *graphō*, it should suffice to point to the wide (and early) diffusion of inscriptions on vases (Snodgrass 2000). Because of the complexity of the architectural procedures, however, it is especially in this domain that acquaintance with writing is to be expected. One mainly thinks of drawings for the sake of planning, but even those needed verbal supplements in order to be put into effect, ranging from the basic alphabetic marks that helped in determining the position of each individual building component (Weber 2013) to the instructions and explanations needed to carry out delicate engineering tasks. On a different yet related level, the scale of the expenditures entailed by public commissions and the risks associated with the organization of large construction workshops made accountability important and thereby favored the rise of detailed accounts concerning materials, building parts, techniques, and workers (Hellmann 1999). The legal aspect of writing, well exemplified by the epigraphic accounts of the construction of the Parthenon and the other buildings on the Athenian Acropolis, clearly played an important role in this context. Because of this long-term familiarity, artisans must have been among the first to realize and explore the potential of writing as a means to reinforce memory, shape thinking, and extend communication. Applied to technical knowledge, writing was a powerful stabilizing tool that could be used to control and standardize procedures. At the same time, by functioning as an external repository of knowledge, it allowed for reflection on this knowledge from a distance, as it were. Finally, the durability and replicability of the (p. 75) written text expanded the author's outreach in an ideal prolongation of typical workshop practices such as teaching and traveling.

Perhaps the most important factor in this context is the relationship between writing and the artifacts themselves. The production of texts corresponded to a move from writing on

the objects to writing *about* them, which generated a productive tension—ultimately, the tension between practice and theory—that lay at the heart of such texts, regardless of any other difference. In fact, it is instructive to arrange the extant titles, which in most cases are all that is left, according to their (conceptual) distance from their objects. Thus, we have writings that are centered on just one building or artifact. Vitruvius, in his already-mentioned catalog (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 11–12), lists several such monographs encompassing some of the main buildings of Greek architecture, starting with the temples of Artemis at Ephesus (by Chersiphron and Metagenes) and of Hera at Samos (by Theodorus), then the Parthenon (by Ictinus and “Carpion”), the Arsenal of the Piraeus (by Philon of Eleusis), and the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (by Satyrus and Pytheus), down to the temples of Artemis at Magnesia and of Dionysus at Teos (both by Hermogenes). Painting and bronze sculpture are represented in this category with one work each, namely, a text by Agatharchus on a stage setting that he painted for a tragedy of Aeschylus (Rouveret 1989) and Polyclitus’s *Kanon* (Philipp 1990; Pollitt 1995). A second category concerns arts and artistic production, either considering them in their entirety or focusing on specific aspects. Again, Vitruvius (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 12–13) provides most instances: Silenus (*On the Proportions of the Doric Order*), Philon (*On the Proportions of Sacred Buildings*), Arcesius (*On Corinthian Proportions*), and many more authors of prescriptive texts on proportions (*praecepta symmetriarum*): Nexaris, Theocydes, Demophilus, Pollis, Leonidas, Silanion (bronze sculptor), Melampus, Sarnacus, Euphranor (sculptor and painter). Euphranor’s treatise on proportions is also mentioned by Pliny, along with a second work, *On Colors* (Pliny, *HN* 35.129). Further writings by painters were Protogenes’s two books *peri graphikēs kai schēmatōn* (*Suda*, s.v. Prōtogenēs), and those by Pamphilus (*Suda*, s.v. Pamphilos: *peri zōgraphikēs kai zōgraphōn endoxōn*) and Melanthius (Pliny, *HN* 1 *ind. auctorum* 35; compare Diogenes Laertius 4.18: *en tois peri zōgraphikēs*). Sculpture was treated by Xenocrates (Pliny, *HN* 34.83: *de sua arte*) and Menaichmus (Pliny, *HN* 1 *ind. auctorum* 33, 34: *de toreutice*; see also 36.80: *scripsit de sua arte*). Finally, there are writings whose titles highlight the makers rather than the made artifacts or the process of making; quite likely, they had a strong biographical component. Pamphilus’s already mentioned book on painters and Menaichmus’s *On Artists* (Athenaeus, 2.65b and 14.635b: *peri technitōn*) are good examples of the category.

This classification also has a certain chronological value, insofar as the monographic writings are already attested in the sixth century BCE, while the others come up later. In fact, writings on a specific art or its partitions written by artists are only attested from the fourth century, even though the fifth century had already witnessed Democritus’s treatises *Peri zōgraphias* and *Peri chroōn* (VS 68 A 33.5.2 and 13.2) and lectures *peri zōgraphias* and *peri agalmatopoiias* by the sophist Hippias (VS 86 A 2). The biographical category probably was the very last one. It is important in this context to avoid two

(p. 76) distinct but complementary mistakes. On the one hand, to conceive this arrangement in terms of a quasi-teleological evolution from concreteness to abstraction and from practice to theory; this is belied by the fact that the first category continued to thrive well into the Hellenistic period. On the other hand, and following up on the considerations expounded earlier, one should not overestimate the elements of continuity; titles are an important clue to the character of texts, the only available one in most of these cases, but of course, identity or similarity can also conceal major differences.

Forms of Self-Awareness

Let us consider the debate about the nature and function of Greek architectural writings, a great number of which belong to the monographs category (Coulton 1983). Scholars investigating their character have tended to privilege one option above the others; they have interpreted them either as official reports about the technical and financial aspects of the construction process (e.g., Philipp 1968, 42–44) or as treatments with theoretical aims (e.g., Drerup 1966, 192) or else as aids for planning (e.g., Wesenberg 1984; Svenson-Evers 1996, 212 n. 1). In fact, the question, if phrased in rigidly exclusive terms, is ill posed. A comparison with Polyclitus's *Kanon* is quite instructive in this respect. As is well known, the Argive sculptor's treatise had a counterpart in an equally named statue, commonly believed to be the Doryphorus (figure 29.2). As Pliny puts it: "He also made what the artists call the Canon, as they draw their artistic outlines from it as from a sort of rule; and he alone of mankind is deemed by means of a work of art to have produced a whole artistic system" (*HN* 34.55).

The statue, which, according to Galen (*De temp.* 1.9), was produced following the precepts expounded in the writing, functioned at the same time as a normative source for the artists—starting with Polyclitus himself, if we believe Varro's statement that his statues were made *paene ad unum exemplum* (Pliny, *HN* 34.56). Describing what *has been* done and prescribing what *should* be done are two complementary and alternating facets of the process of artistic production, and this is true for architecture just as much as for sculpture. Moreover, in the case of the colossal temples of the Archaic period, whose construction times often extended over centuries, one might even wonder whether the writings on the Artemision of Ephesus and the Heraion of Samos that Vitruvius attributed to Chersiphron and Metagenes and to Theodorus were not the outcome of more than one compositional layer. These monographs are called *commentarii* by Vitruvius (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 11, 14), who is our source for most of them (including the one on scene painting by Agatharchus and with the only exception of Polyclitus). The term,

which usually translates the Greek *hupomnēma* and can be rendered as “account” or “commentary,” points to the factual dimension of such writings and is compatible with the notion of a pragmatic updating of the texts over time.

The analogies between Polyclitus’s *Kanon* and the writings of Archaic architects are a consequence of their shared focus on the artifact, but of course, they do not imply a (p. 77) complete coincidence in nature of such monographs. Quite to the contrary, the import of the epistemological shift represented by the *Kanon* with its theoretical ambitions can hardly be underestimated. It is a well-known historical phenomenon of the fifth century that concerns all *technai* and is linked to processes of rationalization and self-reflection by artists and craftsmen (Cambiano 1992; Tanner 1999; Tanner 2006). This professional self-consciousness was not simply made manifest in writing but was also crucially shaped by it. On a basic level, putting down in writing the principles of their crafts disclosed to the authors a specific arena, with its own rules and parameters, which put them on a par with interlocutors from other fields. More to the point, thanks to its potential independence from the actual artifacts, it led to a redefinition of the epistemological status of the artists’ competences. Given the specific nature of the “wisdom” of the artists—their *sophia en tais technais*, as Aristotle put it (*Eth. Nic.* 1141a; see Settis 1973)—the use of writing encouraged them to reassess the role of practice within the domain of their activities and define its relationship to thinking. Polyclitus’s very oscillation between the embedding of principles within an individual artwork and their verbal explication in the treatise is indicative of a crucial transitional moment. The subsequent flourishing in the fourth century of writings on artistic principles and workshop procedures detached from individual artifacts runs along these lines.

This trend did not leave the traditional monographic format unaffected, either. The theoretical considerations of the great architects Pytheus and Hermogenes were almost certainly expounded in their books about the individual temples they had built (see, on Pytheus, Svenson-Evers 1996, 116–150; W. Hoepfner in *KdA* II, 334–338; see, on Hermogenes, Hoepfner and Schwandner 1990; W. Hoepfner in *KdA* I, 305–310; see also chapter 6 below). At the same time, it is not coincidental that it is particularly in the field of architecture that this format continued to play a role. Even discounting the bias of the Vitruvian agenda, the preponderance of architects for this object-centered category is not coincidental. It is likely a consequence of the ongoing centrality of the planning and construction process, with all its complexities and intricacies, in the architect’s activity. The time and energy required by work on actual buildings also must have been a crucial factor in keeping this domain as the privileged locus for theoretical thinking. The way in which Vitruvius characterizes Hermogenes’s contribution is highly significant in this respect: “Hence Hermogenes must have had great and subtle skill to produce his works,

and he has left sources [*fontes*] from which posterity could draw the principles of the arts" (*De arch.* 3.3.9).

It is unclear whether the term *fontes* here refers to the written work of Hermogenes or to his buildings; quite likely, the ambiguity is intentional. In any case, Vitruvius's phrasing is close to that of Pliny in the passage on Polyclitus's canonical statue. At the very least, this suggests the existence of a certain homology between the two cases, despite the temporal distance.

Perhaps the most common, and also basic, form that professional self-awareness takes in all texts on art and architecture is the proud proclamation of one's achievements. Again, writing was used from very early on for this purpose. The makers' names inscribed on objects can have several connotations and should not (p. 78) be straightforwardly likened to modern artists' signatures. Yet a component of self-awareness, however minimal, cannot be denied (Osborne 2010, to be read jointly with Tanner 2010, 283–288; see also chapter 5 below). This holds particularly true when the names are placed in visual and discursive contexts that are clearly meant to say something about the artists' ambitions regarding status and social acknowledgment, as it happens in the late sixth century BCE, when the Athenian vase painter Smicrus labels a lying symposiast with his own name or when his colleague Euthymides remarks disparagingly about his rival Euphronios (Catoni 2010, 333–362). Whereas the aim in these cases is to claim for the craftsmen a share of the lifestyle and habits of the elite circles for which they worked, a group of epigrams attributed to the mid- and late-fifth-century painters Apollodorus, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius, originally placed on their works, specifically addresses their artistic skills (de Angelis 2005; see also chapter 5 below):

"It will be easier to blame this than to imitate it" (Pliny, *HN* 35.63).

"Herakleia is my fatherland; the name, Zeuxis. If any man claims to possess the boundaries of our art, let him show it and be the winner...—but I think that I am second to none" (Aristides, *Or.* 49.386).

"A man who lives in dainty style and at the same time honors virtue, made this painting—Parrhasius, from Ephesus, his glorious fatherland. Nor have I left my father forgotten, Euenor who begot me, his own son, to carry off the first honors of the art among the Greeks" (Athenaeus, 12.543d).

"Though I speak to them that hear and believe not, yet I speak this: I declare that now at last the sure goals of this art have been reached by my hand; insurmountable is the boundary that I have fixed. Yet nothing that mortals have done is without blame"

(Athenaeus, 12.543e).

The intense competitive aspect of all these statements is evident; in some cases, the epigrams even appear to be responding to each other. This competition takes place within a situation of expanded communication, where artists are using writing both to carry out an ideal dialogue among themselves in the direct absence of their interlocutors and to project this discourse into the public sphere. These two factors are complementary insofar as the written expression of professional self-consciousness and pride only can arise if there is a broader audience that is interested in it.

This general frame of publicly acknowledged intense competition may also help us to better understand the rise of the architectural writings of the sixth century. It might be more than a coincidence that the known texts concern two of the largest sacred buildings of the Greek world, the Samian Heraion and the Ephesian Artemision, the only ones that Herodotus (2.148.2) considered worthy, if inferior, rivals of the great Egyptian monuments and that Strabo (14.1.40, 958) still used as (superior) terms of reference to give an idea of the dimensions of the Artemision of Magnesia. In fact, the technical accomplishments of which these two temples were both the outcome and the visible embodiment did not simply testify to the abilities of the architects but also were (p. 79) an important component of the rivalry between the two sanctuaries and their respective *poleis*. The multiplicity of actors involved is most vividly expressed by the dedicatory epigram celebrating a further engineering achievement of the Archaic period, namely, the bridge over the Hellespont that another Samian *architectōn*, Mandrocles, carried out for King Darius in 513/512 BCE (Svenson-Evers 1996, 59–66). The epigram was placed on a painting representing the crossing of the bridge by the Persian army that was dedicated by Mandrocles in the Samian Heraion. It read: “After bridging the Bosphorus that teems with fish, Mandrocles dedicated a memorial of the floating bridge to Hera, having won a crown for himself, and fame for the Samians, doing the will of King Darius” (Herodotus 4.88.1–2).

The epigram ascribes in complementary terms the fame deriving from this engineering feat both to Mandrocles and to his city, without forgetting the actual patron of the work, the Persian king. It is conceivable that the publication and diffusion of the writings about the temples by Chersiphron and Metagenes and by Theodorus were driven by a comparable logic, in which the individual professional reputation of the architects both contributed to civic glory and was reinforced by this collective frame.

Xenocrates and the Medium of Writing

The writings on art and architecture crucially shaped the artists' and architects' self-awareness also with respect to the diachronic dimension. Lysippus famously defined his own artistic principle in opposition to those of his predecessors: "He scrupulously preserved the *symmetria* (for which there is no word in Latin) by modifying the square build of the figure of the old sculptors through a new and hitherto untried system of proportions, and he used commonly to say that whereas his predecessors had made men as they really were, he made them as they appeared to be" (Pliny, *HN* 34.65).

The reference, in this context, to the system of proportions of *symmetria* and to the "squareness" of the human figures immediately points to Polyclitus (see Galen, *De temp.* 1.9 and *Plac. Hipp. et Plat.* 5; and Pliny, *HN* 34.56). In fact, such lucid and pointed historical awareness would have been hardly thinkable without the *Kanon*, whose careful reader (and viewer) Lysippus must have been. Our sources do not attribute any writings to Lysippus himself. In all likelihood, however, the information about his relationship to Polyclitus goes back to another text, the treatise *On Sculpture* by Xenocrates of Athens, the second-generation disciple of Lysippus, who is usually, if somewhat emphatically, considered "the father of art history" (Schweitzer 1932). The masterful reconstruction of the intellectual profile of Xenocrates by Bernhard Schweitzer has found a splendid confirmation thanks to the publication of Posidippus's epigrams and should count among the lasting achievements of properly conducted *Quellenforschung* (see Bähler 2002, contra the untimely and ill-founded doubts of Sprigath 2000; Stewart 2005; Strocka 2007; Prioux 2009). What is worth stressing in our context is the fact (p. 80) that Xenocrates's evolutionary model was informed not by primarily historical concerns but by the competition principle. This was particularly evident in his treatment of Polyclitus, Myron, and Pythagoras. To the extent that Pliny's sections on these artists go back to Xenocrates, it is apparent that the ascription of their flourishing to the same Olympiad (the ninetieth, 420–417 BCE), even though highly debatable from the point of view of chronological exactness or plausibility, was meant to minimize the problems deriving from an arrangement that aimed to attribute as much relevance as possible to the formal criteria.

As is well known, at the beginning of the Xenocratic evolutionary line stood Phidias: "Phidias is deservedly deemed to have first disclosed the capabilities and indicated the methods of bronze sculpture" (Pliny, *HN* 34.54).

Polyclitus followed suit, refining Phidias's achievements: "Polyclitus is deemed to have refined the art of bronze sculpture, just as Phidias is considered to have disclosed it" (Pliny, *HN* 34.56).

Myron's style represented an improvement on Polyclitus from several points of view: "Myron is the first sculptor who appears to have enlarged the scope of realism, being more prolific in his art than Polyclitus and being more accurate in his proportions. Yet he himself so far as surface configuration goes attained great finish, but he does not seem to have given expression to the feelings of the mind, and moreover he has not treated the hair and the pubes with any more accuracy than had been achieved by the rude work of olden days" (Pliny, *HN* 34.58).

Pythagoras went even further in the direction of realism, according to Xenocrates/ Pliny: "Myron was defeated by the Italian Pythagoras of Rhegium. ... He was the first sculptor to show the sinews and veins, and to represent the hair more accurately" (Pliny, *HN* 34.59).

This development, which moved from idealism to realism, eventually culminated in Lysippus (see the passage of Pliny, *HN* 34.65, quoted above). As is clear from Pliny's wording and now confirmed by the first of Posidippus's *Andriantopoiika* epigrams, the sequence thus established was not simply based on stylistic criteria but was crucially interpreted through the lens of competitiveness. This ideal extension into time of the typical contest mentality among artists—witnessed, among other things, by innumerable anecdotes—must have been spurred precisely by the fact that the contest took place "on paper," as it were. In other words, it is likely that the medium of writing both favored the comparison among artists of different ages and made it necessary, at the same time, to provide justification in terms of chronology, even at the price of adjustments that look "wrong" by proper historical standards.

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Greek and Roman Images of Art and Architecture

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter explores representations of images and buildings in the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome, with emphasis on what they reveal about the self-understanding of artists and architects and the reception of their works. In particular, it considers representations that appear as metapictures within larger images, along with those metapictures' virtuoso exploitation of illusion and playful allusion. It also examines the practice of representing an image within an image known as *mise en abîme*, along with its wide range of functions. The chapter provides examples of *mise en abîme* images, such as those of vases, statues, and buildings found within Roman wall paintings. Finally, it suggests that the images of architecture within the various marble plans of Rome were meant to epitomize authority and order.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, buildings, images, metapictures, *mise en abîme*, representations, wall paintings

“When we recommend the introduction of art history into the syllabus, because works of art so perfectly reflect their age, we should also add that like mirrors they will reflect different facts about the age according to the way we turn them, or the standpoint we adopt, not to mention the tiresome tendency of mirrors to throw back our own image,” Ernst Gombrich wrote in 1979 (Gombrich 1979, 134). Gombrich was not alone in his opinion. Nearly a century earlier, Oscar Wilde had written in the preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* that “it is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors” (Wilde 2003, 2). Gombrich and Wilde are correct that the reception of images depends, to a certain extent, on the preconceptions of the viewer. As modern art historians and archaeologists, we approach Greek and Roman images as a means of gaining insight into ancient historical, political, religious, and social contexts and changes. And yet personal inclinations can and do inflect our scholarship (see chapters 23 through 30 in this volume).

Yet if it is true that images can reflect modern concerns and considerations, it is equally the case that ancient Greek and Roman art provides a window through which one can gain an appreciation for ancient self-consciousness of, and engagement with, images. In particular, this chapter addresses Greek and Roman representations of art and architecture that appear as metapictures within larger images. I refer not only to images of the same kind as their support (vases on vases, for instance) but also to metapictures more generally—that is to say, images of vases, sculpture, or architecture represented in other media. It is important to note that these types of images within images are neither photographic nor always precise in their details. Rather, they are subject to the conventions and limitations of their media (especially with regard to scale and detail). Nonetheless, it must be emphasized that metapictures can be understood as significant documents for our understanding of the underlying intentions of their artists and even the contemporary reception of images and practices of image making (Marconi 2011). (p. 85)

Self-Aggrandizement

Self-aggrandizement is by no means a recent invention. In fact, leaving aside earlier periods, one of the most fascinating aspects of Greek and Roman art is its tendency toward self-reference and selective quotation. In terms of Greek vase decoration, for instance, artists first painted metapictures of vases on ceramics dating to the Geometric period (eighth century BCE), although the practice did not become conventional before the early sixth century. By the end of the fifth century BCE, representations of vases on vases are prolific. In a similar vein, from the Archaic period through the Roman Imperial period, statues and vases are often depicted in sculpture and painting, and likewise images of architecture appear on architectural relief and in other media.

In art historical parlance, this practice of representing an image within an image is often referred to as *mise en abîme*, and as a discrete phenomenon, it has been a topic of mounting scholarly attention. Julián Gállego addressed the subject in his monograph *El cuadro dentro del cuadro* (Gállego 1978). Pierre Georgel and Anne-Marie Lecoq, meanwhile, curated *La peinture dans la peinture* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon, in 1983, a show that highlighted works as far-ranging as sixteenth-century genre scenes and self-portraits by Picasso (Georgel and Lecoq 1983). More recently, Victor Stoichita has discussed the seemingly paradoxical structure of Dutch, Flemish, and Spanish Old Master paintings that present the spectator with a disintegration of the distinction between the picture represented and the picture in which it is represented (Stoichita 1997). Such a distinction, in its turn, may carry different resonance depending on whether the picture being quoted within the picture is by the same artist or a contemporary artist or is an

older work (Settis 1997, 11). In the field of Classical art history and archaeology, the device of *mise en abîme* has also generated increasing interest. Greek vases depicted on vases, for example, have been discussed by François Lissarrague, Jenifer Neils, and Werner Oenbrink, among others, while the representation of statues in vase paintings has recently been the subject of various articles and two monographs, one by Oenbrink and the other by Monica De Cesare (for vases in vase painting, see, among others, Gericke 1970; Oenbrink 1996; Sparkes 1996, 64–89; Lissarrague 2001, 30; Neils 2004; for statues on vases, see Schefold 1937; Alroth 1992; De Cesare 1997; Oenbrink 1997; Marconi 2011).

This scholarship is invaluable for demonstrating the manner in which images within images can be important statements made by the artists about the nature, intention, and function of their own craft. In the case of Old Master paintings, for instance, Stoichita rightly underscores examples in which an artist, apparently in order to demonstrate his consummate abilities, inserts into his work not just the objects and subjects of the painting (humans, animals, furnishings, and so on) but also another discrete work of art. In his view, this image within the image becomes a significant tool with which to interpret the overall painting—and, by extension, the stature of the artist himself—for those privileged to know how to “read” the image. (p. 86)

These conclusions regarding the deliberate and sophisticated artifice of *mise en abîme* are valid. Yet in the context of specifically Greek and Roman art, I would suggest (see also Marconi 2011) that metapictures are equally noteworthy—if not more so—because quotations between different artistic media illustrate the contemporary response to, and reception of, works of art at a time proximate to their production. (There has been a considerable amount of attention paid to the gaze and the viewer in theoretical writing since the mid-twentieth century. The fundamental texts, all now with vast commentarial bibliography, are Sartre 1956, 254–302; Foucault 1970, 3–17; Lacan 1979, 67–119. Significant art historical contributions include, among others, Bryson 1983; Freedberg 1989; Crary 1990; Elsner 1995; Nelson 2000; Zanker 2000; Fredrick 2002; Platt 2002; Elsner 2007.)

We know that the Greek and Roman cityscape was a world of images. Statues, for example, appeared ubiquitously (see, e.g., Pliny, *HN* 34.17). If Pliny’s tallies are to be believed, then a person walking through ancient Athens, Delphi, Olympia, Rhodes, or Rome would have been surrounded by freestanding sculpture, to say nothing of wall painting or architectural sculpture. Our understanding of what this hypothetical ancient viewer would have seen, however, is compromised by the fact that many of our literary sources providing artistic commentary—Pliny the Elder, the Philostrati, and so on (see chapters 1 and 3 above)—date from centuries after the works of art to which they refer

were created. Therefore, at best, these and other authors provide evidence for the later reception of Greek art. But to go further and to gain an appreciation for the response to, and reception of, Greek and Roman art at the time of its production, one must exploit the hermeneutic potential of self-reference in images of Greek and Roman art and architecture.

Representations of craftsmen at work are invaluable for the information they supply about ancient tools and craft practices (see chapter 9 below). In much the same way, metapictures of vases, statues, and buildings are suggestive documents for our understanding of both the contemporary reception of Greek and Roman art and architecture and the intentions of their makers. Thus, in this chapter, I concentrate on the wide range of functions fulfilled by *mise en abîme*. Certainly, images within images are a statement about the artist's own craftsmanship, but there is more to the story, with implications for a broader Greek and Roman visual culture. From a personal joke on the micro scale to a public display of power on the macro level, it will become clear in the discussion that follows that metapictures encapsulate multivalent strategies with which to engage the viewer.

Play

The first aspect of the play on images within images to be addressed here is truly that: play. I am interested in the reflexive image, so to speak, in which the viewer is drawn into a game of compare and contrast between the art object itself (a Greek vase, for instance) and its imagery (a vase, statue, or building depicted as part of its decoration). (p. 87)

At the most basic level, this idea of the reflexive image finds a one-to-one correspondence between the art object and its decoration. Lissarrague has addressed this phenomenon in his discussion of an Attic red-figure cup attributed to Douris, today in Florence (figure 4.1: ARV² 432.55; *Para* 374; *Add*² 237; BAPD 205099; Lissarrague 2001, 29–30, figs. 18–22). The kylix is decorated with themes of the symposium on both interior and exterior. The interior medallion is particularly interesting for our purposes. This depicts a solitary, bearded *komast* (reveler) on an elevated couch (a *kline*), in front of which is a table draped with two hanging ivy wreaths. A walking stick is shown in the background. The man extends his right arm to hold out his own cup, as though to request another drink.



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Fig. 4.1 Attic red-figure cup attributed to Douris, from Chiusi. Symposion scene. C. 490–480 BCE. Ceramic. Diameter 28.5 cm. Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 3922.

(Su concessione della Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Toscana, Firenze.)

As is well known, the kylix was a form of Greek vase used most often in the context of the symposion. It was the vessel from which participants sipped their watered wine. The viewer of this image would, in all likelihood, have himself been in a posture much like the man depicted: reclining on a banquet couch, drinking, and conversing with friends. Through this particular cup's decoration, however, Douris implicates the viewer in a game of

comparisons: the drinker in the medallion is depicted holding the same type of cup as the one on which he is depicted and which the viewer himself is holding in order to drink. The vase's decoration is a savvy play on images within images, the result (p. 88) of which is a partial collapse of the distinction between the object and its user. It is a particularly masterful touch that this "game" would have only been slowly revealed to the viewer. As he drank from the cup and the liquid level decreased as wine was consumed, the medallion would have slowly come into view. One can easily imagine the delight with which a tipsy *komast* would have seen his own actions mirrored in the decoration of the cup he was holding.

At a more complex level are works of art that experiment with a more nuanced interplay between the primary image itself and the metapictures within. One finds, for instance, any number of examples of Archaic vase paintings in which a god or goddess is illustrated but in which it is unclear whether the deity depicted is meant as a stand-in for the god himself or herself or as a statue of that god. In fact, it appears that this ambiguity was deliberate: these images were intended to make the point that the represented deity is not just *in* the image but that the represented deity *is* the image. Thus, in black-figure scenes of the rape of Cassandra, the prophetess appears to be seeking protection not with a statue of Athena but rather with the goddess herself (Alroth 1992, 12–16; Marconi 2011, 158).

Schefold refers to images like these as *die lebenden Statuen* (living statues) (Schefold 1937, 33, 58–67; see also Bielefeld 1954–1955, 385 n. 39; Shapiro 1989, 27–36; Alroth 1992, 10–11). Deities are represented as being statuesque in appearance, but they move and/or interfere in the events portrayed. This type of *über*-visuality, in which a real thing can be conflated with, or confused by, an image of it, recalls a poem in the *Anthologia Graeca* by a poet named Plato (16.160). He describes Aphrodite visiting Cnidus in order to see her own image. After having looked at Praxiteles’s famous statue, the goddess exclaims: “Where did Praxiteles see me naked?” (translation by Pollitt 1990, 86). Metapictures like those of Athena in scenes of the rape of Cassandra just discussed are a sophisticated example of the power of the reflexive image. Like Praxiteles’s statue of Aphrodite in Plato’s poem, the painted statues of Athena on those vases succeeds in confounding a viewer’s expectations and engaging his or her curiosity. The *mise en abîme* stages a game, as it were, of differentiation between inanimate image and supposedly sentient deity.



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Fig. 4.2 *Unswept Floor*, signed by Heraclitus, mosaic copy of second-century BCE original by Sosus of Pergamum, from Vigna Lupi. Second century CE. Mosaic of *tesserae*. Width 4.05 m. Rome, Musei Vaticani inv. 10132.

(Photograph © Scala/Art Resource, New York, ART94596.)

This playful impulse is, of course, not unique to Greek vase painting; it has a longer history across the Mediterranean. Thus, in both Greek and Roman spheres, the real and physically tangible floors and walls of buildings could often fade from view under a *trompe l’oeil* veneer of images. At Pergamum, for instance, Pliny (*HN* 36.184) tells us that Sosus, one of the most celebrated mosaic artists of the Hellenistic period, created a mosaic that

resembled an unswept room after a meal. While the second-century BCE original no longer survives, a number of Roman adaptations are extant and attest to the popularity of this whimsical decorative motif. An example today in the Vatican Museums depicts fish bones, empty shells, and other detritus from a meal scattered across the illusion of the “floor” (figure 4.2: Nogara 1910, 3–5, plates 5–7; Skira 1989, 17; Dunbabin 1999, 18–37). Just as Sosus and others who copied him adroitly manipulated their work to create the

artifice of a messy floor, one finds countless examples of Roman wall paintings that similarly negate real walls through the impression of painted architecture. (p. 89)

The so-called Villa of Poppea at Oplontis is an excellent example of this phenomenon, given that its walls are lavishly decorated with wall paintings that effectively cover the interior spaces with “buildings” and architectural vistas. Oplontis is one of the most impressive examples of a Roman seaside villa, a *villa maritima*, which has survived to modern times in relatively sound condition. Located just a short distance from Pompeii, in what is today Torre Annunziata, the complex dates from the middle of the first century BCE, although it was substantially renovated and enlarged in the early first century CE. It underwent further restoration and rebuilding after the earthquake of 62 CE (with regard to the earthquake, there will be more to say below). The villa was largely explored between 1839 and 1840 under the Bourbons, and at the time, several wall paintings were removed to the royal collections in Naples. The site was opened to the public in stages between 1964 and 1984. Although excavation remains incomplete, visitors today are able to access parts of the villa’s central section and to see for themselves the tour de force wall paintings—and the metapictures therein—that decorated the property in antiquity.

The Second Style wall paintings in the atrium at Oplontis are among the finest examples of the genre (Clarke 1991, 117; Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 27; Coarelli et al. 2002, 372). On the west wall, which is the best preserved, false architectural recesses divided by columns frame a faux wooden double door that stands at the top of a short staircase (p. 90) (figure 4.3). The door, which is ornamented with large bronze knobs, is divided into four panels: two simply framed panels distinguish the lower section, while two symmetrical winged Victories hold trophies in the upper. Above the door is an inset panel depicting a sacro-idyllic landscape in which figures move among small *tetrastyle* temples and their *propylaea*, or entrance structures. Images of women embossed on *clipei* (round medallions) worked in silver decorate the upper register.

On the adjacent north and south walls, the painted architectural decoration continues the illusionistic theme (figure 4.4). Here the walls are represented with a red-painted socle at the ground level, which is interrupted by projecting consoles seen in perspective. The consoles support painted columns (some fluted, others decorated with diamond-shaped lozenges) that frame the background wall. This recessed wall, which is vertically divided into red, purple, and green belts, is further ornamented with candelabra depicted between the columns and, in the center, another painted door whose upper panels are again embellished with two winged Victories. Although the upper parts of the north and south wall paintings are now lost, enough survives of the entablature zone to see that this, too, was embellished: again, here, as on the west wall, portrait medallions surmount

the areas to the sides of the central door, which itself is crowned with an inset panel depicting several pedimented buildings.

It is important to note that the villa at Oplontis is not unique in its choice of decoration. The same interplay between real and fictive architecture and architectural ornament is found ubiquitously elsewhere, too, in contexts that are both equally grandiose and more humble. Writ large, the Second Style wall paintings in the well-known cubiculum from the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. 03.14.13a-g; Pappalardo and Capuano 2006, 75-90; Bergmann 2010, 28-32, figs. 55-60; Meyer 2010, 33-46; Cain 2012, 108), for instance, repeat the fantasy architecture of the atrium at Oplontis. To these two villas could be added many more examples. Absent an entire ensemble of trompe l'oeil architecture in a particular wall painting, a similar interest in illusionistic details can be observed also on a more selective basis. The same format of shield busts (*clipeatae imagines*), for example, is found in the wall paintings decorating the atrium of the more modest Casa del Bell'Impluvio (House I.9.1) at Pompeii. Medallion portraits, albeit slightly modified from the *clipeus* format, are also found widely at Pompeii: on the walls of Room Four, a cubiculum in the Casa della Venere in Conchiglia (House II.3.3), and on the walls of an upper room of the Casa del Piano Superiore (House I.11.15), among other examples.



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Figs. 4.3 and 4.4 Oplontis, Villa of Poppea. Second Style painting in the atrium. First century CE. Wall painting. Height of atrium c. 4 m. (Photographs by Maryl B. Gensheimer.)

A large body of literature addresses Roman wall paintings such as those discussed above and their perpetual drive to fool the eye, as it were, into seeing spaces, architectural decoration, and architectural vistas beyond the interior rooms themselves (the classic text on Roman wall painting and the “Four Styles” is Mau 1882; for more recent contributions,

see Ling 1991; Stroocka 1996; Leach 2004). A related phenomenon is the recurrent effort in Roman wall painting to simultaneously present a vision of nature as free and wild, stretching toward the horizon, and a vision of nature as captive and cultivated within the interior of the house, perhaps best seen in the garden room from Livia’s Villa at Prima Porta (Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, [\(p. 91\)](#) [\(p. 92\)](#)

without inventory: Calci and Messineo 1984; Carrara 2005, 17–24). This kind of visual sophistication and the concomitant fascination with the sheer artistry of art is a hallmark of Greek and Roman imagery and image making. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that one hears anecdotes of famous painters (Pliny, *HN* 35.88–89 describes portraits painted by Apelles as being so perfect that a physiognomist could tell how long the sitter had to live or had already lived); of exquisite skill in sculptural technique (Schnapp 1994; Spivey 1995; Squire 2010); of works of art that deceive birds and animals into imagining them to be real (see, e.g., Pliny, *HN* 35.65–66, for the famous contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasius, and 35.95 for a painting of a horse by Apelles that seemed so real that it prompted real horses to neigh when they saw it); and even of sexual intercourse with statues so utterly beautiful as to be better than the real thing (see, e.g., Euripides, *Alc.* 348–352; Ovid, *Met.* 10.245–297; Pliny, *HN* 36.21; Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 4.50; Athenaeus 13.605f–606b; for modern commentary, see Freedberg 1989, 12–26, 317–377; Bryson 1990: 17–30; Elsner 2007, 113–131; Squire 2011, 53–56). What these and other literary sources reveal is a shared impulse to engage the observer, to create a temporary bridge across the picture plane, and to blur the line between real and fictive. In this sense, despite differences in media, there are fundamental similarities between the metapictures deployed in the vases, mosaics, and wall paintings discussed above. In the particular case of the wall paintings, the *mise en abîme* is an invaluable tool, since it generates a reflex to compare and to contrast the real architecture in which the viewer is standing with the fictive architecture depicted on the walls.

Richard Wollheim described this dichotomy as the difference between “seeing as” and “seeing in,” or, in other words, the subtle distinction between “being a spectator in” and “being a spectator of” (Wollheim 1980, 205–226; 1987, 101–177; 1998). Images, he writes, embody a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, they invite viewers to equate representation with reality; on the other, they reveal the fallacy that this involves. “Seeing in” exposes the fundamental pretense of “seeing as,” and one recognizes that the thing that was seen—Apelles’s horse, for instance, or Zeuxis’s grapes—derives from an act of visual volition. Looking, therefore, entails a suspension of disbelief that these architectural montages or shield portraits are painted rather than real, a three-dimensional fiction rather than a literal thing seen. As Wollheim describes them, these two modes of “seeing as” and “seeing in” are simultaneous and inform practices of image making across the world and across time. So while they are relevant constructs with which to analyze Roman wall painting, for instance, they are also applicable to other media and time periods. Thus, Michael Squire has argued that Greek nude sculpture embodies a particular self-awareness about this representational paradox (Squire 2011, 67). Richard Neer has made a similar point about the developments of Greek vase painting in the late sixth and early fifth centuries BCE, drawing attention to what he calls

its “chiastic tension” (Neer 2002, 27–86; see also Elsner 2006). Archaic Greek sculpture and early Attic red-figure vase painting, in Squire and Neer’s view, oscillate between the empirically convincing and the patently artificial in much the same way that Roman wall paintings created nearly half a millennium later do, as discussed above. It would seem, therefore, (p. 93) that we are dealing with a widespread Greek and Roman phenomenon of visual trickery, ambiguity, and riddles in which the *mise en abîme* plays an intrinsic role.

And yet I would suggest that this self-conscious enjoyment of *trompe l’oeil* imagery—or even heightened naturalism—is only a part of the story. Neither Greek and Roman art nor the metapictures of art and architecture within other images that are the focus of this essay are bound solely by a search for illusionistic forms or a celebration of the artists who led the way in creating such forms. The superlative illusionism or naturalism of a work of art—its artifice so brilliant as to disguise the fact that it is merely art, as Ovid puts it (*Met.* 10.252: *ars adeo latet arte sua*)—is only one facet of ancient image production. There are other impulses at work, too, and here again, metapictures are of fundamental importance.

Piety



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Fig. 4.5 Attic red-figure hydria (“Vivenzio Hydria”), attributed to the Kleophrades Painter, from Nola. C. 480 BCE. Ceramic. Height 42 cm. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 81669.

(Photograph © DAI neg. 57.839.)

Thus far, our discussion has centered on metapictures’ virtuoso exploitation of illusion and playful allusion. But it is equally true that images within other images can be more serious in tone. Indeed, metapictures can address something as profound as humans’ changing perception of the gods. When compared with the vases discussed above, it is clear that a radical change takes place in the Late Archaic period in

terms of the manner in which statues are depicted within vase paintings: the gods are

now clearly represented in the form of a statue, instead of as a living person. On an Attic red-figure hydria from Nola, now in Naples (figure 4.5: ARV² 189.74, 1632; *Para* 341; *Add*² 189; BAPD (p. 94) 201724), therefore, even though Athena is still turned toward Ajax and brandishes her spear against him, she is shown standing on a statue base. A group of related works includes those vases whose decoration depicts both a deity or hero *and* a statue of himself or herself. These are particularly sophisticated examples of metapictures, since the images within the image can be seen interacting with, and reacting to, their own likeness. Clemente Marconi has highlighted one such example, an Apulian column *krater* (c. 380–360 BCE) of unknown provenance, today in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. 50.11.4: Marconi 2011), which depicts an encaustic painter working on a statue of Heracles in the presence of the hero himself. These two examples belong to a larger trend of the period, defined by Greek vases that use clearly defined statues as part of their decoration (De Cesare 1997, 87; Oenbrink 1997, 346).

Commensurate with this transition from “image *as* the deity” to “image *as statue of* the deity” as seen in vase painting is a critical change in the literary sources of the period, which confirm a heightened appreciation of a “factual” rather than “living” quality of statues. Literary sources also evince recognition of the distancing gap between statues and the deities that they are thought to represent (Marconi 2011, 159 n. 8; see in particular Aeschylus, *Ag.* 416–417, on which see Steiner 2001, 49). This is the framework within which we can understand why whereas in an earlier period the living deities and their statues were portrayed very similarly in Greek vase painting, by the Early Classical period, artists tended to differentiate them. This changed attitude is often manifested by representing the statues of divinities as though in an earlier, Archaizing sculptural style, by depicting the statues as being set on pedestals, and/or by positioning them frontally to the viewer—unlike the humans depicted in the same vase paintings, who may be represented with their bodies and heads in profile (De Cesare 1997, 87; Oenbrink 1997, 344).

As noted by several commentators, the transformation in the depiction of statues of gods on vases during this period can be attributed to the self-conscious recognition that by assimilating lifelike images of the gods with the gods themselves, artists had sacrificed some of the mysterious and supernatural powers of Archaic statues (Borbein 1985, 260; Hallett 1986, 79; Stewart 1990, 134; De Cesare 1997, 79). By differentiating between deity and statue and by separating the statue from the narrative action of the vase painting (by displaying the statue on a base, for instance), vase painters were able to restore a greater sense of divinity to their images within images (Marconi 2011, 160–161). Seen in this light, changing approaches to metapictures of statues within paintings may be understood to underscore differences in the Greeks’ perception of their relationship to the gods and statues of them.

Document

Beyond comparatively lighthearted contexts of playful reflex or more profound questions of divinity, metapictures also fulfill a third function. In fact, images within images can, at times, be understood to represent a more objective reality. Here again, Pompeii (p. 95) and various archaeological sites along the Bay of Naples offer plentiful examples of the “documentary” potential of metapictures.

In 62 CE, as is well known, Pompeii was devastated by an earthquake that caused heavy damage to both public and private structures throughout the city (Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.22, reports that “a large part of Pompeii collapsed”). The earthquake of 62 presaged the series of tremors that would wrack the Bay of Naples (including the villa at Oplontis, as mentioned above) and necessitate rebuilding for the next seventeen years, until the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE. This picture of a disrupted city is vividly illustrated in a pair of relief panels, each almost a meter long, found decorating a *lararium* (household shrine) in the House of Lucius Caecilius Iucundus (House V.1.26), a local banker of sorts. The reliefs depict two areas of the city rocked by the quake of 62 CE: the forum and the zone around the city’s northern gate, leading toward Vesuvius. In the forum relief (figure 4.6), the Capitoline Temple is shown leaning alarmingly toward the viewer’s left (Andreau 1974, fig. 4; Kraus and von Matt 1975, fig. 9). The equestrian statues on either side of the temple seem to come alive, with the riders all but unseated from their mounts. To the left side of the relief, the arch on the northwest side of the forum (in the direction of today’s Vicolo dei Soprastanti and Vicolo delle Terme) is also clearly tottering from the shocks. In the second relief, the Vesuvian Gate is shown lurching ominously toward the viewer’s right, cleaving from the large water reservoir on its left.

That the Capitoline Temple at Pompeii suffered damage in the earthquake of 62 is certainly suggested by the relief from the House of Lucius Caecilius Iucundus. It is also corroborated by damage to the east and west cella walls of the temple itself (Dobbins 2007, 156). But a question naturally arises. To what extent may the relief be taken as a faithful representation of the temple as it appeared at the time of the earthquake? Is the relief accurate in its details? The extant Capitoline Temple at Pompeii is *hexastyle* Corinthian, with a deep *pronaos*, or porch, of tufa columns. From the forum, two narrow staircases that flank a *rostrum* (podium), which accommodated an altar and may have also served as a speaker’s platform, approach the *pronaos* (Ulrich 1994, 224–248). Above the *rostrum* is a broad staircase that ascends to the *pronaos*. Upon close examination, it becomes obvious that the relief is a *mélange* of close attention to detail and schematic simplification. The *rostrum* and flanking staircases are shown, as is the altar. The relief

even depicts details such as the temple's roof tiles and the Corinthian capitals surmounting the columns of the *pronaos*. And yet, in what is a somewhat glaring omission, the temple is represented as having only four columns across its facade rather than the six documented in the archaeological record, probably as a way of laying emphasis on the door and the cult statue on axis with it. In sum, it may be said that the relief from the House of L. Caecilius Iucundus is "documentary" to the extent that it narrates a historical event, but it is not a wholly accurate rendition of the monuments in question.



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Fig. 4.6 Earthquake relief in the *lararium* of the House of Lucius Caecilius Iucundus at Pompeii. 62–79 CE. Marble. Height 18 cm.

(Source: Kraus and von Matt 1975, fig. 9.)

If the relief from the House of L. Caecilius Iucundus shows the forum in a moment of literal upheaval, then other metapictures are significant for showing us the opposite side of the coin: scenes of daily life. Wall paintings from the Praedia of Julia Felix at Pompeii are "documentary" in the sense that they reveal what the monuments of the city center would have looked like under more routine circumstances.

(p. 96)

The Praedia of Julia Felix, so named for an inscription found in situ naming the owner of the property (*CIL* IV, no. 1136), occupied the entire *insula* at II.4 and included shops, taverns, apartments, and a bathing complex. Recent archaeological work has revealed that the property was created by joining two *insulae* originally separated by a street, which was then eliminated and incorporated into the property after the earthquake of 62 CE. The proprietor, after acquisition, constructed a multipurpose complex that she rented out, along with its associated commercial activities. Four distinct nuclei can be distinguished: a private house, the area around the peristyle, the baths, and the garden. (p. 97)

The complex was first excavated between March and April 1757 under the direction of the military engineer Rocque Joaquin de Alcubierre and his assistant, Karl Weber. At the time, excavation was primarily concerned with the recovery of objets d'art of interest to antiquarians. In much the same manner as was done at the villa at Oplontis, a group of paintings were detached from the walls to enrich the Bourbon collection in Naples. As was customary at the time, the complex was reburied after it had been stripped (Amedeo Maiuri then reexcavated the Praedia of Julia Felix between 1936 and 1953; Maiuri 1954, 285–299). In a boon to archaeology, however, Weber, in May 1757, drew the plan of the building and numbered the sites where objects had been found and removed or where paintings had been cut out (on Weber's plan and excavations, see Parslow 1995, 107–122). This list of objects and paintings is invaluable today for reconstructing the decorative program of the Praedia of Julia Felix.

Of particular interest here is the painted frieze from the entryway to the peristyle quarter from the Via dell'Abbondanza (Olivito 2013). The frieze ran around the atrium (itself measuring just more than 9 by 6 meters) at a height of some 2.5 meters above ground level. Approximately 11 meters of the frieze was detached in the eighteenth century and is now in the Naples museum. It is unclear how much more there would have been originally, although some small and abraded fragments remain in situ. From these and the works in Naples, the frieze's sequence has been reconstructed (Nappo 1989). It presents a series of vignettes taking place against the background of the Pompeii forum porticoes and the equestrian statues that stood in front of those colonnades. One vignette (figure 4.7), for instance, depicts a long public notice, written on a board or a scroll, which has been fixed across the bases of three equestrian statues. Three adults and a boy stand with their backs to the viewer, presumably reading the posted notice. In another section, one sees commercial activities: women haggle with salesmen over pieces of cloth; a man dressed in a toga selects a metal saucepan, while a young boy by his side carries a shopping basket; and a baker serves a pair of men from what appears to be a basket of rolls. In a third scene, a matron (accompanied by either a slave or her child) appears to be giving money to a ragged beggar, himself accompanied by a dog. In the background, two children converse on either side of a column, while in the foreground is another equestrian statue.

The paintings are not, of course, strictly realistic. Like the rendering of the Capitoline Temple in the relief discussed above, the background architecture is a rather simplified version of the two-story forum colonnade. And yet the frieze, although fragmentary and faded, prompts us to imagine beggars plying for cash, traders and artisans of all kinds, local officials going about their business, and women prominent in their own right—chatting, buying, and even distributing largesse to those less fortunate. It also illuminates details of the ancient cityscape that have been lost: portable tables and market stalls,

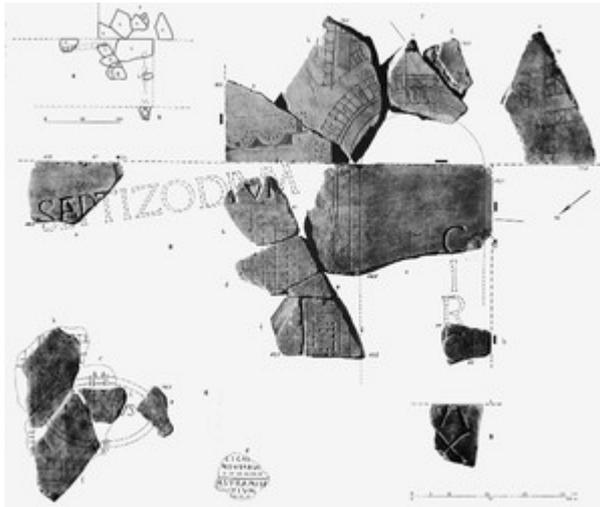
brightly colored clothing, wicker baskets, garlands hung between columns, and multiple statues. In so doing, the frieze from the Praedia of Julia Felix and the metapictures of statues and columns therein provide a vivid sense of the ancient city.



Click to view larger

Fig. 4.7 Painting from the atrium of the Praedia of Julia Felix, Pompeii. Activities in the Forum of Pompeii. Pre-79 CE. Wall painting. Height 64 cm. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 9068.

(Photograph © DAI neg. 75.1530.)



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Fig. 4.8 Fragments 7a-d and 8a-b of the Severan Plan, from the Templum Pacis. The Septizodium. Late second to early third century CE. Marble. Height: 7a-d, 67 cm; 8a, 25.5 cm; 8b, 20 cm. Rome, Musei Capitolini invv. 529, 685, 566.

(Source: Carettoni et al. 1960, pl. 17.)

In a very different way from the images within images discussed above, which focus on a specific vase, statue, or single building or group of buildings, other metapictures evoke (p. 98) whole cities. The so-called Severan Marble Plan of Rome (the *Forma Urbis Romae*), for example, is often vaunted as a consummate representation of the monumentality of the entire ancient city (Carettoni et al. 1960; Rodríguez Almeida 1981;

the website of the Stanford Digital Forma Urbis Romae Project, <http://formaurbis.stanford.edu>, is also a convenient source; in print, see Koller et al. 2006). No more than an estimated 10 to 15 percent of the original map survives, but because the wall in the Templum Pacis on which it was affixed is extant (reused as the exterior wall of the Church of Saints Cosmas and Damian), we are sure of its original extent. One hundred fifty marble plaques, together measuring 18 by 5 meters, depicted some four thousand hectares of the city of Rome at the scale of 1:240. The plan is securely dated to the reign of Septimius Severus because of the citation of the names of the emperor and his elder son, Caracalla (*Severi et Antonini Augg.*); because of the inclusion of the Severan Septizodium, which was inaugurated in 203 CE (figure 4.8); and because of the absence of post-Severan buildings. Like its date, the circumstances that prompted the Plan's creation are also clear. A fire gutted the Flavian-era Templum Pacis during Commodus's reign, in 192 CE (Dio Cassius 72.24.1-2). Septimius's reconstruction of this precinct was an important component of (p. 99) the restoration of order (to Rome and to the Empire more generally) necessitated by the period of civil war that precipitated his reign.

It is important to note that the Severan Marble Plan was not the first example of an incised, monumental plan of Rome. Rather, it is generally assumed that earlier maps dating back at least to the Augustan period preceded the Severan plan (Rodríguez

Almeida 2002; Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 2006). The need for such plans can be attributed to the Augustan reforms to the city of Rome and, above all, to the need to oversee the population entitled to the distribution of free grain and other benefits on a *vicus-by-vicus* (neighborhood-by-neighborhood) and possibly even *insula-by-insula* (housing-block-by-housing-block) basis.

That this type of census information was gathered is confirmed by the occasional discovery of a fragment of a marble plan that is evidently *not* the Severan one. In 1983, for instance, a group of fragments were found in the Via Anicia in Trastevere (Rodríguez Almeida 1983; Coarelli 1991; Tucci 1994; Rodríguez Almeida 2002). (p. 100) These depict the area surrounding the Temple of Castor and Pollux, on the north bank of the Tiber. The Via Anicia fragments are drawn to exactly the same scale as the Severan plan (1:240), but beyond that, there are notable differences. Whereas a single line normally represents walls in the Severan plan, the Via Anicia fragments—like modern architectural drawings—use two lines in order to indicate the thickness of the wall depicted. Another striking difference is the fact that the Via Anicia fragments label not only public buildings (*CASTORIS.ET/POLLVCIS*), as does the Severan plan, but also the names of the owners of the neighboring private properties. Thus, below the temple, a group of shops or warehouses is labeled *CORNELIAE/ET.SOC[IORUM]* (Cornelia and Associates). As a second example, excavations in the Via dei Fori Imperiali in 1995 uncovered a fragment of a marble plan beneath the Domitianic paving of the Forum Transitorium (thus ensuring a first-century date). This fragment likewise observes a 1:240 scale and labels private dwellings and shops (Rodríguez Almeida 2002, 61–66).

From this brief survey, it should be clear that the Severan Marble Plan, despite its modern fame, is not necessarily the highest-quality example of a “documentary” plan of the city of Rome. In fact, it seems not to have been cut to normal graphic standards. Unlike its predecessors, the Severan Marble Plan economized by representing walls with single lines. It also omitted the most important information, from the administrative point of view—that is, the names of individual property owners and retail proprietors. As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill has pointed out, the omission of this information on the Severan plan strongly suggests that the map was not intended for practical, administrative purposes (Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 307). This seems intuitive, given the sheer impracticality of a city official consulting a document that rose some 15 meters above ground level. And yet, for all its shortcuts, the Severan plan nonetheless is remarkably accurate in its depiction of Rome—including the interior walls of houses, shops, and warehouses—as it appeared in the first decade of the third century CE. Indeed, the impressive extent of local knowledge and the rendering of infinitesimal details achieved by the imperial administration in this and other marble plans must be stressed.

The Roman census mandated the declaration of property. In theory, it would have been possible to generate a map of the city of Rome from this information, and yet the disorder of public records in the Republican period would have made the creation of a reliable map a difficult undertaking in that time. In fact, there is no evidence of a detailed Republican street map that identified individual properties and civic monuments (Nicolet 1991, 124–125; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 312). To do as Septimius and his Imperial predecessors did and commission and publicly display a detailed map of the city was a powerful statement of Imperial knowledge and control of the city of Rome. In this sense, marble plans of Rome (whether the famous Severan example or its antecedents from the Augustan period onward) ingeniously exploit metapictures—in this case, images of architecture within monumental relief—in order to facilitate the viewer’s full cognizance of the power and expertise of the Imperial administration. (p. 101)

Conclusions

Neither the metapictures within the Severan Marble Plan nor those of its predecessors constitute reflexive images of whimsy and illusion, as do some of the depictions of vases, statues, and buildings within the vase and wall paintings discussed above. Nor are they concerned solely with a documentary “snapshot” view, as it were, of a single moment in time, whether the earthquake of 62 CE or a day in the forum of Pompeii. Rather, the images of architecture within the various marble plans of Rome were intended to effectively encapsulate authority and order. We have, in a sense, come full circle from the point at which we began this chapter and have seen the full range of possibilities with which depictions of images within images illuminate aspects of ancient self-consciousness of the power of images created in a variety of media and for both public and private contexts. *Mise en abîme* images of vases, statues, or buildings may enliven a symposion. They may, alternatively, astonish a visitor to a Roman house, address the relationship between humans and the gods, or even underscore the various hierarchies and power dynamics of humans’ relationships with, and status relative to, one another.

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Greek and Roman Artists

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the artists of ancient Greece and Rome, with particular emphasis on their social standing and on the problems involved in the reconstruction of their specific contribution. It begins by tracing the history of interest in ancient Greek and Roman artists, from the Renaissance to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It then examines inscriptions and other representations showing artists at work, the social status of Greek and Roman artists such as painters and sculptors in the ancient world, and how they take pride in their craft. It also considers the artists' practice of affixing their signatures in their works such as vases, along with their wages, their education, and their mobility. The chapter concludes by looking at women artists such as painters and goldsmiths.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, artists, education, inscriptions, mobility, signatures, social status, wages, women artists

The interest in ancient Greek and Roman artists—fueled by references to their work and lives in ancient sources such as Pliny's *Natural History*—has a long history, which goes back to the Renaissance and to the *Commentarii* by Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378–1455) (see chapter 9 below). It is to Johann Joachim Winckelmann, however, that we owe the first systematic treatment of this subject, in the second part of his influential *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (*History of the Art of Antiquity*), published in Dresden in 1764. Although Winckelmann was more concerned with presenting a history of art, not of artists and their lives, this text was the first to discuss their names and foremost works within the larger narrative of the general development of ancient art and to consider some of them “from an artistic point of view.”

A fundamental contribution to the equation between history of ancient art and history of artists was given by Heinrich Brunn with his *Geschichte der griechischen Künstler* (*History of Greek Artists*), a work clearly inspired by the widespread aesthetic of the

genius formulated largely by Immanuel Kant (see chapter 23 below). Brunn's *History* treated Greek artists in two volumes. The first, published in 1853, dealt with sculptors, while the second, published in 1859, dealt with painters, architects, metalworkers, gem engravers, die engravers, and vase painters. The articulation of this work speaks to the great significance assigned by Brunn to sculpture within the general development of ancient Greek art. Brunn was also particularly interested in the significance of artistic "schools" within this development.

Brunn's reconstruction of the lives and careers of ancient Greek artists was based primarily on ancient literary sources. This approach is not unexpected, given that our knowledge about ancient artists has to rely primarily on ancient texts, produced by a variety of authors, including poets, historians, or *periegetai* (see chapter 3 above); to these texts, one can add inscriptions, including building records mentioning the names of contributors to the design, construction, or decoration of architecture; honorary inscriptions celebrating benefactions by artists; and signatures, sometimes found in association with votive and funerary sculptures, painted pots, and other (p. 108) media including coins and gems. Because of their importance as a source of information about ancient artists, it is no surprise that in the wake of Brunn, two scholars systematically collected literary and epigraphical sources during the second half of the nineteenth century. Johannes Adolf Overbeck collected nearly twenty-five hundred passages of ancient literary sources mentioning Greek artists (Overbeck 1868), while Emanuel Loewy listed nearly six hundred inscriptions concerning Greek artists (Loewy 1885). Along similar lines, Barclay Vincent Head wrote a compendium of ancient Greek coins (Head 1911, first published in 1887), and Adolf Furtwängler produced a work on ancient gems (Furtwängler 1900), both of which laid emphasis on the contributions of artists in those media. It may be noted that with the exception of Furtwängler's book, all the remaining nineteenth-century publications were focused on Greek artists.

The interest in Greek and Roman artists continued during the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, including two major encyclopedic works: *Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft (RE)*, the authoritative German encyclopedia of classical scholarship; and the *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Thieme and Becker 1907–1950), another German encyclopedia, concerned with the biographies of artists from antiquity to the present. These two works include the names of more than one thousand ancient artists.

The interest in artists continued during the first half of the twentieth century. In the 1920s, two publications addressed free painting, a medium that is now nearly completely lost but is repeatedly mentioned by ancient literary sources. Adolphe Reinach collected the ancient texts concerning this medium (Reinach 1921; Rouveret 1985), while Ernst

Pfuhl dealt with the history of ancient painters (Pfuhl 1923). The latter was also the first to write extensively about the history of Greek vase painting, during the same period that Joseph Clark Hoppin did so for Attic vases (Hoppin 1919 and 1924). The most significant work in this area is that of John Davidson Beazley, who extensively investigated Attic vase painters and potters (Beazley 1925, 1928, 1956 [ABV], 1963 [ARV²], 1971 [Para]; Carpenter 1989 [Add²]), and of Arthur Dale Trendall, who focused on southern Italian and Sicilian red-figure vase painters (Trendall 1936, 1938, 1967, 1970–1983, and 1974; Trendall and Cambitoglou 1978–1982; Trendall 1987; Trendall 1989; Trendall and Cambitoglou 1991–1993). Further work of connoisseurship along the lines established by Beazley and Trendall has been produced more recently by Conrad Michael Stibbe for Laconian vase painters (Stibbe 1972 and 2004), Darrell Arlynn Amyx for Corinthian vase painters (Amyx 1988), Karl Kilinski for Boeotian vase painters (Kilinski 1990), and Robert Manuel Cook and Pierre Dupont for East Greek vase painters (Cook and Dupont 1998).

In comparison, there was little interest in Roman artists until the late 1950s with the publication of the work by Ida Calabi Limentani expressly devoted to this subject (Calabi Limentani 1958). To this, one may add the studies by Donald E. Strong on Greek and Roman gold and silver plate (Strong 1966), by Jerome J. Pollitt on sources on Roman art (Pollitt 1966), by Michael Donderer on mosaicists (Donderer 1989), and finally, by (p. 109) Richard Petrovsky and Eberhard Thomas on Roman metalworkers (Petrovsky 1993; Thomas 2000).

In the same years, the interest in Greek and Roman artists continued in encyclopedic works, including the *Lexikon der Alten Welt* (Andresen 1965), the *Kleine Pauly* (Ziegler, Sontheimer, and Gärtner 1964–1975), and the *Enciclopedia dell'arte antica classica e orientale* (EAA; 1958, with supplements published in 1973 and 1994–1997), the EAA collecting the largest number of artists—about fourteen hundred—known by that time.

In 1972, the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* was established, with the purpose of collecting and publishing with documentation all known ancient Greek personal names, drawn from every available source, including literature, inscriptions, graffiti, papyri, coins, and vases, and for the period from the earliest Greek written records down to, approximately, the sixth century CE (Fraser and Matthews 1987–2005; Osborne and Byrne 1994 and 1996; Corsten 2010). This project reflects the continued interest in Greek artists during the second half of the twentieth century. This interest is also represented by the work by Jean Marcadé on signatures by Greek sculptors (Marcadé 1953–1957), Jerome J. Pollitt and Marion Muller-Dufeu on Greek artists (Pollitt 1990; Muller-Dufeu, 2002 and 2011), and Bernhard Hebert and Inga Schmidt specifically on Hellenistic artists (Hebert 1989; Schmidt 1995). To this, one can add the project called *Neue Overbeck*

(*New Overbeck*), promoted by a group of scholars in Berlin and begun in 2004, whose goal is to add about five hundred new literary and thirteen hundred new epigraphical testimonies to the original publication by Overbeck, for a total of forty-three hundred testimonies (Kansteiner et al. 2007).

In recent years, the most systematic attempt to collect the names of all documented ancient artists and to discuss their biographies and work by experts all over the world has been represented by the *Künstlerlexikon der Antike (Lexicon of Ancient Artists)*, published in two volumes in 2001 and 2004 (*KdA*) and republished in one volume in 2007 (Vollkommer 2007). The *Lexicon*, which includes both safely documented ancient artists and doubtful or rejected ones, contains 3,891 entries, covering the period from about 3000 BCE to 750 CE. In total, the *Lexicon* features about 900 Egyptian artists, 2,500 Greek, Roman and Byzantine artists, and 120 Middle and Near Eastern, Nabatian, southern Arabian, Punic, Numidian, Etruscan, and Germanic artists.

Because of its comprehensive approach and the level of expertise involved, the *Lexicon* has produced important results for our understanding of Greek and Roman artists, especially from a comparative perspective. First, a vast number of Egyptian artists are known by name; these artists were active, for the most part, in the third and second millennia BCE, documented by both inscriptions and papyri, and were clearly proud of their profession. Considering the importance of this documentation, it seems appropriate to preface the discussion of Greek and Roman artists with a review of the Egyptian documentation.

The earliest evidence for the names of Egyptian artists is perhaps as old as the first dynasty of Egypt (c. 2900–2730⁺²⁵ BCE; the Egyptian chronology is based on Hornung, Krauss, and Warburton 2006). The names of Anchka, Bach, and Kahetep—living under (p. 110) the reign of the pharaoh Djer (c. 2870–2823⁺²⁵ BCE)—are found on a series of axes uncovered in tombs at Abydos, which also include a series of tools, and are thus presumed to have belonged to artists (F. Hoffmann in *KdA* I, 39, 112, 372). The first artist certainly identified by name is the sculptor Kachet, active during the second dynasty (c. 2730–2593⁺²⁵ BCE). His title as “commander of the sculptors” is found in his tomb at Helwan near Cairo (F. Hoffmann in *KdA* I, 371).

Another reference to profession and skill is found in an inscription in the tomb of Hesy, a man living during the third dynasty (c. 2592–2544⁺²⁵ BCE). In this inscription, Hesy is called an architect and “great” in carving ivory and arrows; extraordinary fine wood reliefs deposited in his tomb in Saqqara could be his own work (Quibell 1913; S. Hänsch in *KdA* I, 316).

The most famous architect of Egypt was obviously Imhotep (Wildung 1977; D. Wildung in *KdA* I, 336–337), who designed the earliest stone pyramid, for the pharaoh Djoser at Saqqara (c. 2592–2566⁺²⁵ BCE). Since the twenty-sixth dynasty (664–525 BCE), at the latest, he was considered the son of the creator god Ptah and honored as a protector god, especially against diseases, and as an architect. Another important architect was Nefermaat (F. Hoffmann in *KdA* I, 122), who designed the pyramids of Huni (c. ?–2544⁺²⁵ BCE), Snofru (c. 2543–2510⁺²⁵), and Khufu (Cheops, c. 2509–2483⁺²⁵), the last finished by Nefermaat's son Hemiunu (S. L. Lippert in *KdA* I, 292). The first architect to express pride in his accomplishments was Kaemtjenenet (F. Hoffmann in *KdA* I, 372), active as early as the end of the fifth dynasty (c. twenty-fourth century BCE). An autobiographical inscription from his tomb in Saqqara explains the difficulties involved in setting up a monumental sphinx in a temple, on an approximately 2.5-meter-high base, without destroying either the base or the sphinx itself.

Along with inscriptions, we also have many representations showing artists at work, such as the painter Khentika, who is featured with a palette and a kind of paintbrush in his own mastaba at Saqqara (James 1953, pl. 10; C. von Pfeil in *KdA* I, 139), or Imenuahsu, shown painting a sphinx in the tomb of Paser in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna/Thebes West (Theban Tomb 106), dated to the nineteenth dynasty (1292–1191 BCE) (Lepsius 1859, pl. 132, right; T. Schrottenbaum in *KdA* I, 354–355). Likewise, the sculptor Iuti is represented with other sculptors, working on a statue for the princess Baketaten in the decoration of the tomb of Huja at Amarna (de Garis Davies 1905, pls. 17–18; F. Hoffmann in *KdA* I, 369).

A different form of self-representation concerns Bak, an architect and head of the sculptors active under the pharaoh Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten (1353–1336 BCE). Bak might have carved a stele depicting himself and his wife, which may represent one of the earliest documented self-portraits by an artist (Aldred 1968, pl. 79; M. A. Stadler in *KdA* I, 112). Literary sources also mention a stele at Assouan featuring Bak along with his father, Men, the latter probably the head of the workshop responsible for making the famous Colossi of Memnon, the twin statues depicting the pharaoh Amenhotep III (1390–1353 BCE).

In conclusion, a large number of Egyptian artists are known by name, perpetuating their memory through both texts and images. This is a clear indication of pride in their (p. 111) profession and accomplishments. Not by chance, the builder of the first pyramid, at the latest since the twenty-sixth dynasty (664–525 BCE) but probably earlier, was honored as a god.

Greek and Roman “Artists” and Their Signatures

This issue of pride introduces us to Greek and Roman artists, the first living in a culture characterized by a spirit of contest, or *agon*. In ancient Greece and Rome, there was no single term corresponding to our “work of art,” and there was no firm boundary between “artist” and “craftsman,” such as a shoemaker or a carpenter (see chapter 1 above). In Greece, all kinds of manual activities were called *technē*, meaning craft, skill, and knowledge. In Latin, the word used for these activities was *ars*, which had a different meaning from our “art.” All these terms refer to hard work, labor, performed by people who could not afford to have leisure and had no time for politics. The artists clearly belonged to the working class and, in general, to the lower ranks of society (Schweitzer 1963, I, 11-104; Burford 1972; Lauter 1974; Himmelmann 1979; Coarelli 1980; Donderer 1989; Tanner 2006; Stewart 2008, 10-38; Muller-Dufeu 2011, 140-147). Only a few artists—sculptors, painters, and architects of extraordinary high level—were given special consideration, while still being regarded as laborers. Of all ancient authors, Lucian expresses this idea most clearly: “Even if you should become a Phidias or a Polyclitus and produce many marvellous works, all will praise your art, but not one of those who see your art, if he were in his right mind, would pray to be like you. For this is what you will be: a common workman, a craftsman, one who makes his living with his hands” (*Somn.* 9, translation by Pollitt 1990).

Nevertheless, artists were proud to sign their work, which is part of the reason we have, to date, about twenty-five hundred names of Greek, Roman, and Byzantine artists (see appendix 5.1 at the end of this chapter); this number is likely to increase thanks to new discoveries of signed works.

The meaning of signatures by Greek and Roman artists has been much debated (see more recently Viviers 2002 and 2006; Stewart 2008, 14-18; Osborne 2010; Muller-Dufeu 2011, 110-117). Usually consisting of the formula “so-and-so made [me],” using either the aorist or the imperfect tense, and sometimes adding the patronymic (not necessarily an indication that the father was in the same profession), signatures are found in association with various media, especially sculpture, painted pottery, and, as we gather from literary sources, free painting. Particularly interesting are, in the Archaic period, those signatures on votive offerings, in which the signing artists are also the presenters of the gift, expressing pride in their skill (Scheibler 1979). Also of interest are joint signatures, pointing to collaborations by artists, in both sculptures (Goodlett 1989) and painted pots, where *egrapsen* (meaning “wrote,” “drew,” “painted”) is used by the painter, and

(p. 112) *epoiesen* (meaning “made”) is employed by the potter (the maker of the signed vase and/or the owner of the workshop) (Robertson 1972; Seeberg 1994; Maras 2005; Villanueva Puig 2007). As for their general meaning, it seems fair to say that signatures are an expression of personal satisfaction by the artists with their accomplishment. Ancient authors seem to confirm this line of interpretation, some of them by relating the practice of signing by artists to their desire for glory among future generations (e.g., Cicero, *Tusc.* 1.15.34), others by pointing to the practice of faking signatures in order to increase the economic value of the works (Phaedrus, 5 prol.). Yet, that said, the problem with signatures in Greek and Roman art is that these, far from representing the rule, are the exception, most works remaining unsigned. In addition, as is best seen in the case of painted pottery, artists do not always sign their best work. The rationale for selecting certain pieces to sign thus remains unclear. In the case of sculpture, it has been proposed that the use of signatures was related to the public versus private function of the works, with the former more often signed than the latter, which begs the question of to what extent ancient artists were allowed to sign their work without being authorized by their patrons.

In analyzing signatures from a diachronic point of view, the first examples by Greek artists are found on vases. The earliest one belongs to a potter and is written on a Late Geometric fragment of the last decades of the eighth century BCE, found on Ischia in the Bay of Naples and written in Euboean. Unfortunately, only the last letters of the name are preserved: [...]*inos* (Guarducci 1978, 476, fig. 187; Boardman 1998, 53, fig. 162). The first completely preserved names of Greek potters date from a few decades later. The Euboean potter Pyrrhus, son of Agasileos, signed an aryballos in the first half of the seventh century BCE; according to Guarducci and Wachter, this inscription may have been made in a Euboean colony in the West (Jeffery 1990, 83–84, 88 no. 22, pl. 6; Guarducci 1978, 477–478 n. 5; Wachter 2001, 171–172 no. EUC 3; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 331). The potter Aristonothus signed a krater of the first half of the seventh century found in Caere and likely produced in South Italy (Jeffery 1990, 239, 241 no. 24; Guarducci 1978, 477–478, fig. 188; Boardman 1998, 114, fig. 282; Wachter 2001, 29 no. INC 1; W. Müller in *KdA* I, 91). These two potters represent the earliest complete known names, together with the following signatures: Callicleas potted a stand for a torch from Ithaca in the second half of the seventh century (Jeffery 1990, 230–231, 234 no. 2, pl. 45; C. Müller in *KdA* I, 385), Andrias made a clay model from Thera dating to the third quarter of the seventh century (Wachter 2001, 209 no. DOI 1; M. Dennert in *KdA* II, 541), and Nicesermus made a series of fragmentary chalices produced on Chios in the late seventh century and found at Emporio (Jeffery 1990, 338, 343 no. 42e, 377, pl. 65; Boardman 1967, 243–244 no. 614–616, pls. 97–99; Boardman 1998, 145; Wachter 2001, 211 no. IOD 4A–C; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 134).

Unfortunately, the signature of Istrocles on the fragment of an Ionian dinos from Smyrna dated to c. 640 BCE is too fragmentary to decide whether Istrocles was the potter or the painter (Jeffery 1964, 45 no. 1, pl. 5a; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 364). If he were the painter, this would be our earliest signature of a vase painter. The earliest signatures on Attic painted vases are by Sophilus (590–570 BCE), who signed as both vase painter and (p. 113) potter (*ABV* 39.15–16, 681, and 42.36; *Para* 18; *Add*² 10–11; BAPD 305074–305075, 305095; B. Kreuzer in *KdA* II, 407–408; Shapiro, Iozzo, and Lezzi-Hafter 2013). The next example comes from one of the most famous Attic black-figure vases, the François Vase (570–560 BCE), a volute krater signed by Ergotimus as potter and by Clitias as vase painter (Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 4209; *ABV* 76.1, 682; *Para* 29; *Add*² 21; BAPD 300000; Guarducci 1978, 479–480, fig. 189; Cristofani, Marzi, and Perissinotto 1981; B. Kreuzer in *KdA* I, 214, 419–421; Shapiro, Iozzo, and Lezzi-Hafter 2013). From the François Vase onward, we have signatures of either a vase painter or a potter or a combination of both on several hundred Attic vases of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. Various elements, including the combination of signatures, show that potters were the owners of workshops, hiring vase painters to work for them. Potters were thus dominant (Scheibler 1995, 127–128; Boardman 2001, 139–152), which explains why there are several dedications of potters from the Athenian Acropolis but only one from a vase painter (see in general Keesling 2003, 71–74). The potter Nearchus is likely to have dedicated the statue of a kore (c. 520 BCE) signed by Antenor (Raubitschek 1949, 232–233 no. 197; Richter 1968, 68–70 no. 110, figs. 336–340; B. Kreuzer in *KdA* II, 113–114; Keesling 2003, 56–59). Other dedications came from the potters Mnesiades, Andocides, Euphronios (Raubitschek 1949, 213–216 no. 178, 255–258 no. 225; on these potters, see T. Mannack in *KdA* II, 89 [Mnesiades]; K. Zimmermann in *KdA* I, 40–41 [Andocides]; D. von Bothmer in *KdA* I, 231–236 [Euphronios]), and Peicon (Raubitschek 1949, 46–47 no. 44; Wagner 2000, 383–384; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 201). On the other hand, Onesimus, a vase painter active between 505 and 485 BCE, seems to have dedicated a bronze animal statue and seven perirrhanteria, marble basins for lustral water (Raubitschek 1949, 246–248 no. 217, 384–389 nos. 349–353, 391–392 nos. 357–358; V. M. Strocka in *KdA* II, 160–165; Keesling 2003, 73). Interestingly, unlike their Attic counterparts, red-figure potters and vase painters in South Italy and Sicily did not sign their work, with two notable exceptions: Asteas and Python, both from Paestum (Guarducci 1978, 484–485; Trendall 1989, 14, 196, 200; on the two painters, see G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 101 [Asteas], and R. Green in *KdA* II, 341 [Python]).



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Fig 5.1 Kouros base signed by Euthycartides of Naxos, from Delos. Ram, lion, and gorgon head bosses. C. 625–600 BCE. Marble. Height 58 cm. Delos, Museum inv. A 728.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

The earliest documented signature by a sculptor belongs to Euthycartides of Naxos, on a marble statue on Delos dated to the last quarter of the seventh century BCE (figure 5.1: Jeffery 1990, 291, 304 no. 3, pl. 55; Stewart 1990, 22; Gruben 1997, 279, fig. 11; G. Kokkorou-Alewras in *KdA* I, 238; Muller-Dufeu 2002, 101 no. 360). It remains unclear whether the name of Nasstiades from Naxos inscribed on a sculpture of

the second half of the seventh century is a signature or the name of a donor (Gruben 1997, 282–285, fig. 12a–d; G. Kokkorou-Alewras in *KdA* I, 109–110). The practice of signing is documented for the period between the late seventh and early sixth centuries at several different places: Grophon from Melos signed two sculptures found on Melos and at Olympia (Jeffery 1990, 320, 324 no. 23, pl. 62; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 272); Sphyllus signed a limestone group of a warrior on a horse from the cemetery of Castiglione in Sicily (Di Stefano 2001, 57–58, 67–68, figs. 77–79; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 418); and Terpsicles signed a limestone base for a sculpture at Didyma (Loewy 1885, 4 no. 2; Wiegand 1958, 3 no. 2, fig. 2; Jeffery 1990, 332–333, 342 no. 23, pl. 64; Muller-Dufeu 2002, 160 no. 449; (p. 114) R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 441–442). Slightly later, in about 590–580 BCE, [Poly]medes signed the well-known group of “Cleobis and Biton” (probably representing the Dioskuroi) at Delphi (Jeffery 1990, 154–155, 168 no. 4, pl. 26; Vatin 1977, 13–22, figs. 1–7; Stewart 1990, 112; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 296; Muller-Dufeu 2002, 155 no. 438; Müller 2006, 91–97). By c. 500 BCE, signatures become more frequent, and they are generally the work of specialized masons, not the artists themselves. Most often, they appear in association with freestanding statues (but generally not cult statues) and rarely on architectural sculpture and funerary reliefs. In the first case, signatures may be featured on the base (more often the main, frontal face but at times also the upper face) but also on the statue itself. Sometimes the sculptors add the patronymic and the ethnic to their names; the ethnic, signifying the place of origin, was regularly used for works displayed abroad, but occasionally, it is also used for works in the home city. Both literary sources and inscriptions attest to the signatures by

the great sculptors of the fifth to fourth centuries BCE, including Phidias (V. M. Strocka in *KdA* II, 210–236; Muller-Dufeu 2002, 278–343; Donderer 2007), Polyclitus (E. Berger in *KdA* II, 276–287; Muller-Dufeu 2002, 392–405), Praxiteles (W. Geominy in *KdA* I, 305–319; Muller-Dufeu 2002, 480–521), and Lysippus (P. Moreno in *KdA* II, 27–39; Muller-Dufeu 2002, 588–625). The practice of (p. 115) signing by sculptors continued during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, for which we have the larger number of attestations. One may mention the sculptors, Attic or affiliated with neo-Attic workshops, working for a Roman clientele in the first century BCE, such as Apollonius son of Nestor (Loewy 1885, 241–243 no. 343; Guarducci 1978, 413–414, fig. 155; Stewart 1990, 230; G. Bröker and W. Müller in *KdA* I, 71–72) or Aphrodisian sculptors such as Antonianus, active in the Hadrianic period (Guarducci 1978, 414–415, fig. 156; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 60).

Unlike painted pottery and sculpture, Greek monumental painting, highly regarded in antiquity according to literary sources, is almost completely lost. Ancient authors mention the names of several early painters. According to Pliny, Boularchus from Clazomenae is said to have painted the battle of the Magnetians as early as about 710 BCE (Pliny, *HN* 35.55; W. Müller in *KdA* I, 125). According to the same source, the painter Ecphantus from Corinth, living in about 650 BCE, invented monochrome painting (Pliny, *HN* 35.16; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 200), a technique also used by other contemporary painters such as Charmadas, Deinias and Hygiainon (R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 134 [Charmadas], 161 [Deinias], 330 [Hygiainon]). Ancient authors were clearly interested in inventions by artists, particularly painters of this period; thus, Pliny informs us that the painter Philocles from Egypt invented outline drawing (*umbra hominis lineis circumducta*) together with the painter Cleanthes from Corinth (*HN* 35.16; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 413); Athenagoras (*Leg.* 17.2, p. 53 Marcovish) mentions Saurias from Samos (L. Lehmann in *KdA* II, 367–368) as the inventor of that technique; and in an Alexandrian papyrus with a list of artists (*Laterculi Alexandrini*, col. 6.14 Diels), the painter Semon from Athens is credited with this achievement (M. Dennert in *KdA* II, 373). These painters should all be dated to the beginning of the seventh century BCE, and for artists active this early, one would assume that ancient sources were drawing on existing signatures, none of which has survived.

In fact, ancient authors mention the practice of signing by painters, as in the case of the fourth-century BCE painters Nicias (Pliny, *HN* 35.27; U. Koch-Brinkmann in *KdA* II, 135–137) and Apelles (Pliny, *HN praef.* 26–27; Muller-Dufeu 2011, 112–113). However, signatures on paintings are documented by only a few cases; these include for the Archaic period a pinax from Penteskouphia near Corinth, which bears the signature of Timonidas (c. 580–570 BCE), who was also a vase painter (Guarducci 1978, 438–439, fig. 164; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 475); and for the Hellenistic period a small (first century

BCE) classicizing painted marble slab from Herculaneum, featuring Niobe and Leto and signed by one Alexander of Athens (Guarducci 1978, 439–440, fig. 165; G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 20–21).

In Greece, the earliest decorated pebble mosaics date back to the end of the fifth century BCE. The first mosaicist known by name is Gnosis, attested by his signature, *Gnōsis epoēsen*, on a pebble mosaic from Pella, dated to the last quarter of the fourth century BCE (Guarducci 1978, 441–442, fig. 166; Salzman 1982, 107–108 no. 103, pls. 29, 101.2–6, 102.1–2; D. Salzman in *KdA* I, 269–270). The earliest signature on a mosaic with regular cut stones (dated to the late third to early second century BCE) comes from Egypt and (p. 116) belongs to Sophilus, on a mosaic in *opus vermiculatum* and in *opus tessellatum* from Thmuis (today Tell Timai) in the Nile Delta southeast of Alexandria (Guarducci 1978, 442; Daszewski 1985, 142–158 no. 38; W. A. Daszewski in *KdA* II, 408–409). The practice of signing mosaics is documented elsewhere during the Hellenistic period.

Turning to Etruria and Rome, the earliest artists known by name are the Etruscan coroplast Vulca (C. Weber-Lehmann in *KdA* II, 509–510), who made the cult statue for the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus along with an image of Hercules and a quadriga that decorated its pediment at the end of the sixth century BCE, and the Western Greek painters and coroplasts Damophilus and Gorgasus (D. Vollkommer-Glökler in *KdA* I, 157 [Damophilus], 270 [Gorgasus]), responsible for the mural paintings and terracotta sculptures decorating the Temple of Ceres in Rome, inaugurated in 493 BCE. The first Roman painter was Gaius Fabius Pictor (R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 253), active at the end of the fourth century BCE, who was responsible for the decoration of the walls of the Temple of Salus on the Quirinal in Rome. Yet the earliest signature by a Roman artist is of a Gaius Pomponius (*CIL* I² no. 546, XI no. 6720.21; Calabi Limentani 1958, 314–315 no. 106; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 299) on a bronze statuette of Jupiter datable between the second half of the third century and the second century BCE, probably found in Orvieto.

For the later period, particularly significant are the already-mentioned signatures of sculptors—members of Greek communities working for a Roman clientele—specifying as their place of origin either Athens or Aphrodisias, two centers with a long tradition of sculpture; here the inscriptions may have served as a mark of quality (Squarciapino 1943; Stewart 1979, 158–174; Smith et al. 2006, 27–28; Stewart 2008, 15–17).

The latest signatures are dated between the fifth and the eighth centuries CE. The latest signed gem—a sardonyx intaglio—is by Flavius Romul[us?] Vest[alis?], dated to the beginning of the fifth century CE (Zazoff 1983, 323, 377, pl. 96.7; M. Dennert in *KdA* II,

354). The last documented Roman sculptor in the West is a Proiectus mentioned in the inscription on a sarcophagus from Trogir in Croatia (*CIL* III no. 14929; A. Rendić-Miočević in *KdA* II, 321) dated to 438 CE. This inscription refers to Proiectus as the seller of the sarcophagus. In the East, the last documented sculptor is Patrophilus, who created and signed a colossal—three times more than life-size—equestrian bronze statue of the emperor Theodosius II (402–450 CE) for Constantinople, a sculpture later (543 CE) reused by the emperor Justinian II for the decoration of his honorary column in the Augustaion. Patrophilus is the last known bronze sculptor from Greek and Roman antiquity; interestingly, his signature read *Patrophilos plastēs epoiēse*, a testament to the fact that the word *plastēs* was still used in Late Antiquity (*SEG* 48.898; Stichel 2000; M. Dennert in *KdA* II, 197–198). The last known die carver is Johannes Nesteutes, who worked in Constantinople at the end of the sixth century CE (*Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: Propylaeum ad acta sanctorum novembris*, Brussels, 1902, col. 7; M. Dennert in *KdA* I, 370). Finally, Staurachus Ezbontinus and Euremius signed a mosaic in *opus tessellatum* dated to about 750 CE, which decorates the church of Saint Stephanos in Umm al-Rasas, thirty (p. 117) kilometers southeast of Madaba. This is the latest signed mosaic from antiquity, standing in the tradition of mosaics in Jordan (Donderer 1989, 79 no. A 38, pl. 24.2; Piccirillo 1993, 220, 238–239; F. M. Piccirillo in *KdA* II, 420).

One of the most interesting results of the *Künstlerlexikon der Antike* project concerns the distribution of signatures according to artistic specialties (see appendix 5.1 below). Most of the signatures belong to sculptors, representing nearly half of the total number of artists known by name. This is a clear indication of pride in their status and particular expertise. On the other hand, literary sources hint at the fact that free painters may have enjoyed a higher social recognition (one need only mention the Athenian citizenship awarded to Polygnotus of Thasos for his painting in the Stoa Poecile (Harpocration, *Lexikon*, s.v. “Polygnotus”) and the honors decreed for him by the Amphiktyones in Delphi (Pliny, *HN* 35.59; Pollitt 1990, 126–127; U. Koch-Brinkmann in *KdA* II, 272–274). The lack of their signatures is a result of the irreparable loss of their work. For these reasons, it is likely that in the future, our information regarding painters will remain stable, whereas the number of signatures of sculptors will increase and with it our knowledge of that particular craft.

It may also be noted that most of the signatures found in recent years concern sculptors of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. This increase in the number of sculptors of these periods challenges the traditional assumption that most known artists lived in the Archaic to Classical periods. On the contrary, half of the known artists documented today were active between the Roman and Byzantine periods. In considering what is preserved of ancient sculpture, this result should not come as a surprise. Yet the traditional focus of

scholarship on Greek art has produced the false impression that in the Roman and Byzantine periods artistic output was on a reduced scale and that artists mostly gave up signing their works, which was certainly not the case. Other media reinforce this picture: except for coins, most of the known gold- and silversmiths, metalworkers, and coroplasts lived in the Roman period.

Self-Evaluation



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Fig. 5.2 Attic red-figure amphora signed by Euthymides, from Vulci. Revelers. C. 510 BCE. Ceramic. Height 60 cm. Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen inv. 2307.

(Photograph © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.)

We have only a few indications of the pride that Greek and Roman artists took in their craft. Among Greek sculptors (Charouzos 1946; Stewart 1990, 67–69), best known are Euphron from Paros (c. 475–450 BCE), who accompanies his signature with the expression *ouk adaēs*, “not ignorant” (IG I² no. 826; Loewy 1885, 38–39 no. 48; Jeffery 1990, 365, 370 no. 29; E. Walter-Karydi in *KdA* I, 230–231); Arcesilaus (fifth century BCE), who refers to himself as “qualified” (*axios*) in an epigram composed by Simonides (Diogenes

Laertius 4.45; Overbeck 1868, 90 no. 482; G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 94); and Onatas of Aegina (500–450 BCE) who qualifies himself as “skillful” (*sophos*) in the signature on his group of Achaean heroes at Olympia, as reported by Pausanias (Pausanias 5.25.8–10; Overbeck 1868, 80–81 no. 425; Pollitt 1990, 38–39; E. Walter-Karydi in *KdA* II, 155–159). For vase painters, one may mention Euthymides’s proud statement, “as never [painted] (p. 118) Euphronios” (*hos oudepote Euphronios*), on a large Attic red-figure amphora in Munich, an assertion that has been variously interpreted but most likely refers to artistic skill (figure 5.2: *ARV*² 26.1; *Para* 323; *Add*² 155; BAPD 200160; Simon 1976, 101, fig. 113; J.

Neils in *KdA* I, 240–241). Roman artists (see in general Stewart 2008, 21–28) were also capable of self-praise: a Novius Blesamus, who seems to have been a sculptor active in the Early Imperial period, states on his grave altar that he had “decorated the city and the world with statues” (*Hic olim statuis urbem decoravit et orbem*) (*CIL* VI no. 23083; Calabi Limentani 1958, 160 no. 57; Stewart 2008, 21; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 117). In general, (p. 119) however, unlike their Greek counterparts, self-representations by Roman artists are notable for their understated tone, depicting them in the act of working and in their humble clothing, without any hint of glorification (Zimmer 1982, 66–67; Clarke 2003, 118–123; Stewart 2008, 28).

Ancient literary sources characterize two painters as being particularly eccentric. One was Parrhasius (Reinach 1921, 220–243 nos. 257–301; Pollitt 1990, 153–156; U. Koch-Brinkmann in *KdA* I, 186–188), probably born in Ephesus, active between the second half of the fifth and the early fourth century BCE. Parrhasius is said to have been wealthy and arrogant, with a penchant for showing off in public, particularly through his elaborate clothes. Thus, in democratic Athens, he would go around dressed like a king, wearing a purple cloak, a golden wreath or white fillet, and golden shoes, with a stick surrounded by golden tendrils (Athenaeus 12.543c–f). Literary sources are emphatic about Parrhasius’s competition with Zeuxis of Herakleia (Reinach 1921, 188–219 nos. 199–256; Pollitt 1990, 149–153; U. Koch-Brinkmann in *KdA* II, 534–535), the other painter renowned for his eccentric character, including showing off at Olympia by exhibiting his name woven into the checks of his cloaks in golden letters, giving away his works as gifts because they were of too high a value to be sold, or writing beneath one of his works the verse “Easier to criticize than to imitate” (see especially Pliny, *HN* 35.61–66). Well known is the anecdote recounted by Pliny about the contest between Parrhasius and Zeuxis: the latter painted some grapes so successfully that birds flew up to the scene to pick them up; on his part, Parrhasius painted a linen curtain with such verisimilitude that Zeuxis, proud of his own achievement, requested that the curtain be removed in order to see his rival’s painting. This error cost Zeuxis to concede, “because he himself had only deceived birds, but Parrhasius had deceived him, an artist” (Pliny, *HN* 35.65, translation by Pollitt 1990). For such stories, we have to rely entirely on the literary tradition, which is consistent in depicting the leading painters of the fourth century BCE as strong personalities.

Wages

Even if artists did not, in general, belong to the upper echelon of society, one wonders whether they at least earned enough money and what the reward was for their work. The remuneration of ancient artists represents a very troubled issue for us today (for sculpture, see Himmelmann 1979; Stewart 1990, 65–67; Feyel 2006; Muller-Dufeu 2011, 134–140; for painted pots, see Boardman 2001, 153–167), on the one hand, because our epigraphical and literary sources do not always offer specific enough indications about wages (and to what extent the amount paid refers only to the execution of the work or if it includes, for example, the making of models and the expenses for the materials) and, on the other, because when concrete figures are provided, it is difficult to evaluate them in terms of currency and value in contemporary economy. Some of this evidence is worth reconsidering here.

(p. 120) Among the best and most frequently discussed sources are the Erechtheum accounts, written between 409 and 406 BCE: “Mynnion, living in Argile, [made] the horse and the man striking it, and later added the stele: 127 drachmas; Soclus, living in Alopece, the man holding the bridle: 60 drachmas; Phyromachus of Cephisia, the man leaning on a staff beside the altar: 60 drachmas; Iasus of Collytus, the woman with the little girl leaning against her: 80 drachmas” (*IG I³* no. 476, lines 169–183; Randall 1953; Pollitt 1990, 191–193; Stewart 1990, 23–24 with translation; Loomis 1998, 117–119; for the sculptors, see U. W. Gottschall in *KdA* I, 334–335 [Iasus], and R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 96 [Mynnion], 258–259 [Phyromachus], 404 [Soclus]). Further on, two sculptors were paid 240 drachmas: Agathanor for making a scene with two female figures and two mules and Antiphanes for a biga and a youth (E. Paul in *KdA* I, 9 [Agathanor]; W. Müller in *KdA* I, 56 [Antiphanes]). We learn that the sculptors were paid by the size of the relief. As the work probably took between one to two months and six to eight months, they were probably paid like simple mercenaries (in 413, Thracian peltasts were paid by the Athenians one drachma per day, according to Thucydides, 7.27.1–2; Loomis 1998, 44, 55–56). Two other documents point to the same conclusion. In about 250 BCE, the sculptor Sarpedon was paid 25 drachmas for a wooden statue of Dionysus used in a Dionysiac festival at Delos (Loewy 1885, 360 no. 530; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 364). In the second to third centuries CE, the coppersmith Celatus was paid 100 sesterces for a bronze statuette of Mars, found in the Fosdyke in Lincolnshire; the bronze itself already had a value of three denarii (Calabi Limentani 1958, 130–131, 169 no. 142; Toynbee 1963, 131 no. 16, pl. 19; Potter 1997, 76, fig. 67; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 129).

Delian inscriptions point to differences in income among artists. Thus, the painters Antidotus (*IG XI.2* no. 158 A, line 67; W. Müller in *KdA* I, 52) and Heracleides (*IG XI.2* no. 158 A, line 67; R. Vollkommer in *KdA*, I, 296) were paid 200 drachmas in 282 BCE for making two pinakes for the proskenion of the local theater, whereas the painters Asclepiades and Goneus received 2,500 drachmas in 274 BCE for painting the wooden skenai and paraskenia of the same building (*IG XI.2* no. 199 A, line 96; G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 98). Considering the significant difference in the amounts being paid, one can infer that the last two painters were seen as better painters and received a better reward.

Similarly, the sculptors of fame working on the figural decoration of the Temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus received higher compensation than common sculptors. Thus, Timotheus received 2,240 Aeginetan drachmas (about 3,200 Athenian drachmas) for three acroterial sculptures, probably a total of four figures. In contrast, it seems that Hectoridas received only 3,010 Aeginetan drachmas (4,300 Athenian drachmas) for about twenty figures on both pediments (*IG IV².1* no. 102, lines 88-90 [Timotheus], 87-88, 109-110 [Hectoridas]; Burford 1969, 215-217; Pollitt 1990, 104-105; Stewart 1990, 273-274; Yalouris 1992, 67-74; A. Stewart in *KdA* II, 475-479 [Timotheus]; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 290-291 [Hectoridas]).

In general, however, most sculptors and painters seem to have been paid like other laborers. Famous artists were paid more, but on the whole, they did not receive (p. 121) stellar compensations, with some exceptions such as the above-mentioned Zeuxis and Parrhasius. Another special case was the Athenian painter Nicias (Reinach 1921, 286-295 nos. 362-374; Pollitt 1990, 169-171; U. Koch-Brinkmann in *KdA* II, 135-137), who was bestowed the honor of representing his phyle as choregos in 320-319 BCE (*IG II²* no. 3055). He could also afford to refuse to sell a painting of the Nekyia to Ptolemy I, giving it as a gift to Athens instead (Pliny, *HN* 35.132). Nicias was honored with a public burial and an inscription on his tombstone celebrating him as the best painter of his time (Pausanias 1.29.15). Another exceptional case concerns the sculptor Damophon of Messene (Stewart 1990, 303-304; Themelis 1996, 154-185; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 157-160; Sève 2008), active between 210 and 180 BCE. Damophon was honored, with his sons, receiving free food and accommodations for life, in the Sanctuary of Despoina at Lycosura. This was because Damophon gave up the remuneration of 3,546 tetradrachmas for his carving of the cult group of this sanctuary. Seven cities honored Damophon with an inscription on a Doric column facing the Heroon D, located in front of the Asclepieum at Messene. The heroon also may have been dedicated to the sculptor and may have served as his tomb. The towns of Lycosura and Leucas also honored Damophon with two bronze statues and gave him the title of benefactor.

The most expensive Greek and Roman works of art known to us are paintings. Apelles's picture of Aphrodite Anadyomene for the Asclepieum at Cos was later moved by Augustus to the Temple of Caesar in Rome, while giving a tax allowance of 100 talents to Cos (Strabo 14.2.19; on the painter, see Reinach 1921, 314–361 nos. 400–486; Pollitt 1990, 158–163; G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 62–64). The one or two paintings of Aristeides, son of Nicomachus, from Thebes, representing Dionysus and Ariadne, was or were estimated to be worth 600,000 denares (100 talents) and placed in the Temple of Ceres in Rome by Lucius Mummius after the destruction of Corinth (Pliny, *HN* 35.100; on the painter, see Reinach 1921, 272–280 nos. 347–349; Pollitt 1990, 168–169; G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 82–83). A painting by Cydias (fourth century BCE) showing the Argonauts was bought for 144,000 sesterces by the politician Hortensius in the first half of the first century BCE (Pliny, *HN* 35.138; on the painter, see Reinach 1921, 296–297 nos. 376–377; Pollitt 1990, 175; W. Ehrhardt in *KdA* I, 433–434). Hortensius erected a temple in order to house this painting in his villa in Tusculum. As a point of comparison, one may note that Sulla could afford to live during the same years in a very convenient house for a total of 3,000 sesterces a year (Plutarch, *Sull.* 1.4).

Silver vases could also fetch very high prizes. The Greek silversmith Mentor, active in the first half of the fourth century BCE, was particularly famous for his silver vessels; according to Pliny, the orator Lucius Crassus bought two skyphoi for 100,000 sesterces (Pliny, *HN* 33.147; Pollitt 1990, 217; M. Seifert in *KdA* II, 73). Two skyphoi made by the Greek goldsmith Zopyrus, active in about the middle of the first century BCE, were even more expensive, their estimated price being 1,200,000 sesterces (Pliny, *HN* 33.156; F. Baratte in *KdA* II, 537).

It should be emphasized that in all these cases, we are dealing with extreme prices for special works of art made by leading artists; by no means should these prices be considered common for works of art produced in the Greek and Roman periods. In this (p. 122) connection, one may mention the fact that we can very often find, even on the most splendid silver plates from Roman treasures, stamps or inscriptions indicating the weight of silver along with the name of the artist, only the weight serving as guarantee for the prize of the vessel (Mango 1994, 38–44).

Schools

Only in the Pasitelean school do we come across the custom that the sculptor signed his sculpture by also naming his master (Stewart 1990, 306–307). This is the way in which

Stephanus, active in the second half of the first century BCE, indicated that his master was the sculptor Pasiteles, active in the first half of the first century BCE (*IG XIV* no. 1261; Linfert 1989, 89–93 no. 20, pls. 29–33; Stewart 1990, 230; H. Weinstock in *KdA II*, 420–422). Along similar lines, the sculptor Marcus Cossutius Menelaus mentioned that his master was Stephanus (*IG XIV* no. 1252; Palma and de Lachenal 1983, 84–89 no. 35; Stewart 1990, 230; R. Vollkommer in *KdA I*, 148).

On the other hand, ancient authors quite often write of masters and pupils (in general, see more recently Muller-Dufeu 2011, 106–108). We are told, for example, that the sculptor Hageladas of Argos (active in the last quarter of the sixth century BCE; Stewart 1990, 247–248; P. Moreno in *KdA I*, 275–276) was the father and teacher of the sculptor Argeiadas (active in about 480 BCE; G. Bröker and W. Müller in *KdA I*, 78), who was the father and teacher of another sculptor named Hageladas (active in the fifth century BCE; P. Moreno in *KdA I*, 276–280), who, in turn, was the teacher of the famous Polyclitus (active in the second half of the fifth century BCE; Stewart 1990, 263–266; E. Berger in *KdA II*, 276–287), who himself was the teacher of the sculptor and painter Aristeides I (active between the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth century BCE; G. Bröker in *KdA I*, 81–82), who was the teacher of the painter and sculptor Euphranor I (active in the fourth century BCE; Stewart 1990, 287–288; W. Müller in *KdA I*, 229–230), who was the teacher of the painters Charmantides (active in the fourth century BCE; R. Vollkommer in *KdA I*, 134), Leonides (active in the fourth century BCE; R. Vollkommer in *KdA II*, 12), and Antidotus I (active in the fourth century BCE; W. Müller in *KdA II*, 52), who was the teacher of the successful Athenian painter Nicias. This is just one example out of the many genealogies of artistic schools found in the literary record.

In addition, artists quite often had sons who were engaged in the same profession, continuing their fathers' practice (see in general Muller-Dufeu 2011, 103–106). This is particularly apparent in the case of sculptors, for whom we have significant information from signatures, often mentioning the patronymic of the artist, and from literary sources. Famous cases include Praxiteles, the son of the sculptor Cephisodotus and the father of two sculptors, Cephisodotus and Timarchus (Stewart 1990, 277–281, 295–297; M. Weber in *KdA I*, 408–410 [Cephisodotus I]; W. Geominy in *KdA I*, 305–319 [Praxiteles]; B. Andreae in *KdA I*, 410–411 [Cephisodotus II], and II, 472 (p. 123) [Timarchus]), and Scopas, the son of the sculptor Aristander (Stewart 1990, 284–286; C. Vorster in *KdA II*, 391–396 [Scopas]; W. Müller and G. Bröker in *KdA I*, 80 [Aristander]). Sometimes such a lineage could stretch for several generations, as, for example, in the Archaic period, with the sculptors Boupalus and Athenis (Stewart 1990, 243–244; W. Müller in *KdA I*, 125–126 [Boupalus]; G. Bröker in *KdA I*, 104–105 [Athenis]), who were sons of the sculptor Archermus (active on Chios in the sixth century BCE; Stewart 1990, 243–244; R.

Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 76–77), who was himself the son of the sculptor Micciades (Stewart 1990, 243–244; A. Bohne in *KdA* II, 82), who was the son of Melas (R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 60). For a later period, one may mention the Hellenistic sculptor Simias, from Rhodes (R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 388), who was the son of the sculptor Pythocritus, also from Rhodes (S. Lehmann in *KdA* II, 340), who was himself the son of the sculptor Timocharis from Eleutherna on Crete (R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 472–473); or the sculptor Pylilampus from Messene (S. Lehmann in *KdA* II, 331), who was the son of the sculptor Agias, also from Messene (E. Paul in *KdA* I, 13) and who was himself the son of the sculptor Aristomenes (G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 88–89).

Based on these and other such examples, it appears evident that both artists and authors writing about artists were particularly interested in showing a clear line of descent. It may have not been enough, in order to be regarded as a good artist, to be the son of a well-known one, but it must have helped to a certain extent. This is consistent with the general interest of Greek and Roman society in family trees and, ultimately, kinship and genealogy (see in general Rawson 2011; Laurence and Strömberg 2012).

Mobility

Most Greek and Roman artists appear to have worked in one place. But we also know of quite a few who traveled around, although, for the most part, not particularly far distances. Examples are Phatres and Psenobastis, traveling painters and gilders of mummy masks, active in the second century BCE in the region of Fayum (K. Parlasca and H. Seemann in Walker and Bierbrier 2000, 157 no. 114; Clarysse 2001, 67–70; M. Dennert in *KdA* II, 254).

Some artists, however, traveled greater distances. The sculptor Lysippus probably traveled the most of all Greek and Roman artists, working in distant cities and regions. His work is documented in Argos, Olympia, Sicyon, Corinth, Athens, Megara, Thebes, Thespieae, Delphi, Helicon, Thermum, Mieza, Alyzeia, Pharsalus, Dion, Pella, Cassandreia, Lampsacus, Ephesus, Myndus, Rhodes, Lindus, Cos, and Tarentum; to these, one can probably add Sagalassus, Tyre, Sidon, and Alexandria in Egypt (Stewart 1990, 289–294; P. Moreno in *KdA* II, 27–39). This intense activity is confirmed by Pliny's information (*HN* 34.37) that Lysippus created about fifteen hundred bronze statues over the course of his career.

(p. 124) We have knowledge of some ancient sculptors who worked even farther afield. The Greek sculptor Antiochus signed a marble statue probably representing the Parthian

queen Musa (38/37 BCE–3/4 CE) found in Susa (Cumont 1939; D. Rössler in *KdA* I, 55). The Greek sculptor Phocas made two more-than-life-size bronze statues of the king Dhamar'alî Yuhabirr and Tha'rân found in an-Nakhla al-Hamrâ' (Yaqla' in antiquity) in collaboration with the southern Arabian bronze caster Lahay'amm in Yemen at the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century CE (Weidemann 1983; M. Dennert in *KdA* II, 3 [Lahay'amm], and 253 [Phocas]). Qatus (Fattus, Kantus), son of Sinimmar of Babylonia, is mentioned as a Byzantine sculptor who carved a monumental equestrian statue of a Sasanidian sovereign at Taq-i Bustan near Kermanshah (northwest Iran) (Mackintosh 1978, 173–177; von Gall 1990, 38–47, pls. 15–16; K. Hornig in *KdA* II, 342–343).

It is possible that we have even found traces of a Roman painter as far away as western China. Paintings in the Buddhist shrine of the third century CE at Old Miran, which is situated east of the Takla-Makan desert on the Silk Road in western China, are signed in Indian Karoshti letters by a certain Tita, a name reminiscent of the Latin name Titus. The paintings in the shrine offer a wide range of styles, Graeco-Indian, Graeco-Roman, Persian, and native. The possibility of a Roman painter should be taken into serious consideration, although the identification of the place of origin of Tita has proved very controversial (Stein 1921, 512–531, figs. 136–137; K. Hornig in *KdA* II, 479–480).

Female Artists

In the study of Greek and Roman art, the possibility of female artists has only rarely been raised or acknowledged (Kampen 1975; Muller-Dufeu 2011, 173–175). This is consistent, on one hand, with the general omission of female artists in the art historical canon (Salomon 1991) but, on the other hand, also dependent on the limitations of the available sources.

There seems to be evidence for female artists in a scene featuring a vase workshop on an Attic red-figure kalpis attributed to the Leningrad Painter, showing a woman intent at painting a volute krater on the right side (Vicenza, Collezione Banca Intesa 2 [C278]; *ARV*² 571.73, 1659; *Para* 390; *Add*² 261; BAPD 206564; Boardman 1979, 180, fig. 323; see chapter 9 below) (figure 9.1). This is an unmistakable indication of the existence of female artists. Unfortunately, however, with the complete lack of epigraphical evidence for them, we have to rely entirely on ancient literary sources, which point to two particular areas of expertise in two separate time periods: painters in the Hellenistic period and goldsmiths in the Roman Imperial period. For Hellenistic female painters, a key text is a passage of Pliny's *Natural History* (35.147–148), listing the painters Aristarete, Timarete, Eirene,

Calypso, Iaia, and Olympias (Reinach 1921, 20 no. 1, 168 no. 161, 172 no. 170; Pfuhl 1923, II: 917–918; G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 81 [Aristarete]; R. Vollkommer in [\(p. 125\)](#) *KdA* II, 472 [Timarete]; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 200 [Eirene]; P. Knüvener in *KdA* I, 399 [Calypso]; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 334 [Iaia]; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 153 [Olympias]). The existence of female painters during this period is confirmed by Clement of Alexandria, who mentions Anaxandra, the daughter of the painter Nealces of Sicyon, active in the second half of the third century BCE (*Strom.* 4.124; Reinach 1921, 396 no. 524; W. Müller in *KdA* I, 38 [Anaxandra]) and Ptolemaeus Chennos, referring to Helene, daughter of Timon, who was active about 330 BCE and painted the battle near Issos (Photius, *Bibl.* p. 482; Reinach 1921, 402 no. 536; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 291 [Helene]).

For the Roman Imperial period, we know a number of female goldsmiths, all documented by funerary inscriptions from Rome, such as Pompeia Helena (*CIL* VI no. 4430; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 299); Serapa, living in the first century CE (*CIL* VI no. 8741; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 379); Sellia Epyre, living in the second to third centuries CE (*CIL* VI no. 9214; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 373); and Vicentia, belonging to the third/fourth century CE (*CIL* VI no. 9213; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* II, 497).

Conclusions

As repeatedly pointed out in this chapter, our knowledge of Greek and Roman artists is generally very limited, based on the available evidence. New findings will certainly help to get some more details about the lives and works of artists and the attitudes toward them in contemporary society, but the general information will probably remain sporadic and incomplete. Roman and Late Antique inscriptions, however, offer a very promising avenue of research; for too long, the focus of scholarship has been on Greek artists. Authors of the Roman and Byzantine periods were generally neglected because of the old prejudice of artistic decline in these two periods, including a diminution of the practice of signing. Surely, art was different, but artists continued to be artists and remained proud of their work.

[\(p. 126\)](#) Appendix 5.1

The three following lists concern only Greek, Roman, Graeco-Roman, and Byzantine artists known by their names. [\(p. 127\)](#) [\(p. 128\)](#) [\(p. 129\)](#) [\(p. 130\)](#)

1 How the Artists Are Handed Down

Specialty	Signature	Inscriptions	Inscriptions and literature	Pliny	Pausanias	Pliny and Pausanias
Architect	28	165	10	3	7	1
Architect and sculptor		1				
Architect and painter		1				
Sculptor	691	100	41	83	71	8
Sculptor and painter	1	1	3	1		
Sculptor or painter	1					
Stonecutter (τεχνίτης and λιθοξόος)	30	48				
Painter	9	46	4	90	5	2
Painter and/or stucco worker	1					
Painter and coroplast				2		

Greek and Roman Artists

Vase painter	34		2			
Potter	109	4				
Vase painter and potter	11					
Vase painter or potter	1					
Potter and coroplast	1					
Mosaicist	89	7		1		
Gem engraver	57	10	1	2		
Gem and die engraver	2					
Die engraver	48					
Gold- and silversmith	26	62	1	5		
Metalworker	197	12		4		
Gilder	2					
Coroplast	50	4				
Ivory carver		6				
Oculariarius		2				
Total	1,388	469	62	191	83	11

2 Origins of the Artists						
Specialty	Greek before belonging to the Roman Empire	Roman	Greek in the Roman Empire	Byzantine (East Rome after 395 CE)	Greek cannot be dated	Total
Architect	93	91	52	51	6	293
Architect and sculptor	3		1			4
Architect and painter				1		1
Sculptor	711	70	231	6	59	1,077
Sculptor and painter	7		1		1	9
Sculptor or painter	1					1
Stonecutter (τεχνίτης and λιθοξόος)	6	4	30	41		81
Painter	148	59	19		28	254
Painter and/or stucco worker			1			1
Painter and coroplast	2					2

Greek and Roman Artists

Vase painter	36					36
Potter	116					116
Vase painter and potter	11					11
Vase painter or potter	1					1
Potter and coroplast	1					1
Mosaicist	9	37	21	31		98
Gem engraver	37	13	23		1	74
Gem and die engraver	2					2
Die engraver	47		1	1		49
Gold- and silversmith	12	65	19	2	2	100
Metalworker	16	198	7		3	224
Gilder	1		1			2
Coroplast	21	3	29		1	54
Ivory carver		6				6
Oculararius		2				2
Total	1,281	548	436	133	101	2,499

3 When the Artists Were Active

Specialty	Archaic (until 500- 490 BCE)	Classical and Late Classical (500- 490 to 330 BCE)	Hellenistic (330 to 30 BCE)	Roman Republic (until 31 BCE)	Roman Imperial I (31 BCE to 193 CE)	Roman Imperial II (193 to 395 CE)	Ro im (no att to
Architect	13	27	53	19	81	23	17
Architect and sculptor	1	2			1		
Architect and painter							
Sculptor	112	208	391	6	161	59	73
Sculptor and painter		6	1			1	
Sculptor or painter	1						
Stonecutter (τεχνίτης and λιθοξόος)		5	1	1	3	20	10
Painter	17	58	73	6	38	12	19
Painter and/ or stucco worker					1		
Painter and coroplast	2						

Greek and Roman Artists

Vase painter	22	14					
Potter	88	28					
Vase painter and potter	9	2					
Vase painter or potter	1						
Potter and coroplast	1						
Mosaicist			9	1	14	30	7
Gem engraver	4	4	29	8	23		4
Gem and die engraver		2					
Die engraver		42	5		1		
Gold- and silversmith		5	7		50	17	15
Metalworker	4	2	10		191	2	12
Gilder			1		1		
Coroplast	1	1	19	1	26	3	2
Ivory carver							6
Oculariarius					1		1
Total	276	406	599	42	592	167	160

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the architects of ancient Greece and Rome, with particular emphasis on their social standing and on the problems involved in the reconstruction of their specific contribution. It begins by considering evidence concerning Greek and Roman architecture, including inscriptions and documents such as the treatise *De architectura* by Vitruvius Pollio and the *syngraphe* (specification) and *paradeigmata*. It then turns to a discussion of the role of architects as designers and contractors and sometimes even as leaseholders and supervisors of buildings. It also discusses the specific characteristics of the workshops to which the executing craftsmen belonged. The chapter discusses some Greek and Roman architects such as Ictinus, Callicrates, Mnesicles, Libon, Theodotus, Philon of Eleusis, Pytheus, Deinocrates, Sostratus of Cnidus, Cleon, Cossutius, Apollodorus, and Vitruvius himself.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architects, architecture, buildings, craftsmen, paradeigmata, syngraphe, Vitruvius, workshops

In the perception of ancient contemporary society, Greek and Roman architects occupied an odd median position. Because of the increasing complexity of buildings, architects were less and less involved in their actual construction, providing instead the necessary plans and overseeing their erection. Therefore, architects were expected to be able to plan the building process with their clients, calculate the necessary costs, and, finally, direct the construction of buildings in coordination with the craftsmen or the contractors. Naturally, the construction of a temple or a residential building, with all its requirements, was much more demanding than the simple carving of a statue, and because of this expertise, the architect was regarded as an intellectual (Plato, *Plt.* 295E–260A), raised above the level of simple craftsmen (*banausoi*) (Coulton 1977, 23–26; Hellmann 2002, 34–35; Gros 1983). However, in the ancient Greek and Roman world, an architect was not necessarily paid significantly more than a craftsman (for Classical Athens, see Loomis

1998, 97–120, 277–282); yet because of his managing position, he had more possibilities to earn additional money (Hellmann 2002, 50–51).

As a rule, plans to construct buildings were most likely defined in advance, and the architects were involved only later to bring the plans to fruition. Thus, for example, Deinocrates failed to persuade Alexander the Great to transform Mount Athos into a portrait of the ruler holding a city in his hands (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 2 *praef.* 2).

Despite this fact, there were also architects of fame. Pytheus (supposedly from Asia Minor, and on whom see below), for instance, was hired for the construction of the tomb of King Mausolus of Caria (*De arch.* 7. *praef.* 12–13), and Hermogenes (possibly from Priene, and on whom see below) was hired for that of the Temple of Artemis at Magnesia (*De arch.* 3.2.6). However, it often remains unclear what was exactly the basis for an outstanding reputation. According to our experience with contemporary architects, or “archistars,” one would expect that a major personality would be linked with exceptional skills in design. However, in the Greek and Roman world, other qualities probably also played an important role, such as the ability to coordinate the construction process and to solve specific technical problems.

(p. 137) Thus, the architects were often not only the authors of the design but also the contractors (*ergolabos*) (a contentious issue; see Noack 1927, 311; Coulton 1977, 23; Jacquemin 1990, 87) and sometimes even the leaseholders and supervisors of buildings, such as theaters (Demosthenes 18.28). Finally, architects were also members of committees that conducted the examination of buildings (Wittenburg 1978). As such, architects were deeply embedded in contemporary society and also had to prove themselves with the help of their rhetorical skills (Hellmann 2002, 37–38).

Our information concerning Greek and Roman architects relies on scattered references in the ancient literary tradition and on the information provided by inscriptions, which generally give an account of the construction process (see in general Scranton 1960; Hellmann 1999; Hellmann 2002, 22–27; see also chapter 8 below). These inscriptions belong for the most part to the Greek world, where their function was as proof for the attentive supervision of the building process. One would expect similar written records from the Roman world, but those are not preserved, because they were stored in archives and only rarely written into stone (e.g., the building inscription from Puteoli; Riccobono et al. 1940–1943 no. 153). Because of the different social system in the Roman world and the different positions of the supervising officers and dedicators, including the emperors, it was not necessary to provide additional information by publishing those records.

On the other hand, the Roman world has provided us with the treatise *De architectura* by Vitruvius Pollio, an inexhaustible source of information for ancient architecture, which

provides an apparently authentic record of the work of at least one Roman architect (see in general Ferri 1960; Geertman and de Jong 1989; Gros 1997; Howe and Rowland 1999; H. Knell in *KdA* II, 498–509; Knell 2008; Schofield and Tavernor 2009; see also chapter 2 above). Furthermore, Vitruvius names a large number of predecessors, above all Greek architects, some of whom had produced their own writings. None of these treatises documenting the practice of writing on the part of ancient architects (Wesenberg 1984) is preserved.

On balance, our information concerning Greek and Roman architects appears distinctively different for the two cultures. However, in both cases, constructions can be directly attributed to architects based on specific features of design and in spite of the fact that inscriptions that serve as signatures are almost never present on Greek buildings (Hellmann 2002, 51), while their existence in the Roman world, presumed on the basis of ancient literary sources (Pliny, *HN* 36.42), appears no less problematic (Gros 2006, 505).

Based on the specific features of buildings attributable to particular architects, several attempts have been made to reconstruct whole oeuvres (Hellmann 2002, 53–55). However, depending on the author, these lists of buildings can be very different from one another, mainly because of the lack of safe, viable criteria for attribution. In this respect, these attempts are very similar to those made in association with other media, including the reconstruction of the oeuvres of famous sculptors and painters (consider the case of the “Theseum Architect”; Miles 1989, 221; see chapter 23 below). Additionally, there is the risk that the ancient tradition itself may not always be reliable, such as when (p. 138) Pausanias (8.41.9) mentions Ictinus (on whom see below), one of the architects of the Parthenon (figure 6.1), as the author of the Temple of Apollo at Bassae. While this is not necessarily a misattribution, it should be taken with a grain of salt, given the many similar aggrandizing misattributions to famous authors found in Pausanias (e.g., his attribution of the pedimental sculptures of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia to Paeonius and Alcámenes; see Rolley 1994, 363–364).



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Fig. 6.1 Parthenon, Athens, view from the northwest. 447–432 BCE. Pentelic marble.

(Photograph © Marie Mauzy/Art Resource, New York, ART392249.)

Consequently, for no Greek or Roman architect do we have at our disposal a large body of work safely attributable based on external criteria that would allow us to recognize the different phases of development of his artistic personality. Apparently, this was already a difficult task for contemporary art criticism in the ancient world. While specific criteria for stylistic judgment are documented for sculptors

and painters in order to distinguish and characterize their work, comparable criteria are missing in the case of architects. Thus, when Vitruvius formulates his judgments, they are linked only to single personalities. As a result, no master-student relationship is documented for architects, comparable to the one attested for sculptors, including Polyclitus and his school (Arnold 1969). By and large, the ancient tradition about architecture ignores the large number of architects attested by both the mass of buildings produced and the documentation provided by the epigraphical sources. Only such knowledge would make it possible to clearly set apart the outstanding achievements and their distinctive features.

(p. 139) Vitruvius (*De arch.* 1. *praef.* 1.4–5), for instance, refers to the training of architects and lists all the knowledge that an architect must have, including, among many other fields, law, medicine, and geography (Anderson 1997, 4–8). However, in Middle Comedy (fourth century BCE), even cooks were supposed to have such knowledge, and Vitruvius's list characterized a specialist in general (Wilkins 2000).

Overall, it is difficult to attribute innovative impulses in architecture to single individuals. Can the new, innovative plan of the Parthenon be attributed to the genius of a single architect, or was it built to meet the requirements of the political committees that served as patrons (Neils 2005)? A similar question could be asked with regard to the Forum of Trajan. Was it Apollodorus's (on whom see below) achievement—if he indeed designed the entire project—to have created innovative forms through the combination of diverse types of buildings, or was it Trajan's, in his role as adviser (Packer 2001)?

In addition, Greek and Roman building construction was a process during which the original concept could repeatedly be changed, sometimes to a large extent. The atrium of the Pantheon in Rome was probably lowered because the available column shafts were not long enough (Wilson Jones 2000, 199–201) (figure 8.6). Often the construction of temples was interrupted, and buildings were left unfinished, even for centuries. Famous examples are the Olympieion at Athens, which was begun under the Pisistratids and continued after centuries, first under Antiochus IV Epiphanes, then under Augustus, and finally completed under Hadrian (Tölle-Kastenbein 1994; Gruben 2001, 246–253). Another example is the Temple of Apollo at Didyma (Gruben 2001, 396–412). The Propylaea on the Acropolis and the Telesterion at Eleusis were originally planned differently and were only partially completed (Gruben 2001, 191–202, 235–246). The architects who were involved in these constructions did not live to see the completed buildings, and others had to continue their work.

Changes to the original aesthetic concept were frequent. During the construction of the Parthenon, for instance, the distribution of the relief decoration (including the frieze and the metopes) seems to have been altered (Neils 2005). When the Trajaneum at Pergamum was built, the originally intended height of the columns in the surrounding halls no longer seemed appropriate and was therefore increased (Nohlen 1984). As a result, today it is hard to establish whether the architect himself or someone else involved in the building construction changed the original plans.

The scope of the architect's work poses another unsolved problem. What were the details that an architect provided, and how precise were they? Did he determine individual forms, such as the curve of the Doric capital, the way it was painted, or the decoration of the sima? Ancient sources, especially inscriptions, suggest that people often worked with models or samples of these parts (*paradeigma*; see below), including, besides pure decoration, dowels and furnishings. The architect and the building committee always had to approve these models or samples. However, these parts were often only designed by the time of their execution, as is shown in a few preserved buildings (Hellmann 2002, 39–41). Therefore, a consistent execution of the original design was not guaranteed.

We also have to consider the specific characteristics of the workshops to which the executing craftsmen belonged (Hellmann 2002, 70–71). Otherwise, it would be (p. 140) impossible to explain the numerous large and small variations that can be seen in the preserved buildings. Because the architect's work was determined, much more than today, by the dialogue among the various constituencies involved in the construction of a building, it remains difficult to recognize the specific characteristics that reveal an architect's personal profile.

Greek Architects

According to the Homeric poems, experts in planning—namely, architects—are absent from the early Greek period (tenth to eighth centuries BCE) (Philipp 1968). For instance, the *Iliad* (6.315–317) mentions the *tektones*, the carpenters who created the *thalamos*, the house and court of the palace of Alexander, and who are comparable to the carpenters responsible for complex constructions such as ships (*Il.* 15.411). In Homer, planning and execution appear closely connected, with the patron giving the most important instructions. Achilles (*Il.* 23.164), for instance, designs the funeral pyre of Patroclus, which has an outside length of 100 feet (about 30 meters). In addition, in Homer, the patron himself is usually capable of building basic things. Odysseus, for instance, carves his *thalamos's* bed out of an olive tree (*Od.* 23.184–204).

The word *architekton* literally means the first or leader of the carpenters. The term appears for the first time in the fifth century BCE, initially in Herodotus (3.60, 4.87) and later in inscriptions (Coulton 1977, 15–16; Orlandos and Travlos 1986, 40; Callebat 1999–2000; Hellmann 2002, 32–33). Since at least the late fifth century BCE, there appear to be three distinct areas of specialization for architects: one is the architect specializing in design, most likely responsible for the plan of an entire building; another was the contractor (*ergolabos*), in charge of the actual construction; the third was the architect who, as member of a public committee or institution, inspected and controlled the execution of the work. This spectrum of skills began to develop over the course of the Archaic period. However, a concrete professional profile with a set curriculum for training, comparable to that for physicians, never seems to have existed, not even at the end of the Hellenistic period or in Roman times. When a contractor—similar to the character Habinnas described by Petronius in Trimalchio's dinner (*Sat.* 71.5–6)—built a house, a tomb, or a simple construction, he probably used established examples and therefore did not have to hire an architect to design the plan.

Conversely, larger architectural layouts gained importance. Hippodamus of Miletus connected the best form of government with respective layouts for cities and perhaps had a role in the planning of both the Piraeus and the colony of Thurii (McCredie 1971; Martin 1974, 15–16, 103–106; Benvenuti Falciai 1982; Schuller, Hoepfner, and Schwandner 1989; Gorman 1995; M.-C. Hellmann in *KdA* I, 321–326).

Increasing specialization was necessary for the first large constructions in the Archaic period, particularly those made of stone. A good example is the Temple of Aphaea at Aegina (Bankel 1993; Gruben 2001, 121–127). Here the correspondence between the

(p. 141) blocks and their joints in the platform with the position of the walls and the columns above is so accurate that we have to assume that a detailed plan was made before the construction. This is not evident for the earlier Temple of Hera at Olympia (Gruben 2001, 51–56). The various solutions to the so-called Doric corner conflict also document that a design existed before the construction was started, because with a shift in the arrangement of the frieze, the position of the columns underneath would also change. Consequently, the position of the columns had to be determined first, and this decision then had an impact on the design of the platform (Coulton 1977, 60–64). However, as the buildings became more and more complex, the planning and decision-making procedures also became more elaborate, and the work of the architects was split into the three areas mentioned above.

In a Greek polis, the people's assembly decided with a decree (*psephisma*) on the work and the means that were necessary for its execution (Höcker 1993). Occasionally, the assembly could also choose the architect, although this decision more often fell to the committee, which had to control and monitor the construction. The members of such committees could be renewed at certain intervals, and they had numerous tasks (Wittenburg 1978). First and foremost, they had to make sure that the constructions were executed according to the specifications (*syngraphai*). Aside from the form of the construction, these specifications also included the timeframe in which the building should be finished. Moreover, the committees took care of various other problems, including supplying materials such as stones—if the polis had control over the quarries—or negotiating with contractors. At the same time, poleis could also build on their own (Schaps 1996), as is documented in Athens during the fifth and fourth centuries BCE with the Erechtheum or buildings at Eleusis. In Eleusis, an architect was hired who only received his full pay once he had completed specific buildings by hiring carpenters or day workers and was thus treated as a contractor employed directly by the state.

In the various forms of government in the Greek world, the situation was probably very similar, because an aristocratic regime or a tyrant had to hand tasks to committees, too, but possibly also had more say. In any case, this extensive exchange of information between the participating patrons and their committees and the workers, including the architect, led to a differentiated dialogue, which is illustrated in various categories of documents (see chapter 8 below).

One type of evidence, important for the understanding of the architect's work, is the *syngraphe* (specification), or description of the construction project (Coulton 1977, 54–55; Hellmann 2002, 23–25). The first preserved record that we have of a *syngraphe* is the Nike Temple decree (*IG I³* no. 35; Mark 1993, 104–107), dated to the mid-fifth century BCE, commissioning the Nike Temple and its altar on the Athenian Acropolis and referring

to the architect Callicrates as the author of the specifications. The *syngraphai* of the Skeuotheke of Philon at the Piraeus (*IG II²* no. 1668; Hellmann 1999, 46 no. 12) and of the Temple of Zeus at Lebadea (*IG VII* no. 3073; Hellmann 1999, 52 no. 13), with their abundance of detailed information, represent the best documentation for this type of record. With the help of the *syngraphai*, the architect described the construction to the people's assembly so that a decision could be made, while at the same (p. 142) time making the appropriate preparations for the construction. Drawings were not so important for this presentation, but they could be used for internal communication (Heisel 1993).

Next came *paradeigmata* (Coulton 1977, 55–58; Hellmann 2002, 38–39; Wesenberg 2007). It remains unclear what *paradeigmata* looked like. Most likely, they were models or drawings that helped to illustrate the qualities of buildings. Herodotus (5.62) reports that the Alcmaeonidae built the Temple of Apollo at Delphi more beautifully than the existing *paradeigma*. This type of planning was thus in use from at least the Late Archaic period. Building models are already documented from the Geometric period, and there are representations of buildings in drawing or relief from the sixth century BCE (Schattner 1990; Kienast 1985). In the preserved contexts, they served as votive offerings or were introduced in representations with a narrative character, such as the scenes on the François Vase (Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 4209: *ABV* 76.1, 682; *Para* 29; *Add²* 21; BAPD 300000; Arias and Hirmer 1962, pl. 44; Shapiro, Iozzo, and Lezzi-Hafter 2013, pls. 26, 31, 38–40, 43) or one small pediment from the Acropolis (Floren 1987, 243 n. 36). Together with architectural drawings, which are documented for the Near East and Egypt beginning in the second millennium, they show that such forms of representation can be expected at a relatively early date. An important example is the ship's bridge across the Hellespont built by Mandrocles of Samos in 513 BCE for Darius I. Mandrocles dedicated an image of the bridge to Hera in the sanctuary of the goddess of his home city (Herodotus 4.88; Pollitt 1990, 125–126). This must have been a reproduction of his construction that emphasized its function, since the king and his army also appeared. Thus, *paradeigma* could represent both the plan and the completed project.

Paradeigmata could have also served as models of certain refinements of details, such as the curvature, entasis, or other effects that sometimes only appeared in certain regions (Haselberger 1999). The curvature could be produced with the help of the circle, with drawings similar to the ones that Lothar Haselberger has discovered and analyzed on the walls of the Temple of Apollo at Didyma (Haselberger 1991; see chapter 2 above). Various forms of graphic clarification can be assumed in relation to the construction of buildings, despite the fact that no comprehensive drawings are preserved, and they are rarely

mentioned in inscriptions (Coulton 1977, 51–53, 68–73; Hellmann 2002, 39–41). Among other reasons, this practice is explained by the fact that the architects had to communicate their work to many different employees.

According to the inscriptions, the architect had many responsibilities during the construction of a building (Hellmann 1999). He took part in the selection of the location, made sure that the measurements were correct, oversaw the execution of even minute details including the rendering of rough-picked areas, managed the payments, and approved the work. He also created additional sketches with details of special parts (*anagraphai, hypographe*; Coulton 1977, 70–71) to convey plans to the contractor and carpenters. Finally, he oversaw the erection of the stelai with records of the documents and building accounts in the appropriate public places. One person, however, was not always responsible for all of these jobs.

(p. 143) If we look at individual, well-known names of architects of the Archaic and Classical periods, a dilemma becomes apparent that is similar to that regarding other intellectuals in Greek and Roman antiquity. In the later reception, the names that made it into the historical record were those of architects who were responsible for the famous monuments of the various Greek poleis.

The following discussion focuses on a few Greek architects, in order to illustrate aspects of the ancient tradition and organization of the work. According to Pausanias (8.41.9; see also Strabo 9.395), Ictinus (Svenson-Evers 1996, 157–211; M. Korres in *KdA* I, 338–345) built the Parthenon, but Plutarch (*Per.* 13) adds the name of Callicrates (Svenson-Evers 1996, 214–336; M. Korres in *KdA* I, 387–393), who built the long walls to the Piraeus and the Nike Temple. Ictinus also created the Telesterion at Eleusis (Strabo 9.395; Vitruvius, *De arch.* 7 *praef.* 16) and allegedly also the Temple of Apollo at Bassae (Pausanias 8.41.9). Some problems in this tradition can be solved in various ways, for instance, by assuming that Ictinus was the architect responsible for the design of the Parthenon and Callicrates, on the other hand, served as contractor (McCredie 1979). However, this explanation generates its own problems, including the question of whether a single contractor could have built the long walls to the Piraeus or the Parthenon.

On the other hand, we only know about the architects of the Erechtheum through inscriptions, which mention a certain Philocles and Archilochus as an architect of the committee (Svenson-Evers 1996, 273 and 279; W. Müller in *KdA* II, 244 [Philocles]; R. Vollkommer in *KdA* I, 77–78 [Archilochus]). However, the name of the actual creator of the building is missing, because it is not preserved in the inscription. In the process of tradition, certain individuals may have asserted themselves through their accomplishments, but uncertainty prevails, because later writers most likely preferred to resort to famous names, because several architects were usually involved in construction,

as the inscriptions show, and, finally, because it is possible that names were confused between generations.

Mnesicles is mentioned twice as the architect of the Propylaea in ancient literature, once relatively early in the third century BCE by the Atthidographer Philochorus (Harpocration, s.v. *Propylaea*) and later again by Plutarch (*Per.* 13) (Svenson-Evers 1996, 252-267; M. Korres in *KdA* II, 89-92). However, it remains unclear whether his name can be restored in the gap of the second Callias decree (*IG I³* no. 52 B), in which the name of the architect is lost. It is striking how such individual performances were common among architects. According to Pausanias (5.10.3), Libon built the Temple of Zeus at Olympia; aside from this, nothing is known of this architect (Coulton 1977, 28; Svenson-Evers 1996, 373-379; M.-C. Hellmann in *KdA* II, 14-19).

Theodotus, for instance, is only known through inscriptions, which name him as the architect of the Temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus, mainly mentioning the payment of his salary (he was privileged in being paid throughout the year) (Burford 1969, 141-144; Svenson-Evers 1996, 406-414; K. Reber in *KdA* II, 452-454). According to the inscriptions, he worked at least four years on the construction. If we assume a career span of approximately forty years, he could probably have designed and worked on ten such constructions.

(p. 144) We have the most detailed records for Philon of Eleusis (Fabricius 1941; Svenson-Evers 1996, 301-315; L. Lehmann in *KdA* II, 245-247). Apparently, he was already known among his contemporaries as a brilliant rhetorician, who convinced the Athenian assembly gathered in the theater of the quality of his Arsenal (*skeuotheke*) for the Piraeus (Cicero, *De or.* 1.14.62). The work began in 346, was interrupted in 339, and was not completed until 330/329 BCE. Thus, the work of a structure approximately 120 meters long lasted about ten to twelve years.

Philon's second building is the portico to the Telesterion at Eleusis, for which Vitruvius (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 17) names Philon as the architect and provides a date of around 317 BCE through his reference to Demetrius of Phaleron. The building inscriptions, on the other hand, date the beginning of the work for the years around 356 to 352 BCE and name the architect Philagrus. The work was interrupted and not continued until around 330 BCE. It is possible that Philon took up the work at that time, after the Arsenal was completed, and it is also possible that he wrote his lost essay *De aedium sacrarum symmetris* in connection with this work at Eleusis. Additionally, a Philon is known from Delphi as one of twelve contractors who were entrusted in the years after 346 BCE with the rebuilding of the sanctuary, which had been plundered by the Phocians, including the construction of a *hoplotheke* and a stoa. From this series of building projects emerges a coherent

curriculum with heterogeneous tasks that does not make it possible for us to trace the development of an artistic personality. It is possible that Philon had reached a certain status as contractor, if with this character one can identify the name, documented in inscriptions, of a trierarch (*IG II² 1622*, l. 694) and of a dedicator to Asclepius in the sanctuary of the god in Athens (*IG II² 1533*, l. 95).

Pytheus was a contemporary of Philon, about whom much information is preserved, mainly thanks to Vitruvius (Riemann 1963; Svenson-Evers 1996, 116–150; W. Hoepfner in *KdA II*, 334–338). A Hellenistic papyrus (*Laterculi Alexandrini* 7) already names Pytheus as the architect of the tomb of King Mausolus at Halicarnassus, whereas according to Pliny (*HN* 36.31), he was the sculptor who created the quadriga crowning that monument. Furthermore, Vitruvius repeatedly (e.g., *De arch.* 1.1.12) names Pytheus as the architect of the Temple of Athena at Priene (figure 6.2), an attribution for which we lack additional sources. Because the plan of the temple conforms to the city's grid system, the design of the general urban plan has also been attributed to the same architect. However, this cannot be verified. Finally, Pytheus was also active as a writer and apparently emphasized the exceptional role of architecture in comparison with the other arts and consequently also asked for an appropriate education for architects. Additionally, he disapproved of the Doric order. As in the case of Philon, the dates for Pytheus merge into a coherent curriculum. The plans for the Mausoleion are dated to before 350 BCE, while those for the Temple of Athena date to before 334 BCE. However, it remains unclear how and why Philon or Pytheus received these large commissions.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 6.2 Temple of Athena Polias, Priene. C. 340 BCE. Marble.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

During the Hellenistic period, a radical political and social change took place. With this change, courts now gained significance, guaranteeing more stable working conditions for larger projects. The tradition concerning Deinocrates's Athos project has already been mentioned (Meyer 1986; R. Vollkommer in *KdA I*, 162). Supposedly,

he (p. 145) disguised himself as Heracles and managed to have access to Alexander (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 2 *praef.* 1–2). This is hardly surprising if we keep in mind the references in ancient literature to the public performances by Hippodamus (Raeck 2005)

and to the practice of disguising oneself as a god in the early Hellenistic period. In ancient literature, Deinocrates is connected with the urban plan of Alexandria in Egypt, but again, the information is confusing, also because of its often anecdotal character.

It is even more difficult to assess Sostratus of Cnidus, son of Dexiphanes (Müller 1989, 204–205; W. Müller in *KdA* II, 414–415). He supposedly built the Pharos of Alexandria under the first Ptolemies, which was completed in approximately 280 BCE. His name was written on the building. This alone makes it unlikely that he was the executing architect. Moreover, he belonged to the close circle of friends (the *philoï*) around Ptolemy II. It is possible that he had already distinguished himself in 285 and 272 BCE in Delphi with the execution of buildings and had erected a hall on high foundations. Apparently, he had good connections with the Greeks in many prominent places, as attested by the decrees honoring him from Delos. Therefore, he should probably be considered the contractor rather than the executing architect.

Many details are known about Cleon, only from papyri (Tittel 1924; Lewis 1986, 37–45; E. Wirbelauer in *KdA* I, 417). He worked in the Fayum as an architect in the years around 260 to 253/252 BCE, involved in both design and supervision. He was responsible for all public buildings and the maintenance of the canals feeding into Lake Moeris and was highly respected. After an inspection under Ptolemy II in the Fayum, Cleon was (p. 146) dismissed, apparently because of financial problems, and was replaced by Theodorus, who had previously worked as an assistant (*hyparchitekton*) for Cleon, a fact that indicates a well-structured hierarchy (Mertens 1985).

Apparently, the architects' tasks and the division of labor had not fundamentally changed. They could, however, have closer ties to the royal house and therefore had certain advantages and better opportunities to realize their projects, and they probably also received better payments. On the other hand, the position also involved a higher risk of falling into disgrace with the rulers.

In the Hellenistic cities, no substantial changes can be seen regarding the architects' position and tasks (Barresi 2007). In addition, however, there must have been designing architects who worked in different places. Among them was Hermogenes, an architect of the third to second century BCE, whom we know almost exclusively through Vitruvius's treatise (Hoepfner and Schwandner 1990; W. Hoepfner in *KdA* I, 305–310). Hermogenes wrote an essay about the two large temples he built, *De aede Dianae ionica quae est Magnesiae pseudodipteros et Liberi Patris Teo monopteros* (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 7 praef. 12), and dismissed, similarly to Pytheus, the Doric order. It is not clear to what extent such considerations became part of the public debate, but for sure, Doric temples continued to be built. It is possible that this Hermogenes is the same person, son of

Harpalus, who dedicated in Priene the *hypographe* of a temple (Hiller von Gaertringen 1906, no. 207).

Perhaps the fact that architects since the fourth century BCE increasingly made an effort also to comment on their works in writing argues for a new intellectuality among architects (Gros 1983; Wesenberg 1984; see chapters 2 and 3 above). They not only referred to the buildings they themselves had constructed but also spoke about general principles, as far as we can tell from the titles and rare thoughts that are preserved. Theodorus of Phocaea (F. Seiler in *KdA* II, 448–449), for example, wrote about the Tholos that he had built in Delphi (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 7 *praef.* 12), a Silenus wrote about *de symmetriis doricorum* (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 12), and an Arcesius (G. Bröker in *KdA* I, 79) wrote about the temple at Tralles, which he had built, and the Corinthian order (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 12). In these texts, the distinction between the designing architect and the ones who worked as contractors might have become more apparent.

Roman Architects

Architecture in Italy developed at first under similar conditions to those in Greece. For example, it is very likely that the Temple of the Capitoline Triad on the Capitoline in Rome, similar in its large size to the contemporary dipteroi in Ionia, was built with an executing planner and supervisor who were responsible for the construction. However, actual names of architects are known to us only through Vitruvius's work (*De arch.* 7 *praef.* 17). Vitruvius praises, as among the first representatives of his profession in Italy, Cossutius (W. Müller in *KdA* I, 147) and Mucius (C. Leschke in *KdA* (p. 147) II, 94–95)—Cossutius because he significantly contributed to the construction of the Olympieion in Athens under King Antiochus IV Epiphanes and Mucius because of his innovative contribution to design in building a temple commissioned by Gaius Marius.

We also have to take a closer look at Vitruvius. His work records several significant changes in the training and profession of architects in the Roman period. A large number of these architects were trained in the context of the army. Vitruvius himself participated in Caesar's campaigns and gained considerable experience working with different kinds of materials and construction methods, including artillery and construction related to water supply.

Architects also worked in the civilian sector. Vitruvius, for instance, designed a basilica for the city of Fanum on the Adriatic, and he worked under Agrippa to maintain the water supply for Rome (*cura aquarum*).

Because of its strong ties to the emperor, the army had many resources at its disposal. Under Trajan, Apollodorus of Damascus (W. Müller in *KdA* I, 66–67), for instance, built a large bridge across the Donau for the emperor's campaigns in Dacia and probably also wrote an essay about catapults. Therefore, it is not surprising that the emperor also hired Apollodorus to work on large projects in Rome. If help was needed in the provinces, the governors turned to the emperor and asked him to send experts. From Pliny the Younger, we know that not all these requests were granted (*Ep.* 10.37), but that was most likely not always the case. What is clear is that through imperial supervision, a more distinct hierarchy of standards, demand for quality, and skills developed for architects. In this period, many more names of architects are recorded. In addition, there are a number of funerary monuments, which are sometimes quite elaborate and suggest a lucrative status and a prominent position in the social hierarchy (Donderer 1996).

However, also with regard to the Roman world, it is not possible for us to reconstruct an architect's oeuvre on a larger scale. Celer (W. Müller in *KdA* I, 129) and Severus (P. Gros in *KdA* II, 345–346) supposedly designed Nero's Domus Aurea. According to Tacitus (*Ann.* 15.42), they also designed a canal on which ships could travel from Pozzuoli to the Tiber. Domitian's residence on the Palatine Hill is often connected with Rabirius, who was apparently a friend of the poet Martial and is therefore mentioned in his work (7.56; 10.71). Finally, we can add the aforementioned Apollodorus, to whom modern literature attributes the largest number of constructions, including the Pantheon.

However, here also, it must be clarified what exactly were an architect's responsibilities. First of all, he designed the blueprints, as Vitruvius describes for his basilica in Fanum. The goal was to create the greatest possible effect with minimal costs. The writer Fronto, who lived under the Antonines, reports (Aulus Gellius, *NA* 19.10.2–5) that several architects submitted their plans and calculations of costs in competition to win commissions for construction.

We do not know what the situation was like with regard to the large constructions of the Republican period, such as the Theater of Pompey (figure 16.1), the Sanctuary of Fortuna at Praeneste, or, later, the imperial fora, the large baths, or the palace complexes.

If Apollodorus, as reported by Cassius Dio (69.4), designed Trajan's forum and the gymnasium identified with the baths on the Oppian Hill, that means that the design of (p. 148) the entire construction was his achievement, while individual contractors (*redemptores*) took care of the execution, with more or less freedom in translating the design into an actual building (on contractors in Roman architecture, see Lancaster 2008, 257).

Regarding the Colosseum (figure 26.2), Lynne Lancaster was able to show that the overall plan was executed by *redemptores* and that one of them wrongly interpreted the blueprint (Lancaster 2005). The project was not in danger because of this; however, it did result in one flight of stairs being constructed differently from the others.

Similar to the case in the Greek period, the profession of the architect was split into different areas. There was the architect who designed the construction and whose work could bring him fame. In fact, it is a topos characteristic of Roman culture that the patrons often tried to keep the architect's name secret, because they feared losing their fame to the architect. In the provinces, we see what this fame could actually look like. The citizens of Saldae, a city in Mauretania, spent a significant amount of money on an aqueduct that failed to work. Therefore, an engineer from the Legio III who had already retired was asked to help. He was able to solve the problem, and the citizens of Saldae praised him effusively (*CIL* VIII no. 2728).

There were many different types of architects in the administration and in the army, and a large workforce was available. This situation probably also allowed for technological progress, including in surveying and mapping. Furthermore, in Roman architecture, precision of execution was often less important than the logistical management of gigantic projects. This management might have been the most significant skill and accomplishment of many outstanding architects.

At any rate, it is difficult to find a distinct signature. Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli contains a large number of quite unusual constructions whose main characteristic is their unorthodox form. Records say that Hadrian was interested in construction and that Apollodorus once contemptuously rejected him by saying that he should mind his "pumpkins," by which he meant the domes in the emperor's villa (Gros 2002).

However, this behavior was quite typical for members of Roman aristocracy. As indicated by his correspondence, Cicero often visited the construction sites of his villas, managed the projects, and made changes to the plans (Anderson 1997). Caligula negotiated with architects the design of a theater just as a Jewish delegation was visiting him. Galba is said to have gone to his architect directly after a sacrifice in order to speed up the construction of his villa. Hadrian can very well be added to this list.

Thus, all of these builders repeatedly and actively shaped their private constructions and therefore influenced the process greatly. It is not clear to what extent they made use of actual blueprints or concrete designs. It is possible that Hadrian went further than his precursors and produced detailed sketches. However, it is not very likely that he himself oversaw the construction.

Compared with the architect's profession in modern times, the work of the architect in Greek and Roman antiquity was a blend of many diverse skills, and theory and practice were tightly intertwined.

(Translated from the German by Clemente Marconi.)

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The Patronage of Greek and Roman Art

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the patronage, financing, and sponsorship of art in ancient Greece and Rome, from sculpture to portraiture and triumphal arches. It begins by analyzing issues of patronage surrounding the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, before turning to the collaboration between Pericles as patron and Phidias as master designer in the reconstruction of the Acropolis in Athens. It then examines how artists gained more agency in the fourth century, in part because of the cultural and political interstices that opened up between the dominance of poleis such as Athens or Elis as patrons. It also looks at the Ptolemies and Attalids as the most prolific patrons during the Hellenistic period, along with Roman kings as the primary sources of patronage, including Augustus, Tiberius, and Nero. The chapter concludes by considering private individuals as patrons and collectors of visual arts such as funerary art.

Keywords: agency, ancient Greece, ancient Rome, art, financing, kings, patronage, sponsorship, Temple of Zeus, visual arts

Because the majority of extant works of Greek and Roman art are anonymous and unsigned, art historical interpretations are often focused on the intentions and communicative strategies of the patron. Identities have been created for artists posited on their work (see chapter 5 above and chapter 23 below), as, for instance, in Athenian and Apulian vase painting (with ad hoc names such as the “Achilles” or “Darius Painters”) or the putative “masters” behind important works of Roman sculpture such as Trajan’s column (“Maestro delle Imprese di Traiano”; Bianchi Bandinelli 1969, 250) or the portraits of Caracalla (“the Caracalla Master”; Nodelman 1965; see also Kleiner 1992, 324). The identities and social classes of patrons, however, are much more likely to be made explicit through inscriptions or ancient textual sources. While issues of patronage have been central to the study of Greek and Roman art beginning with Renaissance

humanists, they also raise crucial questions concerning intentionality in ancient art that have direct bearing on current theoretical debates in art criticism.



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Fig. 7.1 Delphi Charioteer, from Delphi. C. 478 or 474 BCE. Bronze with copper, silver, and onyx. Height 1.80 m. Delphi, Archaeological Museum inv. 3517.

(Photograph by C. Marconi.)

