

EDITED BY \_\_\_\_\_

**CLEMENTE  
MARCONI**

≡ The Oxford Handbook of  
**GREEK AND ROMAN ART  
AND ARCHITECTURE**

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

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ROMAN ART AND  
ARCHITECTURE**



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For Salvatore Settis



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## ABBREVIATIONS AND SPELLING

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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.

ABV	Beazley, J. D. 1956. <i>Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters</i> . Oxford: Clarendon.
Add <sup>2</sup>	Carpenter, T. H. 1989. <i>Beazley Addenda: Additional References to ABV, ARV<sup>2</sup>, and Paralipomena</i> , 2nd ed. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
ANRW	H. Temporini and W. Haase, eds. 1972–. <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> . Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
ARV <sup>2</sup>	Beazley, J. D. 1963. <i>Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters</i> , 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon.
BAPD	Beazley Archive Pottery Database ( <a href="http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/pottery">www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/pottery</a> ).
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.

- FrGrH** Jacoby, F., ed. 1923–1958. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Berlin: Weidmann; Leiden: Brill.
- IG** *Inscriptiones Graecae, consilio et auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Germanicae editae*. 1873–. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- KdA** Vollkommer, R., ed. 2001–2004. *Künstlerlexikon der Antike*. Munich: K. G. Saur.
- LIMC** *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*. 1981–. Zurich: Artemis.
- Para** Beazley, J. D. 1971. *Paralipomena: Additions to Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters and to Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- PMG** Page, D. L. 1962. *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- RE** Pauly, A. F., G. Wissowa, W. Kroll, et al., eds. 1883–. *Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller.
- SEG** *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. 1923–. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben; Leiden: Brill.
- Syll<sup>3</sup>** Dittenberger, W. 1915–1924. *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd ed. Leipzig: S. Hirzel.
- ThesCRA** *Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum*, 8 vols. 2004–2012. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- VS** Diels, H., and W. Kranz, eds. 1964. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 11th ed. Zurich and Berlin: Weidmann.

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# INTRODUCTION

## *Advocating a Hermeneutic Approach*

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CLEMENTE MARCONI

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

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

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

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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.

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

(*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

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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.



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

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).

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

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“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,

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 (Ferne 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

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

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 aesthetical, 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

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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



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).

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.



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

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

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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PART I

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PICTURES FROM THE  
INSIDE

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## CHAPTER 1

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# GREEK AND ROMAN THEORIES OF ART

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DEBORAH STEINER

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



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?

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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,

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 naïveté) 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

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 *agalmata*-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

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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

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).

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 (ARV<sup>2</sup> 776.1, 1669; *Para* 416; *Add<sup>2</sup>* 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

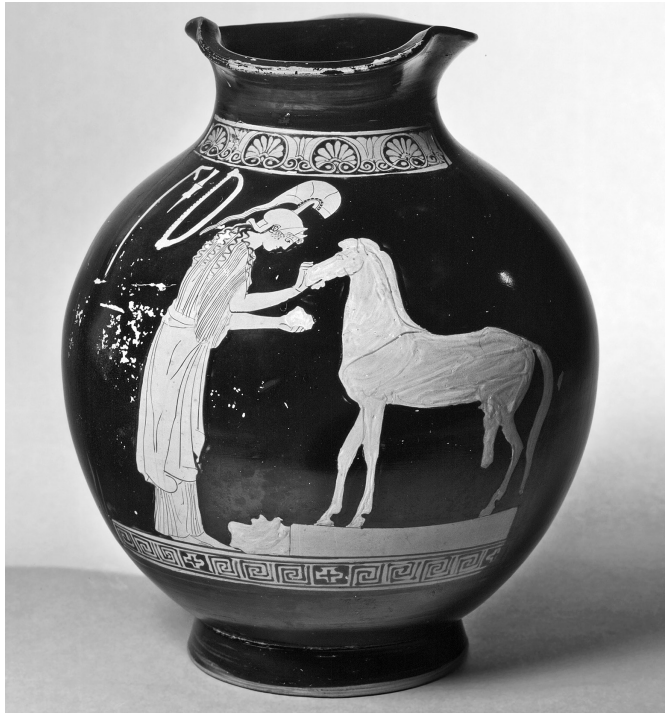


FIG. 1.1 Attic red-figure *oinochoe* attributed to the Group of Berlin 2415, from Capua. Athena modeling a horse in clay. C. 470–460 BCE. Ceramic. Height 21.5 cm. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung inv. F 2415.

