

Beauty and the Gods in Archaic Greece



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ABSTRACT

This thesis is about the relationship between the beautiful and the divine in Archaic Greece. By examining the literary, epigraphic and archaeological records, it seeks to understand how ideas, representations and experiences of beauty informed Greek relations with the gods in the Archaic period (c.750-480 BCE). One aim of the thesis is to elucidate the significance of beauty for Archaic conceptions of the gods. The first chapter explores the representation of the beautiful and the divine in Archaic epic, especially Hesiod and Homer, who profoundly affected attitudes to the gods from the Archaic period to late antiquity. How conceptions of beauty and the gods oriented worshippers' values, actions and the character of their experiences is the focus of the remaining chapters. The second core aim of the thesis, therefore, is to explore the significance of beauty for different forms and contexts of divine worship in Archaic Greece: from musical performances for the gods in chapter two, to developments in sacred architecture in chapter three, to the practice of giving objects to the gods in chapter four. As chapters three and four highlight, the material culture of Greek sanctuaries changed dramatically between the late eighth and early fifth centuries BCE. A central argument of the thesis is that the value and experience of beauty were integral to these changes, which had enduring consequences. Despite its under-representation in scholarship on ancient aesthetics, the Archaic period witnessed a transformation in Greek culture which was pivotal for the religious and aesthetic values, expectations and experiences of later generations of classical antiquity and beyond.

To my family, with love and gratitude.

κινδυνεύει κατὰ τὴν ἀρχαίαν παροιμίαν τὸ καλὸν φίλον εἶναι.

Plato.

Let the beauty we love be what we do.

There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

Rumi.

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I would like to thank (as strange as it sounds) the examiners of the Cambridge Classical Tripos Part II 2012 Paper, 'The Poetics of Classical Art'. On that paper was a question that planted the seed of an idea—'how important was beauty in Classical art?' I recall opening the exam paper and the question jumping out: I thought it was brilliant, but too difficult, so chose a safer option. While this thesis is not an answer to that question, it can at least claim to lay some important groundwork for a future attempt. Years later, as I considered what might be a good subject for a doctorate, a passing thought about beauty and the gods cropped up. If it had not been for Robin Osborne's encouragement at that point, the seed of an idea planted years before may never have sprung to life.

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NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

I have opted for the Greek spelling of names and words. The exceptions—like ‘Plato’ rather than ‘Platon’, ‘Cyprus’ rather than ‘Kypros’—have been dictated by force of convention. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated. In the catalogue of figures, the source of an image is not identified if the photograph is my own.

Abbreviations follow those listed in the third edition of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

Abbreviations not listed in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*:

DAA: Raubitschek, A.E. 1949, *Dedications of the Athenian Acropolis*, Cambridge MA.

DVA: Lazzarini, M.L. 1976, *Le formule delle dediche votive nella Grecia arcaica*, Rome.

ETCSL: *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* (<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk>), 1998-2006.

LfgrE: Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos.

INTRODUCTION

BEAUTY AND THE GODS FROM HESIOD AND HOMER TO TODAY

In Plutarch's *De Pythiae oraculis*, a group of visitors to Delphi is given a guided tour of votive offerings in the sanctuary.¹ The 'brilliance of the bronze' statues amazes one visitor and sparks a conversation about how Corinthian bronze acquired 'the beauty of its colour' (τῆς χροᾶς... τὸ κάλλος).² Eventually the guides resume their spiel, but are soon interrupted by another conversation prompted by their recitation of an oracle. One of the visitors, Diogenianos, is astonished by 'the lack of quality and the cheapness' (τὴν φαυλότητα καὶ τὴν εὐτέλειαν) of oracular verse:

‘καίτοι μουσηγέτης ὁ θεός, καὶ τῆς λεγομένης λογιότητος οὐχ ἦττον αὐτῷ καλὸν ἢ τῆς περὶ μέλη καὶ ῥῥᾶς εὐφωνίας μετεῖναι, καὶ πολὺ τὸν Ἡσίοδον εὐεπείᾳ καὶ τὸν Ὅμηρον ὑπερφθέγγεσθαι· τοὺς δὲ πολλοὺς τῶν χρησμῶν ὀρώμεν καὶ τοῖς μέτροις καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασι πλημμελείας καὶ φαυλότητος ἀναπεπλησμένους.’

Παρὼν οὖν Ἀθήνηθεν ὁ ποιητὴς Σαραπίων, ‘εἴτ’ ἔφη, ‘ταῦτα τὰ ἔπη τοῦ θεοῦ πιστεύοντες εἶναι τολμῶμεν αὐτὸ πάλιν ὥς λείπεται κάλλει τῶν Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου, λέγειν; οὐ χρησόμεθα

¹ On the dialogue, see Schröder 1990.

² Plut. *De Pyth. or.* 395b-c: ἐθαύμαζε δὲ τοῦ χαλκοῦ τὸ ἀνθηρόν.

τούτοις ὥς ἄριστα καὶ κάλλιστα πεποιημένοι, ἐπανορθούμενοι τὴν αὐτῶν κρίσιν προκατειλημμένην ὑπὸ φαύλης συνηθείας;³

‘But the god is leader of the Muses, and it is right and proper that he should have no less of a claim to eloquence of diction than to the euphony that concerns songs and odes, and he should far outstrip Hesiod and Homer in the excellence of his verse. But we see that most of the oracles are full of both metrical and verbal errors and lack quality.’

The poet Sarapion, present from Athens, replied, ‘then do we believe that these are the god’s verses and yet dare to say that they are inferior in beauty to those of Homer and Hesiod? Should we not rather regard them as the best and most beautiful creations, correcting our judgement which has been skewed by bad habits?’

Diogenianos’ amazement at the inferiority of oracular verse arises from the expectation that what is divine should be best and most beautiful. If the Pythia’s oracles are inspired by Apollo, the leader of the Muses, then why do they fall so obviously short of the pinnacle of human poetry, that of Hesiod and Homer? For Sarapion, this poses a theological problem. Rather than challenge the expectation and ‘dare to say’ that Apollo’s verses are ‘inferior in beauty to those of Hesiod and Homer’, his solution is to turn the problem on its head by suggesting that it is we humans who are at fault:⁴ the god’s verses are in fact ‘the best and most beautiful creations’ and it is our standards of judgement and understanding of beauty that are

³ Ibid. 396d.

⁴ Cf. Pl. *Symp.* 202c.

awry. The god's verse does not display 'a lack of quality' (φαυλότης), we are just incapable of assessing its true merits because our aesthetic standards have been skewed by 'bad habits' (φάυλη συνήθεια).

Sarapion's solution keeps the expectation of divinity's claim to supreme beauty intact. And yet it raises another, perhaps greater, problem about how gods and humans relate. That gods and humans should have such divergent views on what counts as beautiful is potentially unsettling, for it reveals a gulf in their aesthetic sensibilities which calls into question their commensurability and thus humans' capacity to communicate with the gods on whom they depend.⁵ To avoid this and the task of reorienting their entire understanding of beauty, another member of the party, Theon, proposes an alternative solution. No problem, he says, if the Pythia's verses are 'inferior to Homer's', because it is not Apollo but the prophetess who is responsible for the diction, metre and quality of the verses. Apollo only inspires her mind with visions 'and creates a light in her soul as to the future—for this is what inspiration is.'⁶ This solution satisfies every expectation: Apollo is exculpated and keeps his crown of beauty, while the potential discrepancy between divine and human aesthetic standards is conveniently sidestepped.⁷

At its core, this conversation in Delphi is about the relationship between the beautiful and the divine. This relationship has a history in ancient

⁵ On the relationship between divine and human aesthetic sensibilities, see pp. 84-91, 354 below.

⁶ Plut. *De. Pyth, or.* 397c: φῶς ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ποιεῖ πρὸς τὸ μέλλον· ὁ γὰρ ἐνθουσιασμός τοιοῦτόν ἐστι.

⁷ On Plutarch's defence of the Pythia and his religious attitudes, see Brenk 1977; Gallo 1996; Hirsch-Luipold 2005; 2014.

Greece, the earliest relics of which are preserved in those two poets, Hesiod and Homer, who for the members of Plutarch's tour party represent the summit of beauty in human verse. As the recourse to Hesiod and Homer shows, their Archaic cultural heritage is an essential point of reference for these visitors to Delphi in the late first or early second century CE when considering and understanding the relationship between beauty and the gods.⁸ Whether as an explicit touchstone of authority or thanks to its formative role in setting the stage for developments in the Classical period, the Archaic cultural dialogue between the beautiful and the divine resonated through the generations of antiquity and, as we will see, echoes to today.

This dialogue is the subject of this thesis. By examining the textual and archaeological records, it seeks to understand how ideas, representations and experiences of beauty informed Greek relations with the gods in the Archaic period (c.750-480 BCE). This period's pivotal role for later generations of antiquity and its under-representation in scholarship on ancient aesthetics have dictated the study's chronological parameters.⁹ One core aim of the thesis, especially in the first two chapters, is to elucidate the significance of beauty for Archaic conceptions of the divine. The conversation about the Pythia's bad verse springs from an

⁸ Cf. e.g. Philostr. *Imag.* 2.1-3; *Her.* 6.1-7.6; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 12 and *Or.* 21, esp. 16-17. See Platt 2009; Whitmarsh 2009, esp. 225-9; Platt 2011, 1-8, 235-52; Hunter 2018, 79-91. On Second Sophistic authors' engagement with the Archaic and Classical past, see Bowie 1970; Schmitz 1997; 1999; Whitmarsh 2001; Webb 2006; Platt 2011, 215-52. For Homer in the Second Sophistic, see Kindstrand 1973; Zeitlin 2001.

⁹ See pp. 11-15 below. Scholarship on ancient aesthetics has grown steadily in the last decade e.g. Porter 2010; Bychkov and Sheppard 2010; Peponi 2012; Sluiter and Rosen 2012; Konstan 2014; Destrée and Murray 2015a; Porter 2016; Grethlein 2017; Osborne 2018, 249-57.

expectation about the nature of Apollo's divinity that the members of Plutarch's tour party have in common—that what is divine should be most beautiful.¹⁰ This in turn affects how they interpret a defining feature of Apollo's cult—his oracles via the Pythia. Ideas and expectations about the divine conditioned what worshippers valued, how they interacted with the gods and the character of their religious experiences. This explains why Greek theology has a central place in the study of Greek religion and why the first core aim of the thesis is coefficient with its second: to investigate the significance of beauty in different forms and contexts of divine worship in Archaic Greece.¹¹

A prime reason for studying beauty and the gods together, as Plutarch's tour party shows, is their pervasive association in antiquity. Beauty has been one of the main subjects of enquiry in the field of aesthetics since its emergence as an independent academic discipline in the mid eighteenth century CE.¹² Since aesthetics is a modern concept constituted by a diverse range of intellectual pursuits—the philosophy of art, beauty and sensory perception—which do not correspond exactly to ancient conceptual categories or groupings, there are inevitable dangers of anachronism in studying how subjects under the modern umbrella of

¹⁰ Cf. Thales' reputed comment, κάλλιστον κόσμος· ποῖμα γὰρ θεοῦ (Diog. Laert. 1.35).

¹¹ For the place of theology in Classical studies, see Henrichs 2010, 21-2; Eidinow et al. 2016.

¹² Baumgarten's *Aesthetica* (1750)—a term coined from the Greek verb αἰσθάνομαι, 'to perceive'—is taken to mark the beginning of the modern discipline, which was systematically developed by Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (1790). On the history of modern aesthetics, see Tatarkiewicz 1974; Guyer 2003; 2014.

‘aesthetics’ featured in antiquity.¹³ Recognising discrepancies between ancient and modern conceptual categories is therefore essential to avoid false assumptions. Far from being a problem, the simultaneous similarity and difference between ancient and modern aesthetic discourse and practice is itself illuminating, for it casts the cultural contingency of ancient and modern ideas into sharp relief. If this is one great appeal of studying ancient aesthetics, it is still critical to tread carefully by building our enquiries on conceptually firm ground. An important justification, then, for investigating beauty and the gods together is their ubiquitous association in ancient sources. To probe their relationship is to take our cue from categories and ideas which Archaic and later sources present as deeply and meaningfully intertwined.

Understanding how that relationship was expressed and explored in the Archaic period cuts across disciplinary divisions in the study of Graeco-Roman antiquity. Archaic poetry is full of connections between beauty and the gods. We find beautiful deities, like Eros, ‘the most beautiful among the immortal gods’ (κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι), godlike human beauties, like Anchises, ‘in form like the immortals’ (δῆμας ἀθανάτοισιν ἐοικώς) thanks to his ‘beauty from the gods’ (θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος), and beautiful votive offerings, like Hekabe’s ‘most beautiful’ (κάλλιστος) robe for Athena.¹⁴ Archaic poetry is a rich resource for ancient attitudes to beauty and the gods, as the first two chapters of the thesis show. The first considers the representation of the beautiful and the divine in Archaic epic, and the second investigates the significance of beauty in Archaic hymns

¹³ Cf. Bychkov and Sheppard 2010, xi-xiv; Destrée and Murray 2015b, 1-5.

¹⁴ Hes. *Theog.* 120; *Hom. Hy.* 5.55, 77; *Hom. Il.* 6.294.

and other forms of musical performance for the gods. More than that, Archaic poetry is essential in revealing ways of perceiving the world and a conceptual terminology for beauty which are foreign to our own. As explored later in this introduction, sensitivity to how beauty is expressed in Greek is fundamental for any enquiry into ancient Greek ideas about beauty.

These were not just a textual phenomenon, however. What texts illuminate are the aesthetic ideas, values and expectations which informed both how worshippers communicated with the gods—with, say, animal and vegetal sacrifices, musical performances and physical votives—and how they perceived the physical environments of worship. To complement and enrich this picture, the archaeological record preserves evidence of what people did, offered and perceived in those environments of worship, like the temples that came to dominate the visual landscapes of sanctuaries, and the votive objects of all sorts and sizes that accumulated in them. It is only by bringing the textual and archaeological evidence together that the extent and significance of the Archaic cultural dialogue between the beautiful and the divine can be registered and understood. In many cases, this is precisely what the ancient material itself invites: as discussed in chapter four, for example, numerous objects dedicated in sanctuaries were accompanied by inscriptions describing the votive as a ‘beautiful object of delight’ (καλὸν ἄγαλμα) for the god.¹⁵

The opening conversation in Plutarch’s *De Pythiae oraculis* foregrounds the importance of ideas and experiences of beauty for the material culture

¹⁵ E.g. *CEG* 125; 205; 285; 291; 302; 303; 311; 334; 335; 363; etc. See Lazzarini 1976, 98; Day 2010, 104; pp. 286-306 below.

of Greek sanctuaries. Diogenianos' 'wonder' (ἐθαύμαζε) at the 'brilliance of the bronze' and the ensuing discussion about the 'beauty' (κάλλος) of Corinthian bronze introduce Apollo's sacred precinct as a place of heightened aesthetic interest, containing objects explicitly prized for their beauty.¹⁶ The tour party's interest in qualities and questions concerning beauty, whether directed at physical votives or the Pythia's verse, is a defining feature of their experience of Delphi as a sacred site in the first half of the dialogue. That Greek sanctuaries were places marked out by their beauty is a recurrent idea in literary sources. In Classical and Hellenistic texts, it becomes common to describe a *temenos* as a κόσμος, an 'ornament' or 'adornment' that enhances physical attractiveness, like the elaborate jewellery and clothing that is Hera's κόσμος before her seduction of Zeus.¹⁷ As a κόσμος, the sanctuary is upheld as a jewel adorning the landscape, enhancing the beauty of its local environment. This association and attitude evolved over time, inextricably linked to changes in what people did and how they interacted with the gods in sanctuaries which had profound effects on their visual and physical character. In other words, the idea that these were places of aesthetic appeal, as Plutarch's tour party suggests, is tied to a history of changes in the material culture of Greek sanctuaries, to which their archaeological remains bear eloquent witness.

¹⁶ Plut. *De Pyth, or.* 395b-c.

¹⁷ Hom. *Il.* 14.187. For *kosmos* as 'ornament'/'adornment', see Hom. *Il.* 4.141-5; Hom. *Hy.* 5.65, 162; *Hy.* 27.17; *Hy.* 32.4; Sapph. fr. 98a.3; Pind. fr. 194.1-3 etc. For sanctuaries as *kosmos*, see Pl. *Leg.* 6.761b-c; *Hesp. Suppl.* 15, no. 16.5-9, 14-18; *I. Eleusis* 93; *SEG* 25.226.40-2; Mikalson 2016, 260. Cf. Herod. *Mim.* 4.

From the second half of the eighth century BCE to the end of the sixth, sanctuaries underwent perhaps their most radical period of transformation in all Greek history.¹⁸ Above all, this was owed to changes in sacred architecture and other dedicatory habits. I say ‘other dedicatory habits’ because buildings in sacred precincts were themselves gifts to the gods like the objects big, small, precious and humble which worshippers dedicated with increasing frequency from the eighth century onwards.¹⁹ The importance of temples and their development for understanding Greek relations with the divine have been too often ignored in the study of Greek religion.²⁰ In their size, longevity, required resources and varied effects on sanctuaries, temples were the most significant gifts Greeks ever gave their gods.

Accordingly, Archaic developments in temple architecture and whether, how and why they had anything to do with Archaic ideas and experiences of beauty are the focus of the third and biggest chapter of the thesis. That those developments have profoundly affected the history of modern Western architecture and its conceptions of beauty is beyond question. The canonical features of Greek temples took shape in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE—their columns, pediments, decoration and rectilinear design. These features have been so heavily idealised in the modern era that they have exercised an enduring impact, readily visible today, on the

¹⁸ See e.g. Snodgrass 1980, esp. 15-84; De Polignac 1984; Morgan 1990; Alcock and Osborne 1994; Osborne 1996, 88-103, 202-14; Mazarakis Ainian 1997; Spawforth 2006; Marconi 2007; Scott 2010; Mazarakis Ainian 2017.

¹⁹ For temples as gifts to the gods, see Burkert 1988; Wilson Jones 2014.

²⁰ Some exceptions: Burkert 1988; Osborne 1996, 88-103, 202-14; Mazarakis Ainian 1997; Marconi 2004; 2007; Spawforth 2006; Wescoat and Ousterhout 2012; Scott 2016.

architectural face of the Western world.²¹ Whether changes in Archaic temples had anything to do with beauty for the people who commissioned, made and used them therefore has an immediate bearing on understanding the architectural world in which we ourselves live.

If temples were the biggest gifts to the gods, the objects dedicated in and around them, from small cooking utensils to statues like those that inspire Diogenianos' wonder, are the most numerous and diverse relics of human interaction with the gods surviving from antiquity.²² The fourth and final chapter investigates the significance of beauty for all kinds of objects given to the gods in sanctuaries, marshalling the archaeological remains of votives alongside the evidence of Archaic inscriptions and poetry to shed light on the values and intentions of dedicators.

Since the eighteenth century, a predominant idea about beauty has been that its perception and value are disinterested: that beauty need not or perhaps should not have anything to do with an object's function, but rather remain untouched by any social, political, economic, ethical or religious interests that might compromise beauty's pure autonomy.²³ What Archaic poetry, epigraphy, temples and votive objects suggest is that this

²¹ See e.g. Stuart and Revett 1750/1751; Le Roy 1758; Gerard 1759; Stuart and Revett [1762] 2007; Quatremère de Quincy 1788; Gordon 1822; Gwilt 1825. On the reception of Greek architecture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Honour 1968; Constantine 1984; Etienne and Etienne 1992; Jenkins 1995; Soros 2006; Toman 2011; Armstrong 2012; Ruprecht 2014.

²² For general studies of Greek votive practice, see Rouse 1902; Van Straten 1981; Prêtre 2009; Patera 2012.

²³ For the emergence of this idea—notably, in the essays of Joseph Addison and the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, then most influentially in Kant [1790] 2000, esp. 111-16—through the secularisation of theological principles and particular historical conditions in the eighteenth century, see Stolnitz 1961-2; Abrams 1989, 62-4, 135-87; Prettejohn 2005. On the idea's significance for ancient aesthetics, see Porter 2010a; Tanner 2010, esp. 281-2; Destrée and Murray 2015b, 2-4.

could not be further from the case for Archaic Greece. The perception, value and experience of beauty appear intrinsic to the social, political, economic, ethical and religious interests and purposes behind the manufacture and reception of temples and other votives. These buildings and objects were made and dedicated to do things—to please and honour their divine recipients, for example, and stake claims to social and political prestige. Far from disinterested, it emerges that beauty was valued precisely because of its agency, its power to make things happen and fulfil the purposes for which temples and other votives were made. It is for this reason that ideas about beauty were an important driver of change in the nature and complexion of sanctuaries in the Archaic period. In turn, the development of Archaic sacred architecture and the accumulation in sanctuaries of objects prized for their beauty significantly affected the evolving character of human relations with the gods, shaping new expectations about the nature of sacred experience in major sanctuaries which had lasting consequences, as Plutarch's tour party suggests, long after the Archaic period.

Historical beauty: the modern legacy and Archaic roots of Plato's beauty

The broad scope of the thesis has been guided by the wide reach and significance of the relationship between beauty and the gods in different aspects of Archaic Greek culture. The thesis does not claim or aspire to be comprehensive on this question, but to explore some important lines of enquiry and encourage research into other areas and periods which

engage with ancient attitudes to the beautiful and the divine.²⁴ The range of material discussed also reflects a general underlying argument about the study of beauty in antiquity. The vast majority of modern scholarship on beauty in Classical antiquity has concentrated on Plato and later thinkers like Plotinos and Augustine who were influenced by him.²⁵ And with good reason. First, their reflections on beauty are of intrinsic merit for their insights into a subject of fundamental importance to our common humanity. And second, the impact of their theories can hardly be over-exaggerated, on everything from ancient pagan aesthetics to late antique, medieval and modern Christian theology, from the Islamic theology of Avicenna in the eleventh century to the recent revival of beauty in art historical discourse in the twenty-first century.²⁶ Nehamas' *Only A Promise of a Happiness*, for instance, is one of the most important publications in recent years to advocate, as the book's subtitle says, 'the place of beauty in a world of art', following modernism's denunciation of that place in the twentieth century.²⁷ It is not for nothing that Nehamas begins with Plato and Plotinos, in particular, the latter's comment that all beautiful things produce 'awe and a shock of delight, passionate longing, love and a

²⁴ For the importance of aesthetics in Classical Athenian religion, see Mikalson 2016, 249-63.

²⁵ E.g. Warry 1962; Tscholl 1967; Moravcsik and Tempo 1982; Ferrari 1987, 140-9; Harrison 1992; Redding 1997; Fontanier 1998; Janaway 1998; Liminta 1998; Stern-Gillet 2000; Fistioc 2002; Lear 2006; Olejniczak Lobsien and Olk 2007; Hyland 2008; Denham 2012.

²⁶ On Avicenna's adaptation of Neoplatonic and Aristotelian ideas in formulating his Islamic theological aesthetics, see Abolghassemi 2018. For the postmodern revival of beauty, see Mothersill 1984; Scarry 1999; Brand 2000; Steiner 2002; Prettejohn 2005; Scruton 2011.

²⁷ Nehamas 2007. Barnett Newman famously encapsulated modernism's hostile stance: 'the impulse of modern art was to destroy beauty' (Newman 1948, 51). See Steiner 2002; Danto 2003.

shudder of rapture'.²⁸ As Nehamas points out, Plotinos is deliberately alluding to a passage in Plato's *Phaidros* where Sokrates describes the intense experience of beauty.²⁹ The passage's 'risky language of passion' gives Nehamas his cue in contrasting ancient, and above all, Plato's conceptions of beauty with their modern counterparts in the work of Kant, Schopenhauer and Bell which have oriented modern attitudes to beauty and the arts.³⁰

Plato's views on beauty, therefore, continue to shape the debate about beauty to this day and deserve all the scholarly attention they receive. Plato did not invent beauty for the Greeks, however, even if this is the impression gained from the copious literature on Platonic beauty compared with the under-representation of attitudes to beauty before Plato.³¹ On the one hand, this echoes the fact that his works represent the earliest substantial, extant philosophical enquiries into beauty. On the other, it gives the misleading impression that deep engagement with ideas about beauty barely existed in the Archaic period preceding Plato. Of course they did, however, not least in Homer to whom Plato was so indebted, as ancient commentators repeatedly emphasised; according to Longinus, who also drew heavily on Homer in articulating his views on the

²⁸ Nehamas 2007, 1; Plotinus, *Enn.* I.6.4.

²⁹ Nehamas 2007, 2; Pl. *Phdr.* 251a-252a.

³⁰ Nehamas 2007, 2-13. Cf. Mothersill 1984, 1, 262, 272-4.

³¹ Surveys of beauty and other aesthetic topics in antiquity often launch off with Plato: e.g. Pappas 1998; Ross 1998; Gaut and Lopes 2001; Faas 2002; Büttner 2006.

sublime, Plato was ‘most Homeric’.³² Indeed, Homer has a fair claim to be among the richest and most influential sources for ancient attitudes to beauty and other traditional topics of aesthetic enquiry and practice, thereby occupying a privileged position in the history of ancient and modern aesthetics.³³ It is this that Ingres’ painting of *The Apotheosis of Homer* (1827) duly recognises: great figures of ancient and modern times—from Sappho to Mozart, Sophokles to Shakespeare, Pheidias to Michelangelo—pay homage to Homer, enthroned before an Ionic temple and crowned by a winged Nike.³⁴

Literary evidence for deep engagement with ideas about beauty is as old as Greek literature itself. Rather than a lack of evidence, it is disciplinary biases that explain why the Archaic period has been under-represented in modern scholarship on beauty in antiquity. Since it has become a canonical subject in the modern philosophical discipline of aesthetics, the tendency has been to leave beauty (like Plato) to the philosophers.³⁵ Beauty was not the exclusive concern of ancient philosophers, however, nor should ancient attitudes to beauty be the exclusive quarry of those who study ancient philosophy.

On the contrary, an underlying argument of this thesis is that ancient ideas, representations and experiences of beauty are of vital *historical*

³² [Longinus]. *Subl.* 13.3: ‘Ὅμηρικώτατος. Cf. Procl. *In R.* I 171.10-17 (Kroll). On Plato’s Homer, see Weinstock 1927; Hunter 2012, 38-108; Hunter 2018, *passim*. For Longinus *On the Sublime*, see Russell 1964; Mazzucchi 1992; Porter 2016. For the influence of Longinus on Romantic theory and aesthetics, see Abrams 1953, esp. 70-2.

³³ On beauty in Homer, see Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

³⁴ Cf. the famous Hellenistic relief in the British Museum for an ancient Greek vision of Homer’s apotheosis; Pollitt 1986, 16; Hunter 2018, 2-3. Cf. Porter 2004.

³⁵ Cf. Hunter 2012, 10.

significance. One reason for this is the way they permeate many of the central concerns and values in Archaic Greek communities: the ideals of the young, the nature of ageing, the qualities of the good life and the relationship between gods and humans. Aesthetic values and experiences were (and are) part of the texture of everyday life.³⁶ If the ‘beautiful’ furniture and tableware of Homeric gods and heroes represent an imagined ideal, Xenophon’s exclamations about the beautiful, orderly appearance of household wares show that they had their counterparts in the domestic realities of daily life.³⁷ Their everyday presence and inseparability from other social concerns and values meant that ideas, representations and experiences of beauty could have a powerful historical effect.³⁸ Put plainly, they influenced and underpinned how and why people acted the way they did—a point amply demonstrated, for example, by Archaic dedicatory inscriptions which underline the beauty of the votive for the god.³⁹ As chapters three and four aim to show, the same applies to broader changes in the material culture of sanctuaries in the Archaic period. The question of beauty, then, has direct bearing on many different aspects of Archaic (and later) Greek culture, for in essence this is a question of how people perceived their world, what they valued and how those perceptions and values affected people’s changing patterns of behaviour and understanding of different aspects of life.

³⁶ On everyday aesthetics, see Dewey [1934] 1980; Saito 2007; Scruton 2011, 67-81; Porter 2012.

³⁷ E.g. Hom. *Od.* 1.136-40; 4.52-8; 10.347-67; Xen. *Oec.* 8.19-21.

³⁸ Cf. Dewey [1934] 1980, 326: ‘Esthetic experience is a manifestation, a record and celebration of the life of a civilization, a means of promoting its development’.

³⁹ See pp. 286-306 below.

If understanding ancient ideas of beauty deserves a central place not just in philosophy but in historical enquiry, it also stands to reason that ancient philosophical reflections on beauty are both rooted in particular historical conditions and have effects far beyond the confines of the philosophical academy. Plato's discourse on beauty and love in the *Phaidros* is a salient example. During the Second Sophistic, few texts could compete with the *Phaidros* for prominence on the Hellenic 'cultural syllabus' of paideia, offering both pagan intellectuals like Plutarch and early Christians like Clement of Alexandria a favoured point of reference for fashioning their ideas.⁴⁰ The *Phaidros*' portrait of the soul as a charioteer gave Clement a means to convey 'the whole of Christian theology, from Man's Fall to his restoration by grace'.⁴¹ From Plotinos to Augustine, Spenser to Wordsworth and Heidegger to Nehamas, the presentation of beauty in the *Phaidros* has echoed through the generations from antiquity to today.⁴² Perhaps the most influential aspect of this and Plato's understanding of beauty in general has been the idea that the perception of beauty is revelatory: that it points to something beyond itself and has a transcendent power to lead us to higher realities.⁴³

Although the impact and legacy of Plato's aesthetic theories are well known, their cultural and historical background have received far less

⁴⁰ Trapp 1990; for Plutarch's Plato, see Hunter 2012, 185-222.

⁴¹ Daniélou 1973, ii. Cf. Butterworth 1916.

⁴² Yunis 2011, 25-30.

⁴³ It is this Platonic idea that underpins Plotinos' Neoplatonic aesthetic theories, and via him, Augustine's views on the revelatory and transcendent power of beauty in Christian theology. See Tscholl 1967; Harrison 1992; Fontanier 1998; Stern-Gillet 2000; Olejniczak Lobsien and Olk 2007; Bychkov 2010. For the pertinence of Plato's transcendental aesthetics for modern aestheticians (notably Kant), see Redding 1997; Fistioc 2002.

attention. Plato's vision of beauty, however, did not emerge from a vacuum: it was rooted in a cultural dialogue between the beautiful and the divine which is both discernible in the earliest Greek literature and which continues to resonate today thanks to Plato's enduring influence. On his attitudes to beauty, scholars tend to see Plato as marking a radical break with precedent. This is in many ways true, as Porter has shown: the formalism and idealism enshrined by Plato and Aristotle represented an important change from the emphasis on matter and sensation characteristic of earlier aesthetic thought and enquiry.⁴⁴ Moravcsik also sees a 'thoroughgoing rift between Plato and the Greek culture of his predecessors', arguing that his 'conception of beauty, as a notion leading us away from itself, did not correspond to the popular conception of beauty at Plato's time'.⁴⁵

But for all that Plato's take on beauty was radical and innovative, an important part of its brilliance was the way that he played on and repurposed familiar aesthetic ideas and expectations. On one level, Plato's view that beauty has a transcendent power leading us away from itself was alien to some popular conceptions of beauty. The simple love and enjoyment of beautiful things that Perikles lauds in the Funeral Oration is no doubt mainstream.⁴⁶ On another level, however, Plato's understanding of beauty and its revelatory potential were the fruit of an Archaic cultural heritage of ideas, values and practices in which beauty and the gods were bound together like two strands of a double helix.

⁴⁴ Porter 2010, esp. 1-21, 83-95.

⁴⁵ Moravcsik 1982, 43.

⁴⁶ Thuc. 2.38-40. Moravcsik 1982, 40.

Perhaps the most often cited passage of the *Phaidros*, in ancient and modern times, is Sokrates' palinode, a hymn that addresses and praises the deity Eros.⁴⁷ Here Sokrates presents a metaphorical account of the lives of immortal souls, which all humans possess. The human soul is envisaged as a winged chariot with a charioteer and two horses, like the souls of gods, whose company human souls enjoy before they descend to earth and are conjoined with mortal bodies. In their prenatal, incorporeal existence among the souls of the gods, human souls ascend to the vault of heaven, from which they glimpse the super-heavenly realm where true Being and the Forms reside in perpetuity. 'Gazing upon truth' and contemplating absolute Justice, Moderation, Beauty and the other Forms nourishes the soul and constitutes the pinnacle of its existence.⁴⁸ Thanks to the love that comes from Eros, the human soul can regain the wings that it lost when it entered a mortal body. The experience of love, which appears inseparable from beauty, therefore has the power to begin an ascent back to the higher rungs of reality.

A striking feature of Sokrates' palinode is the way that it draws on ideas and experiences from religious life.⁴⁹ The ascent of the soul, the vision of the Form of beauty and the earthly experience of love and beauty are couched in theological and religious terms that reflect Plato's Archaic cultural heritage. In their chariots, human souls ascend to the super-heavenly realm following in the train of one of the Olympian gods.⁵⁰ Those

⁴⁷ Pl. *Phdr.* 243e7-257b6. See Trapp 1990; Yunis 2011, 25-30.

⁴⁸ Pl. *Phdr.* 247d.

⁴⁹ For Plato's engagement with Greek religion, see Morgan 1990; 1992; Nightingale 2004.

⁵⁰ Pl. *Phdr.* 246e-247a, 248a-c.

human souls who ‘best follow and are most like [their] god’ enjoy the best view of the Forms.⁵¹ This idea of divine likeness becomes prominent later in defining who humans find beautiful and how they treat them: followers of Zeus desire their beloveds to be like Zeus, followers of Hera desire their beloveds to be like Hera, and so all humans seek a beloved ‘whose nature accords with that of the god... [and] by imitating the god themselves... they lead the beloved to the conduct and nature of the god’.⁵² If the image of the chariot of the gods is familiar from Archaic poetry, especially Homer, the theology of likeness that structures Sokrates’ discourse on beauty and love also has a rich Archaic pedigree.⁵³

In Archaic poetry, the notion of likeness is central to how gods and humans relate. Odysseus is Athena’s favourite, for example, because of the craftiness and resourcefulness they share. Similarly, Helen’s exceptional beauty and seductive power engenders a peculiar intimacy with Aphrodite.⁵⁴ But it is also no surprise to find Plato using this theology of likeness to frame his views on beauty in particular. That beauty assimilates humans to gods is a pervasive theme: when Odysseus ‘glistens with beauty and grace’ (κάλλει καὶ χάρισι στίλβων), ‘he looks like the gods’ (θεοῖσιν ἔοικε).⁵⁵ As Aphrodite observes, the surpassing beauty of the Trojans—like Ganymede, Tithonos and Anchises—makes

⁵¹ Pl. *Phdr.* 248a.

⁵² Pl. *Phdr.* 253b-c. Cf. Pl. *Tht.* 176b1-2.

⁵³ On the Homeric imagery of the soul as charioteer, see Procl. *In R.* I 166.24-6 (Kroll); Hunter 2012, 40.

⁵⁴ See esp. Hom. *Od.* 13.288-300; *Il.* 3.413-17. On this aspect of Homeric theology, see Furley 2010, 162-6.

⁵⁵ Hom. *Od.* 6.237, 243.

them ‘most like the gods in looks and form of all mortals’.⁵⁶ Looking like the gods in their beauty was also a paradigm for different forms of ritual communication with the gods, as chapters two and four will show: in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, it is thanks to their ‘beauty’ (χάρις) that the Ionians on Delos appear ‘immortal and ageless’ like gods as they revere Apollo with boxing, dance and song.⁵⁷ The idea of divine likeness in the palinode shows Plato drawing upon a traditional element of popular theology to construct a vision of beauty which is nonetheless radically new:⁵⁸ the orderliness of his Olympians, who keep to their proper activities, and the spectacle of absolute beauty in a super-heavenly realm are very much his own.⁵⁹

It is also telling how that spectacle of ‘beauty radiant to behold’ (κάλλος... ἰδεῖν λαμπρόν) is described.⁶⁰ By referring to the ‘most blessed of mysteries’ and the *epopteia*, the highest grade of initiation at the Eleusinian mysteries, Plato uses the terminology of mystery cult to describe the soul’s perception of absolute beauty, as he does through Diotima in the *Symposium*.⁶¹ The language of mystery cult provides Plato with a framework for presenting his eccentric views on beauty in terms familiar and comprehensible from the experience of a particular cult. The

⁵⁶ *Hom. Hy.* 5.200-1: ἀγχίθιοι δὲ μάλιστα καταθνητῶν... εἰδός τε φυήν τε.

⁵⁷ *Hom. Hy.* 3.147-55.

⁵⁸ The same is true of the fortunate human who contemplates absolute beauty at *Pl. Symp.* 212a: he is ‘dear to the gods and is, above all men, immortal’.

⁵⁹ Cf. Hunter 2012, 40 on Plato’s Olympians.

⁶⁰ *Pl. Phdr.* 250b.

⁶¹ *Pl. Phdr.* 250b-c: τῶν τελετῶν... μακαριωτάτην. On Plato’s use of the terminology of mystery cult, see Riedweg 1987, 1-69; Yunis 2011, 149-50; Hunter 2004a, 92.

same is true in a more general way throughout the palinode as allusions to common ideas about the gods and aspects of cult life appear vital to Plato's conception of beauty. The famous passage describing the experience of earthly beauty—echoed by Plotinos and cited by Nehamas as foil to modern conceptions of beauty—is a fine example:

ὁ δὲ ἀρτιτελής, ὁ τῶν τότε πολυθεάμων, ὅταν θεοειδὲς πρόσωπον ἴδῃ κάλλος εὖ μεμιμημένον ἢ τινα σώματος ἰδέαν, πρῶτον μὲν ἔφριξεν καὶ τι τῶν τότε ὑπῆλθεν αὐτὸν δειμάτων, εἶτα προσορῶν ὡς θεὸν σέβεται, καὶ εἰ μὴ ᾽δεδίει τὴν τῆς σφόδρα μανίας δόξαν, θύοι ἂν ὡς ἀγάλματι καὶ θεῷ τοῖς παιδικοῖς. ἰδόντα δ' αὐτὸν οἶον ἐκ τῆς φρίκης μεταβολή τε καὶ ἰδρῶς καὶ θερμότης ἀήθης λαμβάνει.⁶²

'But for the newly-initiated, who previously saw many of those realities, when he sees a godlike face or body shape that imitates beauty well, first he shudders and something of those former fears come over him. Then as he looks, he reveres the beautiful one like a god, and if he did not fear to be considered utterly mad, he would sacrifice to his beloved as to a statue and a god. As he looks at him, a change from the shuddering comes over him, with sweat and an unusual heat.'

It is not just that the paradigm of beauty is someone 'godlike in appearance' (θεοειδής), invoking an idea already well-entrenched in

⁶² Pl. *Phdr.* 251a-b.

Homer that gods are supremely beautiful.⁶³ The important point is that the experience of beauty is understood above all in religious terms, conveyed according to common expectations about how humans interact with gods. The ‘shudder’ and ‘former fears’ recall the primordial vision of true beauty which the beholder’s soul witnessed and which this ‘godlike’ youth ‘imitates well’.⁶⁴ If recollection of true beauty through perception of its earthly imitations is a peculiarly Platonic concept, fear upon seeing a ‘godlike face’ is in fact entirely familiar from Archaic narratives of divine epiphany.⁶⁵ Anchises ‘was afraid’ (τάρβησέν), for example, when he saw ‘the immortal beauty’ (κάλλος... ἄμβροτον) of Aphrodite.⁶⁶ Similarly, Metaneira feels ‘reverence, awe and pale fear’ (αἰδώς τε σέβας τε ἰδὲ χλωρόν δέος) at the sight of Demeter in her doorway, just as Plato’s protagonist ‘reveres [σέβεται] the beautiful one like a god’.⁶⁷ Archaic temples, which framed encounters with the gods in cult, often appealed to and reinforced this association with their fearsome imagery, as chapter three argues. How Plato’s beholder responds to beauty is inextricable from deep-rooted religious expectations. What it moves him to do, moreover—to ‘sacrifice to his beloved as to a statue and a god’—makes another direct link between the experience of extraordinary beauty and standard religious

⁶³ See chapter 1.

⁶⁴ Yunis 2011, 152.

⁶⁵ See pp. 55-77 below.

⁶⁶ *Hom. Hy.* 5.174-82.

⁶⁷ *Hom. Hy.* 2.190.

practice.⁶⁸ Anchises reacts a similar way when Aphrodite first appears to him disguised as a maiden, before she reveals her divinity: assuming that the beautiful maiden is a goddess, he vows to build her an altar and make ‘fine offerings’ (ἱερὰ καλά).⁶⁹

Unlike Plato’s allusions to Sappho when he describes the lover’s ‘shuddering’, ‘sweat’ and ‘heat’, the connections adduced in this passage with other Archaic texts are not products of deliberate intertextuality.⁷⁰ Rather, they are the product of common, deeply ingrained cultural expectations about the relationship between the beautiful and the divine which informed Plato’s portrayal of earthly beauty in Sokrates’ speech. How Plato frames Sokrates’ speech is also instructive in this regard. The speech takes the form of a hymn to Eros, which Sokrates says he has offered ‘as beautifully and well’ (καλλίστη καὶ ἀρίστη) as he could, in the hope of inspiring the god’s ‘pleasure’ (χάρις).⁷¹ The importance of beauty in pleasing the gods with hymns and other musical performances is instantiated from the earliest literary record, as when the Achaians sing the ‘beautiful paian’ (καλὸν... παιήονα) to please and persuade Apollo to avert the plague in *Iliad* 1.⁷² Both the content of Sokrates’ speech and its

⁶⁸ Cf. Pl. *Chrm.* 154b-d: ἐκεῖνος ἐμοὶ θαυμαστὸς ἐφάνη τό τε μέγεθος καὶ τὸ κάλλος...πάντες ὥσπερ ἄγαλμα ἐθεῶντο αὐτόν. On sacrifice and divine images in Greek religion, see Romano 1980; Burkert 1983; Vernant and Detienne 1989; Alroth 1992; Van Straten 1995; Scheer 2000; 2015; Steiner 2001; Gaifman 2006; 2012; Mylonopoulos 2010; Platt 2011; Faraone and Naiden 2012; Naiden 2013; 2015; Osborne 2016.

⁶⁹ *Hom. Hy.* 5.81-105.

⁷⁰ Cf. Sapph. fr. 31; Yunis 2011, 152. For the early reception of Sappho, see Yatromanolakis 2007.

⁷¹ Pl. *Phdr.* 257a.

⁷² *Hom. Il.* 1.473. See chapter 2.

very form within the narrative therefore underscore Plato's deep debt to his Archaic cultural and religious heritage in formulating his views on beauty.

Just as Plato appropriated the religious terminology of *theoria* in defining his philosophical project, his views on beauty draw on ideas, values and practices long familiar from religious life to envision a radically new aesthetic theory.⁷³ The revelatory aspect of this theory, that beautiful things can lead to something above and beyond themselves—the realm of the eternal Forms—is a watershed in the history of ancient and modern aesthetics.⁷⁴ This too, however, is a case of Plato refashioning a deep-rooted idea to revolutionary new ends: the idea, which this thesis seeks to illuminate, that beauty can provide access to the divine. Archaic poetry is full of cases where beauty signifies divine presence or agency.⁷⁵ Anchises assumes the maiden before him is divine because of her beauty, just as Priam takes a helpful wayfarer's handsome looks as reassurance that the gods are on his side.⁷⁶ In the natural world, beauty can reveal divine activity 'behind the scenes': it is no coincidence that it was 'under a beautiful plane tree where delightful water flowed' that 'there a great sign' from the gods appeared to the Greeks at Aulis.⁷⁷ Such examples showcase beauty's revelatory power, its capacity to signal the agency or presence of gods who normally remain invisible. The experience of beauty

⁷³ On Plato's appropriation of *theoria*, see Nightingale 2004.

⁷⁴ See n. 42 above.

⁷⁵ See pp. 55-77 below.

⁷⁶ *Hom. Hy.* 5.81-98; *Hom. Il.* 24.348, 374-7.

⁷⁷ *Hom. Il.* 2.307-8: καλῇ ὑπὸ πλατανίστῳ ὅθεν ῥέεν ἀγλαὸν ὕδωρ | ἔνθ' ἐφάνη μέγα σῆμα. Cf. *Pl. Phdr.* 230b for Plato's allusion to this scene. Cf. *Hom. Il.* 14.346-5; *Od.* 5.59-74; *Hom. Hy.* 1.9-14; *Hy.* 3.135-9; *Hy.* 19.25-6; Simon. 519 (fr. 32).

in cult worship might also assume a transcendent guise, as suggested by Plato's echoes of the Eleusinian mysteries when describing the Form of beauty. More broadly, the idea appears in connection with different forms and contexts of ritual worship that the experience of beauty has the power to put human worshippers, in Strabo's words about the beauty of *mousike*, 'in touch with the divine'.⁷⁸ Part of the brilliance of Plato's conception of beauty was to take an idea of time-honoured religious pedigree—that beauty can provide access to the divine—and set it to new philosophical end—that beauty can provide access, if managed wisely, to the realm of the eternal Forms and true Being, and thus be a vehicle for the soul's progress. If Plato's views on beauty still resonate in aesthetic discourse today, then so too does the Archaic cultural dialectic between beauty and the gods.

The terminology for beauty in Greek

Studies of how beauty is expressed in Greek have concentrated almost exclusively on the adjective *καλός*, though Konstan's work has brought its cognate noun *κάλλος* into the picture.⁷⁹ As the foregoing discussion implies, however, the Greek terminology for beauty was far from limited to a single semantic family. What we find is a diverse collection of terms and phrases which share conceptual common-ground and are used to express

⁷⁸ Strabo 10.3.9; see chapter 2.

⁷⁹ Konstan 2014; 2015a; 2015b. On *καλός*, see *Lfgre*: s.v. *καλός*; Dover 1978, 15-16, 69; Janaway 1998, 58-79; Barney 2010; Irwin 2010; Kosman 2010; Lear 2010; Konstan 2014, *passim*; Shakeshaft (forthcoming). A notable exception is Maupai 2003 who identifies multiple terms for beauty in the Roman Imperial period.

beauty in nuanced ways. To develop a well-rounded understanding of Greek attitudes to beauty, it is essential to interrogate how these terms and phrases relate to one another and with our own ideas about beauty. What follows is not an exhaustive or detailed study of this rich terminology, but simply intended to introduce some key terms, phrases and methodological considerations.⁸⁰ Analysis of particular terms and phrases appears at appropriate points throughout the thesis.

As perhaps the most common method of expressing beauty in Greek, there are good reasons for the concentration on καλός. The adjective is applied to everything from people and songs to buildings and natural phenomena. In many cases, 'beautiful' is an apt translation of καλός in denoting a general, attractive aspect of appearance common to such a broad spectrum of visual and audible objects. The same applies to the cognate adjective περικαλλής which intensifies the meaning of καλός and can be rendered as 'very beautiful' or 'exquisite' in each case. Significantly, however, καλός also shades towards meaning 'good': 'it is *kalos* to do this', for instance, is a standard way of saying it is 'good' or 'appropriate' to do this. While this use of καλός in abstract expressions already appears in Homer, the moral connotations of the term become more prominent during the Archaic period.⁸¹ By Plato's day, the adjective might variously mean 'beautiful', 'admirable', 'fine', 'noble', 'good'.⁸²

⁸⁰ For detailed analysis of Homer's terminology for beauty, see Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

⁸¹ E.g. Hom. *Il.* 21.440; *Od.* 3.69-70; Sapph. fr. 50. See Konstan 2014, 43-50.

⁸² Janaway 1998, 58-79; Barney 2010.

This foregrounds two important points. First, the Greek terminology for beauty was not static because the meanings and nuances of words evolved. In Homer, the noun κάλλος refers with one exception to anthropomorphic appearance and, as Konstan points out, is strongly associated with desire: it unambiguously signifies ‘beauty’ in the narrow sense of desirable physical appearance.⁸³ During the Archaic and Classical periods, the word’s range of application expanded, coming to denote the ‘beauty’ of many things—people, cities, artworks, and for Plato, the Form of beauty itself.⁸⁴ New words might also enter the terminology for beauty: in Hesiod and Homer, the noun ὥρα principally refers to any fixed period of time, like a ‘season’ or ‘time’ of day, having not yet acquired the sense of ‘youthful beauty’ that appears in the Classical period.⁸⁵

That the terminology for beauty developed over time underlines the importance of the second point: attentiveness to context and contingency in determining ‘the shade, the fine distinction’ of semantic and aesthetic meaning.⁸⁶ The development and semantic breadth of καλός, for example, which subsumes and surpasses the range of the English word *beautiful*, indicate that any attempt to pin it down to a one word translation will not suffice. Different contexts of use trigger different meanings; if in one context καλός means ‘good’ and in another ‘beautiful’, what this shows is that its range of signification does not correspond exactly with

⁸³ Konstan 2014. The exception: Hom. *Il.* 23.741-3. Cf. e.g. Hom. *Il.* 13.428-33; 20.233-35; *Od.* 11.281-82; 15.251.

⁸⁴ Konstan 2014, 35-61, 97-108. Pl. *Phdr.* 250b.