To be sure, art historical assessments of ancient Greek art, largely based on Pliny, can construct a stylistic and developmental narrative based on the names of famous artists and their most well-known compositions. James Whitley, however, has attempted to show in a discussion of agency that Greek sculpture within its original contexts can foreground the patron over the artist; inscriptions, such as those associated with the Delphi Charioteer (figure 7.1), make explicit statements about their

patrons as agents of their making, where the text inscribes Polyzalus, the son of Deinomenes the tyrant of Gela, as its patron, while a subsidiary inscription has suggested to some scholars that its sculptor may have been Sotadas. In addition, modern accounts and even the traditional way of naming the Antenor *Kore* give precedence to the artist, Antenor, but its own inscription actually gives primacy to the patron, Nearchus (Whitley 2012, 583–585). The Delphi dedication, which has been recut, proves prosopgraphically problematic, however, and (p. 153) may not actually be associated with the bronze statue, which appears to be later than the inscription and thus anonymous and without a known patron or artist (Adornato 2008). Nevertheless, the inscription remains highly relevant for discussions of patronage, as the second recarved version changes the votive formula, highlights Polyzalus as patron, and does, in fact, omit any mention of an artist (“Polyzalus dedicated me”) (Neer 2007, 237–238).

Artists actually did develop a great deal of autonomy and agency by the fourth century BCE, partly as a result of an expanding pool of patrons (Tanner 2006, 172). Ultimately, Whitley seeks to discount semiotic approaches to ancient art founded on notions of visual literacy, but both Greek and Roman patrons emphatically employed legible works of

sculpture, painting, mosaic, and ceramics, along with glyptic and numismatic objects as rhetorical devices intended to communicate very specific messages. Indeed, an understanding of the semiotic intentions of patrons adds additional layers of meaning to Greek and Roman monuments as works of art, archaeological objects, and material culture, whose claims are not competing but complementary. Patrons are indeed agents, but they are also authors of the works they commission.

(p. 154) **Olympia: A Problematic Pediment**

Issues of patronage loom large in debates surrounding the iconographical interpretation of the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. The temple was commissioned between 470 and 457 BCE by the citizens of Elis to celebrate their victory over the city of Pisa (Pausanias 5.10.2; Barringer 2005, 213). The east pediment represents the contest between the hero of Elis, Pelops, and Oenomaus, king of Pisa (Pausanias 5.8.2; Pindar, *Ol.* 1.67–88). Oenomaus challenged any suitor of his daughter Hippodamia to a chariot race and had defeated and killed thirteen potential grooms before his race with Pelops. Pelops, however, with the aid of winged horses given to him by Poseidon, was victorious in the race and secured his marriage to Hippodamia and ultimately the inheritance of Oenomaus's kingdom. The race was also considered the origin of the Olympic games (Pindar, *Ol.* 1; Shapiro 1994, 78–83; Barringer 2005, 218). An alternative version of the myth, not attested textually until c. 440 BCE with the work of Pherecydes, ascribes Pelops's victory to cheating (Pherecydes, *FrGrH* 3 F 37; Barringer 2008, 10).

The east pediment and the west pediment, featuring the battle between Lapiths and Centaurs and the metopes with the labors of Heracles, have engendered subtle arguments involving the images' relationship to poetry, tragedy, philosophy, and politics (Barringer 2005, 220–221). In particular, by focusing on the cheating version of the Pelops myth, the east pediment has been read as a warning against hubris and underhanded tactics in the Olympic games. The patrons of the pediments, however, are unlikely to have originally intended such a negative inflection. In the years immediately following the Eleans' victory over Pisa in 470 BCE, the pediment functions on some levels as a mythological gloss on contemporary geopolitical events in the Peloponnese, through Pelops's defeat of Oenomaus, king of Pisa. Almost six hundred years later, Pausanias was still well aware of the temple's connection to the Elean victory.

Paradigms of Patronage: Pericles and Phidias on the Acropolis

In Athens, the reconstruction of the Acropolis as a spectacular series of interconnected victory monuments after its destruction by the Persians in 480 BCE has become the canonical locus for discussions of patronage (Hurwit 1999, 222–234; Schultz 2001, 40; Martin-McAuliffe and Papadopoulous 2012, 338–340; Neils and Schultz 2012). The new monuments included some of the most famous works of the Classical period, such as the large bronze statue of Athena by Phidias (the Athena Promachos), the Parthenon (figure 6.1) and its colossal image of Athena Parthenos (figure 30.1), the Propylaea, and the Temple of Athena Nike. Framed by Plutarch (*Per.* 13) more than five hundred years later as a coordinated (p. 155) collaboration between Pericles as patron and Phidias as master designer, the rebuilding of the Acropolis raises several critical issues concerning the intentions of patrons and artists and the legibility of its rich iconographic program. Monumental reconstruction had already commenced in the years immediately following the battle of Plataea in 479, under the auspices of Themistocles and Cimon (M. C. Monaco in Greco 2010, 61–63); signed statue bases dated to this period suggest the involvement of the sculptors Critius and Nesiotes, and the “Critius boy” itself provides important evidence for the sculptural production of this period. Pausanias and other authors also record the work of Myron (Athena and Marsyas) and his son Lycius (horsemen), along with Calamis (Athena). Toward the end of the 460s, the very first work commissioned from Phidias was the colossal bronze statue of Athena Promachos, which took nine years to complete (c. 463–454) (M. C. Monaco in Greco 2010, 63; for a later date, c. 440, see Marginesu 2010, 30).

The collaboration between Phidias and Pericles, which began in 447 BCE, is described as one of friendship (Plutarch, *Per.* 13.9). Phidias (Davison 2009) was responsible for overseeing the other artists and architects involved at the site, such as Mnesicles, Ictinus, and Callicrates, and he himself was the author of the program’s most spectacular work of sculpture, the chryselephantine statue of Athena Parthenos; yet Plutarch presents the artistic and architectural achievements of this period as the accomplishments of Pericles (*ta Perikleous erga*), thus ascribing to him the role of visionary patron (*Per.* 13.3; Marginesu 2010, 19–20). The visual component of the Acropolis program, however, was the result of ongoing negotiations among Pericles, Phidias, the polis, and its officials, in particular the *epistatai*, who were city magistrates responsible for overseeing constructions, sculptures, and their expenditures as recorded on surviving stelae (see chapter 6 above). Indeed, the whole Acropolis enterprise seems to have been impelled by

complicated negotiations among the polis, the *epistatai*, Pericles, Phidias, and the other artists, architects, and artisans employed on the project (Marginesu 2010).

The Fourth Century: Artistic Autonomy?

The cultural and political interstices that opened up between the dominance of poleis such as Athens or Elis as patrons throughout most of the fifth century BCE and the rise of Philip II of Macedon and Alexander and the Hellenistic dynasts allowed for far more agency on the part of artists in the fourth century. Ancient authors highlight the aesthetic rivalries between artists, which caused them, in effect, to become patrons of their own work. In sculpture, Praxiteles's Eros, which was eventually dedicated in honor of his mistress Phryne at Thespiae, may represent the most dramatic claim for artistic autonomy and agency (Tanner 2006, 178-179). Phryne had tricked Praxiteles into revealing that he valued his Eros and his Satyr most highly among all of his sculptural creations, (p. 156) and he eventually gave the Eros to her (Pausanias 1.20.1-2). For its display at Thespiae, Praxiteles composed a dedicatory inscription for its base, which read: "Praxiteles rendered precisely the love he suffered,/Drawing the archetype from his own heart./Phryne received me as a gift; love philtres no longer/Do I shoot with any bow, but love is stirred by looking at me" (Athenaeus 13.591a, translated by Pollitt 1990, 88; Tanner 2006, 179). The inscription imbues the statue with its own agency but highlights Praxiteles himself as artist, patron, and dedicator.

In painting, Zeuxis composed a group of centaurs, like the Eros of Praxiteles also apparently without a patron, whose untraditional depiction of its subjects as peaceful and civilized foregrounded its aesthetic rather than iconographic meanings. A female centaur, represented in a complicated pose, nurses her newborn offspring, one at her human breast and one at her equine teat, while her husband scares the infants with a lion cub. Lucian, who had seen a copy of the painting, praises especially the subtle transition between the human and horse elements in the female centaur; when he realized that viewers were more interested in the painting's unusual subject matter than in its virtuoso technique ("art for art's sake"), Zeuxis, as both patron and author of the piece, had it removed from display (Lucian, *Zeuxis* 3-7; Tanner 2006, 179-180). To be sure, fourth-century artists such as Zeuxis continued to engage with powerful patrons. Zeuxis painted for Archelaus of Macedon (Aelianus, *VH* 14.17) and Megabyzus (Aelianus, *VH* 2.2; Plutarch, *Mor.* 472); Apelles for Alexander (Aelianus, *VH* 2.3; Pliny, *HN* 35.85-86); Protogenes for Demetrius Poliorcetes (Pliny, *HN* 35.104-105; Aulus Gellius, *NA* 15.31); Scopas, Bryaxis, Timotheus, and Leochares are all reported to have worked for Mausolus (Pliny, *HN* 36.30-31).

Issues of patronage have also clouded the relationship among Philip II, Alexander, and Leochares for the Philippeion at Olympia. According to Pausanias, the monument was commissioned by (or for) Philip after his victory at Chaeronea in 338, and the portraits in it (and likely also the architecture) were created by Leochares (Pausanias 5.17.4; 5.20.9–10; it remains unclear whether the monument was created *by* or *for* Philipp; Löhr 2000 no. 137; Krumeich 2007, 168–169). Scholars have variously attributed the patronage of the monument and its dynastic aspirations to Philip, Alexander, or a combination of both. The circular monument contained a base that originally supported statues of Philip, his wife Olympias, his father Amyntas, his mother Eurydice, and his son Alexander. The female portraits were eventually removed to the Heraion. Pausanias describes the statues as chryselephantine, but they actually seem to have been marble with applied gilding, designed to mimic ivory and gold. The architectural elements of the monument and the statue base were all apparently quarried at the same time. Peter Schultz's reassessment of the architecture and sculptural program of the Philippeion, however, has revealed it to be a close creative collaboration between Philip and Leochares which redeployed the traditional tholos format for spectacular theatrical effect in order to celebrate the nascent dynasty and its achievements at the sacred heart of Olympia, the Altis (Schultz 2007). The partnership between patron and artist, the circumstances surrounding the genesis of the monument, and its agency were still very apparent to Pausanias centuries later.

(p. 157) At Delphi, the Daochus monument is nearly contemporary with the Philippeion, but here the patron of the monument and its subjects have essentially eclipsed the artists responsible for the group, which represented six generations of Daochus's family, including his son Sisyphus II, his father Sisyphus I, his grandfather Daochus I, his great-grandfather Agias, his great-great-grandfather Aconius, and Agaloas and Telemecho, the brothers of Agias, who had won Pythian crowns, all identified by mostly epigrammatic inscriptions on the base of the monument (Löhr 2000 no. 139; Krumeich 2007, 170–71). A related base from Pharsalus, now lost, belonged, presumably, to a nearly contemporary statue of Agias and names the sculptor as none other than Lysippus (Preuner 1900; Moreno 1974, 44 no. 6, fig. 17; Edwards 1996, 135; Geominy 2007, 84). The lost epigram from Pharsalus is nearly identical to Agias's epigram at Delphi, which is notably without attribution to Lysippus (Moreno 1974, 44 no. 7, fig. 18). The surviving marble Agias at Delphi is often considered to be a reflection of Lysippus's presumed bronze, the Agias from Pharsalus, but the connection is far from definitive (Edwards 1996, 135–137). The Delphi statues are all of Pentelic marble, except for the Sisyphus II, which is of Parian marble (Palagia and Herz 2002, 246). The Parian marble, and also the pose of the statue leaning on a herm, may have been used to heroize Sisyphus II, who may have been dead at the time of the monument's creation (Geominy 2007, 95). The monument is traditionally dated to c. 337 BCE, the period when Daochus II was *hieromnemon* at Delphi. At Delphi, the seat of his office, the identities of Daochus and his family members have

eclipsed the importance of any of the artists associated with the monument. Although modern scholarship has attempted to associate the monument with a named sculptor, Lysippus, the work itself insists on actively promoting the patron and his familial agenda over the agency or autonomy of its artists. (Geominy 1998 and 2007 has challenged the traditional date of the monument and proposes a later date in the first quarter of the third century, with a putative homonymous grandson as the actual donor. Geominy also sees the style of the Delphi Agias as significantly later than the characteristic style of Lysippus [Geominy 2007, 93]. His arguments, however, seem to needlessly complicate the interpretation of the monument, and his analysis of sculptural style may be too strict, not allowing for a plurality of styles already proliferating throughout the Mediterranean by the end of the fourth century BCE).

As was done for Praxiteles and Zeuxis, ancient authors present Lysippus as an autonomous artist. Works such as his *Charis* and *Apoxyomenos* are exclusively associated with his artistic persona as an innovative sculptor and not initially with any particular patron (Moreno 1995; Tanner 2006). Later, the *Apoxyomenos* would play a central role in ongoing negotiations of public display of Greek art in Rome, but it always remained closely associated with Lysippus's sculptural virtuosity (Pollitt 1978). While it is praised for its realism, Lysippus's Granicus monument, however, is more often considered to be an important commission of Alexander himself, who wished to create an appropriate memorial for his fallen companions at the site of his first major defeat of the Persians. The group was made up of at least twenty-five equestrian bronze statues, a size nowhere attested before for a sculptural group. Ultimately, this group is also closely connected with a new patron, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus, who brought it to Rome (p. 158) in 148 BCE for display in his newly built portico (Pliny, *HN* 34.65; Arrian, *Anab.* 1.16.4; Velleius Paterculus 1.2.2-5). The group is also associated with Augustus and his sister Octavia, who rebuilt the Porticus of Metellus at the end of the first century BCE (Livy, *Epit.* 140; Festus 188L; Ovid, *Ars am.* 1.69-70; Suetonius, *Aug.* 29.4; Cassius Dio 49.43.8; Velleius Paterculus 1.11.3). Lysippus's Granicus monument acquires a complicated history of patronage stretching over three hundred years and including Alexander, Metellus, Augustus, and Octavia.

Prolific Patronage: Ptolemies and Attalids

Among Alexander's successors, the Ptolemies and the Attalids stand out as the most prolific patrons during the Hellenistic period. The Ptolemies famously expanded and embellished Alexander's new capital at Alexandria with splendid works of art and architecture. In addition, Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Ptolemy III Euergetes both acted as

literary patrons for the poet Callimachus. Ptolemy II also commissioned an ephemeral work of art consisting of a festival pavilion of great magnificence and a procession. The pavilion itself was decorated with one hundred statues by important sculptors, plus paintings of the "Sicyonian School." Although the pavilion and the procession were not permanent works of patronage, their lasting fame was ensured by literary descriptions preserved in Athenaeus (197A–202B; Pollitt 1986, 280–281; Stewart 1993, 236–238). The literary evocations of the pavilion clearly influenced later royal architecture at sites such as Alexandria or Imperial examples such as Nero's Domus Aurea (Salza Prina Ricotti 1989). Although descriptions mention the extensive works of art displayed within the pavilion, they highlight it as an extravagant example of royal patronage.

A distinguishing aspect of Ptolemaic patronage is the sponsorship of works in distinct artistic idioms. In Egypt, images were created for the Ptolemies in both traditional pharaonic styles and more cosmopolitan Hellenistic styles or a hybrid of both (Pollitt 1986, 250–263; Ashton 2001). Works created in the pharaonic style in Egyptian hard stones were likely created by local artists, while those in marble, at least initially, must have been created by Greek sculptors. At some point in the first half of the third century BCE, the Ptolemies commissioned the Greek sculptor Bryaxis to create a statue of Serapis, which was likely displayed in the Serapeum at Alexandria (on the problematic dating of the image and conflicting evidence in ancient authors, see Pollitt 1986, 279–280). Bryaxis's representation of the syncretic deity, heavily promoted by the Ptolemies, survives in numerous later versions. Ptolemaic patronage was by no means limited to Egypt but occurs in cities and sanctuaries throughout the Mediterranean.



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Fig. 7.2 The Great Altar, Pergamum, north wing, reconstructed in Berlin. C. 175–150 BCE. Marble. Height of frieze 2.30 m. Berlin, Staatliche Museen.

(Photograph by C. Marconi.)

The Attalids established their own capital at Pergamum and lavishly decorated it with innovative and influential works of art and architecture, their most significant act of artistic patronage being the Great Altar of Zeus (figure 7.2). Although its precise date (p. 159) has still failed to generate scholarly unanimity, the altar was most likely commissioned by Eumenes II. Its complex iconographical program has clear cosmological implications and also seems to be linked with

Hesiod's *Theogony*, and the Stoic philosopher Crates of Mallos may have been involved in designing the altar's artistic program (Simon 1975; Pfanner 1979; Pollitt 1986, 97-110; Andreae 2011; Demandt 2013). The Great Altar stands as an impressive artistic collaboration among ruler, philosopher, and sculptors which employed a dramatic and emphatic new sculptural style. Intended to celebrate the victories of Eumenes II, its main frieze depicts a gigantomachy and is unprecedented in terms of its scale; its hyperbolic style would prove an enduring influence for centuries and ensure the reputation of the Attalids as enlightened patrons.

Other dedications at Pergamum and Athens in both sculpture and painting celebrated Pergamene victories over the eastern Gauls (Kuttner 1995, 179). As with the Great Altar, precise details concerning the date of the "Lesser Attalid" group displayed on the slopes of the Acropolis at Athens are still elusive, but this group should probably be associated with Eumenes's father, Attalus I. According to Pausanias (1.25.2), the group depicted the Amazonomachy, the Gigantomachy, the Battle of Marathon, and the Mysian Galatomachy. Attalus may have commissioned Phrymachos and Epigonos to design (p. 160) the sculptural group, dated to c. 200 BCE, for celebrating his military victories, including an important defeat of the Gauls (Stewart 2004). At Pergamum, Attalus may also have employed the same sculptors to create another sculptural group celebrating the Galatian victory (although the Pergamene monument and evidence for surviving bases are often

associated with the Ludovisi Gauls in Rome, these statues are almost certainly second-century CE Roman works carved in a style evoking earlier Pergamene style; Marvin 2002, Andrae et al. 1990). Despite the difficulties in interpretation of the various Attalid victory monuments, what remains clear is that both Attalus and Eumenes were active patrons whose commissioned works transformed the urban landscapes of both Pergamum and Athens. Like that of the Ptolemies, their patronage played out on the world stage.

Rome: Royal and Republican Patrons

Unsurprisingly, historical narratives of the regal period focus on Rome's kings as the primary sources of patronage. The kings are credited with major religious constructions, such as Numa Pompilius for the Temple of Vesta (Plutarch, *Num.* 2; Scott 1999), while the two Tarquins, Tarquinius Priscus and Tarquinius Superbus, patronized the most ambitious religious and civic projects of the sixth century BCE related to Rome's urban infrastructure, such as the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Capitolinus (Tagliamonte 1996, 144–146; Davies 2006), the Circus Maximus (Ciancio Rossetto 1993), and the Cloaca Maxima (Bauer 1993; Hopkins 2007).

Indeed, the scope of works accredited to the Tarquins is comparable to that of their contemporary Greek counterparts, such as the Pisistratids in Athens (Shapiro 1989, 5–8.), and both Pliny and Strabo celebrate the Cloaca Maxima as one of the greatest building projects ever undertaken in the Mediterranean (Pliny, *HN* 36.24; Strabo 5.2). Tarquinius Superbus should also probably be assigned as patron of Vulca of Veii, who created the terracotta cult image for the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Capitolinus (Pliny, *HN* 35.157; see also 35.158; Dionysius of Halicarnassus 3.69 and 4.59; Livy 1.55.2–4, 7, and 1.56.1; Andr n, 1976–1977). Vulca may have been entrusted with other terracotta sculpture for the temple, including the quadriga group for the roof (Pliny, *HN* 38.16; Festus, *Ratumena porta* 340 f L; Plutarch, *Publicola* 13; Andr n 1976–1977, 70–71).

After the Republic was established in 509 BCE, the emphasis shifted to elite individuals who vied for power and prestige through their patronage programs. The arena for competition was largely architectural, and agency was mostly invested in the patron. Manubial temples in particular were designed to perpetuate the military accomplishments of the donor (see chapter 8 below). By the early first century BCE, the builders of manubial temples could also create highly individualized sculptural programs. Quintus Lutatius Catulus appears to have employed the most famous sculptor working in Rome, Scopas the Younger, to create the acrolithic cult image for his Temple of Fortuna Huiusce Diei in the Area Sacra of the Largo Argentina; fragments of this statue, including

the (p. 161) head, are now displayed in the Centrale Montemartini (Centrale Montemartini inv. 2780: Coarelli 1978, 724; Leach 2010, 130–132); other works displayed in this temple included a group of the Seven against Thebes by Pythagoras (Pliny, *HN* 34.60) and two *signa palliata* by Phidias, dedicated by Aemilius Paulus (Pliny, *HN* 34.54).

In certain cases, the prestige of artists could eclipse that of their patrons. The first named Roman painter, Gaius Fabius Pictor, was from an aristocratic Roman family, and in 304 BCE, he completed paintings for the Temple of Salus on the Quirinal. Apparently highly admired and influential until their destruction in a fire during the principate of Claudius, these paintings most likely celebrated the military achievements in the Samnite Wars of Gaius Junius Bubulcus, who vowed the temple in 311 and dedicated it in 303 (Pliny, *HN* 35.19; Valerius Maximus 8.14.6). Pictor is likely responsible for the origins of Roman historical painting, and his work seems to have been characterized by a particular coloristic technique called *splendor* by Pliny (*HN* 35.29) or *antēron* by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who ascribes it as a hallmark of Pictor's work (*Ant. Rom.* 16.3.6). Pictor's accomplishments as a painter have ensured his subsequent reputation, whereas Bubulcus is largely a historical footnote and relevant mostly because he commissioned Pictor to decorate the Temple of Salus (Leach 2004, 4).

Imperial Patrons in the Early Empire: Augustus, Tiberius, and Nero

Patrons from all levels of Roman society continued to actively shape the messages encoded in works of art throughout the Imperial period (Smith 2002, 73 and 96, has elided patrons and viewers as “consumers” of works of art and underscores that their agendas fundamentally structure works of art). Foremost among them, of course, were the emperors such as Augustus, Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, and Maxentius, who stand out as especially prolific patrons. In architecture, imperial patronage produced spectacular results at the capital, and Nero, Domitian, and Trajan are all linked with specific architects, namely Severus and Celer, Rabirius, and Apollodorus of Damascus (see chapter 8 below). Imperial sponsorship of artists in other media is also attested. Augustus commissioned the gem engraver Dioscurides to create a seal with the emperor's portrait, and it is tempting to associate this artist with the emergence of cameos and intaglios with imperial portraits as a new genre in the Augustan period (Suetonius, *Aug.* 50; Megow 1987, 8–14).

By the Imperial period, collecting had also become a significant component of both private and imperial patronage. Programmatic arrangements of sculpture displayed at the temples of Apollo Palatinus, Concord, and Divus Augustus are important early examples. The collection of art from the Temple of Apollo Palatinus was one of three important assemblages closely associated with Augustus, which also included the collections at the Forum of Augustus and the Portico of Octavia (Rutledge 2012, (p. 162) 237-262). The temple was vowed in 36 BCE at the Battle of Naulochus against Sextus Pompey and eventually dedicated in 28 BCE (Velleius Paterculus 2.81.3). After its dedication, the temple came to be closely associated with Augustus's victory over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium, and it acquired the epithets of *Actiacus*, *Actius*, or *Navalis* (*Navalis* is also equally appropriate for the naval victory at Naulochus; *Actiacus*: Ovid, *Met.* 13.715; *Actius*: Servius, *Ad. Aen.* 8.704; Ovid, *Met.* 13.715; Propertius 4.6.17; 4.6.70; *Navalis*: Propertius 4.1.3). The close connections of the temple precinct and its collection with its patron were further underscored by its deliberate location immediately adjacent to the house of Augustus on the Palatine.

The collection included a cult image of Apollo Citharoedus by Scopas, flanked by a Latona by Cephisodotus and an Artemis by Timotheus, restored by the Roman sculptor Avianius Evander (Apollo by Scopas: Pliny, *HN* 36.25; Propertius 2.31.15-16; Celani 1998, 96-98; Latona by Cephisodotus: Pliny, *HN* 36.24; Celani 1998, 98; Artemis by Timotheus: Pliny, *HN* 36.32; Celani 1998, 98-99; for Avianius Evander: Horace, *Sermones* 1.3.90-91 [Porphyrio's *scholion*]; Rutledge 2012, 238). The roof was decorated with Archaic statues by Athenis and Boupalus, the sons of Archermus, including a chariot of the son (Pliny, *HN* 36.13, 37.11; Celani 1998, 91-96). Four bulls by Myron adorned the four corners of the temple's altar (Propertius 2.31.7-8; Celani 1998, 99-101). The doors to the temple displayed reliefs representing the punishment of the Niobids and the destruction of the Gauls at Delphi (Propertius 2.31.12-16). An arch dedicated to Augustus's father, Gaius Octavius, was surmounted by a quadriga with Apollo and Diana/Artemis by Lysias (Pliny, *HN* 36.36; Kleiner 1988; Celani 1998, 114). The intercolumniations of the temple's portico contained statues of the fifty daughters of Danaus, all but one of whom murdered their cousin-husbands, the fifty sons of Aegyptus, on their wedding night.

Although the identities of famous individual artists add measurable prestige to the ensemble, the original intention and context of the works were no longer operative. The sculptures all worked in concert to celebrate themes of vindication, retribution, and restoration of order for their new patron/collector, Augustus. The original location of the Apollo by Scopas in the Temple of Nemesis at Rhamnus would also have underscored these themes for viewers (such as Pliny) who knew the statue's provenance. In addition, works such as the Danaids allude to Egypt and its annexation and to the defeat of

Cleopatra. The architectural sculpture of the complex contained a series of archaizing polychrome terracotta plaques that depicted the struggle between Apollo and Hercules for the Delphic tripod. The retrospective style and material of the reliefs align them with the actual Archaic sculpture on the roof. Because Augustus was linked so closely with Apollo and Antony had highlighted his descent from Hercules, the reliefs cannot have failed to bring to mind the recent victory at Actium and the consequent annexation of Egypt in the minds of visually astute viewers (Kellum 1986). Like the sculptures of the west pediment at Olympia more than four hundred years earlier, they use the allusive language of mythology to commemorate contemporary geopolitical achievements of their patron.

Tiberius also personally collected and curated collections of art at Rome with specific programmatic intent (Becatti 1973–1974). His complete reconstruction of the Temple of (p. 163) Concord was begun in 7 BCE and included the installation of numerous works of sculpture and painting. According to Cassius Dio (59.9.6), Tiberius acquired a statue of Vesta (Hestia) from Paros expressly for the temple in 6 BCE on his way to his retirement on Rhodes (Cassius Dio 55.9.5–6; Bravi 1998, 61–63). The temple was eventually dedicated on January 16 in 10 or 12 CE, the anniversary of the day Octavian had assumed the name Augustus (Suetonius, *Tib.* 20 [12 CE]; Cassius Dio 56.25.1 [10 CE]; see also Ovid, *Fast.* 1.638–650; for the assemblage of sculpture, see Kellum 1990 and Bravi 1998). In addition to the Hestia from Paros, the works of art included sculptures of Apollo and Juno by Baton; Latona with Diana and Apollo by Euphranor (Pliny, *HN* 34.77; Bravi 1998, 48–50); Aesculapius and Hygieia by Niceratus (Pliny, *HN* 34.80; Bravi 1998, 50–52); Mars and Mercury by Piston (Pliny, *HN* 34.89; Bravi 1998, 52–53); Ceres, Jupiter, and Minerva by Sthennis (Pliny, *HN* 34.90; Bravi 1998, 53–55); paintings of Marsyas by Zeuxis (Pliny, *HN* 35.66; Bravi 1998, 55–57), Liber Pater by Nicias (Pliny, *HN* 35.131–132); and Cassandra by Theorus (Pliny, *HN* 35.144; Bravi 1998, 60–61). In addition, numismatic representations of the temple confirm that the exterior included sculptures of the Capitoline triad at the apex of the pediment flanked by Ceres and Diana, while Mercury and Hercules were at either side of the stairway leading up to the *pronaos* (Pliny, *HN* 34.73; Bravi 1998, 46–48). Ultimately, the collected works of art celebrated traditional Republican notions of *concordia* among the orders, a new *Concordia Augusta* within the emerging imperial dynasty, and important aspects of peace (*Pax Augusta*, *Pax Armata*, and *Pax Deorum*), which intertwined with notions of *salus* (good health) for the Roman state, along with notions of ideal kingship (for interpretations of the overall program, see Kellum 1990; Bravi 1998, 64–65; Celani 1998, 125–132).

New equestrian portrait statues were also added to the assembled collection and included images of Gaius and Lucius Caesar, Germanicus, and likely also Drusus Caesar

(*Tabua Siarensis* b1-2, Heinemann 2007, 90-93; Champlin 2011, 83 n. 29). Augustus also donated four elephants sculpted out of obsidian (Pliny, *HN* 36.196). In an extraordinary act of virtual posthumous patronage, the temple's inscription claims Tiberius and his deceased brother Drusus as active sponsors of the building, just as in the dedicatory inscription for the Temple of Castor and Pollux across the Forum in 6 CE (Suetonius, *Tib.* 20; Cassius Dio 56.25.1; Champlin 2011, 82-83).

Although it was not dedicated until approximately five months after Tiberius's death, the Temple of Divus Augustus and its assemblage of painting and sculpture must have been substantially completed during his principate. Located between the Forum Romanum and the Palatine, the temple was richly decorated with important works of art (Lehmann 1941; Fischwick 1992; Rutledge 2012, 263-266). Martial records the eclectic collection at the temple, which included paintings of Hyacinthus (14.173) and Danae (14.175) by Nicias, another painting of Europa (14.180), a terracotta statue of a boy (the "Brutus") by Strongylion (2.77), bronze and terracotta statues of Hercules (14.173), a terracotta statuette by Vulca of Veii (14.171; Pliny, *HN* 35.131), a golden statue of Victory (14.170), a silver statue of Minerva (14.179), a terracotta statue of a hunchback (14.182), reliefs of Hermaphroditus and Leander (14.174, 181), and a German war mask over the door of the cella (14.176). According to Pliny, Tiberius personally dedicated the painting (p. 164) of Hyacinthus because Nicias was a painter particularly admired by Augustus, and this may also partially account for the inclusion of his Liber Pater in the works collected for the Temple of Concordia Augusta (Pliny, *HN* 35.131). Nicias's oeuvre appears to have been more conservative than that of some of his fourth-century contemporaries, with a more political or historical, as opposed to aesthetic, focus, featuring especially naval and cavalry battles, which might have appealed to the emperor (for Nicias's more conservative approach, see Demetrius, *On Style* 76; Tanner 2006, 203).

If the endeavors of Augustus and Tiberius as patron collectors (with the exception of Tiberius's requisition of the Apoxyomenos [Pliny, *HN* 34.62; Pollitt 1978, 167] and the erotic painting of Atalanta and Meleager displayed at Capri [Suetonius, *Tib.* 44.2]) are generally given a positive or neutral assessment in ancient authors, those of Nero are universally condemned as acts of cultural plunder (for an overview of the negative assessments of Nero's collecting, see Miles 2008, 255-259, characterizing Nero as a "Verrine" emperor in the mold of the rapacious first governor of Sicily, Gaius Verres, who was prosecuted by Cicero; see also chapter 22 below). Because Nero's collections have been effectively erased and rearranged by Vespasian at the Templum Pacis, his intentions as patron cannot be recuperated. Like his great-great-grandfather before him, Nero was undoubtedly assembling collections worthy of adorning and improving the urban fabric of the capital, especially after the fire of 64 CE. The works imported by Nero augmented the

city's collections immeasurably and are likely to have been highly esteemed during Nero's principate. It is probably not coincidental that Galba commissioned Agricola to catalog all of the important works of art extant in the city immediately after Nero's death (Pliny, *HN* 35.26; Bravi 1998, 45), and it is also surely significant that Vespasian does not insist on repatriating any of them, including the Eros of Thespieae by Praxiteles, which had been taken to Rome once before by Caligula and returned to the Thespians by Claudius (Pliny, *HN* 36.22; Pausanias 9.27.3). Praxiteles's Eros is a locus for invective against inappropriate and rapacious collecting (Gutzwiler 2004; Miles 2008, 254; Rutledge 2012, 55). If Nero had exhibited the statue at the Domus Aurea, Vespasian apparently transferred the Eros to the collections displayed in the Portico of Octavia, where it was visible during Pliny's day (*HN* 36.22: *eiusdem est et Cupido, obiectus a Cicerone Verri ille, propter quem Thespieae visebantur, nunc in Octaviae scholis positus*: "By Praxiteles, too, there is a Cupid, a statue which occasioned one of the charges brought by Cicero against Verres, and for the sake of seeing which persons used to visit Thespieae: at the present day, it is to be seen in the Schools of Octavia"). It is possible that it was Nero who actually placed the statue in the Portico of Octavia if it was not used at the Domus Aurea (see Miles 2008, 254).

Other works were apparently relocated to the Temple of Peace, which Vespasian dedicated in 75 CE. Josephus (*BJ* 7.159–60) states that the Templum Pacis contained all the great masterpieces of art that had previously been displayed all over the world. Many of these works are presumed to be those collected by Nero. Pliny explicitly states that the most celebrated of the works that he has enumerated in book 34 of the *Natural History* were (re)dedicated by Vespasian in the Temple of Peace and other locations, after Nero had brought them to Rome by violent means for display at the Domus Aurea (34.84: *atque ex* (p. 165) *omnibus, quae rettuli, clarissima quaeque in urbe iam sunt dicata a Vespasiano principe in templo Pacis aliisque eius operibus, violentia Neronis in urbem convecta et in sellariis domus aureae disposta*: "And from all of these that I have recounted the most renowned have now been dedicated by the Princeps Vespasian in the Templum Pacis and his other public buildings at Rome, works formerly conveyed to the city through violent means by Nero and arranged in the reception rooms of the Domus Aurea"; this passage has frequently been misconstrued to refer to the works immediately preceding it, namely, battle monuments created for Attalus and Eumenes to celebrate their victories over the Gauls and Boethus's boy strangling a goose, but Pliny's use of *atque ex omnibus, quae rettuli* would seem to be much more inclusive and thus refer to all the works he has been recounting). Pliny's list is extensive, but works that are known to have ultimately been displayed in the Templum Pacis include paintings of Ialysos by Protogenes (Pliny, *HN* 35.102) and of the Battle of Issos by Helene (Photius, *Bibl.* 149.28–33), sculptures of a bronze cow by Myron (Procopius, *Goth.* 4.21 [perhaps moved from the

Temple of Apollo Palatinus]), a Ganymedes by Leochares (Juvenal 9.22-26; Pliny, *HN* 34.79; *Anth. Pal.* 12.221; *IG XIV* no. 1523; Florence, Museo Nazionale Archeologico: La Rocca 2001, 196, fig. 17), the Pythokles of Polyclitus (Rome, Musei Capitolini: La Rocca 2001, 196-197, fig. 18), a Scylla by Nicomachus (Pliny, *HN* 35.109), a Nile in basanite (Pliny, *HN*. 36.58), and an Aphrodite by an anonymous sculptor (Pliny, *HN* 36.27). Fragments of three statue bases also suggest works by Praxiteles (or possibly Pasiteles), Cephisodotus, and Parthenocles (La Rocca 2001, 197-199, figs. 19a-c). After they were expropriated and recontextualized by their new patron, Vespasian, the remnants of Nero's collection lost their potential for invective and negative agency and reverted to aesthetic objects, politically positive or at least neutral in their inflections (Noreña 2003, 28-29).

As with his collecting, Nero's patronage of the painter Famulus has been cast in negative terms by Pliny (*HN* 35.120), who famously called the Domus Aurea the prison of the painter's great artistic achievement, but in fact, the emerging innovations of the Fourth Style in the Neronian period, in addition to the programmatic use of images in both the Domus Transitoria (figure 7.3) and the Domus Aurea, can be attributed to the close collaboration between imperial patron and artist (De Vos 1990 has also posited the involvement of Seneca with the painter and the Trojan-themed paintings from the Palatine nymphaeum of the Domus Transitoria; for Famulus, Nero, and Neronian painting, see Bragantini 2011). Indeed, Pliny's characterization of Famulus's oeuvre as floridly extravagant (*floridis tumidus*) is equally appropriate for the patron as for his painter (*HN* 35.120: *fuit et nuper gravis ac severus idemque floridis tumidus pictor Famulus*).



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Fig. 7.3 Rome, Palatine, frescoed ceiling from the Domus Transitoria nymphaeum complex. C. 59-64 CE. Rome, Museo Palatino.

(Photograph by E. R. Varner.)

Nero also notably employed the sculptor Zenodorus to create the bronze colossus that was intended to be the centerpiece of the vestibule of the Domus Aurea (Pliny, *HN* 34.45-7; Albertson 2001). Although this collaborative project between artist and patron resulted in the largest bronze statue from Greek and Roman antiquity, the sculpture was always

intimately associated with its patron, Nero, despite the fact that it was not completed according to his original intentions and was dedicated seven years after his death in an altered format. Nero had envisioned the Colossus as a Neronian incarnation of Apollo-Helios, and its imagery and iconography are reflected in contemporary works (p. 166) of art (Bergmann 1993; Bergmann 1998, 190–201; Cadario 2011, 182–189). Zenodorus even devised a new formula for the bronze alloy of the statue to secure its stability. He was renowned as the foremost sculptor of the Neronian age, not inconspicuous for its important and innovative artists and architects, yet his name is largely absent from art historical accounts of ancient sculpture, and his greatest creation remains indelibly associated with the outsize personality of his patron, Nero (Albertson 2001).

Private Patronage: Domestic Decoration and Funerary Art

Like emperors, private individuals were also active as patrons, collectors, and curators. Pompeian wall painting, in particular, has proved a rich source of information on private patronage in the Late Republican and Early Imperial period. Although Richardson has attempted to identify individual painters and workshops at Pompeii, the artists themselves remain anonymous, like many of their Athenian and Apulian predecessors in vase painting, and are identified by their most characteristic works (such as the Boscotreacase or Dioscuri Painters) (Richardson 2000). Patrons and (p. 167) painters closely collaborated to create highly individualized ensembles. The emerging emphasis on recreating picture galleries that began in the late Second Style especially allowed for the expression of patrons' aesthetic and iconographical aspirations (Leach 1982; Clarke 2003; Leach 2004; Wylter 2006). Far from being merely a kind of decorative wallpaper, Roman frescoed interiors were major expressions of patrons' agency in shaping their domestic visual environments (see Bergmann 2001; Tybout 2001; Hallett 2001; Tybout 2002 for debate about the "social significance" of Roman wall painting, which is essentially concerned with intentions of patrons; see also chapters 13 and 15 below).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 7.4 Sarcophagus of Gaius Eunius Euhodus and Metilia Acte. C. 161–170 CE. Marble. Width 2.10 m. Rome, Musei Vaticani inv. 1195.

(Photograph by E. R. Varner.)

Funerary art also provides another important and well-explored avenue for close consideration of private patronage in the visual arts. Several monuments that are complex iconographically are preserved together with their dedicatory inscriptions, such as the sarcophagus of Gaius Eunius Euhodus and Metilia Acte from Isola Sacra, dated to c. 161–170

CE (figure 7.4: Wood 1978; Zanker and Ewald 2004, 299–301; Birk 2013, 27–28, 96, 299 no. 552, fig. 11). The inscription on the lid of the sarcophagus clearly states that Euhodus commissioned the monument for himself and his wife, Metilia Acte (*CIL* XIV no. 371). The inscription adds additional biographical information and indicates that Euhodus was a magistrate of an Ostian carpenters' association and Metilia Acte was a priestess of the Magna Mater. The tragic myth chosen by Euhodus is fairly unusual among the corpus of Roman sarcophagi and is personalized through the insertion of (p. 168) portraits with Euhodus and Metilia Acte playing the roles of Admetus and Alcestis. The story unfolds in three episodes of essentially continuous narration. At the proper left of the sarcophagus are Apollo and Admetus; the central scene depicts the deathbed farewell of Admetus and Alcestis, who has agreed to die in her husband's place; while the final scene shows Hercules reuniting the couple after bringing Alcestis back from the underworld. The sarcophagus expresses the strength of the bonds forged between Euhodus and Metilia Acte which will survive death, in part through their memories kept alive by the monument itself. The triumph over death by being remembered is further underscored by the flying figures of victory supporting the inscription plaque at the center of the lid. Here a private patron has enlisted anonymous artists to craft a monument that ensures a memorial afterlife for himself and his wife, who play starring roles in its imagery.

Slightly later, in the early third century, two unidentified couples have also inserted themselves into another tragic myth, also fairly uncommon in the corpus of Roman sarcophagi. Two sarcophagi in the Cortile Ottagono of the Vatican Museums depict the story of Achilles and Penthesilea (Rome, Musei Vaticani invv. 900, 933: Zanker and Ewald 2004, 285–288; Birk 2013, 298 nos. 546–557). In both sarcophagi, Achilles and Penthesilea appear with late Severan portraits. These sarcophagi isolate the couple as

Penthesilea collapses in the last moments of her death, while the battle between the Greeks and the Amazons rages around them. They are further heroized by the scale, larger than the other participants in the battle, and their pose, which is borrowed from that of the well-known Pasquino composition. Like the story of Alcestis and Admetus, the myth expresses the strength of personal bonds that defy death. Its choice here may also be related to a possibly contemporary poem on the fall of Troy by Quintus Smyrnaeus, which celebrated the encounter between the Trojan hero and the Amazonian queen and especially focused on the exceptional beauty of Penthesilea at the moment of her death, which would also suggest an elevated and sophisticated literary allusion. These Roman funerary monuments confirm that patrons continued to employ the highly effective and richly evocative language of mythology to further their commemorative agendas.

Roman Patronage: Ideal Sculpture and Portraiture

Roman monuments, however, were by no means always anonymous or unsigned or focused exclusively on the political, ideological, social, or eschatological aims of imperial or private patrons. Several surviving works of ideal sculpture and portraiture are signed with no mention of the patron. Two important works closely associated with the school of Pasiteles in the first century BCE bear signatures that proclaim their artistic lineage. The Stephanus Athlete, now in the Torlonia collection, is signed (p. 169) by its artist, Stephanus, who affiliates himself as a pupil of the great master Pasiteles (Villa Albani inv. 909: Pollitt 1986, 175, fig. 173; Bol 1989, 115–117 no. 30; Kleiner 1992, 29–30, fig. 6). The Ludovisi “Orestes and Electra” is signed by Menelaus, who in turn states that he is the pupil of Stephanus (Rome, Palazzo Altemps inv. 8604: Pollitt 1986, 175, fig. 184; Kleiner 1992, 31, fig. 9; de Angelis d’Ossat 2002, 168; Hartswick 2004, 140–142, fig. 3.49). Here in both statues, artistic genealogy seems paramount, and the works may not have been created for specific patrons. The location of the “Orestes and Electra,” however, in the gardens of Sallust may have made the identity of the patron implicit.

Similarly, the display context of the black marble centaurs from Hadrian’s Villa signed by Aristeias and Papias may have implied their imperial patronage (Rome, Musei Capitolini invv. 656, 658: Helbig 1963–1972, II: 203–204; Haskell and Penny 1981, 178–179 no. 20; MacDonald and Pinto 1995, 292–293, figs. 381–383). The inscriptions, however, only mention the artists and the fact that they are from Aphrodisias, a fact further underscored by the black Aphrodisian marble (Göpktepe) from which they are carved (Attanasio, Bruno, and Yavuz 2009, 344; the marble was long thought to be Nero Antico).

The famous relief of Antinous as Silvanus is also signed by Antonianos, who identifies himself as an Aphrodisian (Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme inv. 374071: Meyer 1991, 96–98 no. I.75, pls. 86.4–5, 87). The signature on the Farnese Hercules makes no mention of a patron or of the original inventor of this type, but it does not fail to mention that the carver is an Athenian (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 6002: F. Rausa in Gasparri 2009, 17–20 no. 1). Like the Tivoli centaurs, its display context within the Baths of Caracalla may have implied its imperial patron. Other signatures could emphasize the patronymic of the artist, as in the case of the Belvedere Torso (Brinkman et al. 1998), which is signed by Apollonius, the son of Nestor, who may also be the same artist responsible for the new cult image of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Capitolinus after the restoration of the temple carried out in the early first century BCE by Quintus Lutatius Catulus (Cassius Dio 54.25.4; Josephus, *AJ* 19.1.2; Ovid, *Fast.* 6.37, 652; Suetonius, *Calig.* 52.2; André 1976–1977, 67 n. 10; Nodelman 1987, 80–82; Waszink 1962, 330–331).

Of all Roman monuments, portraits are probably most closely associated with the individual identities of their patrons, and they are seldom signed. Within the genre of portraiture, patrons dominate the discourse and appear as the most active agents, as is also the case in funerary representations such as the sarcophagus of Gaius Junius Euhodus and Metilia Acte, where no mention is made of the artists responsible for the carving. When portraits are inscribed, such as an Antonine bust in Ostia, the inscription identifies the sitter, Volcacius Myronopous (Ostia, Museo Archeologico inv. 38: Calza 1977, 33–34 no. 36, pl. 28). In rare instances, however, portraits can be signed. Thus, two second-century portraits, probably created by a father and son, have prominent inscriptions, in Greek, identifying them as the work of Zenas, son of Alexander (Rome, Musei Capitolini inv. 579: Fittschen, Zanker, and Cain 2010, 84–86 no. 80, pls. 96–97) and Zenas Junior (Rome, Musei Capitolini inv. 459: Fittschen, Zanker, and Cain 2010, 102–104 no. 98, pls. 96, 120, Beil. 32d). While context and accompanying inscriptions may (p. 170) have identified the patrons and/or the sitters, the works themselves bear only the signatures of the artists, and the use of a patronymic and their shared name of Zenas suggest a prominent dynasty of portrait sculptors.

Public Patronage? Triumphal Arches and Senate and People of Rome (SPQR)

Roman triumphal arches also raise important issues about patronage, agency, and reception. The Arch of Titus makes ostensible claims about its authorship. Its inscription

straightforwardly announces that the Senate and People of Rome dedicated the arch in honor of Divine Titus, son of Divine Vespasian (*CIL VI no. 945: Senatus populusque Romanus divo Tito divi Vespasiani f[ilio] Vespasiano Augusto*). Nevertheless, the patronage of the arch is most often assigned to Domitian, who intended it as a dynastic monument celebrating the *consecratio* of his brother (Arce 1993). An alternative interpretation, based on a lost inscription formerly in old St. Peter, assigns the patronage of the arch to Trajan (*CIL VI no. 946*; see Magi 1975). This inscription, however, is probably not to be associated with the arch, and it would be contradictory to have one of the arch's inscriptions proclaiming a dedication by the Senate and People of Rome, while the other explicitly states that Trajan made it. Like the Arch of Titus, the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum, dedicated in 203 CE, has an inscription that assigns authorship of the arch to the Senate and People of Rome (SPQR) but is generally interpreted as a triumphal and dynastic monument engineered by the emperor himself (Brilliant 1993). The four large historical panels over the lateral bays of the arch represent Severus's important victories at Edessa, Ctesiphon, Nisibis, and Hatra.

The Arch of Constantine, erected between 312 and 315 CE, collapses taxonomies of patron and viewer. Again, the inscription insists on the Senate and People of Rome as the authors of the monument. The arch itself has engendered heated debate over both its patron (Constantine or the Senate?) and its ideological programs. (For a review of scholarship on the arch proposing programmatic aspects of the reuse, first proposed by H. P. L'Orange in L'Orange and von Gerkan 1939, 190-191, see Liverani 2004, 383-399, and Liverani 2011. Liverani's interpretation of the arch is too heavily influenced by literary theory. For alternative readings that give more meaning to the program of reused and newly created sculptures, see Elsner 2000, 172-175; Elsner 2003, 216-217; Faust 2011.) As an assemblage of reused and newly created reliefs, it activates a series of associative messages. Constantine is clearly being presented as the present incarnation of imperial continuum and as a new exemplum of a "good" emperor like Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius before him. The Senate and People of Rome are simultaneously viewers of the arch and its ostensible patrons. The inscription makes possibly disingenuous (p. 171) claims about patronage that complicate the interpretation of the arch; nevertheless, this text foregrounds the emphasis on patrons as primary agents in the creation of art in Greek and Roman antiquity.

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The Patronage of Greek and Roman Architecture

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the patronage, financing, and sponsorship of architecture in ancient Greece and Rome. It first considers the classic relationship of patron and artist in the ancient world, embodied by Alexander and Deinocrates. It then examines some of the phenomena that characterize the relationship between patronage and construction in the ancient Greek and Roman world, with emphasis on female patrons in order to understand the dynamics of wealth, opportunity, and obligation in relation to architecture. The article also looks at building patrons in Athens and the commissioning of civic and sacred buildings by public entities, such as the polis or the Roman Senate. In addition, it cites the island Sanctuary of the Great Gods on Samothrace as an example of architectural patronage at work during the Hellenistic period. Finally, it discusses the architectural aspects of the Roman Empire, along with the roles of kings, generals, emperors, and plutocrats in building it.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, buildings, financing, patronage, polis, Samothrace, sponsorship, wealth

Vitruvius opens book 2 of his *Ten Books on Architecture* (*De architectura*) with the story of how young Deinocrates won Alexander's favor. Dressed in the eye-catching guise of Heracles, the aspiring architect proposed to build the great man an edifice commensurate with his stature—nothing less than the reconfiguration of Mount Athos in the shape of a man (perhaps Alexander) bearing a walled city in his left hand and a libation bowl pouring forth the rivers of the world in his right (*De arch. 2 praef.* 1–4; for a recent discussion, see Lobe 2008; see also chapter 6 above). Alexander found the idea impractical, but Deinocrates's vision resonated with his own ambitions. He retained the young man so that his ingenuity would be available as suitable opportunities emerged, which they did. Deinocrates's name is associated with three of the most important projects of Alexander's era: the design of Alexandria in Egypt (along with Crates of

Olynthus and Cleomenes of Naukratos; Pliny, *HN* 5.62, 7.125), Hephaestion's funeral pyre (Diodorus Siculus 17.114–115; Plutarch, *Alex.* 71), and the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus (along with Paeonius of Ephesus and Demetrius, priest of Artemis; Strabo 14.1.23; Solinus 40.5).

Alexander and Deinocrates embody the classic relationship of patron and artist. Alexander possessed the financial means, political authority, cultural sophistication, and personal ambition to reshape his world physically and visually; he did so by “making use of” Deinocrates's talents (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 2 *praef.* 3–4: *teque volo esse mecum, quod tua opera sum usus*). Deinocrates, for his part, recognized that his success depended on anticipating the vision of his patron. Deinocrates served at Alexander's pleasure and on the projects of Alexander's choosing. The Deinocrates story also serves as a foil for Vitruvius's own situation in relation to another great visionary, Augustus. Lacking Deinocrates's youthful good looks and privileged status, the aging and scholarly Vitruvius nevertheless hoped that his writings on architecture would generate a similar delight in and approval from his patron.

(p. 177) Vitruvius and the material evidence attest that both Alexander and Augustus were acutely aware of the power of buildings to shape and brand their new worlds, and they harnessed the skills of particular architects to achieve their aims. They were patrons in the three major senses that we will consider in this essay: supporters of individual architects; funders of public architectural projects that repaid in personal, political, or social benefits; and manipulators of the art of building to make demonstrative statements. Our evidence for patronage of individual architects relies heavily on literary sources. For building patronage, on the other hand, we have not only literary testimony but also numismatic evidence and a rich and growing body of epigraphic texts that considerably expand our knowledge of patrons, particularly women, whose contribution otherwise could hardly have been anticipated. Architectural design and certain signature styles provide further insights into the workings of building patronage.

Patronage in general and its architectural manifestations in particular have been at the center of investigations during the last thirty years, with research focusing on Hellenistic royal patronage (Thompson 1982; Schaaf 1992; Bringmann 1993; Bringmann 2000; Winter 1993; Umholtz 1994; Bringmann and von Steuben 1995; Schmidt-Dounas 2000); the role of influential women (van Bremen 1983; van Bremen 1996; Boatwright 1991; Boatwright 1993; Kron 1996; Kleiner 2000; Gorrie 2004; Umholtz 2008); the social dynamics of giving and taking as an aspect of self-fashioning and cultural identity (Bringmann 2000; Schmidt-Dounas 2000); the tensions between communal benefits and personal ambition (Gauthier 1985; Veyne 1990; Tobin 1997; Bringmann 2000; Hellström 2009; Zuiderhoek 2009); the applicability of patronage models to democratic

communities (Zelnick-Abramovitz 2000; Umholtz 2002; Kallet 2003); and the role of patronage in reshaping late Roman into Christian architecture (Krautheimer 1983; Hunt 2003; Kleinbauer 2006; Croke 2010). In what follows, I consider some of the phenomena that characterize the relationship between patronage and building in the ancient Greek and Roman world, privileging female patrons when possible because their actions offer fresh opportunities for understanding the dynamics of wealth, opportunity, and obligation as they affect architecture.

Patronage of Architects

In the arts, personal patronage constitutes an unequal but mutually beneficial relationship between persons, in which the politically, socially, or financially dominant patron supports or fosters the dependent poet, artist, or philosopher. The patron might commission works, offer financial support, or provide a network of opportunities that benefit not only the artist but also the art in general (see chapter 7 above). Patronage of individual architects is difficult to identify because of the multifaceted nature of the building process, the paucity of named architects whose careers we can track, the ambiguous social status of the architect in antiquity, and the tradition of claiming credit (on patronage, see Coulton 1977, 15–29; Hellmann 2002, 50–55; Taylor 2003, 9–14; on (p. 178) architects, see Svenson-Evers 1996; Anderson 1997, 50–67). Like horse racing, building was a rich man’s (or woman’s) sport. Just as honors went to the owner, not the jockey, so credit redounded upon the patron, not the architect.

We can, however, identify some important personal relationships. The tyrant Polycrates of Samos, who patronized the poets Anacreon and Ibycus and the physician Democedes of Croton, also employed great architects and engineers. He engaged Eupalinus of Megara, who is, in fact, the first Greek to be called an architect (*architektōn*), to design an underground aqueduct (Herodotus 3.60). A prominent architect, perhaps Rhoecus, surely designed Polycrates’s new Heraion, begun after fire destroyed the one first designed by Rhoecus and Theodorus (Herodotus 3.39–60 for Polycrates; Gruben 2001, 355–365, for the temples). But we have no evidence that Polycrates retained Eupalinus or Rhoecus as part of his court to foster the art of building generally. The Hecatomnids appear to have worked closely with the architect Pytheus on both private and public commissions (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 1.1.12, 7 *praef.* 12–13). Hermogenes seems to have led a charmed career that likely involved special favor, although ancient sources connect him with particular buildings rather than with patrons (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.2.6, 3.3.8–9, 4.3.1–2, 7 *praef.* 12).

Roman emperors certainly had their favorite architects. For Nero, it was Severus and Celer, who constructed the stunning Domus Aurea and perhaps were responsible for the enlightened design of the *urbs nova* (Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.42). For Domitian, it was Rabirius, who designed his palace (Martial 7.56, 8.36) and likely important monuments of the ambitious Domitianic building program that share signature design elements. And for Trajan, it was the great Apollodorus of Damascus (Procopius, *Aed.* 4.6.12–13; Cassius Dio 69.4), who exercised his prodigious architectural ingenuity across the empire, including Trajan’s bridge over the Danube; his forum, so-called markets, baths, and victory column in Rome; the harbor at Portus; and arches at Beneventum and Ancona, among other projects. Implicit in these examples of imperial building is the idea that the patron understood the power of architecture and purposefully employed the architect to push beyond conventional boundaries to create extraordinary monuments that redefined a place in ways consonant with the patron’s larger vision (see chapter 15 below).

Patronage of Buildings

More substantial and varied evidence survives for the kind of patronage in which a powerful individual personally financed an architectural project promoting the ambitions of a city or sanctuary. Because building involved great expense (Burford 1969; Bringmann 2001; Hellmann 2002, 56–69; Davies 2002; Salmon 2002), which a community could afford chiefly through windfall (e.g., striking gold or silver, garnering the spoils of victory) or accumulation over time (e.g., subscription, civic allocations), it readily fell into the hands of the wealthy, who as patrons could act with greater speed and largesse, and—potentially—bolder creative vision.

(p. 179) Powerful benefactors played a leading role in the emergence of monumental stone architecture across the Greek world, and they remained major players through the Late Antique period. Tyrants, kings, queens, aristocrats, generals, emperors, empresses, and plutocrats had the financial means and political clout to sponsor great buildings. They were especially attuned to the way such largesse visibly promoted their political, social, or personal interests, in home territory or abroad. Elite citizens also had a substantial part in sponsoring public buildings that benefited their community of users. Expectations were conditioned by the Greek custom of *leitourgia*, in which the wealthy assumed an obligatory financial burden of certain civic or festival functions on behalf of the community, in return for honors. This reciprocity established the underlying expectations associated with the practice of euergetism (a modern term derived from the Greek *euergeteō*, “to do good things,” and *euergetēs*, “benefactor”) which emerged in the later fourth century BCE, in which an individual gave in support of the community (on

largesse, *leitourgia*, and euergetism, see Veyne 1990, 70–200). An expectation of generosity was often connected with civic office, and by the Roman period, it was assumed (Zuiderhoek 2009, for Roman patronage in Asia Minor; see also chapter 13 below). When not tied to civic office, the patron's largesse was discretionary; he or she could choose what, how much, and on whom to bestow generosity. The denizens of Greek and Roman cities came to rely on these various forms of patronage to provide the public buildings—temples, stoas, theaters, gymnasia, gates, walls, baths, and waterworks—that so enhanced urban life.

The patron's donation was not overtly directed toward immediate personal use or material gain; the offer was couched in the language of munificence, with honor the presumed reciprocal. Yet beneath the surface flowed the strong undercurrent of influence and obligation. At Delphi, for example, the exiled family of the Alcmaeonids took the contract for completing the late-sixth-century BCE Temple of Apollo to gain the favor of the oracle (Herodotus 6.62–65). Archaeological evidence corroborates Herodotus's report that they built the temple more beautifully than required, using costly Parian marble rather than local limestone (Courby 1927, 109–111; Davies 2002). Their patronage produced the desired outcome: the Pythia prophesied to their advantage, and the rival Pisistratids were ultimately driven out of Athens.

The Alcmaeonid story reduces patronage to an opportunistic *quid pro quo*, but the impetus for giving, among royalty or private individuals, traverses a considerably more complicated range of motives that could be driven by obligation, ambition, competition, or conviction, be it personal, familial, social, political, or religious. A patron might seek glory, honor, prestige, or enhanced reputation; he or she might give to establish dynastic roots, to demonstrate wealth and power, to keep the population employed, to achieve moral betterment or personal satisfaction (in general, Veyne 1990; for the motives of kings, Bringmann 1993; for dynastic aims, Piok Zanon 2007 and 2009; for women, see Ridgway 1987; van Bremen 1983 and 1996; Kron 1996; Bielman 2012; for plutocrats, Tobin 1997; for the tyrants and the demos, Kallet 2003). Whatever the motive, the essential value accruing to the patron was public acknowledgment of his or her generosity. Architecture was an especially powerful medium, because it was the most expensive, (p. 180) long-lasting, visibly demonstrative expression of civic or sacred identity. Putting one's name to a building staked a large claim to the place itself; buildings offered a kind of immortality through enduring *kleos*. The benefits of receiving were also powerful: buildings shaped lives, actions, customs, rituals, and memories. The many public buildings that communities received through patronage created a sense of place that was simultaneously unique and bound to a larger sense of cultural belonging (see chapters 14 and 15 below).

The parameters offered above distinguish patrons as a special class within the general constellation of persons or entities that commissioned or paid for a building (in general, for financing, Coulton 1977, 15–29; Hellmann 2002, 56–69). Scholars, however, often use the term “patron” generically to signify what in modern American usage would be called the “client,” largely because the meaning and social connotations of “client” in a Greek and Roman context are very different, especially in relation to the role of the “patron” (for a brief discussion of Republican patronage, with further literature, see Deniaux 2006; the varied translations of Vitruvius, *De arch.* 1.1.10 demonstrate the difficulty of finding effective equivalents in modern languages for the terms used to describe roles in the building process). The choice also reflects the modern sensibility to honor all donors as patrons, no matter how modest the gift. But scale mattered. Pliny tells us that “all of Asia” ultimately paid for the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus (*HN* 36.95). Such donors do not meet the criterion of a patron, whose single gift meets the lion’s share of need, as with the Alcmaeonids at Delphi. There is also a distinction to be made between a patron and the commissioners of a building project, that is, those who set the contract and supervised the work. The patron was not usually involved at this level. Some patrons, however, such as the Hecatomnids, the Attalids, and Hadrian, appear to have taken a special interest in the design of the buildings they funded.

Corporate entities, such as the polis or the Roman Senate, regularly commissioned civic and sacred buildings; they often determined the project, let the contracts, paid for the effort and materials, and held the architect to account. We may draw a distinction between these actions, in which the city acts in the capacity of a client, and certain instances when cities use architecture abroad in the service of a larger political agenda or to display conspicuous wealth, in much the same way as a powerful tyrant, royal, or emperor might, that is, as a patron. Athens will serve as our example.

Patronage and the Polis

In building patronage, the dynamics of credit were critical across the Greek world, right from the start. In the mid-seventh century BCE, Cypselus, tyrant of Corinth, built a treasury in the Sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi (Herodotus 1.14; Plutarch, *De Pyth. or.* 13 [*Mor.* 400D–E]), which enshrined other gifts donated by himself and others (e.g., Gyges’s six golden bowls). The Corinthians, once they had overthrown the tyranny, sought and were granted permission to reclaim the treasury (perhaps with an inscription) as (p. 181) the city’s gift (Plutarch, *De Pyth. or.* 13 [*Mor.* 400D–E]; Umholtz 2002, 270–272). At Ephesus, King Croesus of Lydia seems to have inscribed several (perhaps every one) of the “many pillars” (Herodotus 1.92) that he dedicated to the Ionic Temple of Artemis in

the second quarter of the sixth century BCE (Umholtz 2002, 264–265). In the West, in a monumental inscription across the stylobate of the Temple of Apollo at Syracuse, Cleo[...]es, son of Cnidieidas, took credit for making the temple and perhaps raising the columns (Svenson-Evers 1996, 461–469; Umholtz 2002, 263–264). The precise role of Cleo[...]es remains deeply contested: was he the architect, patron, or manager of the project? Current opinion favors the last, but I agree with Gretchen Umholtz that some financial stake must have been involved. As one of the earliest monumental stone Doric peripteroi, the novel temple project relied on bold decisions that involved significant expense. Cleo[...]es could not have laid claim to the temple in this highly visible way if he were not, by general agreement, centrally involved in its execution in a way that no other person or entity was. Cleo[...]es got the *kleos* of the inscription, which in a fundamental sense made him the patron.

Much of the time, having architectural amenities was worth the price of currying the patron's favor. Patronage could, however, create a deep tension between the collective symbolic value of a building and the personal claim of the donor. The Athenians in particular both exploited and struggled with this tension. The Archaic tyrant family of the Pisistratids exercised the power of patronage in making improvements to the water supply with fountains and undertaking the colossal Olympieion in emulation and competition with Ionian counterparts such as Polycrates (Pausanias 1.14.1; Thucydides 2.15.5, 6.54.6; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1315b) (Boersma 2000). But after the fall of the family, the fact that the Olympieion was abandoned strongly suggests that the project was tainted. The demos reclaimed the Altar of the Twelve Gods built by Pisistratus (grandson of the tyrant) by expanding the precinct and destroying his inscription in the process (Thucydides 6.54.6–7) (Kallet 2003, 127–128).

The overthrow of tyranny did not entirely eclipse the role of big men as building patrons in Athens. Peisianax built or sponsored the Stoa Poecile (c. 460 BCE; scholium Demosthenes 20.112; Plutarch, *Cim.* 4.5–6; Pausanias 1.15.1–4) (Camp 1986, 66–72). Cimon recovered the bones of Theseus and installed them in the Theseum, which he likely built and certainly commissioned to be decorated with paintings (c. 476/475 BCE; Plutarch, *Cim.* 4.5–6, 8.5–6; Plutarch, *Thes.* 36.1–4; Pausanias 1.17.2–3, 6). At the end of the fifth century BCE, the private individual Telemachus founded the Sanctuary of Asclepius on the south slope of the Acropolis and, presumably, donated the early buildings within it (*SEG* 25.226) (Aleshire 1989, 3–36; Lefantzis and Jensen 2009).

However, civic pride and self-image placed a limit on what an individual could be allowed to claim and thus on what he or she could give. Plutarch's story of Pericles's exchange with his detractors over the construction of public buildings provides a glimpse of the tensions, albeit reported through Roman voice half a millennium later (Plutarch, *Per.*

14.1-2). That Pericles might offer to pay for the monuments out of his own funds was neither novel nor disturbing. However, his demand that, in return, he be able to personalize the city's most sacred buildings by inscribing his name on them (p. 182) usurped the prestige that the polis—flush with tributary funds and silver revenues—could now claim. Better to spend down the collective treasury than to cede “ownership” of the defining monuments of the polis to an individual (Kallet 2003, 127-135; Kallet 2005, 56-59; Umholtz 2002, 287-288).

The Athenians were especially attuned to the politically demonstrative power of architecture, and as a corporate body, they acted as patrons in building abroad. They erected a highly decorated treasury and stoa at Delphi, both set in strategically visible positions along the Sacred Way (treasury, Neer 2004; stoa, Amandry 1953; Coulton 1975, 39-40, 234; Kuhn 1985, 277-287). The latter not only housed the spoils of their naval victory over the Persians but also provided sheltered space for observers to witness actions performed in the Halos, the main gathering space below the temple. The temple they built for Apollo on Delos to coincide with their reorganization of the primary festival, the Delia (Thucydides 3.104), was an even more overt territorial claim, for they used their own Pentelic marble and craftsmen (Bruneau and Ducat 2005, 183-184 no. 12).

In the Hellenistic period, the tables had turned, and Athens found itself balancing among the competing desires of the kings who vied to associate themselves with the now politically toothless but historically fabled and culturally preeminent capital. Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who had earlier lived in Athens, redesigned the abandoned Olympieion into a Corinthian building (Thompson 1982, 181-186; Schaaf 1992, 84-111; Bringmann 1993, 15; Bringmann and von Steuben 1995, 54-57 no. 24; Camp 2001, 170-182). The Attalid kings, who also had stayed in the city, forged especially close diplomatic and cultural ties, which they concretized with two distinctively Pergamene two-storied stoas set in the heart of the city. These stoas, gifted by Eumenes II (197-159 BCE) on the Acropolis's south slope and Attalus II (159-138 BCE) in the Agora, provided valued amenities, but their design made a striking visual claim on Athens, the recipient city (Thompson 1982, 181-186; Schaaf 1992, 84-111; Bringmann and von Steuben 1995, 62-66 nos. 28-29 [note also Delphi, 143-145 no. 91]; Bringmann 2001, 212-213; Camp 1986, 168-175; Camp 2001, 172). The skirts of the Acropolis were now modeled in the image of the small but powerful citadel of Pergamum. The city that exported its own architecture as patron now had to balance being on the receiving end of that relationship.

Just as Hellenistic kings were drawn to the cultural prestige of Athens, so, too, were Romans. Whatever missteps the Athenians made in forging alliances with the Romans in the late Republic did not ultimately eclipse their cultural value to Roman generals, emperors, and intellectuals. Building out the cultural, social, and commercial centers of

the city gave Romans a strong claim to the intellectual legacy of the city. The Athenians, for their part, pragmatically accepted the splendid architectural amenities. They opened a new agora courtesy of Caesar and Augustus, and they benefited from an Italian style odeion built by Agrippa. They welcomed Hadrian's "New City," with its gate, bath, gymnasium, and completed Olympieion and to the north of the Acropolis, the library, a basilica, and another enormous building, perhaps a Pantheon (Kleiner 1986; Willers 1990; Camp 2001, 183-222; Spetsieri-Choremi 2003). Classical Athens set the bar for fine architecture very high; the Athenians had standards, and the discerning new patrons did not allow their contributions to pale in comparison.

(p. 183) In the second century CE, the Athenians once again drew the line against one of their own, the aristocrat Herodes Atticus (Tobin 1997, 47-67, 161-210, 295-331). Born into a fabulously wealthy Athenian family and trained in rhetoric and philosophy, this proponent of the Second Sophistic stands out above all for the sheer scale of his architectural patronage, which included odeia at Athens and Corinth, stadia at Athens and Delphi, baths at Thermopylae, and aqueducts at Olympia, Alexandria Troas, and Canusium (Philostratus, *VS* 2.552; Galli 2002, 5-107). Herodes's disappointment over not cleaving the isthmus—"an immortal deed" (*ergon athanaton*)—suggests just how powerful he imagined himself to be. For his native city of Athens, his generosity did not make up for his deceit in subverting his father's will, even though he used the money to build the stadium. The Athenians accused him of tyranny before Marcus Aurelius and forgave him only later when the emperor requested it. Jennifer Tobin suggests that the charge of tyranny resonated because of the scale of Herodes's patronage, with its emphasis on permanent buildings rather than ephemeral festivals (Tobin 1997, 285-294). He emulated the exploits of early tyrants and rivaled the actions of contemporary emperors, but, like Pericles, he was merely a citizen.

Late Classical and Hellenistic Royal Patronage at Large

In the Late Classical period, the non-Greek kings of neighboring regions—the Hecatomnids of Caria and the Argeads of Macedon—became the big men who deployed public architecture in the service of personal objectives. The Hecatomnid kings Mausolus and his brother Hidrieus, along with their sister-wives Artemisia and Ada, entered the architectural sphere with remarkable energy (Hornblower 1982, 294-332, esp. 294-296 for architecture in relation to philhellenism and Isocrates's panegyric on Evagoras, king of Salamis; Hellström 2009 for Carian identity and the sanctuaries at Labraunda and

Amyzon as memory theaters). Their building campaign at Halicarnassus, the Sanctuary of Zeus at Labraunda, and the Sanctuary of Artemis at Amyzon (along with the possible involvement of Ada with Pytheus at Priene) demonstrates an acute awareness of architecture as a culturally defining medium (Carter 1990; Kron 1996, 177). The Hecatomnids focused their energies mostly in their home territory of Caria, employing important Greek architects but creatively manipulating Greek architectural language to shape their kingdom. The Sanctuary of Zeus at Labraunda shows the Hecatomnids as builder-rulers par excellence. The peripteral Temple of Zeus primarily engages mainstream Asiatic Ionic design, although on a truncated plan (Pytheus's name has been connected with the temple, but that seems unlikely; see Winter 1993, 257; also Hornblower 1982, 310–311, 323–324). The architectural liberties witnessed in Andron B at Labraunda respond not only to Carian ritual practices but also to a fresh vision for how to frame them. Inscriptions emblazoned across Carian epistyles proclaim their patrons' largesse and reify the (p. 184) connection among place, cult, and dynasty. Vitruvius particularly notes Mausolus's ingenuity with architecture demonstrated in the design of the city of Halicarnassus, the palace, and the Mausoleum (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 2.8.10–11).



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Fig. 8.1 Anta block from the Temple of Athena at Priene. Inscription recording Alexander the Great's dedication. 334–330 BCE. Marble. Height 1.20 m. London, British Museum inv. 1870,0320.88.

(Photograph © British Museum. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.)

Macedonian ascendance over Greece and the creation of Hellenistic empires fully expanded the scope of patronage to an international playing field. Cities and the interurban sanctuaries benefited from the largesse of Hellenistic rulers looking for the allegiance of large territories. Philip II's famous shrine in the Sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia may have been built for rather than by him (Pausanias 5.20.9–10; for its architecture, see Miller 1973), as was the stoa named for him at Megalopolis (Pausanias

8.30.6; Coulton 1975, 255–256), but there is a good chance that he was actively involved on Samothrace. His son, Alexander the Great—as mentioned above—was highly proactive

as a patron. Although he built other structures (including whole cities), Alexander concentrated on the centrally defining building of Greek culture, the temple, thus accomplishing the twin aims of honoring the gods and embellishing a place. He brokered his influence architecturally as he moved across Asia, apparently failing with the Ephesians (Strabo 641) but succeeding to fund temples at Priene (Bringmann and von Steuben 1995, 313–316 no. 268) (figure 8.1) and Sardis (Bringmann and von Steuben 1995, 296 no. 258). His (p. 185) schemes transcend political expediency; he clearly aimed to reshape the world culturally and aesthetically, and he had the means, ambition, and vision to do so.

Alexander's successors left their imprint not only in the sacred spaces and civic heart of Greek cities but also in regions hitherto without Greek sociopolitical structure and its corollary architectural framework (for different approaches to the role of Hellenistic kings as benefactors and/or patrons, see Thompson 1982; Hornblower 1982, 294–332; Bringmann 1993; Winter 1993; Bringmann and von Steuben 1995; Bringmann 2000; Schmidt-Dounas 2000). The assembled evidence for architectural commissions of Hellenistic royalty known from texts, inscriptions, or architectural inference creates a predictably heterogeneous picture, but certain key themes emerge. Hellenistic royals continued to endorse major religious structures, including temples and altars (Bringmann 1993, 12–13; for temples and altars, Bringmann and von Steuben 1995). With respect to civic donations, they were pragmatically responsive to the defensive needs of the recipient city, especially the demand for walls, gates, and water supply (Bringmann and von Steuben 1995). Next in line were buildings that contributed to popular civic pursuits or that helped to build out commercial and sacred space, such as stoas, theaters, or gymnasia (Bringmann and von Steuben 1995). Most of the time, the benefaction was monetary; the city or sanctuary received the funds to build the structure they needed (or wanted), and they offered honors and gratitude in return. Royal patronage had a significant impact on architectural style, as the competitive drive that characterized the architectural donations of big men in the Archaic period once again came to the fore, dynastically.

Patronage and the Making of a Sanctuary: Samothrace

The Sanctuary of the Great Gods on the island of Samothrace offers an excellent opportunity to witness Hellenistic architectural patronage at work (figures 8.2, 8.3, 8.4). In the later fourth through third centuries BCE, the sanctuary grew exponentially from a

regional cult with modest buildings to an international center featuring a host of extraordinary buildings, each innovative in design, sophisticated in material, and rich in architectural decoration. The surviving architraval inscriptions identify both royal and private patrons; the donations of women are as remarkable as those of men. The evidence for patronage is so pervasive and the island's resources so limited that no doubt all of the major marble buildings were gifts to the sanctuary.



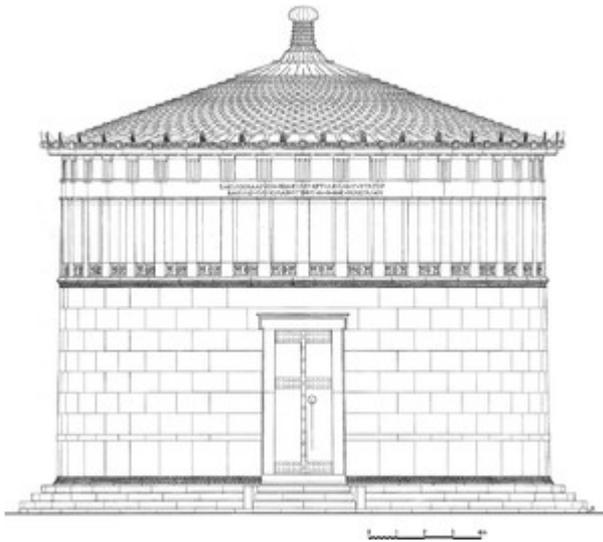
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Fig. 8.2 Restored plan, Sanctuary of the Great Gods, Samothrace. 1, 2, 3: Unidentified Late Hellenistic Buildings. 4: Unfinished Early Hellenistic Building. 5: Byzantine Fort. 6: Milesian Banquet Hall. 7, 8, 10: Dining Rooms. 9: Faux Bronze Age Niche. 11: Stoa. 12: Nike Monument. 13: Theater. 14: Altar Court. 15: Hieron. 16: Hall of Votive Gifts. 17: Hall of Choral Dancers. 18: Sacred Way. 20: Rotunda of Arsinoe II. 21: Orthostate Structure. 22: Sacristy. 23: Anaktoron. 24: Dedication of Philip III and Alexander IV. 25: Theatral Circle. 26: Propylon of Ptolemy II. 27: Southern Necropolis. 28: Doric Rotunda. 29: Neorion. 30: Stepped Retaining Wall. 31: Ionic Porch.

(Drawing by John Kurtich. Courtesy of the Samothrace Excavations.)

Philip II may deserve credit for initiating the building competition with the remarkable Hall of Choral Dancers, the first and largest of the marble buildings in the center of the sanctuary. From what we understand, the connection was personal. Philip met his future wife, Olympias, while the two were being initiated (Plutarch, *Alex.* 2.2), and he maintained an interest in the island, which annoyed his son Alexander (Curtius (p. 186) Rufus 8.1.26; for Philip II's possible involvement, see Lehmann and Spittle 1982, 273–274, 289). Alexander showed no interest in the sanctuary, but his successors, Philip III and Alexander IV, dedicated a fine *hexastyle* Doric exedra, one of the only

monumental dedications of their brief rule (322–317 BCE). Legitimizing their succession as the Argead heirs of Philip II was a powerful motive, but for Philip III, religious conviction may have also played a part (Wescoat 2014; see also Lehmann and Spittle 1964, 132–133, for the priestly roles of Philip III/Arrhidaeus).



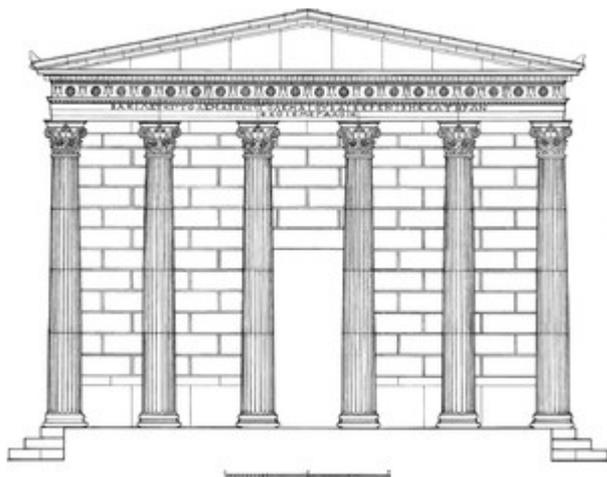
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Fig. 8.3 Rotunda of Arsinoe II, Sanctuary of the Great Gods, Samothrace. C. 280–270 BCE. Thasian marble for the superstructure. Height 12.65 m.

(Drawing by John Kurtich. Courtesy of the Samothrace Excavations.)

Their monument dominated the entrance of the sanctuary until it was upstaged by Ptolemy II's propylon of c. 285 BCE, one of the most inventive buildings of the Hellenistic period (Frazer 1990). The novelty of inscribing both sides was significant. By signaling his largesse to pilgrims as they entered and left the sanctuary, Ptolemy II laid claim both to the experience of initiation and its lasting benefits (Wescoat 2012). Ptolemy II's sister (and later wife), Arsinoe, gave

the sanctuary the largest free-spanning rotunda (p. 187) in Greece, with a splendid interior Corinthian gallery (McCredie 1992). The unique designs of both buildings suggest that the Ptolemies may have had a direct hand in the design rather than simply providing the money. Alfred Frazer credits Arsinoe; Wolfram Hoepfner argues for a more concerted program emanating from Alexandria (Frazer 1990, 227–231; Hoepfner 1984, 363–364; see also Umholtz 2008, 100–106). Construing Arsinoe's motives depends in part on when she built her rotunda. Although Georges Roux builds a wonderful account of Arsinoe offering the rotunda in thanks for receiving asylum (in McCredie 1992, 94, 218, 231–239), the architectural and epigraphic evidence favors an earlier date, when Arsinoe was wife of King Lysimachus of Thrace. While less evocative, her motives were equally important and likely included the aims of consolidating authority in the region, aligning her family with the earlier Argead donors, and reciprocating the honors the island had shown toward her husband, Lysimachus (decree honoring Lysimachus for the return of sacred lands: *SEG* 46.1185; for ridding the island of pirates: *IG* XII.8 no. 150).



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Fig. 8.4 West facade of the Propylon of Ptolemy II, Sanctuary of the Great Gods, Samothrace. C. 285 BCE. Thasian marble for the superstructure with Proconnesian marble details. Length at stylobate 17.20 m.

(Drawing by Alfred Frazer. Courtesy of the Samothrace Excavations.)

We expect queens like Arsinoe (or her slightly later counterpart at Pergamum, Apollonis; see Piok Zanon 2007 and 2009) to act as patrons within their respective empires, but the Milesian lady who dedicated a banquet hall to the Great Gods in the (p. 188) mid-third century BCE was a pioneer (Salviat 1962, 281–290; Kron 1996, 177). The now-lost central epistyle block preserved the critical ethnic. There is room for the name of her father but not for that of a

husband, which led Alexander Conze to conjecture that the Milesian lady must be the hetaira of a diadoch (Conze, Hauser, and Benndorf 1880, 112). Epigraphic evidence attests to other upstanding female donors without reference to husbands (e.g., Archippe of Cyme, Epie of Thasos, or Theodora of Amorgos, discussed below), so we need not assume that the Milesian lady transgressed social boundaries. Unquestionably, she was a bold innovator. The mid-third century is early for a private woman to be acting on such a scale and so far from home. And there are considerable architectural innovations, especially in the Corinthian windows or gallery. We have no way of knowing if the Milesian lady was involved in these design decisions. But on some level, she must have approved them and in so doing allowed the architect to create a remarkable building.

Although it was on strategic trade routes in the north, Samothrace could never have the political or economic importance of the old international shrines such as Delos or Delphi. Political expedience alone cannot explain the depth of the investment that Hellenistic royal and elite patrons sank into the island. Religious conviction and (p. 189) association with the Argead dynasty likely also played a part. The cult resonated with those who plied the sea, had roots in the north, sought moral betterment, or wished to associate with fellow initiates through the network of Samothrakeia that dotted trade routes from the Aegean to the Black Sea.

Female Patrons in the Later Hellenistic Period

In the second and first centuries BCE, private women of means played an increasingly significant role in their cities as patrons of expensive architectural projects. Like their male counterparts, they responded to the needs of their communities through euergetism connected with priesthoods, public offices, and spontaneous donation. At Megalopolis in the Peloponnese, an honorary inscription praises Euxenia (Megacleia?), priestess of Aphrodite, for the hestiatorion and temenos wall she built for the sanctuary (*IG V.2* no. 461; Kron 1996, 178; van Bremen 1983, 223; van Bremen 1996, 36 n. 93). Her generosity, we are told, proceeded naturally from her virtuous ancestry and brought her good reputation. Epie of Thasos restored temples and rebuilt the propylon to the Sanctuary of Artemis Eileithyia, which she was permitted to inscribe with her name (Kron 1996, 178–179; van Bremen 1996, 26–30; Bielman 2012, 244). Archippe of Cyme built the city's bouleuterion, and she, too, was allowed to inscribe her name, among other significant honors (van Bremen 1996, 13–19, 300; Kron 1996, 178–179; Bielman 2012, 239, 244–246). Phile of Priene improved her city's hydraulic infrastructure with a reservoir and aqueduct, which she paid for personally while serving as *stephanephoros* of the city (Ridgway 1987, 407; Kron 1996, 179; van Bremen 1996, 31–32, 36, 57; Bielman 2012, 240). Theodosia of Amorgos repaired the agora of her city, which had fallen into disrepair (van Bremen 1996, 35–36). The tradition continues with Menodora, from Sillyon in Pisidia, who commemorated the death of her son with a temple in the first century CE (van Bremen 1983, 223; van Bremen 1996, 108–112).

As Uta Kron points out, these women had the financial means and the sociopolitical authority to compete with male counterparts for honors offered in return for acts of generosity (Kron 1996, 179). By investing in architecture, they assumed the heaviest financial burden but also reaped the most prominent, visible recognition. Their buildings are not exclusively religious, although that was the arena in which women exercised greatest influence and traditionally had more opportunity. At the core of euergetism remains the opportunity for *kleos*, glory, and women were no less eager than men to stake some share in this long-term benefit, especially on behalf of their families. This phenomenon is related to the rise in women's economic resources in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, but it is not entirely explained by increased wealth, nor does it necessarily signal greater freedom. Riet van Bremen suggests that the impression of expanding opportunity for women is actually an expanding obligation placed on their broader family unit (p. 190) to meet the expectations placed on the elite to provide for the city (van Bremen 1996, 226, 235–237).

Building the Empire: Roman Kings, Generals, Emperors, and Plutocrats

Romulus founded Rome with an architectural act—carving the *pomerium* (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 1.88.2, 1.89.1). In subsequent legend and fact, architectural patronage in Rome maps a course even more demonstrative than that in Greece, with “big” men—first kings, then generals, and ultimately emperors—deploying architecture to validate power and aspiration, cement social stature, display generosity and piety, and achieve a measure of immortality. The Archaic kings of Rome sponsored touchstone structures that would govern Rome’s architectural shape and character for centuries to come. Ancient historians credit each of the seven kings with major contributions (see Richardson 1992, 445), but the last three, Tarquinius Priscus, Servius Tullius, and Tarquinius Superbus, were especially important. The Tarquinii vowed and constructed the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, which became the religious and civic heart of the city (Livy 1.38.7, 1.55.1, 1.56.1; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 3.69.1–6; Pliny, *HN* 35.157; Mura Sommella 2000; Davies 2006; Hopkins 2012; Perry 2012). Its scale, as archaeologically demonstrated by Anna Mura Sommella, rivaled the gigantic temples sponsored by contemporary Greek tyrants and set Rome within their power orbit.

The Tarquinii also initiated the construction of the Cloaca Maxima, the great drainage system that transformed the swampy region between the hills into what would become the Forum Romanum (Livy 1.38.6, 1.56.2; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 3.67.5, 4.44.1; Pliny, *HN* 36.24, 36.104–108; Hopkins 2007). We are reminded of the Greek counterparts, in the aqueduct of Eupalinus or the fountain houses of the Pisistratids. They had a hand in the seating in the Circus Maximus (Livy 1.35.10; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 3.68.1–2), and Tarquinius Priscus is credited with building shops and porticoes in the area (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 3.67.4). Servius Tullius gets credit for creating multiple shrines (Livy 1.45.2–6; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 4.27.7) and for expanding the walled city—although the “Servian” walls themselves appear to be later (Livy 1.44.3; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 4.13.5; Richardson 1992, 262–263). Collectively, the kings architectonically shaped the lives of early Romans on all major fronts: religious, social, commercial, and political.

With the advent of the Republic, responsibility for building shifted from kings first to consuls and then to the censors and the aediles, who were charged, inter alia, with maintaining the city fabric. Wealthy individuals provided financing (Stamper 2005, 38–

39). Many of the prominent civic buildings of the city bear the names of their donors (e.g., Aqua Appia, Via Appia, Pons Aemilia, Circus Flaminius, Basilica Paulii).



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Fig. 8.5 Area Sacra di Largo Argentina, Rome. Temple B, identified as the Temple of Fortuna Huiusce Diei, dedicated by Quintus Lutatius Catulus at the Battle of Vercellae, July 30, 101 BCE. C. 90–80 BCE. Tufa, travertine, and probably Pentelic marble. Diameter of podium 19.20 m.

(Photograph by Lynne Lancaster.)

(p. 191) War proved a boon for Republican Rome architecturally. With triumphal celebrations came a proliferation of manubial temples, pledged (in the midst of battle) by victorious Republican dictators and generals to their patron divinities (Pietilä-Castrén 1987; Ziolkowski 1992; Aberson 1994; Orlin 1997; Popkin 2012, 110–203). Even the earliest Republican temples, such as the first

Temple of the Castors in the Forum Romanum, are attached with this tradition (pledged by Aulus Postumius Albinus during the Battle at Lake Regillus in 493 BCE and completed by his son in 483 BCE; Livy 2.20.12, 2.42.5; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 6.13.2; Richardson 1992, 74–75). The cluster of temples that survive at Largo Argentina in Rome (figure 8.5) and once clustered in the area of the triumphal route stand representative (Coarelli 1981; Stamper 2005, 44–46, 79–81) (figure 16.1). Although the general took the credit for his temple and enshrined the spoils of battle within, fulfillment of the oath was the responsibility of the Senate; only some of the manubial temples were actually paid for out of the confiscated proceeds (manubiae) of victory (Orlin 1997). Such buildings offered an excellent opportunity for architectural invention, with the patron exploiting design, materials, and location to make a differentiating visual statement. The Temple of Hercules Musarum, sponsored by Marcus Fulvius Nobilior, either from manubiae garnered during the Aitolian campaign or through collecting fines as a censor (Cicero, *Arch.* 27; Eumenius, *Pro instaurandis scholis* 7.2–3; Pietilä-Castrén 1987, 95–103), represents an especially innovative composition consisting of a circular temple fronted by a rectangular porch and set within a rectangular precinct lined with niches for statues. Vowed temples especially (p. 192) displayed the patrons' access to expensive materials and foreign architects, for example, Quintus Caecilius Metellus's Temple to Jupiter Stator, the first all-marble temple in Rome, designed by the Greek architect Hermodorus of Salamis (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 3.2.5), or his rival Lucius Mummius's round temple on the

Tiber, built of Pentelic marble in Greek design (Ziolkowski 1988; Davies 2012; Popkin 2012, 143-146; although attribution is contested, e.g., Pietilä-Castrén 1987, 143-144).

The dictators of the late Republic shrewdly understood the power of architectural patronage to fulfill their ambition. Public structures such as the theater complex of Pompey (funded by Pompey) (figure 16.1), Theater of Marcellus, and Forum Julium (both begun by Julius Caesar and completed by Augustus) transformed significant tracts of the urban landscape with permanent amenities that enhanced public and private life while concretizing spectacular victories (Pompey's over the East and Caesar's over Pompey, Gaul, and Africa). Ultimately, such complexes immortalized their patrons' place within the city; they established the character that imperial patronage would soon assume (Gros 1987; Favro 1996, 53-78; Stamper 2005, 84-102).

The monuments completed by Augustus were part of a program by the first emperor to transform the sprawling city of Rome from an opportunistic collection of monuments into a spatially and visually coherent imperial capital (Zanker 1988; Favro 1996; Stamper 2005, 105-150; Haselberger 2007). Augustus used material to signify the transformation, claiming that he found a city of brick and left one of marble (Suetonius, *Aug.* 28.3). Augustus may not have inscribed every building as Croesus inscribed every column, but the list of his accomplishments (*Res Gestae Divi Augusti* [RG]), narrated in the first person and inscribed on bronze tablets hung on his Mausoleum in the heart of the Campus Martius, publicly enumerated the host of buildings he repaired, renovated, rebuilt, or newly constructed. Augustus was so firmly in control of building in the city that he could afford to donate structures in the name of others when opportune (Porticus Octavia; Augustus, *RG* 19) and make renovations that he did not claim with an inscription of his own (Capitolium, Theater of Pompey; Suetonius, *Aug.* 29.1-5, 30.2; Augustus, *RG* 20). Of course, he claimed them all in the *Res Gestae*. He took care to state that he paid for them with his own money, so that he would be perceived as a patron, not an autocrat (Zanker 1997). In transforming the city, he did not act alone. His son-in-law Agrippa tapped the enormous potential of the low-ranking post of aedile to which he was elected in 33 BCE. Working on behalf of Augustus, Agrippa spent his own resources to improve the city's infrastructure and also to erect in the Campus Martius Rome's first major public bath complex (Cassius Dio 49.43). He was responsible for the first Pantheon, and his name was transferred to the later rotunda (Zanker 1988, 139-143).

Augustus and Agrippa used patronage of architecture and urban amenities to secure the support of the population and to obscure the dramatic political changes that transformed Rome from a fractured Republic into a cohesive Empire. Famously, Augustus played with the idea of return or reinstatement of Republican values; buildings served as his most tangible expression of this political, cultural, and religious platform. By reviving the old

buildings, he fixed the memory of the Republic in the present and claimed it for the new order. Through (p. 193) building patronage, the new Rome became synonymous with Augustus (Gros 1976; Galinsky 1996; Gowing 2005). Thereafter, the emperor controlled building within the city.



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Fig. 8.6 Pantheon, Rome. 118–128 CE. Concrete, travertine, granite, and marble. Width of porch 34.20 m.

(Photograph by Lynne Lancaster.)

Following the example of Augustus, Rome became the place where the emperors, especially the Flavians, Trajan, Hadrian, the Antonines, Septimius Severus, and Constantine, laid claim to their authority over the empire spatially (and sociopolitically) through magnificent public structures. Imperial personal financial resources became synonymous with those of the state, and the emperor

largely determined how they could be deployed for building. Like Augustus, Hadrian made an indelible mark on Rome (and across the empire), and, also like him, he could afford to credit others (*Hist. Aug.* 19.10). That he made the decisions, however, would have escaped no one. The most striking of all the buildings we associate with Hadrian is one he does not claim: the Pantheon (figure 8.6). Its famous dedicatory inscription (*M[arcus] Agrippa L[ucii] f[ilius] co[n] s[ul] tertium fecit*: “Marcus Agrippa, son of Lucius, made this building when consul for the third time”) gives honors to the patron of the original building (Cassius Dio 53.27.2). Another form of possessive inscription, the brick stamp, confirms Hadrian’s involvement, as claimed in the *Historia Augusta*, although the significant number of Trajanic in addition to Hadrianic brick stamps in the building have led Lise Hetland to raise the (p. 194) possibility that work began under Trajan and that his great architect, Apollodorus of Damascus, may have had a role in the initial conception of the ocular rotunda (Hetland 2007). Hadrian intentionally put his name on only one temple, to the Deified Trajan, his adoptive father (*Hist. Aug.* 19.9). The decision was well calculated to secure his affiliation with the *optimus princeps* and establish his right to rule. His work across the empire as patron, from Britain to Athens and beyond, demonstrates the now well-oiled machine of imperial architectural patronage at work

(MacDonald 1982; Boatwright 1987; Willers 1990; Boatwright 2000; Stamper 2005, 206–218; Fraser 2006).

While Rome was the architectural domain of the emperors, Roman plutocrats were particularly active as architectural patrons in the provinces, often vying with one another in the scale of their donations to their cities, which in turn vied with one another to be the finest (Dio Chrysostomus, *Or.* 40.11, *Or.* 47). We will consider the phenomenon generally by looking at female patrons. It is worth noting that not all patrons had the money to front the projects they began, nor were their efforts always appreciated, as we know from the trials of Dio of Prusa and Herodes Atticus (Swain 1996, 225–241).

Imperial and Private Female Patrons in the Roman Empire

Roman Imperial women were less involved as independent patrons of public architectural projects than one might expect. Their patronage is particularly associated with buildings that promote female-related virtues and thus seems to be an extension of their husbands' social or political agenda. The women close to Augustus, including his sister Octavia, his wife Livia, and Agrippa's sister Vipsania Pollo, built out Rome with handsome porticoes that housed libraries and art collections (Kleiner 2000, 39, suggests that Octavia's and Livia's architectural patronage might be a direct response to their Ptolemaic counterpart and rival, Cleopatra, who had the capacity to act independently). Livia's works included the Porticus Liviae with its Shrine of Concordia, several other temples and shrines honoring matronly values, and a temple honoring her deified husband (Kleiner 2000, 32–33).

A century later, the empress Sabina, wife of Hadrian, followed in the same vein by constructing a building dedicated to the *matronae* (elite married Roman women), which may well have been the place of assembly for the *conventus matronarum* (assembly of married women). And at the turn of the third century CE, coin imagery suggests that Julia Domna supported the reconstruction of the Aedes Vestae in the heart of the Forum Romanum. The Atrium of the Vestals also required repair, and she may also have been involved there. Both Livia and, later, Julia Domna (along with the rest of her family) were engaged in restoring the Temple of Fortuna Muliebris, an ancient cult associated particularly with married women. The latter also restored the building Sabina built for the *matronae* (Gorrie 2004).

While Imperial women had opportunity to serve as patrons of public architecture, their commissions centered chiefly on buildings that bore meaning for women and (p. 195) emphasized state-sponsored, family-centric moral virtues that supported the agenda of their husbands. Empresses held power by virtue of their male family members, and their actions could not appear to overreach into their husbands' authority.

By contrast, private Roman women, like their Greek counterparts, managed to carve out greater opportunity, and they, too, were no less willing, able, and sometimes compelled to put their resources into expensive architectural projects. Most female Roman patrons were of elite rank, but Eumachia of Pompeii shows how an ambitious woman might raise her status by investing in architecture. As priestess of Venus Pompeiana, matron of Concordia Augustus, and patron of fullers, she built a large precinct adjacent to the forum in Pompeii in the first century CE. The sculptural program links the building (and Eumachia) with Livia, while some of the architectural features reflect those of Augustan buildings in Rome (Kleiner 2000, 33; Zanker 1988, 320–323; Zanker 1998, 97–100, 109). One is tempted to see Eumachia's hand in such carefully constructed decisions.



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Fig. 8.7 Courtyard of the city gate donated by Plancia Magna, Perge. C. 120–122 CE. Limestone faced with marble. Preserved height c. 10.5 m.

(Photograph by Lynne Lancaster.)

Of the wealthy provincial Roman women who were well poised to serve as public patrons, perhaps the best known is the early-second-century CE Plancia Magna, who held a range of civic and religious offices in her hometown of Perge in Asia Minor (Boatwright 1991 and 1993; van Bremen 1996, 104–108) (figure 8.7). Although she came from a wealthy family, she used her own money to

renovate and substantially embellish (p. 196) the city's main south gate, creating a bold multitiered, marble-clad *scaenae frons* design in the courtyard which incorporated statues of gods, mythological founders, and historical benefactors, including members of Plancia's family, who were also referred to as city founders. She added an inner triple arch framing the courtyard, which included statues of Artemis Pergaia, the Genius of the city, and members of the imperial family. Mary Boatwright builds the case for Plancia's direct involvement in the program, especially in establishing the program of statuary

adorning the gate and arch (in which her male relatives are defined in relation to her and not the reverse) (Boatwright 1991 and 1993). Did she intervene in specific architectural decisions, beyond approving their expense? The scale of the sculptural program demands a commensurate architectural frame; it seems likely that the design responds to her vision. In any case, her example was contagious; Julia Sancta restored part of the gate of nearby Attaleia (Antalya) in a similar architectural style (Boatwright 1991, 262). A generation later, Regilla, wife of Herodes Atticus, dedicated the monumental *scaenae frons* style nymphaeum in the Sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia (149–153 CE) (Regilla built the fountain, while Herodes supplied the aqueduct; Bol 1984, 22–31; Tobin 1997, 70, 81, 314–323; Galli 2002, 223–227).

While most of our evidence for female patrons of architecture comes from the eastern empire, women in other parts of the Roman world did their part. Laberia Hostilia seems likely to have been the sponsor of baths (perhaps for women) at Trebula Mutuesca in Italy in the middle of the second century CE; Julia Memmia built splendid baths for her North African city of Bulla Regia in the early third century CE. Both of these women offered these benefactions in their capacity as *patrona* for their cities, which bore the political responsibility of intervening on behalf of the city with Rome (for the role of female patrons generally, see Hemelrijk 2004).

Patronage and the Art of Building

Patronage drove major developments in the art of building in the Greek and Roman world. People with power, financial resources, and the desire for lasting recognition invested in architecture because it fundamentally affected the fabric of life, it created valued social and religious spaces, it lavishly displayed wealth and capacity, and it was enduring. A survey of Klaus Bringmann and Hans von Steuben's catalog of dedications by Hellenistic royalty reveals certain priorities among patrons, which in turn reflect civic desires. The same pattern continues into the Roman period, at least in Asia Minor, where temples remained the dedication of choice, followed by baths and gymnasia (Zuiderhoek 2009, 78–86). The reasons a patron might finance architecture varied significantly according to his or her sociopolitical position, the circumstances, and the times, but in general, motives oscillate between the twin poles of opportunity and obligation. Private patrons tended to act out of civic responsibility in addition to family tradition and its attendant duties. They aimed above all to be good citizens by meeting civic need, to honor family tradition, and to attain the prestige accorded the generous. Patrons need not have taken an active role in the (p. 197) design process; their support enabled communities to think beyond financial constraints when creating the civic buildings that

gave shape to their life and represented it to others. Their buildings offered important amenities for a city or sanctuary; some, like the Milesian lady's, Herodes's, or Plancia Magna's, were also tours de force architecturally.

Patrons operating in larger power contexts—tyrants, kings, generals, and emperors—used architecture more overtly as a political asset and thus were more drawn to opportunities for signature design. In certain instances, we have the strong sense that they were actively involved. Powerful patrons did not have to work by committee; they could shape design expressively: the Hecatomnids crafted the character of their kingdom through architecture; the Ptolemies and Seleucids monumentalized the Corinthian order; the Attalids exported distinctive stoas to forge both physical and political alliances; Augustus refashioned Rome; Hadrian marked the empire. These same patrons (and others) also pressed the art of building into service in the elaboration of personal monuments—houses, palaces, tombs, architectonic honorific dedications, and major votive monuments—where one goal would be to create distinction and individuation within the type. We think of extraordinary buildings, such as the Monument of the Bulls on Delos, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, or the many buildings at Hadrian's Villa. Here we imagine the patron charged the architect to press beyond conventional architectural norms to create a building that stood apart by virtue of its scale, materials, lavish decoration, innovative use of order, crafting of space, or a host of other ways in which we recognize distinction. Discerning Greek and Roman patrons understood that architecture has the capacity to shape, and thus to change, how people live their lives. So, too, could philosophy or religion, but they were harder to purchase. In the hands of an adept patron, buildings were an efficient way to reshape the world to one's own vision.

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The Materials and Techniques of Greek and Roman Art



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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the materials (for example, clay, stones, and metals) and techniques (such as mosaic and bronze casting) of art in ancient Greece and ancient Rome. It begins by considering the historiography of scholarly attention to the materials and techniques of artistic production in the ancient world, citing the treatises written by craftsmen and architects themselves, Greek papyri from Egypt, and Pliny the Elder's encyclopedic *Natural History*. It then turns to a discussion of the three principal types of evidence obtained from literature, art history, and archaeology, along with some of their drawbacks and advantages.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, archaeology, art, art history, bronze casting, literature, materials, mosaic, techniques

Much of what we today consider to be ancient Greek and Roman "art" was originally produced for a practical function: to serve wine, adorn a grave, commemorate an achievement, or honor a god (see chapters 12 and 13). Neither technical mastery nor aesthetic quality was absolutely necessary to meet these goals, but admirable objects are more pleasing to both mortals and immortals, they distinguish the patron and enhance his prestige, and they can burnish the reputation of a craftsman. In Greece, artisans from the Geometric period forward made use of locally available materials—clay, stone, metal, wood, and other organics—alongside more precious imports, as in the preceding Bronze Age. Expansion of trade networks in the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman periods made more exotic substances available, leading to changes in fashion. But whatever the stimuli that drove them, from at least the ninth century BCE, craftsmen working in diverse media continually exploited the potential of raw materials and employed a variety of techniques to create praiseworthy objects of all kinds.

Historiography

Scholarly attention to the materials and techniques of artistic production began early, with the ancients themselves. Several craftsmen and architects wrote treatises about their practices, and although the vast majority is lost, titles and quotations survive (see chapters 2 and 3 above). The earliest treatises were written by East Greek architects in the sixth century BCE and addressed technical matters, feats of engineering, and perhaps also proportional systems. In the fifth century BCE, the architects of the Parthenon authored a book about that temple, and in the fourth, Euphranor, both a (p. 204) sculptor and a painter, penned *On Symmetria* and *On Color*, which presumably contained not only theoretical precepts but also practical information about pigments. The *Kanon* of the mid-fifth-century BCE sculptor Polyclitus and other lost treatises written in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, too, evidently combined theory with practice. Nonartists also wrote on art: Marcus Terentius Varro, praised by Quintilian as “the most learned of the Romans,” was a key source for the elder Pliny. Titles of his many lost works indicate an interest in architecture and antiquities. He was also deeply concerned with language: Pliny preserves his etymology of *lychnites*, the term for the finest Parian marble, “quarried by lamplight in underground tunnels” (*HN* 36.14). Other authors were more focused. Juba, king of Mauritania, was an avid collector of engraved gems and penned a much-consulted book on that topic. This, too, is lost, but the Greek polymath Theophrastus’s earlier *On Stones* survives and can be compared with the elder Pliny’s treatment of the same subject, where some passages are translated verbatim (Jex-Blake and Sellers 1896 [1976]; Ferri 1946; Caley and Richards 1956; Pollitt 1995; Lefons 2000; Cuomo 2008; Lapatin 2012).

Pliny the Elder’s encyclopedic *Natural History* is the most important surviving ancient text for the study of materials and techniques of all kinds. It systematically addresses the origins and physical properties of diverse substances and the processes employed by men to transform them into something useful, whether works of art, medicines, or some other product. Although its last five books (33 through 37) are often referred to as Pliny’s chapters on the history of art, they are organized by material and show the author’s great interest in the geographical sources of specific substances, means of extraction, uses, production techniques, and prices. Thus, in book 33, Pliny provides copious detail about mining and refining gold along with various observations: that it can be spun into thread and woven into a luxurious fabric that was named after its inventors, the Attalids of Pergamum; that an ounce of this incorruptible metal can be beaten out into 750 or more four-by-four-inch sheets; and that gilding can be achieved by means of heat, mercury, egg white, and other adhesives. Much of this information derives from the author’s voracious

reading, but some, such as his description of mining operations in Spain, where he served as a procurator, clearly result from autopsy: “the workman hewing the rock hangs suspended from ropes, so that spectators viewing the operations from a distance seem to see not so much a swarm of strange animals as a flight of birds” (*HN* 33.75, trans. H. Rackham). Book 33 also treats different kinds of gold solders, their use by both doctors and artisans, and the mining and refining of silver and its by-products, such as cinnabar. Pliny enumerates metalworking techniques (casting, chasing, engraving, and filigree, in addition to plating) and names several ancient silversmiths, attributing the origins of silver statuary—like most luxuries, which he despises—to the Greek east. Because digging into the earth produced pigments in addition to metals, these, too, are addressed: the best yellow ochre was from Attica, costing two *denarii* a pound; the next best, called “marbled” (*marmorosum*), cost half as much; the third best was from Skyros or Achaia; and the fourth was from Gaul. Because it was darker, painters used the third to render shadows. Such lists, cobbled together from Pliny’s wide reading, do not necessarily reflect actual practice. (Indeed, archaeological evidence suggests that craftsmen (p. 205) adapted their materials and techniques as circumstances demanded.) In book 34, Pliny addresses copper, bronze, iron, and lead and thus provides important lists of sculptors, with their dates, works, and personal anecdotes. In book 35, he does the same for painters, additional pigments, and different earths. Modelers in clay—including the first to fashion molds from living models—are treated here, and so are details about different varnishes and other preservatives. Marble and marble carvers are addressed in book 36, along with the working of other stones, gypsum, and plaster. Book 37 treats gemstones, their properties, and the carving of intaglios and cameos. Recent research has emphasized not only Pliny’s use of diverse sources and his usefulness but also his larger moralizing purpose (Wallace-Hadrill 1990; Isager 1991; Healy 1999; Doody 2001; Murphy 2004; Carey 2006; Gibson and Morello 2011).

More focused than the *Natural History* are two fourth-century CE Greek papyri from Egypt, now in Leiden and Stockholm, which preserve hundreds of recipes for a number of crafts, including the extraction, imitation, and counterfeiting of precious metals; production of pigments; dyeing of textiles; and artificial coloring of gemstones (Caley 2008). Such recipes were collected c. 600 CE in the so-called *Mappae clavicula*, an influential medieval resource for alchemists and artisans. Pliny’s text, too, was mined by later authors, such as “Theophilus,” an early-twelfth-century monk who compiled accounts of artistic practices in his *Schedula diversarum artium* (“List of Various Arts,” or *De diversis artibus* [“On Various Arts”]), which was intended less as a historical overview than as a practical guide to practitioners (Dodwell 1961). These two goals were combined in the writings of the Renaissance polymath Leon Battista Alberti, who in treatises *On Sculpture* (c. early 1430s), *On Painting* (1435), and *On Architecture* (1452) cites not only

Pliny and Vitruvius but also Cicero, Galen, Plutarch, Strabo, Tacitus, and Virgil, among others. His contemporary, the Florentine goldsmith Lorenzo Ghiberti, also employed Greek and Latin authors to compose a pocket history of ancient art in his *Commentarii* (begun c. 1447), which includes artists' biographies and was intended, in part, to raise the author's own social credibility by demonstrating his learning. Indeed, the *Commentarii* culminated with Ghiberti's autobiography—the first of an artist in modern times—and emphasized “the ideal of the artist as one who combined practical skills with theoretical knowledge.” This treatise served as a key source for Giorgio Vasari's *Lives* (first edition, 1550), which also drew heavily on ancient authors (Gombrich 1966, 1-10; Becatti 1972; Roncoroni 1984; Rubin 1995, quote from 171).

By the seventeenth century, considerably more Greek and Latin texts were available to scholars, and Franciscus Junius the Younger, initially writing in Latin for an erudite international audience rather than craftsmen, cited hundreds of Greek and Latin authors in his *Painting of the Ancients* (1637) and *Lexicon of Artists and Their Works* (published posthumously in 1694). Junius's practice of wide reading, extraction, and compilation was not so distant from Pliny's, although his focus was limited to ancient painting, architecture, sculpture, metalwork, and other crafts. His endeavor was largely a literary one, but he does cite inscriptions and surviving artifacts, and his books are replete with information relating to materials and techniques. The *Lexicon* is a massive reference work, organized alphabetically beginning with Aaron, maker of the golden (p. 206) calf, and ending with Zosimus, an engraver of silver. Citations from ancient authors are given for each of its entries, which range from Greek and Roman painters and sculptors to biblical and mythological figures. Specific localities and the exotic materials they produced are also cited, such as Adulian ivory, Aeginetan bronze, and purple dyes from Aquinum (Junius 1991).

Like Junius, whose work he relied on (but did not acknowledge), Johann Joachim Winckelmann was steeped in ancient texts. His influential *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (*History of the Art of Antiquity*), first published in 1764 (Borbein et al. 2002–2012; Winckelmann 2006), opens with an account of the origins of art and its differences among nations, followed by a short chapter outlining the materials used in statuary, with some reference to technique: clay, wood, ivory, stone (including polychromy, which he is often accused of overlooking), and bronze; then gem cutting and glass. Although Winckelmann relies heavily on ancient literary sources, he frequently cites objects in Italian collections, notably those of his patron, Cardinal Albani, and items recently recovered at the sites buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Materials and techniques are addressed throughout Winckelmann's *History*, but he returns to them explicitly in book 7, where the first chapter discusses “the mechanical part of Greek art”

fashioned from various substances (clay, gypsum, ivory, silver, and stones of various kinds, from marble to semiprecious) to create statuary, coins, and engraved gems. The second chapter focuses on bronze casting, and the third and fourth address painting, culminating with mosaic. Winckelmann treats these topics according to chronological principles, proceeding from softer to more resistant materials, assuming that the former were employed first. Throughout these chapters, he combines literary with physical evidence, both ancient representations of artists at work and surviving artifacts, and repeatedly criticizes his predecessors' practice of interpreting texts in a vacuum, often with biting sarcasm.

Increased archaeological activity in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries vastly expanded the corpus of artifacts available to scholars, and the advent of affordable travel and broader education enlarged the audience for ancient art. Both French theorist Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, writing a detailed treatise on the techniques of ancient sculpture, *Le Jupiter Olympien, ou L'art de la sculpture antique* (1814), and German philologist Karl Ottfried Müller, in his influential *Handbuch der Archäologie der Kunst* (Müller 1830), employ both physical and literary evidence. Quatremère aimed to reveal the methods by which Phidias and other sculptors produced monumental chryselephantine statues and to provide an account of sculptural polychromy in general. Müller's book, in contrast, is Winckelmannian in scope and organization. Materials and techniques are addressed in dedicated chapters, but these appear after the author lists tools mentioned by Homer or discusses traces of paint and metal additions on the newly recovered marbles from Aegina.

Hugo Blümner's four-volume *Technologie und Terminologie der Gewerbe und Künste bei Griechen und Römern* (1875–1887) is arguably the first comprehensive and systematic treatment of materials and techniques. Blümner begins with the necessities of life—food and clothing—and does not address “art” until volume 2, which, like Winckelmann's (p. 207) *History*, treats soft substances—clay, plaster, and wax—before wood, horn, bone, and ivory. Blümner not only cites numerous ancient and modern sources and provides illustrations from, and of, relevant ancient artifacts, but he also presents surviving tools and the results of scientific analyses. He offers a similar wealth of evidence for stonework in volume 3, which encompasses architecture, sculpture, gem engraving, and mosaics, and occasionally adduces modern tools and techniques as *comparanda*. Metals and painting are the subjects of volume 4, the largest of the work. Despite his attempt to be exhaustive, Blümner admits that practical experimentation and physical reconstruction of techniques in so many crafts were beyond his capacity.

The twentieth century brought more artifacts from the earth and greater specialization among scholars. Photography, invented in the nineteenth century, significantly reshaped

research methods. John D. Beazley, who meticulously sketched Athenian vases as part of his attribution studies, also amassed a huge photographic archive. His attention to varying techniques (and styles) of individual vase painters is most evident in *The Development of Attic Black-Figure* (1951). Scholars seeking to elucidate the techniques of stone sculpture also used detailed photographic reproductions alongside drawings to convey to their readers the telltale traces of individual tools (Blümel 1927; Casson 1933; Adam 1966; Claridge 1990; Conlin 1997; Lawton 2006; and Palagia 2006). And practicing artists in a variety of media (e.g., stone sculpture, ceramics, gem engraving, and glassblowing) have brought to bear the kind of hands-on knowledge that Blümner lacked. They have not only closely investigated the surviving material, drawing inferences from years of personal experience, but also attempted to recreate objects physically (e.g., Rockwell 1993; Schreiber 1999; Schmidt 2008). Most famously, Joseph V. Noble (1966) experimented with the three-stage firing process that most scholars today accept produced the distinctive colors of Athenian black- and red-figure pots. He used modern kilns; more recently, others have experimented with reconstructions of ancient ones (Hasaki 2006 and 2012; Kahn and Wissinger 2008). Such reenactments of ancient production techniques (a branch of “experimental archaeology”) have also illuminated methods of granulation in gold jewelry (Nestler and Formigli 1993), casting bronze statues (Born 1985; Formigli 1993 and 1999), and the use of multiple brushes to paint concentric circles on Geometric pots (Papadopoulos et al. 1998). Likewise, the study of materials and techniques in other ancient societies, such as the ancient Near East and Egypt (Moorey 1999; Nicholson and Shaw 2000), offers many insights, as do comparisons to modern production in media where technologies have remained relatively constant, such as gem engraving, or in traditional societies, where ethnoarchaeology can reveal much not only about production methods, apprenticeship systems, and spatial organization but also about attitudes toward craftsmen and their own ritual, religious, superstitious, and magical beliefs (Blakely 2006; Hasaki 2011).

The study of groups of objects, rather than isolated individual artifacts, also has revealed much about craft practices and workshop connections (e.g., Payne 1936; Boardman 2001; Mattusch 2005; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007; Hallett 2009), and the comparison of measurements, computer tomography, and three-dimensional modeling (p. 208) have supplemented more traditional connoisseurship to confirm the use of common molds for different bronze statues (Risser and Saunders, forthcoming). Likewise, careful observation and recording of specific tool marks preserved on ancient silver vessels have suggested common workshop origins (Niemeyer 2007). Recent analysis of red lead pigments on a group of Romano-Egyptian mummies, meanwhile, indicates a source in Spain (Corcoran and Svoboda 2010), providing unexpected evidence of an interlinked

Mediterranean economy. Indeed, as publications increase and databases grow, more such connections will doubtless be made.

Collaborations among archaeologists, art historians, conservators, and scientists have now become standard practice, providing significant insights. Geologists have developed isotopic and other analyses to better source ancient marbles to their quarries and since 1988 have gathered regularly with archaeologists at meetings of the Association for the Study of Marble and Other Stones in Antiquity (see www.asmosia.org). Similar collaborative scientific and archaeological/art historical examinations of ceramics, including some of the more specialized techniques of vase decoration, such as white ground and coral red, have also been undertaken, as have investigations of the polychromy of statuary and other painting techniques (e.g., Manzelli 1994; Brecolouki 2001, 2006, and forthcoming; Tiverios and Tsiafakis 2002; Cohen et al. 2006; Brinkmann et al. 2007; Brinkmann, Primavesi, and Hollein 2010; Descamps-Lequime 2007; Lapatin 2008; Kakoulli 2009; Bentz, Geominy, and Müller 2010; Swaminathan 2013; see also www.trackingcolour.com). Advances in materials analysis employing a variety of scientific techniques to characterize more precisely the chemical composition of diverse materials—from X-ray fluorescence (XRF) to Fourier transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy—can help to determine the nature and origins of clay, marble, and pigments and the composition of metals and other substances and thus reveal much about workshop connections, distribution patterns, trade networks, and ancient imitations, not to mention modern forgeries. Some breakthroughs have been stimulated by multidisciplinary examination of remarkable new finds, such as the bronze statues recovered from the sea near Riace Marina in 1972, which underwent lengthy and revelatory conservation campaigns (e.g., Arias et al. 1984). Indeed, through close observation and scientific testing, considerable insights have been derived from fortuitously discovered masterpieces and unprepossessing objects that might otherwise be dismissed, and increased attention to artifacts of all kinds by conservators and conservation scientists will doubtless continue to provide significant information.

Evidence and approaches

Many approaches useful for obtaining a better understanding of the materials and techniques of ancient art have been employed for centuries and were mentioned above. This section addresses some of the pitfalls and the advantages of the three principal types of evidence available to us.

(p. 209) Ancient Literary Evidence

Greek and Latin authors provide vast and valuable testimony for the materials and techniques employed to fashion a wide variety of items, including lost objects and even entire classes of production (such as Classical Greek panel painting) for which we have scant physical evidence (Reinach 1921; Pollitt 1974; Stewart 1990; Cuomo 2008; Lapatin 2012; see chapter 3 above). Of course, not all ancient writers were contemporary with the objects and craft techniques they described, nor did they necessarily understand them well. Plutarch, in his *Life of Pericles*, for example, lists the materials and workmen employed on the Athenian Acropolis in the fifth century BCE: “The materials were stone, bronze, ivory, gold, ebony, cypress wood; and the arts or trades that wrought and fashioned them were smiths and carpenters, molders, founders and braziers, stone-cutters, dyers, goldsmiths, ivory-workers, painters, embroiderers, turners; those again that conveyed them to the town for use, merchants and mariners and ship-masters by sea, and by land, cart wrights, cattle-breeders, wagoners, rope-makers, flax-workers, shoemakers and leather-dressers, road-makers, miners” (12.6–7, trans. J. Dryden, adapted). But he penned this account half a millennium after the fact, at the height of the Roman Empire, when buildings were constructed under rather different conditions—and using different techniques—from those in democratic Athens. Thus, this presentation of the Periklean building program as a kind of public works project may well be anachronistic. On the other hand, public accounts inscribed on stone, such as those recording payments to the builders and sculptors of the Parthenon and Erechtheum in the fifth century BCE and the Temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus in the fourth, are highly informative contemporary documents, although they were not meant to educate historians about craft practice; rather, they were intended to advance the completion of the projects and guarantee against fraud. Nonetheless, they offer much useful information about the identity of craftsmen (citizen, foreign resident, and slave) and processes not always evident from the physical remains (transport, production of models and tools, erection of scaffolding, work in perishable materials, final polishing, and gilding) and actual costs (Randall 1953; Burford 1969; Feyel 2006; Cuomo 2008; Schultz 2009). Regardless of how transparent these documents may appear to be, we must keep in mind the contexts and audience(s) for whom they were written.

Ancient poets and philosophers also reveal much about materials and working processes, as do historians and forensic orators, who, of course, had different aims. Seemingly offhand comments offered as analogy or evidence of some accepted truth present evidence for practices not preserved elsewhere. For example, among those who mention the techniques of unscrolling and molding ivory that were employed by Phidias and other sculptors to create the ancient world’s most renowned gold and ivory statues are

Philostratus writing about the savant Apollonius's travels to India; epitomizers of Valerius Maximus illustrating the tyrannical nature of the democratic mob; Lucian demonstrating the distance between appearance and reality when it comes to the glory of kings; and Plutarch explaining how vice weakens character. Thus, seemingly unrelated passages, brought together, can provide new insights into ancient craft (p. 210) practices, but modern interpreters must also be aware of their own biases. Plutarch, for example, mentions "softeners of ivory" (*malakteres elephanton*) explicitly in the *Life of Pericles* (quoted above), but because this did not make sense to many of his postantique editors, they altered his text (in Greek and translation) to read "ivory workers" or "workers in gold and ivory" (see Stadter 1989; Lapatin 1997 and 2001). Vocabulary presents other problems: not only did Pliny and other Roman authors translate (or mistranslate) Greek terms (Jex-Blake and Sellers 1896), but words that seem familiar to us today may not mean what they appear to: *iaspis*, for example, does not seem to have denoted the stone we know as jasper, and *sapphirus* and *topazus* are unlikely to be what we recognize as sapphire and topaz (Caley and Richards 1956; Eichholz 1962 and 1965; Lefons 2000; Brecolouki, forthcoming). Meticulous philological research is required to derive meaningful and accurate information from ancient texts, even if they appear descriptive and straightforward.

Art Historical Evidence



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Fig. 9.1 Attic red-figured kalpis attributed to the Leningrad Painter, from Ruvo. Detail of shoulder: idealized depiction of pot painters at work. C. 470–460 BCE. Ceramic. Height 32 cm; height of detail c. 10 cm. Vicenza, Collezione Banca Intesa inv. 2 (C278).

(Photograph by Kenneth Lapatin.)

Representations of craftsmen at work appear on painted pottery, funerary and votive reliefs, statuettes, engraved gems, lamps, and other media, providing a wealth of information about ancient tools and craft practices. Many such images were collected by Blümner (1875–1887). Recent treatments are more focused and more critical (e.g., Mattusch 1980; Zimmer 1982a and 1982b; Hadjidimitriou 2005;

Jockey 1998a; Vidale 2002; Cuomo 2007; Ulrich 2008a; Smith 2009; Williams 2009; Yatromanolakis 2009; Hasaki 2012). A greater degree of veracity—or at least understanding—might be expected from representations of artisans depicting their own crafts, such as images on pots of ceramicists working at their wheels, painting vessels, or firing kilns, but we must remember that these images are not photographic. Not only are they subject to the conventions and limitations of their media, especially as regards scale and detail, but they are also contingent on contemporary ideologies, particularly when they involve self-representation. A much-reproduced Athenian red-figured kalpis from Ruvo (figure 9.1), for example, depicts Athena and two Nikai crowning three men decorating vessels. The men sit or crouch, with brushes in their hands and various small pots at their sides. (The suggestion that this terracotta water jar depicts metalworkers rather than pot painters is unconvincing.) To the side, above the right handle, is a fourth worker, apparently unworthy of such extraordinary honors: a woman. While this scene provides important evidence for the decoration of vessels and for existence of female pot painters, it is a construct. The central male, about to be crowned by the goddess, is larger than the others. He sits on a fine, high-backed *klismos*, draped in a *himation*. This is no more an accurate snapshot of the interior of a workshop than the tondo of a fragmentary kylix of c. 480 attributed to the manner of the Antiphon Painter (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 01.8073: ARV² 342.19, 1646; *Para* 362; *Add*² 219; BAPD 203543), which depicts a half-draped man seated on a stool carefully decorating a kylix. Scholars have labored to identify the implements he holds in each hand and their function, but less attention (p. 211) has been paid to the objects in the background and their implications: a knobbed staff, strigil, and aryballos. These are the standard attributes of an Athenian citizen, who engages in civic business in the agora and exercises in the gymnasium, and the image, in many ways, is an assertion of the social status of the painter.

Likewise, on the funerary relief of Publius Curtilius Agatus, the freedman of Publius (figure 9.2), we can scrutinize the now-damaged tools originally held by this Roman silversmith, identified in the inscription as a *faber argentarius*, and learn something about his technique from the wooden plug inside the silver cup on which he is fashioning a dancing satyr in low relief. (The plug was intended to prevent the collapse of the vessel from the pressure of chasing and engraving.) But the craftsman's voluminous toga and ring are equally, if not more, important as indications of his status, and the first, at least, would certainly not have been worn in the workshop.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 9.2 Grave relief of the silversmith Publius Curtilius Agatus, freedman of Publius, wearing a toga and holding the tools of his trade. Provenance unknown. C. 1-25 CE. Marble. Height 79 cm. Malibu, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 96.AA.40.

(Photograph © J. Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection.)

Tools of various sorts are depicted on tombstones of professionals who employed them, from the hammers and chisels of sculptors and the drills and saws of carpenters and shipwrights to the anvils and tongs of metalsmiths and the T-squares, levels, plumb lines, and cranes of architects and builders. Such implements also appear in the hands of mythological figures in decorative scenes on wall paintings and engraved gems in narrative scenes (e.g., Hephaestus/Vulcan, Prometheus, Daedalus) and generic ones (e.g.,

playful erotes at work). When attempting to extract information about ancient craft techniques from such representations, the aims, contexts, and limitations of the images (p. 212) must always be carefully considered. Where these items were made, the knowledge of their makers, the audience(s) addressed, the messages to be conveyed, and the conventions of the medium all matter, just as with ancient texts.

Archaeological Evidence



Click to view larger

Fig. 9.3 Unfinished statue carved in the round, from Naxos. C. 540 BCE. Marble. Height 1.02 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 14.

(Photograph by Hans R. Goette.)

The surviving artifacts themselves are the richest source of information about materials and techniques and divulge much to close scrutiny. And in addition to “works of art,” ancient tools and production sites also survive, as do commercial installations. Quarries and mines preserve traces of the extraction of raw materials. At refineries, kilns, foundries, construction sites, and public and private workshops, we find discarded and partially worked material, models,

molds, and trial pieces, along with repaired and reused objects, even apprentices’ exercises. These reveal much not only about artistic production but also about the training of craftsmen, the size of working crews, and spatial organization (Mallwitz and Schiering 1964; Higgins 1986; Uhlenbrock 1990; Zimmer 1990; Schiering 1991; Jockey 1995 and 1998b; Mattusch 1982, 1988, 1996a, and (p. 213) 1996b; Van Voorhis 1998; Moustaka 1999; Duthoy 2000; Ramage and Craddock 2000; Papadopoulos 2003; St. Clair 2003; Nolte 2005; Lawton 2006; Rockwell 2008; Smith and Lenaghan 2009; Jeammet 2010; Hasaki 2012; Stewart 2013). Poorly worked, unfinished, or damaged artifacts are often the most informative about technique, for their surfaces and interiors preserve traces of diverse working methods, not yet or no longer hidden by final finishing processes. Archaic Greek marble statues abandoned in the quarries (figure 9.3) on account of irreparable damage or some flaw in the stone, for example, indicate that they were carved in the round from all four sides of the block. The sculptor gradually “unveiled” the figure, using a variety of tools from pick to point to flat chisel, before final finishing. This technique can be contrasted to that evident in unfinished statues from the late Hellenistic and Roman periods that were cut from the frontal plane to the back in increasingly high relief until a fully rounded figure eventually emerged (figure 9.4)

(Blümel 1927; Ridgway 1969; Stewart 1990 and 2013; Grossman 2003; Lawton 2006; Palagia 2006).



Click to view larger

Fig. 9.4 Unfinished marble statue of a *Discophorus* carved front to back, from Aphrodisias. C. third to fourth century CE. Marble. Height 1.83 m. Aphrodisias, Museum inv. 61-084.

(Photograph © New York University Excavations at Aphrodisias.)

(p. 214) Broken and unbroken statues alike preserve traces of joins originally held by mortar, lead, and pins for marbles and solder or a variety of welds for bronzes, in addition to repairs, additions, inlays, and other embellishments. A fragmentary draped marble figure from Athens once had a separately carved and inserted penis shaft and right arm, the latter originally held in place by a pin (figure 9.5). The separate carving of projecting members reduced the effort of cutting away large tracts

of marble, along with any additional cost for a larger block and attendant fees and difficulties of transport. (Outside of the Aegean, where fine, statuary-grade marble was less readily available, marble heads, hands, and feet might be added to limestone bodies, the more luminous material reserved for flesh.) Drill holes at the chest of the Athenian figure were for metal attachments, now lost, perhaps clasps for the drapery. Similar holes on female figures indicate the addition of earrings, necklaces, bracelets, crowns, separately rendered locks of hair, and other adornments in stone, bronze, or lead (Frel 1984; Claridge 1990; Ridgway 1990; Palagia 2006).



Click to view larger

Fig. 9.5 Fragmentary marble statue of a draped man with added arms and penis shaft and drill holes for other accouterments, from the bed of the Ilissos river in Athens. C. 500–480 BCE. Marble. Height 65 cm. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 3687.

(Photograph by Hans R. Goette.)

Other statues preserve evidence of repair over time or reuse under changing circumstances. The excavation of a sculptors' workshop at Aphrodisias in Asia Minor has yielded particularly valuable evidence not only for trial pieces (especially feet and hands) but also for the reuse of a damaged figure, apparently as a student practice piece.

(p. 215) That site also preserves numerous unfinished sarcophagi in various states of completion, demonstrating how standard compositions were

planned and executed (Van Voorhis 1998; Smith and Lenaghan 2009; for sculptors' workshops at other sites, see Jockey 1995; Moustaka 1999; Duthoy 2000; Nolte 2005; Lawton 2006; Stewart 2013).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 9.6 Funerary lekythos with “ghosts” of painted decoration at the shoulder and neck. Provenance unknown. C. 375 BCE. Marble. Height 56 cm. Malibu, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 80.AA.157.

(Photograph © J. Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection.)

Polychromy is rarely preserved on ancient stone sculpture. Natural light applied at different angles and different spectra, however, can reveal differential weathering where pigments were once applied (figure 9.6), and magnification and other techniques can reveal actual traces of ancient pigments, indicating that the seemingly uniform white surfaces of many artifacts were once richly colored. Gilding on marbles, bronzes, and terracottas has been revealed by microscopic examination and other

advanced techniques, but although recent attempts to recover and evaluate the visual effect of polychromy have radically altered our view of ancient sculpture, the original impact and meaning of these practices remain poorly understood. Even when archaeologists and modern artists are able to identify and employ the same raw pigments as those used by the ancients, their application to plaster casts cannot but yield very different results; even when marble is used, ancient binders have yet to be identified, and the original painting and finishing techniques are far from well understood, let alone mastered in their (p. 216) subtlety and sophistication. Nonetheless, it is clear that significant compositional or iconographic elements not carved or modeled into figures and reliefs were rendered in paint, and differing polychrome treatments of similar figures could yield very different results (Manzelli 1994; Tiverios and Tsiafakis 2002; Brinkmann et al. 2007; Brinkmann, Primavesi, and Hollein 2010; Panzanelli et al. 2008; Abbe 2009; Jeammet 2010; www.trackingcolour.com).

Bronze casters, too, employed diverse materials to achieve more realistic effects: inset eyes of colored stone, ivory, or glass; lips and nipples in copper; teeth and fingernails in silver; and drapery hems and other accouterments added in a variety of metals (Mattusch 1982, 1988, 1996b, 1996a and 1997; Hemingway 2000). Special alloys may have been developed for iconographic purposes: Plutarch (*Mor.* 674A) reports that Silanion added

silver to the bronze of a statue depicting the dead Jocasta to make her face more pallid. While possible metallurgically, there is no surviving physical evidence (p. 217) for this practice, and lead, a by-product of silver extraction, would have been considerably cheaper. Easier still would have been to paint or patinate the statue, but the original surface of preserved bronzes rarely survives intact (Scott 2002).

Greek ceramics, too, sometimes preserve evidence of additional colors (Koch-Brinkmann 1999; Cohen et al. 2006; Bentz, Geominy, and Müller 2010) and preliminary sketches (Corbett 1965; Böhr 2002), and later repairs and surviving wasters reveal much about firing technology (Pfisterer-Haas 2002; Rotroff 2011; Papadopoulos 2003; Hasaki 2006 and 2012; Kahn and Wissinger 2008). Still, despite being much studied, the production of Greek pottery remains to be fully understood, for although Noble (1966) and others have been able to replicate the appearance of Athenian black- and red-figured pots, recent research indicates that the production methods of ancient potters and painters were far from consistent (Lapatin 2008; Swaminathan 2013).

Materials and Techniques

The range of materials and techniques employed by ancient craftsmen is far too vast for full elucidation here, and several have already been mentioned above. Brief overviews will have to suffice, as will select references to specialized bibliography. In general, it is important to note that different materials not only had natural properties and visual characteristics (e.g., hardness, ductility, incorruptibility, shine) that made them particularly attractive to both patrons and craftsmen, but they also often had ideological, magical, and moral connotations, which, in addition to geographic and economic ones, were significant for ancient viewers (see, e.g., Stewart 1990; Lapatin 2001; Entwistle and Adams 2011; Brecolaki, forthcoming).

Clay



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig 9.7 Mold (left) and modern cast of an Archaistic female figure, from Taranto. C. 100 BCE. Terracotta. Height 25.4 cm. London, British Museum inv. 1887,0725.4 (Terracotta E15).

(Photograph © Trustees of the British Museum.)

Clay was the most commonly used material in antiquity. Ubiquitous, cheap, and malleable, it is extremely versatile and was fashioned into roof tiles, pipes, and architectural ornaments in addition to pottery and sculpture. And it was used for modeling prototypes of objects rendered in other materials. Clays vary from one locale to another and differ in strength, porosity, pliability, and color. Primary clays are relatively free of impurities; secondary, or sedimentary, clays, which have been combined with

other minerals through geological movement, are generally finer and more suitable to craft production. Attic clay is rich in iron and thus fires to a reddish-orange color, while Corinthian clay has more calcium and thus a creamy, whitish-yellow appearance (Cook 1960; Noble 1966; Sparkes 1991 and 1996; Boardman 2001; Clark et al. 2002; Cohen et al. 2006; Lapatin 2008; Burn 2012). Cleaned of roots, stones, and other detritus, usually through levigation in water, clay can be stretched, rolled, cut, shaped, joined, stamped, and painted. Its flexibility and tensile strength allow clay to be shaped by hand, turned on a wheel, or pressed into molds to fashion bricks and roof tiles, statuettes (figure 9.7), **(p. 218)** bowls, lamps, and other objects. It is a multipurpose material, the plastic of antiquity. (The word “plastic” comes from the Greek *plasso*, “to mold or model.”) But once it is fired, clay becomes hard and durable. Although terracotta (“baked earth”) can be broken, it is virtually indestructible, for fragments can readily be reassembled. In fact, several Greek pots show evidence of ancient repairs (Pfisterer-Haas 2002; Rotroff 2011). This does not necessarily demonstrate that these pots were particularly valuable, however, rather that they were useful.

Although ancient vase painters, whether or not they signed their works, have garnered much attention from modern scholars, potters (whose signatures appear more often) controlled the workshops, with their infrastructure of settling pits for refining clay, wheels for turning vessels, and, above all, kilns and fuel for firing (Hasaki 2012). These establishments were often family affairs, but some, such as the workshop of Nikosthenes, seem to have operated on a quasi-industrial scale and specialized in particular shapes or aimed at particular markets (Tsingarida 2008).

While undecorated pottery was commonly used for cooking, storage, and transport, in addition to eating and drinking, fine wares were decorated with a variety of techniques, Attic black- and red-figure being the best known. Before firing, the vessels were painted with a refined clay slip (often mischaracterized as a “glaze”), which produced, (p. 219) through what is generally understood to have been a three-step firing process consisting of oxidizing, reducing, and reoxidizing phases, a characteristic black gloss that, having been painted either in thin lines or across broad fields, might render decorative details or a shiny black background. Compasses and multiple brushes were used as early as the Geometric period, and by the late seventh century, the black-figure technique, which was developed in Corinth, employed incision, sharp lines cut through the slip, usually before firing, apparently under the influence of imported metalwork. Details might be added in white primary clay (especially to represent the pale flesh of women) or reddish-purple slip. In red-figure, developed in Athens in the late sixth century, painters sometimes diluted the black slip to create thinner brown or even yellow lines for details, while a heavier, three-dimensional “relief line” was used for principal compositional elements. Later, in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, Athenian painters sometimes added brightly colored pigments after firing. These are highly fugitive and rarely survive well. The best-preserved examples appear on funerary vases, particularly white ground *lekythoi* (oil jars). Funerary vases, Panathenaic prize amphorae (always in black-figure), and other vessels were also sometimes enhanced by the addition of thin gold leaf (Noble 1966; Clark et al. 2002; Cohen et al. 2006; Lapatin 2008; Bentz, Geominy, and Müller 2010; Swaminathan 2013).

Elaborate vases sometimes include three-dimensional elements—animal or human heads or even entire figures, handmade or molded—with their wheel-turned components, effectively combining the craft of coroplast with that of potter (True 2006). Indeed, the two must often have been one and the same, at least in the Geometric and Archaic periods, when their products were decorated in similar styles and techniques. Coroplasts produced relief plaques in addition to figures that might stand independently or decorate architecture. The earliest Greek figurines, produced c. 950 BCE, were solid and handmade, produced by rolling and pinching the clay. Soon flat figures were cut from clay sheets, but by the Archaic period, they were cast in molds, first just the fronts, to

which flat backs were added by hand; then molded backs and heads were added to bodies; and eventually, limbs and other accouterments, such as hats, fans, and so on, were separately fashioned and attached. Thus, by the Hellenistic period, complex hollow figures composed of numerous molded elements were not uncommon. (The figures were hollow because the “shells” of their bodies were pressed into molds, and holes were often cut into their backs or openings left in their bases not only to avoid explosion on account of the expansion of heated air during firing but also to allow the coroplast access to the interior to secure the joins.) Such assembly from multiple components not only facilitated production, but it also added to the potential variety of figures within standard types. From the Classical period, figures were painted after firing with bright colors (both mineral and vegetal) and sometimes gilded. Before or after such decoration, a finished figure could be recast and reproduced, but because of the shrinkage of clay during firing, such second-generation figures are about 5 to 7 percent smaller than their prototypes. Cemeteries at Tanagra in Boeotia and Myrina in Asia Minor have yielded particularly rich corpora from the late Classical and Hellenistic periods, and many other centers of production existed around the Mediterranean. Because craftsmen, molds, (p. 220) and finished figures traveled easily, clay composition is a more reliable guide to the origin of artifacts. Indeed, nearly identical statuettes have been found locally produced on opposite sides of the ancient world. Only a few large-scale terracotta sculptures are preserved from Greece, such as the acroterial group of Zeus and Ganymedes from Olympia. Others survive from South Italy, Sicily, and Etruria, where later literary sources record the work of Vulca of Veii. Highly decorated terracotta bowls, often imitating metalwork, were also molded in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. These include “Megarian” and “Arretine” wares and “Terra Sigillata,” which were manufactured in a variety of locales, and, as with lamps and figurines, their distribution patterns provide evidence of ancient trade and signs of acculturation (Higgins 1967 and 1986; Henig 1983; Uhlenbrock 1990; Jeammet 2010; Burn 2012).

Stone

Different stones were employed for different purposes. The islands of the Aegean produce bright, fine-crystallized varieties of marble, that of Paros being the most famous (Schilardi and Katsonopoulou 2000). Quarries on nearby Naxos and Thasos in the northern Aegean also were exploited in the Archaic period, as were sources in Asia Minor. Despite the expense of transport, Cycladic marbles were imported to the Greek mainland for architecture and sculpture before the quarries of Mount Pentelikon, in eastern Attica, were extensively worked in the fifth century. Athens and other Greek *poleis* also employed softer local limestones for building—and less frequently for sculpture. Sicily

and Magna Graecia, without local marble sources, imported the material from Greece in limited quantities and made greater use of limestone for both statues and buildings.

Sculptors' signatures preserved on statues and statue bases indicate that carvers often preferred the marble on which they had trained, traveling with the stones, as it were. The name of Aristion of Paros, for example, appears on the bases of three mid-sixth-century BC Athenian grave monuments. Two of the sculptures are unfortunately lost, but the statue of Phrasikleia erected at Myrrhinous (Merenda) in eastern Attica survives (Athens NM 4889) and its marble has been identified as Parian. Particular stones might also have political and economic implications. The sphinx dedicated at Delphi by the people of Naxos is of Naxian marble. Later sculptors sometimes used particular stones to achieve desired coloristic effects, such as the producers of the "red Marsyas," who depicted the flayed satyr in variegated purple-veined *pavonazzetto* marble that mimicked the appearance of his bloody exposed musculature (Weis 1992). Colorful imported stones were also used to depict barbarians in Roman statuary (Schneider 1986), and carvers at Aphrodisias took advantage of the alternating gray and white veins of local marble to distinguish Europa and the bull who carried her (figure 9.8) or the flesh and clothing of other figures (Smith and Lenaghan 2009).



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Fig 9.8 Bichrome marble statuette of Europa on the bull, from Aphrodisias. C. 300–400 CE. Height 37 cm. Aphrodisias, Museum inv. 79.23.673.

(Photograph © New York University Excavations at Aphrodisias.)

Similar techniques (picks, hammers, drills, and wedges, the last of stone and wood) were used to quarry both marble and limestone. Once freed from their beds, large (p. 221) blocks were dragged on skids and rollers using ropes and tackle tied to protruding bosses or hardware inserted in cuttings. Transport by carts (during the dry season, when roads were hard) and sea was common, the latter being considerably more economical. Evidence of blocks left in quarries, along with inscriptions,

indicates that preliminary carving, whether for architecture or for sculpture, often took place at the quarry site. This served both to lighten the load and to reveal potential flaws in the stone. Carving proceeded from large tools to fine ones: picks and punches to a variety of chisels and then, eventually, smoothers and polishes. Although literary sources sometimes praise statues carved from single blocks, joining was common, either to reduce the amount of stone to be cut away from a block (e.g., an extended arm) or to repair damage. Finishing was achieved by a variety of abrasives and polishes, before the addition of polychromy and, when desired, gilding (Adam 1966; Burford 1969; Ridgway 1969; Strong and Claridge 1976; Bonanno 1983; Camp and Dinsmoor 1984; Stewart 1990; Rockwell 1993; Korres 1995; Durnan 2000; Lawton 2006; Palagia 2006; Malacrino 2010). Tools and carving techniques developed with time. The claw chisel seems to have been adopted in Greece in the middle of the sixth century BCE; the running drill was an innovation of the late fifth. In the Roman period, hair came to be more deeply undercut, “bridges” were sometimes left between locks, and a high, reflective polish seems to have been preferred in (p. 222) some quarters. The presence of such technical features can be of considerable aid in dating individual artifacts.

Gem engraving, another method of working stone, employed very different techniques. Whereas marble is approximately 4 on the Mohs scale of relative hardness (and limestone is 3), the semiprecious stones employed for intaglios and (from about 250 BCE) cameos, were considerably harder, around 7 (diamond is 10). Geologists characterize most of these stones as quartzes and chalcedonies, but they are commonly called agate, amethyst, cornelian, crystal, jasper, onyx, and sard. These vary considerably in color and transparency and were treasured in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Aegean Bronze Age before the Greek and Roman periods. Some were found locally, often in stream and river beds; others were valuable imports. Harder and more brilliant garnets and emeralds were imported from the East in the Hellenistic period.

After grinding the stone to the desired shape, the engraver cut the desired device into it using a series of minute rotating tools. (These were probably of bronze but perhaps of iron—none has been recovered archaeologically.) Shaped like wheels, cones, and balls, these tools were dipped in a fine slurry of oil charged with abrasive powder. It was the powder, usually of corundum (such as emery from Naxos), 9 on the Mohs scale, that cut the stone, not the considerably softer metal tools. It is possible to carve hard-stone gems with reeds or even straw, as long as the abrasive is sufficiently hard and the weaker tool, which is subject to wear, is frequently recharged or replaced. Gem engraving, like statue carving, proceeds from larger to smaller tools and then finer and finer polishes, although in both crafts, revelatory marks of diverse tools often remain visible in less polished work (figure 9.9). Intaglios (from the Italian *intagliare*, “to cut into”) are carved into the stone and, originally being used for seals, leave relief impressions when pressed into clay or

wax. Cameos are carved in relief and thus require the carver to remove considerably more material. The use of layered stones, such as banded agate and sardonyx, for cameos produced coloristic effects not seen in intaglios, such as white figures on a dark ground and vice versa and, in exceptional work, even the suggestion of mottled animals or transparent drapery (figure 9.10). Cameos were much more legible than intaglios and seem to have been produced primarily for display, rather than sealing. Cameo-cut hard-stone vessels rank among the most highly valued products of ancient craftsmen.

Perceived magical and medicinal properties of stones were important to ancient Greeks and Romans (along with several other ancient cultures), and the imagery of devices carved on them sometimes complemented particular powers imputed to them. Amethyst, for example, was thought to protect against drunkenness (*methe* in Greek) and was often adorned with Dionysiac images. The natural color of some stones could be artificially enhanced, and forgeries were produced. There is also evidence for gilding gemstones and the widespread use of glass as a cheaper substitute for more valuable hard stones (Boardman 1970; Bühler 1973; Henig 1983; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007; Entwistle and Adams 2011; Platz-Horster 2012).



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Fig. 9.9 Intaglio depicting Aurelian. Provenance unknown. C. 260–280 CE. Amethyst. Height 2.3 cm. Malibu, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 84.AN.856.

(Photograph © J. Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection.)



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Fig. 9.10 Cameo depicting Hermaphrodite attributed to Protarchos. Provenance unknown. C. 150-100 BCE, in a modern gold ring. Sardonyx. Height 2.8 cm. Malibu, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 2001.28.9.

(Photograph © J. Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection.)

(p. 223) Mosaic is another technique of decorative stonework, although glass and other materials were also sometimes employed. Principally used for floors, mosaic eventually also appeared on walls and ceilings. The earliest stone mosaics in Greece were crafted from river pebbles set in geometric patterns. Figural compositions soon followed, and strips of terracotta and lead were sometimes employed to clarify details or transitions. Tessellated mosaics became common in palaces and well-to-do homes in the Hellenistic period: small cut cubes or

blocks of stones of different colors (*tesserae*) were mass-produced and could then be laid either directly into mortar or, for finer compositions, into a small tray prepared in advance. Smaller, specially shaped tesserae were used for the finest work, called *opus vermiculatum* because the individual tesserae resembled worms. Most tesserae were stone, but glass was used for certain colors, such as red, blue, and green (Ling 1998; Dunbabin 1999; Westgate 2012). Gold-backed glass tesserae became a staple of Byzantine mosaic decoration, but similar techniques were employed for decorative gold glass jewelry, bowls, and other items as early as the fifth century BCE (Lapatin 2001).

(p. 224) **Metal**

Metals such as gold, silver, copper, iron, and lead were mined, smelted, refined, and alloyed. They were hammered to shape (either freehand or in matrices), cast (either by the lost-wax or other methods), and joined mechanically or metallurgically. They could also be inlaid or plated with different metals or other materials, such as glass or enamel. Fine elaboration could be achieved by engraving, chasing (which consists of moving but not removing material), and embossing. Gold, both incorruptible and among the most

malleable of metals, was rolled into fine wire and woven into textiles and chains; thin sheet was pressed into matrices or stamped with punches to form hollow ornaments for earrings, necklaces, and other fine jewelry, elaborate pieces of which might be made of dozens of components. Granulation, the attachment of minute spheres, often in patterns, to a sheet, and filigree, the attachment of wire, were also popular decorative techniques. The use of molds and matrices, whether for jewelry, statuary, or other items, (p. 225) such as spear points, greatly facilitated serial production, and various combinations of components and different finishing treatments might render objects of considerably different appearance. Single items were often assembled through a variety of techniques, whether gold earrings, ornate silver vessels, or bronze statues (Strong 1966; Higgins 1966; Ogden 1982 and 1992; Williams and Ogden 1994; Vickers and Gill 1996; Despini 1996; Williams 1998; Mattusch 1980, 1982, 1988, 1996b, 1996a and 1997; Born 1985; True and Podany 1990b; Formigli 1993 and 1999; Hemingway 2000; Formigli and Scatozza Höricht 2010; Risser and Saunders, forthcoming).