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

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: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1594.48; *Para* 507; *Add*<sup>2</sup> 389; BAPD 275006) and an exactly contemporary pot in Boston (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 1973.88: *Add*<sup>2</sup> 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

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 “two-fold” 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 Aglaia 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



“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, *thaumaidesthai* (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:

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 *poiëse*, *etitheî*, 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").



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; *himeroenta*, 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.

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.

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

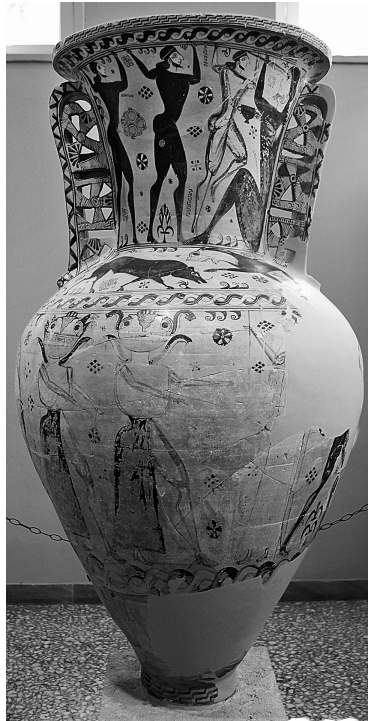


FIG. 1.2 Proto-Attic amphora ("Eleusis Amphora") from Eleusis. On the neck, blinding of Polyphemus; on the shoulder, a lion attacking a boar; on the body, the Gorgons chasing Perseus. C. 650 BCE. Ceramic. Height 1.44 m. Eleusis, Archaeological Museum.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

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

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

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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 “enargistic” 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,

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.)

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 *psychē* 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



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

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



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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## CHAPTER 2

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# GREEK AND ROMAN ARCHITECTURAL THEORY

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MARK WILSON JONES

“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

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

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

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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

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, Pyrrhos, 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 (Courrént 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



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; Callebat 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

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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*)



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*, *diathesis* 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>diathesis</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*.

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

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

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

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).

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

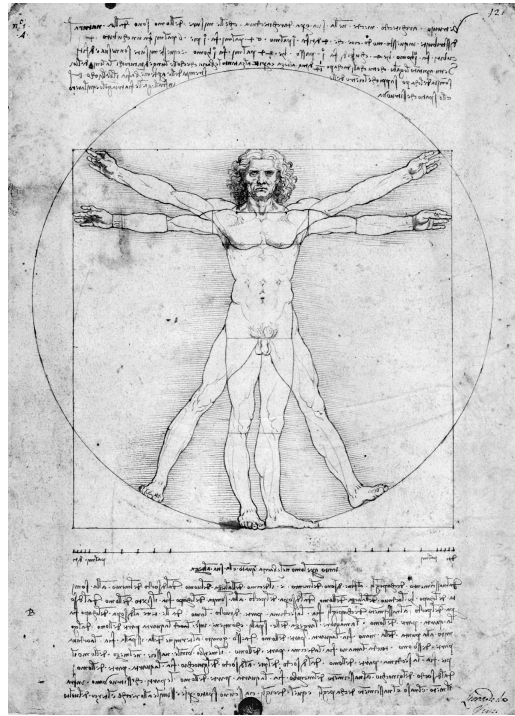


FIG. 2.1 Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), The Vitruvian Man, Study of the Human Body according to Vitruvius, ca. 1492. Pen and brown ink, brush and some brown wash over metalpoint on paper. Height 33 cm. Venice, Accademia inv. 228.

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

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).