⁸⁵ Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 10.104; Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.22; Pl. *Leg.* 837b; Aeschin. 1.134.

⁸⁶ The quote is from Arnold 1862, 11. On the importance of sensitivity to semantics when analysing foreign notions of beauty, see Sartwell 2004.

our word *beautiful*, not that they are altogether different. The same applies to the relationship between practically all ancient Greek words and their various equivalents in all other languages. There is not one Greek word for ‘beauty’ and one for ‘beautiful’ but a cluster of terms which are conceptually interconnected and which relate in various ways to our words *beauty* and *beautiful*. Sensitivity to context—literary, thematic, generic, cultural and historical—is vital in clarifying the aesthetic nuances of the many different terms and phrases to express beauty in Greek.

Besides καλός and κάλλος, the noun χάρις and its adjective χαρίεις might also mean ‘beauty’ and ‘beautiful’.⁸⁷ χάρις has two essential spheres of meaning. On the one hand, it refers to an ideal of social reciprocity, of ‘pleasure’ from favours given and received.⁸⁸ On the other, it denotes a property possessed by people, objects and immaterial things that attracts, charms and pleases. In this sense, χάρις approximates the modern notion of *beauty* and is closely related to κάλλος. The two nouns sometimes appear interchangeable as words for ‘beauty’: when Athena beautifies Odysseus by pouring χάρις on him in *Odyssey* 6, the result is that he ‘glistens with *kallos* and *charis*’.⁸⁹ ‘With beauty and grace’ is perhaps the most idiomatic translation to convey the synonymy of the two nouns here. However, in denoting beauty with respect to motion, posture and elegance of proportions, *grace* is in fact more specific than χάρις in its

⁸⁷ Cf. Maclachlan 1993, 10-11, 31-40; Beekes 2010, s.v. χαίρω.

⁸⁸ See Maclachlan 1993; Parker 1998.

⁸⁹ Hom. *Od.* 6.235-7.

aesthetic meaning.⁹⁰ The ‘pleasurable beauty’ of χάρις embraces a broad spectrum of pleasing and compelling appearances, both those that are erotically attractive—as Nausikaa’s response to Odysseus’ glistening beauties would suggest—and those that provoke reverence and respect—as Odysseus’ ‘beauty’ (χάρις) does for the Phaiakians in *Odyssey* 8.⁹¹ χάρις therefore signifies an aesthetic property comparable to the modern notion of *beauty* in both its conceptual breadth and range of application. At their core, χάρις and modern *beauty* share a broad sense of pleasure-bearing power.

The same power to please characterises the noun’s derivative adjective χαρίεις. Although something may be χαρίεις—‘pleasing’, ‘attractive’—for any reason, the adjective is often applied to visual objects like clothes and people where the sense is ‘physically attractive’; that is, the conventional meaning of *beautiful*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, the adjectives χαρίεις and καλός sometimes work in tandem as equivalent aesthetic terms like their cognate nouns. Helenos recommends the ‘most attractive’ (χαριέστατος) robe as an offering for Athena, and Hekabe duly chooses the one that is ‘most beautiful’ (κάλλιστος).⁹² When Sappho addresses a bride as ὦ καλή, ὦ χαρίεσσα, ‘beautiful woman, attractive woman’, the effect is to underscore her beauty, just as Odysseus’ radiant

⁹⁰ Though sometimes a useful approximation, there are two further problems with ‘grace’ for χάρις: first, it does not capture the importance of pleasure to χάρις; second, its strong connection with Christian theology is potentially misleading. Since χάρις is a fundamental concept in ancient Greek religion (Parker 1998), there is a danger in over assimilating Greek χάρις with Christian grace.

⁹¹ See Hom. *Od.* 6.237-45; 8.19-22. See pp. 77-9 below.

⁹² Hom. *Il.* 6.271, 294.

κάλλος and χάρις emphasises his.⁹³ As terms for ‘beauty’ and ‘beautiful’, the καλός—κάλλος and χάρις—χαρίεις semantic families demonstrate a high degree of conceptual overlap and interconnection. This is discernible in their range of meanings, their associated affects—notably, pleasure, desire and aesthetic admiration—and their associated physical properties—like gold, silver, bigness and radiance. ‘Immortal beauty [κάλλος] shone from’ the cheeks of Aphrodite, while ‘beauty [χάρις] shone from’ the earrings of Hera.⁹⁴ That said, each term has its own aesthetic nuances, whether it is the moral connotations of the adjective καλός, the noun κάλλος’s connection with desire, or the broad idea of pleasure-bearing power conveyed by χάρις and χαρίεις.

Another term for ‘beauty’, ἀγλαΐη, is similarly idiosyncratic. In Homer, ἀγλαΐη has a connotation with pride in appearance, like a horse that ‘exults’ and ‘holds his head high’, ἀγλαΐηφι πεποιθώς, ‘confident in his beauty’ or ‘trusting in his splendour’.⁹⁵ This element of pride and pageantry allies with a sense of glamorous or superficial good looks: Odysseus wonders whether the dog Argos has speed to match his ‘fine form’ (καλὸς... δέμας) or is like one of those ‘table dogs’ that ‘masters tend for the sake of their *aglaĩē*’; that is, ‘for their [superficial] beauty’, ‘for the sake of show’.⁹⁶ The pomp and splendour of ἀγλαΐη explains why in

⁹³ Sapph. fr. 108.

⁹⁴ *Hom. Hy.* 5.174-5; *Hom. Il.* 14.183. Cf. *Il.* 3.392; *Od.* 18.298. *Hy.* 2.275-280.

⁹⁵ *Hom. Il.* 6.506-11; 15.263-8.

⁹⁶ *Hom. Od.* 17.307-10.

later sources, like the Hesiodic *Shield*, it can mean ‘festivity’ in the sense of beautiful and splendid display.⁹⁷

Expressing beauty, however, does not depend on an explicit word for ‘beauty’ or ‘beautiful’. The Greek lexicon contains a variety of terms and formulaic expressions that convey beauty without one of the more obvious lexical suspects so far adduced: κόσμος (‘ornament’, ‘decoration’); ἄγαλμα (‘object of delight’); μορφή (‘shapeliness’, ‘beauty of form’); phrases with εἶδος (‘appearance’, ‘looks’), δέμας (‘form’, ‘shape’), μέγεθος (‘size’, ‘height’) and φυή (‘form’, ‘build’); and divine analogy.⁹⁸ Though εἶδος, δέμας, μέγεθος and φυή are inherently neutral terms, when combined with various adjectives like ‘better’ (ἀμείνων), ‘best’ (ἄριστος) and ‘admirable’ (ἀγῆτος), they can be used to denote beauty.⁹⁹ But is a ‘best appearance’ a beautiful one? The potential ambiguity of such phrases is often mitigated by their common appearance alongside other expressions for beauty. In *Iliad* 3, Paris has a ‘beautiful appearance’ (καλὸν εἶδος), ‘glistens with beauty’ (κάλλει... στίλβων) and is ‘best in looks’ (εἶδος ἄριστε).¹⁰⁰ As the bodily criteria by which people are physically differentiated, phrases with εἶδος, δέμας, μέγεθος and φυή are often used to relativise beauty. According to Eurymachos,

⁹⁷ Hes. [Sc.] 272-6. Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 13.14.

⁹⁸ On these terms and phrases for beauty in Homer, see Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

⁹⁹ Cf. εὐειδής (Hom. *Il.* 3.48), ‘of fair appearance’, ‘beautiful’; εὐφυής (*Il.* 4.147; 21.243), ‘shapely’. εἶδος sometimes appears unqualified in an implicitly positive sense: Hector refers to Paris’ ‘gifts of Aphrodite’, ἥ τε κόμη τό τε εἶδος, ‘your hair and your looks’ (*Il.* 3.54-5). εἶδος is often translated therefore as ‘beauty’, e.g. Blondell 2013, 5. We should beware making this leap, however, because εἶδος can be combined with a negative adjective to express ugliness: Dolon ‘was bad in appearance’ (εἶδος... ἔην κακός) (*Il.* 10.316).

¹⁰⁰ Hom. *Il.* 3.39, 44-5, 392. Cf. 24.347, 376.

Penelope ‘excels all women in appearance and height’ (περίεσσι γυναικῶν ἢ εἰδός τε μέγεθός τε) when she has been endowed with κάλλος by Athena.¹⁰¹ The earliest evidence for Greek beauty contests demonstrates the same tendency: Alkaios refers to women on Lesbos κριννόμεναι φύαν, ‘being judged in form’.¹⁰² Likewise in Hesiod’s *Catalogue of Women*, phrases with εἶδος are both a pervasive means of conveying and relativising beauty: this past age abounded with women ‘lovely in appearance’ (πολυήρατον εἶδος), who ‘rivalled the immortal goddesses in looks’ (εἶδος ἐρήριστ’ ἀθανάτησι).¹⁰³

Divine analogy, then, is another common method of conveying human beauty, like Helen who is ‘terribly like the immortal goddesses to look at’, or the ‘godlike face’ that begins the lover’s ascent in the *Phaidros*.¹⁰⁴ The representation of beauty by divine comparison is entirely oblique: the mortal analogue’s beauty is inferred because gods are known to be exceptionally beautiful. It is by the same logic that certain physical properties and affects, which have strong aesthetic connotations, can in themselves evoke a sense of beauty. That Hagesichora’s hair ‘blossoms like undefiled gold, her face like silver’ (ἐπανθεῖ ἢ χρυσὸς [ὥς] ἀκήρατος ἢ τό τ’ ἀργύριον πρόσωπον) evokes her beauty by virtue of the aesthetic

¹⁰¹ Hom. *Od.* 18.248-9. Cf. 192-6. See p. 78 below.

¹⁰² Alc. fr. 130B.17. On Greek beauty contests, see Gherchanoc 2016.

¹⁰³ Cf. Hes. *Cat.* 10. 32; 13.7; 19.10; 33.12; 182.14. On female beauty in the *Catalogue*, see Osborne 2005. Cf. Hes. [*Sc.*] 4-5.

¹⁰⁴ Hom. *Il.* 3.158: αἰνῶς ἀθανάτησι θεῆς εἰς ὦπα ἔοικεν; Pl. *Phdr.* 251a.

connotations of gold and silver.¹⁰⁵ Thanks to its association with beauty, radiance can have the same effect: to ‘have the sparkle of the Charites’ (Χαρίτων ἀμαρύγματ’ ἔχο[υσαν) is a recurrent formula for female beauty in the *Catalogue of Women*; the ‘beauty’ (κάλλος) of Odysseus and Paris ‘glistens’ (στίλβων); the ‘bright sparkle’ (κάμάρυγμα λάμπρον) of Anaktoria’s face is a mark of the beauty Sappho’s speaker loves and longs for.¹⁰⁶

In other words, the representation of beauty in Archaic texts is tied to a catalogue of physical properties—notably, radiance, bigness, skilful manufacture and precious materiality—and a spectrum of affects—notably, pleasure, desire, wonder and admiration.¹⁰⁷ These common ingredients of Archaic beauty have an aestheticising power of their own. Beauty and desire often go hand in hand in Archaic and Classical texts. It is for this reason that the many words for ‘desirable’ and ‘lovely’ (ἐπὶήρατος, ἐρατεινός, πολυήρατος and ἱμερόεις) can express beauty, especially when combined with its other associated affects, like Tyrtaios’ soldier, ‘marvellous in the eyes of men and desirable in the eyes of

¹⁰⁵ Alc. fr. 1.53-5. See p. 126 below. For the beauty of gold and silver, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 5.722-31; 8.41-5; 9.389; 10.439; 17.53-60; *Od.* 4.614-19; *Hom. Hy.* 3.135-6; *Hy.* 4.249-51; *Hy.* 5.64-5, 88-9; *Mimn.* 12.5-7; Alc. fr. 5 (2 col. ii); Thgn. 1105-6. Cf. Pl. *Hp. mai.* 289e.

¹⁰⁶ Hes. *Cat.* 41.38; 47.3; 123.20; 154a.6; Hom. *Il.* 3.392; *Od.* 6.237; Sapph. fr. 16.18. Cf. *Il.* 14.183 = *Od.* 18.297; *Hom. Hy.* 2.276-80; *Hy.* 5.174-5; etc.

¹⁰⁷ For the beauty of bigness, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 6.294; 18.83-4, 518; 21.108; *Od.* 1.301; 3.199; 6.276; 10.396; 18.195; *Hom. Hy.* 2.275-6; *Hy.* 5.173-4 etc. For skilful manufacture, see e.g. *Il.* 9.187; 11.32; 16.222; 18.390; 18.612; 22.314; *Od.* 18.292-3 etc. See Shakeshaft (forthcoming); chapter 4. For the common affects of pleasure, desire, wonder and admiration, see chapters 1 and 2; cf. e.g. *Il.* 3.396-8; 16.180-2; 18.83-4; 20.223-5; *Od.* 6.237; 11.238-9; 18.192; *Hy.* 5.84-91 etc.

women' (ἀνδράσι μὲν θηητὸς ἰδεῖν, ἐρατὸς δὲ γυναιξί).¹⁰⁸ Not everything 'desirable', 'wonderful', 'radiant' or 'big' is necessarily beautiful, however: Polyphemos was 'a massive wonder' (θαῦμα... πελώριον), but hardly beautiful.¹⁰⁹

Sensitivity to context is therefore essential in determining where the outer boundaries of Greek beauty lie. They may be more fluid and blurry than perhaps we would like, but this kind of complication does not mean we should ignore all those cases where things desirable, wonderful, radiant or big are expressive of beauty. For however hermeneutically challenging, they have an integral place in the broad semantic field of Greek beauty, or in Plato's wonderful phrase, 'the ocean of the beautiful' (πέλαγος... τοῦ καλοῦ).¹¹⁰ As Burke said, 'a clear idea is... another name for a little idea'.¹¹¹ Given beauty's varied range of applications and effects, it is not surprising that its outer boundaries are not always clearly defined, as Sokrates learns the hard way in failing to define καλός, realising instead the truth of the proverb, 'beautiful things are difficult' (χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά).¹¹² Neither the proverb nor Burke's adage are licences to obscurity when investigating big ideas like beauty; rather, they acknowledge the challenges and joys that their enquiry brings. One challenge is to not shy away from how big Greek beauty is: limiting the search to καλός and κάλλος, for example, makes the task more

¹⁰⁸ Tyrtaios fr. 10.29. Cf. Hom. *Od.* 8.366.

¹⁰⁹ Hom. *Od.* 9.190; cf. 256-7. Cf. Theoc. *Id.* 11.

¹¹⁰ Pl. *Symp.* 210d.

¹¹¹ Burke 1773, 108.

¹¹² Pl. *Hp. mai.* 304e.

manageable but it also neglects the fact that they were imbricated with other terms and phrases which were often used interchangeably, for emphasis and/or to evoke different nuances of aesthetic meaning. If this layering effect testifies to the conceptual interconnection between these various terms and phrases, so too does their mutual association with a common affective register—including, pleasure, desire, wonder and admiration—and a catalogue of physical properties—like radiance, large size, skilful manufacture and precious materiality.

To group diverse Greek terms and phrases together, therefore, is not to efface their differences or force them into a modern conceptual mould of beauty. It is to recognise that they share conceptual common-ground both with each other and, in various ways, with modern ideas about beauty, however elusive and mutable. To gain access to peculiarly Greek ideas about beauty, this entire lexical array must be considered and explored, ever attentive to context, to the relationships between ancient terms and to potential discrepancies between ancient and modern conceptual categories.

CHAPTER ONE

EPIC VISIONS

Hesiod's *Theogony* begins with a vision of the Muses dancing and singing of 'the holy race of immortals who always are' (ἀθανάτων ἱερὸν γένος αἰὲν ἔόντων).¹ The descriptive vocabulary in this divine vision aestheticises the Muses. The references to their 'soft feet' (πόσος ἀπαλοῖσιν) and 'tender skin' (τέρενα χροά) exemplify a common ideal of female beauty in Archaic epic, as when Aphrodite's dazzling jewellery around her 'soft' neck and breasts seduces Anchises in her *Homeric Hymn*.² And for the same reason that Aphrodite bathed before her seduction, so here the Muses 'wash themselves' to look their best for the dance.³ In what follows, it is not so much the physical beauty of the Muses that the poet illustrates, but the collective beauty of their song and dance: their nimble choral dances are 'beautiful, desirable' (καλούς, ἱμερόεντας), 'their voice most beautiful' (περικαλλέα ὄσσαν) as it emanates from the 'thick mist that cloaks' them.⁴ Through the haze that

¹ Hes. *Theog.* 21.

² Hes. *Theog.* 3, 5; *Hom. Hy.* 5.88, 90. Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 195; *Op.* 517; *Hom. Il.* 19.285; *Hy.* 6.10. On female beauty in Greek poetry, see Jax 1933.

³ Hes. *Theog.* 5; *Hom. Hy.* 5.58-66. For divine bathing and beautification, see *Hom. Il.* 14.170-87; *Od.* 8.362-6. For goddesses beautifying themselves for the dance, see *Hy.* 27.17; *Cypr.* fr. 4-5.

⁴ Hes. *Theog.* 7-10: κεκαλυμμέναι ἡέρι πολλῇ.

limits human perception of divine appearances, the quality that emerges clearly and characterises the goddesses' activity is beauty.⁵

Anyone familiar with Archaic Greek epic is unlikely to balk at the observation that deities are portrayed as beautiful. The epic epithet θεοειδής, 'godlike in appearance', is a byword for exceptionally beautiful, while to this day 'to look like a Greek god' is still proverbial for bodily beauty.⁶ It seems this aspect of Greek divinity is so obvious that it has largely slipped below the radar of scholarly enquiry, which has tended to study the gods individually rather than explore their common characteristics.⁷ But if we accept that ideas about beauty are bound to cultural and historical context and contingency, then the beauty of Greek deities becomes far less obvious, its significance embedded in an alien aesthetic and religious culture. As a generic divine quality, the beauty of the gods provides an opportunity to study the gods collectively and investigate a common aspect of Greek divinity.

Beauty may be a common divine characteristic but like gods' bodies, it is marked by fluidity and versatility, taking different forms in different contexts.⁸ It is also a mode of divine differentiation, therefore, especially for female deities. The representation of divine beauty, as both a generic

⁵ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 5.127-8. On the semiotics of epiphany in Hesiod's hymn to the Muses, see Platt 2011, 50-5.

⁶ In the 1890s, Eugen Sandow, the 'father of modern bodybuilding', popularised the idea by modelling his own physique on the 'Grecian ideal', posing in imitation of Classical sculptures. See Hatt 2006; Vout 2018, 216.

⁷ Some exceptions: Neri 2004, 291-303 (on late antiquity); Giardino 2005. For recent studies of individual gods, see Dowden 2006; Seaford 2006; Graf 2009; Stafford 2012. For contextual studies of Greek polytheism, see Graf 1985; Parker 2005; Polinskaya 2013. On common characteristics of Greek deities, see Henrichs 2010.

⁸ On gods' bodies, see Osborne 2011, 185-215.

and differentiating quality, highlights both a common conception of the gods and the individual identities and relationships that constitute the pantheon. One aim of this chapter, which explores the relationship between the beautiful and the divine in early Greek epic, is to interrogate how, why and in what contexts the beauty of the gods is depicted. Since Greek gods and humans are alike in form, their physical beauty can serve to define their relationship in visual terms, as the epithet θεοειδής implies. A further line of enquiry, therefore, is what divine beauty has to do with humans and what role beauty plays in the relationship between mortals and immortals.

That it was not priests but poets and craftsmen who informed how Greeks envisaged, thought and talked about their gods underscores epic poetry's vital significance in the study of Greek religion.⁹ The 'absence' of scripture, a professional priesthood and a central religious authority meant that poets held a privileged place in shaping Greek attitudes to the divine.¹⁰ Of course, this should not be overstated: how far epic poems were responses to a religious culture mediated by other forms of engagement with the gods, like visual images and cult ritual, is always worth keeping in mind. Furthermore, lack of evidence for performative context often makes it hard to determine the precise nature of poetic influence. In any case, it is still fair to say that early Greek epic was not just a mirror of religious attitudes, but a potent vehicle of their expression,

⁹ Gagné 2015; Martin 2015b.

¹⁰ On the 'absence' of scripture and a church in Greek religion, see Parker 2011, 1-63.

formation and dissemination. The itineracy of poets served to spread certain views and values about the gods across the Greek world.¹¹

Instead of the orthodoxy of a sacred text, theological diversity characterised Greek poetry and religion.¹² Amid this myriad of poetic visions of the divine, it appears Hesiod and Homer exercised the greatest influence.¹³ Herodotus' famous claim that Hesiod and Homer 'created a theogony for the Greeks, gave the gods their epithets, distinguished their honours and skills, and indicated their appearances', is an exaggeration.¹⁴ Every representation of a god, in whatever medium, affected how Greeks perceived their gods.¹⁵ Yet there is a kernel of truth in Herodotus' words, for no one affected how Greeks all over the Hellenic world thought and talked about their gods more than Hesiod and Homer. Roughly a hundred years before Herodotus, Xenophanes aimed his attack on divine anthropomorphism at Hesiod and Homer's portraits of the gods.¹⁶ Already in the sixth century BCE, they represent the religious authority that Xenophanes denounces, 'since from the beginning', he says, 'all have

¹¹ Herington 1985, 3ff.; Furley and Bremer 2001, 38-9; Hunter and Rutherford 2009. Cf. *Hom. Od.* 17.382-6; *Hom. Hy.* 3.174-5; *Hes. Op.* 654-9.

¹² See e.g. *Hom. Hy.* 1.1-9. On the theological diversity of Greek religion, see Osborne 2015, esp. 12-14; Eidinow et al. 2016.

¹³ On Hesiod and Homer's influence on Greek conceptions of divinity, see Vlastos 1970, 97-102; Burkert 1985; Dietrich 1985-6; Nagy 1990, 44-7; Most 1999, 336-46; Price 1999, 6-7; Kearns 2004; Martin 2015b; Hunter 2018, 42-91.

¹⁴ *Hdt.* 2.53.

¹⁵ Parker 2011, 24-5.

¹⁶ Xenophanes, B14-16 DK; cf. Empedocles B27-9 DK. See Feeney 1991; Graziosi 2014, 36-43; Gagné 2015, 83.

learned according to Homer'. Similarly for Herakleitos, 'the teacher of the most people is Hesiod'.¹⁷

Three important points follow from these observations. First, early Greek epic, especially that of Hesiod and Homer, is indispensable for understanding the theological ideas, values and expectations of worshippers across the Greek world.¹⁸ The present focus will be the most influential and best preserved Archaic epics: Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and the *Homeric Hymns*.

Second, the theological diversity of Greek religion dispels the possibility of definitive answers to questions about the nature of Greek divinity—a lesson which Simonides famously learnt the hard way, as an answer to the question, 'what is a god?', receded ever further the more he thought about it.¹⁹ Hesiod, Homer and the *Homeric Hymns* offer varying perspectives on the relationship between the beautiful and the divine. While aware of these differences, our task is to identify, contextualise and interpret some of the prevailing themes and patterns of thought about beauty and the gods in Archaic epic that are instructive for understanding widespread theological values and expectations.

Finally, it is important to recognise that however rich in Greek theology, these are poems composed according to aesthetic choices designed to please their audience.²⁰ The Archaic epic poet is an entertainer-cum-theologian in whose work aesthetic and theological concerns are

¹⁷ Xenophanes, B10 DK; Herakleitos, B57 DK.

¹⁸ See n. 13 above.

¹⁹ Cic. *Nat. D.* 1.60.

²⁰ On the pleasures of poetic song, see chapter 2, esp. 92-6.

conjoined; as chapter two will show, the beauty and pleasure of poetic song often had a direct theological significance in the context of performance. It follows that these epic narratives should be treated as poetic creations, where analysis of choices like vocabulary and narrative structure are central to the elucidation of their theological significance.²¹

Interest in the visuality of Greek religion has boomed since the 1990s.²² Understanding the rich visual theology of Greek culture has been advanced significantly by work on divine appearances and epiphanies.²³ Scholarship on literary narratives of divine manifestation to mortals has touched on the beauty of the gods; the discussion has been tangential, however, and though Detienne and Sissa describe ‘beauty, [as] that divine attribute par excellence’, it is striking how little the subject of beauty and the gods has been explored.²⁴ Naiden has recently highlighted the importance of beauty in Greek sacrifice, while Mikalson observes that inscriptions demonstrate a ‘pervasive concern with... visual “beauty”’ in almost all forms of cult ritual in Classical Athens.²⁵ One purpose of this chapter is to show that in early Greek epic these strands of religious thought and practice in fact belong together as part of a broader cultural

²¹ On the inseparability of aesthetic and theological concerns in votive reliefs, see Platt 2011, 49.

²² E.g. Gordon 1979; Glasgow 1985-6; Vernant 1991; Donohue 1997; Elsner 2000; 2007; Scheer 2000; Steiner 2001; Doepner 2002; Gaifman 2006; 2012; 2016; Mylonopoulos 2010; Osborne 2011; Scheer 2015.

²³ Vernant 1991, 27-49; Koch-Piettre 1996, 1999, 2001; Detienne and Sissa 2000, 28-42; Osborne 2011, 185-215; Platt 2011; Petridou 2015; Gaifman 2016; Petridou et al. (forthcoming).

²⁴ Detienne and Sissa 2000, 32. See Giardino 2005. Gherchanoc 2016 is an important study of Greek beauty contests, including their religious significance.

²⁵ Naiden 2013, esp. 80-1; Naiden 2015; Mikalson 2016, 9, see esp. 253-64.

framework in which beauty and the gods are inextricably bound, in which beauty plays a starring role in multiple forms of divine representation and interaction between gods and humans.

To ask questions about the nature of Greek gods and their relationship with humankind is implicitly to ask what is ‘Greek’ about them. The mythological traditions of the ancient Near East therefore provide valuable comparanda for investigating early Greek theology. In the last fifty years, great progress has been made to understand the connections between the ancient Greeks and their Near Eastern neighbours.²⁶ The old notion of Greek autonomy and isolation has been systematically dismantled to reveal an ancient world where the exchange of ideas, stories, goods and technologies stimulated and inspired cultural development.²⁷ The intensity of contact and exchange varied at different times. One epoch of heightened intensity was the early Archaic period, c.750-650 BCE, when it is generally believed that Hesiod’s *Theogony* and *Works and Days* and Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were composed.²⁸ The similarities between Greek, Hittite, Ugaritic, Hebrew, Mesopotamian and Egyptian mythology have led some scholars to wonder whether we might even speak of a mythological *koine* in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East.²⁹

²⁶ E.g. Walcot 1966; West 1966; Astour 1967; Bernal 1987; 1991; 2006; Mondi 1990; Burkert 1992; 2004; Penglase 1994; Osborne 1996; West 1997; Dalley 1998; Brown 2003; Bremmer 2008; Collins et al. 2008; Lane Fox 2008; López-Ruiz 2010; Loudon 2011; Haubold 2013; López-Ruiz 2014; Metcalf 2015; Bachvarova 2016.

²⁷ On the former resistance to this view, see Astour 1967; Bernal 1987; López-Ruiz 2014, 155-9.

²⁸ See e.g. Finley 1956; West 1966; Burkert 1976; Janko 1982; Morris 1986; Burkert 1992; Crielaard 1995; Osborne 2004; Lane Fox 2008, 381-4; West 2011, 188-208.

²⁹ López-Ruiz 2014, 187-8.

As for theology, parallels are easy to find: like the Greeks, all Near Eastern cultures except the Israelites were polytheistic, envisaging a race of divine beings, often anthropomorphic in form, who surpass humans in various qualities like power, knowledge and longevity.³⁰ Perhaps unsurprisingly, various Near Eastern deities are praised for their exceptional beauty. These superior divine qualities no doubt mirror things positively valued by humans, but to understand ancient perceptions of divine qualities and their cultural specificity, it is necessary to look closer at the details and contexts of their representation.³¹

Defining divine and human beauty

It is in the context of direct divine-human comparison that beauty emerges most clearly as a generic divine quality in early Greek epic. In *Odyssey* 5, Kalypso makes a last-ditch effort to dissuade Odysseus from leaving her island by pointing out her greater beauty than Penelope, whom Odysseus longs for:

οὐ μέν θην κείνης γε χερείων εὐχομαι εἶναι,
οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, ἐπεὶ οὐ πῶς οὐδὲ ἔοικεν
θνητὰς ἀθανάτησι δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἐρίζειν.³²

³⁰ For a general comparison of Near Eastern conceptions of god, see Van der Toorn 1999.

³¹ Cf. Vegetti 1995, 263-4; Van der Toorn 1999, 357.

³² Hom. *Od.* 5.211-13.

‘Surely I can claim to be no worse than her in form and stature. For it would by no means be right for mortal women to rival immortal goddesses in form and appearance’.

Odysseus admits that Penelope is ‘weaker in appearance and size’, and as he explains why, incidentally provides the clearest exposition in Archaic epic of how divine beauty is conceived:

ἡ μὲν γὰρ βροτός ἐστι, σὺ δ’ ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως.³³

‘For she is mortal, but you are immortal and ageless.’

Kalypso’s ‘immortal and ageless’ nature ensures she wins the beauty contest with Penelope as a matter of course. The superior beauty of the gods is bound to their amaranthine vitality—that immortal and ageless nature which defines them in contrast to humans subject to ageing and death.³⁴ The relationship between inner nature and outer form is fundamental to the representation of physical beauty in Greek epic. For humans, that relationship can be dissonant, beauty no reliable guide to human nature.³⁵ The physical beauty of the gods, however, defines their nature both collectively as a race distinct from humans, and individually as deities with specific characters, roles and competencies.

³³ Ibid. 217-18.

³⁴ See Vernant 1991, esp. 41.

³⁵ For the human dissonance between appearance and character, cf. Hom. *Il.* 2.671-5; 3.38-57; *Od.* 8.166-177; Hes. *Theog.* 574-85; *Op.* 60-8.

The latter is clear in Hesiod's *Theogony*, which focusses on the gods themselves rather than their interactions with humankind. Accordingly, Hesiod's representation of divine beauty is more sparing and selective than Homer's: rather than a generic quality distinguishing gods from humans, beauty sets some gods apart from others, conveying something special about their divinity. Gods associated with love and seduction, for example, are picked out for their beauty. One of the three parentless and primordial deities in Hesiod's cosmogony is Eros, the personification of Love driving the evolution of the cosmos.³⁶ Eros' demiurgic role is underscored by his all-encompassing power: 'the most beautiful [κάλλιστος] among the immortal gods, the limb-melter [λυσιμελής], he conquers the mind and wise counsel of all gods and all men in their breasts'.³⁷ As the only occurrence of this superlative adjective in the Hesiodic corpus, the description of Eros as 'most beautiful' (κάλλιστος) is noteworthy: it ties beauty to the exercise of erotic power, that physical and psychological force that 'melts limbs', 'conquers the mind' of all and propels the evolution of the cosmos.

The only other appearance of Eros is in the narrative of Aphrodite's birth, who grew inside the foam around the sea-borne genitals of Ouranos. Arriving at Cyprus, 'she came forth a reverend beautiful goddess [αἰδοίη καλὴ θεός]'.³⁸ In this programmatic narrative of her birth and entry into immortal society, the nature of Aphrodite's divine power is suggested by

³⁶ Cf. 'Orpheus' fr. 28; Pherecydes B 3, A 11; Parmenides B 13; Sappho 198; Plato, *Symp.* 178b. See West 1966, 120; Most 2013.

³⁷ Hes. *Theog.* 120-2. Cf. Sapph. fr. 16; Pl. *Symp.* 195a.

³⁸ Hes. *Theog.* 194. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 6.1.

her immediate companionship with the divine personifications of Love and Desire—Eros and ‘beautiful Himeros’ (Ἰμερος ... καλός), who joined her ‘as soon as she was born and when she went to the tribe of the gods’.³⁹ If their companionship reflects their shared interests, activities and natures, its immediacy—‘as soon as she was born’—suggests the strength of their affiliation. Their most obvious shared characteristic is beauty: all three are among the few deities in Hesiod described as ‘beautiful’ (καλός). As a trinity of divine beauties, they embody and express the interconnection between beauty, love and desire as forces underpinning divine and human existence.

There is a strong metaphorical dimension, then, to Hesiod’s representation of the beauty and affiliation of these deities. The same applies to his characterisation of ‘the beautiful-cheeked’ Charites, from whose ‘eyes love, the limb-melter, trickles down as they look; beautifully they look from under their eyebrows’.⁴⁰ Like Eros and Himeros, the Charites personify an abstract concept: they embody the ‘beauty’, ‘pleasure’ and ‘favour’ denoted by χάρις.⁴¹ Accordingly, beauty and beautification define their representation throughout Archaic epic, where they often appear as attendants at Aphrodite’s toilette.⁴² As with Eros and Himeros, moreover, the beauty of the Charites reflects a conception of beauty centred on its effects. Derived from the Indo-European word **gher-*

³⁹ Hes. *Theog.* 201-2.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 910-11: τῶν καὶ ἀπὸ βλεφάρων ἔρος εἵβετο δερκομενάων Ἰλυσιμελῆς: καλὸν δὲ θ’ ὑπὶ ὀφρύσι δερκιόωνται.

⁴¹ On χάρις, see Maclachlan 1993, esp. 31-55 for the Charites and χάρις as ‘beauty’; Pasquali 1942, 140; Latacz 1966, 78-98.

⁴² Cf. Hom. *Il.* 5.348; 17.51-52; *Od.* 6.18; 8.364-66; 18.193-94; *Hom. Hy.* 5.58-65; *Cypr.* fr. 5-6.

meaning ‘pleasure’, ‘delight’, affectivity is written into the semantics of χάρις.⁴³ Whether intentional or not, Hesiod’s aestheticisation of Eros, Aphrodite, Himeros and the Charites appears like a metaphor for the agency of beauty: that beauty unites and defines their divinity echoes the idea that love, desire and pleasure are common ingredients in the experience of beauty.

While this abstract quality is peculiar to Hesiod, the same conception and expression of beauty focussed on its effects pervades Archaic epic. This emphasis on beauty’s agency can lend itself to defining a deity’s place within the pantheon. In *Homeric Hymn* 6, the seductive power of Aphrodite’s beauty establishes her role and relationship with the other Olympians, when at the sight of her ‘immortal clothes’, ‘beautiful golden crown’ and golden earrings and necklaces, ‘each [god] prayed to lead her home as his wedded wife, as they wondered at the appearance of violet-crowned Kythereia’.⁴⁴ For Hera in *Homeric Hymn* 12, by contrast, the nature and effect of her beauty mirrors and affirms her queenly position among the gods. She is invoked as,

ἀθανάτων βασίλειαν, ὑπείροχον εἶδος ἔχουσιν.⁴⁵

‘queen of the immortals, who possesses a preeminent appearance.’

⁴³ Maclachlan 1993, 4; Beekes 2010: s.v. χαίρω.

⁴⁴ *Hom. Hy.* 6.6-16: ἄμβροτα εἵματα... στεφάνην... καλήν, χρυσεῖην... ἤρῃσαντο ἕκαστος ἰ εἶναι κουριδίην ἄλοχον καὶ οἴκαδ’ ἄγεσθαι, ἰ εἶδος θαυμάζοντες ἰοστεφάνου Κυθερείης. Cf. *Hom. Od.* 8.335-42.

⁴⁵ *Hom. Hy.* 12.2. Cf. *Hy.* 5.41.

The juxtaposition of βασιλείαν with ὑπείροχον εἶδος underlines how her superior social position is manifested in her superior looks. Her preeminent appearance and special relation to Zeus inspire not eros as for Aphrodite, but a deferent and reverential attitude, as the gods ‘revere and honour her equally with Zeus’.⁴⁶

For Hera and Aphrodite in these two *Hymns*, the particular forms of their beauty help define their roles and relations within the Olympian pantheon. Likewise, Artemis in *Odyssey* 6 is distinguished by her beauty as she hunts wild beasts in the mountains accompanied by her nymphs:⁴⁷

πασάων δ’ ὑπὲρ ἥ γε κάρη ἔχει ἡδὲ μέτωπα,
 ῥεῖλά τ’ ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι.⁴⁸

‘high above them all she [Artemis] holds her head and brow, and easily is she recognised, though all [the nymphs] are beautiful’.

Artemis’ greater beauty sets her apart in this divine company, signalling her superior status to the nymphs.⁴⁹ Yet as a huntress in the mountains, hers is again a different kind of beauty from the queenly majesty of Hera or the erotic lure of Aphrodite. Archaic epic envisages a plurality of divine female beauties, whose differences in form and effect reflect and convey differences in their respective divine identities.

⁴⁶ *Hom. Hy.* 12.5.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Hom. Il.* 5.51-3; *Hom. Hy.* 27.2-10.

⁴⁸ *Hom. Od.* 6.107-8.

⁴⁹ Cf. Garvie 1994, 108.

These differentiated models of divine beauty provide paradigms for defining human beauty. The image of Artemis is in fact an analogy for Nausikaa playing amid her handmaids: ‘just so’, Homer says, ‘did the unmarried maiden [Nausikaa] stand out among her handmaids’ (ὥς ἥ γ’ ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμής).⁵⁰ Nausikaa is distinguished by her beauty like Artemis, whose appearance in this wild guise mirrors Nausikaa’s pre-marital status, for she too is ἀδμής, ‘untamed’, ‘unmarried’. Yet the comparison to Artemis also suggests the maiden’s desirability as a bride by emphasising her outstanding beauty. The simile thus helps define Nausikaa’s peculiar social position in the *Odyssey*: unwed though ready for marriage.⁵¹

Penelope’s appearance ‘like Artemis or golden Aphrodite’ similarly tells us something special about her.⁵² Like Artemis, she is a model of chaste female beauty, renowned for her fidelity in her husband’s twenty-year absence.⁵³ Yet she is also desirable like Aphrodite, drawing a host of suitors to her door.⁵⁴ The double divine analogy encapsulates this duality, echoing the personal dilemma that Penelope faces: whether to stay loyal to her lost husband or accept the suit of another man.⁵⁵ In these specific divine analogies, Homer draws on his audience’s knowledge of clearly differentiated divinities to enrich and define his mortal characters at the

⁵⁰ Hom. *Od.* 6.109.

⁵¹ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 6.25-35, 57-67, 158-9, 239-46, 273-88; 7.311-14. On Nausikaa’s comparison to Artemis, see Roisman 2011, 558-9.

⁵² Hom. *Od.* 17.37; 19.54. See Russo et al. 1992, 21.

⁵³ See Hom. *Od.* 1.343-44; 19.130ff.; 24.194-98.

⁵⁴ See Hom. *Od.* 18.187-249, esp. 212-13.

⁵⁵ See Hom. *Od.* 1.245-51; 2.88ff; 19.130-61.

same time as underscoring their beauty.⁵⁶ The same technique is used to characterise the princess Hariya in the Ugaritic myth of king Kirtu: Hariya is a mortal woman ‘whose grace is like the grace of Anat, whose loveliness is like the loveliness of Athtart’.⁵⁷

A notable difference between Ugaritic myths and early Greek epic, however, is the proliferation in the latter of generalised comparisons of human to divine appearance. ‘Godlike in appearance’ (θεοειδής), ‘resembling god’ (θεῶν ἐναλίγκιος), ‘looking like goddesses’ (ἐἵκουῖα θεῆσιν) and ‘in form like immortals’ (δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ὁμοῖος) are pervasive accolades for Homeric heroes and heroines.⁵⁸ And just as specific divine analogies simultaneously aestheticise mortals and highlight their defining traits and predicaments, so these general assimilations highlight a defining feature of the heroic past: the proximity of gods and humans. Exceptional strength, power and wits also liken humans to gods, but beauty holds a special place in this catalogue of godlike attributes because it characterises the relationship between mortals and immortals in visual terms.⁵⁹

This exercise in visual theology is a distinctive and essential feature of early Greek epic, especially in the *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and *Homeric Hymns*. The godlike beauty of heroes and heroines collapses the physical distinction between gods and humans. At every turn human beauty is

⁵⁶ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 4.122, 13-14.

⁵⁷ De Moor 1987, 198. Cf. West 1997, 243. On the beauty of Ugaritic deities, see Korpel 1990, 424-32. For the comparison of Greek and Ugaritic literature, see Walcot 1969; 1970; 1972.

⁵⁸ E.g. Hom. *Il.* 3.158; 8.305; 11.638; 24.630; *Od.* 2.5 = 4.310; 3.468; 6.16; 6.243; 7.5; 7.291; 8.14; 8.174; 16. 200; 19.268; 24.371; *Hom. Hy.* 2.108; *Hy.* 5.55 etc.

⁵⁹ On the godlike nature of Homeric heroes, see Griffin 1980a, esp. 81-102.

invested with the divine: heroes and heroines are said to have ‘beauty from the gods’ (θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος), to look like gods as a result, and are even pursued and abducted by gods ‘for the sake of their beauty’ (κάλλεος εἵνεκα).⁶⁰ In the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, the heroic past abounds with beautiful women who ‘rivalled the immortal goddesses in appearance’ and thus attract the gods’ amorous attention;⁶¹ divine attraction to female beauty drives the poem’s heroic genealogy.⁶²

The physical similarity of gods and humans belies a deeper difference, however. In reply to Lykaon’s supplication, Achilles gives him a lecture on mortality: ‘you too must die. Why wail over this?... do you not see how great I am, how beautiful and big [καλός τε μέγας τε]? My father is a noble man, the mother that bore me a goddess; but even over me hang death and mighty fate’.⁶³ Achilles’ physical marks of greatness, his claim to be καλός τε μέγας τε, recall the image of Ares and Athena on his shield, ‘beautiful and big in arms, as is the way for gods’ (καλὼ καὶ μεγάλῳ σὺν τεύχεσιν, ὥς τε θεῶ περ).⁶⁴ Achilles looks godlike, his mother is a goddess, but he too will die.⁶⁵ The hero’s unparalleled proximity to the gods in kinship, appearance and power intensifies his crucial difference from them: mortality.

⁶⁰ See e.g. Hom. *Il.* 20.233-35; *Od.* 8.457-60; 6.18; 15.251; *Hom. Hy.* 5.77; *Hy.* 5.45ff, 200-38; Hes. *Cat.* 120.4.

⁶¹ E.g. Hes. *Cat.* 13.7; 33.12. On the *Catalogue*, see West 1985; Hunter 2005; Ormand 2014.

⁶² Osborne 2005, 5-24.

⁶³ Hom. *Il.* 21.106-10.

⁶⁴ Hom. *Il.* 18.518.

⁶⁵ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 24.629-30.

Physical beauty therefore has the power both to assimilate gods and humans and to underline their essential differences. This theme predominates in *Homeric Hymn* 5, when Aphrodite recalls the fates of Ganymede and Tithonos. The former was abducted by Zeus ‘on account of his beauty’ (διὰ κάλλος) to become the gods’ wine-pourer and be ‘immortal and ageless like the gods’ (ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως ἴσα θεοῖσιν).⁶⁶ Tithonos’ story is the tragic counterpart. ‘A man like the immortals’, he too was loved and abducted by a deity, the goddess Dawn.⁶⁷ But when she asked Zeus to make Tithonos immortal, she crucially forgot ‘to ask for youth and to wipe away destructive old age’.⁶⁸ So long as he possessed ‘lovely youth’ (πολυήρατος ἦβη), they took pleasure in love.⁶⁹ But as ‘repulsive old age’ (στυγερόν... γῆρας) set in, Dawn distanced herself ever further from Tithonos, eventually locking him away to a fate of perennial ageing.⁷⁰

The stories of Ganymede and Tithonos highlight the gulf that separates gods and humans.⁷¹ On the surface, they seem to do the opposite, to show that gods and humans can be alike in form and enjoy the most intimate relationship; bodily beauty brings them together and masks their differences. Underlying the apparent similarity, however, is an irreconcilable difference in nature: divine beauty is everlasting, human

⁶⁶ *Hom. Hy.* 5.203, 214.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 219.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 224.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 225.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 233.

⁷¹ Smith 1981a, esp. 71-82, identifies the importance of this theme in the *Hymn* but omits the significance of beauty in its expression.

beauty transient.⁷² Ganymede's eternal youth preserves the beauty for which Zeus abducted him; Tithonos' eternal ageing and loss of beauty makes him ever more repugnant to the goddess who once loved him. As Tithonos' story poignantly demonstrates, the youthful beauty and vitality of mortals is a passing glory invariably superseded by the physical degeneration of old age. In the narratives of Ganymede and Tithonos, it is through the framework of beauty, through the standards of physical attractiveness and what they represent, that gods and humans discover not only their potential for intimacy, but also their fundamental difference.

In an article on the nature of Greek divinity, Henrichs argues that 'true immortality is the ultimate mark of genuine divinity'.⁷³ Ageing and death are two sides of the same mortal coin, as Tithonos' grim fate shows. The inverse of that human condition defines the gods of early Greek epic: immortality *and* agelessness.⁷⁴ Immortality is a common divine characteristic in most religions, but agelessness is not a necessary corollary; Egyptian deities were subject to the same cyclical pattern of ageing and regeneration that governed the entire universe.⁷⁵ The peculiar permanence of the gods of early Greek epic stands out by contrast. This aspect of their divinity is crucial for understanding the significance of their beauty: divine beauty is the external manifestation of a permanent vitality in contrast to the impermanence of humans, who are, in Apollo's words, 'like

⁷² See Vernant 1991, 27-49; Petridou 2015, esp. 41-3.

⁷³ Henrichs 2010, 38. Cf. Lloyd 1997.

⁷⁴ See Clay 1982; 1983, 141-8.

⁷⁵ See e.g. the Destruction of Mankind: 'Re, the self-created... mankind plotted against him, while his majesty had grown old, his bones being silver' (Lichtheim 2006b, 198). See Hornung 151-65; cf. Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 21.

leaves that one moment blaze with life... and the next waste away lifeless'.⁷⁶

This wisdom of early Greek epic, especially the *Iliad*—that the human condition is clarified in light of the divine—is paralleled in the mythological traditions of the ancient Near East, notably the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.⁷⁷ Though unusually close to the gods, Gilgamesh must learn to accept his human mortality. 'You will not find the eternal life you seek', the alewife tells him: 'when the gods created mankind, they appointed death for mankind, kept eternal life in their own hands'.⁷⁸ Where early Greek epic appears different is that in these moments of reflection on the relationship between divine and human existence, there is often a strong visual element to its expression, as the stories about Ganymede, Tithonos and Achilles' exchange with Lykaon illustrate.

Another, and perhaps the most memorable example, is Achilles' conversation with Priam in *Iliad* 24, when the two enemies are reconciled through the recognition of their common mortality and suffering. It is this condition that defines humans in contrast to the gods, who, Achilles says, 'have assigned this fate to wretched mortals, to live with grief, though they are free from sorrow'.⁷⁹ It is striking that even under the spectre of this carefree divine world, Achilles is 'like the gods to look at' and Priam 'godlike in appearance' (θεοειδής). They may both look beautiful like

⁷⁶ Hom. *Il.* 21.464-6.

⁷⁷ See also the Ugaritic Legend of Aqhat, De Moor 1987, esp. 238-9. On the relationship between *Gilgamesh* and Homeric epic, see West 1997, esp. 334-401; Abusch 2001; Currie 2012.

⁷⁸ Dalley 2008, 150 (OBV X.iii).

⁷⁹ Hom. *Il.* 24.525-6. See Griffin 1980b, 39.

gods and ‘take pleasure in looking at one another’, but this physical similarity only serves to underscore their essential difference from the gods that has framed their reconciliation.⁸⁰ For unlike gods, suffering and death await them both. Yet it is from this sad fact that compassion between two mortal enemies may emerge. The divine assimilation of Achilles and Priam simultaneously conveys their beauty and intensifies the poignancy of their realisation of common suffering and humanity. The paradoxical relationship between gods and heroes—simultaneously so near and so far—becomes clear in the light of godlike beauty.⁸¹

In the theologies of early Greek epic, beauty plays a defining role, visually defining both the immortal and ageless nature of the gods as a race distinct from mortals, and the individual divine identities within the pantheon. In both cases, divine appearances characterise the nature of the gods and their relationship with humankind. Divine appearances are far from fixed, however: like Near Eastern deities, Greek gods change shape at will, unconfined to a single body like humans.⁸² In early Greek epic, this protean power becomes a fountainhead of theological enquiry: if gods can take any shape, how can humans recognise them? Having explored the comparison of gods and humans, it is time to investigate their direct encounters, where beauty again mediates how gods and humans relate.

⁸⁰ Hom. *Il.* 24.630-4. Significantly, Priam is only called θεοειδής in *Il.* 24; see 24.217, 299, 372, 386 etc. Cf. Haubold 2013, 42-4.

⁸¹ Cf. Guthrie 1950, 113-27; Whitman 1982, 19-43.

⁸² For the polymorphism of Egyptian deities, see Silverman 1991, 19ff.; Baines 2000; of Mesopotamian deities, see Porter 2009; of Ugaritic deities, see Korpel 1990, 523-613.

Beauty and divine epiphany

The challenge of recognising a deity is encapsulated by Odysseus in conversation with Athena:

ἀργαλέον σε, θεά, γνῶναι βροτῶ ἀντιάσαντι,
καὶ μάλ' ἐπισταμένῳ: σὲ γὰρ αὐτὴν παντὶ εἴσκεις.⁸³

'it is difficult, goddess, for a mortal man to know you when he meets you, however wise he is; for you liken yourself to everything'.