Bronze, consisting of approximately 90 percent copper and 10 percent tin and/or lead, was the most important alloy employed by ancient craftsmen. Although exact proportions varied according to time and place, bronze not only has a lower melting point than pure copper, but it also possesses greater tensile strength and is more ductile. While copper is common in lands surrounding the Mediterranean (Cyprus is a particularly rich source), tin had to be imported from afar (perhaps as distant as Cornwall and southwest Turkey). Lead, which further lowers the alloy's melting point, is a common by-product of refining silver and seems to have been used in larger proportions in the Roman bronzes (see, e.g., Scott and Podany 1990; Scott 2002; Mattusch 2005).

In Geometric Greece, statuettes and other objects were solid cast using the direct lost-wax technique, in which a model fashioned in wax is "invested" in a clay mold, which, when fired, melts out the wax, leaving a hollow "matrix" into which the molten metal can be poured. In this early period, larger statues were fashioned by hammering and annealing sheet bronze to shape and joining it mechanically with rivets, the so-called *sphyrelaton* technique. Hammering was also employed to create bowls, cauldrons, shields, helmets, greaves, and other armor (Mattusch 1988; Hemingway 2000).

Hollow casting, which required less metal and reduced the risk of casting flaws and cracking on account of uneven cooling of the molten metal, was long practiced in Egypt and Mesopotamia and appears to have been imported to Greece in the sixth century BCE. This process begins with an armature in the general shape of the figure, around which a core, usually of clay but later sometimes of plaster, was built. A thin layer of wax was applied over the core and shaped to the desired final form. This model was invested in clay, as in the solid casting, but with metal chaplets, or pins, driven through the wax to

attach the investment to the core in order to hold the latter in place when the assemblage was fired, melting out the wax. The bronze was then poured into the thin hollow space—the matrix—between the core and the investment, creating a thin-walled hollow bronze. The core, which remained inside the bronze, was often scraped out in antiquity, but sometimes it (or some trace) remains and through scientific analysis can provide hints to a statue's origin (Mattusch 1988 and 1997).

A disadvantage of the direct lost-wax technique, whether solid or hollow, is that the original model of a figure was lost when the wax was melted away, and the mold was necessarily destroyed when the investment was broken to remove the cast statue. If the casting was unsuccessful, work would have to start anew from the beginning. The indirect technique solved this problem and also allowed for repetitive, multiple casts from the same master model—or for the recombination of different components. The indirect (p. 226) method essentially added two intermediate steps to the direct method: once the original wax model had been formed, it was surrounded by removable piece molds, rather than the investment. The master model was then set aside, and a new casting model was created using the piece molds; it was then invested as in direct casting. Both the original master model and the piece molds were retained and could be reused to create multiple versions of the same figure or recombined for future commissions (Mattusch 2008; Risser and Saunders, forthcoming).

Much work remained to be done after a statue was cast: the surface needed to be cleaned with abrasives of its “casting skin” and the projecting chaplets removed, along with the “flutes” and “gates” that had been added to the wax casting model to allow the bronze to flow more evenly and hot gases to escape. Inevitable small casting flaws needed to be patched. Details such as locks of hair, eyebrows, and cuticles might be sharpened by chiseling or other “cold work,” and separately cast elements would be joined either mechanically or metallurgically before or after inlays in other materials were added. Large-scale statues were rarely cast whole but rather were assembled from diverse components (head, torso, arms, hands, legs, and feet), each hollow cast and subsequently joined together. Protruding locks of hair or other elements might be solid-cast and attached to the whole, and eyes of stone, glass, ivory, or bone were often inlaid in hollow sockets or covered with silver sheet. Although most surviving ancient bronzes are now dark green in color because of corrosion, they were originally golden brown, like the suntanned skin of Mediterranean males, and other metals might be added to render specific anatomical features more realistically, such as copper red lips and nipples or silver teeth and fingernails. Some bronzes—and marbles, too—were entirely gilded, their patrons opting for symbolic over naturalistic coloring (Mattusch 1988; Bourgeois et al. 2007).

Although bronze statues today are often touted as priceless “original” works after which more durable marbles of the same types are sometimes denigrated as mere mechanical copies, recent research has emphasized the degree to which bronze lends itself to serial reproduction. Indeed, long after the death of a sculptor, his heirs, if they retained his master models and piece molds, would be able to recast his creations. Both ancient literary sources and surviving artifacts, moreover, attest to aftercasts made from finished works by creating new molds. Such molds and new models fashioned from them in plaster could be shipped around the Mediterranean, ensuring widespread replication and dissemination (Landwehr 1985; Mattusch 1997).

Painting

Painting, on panel and fresco, was widely practiced in the Greek and Roman world, the former being much more highly praised than the latter. In fact, Roman wall paintings often depict prized smaller paintings (*pinakes*) on stands or protected by shutters, and ancient literary sources record that Greek painters such as Apelles and Protogenes developed varnishes and applied multiple layers of paint to protect their work from the (p. 227) elements. Few panel paintings survive apart from the “Fayum” portraits inserted into Romano-Egyptian mummies, preserved in the dry climate of Egyptian tombs; a small group of sixth-century BCE votive plaques from a cave near Pitsa, west of Sicyon in the northeastern Peloponnese, are a notable exception (Orlandos 1964). Painted on a white stucco ground applied to boards, they closely resemble polychrome Corinthian vase painting in style, with their outline drawing, flat fields of color, and lack of shading, perspective, and illusionistic treatment (all of which ancient literary sources tout as later developments). And they appear to confirm scholars’ conviction that surviving ceramic decoration echoes the style of lost panels. But the Pitsa plaques surpass contemporary ceramics in their range of colors—black, white, light blue, red, green, yellow, purple, and brown—and recent analysis indicates that carbon black, cinnabar, hematite, and yellow ochre along with a red arsenic-based pigment were employed both alone and in combination with one another and white gesso to achieve these results (Brecoulaki, forthcoming). Another painted wooden panel dating to the fourth century BCE from Saqqara in Egypt, inscribed in Greek and Greek in style, was rendered on a white gypsum gesso ground using red and yellow ochres, lead white, vermilion, carbon, and Egyptian blue (Tanimoto, Ambers, and Stacey 2007). The last is a synthetic pigment produced by heating copper with calcium and silica (sand) which was invented in early pharaonic Egypt and came to be manufactured throughout the ancient world. It was used in Roman wall painting and on Greek statuary. Analysis of the Saqqara panel has also revealed that the gesso and the pigments were bound with animal glue and plant gum. Other pigments known to have been used by Greek and Roman artists include organic madders, woads,

and indigo and minerals such as orpiment, malachite, azurite, cinnabar, various leads, and verdigris. Pliny lists several others, along with diverse means of applying them. Tempera—the use of egg white as a binder—appears to have been a common technique in antiquity, but as the organic material is subject to decomposition, it usually eludes scientific analysis. Ancient literary sources also mention encaustic (from the Greek *enkaustikos*, “to burn in”), by which pigments were mixed with beeswax and resin and softened by heat. The resulting pastelike material could be applied with a warm palette knife. This technique was employed by some of the most renowned painters of the Classical and Hellenistic periods and continued to be used, alongside tempera, on some Fayum portraits (Reinach 1921; Doxiadis 1995; Walker and Bierbrier 2000).

Ancient wall paintings survive much better than panels, particularly from the sites buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. Much earlier fragments from Archaic Greek temples have been recovered in the Corinthia, on Aegina, and at Kalopodi, and well-preserved Early Classical tombs painted in Greek style have been discovered at Paestum and elsewhere in South Italy and Elmalı in Lycia. Most revelatory has been the series of Macedonian painted tombs, dating from the late fourth century BCE through the Hellenistic period, which employ subtle shading and highlighting in addition to sophisticated foreshortening and perspective, all innovations of the period praised by ancient literary sources (Tiverios and Tsiafakis 2002; Brecolouki 2001, 2006, and forthcoming; Descamps-Lequime 2007; Kakoulli 2009).

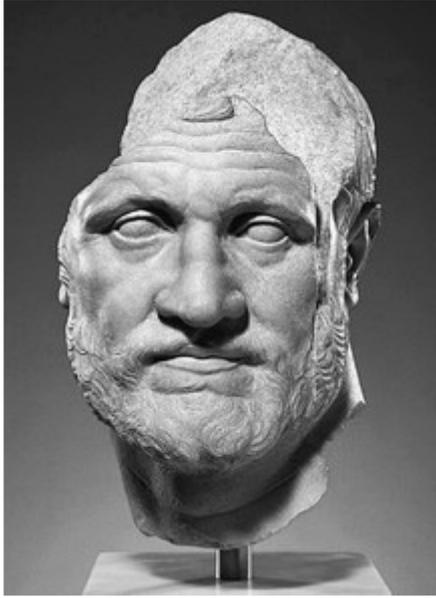
(p. 228) Wall paintings were usually executed on the finest of several layers of plaster applied to stone, brick, or even reed surfaces. (Vitruvius calls for seven layers, but this was rarely done.) Although these murals are often called frescoes, meaning that the pigments were painted when the plaster was still wet and bound to it by a chemical reaction, some were actually painted *a secco*, using a binder of some sort, such as tree gum, egg white, animal glue, wax, or resin, and thus are subject to flaking and other forms of deterioration. True fresco is much more durable but required the craftsmen to carefully plan the portion of a wall they could decorate in a single session before the plaster dried. Thus, they had to decorate relative small sections of walls piecemeal, and edges of their *giornate di lavoro* (“daily work”) can often be discerned through close examination. So, too, there is evidence for underdrawing, whether in underlying layers of plaster or incisions and sketching in the final layer, which would be overpainted. Such preparatory sketches along with the formulaic quality of many ancient decorative schemes indicates that many wall paintings were planned in advance, whether from pattern books or close familiarity with well-known compositions, but despite close parallels between individual paintings, there is no evidence for exact copying from large-scale cartoons, as in later periods (Ling 1991 and 2000; Esposito 2007 and 2009).

Other Materials and Techniques

Last but not least, stucco work; the carving and joining of wood, bone, and ivory for statuary, furniture, and other items; the weaving of textiles of various sorts; and other crafts were all practiced on a variety of scales, and despite their perishability, significant examples survive from diverse contexts, especially the Vesuvian cities (Strong and Brown 1976; Meiggs 1982; Barber 1991; Mols 1999; Lapatin 2001; De Carolis 2007; Ulrich 2008b; Amrein et al. 2012).

Conclusions

Understanding the sources and properties of specific materials and the symbolic, cultural, and political values ascribed to them by the ancient Greeks and Romans can aid us considerably in understanding how and why craftsmen exploited them, utilizing the techniques they did to create objects of quality that served a variety of functions. Awareness, as far as possible, of each and every step in the transformation of raw materials to finished product, from quarry or mine through workshop to ultimate display/use context, can greatly increase our comprehension not only of the artifacts themselves but also of the societies in and for which they were created.



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Fig. 9.11 Head of a man. Provenance unknown. C. 150 BCE. Marble. Height 40.6 cm. Malibu, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 91.AA.14.

(Photograph © J. Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection.)

A central tenet of positivistic art history was that technique affects style, and as with most simplistic equations, there is some truth to this. The earliest Greek stone figures exhibit a blocklike quality, with slight transitions between their four sides, seemingly (p. 229) derived from the faces of rectilinear blocks removed from the quarry. Stone carving is a glyptic process: the material is cut away to reveal the figure, and thus, planes are often flat and transitions pronounced. Sculpture in clay and bronze, in

contrast, is plastic, and because the primary substance, clay or wax, is modeled, softer and more naturalistic forms can be more readily achieved. But material is not determinative. The technique of a skilled craftsman trumps matter, and a master imposes his style on his medium. Thus, for example, the expressive features of a Hellenistic portrait head in marble can be just as “plastic” as those of one in bronze (compare figures 9.11 and 9.12).



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Fig. 9.12 Portrait head from Delos, Palaestra. C. 100 BCE. Bronze. Height 32.5 cm. Athens, NationalArchaeological Museum inv. 14612.

(Photograph by Gianni dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY, AA388904.)

Techniques and styles both evolved over time, of course, and it is often difficult to know which drove the other (Gombrich 1968). Some technical features, such as carved irises and pupils, may be useful for dating Roman portraits, but these same traits appear earlier in Late Classical and Hellenistic intaglios and cameos, so care should be taken when declaring any single feature diagnostic of a specific period or locale or when examining one medium separately from another. It is important, moreover, to recognize

that different crafts were closely linked, not only geographically, in the workshop quarter of a city, but also in the materials and skills they required. The expertise of the ceramicist was essential not only to the production of pots and terracotta figurines but also to the sculptor in bronze, who needed to fashion models and cores and fire clay molds, and to the silversmith, who might desire to experiment with prototypes or details or to make (p. 230) copies of his work, which might be reproduced more economically for a different market in another medium (figures 9.13 and 9.14).

Indeed, molds of every kind allowed for the serial production of objects on an industrial scale and also for their diffusion, recombination, and adaptation, literally across the Mediterranean (Muller 2010). The “cold work” required to finish a bronze after casting, moreover, is not so far removed from that employed by an engraver of gold or silver, the preparation of stone matrices for jewelry requires similar skills to those for carving intaglios, and there is good evidence that some gem engravers also cut the dies for coins (Zwierlein-Diehl 2007, 78–80). Metal tools, of course, were needed by a wide variety of craftsmen, including stone carvers and gem engravers, not to mention workers in wood, bone, and ivory. Many other crafts were also interconnected; a good example is Phidias and his followers, who combined the techniques of carpenters, furniture makers, coroplasts, bronze casters, jewelers, and glass makers in order to fashion the most

renowned statues of Greek and Roman antiquity (Lapatin 2001, 61–95). At the same time, there is evidence for craft specialization (and miscommunication) within workshops despite the interdependency of individuals, such as painters and potters or sculptors and founders (see, e.g., Ling 2000; Hasaki 2012; Risser and Saunders, forthcoming).



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Fig. 9.13 and 9.14 Southern Italian silver *phiale mesomphalos* from Eze in southern France and a black-slipped mold-made *phiale mesomphalos* from Campania, both depicting chariots driven by Nikai and divinities. C. 300 BCE. London, British Museum inv. GR 1891.6-27.3 (Silver 8), diameter 20.6 cm; and GR 1839,1109.37.a (Vase G 118), diameter 20.3 cm.

(Photographs © Trustees of the British Museum/
Kenneth Lapatin.)

(p. 231) (p. 232) In

general, the better we understand the materials and techniques employed in the Greek and Roman world, the comments of ancient authors, the terms employed in inscriptions, the ancient representations of their activities, and their tools, the better we can grasp how Greek and Roman craftsmen achieved what they did—not through any supernatural ability but through the evolution, both gradual and sudden, of long craft traditions. These developments did not take place in a vacuum but occurred in a variety of contexts where diverse

demands and opportunities sometimes required the exploitation of locally available materials and models and at other times valued exoticism and wonder. Rare and expensive substances (which might be provided to craftsmen directly by their patrons) were often imitated in cheaper, more readily available ones, whether glass colored and veined to look like agate, bone instead of ivory, or terracotta jewelry gilded before being deposited in a tomb, where its fragility was no impediment to fulfillment of its purpose. We must also recall that the amount of ancient art that has come down to us is a mere fraction of the total production, that entire categories of production are lost to us, and that our studies tend to encompass far less than the totality of survivals. The vases of Exekias and Euphronios (figure 22.2), the Delphi charioteer (figure 7.1), the Riace bronzes, and the sculptures of the Parthenon are all well known, and they are works of exceptional quality. Museum storerooms and excavation depots are full of objects of

variable quality in a much wider range of materials that are nonetheless crucial to our studies of Greek and Roman artisans, their practices and products, and the needs and desires of their clients. It is only through close consideration of all available evidence, utilizing a variety of approaches and collaborating with colleagues in diverse fields, that we will gain a greater understanding of the past.

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The Materials and Techniques of Greek and Roman Architecture

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the materials and techniques of architecture in ancient Greece and ancient Rome. It begins by considering the sources of evidence on the design and technology of Greek and Roman architecture. It then turns to a discussion of the building materials used in the ancient world, from wood to mud and clay, stone and concrete, and metals. The chapter also examines the techniques used in the design and construction of ancient buildings such as temples and monuments, including masonry and wooden carpentry.

Keywords: ancient buildings, ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, building materials, construction, design, masonry, techniques, wooden carpentry

The design, materials, and techniques of ancient Greek and Roman architecture have been a field of inquiry for modern scholarship since the Renaissance, with the interest in this subject considerably increasing over the course of the eighteenth century, in the age of the Enlightenment (Gruben 2000). The work of the Italian artist and architect Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–1778), including his detailed study of the remains of ancient architecture in Rome, in particular shows the strong connection between this branch of research and the architectural profession. Indeed, many modern architects saw the study of ancient technology as an important background for their practice. It is from this relationship between the history and the practice of architecture that the interest in the technical aspects of Greek and Roman architecture that is distinctive of much of the scholarship throughout the nineteenth century derives, including the work of scholars such as Josef Durm (1837–1919) and Jacob Ignaz Hittorff (1792–1867). This interest was passed on in the twentieth century to a new generation, including William Bell Dinsmoor (1886–1973) for Greek architecture and Gustavo Giovannoni (1873–1947) for Roman architecture.

In recent decades, the study of the design and technology of Greek and Roman architecture has made considerable advances. On the side of the literary and epigraphical sources, Vitruvius's account, particularly important with regard to planning and procedures, has received considerable attention, including new translations in English and French with extensive commentaries (see, e.g., Gros 1997; see also chapter 2 above).

At the same time, much progress has been made toward the understanding of construction processes by closely examining the material evidence. Thus, buildings that were investigated in the past have benefited from new detailed studies, partly following in the tradition set by the early investigators, based on extensive documentation (p. 242) and illustrations. In addition, there has been the application of experimental archaeology, especially in the study of the use of concrete and other materials. This change of approach places emphasis on the analytical, rather than the purely formalist, approach to design and technique. Yet such an "objective" (in the minds of its proponents) approach uses a technical language exclusive to trained architects and engineers and, as result, is inaccessible even for most architectural historians. In addition, such analyses of architectural and structural elements—although they are valid tools when used for specifically analytical purposes—have appeared more dogmatically over the last thirty years where the context of the architectural history being written did not require them.

Today the recording of remains is no longer the final goal of architectural studies, and contemporary scholars are more concerned than their predecessors with investigating the historical context of ancient buildings and with placing ancient architectural practice in its larger social and cultural-historical context. In fact, although Greek and Roman historians and classicists have often used buildings as illustrative backdrops to the written sources, it is only fairly recently that scholars have recognized the built environment as an active force in shaping society (see chapters 14 and 15 below). While the extensive remains of ancient Greece and Rome were studied for many years primarily within the aesthetic tradition of architectural history, architecture has enormous potential to enlarge, and at times dramatically change, our understanding of ancient society.

In the last decade, there has been an increasing interest in the process through which buildings came into being and in the part of Greek and Roman society involved in their creation (see, e.g., Thomas 2007). Architectural historians and archaeologists are trying to observe the standing monuments not just as finished products but as objects that may reveal something of the generating process that produced them. Construction history is a relatively new and growing discipline, and it provides much useful comparative material, raising a number of interesting questions and pointing toward new directions for further research.

Greek Building Materials

Wood has been traditionally considered, following Vitruvius (*De arch.* 2.1.3-5) and his presumably Hellenistic sources, the earliest building material, associated with primitive shelters (in general, on wood in ancient construction, see Wright 2005, 5, 13-28; for Greek architecture, see Martin 1965, 2-46; Orlandos 1966-1968, I: 1-49; Meiggs 1983. In fact, wood is rigid and strong enough to support considerable loads, while it is also lighter than stone and easier to cut to the desired size and shape, especially with metal tools. As an organic substance, however, wood is at a disadvantage compared with stone and other inorganic building materials: it is subject to rapid decay, and it is far from durable, relatively soft, and highly combustible. This is the reason wood is archaeologically documented far less than other materials such as stone, bricks, and even plaster. In the absence of physical remains, some information is provided by the negative (p. 243) impressions that timber has left on floors (e.g., post holes) or walls or by sockets for beams, rafters, and doors in extant buildings. In addition, one may mention representations of wooden structures and woodworking in vase paintings and references to the use of this material for construction in both literary sources (especially Theophrastus's *Enquiry into Plants* and the works by Pliny the Elder, Vitruvius, and Pausanias) and epigraphic sources.

In Greek architecture, the use of wood is well attested in association with the earliest monumental structure, the Protogeometric "Heroon" at Lefkandi (Coulton 1993). In this building, with its elevation of mud bricks on a stone socle, wood is restored for the thresholds, the posts of the veranda running along the flanks and around the apse on the back, the corresponding posts set along the inner face of the north and south walls, the posts along the central axis, and, finally, the rafters and ridge pole of the roof.

In the seventh century BCE, wood was still consistently used for the elevation of monumental buildings, both for reinforcing the walls and as material for the columns, the entablature, and the roof supporting the newly introduced heavy terracotta tiles, as in the case of the first Temple of Apollo at Corinth and the first Temple of Poseidon at Isthmia (Gebhard 2001; Rhodes 2003). The birth of monumental architecture must have been accompanied by the development of mastery in carpentry and joinery of wood—apparently using the same, standardized kit of tools documented in Egypt and the same methods for assembling, attaching, and fitting—which made possible the use of shaped timber for the complex system of temple roofing described below; cross-cultural comparison suggests that this development may have gone hand-in-hand with shipbuilding (Wright 2005, 5).

In addition, the systematic use of timber implies the acquisition and development of a series of skills, including those of the woodsman, lumberjack, and sawyer, and, once felled logs were cut to shape, the capability of delivering the material from the timber yard to the construction site, preferably by sea, which could involve a long journey, made difficult not so much by the weight of this material as by its often excessive length. One may also mention the development of treatments for preventing wood from rotting because of moisture, including brushing it with pitch or painting it using the encaustic technique.

The preference for stone in Greek monumental architecture beginning in the first half of the sixth century BCE should not make us forget the continued importance of wood in construction continuing into the Hellenistic period: besides the heavy-timber-framed gable roofs of temples, one may mention the use of wood for reinforcing mud-brick walls of both fortifications and houses; the combination of wood with stone for the entablature of both civic and domestic buildings; the use of wooden columns and pilasters, not only for temples and stoas but especially for houses; the consistent use of this material for the frames of windows and doors, in addition to ceilings, stairs, and doors, of both houses and temples (even marble ones); and, last but not least, the use of wood for the installations and building tools required for construction, including scaffolding, ladders, or ramps, for the first, and rules, poles, and leveling boards.

(p. 244) Literary and epigraphical sources show that the Greeks were particularly sensitive to the different qualities of the various species of wood, including their hardness, weight, and strength, and that they were very careful in selecting the type based on structural function and placement, such as oak for columns and pilasters and cedar—a very expensive material—for ceilings.

These texts also provide information about the regions responsible for the production of wood—such as Macedonia, presented as the main source during the Classical period—and for the complexities of the trade of this material. An inscription from Carpathos (*IG* XII.1 no. 977; *Syll*³ 129; *SEG* 34.847), dated after 394/393 BCE, records Athenian gratitude to Aegean islanders, who had “presented the cypress for the temple of Athena mistress of Athens.” The Temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus contracted for five different kinds of wood, some of it from as far away as Crete; they included tall conifers for roof beams (*IG* IV².1 no. 102, ll. 22–25), plus elm, nettle tree, and boxwood for the doors (*IG* IV².1 no. 102, ll. 42–43).

In the passage on the beginnings of architecture referred to earlier, Vitruvius mentions mud and clay as some of the earliest building materials, along with wood. In fact, clay appears to have played a major role in Greek architecture from very early on and continuing into the Hellenistic period (on clay and terracotta in ancient architecture, see

Cuomo di Caprio 1985; Wright 2005, 75–142; for ancient Greece, see Martin 1965, 46–112; Orlandos 1966–1968, I: 51–96; Winter 1993; Hellmann 2002, 298–315; Malacrino 2010, 41–60). The popularity of clay was motivated, on one hand, by the fact that mainland Greece, Asia Minor, and South Italy and Sicily were all rich in deposits of high-quality clay (the same employed for making pottery, figurines, or statues) and, on the other, by the plastic and waterproofing properties of this material. Representations in the visual arts, the discovery of workshops for terracotta production, and comparison with traditional modern practice inform us about the process of transforming clay into building material. Once clay was extracted from its quarry, it was exposed first to a period of drying in the sun, then aged, and finally purified of substances that might cause difficulty in the later phases of modeling and firing. Clay for construction was mixed with degreasing agents, of both plant (such as straw) and mineral (such as sand) origin.

Besides *pisé*—the creation of earth walls by ramming earth between wooden boarding on either side (Pliny, *HN* 35.169)—the most basic application of clay was in association with wattle-and-daub construction, in which the clay, mixed with straw and sand, covered a framework made of interwoven staves and twigs, a technique (called *trellis*) for building walls that is amply attested for both the Protogeometric and Geometric periods but was also used in later periods for internal partitioning and minor structures.

More successful was the construction of walls with mud bricks, attested in Greece from the Neolithic period and still appreciated by Vitruvius (*De arch.* 2.3.1) for being durable, light, and easy to build with, only on the condition, he warns the reader, that raw clay was used for their production. This was mixed with straw and water and shaped into the form of a parallelepiped with a mold. The bricks were then left to dry in the sun, and only after they had dried throughout were they used for construction. In spite of its many advantages, mud brick has one major weakness, namely, its low durability in wet (p. 245) conditions. Particularly dangerous is dampness from the ground, which required, from early on, the adoption of a stone socle for mud-brick walls. This did not prevent mud brick from being widely adopted in Greek architecture, because of its relative strength, ready availability, convenience in use, and low cost. We note first the walls of most temples built in the eighth and seventh centuries BCE, before the systematic adoption of stone. After that and down to the Hellenistic period, mud brick was still widely used for many fortifications and enclosure walls (starting with Smyrna in the ninth and eighth centuries BCE), public buildings (such as the Pompeion at Athens, c. 400 BCE), and most houses. To this, one may add palaces, including that of King Mausolus at Halicarnassus, according to the testimony of Vitruvius (*De arch.* 2.8.9–10). In the fourth century BCE, the Greeks began using fired bricks—much more costly to manufacture yet closer to stone than mud bricks, because they were stronger, harder, and impermeable. However, it was only with the Roman Imperial period that fired bricks became a staple building material.

Still, the practice of firing clay had a longer history. Terracotta is a very hard and durable substance, waterproof, fireproof, and resistant to weathering. Because of these qualities, from the seventh century BCE onward, this material was used in the form of plaques for the cladding of mud-brick walls, for revetments sheathing the woodwork of a roof, and for roofing tiles, primarily pan tiles and cover tiles, along with ridge tiles, antefixes, and acroteria. Architectural terracottas appear with the rise of the first monumental Greek temples in the seventh century BCE, and fired clay was the sole medium for roofing temples in the sixth century BCE; its inexpensive nature continued to appeal even after the introduction of stone tiles around 500 BCE. Beginning with the building program on the Acropolis in the mid-fifth century BCE, major temples and public buildings were generally outfitted with all-stone roofs, usually of marble. But there are exceptions, such as the fourth-century BCE Temple of Zeus at Nemea, which had fired-clay roof tiles.

Although four times heavier and more difficult to extract and reduce to shape than wood, stone, an inorganic material, is, unlike wood, hard, strong, and enduring (in general, on stone in ancient construction, see Waelkens, Herz, and Moens 1992; Bessac et al. 1999; Lazzarini 2004; Wright 2005, 7–8, 29–74; for Greek architecture, see Martin 1965, 112–146; Orlandos 1966–1968, II: 1–13; Hellmann 2002, 73–75; Malacrino 2010, 7–10, 16–23). These qualities were greatly appreciated by Greek builders, and in fact, Greek monumental architecture soon adopted stone. The post-and-lintel system of temple architecture and the decorative elements of the Doric and Ionic orders were explained by Vitruvius (*De arch.*, respectively, 4.2.2–3 and 4.2.5) as a direct translation of wooden forms into stone (Barletta 2001 and 2009; Wilson Jones 2014). The exact terms of that translation are quite controversial, but the “petrification” of the Greek temple appears to have taken place with the first stone cornice, found in the already-mentioned seventh-century BCE Temple of Apollo at Corinth.

The use of stone, along with the design of the earliest monumental temples, was conditioned by the need to support heavy terracotta roof tiles. To that end, in addition to solid foundations of cut stone, the same material began to be used for the elevation as a whole, progressively replacing wood and bricks for monumental architecture. As a (p. 246) result, from the Archaic through the Hellenistic periods, temples were made entirely of stone, except for the roofing, which was supported on heavy timber framing. Unlike temples, the walls of single-story domestic buildings were built of adobe, or sun-dried bricks, on a foundation of stone or rubble.

Lithology and petrology distinguish among different classes of stone—igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic—on the basis of both their formation and their chemical composition. Every class of stone is used in Greek architecture (including breccia, tuff, granite, gneiss, limestone, and marble and occasionally also sandstone, andesite,

porphyry, and trachyte), depending on available sources, structural properties (strength and durability), and aesthetic qualities (such as color and surface). Frequently used were tuffs (also called *poros* in some ancient texts) and limestone. The former, a porous rock formed by consolidation of volcanic ash, was easy to get and relatively cheap, and it could be used for any part of a building. Limestone, a sedimentary rock, is harder, and in the absence of a local supply of marble, it was the material of choice for Greek architects all over the Mediterranean. Both tuff and limestone, however, are continually subject to degradation of both a mechanical and chemical nature, which led to the practice of covering the exposed face of fine masonry executed in those materials with plaster. In contrast, marble, consisting of limestone metamorphosed into a harder crystallized state, has greater strength and durability, and this, along with its appearance and the possibility of carving detailed moldings, explains the particular popularity of this material, which was frequently imported from distant places. Besides Attica (see below), some of the best sources for white marble were the Aegean islands of Paros, Naxos, and Thasos, and it was the islanders, particularly the Naxians, who pioneered the use of marble in Greek architecture between the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE, as seen in both the local Temple of Dionysus at Yria and the Oikos of the Naxians on Delos (Gruben 1997).

Mediterranean geology ensured that many Greek communities had access to local supplies of building stone. Most fortunate in this respect was Athens: good limestone was available on the Acropolis itself, on other hills of the city, and in nearby areas, including Kara (source of a yellow-pink limestone) and the Piraeus (whose limestone was softer and easier to cut); in addition, marble quarries at Mount Hymettos (source of a bluish-white marble) and Mount Pentelikon (source of a pale, fine-grained marble with warm tones) were located a short distance, about 11 and 14 kilometers, respectively, from the city center (Korres 1995; Abraldes 1996; Kouzeli and Dimou 2009). Builders in areas less blessed with good stone had to rely heavily on imported materials, and especially in these cases, blocks of stone from destroyed buildings were occasionally reused in new constructions. In order to economize, besides relying as much as possible on locally available stone, many buildings used a mix of stones (often a combination of *poros*, limestone, and marble), reserving the finer materials for the most visible parts. A case in point is the Temple of Aphaea at Aegina, in which the use of the imported marble from Paros was limited to the lower row of roof tiles (also used for the acroteria, pediments, *sima*, and antefixes), thus giving the impression, from below, that the whole roof was made of this expensive material (Bankel 1993). In general, the choice of building stone was a momentous decision for a project, dictating not only the finished appearance of the building but also the largest single expense. For the fourth-century BCE Ephesians embarking on their new Artemision, the matter was so serious that

(according to Vitruvius, *De arch.* 10.2.15) they debated in public whether to use marble from Paros, Prokonnesos, Herakleia (at Latmos), or Thasos.

In general, building stone is readily available, as an outcrop of bedrock at the surface or immediately beneath it. However, quarrying stone represents a technical feat, particularly on the scale on which it was practiced for monumental architecture first by the Greeks and then by the Romans (in general, on ancient quarrying and transportation of stone, see Ward-Perkins 1972; Bessac 1996; Wright 2005, 34–43; Fant 2008; Malacrino 2010, 30–38, 139–144; for ancient Greece, see Martin 1965, 146–151, 163–172; Orlandos 1966–1968, II: 15–31; Dworakowska 1975; Waelkens, Paepe, and Moens 1990; Waelkens, Herz, and Moens 1992; Hellmann 2002, 75–81). The quarrying industry, which followed from mining and developed considerably over time, required considerable capital and managerial competence, and it therefore played an important role in Greek and Roman economy and had a lasting impact on the natural landscape (as expressly lamented by Pliny, *HN* 36.1).



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Fig. 10.1 Ancient marble quarry at Aliko, Thasos.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

Quarrying (figure 10.1) was generally practiced either by working from the surface downward (open quarrying) or, more rarely, by driving galleries or caves horizontally into the face of the rock slope (underground quarrying, most famously associated with the extraction of the *lychnites* on Paros). The method of extracting the stone (*tomē*), however,

remained the same: steps included identifying and preparing a bed of suitable rock, marking out the dimensions of the block required with the assistance of painted or incised lines, and separating and freeing the block from the adjacent rock with the help of metal tools—saws or picks for digging channels that would serve to isolate the block on three vertical sides and, after a horizontal groove was dug along the surface of the block, wedges struck with a hammer into the bottom of the groove in order to detach the block itself. This last step was the most critical, because of the danger of stone fissures. (p. 248)

When possible, a quarry was opened next to the building site itself, but more often, stone had to be delivered from an established quarry located at a greater distance. Greek

building accounts are rich in references to the supply of stone, specifying the names of individuals in charge of supplying stone of a certain type from a certain quarry. Whereas the handling of stone at the quarry, the quarry yard, or the building site was a relatively easy operation with the help of manpower and the assistance of levers, wedges, rollers, ropes, and planks, transporting stone from the quarry to the building site was a much more complex operation, which could be accomplished in two different ways: either by water (sea or river) or overland (in a wheeled cart or by sled in the case of average-sized wall blocks; particularly large blocks required ingenious schemes noted by ancient authors). Transport over water was far more convenient and cheaper. In fact, generally, land transport cost about twice as much as water transport. This was partly a matter of poor or nonexistent road surfaces. Greek building accounts show that the summer months, between July and September, were the favored times for transporting building stone. This was the dry season, when dirt roads could support heavy weights. The other reason was the nature of the traction: teams of lumbering oxen hired for the most part from local farmers in the fallow period of the agricultural year.

A complex set of procedures characterized the process of rough shaping (*pelekēsis*, generally accomplished at the quarry) and stone dressing by quarrymen and masons, who often traveled to the final destination because of their familiarity with the material (a practice well documented for Roman times). Rough shaping and stone dressing included the use of guide lines for setting out the forms to be cut out of a single block of masonry and carving forms out of stone by way of removal, preparing them for delivery to the building site. In this process, a relatively limited and standardized set of iron tools with wooden handles, comparable to those used by sculptors (see chapter 9 above) was used (in general, on ancient stone tools for architecture, see Rockwell 1993; for ancient Greece, see Martin 1965, 152–155, 179–189; Orlandos 1966–1968, II: 45–69; Bessac 1986; Malacrino 2010, 38–39). The pick, the hammer, and the double ax were used for the preliminary shaping, and the drove, the point/punch, the chisel, and the drill were used for the final dressing; rasps and hard stones followed for smoothing and removing all marks of tooling from the surface. Information about these tools is provided by their survival, their representations in the visual arts, ancient literary references, and the marks not removed by masons and left on blocks. To these tools can be added the instruments—such as squares, bevels, compasses, and calipers—that assisted in bringing the block to its final shape, according to the specifications of the architect (see chapter 6 above).

(p. 249) Buildings, especially temples, also used a significant amount of metal (in general, on metal in ancient architecture, see Wright 2005, 231–278; for Greek architecture, see Martin 1965, 155–162; Orlandos 1966–1968, I: 97–129; Philipp 1994; Normann 1996; Hellmann 2002, 242–243). The use of architectural elements made entirely of bronze

remains problematic, as we have to rely primarily on literary sources, such as for the Temple of Athena Chalchioecus at Sparta (Pausanias 3.17.2) or the doors of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia (Pausanias 5.10.10). In contrast, the use of metal—particularly bronze, but also gold and silver—is well attested for cladding and decoration, especially of doors, from the Archaic all the way down to the Hellenistic period. The great doors, a focal point of temple design, which could be made from exotic woods, as at Epidaurus, but might also be bronze, as at Olympia, had lavish fittings, now known mostly from ancient literary sources, which regularly included precious metals and ivory (Pope and Schultz 2014). It was probably to protect these luxurious doors that in so many temples, security grilles were fitted between the columns of the front porch. The fifth-century BCE Temple of Athena at Syracuse had doors of such costly artistry that four hundred years later, they attracted the greed of Gaius Verres (73–71 BCE), Roman governor of Sicily and notorious art thief.

Far more consistent was the use of metal for building; the amount of lead and iron used for the ties that bonded the masonry blocks was sufficient for abandoned temples to be mined for this purpose. Greek blacksmiths produced a variety of grades of iron. Wrought iron was the principal material for architectural hardware. It was used invariably for clamps and dowels, embedded in cuttings below the surface of stone blocks and sealed into place by lead, which, for the most part, was poured in a molten state. Clamps secured blocks across the tops of joints, while dowels fastened the bottom of blocks to the course below. Sometimes the use of metal—particularly iron—was more extensive, serving a structural purpose (Dinsmoor 1922). Thus, in the Temple of Olympian Zeus at Acragas (c. 480 BCE) and the Propylaea at Athens (c. 438 BCE), a linear cavity was cut along the axis of a horizontal stone architrave for the insertion of iron bars. In the first case, the iron bar served as a temporary brace that only functioned during construction.

Greek Construction Techniques

Any discussion of Greek construction techniques is bound to focus on temple architecture, given the particular emphasis accorded these structures in Greek society, particularly during the Archaic and Classical periods (on Greek construction techniques, see especially Dinsmoor 1950, 164–179; Martin 1965; Orlandos 1966–68; Coulton 1977; Camp and Dinsmoor 1984; White 1984; Ginouvès and Martin 1985–1998, I–II; Lawrence 1996, 66–76; Landels 2000; Hellmann 2002; Giuliani 2006; Cooper 2008; Malacrino 2010; on Greek vocabulary for construction, see Orlandos and Travlos 1986; Hellmann 1992). True symbols of the wealth and power of the communities that built them, temples, unlike other types of public structures and residential houses, represented a (p. 250) significant

investment of economic and human resources, acting as catalysts for technical innovation. These innovations served to impart these buildings with a sense of monumentality, through their location, sheer size, and quality of materials and execution. By the Early Hellenistic period, other types of buildings, such as stoas and theaters, claimed a role in shaping the cityscape. But by and large, experimentation with not only design but also materials and construction techniques was mainly in the field of temple architecture (on technology associated with domestic and utilitarian architecture, see the essays in Oleson 2008).

A distinctive feature of ancient Greek temple building was minutely detailed record keeping (Scranton 1960; Roux 1966; Burford 1969; Hellmann 1999; Hellmann 2002, 22–27; see chapter 6 above). From the fifth century BCE onward, records could be inscribed for public display, sometimes at such length as to constitute monuments in their own right. Important records of this kind survive for the fifth-century BCE Athenian Acropolis and the fourth-century BCE temples at Epidaurus and Delphi. These documents serve as a major source of information for many aspects of Greek temple construction.

Temple building offered a major technical challenge for ancient Greek communities. Ancient writers present temple builders such as Chersiphron, the architect of the sixth-century BCE Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, as heroic figures producing inventive solutions to the problems of stone construction (Pliny, *HN* 36.95–97). In fact, as we noted, the problems began at the quarry. Given the simple technology possessed by the ancient Greeks, every colonnaded temple represented a remarkable victory for quarrymen and haulers. To the problems at the moment of extraction, we must add those already mentioned concerning the transportation of the blocks to the building site. To limit weight and transport costs, quarrymen normally roughed out the blocks before they were transported to the building site.

Pliny, in reference to Chersiphron at Ephesus, mentions the practice of raising up massive architrave blocks of many tons and setting them in place by hauling them up ramps formed out of earthworks (on lifting in Greek architecture, see Martin 1965, 200–219; Orlandos 1966–1968, II: 31–44, 87–98; Coulton 1974; Korres 1995; Hellmann 2002, 86–88; Malacrino 2010, 144–148). This practice is well attested for Egypt, and it cannot be excluded that it was employed for colossal Greek buildings. These were rather exceptional circumstances, though, and the average building blocks retain cuttings that betray sophisticated techniques for lifting and lowering them into place, such as U-shaped channels for the looping of the ropes (figure 10.2) or oblique holes for the insertion of metal “crabs” (*karkinoi*) or lifting claws. Such traces prove the invention by the later sixth century BCE of the pulley-operated crane. This, in turn, required smaller

loads and helps explain why the monolithic columns of the sixth century BCE gave way to superimposed drums.



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Fig. 10.2 Limestone blocks with U-shaped channels for lifting. Agrigento, Temple of Olympian Zeus (B). C. 480 BCE.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

A nest of wooden scaffolding marked the construction site. Exactly how the architects and master masons collaborated to realize the finished building is not clear, but there seems to have been a strong element of rule of thumb (Martin 1965, 172-179; Haselberger 1997; Muller 2001; Hellmann 2002, 37-49; Malacrino 2010, 108-110; see chapters 2 and 6

(p. 251) above). While there is no definitive evidence for the systematic use of three-dimensional models or a detailed overall plan, it is clear that some details were worked out on-site. This follows from the practice of incising working drawings on the walls of temples from the sixth century BCE onward. The most impressive examples come from the Temple of Apollo at Didyma, dating from the third century BCE (Haselberger 1985). Here the drawings cover a huge area of more than 200 square meters on the walls of the inner court and of the inner shrine. They include profiles of column bases, plans of ceiling coffers, and a method for calculating the contour (*entasis*) of the columns. These drawings were only preliminary sketches and in some cases were demonstrably modified in the execution. A variety of technical models were also made available for copying by workmen on-site. For instance, the inscribed accounts for the Erechtheum on the Athenian Acropolis record payments for wax models of the decorative details of the ceiling coffers. We also hear of samples of column capitals, paintwork, and carved moldings.

The fact that masons finished off the blocks on the spot explains the layer of stone chippings often found in the excavation of temple sites (to the literature above on quarrying, add Martin 1965, 190-200; Orlandos 1966-1968, II: 71-77; Hellmann 2002, 83-88; Malacrino 2010, 102-108). Individual blocks arrived from the quarry with protective mantles (*apergon*), along with projections or tenons. These were sometimes clearly meant for help in lifting. But in some cases, such as at Segesta, these projections were probably meant to give blocks further protection during the repeated manipulations

(p. 252) of the construction process (Mertens 1984). On some temples, even those that appear to have been completed, the protective mantles were retained, especially at the level of the platform, perhaps for decorative effect (Kalpaxis 1986). With columns, to ensure a precise correspondence, masons would add the fluting only after a column had been assembled from its drums, having first indicated on the bottom drum where the flutes were to begin.

Surviving building elements provide many clues about the methods of the temple masons, particularly as regards the joining and fastening of blocks (Martin 1965, 219-296; Orlandos 1966-1968, II: 99-122; Hellmann 2002, 89-95). It was standard practice to apply the so-called *anathyrosis* to the upright side of the block; the center was roughly hollowed with a pick except for a narrow border around the edges, which was worked smooth. This technique represented an expedient system for giving the appearance of fineness in jointing while minimizing labor, and it derived ultimately from Egypt. The Greeks also borrowed the system for fastening blocks together from the same source. This reduced the risk of movement in the event of earthquakes, a constant hazard in the Greek world. Blocks were secured horizontally by metal coupling of varied shape; dovetail, double-T, and pi-shaped were among the most popular, set in lead to protect them against rust. Drums of columns were secured vertically by plugs or dowels, which could be of wood and of metal. They, too, were set in lead, poured in after one drum had been placed on another by means of a shallow channel in the stone.

It was probably general practice for blocks to carry masons' marks, not necessarily carved but painted or added in black-lead. For the most part, these marks no longer survive, but guide lines lightly incised in the stone, indicating the placing of the first column drum, the staggering of the steps of the platform, and so on, are often still visible to the naked eye. By the fifth century BCE, small cavities in the stone surface point to the use of levers or crowbars to maneuver the block into place. Conspicuously absent are the use of mortar to bond masonry and the mixture of an aggregate with cement to form concrete, building technology typical of the Roman period.

For the detailed carving and finishing off of the stonework, Greek masons worked with a variety of different chisels (see the literature above on stone tools). In addition, compasses must have been used to engrave the mechanically applied grooves decorating the base of the cushion (*echinus*) of Doric capitals. In the sixth century BCE, a lathe was used to create the horizontal grooves on the Ionic bases of the Temple of Hera at Samos.

The masonry of a Greek temple accounts for a major part of the building's beauty to the modern eye, and the ancients probably shared the modern aesthetic response to finely dressed stone. A case in point is Pausanias's praise of the Propylaea on the Athenian Acropolis (1.22.4), which he presents as being unrivaled to his day because of the beauty

and size of its stones, mentioning its roof of white marble. That in all-marble temples such as the Parthenon (figure 6.1) the brightness of freshly quarried stonework played a prime aesthetic function is indicated by the fact that in Classical and later temple building, the blocks were carefully arranged in courses of equal height, with their joints harmoniously aligned in alternating courses; in the best work, the dressing was so fine that joints were hairline (Martin 1965, 356–409; Hellmann 2002, 110–118; Malacrino (p. 253) 2010, 97–102). Along similar lines, temple builders were in the habit of covering building stone of inferior quality with a coat of white plaster to emulate construction in finer materials.

Yet it needs to be remembered that color was integral to the ancient experience of a Greek colonnaded temple (Summitt 2000; Hellmann 2002, 229–245; Tiverios and Tsiafakis 2002; Ebbinghaus 2007). One consequence of its use, and likely aim, would have been to make the building more visible from afar. Not by chance, the brightest colors were those painted onto stonework (including marble) from the column tops upward, including sculpture. Most of the paint is now lost, and expert opinion tends to be divided between those who emphasize and those who downplay the effect of color in Greek architecture. But it probably was, and was meant to be, striking.

Finally, wooden carpentry should be mentioned; being entirely lost, this is one of the lesser-known and hence more controversial aspects of ancient Greek buildings (Hodge 1960; Liebhart 1988; Klein 1998; Hellmann 2002, 278–297). In temples, pitched roofs were supported by a system of timbers slotted into the tops of the walls below, into the gables, and into the cross-walls at the level of the attic. It may be that the longest timbers, such as those from the Sila forests in South Italy, could have spanned the roof. However, whether Greek temples used timber ties to support the roof (trussing) is a matter of debate.

The Materials and Techniques of Roman Architecture

The ancient Roman builders drew on many technological innovations made by the Etruscans and the Greeks (on Roman construction techniques, see especially Durm 1905; Giovannoni 1928; Lugli 1957; Ginouvès and Martin 1985–1998, I–II; Adam 1994; Taylor 2003; Giuliani 2006; Lancaster 2008; Malacrino 2010). From the sixth century BCE onward, most major buildings in Rome and central Italy used solid blocks of stone for city walls, public buildings, and aqueducts (Boëthius 1978; Cifani 2008). Even when the whole

structure was not made of squared-stone masonry and concrete substituted for the bulk, the concrete core was commonly made with stone aggregate and faced with stone in the form of nodules, pointed cubes, or small blocks.

Until the end of the second century BCE, the stones available were the local volcanic conglomerates, called tuffs (on stone in Roman architecture, see Lugli 1957, 51–359; Adam 1994, 20–58; Jackson and Marra 2006; Malacrino 2010, 10–16). Cappellaccio is a gray tuff of relatively poor quality, quarried from the hills of Rome especially during the seventh to fifth centuries BCE (it was used for the foundations of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus). Other tuffs became available to Romans as a consequence of their expansion into Latium and southern Etruria. Fidenae and Grotta Oscura tuffs were quarried north of Rome, up the Tiber, from 426 and 396 BCE, respectively. Eventually, (p. 254) Roman builders began to use Monteverde and Anio tuffs, both harder than the previous ones, in addition to *Lapis Albanus* (*peperino*), *Lapis Gabinus* (*pietra sperone*) and *Lapis Tiburtinus* (travertine). Travertine is a hard white limestone quarried near Tibur, a calcareous sedimentary stone more durable than the volcanic tuff, which was widely used in the major architectural monuments even after the Roman era. Basalt (*selce*) was used for paving streets and consular roads (Quilici and Quilici Gigli 1992; Adam 1994, 276–280; Malacrino 2010, 192–198).

The technique that went along with the use of tuff was ashlar masonry (*opus quadratum*), which consisted of squared blocks of stone, usually laid without mortar and kept in place by their own weight, with a tight fit (see Adam 1994, 106–115; Malacrino 2010, 111–114). Usually, as in Greek architecture, the blocks were laid in alternate courses of “headers” (laid crosswise) and “stretchers” (laid lengthwise) and were fixed with dowels and clamps. Often Roman builders combined travertine, tuff, and marble in the same construction. Outside Rome, especially in Roman colonies and towns, it was common to use polygonal masonry, also called *opus siliceum*, in which the blocks of stone were not squared or set in rows but fit together snugly (see Adam 1994, 102–106).

The earliest recorded marble building in Rome is the Temple of Jupiter Stator, vowed in 146 BCE (on marble in Roman architecture, see especially Gnoli 1988; Pensabene 1985, 1994, and 1998; Malacrino 2010, 24–30). It was commissioned by a triumphing general and designed by a Greek architect, Hermodorus of Salamis, presumably employing marble (and marble workers) imported from Greece. Indeed, Pentelic marble—quarried, as we saw, near Athens—appears in other temples built during the same period, while the quarries of white marble at Luni (modern Carrara) began to be exploited only after the mid-first century BCE. Gradually, other white marbles were imported to Rome, together with colored marbles and hard stones from any provinces of the Empire (for Asia Minor, see Barresi 2003) to be used in architecture, sculpture, and interior decoration. The

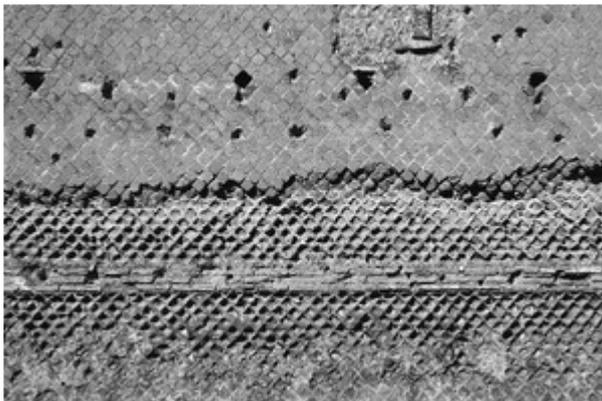
Romans definitely had a penchant for colored marbles and hard stones (see De Nuccio and Ungaro 2002; Lazzarini 2007; Malacrino 2010, 25–30), as already remarked on by Strabo (9.5.16) in the age of Augustus and confirmed by the *Edict on Maximum Prices* issued by Diocletian in 301 CE, in which the vast majority of marbles mentioned are colored. Augustus's boast, reported by Suetonius (*Aug.* 2.28), that he had found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble bears eloquent testimony to the aesthetic appreciation of marble by the Romans, although this statement should not be taken literally (see chapter 15 below). The state ownership of most of the quarries made the fine stones required for expensive building programs available to the emperors of the first and second centuries CE (in addition to the literature mentioned above, on Roman quarrying, see Dworakowska 1983; Fant 1989; Adam 1994, 20–29; Hirt 2010; Malacrino 2010, 37–38).

In the late second and early first centuries BCE, when travertine and Greek marble began to be available in Rome, the builders were also confronted with the problem of lifting heavier stones of much larger dimensions than before. To that end, the Romans adopted the lifting technology from the Greeks, particularly the use of cranes, ropes, pulleys, and capstans. However, they also used these elements on a larger scale than in (p. 255) the Greek world, including the coordinated use of multiple devices for lifting particularly large architectural elements and obelisks (see Adam 1994, 43–51; Lancaster 2008, 258).

An important difference between Greek and Roman architecture concerns the construction of stone columns: by the mid-sixth century BCE, the Greeks primarily used stacked drums, while the Romans preferred monolithic shafts, especially from the early second century CE onward. This preference for monoliths had a significant effect on the quarrying, transportation, and lifting of stone, requiring more organized work practices (Ward-Perkins 1981; Wilson Jones 2000; Lancaster 2008, 258; see chapter 2 above). Column shafts of preset length—the 6:5 rule, according to which the column shafts were five-sixths of the total column height (including base, shaft, and capital) (Wilson Jones 2000, 147–56; Lancaster 2008, 258)—attest to this process of standardization, indicating the production of blocks, columns, and other items precut in the quarries and shipped to the marble yards. During the period from the late first century BCE to the early second century CE, the central administration increasingly took control of quarries supplying marble for projects sponsored by the emperor.

Probably the most important Roman contribution to building technology was the systematic use of concrete, which had a significant impact on architectural design (see Lugli 1957, 361–693; Adam 1994, 65–87; Lamprecht 1996; Wright 2005, 181–217; Jackson et al. 2007; Lancaster 2008, 260–266; Malacrino 2010, 61–76, 114–124). The development

of this material by the late third century BCE radically changed the use of the buildings stones mentioned above. *Opus caementicium* is a type of mortared rubble construction, which consists of fist-sized pieces of stone (*caementa*) set in mortar to create a solid mass. This type of construction required a large quantity of water for mixing the mortar, and it is thus not by chance that the earliest examples appear only after aqueducts began supplying the city of Rome with water (beginning with the Aqua Appia, c. 312 BCE). Roman concrete was different from earlier attempts in the same direction because of the inclusion of a volcanic ash called *pozzolana* (*pulvis Puteolanus*), available in the area of Puteoli, modern Pozzuoli, from which the modern term takes its name. The same material was also available in several areas of central Italy, including the Colli Albani, the volcanic system south of Rome. Pozzolana increases the strength of the mortar considerably. A lime mortar consisting of sand, slaked lime, and water hardens and gains strength through its contact with carbon dioxide in the air; as a result, however, the mortar at the center is not nearly as strong as that closer to the outer surface. When pozzolana is added to this mortar, it plays an active role in its chemical transformation throughout the mass, producing a strong, cohesive mortar. Not by chance, the resistance to compression of pozzolana-lime mortar is five to eight times that of lime mortar.



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Fig. 10.3 Example of *opus reticulatum*, with three courses of bricks. Hadrian's Villa. C. 120-130 CE.

(Photograph by Pier Luigi Tucci.)

The walls in *opus caementicium* had the inner core consisting of *caementa* laid in the mortar and were faced with stone and brick, which formed a smooth outer surface. Vitruvius (*De arch.* 2.8.1) expressly refers to two types of facing: *opus incertum* (Adam 1994, 127-128; Malacrino 2010, 124-126) and *opus reticulatum*

(Adam 1994, 131-134; Malacrino 2010, 126-127). *Opus incertum* appeared by the second century BCE and consisted of small, irregularly shaped lumps placed in a random pattern and roughly (p. 256) smoothed on one side to form a flat outer surface. In Rome, the small irregular blocks were made of soft volcanic tuff. Elsewhere, outside the volcanic zone around Rome, tuff was replaced by limestone. By the late second century BCE, the appearance of *opus incertum* had become more regular, consisting of square, pyramid-shaped blocks of tuff set in a diagonal grid pattern called *opus reticulatum* (as in the

Theater of Pompey, c. 55 BCE) (figure 10.3). Modern scholarship has introduced two terms, *opus quasi reticulatum* (Adam 1994, 129–131) and *opus mixtum* (Adam 1994, 139–144), in order to categorize different types of *opus reticulatum*. The former refers to a rough version of the *reticulatum*, in which the blocks of tuff or limestone are not arranged according to a regular grid; this is, however, a subjective evaluation, and the term should be used with caution. *Opus mixtum* denotes the technique popular in the first and second centuries CE, in which panels made of *opus reticulatum* are separated by bands of bricks. The earliest examples of *opus reticulatum* employ pieces of volcanic tuff. The fact that this material was easily available in central Italy must have played a role in the development of the technique. Another factor is the softness of volcanic tuff, which is relatively easy to cut to the desired shape. In this regard, it has also been suggested that the transition to the use of *opus reticulatum*, a standardized, industrialized technique, was connected with the increase of slaves as a result of the military conquests during the mid-second century BCE and the possibility of employing them, instead of skilled labor, toward the fashioning of the stone (Coarelli 1977; Torelli 1980). *Opus reticulatum* was not common in the provinces, where, it has been argued, this technique made reference to central authority, conveying a message of power and pride (Medri 2001).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 10.4 Wall built of brick-faced concrete.
Domitian's Palace on the Palatine Hill. C. 81–92 CE.

(Photograph by Pier Luigi Tucci.)

(p. 257) Brick-faced concrete (*opus testaceum*) (figure 10.4) superseded *opus reticulatum* in Rome over the course of the first century CE, although the two continued to be used together in *opus mixtum* until the late second century CE (on *opus testaceum* and bricks in Roman architecture, see McWhirr 1979; Brodrigg 1987; Adam 1994, 145–150; Malacrino 2010, 127–130). The Tiber valley has deep deposits of alluvial clays suitable for shaping and firing (terracotta) into

roof tiles, plaques, and bricks. The use of terracotta, particularly for roof tiles and revetments, is well documented in Rome from the seventh century BCE. However, fired

brick was introduced much later, apparently for lack of incentive, given the abundance and easy workability of tuff. In particular, the intensive production of flat bricks developed only after the Augustan age, when fired bricks quickly became one of the principal materials for facing concrete. As a result, brick manufacture reached an industrial scale never before achieved (for the organization of industry, see Boucheron, Broise, and Thébert 2000; Anderson 1997, 151-165). In the Greek world, brick tended to be used in bands of a few courses that extended the full thickness of the wall or as the main structural material composing the wall, whereas in Roman architecture, it was used only as a facing for concrete walls. Roman builders sometimes used courses of *bipedales* that ran through the entire thickness of the wall, but these seem to have served more as a constructional aid by providing flat surfaces (p. 258) at critical points in the structure (tops of foundations, springing of arches, stages of scaffolding), by aiding in keeping the wall true as it rose, and by marking critical levels within the building process, to name a few uses. A critical change in brick production was the introduction of large bricks, both *sesquipedales* (one and a half Roman feet, about 44.4 centimeters square) and *bipedales* (two Roman feet, about 59.2 centimeters square). Some were used whole, for the roofs and floors of drains, to cap off concrete foundations, or to form leveling courses at intervals higher up a concrete wall but also for arches and vaults. Most were sawn or split into smaller triangles for the wall facing. *Sesquipedales and smaller slabs, bessales*, were made for lining the intrados of vaults. The many contractors and subcontractors involved in the business of fired bricks often found it necessary to be able to distinguish their products from someone else's (DeLaine 2000). During the second century CE and occasionally later, the stamps were actually dated (by the names of the consuls for the year), and as a result, the dating of a brick building can be equally precise (but with caution) thanks to brick stamps, a particular feature of brick production in Rome and its environs.

In the third and fourth centuries CE, *opus vittatum* became increasingly common (Adam 1994, 135-139; Malacrino 2010, 127). This technique consists of interspersed courses of small tuff blocks and bricks, with thick bands of mortar between each row, which reduced the quantity of facing material required.

In addition to bricks for masonry, tiles and other clay products for buildings were produced. Circular bricks were used for building columns, and other preformed shapes could be supplied and combined to make cornices and other decorative moldings. In the first century BCE, *tegulae mammatae*, bricks with bosses at the corners of one side, were used to create a space for hot air along the walls of the *caldaria* in the Forum Baths and Stabian Baths at Pompeii (see Adam 1994, 264-270; DeLaine and Johnston 1999; Malacrino 2010, 181-182). The most advanced form of wall heating came with the

introduction of *tubuli*, rectangular hollow tubes that lined the walls. Small bricks were often set into concrete in a herringbone pattern in flooring (*opus spicatum*).

Waterproofing for floors, roofs, cisterns, and aqueducts was achieved with *cocciopesto*, a mixture of lime, pozzolana, and crushed brick or pottery (this technique should not be associated with *opus signinum*, which was used structurally).

Walls, ceilings, and floors were rarely left bare, and their finishing could take a wide range of forms (Frizot 1975; Adam 1994, 216–234). Originally, painted terracotta panels and friezes were used on temples and aristocratic houses. Eventually, plaster and stucco, marble veneer, mosaics, and frescoes became the customary way to decorate the surface of a wall (see chapters 13 and 15 below).

The Romans brought the use of the arch, which first appeared in Rome by the sixth century BCE (Cifani 1994, 194), to a whole new level by making it a basic element for building types such as the theater and the amphitheater (Adam 1994, 158–177; Lancaster 2008, 257–260; Malacrino 2010, 131–135; for Greek precedents, see Boyd 1978). When the arch was translated into concrete construction, the resulting curvilinear form led to the development of large-scale vaulted structures, which can be regarded as one of the most significant Roman contributions to the history of building technology (Sanpaolesi (p. 259) 1971; Rasch 1985; Pelliccioni 1986; Adam 1994, 177–195; Lancaster 2005; Lancaster 2008, 266–273; Malacrino 2010, 136–137; for Greek precedents, see Boyd 1978). The mastery of wooden centering—which shows significant developments from one of the earliest surviving domes, the Temple of Mercury at Baiae in South Italy (21.6-meter span), with significant deformations in profile (Rakob 1992), to a series of fourth-century CE domes in and around Rome (Rasch 1991), which show no sign of deformation—was an important factor in the construction of concrete vaulted structures, and the triangular truss must have played a critical role in this development (Adam 1994, 174–177, 205–213; Malacrino 2010, 148–152). Timber was essential to Roman construction: it was used for foundations, scaffoldings, vaulting, ceilings, and roofs but also for temporary buildings, its importance being attested by Pliny the Elder, Strabo, and Vitruvius, who all discuss the types of wood appropriate for building and their uses by builders (forests were available to Romans in Italy, and import from outside Italy seems to have remained unusual and noteworthy) (Ulrich 2007). The construction of vaults also took advantage of the Roman mastery of concrete, particularly as regards the use of different types of stone (including *selce*, scoria, and pumice) as *caementa*, with the lighter ones being used at the top and the heavier ones lower down. This careful use of materials with different weight according to their position within the vault reflects one of the main concerns of Roman builders in relation to large-scale vaulted structures: the lateral thrusts that these vaults exerted on the walls. A simple method for countering these lateral thrusts was to juxtapose the vaults so that they balanced each other, a technique

that dates back to the second century BCE. Two other means of controlling the lateral thrusts of vaults were the buttressing arch, which was developed in the context of the imperial baths (Baths of Diocletian, Basilica of Maxentius), and the iron tie bar, used in conjunction with vaults supported on colonnades (DeLaine 1989–1990; Lamprecht 1996; Lancaster 2008, 269–270). A particular type of vaulting technique consists of the use of vaulting tubes, or *tubi fittili* (Wilson 1992; Scurati-Manzoni 1997; Lancaster 2008, 275–277). The earliest examples occur in a third-century BCE bath building at Morgantina, but the largest use of *tubi fittili* is documented in Tunisia in the late second century CE, at a time when concrete vaulting was well established. In the second and third centuries CE, *tubi fittili* were used as a permanent centering for concrete vaults, as a type of lightweight vaulting in its own right, often without significant fill on top. Their use was very likely an attempt to save on materials and labor. A different method of vault construction used from the Hadrianic period onward is the technique of embedding amphoras into the concrete vaults, in order to lessen the weight and therefore the lateral thrusts of the vaults (Spanu 2007).

Conclusions

The study of Greek and Roman architecture continues to depend on detailed documentation of ancient buildings and their elements. There are many significant structures for which the documentation remains inadequate, and these will offer opportunities for (p. 260) future scholars. But in that regard, one key question arises in the light of recent scholarship: how can we make this kind of detailed analysis useful? Most studies published in recent years show that there is a wide range of approaches at different levels of detail (DeLaine 2008). The traditional approach consists of the complete, stone-by-stone documentation of a standing structure. Often, however, archaeologists and architectural historians who focus on construction details, materials, and techniques create very large computerized data sets (this is also a consequence of the application of methodologies typical of archaeological stratigraphy, more and more frequently applied to the walls of ancient buildings), aiming not only to reconstruct the original appearance of a building but also to produce an approximate quantification of the different materials used in its construction. All these approaches are necessary, but if done mechanically, their results can be useless; it is clearly a much safer scholarly business simply to count the blocks of stone or the courses of bricks and stay away from broader issues. Yet most publications present endless lists of building materials (e.g., brick stamps) that nobody will ever read, except perhaps for two or three specialists in

the field. Going from one extreme to the other, most of the digital reconstructions merely simplify the ancient built environment and are very often unreliable.

In the light of all this, the question of what we are trying to achieve becomes a particularly pressing one. Although the analysis of the construction process or virtual reconstructions of a whole town are becoming increasingly popular, it is unlikely that these methods will contribute to a better understanding of the Greek and Roman world. Indeed, we can describe at length the development of certain architectural types and buildings techniques—an approach that has been followed almost to excess—but can say almost nothing about the function of architecture in the lives of the people who used it. The study of the design, materials, and techniques of Greek and Roman architecture should not be an end in itself but should contribute instead to a larger understanding of ancient society. It is absolutely necessary to draw connections between the construction of space and residents' lives, and this can be achieved only through interdisciplinary work.

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The City in the Greek and Roman World

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the city and the concept of the urban environment in the context of art and architecture in ancient Greece and Rome. Using a holistic approach, it highlights the wide variety of buildings produced in the Greek and Roman world. Before discussing the specific achievements of Greek and Roman urbanism, the chapter considers the scholarly investigations into the historiography of ancient Greek and Roman cities, including large-scale archaeological excavations and geophysical surveys. It then examines changes in the ancient built environment, particularly the integration of public architecture, especially stone temples, in Greek settlements and nearby sanctuaries. The chapter also looks at residential housing and the transition from the modest settlements of Early Iron Age Greece to elaborate cityscapes.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, cities, cityscapes, residential housing, stone temples, urbanism

The period spanning the first millennium BCE through the fifth century CE around the Mediterranean was one of the most remarkable epochs in the evolving relationship of the people of this region with their urban environment. Cities and the inclination for people to congregate and survive together within durable structural forms and a system of shared cultural norms had existed centuries before the Greeks and Romans, most notably in Mesopotamia and Egypt. However, the fifteen-hundred-year period bookmarked by the collapse of Mediterranean Bronze Age civilization and the sweeping cultural and political changes of Late Antiquity has few parallels. Population levels expanded considerably after generations of stagnation. The largest Greek settlements at the beginning of the first millennium BCE had a few thousand inhabitants, but by the end of the millennium, some megalopoleis, such as Alexandria, had populations estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands (Scheidel 2004). Rome reached one million by the first century CE, a size not reencountered in Europe until London in the nineteenth century (Morley 1996, 33–54). Demographic growth and concentrated living conditions were accompanied by

transformations in nearly all aspects of Greek and Roman culture. Architectural innovations using stone, marble, brick, and cement sparked new structural forms in the urban fabric (see chapter 10 above). The organization of space became increasingly deliberate and influenced by conceptual approaches in cohabitation, such as the logical arrangement of streets and residential zones. This was particularly characteristic for the Greeks and Romans, because they were famous for establishing new urban centers throughout the Mediterranean and beyond. At the same time, the Greek and Roman city became a hub from which to exploit the surrounding hinterlands and routes of economic exchange, not only to sustain basic living standards but also to increase the power and wealth of the local elites. Unique sociopolitical factors shaped the physical image of the Greek and Roman city. For example, the relatively uniform outward appearance of Greek domestic architecture until the conquests of Alexander the Great is often attributed to the inclusive nature (p. 270) of many Greek governments (Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994). By contrast, the flamboyance of Greek and Roman urban mansions by the end of the first millennium BCE is viewed as an articulation of authority by the ruling elite (Zanker 1998). In total, the specific achievements of Greek and Roman urbanism are not necessarily the most remarkable traits, but more so is the manner in which the Greeks and Romans consistently innovated and transformed their environment to fit the needs of a changing population.

Investigating Greek and Roman Cities

Like every element of Mediterranean civilization, perspectives on the Greek and Roman city are in constant fluctuation, being contingent on the archaeological data and the changing inclinations and methodologies of intellectual inquiries (on the historiography of ancient Greek and Roman urbanism, see Castagnoli 1971, 2-7; Martin 1974, 13-47; Greco and Torelli 1983, 17-35). The spectacular eighteenth-century unearthing of Pompeii and other Roman cities along the Bay of Naples that were buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE was a key chapter in the modern rediscovery of Greek and Roman cityscapes (Hales and Paul 2011). Entire residential and public quarters with multistoried buildings and elaborate furnishings from daily life stood next to bars, bakeries, theaters, and prostitution houses. While the surviving monuments of Rome were no less impressive, the fact that Pompeii remained untouched by future generations meant that people could experience a Roman city as it was in the first century CE.

The large-scale excavations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by foreign archaeological schools and local archaeological societies did much to advance a general appreciation of the Greek and Roman city. The “Big Digs” conducted at such

places as Corinth and Ephesus uncovered street systems, fortification walls and gates, monumental architecture, public and commercial venues, and urban sanctuaries all within a singular context (Whitley 2001, 29–36). These efforts laid the foundations for modern archaeological investigations of the Greek and Roman city. Early interest focused on debating the origins of formal town planning, attributing orthogonal streets and regular city blocks either to the Greeks, under the influence of Hippodamus of Miletus, or to Etruscan and Italic traditions. Francis Haverfield's *Ancient Town Planning* (Haverfield 1913) and Armin von Gerkan's *Griechische Städteanlagen* (von Gerkan 1924) both detected similarities and differences between the two traditions. Yet Haverfield ultimately favored an "Oriental" influence from Mesopotamia, while von Gerkan credited the Greeks with sparking innovative forms of urban planning. At the same time, however, beyond simply unearthing and accumulating, there was little concern in identifying gradations within ancient urban practices. The geometry of Greek and Roman urban planning and the formal aspects of architectural design were the preferred topics of research over these two cultures' social interaction with their built environment. R. E. Wycherley's *How the Greek Built Cities* (Wycherley 1962, originally published in 1949), arguably the most influential monograph on Greek urbanism in the (p. 271) English language, was arranged strictly by building typologies. In other studies, monuments of the Greek Classical and Roman Imperial period were routinely given priority, usually to the detriment of earlier phases. Roland Martin's *L'urbanisme dans la Grèce antique* (Martin 1974, originally published in 1956) focused largely on the innovations of the Classical period and in particular on town planner Hippodamus of Miletus. In Martin's view, it was in the Ionian Greek cities of Asia Minor that new aesthetics in urban planning and architectural forms were fully realized and then applied, eventually spreading to mainland Greece. Here the Greek city of the Classical period has become the champion, where rational forms prevail over the irrational.

By the second half of the twentieth century, the trend in Mediterranean archaeological practice shifted from large-scale excavations to detailed studies of the urban environment with targeted fieldwork. There was greater interest in contextualized finds, such as pottery and objects from daily life, and in establishing the chronology of buildings and their development over time. On the whole, this tendency continues to the present, being most visible in the surging popularity of domestic archaeology and the sociopolitical relationship among house, city, and countryside in the ancient Mediterranean (Clarke 1991; Nevett 1999; Cahill 2002). Aerial photography was also widely used after World War II for studying the organization of ancient urban centers, particularly by noting the preservation of an ancient system of land division in the orthogonal alignments of modern agricultural fields and city streets. Ferdinando Castagnoli's *Orthogonal Town Planning in Antiquity* (Castagnoli 1971, originally published in Italian in 1956) and J. B. Ward-

Perkins's *Cities of Ancient Greece and Italy* (Ward-Perkins 1974) made extensive use of aerial photography in writing their histories of Mediterranean urbanism. In addition, smaller settlements and those on the periphery were studied and integrated into discussions of ancient urbanism (Boyd and Jameson 1981). Another tendency in intellectual inquiries was the widespread adoption of social archaeology. Narratives of the Greek and Roman city were no longer limited to formal observations of monuments but dealt more with the manner in which people experienced their surroundings and how the environment was shaped by them (Snodgrass 1980; Greco and Torelli 1983; Morris 1987; Gros and Torelli 1988). The role of the ancient economy became another important factor in discussions of the ancient city (Scheidel, Morris, and Saller 2007).



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Fig. 11.1 Mantinea. Linear anomalies from soil marks reveal sections of an orthogonal planned settlement in the Peloponnese. Satellite image.

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Another great methodological shift began in the 1970s with the onset of survey archaeology and the study of the ancient countryside (Snodgrass 1990; Given and Knapp 2003). New light was shed on the rural hinterlands and how they were exploited for agriculture, the extraction of raw materials, and the exchange of goods over land and sea. Rather than view the city in isolation, survey archaeology placed the urban environment within a much larger framework. Several

fieldwork projects have even used urban survey, as opposed to the countryside, to study the wider archaeological features of the ancient city (Alcock 1991; Lolos, Gourley, and Stewart 2007). Concurrent with these developments, geophysical survey and remote sensing are quickly being used for studying and reconstructing Greek and Roman cities (Keay et al. 2000; Romano 2003). They can reveal previously unknown subsurface features and are able to explore large archaeological contexts over a short amount of time without damaging the landscape. Recently, important [\(p. 272\)](#) geophysical surveys have taken place at Sicyon in the Peloponnese (Lolos and Gourley 2011), Plataiai in Central Greece (Konecny et al. 2012), and Interamna Lirenas in Latium (Bellini et al.

2012), while satellite remote sensing has been used in the Peloponnese to identify orthogonal planned settlements (Donati, forthcoming) (figure 11.1).

The City in the Greek World

(p. 273) The breakup of Bronze Age civilization toward the end of the second millennium BCE ushered in sweeping changes on mainland Greece and the Aegean islands. The relative stability and advanced cultural and economic institutions of the Minoans and Mycenaeans were replaced by a protracted period of uncertainty during the Early Iron Age. It is challenging to draw generalizations about this period, because the archaeological data are at a nadir in the majority of contexts (Snodgrass 2000; Lemos 2002). Besides in Crete and the Aegean islands, architectural forms in durable materials are greatly lacking or wholly nonexistent. A large number of Early Iron Age settlements are known only from mortuary evidence and pottery deposits (Argos, Corinth, Athens). The basic picture that does emerge from the period is one of regionalism: population levels were relatively low, small networks of power and exchange predominated, and people congregated in modest settlements often in hard-to-reach locations (Dickinson 2006; Bintliff 2012, 209–233).

A good starting point for exploring the transitional period to the Early Iron Age is Karphi in eastern Crete, which was occupied between 1200 and 1000 BCE on a steep outcrop some 1,100 meters above sea level (Wallace and Mylona 2012). One- and two-room rectilinear houses in stone were clustered around one another. Some buildings were arranged on the same axis, showing forethought in their organization. Two larger buildings at the center probably had a heightened significance as the homes of local elites (Day and Snyder 2004). A shrine was identified based on the discovery of an altar and a number of terracotta figurines with upraised arms. Similar settlements with clusters of rectilinear houses built in stone have been discovered elsewhere on Crete (Vronda, Vrokastro) and the Aegean islands (Zagora on Andros). Zagora is perhaps the finest example, because it provides a picture of a more or less complete Early Iron Age settlement. The town dates between 900 and 700 BCE and was built on a steep hill that was partially guarded by a fortification wall (Cambitoglou 1981; Cambitoglou et al. 1988). Dozens of rectilinear houses were organized in neighborhood-like clusters along similar axes. Originally, houses were simple one-room structures with courtyards, but internal space was later enlarged and subdivided. Many houses had hearths and areas for the storage and consumption of food products. An open-air sanctuary with an altar stood at the center of town. Although basic in form, the close-knit organization of Zagora and

Karphi, with designated areas for habitation, consumption, and communal worship, suggests a certain degree of sophistication in cohabitation.

Fewer Early Iron Age settlements on mainland Greece have been discovered on the same scale as those on Crete and the Aegean islands. Nichoria in the Peloponnese had freestanding single-room houses with apsidal ends that were built in mudbrick and had high thatched roofs (Mazarakis Ainian 1992). Instead of clustering around one another, structures were dispersed throughout the settlement. Irregular distributions of single-unit houses with curvilinear ends were characteristic of Early Iron Age architecture on mainland Greece (Mazarakis Ainian 1997).

(p. 274) Noticeable changes occurred at the end of the Early Iron Age. The enlargement of internal household space allowed for a more diverse range of domestic usage, such as domestic crafts and industry (Lang 2005). The houses at Zagora are a good indication of this general trend, but there are other cases (Miletus, Kastanas in Macedonia). Another clear example is the appearance of fortification walls (Frederiksen 2011). The earliest preserved defensive walls are the late-ninth-century BCE mudbrick walls at Old Smyrna in Ionia. In the following century, walls became more widespread, but they were generally restricted to settlements on the Aegean islands (Amorgos, Siphnos) and in Ionia (Iasos). The hilltop settlements of Zagora and Emborio on Chios are characteristic of the first generation of Greek fortification walls. They were constructed from stone or mudbrick and worked in tandem with the steep natural topography to create a unified system of defense. Although the majority of Early Iron Age settlements still remained unfortified, the consolidation and protection of communal space were clearly a growing concern in the eighth century BCE. This was a period of growing demographics after several centuries of stagnation and the emergence of Greek city-state culture (Bintliff 2012, 213-220). Instead of dispersed centers of habitation with limited populations and influence, the focus was now on a single urban settlement that held authority over a surrounding territory with arable land, natural resources, satellite villages, and perhaps coastal harbors. The changes in Greek settlements toward the end of the Early Iron Age reflect this new direction.

The Archaic period was an important epoch in the realization of a new order of social and economic realities. For the first time, the Greek city was a concept that could be planned from the very beginning to suit the needs of a specific population at a determined geographic location (Greco and Torelli 1983, 149-232; Hoepfner 1999, 129-199). Colonization in South Italy (Magna Graecia) and Sicily and the Black Sea was the main catalyst for planned settlements. Megara Hyblaea had an organized street system with residential blocks and zones for public use by the seventh century BCE (De Angelis 2003, 17-39; Gras, Tréziny, and Broise 2004). The agora was given priority at the center of town, and over time, public buildings and religious structures surrounded the open space.

precedent that other Greek cities adopted in the following centuries (Argos, Corinth). Monumental temple architecture became such a central feature of the Greek city that by the end of the Archaic period, it was almost a prerequisite element.

The Greek agora was another defining element of the Archaic Greek city (Tritsch 1932; Martin 1951; Kenzler 1999; Hoepfner 2006). In its earliest incarnation, the agora was a simple yet multipurpose open venue where public assemblies, religious events, (p. 276) and commercial activity took place. The agora at Dreros on Crete dates to the beginning of the seventh century BCE and was nothing more than an open zone at the foot of two hills (Kenzler 1999, 70–73). In the West, colonial settlements integrated the agora into their communal space at a privileged location from the outset. The agora at Megara Hyblaea included public architecture, such as temples for religious use and covered stoas (Vallet, Villard, and Auberson 1976; Mertens 2006, 65–71, 90–91). In the sixth century BCE, the agora at Metapontum had monumental temples, altars, and a large wooden assembly structure that was eventually converted into stone (Mertens 2006, 157–163). On mainland Greece, long-established cities such as Argos, Corinth, and Athens began to renew their public space and build permanent structures. The construction of water channels in the Argive agora diverted seasonal flooding, permitting the Argives to use their public space year-round (Pariante, Piérart, and Thalmann 1998). Lead weights and inscribed plaques listing commercial goods were found inside a series of buildings and suggest commercial activity. A heroon with an inscribed pillar and boundary markers was another feature (Pariante 1992). At Athens, the development of the Archaic agora followed a similar trajectory, but one major difference was the appearance of civic architecture beginning around 500 BCE to complement the establishment of a democratic constitution (Camp 1986; but *contra* see Papadopoulos 2003). The Old Bouleuterion, a square assembly hall with internal supports, housed meetings of a five-hundred-member council, while the Stoa Basileus served as the meeting venue for a group of nine Athenian officials. Still, compared to later centuries, the Archaic agora was a modest venue with only a scattering of public waterworks, temples and shrines, commercial buildings, and, more rarely, civic structures. The focus was still on the central open area.

The inherent plurality of the Archaic Greek city makes single definitions challenging. Among other aspects, it was responding to growing demographics and the rise of Greek city-state culture, the diffusion of Greeks beyond their traditional homelands, and broad changes in the sociopolitical structure of a class-based population. General trends can certainly be identified (colonial planned settlements, temple building, demarcation of public space, fortification walls, cemeteries outside the city), but there were numerous regional distinctions. For example, Cretan cities often lacked large public spaces and monumental urban sanctuaries, because the focus was on a social system of male citizens and communal dining (Erickson 2011). At Azoria, recent excavations found evidence for

communal male banquet halls in a compact settlement largely consisting of houses and a modest cult building (Small 2010; Haggis et al. 2011). This manifestation is very different from the major town-planning initiatives in the West and the large urban sprawl of Corinth.

The chronological transition from the Archaic to the Classical period is conventionally defined by the Persian Wars at the beginning of the fifth century BCE. These historical events were of great importance in the development of Greek urban practices during the Classical period. In their effort to conquer the Greeks, the Persians sacked and destroyed Greek cities in Ionia and on mainland Greece. Most prominent among these were Miletus (494 BCE) and Athens (480 BCE). The defeat of Persia and the aftermath (p. 277) of the war provided citizens with the opportunity to rebuild their cities in ways that were not possible before. By 479 BCE, plans were under way for the reorganization of Miletus (Weber 2007). One of Miletus's most famous citizens, the fifth-century BCE town planner and theoretician Hippodamus, was probably not involved in the reconstruction (he was too young), but he was put in charge of creating a logical arrangement of streets, city blocks, and zones for public use elsewhere (McCredie 1971; Gehrke 1989). Notably, he is credited with planning Piraeus, the harbor of Athens, during the middle of the century (Burns 1976; Gill 2006). Hippodamus of Miletus was not the first town planner in the Greek world, as the Archaic settlements in South Italy and Sicily demonstrate, but he was an innovator in the ideology behind the rational distribution of urban space using an orthogonal plan (Hellmann 2010). His work at Piraeus and Thurii, along with numerous treatises, influenced generations of Greek town planners and urban layouts.

After the Persian Wars, the city of Athens was not reorganized on a rational scale, maintaining, instead, its former irregular layout. Substantial changes were redirected elsewhere in the creation of monumental public spaces and religious venues, in particular the Periklean building program on the Athenian Acropolis. The Athenian agora was adorned with additional civic buildings, shrines, and colonnaded stoas (Camp 1986; Shear 1994). Although the elaboration of the Greek agora with monumental architecture was a growing trend during the Classical period (Argos, Mantinea), one must remain cautious with Classical Athens and its democratic institutions. Athens was a major exception to the typical Greek city, which by the end of the fifth century BCE numbered around one thousand (Hansen 2006). Elis in the Peloponnese was a new foundation through synoecism, and although it, too, had a democratic constitution, its agora was an undeveloped space with no monumental civic structures throughout the fifth century BCE (Donati 2011). At the same time, remote sensing indicates that Elis was planned with an orthogonal street system (Tsokas et al. 2012). Marginal settlements, such as Orraon in Epirus and Lato on Crete, may provide a more balanced picture of the Classical Greek city than Athens. They were fortified yet modest in scale and largely made up of

residential houses. The stone houses at Orraon, incredibly preserved up to two stories, were integrated into a strict orthogonal plan (Hoepfner et al. 1999), but houses at Lato were loosely organized on the slopes of a hill (Westgate 2007). Lato had public areas, including an agora with dining rooms, but they were unpretentious venues compared with Athens.

Turning to domestic architecture, the inclusion of orthogonal residential city blocks with equally divided households was the driving factor behind the rational distribution of space in new settlements. At Olynthus in Macedonia, a new section of town was built following a synoecism of surrounding communities in 432 BCE (Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994, 27-74; Cahill 2002, 27-33). Residential quarters were equally divided into rectangular city blocks, and houses were built within equivalent plot sizes and had similar internal designs. Some have correlated the regularity in the arrangement and dimensions of Greek town houses at Olynthus and elsewhere (Halieis, Kassope, Piraeus) with the relative equality in Greek society during this period (see especially Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994; but *contra* see Cahill 2002, 194-222). At new settlements, land and (p. 278) even agricultural farmland were distributed among the citizen class (Carter 2006), but even in unplanned cities, there was uniformity in the external appearance and internal arrangement of Greek houses (Athens). The basic structure of the house of the Classical period consisted of an internal courtyard surrounded by various rooms (Jameson 1990; Nevett 1995; see Westgate 2007 for divergences in the typical design). Access was usually through a narrow corridor that led into the courtyard. Many houses had a specific room reserved for dining, with upraised plinths for the insertion of dining couches. The houses at Olynthus had internal courtyards with a row of pillars on the northern side that supported second floors (Nevett 1999, 53-79; Cahill 2002). Although often uniform in scale and execution, pottery deposits and other small finds uncovered in houses of the Classical period reveal diverging economies and usage. Some houses at Olynthus had elaborate mosaic floors with figural decoration and expensive household furnishings, while somewhat larger houses were located in a suburban "villa" section of town. Household crafts and industries were also variable elements. It was not until the end of the Classical period that subtle distinctions in social status gave way to open displays of wealth in the Greek household. The fourth-century BCE House of the Mosaics in Eretria is an early example that accelerates in the following centuries. Significantly larger than the typical house of the Classical period, the House of the Mosaics had a large central courtyard and multiple dining rooms with decorative mosaic floors (Ducrey 1991).

The Hellenistic period was an epoch of stark reversals and new realities in the sociopolitical structure of the Greek city and its physical image. The conquests of Alexander the Great marked a transition from a society dominated by city-state culture and the citizen class to one swayed by Hellenistic dynasts, confederations, and,

ultimately, the unmatched power of Rome. This situation had wide-reaching implications for the urban environment (Greco and Torelli 1983, 313–374; Hoepfner 1999, 441–525). Metropoleis were designed to accommodate sizable populations, possibly more than one hundred thousand people, on a scale never before encountered. Many were completely new foundations (Alexandria, Demetrias, Thessalonica), while others (Sicyon) were recreations of older settlements. Whatever the case, the hand of an influential Hellenistic dynast, and not a group of citizens, often led to a new or rearranged urban center. Orthogonal planning was widely embraced during this period as an efficient means of organizing urban space. The primacy of implementing a rational system is particularly evident in cities built on irregular hilltops, such as Priene in Ionia (Rumscheid 1998). More so than in previous centuries, orthogonal planning became a standard means of emphasizing the monumental nature of the Greek city with its collection of impressively designed venues and public buildings. An atmosphere of new architectural vocabulary took hold, and building forms were codified on a monumental scale and executed in marble or stone (Lauter 1986). Cultural venues were particularly in vogue, such as gymnasia (Glass 1988), theaters (Frederiksen 2002), baths (Trümper 2013), and libraries (König, Oikonomopoulou and Woolf 2013), while colonnaded stoas (Coulton 1976) were used to great effect as architectural backdrops, especially in the Greek agora. For the first time, civic buildings, in particular the bouleuterion (Gneisz 1990), became widespread. (p. 279) The bouleuterion at Priene, with its square form and auditorium seats on three sides, was a typical composition during the Hellenistic period.

Besides changes in its physical composition, the Greek city became a mechanism for ruling dynasts and local elites to enhance their power and visibility. The monumental public buildings that adorned many urban centers were often financed by these wealthy donors. Athens, a city famous for trumpeting its democracy with architecture and sculpture, benefited from large eponymous building programs financed by eastern monarchs during the Hellenistic period (Habicht 1990; Camp 2001). The Stoa of Attalus II was an enormous edifice that defined the eastern side of the Athenian agora, and the Stoa of Eumenes II was an equally large stoa on the southern side of the Acropolis. Prominent local elites were also eager to mark their presence in the Greek city. The historian Polybius, a citizen of Megalopolis in the Peloponnese during the second century BCE, helped finance the reconstruction of civic buildings along the western side of the agora in his hometown (Lauter 2002). In the same agora, the citizens of Megalopolis had previously dedicated a monumental stoa to Philip II, the Macedonian king, at the end of the fourth century BCE (Lauter 2005). The growing inclination to venerate foreign rulers and local elites as benefactors was matched by the appearance of massive palace complexes in the royal capitals (Pella, Demetrias, Antioch, Pergamum) (Hoepfner and Brands 1996; Nielsen 1999). The palace at Pella was more than 50,000 square meters and contained dozens of rooms, meeting halls, and service quarters.

The social and economic gradations in the Greek city were pronounced in the Hellenistic period as the emphasis on the citizen class declined. In metropolitan centers, urban mansions appeared in planned residential zones. At Pella, the House of Dionysus (more than 3,000 square meters) and the House of the Abduction of Helen (2,300 square meters) each filled up the width of an entire city block south of the agora (Makaronas and Giouri 1989). Space was defined by large colonnaded peristyles surrounded by multiple rooms, some with elaborate mosaic floors with figural decorations. Faux architectural details were applied to the exterior and interior using plaster that was painted in bright colors, giving the impression that the houses were public buildings adorned with expensive stone and marble. Elaborate bronze vessels and expensive household furnishings found inside during excavations indicate that economic resources were not limited to architectural details. In general, the houses of the elites became semipublic quarters where an owner could receive and entertain guests in a colonnaded courtyard or dining room. In this way, the urban mansions imitated the palace complexes of the ruling dynasts on a smaller scale. Of course, the majority lived in far more modest accommodations. On the island of Delos, an important trading center during the Hellenistic period, many houses were simple two- and three-room structures with no courtyards or dining rooms (Trümper 2005). They often measured one hundred square meters or less and were connected to small shops on the ground floor. The contrast in social and economic status at Delos was stark, considering that urban mansions with elaborate ground plans and luxurious statuary and wall decorations were built near these unpretentious living quarters.

The City in the Roman World

(p. 280) The origins of the Roman city bring us back to a time in which the Italian peninsula was an amalgamation of various peoples, including Latins, Oscans, Etruscans, and Greek colonists, who lived in city-states similar to those in the eastern Mediterranean. Although Rome would eventually dominate the region in the following centuries through its military prowess and would implant its urban culture elsewhere, the emergence of the city transpired within established Italic traditions (Gros and Torelli 1988, 5-60; Rasmussen 1997 and 2005). Rome during the Early Republic was still a loose composition that had developed gradually since the time of the Etruscan kings, expelled in 509 BCE (Anderson 1997). The Capitoline Temple was the most symbolic emblem of the new social order and, by tradition, dates to the foundation of the Republic (Stamper 2005, 6-33). The temple, with high podium and tripartite cella, held a commanding position that overlooked the Forum Romanum, the public center of the city established a century earlier in the lowlands between the Capitoline and Palatine hills. The most

significant developments during the Early Republic occurred in the fourth century BCE, when Rome secured territorial concessions from neighboring cities in Latium and Campania. For the first time, Roman influence extended beyond Rome and the lower Tiber River. This not only affected the built environment of Rome, but it completely altered the course of urbanism in central Italy. The infrastructure of Rome was enhanced by large-scale building projects, attesting to the size and prosperity of the city (Edlund-Berry 2013). The Servian Wall upgraded the preexisting defensive walls and enclosed a massive area of more than 450 hectares (Holloway 1994, 91-102). The first Roman aqueduct, the Aqua Appia, supplied the city with fresh water, and the Via Appia became a strategic road that connected Rome with other cities in Italy (Richardson 1992, 15-16, 414).



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Fig. 11.3 Reconstruction of Cosa. (Courtesy of Elizabeth Fentress)

(Source: Fentress 2003, fig. 10.)

Outside Rome, the Romans embarked on an ambitious policy of establishing colonies in central Italy to buttress their sphere of influence. Some were created ex novo, such as Alba Fucens (303 BCE) and Cosa (273 BCE), while others were implanted in preexisting settlements, such as Fregellae (313 BCE) and Paestum (273 BCE). The early colonies offer insights into the Roman conceptualization of urban space,

particularly during the Middle Republic, when recurring features appeared (Zanker 2000). The overarching idea in these settlements was to create a recognizable Roman cityscape that acted as an embodiment of Roman society (figure 11.3). To populate the cities, Roman and Latin colonists were relocated and allocated land, whose size depended on the social status of the colonist (Fentress 2000). Many, if not most, of the colonies were organized with an orthogonal plan that divided the city into public, religious, and residential zones (Hesberg and Zanker 2012). Excluding the Greek settlements in South Italy and Sicily, the use of the grid for town planning was rare on the Italian peninsula before Roman expansion. The colonies were fortified settlements that usually had a major north-south (*cardo maximus*) and east-west avenue (*decumanus maximus*). These avenues often [\(p. 281\)](#) bisected or delineated the Roman forum, which normally had a well-defined

rectangular shape. Various civic and religious buildings, such as the comitium (Hölkeskamp 2001), a circular meeting venue for political gatherings, surrounded the forum itself. At Paestum, the colonists went so far as to dismantle the Greek bouleuterion and replace it with the comitium, rather than recycle the preexisting circular structure (Greco and Theodorescu 1990). An Italic temple built on a high podium and with strict frontal axis was another landmark in the forum or on an acropolis. It often acted as the principal sanctuary of the city and in some instances served as the Capitolium (Zanker 2000, 33–35). Although the Roman forum clearly had a civic and religious function during the Republic, social stratification was nevertheless on display. In some instances, the perimeter of the forum was reserved for the houses of local elites (Cosa, Rome) (Fentress 2003, 14–23; see also Livy 1.35.10). This arrangement contrasted markedly with the communal public buildings around the Greek agora, which promoted an inclusive citizen class.

Besides colonial foundations, the emergence of new building types and innovations in construction methods rapidly transformed the Roman city during the Middle and Late Republic (Adam 1994; see chapter 10 above). The basilica, with its long rectangular form and internal peristyle, became a quintessential architectural element (Welch 2003). It was a multifunctional building often used to great effect as an architectural backdrop (p. 282) in the Roman forum. The first basilicas were built by prominent Roman statesmen in the Forum Romanum during the second century BCE, such as the Basilica Porcia by Marcus Porcius Cato and the Basilica Sempronia by Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus. Mostly known today from literary sources, the first generation of eponymous basilicas attests to a competitive atmosphere among elite citizens in the most public of Roman venues. Elsewhere, the basilica was a ubiquitous architectural feature that symbolized the influence of Rome. The earliest surviving basilica comes from Pompeii (120 BCE) (Ohr and Rasch 1991), and more are found in the colonies beginning around 100 BCE (Nünnerich-Asmus 1994, 5–54).

Proficiency in the use of concrete, often in combination with stonework, enabled the Romans to create structures with barrel vaults and therefore large expanses of internal space. Dating to the early second century BCE, the Porticus Aemilia in Rome was a massive warehouse nearly five hundred meters in length along the Tiber River (Crawford and Coarelli 1977). It is the first known instance of concrete vaulting in Roman architecture and demonstrates the manner in which Roman architectural ingenuity altered the built environment.

Buildings and venues for public spectacles and games became widespread in Rome during the Late Republic, and they were often financed by prominent statesmen and victorious generals (Welch 1994 and 2007). Theaters (Sear 2006), circuses (Romano 2005), and eventually amphitheaters (Welch 2007) and odeia (Meinel 1980) permeated

Rome and ultimately the cities in the Italian peninsula. The earliest were usually built in perishable materials, sometimes in combination with stonework or expensive decorative elements. One of the first theaters in Rome, the Theater of Lucius Mummius, was decorated with marbles that Mummius himself looted from Corinth in 146 BCE. It was not until one hundred years later that the Theater of Pompey (55 BCE) became the first permanent stone theater in Rome (figure 16.1).



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Fig. 11.4 Atrium of the House of the Silver Wedding at Pompeii. Second century BCE.

(Photograph by Erich Lessing, © Art Resource, New York, ART78553.)

Roman domestic architecture during the Republic combined elements from indigenous Italic and foreign traditions to create a decidedly Roman functionality and aesthetic (Wallace-Hadrill 1994; Hales 2013). Unlike its Greek predecessor, the Roman house was a semipublic quarter where the owner would conduct business and receive clients (see chapter 15 below). The configuration of the house was designed for this very purpose (figure 11.4). From the

entrance, a narrow corridor (*fauces*) led to a central atrium courtyard, where a downward-sloping opening in the roof (*compluvium*) brought in natural light and channeled rainwater into a central reservoir (*impluvium*). Various rooms were positioned symmetrically around the atrium. The most prominent of these was an office (*tablinum*), on direct axis with the entrance corridor and atrium. Depending on the size of the house, a garden (*hortus*) and/or peristyle courtyard with an attached dining room (*triclinium*) may have been behind the atrium. The earliest atrium houses in Rome date to the sixth century BCE at the base of the Palatine near the Forum Romanum (Carandini 1990). The aristocratic character of the atrium house is unmistakable, but it was later adopted by the lower classes by the third and second century BCE. The residential city blocks of Roman colonies were designed to include atrium houses (Cosa, Fregellae) (Fentress 2003, 23–26), while the best-preserved examples (p. 283) today come from Pompeii and Herculaneum (Richardson 1988, 107–127; Hales 2003, 97–134). Because of its semipublic

nature, the Roman Republican house became a venue for self-aggrandizement and displays of personal wealth. Victorious Roman generals and prominent statesmen regularly adorned their houses with military loot and foreign *luxuria* (Welch 2006). Wall painting was used to the same effect by varying social classes (Clarke 1991). The so-called First Style painting, popular from 200 BCE to 80 BCE, represented stone and marble architectural elements to give an illusion of a public building, much as in the Hellenistic palaces and urban mansions of the Greek East (Laidlaw 1985). This was surpassed by the Second Style in the first century BCE, which employed sophisticated trompe d'oeil architectural and figural perspectives (Stinson 2011). A visitor to a Roman house was undoubtedly amazed by the lively colors and illusionistic impressions all around.

The military expansion of Rome and political friction among the Roman elite combined to transform the preexisting sociopolitical order throughout the Mediterranean during the closing decades of the first century BCE. Rome controlled much of the region and would eventually incorporate foreign territories as Roman provinces in the following centuries. However, the biggest fundamental change was the abolition of the Republic and the establishment of a Principate. The old aristocratic political order was abandoned in favor of the Empire and the absolute rule of a single person. Naturally, this (p. 284) had far-reaching consequences for the physical and social composition of the Roman city beginning with Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE) and followed by subsequent dynastic families. Rome and the cities throughout the Empire became instruments to consolidate the power of the emperor and advertise his rule (Zanker 1988; see also chapter 13 below). Building projects were commissioned under the emperor's direct patronage to improve the livelihood of Roman citizens and unabashedly aggrandize the image of the emperor at the same time. Augustus famously boasted, according to the Roman biographer Suetonius (*Aug.* 2.28), that he found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble. Other emperors, such as those of the Flavian dynasty (69–96 CE), sought the favor of the masses by constructing the Colosseum (figure 26.2) and other buildings for public spectacles and leisure (Baths of Titus). (figure 15.2) Triumphal arches (Pfanner 1983; Kleiner 1985) and other monuments promoted the military exploits of the emperor (Arch of Titus, Column of Trajan) and even his adeptness at negotiating peace (Ara Pacis) (figure 15.2). The center of Rome became a venue for the construction of vast imperial fora that included large colonnaded courts, basilicas, temples, public libraries, market halls, and statues of the emperor and his family (Packer 1997). The free use of concrete vaults, domes, and curvilinear forms—best expressed by the numerous imperial bath complexes sponsored by the emperors (Trajan, Caracalla) (Claridge 1998, 288–290, 319–328; DeLaine 1997) and the Pantheon completed by Hadrian (117–138 CE) (figure 8.6)—opened up new avenues for architectural achievements (Wilson Jones 2000, 177–213). Other building projects teetered on the narcissistic qualities of some infamous emperors.

After a fire destroyed central Rome in 64 CE, Nero opted to seize land and build himself an extravagant urban palace called the Domus Aurea, or Golden House (Ball 2003). Architecturally, the Domus Aurea was an engineering feat, pushing the limits of the use of concrete to create vaulted ceilings with decorative mosaics and a dome with a central oculus and hidden light wells. A colossal bronze statue of Nero in the guise of Sol, the Roman sun god, was erected outside the palace. Every Roman emperor found different methods of self-advertisement, either beneficial or detrimental to the urban environment, but the basic practice was constant throughout the Empire.

As the Roman Empire grew, provincial cities became increasingly important to its economic welfare and political stability (Gros and Torelli 1988, 237–426). Some were established as military colonies, such as Timgad in North Africa founded by Trajan in 100 CE (Ward-Perkins 1981, 391–399), while others were older settlements that flourished under Roman control. Palmyra was an ancient city in Syria, but a period of long prosperity ensued once it became the capital of a Roman province during the first century CE (Ward-Perkins 1981, 354–361). Greek cities in Asia Minor reached new levels of wealth during the High Imperial period. For example, the monumental building phases of Aphrodisias (Ratté 2002) and Ephesus (Scherrer 2008) largely occurred during the first and second century CE, when they were lavishly adorned with public squares, theaters, odeia, stadia, bath complexes, and infrastructure to supply water. Wealthy local citizens, often with ties to the imperial family, often funded the building projects, such as the Library of Celsus at Ephesus, completed in 135 CE by the family of the Roman governor of Asia (Sauron 2010). Elsewhere, the hand of the Roman emperor was personally (p. 285) involved. Septimius Severus (193–211 CE), the first Roman emperor from Africa, embellished his hometown of Leptis Magna with a new forum, basilica, harbor, bath complex, and fountain house (Ward-Perkins 1993). Whatever the case, a kind of Roman urban koine was adopted in the provinces, as stock monumental buildings and architectural decorum created distinctly Roman-looking cities, though perhaps at the expense of derivative execution (figure 11.5). Further attention was redirected away from Rome once the emperor Diocletian (284–305 CE) divided the Roman Empire into four administrative zones, each ruled by four co-emperors with their own administrative capitals. Cities on the periphery, such as Trier in Germany (Ward-Perkins 1981, 442–449) and Thessalonica in Macedonia (Grammenos 2003), became important urban centers as the personal residences of the co-emperors, who adorned their capitals with palaces and grand public buildings. A generation later, the emperor Constantine (306–337 CE) formally transferred the capital of the Roman Empire to Constantinople (Mango 1985), an indication that the future of the Empire was best managed in the eastern provinces away from Rome (Holloway 2004).



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Fig. 11.5 Arch, Palmyra. 220 CE. Height 14.5 m.

(Photograph © DeA Picture Library/Art Resource, New York, ART354926.)

The metamorphosis of the old political hierarchy by Diocletian and Constantine had lasting consequences for the Roman city. It marked the beginning of Late Antiquity, traditionally viewed as the final phase of ancient Mediterranean civilization before its transition to the Middle Ages. The period used to be defined as one of gradual decline and ultimate abandonment for

the Roman city, but renewed interest in Late Antiquity recounts a more positive picture (Bauer 1996; Harris 1999; Cameron 2012). Established (p. 286) Roman architectural traditions continued well into the fourth century CE. Diocletian dedicated the largest-ever imperial bath complex in Rome (Baths of Diocletian) (Claridge 1998, 352–354), and Maxentius (306–312 CE) constructed the Basilica Nova near the Forum Romanum (Claridge 1998, 115–116). Constantine used the area in front of the Roman Colosseum to erect a triumphal arch, which interestingly combined new and reused sculptural elements (Claridge 1998, 272–276). In general, the reuse of architectural elements was common during Late Antiquity, but innovations, particularly in the use of brick ribbing, maintained Roman traditions in monumental public architecture. Many Roman fora in the provinces still functioned as centers of local administration and commerce. For example, an administrative building in the Roman forum at Corinth was rebuilt in the fifth or sixth century CE, while public documents continued to be displayed along with public statuary (Brown 2012). Certain cities, especially those in the eastern provinces such as Aphrodisias (Ratté 2001) and Amorium (Lightfoot 2008, continued to thrive during Late Antiquity and the transition to Christianity. Nevertheless, the period did witness a general slowdown in the construction of public buildings by the fifth century CE, and insecurities arising from raiding barbarian tribes prompted cities to build fortification walls, sometimes for the first time (on Aphrodisias, see De Staebler 2008). The Roman city became less monumental, but it continued to prevail.

Conclusions

The transition from the modest settlements of Early Iron Age Greece to the elaborate cityscapes spread throughout the Roman Empire is extraordinary. It serves as an important reminder that the city, no matter where it crystallizes, is a flexible, man-made instrument that takes shape and is continuously modified at any time to serve its inhabitants. It is an organizer of culture and an image of culture at the same time. This is just as true for the modern city as it was for the ancient city. The ancient Greeks and Romans were skillful in modeling their built environment based on distinct sociopolitical circumstances and even the inclinations of the ruling elites. Their skillfulness sparked an astonishing influx of urban and architectural achievements, such as orthogonal plans, improvements in construction methods, and myriad building types that served all aspects of daily life. On top of that, the Greek and Roman city was not an isolated regional phenomenon; instead, it was disseminated well beyond the traditional heartland of Greek and Roman culture through colonization, military expansion, and cultural integration.

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The Functions of Greek Art

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter explores the wide variety of functions of art in ancient Greece, with particular emphasis on the use of images in sculpture and painting in religious and civic contexts. It considers Greek statues, temples, and stoas, along with the use of architectural sculptures to deploy narratives related to local myths and cults. It also discusses the dedication of large quantities of marble reliefs in sanctuaries and in illustrating the contents of decrees, along with murals in sacred buildings and battle pieces as a means of glorifying the victors. The chapter highlights the function of Greek art primarily in public spaces, both to visualize the divine and to commemorate humans and also to embellish sacred architecture.

Keywords: ancient Greece, architecture, art, cults, images, murals, painting, public spaces, sacred buildings, sculpture

This chapter deals with sculpture and painting as the principal representatives of Greek art. Long before the concept of art was formulated, from the mid-seventh century BCE on, the Greeks began to create images on a monumental scale in order to depict the divine, commemorate and/or honor men and women, and embellish sacred architecture with narratives. The human figure formed the chief subject of what we now understand as Greek art; it functioned primarily in religious and civic contexts and was intended for public display. The images were neither mute nor anonymous, being the product of a literate society. Not only did artists proudly sign their works, but these were complemented by inscriptions, usually readily accessible and often written in verse, clarifying their meaning and the intentions of their donors. On occasion, the inscriptions create the impression that the statue talks to the viewer. The epigram on the base of the Archaic funerary statue of Phrasicleia, for example, tells the viewer that she will always be a virgin because she died before marriage (Athens, National Museum 4889; *CEG* no. 24; Karakasi 2003, pls. 235–237). Earlier statues carried inscriptions on their bodies or supports (thrones or rocks), but these were gradually relegated to statue bases.

The sculpture industry began on the islands of the Aegean but was quickly dominated by Athens. It reflected an aristocratic society in the sixth century BCE, to be followed by an egalitarian art invested with the values of the Athenian democracy in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, which also promoted the star status of exceptional artists (Palagia 2006). Democratic values were eroded as a result of the ascendancy of the kingdom of Macedon in the last quarter of the fourth century BCE, and art eventually reverted to the oriental custom of glorifying the ruler and minimizing the artist. It was also gradually secularized as it served to decorate palaces, mansions, and tomb interiors, thus losing its public character. In addition, ruler cult and the placement of ruler portraits alongside cult statues in the Hellenistic period helped to blur the distinction between the sacred and the secular. Not only the styles but also the functions of Greek art varied according to periods; the differences will be highlighted by discussing paradigms from the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods.

(p. 295) The Greek civic landscape was full of images that dominated everyday experience to an extent that is perhaps hard to visualize today. The impact of Greek art on the conquering Romans (see chapter 16 below) may serve as an indication of the continuum of a cultural environment that functioned for centuries.

The earliest surviving monumental statuary consists of marble images of men and women dedicated in open-air shrines to visualize the divine or erected in cemeteries to commemorate the deceased. These images were generic, and there was no question of depicting individual features even in statues that were meant as representations of specific people. Early divine images are found on the sacred island of Delos, birthplace of Apollo and Artemis, which attracted gifts from the nearby island of Naxos. The planklike statue of Artemis, from the second half of the seventh century, in Naxian marble, was dedicated on Delos by the Naxian Nicandre (*CEG* no. 403; Karakasi 2003, 67, pls. 62–63, 213). She meticulously listed the names of her male relatives, her father, brother, and husband, in a dedicatory inscription cut on the left side of the figure's skirt. We do not know if the statue was signed on the base, which is now lost. Artemis's hands are pierced for the insertion of leashes for animals, and the patterns of her dress were picked out in color. It has been suggested that the tenor of the inscription may imply that the dedication was made on the occasion of Nicandre's marriage (Day 2010, 191) or in commemoration of her assumption of a priesthood of Artemis (Connelly 2007, 125). Priesthoods were the highest offices open to women in Greek and Roman antiquity, and dedications by women were indeed triggered by assumptions of office. A similar figure, also in Naxian marble but on a grander scale, differing mainly in the gesture of the right hand, was found in a cemetery on Thera, illustrating the parallel use of similar types as either votive or funerary throughout the Archaic period (Museum of Prehistoric Thera; Karakasi 2003, 81, pl. 76) (figure 12.1).

In later periods, priestesses had their portraits dedicated by male relatives. The earliest known portrait of a priestess is the fifth-century BCE Key Bearer by Phidias, presumably set up in Athens and now lost (Pliny, *HN* 34.54). A good example of a portrait of a priestess surviving with the inscribed base intact is offered by the Hellenistic portrait of Aristonoe, priestess of Nemesis and Themis at Rhamnus (Connelly 2007, 145–146, fig. 5.14). The statue is usually dated to the late third century BCE for stylistic reasons, but Tracy (1990, 165) has shown that the letter cutter of the inscription operated around the middle of the second century BCE. It was dedicated to the two goddesses by the priestess's son. The dedicatory inscription also names her father and husband in a formula reminiscent of Nicandre's dedication (figure 12.2).



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Fig. 12.1 Statue dedicated by the Naxian Nicandre to Artemis, from Delos. C. 640 BCE. Marble. Height 1.75 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 1.

(Photograph by Hans R. Goette.)

The Archaic male type of naked youth (kouros) was indiscriminately used as votive or funerary. In the case of grave statues, the manner of death could be indicated in an inscription. A good example is offered by Croesus from Anavyssos, who died in the forefront of battle according to the epigram cut on the base (c. 530 BCE) (*CEG* no. 27; Kaltsas 2002 no. 69). The poem addresses the viewer, inviting him to lament the passing of the heroic Croesus. His robust physique leaves no doubt about his prowess (figure

12.3). In a similar vein, the verse inscription on the base of the honorary portrait of the Athenian politician Demosthenes, erected by the Athenians in the Agora forty-two years after his (p. 296) suicide in 322 BCE, addresses the honorand, lamenting the fact that his prowess did not match his resolution and that as a result, Athens was conquered by Macedon (Plutarch, *Dem.* 30.5–6; Wycherley 1957, 210–211; Richter 1984, 108–113, fig. 74). Demosthenes is portrayed by the sculptor Polyuectus as an elderly intellectual. Considering that this is a posthumous portrait, there is no way of knowing whether it reproduces his true features (figure 12.4).



Click to view larger

Fig. 12.3 Funerary kouros of Croesus, from Anavyssos. C. 530 BCE. Marble. Height 1.94 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 3851.

(Photograph by Hans R. Goette.)

In addition to the human figure, grave markers also consisted of marble lions, which remained popular from the Archaic to the Hellenistic periods. Dogs, leopards, bulls, and eagles were also placed on tombs in the Classical period. These animals served as guardians of the tomb or symbols of the occupations of the deceased. Lions often marked the tombs of warriors such as King Leonidas of Sparta (Herodotus 7.225) or the Sacred Band of Thebes who fell in the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BCE (Ma

2008).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 12.4 Roman copy of portrait of Demosthenes in the Athenian Agora. Original of 280 BCE. Marble. Height 1.92 m. Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek inv. 2782.

(Photograph by Hans R. Goette.)



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 12.2 Portrait of priestess Aristonoe, dedicated by her son to Nemesis and Themis, from Rhamnus. Second century BCE. Marble. Height 1.62 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 232.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

Honorary statues were invented in Athens even before the introduction of portraiture. After the expulsion of the tyrant Hippias from Athens in 510/509 BCE, the Athenians erected a bronze group of Harmodius and Aristogeiton in the Agora, to commemorate their assassination of the tyrant's brother Hipparchus in 514 (Wycherley 1957, 93–98; Taylor 1991; Steiner 2001, 219–222; Geagan 2011, 4–5, A 1). The bronze group, made by the Athenian sculptor Antenor, who is better known to us for his work in marble, must (p. 298) have been at the cutting edge of the new bronze-casting technology. The statues were not true likenesses of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. It is, in fact, debatable when lifelike portraits really began, although the late fifth century BCE is a reasonable guess. The political significance of the Tyrannicides group was enormous: it stood as a symbol of Athenian freedom and eventually became the recipient of

cult, although the exact date of its introduction is unknown. The symbolic value of the group prompted Xerxes to remove it to Susa when he captured Athens in 480 BCE. In 477/476, the Athenians commissioned a replacement bronze group from Critius and Nesiotes. A fragment of its statue base survives in the Agora Museum, carrying an epigram that praises the Tyrannicides' action. Roman copies of this group preserve the idealized features of the honorands. Antenor's (p. 299) Tyrannicides group was rescued by Alexander the Great and returned to Athens by Seleucus I or his son Antiochus I to be set up next to the group by Critius and Nesiotes. A decree banned the erection of other honorary statues besides the Tyrannicides until Antigonus One-Eyed and Demetrius Poliorcetes liberated Athens from Demetrius of Phaleron in 307 BCE, whereupon they were honored with the cult epithet Saviors and had their statues erected on a chariot next to the Tyrannicides. The statues of Brutus and Cassius, Julius Caesar's assassins, were erected nearby in 43 BCE.

The Athenian general Conon was the first after the Tyrannicides to be honored with a bronze portrait in the Athenian Agora (and another on the Acropolis) after his victory in the naval battle off Cnidus in 394 BCE (Wycherley 1957, 213). Henceforth the Agora (p. 300) became a focal point for the erection of honorary statues, mainly set up for political reasons. Many portraits were posthumous; true likeness was therefore not guaranteed. In the Hellenistic period, honorary statues of civic benefactors became common in Greek cities and sanctuaries.

By far the greatest glory was earned by victors in the Olympic Games, who were considered ornaments to their cities. Statues of Olympic victors were erected at Olympia (Currie 2005, 143-148; Smith 2007). They were often duplicated in the agora of the athlete's hometown, with the exception of Sparta, which tended to disapprove of honorary statues at home. The earliest known victor statues at Olympia were two wooden kouroi representing Praxidamas of Aegina and Rexibius of Opus, who won in 544 and 536 BCE, respectively (Pausanias 6.18.7). Victor statues at Olympia proliferated from the late sixth century BCE on and were set up either by the victors themselves (who were granted this privilege as an additional prize) or by their cities. Some statues were retrospective, such as that of the seventh-century BCE victor Chionis, made by Myron, which was set up by Sparta in the second quarter of the fifth century BCE (Pausanias 6.13.2).

Victor statues were generic; visitors to Olympia must have been overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of idealized bronze men, challenged only by the bronze chariots commemorating victories in the races (Schollmeyer 2001). According to Pausanias (6.10.6-8), the earliest chariot owner to be commemorated with a statue standing next to his chariot, which was driven by a charioteer, was Cleosthenes of Epidamnus, who won the races at Olympia in 516 BCE and had his bronze group made by Hageladas of Argos. The Spartan elite were enthusiastic horse breeders and won a series of chariot races at

Olympia through the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. The first female Olympic victor was Cynisca, sister of the Spartan king Agesilaus, who scored two consecutive victories in 396 and 392 BCE. She commemorated them by dedicating two bronze chariot groups at Olympia. The dedicatory inscription of the first group inevitably mentions Cynisca's male relatives (her father and two brothers, who had all been kings of Sparta), also pointing out that she was the first-ever female Olympic victor (the inscribed statue bases are in the garden of the Olympia Museum and in the Museum of the Ancient Olympic Games at Olympia; Palagia 2009b, 34-36, figs. 3-5).

The boxer Euthymus of Locri Epizephyrii scored three Olympic victories in 484, 476, and 472 BCE. He was commemorated with statues both at Olympia and at home. The statue at Olympia was dedicated by the victor himself and signed by Pythagoras of Samos (Pausanias 6.6. 4-11; Currie 2002). Euthymus's athletic victories inspired such awe that he was the first Greek to receive cult in his lifetime. His rival, the boxer Theagenes of Thasos (victor in 480 and 476) also had his statues erected both at Olympia and at home (Pausanias 6.11.2-9). Both were in bronze, the one at Olympia created by Glaucias of Aegina, who specialized in agonistic dedications. Theagenes's aura affected his statue at home to the extent that it served as his double. After his death, an old enemy of his flogged the statue every night until it keeled over and crushed him. The children of the deceased accused the statue of murder, whereupon it was punished by being cast into the sea. However, after being plagued by famine, the Thasians were compelled to (p. 301) restore the statue to its original position in the agora of Thasos and to offer sacrifices to Theagenes, who eventually developed into a healer hero (Steiner 2001, 8).

The magical qualities of statuary and its function as a "double" for the honorand (Muller-Dufeu 2011) can be found in several instances involving images of the kings of Sparta. In order to atone for the sacrilege of the death of Pausanias the Regent inside the temenos of Athena Chalcoecus, the Spartans erected two bronze statues of him beside Athena's altar (Thucydides 1.134; Pausanias 3.17.7-9; Steiner 2001, 7). A portrait of the Spartan king Archidamus III was erected at Olympia to make up for the fact that his body was not retrieved for burial at home after he had died fighting in South Italy in 338 BCE (Palagia 2009b, 32).

Divine images often functioned as the recipients of cult. Cult statues could be placed within temples or in open-air shrines. The earliest cult statues were made of wood; in later periods, larger statues in marble or more costly materials such as gold and ivory were added to the cella, and as a result, some temples had two or more cult statues of the same divinity (Despinis 2004). A good case in point is the small Ionic Temple of Athena Nike on the Athenian Acropolis, which housed a venerable wooden image of the sixth century BCE, a survivor of the temple of the Archaic period, alongside a new, cult statue of Classical style that was erected when the temple was rebuilt in the early 420s BCE

(Holtzmann 2003, 160). On rare occasions, images of several different deities were set up next to one another in the cella, as in the case of the Temple of Apollo dedicated by the Athenians on Delos in the last quarter of the fifth century BCE, housing a crescent-shaped base carrying seven statues (Bruneau and Ducat 2005, 183–184). In the Hellenistic period, ruler portraits occasionally stood adjacent to cult statues, sharing the temple with the divine image; for example, a marble statue of Attalus II was found next to the cult statue of Hera at Pergamum (Istanbul Archaeological Museum; Radt 1999, 187, fig. 131).

The most influential cult statue of Greek and Roman antiquity was the colossal seated Zeus at Olympia, created by Phidias in the 430s BCE. It impressed viewers not only on account of its sheer size and the luxury of its materials (figure made of gold and ivory, throne of ebony and gold with inlays of glass and semiprecious stones, decorated with painted barriers) but also because of its majesty, allegedly inspired directly by Homer's *Iliad* (Davison 2009, I: 319–404). Phidias was said to have asked for divine approval, and Zeus himself responded by striking the temple with a thunderbolt. A bronze hydria was placed on the temple floor marking the spot (Pausanias 5.11.9). The throne and statue base were decorated with mythological narratives relating to Olympia, the games and also Athens, hometown of the sculptor. Phidias was said to have expressed his love of the boy Pantarces, who won in the Olympics of 436, with a graffito on one of Zeus's fingers. It is not clear where on the statue Phidias may have signed his name, considering that the base was decorated with a frieze; it is a matter of debate whether he had signed his work at all. It is interesting to note that Phidias's pupil, Agoracritus, had signed his marble *Nemesis* at Rhamnus on a ribbon hanging from the apple bough in her left hand, because the statue base carried a relief frieze (Zenobius s.v. *Rhamnousia Nemesis*; Despinis 1971, 1). That cult statues were signed by their sculptors is demonstrated by the statue base of (p. 302) the second-century BCE acrolithic group of Asclepius and Hygieia at Pheneus, signed by Attalus of Athens (Muller-Dufeu 2002, 823 no. 2441). In the Hellenistic period, sculptors introduced personal touches to their works; for example, the statues of *kanephoroi* (basket bearers) in front of Damophon's cult statues of Demeter and Kore at Megalopolis were said to be portraits of the sculptor's daughters (Pausanias 8.31.1–2). The late Hellenistic sculptors Xenophilus and Straton added their portraits to the cult group of Asclepius and Hygieia at Argos (Pausanias 2.23.4).

A good example of a statue that received cult in the open air was the bronze *Eirene* with the infant *Plutus* by Cephisodotus, erected in the Athenian Agora shortly after the conclusion of peace with Sparta in 375/374 BCE (Pausanias 1.8.2; 9.16.2; Meyer 2008, 73–78, figs. 5–9).

Greek temples and stoas, in addition to treasuries in Panhellenic sanctuaries, were embellished with architectural sculptures that formed part of the fabric of the buildings (Palagia 2012). Ionic temples could be decorated with sculptured friezes, Doric temples with sculptured metopes. Hellenistic stoas were embellished with relief friezes. Pediments and acroteria of sacred architecture could also carry sculptured decoration. The fourth-century BCE architect Pytheus developed the idea of sculptured ceiling coffer lids, which became popular in the Hellenistic period. Sacred architectural sculpture invariably depicted gods and heroes. The Parthenon frieze, which showed the Athenians and the twelve gods celebrating the Panathenaic festival, was exceptional in its goal of emphasizing the superiority of Athens over its allies.

Architectural sculptures provided excellent opportunities for the deployment of narratives related to local myths and cults. The Siphnian Treasury at Delphi (c. 525 BCE) and the gigantomachy frieze on the Great Altar of Pergamum (c. 170 BCE) (figure 7.2) provide evidence that the figures on the friezes could be named and the sculptures signed. A sculptor's signature is partly preserved on the rim of the shield of one of the giants on the north frieze of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi (Brinkmann 1994; Viviers 2002) (figure 12.5). That architectural sculptures could be the subject of public competition is known thanks to Paeonius of Mende, who signed a marble Nike dedicated by the Messenians and Naupaktians at Olympia (c. 425 BCE), proudly describing himself as the victor of the competition for the acroteria of the Temple of Zeus (Boardman 1985, fig. 139). The sponsorship of architecture and architectural sculptures by affluent individuals could serve as a means of acquiring political influence. The wealthy Athenian family of the Alcmaeonids, who were exiled from Athens and courted Spartan support for their return, undertook to build the Temple of Apollo at Delphi and purchased quantities of Parian marble for the creation of the colossal statues of the east pediment even though their contract only required limestone (c. 510 BCE) (Herodotus 5.62).

Sculptured reliefs could serve as grave markers, dedications in sanctuaries, or visual commentaries on the texts of decrees cut on stone. The greatest concentration of marble reliefs is in fourth-century BCE Athens. As an egalitarian society, Athens offered opportunities for patronage that did not require vast sums of money. Grave reliefs varied in size and represented mundane affairs, family gatherings, and everyday occupations with a distinct lack of eschatological themes (for a brief survey of grave reliefs, see Schmaltz (p. 303)



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Fig 12.5 Detail of the gigantomachy (north) frieze of the Siphnian Treasury, with sculptor's signature on shield. C. 530 BCE. Marble. Height of frieze 64 cm. Delphi Museum.

(Photograph by Hans R. Goette.)

1983). The Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE) brought about the lifting of the ban on luxurious grave monuments that had applied in Athens since the conclusion of the Persian Wars (479 BCE). It also marked the introduction of battle scenes for the decoration of war memorials, both public and private (Goette 2009). Banquet reliefs, common from the fourth century BCE on, belong to a borderline case, as they could serve as either grave or votive reliefs. Funerary monuments in Athens and Attica became a means of conspicuous consumption and were banned for a second time

around 317 BCE. The second ban lasted for about three centuries. Meanwhile, grave reliefs in different styles but basically with similar iconography were produced on the islands of the Aegean and in the cities of East Greece during the Hellenistic period.

Large quantities of marble reliefs were dedicated in the sanctuaries of Athens and Attica in the Classical period (Comella 2002). They were usually set up on tall bases in the open air and represented the deities worshipped in the sanctuary. In the fourth century BCE, gods were accompanied by votaries on a smaller scale. The inscriptions usually name the gods and dedicators but do not specify the occasion. We do not know if these reliefs were thanksgiving offerings or gifts in anticipation of favors.

Sculptured reliefs illustrating the contents of decrees were invented in Athens during the Peloponnesian War and continued through the early Hellenistic period (Lawton (p. 304) 1995). Their iconography is limited. Treaties between cities can be illustrated with the patron gods of the cities shaking hands, while honorary decrees show the honorand being crowned by a deity.

Monumental painting in the Archaic and Classical periods was reserved for sacred buildings. The earliest murals were on plaster, which was applied on brick walls, as is indicated by the remains on the walls of the Archaic Temple of Poseidon at Isthmia (Robertson 1975, 244) and the interior of the seventh-century BCE Temple of Apollo at

Calapodi (Moormann 2011, 44). In the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, the paintings were on wooden panels fixed to interior marble walls. All are now lost (for an account of the lost paintings of Greek antiquity, see the chapters on painting in Robertson 1975). There are several indications that these paintings were movable, the most obvious being the display of paintings by Polygnotus in the picture gallery of the Propylaea on the Athenian Acropolis (Pausanias 1.22.6). Because the pictures were earlier than the building, they obviously had been transferred from elsewhere (Robertson 1975, 245).

The drawing and spatial arrangements of Attic red-figure vase painting give us some idea of the quality of design in monumental painting. But vases are not only small-scale; they were chiefly produced for a private clientele, and this determined their imagery, which ranged from ritual scenes to pornography (Robertson 1992; Boardman 2001).

Panathenaic amphoras, on the other hand, were manufactured for the Athenian state to serve as official receptacles of the sacred olive oil awarded to victors at the Panathenaic games (Bentz 1998). As a result, they were decorated with a formulaic image of Athena that retained its Archaic character long after the introduction of the Classical style. Her Archaism functioned as guarantee of the high quality of the Attic olive oil contained within.

Complex mythological narratives were revolutionized by Polygnotus of Thasos, whose career spanned the middle years of the fifth century BCE. He painted two vast panel pictures inspired by the Trojan War in the Lesche of the Cnidians at Delphi, one showing "Troy Taken," the other Odysseus's descent into the Underworld (Pausanias 10.25-31; Robertson 1975, 243-251; Castriota 1992, 96-127). The compositions were articulated by ground lines that facilitated the distribution of figures on several levels positioned in a shallow field. Landscape elements were scarce and always subordinate to the human figures, who were carefully named. Polygnotus's influence has been detected on contemporary Attic vase painting, for example, a calyx krater by the Niobid Painter showing a heroes' assembly in the presence of Athena (Paris, Louvre G 431; Boardman 2001, 272, fig. 300). From the same period, the funerary white-ground lekythoi produced in Athens give us some idea about the polychromy of monumental painting (Oakley 2004). White lekythoi disappear at the end of the fifth century BCE, but a sort of polychromy lives on in the Attic hydria by the Pronomus Painter from around 400, found at Pella, with added white and gilding (figure 12.6: Drougou 2000). It represents the contest of Athena and Poseidon for the land of Attica in a complex composition that may draw on a now-lost panel painting. Despite its religious imagery, the hydria probably had a funerary function.



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Fig. 12.6 Attic red-figure hydria attributed to the workshop of the Pronomus Painter, from Pella. Contest of Athena and Poseidon. C. 400 BCE. Ceramic. Height 47 cm. Pella, Archaeological Museum inv. 80514.

(Photograph by Olga Palagia.)

(p. 305) In addition to mythological and divine subjects, battle pieces (usually dedicated in stoas) were a means of glorifying the victors. Figures were often identified by name. The Battle of Marathon, painted by Micon for the Stoa Poecile of Athens, depicted Miltiades, Callimachus, and Cinegirus in action (Aelianus, *NA* 7.38; Pausanias 1.15.3). It was not an accurate representation of a historical event; it included, among other

things, Theseus, Athena, and Heracles in order to demonstrate that gods and heroes fought on the Athenian side. In the fourth century BCE, the Battle of Mantinea, painted by Euphranor for the Stoa of Zeus in the Athenian Agora, showed Xenophon's son Gryllus killing Epaminondas, an event that probably did not take place (Pausanias 1.3.4; 8.11.6 and 9.15.5; Palagia 1980, 51-54). The painting represented the Athenian version of the death of Epaminondas and was a public gesture toward Xenophon.

Even though painting was reserved for sacred spaces, during the Peloponnesian War, the rule was relaxed. There is a story that Alcibiades persuaded the painter Agatharchus to paint his home, an action that must have shocked Athenian society (Plutarch, *Alc.* 16.4; Demosthenes 21.147). His choice of painter is interesting. Agatharchus was famous for painting stage scenery; we can therefore visualize Alcibiades's walls articulated in bands with architectural elements such as columns on painted plaster, anticipating the (p. 306) First Pompeian Style (see Ling 1991, 12-22). Alcibiades also had his portrait painted by Aristophon. He was shown seated on Nemea's lap to commemorate his victory in the chariot races of the Nemean Games (Pausanias 1.22.7; Plutarch, *Alc.* 16.5). We do not know where this was originally dedicated, but it ended up in the picture gallery of the Propylaea on the Athenian Acropolis. During the last phase of the Peloponnesian War, the exodus of Athenian artists in search of employment included the painter Zeuxis, who found refuge at the court of the Macedonian king Archelaus. We are told that he was

generously rewarded for painting the king's palace, although the subjects of his paintings elude us (Aelianus, *VH* 14.17).

It was probably the ascendancy of the kingdom of Macedon that facilitated the introduction of murals for private use. It is remarkable that the most important buildings in fourth-century BCE and Hellenistic Macedonia are palaces, mansions, and tombs rather than temples and stoas. The best-preserved wall paintings of the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods were excavated in the underground chamber tombs of Macedonia that served royalty and the elite (Brecoulaki 2006; Borza and Palagia 2007; Paspalas 2011; Palagia 2011; Kottaridi 2011). The murals are found both on the facades of tombs, in which case they would have been visible to the public, and in the interiors, reserved only for the family of the deceased. Some of these tombs also contained figural paintings on marble funerary furniture such as couches and thrones. Macedonian painting is of high quality even when restricted to a limited audience, and it has been suggested that the accumulated riches from Alexander the Great's conquest of Asia attracted the best talents from Athens, Sicyon, and East Greece.

A remarkable innovation of Macedonian painting was the introduction of religious subjects and underworld scenes in a funerary context. Such themes are related to mystery cults that promised a blissful afterlife. The earliest known funerary painting is in the interior of Vergina Tomb I from the third quarter of the fourth century BCE, showing Pluto's abduction of Persephone (Andronikos 1994). This theme is more appropriate to a temple of Demeter and Kore, and it probably indicated that the deceased was an initiate in the mysteries of the two goddesses. It has indeed been suggested that the painting was inspired by a famous prototype in the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis and attributed to the Athenian artist Nicomachus or one of his assistants.

The marble funerary couch of Potidaea is painted with the marriage of Dionysus and Ariadne in a banqueting context, implying that the deceased was an initiate in the mysteries of Dionysus (Thessaloniki Museum; Sismanidis 1997, 35-74, pls. 1-29). The banquet on the facade of the Tomb of Agios Athanasios is not so much a funerary banquet as a scene from the royal court, drawing on the dynastic art of the western satrapies of the Persian Empire which was conquered by Alexander the Great. The royal hunt on the facade of Tomb II at Vergina is another instance of life at court. The walls of Vergina Tomb III were exceptionally decorated with panel paintings that have not survived, but the antechamber carries a mural of a chariot race, inspired by the funeral games of the (p. 307) elite. In sum, the surviving paintings of Macedonia reflect the world of the royal court rather than the democratic societies of the Greek city-states.

Figural wall paintings in domestic architecture are attested in the Late Hellenistic houses of Delos (Bruneau and Ducat 2005, 115-124). Domestic shrines were decorated with

religious scenes such as sacrifices or processions, while the walls of other rooms were articulated in bands interrupted by painted figural friezes with scenes from drama, athletic events, ritual dances, or the entourage of Dionysus.

In sum, Greek art in the Archaic and Classical periods functioned primarily in public spaces, serving to visualize the divine and also to commemorate humans. Its subject was first and foremost the human figure. In the Archaic and Classical periods, art was dominated by Athens and reflected the ideals of the city-state. With the ascendancy of the kingdom of Macedon in the third quarter of the fourth century BCE, the boundaries between the secular and the divine became blurred, scenes from the royal court were introduced, and the public character of art was modified.

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The Functions of Roman Art

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the wide variety of functions of art in ancient Rome, with particular emphasis on the use of images in sculpture and painting. It first considers the use of sculptures in the decoration of houses and villas, followed by a discussion of honorary statues and monuments of public self-representation from the Late Republic to the Principate. It then looks at the art of the citizens in the Imperial period, focusing on sarcophagi and mosaics. The chapter also makes a distinction between funerary statues and the images inside houses.

Keywords: ancient Rome, art, honorary statues, houses, images, mosaics, painting, sarcophagi, villas

What purpose did what we call works of art today serve for the Romans? What kinds of images were shown in what locations, and why were they displayed in these places? What were their functions in specific environments?

Obviously, these are not the only questions that can be asked about a work of art. However, thinking about the way we deal with art in the present, we have to acknowledge that location plays an important role in our experience of viewing today. For example, the effect of a religious image or the impact of a statue of a saint depends not only on the viewer's approach but also on whether he or she encounters these images in a museum, in a private collector's living room, or inside a church.

For example, the praetor Gaius Verres, an ancient collector of Greek art who was prosecuted by Cicero, probably enjoyed his collection because of its aesthetic value, as did the visitors he welcomed to his house. The display of his collection of artworks was nevertheless also an act of self-representation on the part of Verres. We see a similar phenomenon when we consider the Greek statues created by famous masters, which were exhibited in the sanctuaries of Rome. The connoisseur could look at them as valuable pieces of art, even if they had primarily been displayed by generals as spoils of war or as offerings to the gods. However, in the following, I will not examine the art

lover's and the connoisseur's role and behavior but will rather deal with the question of why certain works of art were put up in certain spaces and what function they served in their respective environments. We will have to focus on the most important places where art was displayed. These are, on the one hand, public spaces, that is, squares, streets, and sanctuaries, and, on the other hand, houses and villas. In both environments, significant changes occurred over time; these changes are important if one analyzes the function of art.

The "Roman" language of images did not emerge until the late fourth century BCE, when it began to develop its characteristics in correspondence with the systematic expansion of the Roman Empire, that is, with the onset of Roman imperialism. Before this time, the works of art that were produced in Rome were essentially of the same kind as the art of the Etruscan or Italic cities. Therefore, we can leave aside here the (p. 311) very poorly documented images that are representative of the early stages of Roman history.

The "Roman" art that we have defined in this way, made significant use, at least as far as sculptural decoration was concerned, of forms and of entire works of Greek art, regardless of their period of production. For this reason, Roman art spoke from the beginning in an adopted language, especially in sculpture, where the forms and content originally referred to a different culture and society. The Roman viewers, however, could only perceive and understand the forms of statues and images in the context that was given to these works of art in their new function. The perspective of today's educated art historian should therefore not simply be applied to the Roman viewer. The Romans probably did enjoy the beauty of Greek representations of bodies. However, they saw the images in the context of new functions and meanings, for example, as honorary statues in the public space or as part of the decoration of a villa (see in general Zanker 2010).

Houses and Villas

I will first deal with the function of sculptures in the private sphere of houses and villas, because in this area, we can understand the phenomenon of the relationship of the Romans with the art adopted from Greece particularly well.



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Fig. 13.1 Statue of resting Hermes/Mercury from the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum. Roman copy of a fourth-century BCE original. Bronze. Height 1.15 m. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 5625.

(Photograph © Vanni/Art Resource, New York, ART382404.)

The so-called Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum offers a particularly meaningful example because of the quantity of marble and bronze pieces, which were recovered there in the eighteenth century under difficult conditions with the help of an intricate network of tunnels. In the atrium, the tablinum, the square peristyle, and the garden surrounded by porticoes, more than one hundred statues and herms, made partly of marble and partly of bronze, have been found (cp. figure 16.2). These statues could evoke an

abundance of ideas and values in the viewer's mind, although it remains impossible to this day to reconstruct a clear program (Comparetti and De Petra 1883; Wojcik 1986; Neudecker 1989; Mattusch 2005, with further literature). It is striking, however, that very few figures popular among the Romans, such as Dionysiac figures and Greek athletes, are present. So far, only two drunken satyrs and two runners can be found among the many sculptures and busts. Even rarer are the divinities. Among the artworks collected by the senatorial family to whom the mansion belonged, there is one Athena Promachos, perhaps commemorating the military accomplishments of the family. In addition, there is a seated Hermes/Mercury (figure 13.1), a deity that in Rome was primarily regarded as a guarantor of prosperity and success. On the other hand, in the peristyle garden and in the almost square portico, one encountered numerous portraits of famous Greeks. Aside from the poets and philosophers, the numerous Hellenistic kings catch one's eye. Among the portraits that we can identify, aside from the first Ptolemies and Demetrius Poliorcetes, there are rulers that are rarely found otherwise, such as Philetaerus, the founder of the Pergamene (p. 312) dynasty. The display of these Hellenistic rulers, which can also be found in other villas, although not in the same quantity, is a clear sign of admiration, given that these portraits were placed next to those of philosophers and poets. Apparently, the Roman senators felt comfortable in their

company; they might have felt like small rulers in the provinces. However, in Rome, they had to do without the glamour of royal appearance because of many others who held the same social standing. For this reason, the array of statues and portraits inside the villas might have said quite a bit about the condition and ideals of the Roman upper class. However, we can hardly reconstruct this phenomenon in a reliable way.

On the whole, the rich sculptural decoration of the Villa dei Papiri shows that the owner intended to evoke thoughts in the viewer about entirely different areas of Greek culture. Certain preferences can be detected. Thus, in contrast with the numerous philosophers and Hellenistic rulers, there are only a few athletes and Dionysiac figures in the villa. A particular aesthetic fondness for a specific artistic style cannot be distinguished, unless the group of the kanephoroi of the Severe Style is considered as such. It is more likely, however, that here, too, it was the subject that was of relevance. Most interesting is the fondness for herms: one wanted to look into the faces of famous men, (p. 313) certainly to read in them something of their skills, to admire them, perhaps, and to think about them.

In other villas, artworks of a different kind were displayed. An extreme example was discovered in a villa near Sperlonga (Conticello and Andreae 1974; Kunze 1996). On a hot summer day, in a deep grotto located next to the villa on the ocean, the owner and his guests could enjoy two gigantic, quite eerie groups of statues. In very close proximity to the visitors, who may have been eating and drinking, one group represents the realistic scene of Scylla devouring Odysseus's companions. Behind this scene was another one in which Odysseus and his companions blind the giant Polyphemus in his cave. In this case, the associations were set against the backdrop of the cave setting in which the viewers found themselves. Unlike the example of the Villa dei Papiri, the purpose here is not education but rather a grandiose theatrical effect about which the guests probably spoke for a long time after their visit.

A wealth of images could be found inside villas (Neudecker 1988). Yet the range of what the sculpture workshops had to offer seems to have been quite limited. The fact that copies of the same types of statues can be seen again and again leads to the conclusion that the knowledge and taste of the average customer were not particularly developed. Occasionally, however, collections of real art lovers can be found, as, for example, in the case of Verres, so badly defamed by Cicero's accusing speeches.

Greek images surrounded owners and visitors of houses and villas with a world of art that was very different from their daily lives, very different from politics and business. The images were supposed to entertain, to provide pleasure and amusement, and, if the interest was there, also to educate. It is astonishing to see how consistently in the selection of images references to the present were generally avoided, if one excludes the portraits of the owners themselves and, later, of the emperor. Apparently, the intention

was to be surrounded in the private sphere by a world of pure culture and memory. Our idea of the sober, strenuous Romans, who conquered and governed the Mediterranean, is shaken in the light of these villa decorations.



Click to view larger

Fig. 13.2 Dionysiac frieze of the Villa dei Misteri at Pompeii. First century BCE. Wall painting. Height 3.3 m.

(Photograph © Alinari/Art Resource, New York, ART462348.)

The same is true of the elaborate mural paintings of the so-called Second Style, which were painted inside the prestigious rooms of villas and houses during the last decades of the Republic (for an overview, see Beyen 1938–1960; Mielsch 2001, 29–66; Tybout 1989; Fittschen 1976; Ling 1991; for good

reproductions, see Mazzoleni and Pappalardo 2004). Many Greek forms and even entire Greek compositions were commonly used in this type of painting. However, we are dealing with an independent and new form of decoration, taken as a whole, which appears to have satisfied, to a great extent, the needs of the Romans in the Late Republic. And this is not only true of the Roman upper class but can also be seen in a medium-sized city such as Pompeii, where colorful marble veneers can be found painted on the walls of the smaller rooms of houses. In the famous triclinium of the Villa dei Misteri outside the walls of Pompeii, the people who gathered there for banqueting were surrounded by almost life-size painted women and children—most likely members of the owner’s family—mixed with Dionysiac figures (figure 13.2). Alternatively, guests could behold a large landscape and probably realize only at a second glance that Homeric scenes from the (p. 314) *Odyssey* were depicted. As with the sculptures, the viewer’s thoughts were led from his or her own world into literary or mythological realms, which seem, unlike in later mural painting, to encroach into the real space. The seemingly real turns out to be imaginary again and again, and even the wonderfully rich architectural perspectives are not extensions of the room in which the viewer is located, in a way that is entirely different from baroque villas. This is because a seemingly realistic image can, as in the cubiculum of the Villa of Boscorale, appear right next to an entirely different scene, such as the view into a sanctuary right next to a view of an idyllic garden with a spring sanctuary.

Apparently, these wall decorations were less about achieving a uniform effect of luxurious space than about offering diverse spaces and images, which could spur the viewer’s imagination without suggesting that these spaces could be entered. As such,

they parallel portraits of Greeks in their function as instigators of thought. Thus, architectural visions confront the gaze with mysterious sanctuaries, which remain locked to the viewer. It is hard to say to what extent such images were an expression of an actual religious need. But it is quite possible to look at them in the context of an attempt at religious renewal, especially in the early Augustan period.

Inside the villas, of course, one did not constantly wallow in the thoughts and feelings that were triggered by the sculptures and mural paintings, but, rather, one was occupied with family, politics, business, and all kinds of other things. However, the presence of such a pronounced, consistent, and continuously repeating world of images could not have been entirely without consequences. The sculptures and paintings indeed suggested thoughts and feelings that distracted from the concrete problems of everyday life. Without doubt, they were supposed to make the viewer think of and experience a “different” world. They were meant to seduce the viewer to dream, to feel, and to ponder.

Honorary Statues and Monuments of Self-Representation in the Late Republic

(p. 315) We enter a completely different world when we look at politically motivated monuments of self-representation. Starting in the later fourth century BCE, honorary statues for politicians and generals were erected in the Forum, especially on and around the *rostra*. Before long, the erection of such statues became rampant, so that in 158 BCE, the Senate decided to take down all sculptures that had been set up without official permission (Pliny, *HN* 34.30). We don't know for how long this regulation was in effect, but we do know that the erection of honorary statues, for whatever reason, still remained a particularly valued and effective tool for political advertisement. This was especially true during the last decades of the Republic. The use of honorary statues is extremely well documented during Julius Caesar's last years, when friends and opponents alike used this tool either to support or to defame the dictator (Zanker 2009).

If we examine the relatively few well-preserved honorary statues from the time of the Late Republic, we are confronted with two entirely different types of sculptures. On the one hand are the toga statues. Good examples are the bronze statue of the so-called Arringatore (Zanker 2010, 56, fig. 33; Vessberg 1941, pl. 19) and the *togati* on the coins of the second and first century BCE (Vessberg 1941, pl. 12). On the other hand are the statues with nude bodies, a type that had originally been used for sculptures of heroes and gods but since Alexander was also used for statues of Hellenistic rulers. The toga statues of the Late Republic wear the short toga, which, despite its different cut, is at

first glance hard to distinguish from the Greek mantle. This similarity was intentional. The new Roman cosmopolitan elite apparently did not consider it important to emphasize their own traditions. This process of “Hellenization” is even more blatant in the case of nude statue types, which were adopted directly from Hellenistic art. Very well-preserved examples are the nude general with a raised leg from the Theater of Cassinum (Carettoni 1943, 53–54, pls. 1-4; Coarelli 1992, 100, figs. 14–15; Zanker 2010, 58, fig. 34) and the so-called General from Tivoli (figure 13.3: E. Talamo in Giuliano 1979;, 1.1, 267 no. 164). We should keep in mind that both the toga statues and the ideal nude types were displayed together in many public spaces. The contrast between the two kinds of statues created an astonishing effect and was the result of the adoption of Hellenistic honorary forms.



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Fig. 13.3 Statue of General from Tivoli, Temple of Hercules. C. 75–50 BCE. Marble. Height 1.88 m. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano inv. 106513.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

We don't know whether honoring an individual with a representation was to be understood as an indication of that person's supernatural powers, as was the case for Hellenistic kings. It is unlikely, however. In any case, such monuments were new and certainly quite puzzling for Roman citizens. In this context, we can also think of the previously mentioned display of portraits and sculptures of Hellenistic kings in the villas and see a desire for similar honors.

Unfortunately, we do not have any statements from that time about this problem. However, because a number of portrait statues displaying (p. 316) “heroic nudity” are also present in Roman cities and even on graves, it is obvious that nudity could also be understood as a commonly used way to honor a person, particularly because the nude bodies were always given realistic portrait heads of the people who were honored in this way. *Our* eyes see the discrepancy between the youthful ideal forms of the naked bodies and their realistically depicted facial features, because, in keeping with the historicist tradition, we look for a homogeneous style of art. The Romans, on the contrary, probably perceived these kinds

of statues differently. They recognized the person who was honored in the realistic facial features. In the statue's body, they probably saw the abstract praise of the person's accomplishments. The body communicated messages such as "He was like a hero" or "He was courageous and brave like a Heracles." The fact that such perception of "heroic nudity" as a form of honor was unproblematic for the Romans can be evinced from the common use of these statues with their twofold message. This can be observed throughout the whole Imperial period in association with both statues of emperors and tomb statues for the middle class (Hallett 2005; Wrede 1981).

So far, we have ignored the portraits that were placed on top of the statues' bodies or were set up as busts with low necklines. These are an important part of the "message," and those produced in these decades constitute the apex of ancient portraiture. (p. 317) Yet they should not be regarded as only a phenomenon of Roman art but rather seen in the context of an interest in the unique characteristics of a specific physiognomy, which emerged in the Hellenistic world. In the course of the fourth and third centuries BCE, the normative culture of the Classical period was increasingly dissolving. The individual as such strove for honor and recognition. The realism of the Roman portraits, as with most elements in Roman art, has its roots in the Hellenization of the entire culture, which, as we saw earlier, affected the visual world inside the villas and houses to such great extent (Zanker 1976b and 1995).