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).

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

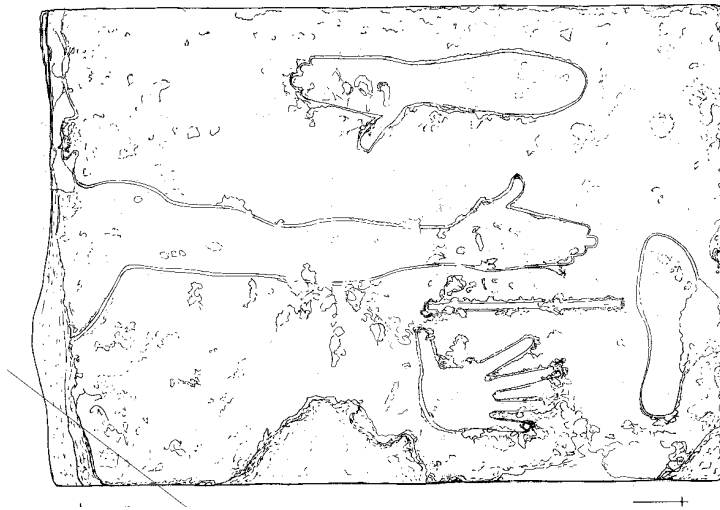


FIG. 2.2 Metrological relief from Salamis.

(Drawing by author and Manolis Korres.)

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

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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.”

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



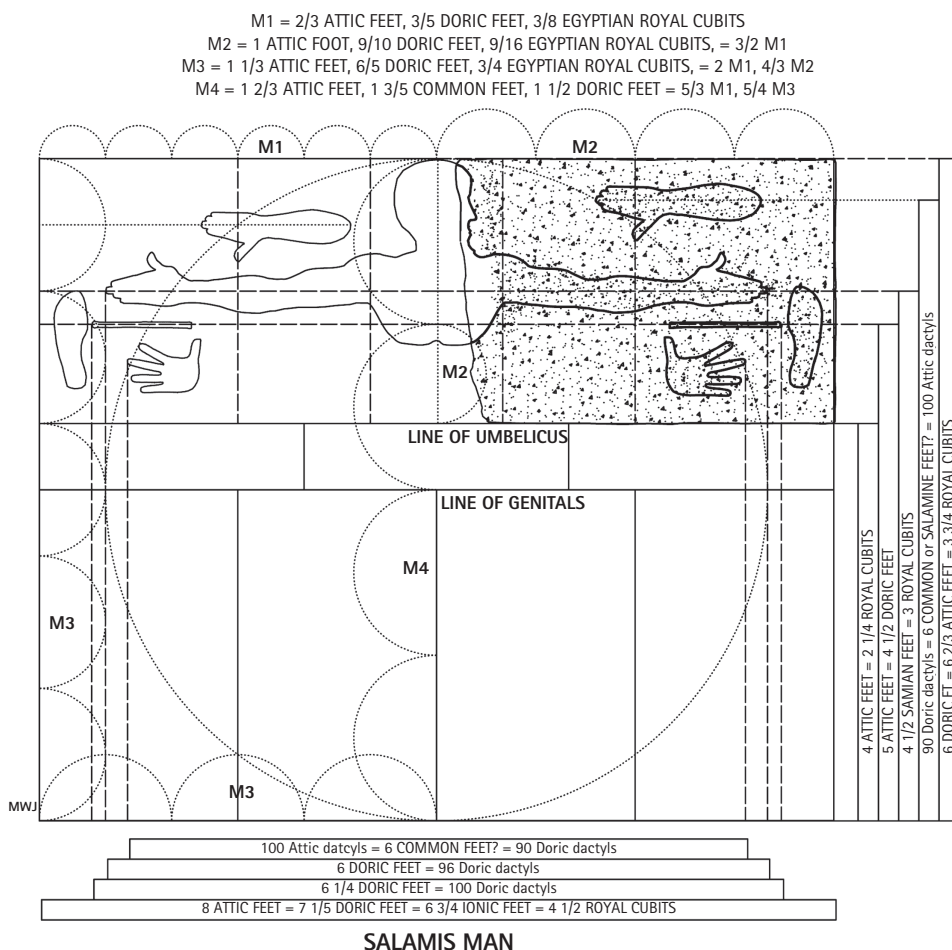


FIG. 2.3 Salamis Man, a tentative reconstruction.