The inexhaustible mimetic power of the gods makes identifying them a challenging, yet vital, hermeneutic exercise, as Platt's study of epiphany shows.⁸⁴ Divine epiphanies bring mortals face to face with the gods, allowing them to interact directly without recourse to standard forms of mediation like oracles and ritual worship.⁸⁵ Though rich in aporetic potential, epiphanies therefore provide, in Platt's words, 'cognitive reliability' for the gods' existence, appearances and relation to humankind.⁸⁶ Petridou also stresses the epistemological significance of divine manifestation: 'epiphanies are sources of knowledge', giving humans opportunities to know the gods in person.⁸⁷

⁸³ Hom. *Od.* 13.312-13. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 2.111. On the theological problems such polymorphism entails, see Plat. *Resp.* 380d.

⁸⁴ Platt 2011, esp. 52-72.

⁸⁵ Epiphanies are culturally mediated too (Platt 2015, 493); the point is their apparent ability to bypass normal forms of ritual mediation.

⁸⁶ Platt 2015, 493; Platt 2011, esp. 12-13.

⁸⁷ Petridou 2015, 105.

What humans see in divine epiphanies is an essential facet of what they learn about the gods in these direct encounters.⁸⁸ The privileged epistemological status of sight in Hellenic culture is inherent in the words themselves: ‘to see’ (ἰδεῖν) and ‘to know’ (εἰδέναι) are two forms of the same verb.⁸⁹ If vision is a kind of knowledge and vice versa, it becomes clearer why the visible aspect of the gods—their εἶδος—is such an important aspect of defining divine nature. In epic narratives of divine encounter, a similar visual emphasis appears but with an added complication: seeing and knowing the gods is problematised by their ability to ‘liken themselves to everything’. So how do you know when you see a god?

In Homer and the *Homeric Hymns*, deities take different forms in their interactions with mortals, often appearing as humans, sometimes as animals, even as natural phenomena.⁹⁰ There is a general pattern to this divine shape-shifting: gods often take a form suitable to the occasion and the action they effect.⁹¹ Hera appears as Stentor ‘who could shout as loud as fifty men’ to rouse the Achaians with a booming speech.⁹² Iris takes the form of Polites, the Trojan ‘lookout trusting in the speed of his feet’, when

⁸⁸ Cf. Lane Fox 1986, 102-167; Koch Piettre 2001; Platt 2016. Cf. Rutherford 2000. Other sensory modalities also feature with varying degrees of emphasis and significance. On divine scents and presence, see Clements 2015. Grand-Clément 2017 rightly highlights the multi-sensory plenitude of Greek divine epiphanies; the importance of sight stands, however.

⁸⁹ See Vernant 1995, 12-13; Squire 2016b, 13-14. On the link between superior divine vision and knowledge, see Clay 1983, 13-25.

⁹⁰ On Homeric epiphanies and divine transformations, see Kullman 1956; Mellitzer 1968; Clay 1974; Pucci 1998, 69-96.

⁹¹ Petridou 2015, 39-40.

⁹² Hom. *Il.* 5.786.

she rushes to warn the Trojans of the Achaian advance.⁹³ Apollo jumps aboard the Cretan sailors' ship as a dolphin, appearing as a sea-creature to guide their sea voyage to Krisa.⁹⁴ In most cases, such divine disguises are too good for humans; Aias' claim that 'the gods are easily recognised' is more hopeful than true.⁹⁵

But there are some recurring signs that suggest a god's presence, notably height, radiance and beauty. Because humans can also be 'beautiful and big', the challenge is to read the signs correctly.⁹⁶ While beauty may signify divine presence, it is by no means a passive divine quality. Rather, their beauty often appears closely related to what gods *do* when they encounter mortals. And since gods can take any form, and since they appear to humans to make things happen, the question is why they choose the form they do: how does divine appearance relate to divine purpose? To understand how, it is essential to set these divine manifestations in their narrative context; the significance of divine morphology is embedded in narrative.⁹⁷

In Homer, beauty typically does not feature in direct encounters between gods and humans because more often than not divine disguises go undetected. That gods take forms appropriate to what they do also explains to a large extent why divine beauty appears when it does. For his two epiphanies in Homer, Hermes adopts the same appearance like a

⁹³ Ibid. 2.792

⁹⁴ *Hom. Hy.* 3.399-439.

⁹⁵ *Hom. Il.* 13.72.

⁹⁶ See Platt 2011, 60-72; Petridou 2015, 37.

⁹⁷ For narratological readings of Greek epic, see de Jong 1987; 2001; 2014, 135-65.

young man ‘with the first sign of hair on his lip, when youth is at its most pleasing’ (πρῶτον ὑπηνήτη, τοῦ περ χαριεστάτη ἥβη).⁹⁸ In the *Iliad*, he assumes this guise to escort Priam on his perilous mission to ransom Hektor’s body from Achilles. Terrified at the sight of someone approaching as he proceeds to the Achaian camp, Priam is immediately reassured by this attractive stranger that he will protect him.⁹⁹ But it is not just the stranger’s kind words that reassure Priam: ‘even now’, Priam replies, ‘some god holds his hand over me, as he sends such a wayfarer to meet me, auspicious man, such as you are with your wonderful form and appearance, and your good sense’.¹⁰⁰ For Priam, it is both the young man’s good sense and good looks that signify the benevolent intervention of some god. His comment rests on an instinctive association of beauty with the gods; he does not suppose that the stranger’s beauty indicates his divinity but that it points to the working of divine will in some indirect way.¹⁰¹

In the *Odyssey*, Hermes adopts the same youthful appearance when he intercepts Odysseus en route to rescue his men from Kirke. There are further similarities between these episodes from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*: in both, Hermes intervenes to save and protect a mortal on a life-threatening mission and offers precise instructions on how to achieve it.¹⁰² In short,

⁹⁸ Hom. *Il.* 24.348; *Od.* 10.279.

⁹⁹ Hom. *Il.* 24.358-71.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 374-7: ἀλλ’ ἔτι τις καὶ ἐμεῖο θεῶν ὑπερέσχεθε χεῖρα, ἢ ὅς μοι τοιόνδ’ ἦκεν ὁδοιπόρον ἀντιβολῆσαι ἢ αἴσιον, οἷος δὴ σὺ δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἀγητός, ἢ πέπνυσαί τε νόω.

¹⁰¹ The pleasing irony of Priam’s comment is that the audience knows this stranger is a god.

¹⁰² Hom. *Il.* 24.460-7; *Od.* 10.286-306.

Hermes is motivated by benevolent concern for Priam and Odysseus; he does them both the greatest of favours, in Homeric terms, he offers them χάρις.¹⁰³ The narratological parallels between the two episodes strongly suggest that Hermes' common guise is about more than metrical expediency or the demands of versification. Despite having an infinite protean repertoire at his disposal, Hermes' adoption of the same appearance is connected with his similarly benevolent intentions in both encounters. Just as what he does for Priam and Odysseus is 'most pleasing' (χαριέστατος), so too is his appearance at that time when 'youth is at its most pleasing'. The coherence between how the god appears and how he acts brings the social and aesthetic senses of χάρις into unison: Hermes' 'most pleasing' appearance echoes and affirms his 'most pleasing' intentions.¹⁰⁴

Form also follows function when Athena reveals her identity to Odysseus. Set ashore by the Phaiakians, Odysseus wakes to the familiar sight of an unknown island. Informed by a shepherd that it is Ithaka, the hero conceals his joy with characteristic cunning. But this time he has been outmatched in the game of dissimulation: the shepherd transforms into 'a woman, beautiful, tall and skilled in splendid handiwork' (γυναικὶ ἰ καλῇ τε μεγάλῃ τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυίῃ).¹⁰⁵ She then identifies herself explicitly as 'Pallas Athena' and recalls her ever present support of Odysseus despite his inability to recognise her.¹⁰⁶ Combined with the

¹⁰³ For this use of χάρις, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 5.211; 9.613.

¹⁰⁴ On the marriage of the social and aesthetic senses of χάρις, see chapter 2.

¹⁰⁵ Hom. *Od.* 13.288-9. On this encounter see Clay 1983, 186-212.

¹⁰⁶ Hom. *Od.* 13.299-300. Cf. Hom. *Hy.* 3.480; *Hy.* 2.268; *Hy.* 7.56.

verbal declaration of her identity, Athena makes this particular appearance identifiable to Odysseus—a necessary tactic given her ability to be ‘like everything’.¹⁰⁷ Her beauty, height and appearance as a woman skilled in handiwork (whatever that looks like) are made recognisable to Odysseus as Athena’s defining attributes to facilitate their ‘undisguised’ communication. When she appears in the same guise later on, therefore, she has only to pop her head around the door of Eumaios’ hut for Odysseus to recognise her and understand her purpose.¹⁰⁸ Like Hermes, her beauty is tailored to a particular purpose: it provides the suitable guise for her ‘undisguised’ interaction with Odysseus.

The beauty of Hermes and Athena in these encounters is suited to the particular purpose of their intervention. For the former, it offers reassurance to his mortal counterparts by reflecting his ‘pleasing’ intentions. For the latter, it provides recognisability to facilitate her interaction with Odysseus. More than simply indicative of their divinity, their beauty reflects and affects the nature of their relationship with their mortal counterparts. The same holds for Helen’s recognition of Aphrodite in *Iliad* 3, though the notion of divine intentionality is subverted. Aphrodite appears ‘like an old woman born long ago’ (γρηῖ δέ μιν ἐῖκυῖα παλαιγενεῖ) to encourage Helen to go to Paris.¹⁰⁹ Her disguise fails: Helen recognises Aphrodite from ‘the most beautiful neck, desirable breast and flashing eyes of the goddess’ (θεᾶς περικαλλέα δειρὴν ἰ στήθεά θ’

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Pucci 1998, 69-70, 82.

¹⁰⁸ Hom. *Od.* 16.157-9.

¹⁰⁹ Hom. *Il.* 3.386.

ἰμερόεντα καὶ ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα).¹¹⁰ These beautiful bodily features, so at odds with her disguise as an old woman, give Aphrodite away.¹¹¹ This episode has been seen as exemplifying the insufficiency of the human form to contain the beauty and splendour of the divine body beneath.¹¹² But how can we reconcile this interpretation with the fact that in most cases gods go undetected by mortals in Homeric epic?

The narrative context of the scene and Helen's relationship with Aphrodite are instructive. Soon before this encounter, Iris appears to Helen disguised as Laodike to inform her about the duel between Paris and Menelaos.¹¹³ There she shows no sign of 'seeing through' Iris' disguise. When she does 'see through' Aphrodite's disguise a little later on, therefore, the implication is not that gods generally struggle to conceal their natural splendour, nor that Helen has special powers of divine recognition. It implies that she is able to recognise Aphrodite in particular. Helen's ability to see Aphrodite and understand her deceptive purpose underlines their special relationship. After all, this is not the first time Aphrodite has worked her charms on Helen; much of the power of this scene derives from its implicit reworking of events that caused the Trojan War—Paris' seduction and abduction of Helen orchestrated by Aphrodite. But now Helen knows all too well what Aphrodite is like. Helen's recognition of Aphrodite may suggest the inadequacy of the goddess'

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 396-7.

¹¹¹ The dissonance between Aphrodite's disguise and her revealing features partly encouraged the Alexandrian critic Aristarchos to athetise these lines; see Kirk 1985, 322-3; Hunter 2018, 68-70.

¹¹² E.g. Perkins 1985, 10; Petridou 2015, 38.

¹¹³ Hom. *Il.* 3.121-45.

disguise to conceal her beautiful divine body, but more than that it highlights the peculiar intimacy, as their ensuing conversation shows, between Aphrodite and her closest mortal counterpart.¹¹⁴

Beauty may signify divine presence—whether intentionally for Athena, or involuntarily for Aphrodite—but its significance is rooted in specific relationships between gods and humans. Such relations can change suddenly, of course, and it is for this reason that in their *Homeric Hymns*, Aphrodite and Demeter manifest their beauty how and when they do. To give Aphrodite a taste of her own medicine, Zeus inflicts the goddess with ‘sweet desire’ for the mortal Anchises, whose ‘form like the immortals’ and ‘beauty from the gods’ (θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος) at least warrants Aphrodite’s affection.¹¹⁵ After the Charites have bathed, perfumed and adorned her with gold and ‘beautiful clothes’, Aphrodite heads to Ida and appears before Anchises looking ‘like an unmarried maiden in height and appearance, so as not to scare him when he set eyes on her’ (παρθένῳ ἀδμήτῃ μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ὁμοίῃ, ἵ μή μιν ταρβήσειεν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι νοήσας).¹¹⁶

By changing her ‘height and appearance’, Aphrodite conceals her divinity to inspire the hero’s desire rather than fear. And to good effect: Anchises wonders at ‘appearance, height and shining clothes’, her ‘robe brighter than the blaze of fire’, her ‘twisted bracelets and radiant ear-buds’,

¹¹⁴ See Hom. *Il.* 3.399-417, esp. 415.

¹¹⁵ Hom. *Hy.* 5.53, 55, 77. On Aphrodite’s punishment, see Detienne and Sissa 2000, 36-8. On the Olympian politics in the *Hymn*, see Clay 1989, 152-201. On the *Hymn* generally, see Smith 1981a; Rudhardt 1991; Faulkner 2008; Olson 2012.

¹¹⁶ Hom. *Hy.* 5.61-5, 82-3.

her 'exquisite necklaces, beautiful, golden and exceptionally ornate; they shone like the moon around her tender breasts, a wonder to behold'.¹¹⁷ The focus on her beautiful, coruscating ornaments allows the audience to see and understand why 'eros seized Anchises' (Ἀγχίσῃν δ' ἔρος εἶλεν).¹¹⁸ So her beauty achieves the right response but the disguise is only so convincing. Anchises immediately assumes she is a goddess and vows to give her 'fine offerings', though he is uncertain which goddess she might be.¹¹⁹ For Anchises, her beauty signifies divinity, and of course he is right. But because anthropomorphic beauty is an inherently ambiguous (and therefore exploitable) mark of divine presence, Aphrodite can deny her divinity with enough plausibility to persuade him to go to bed with her: 'I am no god. Why do you liken me to the immortals?' (οὐ τίς τοι θεός εἰμι. τί μ' ἀθανάτησιν εἴσκεις;).¹²⁰

With signs of lingering disbelief Anchises accepts her story and off they go to bed. The narrator again focuses on Aphrodite's 'shining adornment' (κόσμον... φαεινόν) when Anchises undresses her.¹²¹ Like the description of her initial appearance, her body is only tantalisingly present as he removes her finery. It is her ornaments divested rather than her body revealed that the narrator portrays—a descriptive focus variously interpreted as a tacit recognition of the incomprehensibility of divine bodies

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 85-90: εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε καὶ εἵματα σιγαλόεντα. ἰ πέπλον... φαεινότερον πυρὸς αὐγῆς... ἐπιγναμπτὰς ἔλικας κάλυκας τε φαεινάς, ἰ ὄρμοι... περικαλλέες... καλοὶ, χρύσειοι παμποίκιοι· ὥς δὲ σελήνη ἰ στήθεσιν ἄμφ' ἀπαλοῖσιν ἐλάμπετο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 91.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 92-106.

¹²⁰ Ibid. 109. Cf. Hom. *Od.* 16.187.

¹²¹ Ibid. 155-66.

and a means of making Aphrodite's body indistinguishable from the imagined human body of an 'unmarried maiden'.¹²² Comparison with similar scenes of female seduction in Archaic epic suggests an alternative explanation. The same focus on elaborate material adornment rather than the body appears in the description of Hera before her seduction of Zeus in *Iliad* 14, of Aphrodite when she inspires the Olympians' desire in *Homeric Hymn* 6, and of Pandora's irresistible beauty in *Theogony* and *Works and Days*.¹²³ The emphasis on Aphrodite's jewellery and clothes is therefore conventional: the point is that she embodies an erotic paradigm of female beauty, rich with power to seduce and deceive.¹²⁴

This interpretation is underpinned by Aphrodite's revelation of a different kind of beauty for a different purpose in her full epiphany to Anchises. While he dozes in post-coital slumber, Aphrodite dresses, enlarges her height,

... κάλλος δὲ παρειάων ἀπέλαμπεν

ἄμβροτον, οἷόν τ' ἔστιν ἔυστεφάνου Κυthereίης.¹²⁵

'and from her cheeks shone immortal beauty, such as belongs to fair-crowned Kythereia'.

¹²² Platt 2011, 68-9; Osborne 2011, 188. Cf. Gordon 1980, 20.

¹²³ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 14.159-87; Hes. *Theog.* 570-616; *Op.* 53-105; *Hom. Hy.* 6.

¹²⁴ Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.21ff. where Vice (rather than Virtue) is seductively dolled up to lead Herakles down an erroneous path.

¹²⁵ *Hom. Hy.* 5.174-5.

The emphatic, isolated position of ‘immortal’ at the start of the line underscores Aphrodite’s change in appearance from plausibly human to definitively divine. She then wakes the hero and asks him to consider,

... εἴ τοι ὁμοίῃ ἐγὼν ἰνδάλλομαι εἶναι

οἷν δὴ με τὸ πρῶτον ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι νόησας;

...

ὥς δὲ ἶδεν δειρὴν τε καὶ ὄμματα κάλ’ Ἀφροδίτης

τάρβησέν τε καὶ ὅσσε παρακλιδὸν ἔτραπεν ἄλλῃ.¹²⁶

“whether I look the same as I did when you first set eyes on me”...

and when he [Anchises] saw the neck and beautiful eyes of Aphrodite, he was afraid and averted his gaze’.

For her first epiphany, Aphrodite’s radiant ornaments arouse Anchises; one type of beauty brings god and human together. For her second epiphany, the ‘immortal beauty’ shining from her body—her ‘cheeks’, ‘neck’ and ‘eyes’—terrifies Anchises; another type of beauty draws god and human apart. The goddess uses her ‘immortal beauty’ (κάλλος... ἄμβροτον) to manifest her divinity and mark a change in her relationship with Anchises. Her invitation for him to consider her change in appearance highlights this method of divine communication through bodily form. No longer is she the maiden to-be-tamed, the object of his desire; she is a goddess, more powerful than him, and fundamentally different from him, as her ensuing lecture on divine immortality and human mortality demonstrates. As in her

¹²⁶ Ibid. 178-82.

stories about Ganymede and Tithonos, so in the direct action of the *Hymn*, beauty acts as a medium for both uniting and dividing mortals and immortals. For her two epiphanies, this process is a conscious choice by Aphrodite as she uses different forms of beauty to exercise control over Anchises.¹²⁷ In the first, it is the erotic beauty of radiant materiality to arouse his desire, mask their differences and effect her seduction. In the second, it is the ‘immortal beauty’ of her body to inspire his fear, reassert their differences and ensure he will be compliant with her instructions about their son and fear boasting of their affair.¹²⁸

Beauty’s active role in shaping the relationship between god and human, and more specifically, in the exercise of divine power, reappear in *Homeric Hymn 2*.¹²⁹ Grieving over the loss of Persephone, Demeter withdraws from divine company to wander among mortals, disguising her identity by ‘concealing/destroying her appearance’ (εἶδος ἀμαλδύνουσα). Like Aphrodite’s first appearance to Anchises, she assumes a human form, ‘looking like an old woman born long ago, debarred from motherhood and the gifts of garland-loving Aphrodite’ when she winds up in Eleusis.¹³⁰ In both *Hymns*, it is the goddess who is initially described as looking like a human and the humans she encounters that look like gods: like Anchises with his ‘form like the immortals’, the girls who meet Demeter are ‘like goddesses in the flower of youth’.¹³¹ This initial reversal only intensifies the

¹²⁷ Cf. Billet-Dubois 2011 who reads Aphrodite’s actions as an ‘erotic *aristeia*’.

¹²⁸ See *Hom. Hy.* 5.256-90.

¹²⁹ On resemblances between the two *Hymns*, see Richardson 1974, 42-43; Sowa 1984, 44-51; Clay 1989, 232; Faulkner 2008, 38-40; Platt 2011, 63-65.

¹³⁰ *Hom. Hy.* 2.94, 101-2.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 108. Cf. Faulkner 2008, 11.

subsequent reassertions of the proper order through the manifestation of divine appearances.

Having recognised something ‘godlike’ about the old lady, as Anchises did about the unmarried maiden, the girls and their mother Metaneira accept Demeter into their household as nurse to baby Demophon.¹³² The full revelation of her divinity is postponed till a moment of miscomprehension re-establishes the distance between god and mortal household. At the sight of Demeter placing Demophon in the fire to make him ‘ageless and immortal’, Metaneira fails to understand the deity’s good intentions and screams in fear for her son’s life. The rift between divine and human thus emerges around the issue of death. Angered by Metaneira’s ignorance, Demeter declares that Demophon can no longer escape death as she intended.¹³³ The verbal declaration of her identity—‘I am Demeter’—is accompanied by its visual manifestation:

“Ὡς εἰποῦσα θεὰ μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ἄμειψε
γῆρας ἀπωσαμένη, περὶ τ’ ἀμφὶ τε κάλλος ἄητο·
ὁδμή δ’ ἱμερόεσσα θυθέντων ἀπὸ πέπλων
σκίδνατο, τῆλε δὲ φέγγος ἀπὸ χροὸς ἀθανάτοιο
λάμπε θεᾶς, ξανθαὶ δὲ κόμαι κατενήνοθεν ὦμους,
αὐγῆς δ’ ἐπλήσθη πυκινὸς δόμος ἀστεροπῆς ὥς.”¹³⁴

¹³² *Hom. Hy.* 2.159; cf. 188-90.

¹³³ On gods denigrating humans in epiphanies, see West 1966, 159-60.

¹³⁴ *Hom. Hy.* 2.275-80. For comparison of this epiphany with Athena’s more modest appearance in *Hom. Il.* 1.193ff., see Kearns 2004, 71-2.

‘As she spoke the goddess changed her height and appearance, casting old age aside, beauty wafting all around her; a lovely fragrance spread from her scented garments, radiance shone far from the goddess’ immortal skin, her golden hair flowed over her shoulders, and the sturdy palace was filled with brightness like lightning.’

For the same reason Anchises averted his eyes upon seeing Aphrodite’s ‘immortal beauty’, Metaneira is temporarily paralysed, unable to withstand this intense multisensory experience of divinity.¹³⁵ While Demophon is destined to mortality thanks to his mother’s ignorance, Demeter casually ‘casts old age aside’. This dramatic spectacle, then, is about more than the goddess revealing herself as Demeter. It illuminates her irreconcilable difference from mortals by virtue of her immortality and agelessness; in place of old age, there appears the extraordinary ‘beauty’ that manifests this divine nature, emanating from her ‘immortal skin’. The beauty of Aphrodite and Demeter in their full epiphanies not only betrays their divinity: it is tied to the exposure of the great fault-line between mortals and immortals—death. In both cases, the representation of divine beauty gives form to the ideas of vitality and mortality that structure the divine-human dichotomy.

More specifically, beauty allows both goddesses to shape their relationship with mortals. If the form of their beauty reflects their divinity and therefore difference from mortals, its affective intensity makes mortals

¹³⁵ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 20.131: χαλεποὶ δὲ θεοὶ φαίνεσθαι ἐναργεῖς. See Giardino 2005; Petridou 2015, 37-8.

feel and experience their power. The beauty of the gods in epic narratives of epiphany is not a simple physical property, like the height (μέγεθος) with which it is grouped as a standard mark of divinity. Their beauty demands a response: by defining their appearance and affecting the humans they encounter, beauty serves as an effective tool for gods to communicate visually with mortals and dictate the terms of their changing relationships. In her *Hymn*, Aphrodite goes further by harnessing the manifold effects of beauty to manipulate Anchises according to her capricious desires; an appropriate exercise of divine power, perhaps, for a goddess of beauty, desire and seduction.

Alongside immortality, Henrichs identifies power and anthropomorphism as the two other defining characteristics of Greek gods.¹³⁶ Epic epiphanies of gods in human form displaying their extraordinary power confirm the point. Yet Petridou is right to emphasise that human form is just one epiphanic possibility: Athena makes her divinity ‘manifest’ (ἐναργής) as a bird, Apollo as a supernatural ‘radiance’ (σέλας).¹³⁷ In epic epiphanies, the important distinction about divine anthropomorphism is that it provides the best form for the gods’ intimate interaction and communication with mortals.¹³⁸ Of course, a supernatural conflagration communicates a message too, but it is significant that when Apollo needs to converse directly with the Cretan sailors about establishing his cult, he appears ‘like

¹³⁶ Henrichs 2010, 32-7.

¹³⁷ Hom. *Od.* 3.371-84, 419-20; Hom. *Hy.* 3.440-7. See Petridou 2015, 29-106.

¹³⁸ Cf. Bierl 2004, 47-8; Platt 2011, 69.

a man, vigorous, strong, and in the prime of youth' (ἀνέρι εἰδόμενος αἰζηῷ τε κρατερῷ τε, ἢ πρωθήβῃ).¹³⁹

Divine anthropomorphism, then, addresses the fundamental theological notion of commensurability between gods and humans, whereby common form mirrors common values, interests and understanding.¹⁴⁰ It seems this is why Xenophanes got so exercised: contrary to the popular conception of the gods disseminated by epic poets, Xenophanes envisages a greatest god 'in no way similar to mortals either in body or thought'.¹⁴¹ But a closer look at gods' bodies in Archaic epic, especially in their epiphanies, shows that Xenophanes missed the mark. Divine bodies are both similar to and different from those of mortals.¹⁴² The basic form of their bodies may be anthropomorphic even when they manifest their divinity, but they are crucially different in degree: bigger, brighter, more beautiful. The dynamic interplay between similarity and difference is in large part what makes these epic visions of the gods such compelling and profound sources of theological reflection and enquiry.

Anthropomorphism characterises the gods of epic but it is the particular character of divine anthropomorphism that defines their nature and relationship with mortals, distinguished by certain common attributes like height, radiance and beauty. Beauty is different, however, in that it subsumes both height and radiance, which are among the most common

¹³⁹ *Hom. Hy.* 3.449-50.

¹⁴⁰ See Vernant 1991, 27-49; Buxton 2009, 157-90; Henrichs 2010, 32-5; Osborne 2011, 185-215.

¹⁴¹ Xenophanes, B23 (DK); see Trépanier 2010, 276-81.

¹⁴² Vernant 1991, 27-49; Steiner 2001, 45-6; Petridou, 8, 42ff.

properties of beautiful people and objects in Archaic epic.¹⁴³ Furthermore, the beauty of gods' bodies is marked by its power to affect humans, thereby undermining the claim that divine anthropomorphism is 'an intrinsically passive divine quality'.¹⁴⁴ On the contrary, the gods' anthropomorphic beauty performs an active role in creating and dictating their relations with mortals. The beauty of the gods in early Greek epic is not merely an outward manifestation of their power, immortality and agelessness. It is one of the very sources of their power.

As for the general significance of beauty in epic epiphanies, the most obvious point to emerge is the strength of the association between beauty and the gods. Even the light with which Athena guides Odysseus and Telemachos is 'most beautiful' (περικαλλές); 'this', Odysseus tells his amazed son, 'is the way of the gods'.¹⁴⁵ For all its potential ambiguity, the fact that beauty repeatedly signifies divine presence underscores the inseparability of beauty from divine nature. In these remarkable opportunities for direct apprehension of the divine, what mortals often see, experience and learn about the gods is their beauty.

The peculiar significance of this aspect of Greek epiphanies is clarified by comparison with Near Eastern narratives of encounter between gods and humans. Mesopotamian, Ugaritic, Egyptian and Hittite myths similarly

¹⁴³ For height and beauty, see e.g. Hom. *Od.* 6.102-8; 6.230-7; 8.19-23; 18.191-6; 23.156-63; cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 5.1.5; Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1123b5; Richardson 1974, 252. For radiance, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 6.294-5, 401; 14.183-5; 18.130-1; 19.370-80; *Od.* 6.237; 15.107-8; 18.196, 298.; 22.317-9; *Hom. Hy.* 5.85-90. On the aesthetics of radiance in Greek culture, see Prier 1989, 50-6; Maclachlan 1993, 34f.; Parisinou 2000; Steiner 2001, 97-8; Neer 2010; Konstan 2014, 42.

¹⁴⁴ Henrichs 2010, 33.

¹⁴⁵ Hom. *Od.* 19.34, 43. See Bierl 2004. Cf. the aestheticisation of Dionysos' apparitions of natural phenomena at *Hom. Hy.* 7.40-2.

portray gods and heroes in close contact. The Sumerian story about Shukaletuda and Inana, and the Hittite Illuyanka Tales about Hupasiya and Inara, represent mortal men sleeping with goddesses like their Greek counterparts.¹⁴⁶ There are also some common features with Greek epiphanies: like Demeter's epiphany to Metaneira, radiance and fragrance manifest divine presence in some Egyptian royal inscriptions.¹⁴⁷ Radiance characterises the manifestation of the gods in many Near Eastern literary traditions, as when Ezekiel sees 'the dazzling light that shows the presence of Israel's God', and Inana's 'stellar brightness' illuminates Lugalbanda in the mountain cave.¹⁴⁸ While Inana's 'brightness' demonstrates her awesome divine power, it might also implicitly convey her beauty, given the aesthetic value attached to radiance in Mesopotamian cultures.¹⁴⁹

What is unparalleled in the Near Eastern mythological traditions, however, is the explicit and recurring emphasis on beauty found in Greek epiphanies. This is not to say that deities of the various Near Eastern religions are not portrayed as beautiful; they certainly are, but epiphany is not one of the primary contexts of their aestheticisation as it is in Greek

¹⁴⁶ For Shukaletuda and Inana, see *ETCSL* 1.3.3. For the Illuyanka Tales, see Hoffner 1999, 10-14. Cf. Ishtar's attraction to Gilgamesh's 'beauty'; Dalley 2008, 77-80 (SBV 6.i-iii).

¹⁴⁷ See Hornung 1996, 133-5.

¹⁴⁸ *ETCSL* 1.8.2.1 (lines 176-82); Ezekiel 8:4. Cf. Ezekiel 1. On the radiance (*melâm/melammu*) of Mesopotamian deities, see Oppenheim 1943; Cassin 1968; Winter 1994; West 1997, 113-14; Rochberg 2009, 49ff. On their radiance in epiphanies, see Ataç 2007.

¹⁴⁹ On the aesthetic value of radiance in Mesopotamia, see Winter 1994.

epic.¹⁵⁰ Another peculiar feature of Greek epiphanies is the challenge for mortals of recognising a god. Shukaletuda, Hupasiya and Lugalbanda, for example, have no trouble recognising the deities with whom they interact. Likewise in the Ugaritic myths of Kirtu and Aqhat, it is simply assumed that gods and humans know who each other are.¹⁵¹ What makes this distinction more intriguing is that Near Eastern gods exercise the same metamorphic powers that are the fountainhead of Greek interest in the challenges of identifying divinity.¹⁵² Like Greek gods, they even disguise themselves in their interactions with mortals, as in the Egyptian Three Tales of Wonder and God's encounter with Abraham in Genesis.¹⁵³ Interest in the visual clues of recognising divinity, however, is not attested in the various mythological traditions of the Near East.¹⁵⁴

Since beauty is one of the main visual clues, this interest would seem to explain beauty's prevalence in Greek epic epiphanies. Yet understanding its unparalleled significance in Greek epiphanies is a much greater task, for which the character of early Greek epic, its views on the gods and broader cultural attitudes to beauty should be considered. As the ancient

¹⁵⁰ For the beauty of Ugaritic deities, see De Moor 1987, 75, 109-16, 118, 126, 144, 197-8; of Egyptian deities, see Lichtheim 2006b, 26-7, 35, 41, 44, 47, 82, 88-9, 90-3, 97, 105, 124; cf. Green 2001.

¹⁵¹ See De Moor 1987, 193, 234, 237.

¹⁵² See Hom. *Od.* 13.312-13.

¹⁵³ Three Tales of Wonder (Lichtheim 2006a, 220-2). Cf. Horus and Seth (Lichtheim 2006b, 214-23). For comparison of the episode in Gen. 18 with other Near Eastern narratives of divine-human encounter, see Hamori 2008.

¹⁵⁴ This is despite the fact that visual and visionary experiences are emphasised and theologically significant in, for example, Mesopotamian texts and votive statuary; see Winter 2000. The emphasis on visual aspects of epiphany in Greek epic is not absolute; we also find principally aural epiphanies, especially in the *Iliad*, e.g. *Il.* 5.121-33; 15.236ff.; 22.214ff; cf. Hes. *Theog.* 22ff. See Pucci 1998, 69-96.

scholia observe, visualisation is one of Homer's defining poetic techniques.¹⁵⁵ The rich descriptive vocabulary and attention to visual detail allow the audience to see the action unfold with a 'vividness' (ἐναργεῖα) that mimics real life.¹⁵⁶ The same visually-oriented approach predominates in the epiphanies narrated in the *Homeric Hymns*. The emphasis on visual beauty in epiphanies therefore fits within this general pattern of visualisation in early Greek epic, motivated in part by the poetic ideal of 'vividness' (ἐναργεῖα). The vividness of poetry echoes and evokes the vividness characteristic of the gods when they reveal themselves to mortals.¹⁵⁷

Poetry is not an island, however, and this visual emphasis in epiphanies should not be divorced from broader attitudes to sight in Greek culture. Its privileged epistemological status is epitomised by Aristotle: 'we prefer sight [τό ὄραν], generally speaking, to all the other senses. The reason for this is that of all the senses, sight best helps us to know things [γνωρίζειν], and reveals [δηλοῖ] many distinctions'.¹⁵⁸ If how gods appear is central to what humans learn about them, and if divine appearances are distinguished by their beauty, then it makes sense that beauty should

¹⁵⁵ See Schol. bT *ad Il.* 6.467: 'we do not just hear about the events but see them too'. For the visual poetics of Greek epic, see e.g. Clay 2011; Lovatt 2013; Lovatt and Vout 2013.

¹⁵⁶ On ἐναργεῖα, see Zanker 1981; Koch-Piettre 1999; Webb 2009, 87-96; Plett 2012. On how Homer's visual poetics relate to Mesopotamian literature, see Haubold 2013, 34-44. Cf. Ford 1992, 55; Hunter 2018, 84.

¹⁵⁷ For gods making themselves 'vivid', see Hom. *Il.* 20.131; *Od.* 3.420; 7.201; 16.161. On the relationship between epiphany and representation, see Platt 2011. On *enargeia* in the imagery of Archaic temples, see pp. 240-1 and 258-9 below.

¹⁵⁸ Arist. *Metaph.* 980a (trans. Tredennick). Cf. Pl. *Phaedr.* 250d; *Ti.* 61d-68e. On sight and its epistemology in Graeco-Roman antiquity, see Squire 2016a.

characterise the visual hermeneutics of divine manifestation. And since anthropomorphic beauty suggests but is no guarantee of divine presence, a crucial interpretative ambiguity emerges: is this extraordinarily beautiful person human or divine?¹⁵⁹ Such ambiguity provides poets with a rich theme to explore, as they imagine it exploited by mortals, like Odysseus likening Nausikaa to Artemis to ensure his successful supplication, and by gods, like Aphrodite denying her divinity to seduce Anchises.¹⁶⁰ According to Herodotus' account of Peisistratos' famous ruse, this exploitable ambiguity was more than poetic fantasy. It could even be a political weapon: by dressing a tall and beautiful woman in armour like Athena to escort him into the city, Peisistratos apparently regained control of Athens.¹⁶¹

Alongside the high aesthetic and epistemological value of viewing and visualisation in Archaic Greek poetry and culture, the nature of contemporary attitudes to beauty may also underlie its special significance in epic narratives of epiphany. Representations of beauty in Archaic (and Classical) literature—whether, say, of people, music or anything else—are marked by their emphasis on effects.¹⁶² This is often discernible in the very terminology: affectivity is written into many Greek words and expressions for beauty, like the 'pleasure' implicit in χάρις and χαρίεις, the 'delight' in ἄγαλμα and ἀγλαΐη, and the many words for 'lovely' or 'desirable' like

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Platt 2011, esp. 12-20; Petridou 2015, 37.

¹⁶⁰ Hom. *Od.* 6.149-70; *Hom. Hy.* 5.109.

¹⁶¹ Hdt. 1.60. See Pax 1962; Van Straten 1976; Versnel 1987; Sinos 1993; Connor 2000; Platt 2011; Petridou 2015, 147-56.

¹⁶² On the effects of musical beauty in Archaic and Classical literature, see Peponi 2012. Cf. Osborne 2011, 34-5.

ἐρατεινός, ἐπῆρατος, and ἱμερόεις.¹⁶³ This is not the case for another Greek word for ‘beauty’, κάλλος, but still a very strong connection with effect—desire—appears in the narrative contexts of its use, though Aphrodite and Demeter’s epiphanies show it could be terrifying too.¹⁶⁴

Indeed, it is in narrative and explicit description that the manifold effects of beauty in Greek literature—love, desire, pleasure, admiration, delight, wonder, reverence, awe, fear—are most striking. To convey Helen’s beauty in *Iliad* 3, Homer underscores its extraordinary effects: the Trojan elders observe that ‘she is terribly like the immortal goddesses to look at’, and agree that such beauty is a justifiable cause for ten years suffering in war, even if now they wish she would leave.¹⁶⁵ Helen’s godlike beauty exercises a godlike power over the Trojans and Achaeans. Like Helen here, so with the gods in their epiphanies, it is hard, perhaps wrong, to separate beauty from power.¹⁶⁶ The inherent power of beauty and the inherent power of the gods further cement the bonds between them in early Greek epic. It seems reasonable to suggest, therefore, that this particular conception of beauty focussed on its effects contributed to its special significance in Greek epic epiphanies: in these moments when gods impress their power on mortals, they draw on beauty’s power to exert

¹⁶³ On χάρις and χαρίεις, see Latacz 1966, 78-98. On ἄγαλμα, see pp. 287-91 below; Scheer 2000, 8-18; Bettinetti 2001, 27-37; Day 2010, 85-129; Gaifman 2012, 11, 57, 82. On the Greek terminology for beauty, see pp. 25-34 above.

¹⁶⁴ On κάλλος, see Konstan 2014; 2015a; 2015b.

¹⁶⁵ Hom. *Il.* 3.156-60.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Pl. *Hp. Mai.* 295e8, where Sokrates suggests then refutes the idea that *dunamis*, ‘ability’, ‘power’, is the beautiful (see Hyland 2008, 21-2, 82-3). That the power or agency of beauty is fundamental to its perception is a different point; Hyland 2008, 82-3. Cf. Scruton 2011, xi: ‘beauty demands to be noticed; it speaks to us directly like the voice of an intimate friend. If there are people who are indifferent to beauty, then it is surely because they do not perceive it.’

their own, to influence and affect mortals as they choose. Nor is this process whereby divine agency elides with the agency of beauty limited to narratives of epiphany.

The power of beauty and the gods

In the *Odyssey*, one of Athena's favourite ways of aiding Odysseus and his family is by beautifying them.¹⁶⁷ How she does this appears carefully calculated to produce certain social effects appropriate to the particular person and situation. On two occasions for Odysseus and one for Penelope, Athena exploits the erotic agency of beauty to benefit them in various ways. After his supplication of Nausikaa in *Odyssey* 6, Odysseus is unknowingly given a sparkling makeover by Athena: she pours 'charis on his head and shoulders', making him 'bigger and stouter' and his hair like flowers of hyacinth.¹⁶⁸ The effect of this shower of χάρις is that Odysseus appears 'glistening with beauty and grace' (κάλλεϊ καὶ χάρισι στίλβων).¹⁶⁹ Though Athena's purpose is not explicit, Nausikaa's reaction supplies an explanation: she marvels at Odysseus' transformed appearance, comments how 'he looks like a god' and quietly longs for a such a man to be her husband.¹⁷⁰ By sparking Nausikaa's admiration and erotic interest in him, Athena ensures Odysseus' safe passage into Phaiakian society. Likewise, Athena beautifies Odysseus in precisely the

¹⁶⁷ See Müller 1966; Clay 1983, 161ff.

¹⁶⁸ Hom. *Od.* 6.230-5.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 237.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 237-46. For more on this scene, see pp. 277-84 below.

same fashion just before his decisive meeting with Penelope after he has killed the suitors: the same erotic effect appears intended to facilitate their long-awaited reunion.¹⁷¹

When Penelope is the subject of Athena's tricks, the erotic power of beauty to manipulate human affairs becomes clearest. Athena inspires Penelope to present herself to the suitors 'so that she might flutter the hearts of the suitors and win greater honour from her husband and son'.¹⁷² Athena achieves this by endowing Penelope with 'immortal gifts, so that the Achaians would marvel [θηησαΐατ'] at her':¹⁷³ she washes her face 'with immortal beauty' (κάλλει... ἀμβροσίῳ), depicted like a physical ointment that Aphrodite uses 'when she joins the desirable dance of the Charites' (εὖτ' ἂν ἦν Χαρίτων χορὸν ἱμερόεντα).¹⁷⁴ And Athena 'made her bigger and fuller in appearance, and whiter than sawn ivory'.¹⁷⁵ The erotic power of Penelope's divinely-endowed κάλλος is palpable: at the sight of her, the suitors went 'weak at the knees, their hearts charmed by eros, and they all prayed to go to bed with her'.¹⁷⁶ In this state of erotic enchantment, the suitors are easily exploitable, as Penelope coaxes from them a shower of gifts vainly hoped to win her affection—much to

¹⁷¹ Hom. *Od.* 23.157-61 = 6.230-4. On the parallel between these scenes, see Müller 1968, 146-7.

¹⁷² Hom. *Od.* 18.160-3.

¹⁷³ Ibid. 191. On θηέομαι and related verbs, see Mette 1960.

¹⁷⁴ Hom. *Od.* 18.192-4. On the desirable chorus, see pp. 118-41 below.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. 195-6. That Penelope is made 'bigger and stouter', like Odysseus, demonstrates two common ideals of beauty for men and women; see Pasquali 1942, 141-2.

¹⁷⁶ Hom. *Od.* 18.212-13.

Odysseus' delight, for he recognises Penelope's ulterior motives.¹⁷⁷ And so Athena achieves her aim of enhancing Penelope's honour in the eyes of her husband. The narrative sequence therefore reveals how the goddess harnesses the erotic agency of κάλλος to manipulate the suitors and benefit Odysseus and Penelope.

On other occasions in the epic, Athena employs a different kind of beauty for a different social effect. Before the Phaiakians, Athena pours 'divine beauty' (θεσπεσίην... χάριν) on Odysseus, again making him 'bigger and stouter', this time 'so that he would be dear to all the Phaiakians, and respected and revered' (ὥς κεν Φαιήκεσσι φίλος πάντεσσι γένοιτο | δεινός τ' αἰδοῖός τε).¹⁷⁸ As in the episode with Nausikaa, Odysseus' χάρις has a pleasing effect, the sort that may make the Phaiakians' wonder at the sight of him and make him φίλος—'dear', 'welcomed', 'loved'.¹⁷⁹ But this pleasing effect is untouched by the erotic undertones that characterised the episodes with Nausikaa and Penelope. By contrast, this χάρις may engender the perception of Odysseus as δεινός τ' αἰδοῖός τε, 'respected and revered', two qualities that in Homer underline social authority.¹⁸⁰ Athena's beautification, then, is tailored to the context, as she endeavours to help Odysseus win honour among the Phaiakians. Such social prestige is what Telemachos lacks at the beginning of the *Odyssey*. Accordingly, when Telemachos is en route to the assembly to stake a claim to his inheritance, Athena pours the same

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. 281-3.

¹⁷⁸ Hom. *Od.* 8.19-22.

¹⁷⁹ See Pasquali 1942, 140.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 3.172; 18.394; *Od.* 14.234.

‘divine beauty [θεσπεσίην... χάριν] on him. And everyone marvelled [θηεῦντο] at him as he came’.¹⁸¹ Rather than an object of the erotic gaze, Telemachos attracts their respectful admiration; that the elders make way for him to take his father’s seat reinforces this sense of enhanced social authority.¹⁸²

On multiple occasions, therefore, Athena beautifies Odysseus and his family to benefit them in ways appropriate to their social situations and personal predicaments.¹⁸³ Beauty’s efficacy as a divine tool for manipulating human affairs depends on the power of its social effects, on its power to alter and affect how humans relate. If Athena harnesses these effects out of benevolence for Odysseus and his family, Zeus’ fabrication of Pandora in Hesiod’s *Theogony* and *Works and Days* represents the polar opposite. In both poems, the first woman is devised by Zeus to punish mankind for Prometheus’ theft of fire. In both, her beauty plays a instrumental role in fulfilling the god’s malevolent purpose.¹⁸⁴

The narrative of Prometheus and Zeus in the *Theogony* is structured by the repeated motifs of gift and counter-gift, deception and retaliation.¹⁸⁵ The cycle ends with Pandora: she is Zeus’ trump card, the deception to end all deceptions. In her fabrication by Hephaistos and Athena, the focus

¹⁸¹ Hom. *Od.* 2.12-13.

¹⁸² Cf. Hom. *Od.* 17.63-4. Athena’s tricks aid Telemachos, but as the ensuing scene shows, he still has a way to go.

¹⁸³ Cf. her rejuvenation of Laertes at Hom. *Od.* 23.367-9. Note the counter example to these beautifications at *Od.* 13.397-403 where Athena conceals Odysseus’ beauty and transforms him into a beggar in order to assist him. Cf. Kirke’s transformations of Odysseus’ men at *Od.* 10.239-40, 393-6.

¹⁸⁴ See Vernant 1981 for the classic structuralist interpretation of Hesiod’s Pandora.

¹⁸⁵ See Vernant 1974, 178-94; Clay 2003, 101.

on her elaborate ornaments indicates the source of her intractable power: she is decked out in 'silver-white clothing', 'a richly embroidered veil, a wonder to behold', a garland of 'budding, desirable flowers of grass' and a 'crown of gold' decorated with 'as many terrible beasts that land and sea nurtures... and beauty [χάρις] wafted over them all.'¹⁸⁶ The contrast between the frightening animals and the 'beauty that wafts over them' mirrors the paradox that Pandora embodies: she is a καλὸν κακόν, 'a beautiful evil', whose attractive exterior masks the 'evil' she brings on men, draining their livelihood like drones feeding endlessly on the labour of bees.¹⁸⁷

Pandora's beauty is the instrument of Zeus' deception: her beauty lures men to her and ensures they are bound to the hardships she brings.¹⁸⁸ In *Works and Days*, Pandora is similarly conceived in paradoxical terms as 'an evil in which all will take pleasure in their hearts, embracing their own evil' (κακόν, ᾧ κεν ἅπαντες ἰτέρπωνται κατὰ θυμὸν, ἐὼν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες).¹⁸⁹ Again she embodies a deceptive contrast between outer and inner, between her beauty's promise of happiness and the destructive reality she creates. On the one hand, Zeus commands Hephaistos to 'liken her in the face to the immortal goddesses, to the beautiful lovely appearance of a maiden [παρθενικῆς καλὸν εἶδος ἐπήρατον]', and Aphrodite 'to pour beauty [χάριν] on her head and terrible

¹⁸⁶ Hes. *Theog.* 574-84. Cf. Loraux 1993, 81: 'the first woman *is* her adornments - she has no body'.

¹⁸⁷ Hes. *Theog.* 585; see 594-612.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Clay 2003, 102.

¹⁸⁹ Hes. *Op.* 57-8.

longing and limb-devouring cares'.¹⁹⁰ On the other, Hermes sets 'in her a dog's mind and thievish character'.¹⁹¹ The dissonance between her appearance and character is what ensures her efficacy as a punishment for mankind. Her beauty is the bait, her nature the hook.

As the progenitor of 'the destructive race of women', Pandora is Hesiod's ur-woman:¹⁹² the implication is that her qualities are those of women generally, which thereby perpetuate Zeus' punishment of mankind. As much as an instrument of divine power, Pandora reflects what Hesiod perceives to be the problem with female beauty: its power to attract, entice and deceive with the false promise of happiness.¹⁹³ Rooted in the knowledge of its power, this indictment and fear of female beauty is not confined to Hesiod: Helen's beauty in the *Iliad* is a similarly destructive force—the cause, no less, of ten years suffering in war.¹⁹⁴

And although Zeus can use this power to enforce his own in *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, in *Iliad* 14 the tables are turned as Hera uses seduction as her weapon of deception on Zeus. Even the most powerful of gods falls victim to the charms of female beauty, as Hera knows all too well from Zeus' long list of amours.¹⁹⁵ To exploit her husband's weakness, Hera appears before him decked out in the armour of eros: her body

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. 62-3, 65-6.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. 67.

¹⁹² Hes. *Theog.* 591.

¹⁹³ For a more sympathetic modern view (indebted to Plato) of beauty as only a promise of happiness, see Nehamas 2007.

¹⁹⁴ Hom. *Il.* 3.156-60. Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.21ff. On the 'problem' of female beauty in Archaic and Classical Greece, see Blondell 2013, 1-26.