However, in the true-to-life rendering of physiognomies, new forms and messages can also be found among Roman portraits. Despite a generally realistic depiction, portraits from Greece and the cities of Asia Minor frequently indicate ideal or "nicer" features and avoid the strict realism that is usually found in Roman portraits. In Rome, artists were not afraid to indicate strongly the signs of age, even in the facial features of important politicians. The well-known portrait type of the so-called Postumius Albinus, for example, depicts the face of a toothless old man. Still, his unbroken energy finds expression in the powerful turn of his head, full of pathos (Zanker 2010, 61, fig. 36). Portraits of leading citizens that show a thoughtful face rendered in a very nuanced way can also be found. A good example is the portrait type Copenhagen-Florence (Megow 2005, 99-107, pls. 47c-56d, Type XI). The best of these portraits attempt also to capture the unique features and character of the depicted. Caesar's face, in the Tusculum portrait type which originated during his lifetime, is a good example here (Zanker 2009). Public representation and character study are two entirely different goals. Portraits that sat on a bust or herm, meant to be viewed closely, should indeed be differentiated from the statues that were displayed in public spaces. However, this is hardly possible, because the preservation of the statues is highly fragmented and random.

During the Late Roman Republic, aside from such portraits of the elite, there were also portraits of families who were mostly from the class of the *liberti*. These portraits were

set up, for the most part, on the fronts of tombs, placed along main roads, as a form of commemoration of the families, along with inscriptions (Kockel 1993). These portraits are never charged with the pathos visible on some of the images of the upper class. They have rather calm and dignified expressions on their faces and represent these people the way they really looked, with their wrinkles and blemishes, without intention to exalt. Thanks to this widening of the social constituencies interested in portraits, new tendencies entered the scene, which were also at work during the Imperial period.

Whether one was from the upper class or a successful *libertus*, during the decades of fast changes in state and society, everyone shared the desire to speak about his political achievements and to make himself present with his own portrait, be it as a politician or at the tomb. "This man deserves recognition," said the dedicators of statues of politicians, thus recommending their candidates. "I have accomplished a lot; remember me and my family," said the ones who had come to wealth without holding office.

Principate and Ruler Image

(p. 318) Without doubt, the fact that there was no one binding, exclusive ruler image during the Imperial period following the ascent of Augustus is tied with the ideology of the Principate itself. Augustus preferred to be represented wearing the toga and as *princeps senatus* in order to play down the actual extent of his power. Following his example, throughout the Roman Imperial period, the toga remained an option for the representation of the emperor as citizen and *princeps*. However, aside from this option, there were also several other forms of self-representation among which the donors could choose when a statue was erected for the emperor. With the armored statue, his quality as general was emphasized. High atop a horse, the emperor could appear as victor over the barbarians and as sovereign prince. An example is the famous rider statue of Marcus Aurelius on the Capitoline Hill (figure 13.4), in which a barbarian was originally shown stomped into the ground by the emperor's horse. Clothing associated with travel—short *tunica* with mantle—made the viewer think about the emperor's constant presence at the borders of the empire. Heroic nudity was also frequently used as an honorific form. As seen already in the Late Republic, all of these different kinds of statues were by no means reserved exclusively to depict the emperor. They could also be used for other people, even commoners without any distinguished position. Only the depiction as *triumphator* and only statues in the guise of Jupiter, enthroned or upright with scepter, seem to have been reserved for the emperors. Originally, these types of sculptures were meant to be an expression of the emperor's apotheosis, but overzealous benefactors had already honored the emperor Claudius in such a way when he was still alive (Zanker 2010, 67).

In this context, it is important to keep in mind that these statues were not forms of imperial self-representation but rather honors paid by cities, by various bodies, or even by individuals. Because of this and because the emperors behaved in a way that suggested equality toward the senators and, in the case of “good emperors,” approachability with respect to the people, the Republican fiction of an emperor as *primus inter pares* was kept intact. However, a look at the numerous statues that were set up to honor the emperor in the squares of cities across the entire Empire leaves no doubt about his sovereign and absolute rule.

Of course, it was important to the dedicators to have the statues of the emperors set up in the most effective places. Therefore, the sculptures could be seen first and foremost in the fora, which, since the Early Imperial period, had gradually developed from places for gatherings into places for monuments. Because in a number of cities the bases for the statues remain preserved, one can easily picture this privileged type of installation. In Pompeii, which was buried during the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE, and also in the northern African cities of Djemila and Timgad, the often larger-than-life-size monuments for the imperial family occupied the most prominent places on the squares, whereas the statues for other worthy men and for the notables of the town were set up on the edge and between the columns (Zimmer 1989).



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Fig 13.4 Equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, formerly at the Lateran. C. 161-180 CE. Gilded bronze. Height 4.24 m. Rome, Musei Capitolini inv. 3247.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

(p. 319) Of course, the large monuments, which were built in many cities and especially in Rome, were much more effective. The triumphal arches spanned important streets and intersections and the entrances to the fora. Because they were erected for different reasons, many of them could also be found in smaller cities. In Pompeii, for example, there were no fewer than four such monuments. These arches lifted the statues of the honorees high up above the streets, so that the traffic passed

under them. Pliny (*HN* 34.27) sees the purpose of the arches and honorary columns as raising the honoree “above the rest of the mortals” (*attoli super ceteros mortales*). In the case of the triumphal arches, the triumphing emperors were shown with Victoria on the quadriga. On other arches, members of the imperial family could also be seen. On the honorary columns—of which the Column of Trajan and the Column of Marcus Aurelius are preserved in Rome—stood the statues of the emperors, above reliefs featuring the military campaigns they had led, which both “documented” and justified this exceptional distinction. Aside from these monumental forms of praise, which were donated by the “Senate and the People,” there were numerous other ways for the citizens to express approval and gratitude for the emperor. For example, cities decorated certain buildings with fitting statues and reliefs for the imperial cult. A particularly impressive example is the portico of the temple of the imperial cult at Aphrodisias in Asia Minor (figure 15.4). On numerous reliefs, depictions of the emperors (p. 320) and their deeds were shown above mythological images, which made the emperors themselves look almost like mythological figures (Smith 2013). Honoring the emperor played an important role not only in the public space but also in social interactions. Just think of the coins on which the image of the emperor went daily from hand to hand throughout the Empire. Or the glass pates, gems, and cameos that people would give as gifts (perhaps to the imperial family itself in the case of particularly valuable stones).

In Rome, emperors “responded” to the numerous forms of honor with many buildings “for the people,” including theaters, amphitheaters, and, later, above all, baths (Zanker 1997). In the cities of Italy and in the provinces, it was usually the local elites’ responsibility to make these dedications. These men also spent their riches as a form of gratitude to the imperial house, which, when it was necessary and effective, served the cities as benefactor, especially when they had been hit by disasters. Above all, the emperor guaranteed security with his troops at the borders of the Empire. And wherever it seemed necessary, mostly in Rome, he himself attended to the needs of the *plebs*. This relationship of give and take, which was a fundamental source of strength for the imperial rule, has been effectively described as a form of continuous “dialogue” between the emperor and the people. Of course, this “dialogue,” based on gift and counter-gift, would only have lasted as long as the emperor could actually guarantee safety and security to his Empire.

The emperor’s pseudo-Republican political role as *princeps*, which was emphasized by his public appearances in the toga, prevented the emergence of a form of portrayal that was exclusively used for the emperor as we know it from other cultures, such as the European Baroque. Think of the portraits of Louis XIV in this context. The extremely stylized Classical, polykletian forms of the portrait of Augustus in the so-called Prima Porta type

was an attempt to find a form that could exclusively be used for the emperor. However, even during Augustus's lifetime, this type did not endure (Boschung 1993).

Therefore, the portraits of the emperors generally depicted them in more or less realistic forms. One did not shy away from depicting the bald head and old face of the emperor Vespasian or the gaunt features of Nerva, who was dyspeptic. The dignity of the latter was not violated, nor was the energy in Vespasian's face less recognizable. The last portrait of Caracalla is an exception, with the emperor's menacing facial features. It is an interesting characteristic of Roman imperial portraiture that it only represents the respective emperors through their facial expressions and the way they preferred to be seen. Think of the vastly different portraits of the friendly Titus, the strict Trajan, or Antoninus Pius, who turns so attentively toward his imaginary counterpart.

The appearance in plain clothes and the people-oriented behavior of the "good emperors" were without doubt used in order to mask the autocratic government as a Principate. The frequent honoring of the emperors by the cities and the citizens of the Empire was inspired by thankfulness or in the hope of receiving benefits from the emperor. Therefore, the dedications of statues have to be understood as praises. No official orders were necessary. One simply wanted to honor the emperor, and it is not important for us today to ask if the motive was honest, because people also honored (p. 321) their dead by erecting statues for them and depicting them as gods or heroes. The dedication of statues was part of the "dialogue" between emperor and citizens.

The Art of the Citizens in the Imperial Period

Leaving aside honorary statues that were erected by the communities and paid for by the represented person, portrait statues and busts of citizens were placed in houses and especially on graves. We can leave aside in this discussion the portrait busts and statues with the toga, because they don't need special explanation, as evidence of self-representation or honorable commemoration. Statues with the body or bust of a god or a hero, on the other hand, need clarification. As with the statues that were built for the emperors during their lifetimes, such depictions of citizens *in forma deorum* were not understood as signs of "apotheosis" but were rather a form of allegorical praise (for what follows, see the many examples in Wrede 1981 and Hallett 2005). If a doctor appeared in the Classical body type of Asclepius supported by a staff decorated with a winding snake, the intention was merely to demonstrate what an excellent doctor the person had been. A depiction as Ceres in the Classical statue type of Demeter was generally used for caring mothers. Unmarried young women and girls were represented as Artemis/Diana,

energetic men as Heracles/Hercules, loving wives as Venus in the nude in a type of a statue of Aphrodite. We assume that the bodies of the gods were supposed to evoke for the viewer a number of characteristics and qualities that were associated with these gods and with which one wanted to honor the depicted person. For many of us, with ideas that have been shaped by Christianity, this is hard to imagine. However, think of the depiction of Paolina Borghese with a naked body by Canova (1805–1808). At the time, the Church considered the depiction a scandal, but Canova and the Principe Borghese saw it justified as a not at all unseemly form of representation of the ancient ideal of beauty. They could have referred to the Roman Venus statues with Classical bodies and realistic portraits. Particularly alienating to our modern eyes is the perfect body of the Venus joined with the realistic portrait of an older woman. But in such cases, the allegorical character of the depiction is especially clear (Wrede 1981).



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Fig. 13.5 Sarcophagus with the myth of Endymion, from Saint-Médard-d'Eyrans. C. 230 CE. Marble. Height 95 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre inv. Ma 1335.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

We often come across the same phenomenon in the mythological reliefs on Roman sarcophagi. The intention in these images was also to characterize the deceased through comparison with mythological figures. It was important to express the love and affection of the deceased couples and of the surviving family

members. The moon goddess, for example, was depicted with the wife's face and hair, filled with longing for her deceased husband, who is represented as a sleeping Endymion (figure 13.5: Zanker and Ewald 2012, figs. 87–91). Or a mother who mourns her daughter appears as Demeter, who chases Hades as he is abducting the desperate Persephone in his chariot. Elsewhere, the loss of a wife is represented by the same mythological picture but with the abduction (p. 322) to be understood as something positive; therefore, the hostage is depicted as a beautiful bride, naked and held by Hades. The figure of Demeter is, of course, not personalized with a portrait in this image. How "abstract" such mythological allegories could be is visible in a sarcophagus on which the lovesick Phaedra, who is yearning for Hippolytus, is depicted with the features of the deceased. In order to understand these comparisons, one must realize that the allegories often did not mean to evoke a comparison with the entire myth but only with a certain aspect. In the case of the comparison with Phaedra, a woman's overwhelming love for her deceased husband or son was evoked in the comparison, not the entire tragic story. The examples

in which mythological figures are depicted with the facial features of the deceased also emphasize the function of most other mythological images on sarcophagi when these are not actualized by the presence of portraits. All of these images were supposed to say something about the deceased, either by praising their qualities or by expressing the hope for an afterlife in a different world.

The portrait statues generally stood in front of rich graves; the mythological sarcophagi were always inside the burial chambers themselves. Aside from these costly monuments, there were often other pictures in the forms of murals, stuccoed ceilings, and mosaics on the floors in the burial chambers. Most of these pictures also depicted myths or mythological figures, often taken from the world of Dionysus. On the whole, aside from praising the dead and expressing sorrow, funerary images had as their second main theme, perhaps surprisingly, the celebration of life. The encounter with the dead was supposed to bring up positive memories and urge the living to enjoy life. Therefore, the monuments and images associated with tombs always had two functions.

The latter appears also to have been the primary function of the pictures on the walls inside the houses. It was mentioned above that people during the last decades of (p. 323) the Republic liked to be surrounded by illusionistic architectures and wanted to look at magnificent palaces, sanctuaries, and parks. This changed with the beginning of Augustus's rule. The architectural articulations of the walls took on mannerist forms and no longer meant to suggest the view into real spaces but rather intended to evoke a sort of dream world. In these panoramic vistas appear Greek figures in costumes of times long gone, priestesses and warriors, athletes and philosophers. However, no contemporaries can be seen. Occasionally, such figures also appear in the form of Classical statues, reminiscent of the statues nearby in the villa gardens. In the centers of the walls are generally larger pictures with mythological figures, which originally were most likely to have been understood as panel paintings. Placed among the illusionistic architecture on the walls, these mythological pictures drew particular attention and led the viewer's gaze and thoughts into the world of myths, just as did the images on the sarcophagi. The artistic character of the images certainly contributed to aggrandizing the ambience.

The majority of mythological themes were taken from the realm of Dionysus and Aphrodite, the goddess of love. There are many happy pairs of satyrs and nymphs floating on the surfaces of the walls. The gazes and thoughts of inhabitants and guests were directed toward the positive side of life, the joys of the meals and love. This was without doubt the primary function of the images inside the houses. Of course, there were also entirely different mythological images, which represented the punishment of injustice by the gods and human errors and catastrophes. However, these represent only a fraction of the mythological images. Myth retained its old role, but its purpose in Pompeian houses was mostly that of evoking happy and sensual images of life's pleasures. After the

disappearance of the Vesuvian cities, our evidence for Roman mural painting dries up. One gets the impression that the unrestrained mural paintings of the so-called Fourth Style make way for calmer structures with fewer pictures.

Richly preserved mosaics, on the other hand, can at least give us a schematic idea of the favored themes after the eruption of Vesuvius (Balty 1977; Dunbabin 1978 and 1999). In this medium, the myths also played an important role. Here the Dionysiac and Aphrodisian themes prevail. However—and this is an extremely interesting new development—starting in the second century CE, themes from certain areas of real life appear more and more, displacing myths from their leading role. These images take us into the arena to the gladiators and into the circus to the chariot races. Thus, they keep the memory of the games enjoyed or the hope for the next games fresh in the minds of their viewers. Furthermore, these later mosaics show different aspects of the world of the rich villa owners. The numerous banquet scenes and depictions of food, mostly fish, keep evening gatherings in mind. Representations of the villa and the calendar address life in the countryside and farm work. Hunting scenes and the subsequent eating and drinking by hunters in the open are particularly common. These last images were apparently understood as the epitome of the owners' elite lifestyle. The self-confident statement about one's elevated social standing becomes an essential new function of images beginning in the third century CE.

The mythological images, above all themes of Venus and Dionysus, continue to play an important role in the later third century CE and after. However, their numbers (p. 324) decrease steadily, and the repertoire becomes smaller and smaller. Muses are now found more frequently, and so are the seasons, occasionally with Aion and the erotes, often without a mythological context. The mythological figures and stories have become "literature," losing their value as reference points in life because of new forms of religiosity, above all Christianity. But with this, we touch on a complex topic, which reaches far beyond the purpose of this essay.

To summarize the function of images on the monuments of citizens, we have to distinguish between the funerary context and the images inside houses, as for the Late Republican period. Funerary statues and the sarcophagi were meant—first and foremost—to honor the deceased by speaking of his or her qualities, especially his or her love and caring. Unlike in the Late Republican period, the messages of the images on these grave monuments no longer try to address the community at large and no longer speak primarily about social standing; what they want to communicate is love and caring, particularly of spouses. We are dealing with a move toward family, in which images also speak to the living and urge them to enjoy life in spite of death. The same tendency can be seen in paintings inside the house, most of all in the mosaics. New and of great historical interest is the change in the imagery, especially beginning in the third century

CE, when villa owners have more images of their upscale lifestyle featured on the mosaics, pointing to their passion for hunting. With such themes, the explicit representation of social distinction enters the private sphere. Earlier this was expressed only indirectly through the richness of the decoration of villas.

(Translated from the German by Deike Benjoya and Clemente Marconi.)

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the religious contexts of ancient Greece, with particular emphasis on the articulation and original functions of altars and temples. It begins with a discussion of ritual and ritualization within the context of ancient Greek architecture and imagery. It then considers the use of vase paintings and votive relief sculptures in sacrificial rituals and processions. The chapter concludes by analyzing the connection between architectural decoration and ritual in the ancient Greek world.

Keywords: altars, ancient Greece, architectural decoration, architecture, imagery, processions, ritualization, rituals, temples, vase paintings

In a seminal article on the functions of Greek temples, Walter Burkert characterized Greek culture as a “temple culture” (Burkert 1988, 27). Other historians of religion have gone so far as to claim that temples were a nearly obligatory element of Greek cult practice (Graf 1997, 943). Admittedly, in antiquity, Greek temples were a focus of attention—if not an obsession—for authors such as Pausanias and have equally managed to capture the imagination of modern scholars in all fields of ancient studies. However, Greek cult practices were never truly dependent on the presence of a built temple. Generally speaking, ancient Greeks seem to have been hesitant about creating structures that served an exclusive function in a highly specific context (Mylonopoulos 2011b, 77–78). A treasury could thus resemble a *naiskos*, the facade of a Macedonian tomb could assume the form of a temple-like structure, and “caryatids” could be used in Archaic treasuries (Siphnian Treasury, Delphi), Classical temples (Erechtheum, Athens), or Late Classical tombs (Tomb of Pericles, Limyra). Modern interpretations that have tried to charge Greek temple architecture and its decoration with theological meaning either remained far too general in their approach (Osborne 2009) or failed to reflect on the existence of an ancient Greek theology and its exact emic and etic definition (Elsner 2012, 13–17). Allegorical or symbolical descriptions of architecture in Greek literature are rare: the famous passage in Euripides’s *Iphigenia in Tauris* that describes male

children as the columns of a house and Orestes as a column with blond hair growing from its capital is the exception rather than the rule (*IT* 50–58). Torsten Mattern has convincingly argued that Greek sacred architecture cannot be described as some kind of built theology or allegory in stone. Although their religious nature cannot be seriously challenged, temples were also profoundly utilitarian buildings (Mattern 2006). Indeed, according to Hans Sedlmayr, ancient Greek temples were the only form of sacred architecture that seemed free of symbolic significance (Sedlmayr 1948, 229).

(p. 327) This is all the more surprising when considering that the sacred architecture of other cultures and periods has been placed in a more pronounced allegorical or even theological interpretive context not only by scholars but, more important, by contemporary sources. In ancient Egypt, for example, temples and rituals were often addressed as the symbolic point of conjunction between sacred space and sacred time. In Byron E. Shafer's words, the Egyptian temple

was also the cosmos in microcosm. The enclosure wall and sacred lake were Nun, the sanctuary was the place of First Creation, the hypostyle hall and the bases of walls were the liminal swamp, the columns were plants, the ceilings were sky, the floors were earth, the vaults were netherworld, the pylon was mountains of the eastern horizon, and the axial way was the path of the sun. The temple was also the body of god and could be personified, especially in the Ramessid Period, as a divine figure of human form.

(Shafer 1998, 8)

Indeed, Egyptian temple architecture, combined with the countless depictions of festivals, religious practices, worshippers, and deities, offers a visually enhanced reflection of ritual reality. Mesoamerican sacred architecture has been similarly understood as an architectural-ritual event with cosmological and religious astronomical connotations. Nevertheless, Lindsay Jones has correctly emphasized the “multivocality” of all sacred architecture (Jones 1993, especially 338–342; drawing on Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical discourse on interpretation, the analysis of Mesoamerican temple architecture and religious architecture in general is developed and analyzed more deeply in Jones 2000).

A theologically charged interpretation of architecture is most obvious in the case of medieval cathedrals. Since the early nineteenth century and the work of Friedrich Schlegel, their architecture and ornament have been seen as the materialization of a soteriological and teleological theology that recognizes that “the specific forms of the cathedral matrix may also be related to another powerful sign of salvation: the Celestial City” (Murray 1996, 43). Augustine's allegorical identification of the apostles with the

pillars of the Christian Church was adopted by medieval authors and explicitly associated with sacred architecture by Abbot Suger in his writings on the construction of St. Denis (Recht 2008, 112–113). Current scholarship on the subject has tried to shed light on interconnections between specific architectural and decorative elements of mediaeval cathedrals and concrete contemporary religious texts (Murray 2004). Other critical voices, however, claim that the idea of a cathedral as a terrestrial material expression of “Heavenly Jerusalem” is nothing but a scholarly fiction rooted in the structuralist movement of the Vienna School of art history (Schlink 1998). Similarly, certain decorative features of Byzantine architecture and art are still seen as means of conveying important symbolic messages. Recently, Slobodan Ćurčić interpreted the so-called radiant frieze as an element attempting to grant visual form to the notion of divine light (Ćurčić 2012). All the same, current scholarship on Byzantine church architecture attempts to show that despite all general associations between the liturgy and the architectural design of churches, the search for “an architecture whose form corresponds neatly to that of the (p. 328) ritual” should be abandoned (Marinis 2011, 32). Church architecture seems rather to have reacted to a complex network of theological developments, canonical regulations, ritual and practical needs, and individual agency (Marinis 2012 and 2014).

Ritual

Despite the complexity of the topic, a contribution that aims to discuss ancient Greek architecture and imagery in the light of ritual practice cannot avoid at least a brief look at the notion of ritual and ritualization. Jaś Elsner recently criticized the “extremely optimistic” application of ritual theory to material culture and the use of the term “ritual” by art historians, archaeologists, and architectural historians “without further definition and without much apparent thought” (Elsner 2012). In an approach highly reminiscent of Jack Goody’s work (1977), Elsner correctly addressed the issue of whether rituals always needed to be religious in their nature. Nevertheless, his questions—“are there not endless examples of repetitive and ritualized activity from the nonsacred sphere, from the brushing of one’s teeth to the daily taking to and collecting of children from school by parents to all the rules we obey when driving a car to the rituals of the justice system and imprisonment? To what extent do these deserve the terminology of ‘ritual’? To what extent can any be excluded?” (Elsner 2012, 8)—reveal acceptance of the colloquial use of the term “ritual” to describe daily activities, such as brushing one’s teeth, and a rather parochial emphasis on repetitiveness as the parameter for identifying rituals. Under specific circumstances, the situations addressed by Elsner can perhaps be characterized as ritual-like activities (Bell 1997, 138–169; Snoek 2006) but certainly not as rituals or rites.

Although Dietrich Harth and Axel Michaels, following Pierre Bourdieu, may have rightly stressed that “ritual” was a polyvalent “open term” that could hardly be specified in an all-encompassing way (Harth and Michaels 2003, 14), the present study will follow Victor Turner’s sociocultural approach (Turner 1991) and identify ritualization more concretely according to Catherine Bell’s fundamental study, that is, as

a way of acting that is designed and orchestrated to distinguish and privilege what is being done in comparison to other, usually more quotidian, activities. As such, ritualization is a matter of various culturally specific strategies for setting some activities off from others, for creating and privileging a qualitative distinction between the “sacred” and the “profane,” and for ascribing such distinctions to realities thought to transcend the powers of human actors.

(Bell 1992, 74)

In such a context, formality, fixity, and repetition are important characteristics but, as Bell emphasizes, not “intrinsic qualities” of rituals (Bell 1992, 92). Admittedly, her definition does not explain the genesis of rituals or the decision-making processes that lead to the transformation of a repetitive quotidian activity into a ritual, but it does offer an adequate semantic frame for the parameters employed in this chapter to determine (p. 329) whether a specific activity can be understood as ritual. For example, the slaughter of an animal by a butcher, even if it takes place repetitively and according to a specific sequence of actions, will not here be considered a ritual (I am referring exclusively to an ancient Greek context and will not enter here on a discussion of the Jewish *shechita*). On the contrary, the slaughter of an animal at an altar after it has been adorned and ceremoniously led to the sanctuary in a procession will be addressed as a central ritual act in ancient Greece. Similarly, compared with a bath taken before a wedding ceremony, a bath taken on an everyday basis is not a rite. In general, rituals and rites will be understood as parameters that influence both sacred architecture and religious imagery to various degrees (Bell 1997, 73: “ritual as a performative medium for social change emphasizes human creativity and physicality: ritual does not mold people; people fashion rituals that mold their world”). Finally, Jan Snoek’s differentiation between rite (“the performance of an indivisible unit of ritual behavior”) and ritual (“a sequence of one or more rites, together framed by transitions from common to ritual”) will be applied in the following discussion of the materiality of ritual practices in ancient Greece (Snoek 2006).

Greek Religious Architecture and the Performance of Rituals

As stated above, Greek temples appear to be one of the most important signifiers of ancient Greek culture. Until the late fourth century BCE, the dedication of temples by cities and in some cases individuals—Archaic tyrants such as Polycrates or private persons such as Themistocles and Xenophon (Beschi 2002, 19–37; Purvis 2003, 65–126)—was a crucial means of displaying piety, power, and wealth. Strangely enough, Alexander and his successors showed little or no interest in the erection of monumental temple structures. Most temples built in the Hellenistic period seem to have been civic projects (Schmidt-Dounas 2000, 3–20). However, within a strictly religious framework, neither temples nor other architectural forms were absolutely necessary. Many sacred sites, such as the Sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, began as simple open areas for the performance of a sacrifice and the celebration of a communal sacrificial meal (Morgan 1999, 373–377; Mylonopoulos 2003, 161–163). Nevertheless, though propagated already in antiquity and most prominently by Seneca (*Ep.* 41.3), the evolutionist model for the development of sacred spaces from sites in nature to elaborate and luxurious architectural complexes is certainly a fiction. Although it is true that many sanctuaries began as natural hypaethral areas and sometimes never changed their form (Mylonopoulos 2008b, 54–67), evidence from Minoan Crete (on the extraurban sanctuary at Anemospilia, one of the most important Minoan sacred sites, see Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 269–311) and Mycenaean Greece (on Mycenaean urban sanctuaries, see Albers 1994) demonstrates that more or less monumental architectural structures meant for religious (p. 330) purposes and uses appear already in the Bronze Age. It seems plausible to assume, therefore, that spatial simplicity and architectural elaboration were viable alternatives from the very beginnings of religious architecture in Greece. What remains open, however, is whether the nature of cults and rituals along with their performative needs affected the decision to celebrate religion in a natural or built environment.

In the vast majority of cases, the cultic center of the sanctuary was the altar. Thus, a number of sacred spaces consisted only of a clearly defined sacrificial area with an altar. (The case of the sacrifice at the Laphria in Patrae is rather special. Here no altar was needed, since the animals were thrown alive into the flames; see Pirenne-Delforge 2006.) Indeed, in this respect, the Altar of the Twelve Gods in the Athenian Agora is a Greek sanctuary in its purest form: an altar surrounded by a parapet wall signifying the boundaries of the temenos. Despite its apparently humble form, the Sanctuary of the Twelve Gods was the focal point for the calculation of distances from and to Athens and was one of the most important places of refuge within the city (Wycherley 1957, 119–

122). Its history can be traced back as early as the late sixth century BCE. According to Thucydides, it was then that Pisistratus the Younger, the grandson of the Athenian tyrant, founded the sanctuary (Thucydides 6.54.6–7; although the author is not writing explicitly *hidrysato* but *anethēke*, one can assume that Pisistratus was at least the initiator of the foundation), which was probably destroyed during the Persian sack of Athens. In the fourth century BCE—perhaps during the Lykourgan building program—the monument received a new parapet (Gadbery 1992).

Typologically, there is no prescribed form for an altar, which can assume an appearance that varies from a monumental pyrelike structure created from sacrificial remains (Olympia, Delos), to an extremely long but relatively low shape (Isthmia, Nemea), to an extraordinarily elaborate and architecturally complex structure in which the altar is set within a temenos wall that consists not only of a low parapet but also very often of an embellished courtyard with or without colonnades (Samothece, Pergamum) (Sinn 2005, with extensive bibliography). Attempts to associate a specific type of altar with special categories of rituals, such as so-called chthonic sacrifices (Yavis 1949, 91–95), have proven futile because the differences between so-called Olympian and chthonic sacrificial rituals were not as significant as scholarship has hitherto hypothesized (Ekroth 2002, especially 215–341; Hägg and Alroth 2005). The centrality of the altar is reflected in its countless representations in Greek art (Aktseli 1996; Kossatz-Deissmann 2005, 381–392) where, if it is not depicted during a sacrifice with the god's portion of the sacrificial animal burning in the flames (Straten 1988), it can be used to signify "sanctuary" (Gebauer 2002, 515–524).

Compared with a Byzantine church, which represents the place of the liturgy—the main ritual event of Orthodox Christianity—an ancient Greek temple served as a more or less monumental backdrop for the central ritual activities at the altar (Sinn 2000) and also as the house of the sanctuary's primary cult statue. Despite its numerous varieties, the peripteros became the most canonical form of ancient Greek temples and the quintessence of Greek culture quite early. Some problematic cases aside, the eighth-century BCE Temple of Artemis at Ephesus seems to have been the earliest Greek peripteral (p. 331) temple (Barletta 2001, 32–39). Strangely enough, however, the question of why the peristasis became such a definitive and normative characteristic of temple architecture in Greece has rarely been raised. Its emergence and unparalleled success in religious architecture is all the more puzzling when one considers that in Egypt, a culture with similar interest in temple structures, a peristyle surrounding the entire body of a temple rarely appears. Even the Romans were more interested in prostyle than peristyle temple buildings. René Ginouvès interpreted the Greek peristasis as the result of practical necessities combined with the symbolic association of the column with the human body, which seems to bear the roofs of the structures housing the

images of the gods (Ginouvés 1989). Vitruvius had already drawn such a parallel between the Doric column and the “proportions, strength, and beauty of the male body” and the Ionic column and the “delicacy, adornment, and proportions characteristic of women” (Vitruvius, *De arch.* 4.1.6 on Doric; 4.1.7 on Ionic; see in general Rykwert 1996). Since Vitruvius’s analogy is aesthetic rather than metaphorical, however, the idea of the Greek peristasis as the symbolic rendering of human beings surrounding and supporting the house of the god seems somewhat anachronistic, comparable to the identification of the columns in medieval cathedrals with apostles and prophets.

Furthermore, the hypothesis that the Parthenon (figure 6.1) is not a temple but rather a monumental treasury (Preisshofen 1984; Holtzmann 2003, 105–107) implies that the architectural form of the peripteros, though still associated with religious functions, was not strictly bound to temple architecture. If it is correct, then the formal boundaries between temples and treasuries were even more fluid in antiquity than hitherto assumed (Svenshon 2001). Scholars such as Gabriele Nick have argued, however, that the Parthenon was indeed a temple and the chryselephantine statue of Athena one of the cult statues on the Athenian Acropolis (Nick 2002, 113–157, especially 119–132). Francis Prost has persuasively tried to bridge the gap between the two diametrically opposed scholarly opinions by emphasizing that Greek religion, art, and architecture were always multivocal and polyvalent (Prost 2009).

The Greek temple was not merely a shrine for the primary cult statue of the deity but also the appropriate site for additional though rather secondary—if compared to the significance of the sacrifice at the altar—ritual acts. The furnishing of temple interiors with tables (*trapezai*), for example, is clear indication that bloodless food offerings were usually deposited before the statue of the deity (Gill 1991, 7–11; Mattern 2006, 174–175; Mattern 2007, 158). Such tables of offerings were also used for pieces of sacrificial meat that were intended for the deity but had not been burned at the altar (Gill 1991, 11–15; Gill uses the term *trapezomata*, although it is used only once with this meaning). In rare cases, altars could be installed within a temple. Pausanias refers to the altars of Poseidon and Erechtheus, Boutes, and Hephaestus in the Erechtheum (1.26.5) and that of Poseidon in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi (10.24.4). What exactly was sacrificed at these altars and how practical problems, such as fire and smoke in a closed space, were resolved remain unclear.

Albeit less concretely, one can associate prayers with temple interiors. Admittedly, in Greek antiquity, the performance of a prayer was not bound to a specific area within a (p. 332) sacred space. Indeed, it did not even have to take place within the boundaries of a sanctuary, despite Simon Pulleyn’s emphasis on the close connection between sacrifice and prayer and his consideration of prayer as a nonautonomous religious action (Pulleyn

1997, 10–15, 40). Following Snoek's definition, a prayer would have been a rite and not a ritual. The visual evidence, even if not taken as literal, quasi-photographic documentation, suggests that worshippers sought to say prayers in the vicinity of the deity, most likely near the primary cult statue in a temple or other statues of deities in a sanctuary (Straten 1974; Klöckner 2006, 146–149). Nonetheless, a special type of prayer, the so-called prayer of justice, seems to have been intrinsically associated with the physicality of a sacred space, as revealed by the case of the Sanctuary of Demeter at Cnidus (Chaniotis 2009, with previous bibliography). Adoration of the primary cult statue before or near the image and mostly with the gesture of a raised hand or a hand touching the worshipper's lips has been identified as a form of prayer (Aubriot-Sévin 1992, 109–110; but see Pulleyn 1997, 5). In its most extreme form, the adoration of the image, the *agalmatophilia* (Corso 1999, 101–104), can climax with the rape of the statue. The explicit and widely cited story about the encounter of a young admirer with the statue of Aphrodite in Cnidus (figure 24.2) is rather telling (Pseudo-Lucian, *Amores* 13–16). Barriers in Greek temples, which have recently been interpreted as architectural features of sacred buildings open regularly to the public, much like those in modern-day churches and mosques, would have functioned as psychological rather than physical boundaries to prevent extreme or undesirable forms of ritual adoration (Mylonopoulos 2011a).

On a more practical level, the temple interior was often used as a space for the deposition and storage of offerings. Inventory lists from the Athenian Acropolis and the sanctuaries of Asclepius in Athens, Artemis in Brauron, Athena in Lindus, and Apollo on Delos demonstrate that offerings kept within temples could be of significant monetary but also ritual value (see, for example, Hamilton 2000 on Delos; Harris 1995 on the Parthenon and Erechtheum). Clothing, for example, played an important role among the offerings kept inside the temple in Brauron (Linders 1972; Cleland 2005). Ancient Greek authors occasionally censored the practice of dedicating both too much and too often (Plato, *Leg.* 10.909E–910A). Although the ritualized pursuit of refuge in a sanctuary is most closely associated with the altar (Naiden 2006, 36–41), cases such as those of Demosthenes in the Sanctuary of Poseidon on Calauria (Plutarch, *Dem.* 29) or Pausanias in the Sanctuary of Athena Chalcioecus in Sparta (Thucydides 1.134) demonstrate that a temple was occasionally deeply involved in issues of *asylia* and could be seen as the ultimate safe haven.

Ancient literary sources, epigraphic documents, and archaeological evidence can inform us about possible ritual uses of a temple's interior. All the same, it is usually impossible to associate such rituals with precise points inside a temple. In this respect, the interpretive problems associated with the term *adyton* are telling. Despite the fact that the term is still widely used for the innermost closed room of the *naos*, Susan K. Thalmann and Mary B. Hollinshead have demonstrated beyond any doubt that an area or room identified by

sources as *adyton* was rarely a part of the temple (Thalmann 1975; Hollinshead 1999). Although Thalmann hypothesized that the closed rooms in (p. 333) a temple's cella were used in South Italy for storage or ritual purposes and in Sicily to house the cult statue and various rituals connected with the image (Thalmann 1975, 99–120), Hollinshead suggested that these spaces had a primarily practical function and were used as storage spaces for valuable offerings (Hollinshead 1999, 207–210). Equally problematic is the exact definition of the term “parthenon,” usually understood as a part of a temple dedicated to virginal deities (Roux 1984; Tréheux 1985; with respect to the Parthenon on the Athenian Acropolis, both scholars agree on the connection of the term with either the virgin Athena or the virgins in her service but disagree on whether the term designated the entire temple from the beginning [Roux] or only the square room with the four ionic columns [Tréheux]), although in the case of its most famous example, the Parthenon on the Athenian Acropolis, relevant inscriptions refer to it as a storage space (Harris 1995, 81–103). To my best knowledge, the existence of a “parthenon” is epigraphically attested in Athens (*IG II²* no. 1407), Brauron (*SEG* 46.133), Magnesia on the Maeander (*SEG* 15.668), and Cyzicus (Barth and Stauber 1993 no. 1433). While in the first three cases, one can easily accept its proposed association with virginal deities, such as Athena and Artemis, at Cyzicus, the “parthenon” lies within the sanctuary of Meter Placiane, a deity with a rather matronly character. Thus, one may assume that the word had additional meaning in terms of both ritual and architecture (I cannot enter here on a detailed discussion of the term “parthenon” and its possible associations with architectural forms and ritual functions, but a study of the topic that does not focus entirely on the Athenian Parthenon is certainly worth undertaking).

Besides the temple—the building most obviously identified with Greek religious architecture—a number of structures served ritual purposes without architectural forms explicitly designed for their enactment. Stoas are intrinsically associated with the various performative aspects of ritual practices. The simple concept of a colonnade before a wall gave rise to a substantial number of variations of its basic type in form and size (simple stoas with one or more aisles, L-shaped and pi-shaped stoas, peristyle structures, stoas with banquet rooms) (Coulton 1976, 75–98). From a functional perspective, relatively large stoas with space for the appropriate display and protection of votive statues, reliefs, and paintings existed already in the Archaic period. Furthermore and probably more important, worshippers could find shelter in them during the large festivals, processions, and sacrifices (Kuhn 1985, 226–269, 287–307). However, the Greek stoa never became a building linked exclusively to religion and the performance of ritual. Stoas “adorned” civic spaces early on and, in the Hellenistic period, became one of the most popular means for rulers to express their favor toward cities (Schmidt-Dounas 2000, 23–52). The stoas of Attalus in Athens and Orophernes in Priene are simply two randomly chosen examples of this tradition. Even rather specific forms of stoas, such as those that included

rooms for banqueting, were erected both in sanctuaries (pi-shaped stoa at Brauron) and in agorai of cities (South Stoa I on the Athenian Agora). Excluding especially luxurious ones, such as the *pinakotheke* on the Athenian Acropolis, individual banquet rooms do not differ significantly from the *andron* of domestic architecture (one should stress, however, that luxurious *andrones* have been also excavated; see Reber 1989). Interestingly, the *abaton*, a space with a highly specific function in the sanctuary (p. 334) of a healing deity (particularly Asclepius and Amphiaraus) and used as a sleeping chamber for visiting patients, assumed the form of a stoa (Riethmüller 2005, 382–387).

Although one might easily presuppose that oracular sanctuaries would have developed a clearly defined architectural repertory of forms because of their specific ritual needs, the opposite seems to have been the case (see, in general, Friese 2010). Furthermore, oracular shrines in a special category, those connecting the worlds of the living and the dead as in the case of the *nekromanteia* in Taenarum, Epirus, Heraclea Pontica, and Cumae, demonstrate a more intense tendency toward the integration of natural elements, especially caves, in their topography but do not appear to have required special forms of architecture (Mylonopoulos 2008b, 69–70, with previous bibliography). Finally, the monumental stairs associated with the viewership of rituals or mimetic reenactments of mythological narratives are an architectural feature of Greek sanctuaries that has drawn increasing attention from scholars (Nielsen 2002; Mylonopoulos 2006, 92–99). The close connection between such stairs and theater structures is rather obvious. On Samothrace, for example, the so-called altar court most probably had a functional link to the theater on the hillside across from it (Mylonopoulos 2006, 97–99). Monumental stairs have often been excavated in sanctuaries of Demeter (Corinth, Lycosura, Pergamum), but the type is far too widespread to be associated exclusively with a specific cult or ritual activity (Hollinshead 2012, 46–55).

The Visuality of Rituals or the Art of the Ritual

Although vase painting and relief art have their own narrative rules and cannot be taken as some kind of ethnologically founded photographic documentation, their apparent immediacy offers a more direct access to ancient Greek ritual practices than does architecture. It comes as no surprise that the centrality of the sacrificial ritual led to its countless depictions between the Archaic and the Late Classical periods. With some exceptions that cannot be addressed in the context of this chapter (the sacrifice at the Laphria in Patrae or the drowning of horses at Genesion in the Argolid), Greek sacrificial rituals seem to have followed a relatively clear order from the choice of the perfect animal and its slaughter at the altar to the subsequent sacrificial meal (Auffarth 2005).

Aside from certain notable exceptions, vase paintings and votive relief sculptures focused on a single rite out of the entire ritual: the ceremonious procession to the altar. Only rarely do vase painters show interest in depicting the entire spectrum of ritual activities and the occasionally large numbers of participants and cult servants. Preserved examples that do so seem to date to the early sixth century BCE. Among them, the much-cited black-figure cup in the Niarchos collection in Paris, which depicts eighteen figures without including the priestess, is truly exceptional. The procession ends at an altar behind which the priestess and Athena (or her image) are standing (p. 335) (Straten 1995, fig. 2; Laxander 2000, 7–10; Mylonopoulos 2006, 73–75). Although it has been suggested that the exceptionality of the image indicates that it is an early depiction of the Panathenaic procession (Himmelmann 1997, 22), there is no visual sign supporting this hypothesis, which nonetheless remains an intriguing interpretation. In vase painting, the participants were reduced in number rather quickly to the most relevant ones: priest or priestess, men guiding the sacrificial animal or animals, and occasionally additional cult servants such as musicians. An interesting example is a black-figure amphora in Berlin (figure 14.1a-b: *ABV* 296.4; *Para* 128; *Add*² 77; BAPD 320383), with the theme of the sacrificial procession on both its sides, which must be understood as presenting parts of the same scene. Athena, in the posture of the warrior goddess with raised spear, stands behind an altar, which is clearly represented as a man-made structure. On the other side, the branch-bearing priestess approaches, followed by three cult servants guiding the sacrificial bull. Here we see a clear hierarchy in terms of size, with Athena and her helmet extending beyond the frame of the scene. The human figures are smaller, a convention also found in reliefs. The bull is disproportionately small. Interestingly enough, the four musicians shown on the other side of the vase are as tall as Athena. Since the goddess was missing, the vase painter apparently saw no problem in filling the frame with figures, which, had they been on the other side facing Athena, would have constituted an act of hubris.

Despite the popularity of sacrificial processions in Archaic vase painting, the repertory of votive reliefs in the period demonstrates rather random interest in the topic (the most notable exception is the Late Archaic so-called pig relief from the Athenian Acropolis; see Comella 2002, 19, 190 cat. no. Atena 8, with bibliography). In the Classical and Late Classical periods, however, the sacrificial procession became the most popular theme on Attic votive reliefs (Comella 2002, 161–170). Compared with the usually anonymous participants of the vase paintings, the scenes on the reliefs can be associated with families or, more generally, *oikoi*. Moreover, as Anja Klöckner has observed, whenever the sacrificial animal on a votive relief is a bull, the dedication is associated with rituals connected to the child or children of the family that dedicated the relief (Klöckner 2006, 141–144). A possible example of this may be a votive relief from the mid-fourth century BCE found in Piraeus (figure 14.2), which depicts male and female members of an Attic

oikos bringing a bull to the altar where a cult servant is holding it. In the foreground amid the entire family stands a young girl (Kaltsas 2002, 214 no. 437, with bibliography).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 14.3 Votive (?) relief from Larymna. C. 410–400 BCE. Marble. Height 70 cm. Chalkis, Archaeological Museum inv. 7.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 14.4 Tyrrhenian amphora attributed to the Timiades Painter. Said to be from Italy. Sacrifice of Polyxena. C. 550 BCE. Ceramic. Height 38 cm. London, British Museum inv. 1897.7-27.2.

(Photograph © British Museum.)

What vase images and reliefs avoid showing is the actual slaughter of the animal when the sacrificial instrument, usually a knife, pierces its throat (Straten 1995, 106–107). The few exceptions that actually depict this most brutal moment of the sacrifice—among them an unusual relief from the late fifth century BCE found in Larymna (figure 14.3) (Straten 1995, 186–187, 329)—can be securely associated with a specific type of blood sacrifice before a battle, the *sphagion*, in which no parts of the animal were eaten at a communal sacrificial meal (Jameson 1991; Gebauer 2002, 280–285). Although the reality of human sacrifice in ancient Greece has been convincingly dismissed (Bondechère 1993), the renderings of mythological human sacrifices, such as those of the Trojan youths at the pyre of Patroclus or Polyxena’s at the tumulus of Achilles (Mylonopoulos 2013), [\(p. 336\)](#) [\(p. 337\)](#) bear a striking

resemblance to the scenes of the *sphagion*. The sacrifice of Polyxena, for example, is shown in all its unmasked brutality on a so-called Tyrrhenian amphora in London (figure 14.4: ABV 97.27, 683; *Para* 37; *Add*² 26; BAPD 310027). If the vase painter were to replace the figure of the young virgin with that of an animal, the result would be a typical rendering of a *sphagion*. Structurally speaking, both ancient authors and artists apparently conceived human sacrifice as a *sphagion*. Compared with the sacrificial procession, neither the conclusion of the sacrifice nor the preparations for the communal meal or the meal itself were often represented in the visual arts of Archaic and Classical Greece (Straten 1995, 144-153). In this respect, the Archaic so-called Ricci hydria in the Villa Giulia in Rome is quite exceptional (Mylonopoulos 2006, 77-79).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 14.1a-b Attic black-figure amphora attributed to the Painter of Berlin 1686 (name vase), from Vulci. Sacrificial procession. C. 540 BCE. Ceramic. Height 47 cm. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung inv. F 1686.

(Photograph © bpk, Berlin/Johannes Laurentius/Art Resource, New York, ART305140.)

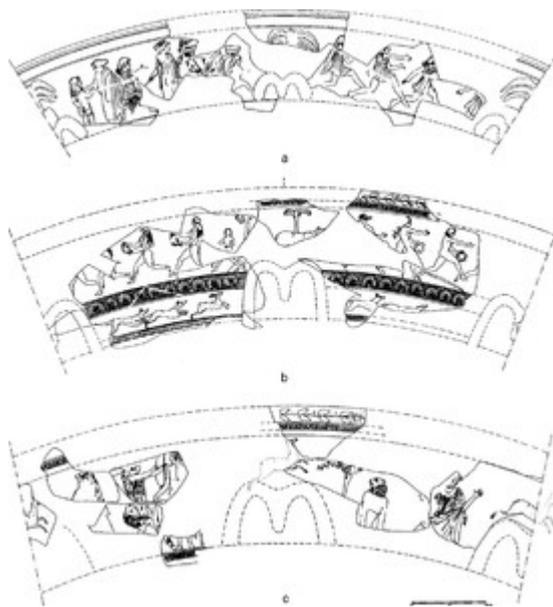
The sacrificial procession remained a popular ritual-related topic in Greek art until red-figure pottery ceased being produced toward the end of the fourth century BCE and the practice of relief dedication declined in the Hellenistic period. Generic depictions of rites such as libations complemented the repertory.

Nevertheless, in late Archaic and Classical times, a specific vase form was produced for the sanctuaries of Artemis at Brauron and Munichia.

Known as the *krateriskos*, it was decorated with ritual scenes explicitly

associated with aspects of religious life in these two sanctuaries. It is well known that initiation rites for young maidens, the *arkteia*, were held at both sites (Faraone 2003). Despite Aristophanes's *Lysistrata* (641-646), in which the *arkteia* is (p. 338) referred to as part of some sort of *cursus honorum* for young Athenian women, literary sources do not reveal much about the rites associated with the initiation. Nevertheless and most likely, the scenes on the *krateriskoi* show parts of the initiation ceremony at the sanctuaries

(Kahil 1965 and 1977). If the hypothesis holds true, then the young girls first gathered near the altar and then started running. At some point, they undressed and continued the race, probably finishing it naked (figure 14.5). The ritualized running was a chase rather than a race and was probably conceived of as a form of a mimetic reenactment of the myth that gave rise to the initiation rites (Scanlon 1990; Mylonopoulos 2011b, 67–70)—namely, that a bear holy to Artemis had hurt a girl in the sanctuary and was then killed by the maiden’s brothers. In order to calm the goddess down, the Athenians had established the *arkteia* in her main Attic sanctuary at Brauron. Here young Athenian girls had to serve the deity as “bears” (*arktoi*). Apparently, the young girls were imitating the attempt of the girl to escape from the bear in the ritual’s foundation myth.



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Fig. 14.5 *Krateriskoi* found at Brauron. Drawing.

(Source: Kahil 1977, 86, fig. A-C.)

The miniature *chous* is another Attic vase form specifically associated with a concrete ritual. While adults participated in a drinking contest on the *Choes*, the second day of the *Anthesteria*, small jugs were given to children between the ages of three and four, most probably as their first taste of wine and to mark their entry into the world of Dionysus. (p. 339)

Compared with the *krateriskoi*, however, these miniature jugs rarely refer visually to rituals associated with the *Choes*. Instead, they

show scenes from the everyday life of children playing with toys or, less frequently, with animals (Neils 2003, 145–149).



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Fig. 14.6 Votive relief dedicated by Xenocrateia, from the sanctuary of Cephissus at Neo Phalero. C. 410 BCE. Marble. Height 57 cm. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 2756.

(Photograph © National Archaeological Museum Athens.)

The significance of young Athenian boys and girls in the religious life of their city is illustrated in one of the most remarkable reliefs from Classical Athens, the votive relief of Xenocrateia from the small sanctuary of Cephissus at Neo Phalero (figure 14.6) (Walter 1937, 97–107). Recently, the relief has been convincingly dated to the years around 410 BCE (Voutyras 2011).

Xenocrateia, the mother of Xeniades, dedicated the relief to the personified Cephissus and his *sybomoi theoi* on behalf of her son. Like a visual reaction to the accompanying dedicatory inscription (*IG I*³ no. 987; a list of deities, *IG II*² no. 4547, found inscribed on a stone block—perhaps the altar—is most probably referring to the *sybomoi theoi*), the relief shows Xenocrateia presenting her little boy to Cephissus. The three figures are surrounded by a group of deities, most probably the *sybomoi theoi* of the text, who seem rather uninvolved. It is important to note that according to the inscription, Xenocrateia was also the founder of the sanctuary, a fact that makes the connection between her and the god much more personal (Purvis 2003, 15–32). Emmanouel Voutyras suggested that behind the exceptional act of the sanctuary’s foundation and (p. 340) the dedication-like presentation of the child to the deity lay Xenocrateia’s real promise to dedicate her son to the river god, a plan disrupted by the Spartan invasion of Attica. Xenocrateia was forced to move from her home demos to the fortified city. Instead of postponing her promise to Cephissus, Xenocrateia decided to found a small sanctuary to the god at a site where the river still flowed into the area protected by the Long Walls and to perform the act of her son’s dedication there (Voutyras 2011, 53).



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Fig 14.7 Votive relief to Artemis, from Achinos. C. 350 BCE. Marble. Height 68 cm. Lamia, Archaeological Museum inv. BE 1041.

(Photograph © Archaeological Museum, Lamia.)

The connection between a singular votive relief from Achinos (figure 14.7) and ritual practices associated with children and childbirth is even more pronounced (Dakoronia and Gounaropoulou 1992). This relief dates to the mid-fourth century BCE and shows Artemis standing behind an altar and holding a long torch. On the other side of the

altar, a miniaturized cult servant guides an equally small bull. Behind him, a young mother holds her baby in her outstretched arms, presenting it to the deity. There is no reason to recognize a sign of the cult of Artemis Tauropolos in the sacrificial animal, as was suggested in the first publication of the object (Dakoronia and Gounaropoulou 1992, 219-220). The mother is followed by a young female servant bearing a basket of offerings on her head and also an older female figure with covered head and right hand raised in the typical gesture of adoration. The uniqueness of the relief lies in the hung clothes and [\(p. 341\)](#) shoes in the background. As stated above, thanks to the inventory lists from Brauron and the Brauronium on the Athenian Acropolis, textile dedications to Artemis are a well-documented practice, yet the relief here is the sole visual evidence for this kind of dedicatory practice and, more important, for the way in which clothing was displayed in sanctuaries. Furthermore, the relief seems to conflate the area outside the temple, where the sacrifice would have taken place, with the temple's interior, where the clothes would have hung. One single image thus unites four ritual actions: the sacrifice of a bull, the adoration of the deity through a specific gesture, the presentation of a child to a protective deity, and the dedication of clothes manifesting successful childbirth.



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Fig 14.8 Votive relief of Archinus, from the Amphiareum at Oropus. C. 400–350 BCE. Marble. Height 49 cm. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 3369.

(Photograph © National Archaeological Museum Athens.)

Although the famous fourth-century BCE relief of Archinus (figure 14.8) was found at the Sanctuary of Amphiaraus at Oropus (Kaltsas 2002, 209–210 no. 425), the narrative or, rather, narratives depicted create the impression of a direct connection between the votive objects and the wondrous healing of Plutus in Aristophanes’s homonymous comedy (665–744), which was associated either with the Asclepieum at Piraeus or, more likely, the City Asclepieum on the south slope of the Athenian

Acropolis. In Aristophanes’s piece, Asclepius and his two daughters visit the patient in his sleep. While the god is treating Plutus, two snakes join in and assist him by licking the diseased area (his eyes). In the relief, the artist modeled three scenes on three different layers. The middle layer shows Archinus asleep with the snake of Amphiaraus touching his shoulder. The front layer visualizes the treatment of the patient by the god himself as it occurs in Archinus’s dream. In the background, one sees the healthy figure of Archinus standing next to a stele, probably a self-reference to the votive relief, with his right hand raised (p. 342) in a gesture of adoration. (Kaltsas 2002, 209–210, identifies the standing bearded divine figure with Asclepius and the smaller standing young figure in the background with Amphiaraus. According to the inscription, the relief was dedicated to Amphiaraus and not Asclepius. In addition, there would have been no need for Amphiaraus to address another god in adoration. More important, the standing Archinus in the foreground and the young standing figure in the background are iconographically nearly identical.) Different times (before and after the treatment), different levels of existence and experience (sick; healthy; awake; asleep; an out-of-body experience in a dream), and different spaces (the metaspace of the dream; the *abaton*, site of the healing sleep; the site of the relief’s display) concur in a single object. To my best knowledge, there is no other ancient Greek votive relief that achieves this kind of spatial and temporal sophistication.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig 14.9 Attic red-figure *oinochoe* attributed to the Group of Berlin 2514, from Sicily. C. 470–460 BCE. Ceramic. Height 20.3 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. 08.258.25.

(Photograph © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York, ART447680.)

Finally, an unusual scene on an Early Classical *oinochoe* in New York seems at first sight simply to visualize a prayer scene (figure 14.9: *ARV*² 776.3; *Para* 416; *Add*² 288; BAPD 209571; Oenbrink 1997, 368 no. A13, pl. 19; De Cesare 1997, 86, 261–262 no. 220). An older bearded man with a walking stick stands behind a column on top of which stands a statue of Athena. He raises his right hand and points with his forefinger toward the statue. The unexpected element in the scene is the fact that the statue seems to turn its head toward the

praying man. This is clear indication of a “living” image inhabited by the deity at the moment that she is being addressed by a worshipper. The painter of the *oinochoe*, stylistically not even a good one, is here commenting on the debate over the identification of images with the deities they were meant to represent. Clearly, he believed that at least (p. 343) occasionally, image and deity were one and the same (on the contrary, the main thesis of Eich 2011 is that ancient Greeks never believed in the identification of the cult statue with the deity and always considered images of deities as inanimate objects).

Building and Image: Architectural Decoration and Ritual



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Fig. 14.2 Votive relief from Piraeus. C. 350 BCE. Marble. Height 56 cm. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 1429.

(Photograph © National Archaeological Museum Athens.)

One could easily assume that architectural sculpture, the result of a creative junction between religious architecture—the *mise en scène* of rituals—and relief sculpture—a means of petrifying rituals—would be deeply influenced by and strongly interested in the depiction, display, and promotion of religious practices (Ridgway 1999; the title of Ridgway’s volume, *Prayers in Stone*, however, implies a ritual involvement of architectural sculpture that did not really exist). The case is quite the contrary. With the

remarkable exception of the Parthenon frieze, which most scholars see as a reflection (p. 344) of the Panathenaic procession (for a helpful overview of previous scholarship on the Parthenon frieze, see Neils 2001, 173–186; more recently, Fehr 2011 has attempted to interpret the frieze as a guidebook for Athenian democratic rules and values and suggested that the ritual connotations of the frieze, if there ever had been any, would have been secondary), and some other instances—mostly of the Archaic period—the themes decorating temples, treasuries, and other structures of religious character are mythological rather than cultic (on cultic themes in architectural sculpture, see Marconi 2013). In recent years, architectural sculpture in the Greek colonies of South Italy and Sicily has been convincingly interpreted as a powerful visual means of conveying and strengthening cultural identity through the use and promotion of myths (Marconi 2007: The study of architectural sculpture in mainland Greece and Asia Minor would profit from a similar approach that does not use the term “identity” in a generalized way but rather

searches for *specific* meanings conveyed by *specific* myths in *specific* cultural, political, and social contexts.) However, other critical voices have pointed to the rather restricted communicative “skills” of sculptural decoration caused by its limited visibility and have emphasized instead the notion of “decoration” (Hölscher 2009). If decoration were indeed *a*, if not *the*, primary aim of sculptural decoration, one would have to ask why it is that buildings “decorated” with sculpture were almost exclusively religious in nature. (p. 345) (On the interesting exception of the Thasian gates, which bear sculptural decoration, and how they can be seen in a network of Oriental influence and religious use, see Walsh 2009.)

Admittedly, the late-fifth-century BCE reliefs adorning the balustrade around the small temple of Athena Nike on the Athenian Acropolis do depict ritual practices such as the sacrifice of bulls (a sacrifice before battle for Jameson 1994; a celebratory sacrifice for Athena, thanking her for a victory, for Hölscher 1997; a chthonic sacrifice for Simon 1997). The performance of the rituals on the balustrade, however, is elevated to a frame outside the human realm; it involves no human figures, as the actors in the theater of ritual are winged Nikai performing either for Athena or in her presence. How can we explain this apparent reluctance to depict ritual acts in an architectural frame that functioned as their stage? Is it possible that for ancient Greeks, the depiction of cultic scenes in architecture meant symbolically elevating human beings to the level of gods? Along the same trajectory, scholars have tried to interpret the absence of depictions of contemporary historical events in religious architecture, with the N and W friezes of the Athena Nike Temple being the only case still under debate. According to Tonio Hölscher, both friezes depict battles between Athenians and other Greeks—the western side the battle against the Boeotians at Oenophyta, the northern side the battle against the Corinthians near Megara (Hölscher 1973, 91-98, especially 94-95). Based on iconographic elements and the claim that historical incidents do not normally decorate temples, Florens Felten suggested instead that both friezes exhibit events of the Trojan War (Felten 1984, 123-131). Although I follow Hölscher’s interpretation, I must add that the depiction of Athenian battles waged during the First Peloponnesian War signifies either that by the time the temple was ready to be sculpturally adorned, the fallen Athenians, much like the citizens who had fallen at Marathon, had been elevated to the level of heroes or that the monument was to initiate such a process of heroization. I would argue that the fallen Athenians from the early 450s BCE had already joined the ranks of the glorious dead of Marathon a generation after their death. In this respect, the battles at Oenophyta and Megara were not depicted purely as historical incidents but rather as parts of Athens’s ever-growing mythological past.

Conclusions

Although Greek religious space seems to have reacted to the diverse needs of ritual activities and their dynamic changes (Mylonopoulos 2008a), architectural forms remained functionally nonspecific, so that with the exception of the altar, structures such as the temple, the stoa, the banquet room, and the gathering hall were generally defined as religious according to function rather than form. Admittedly, a temple, a treasury in the form of a prostyle temple, or the facade of a tomb emulating a temple front lay within religious or sepulchral boundaries, although a stoa may have been found in either a sanctuary or an agora. From an architectural perspective, even the (p. 346) Eleusinian *telesterion*, a building with clear ritual functions, is essentially a large gathering hall. Such an observation, however, does not by any means imply that ancient Greek architecture in sanctuaries was of no or limited importance. On the contrary, architecture was the decisive parameter in the spatial and visual definition and organization of any given sacred space, which naturally, perhaps even more important, was also defined by ritual activity. In ancient Greece, ritual space and architectural space were surely not identical; occasionally, they could even be antithetical (Mylonopoulos 2011b, 57–59). Together, however, they both constructed sacred space. Votive offerings, especially sculpture in the round and votive reliefs, were a powerful means of enhancing sacred space and always the result of a highly specific ritual act, the dedication. In addition, thanks to the topics depicted, votive reliefs—more emphatically than votive statues—could also become both petrified recollections of past and promises of future ritual practices honoring the gods. Their iconography visualized the ambivalence of the Greeks' relationship with their gods; despite their proximity, the obvious difference in their sizes conveyed the distance between the deity and the worshipper. It is perhaps this hierarchically conceived distance that kept Greek builders of temples from using rituals as topics for architectural sculpture, which, with its preference for mythological scenes, granted visual emphasis to the general religious functions of the structures it adorned without attempting to specify or explain them.

When in his *Antiquitates Romanae*, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, well known for his interest in associating Rome with Greece, attempted to identify a sacrificial ritual in the city of Rome as Greek, he laid stress on the traditionally (*kata nomous*) Greek manner (*tropos*) of the ritual praxis rather than on the theological connection between Greek and Roman sacrificial rituals (7.72.15–16). Similarly, both Greek religious architecture and votive imagery seem to have been more interested in the ritually *how* than in the theological *why*.

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Buildings, Images, and Rituals in the Roman World

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the religious contexts of ancient Rome, with particular emphasis on the interrelationships among buildings, images, and rituals from the Republican to the Late Imperial period. It discusses the link between sacred spaces and architecture, along with public spaces and buildings and houses. In particular, it considers the role of Roman buildings in creating an appropriate setting for the performance of ritualized acts full of meaning for contemporary society. It also explores mural paintings, plaster decorations of ceilings, and floor mosaics in the domestic sphere.

Keywords: ancient Rome, architecture, buildings, houses, images, mural paintings, plaster decorations, public spaces, rituals, sacred spaces

In book 7 of his *Ten Books on Architecture* (*De architectura*), Vitruvius tells the story of an artist hired by the citizens of Tralles to decorate their small theater, who painted on the facade of the stage building “columns... statues, Centaurs supporting the architraves,” and a number of other similar images (*De arch.* 7.5). Most of the viewers found this decoration appealing, but a few judicious ones criticized the selection of motifs, which they found inappropriate for the setting; ultimately, writes Vitruvius, these critics managed to prevent the city fathers of Tralles from making “Abderites” (a synonym for “fools”) of themselves because of their lack of taste. This passage by Vitruvius is one of the very few in ancient literature dedicated to the relationship between buildings and images, but after reading it in its entirety, one gets a clear sense of the great significance of this subject.

This anecdote introduces us to the content of this chapter, which is dedicated to the question of how Roman buildings managed, through their architectural forms and figural decoration, to create an appropriate setting for the performance of ritualized acts full of meaning for contemporary society.

In scholarship, this problem has not always been addressed in this holistic way, the attention being paid, alternatively, to pure architectural form, figural decoration, or ritual actions.

In the first handbooks on Roman architecture, dating back to the nineteenth century, by Aloys Hirt (1821–1827), Auguste Choisy (1873 and 1899), and Josef Durm (1885), the emphasis was on the typology of monumental buildings, a subject of particular interest to the architects of the growing European cities of that time. In 1959, Luigi Crema (1959) was the first, in his encyclopedic account of the subject, to make the historical dimension of Roman architecture into a guiding principle, but he also reinforced the strict formal classification of buildings according to types. In subsequent general accounts of Roman architecture (Brown 1961; Boëthius and Ward-Perkins 1970; Ward-Perkins (p. 353) 1981) and monographs on individual classes of buildings, typology remained the basic category of analysis.

Countering this approach, in his volumes on Roman architecture, Pierre Gros has adopted a new categorization, using function as the main criterion and distinguishing between private and public buildings (Gros 2011, first published in 1996; Gros 2006, first published in 2001; for a similar approach, see Hesberg and Zanker 2009). Meanwhile, in the age of architectural postmodernism, questions of design have informed the discussions of Roman architecture by William MacDonald (1982 and 1986) and Mark Wilson Jones (2000), while questions about construction techniques and building process have been central to the work of Jean-Pierre Adam (1984) and Rabun Taylor (2003).

As one would expect, the 1970s saw the emergence of the first sociopolitical considerations, with increasing emphasis being laid on the cultural-historical concept of *Lebensraum*, or living space (Gros 1978; Zanker 1987). In 2005, Henner von Hesberg systematically developed these ideas into a comprehensive concept in his volume on Roman architecture (Hesberg 2005; see Thomas 2010 for a discussion of the current state of scholarship). Hesberg—along with many scholars today—regards architecture as a cultural indicator and buildings as social objects. In writing the history of architecture, one should thus present this subject in the reality of its life, including its cultural context. These ideas have guided the following overview, which is devoted to the relationship among buildings, images, and rituals. These three components of the same complex cultural phenomenon require a few introductory remarks.

Let us stress, first, the enormous number of Roman buildings. The dense and stable building growth, coupled with spectacular interventions into the natural landscape, that occurred during the Roman era was without precedent in the Mediterranean. The development of the arch and *opus caementicium* in the second century BCE created the

technical conditions for that expansion. At the same time, a wide range of distinctive building types was developed from a few basic models, following a demand for functional suitability. The buildings were expected to accommodate well-ordered actions, rituals, and ceremonies, and the requirements associated with those actions influenced the different types of design, which Vitruvius makes the basis of his treatise *De architectura*.

In the Roman world, much more than in the modern one and contrary to the practices of contemporary architecture, particular significance was attached to the quick recognition of a functional type, which served as an indication to the public of a socially expected or religiously required behavior. This indication must have been particularly marked in relation to religious buildings, which is why the image of temples achieved an iconic status, as we will see below.

Images were, before the rise of modern architecture, an indispensable feature of buildings. Their main function was to bestow distinction on buildings by their presence, and this was not limited to acting as a medium for messages. In fact, images contributed significantly to the positive aura of buildings, valued in antiquity as their *auctoritas*. Indeed, in antiquity, architectural design was conceived and perceived as an image.

(p. 354) Add to this image the public performing a ritual or a ceremony, and the result was an overall impression of buildings, which became a subject featured in several media in Roman art. In modern scholarship, particular consideration has been accorded the so-called historical reliefs, regarded as a visual archive of historical events framed by buildings belonging to the sphere of political and religious public life (Torelli 1982).

The actual images featured on buildings took, first of all, the form of architectural sculpture and ornamentation. Scholarship has been concerned with the sculptures on the pediments, the reliefs on the metopes, architraves, and the attics of porticoes or with the occasional figural decoration found on capitals, column shafts, archivolt, and pilasters. This research, however, has been conducted most often from a sculptural perspective, more rarely from an architectural one. Yet even sculptures in the round, through their positioning in niches and between columns, were often so deeply embedded in the surrounding architecture that they could be perceived as relieflike images. Later in this chapter, we will consider buildings and constructions that were conceived of as frames for statues and reliefs, thus becoming carriers of images with great communicative power. In the period of sociopolitical and semiotic approaches in scholarship, beginning with the 1970s, these buildings, pertaining to the public sphere, were explored as tools for political propaganda.

The connection between images and buildings was much more intense in the domestic sphere. Mural paintings, plaster decorations of ceilings, and floor mosaics concealed the structures of buildings like a second skin. In recent years, this imagery has come under

intense scrutiny by scholars, addressing questions concerning cultural sensitivities and mentalities.

We can be confident that the intended audience was able to understand and comment in an informed way on the content of these images, thanks to the redundancy of the iconographic schemes, the distribution of the images on the buildings, and the life events staged in these buildings.

The buildings and their images addressed a public that was performing actions. The most strictly defined among these actions were the immutable sacred rites performed in front of temples. The unchanging repetition of those rites satisfied a fundamental need of religious experience, that of conveying a sense of certainty. From religious rites, one can detach, only to some degree, the ceremonial character of state events. In those events, the repetitive actions performed were periodically charged with new meaning and adapted to new political situations.

Outside the state-sponsored sphere were many civic activities that conformed to a regular order. In the public baths, practical needs required that actions be performed by a collectivity and that rules be followed. At banquets and receptions in private houses, social conventions resulted in ritualized and, in some cases, even ceremonial behavior. The central areas of the houses were to be arranged accordingly, states Vitruvius (*De arch.* 6.5), who explains his recommendations by referring to political ranking.

Buildings, taken along with images and rituals, thus represent a cultural-historical phenomenon. Based on the demands expected from them, they can be presented under (p. 355) the headings of “tradition,” “representation,” and “beauty,” which in the following text will articulate my discussion of religious, state-imperial, and residential buildings.

Tradition in Sacred Spaces

In the Roman world, temples were often described and depicted (Gros 1976; Stamper 2005; Schollmeyer 2008). In the depictions, the emphasis is almost always on the facade, whose basic shape consisting of a triangular pediment resting on four, six, eight, or ten columns was extremely memorable. On coins, the facade—often represented without regard for the actual number of columns—serves as an emblem of a specific cult place, a remembrance of the event that led to its foundation, which was celebrated every other year on the occasion of the *dies natalis* of the temple. Vitruvius goes to great lengths to distinguish the forms of temples into types, dividing them into aerostyle and pycnostyle

facades and according to other subtleties that would have not passed unnoticed to the trained eye but for the common public fused into the image of the temple. This basic form was to remain unchanged, in order to convey a sense of timelessness and tradition. As a building type, the temple is a materialization of *memoria*, which preserves the past before the mind's eye and promises continuity, the same way that ritual will continue forever. Sacred buildings derived their individuality from their historical or mythological foundation. This was alluded to even on small coins by featuring the sculpture in the pediments, the part of the decoration of temples that made reference to this event.

In the Archaic period, as in the case of the Temple of Mater Matuta in Rome from about the middle of the sixth century BCE, it was still undetermined which images should decorate which part of the building, with the result that modern attempts at reconstruction may vary (figure 15.1). Terracotta statues could be installed even on the ridge beam (Cristofani 1990; for an alternative reconstruction, see Pisani Sartorio 1989, pl. 7; for the unusual solutions found at Satricum, see Lulof 1996). In the Republican period, despite its inauspicious format, the gable soon became the favorite area for the display of images. Several temples of this period can be reconstructed with mythological representations, including a rich number of terracotta figures, such as the pediment from San Gregorio in Rome (Ferrea 2002). The Early Republican Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was characterized in its original phase (c. 500 BCE) by the presence of a quadriga of Jupiter made of terracotta and placed at the roof's apex; after the fire of 69 CE, the newly restored building featured a gigantic lightning bolt on the tympanum; finally, after a second fire in 80 CE, a series of figures—including the Capitoline Triad and Vulcan forging the lightning—populated the gable (Albertoni and Damiani 2008). Acting as *memoria*, these images preserved the mythological foundation of the temple for subsequent generations.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 15.1 Reconstructed pedimental decoration of the Temple of Mater Matuta in Rome. C. 550 BCE. Terracotta. Height 5.8 m. Rome, Musei Capitolini invv. 16101-16116.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

More sophisticated was the figurative program on display in the Temple of Apollo Medicus, founded in Rome in the year 431 BCE and known to us only in its Augustan version, under the name of Apollo Sosianus (Viscogliosi 1996; La Rocca 1985). Thanks to the almost complete reconstruction sponsored by Gaius Sosius, who triumphed in (p. 356) 34 BCE, and Octavian, later Augustus, this temple enjoyed a second life. The

gable was now filled with a group of pedimental sculptures taken from Greece, which featured an Amazonomachy. That these sculptures were plundered works of art would have become more clear to the viewer as he or she entered the cella; here, thanks to the use of expensive, colorful, false facades, all four walls were articulated as display surfaces, featuring aediculas filled with Greek sculptures and paintings. The resulting effect was a gallery of Greek art, which was meant to preserve the *memoria* of the event that had led to this new foundation, namely Sosius's victories. These accomplishments were eclipsed by Augustus's own exploits, commemorated by a frieze in the cella featuring the triple triumph of Octavian in the year 29 BCE. Finally, the early history of the temple, that of Apollo Medicus, was attested by small details in the decoration of the building, such as the laurel garlands adorning the capitals and the architrave. If the suggestion that the pedimental sculptures were taken from the Temple of Apollo Daphnephoros at Eretria is correct, these images would also refer, with their subject and date, to the first foundation of the Roman Temple of Apollo Medicus. In short, a wide variety of images on this temple referred to the long history of the building. The emphasis, though, was on Augustus as a new major figure in history and a favorite of Apollo, whose birthday was made into the new *dies natalis* of the temple. *Memoria* was thus not only evoked but was also the result of a new construction.

(p. 357) On the architraves of many temples, and with particular splendor on the Temple of Vespasian in the Forum Romanum (De Angeli 1992), the marble reproductions of bucrania, woolen bands, and cult implements documented a religious tradition by means of a recording of cultic celebrations. This recording found expression not only in

scrupulously precise transcriptions but also in reliefs, which were the main artistic medium in the religious sphere.

Altars were buildings expressly designated for ritual actions. At the foundation of sacred sites, sacrifices were already established in the calendar, and they were commemorated on the altar through selected relief images. No other Roman altar is as eloquent and rich in images as the Ara Pacis on the Via Flaminia in Rome, dedicated on the January 30 in 9 BCE (Rossini 2006) (figure 15.2). The exterior of the Ara Pacis is the marble replica of a wooden fence—from which hang garlands, bowls, and bucrania—surrounding the altar proper. On its outside are two processions featuring the Gens Iulia, Augustus, political collaborators, and cult personnel, moving in the same direction as if they were to enter the enclosure, although what is commemorated is demonstrably not a specific historical event but a generic rite of *supplicatio*. It is inside the fence, and on the altar itself, that one sees the actual animal sacrifice to Pax, performed by the Vestal Virgins and the priests. Finally, the mythological justification for the dedication of the altar is offered to the viewer by a series of panels decorating the enclosure, featuring narratives leading all the way back to the beginning of Roman history and Aeneas.

Rituals endowed religious buildings with their characteristic appearance, which distinguished them almost unmistakably from secular structures. The main elements were played out on the facade. Steps raised the temple symbolically above everyday life and made the ritual actions or even an epiphany of the deity more visible for the crowd below; at least, this was how ritual was perceived and represented according to a modest little image from Pompeii (House VII 9, 47; see Small 2007). On *templa rostrata*, on the other hand, the stairs were interrupted by projections and balustrades—the *rostra*—which served to create a stage for public events (Ulrich 1994). On the steps and between the columns of the *pronaos*, there was room for the *lectisternia* and *sellisternia* of the gods, attended by choruses standing on the steps. Porticoes, necessary for the preparation and performance of ritual actions, such as the *pompae*, enclosed the sacred areas.



Click to view larger

Fig. 15.2 Ara Pacis Augustae. 9 BCE. Marble. Width 10.7 m. Rome.

(Photograph © Vanni Archive/Art Resource, New York, ART14299.)

Most sacred building complexes included only a few parts, such as the temple, the altar, and the portico. Places of worship for Isis and Serapis, on the other hand, featured interesting combinations of various chapels and halls, which contributed to the sense of exotic strangeness that was sought in those sanctuaries. The quick recognition of the

character of the cult, at places such as the large Iseum Campense in Rome and the Sanctuary of Isis in Pompeii (Lembke 1994; Hoffmann 1993; De Caro 1992; in general, on Isea, see Kleibl 2009), was guaranteed by the abundance of Egyptian images and hieroglyphic signs. With their Archaic-looking style, these images signaled to visitors that the cult was one of ancient tradition. The varied small-scale configuration of these cult buildings was consistent with the complex extravagance of the rituals that were performed there. A wall painting from Herculaneum gives us a glimpse into such festivals, (p. 358) in which the visual appearance of the worshipping community contributes significantly to the overall picture (Ling 1991, 162, fig. 174) (figure 15.3).

In the Roman world, presenting the tradition, particularly the religious one, as uninterrupted was the task of individual temple buildings and their imagery. Subjects could be more historical or more mythological; the aura of eternity came to the buildings mainly from the combination of columns and pediment. The tradition, branded as authentic, found its expression in the rituals and was commemorated in perpetuity on the buildings through architectural form and images featuring cult implements and cult actions.

Representation and Communication in Public Spaces

Architecture is a medium for communication, and its specific objective is public representation. How this was accomplished in the case of Roman buildings will be discussed in this section using as examples fora, theaters, and funerary monuments.



Click to view larger

Fig 15.3 A cult scene in a sanctuary of Isis, from Herculaneum. Third quarter of first century CE (?). Wall painting. Height 80 cm. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 8924. (© Erich Lessing/ Art Resource, New York.)

The fora were public spaces par excellence, which nonetheless could also be perceived as either sanctuaries, larger areas for public services, or simply urban plazas. In Rome, the Forum of Trajan, dedicated in 112 CE (Packer 1997; Meneghini 2009), represents the (p. 359) highlight of this type of building complex. In the fourth century CE, an official state visit to Rome still would have not been conceivable without including the Forum of Trajan. Thus, when, in 353

CE, Constantius II made his ceremonial entrance here, the appeal of this unique architecture was still strong—according to the report by Ammianus Marcellinus (16.10.5)—in spite of the fact that by that time, some of the images originally decorating the buildings may have already gone missing.

Across a large plaza measuring 330 by 180 meters stood a basilica, which, with its double internal colonnade and two large hemicycles on the narrow sides, surpassed all the previous buildings of this type in size and sophistication of design. Hemicycles were repeated on the long sides of the wide area, which was surrounded by porticoes. The southern end of this architectural complex consisted of a corridor with several kinks and a peristyle, for which there were no precedents in both form and function. The northern

end of the complex must have looked even more surprising to contemporary visitors. A 100-foot-high relief column, the grave monument of Trajan, was flanked by two halls, which served as libraries, despite their close similarity to the cellas of a temple, while further north, a series of lecture rooms bordered a semicircular court. In the middle of that court must have stood the temple dedicated to Trajan and Plotina. Apollodorus of Damascus, the architect of this building complex, significantly developed traditional architectural elements (p. 360) and types such as the porticoes, the basilica, and the hemicycles—all already present in the Forum of Augustus—by increasing their size and finding new innovative solutions for their distribution, making them into effective means of imperial representation.

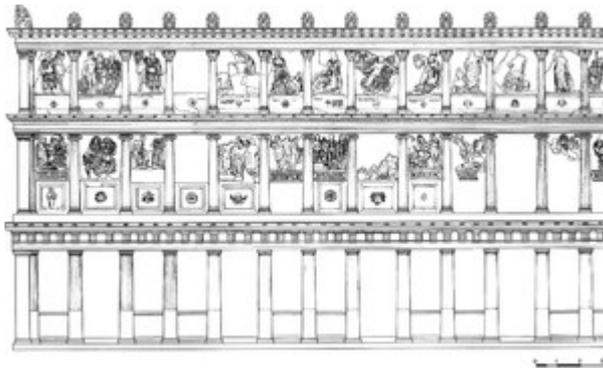
From literary sources, we can still have an idea about the activities that took place in some areas of this building complex: the administration of justice and research, supported by the huge libraries, were daily activities, of which a frequent visitor, Aulus Gellius, informs us in his *Noctes Atticae* (11.17.1; 13.25.2). The daily routine was interrupted for state events of particular significance, such as tax-debt reliefs that included the destruction of the relevant documents (for the representation of such an event and the relevant literary testimonia, see Rüdiger 1973). In general, one may argue that no significant event in public life could have taken place without an architectural stage such as the Forum of Trajan. The advantage provided by these architectural complexes on such occasions was so great because they offered a place for images, which served to communicate from the top down.

Such images populated the Forum of Trajan in large numbers. High above the columns, on the attica of the porticoes, stood the figures of Dacian prisoners supporting the entablature. Between those statues, the portraits of members of the imperial families, affixed on marble shields, looked down, like history carved into stone. In the hemicycles, portrait statues filled the niches in the walls at the backs of the porticoes. The basilica featured a long frieze—its exact placement on the building escapes us—illustrating Trajan's victorious battles. Thematically, this frieze was an introduction to the carved band winding in a spiral around Trajan's column, about 200 meters long, featuring the Dacian Wars. The themes of this decorative program are so explicit that no further explanation is required about the overall intent of the ruler's representation in this forum. Unlike on religious buildings, the message moved from a present celebrated as the heyday of Roman history into a promising future.

With the beginning of the Roman Imperial period, richly articulated and decorated building complexes of the kind just discussed received more space and significance in the urban centers of the Empire. The financial investment was considerable and is reflected in the high quality of design and execution. These architectural complexes served, as

regards their function, for the ritualized activities associated with state government, cult, and the administration of justice.

Aphrodisias, a city in the region of Caria in Asia Minor, rich in expensive public buildings and images, preserves a unique monument, the Sebasteion, which seems to have been expressly planned for receiving a flood of images (Smith 2013). A wide processional way, 80 meters long, led to a temple for the imperial cult (figure 15.4). This path was flanked by two three-story porticoes, whose two upper floors carried, in the intercolumniations between the half-columns, relief panels: those on the middle floor featured a gallery of Greek mythology; those in the upper floor featured the members of the Julio-Claudian family, including Augustus, Germanicus, Claudius as emperor subduing Britannia, and Nero vanquishing Armenia. A total of about two hundred relief panels glorified Rome and the ruling dynasty by deploying the full power of mythological representation.



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Fig. 15.4 Sebasteion, Aphrodisias. Graphic reconstruction by L. Bier (1995). C. 20–60 CE. Marble. Height 12 m.

(Source: Smith 2013, fig. 13. Courtesy Aphrodisias Excavations.)

(p. 361) The series of images featured on public buildings presupposed that people had the time for contemplating them. This time came, first and foremost, on the occasions of ritual events. Triumphal arches and honorary columns covered by reliefs, like those for Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, were isolated structures with the express task of conveying

messages from the emperor. On a few occasions, maybe only one occasion, they may have served as a backdrop for a ceremony such as the triumphal procession, the *profectio*, or the *adventus* of the emperor—one more reason for the plethora of images, for preserving the memory of the ruler's accomplishments and hopes. The original type of the triumphal arch with one gate was expanded in the arch for Septimius Severus and his sons to include three accesses, which allowed for the display of still more images on the building (Brilliant 1967; in general, on triumphal arches, see De Maria 1988). On this arch, the images—narrative accounts of the war on relief panels and of the triumphal procession on the frieze, the prisoners forever bound to support the load of the arch, the symbolic epiphanies of Victoria, the auspicious seasons, and other propitious gods—are distributed

with such order that any viewer would have quickly realized what to make of the general meaning of this monument.

Representation in the public, political sphere consists of the communication of statements from the ruler, and it is in this respect a form of propaganda. As such, it works less through its arguments than through the impact of the large images that it uses. In fact, representation provokes emotions. This was particularly the case when luxury and splendor were used to elicit positive feelings of participating in the wealth of the powerful. This representation of luxury was effectively pursued with the construction of particularly elaborate buildings. (p. 362)

Magnificence was already an essential component of public building projects in the politically turbulent years of the Late Roman Republic. The aediles, for example, who were interested in reaching the highest public offices later in their careers, sponsored the construction of temporary wooden theaters for sacred games, whose most impressive features were the facades of the stage buildings, or *scaenae frontes* (Gros 1987, 319–346). These were used as scaffolding for the display of an incredible number—supposedly hundreds—of statues and paintings, framed by columns of colored marble or precious metal. This plethora of statues, framed by aediculas, would have conjured up the impression of a gigantic tableau consisting of reliefs. The *scaenae* were a very appropriate setting for such a rich display of images, given that on the stage itself during performances, it was possible to see magnificent moving images, so to speak. In addition, before the beginning of the spectacle, the curtains, still closed, would have confronted the spectators with images. The luxury of these tableaux was clear through their basic lack of function, given that they had little to do with theatrical performances themselves. Buildings such as the famous Theater of Aemilius Scaurus (58 BCE) described by Pliny (*HN* 36.114–115), were clear instances of conspicuous consumption (Medri 1997). The public in the theater would have experienced this magnificence as an expression of power. At the same time, the luxury dispensed free of charge was also a source of *dignitas* for those people.

With the beginning of the Empire, theatrical buildings became closed, bowl-like structures (Fuchs 1987; Ciancio Rossetto and Pisani Sartorio 1994; Ramallo Asensio and Röring 2010). As in a panometer, the view moved from the figures adorning the *scaenae frons* to the magistrates seated in the side boxes, then back to the audience—which, thanks to the fixed seating arrangements and the different garments worn by the spectators, would have appeared like a color reproduction of the social order—including the ruler portraits in the *cavea* and the *pompae* roaming through the orchestra (compare the relief in Castel Sant’Elia reproduced in Ramallo Asensio and Röring 2010, 24). This panorama consisted of the political and social representation of the imperial rule. For the

whole Imperial period, the theater remained the public building featuring the largest quantity of images. Today's empty "scaffoldings" of the facades of stage buildings, at sites such as Arausio in Gallia, Aspendus in Pamphylia (figure 15.5), and Sabratha in Africa are like frames without pictures.

Amphitheaters exhibited similar facades, with their exteriors covered with statues; the *cavea* inside offered the overwhelming vision of the crowd of many thousands and in the center, as the target of every glance, the gigantic *mise en scène* with the victims of the spectacle. Since this was the impression that everyone expected from these buildings, coins featuring the Colosseum in Rome show that monument not as naked architecture but filled with a many-headed crowd (Golvin 1988; Bomgardner 2000; Welch 2007).



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Fig. 15.5 Aspendus, view of the theater with the stage building. C. 150 CE. Limestone. Width 96 m.

(Photograph © Alfredo Dagli Orti/Art Archive at Art Resource, New York, AA341606.)

We move now from the political to the festive public buildings. The ostentatious wealth of images featured on the magnificent buildings mentioned above finds a logical sequel in the public structures designated for *otium*. From the facades of theaters' stage (p. 363) buildings we come first to the display facades of the large fountains, the *nymphaea*, in which the uninterrupted rushing water symbolically

expressed the welfare made available to everyone. The abundance of water was, in fact, a luxury, very much like the architecture framing it, and it served as the representation of power. Fountain buildings such as the one in Miletus or the Septizodium in Rome at the foot of the Palatine Hill consisted of display walls, which featured a plethora of marble images framed by structurally superfluous columns and architraves (Dorl-Klingenschmid 2001; Longfellow 2011). In front of such buildings, passersby would have had the leisure to look upon the lavish decoration, an opportunity offered to an even higher degree in the Imperial baths of Rome. In those buildings, luxurious architecture and images were efficiently combined on a grand scale. Above the *natatio*, the pool of the Baths of Caracalla in Rome, still stands a display wall articulated with gigantic columns, once featuring eighteen statues, skewed from down below and appearing, under the afternoon

light, like one big, flat relief picture (DeLaine 1997; on baths in general, see Nielsen 1990; Yegül 1992 and 2010). Rushing jets of water further contributed to this rich visual and acoustic experience. To this picture of abundance one may add the crowd of bathers in the pool, sixteen hundred at one time, according to Olympiodorus (fragment 57). As a result, baths conveyed a feeling of wellness, technical excellence, and leisure, made available in the best of all (p. 364) possible worlds. Everybody was accorded the luxury of afternoon pleasures, at least, which came as a representative gift from the emperor.

In the centers of the Empire, above all in Rome, representation came from the emperors, but in the countless smaller places in the Empire, it came from the local elites. Even ordinary people, when they had the means, had the desire to fashion their own living space with self-representation. This was accomplished in the most lasting and powerful way on the buildings associated with the cult of the dead, monuments for which one expects a close cooperation of design, rituals, and images.

The patrons of this type of monument were, for the most part, the same persons to be buried in them, who used their construction as a means for self-representing during their lifetime while expecting eternal glory after death. For the design of these structures, a number of funerary building types were available, which offered the possibility of individualized formal solutions and room for personalized messages (Hesberg 1992). The tendency toward competition in self-representation within the same socioeconomic layer during the Late Republic and the Early Empire is manifested in the variations among similar types of burial monuments lining the roads leading to urban centers, such as outside of Porta Ercolana and Porta Nocera at Pompeii (Kockel 1983; D'Ambrosio, De Caro, and Vlad Borrelli 1983; see also Hesberg and Zanker 1987). The most visible places on these tombs featured portraits and images that related the professional and social exploits of the deceased, along with his or her accomplishments and successes. Even an entire tomb could be fashioned as the representation of the activities of its patron; thus, in the years around 30 BCE, Vergilius Eurysaces, the owner of a wholesale bakery, did not content himself with having his tomb—located in a very busy spot on the Via Praenestina immediately outside of Rome—displaying a frieze featuring the entire production and marketing process occurring at his business and, in a niche, portraits of himself and his wife; the central part of the building even featured a series of cylindrical kneading machines (Ciancio Rossetto 1973). The relief featuring baked goods on the adjacent tomb of the baker Ogulnius certainly could not compete with those striking representations.

The reliefs—dating to the early second century CE—from the tomb of the building contractor Haterius Antigonus, on the Via Casilina immediately outside of Rome, are even richer in narrative content (Sinn and Freyberger 1996). The funerary monument is lost to us, but its original appearance is preserved by its representation on one of the reliefs that

once decorated the tomb. This relief shows the monument clad with images, of which the most interesting, probably not only to us, are those featuring large public buildings erected by this contractor—arches, amphitheaters, and temples, all richly decorated with reliefs and statues in their turn.

Beautiful Houses for Social Rituals

No Roman buildings had more ubiquitous images than houses (Joyce 1981; Mielsch 1987; Clarke 1991; Frazer 1998). In recent years, the cultural-historical analysis of (p. 365) this living environment has been quite intense, making the traditional distinction between public and private space an obsolete one. Contrary to that distinction, the villas of the wealthy and their urban residences included a series of spaces for the public, which reached deeply into what we traditionally regard as the private sphere. For this reason, current research deals not only with social strategies but also with life values and sensibilities and also with pleasure, eroticism, and intimacy (Zanker 1979; Wallace-Hadrill 1994; Hales 2003; Pesando and Guidobaldi 2004). The articulation of buildings and the images on them created a space for a social life that revolved around beauty and enjoyment. To that end, overwhelming interior decorations, sophisticated light games, stimulating soundscapes, and especially dramatic views were carefully devised. In such elaborate environments, the zest for life was staged through ritual actions, and the prosperous social conditions of the owner of the house were reasserted.

Above all, the main goal of these sophisticated spaces was to enthrall the eyes of the beholder, so that the charm of the environment with ingeniously devised views, insights, and vistas could exert its influence. Cicero and Atticus, for example, found the window in a room of a villa too small, but they agreed with the argument put forward by the architect Cyrus that “views of greenery through wide openings are not so pleasant,” which is explained by Cicero in his letter with scientific considerations drawing on optics (Cicero *Att.* 2.3.2; see Balensiefen 1994). We can fully comprehend this passage considering the case of a villa in ancient Oplontis, one of the many luxurious seaside villas in the Bay of Naples (Fergola 2004; Ciardiello 2010). To the main Late Republic building was added in Neronian times a wing on the east side, in which three banquet rooms and three miniature gardens would have appeared to form a string. The gardens were light wells not to be entered. As a result, the view—and this only—would have moved from a series of open and closed, lighter and darker areas, and this effect was heightened by gardens in perspective painted on the walls. The boundary between reality and representation, inside and outside, was completely blurred. Lying on one of the

couches, one would have felt oneself to be in a garden pavilion, both in the house and in the garden.

Even more airy was the arrangement of the banqueting rooms in smaller town residences such as the Casa dei Cervi in Herculaneum, dating to about the same period as the villa in Oplontis (Tran tam Tinh 1988). A central dining room opens on two sides in full width. Toward the north, the view would have moved through a small garden with marble animals to a temple-like facade, while toward the south, it would have moved across a footpath and a delicate porch all the way to the sea, crowded with ships occupied by people enjoying, in their turn, the sight of the seaside villas.

The staging of calculated resting points made those views into framed pictures. Further visual stimuli derived from the fact that all viewing axes in the architecture of the house included aquatic elements, which were enjoyed acoustically in the first place but which also laid the most alluring light reflections on plants and statues. Statius describes in a series of poetic images the aesthetic experience derived from the architectural views from the hedges cut into figures by the *topiarius*, and from the trickling, (p. 366) bubbling, and rushing water (Statius, *Silv.* 1.3, 2.2; see Bowe 2004). In fact, the ultimate goal of such landscaped environment was no doubt a sense of enjoyment and wellness, not unlike in the Roman urban baths.

The spaces in which this desire for well-being was concentrated were almost exclusively designed for social interactions, which always took place in association with eating and drinking. These banquets and receptions were governed not only by the respect of customary rules of social behavior but also by ceremonies, which began with the distribution of the participants on the couches and extended to the regulation of drinking. In somewhat loose terms, we can speak of the rituals of social life, for which the architecture, with its articulation, provided the appropriate setting (Dickmann 1999).

The real, solid internal walls of residential buildings disappeared completely under images. Roman wall painting, from its beginnings in the second century BCE all the way until the Late Imperial period, was marked by its effort to negate the substance of walls by covering them with images of other architecture.

Thus, in the villa at Oplontis, the atrium, painted around the middle of the first century BCE, features an overwhelming architectural view of palaces and sanctuaries with gardens projected on its walls (figures 4.3 and 4.4). The resulting effect must have been not of a particularly elegant or cozy living atmosphere but of a royal palace or a Greek sanctuary. Sketched reconstructions of the painted architectures into three-dimensional spaces illustrate that same subtle blend of architecture and nature, of vistas and views, described above.

The representation of wealth, which at Oplontis found expression in painted costly materials, such as gold and precious stones, also contributed to the sense of enjoyment. Somewhat later, in the time of Augustus, the high value of figurative paintings took the place of expensive materials. A series of painted rooms from the so-called Villa della Farnesina on the Tiber River in Rome, were entirely moved to the Museo Nazionale Romano when the remains of the villa were destroyed in 1879 (Bragantini, Dolciotti, and Sanzi Di Mino 1998; Mols and Moormann 2008) (figure 15.6). The architectures painted on the walls of these rooms were reduced to simple motifs such as aediculas and miniaturized architectural parts. These architectural elements served as the frame for the reproduction of what accounted for the most expensive forms of wall covering, namely, paintings on wood panels and white marble. From then on, those paintings projected a sheer, endless wealth of stories and myths on the surfaces of the walls.



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Fig. 15.6 Paintings from room B of the Villa della Farnesina, Rome. C. 20 BCE. Wall painting. Height 2.30 m. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano inv. 1118 (Photograph by Luciano Romano.)

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For a long time, Roman wall painting has been treated in the archaeological literature as an independent artistic genre instead of as images on buildings. That approach has drastically changed during the past two decades (good overviews are provided by Ling 1991; Mazzoleni and Pappalardo 2004; Lorenz 2008; on floor mosaics, see Muth 1998), particular consideration being accorded in more recent years to the general context, often laboriously restored. Thanks to this process of

recontextualization, we have an idea of how social events found almost ritual expression within buildings and how sensations were constructed with the combined use of images and architectural design. (p. 367) The participants would have probably agreed with those social practices and also with what made living in these houses more enjoyable, namely, pleasure for the eyes and the desire for beauty.

Conclusions

Within the proposed classification of buildings according to the categories of “tradition,” “representation,” and “beauty,” it is possible to include all those structures that are more than simple *aedificia*, achieving the status of *architectura*. Other classifications are theoretically possible. Yet our inquiry according to cultural spheres of action has made it easier to give a full sense of the complexity of the buildings when considered in association with their figural decoration and the activities that took place within their walls. The result is a ranking of buildings that comes close to the hierarchies of Roman social life.

Religious buildings were the most elaborate in terms of design, the richest in decoration, and the most enduring in conception. The columns surmounted by a pediment (p. 368) and preceded by a flight of stairs most likely represented the most sublime image in Roman architecture.

In the buildings associated with the ruler, architectural elements with sacred connotations such as long rows of columns could be used as effective means for representation. Because messages had to be conveyed with each new historical situation and because predecessors or rivals had to be eclipsed, there were often forces pushing toward innovation. As a general rule, therefore, the most modern architecture was to be found in those realms in which power and rank were put on display, namely, the palaces of the rulers and the spaces intended for the entertainment of the people.

Residential buildings displayed—whenever financial means made it possible—all sorts of beautiful views and representations of the sorts of buildings grouped here under “tradition” and “representation,” which lent greater dignity to the private lifestyle. This was clearly an architecture based on visual associations and rich in allusions.

The ranking of buildings corresponded with the level of control of the audience, from the ritual actions carried out as an obligation to the gods, to the ceremonies maintaining the ruler’s dignity, and, finally, to the ritualized code of conduct and the practices of social interaction in the private sphere.

The degree of density, quality, and significance of the images on buildings is more difficult to correlate with that ranking. In fact, it would appear that the use of images quickly expanded in the private sphere. Appearances, however, can be deceptive. It was on sacred and representative buildings that images were the most sophisticated, being made out of marble and often close to Greek art in the quality of their craftsmanship, which represented their direct source of inspiration.

The economic and political framework determined the power and resources for such costly architectural undertakings, and it represents the particular historical context, which explains developments in architecture. Conversely, changes in building design and construction techniques give us insight into historical changes. In scholarship, Roman buildings, along with their figural apparatus, have been traditionally subdivided according to periods, corresponding to the rule of individuals or dynasties. What may appear at first only an expedient solution is, in fact, in most cases a first step toward the correct explanation: the role of public buildings in the political sphere meant that a change in the rule was communicated and made visible on the buildings themselves, often in their decoration.

The persistence of religious buildings and of their appearance was also significant. Even the change from religious architecture made out of tufa in the Republican period into the *aurea templa* in marble of the Augustan age was not as revolutionary at the visual level, as is often assumed by scholars. In fact, a coating of stucco was normally applied to architectural elements made of tufa, in imitation of marble, whereas the terracotta figures on the pediments would have featured the same polychromy as most pedimental sculptures in marble of later periods. Not by chance, then, Augustus refers in his *Res Gestae* (19–20) not only to a series of new buildings but also to eighty-two “restored” temples.

(p. 369) The individual building types that belonged to the sphere of public representation did not develop at the same time and with the same speed. The large urban building complexes were the first to be increased to great variety, starting with the Early Imperial period. The age of Augustus saw the introduction of hemicycles in the design of the forum. From then on, dynastic rivalry constantly prompted the discovery of more interesting solutions. This could be manifested in their plans, which ranged, for open places, from rectangular to polygonal, round, and even oval shapes. The Imperial baths built in Rome beginning with the second century CE are the most sophisticated result of this search for elaboration in design. In contrast, in the case of functional buildings such as libraries and *macella*, from the second century CE on, regional models of design became prevalent (Hoepfner 2002; Ruyt 1983). On the whole, the second century CE can be regarded as the golden age of Roman architects. This period’s contribution to architectural history consists of the invention of the Imperial relief columns in the city of Rome, along with the development of the triumphal arches of the Early Imperial period from supports for statues into carriers of images. Both building types are indicative of the rapid increase in the use of images on public buildings, which had already taken place in domestic architecture.

Buildings, images, and rituals of the Roman period need to be considered and analyzed together. Although the critique of pure architectural analysis may sound familiar, much regarding the interaction of people with buildings and the visual reception of architecture remains unintelligible or appears foreign to us. Images, when considered in connection with buildings, help us to explain many peculiarities, thus becoming historical evidence. No Roman emperor could neglect this part of the public sphere without harming his reputation (Zanker 1997; Thomas 2007), and the same goes for the generals of the Republican period if they wanted to maintain their positions. Along similar lines, buildings and images played an important role in the self-representation of private individuals. That this was accomplished by using both images and architectural forms proves the allure attached to the splendor of buildings and the variety of images in the Roman world.

(Translated from the German by Clemente Marconi.)

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The Roman Reception of Greek Art and Architecture

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the varied, ambivalent, and often contradictory ways in which the Romans interacted with Greek art and architecture during ancient times. More specifically, it explores the cultural practices that framed the Romans' reception of art and architecture by the Greeks, including their looting, collecting, and theorizing of Greek art. Furthermore, it considers how the Romans copied and adapted Greek styles and turned Greek images into new Roman works, including monuments. The chapter also discusses the outcomes of the Roman reception of Greek art and architecture.

Keywords: architecture, art, collecting, cultural practices, Greeks, images, looting, monuments, Romans, theorizing

The Romans *used* Greek art. They appropriated it as war booty, then shipped it to Italy to adorn their triumphs, their sanctuaries, and their villas. They collected Greek art in vast public and private displays, proud attestations to the wealth, the munificence, and the sophisticated judgment of their patrician patrons and objects of emulation by the aspiring nouveau riche. The Romans theorized Greek art, preserving, adapting, and transforming the historical accounts written in the Hellenistic era, then excerpting and applying them to their own areas of interest. And they commissioned new works in traditional styles, from artists with Greek names and pedigrees; they put their own portrait heads—awkward, wrinkled, middle-aged—on the peerless bodies of Greek gods and athletes (see chapter 13 above); they commemorated their dead with sarcophagi depicting Greek myths and using a familiar Greek visual repertoire.

In short, the Romans interacted with Greek art in a manner that was varied, pragmatic, and widespread. The objects they commissioned ranged from monumental public sculptures to brilliantly colored paintings and small-scale items of personal adornment such as gems and jewelry. Patrons included not only metropolitan connoisseurs but also wealthy freedmen in Rome, minor landowners in the provinces, and army veterans along

the Empire's borders. And the chronological scope of their concern is impressive; a fascination with Greek models is visible already with the origins of monumental building projects in Rome in the fifth century BCE and continued well into Late Antiquity, as the Roman Empire became Christian. An examination of the Roman reception of Greek art and architecture thus has as its purview an Empire-wide selection of images built up over a millennium, along with the cultural practices associated with them; it is, potentially, a broad topic indeed.

This relation between Roman and Greek art and architecture has been a central topic of art history since the origins of the discipline. In the mid-eighteenth century, it was a concern for Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who emphasized Roman dependence on (p. 375) Greek models; this allowed him—without ever traveling to Greece—to reconstruct the history of Greek art through literary sources and the numerous Greek-style monuments preserved in Rome (Borbein et al. 2002–2012).

Winckelmann's example was influential though not universally accepted. The art historians of the late-nineteenth-century Vienna School, such as Franz Wickhoff and Alois Riegl, in many ways challenged Winckelmann. They gave a strong positive valuation to Roman art, emphasizing the ways in which it departed from Greek models and anticipated instead the developments of later medieval art (Riegl 1893 and 1901–1923; Wickhoff and Ritter von Hartel 1895; useful discussion in Brendel 1979, 25–37; see chapter 19 below). Concurrently, classical archaeologists such as Adolf Furtwängler made a close and careful study of Greek-style Roman monuments (Furtwängler 1893). Aided by plaster casts and photographic reproductions, they compared variants of the same sculptural types in a process known as *Kopienkritik*; the goal was to reconstruct the lost Greek originals on which these works were assumed to be based. The result of these efforts, combined with those of the Vienna School art historians, was to canonize a bifurcation of Roman visual culture. On the one hand, there were the innovative monuments prized by the Vienna School, such as the Fourth Style paintings of Pompeii and the Arch of Titus; these in many ways still form the basis of what is considered Roman art. And on the other hand, there were the works in Greek style analyzed by Furtwängler; these have been used above all to illustrate *Greek* art history, as survey books featuring the Esquiline Discobolus or Apollo Belvedere attest.

Creative efforts to move beyond this dichotomy began some forty years ago and have more recently become a major focus of scholarship on Roman art. Two early books have been particularly influential: Paul Zanker's *Klassizistische Statuen: Studien zur Veränderung des Kunstgeschmacks in der römischen Kaiserzeit* and Tonio Hölscher's *Römische Bildsprache als semantisches System*. Zanker's book documented a variety of Roman works in a Polyclitan style, concentrating on formal analysis, dating, and

categorization of the sculptures as precise copies, loose interpretations, or new creations in a familiar style (Zanker 1974). Hölscher's work took a semiotic approach, correlating the Romans' use of particular Greek artistic styles with specific subjects; for instance, he showed how a High Classical "Pheidian" style was often used for Olympian deities, a more expressive Hellenistic one for giants and animals (Hölscher 1987, 58).

Taken together, these two books had a powerful effect on the field of Roman art history. They opened up for consideration many monuments hitherto neglected, from large-scale works of *Idealplastik* (roughly, Greek-style sculptures of gods and mythological heroes) to the decorative objets d'art populating luxury villas; they also offered fruitful methods of approach that highlighted Roman initiative without denying the monuments' indebtedness to Greek precedent. The extent to which these ideas have by now become canonical may perhaps be gauged by recent survey texts in Roman art—most notably Jás Elsner's *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph*, with a chapter devoted to "Art and the Past: Antiquarian Eclecticism" (Elsner 1998)—and displays such as the Metropolitan Museum's new Roman galleries, where Greek-style works such as the Hope Dionysus take center stage. And new scholarship that questions the assumptions (p. 376) underlying Furtwängler's *Kopienkritik*, and highlights the creative though "emulative" nature of Roman monuments in Greek formats, has sought to push these ideas even further, resulting at times in an emphasis on Roman originality similar to that of the Vienna School, albeit anchored in very different images (Marvin 2008; Gazda 2002; Perry 2005).

The focus of this chapter, as signaled by its title, is on "reception," a semantically loaded term that highlights the active participation of the audience in a work of art and the "horizon of expectations" that such an audience brings to it (Jauss 1982; see chapter 29 below); this contrasts with the more passive role that might be indicated by a title such as "The Influence of Greek Art on Rome." My purpose here is to analyze the varied, ambivalent, and frequently contradictory ways in which the Romans interacted with Greek art and architecture. To do so, I look not only at the art objects that constituted the end results of such interactions but above all at the cultural practices that led to their creation. Among the most significant of these practices are the Roman looting, collecting, and theorizing of Greek art and the copying and adaptation of Greek styles and visual formats in new Roman works. Although these practices varied in their aims, in the individuals involved with them, and in the monuments produced, there are some important commonalities. Most significantly, all the cultural practices analyzed here resulted in a decontextualized view of the associated artworks; this allowed and indeed encouraged the Roman reinterpretation of Greek art and architecture. A further point about this approach is also worth noting. My emphasis on cultural practices demonstrates how the production of new Roman-period works of art is only part of the

story; also significant are the repurposing and theorizing of much older Greek monuments. Such topics have received little attention in previous scholarship, whereas the creation of new “Roman originals” has loomed large; this essay redresses the balance to offer a broader, more comprehensive perspective on the Roman interaction with Greek art.

Looting

The looting of Greek cities and sanctuaries from the late third to the first centuries BCE was the Romans’ first extensive, direct, and transformative experience of Greek art. It is true that there were likely earlier contacts. Literary sources preserve the names of early Greek craftsmen who traveled to Rome, such as the painter Ecphantus of Corinth (Pliny, *HN* 35.16). So, too, archaeological remains of major Roman monuments such as the late-sixth-century BCE Capitoline Temple to Jupiter show close connections to contemporary Archaic Ionic sanctuaries; the similarities in planning and in details of ornamentation suggest that architects with experience in Greek temple building came West to assist in their construction (Hopkins 2012). And through Rome’s interactions with the Etruscans came further exposure to Greek art, both direct—through the latter’s imports from Greece, especially of painted pottery—and indirect, as the Etruscans (p. 377) adapted for their own purposes Greek models in sanctuary building and divine statuary (Torelli 2000).

Still, the Romans’ connection to Greece through looting was different. More individuals were involved, and their contact with Greek art was closer, as they conquered and plundered actual Greek works of art directly on Greek soil. In addition, the extraordinary wealth that flowed to Italy through war booty meant that the Romans had the means to commission new Greek-influenced monuments to highlight their acquisitions or, in some cases, to compete with them. In essence, looting was a powerful spur to the Roman reception of Greek art and architecture, and it also facilitated the integration of Greek forms with Roman cultural practices.

When analyzed in comparison with that of other ancient Mediterranean civilizations, the Romans’ looting had two particularly distinctive features (Miles 2008, 13–104). First, it was *rationalized*, that is, intentionally carried out in a manner that was safe (at least for the soldiers), organized, and militarily effective. Second, it was *ritualized*, connected to major religious institutions and the practices of state cult. These features were significant for the Romans’ experience of Greek art. The rationalization of Roman plundering practices meant that war booty was carefully acquired, apportioned, and deployed, with the most high-profile pieces going to the general in charge and shipped home for display

in his triumph, if such was voted to him, or in monuments and ceremonies paid for *ex manubiis* (from the spoils). The ritualization of looting gave a sacral aura to activities such as *evocatio*—when the statue of an enemy city’s patron god was removed and taken to Rome and a new cult established there (Versnel 2004)—and above all to the triumph; it is worth exploring this latter event in some detail, as it was the most significant occasion at which early Romans encountered Greek art.

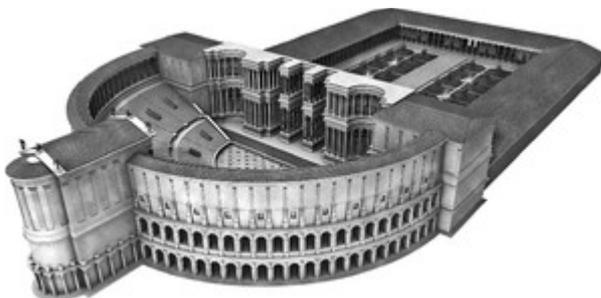
The triumph was a key religious and political ceremony of the Roman Republic and a popular though less significant spectacle under the Empire (Beard 2007). It featured a victorious general, his army, and their prisoners and loot in a parade through the streets of Rome, culminating with a sacrifice at the Capitoline Temple to Jupiter. The triumphal route was designed to accommodate an enormous audience, and widespread attendance was encouraged; the goal was to make vivid for such viewers the military successes of the Roman army in far-off lands along with their direct benefits for the city’s population. For this, enormous quantities of war booty were extremely useful, and the literary sources are full of staggering descriptions of such material. While details of individual processions may be questioned, the overall impression of extravagant visual display remains and is corroborated both by the rich material culture of Late Republican Rome and (negatively) by the archaeologically attested impoverishment of Greece in the second and first centuries BCE (Alcock 1993; La Rocca, Parisi Presicce, and Lo Monaco 2010).

This triumphal display, by its nature, encouraged an appreciation of Greek art very different from our own. It was founded less on aesthetic or art historical qualities than on such factors as scale, quantity, material, and provenance. As works moved swiftly past a large audience, the Romans evaluated them based not on their fine details but on their overall visual magnificence; particularly effective were colossal images, for example, or (p. 378) quantities of gold and silver. Also valuable was the knowledge that an object had been taken from a prominent former owner: the Macedonian king Perseus’s dinner service, the Pontic king Mithridates VI’s gem collection, and so on.

While such information about ownership was important to the Romans, they were in other ways conditioned by the triumph to view Greek art in a strongly decontextualized manner. They saw objects in isolation, far from the rich visual displays of which they had originally formed a part; also absent were the cultural practices that had once made them meaningful, for instance, the codified extravagance of the elite symposium or the pious observances of the civic shrine. The monuments were instead integrated into a pageant celebrating Roman power and military victory; their beauty and elaboration showed the talents of the Greeks but even more the merits of the Romans who had triumphed over them. And following the triumph, the objects were destined for new settings very different from their original contexts. They were shown, particularly, in the temples and

great public porticoes funded by successful generals (Stamper 2005, 49–67); a few select works might also grace the generals' homes (Welch 2006). In such places, they served the needs of elite in-group competition (proclaiming the achievements of a specific individual as against his peers) and also helped to make Rome a fit city to vie with the great Hellenistic capitals of the late first millennium BCE (Hölscher 1994). In this way, the looted objects displayed in Roman public and private spaces served as permanent reminders of the triumph's ephemeral glory and retained their association with military victory long after the conclusion of the campaign.

The theater complex of Pompey—begun after his triumph over “Pontus, Armenia, Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Media, Colchis, Iberia, Albania, Syria, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia and Palestine, Judaea, Arabia, and all the power of the pirates by sea and land” in 61 BCE (Plutarch, *Pomp.* 45) and dedicated the following decade—demonstrates in exemplary fashion how the wartime plundering of eastern lands both inspired and facilitated revolutionary developments in Roman art and architecture (figure 16.1). It is famous above all as the first large-scale permanent theater constructed in Rome (Gros 1999a and 1999b). But the complex should also be appreciated for its integration of this feature with several temples (most important is a shrine to Venus Victrix, Pompey's patron goddess) in a manner evocative of earlier Italian sanctuaries, such as at Gabii. And it also had an elaborate garden portico; this looked back to the temple and portico dedications of previous triumphant generals and also to the porticoed theaters of Hellenistic kings. In this way, Pompey's complex had strong ties to the Roman past, combined with evocations of the Hellenistic world. According to our literary sources, these evocations of Greece were quite self-conscious on the part of Pompey, who not only took the title *Magnus* (the Great) in emulation of the Macedonian king Alexander but also had a model made of the theater at Mytilene as an inspiration for his own complex (Plutarch, *Pomp.* 42.3).



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Fig. 16.1 Reconstruction in 3-D of the Theater of Pompey (61–55 BCE), by Martin Blazeby.

(Photograph by Martin Blazeby.)

In its decoration as in its design, Pompey's theater complex highlighted its connection to Greece. This was done particularly through looted Greek artworks. The complex had purple and gold tapestries from Hellenistic Pergamum, panel paintings by famous Classical masters, and

large numbers of statues: Apollo and the Nine Muses, (p. 379) at least nine female poets, female personifications of the fourteen nations conquered by Pompey, and images of miraculous fertility, such as a statue of Eutychis, who gave birth to thirty children. The nations and miracles were new commissions (Pliny, *HN* 7.74, 36.41), the rest likely looted or perhaps in some cases paid for; we know from Cicero that his friend and sometime agent Atticus assisted Pompey with his sculpture collection (*Att.* 4.9.1). However acquired, the artworks in their new setting formed an impressive visual ensemble with intriguing thematic links; the emphasis was on Greek women, their achievements (particularly, with the Muses and poets, in the field of culture) and at the same time their submission to Rome (Evans 2009). As such, the looted artworks were radically altered by their new context, even while they remained, at a formal level, unchanged.

Collecting

Looting and collecting were distinct though allied processes, with the boundaries often blurred between them. Some collectors—for instance, the notorious Late Republican governor of Sicily, Gaius Verres—ransacked Greek towns and paid a pittance for their acquisitions; Verres operated in peacetime but was compared (unfavorably) by Cicero to conquering generals (*Verr.* 3.4.115–116). Other collectors were more restrained or perhaps less memorably and successfully prosecuted. Some paid extraordinary sums of money for Greek artworks; Augustus's associate Agrippa, for example, paid the town of Cyzicus 1.2 million sesterces for paintings of Ajax and Venus (Pliny, *HN* 35.9). Still, all Roman collectors benefited from their position of wealth and power relative to the (p. 380) Greeks, and in this way, their activities were aligned with conquest and plundering—even when they failed to exploit their advantage to the extent practiced by Verres.

At the same time, collecting began with looting. Successful generals acquired a not insubstantial portion of the Roman army's plunder. Upon completion of their tours of duty, they returned to Rome and were expected to deploy it for the public good, broadly construed. They might, however, display particularly noteworthy objects they had plundered in their homes; if conscientious, they might even pay the treasury for them (Churchill 1999, especially 96–97). As the taste for Greek art spread, its purchase could also be initiated by those whose conquests were in less artistically fashionable areas—for instance, Gaul, whose technically brilliant and strikingly abstract Celtic artworks never found a Roman following—or by those who had no major martial successes to their names; it is perhaps not coincidental that the Republican collector whose tastes and

purchases we know best is Cicero, an accomplished orator rather than a military expert (Marvin 1989).

Over time, collecting became a more widespread practice. Under the Empire, it was popular among *equites* and wealthy freedmen in Rome and the comfortably well-off elites throughout the provinces; most familiar are the collections in the rich homes around the Bay of Naples, but recent studies have documented similar private accumulations of Greek-style artworks in, for example, Gaul, Cyprus, and North Africa (Italy: Döhl and Zanker 1984; Gaul: Stirling 2005; Cyprus: Daszewski 1985, 284–285; North Africa: Leveau 1982). And unlike the plundering of Greek art—which concluded with the final conquest of Greek lands, essentially pacified by the end of the Republic—collecting continued throughout the Empire and in some ways intensified as the opportunities for wartime acquisitions dried up. Indeed, the culmination of the Roman collecting of Greek-style art came in the Late Antique era, with the immense troves seen, for example, in Chiragan, Aphrodisias, and Constantinople (Bergmann 1999); this was perhaps a result of the ever more emphatic concentration of wealth in the hands of a few powerful individuals and the growth of private properties that emulated and supplanted public spaces. So, too, with the advent of Christianity, the closing of pagan temples permitted rich individuals to acquire Greek artworks never before in private hands; the Constantinopolitan courtier Lausus, for example, in the fifth century CE amassed a collection that included Phidias's Olympian Zeus, Praxiteles's Aphrodite of Cnidus, and the Kairos of Lysippus (Bassett 2004, 232–238).

Unlike looting, which was largely dependent on the fortunes of war, the collecting of Greek art and architecture had a broader scope. Among the objects collected were panel paintings, religious statues, portraits, votives, funerary reliefs, gems, tableware, and architectural materials; these last, although little studied, were extremely significant because of their scale and the technological difficulties of transporting them and should be better known (the Mahdia shipwreck, for example, had in its cargo seventy architectural members, whose bulk and weight were far greater than those of the sculptures, although they have received the lion's share of attention; see Hesberg 1994). From literary sources, especially Pliny's *Natural History*, it seems as though *opera nobilia* by the master artists of the fourth century BCE were particularly valued; Rome had fourteen (p. 381) statues by Praxiteles, eight by Scopas, four by Lysippus, three by Euphranor, and two each by Myron, Phidias, and Polyclitus (Pollitt 1986, 161). From shipwrecks and from archaeological remains such as those in houses around the Bay of Naples, we can, however, see how the artworks in collections were more varied than the literary sources suggest (Hellenkemper Salies 1994; Bol 1972; Neudecker 1988); their selection and display were also more dependent on the taste of the individual collector. Particularly popular were artworks depicting mythological scenes of pleasure and good

living (Dionysus and Aphrodite, satyrs, maenads, Cupids); these constituted a kind of “default option” for Pompeian home decor and also appeared in lavish villas such as that of Early Imperial Oplontis, home of Nero’s wife Poppea and her family (Döhl and Zanker 1984, 208; De Caro 1987). Other patrons had different preferences. The owners of the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum had a special interest in Hellenistic ruler portraits (Dillon 2000); the emperor Hadrian in his villa at Tivoli quoted a number of major Athenian monuments and also evoked both Pharaonic and Ptolemaic styles from Egypt (Raeder 1983). In public collections, we also see variety rather than uniformity, with the Augustan aristocrat Asinius Pollio displaying a preference for Late Hellenistic rococo sculptures and his younger contemporary, the emperor Tiberius, preferring works of the fourth century BCE (Zanker 1988, 141; Bounia 2004; on the collection of Asinius Pollio, see Pliny, *HN* 35.33–34).

As telling as such preferences is a consideration of what was *not* collected. Quality was not the determinative factor; we have both spectacular works of Greek art found on Roman soil and also decidedly mediocre ones, such as small-scale votives and grave reliefs (Kuntz 1994). Nor was antiquity required. It was perhaps an advantage, as the mediocre reliefs show, along with works such as the painting on marble of the “Knucklebone Players” from Herculaneum, in which a worn image of the third century BCE was improved by a restorer of the first century BCE (Bergmann 1995, 103). But even very wealthy and powerful collectors made use of copies and new creations in traditional styles; Hadrian, for instance, had a copy of Praxiteles’s fourth-century BCE Aphrodite of Cnidus, the proprietors of the Villa dei Papiri had a bust of Polyclitus’s High Classical Doryphorus, proudly signed by the first-century BCE copyist, Apollonius of Athens (Raeder 1983, 95 no. I97; Mattusch 2005, 276–277, 279–282). Thus, the Romans’ criteria for collecting were very different from, for example, those of art museums today; their acquisitions were guided above all by considerations of style and subject matter (both dependent on the individual preferences of the collector) and appropriateness for context. By this last, I mean not only decor in the Roman sense—the integration of a place’s artworks with its function, for instance, an intellectual deity such as Athena in a library or the fertility god Priapus in a garden—but also the convenience of an object for its display setting. For private collectors, small-scale reliefs, statues, and panel paintings were best; only enormous public spaces could properly accommodate larger-than-life-size works, such as the colossal Hercules Farnese in the Baths of Caracalla (Marvin 1983). And there were few contexts suitable for architectural sculpture or monumental wall painting, two important Greek artistic genres that were in consequence rarely collected by Romans. In this way, what was and was not collected was dependent less on what was (p. 382) available in Greece than on what Romans found a use for; there was a broad consensus on some items (e.g., less-than-life-size Dionysiac subjects), a generalized

rejection of others (e.g., architectural sculpture), and an extensive middle ground, with works favored or dismissed depending on price, availability, and personal taste.

The Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum is one of the largest and best-documented of these Roman collections and also one of the most individually particularized (see figure 16.2 for a view of the Getty Villa, intended as a free replication of the Villa of the Papyri). It boasted more than seventy-five preserved sculptures in bronze and marble and thus was small relative to the imperial villa at Tivoli (with more than five hundred objects) but impressive by the standards of private collecting on the Bay of Naples; the nearby villa at Oplontis, with its beautifully executed Second Style wall paintings, had only forty-five. The Herculaneum villa did include among its statues some works characteristic of the “default option,” such as lounging satyrs imaginatively integrated into its long reflecting pool. It also had copies of the sort of *opera nobilia* favored by the cognoscenti, for instance, a bronze Polyclitan female, made as a pair with the Doryphorus, and a marble Panathenaic Athena (Mattusch 2005, 147–151 [Athena], 278–282 [Polyclitan female]).



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Fig. 16.2 The Outer Peristyle at the reimaged Getty Villa in Malibu, CA, September 8, 2005, by Richard Ross. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 2011.IA.68.

(Photograph © 2005 Richard Ross with the courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Trust.)

But the villa also had an unparalleled selection of copies of Hellenistic ruler and philosopher portraits (some thirty-four all told), including many singletons. This part of the collection likely reflects the interests of the villa’s owners, who also had works (p. 383) of Hellenistic philosophy in their library and hailed from the Late Republican ruling elite; for them, as for Pompey, Greek charismatic monarchs were important precedents

(Mattusch 2005, 20–23). Still, we cannot with our present state of knowledge precisely evaluate how biographical the images were; we must also emphasize both their accumulation over time (since the villa was occupied from the early first century BCE to the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE) and their transformation in their new Roman setting. The Hellenistic ruler portraits, for example, had originally been monumental figures displayed individually in prominent locations within royal capitals or Greek cities and frequently served as objects of cult (Smith 1988, 15–31). In Herculaneum, by contrast,

their copies formed a row of busts in the villa garden, juxtaposed with High Classical athletes, Severe Style maidens, and a Hellenistic Pan fornicating with a she-goat. The ruler portraits were conversation pieces, suitable for engendering philosophical reflections or displays of esoteric historical knowledge, but also likely to be upstaged by the context: the many other sculptures, the pools, the plants and flowers of the garden, and the spectacular maritime scenery beyond. In this they were characteristic of many Late Republican collections, while at the same time, their display context—which through comparison heightened contrasts among the individual works—facilitated analysis of the sort prized by Roman theoreticians of Greek art.

Theorizing

Theorizing Greek art—which I would construe very broadly as the formulation of a set of approved questions or approaches to the topic—began with the Greeks (Tanner 2006; see chapter 3 above). In the Classical era, artists themselves authored treatises, setting forth the rules and theoretical underpinnings of their craft. By Hellenistic times, scholars constructed the first histories of art, focusing on chronological development and the construction of a canon of major artists and works. The Romans used these Classical and Hellenistic texts to articulate their own approaches to Greek art and architecture. They also integrated them into a broader cultural discourse, so that references to Greek art became an identifying feature of an educated individual. And they applied them to illuminate new, characteristically Roman topics, above all rhetoric (Hölscher 1987). Thus, while we have in the Roman period no preserved stand-alone histories of Greek art and only one craft treatise (the *De architectura* of Vitruvius), references to famous Greek artists and masterpieces permeated Roman literature and were found in, for example, Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, the travel guide of Pausanias, the medical writings of Galen, Cicero's forensic speeches, and Quintilian's handbook of rhetoric.

Within these extremely varied Roman discussions of Greek art, two themes were central. The first was the progress of the field, above all toward naturalism. The second was the contribution of individual master artists to this progress, with close analysis of their distinctive styles, their strengths and weaknesses, and so on; this was relayed through critical judgments, especially comparisons, and through [\(p. 384\)](#) biographical anecdotes. Pliny the Elder's discussion (*HN* 35.36) of the major Classical painter Parrhasius is broadly typical: "Parrhasius of Ephesus also contributed greatly to the progress of painting, being the first to give symmetry to his figures, the first to give play and expression to the features, elegance to the hair, and gracefulness to the mouth: indeed, for contour, it is universally admitted by artists that he bore away the palm" (translation

by J. Bostock and H. T. Riley). Pliny also offered anecdotes about the rivalry between Parrhasius and his contemporary Zeuxis, whose contests had as their goal *trompe l'oeil* naturalism. And Pliny concluded with a list of paintings by the artist, in Rome and elsewhere, along with succinct descriptions of their subject matter and particular merits. Quintilian (*Inst.* 12.10) likewise highlighted the rivalry of Zeuxis and Parrhasius, singling out the former's mastery of line, the latter's of light and shadow. Thus, for the rhetorician as for the natural historian, comparison was critical; it served to bring into focus the distinctive features of each artist and to articulate individual contributions to the broader development of Greek art.

It is important to emphasize that Pliny and Quintilian—and, indeed, the many other Romans who commented on Greek art and architecture—had a perspective on the subject that could never have been shared by the Greeks. They had an awareness of the trajectory of Greek art from its rather abstract Archaic origins to the idealized naturalism characteristic of the Classical era and the baroque and classicizing styles of the Hellenistic period. For Roman art theorists, Greek art thus had, as it were, a narrative arc, effectively brought out by eclectic juxtapositions of stylistically varied images. This understanding of Greek art history is familiar; through writers such as Pliny, it has profoundly affected our own. It is also, emphatically, selective, because it left out much of what made the monuments meaningful to their first viewers, above all, the contexts and practices that integrated the images into Greek lived experience. The Romans instead saw the works in question as autonomous art objects, which could be excerpted, recombined, and analyzed as new patrons and viewers chose.



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Fig. 16.3 House of the Vettii at Pompeii, Triclinium p (Ixion Room). After 63–79 CE.

(Photograph © Scala/Art Resource, New York, ART180937.)

This interest in recombination and analysis is illuminating given the display settings in which the Romans viewed Greek art. These settings included not only colonnaded gardens such as those of Pompey's theater complex or the Villa dei Papiri but also the *pinacothecae* (picture galleries) that became popular in Italy from the Augustan era onward (Bergmann 1995, 98–107). These had their origins in Roman collections of Greek panel paintings—often private, occasionally

open for public viewing—but are most familiar from their less costly reflections in Pompeian domestic frescoes. Such fictive *pinacothecae* appeared regularly in Third and Fourth Style painting, for instance, in the House of the Menander and the House of the Vettii at Pompeii (Archer 1981). In the latter, created between 63 and 79 CE, we see an elaborate and fantastical architectural framework with columns, pediments, and acroterial sculptures; within it were set large-scale mythological panel paintings along with smaller floating figures and renderings of statues (figure 16.3). The walls of this moderate-sized room were thus crammed with images, in a manner that facilitated their juxtaposition and comparison—the carefully contoured (perhaps Parrhasian) heroes on the large panels, for instance, contrasting with the more sketchily drawn amorous couples floating nearby. The appropriate [\(p. 385\)](#) response to such images is suggested in an episode of Petronius's *Satyricon* (83), when the protagonist Encolpius visited a picture gallery, identified the paintings by artist, and commented on their various styles (Elsner 1993).

As Encolpius's behavior demonstrates, the Romans' theorization of Greek art, together with their preference for display settings such as the *pinacothecae*, encouraged a distinctive mode of viewing. The focus was on the connoisseurial evaluation of images based on criteria such as naturalism, chronology, and personal style; the result was a highly selective understanding of Greek artists' aims and achievements. This mode of

viewing was also significant because of the types of new Roman images whose making it encouraged, most significantly copies of famous Greek masterpieces, adaptations, and novel creations in traditional Greek styles.

Copying and Adapting

Greek-style works of art and architecture permeated Roman visual culture. Adaptations and transformations of Greek images and buildings were among the earliest Roman (p. 386) artistic productions; by the Late Republic, there were also precise copies of celebrated works and careful, convincing “fakes” (Fuchs 1999; Pollitt 1986, 150–163). With the accession of Augustus, classicizing sculptures, paintings, and buildings attained a new centrality in Rome as a result of their deployment in the *princeps*’s public commissions; they also became popular in the private art of the metropolitan elite (Zanker 1988, 239–263). The High Empire saw the apogee of Greek-style artistic production in Rome, along with the adoption of Greek styles and visual formats in monuments throughout the Empire, from Spain to the Euphrates and from Britain to North Africa (Kousser 2008, 81–110). And there was continued production of Greek-style artworks into Late Antiquity, in private luxury arts such as mosaics and silver throughout the Empire and major public monuments in Constantinople, the New Rome (Constantinople: Bassett 2004; mosaics: Muth 1998; silver: Cameron 1992; Painter 1993).

These Greek-style works were varied in their character as in their chronology and geographical spread. Some were copies of famous Greek masterpieces and meant to be recognized as such; Polyclitus’s Doryphorus (figure 29.2), Phidias’s Athena Parthenos (figure 30.1), and Praxiteles’s Aphrodite of Cnidus (figure 24.2) are among the clearest examples of this phenomenon. But these monuments functioned very differently from the copies we see today, such as the cheap knockoff versions of the Venus de Milo sold outside the Louvre. The Roman copies were, to begin with, generally created individually rather than mass-produced. From casts found in a sculptor’s cache at Baiae in South Italy, it is clear that the Romans had the capacity to replicate Greek masterworks precisely (Landwehr 1985). But to judge from these casts and from instances where we have both the Greek original and Roman versions of it, it is likewise clear that this was rarely done (Hallett 1995, 123). In most cases, comparison of the many copies demonstrates that a generalized rendering of the pose, dress, and gesture was enough; this constituted, as it were, the visual signature of the piece, while precise details and the overall style could be more freely handled.

Roman copies were different from modern ones in other ways, too. While small-scale marble and terracotta replicas were familiar components of Roman domestic and funerary assemblages, there were also public monuments that were extremely expensive and visually impressive; sculpted from the heavy, unyielding medium of marble, they were carved with technical finesse, vividly painted, and larger-than-life-size (Kousser 2008, 12–14). The creators of such images were talented and often, it seems, proud of their handiwork; predominantly Greek, they happily signed their pieces, even when they copied a well-known Greek original (e.g., that of Apollonius of Athens, discussed above; see Mattusch 2005, 276–277). And these monuments were set up in high-profile locations in Rome and throughout the Empire; while the originals were created primarily for Greek sanctuaries, the copies were in Roman times deployed in widely different surroundings, such as fora, baths, theaters, and gladiatorial arenas (Fuchs 1987; Manderscheid 1981).

All of this suggests that—despite the modern deprecation of “mechanical copying”—these images were valued by the Romans. And literary texts concerning these images, along with writings on the analogous topic of emulation in literature, suggest that these Roman copies did not hide their retrospective character; rather, they were (p. 387) valued precisely *for* their effective evocation of the originals on which they were based (Kousser 2008, 8–12). In this way, discussions of Greek-inspired Roman artworks that highlight originality at the level of visual detail are not so much incorrect as misguided; what is most Roman about these images is not their iconography or style but their context, that is, their deployment in radically innovative settings (Kousser 2008, 149–151; *contra* Perry 2005).

In addition to the clearly identifiable copies, we also have replica series of Greek-style images in painting and sculpture that cannot be definitively traced back to a famous original: statues of the nude Aphrodite taking off her sandal, for example, or paintings of Narcissus by the pool (Künzl 1970; Elsner 1996). These images were still clearly meant to “look Greek” and to take on the authority and allure that references to Greek art offered; however, a generalized Greek character rather than an association with a particular master or work of art may have been their central goal (Landwehr 1998). Such images could flexibly be adapted to particular circumstances. They might be duplicated and mirror-reversed to frame a doorway or given new attributes if another god or mythological hero were called for. So, too, they could be miniaturized, executed in a new medium, or grouped with other, radically different images; the patron’s taste and the artist’s talent were key determinants here (Bartman 1991). Their flexibility made such replicated images extremely useful, and they are even more popular than the recognizable copies, at least to judge from what is preserved in the archaeological record; they have a broader chronological and geographical range and a more extensive

penetration into various media, including lamps, gems, coins, and statuettes in addition to monumental painting and sculpture.



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Fig. 16.4 Marble statue of Apollo Citharoedus, from the frigidarium of the Baths of Faustina at Miletus. Second to third century CE. Marble. Height 1.77 m including the plinth. Istanbul, Archaeological Museum Mendel no. 114

(Photograph © DeA Picture Library/Art Resource, New York, ART420027.)

A languid Apollo from the Baths of Faustina Minor at Miletus in western Turkey offers a visually striking and well-provenanced example of such images (figure 16.4) (Schneider 1999, 168–174). In this less-than-life-size marble statue, the god stands in a sensuous, seemingly casual hip-shot pose, with one arm raised and bent behind his head, the other cradling a cithara in token of his musical accomplishments. His gesture and attributes connect him to an extensive replica series in many media, including not only monumental statuary

but also lamps, paintings, and relief sculpture (Simon and Bauchhenss 1984, 383–384, no. 61). At Miletus, the Apollo was surrounded by other familiar statue types, most prominently a group of Muses likely originating in the Hellenistic era; these were juxtaposed in the baths with other divine images—such as the gods of health, Asclepius and Hygieia—along with contemporary imperial and private portraits (Manderscheid 1981, 93–96). As an ensemble, the statues highlighted the baths' association with both physical pleasure and mental stimulation; they also helped to create an attractive setting for visitors. And they offered implicit testimony to the benefactions of the Romans and particularly the imperial family, who not only paid for the baths themselves but maintained the complicated water systems they required (DeLaine 1999). Given this context, it is likely that what was most important about the Apollo for Roman-era viewers was not his resemblance to a famous Greek masterpiece (broadly Hellenistic in style, he cannot be securely attributed to a particular sculptor). Rather, what counted was his contribution to the atmosphere of elegant, rather learned (p. 388) but also sensual

pleasure prevailing in the baths; this was what gave his Greek-inspired form its meaning for the inhabitants of Miletus in the Antonine age.

Along with recognizable copies and works such as the Apollo that were flexibly adapted from replica series, we also have new Roman creations in various Greek styles. These images included “one-offs” in addition to artworks so highly particularized—for instance, through the insertion of portrait heads or the incorporation into a larger whole—that their originality can seem to us more striking than their relation to previous art. Such Greek-style imagery permeated many familiar and quintessentially “Roman” artistic genres; it appeared, for example, in historical reliefs, sarcophagi, mythological wall paintings, portraiture, and architectural ornament. It also had a broad chronological and geographical scope; it characterized Roman architecture and architectural sculpture as early as the Archaic period, spread throughout Italy by the Late Republic, was selectively adopted in the provinces by the High Empire, and survived (with careful adaptations) into Late Antiquity. In this way, Greek-style imagery, broadly construed, was essential to innovative Roman art making.



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Fig. 16.5 The Hinton St. Mary mosaic, with Christ, hunting motifs, and Bellerophon slaying the Chimaera. Fourth century CE. Mosaic of tesserae. 8.1 × 5.2 m. London, British Museum inv. 1965,0409.1.

(Photograph © The Trustees of the British Museum/ Art Resource, New York, ART177251.)

This last point is well illustrated by the analysis of one final work, a Late Antique mosaic pavement found in a Romano-British villa at Hinton St. Mary (figure 16.5) (p. 389) (Toynbee 1964). The mosaic of approximately 8.5 by 6 meters had a complex ornamental design; it included large-scale busts, smaller hunting scenes, and a mythological tableau of Bellerophon and the Chimaera, all set in highly decorative roundels. The scene with Bellerophon had a long history. In its basic visual format—with a

rider on horseback spearing an enemy below—it derived from Classical prototypes such as the Athenian funerary relief of Dexileus; the image was subsequently adapted for

Roman imperial monuments such as the Great Trajanic Frieze and also for provincial works such as military gravestones of Roman Germany. In Britain, it appeared in a number of depictions of Bellerophon and the Chimaera at this time; its rendering of the heroic slaying of a famous mythological monster clearly resonated with members of the Late Antique provincial elite, just as did the more mundane hunting scenes with which the Bellerophon image was juxtaposed (Pearce 2008, 208–211). And the mosaic's large corner busts likewise attested to the patron's interest in the classical mythological heritage; men depicted with long, vigorous, windswept hair are likely to be identified as the Four Winds (Pearce 2008, 208). At the same time, the owner of the Hinton St. Mary villa clearly also had other interests. The mosaic's central roundel had a large bust of a beardless young man with straight bangs, long curling locks in the back, and a tunic and (p. 390) pallium; behind him, like a crown, projected the Christian symbol of the chi rho. This young man has been variously identified as Christ himself or as a Christianized emperor of the Constantinian dynasty (Pearce 2008, 193–194). In either case, what is noteworthy in the Hinton St. Mary mosaic is the seamless integration of pagan, mythological art with Christian images and, presumably, practices on the part of the mosaic's owner. This imbued Classical images such as the Bellerophon with some new resonances, eliminated others that were traditional, and resulted in an appreciation of the mosaic that was up-to-date and thoroughly Late Antique in character.

Conclusions

This chapter has surveyed a range of cultural practices whose broader implications have not been sufficiently recognized; through them, the Romans turned Greek images into art. By this I mean that the Romans removed Greek monuments from their original contexts, gave them new settings and functions, and in so doing transformed them into autonomous works of painting, sculpture, and so on. It is true that this kind of aesthetic appreciation did not originate in Roman times. The Greeks themselves had initiated the process, starting in the Classical era with treatises intended to rationalize and dignify the making of buildings, paintings, and statues. And in the Hellenistic period, we see not only the creation of the first scholarly histories of art but also the beginnings of an art market, the development of art collecting by wealthy and powerful royal dynasties, and the deployment of at least some works as objets d'art, put on display for their aesthetic appeal in civic spaces and private homes. Still, the Roman efforts were different in their scale, in their degree of popularity throughout the social spectrum, in their geographical spread, and in the extent to which the artworks were alienated from their original functions and settings and given new roles and identities on Roman soil.

This development has had important implications for later eras. To begin with, it has given us the phenomenon of classicism, that is, the transformation of what had once been a period and regional style (roughly, that of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE in Greece) into a semiotic one, evocative of high culture and the authority of the past. It was because of the Romans that classicism became *the* style for official public art—for the idealized representation of the *princeps*, for the evocative and aspirational depiction of the advantages of his rule, for the imposing rendering of his gods and favored mythological heroes, for the elegant and impressive decoration of his palaces and temples. Through the Romans, this conservative yet highly effective visual language was transmitted to the Renaissance and later eras. Indeed, it is still powerful today, as testified by the adornment of everything from banks and universities to ranch-style suburban houses with Corinthian columns.

A further outgrowth of the Roman reception of Greek art and architecture is likewise significant. This is its influence on our own reverential but highly selective view of Greek image making. Because the Romans' understanding of Greek art was predicated (p. 391) on its decontextualization, together with its tremendous benefits for their free and transformative use of Greek monuments came a very limited curiosity regarding the original functions and meanings of such images. This has encouraged in later periods a similarly limited view of Greek art, with an emphasis on questions of chronology and attribution that we—with scant access to the original works of painting, sculpture, and architecture on which the Romans based their histories—are ill prepared to answer. And at the same time, it has discouraged inquiry into other issues (e.g., the use and abuse of images, Greek visuality, aniconism) that might be very fruitful for our understanding of what Greek artists and architects actually set out to do. In this way, investigating the Roman reception of Greek art can illuminate Rome, Greece, and the history of art history.

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Roman Art and Architecture in the Provinces and beyond the Roman World

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines art and architecture in the Roman provinces and beyond the Roman world, with emphasis on historiography and the central methodological issues of past and current scholarship. More specifically, it considers the traditional interpretation of style in the art of the Roman provinces in relation to the “Graeco-Roman” style. The chapter also discusses the concurrent application of the categories of center, province, and periphery to more recent discussions of iconography and social interpretation in addition to location, function, patronage, and viewer response.

Keywords: architecture, art, center, Graeco-Roman style, iconography, location, patronage, periphery, province, Roman provinces

The provinces of the Roman Empire, acquired largely through conquests that began in Italy and extended ever further outward, by the second century CE encompassed territory from southern Scotland to North Africa and Egypt, most of Europe and most of the Middle East all the way to the edge of Persia. Vassal relationships connected the Empire to the Caucasus and Crimea, trade linked it to the Sahara and India, and less beneficent contacts appear in the archaeology of Scandinavia. Initially, *provincia* meant the field of a magistrate’s authority, but by the second century BCE, it had come to refer also to geographical territory. Cicero (*Verr.* 2.2.32, 2.2.40) points to the *lex provinciae* in which a conquering commander, having organized the peace settlement, established boundaries (in some cases) and administration systems; the results varied widely during the Republican period, with territories governed in differing ways and subject to different kinds of authority. During the Imperial period, some greater uniformity resulted from the existence of two main forms of province, those under the control of the emperor and those controlled by the Senate and people of Rome; however, the vast differences in the peoples and traditions, social and military conditions, and degrees of wealth in the various regions meant that there was little in the way of uniform perception or treatment

of provinces. Within a province, local elites who cooperated with the Roman administrators tended to assimilate and receive favors, from citizenship to high local office even to senatorial status, as witnessed by such men as Herodes Atticus. Only in the early third century CE, under Caracalla, did all free people living within the boundaries of the Empire (boundaries that had in many cases changed over time) gain the right of citizenship, even though many never would have been recognizable as Roman to someone in Rome.

In this history of diverse perceptions of the world outside of the city of Rome and of Italy, some provincials were more provincial than others. Educated and wealthy (p. 396) Greek-speaking men of the second century CE may not have been to the taste of conservative Italians of the same stratum, but not because they were “provincial” in any modern sense. Rather, they were repositories for concerns about *luxuria*, failed manliness, or inadequate martial value: clichés that revealed anxieties about the dilution and disappearance of the imagined community of “old-fashioned” Romans. At the other end of the judgmental spectrum stood the barbarians, perhaps capable of becoming civilized but always available as markers both of savagery and of rugged authenticity. Somewhere between the two stood “provincial” provincials, people living within local frameworks who, even if they traveled as merchants or soldiers, had little or no contact with the Roman elites of Italy. Whether they really were “provincial” in the judgmental sense in which modern cultures use the term and which shaped so profoundly the art historical discourse of late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship in colonizing and imperial societies remains unclear.



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Fig. 17.1 Dougga, view of the Capitolium. C. 166-167 CE. Limestone. Height of columns c. 8 m.

(Photograph © Vanni/Art Resource, New York, ART189739.)

The art of the Roman provinces, so vast a territory, so complex a history, so stratified a set of diverse societies, so enormous a set of traditions, remains impossible to summarize in a page or two. There are exceptions to everything. Thus, if we compare several specific historical moments—the Augustan period, the time of Hadrian, and the time of Diocletian—we can see patterns and changes throughout the Empire. The West was where Latin was used, at least by the

educated, and scholars usually include in it the enormous territory from Britain across northern Europe to the Danube River and the northern Balkans, modern France and Spain and bits of modern northern Italy and Switzerland, and even North Africa, although Egypt is not normally at ease in this company any more than when it is put together with the Greek East. That territory from Greece across Turkey and down to modern Palestine and Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Syria mixed deeply Hellenized societies with those whose own traditions, from Nabatean and Judaeon to Palmyrene, remained alive into Late Antiquity. Whereas many Greek-speaking areas from Greece itself eastward continued to preserve traditional Greek urban plans, building types, and classicizing or Hellenistic visual vocabularies, for example, in many of the mosaics from Antioch, there are shifts and adaptations, as when Roman bath architecture appears in the eastern provinces. The African provinces from Mauretania (modern Morocco) to Tripolitania (modern Libya) reveal the presence of local funerary monument types, although these sometimes have the kind of naturalistic portraiture found elsewhere in the western Empire. House forms there may contain very Hellenized mosaics alongside such elements as underground rooms particular to only a few regions (for example, at Bulla Regia in modern Tunisia). Temples with modified Italian forms such as podia with frontal stairways appear in cities that may have remnants of pre-Roman plans, such as in Carthage or Dougga (modern Tunisia) (figure 17.1), whereas others stand in cities set up for military veterans, such as Volubilis or Timgad (modern Morocco and Algeria), both with their striking grid plans

resembling idealized military camps. All around the West, where many people came to know Latin and to appropriate Roman monumental forms, from honorific arches to amphitheaters, from funerary stelae with portraits to floor mosaics and hypocaust heating systems, local traditions still continue to appear. Despite the aqueducts, the roads, (p. 397) the fora and baths and podium temples, pockets of local dress, old burial and ritual sites, and even old sculptural styles, both local (for example, at Lara de los Infantes in northern Spain) and imported from other places (as when we find Mithraea or altars to Jupiter Dolichenus or a Palmyrene-looking funerary stele for a veteran in Britain or Pannonia [modern Hungary]) enrich the picture of visual and material culture in the provinces. The patterns change over time more in some places than others, with changing preferences in tomb stone sculpture and mosaic themes, with shifts in the way spaces are used in houses and in cities themselves. In a city such as Aphrodisias in Asia Minor, sarcophagus production comes to be an important element of the artistic and economic scene in the second century CE as it had not been before, and the city itself begins to look different when, in the fourth century, grand houses begin to appear in the old civic center among the fora and temples of an earlier era. In certain periods, even the centers (p. 398) of gravity change, as artistic production continues with energy in Late Antique Tunisia and in the Balkans as at Thessalonica, while in other areas, archaeology has revealed changes in preferences that lead to fewer stone statues and tomb monuments. Cities in Gaul give themselves decorated monumental walls (although not always for defensive purposes), people reuse materials for new buildings, and spaces are converted from one religious use to another. Neither temporal nor geographical stability and neither social nor cultural uniformity interfere with the multiplicity of the material and visual culture of the Roman Empire.

Center, Province, Periphery: The Historiography of Roman Provincial Art

Center, province, periphery—the model suggested for the ancient Near East by Michelle Marcus (1990)—can be used to describe all these territorial and social relationships, but the terms, always refused by the constant fluidity of historical conditions, are on some levels inevitably unsatisfactory, especially when we try to understand the way visual culture operated both on the production of material objects and on their reception. The layering of cultural interrelations, imperial, regional, and local, and among all of these the layering with groups outside the Empire's boundaries make most categories problematic in their fixity. Just one example of the fluidity of cultural relations might be the way temples did and did not respond to the architectural ideas of the city of Rome.