(Drawing by author.)

*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; Bundrick 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,

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**

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*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



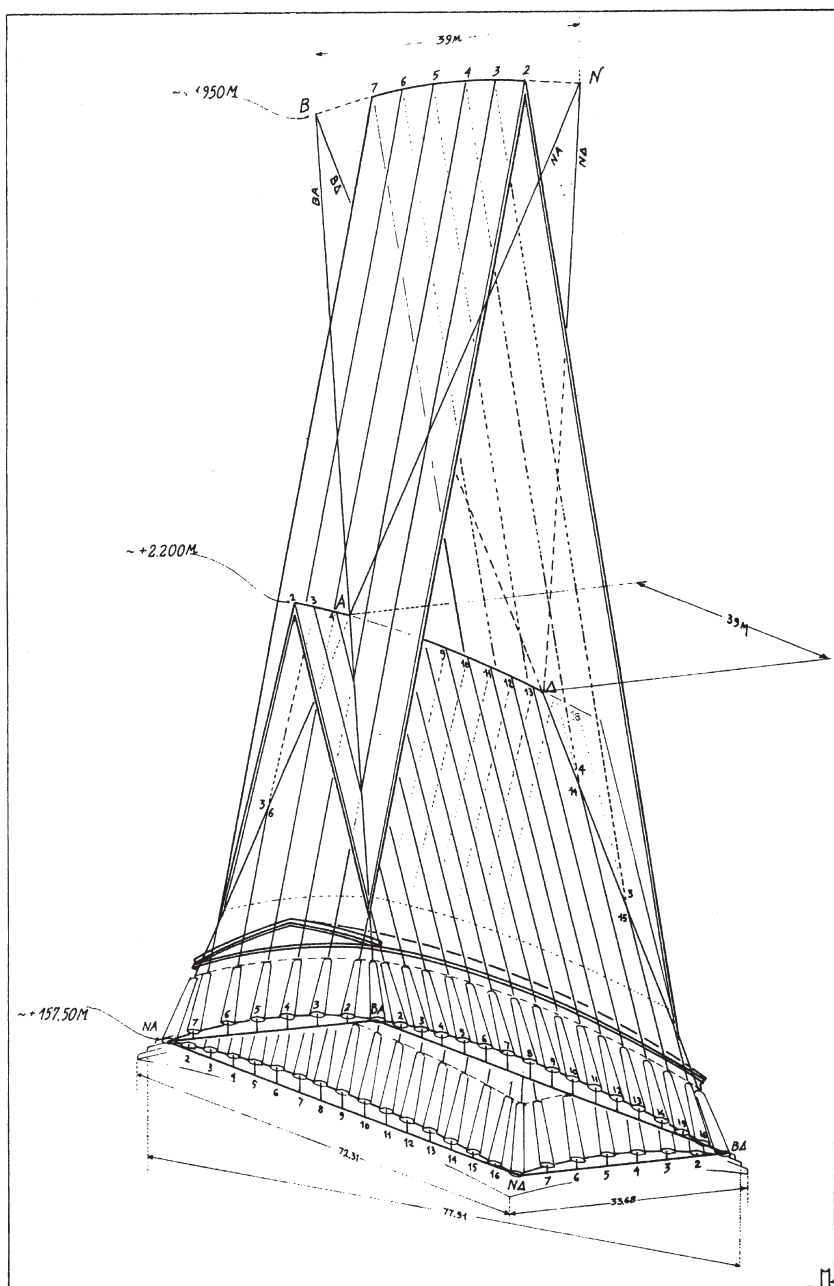


FIG. 2.4 Exaggerated visualization of Parthenon refinements.

(Drawing by Manolis Korres.)