¹⁹⁵ Hom. *Il.* 14.312-28. For Zeus' sexual proclivities, see Dowden 2006, 39-51.

washed and perfumed, her 'shining, beautiful, immortal' locks combed and plaited, adorned with radiant and intricately decorated garments, and earrings from which 'great beauty shone'.¹⁹⁶ Zeus' immediate reaction signals the fulfilment of her deceptive purpose: 'as soon as he saw her, eros enveloped his clever mind'.¹⁹⁷ Not clever enough, it seems, to see through the beautiful pretence. Persephone also succumbs to the affective and deceptive power of beauty in *Homeric Hymn 2*, when a wonderful floral meadow, and one narcissus in particular, 'a beautiful play-thing' (καλὸν ἄθυρμα), acts as a 'snare' (δόλον). When she goes to pluck the flower, the earth yawns and Hades emerges to abduct her; and all this was 'by the will of Zeus, as a favour to the Hospitable One', Hades.¹⁹⁸

Whether to reshape the pantheon with a new marriage, distract the watchful eyes of Zeus, benefit humans or punish them, deities use beauty as a vehicle of their power in their interactions with both gods and humans. For both mortals and immortals are susceptible to beauty's charms. On arrival at Kalypso's island, Hermes is confronted with a natural scene to stop anyone in their tracks:

... ἔνθα κ' ἔπειτα καὶ ἀθάνατός περ ἐπελθὼν
 θήσαιοτο ἰδὼν καὶ τερφθείη φρεσὶν ᾗσιν.
 ἔνθα στὰς θηεῖτο διάκτορος Ἀργεῖφόντης.
 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ πάντα ἐῷ θήσατο θυμῷ,

¹⁹⁶ Hom. *Il.* 14.170-87: φαεινοὺς ἢ καλοὺς ἀμβροσίους... χάρις δ' ἀπελάμπετο πολλή.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. 294.

¹⁹⁸ Hom. *Hy.* 2.6-9.

αὐτίκ'...¹⁹⁹

'It was a place where even an immortal visitor would gaze, marvel and delight in his heart. There the messenger god, slayer of Argus, stood and marvelled. And when he had marvelled at everything to his heart's content, then...'

Immortals evidently have higher standards, but as suggested by the repetition of the verb 'to marvel' (θηέομαι) three times in three lines, their predisposition to aesthetic pleasure and the nature of their aesthetic experiences are essentially the same as humanity's.²⁰⁰ This common aesthetic sensibility is theologically vital: like divine anthropomorphism, it both marks an essential point of commensurability between gods and humans and underpins the potential for effective communication.²⁰¹ That gods harness beauty's effects to different purposes is only half the story; the gods' own susceptibility to beauty makes this process a two-way street. In other words, how do humans use beauty to affect the gods? What role does beauty play in ritual communication with the gods in early Greek epic?

¹⁹⁹ Hom. *Od.* 5.73-7.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Hes. [Sc.] 318: Herakles' shield made by Hephaistos is 'a wonder to behold even for Zeus' (θαῦμα ἰδεῖν καὶ Ζηνὶ); Hom. *Hy.* 2.10-11. Cf. Larson 2007, 59. Unlike Hermes, Odysseus takes no pleasure in Kalypso's garden. This does not mean that gods and humans do not both delight in beautiful natural phenomena. Rather, the contrast serves a narrative purpose: Odysseus' lack of pleasure in the beauties that surround him—both Kalypso's beauty and that of her home—underscore his desire to go home.

²⁰¹ See p. 3 above.

Beauty and the gift

The two longest and most detailed scenes of divine worship in Homer are the Trojan ladies' offer of a robe to Athena in *Iliad* 6 and Nestor's sacrifice of an ox to Athena in *Odyssey* 3. Both scenes testify to the perception of beauty as a desideratum for offerings to the gods. Typically, aesthetic concerns do not figure in Homer's depiction of ritual practice, nor in Hesiod's advice about it.²⁰² The reason for this distinction seems to be causation and the degree of narrative attention. Hesiod's advice concerns short routine observances of the gods and this is what the majority of Homeric ritual scenes portray. The offerings of the Trojan ladies and Nestor, however, are narrated at length and sparked by exceptional circumstances: the former by Diomedes' rampage; the latter by Athena's attendance and epiphany at Nestor's feast. The greater the significance of the ritual act and the greater the desire for divine propitiation, the more prominent aesthetic concerns become. The Achaians' performance of the 'beautiful paian' (καλὸν... παιήονα) to placate Apollo reaffirms this pattern: the god's 'delight' (τέρπειτ') at the song appeases his anger, encouraging him to dispel the plague from the Achaian army.²⁰³ In ritual communication with the gods, beauty aims at divine delight in its creation of special value.²⁰⁴

²⁰² See e.g. Hom. *Il.* 2.402-31; 7.313ff.; *Od.* 9.550ff.; 13.24ff.; 14.414ff; Hes. *Op.* 724-64.

²⁰³ Hom. *Il.* 1.473-4.

²⁰⁴ Beauty is not the only way of creating 'special value' in ritual: Achilles' cup (*Il.* 16.220-54), reserved for libations to Zeus alone, instantiates an alternative method.

In the hope of staying Diomedes' onslaught, Helenos recommends that the Trojan women make an offering to Athena. His specifications are intended to enhance the offering's capacity to please and persuade the goddess to respond favourably to the Trojan ladies' prayers: Hekabe should choose,

πέπλον, ὅς οἱ δοκέει χαριέστατος ἡδὲ μέγιστος
εἶναι ἐνὶ μεγάρῳ καὶ οἱ πολὺ φίλτατος αὐτῇ.²⁰⁵

'the robe that seems to her the most attractive and biggest in the hall,
and much the most dear to her'.

Different measures of value converge in his recommendation. That it is 'most attractive', 'most pleasing' (χαριέστατος), highlights the importance of the gift's aesthetic value. This is reinforced, given the association between beauty and large size in Archaic Greek poetry, by its specification as 'biggest', which perhaps also implies its supreme material value.²⁰⁶ That the robe should be 'most dear' to Hekabe introduces a sentimental criterion: the greater Hekabe's attachment to the robe, the greater the act of deference and generosity in giving it away. From her store of 'richly-embroidered [παμπούκιλα] robes, the handiwork of Sidonian women', Hekabe selects the one 'that was most beautiful in its colourful embroideries and the biggest, and it shone like a star' (ὅς κάλλιστος ἔην

²⁰⁵ Hom. *Il.* 6.90-1. Cf. 6.271-2. On pleasing and persuading the gods, see Furley 1995.

²⁰⁶ For beauty and bigness, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 6.294; 10.436; 18.83-4; *Od.* 6.276; 9.426; 10.227; 14.5-7; 15.107; *Hom. Hy.* 2.275-6; *Hy.* 3.197-8; *Hy.* 5.173-5, 266 etc.

ποικίλμασιν ἡδὲ μέγιστος, ἡ ἀστὴρ δ' ὥς ἀπέλαμπεν).²⁰⁷ Its radiance, polychromy and Sidonian manufacture together convey the robe's supreme beauty and material value as a luxurious import. The other Iliadic reference to Sidonian craftsmanship is a mixing bowl that 'surpassed in beauty [κάλλει] all others in the whole world, since Sidonians expert in crafts [πολυδαίδαλοι] fashioned it well'.²⁰⁸

From Helenos' recommendations and Hekabe's selection of the offering, it is clear that the beauty of the robe is considered essential to its efficacy as a votive. The attention paid to the offering—its origin, specification, selection, and ritual presentation to the goddess—creates a strong sense of anticipation mirroring the Trojan concern to propitiate Athena. Her terse rejection of their prayers therefore underscores the goddess' intransigence.²⁰⁹ The emphasis on the robe's beauty demonstrates both the Trojans' heightened concern to please the goddess and her implacable enmity towards them.²¹⁰ Beauty may enhance an offering's power to please its divine recipient, but it is no guarantee. The Trojans remain subject to Athena's vindictiveness.

In *Odyssey* 3, by contrast, Athena benevolently appears 'to accept the offerings'.²¹¹ To commemorate her epiphany at his feast, Nestor summons

²⁰⁷ Hom. *Il.* 6.294-5.

²⁰⁸ Hom. *Il.* 23.742-3. Cf. Hom. *Od.* 15.113-19. On beauty and Sidonian crafts, see pp. 321-3 below.

²⁰⁹ See Hom. *Il.* 6.311: ὥς ἔφατ' εὐχομένη, ἀνένευε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη.

²¹⁰ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 5.211-20 where the inversion of the expected response to beauty serves to characterise Odysseus. Athena's rejection of the Trojans' prayers plays on ritual norms to highlight poetic themes. For equivalent poetic devices in the representation of sacrifice in the *Iliad*, see Hitch 2009, esp. 141-203.

²¹¹ Hom. *Od.* 3.435-6.

a goldsmith to gild the horns of a sacrificial ox. Like Hekabe's big imported robe, gilding the ox no doubt enhances its material value as a pleasing gift. Yet the emphasis is clearly on aesthetic concerns: the ox's horns are gilded 'so that the goddess would take pleasure at the sight of the object of delight' (ἵν' ἄγαλμα θεὰ κεχάροιτο ἰδοῦσα).²¹² Gold beautifies the beast to please Athena's eyes.²¹³

Beauty's theological significance in these scenes from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is suggested, not least, by the aesthetic terminology employed. The 'attractive' (χαρίεις) physical appearance of these 'objects of delight' (ἀγάλματα)—one artefactual, the other animal—is intended to make the deity 'rejoice, be glad, take pleasure' (χαίρω).²¹⁴ It is hoped that the 'beauty' (χάρις) of the votives will please the goddess and inspire her 'pleasure' and 'favour' (χάρις).²¹⁵ Beauty's role in these scenes, then, is to facilitate effective and propitious communication with the deity and encourage a reciprocal relationship between divine and human.

Far from commercial or contractual in nature, such reciprocity is built upon the affective experiences of pleasure and gratitude written into the semantics of χάρις.²¹⁶ As the Iliadic episode shows, the beauty of an

²¹² Hom. *Od.* 3.438. Cf. Naiden 2013, 20.

²¹³ For the beauty of gold, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 5.730-1; 11.632-3; 14.238, 351; 18.290, 562, 612; 22.315 etc.; *Od.* 1.137; 4.53, 614-18; 5.232; 7.173; 10.369, 545; 15.136 etc.; Hes. *Theog.* 578-84; *Hom. Hy.* 5.88-9; *Hy.* 6.7-8; Alc. fr. 1.51-5; etc. Cf. Pl. *Hp. Mai.* 289e. On beautifying the beast in Greek sacrifice, see Van Straten 1995, 43-6.

²¹⁴ On χαρίεις and ἄγαλμα, see n. 163 above. Cf. Beekes 2010, s.v. χαίρω.

²¹⁵ On χάρις and reciprocity in Greek religion, see Maclachlan 1993; Parker 1998. On sacrifice and reciprocity in the *Iliad*, see Hitch 2009, esp. 95-111.

²¹⁶ See Parker 1998, 118-24.

offering could fail to move a god to answer a worshipper's prayers.²¹⁷ What is at stake, therefore, is the nature of the relationship between human worshippers and divine recipient—each with their own, sometimes harmonious, sometimes conflicting interests and agendas. Because of beauty's power to attract attention, please and persuade—whether in songs, objects or sacrificial animals—it provides humans with a means of creating positive relations with the gods, just as it does with other humans. It is no coincidence that the robe Helen gives Telemachos as a gift of guest-friendship is the same as that which the Trojans give Athena.²¹⁸ Beauty's role in forging social bonds between humans is mapped onto the modalities of ritual communication with the gods.²¹⁹

While rituals open the channels of communication with the gods, the two longest scenes of worship in Homer showcase the belief that the efficacy of those rituals is bound to aesthetics—that is, to the deity's response to the aesthetic properties of offerings and ritual acts. It is not just what is done that matters, but how:²²⁰ not any robe but the 'most beautiful' one; not any ox but one beautified with gold.²²¹ By the same

²¹⁷ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 3.144-6; 14.406; Aesch. *Cho.* 42-8, 519-21. See Naiden 2013, 131-82.

²¹⁸ Hom. *Od.* 15.107-8 = *Il.* 6.294-5.

²¹⁹ Parker 1998, 120. Cf. the Homeric use of ἄγαλμα to describe gifts for gods and humans at Hom. *Od.* 3.274, 438; 4.602; 8.509; 12.347; 18.300; 19.257.

²²⁰ Cf. Pl. *Symp.* 181a.

²²¹ Cf. Diomedes' pledge of sacrifice to Athena at Hom. *Il.* 10.292-4. Note the role of beauty in epic perversions of sacrifice. In the *Cypria*, Agamemnon must sacrifice his daughter 'supreme in beauty' (κρατιστεύουσα κάλλει) (Proclus, *Chrest.* 8). Cf. Eur. *IT* 23. At *Il.* 18.336-7 and 23.22-3, Achilles chooses 'beautiful Trojan children' (Τρώων ἀγλαὰ τέκνα) as a sacrifice to Patroklos. In each case, the normative value of sacrificial beauty underlines the perversion of sacrificial norms.

token, Apollo ‘delights most’ (μάλιστ’ ἐπιτέρπει) in Delos in his *Homeric Hymn*, though many places are dear to him.²²² For there the Ionians delight Apollo with boxing, dancing and song in such a way that if someone were to see them, ‘he would say they were immortal and ageless [ἀθανάτους καὶ ἀγήρως]... for he would see the beauty of the whole scene [πάντων γάρ κεν ἴδοιτο χάριν], and be delighted at the spectacle of the men, the women with their beautiful girdles, the swift ships and their many possessions’.²²³ In this idealised portrait of cult worship, the intimate communion of Apollo and the Ionians is mediated by the ‘beauty’ of ritual performance: it both unites them in festive delight and manifests that unity in the Ionians’ godlike appearance.

In Archaic epic, beauty is so deeply woven into the conception of divinity that it becomes hard to think about beauty without thinking with the gods. This highly theological conception of beauty and highly aesthetic conception of the gods is the first point to stress. The inseparability of beauty from the three defining characteristics of Greek gods underpins its claim to be a ‘divine attribute par excellence’: the beauty of the gods manifests their immortality, characterises their anthropomorphism and provides a vehicle for their power.²²⁴ Hazlitt’s description of Greek statues encapsulates the beauty of the gods in Archaic epic: ‘Their beauty is power... by their beauty they are deified’.²²⁵

²²² *Hom. Hy.* 3.146.

²²³ *Ibid.* 151-5.

²²⁴ Detienne and Sissa 2000, 32; Henrichs 2010.

²²⁵ Hazlitt [1816-24] 2008, 70.

As this chapter has shown, divine beauty often has something to do with humans. This introduces the second and most important point to emphasise: in multiple forms and contexts, beauty mediates how gods and humans relate and communicate. It brings them together in ritual worship, assimilates them physically and motivates their sexual liaisons. But it also separates them, for the beauty that can make them physically indistinguishable is only a superficial veneer over a deeper difference in nature. Dividing gods and humans as much as it unites them, beauty therefore strikes at a theological problem and paradox central to many religions: ‘that there can be human understanding of gods only if gods are in some important sense like men but that gods can have the sorts of powers that make them gods in human eyes only if they are in some important sense not like men’.²²⁶

Beauty satisfies both those ‘important senses’. On the one hand, beauty facilitates human understanding of the gods: gods and humans are alike in their possession of bodily beauty and their pleasure in beautiful things. On the other, the superiority and permanence of the gods’ beauty underlines their difference from mortals by manifesting their immortality and agelessness in contrast to the ephemerality of human beauty and vitality. And by virtue of its manifold effects, the beauty of gods and their beautification of others allows deities to exercise those ‘powers that make them gods in human eyes’. In early Greek epic, the paradox at the heart of the divine-human relationship is expressed, explored and sustained through the representation of beauty.

²²⁶ Osborne 2011, 215.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LOVELY GIFTS OF THE MUSES

In the mythical imagination of Archaic Greece, music, dance and song are essential elements of the good life.¹ On two separate frontiers of the known world live the Hyperboreans and Phaiakians, two races of mortals whose blessed existence and unusual proximity to the gods is illustrated by their constant delight in music, dance and song.² Time and again these activities, encapsulated by the Greek word *mousike*, are associated with celebration, pleasure and delight.³ And as these mythical examples show, the pleasures of musical performance bear a special divine connection. It is no coincidence that the Hyperboreans and Phaiakians boast the special favour and proximity of the gods. For like Greek deities, the so-called ‘blessed ones’ (μάκαρες), they enjoy carefree lives epitomised by their indulgence in the delights of *mousike*. *Iliad* 1 provides a memorable portrait of this characterisation of divine existence: in pointed contrast to the troubles brewing in the Achaian camp, the Olympians set aside their quarrels and turn to the pleasures of the feast, Apollo’s ‘most beautiful lyre’

¹ See West 1992, 13-14.

² See Alc. fr. 307(c); Pind. *Pyth.* 10.30-43; Hom. *Od.* 8.97-103, 246-53; 9.4-11.

³ The verb τέρω, ‘to delight’, ‘give pleasure’, very often appears in connection with *mousike* in Greek poetry: cf. Hes. *Theog.* 37, 51, 917; [Sc.] 270-85; Hom. *Il.* 1.474; 9.186; 18.526; *Od.* 1.347; 1.422; 8.45; etc.; Stesichoros 232; Pind. fr. 129. On the pleasures of Archaic and Classical *mousike*, see Peponi 2012. On the culture of *mousike*, see Murray and Wilson 2004.

(φόρμιγγος περικαλλέος) and the ‘beautiful voice’ (ὀπὶ καλῇ) of the Muses.⁴

For ordinary mortals, religious festivals provided the outstanding occasion for such divine musical delights. According to the Athenian in Plato’s *Laws*, the gods took pity on humans and created festivals as a relief from the trials of mortal existence.⁵ ‘The gods were given to us as companions in the dance’, Plato explains, ‘and granted us the pleasurable perception of rhythm and harmony... and because of the joy [χαρά] inherent in the activity they called it the chorus [χορός]’.⁶ So, too, in the Archaic period the joy of musical performance and its power to bring divine and human together went hand in hand. Theognis invokes Apollo to keep his city safe, ‘so that when spring arrives the people may send you glorious hecatombs in good cheer, delighting in the lyre and lovely feast and choruses of paians and cries around your altar’.⁷ Public festivals like that envisaged by Theognis—with its lyres, paians and cries around the altar—might feature a host of different types of musical performance. Processions with musicians and choruses that sang and danced;⁸ sacrifices accompanied by music and hymns;⁹ rhapsodes, lyre-players and

⁴ Hom. *Il.* 1.601-4.

⁵ Pl. *Leg.* 653c-d. Cf. Thuc. 2.38.1. On the pleasure and refreshment of festivals, see Parker 2011, 176f.

⁶ Pl. *Leg.* 653e-654a.

⁷ Thgn. 776-9. On the passage’s disputed authorship, see Highbarger 1937; Van Groningen 1966, 302; West 1992, 17 n. 22.

⁸ See Eumelos fr. 1 (696 *PMG*) from a processional hymn, perhaps the earliest surviving fragment of Greek lyric.

⁹ Cf. Hdt. 1.132.4.

aulos-players competing for victory in musical contests;¹⁰ choruses of men, women, boys and girls singing and dancing for the mutual purposes of divine adoration and human entertainment.¹¹

The ubiquity of musical performances for the gods extended to more ‘private’ rituals too.¹² On a votive plaque from a cave in Pitsa (fig. 1), a group of worshippers conducts a sacrifice to the nymphs accompanied by the lyre and aulos.¹³ It was even customary for dinners and drinking-parties to include hymns to the gods.¹⁴ Xenophanes gives a vivid picture of the practice:

... πλεκτούς δ' ἀμφιτιθεῖ στεφάνους,
 ἄλλος δ' εὐῶδες μύρον ἐν φιάλῃ παρατείνει·
 κρητὴρ δ' ἔστηκεν μεστὸς εὐφροσύνης·
 ...
 ἐν δὲ μέσοις ἀγνὴν ὁδὸν λιβανωτὸς ἴησιν,
 ...
 βωμὸς δ' ἄνθεσιν ἂν τὸ μέσον πάντῃ πεπύκασται,
 μολπὴ δ' ἀμφὶς ἔχει δώματα καὶ θαλίη.

¹⁰ Pausanias 10.7.4 records that aulodic competitions at the Pythian festival were cancelled in 582 BCE soon after their institution because they were considered inappropriately lugubrious for a festival. Though perhaps apocryphal (West 1992, 337), the anecdote demonstrates the importance attached to delightful music at festivals. Cf. Sappho fr. 150.

¹¹ On the chorus in Archaic and Classical Greece, see Lonsdale 1993; Kowalzig 2004; 2007; Kurke 2012; Billings et al. 2013.

¹² ‘Private’ in the sense of not state organised; on the problems with a public/private model for studying Greek religion, see Parker 2015.

¹³ On instrumental music in images of Greek worship, see Nordquist 1992.

¹⁴ Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 29.1-6; *Alcm.* fr. 98; *Anac.* frs. 348 and 357; *Thgn.* 1-18; *Pl. Symp.* On the symposium generally, see Murray 2018.

χρὴ δὲ πρῶτον μὲν θεὸν ὕμνεν εὐφρονας ἄνδρας
 εὐφήμοις μύθοις καὶ καθαροῖσι λόγοις,
 σπεύσαντάς τε καὶ εὐξαμένους τὰ δίκαια δύνασθαι
 πρήσσειν...¹⁵

‘someone places woven garlands around our heads, another offers
 fragrant myrrh in a dish; the mixing-bowl stands filled with good
 cheer... in the middle frankincense gives off its holy aroma... the
 altar in the centre is strewn with flowers, song and festivity fill the
 house. For men of good cheer, having poured libations and prayed
 for the ability to do what is right, they first must hymn the god with
 auspicious tales and pure words...’

However idealised, Xenophanes’ drinking-party evidently has its sacred
 elements: the ‘woven garlands’ familiar from religious ritual, ‘frankincense
 giving off its holy aroma’, ‘the altar strewn with flowers’, and the libations,
 prayers and hymns that begin the festivities. The attention to aesthetic and
 ritual propriety—not least, in hymnic communication with the gods ‘through
 auspicious tales and pure words’—are indispensable features of this
 private social event.¹⁶ That songs for gods at a drinking-party were less
 sacred or less meaningful as forms of engagement with the gods than, for
 example, hymns at a public sacrifice in a sanctuary is clearly untenable.¹⁷

¹⁵ Xenophanes fr. 1.2-16.

¹⁶ See Easterling 1985, 39-41.

¹⁷ Equally, Xenophanes’ religious concern in this poem is no evidence that it describes the meeting of a special religious fellowship (e.g. Defradas 1962, 344-65).

It seems there was barely a social occasion when communicating with the gods through music, dance or song was out of order.

In short, *mousike* was ‘at the heart of Greek religion’.¹⁸ The pervasive association of *mousike* with pleasure underpinned its vital role in divine worship. Just as they delighted their human spectators, so performances of music, dance and song were intended to please and honour their divine recipients. A fragmentary choral song by Alkman offers a succinct expression of this basic theological premise: ‘may our chorus be pleasing [ῥάδοι] to the house of Zeus’.¹⁹ In this respect, music, dance and song were no different from other forms of offering like libation, animal sacrifice and votive objects.²⁰ When asked at Delphi what sacrifice he would make, Pindar apparently replied, ‘a paian’—a traditional cult song for Apollo.²¹ Elsewhere, Pindar describes his song as an *agalma*, a word commonly used to denote a material ‘object of delight’ for a deity.²² Such analogies demonstrate the equivalence between different types of offering to the gods: all are united in their attempt to evoke divine pleasure and goodwill,

¹⁸ Murray and Wilson 2004b, 4.

¹⁹ Alc. fr. 45. Cf. Alc. fr. 56.1-2.

²⁰ See Svenbro 1984. On the equivalence between hymns and material votives, see Depew 2000; Day 2010, *passim*. Cf. Kowalzig 2004, 49-55; 2007, 70-2; Kurke 2012, 220-1.

²¹ The anecdote comes from the Pindaric *Apophthegmata* in Drachmann 1997, 3 (lines 18-19). On Pindar’s paians, see Rutherford 2001.

²² Pind. *Nem.* 3.14. Cf. Pind. fr. 140b.7 where Pindar equates an earlier poet’s paian with an object of dedication. For the hymn as *agalma*, see Furley 1995, 32-6; Pulleyn 1997, 49-50; Depew 2000; Bremer and Furley 2001, 3-7; Kurke 2012. On Archaic *agalmata*, see pp. 286-306 below.

in a word, *charis*. The social ideal of mutual good feeling signified by *charis* is fundamental to the role of *mousike* in Archaic Greek religion.²³

That *charis* can also mean ‘beauty’ should give us pause for thought.²⁴ How important was beauty in cultivating harmonious relations with the gods through *mousike*? The relationship between these social and aesthetic senses of *charis* is an overarching theme of this chapter, which investigates the significance of beauty in Archaic performances of music, dance and song for the gods. Recent scholarship, especially on the chorus, has emphasised and elucidated the varied socio-political aspects of Greek *mousike*.²⁵ The focus of this chapter is on the theology of these performances: that is, on what they say and imply about the gods and how they work as forms of interaction with the divine. By concentrating on the question of beauty, however, the chapter seeks to illuminate an essential aspect of the affective power of these performances, which is also pertinent to their socio-political efficacy.²⁶ Its central argument is that in musical performances for the gods, ideas, representations and experiences of beauty were integral to how Greeks related and communicated with their gods in the Archaic period.

The phrase ‘musical performances’ requires some explanation. Consonant with its etymological ancestor *mousike*, ‘musical’ is taken to include music, dance and song. That these activities belonged together

²³ On *charis* in hymns, see Race 1982, 8; Furley and Bremer 2001, 3-4.

²⁴ For *charis* as ‘beauty’, see e.g. Hes. *Theog.* 583; Hom. *Il.* 14.183; *Od.* 6.229-37; 23.156-62; *Hom. Hy.* 2.215; *Hy.* 3.153; Alcman fr. 3.71; Sappho fr. 138; etc. See Maclachlan 1993, 10-11, 31-40.

²⁵ E.g. Wilson 2003; Kowalzig 2004; 2005; 2007; Kurke 2007; Ferrari 2008.

²⁶ Cf. Kowalzig 2007, 1-2; Kurke 2012.

under the conceptual umbrella of *mousike* reflects an important point: performances often involved the combination of song, dance and musical accompaniment. True, rhapsodes recited poetry without musical accompaniment and lyre- and aulos-players might not sing. But we must not disregard everything but the verbal or aural aspects of their performances as a result. Plato's *Ion*, for instance, vividly conveys the visual histrionics of a performing rhapsode. It is important to recognise the combination of different elements—verbal, aural, visual, kinetic—for the overall effect of a performance. For understanding Greek *mousike*, the heuristic value of the term *performance* partly lies in evoking this combined effect.²⁷ This is reinforced by the idea of spectatorship implied by *performance*: both the visual spectacle of the performance and the role of the audience—divine and human—are central to understanding the theological significance of beauty in musical performances for the gods in Archaic Greece.²⁸

Divine beauty in *mousike*

Such musical performances often featured hymns, that is, songs directly addressing the gods to inspire their beneficence.²⁹ This basic purpose

²⁷ Despite the absence of an ancient Greek equivalent term; see Goldhill 1999; Stehle 1997, esp. 3-22.

²⁸ On the viscosity of Greek lyric, see Cazzato and Lardinois 2016.

²⁹ Prayers and hymns share many formal characteristics. A general distinction concerns intended effect: prayers make requests that accompany offerings (or the promise thereof) intended to persuade the deity to answer the request; hymns might make such requests but they are intended to please the deity in themselves. See Pulleyn 1997, 49; Bremer and Furley 2001, 3-4.

explains why hymns are particularly rich in the representation of divine beauty. Alongside other desirable attributes like strength and power, praise of beauty is a common method of human adulation of divine brilliance. This is amply attested by the largest collection of hymns from the Archaic period, the *Homeric Hymns*, likely performed by rhapsodes and kitharodes as preludes (*prooimia*) to longer recitations of epic poetry at public festivals.³⁰ In the shortest *Homeric Hymn*, for example, the veneration of beauty is the principal means of soliciting the deities' favour: 'Of fair-haired [ῥύκομον] Demeter, the august goddess first I sing, of her and her daughter, most beautiful [περικαλλέα] Persephone. I salute you, goddess: keep this city safe and give my song its beginning.'³¹

The representation of divine beauty is an obvious means of praise, but as the previous chapter showed, it also serves to identify the nature of the deity invoked. The erotic beauty of Aphrodite contrasts with the queenly beauty of Hera in their respective *Hymns*, thereby highlighting differences in their respective divine powers and social positions.³² Hymns often focus on what gods can do, but how they look is also central to their identification and praise.³³ The depiction of divine beauty can vary,

³⁰ Thucydides 3.104 describes the *Hymn to Apollo* as a *prooimion*. A standard closing formula is for the poet to say that he will move to another song, e.g. 'I will remember both you and another song': cf. *Hy.* 2.495; *Hy.* 3.546; etc. Pindar claims that the Homeridai begin their recitations with a *prooimion* to Zeus (*Nem.* 2. 1-5). Cf. Hom. *Od.* 8. 499. On *Hymns* as 'preludes', see Càssola 1975, xii-xxi; Richardson 1974, 3-4; Calame 1995. On their performative context, see Smith 1981b; Clinton 1986; Clay 1989, 6-7; Parker 1991; Stehle 1997, 171-215; Faulkner 2011, 16-19. On the performance of the *Hymns* by rhapsodes and kitharodes, see Power 2010, 187-8.

³¹ *Hom. Hy.* 13. Cf. Thgn. 5-7.

³² See pp. 46-7 above.

³³ Cf. Platt 2011, 60ff.

however, not just from one to deity to another, but for a single deity. A fragment of the seventh century BCE kitharode Terpander preserves what appears to be a line from a hymn to the Dioskouroi, ‘sons of Zeus and Leda, you most beautiful saviours’ (ὦ Ζηνὸς καὶ Λήδας κάλλιστοι σωτῆρες).³⁴ In Alkaios’ hymn to the Dioskouroi, they are invoked as the ‘strong sons of Zeus and Leda’ (παῖδες ἰφθίμοι Δ[ίος] ἡδὲ Λήδας), praised not for their beauty but salvific power, as they ‘easily rescue mortals from chilling death’.³⁵

Why Terpander and Alkaios chose to emphasise these different aspects is unclear. Comparison of two poems by Sappho and Alkaios, however, suggests that liturgical purpose had a decisive effect in determining how a deity—and his or her beauty—might be portrayed. Recent finds confirm that fragment 17 of Sappho describes a ‘festival’ (ἐόρτ[α]ν) to Hera.³⁶ The reference to Hera, ‘Zeus god of suppliants’ and Dionysos, ‘Thyone’s desirable [ἰμε[ρόεντα] son’, strongly suggests that the festival was at the Lesbian sanctuary of these three deities at Messon.³⁷ Sappho’s Lesbian contemporary Alkaios seems to mention the same sanctuary when he recalls how the Lesbians established a temenos and ‘entitled Zeus god of suppliants and you, glorious Aeolian goddess [Hera], mother of all, and the third they named Kemelios, Dionysos, eater of raw flesh [ὠμήσταν]’.³⁸ Sappho’s Dionysos and Alkaios’ Dionysos are strikingly different: for the

³⁴ Terpander fr. 5 (1027c *PMG*).

³⁵ Alc. fr. 34.2; 7-8. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 33.

³⁶ Sapph. fr. 17.2. For the new Sappho, see Bierl and Lardinois 2016.

³⁷ Sapph. fr. 17.9-10. On fr. 17, see Lidov 2016; Caciagli 2016; Nagy 2016.

³⁸ Alc. fr. 129.6-9. On the relation between the two poems, see Boedeker 2016; Caciagli 2016; Nagy 2016.

former, he is ‘Thyone’s desirable son’; for the latter, the ‘eater of raw flesh’. Dionysos is a famously mutable god but his contrasting portrayal in a single sanctuary is noteworthy. Whether or not Sappho’s poem was performed at the festival it describes, it evokes an atmosphere of festive celebration for Hera’s ‘pleasure’ (χ[άρις].³⁹ By contrast, Alkaios calls on the divine triad to bring vengeance on the perjurious Pittakos who broke his oath and ‘devours the city’.⁴⁰ The change in epithet for Dionysos therefore appears bound to this intentional difference. For Alkaios’ grim request, Dionysos ‘eater of raw flesh’ is suitably menacing. For Sappho, on the other hand, the suggestion of Dionysos’ beauty as ‘Thyone’s desirable son’ suits the festive atmosphere of pleasure and delight.

The representation of divine beauty, therefore, may be suited both to the deity’s identity and the hymn’s performative context. As the previous chapter showed, although divine beauty takes different forms, the epiphanies narrated in the *Homeric Hymns* reveal that beauty is also a common divine attribute. The depiction of divine beauty in the *Hymns* therefore serves a dual theological function. On the one hand, particular forms of beauty help define and praise individual divine identities. On the other, superhuman beauty is a general divine quality that sets gods apart from mortals.

Hymnic visions of gods enjoying the communal delights of *mousike* underscore the impression that beauty is a common divine attribute. These scenes also shed light on how the poet of the hymn understands the

³⁹ On the restoration of χ[άρις] in fr. 17.2, see Lidov 2016, 416-18. On the performance of fr. 17 at the festival, see Burris, Fish, Obbink 2014, 5; Bierl 2016; Lidov 2016; Nagy 2016.

⁴⁰ Alc. fr. 129.23-4.

relationship between his own musical performance and its intended divine audience. Though scholars have noted how these scenes present *mousike* as characteristically divine, the scenes' emphasis on beauty and its theological implications often go unrecognised.⁴¹ To showcase the beauty of the gods in early Greek epic, the previous chapter of this thesis began with Hesiod's portrait of the Muses on mount Helikon.⁴² In fact, this passage belongs to Hesiod's hymn to the Muses, before his main theogonic narrative.⁴³ The depiction of the Muses' physical, aural and choral beauty thus adheres to a familiar strategy of hymnic praise. More than that, because the Muses personify the essential qualities of *mousike*, the aesthetic details of their representation reflect the aesthetic ideals to which Hesiod himself aspires.

Throughout the hymn, Hesiod draws attention to the beauty and divinity of the Muses' chorus, as when they head to Olympos 'exulting in their beautiful voice, in their immortal song' (ἀγαλλόμεναι ὀπὶ καλῇ, ἰ ἀμβροσίῃ μολπῇ).⁴⁴ The importance of beauty for Hesiod's conception of the Muses and *mousike* is echoed by their Olympian neighbours—the Charites and Himeros.⁴⁵ The implication is that the 'desire' embodied by Himeros and the 'beauty' and 'pleasure' embodied by the Charites bear a special connection with the nature, interests and activities of the Muses. That the Muses' voice and the sound of their dancing feet are ἐρατός and

⁴¹ E.g. Calame 2011; Richardson 2011. An exception: Lonsdale 1993, 48-68.

⁴² Hes. *Theog.* 5-21. Cf. Anac. fr. 390.

⁴³ On the proem to the *Theogony* as a hymn, see West 1966, 150-1; Thalmann 1984, 134-8.

⁴⁴ Hes. *Theog.* 68-9. Cf. 43; Pind. *Nem.* 5.23-5.

⁴⁵ Hes. *Theog.* 63-5. See West 1966, 177.

ἐπῆρατος—‘lovely’, ‘desirable’—again idealises desire as a response to *mousike*.⁴⁶ Delight is also accorded a canonical status with the Muses repeatedly ‘delighting [τέρπουσι] the mind of Zeus’ with their song.⁴⁷

Divine choral scenes in the *Homeric Hymns* betray a similar emphasis on beauty, desire and delight. In her *Hymn*, Artemis goes to Delphi ‘to organise the beautiful dance of the Muses and Charites’ (Μουσῶν καὶ Χαρίτων καλὸν χορὸν ἀρτυνέουσα).⁴⁸ The presence of the Charites and the chorus’ description as *kalos* evoke a general impression of choral beauty, which is heightened by the physical appearance of Artemis, ‘her body adorned in attractive finery, as she leads the dances’ (χαρίεντα περὶ χροῖ κόσμον ἔχουσα, ἰ ἐξάρχουσα χορούς).⁴⁹ In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Artemis’ physical beauty again defines her place in the Olympian chorus:

τῇσι μὲν οὔτ’ αἰσchrῇ μεταμέλπεται οὔτ’ ἐλάχεια,
ἀλλὰ μάλα μεγάλη τε ἰδεῖν καὶ εἶδος ἀγητή
Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα.⁵⁰

‘among them dances one neither ugly nor short, but very tall and admirable in appearance, Artemis the archer’.

⁴⁶ Hes. *Theog.* 65, 67, 70. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 4.419-426, 434, 455. On desire as a response to *mousike*, see Peponi 2012, esp. 95-153.

⁴⁷ Hes. *Theog.* 51. Cf. 37; 40-1; 81-103.

⁴⁸ *Hom. Hy.* 27.15.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 17-18. On the preeminent beauty of the chorus-leader, see discussion of Alc. fr. 1 at pp. 126-34 below.

⁵⁰ *Hom. Hy.* 3.197-9. Cf. Artemis’ outstanding beauty at *Hom. Od.* 6.101-9; on the choral allusions in this scene, see Swift 2016, 279-81.

Artemis' fellow Olympian choreuts also enjoy a special association with the blessings of physical appearance: Aphrodite, whose desirable beauty is instrumental to her erotic charms;⁵¹ the Charites, who embody and endow beauty on Aphrodite and mortal women;⁵² the Horai, who personify youthful beauty (ῥπα) and attend to Aphrodite's toilette;⁵³ and Ares and Hermes, both distinguished in the Homeric tradition as paragons of young male beauty.⁵⁴

Attention to the visual spectacle of this Olympian chorus continues with the image of Apollo playing the kithara in their midst, 'stepping beautifully and high, and a radiance shines around him and the sparkling of his feet and well-spun tunic'—much to the 'delight' of his onlooking parents, Leto and Zeus.⁵⁵ Given the aesthetic connotations of radiance in Archaic literature, Apollo's 'sparkling' feet contribute to the chorus' visual beauty at the same time as conveying his rapid motion in the dance.⁵⁶ Allied with

⁵¹ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 9.389; *Od.* 8.335-42; *Hom. Hy.* 5.58-91; *Hy.* 6.

⁵² Cf. Hom. *Il.* 5.348; 17.51-2; *Od.* 6.18; 8.364-6; 18.193-4; *Hom. Hy.* 5.60-5; Hes. *Theog.* 907-11; *Cat.* 10: 32-3; 41: 38.

⁵³ Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 6; Hes. *Op.* 75; *Mimn.* 2.1; *Pind. Ol.* 10.103-6; *Nem.* 8.1-2; *Ar. Av.* 1724.

⁵⁴ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 24.345-8; *Od.* 8. 309-10; 10.277-9; *Hom. Hy.* 4.323. Note also the participation of Harmonia and Hebe who manifest the ideals of rhythmic harmony and youthfulness (Lonsdale 1993, 58), themselves closely linked with beauty; cf. *Pind. Nem.* 10.18: "Ἡβᾶ... καλλίστα θεῶν.

⁵⁵ *Hom. Hy.* 3.202-3: καλὰ καὶ ὕψι βιβάς, αἶγλη δὲ μιν ἀμφιφασίνει | μαρμαρυγαί τε ποδῶν καὶ ἐϋκλώστοιο χιτῶνος. Cf. Stesichoros 232 (*Plut. de E apud Delph.* 21).

⁵⁶ Cf. the formula, 'possessing the sparkle of the Charites' (Χαρίτων ἀμαρύγματ' ἔχουσιν), to express female beauty in Hes. *Cat.* 41: 38; 47: 3; 123: 20; 154a: 6. The 'beauty' of χάρις and κάλλος are themselves radiant: cf. Hom. *Il.* 3.392; 14.183; *Od.* 6.237; *Hom. Hy.* 2.276-80; *Hy.* 5.174-5; etc. On radiance in Greek culture, see Prier 1989; Neer 2010. Power 2011, 82-5 and Kurke 2012 see the 'sparkles' of feet as alluding to statuary. The evocation of quick motion and beauty seem to me more likely and readily substantiated; cf. Hom. *Il.* 18.599; *Od.* 8.260-5.

these visual, physical and kinetic aspects of the Olympian performance, the Muses' voice defines its aural quality:

Μοῦσαι μέν θ' ἅμα πᾶσαι ἀμειβόμεναι ὀπὶ καλῇ
 ὑμνεῦσιν ῥα θεῶν δῶρ' ἄμβροτα ἡδ' ἀνθρώπων
 τλημοσύνας, ὅσ' ἔχοντες ὑπ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι
 ζώουσ' ἀφραδέες καὶ ἀμήχανοι, οὐδὲ δύνανται
 εὐρέμεναι θανάτιό τ' ἄκος καὶ γήραος ἄλκαρ.⁵⁷

'all together the Muses sing in exchange with their beautiful voice, about the immortal gifts of the gods and human sufferings—all that they have from the immortal gods as they live witless and helpless, unable to find a remedy for death and defence against old age'.

Resplendent in their beauty, the gods dance to the tune of human suffering. If the Muses' song offers a poignant reminder of the gulf between gods and humans, the paradigmatic nature of the Olympian chorus also shows the way to bridge it.⁵⁸ Divine choral scenes in Archaic hymns are paradigms for human musical performance.⁵⁹ Their aesthetic emphasis therefore reveals that it is not simply what the gods do that matters, but how: above all, divine musical performances are characterised by their beauty. The presence of the Charites with the Muses in the *Theogony*, with Artemis in her *Hymn* and with the Olympians in the *Hymn*

⁵⁷ *Hom. Hy.* 3.189-93.

⁵⁸ Lonsdale 1993, 57; 1995.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 19.15ff.

to *Apollo* underscores this aestheticisation of divine *choreia*.⁶⁰ So, too, Sappho twice invokes the Muses in partnership with the Charites: ‘come here luxurious Charites and beautiful-haired Muses’ (δεῦτέ νυν ἄβραι Χάριτες καλλίκομοί τε Μοῖσαι).⁶¹ The common association of the Muses and Charites mirrors the centrality of ‘beauty’ and ‘pleasure’ (*charis*) in the Archaic cultural realm of *mousike*.

In the hymn’s performance, these divine choral scenes appear both paradigmatic and self-referential. The musical performance of the mortal poet reflects the divine musical performance of which he sings; what the audience sees in performance echoes what the poet envisages in song.⁶² The poets of the *Hymns to Artemis* and *Apollo* highlight this self-referentiality by immediately following their divine choral scenes with direct, first-person addresses to the deity that draw attention to their own performance: ‘how shall I hymn you’, the poet asks, ‘fit subject as you are in every respect?’⁶³ The equivalence between divine and human song is significant. As Calame puts it, mortals are thus shown ‘to share in the life of the gods’.⁶⁴

But if divine song and dance are characterised by beauty, then its human equivalent must aspire to be the same if it is to succeed in pleasing

⁶⁰ See also Hom. *Il.* 1.601-4; *Od.* 5.61; *Cypr.* fr. 6; Bacchyl. 17.101-8.

⁶¹ Sapph. fr. 128. Cf. Sapph. fr. 103.8; Anac. fr. 346 (3); Ibyc. S 255; Stesichoros S 212; Thgn. 15; Pind. *Nem.* 4.1-8, 9.53-5, fr. 52f.3-6; Bacchyl. 19.3-6; Eur. *HF* 673ff.

⁶² On the intersection of vision and visualisation in Greek lyric, see Peponi 2016.

⁶³ Hom. *Hy.* 3.207. At *Hy.* 19.48 and *Hy.* 27.21-2, the choral scenes are followed by the poet’s direct address to the deity (‘rejoice’) and the use of first-person verbs—two poetic devices that link the divine world represented and that of the hymn’s performance.

⁶⁴ Calame 2011, 344.

divine ears. In other words, sharing in the life of the gods through music, dance and song entails sharing in their beauty. Archaic hymns portray the beauty of the gods as a praiseworthy quality with a defining power: a power to define individual divine identities, the generic nature of divinity and the nature of divine musical performance. The beauty of the gods in hymns provides the background to what the rest of this chapter will explore: the theological significance of human beauty in musical performances for the gods.

Godlike beauty in *mousike*

Just as the poets of the *Hymns* highlight the self-referentiality of their divine choral scenes, so Hesiod assimilates himself to the Muses when he recalls how he became a poet. In an epiphany on mount Helikon, the Muses taught Hesiod ‘beautiful song’ (καλὴν... ἀοιδίην), breathed into him a ‘divine voice’ (αὐδὴν θέσπιν) and enjoined him to sing of ‘the race of blessed immortals’.⁶⁵ The songs of Hesiod and the Muses are thus alike in subject—both sing of the immortals—and in character—both are ‘beautiful’ and ‘divine’.⁶⁶ Similarly, in the *Hymn to Apollo*, the mortal chorus of Delian maidens acts as foil to the Olympian chorus. The ‘beautiful song’ of the Delian maidens recalls that of the Muses, while their ability ‘to mimic the voices of all men’ resembles that divine capacity for imitation when gods

⁶⁵ Hes. *Theog.* 22-33. On Hesiod’s epiphany, see Platt 2011, 50-60.

⁶⁶ Cf. Hesiod’s concluding call on the Muses to ‘give desirable song’ (104), echoing the opening description of their choruses as ‘beautiful, desirable’ (8). Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 10: the poet envisages Aphrodite’s ‘desirable face’ and then enjoins her to ‘give desirable song’.

encounter humans.⁶⁷ And like those encounters, the maidens' mimetic powers are worthy of a characteristic response to divine manifestation, 'wonder' (θαῦμα).⁶⁸ To underscore further the divine character of the Delian chorus, the poet addresses the maidens with an imperative otherwise reserved for deities in the *Hymns*: 'rejoice [χαίρετε] all you maidens'.⁶⁹

The godlike chorus of the Delian maidens is part of a festival to Apollo described by the poet and at which the *Hymn* was (at least at some point) performed.⁷⁰ The festival's introduction provides the perfect vignette of the power of beauty to assimilate god and human worshipper in musical performance. A spectator of the Ionians worshipping Apollo with boxing, dance and song 'would say they were immortal and ageless... for he would see the beauty of the whole scene, and delight in his heart' (φαίη κ' ἀθανάτους καὶ ἀγήρωσ ἔμμεναι... πάντων γάρ κεν ἴδοιτο χάριν, τέρψαιτο δὲ θυμόν).⁷¹ By virtue of their 'beauty' (χάρις), the Ionians appear 'immortal and ageless' like gods as they honour Apollo. Their

⁶⁷ *Hom. Hy.* 3.164: οὕτω σφιν καλὴ συνάρηρεν ἀοιδή. On the aesthetics of the Delian chorus, see Peponi 2009; Kurke 2012. For divine mimetic powers, see e.g. *Hom. Il.* 2.792; 3.121-4, 385-9; 5.786; etc.; *Od.* 1.102-5; 7.19-20, 199-203; etc.; *Hom. Hy.* 2.101-4; *Hy.* 3.449-50; *Hy.* 5.81-2. Ancient perceptions of the imitative qualities of dance are no doubt also pertinent to this characterisation of the Delian chorus. Most famous is Aristotle's definition of dance at *Poet.* 1447a13-28; see Rotstein 2012; Peponi 2015.

⁶⁸ *Hom. Hy.* 3.156. For the wonder of divinity, see e.g. *Hom. Il.* 1.199-200; 2.320; 3.398; 4.74-80; 8.77; *Od.* 3.372-3; 19. 33-6; *Hom. Hy.* 3.399-415 etc.

⁶⁹ *Hom. Hy.* 3.166. Cf. Nagy 2009, 23.

⁷⁰ *The Contest of Homer and Hesiod* (18) relates that the *Hymn* was recorded on placards in the Delian temple of Artemis. For the *Hymn's* formation, see Förstel 1979, 20-62; Janko 1982, 99-132; Burkert 2001, 189-97. Stehle 1997, 178 rightly notes that the *Hymn to Apollo* is unusual, compared with other bardic *Hymns*, in explicitly referring to its own setting.

⁷¹ *Hom. Hy.* 3.151-3.

godlike beauty in musical and athletic performance bridges the gap between them and Apollo; the delightful communion of god and human worshippers is mediated and manifested by beauty. On Olympos, the Muses' song highlights the gulf between gods and humans. On Delos, the poet envisages the means, at least temporarily, to transcend it. The Ionians live up to the aesthetic ideal of the divine musical paradigm and 'delight' Apollo above all others.⁷² The god's pleasure in the festival invests the Ionians' *charis* with added significance: at the same time as signifying their godlike 'beauty', it suggests the special 'favour' of Apollo that they enjoy.⁷³ Here, therefore, the social and aesthetic senses of *charis* come together in musical performance for the gods: the 'beauty' (χάρις) of ritual performance assimilates human to god, pleases the deity and inspires his 'favour' (χάρις).