Augustan and Julio-Claudian temples from Nîmes and Vienne in Gallia Narbonensis (southern France) to Ankara in Galatia (Turkey) share strong similarities with buildings of the same period in Rome, and the Ankara Temple even features the inscription of Augustus's *Res Gestae* in Latin and Greek. Their frequent dedications to the members of the imperial family concretize the connections to Rome that their architecture renders explicit. At the same time, though, the Dendur Temple of Augustus is totally Egyptian in its architectural, sculptural, and epigraphic form, and the Temple of Bel at Palmyra (on a major trade route with Persia) combines Hellenistic and Roman elements with those found in Mesopotamia and Persia; finally, the Temple at Garni (Armenia), whose date and even its identity as a temple are still debated, shares a Graeco-Roman vocabulary with the use of basalt rather than marble. In short, a constant process of interpenetration is visible even in a fairly canonical architectural type in the first century CE, and local, regional, and imperial features occur almost everywhere within and outside the Empire. The extent to which such architectural conversations took place within the city of Rome remains a largely undiscussed question; that influences from provincial temple architecture may have found their way into the visual vocabulary of the capital in ways other than in the fashion for Egyptianizing details or Mithraic sanctuaries requires further exploration.

(p. 399) The problematic distinctions between material objects and art come into play in efforts to stabilize definitions of imperial, provincial, local, and so on, as archaeologists discover enormous supplies of trade amphorae, beads, and coins from the Roman Empire in ports such as Pattanam/Muziris in India, great stashes of Roman weaponry and armor in Danish bogs, and bits of Graeco-Roman jewelry in Afghani hoards. Whether the center, in this case, should be considered the city of Rome or the entire Roman Empire, Greece and Italy or the Mediterranean and its surrounding lands, becomes increasingly unclear as we then pursue the problem of whether within the Empire the city of Rome is the center and everything else province and periphery or whether again southern Greece and central Italy are center to a surround of decreasingly "Graeco-Roman" cultural territories. The shifting nature of these definitional relations seems to point up the need for far more elastic categories or perhaps for a deep skepticism about categories themselves and about the problematics and politics of category production. There is, however, no question but that the study of the visual culture of the Roman provinces and "peripheries" has long struggled with (and usually ended acquiescent to) hierarchical categories in which the Center is the measure, assimilation and resistance are the polar options in relation to that Center, and the farther physically from the Center, both geographically and temporally, the more troubled the postulated relation to the measure becomes (see in general Castelnuovo and Ginzburg 1994).

Although there is an ever-increasing catalog of works of art and architecture and other products of material culture from the Roman provinces, there has as yet been only a fitful effort at conceptualizing the issues raised by these corpora; fewer still are the synthetic studies. And yet fewer are the studies of the way in which “peripheries” interact with the provinces (e.g., work on Gandharan art history with its long-standing conviction of the centrality of Graeco-Roman “influence:” Banerjee 1961; Cambon 2010; Kouremenos, Chandrasekaran, and Rossi 2011). At the turn of the twentieth century, Alois Riegl (1901–1923) had already begun to explore the idea of a *Reichskunst*, an art of empire, around the same time that Adolf Furtwängler (1905) presented *Soldatenkunst* as the vehicle for the transmission of ideas from northern Italy around the Empire in the Late Republic and Early Empire. Few scholars rose to these early provocations, and instead, most chose the path of “thinking locally” by examining production in distinct geographic areas where typological or stylistic similarities were visible. Thus, the work from the 1920s and 1930s by Friedrich Koepp (1921) and Lothar Hahl (1937) on the Rheinland and its neighbors considered the ways in which objects and monuments from this area shared formal characteristics. As the heroic efforts of Émile Espérandieu (1907–1938) in cataloging all the sculpture from Roman Gaul continued through the years before World War II, few took up the challenges his work raised. Local museum collections were cataloged, and regular publication of excavations made sites known, but the lack of a common language along with political and economic problems often meant that few scholars in one area knew well or worked with the objects in others.

Similarly, most work in a province was conducted by local scholars, and this remains true today; although international meetings, the Internet, the *Corpus Signorum Imperii* (p. 400) *Romani* (the international series of regional sculpture catalogs that began with the collections of Austria in the 1960s and now extends to collections in Germany, Poland, Britain, Italy, Tunisia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal, the Netherlands, Switzerland, France, and Spain), and the website www.ubi-erat-lupa.org allow for far easier contact, it is clear that people tend their own gardens. Thus, for example, until recently, almost all the studies of the mosaics of Roman Algeria have been produced by Algerian or French scholars and published in French, whereas most work on sculpture in Dacia was produced mainly (again until recently) by Romanian archaeologists, and the archaeology of Roman Britain continues to be worked almost exclusively by the British (who, like other European and North American scholars, work in almost all parts of the Roman Empire alongside national teams). The increased contact among scholars internationally, enhanced by such efforts as the meetings of the International Colloquia on Provincial Roman Art or the Roman Frontier Studies group, have helped to inform local scholars of work elsewhere and yet have not at this point led to the publication of a great deal of multiregion synthesis. However, the growing number of scholars interested in specific issues such as the Imperial use of the honorific arch, the global impact of the

Severan reign, or the role of the tombstone in the formation of social identities is cause for optimism, as are debates on such terms as “Romanization” or “resistance,” which are current in certain European circles (e.g., Mattingly et al. 1997; and Noelke, Naumann-Steckner, and Schneider 2003; among others).

The 1930s and '40s saw the rise of a series of debates about the art of the provinces that, for all their problems, tackled with new energy questions about how provincial art and culture came to have the forms they seemed so persistently to manifest. These efforts to study the broader spectrum of art and culture across the provinces tended to focus on three sets of issues: ethnicity (subtended by contemporary concerns with nationalism), “Romanization” (entangled with thinking about modern imperialism and colonialism), and quality (engaged within often unselfconscious assumptions about hierarchy). One need not wait until the 1930s, of course, to find these concerns in scholarship on the provinces. One can see, for example, in the rhetoric of Josef Strzygowski (1901) and Furtwängler (1905) in the late 1890s and the early 1900s, the impact of modern national and ethnic questions. Arguing (against the tide of opinion) for an Augustan dating of the Tropaeum Traiani, the great trophy monument in eastern Romania, Furtwängler (1905) speaks rather sorrowfully of the death-by-creeping-Hellenism inflicted on the hard and “ungainly” style present in the Rhine and Danube provinces and in northern Italy prior to the Flavians. His reading of that early style, its sources in the prosperous and independent peasant stratum of northern Italy, its dissemination among the local recruits in the legions, makes an implicit case for a muscular (manly?) and authentic style derived from a vigorous and authentic people of the land. One finds an unstated foundation in ideas about *Volksgeist* and *Volkskunst*, idealist efforts to formulate explanations for artistic similarities across time and within specific geographical or cultural-linguistic boundaries (ideas about Germanic or Celtic peoples were articulated in these frames). The description of the foreign as potentially debilitating and deracinating and Furtwängler’s notion of regional or national authenticity have parallels in the rhetorics of xenophobia (p. 401) in Europe before World War I as much as in Roman imperial language. One need not await the debates around Strzygowski’s *Orient oder Rom* or some of the academic language of the Nazi period to see how entangled with questions of ethnicity and nation early explorations of the art of the provinces could be. One can find similar rhetorical moves in the literature on “barbarians” and the culture of Late Antique Europe, too, as Ian Wood has shown (2008).

Twentieth-century articulations of the ways in which artistic ideas traveled through the Empire seem to begin with Riegl, but by the 1920s, British archaeologist Frances Haverfield (1923) had, perhaps unconsciously, woven the strands of modern nationalism and imperialism into a notion of “Romanization” that continues in modified form today. For Haverfield, Roman conquest allowed local populations access to a new and richer

cultural life and also to new prosperity and comfort. The traffic tends to be one-way: Roman ideas permeate some social strata and manifest in material culture, although certain groups (for example, those in remote rural areas) retain many of their pre-Roman cultural forms, such as elements of style or iconographic preferences. The idea that Roman culture itself changes because of contact with diverse peoples outside of Italy emerges necessarily in discussions of Rome's contacts with the Greek East, and it shows up in relation to the Egyptomania fad of the Augustan period, but until fairly recently, the picture of cultural contact with the western and northern provinces allowed for little mutuality (e.g., Hingley 2000) other than within specific immigrant or religious groups ("Oriental cults" discussed originally by Franz Cumont, 1911). That such ideas about "Romanization" should have emerged not only in Britain but in other colonializing nations of Europe is hardly surprising, but it does imply a certain amount of denial.

That denial was built not only on the foundation of attitudes about colonialism and empire but also on deeply embedded notions of quality. Quality has always been part of the rhetoric of art criticism and came into art history from its earliest moments, as in Pliny's assertion of the death of Art. But for late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century archaeologists and art historians working on the art of the provinces, quality posed some interesting problems, including those concerning the way unprovenanced ideal sculpture and imperial portraits were to be displayed in relation to work from the provinces in the increasingly important realm of the public museum.

Again, Riegl (1901–1923) stands in the vanguard. In *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, he had already placed value on abstract and nonrealistic *Reichskunst* and the art of the early Middle Ages in Europe; for him, quality seems not to have been rooted in adherence to Classical Greek figural representation, and as a consequence, it took him to an unusual openness to form. But to the extent that the classical—the European admiration for which remained the dominant cultural tendency through much of the twentieth century outside of certain high-cultural circles—had strong ideological value as timeless and traditional, it remained appropriate to much European and North American scholarship as the basis for assessment of quality in ancient art. The unease of scholars toward nonclassical styles seen in the arts of some parts of the Roman Empire reveals itself constantly in the adjectives they used: rough, crude, (p. 402) *gelenkt, hart, naive, mal-formé, secco, profondamente provinciale*, and so on. For the archaeologist with nationalist sympathies, the tension between local and classical styles was to some extent irresolvable, but in the frame of colonialist or imperialist thought, "Romanization" would either smooth out roughness and bring in metropolitan elements that would create something new without eliminating the indigenous altogether, or it would deracinate and weaken the indigenous to the point of destruction. Quality in the art of the provinces thus becomes part of the larger ideological framework of scholarship.

The great exhibition in Rome, the *Mostra Augustea della Romanità* (1937–1938), brought together for the first time works from all over the Roman Empire as part of Mussolini's new imperial agenda, while in the same period, increased efforts to develop corpora in specific regions proliferated. Through the 1930s and '40s, the many studies by García y Bellido (e.g., 1949) established the parameters of art in Roman Spain, while those of Silvio Ferri (1933), Lothar Hahl (1937), and others addressed the art of the Danube, the Rhine, and northern Italy. Their interests focused especially on the sculpture of these regions, although Italian and French scholars also worked on the mosaics and architecture of colonial North Africa (Bartoccini 1931). Style and typologies were very much at the heart of this work, as was the effort to define what the essential characteristics of a region might be. The difficulties of dating unprovenanced work were offset a bit by the fact that funerary art often had datable epigraphic evidence; nevertheless, the corpora show clearly how difficult it was for scholars to pursue standard art historical efforts at establishing chronologies. Gaps in knowledge of painting and the uneven finds of silver, bronzes, or glass posed equally serious challenges to scholarly understanding of regional styles, subjects, and even questions about what materials were imported and which were made by local or visiting artists; even now, many of these problems continue to plague the study of art in the provinces.

After World War II, a number of broad surveys of the art of the Roman Empire appeared, including those of García y Bellido (1972), Kähler (1963), and Bianchi Bandinelli (1970 and 1971). The work of Bianchi Bandinelli on the provinces, especially his essay originally published in 1942, "*Gusto e valore dell'arte provinciale*" (Bianchi Bandinelli 1973), was among the early few to attempt explicit theorization of both form and content in the art of the European provinces (he would take on the Empire East and West in the surveys *Rome: The Center of Power* and *Rome: The Late Empire*, in the 1960s and '70s, though). His effort to shift the discussion from a generally negative view of the art of the western provinces and also away from a nationalistic agenda took him into an equally ideological position but one rooted in the attempt to show the value of the "*popolaresco*." For him, the art of the provinces revealed a fundamentally humanistic and nonelite taste that would provide the basis for a new Late Antique art; in all of this, the ideas developed later on "*arte plebea*" can be seen. This Gramscian view, based in Bianchi Bandinelli's studies of Etruscan and early Roman art in Italy, allowed a reassessment of the critical terms of debates about art in the provinces, and other scholars show that by the 1960s, a trend in more positive assessments could be (p. 403) seen. No longer explicitly nationalistic, studies such as that of Jocelyn Toynbee (1964) on Roman art in Britain made serious efforts to find the valuable and the original in arts often derided as bad or "provincial." At the same time, though, the problems of how to articulate the formal characteristics of that art, at least in the West, remained (and remain). The vocabulary of

the classical continued to be dominant and thus forced the formal languages of the various provinces to be written with a terminology of lack and failure. For example, in speaking of funerary portraits in northern Italy, a number of scholars comment on the *inability* of local sculptors to provide recognizably distinctive facial features; what they do provide is said to be “formulaic and very badly executed faces, which reveal that the craftsman intended to create a portrait but failed dismally” (Zanker 2010, 179). Apparently trying for something altogether different, in 1932, Silvio Ferri had insisted that provincial art might operate on rules different from those of the classical or the court; however, he found himself making claims for originality with a comparable vocabulary, “*meno dolce, più angolose,*” and with a spontaneous reversion to “*arcaicità generica*” (Ferri 1931–1932, 307). Whereas such terms are and long had been largely absent from the discussion of North African mosaics and from the arts of southern Greece and coastal Asia Minor, they remained present in the scholarship of art in the western provinces. That said, however, the language of lack, deformity, and excess visible in some of the literature on the Hellenistic and Roman art of Greece itself has clear parallels to that of the West. The problem of finding a neutral language to describe works about which scholars continue to feel ambivalent (perhaps because of our continued embeddedness in such issues as quality or nation) remains, although a number of recent exhibitions have cast a spotlight on the aesthetic interest of many of these same objects (e.g., Aillagon 2008; or Jørgensen, Storgaard, and Thomsen 2003; it may not be an accident that some of the most exciting exhibitions of the early twenty-first century have concerned Late Antique art).

Two interesting conferences from the 1960s and '70s reveal some of the struggles over how to move beyond purely formal questions (and perhaps beyond quality and its discontents) and instead to integrate more fully the work of the historian and philologist with that of the archaeologist and art historian. The International Congress of Classical Studies meetings in 1974, published as *Assimilation et résistance à la culture gréco-romaine dans le monde ancien* (Pippidi 1976), included mainly papers on the interaction of Greeks and Romans with people outside of Attica and Rome, although the visual contributions were in the minority, with only a few papers including images. Nevertheless, the conference had a significant impact on the visual studies fields, because it went beyond thinking about individual provinces in relative isolation from the world around them and beyond seeing “Romanization” as an undilutedly positive experience for the conquered. The inclusion on the agenda of a paper by Marcel Bénabou (Bénabou 1976) on resistance and assimilation in North Africa made explicit the political struggles over modern colonial liberation movements, while at the same time, it insisted on the necessity for asking deeper questions about who among indigenous populations actually benefited by complicity with Rome, an issue raised at the same conference by P. A. Brunt (Brunt 1976). Interestingly, it would seem that the debate (p. 404) had rather

little reverberation in art history until quite recently, when the work of Greg Woolf (1998) and the collections by Scott and Webster (2003) and Eliav, Friedland, and Herbert (2008), among others, have reintroduced these historical questions from a more archaeological perspective and have engaged material objects as part of the corpus of evidence.

The 1963 Paris conference, *Le rayonnement des civilisations grecque et romaine sur les cultures périphériques* (International Congress of Classical Archaeology 1965), whose title suggests its different and earlier perspective on the interactions of Greek and Roman culture with other regions, makes a useful comparison and points up what had and had not changed in the field in the thirteen years after this conference. As *rayonnement* conveys a solar warmth, so, too, do the papers retain a sunny disposition toward the processes of interaction, in part because of their resolute insistence on viewing the radiance as positive and unproblematic. The two conferences, casting light on the various positions of Classical scholars on the anticolonial movements of the period and the diverse views of nation and nationalism within both Soviet-bloc institutions and those in the West and its allies, give a sense of where the conversation about provincial culture stood before the changes in historical studies that followed 1968 and contemporary decolonization. What seems unchanged and unchanging, however, was the presence of papers by scholars about the art and archaeology of their homelands, presented in unflinchingly empiricist frames and with no apparent desire to think in a theoretical or methodological way about the problematics of art in provincial or peripheral areas. For every paper with a theoretical vision, there were dozens that seem to have been unaware of the theoretical debates and comfortable with the traditional approaches. Without these, of course, there would be no data on which to make theories.

New Developments

In the years since those conferences, exciting developments in the art and archaeology of the provinces have shifted some of the priorities, even as debates about how to imagine the various and divergent experiences of Roman imperialism remain vibrant and motivating for scholars of material culture. For one thing, the dominance of discussions of style has ebbed slightly, although it is still a core issue. Space has opened up for more attention not only to questions of iconography and social interpretation but also to discussions of location, function, patronage, and viewer response, all increasingly important for art historical and archaeological scholarship recently. What makes the new work especially interesting is the way in which some of it incorporates older formal and typological methods along with iconographic inquiry into new questions. Two authors have provided stimulating interventions of this sort: Paul Zanker's work on provincial

imperial portraiture (Zanker 1983) and R. R. R. Smith's work on portrait statues from Aphrodisias (Smith 1998) explore style as a way to get at local patronage choices and at questions of local identity, especially in the eastern, Greek-speaking part of the Empire.

(p. 405) Both scholars use traditional methods of formal analysis and yet produce something different because of the nature of their questions and the underlying assumption that local choices are not simply a matter of lack of access to the artists, materials, models, or skills of the city of Rome. For both authors, some provincial artists and patrons (at least in the East and in North Africa) make choices based not on lack, failure, and inadequacies of skill and knowledge but because of personal and local drivers and ideological forces at work in their particular environments, both geographical-temporal and social. Because Smith's material is excavated and therefore has a context that most of Zanker's second-century CE portraits do not, he can add to the discussion the ability to identify nonimperial subjects and even to establish display contexts so that we know how the statues looked to their Roman viewers. Here the provinces can cease to be "provincial" and always lacking, but then the majority of the examples in both works come from those provinces where the language of failed effort is somewhat rarer than it is in discussions of the northern and western provinces. Both Zanker and Smith provide their patrons and audiences with an identifiable local presence and a way to combine vigorous local concerns with subjects or typologies associated with the city of Rome.



Click to view larger

Fig. 17.2 Roman floor mosaic with the triumph of Neptune and the four seasons, from La Chebba. Second century CE. Mosaic of tesserae. 4.90 × 4.85 m. Tunis, Musée National du Bardo.

(Photograph © Vanni Archive/Art Resource, New York, ART2537.)

A second interesting move that incorporates formalist approaches and style questions into new modes of thinking about the art of the provinces comes with work on mosaics (figure 17.2), although it does not often attempt to theorize cultural location. Again, Riegl is a kind of progenitor, able to focus attention on the abstract patterns of floor mosaics rather than following the dominant mode of searching their mythological panels for clues about ancient painting. The mainstream

of Italian, French, and North African scholarship concentrated, as did some of the work on Roman British mosaics, on establishing “schools” of artisans and attempting to date individual mosaics, but with the increase in archaeological accuracy of excavation and recording, some work emerged with an interest in the way mosaics on floors were experienced. Irving Lavin’s early essay (1963) on hunting mosaics, his examples from the eastern provinces, described the way decentered mosaic composition implied a mobile viewer; rather than seeing only a framed panel and an unmoving individual viewer, he understood the possibility that the composition of the mosaic depended on a floor on which the viewer(s) walked. This insight was significant perhaps less for its desire to locate a change in Late Antiquity than for pointing the way to a phenomenological view in which one experienced the floor *as* a floor. The more recent work of Rebecca Molholt (2011 and forthcoming) and Susanne Muth (1998) explores the material and formal means by which the artisans created a particular viewer experience, and the awareness of the relationship of the architectural setting to the floor mosaic provides these scholars with an excellent way of understanding the medium and both its figural and abstract elements. This work is by no means about the provinces; rather, it explores a medium whose density of use in a variety of spaces in North Africa’s and Asia Minor’s provinces lays the groundwork for a broader discussion of the relationships among provinces through the lens of a single medium and its architectural frame. And, perhaps more important, it brings to bear on an aspect of the art of the Roman provinces the insights of recent art history concerning viewer experience, identity, temporality, and physical setting. Still in (p. 406) the minority, scholars who use these critical concepts from art history on the art of the provinces have not yet produced many studies of painting or mosaics that explore the connection between administrative and cultural contexts and medium. A consideration of painting or mosaics that asks how these media work in the larger frame of an empire is yet to come.

Comparable concerns with experience and identity emerge increasingly in the discussions of funerary art in the Roman provinces. These focus less on the phenomenological and more on the issue of identity. They tend to cluster around the northern and western provinces, but some take a regional approach and look at both formal and iconographic relationships as a way to explore the expression of identity in specific sectors of the population. From the work of scholars such as Jean-Jacques Hatt (1951), Guido Mansuelli (1958), Hans Gabelmann (1973), and Lucia Teposu-Marinescu (1982), among others, on art in Gaul, northern Italy, the Rhine, and the Danube, work that looked at links among artisans and among patrons and that explored local preferences in their relationships to those of the imperial center, we are now seeing studies, for example, of military preferences and the way military tombstones can provide a sense of the formation of identities within the broader context of the Empire (e.g., Hope 2001; Mattingly (p. 407) 2003; Skupinska-Løvset 1999; Stewart 2009). This work becomes

especially important because of the way local populations were interpellated into a constantly constructed military identity while at the same time retaining certain local traditions and connections to the places from which they came. The increased interest in the functions of visual materials and in their social meanings is crucial to this strand of work, but it also relies heavily on an ever more vibrant conversation among art historians, epigraphers, and archaeologists (for example, the work of David Mattingly [2003] on funerary monuments in Ghirza, Libya). Although rather little of this kind of art history is published in the collections concerned with the military, such as the *Limes/Frontier Studies* collections (but there are some exceptions, especially in studies of fortresses and their buildings, e.g., Freeman 2002 and Morillo Cerdán 2009), greater communication would seem to be of value. Archaeological work on fortifications and military camps has tended to appear in such venues rather than in the literature on art history, and it has therefore had a greater impact on archaeological and historical studies than on studies of visual culture and visuality.

To study the architecture of the Roman provinces has required precisely this kind of close communication between architectural historians and archaeologists, and from early days, the two often overlapped (e.g., J. B. Ward-Perkins or Giorgio Gullini; a comparable overlap, although with different outcomes, arose as architects studied architectural history and archaeology, e.g., Wilhelm Dörpfeld or Georges Gromort). Important studies of the Roman architecture of Athens, produced mainly by members of the foreign schools in the city during most of the twentieth century (a situation that obtained as well throughout the colonized areas of North Africa and the Levant), combined interest in technical issues such as those connected to engineering, design, and measurement with interest in the functions and uses of structures within the local historical setting (e.g., Macready and Thompson 1987). Few broad regional studies or theoretical efforts took on the questions of architecture specifically in the context of Empire except to consider the ways in which both buildings and urban plans mirrored and adapted metropolitan Roman ideas or the way architecture in the East differed from or resembled that of the western provinces (exceptions include MacDonald 1986 and Thomas 2007). The raw materials were often present in the form of local studies too numerous to mention (e.g., Downey 1988 or Celestino Pérez and Mayoral Herrera 2010) or in the typological work of Pierre Gros (2006 and 2011) and others (e.g., Johnson 2009 or Mühlenbrock 2003), but one has yet to see the kind of theoretical debates focused on architecture in the provinces that have been visible for sculpture, for example (but see Hesberg 1995, 57-72). Systems of regional patronage in the context of the imperial cult have received interesting work, as have studies of patronage under specific rulers, and these show the value of connecting epigraphical and other textual evidence with the study of existing structures, but much of this kind of work gives little attention to the actual appearance and siting of the buildings concerned, and it reveals quite vividly the difference in the ways historians and

architectural historians approach their material (Price 1984 or Boatwright 2000). The fundamental questions about how form does or does not follow social functions are being asked increasingly in relation to domestic (p. 408) architecture around the Empire, but they are less present, with the exception of studies of baths in the eastern and western provinces, in relation to much of public architecture such as temples, fora, amphitheaters, or markets (DeLaine and Johnston 1999 and Yegül 2010).

The placement of discussions of the art and architecture of the Roman provinces in general books on Roman art reveals a good deal about a central unresolved issue. How should scholars deal with chronology when (as is also the case in Rome itself) so many objects are hard or impossible to date, when provenances are lacking, and when the relationship between state monuments from arches to portraits is either absent or problematic? If the problem is serious for the city of Rome and for the provinces of Achaëa and Asia with their many traditionally Greek metropolitan centers, then chronologies for other places can become utterly amorphous. Thus, one finds some surveys using one or several chapters, separate from the overall narrative based on political history from the Republic to Constantine or Theodosius II, for discussion of the provinces; there, much of the discussion tends to be either thematic or geographical. The experiment set by Brilliant (1974) in the 1970s to confront the fact that the metropolitan center often differed from the provinces and that an artistic “law of uneven development” might obtain is to be found, without the analytic justification, in recent books by Stewart (2008, but see also Stewart 2010 for a different approach) and Zanker (2010). The alternative, simply to insert provincial examples into the metropolitan narrative, as in most textbooks on Roman art (e.g., Ramage and Ramage 2009) or Diana Kleiner’s work on Roman sculpture (1994), assumes Rome as the measure even when it raises questions about the way art works in the various provinces.

The heart of the problem is, of course, the conceptual hegemony of the capital. In some cases, the capital clearly exerts a determining influence on the appearance and use of monuments; temples of the imperial cult are only the most obvious example, but one can add to this imperial and private portraits in certain areas, urban plans in many places, infrastructure, honorific arches (but not always, as in the Besançon or Reims arches), and so on. In other cases, especially those with Greek roots, whether in the East or in coastal Iberia, Gallia Narbonensis, Sicily, and Cyrenaica, the issue is already complicated, and when we turn to regions with vastly different Iron Age traditions, from Britain to Thrace, that hegemony operates in an extremely “uneven” way; so, too, in Egypt or Syria, Palmyra, or Palestine, where the long-standing artistic traditions that operated in complex relations with their own Hellenized past. Within the various regions, movements of goods and people (including merchants and soldiers but also those elites who move

back and forth to Rome) can shape the look of objects and thus disrupt efforts to build chronological sequences by reference to Italy or to Rome.

Acknowledging the diversity of the visual material from the provinces may not be enough to resolve the problems generated by the long-standing attachment to the chronological narrative generated by the politics of Rome. If many objects in the provinces continue to be datable only within 150 or 200 years (as is the case with much nonelite sculpture and unprovenanced terracottas), then it is not simply a matter of refusing (p. 409) to ask that a woman wear her hair like an empress while the empress is alive. Instead, one may need to detach to some degree the writing on the art of the Roman provinces from the chronological hegemony of the capital in order to allow chronology its multiple narratives. Clearly, for example, certain elements of the visual culture of nonelite populations in small towns or rural areas, funerary and votive monuments not least, require a longer time horizon and the presumption of more enduring practices that may have less to do with trends in the large towns and metropolitan centers even within a province. The funerary monuments of the Dijon area, the votive or sanctuary monuments of Britain and Phrygia, and even some of the grand mosaics of Tripolitania may require more than a century as a dating frame unless they come from dated sites; in this case, we could take Braudel's model of the *longue durée*, not only in terms of the way we imagine "the Roman period" but more specifically in the way we picture the pace and rhythms of life for nonelite and nonmetropolitan groups. While a portrait of Hadrian from the Thames may not look quite like one from Rome or Athens, it is still recognizable as the emperor and likely to come from some time within the emperor's lifetime or shortly thereafter; the same is true for a portrait of Antinous from the estate of Herodes Atticus at Loukou in Arcadia. However, the man with a beard on a votive stone from Pannonia or Egypt, even when his beard looks suitably imperial, may have lived in the first or the third century CE and not the second. Similarly, the use of the himation or of Norican hats or Germanic jewelry may not assist in dating a stele any more than it helps us to understand local gender practices such as women's putative conservatism in one area versus men's in another. Under the circumstances, neither the scholar's strategy of separate chapters nor the insertion into the master narrative seems to suit the local, regional, class, ethnic, and gender particularities of much of provincial art. And at the moment, no solution is visible, although the development of interesting critiques of older models of "Romanization" and the occasional embrace of alternative approaches such as cross-cultural comparison may eventually produce the kind of multivocal narratives that Bianchi Bandinelli's *Rome: The Late Empire* (1971) had in mind. The second of two volumes, with the first having focused on the art of the city of Rome from the later Republic through the early third century CE, *Rome: The Late Empire* combined attention to the art of the provinces with that of the third through fifth centuries. Clearly, the choice was motivated by the ongoing discussions, since the early twentieth century,

about the formal relationships between Late Antique art and the art of the northern and western provinces. And clearly, Bianchi Bandinelli's experiment generated more problems than it solved, but the effort to write a different kind of story about Roman art and to give the art of the provinces a space of its own and a narrative of its own remain provocative for art history today. The debate about how to write an art history of the Roman provinces is still in its infancy, but the increased emphasis on interdisciplinary and cross-cultural conversation, and also on phenomenological approaches, interest in the multivocal nature of artistic expression, and concern with the reception and functions of visual monuments combine with the desire to understand the nature of visuality as a socially constructed phenomenon (e.g., Elsner 2007, 253-287, on Dura Europos) to suggest that such an art history may be possible.

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The Post-Antique Reception of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the reception of Greek and Roman art and architecture from the Middle Ages up to the twentieth century, with a focus on Italy, and the role played by artists and architects in this process. It first discusses the significance of the ruins of ancient monuments and the writings of Latin authors for the reception of ancient art during the Middle Ages. It then turns to the Renaissance, with reference to the interaction between humanists such as Poggio Bracciolini and artists such as Raphael. It also looks at the emergence in Rome of a classicist trend in painting inspired by Annibale Carracci during the first half of the seventeenth century. The chapter concludes by analyzing the significance of ancient art for modern artists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Keywords: ancient monuments, Annibale Carracci, architects, architecture, art, artists, humanists, Italy, Middle Ages, Renaissance, Annibale Carracci

This essay will discuss the reception of Greek and Roman art and architecture from the Middle Ages up to the twentieth century, with a particular focus on Italy, a country that has played a critical role, particularly in the Early Modern era. As Ernst Gombrich once wrote, “the debt of Western art to antiquity cannot be encompassed in eight chapters and not in eighty, for the discoveries of the Greeks remained of course basic to all representational conventions before Cubism” (Gombrich 1966, 260). In fact, attempting to sketch the distinctive features of a cultural phenomenon that has a history of more than one thousand years in just a few pages inevitably results in significant omissions and a simplification of the original cultural-historical contexts and modern interpretive work.

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the reception of Greek and Roman antiquity has represented an important branch of research for art historians, in both the ancient and the medieval and modern fields. Only a few years after the publication of a pioneering volume on the intersections between medieval and Roman art (*Bilder aus der*

neueren Kunstgeschichte, 1867), by Anton Springer, one of the leading German art historians of the nineteenth century, a number of classical archaeologists went to work on crucial documents for the reception of antiquity, namely, Renaissance sketchbooks reproducing ancient monuments and works of art, such as the *Codex Pighianus* (c. 1550), analyzed by Otto Jahn and Christian Hülsen in 1869, and the *Codex Wolfegg* (early sixteenth century), studied by Carl Robert in 1901 (not coincidentally the year that saw the first publication of Riegl's *Late Roman Art Industry*; see chapter 19 below).

Between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Aby Warburg made the reception of ancient Greek and Roman art into a major problem for modern art history, particularly as regards the transmission of iconographic formulas evoking strong emotions ("*Pathosformeln*") (Didi-Hubermann 2002; Papapetros 2003).

(p. 418) For Warburg, who also approached art history from a psychoanalytic and anthropological perspective, the quotation of ancient images by Renaissance artists was key to the more general understanding of Renaissance culture and thinking, with its new, humanistic interest in Greek and Roman antiquity (Ginzburg 1966; Bredekamp and Diers 1991; Settis 1997). Thanks to the activity developed since the 1910s around Warburg's library—moved from Hamburg to London in 1933 and transformed into the Warburg Institute—and its emphasis on the reception of Greek and Roman antiquity in the Renaissance, this subject has become an important branch of art history during the twentieth century. At the Warburg Institute, the approach of its founder has received further elaboration from scholars such as Fritz Saxl, Erwin Panofsky, and Ernst Gombrich, with a variety of perspectives that are not always in line with Warburg's original approach (Ginzburg 1966; Bredekamp and Diers 1991; Lavin 1995; Gaston 1998). One example is the important series of lectures (*Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, 1923–1932) edited by Saxl, featuring an essay by Adolph Goldschmidt on the "afterlife" (*Nachleben*) of ancient forms in the Middle Ages in the first volume. Another example is the study by Panofsky and Saxl (1933) on Greek and Roman mythology in medieval art, devoted to the representation of mythological figures by medieval artists, in which one finds the first formulation of that "principle of disjunction" (see also Panofsky 1960), according to which, in medieval art, Greek and Roman iconographies were generally adopted for Christian subjects, whereas medieval garments displayed subjects derived from Greek and Roman mythology (against this theory see Dacos 1979; Himmelmann 1985; Settis 1986; Romano 2008).

In the same years, another important strand of research was the reception of Greek and Roman antiquity in the literature and visual arts of medieval France (Adhémar 1939). The work in this field by Jean Adhémar was critical in redirecting attention toward local sources of inspiration. A case in point is that of the classicizing sculptures decorating the exterior of the Reims Cathedral, whose Greek-like forms were explained according to

Émile Mâle by the French presence in the eastern Mediterranean during the Fourth Crusade. Today the ancient-looking style of those sculptures is explained by inspiration from the neighboring region of Upper Lotharingia (Sauerländer 2009).

A similar problem, namely, the tendency to refer to models in Greece on the basis of generic formal comparisons and without careful consideration of local sources of inspiration, has characterized the study of the reception of Greek and Roman art in Italy during the Renaissance. This is in spite of the early work on the subject by Arnold von Salis (1947), who explicitly laid emphasis on the fact that in the Renaissance, knowledge was limited to Hellenistic and, for the most part, Roman art (compare Ladendorf 1958). In the case of the Italian Renaissance, the picture is certainly complicated by figures such as Cyriacus of Ancona, a merchant, diplomat, and humanist who traveled extensively around the eastern Mediterranean, including several sites in Greece. A notable exception within this scholarly trend is represented by the magisterial publication on Ghiberti by Richard Krautheimer (1982, first published in 1956), which emphasized the general significance of Greek and Roman art in Italian society between the late fourteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries, the interactions between humanists and artists, and the importance of patrons and collecting. (p. 419)

In particular, Krautheimer gave special attention to the identification of works of art of which Ghiberti might have had direct knowledge, and in so doing, he was putting to use the *Census of Antique Works of Art Known in the Renaissance*, an interdisciplinary research database cataloging the documentation of ancient monuments known in the Renaissance, which he himself had promoted along with Saxl and Karl Lehmann; the project was initiated in 1947 by the Warburg Institute, later continued in collaboration with the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, and, since 1997, has been based in Berlin at Humboldt University. In relation to the *Census* project, Gombrich formulated a series of important methodological considerations about the reception of works of Greek and Roman art in the Renaissance (Gombrich 1963). Particularly significant is Gombrich's distinction, in reference to quotations from ancient works of art by Renaissance artists, between faithful imitation—in keeping with the concept of *imitatio* in the art of rhetoric—and assimilation, in which the model is transformed to a point where its identification as a source is no longer possible. These two concepts of imitation, from nature and ancient models, and assimilation, with the consequent problem of identifying models, have subsequently become two central concerns for scholarship until very recently (see, for sculpture, the case of the Laocoön group: Settis 1999; Brilliant 2000; Cuzin and Gaborit 2000; Décultot, Le Rider, and Queyrel 2003). In the 1960s and 1970s, the *Census* project significantly contributed to the development of an interest among art historians in the reception of ancient art, as indicated by a spate of publications on the subject (Rowland 1963; Vermeule 1964; Dacos 1979). Finally, in 1986, Phyllis Bober and Ruth Rubinstein,

the project's two curators, published a volume (Bober and Rubinstein 2010) with a selection of about two hundred works of ancient art, which made the main results of the *Census* accessible. Today the continuously increased *Census* database—since 1997 operated by Humboldt University in Berlin—is available online (www.census.de), as is the database of ancient sculpture in collections of engravings by the Scuola Normale Superiore (<http://mora.sns.it>).

The 1980s saw the publication of two other important works on the modern reception of Greek and Roman art. One is *Taste and the Antique* by Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny (1981), an in-depth discussion of the reception history of almost one hundred sculptures that formed the canon of ancient art for about three centuries. This volume follows the reception and reproduction of the sculptures in a variety of media, including plaster casts, prints, small bronzes, and earthenware, stressing the role of collectors, the learned public, and antiquarians. Another significant contribution was the volumes edited by Salvatore Settis (1984–1986), which represent an attempt at approaching the problem from a plurality of points of view, and keeping the interpretation open, without the attempt at reaching a unified conclusion.

Leaving aside more general publications (e.g., the problematic volume by Barkan 1999), the 1990s saw a new interest in the reception of Greek and Roman art by twentieth-century artists, in line with a change in approach to the “classical” past in the age of globalization and postmodernity (Settis 2006). Particularly significant in this regard, was the exhibition “On Classic Ground” held at the Tate Gallery in London in 1990, which focused on the art of 1910 to 1930 and the new classicism of artists such as (p. 420) Picasso, Léger, and De Chirico (Cowling and Mundy 1990; see, more recently, Green and Daehner 2011; Prettejohn 2011).

Two fairly recent publications show the different approaches to the problem of the reception of Greek and Roman antiquity characteristic of the field today. On the one end is *The Classical Tradition* (Grafton, Most, and Settis 2010), a reference volume that deals with the reception of the “classical” heritage at large but with an imbalance between a heavy emphasis on literary sources and a limited consideration of the visual material. Quite different is the essay by Settis on the “classical” and its future (Settis 2006), which focuses on key monuments and works of art. By taking into account reflections about the status of art history in contemporary society (e.g., Belting 1987) and confronting the need, in reference to the “classical” heritage, to move beyond traditional Eurocentric approaches, Settis, by comparing the relationship between the European past and that of other cultures, such as China and pre-Columbian America, has argued that obsession with cultural decay, ruins, and a “classical” past is specifically European and has significantly changed over the centuries through periods of decay and rebirth.

The Middle Ages

This brings us to the Middle Ages, the first period under consideration here, in which in addition to the ruins of ancient monuments, the writings of Latin authors were critical for the reception of ancient art. Thanks to Pliny the Elder, known also through excerpts and quotations by Isidore of Seville, memory of the excellence of Greek and Roman art had been preserved together with the names of the most celebrated Greek artists, although not without some degree of confusion (see also chapter 23 below); these names included Phidias, Polyclitus, Praxiteles, Apelles, and Zeuxis (Pfisterer 1999).

Still, until the Renaissance, knowledge of ancient art in Europe consisted mainly of rarely signed sculptures of the Roman period, together with numerous works of decorative arts. This situation did not change substantially over the course of the fifteenth century, when some ancient works made their way from Greece first to Florence and then to Venice, or with the circulation of a few drawings made in Greece and Asia Minor (1426–1448) by Cyriacus of Ancona (Beschi 1986 and 1998); to this one may add the investigation of the Domus Aurea in Rome, which started around 1480 and put artists face-to-face with Roman painting from the time of the emperor Nero (Dacos 1979).

As far as architecture is concerned, in the Middle Ages, ruins of ancient monuments served as a source of material, but they also provided inspiration for building techniques and elements of design. Vitruvius's text, present in Europe in only one copy, was read and excerpted between the ninth and tenth centuries, but its impact on architectural practice remains unclear. A case in point is the ancient-looking elements of Lorsch Abbey, one of the main centers of Carolingian art, which may derive from the direct examination of ancient ruins or from the interpretation of this ancient text (Schuler (p. 421) 1999; Nussbaum 2008). One has to wait until the advanced fifteenth century in order to find a clear influence of Vitruvius on architectural practice.

A variety of factors and effects can be associated with *spolia*, the practice of reusing works of ancient art—often sarcophagi—in buildings (Esch 1969 and 1990; Greenhalgh 2009). On the one hand, there were economic considerations, as spoliating represented the opportunity to acquire valuable building material at low cost, including marble and colored stone, which could then be rebuilt into the new constructions; at the same time, the use of *spolia* expressed the Christian triumph over the pagan past, although mixed with admiration for ancient artistic practice and not without interest for ancient iconography (Settis 1986; Greenhalgh 2009). *Spolia* and ruins could represent powerful statements about the origins of civic communities (as at Modena, Verona, Reims, Siena, or Trier) but also serve as testimonies to military victories and successful trade (as at

Pisa, Genova, or Amalfi). At the same time, ancient marbles could serve to evoke the image of Rome, as a seat of the pope (Montecassino, Genova) or as the victor over Carthage (Pisa) (Settis 1986; Gramaccini 1996; Müller 2002; Clemens 2003).

In addition to architectural elements, ancient sculptures, such as reliefs, altars, and sarcophagi, both locally found (Modena, Trier) and imported (Pisa, Genova, Amalfi), could also be reused. The sarcophagi could serve as reliquaries, altars, and royal and imperial tombs, a practice later imitated by aristocrats and local elites. Inserted into the walls and placed in churches or the surrounding cemeteries, these reliefs exhibited a rich repertoire of strongly emotional images, and the serial character of these representations facilitated the reception of particular iconographic schemes (Andreae and Settis 1984; Settis 1986).

The modalities of reception greatly varied depending on time and place. In the twelfth-century basilica at Vézelay in Burgundy, a representation of the people of Rome molded on a Roman relief shows a clear understanding of the source's subject (Adhémar 1939; Balty 2008). On the other hand, representations of Orestes's matricide were clearly not recognized for their original meaning, when sarcophagi with this subject were used either for holding the remains of a saint at Husillos in northern Spain or as a source of the decoration for one of the capitals of the Church of San Martín de Tours at Frómista in the province of Palencia, Spain (Settis 1986). On a different note, at Modena at the beginning of the twelfth century, Wiligelmo consciously appropriated the iconography of a sarcophagus, yet within the same project, the decoration of the Cathedral of Modena, an ancient statue was systematically recarved and made into the image of an angel. Along similar lines, in about 1282 at Orvieto, Arnolfo di Cambio carefully included a Roman sculpture in the monumental tomb of Guillaume De Bray, making it into a representation of the Virgin (Settis 1984). Finally, in Pisa, emulation prompted the sculptor Biduino and his patron (ca. 1170) to reproduce a Roman sarcophagus for the coffin of Judge Giratto in the Campo Santo (Settis 1986; Milone 1993).

In churches' treasuries, the value of liturgical objects was augmented with ancient gems (Brown 1997; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007). Besides the appreciation for the rarity of these objects and the properties attributed to the different types of stones, sometimes the reuse of gems shows consideration for their subject matter, reinterpreted in Christian (p. 422) terms. Thus, between 1248 and 1252, Albertus Magnus saw the images of two of the three Magi on the central cameo depicting Ptolemy II and his consort Arsinoe II, in the Shrine of the Three Kings in Cologne Cathedral, a reliquary said to contain the bones of the biblical Magi (Zwierlein-Diehl 2008). Attempts at reviving the ancient art of glyptic are documented by Lombard and Carolingian productions and also by the gems carved at the court of Frederik II, owner of the Farnese Cup, the most important Hellenistic cameo,

later in the possession of Lorenzo de' Medici and quoted by Sandro Botticelli (Settis 2003; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007).

Finally, between the seventh and the twelfth centuries, Late Antique ivory diptychs were generally reused as covers for religious books; however, the Symmachi-Nicomachi diptych was reused as doors on an early-thirteenth-century reliquary of the seventh-century founder of the Abbey of Montier-en-Der, testifying to the antiquity of this cult place (Wittekind 2008).

The Gate of Frederick II at Capua (ca. 1234), the first work of civic architecture making explicit reference to antiquity, was built in connection with the promulgation of the collection of laws known as the Constitutions of Melfi. The decoration of the gate featured the enthroned emperor dispensing justice, along with a female head (perhaps Justice) and two male busts (perhaps Constantine and Charlemagne), all based on ancient models. This accords well with the display of antiquity exhibited in his residences by Frederick II, meant to affirm his status as an emperor.



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Fig. 18.1 Sarcophagus with Meleager on his death-bed, from the environs of Rome. C. 180 CE. Marble. Height 72 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre inv. Ma 539.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

It was in Puglia, around the court of Frederick II, that the sculptor Nicola Pisano may have received his training, but it was in Tuscany that this artist found in the images of Roman sarcophagi the models for the representations of gestures, expressions, and

forms that greatly enhanced the communicative power of his sculptures (Seidel 1975 and 2005; Settis 2003). Thus, for one of the animated, unusual gestures exhibited in his *Massacre of the Innocents* in the pulpit of the Siena Cathedral (1265–1268), he was inspired by a Roman sarcophagus featuring the death of Meleager (Seidel 1975 and 2005) (figure 18.1); this is a gesture so powerful in its emotional (p. 423) intensity that it later inspired both Giotto (Romano 2008) (figure 18.2) and Donatello (Pope-Hennessy 1993).

In the paintings of Giotto, characterized by a new, “modern” language, inspiration from Roman monuments can be detected in details of representations of buildings (Romano 2008; Benelli 2012). Those ancient sources also provided the inspiration for the rendering of foreshortening in the *Adoration of the Magi* at Assisi, in which Giotto also expressly quotes one of the Dioscuri from the Quirinal group in Rome (see chapter 23 below). In

general, however, in spite of such quotations, there are only a few instances during the Middle Ages in which ancient images served as models for the depiction of gestures and the rendering of forms, including bodies and draperies.

The Renaissance



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Fig. 18.2 Giotto (1266-1336), *Lamentation over Christ*, Padua, Scrovegni Chapel.

(Photograph © Cameraphoto Arte, Venice/Art Resource, New York, ART3904.)

Although he knew Vitruvius's text, Petrarch wrote (1337 or 1341) on the ruins of Rome from a purely literary perspective, drawing on Virgil. A similar lack of attention for the actual remains characterizes the description of the Colosseum by Giovanni Dondi, (p. 424) Petrarch's friend (Günther 1988), who tells us of the sense of admiration that sculptors felt in front of the ancient statues in Rome

(Krautheimer 1982), a different feeling from the almost magical attraction sensed earlier by Magister Gregorius (thirteenth century) (Gramaccini 1996).

Between the end of the Trecento and the early Quattrocento, when ancient art became a source of inspiration for contemporary art in Florence, there was an increasing interaction between humanists and artists. It is possible that in 1401, in the competition for the new bronze doors of the Baptistery, the patrons explicitly asked for a reference to ancient art, which was the source of inspiration for both Lorenzo Ghiberti and Filippo Brunelleschi, quoting, respectively, a Roman sarcophagus and the Spinario (Krautheimer 1982).

The early fifteenth century saw also, in Florence and later in several other centers in Italy and Europe, the beginning of a new artistic trend that regarded ancient art highly for its technical skill, taking it as the model for the representation of the human body, movement, and depth and as a source of inspiration for the effective representation of gestures and emotions, which ultimately led to the abandonment of earlier

representational modes. Leon Battista Alberti, in his *De pictura*, was the first to recommend the practice of copying works of ancient art, an operation later mediated by plaster casts, prints, and small-scale copies. The writings of Giorgio Vasari show how this practice came to be regarded as an essential component in the training of artists, as a way to learn how to represent nature, something it remained for about four centuries (Haskell and Penny 1981; Harprath 1989; Ames-Lewis 2000).

The style of Donatello shows such a deep assimilation of the formal characteristics of ancient sculptures, best seen in the statues for the church of Orsanmichele, that the identification of his direct sources of inspiration often remains unclear. Roman sarcophagi featuring erotes were the models for the pulpit of the Prato Cathedral (Pope-Hennessy 1993). For the Cantoria, or singing tribune, at the Duomo in Florence, the inspiration was provided by a series of reliefs featuring erotes carrying attributes and thrones of various divinities from the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, one of which was attributed to Polyclitus (Pfisterer 2002).

A particular attention for the rendering of the nude and movement of ancient images, very far from the elegance of Gothic art, is characteristic of the drawings produced by artists of the early fifteenth century, such as Pisanello (Blass-Simmen 1995). This painter, who copied several complex scenes from Roman sarcophagi with painstaking attention to detail, was also the author of an innovative series of medals, which refer to their ancient models (Beschi 2007).

The notion that Greek and Roman antiquity had reached the highest quality in the arts also inspired architects, who paid particular attention to ancient ruins, particularly in Rome; they did not, however, produce slavish imitations. The humanist Poggio Bracciolini played a role in the diffusion of Vitruvius in Florence (ca. 1416). As a result, Leon Battista Alberti not only took inspiration from the treatise of the Roman architect for his own *De re aedificatoria* (ca. 1450 but published only in 1482) but also made a point of verifying Vitruvius's prescriptions on ancient ruins (Burns 1999). Alberti's study of (p. 425) ancient ruins and their use as models for his buildings, with references that were meant to be recognized by the public, parallel the philological work that was pursued by contemporary humanists.

A similar approach also characterizes Andrea Mantegna's work (Agosti and Thiébaud 2008). Trained in Padua in the same years as Donatello, Mantegna embodied in his work the two main artistic precepts formulated by Alberti in his *De pictura* (1435) (Pfisterer 2002), namely, the importance of the observation of nature and the study of antiquity (Bodon 2010). Thus, Mantegna turned to the subject on Roman sarcophagi—the carrying of the body of Meleager—that Alberti had recommended to painters for an engraving that later became a source of inspiration for the *Pala Baglioni* (also known as *The Deposition*)

by Raphael (Settis 2002). More often, however, Mantegna's references to works of ancient art are not as clear-cut, being dispersed within the context of ancient-looking compositions, such as the arch among the now-lost *Stories of St. James* in the Ovetari Chapel in Padua. Still, his archaeological recreations in the *Triumphs of Caesar* are heavily indebted to Greek and Roman authors, presumably as a result of collaborations with a humanist at the court of Isabella d'Este, an avid collector of works of ancient art (Brown 1992). To a similar cultural milieu belong the complex archaeological recreations described and illustrated in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, first published in Venice in 1499.

At the beginning of his pontificate, Sixtus IV decided to transfer a series of bronze statues considered to be examples of artistic excellence from the Lateran to the Capitoline, the seat of the civic government of Rome. These were the Spinario, the hand and head from a colossal statue of Constantine, the Hercules from the Forum Boarium (figure 18.3), the Camillus, and the Wolf, the last being particularly important to the memory of the mythical origins of Rome. This act (1475), presented as a restitution (*restitutio*) to the people of Rome following the example of ancient Roman emperors, marked the beginning of the transformation of the Capitoline into a museum, completed in 1538 with the relocation of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (Haskell and Penny 1981, 15) (figure 13.4).



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Fig. 18.3 Statue of Hercules, from the Forum Boarium. Second century BCE. Gilded bronze. Height 2.41 m. Rome, Musei Capitolini inv. 1265.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

In about 1480 (or a little earlier, as argued by La Malfa 2009), the discovery of the vaulted, painted ceilings of the Domus Aurea, rich in gilded stuccos and peopled with fantastic creatures framed by architectural elements and garlands, began to reveal unexpected forms and compositions to Renaissance painters, including Ghirlandaio, Pinturicchio, Signorelli, and Perugino. In order to draw those paintings, artists descended underground in the ruins,

which were similar to grottoes (Dacos 1969). Among those visitors was probably Jacopo Ripanda, famous for his reckless drawing of the reliefs of Trajan's column and to whom we owe a large collection of drawings of works of ancient art. The Domus Aurea paintings gave rise to a new form of decoration called the *grottesca* (from *grotta*, a reference to the conditions of the ruins of Nero's palace), which became very popular in Italy (Morel 1997). Thirty years later, Giovanni da Udine, a collaborator of Raphael, enriched the *grottesche* in the Vatican Loggias with stuccos, in imitation of the ceilings of the Domus Aurea and of Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli (Dacos 1986). (p. 426)

Bramante, the architect of the *Stanze di Raffaello*, was also in charge of the design of the Cortile del Belvedere, the courtyard in the Vatican Palace, in which Julius II, Leo X, Paul III, and Clemens VII exhibited their growing collection of ancient statues, which would soon become models of artistic perfection during the first three decades of the sixteenth century (Winner and Andreae 1998). These sculptures were reproduced in a variety of media, including prints and plaster casts, and became very popular first in the royal courts in France, Britain, and Spain and then in academies.

In addition to the Belvedere Apollo, which would later come to represent the true essence of Greek art for Winckelmann, the Laocoön group was added to the collection in 1506 (figure 29.1). The discovery of this sculpture aroused great interest because of its identification with the famous statue in the palace of the emperor Titus mentioned by Pliny. Among the many works that document the impact of this group from its discovery until the twentieth century, one may point out the parody by Titian, featuring a group of apes in lieu of the Trojan priest and his two sons, within the context of the Vesalian-Galenist controversy (Décultot, Le Rider and Queyrel 2003).

The favorable judgment of Michelangelo contributed to the prestige of the Belvedere Torso, which entered the collection many years after its discovery (Wünsche 1998). Michelangelo had deeply assimilated the language of ancient, particularly Hellenistic, (p. 427) sculpture from early on, as indicated by Vasari's anecdotes about the *Cupid* and the *Bacchus*, now at the Bargello, sold as ancient pieces. Likewise, a drawing by Michelangelo reveals the impact of the Volta Dorata, one of the most appreciated ceilings of the Domus Aurea (Agosti and Farinella 1987). Later, Michelangelo favored more complex compositions and a closer observation of nature. Still, one of the Ignudi on the Sistine Chapel ceiling (1508-1512) features an unusual pose found on a famous gem probably known to Michelangelo through a drawing (Dunkelmann 2010). This gem was no longer in Florence at the beginning of the sixteenth century, but it had been highly valued by Ghiberti and was even attributed to Polyclitus (Pfisterer 2002). One may thus suggest the possibility that Michelangelo might have chosen this iconography also as a form of emulation of a work attributed to a great ancient artist. Michelangelo's emulation

of the artists of the past emerges clearly in the case of the David, a colossal marble statue executed in one block of stone, like the Laocoön group according to Pliny's description (Pfisterer 2002).

For architects in search of inspiration from ancient monuments, the Pantheon (figure 8.6) offered the model for religious buildings, such as the Tempietto at San Pietro in Montorio in Rome and the project for St. Peter's Basilica, both designed by Bramante. It was only in 1511 that the first illustrated edition of Vitruvius, edited by the architect and humanist Fra' Giocondo, showed how Roman temples had a longitudinal plan. This publication also influenced the initial design of Villa Madama by Raphael, which also took into account the descriptions of villas by Pliny the Younger, and the ancient ruins in Rome's suburbium. Stimulated by the rich intellectual environment of the papal court (Rowland 1998), Raphael's antiquarian culture finds its best expression in his architecture, rather than in his paintings (Burns 1984; Onians 1988). Here one finds, alongside references to Vitruvius, elements derived from ancient monuments, reused with flexibility, taking into consideration visual effects. Raphael linked his architectural studies to a project of systematic graphic documentation of all the remains of ancient architecture in Rome, which he outlined in his *Letter to Leo X*, written with Baldassar Castiglione in 1519. Raphael's intention was to publish the results of this extensive campaign of measurement and drawing of the ruins—very innovative for its time—together with a translation of Vitruvius's text (Di Teodoro 1994). In his *Letter*, Raphael shows confidence in the accomplishments of contemporary artists, coupled with a critical attitude toward ancient art, which is also revealed in his reference to the formal differences between the sculptures adorning the Arch of Constantine. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, this new sensibility toward the stylistic differences between works of ancient art is also found in the writings of Pirro Ligorio, a painter and architect who worked for Pius IV and was also the author of a monumental antiquarian treatise, which was never published but whose manuscript was still consulted in the seventeenth century (Schreurs 2000). A case in point concerns the Hercules from the Forum Boarium (figure 18.3): although its find spot could be taken to suggest its identification as a sculpture by Myron mentioned by Pliny, Ligorio refrained from that attribution because of its style, "more beautiful than nature," which was not in agreement with Myron's own style as described by ancient authors. (p. 428)

To get back to Raphael, whose paintings earned him the epithet of New Apelles (Pfisterer 2002; Maffei 2010), his assimilation of ancient sculptural models is such that his sources are not easy to identify. This task is facilitated by Raphael's preliminary studies (Agosti and Farinella 1984), which show the painter's considerations not only of the statues at the Belvedere but also of those in various private collections in Rome (Becatti 1968; Gasparri 2010). In fact, in Rome, Florence, Venice, and many other Italian cities, the

fifteenth century saw the development of collections of ancient sculptures, often organized by subject matter (Wrede 1993).

In spite of all this interest in ancient images, existing works of ancient art were not quoted in illustrations by mythographers, despite their references to ancient literary sources on art and their function as sourcebooks for iconography. One such publication is *Images Depicting the Gods of the Ancients (Imagini degli dei degli antichi)* (1556) by Vincenzo Cartari, which started including ancient gems, coins, and small bronzes as illustrations mixed with modern images derived from literature only in 1615 (Volpi 1992). The *Iconologia* (1593) by Cesare Ripa (Maffei 2012) represents the most relevant example of this lack of concern for the monumental evidence.

The system of architectural orders envisaged by Raphael found its codification in book 4 (1537) of the influential treatise on architecture by Sebastiano Serlio. This author discussed ancient monuments separately in book 3 (1540). Serlio's ideas about the orders were not reinforced by the ancient ruins; rather, his source of inspiration derived from a need to rationalize architecture, which also found expression in the correlation between the orders and buildings' functions (Thönes and Günther 1985; Onians 1988 and 2006). Jacopo da Vignola (1562) (Affanni and Portoghesi 2011) and Andrea Palladio (1570) (Puppi 1989) further developed Serlio's classicist vision, and since the 1620s, thanks to Inigo Jones, Palladio's interpretation of Greek and Roman architecture became popular in Britain, spreading later through Europe and the United States (Tavernor 1991; Anderson 2007).

The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Seventeenth-century art theorists recount the story of Annibale Carracci drawing the Laocoön group on a wall with a piece of chalk, from memory. This story provides an indication of the role played by ancient art as a source of inspiration, along with the direct observation of nature and the study of modern painters for Carracci (Ginzburg Carignani 2000). In Rome, the influence of ancient art is particularly noticeable not only in the iconographies but also in the three-dimensionality of the figures in the decoration of the *Camerino* (1595 or 1599) at Palazzo Farnese, devised by Carracci with the assistance of the humanist Fulvio Orsini (Martin 1956; Mozzetti 2002). Caravaggio himself, criticized for his excessive realism, had an eye for ancient art, as indicated by the (p. 429) quotation in his *Buona Ventura* of the *Zingarella*, a statue of Diana in the Borghese collection (Borea and Gasparri 2000).

In Rome, the first half of the seventeenth century saw the development of a classicist trend in painting inspired by Carracci (e.g., Domenichino and Guido Reni) in parallel with an increased interest in movement, expression, and realism resulting in complex compositions, on the part of artists with a deep knowledge of ancient art (e.g., Pietro da Cortona and Bernini). This period also saw a great expansion in both collecting and antiquarian studies, including major publishing enterprises promoted by aristocratic collectors (e.g., the Giustiniani and Barberini) and scholars (e.g., Giovan Pietro Bellori) (Borea and Gasparri 2000; Herklotz 1999; Fusconi 2001; Rausa 2011). In particular, in the 1630s, the artists in charge of the publication of the Giustiniani collection (*Galleria Giustiniana*, 1631), including Nicolas Poussin, Joachim von Sandrart, and François Duquesnoy, developed a new approach to ancient sculpture, which involved the careful measuring and analysis of proportions and anatomy; the aim was to develop a style both closer to Greek models and more expressive. To the same group belonged François Perrier, the author of two collections of prints (*Segmenta*, 1638; *Icones et segmenta*, 1645) reproducing ancient sculptures then regarded as masterpieces, which became incredibly popular (Cropper and Dempsey 1996; Lingo 2007). In his paintings, notable for their archaeological correctness (Cropper and Dempsey 1996), Poussin not only made ample use of sculptures in Rome (Sénechal 1996), but he also included the few remains of ancient paintings and mosaics known at the time (Lavagne 2011). Peter Paul Rubens, a painter who felt a particular attachment to Greek and Roman antiquity—as indicated by his project for the publication of ancient gems, a joint venture with his friend Nicolas-Claude de Peiresc (Herklotz 1999)—shared a similar approach. His *Death of Seneca* (1612–1613) is an explicit, moving quotation of the Dying Seneca in the Borghese collection, in part motivated by Rubens’s personal interest in Stoicism (Noll 2001).

As we saw with Raphael, the unified image of Greek and Roman antiquity characteristic of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance began to give way to a more complex understanding, sensitive to differences in style, explained according to an evolutionary model. The next step, between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was the attempt to distinguish between Greek and Roman styles. This was made possible through the increased knowledge of ancient art among artists, particularly those working for the *Museo Cartaceo* (“Paper Museum”), the vast project of documentation of works of ancient art promoted by Cassiano dal Pozzo, a patron of Poussin (Cropper and Dempsey 1996; Herklotz 1999). Thus, in about 1670, at the Académie Royale in Paris, the study of ancient Greek art was focused on attempts at identifying various schools (Cropper and Dempsey 1996). In 1674, Jacques Carrey drew the Parthenon sculptures for the Marquis de Nointel (Bowie and Thimme 1971). Finally, in 1758, also thanks to the financial support of the Comte de Caylus, the architect Julien-David Le Roy managed to publish his *Ruins of the Most Beautiful Monuments of Greece* ahead of James Stuart and Nicholas

Revett, who were working on a similar publication on the monuments of the Acropolis and other ancient buildings in Greece (Le Roy 2004). (p. 430)

Another critical step in the modern reception of Greek and Roman art is represented by the “Grand Tour,” the traditional trip made by members of the European aristocracy, which began flourishing in the seventeenth century and included Italy as a main destination (Wilton and Bignamini 1996; Cometa 1999), to which Greece and Turkey were added later on. The Grand Tour played a major role in making the study of ancient ruins and works of ancient art into an important component of elite education and social life, and it was tied up with the practice of collecting (for Britain, see Coltman 2009). This is the background for Winckelmann’s *History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764) (see chapter 19 below), in which Greek art, in its “noble simplicity and quiet grandeur,” was presented as the ideal of perfect and absolute beauty, and beauty was the sister of liberty. Winckelmann’s message was at the same time aesthetic, ethical, and political, and it had great consequences for Neoclassicism and the reception of Greek art first in the age of the French Revolution and later under Napoleon (Honour 1968; Irwin 1997; Schnapp 1997; Pinelli 2005; Coltman 2006; Potts 2006).

However, the “Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns” that animated literary circles in the age of Louis XIV took its toll on the reception of Greek and Roman art, particularly its prestige. The modest quality of the paintings found at Herculaneum did not lend support to the Ancients’ cause (Michel 1984), and among the Moderns, Étienne Maurice Falconet (1771) came to proclaim the superiority of his monument to Peter the Great over the bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius, which until then had been the uncontested model (Settis 2006).

The new interest among architects for simple lines and forms, in reaction to Baroque and Rococo architecture, prompted a renewed attention to the Doric. The temples in Paestum were drawn around 1750, and later published (1764), by Jacques-Gabriel Soufflot, who took inspiration from them for his design of the Church of Sainte Geneviève in Paris, later known as the Panthéon (Ceserani 2012, 60–68). The austerity of the Doric order, which Abbé Laugier saw as the simplest of all the conventional orders, greatly contributed to the development of the Greek Revival between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, particularly in France with the work of Claude Nicolas Ledoux and in Germany with architects of the caliber of Friedrich Gilly, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, and Leo von Klenze. In the United States, buildings were also designed following Greek forms, such as the Bank of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia by Benjamin Henry Latrobe. Countering this trend, it was Roman architecture, particularly the monuments in Rome, that inspired the work of Giovanni Battista Piranesi, whose publications were very influential, including for Robert Adam, the publisher of the ruins of Diocletian’s Palace at Spalato (1764), which

served as a model for the Adam brothers' *Adelphi* (begun in 1768) in London (Honour 1968; Irwin 1997; Pinelli 2005; Kondo 2012).

The history paintings by Jacques-Louis David are emblematic of the idea of art of this period (Johnson 1993): his subject matters, centered on examples of civic virtues, are located in archaeologically recreated ancient settings, and their compositions and colors are simplified and toned down, in order to come closer to ancient art. For his reconstructions, David used Perrier's plates and the recently published (p. 431) work by Bernard de Montfaucon, namely, *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures* (1719–1724). References to ancient art in David's work are many, including in the *Lictors Bringing Brutus the Bodies of his Sons* (1789), in which the protagonist is given the face of the bronze head from the Capitoline traditionally identified with this character.

The publication of the first vase collection of Sir William Hamilton, the British envoy to the king of the Two Sicilies in Naples, edited by the Baron d'Hancarville (1766–1767), also had an influence on David and on his pupil Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres. This influence is particularly noticeable in the emphasis on pure outline, which is also characteristic of the work by John Flaxman as a draftsman of Wedgwood pottery (Rosenblum 1967; Jenkins and Sloan 1996; Milanese and De Caro 2005).

The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

The arrival of the Parthenon marbles in London in 1812 brought the primacy of the sculptures in Rome to an end (Cook 1984; Pavan 1974–1975; Farinella and Panichi 2003). In spite of the fact that by now, the study of ancient art and artistic practice began to take different paths, the former becoming a fully fledged academic discipline, the first to point out the quality of the Parthenon marbles to artists was a classical archaeologist, Ennio Quirino Visconti. Antonio Canova, who in 1815 voiced opposition to the possible restoration of the Parthenon sculptures, took them as inspiration for his *Theseus Fighting the Centaur* (1804–1819) (Johns 1998; Farinella and Panichi 2003) (figures 18.4 and 18.5). Likewise, the Parthenon frieze inspired Bertel Thorvaldsen for his *Triumph of Alexander*, commissioned for the Palazzo del Quirinale in Rome under Napoleon (1818–1828) (Honour 1989; Jørnæs 1991; Farinella and Panichi 2003). On a slightly different note, Greek climate and nature, seen as important factors for the development of Greek art, play a major role in Karl Friedrich Schinkel's *Vision of the Golden Age of Greece* (1825), a painting commissioned by the city of Berlin and depicting a building under construction that echoes the Parthenon (Bergdoll 1994; Zadow 2003). An almost philological reproduction of this monument characterizes Alma Tadema's *Phidias and the Parthenon*

Frieze (1868), featuring Phidias in front of his new creation, the highly polychrome Parthenon frieze, being viewed by members of the Athenian elite, including Pericles, his mistress Aspasia, and his young nephew Alcibiades (Farinella and Panichi 2003).



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Fig. 18.4 Parthenon, south metope 2, struggle between Lapith and centaur. 447–438 BCE. Marble. Height 1.34 m.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

Later in the nineteenth century, the significance of ancient art for modern artists was drastically reduced because of a variety of factors, including the increasing popularity of *en plein air* painting—which finds its culmination with Impressionism—and the progressive abandonment of mimetic and perspectival notions of vision and representation (Crary 1992). Works of ancient art, however, did not completely cease to exercise (p. 432) their influence on modern

artists, although they did so in different ways (Wünsche 1998; Cuzin and Gaborit 2000; Prettejohn 2011). There is, for example, the influence of the Belvedere Torso on the work of Auguste Rodin or the presence of the *Spinario* in one of Paul Cézanne's sketchbooks (1885–1900). Henri Matisse drew the same statue from memory, preserving its gesture and posture, which he then rendered in bronze in his *Thorn Extractor* (1906).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 18.5 Antonio Canova (1757–1822), *Theseus Fighting the Centaur* (1804–1819). Marble. Height 3.40 m. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

In the twentieth century, the influence of ancient art in general, and Greek art specifically, is particularly noticeable in the work of Giorgio De Chirico, who, between 1912 and 1917, during his metaphysical period, painted a series of uninhabited cityscapes, populated by ancient sculptures and plaster casts, along with objects of daily life and modern machines, with imposing modern and premodern buildings as a background

(Cowling and Mundy 1990; Green and Daehner 2011). Leaving aside these often explicit quotations, Greek and Roman art continued to maintain its influence during the twentieth century in the general approach to form and representation. The simplicity of the Doric order inspired Le Corbusier’s famous comparison, in *Towards an Architecture* (1923), between the development of the Doric temple and the development of engines, taken as icons of modernity (Le Corbusier 2007). Similarly, ancient Greek art, not only that of the Archaic but also that of the Classical and Hellenistic periods, deeply influenced (p. 433) the formal experimentations of Pablo Picasso; note the Hera-like figure for the Spanish Resistance in the comic-strip-like series of etchings *The Dream and Lie of Franco* (1937) (Green and Daehner 2011, 2). This is reminiscent of Christian Zervos’s appropriation of ancient art for modernism in *L’art en Grèce* (1934) and the emphasis he placed on Cycladic and Archaic art over the boring and obsolete art of the Classical period; with this approach, he sought to go beyond what he saw as a false dichotomy between “the arts wrongly dubbed savage” and “the cultures called classical” (Green and Daehner 2011, 1), a proposition that opened a new, modernist chapter in the reception of Greek and Roman art.

(Translated from the Italian by Clemente Marconi.)

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the modern historiography of art and architecture in ancient Greece and Rome and its relationship with modern intellectual history. It begins with an analysis of two fundamental conditions that have shaped the modern historiography of the Greek and Roman visual arts: the fragmentary survival of the remains of the Classical past and the normative position of the Classical cultures in Western civilization. It then turns to Greek and Roman texts bearing on the historiography of the visual arts. The chapter concludes with a discussion of recent and current approaches to the historiography of Greek and Roman art and architecture.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, Classical cultures, historiography, intellectual history, visual arts, Western civilization

This essay neither summarizes the history of ancient Greek and Roman art and architecture nor reviews the state of scholarship on them, subjects represented by other contributions to this volume. Its focus is instead on historiography, the process by which that history comes to be written and the specific studies connected with it come to be conceived and executed. Interest in the historiography of art has grown steadily since the 1980s, when growing disciplinary self-consciousness within the sciences and humanities alike encouraged academic attention to intellectual and institutional history and to awareness of the connections between practice and content (e.g., Murray and Evans 2008). Thus, while the historiography of art has emerged as an academic specialty in itself (e.g., the *Journal of Art Historiography*, 2009–, Birmingham), its ties with the broader discipline of art history necessarily remain close. The link between scholarly method and the resulting historical understanding is nowhere clearer than in the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture. The modern historiography of the Greek and Roman visual arts is founded on ancient practice and has been shaped by two

fundamental conditions: the fragmentary survival of the remains of the classical past; and the authoritative position of the classical cultures in Western civilization.

To consider the first factor: The corpus of Greek and Roman art and architecture by no means presents itself as a ready-made collection of material but requires extensive reconstruction in every sense. The number of Greek and Roman objects that survive intact is very small; those that carry explicit information about their identification, date, or makers are even fewer; and the problem of the loss of context for much material remains acute. It is not possible to establish or to organize the corpus in any meaningful way without the help of ancient written evidence. It is the body of extant texts—itsself no less partial—that has served and continues to serve not only as documentation for

(p. 441) Greek and Roman art but also as the foundation and framework for all efforts to understand it. Texts provide information contributing to the identification of places and objects and of the makers of structures and artifacts; to the establishment of dates and historical, social, and cultural contexts; and to the interpretation of the physical record. They also offer explicit historiographic guidance and serve as the models for modern practice. The texts are, furthermore, the source of the principles and practices by which Western scholarship undertakes the study of all material remains of human culture.

The second major factor that has shaped historiographic practice is the status of ancient Greece and Rome as cultural authorities in the Western tradition. Because even during antiquity the forms of Greek and Roman civilization were repeatedly adopted or challenged as models for contemporary practice, their history has rarely, if ever, been approached in a disinterested way but has usually been undertaken in some prescriptive context that shapes both approaches and outcomes. The importance of this normative status is clear in the differences between the earliest post-Antique writings on art (Grinten 1969) and the much more fully developed historiographic literature of the Renaissance that decisively enunciated classical authority.

Even today, after centuries of ever more intensive and systematic efforts to recover the physical remains of the Greek and Roman world, few opportunities exist to verify the information presented in the ancient texts. It is not the aim of historiographic study merely to determine the accuracy of that information, to impeach or endorse the sources or those who follow them; rather, its purpose is to understand what led to the formation of the ancient understanding and the subsequent use made of it. By examining the ancient tradition and its effects, it is possible to begin to determine which of its features—facts and concepts alike—remain useful and which need no longer guide current and future historiographic practice (Donohue 2005).

Historiography in the Ancient Texts

The Greek and Roman texts bearing on the historiography of the visual arts include both explicit statements about their historical development and information that contributes to historical understanding. The body of relevant texts is extremely diverse. They are written in both Greek and Latin and occasionally in a language of the various cultures that interacted with Greece and Rome. The earliest, Linear B texts from the Late Bronze Age, date from the second millennium BCE, and the designation of the latest depends on how and when the end of antiquity is defined. Some texts survive in the form of ancient inscriptions or manuscripts; others have been transmitted to the modern world through more or less complete manuscript copies, quotations, or summaries. The corpus includes texts that can be roughly categorized as documentary, literary, subliterary, and paraliterary, rubrics that are often presumed to correlate to some extent with degree of reliability. Documentary texts, in theory, offer information that is unmediated—inscriptions, for example, that preserve the names of makers of works of art, or building (p. 442) accounts, or records of property—or minimally mediated, such as ancient descriptions of the dedications in sanctuaries, the purpose of which is often assumed to be essentially reportorial. The terms “subliterary” and “paraliterary” are applied, especially in papyrology (Renner 2009, 282–283), to works such as technical treatises and ancillary texts such as commentaries and lexica, for which at least the intention of accuracy is likewise assumed. The category of literature includes a great number of forms—poetry, drama, history, and novels, to name only the most obvious—in which the nature of the information contained reflects factors ranging from the genre of particular texts to the intentions and practices of individual authors.

Historians of Greek and Roman art have long been accustomed to mining the textual corpus for facts and arranging the extracted information to establish a coherent and reliable documentary basis. Such was the aim of the Dutch scholar Franciscus Junius (1591–1677), who, acutely aware of the many contradictions within the ancient traditions and convinced of the need to explain and, if possible, resolve them, analyzed the texts available to him and produced an encyclopedic narrative account of ancient painting incorporating extensive quotations (*De pictura veterum*, 1637; *The Painting of the Ancients*, 1638) and an alphabetical *Catalogus* of artists and architects (1694), translated only much later as *A Lexicon of Artists and Their Works* (Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl 1991). Of the descendants of the *Catalogus*, the most influential is Johannes Overbeck’s collection of ancient sources on the history of the fine arts (Overbeck 1868), which presents, without translation and with only minimal annotation, excerpts from texts and inscriptions relating to painting and sculpture, organized by chronology and medium and

focusing primarily on individual painters and sculptors and their works. Selections of translated excerpts relating to the art and architecture of Greece and Rome have been published by J. J. Pollitt (Greece: 1965 and 1990; Rome: 1966 and 1983). In contrast to such sourcebooks, which include a range of the visual arts, other compendia, with and without translations and more or less full annotation, were devoted to specific media such as Greek sculpture (Jones 1895; Loewy 1885; Marcadé 1953–1957; Muller-Dufeu 2002) and ancient painting (Reinach 1921). The ongoing usefulness of such compendia is attested by the appearance of reprinted, updated, and online versions and databanks (Stewart, *One Hundred*), and they continue to serve as important tools for historiography. The modern collections tend to present excerpts from texts focusing on the names of individual artists and arranged as far as possible by chronology and medium. This structure, while facilitating reference, has an important drawback: for the most part, it decontextualizes the information. Yet context is significant; many of the ancient texts use the achievements of particular artists and architects as fixed points in distinctive schemes of chronology and development that reflect particular agendas. Treating the textual corpus primarily as a source of testimonia—that is to say, extracting information from the matrix that carries it—obscures one of its most striking characteristics: in many texts, history, criticism, and prescriptive advice are combined. While the urgent need to establish a documentary base (which, in fact, sometimes functions as a substitute for works that have left no other trace) can certainly account for such an approach in post-Antique scholarship, it is also important to recognize that quoting and excerpting are practices that were widespread in antiquity (p. 443) and thus already represented in the ancient sources. The models for modern art historiography, in other words, are provided by antiquity itself. The most obvious examples are the ten books on architecture of the Augustan architect Vitruvius and the *Historia Naturalis* (*Natural History*) of Pliny the Elder (77 CE), in which the authors take pride in acknowledging the writers from whose works they have extracted the information they offer. Identifying and evaluating the sources, both named and presumed, of the information given in these and other texts was one of the major tasks that historians of ancient art set themselves in the nineteenth century, when sophisticated methods of textual analysis were able to provide more convincing answers to the kinds of questions Junius had raised about inconsistencies among the sources. At the same time, the evidence of monuments was being brought under better control by intensive work since Renaissance times in the collection and cataloging of the existing corpus and by attempts since the late eighteenth century to systematize practices of excavation. Practical developments, such as the increasing availability of publications of ancient texts, images of monuments, and the results of scholarship, together with the emergence of new academic and institutional structures, likewise contributed to the establishment of a historiography of Greek and Roman art and architecture that is still recognizable in its basic outlines.



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Fig. 19.1 Anton von Maron (1731–1808), *Johann Joachim Winckelmann* (1768). Weimar, Stiftung Weimarer Klassik und Kunstsammlungen.

(Photograph © Berlin/Art Resource, New York, ART335166.)

The emphasis in both ancient and modern historiography on specific artists and monuments gives the impression that the historical understanding results from the analysis and coordination of independent elements of information. The impression is misleading; in fact, an explicit historical and developmental framework is already attested in antiquity, and a small number of ancient texts serve as the basis for all post-Antique historiography of Greek

and Roman art and architecture. Chief among them are texts from Late Republican and Early Imperial Rome that offer explicit comments on the development of the visual arts: Cicero's dialogue the *Brutus* of 46 BCE; the essays on Greek orators by the Augustan writer Dionysius of Halicarnassus; Vitruvius's ten books on architecture; the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder; and the rhetorician Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, a treatise on the training of an orator (c. 100 CE). Of particular importance in this connection is Cicero's *Brutus*, which furnishes the authoritative statement of the progressive development of ancient Greek statuary from less lifelike representations of the human figure to successful renderings of the appearance of nature. Ernst H. Gombrich (1960) demonstrated that Cicero's essay is the basis of the historical understanding of the evolution of Greek and Roman art presented in the Renaissance painter Giorgio Vasari's (1511–1574) great work on the lives and works of the modern artists, which set the course for subsequent histories of art (Bettarini 1966). The double influence of Vasari and of Cicero and other ancient writers whose works reflect their acceptance of a similar pattern of development is clear in the *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (*History of the Art of Antiquity*) of Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768) (figure 19.1), published in 1764 (Borbein et al. 2002–2012), which even today has not been entirely superseded as the model for the historiography of Greek and Roman art. Like Vasari, Winckelmann also

took from writers such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus the idea that the rise of art was followed by its peak, decline, and revival (Donohue 1995). This developmental pattern underlies all subsequent schemes of periodization. (p. 444)

The general lines of the explicitly historiographic formulations in ancient literature are clear, and they have, for the most part, proved “good enough” to furnish a rough guide to the extant material remains. The degree of success enjoyed by attempts to establish the corpus of art and architecture and to interpret it has tended to confirm the essential trustworthiness of the texts, which began their modern historiographic lives already in a position of authority. The long-standing post-Antique presumption that these texts could furnish historical evidence did not mean, however, that their information was accepted altogether uncritically; rather, they have been the focus of intense analysis to establish not simply their credibility on specific points but, more important, their credentials, which could be taken to guarantee reliability even in the absence of confirming evidence.

Pliny’s *Natural History* offers an especially clear example of the rigorous approach to the textual tradition that emerged in the nineteenth century. The edition of the sections of the *Natural History* bearing on the visual arts published by Katherine Jex-Blake and Eugénie Sellers (1896) gives a clear picture of the state of such research at the end of that century. Sellers, who had close ties with the German academic community, brought the methods and results of its work in philology and art history to the analysis of Pliny’s (p. 445) texts, stressing the identification of his named and unnamed but presumed sources and extending the work of producing detailed characterizations of their nature and content. The emphasis on source criticism, to some extent invited by Pliny himself, served to deemphasize the framework he provided in favor of the recovery of an ancient historiographic tradition that was presumed to be both coherent and specifically pertinent to the visual arts. The information it offered was valued hierarchically, the highest rank assigned to material thought to originate in the writings produced by the artists and architects themselves, which survive, with the exception of Vitruvius’s treatise, only in excerpts and references to titles.

A corresponding emphasis on the recovery of lost works marked the contemporary approaches to the material record of Greek and Roman sculpture and painting. Since the Renaissance, it had been common to try to match extant works with pieces mentioned in the ancient sources. It was only in the eighteenth century that sculptures long identified as coming from the hands of the great Greek masters whose names are preserved in texts were recognized as later productions (Potts 1980). The attempt to reconstruct the lost body of Greek originals through study of largely Roman-era statues understood as copies of Greek masterpieces reached its apex in the work of Adolf Furtwängler, who combined the principles of textual criticism with the capability of photography to allow the

comparison of multiple replicas of similar statuary types in order to work backward toward the presumable prototypes (Furtwängler 1893). The German terms *Kopienkritik* (referring to the comparative analysis of copies) and *Meisterforschung* (research into the work of individual masters) are still used as a shorthand for this tradition, which long dominated the study of Greek and Roman sculpture. It also shaped the study of ancient monumental painting, similarly reliant on Roman works presumed to echo the lost Greek corpus, and also of the body of painted vases (Rouet 2001, 36–40), which were valued in part because of their presumable worth as evidence for the achievements of the great Greek painters. It should be emphasized that the ancient texts themselves encouraged the approach by their focus on named artists in tracing the development of artistic media; their influence on the historiography of later periods of art in works such as Vasari's in turn reinforced the practice.

A different approach to the corpus of texts was adopted by J. J. Pollitt, who investigated it in terms of what it revealed about ancient conceptions of the visual arts through focusing on the terms used in its historiography and criticism (Pollitt 1974). While he distinguished critical literature from historiographic and characterized traditions and sources in terms that largely reflect the established understanding and its goal of reconstructing a coherent, authentic, and pertinent historiography of art, he also drew attention to a phenomenon noticed previously: the close ties between the vocabulary of rhetorical criticism and that of the visual arts. Treating the Greek and Latin terminology element by element made it easier to see the substantial overlapping among the categories and thereby opened the way to questioning the long-held emphasis on judging the documentary value of specific sources and on according special value to those that seemed to originate among practicing artists. Pollitt's work remains indispensable for understanding the intellectual foundations of the texts relevant to the visual arts. (p. 446)

The strong similarities between the general schemes of rise and decline given in ancient accounts of the development of the verbal arts and the visual arts and in the characterization of individual practitioners (e.g., Preißhofen 1979) point not so much to historiographies that originate—for preference, in writings by practitioners—in the separate spheres of each activity and accurately reflect their individual courses as to a general formulation of the history of the *technai*, the arts of civilization, and furthermore one that is constructed on a framework of political history with its own complex formulations (Donohue 1995). In other words, the content of the ancient texts is shaped by factors outside their ostensible subject matter.

The Normative Position of the Classical Cultures in Western Civilization

One of the most significant aspects of the historiography of the Greek and Roman visual arts is its role in the establishment and maintenance of cultural authority within and beyond antiquity. The course of the post-Antique historiography of classical art is strongly marked by the adoption of Greece and Rome as cultural models beginning in the Italian Renaissance, and the multifarious phenomena generally subsumed under the rubric of the classical tradition constitute a separate area of study. Two crucial factors in the historiography, however, the related elements of authority and prescription, already existed in the ancient texts themselves.

Among the most prominent features of the ancient historiographic tradition are the valorization of the visual arts of Greece in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE and the near absence of Roman art. The latter is all the more striking because the chief texts were produced in periods when Rome dominated the Mediterranean region. The focus on Greece seems to be inherent and not simply the result of preservation. The extant texts of Roman date or Roman authorship offer no suggestion that comparably organized Roman alternatives were ever articulated for the visual arts; indeed, those arts appear to have been the particular focus of moral objections centered on the corrosive social effects of luxury. Furthermore, within the Roman reception of Greek culture, there is an explicit articulation of a different set of creative priorities, best summed up in the imperative that Virgil places in the mouth of Anchises, defining for Romans their proper sphere as rulers, exercising the “arts” (*hae tibi erunt artes*) that enabled them to establish their dominion (*Aen.* 6.851–853).

In practice, as is well known, Romans did not reject the forms of Greek civilization, in literature or in art (see chapter 16 above). As it becomes increasingly evident that the elements contributing to the formation of Roman art require comprehensive reexamination, the old term “Graeco-Roman,” which once seemed to beg so many questions, (p. 447) is again finding favor for the body of works produced in significantly Roman contexts in which more obviously Greek models predominate. The historiographic features of the Roman-era texts bearing on the visual arts reflect a long-term debate over cultural authority. Information about the Greek arts in general was used to justify a range of Roman activities and prescribe standards for them, as is clear from the presence of summaries of the development of Greek painting and sculpture in discussions of the history and practice of oratory and rhetoric in Cicero, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Quintilian. That these matrices did not merely carry information but had the capacity to

shape it is particularly clear in the case of Pliny's *Natural History*, which, as Jacob Isager (1991) has conclusively demonstrated, is no mere compilation of facts but instead a highly organized prescriptive view of contemporary Roman society in its use and abuse of the natural world, sharing many features of an established moralizing discourse on the arts of mankind. His analysis suggests that in the context of Roman culture, the only space in which the praise that is both implicit and explicit in the textual tradition could outweigh the moralizing blame is the realm of technical achievements useful for society.

Similar prescriptive agendas characterize other texts in the historiography of the visual arts. The origin and early development of Greek sculpture, for example, is reported largely through the lens of the ancient debates between Jewish and Christian iconoclasts and pagan defenders of images over the propriety of representing divinity (Donohue 1988). The prescriptive element is also attested in the historiography of Greek and Roman architecture. Vitruvius, whose ten books represent the only extant example of a treatise from an ancient practitioner of the visual arts, is often valued chiefly for his personal expertise, in fact combines historiographic remarks on the origin and development of architecture and the achievements of specific architects with theoretical and technical material on a variety of subjects in order to present a comprehensive manual that was intended as much to establish the dignity of architecture and its membership among the learned arts as to offer practical instruction (Gros 2006; see chapter 2 above). His work does not stand so far apart from the historico-critical works as might be assumed on the basis of his status as a professional architect.

It is ironic that the prescriptive nature of the ancient texts was systematically downplayed in the nineteenth-century search for historiographic rigor, given that until that point, they had repeatedly been endorsed in their role of cultural authority in the post-Antique West. From the fifteenth century on, summary accounts of ancient architecture drawn from ancient texts served to contextualize the work of contemporary practitioners; in the sixteenth century, Vasari was not alone in adopting their historical and critical content for the guidance of painters and sculptors. At the heart of Junius's works is the defense of the value of the arts, and he makes explicit his intention to improve current practice. In the eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries, excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii and other archaeological discoveries and investigations fueled Neoclassical styles in architecture and indeed all the visual arts; as early as the 1750s, Winckelmann had proclaimed the classical arts as models for the wholesale renewal of modern society. The erosion of the authority of the classical tradition in the (p. 448) practice of art and architecture during the emergence of modernism in the later nineteenth century provided the ground for critical approaches to their historiography.

Recent and Current Approaches to the Historiography of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture

While many features of earlier historiographic practice have been abandoned, some persist. Indeed, it is difficult to see how it would be possible to dispense completely with the older scholarship, because many of its achievements have not been superseded, while others form the basis for new directions of study. In any event, historiographic awareness has visibly influenced several current approaches to Greek and Roman art and architecture.

A conspicuous example of the deliberate rejection of traditional practice is the abandonment of the old developmental framework of rise and decline; periods long denigrated, such as the Hellenistic age and the Late Roman—indeed, Roman art itself—are now studied without bias. The shift began in the later nineteenth century, when challenges to classical models in all the arts became so strong that they demanded a reevaluation of the existing norms. The most significant change took place in the historiography of Roman art. The Viennese scholars Alois Riegl (figure 19.2) and Franz Wickhoff directly addressed the phenomenon of the stylistic change in Roman art and proposed different explanations for the Roman rejection of classical standards of naturalism than the supposition of decline (Riegl 1893 and 1901–1923; Wickhoff and Hartel 1895). Their contributions were key not only to the study of Roman art (Brendel 1953 and 1979; Kampen 2003) but also to the overall practice of art historiography, as attested by an immense body of analysis of their work (e.g., Woodfield 2001). The model of rise and decline also dominated the historiography of architecture. The influential volume by William Bell Dinsmoor, which long enjoyed the status of being the standard handbook on Greek architecture, is, in fact, “an account of its historic development”; its chapter titles use the vocabulary of “rise,” “culmination,” and “the beginning of the decadence” (Dinsmoor 1975), judgments now largely set aside in favor of exploring adaptations and challenges to forms once considered canonical. Another, related developmental concept, the ancient notion of “origins,” has also been questioned for sculpture (Donohue 1988) and the Greek architectural orders (Barletta 2001).



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Fig. 19.2 Alois Riegl (author of photo unknown; c. 1890).

(Source: Scarrocchia 1986.)

The dominant focus on the achievements of Greece has also been largely abandoned. Attention to artistic realms has decisively expanded beyond Greece and Rome to include cultures and areas once unknown or considered merely peripheral or dependent on classical models. Historians of Greek and Roman art give increasingly serious consideration to the Etruscan, Italic, Achaemenid, and Egyptian traditions and those

(p. 449) of Europe and the East, recognizing them as active partners in dynamic interchanges rather than mere recipients.

Conversely, some features of the ancient traditions that had long been undervalued have won renewed attention. Media such as metalwork, prominent in the ancient texts but long relegated to the bottom of a hierarchy that privileged the “major” forms of painting, sculpture, and architecture (Lapatin 2003), are now recognized as significant elements within the broad definition of visual culture (Vickers and Gill 1994).

Another marked shift in historiographic practice is the move away from one of the most prominent features of the ancient traditions, the focus on the achievements of individual artists to establish the landmarks of development (see chapter 23 below). It is worth recalling that while Winckelmann began his *History* with a programmatic preface that differentiated his work from all previous treatments by its focus on *das Wesen der Kunst*, the essence of art, rather than on the history of artists (Borbein et al. 2002–2012, 4.1, XVI), his history of art in fact follows the lines of ancient historiography. Similarly, while something like the notion suggested by Heinrich Wölfflin of a *Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen*, art history without names (Wölfflin 1915, VII), was attempted by Rhys Carpenter in approaching the development of Greek sculpture as “an anonymous product of an impersonal craft” (Carpenter 1960, v), many of his ideas reflect the same set of traditional concepts and judgments. Nonetheless, it has become clear that the tradition

(p. 450) of *Meisterforschung*, for example, is largely unsatisfactory in its aims and methods, and so the popularity of monographic treatments of named sculptors is declining even as attempts to recognize hands and workshops continue. The use of Roman-era works to understand Greek sculpture had not always gone unquestioned, but efforts to focus on Greek originals (e.g., Waldmann 1916) made little headway against prevailing practice. Brunilde Ridgway's challenge (1984) to the consensus view of Roman "copies" marked a decisive shift in approach. It is now widely accepted that the immense corpus of Roman "copies" demands to be interpreted on its own terms and that it arose not from less or more successful attempts to replicate canonical masterpieces but rather from a process of emulation that finds convincing analogues in the theory and practice of literature (Gazda 2002; Marvin 2008; see chapter 16 above). Although attempts are still made to identify and characterize the works of individual Greek sculptors, the impossibility of recovering artistic personalities in the fashion envisaged in the older scholarship is now widely acknowledged. The influence of modern critical approaches such as reception theory is clear in the recognition of the flexibility and creativity of the later Greek and Roman corpus, but it should not be overlooked that much of the crucial evidence came from work along traditional lines.

The related practice of the identification of individual artists as practiced in the study of vase painting has likewise been the focus of fierce criticism, much of it directed at the work of John Davidson Beazley, whose attributions to painters whose names are only occasionally known brought order to the extant Attic corpus. Some of the objections arise from what is seen as the elevation of an essentially utilitarian class of objects to the status of high art, itself a category that arouses hostility, while others reflect doubt about the validity of a system that often appears so self-contained in its concerns that it seems far removed from the wider contexts of the function and meaning of the images within their cultural contexts (Rasmussen and Spivey 1991: 1-35). Historiographic studies, however, have furnished more constructive approaches to the field of vase painting (Rouet 2001), and the principles of Morellian-style connoisseurship have usefully been placed in the context of larger paradigms of knowledge (Ginzburg 1979; see chapter 23 below). Attribution studies join the analysis of potters' workshops and other contexts to formulate new questions about technology and production (e.g., Papadopoulos 2003) and also trade and reception that are key to understanding the history of the medium.

Further evidence challenging the older conceptions of originals and copies comes from the realm of technical studies (see chapter 9 above). The comprehensive reevaluation of sculptural production, ranging from analysis of stones and metal alloys to the details of carving and casting (Palagia 2006; Jockey 2007), has important historiographic consequences, particularly notable in the cases of the polychromy of stone sculpture (Brinkmann, Primavesi, and Hollein 2010; Jockey, forthcoming) and of bronze statuary,

for which it is no longer possible to maintain the traditional notion of the primacy of the Greek bronze original (Mattusch 1996). The close study demanded by *Kopienkritik* of differences among similar sculptural types now contributes to a new framework of interpretation, and additional information of great value comes from the examination of practices of restoration and collecting (Grossman, Podany, and True 2003). (p. 451)

Technical studies are also contributing to the replacement of long-standing paradigms emphasizing specific masters in the study of other arts. For painting, both the expansion of the corpus through new discoveries and advances in materials science, such as chemical analysis of pigments, have begun to furnish the basis for new historiographic directions stressing regional traditions, the organization of workshops, and the transmission of models and working methods (Kakoulli 2009). While since the Renaissance, active practitioners of painting and sculpture have made contributions to the historiography of those arts, the influence of trained architects has been even more pronounced in the rigorous focus on technical analysis that characterizes the tradition of *Bauforschung*. The intensive investigation of particular structures, building types, and sites continues to yield significant new evidence for practices in design, construction, and urban planning (e.g., Haselberger 1997; Korres 1994; Hoepfner 2009; see chapters 2 and 10 above).

Especially characteristic of current practice is the emphasis on the social aspects of Greek and Roman art, which corresponds to a disciplinary reorientation within art history and history generally that reflects and responds to current societal concerns (see chapters 26 and 27). The visual arts are increasingly studied through the lens of economics, imperialism, social class, feminism, gender, and identity. The tendency has been especially pronounced in the historiography of Roman art, in which political readings, such as Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli's Marxist interpretations, have found opportunity to flourish alongside rival approaches (Brendel 1953; Kampen 2003). The new contextual focus has fostered both closer attention to the effects of the historiographic tradition on praxis (Kampen 2003; Ridgway 2005) and self-conscious examination of contemporary paradigms (AIAC 2008). Attention to context is also shaping the investigation of the tradition itself, whether in attempts to apply sociological theory broadly (Tanner 2008) or in more focused analyses, such as treatments of ancient writings on particular media (Rouveret 1989), authors and genres (Isager 1991), and particular systems of thought (Zagdoun 2000).

Classical archaeology, since its foundation in the nineteenth century an intensely interdisciplinary undertaking, has never been in a stronger position both to benefit from the wide range of specialties it includes and to contribute even to fields well beyond the

bounds of antiquity. The historiography of Greek and Roman art and architecture is taking an ever more active role in the living tradition of the study of the past.

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Conserving Greek and Roman Architecture

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the restoration and preservation of Greek and Roman architecture. More specifically, it examines the difficulties and complexities involved in making choices concerning the conservation of Greek and Roman ancient monuments and buildings, including temples and basilicas. It also considers the restoration, rehabilitation, conservation, stabilization, reconstruction, and maintenance efforts in Italy during the Renaissance. Finally, the chapter discusses the factors to take into account in the conservation of archaeological sites.

Keywords: ancient monuments, archaeological sites, architecture, buildings, conservation, Italy, preservation, rehabilitation, Renaissance, restoration

The remains of monumental architecture dating from between the tenth century BCE and the fourth century CE are the most immediate and physical evidence of the ancient Greek and Roman world. Today the imprint of Greek and Roman antiquity across the Mediterranean region and beyond to western Asia and northwestern Europe is constantly being affirmed through archaeology and architectural heritage protection efforts. The canon of Classical architecture first developed in Greece and expanded during the Roman Empire, and the commitment of these ancient cultures to its use throughout antiquity as the architecture for state, religious, and most other buildings is what ensured both its omnipresence and its endurance through to modern times. The rules and orders that made up the Greek and Roman architectural canon offered a complete system of design (see chapter 2 above). Understanding the intention and application of these rules is crucial to preserving and presenting Greek and Roman architectural remains in today's world of cultural heritage conservation and interpretation (see in general Schmidt 1993; Stanley-Price 1995; Teutonico and Palumbo 2002; Demas 2003; World Monuments Fund and Soprintendenza Archaeologica di Pompei 2003; Warren 2006; Ashurst 2007; Stubbs 2009).



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Fig. 20.1 The complete range of possible conservation interventions may be found at the Forum Romanum, which has attracted the attention of restorers and conservators since the Renaissance.

(Photograph by John Stubbs.)

Fortunately, examples of a wide range of types, stylistic variations, and arrangements of Greek and Roman architecture have survived. A full range of challenges in conserving and presenting this especially valued architectural fabric also exists, such as stabilization of truncated columns and walls, conservation of deteriorated stucco and mosaics, weatherproofing of building fragments, and

decisions on restoration, dealing with *lacunae* (missing elements) and reconstruction. Such a range of challenges and solutions are readily seen, for instance, in the Athenian Agora and the Forum Romanum and the extraordinarily intact in situ remains of Pompeii and Herculaneum (figure 20.1). (p. 456)

Restoring and Preserving Greek and Roman Buildings: An Enduring Interest

From the time of their creation in antiquity, there have been needs to restore, rehabilitate, reconstruct, and preserve Greek and Roman buildings. There are numerous examples of where earlier versions of ancient buildings, especially those serving sacred functions, were rehabilitated as a result of the dangers of nature or man or simply because of their own success which required expansion and improvement. The Temple of Hera at Olympia is frequently cited as an example of an important Greek temple that was rehabilitated by replacement of its wooden peristyle with more durable stone (Donderer 2005). The Parthenon (figure 6.1) is the second or third temple to stand at the same general location on the Athenian Acropolis (Neils 2005). In Rome, the House of Romulus at the edge of the Palatine Hill was preserved in antiquity and as a relic of the Eternal City's founding, the Regia in the heart of the Forum was periodically rehabilitated on its highly respected symbolic site, and the second-century BCE Temple of Hercules in the

Forum Boarium was extensively restored with identical replacement Corinthian columns after a flood from the Tiber in the first century (Stubbs 2009, 168). (p. 457)

Numerous Greek and Roman buildings, in particular temples and basilicas, were adapted to become Christian churches, despite their differing ritual requirements, and there are countless examples of recycled ancient building components used in newer structures. Perhaps the most outstanding example of this is found in the recycled marble veneers and columns of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, dating from the mid-sixth century CE, whose grandness was inspired by ancient Roman architectural capacities and ideals (Brown 1986, 48). Another example of revival of the Antique is seen in the early-ninth-century CE gatehouse of Lorsch in central Germany erected to celebrate the establishment of Emperor Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire (Nussbaum 2008; see also chapter 18 above). Recycled Roman remains are widely found in several Romanesque churches in the Provence region of France, such as St. Trophime in Arles and nearby St.-Gilles-du-Garde (Stubbs 2009, 173).

The architecture of the Renaissance in Italy from 1450 to 1600 CE is characterized by styles borrowed from the Antique. Numerous ancient buildings in Rome were spared from destruction, documented, reconstructed on paper, and used as models for then-modern buildings (see chapter 18 above). The work of Leon Battista Alberti, Filippo Brunelleschi, and Andrea Palladio, among others, reveals this. During the next three centuries, the lure of the Antique among antiquarians, collectors, and cognoscenti throughout Europe led to an appreciation of the Greek and Roman past that increasingly resulted in its documentation, restoration, and protection. The structural stabilization of the Roman Colosseum in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Jokilehto 1999, 39) and the archaeologically accurate reconstruction of the nearby Arch of Titus in 1822 are early examples of a new ethos (Stubbs 2009, 25): preservation for the sake of preservation.

From the early nineteenth century forward, much of the interest and legislation for historic monuments protection in Rome focused on preserving the city's key ancient monuments (Stubbs 2009, 206). Similar legislation was enacted during this period in France, Spain, England, and Germany, setting examples for all of the countries of Europe eventually doing the same (Stubbs 2009, 211). The surviving buildings from antiquity were viewed as deserving special early attention and care during restoration because of their age and significance. Surviving ancient buildings throughout the Mediterranean region owe their existence today to antiquarians, scholars, archaeologists, architects, and others who took interest in their protection and acted to preserve them.



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Fig. 20.2 The Forum of Pompeii under excavation in this engraving (c. 1840) illustrates the key challenges in ruins conservation of featuring truncated structures without roof protection.

(Photograph by John Stubbs.)

Other forces shaped the growing interest in preserving Greek and Roman architecture, such as the sensational archaeological discoveries of Herculaneum and Pompeii in 1709 and 1748, respectively (figure 20.2). Concern for the preservation of these rarities was spurred by the

realization that such precious fabric could be lost. The loss of beloved monuments throughout Europe through war, modernization, and other means was omnipresent at the time, and such actions also stimulated concerns for more effective preservation of ancient architecture. At the same time, developments in the allied, then-nascent disciplines of archaeology, museology, art history, and art conservation played important roles in preserving remnants of the ancient past. Awareness of the [\(p. 458\)](#) importance and merits of organized architectural heritage protection was ascendant and has been growing ever since (Dyson 2006; Stubbs 2009).

As organized architectural heritage protection measures developed, the purview of architectural conservation grew to be more inclusive, with archaeological site conservation representing a specialization. International charters citing recommended principles that favored conservation of monumental remains, such as the Athens Charter (1931) and the Venice Charter (1964), were supplemented with additional site protection and interpretation guidelines that expanded to be the basis of today's world practice in architectural conservation. The influential Athens and Venice charters especially took into account issues of stabilizing and restoring Greek and Roman monumental buildings. Newer concepts introduced via subsequent charters and declarations advanced concerns for additional heritage values such as preserving a site's sense of place, honoring craft traditions, and preserving living heritage (Stubbs 2009, 251). Doctrinal examples that address these concerns are found in the Australia ICOMOS's seminal Burra Charter dating from 1979 (Walker and Marquis-Kyle 2004) and the China Principles inaugurated in 2002 (Agnew and Demas 2004). Principles and recommended procedures contained in these charters fit within an extensive array of operational standards and guidelines used today, such as powerful heritage protection legislation, an array of possible architectural conservation procedures, and educational programs, including those promulgated at the international level by organizations such as the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites

(ICOMOS). At the national level, various state agencies, organizations, and private initiatives undertake architectural conservation often in collaboration. Archaeological site conservation is guided further by the more specific tenets of other charters and declarations, such as the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1969, revised 1992). (p. 459)

Choices in Conserving Greek and Roman Buildings

Conservation of physical cultural property has been defined as all actions aimed at safeguarding cultural property for the future in order to study, record, retain, and restore the culturally significant qualities of the object, site, or building with the least possible intervention (International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, Canadian Group 1989). It is, first and foremost, a process intended to ensure that cultural property endures and can be used now and in the future (Feilden 2003, 3). Thus, architectural conservation constitutes actions and interests that address the repair, restoration, maintenance, and display of historic buildings, enclaves of buildings, and sites, along with their associated accouterments such as furnishings and fittings.

Since the origins of conservation of physical cultural property as an emerging discipline in the late eighteenth century, acts of restoring, rehabilitating, and conserving works of architecture such as Greek and Roman buildings have been described using terms drawn from several languages. The term “architectural conservation” refers to the processes of caring for a place so as to safeguard its cultural heritage value (International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, Canadian Group 1989; Bell 1997, 24).

Architectural conservation may involve ascending degrees of intervention: doing nothing at all, simple maintenance, stabilization, repair, restoration, extensive rehabilitation, or complete reconstruction. Where appropriate, conservation processes may be applied to parts or components of a structure or site (ICOMOS New Zealand Charter, sections 22 and 13). The term “architectural conservation” also applies to the applied science of conserving building materials.

Each architectural conservation challenge may be viewed in terms of its type and relative physical impact on the heritage resource in question. Decisions concerning the use of these choices of intervention, and the extent to which they will be applied, define the approach of any conservation project. Because architectural conservation is largely an act of attempting to mitigate change, deciding when and how to intervene is often crucial.

After a potential architectural or archaeological site conservation project has been identified, and after required approvals are in place, the next steps include determination of the scope of the project and formulation of viable scenarios for implementing effective and sustainable solutions. Key to this is determination of the physical and philosophical parameters of the project based on rigorous research into both the history and the current condition of the resource. Important questions to resolve before proceeding further include: Who created the building or complex of buildings, and why? What were the original designer's and builder's intentions? What changes occurred over time, and why? While these questions are being addressed, it is necessary to develop a thorough understanding of the pathologies (threats) that are affecting (p. 460) the resource in question, so as to be able to prescribe effective conservation remedies. The rate of deterioration and the cost-effectiveness of possible solutions are additional questions that should be resolved during the conservation project-planning phase that may include both on-site and laboratory testing of conservation materials and methods. Careful determinations of what to conserve and the methods to be used are important, because a building, or a remnant thereof, represents far more than its walls, framing, and finishes. As British conservation architect John Warren states, a building is "a statement by and about those who created it, about the time of its making and about the subsequent vicissitudes that have laid upon it the patina of age, the scars of events, and it speaks of the social evolution which its adaptation and changes describe" (Warren 1993, 6).

The restoration and structural rehabilitation process may occasionally entail major changes to a structure. Architectural conservation professionals should therefore have a thorough understanding of the building and site in question—their significance, their distinguishing features, and how they are expected to function in the future—before committing to actions that may affect their historical integrity. When dealing with listed historic buildings and sites especially, conservation professionals should carefully document all of their various features; overall appearances and details, their spatial qualities, and materials and finishes. Working in a team, conservation specialists should also record their actions and the rationale of their judgments. Because attitudes toward the significance of historic buildings may change over time, it is necessary to document thoroughly and objectively as many details of the subject structure and site as possible, a process that may also help in sharpening one's perception of each project. British conservation architect Bernard Feilden summarized the task well: "A complexity of ideas and of cultures may be said to encircle a historic building and be reflected in it. ... The objective of the conservator must be the retention of the fabric and its consolidation for future use in the context of a sympathetic understanding of its past" (Feilden 2003, 1). Thus, most architectural and archaeological conservation experts argue for as little intervention as possible and for accomplishing only what is structurally necessary to

arrest or slow the rate of erosion. Most would also agree that the less visible the intervention, the more successful the end result.

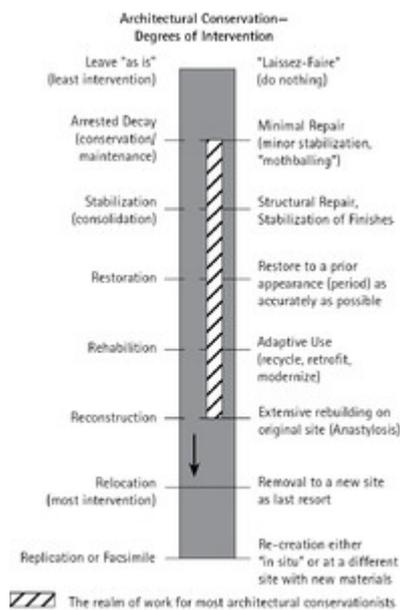
Sympathetic repairs must be ensured through the use of appropriate materials and techniques. Occasionally, policies concerning conservation bow to the urgency of the situation, the nature of the defects, what threats apply, and plans for utilization of the building and site. However, when assessing these factors, certain immutable principles should be recognized. The most important of these entail a commitment to minimal intervention and possible reversibility. The minimal-intervention principle also ensures the retention of historic building fabric which is crucial to conserving authenticity. Of course, some principles are bound to conflict with one another, as probably will other issues pertaining to the fit of new uses, compliance with modern building regulations, expense, and so on. In such cases, sound judgment based on experience comes into play (Lee H. Nelson, former head of the US National Park Service's Technical Preservation Services division, recommended that a good aid to problem solving in architectural (p. 461) conservation is to produce a "decision-making tree" with listings of the pros and cons of the conservation interventions under consideration; Stubbs 2009, 128).

In recent decades, the field of architectural conservation has expanded to include a wider scale of possible physical involvements and degrees of intervention (based on the concept of the "scale of intervention" in Fitch 1982, 44). The scale of possible physical examination may range from the microscopic, as in analyzing building fabric in minuscule detail in a laboratory setting, to the macroscopic, as in documenting and analyzing enclaves of buildings, entire towns, or large cultural landscapes. There is a similarly wide range of degrees of intervention available to the architectural and archaeological conservationist. Each level on this scale carries with it attendant philosophical implications that become increasingly complex from the standpoint of decision making, since the greater the physical intervention used in conserving a historic resource, the greater the risk to its authenticity and the impossibility of reversing the action. Decisions about what to do in conserving a physical resource, be it a wall fragment or an entire building, become more complicated when several types of intervention are required, which is often the case. Such considerations underscore the importance of documenting as-found conditions, understanding the likely effects of various interventions on the physical and aesthetic character of the resource in question, and carefully conducted implementation. Whichever level of intervention is chosen, long-term conservation is best served by the use of a site in a way that respects its historic physical and aesthetic integrity.

Restoration, rehabilitation, conservation, stabilization, reconstruction, and maintenance are among the most common interventions that architectural conservationists rely on. These and other types of intervention represent a range of choices in architectural and

archaeological conservation that span from the least to the most intrusive to a building or site's historic integrity. They may include the following (see figure 20.3).

Laissez-faire. This approach involves leaving a physical historic resource alone (Stubbs 2009, 125). There are instances in which no action at all is either required or justified, as when conditions are not right for intervention. For instance, there may be a complicating extrinsic circumstance, such as the presence of a recalcitrant owner or one lacking in capacity, whose eventual agreement or withdrawal may allow conservation intervention. Examples of a *laissez-faire* approach used in the treatment of archaeological resources include the Italian Ministry of Culture's long-standing policy of not permitting excavation of portions of ancient Pompeii, leaving them for future researchers (Stubbs 1995, 78), or decisions to document only, and not excavate, certain tumuli at Cerveteri and Tarquinia discovered by remote sensing and analyzed by boroscopic photography (Lerici 1961, 3). Saving more in-depth research and interpretation for later is also seen in the "lining out" of the unexcavated portions of the Roman villa in Fishbourne, England, where concrete pavers and plantings delineate unrevealed foundation walls and streets in areas near the site's main interpretive facility (Stubbs 1995, 84; Stubbs 2009, 295) (figures 20.4, 20.5, 20.6).



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Fig. 20.3 Choices involving how to intervene in conserving historic buildings range from minimal to maximum intervention. Such choices have significant practical, theoretical, and economic implications.

Preservation or conservation. The common definition of "preserve" is to keep safe from harm, to maintain, keep up, and guard against decay; "conserve" is to preserve, (p. 462) retain, keep entire. Architectural and archaeological conservation's aim is to preserve or conserve as much historic building fabric as possible (Stubbs 2009, 125). This approach is considered conservative from a theoretical standpoint. Examples include the preservation and regular maintenance

of the Arch of Septimius Severus in Rome (Brilliant 1967; Stubbs 2011, 17) and of the Pont du Gard bridge and aqueduct system near Nîmes (Fabre, Fiches, and Paillet 2000).



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Fig. 20.4, 20.5, 20.6 Conservation and display of the Roman villa in Fishbourne, England, where a range of techniques are used, including consolidated and exposed walls, mosaics, and wooden elements beneath a large clear-span modern protective structure (20.4), the lining out of unrevealed foundation walls (20.5), and the abstract indication of still-subterranean ancient streets and evidence of landscape features (20.6).

(Photographs by John Stubbs.)

Preventive conservation.

Preventive or defensive conservation has been employed more frequently in the context of objects conservation; it is increasingly being used, however, for conserving historic buildings and ensembles of buildings (Stubbs 2009, 125). It has been defined as “all actions taken to retard deterioration and prevent damage to cultural property through the provision of optimal conditions of storage use and handling” (International

Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, Canadian Group 1989, definitions). An example of defensive conservation at an archaeological site was the prevention of new road construction across the [\(p. 463\)](#) [\(p. 464\)](#) partially excavated entrance of the ancient port of Tyre in Lebanon in 2004 (Stubbs 2009, 301).

Maintenance. Every historic structure requires maintenance, which sometimes may require the attention of specialty maintenance personnel (Stubbs 2009, 125; Feilden 2003, 77). Regular maintenance (also termed cyclical maintenance) entails periodic inspections and relatively minor actions such as minor stabilization measures and grounds maintenance. Archaeological sites that are mostly simply maintained and presented included the temples of Paestum and Hadrian’s Wall in northern England (Stubbs 1995, 79).

Consolidation or stabilization. The aim of stabilizing a historic building or a part thereof is to slow or arrest the decay process (Stubbs 2009, 125). Options for consolidation or stabilization range from minimal to radical in terms of level of intervention, and such options may be visible or invisible. The choices depend on the materials involved, their condition, the nature of their pathologies, and the physical magnitude of the problem.

Thus, flaking paint or a detached plaster surface may call for stabilization in situ via material conservation measures. A structurally damaged building may be stabilized by measures ranging from temporary shoring to major structural intervention. Examples of this approach include the late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century structural stabilization measures implemented at the Colosseum (Jokilehto 1999, 39) or recent stabilization using cabling and steel-frame tie-backs at the Basilica of Maxentius in Rome (Giavarini 2005). Deterioration of the partial remains of a building may also be stabilized through interventions such as the resetting of exposed wall tops by more durable but physically and visually compatible construction detailing. There have also been numerous efforts during the past half-century to stabilize and preserve archaeological remains by installation of sheltering systems that offer partial or entire protection from the elements (Stubbs 2011, 24).

Restoration. Restoration returns a building or site to an appearance it had at an earlier time (Stubbs 2009, 126). This usually entails major interventions affecting all parts of the structure. If compelling evidence justifies restoration to an original appearance or condition, this may involve the alteration or removal of subsequent modifications to the building or site. Such work is best achieved if it emerges from sound, objective, and comprehensively conceived conservation policy. Examples of ancient buildings that have been restored include the Maison Carrée in Nîmes (Stubbs 2009, 190) and the extensively restored Arch of Titus in Rome (Stubbs 2009, 207), both of which had accretions removed with their ancient forms substantially restored in the early nineteenth century.

Rehabilitation or renovation. Rehabilitation makes efficient, contemporary use of a property possible once again (Stubbs 2009, 126). The repairs and alterations, however, preserve those portions or features of the property that are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values. Rehabilitation entails the extensive renewal or modifications of the elements of a building required to adapt it to a new purpose, as when modern services are introduced. Sensitive rehabilitations include the reuse of original materials where possible. Examples include the Theatre of Epidauros (Gogos and Kampourakis 2011) and the Roman theater in Orange (Sear 2006, 245–247), both of which are used today for performances. (p. 465)

Reconstruction. Reconstruction is the reassembly of a partially or completely collapsed structure on its original site (in situ) using most if not all of its original materials (Stubbs 2009, 126). Also called *anastylosis*, it is considered to be a major type of intervention. It is most easily justified in cases of extreme recent damage from catastrophes such as earthquake, flood, or bombing. Reconstruction may be justified in terms of practicality—a rebuilding on original foundations of a collapsed building using as much original fabric as possible, for example. The *anastylosis* of the Roman Temple of Helios in 1975 at Garni,

Armenia, is an example (Stubbs 2011, 309–311). It may be justified when a destroyed building or landscape was a vital part of an urban scene and its reconstruction is helpful to interpreting an established historic context. Examples include the reerection of the collapsed Library of Celsus at Ephesus (Praschniker et al. 1944) and the extensive rebuilding with mostly new elements of the Stoa of Attalus in Athens (Thompson 1992; Stubbs 1995, 79).

Relocation. Occasionally, there is no way to save a historic building other than to move it (Stubbs 2009, 126). In such circumstances, the building may be disassembled and reassembled or sometimes moved as a complete entity to a new site. The formerly deeply buried and dispersed remains of the Ara Pacis in Rome (figure 15.2), relocated and reassembled within a nearby modern enclosure in the 1930s (since replaced), serves as one example that is close in approach to scores of examples of relocated ancient buildings or parts thereof that are preserved and featured in controlled museum environments (Stubbs 2011, 15; see also chapter 21 below).

Replication. The replication of a vanished or extant building entails creating a copy or facsimile at a different site (Stubbs 2009, 126). Justifications for replication are similar to those for reconstruction. Replication can involve the creation of another version of a building or landscape by its original creator, or it can be achieved in a later era. The term “replication” is related to the term “reproduction,” which describes when exact copies of extant examples of missing building elements (or *lacunae*) are used on a project. Examples are the replication of the Parthenon in Nashville, Tennessee (Creighton and Johnson 2000, 20), or the near replication of the Temple of Vesta at Tivoli at Stowe House in England (Hunt 1979, 79).

Re-restoration: With western Europe’s experiences in stabilizing and restoring ancient monuments now dating back more than two centuries, there are understandably growing needs to re-restore or re-convert formerly restored buildings and sites. Reasons for this may be short duration of the interventions or new thinking in conservation practice. The fine mosaics and truncated walls of the fourth-century CE Villa del Casale near Piazza Armerina, which were imaginatively conserved and presented in 1959, were subject to a new shelter and elevated walkway system in 2009 (Stubbs 2011, 24). Ancient Pompeii is a veritable laboratory for observation of approaches to archaeological stabilization and restoration. Collapse or near collapse of some reconstructed heavier rigid reinforced concrete roofs and walls restored as recently as the 1970s has been a concern of site managers in the past decade (World Monuments Fund and Soprintendenza Archaeologica di Pompei 2003). Such problems can be very difficult to resolve when matters of priority, cost, aesthetics, site safety, and site interpretation are (p. 466) taken into account. Ideas for restoring ruined ancient buildings by mostly using their original design principles and

materials were put forward by noted Italian restoration architect Paolo Marconi in relation to a prototypical new approach to ruins conservation for the House of the Silver Wedding in Pompeii in 1999 (Marconi 2001).

An extensive restoration, a reconstruction, or a replica of a damaged or destroyed building will never carry the same value and meaning as the original. Nevertheless, the replication of a lost building or a part thereof may be important to restoring the integrity of the whole of an incomplete architectural or artistic conception and therefore has its place in architectural conservation practice. The task might be as simple as replacing a lost component within a known design, or it may be more speculative, although all interventions should be based on careful research and documentation in relation to aesthetic concerns and proven conservation principles.

The Conservation Process

The threats to physical cultural heritage—and the processes of their decay—are widely recognized among cultural heritage conservation professionals today (Feilden 2003, 92; Stubbs 2009, 93); so are the basic steps for physically conserving architecture, archaeological sites, and designed landscapes.

It is a physical fact that everything built by humans tends toward equilibrium with its natural environment (Stubbs 2009, 145). As a result, architectural conservationists are in a perpetual struggle against time to slow the inevitable process of decay. Given what is often at stake and the frequent need to act expeditiously, the ability to translate ideas for conserving historic buildings and sites into reality is a crucial part of the architectural conservation process. To this end, most practitioners, whether architects, engineers, materials conservation scientists, landscape architects, or conservation planners, take on the tasks of architectural conservation in four main phases (Stubbs 2009, 145), as follows.

Project identification. The first phase is determination of the project's physical and conceptual parameters. Tasks in this initial stage include documenting the project's status as a historic site (its precise location, its ownership, its physical characteristics and condition, its legal status, and its sustainability as a preserved historic resource); obtaining historical information of all kinds, especially data pertaining to the site's architectural and ownership history and its significance; and, very important, evaluation of the site's potential for continued use as a viably preserved and presented historic resource.

Research and planning. Tasks here include researching and analyzing materials and structural systems, developing detailed designs and specifications for restoration and conservation, planning for the project's economic sustainability, determination of project phasing, and any special procedures, cost estimating, procurement of owner and agency approvals, and selection of the project implementation team, including contractors, project managers, and craftspeople. (p. 467)

Implementation. Execution of the planned project includes securing the necessary legal permits, site preparation and protection measures, phased project implementation, detailed documentation of the implementation process, development of a project completion report, and placement of the completed conservation project into service.

Maintenance, protection, and sustainability. This is the final, ongoing phase of design and implementation of a cyclical maintenance and site-protection program based on a viable plan for the sustained use of the resource. Tasks include production of both short- and long-term operation and maintenance plans that consider the physical characteristics of the resource, its intended uses, and its vulnerabilities; implementation of the maintenance actions using trained personnel; and, finally, periodic reviews and adjustments of the maintenance, protection, and sustainable use program as necessary (figures 20.7, 20.8, and 20.9).

Since the different stages of the architectural conservation process often require individuals with different abilities, it is advisable to use an integrated, team-based approach at each stage of development in a way that ensures participation of the principal parties and appropriate specialists. The phased development of architectural conservation projects also accommodates timely participation of other shapers and enablers of the project—from site owners and project funders to heritage management officials and the general public—with all potentially having a major influence on a project's outcome. In addition, throughout the process, it is important to maintain an awareness of the socioeconomic and regional planning contexts of the project.

Despite all the tools and rhetoric in the field of architectural and archaeological site conservation today there is frequently a lack of awareness of best practices in the field (Stubbs 2009, 126; Cleworth 2010). Another challenge may be ambivalence on the part of those responsible for cultural resources (Stubbs 2009, 126). Such ambivalence may stem from perceptions of "ownership"—that is, taking responsibility for the past. Another challenge may be underestimation of the potential threats to architectural and archaeological heritage. Difficult problems such as prevention of site wear through visitation, an imbalance of site usage, pillaging, apathy on the part of officials in charge, and inconsistent financial support are not uncommon at preserved and presented architectural and archaeological monuments. Other challenges may be posed by the

timing of conservation projects, since decisions are occasionally made in haste before adequate technical information and financial support are available. Taking the time to completely consider all aspects of a decision, including the possibility of deferring any action until greater consensus and coordination can be reached and adequate support obtained, is usually the best approach.

Conclusions



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Figs. 20.7, 20.8, and 20.9 Conservation challenges at Pompeii, *insula* V.2: structural failure of house exterior wall (20.7), deterioration of all components of a frescoed wall (20.8), and inadequate site maintenance in a restricted area (20.9). (Photographs by John Stubbs.)

When archaeological sites are determined to be suitable for conservation and display to the public, there are a number of elements to take into account, including

(p. 468)

(p. 469)

the site's potential for this kind of treatment at the earliest stages of archaeological fieldwork (figures 20.10 and 20.11). Not all sites merit display, for one reason or another, in which case returning the relatively stable

environment to archaeological fabric by reburial in a conservation-supportive way is expected in contemporary field practice.

A site is never in a more original condition than the state in which it is found, so having conservation expertise constantly on hand during the archaeological process is essential (Stanley-Price 1995, 2). An archaeological conservator, expert in dealing with the type and scale of artifact or architectural fabric being addressed, should be present throughout the process of both archaeological investigation and conservation intervention. Of equal importance is limiting intervention where possible (Stanley-Price 1995, 4). Utilization of nondestructive investigative techniques such as LIDAR mapping of archaeological sites is appropriate for this purpose. Utilization of GIS/GPS site mapping for archaeological documentation and research purposes and for conservation planning, site interpretation, and site maintenance is a similarly valuable methodology.



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Fig. 20.10 Reconstructed colonnade at Pompeii.

(Photograph by John Stubbs.)



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Fig. 20.11 Partial sheltering of Etruscan and Roman remains at Roselle, Grosseto (Italy).

(Photograph by John Stubbs.)

Ironically, traditional archaeological investigation involving stratigraphic excavation is among the greatest threats to a site's conservation, since such methods invariably affect a site's intactness, hence its authenticity (Cleland 1932, 169). Thus, inherent challenges are posed by the fact that those involved in archaeological site conservation (such as archaeologists and conservators) not only represent different disciplines but usually have different objectives. Most such divergences (p. 470) (p. 471) in purpose can be resolved by careful planning involving all interested parties at the onset of archaeological projects (Stanley-Price 1995, 3; Stubbs 1995, 74). An additional hindrance to the

easy combining of archaeology and archeological site conservation is that their goals usually entail physical intervention at sites owned and controlled by others, including public entities, which may have yet different interests in the matter.

Despite these challenges, the taking of responsibility for and competence in the conservation and display of in situ archaeological remains are growing as awareness of the importance of cultural heritage protection increases. The increased number of projects involving archaeological site conservation and display over the past few decades is testament to this.

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Displaying Greek and Roman Art in Modern Museums

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter explores the development of museum display environments for Greek and Roman art and architecture, from the Early Modern period up to the twentieth century. In particular, it considers the influence of museum displays on how artworks from ancient Greece and Rome are perceived. The chapter focuses on “permanent” displays in encyclopedic museums, museums devoted to ancient art and archaeological sites, and college and university museums.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, archaeological sites, architecture, art, artworks, college and university museums, encyclopedic museums, museum displays

The contemporary archaeologist’s view that when antiquities lose their provenance, “their cultural value and their historical meaning are lost forever” (Vassallo 2007, 82) parallels the contemporary theorist’s view of artwork in the museum: “it is unnaturally borne there from some other milieu, from some ‘original’ situation: its present situation is in one sense fraudulent (the museum is not ‘its’ place)” (Preziosi 2006, 60, 61–62).

However, the vital cultural fabric of the Greek and Roman world, in which an ancient artwork once served a particular purpose or even successive purposes—“its place”—no longer exists. Except for a few monuments that have survived above ground, ancient artworks have had to be found on land or at sea in order to be known. An object’s archaeological findspot, when it is known, may not be its only relevant ancient context. And outdoor preservation in situ, when even possible, has been problematic in modern times and generally fraught with security and conservational issues. Meanwhile, since its invention in the eighteenth century, the modern museum has stepped up historically to become an essential context by housing and preserving many known ancient artworks and by making them available to the public and also by the public’s having gradually grown accustomed to viewing these artworks in the museum (Duncan and Wallach 1980; Hooper-Greenhill 1992; Duncan 1995; Carrier 2006; McClellan 2008). This essential context of the museum overshadows any particular didactic context the museum itself

has sought to impose, implemented by labels, signage, and so on. In the modern world, the museum is the ancient artwork's place.

Without projecting current mores into the past, this chapter investigates the development of museum display environments for ancient art and several museums' presentations of key ancient artworks to the public. "Permanent" displays in the encyclopedic museum, the museum devoted to ancient art, the archaeological-site museum, and the college (or university) museum are considered here, but special exhibitions are not. (p. 474)

Most museums have periodically reinstalled their original galleries, and many have built new wings or entire buildings for their growing collections. The nature of displaying ancient art in museums is thus ephemeral, but it thereby illuminates aspects of Western ideology and taste over the last several hundred years.

In a survey course or textbook, famous ancient monuments may be considered in their historical, archaeological, and art historical contexts, but they are rarely considered in the context of their current or past installations in modern museums and how their museum display might affect the ways in which these monuments have been perceived. This chapter will consider the last, focusing primarily on Greek and Roman marble statuary, architectural sculpture, and Athenian vases.

Notwithstanding the derivation of "museum" from *museion*, a shrine or home of the Muses in Classical Greek, the public museum is a modern Western invention that did not exist in the ancient world (Abt 2006, 115–119). In antiquity, *museion* famously designated the third-century BCE library at Alexandria where scholars gathered (Findlen 1989). The Latin term *musaeum*, as revived in the Italian Renaissance, was associated with the humanist scholar's study (*studio* or *studiolo*), which was a locus for early private collecting.

Modern Display before Modern Museums

The rebirth of classical antiquity that defined "Renaissance" consisted of an interest not only in Latin and Greek texts but also in physical remains of ancient culture. In Quattrocento Italy, *disiecta membra* of antiquity attracted scholars and artists and soon became desiderata for contemporary art patrons (Abt 2006, 119–123).

Display has always been a corollary to collecting. In the Renaissance, prized ancient sculpture could be arrayed outdoors on building facades, in private courtyards and gardens. Indoors, guests were admitted to collectors' treasure chambers, often their

studies. Private collecting enhanced the desirability of small things, such as bronzes, terracottas, vases, coins, cameos, and engraved gems. Objects with classical inscriptions were prized. Antiquities thus formed the backbone of elite Early Modern collecting (Thornton 1997; Settis 2008; Christian 2010).

Diverse genres of objects, including *naturalia* and global exotica, were collected together with ancient and modern artworks. Alongside courtly collections, *Wunderkammern*, scholarly cabinets of curiosities, flourished throughout Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (MacGregor 2007). Some foregrounded *naturalia*, in an attempt to classify and control a microcosm of the world, and encyclopedic collecting reached a zenith during the Age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. Engravings document *Wunderkammern* with curiosities displayed not merely chockablock in cabinets extending up their walls but also suspended from their ceilings. (p. 475)

Meanwhile, in royal palaces and great houses, ancient artworks (sculpture and some vases) were disposed as decoration along walls of galleries, placed on pedestals, in recessed niches, and over doors, or set atop cabinets. The perennial importance of display fostered restoring antiquities to evoke their original perfection. Restoration, particularly of marble and bronze sculpture, began in the Renaissance and was often done by prominent artists. Invasive sculpture restoration culminated with the Roman workshops of Bartolomeo Cavaceppi (1716–1799) (Barberini and Gasparri 1994), Carlo Albacini (c. 1739–1807) (Vaughan 1991), and Vincenzo Pacetti (1746–1820) (Donati and Casadio 2009).

Early Modern Museums

Seamlessly restored classical marbles suited the taste of elite young British travelers, including members of the Society of Dilettanti, and other foreigners collecting ancient art on the Grand Tour (Haskell and Penny 1981; Wilton and Bignamini 1996; Coltman 2009; see chapter 18 above). To staunch the flow of antiquities from Italy, the Vatican established Rome's Capitoline Museum (opened to the public in 1734) (Albertoni et al. 2006), which absorbed ancient sculptures from the famed Albani collection, and the Museo Pio-Clementino (opened in 1773) (Consoli 1996; Liverani 2000). Displayed in these museums' impressive architectural spaces, including the Pio-Clementino's domed rotunda and octagonal Belvedere courtyard with its loggia and predominately pale blue-gray niches, ancient sculptures, such as the Apollo Belvedere and the Laocöon (figure 29.1), icons since their sixteenth-century exhibition here, were not merely a decorative backdrop for human affairs but were themselves the focus. From the mid-eighteenth

century, this focus was enhanced by the profound impact of Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), whose writings extolled the classical artistic ideal, urged its contemporary imitation, and first differentiated between lauded ancient Greek art and inferior Roman, laying the basis for art history by demonstrating chronological stylistic development (Borbein et al. 2002–2012; Winckelmann 1880 and 2006). As stops on the Grand Tour, these museums inspired displays of antique sculpture throughout Europe. And from the 1730s, the Vatican's exhibit in the Apostolic Library of ancient clay vases (given by Cardinal Filippo Antonio Gualtieri), perched atop tall wooden book cabinets, was likewise influential.

The eighteenth century's invention of the public museum—in which collections once elite and private become available to all—is strongly associated with the birth of nationalism (Abt 2006, 123–129). The royal collections of the Palais du Louvre in Paris, as a result of revolution, famously became a free resource for the French citizenry on August 10, 1793 (McClellan 1994). But before that dramatic moment, other public museums had been created by private bequests. The British Museum was founded as a national museum in 1753, as stipulated in the bequest by the physician Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753) of his encyclopedic collection, which contained a library, *naturalia*, ethnographic (p. 476) material, coins, and Egyptian, classical, Oriental, and medieval antiquities (Jenkins 1994; MacGregor 1994; Caygill 1994; Sloan 2003; Sloan ed. 2003). In order to display Sloane's collection for the public, the new British Museum acquired Montagu House, a seventeenth-century brick mansion in Bloomsbury (opened 1759). In this ex-domestic, richly decorated interior, amid the welter of diverse objects, Roman antiquities filled six labeled cabinets, and Roman painting fragments were hung in frames on walls (Caygill 2003; Anderson et al. 2003).

The museum began consciously collecting classical works in 1772 by acquiring the first vase collection of Sir William Hamilton, British ambassador to the Kingdom of Naples (Jenkins and Sloan 1996). This acquisition included the large Meidias Hydria (the Athenian red-figure name vase of the Meidias Painter, c. 420–400 BCE), already an icon of beautiful ancient painting from its illustration and promotion in d'Hancarville's luxurious publication of Hamilton's antiquities (D'Hancarville 1766–1777). The Hamilton vases' installation in Montagu House might be suggested by the design for a wooden display cabinet with exposed vases arranged symmetrically by shape. “The principle is the same as in the seventeenth-century cabinet of curiosities” (Nørskov 2002, 51); transition from private to public display had not yet been fully realized.

Even more influential for emerging museums than the Louvre's public opening was its extraordinary enrichment with artistic masterpieces through Napoleon's war plundering from the 1790s to 1815 (Miles 2008, 319–348). The Vatican was hard hit. At the Louvre

from 1798 to 1815, the Apollo Belvedere and the Laocöon, installed on tall bases within arched niches, were the focus of their own opulent, brilliantly polychromed antiquities galleries in the former summer apartments of Anne of Austria, and now the Apollo's status as a Greek original was questioned (Lemaistre 2004; Gallo 2009).

In 1803, the Louvre was renamed the Musée Napoléon. However, with Napoleon's defeat, after debate, the Allies demanded the booty's return, and more than half was restituted. But the race was on: the breathtaking model of Napoleon's Louvre inspired European national acquisitiveness to achieve rich museum collections, and classical art was pivotal (Bergvelt et al. 2009; McClellan 2009).

Museums in the Nineteenth Century

In 1816, the British Museum finally decided to acquire the ancient Greek marbles, which included Parthenon sculptures that Lord Elgin (Thomas Bruce, 1766–1841), former British ambassador to Constantinople, had removed from the Athenian Acropolis under an Ottoman *firman* (letter of permission), shipped back to London, displayed to the public, and then offered for sale to the museum. Phidias's Parthenon sculptures (447–432 BCE), actual Classical Greek works publicly displayed free of charge by the British Museum, soon came to be considered the world's most beautiful art (Williams 2002; Jenkins 2007).

(p. 477)

Meanwhile, the British Museum was engaged in controversies between “archaeologists and aesthetes” (Jenkins 1992) over how the Elgin marbles ought to be displayed. In the 1800s, they were moved and rearranged in four versions of the “Elgin Room” (1817, 1832, 1852, 1868). The first, by Robert Smirke, intended to be temporary but used from 1817 to 1831, was an external brick addition with blue walls, pine floors, and a skylighted roof. Important display decisions already made here had profound impact. While in Elgin's possession, the broken Parthenon sculptures were not perfected with marble restorations (he was, in part, dissuaded by Antonio Canova). Significantly, after acquiring Elgin's sculptures, the British Museum did not restore them. Public exhibition of unrestored ancient marbles—an innovation associated with Romantic appreciation of ruins—deeply affected subsequent taste, although it did not immediately become a universal norm. Another influential decision was to exhibit the Parthenon sculptures as artworks, at about eye level (with the British Museum's fifteen metopes hung higher—but not too high—on the walls), rather than approximating their architectural placement. Thus, the frieze ran along the gallery's walls facing inward.

Top lighting, preferred for display in British private houses, was generally agreed upon for the sculptures. Whether gallery walls ought to be neutral or a dark shade related to ancient color use was debated. Red was generally chosen in “permanent” Elgin Rooms from the later 1830s throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and was consistent with decisions abroad, “backgrounds... in the Belvedere of the Vatican had been painted red. At Paris, red hangings had been draped behind the Venus de Milo” (Jenkins 1992, 53). Whether Parthenon sculptures in Athens should be represented by plaster casts was also debated, and the frieze was thus displayed later in the nineteenth century and afterward.

King Ludwig I of Bavaria (r. 1825–1848) was passionate about collecting ancient art while still a prince, purchasing the best pieces available in Rome, including the Barberini Faun (1819), and artwork from Greece under Ottoman rule. In 1812, Ludwig acquired the recently discovered fragmentary Greek pedimental sculptures from the Temple (of Aphaea) on Aegina. Their marble restoration was entrusted to Berthold Thorvaldsen (1770–1844), the Neoclassical Danish sculptor. Thorvaldsen met the dual challenge of approximating the marble sculptures’ then-unfamiliar early-fifth-century BCE style and weathered surfaces in his Aegina pedimental compositions, fabricated in Rome from 1816 to 1818—concurrent with the British Museum’s acquisition and display of unrestored Parthenon sculptures.

As a means of educating the Bavarian people, Ludwig I wanted his royal sculpture collection displayed in a Munich museum open to the public. The architectural competition winner, Leo von Klenze (1784–1864), created a purpose-built museum (1816–1830) with an Ionic Greek temple front (Klenze and Schorn 1833; Vierneisel and Leinz 1980; Giebelhausen 2006, 225–231; Wünsche 2007). Classicizing architectural packaging, also employed by Robert Smirke for his Greek Revival British Museum (1823–1852) (Caygill and Dale 1999), long remained a hallmark of museums. Inspired by the Greek word *pinakothekē*, signifying a repository of paintings, as in the Propylaea of the Athenian Acropolis, Munich’s sculpture museum was given the invented name Glyptothek (“glypto,” from the ancient Greek *glyphein*, to carve, signifies “sculpture”). (p. 478)

The Glyptothek’s ideal plan facilitated an art historical organization influenced by Winckelmann, moving from Egyptian sculpture to early Greek, the Aegina pediments, additional Greek sculpture, Roman sculpture featuring an impressive portrait gallery in the largest hall (figure 21.1), plus a room for colored sculpture of stone or bronze and one for Neoclassical sculpture by contemporary masters. Most artworks, including the Roman portraits, were symmetrically disposed along walls; the Barberini Faun was centered. Thorvaldsen’s Aegina pedimental compositions were displayed freestanding, at about eye

level, on parallel long modern marble bases aligned across their gallery's space before reliefs depicting the temple.



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Fig. 21.1 The Roman room in the Glyptothek in Munich, early-twentieth-century photograph.

(Photograph © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.)

Klenze's choice of opulent, polychrome ornamentation prevailed for the Glyptothek's interior decor. As he already understood, ancient sculpture and architecture had originally been colorful. The early Greek room had polished red marble-stucco walls imitating *rosso antico*, the Aegina room's walls were green resembling *verde antico*, and the Roman hall had purplish walls mimicking *fior di persico*

marble. Plaster relief decoration on the white upper walls and vaulted ceilings was gilded and often also painted. There were red marble sculpture bases and colorful, patterned marble floors, one with an inset ancient mosaic. The museum's overarching design was considered a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. (p. 479)

The Venus de Milo, found on Melos in 1820, was acquired by the French (Curtis 2003; Samara-Kauffmann 2007) (figure 29.3). Given to the Louvre in Paris by Louis XVIII, this larger-than-life-size Greek marble statue went on display though missing its separately made arms. The arms would have been permanently restored in marble had there been agreement about their positions and attributes; meanwhile, the statue came to be admired in an incomplete state. Having lost the Medici Venus (from the Uffizi Gallery's Tribuna) in the return of Napoleonic booty, the Louvre touted its Greek acquisition, which it called *Vénus*. The Melos statue, a classicizing Hellenistic work (c. 125–100 BCE), would not be a famous masterpiece today had it not been promoted by the nineteenth-century Louvre. Given a new (2010) ground-floor installation in the Pavillon du Roi, the Venus de Milo remains on every tourist's itinerary, along with the *Mona Lisa* and the Victory of Samothrace.

The Victory or Nike of Samothrace was discovered on that Greek island in 1863 by Charles Champoiseau, French consul at Adrianople (Hamiaux 2007). It was first exhibited

in an incomplete state in the Louvre's Salle des Caryatides. The marble Nike's upper portion and drapery were later reassembled and/or restored in plaster in various stages. The missing right wing is a plaster reverse of the left. The head and arms of this Hellenistic Greek statue (c. 190 BCE) are likewise missing, but their restoration was not attempted. In 1879, Champoiseau recovered on Samothrace blocks from the statue's pedestal in the form of a ship's prow, which he shipped to Paris. Afterward, the monument's restoration proceeded, inspired by Otto Benndorf's reconstruction. In 1884, the colossal Winged Victory (height 3.28 meters), alighting on the prow of a ship to celebrate a naval victory, was erected on the landing of the Louvre's newly completed, skylighted Daru staircase, which visitors encountered after entering the museum. This dramatic reinstallation catapulted the Victory of Samothrace to international fame. In 1934, an archaeologically incorrect block of cement was inserted between the statue and its base, making the Victory visible from the bottom of the staircase. Absolute emphasis on the Nike endured until it was displaced by I. M. Pei's Louvre Pyramid of 1989, which created an underground entrance hall from which museum-goers select a wing to visit.

In the Renaissance, modern bronze statuettes of famous antique statues, such as the Roman bronze equestrian portrait later identified as Emperor Marcus Aurelius, were desirable collectibles. Subsequently, large bronze casts and marble copies of antiquities served as garden sculptures and indoor decorations supplementing originals. Antique sculpture was also available in plaster casts, which were enormously popular during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In late-nineteenth-century America, several encyclopedic art museums were founded. Displaying Greek and Roman art to demonstrate Western culture's classical roots was then considered essential for educating visitors, for providing artisanal models, and for defining a world-class museum. Generally antiquities-poor, new American museums turned to plaster casts (Dyson 2010). The classical cast collection at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (opened 1876) numbered 759 by 1891 and included the restored Aegina pediments, a Parthenon Room, the Apollo Belvedere, and the Venus (p. 480) of Melos. Boston's 759th plaster cast—the Nike of Samothrace—was installed atop the main staircase in the entrance hall (Robinson 1891).

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (founded 1870) likewise presented monuments of classical and also Western art in plaster casts (although, in 1874, it acquired the Cypriot antiquities of Luigi Palma di Cesnola) (Metropolitan Museum of Art 1908). Into the early twentieth century, the Victory of Samothrace graced the cast display in the main hall of the 1880 Central Park building. By 1908, of the museum's 2,607 casts, 1,046 were Greek and Roman. But a century later, the Metropolitan had loaned, gifted, and sold its out-of-fashion casts, and, like those of most museums, its permanent installations are now devoted to original artworks.

Museums in the Twentieth Century

The southern wing of the Metropolitan, begun in 1912, by McKim, Meade, and White, was intended for important works of classical art that the museum had recently acquired. The initial section (1917) departed from the traditional museological practice of separating artistic media with an avant-garde installation that combined “bronzes, terracottas, vases, glass, gems, beads, and other pieces which belong to one and the same epoch” (Richter 1917, x, xii).

The Metropolitan Museum’s McKim, Meade, and White skylighted Roman Court, delayed by World War I, opened in 1926. It was patterned on peristyle gardens from ancient Roman villas in the Bay of Naples to provide an appropriate setting for Greek and Roman art and “to illustrate the important part that color played in classical architecture” (Robinson 1926, 4). For example, the unfluted lower portion of the peristyle’s columns was painted red. The central sunken area contained an antiquizing garden planted around a splashing fountain. Amid this evocative setting, ancient sculpture was exhibited in the garden and on the peristyle’s modern black-and-white mosaic floor.

With the exception of Ernst Curtius, who left the finds from his excavations (1875–1881) at Olympia, where the first provincial Greek archaeological-site museum was then established (1887–1888) (Hatzi 2008), German archaeologists generally sent home (under permits or purchased) finds from their nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century excavations. To accommodate archaeological material in Berlin, from 1910 to 1930, a blocky Neoclassical building was constructed by Ludwig Hoffmann, stripped down from plans by Alfred Messel (1853–1909) following the vision of art historian Wilhelm von Bode (1845–1929). Known as the Pergamum Museum (damaged during World War II; restored 1950s; entrance 1980–1982; renovation 2013–2028) after its most famous contents, this last museum on Berlin’s *Museuminsel* was designed to house at full height reconstructed ancient architectural remains and to encompass several museums (Maischberger, Wartke, and Gonnella 2011).

The vast, windowless but skylighted, 1920s modern galleries of the main block have contained the *Antikensammlung*’s Hellenistic and Roman architecture. The central gallery (p. 481) has housed the imposing West stepped entrance of the Great Altar from the Acropolis of Pergamum (c. 166 BCE; excavated 1878–1886 by Carl Humann), with its dynamic Gigantomachy frieze, petite Ionic colonnade, and rooftop statuary (figure 7.2). The frieze slabs from the altar’s not-reconstructed sides and back have been installed according to museological tradition, running illogically around the inside of the gallery’s

walls. Visitors could ascend the altar's steps to view the small Telephos frieze disposed correctly around a mock-up of the inner altar courtyard in an adjoining space. Missing parts of the sculptures have not been restored.

In this museum display, the partially reconstructed Pergamum Altar has essentially been reduced to a theatrical facade. However, in its previous Berlin installation within a short-lived, skylighted smaller Pergamum Museum (1901–1909) on this site, the Great Altar had been reconstructed as it was in antiquity as a freestanding rectangular architectural monument.

In the late 1920s, the art dealer Joseph Duveen (1869–1939) made the then unusual offer to finance a new “Elgin Room” for the British Museum, to be built on adjacent land (Caygill and Dale 1999). He hired an architect himself: John Russell Pope, the American master of Neoclassical style. As prescribed by a scholarly committee, this gallery was designed to contain only the original Parthenon sculptures in London. Pope's early plans show an immense I-shaped space, with its smaller end rooms reached by tall staircases flanked by Doric columns. The committee (Bernard Ashmole, John D. Beazley, and Donald Robertson) critiqued the plans; a compromise included downscaling the gallery, placing the Ionic frieze lower and projecting from the walls, omitting the tall staircases, setting pedimental sculptures on separate bases to indicate lacunae, and mounting the metopes on wall shelves in the end rooms. Work was completed in 1939, but then the gallery was emptied during World War II, in which it suffered damage. The restored gallery, opened in 1962, remains in use today, augmented with precise, low-energy lighting and didactic displays in adjacent galleries.

The Duveen Gallery's skylighted Neoclassical interior is in accord with the museum's architectural exterior. Yet it is also modern in its extreme simplicity and neutral tonality. The walls and Doric columns are pale French limestone, and the floor is predominantly black marble. Rather than an archaeological and/or architectural reconstruction, it presents a spare, symmetrically organized, and visually accessible placement of the Parthenon sculptures. The Ionic frieze faces inward, running along the gallery's two long walls. The sculptures from the East and West pediments likewise face inward—toward each other—across the gallery. But, given pride of place in the end rooms, they do not visually overlap the temple's other sculpture. A purpose-built display space with a preserved integral installation, designed by the architect of the West Building of the National Gallery of Art (1941) in Washington, DC, the Duveen Gallery is a landmark of earlier-twentieth-century design: “In his somewhat casual attitude toward the marbles, Pope obviously intended that his architecture be at least the equal of the ancient sculpture” (Bedford 1998, 182, 184).

When the Metropolitan Museum decided to transform the Roman Court into a restaurant (1954), the Greek and Roman Department lost much exhibition space. (p. 482) Thus, from the 1960s, Greek vases were isolated in second-floor galleries. Here, as organized by Dietrich von Bothmer, then the curator, the space was divided between the central display aisle and rear aisles presenting a chronological study collection of vases, visible from one side only, organized by shape in glass-fronted cases. The main aisle featured internally lighted inset display windows, whose vases were likewise visible from one side only. The large didactic Shape Case, for example, illustrated “most of the shapes of Attic vases from the late sixth to the fourth century B.C.” (Bothmer 1972, 9), using specimens of Athenian black-glaze and decorated pottery silhouetted against its illuminated pale background. Here real vases were transformed into abstracted profiles.

Then, in 1972, the Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired for an unprecedented million dollars an Athenian calyx krater of c. 515 BCE depicting the death of Sarpedon, which was potted by Euxitheos and painted by Euphronios (figure 22.2). The vessel was praised by the director, Thomas Hoving: “it is exceedingly rare to acquire a work of art about which one can say unhesitatingly that it is the best in existence, that it is one of the two or three finest works of art ever gained by the Metropolitan” (Hoving 1972, 1). It also grabbed media attention under the charge of being the “hot pot”—as dubbed by Hoving (1993, 323)—and was finally exposed as having been looted from an Etruscan tomb and repatriated to Italy in 2008 (see chapter 22 below). A sixth-century BCE Athenian red-figure vase that the public was eager to look at, the krater was unveiled in November 1972, surrounded by photographic blow-ups, and spotlighted in its own gallery, where it could be viewed all the way around. Even after its integration into regular galleries, emphasis on this masterpiece for decades gradually raised museums’ awareness about accessibly displaying Athenian vases.

During World War II, the Glyptothek’s sculpture was moved out for safekeeping. Munich’s Neoclassical Königsplatz, now also housing important Nazi buildings of the 1930s, was physically and ideologically central in Hitler’s Germany. The museum was bombed in July 1944, and Klenze’s nineteenth-century interiors were not salvaged. Reconstruction during the 1960s, according to plans by Joseph Wiedemann, recreated the building’s basic structural form. While the exterior’s design was retained, the now-exposed architectural brickwork inside was simply whitewashed and new floors and sculpture bases made from gray limestone. When the Glyptothek reopened in 1972, its new neutral ambience both distanced the museum from the Neoclassical style championed by the Nazi Party and suited the twentieth century’s modernist aesthetic for gallery space.

In the 1960s, under director Dieter Ohly, Thorvaldsen’s nineteenth-century reconstruction of the Aegina pediments was destroyed (Ohly 1976–2001). In likewise

museum gallery for its display is an architectural pastiche based in part on an underground sanctuary of Hercules at Monte dell'Incastro, Italy, while featuring a colored inlaid marble floor with a trompe l'oeil circular design of triangles copied after the floor of the belvedere from the Villa dei Papiri. A fanciful niche, of *verde antico* marble panels with a red porphyry border surrounded by a pedimented travertine frame, was designed to set off the white marble statue.

The Getty Museum's antiquizing Roman Villa, replete with wall paintings, colored marbles, and gardens containing bronze replicas of Villa dei Papiri sculptures, seemed awfully eccentric and was severely criticized in the austere modern museum realm of twentieth-century America. But the public loved the Malibu Villa. And the Villa kept alive the museum tradition of evocative *all'antica* surroundings for displaying antiquities, which included the Metropolitan Museum of Art's original Roman Court and the Museum of the Ancient Agora (opened 1956) in the Stoa of Attalus (c. 150 BCE) reconstructed by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens (Valavanis 2007a; see chapter 20 above).

The Lansdowne Heracles itself exemplifies shifting conceptions of restoration for display (True 2003). After its 1790 discovery, the statue was restored in marble in Rome before its 1792 acquisition by the Marquess of Lansdowne for display in Lansdowne House in London. In the 1970s, at the Getty Museum, rusting eighteenth-century iron dowels and the "modern" goal of more archaeologically correct presentation led to removal of the statue's "alien additions," including the "tip of the nose" and "both extremities of the club" (Barov 1978, 3), and inserting recessed cast-epoxy fill for missing structural parts. By the 1990s, the 1970s restorations were deteriorating. In a new conservation effort, the original restorations were reincorporated, and the Lansdowne Heracles (p. 484) "returned to being both an ancient sculpture and a product of eighteenth-century taste" (Podany 2003, 21).

New Directions

At J. Paul Getty's death in 1976, the bequest of his nearly \$700 million estate to his museum provided the largest endowment of any museum in the world. Ultimately, this endowment made possible construction of a splendid new home for the museum's expanded European collection and divisions of the Getty Trust. When the Western art moved to Richard Meier's Getty Center in Los Angeles (opened 1997), the Malibu Villa (p. 485) was renovated by Machado and Silvetti Associates to become a museum for ancient art (opened 2006). Visitors to the renovated Villa take a hillside path from the

parking garage; thus, they first glimpse the Villa from above and then descend through the complex's new outdoor public theater to the entrance-level plaza. The path intentionally recalls the modern visitors' approach to the beneath-ground-level excavations of Herculaneum.



Click to view larger

Fig. 21.3 Statue of Hercules (“Lansdowne Heracles”) from Tivoli. C. 125 CE. Marble. Height 1.935 m. J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 70.AA.109.

(Photograph © The J. Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection, Malibu, CA.)

The quite formal architectural renovation, with enhanced seismic protection, has provided entirely different galleries with terrazzo floors on the second floor (figure 21.2b); some have natural light, from windows and/or skylights, appropriate for displaying ancient art. The museum now readily accommodates special exhibitions, in addition to its increased number of permanent galleries for the antiquities collection. A highly selective curatorial aesthetic results in sparse displays with abundant space between

objects and cases. And the Villa's antiquities reinstallation is largely organized thematically, with divine and heroic iconography on the first floor and imagery associated with daily life on the second. As in gender-related galleries devoted to “Women and Children (p. 486) in Antiquity” (figure 21.2b no. 207) and “Men in Antiquity” (figure 21.2b no. 209), Greek, Etruscan, and Roman objects illustrating the featured iconographic themes mingle in a unified realm of classical culture. With thematic organization now often considered more accessible than art historical style and chronology, at the Villa, the last is relegated to a didactic “TimeScope Room” (figure 21.2a no. 113).

The reinstallation is also collection-driven. For example, the Getty Bronze, a Greek bronze statue in Lysippan style (c. 300–100 BCE) of a nude youth crowning himself in victory (found in the Adriatic Sea; acquired 1977), which once stood before the apse in the elaborate barrel-vaulted Basilica (figure 21.2a no. 106), now occupies its own climatized second-floor gallery (figure 21.2b no. 210) between “Men in Antiquity” (figure

21.2b no. 209) and “Athletics and Competition” (figure 21.2b no. 211). The statue’s straightforward presentation—spotlighted yet surrounded by sufficient ambient light, and centered in a gallery with neutral wall color—facilitates viewing in the round. This post-renovation display contrasts with the Lansdowne Heracles’s stagy installation (figure 21.2a no. 108 and figure 21.3).

The Getty has not been alone among museums in suffering consequences from purchasing antiquities on the art market, not only by having acquired illegal objects later restituted to their source country but also by having acquired forgeries. Recognized (p. 487) fakes normally are only exhibited in special exhibitions. However, the notorious Getty Kouros (J. Paul Getty Museum and Nicholas P. Goulandris Foundation 1992), whose authenticity is officially unresolved art historically and scientifically, remains on display (figure 21.2b no. 211), with a label that reads, “Greek, about 530 B.C., or modern forgery.”

Beyond archaeologically inspired architectural reconstruction, adaptive architectural reuse is an effective means of creating an evocative museum setting for ancient art. Rome’s urban layering has long fostered such adaptation, from the original Museo Nazionale Romano alle Terme di Diocleziano (founded 1889; now subdivided) to the Centrale Montemartini (opened 1997), a former electricity plant in which ancient artworks are juxtaposed with old machinery (Bertoletti, Cima, and Talamo 2006).

Rome’s Museo dei Fori Imperiali (opened 2007) has recently been installed within the adjacent archaeological site known as Trajan’s Market, probably built c. 100–110 CE by the emperor’s architect Apollodorus of Damascus (Ungaro 2007). Important finds from different fora are displayed along a mazelike route throughout the site’s brick-faced concrete architecture, on its various levels abutting the Quirinal Hill, in ancient rooms with travertine-framed doorways, and in the central vaulted hall.

Remarkably, in contradistinction to the modern norm of displaying in a fragmentary state Greek and Roman sculptures not restored before the twentieth century (Pinelli Rossi 2003), here new didactic reconstructions create broadly accessible exhibits. In these reconstructions, the original appearance of fragmentary artwork has been suggested without forming a seamless whole. For example, a restored section of the attic from the Forum of Augustus’s porticoes (dedicated 2 BCE), displayed in the central hall, consists of a caryatid (inspired by Athens’s Erechtheum maidens) that supports part of the roof coping, along with a square relief depicting a round shield emblazoned with a head of Jupiter Ammon. This architectural mock-up reveals the monument’s still-known parts—even if not in this museum—and also no-longer-preserved parts; it is composed of extant ancient Luna marble fragments and simply carved new white limestone slabs combined with resin molds taking into account extant pieces elsewhere.

In 1997, a branch of the Museo Nazionale Romano opened in the magnificently restored fifteenth- to sixteenth-century Palazzo Altemps (Scoppola 1997; De Angelis d'Ossat 2002). Displayed in this historic building's open courtyard, upstairs loggia, and frescoed rooms, ancient sculptures from venerable private collections, including that of the German Cardinal Altemps (1533–1595), who once owned the palace, evoke Early Modern times. Art icons known since the seventeenth century from the Boncompagni-Ludovisi collection are appropriately exhibited, conserved with their post-Antique restorations, including the Ludovisi Gaul Group and the Ludovisi Ares (restored by Gianlorenzo Bernini).

Jaś Elsner once lamented the museum tendency “to divide visual material by its style and form” because it belongs to “different departments” with “responsibility for different galleries” (Elsner 1996, 770). Instead, he urged that museums explore “the place of classical antiquity in the formation of the Western tradition” through “its afterlife in collecting, display, and cultural prestige” (773). Indeed, evoking post-Antique Western contexts for Greek and Roman artworks that precede the creation of museums has become a popular theme for cross-departmental museum installations. (p. 488)

At the recently (2007) renovated and climatized Bowdoin College Museum of Art (McKim, Meade, and White, 1894) in Brunswick, Maine, a long-term installation in the Northend Gallery featuring European paintings and manuscripts, “The Renaissance and the Revival of Classical Antiquity” (figure 21.4), integrates several ancient artworks, including a Roman marble portrait of Emperor Antoninus Pius (c. 138–150 CE), which represent types of Antique objects known to artists and collectors during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. With rose-colored walls, low ambient lighting, spotlighted objects and vitrines, and music from Ottaviano Petrucci's *Harmonice Musices Odhecaton* (a compendium of polyphonic music published in Venice in 1501), Bowdoin's thematic gallery evokes this Early Modern period (Higginbotham and Westley 2005).

Along similar lines, the British Museum's Greek Revival King's Library (1823–1827), employed as a thematic gallery since 2003, houses the permanent installation “Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century.” Underscoring the breadth of this encyclopedic museum, Greek and Roman works here figure among the global array of “natural” and “artificial” objects collected and categorized at the time. In the section “Classifying the World,” a freestanding vitrine devoted to “Understanding Greek Vases” informs museum-goers that these vases were believed to have been made by Etruscans but William Hamilton concluded from their inscriptions that they were Greek. Some tall glass-fronted wooden cases lining the gallery's walls, originally for books, now contain Greek and South Italian vases, which are visible from one side only and stand on shelves that extend well above viewers' heads, evoking an old-fashioned mode of display. The library of an eighteenth-century gentleman included ancient coins, so in another vitrine, a tray containing specimens owned by George III contextualizes

these difficult-to-exhibit small objects. Restored ancient marbles from old British collections, including the Townley collection's Roman marble head of Athena outfitted with a bronze helmet and bust by Albacini in 1793, appropriately punctuate the Enlightenment gallery's space.

In a 2007 reinstallation, the Metropolitan Museum has reimagined its early-twentieth-century plan with Greek and Roman art fully reoccupying the McKim, Meade, and White south wing (Clarke 2008). Designed by Jeffery L. Daly, it features architectural interiors impressively refurbished, designed by Kevin Roche, John Dinkeloo, and Associates. Skylights are reopened in the barrel-vaulted monumental sculpture hall (the Mary and Michael Jaharis Gallery), and a raised restored skylight vault covers the Roman Court (the Leon Levy and Shelby White Court), whose original colorful antiquizing components have been banished, including the painted plaster Doric columns, now replaced with limestone Tuscan ones. A level *all'antica* inlaid marble floor within the court's peristyle (enhancing handicapped access) replaces the 1920s sunken "domestic" garden, and a Romanizing contemporary basin fountain stands at the center of this now formal public space.

Set between the barrel-vaulted hall and the Roman Court, the Metropolitan's immense capital and base sections of an Ionic column (c. 300 BCE) from the Temple of Artemis at Sardis look "like part of the McKim, Mead and White building" (Picón et al. 2007, 14). Greek and Roman marble sculptures, often on gray bases, predominate in the main (p. 489) Beaux-Arts limestone gallery spaces, where they look right at home. At the same time, this classic pale setting, ascribing to parameters of contemporary taste, conveys the false impression that these now-white ancient marbles are representatives of an originally white classical world. Perhaps fittingly, some prominently positioned artworks, including the Lansdowne Amazon, the Hope Dionysus (with intact eighteenth-century restorations by Pacetti), and the Badminton sarcophagus, come from old British private collections.

An abundance of objects in different media are displayed beyond marble sculpture. The Metropolitan has returned to a chronological, integrated multimedia installation, enlivened by interwoven iconographic subthemes and geographical divisions, beginning with a panorama of works from throughout the early Greek world.

Many of the Athenian black- and red-figure vases, mostly clustered in multimedia side galleries off the barrel-vaulted hall, are enhanced by exhibition in large freestanding vitrines with suspended glass shelves which enable these utilitarian vessels to be viewed up close and from a variety of angles—ideal for decorated pottery displayed as art in a museum. And integrated into each vitrine are contemporaneous works in other media, such as bronze statuettes, vases, coins, or marble fragments. Freestanding vitrines are

illuminated by ceiling spotlights and, in some galleries, also by daylight. Important vases occupy their own vitrines, including the black-figure column krater with the Return of Hephaestus (c. 550 BCE), attributed to Lydos.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 21.4 Bowdoin College Museum of Art. Installation, "The Renaissance and the Revival of Classical Antiquity," May 2010, photograph by Dennis Griggs.

(Photograph © Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME.)

In the gallery space for Early Imperial Roman culture, the Metropolitan has created an original-scale mock-up (after 1903–1905 excavation plans) of the late-first-century (p. 490) BCE Black Room, a *cubiculum nocturnum* from the villa of Agrippa Postumus at Boscotrecase, buried by the 79 CE eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Rather than being displayed separately, the elements

cut into panels from the bedroom's Third Style frescoed decorations painted on a black ground above a red podium, including candelabra, pavilions, and floating landscapes, have been positioned against reconstructed scumble-painted walls. The room's evocation includes a modern recreated mosaic floor topped by a Roman marble table and bronze lampstand. Recessed, muted lighting near the rear wall and bright spotlighting near the entry, where a broad portal issued onto a terrace or promenade overlooking the sea, enhance the installation's aura of virtual reality.



Click to view larger

Fig. 21.5 Greek and Roman Study Collection (opened 2007), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, view during installation.

(Photograph © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.)

As museum collections grew, a need developed for curatorial selection of objects for display, with the rest relegated to storerooms. The Metropolitan's reinstallation resolves this dichotomy with its Greek and Roman Study Collection (figure 21.5) in a windowed and spotlighted mezzanine gallery that is open to the public. Here several thousand objects are organized chronologically

by period, from Neolithic to the end of Roman times, with individual vitrines devoted to specific geographic locations such as Corinth, iconographic themes such as the symposium, or individual media such as terracottas. Printed labels do not clutter the installation; instead, object identifications can [\(p. 491\)](#) be searched on touch-screen computer monitors. An open study collection, increasing interested visitors' contact with original objects, is a valuable resource.

Key monuments long exposed to air pollution and more recent discoveries are now both being housed in climatized protective environments. But their resulting displays enjoy varying degrees of success, as the following selected examples in contemporary Rome and Greece suggest.

The bronze equestrian statue of Emperor Marcus Aurelius (c. 175–180 CE) (figure 13.4), which stood outdoors in Rome since antiquity and in recent centuries on a base by Michelangelo at the center of the Campidoglio, was removed for conservation in 1981 and replaced by a copy. Now the bronze statue, with traces of original gilding revealed, is displayed within the renovated Capitoline Museum's Palazzo dei Conservatori complex (opened 2005) (Albertoni et al. 2006). It stands in a purpose-built exedra-shaped exhibition hall, designed by Carlo Aymonino, occupying the former garden of the Palazzo Caffarelli. Unfortunately, the hall's ceiling grid of skylights and spotlight-concealing panels casts odd light patterns across the monument, and its disparate architectural components below glass upper walls form a confusing backdrop. Moreover, rather than protecting indoors both the statue and Michelangelo's original base—an integral part of

the monument's modern history—a new statue base was designed by Francesco Stefanori, which “bears an unfortunate resemblance to a diving board” (Fentress 2007, 366).

Controversy has swirled around whether the expensive, abstracted, externally predominantly white, travertine, and glass, new Ara Pacis Museum (opened 2006) by American architect Richard Meier ought to have been inserted in Rome's *centro storico* (Andriani et al. 2007; Strazzulla 2009). And ought the Augustan altar's politically expendable former enclosure on this Tiberside site (not its findspot) across from the Mausoleum of Augustus—an understated Rationalist 1936–1938 open-air pavilion by architect Vittorio Ballio Morpurgo (1890–1966) which, along with the commendable full reconstruction of the Ara Pacis itself, figured in Mussolini's Fascist urban plans for the city—have been demolished or preserved, renovated, and climatized? Meier's ambitious creation, approached by a long, narrow, stepped entry plaza with a fountain, features several parts beyond its central, climatized, glass-walled, skylighted, white-framed gallery for the altar, including an enclosed small museum entry hall, an enclosed rear auditorium block, and basement galleries for didactic and sculpture displays, and special exhibitions. But for many museum-goers, the purpose of visiting is simply to see the Altar of Augustan Peace (13–9 BCE) (figure 15.2).

Unfortunately, questionable didactic, lighting, and design features impair the monument's presentation. Preceding the Altar's exhibition space, a Julio-Claudian portrait gallery stands before a monumental rough-hewn travertine wall; it is disconcerting to discover that prominently positioned modern plaster casts constitute one's first encounter with Augustus et alia at this Roman museum. In the central display space, viewing the Ara Pacis is undermined by odd light patterns cast across the monument's surface by louvers (*brise-soleils*) on the glass walls designed to filter sunlight. Finally, because the new museum retains the Morpurgo pavilion's narrow travertine base, inadequate space (p. 492) exists along the sides of the Altar's precinct enclosure for viewing the processional frieze properly.

In northern Greece, the Building for the Protection of the Royal Tombs of Vergina ought to be considered an archaeological-site “museum” (Drougou 2007). A bold success, it secures, preserves, and suggests the original context of its monuments. The fourth-century BCE royal tombs at ancient Aigai (modern Vergina), discovered by Manolis Andronikos (1919–1992) in 1977–1978 and believed by him to include the tomb of Philip II, were protected since antiquity beneath a 13-meter-high and 110-meter-wide tumulus, removed during excavation. In 1991 to 1993, the tombs, some with extant painted decoration, were enclosed within a structure providing climatization and security in situ (opened 1997), and the earthen burial mound was recreated above. In this dark subterranean space, the architectural tomb facades are floodlighted, and the dazzling

array of unlooted grave goods, including gold funerary larnakes, is organized in vitrines dramatically spotlighted from above—a tour de force of boutique lighting.

The Acropolis Museum in Athens (opened 2009)—the commodious new climatized museum of concrete, steel, and glass for this renowned archaeological site, replacing the small 1874 museum—has been moved offsite (300 meters to the south), perched above a different, urban Athenian archaeological site (Bernard Tschumi Architects 2009; Cohen 2010; Servi 2011). Designed by Bernard Tschumi Architects with Michael Photiades, the museum offers a partial view of the Parthenon (447–432 BCE), particularly from its terraced restaurant and rectangular top-floor gallery for the temple’s sculptures, whose shifted axis mimics the temple’s orientation. Museum-goers begin their visit by ascending an inclined ramp featuring finds from the Acropolis’s slopes. Here and on the first floor, Athenian vases have been relegated to architecturally embedded wall cases in which they are visible from one side only.

The museum is installed chronologically. The first floor features a filtered-glass-walled and skylighted double-height (9 meters) Archaic Gallery—conceptually a hypostyle hall—punctuated by huge structural gray-concrete “columns” that overwhelm the early poros and marble sculptures. But the sophisticated disposition of largely unrestored Acropolis sculptures, including the Calf Bearer (c. 570 BCE), the Peplos kore (c. 530 BCE), and the Critius Boy (after 480 BCE), placed throughout the space and facing in various directions, which suggests the *mélange* of dedications in the ancient sanctuary, invites museum-goers to view these works in the round.

The museum’s interior, with gray steel, precast gray concrete architectural elements and bases for architectural sculpture, plus white marble display floors and white sculpture bases, has been compared to the Classical Greek use of “different colors of natural stone in their architecture to produce contrast” and, particularly, to the “dark gray limestone for the background of the Erechtheion frieze” (Caskey 2011, 3). Yet the vast museum’s high-tech gray-and-white schema is more likely the progeny of the Munich Glyptothek’s mid-twentieth-century interior: coloristically austere and inoffensive to modern sensibilities.

Contrasting with the inappropriately lofty Archaic Gallery, the low-ceilinged Parthenon Gallery is unprepossessingly squat. But it extends around the periphery of the glass-enclosed (p. 493) rectangular third floor, enjoying a partial south view of the temple. And unlike the Archaic Gallery’s dot-covered filtered glass, the internally clear UV- and temperature-shielded glass here offers fine illumination, augmented by artificial spotlighting.

Despite its lack of monumentality, the utilitarian Parthenon Gallery is designed to accommodate, and ultimately reunite, all of the temple's sculptures permanently removed from the Acropolis's polluted environment. Significantly, this gallery's display departs from museological tradition by orienting the sculptures facing outward as on the temple. And it abstractly refers to their architectural context in several ways. The space's rectangular gray concrete core holds the full 160-meter length of the Parthenon's Ionic frieze; here plaster casts of known parts have been pieced together with originals to create an approximately fifty/fifty montage suggesting the whole. The frieze is positioned for museum viewing, though, slightly above eye level. Departing from museological and architectural norms, before entering the gallery, the Athens frieze blocks' exposed rough-hewn back sides are visible.

To evoke the Doric frieze, stainless-steel shafts run around the gallery's space, in front of the core, supporting, well above eye level, marble metopes and casts of metopes mounted in gray frames. Finally, in the outermost display layer on the gallery's short ends, the pedimental sculptures are surprisingly presented lower than eye level, in freestanding reconstructed compositions made up of originals and casts set on stumpy gray concrete bases; they cannot be viewed from another vantage point. And visually, the pedimental sculptures illogically overlap the frieze, a feature already criticized in a British Museum display during the nineteenth century.

In the Acropolis Museum's crowning gallery, the use of plaster casts emphasizes Greece's political stance, requesting return of absent Parthenon sculptures, particularly from the British Museum, for reunification in this purpose-built space. But these casts also make possible presentation of the known sculptures in a scholarly educational format. This last function recalls the venerable role once played by casts in museums, including in some of the British Museum's own nineteenth-century Parthenon sculpture installations. And presenting Parthenon sculptures low down for up-close viewing was another nineteenth-century British Museum idea.

In today's museums, important technical advances, which may not necessarily be visible, underlie object display, including scientifically sound conservation and restoration techniques; sophisticated climatization to control pollutants, pests, temperature, and humidity levels; use of UV- and temperature-shielded glass; energy-efficient artificial lighting; environmentally friendly display materials (Brophy and Wylie 2008); and also earthquake-proofing with seismic mounts and isolators and stronger display furniture (Podany 2008).

Modern museums thus far have emphasized objects and have displayed Greek and Roman works in environments that promote and support museum-goers' looking at and contemplating them. Signage for ancient art displays is often more copious than in the

past and—whatever context is emphasized—now rather standard in form, generally including object labels, occasional display case labels, and wall or freestanding text panels with gallery or display section overviews. Sometimes more elaborate didactic (p. 494) materials, including models, videos, or computer databases, might be provided, often in subsidiary spaces. Audio guides are fairly standard. And many museums now have increasingly elaborate websites that augment their on-site displays, offering not only general visitor information but also itineraries and virtual tours of galleries, exhibition videos, collection databases, and more.

Significantly, the nature of displaying Greek and Roman art in museums is about to change in fundamental ways. As is well known, museums have moved toward greater commercialization to attract larger audiences by, for example, devoting more prime space to shops and restaurants and becoming places geared to popular entertainment (“edutainment”) rather than elite education (Smith 2006). And there is enormous pressure for art museums to move away from traditional displays conducive to quiet study and aesthetic contemplation by introducing new media, which would draw attention and take space away from exhibited objects (Bann 2003; Henning 2006). Already, there are occasional in-gallery videos or projected images, but eventually, installations will involve much more interactive visual and aural media use. Data downloadable on personal mobile devices will surely augment and perhaps replace printed signage, likewise altering the in-gallery experience. But perhaps the extraordinary museum objects from the past cultures of Greece and Rome will hold their own amid contemporary culture’s embrace of virtuality (Müller 2010).

Finally, as we have seen, Greek and Roman art has historically been a seminal field for collecting in the West, and exciting acquisitions have inspired new museum installations. Meanwhile, archaeologically rich countries have created ambitious museums and displays for their own archaeological sites and historic collections. Today, with museums in most Western countries strictly following the articles of the UNESCO Convention of 1970 in regard to cultural property, the possibilities for their purchasing on the art market legal works for display have diminished. While the future remains uncharted, increasing international cooperation among nations might well ensure ongoing exchanges that would allow continued vital display of fresh works of ancient art in museums large and small for viewers everywhere.

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the debate regarding proper ownership of cultural property in general and the art of ancient Greece and Rome in particular. It looks at the arguments of two camps: those writing about the impact of looting on the study of the past and their call for further legislative efforts to reduce it and those arguing for more freewheeling acquisitions to be made of art on the market regardless of provenance and for keeping tight possession of what is already in museums. The chapter highlights looting as a significant, global problem that needs to be addressed and its substantial impact on the study of Greek and Roman art and architecture.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, acquisitions, architecture, art, cultural property, looting, museums, ownership

Egyptian mummies, Scythian gold, and Chinese terracotta soldiers in blockbuster exhibits and permanent galleries all attest to widespread public interest in museum-going, in seeing visible remains of the past in well-lit, attractive, and gently didactic settings. Yet many of our prestigious art museums have come under intense and uncomfortable scrutiny because of their practices. Their purchases, gifts, and loans of antiquities have raised ethical and moral questions. To what extent have public (and private) collections been formed as a result of the looting of archaeological sites? Do museums exercise due diligence in background checks on their purchases? Do such purchases encourage looters to destroy yet more archaeological sites so as to make more sales? Under what circumstances should the looted art be repatriated to its presumed source country? What about older collections, formed before international laws restricted such purchases? Should they be returned? Do the various missions of museums (to educate the public, to preserve and conserve items) trump all other concerns? To whom should we entrust the remains of the past?

The issues are complex, and there is a dark underbelly to the acquisition and display of artifacts. Because looting destroys the historical context of archaeological objects, the debate has taken on fresh urgency. The problem of stolen artifacts is now global, with vulnerable “source” sites in Mali, Nigeria, Thailand, Cambodia, China, Mexico, Peru, Afghanistan, Egypt, and Iraq. Organized crime is heavily involved in the marketing of artifacts; the US Department of Justice estimates that the trade in illicit antiquities ranks behind only drugs and arms as the highest-grossing criminal trade (Charney, Denton, and Kleberg 2012).

Questions about the proper ownership of art date back far into Greek and Roman antiquity and were brought into public discussion by Cicero in 70 BCE, when he (p. 500) prosecuted for extortion Gaius Verres, who had just served as the Roman governor of Greek Sicily (Miles 2008). Cicero used the issue of Verres’s theft of boatloads of art—including cult statues—to make the case a sensation in Rome. Greek and Roman art from Mediterranean countries lies at the center of a long tug of war between claims for private ownership of art as private property and claims about the intellectual and historical significance of art that pushes it into a specially protected public, national, or even universal sphere. Today’s debate (conducted through voluminous publications, public lectures, and conferences) has on one side scholarly authors writing about the impact of looting on the study of the past and arguing for further legislative efforts to reduce it, especially by curtailing illegal purchases of looted artifacts (Renfrew 2000; Brodie, Doole, and Renfrew 2001; Bogdanos 2005; David Gill’s

website Looting Matters, <http://lootingmatters.blogspot.gr/>). They are joined by representatives of countries that seek repatriation of artworks taken away from their places of origin long ago. On the other side are museum directors, curators, and a few academics sympathetic to them who argue for more free-wheeling acquisitions to be made of art on the market regardless of provenance (even if stolen) and for keeping tight possession of what is already in museums (Cuno 2008 and 2009). The latter argue that art belongs to all humans, and no one country has such a special claim that any item should be kept only in that country. Mixed into the debate is the legal perspective that provides extensive analysis of legal history and legal claims over past acquisitions and seeks a practical way forward (Merryman 2006 and 2009).

Current questions about who should own art and the ongoing national and international legal efforts to control its marketing are shaped by a history of acquiring antiquities that is deeply rooted in the culture of the Italian Renaissance and interwoven with the history of archaeology as a way of studying the past. We begin here with an overview of the historical issues that are the basis for the arguments in the current debate, and then we consider those arguments.

The Social Impact of Collecting Antiquities

During the Renaissance, an avid search for ancient Greek and Latin manuscripts was fueled by keen interest in the Greek and Roman past among highly competitive humanists in Italy, and their interest soon spread northward through Europe. Petrarch and Boccaccio supplemented their studies by collecting ancient coins and inscriptions, while architects and artists read Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder and eagerly sought ancient art that might illustrate the principles behind the texts. Not only in Rome but everywhere in Italy, ancient history and topography were pursued both through textual study and by mapping ruins and the local terrain. Such questions as which river was Caesar's Rubicon were debated with fervor, and the investigations and hot pursuit of (p. 501) manuscripts were backed by the substantial resources of aristocratic patrons. At Nemi in June 1450, an attempt was made to raise two Roman ships visible at the bottom of the lake, and although only some pieces were brought up, Biondo and Alberti were able to write histories of the ships (even if somewhat inaccurate), thus showing the value of antiquities for historical understanding. A lucrative market in antiquities within Italy encouraged random digging, but most finds were uncovered simply by chance during agricultural or engineering work. Excavation for the sake of answering historical questions was slow to develop and did not emerge until the nineteenth century.

A spectacular chance find came to light on January 14, 1506, in Rome: a farmer plowing his field suddenly came upon a deep hole that contained a marble sculptural group (figure 29.1). An eyewitness, Giuliano da Sangallo the Younger, wrote an account in which he recalls that day when he was a boy and his father summoned Michelangelo to go look at the new find. His father instantly recognized the group as the Laocoön group described by Pliny, attributed to three Rhodian sculptors and, in Pliny's view, the finest work of art in Rome. The sculpture was bought by Pope Julius II and by June was installed in the Belvedere courtyard in the Vatican. Together with the Apollo Belvedere, the Laocoön group (representing the Trojan priest and his two sons being strangled by sea serpents) became the core of an extensive papal collection of ancient statuary. The group was closely studied

as a model by Michelangelo and other sculptors. Even through five centuries of changing taste in art, that statue group remains one of the most admired from antiquity.

Earlier, in 1471, Pope Pius IV had started a public museum on the Capitoline (now the Capitoline Museums) by donating bronzes for public viewing, thus marking the birth of modern public museums (on Early Modern collecting and the beginning of archaeology, see Barkan 1999; Schnapp 1996; Haskell and Penny 1981; see chapter 18 above). Just as in the Late Republican and Imperial periods of ancient Rome, statuary was set in gardens or public areas that were generally accessible for people to come and enjoy fine works of art. In 1538, Pope Paul III moved the equestrian bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius (figure 13.4) from the Lateran palace to the Capitoline, to be surrounded by a piazza designed by Michelangelo. The statue was much admired (and was the most frequently sketched and engraved of any ancient art) and came to be a symbol of Rome itself.

Papal collections, in turn, became a model for royal collections elsewhere in Europe, such as the one started by François I of France. But unlike the popes of Rome, who had ready and commanding access to new finds made locally, European royalty had to go to much greater lengths to acquire ancient statuary: they had to purchase finds, usually from Rome or Florence, or try to arrange for copies or casts or emulations of the originals, or, as an alternative, commission new art made by living artists. By 1624, the papal state began controlling the export of antiquities, with new requirements for licensing, and landowners were required to report chance finds. These restrictions began to circumscribe age-old property laws that made little distinction between kinds of property. These are antecedents of modern laws on property, which distinguish between private property, public property (held in common for all), and state property.

Interest in antiquity endured over the centuries as a favored pursuit for the educated and upper classes, and the presence of antiquities in one's town house or villa was a (p. 502) marker of a successful, educated, aristocratic person. Taste in architectural styles was similarly retrospective, and ancient statuary was framed and complemented in residences with classicizing styles. Antiquities were a part of a broad set of aesthetic, political, and social choices, and they stood for power, educated taste, high aesthetic merit, and aristocratic status.

During the eighteenth century, "Grand Tourists" from Britain, France, and Germany flocked to Italy for traveling experience and some sophisticated polish in their education, and they wanted souvenirs from their time abroad. The Grand Tour led to Rome as a primary destination, where the interest in antiquities and ancient topography stimulated further collecting of antiquities. There was also a market for fakes and for contemporary painting that reflected interest in the past, depicting ruins and statuary in landscapes or the fragmentary ancient buildings of Rome. The typical Grand Tour was extended to Naples after the discovery of Herculaneum (1738) and Pompeii (1748). The ancient cities were found in the course of destructive tunneling in a search for "treasures" (marble architectural pieces and statuary) destined for the Bourbon court, until more systematic efforts were directed by Karl Weber (1712–1764). That one could walk down actual ancient streets and visit ancient Roman houses in Pompeii seemed a marvel to visitors, and it still does.

Sir William Hamilton (1731–1803) (see figure 22.1), who served as the British ambassador to the Bourbon Kingdom of Naples, was a great promoter of antiquarian interests and was himself an extremely avid collector. He received guests from abroad, gave tours, studied Mount Vesuvius, and displayed his own collections, much of it pottery amassed from digging up ancient graves in the

vicinity of Naples, at Nola, Capua, and other sites. The key to his enormous impact on the taste for antiquities abroad was his publications; through lavishly produced books with handsome illustrations, he promoted a burgeoning trade in painted pottery made of terracotta (which he refers to as “vases,” still the standard term). These vessels were studied, presented, and cataloged as works of art, and thus, he could charge substantial prices for the pieces he shipped home to England. The money from the sales then funded more acquisitions (for Hamilton’s correspondence, see Bignamini and Hornsby 2010, Vol. 2). Although there were in fact legal restrictions on such exports, the Bourbon court officials seem to have turned a blind eye to Hamilton’s activities out of respect for his other contributions. Meanwhile, the publications of J. J. Winckelmann (1717–1768) were shifting antiquarianism (which focused on taxonomies and typologies, some quite useful still today) to art history (which seeks to put objects into a broader historical and aesthetic context).

Art Taken as Plunder in War



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Fig. 22.1 Angelo De Clener after Christoph Heinrich Kniep. Excavation of a tomb near Nola, c. 1790.

(Source: Hamilton and Tischbein 1791–1795, I, frontispiece.)

While genteel collecting and merchandising of found art continued apace, the very high values placed on ancient art, books and manuscripts, and what we would call cultural property are demonstrated by the plundering that took place during wars, at times [\(p. 503\)](#) waged in part for the sake of such plunder. Under the Habsburg king Charles V, Rome was sacked and pillaged in 1527, a shock that reverberated throughout Europe because of the high estimation of Rome as an artistic and religious center. In the seventeenth century, when Heidelberg was sacked (1622) in the course of the Thirty Years War, its famous Palatine Library was sent to Pope Gregory XV, transported by 196 mules, all of which wore silver labels proclaiming that they carried the Palatine Library to the pope. After the Battle of Prague

(1649), Queen Christina of Sweden instructed her general to gather up the art collection of Rudolf II of Hungary, with the comment that it was what interested her the most. The sack of Prague was carried out during the very negotiations [\(p. 504\)](#) of the Peace of Westphalia, due to start in a matter of months. Hugh Trevor-Roper remarks that in the seventeenth century, art (especially Greek and Roman art) had an aura and prestige so strong that enemy cities or dynasties sought to destroy the aura by appropriating it, like cannibals taking the *mana* of a defeated enemy (Trevor-Roper 1970, 7).

In the eighteenth century, the worst instances of plundering of art were carried out by Napoleon Bonaparte in Italy during his invasions of the 1790s. Earlier in the decade, armies of the French revolutionary government had looted Flemish and Dutch art in the Netherlands, but Napoleon took this to a new level of thoroughness and had his men sweep through the Italian peninsula, even cutting paintings out of frames over altars in churches. There was a facade of legality that Napoleon instituted with lopsided “treaties” that allowed him to name what he wanted from aristocratic collections. Most egregious was the Treaty of Tolentino (1797), which, among many stipulations, imposed the surrender of the papal collections in the Vatican. The Laocoön group, the Apollo Belvedere, thirty-seven manuscripts of the Palatine Library, geological specimens, and even the pope’s archives and working papers were all shipped to Paris, where Napoleon staged a Roman-style triumphal procession of the plunder through the city.

The plunder and its parading raised considerable controversy, especially among French artists and intellectuals such as Quatremère de Quincy, who wrote open letters protesting the move of art from its “ancient seat.” He used arguments in his tracts first voiced by Polybius and Cicero, saying that art has a context and belongs there; taking it out of context “irreparably impairs its legibility” (for Quatremère’s protest, see Miles 2008, 326–327). After the Battle of Waterloo (1815), the Duke of Wellington made the decision that the art plundered by the French should be returned, and about 55 percent of it was sent back. The returns included the Laocoön group and the Apollo to the Vatican, the Horses of San Marco to Venice, and the manuscripts from the Palatine Library to Heidelberg (rather than the Vatican). This was the first instance of repatriation of wartime plunder since the fall of Carthage in 146 BCE, when Scipio Aemilianus returned to Sicilian cities statuary looted by the Carthaginians and found in Carthage.

When Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798, he took with him a corps of “savants” (architects, engineers, scientists, painters, draftsmen), who gathered up many specimens of sculpture and architecture and numerous artifacts. The extensive, high-quality documentation of monuments in Egypt and Egyptian antiquities made by the savants and later published as *Description de l’Égypte* (1809–1829) opened the new field of Egyptology and led to subsequent exploration of the Near East.

Most of the requisitioned antiquities were taken under treaty by the British after the French capitulation in Egypt in 1801, including the Rosetta Stone (they are now in the British Museum). At the time, no one seems to have complained about this as plunder, in contrast with the looting of Italy; on the contrary, the Egyptian antiquities were eagerly received and started new fashions and an Egyptomania craze in home decoration, architecture, and consumer goods. (p. 505)

Museums and Archaeology

A direct result of the plundering (and partial repatriation after Waterloo) was a heightened competitive rivalry in western Europe to collect antiquities and display them in national museums (see chapter 21 above). The Louvre (which became a public museum during the French Revolution in 1793) and the British Museum (specifically established in 1753 as the first national museum for the public and to promote intellectual inquiry) sought to increase their holdings by purchasing finds from abroad, including the Winged Victory from Samothrace and the Venus from Melos (figure 29.3) in Greece and the sculpture and architecture taken from the Parthenon in Athens by Lord Elgin. The

idea of having a “universal” museum, with finds representing various eras and places around the world, was part of the idealism of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, and the idea flourished in a nationalistically tinged competition in the course of the nineteenth century. King Ludwig I of Bavaria bid for the Aegina pedimental sculptures, and they became the centerpiece of a new Glyptothek in Munich. The sculpture was found by the architect Charles Robert Cockerell (then twenty-three years old) in 1811, while he was on a sort of Grand Tour, to Greece rather than Italy because of the ongoing Napoleonic wars which made travel in Italy impossible. Later in the same summer, Cockerell and his travelling companions discovered sculpture from the interior of the Temple of Apollo at Bassae and sold it to the British Museum.

The mid-nineteenth century saw the development of archaeology as a scholarly field of study, and museums began to collect antiquities via sponsored excavations in Turkey, Cyprus, and the Near East. Understanding history through systematic excavation required the concept of stratigraphic layers and was late to develop, in part because of the constraints of fixed ideas about biblical chronologies; suggestions that the earth and human history were older than the Bible indicated (4004 BCE) caused great outcry and controversy when they were first discussed publicly in the early nineteenth century. Developments in geology, paleontology, and especially evolutionary theory led to more scientific and rigorous archaeological undertakings. In the nineteenth century, acquisition of artifacts continued to be a significant motivating factor in the development of archaeology as a discipline. Sometimes deals were cut with the authorities in the host country to divide the finds from an excavation (*partage*); in other instances, excavators found ways to circumvent restrictions.

Legislation about Ownership

Another development in the nineteenth century was legislation protecting art and cultural property in time of war. The Duke of Wellington specifically prohibited looting of all kinds during his campaigns in the Peninsula (some episodes were punished with hangings), and he engineered the return of the art in Paris looted by Napoleon. But those (p. 506) actions were carried out by his fiat as commander in the field and in Paris as commander of the army of occupation, not by legislation.

The next instance of wartime prohibitions was in the United States, when President Abraham Lincoln asked Professor Francis Lieber to write a General Order that included provisions to respect the enemy’s cultural property (*General Orders No. 100*, also known as the Lieber Code, 1863). Lieber, who was Prussian in origin but emigrated to the United States, was a survivor of Waterloo. The Lieber Code gives instructions to soldiers to protect works of art, libraries, scientific collections and instruments, and the property of churches, hospitals, and educational institutions and forbids private appropriation of any such items. (The text of the Lieber Code is printed in Simpson 1997, 272–273. A modern version is still carried into battle on a small card by members of US armed forces today.) The Lieber Code was admired by European legal scholars and became a model for international agreements on cultural property, including provisions in the Brussels Declaration of 1874, the Oxford Manual of 1880, and the Hague Conventions of 1907.

After the unprecedented destruction, theft, and looting of art in World War II by Nazis, far beyond anything enacted by Napoleon, the first international agreement dealing specifically with cultural property was written in 1954. The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the

Event of Armed Conflict has been signed by more than one hundred countries; the original is now supplemented with a revised Second Protocol (2004). It strengthens the provisions of the Convention of 1907, under which it was possible to prosecute Nazis and find that the removal and destruction of art were war crimes. Redress of the theft and destruction of art during World War II is far from complete and is ongoing, and there are enormous registries of other lost art (an estimated one hundred thousand items) that has not been recovered, both in print and on the Internet. (Lynn Nicholas's book of 1994 on the Nazi looting of art has now a parallel documentary with the same title, *Rape of Europa* [2006], with interviews of victims. An example of a published registry, just for Vienna, is Lillie 2003, with a length of 1,439 pages.) The successful restitution in 2006 to Maria Altmann of five paintings by Klimt (stolen from her family by the Nazis and later put into a government museum in Austria) is said to have made art dealers all the more hesitant about trading items that might have been looted during World War II.

Apart from plundering in wartime, looting and illicit digging pose the greatest threat to antiquities. (Natural disasters threaten, too, but little can be done to prevent them.) The governments of the host or "source" countries began to devise laws restricting excavations and exports of antiquities as early as the nineteenth century. Egypt, for example, enacted antiexport legislation concerning antiquities in 1835, even though it was often circumvented. Newly independent Greece enacted legislation as early as 1834 and founded an Archaeological Service as a government authority in 1833. Current laws in most countries require all finds to stay in the source country; archaeologists today excavate not to acquire objects but to answer research questions, study the finds, and publish them, thus contributing to our understanding of history. Along with the heightened consciousness of the importance of protecting antiquities has come an increasing body of international accords, agreements, treaties, and legislation to respect and protect (p. 507) cultural heritage of many sorts, including archaeological sites. An especially significant treaty is the UNESCO Convention on the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Cultural Property of 1970, signed by more than one hundred countries, which protects cultural property by making it unacceptable to market anything acquired after 1970 without documented provenance. This came about as an enormous effort was made to stop the looting of archaeological sites, which had escalated in the post-World War II years (the full body of international agreements is available on the UNESCO website and the J. Paul Getty Museum website; the UNESCO Convention of 1970 is in Renfrew 2000).

The strategy is to reduce looting by diminishing the demand for the looted objects by making such purchases illegal: if there are fewer buyers, then looting becomes less profitable. Yet despite these efforts and the legislation, the flow of stolen and looted objects out of source countries and into private collections and museums is still continuing. For several decades after 1970, museum administrators, curators, dealers, and donors of privately purchased items colluded in finding ways to circumvent the legal restrictions imposed by source countries. When revealed, these actions became notorious in the media during the 2000s, and the scandals accelerated the "debate" about cultural property.

Modern Collecting of Antiquities

Many types of art were and are made with the expectation of being sold and collected, and certainly no stigma attaches to contemporary private collectors of modern art, panel paintings (usually meant to be somewhat portable), furniture, baseball cards, and so on, that is, appealing items made recently. The problem comes when people buy unprovenanced antiquities today. The “taste for the antique” (as Haskell and Penny have called it) has persisted to this day—one meaning of “classical,” after all, is something that endures over time, and appreciation of Greek and Roman art is firmly embedded in our visual culture, even with much competition for our attention and affection. Everyone agrees that even ordinary things such as Graeco-Roman coins or lamps or pots can be enormously appealing because of their historical associations, let alone the many objects that are truly beautiful. But nearly all antiquities that people have purchased since 1970 have been taken out of context illegally, with no proper documentation. They are stolen property. Although looting has been going on for centuries, it is illegal to remove antiquities from the source countries. (Looted objects can still be sold within some source countries.) Culpability is not just a matter of who owns the stolen artifact or where the stolen artifact should be exhibited; what really matters is the destruction of historical sites that potentially could have provided new insights into the past (the essays in Brodie, Doole, and Renfrew 2001 survey the problem globally). Perhaps unknowingly, many people have purchased stolen art and have thereby encouraged the destruction of sites.

Even small items (not necessarily what we could call “art” yet still looted and sold) can illuminate archaeological sites when they are excavated properly; coins are often precious evidence for chronology in an excavated layer. Some examples of new historical (p. 508) chronologies proposed on the basis of humble finds include the stamped amphora handles from Koroni in Attica (which showed that the site was actually a Ptolemaic camp; Grace 1963; Rotroff 1997, 31–32); the nondescript salt cellars found in the Great Tumulus at Vergina in northern Greece (which may show that the construction of the mound should be dated rather later than the death of Philip II; Rotroff 1984, 343–354); the black-figured funerary *lekythoi* found in the Marathon mound (raised after the battle of 490 BCE), which provide a stylistic fixed point (Biers 1992). Even ordinary objects can provide significant historical understanding, when they have a context.



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Fig. 22.2 Attic red-figure calyx krater signed by Euxitheos (potter) and Euphronios (painter), from Cerveteri. Hypnos and Thanatos lifting the body of Sarpedon. C. 515 BCE. Ceramic. Height 45.7 cm. Rome, Museo Nazionale di Villa Giulia inv. 1972.11.10.

(Photograph © Scala/Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali/Art Resource, New York, ART407273.) (p. 516)

The purchase of antiquities became especially problematic when museums began to bolster attendance with prominent acquisitions to their regular collections. A turning point came in 1972, when the Metropolitan Museum of Art purchased an Athenian vase known as the Euphronios vase (figure 22.2) from dealer Robert Hecht, Jr., for one million dollars. Within weeks of its announcement, public questions were raised about its cost and its source (few believed that it was from “an old collection”), and Hecht was later indicted in Italy, although the case ended without a verdict because the statute of limitations had expired. The krater was returned to Italian possession in February 2006. According to the journalists who conducted interviews with the *tombaroli* (tomb robbers) and a convicted (p. 509) dealer, when the robbers heard that a pot had been sold for a million dollars, they “went crazy” and redoubled their efforts (Watson and Todeschini 2006: 359).

Scholarly studies that have tracked the sale of pottery in the years following 1972 show a sharp leap in purchases; thus, the efforts of the *tombaroli* and *clandestini* were fruitful (the most complete is Nørskov 2002 with extensive graphs and charts). The link between the marketing of antiquities and looting is now proven by overwhelming evidence. Polaroid photographs and other documents found by criminal investigators show sculpture and pottery immediately after removal from the ground, on newspapers with clinging dirt, and then after cleaning. Such documents were found in the possession of convicted dealers Giacomo Medici and Robin Symes, and the story of the photographs, the collectors and museums who purchased the items, the criminal investigation, and the subsequent legal actions against them has been presented fully and vividly (Watson and Todeschini 2006; Waxman 2008; Felch and Frammolino 2011).

Damage done by looting and collecting has been assessed in a number of scholarly studies. Without a context, new problems emerge: the first is that we must question the authenticity of the object; second, we have lost not just the physical context but also the associated archaeological evidence for its date; finally, false provenances are often created by dealers to obfuscate the source, adding confusion (Mackenzie 2005, 107–108). Gill and Chippindale (1993) studied the fate of Cycladic marble figures, for example, and the material and intellectual consequences of the loss of their context. These were initially regarded as awkward and primitive in the nineteenth century, but sculptors and

painters of the early and mid-twentieth century (such as Jacob Epstein, Constantin Brancusi, Henry Moore, and Pablo Picasso) were attracted to their essentialized, abstract qualities, and some of them owned such figures. A fashion for collecting Cycladic figurines developed after World War II, especially during the 1960s, and the eager collecting (public and private) led to wholesale looting on the islands where they were made and used. Gill and Chippendale estimate that some eleven thousand to twelve thousand graves were looted (in proper excavations, about one in ten graves had such figures); thus, about 85 percent of likely Early Cycladic grave sites are lost to any historical understanding.

Another consequence was that many fakes were sold into circulation. Among a large array of material with no provenance and no documentation, it is now impossible to identify styles, regions of production, manner of use; we do not know even how these statues were used, since most have no context (from a tomb? a sanctuary? a habitation site?). And any slightly unusual (or closely similar) figures are suspected of being fakes.

In a subsequent study of contemporary collections of ancient Greek and Roman art (Chippendale and Gill 2000), the authors find that the majority of works of art have no known findspot (71 to 75 percent) or modern history before 1974 (81 percent). They point out the primary intellectual consequence: that the existing typologies, art historical paradigms of development, and stylistic expectations that are used as *comparanda* to try to interpret these pieces only become more entrenched; the new art does not expand our knowledge but only makes it more conservative. Any anomaly observed in the art again makes the authenticity of a piece suspect (or incomprehensible at best), until some parallel from a proper context may illuminate it. (p. 510)

Return, Restitution, Repatriation

From the 1930s onward, major museums made many important returns of significant cultural objects, including Icelandic manuscripts, Mandalay regalia, a Guatemalan stele, Mayan jars, and masks from Papua New Guinea. J. Greenfield lists thirty-four examples of returns that came about as a result of diplomatic and institutional negotiations or, for some, litigation (Greenfield 1995, 9-10, 261-266). Thus, there is ample modern precedent for returning items of historical importance back to their places of origin, even though they were taken or looted at a time when such removal was not necessarily regarded as criminal. But should the returns be regarded as restitution (of dubiously obtained items, with the implication of culpability) or even repatriation (with the implication that items have a particular home)? As Greenfield remarks: "'Return' may also refer in a wider sense to restoration, reinstatement, and even rejuvenation and reunification" (Greenfield 1995, 257).

Looted antiquities in museums and private collections became frequent news items in the 1990s and 2000s. Turkey claimed the Lydian Hoard (Karun Treasure) which was purchased by the Metropolitan Museum in New York after it was looted in 1966, and it was returned to Turkey in 1993. From the same museum, Italy claimed a set of silver and gold vessels, the Morgantina Silver Hoard, which was returned to Italy in 2010. Armed with photographs and other documents found by Italian and Greek criminal investigators, fresh demands for restitution of stolen items were made by the Italian and Greek governments beginning in 2000. Prior requests for returns had been brushed aside as having insufficient proof for the return of valuable property. Now the proof was there, the claims were made,

and a considerable number of items were returned, including objects held in private collections. Indictments of individual curators were either made or threatened by the governments of Italy and Greece, extending liability to specific individuals. Whether the forced returns have helped reduce looting is hard to know, but anecdotal evidence suggests that at the least, dealers have to be more careful about what they sell and provide a plausible history of acquisition.

With so many high-profile returns of objects and with many curators, museum directors, dealers, and private collectors often in the news media in stories linking them to criminal traffic in artifacts and art, the high reputation of museums as cultural and intellectual institutions has become tarnished and diminished, especially in the United States, where so much of this was carried out. Museums found to have purchased looted antiquities through convicted dealer Giacomo Medici included not just the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu but also the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Princeton University Museum of Art, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the San Antonio Museum of Art, and several others. Many museums in western Europe and Japan also purchased them. One could almost say it was “normal” to have had such connections to underworld and criminal dealers and middlemen, if a museum (or private collector) was acquiring Greek and Roman art.

Collectively, the directors of museums took these public revelations very seriously. The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), which represents 184 major art (p. 511) museums in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, issued several position papers. First, in 2004, it proposed a rolling period of ten years before unprovenanced ancient items could be purchased (that is, members were still planning to purchase them). Then, in 2008, the AAMD recommended the 1970 cutoff date in compliance with the UNESCO Convention of 1970, and there is now a section of the AAMD website devoted to registering recently acquired ancient objects, plus a second registry for claims stemming from the period of Nazi theft of art and World War II. The American Association of Museums (AAM) also published in 2008 a set of standards for collecting archaeological material and ancient art. Thus, there is now a bright line, 1970, as an ethical marker between what is licit and what is illicit to collect.

The response on the part of individual museums has been threefold. First, they have returned to source countries many artifacts and works of art, sometimes quietly. Programs of loans have been negotiated with Italy and Greece in return for the more glamorous (and notorious) items. In a second move forward, many museums have now declared themselves to be in compliance with the UNESCO Convention of 1970, with varying cutoff dates for further acquisition. Among American museums, the University of Pennsylvania Museum was the first to declare a cutoff date for acquisition a few months before the UNESCO Convention was actually issued in 1970, and there are other museums that complied early on. The J. Paul Getty Museum now has a stringent policy in place that not only respects the cutoff date of 1970 but declares that nothing will be acquired that was stolen or illicit.

Some museums have taken on new ways to address the problems of displaced cultural property, with accompanying efforts to educate the public about the issues. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts is researching Nazi-era provenance, with careful attention to works of art in its own collection, and publishes on its website all information about provenance, including names of dealers. The Getty Conservation Institute has for decades (long before the scandals of the 2000s) undertaken extensive programs of conservation within source countries, in an effort to preserve and conserve ancient art in situ, such as the Tomb of Nefertari in Egypt, Mediterranean mosaics, Buddhist wall paintings in China,

and Mayan sites. By supporting conservation efforts with expertise and financing, source countries are assisted in protecting archaeological sites.

Museum Directors Speak Out

Archaeology certainly has a political dimension, since artifacts are used to support claims about identity and heritage (the issues surrounding cultural heritage have been addressed at length: Sax 1999; Lowenthal 1998; Mackenzie 2005; Stone 2011; and “Heritage Management” in *Oxford Bibliographies* [online]). This was a vital role of art in antiquity, for the makers and also for the takers: for Xerxes, who took statues of the Tyrannicides from Athens which were returned much later by Alexander the Great after the latter defeated the Persian Empire, and for the victorious Roman generals who paraded plundered art from Greek cities through Rome. The high-profile indictments and restitutions (p. 512) of the 2000s heated up a postmodern debate about ownership. Can anyone “own” the past? How should nations claim a particular “patrimony” if the objects are also of worldwide significance, a part of our common human heritage, belonging to all? What about the ideal of the universal museum that protects and preserves and educates? These questions and other tangential issues have been raised by museum directors in defense of their collections and by some curators and academics in their support (Cuno 2009).

At stake in the debate is not just slaking the thirst for new acquisitions but also previous nationalist claims against museums for objects taken long ago, such as the Parthenon/Elgin Marbles, the Rosetta Stone, Montezuma’s Headdress, and Benin bronzes. The countries in which the items were created (Greece, Egypt, Mexico, Nigeria) want them back, arguing that the items are part of their national patrimony and belong in their original home, even if they were taken away in an earlier era before the existence of the respective modern nation-states. Each of these items (and many more) requires a specific justification for return, since the return, if made, would be for emotional, historical, and ethical reasons, not because of legal claims. Perhaps the most-discussed case is that of the Parthenon/Elgin Marbles (Hitchens 1997; Neils 2001, 239–248; Miles 2008, 309–316, 357–360; Merryman 2009). One argument in favor of returning the pieces is that the Parthenon is an exceptional monument, much of the temple still stands in place, and all of its architectural sculpture should be reunited. Lord Elgin also took notable pieces of the actual fabric of the temple, including one whole Doric capital, and a caryatid from the Erechtheum. The architectural sculpture in Athens (the half not taken by Elgin) is on display in a modern museum with planned space for an eventual return, now filled by casts of the pieces that are in London (see chapter 21 above). The space exactly replicates the orientation of the Parthenon itself, visible through floor-to-ceiling glass only a short distance away. While it cannot be replaced on the building, the reunited sculpture would be exhibited adjacent to the Acropolis in Athens, where it belongs. There is a space, too, for the sixth caryatid to join her sisters.

Some directors of museums have replied to criticisms by raising counterpoints and new issues. Neil MacGregor (director of the British Museum) points to the Enlightenment ideals of the universal, encyclopedic museum and the historic role of museums in protecting and preserving objects that might have been destroyed or lost, had they not been collected in an earlier era. He emphasizes the great educational value of having objects from many different cultures under one roof and having

them accessible to all. The museum is meant for all citizens, not just British citizens, and now serves as a great historical repository (MacGregor in Cuno 2009, 39–54; see also MacGregor 2010). Firmly opposed to the return of the Parthenon/Elgin Marbles, MacGregor believes that they belong in the United Kingdom, where they can “do most good,” and the fact that the best preserved of them are in London is a happy result of history.

James Cuno, president of the Getty Trust, has been outspoken in support of the right of museums to collect everything, even unprovenanced (illicitly acquired) antiquities. (Cuno 2008 and 2009) He also extols the virtues of encyclopedic museums, with an assumption that there is no ideological motivation for them (unlike the national museums in source countries, which have “nationalist retentionist” policies) (for a detailed critique of Cuno 2008, see Winter 2009; Hamilakis 2007 gives a nuanced view of nationalist uses of the past (p. 513) in Greece). Cuno and his coauthors, Philippe de Montebello and Kwame Anthony Appiah, emphasize a “cosmopolitan” view of art, in which art belongs to all and therefore could and should be kept and viewed in any place in the world. If one takes a loftier, cosmopolitan view of world history, then the comparisons made possible by encyclopedic museums can be intriguing and enlightening, and the sense of connection to the past is possible among all people; that is, “our people” built the Great Wall in China, the Parthenon, the Chrysler Tower (Montebello in Cuno 2009, 55–70; Appiah in Cuno 2009, 71–86). “Our people” is all of us in this line of argument, in a common endeavor of humankind (this argument overlooks the unique circumstances and particularity of each construction but underlines the idea that we can all appreciate great architecture). Cuno, Merryman, and others argue that in contrast to claims about “cultural patrimony” or “cultural heritage,” there should be a licit, international trade in antiquities and cultural objects and that individual nations should not prohibit this with their own nationalist, retentionist regulations (Cuno 2009; Merryman 2009). In response, it should be noted that sovereign nations have the right to continue their retentionist policies and exert whatever control over exports they wish, despite idealistic ideas about art belonging to all humankind.

The museum directors have also pointed to some pragmatic issues. If returned, will the repatriated items be properly protected? In the case of the Karun Treasure (Lydian Hoard), one repatriated item seems to have been replaced with a fake version. The looting of the Baghdad Museum during war demonstrated the vulnerability of museums in some parts of the world. Apart from security, there is also the issue of accessibility to visitors and scholars: too often, even important museums in Greece, Italy, and Turkey are closed, have very short hours, or forbid photographs. There is the problem of the “orphans,” the looted art and artifacts that emerged since 1970 and, presumably, are still emerging. Several professional archaeological journals, including the *American Journal of Archaeology* and *Hesperia*, have in place strong policies that prohibit the publication of undocumented finds. When offered such items for sale, however, rather than purchasing them (as Cuno and others would like to do), it would be better to call for an investigation about their sources, since they are stolen property. The museum directors, along with everyone interested in the issue of cultural property and its protection, rightly insist that more needs to be done to control looting by the governments of the countries in which the looting occurs. Everyone agrees on that issue.

Conclusions

There seems little doubt that looting is a significant, worldwide problem that needs to be addressed, both by curtailing it at its source and by curtailing purchase by potential customers. It has had a substantial impact on how we study Greek and Roman art by limiting the kinds of questions we can ask and answer about it. Museums and private collectors should not purchase art and artifacts that have emerged since 1970, and many institutions now recognize this and have such policies in place. The returns of looted (p. 514) art resulted in greater cooperation for extended long-term loans to US museums, such as the Chimaera of Arezzo. In a sense, the debate over Greek and Roman art as cultural property is nearly over, except that some museums and private collectors continue to buy ancient art that emerged recently. There is also the issue of the outstanding items still in dispute, such as the Parthenon/Elgin Marbles. But rather than focusing on the current location of such items, more attention should be given to protecting archaeological sites. Still in extensive discussion is cultural heritage of all sorts threatened by war in various parts of the world. How do we protect it, how do we anticipate and prevent its destruction by the warring parties, and who should pay for its restoration (Stone 2011)?

The larger significance of the UNESCO Convention of 1970, the scandals that came to light as a result of the Italian and Greek investigations, and the ensuing debate, is that we see it is possible to improve professional and social ideas about ethical behavior. Behavior that earlier was considered acceptable, such as big-game hunting, is no longer regarded as moral or ethical today. The greater public awareness of antiquities brought about by an active investigative climate is changing the moral climate for collecting. Nonetheless, the buying of antiquities does continue in some museums where the new norms are still not accepted, and the issue is not yet fully resolved in the twenty-first century.

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Connoisseurship

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the connoisseurship of Greek and Roman art and architecture, from the Roman Imperial period to Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, Early Modern times, and the nineteenth century. It first looks at the chronology of artists ranging from painters to architects and important sources for the emergence of art history, such as Cicero's description of the formal development of sculpture and painting from the fifth to the fourth centuries BCE and their contribution to naturalism. It then turns to authors and connoisseurs of the Roman Empire before concluding with a discussion of new methods in the attribution of works of art to ancient artists.

Keywords: architecture, art, art history, artists, attribution, connoisseurs, connoisseurship, Late Antiquity, Middle Ages, Roman Empire

During the trial of Gaius Verres, who had accumulated a large art collection through robbery during his time as Roman governor (*propraetor*) of Sicily, Cicero appears as a connoisseur of Greek art and Greek artists. At the same time, however, he distances himself from this expertise, one apparently inappropriate for a Roman citizen, by clarifying that he relied on the help of others to gather the information necessary for the trial. One passage reads: "These [two bronze female statues] are called the *Kanephoroi*; who is the artist who made them? Who indeed? You admonish rightly; they were said to be by Polyclitus" (*Canephoroe ipsae vocabantur; sed earum artificem—quem? quemnam? recte admones—Polyclitum esse dicebant*) (Cicero, *Verr.* 2.4.5, trans. J. J. Pollitt).

The names of artists were important during Verres's trial for extortion (*de repetundis*), because the material value of Greek art, particularly from earlier periods, was closely tied to the fame of the artist who had created it. Aside from other criteria, such as old age, unusual subjects, famous owners, or anecdotes associated with individual artifacts, the artist's name alone often defined the value of a work of art. According to Pliny (*HN* 36.30), the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, for example, became one of the Seven Wonders

of the World mainly because of the four sculptors—Scopas, Bryaxis, Timotheus, and Leochares—who did carvings for this monument.

As early as in the texts of Homer, the names of artists or, more precisely, of craftsmen make their appearance (on the life and work of Greek and Roman artists and architects, see Vollkommer 2001-2004; on mythical and early Greek artists, see Philipp 1968; Morris 1992; Willers 1996; Frontisi-Ducroux 2000; on Greek artists in Hellenistic and Roman times, see Hesberg 1998, 205-214; Saladino 1998; literary sources on Greek artists are collected in Overbeck 1868 [a new, enlarged edition is now in press]; see also Pollitt 1990 and, on Roman art, 1983; see chapter 5 above). Hephaestus, the creator of, among other things, the Shield of Achilles (Homer, *Il.* 18.468-608), is, unsurprisingly, frequently named. In the *Iliad* (18.592), we also already encounter the multitalented, mythical Daedalus.

(p. 520) In principle, the ancient world did not distinguish between craft and art (for modern views on the status of ancient artists, see especially Schweitzer 1963; Burford 1972; Coarelli 1980). However, different levels of artisanal perfection or artistic accomplishment did not go unnoticed (see chapter 1 above). This, in turn, resulted in standards for rewarding artistic activity, with income and financial success as a marker of the position of the craftsman/artist (generally men) in society, his reputation, and his fame. Occasionally, we can find negative characterizations of the profession of the craftsman/artist in ancient literature. However, such negative statements (which have had an influence on modern scholarship since Jacob Burckhardt) usually refer not to the results of artistic creation but rather to the circumstances under which craftsmen worked, including the dirty environment of workshops and the slavelike, heavy physical labor.

The achieved or expected success boosted the self-confidence of the Greek artist. This becomes evident as far back as the late eighth century BCE, when signatures first appeared on painted clay pots, then on sculptures (on signatures by Greek sculptors, see Loewy 1885; see chapter 5 above). These signatures preserved the names of artists for posterity and connected them to specific works of art. In this way, both the artist's name and the work of art entered the literary tradition. Because signatures and literary references often mentioned not only the name of the artist but also (as often in Greek culture) the father's name, and because the father was often (corresponding to the artisanal character of ancient art making) an artist himself, it was possible to construct genealogies of artists with the help of these indications of family relationships (see chapter 5 above). Examples include a family of sculptors who worked on Chios in the sixth century BCE (Pliny, *HN* 36.11: Malas, Micciades, Archermus, Boupalus, and Athenis) (figure 23.1) or the family of the sculptor Praxiteles in Athens in the fourth century BCE

(Pliny, *HN* 34.51, 87; 36.24: Cephisodotus, [?] ,—Praxiteles, Cephisodotus the Younger, and Timarchus). Artists' genealogies of a different kind preserved in the literary record are pupil-teacher relationships (see chapter 5 above). One example is the school of the sculptor Polyclitus, which spanned at least three generations between the fifth and the fourth centuries BCE (Pliny, *HN* 34.50; Pausanias 5.17.3–4).



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Fig. 23.1 Nike by Archermus, son of Micciades, of Chios, from Delos. C. 550 BCE. Marble. Height 90 cm. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 21.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

Where these genealogies were linked with information about, for instance, the installation of specific works, the occasions for their creation, or the time of the patrons, this allowed for the establishment of chronologies. However, these chronologies hardly ever spanned more than three generations, barely an entire century. The system of *akmē* or *floruit* dates did not depend on generations; here the culmination of an artist's career was defined using, arguably, his most famous

work as a reference, dated in correspondence to the years of a specific Olympiad. We know this system best from Pliny (*HN* 34.49–52 for sculpture; 35.54–133 for painting). The fact that an acme reported by Pliny does not necessarily indicate the midpoint of an artist's life or work but occasionally refers to a famous late work is well demonstrated in the case of Polyclitus: Pliny (*HN* 34.49) mentions the ninetieth Olympics (420–417 BCE) as the *floruit* of this sculptor, the time when Polyclitus, probably as an old man, created the cult image of Hera for the Argive Heraion. Pliny, and most likely also his Hellenistic sources, focused on the two Classical centuries of Greek art; in fact, they only mention *floruit* dates for the artists (p. 521) of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Works by these artists were especially famous into Late Antiquity and were regarded as exemplary. Today they are often called *opera nobilia*, after the title of a book by the sculptor, metalworker, and art theorist Pasiteles (Pliny, *HN* 36.39), who was active in Italy in the

first century BCE. It is assumed that these works in particular were frequently copied during the Roman Imperial period.

Beginnings of an Art History

The chronology of artists was the precondition for the emergence of an art history, which aimed to capture larger contexts (see in general Jex-Blake and Sellers 1896, XIII–XCIV; Pollitt 1974, 9–111). Cicero (*Brut.* 70–71), for example, describes the formal development of sculpture and painting from the fifth to the fourth centuries BCE as a development toward increasing naturalism. Quintilian (*Inst.* 12.10.3–9) describes the same development but with more details and subtler distinctions. Cicero and Quintilian refer to art as a term of comparison in their essays about rhetoric, the art of speech. Their statements about art (they always name the artist) probably depended [\(p. 522\)](#) on Hellenistic authors. One of them was Xenocrates, who himself worked as a sculptor and wrote about different artistic genres.



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Fig. 23.2 Copy of Polyclitus's Diadoumenos of c. 430 BCE, from Delos. C. 100 BCE. Marble. Height 1.95 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 1826.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

Pliny (*HN* 35.56–150) describes the development of painting, in particular, as a series of inventions. In his opinion, a new invention in sculpture would be, for example, the “standing on one leg” attributed to the sculptor Polyclitus (Pliny, *HN* 34.56: *uno crure ut insisterent signa*). Polyclitus indeed perfected the contrapposto, the distinction between the weight-bearing leg and the free leg (figure 23.2). It seems to be a natural human desire to want to know who created an

object, especially when the object is an artifact. Therefore, ancient Greeks and Romans always tried to name the “inventor,” the *prōtos heuretēs*, of certain cultural

accomplishments. In the realm of architecture and visual arts, aside from formal or content-related inventions, brilliance in craft or technique or simply the fame that was connected to the artwork could also prompt people to ask who created it. The Aphrodite of Cnidus (figure 24.2), for instance, was revolutionary because it was the first depiction that showed the goddess completely naked. At the same time, it was a perfect masterpiece of marble sculpture. It was the combination of these two distinctions that resulted in the statue's fame along with its creator's fame. With it, Praxiteles also made the city of Cnidus appear more attractive (Pliny, *HN* 36.20–21).

(p. 523) Aside from the general interest in “inventors,” the name of the artist was the most important tool during Greek and Roman antiquity to judge art, to date it, and to define its place in history and art history. If, for example, on the Athenian Acropolis, old votive statues were reused in the Roman period to honor contemporary people, the original inscription was erased but not the artist's signature (Krumeich 2010). In the first century BCE, when Cicero argued against Verres, knowledge of the names of the most famous Greek artists had long been part of general education, even if Cicero acts as if Romans were not supposed to know about art (on Roman connoisseurship, see Jucker 1950). Therefore, a statue was easily forgotten when its creator was not known (Pliny, *HN* 34.93). When its artist's name was unclear, people tried to attribute a work to someone. Pliny (*HN* 36.27–29) gives a few examples and wonders how works of art raise interest even when their creators are unknown.

Roman Connoisseurs

Pausanias attributes two statues to Endoios and Canachus (Pausanias 7.5.9; 9.10.2), because in both cases, he recognizes the artists' hand or style, which he knew from works that were identified as theirs. He even presents a sort of art historical analysis in the case of the cult image of Heracles at Erythrae (Pausanias 7.5.5): the statue neither resembles the so-called Aeginetan style nor the older Attic one, and it is, therefore, without doubt Egyptian. Such a judgment is much more nuanced than the widespread and easily made distinction between Archaic (ancient) and post-Archaic works. According to Statius (*Silv.* IV 6.22–24), the connoisseur's eye recognizes the style (*ductus*) of ancient (*veteres*) artists and can therefore also attribute unsigned pieces to them (see also Philon, *De ebrietate* 89; *De specialibus legibus* 1.33; Athanasius, *Contra gentes* 35). Already in the first century BCE, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Dem.* 50) draws a parallel between the skills needed to identify sculptures by Polyclitus, Phidias, or Alcamenes and paintings by Polygnotus, Timanthes, or Parrhasius, which are skills acquired through the long

experience of viewing, and the skills needed to understand, for instance, the style of the orator Demosthenes, which are skills acquired over time through exhaustive studies.

Doubtful attributions were discussed, for example, in the cases of the cult images of the Nemesis of Rhamnus (Strabo 9.17 p. 396) or a statue of Hephaestus (Pliny, *HN* 34.64). Martial (9.44) derides himself as a connoisseur whose attribution is refuted by the artist's signature. If a clear attribution seemed impossible, there was only resignation (Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 4.47.41). According to Sextus Empiricus (*Adversus dogmaticos* 1.55–59), a safe judgment about art is generally impossible. However, not infrequently, works of art could be falsely connected with famous artists (Phaedrus, 5 prol. 4–10).

To the authors and connoisseurs of the Roman Imperial period, only Greek artists were of interest, and Roman artists were hardly ever mentioned (in general, on artists in Roman society, see Stewart 2008, 10–38; on the signatures of Roman artists, (p. 524) see Limentani 1958, 153–180). The reasons for this were the strong classicistic character of Roman culture and the opinion, best expressed by Virgil (*Aen.* 6.847–853), that the Romans were meant to govern, while the Greeks were superior in the visual arts. At the center of attention were the Greek artists of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Their fame began, according to literary sources, in their lifetimes and spanned all of Greek and Roman antiquity. At the same time, a different image of the artist survived. This image reaches back to the Archaic period, when the negatively valued figure of the craftsman/artist was seen as separate from his admirable works of art (Plutarch, *Per.* 2.1). Contrary to this, in writings by authors of the Roman Imperial period, the artist, especially the Greek artist of the Classical period, appears less as a craftsman and more as an individual with transcendental skills. Dio Chrysostomus (*Or.* 12.49), for example, writes that Phidias is divinely inspired (*daimonios*), whereas Callistratus (2.1) claims the same for artists in general and likens them to poets and writers. Thus, the artist's aura becomes independent from his work and focuses on his famous name.

Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages

Since the Hellenistic period, Greek sculptors and gem cutters signed with the name "Phidias," although it is quite unlikely that they were related to the artist of this name of the Classical period. Because interest in the details of Greek art history diminished more and more in the later Roman Imperial period, art knowledge was limited to the most famous names such as Phidias (no artist is mentioned more frequently in ancient literature; see Davison 2009, II: 657–1170), Praxiteles, and Apelles (in general, see Pekáry 2007; Mango 1963).

There was no longer a clear idea of the work of these and other artists, and eventually, it was possible to exchange names or to connect all kinds of artworks with famous names. For example, Apuleius (*Flor.* 7.4–5) lists among the artists who were allowed to portray Alexander the Great not Lysippus but rather Polyclitus, who lived one hundred years earlier. Ausonius (*Epigrams* 33) correctly names Phidias as the creator of the Athena Parthenos (figure 30.1) and of the Zeus at Olympia, yet at the same time, he also attributes a statue of Kairos (in Latin: Occasio) to him. He obviously mistook Phidias for Lysippus, for whom a statue of Kairos is well documented. Procopius (*Goth.* 4.21.12–14) saw several works by Phidias and Lysippus and also the statue of a calf by Myron in the Forum Pacis in Rome. Although a few statue bases with the names of Greek sculptors were found in the area of the Forum Pacis (La Rocca 2001), it remains doubtful whether the connections of individual works with artists' names are correct and whether, indeed, originals of the named artists stood on those bases. Similar Late Antique statue bases with the names of famous Classical sculptors (*OPUS POLYCLETI*, for example) were found in the area of the Basilica Julia on the Forum Romanum and at other places in Rome (*CIL* VI.2 nos. 10039–10043). Best known are the Late Antique—renewed in the sixteenth century—inscriptions *OPUS FIDIAE* and *OPUS PRAXITELIS* on the (p. 525) group of Dioscuri on the Quirinal in Rome (*CIL* VI.2 no. 10038) (Thielemann 1993; Geppert 1996). This group was always visible in Rome. Even though neither Phidias nor Praxiteles could have carved the two Dioscuri or their horses, the inscriptions made the names of these two artists well known also in the Middle Ages.

In medieval sources, we come across the names of Classical artists more often in the writings of Byzantine authors than in those of authors from western Europe (Greenhalgh 1984). However, in both cases, we are only dealing with the simple names of famous representatives of antiquity, without any real knowledge of their work. Photius (*Homiliae* 10 p. II 433 Aristarches), for example, praises the mosaic floor decorated with animal figures inside a church, stating that compared with the master of this mosaic, Phidias, Parrhasius, Praxiteles, and Zeuxis seem like apprentices. Along similar lines, Niketas Choniates, in an appendix to his historical work (*Chronike diegesis* pp. 856–868), describes works of art that were destroyed in the year 1204 on the occasion of the looting of Constantinople that took place during the Fourth Crusade. His allegorical descriptions are rich with anecdotes mentioning the name of an artist only in connection with a seated statue of Heracles, and this name is certainly wrong (Lysimachus instead of Lysippus).

Early Modern Times

A renewed interest in ancient artists began in the Early Renaissance (in general, see Beschi 1986; Sénéchal 1986; Pfisterer 1999 and 2002). Dante (*Purgatorio* 10.30–33) and Petrarch name Polyclitus, but they only use the name as a literary topos in order to emphasize the special quality of a work of art. The artists known from ancient literature—whose numbers were slowly growing because of the gradual availability of more ancient texts—appeared now as mythical figures, so to speak; they were included in the lists of famous men, and, more important, they became role models for Renaissance artists. To be regarded as a new Phidias (Thielemann 1996), a new Lysippus, or a new Apelles was extraordinary praise.

Beginning in the later fourteenth century, there was renewed interest in finding information about the lifetimes and careers of ancient artists in the literary tradition. Filarete (Antonio Averlino) has an extensive catalog of artists and inventors, including those of Greek antiquity with very short comments taken from ancient literature, in his *Trattato di architettura* (XIX fol. 151v–157r), which was written around 1461 to 1463. Filarete imagines all these figures as mural paintings adorning a hall that he designed as part of an ideal house for himself.

By this time, people also began to connect individual ancient works of art, or works regarded as ancient, with artists' names, most often Phidias and Polyclitus. These attributions are based on free associations alone if we leave aside signed gems and the Parthenon sculptures that Cyriacus of Ancona presented as Phidias's work in 1447. The first historically correct attribution of an ancient statue occurred in January 1506 (p. 526) in Rome, when Giuliano da Sangallo and Michelangelo identified the Laocoön group (figure 29.1), at the moment of its discovery, with the work of the Rhodian sculptors Hagesander, Polydorus, and Athanodorus mentioned by Pliny (*HN* 36.37) (Stewart 1990: 215–216; Settis, Maffei, and Rebaudo 1999). The Farnese Bull followed suit. It was discovered in 1545 and a few years later connected with the Dirce group reported by Pliny (*HN* 36.34) as the work of Apollonius and Tauriscus of Tralles. The Renaissance scholars, however, did not realize that the group from the Baths of Caracalla in Rome could not have been the original mentioned by Pliny (Rubino 1991; Kunze 1998).

The biographies of the Renaissance artists written by Giorgio Vasari and published in 1550 contributed significantly to the fact that for a long time, art history has been, above all, a history of artists. However, Vasari was skeptical when it came to extrapolating biographies of ancient artists from literary sources. Franciscus Junius took a different approach. His extensive catalog of ancient architects, engineers, and visual artists is

entirely based on literary sources, quoted in detail. This catalog appeared in 1694 posthumously as an appendix to Junius's essay *De pictura Veterum* (first published in 1637), a treatise on ancient painting, which was also based on ancient literary sources (see chapter 19 above).

Ancient signed gems, many of which are preserved, offered a particularly clear connection between work of art and artist (on the modern interest in ancient gems, see Zazoff and Zazoff 1983). The interest in them was so strong that both entire gems and their signatures alone were counterfeited. Philipp von Stosch, who himself collected gems, published in 1724 a comprehensive critical presentation of the gems bearing masters' signatures known at the time in Latin and French (*Gemmae antiquae caelatae sculptorum nominibus insignitae*), in which he tried to distinguish between authentic and fake pieces.

The first consistent attempt to write art history as a history of the development of artistic forms and not as a history of artists was the *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (*History of the Art of Antiquity*) (1764) by Johann Joachim Winckelmann (Borbein et al. 2002–2012; Winckelmann 2006; Pommier 1996). Winckelmann also mentions ancient artists but judges their work independently of their names. He states in his preface very clearly that the aim of his research was insight into the nature of art, on which the history of the artist would not have much of an impact ("the focus... is on the essence of art, on which the history of individual artists has little bearing").

The recognition that the majority of ancient ideal sculptures known in the eighteenth century were not Greek but rather Roman works, many of which are replicas of Greek originals, was and continues to be the most important premise for all attempts to identify the works of Greek masters known through literary sources. The two Jonathan Richardsons (father and son) led the way toward this realization (*Traité de la peinture, et de la sculpture I-III*, 1728) (Haberland 1991; Gibson-Wood 2000; Hofter 2005). In scholarship, the Richardsons' theory that many statues were replicas of varying quality of famous originals was accepted slowly. Winckelmann, who accepted the Richardsons' theory only reluctantly, identified a statue (of which several replicas exist) of a youth leaning against the trunk of a tree on which a lizard crawls with Praxiteles's Apollo (p. 527) Sauroctonus (Stewart 1990, 178–179), mentioned in Pliny (*HN* 34.70). Ancient literary descriptions, or the depictions of statues on coins, gems, or reliefs, led to further identifications over the course of the eighteenth century, which are still accepted today. Examples are Praxiteles's Cnidian Aphrodite (Stewart 1990, 177–178), already identified by Richardson, Myron's Discobolus (Stewart 1990, 148), identified by Carlo Fea in 1783, and Praxiteles's Resting Satyr (Stewart 1990, 179) (figure 23.3), Leochares's Ganymedes

(Stewart 1990, 282–284), and the Tyche of Antioch by Eutychides (Stewart 1990, 201–202), all identified by Ennio Quirino Visconti between 1782 and 1802.

There were long discussions prior to the purchase of the Parthenon sculptures, the Elgin Marbles, for the British Museum (Farinella and Panichi 2003; see chapter 18 above). The question was whether these sculptures could be connected with Phidias's name as the literary tradition suggested. The British Parliament opted for Phidias and the purchase, although this did not settle the debate about the attribution of the sculptures to Phidias. In fact, although the Parthenon sculptures are recognized today as masterpieces and a milestone in the history of ancient Greek art, there are still many varying opinions regarding the extent to which Phidias was actually involved in their creation and whether this master's own hand can be identified in them (Borbein 1989).

The Search for Masters in the Nineteenth Century



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Fig. 23.3 Copy of Praxiteles's Resting Satyr of c. 340 BCE, from Villa d'Este in Tivoli (Hadrian's Villa?). C. 120–140 CE. Marble. Height 1.705 m. Rome, Musei Capitolini inv. 739.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

A new era of research began with Heinrich Brunn's *History of Greek Artists* (*Geschichte der griechischen Künstler*, 1853–1859). Brunn collected the literary and epigraphic sources regarding ancient artists in great detail. His goal was to build up a history of ancient art on the basis of the factual and chronological information gathered from those sources, along with ancient judgments about art and artists. In this publication, the chronological sequence of works of art replaced the

alphabetical catalogs of artists found in earlier publications. In addition, the (then few)

securely attributed works were compared with the ancient literary sources, in the hope that the artworks would aid in the better understanding of the written sources and that the ancient written records would inform the opinions of modern stylistic judgment. The emphasis is on the written tradition, which was analyzed using the much-improved tools provided by classical philology and ancient history. The fact that, unlike with Winckelmann, the history of artists now formed the basis of art history is in accordance with the widespread aesthetic of the genius particularly formulated by Kant (*Critique of Judgment* § 46: “Fine art is the art of genius”). This approach also led Brunn to present a distinct hierarchy among individual artists and, contrary to the views prevailing in Greek and Roman antiquity and the idea of Winckelmann himself, a sharp separation between art and craft. As a result, sculpture and panel painting are treated as the only significant media with an impact on the development of ancient Greek art. Not by chance, Brunn outlines only these two genres (p. 528) (p. 529) in detail and according to a chronological order, while for the “minor arts” and architecture, he limits himself to resorting to the traditional alphabetical catalogs of artists. The fact that the study of Greek and Roman art was in the following years mostly interested in “great” art, especially sculpture, can be explained by the philosophically founded contempt toward the “minor arts.”

Positivism, which defined science in the late nineteenth century, also led to new methods in the attribution of works of art to ancient artists. The point of departure was a collection as comprehensive as possible of preserved artworks of all genres. The new medium of photography made the documentation easier while at the same time guaranteeing a relatively objective form of reproduction. A new method (named after its author) developed by the physician and art historian Giovanni Morelli (1816–1891) was supposed to provide an objective basis for the identification of an individual artist’s style (see Ginzburg 1983). Morelli recognized indications of an artist’s characteristics in the small details of, for instance, the ears, nose, eyes, fingers, or folds. According to Morelli, these superficial details are part of the unconscious artistic routine. Therefore, they hardly ever change and constitute distinctive features—like one’s handwriting—regardless of the subject or format of the artwork. The method of comparing formal details had been common for a long time. Morelli radicalized it while limiting its purpose to the identification of the artist.

The progress made in cataloging preserved monuments and their related photographic documentation was the precondition for Adolf Furtwängler’s attempt to gain more specific knowledge of the work of the famous Greek sculptors of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. While Brunn had focused on the critical reevaluation of literary sources, Furtwängler now focused on the Roman copies, which he assumed would only reproduce, more or less faithfully, the *opera nobilia* of the Classical masters. In his influential book *Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture* (1893), Furtwängler placed works that he believed were

of the same style, or at least quite similar, side-by-side with the ones that had been attributed with relative certainty to an artist, thus broadening the oeuvres of the respective artists. He then examined whether the newly attributed works could also be connected to works mentioned by ancient literary sources. This venture was quite elaborate, and the specific stylistic comparisons were often quite associative and strongly influenced by subjective perception. However, when we are dealing with copies, it is quite difficult to follow Morelli's method, because it is impossible to determine whether details of the ears, hands, or clothes are to be attributed to the creator of the original or to the sculptor responsible for the copy.

New Discoveries

We must decide on a case-by-case basis to what extent the original Greek sculptures that have been found in growing numbers since the late nineteenth century can help us adjust our concepts about lost masterpieces that are mentioned by Roman authors. (p. 530)

Furtwängler deemed the originals known to him as products not of art but rather of craft. This assessment, which is historically incorrect in its assumption of a separation between art and craft, has also been proven wrong by time. Especially today, newly discovered originals provide us with fresh knowledge about Greek masters. Agoracritus's cult image of the Nemesis of Rhamnus (Pliny, *HN* 36.17; Strabo 9.1.17 p. 396) was recognized in copies that are almost completely preserved after corresponding fragments of the original were found in the excavation of the temple of the goddess (Despinis 1971 and 1994a; Stewart 1990, 165). Another example is a head in the Acropolis Museum in Athens: when the circumstances of its discovery were reconstructed, it became clear that it may well be the head of the Artemis Brauronia by Praxiteles (Pausanias 1.23.7; Despinis 1994b). However, a proper assessment of original sculptures remains difficult. For instance, one suspects that the Hermes by Praxiteles, which was found in Olympia precisely where Pausanias saw it (5.17.3), is actually a copy (Stewart 1990, 177, 198). On a different note, the two bronze statues that were found in the sea near Riace, which are originals from the fifth century BCE, have been connected with the names of different masters without any kind of verification (Arias et al. 1984; Stewart 1990, 147–148).

Greek and Roman Painters

The mural—and panel—paintings of the Greeks are almost completely lost. Attempts to identify at least some of the creations by painters such as Polygnotus, Parrhasius, or

Apelles, praised and described in ancient literature, in copies have not been successful. Many murals from the Vesuvian cities reflect parts or individual figures from earlier Greek paintings, but they do not represent accurate copies (on Greek painting and the problem of Roman copies, see Lippold 1951; Bianchi Bandinelli 1965; Scheibler 1994; Blanckenhagen 1963 and 1968). The models have been changed in order to conform to Roman principles of composition. Only the Alexander Mosaic from Pompeii may be regarded as a relatively reliable copy of a Greek painting from the later fourth century BCE, namely, the *Battle of Alexander the Great and Darius* (Pliny, *HN* 35.110) by Philoxenus of Eretria (Stewart 1993, 130–150; Cohen 1997; Andreae 2003, 63–77).

Only a few names of Roman painters are preserved in the literary tradition. Some examples are Gaius Fabius Pictor, who painted the Temple of Salus in Rome in 304 BCE (Pliny, *HN* 35.19); Studius (Ludius), who invented a particular landscape genre during the time of the emperor Augustus (Pliny, *HN* 35.116–117); and Famulus (Fabullus), who worked in Nero's Domus Aurea (Pliny, *HN* 35.120). Fabius Pictor was part of the Roman aristocracy; Famulus must have been a free Roman citizen, because he used to wear the toga while painting. A few signatures of Roman painters are also preserved. However, detailed knowledge of the work of these artists and craftsmen cannot be derived from the written and epigraphic sources.

In opposition to the idea that the anonymous painters of the Pompeian murals were mere copyists of Greek models, believing instead that they were independent artists, the attempt was made to distinguish various "hands" with the help of Morelli's method (p. 531) or other criteria (Richardson 1955; Ragghianti 1963). However, the different oeuvres of mural painters that were put together this way have remained controversial and do not play an important role in the research on Pompeian painting. It may be possible to recognize several artists' hands in the decoration of a house, but it is still difficult to determine an artist's personal style; this is because the work of the Pompeian mural painters was strongly influenced by the characteristics of the workshop and by the reproduction of models, so that individuals could hardly express themselves in a unique way. Morelli's method aims at an artist's individuality and therefore can find limited application here.

Greek Architects

Thanks to Vitruvius in particular, the names and works of famous Greek architects were already known in the Renaissance. However, only the records of travelers in the eighteenth century and the excavations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have

made it possible to connect the names of some ancient architects with more or less well-preserved buildings (in general, see Svenson-Evers 1996; see chapter 6 above).

Of some of these architects, several buildings are mentioned by literary sources and still preserved (see in general Dinsmoor 1950; Lawrence 1996; Gruben 2001): these include Ictinus (the Parthenon, the Telesterion at Eleusis, the Temple of Apollo at Bassae), Pytheus (the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Temple of Athena at Priene), and Hermogenes (the Temple of Dionysus at Teos, the Temple of Artemis Leucophryene at Magnesia) (Hoepfner and Schwandner 1990) and also Apollodorus of Damascus (buildings for Trajan in Rome). Occasionally, it has been attempted to identify the characteristics of an architect in various monuments, using them as a basis for further attribution.

Even to anonymous architects such as the one responsible for the Hephaesteum (earlier known as the Theseum) in the Athenian Agora (built in the second half of the fifth century BCE), the Temple of Ares in the Athenian Agora, the Temple of Poseidon at Sunium, and the Temple of Nemesis at Rhamnus have been attributed (William Bell Dinsmoor: the "Theseum architect"; *contra* see Miles 1989, 239–242). However, when we are dealing with a complex structure like a Greek temple, it is even harder to attribute it to an individual than in the case of statues. Therefore, speculation must rule here.

Vase Painters: The Beazley Method



Click to view larger

Fig. 23.4 Attic red-figure amphora attributed to the Berlin Painter (name vase), from Vulci. Silen, Hermes, and deer. C. 480 BCE. Ceramic. Height 81.5 cm. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung inv. F 2160.

(Photograph by Johannes Laurentius © Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung/Art Resource, New York, ART179536.)

Beginning in the early twentieth century, John D. Beazley (1885–1970) consistently and successfully refined Giovanni Morelli’s method to identify Italian Renaissance painters, developing a system for the classification of Greek, especially Attic, painted pottery (Attic vase painters: Beazley 1956 [ABV], 1963 [ARV²], 1971; Etruscan vase painters: Beazley 1947). Thanks to his lifelong efforts, Beazley was the first to provide a clear, (p. 532) comprehensive understanding of the enormous number of Attic black- and red-figure vases

(Kurtz 1985; Bothmer 1987). Like Morelli, he interpreted small details of the face, the limbs, the clothes, and the ornaments as characteristic features of individual painters and then attributed all the vases that exhibited these details to a specific painter. Only a few painters can be named after their signatures (e.g., Euphronios), while others can be named after the signatures of the potters for whom they worked (e.g., the Amasis Painter). Most of them, however, receive conventional names (e.g., the Berlin Painter, figure 23.4, (p. 533) after the location of one of his works). The aim here, as in Morelli’s case, is to identify the individual artist. However, Beazley also records different degrees of artistic quality, by distinguishing between master and pupil, workshops (where “workshop” does not necessarily refer to an economic or organizational unit), and, finally, painters who worked in the style of a master. Out of these differentiations emerges a system of competing or successive workshops run by leading masters, their students and imitators, and a relative chronology. Among the approximately fifteen hundred Attic vase

painters Beazley has identified, a few artists such as Exekias, Euphronios, and the Meidias Painter stand out. These artists appear to have driven the development of vase painting, and although their biographies remain unknown, they seem recognizable as individuals.

However, because there are often great differences in artistic quality in the oeuvre of a single vase painter and also in the products of a workshop, and because the boundaries between the so-called masters and pupils or between workshops are fluid, more recent scholarship has started questioning whether Beazley's idealistic approach really does justice to the high complexity of the phenomenon under investigation (Robertson 1999, 2-6; Neer 1997; Hoffmann 2011). If we look at the vase painters in the context of the workshops in the Ceramicus in Athens, it becomes difficult to define them as individuals, as personalities. In order to develop his system, Beazley used the example of Attic vase production from the sixth to the fourth centuries BCE. This production was characterized by strong competition and rapid development in all branches of the visual arts. This correlated with a society that was also greatly characterized by competition and change. But one just needs to consider South Italy (whose red-figure production was systematically analyzed by Arthur D. Trendall, in keeping with Beazley's method; Trendall and Cambitoglou 1967; Trendall and Cambitoglou 1978-1982; Trendall 1987), where the social situation was different, to realize that a clear distinction between vase painters' oeuvres is even more problematic there than in Athens.

The methodology developed by Morelli and Beazley has also been applied to other types of ceramics (e.g., Corinthian [Amyx 1988] and Etruscan vases along with Roman *terra sigillata* [Dragendorff 1948]) and has also been used for the classification of Cycladic idols (Getz-Preziosi 1987; Cherry 1992; Mertens 2005) and Etruscan urns (Massa-Pairault 1985). When not stretched too thin and misused to identify artistic personalities in the modern sense, this approach remains an important tool to order the large number of decorated artifacts. However, this order remains first and foremost a superficial one; it must be complemented by a historical interpretation of both form and subject.

The Problems in the Search for Masters after Furtwängler

The question of the artist, or the "master," has been asked for the longest time and in the most intensive way in reference to ancient sculpture (for recent research, see Wascheck (p. 534) 1996; Palagia and Pollitt 1996; Strocka 2005; Marconi 2010). This is because it is

only for this medium that we have at our disposal a rich literary tradition, which corresponds to an equally rich monumental record. Many of the identifications of “masterpieces” by Greek sculptors that were proposed between the sixteenth and the late nineteenth centuries have stood the test of later scholarship. However, after Furtwängler had led the search for masters in the study of ancient Greek art to a peak, very few breakthroughs followed in this area of study. In truth, efforts at retrieving works by ancient masters were not abandoned, but new methods of research in that regard were simply not developed. Great achievements, on the other hand, were made regarding the assessment and dating of Roman copies (Lippold 1923; Zanker 1974; Ridgway 1984; Gasparri 1994; Cain 1998; Gazda 2002; Mattusch 2002; Hallett 2005; Junker and Stähli 2008). Since the so-called copies were also considered independent works of Roman ideal sculpture, skepticism grew about reconstructing Greek originals with the help of Roman statues.

Furthermore, since the early twentieth century, the interest of Greek and Roman archaeologists and art historians has increasingly focused on developments beyond the individual in the visual arts and on an art history without names. It also seemed problematic that traditional research on masters concentrated on the artists of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, at the risk of adopting the classicistic prejudice of written sources. The few, more recent attempts to describe the history of Greek sculpture of at least the fifth and fourth centuries BCE as a sequence of oeuvres of great masters (e.g., Picard 1935–1966; Todisco 1993) show how far removed the research on masters is from the rest of scholarship on ancient art. In other accounts (e.g., Robertson 1975; Stewart 1990), the reconstructed oeuvres of sculptors stand like erratic blocks nearly unconnected from the general flow of development of the visual arts. For research concerned with Hellenistic sculptures, the connection of individual works with the few written names recorded also by literary sources plays only a minor role.

However, one thing is certain: it is the artists who create art. The Greek sculptors certainly weren't regarded as geniuses in the modern sense, and they did not understand themselves as such. But they were individuals who, depending on their skills, strove to find solutions for the tasks they faced. Many of them followed established traditions and conventions or the trends of their times; others, however, successfully tried to create something new, in terms of technique or artistic conception, thus refining traditions. The majority of these sculptors, who stood out as pioneers of art history, remain anonymous for us today. One example is the “inventor” of the contrapposto, who presumably worked around 500 BCE in Athens. However, the sculptors who became famous during antiquity and whose names and works were handed down by the literary tradition are most likely part of this group.

To correlate the written with the archaeological record still remains the most important task in the search for masters. In that regard, it is not sufficient to connect a preserved ancient sculpture only with a sculptor's name, especially not if this connection remains hypothetical or is based only on the subjective impression of a self-proclaimed connoisseur. One example is the sculpture of Leda and the Swan, which is commonly attributed to Timotheus and which was often copied but never mentioned by literary sources (Rieche 1978 and 2008). The sculpture was attributed to this artist based (p. 535) on the stylistic similarity of some copies to the sculptures of the Temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus. But it remains problematic to compare Roman copies directly with Greek originals, and we also do not know to what extent Timotheus, who is mentioned in the building's accounts, was involved in the work on the temple.

Only after we obtain further information about the sculptor, or about the occasion or place of installation of his work, can we place a sculpture in a historical and art historical context and finally understand it as part of an oeuvre. Attributing other sculptures to the same artist based on stylistic and thematic similarities with works already identified as being from the same hand presents numerous problems. Because such attributions are usually based on Roman copies, there is a risk that the observed stylistic similarities apply to the copies and not the copied originals. Furthermore, some reconstructions of the oeuvres of individual artists are based on the unverified, even unlikely, assumption that the sculptor never changed his style or his preference for certain motifs. Thus, two statues that are preserved through several Roman copies that seem related to Polyclitus's work, the Sciarra Amazon (Stewart 1990, 162-163) and the "Westmacott Boy" (Stewart 1990, 162), are differently assessed. Because both of them do not realize the *contrapposto* in the same manner as Polyclitus's Doryphorus (Stewart 1990, 160-162) (figure 29.2), some researchers do not see them as part of Polyclitus's oeuvre. Others, however, see a characteristic tendency of the master to refine his concepts in this divergence from the canon set by the Doryphorus. The Apoxyomenos (Stewart 1990, 187) and the Farnese Heracles (Stewart 1990, 190), two statues that, for good reasons, have been attributed to Lysippus, show how vast the differences could be in the depiction of the human body within one oeuvre.

Just as the "hands" of individual painters can be differentiated on Attic vases with the help of Morelli's method, one can identify the "hands" of individual sculptors of Archaic sculptures or the Parthenon Frieze. But an artist only acquires a distinct profile for us if we can find more information about him in written records. For this reason, our possibilities are limited to reconstructing oeuvres that show the sculptor not only as representative of a period's style but also, along with his "signature," his specific contribution to the development of art history. Lysippus supposedly created fifteen hundred works of art altogether (Pliny, *HN* 34.37). This perhaps fantastic number

reminds us that only a fraction of the works of ancient artists are preserved in written sources, and even fewer are to be found in the archaeological record. On the other hand, the assumption of an extensive oeuvre does not allow us to attribute, for example, all the heads exhibiting a “Praxitelian” style to the master himself. However, despite necessary skepticism, we can recognize a few Greek sculptors as important key figures and some of their works as unique creations, and we can define their place in art history: Polyclitus, who established a canon (Beck et al. 1990; Borbein 1996); Phidias, who directed work on the Parthenon (Borbein 1989); Praxiteles, the creator of a new ideal of divine images (Pasquier and Martinez 2007); Lysippus, the artist also interested in theory who worked in the circle of Alexander the Great (Moreno 1995). All of them are examples of research that is concerned with the works and influence of Greek masters—research that can be, despite necessary hypotheses, meaningful and productive (Borbein 2005).

Translated from the German by Deike Benjoya and Clemente Marconi.

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Formal Approaches

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the approaches employed in the formal analysis of the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It begins with a discussion of the traditional stylistic approach in art history, its distinctive features and influence, and its critics and advocates. It then turns to the idea of style in a work of art, along with its functions. Finally, the chapter asks whether the focus on artistic form and style can still be considered a worthy scholarly pursuit.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, art history, form, formal analysis, style, stylistic approach

The term “style” derives from the Latin word *stilus* (the writing instrument—stylus—consisting of a small rod with a pointed end for scratching letters on wax-covered tablets), and since the early fifteenth century, it has been used in the figurative sense to denote a characteristic manner of literary and rhetorical expression (*modus scribendi et dicendi*) (for the history of the term and its meaning in relation to art history, see Schapiro 1953; Gombrich 1968; Sauerländer 1983). The introduction of the term into the realm of art history is largely thanks to Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1755), who, in his *History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764), was the first to use the succession of different styles or systems of forms as the foundation for a systematic presentation of ancient art, establishing a new standard for art historical analysis (Winckelmann 1968 and 2002). Ever since, for art historians, “style” has denoted the sum of all the formal attributes of an image.

The term “style” implies that the individual formal attributes of an image are all connected with one another. In other words, the image is a coherent unity, shaped by a deeper principle to which each individual formal attribute owes its material form. Returning to the etymology of the word “style,” it is possible to find a parallel with an

individual's handwriting: the form of each of the different letters follows the particular, personal manner of its author.

The term "style" need not be limited to an individual object but can also be applied to the characteristic formal attributes of an artists' oeuvre (personal style) (see, e.g., Palagia and Pollitt 1996), to a larger group of works or an artistic genre (genre style), or, finally, to a specific period of time (period, or epoch style). The term can be applied to nearly the entire spectrum of artifacts, from simple utilitarian objects, such as plain pottery (for the formal evolution of plain pottery, see, e.g., Sparkes and Talcott 1970), to more elaborate works of art.

Observations on style and formal development still represent, alongside typological criteria, an essential basis for our classification and dating systems. However, in spite of its undisputed heuristic value, the role of stylistic analysis has been contested in more recent scholarship.

(p. 542) Like any scientific discipline, the study of ancient Greek and Roman art has opened itself over the years to new interests and questions. These different research objectives have brought with them different methodologies and the preference for particular issues. In recent decades, the study of ancient images has focused primarily on subject matter, in an effort to interpret themes from a cultural-historical perspective. From that point of view, the research issues have shifted in correlation to the dominant discourses of contemporary culture. Thus, beginning in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, scholars began to address the imagery of Greek and Roman art from a sociohistorical perspective (see chapter 26 below); research on Greek slavery (e.g., Himmelmann 1971; Zanker 1975; Laubscher 1982), the representation of the "Other" or minorities, or messages concerning specific social classes in various media came to the fore (e.g., the discussion on *arte popolare*: Bianchi Bandinelli 1967; Bianchi Bandinelli 1970, 51–106; Bianchi Bandinelli 1966; Zimmer 1982, 89–91). In the 1980s, a period characterized by a particular concern for social status, the emphasis of research was on themes of self-representation and of public and political representation, particularly regarding Roman culture (e.g., Zanker 1988; Hesberg and Zanker 1987; Giuliani 1986; in general, on this line of research, see Bergmann 2000). Finally, in the 1990s, Greek culture came back to the center of discussion: under predominantly anthropological points of view, attention turned increasingly toward themes of private life, rather than the public and political realm (on this trend, see Morris 1994, 40–41; Hölscher 1998a, 5; see chapter 28 below). Research was conducted on the role of the family, the relationships between genders, and the understanding of age differences (on gender studies, see Boymel Kampen 2000 and chapter 27 below). In the same context, there was a resurgence of interest in the seemingly irrational, atavistic elements of cultural life,

with questions about Greek religion, cult, ritual, and initiation (on the renewed interest for religion in more recent scholarship, see Baudy 1995; for a particular interest in the irrational and—in keeping with W. Burkert’s ideas—atavistic elements of Greek religion, see, e.g., Frontisi-Ducroux 1991; Moreau 1992; Graf 1996). Beginning at the end of the 1990s, scholarship—under increasing pressure to find external funding—began concentrating more and more on excavations and on the comparative analysis of archaeological contexts (for the emphasis on landscape and settlement archaeology in the past fifteen years, see, e.g., Wiseman and Zachos 2003; Radt 2006). Within this context, the individual work of art, with its specific message and form—which remains central to its display in museums—has receded into the background.

As Bianchi Bandinelli noted presciently in 1970 (Bianchi Bandinelli 1981, 125–150), within this roughly sketched development in the study of Greek and Roman art, there is one big loser, namely, the interest in artistic forms and their interpretation, which was now considered in many circles to be hopelessly outdated or the idle play of a restricted circle of specialists (on criticism of stylistic analysis in more recent scholarship, see Borbein 2000, 113–114; on the primacy of iconological analysis in recent decades, see Hölscher 1995, 213–220; see also chapters 25 and 30 below). Many have explicitly presented the turn toward interpretation of subject matter initiated in the 1960s as a reaction directed against the traditional stylistic approach, which until that time had played (p. 543) a leading role, particularly in German universities. In order to understand this opposition, and its underlying assumptions, it is necessary to dwell briefly on that approach, including its distinctive features and influence.

Stylistic Approach and Greek and Roman Art: Advocates and Critics

Heinrich Wölfflin and Alois Riegl can be regarded as the two main founders of the stylistic approach in art history. Working at the beginning of the twentieth century, these two scholars introduced a new form of analysis for works of art, which enjoyed immediate success. Linked with contemporary tendencies in the visual arts—particularly the emphasis on the autonomy of artistic form—this new approach also had strategic epistemological implications. The latter apply in particular to art history, which was still not an established field of study in higher education but was soon to become one. Wölfflin and Riegl regarded artistic form as independent from both the subject matter and the function of works of art and as an autonomous cultural expression, which they sought to describe and interpret through its historical changes. As such, artistic form was

considered—and this was the goal of the proposed analysis—as the expression of a specific type of viewing, of a time-specific way of processing sensory data, and, translated in metaphorical terms, as an expression of a changing worldview. This is the rationale for Riegl’s progress-oriented model of development from tactile to optical, but also—mediated by criteria of artistic quality—for Wölfflin’s principles of art history, with their cyclical process of development from linear to painterly (on Wölfflin, see Lurz 1981; Hart 1981; Büchsel 1995; on Riegl and his influence on the study of Greek and Roman art, see Bianchi Bandinelli 1965; Borbein 1995a, 208–212; Elsner 2006). With its focus on pure form, this new approach provided art history, and also classical archaeology, with an independent research subject and a competence uniquely its own, which gave renewed—new in the case of art history—legitimacy to their establishment as full-fledged scientific disciplines.

Ironically, precisely this aspect of the field led to regrettable consequences in the following years, because archaeology, in its concentration on artistic forms, began to seclude itself from the other disciplines of classical scholarship, gradually losing sight of the larger cultural-historical context, of which the visual arts are just one part (see Bianchi Bandinelli 1981, 121–123; Borbein 1995a, 221–228). As a reaction to this came the tendency of the recent decades to push for larger, cultural-historical questions in order to fill the gap with the neighboring disciplines, including, first and foremost, ancient history. Another point of criticism of traditional stylistic analysis concerned the lack of a satisfactory answer to the question of how artistic form, taken as an absolute form, detached from any thematic implication, would allow any move beyond simple observation of its change, in the direction of historical interpretation.

(p. 544) Soon the necessity was felt of moving beyond the original interpretation of form as the expression of a particular stage of development in viewing or knowledge, taking into account psychology and the aesthetics of perception. The result of this process was the use of terms that became increasingly abstract and generic—such as the particular “spatial behavior” of sculpture or the “tectonic disposition” of Doric art—but could seemingly be related, in a metaphoric and associative sense, to other fields of cultural studies. Yet in essence, these metaphorical and associative shortcuts in terminology only contributed to hinder a methodologically feasible and viable interpretive process, which could provide for a historical understanding of artistic form, correlating it with phenomena from other areas of cultural production (on the so-called *Strukturforschung*, see Borbein 1972; Borbein 1995a, 221–242; Wimmer 1997).

These criticisms of traditional formal analysis are by no means unjustified, yet today, a generation later, it is worth looking back to raise the question of whether the neglect of stylistic questions does not have its own shortfalls and whether, considering current

trends, there are risks involved in forsaking form as a source of historical knowledge. In fact, the symptoms of a crisis that has emerged in recent years can hardly be overlooked.

A case in point is anthropological approaches to the study of the imagery of Attic vases, in which significant shifts in style such as the one from the Archaic into the Classical period are largely ignored (see, e.g., Bérard et al. 1989; in general, on anthropological approaches, see Lissarrague and Schnapp 2000, 376–381, and chapter 28 below). Increasingly often, we read of Greek culture and life, or Greek religion, taken as a general concept, without any further historical qualification, with the odd consequence that one of the most significant characteristics of Greek culture from the cross-cultural perspective, namely, the remarkable dynamism of its development, is hardly taken into account. Yet in this regard, it is noteworthy that this dynamic development becomes evident and easy to detect at the level of formal changes.

In more recent scholarship, stylistic forms and artistic conventions have also been increasingly considered a bothersome filter, whose “code” needs to be “deciphered,” in order to recognize the true life of the ancient Greeks (see the application of this model of analysis to the study of Greek vase painting in Bérard et al. 1989; in general, on semiotic approaches to the study of Greek and Roman art, see Schneider, Fehr, and Meyer 1979; Hölscher 2000, 160–165; see also chapter 30 below). As a result, in the literature on Greek and Roman art, there is an increasing tendency to use works of art as simple illustrations, for activities that are otherwise interpreted on the basis of literary sources. In spite of differences in language and approach, much current scholarship exhibits disconcerting similarities with cultural-historical research of the late nineteenth century, such as the great narratives about “Ancient Life and Manners” by Friedländer (1865–1871) and Licht (1925–1928).

These shortcomings become particularly evident in the case of attempts at interpreting the styles of particular periods in terms of their content, connecting them with real life. Thus, for example, the style of the High Classical period, with its characteristic restraint of violent actions and emotions, along with realistic traits, has often been connected in recent years with the well-known passage in Plutarch about the emotionally (p. 545) subdued appearance of Pericles (Hölscher 1975; Hölscher 1992, 480; Hölscher 2000, 155–156; on this line of interpretation, see Hölscher 1971, 36–42; Fehr 1979; Zanker 1995, 29–38). Based on this ancient source, the style of the art of this period has been considered as the expression of a specific, contemporary ideal of behavior. Be that as it may, what is striking about this line of interpretation is the potential danger of taking such literary references as viable explanations: style as the reflection of lived reality. Within this context, the historically relevant questions are not even asked, let alone answered—namely, why this behavior became an ideal, what was the motivating factor,

and with which values it was associated. The realities of ancient life, no longer to be observed, cannot be of help here. The interpretation can be pursued only on the basis of the visual arts. Only here can one observe how this ideal, coagulated into a style, concretely developed, with which subject matter and themes it was connected, and which new contents it introduced.

In recent years, in defense of stylistic approaches, it has been noted in various quarters that formal analysis remains an indispensable tool for dating by archaeologists and one that is used on a daily basis, regardless of whether one explicitly admits it or not (so, e.g., Borbein 2000, 114–120). It would be hard to disagree with this argument, which is, however, not precisely pertinent to the problem at issue here. The construction of stylistic series for the purpose of dating is linked with the interpretation of artistic forms, but it serves a different purpose and even runs against it on crucial matters (on the concept of stylistic series and its implications see Himmelmann 1960, 13–40; Borbein 2000, 117–120). In fact, in order to be an easily comprehensible and widely usable dating instrument, stylistic series generally limit themselves to a selected number of criteria, choosing them so that as many objects as possible, including small fragments, can be included. Within the study of sculpture, this has led to a particular focus on the configuration of minute details and surface rendering, approaching works as if with a microscope. This problem, less noticeable in its application to the development of particular vase shapes (see, e.g., Schleiffenbaum 1991), becomes particularly important in relation to more complex formal systems, such as sculpture, where it results in a serious reduction of the interpretive potential. See, for example, the effort at dating Hellenistic sculptures using the changing relationship between bone structure and flesh or body and garment as the main criterion (Vorster 1983, 89–248; Niemeier 1985, 19–88; Hoff 1994; *contra* see Steinbruckner 1986, 23–24; see also the characterization of the Severe Style based on single formal features proposed by Stewart 2008, 377–378). However, for a historical understanding of artistic form, a statue preserved in its entirety and associated with an archaeological context offers a far richer wealth of significant information than any fragment of a draped figure—information that is necessary, considering that stylistic judgment is always based on the overall context of formal characteristics.

A further complication arises from the natural tendency associated with stylistic series to present formal developments as a gradual, continuously progressive process. However, the main formal revolutions in the history of Greek art do not conform in any way to this model of organic growth but rather represent profound upheavals within relatively short periods of time, accompanied by various waves of experimentation and (p. 546) followed by calmer periods of application of the new, dominant artistic concepts, a form of

development that can be best described in the terms of Thomas Kuhn's proposed model of paradigm shift (Kuhn 1970, especially 35–51, 111–135).

By its very nature, the construction of evenly developing stylistic series is also blind to a second phenomenon, which represents an important and rewarding field of observation for the historical interpretation of formal processes, namely, the coexistence of different formal systems at the same time. This observation opens up the possibility of following the emergence of new stylistic forms from a discourse of competing systems. It seems clear that the formal languages of different periods, as regards their homogeneity and development, can find different expressions and that these differences are naturally of critical importance for a historical interpretation of "style" (for the different dynamism of development in different periods and cultures, see Hölscher 1988, 130–133; for the temporal coexistence of different stylistic forms, see Hölscher 2004, 10–22, 58–85; Leibundgut 1991). This much can be said so far about the conflicting relationship between formal analysis for the purpose of dating and stylistic interpretation.

The development of Greek art demonstrates that style is an extremely sensitive indicator of historical changes. In antiquity, all the major stylistic upheavals took place at times in which one can also observe profound changes in other areas of human activity. Furthermore, these upheavals, as noted before, are often easier to follow at the formal level than at the level of subject matter and themes. A connection between style and other historical phenomena, therefore, cannot be denied, and as such, it should also be subject to interpretation.

A critical shortcoming of earlier stylistic analysis was its absolute approach to form, dealt with independently from subject matter and theme and from the function, use, and display conditions of the works of art. Yet function (defined by Hölscher 1992, 465–478, as a comprehensive concept embracing the full range of external relationships of a work of art and its subject matter) and placement are also central parameters for the interpretation of artistic form, and the same goes for theme and subject matter, which are made visible through this form.

A Reconsideration of the Notion of Style

In light of all this, one could tentatively define style as the sum of all formal decisions, which contribute to the appearance of a work of art as it is. It is also significant that these decisions are interconnected, constituting a system. Style, then, is like a specific chart of these decisions. It is critical here to consider a multiplicity of decisions, not one single active agent, of which style would be the expression—be it a specific mode of

viewing or knowledge (as in Riegl) or a psychological disposition and a particular existential experience (as in Pollitt 1972); on the contrary, style should be regarded as the result of (p. 547) a variety of factors, coming from different areas of human activity (see Hölscher 1992, 476–477; Conkey and Hastorf 1990). The time style or period style can thus be defined as the sum of the formal decisions, which the works of art of a given period have in common, or in which these decisions recur in similar forms and also distinguish themselves from earlier and from more recent manifestations. Critical for this definition of style is the fact that we are dealing with decisions. Artistic form is not the product of nature, but it is something created, crafted, and, like all historical products, directed by specific, time-related intentions and interests—and here it is initially indifferent to whether the producers or the contemporary public consciously reflect on such intentions or instead follow unconscious inclinations.

How, then, can one interpret form on the basis of its underlying intentions? It is necessary to use a model that in principle appears very simple but which is, in fact, extremely complex in its practical application. This model could be formulated, in the manner of Wittgenstein, as follows: the meaning of an artistic form is defined by the use that one makes of it (see Wittgenstein's concept of "Use"; Kenny 1973, 182–191). "Use" is, of course, an ambiguous term, which includes all the potential relationships that the artistic form can entertain. Here I will address only the most important of such relationships.

An important and very fruitful field concerns the communicative potential of an artistic language. It is evident that a change in the form of a message also results in a change in what is or can be said. The form of a message is thus not neutral in its meaning, but it is linked with specific tendencies in the realm of subject matter and themes, which can find a better and more fitting expression through that particular form. As a result, certain themes and subjects can take on a new meaning, others can lose their meaning, and finally, other themes can be, by using a new form of expression, cast in a new light and interpreted in a different way. To mention only a simple example, in the early stages of the Severe Style, as a result of the discovery of the contrapposto, an intensive experimentation with figures that exhibit strong movements, and in clearly defined situations, takes place: in contrast with the statues of youths of the Archaic period, which are primarily characterized by their attributes, the figures of the Severe Style emphatically express their power before the viewer and, when grouped, enter into a dialogue with one another (see, e.g., Myron's *Diskobolos*, figure 24.1: Rausa 1994, 102–103, 173–177 no. 4, figs. 3–4; or a series of torsos from Delos in strong movement, Hermary 1984, 8–19 nos. 5, 7–8, pls. 8.1–3, 9.5, 10, 1–3; see Kunze 2002, 135–136, 178–180). For the artists of the period, this opened up new possibilities for communication, which went way beyond the horizon of the earlier, Archaic period (on the new

possibilities for visual representation associated with the Early Classical style, in the specific case of the East pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, see Kyrieleis 1997, 12–27; on Early Classical statuary groups, see also Bumke 2004, 129–185).



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Fig. 24.1 Copy of Myron's Diskobolos of ca. 450 BCE ("Discobolo Lancellotti"), from Rome. C. 140 CE. Marble. Height 1.55 m. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano inv. 126371.

(Photograph © Hirmer.)

Another important role of style concerns its representational or mimetic function. Here, too, it is evident that each new system of forms will lay emphasis on some specific features of a represented object, such as the human body, while understating others. A particular style always involves a particular selection of traits that are regarded as significant from the representational point of view; selection is nothing other than an (p. 548) appraisal, a feature of content that can be concretely described.

Therefore, the body of an Archaic kouros can be compared with that of an Early Classical statue of a youth and be analyzed in terms of their respective differences in forms of representation (see Borbein 1995b, 241–289; Hölscher 1998a, 30–39).



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Fig. 24.2 Copy of Praxiteles's Cnidian Aphrodite of ca. 360 BCE, formerly in Palazzo Colonna. C. 50 CE. Marble. Height 2.04 m. Rome, Musei Vaticani inv. 812.

(Photograph © Hirmer.)

A third and more sensitive area, methodologically speaking, is the aesthetic dimension of artistic form. Through artistic creation, a represented subject receives a specific form of perceptual reference. It is a historical fact that different periods have regarded different forms of perceptual reference as worthwhile and satisfactory. Here, too, a consideration of a given period's use of stylistic forms is critical. How were the possibilities of a new formal concept explored? Which representational effects became artistic

goals? And which were intensified through a new setting (on the relationship between style and setting, see Borbein 1973)? For example, it is clear that the Late Classical statue of the Cnidian Aphrodite (figure 24.2) and the Hellenistic statue of the Crouching Aphrodite (figure 24.3), in spite of their similar theme—the naked Aphrodite bathing—strive to achieve completely different visual effects, revealing quite different conceptions of their shared subject (for a comparison between the two statues and their interpretation see Kunze 2002, 108–125; Brinkerhoff 1978, 44–49; Havelock 1995, 9–54, 80–83; on the significance of aesthetic factors in the forming of ancient sculptures, including their [\(p. 549\)](#) subject, see Kunze 2003, 9–48). In this way, it is possible to distinguish the artistic intentions of different periods at the level of the visual effects and aesthetic presentation (on the relationship between aesthetic preferences and visual statements as applied to the particular case of Hellenistic sculpture, see Kunze 2002, 229–241).



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Fig. 24.3 Copy of Doidalsas's Crouching Aphrodite of the third century BCE, from Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli. C. 120 CE. Marble. Height 92 cm. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano inv. 108597.

(Photograph © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome.)

The subdivision of style proposed here into three different functional areas naturally has a theoretical character, and it is based on its heuristic value. In fact, these different areas are closely interrelated, and they can hardly be distinguished so neatly. As such, in each act of interpretation, they have to be employed together. In practice, depending on the style of a particular period, one or another of these aspects will move to the foreground. So, for example, for the monumental sculpture of the Archaic period, which is rather uniform in terms

of its subject matter and typology, the representative and (p. 550) mimetic function, with its emphasis on particular features, can be a particularly fruitful approach, whereas for other stylistic periods or artistic genres, the communicative function or the aesthetic dimension of style can be a more appropriate point of departure.

A considerable difficulty derives from the fact that the question of the significance of a particular style is ultimately bound with the totality of phenomena associated with it. With the specific artistic language of their time, artists of a given period can give expression to everything they want to represent or deem worthy of expression. As such, style describes, so to speak, the horizon of all the artistic possibilities and interests of a given period. For this reason, the analysis of the significance of a given style is, from the outset, a holistic investigation that is aimed at the whole.

Precisely this fact has led earlier scholarship to regard stylistic analysis as the high road toward the understanding of past cultures, on the assumption that through the careful observation and categorization of stylistic characteristics, one could gain a direct access to the "spirit" or "mentality" of past epochs, of which style represents the "expression." The problems associated with this line of thinking are well known; they begin with the

fact that a reliable and universal evaluation standard for stylistic forms is impossible to formulate and could only be applied in a normative sense, and they end with the difficulty of translating into clearly formulated art historical terms the intended objective of (p. 551) those observations, namely, that intuited and holistic “spirit.” (An attempt at establishing such a normative standard can be seen in the interpretation of “style” as an expression of sensory perception proposed by Riegl and his followers. The problem of a normative, inevitably ahistorical standard remains, even for attempts to resort to the latest scientific knowledge about cognitive processes; see, e.g., Renfrew and Zubrow 1994; Kader 2000).

In order to avoid these difficulties, it has been argued here for the definition of the meaning of “style” in terms of its “use,” that is, as the sum of all the observable relationships and consequences with which a style is connected. This line of inquiry depends on a series of individual observations that have to be combined with one another like pieces of the same puzzle. In this way, the holistic perspective is preserved, along with the most important aspect associated with the traditional idea of style, that of requiring interpreters to place individual observations into a larger, ideally holistic context. It will admittedly never be possible to represent exhaustively the full complexity of all the factors that were involved in the creation of a specific artistic language. Against all attempts at explaining “style” monocausally and as the result of one or only a few factors—such as a form of sensory perception, a specific psychological disposition, or a behavior—one may argue that the richer and more diverse the factors considered in relation with this problem, the more numerous the opportunities for connecting artistic phenomena with those occurring in other areas of cultural production. This approach will allow for the understanding of artworks as documents of a larger cultural-historical context.

Conclusions

Finally, the question arises of whether focusing on artistic form and style still represents a worthy scholarly pursuit. Can the increasing lack of consideration for stylistic analysis in recent archaeological research be regarded as an indication of the fact that the questions associated with that approach have become obsolete and outdated? A look beyond the boundaries of our discipline shows precisely the opposite. Conditions have fundamentally changed since the 1960s, when arguments against formal analysis were dominant, particularly regarding the assessment of the significance of visual communication in the general economy of culture. That assessment, in fact, has fared in a roughly inversely proportional way to the evaluation of aesthetic factors in Greek and

Roman archaeology. The importance of image and form as a central medium, for example, is clear from the large budgets reserved for advertising by large corporations; likewise, in the political arena, one may point to the minutely calculated staging of election campaigns. This is not because conservative art lovers hold the levers of political power. The reason lies in the fact—supported by marketing surveys—that a visual message exerts a far greater effect than any argumentative discourse. This problem has been critically addressed in current discussions about the media. In mass communication, the problem is not which specific themes are transmitted by a medium but in which way specific media, based on their structure and form of transmission, affect people, transmit their (p. 552) contents, and shape and transform the cultural identity of a society (McLuhan 1964; more recently, Harries 2011; Williams 2013).

In the humanities, beginning in the middle of the 1990s, this trend has resulted in what has been called an “iconic” or “visual turn,” in which the analysis of images and their formal structure has become one of the central topics of research (see Mitchell 1994; more recently, Martin 2003: 87–92; compare the “linguistic turn” of the late 1960s and 1970s, Rorty 1967). This turn has opened up several promising possibilities for Greek and Roman archaeology. The great importance of visual representation in ancient cultures is immediately apparent through the immense expense that was lavished on it. Additionally, a notable feature of ancient Greek culture, unlike other ancient cultures, is the remarkable dynamism at the level of stylistic development and elaboration of form. This is a clear indicator of an intensive engagement with the modalities of visual representation and its possibilities, which are observed for the first time at this scale in Greek culture. We are thus dealing with a historical phenomenon of the first order. For this reason, it is all the more surprising that in recent years, this set of questions has played a relatively minor role in the study of Greek and Roman art (the following publications, per se very different from one another, represent exceptions: Elsner 1995; Neer 2002; Kunze 2002; see already Borbein 1973). Time will tell whether this trend will continue. But one thing is clear: no help should be expected from the neighboring fields of classical studies. If the analysis of images and their formal systems is a historically significant problem, this is a genuine subject of inquiry for the disciplines concerned with the visual arts, namely, Greek and Roman archaeology and art history.

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Iconographical and Iconological Approaches

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the iconographical and iconological methods used to interpret the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It begins with a discussion of the juxtaposition of the terms “iconography” and “iconology” in Greek and Roman art, before turning to early studies of Greek and Roman iconography. In particular, it considers the works of scholars such as Carl Robert, Hellmut Sichtermann, and Nikolaus Himmelmann-Wildschütz. It also explores iconographic studies that focus on both the mechanisms of construction and the transmission of images, with reference to the peculiarities of images on vases and the proper ways of reading them. The article analyzes the kylix by Exekias in Munich within the context of the iconography of Dionysus in Archaic art, before concluding by looking at the classification of Roman sarcophagi based on iconography and iconology.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, iconography, iconology, images, kylix, sarcophagi, vases

The juxtaposition of the terms “iconography” and “iconology” goes back to the Renaissance art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892–1968) in an essay published in 1955, which drew on and modified an earlier article on the subject that appeared in 1939. Panofsky used these two terms to summarize and give currency to his method of interpretation of premodern European paintings. In this method, interpretation involves three actions. The first, preiconographical description, dealing with primary or natural subject matter, consists of the identification of the objects, events, and expressions depicted in a work of art, drawing on both practical experience and the knowledge of the history of style. The second action, iconographical analysis, dealing with secondary or conventional subject matter constituting the world of images, stories, and allegories, presupposes a familiarity with specific themes or concepts as transmitted through literary sources in addition to a knowledge of the history of types. The third and final action is iconological interpretation, which has as its object the intrinsic meaning or

content of the work of art, constituting the world of “symbolic” values. The aim of this interpretive process is to move beyond the deciphering of a single work of art in order to understand “the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, essential tendencies of the human mind were expressed by specific themes and concepts” (Panofsky 1955, 39) and thus providing art historical research with an anthropological dimension.

In truth, however, the beginnings of the iconological method date to a few decades earlier. Indeed, Panofsky mainly provided the practical tools and the larger theoretical framework for the interpretive approach to works of art pioneered by Aby Warburg (1866–1929) as early as 1912. From the standpoint of the field of Greek and Roman art history and archaeology, it is important to point out that this approach—concentrating first on the cultural-historical and later on the anthropological—was in contrast with mainstream academic art history personified by scholars such as Max Dvořák and Heinrich Wölfflin, the two great masters of stylistic interpretation as a tool for the (p. 558) chronological classification of works of art (Heckscher 1979), and Bernard Berenson, the well-known pioneer of connoisseurship.

The problem that this chapter will address is the place of the current study of Greek and Roman art, in particular ancient iconography, within this process, which, from the documentation and classification of images, should lead to a deeper understanding of ancient Greek and Roman culture and to a productive comparison between that culture and the contemporary world.

Iconographical Approaches in the Twentieth Century: From Robert to Sichtermann

The turn toward iconology initiated by Warburg was contemporary with the work of Carl Robert (1850–1922), the pioneer of the study of Greek and Roman iconography. The correct methodology in the interpretation of the vast mass of images featured on the vases excavated beginning in the 1830s in the Etruscan cemeteries and kept in the large national museums of various capitals in Europe had become—especially after the exemplary presentation of the vases in Munich published by Otto Jahn in 1854—a central issue in the discipline (Isler-Kerényi 1980). The title of Robert’s first discussion of the subject (*Bild und Lied: Beiträge zur Geschichte der griechischen Heldensage*, Robert 1881) is indicative of the problem at stake: defining to what extent and in which cases images can aid in the reconstruction of the lost ancient poetic tradition. This question reflected the general approach of classical scholarship at the time, dominated at the

international level by the classical philology practiced in Berlin by Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. The approach was marked by its positivistic character and was essentially aimed at the systematic gathering of all the documentation that would help in an as complete a reconstruction of the classical world as possible. Within this larger framework, the role of the archaeological evidence was one merely of support, ancillary to the texts, a situation that was also reflected in the teaching of classical archaeology in German universities. Although Robert stressed the fact that ancient art is almost never an illustration of literary texts, he used it quite systematically to reconstruct versions of myths missing from the surviving literary tradition. About forty years later, in 1919, Robert concluded his reflections on this subject with the volume *Archäologische Hermeneutik: Anleitung zur Deutung klassischer Bildwerke*, in which he systematically laid out the various methods that would make possible the deciphering of individual images. Characteristic of his time is Robert's interest in mythological images, coupled with a lack of interest in the larger mass of representations featuring unnamed figures or scenes of so-called daily-life, in addition to his understanding of hermeneutics as a process of identification and denomination of figures and scenes. Also symptomatic of his time is the (p. 559) use—unfortunately widespread until recent years—of the expression “heroic legend” (*Heldensage*) in application to mythological stories. This is a misnomer, since myths, unlike sagas and legends in European culture, belong to the religious sphere and often also to cult practice (see especially Rudhardt 1981, 194 and footnote: “myth is religious” and “myths are religious even though sometimes they are pictured or narrated without wanting to always express a religious message”). For at least half a century, Robert's work has proved fundamental for studies dealing with hermeneutics and iconography within the field of classical art and archaeology.

Hermeneutics, broadly defined as the series of methods used for the interpretation of ancient art, was bound to develop—almost by necessity—in relationship with the artistic production that offers the largest surviving body of evidence, namely, Archaic and Classical Greek vase painting. After Robert, the relationship between text and image was discussed by Séchan (1926) and Dugas (1960), only to confirm Robert's conclusions, namely, that this relationship is neither obvious nor straightforward, given that the artist, while drawing on the same mythological tradition as poetry (*tradition littéraire*), remained faithful to the iconographical solutions—regarded as substantially autonomous from other forms of expression—created by his predecessors (*tradition graphique*). Like Robert's, these arguments assume the lack of cultural discontinuity between the forms of expression of ancient artists and the forms of understanding of modern exegetes, an assumption predicated upon a teleological, Hegelian vision of history and cultural development, according to which Western culture directly derives from classical, particularly Greek, culture, of which it represents the final realization (Isler-Kerényi 1999). This line of thinking does not take into account the basic differences between “us”

and “them,” which are particularly evident in the religious sphere. Hence the conviction that the ancient evidence can be discussed both objectively and completely.

Scholarship of the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century was still mainly concerned not with the identification of the meanings and messages of works of art but with their chronological determination and their place in history. In fact, in consideration of the substantial lack of documentary sources, this was a harder task than for scholars of later, European art. This may explain the central role of John D. Beazley (1885–1970), whose work was nearly contemporary with Robert’s and whose well-known lists attributing tens of thousands of images on vases to specific vase painters, based on stylistic considerations and Morellian analysis, would finally provide the chronological and historical framework for at least the images painted on Athenian vases between the sixth and fourth centuries BCE. At that time, classical archaeologists regarded the classification of ancient works of art according to date and style as their primary task, looking at both those artworks already in museums and those emerging from the numerous new excavations. This task was not easy to accomplish on a continent, Europe, that was dealing with two world wars and was divided by contrasting ideologies. During this period, until the 1950s, the correct interpretation of images on vases was still not regarded as a problem.

Hellmut Sichtermann (1915–2002) was the first to raise the problem of Greek vases—in addressing the imbalance created in ceramic studies between the emphasis on style (p. 560) and attribution on the one hand and the concurrent limited interest in meaning on the other—as a cultural phenomenon *sui generis* which eschews modern categories of understanding, to the point of being paradoxical (Sichtermann 1963). Sichtermann, in referring to Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897), based this consideration on the fact that Greek vases correspond to a way of living and thinking informed by mythological thinking and thus substantially different from ours. This reflection on Greek vases as a manifestation characteristic of Archaic and Classical Greek culture, although fundamental, has found little reception in later scholarship on the subject. Retrospectively, however, it can be regarded as heralding a new phase of iconographical studies of Greek painted vases.

The Language of Images: The Anthropological Turn

Since 1967, Nikolaus Himmelmann-Wildschütz (1929–2013) (1967, 1968) has been an innovative voice in the field with a series of detailed studies on the vase iconography of

the Geometric and later periods, focused on the interpretation of pictorial motifs and the reconstruction of their mechanisms of production by artists. This approach made manifest that images on vases cannot be read as spontaneous and direct sources of information, given that their scope was not intended to register and transmit concrete realities but that they were the expression of mental systems belonging to specific cultural milieus.

The following years were characterized by the publication of a series of new iconographic studies, which were nearly contemporary but independent of one another (Isler-Kerényi 1969; Isler 1970; Bérard 1974; Moret 1975). That these new studies were pursued in Swiss universities may be explained by the local academic environment, which was less conditioned by school traditions. These four monographs addressed different subjects and themes, but they had both the intention of moving beyond the traditional iconographic readings—regarded as inadequate and unsatisfactory—and the general orientation in common. This consisted of the interest in both the mechanisms of the construction and transmission of images—beyond the identification and denomination of figures—and attention to their cultural context, including the religious one. The problem of the relationship between texts and images was still present, but the idea was that it had to be discussed on a case-by-case basis and defined according to the different subjects represented. Of relevance to the present discussion is the fact that all these studies came to the conclusion that images are informed by figural types and iconographical schemas also found on images with a different subject rather than by specific myths; it is in these types and schemas that the meanings of the images essentially reside. The female winged figure, for example, can be identified, after a certain period and in some contexts, with Nike, the goddess of victory. But this is only in her (p. 561) capacity of goddess present at all contests, which is why sometimes the same figure can also be named Eris. Claude Bérard arrived at similar conclusions: “it is pointless to try to name the female character that emerges from the earth: either Semele, or, if you prefer, Ariadne, but especially a new bacchant [*bákchè*]” (Bérard 1974, 111). Particularly the analysis by Moret made manifest that “as much as in ordinary language, the meaning of a word depends on the context in which it appears, similarly, in iconography a motif can change meaning depending on the scene where it is used” (Moret 1975, 298). Although the modern viewer needs to resort to texts in order to identify the subjects of an image, those names, which are interchangeable, are less significant than the contents and messages of the image itself. These contents and messages can be understood based on a careful reading of the individual images and on a consideration of the schemas that they adopt in relation to the series to which they belong.

Herbert Hoffmann was the first to make an explicit turn toward an anthropological and theoretical approach, with a series of studies published beginning in 1974 and brought together in a volume more than thirty years later (Hoffmann 2007). One of the innovations of Hoffmann's work was his interest in images with unidentified characters, including animals, forming the iconographical repertoire of vessels of special shapes, such as *askoi*, *rhyta*, and *kantharoi*. This approach opened up the idea, plausible but only rarely used in the interpretation of images on vases, that there should be a correspondence—not immediately recognizable but real—between the shape, that is, the function, of a vase and the subjects of its decoration. It is precisely the function of these vessels that makes it possible to link their imagery with the religious sphere—one feature that distinguishes the ancient Greek world from the modern interpreter—and thus realize the shift from iconography to iconology. We will discuss below to what extent iconology can be understood in Panofskian terms in the specific field of study of Greek and Roman art.

This phase of individual and sporadic experimentations was followed in the 1980s by a series of conferences dedicated to problems of iconography and interpretation, with the participation of scholars of different orientations (Lissarrague and Thélamon 1983; Moon 1983; Bérard, Bron, and Pomari 1987). The spectrum of interests and methodologies ranged from traditionalist approaches in keeping with Robert and iconographical lexicons—from the one published in the nineteenth century by Roscher to the more recent yet methodologically obsolete *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae* (LIMC) (Lissarrague 2002, 10)—to positions that were more or less open from the historical and anthropological point of view.

The exhibition and catalog published in 1984 and edited by Jean-Pierre Vernant, the well-known Parisian scholar interested in the anthropology of ancient Greece, in collaboration with Claude Bérard, represents an important point of arrival in this initial phase of the trajectory that in the study of Greek and Roman art led from iconography into iconology (Vernant and Bérard 1984). The novelty of this initiative, which brought together scholars from different fields of classical studies and was directed to a nonspecialized public, was made apparent already in its title: *La cité des images* instead of *Les images de la cité*. This was meant to point out the fact that Athenian vase painters (p. 562) were not interested in reproducing the historical and tangible reality of the Greek polis; instead, they made a selection of themes, within the available repertoire, that was meant to evoke the idea of the polis, even to the point of neglecting themes that would appear essential to us, such as political activities. According to Vernant: “The imagery is a construct, not a carbon copy; it is a work of culture, the creation of a language that like all other languages contains an essential element of arbitrariness” (Bérard et al. 1989, 8). In this exhibition and volume, the attention is focused on themes of human life (which it would

be improper to define as daily life)—including war, hunting, eroticism, and the symposion—instead of the subjects and mythological characters of traditional iconographic studies. Even festivals and gods are discussed from the perspective of the common man. In open contrast with the still widespread positivist approaches of nineteenth-century derivation, the aim of this project was to actualize Greek vase painting, making it into an interesting subject of investigation. In Vernant's words: "The authors, inviting us to look through the lens of Greek imagery and to reject intuitive and obvious naturalistic interpretations of figural representations, force us to reexamine our own social constructs. But this detour through Greek imagery brings us back to a source of these constructs, and by demonstrating their cultural relativity, not only strips them of the authority they have assumed, but also throws them into sharper relief" (Bérard et al. 1989, 8).

The Problem of the Archaeological Context: The Historical Turn

The exhibition *La cité des images* with its catalog and the conference held at Lausanne have launched the larger discussion of the peculiarities of the images on vases and the proper ways of reading them. In the English-speaking literature, this has been done in explicit contrast with traditional approaches (Rasmussen and Spivey 1991; Sourvinou-Inwood 1991; Goldhill and Osborne 1994), whereas in Germany, the discussion has been on a more theoretical level (Fehr 1996; Hoff and Schmidt 2001; Schmidt and Oakley 2009). These contributions, which were motivated by the same basic dissatisfaction with current interpretive approaches, have taken different directions. This makes the fact that they have reached similar conclusions, which are bound to influence future readings of images on vases, while questioning many of the approaches of the past, even more remarkable:

- Images do not represent tangible realities; instead, they are, in essence, *constructions* made of types and pictorial motifs which are meant to evoke certain values considered essential by both vase painters and their patrons (Fehr 1996).
- The distinction between mythological scenes and scenes of daily life, which may seem obvious from a modern, positivistic point of view, is unsatisfactory, because (p. 563) "Gods and the characters of myth did not inhabit a separate world.... They were part of human experience; they intervened directly in human life; they were a necessary means of *re-presenting* and of making sense of the world" (Beard 1991, 20). As a result, both mythological and human figures can occur on the same image; this is particularly the case with those images on vases referring to ritual experiences, which

belonged to human life, but not everyday life, and in which one moved in a special territory, pervaded by the divine presence. An example is the encounter of Dionysus with youths, which the Amasis Painter often represented on amphoras of high quality, or the images featuring the same god with a female figure identified by Beazley with Ariadne and by others with Aphrodite but which more likely represents a mortal woman, the archetype for all those women who, in critical situations involving identity change, felt the comforting presence of the god of transformation par excellence (Isler-Kerényi 2007).

- The names of individual characters are thus secondary to their meanings. From the fact that on a well-known amphora painted by Exekias, Dionysus is represented standing in front of a youth named Oinopion—the son of Dionysus, to whom the god had donated the vine and taught the art of winemaking—one may deduce that for the youths mentioned above, the anonymous archetypes for the Athenian ephebes, Oinopion represented one of their possible mythological models.
- Reading images on vases is thus not a self-evident and instantaneous operation but instead a highly problematic one: “Reading images is no simple task;... we need to think carefully about the complexity of the whole process of looking (both for us, in our world, and for the ancients);... we need to accept, even emphasize, the many different meanings that even an apparently simple image can create. But it follows from this that there is no *one* approach to recommend. Like the ancients themselves, we make sense of the images on Greek pots in many different ways” (Beard 1991, 43).
- The problems derive from the well-known fact—rightly pointed out by Sourvinou-Inwood but ignored in the practice of traditional interpretations—that the interpreter is facing images that are the expression of a substantially different culture and are thus not easy to access. This situation raises the question of how and to what extent the modern interpreter can adopt the right, ancient perspective.
- But be that as it may, the approaches, as a result of the various readings, may vary (Lang 2002, 250) and still not exclude one another, depending on the interpreter, on the specific image under consideration, and on what one is interested in knowing in reading images, for example, the practicalities of the work of potters and painters, their ways of constructing images and conveying certain meanings, the religious significance of specific figures. In any event, images have to be considered with attention paid to all their details and taking into account the typology and iconographic tradition to which they belong; the development of that tradition over generations can, in fact, shed light on the meanings of images. In addition, one should consider each representation in relation to its own support and the whole decoration on it: for kylikes, one needs to consider not only the tondo but (p. 564) also the decoration on the exterior, for amphoras both the reverse and the obverse. This is a

process of recontextualization that is even more essential in those cases, which are unfortunately quite frequent, in which the archaeological context for the object has gone missing. The decoration, when taken in its entirety, can be illuminating about the practical and symbolic uses of the various types of vases and thus about the real life to which they originally belonged.

An Example: The Kylix by Exekias in Munich



Click to view larger

Fig. 25.1 Attic black-figure kylix signed by Exekias, from Vulci. Interior with Dionysus crossing the sea. C. 540–530 BCE. Ceramic. Diameter 30.5 cm. Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen inv. 2044.

(Photograph © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.)

The kylix by Exekias in Munich (figure 25.1) is one of the best-known Greek vases, often discussed—and not only by historians of Greek art—for the extraordinary quality of the image decorating its interior (Mommsen 2002–2003): Dionysus reclining on a ship surrounded by dolphins, the mast entwined with two vine trees full of bunches of grapes. (p. 565) Because of the presence of the dolphins, this image has often been related to the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* (VII), which recounts the adventure of

the god with the Tyrrhenian pirates turned into dolphins. This is in spite of elements in the image that speak against such a direct link with the poem, including the fact that the god is bearded, not young, and displays the relaxed posture of a symposiast, rather than being involved in any action. The interpretation of this scene is made difficult by the fact that we are dealing, at least at first glance, with an image that is unique and does not have parallels in the iconographic repertoire; it lacks, in fact, direct typological precedents, and it has no following. Still, a recontextualization of the image in the sense outlined above is not only possible but also illuminating. In what follows, I will be

presenting the main results of an analysis of this image formerly published within the context of a larger study of the iconography of Dionysus in Archaic art (Isler-Kerényi 2007).

The kylix, signed by Exekias—one of the leading potters and painters in Athens during the third quarter of the sixth century BCE—as potter, occupies a special position within the history of this type of vessel in Athens. Our example marks, in fact, a notable break with the types of cups in use between the first quarter and the middle of the sixth century BCE. Those types had a tendency toward slenderer and more elegant proportions, while the individual components—the foot, the stem, and the bowl—were gradually blended together. Exekias breaks this tradition, according relevance to each of these elements, creating a whole that is well balanced and almost architectural. Considered from the point of view of the development of the Attic kylix during the Archaic period, the vase by Exekias in Munich represents a well-thought-out novelty that heralds a new taste for kylikes, among both potters and the users of these vessels (figure 25.2).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 25.2 Vase in figure 25.1, profile.

(Photograph © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.)

The selection of motifs for the decoration of this kylix would also appear to represent, at first glance, a novelty: on the outside, two pairs of eyes on each side of the vase, along with two groups of warriors fighting over a dead body beside the handle roots, while Dionysus is sailing inside. This sequence of

motifs is dictated by the very form of the vase: in lifting (p. 566) the cup with both hands in order to bring its content to his lips, the beholder would first see the two pairs of eyes; next, the attention would be focused on the area of the handles; and finally, as the cup was being emptied of its contents, the decoration inside would become predominant. This sequence is still valid even if the kylix by Exekias was not intended for actual use—as one would deduce from the coral red covering the interior—but was meant instead to evoke symbolically the situation at the symposion.



Click to view larger

Fig. 25.3 Vase in figure 25.1, eyes.

(Photograph © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.)

The motif of the eyes, meant to animate vases and other objects, was not, per se, a novelty, already being present in Geometric art. But never before had pairs of eyes been combined in such a convincing way with their support, as one sees on this kylix by Exekias (figure 25.3). This may explain the great success enjoyed by this innovative solution among his colleagues and successors at the Ceramicus of Athens

for nearly two consecutive generations. This motif animated the vase, directly engaging its viewer. When considered in relation with ancient ideas about the eyes and the function of sight, it becomes clear that the gaze coming from the cup was identified with the liquid contained in the vase and with Dionysus himself. In this way, the god came into action in the symposium, inducing the transformation of the person holding the kylix, while at the same time interrogating the drinking companion. The selection of this particular motif by Exekias corresponds to the centrality of the experience of looking featured in two other important innovations taking place in the same years between 540 and 530 BCE: rituals of initiation (p. 567) into mysteries—culminating in seeing things that could not or should not be described in words—and tragedy, in which looking and seeing, appearance and reality, may tragically diverge, causing misrepresentations or blindness. The pair of eyes with which the kylix looked first at its holder and then at the person in front of him, soliciting a range of emotions, finds close similarities with the gorgoneion, a motif often used before Exekias on cups for the decoration of the medallion inside (Rivière-Adonon 2011).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 25.4 Vase in figure 25.1, handles area.

(Photograph © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.)