Given the *Hymn's* performance at the festival it describes, the poet clearly has a self-serving reason to present this idealised vision of worship and emphasise *mousike's* power to elide the differences between human and divine. And no wonder, we may think, that epic poets describe poets as 'divine'.⁷⁴ The representation of musical performers in other media, however, affirms that becoming godlike in performance had broad cultural currency in Archaic Greece. Sixth century Attic vases offer visual testimony to the assimilation of mortal musician and divine prototype. In his earliest

⁷² Ibid. 146.

⁷³ The same is true for Athena's dispensations of *charis* on Odysseus and Telemachos, which both beautify them and manifest the goddess' special favour; see pp. 77-80 above.

⁷⁴ E.g. Hom. *Od.* 1.366; 4.17; 8.43, 47, 87, 539; Hes. *Theog.* 32. See Hunter 2018, 2.

depiction in Athenian art, on the Sophilos *dinos* (c.580 BCE) (fig. 2), Apollo appears as *kitharoidos*: beside Hermes in a chariot, he wears a long white *chiton*, embroidered *himation* and carries a kithara. But because mortal kithara-players don the same costume (*skeue*), distinguishing between them and Apollo is often difficult.⁷⁵ Roughly contemporary with the Sophilos *dinos* is this fragmentary pinax from the Athenian akropolis (fig. 3). On the left a woman proffers something, perhaps a pomegranate, over an altar with a fire. Is the lyre-player on the right Apollo accepting the offering or a mortal musician accompanying the rite?⁷⁶

The ambiguity underlines the perceived similarity between Apollo and his human kithara-playing counterparts.⁷⁷ In an intriguing visual parallel to the way Archaic hymns liken divine and human musical performance, one neck-amphora even invites the comparison. On one side (fig. 4) are Apollo and Artemis, the latter with her bow, the former with his kithara, white *chiton* and ornate *himation*. On the other side (fig. 5), another kithara-player strikes the same pose as Apollo: his right arm at a right-angle beside the kithara, his left raised to the strings, his head slightly inclined. And like Apollo, he wears the elaborate garb of the performing kitharode: a long white *chiton* and an embroidered, polychrome *himation*. Only his

⁷⁵ For more examples of the ambiguity between mortal kitharode and Apollo *kitharoidos* on Attic vases, see Shapiro 1992, 65-6. For images of Apollo *kitharoidos*, see *LIMC* s.v. Apollon (D).

⁷⁶ Graef and Langlotz 1925, 245 suggest Apollo; Maas and Synder 1989, 29 assume he is a man. His position on the other side of the altar from the mortal worshipper would make Apollo most likely.

⁷⁷ Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 94-5.

beard shows that this is not Apollo but a less youthful mortal protégé, implicitly praised by his evident similarity to the god he emulates.⁷⁸

As this example shows, the kitharode's elaborate costume (*skeue*) is instrumental to his divine assimilation. According to the fifth century CE Neoplatonist Proclus, this practice of imitating Apollo was indebted to Chrysothemis, the legendary first winner of the kitharodic contest at the Pythian festival: 'The Cretan Chrysothemis was the first to clothe himself in outstanding raiment [στολῇ χρησάμενος ἐκπρεπεῖ], take up the kithara in imitation [μίμησιν] of Apollo, and sing a song by himself; and because he won acclaim, this practice of competitive performance continues'.⁷⁹ Whatever its historicity, Proclus' aition for the 'show business' of *kitharoidia* reflects an important point: Chrysothemis' 'outstanding raiment' transforms his kitharodic performance into an impressive visual spectacle of self-consciously divine proportions.⁸⁰

The theological significance of the kitharode's performative costume is clear in Herodotus' story about the seventh century BCE kitharode, Arion.⁸¹ Betrayed by the sailors taking him to Corinth, Arion is presented with a choice: either be killed or jump overboard. He opts for the latter, after one last performance. He dons his kitharodic costume (*skeue*), performs a song and leaps overboard 'in all his finery' (σὺν τῇ σκευῇ

⁷⁸ Shapiro 1992, 65-6.

⁷⁹ Proclus, *Chrest.* ap. Photius Bibliotheca 320b1-4. Cf. Paus. 10.7.2. See Power 2010, 28-9.

⁸⁰ For the 'show business' of *kitharoidia*, see Power 2010, 18. On Apolline assimilations in *kitharoidia*, see Power 2010, 28-31.

⁸¹ Hdt. 1.23-4.

πάση).⁸² A dolphin then rescues Arion and conveys him, still wearing his costume (σὺν τῇ σκευῇ), back to Corinth—a miraculous intervention indicative of Arion’s divine protection. The sequence of musical performance followed by miraculous rescue also implies the god’s attraction and favourable response to the song’s performance; Herodotus leaves open the question of whether Arion staged his dramatic exit with this purpose in mind. The story’s denouement reaffirms the poet’s special divine connection. Having feigned innocence to the Corinthian tyrant Periander, the sailors are forced to confess when, in the manner of a divine epiphany, Arion ‘appears’ (ἐπιφανῆναί) before them still wearing his costume, just as he was when he jumped overboard.⁸³ Herodotus’ repeated emphasis on the musician’s costume gives it an aura of divine significance: it seems not just to enhance the visual spectacle of his performance but to give him a larger-than-life, quasi-divine persona.⁸⁴

Literary and archaeological sources both testify to the kitharode’s godlike appearance in performance. The importance of beauty for the visual dynamics of the performing kitharode is suggested, not least, by the fact that ‘godlike in appearance’ (θεοειδής) is synonymous with ‘exceptionally beautiful’ in Archaic and Classical Greece.⁸⁵ To be more specific, it is noteworthy that the costumes of kitharodes on Attic vases betray properties often aestheticised in Archaic poetry. Their multi-coloured and intricately embroidered *himatia* recall the ‘many cunningly

⁸² Hdt. 1.24.5. Cf. Plutarch *Conv. sept. sap.* 18.161c.

⁸³ Hdt. 1.24.7. On the scene’s epiphanic allusions, see Power 2010, 27; Kowalzig 2013, 34.

⁸⁴ Power 2010, 25. Cf. Lavecchia 2013.

⁸⁵ See chapter 1.

wrought things' (δαίδαλα πολλά) that beautify material objects in Archaic epic, evoking the aesthetic ideal of *poikilia*, denoting polychromy, variegation and/or intricate ornamentation.⁸⁶ Whiteness is linked with the beauty of many things but the description of Hera's veil, 'beautiful, fresh and... white like the sun' (καλῶ νηγατέω· λευκὸν... ἥελιος ὥς) is perhaps the most pertinent example to suggest the aesthetic value attached to the long white *chiton* donned by kitharodes.⁸⁷

By the late Archaic period, these visual signs of the kitharode's godlike beauty are accompanied by *kalos* inscriptions.⁸⁸ On this Athenian neck-amphora of c.480 BCE (fig. 6), the *kalos* inscription beside the performing kitharode invites the viewer, in the act of reading, to participate in the judgement of his beauty.⁸⁹ The viewer of the vase is thereby engaged in the aesthetic appreciation of the depicted kitharode in a way that mimics a spectator's, or indeed a judge's, perception of a real kitharode's performance at a festival like the Panathenaia—no doubt a prime source

⁸⁶ For the association of δαίδαλος and cognates with the beauty of textiles and other objects of craft, cf. Hom. *Il.* 9.187; 14.179; 16.222; 23.742-3; *Od.* 1.131; 10.315; Hes. *Theog.* 578-84. For the association of ποικίλος and cognates with beauty, cf. Hom. *Il.* 3.327-8; 6.289-95; *Od.* 15.107; 18.293; *Hom. Hy.* 5.88-9; Alc. fr. 1.66; Sapph. fr. 39.2; fr. 98a.11; Mimn. 12.5-6. On the intersection of δαίδαλος and ποικίλος, see Frontisi-Ducroux 2000, 52-5. On *poikilia*, see Berardi 2009; Grand-Clément 2015.

⁸⁷ Hom. *Il.* 14.185. As in this example, the connection of whiteness with radiance is central to its aesthetic value. Whiteness is an ideal of female beauty in particular: compare the female epithet λευκώλενος (e.g. Hom. *Il.* 1.55; 3.121 etc.) with *Od.* 18.195-6. Cf. *Il.* 10.436-7; Archil. fr. 9.

⁸⁸ On *kalos* inscriptions, see Hedreen 2016; Mannack 2016.

⁸⁹ Cf. *pelike* by the Pan Painter, c.480 BCE (Bundrick 2005, fig. 98).

of inspiration for these Attic vase-paintings of kitharodes.⁹⁰ In such a competitive context, the visual and aural beauty of his performance might enhance his chances of carrying off a prize. Yet the religious framework of the festival invests the beauty of his performance with theological resonance too. First, in the broad sense that musical contests were intended to please the presiding deity. Second, in that individual performances by kitharodes (and rhapsodes) were preluded by hymns to the gods of the kind represented by the *Homeric Hymns*. The beauty of the performing kitharode was for the pleasure of divine eyes and ears as much as human, not to mention that competitive victory, though awarded by human judges, may testify to divine favour and pleasure in the performance. One *Homeric Hymn* ends with the poet calling on the god to ‘grant me victory in the contest’; another by invoking the god to ‘bestow beauty on my singing’ (χάριν δ’ ἄμ’ ὅπασσον ἀοιδῇ).⁹¹ And what better way to win the divine and human audience’s approval than by emulating Apollo *kitharoidos* himself, adorned in beautiful, godlike raiment?⁹²

Kitharodic attire seems to have been especially ornate, but visual beauty was evidently valued in different types of musical performance. In conversation with the rhapsode Ion, Sokrates observes that ‘it is always appropriate in your profession to adorn your body and appear as beautiful

⁹⁰ The other side of the vase represents a man whose gesture may suggest that he is either the judge or trainer of the kitharode assessing his performance; see Marconi 2017, 153. On the aesthetic judgement of musical performers at public contests, see Le Ven 2010; Nagy 2011, 266-77; Martin 2015a, 18-23. On these vase-paintings and the Panathenaia, see Shapiro 1992. For more images of musical performance in Athens, see Bundrick 2005.

⁹¹ *Hom. Hy.* 6.19-20; *Hy.* 24.5.

⁹² On the dress of kitharodes, see Bieber 1917; Maas and Snyder 1989, 58-9; Power 2010, 11-27; Ercoles 2014. Cf. red-figure lekythos c.480 BCE by the Nikon Painter, New York, Metropolitan Museum, 53.224.

as possible [ὥς καλλίστοις φαίνεσθαι]... decked out in intricate colourful clothing [κεκοσμημένος ἐσθῆτι ποικίλῃ] and golden crowns'.⁹³ And according to Xenophon's Sokrates, an aspiring aulos-player should emulate the 'externals of the profession' by procuring the 'beautiful attire' (σκεύη... καλά).⁹⁴ Such attire is envisaged on this Archaic amphora (figs. 7 and 8): over a long sleeveless *chiton* with a band of embroidery above the ankles, the aulete wears a fringed and chequered tunic (ἐπενδύτης)—a fine example of the 'intricate colourful clothing' (ἐσθῆς ποικίλῃ) that beautifies the rhapsode Ion.⁹⁵ On the other side of the amphora, a rhapsode begins his recitation holding the staff characteristic of his profession: the words streaming from his mouth, 'so it was once upon a time in Tiryns' (ΗΟΔΕΠΟΤΕΝΤΥΡΙΝΘΙ), identify his performance as an epic recital of the kind that would have followed the preludial *Homeric Hymns*. Wreathed like the aulos-player but wearing only a simple himation, this rhapsode is certainly less spectacular than Plato's Ion. The inscribed platform on which he stands makes plain his aestheticisation nonetheless: 'you are beautiful' (ΚΑΛΟΝ ΕΙ), it proclaims, again putting into the mind and mouth of the reading viewer the judgement of the performer's beauty.⁹⁶

The platforms on which both the aulete and rhapsode stand show that they are performing in a contest, likely at a public festival. If elaborate costumes enhanced the aesthetic appeal of individual performers and their

⁹³ Pl. *Ion*. 530b; 535d. Cf. 541c.

⁹⁴ Xen. *Mem.* 1.7.2.

⁹⁵ On the *ependytes*, see Miller 1997, 170-83.

⁹⁶ Cf. Lissarrague 1999, 367.

chances of competitive success, it seems they also contributed to the general splendour of the festival. An inscribed decree (c.340 BCE) from the Euboean city of Eretria details the institution of musical contests for rhapsodes, aulodes, kitharistai, kitharodes, and solo-singers at the city's Artemisia festival. It states that all musical competitors participate in the 'procession to the sacrifice in the court wearing the attire which they wear in the contest' (προσόδιον τεῖ θυσίῃ ἐν τεῖ αὐλειῇ ἔ[χο]ντας τὴν σκευὴν ἥμπερ ἐν τοῖ ἀγῶνι ἔχουρ[ι]).⁹⁷ The reason for their inclusion is later made explicit: 'let all the competitors in the musical contests participate in the procession, so that the procession and sacrifice may be as beautiful as possible' (συμπομπευόντων δὲ καὶ οἱ τῆς μουσικῆς ἀγωνισταὶ πάντες, ὅπως ἂν ὡς καλλίσστη ἡ πομπὴ καὶ ἡ θυσίη γένηται).⁹⁸ The elaborate costumes of the competitive musicians beautify the procession and sacrifice for the mutual purposes of socio-political ostentation and the deity's aesthetic pleasure.⁹⁹

Attic vase-paintings of musicians in sacrificial processions convey a similar impression. On an amphora of c.540 BCE (fig. 9), a group of worshippers lead a sacrificial cow to an altar, by which Athena stands with her spear poised as on Panathenaic vases—a strong suggestion that the scene depicts a sacrificial procession at the Panathenaia.¹⁰⁰ The procession continues on the other side of the vase (fig. 10): two kithara-

⁹⁷ *IG* XII ix 189, 13-14.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 38-40. On the beauties of sacrifice, see Van Straten 1995, 43-6; Naiden 2013, esp. 80-1; Naiden 2015.

⁹⁹ Cf. Power 2010, 21. On the aesthetic splendour of the procession in Classical Athens, see Kavoulaki 1999.

¹⁰⁰ On this vase, see Shapiro 1992, 54-5; Power 2010, 23; Ercoles 2014, 100-1.

players and two aulos-players play their instruments and wear the colourful, embroidered costumes of their musical profession to make the procession ‘as beautiful as possible’, a delight to the eyes and ears of gods and humans alike.¹⁰¹

Like the chance spectator of the Delian festival in the *Hymn to Apollo*, the viewer of this vase is invited to ‘see the beauty of the whole scene’ as the Athenians honour Athena. For the Ionians on Delos and kitharodes looking like Apollo, such beauty blurs the visual boundaries between human and divine, manifesting its power to bring the two together in the act of musical performance.¹⁰² For various types of *mousike*—rhapsodes, kithara-players, aulos-players—it seems visual beauty was highly prized: its power to enhance the spectacle of performance and please the human audience was as good an indication as any of divine pleasure in the performance too. Yet in a culture where physical and musical beauty were inextricably connected with the gods—as both its sources and paradigms—the beauty of a performance carried added theological significance in its emulation of a divine ideal.

Alongside divine choral scenes in Hesiod and the *Hymns*, this fragment from the epic *Cypria* envisions this ideal:

ἦ δὲ σὺν ἀμφιπόλοισι φιλομμειδῆς Ἀφροδίτῃ
 πλεξάμεναι στεφάνους εὐώδεας ἄνθεα ποίης
 ἄν κεφαλαΐσιν ἔθεντο θεαὶ λιπαροκρήδεμνοι,

¹⁰¹ Cf. Ercoles 2014, 107.

¹⁰² On divine imitation in Greek ritual, see Burkert 1985, 97-8; Connelly 2007, 104-15; Petridou 2015, 43-9.

Νύμφαι καὶ Χάριτες, ἅμα δὲ χρυσέῃ Ἀφροδίτῃ,
καλὸν αἰεῖδουσαι κατ' ὄρος πολυπιδάκου Ἰδῆς.¹⁰³

‘Smile-loving Aphrodite and her attendants wove fragrant garlands, flowers of the meadow, and put them on their heads, those goddesses with gleaming veils, the Nymphs and Charites, and golden Aphrodite with them, singing beautifully on Mount Ida with its many springs.’

Their fragrant garlands, the sound of their beautiful song and the visual splendour of golden Aphrodite, the choreuts’ radiant veils and floral headdresses ally in a heady synaesthesia of divine beauty in choral performance. But what about human choruses? What, in Plato’s words, about their mortal ‘partners in the dance’?¹⁰⁴

The desirable chorus

Performances of collective song and dance were a prolific form of divine worship across the Greek world, from local cults within city-states, to large interstate festivals like that depicted in the *Hymn to Apollo*.¹⁰⁵ Joyful communion with the gods through dance is well illustrated in Plato’s *Laws*, where he also stresses the chorus’ role in educating and socialising the

¹⁰³ *Cypr.* fr. 6.

¹⁰⁴ *Pl. Leg.* 653e-654a.

¹⁰⁵ On choruses in Greek religion, see Lonsdale 1993; Naerebout 1997; Kowalzig 2004; 2007; Kowalzig and Wilson 2013.

young.¹⁰⁶ The communal nature of the chorus underlay its power to inculcate, express and reaffirm a community's values and socio-political identity.¹⁰⁷

This sense of community to some extent distinguishes the character of choral songs from those of other musical performers like rhapsodes and kitharodes. The latter's itinerancy is well documented: Arion's travels and maritime adventures are an obvious example.¹⁰⁸ Travelling in search of work, fame and fortune, such musicians often came into a community from outside.¹⁰⁹ By contrast, choruses were typically made up of members of a particular community whose views and values they represented, whether to the community itself or to others as embassies at interstate festivals.¹¹⁰ That choruses featured multiple participants, whereas rhapsodes and kitharodes often performed solo, might seem another obvious distinction. But as Davies observes, except for one instance in Plato, the ancients did not distinguish between solo and choral poetry.¹¹¹ If the distinction was not pertinent to ancient observers, perhaps it is worth highlighting some similarities.

Like other musical performances, choruses were often staged in competition. One of the oldest inscriptions in the Greek alphabet, on a

¹⁰⁶ Pl. *Laws*, esp. chapters 2 and 7. For Plato on the chorus, see Lonsdale 1993, *passim*; Prauscello 2014. For dance and *paideia*, cf. Polyb. 4.20.8-11.

¹⁰⁷ On choral poetry as community poetry, see Stehle 1997, esp. 26-70; Kowalzig 2007.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Hes. *Op.* 654-9; Hom. *Od.* 17.382-6; *Hom. Hy.* 3.174-5. See Hunter and Rutherford 2009.

¹⁰⁹ See Stehle 1997, 171ff.

¹¹⁰ On choral embassies (*theoriai*), see Kowalzig 2005; Rutherford 2013, 237-49.

¹¹¹ Davies 1988.

wine jug of c.740 BCE, conjures this competitive atmosphere as it pledges that ‘whoever of all dancers now performs most delicately, to him this...’ (ὅς νῦν ὀρχεστοῦ πάντων ἀταλότατα παίζει, τῷ τόδε κλ[.]μιν[.]).¹¹² The adverb ἀταλότατα, ‘most delicately’, indicates the importance, as in other forms of *mousike*, of aesthetic qualities and judgement in conferring value on choral performance.¹¹³

The aesthetic standards and expectations of choral performances presumably varied depending on the type of dance and its participants’ age and status; everyone from young to old might dance in a chorus.¹¹⁴ But it is still fair to say that beauty was a general and outstanding quality associated with the chorus, unsurprisingly perhaps, in light of divine choruses. And like other forms of musical performance, there is recurring emphasis on the visual beauty of the chorus, especially the physical appearance of the dancers. In *Iliad* 3, Aphrodite tries to entice Helen to Paris with the image of him ‘glistening in his beauty and clothes’, like someone ‘heading to the dance or fresh from the dance’ (κάλλει τε στίλβων καὶ εἵμασιν... χορὸν δὲ ἰ ἔρχεσθ’, ἢ ἐ χοροῖο νέον λήγοντα).¹¹⁵ The dance again appears as a prime occasion for the spectacle of human beauty in the *Odyssey*, when Athena beautifies Penelope ‘with the immortal beauty that fair-garlanded Kythereia anoints herself with when she joins the desirable dance of the Charites’ (κάλλει...

¹¹² CEG 432. Cf. Hom. *Il.* 18.567. See Carruesco 2016, 84.

¹¹³ On the aesthetic value of choruses in Archaic and Classical Greece, see Kurke 2012; Peponi 2015.

¹¹⁴ For the varieties of choral dance, see Prudommeau 1965; Webster 1970.

¹¹⁵ Hom. *Il.* 3.393-5. Cf. *Od.* 6.64-5.

ἀμβροσίῳ, οἷῳ περ ἐϋστέφανος Κυθήρεια ἰ χρίεται, εὖτ' ἂν ἦ
 Χαρίτων χορὸν ἱμερόεντα).¹¹⁶

Implicit in the *Iliad* passage is the idea that Paris' chorus-worthy beauty will inspire Helen's desire. In the *Odyssey*, this association is explicit in the Charites' 'desirable' dance (ἱμερόεις). An Athenian drinking-song, perhaps from the late sixth century BCE, describes a chorus for Dionysos, possibly a dithyramb:

εἴθε λύρα καλὴ γενοίμην ἐλεφαντίνῃ
 καί με καλοὶ παῖδες φέροιεν Διονύσιον ἐς χορόν.¹¹⁷

'If only I could be a beautiful ivory lyre and beautiful boys would carry me in the Dionysian dance'.

The 'beautiful boys' in the Dionysian dance excite the singer's sexual fantasy, fit subject of song for the symposium. The famous ivory figurine from Samos (fig. 11), which once formed the arm of a lyre, materialises a neat parallel to this lubricious poetic fragment: a naked 'beautiful boy', adorned with an inlaid headband and intricate belt, becomes the 'beautiful ivory lyre' itself.

In Archaic texts, the beauty and desirability of the chorus are two sides of the same coin. What is more, the chorus is 'desirable' in an overtly erotic sense, as the stories of dancing girls attracting amorous male

¹¹⁶ Hom. *Od.* 18.192-4. Cf. Hes. [*Sc.*] 201-6.

¹¹⁷ Skolion fr. 900 *PMG*. Cf. Anac. fr. 386; Archil. fr. 120: the earliest reference to the 'dithyramb, the beautiful [καλόν] song of lord Dionysos'. On Greek dithyramb, see Kowalzig and Wilson 2013.

attention also testify.¹¹⁸ Polymele, ‘beautiful in the dance’ (χορῶ καλή), inspires Hermes’ fancy, who ‘desired [ἠράσας] her when he saw her among the girls singing and dancing in the chorus of Artemis’.¹¹⁹ It is perhaps in the same light that this Attic vase-painting should be seen (fig. 12). Five women hold each other by the wrist in a standard visual formula for choral dance.¹²⁰ On the right a woman prepares sacrifice at an altar, on the left a figure sits watching the rite. The scene has been viewed as depicting a ritual from the Attic *Thesmophoria*, though the naked male figure accompanying the dancing women has posed something of an ‘enigma’.¹²¹ Indeed, like men and gods in literary narratives about female dances, his presence is an intrusion spurred by desire for the dancing women; his nudity, outstretched pose and the apparent surprise of the woman closest him all signal his erotic intent.¹²² The disguised Aphrodite in her *Homeric Hymn* relates a similar situation, explaining to Anchises how she was snatched away by Hermes while dancing with other ‘brides and maidens’ in a chorus for Artemis and commanded to become Anchises’ wife.¹²³ The dance of ‘brides and maidens’ is thus the pretext for

¹¹⁸ For the ‘desirable chorus’, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 18.603; Hom. *Hy.* 4.481; *Hy.* 6.13; Hes. *Theog.* 7-8, 63-4; [Sc.] 201-2, 280; Alc. fr. 27.

¹¹⁹ Hom. *Il.* 16.180-3. Cf. Telesilla fr. 717 (PMG); Eur. *Hel.* 1312-13; Plut. *Thes.* 31; Hellanicus *FGrH* 4 F168a; Paus. 4.16.9; 6.22.9. See Bowie 2011, 46-7; Swift 2016, 277.

¹²⁰ Cf. Hom. *Hy.* 3.196. On visual formulae for dance, Prudhommeau 1965.

¹²¹ Ashmole 1946; Parker 2005, 280. The figure on the left is interpreted as Demeter, her hand raised in grief.

¹²² That other vases attributed to this painter depict scenes of erotic pursuit supports this interpretation; see Brijder 1983, 209-10, pls. 58c-d.

¹²³ Hom. *Hy.* 5.107-42.

why she appears before him in the dazzling jewellery and clothes that inspire Anchises' eros.

The passages and vase-painting just cited refer specifically to choral performances by young women (*parthenoi*). For such choruses, physical beauty and sexual desire were of special significance. More than just an opportunity for female display, 'appearing in a chorus... is a common *topos* for the ending of virginity, expressed in myth through divine abduction'.¹²⁴ Fortunately, our knowledge of parthenaic choral performances is not limited to external representations in myth. Our earliest examples of Greek choral song are by the seventh or early sixth century BCE Spartan poet Alkman.¹²⁵ Among them are two substantial fragments of choral songs performed by young Spartan women, the so-called *partheneia*, 'maiden-songs'.¹²⁶ They are also among our most vivid and challenging Archaic sources for understanding the theological significance of beauty in musical performance.

First, a word of caution. Alkman's maiden-songs are enigmatic to say the least. Their lacunose condition and obscure vocabulary, allusions and sequence of ideas obnubilate their sense, and no one can fairly claim to have had the mist drawn from their eyes, like Diomedes on the battle-

¹²⁴ Swift 2016, 278. Note how girls are often snatched from dances of Artemis, who presides over girls' transition to sexual maturity. Cf. Nausikaa's comparison to Artemis at Hom. *Od.* 6.101-9. Understanding the significance of female sexuality for choral performances by young women was pioneered by Calame 1977. For more recent treatments, see Ingalls 2000; Cyrino 2004; Bowie 2011; Swift 2016.

¹²⁵ On Alkman's date, see test. 10-11 (Campbell 1988); West 1965, 188-94; Schneider 1985.

¹²⁶ Alc. frs. 1 and 3. On the validity of 'maiden-song' as a discrete genre, see Calame 2001, 2-3 and 74-88.

field.¹²⁷ The focus here will be Alkman's first maiden-song, the so-called *Louvre Partheneion*, which by virtue of its obscurity has, in Page's words, 'proved a happy hunting-ground for the imaginative'.¹²⁸ The necessity of imagination must be tempered by due scepticism in interpreting a text that divides opinion like few others.

I begin by asserting some widely accepted assumptions on which my interpretation builds. First, that the song accompanied some kind of religious rite to a god or gods which is referred to in the text.¹²⁹ Second, that it was performed by the chorus of 'ten girls' (παίδων δεκ[άς]) mentioned at line 99, the same ten girls who are individually named in the poem.¹³⁰ Third, that Hagesichora, as her name ('Chorus-leader') suggests, was their leader in the dance, and that Agido also had a prominent role.¹³¹

From these general observations it is clear that the maidens' song was explicitly self-referential. The first, largely lost, half of the poem narrated various myths. At line 39 the focus shifts suddenly to the 'real world' of the choral performance when the first person speaker—standing for the collective voice of the chorus—turns her attention to Agido. Thereafter, the poem is concerned with the chorus itself, its members and ritual activities. The general structure of the poem, then, seems to have been a mythical

¹²⁷ Hom. *Il.* 5.124ff.

¹²⁸ Page 1951, vi.

¹²⁹ See Alcman fr. 1.41-2, 61, 81-3, 87-8.

¹³⁰ παρσένοχος (86) and νεάνιδες (90) are similarly self-referential.

¹³¹ Hagesichora named at fr. 1.53, 57, 77, 79, 90, referred to as 'chorus-leader' (χοραγός) at 44, and as 'chorus-marshall' ([χο]ροστάτης) at 84. As Nagy 1990a, 345-9 argues, and Stehle 1997, 82 n. 39 agrees, the name 'Hagesichora' may well have been the title given each year to the girl acting as chorus-leader.

section followed by the chorus' self-presentation.¹³² How these parts relate will be taken up in due course. First, let us explore how the chorus presents itself.

The chorus' song draws attention to the visual appearance of its dancing members, above all, their beauty.¹³³ Agido and Hagesichora are singled out for special praise.¹³⁴ The former's beauty is conveyed by her 'brightness; I see her shining like the sun, which she invokes for us' (τὸ φῶς· ὁρῶ ἢ ὥτ' ἄλιον, ὅνπερ ἄμιν Ἰ Ἀγιδῶ μαρτύρεται ἢ φαίνην·).¹³⁵ Agido is both radiant like the sun and has the special role of invoking or calling the sun to witness the rite on the girls' behalf. The sequence of expression suggests that her sunlike radiance is the reason why she is the one to invoke the sun. As we will see, the same dynamic of beauty underpinning an intercessory ritual role also applies to Hagesichora, who attracts the chorus' attention after this description of Agido.

They say that their 'chorus-leader' (χοραγός) 'seems preeminent' (δοκεῖ... ἐκπρεπής), like a prize-winning race horse among grazing herds.¹³⁶ The speaker then addresses the audience directly with a

¹³² The original poem is believed to have consisted of ten fourteen-line stanzas, the first five focussed on myth, the second five on the chorus; see Page 1951, 1-3.

¹³³ On the importance of the visual in parthenaic song, see Swift 2016.

¹³⁴ The question of who is portrayed as most beautiful has preoccupied scholars e.g. Page 1951, 44-51; Bowie 2011, 42-4. I agree with West 1965, 197 that their comparison is far less important than their mutual preeminence compared with the rest of the chorus. I take this as the meaning of ἀ δὲ δευτέρα πεδ' Ἀγιδῶ τὸ φεῖδος ἢ ἵππος Ἰβηνῶι Κολαξαῖος δραμήται (58-9); to paraphrase, 'whoever comes after Agido in looks is no match for her'.

¹³⁵ Alc. fr. 1.40-3. I follow West 1965, 194 in taking φαίνην with ὁρῶ rather than μαρτύρεται.

¹³⁶ Alc. fr. 1.44-8. Cf. Hom. *Il.* 6.506-11; 15.263-8.

retorical question—‘why, do you not see?’ (ἤ οὐχ ὀρῆις;)—as if to make the preceding praise of Hagesichora’s preeminence self-evident.¹³⁷ The visual deixis of the chorus’ song thereby guides the audience’s gaze in the appreciation of Hagesichora’s outstanding appearance.¹³⁸ They continue:

... ἃ δὲ χαίτα
 τᾶς ἐμᾶς ἀνεψιᾶς
 Ἀγησιχόρας ἐπανθεῖ
 χρυσὸς [ὦ]ς ἀκήρατος·
 τό τ’ ἀργύριον πρόσωπον,
 διαφάδαν τί τοι λέγω;
 Ἀγησιχόρα μὲν αὖτα.¹³⁹

‘... the hair of my cousin Hagesichora blooms like undefiled gold, and her face like silver, why do I tell you openly? Here is Hagesichora herself!’

According to a common Archaic and Classical *topos*, Hagesichora’s hair ‘blooms’, ‘is in flower’ (ἐπανθεῖ), to evoke her youthful beauty which is underscored by analogy with gold and silver, rich with connotations of beauty and divinity in Greek culture.¹⁴⁰ Again the evocation of

¹³⁷ Cf. Peponi 2016, 3.

¹³⁸ On visual deixis in Alkman, see Peponi 2004. Cf. Swift 2016, 268ff.

¹³⁹ Alcman fr. 1.51-7.

¹⁴⁰ For the analogy between youthful beauty and natural growth, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 17.53; 18.56, 437; *Od.* 6.162-9; 14.175; *Hom. Hy.* 2.108; Sapph. fr. 105a-b; fr. 115; Aesch. *Suppl.* 998, 1015; Soph. *Trach.* 144-150. For the beauty and divinity of gold and silver, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 5.722-31; 8.41-5; 9.389; 10.439; 17.53-60; *Od.* 4.614-19; *Hom. Hy.* 3.135-6; *Hy.* 4.249-51; *Hy.* 5.64-5, 88-9; Mimn. 12.5-7; Alcman fr. 5 (2 col. ii); Ibycus fr. 151.40f; Thgn. 1105-6.

Hagesichora's beauty is immediately followed by a question engaging the audience directly to make her beauty appear self-evident: 'why do I tell you openly? Here is Hagesichora herself!' Twice the chorus speaks directly to the audience, encouraging them to see for themselves the beauties described.¹⁴¹ The audience's gaze is made an active force in the visual dynamics of the choral performance, challenging the idea that this song was part of a private initiation ceremony.¹⁴²

The girls' song continues to direct the audience's eyes when they describe the various ornaments (presumably) worn by the rest of the chorus: 'an abundance of purple... an intricate snake-bracelet of solid gold... a Lydian headdress, the pride and joy of dark-eyed girls' (πορφύρας... κόρος... ποικίλος δράκων | παγχρύσιος... μίτρα | Λυδία, νεανίδων | ιανογ[λ]εφάρων ἄγαλμα).¹⁴³ Contrary to the proverbially 'Spartan' image of Spartan society, the girls' ornaments convey a wealth, material luxury and aesthetic ostentation that archaeological finds from seventh and sixth century BCE Lakonia also attest.¹⁴⁴ This intricately carved snake-bracelet, probably made in a Lakonian workshop, provides a hitherto unrecognised parallel to that described in the poem (fig. 13).¹⁴⁵ The collection of gold and silver

¹⁴¹ Cf. Puelma 1977, 42 n. 77; Clark 1996, 157; Peponi 2004, 300.

¹⁴² On the gaze in parthenaic song, see Swift 2016, esp. 276. For the private initiation theory, see Calame 1977. Calame 1983, 327 views the chorus' questions as addressed to itself. Stehle 1997, 87-9 notes that there is no evidence for private initiation ceremonies in Sparta. Cf. Alc. fr. 3.73 where the reference to Astymeloisa moving 'among the assembly' (κατὰ στρατόν) also suggests public performance.

¹⁴³ Alc. fr. 1.64-9.

¹⁴⁴ On the archaeology of Archaic Sparta, see pp. 309-33 below.

¹⁴⁵ On the bracelet, see Philipp 1981, 237.

jewellery from the Spartan sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, like this wreath of twisted silver wire with gold leaves and berries (fig. 14), also evokes (and helps us visualise) the kind of rich ornaments that the girls parade before their audience.¹⁴⁶ The chorus then name themselves in turn, highlighting some of their physical attractions: ‘the hair of Nanno... Areta, godlike in looks [σιειδής]... Sylakis and Klesisera... Astaphis... Philylla and Damareta and lovely [ἐρατά] Wianthemis’.¹⁴⁷

Unlike Hagesichora and Agido, however, the physical and cosmetic assets of the other choreuts are mentioned in an ostensibly self-deprecatory way. The chorus says that all these adornments cannot provide protection: ‘for neither [οὔτε] an abundance of purple is sufficient for protection [ἀμύναι], nor [οὔτε] an intricate snake-bracelet... nor [οὐδέ] ... nor [οὐδέ]...’, and so on. The rest of the chorus draw attention to their wealth and beauty as they announce its deficiency. The paradoxical effect is that they appear more desirable thanks to their modesty.¹⁴⁸

So how does the chorus present itself? By guiding the audience’s visual appreciation of their performance, they highlight their wealth, beauty and desirability. Hagesichora and Agido appear outstanding in beauty, while the rest present their appearance and finery as in some sense deficient. In what sense? What is their beauty unable ‘to provide protection’ from?

¹⁴⁶ For the jewellery, see Dawkins 1929, 381-4. Although apparently the oldest extant gold Greek wreath, there is no photograph of it. See Higgins 1980, 102; Deppert-Lippitz 1985, 91. On the question of beauty for Orthia’s votives, see pp. 307-31 below.

¹⁴⁷ Alcm. fr. 1.70-6.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. West 1965, 199; Stehle 1997, 85-6.

The sequence of logic and causal conjunction γάρ in ‘for neither an abundance of purple...’ clarify that the chorus’ assets are unable ‘to provide protection’ from the threat posed by the ‘Peleades’:

ταὶ Πεληάδες γὰρ ἄμιν
 Ὀρθρίαι φᾶρος φεροίσαις
 νύκτα δι’ ἀμβροσίαν ἄτε σήριον
 ἄστρον ἀηρομέναι μάχονται.
 οὔτε γάρ τι πορφύρας
 τόσος κόρος ὥστ’ ἀμύναι...¹⁴⁹

‘For the rising Peleades fight with us as we bring to Orthria a robe/
 plough, like Sirius star through the ambrosial night. For neither an
 abundance of purple is sufficient for protection...’.

Here is the ritual activity that the girls’ song accompanies: they bring ‘a robe/plough to Orthria’, ‘Goddess of the Twilight Dawn’.¹⁵⁰ Who are the ‘Peleades’ that ‘fight with’ them as they do this? One theory is that these ‘Doves’ are Hagesichora and Agido, whose beauty is praised before this

¹⁴⁹ Alc. fr. 1.60-5.

¹⁵⁰ Ancient commentary on the papyrus states at lines 60ff. that φᾶρος does not mean ‘robe’ (as elsewhere) but ‘plough’ (ἄροτρον). A votive ‘robe’ seems more likely (and well attested) but denying the ancient testimony may be hazardous. Unable to see how a robe or plough could be like Sirius star, West 1965, 198 emends it to *phawos*, ‘light’; Hekabe’s peplos for Athena, however, ‘shone like a star’ (Hom. *Il.* 6.295). See Priestley 2007. For various identifications of the goddess, see Bowra 1934 and Calame 1977 II, 119-28 (Helen); Schwenn 1937, 315 and Burnett 1964, 30-3 (Eileithyia); Clay 1991, 56 (Artemis Phosphoros); Gentili 1991 (Aphrodite Heosphoros); Garvie 1965 (Leukippid Phoebe); Nagy 1990a, 347 (Leukippides). Such variety seems good grounds, on present evidence, for agnosticism. I agree with Robbins 1994, 9 that Ὀρθρίαι (61) and Ἀώτι (87) refer to one goddess connected with the dawn.

passage.¹⁵¹ That Hagesichora and Agido ‘fight with’ the rest of the chorus is hard to understand;¹⁵² the solution is to translate ἄμιν... μάχονται as ‘fight *for* us’, that is, ‘strive on our behalf’.¹⁵³ As Page points out, however, this is not how the verb μάχομαι is used.¹⁵⁴ Another possibility is that the Peleades are the star cluster Pleiades ‘rising’ in the sky.¹⁵⁵ The continuation of astral imagery in the chorus’ comparison of the φᾶρος—‘robe’ or ‘plough’—to Sirius star would seem to support this identification.¹⁵⁶ But what threat could a star cluster pose? The third theory is that the Peleades are a rival chorus ‘fighting with’ Alkman’s girls in a competitive choral showdown.¹⁵⁷

West combines the second and third possibilities, identifying the Peleades as the star-cluster Pleiades who ‘stand for a rival choir, either an actual one or a theoretical one’.¹⁵⁸ On this view, Alkman’s girls are engaged in a kind of choral beauty contest in which the majority of the chorus acknowledge that they are not sufficiently beautiful to secure victory. As West observes, the martial imagery of ‘they fight’ (μάχονται) and ‘provide protection’ (ἀμύναι) culminates in the later assertion that ‘thanks to Hagesichora girls have walked the path of lovely peace’ (ἐξ

¹⁵¹ E.g. Calame 1977 II, 72; Puelma 1977, 33-5; Peponi 2004.

¹⁵² See Calame 1977 II, 72-3.

¹⁵³ E.g. Peponi 2004.

¹⁵⁴ Page 1951, 52-7.

¹⁵⁵ E.g. Burnett 1964, 31-2; Davison 1968, 159-61; Stehle 1997, 79-81; Hutchinson 2001, 90-3. Cf. Simon. fr. 555.

¹⁵⁶ On the Sirius star analogy referring to φᾶρος, see Priestley 2007.

¹⁵⁷ E.g. Page 1951, 52-7; Bowra 1961, 56-7; Eisenberger 1991, 283.

¹⁵⁸ West 1965, 197.

Ἀγησιχόρ[ας] δὲ νεάνιδες ἰρ]ήνας ἐρατ[ᾶς] ἐπέβαν).¹⁵⁹ So it is thanks to Hagesichora with her superior beauty that Alkman's girls defeat their rivals. West is certainly right to connect the martial imagery of μάχονται, ἀμύναι, and ἰρ]ήνας. The problem arises when we look at the context of ἰρ]ήνας.

The comment about Hagesichora securing 'peace' supersedes another self-deprecatory remark from the chorus:

φείποιμί κ', [ἐ]γὼν μὲν αὐτὰ
 παρσένος μάταν ἀπὸ θράνω λέλακα
 γλαύξ· ἐγὼ[ν] δὲ τᾷ μὲν Ἀώτι μάλιστα
 φανδάνην ἐρῶ· πόνων γὰρ
 ᾄμιν ἰάτωρ ἔγεντο·
 ἐξ Ἀγησιχόρ[ας] δὲ νεάνιδες
 ἰρ]ήνας ἐρατ[ᾶς] ἐπέβαν.¹⁶⁰

'If I may speak, for I myself a maiden shriek in vain, an owl from the rafter; but I do desire above all to please Aotis. For she has been the healer of our troubles; but thanks to Hagesichora girls have walked the path of lovely peace.'

The chorus depreciates its singing ability, screeching 'in vain [like] an owl from the rafter'. The adverb μάταν, 'in vain', suggests that their singing has a specific purpose which they are unable to achieve.¹⁶¹ That purpose

¹⁵⁹ Alcman. fr. 1.90-1.

¹⁶⁰ Alcman. fr. 1.85-91.

¹⁶¹ Stehle 1997, 77.

is revealed by their following assertion: ‘but I do desire above all to please Aotis; for she has been the healer of our troubles’. Despite their desire to please the goddess ‘Aotis’—‘Lady at the Dawn’, another epithet for ‘Orthria’, ‘Goddess of the Morning Twilight’—the chorus recognise that their singing is incapable of doing so. And this is where Hagesichora comes to the rescue: ‘but thanks to Hagesichora girls have walked the path of lovely peace’. Unlike the rest of the chorus, then, Hagesichora is able to please the goddess and secure ‘lovely peace’.

The comment about Hagesichora securing ‘peace’ appears, therefore, in the context of divine propitiation. It bears no obvious or subtle connection with being victorious in a ‘fight’ with a rival chorus.¹⁶² This throws into question the significance of the preceding martial imagery. The culmination of this imagery with the reference to ‘peace’ through divine propitiation suggests that the ‘fight’ with the Peleades and the girls’ insufficient ‘protection’ also have something to do with divine-human relations, rather than competition with a rival chorus.

The most plausible identification of the Peleades, then, is as the star cluster Pleiades, who pose some threat to the chorus that their appearance and finery cannot defend against.¹⁶³ Whatever that threat, the important point for us is that Hagesichora is able to defend the chorus against it and secure ‘peace’. As the context of this remark shows, Hagesichora achieves this by pleasing the goddess Aotis/Orthria. Although

¹⁶² Hutchinson 2001, 99 points out that ‘peace’ also makes little sense in denoting victory in a contest.

¹⁶³ Stehle’s theory (1997, 79ff.) that the Pleiades are inimical because they signal the coming of summer heat is an attractive possibility. Cf. Hes. *Op.* 619-20; Statius *Theb.* 12.50; Hutchinson 2001, 91.

the rest of the chorus lack sufficient beauty—both in physical appearance and song—to please and persuade the goddess to avert the threat of the Peleades, the same is not true of Hagesichora and Agido. They are there, preeminent in their beauty, and thus able to please the goddess and ensure the success of the rite:¹⁶⁴ ‘for is not beautiful-ankled Hagesichora present here, and does she not remain beside Agido and commend our festival? Accept our prayers, gods. For fulfilment and accomplishment belong to the gods.’¹⁶⁵

By virtue of their beauty, Hagesichora and Agido intercede for the rest of the chorus (and perhaps community at large). Without Hagesichora in particular, the chorus’ efforts would be ‘in vain’ and it is for this reason that they emphasise their obedience to their chorus-leader, just as ‘on a ship one must obey the helmsman most of all’ (τ[ῶι] κυβερνάται δὲ χρὴ ἢ κ[ῆ]ν νᾶϊ μάλιστ’ ἀκούην·).¹⁶⁶ The other substantial fragment of a maiden-song by Alkman shows a comparable picture, where one girl, Astymeloisa, is presented as outstanding in beauty—‘the moist beauty of Kinyras sits on the maiden’s hair’—and performs the major ritual role of offering a ‘wreath’ (πυλεῶν), probably to Hera.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ See Diels 1896, 369; Puelma 1977, 52; Stehle 1997, 82; Hutchinson 2001, 90-3.

¹⁶⁵ Alcman. fr. 1.78-84: οὐ γὰρ ἄ κ[α]λλίσφυρος ἢ Ἀγησιχ[ό]ρ[α] πάρ’ αὐτεῖ, ἢ Ἀγιδοῖ [δ’ ἴκτ]αρ μένει ἢ θωστήρ[ι]α τ’ ἄμ’ ἐπαινεῖ; ἢ ἀλλὰ τᾶν [εὐχάς], σιοί, ἢ δέξασθε· [σι]ῶν γὰρ ἄνα ἢ καὶ τέλος·.

¹⁶⁶ Alcman. fr. 1.94-5.

¹⁶⁷ Alcman. fr. 3.71-2: νοτιά Κινύρα χ[ά]ρ[ι]ς ἢ ἐπὶ πῆαρσενικᾶς χαίταισιν ἴσδει. The identification of πυλεῶν’ (fr. 3.65) as a ‘wreath’ for Hera depends on Ath. 15.678a, where Pamphilos says that the word, also in Alcman. fr. 60, denotes a wreath that Spartans give Hera.

Records of ritual privileges for winners in beauty contests betray a similar attitude to the theological value of human beauty in divine worship.¹⁶⁸ The winner in a male beauty contest at Elis had the honour of carrying Athena's armour, the runner-up led the sacrificial cow, and third place laid offerings on the altar.¹⁶⁹ In a festival to Hermes at Tanagra, the ephebe judged 'most beautiful in looks' (τὸ εἶδος κάλλιστος) carried a ram around the city walls to imitate Hermes, who performed the same kriophoric task to avert a plague from the city.¹⁷⁰ The priesthood of Zeus at Aigion was appointed to the boy 'victorious in beauty' (ὁ νικῶν κάλλει).¹⁷¹ The ritual significance of beauty in Alkman's maiden-songs is part, therefore, of a much bigger and long-standing set of ideas and practices concerning the relationship between human beauty and the divine in cult worship.

At a basic level, these practices suggest that human beauty was thought pleasing to the gods and therefore those deemed most beautiful were specially suited to perform ritual actions intended to have a pleasing effect on the gods. Yet the broad cultural conception of the gods as paradigms of anthropomorphic beauty points to a deeper theological significance. That is, those deemed most beautiful were also those most like the gods. Proximity to the gods in form therefore justifies proximity to the gods in ritual action and communication; the godlike beauty of the Ionians delighting Apollo on Delos adheres to the same pattern of

¹⁶⁸ On Greek beauty contests, see Crowther 1985; Hawley 1998, 37-9; Parker 2011, 173; Gherchanoc 2016.

¹⁶⁹ Ath. 13. 565f. Cf. 609f-610a.

¹⁷⁰ Paus. 9.22.1.

¹⁷¹ Paus. 7.24.4. Cf. 9.10.4.

theological thought.¹⁷² In all these instances, beauty mediates between mortals and immortals, bridging the gap between them thanks both to beauty's power to please and to the predilection of Greek deities for those most like themselves.¹⁷³ Recall, for instance, Aphrodite's observation that Anchises' Trojan compatriots are 'of all human beings most like the gods in appearance and stature' and have thus attracted the gods' greatest attention.¹⁷⁴

Yet there are no illusions about how superficial this similarity between gods and humans really is: as soon as his beard began to grow, the priest of Zeus at Aigion passed on the mantle to the next most beautiful contender; in Aphrodite's stories about other Trojan beauties, their similarity to the gods in form underscores their irreconcilable difference in nature.¹⁷⁵ What makes the discourse about physical beauty in divine-human relations so interesting is its role in exploring and expressing both similarity and difference between gods and humans.

This interplay of similarity and difference also emerges in Alkman's first maiden-song, specifically, in the relationship between the mythical section at the poem's beginning and the chorus' subsequent self-presentation. The text begins *in media re* with a myth featuring (at least one of) the

¹⁷² Wilgaux 2009 comes to a similar conclusion concerning ritual prescriptions (in later inscriptions) about priests' bodies.

¹⁷³ Cf. e.g. Hom. *Il.* 3.413-17 (Aphrodite and Helen); *Od.* 13.288-301 (Athena and Odysseus); *Od.* 7-8 (gods and Phaiakians); Alc. fr. 307(c) and Pind. *Pyth.* 10.30-43 (Apollo and Hyperboreans).

¹⁷⁴ Hom. *Hy.* 5.200-1: ἀγχίθεοι δὲ μάλιστα καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων... εἰδός τε φυήν τε.

¹⁷⁵ See pp. 48-52 above.

Dioskouroi—Polydeukes—and the death of the sons of Hippokoon.¹⁷⁶ A gnomic statement concludes the mythical narrative:

μή τις ἀνθρώπων ἐς ὠρανὸν ποτήσθω

μηδὲ πη]ρήτω γαμῆν τὰν Ἀφροδίταν

Κυπρίαν φ]άν[α]σαν ἢ τιν΄

[...] ἢ παῖδα Πόρκω

εἰναλίω· Χά]ριτες δὲ Διὸς δόμον

ἀμφιέπου]σιν ἐρογλεφάροι.¹⁷⁷

‘(May no) human fly to heaven (nor) try to marry (the Cyprian) queen Aphrodite, or any... or a child of Porkos of (the sea); but the Charites with love in their eyes (are busy about) the house of Zeus.’

The reference to marriage suggests the myth may be related to that told in Euphorion's *Thrax*, in which Hippokoon's sons were rival suitors to the Dioskouroi.¹⁷⁸ The myth's details elude us but the gnomic statement at least preserves its intended message: goddesses are off limits for mortal suitors, something the Hippokoontids apparently failed to realise and for which they duly suffered.

Why are Aphrodite, a child of Porkos and the Charites mentioned? Perhaps they had some specific role in the myth. Their special association with physical beauty is noteworthy, however. For Aphrodite and the

¹⁷⁶ Alc. fr. 1.1-15.

¹⁷⁷ Alc. fr. 1.16-21.

¹⁷⁸ Calame 1977 II, 56 n. 21.

Charites, this association needs no further elaboration.¹⁷⁹ If Porkos is a Lakonian name for Nereus, as Hesychios says, then a child of Porkos is effectively a Nereid, one of those sea nymphs often characterised by beauty.¹⁸⁰ That these goddesses are mentioned on account of their beauty would make sense: they are precisely the kind of goddess that a mortal man would try to marry and fly to heaven for. They are beautiful, desirable but, crucially, unattainable—‘the Charites with love in their eyes (are busy about) the house of Zeus’, inaccessible to mortals, set at an appropriate distance from their reach.

The theme of potential brides has been interpreted as the link between the mythical section of the poem and the chorus’ subsequent self-presentation: ‘the myth warns against unsuitable brides, while the chorus presents suitable ones’.¹⁸¹ Choral dance provides an occasion for these girls to present themselves to society as potential brides. Through myth, their song illuminates the wrong kind of courtship for mortal men. Through self-description, their song implies that they are the appropriate objects of amorous male attention. The chorus’ emphasis on their beauty therefore has two levels of significance. On the one hand, it is presented as essential to pleasing the goddess and ensuring the efficacy of the ritual. On the other, it advertises to the audience the girls’ readiness for

¹⁷⁹ See pp. 44-6, 62-3, 78, 105 above.

¹⁸⁰ Hesych. s.v. Nereus. Cf. Schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 477. For beautiful Nereids, see Hes. *Theog.* 240-62; Bacchyl. 17.101-8; Nonn. *Dion.* 34.79; West 1966, 235. See Barringer 1995.

¹⁸¹ Stehle 1997, 32.

marriage.¹⁸² The sociological significance of their beauty in choral performance—the public self-demonstration of their nubile status—is subsumed within a theological framework—their beauty may inspire divine pleasure.¹⁸³

The same two levels of significance feature in the girls' mythical narrative. The theme of potential brides links the mythical section to the chorus' self-presentation. So, too, does the precept derived from myth: the distance between gods and humans. Like so many Greek myths, the message drawn from the Hippokoontid story is to respect the proper boundaries between human and divine. Like many others, the Hippokoontids suffered for their transgressions. The myth told by the girls after their Hippokoontid narrative is too fragmentary to identify, but its concluding maxim survives: 'they suffered unforgettable deeds because of their evil plans. There is such a thing as divine vengeance' (ἄλαστα δὲ ἰφέργα πάσον κακὰ μησαμένοι. ἢ ἔστι τις σιῶν τίσις·).¹⁸⁴ By emphasising the reality of divine retribution, this second maxim also reiterates the distance between gods and humans.

This general message from the myths has a direct bearing on the girls' self-presentation. The chorus' awareness that they are unable to please the goddess Aotis plays on precisely this theme of distance between gods and humans. Despite their good intentions, the girls know they are unable to please the goddess, they lack the means to get through to the divine

¹⁸² This assumes that the girls' audience included men. Though this cannot be proved on current evidence, stories of men abducting maidens from the dance suggest that they were common spectators.

¹⁸³ Cf. Swift 2016, 282: 'any potential 'marriage market' is a secondary context'.

¹⁸⁴ Alc. fr. 1.34-6.

healer of their troubles. They are therefore reliant on Hagesichora and Agido, who do possess sufficient beauty to attract, please and persuade the goddess to avert the threat posed by the Peleades. While their mythical narratives underline the gulf between gods and humans and the dangers of not showing deities their due respect, the girls' self-presentation reveals both the same concern and, more importantly, the solution: beauty provides a way to bridge the gap and elicit not divine retribution, but pleasure and goodwill.¹⁸⁵ The negative paradigm in myth is balanced by its positive corollary in ritual performance.

This is true in two ways. First, on the explicit theological level of maintaining harmonious relations with the gods in contrast to the transgressors of myth. Second, on the implicit sociological level of presenting suitable brides in contrast to the unsuitable exempla of myth. The spectacle of the girls' beauty is simultaneously instrumental to both. This public spectacle bears added sociological weight, however, because these girls were likely from the Spartan social elite. The name Agido appears linked to one royal Spartan family, the Agiadai. Other names connected with Spartan royalty in Alkman's fragments also suggest he composed poetry for aristocratic performance.¹⁸⁶ The girls' description of their valuable material adornments would support this view, as they highlight their wealth and beauty—the aristocratic trappings of divine favour—before their community. The extent to which the girls' performance

¹⁸⁵ This therefore echoes the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, where the song of the Olympian chorus highlights the gulf between gods and humans, while their performance and that of the Ionians on Delos also show the way to bridge it. See pp. 104-10 above.

¹⁸⁶ See Page 1959, 19-20; Calame 1977 (II), 140-41; Stehle 1997, 23-4.

publicly affirms and reinforces aristocratic preeminence is intensified by the theological and eirenic significance with which their beauty is invested. Such beauty is presented as necessary to please the gods, ensure the efficacy of the ritual and secure 'peace', all of which have consequences for the community at large. The poem's theology of beauty therefore underpins aristocratic self-assertion.¹⁸⁷

Alkman's first maiden-song provides a precious glimpse into how ideas, representations and experiences of beauty featured in a specific musical performance for the gods in Archaic Sparta. Although its specificity should be stressed, its correspondences with external depictions of choruses of young women are also noteworthy: the connection with emerging female sexuality and the concomitant focus on the girls' visual appearance, especially their desirable beauty.¹⁸⁸ More broadly, these earliest fragments of Greek choral song reaffirm the idea discernible in Archaic epic that the chorus was a prime occasion for the spectacle of human beauty. As with professional musicians like kitharodes, it seems material finery had a prominent role in enhancing the visual beauty of the performance for the pleasure of divine and human eyes.

The same is true of this sixth century BCE votive pinax from the Athenian akropolis (fig. 15).¹⁸⁹ On the right a male aulos-player serenades four women wearing multi-coloured mantles over long tunics with embroidered lower borders. Two wear striped, polychrome turban headdresses, recalling the Lydian *mitra*, the 'pride and joy [ἄγαλμα] of

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Tanner 2006, 55-67.

¹⁸⁸ See Swift 2016.

¹⁸⁹ See Graef and Langlotz 1925, 251 (no. 2574).

dark-eyed girls', mentioned by Alkman's chorus.¹⁹⁰ Sappho's advice to her companion Dika suggests the aesthetic value of the floral garlands worn by the other two women on the pinax: she encourages Dika to bind her hair with 'lovely garlands... for the blessed Charites look rather on what is adorned with flowers and turn away from those who lack garlands'.¹⁹¹ Just visible by their sides, the women appear to hold hands and carry wreaths, possibly offerings for a deity. The two deers in their ranks could suggest some link with Artemis, whose Brauroneion sanctuary on the Athenian akropolis was instituted in the second half of the sixth century.¹⁹² Whether or not it commemorates a specific event, the image draws on the cultural and aesthetic associations of young women elaborately dressed in musical performance to create an object that may please its divine recipient. The desirable beauty of girls in musical performance is transposed into a new medium but set to the same end of evoking divine pleasure in the spectacle.

The beauty of the hymn

In divine choral scenes, the physical beauty of the gods often allies with the aural beauty of their song. So, too, the visual and aural aesthetics of

¹⁹⁰ Alcman. fr. 1.69. Cf. Sappho. fr. 98: μῆτρ' ἄν' ἀν' ἀπὸ Σαρδίων. That the *mitra* was like a turban is the most common view, but there is no consensus. See Brandenburg 1966; Bezzantakos 1987; Lee 2015, 159.

¹⁹¹ Sappho. fr. 81.1-4 (Ath. 15.674e): στεφάνοις... ἐράτοισι... εὐάνθεα γὰρ πέλεται καὶ Χάριτες μάκαιραι ἢ μᾶλλον προτόρην, ἀστεφανώτοισι δ' ἀπυστρέφονται. Cf. Sappho. fr. 98.

¹⁹² See Rhodes and Dobbins 1979.

choral performance go hand in hand in this fragment of another choral song by Alkman:

Μῶσ' ἄγε Καλλιόπα, θύγατερ Διός,

ἄρχ' ἐρατῶν φεπέων, ἐπὶ δ' ἵμερον

ὕμνῳ καὶ χαρίεντα τίθη χορόν.¹⁹³

'Come, Muse Kalliope, daughter of Zeus, lead the lovely words, set desire on the song and make our dance attractive'.

The invocation of Kalliope defines the aesthetic ideals to which the performance aspires: that the words be 'lovely' (ἐρατῶν), the song possess 'desire' (ἵμερον) and the choral dance look 'attractive', 'pleasing' (χαρίεντα). These qualities are attributed to a divine source, Kalliope, the 'Beautiful-Voiced' Muse. The fragment therefore exemplifies a common nexus of ideas attached to musical performances for the gods: the interconnection of beauty, desire and pleasure as aesthetic ideals of *mousike*; the divine origin of these qualities; and therefore their power to connect human and divine.

The importance of the hymn's beauty in facilitating this connection is suggested by the standard closural formula in the *Homeric Hymns*. After identifying and praising the deity, most poets conclude their *Hymns* by directly addressing the god with the imperative, χαῖρε. More than a simple salutation, the poet encourages the god to 'rejoice', 'take pleasure' in the hymn sung in his or her honour.¹⁹⁴ This is reinforced in a third of the

¹⁹³ Alc. fr. 27. Cf. Stesichoros 278 (Str. 8. 3. 20).

¹⁹⁴ See Day 1994; Depew 2000, 64-74; Calame 2011, 354-5.

Hymns as χαῖπε is combined with the adverbial οὕτω to mean ‘and so rejoice’.¹⁹⁵ The address often introduces a concluding request, whether for favour, ‘success and prosperity’, or something more specific like protection at sea.¹⁹⁶ The imperative χαῖπε thus signals the hymn’s purpose: to inspire the ‘pleasure’ (χάρις) of the divinity as the basis for a relationship of reciprocal goodwill.¹⁹⁷ And central to the fulfilment of this purpose is the hymn’s own χάρις, its ‘beauty’;¹⁹⁸ the call on the god to ‘take pleasure’ in itself suggests that the hymn possesses this pleasing quality.¹⁹⁹

Such formal devices and explicit references to the aesthetic properties of hymns clarify that beauty was considered instrumental to their efficacy in pleasing the deity.²⁰⁰ But what features of hymns contributed to their beautification? This is, of course, a much more difficult question—how can we know? I would tentatively suggest that it is possible to identify at least one feature, backed up by ancient testimony. Images of abundant and beautiful natural phenomena in the *Homeric Hymns* contribute to their aestheticisation and enhance their capacity to delight the deity, just as in the *Odyssey* Hermes marvels at the sight of Kalypso’s garden—a place

¹⁹⁵ *Hom. Hy.* 1(D)11; *Hy.* 3.545; *Hy.* 4.579; *Hy.* 9.7; *Hy.* 14.6; *Hy.* 16.5; *Hy.* 18.10; *Hy.* 19.48; *Hy.* 21.5; *Hy.* 26.11; *Hy.* 28.17.

¹⁹⁶ Requests for general blessings: *Hy.* 2.494; *Hy.* 11.5; *Hy.* 15.9; *Hy.* 16.5; *Hy.* 19.48; *Hy.* 21.5 etc. More specific requests: *Hy.* 6.19-20; *Hy.* 10.5; *Hy.* 13.3; *Hy.* 22.7; *Hy.* 24.5; *Hy.* 25.6.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Depew 2000, 64.

¹⁹⁸ See Furley 1995, 45; Depew 2000, 74; Platt 2011, 61-2.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 24.5; Pind. fr. 75.1-2.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 22; *Hom. Hy.* 10.5; *Hy.* 24.5; Alc. frs. 3.5, 35, 36, 87b; Archil. fr. 120.

where ‘even an immortal visitor would gaze in wonder and delight in his heart’.²⁰¹

So gods delight in natural phenomena, but how does their representation in song please divine ears? An observation by the literary commentator Hermogenes is instructive: ‘the beauty [κάλλος] of a place, the variety of plant-life, the diversity of streams and so on... afford pleasure [ἡδονήν] to the eye when seen and to the ear when spoken of’.²⁰² With her connection to nature’s richness, such imagery is especially apt to delight to Demeter, and this would explain its prominence in her *Hymn*, like the floral meadow, ‘an awe-inspiring sight for immortal gods and mortal humans’.²⁰³ So, too, natural imagery has special significance in *Hymns* for deities who embody natural phenomena: *Selene*, *Helios* and *Earth Mother of All*.²⁰⁴ In the latter,

παρθενικαί τε χοροῖς πολυανθέσιν εὐφροني θυμῷ
παίζουσαι χαίρουσι κατ’ ἄνθεα μαλθακὰ ποίης,
οὕς κε σὺ τιμήσης, σεμνὴ θεά, ἄφθονε δαῖμον.²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ Hom. *Od.* 5.73-4. See pp. 83-4 above.

²⁰² Hermog. *Id.* 2.4.

²⁰³ Hom. *Hy.* 2.10-11: σέβας τό γε πᾶσιν ἰδέσθαι | ἀθανάτοις τε θεοῖς ἡδὲ θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποις. The irony, of course, is that in the hymn’s narrative this floral meadow is a trap for Persephone. Cf. *Hy.* 2.5-14, 23, 34, 38, 100, 174-8, 380-2, 386, 401-2, 417-28, 453-6, 472-3. Cf. *Hy.* 1.13ff.; *Hy.* 3.135-7; *Hy.* 5.256-72; *Hy.* 7.39-42; *Hy.* 19.17-26.

²⁰⁴ On Greek nature deities, see Larson 2007. On the aesthetics of the landscape in Greek culture, Segal 1963; Motte 1973, 27-8; Hurwit 1991.

²⁰⁵ Hom. *Hy.* 30.14-16.

‘girls in flower-bedecked dances delight with joy as they play among soft meadow flowers, so it is for those you honour, reverend goddess, boundless divinity’.

This floral meadow is at once an image to delight the goddess, an image of her blessings to mortals and a praiseworthy image of the goddess herself. As personifications of natural phenomena, the same is true for Selene and Helios: the depiction of their beauty elides the distinction between images that delight and images that praise.²⁰⁶

To illustrate his observation about natural beauty’s power to please the eyes and ears, Hermogenes cites a fragment of Sappho, in which the singer calls on Aphrodite:

δεῦρὺ μ’ ἐκ Κρήτας ἐπ’[ὶ τόνδ]ε ναῦον
 ἄγνον, ὅππ[α τοι] χάριεν μὲν ἄλσος
 μαλί[αν], βῶμοι δὲ τεθυμιάμε-
 νοι [λι]βανώτῳ·
 ἐν δ’ ὕδωρ ψυχρον κελάδει δι’ ὕσδων
 μαλίνων, βρόδοισι δὲ παῖς ὁ χῶρος
 ἐσκίαστ’, αἰθυσσομένων δὲ φύλλων
 κῶμα κατέρρει·
 ἐν δὲ λείμων ἵππόβοτος τέθαλεν
 ἡρίνοισιν ἄνθεσιν, αἱ δ’ ἄηται

²⁰⁶ *Hom. Hy.* 31.8-14; *Hy.* 32.3-13. Cf. Alc. fr. 45, a hymn to Hebros, κ[άλλ]ιστος ποτάμων.

μέλλιχα πνέοισιν...²⁰⁷

‘Come here to me from Crete to (this) holy temple, to your attractive grove of apple-trees, and altars smoking with frankincense. Here cool water babbles through the branches of apple-trees, the whole place shaded with roses, enchantment pouring down from the shimmering of the leaves. Here the meadow where horses graze blooms with spring flowers, breezes blow gently...’.

The ekphrasis appeals to every sense: the taste of ‘apples’, the sound of ‘babbling’ water, the feel of ‘cool water’, of shade and ‘breezes blowing gently’, the sight and smell of ‘frankincense’, ‘roses’, ‘spring flowers’, the ‘attractive grove’ and ‘shimmering leaves’.²⁰⁸ ‘Here’, in this place rich in synaesthetic delights, the speaker urges Aphrodite to come and join some festive occasion:

ἔνθα δὴ σὺ... ἔλοισα Κύπρι

χρυσίαισιν ἐν κυλίκεσσιν ἄβρωσ

ὀμμεμείχμενον θαλίαισι νέκταρ

οἶνοχόαισον.²⁰⁹

‘Here in this place, you, Kypris, take... and pour into golden cups nectar gracefully mingled with our festivities.’

²⁰⁷ Sapph. fr. 2.1-11.

²⁰⁸ On synaesthesia in the poem, see Butler and Purves 2013, 3-5.

²⁰⁹ Sapph. fr. 2.13-16.

The poem's original context of performance is unknown. Was it sung, as the ekphrasis suggests, in a sanctuary at a festival for Aphrodite?²¹⁰ Or is it just fanciful evocation?²¹¹ Either way, the important point is that the poem presents itself as a hymn encouraging Aphrodite to appear. To understand the significance of what it represents, therefore, it is worth interrogating how the poem seeks to achieve its ostensible purpose of invoking Aphrodite's epiphany. As scholars have pointed out, the natural phenomena described have erotic connotations appropriate to Aphrodite.²¹² But to claim that the poem is thus like 'a long and diffuse act of love' is surely to go too far, carried away by the effect of Sappho's poetry, just as in the late nineteenth century Symonds romanticised his portrait of ancient Lesbos under the heady influence of this Sapphic hymn.²¹³

Such modern fantasies are in fact illuminating, for they testify to the poem's power to attract, charm and please. And it is here that the theological significance of the ekphrasis lies. It is not just that these natural phenomena are relevant to Aphrodite, but that the vivid description of their synaesthetic delights facilitates the poem's ostensible purpose of invoking Aphrodite to appear: 'the pleasure to the ear' afforded by their description serves to attract and entice Aphrodite to 'come here to this holy temple'.²¹⁴ The final stanza visualises and realises this desired effect of intimacy

²¹⁰ E.g. Lanata 1996, 15-17; Lardinois 1996, 165; Ferrari 2010, 151-4.

²¹¹ E.g. Yatromanolakis 2004, 63-6; Bowie 2016, 154-5.

²¹² Merkelbach 1957, 26-7; Bowra 1961, 197; Lanata 1996, 15-17; Winkler 1996. Cf. *Ibyc.* frs. 2 and 5.

²¹³ Winkler 1996, 108. The Symonds passage (1874) is quoted by Page 1955, 140-2.

²¹⁴ Cf. Burnett 1983, 262-3.

between god and human worshippers by inviting Aphrodite to join in and ‘pour into golden cups nectar gracefully mingled with our festivities’.²¹⁵ The reference to ‘nectar’ intensifies the sense of intimacy between the deity and her worshippers: by enjoying the drink of the gods, Aphrodite’s votaries appear like gods themselves. As in the *Homeric Hymns*, the description of natural beauty aestheticises this ‘hymn’, endowing it with the χάρις for which Sappho’s poetry was famous in antiquity and which here mediates the communion of human and divine.²¹⁶

Above all, the theological significance of beauty in musical performances for the gods is to facilitate this kind of intimacy between human and divine. The affective power of beauty makes it effective in communication with the gods through music, dance and song. At the same time as entertaining its human audience, the beauty of *mousike* aims to inspire divine pleasure and favour (χάρις), while the representation of divine beauty in hymns does the same by honouring the deity. Praise and pleasure for the gods combine in the song’s possession and representation of beauty. As Theokritos says, ‘songs are the most beautiful of honours for the gods’ (γεράων δὲ θεοῖς κάλλιστον ἀοιδαί).²¹⁷

The divine origins, practice and aesthetic ideals of *mousike* intensify beauty’s power to bring divine and human together. By emulating a divine

²¹⁵ Cf. the intimacy of ‘Sappho’ and Aphrodite in Sapph. fr. 1. See Lardinois 2001, 78.

²¹⁶ For the χάρις of Sappho’s poetry, see Demetr. *Eloc.* 132; *Anth. Pal.* 7.17; Dion. Hal. *Dem.* 40; Strabo, 13.2.3; Himer. *Or.* 28.2; cf. Apul. *Apol.* 9; Segal 1996. Cf. Pind. fr. 75.

²¹⁷ Theoc. *Id.* 22.223.

ideal, the experience of beauty in *mousike* allows the differences between mortals and immortals, at least for a moment, to be elided in the pleasures of music, dance and song. Divine paradigm and human reality merge in the performance.²¹⁸ From the representation of divine and human beauty within Archaic hymns, to the perception, judgement and experience of beauty in different aspects and forms of musical performance, the literary and archaeological sources bear witness to Strabo's observation that 'mousike... through pleasure and the beauty of craft brings us in touch with the divine' (ἡ τε μουσική... ἡδονῇ τε ἅμα καὶ καλλιτεχνία πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἡμᾶς συνάπτει).²¹⁹

This late sixth century votive relief from the Athenian akropolis envisages this divine-human communion in a literal way (fig. 16). On the left a pipe-player, probably Hermes, provides musical accompaniment for the dance of the three Charites, who were worshipped on the west side of the akropolis near the Propylaia, where this relief was found.²²⁰ Their parted strides convey their movement in the dance as they hold each other by the wrist, recalling the Olympian choral scene in the *Hymn to Apollo* where the divine choreuts 'dance holding each other by the wrist'.²²¹ What that choral scene implied, this relief makes explicit; the

²¹⁸ Burkert 1985, 103. Cf. Sapph. fr. 140(a) where someone (a priestess?) impersonated Aphrodite lamenting Adonis.

²¹⁹ Strabo 10.3.9. On this passage, see Hardie 2004, 14ff.

²²⁰ See Mitropoulou 1977, 21. Pausanias 1.22.8 says the Charites and Hermes Propylaios were worshipped by the Propylaia. The relief's place of excavation and the association of the Charites with the dance strongly undermine the identification of the three women as the daughters of Kekrops e.g. Charbonneaux et al. 1971, 263. For further problems with the identification, see Güntner 1994, 13.

²²¹ *Hom. Hy.* 3.196.

Charites dance with a figure on the right whose smaller stature signifies that he is a human.²²²

His physical intimacy with the goddesses has led some to doubt he is human.²²³ It should be clear by now that this is no grounds for denying his humanity, whether we cite Plato's view that the gods were 'given to us as companions in the dance', or Apollo leading the choral procession of the Cretan sailors, or any number of other indications that intimacy between divine and human was a crowning ideal of musical performance.²²⁴ The relief visualises this ideal: hand in hand in the 'desirable chorus', that quintessential act of communal identity, the mortal worshipper dances with the Charites. He is literally 'in touch with the divine' through the pleasure and beauty (χάρις) of *mousike*. Although the specific motives are not known, the fact that the relief was dedicated to the Charites is significant: it is a gift intended to please and honour its divine recipients, to inspire their pleasure and favour (χάρις).²²⁵ The relief's vision of communion with the Charites echoes and underpins its role in maintaining pleasing relations with them. Through its decoration and ritual function, the votive therefore encapsulates how the social and aesthetic senses of *charis* come together in the beauty of musical performances for the gods.

As much as it portrays an ideal of divine worship, the relief also invites the viewer into its world. The frontal gaze of the Charites calls on the

²²² Cf. Himmelman 1957, 16ff.

²²³ E.g. Comella 2002, 14.

²²⁴ Pl. *Leg.* 653e; *Hom. Hy.* 3.514-19. Cf. Ar. *Lys.* 1314-15.

²²⁵ It is possible the relief commemorated a specific choral dance for the Charites, who presided over the growth and maturation of the young in Athens. See Pirenne-Delforge 1996, 201ff.

viewer to witness and share in the depicted experience of beneficent intimacy between divine and human. The worshipper encountering this relief on the akropolis is made to address the divine directly. Just as hymns salute and invoke the gods to ‘rejoice’ (χαῖρε), so here the viewer is made ‘to greet’ (χαίρειν) the Charites face on, both beholding the past experience of *charis* that the relief depicts, and giving that past experience of *charis* continued cogency in the present by greeting and engaging with the Charites directly.²²⁶ That the sanctuary was a place of special access to the gods is here made manifest in the exchange of gazes between the deities and the human worshipper on the akropolis.

As ‘precincts set apart’ (τεμένη) and dedicated to the gods, sanctuaries like the Athenian akropolis were ‘sacred places’ (ἱερά) where the expectation and experience of divine presence were most keenly felt. While the relief of the Charites shows how objects in sanctuaries might portray and mediate encounters with gods, sanctuaries brought worshippers into contact with the divine in multiple ways: from votive objects and images of deities, to ritual acts of communication, to the particular character of the visual and physical environment of worship. The Archaic period witnessed dramatic changes in how sanctuaries managed human relations with the gods. Among the most significant and influential of these changes was in the field of sacred architecture. Developments in temple building from the second half of eighth century to the end of the sixth century effected one of the most profound transformations to the character

²²⁶ Cf. the so-called Chiaramonti relief, a Roman version of an early fifth century BCE relief from the Athenian akropolis depicting the Charites: the central goddess stares out at the viewer. On the temporal significance of *charis* in Archaic dedicatory inscriptions, see Day 2010, esp. 232ff; Furley 2010.

of Greek sanctuaries in any period of ancient Greek history. It is to them and their relation with Archaic ideas and experiences of beauty that we shall now turn.

CHAPTER THREE

TO ROOF A PLEASING SHRINE

The title of this chapter alludes to one of the earliest Greek references to a temple, in *Iliad* 1. With pleas for his daughter's return falling on deaf ears, the priest Chryses calls on Apollo to punish the Greeks:

Σμινθεῦ, εἴ ποτέ τοι χαρίεντ' ἐπὶ νηὸν ἔρεψα,
ἢ εἰ δὴ ποτέ τοι κατὰ πύονα μηρί' ἔκηα
ταύρων ἢ δ' αἰγῶν, τόδε μοι κρήνην ἐέλδωρ·
τείσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν.¹

'Smintheus, if ever I have roofed for you a pleasing shrine, or if ever I have burned the fat thigh bones of bulls and goats, grant me this wish: may the Danaans pay for my tears with your arrows.'

To persuade Apollo to grant his wish, Chryses recalls his previous acts of piety.² Like sacrificing bulls and goats, to roof a shrine for the deity is an act of veneration which may inspire divine 'pleasure' and 'favour' (χάρις). And given his swift response to Chryses' prayer, it seems Apollo did find the shrine 'pleasing' (χαρίεις).

This passage highlights a vital characteristic of Archaic Greek temples. Whether they functioned as homes of deities, treasuries or anything else, temples were first and foremost gifts to the gods and therefore embedded

¹ Hom. *Il.* 1.39-42.

² Cf. Kallinos fr. 2a (West).

in the framework of *charis* which governed human relations with the divine.³ The description of the shrine as *χαρίεις*, ‘pleasing’, makes this clear: the ‘pleasure’ (*χάρις*) the temple gave Apollo is repaid in the ‘favour’ (*χάρις*) he shows Chryses. This is also true for Chryses’ sacrifices, but it is indicative that he mentions the shrine first. This priority reflects another fact about temples which underlines their critical importance, despite their relative neglect, in the study of Greek religion: temples were the most expensive, laborious, conspicuous and enduring gifts Greek communities ever gave their gods. Their ruins are therefore among the most significant records we have of Greek theological values. They are the monumental deposits of social relations with the gods, shaped by the values and aspirations of a pleasing reciprocity between human and divine.

Temples are also the deposits of a wider network of relationships between people: between those who commissioned, funded, designed, built, used and viewed temples. This chapter will explore how this nexus of relationships between people and gods affected the aesthetic character of Archaic temples and their development. Did the dedicatory purpose of temples have anything to do with beauty? How important, if at all, were contemporary ideas and experiences of beauty for the communities and individuals who commissioned, funded, designed, built, used and viewed Archaic temples?

³ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 12.345-7; *Hom. Hy.* 2.270-300; *CEG* 301; *SEG* LX 769. The latter inscription on a temple at Dionysopolis records that it was dedicated by a priest Demophon as a ‘thank-offering’ (*χαριστήριον*). For Greek temples as gifts, see Burkert 1988; Wilson Jones 2014. Greek temples shared the premise of evoking divine pleasure with their Mesopotamian counterparts. E.g. the temple-building accounts of the Neo-Assyrian ruler Esarhaddon (680-669 BCE) often conclude with the hope that the deity ‘look joyously’ on his or her temple built by the king. See Winter 2000, 27-9.

One obstacle to understanding the ancient significance of beauty for Greek temples is their aestheticisation in the modern era. The question of beauty strikes warning bells: will this not devolve into the heavy subjectivism and universalising tendencies that characterised the aesthetic appreciation and canonisation of Classical architecture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?⁴ The rich history of modern aesthetic attitudes to Greek architecture clouds our view of their ancient counterparts. The predominance of certain ideas in modern aesthetic discourse, especially the notion of aesthetic autonomy, poses a further challenge.⁵ According to modern sensibilities, enquiry into the beauty of temples may seem disconnected from the historical, political and religious questions that have gained traction in scholarship on temples in the last forty years.⁶ Such scholarship has proved invaluable, taking temples from their former isolation in architectural treatises and typological handbooks and re-inserting them into their contemporary social worlds.⁷

To be sure, this chapter does not aim to turn back the clock. For it is important to realise that divorcing aesthetic appreciation from wider historical, political and religious concerns is a modern western habit not

⁴ E.g. Stuart and Revett 1750/1751; Le Roy 1758; Gerard 1759; Stuart and Revett [1762] 2007; Quatremère de Quincy 1788; Gordon 1822; Gwilt 1825. On Greek architecture's reception in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Honour 1968; Constantine 1984; Etienne and Etienne 1992; Jenkins 1995; Soros 2006; Toman 2011; Armstrong 2012; Ruprecht 2014.

⁵ On the emergence of this idea, see Stolnitz 1961-2; Abrams 1989, 62-4, 135-87; Prettejohn 2005. Cf. pp. 10-11 above.

⁶ Cf. Kristeller 1980, 174; Destrée and Murray 2015b, 2-3.

⁷ E.g. Corbett 1970; Snodgrass 1980; de Polignac 1984; Mazarakis-Ainian 1988; Morgan 1990; Marinatos and Hägg 1993; Morgan 1994; Whitley 2001; Pedley 2005; Spawforth 2006; Marconi 2007; Scott 2010; Wescoat and Ousterhout 2012.

only alien to Archaic Greek culture (among others) but positively misleading.⁸ Take the following example: ‘we must beware of thinking that the ancient way of experiencing a temple was - like ours today - mainly aesthetic... the Greeks thought of a temple first and foremost as the god’s personal house’.⁹ It is true that there is a discrepancy between ancient and modern ways of experiencing a temple. Another discrepancy that this comment overlooks, however, is the nature of aesthetic appreciation: it assumes that aesthetic experience is wholly distinct from the religious appreciation of the temple ‘as the god’s personal house’.¹⁰ On the contrary, the core argument of this chapter is that the value, judgement and experience of the beauty of temples were intrinsic to their religious significance. As it was for musical performances for the gods, so, too, for Archaic temples, ideas and experiences of beauty were woven into the fabric of their religious life.

Aischylos’ fragmentary satyr play, *Isthmiastai*, neatly illustrates the interconnection between theology and aesthetics in the ancient life of temples.¹¹ The scene is set in the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, where a chorus of satyrs fix images of themselves to the temple. The satyrs marvel at the images’ lifelike appearance—‘a Daedalic representation, it only lacks a voice!’—then make plain their ritual purpose:

⁸ Cf. Porter 2010a; Destree and Murray 2015b, 4-5. Cf. Gherchanoc 2016 who demonstrates the social, political and religious significance of Greek beauty contests.

⁹ Spawforth 2006, 7.

¹⁰ On aesthetic and religious modes of appreciation in antiquity, see Elsner 1996.

¹¹ For more on the play, see Snell 1956; Zeitlin 1994, 138-9, n. 2; O’Sullivan 2000. On the scene’s significance for the imagery of Archaic temples, see Faraone 1992, 37-8; Marconi 2004.

εὐκταῖα κόσμον ταῦτ[α] τῶι θεῶι φέρω

καλλίγραπτον εὐχάν.¹²

‘I bring these votives as an ornament for the god, a beautifully-painted vow’.

The beautiful images are *kosmos* for Poseidon, a word ranging from moral and physical ‘order’, to ‘universe’, to the aesthetic sense used here: ‘ornament’, ‘adornment’ or ‘decoration’ that enhances physical attractiveness.¹³ To modern ears, the ‘decoration’ of temples may sound like an appeal to pure formalism, to pretty appearances devoid of deeper meaning or content.¹⁴ In the passage of Aischylos, however, the aesthetic notion of *kosmos* is invested with theological meaning and value. The satyrs’ sculptural *kosmos* beautifies the temple to please and honour Poseidon. It therefore represents a way of relating to the god comparable to other forms of ritual communication—a point underscored by the metaphorical description of the image as ‘a beautifully-painted vow’.¹⁵ Like vows, their ‘beautifully-painted’ images are essential agents in the culture

¹² Aesch. *Isthmiastai* 11-12 (Sommerstein 2008; *P Oxy.* 2162 fr. 1 (a) = *TrGF* F 78 a).

¹³ For *kosmos* as ‘adornment’, see Hom. *Il.* 4.141-5; 14.187; Hom. *Hy.* 5.65, 162; *Hy.* 27.17; *Hy.* 32.4; Sapph. fr. 98a.3; Pind. fr. 194.1-3 etc. For *kosmos* in later (Hellenistic) architectural terminology, see Hellmann 1992, 231-3. On the semantics of *kosmos*, see Finkelberg 1998; Beekes 2010, s.v. *kosmos*.

¹⁴ See Marconi 2004; 2007; Hölscher 2009, esp. 62.

¹⁵ Of course, the comic conceit of the passage is that satyrs are not beautiful to anyone but themselves. Yet the very fact that they refer to their ‘beautiful form’ (19) and their images as ‘beautifully-painted’ *kosmos* underlines the high value set on beauty, as far as the satyrs are concerned, in pleasing the god through adorning his temple. In other words, their aesthetic and theological intentions, however comically misplaced, are indicative.

and universe of *charis* that binds gods and humans together. It is no wonder, then, that the passage concludes with the satyrs directly addressing the deity with the imperative *chaire*, cognate with *charis*: ‘*chaire* lord, *chaire* Poseidon’.¹⁶ As in the *Homeric Hymns*, *chaire* here is both a salutation to the god (‘hail’) and invites him to ‘rejoice’, take ‘pleasure’ (χάρις) in his offerings, whether songs or images adorning his temple.¹⁷ In ritual communication, the aesthetic value of those images, their ornamental and ‘beautifully-painted’ appearance, enhances their capacity to please the god.

Chryses’ shrine for Apollo and the satyrs’ images on the temple of Poseidon share the aim of inspiring divine pleasure. If that aim was common to Greek temples from the composition of the *Iliad* in the late eighth or early seventh century to that of the *Isthmiastai* in the first half of the fifth century, it is also true that these poems frame a period of profound change in Greek sacred architecture.¹⁸ The eighth century witnessed a surge in the construction of cult buildings in the Greek world.¹⁹ Most were of comparable dimensions to domestic buildings, though a few, like the temple of Apollo at Eretria (c.34 m x 8 m), built in the last quarter of the

¹⁶ Aesch. *Isthmiastai* 22.

¹⁷ On *chaire* in the *Homeric Hymns*, see pp. 143-4 above. On the equivalence between hymns and images as votives, see Day 1994; Depew 2000.

¹⁸ On the date of the *Iliad*, see p. 167 below. The *Isthmiastai* is presumed to be one of Aeschylus’ later plays due to the probable use of elements of stagecraft; Taplin 1977, 420-2.

¹⁹ On early Greek temples, see de Polignac 1984; Mazarakis Ainian 1997 and 2016; Morgan 2003, 142-8.

eighth century, signal an emerging taste for grandeur.²⁰ The building's mudbrick walls, probable thatched roof and apsidal end show that temples at this time, however big, were rooted in the forms and materials of vernacular architecture. The period from c.630 BCE to c.560 BCE witnessed rapid changes in Greek temple building. One critical effect of these changes was to clarify the distinction between sacred and vernacular architecture. By the end of the sixth century, sanctuaries across the Hellenic world boasted temples which were clearly distinguished from vernacular buildings in their size, forms, materials and decoration. In these features, temples would remain unparalleled in Greek communities for centuries.²¹ Such changes were revolutionary both in their speed and in the extent and longevity of their effects on everything from the landscape to politics, economics and religion.²² As we will see, an important aspect of this Archaic revolution in the visual landscapes of sanctuaries was its cognitive effect: its effect on expectations about sacred experience in sanctuaries. Before assessing their impact, this chapter will investigate the

²⁰ On this temple, see Auberson 1968; Bérard 1971; Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 102-4, 243. Other big temples from the late eighth and early seventh century include the Apollonion at Halieis (27.30 m x 4.46 m), the Artemision at Rakita (34.40 m x 11.0 m) and the Heraion at Samos (33.0 m x 6.5 m).

²¹ Some public civic buildings were also built on a large scale and with durable materials in the Archaic period: the seventh century *stoai* in the agora of Megara Hyblaia and the sixth century *ekklesiasterion* at Metapontion are notable examples. See Di Vita 1996, 266-8; Mertens 1996b, 328-9. The point stands, however, that until the fourth century, few buildings competed with temples in their size and decorative embellishment. Archaic treasuries were often elaborately decorated; that they were continuous with temple architecture is demonstrated by their location in sanctuaries, their forms, decoration, and function as gifts and store-houses of offerings.

²² See Snodgrass 1980, esp. 55-65; Osborne 1996, 202-14; Mazarakis Ainian 2017.

significance of beauty for choices and changes in the size, design, materials and decoration of Archaic temples.

The aesthetics of Archaic sacred architecture: ‘such are the heights and summits of the hall that they need a Homer to praise them’

But first, an interpretive conundrum: how can we know how important ideas and experiences of beauty were for the communities and individuals who commissioned, funded, designed, built, used and viewed Archaic temples? How can we know what (if any) aesthetic rationale lies behind the design, materials and decoration of Archaic temples? The earliest Greek architectural treatises were written in the sixth century BCE by the architects of temples at Samos and Ephesos—Theodoros, Chersiphron and Metagenes.²³ Their works do not survive and the closest we come to an Archaic architect’s words on architecture are those of later authors who probably drew on them: Philon of Byzantion in the second half of third century BCE; Vitruvius in the second half of the first century BCE; and Pliny the Elder in the mid-first century CE.²⁴ Vitruvius is a rich source on architectural ‘beauty’ (*venustas*) and it is possible that his aesthetic principles are indebted to earlier Greek sources.²⁵ But there are obvious

²³ See Hdt. 3.60; Pl. *Ion* 533b; Vitr. 7. pr. 12-17; 10.2.11-12; Plin. *HN* 7.56, 198; 36.19, 21, 56, 90, 95-7, 179; Paus. 10.38.3. See Coulton 1977, 24-8; Hellmann 2002, 32-55; Senseney 2016.

²⁴ They may preserve the ideas or words of Archaic architects, but their reliability is necessarily problematic since those ideas and words are repurposed to suit the literary agendas of these later authors.

²⁵ See esp. Vitr. 1.2.2-4; 1.3.2. On Vitruvian aesthetics, see Schlikker 1940; Scranton 1974; Pollitt 1974, 164-7, 173-80, 343-7; Thomas 2015.

dangers in retrojection: not only are aesthetic attitudes (to architecture) prone to change, but especially in the seventh and early sixth centuries, when architectural conventions were not yet established, the practice of architects must have been substantially different from that of even their fifth century inheritors who could rely on tradition.²⁶

Without knowing how Archaic architects explained their choices, how should we interpret changes in the design, materials and decoration of Archaic sacred architecture? These changes are commonly interpreted in modern scholarship as a process of ‘monumentalisation’. Although the term is often not clearly defined, Barletta outlines its basic meaning: ‘the term “monumental” is generally understood to mean large size, and thus to convey a sense of impressiveness to the beholder. In architecture it also conveys permanence, referring to construction in nonperishable materials.’²⁷ Elaborate decoration is sometimes added to the list of ‘monumental’ features.²⁸ For Archaic temples, their increasing size, decoration and use of more durable materials like stone and terracotta are therefore seen as embodying ‘conscious attempts to monumentalise religious architecture’.²⁹

The association with ‘impressiveness’ shows that ‘monumentality’ is not an anodyne objective concept, but one laced with aesthetic nuance:

²⁶ Coulton 1977, 15-16. Another problem with using Vitruvius is highlighted by his term for ‘beauty’, *venustas*: the translation into Latin underlines the potential for (perhaps inevitability of) cultural dissonance between Archaic Greek aesthetic attitudes to architecture and those of early Imperial Rome, as well as the anachronism of using the latter to understand the former.

²⁷ Barletta 2016, 31. For monumentality in Roman and Etruscan architecture, see Thomas 2007, esp. 1-14; Thomas and Meyers 2012.

²⁸ E.g. Rhodes 2003, 88, 93.

²⁹ Rhodes 2003, 93. Cf. Mertens 1996b, 318; Hemans 2015, 39.

impressive appearance is an aesthetic judgement. If we accept that aesthetic values, judgements and experiences are bound to cultural and historical context, then we cannot assume that aesthetic judgements which seem obvious to us are interpretively valid for understanding ancient architecture. Do Archaic sources validate the association of architectural bigness with ‘impressiveness’? What would ‘impressiveness’ mean for Archaic Greeks? Furthermore, the assertion that certain architectural features embody ‘conscious attempts to monumentalise religious architecture’ suggests that ‘monumentalisation’ was the explicit goal of those who built these temples. This begs the question of how *they* would have expressed this goal: is there an ancient Greek word and concept for ‘monumentality’ that justifies its privileged heuristic status in modern scholarship on Archaic architecture?

The answer is no. There are various words that convey large size, notably, the adjectives ὑψηλός, ‘lofty’, ‘tall’, μέγας, ‘big’, and the noun μέγεθος, ‘stature’, ‘bigness’, ‘grandeur’. But no single word captures monumentality’s range of nuances, in particular the additional sense of durability.³⁰ Of course, this does not mean that the concept cannot be useful in describing the character and development of sacred architecture.³¹ But it does highlight the unsettling fact that the dominant model for understanding changes in Archaic sacred architecture may have

³⁰ The ‘imperishable’ (ἄφθιτος) is an important concept for Archaic sacred architecture, as argued pp. 176-7 below, but it is conceptually distinct from any notion of grandeur.

³¹ The idea of ‘performance’ in Hellenic studies is a good example of the positive heuristic value of a modern concept with no ancient equivalent. See pp. 98-9 above. But it is essential to recognise such disparity and thus justify and demonstrate—not assume—the heuristic value of a modern concept.

only a tangential bearing on how the individuals and communities who made those changes expressed and understood them. The challenge then is to find an interpretive framework which is grounded in Archaic terminology and attitudes to architecture. The cultural specificity of aesthetic tastes, values and expectations means that this is essential for any enquiry into the significance of beauty for ancient architecture. Is it possible to excavate the aesthetic attitudes which informed the construction, development and reception of Archaic temples?

To do so, we need Archaic poetry. First, Archaic poetry supplies a contemporary language and conceptual terminology for describing and understanding Archaic architecture. Crucially, it also illuminates aesthetic values and ways of seeing of architecture which are culturally and historically contingent. Archaic literature provides the perceptual, cognitive and conceptual filters, available to people in Archaic Greece, through which to interpret Archaic buildings. Lucian encapsulates this point when he exclaims, ‘such are the heights and summits of the hall that they need a Homer to praise them’.³² And no wonder that it is ‘a Homer’, for the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are unparalleled Archaic literary sources for understanding Archaic architecture and its aesthetics. This is for three reasons. First, because Homer’s descriptions and attention to buildings surpass in length and detail that of any other Archaic literary sources. Second, because of the panhellenic aspiration and success of Homeric epic. And third, because of the central role which aesthetic emphasis plays in Homer’s evocation of the heroic past.

³² Lucian, *De Domo* 9: Τὰ μὲν δὴ ὑψηλὰ καὶ κορυφαῖα τοῦ οἴκου τοιάδε, Ὅμηρου τινὸς δεόμενα ἐπαινέτου.

Before exploring these points further, it is important to consider what exactly the depiction of architecture in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* reveals. For if the epics are products of a long oral tradition, how can we know whether their portrayal of architecture is indicative of the period of their composition (to which we will return) and not some more distant past age? Within a long oral tradition, epic poets inherit from their predecessors both subject matter and a set of stock phrases and scenes that are building blocks for composition, for telling stories in performance to entertain their audience. Such poets preserve material from earlier generations not out of antiquarian concern for the past but because it is meaningful to their present audience.³³ Through a combination of poetic inheritance, invention and deliberate archaism, the epics portray the past to explore human dramas and concerns significant in the present. For all their long prehistory, the epics are thus rooted in the time of their composition and reflect the outlook and values of this period.³⁴ Homer's representation of buildings therefore tells us about attitudes to architecture in his contemporary world, even if the buildings described have little resemblance to those familiar to the audience.

To be sure, Homer's epics are not architectural treatises: his descriptions of buildings are shaped by and serve poetic ends and it is important to attend to their poetic character and narrative purpose. But it is precisely because of their poetic character that they are so illuminating for aesthetic attitudes to architecture. Homer envisages a heroic past which is

³³ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 1.351-2: 'people praise above all the newest song that circulates among listeners'. See e.g. Osborne 1996, 147-57; Raaflaub 1997; Raaflaub 1998; Osborne 2004a.

³⁴ Raaflaub 1998, 186; Osborne 1996, 153-6.

set apart and elevated above the world 'nowadays'. Individual heroes achieve feats of strength which 'not even two men' could achieve 'such as mortals are now'.³⁵ Another feature distinguishing this heroic age is the proximity of gods and humans, neatly illustrated when Achilles rejects Lykaon's plea to spare his life: 'do you not see how beautiful and big I am [ἐγὼ καλός τε μέγας τε]? My father is a noble man, and the mother that bore me is a goddess; but even over me hang death and mighty fate'.³⁶ Like other heroes and heroines, Achilles is the child of a deity, while his closeness to the gods is underscored by his godlike appearance, 'beautiful and big', like the image of Ares and Athena on his shield.³⁷ Indeed, the beauty of Homeric heroes and heroines, who are repeatedly 'in form like the immortals', both conveys their proximity to the gods and further elevates and sets them apart from 'mortals now'. But it is not just the aestheticisation of heroes and heroines that contributes to what Redfield dubbed the 'epic distance'.³⁸ Homer depicts an enchanted world where everything from trees and streams, to tableware and textiles, to armour and palaces, is 'beautiful'.³⁹ It is a world that is bigger, better and more beautiful than the world nowadays. In short, the aesthetic distinction of this mythical past is integral to its heroic character. If the epics testify to the outlook and values of their contemporary world, then the process by which

³⁵ Hom. *Il.* 5.303-4. Cf. 12.445-8.

³⁶ Hom. *Il.* 21.108-10.

³⁷ Hom. *Il.* 18.516-19. The poetic brilliance of this proximity is that it sets in high contrast the crucial difference between gods and humans—mortality—as Achilles' comment shows. See p. 50 above.

³⁸ Redfield 1975, esp. 35-9.

³⁹ On beauty in Homer, see Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

Homer heroises the past illuminates the aesthetic tastes, values and aspirations of that contemporary world. Architecture is no exception to this aesthetic emphasis. However fanciful, Homer's portrayal of heroic architecture is therefore a guide to the architectural aesthetics of his own time.

So what is Homer's own time? The common consensus is that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were composed in something like the form we have them in the period c.750-650 BCE.⁴⁰ As for chronological clues in the texts, the description of the riches of Egyptian Thebes is noteworthy: this in all likelihood refers to the restored wealth and power of the city after the Mycenaean period, in the 25th Dynasty between 715 and 663 BCE.⁴¹ That few objects described in the epics find parallels in the archaeological record dating after c.650 BCE perhaps suggests that the poems had attained a relatively fixed form by this point.⁴² Neither certainty nor specificity is possible, however, and it seems safe to say that the poems were created in something like the form we have them between the late eighth and early seventh century.