The area of the handles features two scenes that are similar but not identical: groups of warriors to the right and left fighting over a dead body placed in the middle (figures 25.4 and 25.5). The ancient viewer may have identified the subject of these scenes with a number of events in the epic tradition, providing the dead with a mythological name, such as Patroclus or Achilles,

but why not see a situation characteristic of human life in these scenes? Here again, it is useful to take into consideration the vase-painting tradition prior to the kylix by Exekias. On the exteriors of some Siana cups, one sees—along with symposion scenes and other subjects—warriors engaged in duels, a likely allusion to the identity of the symposiast as a warrior. From the standpoint of this tradition, the novelty featured by Exekias in his kylix is not only the presence of the dead but especially the fact that the fighters are not individuals but groups of warriors, moving and acting together. The emphasis here is not on the accomplishments of the individuals but on the solidarity of the group. This is not a minor point, considering that the cup was painted at a time not far removed from the democratic (p. 568) reforms introduced by Cleisthenes. As for the dead, his presence is not coincidental: the area of the handles must have been felt, as best shown by the decoration of kraters, as a zone of passage and transition, including death. Thus, taken as a whole, the decoration of the exterior evokes death, with the eyes that while directly engaging the symposiast looking at them, force him to think about death and his own mortality.

When considered from this angle, the decoration inside the kylix would also appear new only up to a certain point. In the tradition of cups, one of the most frequently recurring motifs after the gorgoneion was the sea, depicted with mythological figures, dolphins, or other sea animals. The sea, like the petrifying gaze of the Gorgon, has the power of evoking death. In addition, particularly at the symposion, the sea has the power to evoke a state of suspension, wandering, and provisionality. When contrasted with the images of the Gorgon and the sea, both evoking death, the figure of Dionysus in the center, in the role of the symposiast, would thus appear a happy alternative. As such, this image

reiterates the same message as the pairs of eyes on the exterior of the cup: the notion—widespread in that particular moment at Athens and way beyond the realm of vase painting—that looking does not always coincide with seeing and can lead to either a tragic or a releasing outcome.



Click to view larger

Fig. 25.5 Vase in figure 25.1, handles area.

(Photograph © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.)

The proposed connection among the various elements in the decoration of our vase is clearly confirmed by the later tradition of eye cups (Rivière-Adonon 2011). From this, one may deduce that the kylix by Exekias, although exceptional from an aesthetic point of view, belongs to a larger artistic tradition that from the beginnings down to the first (p. 569) decades of the fifth century BCE, has

marked in Athens the production of figured cups for the symposion. It would appear clear at this point how the proposed process of recontextualization of an image on a vase is more telling than the extrapolation of the image itself from its support and its connection with one of the few poems—whose exact dating is otherwise controversial—that have come to us through the later, manuscript tradition.

Such a process of recontextualization will always be bound to remain partial, and it can satisfy only up to a certain point. In fact, although we can place the Exekias cup within the production of painted vases in Athens during the Archaic period, drawing from it information about the contemporary cultural climate, we are missing those elements that would help us understand its actual destination. About its discovery, we know only that the kylix was found in the Etruscan city of Vulci, and given its excellent state of preservation, we think that it may have come from a cemetery. But we know nothing about the type of tomb in which the vase was found, its placement in relation to the body of the deceased, the gender of the dead, or the other grave goods, all elements that would have helped in understanding the potential symbolic meaning of the decoration of the vase, including its use by members of the local elite and possible allusions to mystery rituals. Considering cases in which we have knowledge of the original archaeological context of a vase, such as for a well-known Attic volute krater of the Classical period from

the cemetery of Spina (Isler-Kerényi 2003), we can only imagine and deplore that loss of information. The case of the kylix by Exekias helps us understanding why scholars of Greek painted pottery have become increasingly interested in recent decades in the archaeological contexts in which vases were found and thus in the historical context of the vases themselves and the possible relationship between the potters and painters in Athens and their clients abroad, including Magna Graecia, Etruria, and the Black Sea region (Noerskov et al. 2009). Thanks to these studies, the investigation of Greek vases is finally turning into a historical discipline.

Various methods of contextualization have proved critical to a historical and anthropological understanding not only of Greek vases (Stansbury-O'Donnell 2011) but also of other types of archaeological material, often considered only from an art historical point of view, including, for example, Roman sculpture (Zanker 1994), terracotta figurines from Taranto (Graepler 1997), Roman mosaics (Grassigli 1999), the architectural sculpture from Selinunte (Marconi 2007), and the painted walls at Pompeii (Lorenz 2008). Particularly telling in this regard is the case of the Roman sarcophagi with relief decoration, which we will closely consider next.

The Study of Roman Sarcophagi between Iconography and Iconology

Relief sarcophagi are a typical form of expression of Roman art, comparable to Attic vases for Greek art. And as for painted pottery, the understanding of relief sarcophagi confronts us with the cultural distance between their world and the world of the modern (p. 570) interpreter. Not by chance, then, there are analogies in the historiography between the two classes of material, with some of the scholars involved being the same. However, whereas Greek vases went completely forgotten in the centuries after their production, so that the beginning of their investigation coincides with their discovery first in Italy and then on the Athenian Acropolis, many sarcophagi remained above ground and were viewed and appreciated in the post-Antique period. If for later generations relief sarcophagi stood as emblems for classical antiquity, they also fell prey, particularly in German-speaking countries, to the general distaste for Roman culture and visual arts, often regarded for many generations as decadent in comparison with Greek art, according to a paradigm of interpretation shaped by J. J. Winckelmann (Koch and Sichtermann 1982, 9; Zanker and Ewald 2004, 23-24).

To the same Otto Jahn who was the author of the first systematic study of Greek vases we owe, in 1869, the idea of creating a corpus that would bring together and present, in a

series of volumes focused on individual themes, all the known sarcophagus reliefs. Of particular interest were the subjects, for the large part mythological, and the iconography, to which the first four volumes were dedicated, published between 1890 and 1919 by Carl Robert. Such a vast undertaking could only have been brought into effect through the collaboration of a variety of scholars working simultaneously under the coordination of a director; this position was held between 1921 and 1945 by Gerhart Rodenwaldt, followed by Friedrich Matz, Bernard Andreae (since 1978), and Guntram Koch (since 1998). The main objective of this presentation of the material was to classify relief sarcophagi according to date and workshop. This approach, like the parallel work on Greek vases being pursued by Beazley and his followers, contributed in the 1940s to the segregation of the study of Roman sarcophagi within the large field of study of Greek and Roman art (Koch and Sichtermann 1982, 16): by increasing the degree of specialization while at the same time losing sight of the fact that the material belongs to a culture that is different but not inferior, thus requiring a particular effort toward interpretation.

Those who believed that the figural decoration of sarcophagi, often of high quality, was not motivated simply by superficial aesthetic reasons and ostentation, the task of moving beyond iconography—that is, the identification of themes and individual figures—in trying to identify the motivations behind the selection of themes was not easy. Obviously, it is not particularly difficult to see allusions to death and the loss of loved ones in reliefs featuring subjects such as the death of Meleager or the children of Niobe; the sleep of Endymion, Ariadne, and Rhea Silvia; or the rape of Proserpina or the daughters of Leucippus. In addition, the intention of glorifying and perpetuating the memory of one's relatives becomes evident in those cases, which become more frequent with the third century CE, in which individualized portraits are featured on figures that are part of mythological scenes or presented within medallions. Way more problematic, and one would say anachronistic, is to interpret the marine or Dionysiac *thiasoi*—the largest body of mythological scenes on sarcophagi in Rome—as an allusion to travel toward the Isle of the Blessed or to a happy afterlife. This would imply that the ancient Romans had, like the Christians, a clear conception of what the dead were to face, an assumption clearly contradicted by a look at contemporary funerary epigrams. A recurring (p. 571) feature of those texts is, in fact, the idea of *post mortem nescio*, indicating that many people simply did not have such a conception (Koch and Sichtermann 1982, 602). The only approaches and interpretations that can be regarded as convincing are those that go beyond individual cases and are applicable to the entire figural repertoire of the sarcophagi. In Sichtermann's words, "Without a clear understanding of the general there can be no exploration of the individual" (Koch and Sichtermann 1982, 598), where "general" refers to the response to works of art by the Romans, to their feelings about death, and to the significance and role of mythology in their society.

A critical step in this direction, consisting in abandoning a specialist's view while embracing a larger anthropological perspective, came with a monograph published about a generation later than those considerations by Sichtermann, with the title "Living with Myths: The Imagery of Roman Sarcophagi" (Zanker and Ewald 2004). The points of departure for Zanker, in proposing his new interpretation of this body of images, are two. The first is an archaeological one and consists of the consideration of how the images on sarcophagi would have functioned within their original context, namely, tombs. Here analogy becomes critical, since the original archaeological context is known only for a few sarcophagi. The second point of departure is a reconsideration—free, as much as possible, from Christian preconceptions—of the meaning and function of myths, which clearly played a significant role in helping the intended viewers deal with death—their own death and that of their loved ones. For example, it is important to keep in mind that myths were about neither erudition nor entertaining—they were neither sagas nor tales—and that, quite the contrary, "the human life, including the most trivial aspects of everyday life, were continuously related with the other world of gods and heroes" (Zanker and Ewald 2004, 38), an attitude that continued beyond the advent of Christianity until the end of antiquity between the fourth and fifth centuries CE. As for the methodology, in the absence of explicit mentions by literary sources, in order to understand the specific meaning or, better, the possible multiple meanings of the messages conveyed by those images, the suggestion is made in Zanker and Ewald's book that the images themselves need to be analyzed first with the tools of art history, by looking at how the sculptor has articulated the composition of the relief, selected the figures, and introduced innovations within an established iconographic tradition. In addition, instead of organizing the selection of the more than 130 sarcophagi presented in the book according to mythological or daily-life subjects—the standard in the literature on the subject—the three main types of message conveyed by this imagery are considered: immediate reactions to death (regret, mourning, and consolation), visions of happiness, and glorification of the deceased. At the end of Zanker's and Ewald's study, the material is reconsidered from a historical perspective, in order to emphasize how the repertoire developed over time both in the choice of subjects and stylistic forms and in the message conveyed. In a way that accords with the very nature of ancient mythology, the interpretations proposed by Zanker and Ewald cannot and do not intend to be either unique or definitive, reflecting as they do the variety of mental associations and affective dispositions of the public for these images, including the modern one.

(p. 572) This new approach—marked by a greater consideration for the cultural diversity between past and present than in traditional positivistic and materialistic readings of these images—appears to be particularly productive in relation to the interpretation of the two main subjects that one could categorize under the heading of visions of happiness: the marine and Dionysiac *thiasoi*. In both cases, fabulous creatures, such as

the hybrid figures of tritons, satyrs, and fauns, are combined with manifestations of pure human joy: music, dance, ecstasy, and eroticism. When considering the idea of *post mortem nescio*, happiness, as experienced in life and which one may have hoped for himself or herself after death, could only be imagined in human terms. In this regard, the conclusions by Zanker are highly convincing: “The specific characteristic of the visions of happiness that one sees on Roman sarcophagi, consists in the fact that these images are basically projecting nothing new, better, more perfect, but simply expressing the wish for the deceased, that their future will be as good as their past, or, when their life had been not so enjoyable, that it may, under more auspicious circumstances, go for the better: nothing else” (Zanker and Ewald 2004, 177).

This still does not explain the presence of the fabulous traits mentioned above. In order to understand those, it will be useful to consider a similar phenomenon, namely, the luscious floral decoration seen on the monumental volute kraters painted in Apulia during the course of the fourth century BCE, consisting of plants and beautiful flowers, masterfully painted but hardly corresponding to any botanical reality, perfect images of growing and flourishing in a world that far surpasses the human experience (Isler-Kerényi 2008). Along similar lines, one could say that in the marine *thiasoi*, the naturalism of the bodies, desirable and yet unreal, directs the viewer toward the unthinkable. A similar explanation may account for the many erotes and putti, flying and swimming or busy playing some game, which populate the scenes with marine and Dionysiac *thiasoi*. On first sight, these figures may seem only to allude to the erotic atmosphere pervading these scenes; yet Eros and the figure of the child also evoke, as on Apulian funerary vases, the possibility and hope for new beginnings.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 25.6 Sarcophagus from Vigna Casali near Rome. Main side and lid: Dionysus and Ariadne. End of second century CE. Marble. Height 0.68 m. Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek inv. 843.

(Photograph © Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.)

The most conspicuous difference between the two kinds of *thiasoi* is the presence, in the Dionysiac scenes, of ritual implements, such as the mystic cyst from which a snake is escaping, altars, and cult figures. Although it seems safe to assume that these images are not concerned with representing specific ritual

actions, their reference to Bacchic experiences is clear: moments of joy experienced in life and hoped for in the afterlife, very much like the banquets in the open, the ecstatic

dances, and the erotic meetings. A fitting example in this regard is offered by the sarcophagus of the Severan period discovered in 1775 at Vigna Casali on the Via Appia and today in Copenhagen (Zanker and Ewald 2004, 164–165, fig. 151; 252, fig. 225; 309–312). On the main side of this sarcophagus (figure 25.6), around the central pair formed by Dionysus and Ariadne, arranged according to a pyramidal composition already found on Attic vases of the fourth century BCE, one sees a flourishing vine rich with grapes. This may be taken as an allusion, already found in Greek iconography, to the fact that from the destruction of the grapes, wine will be born, the liquid contained in the *kantharos* held by Ariadne in one hand. To consider the vine only as an expression of the fertility of nature and the wine as an instrument of (p. 573) exclusively human joy, excluding the possibility of a metaphorical meaning pointing to some form of rebirth, runs the risk of projecting modern, reductionist materialism on the ancient mentality, which was certainly more open. According to Zanker, the small scene taking place under Dionysus and Ariadne and featuring Silenus, who shakes a fan near two erotes who, after having found him and bound him up, are leading a reluctant faun into the open, can be read as, however jokingly, a form of distancing immediate physical desires in favor of a representation of longing for love (Zanker and Ewald 2004, 165). A peaceful and harmonious imaginary Dionysiac existence is also evoked by the panthers, which, rather than being ferocious and aggressive, behave like little dogs. In addition to the cists with the snake, the Bacchic sphere is represented by the figure of Hermes *psychopompos*, the guide of the souls, and the satyrs, making the gesture of the *aposkopein*, or scanning with their eyes; these are traditionally the first figures who recognize Dionysus and show the god to the humans (Isler-Kerényi 2004). In order to fully understand the message that the sculptor—along with the patron of the sarcophagus—may have intended to express would require a deeper analysis, which would take into account the iconographical tradition and close comparisons with similar sarcophagi, for not only the other elements in the main scene but also the scenes on the lid and on the right side of the sarcophagus (figure 25.7).

From what I have noted, however, it may be concluded that the Dionysiac *thiasoi* had a less generic meaning than the marine *thiasoi*, targeting patrons who were familiar with Bacchic allusions, even in the absence of an eschatological thinking comparable to Christian beliefs. Such a reading does not contradict other approaches; on the contrary, it makes manifest how the images featured on the sarcophagi, when carefully analyzed without introducing unwarranted speculations, are rich in meaning and promise perpetually newer interpretations.

Which Iconology?



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Fig. 25.7 Sarcophagus in figure 25.6, right side.

(Photograph © Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.)

(p. 574) In this chapter, I have roughly sketched the historiography of about a century of iconographical studies and emphasized more recent iconological and anthropological approaches, explored here in application to the study of Greek vases and Roman relief sarcophagi. The first conclusion from the preceding analysis is that it would be hardly appropriate, or actually vain, to try to apply the

methodology proposed by Panofsky to the study of Greek and Roman art. This is for two reasons that will require further consideration: one is the substantial difference between Renaissance paintings and ancient images in terms of modern, scientific investigation; the second is the drastic, cultural caesura that separates the world of ancient images from the world of modern interpreters.

In the case of Renaissance paintings, we often know, or we can at least try to reconstruct, the specific circumstances that led to their creation and their historical context, including place, patronage, and artist. As such, these paintings can be placed within a dense web of possible and plausible relationships with other works and other people, whose investigation may lead to the ideological position, the intentions, and the messages of those responsible for their production. Such works can thus be interpreted from an anthropological perspective, establishing a stimulating dialectic with the present. The situation is completely different in the case of ancient images, including Greek vases and Roman sarcophagi; these represent, within the cultural historical context to which they once belonged, a class of material not always of the highest level and, in any case,

(p. 575) only a fraction of the original visual culture, of whose conditions of production we only know what we are able to infer, always by means of hypotheses, from the objects themselves. For the period of production of these works, namely the sixth, fifth, and part of the fourth centuries BCE for the vases and the Roman Imperial period for the sarcophagi, we have much less information than what historical sources tell us about

premodern Europe; and in any case, what we do know is insufficient even to attempt an iconological analysis comparable to the one advocated by Panofsky. Quite the contrary, it is the vases and sarcophagi themselves that, when their images are analyzed according to the methods outlined here, can provide aid for the reconstruction, still partial and hypothetical, of the cultural milieu to which they once belonged.

Even more serious are the consequences of the cultural rupture between the ancient pagan and polytheistic world and Christian and modern Europe. We remain familiar with the ideological and religious coordinates of Renaissance paintings, no matter how distant in time and different in their historical and social situation. The works of Greek and Roman culture that have come to us, including Greek vases and Roman sarcophagi, with their images, are part of a civilization that is substantially different from ours and requires us, in order at least to come closer to it, to question the very roots of the way we think of and imagine the world and transcendence (Rudhardt 1981; Brelich 1985; Kerényi 1995; Versnel 2011). The main obstacle to such questioning is the belief that ancient polytheism was necessarily a form of religiosity inferior to the beliefs of the modern world, including Christianity. This is in accordance with the nineteenth-century evolutionary model, in which the path of human civilization from before (ancient culture) to after (the modern world) is, by its very nature, a positive trend, a model similar to the Christian idea of redemption. Instead, a fruitful anthropological approach requires placing the polytheism of the ancients and the modern mentality, including one rooted in Christianity, on an equal footing.

A consequence of the mentalities discussed here—evolutionary or Christian—is the quasi-mechanical use of improper, often misleading terms, automatically projecting Christian concepts onto ancient culture. Frequent cases are, for example, the use of the term “saga” or “legend” for myths; the implicit equation of heroes such as Odysseus and Achilles with characters of the type of Orlando Furioso or Garibaldi; and speaking of an “afterlife,” a Christian concept par excellence, in treating beliefs associated with objects or archaeological contexts linked with the funerary sphere (Graepler 1997, 150-152). To this same category belongs the automatic identification of sexuality with fertility, two distinct phenomena for the ancients, which were manifested in different mythological figures. Thus, for example, the satyrs, a clear expression of playful sexuality with an end in itself, are often considered, against all iconographic evidence, as symbols of fertility. Likewise, fertility—with its implicit meaning of usefulness, which conforms to the prevailing materialistic view in the study of Greek and Roman art—is attached to the interpretation of almost all the goddesses of the ancient pantheon. Equally misleading is the concept created in the twentieth century of the “apotropaic,” for example, for the gorgoneion, because it presupposes a superstitious attitude toward a dreadful figure instead of religious veneration of a complex divinity (Marconi 2007).

(p. 576) Equality between the ancient Greek and Roman world and the modern world will be reached in interpretation only when the traditional terminology is subjected to critical scrutiny and we become aware of our own ideological position. To use Zanker's words (1994, 291), "it is absolutely necessary that interpreters be aware of their own interests and intellectual motivations and declare them," even though this might imply "that we have to give up the idea of an interpretation which is both univocal and correct." Shifting from iconography to iconology and to anthropology has its value in the study of Greek and Roman art. However, in this field, iconology is bound to be different from the way it is practiced in other fields of art history that deal with more proximal historical periods, and it presents significant challenges. On the other hand: "What is the purpose... of scrupulously investigating the past, if this does not help us to understand and put in perspective our world?" (Grassigli 1999, 466). Only the result of individual interpretations will show whether it was worth it to face those challenges and whether the process of slowly infiltrating, through the images, the mentality of the ancient viewer (Zanker 1994, 290) is possible and will really lead us to a knowledge that is also useful for the present.

Translated from the Italian by Clemente Marconi.

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Sociohistorical Approaches

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the sociohistorical approaches used to interpret the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It begins with an overview of the problems affecting sociohistorical research in Greek and Roman art, along with the interest of Greek and Roman art historians and archaeologists in social history. It then turns to a discussion of attempts to obtain information about social reality from works of ancient art, along with the notion of “social role” as applied to the field of Greek and Roman art. The chapter also considers the relationships between “unequal” people and their patterns of interaction, as reflected in images and monuments of the Greek and Roman world. Finally, it explores the use of concepts such as elite and social coherence/conflicts in the analysis of ancient images and architectural monuments.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, elite, images, social conflicts, social history, social role, sociohistorical research

Interpreting the great works of Greek and Roman painters, sculptors, and architects from a purely aesthetic point of view is still regarded by many scholars as the essence and main task of the study of ancient Greek and Roman art. According to an idea well rooted in tradition and still popular today, art is a world of its own (*l'art pour l'art*), whose core is not touched or conditioned by any “external” factors such as social structures and functions. Seen this way, any attempt to explain key characteristics of a famous work of ancient Greek or Roman art or architecture through its relationship to a social or political context could be criticized as prioritizing what is, at best, a peripheral aspect. To continue this line of thought, isn't it to be feared that if such attempts gain the upper hand, the study of Greek and Roman art will end up losing its identity and autonomy, becoming an appendix to ancient history (cf. Sauer 2004), in which the sociological point of view was firmly established several generations ago?

Another well-known obstacle impairing sociohistorical research in the study of Greek and Roman art is the fact that in this discipline, many scholars focus primarily on those

prominent individuals who promoted and created the works of art and monumental buildings to be interpreted and explained. In reading publications of this kind, one sometimes gets the impression that such great personalities—for instance, Phidias, Pericles, or Augustus—could carry through and realize their visions and concepts without asking anyone else, in a quasi-omnipotent way. As opposed to this, the sociological approach, not focused on personalities, starts from the characteristics and interests of small or large groups of people and is concerned with the rules governing the interaction of these segments of society.

In addition, the traditional subdivision of the material heritage of Greek and Roman culture into numerous classes of artifacts (in German, *Gattungen*), such as temples, portraits, statues, painted vases, or sarcophagi, is a potential barrier to any sociohistorical approach. Following a traditional practice in archaeological research projects, objects subsumed under a particular class are usually studied separately from objects belonging to other classes. This approach, which receives further support from the increasing (p. 580) trend toward specialization, contradicts ancient reality. There, as a rule, all those classes of artifacts were integrated in a network of interrelation with regard to both their practical use and their symbolic function within a social context. Monumental sacred buildings, for instance, were frequently decorated with figural sculptures; the first of these two classes is the domain of historians of architecture, the second of art historians. But it is clear that the messages of both complemented each other and, beyond this, were part of a complex process of visual communication—which also included cultic festivals and rituals—in which those participating simultaneously generated and experienced an image of their cultural identity (Marconi 1994 and 2007).

Any sociohistorical research justifies itself by referring to theories. In the non-classical archaeological disciplines of the Anglo-Saxon cultural sphere, several attempts have been made to replace traditional approaches with a new theoretical framework including social aspects (“new/processual/post-processual/postmodern archaeology”), with very little response in Greek and Roman archaeology as regards the interpretation of art and architecture (for an exception, see, e.g., Shanks 1999). There, as a rule, theoretical approaches meet open or latent mistrust: it is postulated that one should “start from the objects/works themselves,” not from theories, which are dismissed out of hand as “preconceived notions” or “speculations.”

Despite all of this, there are some Greek and Roman archaeologists who are interested in social history and the theoretical problems connected with it (see, e.g., Steuernagel 1991 and 2001–2002). It seems to me that this interest, which was initially applied mainly to Roman art and architecture, owes its historical origin and its vitality less to a field-immanent or interdisciplinary discussion than to some scholars’ intellectual and

sometimes even political opposition to fascism in Italy and Germany. Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli (1900–1975), who participated in the resistance against fascism and later became a member of the Communist Party, can be regarded as the *hērōs ktistēs* of a sociohistorical approach in classical archaeology (see, e.g., Bianchi Bandinelli 1969 and 1970). Above all, through his students—Bruno d’Agostino, Andrea Carandini, Filippo Coarelli, Adriano La Regina, Mario Torelli, and Fausto Zevi, among others—he strongly influenced Italian archaeology and some German archaeologists of the postwar generation, such as Paul Zanker. In addition, one should mention the considerable influence on the development of the discipline in the United States of German scholars who had emigrated in order to escape from fascism (e.g., Otto Brendel and Karl Lehmann-Hartleben) or had left Germany soon after the war, since the military defeat of the Nazi state was not followed by a real change in the political and social structures (Peter Heinrich von Blanckenhagen). All of them were concerned, in various ways and inspired by the democratic culture of their new home, not only with the cultural-historical but also the social aspects of ancient art and architecture, passing on to their numerous American students many impulses that are still felt today. Finally, the international student movement of the 1960s and early 1970s, which demanded that all historical sciences incorporate a sociohistorical interpretation of their respective source materials, had a great impact on the scientific production of young scholars (the author of this chapter included).

(p. 581) Greek and Roman art historians and archaeologists adopting this type of approach always face the problem of how to decipher the meaning and function of their visual evidence with regard to its social context. Sometimes such a tentative deciphering can be confirmed by written sources. But merely recapitulating what classicists and ancient historians already know may seem disappointing. There is no doubt that Greek and Roman art and architecture can say much about ancient society and its development that is not mentioned in the ancient texts. But how can we extract this information? As of now, there is no established method for achieving this goal. Nevertheless, many scholars are making an effort to fill this gap by proposing new theories concerning specific subjects, which, taken together, cover a broad range of Greek and Roman social life. It is the large classes of artifacts commissioned and used by private individuals that evidently yield the most fruitful results: painted vases (Marconi 2004; Oakley 2009; Yatromanolakis 2009a), grave reliefs (Bergemann 1997), sarcophagi (Zanker and Ewald 2012), and Roman wall paintings (Leach 2004), along with the numerous types of residential buildings (Nevett 1999 and 2007; Bergmann 2007).

Although the work of those scholars represents, on the whole, considerable progress, it does not as yet form a clearly profiled “school” within the discipline. However, several larger interrelated perspectives are gradually emerging, each of which can be linked to a

fair number of individual studies and projects. In the following, I shall outline and discuss what are, in my view, the most important of these perspectives, taking into consideration the relevant visual and architectural material. As one may expect, given the space constraints, my discussion of the various approaches will have to be selective, and it will be, to a fair degree, subjective.

“Distorted Ideals” in Art: A Mirror of Social Reality?

In Greek and Roman art, from the second half of the seventh century BCE up through the Roman Imperial period, features can be seen in representations of the human body that openly contradict the aesthetic norms and/or ethical values of their time of production (Metzler 1971; Zanker 1989; Fehr 1990; Dasen 1993; Cohen 2000; Stähli 2009; Walsh 2009; Smith 2010; Osborne 2011, 124–185): unusual proportions; missing limbs; deformities; crooked or snub noses; big bellies; oversized or erect phalluses; incomplete, irregular, or excessive hair growth on the head and body; physical decay, caused by either illness or old age; swaggering, hectic, frightened, or limp movement of the body; obscene poses and motions; unseemly behavior.

The first attempts in the late 1960s to extract information about social reality from works of ancient art often started from these “deficits,” which were regarded as “realistic,” as opposed to the “idealizing” tendency prevailing particularly in Greek Classical imagery. Such “deviations” appear primarily associated with depictions of people of (p. 582) low status: workmen, traders, fishermen (Laubscher 1982; Himmelmann 1994; Stähler 2005), in addition to slaves (Himmelmann 1971), beggars (Giuliani 1987; Fehr 1990), and barbarians (Schneider 2001). Especially in the 1970s and 1980s, numerous studies appeared in which descriptions of such people in ancient texts were connected with particular combinations of the “deficits” (called “distorted ideals” in Walsh 2009) depicted in images. The assumption, from early on, that such depictions were supposed to provoke laughter (often presumptuously and cruelly) is repeatedly mentioned in scholarly discussions (Fehr 1990; Clarke 2007; Wannagat 2007; Mitchell 2009).

Soon, however, ancient art historians and sometimes also classicists began to criticize this approach, in which the images would end up being degraded to “illustrations” of something already known through the written sources. They argued that these images, like the written texts, had their “own” language which should be interpreted “from within” instead of approaching it with assumptions from the “outside.”

This criticism is often exaggerated. Most of the alleged “illustrationists” have always pointed out the fact that the “deficits” they examined were not to be understood as “documentary” in today’s sense of the word but rather as symbols that carry meanings; the images do not represent social reality mimetically but rather in the way artists or their clients perceived and judged it. Furthermore, these scholars were well aware of the problem that the depicted “deficits” were often not consistent with the written records.

That criticism resulted in increasing attention being paid to the methodological problem of “reading” such images. Thus, it is regularly pointed out that the meaning of a particular “deficit” and the judgment that came with it could vary depending on the pictorial context or the subject represented. Furthermore, the possibility was suggested that the same depiction could be interpreted differently depending on the viewer’s social and political experiences and interests (Kistler 2006). Moreover, ancient imagery was defined as an *eigengesetzliches* (roughly, autonomous) medium, in which those “deficits” would not refer to contemporary social realities, that is, issues that existed outside the picture, but were rather to function as elements of a self-contained dialectical discourse, inherent to the images themselves, about certain human characteristics and behavioral patterns (Heinemann 2009). Sometimes these depictions are also understood as “fictional” or “mental constructs” (Cohen 2000; Hedreen 2009), an approach that also forms the basis of the attempt to find in ancient literary genres, especially iambography, analogies to those functions of the visual medium (Steiner 2009).

However, all these analyses acknowledge that in the end, the representations of “deficits” all presuppose, beyond their presumptive function within the context of a “discourse” immanent to the images themselves, some kind of social background. This background, however, is usually only described in a few vague words. For this reason, we need to make sure that these “discourse”-oriented models of interpretation, valuable and productive as they certainly are, do not end up taking us back to the *hortus conclusus* of a hermeneutically oriented *Geistesgeschichte* (approximately, history of ideas). Ancient intellectuals who saw such “deficits” reproduced in images might have, in many cases, perceived them as parts of a “discourse” and discussed them accordingly. However, they would have certainly also shared the then-popular view that successful (p. 583) visual representations were first and foremost characterized by a deceptively similar, fascinating mimesis of living—and thus also social—reality. This is what they referred to in their conversations (e.g., Socrates in Xenophon, *Mem.* 3.10.1–8).

Social Roles: Acknowledged Concepts of Behavior

For a long time, the notion of a “social role” was seen as inapplicable within the field of Greek and Roman art because of the aforementioned focus of this discipline on important individuals or single famous monuments. Only after an increasing willingness to use sociohistorical-thinking models in reference to antiquity since the 1970s has research in this field started to turn toward the examination of visual manifestations of ancient role models.

As visual expressions of such role models, the statues of *korai* and *kouroi* (regarded as members of the Archaic “aristocratic” class; see Zinserling 1975; Schneider 1975; Steuernagel 1991; Metzler 1992; Fehr 1996b) and the representations of Greek polis citizens, their wives, and other family members in Classical and Hellenistic art (in media ranging from statues and funerary and votive reliefs to vase painting) came under particular consideration (Hollein 1988; Bergemann 1997; Hoff 2009; Fehr 2009 and 2011). One important study was also concerned with the role of the intellectual in ancient Greece and Rome (Zanker 1995a).

Greek representations of mythical heroes or heroines and gods were less frequently analyzed in this way, which can probably be explained by the fact that these subjects are generally regarded as unfit for a sociohistorical approach. This argument, however, does not seem particularly solid, considering the generally fluid transition between the mortal and divine realms in Greek iconography. A similar hesitation in research can also be seen, independent of subject matter, in the area of the “ideal sculpture” of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, still considered by some to be a timelessly valid aesthetic norm, standing above everyday politics. Despite these reservations, it can be demonstrated (Neumer-Pfau 1982; Himmelmann 2003; Fehr 1979 and 2011) that “ideal” images of gods and mortals of the Classical period can be perceived as clear paradigms for specific modes of conduct: for instance, Apollo and Artemis as role models for ephebes and unmarried young women, Hera as the prototype of the Greek citizen’s wife who gives birth to legitimate children, or the so-called Critius Boy as the embodiment of a well-behaved youth. In reference to Roman art, some studies examined the visual representation of social roles through mythological *exempla* (Prehn 1995; Bell and Hansen 2008; Lorenz 2008, 246–249).

As regards Greek art, interpretations concerned with the notion of “social role” generally start from characteristics of the individual figures (Fehr 1979; Neumer-Pfau 1982; Giuliani 1986; Darling 1998–1999; Ziegler 1999; Brulé 2006; Cleland, Harlow, and

(p. 584) Llewellyn-Jones 2005; Gherchanoc and Huet 2007), in particular facial expressions, specific postures and manners of movement (in ancient Greek, *schēmata*), the “rhetoric” of certain types of clothes and their draping, and hairstyles. In these studies, it is argued that the ancient viewer associated certain combinations of such visible features with social norms, that is, with ethically relevant concepts of behavior that were not exclusively tied to specific situations and areas of life but were obligatory in regard to whatever one was doing. The interpretations of those visual characteristics have made use of written sources and the respective narrative context of the figures analyzed when they were part of a pictorial scene.

Certain components of social roles of antiquity have been examined in these studies with particular thoroughness. Of central importance was the prestigious display of manly capability and motivation (*aretē/virtus*), which was understood as either worthy effort and difficult overcoming of numerous obstacles (*ponos/labor*) or as a result of the use of physical or intellectual *technai/artes* (i.e., skills in the broadest sense; see Hölscher 1980, 290–297; Fehr 1979, 1996b, and 2009; Himmelmann 2009). Equally beneficial to individual status was the public presentation of physical beauty and material affluence (*olbos*) and a luxurious and sensual lifestyle (*tryphē/luxuria*; see Fehr 1996b; Zanker 1998; Prehn 2007). At the same time, it was important not to appear as a sybaritic weakling, no longer able to toil gloriously. Such an allegation would have immediately ruined the status that had been achieved. Furthermore, he who strove for social prestige within a community of citizens who saw themselves as “equals” was expected to leave no doubt regarding his ability at self-control and moderation (*sōphrosynē/moderatio*); he had to restrain his zest for action in order not to appear like an “adventurer” and had to avoid the suspicion that he was aiming for autocracy (Fehr 1979; Ghedini 1986; Zanker 1995b, 49–55; Bergemann 1997). Various emphases and interrelations of these role components were visualized in works of art, a fact that can be explained partly by the change of a role model over time and partly by the coexistence of multiple variations of one and the same role (Mann 2009).

Other distinctive marks of status characteristic of ancient role behavior were *scholē* and *otium*, that is, the time in which one could rest from efforts connected with one’s prominent social role and, released from obligations, engage in activities chosen by oneself according to one’s personal inclinations. It was, so to speak, one’s “time of freedom.” In Greek visual arts, *scholē* was expressed through relaxed postures, the narrative pictorial contexts showing the respective personal interests of the depicted (Hollein 1988; Brulé 2006; Fehr 2009; see also Anastasiadis 2004). Research has paid particular attention, with important results, to the manifestations of *otium* in the residential culture of the Roman villa, including wall paintings, sculptures, gardens, fish

ponds, and the landscaping of the villas' surroundings (Gazda 1991; Zanker 1995b; Gros 2006, 263–378; Grüner 2006; Prehn 2007).

Usually, more than one role is combined in an individual (e.g., the politician who is also a philosopher), a fact that sometimes can lead to conflicts between these roles. In the ancient world, someone could, for example, be a member of a group of cooperating “equals” but at the same time hold a leading position as *primus inter pares* because of his outstanding (p. 585) capabilities. Well-known examples for this contradictory double role include Miltiades (both hoplite and general), Alexander the Great (Macedonian *hetairos* and king), or Augustus and Trajan (*civis Romanus* and *princeps*). It would be interesting to investigate further, in these and other cases, how the tension between the two roles that the *primus inter pares* had to enact was reflected in the visual arts—or outplayed. This problem has already been considered with regard to the depiction of the Athenian phalanx and its leader Miltiades in the painting depicting the Battle of Marathon in the Stoa Poecile (Hölscher 1973, 54–60). However, other important monuments would also offer the opportunity for such analysis, including the Alexander Mosaic and the frieze of the Ara Pacis (figure 15.2).

Patterns of Social Interaction: Equals and Unequals

In social systems, not only individual actions but also interactions are governed by rules and norms. Larger or smaller Greek communities, whose members considered themselves “equals,” traditionally used the concept of egalitarian participation as a guideline for joint actions. Well-known examples of this cooperative pattern of interaction are the hoplite phalanx, the symposium, collective hunting, and pairs of brothers and friends. In the visual arts, the fact that the members of a community had equal shares in a joint action was frequently expressed (Fehr 1996b and 2011) by representing all the figures involved in such action with similar *schēmata* (e.g., Harmodius and Aristogeiton, figure 26.1, paired as friends in the group on the Athenian Agora; see Hölscher 2010). Similarly, in cities such as Olynthus and Priene (Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994), the identical floor plans of the houses were symbolic of the equal parts that all members of the polis had taken in the realization of the urban project.

The cooperation based on equality characteristic of such communities could at the same time be understood also as a competition (*agōn*) among all those involved. In antiquity, the two notions of cooperation and competition were by no means mutually exclusive.

Thus, Plutarch famously noted that the artists and craftsmen who collaborated in Pericles's time to make the great buildings and works of art on the Acropolis competed with one another (Plutarch, *Per.* 13.1). The identical postures and gestures (*schēmata*) of runners on painted Attic vases, for example, illustrate that the competitions taking place within a community could be understood as a form of egalitarian participation. The same can be assumed regarding the statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton in the Athenian Agora, because the two were lovers. In such love affairs, both partners tried to gain attention through joint, glorious deeds while at the same time carrying out an *agōn*.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 26.1 Detail of a throne ("Elgin Throne") depicting the Tyrannicides of 477 BCE. Provenance unknown. C. 300 BCE. Marble. Height 81.28 cm. Malibu, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 74.AA.12.

(Source: Seltman 1947, pl. 7.)

The references to relationships between "unequal" people and their patterns of interaction, which can be seen in images and monuments of the Greek and Roman world, likewise offer several opportunities for sociohistorically oriented research. Thus, depictions of, for instance, members of Greek *oikoi* and Roman *familiae* shed light on social (p. 586)

relationships and complementary patterns of interaction within these social subsystems (e.g., husband and wife, free and not free, older and

younger adults: see Zanker 1975; Kleiner 1977; Sutton 1981 and 2004; Bergemann 1997; Löhr 2000; Seifert 2007; Matheson 2009). Here the "private sphere" and the "public space" (a distinction created within the context of the civic emancipation of the eighteenth century) often appear to merge in the same visual context. Scenes in which children or adolescents are shown together with adults have been studied with particular intensity in the last years (Beaumont 1995; Neils and Oakley 2003; Uzzi 2005). It has become more and more clear that these images express, first and foremost, the goal of socializing the offspring, that is, the expectation and hope that the children will adopt the roles appropriate to their gender as adults (Seifert 2011). It was not the intention of these images, however, to characterize "childhood" (or "youth," respectively) as a world

of its own. Valuable information about the social interactions between “unequals” in *oikos* and *familia* is also provided by the arrangement of rooms in ancient houses (Wallace-Hadrill 1994; Zanker 1995b; Nevett 1999 and 2007; Bergmann 2007).

A special form of social interaction between “unequals” can be seen when a member of a society confronts individuals, groups, or institutions that formally or informally act (p. 587) in the name of the society or embody it symbolically. “Unequal” partners of this kind interact, for example, within the social control of the individual through everyone else, a phenomenon characteristic of ancient face-to-face societies, which is further illuminated by the analysis of the figures of observers in narrative images (Kaeser 1990; Fehr 2011). A social control by higher authorities finds eloquent expression in the architectural design of buildings for spectacles in the Roman world (Clarke 2003, 130–159).

Status: “Elites” and the “Rest of Society”

For a long time, the majority of studies concerned with sociohistorical aspects within the field of Greek and Roman art and architecture focused on the goal of finding a relationship between the material evidence analyzed by them and an “elite,” frequently referred to as an “aristocracy.” By “elite,” these authors generally intended a socially homogeneous upper or leading class that was wealthy enough not to have to work and which was furthermore characterized by an intellectual and moral education that fit their status, along with taste and a distinct ability to make aesthetic judgments (in German, *Bildung* and *Geschmack*). In works of art and in buildings (such as the large houses of the Hellenistic period and Roman villas) attributed to the initiative of members of these “elites,” one expected to find clear evidence for the sophisticated lifestyle corresponding to their ideologies and value systems (e.g., Schneider 1975 and 1983; Mielsch 1987; Kiderlen 1995; Dickmann 1999). More recent work, however, has begun to acknowledge—for instance, in reference to Late Archaic and Early Classical vase painting—that these “elites” were usually composed of several social groups that had quite different behavioral ideals and interests (Neer 2002) and often competed with or even fought each other (Sutton 2000; Kistler 2004).

In antiquity, this lack of homogeneity was intensified, particularly in times of radical historical change (such as the Late Archaic–Early Classical period and the Early Imperial period), by social climbers, who tried to integrate themselves within the existing upper class by imitating its highly regarded behavior or by acquiring traditional status symbols. Relevant studies (Zanker 1995b; Fehr 2009) emphasize that this process of integration

into the social elite was only partially successful and convincing, if that (as shown, for instance, by Petronius's Trimalchio). This usually happened because the climber lacked the right upbringing and education and sometimes also simply because of insufficient financial means. But did the climbers actually recognize this failure as such? Perhaps they perceived their attempts as successful, as a demonstration of their belonging to a kind of "community of values" wherein all groups and classes of society, regardless of their differences and tensions, could feel accepted (Wallace-Hadrill 1991; Zanker 1995b).

Moreover, we should closely examine to what extent the classes and groups "below" the social "elites" developed their own lifestyles and value concepts that reached beyond (p. 588) the imitation of the "elites" (Fehr 2009) on the basis of their own personal experience, such as the relationship between their economic and social achievement and their professional skills (*technai/artes*) or the regular alternation between working and resting periods. These values are only sporadically mentioned in the written records, but they could have influenced the images and buildings commissioned by members of the "nonelites." This, in turn, could have created certain modifications to the traditional visual world of symbols of the upper class (Petersen 2006). It is also possible that in public monuments whose design was supposed to appeal to the social "elite," additional ways to understand the monument were built in for the "rest of society."

Belonging Together: Strengthening Social Coherence and the Awareness of Collective Identity

It is all too well known that ancient social systems were not monolithic constructs. Structural problems such as a disparate distribution of political rights and income or the coexistence of diverse religious beliefs and cultural traditions could seriously threaten their coherence or even, over a short or long period of time, lead to their collapse. Such tendencies could be balanced out, to a certain degree, by the principles of a traditional social ethic and by laws. Another way of preventing such threat was by shaping the communication and interaction in the public sphere through political and religious institutions, ceremonies, and rituals (e.g., shared meals or cultic processions and festivals of the citizens of a polis), so that the feeling of togetherness was strengthened: every individual with his or her specific interests and ideas should feel at home in the community and identify with it. Numerous studies have analyzed the ways in which this was accomplished using literary sources as a basis (see Gruen 2011). However, the analysis of ancient images and buildings can likewise make an important contribution in

this regard (Hölscher 1997; Marconi 1994 and 2007), as will be shown here with a few examples.

The *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (3.298–299) describes how, in the sanctuary of the god in Delphi, “the countless tribes of men built the whole temple of wrought stones” (trans. H. G. Evelyn-White). In fact, during the sixth century BCE, donations were collected for the rebuilding of the burned Temple of Apollo at Delphi from all over the Greek world and also beyond it. In the fourth century BCE, the orator Isocrates (3.66) refers to the monumental sacral buildings erected in Athens at the time of Pericles as “works of the democracy” (see Metzler 1988). Statements like these suggest that the building of large temples to honor a god could be understood as a collective effort made by all those who recognized the divinity as their patron and felt united as a community when they celebrated rituals together. As a kind of exercise in cooperation, such a project could (p. 589) strengthen social coherence and soften political tensions. However, this could work only if regulations that were generally accepted as just defined the contribution an individual had to make according to his or her capacity and his or her place in the hierarchy of the community. Perhaps there is a connection between this proportional concept of justice and the fact that Greek temples were built using a relatively small number of standardized elements of various sizes (Fehr 1996a).

In addition, certain forms of Greek and Roman buildings for public gatherings offered the *politai* or *cives Romani* the opportunity to experience an intense self-awareness as a community and thus strengthened their identification with their city-state or the *Imperium Romanum*. When, for instance, Athenian citizens gathered in the Theater of Dionysus, the thousand-headed demos seated in the steep *cavea* soared above the speaker standing virtually at its feet and could feel itself like a collective—and often mercurial—sovereign, which the speaker had to treat respectfully (see Neumeister and Raeck 2000). The situation was different in the Amphitheatrum Flavium in Rome (figure 26.2), where the strict seating arrangements for various ranks and groups in Roman society made its clear structure quite evident to every visitor (Clarke 2003, 130–159). In the arena, on the other hand, barbarians or criminals confronted each other, thus conveying to the spectators who looked down from far above the feeling that they, representing the Roman Empire as a civilized community, stood high above the “vermin.”



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Fig. 26.2 The Colosseum, from a model of ancient Rome. Rome, Museo della Civiltà Romana.

(Photograph © Gianni Dagli Orti/Art Archive at Art Resource, New York, AA375145.)

In a well-known passage in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle states (1132b–1133a, 6–8): “The very existence of the state depends on proportionate reciprocity (p. 590)

[*antipoiein*].... This is why we set up a shrine of the Graces in a public place, to remind men to return a kindness [*antapodosis*]; for that is a special characteristic of grace [*charis*], since it is a duty

not only to repay a service done one, but another time to take the initiative in doing a service oneself” (trans. by H. Rackham). From this passage, it would appear that the ethic norm of *charis*, in the sense of voluntarily doing a favour or returning it, respectively, was regarded as indispensable for the coherence of a society.

While the written evidence referring to the history of reciprocal gift giving within human communities and in the interaction between mortals and immortals has been thoroughly discussed by scholars for generations, studies of this particular aspect in reference to Greek and Roman art and architecture are comparatively rare. Some have addressed visual depictions of the giving of various kinds of gifts, gathering the available visual evidence (Sutton 1981, 246–447; Koch-Harnack 1983; Grüner 2007; Tsoukala 2009). Furthermore, inscriptions on terracotta and metal vases and on strigils, mirrors, fibulae, and rings refer to the function of these objects as a gift from one individual to another (Steinhart and Wirbelauer 2000). Additionally, we have numerous gifts for the gods found in sanctuaries (Franssen 2011). All of these objects have been duly classified according to typology, place of production, and chronology. What is missing, however, is an attempt that goes beyond such classificatory differentiations and draws, on the basis of the archaeological evidence, general conclusions regarding the social norm of *charis* (an exception: Reden 2002). This norm did not simply apply to the private sphere of partners involved in an act of gift giving but reached far beyond this—as indicated by the passage from Aristotle—representing a necessary prerequisite for the coherence of the entire society to which these partners belonged; therefore, everyone was expected to participate in reciprocal gift giving (Himmelmann 1969). The fact that the fulfillment of this norm was actually understood as an act of public interest can be extrapolated from Attic vase paintings. There, in a large number of cases, several couples of “givers/

receivers” are brought together in the same picture. Because reciprocal *charis* also provided a basis for the interaction between mortals and immortals, it would also be important to analyze whether this model of behavior critical for the strengthening of social coherence also forms the basis of the much-debated depictions of humans or deities pouring libations (for these, see Himmelmann 2003). Finally, a comparison between scenes of gift giving and selling/purchase on painted vases of the Late Archaic and Early Classical periods could shed light on the ancient perception of the differences and similarities between reciprocal gift giving in the social realm and the exchange of goods for other goods or money on the market (see Meyer 1988).

Another important prerequisite for the coherence and stability of a complex society is a system of visual symbols that is accepted by all of its members as an expression of their common norms and values, which, at the same time, takes into account the specific interests, experiences, traditions, and beliefs of the particular classes and groups along with the ethnic and religious communities within this society. In the multicultural Hellenistic states, it seems that this principle was applied to the design of images whose message was supposed to be understood by a broad public consisting of differing groups. This aim was achieved by conceiving of the image, so to speak, as a multilingual visual “text”: everyone could agree to (p. 591) it because each of the groups addressed could read this “text” in its own way, that is, on the basis of its traditional group-specific codes and as an affirmation of its particular collective identity (Neumer-Pfau 1983; Fehr 1997; see also Kyrieleis 1973; Kyrieleis 1975, 126–136).

Social Conflicts

Unlike in the modern era, in Greek and Roman antiquity, visual media were hardly ever used to attack domestic political opponents directly or as a tool to defame certain social groups or social strata. Nonetheless, ancient viewers might have connected a large number of individual images or groups of images with particular political conflicts within the state or with social tensions. Artists who wanted to induce such a reaction could appeal to a traditional and very popular scheme of ideas: mythological analogy. One example is the quarrel between Poseidon and Athena for Attica, a conflict that was frequently depicted in Attic art of the fifth century BCE and was settled by a court decision. Within the context of the fight between Athens and Sparta, this mythical conflict could have been understood as an analogue to the conflict between “radical democratic” and oligarchic, Sparta-supporting Athenians (Tiverios 2009).

Social antagonism has also been the subject of some studies, which have discussed the interrelations between certain contemporaneous series of images (produced in the Late Archaic Period and in the transitional phase between the Late Roman Republic and the Early Principate). These studies have shown the possible presence of tensions between equally ranking social groups, characterized by ideological divergences and opposing lifestyles (Zanker 1988, 33–77; Sutton 2000; Neer 2002; Kistler 2006). More research is needed on this particular issue.

Likewise, it would be worth some effort to investigate to what extent the seemingly idyllic family scenes on Attic funerary monuments or the peaceful atmosphere of the Dionysian-Aphrodisian imagery of Late Classical vases are an indication of escapism (see Burn 1987; Tiverios 2009, 190–192), indirectly pointing to a situation of heavy social and political strife. With regard to Roman art, many images convey the message of *concordia* (Hölscher 1990), be it in the conception of these representations or in the inscriptions accompanying them. In many cases, this is probably to be assessed as a masquerade, which conjured up for the ancient viewer an ideal of peaceful agreement between social classes or within dynasties, concealing an ongoing conflict. This fact is indeed generally well known; however, here also, case studies are needed to analyze further the communicative strategies and intentions of those behind such conciliating and obscuring depictions.

The idea conveyed by a monumental public building is usually, truthfully or not, one of stable and orderly social relationships, even if political quarrels and social tensions might have influenced the decision to build it or the subsequent work of designing and constructing it, to a large extent. However, such contexts can hardly ever be reconstructed in a reliable way. It is different when we analyze the architectural development (p. 592) of a Greek agora or a Roman forum in the context of the diverse interdependent forms of political, administrative, cultic, and economic uses of such a city center. Here the visible urban structures can point to a change in these functions regarding their respective importance and also their connectedness and their demarcation from one another—and sometimes also to their collisions. The latter, for instance, can be seen on the Athenian Agora, where “the potters and bronzeworkers descended on the shrine of Zeus, to the northwest, after the Persian War, and marble cutters, metalworkers and potters took over the south side after the destruction wrought by Sulla.... Scattered remains show that ill-built structures, probably shops, invaded the northeast corner, reaching towards the Panathenaic Way, in the late fifth century, probably in the days of the Peloponnesian War, when... there was a desperate shortage of living space within the city.” We get the impression that “the small houses and workshops on the fringes were always ready to encroach jungle-like on the central square, especially in time of depression and decay” (Thompson and Wycherley 1972, 170). Through this

“invasion,” traders and craftsmen clashed with the political and religious authorities traditionally in charge of the city center, during periods when these authorities were weakened. Here we encounter the traces of a latent conflict between—to use an Aristotelian distinction—that part of the population that had to do “the necessary things” in order to make a living and those people who, thanks to their wealth, did not feel this pressure and could therefore devote themselves to “the activities of a free man”: public government and service to the gods.

The Banquet as Social Microcosm

In both Greek and Roman culture, there is a complex context of interaction and communication to which, as will be outlined in the following, all of the perspectives mentioned so far—and others—can be applied and in which the interdependency of these perspectives becomes visible: the banquet (see, in general, Murray 1990; Slater 1991; Murray and Tecusan 1995; Nielsen and Nielsen 1998; Charalampos and Carrière 2003; Bruit et al. 2004; on Greek banquets, see Fehr 1971; Dentzer 1982; Hurschmann 1985; Lissarrague 1987; Schmitt Pantel 1992; Schäfer 1997; Seifert 2007; Yatromanolakis 2009b; on Roman banquets, see Dunbabin 2003; Vössing 2004; Roller 2006; Schnurbusch 2011) (figure 26.3).

The male guests who were invited to such an event regarded themselves as a community of “equals,” in which a *primus inter pares*, who functioned as a kind of moderator, defined the program and the respective rules and supervised their observance. This exclusive circle interacted in the banquet hall in many different ways with people of lower classes (mostly slaves); no host could do without their services, and their (supposed) physical and character “deficits” often contributed to the amusement and self-affirmation of the guests. The list of such people includes cup bearers and other servants, prostitutes, acrobats, pantomimes, dancing dwarfs, and also uninvited poor devils, such as beggars and parasites.



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Fig. 26.3 Wall block of the Tomb of the Diver, from Paestum, Tempa del Prete. Symposium scene. C. 480 BCE. Painted stucco on travertine. Height 78 cm. Paestum, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 23105.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

(p. 593) Within such a community of “equal” guests, numerous formal and informal competitions were held, in which the individual symposiast, demonstrating his *aretē*, could prove to be the best, say, the hardest or most elegant drinker, the most gifted singer/poet, the most brilliant intellectual,

or the best-qualified suitor.

During ancient banquets of the upper class, the host could demonstrate his wealth and social prestige by ensuring splendid, more or less tasteful decor and many possibilities for sensual pleasure. With regard to the Greek symposium, we have to question, however, the long-prevailing assumption that this institution was, until the Early Classical period, a privilege reserved for an “aristocratic” elite with a considerable amount of “time of freedom” (*scholē*) available. On the contrary, we have to take into consideration the possibility that the middle class also held symposia and that there was a larger variety of this practice, in relation to diverse social groups and occasions.

The commitment of all invited guests to host a banquet at some point was a manifestation of reciprocal *charis/gratia*, which, just like the custom of the gifts given to one another by the guests, contributed to the long-term cohesion of the community. For the same reason, avoiding conflicts at the banquet was a constantly repeated exhortation. However, latent hostility and open, sometimes even violent, strife were daily occurrences.

Furthermore, the banquet played an important role in the socialization of male adolescents, whose willingness to comply with the social rules and to be respectful of traditional values could be strengthened during these events. Of course, the exemplary behavior of the adult guests was a necessary requirement for this, and all of them were expected to make sure that everyone demonstrated appropriate demeanor and self-control (*sōphrosynē*). However, the consumption of wine often led guests to cross lines boisterously and disobey those social norms. This was criticized by some guests for ethical reasons but also approved of by many of them, because such behavior could

(p. 594) be justified through the divine authority of the wine god Dionysus, *per definitionem* the deity who broke all boundaries.

All of these aspects are visually expressed, either directly or indirectly, in numerous Greek and Roman banquet scenes. These representations contain a significant amount of information not found in ancient texts. Particularly illuminating are depictions on painted vases, which were used when drinking together (especially drinking cups and kraters for mixing wine and water); the decoration of these vessels, themselves part of the events illustrated on them, shows how the symposium was perceived and thought of by its participants (Lissarrague 1987).

Many Greek and Roman premises in which banquets took place have been found in excavations of settlements and sanctuaries (Börker 1983; Dunbabin 1991 and 1996; Leybold 2008). They allow for important conclusions about the diverse functions and social/religious contexts of collective drinking and eating in the private and public sphere. The *andrōnes* in Greek dwellings of the post-Archaic period are of special interest, inasmuch as they reveal interactions between the two small worlds of the *oikos* and symposium while also making clear their boundaries (Nevett 1999): with the often luxurious decoration of these rooms, the owner of the house directed the guests' attention toward the material wealth of his *oikos* and his status. At the same time, however, architectural design ensured that members of this *oikos* who were not allowed to participate in the symposium (especially wives and daughters) would not be able to see and, probably, not able to hear what took place inside the *andrōn*.

This archaeological evidence for banqueting has been assembled in many extensive syntheses and thoroughly analyzed to date. The individual aspects mentioned above are often discussed in detail in those publications but are relatively rarely connected with one another. It is time for an attempt to develop a complex paradigm of interpretation that could be used as the basis for a broad, comprehensive sociohistorical interpretation of ancient banquet culture (and perhaps also of other important areas of Greek and Roman culture). In this field of research, it would be particularly interesting to analyze systematically the close interconnection between the pictorial/architectural evidence and the written record. The interdisciplinary collaboration required by such a project has made considerable advances, as demonstrated by the results of the numerous scientific conferences on the subject that have taken place in the past decades.

Conclusions

In the ancient literary tradition, historical change or durability, no matter on what level, was frequently credited to the work and influence of great personalities. However, in contrast to today's popular concept of the "individual," there was no attempt to ascribe to

these personalities certain unique features not to be found in any other human being. Instead, the praise of someone's uniqueness was based on the fact that the person described embodied much-valued characteristics and behavioral patterns—for (p. 595) instance, courage, justice, or prudence—to a higher degree than all other individuals in whom such characteristics or behavioral patterns could also be seen. This ancient approach starting out from the typical enables the modern interpreter to apply sociological categories and provides full justification for the numerous attempts by historians of Greek and Roman art described here to use concepts such as "role," "elite," "forms of interaction," or "social coherence/conflicts" in the analysis of images and architectural monuments.

Future efforts in this area could tie in with the discussion—which was initiated by Jacob Burckhardt and Bernhard Schweitzer—about the ancient artist/architect as a social being. This could significantly contribute to achieving the goal formulated at the beginning of this chapter, namely, of elucidating the meaning of a work of ancient art through a methodically convincing connection with its social context (see Tanner 1999 and 2006). The idea formulated by the artist of his or her work of art was to a considerable degree determined by the fact that the artist himself or herself was part of that social context; the artist always had to fathom how much artistic freedom the patron's expectations—taking into consideration the message the latter wanted to convey—allowed for and also had to keep in mind the public's reception of his or her work. Moreover, the artist could also try to improve his or her not particularly high social status by attempting (sometimes by writing theoretical treatises) to satisfy the needs of the intellectual viewer.

Translated from the German by Deike Benjoya and Clemente Marconi.

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Gender Studies

Caroline Vout

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the use of gender studies as an approach to the study of the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It first considers the portrait of Sir John Reade, painted by English artist George Romney in 1788 and currently in the possession of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. It then cites ancient works of art that combine a nude body with a portrait, such as statues. The chapter also discusses gender roles and power relations between gods and mortals.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, gender roles, gender studies, gods, John Reade, mortals, power relations

Looking at art, especially art produced by peoples as remote as the Greeks and Romans, can cause anxiety. How confident are we that we know what we are looking at, that it looks as it did in antiquity, that we see in the same way as the ancients? Attempts to answer these questions confirm that we are right to be anxious: even the ability to time-travel would not give us a Greek or a Roman mindset (Hopkins 1999). Yet still we look, not only because we are intrigued but also because we *can* see that material culture offers a different inroad into the Greek and Roman past from that offered by literary evidence, a pathway with the potential to lead straight to women, slaves, children, “ordinary people” (Clarke 2003), who are rarely represented by texts. Even authors such as Thucydides or Tacitus, who stress the accuracy or detachment of their prose, write from an elite perspective, which is as much about writing themselves into history as it is about “telling it as it was.” For all that ancient artists had their own style, agenda, and ambition, too, few of their names survive. The very nature of their production opens it to a greater range of interpretations than Thucydides’s history and, often, a greater array of audiences. Some of it was even made with women in mind.

How are we, as historians of art and architecture, to handle these problems and opportunities? From the 1970s, feminist scholars, motivated by the desire to reexamine the past from and for a female perspective, devoted contagious energy to looking for their

sisters in the ancient world. Unsurprisingly, their gaze fell on painted pottery and funerary monuments, both categories of artifacts rich in the representation of women. “What women were doing while men were active in all the areas traditionally emphasized by classical scholars” (Pomeroy 1975, ix) was exposed to public view: they are seen making dedications to the gods, spinning, fetching water, putting on jewelry, having sex, and saying goodbye to their husbands.

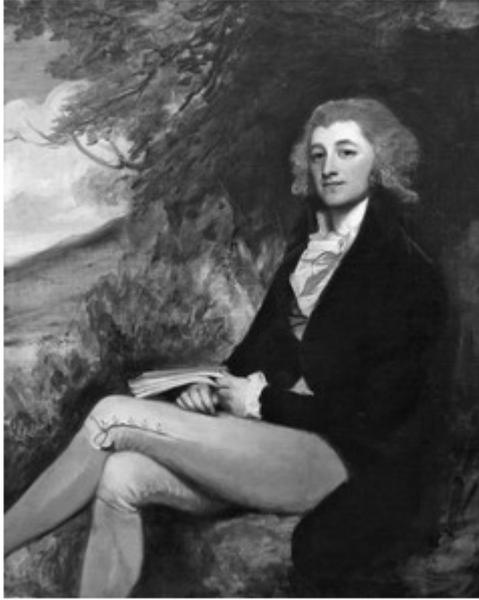
In this way, the act of looking *for* became an act of looking *at*—and the more carefully scholars looked, the greater their awareness that these images were not simply documentary but governed by artistic convention; that if they were evidence of anything, it was not the secluded sphere of women, as Pomeroy had hoped, but the representational (p. 603) sphere of their particular visual medium. Not that this makes pots or grave markers useless for her purposes, for in getting to grips with their iconography, one is exposing the means by which women and the role of women were constructed and social norms inculcated. In other words, one begins to understand not what real, flesh-and-blood women did on a daily basis, which was probably rather dull anyway, but how they were classified in relation to other women, men, animals, and gods and why they did not have more options (e.g., Kampen 1981; Reeder 1995; Leader 1997; Lewis 2002; Sojc 2005a). They are still freed from their women’s quarters onto a bigger stage; however, their female status is no longer a given but is interrogated.

Such interrogation is of a piece with a shift in approach in the 1990s from “feminist history” to “gender studies” which strive to situate the female and feminine in relation to the male and masculine. What was sometimes simplified as a binary model for making sense of who we are (male versus nonmale or female) is now a more fluid scale, which recognizes that masculinity is as dependent on femininity for its definition as femininity is on masculinity, that each end of the spectrum is in dialogue to voice further identities, and that masculinity is a way of inhabiting the world that must be repeatedly proven or “performed” in light of constant questioning (see, e.g., Foxhall and Salmon 1998; Wohl 1998; Gleason 1995; Gunderson 2000). In the words of Judith Butler (1990, 270), “Gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time—an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts.”

It matters little for our purposes whether gendered behavior is or is not biologically derived (Browne 2007, 2). “Gender” is a mode of analysis that can help us interpret the range of bodily descriptions, interactions, and gestures that ancient authors and artists ascribe to their subjects and to put each piece of evidence into a large enough grid to appreciate these traits not as quirks but as social characteristics. No data set can be sufficiently large to enable us to revisit antiquity; codes of behavior are as culturally

determined as modes of representation. Still, we cannot see as they saw. But “gender studies” give us a language with which to worry about similarity and difference, not only between ancients but also between them and us—and to foreground what it might mean then and now both to look at images of the human body and to look at them as only a man, woman (gay, straight, empowered, disenfranchised, and so on) or a transgender person looks. Art history, too, has shifted the focus of its inquiry in recent years from the moment of production to reception so as to emphasize ways of seeing other than connoisseurship. Classical art historians interested in the viewing experience (e.g., Osborne 1994 on the female nude; Stewart 1997 on the Parthenon frieze; Stansbury O’Donnell 2006 and Lyons 2008 on pots) have used the work of gender theorists such as Butler to underwrite their subjectivity.

But for all of this “progress,” few books or articles on ancient Greek and Roman art and gender match Maud Gleason’s (1995) or Erik Gunderson’s (2000) sophisticated treatments of the literary material. Any book or article that declares an investment in and contribution to gender in its title is still likely to be about women or goddesses and to conflate gender and sexuality to tell of nude bodies and traditionally erotic body parts, cross-dressing, or childbirth (e.g., Cohen 1997; Kampen 1996a; Morelli 2009; Budin (p. 604) 2011). An exception is the collection of essays edited by Natasha Sojc (2005a) and the work done on the gendered use of space in antiquity, in particular on the social structure of the Greek and Roman house, and on architecture as reinforcing gendered hierarchies (Greece: Nevett 1995 and 2010; Antonaccio 2000; Rome: Fredrick 1995; Kellum 1996; Wallace-Hadrill 1996; Muth 1998; Trimble 2002; Milnor 2005). What American literature specialist Jennifer Doyle (2009, 391) identifies as the virtue of “thinking about queer visual culture” is true of the gender theory in which it is grounded: “To pursue this line of inquiry is to ask questions about where and how that art happens, about who that art addresses,... about what kinds of things art makes possible. It is also to look differently at art in general—at the sexual politics of all art.” She continues with a Warhol print in mind: “what’s queer about that Warhol image is not exactly what it depicts, but where it hangs and what its location makes visible.”



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 27.1 George Romney, *Portrait of Sir John Reade* (1788). William L. Elkins Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art inv. E1924-3-19.

(Photograph © The Philadelphia Museum of Art.)

With this more capacious definition in mind, this chapter wills us to rethink the mode of analysis that is “gender studies” to embrace not (only) sexy, sexual, or aberrant bodies but all ancient bodies and the contexts for these bodies. By way of rehearsal for the ancient case studies we will use, consider the *Portrait of Sir John Reade*, painted by English artist George Romney in 1788 and now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (figure 27.1). Something about the slight tilt of the head and

the inquiring gaze combine (p. 605) with the angle of the left leg, exaggerated as it is by the buttons on his breeches and by the hand that holds the papers as though about to swat a fly, to give its subject an impatience that borders on the arrogant. Asking how this portrait compares with other portraits by Romney, an artist renowned for his paintings of women, particularly those of Emma Hamilton, and by English artists and artists from continental Europe, along with late-eighteenth-century ideals of masculinity more broadly, would give us more information about the degree of his affectation, attractiveness, activeness, and arrogance. It would confirm that, contrary to the conventions of other places and periods, looking like an off-duty Apollo Belvedere against a Romantic backdrop was a normal and positively masculine posture, at least among aristocratic society. But even without this contextual data, we can see that the subtlest change to the angle of head, hands, and leg would modify the identity embodied, making Reade more or less relaxed, aloof, knowing—more or less masculine. It is impossible to look at the human figure and not view it in terms of gender. The issue of erotic appeal need not come into it.

Greek and Roman Bodies

Were John Reade to have been born in ancient Rome, he would probably have been depicted in a toga. In contrast with the studied eccentricity of Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein's painting of Goethe of 1786–7 (Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt am Main; Bisanz 1988), in which a togalike mantle acts as a dust sheet to cover a body that echoes the statue of Sleeping Ariadne in the Vatican (how do its backdrop and its subject's hands, breeches, and debt to the Antique compare with those by Romney?), in Italy, in the Republic and the Empire, the toga was standard elite male attire—at least as far as visual commemoration was concerned. It gave its honorands an excuse not to have a body. In reality, few activities were carried out toga-clad (Vout 1996). In art, wearing the toga made men's membership of an enfranchised, Roman world explicit.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 27.2 Statue of Marcus Nonius Balbus (Senior ?) in a toga, from the Basilica Noniana at Herculaneum. C. 27 BCE–14 CE. Marble. Height 2.07 m. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 6167.

(Photograph © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome.)

What kind of Roman men are these? Let us begin with two togate statues found in a basilica at Herculaneum (Wallace-Hadrill 2011) and identified, on the basis of epigraphic evidence, as praetor, patron, and benefactor of the town, Marcus Nonius Balbus (tribune of the plebs in 32 BCE), and his father of the same name (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale invv. 6167 and 6246). Each figure is a little more than two meters in height—one in a Late Republican–Early Imperial toga (figure 27.2)

and the other in a slightly later toga with the mass of folds or *umbo*. Does this point to the second of them being the son? Perhaps, although problems with the early documentation of the finds and the fit of the young head to the body leave room for uncertainty (Allroggen-Bedel 1974, 101–103; Zanker 1983, 260–264; Fejfer 2008, 219–223; Borriello, Guidobaldi, and Guzzo 2008, 47–53 and cat. nos. 47 and 48). What we can say is that both

hold the right arm across the body in a way that is unusual, especially in togas of the Early Empire (Fejfer 1997, 32). Given the emphasis that Roman rhetorical writings put on the deliberate and moderate use of the hands (Aldrete 1999) and on gender as a category of critical discourse, it is (p. 606) difficult not to see their pose as studied—an assertion of controlled and trained masculinity made through the art of speaking. The Nonii Balbi do not just address the viewers; they persuade them of their right to be noticed. As Joy Connolly observes of rhetoric and masculinity more broadly (2007: 96), “the rhetoric of gender helps recast the competitive nature of intra-elite relations as a contest of virtue, a perfect fit with senatorial aristocratic ideology and its claim to preserve the archaic *mos maiorum*.”



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Fig. 27.3 Statue of Viciria, from the Basilica Noniana at Herculaneum. C. 27 BCE–14 CE. Marble. Height 2.17 m. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 6168.

(Photograph © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome.)

According to Quintilian (*Inst.* 1 *praef.* 9), the perfect orator had to be “a good man” (*vir bonus*). The Latin noun *vir* is at the root of *virtus*, or virtue, and more loaded than the alternative *homo*: a *vir* was an elite man (Corbeill 2010, 223), a man of honor, husband material. In Herculaneum’s Basilica Noniana, the presence of the praetor’s wife and mother, Viciria (figure 27.3), turn him and his father into family men also, asking us to see the former as someone’s son in addition to being a successful citizen. The

tightly wrapped body of the mother’s statue draws attention to the fact that only its fingers are exposed, accentuating the free arms of her male counterparts. We were perhaps too hasty in claiming that togas deny corporeal individuality. In contrast with her constraint, their bodies are expressive. Even her head is covered as a mark of her modesty and her face so lined as to make her old before her time, the ultimate matriarch, like Cornelia, (p. 607) mother of the Gracchi, or Livia, the wife of Augustus. Portraits of women were often more idealized than those of men, while sculpture of this body type

was more common in funerary than in honorific contexts (Fejfer 2008, 335). Such conventions make Balbus's mother stand out. Does she seem dangerously influential, like Livia in relation to her aged husband and son, or, like Cornelia and her children, only enforce the men's male reputation?

More than this, are all togate men the same kind of men? Take an Augustan funerary relief that was discovered built into the ancient walls at Ravenna (figure 27.4: Zimmer 1982 no. 62; Clarke 2003, 118–120). In its top tier, a male and a veiled female figure stare out of a niche, visible from the waist up but clearly wearing the toga and stola, respectively. To all intents and purposes, they are a similar couple to Viciria and Balbus Senior, except that the inscription below them records that the man is shipbuilder Publius Longidienus, and the woman is his freedwoman and thus formerly his slave. Not only this, but in the bottom tier of the stele, a male figure, in a tunic this time (only practical for the shipbuilding he is doing), is again identified as Longidienus. Above him, a second niche contains two more toga-clad men, their interaction with each other relaxed, even manly. A third inscription reveals that they are his freedmen—and that they paid for the monument.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 27.4 Grave stele of Longidienus and Longidiena. C. 27 BCE–14 CE. Marble. Height 1.4 m. Ravenna, Museo Nazionale inv. 7.

(Photograph © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome.)

(p. 608) This is a monument that enjoys playing with categories of class and status. More often in grave monuments of this kind, hierarchy is marked by having togate figures buy goods from tunic-wearing workers (e.g., Zimmer 1982 nos. 39 and 114), whereas here, Longidienus is one moment bodying forth the freeborn status that he shares with the Nonii Balbi and the next embracing his identity as a working man in “nonelite” attire. This oddity is made more marked by the claims to citizenship celebrated by

the dress and titlature of his companions. We see here *both* the difficulty of dividing

gender off from the categories of class and status *and* the problem of conflating these categories so as to see gender in (simple) terms of dress or gesture. It shows that not all togate men are *virī boni* and that a veil and stola can turn a slave into a respectable Roman wife; at the same time, it reminds us that gender is not, like these costumes, “an artifice to be taken (p. 609) on or taken off at will, and hence, not an effect of choice” (Butler 1993, x). Instead, gender “decides the subject” (Butler 1993, x). By asking which pose is better (rhetorician or worker; husband or slave owner), Longidiusus’s and Longidiena’s stele keeps manliness on the drawing board.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 27.5 Loricated statue of Marcus Nonius Balbus, from the Terrace of Marcus Nonius Balbus at Herculaneum. C. 27 BCE–14 CE. Marble. Height 2.35 m. Herculaneum, archaeological deposit inv. 2578/77875.

(Photograph © Andrew Wallace-Hadrill.)

Back in Herculaneum, Marcus Nonius Balbus the Younger was not always toga-wearing, either. In fact, statues survive that show him standing in military cuirass and cloak (figure 27.5: La Rocca, Parisi Presicce, and Lo Monaco 2011 cat. no. 3.3), on horseback in similar dress (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 6104), and naked. When he is in military guise, his right arm is raised so as to address the viewer in a more obvious manner than in the basilica. This gesture is less about persuasion than

acclamation of deeds already done, “as if to thank the inhabitants of Herculaneum cheering their patron” (Monaco 1881, 45) and any *virtus* more aggressive (McDonnell 2006). There is little of the negotiation encouraged by his togate statue. Masculinity is not being “performed” in the way that it was earlier; it is already proven, and the viewer is rendered passive, resigned to the role of spectator rather than participant. In the case of the equestrian image, the viewer is the enemy and Balbus imperious. The question “What kind of man is this?” becomes imperative.

(p. 610) This is also the case with Balbus’s naked, or (more accurately) nude, statue, which was originally displayed in the theater (figure 27.6: La Rocca, Parisi Presicce, and

Lo Monaco 2011 cat. no. 3.2). Although its arms and legs are restored, it is otherwise intact, its Republican portrait head perched on top of a gloriously athletic body. The military cloak is no longer a practical garment but a fashion accessory precariously draped from the left shoulder, its fluid folds accenting the strong lines of the statue's iliac crests and pectoral muscles. These, too, are a costume—part of a marble torso, which, in contrast to Balbus's facial features, complete with wrinkles, is Greek in origin, from the same stock as the Apoxyomenos and Doryphorus (figure 29.2), right back to the Archaic kouroi whose nudity was part of their prestige. Only the appearance and position of the head, angled as it is to the right, signals that this statue looks in a new direction; Cresilas's fifth-century Diomedes, on which the body is based, shares neither the expressiveness nor the jauntiness. How are we to reconcile the head and the body, reconcile this Balbus with his other appearances?



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 27.6 Statue of Marcus Nonius Balbus, nude, from the theater at Herculaneum. C. 27 BCE–14 CE. Marble. Height 2.17 m. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 6102.

(Photograph © Courtesy of the Museum.)

The statue is not the only example from Italy of the Late Republican and Early Imperial period to combine a nude body with a portrait; some of them, like those from Foruli and Formiae, stand in a similar pose, while others, like that of Gaius Cartilius Poplicola at Ostia, set one foot on a rock or a pillar-like object, leaning forward attentively so as to [\(p. 611\)](#) support themselves with their bent knee (see Hallett 2005, 108–110, 114). But the statue is strange within its immediate context, at Herculaneum's theater,

where Balbus's successors Lucius Mammius Maximus and Marcus Calatorius Quartio (Naples, Museo Nazionale invv. 5591 and 5597) are commemorated by heavily draped togate statues—bronze counterparts to the statues in the basilica—and where the extant female statues are cocooned in fabric (see Daehner 2007). Does their presence make him appear more or less Roman, more or less manly? The cuirassed body type was as Greek in its origin as the nude, but even the Greeks, whatever their premium on athleticism and

on homosocial relations among citizens, might have worried about Balbus's exhibitionism. In the fourth century BCE, the Attic orator Aeschines criticized his opponent Timarchus as follows (1.26):

They [Solon and the men of old] were too modest to speak with the arm outside the cloak, but this man [Timarchus] not long ago, yes, the other day, in an assembly of the people threw off his cloak and leaped about like a gymnast, half naked, his body so reduced and shamed by drunkenness and lewdness that right-minded men, at least, covered their eyes, being ashamed for the city that we should let such men as he be our advisors.

To call the statue of Balbus from the theater an aberrant image of masculinity, the kind of man who was criticized for not being sufficiently active or for being active in an insufficiently controlled way, a nonman or *cinaedus* (see, e.g., Richlin 1993; Williams 1999, 175-178, 209-224), would be absurd. For all that Roman writers were as quick as, if not quicker than, the Athenians to criticize their enemies for being sexually passive or overly sexed, the statue shares few of their specific charges, only, possibly, the sense of a broken walk and a hairless chest and legs (Quintilian, *Inst.* 5.9.14). Otherwise, it displays no notorious behavior. Balbus stands neither with his hand on his hip (Juvenal 6.O.24) nor scratching his head with one finger (Juvenal 9.133) and still has his pubic hair. He is also not in gaudy or transparent clothing but naked, so as to leave his biological sex in no doubt (compare Aristophanes, *Thesm.* 130-145, in which Mnesilochus tries to determine whether the person he has just seen is a man). In stark contrast to the array of lithe bodies like those of Ganymedes and Narcissus, with which Roman eyes were bombarded (Bartman 2002), there is little passive or teasing about him.

His immediate company, however, and the existence of his other statues on the site make it hard for us not to see the decision to display his sex here as striking, all the more so in the theater, where the notion of *performing* one's masculinity was amplified, where men played the roles of women, and where the building's entrances and seating were controlled so as to segregate the audience on the basis of nationality, class, gender, and marital status (see chapter 26 above). These features make the statue more self-conscious and the viewers more self-conscious than they were even in front of the cuirassed Balbus about their own looking and the role they are being made to play as a result. Do they desire him after all, as the emperor Tiberius is supposed to have desired the statue of Lysippus's Apoxyomenos near the Baths of Agrippa in Rome (Pliny, *HN* 34.2)? Do they find him decadent and louche or sexually aggressive? The answers depend as much on (p. 612) exactly where the statue stood and on whether it originally commanded the space as they do on the viewer's status, cultural heritage, and gender. So pervasive was the display of nude bodies and male sex organs in Italy (in sculpture, wall painting,

lamps, and mosaics, not to mention in the display of apotropaic phalloi) that we might wonder how far sexual desire had anything to do with it.

We are well advised to keep sex and gender separate, or at least to remind ourselves that for all of their flirtation, they need not be synonymous. It is gender that was a means of encoding power, and it is gender that demands that we study these statues not as data under a microscope but as sculpture that shared the viewer's world, asked to be measured against other sculptures and against the viewer's body, and elicited strong feeling. Alone, the statue of Nonius Balbus from the theater is pretty unsubtle, but put back next to his other statues, it takes its place on a sliding scale of masculinity that enables its subject to adopt different kinds of posturing at different points on the male-female scale. In the intersections of these different positions, Nonius Balbus is made three-dimensional, a multifaceted man, as opposed to a projection. He is sufficiently well rounded to function as a model citizen.

Gods and Mortals

Is the body of Balbus from the theater a god's body? Many books ostensibly on gender in Greek and Roman art begin and end with Jupiter, Aphrodite, or mother goddesses. But should we really think of Jupiter and Aphrodite as an archetypal male and female? The former turned sexual incontinence into a virtue; the latter was born from the sea, not of woman, and was blessed with a supernatural allure that made men want sex with her without asking questions (e.g., the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*). Not only was Nonius's nude image diametrically opposed to the bodies of Viciria and Longidienus's wife, but so, too, was Aphrodite's and Jupiter's promiscuity.

Gender power works differently with gods. Gods occupy a different position from mortals on the masculine-feminine spectrum. Arguably, the attributes, activities, and behaviors that define a female god vis-à-vis a male god constitute Olympia as its own culture with distinct conventions: Artemis and Athena embrace what are, by human standards, male characteristics, while Dionysus was a "phallic god" who was also seen as "womanly" (Jameson 1993). ("Where does this woman-man come from?" asks a character in an Aeschylus play, *Edoni* fragment 61, quoted by Aristophanes, *Thesm.* 136.) Confronting this instability head-on had dangerous consequences for the viewer/worshipper's selfhood. When Actaeon and Sipriotes see Artemis bathing, the first is transformed into a stag and ripped apart by his dogs, and the second is turned into a woman (Antoninus Liberalis 17).

For the second part of this chapter, I turn to examine how these differences in gender systems (that everything said and done by Artemis and Dionysus is less to prove that they are male, female, or androgynous than that they are divine, that however human (p. 613) they look, they are not mortal) influence our understanding of statues that cast themselves in their image. One of the most interesting of these for our purposes is a roughly life-size marble statue today in the Vatican (figure 27.7: La Rocca, Parisi Presicce, and Lo Monaco 2011 cat. no. 5.21). The subject of a seminal article by Natalie Kampen, “Omphale and the Instability of Gender,” the statue is identified as a portrait of a woman of the Severan period (193–211 CE) in the guise of Omphale, the Lydian queen for whom Hercules worked as a slave and, in some versions of the story, exchanged his clothing. As is the case with wall paintings and a statuette group from Pompeii that show both figures, the woman carries the demigod’s club and wears his lion skin over her head and shoulders. “Wouldn’t a portrait as Omphale be comparable to appearing as Medea or Cleopatra?” (Kampen 1996a, 233). Kampen’s conclusion is that by the time this statue was made, changing relations with the East and the ruler’s changing relationship with Hercules made Omphale and the gender destabilization she stands for a “repository for virtue” (Kampen 1996a, 244).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 27.7 Statue of a Roman woman as Omphale. Provenance unknown. C. 193–211 CE. Marble. Height 1.82 m. Rome, Musei Vaticani inv. 4385.

(Photograph © Courtesy of the Museum.)

Unlike at Pompeii, however, our woman is on her own. Is the role she is playing necessarily that of Omphale? Or might she be seen as Hercules himself, or as Venus playing the part of Hercules? As Kampen acknowledges, her body reminds us of bodies based ultimately on (p. 614) Praxiteles’s statue of Aphrodite. Christian writer Clement of Alexandria notes (*Protr.* 4.50), “if one sees a woman represented naked, he understands it as ‘golden’ Aphrodite.” In place of the drapery that

the Praxitelean version holds, this one draws the lion skin across her pelvis. From the front, the fold looks almost like a phallus. But follow the direction of the hand and move

around the statue to the right, and we are given a peek at her genitals; perhaps it is only now that we notice how the paws accent the swelling of the breasts. As “Hercules” and “Venus” compete for our attention, Omphale’s role is secondary.



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 27.8 Statue of a Roman man as Hercules. Provenance unknown. C. 230 CE. Marble. Height 2.06 m. Rome, Palazzo Barberini.

(Photograph © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome.)

This alternative scenario gains force the moment the statue is put back into a commemorative culture in which being given a divine body was not unusual. Take the freestanding male nude from early in the third century CE, now in Palazzo Barberini, which again wears the lion skin over the head and tied across the chest so as to highlight its portrait features (figure 27.8: Wrede 1991 cat. no. 126), or the late Flavian and Antonine statues of women with Venus bodies and Cupid figures at their sides (e.g., “Marcia

Furnilla,” Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, 711: D’Ambra 1996 and 2000). In this company, our “Omphale” is confirmed as a Venus, far closer to them in kind than to the swaggering Palazzo Barberini figure, with its open posture and sharp-toothed headdress. Yet even then, she throws statues of Hercules into relief to have us rethink the relationship of bearded and unbearded Hercules statues (like the pair in the Metropolitan Museum in [\(p. 615\)](#) New York, invv. 03.12.13 and 03.12.14, which are assumed to have been displayed together in Flavian Rome) and that between gods and mortals, virile and less virile versions of the same god. Hercules occupied many points along the masculine-feminine scale before being forced into wearing a dress.

None of this invalidates Kampen’s arguments, but it does sharpen how we see the statue’s power as female, as male, as a human body. See this body as a woman’s body, and we see it as Venus; see it as Hercules, and it raises anxieties about what the model man should look like, making every Hercules imitator a Hercules-manqué. See it as Omphale and ourselves as her companion, and we are inevitably emasculated. Only the

statue's head is resolutely mortal, and this is so indebted in its hairstyle to the portraiture of Julia Domna as to be Other in a different way (Julia being the Syrian wife of the emperor Septimius Severus and a woman renowned as much for her adulteries and incest with her son, Caracalla, as for philosophizing; Levick 2007). In all of these scenarios, the honorand wins, but not because her statue is "a repository for virtue." The destabilization it embodies is no simple reversal of male and female roles but throws the entire system of gender difference into relief.

Hercules not only has more wives than anyone else, but he "deflowered Thestius' fifty daughters over the course of seven days" (Athenaeus 13.556). Like father, like son; either being born of Jupiter exculpates him, or here we have our *cinaedus*. What does it mean to have a body like this or to claim that one has a body like a god's? Eve D'Ambra (1996, 221) is in tune with Kampen when she says of the late Flavian and Antonine statues of women with Venus bodies, "For Aphrodite/Venus beauty served as an erotic attraction; for the Roman matron, beauty reflected virtue and the display of the voluptuous female form, even if understood as a mythological conceit or a convention of art, had to be redefined as a sign of fertility." But these statues are still nude in a world in which most images of women were heavily draped. They have a body suffused with sex, a body born, or so the story went, of Greek sculptor Praxiteles's desire for a courtesan named Phryne (Athenaeus, 12.591b; Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 4). Do such stories dissipate when there is a portrait head (see Morales 2011)? If Aphrodite's body had to have been modeled on any body, then what options were there? Hers had to be a body that promised sex without losing its dominance over the viewer or its mystery. For a respectable Roman woman to adopt this stance was a highly risky strategy. It arguably constituted a subversion of gender norms, even before one added the dynamic of cross-dressing.

Locating Difference



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Fig. 27.9 Attic red-figure column krater in the manner of the Göttingen Painter, from Rutigliano. Naked women washing. C. 490 BCE. Ceramic. Height 22.8 cm. Bari, Museo Archeologico Provinciale inv. 4979.

(Photograph © Museo Civico, Bari.)

This chapter has focused mainly on Rome. But it could have adopted a similar approach to Greece. In fifth-century BCE Athens, for example, female companions often graced the drinking vessels that were used in the symposion (see, e.g., the cup in New Haven, Yale University 1913.163: ARV² 36; *Add*² 158; BAPD 200208). This is (p. 616) hardly surprising: the symposion was a male-only drinking party, its atmosphere enhanced by their presence. The decoration of the pottery both reflects reality and

injects it with a frisson of fantasy. But does this make all women on such vessels prostitutes? Most scholars think so, of the nude ones, at least; either that, or they are female athletes (see, e.g., Lewis 2002, 101–112). Yet this is to underestimate the subtlety of the artistic genre. Take an Attic red-figure column krater from Rutigliano, now in Bari (figure 27.9: ARV² 236.4, 1638; *Add*² 200; BAPD 202270), which shows three women naked, two of them washing and the other scraping herself with a strigil; on the other side are two male figures, staring at each other, also nude except for cloaks, one of them carrying a wineskin. Read together, these scenes might, indeed, tell a story of high-spirited males about to invade the women's quarters. But this is not the only story they tell. The fact that one of the women uses an implement usually associated with the male body and the gymnasium turns her activity into a performance (a performance of masculinity, even?), which punctures the revelry on the other side by having us look again at their bodies, their training or lack of it. If these women speak of gender, they speak mainly of male gender: they stop the artistic convention of male nudity from growing stale or one-dimensional and Butler's (p. 617) "stylized repetition of acts" from

wearing thin (Vout 2012). Such questioning of postures, and the identities they underpin, is crucial for maintaining gender roles and for their revision.

We have come a long way from Pomeroy's formative steps in search of ancient women. We have also come a long way from thinking that being a Roman man was as easy as putting on a toga. There were many ways for him to show his masculinity to the world, some of them, on the surface, rather Greek. For all that scholars have stressed the difference between the homosocial culture of fifth- and fourth-century BCE Athens and what is often called "phallographic" Rome, with its more visibly hierarchical structure, penchant for violence, and premium on marriage, the visual culture of both societies reveals a more complex picture. Marcus Nonius Balbus the Younger can embrace Greek nudity and appear manly, Roman women can dress as superheroes and seem womanly, and gods can be anthropomorphic and yet flout cultural convention. Even before Praxiteles chose to envision Aphrodite naked, nude women on Greek pots could be objects of male fantasy, which were as vocal about masculine constructs as they were about women's reality. These women are emblematic of the fact that any artworks worth their salt confirm *and question* gender identities.

Few scholars have been as influential in their study of ancient sex and gender as French theorist Michel Foucault. Indeed, his three-volume work, *The History of Sexuality*, written between 1976 and 1984, is largely responsible for drawing the kind of distinction between Greece and Rome that we noted in the last paragraph. More precisely, Volumes II (Foucault 1984a) and III (1984b) are split between the Greeks and their "use of pleasure" and the Hellenistic/Roman world with its increasing anxiety over sexual activity and emphasis on control, purity, and "the care of the self." This chapter has come to a different conclusion: not Greeks versus Romans but gods versus mortals. It has found that in the case of mortals, exploration of gender roles is always an exploration of power relations, with all of the display of self-regulation that this demands, whereas for gods, where power is a given, exploration of gender roles is always sexual. In this way, the basic Foucauldian claims about antiquity are reconfigured.

Where does scholarship go from here? By the end of the last millennium, classicists had replaced feminist theory with film theory with queer theory in an attempt to theorize the act of looking and, in particular, the act of looking at, and in the manner of, minority groups and not like a (straight) man. All of this has opened up new avenues of inquiry but is in danger of restricting our field of vision, focusing on anomalies at the cost of an expansive nexus of relations (between men, women, gods) that governs and creates society. Nowhere are these relations better attested than in the visual record—sometimes crudely, as in the contrast between the nude Balbus or nude Aphrodite and draped Viciria, and sometimes delicately, as in a statue's swing of a hip or turn of the head. Knowing whether that statue is male or female, occupies male or female space, or is

engaged in a male or female activity is not enough. Only in analyzing the degree of masculine, feminine, or mortal bravado on display can we gauge the culturally prescribed roles that men or women followed.

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Anthropological Approaches

Gloria Ferrari

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the use of anthropological approaches in the study of the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It begins by considering the juxtaposition between anthropology and classical archaeology, citing the case of Carl Robert and his analysis of texts and images in terms of narrative structure by invoking the notion of *Völkerpsychologie*. It then turns to a discussion of the formalist approach as the dominant mode for interpreting both sculpture and painted vases. The chapter concludes by analyzing the issue of what constitutes “art” and the value of aesthetic appreciation, along with the essential underpinnings of traditional Greek and Roman art history.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, anthropology, archaeology, architecture, art, art history, Carl Robert, sculpture, *Völkerpsychologie*

Anthropology has had an important role in studies of ancient Greek and Roman art, albeit a role marked by such discontinuity and eclecticism that it does not lend itself to being described as a set of principles. What is possible is a historiographic overview prefaced by some general considerations.

To oversimplify, it may be said that recourse to anthropological models has been a means to address monuments as documents of the cultural milieu that brought them into being, including not only historical circumstances but also social structures, cultural norms, and their attendant belief systems. The task of charting connections between the monuments and other sources, including texts, in order to expose the network of meaning and practices that the artifacts punctuate, is traditionally carried out in a synchronic perspective. Any anthropological account makes explicit the theoretical underpinnings of its inquiry and acknowledges of the distance that separates the society and culture of the observer from those of his object—that is, the measure in which they are alien to each other (on “distantiation” in anthropology, see Lévi-Strauss 1963, 378). In the case of Greek and Roman art, instead, it is continuities and aesthetic affinities that have been stressed, in the reconstruction of a tradition of Western art reaching far into antiquity—

the proper subject of art history (on the potential for anachronism in this position, see Squire 2010, 133–144). In other important respects, the methodology dominant in the twentieth century marked Greek and Roman art as different from that of other peoples: taking an atheoretical stance, it addressed the formal characteristics of the monuments in empirical terms and arranged them on the basis of stylistic criteria, typology, and the achievements of great artists. For the modern period, scholars have traced the antithesis of these two approaches to the distinction in Vasari between accounting for a work of art *semplicemente*, in absolute terms, or *secondo che*, that is, “with respect for places, times, and other similar circumstances” (Vasari 1568, VII, 75; Ginzburg 2001, 109–138). The two positions, writes Ginzburg (2001, 138), “are both necessary and mutually incompatible; they cannot be experienced *simultaneously*.” He adds, however: “But the relationship between the two (p. 622) approaches is asymmetrical. We can articulate the ‘simple,’ direct, absolute approach through the language of history—not the other way around.” Today efforts to bridge the divide seem to move precisely in that direction. But it is a dynamics of exclusion that has characterized the adoption or rejection of anthropological perspectives in classical archaeology. The need to choose between them is apparent in what is arguably the earliest brush of a classical archaeologist with anthropological theory, the case of Carl Robert.

Carl Robert and Völkerpsychologie

A work of the young Carl Robert, *Bild und Lied*, published in 1881, presented a comparative analysis of texts and images in terms of narrative structure and relied on a rather bold and clearly stated theoretical premise: the concept of a complex of ideas, customs, and representations that is the common property of the society to which any individual belongs. This *Volksbewusstsein*, “folk consciousness” or, as it is commonly known, “collective consciousness,” was for Robert the reservoir of *Volksvorstellungen*, or “collective representations,” into which single instances of representation, such as those of poetry and in the visual arts, flow and from which, in turn, they spring anew (Robert 1881, 3–51). The relationship of images to texts is thus projected as indirect, through the relay of cultural assumptions and modes of representation. Turning to modes of narrative, Robert laid the foundation of a problem that has occupied art historians ever since, that of the structure of narrative in the visual arts and literary genres. In Archaic art, he isolated several instances of representations in which several stages of a story seem to be compressed into one frame. In a scene of the blinding of Polyphemus on a Laconian cup (figure 28.1), for instance, a viewer intent on following the chronological order of events may find it strange or even comical that the Cyclops cannot accept the wine cup

Odysseus is offering him because he holds in both hands the legs of the men on whom he is feeding; and although he is neither drunk nor asleep, he allows the men to take out his eye. The issue is one of structure: the visual narrative, Robert argued, here emulates the epic and attempts to give the complete story in a synoptic mode by introducing in the picture elements that evoke an earlier or later stage of the story. Pictures in which such references are lacking, those depicting a single event, would instead have a structure akin to that of drama. The relationship between the visual and the verbal was thus formulated in terms of a structural analogy.



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Fig. 28.1 Interior of Laconian kylix, attributed to the Rider Painter, from Nola. Blinding of Polyphemus. C. 560 BCE. Ceramic. Diameter 22 cm. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet des Médailles inv. 190.

(Photograph © Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY, ART14710.)

Were the notions of *Volksbewusstsein*, “folk consciousness” or “collective consciousness,” and *Volksdarstellungen*, “collective representations,” on which Robert relied entirely unrelated to those of *conscience collective* and *représentations collectives* that would be fundamental to the sociology of Émile Durkheim and his colleagues and successors? These terms have a technical ring, and the correspondence is too specific to be a matter of

coincidence. Robert’s *Bild und Lied* preceded the earliest mention (p. 623) of *conscience collective* by the French sociologist by a full sixteen years. Robert credits no one for the idea, but Durkheim did so, although much later, reluctantly. In the *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, in his discussion of mythology as a system, he refers to the founders of the *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft*, Moritz Lazarus and Heymann Steinthal, as the men who had put forward the theory that the rules that govern human societies are dependent on historical and social factors (Durkheim 1912, 23; on the question of Durkheim’s indebtedness to *Völkerpsychologie*, see Klautke 2013, 25, 29–32). As regards Carl Robert, I have, so far, no documentation of a direct link to Lazarus and Steinthal, only the probability of one. Lazarus taught philosophy, psychology, and folk psychology in Berlin beginning in 1866; Steinthal had taught linguistics there since

1856. From Kern's parallel lives of Hermann Diehls and Carl Robert (Kern 1927, 33, 41–43), one learns that Diehls took courses in linguistics in Berlin with Steinthal and that Robert also spent one year in Berlin, his last as a student, in 1872–1873. It is to Lazarus and Steinthal that one owes the proposition of an overindividual psyche, as it were, the spirit of the nation, which is the depository of cultural norms and systems of representation (for an early formulation, see Lazarus (p. 624) 1851; Köhnke 2003 offers a collection of Lazarus's most significant essays). For their proposal, these scholars drew on the one hand on Hebartian psychology and on the other hand on Humboldt philosophy of language, in an ambitious formulation that can be seen as the basis of modern cultural anthropology (on the intellectual matrix of the project, see Bunzl 2003, 56–60; on the role of *Völkerpsychologie* in the thought of Franz Boas, the founding father of modern cultural anthropology, see Boas 1904, 18, 20; Kalmar 1987; Bunzl 2003, 81–85, with an analysis of earlier scholarship; Klautke 2010, 11). In a society, the conceptual activities of individual members form a system of collective representations that out of necessity have an existence beyond and outside the individual. The collective consciousness informs and confronts that of the individual. Its "elements" are, first of all, language, *Sprache*, which embodies the psychological forms of thought, a thesaurus of representations and concepts informing mythology, religion, national poetry, and customs but also monuments and the visual arts. The following statement uncannily foreshadows some recent proposals for the indexical power, or "agency," of artifacts:

On the other hand are real but symbolic embodiments [*Verkörperungen*] of thought: art work, documents, literature, built structures of all kinds, industrial products. These contain the objectivized [*objectivirten*] *Geist* in the narrow sense, *Geist* transferred into an object, whose relation to the subjective activity of persons is only the following: that, in general, subjective activity such as will comprehend these objects must be present if they, as objectivized thought are to come alive. The objects themselves have the potential [*in den Objecten selbst liegt es*] to arouse this subjective activity.

(Lazarus 1865, 53–54; trans. Kalmar 1987, 679)

My purpose in focusing at the outset on Carl Robert's appeal to *Völkerpsychologie* (albeit without acknowledgment) is twofold: to point out on the one hand its fundamentally anthropological outlook and on the other the far-reaching impact of this concept. "Riddled with conceptual and methodological problems" as it was (Klautke 2010, 1), Lazarus and Steinthal's project laid out a new epistemological paradigm. It is against that paradigm that the underlying coherence of theoretical developments, which otherwise may appear unrelated, becomes evident: not only Durkheimian sociology, leading up to the "anthropology" of Louis Gernet (on the reception of the premises of

Völkerpsychologie by Durkheim and scholars of the Durkheimian school, see Klautke 2013, 24–39), but also the historical psychology of Ignace Meyerson, whose insights Vernant turned onto the classical world (Pizarroso 2008, 406; Di Donato 1990, 209–213), in addition to Saussure’s structural linguistics, which is the basis for structural anthropology and for semiotic approaches. Saussure spent eighteen months of his four-year stay in Germany in Berlin, and it has been surmised that he, too, attended Steinthal’s lectures (Culler 1976, 13–14, 123); it has also been remarked (Belke 1971, CX and n. 112; Krewer and Jahoda 1990, 6; Klautke 2010, 9) that the tripartite distinction drawn in the *Course in General Linguistics* among *langage* (the capacity of speech), *langue* (language), and *parole* (speech) precisely corresponds to Steinthal’s triad of *Sprachfähigkeit*, *Sprachmaterial*, and *Sprechen*.

(p. 625) As for Carl Robert, it may be objected that his attempt at a structural interpretation of poetry and image in Greek and Roman antiquity is little more than a historiographic curiosity, a false start to a dead end, because its connection to the matrix from which it issued was obscured. But the issue is far from dead. Several scholars have turned their attention to the model he set forth for the tantalizing promise of cultural insights it seems to hold. Anthony Snodgrass, for instance, appeals to Robert in the Sather Lectures of 1987, where he returns to the issue of the structure of visual narratives, focusing, among others, on the same Laconian cup with the blinding of Polyphemus, to ask if elements that allude to the cannibalism and drunkenness of the Cyclops have narrative valence or add connotations to the image (Snodgrass 1987, 135–146; see also Himmelmann 1998; Snodgrass 1998, 55–57, referring to Robert’s “remarkable pioneering work”). But on the promise of the approach taken in *Bild und Lied*, Robert had firmly shut the door in his *Archäologische Hermeneutik* of 1919. The epigraph with which that book opens explicitly excludes from the correct method in Greek and Roman art history any attempt at theoretical formulations, as though empiricism were devoid of theoretical implications: “The rules, which I expose, were revealed to me by purely empirical means. I leave the task of organizing the laws of hermeneutics into a system to more philosophical minds.” This adherence to a staunchly positivist approach is reinforced by statements such as “the first necessary condition for the correct interpretation is to see correctly” and “meaning becomes self-evident through a careful description” (Robert 1919, 1, 15). The book makes no mention of *Bild und Lied*, although the concept of *Volksvorstellungen* is invoked once in the chapter on iconography.

The 1970s



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Fig. 28.2 Funerary kouros from Anavyssos. C. 530 BCE. Marble. Height 1.94 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 3851.

(Photograph © Album/Art Resource, New York, ORZ073355).

By the authority of giants such as Adolf Furtwängler and John Davidson Beazley, from the end of the nineteenth century onward the formalist approach, relying on taxonomy, stylistic analysis, and attribution to known and unknown masters, had become the dominant interpretive mode for both sculpture and the painted vases, although more so in England, Germany, and North America than in France and Italy. That model would not be seriously challenged until after Beazley's death in

1970. In the intervening period, projects relying on anthropological theory developed not in the mainstream of classical archaeology but in the history of religion, most prominently in the work of the so-called Cambridge Ritualists, particularly Jane Harrison, and that of Angelo Brelich. Although it is not directly concerned with art, Brelich's *Paidés e parthenoi* reveals the possibilities that a historically grounded anthropological frame of reference opens up for the interpretation of the monuments. Brelich opens his treatise on rituals marking the passage of boys and girls into the adult community in ancient Greece by establishing a morphology of initiations on the basis of comparative ethnology. He then moves on to examine the rites in a historical frame, integrating in his analysis literary sources for myth and ritual, epigraphic, and archaeological materials. Once they are situated in a specific (p. 626) social transaction and placed in relationship with other forms of expression, the monuments elicit a different, productive set of questions about their status and function. That is the case with the kouroi, to give one instance. The type is known by hundreds of examples: a youth, not yet a grown man, striding forward, nude (figure 28.2). Outside of the art historical frame of reference in which these statues had

been studied, on the basis of ethnographic parallels and numerous references to disrobing in written sources on the occasion of coming of age, Brelich identified nudity as initiatic “costume,” suggesting for the kouroi, albeit tentatively, a commemorative function in the context of the rituals (Brelich 1969, 72, 448–449).

(p. 627) The model of a historically and contextually grounded analysis that Brelich offered had little following outside the “Rome School” in the history of religion. The emergence of anthropological approaches to Greek and Roman art (mostly Greek) bears in greater or lesser degree a “structuralist” imprint, although that label is in most cases an approximation. Proposals came in rapid succession from several, unrelated directions in the late 1970s. The move was apparently triggered on the one hand by frustration, a sense that the tyranny of formalist methodology had driven the discipline into a blind alley and rendered it increasingly isolated and inaccessible (Hoffmann 1979). Humphreys (1978, 109–129) voices the historian’s frustration at the “alarming gap between the archaeologist and the historian” (110), particularly historians dealing with social and economic issues, and notes the archaeologist’s reluctance to move beyond classification and chronology. On the other hand, the anthropological turn responded to developments in critical theory that presented new challenges in the allied fields of Classics and art history. Herbert Hoffmann’s 1977 presentation to the Royal Anthropological Institute in London provided the opening salvo (Hoffmann 1977; see also the programmatic statement in Hoffmann 1979). The brief essay focused on a particular type of vase, Athenian *askoi*, small pouring vessels decorated with a variety of scenes: animals pursuing animals, hunts, amorous pursuit and sex, mythical subjects, banquets. The essay confronted important issues that are still unresolved: is there an underlying coherence to this bewildering assortment? And what makes these images appropriate to the particular shape on which they appear, that is, to the function of the vessel? In his attempt to answer these questions, Hoffmann turned to semiology and anthropological theory, specifically, the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, albeit mediated by Edmund Leach. The model on which the interpretation rests is that of structural linguistics and its governing notion that language underlies, and is distinct from, individual acts of speech: it is a culture-bound system that encodes fundamental categories of thought, arranged in patterns of binary oppositions. Accordingly, “every part is a variation of every other part and... reproduces the whole on the level of significance” (Hoffmann 1977, 2). In the case of the *askoi*, the varied imagery would consist of “transformations” of the same theme, that of sacrifice, mediating between opposites: life and death, the human and the divine. Such a theme, Hoffmann argued, is appropriate to the function of the vessels in funerary rites (Boardmann 1979 points to the substantial weakness of these conclusions).

Two years later, an essay by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood also challenged the prevailing empiricist method in the study of Greek art, describing her methodology as “eclectic,” a

“modified structuralist approach,” which, however, did not lose sight of historical circumstances (Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 2). Her approach, which was and remained throughout her work frankly eclectic, is not easily classifiable as either structuralist or anthropological. It adhered, however, to one of the tenets of cultural anthropology in its insistence on the distance between ancient Greek culture and its modern interpreters and the need to recover the assumptions and expectations of the ancient viewers, their “perceptual filters” (see, e.g., Sourvinou-Inwood 1991, 3–23). But it was the (p. 628) work of scholars associated with the Centre Louis Gernet, with its declared anthropological methodology, that had the greatest impact on research on Greek and Roman art, especially on the area that had long been the preserve of connoisseurship: Archaic and Classical Greek vase painting.

The Paris School

Through the “historical anthropology” of Gernet, what has become known as the Paris School (*malgré soi*, I think) stands directly in the tradition of the sociology of Durkheim, from whom Gernet drew the fundamental operating concepts of collective consciousness and collective representations (on Gernet’s affiliation to the Durkheim school and the role of the concept of collective representations in his work, see Humphreys 1971; Humphreys 1978, 76–94). It would be hard to overestimate the importance of the notion of representations in his thought, emphasizing the conceptual import of the concrete aspects, such as gestures, of social activities in relationship to the institutions they sustained. But it was Jean-Pierre Vernant and the scholars associated with him who brought actual monuments into play—not actions and things described in literary texts but statues, vases, inscriptions, and pictures. Vernant’s own inquiry into the visual universe of the Greeks has addressed both philosophical conceptions of figuration and mimesis and the way in which visual images and artifacts articulate concepts. I think in particular of the essay on the *kolossos* as a concept and as an artifact in *Myth et pensée*, illuminating the way in which the monument represents the visible double for the invisible dead (Vernant 1985, 325–338). Elsewhere he addressed more generally the task of defining the conditions that allow archaeological documents, epigraphical testimonies, and literary texts to throw light on one another in reciprocal fashion.

A landmark in the activity of the scholars at the Centre Louis Gernet (since 2010, the Centre Louis Gernet-Recherches Comparées sur les Sociétés Anciennes forms part of AnHiMA, including also the former Centre Gustave Glotz-Mondes Hellénistiques et Romain and Phéacie-Pratiques Culturelles dans les Sociétés Grecque et Romaine; www.anhima.fr/spip.php?article1), in collaboration with colleagues at the Institut

d'Archéologie et d'Histoire Ancienne of the University of Lausanne, was *La cité des images*, a traveling exhibition of Greek vases accompanied by a book of essays (Bérard and Bron 1984; see chapter 25 above). The project represented a clear *démarche* with respect to current trends. On display were not the objects themselves, bearing the imprint of the master's hand, but photographs of the vases. The ambience was not exclusively that of the museum or the private collection but rather more public venues that extended to metro stations. And the commentaries that accompanied the pictures and the essays in the book made no mention of the painters, showed little concern for either artists or style. Unlike earlier attempts at structural analysis (Hoffmann 1977; Sourvinou-Inwood 1979), the book presented the reader—without apologies (p. 629) and without much warning—not with an argument but with a *fait accompli*: a new frame of inquiry and a different vocabulary with which to talk about the vases. The outlook of the project was expressed by a metaphor that emphasizes the distance that separates modern interpreters from the world of ancient Greece, turning them into anthropologists. The imagery in its entirety is cast as a “city” populated by the collective representations of its inhabitants, and to us an “exotic and distant world,” which we enter as strangers (Vernant 1989, 7–8). This was joined by the concept of visual representation as language, a code unintelligible to someone lacking the local knowledge that the members of the city shared. The model of structural linguistics was the interpretive paradigm explicitly or implicitly acknowledged by all the participants, although in different measures. In Saussure's formulation, language is a system of signs that express concepts in an entirely conventional manner and, in its entirety, belongs to the given social community of speakers. Language is actualized in acts of speech, in which a sign is joined to other signs (the syntagmatic chain) or may be substituted for by another, with which it stands in a paradigmatic relationship. In this regard, there are differences among the members of the team. The semiotic approach, in the formulation given by Claude Bérard, may be briefly summarized as follows. The artist manipulates a set of icons (“minimal formal units”), which are many but finite in number. These “refer” to objects that one may think of (parts of the body, features such as dress or hairstyle, attributes) but have no meaning in and of themselves. They are simply available elements—comparable to the phonemes and morphemes of language—in the minds of the painters and the viewers (Bérard 1983). They acquire meaning only in combination or syntagmatic association. Accordingly, interpretation should proceed by observing the combinations and substitutions of such units against the background of the entire repertoire of icons. In contrast, François Lissarrague adopts the model of structural linguistics as a useful heuristic device but one that cannot be applied strictly in the interpretation of pictures (Lissarrague 1990, 9–12). His sustained study of the theme of war on Athenian vases proceeds by identifying anthropologically significant categories—such as the hoplite, the archer, the woman, the satyr—to analyze their occurrences in thematically related series, with the aim to establish their semantic range and binary oppositions.



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Fig. 28.3 Detail of the Attic black-figure volute krater signed by Ergotimus (potter) and Clitias (painter), "François Vase," from Chiusi. Ajax carrying the corpse of Achilles. C. 570 BCE. Ceramic. Height of krater 66 cm. Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 4209.

(Photograph © Scala/Art Resource, New York, ART58528.)

The insight gained from the analysis of the pictures is then related to representations in other forms of cultural expression. I give an example not from *La cité des images* but from a seminal article by Lissarrague and Alain Schnapp, which analyzes the representations of the death of the hero, the moment in which the body is carried away from the battlefield and saved from outrage (Lissarrague and Schnapp 1981). Often the body is marked by its large size and in particular by the long, flowing hair. The

typical iconographic scheme for the transport may be seen on the François Vase (figure 28.3: *ABV* 76.1, 682; *Para* 29; *Add*² 21; BAPD 300000), where inscriptions identify the characters as Ajax with the body of Achilles. Here, as in many other instances of this theme, particular emphasis is placed on the hero's hair. This, Lissarrague and Schnapp argue, is one of the ways in which the concept of the heroic death, such as the "Spartan beautiful death," is given visual expression: the long, flowing hair is a signifier of the beauty of heroic death. One finally understands the sense of an (p. 630) episode reported by Herodotus (7.208). Before the Thermopylae, a Persian scout was startled by the sight of Spartan warriors combing their hair before going into battle. Through this gesture, they readied themselves to become beautiful corpses, thus advertising their determination to fight to their death. In this manner, the visual representations, poetic representations of the ideal death on the battlefield, and, if Herodotus is to be believed, actual customs converge. One is not the illustration of the other, but they are complementary and inseparable in the mind of the viewer, calling up series of other related images, gestures, and customs.



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Fig. 28.4 Attic red-figure kylix attributed to the Penthesilea Painter (name vase), from Vulci. Amazonomachy. C. 470–460 BCE. Ceramic. Diameter 43 cm. Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen inv. 2688.

(Photograph © Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen/Art Resource, New York, ART444986.)

The possibility that visual imagery functions in a manner analogous to language—as had been postulated in Carl Robert’s analysis of the structure of narratives—is illustrated by Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux’s comparative analysis of verbal and visual tropes in *Du masque au visage*, particularly her interpretation of the frontal face in Archaic and Early Classical painting (Frontisi-Ducroux 1995, 81–94). The frontality that characterizes the mask and particularly the Gorgon is the exception in representations of human figures. The frontal face

confronts the viewer in a way that represents an infraction of the norm, and its pointed connotations are stressed by the fact that it is often the face of a character who is dead or about to die, such as the Amazon squire in an Early Classical painting of the duel of Achilles and Penthesilea (figure 28.4: ARV² 879.1, 1673; *Para* 428; (p. 631) *Add*² 300; BAPD 211565). But it may also be the face of someone asleep, or a symposiast in his cups, or a whirling dancer, or a man in a funeral procession, turned around to face the viewer. The figure thus turns away from the figural context into which it is embedded, in a way that is structurally analogous to the rhetorical figure of the *apostrophe*: the point at which, for instance, an orator would turn from addressing the jury to confront his adversary directly. Moving to an instance of this trope at *Iliad* 16.787, where the poet turns to his character with a direct address (“then for you, Patroclus, the end of life appeared”), Frontisi-Ducroux observes (1995, 92): “the analogy between the rhetorical figure of the *apostrophe* and the graphic procedure of frontality is made evident by their application to the same motif, the death of the warrior, sung in the epic on the one hand, depicted on the vases on the other.” If frontality is the means to represent the evasion or falling out of the figure from its surroundings, one may also understand in the same sense

other cases in which the figure is used for other extreme states, such as madness, drunkenness, and ecstatic dancing.

The impact of this approach, relying on structural linguistics in an anthropological perspective, has been considerable, so much so that it was recently characterized as a (p. 632) “time honored tradition of dealing with Greek art as if it were a *language*, a codified system of signs available to our reading skills” (Smith and Plantzos 2012: 14). Even as its premises gained acceptance, however, there emerged problematic aspects of a more or less strictly structural reading. The focus on the conceptual structure informing a number of different and varied representations—whether myths or pictures—is ultimately reductive, it is argued, because it leads to neglecting the object itself: its details, its concrete aspects, the circumstances of its production and reception. This charge is in line with the critique of structuralism that began in France fifty years ago, exemplified—to remain within structural linguistics—by Émile Benveniste’s influential essay (Benveniste 1964, 274; on Benveniste’s determinant role in the development of a poststructuralist critique, see Williams 1999, especially 175-177). Examining the levels at which linguistic analysis may be carried out, Benveniste pointed out that one moves from that of phonemes to that of morphemes, or words, then reaches the level of the phrase. But while the signs that are its components are part of the language system, the phrase is the site of creativity, “language in action”: “With the phrase one leaves the domain of language as a system of signs and enters another universe, that of language as instrument of communication, whose expression is discourse” (Benveniste 1964, 274; Benveniste 1966, 129).

As a segment of discourse, the phrase has a particular content, deployed in a specific frame of reference—a given situation—and it implies an audience. Discourse, in other words, takes place in the social domain and involves much that is outside of language. Let us take this insight to the analysis, cited above, of a specific visual “phrase,” the figure of the warrior carrying the body of his dead comrade on his shoulder, cited above. The authors recognize in this group Ajax and Achilles if their names are inscribed, as they are on the François Vase. If there are no inscriptions or other explicit elements that mark the picture as epic, one is free to interpret the figures as either heroes or historical hoplites, since the concept of the hero applies equally to either. But the specific “content”—whether the image refers to the age of the heroes or the present of the intended viewer—indeed matters if one is to account for its discursive context, that is, the frame of reference within which it is issued. Arguably, at least some things that may be imagined in a distant place or time are unimaginable in the here and now (see Ferrari 2003, 37-40).

More broadly, criticism has been leveled at insufficient attention paid to the particular historical and social circumstances of cultural production. For instance, Tanner voices this concern after considering Alain Schnapp's analysis of representations of the hunt, one that he finds persuasive. He faults it, nevertheless, for not doing enough, that is, for not accounting for the fact that the subject occurs in visual images on Attic black-figure vases of the sixth century BCE, while literary accounts date to the fourth century BCE: "The linguistic model, seeking access to deep underlying cultural codes, effaces the significance of the specific material medium through which such codes are materialized and mobilized in specific institutional contexts, with specific audiences, with correspondingly differing social ramifications and effects" (Tanner 2006, 17).

Conclusions

(p. 633) The call for more "contextual" and historically grounded approaches to the monuments has been accompanied by attempts to reclaim in a postmodern vein what had become largely discredited fundamental principles of traditional art history, namely, stylistic analysis and the definition of "art" as the proper object of Greek and Roman art history. As regards the first, Hölscher made a strong case for its importance already in the wake of the "structuralist" turn of the 1970s and 1980s:

The sacrifice of formal analysis has much more serious consequences than is often appreciated—especially for social history. For few cultural phenomena have a more pronounced collective and social character than artistic style and the language of artistic imagery.... Moreover, the common visual language of a society—underlying the thematics of its imagery and regardless of minor temporal and local stylistic differences—is a social fact of the greatest interest.

(Hölscher 2004, 1; in a different vein, see Neer 2005)

The issue of what constitutes "art" as a privileged category of cultural production that cannot be subsumed under rubrics such as "material culture" or "visual culture" has been the subject of much discussion in recent years and with it the question of the value of aesthetic appreciation and the very possibility of a history of art (to these issues are devoted the essays in Platt and Squire 2010). Tanner, for instance, put forward a most sustained effort to arrive at a working definition of art: the creation that serves no function outside of itself but has a purely expressive-aesthetic valence (Tanner 2006, 20–21). In this respect, such an object differs from monuments whose production is tied to religious or other social institutions, but it should nevertheless be approached in a sociological and anthropological frame of inquiry. The question of what is art and how art

operates in society has also recently come to the fore in the field of anthropology (see, e.g., Coote and Shelton 1992). Most notable, and controversial, here has been Gell's proposal of art as artifact endowed with agency and operating in the social realm (Gell 1998; see the enlightening critique by Bowden 2004; Gell's notion of the agency of art is turned onto Greek and Roman art in a cross-cultural perspective in the essays in Osborne and Tanner 2007).

My aim in introducing at the end these authoritative examples of the reevaluation of the essential underpinnings of traditional Greek and Roman art history is not to engage with them, nor do I pretend to do them justice by such brief remarks. I wish simply to point out that what they advocate is not a return to the past. Rather, each conceives of the production of art as cultural expression and social practice, to be accounted for *secondo che*, in the words of Vasari cited at the beginning of this chapter.

Such a premise also underlies several other approaches to Greek and Roman art that are the subject of this section of this *Handbook*—sociohistorical, semiotic, gender (p. 634) studies, reception theory—which emerged more than a generation ago, appealing to different sources. That they share a common ground, I would argue, eventually depends on a common, however distant, matrix in Lazarus and Steinthal's sociological paradigm, with which we began.

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Theories of Reception

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the theories of reception of the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It begins with an overview of reception theory and the burgeoning branch of Classics known as reception studies and explains how reception can bridge the disciplines of Classics and art history. It then turns to a discussion of Elizabeth Prettejohn's 2012 book *The Modernity of Ancient Sculpture* and in particular her views on reception with regard to ancient sculpture. The chapter also considers the scholarly debate on historicism, before concluding with an assessment of what reception theory might offer to the student of Greek and Roman visual culture.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, art history, Elizabeth Prettejohn, historicism, reception studies, reception theory

The past is not all in the past. Like it or not, our views of Greek and Roman antiquity (as of other historical times and places) are mediated through the lens of the modern day. As our language of “past” and “present” makes clear, each is parasitic on the other; the past is inextricable from the present moment in which we look back, just as the present is necessarily defined by its relationship to the past. By the same logic, our perspectives on the past are filtered through the lens of the present; they are—and have been—framed by a succession of previous perspectives, stretching between the ancient world and our own.

As Greek and Roman writers knew full well, this paradox underlies every attempt at writing history (see, e.g., Grethlein and Krebs 2012). When it comes to the history of *art*, though, the paradox becomes particularly acute. After all, nobody reading this book could deny the historical “pastness” of the Greek and Roman objects illustrated in it. And yet every time we engage with those objects (as indeed with their photographic reproductions), that engagement takes place in the present: images from the past belong not only to the there and then but also to the here and now. The very presence of past images, we might say, undermines their rightful historical absence; as Michael Camille nicely put it, objects amount to “actual apparitions” of history, “blurring the line between

past and present”; images are places “where the gazes of both can meet” (Camille 1996, 7).

Thankfully, perhaps, the current chapter cannot explore every aspect of this past-present paradox. In what follows, my aim is instead to show why such quandaries matter, and why they particularly matter within a *Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture*. By doing so, the overriding objective is less to demonstrate a (Graeco-Roman) art historical “problem” than to showcase the opportunities with which Greek and Roman materials present us. On the one hand, my discussion will survey the burgeoning branch of classics known as “reception studies”. On the other, I use the language of “reception”—with all its inherent strengths and weaknesses—as a way of (re)building some much-needed intellectual bridges between the disciplines of classics and art history.

A Tension of Tense

(p. 638) Let me begin, though, by introducing what has come to be called reception theory more generally. Particularly important here has been a branch of literary criticism that crystallized in the 1960s, sometimes associated with a “Constance School” (for overviews see Holub 1984 and 1995; Maclean 1986; Hardwick 2003, 6–9; Martindale 2007, 297–303). The leading voice was arguably that of Robert Jauss, who advocated what he labeled an “aesthetics of reception,” or *Rezeptionsästhetik* (Jauss 1982). Where others had focused on a text’s formal features (following a tradition of “Russian formalism”), or else sought to reconstruct a work’s “original” production and cultural significance (taking their lead from Marxist “new historicism”), Jauss emphasized the active role that readers play in deriving meaning. To concentrate on “form” is not enough, Jauss argued, nor should we satisfy ourselves with resurrecting readers’ historical reactions; responses to a text take place in the present, not the past. For Jauss, this emphasis on reception had important implications for literary criticism writ large. Because every act of interpretation ultimately falls back on a two-way dynamic between a text and its present-day respondents, the meanings we derive depend on our own perspectives as readers, and not least on (our interpretations of) earlier interpretations before us. Meaning is “a yielded truth—and not a given one,” as Jauss puts it; what is more, it “is realized in discussion and consensus with others” (quoted in Segers 1979–1980, 86; for discussion, see Martindale 2006, 3–4).

Jauss’s literary critical framework would find numerous intellectual allies, albeit from a host of different academic frameworks (see Machor and Goldstein 2001; Semsch 2005;

Batstone 2006; Schmitz 2007, 86–97). One poignant intersection lies in Wolfgang Iser’s work on a text’s “implied readers” (Iser 1978), in turn developed to theorize the implied “viewers” of an image (see Kemp 1985 and 1998); no less important have been the writings of Hans-Georg Gadamer, especially those concerned with post-Enlightenment traditions of hermeneutics (Gadamer’s idea that “meanings” are fluid, grounded in the cultural and intellectual frames of the present day: “we must realize that every work of art only begins to speak when we have already learned to decipher and read it” [Gadamer 1986, 48]; see also Gadamer 1989). For all their differences in intellectual tradition, many of the same conceptual currents resurface in French poststructuralist theory: one might compare Barthes’s underlying notion of “reader response” (Barthes 1974 and 1975), and not least Derrida’s critique of Western “logocentrism” *tout court* (Derrida 1976).

Such theories of “reception” have resonated across a whole host of disciplines. But they have proved particularly influential within the field of classics, especially during the last two or three decades, and nowhere more so than in Britain and North America. The most fundamental contribution has been that of Charles Martindale, who helped to found a so-called Bristol School of classical “reception studies” (see above all Martindale 1993, especially 1–34; compare Martindale 2006 and 2007). Among classicists, Martindale’s fundamental premise that “the interpretation of texts is inseparable from the history of their reception” (Martindale 1993, xiii) has been attractive for at least two (p. 639) reasons. First, on a pragmatic level, it has served to open up new avenues of research: by widening the field of classics to encompass not only Greek and Roman materials but also materials responding to them—and from a variety of culturally heterogeneous frameworks—“reception studies” have enabled classicists to branch out into associated disciplines, showcasing (and thereby to some extent justifying) their own classicist training. Second, and no less important, has been an implied epistemological-cum-political position. Through their very emphasis on different moments of reception, reception studies have played an important part in the so-called canon wars of the late twentieth century, exposing the ideological underpinnings belying different (ab)uses of the Greek and Roman past, right up to and including the present day.

Such “relativizing” considerations explain why many modern-day classicists prefer to talk about “reception studies” rather than, for example, the “classical tradition” (see Hardwick and Stray 2008b, 2–3; Budelmann and Haubold 2008; contrast, e.g., Silk, Gildenhard and Barrow 2014, especially 102–118). Although Jauss himself postulated a “chain of receptions from generation to generation” (Jauss 1982, 20), Martindale and others have been keen to emphasize the dynamic relations between a text and its subsequent receptions; in doing so, their very language of “reception” has served as an antidote to a traditional historical emphasis on variables of chronology. Quite apart from its implied claims of canonicity, the problem with “tradition” is its suggestion of a “past”

followed by a sequence of successive “presents.” Fundamental to Martindale’s thesis, by contrast, is the idea that the “original” is indistinguishable from its subsequent receptions: “there is no Archimedean point from which we can arrive at a final, correct meaning for any text” (Martindale 2006, 3–4). Where “tradition” is understood to imply a passive “handing down” from past to present (from the Latin verb *tradere*), Martindale understands “reception” as operating “with a different temporality, involving the *active* participation of readers (including readers who are themselves creative artists) in a two-way process, backward as well as forward, in which the present and past are in dialogue with each other” (Martindale 2007, 298).

What has all this to do with the study of ancient art and architecture? Although Martindale has long been interested in both the visual and the verbal “receptions” of Greece and Rome (Martindale 1993, 60–64; see also Llewellyn 1988), his primary concern is with reception as an approach to Latin literature. Indeed, it is fair to say that reception studies have had much more impact on the study of ancient texts than on the study of Greek and Roman visual culture (most of those who have considered the reception of ancient visual materials, moreover, treat them as simple extensions of “texts”: e.g., Hardwick 2003, 4 n. 9; Laird 2010, 351). Of course, there are a plethora of “classic” books on different aspects of the “classical tradition” in art more generally (e.g., Rowland 1963; Vermeule 1964; Greenhalgh 1978; Settis 1984–1986; see too, in addition to chapter 18 above, e.g., Howard 1990; Reid 1993; Barkan 1999; Payne, Kuttner, and Smick 2000; Fejfer, Fischer-Hansen, and Rathje 2003; Kurtz 2004; Boschung and Wittekind 2008; Bober and Rubenstein 2010; Grafton, Most, and Settis 2010); numerous studies have also been dedicated to specific moments of reception (with a particular anglophone focus on the British eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: e.g., Jenkins 1992; (p. 640) Edwards and Liversidge 1996; Coltman 2006 and 2009); likewise, others have surveyed the sequential receptions of individual works (in addition to the bibliography on the Laocoön group cited below, see, e.g., Haskell and Penny 1982; Knell 1997; Cuzin, Garborit, and Pasquier 2000). And yet—for better or worse—there is a recurrent tendency to chart a work’s reception without consideration of the broader theoretical stakes. Among historians of Greek and Roman art and architecture, at least, there has been markedly less interest in why, from a methodological point of view, issues of reception might *matter*.



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Fig. 29.1 The Laocoön group (as seen today, with Laocoön's right arm restored), attributed by the Elder Pliny to the Rhodian sculptors Hagesander, Athanodorus, and Polydorus, from the Esquiline hill in Rome. Probably first century BCE. Marble. Height 1.84 m. Rome, Musei Vaticani inv. 1059, 1064, 1067.

(Photograph by Michael Squire.)

There are exceptions to this general trend, of course. In their 2001 textbook introduction to “Classical art”, for example, Mary Beard and John Henderson attempted to interweave a history of Hellenistic and Roman visual culture with stories about its European afterlife, explaining how each is important for approaching the other (Beard and Henderson 2001, especially 1–9). Two other anglophone monographs stand out in particular. The first is Richard Brilliant's book *My Laocoön: Alternative Claims in the*

Interpretation of Artworks (Brilliant 2000). Brilliant's focus is on the Laocoön group (figure 29.1), a statue discovered in 1506 and promptly installed in the Belvedere Courtyard in the Vatican. A host of important studies have charted the various artistic, literary, and (p. 641) philosophical responses to the statue in the ensuing half-millennium, and from a variety of different national perspectives (e.g., Settis 1999; Décultot, Le Rider, and Queyrel 2003; Buranelli, Liverani, and Nesselrath 2006; Curtis and Feeke 2007; Gall and Wolkenhauer 2009). But Brilliant was among the first to go further, interrogating what this history of receptions might mean for getting to grips with the statue's ancient historical contexts: “the veil of interpretations,” as he puts it, “seemed to interfere with the direct perception of this prestigious artwork as an exemplar of ancient art” (Brilliant 2000, xiv). Second, and perhaps still more provocative, has been the work of Elizabeth Prettejohn. Prettejohn is even more explicit in extending the insights of reception theory (as developed by her husband, Charles Martindale) to the interpretation of Greek and Roman sculpture; the consequent manifesto is elucidated in her important 2012 book *The Modernity of Ancient Sculpture* (Prettejohn 2012), although earlier contributions showcase a related approach (Prettejohn 2006; and compare, e.g., Prettejohn 2002).

This chapter will have reiterative recourse to Prettejohn's recent book and in particular her thesis that "no temporal lapse, however long, should be permitted to impede our explorations of ancient sculpture" (Prettejohn 2012, 170). In what follows, I have chosen to concentrate on Prettejohn's work not because she is the only scholar to think about reception, but rather because she is the most provocative outspoken about the underlying methodological stakes: by applying to the study of visual materials the sorts of theoretical frameworks developed by the "Bristol School," Prettejohn's work serves as a useful case study for thinking about the past, present, and future of reception studies within the field of Greek and Roman art and architecture.

Before explaining Prettejohn's underlying polemic, it is worth pausing to note the special relevance of reception theory when it comes to art and architecture. Although designed first and foremost to facilitate the interpretation of texts, reception theory is, if anything, still more important when it comes to approaching images. With textual materials, after all, we tend to be well aware of our historical remove from the authors we read. As anybody who has struggled learning Latin or Greek knows full well, we must begin by learning the underlying conventions—the vocabulary, syntax, and grammar (likewise, before we can decipher an inscription or ancient papyrus, we must come to grips with the epigraphic and papyrological "rules"); alternatively, we make do with some sort of "translation," that is a version of the text that converts those symbolic forms into a cultural language that we *can* understand (in the same way that we turn to translations of works in modern "foreign" languages). With images, by contrast, it is all too easy to efface such critical skills—to think that we see as others saw. If this is true of all images, it is particularly true of those from the Greek and Roman worlds. The very delineation of these objects as "classical" reminds us as much (see Wellek 1965; Settis 2006; Silk, Gildenhard and Barrow 2014); regardless of their original contexts and functions, Greek and Roman visual materials have long been thought to embody some aesthetic exemplarity—to be, in some critical sense, *timeless* (Squire 2011a, xi-xv). The assumption is, of course, mistaken. Just as the passing of time changes how images look (a statue's loss of paint, its fragmentation or subsequent reconstruction, the addition of a "fig leaf," etc.), so, too, does it change how images are looked at and interpreted. This fact invests theories of (p. 642) reception with a particular importance when it comes to visual materials: the different ways in which images and texts operate give theories of reception a special critical urgency in the interpretation of pictures; images from the Greek and Roman past, moreover, embody those underlying methodological questions in particularly complex ways.

Historicism and Its Discontents

It would be wrong to think of “reception studies” as a wholly new concern among classicists. Although scholars might not have conceptualized their project in terms of “reception theory” (at least, not before the twentieth century), they have long recognized that “the past is mediated already in the past” (Porter 2008, 474). This has in part to do with the Greek and Roman materials available to us. So it is, for example, that we know of Polyclitus’s *Kanon* only from subsequent cultural references to it (both literary tidbits and sculpted adaptations of Polyclitus’ *oeuvre*: see chapter 3 above); likewise, our knowledge of Greek painters such as Apelles, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius derives from later Roman discussions—above all, in Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History*, written some four or five centuries after these artists flourished (see chapter 3 above). Ever since Adolf Furtwängler systematized the study of *Kopienkritik* and *Meisterforschung* in the late nineteenth century (see chapter 19 above), studying Greek sculpture has been inseparable from studying its later Roman imitations and adaptations. “Reception studies” are built into the very fabric of classics as a discipline, and into the subdisciplinary field of studying Greek and Roman art above all.

But there is a fundamental difference between the sorts of “reception studies” pursued by Furtwängler and the general critical approaches advocated by Jaus and his “Bristol School” classicist followers. By studying Roman “responses” to and “copies” of earlier Greek sculpture, Furtwängler was primarily interested in reconstructing *original* “masterworks” (*Meisterwerke*: Furtwängler 1895). The Roman “reception” of Greek art was consequently understood as a means to a historical end: examining “copies” of a statue such as the Doryphorus (figure 29.2) could help archaeologists reconstruct what Polyclitus’s “original” statue looked like, and in turn uncover what the Doryphorus might “originally” have meant (“what it actually was,” as Furtwängler 1895, 384, puts it; for discussion, see Prettejohn 2012, 95). At work, as numerous recent scholars have observed, is a deeply philological paradigm, modeled after the reconstruction of lost texts and editions on the basis of extant manuscripts (see e.g., Gazda 1995, 126–129; Marvin 2008, 145–150; Junker and Stähli 2008). Ultimately, it is “historicism” that proves the motivating factor. The scholarly emphasis is on the historical genesis of the artwork; as a result, the underlying objective is to reconstruct what a statue itself “meant” when it was first created. In the words of one scholarly detractor, the foundational aim is to “roll back the years and reveal to us the original in its gleaming, pristine form” (Martindale 1993, 4).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 29.2 Roman “copy” of Polyclitus’s Doryphorus of c. 440 BCE. Provenance unknown. C. 20 BCE. Marble. Height 1.98 m. Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Arts inv. 86.6.

(Photograph © Minneapolis Institute of Arts.)

Reception theory (or at least the sorts of reception theory championed by Martindale’s “Bristol School”) works around a different set of epistemological parameters. Because meanings always fall back on variables of “receiver,” it is deemed impossibly “positivist” (p. 643) (not to mention aesthetically reductive) to reconstruct what a text or image “originally” meant. For some, the whole idea of chronological “sequence” proves no less a metaphorical red herring. This is the approach

championed by Prettejohn in *The Modernity of Ancient Sculpture*. Concerned with the forging of art history in particular, Prettejohn traces the “historicist” bugbear back to Johann Joachim Winckelmann, whose 1764 *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (*History of the Art of Antiquity*) provided a disciplinary paradigm for the subsequent study of ancient and modern art alike (Prettejohn 2012, 7–37; see chapter 19 above). What is so interesting about Winckelmann’s project, Prettejohn observes, is its underlying tension between “art” (*Kunst*) and “history” (*Geschichte*). In recent years, the predominant “art historical” emphasis has been historicist in orientation; in line with what Ivan Gaskell nicely terms “retrieval art history” (Gaskell 1992, 182), an underlying objective has been to reconstruct the “period eye” of any given time or place in historical perspective (Baxandall 1972, especially 29–32; see also Squire 2009, 79–83). According to Prettejohn, however, Winckelmann knew that historicism was never enough. For all of Winckelmann’s attempts to impose stylistic systems for relativizing the “pastness” of Greek art, Greek sculpture was also understood to possess an aesthetic exemplarity—an essential *presence*, which could in turn inspire (p. 644) modern-day artists (Winckelmann 1765 and 2006; Barasch 2000, II: 97–121, provides an excellent orientation; Squire 2012c surveys some of the more important bibliography). For Prettejohn, Winckelmann’s underlying idea of “art” supersedes that of “history.” Still more important, the aesthetic

power of an object invokes a mode of “thinking across time” (Prettejohn 2012, 167). “Roman is to Greek as modern is to ancient,” writes Prettejohn; “why should a Roman interpretation, in marble, of a Greek bronze be any more relevant to the study of Greek art than a painting by Leighton—a supremely sophisticated observer of ancient sculpture?” (Prettejohn 2012, 169).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 29.3 Statue of Aphrodite, from Melos (“Venus de Milo”). C. 100 BCE. Marble. Height 2.04 m. Paris, Musée du Louvre inv. Ma 399.

(Photograph by Michael Squire.)

The best way to explain the polemic here—and to understand how reception theory is understood as offering a corrective—is by way of demonstration. One of Prettejohn’s favorite examples is the statue known as the Venus de Milo (figure 29.3).

Discovered [\(p. 645\)](#) in 1820 (on the eponymous island of Melos in the southwest Cyclades), the Venus de Milo is today one of the most famous exhibits of the Louvre in Paris (see Stewart 1990, 177–178; Havelock 1995, 93–98; Cuzin, Garborit,

and Pasquier 2000, 432–476; Salmon 2000; Hales 2002; Curtis 2003; Kousser 2005, especially 337–339, with further bibliography cited at 228 n. 5). Exploring different scholarly approaches to the statue, Prettejohn postulates three different methodological “options,” each with its own set of theoretical assumptions (Prettejohn 2006; adapted in Prettejohn 2012, 73–95). The first approach is the one most familiar to historians of (Greek and Roman) art—and the one best represented in the contributions to the present volume: “to discover as much as possible about the object’s making, the social and historical contexts in which it was made, and its meaning within those contexts” (Prettejohn 2006, 228–230, later citing Smith 2002 as an example of this approach). For Prettejohn, such attempts are inevitably in vain. Try as one may to find epigraphic evidence, textual references, or indeed iconographic parallels, it proves ultimately impossible to understand what the Venus de Milo “originally” meant. “Historicist” models, in short, are unsatisfyingly “positivist” in their empirical assumptions and circular logic: they make too much out of too little information. On this

basis, Prettejohn proceeds to challenge historicism *tout court*: “there is then a serious argument to be made that it is not possible to write a history of ancient art at all, along the positivist lines of traditional art-historical enquiry” (Prettejohn 2012, 230).

In Prettejohn’s view, there is something still more damning about this first methodological approach for understanding the Venus de Milo: for the historicist obsession with the statue’s past risks distracting scholars from its powerful presence. This leads Prettejohn to consider the statue’s more modern critical reception and to her second interpretive model: might it not be more helpful to reorient our inquiry away from the statue’s “original” production and toward its subsequent interpretation? The nature of the evidence available to us makes it much easier to explore the work’s modern as opposed to ancient reception, and Prettejohn proceeds to do precisely this. She surveys responses to the statue in the writings of (among others) Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, the Comte de Clarac, and Toussaint-Bernard Émeric-David. She also analyzes artistic reactions from the same period, by the likes of Albert Moore and James McNeill Whistler in the nineteenth century, along with Salvador Dalí, Mary Duffy, and Jim Dine in the twentieth. In each case, these modern responses are said to respond to formal features in the ancient statue. Compare and contrast the Venus de Milo with Albert Moore’s supposed response to it in 1869 (figure 29.4), for example, and we see more clearly the “articulation of the body in the ancient work” (“a plumb line from a point midway between the clavicles falls directly to the malleolus internus of the supporting foot”: Prettejohn 2012, 90–92). “At the present moment,” Prettejohn concludes, “it seems to be practising artists, rather than classical scholars, who maintain faith in the intellectual and aesthetic power of classical art” (Prettejohn 2006, 244).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 29.4 Albert J. Moore, *A Venus* (1869). Oil on canvas. York, York Art Gallery.

(Photograph © York Museums Trust.)

Prettejohn's third model of approaching the Venus de Milo wrestles with the implications of all of this for forging a different art historical method. For her, the aesthetic power of the statue collapses the chronological disparity between "antiquity" and "modernity." Better, perhaps, the very reception of the statue sheds light on how the (p. 646) statue entrances its viewers; it helps us to understand what the statue *is* and *has been*, simultaneously occupying

a past and present tense alike: "each reception potentially has something to tell us about the Venus, as well as something about the subjective perception of the receiver" (Prettejohn 2006, 245). Needless to say, Prettejohn's mode of "reception studies" aligns itself with this third model over and above the previous two: "the imaginative collaboration of many minds produces a fuller account of the statue than the bare minimum our facts can provide," she concludes; what's more, "such an account may be closer in richness and complexity to the 'original' import of the statue" (Prettejohn 2006, 249).

Before turning to analyze the merits—and, in my view, intellectual problems—of this approach, it is necessary to say something about the aestheticizing agenda operating behind it. Fundamental to Prettejohn's diachronic view of Greek and Roman art is an underlying ideology about its nature as "art" in the first place. This is not the place to discuss the ways in which ancient ideas about "art" were like and unlike our own (see chapter 1 above, along with Platt and Squire 2010); for Prettejohn, in any case, such "historicist" discussions are thought to be of only limited relevance (Prettejohn 2012, 98–100). What her model of reception assumes, rather, is that sculptures such as the Venus de Milo—no less than modern artistic responses to it—have an aesthetic value (p. 647) that transcends any given chronological time frame (for a differently nuanced argument, compare Holly 1996 and 2008).

This “aestheticizing” agenda is fundamental to much recent work in “reception theory,” not least among classicists (see Martindale 2005 for a similar critical approach to the aesthetics of Latin poetry); it also resonates with a larger intellectual shift, above all in post-postmodern art history (see, e.g., de Bolla 2001; Steiner 2001; Nehamas 2007; for further bibliography, see Squire 2009, 72–74). Prettejohn herself makes no secret of her allegiance to aesthetic ideas about the artwork’s inherent “beauty” (compare Prettejohn 2005), nor does she disguise her ultimate debt to the philosophical writings of Immanuel Kant in the late eighteenth century (Kant 1987; bibliographic overview in Squire 2009, 50–60). From this perspective, reception theory provides a way of reorienting not just the study of Greek and Roman sculpture but also “art history” at large. For Prettejohn, paying heed to the reception of a statue such as the Venus de Milo ultimately sheds light on those formal aspects that “initiate the free play of the imagination” (Prettejohn 2012, 243). Where Prettejohn’s first, “historicist” method of interpreting the Venus de Milo, with its search for “original” meanings, is accused of ignoring the iconic power of the statue, reception theory serves to “mystify” the object once more, championing a more timeless aesthetic. As Henri Matisse put it, the person who responds to an artwork by hoping to identify with its past audiences loses sight of the work’s aesthetic presence, rather “like a man who searches, with retrospective jealousy, the past of the woman he loves” (quoted in Laird 2010, 349). To be fair, Prettejohn is keen not to ignore history altogether: “what is revealed in reception is not the timeless or universal aesthetic potential of the object, but rather its aesthetic power in a specific historical encounter (always triangulated with our own reception),” as she puts it (Prettejohn 2012, 100). Regardless of which “historical encounter” we choose to concentrate on, though, each reception is understood as a response to some inherent property of the statue. The overarching “Kantian” art historical framework consequently champions not history but a different mode of aesthetic “truth”—one that cannot be tied down in either time or place.

Ways Forward—and Back



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Fig. 29.5 Parthenon, East Pediment. Three female figures (Hestia[?] , Dioné[?], and Aphrodite). 438–432 BCE. Marble. Height of Hestia 1.34 m. London, British Museum.

(Photograph © Trustees of the British Museum.)

What, then, might reception theory offer the student of Greek and Roman visual culture? One of the major virtues perhaps lies in its formalist emphasis—the close attention it pays to the visual properties of a given sculpture or painting. In the hands of a sensitive expert such as Elizabeth Prettejohn, the study of artistic reception can help us to see new registers of significance. Comparing and contrasting figures

from the East pediment of the Parthenon (figure 29.5) with Picasso’s 1921 painting of *Three Women at the Spring* (which is said to have been partly inspired by the Parthenon sculptures) (figure 29.6), for example, might serve to highlight “the solid gravity of [the] seated figures.” The statue’s artistic reception helps us to appreciate new aspects of the “original,” such as the “massive protruding knees, thus revealed as a notable feature of the female (p. 648) figures from the East pediment” (Prettejohn 2012, 237–238). In this connection, each act of reception has the potential to illuminate not only “the subjective perception of the receiver” (Prettejohn 2012, 245) but also something about the ancient object itself, in spite of the removes of time, geography, and culture. For Charles Martindale, this sort of approach is particularly important when it comes to Greek and Roman materials, about which a great deal of historical information is otherwise unavailable. “Reception,” as Martindale puts it, “provides a way of compensating for the loss of so much of the archive” (Martindale 2007, 309). Given how little we know about ancient objects, as indeed about ancient texts, reception studies are said to serve as a “replenishing” sort of substitute: “if we adopt a reception approach, a vein of great richness immediately opens up before us, with abundant material for us to work on and with” (Martindale 2007, 310).



[Click to view larger](#)

Fig. 29.6 Pablo Picasso, *Three Women at the Spring* (1921). Oil on canvas. New York, Museum of Modern Art.

(Photograph © The Museum of Modern Art/Art Resource, New York.)

But does it follow that “for much of antiquity one can write a reception history, or no history at all” (Martindale 2007, 310)? It is at this point, I think, that a problem sets in. For much recent work in reception studies would seem here to conflate two rather different claims (see Squire 2013). On the one hand is the hypothesis that when it comes to Greek and Roman art (as indeed Greek and Latin literature), historicism is impossible. On the other hand is the claim that historical interpretation is both unnecessary and

undesirable. Before we can assess what reception theory can contribute within [\(p. 649\)](#) *A Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture*, we need to interrogate both claims in turn.

Let me begin with the first idea. Can we write “histories” of Greek and Roman art in the first place? Although we cannot hope to know *everything* about an object’s production or consumption in antiquity, I for one am convinced that we can know *something*. In this regard, the equation of “historicism” with “positivism” strikes me as wholly unhelpful. As ever, it all depends on what sorts of questions we pose—and with what sorts of answers we satisfy ourselves.

Consider, once again, the Venus de Milo (figure 29.3). Prettejohn is, of course, in one sense right: we have very little “documentary or textual evidence” about the statue (Prettejohn 2006, 230), save for a fragmentary inscription that most likely belonged to it (“[?Alex]andros son of Menides from Antioch-on-the-Meander made it”). But in spite of the textual bent of so much art history, we do not need literary sources to situate a statue historically. The very form of an object gives it a context: with or without texts, the statue constitutes historical evidence that can be compared and contrasted with other sorts of material testimonia. Available to us are, in fact, numerous ways of contextualizing this

sculpture (for one recent attempt, see Kousser 2005; developed in Kousser 2008, 28–34). (p. 650) On the one hand, our questions might concern the formal properties of the produced statue (the Parian origin of its marble; the use of two distinct blocks of stone, disguised by the drapery wrapped around the crotch; the labored process of integrating the separately rendered parts; the close attention to the statue's right-hand and frontal aspects, as opposed to the left-hand and reverse sides; the apparent "retrospection" of its style; the likely reconstruction and sorts of display settings, etc.). On the other hand, we can situate the statue within a broader array of social, cultural, and even theological contexts—in terms of culturally constructed notions of gender, for example, perceived "ideals" of the female body, and, not least, ancient concepts of epiphany and ideas about representing the gods (see Platt 2011, especially 188–193). Applied to whole areas of Greek and Roman visual culture in the late twentieth century, such concern with the *ancient* reception of images has resulted in some of the most stimulating work within the field. One thinks, for example, of French "structuralist" approaches to Greek vase painting (approached from the perspectives of Athenian viewers rather than vase painters: e.g., Bérard 1989) and also of Jaś Elsner's pioneering analyses of Roman art from the viewpoint of the "Roman viewer" (Elsner 1995; see also Elsner 2007c).