As much as the aesthetic attitudes to architecture in Homer are grounded in this period, their significance for understanding Archaic architecture is far greater given the panhellenic success of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the sixth century.⁴³ Their wide dissemination and success

⁴⁰ On the date of Homer, see e.g. Finley 1956; West 1966; Burkert 1976; Janko 1982; Morris 1986; Crielaard 1995; Osborne 2004; Lane Fox 2008, 381-4; West 2011a, 188-208; 2011b, 15-19.

⁴¹ Hom. *Il.* 9.381-4. See Burkert 1976; Osborne 1996, 159; West 2011a, 197-8.

⁴² Osborne 1996, 159.

⁴³ On the early reception of Homeric epic, see Fowler 1987; Snodgrass 1998; Burgess 2001; Graziosi 2002; Nagy 2011.

makes the epics all the more important as historical documents for the Archaic period. Yet it also underlines their lack of specificity. In contrast to other Archaic poetry, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* suppress elements tying their portrait of the past to any one place. As Raaflaub points out, local and regional specificities are largely removed and ‘replaced by a panhellenic outlook and, accordingly, a deliberate focus on issues, values, patterns of life, and modes of behaviour that were familiar, acceptable, and important to many Greeks in many parts of Hellas’.⁴⁴ What this means, moreover, is that Homer’s aesthetics, which are vital to his construction of a heroic world, aspired to a panhellenic resonance too. In contrast, say, to Sappho, who can reject the aesthetic tastes of the many and claim with an emphatic first person voice what is ‘the most beautiful thing’—‘I say it is what one loves’—Homer’s aesthetic attitudes aim at broad appeal and familiarity to underpin his panhellenic agenda.⁴⁵ And it seems the epics succeeded in this task; those common aesthetic tastes rejected by Sappho bear a suggestive resemblance to those espoused by Homer.⁴⁶

The panhellenic aspiration and success of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* present something of a paradox in determining their value for the interpretation of Archaic material culture. On the one hand, the epics have a general and profound significance across the Greek world. On the other, this very breadth calls into question their specific applicability and explanatory power at a local level. This problem is particularly acute for sacred architecture contemporary with Homer in the late eighth and early

⁴⁴ Raaflaub 1998, 177.

⁴⁵ Sapph. fr. 16.3-4.

⁴⁶ DuBois 1996; Winkler 1996, 97-8.

seventh century. While Homer adopts a panhellenic perspective, contemporary sacred architecture appears to have been anything but: the archaeological record of temples from this time indicates a strong tendency to architectural localism.

The question, then, is how Homer, who is purposefully general in outlook and ambition, can shed light on early Archaic temples, which are characterised by their local particularity. The situation is somewhat different for the sixth century. Regional variety still dominated the field, but the late seventh and sixth centuries also witnessed a movement towards standardisation in temple architecture, demonstrated by the emergence of the Doric order and the widespread adoption of stone, roof tiles, rectilinear design, colonnades and colourful decoration with figural imagery and architectural ornaments.⁴⁷ What is more, sixth century literature presents a richer and more diverse body of evidence for interpreting aesthetic aspects of particular temples. For the late eighth and seventh century, however, Homer stands in near complete isolation in providing access to an aesthetic discourse on architecture and to ways of seeing, experiencing and talking about buildings which had general currency at the time. So how can this broad-based discourse illuminate the significance of beauty for early Archaic temples given their decidedly local character?

This question taps into a bigger issue, also highlighted by Homer, about the relationship between the general and the particular in Greek religion. Homer depicts the Greek gods as universal in power and interests: they control the entire universe and are worshipped by all mortals, from the

⁴⁷ On the emergence of the orders, see Barletta 2001; Wilson Jones 2014.

Greeks to the Ethiopians, through prayers and offerings like music, animal sacrifice and physical objects. But although Greek gods were conceived as universal, they were also intensely local: they appeared in various guises and with various epithets in different places, and were worshipped in ways and for reasons peculiar to particular places.⁴⁸ The religious life of different Greek communities therefore varied significantly, even though they shared certain religious values, expectations, practices and places of worship. Accordingly, Homer's panhellenic gods, as Graziosi notes, 'belong at the same time to everyone and no one in particular';⁴⁹ they embody and, in Herodotus' words, epitomise the universal conception of the gods, ever in dialogue with their particular manifestations in different places.⁵⁰

Like the gods to whom they were dedicated, Greek temples also partook in the general and the particular. Every Archaic temple was rooted in peculiar local conditions, whether at times of greater architectural localism, as in the early Archaic period, or at times of greater standardisation, as in the late Archaic period. That is, even if two temples in different places shared numerous features in form and function, their inevitable differences in context ensured that each was distinctive. And yet despite their variety and distinctiveness, all Archaic temples had at least one thing in common: they were all dedicated to the gods and all therefore embedded in a general system of values and expectations about how

⁴⁸ See Osborne 2015.

⁴⁹ Graziosi 2002, 60. Cf. Burkert 1985, 121-3; Parker 2011, 25; Hunter 2018, 79-80.

⁵⁰ See Hdt. 2.53; p. 38 above. See Larson 2016, 31-40 for a focussed study of Hera's general and particular manifestations in the Archaic period.

gods and humans relate. As Chryses' 'pleasing' (χαρίεις) temple for Apollo shows, the idea, ideal and experience of *charis* was at the heart of this general system of values and expectations that transcended local boundaries. That Archaic temples were invested in the political life of Greek communities is another characteristic which, as we will see, was common to all even if the political life of Greek communities varied greatly.

The important point, then, is that Archaic temples were always local and specific but at the same time laden with general values which went beyond the local and specific. It is precisely because of Homer's own claim to universality, therefore, that he is so useful in helping us understand how temples reflected and evoked broader value systems that intersected with but transcended local conditions. It is thanks to his lack of specificity and aspiration to panhellenic resonance that Homeric architecture and aesthetics may shed light on how particular temples aspired to more general values.

To do justice to this balance between the general and the particular in the life of Archaic temples, this chapter will explore the question of beauty by looking at two temples in depth and by spanning out to consider general themes, commonalities and patterns of development in Archaic sacred architecture. The first case-study is on the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia in the Corinthia (c.690-650 BCE), and the second on temple C at Selinous in Sicily (c.540-510 BCE). These temples have been chosen because their original appearance and archaeological context is sufficiently well-known and because they belong to different periods, places and types of sanctuaries—Isthmia was an extra-urban sanctuary,

while temple C was in the main urban sanctuary at Selinous. For the latter, a rich body of literary evidence can be brought to bear on the interpretation of its aesthetic character and significance. For Isthmia, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which are roughly coeval or slightly earlier than the temple, provide the main guide to the aesthetics of the temple and the broader system of values within which it was situated and to which, as we will see, it made a concerted appeal.

The temple of Poseidon at Isthmia

The precinct of Poseidon at Isthmia was one of the most important Corinthian sanctuaries, about ten kilometres east of the ancient city of Corinth at a crossroads by land and sea (fig. 17).⁵¹ ‘The bridge of the untiring sea’ was Pindar’s apt expression for the sanctuary’s position close to the narrowest point of the Isthmus between the Corinthian and Saronic Gulfs.⁵² The sanctuary lies on an elevated plateau with a view of the Saronic Gulf to the east (fig. 18), and the main ancient road linking northern Greece to the Peloponnese is immediately adjacent to the northern limit of the temenos. Its prominent location is a key aspect of Isthmia’s history, not least, for the sanctuary becoming the site of one of the panhellenic games in 582 BCE.⁵³ The sanctuary’s prominence is also

⁵¹ Finds from the sanctuary are published in the *Isthmia* series. Most recently, see Gebhard and Gregory 2015.

⁵² Pind. *Nem.* 6.39.

⁵³ For an overview of the sanctuary’s history, see Gebhard 1993.

vital for understanding the significance of ideas of beauty for the first temple built there in the first half of the seventh century BCE.⁵⁴

The discovery of substantial layers of ash, bones and pottery dating back to the mid-eleventh century BCE indicate that the seventh century temple was inserted into a ritual context with an already rich history.⁵⁵ Animal sacrifice and communal drinking and dining appear to have been the principal ritual activities in the sanctuary from the eleventh to eighth century.⁵⁶ There is no evidence for cult buildings at Isthmia during this period but there are signs of increasing investment in the sanctuary in the second half of the eighth century, such as terracing to accommodate more worshippers in the sacrificial area and the dedication of some valuable objects, like armour and a few bronze tripods.⁵⁷ The archaeological record of Isthmia from the eleventh to eighth century BCE presents a modest picture compared with sites of similar antiquity, like Olympia, and even other sites in the Corinthia, like Perachora, which began life in the eighth century.⁵⁸ The architectural transformation of the sanctuary in the first half of the seventh century therefore represents a decisive change in the character of Corinthian investment at Isthmia. The sanctuary was equipped with temenos walls, a stone altar of unprecedented length (over

⁵⁴ Sixth century inscriptions are the earliest unequivocal evidence that Poseidon was worshipped at Isthmia. There are no signs of a change in the principal deity worshipped, so it is a safe assumption that the seventh century temple was dedicated to Poseidon; Morgan 1994, 112-13.

⁵⁵ On Isthmia in the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, see Morgan 1999.

⁵⁶ Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 18-22.

⁵⁷ Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 9-16; Morgan 1994, 124-9.

⁵⁸ Perachora received more valuable dedications in the late eighth century than Isthmia, though it should be noted that there is a difference in type: no tripods, for instance, have been found at Perachora. See Morgan 1994, 129-35.

100 feet), and a similarly grand temple for its time: the peripteral temple was 39.25 metres long and 14.25 metres wide.⁵⁹

The temple was destroyed by fire in c.460-450 BCE and a successor soon built on the same spot.⁶⁰ Reconstruction of a relatively clear picture of the Archaic temple is owed to the discovery of large quantities of its roof tiles, stone blocks and its robbed-out foundations beneath the Classical temple (fig. 19).⁶¹ The roof tiles and stone blocks explain the temple's prominence in modern narratives of Greek architecture and seem to vindicate the ancient tradition upholding the Corinthia as an early heartland of Greek architecture: the temple is one of the earliest Greek buildings after the Mycenaean collapse to use roof tiles and one of the earliest to use only ashlar masonry for its cella walls instead of mudbrick.⁶² Another temple built by the Corinthians around the same time or a little earlier (c.680 BCE), on Temple Hill in the centre of Corinth, also employed roof tiles and courses of stone blocks, though less survives and its appearance is less clear than that of its Isthmian counterpart.⁶³

From the thousands of tile fragments recovered from Isthmia, it is evident that the temple's roof was hipped on all four sides and composed of interlocking tiles which combine the often separate pan and cover tiles

⁵⁹ Gebhard and Hemans 1992; Hemans 2015, 41-2.

⁶⁰ The date is determined by pottery in the burned deposits of the Archaic temple; see the appendix to Risser 2015, 95-6.

⁶¹ For the excavation of the Archaic temple, see Broneer 1971; Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 23-34.

⁶² See Pind. *Ol.* 13.21-2; Plin. *NH.* 35.43.151-2.

⁶³ For the temple on Temple Hill, see Rhodes 2003.

into a single S-shape (figs. 20-1).⁶⁴ Each pan and cover tile is massive, weighing about 30 kg and over half a metre in width and length (fig. 22). Explanations for the adoption of the tile roof range between the practical and the aesthetic: that it was more durable and resistant to fires than thatch and/or that it contributed to 'the monumental appearance of the temple... [and] was designed to create a strong pattern'.⁶⁵ Far from incompatible, such practical and aesthetic concerns are mutually supportive and, as commentators since Vitruvius have observed, characteristic of architecture in particular.⁶⁶ This understanding of architecture is already suggested in the *Iliad* when Poseidon recalls how he built the Trojan wall:

ἦτοι ἐγὼ Τρώεσσι πόλιν πέρι τεῖχος ἔδειμα
εὐρύ τε καὶ μάλα καλόν, ἵν' ἄρρηκτος πόλις εἴη.⁶⁷

'And I built for the Trojans a wall around their city, a wide and very fine wall, so that the city would be impregnable'.

In Homer, the adjective *kalos* registers different degrees of aesthetic intensity depending on context, ranging from 'beautiful' in the sense of physically attractive, to 'good' or 'appropriate'.⁶⁸ When applied to crafted

⁶⁴ See Broneer 1971, 40-53; Hemans 1989; Sapirstein 2009; Hemans 2015, 50-4, 59-63.

⁶⁵ Hemans 2015, 53-4. Cf. Wikander 1988a, 207; Sapirstein 2009, 197.

⁶⁶ Vitr. 1.3.2: all buildings 'should be made in such a way that accounts for durability, utility and beauty [*firmitas, utilitas, venustas*]'. On functionalism and aesthetics in architecture, see Scruton 2013, *passim*, esp. 5-6.

⁶⁷ Hom. *Il.* 21.446-7.

⁶⁸ On *kalos* in Homer, see Konstan 2014, 35-43; Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

objects, *kalos* often denotes a positive aspect of appearance and quality, much like ‘fine’ in English. This appears to be the sense here: the description of the wall as ‘very *kalos*’ conveys both that the wall was ‘beautiful’ in appearance and that it served its function well, making Troy ‘impregnable’. In the same vein, Aristotle states that a city wall should be both an ‘ornament’ (κόσμος) for the city and satisfy its military ‘needs’ (χρείαι).⁶⁹

So can we tease out further how the Isthmian roof met the mutual demands of functionality and aesthetics—how was it *kalos*, ‘beautiful’, ‘appropriate’, ‘fine’? The strength and durability of the tile roof no doubt partly motivated its construction, but even this has an aesthetic dimension. In the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, imperishability is a defining characteristic of divine homes. Poseidon’s maritime palace at Aigai is ‘golden, shining, made imperishable forever’ (χρύσεια μαρμαίροντα τετεύχεται ἄφθιτα αἰεῖ).⁷⁰ So, too, Hephaistos’ house on Olympos,

ἄφθιτον ἀστερόεντα μεταπρεπέ’ ἀθανάτοισι

χάλκεον, ὃν ῥ’ αὐτὸς ποιήσατο κυλλοποδίων.⁷¹

‘imperishable, sparkling, outstanding among the immortals, a house of bronze which the Club-footed god himself had built’.

⁶⁹ Arist. *Pol.* 1331a, 12-13.

⁷⁰ Hom. *Il.* 13.22.

⁷¹ Hom. *Il.* 18.370-1.

Permanence defines the gods and their material world in contrast to the ephemerality of mortals.⁷² It is perhaps not too fanciful to suggest, therefore, that the construction of temples with more durable materials like terracotta roof tiles was ‘appropriate’ from a contemporary theological and aesthetic perspective: just as Poseidon is ‘imperishable’ like his maritime palace in Homer, so his earthly residence at Isthmia looks ‘imperishable’ (ἄφθιτος) too. The roof is *kalos* both in the functional value of its stability and in giving the visual impression of an appropriately ‘imperishable’ home for an immortal. It is no coincidence that in the Archaic period the Corinthians, like most Archaic Greek communities, reserved the use of roof tiles for sacred architecture, while domestic roofs continued to be made of mud-plaster for centuries.⁷³ As we will see, the tile roof contributes to the developing distinction of Archaic sacred architecture from the vernacular.

Did other aesthetic concerns inspire the adoption of the tile roof? In fact, the large interlocking tiles of the Isthmian roof embody perhaps the most common constructional ideal of Homeric architecture: the quality of being ‘well fitted’ (εὖ ἀραρώς) or ‘closely fitting’ (πυκινῶς ἀραρώς).⁷⁴ Various

⁷² Cf. Hom. *Od.* 4.78-9: ‘no mortal could compete with Zeus; for his house and possessions are immortal’. Cf. *Il.* 21.464-6.

⁷³ On Archaic Corinthian domestic architecture, see Williams and Fisher 1971, 5-10; Williams and Fisher 1972. For later Classical domestic architecture at Rachi, the settlement nearest Isthmia, see Anderson-Stojanović 2015. On Archaic roof tiles generally, see Winter 1993; 1994.

⁷⁴ E.g. Hom. *Il.* 7.339, 438; 9.475; 12.454; 14.167; 18.275-6; 21.535; 23.712-13; 24.318; *Od.* 2.344; 21.236, 382; 22.128, 155, 258, 275; 23.193-4. Cf. *Lfgre* s.v. πυκνός 3b. Since the epics likely antedate the reinvention of tiles in the first half of the seventh century and certainly antedate their widespread adoption, it is no surprise that tile roofs do not appear in Homer. For thatched roofs in the epics, see Hom. *Il.* 24.450-1 and note that the adjective ὑπορόφος, ‘high-roofed’, is a compound of ὑψηλός, ‘lofty’, and ὄροφος, ‘the reed used for thatch’; it literally means, ‘high thatch-roofed’.

phrases with the verb ἀραρίσκω, ‘to join’, ‘fit together’, are repeatedly applied to doors, gates and stone walls, in one instance to evoke the compact ranks of soldiers:

μᾶλλον δὲ στίχες ἄρθεν, ἐπεὶ βασιλῆος ἄκουσαν.

ὥς δ’ ὅτε τοῖχον ἀνὴρ ἀράρη πυκινοῖσι λίθοις

δώματος ὑψηλοῖο βίας ἀνέμων ἀλεείνων,

ὥς ἄραρον κόρυθές τε καὶ ἀσπίδες ὀμφαλόεσσαι.⁷⁵

‘The ranks of soldiers joined together all the more when they heard the king. As when a man fits together the wall of a lofty house with compact stones to keep out the force of the winds, so their helmets and embossed shields fitted together.’

The close-fitting forms of architecture convey a strong visual order also embodied by the ordered ranks of warriors. A standard Homeric way to express such orderly formation is with the noun *kosmos*: the armour of the Thracians, for example, ‘lay beside them on the ground all in good order in three rows’ (παρ’ αὐτοῖσι χθονὶ κέκλιτο εὖ κατὰ κόσμον ἰ τριστοιχί).⁷⁶

It appears, therefore, that the Isthmian roof manifested both a contemporary architectural ideal of ‘close-fitting’ construction and visual *kosmos* in its ordered and grid-like arrangement of interlocking tiles. Here the two senses of *kosmos* come together: the visual ‘order’ of the innovative tile roof is an ‘ornament’ for the temple and god. Dated to the late eighth century BCE, two terracotta roof models from Helike in Achaia,

⁷⁵ Hom. *Il.* 16.211-14.

⁷⁶ Hom. *Il.* 10.472-3. Cf. *Il.* 11.47-8; *Il.* 12.85; *Il.* 12.225; *Od.* 13.76-7.

one painted with chariot races and geometric patterns (fig. 23), the other impressed with orderly geometric designs (fig. 24), show how the roof could be an ornamental focus of attention.⁷⁷ On another late eighth or seventh century architectural model from Aetos on Ithaka, the roof is decorated with a chequerboard pattern indicative of a similar taste for ornamental visual order as at Isthmia (fig. 25).⁷⁸

At Isthmia, the roof becomes an ornamental focus of attention on a grand scale, opening up decorative possibilities that would be exploited by later temples.⁷⁹ Unlike thatch, the terracotta roof creates a stable platform for more decoration like sculpted antefixes and akroteria. Compared with the profusion of terracotta antefixes on the later seventh century temple of Apollo at Thermon (c.630-620 BCE) and Hera's temple at Mon Repos on Kerkyra (c.610 BCE), the decorative embellishment of the Isthmia roof is minimal: in the centre of the pan tiles along the eaves there was a small triangular peak, echoing the triangular finish of the cover tiles to create a wave-like pattern (fig. 26).⁸⁰ If only subtle, this detail is an important harbinger of things to come in Archaic temple decoration.⁸¹

In addition to the visual form of the tile roof, the concept of *kosmos* also seems pertinent for the regularity of the whole temple's design, largely

⁷⁷ See Kolia 2011, 221-2; Gadoulou 2011; Kolia 2014; Gadoulou 2017, 212-13; Morgan 2017, 199.

⁷⁸ Schattner 1990, 28-31; Morgan 2001.

⁷⁹ The revolution identified by Marconi 2004 in the decoration of the entablature of temples c.630-600 BCE is therefore prefigured by attention to the roofs of the Corinthian temples on Temple Hill and at Isthmia. Cf. Rhodes 2003, 93.

⁸⁰ On the roofs at Thermon and Mon Repos, see Winter 1993, 112-13; Sapirstein 2012.

⁸¹ For an overview of Archaic temple decoration, see Marconi 2004; Marconi 2007, 1-28.

determined by the tile roof. Because the roof was hipped on all sides, the rows and columns of tiles on each side had to align with those on the adjacent sides. This created quite rigid requirements for spacing the tiles, especially on the building's two ends.⁸² This concern with alignment embraced other elements of the temple's design, namely, the relationship between the roof, cella walls and peristyle.⁸³ The excavation of their robbed-out foundations shows that pilasters adorned the north and south walls of the cella (fig. 19).⁸⁴ The average interaxial distance between the pilaster foundations is about 2.26 m, equal to the width of four roof tiles (spaced 0.50 to 0.565 metres apart). The presence of a wooden peristyle is strongly suggested by the discovery of large portions of the stylobate's foundations and the overall dimensions of the tile roof.⁸⁵ The position and number of the columns—eighteen on the flanks, seven on the ends—is reconstructed by aligning them with the pilasters on the cella walls.⁸⁶ If correct, this would mean that four roof tiles spanned the distance between each column and pilaster to create an ordered regularity of design and appearance encompassing the entire temple (figs. 27-8).

⁸² On the roof's design, see Sapirstein 2009, 222-3; Hemans 2015, 53.

⁸³ There was a degree of wriggle room within the parameters of alignment between these elements, e.g. in block size variation and slip space in roof cuttings. See Hemans 2015.

⁸⁴ Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 28-34.

⁸⁵ On the Isthmian peristyle, see Broneer 1971, 9-13; Rhodes 1984, 43-59; Hemans 1989, 255-8; Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 25-34; Barletta 2001, 36-8, 49-51; Hemans 2015, 41-2.

⁸⁶ The interaxial distance between the pilasters (c.2.26 m) is used to determine how many columns would have been needed to span the length (39.25 m) and width (14.25 m) of the stylobate.

The size of the roof tiles and of stone blocks from the cella walls and the distances between the pilasters and columns all adhere to multiples of the same dimension.⁸⁷ That is, the whole temple was constructed according to a standardised set of measurements, for which practical and aesthetic considerations may again be mutually responsible. To be sure, this standardisation would have facilitated construction of such a complex structure for its time. But the visual effect of such regularity should not be ignored; does the temple represent an incipient concern for what Vitruvius calls *symmetria*, ‘commensurability’, and identifies as fundamental to architectural ‘beauty’ (*venustas*)?⁸⁸ In the Greek terminology of the early seventh century, it is better to say that the modularity of the Isthmian temple betrays a concern with *kosmos* in a dual sense: the ordered appearance of the temple has an ornamental quality.⁸⁹

As we have seen, the placement of the columns, if correctly reconstructed, contributed to this effect. This aspect of the Isthmian peristyle is underlined by comparison with two earlier colonnaded temples in Achaia, not far west of Corinth, which perhaps influenced the decision to build a peristyle at Isthmia.⁹⁰ In the second half of the eighth century BCE, a long apsidal temple was built for Artemis Aontia at Rakita which had the

⁸⁷ Hemans 2015, 56-7.

⁸⁸ Vitr. 1.2.2-4; 1.3.2.

⁸⁹ This kind of regularity of design and ornament was not reserved for stone blocks and roof tiles but also applies to mudbrick: bricks were moulded in regular sizes and could be made in different colours and layered, as on the altar underneath the early Archaic temple at Helike; see Kolia 2011, 212-13.

⁹⁰ On this and archaeological traces of contact between Achaia and the Corinthia, see Morgan 2017, 206-7; Gadolou 2017.

earliest extant peristyle on the Greek mainland (fig. 29).⁹¹ Later in the eighth or early seventh century, another apsidal temple was built for Poseidon at ancient Helike with a similar semi-circular arrangement of columns at the ends (fig. 30).⁹² The thatched roofs of both temples meant that the kind of alignment at Isthmia between roof, pilasters and columns was not possible. Yet to understand the aesthetic significance of the Isthmian peristyle, a more significant comparison concerns how the Achaian temples combine traditional elements familiar in vernacular architecture, like the apsidal form and thatched roofs, with their innovative peristyles. However novel in their colonnades, the Achaian temples still have a foot in the vernacular. By contrast, the temple at Isthmia, with its rectilinear peristyle and tile roof, steps purposefully out of the vernacular.⁹³ On present evidence, nothing in contemporary domestic architecture in Corinth compares with these features.⁹⁴ Like the tile roof, the peristyle at Isthmia sets the temple apart in its architectural world, while also inviting it to be viewed from all sides.⁹⁵

Looking at the sides of the temple, a worshipper would have seen through the colonnade to the cella walls made of dressed blocks of the

⁹¹ Petropoulos 2002; Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 72-3.

⁹² Kolia 2011.

⁹³ On conservatism and innovation in early Archaic architecture, see Mazarakis Ainian 2017.

⁹⁴ The Corinthians began using stone in their domestic architecture in the eighth century to fortify domestic elements like thresholds, jambs and socles; see Rhodes 1984; Rhodes 2003. They also had a long tradition of making stone sarcophagi; see Hayward 2013; Sanders et al. 2014; Morgan 2017, 194-5. The stone walls of the temple were prefigured in domestic architecture; the peristyle and tile roof, however, represent a purposeful distinction from the vernacular.

⁹⁵ Gebhard 2001, 41.

local limestone (fig. 31).⁹⁶ Since the walls were plastered with white stucco from floor to ceiling and the masonry was not visible, the reason for using stone blocks must have been purely practical: to support a tile roof weighing approximately 48 tonnes.⁹⁷ It is clear, however, that the white stucco still visible on many blocks had a decorative purpose (fig. 32). As on the later temple of Hera at Argos (c.650-620 BCE) and many others, the stucco gave the cella walls a white sheen highly prized in contemporary aesthetic culture.⁹⁸ Hera's 'beautiful veil' is 'white like the sun', and the stones outside Nestor's palace are 'white, gleaming like oil'.⁹⁹ Like the 'imperishable', 'shining' and 'sparkling' homes of Poseidon and Hephaistos in the *Iliad*, 'a white radiance encompasses' the gods' home on Olympus in the *Odyssey*.¹⁰⁰ It seems reasonable to suggest, therefore, that the use of bright building materials contained an element of theological propriety. In Archaic poetry, the gods and their homes are characterised by radiance; thanks to white stucco and metal additions, especially bronze, their temples may also have an appropriate lustre distinguishing them from other buildings in their contemporary architectural worlds.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ On stone resources in the Corinthia, see Hayward 2003.

⁹⁷ See Sapirstein 2009; Hemans 2015, 52.

⁹⁸ On the Argive Heraion, see Waldstein 1902-5; Amandry 1952; Østby 2006, 29-34. On stucco in Greek architecture generally, see Neils 2016, 166-7.

⁹⁹ Hom. *Il.* 14.184-5: κρηδέμνω... καλῶ... λευκὸν δ' ἦν ἡέλιος ὥς; *Od.* 3.408: λευκοί, ἀποστίλβοντες ἀλείφατος.

¹⁰⁰ Hom. *Od.* 6.45: λευκὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν αἶγλη. Cf. *Il.* 11.77.

¹⁰¹ For the radiance of the gods, see *Il.* 1.199-200; 3.397; 4.75-7; 13.22; 17.547-52; *Od.* 6.45; 19.34; *Hom. Hy.* 2.275-80; *Hy.* 3.440-7; *Hy.* 31; *Hy.* 32 etc. See Parisinou 2000; Constantinidou 2010.

In addition to its divine connotations, the poetic representation of radiance is dominated by beauty. The ‘beauty’ denoted by *charis* and *kallos* are themselves radiant: ‘great beauty [χάρις] shone from’ Hera’s earrings and ‘immortal beauty [κάλλος] shone from the cheeks’ of Aphrodite.¹⁰² In an architectural context, the palace of Menelaos is illuminating:

αὐτοὺς δ’ εἰσήγον θεῖον δόμον. οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες
θαύμαζον κατὰ δῶμα διοτρεφέος βασιλῆος·
ὥς τε γὰρ ἡελίου αἶγλη πέλεν ἢ σελήνης
δῶμα καθ’ ὑπερεφές Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τάρπησαν ὀρώμενοι ὀφθαλμοῖσιν...¹⁰³

‘And they led them [Telemachos and Peisistratos] into the divine palace. They gazed in wonder at the house of the king, cherished by Zeus, for there was a radiance like the sun or moon over the high-roofed house of noble Menelaos. And when they had delighted in looking at everything...’.

Shining like the sun or moon, it is no surprise that Menelaos’ palace is introduced as ‘divine’. This quality is underscored later when Telemachos, amazed by ‘the flashing of bronze, gold, electrum, silver and ivory’, says to Peisistratos, ‘this is how it must be inside the court of Olympian Zeus...

¹⁰² Hom. *Il.* 14.183; Hom. *Hy.* 5.174-5. For the beauty of radiance, see Hom. *Il.* 3.392; *Od.* 6.237; *Hy.* 2.275-80; Hes. *Cat.* 41.38; 47.3; 123.20; 154a.6; Alc. fr. 1.40-3; Sapph. fr. 16.18; fr. 34; fr. 96 etc.

¹⁰³ Hom. *Od.* 4.43-7.

awe holds me as I look [σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα].¹⁰⁴ For Telemachos, the radiant palace inspires visual wonder (θαῦμα), delight (τέρψις) and awe (σέβας). In the aesthetic intensity of its appearance and effects, Menelaos' palace evokes a divine connection—a semblance of Zeus' own palace.¹⁰⁵ His aesthetic experience is fundamentally theological: gazing in wonder and delight at the radiance of the high-roofed palace, Telemachos gains a sense of how gods live; the experience of beauty is a medium for relating to the divine.

Such passages cast the architectural use of bright and reflective materials in the light of contemporary thought about beauty and the gods. Prized for its radiance and beauty, bronze seems to have enjoyed its architectural heyday quite early.¹⁰⁶ Of the architectural bronze recovered from Olympia—including fragments from columns and capitals, revetment for doors and two large reliefs representing an archer and griffin—most belongs to the seventh century.¹⁰⁷ It seems bronze revetment may have been fairly common in this period.¹⁰⁸ The vulnerability of bronze to damage and decay, however, perhaps explains why its architectural heyday was quite short-lived.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 4.72-5.

¹⁰⁵ This architectural divine connection is entirely appropriate for Menelaos as Zeus' son-in-law; see Hom. *Od.* 4.561-9.

¹⁰⁶ For the radiance and beauty of bronze, see Hom. *Il.* 2.455-8; 11.62; 13.244, 801; 16.664; 18.130-1; 22.26-32, 134-5; 23.27; *Od.* 4.72-5; 22.113-14; Alc. fr. 140 (Campbell; 357 L-P). See Stewart 1990, 36.

¹⁰⁷ Wilson Jones 2014, 47-8.

¹⁰⁸ From the sixth century, there is also the temple of Athena 'of the bronze house' (*Chalkioikos*) on the Spartan akropolis, apparently owing its name to extensive bronze decoration. See Paus. 3.17.2. Cf. Pind. *Paeon* 8.68-9; Alc. fr. 140.

¹⁰⁹ Wilson Jones 2014, 48.

Although some architectural bronze has been excavated at Isthmia which may belong to the seventh century temple, it is not clear how it was employed nor how extensive it was.¹¹⁰ In any case, the white walls of the temple appealed to that common aesthetic taste for brightness. The temple was also decorated with paintings which are among our earliest evidence for Greek wall-painting. Numerous limestone pieces from the temple preserve fragments of wall-paintings depicting figures, geometric ornaments and floral patterns.¹¹¹ Although too fragmentary to reconstruct, what is striking about the paintings is the variety of vivid colours: black, white, grey, red, orange, yellow, brown, light blue and purple (figs. 33-8). In Greek terms, they are *poikila*, 'multi-coloured', a quality often aestheticised in Archaic poetry. Hekabe chose a robe for Athena that was 'most beautiful in its colourful embroideries and the biggest, and shone like a star' (κάλλιστος ἔην ποικίλμασιν ἡδὲ μέγιστος, ἡ ἀστήρ δ' ὥς ἀπέλαμπεν); Antinoos gave Penelope a 'big, most beautiful robe, worked in many colours' (μέγαν περικαλλέα πέπλον, ἡ ποικίλον).¹¹² As far as the Isthmian paintings are concerned, two things are telling about these beautiful robes. First, the fact that they are gifts intended to please their recipients, and second, that they are both multi-coloured and 'big' (μέγας). The same combination of bigness and polychromy in the Isthmian wall-paintings sheds light on their aesthetic significance.

The clearest fragment of the wall-paintings shows the mane of a horse painted in yellow and dark red wavy lines (fig. 39) with stylistic parallels in

¹¹⁰ On metal architectural fixtures from Isthmia, see Raubitschek 1998, 131-44.

¹¹¹ Broneer 1971, 33-5.

¹¹² Hom. *Il.* 6.294-5; *Od.* 18.292-3.

contemporary Protocorinthian vase-painting (fig. 40).¹¹³ Similarly, the fragment of a meander pattern among the Isthmian wall-paintings recalls the upper meander border on a *kotyle* attributed to the Aigina Bellerophon Painter (figs. 41-2).¹¹⁴ The crucial difference between Protocorinthian vase-paintings and the Isthmian wall-paintings is size. If Protocorinthian vase painters excelled in miniature decoration, the painters of the Isthmia wall-paintings, perhaps vase-painters themselves, pushed the limits of scale in the other direction: the fragments of the horse show that it must have been about a third life-size and therefore significantly bigger than the vast majority of figural paintings around the mid seventh century.¹¹⁵ According to contemporary aesthetic standards, ‘big, most beautiful and worked in many colours’ is as good a description as any for the Isthmian wall-paintings.

The paintings were likely made around the middle of the seventh century and are therefore among the earliest examples of such rich polychromy in any form of Greek painting. At that time, the introduction of purple into wall-painting and vase-painting, as on the Chigi vase (c. 650-640 BCE), broadened the available spectrum with a colour already rich in aesthetic significance.¹¹⁶ Purple-crimson ranks at the top of the aesthetic scale of colours in Homer. This is conveyed by the consistent

¹¹³ On parallels between the Isthmian paintings and Protocorinthian vase-paintings, see Broneer 1971, 33-4; Niemeier et al. 2012, 82; Arafat 2015.

¹¹⁴ Arafat 2015, 128-9.

¹¹⁵ For miniature masterpieces of Protocorinthian vase-painting, see Amyx 1988, 390-1. On the interdependence of early Greek wall-painting and vase-painting, see Hurwit 2012.

¹¹⁶ On the development of polychromy in Greek painting, see Payne 1931, 92-8; Amyx 1988, 368-70; Walter-Karydi 2018. On the Chigi Olpe, see Hurwit 2002; Mugione and Benincasa 2012.

association of words which imprecisely denote (what we see as) the crimson to violet colour spectrum—πορφύρεος, ἀλιπόρφυρος, φοῖνιξ—with various Homeric terms and phrases for beauty.¹¹⁷ In both epics, the formula ‘beautiful purple rugs’ (ῥήγεα καλὰ ἰ πορφύρε’) reappears, while in the *Odyssey*, the Phaiakians play with ‘a beautiful purple ball’ (σφαῖραν καλὴν... πορφυρέην) and the ‘sea-purple’ weaving of Arete and the nymphs is a ‘wonder to behold’ (ἀλιπόρφυρα, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι).¹¹⁸ In the *Iliad*, a cheekpiece for a horse, made of ivory and stained ‘with purple dye’ (φοίνικι), is an ‘object of delight’ (ἄγαλμα) for its owner ‘and an ornament for the horse’ (κόσμος θ’ ἵππῳ).¹¹⁹ Like ultramarine blue in fifteenth century Italian paintings, purple occupies a privileged aesthetic status in the Archaic period eye.¹²⁰ In their large size, polychromy and novel use of purple, the Isthmian wall-paintings betray their purpose to beautify the temple as an ‘ornament’ (κόσμος) for Poseidon’s delight.

This purpose would have been given an added element of ostentation if the paintings were on the outside of the cella walls, which seems likely on

¹¹⁷ On purple in antiquity, see Reinhold 1976; Longo 1998; Bradley 2013, 135-8; Jockey 2018.

¹¹⁸ Hom. *Od.* 6.306; 13.108. See *Il.* 24.644-5; *Od.* 4.297-8; 7.337; 10.352-3. Cf. *Il.* 6.218-19; 7.305; 15.537-8; *Od.* 19.241-2; 23.200-1.

¹¹⁹ Hom. *Il.* 4.141-5.

¹²⁰ Cf. Alcman fr. 1.64-5; Sappho fr. 44.8-10; fr. 54; fr. 98a; fr. 101; *Hom. Hy.* 7.3-6; Anacreon fr. 12.3; fr. 13; Thgn. 827. Houby-Nielsen 2017 makes a strong case for Chalkis in Aitolia (on the Corinthian Gulf) as a centre of textile production using sea-purple dye in the 7th and 6th centuries. On the use of purple dye in antiquity, see Landenius Enegren and Meo 2017. On the fifteenth century period eye, see Baxandall 1988, 29-108, esp. 81-6.

present evidence.¹²¹ Around the same time in the mid seventh century, wall-paintings were added to the late Geometric or early Archaic South temple in Apollo's sanctuary at Abai (modern Kalapodi) in Phokis.¹²² The paintings depict advancing warriors in a style similar to the Chigi vase (fig. 43) that suggests a connection with the Protocorinthian painting industry.¹²³ At Abai, the wall-paintings adorned the interior of the cella. By contrast, the Isthmian wall-paintings, if correctly reconstructed on the outside of the cella, contributed to the external appearance of the temple. It is not just, therefore, that the temple was in a highly conspicuous location beside a main road on an elevated plateau, but that its external appearance—with its tile roof, peristyle and white walls adorned with large and brightly coloured paintings—made an ostentatious statement of its aesthetic aspiration and appeal.

The large size of the temple amplified this statement. The cella was about 7.76 metres wide and 32 metres long, approximately one hundred feet; the temple was a *hekatompedon*, 'a hundred-footer'. Some earlier temples built at the end of the eighth century and beginning of the seventh had reached similar lengths.¹²⁴ The addition of the peristyle at Isthmia, however, significantly altered the proportions of the temple, making it

¹²¹ On the position of the paintings, see Broneer 1971, 33-8; Niemeier et al. 2012, 81; Morgan 2017, 199 n. 8. The fragmentary paintings show signs of exposure to heat but it is not clear from this whether they were inside the temple. Further study is needed to clarify the matter. At present, it is debatable whether any paintings would have survived inside the cella where damage to the internal faces of wall blocks indicates the conflagration was most intense.

¹²² See Niemeier et al. 2012.

¹²³ Ibid.; Arafat 2015, 129.

¹²⁴ E.g. Apollonion at Eretria (c.34 x 8 m); Apollonion at Halieis (27.30 x 4.46 m); Artemision at Rakita (34.40 x 11 m); Heraion at Samos (33 x 6.5 m). See Mazarakis Ainian 1997.

much wider relative to its length, unlike many of its long and thin predecessors. The peristyle increased the building's overall size to about 39.25 metres long and 14.25 metres wide. It was thus one of the largest temples in the Greek world at the time.

Another striking feature at Isthmia is the way that the architectural project of enlargement encompassed the temple, altar and temenos walls. Both the altar and temenos walls were built on a comparably grand scale with the same 'close-fitting' limestone masonry used for the temple.¹²⁵ Continuous courses of the temenos walls have been found north of the temple adjacent to the ancient road and close to its southern flank. The altar faced the temple's east side and was an unprecedented hundred feet long (figs. 44-5). It seems logical that the enlargement of the altar—the ritual focus of musical, vegetal and animal offerings to Poseidon—reflects a desire to conduct religious ceremonies on a bigger scale.¹²⁶ That the altar was built at the same time as the temple and was the same length as its cella suggests that visual coherence between temple and altar was also a motivating factor. In fact, these two explanations work together: the coherent enlargement of the temple and altar turn the sanctuary into a place of grand spectacle, both ritual and architectural.¹²⁷

This point is underpinned by the aesthetics of size in Archaic Greek culture. The outstanding feature of Homeric architecture is grandeur. Homer portrays a world where gates, doors, towers, walls, courts,

¹²⁵ For the altar and temenos walls, see Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 41-51.

¹²⁶ Cf. Morgan 1994, 141.

¹²⁷ For architecture and ritual in Graeco-Roman antiquity, see Wescoat and Ousterhout 2012.

columns, bedrooms, huts and palaces are almost invariably 'lofty' (ὑψηλός), 'big' (μέγας), 'tall' (μακρός), and 'high-roofed' (ὑψόροφος and ὑπερεφής).¹²⁸ Just as heroes and heroines are bigger and better than people nowadays, so is their architecture. And just as heroes and heroines are 'beautiful and big' (καλοί τε μεγάλοι τε), so beauty and bigness go hand in hand in Homeric architecture. Priam's 'most beautiful house' (δόμον περικαλλέ') has a court with sixty-two adjoining rooms, the bedroom in Paris' 'most beautiful house' is 'high-roofed', the palace of Nestor is 'fine' (καλός) and 'lofty' (ὑψηλός), and the palace of Odysseus is 'fine', 'lofty', 'most beautiful' (περικαλλής), 'big' (μέγας), and 'high-roofed' (ὑπερεφής).¹²⁹ The *Odyssey* also describes the aesthetic experience of such architecture. Menelaos' 'high-roofed' and radiant palace inspires Telemachos' 'wonder', 'delight' and 'awe'.¹³⁰ 'The long, lofty walls' of the Phaiakians are 'a wonder to behold' (τείχεα μακρά, ἢ ὑψηλά... θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι), and at the sight of the garden and 'lofty', 'high-roofed' palace of Alkinoos—radiant in gold, silver and bronze—Odysseus ' marvelled to his heart's content' (ἐὼς θηήσατο θυμῷ).¹³¹

What the Homeric epics show is that magnitude both characterises the buildings of the heroic past and was at the heart of early Archaic conceptions of architectural beauty. This observation sets the drive towards ever bigger temples in the Archaic period within a cultural and

¹²⁸ See e.g. Hom. *Il.* 3.384; 4.34; 5.213; 7.436-41; 9.582; 12.454-5; 18.274-6; 19.333; 23.712; 24.317-19; *Od.* 1.126, 330; 3.402; 4.15, 304; 7.346; 8.56; 17.110 etc.

¹²⁹ Hom. *Il.* 6.242-50; 3.421-3; Hom. *Od.* 3.387, 402, 407; 1.126; 4.757; 7.225; 19.526; 20.122, 319; 21.77-8; 22.495; 23.49-51.

¹³⁰ See p. 184 above.

¹³¹ Hom. *Od.* 4.15-75; 7.44-5; 7.81-135.

aesthetic frame. If grandeur defines heroic architecture, then it seems that efforts to expand the architectural boundaries of scale, as at Isthmia, were both innovative and retrospective: on the one hand, to transcend the expected limits of size; and on the other, to equal the heights and beauties of the heroic past.¹³²

On the former, it is important to recognise that the transcendence of expectation is the soil from which wonder springs.¹³³ The ‘long, lofty walls’ of the Phaiakians are ‘a wonder to behold’ because they surpass Odysseus’ expectations of scale.¹³⁴ Ganymede among the gods on Olympos is a ‘wonder to see’ (θαῦμα ἰδεῖν) because his presence confounds the expectations of how gods and humans relate.¹³⁵ Wonder is often portrayed as a response to beauty: pleasure in how something appears merges with the transcendence of expectation.¹³⁶ So it is for Telemachos confronted by the grandeur and radiance of Menelaos’ palace, the likes of which he has never seen; his only frame of reference is

¹³² Cf. Scruton 2013, 14: ‘From Vitruvius through the Renaissance to the Gothic revival, responses to architecture have been at one and the same time practical and backward-looking’. In light of the relationship between early Greek temples and the architectural grandeurs of the heroic past, we might modify Scruton’s observation to, ‘from the early Archaic period...’.

¹³³ Cf. [Longinus], *Subl.* 35.5: θαυμαστόν δ’ ὅμως αἰεὶ τὸ παράδοξον.

¹³⁴ Hom. *Od.* 7.44-5.

¹³⁵ Hom. *Hy.* 5.202-5.

¹³⁶ For beauty and wonder—the latter conveyed by θαυμάζω, θαμβέω, θηέομαι (‘to gaze in wonder’, ‘marvel’) and their cognates—see e.g. Hes. *Theog.* 581-4; Hom. *Il.* 3.396-8; 18.83-4, 376-7, 466-7; 24.629-34; *Od.* 2.13; 6.237; 8.17; 11.281-2, 287-8; 17.63-4; 17.306-7; 19.34-6, 226-31, 256-7; Hom. *Hy.* 2.15-16; *Hy.* 3.156-64; *Hy.* 5.88-90 etc. On the beauty and wonder of crafted objects in early Greek epic, see Hunzinger 1994, *passim* esp. 22. On wonder in Archaic and Classical Greek culture, see Prier 1989; Neer 2010, esp. 57-69.

another spectacle beyond his comprehension, ‘the court of Olympian Zeus’.¹³⁷

According to the cognitive habits and aesthetic values of early Greek poetry and thought, it is not simply that the construction of ever bigger temples appealed to a common ideal of architectural beauty. For in pushing beyond the bounds of expectation, they might be ‘wonders to behold’ as well—equal in appearance and effects to the architectural beauties of the heroic past.¹³⁸ The presence of a portion of cyclopean wall not far southeast of the Isthmian temple reinforces this connection to the glories of the past (fig. 44).¹³⁹ Similarly, the pseudo-cyclopean terrace wall at Argos, which was built c.700 BCE and framed the seventh century temple of Hera (c.650-620 BCE), may have been purposefully evocative of a link to the heroic past.¹⁴⁰

Of course, an important difference between Homer’s lofty buildings and those at Isthmia and Argos is that the latter are sacred: they are not homes of mortals, but temples dedicated to the gods.¹⁴¹ The question then is how the aesthetics of architectural grandeur, however retrospective, makes sense in a present religious context. Eumaios’ court in *Odyssey* 14 provides a useful springboard for discussion:

¹³⁷ Hom. *Od.* 4.15-75.

¹³⁸ Cf. Diod. Sic. 4.80.5. For the evocation of ‘wonder’ in Archaic and Classical sculpture, see Neer 2010.

¹³⁹ Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 15-16.

¹⁴⁰ Wright 1982.

¹⁴¹ The lack of descriptive attention applied to temples in Homer is striking and discussed at pp. 264-6 below.

τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐνὶ προδόμῳ εὖρ' ἤμενον, ἔνθα οἱ αὐλὴ
 ὑψηλὴ δέδμητο, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ,
 καλὴ τε μεγάλη τε, περίδρομος.¹⁴²

'He [Odysseus] found him [Eumaios] sitting in front of his house,
 where his lofty court was built in a conspicuous place, beautiful and
 big with an encircling wall.'

At first sight, the beauty and grandeur of the swineherd's court might seem disproportionate to his status. This may be a world where even a swineherd's court can reach such aesthetic heights, but this is not any swineherd: Eumaios is one of Homer's most cherished characters, whose 'beautiful and big' court enhances his favourable portrayal and prestige.¹⁴³ In a sense, therefore, the description is appropriate to his character.¹⁴⁴ The ideas of propriety and prestige are fundamental to architectural aesthetics in Homer. That Alkinoos' palace is 'easily recognised [ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίγνωτ]... for no houses of the Phaiakians are similar', echoes and underlines his exalted status in society, for 'on him the power and might of the Phaiakians depend'.¹⁴⁵ As the son-in-law of Zeus, it is entirely appropriate that Menelaos' palace is 'divine' and looks like 'the court of Olympian Zeus'.¹⁴⁶ The same pattern appears on a divine level: the house Hephaistos built for

¹⁴² Hom. *Od.* 14.5-7.

¹⁴³ There is still a relative scale: the palaces of Nestor, Menelaos, Alkinoos and Odysseus are yet bigger and more beautiful.

¹⁴⁴ It is also noteworthy that despite his humble occupation, Eumaios was born a prince (Hom. *Od.* 15.403-83).

¹⁴⁵ Hom. *Od.* 6.300-2, 197. Cf. 17.264-8.

¹⁴⁶ Hom. *Od.* 4.42-7, 73-5, 561-9.

himself on Olympos is ‘outstanding among the immortals’ (μεταπρεπέ’ ἄθανάτοισι)—both a token of his divine honour and appropriate to his status as god of craft (τέχνη), which includes architecture.¹⁴⁷

In a religious context like that at Isthmia, the propriety and prestige of architectural bigness and beauty also make perfect sense. As chapter one showed, Archaic poets, notably the most influential among them—Hesiod and Homer—envisaged and promulgated a popular conception of the gods as bigger and more beautiful than humans and their appearance a cause for wonder. It is only appropriate, therefore, that their temples should be and do the same: that they be ‘beautiful and big’, ‘a wonder to behold’. And if such an appearance enhances the prestige and honour (τιμή) of the god, then the temple will have satisfied its basic aim of evoking divine pleasure (χάρις).¹⁴⁸

The aesthetic rationale behind the construction of ever bigger temples, like that at Isthmia and elsewhere, was rooted in such theological values, which were also inextricable, as we will see, from politics. The aesthetic significance of a temple, however, is not frozen at the moment of its conception: theological propriety, divine pleasure and prestige may explain the aesthetic motivations behind the temple’s design, but they do not clarify what effect and role architectural grandeur had in the ritual life of the temple in the sanctuary.¹⁴⁹ The aesthetics of Homeric architecture is again

¹⁴⁷ Hom. *Il.* 18.370. Cf. 1.606-8. Kalypso’s cave and garden at *Od.* 5.59-74, perhaps the most heavily aestheticised natural scene in Archaic poetry, similarly suits her characterisation as supremely beautiful (5.211-19).