If it is possible to reconstruct something about the historical contexts of ancient art and architecture, it also strikes me as desirable to do so; indeed, if this were not the case, reception studies would not busy themselves with the historical contexts of more recent periods (when ancient Greek and Roman artifacts were themselves "received"). The larger problem, in my view, lies in the ideological hijacking of reception studies to serve a different, aestheticizing agenda. "Thinking across time" has many benefits. But to adopt such a diachronic view need not be to assume some "timeless" aesthetic, one that works independently from whichever "interested" historical frame we choose to focus upon. If, as we have said, objects blur the past with the present, to think about objects *only* in terms of the present would be at least as reductionist as approaching them in the exclusive terms of the past. From this perspective, the idealist recourse to Kantian aesthetics strikes me as particularly problematic. It assumes the *a priori* relevance of modern cultural and intellectual frameworks for approaching objects crafted under markedly different circumstances, serving different agendas, purposes, and functions. The essentially "essentializing" agenda of so much reception theory, in short, risks championing precisely the sorts of (single, imperialist, and totalizing) "God's-eye view" that it explicitly set out to overturn (see Martindale 1993, 2).

This is not to suggest that reception studies have *no* role within the study of Greek and Roman art history, however. What is needed, rather, is a slightly recalibrated methodological approach. To my mind, there seems to be particular mileage in taking the diachronic concerns of reception theory but developing them in new sorts of interpretive

directions. More specifically, I think we need to challenge the recurrent equation of “historicism” and “positivism”; rather than deeming reception an alternative to historicism, the two might be made to work in much closer symbiosis.

One way of proceeding here might be in terms of an explicitly comparative angle. This is the general approach championed by Jeremy Tanner, for example, in his work on the “invention of art history in ancient Greece” (Tanner 2006). In his book, Tanner (p. 651) compared (and indeed contrasted) ancient Greek discourses about image-making with those that emerged in the later modern West, themselves explicitly founded on supposed earlier Greek and Roman models. Of course, Tanner’s approach is deeply historicizing, championing the variables of chronology *within* antiquity above all else (Tanner 2010, 267–275). But Tanner nonetheless recognized the intellectual traction that comes from adopting a broader comparative perspective. In some ways, his project therefore aligns with what one German art historian has called “an anthropology of images” (Belting 2011a). Tanner’s sensitive analysis allows us to see how images at once mediate and embody both similarities and differences in “ancient” and “modern” cultural perspectives.

For all the manifold differences in approach and method, my own recent work *The Art of the Body: Antiquity and Its Legacy* (Squire 2011a) might be understood in similar terms. In that book, I tried to give some concrete examples of what a more “historicist” mode of reception studies might look like, as applied to the study of Greek and Roman art. My argument was that by examining the reciprocal, visually mediated dialogue between ancient sculpture and subsequent responses to it, a comparative analysis could help us to understand both “ancients” and “moderns” alike (to quote the book’s series title). It might ultimately prove impossible to disentangle the “ancient” from the “modern.” But the project of doing so (or rather, of *attempting* to do so) proves enlightening in and of itself.



Click to view larger

Fig. 29.7 Group of Aphrodite, Pan, and Eros (“Slipper-Slapper” group), from the Establishment of the Poseidoniasts of Berytos on Delos. C. 100 BCE. Marble. Height with base 1.55 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 3335.

(Photograph by Michael Squire.)

One poignant example, related to our previous discussion of the Venus de Milo, concerns ancient images of the naked female body, in particular the legacy of the Aphrodite of Cnidus—a marble statue made by Praxiteles sometime around the middle of the fourth century BCE (Corso 2007, 9–186; Squire 2011a, 69–114, with further bibliography at 213–218) (figure 24.2). As so often, we do not have Praxiteles’s “original” statue, which is long since lost; we must instead proceed on the basis of later literary

reactions and the numerous (and equally rich) artistic adaptations of it (cf., e.g., figure 24.2). Some scholars would cast antipositivist doubt on our very ability to reconstruct what that “original” statue looked like: “it is remarkable that the identification of the copies with the Cnidian is invariably presented as fact; a previous identification is repeated tralatitiously as if it were a fact,” as Prettejohn complains (2006, 231 n. 8). This strikes me as unduly nihilistic. In the case of Praxiteles’s statue, at least, we know a very great deal about the image and, indeed, about the different (albeit connected) ways it was imbued with meaning. First are the rich literary discussions of both the work and the artist (Johannes Overbeck’s laborious, albeit selective, sourcebook lists more than one hundred literary references to Praxiteles and nineteen references to this work in particular; Overbeck 1868, 230–249 nos. 1190–1300; 236–240 nos. 1227–1245). Second, and arguably still more remarkable, are the knowing and self-referential ancient visual adaptations of the statue in a host of different media and contexts (see Smith 1991, 79–83; Havelock 1995, especially 9–37; Spivey 1996, 173–186; Pasquier and Martinez 2007, 130–201). One of the most remarkable examples comes in the “Slipper-Slapper” group from Delos, which purposely plays upon a viewer’s knowledge of the Praxitelean “original” (figure 29.7). The group engages with underlying themes about both the goddess’s desirability and the inherent danger of mortals looking upon her “naked”

godhead, while adding its own visual commentary (p. 652) through its iconographic adaptations and incorporation of two additional figures (Squire 2011a, 109–114; see also Havelock 1995, 55–58).

Why bother examining these ancient visual and literary responses in the first place? It is important to reconstruct the sorts of cultural frameworks in which Praxiteles's statue operated and came to be understood, I would suggest, precisely in order to understand its subsequent modern reception (and vice versa). After all, the Cnidian Aphrodite—or, rather, subsequent literary and visual responses to it—proved instrumental in forging Western ideas about the “female nude” (as successively embodied in images such as Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, Titian's *Venus of Urbino*, and Pistoletto's postmodern *Venus of the Rags*). Our own modern views of Praxiteles's ancient statue are necessarily filtered through this later ideological lens; far from making a nonsense of historicism, the various receptions of the statue make it even more important to think about what might be “ancient” and “modern” in our own re(tros)pective views (Squire 2011a, 70–71, 109–110).

This leads to a key point about method. To be clear, my objective would never be to reconstruct “the” meaning of Praxiteles's statue, as though it could ever embody a singular (or chronologically static) sort of significance. Painting in decidedly broad brush (p. 653) strokes, my discussion nonetheless tried to situate visual and verbal responses to the image within a variety of loosely interconnected ancient discourses—about the nature of Aphrodite, for example, the “visualization” of a god or goddess, and the ideology of visual representation. At the same time, it tried to relate these ancient frameworks to more modern ideas, as mediated through this history of the statue's reception. Now, we can (and should) fragment these categories of “antiquity” and “modernity” into ever-smaller chronological units. To my mind, though, they still prove useful as overarching heuristic frames. By adopting a broadly comparative approach, we can begin to see how Greek and Roman “ways of seeing” appear to be at once like and unlike more recent ones, predicated around what John Berger has nicely termed the “male gaze” (Berger 1973, 45–64; see Squire 2011a, 74–79).

In the case of the Cnidian Aphrodite, the range of literary and visual receptions of the statue *within* antiquity can itself illuminate what is similar and different when it comes to more modern artistic adaptations (no less than the other way around). True to the best traditions of cultural history, the resulting analysis has the potential to shed light on *both* ancient (visual) cultures *and* more modern ones, pointing at once to continuities and divergences. “A viewpoint oscillating between antiquity and other periods,” as the editors of a recent book on “reception and the classics” put it, “allows us to consider not only how the classics can illuminate other periods, but also how the reception of antiquity can teach us more about the ancient world itself” (Brockliss et al. 2012, 3; compare

Whitmarsh 2006, 115, preferring to talk about “recipience” as opposed to “reception,” “the constant shuttling back and forth between text, interpreter and intermediaries”).

The argument might be expressed in still stronger terms. On some profound level, “historicism” is itself only made possible by thinking about reception more diachronically. By this I do not mean that the layers of reception resemble some interpretive lacquer—something that can be “stripped away” so as to reveal a pristine past “as it really was” (a recurrent polemic among reception theorists). In my view, it is instead the reciprocal dialogues that matter. Nowhere is this more apparent than in what Ernst Gombrich famously labeled the “Greek revolution”—the rise, above all in sixth-century BCE Archaic Greece, of what we today recognize as more “naturalistic” modes of representing the human body. Exactly how and why this historical phenomenon came about has huge cross-cultural importance—for those interested in Greek art, certainly, but also for those concerned with the visual cultures of other times and places (from the self-styled “rebirth” of Greek and Roman naturalism in the Renaissance to the comparable developments in Han Dynasty China). Such is the legacy of this “Greek revolution,” however, that we can never hope to understand it *solely* in its own historical terms: the perspectives of the present necessarily encroach upon our views of the past. By recognizing this fact and by analyzing some of the ways in which ancient thinking at once corresponds with and diverges from ideas circulating in (for example) the Renaissance, we are able to see both similarities and differences (Elsner 2007b; Neer 2010; Squire 2011a, 32–68; Squire 2012b, 478–485). We need to consider issues of reception, in other words, not to compensate for a *loss* of historical information but rather to contextualize the sheer mass of material available to us, from both the ancient and modern worlds alike (p. 654) (see Laird 2010, 358). Considerations of artistic reception consequently allow for a more “decentralized”—but no less historicist—mode of cultural history (Goldhill 2006, especially 273).

***Blickwechsel*: Classics and Art history**

I want to end this chapter with a slightly different question: what might this historicist mode of reception studies mean for the institutional study of Greek and Roman art? At issue here, I think, are the disciplinary frameworks in which we study “ancient” and “modern” visual cultures (see Donohue 2003; Squire 2011b, 375–377; both have further bibliography). When Winckelmann wrote his 1764 *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, it went without question that ancient art could help in understanding the modern (and vice versa); indeed, Winckelmann’s system for approaching the “stylistic” history of Greek sculpture was explicitly modeled on that of more recent times (see Squire 2011a,

50–53). Among Winckelmann’s immediate German successors—including Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Johann Gottfried Herder, Georg Wilhelm Hegel, and others (Nisbet 1985 presents a useful anthology)—we can trace a related mode of thinking: theorizing contemporary art (no less than earlier Western imagery or, for that matter, images from other times and places) went hand-in-hand with theorizing ancient Greek and Roman art (see, e.g., Butler 1935; Podro 1982; Marchand 1996). The same held equally true in the nineteenth century and even (if not especially) in the early twentieth: the great illuminati of *modern* art history were also experts of *ancient* art (Jacob Burckhardt, Alois Riegl, Heinrich Wölfflin, Aby Warburg, Fritz Saxl, Ernst Gombrich, to name but a few). After abandoning Nazi Germany and reestablishing itself in London in 1933, the Warburg Institute could still define its intellectual remit in terms of a “classical tradition,” concerned with the inescapable *Nachleben* (“afterlife”) of ancient iconographic motifs specifically (see Warburg 1999, with Forster’s introduction on 1–75; see also chapter 18 above).

The situation today could not be more different. In Britain, at least, the study of Greek and Roman art belongs almost exclusively to departments of Classics (see Elsner 2007a); in Germany, there is still less academic traffic between the segregated fields of *Klassische Archäologie* and *Kunstgeschichte*. Things may at first appear more “interdisciplinary” in North America (much to the chagrin of some, e.g. Hölscher 2002, 13): in the United States, a number of professors do have their academic appointments “split” between departments of “Classics” and “Art History.” Even there, though, there can be an unspoken assumption that historians of Greek and Roman art should stick to their “classicist” chronological confines. A fundamental mantra of “art history”—that certain ideas, skills, and intellectual questions unite the study of *all* visual expression—appears to hold only limited traction among specialists of Greek and Roman antiquity (see Squire 2012a, responding to Stewart 2012). Some scholars of Greek and Roman art have delighted in their subsequent disciplinary retreat, and for a whole host of different reasons. Why (p. 655) should we force Greek and Roman art into “anthropological moulds and structures” or “subject it to the service of ideologies bred by modern concerns with race, gender and psychology?” asks one influential textbook on “classical art” (Boardman 1993, 2). Another scholar, this time a trenchant “material culturalist,” is equally dismissive about the insights of art history, arguing that “all art is material culture.... Classical art history therefore is archaeology or it is nothing” (Whitley 2001, xxiii; repeated in Whitley 2012, 595; for two responses, see Neer 2010, 6–11; Squire 2011b, 375–377). From an “outsider” art historian’s perspective, the situation can look bleak indeed: “art historical classicists are in fact so lacking in self-assertiveness that they have more or less retreated into a corner of their own, isolated from the rest of the discipline...

nor does any classicist dare to build a case for the unavoidability of their field, any case at all" (Wood 2012, 171; compare Prettejohn 2012, 6).

There is a deep irony here. For this status quo has itself come about thanks (at least in part) to the critical receptions of ancient Greek and Roman objects in the twentieth century. The rise of "modernism," especially in the wake of World War II, made an explicit irrelevance of Greek and Roman art, with its "dread white army of Greek and Roman statuary" (Wood 2012, 171). The discipline of art history has tended to follow suit. Of course, as Prettejohn argues, "Modernism's declaration of independence from the classical tradition must... be taken with a considerable pinch of salt" (Prettejohn 2012, 277); the very rejection of "classical" Greek and Roman forms, moreover, itself pays homage to a certain burden of influence (see Squire 2011a, 1-31). Still, it is the disciplinary consequences that strike me as significant. If the later twentieth century witnessed a general severing of "classics" from "art history," that process is itself symptomatic of antiquity's influence on the whole trajectory of both Western art and Western art history; had Greek and Roman art been *less* historically influential, it might have enjoyed *more* of a presence in departments of art history today.

This is where reception studies might offer a decisive disciplinary corrective, reconciling different "ancient" and "modern" scholarly perspectives. A rather more rigorous methodological paradigm would be required, not the aestheticizing (and in essence essentialist) agendas espoused by many adherents of the "Bristol School," nor the "return-ticket" sorts of reception studies practiced by numerous others (with their fleeting visits from the ancient Mediterranean to some other time and place, remaining ever the metaphorical tourists). What is needed, rather, is something more ambitious, holistic, and theoretically attuned—something that could restore an intellectual bridge between "classics" and "art history."

German art historian Hans Belting provides one possible paradigm for what this new model might look like. In his book on *Florence and Baghdad: Renaissance Art and Arab Science*, Belting talks about what he terms an art historical *Blickwechsel*, an "exchange of glances" (Belting 2011b, 4). Belting's concern is with variables of cultural space, not time: "our understanding of Western culture comes into sharper focus if we take a step back and examine a crucial encounter with Middle Eastern culture," he explains; "only a *Blickwechsel* (a shift of the gaze from one culture to another) can reveal the characteristics of two cultures that make use of the same knowledge" (Belting 2011b, 28).

(p. 656) Despite Belting's interest in the overlapping but nonetheless distinct (visual) cultural traditions of Renaissance Italy and the Islamic East, his methodological frame has much to offer future theories of Greek and Roman reception. Precisely because Greek

and Roman materials are so implicated within the subsequent history of Western art (just as the history of Western art is itself so implicated within our retrospective interpretations of the Greek and Roman), an informed historical understanding of each can provide a critical lens for approaching the other: “their characteristics become more striking when they are seen next to each other than when each is viewed separately and elucidated solely on its own terms” (Belting 2011b, 4–5). The diverse visual appropriations of Greek and Roman art serve as just one such metaphorical lens: whether we concentrate our gaze on the arts of antiquity or on those of more recent periods, a comparative analysis can bring both into sharper interpretive focus.

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Semiotics TO Agency

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines semiotics and agency in relation to the art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It begins with an overview of meaning in the visual arts, expressed on five different levels: factual meaning, conceptual meaning, explicit historical meanings of images, implicit historical meanings of images, and actualized meaning of images. It then turns to a discussion of modern approaches to ancient art, with emphasis on hermeneutics and visual agency. The chapter also considers semiotic theory and the fundamental insights it provides with respect to cultural history, in addition to some basic problems when it is applied to the visual arts. It also looks at the emergence of the notion of social agency as a means to interpret human figures in Greek and Roman sculpture. Finally, it explores the interference between art forms and other subsystems of human culture.

Keywords: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, architecture, art, hermeneutics, meaning, semiotics, social agency, visual agency, visual arts

Introduction



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Fig. 30.1 Version of the Athena Parthenos by Phidias of 438 BCE (“Varvakeion statuette”), from Athens (Varvakeion School). First half of the third century CE. Marble. Height with base 1.05 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 129.

(Photograph © Gianni Dagli Orti/The Art Archive at Art Resource, New York, AA389405.)

Scientific exploration of works of (figurative) art focuses on the three principal questions of meaning, function, and agency: what images signify, how they are used, and what they bring about. The most traditional of these issues is meaning, to which a substantial body of theoretical reflection has been devoted since the beginning of art historical scholarship. Meaning in the visual arts is, in principle, expressed on five different levels:

- Factual meanings, or subject matter, in the sense of designation, of

images or their elements: the goddess Athena (figure 30.1), the myth of Heracles killing the Nemean Lion (figure 30.2), the triumph procession of the Roman emperor Titus (figure 30.3).

- Conceptual meanings, in the sense of the implicit significance of images: Athena as an embodiment of warlike power and/or scientific knowledge; Heracles as an example of individual heroism, a protagonist of world conquest, a model of the exuberant joy of life or of controlled male virtue; the triumph of Titus as a manifestation of the emperor’s *virtus* and *honos* and of Rome’s claim to world dominion.
- Explicit historical messages of images, expressed and experienced in the frame of their functions and roles, in their (changing) context(s), situations, or locations *within the horizon of historical societies*: the statue of Athena Parthenos in the Parthenon as an expression of Athenian political identity and imperial claims in the time of Pericles; images of Heracles killing the lion as exemplary models of Alexander the Great; the

glorification of the triumph of Titus on his honorary arch as a message of his brother and successor, Domitian, in order to strengthen his dynastic power.

- Implicit historical meanings of images, valued in their significance *from the perspective and through the categories of modern historians*: the statue of Athena Parthenos as a high point of Athenian classicism; Heracles as an exponent of Greek body culture; the triumph relief of the Arch of Titus as a document of the “eternal” struggle between “East” and “West.”

(p. 663) • Actualized meanings of images, *translated according to experiences and concepts of modern observers*: Athena as a model case of a virgin daughter related only to her father; Heracles as a prototype of predominant “maleness”; the triumph of Titus over the Jews as a manifestation of proto-anti-Semitism.

On each of these levels, specific methodologies were developed by modern scholarship within the general cultural and intellectual framework of their time.

History: From Hermeneutics to Visual Agency



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Fig. 30.2 Relief on a harness from the Treasure of Panagyurishte. Heracles and the Nemean Lion. Fourth century BCE. Silver. Sofia, Archaeological Museum.

(Photograph © Erich Lessing/Art Resource, New York, ART85662.)

From Early Modern times on, the approach to ancient art was conditioned by two kinds of alienation. First, the images of antiquity were removed from their original contexts and seen as isolated testimonies of historical culture; second, they often were perceived (p. 664) without the specific ancient sense of visuality and interpreted with the categories of literary—that is, nonvisual—traditions. Both factors affect the meaning of art. The path of modern approaches can be

described as a series of attempts to regain historical contexts and visibility.

From Baroque Antiquarianism to Positivist Hermeneutics



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Fig. 30.3 Detail of the Arch of Titus on the Via Sacra in the Forum Romanum. Triumphal procession of the emperor Titus. 81 CE. Marble. Height of the arch 15.40 m.

(Photograph © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome.)

The reevaluation of ancient art during the Renaissance and Baroque periods led not only to a reappraisal of (Greek and) Roman art forms by artists, connoisseurs, and collectors but also to a new scholarly interest in the themes represented. Learned scholars called antiquarians assembled great quantities of documents from antiquity, both images and objects of

material culture, explaining them mostly as testimonies of the Roman world (and thereby ignoring the fact that many themes of Roman art came from Greek traditions). They appreciated material testimonies because of their greater reliability compared with literary texts; their general aim was not so much to interpret the objects through critical methods but to integrate them into a comprehensive order of the (p. 665) world. The most extensive project of this kind was Bernard de Montfaucon's *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures* (1719-1724), including forty thousand illustrations of images and objects, presented in a hierarchical sequence of the realms of the divine (*res divinae*: gods and heroes) and the sacred (*res sacrae*: religion), followed by the human spheres of social and military affairs (*res publicae/privatae* and *res militares*), and burial and afterlife. In many respects, the antiquarians laid the methodological foundations of archaeological research, not least regarding typology and iconography of works of art (Stark 1880; Momigliano 1950; Schnapp 1993 and 2008; see also chapters 18 and 19 above).

Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the founder of modern art history based on artistic style, was also influential through his methodology of hermeneutics, developed in particular in his *Monumenti antichi inediti* (1767). His insight that many works of Roman art represented Greek myths was based on the assumption that art is a kind of silent poetry, and therefore, as in poetry, the most sublime theme of art was Greek myth. In this sense,

art is essentially seen as an illustration of myth which is an entity of its own separated from the reality of human life; the task of scholarship is to decipher the myths in art (Himmelfmann 1971). Questions regarding artistic genres or functions are not posed. Instead, the meaning of Greek art is, on the one hand, deduced from its general historical circumstances: political freedom as the ideal condition of beauty in art, its suppression as a cause of art's decline. On the other hand, its values are derived from ideals of Winckelmann's own time: *edle Einfalt, stille Größe* ("noble simplicity and quiet grandeur").

(p. 666) The first systematic methodology of investigating the contents of Greek and Roman works of art is Carl Robert's *Archäologische Hermeneutik* (Robert 1919; see also chapter 25). His declared aim was to determine the factual themes represented in images, to identify figures, actions, and events. To this end, Robert explores, with a kind of philological methodology, images of various complexity, proceeding from single figures with their attributes, mimics, and gestures, to scenes with their narrative elements and compositional forms. In this process, understanding images is partly possible from the image itself, by recognizing its theme through acquaintance with the natural world of beings and objects; it is also partly achieved through the acquaintance with specific cultural circumstances, such as knowledge of myths, use of literary texts, comparison with other images, and consideration of contexts, local setting of works of art and configurations of themes in the frame of a monument. In principle, this is a positivist approach, highly efficient and fundamental to this day but of limited reach. Wider aspects of meaning of the works of art, such as ethical behavior and social values, the character of gods and heroes, the religious or political context of images, their genre and function, are in part considered but always in the service of concrete explanation, not for their own sake.

A fundamental new theoretical approach was developed by art historians Aby Warburg and Erwin Panofsky (see chapter 25). Panofsky's three-step model of interpretation, leading from the identification of "natural" subjects, to the recognition of culturally stamped themes, and ultimately to the deeper cultural content of art as an expression of basic cultural conceptualizations and attitudes of entire societies and epochs, is in some respects a predecessor of later semiotic theory (Panofsky 1939). The main weakness of this theoretical framework consists of the fact that "meaning" is basically confined to the factual themes of images and their conceptual, ethical, or religious significance, which can be adequately expressed through language, whereas the artistic form, the constituent feature of the visual arts, is much less present as an essential bearer of "meaning." On a higher philosophical level, Panofsky's system was criticized as being based on the assumption of an essential truth that is embodied in art and has to be recognized by the observer, leaving little space for the polyvalence and openness of works of art and for the

dynamics of reception by viewers who interpret them according to their own cultural horizon and actual experiences.

Semiotics

The theory of semiotics has developed a conceptual framework of analyzing and understanding social and cultural practice on the basis of signs, as a process of signification. Pioneered by the British philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1834–1914; Peirce 1931) and the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913; Saussure 1916) and influentially further developed by Roland Barthes in France (1915–1980; Barthes 1964) and Umberto Eco in Italy (1932–; Eco 1968), the semiotic approach aims to offer a general concept of human culture and social practice. Human culture is seen as a dominion of signs, used to transport cultural meaning in social (p. 667) interaction. Among the various systems of signs, language and script hold in practice a privileged position. Visual systems play a minor role and are often overshadowed by categories taken from linguistics. Nonetheless, semiotic theory was influentially introduced and adopted in the history of Greek and Roman art. Semiotics shares some categories with Panofsky's concept of iconography/iconology, but in general, the semiotic model is opposed to the iconological assumption of an essentialist reference between form and content, emphasizing instead the basically arbitrary character of signs in relation to their meaning. Specific societies develop and use their specific systems of signs in which there is no inherent, major or minor, "truth," and no development toward "superior" semantic systems; semiotics is fundamentally relativistic (for semiotics in Greek and Roman art, see Vernant and Bérard 1984; Schneider, Fehr, and Meyer 1979; for art history, see Bal and Bryson 1991).

Signs designate objects, notions, and ideas. Not only notions and ideas but also objects must be conceptualized in order to be signified: to make an image of a house, the author/artist has to create an imagined image of it, including what he or she considers essential for a house: doors and windows, colors, building materials, three-dimensionality, surroundings, inhabitants. And this imagined image again depends on which idea is behind the house: shelter, technique and style of architecture, home of a family. This concept of a house is the foundation of the image, in terms of semiotics: the "interpretant."

In general, the system of semiotics is conceived on three levels:

- *Semantics* means the relation between a sign and the real or ideal object to which it refers. Examples: the word "horse," the script h-o-r-s-e, a painted/sculpted horse in relation to a real horse and its cultural significance (see below).

- *Syntactics* means the interrelation between the signs in structural systems. Examples: the configuration of beings and things within a painting; the composition of words and phrases in a text or, macroscopic, the principles of configuration and composition in specific cultures of (e.g., Greek, Byzantine, Baroque) “art;” the grammar of specific languages.
- *Pragmatics* means the use and impact of signs in social interactions. Examples: the adoption of a national hymn at public events for creating collective identity, the use of a god’s image in a community’s civic procession, the dedication of votive offerings as an assertion of the dedicant’s piety and/or social status, the erection of political monuments for creating and stabilizing political power among a mass public.

A general difference between language and figurative art is drawn in the representational function of signs: “conventional”/“arbitrary” versus “natural” or, in terms of computer language, “digital” versus “analogue.” The signs of language, being essentially sequences of voices, have nothing in common with the designated objects; they are attributed to them by pure convention. The same is true of nonpictographic systems of script, where conventional signs refer to letters, syllables, or words.

(p. 668) In the realm of visuality, distinctions can be made between specific classes of signs. An *icon* is a sign that has a sufficient number of “natural” traits in common with the object it represents. In art, this definition applies to figurative images, in spite of the fact that images also have features of conventional rendering: a horse can be depicted on a sheet of paper by a simple outline; this is sufficient, although no horse possesses a black outline, nor has any horse a flat white body, as is conditioned by the outline’s paper background. Conversely, a *symbol* is defined as a conventional sign that has nothing in common with the designated object or meaning, such as a wedding ring or traffic lights. Moreover, *index* refers to visual elements pointing to something that is not self-evident; in life, smoke is (normally) an index of fire; in art, gazes and gestures of figures can emphasize specific motifs within a painting.

On the level of semantics, a basic distinction is made between *denotation* and *connotation*. Denotation means the designation of an object as such—a horse or a scene of sacrifice—whereas connotation circumscribes the implied meaning(s) of this theme. A horse can be “connotated” or interpreted as a workforce of agriculture, a symbol of social nobility, or an embodiment of sexual lust, and so forth. Such meanings are not “naturally” inherent in these themes but are culturally ascribed to them; yet they are the primary motif of conveying to these figures cultural significance. Thus, as a rule, horses are thematized in art and literature not because of their “natural” existence but because of their cultural significance. In Roman art, scholarship has largely focused on connotated meaning in political monuments: on scenes of triumph as examples of *virtus* or rites of

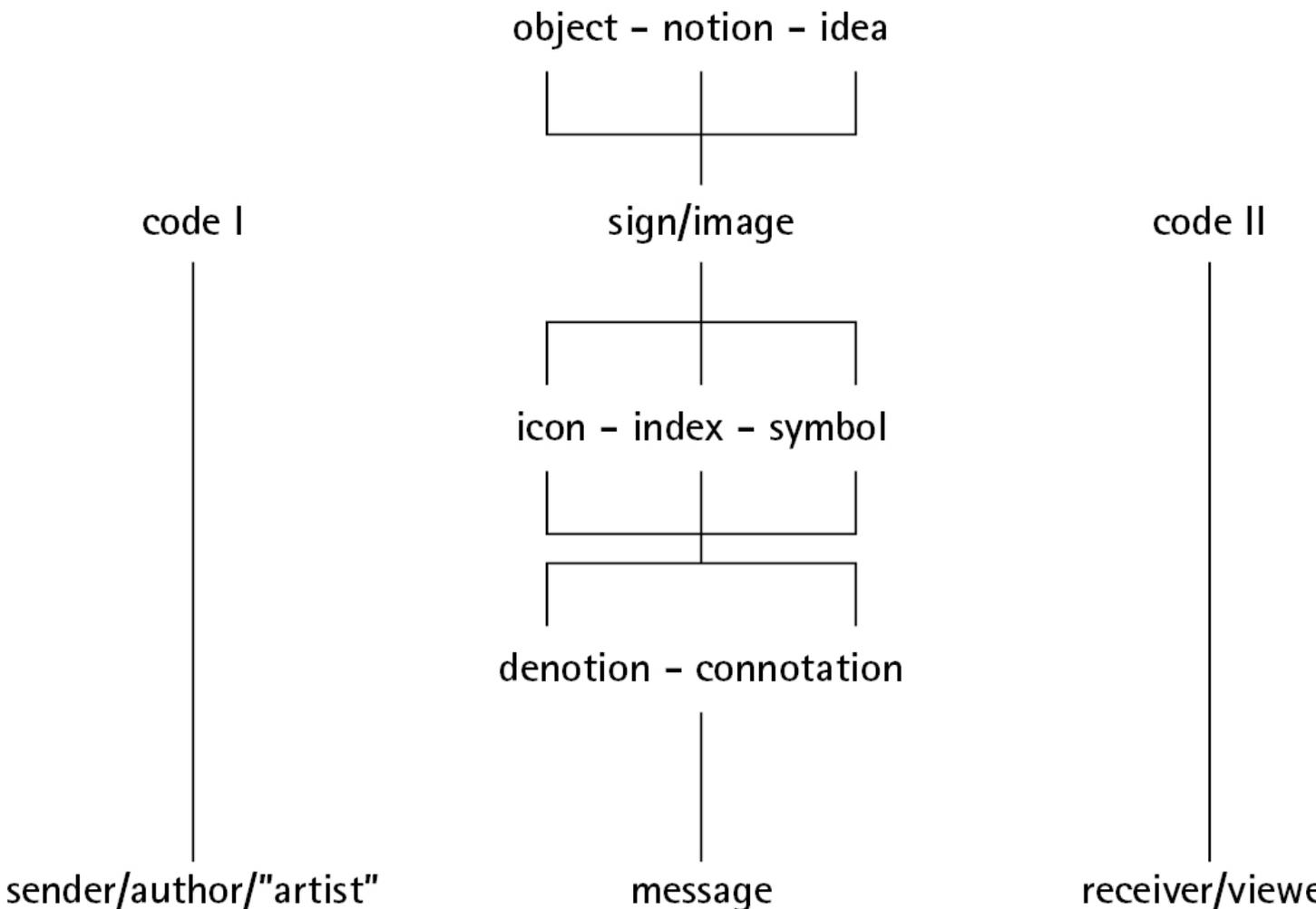
sacrifice as a demonstration of *pietas*. Correspondingly, in Greek art, naked bodies of young men express male “beauty and virtue” (*kalokagathia*), elegant maidens appear in garments and with gestures that demonstrate attraction (*charis*). Generally speaking, this is the level on which all essential questions of “meaning” in the visual arts are to be dealt with: from social values, their affirmation and subversion, to gender issues and psychoanalysis.

On the level of syntactics, a basic difference is emphasized between the notions of a general code and a specific message (in French, *langue* and *parole*). *Code/langue* defines an entire system of communicative signs, such as the grammar of a specific language or the formal principles of a specific society’s figurative art, whereas *message/parole* means the specific work, text, or image that is produced by choosing and composing appropriate elements out of this system. In this sense, the general system of “Classical” Greek art forms of the fifth century BCE provides a general view of the world, implying a concept of beings and things as forces and counterforces and a reciprocal spatial interrelation between images and viewers; whereas the figure of Polyclitus’s heroic lance bearer, the Doryphorus (figure 29.2), or the compositions of Athenian myths in the Parthenon pediments use this “system” in order to give this specific hero and these specific myths a specific dynamic form and complex meaning. Likewise, the classicism of art in the time of the emperor Augustus is a general style of shaping Roman *maiestas* and *dignitas*, whereas on the Augustan Ara Pacis (figure 15.2) this style is adopted for a specific ideological message of religiosity and peace (Zanker 1987). The visual code circumscribes the general generative rules and structures of depiction that make possible the production (p. 669) of images for the specific functions of denotation and connotation, of representing specific themes, conveying their meaning and giving them power in social interaction.

On the level of pragmatics, a model of social communication was developed that conceives signs, such as texts or images, as messages between an expedient/sender and a receiver. Signs, in this sense, are not static things but events. The expedient/sender creates, on the basis of his or her cultural code, a message that is transmitted to an individual or collective receiver, who comprehends it by means of his or her own cultural code. This model has two major consequences. First, the message is not thought to be just passively perceived but to arouse an active reaction on the side of the receiver—and this reaction may turn back to the expedient or go further to other participants, who again are supposed to react, in a never-ending chain. Second, the model envisages the possibility that the cultural codes of the expedient and the receiver may either coincide or more or less diverge from each other; in the case of coincidence, the receiver will understand the message in the sense intended by the expedient, while in the case of divergence, a reinterpretation is to be expected according to the receiver’s individual or

collective cultural framework and life experiences. Both of these aspects constitute dynamic factors of the semiotic process.

In a schematic way, the semiotic model can be visualized as follows:



Within this theoretical framework, some basic general notions of the cultural field of the visual arts are defined in a new sense:

- The *sign*, and especially the work of art, is not understood as a given fact, embodying some essential truth, authoritatively expressed by the artist, and to be correctly recognized by “the” spectator through faithful observation. Its meaning is again and again actualized in acts of active appropriation; therefore, it is in many respects open to reinterpretations by a plurality of viewers.
- The *author*, that is, the artist and also the patron, is no longer conceived of as an autonomous creator and initiator but as a mediator in a communicative chain (p. 670) between collective cultural concepts and anticipated audiences. By using the language

and the visual conventions of their society and period, artists and patrons display their individual intentions within a firm structure of inherited collective modes of perception, thought, and expression. In this sense, Barthes heralded “The Death of the Author,” intending thereby the notion of a creative genius as the highest authority of its meaning (Barthes 1984).

- The *receiver*, or viewer, on the other hand, is no longer seen as a passive observer but as an active viewer. After its production, it is only through the act of viewing that the work of art is engendered with meaning by the totality of viewers throughout time, and this chain of reception ends with the actual scholar and his or her narrative about the work. Receivers, too, are acting not just according to their individual experiences and character but on the basis of the cultural practice, repertoire, and concepts of their group or society.
- Finally, *context* plays a major role in semiotic theory. Senders articulate their messages/“texts,” and receivers interpret them within the net of their social and cultural conditions/“contexts.” Here, corresponding to the syntactic notions of code and message (see above), a distinction is to be made between general and specific contextuality. On the one side, context means the general historical frame, such as social structures, political circumstances, religious and cultural premises, collective mentalities that are “behind” the artistic production of a specific society, providing the general categories of producing and understanding the messages of texts and works of art. On the other hand there are the specific concrete situations in which patrons and artists are producing and setting up works of art and in which viewers are responding to them, all driven by specific experiences and intentions. This kind of specific context, with specific interactions and “discourses,” is what scholarship is actually focusing on; yet it should not be overlooked that such specific situations and actions are in multiple ways embedded in, and not fully understandable without comprehension of, the wider contexts of social structures and cultural practices.

As a consequence, context is never singular: every cultural “text” or element, object or phenomenon, is surrounded, in a concentric pattern, by various contexts—social, political, religious, technical, artistic, and so forth. Moreover, contexts are reciprocal, changing their position depending on the specific scientific focus: “texts” can become “contexts,” and vice versa.

The dynamic concept of semiotic communication implies that contexts, contrary to common assumptions, are never given facts and determining forces of the production and reception of works of art: for all “contextual,” that is, social and cultural, circumstances are exposed to interpretation and modification by social agents; works of art, as factors of social agency between producers and receivers, can confirm and also contradict and modify the contextual conditions of their origin. Context, in this

sense, is both a premise and a result of cultural practice, wherein works of art unfold their impact.

(p. 671) Last but not least, the investigating scholar is just the final link in the chain of reception; scientific narratives about art, too, are stamped by scholars' general cultural premises and their personal points of view. This applies above all to the choice of themes for investigation. Most scholarly interests are more or less clearly influenced by contemporary priorities: political representation or gender issues after 1968, "foreign" cultures in the period of postcolonialism, and so forth. In order to avoid the danger of anachronistic actualizations (by modern concepts of "political propaganda," contemporary "feminism," or "political correctness"), historical contextualization is helpful. But even historical contexts are not firm and objective frames of "uninvolved" research, for "contexts" are never given facts. They, too, are constituted by scholars through selection from the multiplicity of historical phenomena, according to the questions they are asking around cultural signs/works of art. Such scientific relativism is unavoidable in reasonable concepts of historical research, and insofar as it directs scholarship to deal with themes and aspects of relevance to present-time societies, it is a fruitful incentive, but only under three conditions. First, the present-time perspective on historical cultures should generate open *questions*, not pre-given *answers*; there must be a clear borderline against ideology-driven research. Second, scholars must be aware of their own relativism, not only of the possibility of error but also of the implicit limitations of their own interests and approaches. Third, the relativity of insight into the reality of historical societies must never obscure the fact that those people and events really existed; what historians do is not construction but reconstruction. Otherwise, we implicitly justify the Nazis' negation of the Holocaust.

In classical archaeology, semiotic approaches were first applied in a francophone group around Jean-Pierre Vernant, stamped by theoretical approaches of social anthropology (Émile Durkheim, 1858-1917; Louis Gernet, 1882-1962) and structuralism (Claude Lévi-Strauss, 1908-2009). The focus is on the imagery of Greek vases, representing fundamental spheres of social life, such as warfare, hunting and athletics, banquets, or religious rituals. Most influential was an exhibition *La Cité des images*, accompanied by a volume of essays, analyzing vase paintings as visual creations of a conceptual social polis order (Vernant and Bérard 1984; see also chapters 25 and 28 above). The basic approach is constructivist: images are not seen as reproductions of social realities but as visual creations of social structures and concepts. At the same time, this approach is influenced by structuralist views, emphasizing conceptual polarities, such as culture vs. nature, polis vs. oikos, male vs. female, youth vs. adulthood, elite vs. lower classes, Greek vs. non-Greek. In principle, the ancient world is seen as a fundamentally "foreign" culture; yet, within this structural foreignness historical conditions and changes are considered more

or less irrelevant (Vernant and Bérard 1984; Lissarrague 1990; Schmitt-Pantel 1992; Schnapp 1997 and 2008).

More emphasis was given to historical contexts in semiotic interpretations of political monuments in Germany (see in general Schneider, Fehr, and Meyer 1979). Along this line, the cult statue of Athena Parthenos was analyzed as a comprehensive ideological program of the democratic state of Athens (Fehr 1979b). In a wider sense, though less explicitly, most (p. 672) scholarship of this period on public art was influenced by semiotic positions. Public monuments were investigated as manifestations of political power (Torelli 1982; Coarelli 1996). Greek and Roman portrait statues were no longer interpreted as representations of individuals but as bearers of messages about political and social values and rank (Brilliant 1963; Hölscher 1971; Zanker 1973; Giuliani 1986). The imagery of Roman state monuments was interpreted as a representation of ideological concepts: scenes of triumph as manifestations of military prowess (*virtus*), the acceptance by a Roman commander of the submission of enemies as demonstrations of clemency (*clementia*) and trustworthiness (*fides*), the performance of sacrifices as acts of piety (*pietas*) and foresight (*providentia*) (Hölscher 1980).

While semiotic theory has brought fundamental insights into cultural history, it implies some basic problems when applied to the visual arts.

A general problem in the semiotic approach to figurative art is its inherent concept of the sign as a bearer of meaning different from the sign itself. This is most apparent in the Saussurean branch of semiotics, which emphasizes the arbitrariness and conventionality of signs, according to the model of language. Like words and texts that are essentially *not* what they signify, the essence of images is seen in those features that differ from reality, such as the black outline of a horse on a white sheet of paper. More adequate to the communicative system of images is the Peircean concept where—beside *symbols*, defined as purely arbitrary signs of objects and notions, and *indexes*, as hints to contents different from the sign—*icons* are included as signs that share some visual qualities with the real object; but there, too, the definition as a sign is based on the conventional features of images. In this sense, the semiotic approach to art carries on a divide between form and content that was inherent in most earlier approaches of archaeological hermeneutics: visual forms become secondary with regard to the messages that are conceived according to the model of linguistic notions. It is true that images *can* transport more or less ideal notions and abstract meanings that can be more or less precisely expressed in words: the *aretē* of naked youths, the *charis* of young maidens. The essential character of images, however, implies that they visually and concretely embody, and in this sense *are*, what they mean. A grave statue of a young man or a public image of a Roman emperor, a statue of Zeus hurling the thunderbolt or of Aphrodite displaying her

sensuous beauty, *are* those individuals and deities. The concept of a constructed sign fails to grasp the concrete presence and the immediate physical impact of images.

“The basic tenet of semiotics... is anti-realist” (Bal and Bryson 1991, 174), whereas figurative art is basically mimetic. Art represents reality—through its specific means, and in specific aspects, but still in reference to some experienced or imagined (in the case of myths) reality. Thus, images are, it is true, to some degree productions of human creativity, differing from the “real” world, but to some other degree, they are reproductions of pregiven reality. Semiotics focuses on the first while neglecting the second of these aspects. Yet the distinctive feature of figurative art consists not in those aspects that differ from reality but in those that coincide with the beings and things of the real world. Only on the premise of a basic reference of figurative art to reality can the deviances of technique, style, and formal concepts be dealt with.

The difficulties of adopting semiotic categories developed in linguistics for figurative art lie in some fundamental structural differences between those media. Language (p. 673) is based on the distinct units of words—“boy,” “youth,” and “man,” “thin” and “thick,” “fighting” and “defeating.” Literary description can achieve some differentiation but is necessarily bound to fail in describing the multiplicity of individual reality. In contrast, images dispose of infinite transitions between boyhood and old age, slim and fat bodies, and of innumerable ways of depicting the attitudes, movements, and actions of fighting. The same is true on the level of connotated meanings. Notions of language cover only some very general qualities of the images—*aretē* for naked youths, *charis* for young maiden—whereas there are hundreds of different *visual* youths and maidens, embodying multiple variants of *aretē* and *charis*. And it is this specificity of the visual form that constitutes the meaning of an image.

On the level of pragmatics, a weakness of semiotics is the fact that the sign/message appears as a mere projection of the intention of the producing sender and the interests of the comprehending receiver. Recent cultural theory, however, tends to give the sign itself a kind of (relative) autonomy: images, along with other meaningful objects in social practice, have some life of their own which transcends the intentions and interests of senders and receivers (see below).

This does not mean that semiotic theory is in principle inadequate for figurative art; without doubt, it contains many helpful concepts for art history. Yet it has to be basically freed from its specifically linguistic constraints. An approach is required—whether or not under the label of “semiotics”—that seriously considers and exploits the mimetic visuality of ancient figurative art as a producer of meaning in a social context.

From Visual Significance to Social Agency

In reaction against the traditional methodology of iconographic hermeneutics, scholars of the “Vienna School,” Franz Wickhoff and Alois Riegl, followed by the art historian Heinrich Wölfflin, developed a concept of pure art history around 1900, focusing on basic formal structures, such as space and surface, pictorial and linear, optic and haptic qualities, which are characteristic of specific historical epochs (Wickhoff 1895; Riegl 1901–1923; Wölfflin 1915; see also chapter 24 above). This methodology, which soon became influential in Greek and Roman archaeology, was a fruitful turn, for it opened the path for an understanding of visual forms as an autonomous medium of meaning (Krahmer 1931; Kaschnitz-Weinberg 1965; Schweitzer 1969). On the other hand, it entailed problematic consequences. In the German branch of *Strukturforschung*, such formal systems were combined with ethnic entities, bringing them—often unwillingly—close to racist ideologies. More in general, the analysis of forms became increasingly detached from the themes and functions of art, ending in an aesthetic interplay of artistic styles lacking any connection with social practice. A critical assessment of such theoretical positions was presented by Otto Brendel in *Prolegomena to a Book on Roman Art*, where he pleaded for a concept of a plurality of styles in Roman art, dissolving the traditional nexus between art forms and the innate character of their producers (Brendel 1953).

(p. 674) Starting in the 1960s and 1970s, new approaches were developed through which images of Greek and Roman art were taken as visual products in their own right, as concepts that had meaning in themselves, constructing visual messages of social and political relevance. For Roman art, Italian scholar Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli and his school introduced a distinction between an *arte aulica*, oriented toward Greek models and used in particular in imperial and elite monuments, and an *arte plebea*, stemming from indigenous Italic roots, which was more in favor among the rising middle classes (Bianchi Bandinelli 1966 and 1969). The French approach to images as constructions of social anthropology, built on semiotic premises, was increasingly developed into a concept of figurative art as a visual system of autonomous character (see above).

In a similar vein, human figures in Greek and Roman sculpture were interpreted according to social practice and values of the body. Postures, gestures, and mimicking of votive statues, sepulchral images, and especially public portrait statues, of politicians, poets, and philosophers, are seen as expressions of social roles and models of behavior that exert power on their viewers (Hölscher 1971; Schneider 1975; Giuliani 1986; Zanker 1995); “light” and “heavy” movements are understood as social habits (Fehr 1979a); the nude male body is seen as a basic element of social activity and impact in Greek culture

(for diverging views, see Himmelmann 1990; Hurwit 2007; for Roman bodies, see Hallett 2005); a powerful focus is laid on the erotic aspect of male and female bodies in the context of social practice in ancient Greece (Stewart 1997). The visual significance of bodies is emphasized in distinctions between athletes' bodies; citizens', noncitizens', and foreigners' bodies; heroes' and gods' bodies; but also between bodies in different genres, such as vase painting and grave reliefs (Osborne 2011). In this sense, many features that previously were interpreted as aesthetic forms of style are now conceived of as elements of social and cultural content. This does not mean that style no longer matters; on the contrary, social and cultural life has its style, too. If art refers to reality, reality has affinities to art (see below).

In this context, artistic styles as such are analyzed as an expression of semantic meaning. In Greek art, in particular, the change from the Archaic to the Classical style is interpreted as a far-reaching cultural process, implying the changing interrelation between images and viewers in addition to the changing perception of the world as part of a change of social structure and behavior (Tanner 2006; Neer 2010; the concept of "naturalism" needs further discussion). Roman art is now conceived as a "semantic system" of various styles, mostly derived from Greek prototypes, that are adopted one beside the other for different themes and values (Hölscher 1987).

However, the most important, far-reaching impulse of such approaches is a concept that regards art not only as an expression of social values but as an agent in social interaction: the question is not only what images mean but how they are "used," and what they "do." This means to investigate not only the images as such but the social practices of erecting and "using" images. The imagery of Greek vases is investigated with regard of the vessels' function in the symposion or in funeral rites (Giuliani (p. 675) 1995); Greek and Roman portrait statues are interpreted as factors in a public process of negotiating political and social power (Tanner 2006). In particular, viewing as a response to the formal effects of Greek sculpture is conceived of as a practice of social relevance (Neer 2010). Ultimately, this may lead to a shift from aesthetic to social qualities of art, from "creating" and "viewing" to "agency" and to "living with art" (Hölscher 2012).

Producing, Understanding, and Living with Images

Premises

Functions and Ontological Status of Images

Images are not signs of something fundamentally different from themselves, but they embody those beings or things that they re-present. The image of a horse has the significance of a horse. Images make beings and things “present,” here and now, over time and space. In Greek and Roman antiquity, the ontological status of an image was not to refer the viewer to some transcendent significance beyond the image; its function was “to be there” within the spaces of social life and to make the being or thing represented a part of the social world. As far as there is significance, it is embodied meaning (for the ontological status of images in Greek and Roman culture, see Vernant 1990; Squire 2011).

Images were central elements in what can be termed “iconic culture.” There were no “museums” in the modern sense of detached spaces of aesthetic pleasure or erudite study; images were integrated into the spaces and practices of life. They had functions in social practice: as cult statues of gods and goddesses in temples, votive offerings in sanctuaries, images of the deceased on tombs, honorary statues of famous persons in public spaces, meaningful adornment of architecture, authoritative emblems of coins and seals, appropriate decoration of pottery and utensils for various functions in public and private life, such as religious rituals or festive occasions. Images had their meaning within these contexts of social spaces and situations and, vice versa, contributed through their meaning to the character of those spatial and situational contexts. In the frame of such contexts, images became objects of social practice and discourse (Tanner 2006; Hölscher 2012).

Images and Reality

Images are “re-presentations” of beings or things that have a real or imagined existence and on which the image, to some degree, depends. In this sense, an image is a human creation but not a “free” construction. Every image combines “natural” with conventional and arbitrary elements. Archaic kouroi, although they appear to modern eyes highly stylized according to cultural conventions, are full of realistic observations; (p. 676) conversely, Roman portraits, looking like realistic representations of individual persons, are worked in specific culturally determined forms of mimics, hairstyle and physiognomic types that convey powerful intentional expressions. “Natural” elements serve in identification; “cultural” features enhance meaning.

However, the relationship between “reality” and its representation in images is not one between a meaningless “given” substratum and its sublimation to meaning through art. For “reality” itself is full of meaning, which appears on three levels of cultural practice, both collective and individual. The first level is *perception*. Human beings perceive the real world, its beings, objects, and events, through the lens of their cultural attitudes:

mountains and rivers, animals and plants, men and women, and so forth, are not neutral objects but meaningful constituents of an “interpreted” world. The second level is *formation*. Men shape the real world according to their cultural needs and wishes: cities and landscapes, architecture, clothes, pieces of equipment, and so on. The third level is *(inter-)action*: Men act and interact in the real world in culturally meaningful ways, such as rituals and forms of behavior.

In this sense, the “real” world, too, is a construct of meanings. Insofar as human beings give the real world visual meaning, through perception, formation, and (inter)action in visual forms, “reality” is a kind of “image.” The world of “reality” and the world of images are two media, both potentially loaded with meaning and exerting a comparable visual impact on the participants of these worlds. Because of their different “materials” and conditions of social “use”—“real” beings and objects and targeted activities on the one hand, conventional “artifacts” produced by expressive techniques on the other—the ontological status of the bearer of meaning and the practices of producing and receiving its meaning are not identical. Reality, on the one side, possesses the physical dimensions of life, of active moving, enjoying and suffering, living and dying, all of which are closed to an image. Art, on the other side, includes much greater possibilities of expressive shaping. Nevertheless, both media are in many respects analogous, and the borderline between reality and art is in many respects permeable: a young man fell in love with the statue of Aphrodite by Praxiteles, while a Macedonian general used to tremble in fear of Alexander the Great when looking at his portraits, even long after the king’s death.

One of the basic problems of scientific dealings with art lies in the fact that scientific discourse is necessarily bound to communication through language. For, although in principle direct social communication is possible through visual signs, such as through mimics or gestures, complex arguments and discourses on objects outside the involved partners are only possible in the medium of language. Thus, on all levels of scientific analysis and interpretation of visual art, actions of translation from the sphere of visibility to that of language are unavoidable. Even art historical terminology is stamped by this domination of the sister medium: “language” of art and “reading” or even “deciphering” art are widely used terms, without good alternatives at hand. It is all the more essential to keep in mind that the phenomena of art are basically visual and that their visibility must not get lost in the necessarily linguistic operations of scientific discourse.

Factual and Conceptual Meaning

Factual Meaning

(p. 677) As far as the first task of art history is to explore the intended meaning and the actual perception of works of art within historical societies, the precise identification of

their factual themes, their subject matter, must be a main focus of research. On the level of factual significance, in semiotic terms, of denotation, the concept of “meaning” is unequivocal: if the artist represents the goddess Athena, or a priest, or a horse, the ancient viewer and also the modern interpreter are supposed to recognize Athena, a priest, or a horse. Doing otherwise was in antiquity and is today not a legitimate act of reception but a mistake.

Recognition of factual themes in works of art is based on previous knowledge on two levels. For concrete “natural” subjects, such as a horse or an old man, visual acquaintance with the real world is required. Themes of cultural practice, however, require specific knowledge—which can only be provided through language. For recognizing that a group of men (and women) lying on beds is neither a hospital nor a collective sleeping room, one must know that the Greeks used to recline on klinai during the symposion. The same applies to specific stories, such as the battle of Alexander against the Persian king Darius, or to the whole range of myths. The battle of Alexander against Darius, the legend of Theseus and the Minotaur, and even the story of the nativity of Jesus Christ can only be narrated in texts and recognized on the basis of verbal narrations: none of these events could be narrated by or recognized from an image alone.

Conceptual Meaning

Beyond their identifiable subjects, images possess conceptual significance. This has long been explored in Roman state art, where victorious battle scenes are interpreted as manifestations of military *virtus*, generals receiving the submission of enemies as models of *clementia*, public sacrifices as examples of *pietas*, and so forth. Roman coins combining images and inscribed legends provide a firm methodological basis for the investigation of conceptual meanings. Likewise, in Greek art, fighting warriors potentially represent heroic prowess, citizens in ordered clothes may show exemplary civic modesty and countenance, while nude male bodies can incorporate the ideal valor and beauty of manliness. Moreover, the realm of myths, a favorite repertoire of Greek and Roman art, is a conceptual world of the highest religious and social relevance. Heracles can be understood as a model of man’s physical and ethical excellence, Aeneas and Romulus as protagonists of Roman religious piety and warlike valor, the Trojan war as a venue of archetypal concepts of human behavior and values.

The decisive feature of conceptual meaning in the visual arts is that visibility has its own autonomous power of expression, which is on principle different from other forms of communication. The essence of an image of an athlete or a depiction of the sack of (p. 678) Troy lies in “figuration” and “configuration,” in the physical build of the figures, in their attitudes and movements, actions and interactions, and in their relation to the viewer (see below). This implies that figures of athletes represent not simply *aretē* but

infinite forms of powerful athletic bodies in which a beholder might see a spectrum of qualities that he or she subsumes under the term *aretē*. It is specific of Greek and Roman art that images (almost) never become fixed ciphers of fixed meanings. Linguistic terms, therefore, are essentially insufficient for defining the multiplicity of visual meanings, but on the other hand, they are unavoidable for communicating *about* visual meaning. Again, we must be aware of the fact that language is never an equivalent to visual forms but can only *point to* the phenomena of visual art.

Moreover, conceptual meaning is not essentially inherent in an image but is intentionally ascribed to it. Artists represent concrete beings, an athletic body or a well-clothed citizen, leaving it to the spectator to take them as representations of *aretē* or civic countenance. In doing this, they will more or less agree with or respond to the social values of their time, and they may use the specific possibilities of stylistic forms of their time for conveying these messages' visual power. Yet conceptual meaning is never unequivocal.

It is on this level that the artwork's openness and the viewer's freedom of reception come in. Thus, on the level of collective cultural attitudes, nude bodies are valued in different ways by ancient Greek, Roman, and Christian societies; while on the level of individual judgement and taste, viewers can agree or disagree with the values of their society or group.

Openness to interpretation is often taken as a *passe-partout* for far-reaching interpretive license; historical viewers are imagined as being in possession of an unlimited potential of responding and reacting to works of art (which have no weapons of defense against unwanted "scientific harassment"). Yet every society has its specific structures and boundaries of cultural concepts. Interpretation of conceptual meaning has not only to explore open possibilities of viewers' reactions but has also to demonstrate that the suggested interpretation lies within the specific society's cultural spectrum.

The ancient viewers of Greek and Roman art have disappeared, mostly without leaving documents about their impressions. Reconstructing how they might have experienced works of art is a highly conjectural matter. Individual reactions may have widely diverged, from congruence with the intentions of artist and patron to totally deviating perceptions. Such individual positions, however, are normally not traceable through scientific methods. An example of highly personal views about art can be found in the dialogues of Plato, whose understanding of images, stamped by his philosophical premises, is often wrongly assumed to be valid for ancient Greece or even antiquity as a whole. As a rule, what can be investigated are not individual interpretations of any supposed idiosyncratic viewer but only the collective cultural horizon within which "normal" viewers can and will have perceived, understood, and reacted to specific

images. This must not mean a totally uniform normative reception within a given society. From literary sources, we know, for example, of two ambitious paintings dedicated by Alcibiades that provoked sharply controversial reactions among his (p. 679) fellow Athenian citizens: rejection from the elder, enthusiasm from the younger. In this sense, the reception of images by different social groups may be reconstructed, along such axes as between youth and old age, between male and female, between elite and middle class or slaves, and between citizens and foreigners. A major challenge in such enterprises is not to start from general assumptions about what male and female, elite and lower-class, and so on, views “essentially” have to be; even the assumption of antithetical views as such—for example, of male and female viewers—needs verification in every single society. What is meant to be “universal” is mostly a projection of one’s own cultural premises. The quest for the viewer needs particularly good documentation and circumspect analysis (for examples, see Elsner 1995 and 2007; Marconi 2004; Sojc 2005).

A major role in determining the possible meanings of an image or object of art is constituted by contexts. The same type of image, such as the statue of an Archaic youth (kouros) or maiden (kore), if dedicated in a sanctuary, means an anonymous representative of the young generation; if erected on a grave, an image of the prematurely deceased; if reexposed in a Roman villa garden, a reminiscence of Greek sacred festivity. Especially instructive are differences of meaning between Greek myths in vase painting, where they primarily refer to exemplary social values, and in the relief decoration of Greek sacred architecture, where they often aim to create patriotic identity (Marconi 2007). Still much debated is the question of how far Greek vases, which in great part were found in graves, were painted for prior use in social life or for being given immediately to the dead and how far this affects their interpretation (Graepler 1997).

A particular challenge for the interpretation from the perspective of changing viewers is the export of Greek (objects decorated with) images to regions of more or less divergent culture, such as South Italy and Sicily, Etruria, or the Black Sea region. In the trade with Greek vases, a wide range of possibilities for mediating between the cultural milieu of production and reception becomes evident: while the producers seem rarely to have designed vases especially for the foreign market, some general selections must have been made by intermediate traders and special choices by the final buyers. The imagery of the vases was of Greek origin, but part of it was common cultural property of Mediterranean elites, such as warfare, hunting, or the symposion; other themes, especially the rich repertoire of Greek myths, were obviously received and adapted with some conceptualizing effort, raising the question of how the images were reinterpreted in terms of those foreign cultures (Marconi 2004; Schmidt and Stähli 2012).

Visual Elements of Meaning: Bodies and Actions, in Reality and Art

The specific capacity of images to represent meaning lies in their visual form. The visual appearance of human or divine figures and also of events of social life and myth is based on three kinds of factors: *figuration*, *configuration*, and *presentation*. Figuration implies (p. 680) the physical build of bodies, their equipment, with clothes and attributes, and their dynamic extension through mimics and gestures, attitudes, and actions. Configuration means the concrete interaction with other figures and the general constellation of figures, objects, and the surrounding world. Presentation includes the way in which the image refers to the viewer. All of these factors are effective not only in images but also in social practice. They serve to express meaning in real-life practice and also in art; in principle, the muscular body of an athlete or the solemn performance of a ritual of sacrifice in real life possesses a power of demonstrating athletic valor or religious piety, not identical with but analogous to a visual depiction of these themes in art. In Greek and Roman art, human and divine beings constitute, more than objects and phenomena of the surrounding world, the main themes of depiction. In this sense, the human body ascends to being a “conceptual object” of culture in general and of art in particular (Holmes 2010).

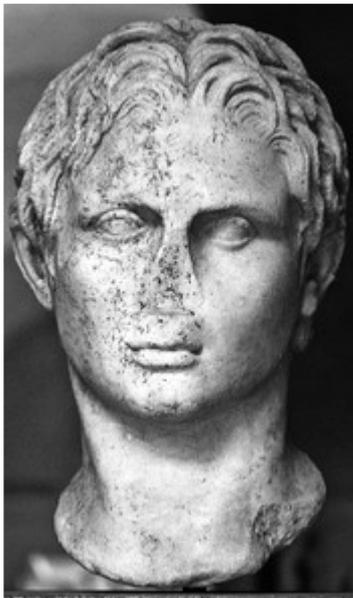
In general, the body, with its qualities, capacities, and activities, presents a rich spectrum of expression: the physical build, clothing and nudity, attributes, postures and attitudes, gestures and mimics, actions and interactions. A systematic exposition of these elements and their application in social practice and in art is a most promising field of future research (Catoni 2005). Most of these features are determined by specific cultural conventions, constituting a web of social signification and communication. They are basic visual elements in the cultural conceptualization of the *Lebenswelt* and also in the production of meaningful works of art. The power of *art*, in comparison with *social practice*, lies in its capacity to shape and compose these elements beyond their natural form and to present them in specific forms to the viewers.

Forms and Themes: Visual and Textual

However, the emphasis on visuality as a sphere of expression and perception of significance, with its own capacities and rules, should not lead to a fundamentalist concept of autonomous visual aesthetics. Recent criticism of “logocentric” approaches to art sometimes tends to limit the interpretation of works of art to purely visual phenomena by rejecting “philological” analysis of content as it is transmitted in verbal form. Even iconographic analysis, focusing on “picture language” of physical traits, attributes, clothes, and so forth, is often dismissed as an oblique “philological” approach to visual

art. This, however, is a relapse to the fruitless dead end of autonomous description of form and style, entailing two essential shortfalls of understanding works of art.

On a first level, visual forms are not fully understood without a precise knowledge of what the image represents. Bodies, actions, and interactions as such have meaning only in a very general and imprecise sense. Their significance and their impact in social practice consist of their quality of being bodies of specific subjects, either general subjects such as athletes, intellectuals, or citizens or individuals such as Heracles, Achilles, or Alexander the (p. 681) Great. The basic assumption of art history that themes in art get their meaning and their power only through their visual form has its complement in the insight that forms get their significance only through the subjects they represent. The power of images, their capacity to exert their impact on social life, is based on both, subject and form, not as two separate aspects but as interdependent factors, subject in its specific form, form of a specific subject.



Click to view larger

Fig. 30.4 The “Alexander Schwarzenberg.” Roman copy of a portrait of Alexander the Great, reportedly from Tivoli. Original of ca. 330 BCE. Marble. Height 35.5 cm. Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlung und Glyptothek, inv. GL 559.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

This implies, without escape, “philological” methodology. For factual subject matters and themes of historical cultures are to a high degree transmitted and preserved in the medium of language; their recognition is based on iconography. Purely visual perception allows the viewer to recognize beings and things that are known to him or her from the experience of his or her own world: human beings, animals, plants, sun, and moon. All culture-specific subjects, however, are inaccessible by pure visual perception. This applies on

the one hand to general themes, to social groups such as magistrates, priests, or slaves or to practices such as sacrifices or athletic contests, and on the other hand, to specific subjects, individual persons such as Zeus, Heracles, and Alexander the Great (figure

30.4), or to events such as the episodes of the Trojan War, the victory of Alexander the Great, or the festival of the Panathenaia. Information about such themes can only be provided by language. Neither the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur nor (p. 682) the story of the nativity of Jesus Christ would be understandable from an image alone. Images can efficiently preserve the memory of persons and events if once they are known within a society, but they cannot produce the knowledge of them. Viewing and understanding images of culture-specific themes always implies knowledge based on verbal information. Discrimination of “philological reading” of images—which, in fact, means traditional iconographic analysis—is missing the point: “philological” identification of subject matter is indispensable.

On a second level, the conceptual meaning(s) of images are not only visually perceived by viewers but also interpreted and discussed in social discourses. Since social communication on matters of some complexity is only possible in the medium of language, such discourses necessarily entail the translation of visual phenomena and perceptions into language. This fact not only implies searching for verbal “equivalents” to visual impressions, but it leads moreover to interpretations and conceptualizations in categories that belong essentially to the realm of nonvisual, intellectual notions. At this point, semiotic approaches get their full efficiency: the more an image is loaded with significance that transcends its visual appearance, the more it can be dealt with as a “sign” in the sense of semiotics. In any case, no matter how much such discourses become estranged from the images’ visual essence, they are an essential part of the images’ social life. Scientific analysis is just the ultimate consequence of this necessarily linguistic approach to art.

This by no means implies a subordination of the medium of images in relation to language. For on the other hand, all texts imply aspects of visuality. As Orhan Pamuk, quoted by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, puts it: “Reading a novel is visualizing images which an author has triggered by his words.” More fundamentally, every linguistic reference to the world of concrete reality, whether a literary text or an everyday phrase, evokes a more or less clear “imagin”-ation. We cannot think the world without imagining it. Without entering into this complex matter, it is clear that in the experience of art and also in the practice of life, language and images, with all their fundamental differences, are inextricably interwoven. There is no hierarchy.

The Meaning of Art Forms

Nevertheless, the most intriguing question of any serious attempt at understanding historical art regards the visual forms as such: of bodies and objects, attitudes and

actions, compositions and style. *Iconography* is to a high degree independent of specific artistic forms: Athena/Minerva with armor and owl is iconographically similar in all styles from Greek Archaic to Late Roman and even to Fascist classicism. The same is true of the *iconology* and the *semiotics* of meanings, as long as they do not fully comprehend the visual aspects: a Roman scene of sacrifice can be seen as a manifestation of *pietas*, whether it is represented in extended or abbreviated form, in the style of the Augustan or the Severan period. Both approaches focus on iconography, on *what* is represented in (p. 683) an image, not *how* it is depicted. In both cases, the essence of the interpretation can be described without any loss of meaning through language: Athena, *pietas*. This does not speak against the methodologies of iconography, iconology, and semiotics, all of which have led to important results and insights, but it makes clear that essential aspects of the artistic product are neglected by these approaches.

This leads to the underlying general principles of artistic form and composition in various periods of Greek and Roman art. Changes in art regarding concepts of the body and of action in time and space can be connected with basic concepts of social practice, of cognitive capacities, and of fundamental views of the world. In Archaic Greek art, bodies are entities of characteristic elements without reciprocal interaction of their parts. They are endowed with qualities, such as a strong chest; capacities, such as agile joints; and values, such as beautiful hair, juxtaposed one beside the other, without any need for organic integration. In the Classical period, bodies are physical systems of active and passive parts reacting to each other through tensions and relaxations. Each element is defined in its capacities by its place within the whole configuration. In the Hellenistic period, bodies are defined by their material physical qualities. The dynamics of potential or actual activity and the sensuous impression of the surface become the artist's predominant aim. In simplifying terms: Archaic bodies *have* strength and beauty, Classical bodies *are* examples of strength and beauty, Hellenistic bodies *demonstrate* physical qualities and beauty. On a more general basis, Greek and Roman concepts of the body have been opposed to each other through a comparison between linguistic definition and visual representation (Fabricius 2003).

The most obvious example of far-reaching interference between art forms and other subsystems of human culture is the "Canon" of the Classical Greek sculptor Polyclitus, perhaps realized in his statue of a lance bearer (the Doryphorus) (figure 29.2); his concept of ideal beauty and valor of the human body is based on philosophical notions of harmony and connected with analogous concepts of good political order and medical theories on physical health (Borbein 1996; see in general Bol 1990; Tanner 2006; Neer 2010; Osborne 2011).

The body, with its qualities and capacities, is a particularly fruitful focus for understanding Greek and Roman art because of its fundamental importance within those societies. Moreover, the body as a “social element” opens manifold perspectives toward various fields of social practice and theory. A particularly prolific concept is the notion of social roles in which the body, with its intentional appearance and formalized actions, is of crucial relevance (Bell and Hansen 2008). More generally, if the body’s postures, forms of action, and ways of behavior, in “reality” and in art, are conceived of as expressions of social “habits,” a bridge can be built to cultural theory. For bodily “habit” or *hexis* is clearly, in a cultural sense, a part of the general notion of the cultural “habitus” of societies and their subgroups, developed by Pierre Bourdieu as a fundamental concept of historical sociology (Bourdieu 1979).

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Index

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(p. 687) Index

Aaron, sculptor 205–206
abaton 333–334, 342
Abydos 110
Achilles 26–28, 140, 168, 335, 337, 567, 575, 629, 630–632, 680
Achilles's shield 26–28, 31–32, 42, 51
Achilles Painter 152
Achinos 340
Acragas, Temple of Olympian Zeus 249
acrolithic 161–162, 301–302
Acropolis Museum, Athens 492–493, 530
acroteria 120, 220, 245, 246, 302, 384
Actium 162
Adhémar, Jean 418
Admetus 168
adventus 361
adyton 332–333
aedificia 367
aedile 190, 192, 362
Aegina 206, 227
Aegina, Temple of Aphaea 140–141, 246
Aegina, Temple of Aphaea, pedimental sculptures 206, 477–478, 479, 482, 505
Aemilius Paulus 161
Aeneas 357, 677
Aerial Photography 271
aerostyle 355
Aeschines 611
Aeschylus 75, 94, 612
aesthetics 9–10, 21–22, 25, 37–38, 271, 465, 544, 638, 650, 680
agalma/agalmata 23–24, 27, 28, 32

agalmatophilia 332
Agatharchus, painter 44, 75, 76, 305–306
Agesilaus 300
Agesistratos 44
Agias, sculptor 123, 157
Agios Athanasios, Tomb 306–307
agon 111, 300, 585
agora 51, 182, 211, 274, 275–276, 277, 281, 299–300, 333, 345, 592
Agoracritus, sculptor 301, 530
Agricola 164
Agrippa 147, 182, 192–193, 194, 379
Aion 324
Ajax, son of Telamon 379, 629–630, 632
Ajax the lesser 94
Akhenaten, Pharaoh 110
Alba Fucens 280
Albacini, Carlo 475, 488
Albani, Cardinal 206, 475
Alberti, Leon Battista 45, 205, 424–425, 457, 501
Alcamenes, sculptor 138, 523
Alcestis 168
Alcibiades 305–306, 431, 678–679
Alcman 27
Alcmaeonids 142, 179–180 302
Alexander Mosaic, Pompeii 530, 585, 677
Alexander of Athens, painter 115
Alexander the Great 55, 136, 140, 145, 155, 156, 157, 176–177, 184, 185–186, 269–270, 278, 299, 315, 329, 378, 511, 524, 585, 662, 676, 680–681
Alexandria 123, 145, 158, 176, 187, 269, 474
Alexandria, Museum 474
Alexandria, Pharos 145
Alexandria, Serapeum 158
Alexandria Troas 183
Algeria 396, 400
altars 95, 118, 141, 158–159, 162, 181, 185, 273, 276, 301, 302, 329, 330–331, 332, 334–335, 357, 421, 481, 491–492
Alyzeia 123
Amasis Painter 532, 563
Amasis, Pharaoh 42
(p. 688) amazonomachy 159, 356
Ammianus Marcellinus 359

Amorgos 274
Amorium 286
Amphiaraus 333-334, 341-342
Amphiktyones 117
amphitheater 258, 282, 320, 362, 364, 396, 408
Amyntas 156
Amyzon, Sanctuary of Artemis 183
Anacreon 27, 178
anastylosis 465
anathyrosis 252
Anavyssos 295
Anaxagoras 44
Anaxandra, painter 125
Anchises 446
Ancona 178
Andocides, potter 113
Andreae, Bernard 570
Andrias 112
andron 594
Ankara 398
Antenor 113, 152, 297-299
Antenor Kore 113, 152
Anthesteria 338-339
anthropology 2, 560-562, 576, 621-634, 651, 671, 674
Antidotus, painter 120, 122
Antinous 169, 409
Antioch 279, 396
Antiochus I 299
Antiochus IV Epiphanes 139, 147, 182
Antiochus, sculptor 124
antiquarianism 70, 71, 97, 419, 427, 429
Antonines 147, 193
Antoninus Pius 320, 488
Apelles 23, 92, 115, 121, 156, 226-227, 420
Aphrodisian marble 169
Aphrodisias 116, 169, 214-215, 220, 284, 286, 319-320, 360-361, 380, 397, 404-405
Aphrodite - Venus 30, 88, 121, 165, 189, 195, 321, 323-324, 332, 378, 379, 380, 381, 386-387, 479-480, 522, 527, 548, 563, 583, 612, 613-615, 617, 651-653, 672, 676
Aphrodite of Cnidus 30, 88, 332, 380, 381, 386, 522, 527, 548-549, 613-614, 615, 617, 651-653, 676

Apollo 28, 32, 62, 138, 139, 142, 143, 161, 162, 163, 165, 168, 179, 180–181, 182, 243, 244, 251, 295, 301, 302, 304, 331, 332, 355–356, 375, 379, 387–388, 426, 475, 476, 479, 501, 504, 505, 526–527, 531, 583, 588, 605

Apollodorus of Damascus, architect 72, 139, 147–148, 161, 178, 194, 359–360, 487, 531

Apollodorus, painter 78

Apollonius of Athens, sculptor 115, 169, 381, 386

Apollonius of Tralles, sculptor 526

Apollonius of Tyana 37, 209

apotropaic 575, 612

Apuleius 524

aqueducts 148, 178, 183, 189, 190, 196, 253, 255, 258, 280, 396–397, 462

Arausio (Orange) 362

Arcadia 409

Arcesius, architect 44, 48, 71, 75, 146

arch, buttressing 259

Archaic period 22, 24, 25, 32, 33, 34, 42, 76, 79, 85, 93, 111, 115, 123, 140–142, 185, 219, 220, 274–276, 295, 301, 333, 344, 355, 388, 524, 547, 549–550, 565, 569, 591, 594

Archaic period, Late 93, 142, 591

archaizing 94, 162

archaeology 45, 50, 96–97, 179, 190, 207, 242, 271, 398, 400, 404, 407, 451, 457, 505–506, 511–512, 542, 552, 580, 655

Archelaus of Macedon 156, 306

Archerms, sculptor 123, 162, 520

Archidamus III 301

Archilochus, architect 143

Archimedes 44

Archinus, relief 341–343

Archippe of Cyme 188, 189

architects 44, 50, 72–73, 136–148, 369, 445, 447, 531

architectural conservation 458, 459–466

architectural sculpture 302, 343–345, 354, 382, 388, 512

architectural terracottas 245

architectural theory 41–65

architekton 72, 140, 178

architrave 249, 250, 352, 354, 356, 357, 363

archivolt 354

Archytas 44

(p. 689) *areostyle* 57

Ares – Mars 55, 59, 120, 163, 487, 531

arete/virtus 584, 593, 606, 609, 662, 668, 672–673, 677, 678

Argeiadas, sculptor 122

Argos 59, 123, 273, 275, 276, 277, 302, 520-521
Argos, agora 276
Argos, Temple of Hera 56, 59, 275, 520-521
Ariadne 29, 121, 306, 561, 563, 570, 572-573, 605
Aristander, sculptor 123
Aristarete, painter 124
Aristeias, sculptor 169
Aristeides I, painter 121, 122
aristocratic 55, 141, 148, 161, 179, 183, 258, 282, 283-284, 294, 421, 530, 583, 587, 593, 605, 606
Aristomenes, sculptor 123
Aristonoe 295
Aristonothus, potter 112
Aristophanes 337-338, 341, 611, 612
Aristophon, painter 306
Aristotle 12, 44, 55, 72, 74, 77, 589-590
Arcesilaus 117
Arcesius 146
arkteia 337-338
Arles 457
Arles, St.-Gilles-du-Garde 457
Arles, St. Trophime 457
Arringatore 315
ars 10, 22, 111, 584
Arsinoe II 186-187, 422
arte aulica 674
arte plebea/popolare 402-403, 542, 674
Artemis - Diana 44, 75, 162, 163, 176, 181, 189, 196, 247, 250, 295, 321, 332, 333, 337, 338, 340, 341, 429, 488, 530, 531, 583, 612-613
Asclepiades, painter 120
Asclepius 23, 120, 143, 144, 181, 209, 244, 302, 321, 332, 334, 341, 342, 387, 535
Asinius Pollio 381
askos 561
Aspendus in Pamphylia 362
Assisi 423
Asteas 113
asylum/asylia 187, 332
Atalanta 164
Athanolodorus 526
Athena - Minerva 25, 29, 36, 44, 53, 55, 64, 73, 88, 93-94, 144, 154-155, 163, 210, 244, 249, 301, 304-305, 311, 331, 332-333, 334-335, 345, 381, 488, 524, 531, 591, 612, 662-663, 671, 677, 682
Athena Parthenos 53, 154, 155, 386, 524, 662, 671

Athena Promachos 154-155, 311
Athenaeus 25, 30, 71, 75, 78, 92, 119, 156, 158, 615
Athenis 162, 520
Athens 123, 254, 273, 276-279
Athens, Acropolis 74, 113, 139, 141, 142, 154-155, 159, 181, 182, 209, 245, 246, 250, 251, 252, 274, 277, 279, 299, 301, 304, 306, 331, 332, 333, 335, 341, 345, 429, 456, 476-477, 492-493, 512, 523, 570, 585
Athens, Agora 182, 211, 277, 279, 299, 302, 305, 330, 333, 455, 465, 531, 585, 592
Athens, Altar of the Twelve Gods 181, 330
Athens, Archaic agora 276
Athens, Asclepieum 341
Athens, Brauronium 341
Athens, Ceramicus 533, 566
Athens, Erechtheum 120, 141, 143, 209, 251, 326, 331, 332, 487, 512
Athens, geology 246
Athens, Hephaestum 531
Athens, "Lesser Attalid" group 159
Athens, odeia 183
Athens, Old Bouleuterion 276
Athens, Pantheon 182
Athens, Parthenon 44, 53, 64, 74, 75, 138-139, 143, 203, 209, 232, 252, 302, 331, 332, 333, 343-344, 429, 431-432, 456, 465, 476, 477, 479, 481, 492-493, 505, 512-513, 514, 525, 527, 531, 535, 647, 662, 668
Athens, Parthenon frieze 302, 343-344, 431, 535, 603
Athens, Pinakothek 333, 477
Athens, Pompeion 245
Athens, Propylaea 139, 143, 154, 249, 252, 304, 306, 477
Athens, Stoa Basileus 276
Athens, Stoa of Attalus II 182, 279, 301
(p. 690) Athens, Stoa of Eumenes II 182, 279
Athens, Stoa of Zeus 305
Athens, Stoa Poecile 117, 181, 305, 585
Athens, Temple of Ares 531
Athens, Temple of Athena Nike 154, 301, 345
Athens, Temple of Olympian Zeus 139, 147, 181-182
Athens, Theseum 181
Athens, urban development 276-277
Athens Charter 458
atheoretical/antitheoretical 4-5
athletes 311-312, 323, 383, 616, 674, 678, 680
atrium 89, 282-283, 311

Attaleia 196
Attalids 158-160, 180, 197, 204
Attalus I 159-160, 165
Attalus II 182, 301
Attalus of Athens, sculptor 302
Attic foot 51
auctoritas 53, 353
Augustine 327
Augustus 55, 59, 65, 121, 139, 158, 161-164, 176-177, 182, 192-193, 194-195, 197, 254, 284, 318, 320, 323, 356-357, 360, 366, 368-369, 379, 386, 398, 487, 491, 530, 579, 585, 607, 668
Augustus Prima Porta type 320
Aulus Gellius 147, 360
Aulus Postumius Albinus 191, 317
Ausonius 524
author 669-670
Avianus Evander 162
Azoria 276
Babylonia 124
Bacchylides 27
Badminton sarcophagus 489
Baiae 386
Baiae, Temple of Mercury 259
Bak, architect 110
banquet 187, 276, 303, 306, 313, 323, 333, 345, 354, 365, 366, 572
Barberini Faun 477
Bari 616
Baroque 320
barriers 332
Bassae, Temple of Apollo 138, 143, 505, 531
baths 147, 169, 178, 179, 183, 196, 258, 259, 278, 284, 286, 320, 354, 363, 366, 369, 381
Baton, sculptor 163
Bauforschung 451
Beazley, John Davidson 108, 450-451, 481, 531-533, 559, 563, 625-626
Bellerophon 389-390
Belting, Hans 655
Belvedere Apollo 375, 426, 475, 476, 479, 501, 504, 605
Belvedere Torso 169
Beneventum 178
Benndorf, Otto 479
Benveniste, Émile 632
Berard, Claude 561, 629

Berenson, Bernard 588
Berlin Painter 532
Bernini, Gianlorenzo 429, 487
bessales 258
Bianchi Bandinelli, Ranuccio 152, 402, 409, 451, 530, 542-543, 580, 674
Biduino, sculptor 421
Biondo 501
bipedales 257
Blanckenhagen, Peter Heinrich von 580
Blümner, Hugo 206-207
Boccaccio 500
Boeotia 108, 219, 345
Boethus, sculptor 165
Borghese collection 429
Boscotrecase, Villa of P. Fannius Synistor 90
Boscotrecase, Villa of Agrippa Postumus 490
Bothmer, Dietrich von 482
Botticelli 442, 652
Boularchus of Clazomenae 115
bouleuterion 189, 276, 278-279, 281
Boupalus, sculptor 123, 162
Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick 488-489
Bracciolini, Poggio 424
Bramante 426
Brauron, Sanctuary of Artemis 332, 333, 337, 338, 341
Brendel, Otto 580, 673
brick (fired), building material 55, 56, 192-193, 217, 242-246, 254
brick ribbing 286
(p. 691) brick stamp 193, 258, 260
Brilliant, Richard 640-641
Bristol School 638, 641
Britannia 360
British Museum, London 475-477, 481, 488, 493
Bronze Age 203, 222
bronze, material 207-208, 214-217, 225-226, 229-230, 249
Brunelleschi, Filippo 424, 457
Brunn, Heinrich 107, 527
Brussels Declaration 506
Bryaxis, sculptor 156, 158, 519
Bulla Regia 196, 396
Burckhardt, Jacob 520, 560

Burgundy 421
Burkert, Walter 326
Burra Charter 458
busts 169, 311, 316, 317, 321, 381, 488
Byzantine 79, 109, 111, 117, 124, 125, 223, 327, 330, 525, 667
Caere 112, 461
Caesar, Drusus 163
Caesar, Gaius 163
Caesar, Julius 147, 182, 192, 299, 315, 317
Caesar, Lucius 163
Calamis, sculptor 155
Calapodi, Temple of Apollo 304
Calf Bearer 492
Caligula 148, 164
Callias 143
Callicleas, potter 112
Callicrates, architect 141, 143, 155
Callimachus 33–38, 158, 305
Callistratus 524
Calypso, painter 124–125
cameos 161, 205, 222, 229, 320, 474
Camerino 428
Canachus, sculptor 523
Canova, Antonio 321, 431, 477
capital 59, 61, 95, 139
Capitoline Museums, Rome 475
Capri 164, 244
Capua 502
Capua, Gate of Frederik II 422
Caracalla 98, 152, 169, 284, 320, 363, 381, 395, 526, 615
Caravaggio 428
Caria 136, 183
Carolingian 420, 422
Carpathos 244
Carpenter, Rhys 449
Carpion, architect 44, 64, 75
Carracci, Annibale 428
Carrara marble 254
Carrey, Jacques 429
Carthage 396, 421, 504
caryatid 326, 479, 487, 512

Cassandra 88, 163
Cassandreia 123
Cassius Dio 147, 163
Castiglione 427
casts 432, 477, 479–480, 491, 493, 501, 512
Caucasus 395
Cavaceppi, Bartolomeo 475
cavea 362, 589
Celatus, coppersmith 120
Celer, architect 147, 161, 178
censor 190, 191
centaurs 154, 156, 169, 352, 431
Centrale Montemartini, Rome 487
Cephisodotus, sculptor 122, 162, 165, 302, 520
Cerveteri. *See* Caere
Cesnola, Luigi Palma di 480
Cezanne, Paul 432
Chaeronea 156, 297
Charias 44
Charis 157
charis/gratia 24–25, 28, 30, 32, 51, 590, 593, 668, 672–673
Charlemagne 422, 457
Charles V 503
Charmadas, painter 115
Charmantides, painter 122
Chersiphron, architect 44, 71, 75, 76, 79, 250
Chimaera 389
Chimaera of Arezzo 514
China Principles 458
Chionis 300
Chios 112, 520–521
Chiragan 380
Chirico, Giorgio de 420, 432
Choes 338
Choniates, Niketas 525
choreia 32
(p. 692) Christianity 117, 374, 380, 39–390, 418, 421–422, 447, 457, 570–571, 573, 575
Christina of Sweden 503
chryselephantine 155, 156, 206
Cicero 33, 37, 42, 45, 55, 112, 148, 164, 205, 310, 313, 365, 379, 380, 383, 395, 443, 447, 499–500, 504, 519, 521, 523

Cimon 155, 181
circus 160, 282, 323
citizenship 395, 608
cives Romani 589
clandestini 509
“classical”/classics 6–8
Classical period 14, 22, 47, 53, 59, 61, 65, 117, 143, 154, 219, 244, 249, 271, 276–277, 278, 296, 304–305, 307, 317, 334–335, 524, 544, 569, 683
Classical period, Early 94, 227, 342, 544, 547, 587, 590, 593, 630
Classical period, High 375, 381, 383, 544
Classical period, Late 183, 219, 229, 306, 326, 334, 305, 548, 591
Claudius 161, 164, 318, 360
clay, material 206–207, 217–220, 225, 244–245, 257–258
Clazomenae 115
Cleanthes, painter 115
Cleisthenes 568
Cleiton, sculptor 35
Clement of Alexandria 92, 125, 614–615
Cleobis and Biton, sculptural group 114
Cleon 145
Cleosthenes of Epidamnus 300
Cleveland Museum of Art 510
clipeatae 90
clipei 90
Clitias, vase painter 113
Cnidus 88, 299, 522
Cnidus, Sanctuary of Demeter 332
cocciopesto 258
Colli Albani 255
Cologne Cathedral, Shrine of the Three Kings 422
colonialism 400, 401, 404, 671
colonization 274, 286
Colossus of Nero 165
column 42, 55, 56, 58–60, 62, 65, 305, 326–327, 331, 354, 355, 357–358
comitium 281
Commodus 98
compluvium 282
concordia 163, 591
concrete, building material 43, 242, 252, 253, 255, 257, 461
connoisseurship 2, 108, 208, 450, 519–535, 603, 328
consolidation, conservation 464

Constance School 638
Constantine 170, 193, 285–286, 408, 422, 425, 427
Constantinople 116, 285, 380, 386, 476, 525
Constantinople, Hagia Sophia 457
Constantius II 359
Constitutions of Melfi 422
construction
construction, Greek techniques 249–253
construction, Roman techniques 253–260
context 670
conventus matronarum 194
copying 14, 228, 251, 385–39
Corinth 115, 121, 123, 180, 183, 217, 219, 270, 273, 274, 275, 276, 282, 334
Corinth, first Temple of Apollo 243, 245, 275
Corinth, Roman forum 286
Corinth, urban development 274–276
Corinthia 227
Corinthian order 42, 43, 47, 56, 59–60, 146, 182, 197, 390, 465
Corinthian windows 188
Cornelia 606–607
Cortile del Belvedere, Vatican 426
Cos 121, 123
Cos, Asclepieum 121
Cosa 280, 281, 282
Cossutius 146–147
craftsman 22, 111, 136, 203, 229, 520, 524
crane 211, 250, 254
Crates of Mallos 159
Cratylus 35
Cresilas 610
Crimea 395
Critius Boy 492, 583
Critius, sculptor 298, 299
Croesus 295
(p. 693) Croesus, King of Lydia 181, 192
Crouching Aphrodite 548, 550
Ctesibios 44
cubiculum 90, 490
cult statue 37, 95, 114, 116, 294, 301, 330, 675
cultural identity 8, 177, 344, 552, 580
cultural property 499–534

Cumae 334
Curtius, Ernst 480
Cycladic 222, 433, 509
Cynisca 300
Cypselus 180
Cyrenaica 408
Cyriacus of Ancona 418, 420, 525
Cyrus, architect 365
Cyzicus 379
Cyzicus, Sanctuary of Meter Plakiane 333
Dacia 147, 360
Daedalus 27, 29, 211, 519
Damophilus and Gorgasus, painters 116
Damophon of Messene, sculptor 121, 302
Danaids 162
dance 22, 29, 572, 631
Dante 525
Danube 178, 396
Daochus 157
Darius 79, 677
Darius Painter 152
David, Jacques Louis 430
decor/prepon 46-47, 53-57
deformities 581
Deinias, painter 115
Deinocrates, architect 136, 144, 176
Deinomenes 152
Delos 113, 120, 197, 246, 279, 295, 307, 330, 332, 651-652
Delos, Athenian Temple of Apollo 301, 332
Delos, domestic architecture 279
Delos, domestic wall painting 307
Delos, Monument of the Bulls 197
Delos, Oikos of the Naxians 246
Delphi 4, 27, 29, 33, 34, 86, 114, 117, 123, 142, 145, 146, 152-153, 157, 179, 180, 182-183, 188, 220, 232, 250, 302, 304, 326, 331, 588
Delphi Charioteer 152-153, 232
Delphi, Athenian Stoa 182
Delphi, Daochus monument 157
Delphi, Lesche of the Cnidians 304
Delphi, Naxian Sphinx 220
Delphi, Siphnian Treasury 302, 326

Delphi, Temple of Apollo 142, 179, 302, 331
Delphi, Tholos 44, 146
Delphi, Treasury of the Corinthians 180-181
Delphic Tripod 162
Demeter - Ceres 116, 121, 163, 302, 306, 321, 322, 332, 334
Demetrius 278
Demetrius of Phaleron 144, 299
Demetrius Poliorcetes 299, 311
Democedes of Croton 178
Democles 44
democracy 279, 294, 588
Democritus 44, 75-76
Demodocus 32
Demophilus, architect 75
demos 181
Demosthenes 295-296, 299, 523
Dendur temple 398
depictions *in forma deorum* 321
Dexileus, funerary relief 389
Dexiphanes 145
Diades 44
diastyle 57
Didyma, Temple of Apollo 62, 113, 139, 142, 251
die-engravers 107
Dijon 409
Dinsmoor, William Bell 241
Dio Chrysostom 33, 36, 37, 70, 524
Diocletian 254, 259, 285, 286, 396, 430
Diocletian price edict 254
Diodorus Siculus 56
Diogenes Laertius 51, 56, 71
Diomedes 610
Dion 123
Dionysius of Halicarnassus 70, 160, 161, 190, 191, 346, 443, 447, 523
Dionysus 75, 120, 121, 246, 279, 306-307, 322-323, 338, 375, 381, 489, 531, 563-568, 572-573, 589, 594, 612
Dioscuri 423, 524-525
Dioscurides, gem engraver 161
Diphilos, architect 44
(p. 694) *dipteroi* 146
diptych, ivory 422

Dirce Group 526
dispositio 46–47
distorted ideals 581–582
distributio 46–47
Djemila 318
Djer 110
Doidalsas, sculptor 550
dome 148, 259
domestic architecture 71, 95–96, 269–271, 277–278, 282–284, 307, 333, 354, 369
Domitian 100, 147, 161, 170, 178, 662
Donatello 423–425
Doric foot 51
Doric order 42, 43, 44, 47, 51, 53, 55, 56, 59, 75, 144, 146, 430, 432
Dorus 56
Doryphorus 76, 381, 382, 386, 535, 610, 642–643, 668, 683
Douris 87
Dreros, agora 275
Drusus 163
Duquesnoy, François 429
Dura Europos 409
Dying Seneca 429
Ecphantus of Corinth, painter 115, 376
Egypt 7, 8, 42, 51, 56–57, 108–111, 115–116, 142, 145, 158, 162, 176, 205, 207, 208, 222, 225, 227, 243, 250, 269, 327, 331, 357, 381, 395, 398–399, 401, 408, 409, 448, 476, 499, 504, 506, 512, 523
Egyptianizing 398, 401
Eirene 302
Eirene, painter 124
Eleusis 31, 141
Eleusis, Telesterion 139, 143, 144, 306, 531
Elis 36, 154, 155
Elis, urban development 277
elite 569, 587–588
emic 11–12
Emporio on Chios 112
encaustic 94, 227, 243
Endoios 523
Endymion 321–322
Epaminondas 305
ephebes 563, 583
Ephesus 119, 123, 270, 284
Ephesus, Artemision 44, 75, 76, 176, 180–181, 250, 330

- Ephesus, Library of Celsus 284, 465
Epidaurus 250
Epidaurus, Temple of Asclepius 120, 143, 209, 244, 249, 535
Epidaurus, Theater 464
Epie of Thasos 188
epigrams 34, 36–38, 78–80, 570–571
Epirus 277, 334
equestrian statues 95, 97, 124, 425, 491
equites 380
Eretria
Eretria, House of the Mosaics 278
Eretria, Temple of Apollo Daphnephoros 356
Eretria, urban development 274
Ergotimus, potter 113
Eros-Cupid 155–156, 164, 427, 572, 614
Erythrae 523
Espérandieu, Émile 399
Esquiline Discobolus 375
etic 11–12
Etruscans 6–8, 109, 116, 253, 270, 280, 310–311, 376, 402, 448, 482, 488, 533, 558, 569
Euenor, painter 78
euergetism 158, 179, 189
Eumachia 195
Eumenes II 159, 182
Eupalamus 30
Eupalinus of Megara, architect 178, 190
Euphranor, sculptor and painter 44, 75, 122, 163, 203–204, 305, 381
Euphronios krater 482, 508
Euphronios, vase painter and potter 78, 113, 117–118, 232, 532, 533
Euremius, mosaicist 116
Euripides 32, 35, 92, 326
Europa 163
Eurydice 156
Eurysaces, tomb of 364
eurythmia 12, 46–47, 51–53, 57–58, 61, 64–65
eustyle 57
Euthycartides of Naxos, sculptor 113–114
Euthymides, vase painter 78, 118–119
(p. 695) Euthymus of Locri Epizephyrii 300
Eutychides, sculptor 527
Euxenia, priestess of Aphrodite 189

Euxitheos, potter 482
evocatio 377
evolutionist model 329
Exekias, vase painter and potter 232, 533, 563–569
exempla 583
Ezboninus, mosaicist 116
familiae 585–586
Famulus, painter 130, 530
Fanum, Basilica 57–58, 64, 147
Farnese Bull 526
Farnese Cup 422
Farnese Hercules 169, 381
fauces 282
Fayum 123, 145–146, 227
Fayum, portraits 227
female artists 124–125
feminism 602–603, 617, 671
festivals 183, 327, 333, 357–358, 562, 580, 588
figurines, terracotta 219–220, 229, 273, 569
Filarete 525
Flavians 98, 193, 284, 400, 615
Florence 87, 420, 424, 427, 428, 501
Florence, Baptistery 424
Florence, Duomo 424
Florence, Orsanmichele 424
fluting 252
fora 147, 284, 286, 318, 319, 358, 386, 396–397, 408, 487
formal analysis 2, 541–552
formalism 638
Formiae 610
Foruli 610
Fosdyke 120
fountain buildings 363
François I 501
François Vase 113, 142, 629–630, 632
Frederik II 422
Fregellae 280, 282
Fromista, Church of San Martin de Tours 421
Frontisi-Ducroux, Françoise 630
funerary art 55, 107, 147, 166–168, 169, 210–211, 219, 294–295, 303–304, 306–307, 322, 324, 364, 386, 396, 402, 403, 406, 409, 508, 572, 575, 583, 591, 607, 627

funerary reliefs 114, 210, 211, 380, 389, 409, 583, 607
Furtwängler, Adolf 108, 375, 399, 400, 445, 529–530, 533–534, 625, 642
Gabii 378
Gadamer, Hans-Georg 1–2
Gaius Cartilius Poplicola 610
Gaius Fabius Pictor 116, 161, 530
Gaius Junius Bubulcus 161
Gaius Junius Euhodos 167
Gaius Marius 147
Gaius Pomponius 116
Gaius Verres 164, 249, 310, 379, 500, 519
Galatia 160, 398
Galba 148, 164
Galen 48, 76, 205, 383
Gallia Narbonensis 398, 408
Ganymedes 165, 220, 527, 611
Garni, Temple of Helios 398, 465
Gattungen 579
Gaul 192, 204, 380, 398, 399, 406
Gauls 159–160, 162, 165
Gela 152
gem engraving 207, 210, 211, 222, 230
gems, material 207, 211, 222
gender studies 2, 602–617
Geometric period 22, 57, 85, 112, 142, 203, 207, 219, 225, 244, 560, 566
geophysical survey 271
Germanicus 163, 360
Gernet, Louis 624
Getty Bronze 486
Getty Kouros 487
Getty Museum, Malibu 483–487, 507, 510, 511
Ghiberti, Lorenzo 107, 205, 418–419, 427
Ghirlandaio 425
gigantomachy 159, 302, 481
gilding 156, 204, 209, 215, 221, 222, 304, 491
Gilly, Friedrich 430
Giotto 423
Giovanni da Udine 425
GIS/GPS site mapping 469
Giuliano da Sangallo 501
glass, material 206, 207, 216, 222

- (p. 696) Glaucias of Aegina, sculptor 300
- Gleason, Maud 603
- Glyptothek, Munich 477-478, 482, 492
- Gnosis, mosaicist 115
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von 6
- gold, material 24-26, 224-225, 249, 301, 366
- Gombrich, Ernst 417-418, 653
- Goneus, painter 120
- Gorgon 630
- gorgoneion* 567-568, 575
- Gothic 424
- Gracchi 282, 607
- grammata* 23
- Grand Tour 430, 475, 502, 505
- Granicus monument 157-158
- Grophon of Melos, sculptor 113
- Gryllus 305
- Gunderson, Erik 603
- gymnasia 147-148, 179, 185, 196, 211, 278, 616
- Habinnas 140
- Hadrian 72, 115, 139, 148, 161, 169, 170, 180, 182, 193-194, 197, 256, 259, 284, 381, 396, 409, 425, 464, 483
- Hadrian's Wall 464
- Hageladas of Argos, sculptor 112
- Hagesander, sculptor 526, 640
- hairstyles 584
- Halicarnassus
- Halicarnassus, domestic architecture 184
- Halicarnassus, Mausoleum 44, 75, 144, 183, 197, 519, 531
- Halicarnassus, Palace of Mausolus 245
- Halieis 274
- Hamilton, Sir William 431, 476, 502
- Harmonides 30
- Harpalus 146
- Harpocratio 71
- Haterius Antigonos, tomb of 364
- Hecatomnids 178, 180, 183, 197
- Hectoridas, sculptor 120
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm 7, 8, 559, 654
- hegemony 7, 408-409
- Helene, painter 125, 165

Helicon 123
Hellenistic Period 22, 25, 43, 59, 76, 88, 116, 124, 140, 144-145, 158-159, 182, 185-190, 219-220, 222, 227, 243-246, 249-250, 278-279, 294, 296, 300-304, 306, 329, 337, 384, 390, 432, 524, 587, 683
Hephaestus-Vulcan 26, 27, 28-30, 35-36, 211, 331, 355, 489, 519, 523
Hera-Juno 56, 59, 72, 75, 76, 78-79, 141, 142, 163, 178, 252, 275, 301, 456, 520, 583
Heraclea Pontica 334
Heracleides, painter 120
Heracles - Hercules 55, 94, 116, 145, 154, 162-163, 168-169, 176, 191, 305, 316, 321, 381, 425-427, 456, 483, 486, 523, 525, 535, 662-663, 677, 680
Herculaneum 115, 283, 311-313, 357-358, 365, 381-384, 430, 447, 457, 483, 502, 605-611
Herculaneum, Basilica Noniana 365
Herculaneum, Casa dei Cervi 365
Herculaneum, Theater 610
Herculaneum, Villa dei Papiri 311-313, 381, 382, 384, 483
Hermaphroditus 163, 224
hermeneutics 1-16, 558-559, 625, 638, 663-665, 672, 673
Hermes-Mercury 163, 204, 259, 311, 530, 532, 573
Hermodorus of Salamis, architect 192, 254
Hermogenes, architect 44, 48, 57, 71, 75, 77, 136, 146, 178, 531
Herodas 23
Herodes Atticus 183, 194, 196, 395, 409
Herodotus 42, 72, 78, 140, 142, 179, 630
Hesiod 22-23, 159
Hesy, tomb of 110
hexastyle 59, 95
himation 210, 409
Hinton St. Mary, Romano-British villa 388-389
Hipparchus 297
Hippias, sophist 75
Hippias, tyrant 297
Hippodamia 154
Hippodamus of Miletus 71, 72-73, 140, 145, 270-271, 277
Hippolytus 322
historical reliefs 354
historicism 638, 642-647
historiography 203-208, 398-404, 440-451, 570
(p. 697) Hoffmann, Herbert 561, 627
hollow casting 225
Homer 22, 27, 28, 30, 32, 36, 37, 43, 140, 206, 301, 519
Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 612

Homeric Hymn to Apollo 588
Homeric Hymn to Dionysus 565
homogeneity 546, 587
honorary arch. *See* triumphal arch
honorary column 319, 361
honorary statue 297-300, 311, 315, 321, 675
Hope Dionysus 489
hoplotheke 144
Horses of San Marco 504
Hortensius 121
hortus 282
Hygiainon, painter 115
Hygieia 163, 302, 387
hypocausts 396
Iaia, painter 124
Iasus of Collytus, sculptor 120
Iberia 378, 408
Ibycus 178
iconography 2, 303-304, 346, 387, 404, 421, 428, 485, 557-576, 667, 682
iconology 2, 557-576, 667, 682
Ictinus, architect 64, 75, 138, 143, 155, 531
ideal sculpture/ *Idealplastik* 168, 375, 401, 526, 534, 583
idealization 22, 168, 298-299, 581, 607
identity 57, 177, 180, 183, 209, 344, 404-407, 511
Iliad 42, 51, 140, 301, 519, 631
illusionistic 90, 93, 227, 283, 323
Imhotep 110
imitatio 419
Imperial period 14, 59, 85, 124, 125, 245, 271, 318, 360, 521, 523-524, 575, 581
Imperial period, Early 118, 161-166, 318, 364, 369, 381, 399, 443, 489, 587, 605, 610
Imperial period, High 284, 386, 388
Imperial period, Late 14, 366
imperialism 310, 400-401, 404
impluvium 282
index 668, 669, 672
India 7, 124, 209, 395, 399
inequality 277, 318
Ingres, Jean-Auguste-Dominique 431
initiation 186, 337-338, 542, 566
inscriptions 111-114, 116, 120, 137-139, 140, 142, 143, 144, 157, 169-170, 185, 232, 294, 303, 441
insulae 96

intaglios 205, 222-223, 229, 230
Ionic order 42, 47, 56, 183, 245, 477
Iron Age, Early 273-275, 286
Ischia 112
Isidore of Seville 420
Isis 357
Isocrates 183, 588
Isola Sacra 167
Isthmia, Temple of Poseidon 243, 304, 329, 330
Istocles, potter/vase painter 112
ivory, material 27, 34, 42, 110, 156, 206, 207, 209-210, 216, 226, 228, 232, 249, 301, 422
Jahn, Otto 417, 558, 570
Jauss, Robert 638
Jerusalem, Temple of Solomon 47
Johannes Nesteutes 116
Juba, King of Mauritania 204
Julia Domna 194, 615
Julia Memmia 196
Julia Sancta 196
Junius, Franciscus 205-206, 442-443, 447, 526
Justinian II 116
Kairos 380, 524
kalpis 124, 210-211
Kanon 44, 48, 71, 75, 76-77, 79, 204, 642
Kant, Immanuel 5, 107, 527, 647, 650
Karphi 273
kiln 207, 210, 212, 218
kleos 180, 181
klismos 210
Koch, Guntram 570
komast 87, 88
Kopienkritik 375-376, 445, 450, 642
Kore-Persephone 302, 306, 321
kore/korai 29, 32, 113, 152, 492, 583, 679
kosmos 56
kouros/kouroi 29, 114, 295, 298, 300, 487, 548, 583, 610, 626, 675, 679
(p. 698) *krateriskos* 337-339
Krautheimer, Richard 418-419
Kristeller, Paul Oskar 22
Kunsttheorie 22
kylix 87, 210, 564-569, 623, 631

Laberia Hostilia 196
Labraunda, Sanctuary of Zeus 183-184
laissez-faire, conservation 461
Lampsacus 123
Lansdowne Amazon 489
Lansdowne Heracles 483-484, 486
Laocoön group 419, 426-427, 428, 475, 476, 501, 504, 525-526, 640
Lapiths 154
lararium 95-96
Late Antique period 125, 129-130, 179, 380, 388-390, 398, 401-403, 409, 422, 524
Lato, Crete 277
Latrobe, Benjamin Henry 430
Lausus 380
Le Corbusier 432
Leander 163
Lebadea, Temple of Zeus 141
Lebensraum 353
Lebenswelt 680
lectisternia 357
Leda 534
Ledoux, Claude Nicolas 430
Lefkandi, "Heroon" 243
Lehmann, Karl 419, 580
leitourgia 179
lekythos 216, 219, 304, 508
Leningrad Painter 124
Leochares, sculptor 156, 165, 519, 527
Leonardo da Vinci 49, 50
Leonidas, architect 44, 75
Leonidas I, King of Sparta 297
Leptis Magna 285
Leto-Latona 115, 162, 163
Leucas 121
Leucippus 570
Lévi-Strauss, Claude 621, 627
lex provinciae 395
libations 337, 590
Liber Pater 163-164
libertus 317
Libon 143
libraries 194, 278, 284, 359, 360, 369

LIDAR mapping 469
Lieber Code 506
lifting 250-251, 254-255
limestone 220, 222, 246
Limyra, tomb of Pericles 326
Lindus, Sanctuary of Athena 42, 123, 332
Linear B 441
linguistics. *See* structural linguistics
lions 28, 31, 296-297
Lissarrague, François 85, 629
liturgy 327, 330
Livia 90, 194-195, 607
Locri Epizephyrii 300
Lombard 422
longue durée 409
Lorenzo de' Medici 422
Lorsch Abbey 420-421, 457
lost wax technique 224-225
Loukou 409
Louvre, Paris 386, 475-476, 479, 505, 645
Lübke, Karl Heinrich 6-7
Lucian 34, 111, 156, 209
Lucius Crassus 121
Lucius Mammius Maximus 611
Lucius Mummius 121, 192, 282
Ludovisi Ares 487
Ludovisi Gaul Group 487
Ludovisi "Orestes and Electra" 169
Ludwig I, King of Bavaria 477, 505
Lycius, sculptor 155
Lycosura, Sanctuary of Despoina 121, 334
Lydian Hoard (Karun Treasure) 510, 513
Lydos, vase painter 489
Lysias, sculptor 162
Lysimachus 187, 525
Lysippus, sculptor 79, 80, 114, 123, 157-158, 380-381, 524-525, 535, 611
Macedonia 14, 183, 184, 227, 244, 274, 277, 285, 294, 296, 306-307
macella 369
Magi, the Three 422
Magna Mater 167
Magnesia on the Maeander, Temple of Artemis Leucophryene 44, 75, 78, 136, 146, 333, 531

Mahdia shipwreck 380
(p. 699) Mandrocles of Samos, architect 79, 142
Mantegna, Andrea 425
Mantichus Apollo 28
Mantineia 277
Mantineia, Battle of 305
manubial temple 160, 191
Marathon
Marathon, Battle of 159, 305, 345, 585
Marathon, mound 508
marble
marble, material 220–221, 252–253, 254–255, 487
marble, quarrying 221–222, 246–247
Marcus Aurelius 170, 183, 318, 319, 361, 425, 430, 479, 491, 501
Marcus Calatropius Quartio 611
Marcus Cossutius Menelaus 122
Marcus Fulvius Nobilior 191
Marcus Nonius Balbus the Elder 605–606, 607
Marcus Nonius Balbus the Younger 609–611, 612 617
Marcus Porcius Cato 282
Marsyas 163, 155, 220
Martial 147, 163
Martindale, Charles 638–639, 641, 648
Marxism 451, 638
masons' marks 252
Matisse, Henri 647
Matz, Friedrich 570
Mauretania 148, 396
Mausolus 136, 144, 156, 183, 184, 245
Maxentius 161, 259, 286, 464
Maximus of Tyre 36–37
McKim, Meade and White 480, 488
Medici Venus 479
Megabyzus of Macedon 156
Megalopolis 184, 189, 279, 302
Megalopolis, hestiatorion 189
Megalopolis, Stoa of Philip II 184, 279
Megara 123, 345
Megara Hyblaea
Megara Hyblaea, agora 274, 276
Megara Hyblaea, urban development 274
megaron 42

Meidias Painter 476, 533
Meisterforschung 445, 449–450, 642
Melampus 44, 75
Melas 123
Meleager 164, 422, 425, 570
Melos 113, 479, 505, 645
memoria 355–356
Menaichmus, painter 75
Menelaus 42
Menelaus, sculptor 169
Menodora 189
Mentor, silversmith 121
Mesopotamia 7, 222, 225, 269, 270, 378, 398
Messene 121
Messene, Asclepieum 121
Messene, Heroon D 121
Metagenes, architect 44, 47
metal, building material 249
metapictures 84–86, 88, 89, 92–94, 100
Metapontum, agora 276
Metilia Acte 167–168
metopes 61, 139, 154
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 94, 375, 480–482, 483, 488, 508, 510, 614–615
Micciades, sculptor 520
Michelangelo 426–427, 491, 501, 526
Micon, Painter 305
Middle Ages 73, 205, 285, 327, 375, 401, 417, 418, 420–423, 429, 524–525
Middle Comedy 139
Mieza 123
Miletus 274, 276–277, 363, 387
Miletus, Baths of Faustina Minor 387
Miletus, urban development 276–277
Miltiades 585
mimesis 22, 34, 37, 628
Minoan 273, 329
Miran 124
mise en abîme 85–86, 88
mithraea 397–398
Mithridates VI, King of Pontus 378
Mnesiades, potter 113
Mnesicles, architect 143, 155

- model 112, 119, 139, 142, 251, 378, 531. See also *paradeigmata*
- Modena, Cathedral 421
- molds 205, 208, 212, 217–220, 224–226, 229, 230, 244, 487
- Monte dell’Incastro, Temple of Hercules 483
- Montier-en-Der, Abbey 422
- monumental painting 115, 304, 387, 445
- (p. 700)** monumental statuary 295–296
- Morelli, Giovanni 450, 529–535, 559
- Morgantina 259
- Morgantina Silver Hoard 510
- mortar, building material 255
- mosaicists 88, 108–109, 115–117, 127, 128, 130
- mosaics 88, 92, 115–117, 153, 206, 207, 223, 258, 278, 279, 284, 322, 323–324, 354, 366, 386, 388–390, 396–397, 400, 402, 403, 405–406, 409, 429, 465, 479, 480, 490, 511, 525, 530, 569, 585, 612
- mousike* 22
- Mucius 146–147
- mud brick, building material 243–245, 274
- Müller, Karl Ottfried 206
- Munichia 337
- Musa, Parthian queen 124
- Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome 487
- Museo Pio-Clementino, Vatican, Rome 475
- Muses 33, 324, 379–380, 387, 474
- museum 473–494, 505–514, 542, 558, 628
- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 479, 510
- music 22, 30–31, 335, 387, 572
- Mussolini 402, 491
- Muziris 399
- Mycenaean 57, 273, 329–330
- Myndus 123
- Mynnion of Argile, sculptor 120
- Myrina, cemetery 219
- Myron, sculptor 34, 80, 155, 162, 165, 169, 300, 381, 427, 524, 527, 547–548
- Mysian Galatomachy 159
- naiskos* 326
- naos* 332
- Napoleon 430, 431, 476, 479, 504, 505–506
- Narcissus 387, 611
- Nashville, Parthenon 465
- Nasstiades 113

nationalism 2-3, 400, 401, 404, 475
nativity 677, 682
naturalism 93, 226, 229, 383-385, 396, 448, 521, 653, 674
Naulochus, Battle of 162
Naxos 113, 220, 222, 246, 295
Nearchus, potter 113, 152
Nefermaat 110
Nefertari 511
nekromanteia 334
Nemea 245, 306, 330
Nemea, Temple of Zeus 245
Nemesis 162, 295, 301, 523, 530, 531
Neo Phalero, sanctuary of Cephissus 339
Neoclassical 430, 447-448, 477, 478, 480-482
Nero 147, 158, 161, 164-166, 178, 284, 360, 365, 381, 420, 425, 530
nero antico 169
Nerva 320
Nesiotes, sculptor 155, 298-299
Nexaris 44, 75
Niarchos 334
Nicandre 295-296
Niceratus, sculptor 163
Nicesermus, potter 112
Nichoria 273
Nicias, painter 115, 121, 122, 163-164
Nicola Pisano 422
Nicomachus, painter 121, 165
Nike - Victoria 29, 34, 141, 143, 154, 301, 302, 345, 479-480, 525, 560-561
Nike of Samothrace 186, 479-480
Niketas Choniates 525
Nikosthenes, potter 218
Nîmes 398
Niobe/Niobids 115, 162, 570
Niobid Painter 304
Noble, Joseph V. 207
Nola 93, 502
Nonius Balbus 605
Novius Blesamus, sculptor 118
nudity 315-316, 318, 610, 616-617, 626, 680
Numa Pompilius 160
nymphaeum 165, 196, 363

- Nymphodorus 44
Octavia 158, 194
odeia 183
Odysseus 21–22, 23, 27, 30, 32–35, 42, 140, 304, 313–314, 575, 622
Odyssey 21–22, 23–24, 25, 42, 314
Oenomaus 154
Oenophyta 345
oikoi 335
oinochoe 25–26, 342–343
(p. 701) oligarchy 591
Olympia 4, 33, 36–38, 86, 113, 117, 119, 123, 138, 141, 143, 154, 156, 162, 183, 184, 220, 249, 300–302, 330, 480, 530, 547
Olympia, Achaean heroes group 117
Olympia, Philippeion 156–157
Olympia, Temple of Hera 141, 456
Olympia, Temple of Zeus 138, 143, 154, 162, 184, 196, 249, 302, 547
Olympia, Zeus and Ganymedes acroterial group 220
Olympian Zeus by Phidias 33, 36–38, 380, 524
Olympias, Macedonian Queen 156, 185
Olympias, painter 124–125
Olympic Games 80, 154, 300, 301, 302, 520
Olympus 28, 42
Olynthus 277–278, 585
Olynthus, domestic architecture 277–278
Omphale 613–615
Onatas, sculptor 117
Onesimus, vase painter 113
Oplontis, Villa of Poppea 89–90, 365–366, 381, 382
opus
opus caementicium 255, 353
opus incertum 255–256
opus mixtum 256
opus quadratum 254
opus quasi reticulatum 256
opus reticulatum 255–256
opus signinum 258
opus siliceum 254
opus spicatum 258
opus tessellatum 116
opus testaceum 257
opus vermiculatum 116, 223

opus vittatum 258
Orange, Theater 464
orchestra 362
ordinatio 46–47
Orientalizing Period 28
Oropus, Sanctuary of Amphiaraus 341
Orraon, Epirus 277
Orvieto 421
Oscans 280
Ostia 169, 610
otium 362–363, 584
Overbeck, Johannes Adolf 108–109, 442, 519, 651
Oxford Relief 50
Pacetti, Vincenzo 475, 489
Padua 425
Padua, Ovetari Chapel 425
Paeonius of Ephesus 176
Paeonius of Mende, sculptor 29, 138, 302
Paestum 113, 227, 280–281, 430, 464
painters 530–531
painting
painting, Archaic Greece 226–227, 333, 630
painting, Classical Greece 209, 226–227, 304, 323, 333–334, 378–379, 630
painting, fresco 167, 226–228, 354
painting, funerary 306–307, 593
painting, Macedonian 227, 306–307
painting, panel 209, 227, 304, 323, 378, 380, 381, 384, 527, 530
painting, Pompeian First Style 283
painting, Pompeian Fourth Style 165, 323, 375, 384
painting, Pompeian Second Style 89–90, 167, 283, 313, 382
painting, Pompeian Third Style 384, 490
painting, Roman 226–228, 323, 324, 366–367, 379, 420, 476
Palestine 378, 396, 408
Palladio, Andrea 58, 428, 457
Palmyra 284–285, 408
Palmyra, Temple of Bel 398
Pamphilus, painter 74, 75
Panathenaia 302, 304, 334, 335, 681
Panathenaic amphoras 219, 304
Panathenaic games 304
Pandora 26–27, 28
Pannonia 397

Panofsky, Erwin 418, 557, 574-575, 666, 667
Paolina Borghese 321
Papias, sculptor 169
paradeigmata 142
paradigm-shift 546
Parian marble 157, 179, 204, 220, 302, 650
Paris, Church of Sainte Geneviève 430
Paros 163, 220, 246-247
(p. 702) Parrhasius, painter 35, 78, 92, 119, 121, 384, 523, 525, 530, 642
Parthenocles, sculptor 165
Parthenon. *See* "Athens, Parthenon"
Parthenon marbles 431, 477, 512, 514, 527
Pasiteles, sculptor 122, 165, 168-169, 521
Pasitelean school 122
Pasquino 168
Patrae 330, 334
Patroclus 140, 335, 567, 631
patronage 152-171, 176-197, 284, 302, 404, 407
patronage, architecture 176-197
patronage, art 152-171
Patrophilus, sculptor 116
Pattanam 399
Pausanias 243, 252
Pausanias the Regent 301, 326
pavonazetto 70, 126, 138, 154, 156, 220, 332, 383, 523
Peisianax 181
Pella 115, 123, 279, 304
Pella, House of Dionysus 279
Pella, House of the Abduction of Helen 279
Pella, palace 279
Peloponnesian War 303-304, 305, 306, 345, 592
Pelops 154
Penelope 21, 26-27
Pentelic marble 157, 182, 192, 254
Penteskouphia 115
Penthesilea 168, 630-631
Penthesilea Painter 630-631
Peplos Kore 492
Pergamum 88, 139, 158-160, 182, 204, 279, 301, 302, 330, 334, 378, 481
Pergamum, Great Altar of Zeus 158-160, 302, 330, 481
Pergamum, Temple of Hera 301

Pergamum, Trajaneum 139
Pergamum Museum, Berlin 480–481
Perge 195–196
Pericles 154–155, 181, 183, 431, 544–545, 579, 585, 588, 662
period style 547
peripheries 399
peripteros 330–331
peristasis 331
Perrier, François 429
Perseus 31
Perseus, King of Macedonia 378
Persia 7, 79, 124, 154, 157, 182, 395, 398, 511, 630, 677
Persian Wars 79, 154, 182, 276, 277, 303, 592
Perugino 425
Petrarch 423–424, 500, 525
Petronius 140, 385, 587
Phaeacians 32
Phaedra 322
phantasia 37
Pharsalus 123, 157
Phatres, painter 123
Pheneus 301–302
phenomenology 2, 405–406, 409
Pherecydes 154
Phidias, sculptor 33, 36–38, 53, 80, 111, 114, 154–155, 151, 206, 209, 230, 295, 301, 380, 381, 386, 420, 431, 476, 523–525, 527, 535, 579
Philagrus 144
Phile of Priene 189
Philetaerus 311
philhellenism 183
Philip II 155, 156–157, 184, 185–186, 279, 508
Philip III 186
Philochorus 143
Philocles, architect 143
Philocles, painter 115
Philology 444–445, 527, 558
Philon of Byzantium 56
Philon of Eleusis, architect 75, 141, 144
Philostratus 70, 86, 209
Philoxenus of Eretria, painter 530
Phocas, sculptor 124

Phocians 144
Photius 525
Phrasicleia 294
Phrygia 25, 409
Phryne 615
Phyromachus of Cephisia, sculptor 120, 159-160
Piazza Armerina, Villa del Casale 465
Picasso, Pablo 85, 419-420, 432-433, 509, 647
piety 93-94, 329, 668, 672, 680
pigments 204-205, 208, 215, 219, 227-228, 451
(p. 703) pilasters 243, 244, 354
pinacothecae 384-385
Pindar 27-28, 29, 33, 36
Pinturicchio 425
Piraeus 50, 72, 143, 246, 277, 335
Piraeus, Arsenal/Skeuotheke of Philon 44, 75, 140, 141, 144
Piraeus, Asclepieum 341
Pisa, Greece 154
Pisa, Italy 421
Pisanello 424
pisé, building technique 244
Pisistratids 139, 160, 179, 181
Pisistratus the younger 181, 330
Pistias 52
Pistoletto 652
Piston, sculptor 163
Pitsa, votive plaques 227
Plancia Magna 195-196
Plataea, Battle of 155
Plato 12, 30, 35, 37, 43, 44, 49, 53, 70, 88, 678
play, theory 86-93
plebs 320, 605
Pliny the Elder 25, 33, 43, 45, 70, 71, 74-76, 80, 88, 107, 115, 119, 123, 124, 227, 243, 247, 250, 259, 319, 362, 380-381, 383-384, 401, 420, 426-427, 443-445, 500-501, 519-523, 526-527, 642
Pliny the Younger 147, 427
Plutarch 143, 154-155, 180, 205, 209-210, 216, 544-545, 585
Plutus 302, 341
polis 141, 155, 180-182, 562, 583, 585, 588, 671
politai 589
Pollis, architect 44, 75
Polybius 279, 504

polychromy 162, 206, 208, 215, 216, 221, 227, 304, 368, 431, 450
polychromy, architecture 368, 431
polychromy, sculpture 206, 208, 215, 221, 450
Polyclitus, sculptor 43–44, 48, 59, 71, 75, 76–77, 79–80, 111, 114, 122, 138, 165, 204, 375, 381, 382, 386, 420, 424, 427, 519–520, 522–525, 535, 642–643, 668, 683
Polycrates of Samos, tyrant 178, 181, 329
Polydorus, sculptor 526
Polyeuctus, sculptor 296
Polygnotus, painter 117, 304, 523, 530
Polyidos, architect 44
Polymedes, sculptor 114
Polyphemus 31, 313, 622–623, 625
Polyzalus 152–153
pomerium 190
pompae 357, 362
Pompeia Helena, goldsmith 125
Pompeii 4, 89, 90, 94–98, 101, 166, 195, 258, 270, 282–283, 313–314, 318–319, 357, 364, 375, 384–385, 447, 455, 457, 461, 465–466, 502, 530, 569, 613
Pompeii, Capitoline Temple 95
Pompeii, Casa del Bell’Impluvio 90
Pompeii, Casa del Piano Superiore 90
Pompeii, Casa della Venere 90
Pompeii, Forum 97
Pompeii, Forum Baths 258
Pompeii, House of Lucius Caecilius Iucundus 95
Pompeii, House of the Menander 384
Pompeii, House of the Silver Wedding 283, 466
Pompeii, House of the Vettii 384–385
Pompeii, Porta Ercolana 364
Pompeii, Porta Nocera 364
Pompeii, Praedia of Julia Felix 95–98
Pompeii, Sanctuary of Isis 357
Pompeii, Stabian Baths 258
Pompeii, Vesuvian Gate 95
Pompeii, Villa dei Misteri 313–314
Pompey 147, 192, 256, 282, 378–379, 383, 384
ponos/labor 584
Pope Clemens VII 426
Pope Gregory XV 503–504
Pope Julius II 426, 501
Pope Leo X 426

Pope Paul III 426, 501
Pope Pius IV 427
Pope Sixtus IV 425
Poppea 381
portraiture 168–170, 297–298, 316–317, 320, 396, 404, 615
Poseidon-Neptune 154, 243, 304, 329, 332, 531, 591
(p. 704) Posidippus 70, 79
positivism 4, 529, 649, 650
post-and-lintel system 245
Postumius Albinus 191, 317
Potidaea 306
Poussin, Nicholas 429
Praeneste, Sanctuary of Fortuna 147
praetor 310, 605, 606
pragmatics 667
Prato Cathedral 424
Praxidamas 300
Praxiteles, sculptor 30, 88, 114, 122–123, 155–156, 157, 164, 165, 380–381, 386, 420, 520, 522, 524–525, 526–527, 530, 535, 613–614, 615, 617, 651–652, 676
prayer 23, 24, 331–332
preservation, conservation 461–462
Prettejohn, Elizabeth 641, 642–644
prevention, conservation 467
Priene 44, 146, 183, 184, 189, 278, 279, 585
Priene, Stoa of Orophernes 333
Priene, Temple of Athena 44, 73, 144–145, 531
Priene, urban development 189, 278
priest 55, 176, 186, 189, 295, 334–335, 357, 426, 677, 681
priestess 167, 189, 195, 295, 323, 334–335
Prima Porta, Livia's Villa 90–91
Princeps 318–320, 585
Princeton University Museum 510
procession 32, 158, 333–336, 588
Procopius 524
profectio 361
Proiectus, sculptor 116
pronaos 95, 163, 357
Pronomus Painter 304–305
propraetor 520
Proserpina 570
proskenion 120

Protarchos, engraver 224
Protogenes, painter 75, 156, 165, 226-227
Protogeometric period 243-244
provinces, art of 395-409
provincia 395
provincial 195-196, 284, 389, 395-402
Psenobastis, painter 123
psychoanalysis 418, 668
Ptolemaeus Chennos 125
Ptolemies 145, 158-160, 186-187, 194, 197, 311-312, 381, 508
Ptolemy I 121
Ptolemy II Philadelphus 145, 146-147, 158, 186, 188
Ptolemy III Euergetes 158
Publius Curtilius Agatus, silversmith 211
Publius Longidienus 607-608
Puglia 422
Puteoli 137, 255
pycnostyle 57, 355
Pyrilampus of Messene, sculptor 123
Pyrrhus, potter 112
Pythagoras, philosopher 43, 56
Pythagoras of Rhegium, sculptor 51, 80, 161, 300
Pytheus, architect 44, 48, 71, 73-75, 77, 136, 144, 145, 146, 178, 183, 302, 531
Pythocritus, sculptor 123
Python, vase painter 113
quarries 65, 141, 208, 212-213, 220-222, 246, 254, 255
Quatremère de Quincy, Antoine-Chrysostome 206, 504
Quintilian 33, 49, 70, 204, 383, 384, 443, 521, 606
Quintus Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus 157-158, 192
Quintus Lutatius Catulus 160, 169
Rabirius, architect 147, 161, 178
Raphael 425, 427-428, 429
Ravenna 607
Ravenna, Basilica of San Vitale 424
realism 80, 157, 317, 428-429
receiver 590, 642-643, 646, 649, 670
Reception Theory 2, 450, 634, 637-656, 678
reconstruction, conservation 260, 461, 465
Regilla 196
rehabilitation, conservation 460, 461, 464
Reichskunst 399, 401

Reims 408, 418, 421
reliquary 422
relocation, conservation 465
(p. 705) Renaissance 50, 56, 107, 152, 205, 241, 390, 417–420, 423–429, 474–475, 479, 488, 500, 525, 526, 531, 574, 575, 653, 656, 664
Renaissance, Early 429
renovation, conservation 464
repairs, ancient 189, 192, 194, 212, 214, 217, 218, 221
repatriation 500, 504, 505, 510–511
replication, conservation 465
Republic 59, 100, 147, 160–161, 163, 166, 182, 192, 280–281, 282, 315–317, 324, 355, 364, 365, 377, 379, 383, 386, 388, 399, 443, 501, 591, 605, 610
Republic, Early 280, 355
Republic, Late 14, 166, 182, 192, 281, 282, 315–317, 324, 364, 365, 377, 379, 383, 386, 388, 399, 443, 501, 591, 605, 610
Republic, Middle 280–281
Res Gestae Divi Augusti 192, 368, 398
restitutio 425
restoration 431, 450, 464, 465
Rexibius 300
Rhamnus 295, 301, 523, 530, 531
Rhamnus, Temple of Nemesis 162, 531
Rhea Silvia 570
Rhine 400, 402, 406
Rhodes 86, 123, 274
Rhoecus, architect 72, 178
Riace bronzes 208, 232, 530
Ricci hydria 337
Richardson, Jonathan 526
Ridgeway, Brunilde 450
Riegl, Alois 375, 399, 401, 405, 417, 448, 543, 546, 551, 654, 673
rite 328–329, 625, 627, 668, 674–675
ritual 32, 207, 307, 327–345, 563, 566, 580, 588, 626, 675–676, 680
ritualism 625
Robert, Carl 4, 417, 558, 570, 622–625, 630, 666
rococo, Hellenistic 381
Rococo 430
Rodenwaldt, Gerhart 570
Romanesque 457
Romanization 400–403, 409
Rome 170–178, 280

Rome, Aedes Vestae 194
Rome, Aqua Appia 190, 255, 280
Rome, Ara Pacis 284, 357–358, 465, 491, 585, 668
Rome, Arch of Constantine 170, 427
Rome, Arch of Septimius Severus 170, 462
Rome, Arch of Titus 170, 284, 375, 457, 464, 662, 665
Rome, Atrium of the Vestals 194
Rome, Basilica Julia 524
Rome, Basilica Nova 286
Rome, Basilica of Maxentius 259, 464
Rome, Basilica Paulii 190
Rome, Basilica Porcia 282
Rome, Basilica Sempronia 282
Rome, Baths of Agrippa 611
Rome, Baths of Caracalla 169, 363, 381, 526
Rome, Baths of Diocletian 259, 286
Rome, Baths of Titus 284
Rome, Campus Martius 192
Rome, Circus Maximus 160, 190
Rome, Cloaca Maxima 160, 190
Rome, Colosseum 148, 284, 286, 362, 423, 457, 464, 589
Rome, Column of Marcus Aurelius 319
Rome, Column of Trajan 152, 178, 284, 319, 359–360, 425
Rome, domestic architecture 282
Rome, Domus Aurea 147, 158, 164–165, 178, 284, 420, 425, 427, 530
Rome, Domus Transitoria 165
Rome, Forum Boarium 425, 427, 457–458
Rome, Forum Julium 192
Rome, Forum of Augustus 161–162, 360, 487
Rome, Forum of Trajan 139, 178, 358–360
Rome, Forum Pacis 524
Rome, Forum Romanum 163, 190–191, 194, 280, 282, 286, 357, 455, 524
Rome, Forum Transitorium 100
Rome, gardens of Sallust 169
Rome, house of Romulus 456
Rome, Iseum Campense 357
Rome, Largo Argentina 160–161, 191
Rome, Markets of Trajan 487
Rome, Mausoleum of Augustus 65, 192, 491
Rome, Palace of Domitian 147, 178
Rome, Palazzo dei Conservatori 491

Rome, Palazzo Farnese 428
(p. 706) Rome, Pantheon 139, 147, 182, 192, 193, 284, 427, 430, 575
Rome, Pons Aemilia 190
Rome, Porticus Aemilia 282
Rome, Porticus Liviae 194
Rome, Porticus Octavia 158, 161, 164, 192
Rome, San Pietro in Montorio 427
Rome, Servian Wall 190, 280
Rome, Severan Septizodium 98, 363
Rome, Shrine of Concordia 194
Rome, St. Peter's Basilica 427
Rome, Temple of Apollo Medicus 164-165, 355
Rome, Temple of Apollo Palatinus 161, 165
Rome, Temple of Caesar 121
Rome, Temple of Castor and Pollux 100, 163, 191
Rome, Temple of Ceres 116, 121
Rome, Temple of Concordia Augusta 164-165, 195
Rome, Temple of Divus Augustus 163
Rome, Temple of Divus Trajanus 194
Rome, Temple of Fortuna Huiusce Diei 160-161
Rome, Temple of Fortuna Muliebris 194
Rome, Temple of Hercules (Boarium) 456-457
Rome, Temple of Hercules Musarum 191
Rome, Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus 55, 95, 146, 160, 169, 190, 253, 280, 318, 376
Rome, Temple of Jupiter Stator 192, 254
Rome, Temple of Mars Ultor 59
Rome, Temple of Mater Matuta 355-356
Rome, Temple of Peace 98-99, 164, 165
Rome, Temple of Salus 161, 530
Rome, Temple of Vespasian 357
Rome, Temple of Vesta 160
Rome, Theater of Aemilius Scaurus 362
Rome, Theater of Lucius Mummius 282
Rome, Theater of Marcellus 192
Rome, Theater of Pompey 147, 192, 256, 282, 379, 572
Rome, Via Anicia 99-100
Rome, Via Appia 190, 280, 572
Rome, Vigna Casali 572
Rome, Villa della Farnesina 366
Romulus 190, 456, 677
Rosetta stone 504, 512

rostrum 95, 315, 357
Rubens, Peter Paul 429
Rudolf II 503
Rutigliano 616
Ruvo di Puglia 210
Sabina 194
Sabratha 362
sacrifice 148, 301, 307, 329–335, 337, 341, 345, 357, 377, 627
Sagalassus 123
Sahara 395
Salamis Relief 50–51, 64
Saldae 148
Sallust 169
Samnite Wars 161
Samos 44, 51, 75, 76, 78, 115, 142, 178, 252, 275
Samos, Temple of Hera 44, 75, 76, 78, 252, 275
Samothrace 184, 186–188, 330, 334, 479–480, 505
Samothrace, Altar court 334
Samothrace, Banquet Hall 187–188
Samothrace, Doric Exedra 186
Samothrace, Hall of Choral Dancers 185
Samothrace, Ptolemy II's propylon 186, 188
Samothrace, Rotunda of Arsinoe 186–187
San Antonio Museum of Art 510
Saqqara 110, 227
sarcophagus 4, 116, 167–169, 322, 397, 421, 422, 424, 489, 569–574
Sardis 184, 488
Sarnacus 44, 75
Sarpedon 482
Sarpedon, sculptor 120
Satyrus, architect 44, 71, 75
Saurias, painter 115
Saxl, Fritz 418–419, 654
scaenae frons 196, 362
Scamon of Mytilene 44
Scandinavia 395
schemata 584, 585
Schnapp, Alain 629
schole 584
schools, sculpture 107, 122–123, 405
Sciarra Amazon 535

Scipio Aemilianus 504
Scopas the Younger, sculptor 160
(p. 707) Scopas, sculptor 123, 156, 162, 380-381, 519
Scylla 165, 313
Second Sophistic 36, 183
Seleucids 197, 299
Seleucus I 299
self-evaluation 117-119
Selinus, urban development 274
Sellia Epyre, goldsmith 125
sellisternia 357
semantics 667
semiology 627
semiotics 2, 153, 354, 375, 390, 544, 624, 629, 662-683
Semon of Athens, painter 115
Senate 170-171, 180, 191, 315, 319, 395
Seneca 165, 329, 429
Septimius Severus 98, 170, 193, 285, 361, 462, 615
Serapa, goldsmith 125
Serapis 158, 357
Serlio, Sebastiano 428
Servius Tullius 190
sesquipedales 258
Settis, Salvatore 419-420
Severan Marble Plan 98-101
Severe Style 312, 383, 545, 547
Severus, architect 147, 161, 178
Sextus Pompey 162
shield portraits 92
Sichtermann, Hellmut 558-560
Sicily 113, 164, 220, 244, 249, 274, 277, 280, 333, 344, 379, 408, 500, 519, 679
Sicyon 74, 123, 125, 158, 227, 271-272, 278, 306
Sicyonian School 158
Sidon 123
Siena 421, 422
sign 625, 632, 667-672
signa palliata 161
signature 78, 107-108, 109, 111-117, 126, 168-170, 177, 178, 218, 222, 302, 520, 523-524, 526, 530, 532, 535, 565
Signorelli 425
Silanion, sculptor 44, 75, 216

Silenus 572
Silenus, writer 44, 75, 146
Sillyon in Pisidia 189
silver, material 224-226, 229-230, 249, 378
sima 139, 246
Simias, sculptor 123
Sistine Chapel 427
Sleeping Ariadne 605
Slipper-slapper group 651-652
Smicrus, vase painter 78
Smyrna 112
Smyrna, fortifications 245, 274
social history 579-595, 633
social system 13, 137, 276
sociology 2, 622, 624
Soclus of Alopece, sculptor 120
Socrates 35, 52, 583
Sol 284
Soldatenkunst 399
solid casting 225-226
sophia 33-34
Sophilus, mosaicist 115-116
Sophilus, vase painter 112-113
sophrosyne/moderatio 584, 593
Sostratus of Cnidus 145
Sosus, mosaicist 88
Sotadas, sculptor 152
Sourvinou-Inwood, Christiane 563, 627
Spain 204, 208, 386, 396, 397, 400, 402, 421
Spalato, Diocletian's Palace 430
Sparta 42, 249, 300-301, 302, 332, 340, 591, 629-630
Sparta, Temple of Athena Chalchioecus 249, 332
Spartan, dedications 300-301
Sperlonga 313
sphagion 335, 336-337
Sphyllus, sculptor 113
Spina 569
Spinario 424, 425, 432
spolia 421
stabilization, conservation 457, 464, 465
stairs 243, 334, 367-368

Stattius 365-366, 523
statues, as "doubles" 301, 628
status, social 177-178, 195, 211, 278, 294, 520, 542, 587-588
Stephanus Athlete 168-169
Stephanus, sculptor 122, 168-169
Sthennis, sculptor 163
stoas 117, 144, 179, 181, 182, 184-185, 197, 243, 250, 276, 277-279, 302, 305, 333-334, 345, 465, 483, 585
Stoics 37, 56
(p. 708) stone, material 220-224, 245-249
Strabo 33-34, 78, 160, 205, 254, 259
Straton, sculptor 302
Strongylion, sculptor 163
structural linguistics 624, 627, 629, 631-632
structuralism 327, 627-633, 638, 650, 671
Strukturforschung 544
Strzygowski, Josef 400
stucco 227, 228, 258, 368
Studius (Ludius), painter 530
stylistic analysis 541-551
stylobate 60, 64, 181
Suda 71
Suetonius 254, 284
Sulla 121, 592
Sunium, Temple of Poseidon 61, 531
supplicatio 357
Susa 124, 298
symbol 668
Symes, Robin 509
Symmachi-Nicomachi diptych 422
symmetria 44, 46-53, 57-59, 61, 64-65, 79
symposium 24, 87, 101, 378, 490 562, 566-569, 585, 593-594, 615-616, 674-675, 677, 679
syncretism 158
syngraphe 141
synoecism 277
syntactics 667-668
Syracuse
Syracuse, Temple of Apollo 181
Syracuse, Temple of Athena 249
Syria 284, 378, 396, 408, 615
systyle 57

tablinum 282, 311
Tacitus 147, 205, 602
Tadema, Alma 431
Taenarum 334
Tanagra, cemetery 219
Tanner, Jeremy 632, 650-651
Taranto/Tarentum 123, 569
Tarquinia 461
Tarquinius 160, 190
Tauriscus of Tralles, sculptor 526
techne 10, 22, 24-25, 33, 36-37, 42, 49, 51, 111, 446, 584
tegulae mammatae 258
Telemachus 42
temenos 189, 301, 330
tempera 227
temples 139, 146, 160, 161, 178, 179, 184-185, 189-191, 194, 196, 227, 243, 245-246, 249-254, 258, 274-276, 284, 301-302, 306, 326-327, 329-333, 344-345, 353-357, 364, 378, 396-398, 427, 430, 457, 464, 579, 588-589
Teos, Temple of Dionysus 75, 531
Terpsicles, sculptor 113
terra sigillata 220, 533
terracotta sculpture 116, 160, 218-220
tesserae 223-224
tetrastyle 90
textile 27, 205, 224, 228, 341
Thames 409
Thasos 220, 246, 247, 300-301
Thasos, Sanctuary of Artemis Eileithyia 189
thauma 24-25, 28, 32
thaumatic 26
The Hague Conventions 506
Theagenes of Thasos 300
theater 120, 137, 144, 147, 148, 179, 185, 192, 250, 256, 258, 270, 278, 282, 284, 315, 320, 334, 352, 362-363, 378-379, 384, 386, 464, 589, 610-612
Theater of Cassinum 315
Thebes 121, 123, 297
Thebes, Egypt 110
Themis 295
Themistocles 155, 329
Theocydes, architect 44, 75
Theodorus of Phocaea, architect 44, 146

Theodorus of Samos, architect 44, 71, 72, 75, 76, 79, 178
Theodorus, architect (Fayum) 145-146
Theodosia of Amorgos 189
Theodosius II 116, 408
Theodotus, architect 143
Theophilus 205
Theophrastus 204, 243
theoria 23-24
Theorus, sculptor 163
Thera 112, 295
Thermopylae
Thermopylae, Baths 183
Thermopylae, Battle of 65, 630
Thermum 123, 275
Theseus 305, 677, 681
(p. 709) Thespiae 123, 155-156, 164
Thessalonica 278, 285, 397-398
thiasoi 570, 572-573
Thmuis 116
Thrace 408
Thucydides 120, 330, 332, 602
Thurii 140, 277
Tiberius 161, 162-164, 381, 611
Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus 282
tiles
tiles, stone 245
tiles, terracotta 56, 95, 217, 243, 245, 257, 258
Timanthes, painter 523
Timarchus, sculptor 122-123, 520
Timarete, painter 124-125
Timgad 284, 318, 396
Timocharis of Eleutherna, sculptor 123
Timon 125
Timonidas, vase painter 115
Timotheus, sculptor 120, 156, 162, 519, 534-535
Tischbein, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm 605
Tita, painter 124
Titian 426, 652
Titus 124, 170, 284, 320, 375, 426, 457, 464, 662-663
Tivoli, General 315
Tivoli
Tivoli, Hadrian's Villa 148, 381-382, 425, 483

Tivoli, Temple of Vesta 465
togatus 315, 605, 607–609, 611
tombaroli 508–509
tools, stone 86, 207, 209–212, 248–252
Trajan 72, 139, 147–148, 161, 170, 178, 193–194, 284, 320, 358–359, 360, 361, 531, 585
Trajanic Frieze 389
Tralles 146, 352
Tralles, Asclepieum 146
trapezai 331
travertine 254
treasury 180–181, 182, 302, 326, 331, 345, 380
Treaty of Tolentino 504
triclinium 282, 313
Trier 285, 421
triglyph 56–57, 60–61, 64
tripod 25, 27, 28, 29, 32, 162
Tripolitania 396, 409
triumph 170, 191, 254, 284, 318–319, 355–356, 361, 374, 377–378, 504, 662, 668, 672
triumphal arch 170–171, 284, 286, 319, 361, 369, 662
Trogir 116
trompe l'oeil 88, 90, 93, 283
tryphe/luxuria 584
tubi fittili 259
tubuli 258
tuff 246, 253–254, 256
Tunisia 259, 396, 397–398, 400
Tusculum 121
Tusculum portrait type, Julius Caesar 317
Tyrannicides group 298–299, 511
tyranny 179, 180–181, 183, 190, 197, 329
Tyre 123, 463–464
Tyrrhenian amphoras 337
Umm al-Rasas, Church of St. Stephanos 116–117
UNESCO 458, 494, 507, 511, 514
Upper Lotharingia 418
urban planning 270–286, 451
Valerius Maximus 161, 209
Varro, Marcus Terentius 43, 45, 73, 76, 204
Vasari, Giorgio 205, 232, 424, 427, 443, 445, 447, 526, 621, 633
vase painters 28, 94, 107, 108, 113, 117–118, 207, 218, 334, 531–535, 559, 561–562, 650
vase-painting
vase-painting, Apulian 94, 152, 166, 572

- vase-painting, Attic 108, 166, 304, 338-339, 482, 533-535, 544, 585
- vase-painting, Attic black-figure 88, 113, 207, 219, 334, 335, 489, 508, 632
- vase-painting, Attic red-figure 25, 87, 92, 93, 108, 113, 118, 124, 207, 210, 217, 218-219, 304, 337, 476, 482, 489, 532, 616
- vase-painting, coral red 28, 208
- vase-painting, Corinthian 227, 533
- vase-painting, Geometric 22, 85, 112, 207, 219, 560, 566
- vase-painting, white-ground 208, 304
- Vatican Loggias 425
- vaulting
- vaulting, barrel 282
- vaulting, tubes (see *tubi fittili*)
- Venice 420, 425, 428, 504
- (p. 710)** Venice Charter 458
- Venus de Milo 386, 477, 479-480, 505, 644-647, 649, 651
- Venus Victrix 378
- venustas* 45-46
- Vergina 306-307, 492, 508
- Vergina, Great Tumulus 508
- Vergina, Tomb 1 306
- Vergina, Tomb 2 306-307
- Vergina, Tomb 3 307
- Vernant, Jean-Pierre 561-562, 624, 628-629, 671
- Vespasian 164-165, 170, 320, 357
- Vezelay, Basilica 421
- Vicentia, goldsmith 125
- Viciria 606-607
- victor statue 300-301
- Vienne 398
- viewer/viewing 21, 23-24, 34, 37, 53, 84, 86-93, 161, 170, 217, 294-295, 306, 310-314, 323, 352, 488, 547, 561, 566-569, 572, 576, 584, 591, 603, 606, 609, 612, 622, 627-628, 630, 638, 645-646, 650, 666, 669-670, 678-683
- villa 89-90, 95, 97, 121, 148, 169, 197, 310, 311-314, 317, 323-324, 365-367, 375, 381-383, 384, 388-389, 425, 427, 461, 465, 480, 483, 490, 501-502, 584, 587, 679
- villa maritima* 89
- Vipsania Pollo 194
- Virgil 205, 423, 446, 524
- Visconti, Ennio Quirino 431
- Vitruvian Man 48-49
- Vitruvius 41, 43-59, 64, 70, 71-73, 75, 76, 77, 137, 138, 139, 143, 144, 146-147, 176-177, 180, 184, 205, 228, 241-246, 255, 259, 331, 352-355, 420-424, 427, 443, 445, 447, 500, 531

Volcacius Myronopous 169
Völkerpsychologie 622–625
Volksbewusstsein 622
Volksgeist 400
Volkskunst 400
Volksvorstellungen 622, 625
Volta Dorata 427
Volubilis 396
von Klenze, Leo 430
von Sandrart, Joachim 429
von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Ulrich 558
votive relief 210, 303, 334, 335, 339, 340, 341–342, 346, 583
Vroulia 274
Vulca of Veii, sculptor 116, 160, 163, 220
Vulci 569
wages 119–122
walls, fortification 243, 245, 270, 273, 274, 276, 286, 407
Warburg, Aby 417–419, 557, 558, 654, 666
Weber, Karl 97, 483, 502
Westmacott Boy 535
Wickhoff, Franz 375, 448, 673
Wiligelmo 421
Winckelmann, Johann Joachim 107, 206–207, 374–375, 426, 430, 443–444, 447, 449, 475, 502, 526–527, 541, 570, 643–644, 654, 665
Wölfflin, Heinrich 449, 543, 557–558, 654, 673
wood, building material 203, 209, 228, 230, 242–244, 245, 249, 252, 253, 259
Wunderkammern 474–475
Xeniades 339
Xenocrateia 329
Xenocrates, sculptor 75, 79–80, 521–522
Xenophanes 36
Xenophilus, sculptor 302
Xenophon 22–23, 35, 305, 329
Xerxes 298, 511–512
Yemen 124
Yria on Naxos, Temple of Dionysus 246
Zagora on Andros 273–274
Zanker, Paul 375
Zenas Junior, sculptor 169–170
Zenas, son of Alexander, sculptor 169
Zenodorus, sculptor 165–166

Index

Zervos, Christian 433

Zeus - Jupiter 116, 160, 163, 169, 172, 190, 192, 220, 245, 253, 254, 301, 318, 355, 376, 377, 397, 592, 612, 615, 672, 681

Zeus - Jupiter Ammon 487

Zeuxis, painter 78, 92, 119, 120-121, 156, 157, 163, 306, 384, 420, 525, 642

Zopyrus, goldsmith 121

Zosimus, silversmith 206