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Pl. *Euth.* 14d-15a where Sokrates corners Euthyphro into admitting that humans give gods gifts for the sake of divine ‘honour, privileges and... pleasure’ (τιμή τε καὶ γέρα καί... χάρις).

¹⁴⁹ On monumentality and ritual in Archaic Greece, see Osborne 2004.

instructive, not least Eumaios' court, for it instantiates a common theme in the poetic representation of buildings which may shed light on contemporary cultural expectations about architecture.

That Eumaios is not any swineherd partly explains the description of his court. Yet this is also not any court: it is here that Odysseus will be first reintroduced to his household, including his son. According to a common Homeric technique, the description of the court as 'lofty', 'in a conspicuous place, beautiful and big', marks it out as significant in the narrative. Extended descriptions of buildings in the epics, especially those that emphasise their beauty and bigness, almost always anticipate an important meeting. Whether it's Achilles' hut before his meeting with Priam, Menelaos' palace before his interaction with Telemachos, or Alkinoos' palace before Odysseus' introduction to the Phaiakians, it is fair to say that architectural ekphrasis in Homer both underscore the prestige of the buildings' owners and set the scene before an important encounter.¹⁵⁰

This is of course a narratological technique, but it also has a special pertinence for understanding how the aesthetic distinction of a temple, like that at Isthmia, affected human relations with the divine in the sanctuary. For there, too, the temple anticipates and sets the stage for an important encounter: an encounter with the god. Outstanding in its size, form and decoration compared with other buildings, the temple is marked out as significant. In the context of the sanctuary, the meaning, value and experience of this visual distinction is inseparable from the basic expectation that the sanctuary is a place of special contact with the divine.

¹⁵⁰ Hom. *Il.* 24.443-596; *Od.* 4.15-75; 7.81-135. Cf. *Il.* 6.242-50; *Od.* 5.55-76; 17.264-8.

That the temple is outstanding in size, form and decoration bears directly on how worshippers perceive, understand and approach the deity to whom it is dedicated. The aesthetic experience of the temple is intrinsic to this process: like Telemachos enthralled at the sight of Menelaos' palace, it is in the intensified experience of beauty—in its pleasure, delight and wonder—that mortals gain a direct sense of how gods might be.¹⁵¹

In addition to its tile roof, peristyle and decoration, the large size of the Isthmian temple amplified its aesthetic appeal, ensuring that it was, like the 'beautiful and big' palaces of Alkinoos and Odysseus, 'easily recognised' (ῥεῖα ἀρίγνωτος).¹⁵² This notion ranks alongside others like 'preeminent' (ἑξοχος) and 'outstanding' (ἐκπρεπής and μεταπρεπής) central to early Greek conceptions of beauty. Consider the sight of Artemis amid her nymphs:

πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἣ γε κάρη ἔχει ἡδὲ μέτωπα,

ῥεῖά τ' ἀρίγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι·

ὥς ἢ γ' ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμής.¹⁵³

'She [Artemis] holds her head and brow high above them all, and

easily is she recognised, even though all [the nymphs] are beautiful.

Just so was the unmarried maiden [Nausikaa] outstanding among

her handmaids.'

¹⁵¹ Like Telemachos' comparison of Menelaos' palace to the 'court of Olympian Zeus', it is noteworthy that the other most extensive description and aestheticisation of a building in Homer—the palace of Alkinoos—also makes an explicit divine connection: the garden and palace of Alkinoos are his 'glorious gifts from the gods' (θεῶν... ἀγλαὰ δῶρα) (Hom. *Od.* 7.132).

¹⁵² Hom. *Od.* 6.300-2; 17.264.

¹⁵³ Hom. *Od.* 6.107-9.

Thanks to her superior height and appearance, Artemis stands out and is ‘easily recognised’. That her companions are also ‘beautiful’ underscores Artemis’ beauty, as she demands attention above all others, like Nausikaa ‘outstanding among her handmaids’, or Penelope who ‘excels all women in looks and stature’, or Hagesichora and Agido in Alkman’s first maiden-song.¹⁵⁴ As these examples suggest, the importance of ideas of preeminence in early Greek aesthetics was heightened by the competitive culture of Greek life, to which beauty was no exception.¹⁵⁵ Yet preeminence also bore a deeper and more elemental significance for how beauty was generally conceived: that whatever their physical properties—like bigness and radiance—and whatever their effects—like pleasure, desire and wonder—beautiful things demand to be noticed. They stand out, attract and demand our attention; they are by their very nature ‘easily recognised’ (ἀρίγνωτα).

This aspect of early Greek aesthetics is also critical for understanding the aesthetic character and development of Archaic temples. Like Hephaistos’ ‘outstanding’ home on Olympos and the ‘easily recognised’ palaces of Alkinoos and Odysseus, the temple at Isthmia—thanks to its size, tile roof, rectilinear peristyle and decoration—was immediately distinguished in its contemporary architectural world. The temple’s conspicuous location intensified the effect. Like the ‘beautiful’ courts of Eumaios and Telemachos, it too was built ‘in a conspicuous

¹⁵⁴ Hom. *Od.* 18.248-9: περίεσσι γυναικῶν | εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε. On Alcman fr. 1, see pp. 124-41 above. Cf. *Od.* 5.211-18; Sapph. fr. 96.6-11; Hes. [Sc.] 4-5.

¹⁵⁵ On Greek beauty contests, see Gherchanoc 2016.

place' (περισκέπτω ἐνὶ χώρῳ):¹⁵⁶ on a raised plateau above the plain of the Isthmus, the temple would have been visible for miles, both to those travelling south on the road linking northern Greece to the Peloponnese, and those approaching the Isthmus by sea from the Saronic Gulf (figs. 17-18). Visible from all the main routes into the city, the contemporary temple in Corinth was similarly 'conspicuous', 'far-seen' (περισκέπτος) on Temple Hill in the centre of the settlement.¹⁵⁷ This concern with visibility is a common theme in the history of Greek temples, especially those which received the greatest economic investment and decorative embellishment.¹⁵⁸ It is telling, for instance, that the Corinthians built their grand temples at Temple Hill and Isthmia rather than the remote sanctuary of Hera at Perachora, despite the latter's far greater wealth of dedications at the end of the eighth century.¹⁵⁹

Whether motivated by additional political or economic considerations, the conspicuous location of temples contributed to them being 'outstanding' and 'easily recognised'. As we will see, this quality was instrumental to the prestige associated with their construction. But it was

¹⁵⁶ Hom. *Od.* 1.425-6; 14.5-8. Cf. 10.210-11.

¹⁵⁷ Rhodes 2003; Morgan 2017, 201. We do not have the foundations of the seventh century temple on Temple Hill and its exact location is not known for certain. Given where its stone blocks and roof tiles were discovered and the fact that there is no alternative location known, it is generally agreed that it was on the same site as the later sixth century temple, whose remains are still in situ.

¹⁵⁸ In later Classical and Hellenistic terminology, such places for temples are described as 'most manifest' (ἐπιφανέστατος); see Spawforth 2006, 27, 48-9. For the political significance of such visibility, see e.g. de Polignac 1984; de Polignac 1994; Morgan 1994.

¹⁵⁹ Morgan 1994, 129-41. Like the Isthmian temple, the temple on Temple Hill was evidently distinguished from contemporary buildings by its size, conspicuous location and painted roof tiles. Unlike Isthmia, it did not have a peristyle, however; see Rhodes 2003.

also vital in defining the aesthetic character and role of temples in sanctuaries. In its large size, decoration and distinctive design, the temple at Isthmia integrated and appealed to contemporary ideas and standards of visual and architectural beauty. Combined with its conspicuous location, this made the temple an ‘outstanding’ focus of aesthetic attention in the sanctuary.

The excavation of a large cache of Archaic armour from Isthmia shows how the temple served as an aesthetic focal point in the ritual life of the sanctuary. The earliest armour belongs to the eighth century and none has been found which postdates the temple’s destruction by fire in c.460-450 BCE.¹⁶⁰ The vast majority is from the seventh and sixth centuries and was recovered from two deposits, one from the gully on the northern side of the temenos beside the Archaic road, the other on the eastern side of the temenos beyond the altar. Fire damage to many of the helmets, for example, shows that they were displayed close to the temple, while nail holes and loops on their necks indicate that some were fixed to posts and others to the walls or perhaps columns of the temple (figs. 46-8). Here it is instructive to compare a fragment from the *Europia*, a poem attributed to the eighth century Corinthian poet Eumelos but probably composed in the late seventh century by a Corinthian poet within the same epic tradition:¹⁶¹

”Οφρα θεῶ δεκάτην ἀκροθίνιά τε κρεμάσαιμεν

¹⁶⁰ On armour from Isthmia, see Jackson 1992. On Greek armour, see Snodgrass 1967; Everson 2004; Viggiano and Van Wees 2013; Schwartz 2013.

¹⁶¹ West 2011, 389-90.

σταθμῶν ἐκ ζαθέων καὶ κίονος ὑψηλοῖο.¹⁶²

‘So that we might hang up for the god a tithe and spoils from the holy posts and lofty column.’

Whatever its original context, the fragment neatly evokes the situation at Isthmia, where the ‘holy’, ‘lofty’ temple acted as a centrepiece for military dedications.¹⁶³ Their discovery in the northern and eastern deposits perhaps reflects the original position of many of these helmets and other items of armour: that is, along the temple’s northern colonnade, visible from the Archaic road, and on the eastern front of the temple and in its pronaos.¹⁶⁴ The temple functioned not just as a storehouse or visual backdrop, therefore, but as an aesthetically ‘outstanding’ focus of attention which military offerings exploited to emphasise their own claims for attention.¹⁶⁵

By fixing images of themselves to the temple, the satyrs in Aischylos’ *Isthmiastai* suggest that this ritual-aesthetic aspect of Poseidon’s temple at Isthmia remained significant throughout its two hundred year existence, until its destruction in c.460-450 BCE.¹⁶⁶ Since Aischylos died in 456/5 BCE, he must have envisaged the scene at Isthmia in front of the seventh century temple. The short scene is replete with different words for ‘look’,

¹⁶² Eumelos fr. 12 B (28 W).

¹⁶³ The discovery of numerous valuable dedications and storage vessels for consumables among the burned deposits of the seventh century temple indicate that one of its primary functions was as a store-house; see Gebhard 1998; Morgan 2003, 146-8.

¹⁶⁴ Jackson 1992, 142.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Alc. fr. 140 (Campbell).

¹⁶⁶ For the date of the fire, see Risser 2015, 95-6.

‘see’, ‘gaze’—ὄράω, ἄθρέω, θεωρέω, σκοπέω, βλέπω—which present the sanctuary as a place of spectacle.¹⁶⁷ Although this is characteristic of early fifth century ideas and expectations about sacred experience in sanctuaries, it nonetheless echoes a principal argument of this case-study: that the architectural transformation of Isthmia in the mid seventh century—with its new temenos walls, long altar and temple—turned the sanctuary into a place of heightened visual interest and aesthetic intensity in a way unprecedented in its already long history. Above all, this effect was owed to the temple, which purposefully integrated and embodied prevailing standards of beauty in its large size (μέγεθος), colourful decoration (ποικιλία) and the visual order and ornament (κόσμος) of its tile roof, pilasters and rectilinear peristyle. In the process, the Corinthians built a temple which was immediately distinct in its visual and architectural world, ‘both beautiful and big’ (καλός τε μέγας τε) and ‘easily recognised’ (ἀρίγνωτος), in every way appropriate for the deity to whom it was dedicated.¹⁶⁸ Indeed, as Aischylos’ satyrs remind us, in the ritual context of the sanctuary, aesthetics and theology know no bounds. The aesthetic rationale behind the design, materials and decoration of the temple was inextricably theological: to make the temple an ‘ornament’ (κόσμος) for the god and an agent of *charis*—a pleasing shrine.

For all that Archaic temples managed relations with gods, they were also implicated and active in a wide network of relations between people: those

¹⁶⁷ Aesch. *Isthmiastai* 1-21. For sanctuaries as places of architectural spectacle, see Marconi 2004; pp. 219-20, 266-72 below.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 13.72: ‘in truth the gods are easily recognised’ (ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοί περ). On the challenges of divine recognition, see pp. 55-77 above.

who commissioned, funded, designed, built, and decorated them, and those inside and outside the community who viewed and engaged with temples during their visits to a sanctuary. Building an Archaic temple was a major social event. First, because of the many people and resources needed for its construction, and second, because of a temple's peculiar place in society.¹⁶⁹ Architecture—ancient and modern—is a public craft: the size of buildings means they impose themselves on society more than any other aspect of material culture.¹⁷⁰ As Ruskin emphasised in his *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, architecture is perhaps the most political of the arts.¹⁷¹

For an Archaic temple like that at Isthmia, this political element was heightened both by the building's outstanding size and its special significance for the community at large.¹⁷² As the community's most expensive and conspicuous gift to the god, and therefore one of the most significant expressions of its collective piety, the temple occupied a privileged place in the whole community's relations with the divine. Furthermore, the temple was an almost unavoidable part of every worshipper's experience of the public space of the sanctuary: the temple dominated the visual landscape of the sanctuary thanks to its size and played an important role in ritual, whether as a storehouse of offerings, as a home for a divine effigy, or as a stage for ceremonies performed around

¹⁶⁹ On building Greek temples, see Burford 1969; Coulton 1977; Camp and Dinsmoor 1984; Davies 2001; Salmon 2001; Hellmann 2002; Klein 2016.

¹⁷⁰ See Scruton 2013, 13.

¹⁷¹ Ruskin 1849, introduction and chapter 1.

¹⁷² On the politics of Greek temples, see e.g. Snodgrass 1980, 55-65; de Polignac 1984; Burkert 1988; Morgan 1990; Alcock and Osborne 1994; Morgan 1996; Mazarakis Ainian 1997; Scott 2010; 2016.

it.¹⁷³ In short, their public religious significance, conspicuousness and the scale of investment necessary for their construction meant that big temples could hardly fail to be political. How their appearance was judged, valued and experienced could hardly fail to be political too. The aesthetic life of temples was entangled in theology and politics.

Problems with the chronology of Archaic Corinthian history hinder our understanding of the political circumstances behind the construction of the Isthmian temple.¹⁷⁴ From Diodoros' narrative, it is often claimed that the Bakchiadai, an oligarchic aristocratic clan, were deposed around 657 BCE by Kypselos, who made himself tyrant of Corinth.¹⁷⁵ Since the temple on Temple Hill in Corinth is dated to c.680 BCE and the temple at Isthmia has a *terminus post quem* of c.690-650, it is tempting to link their construction with this decisive moment in Corinthian politics. Did the Bakchiadai commission the temple on Temple Hill and Kypselos build the one at Isthmia to outshine his political predecessors and glorify his new regime with an act of public piety and display?¹⁷⁶

However tempting, the argument rests on weak foundations: it hinges on the date of 657 BCE for Kypselos' coup, a date derived from Diodoros' calculation that 447 years elapsed between the mythical Return of the

¹⁷³ While the evidence is often complex and unclear, the functions of early Greek temples appear to have varied considerably. See Morgan 1990; Mazarakis Ainian 1997; Morgan 2003, 142-8; Wilson Jones 2015, 21-30; Mazarakis Ainian 2016. There is no evidence that a divine effigy was housed in the Archaic temple at Isthmia.

¹⁷⁴ On the chronology of Archaic Corinthian history, see Servais 1969; Oost 1972; Snodgrass 2012.

¹⁷⁵ Diod. fr. 7.9.2-6; see Salmon 1984, 186-96.

¹⁷⁶ See Salmon 1984, 60-2. On piety and display in votive practices, see Doepner 2002, 148-73; Day 2010, 181-231; chapter 4 below.

Herakleidai and the rise of Kypselos. The date of the Return was traditionally set in antiquity at 1104 BCE; 447 years later gives 657 BCE.¹⁷⁷ While it is possible that Kypselos became tyrant in 657 BCE, Diodoros offers no assurance of that possibility: it goes without saying that a postulated date for a mythical event cannot support a chronological argument about political history. In light of other ancient sources, there is nothing to deny that Kypselos' rise to power came as late as c.630 BCE.¹⁷⁸ On present evidence, the precise political motivations behind the construction of the temples at Corinth and Isthmia must remain an open question. That they were built at a time of significant political change—in the twilight of the Bakchiad oligarchy or at the beginning of Kypselos' reign—is perhaps the most that we can say, however vague.

To pursue this political theme further, we must widen the lens of our enquiry. The significance of beauty for Archaic temples has so far been investigated from a theological perspective, not least, to reflect and emphasise an order of priority in line with what Archaic temples were for the communities that built them: first and foremost religious buildings, structures shaped by human expectations about the gods, mediating relations between divine and human.¹⁷⁹ At Isthmia, a demonstrable

¹⁷⁷ Snodgrass 2012, 11.

¹⁷⁸ The other principal sources are Hdt. 5.92; Arist. *Pol.* 1315 b22; Nicolaus of Damascus *FGH* 90 F 57. A man named Kypselos was Athenian archon in 597/6 BCE, whom most regard the grandson of the tyrant Kypselos; see Bradeen 1969, 193-7. As Snodgrass 2012, 13 points out, this evidence does not rule out the possibility that Kypselos became tyrant in c.630 BCE, around the birth of his grandson.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Marconi 2007, 30: 'temples... were first and foremost emblems of polis identity'. The problem with this is that it effaces the primary religious significance of temples and assumes that all temples were tied to a polis, an assumption countered by the fact that states which never became *poleis*—but remained *ethne*—also built temples. See Morgan 1994; 2003.

concern with contemporary ideas of beauty proved integral to the temple's agency in managing pleasing relations with the divine. But if they were also entangled in relations between people, then what significance, if any, did architectural beauty have in the political lives of Archaic temples?

The politics of beauty in Archaic temple building

It has become an axiom of modern scholarship that Greek temples were used to calibrate political prestige.¹⁸⁰ In temple building, *poleis* appear to have competed with each other in games of one-upmanship. In the sixth century, the Samians built a temple for Hera which just surpassed in ground area (6038 sq m) that of the temple of Artemis (6017 sq m) built by their Ephesian neighbours earlier that century.¹⁸¹ It seems bigger equalled better in such political games. Yet the difference in ground area between the Samian Heraion and the Ephesian Artemision was too small to be visually obvious. So how would this token of superiority and prestige have been known and meaningful? Perhaps it infiltrated 'common knowledge' about the temples, or perhaps it was meaningful only to a privileged few, like the architects.¹⁸² For our purposes, the example raises an important question concerning the politics of beauty in Archaic temple building: what made temples politically prestigious and how was that prestige triggered?

¹⁸⁰ E.g. Snodgrass 1986; Marinatos 1993, 229; Scott 2010; 2016. On prestige more broadly in early Greece, see Morgan 1990; Duplouy 2006.

¹⁸¹ Snodgrass 1986. Similarly, the temple of Zeus at Akragas (6806 sq m) surpassed temple G at Selinous (5007 sq m), and the Parthenon was marginally bigger than the temple of Zeus at Olympia. See Osborne 2004, 37-8.

¹⁸² Osborne 2004, 37.

Inscriptions naming donors on temples and altars represent one way in which prestige was conveyed.¹⁸³ On the Artemision at Ephesos, the Lydian king Kroisos commemorated his contribution on at least four of the temple's sculpted column drums with the words, 'King Kroisos dedicated [this]'.¹⁸⁴ On the largest temple in the main urban sanctuary of Metapontion, temple A II (c.540-530 BCE), an inscription on the architrave named the man responsible for its construction and invoked protection 'for himself and his family'.¹⁸⁵ Such inscriptions ensured the public recognition of benefactors and therefore their potential for prestige. In some cases, aesthetic concerns appear to have dictated the placement of inscriptions to reinforce their claims for prestige.¹⁸⁶ It seems no coincidence that Kroisos' inscriptions were directly below the columns' elaborate sculptural decoration (fig. 49). Or that on the altar of the Chians at Delphi (c.500 BCE), the dedicatory inscription was carved on its external marble moulding facing the Sacred Way leading to the temple terrace (fig. 50).¹⁸⁷ In both cases, the concern with maximum visibility, and therefore recognition and prestige, is suggested both by the inscriptions' conspicuous position and their juxtaposition with aesthetically

¹⁸³ On architectural inscriptions in the Archaic and Classical periods, see Umholtz 2002. Cf. Scott 2016, 137-8.

¹⁸⁴ *IEphesos* 1518; *Syll.*³ 6; London, British Museum B 16. See Hdt. 1.92; Hellmann 1999, 91-2; Umholtz 2002, 264-5. For more on Kroisos' votives, see pp. 301-2.

¹⁸⁵ Marconi 2016, 80. For sixth century architecture in Metapontion, see Mertens 2006, 136-8, 149-55; Lippolis et al. 2007, 791-2.

¹⁸⁶ On the ornamentality of architectural inscriptions, see Butz 2009.

¹⁸⁷ *Syll.*³ 19a; Umholtz 2002, 268. Amandry 1986, 216-17 argues that the surviving inscription is a Hellenistic re-working of the original Archaic text. For more inscriptions on Archaic altars, see Umholtz 2002, 267-8.

distinguished and eye-catching elements of their respective structures: the sculptural *kosmos* of the Artemision and the bright white marble moulding of the Chian altar contrasting with its blue-grey stones below.¹⁸⁸

Prominent inscriptions testify to the pride and prestige in temple building, but why were temples considered effective in this regard? As Scott points out, the conspicuous location, obvious expense, labour intensity and relative rarity of temples ‘point to their exceptional nature, and, thus, the prestige they carried’.¹⁸⁹ To this list of exceptional features should be added what temples looked like: they were often the biggest buildings in a community, often employed distinctive building materials and architectural features, and often had the most decoration. Such features made temples visually outstanding in their communities and therefore prestigious. The social kudos associated with outstanding architecture is well illustrated by the disguised Odysseus when he describes his palace:

Εὖμαι', ἧ μάλα δὴ τάδε δώματα κάλ' Ὀδυσῆος·
 ρεῖα δ' ἀρίγνωτ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν πολλοῖσιν ἰδέσθαι.¹⁹⁰

‘Eumaios, surely this is the beautiful palace of Odysseus; easily is it recognised and seen even among many houses.’

That his house is ‘easily recognised’ demonstrates Odysseus’ social preeminence and prestige (and thus the irony of his beggar’s disguise). Furthermore, the description of the house as *kalos*, ‘beautiful’, ‘fine’,

¹⁸⁸ Umholtz 2002, 268.

¹⁸⁹ Scott 2016, 136.

¹⁹⁰ Hom. *Od.* 17.264-5. Cf. *Od.* 6.298-303.

presents the aesthetic value of the building as central to its power to confer honour on its owner.

The same is implied by an inscription on the Apollonion at Syracuse. This temple is a major landmark in the history of the Greek sacred architecture. When it was built in the first quarter of the sixth century (c. 590-580 BCE), it was one of the biggest temples in the Greek world (54.90 m x 21.50 m), by far the biggest in Sicily, and the first in west Greece with a peristyle.¹⁹¹ The deep front porch had a double row of six columns and there were seventeen along the flanks, each made from a single piece of local limestone (figs. 51-2). A strong sense of pride in this groundbreaking feat is clear from the massive eight metre long inscription carved on the top step of the temple's east facade (fig. 53-4). Although the inscription is badly weathered and its precise reading contested, its first part is clear: 'Kleom[...]es made (the temple) for Apollo' (Κλεομ[...]ες : ἐποίησε τόπέλονι). The central section perhaps contains a patronymic for Kleom[...]es and the final part refers to 'the columns, fine works' (στυλεῖα : καλὰ ἔργα).¹⁹²

According to the customs of architectural epigraphy, Kleom[...]es was probably not the architect but the temple's contractor or principal donor.¹⁹³ His pride in the temple and desire for social recognition are underscored in various ways: in the large size of the inscription and its conspicuous position on the front of the temple; in the specific reference to the

¹⁹¹ On the temple, see Cultrera 1951; Mertens 1996a; Marconi 2007, 38-50.

¹⁹² *IG XIV I* (= *SEG XXXI* 841). On the inscription, see Engelmann 1981; Marconi 2007, 42-5; Porter 2010, 413-15.

¹⁹³ See Umholtz 2002; Marconi 2007, 42-5.

monolithic columns, the first and largest of their kind in west Greece; and finally, in their description as *kala*, a mark of qualitative value that here, as elsewhere, straddles the aesthetic and the functional. That is, the qualification *kala* points to the columns both as objects of beauty, whose grandeur was plain to see, and as groundbreaking feats of engineering —‘fine works’ to bolster any claim to social or political authority that Kleom[...]es may have had.¹⁹⁴ If the description reflects the value set on beauty in calibrating socio-political status, the dedication ‘to Apollo’ highlights that the aesthetic significance of the temple was bound to politics and theology. As much as those ‘fine works’ were an asset to Kleom[...]es, they were also germane to the temple’s dedicatory purpose as a pleasing gift ‘to Apollo’, like Chryses’ ‘pleasing shrine’ for Apollo in *Iliad* 1.

Indeed, the political efficacy of temple building rested on the premise that temples were public gifts to the gods and therefore beneficial to the whole community. However selfishly motivated in fact, the individual patronage of temples, common in the Archaic period, could have the semblance of piety and beneficence towards the community at large.¹⁹⁵ No wonder that building temples, as Aristotle recognised, was a favourite pastime of Archaic tyrants.¹⁹⁶

One crucial reason, then, that a concern with beauty was at the heart of Archaic temple building was because of its simultaneous political and

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 21.446-7.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Diod. 8.9; Marconi 2007, 44-5.

¹⁹⁶ Arist. *Pol.* 5.1313b. Cf. Arist. *Pol.* 6.1321a37-9; Polyainos 5.1.1. See Salmon 1997, 65-7; Mitchell 2013, 120-1.

theological value: the beauty of a temple would both make it pleasing to the god and enhance the social honour and prestige of those involved in its construction.¹⁹⁷ The perceived agency of beauty was fundamental to its significance: whether directed at gods or humans, the beauty of a temple had a power to please, delight and inspire admiration.

As chapters one and two of this thesis have shown, emphasis on the power and effects of beauty is a defining feature of its representation in Archaic literature. For Archaic temples, it seems this understanding of beauty's agency was also central to their political and theological character. Nowhere is this clearer than in ancient accounts of how the Alkmaionidai funded the completion of Apollo's temple at Delphi at the end of the sixth century BCE (c.510 BCE).¹⁹⁸ Banished from Athens by the Peisistratidai, the Alkmaionidai sought the favour of the Delphic oracle for the political power it could wield: the Pythia's oracular authority might persuade the Lakedaimonians to support them in their bid to regain control of Athens. Herodotus says that 'in their desire to use all devices against the Peisistratidai', the Alkmaionidai accepted the contract to build the temple at Delphi and 'made it more beautiful than the prescribed model [τοῦ παραδείγματος κάλλιον]' by using Parian marble instead of

¹⁹⁷ The intersection of aesthetic, political and theological value in temple-building therefore echoes the dynamics of choral beauty in Alkman's *Louvre Partheneion*; see pp. 125-41 above.

¹⁹⁸ On this temple, see Courby 1927, 92-117.

limestone for the east facade (figs. 55-6).¹⁹⁹ Making the temple ‘more beautiful’ was one of those political ‘devices’ to persuade the Pythia to back their cause. And with the help of further bribes, the ploy worked: the Lakedaimonians eventually heeded the Pythia’s insistence to support the Alkmaionidai.²⁰⁰ Beautifying Apollo’s temple therefore proved an effective tool in the political machinations that restored the Alkmaionidai to power and made possible Kleisthenes’ democratic reforms.²⁰¹

A generation later, Megakles, the son-in-law and nephew of Kleisthenes, could still bask in the glory of his family’s commission at Delphi. Megakles’ victory in a chariot race at the Pythian games of 486 BCE was celebrated in an ode by Pindar. In the first half of the song, Pindar presents Megakles’ victory, like his family’s construction of the temple, as sources of fame and honour for all Athens:²⁰²

Κάλλιστον αἱ μεγαλοπόλεις Ἀθᾶναι
 προοίμιον Ἀλκμανιδᾶν εὐρυσθενεῖ
 γενεᾷ κρηπῖδ’ ἀοιδᾶν ἵπποισι βαλέσθαι.
 ἐπεὶ τίνα πάτραν, τίνα οἶκον ναίων ὀνυμάξαι

¹⁹⁹ Hdt. 5.62. Cf. Arist. *Ath.* 19.3-4. The discovery of Parian marble sculptures from the temple’s east pediment and limestone sculptures from the west confirm Herodotus’ statement; see De La Coste-Messelière 1931. On beauty and building materials, see Xen. *Vect.* 1.4 where Xenophon notes Attika’s prodigious wealth of stones, ‘thanks to which [it has] the most beautiful temples, most beautiful altars and most outstanding statues for the gods’ (ἐξ οὗ κάλλιστοι μὲν ναοί, κάλλιστοι δὲ βωμοὶ γίνονται, εὐπρεπέστατα δὲ θεοῖς ἀγάλματα).

²⁰⁰ Hdt. 5.63-5.

²⁰¹ Cf. Hdt. 1.60 where human beauty proves effective in the aristocratic contests for power in Archaic Athens; see Petridou 2015, 147-56.

²⁰² See Athanassaki 2011b on why Pindar presents Megakles’ victory and his family’s commission at Delphi as honours to all Athens.

ἐπιφανέστερον

Ἑλλάδι πυθέσθαι;

πάσαισι γὰρ πολίεσι λόγος ὁμιλεῖ

Ἐρεχθέος ἀστῶν, Ἄπολλον, οἳ τεόν

δόμον Πυθῶνι δίῃ θαητὸν ἔτευξαν.²⁰³

‘The great city of Athens is the most beautiful prelude to set down as the foundation of songs for the mighty family of the Alkmaionidai and their horses. What fatherland, what house can you inhabit and name with a more distinguished reputation? For in all cities there is talk of the citizens of Erechtheus, who built your home in divine Pytho, Apollo, marvellous to behold.’

Pindar begins by likening his song to architecture: the ‘most beautiful prelude’ to his song is a *krepis*, an architectural term for the ‘foundation’ of a building.²⁰⁴ The allusion thus foreshadows the song’s ensuing reference to the temple of Apollo, which the Athenians, ‘the citizens of Erechtheus’, built in Delphi and thanks to which they enjoy renown ‘in all cities’.

The talk in all these cities is not just that the Athenians built the temple but that they made it ‘marvellous to behold’ (θαητός): like Odysseus’ ‘beautiful palace’ and the ‘fine’ columns of the Apollonion at Syracuse, the aesthetic value and judgement of the temple appear essential to its power to confer socio-political prestige. What matters are not merely the facts

²⁰³ Pind. *Pyth.* 7.1-12.

²⁰⁴ For more of Pindar’s interactions with architecture, see Pind. *Ol.* 6.1-3; *Paeon* 8; fr. 194; Porter 2010, 436-44; Athanassaki 2011a; 2011b; 2012; Fearn 2017; Neer and Kurke (forthcoming). On Greek architectural terminology, see Hellmann 1992.

about the building, that it is owned, built or funded by so and so, or that its ground area is this much bigger than another building. How the building is seen, judged and experienced is also crucial in calibrating socio-political prestige. However big, conspicuous and elaborately decorated, if a temple were judged to be ugly, this would surely undermine the social kudos of those involved in its construction. Conversely, the aesthetic approbation of a temple—that its appearance is deemed ‘beautiful’, pleasing, ‘marvellous to behold’—enhances its socio-political value. This assessment of the temple’s value does not belong simply in the realm of facts about it. For in the perception of its beauty, the judgement of the temple’s value is registered in a pleasing affective experience. That the temple is ‘marvellous’ is part and parcel of the prestige that the Alkmaionidai and Athenians enjoy; as Pindar’s description implies, aesthetic admiration of the building filters into admiration and renown for those who built it. The aesthetic experience and judgement of the temple trigger socio-political prestige, just like Pindar’s song, which honours Megakles, his family and native Athens by recalling their glorious benefaction at Delphi and by the song’s own claim to be κάλλιστος, ‘most beautiful’.

In Herodotus and Pindar, the beauty of the Alkmaionid temple at Delphi is presented as instrumental to its political impact, whether to persuade the Pythia to back the Alkmaionid cause, or to underscore the family’s widespread prestige a generation later. But even in this most political context, as Pindar extols Alkmaionid and Athenian fame throughout Greece, it is noteworthy that Apollo is addressed directly: ‘they built your home in divine Pytho, Apollo, marvellous to behold’. The invocation

provides a salutary reminder that Archaic temples were bound by the intertwining branches of theology and politics. Like the ‘fine’ columns of the Apollonion at Syracuse, at once a political asset to Kleom[...]es and a pleasing gift ‘to Apollo’, the ‘marvellous’ temple at Delphi is an honour both to Apollo and the Athenians. What is more, the direct engagement of Apollo suggests that the Athenians’ widespread fame is a divine blessing—a pleasing favour from Apollo in return for his ‘marvellous home’.

From these various sources, it appears that the significance of beauty in sacred architecture lay in its simultaneous political and theological value: to evoke divine pleasure (χάρις) on the one hand, and inspire admiration and trigger political prestige (τιμή) on the other. And if a temple was ‘easily recognised’ (ἀρίγνωτος)—thanks not least to its outstanding aesthetic appeal—it was a credit both to those responsible for its construction and the god or gods to whom it was dedicated. Since temples were implicated in political relationships as well as those between humans and gods, beauty’s value in temple architecture derived from a recognition of its power to affect the character of those relationships. A recognition, in other words, of its affective agency on gods and humans alike.²⁰⁵ Far from the isolated and autonomous status that the concept of beauty has often been given in modern aesthetic discourse, Archaic sources present the beauty

²⁰⁵ On the mutuality of human and divine aesthetic sensibilities and its theological significance, see pp. 1-3, 83-4, 91 above.

of Greek temples as an active force in the network of social relations in which temples were enmeshed.²⁰⁶

Having surveyed the politics of beauty in Archaic temple building, it is time to investigate further how exactly a concern with beauty is demonstrated by the archaeological record of Archaic temples. The temple of Poseidon at Isthmia provided a well-documented seventh century example to explore this question in depth. Temple C at Selinous in Sicily (modern Selinunte) presents an opportunity to interrogate the aesthetic character of a sixth century temple in a different part of the Greek world. Construction of temple C began around the mid sixth century, roughly one hundred years after the Corinthians completed their temple for Poseidon at Isthmia. In that time, Greek sacred architecture had changed dramatically. Efforts at enlargement had reached new heights, with giant strides made by the Ionian communities at Samos, Ephesos and Didyma.²⁰⁷ Greek communities in the west had begun to build their own big temples, like the Apollonion at Syracuse, and to develop their own distinctive architectural

²⁰⁶ In his anthropological theory of art, Gell denied beauty's importance for understanding how artworks exercise social agency (Gell 1998, esp. 5-6). The reason for this denial seems owed to a predominant idea in modern aesthetic discourse, that beauty is an object of disinterested contemplation. On this view, the concept of beauty appears divorced from and irrelevant to Gell's prime interest: art's investment in social relationships. On the contrary, the political aesthetics of Archaic temples shows that their beauty—far from being disinterested and divorced from social processes—was in fact instrumental to 'the unfolding patterns of social life' (Gell 1998, 5). Cf. Parsons and Carlson 2008, 137-66. For more on beauty's agency in Archaic material culture, see chapter 4 below.

²⁰⁷ See Buschor 1930; Gruben 1963; Kienast 2002; Ohnesorg 2007; Senseney 2016.

styles.²⁰⁸ To be sure, regional variety and experimentation still characterised temple architecture in the sixth century. But the emergence of the Doric order in the late seventh and early sixth century, and the widespread adoption of stone, roof tiles, colonnades and colourful decoration testify to a greater degree of standardisation than in the seventh century.²⁰⁹ This emerging tradition and wider conversation in temple design put the builders of temple C in a very different position to their seventh century predecessors at Isthmia. These differences were of course accentuated by local conditions, not least, Selinous' status as a relatively new settlement on the western fringes of the Greek world.

Temple C at Selinous

When construction of temple C began around the mid sixth century, Selinous was barely a hundred years old. At some point in the third quarter of the seventh century—Diodoros implies 651-650 BCE, Thucydides 628-627 BCE—the citizens of Megara Hyblaia in east Sicily, led by an *oikistes* called Pamphilos from the mother-city Megara, founded Selinous on the coast of western Sicily (fig. 57).²¹⁰ Unlike Megara and Megara Hyblaia, the location of Selinous afforded ample space to avoid stepping

²⁰⁸ For an overview of west Greek Archaic architecture, see Mertens 1990; 1996b.

²⁰⁹ On the emergence of the orders, see Barletta 2001; Wilson Jones 2014.

²¹⁰ Thuc. 6.4.2; Diod. 13.59.4. See Dunbabin 1948, 435; Bérard 1957, 89, 115-16, 244-5. Some see the discrepancy as reflecting different moments in the foundation process e.g. Cusumano 2010, 16-18; others favour Diodoros' date on the basis of archaeological finds at Selinous e.g. Rallo 1982; Tusa 1982; Østby 1995. As Marconi 2007, 61-6 shows, neither explanation is wholly convincing.

on the toes of its neighbours—Greeks to the south, Phoenicians to the west, Elymians to the north.²¹¹ It seems that thanks to its fertile territory, trade with Greeks and perhaps non-Greeks too, Selinous was prospering by the early decades of the sixth century.²¹² Eloquent testimony to its prosperity is the city's vigorous building activity throughout the sixth century, which, in contrast to the scant literary sources for the Archaic history of Selinous, offers some of the best evidence for the city's cultural life.²¹³

An important focus of that cultural life was the city's main urban sanctuary on the akropolis, adjacent to the major north-south avenue through the city, overlooking its harbours to the east and west (fig. 58-61). Two small temples (R and S) were built in the sanctuary in the first two decades of the sixth century. Around 560 BCE, extensive renovations began which turned the sanctuary into the city's grand centrepiece.²¹⁴ Like the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia, construction of temple C was part of a comprehensive program of architectural transformation. The sanctuary was enlarged to the east with a terrace and bordered by an enormous retaining wall of ashlar masonry, unparalleled in size and design in the Greek world at the time (fig. 62-3). 17 m wide at its base, 9.8 m high,

²¹¹ Dunbabin 1948, 301; Parisi Presicce 1984, 42-3; Marconi 2007, 63-4. Relations with non-Greeks were fractious, however: according to Diod. 5.9 and Paus. 10.11.3, the Selinuntines were at war with the Elymian Segestans around 580 BCE.

²¹² See Finley 1979, 35-6; De Angelis 1994; Mertens 2003, 438ff.

²¹³ For the Archaic history of Selinous from the literary sources, see Marconi 2007, 66-7; Cusumano 2010, 18-20.

²¹⁴ There also appears to have been a predecessor on the site of temple C, though it is little known. On this and temples R and S, see Marconi 2007, 77-9. For the renovation of the sanctuary, see Di Vita 1984; Østby 1995, 87-92; Di Vita 1996, 284-90.

about 75 m long on the eastern border of the sanctuary and a further 50 m on its northeast side, the wall calls to mind Homer's description of 'the long, lofty walls [of the Phaiakians]... a wonder to behold'.²¹⁵ While the sanctuary was already 'in a conspicuous place' (περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ) on a hill in the city centre, for anyone approaching Selinous by land or sea from the east, its 'long, lofty walls' made the sanctuary a 'wonderful' and 'easily recognised' landmark in the city, as they still are today (figs. 64-5).

The grandeur of its external walls was matched by new constructions inside the sanctuary. A large L-shaped stoa (74 m x 29.3 m) was built on the eastern side of the sanctuary framing the sacrificial area, in the middle of which was a massive stone altar (20.49 m x 7.95 m) with a central staircase, mirroring the frontal staircase of temple C which it faced (figs. 59 and 66).²¹⁶ The architectural re-organisation of the sanctuary set this new altar at its centre, positioned roughly equidistant between the porticoes of the stoa, the eastern facade of temple C and the south perimeter wall. This effect was enhanced by a new entrance to the sanctuary in the south perimeter wall, which led directly into the sacrificial area between temple C and the altar.²¹⁷

Another structure also appears purpose-built to direct attention to this area: the so-called South Building, adjacent to the southern perimeter wall on the west side of the southern entrance (fig. 67). The most plausible interpretation of the South Building, a simple rectangular structure 23 m long and composed of rows of steps, is that it was a viewing-platform from

²¹⁵ Hom. *Od.* 7.44-5. See Mertens 2010, 111-12.

²¹⁶ See Gabrici 1929; Di Vita 1967.

²¹⁷ Gabrici 1929, 76ff; Di Vita 1967, 40.

which worshippers could watch religious ceremonies.²¹⁸ Its orientation to the north, to the area between temple C and its facing altar, suggests that it was designed for watching ceremonies linked with this temple and altar.²¹⁹ The identification of the South Building as a *theatron*, which could have accommodated around 500 people, highlights the sanctuary's role as a place of grand spectacle.²²⁰ In particular, it was the space around the altar in front of temple C that the architectural orchestration of the space set as centre-stage, framed by the long stoa, South Building and east facade of temple C.²²¹ The grandeur of its new structures, 'beautiful and big' and 'easily recognised' in the architectural landscape of Selinous, provided a fitting architectural stage for the grand spectacles of religious ceremony. If its new structures marked the sanctuary out as the city's crowning centrepiece, then the jewels in that crown, towering over the skyline and visible for miles around, were two new temples likely

²¹⁸ The rectangular form and steps of the South Building have led to its identification as an altar, which is problematised by its north-south orientation. Voigts 2011, 51 points out that its steps also significantly diverge in ratio from other large altars at Selinous. Marconi and Scahill 2015 argue persuasively for its identification as a *theatron*.

²¹⁹ Marconi and Scahill 2015, 288-90 link the South Building with temple R. The relative sizes of temple R and the South Building, and the latter's orientation to the area in front of temple C make this seem less likely than its principal connection to temple C. That it was used to watch religious ceremonies connected with both temples is entirely plausible.

²²⁰ On estimating the number of spectators, see Marconi and Scahill 2015, 286.

²²¹ Cf. Mertens 2010, 75-6.

dedicated to Apollo and Athena respectively: temple C (c.540-510 BCE) and temple D (c.510 BCE) (figs. 64 and 68).²²²

The size of temple C set it apart from its predecessors at Selinous. Like temple Y (c.560-550 BCE), temple C had a stone peristyle and Doric frieze of triglyphs and figural metopes. Temple C, however, was double the size, with a stylobate 63.72 m long and 23.93 m wide.²²³ While the Homeric epics demonstrate the importance of large size in early Archaic conceptions of architectural beauty, the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* affirms its continued significance in the sixth century. When Apollo arrives at Delphi, he declares that here he intends 'to build his most beautiful temple [περικαλλέα νηόν]'. Its sole physical trait is bigness: 'Apollo laid out the foundations in broad and very long unbroken lines'.²²⁴ The aesthetic aspiration of its ambitious size is one feature among many which illustrate temple C's debt to the Apollonion at Syracuse (c.580 BCE). The internal division into pronaos, long cella and shallow adyton, the stone peristyle with six columns on the ends and seventeen on the flanks, and the double row of columns on the eastern facade are common to both temples

²²² The consecration of temple C to Apollo and temple D to Athena is based, first, on an inscription (*IG XIV 269*) (c.475 BCE) which was found between them and is dedicated to Apollo Paian and Athena; and second, on analogy with the metropolis Megara, where Apollo and Athena were worshipped on the western akropolis. See Tusa 1967; Marconi 2007, 132-3. Temple C's date is controversial: because its foundations have never been excavated the date is based primarily on the style of its metopes. Their general style suggests a date around 530 BCE, though certain details suggest a date as late as c.510 BCE. See Østby 1995; Marconi 2007, 170-6.

²²³ On temple Y, see Gabrici 1956, 249ff; Marconi 2007, 84-5; Mertens 2010, 69-72.

²²⁴ *Hom. Hy.* 3.287, 294-5: διέθηκε θεμείλια... Ἀπόλλων ἰ εὐρέα καὶ μάλα μακρὰ διηνεκές. For a Near Eastern parallel for divine involvement in temple building, see Winter 2010, 273: Ea/Enki 'straightened out' the temple plan of Gudea of Lagash.

(compare figs. 52 and 69).²²⁵ In addition to its double row of columns, the eastern front of the Apollonion at Syracuse was emphasised by Kleom[...]es' inscription and a staircase between the central intercolumniation. On temple C, this frontal emphasis was further accentuated in two ways. First, by a large staircase of nine steps spanning the whole width of its eastern front, in contrast to four steps on the other sides. Second, by the eastern facade's decoration with figural metopes, in contrast to the plain metopes on the other sides.²²⁶ The structural and decorative emphasis of the temple's eastern facade therefore reinforced the effect created by other new structures which made the space around the altar in front of temple C a focal point in the sanctuary.

Although the peristyle of the Syracusan Apollonion was a model for temple C, their differences testify to an evolving conversation in the design and theoretical principles of Greek sacred architecture. The monolithic columns of the Apollonion had squat proportions, their height about four times the width of their lower diameter. Combined with the narrow intercolumniations, the result was that their capitals nearly touched and the elements of the frieze were not axially aligned with the columns and their intercolumniations (figs. 53 and 70).²²⁷ Temples built in Sicily in the following years evidently sought to resolve this, not least, temple Y (c. 560-550 BCE), the immediate predecessor to temple C at Selinous. The squat proportions, wide echini and monolithic form of temple Y's columns

²²⁵ On the relationship between these two temples, see Mertens 1996b, 322-7; Mertens 2010, 72-4.

²²⁶ The central staircase originally had seven steps; two more were added because the ground in front of the temple settled; Marconi 2007, 127.

²²⁷ Marconi 2016, 78.

recalled those of the Apollonion. Yet the relationship between the columns and the frieze marked a significant change: the columns were spaced further apart and the triglyphs aligned on the axis of the columns and the intercolumniations (figs. 71-2).²²⁸

Temple C followed suit: its columns, which were taller (8.65 m) and more slender than those of temple Y and the Apollonion, were aligned with the Doric frieze above, and its corner triglyphs were marginally wider than the others so that the triglyphs next to them would be aligned with the outermost intercolumniations of the peristyle (figs. 73-5).²²⁹ The contemporary temple of Hera at Poseidonia in South Italy (c.550-520 BCE) employed an alternative technique to resolve this corner problem: the outermost metopes were widened instead of the corner triglyphs (fig. 76).²³⁰

What these efforts and experiments in temple design suggest is that orderly alignment and proportion were guiding principles for the architects. Vitruvius would later echo the sentiment by identifying *taxis*, ‘arrangement’, ‘order’, and *symmetria*, ‘commensurability’, among his six fundamental principles of architecture.²³¹ The two principles are linked in his definition of *taxis*, which ‘consists of adapting each individual element of a building to the right dimensions and establishing its overall proportions by

²²⁸ Marconi 2007, 84; Mertens 2010, 69-72. Temple Y’s foundations have not been found and its original location is not known. Enough survives of its columns and different parts of its entablature, however, to build a relatively accurate picture of the relationship between its constructional elements. See n. 223 above.

²²⁹ Marconi 2007, 130.

²³⁰ On this temple, see Mertens 1993; Mertens 2006, 140-9. On the corner problem, see Coulton 1977, 60-4; Osthues 2005.

²³¹ Vitr. 1.2.1. On Vitruvius’ architectural theory, see e.g. Coulton 1977, *passim* esp. 65-73; Knell 1985; McEwen 2003; Gros 2006; Thomas 2015.

reference to commensurability [*symmetria*].²³² *Symmetria* denotes the commensurate relationship of ‘separate parts to the form of the whole scheme’.²³³ For Vitruvius, *symmetria* and by extension *taxis* are central to architectural ‘beauty’ (*venustas*), defined as ‘a pleasing and elegant appearance’ (*species grata et elegans*) dependent on the ‘commensurability’ of a building’s constituent parts.²³⁴ Archaic efforts to establish an ordered and commensurate relationship between the peristyle and the frieze chime with Vitruvius’ understanding of architectural beauty. But were such aesthetic ideas alive and meaningful to the Archaic architects who made these choices?

In the mid fifth century BCE, the sculptor Polykleitos wrote the first sculptural treatise, the *Kanon*.²³⁵ It is preserved only in quotes and paraphrases by later authors like Galen, who records the sculptor’s view that ‘beauty [κάλλος] consists... in the commensurability [συμμετρία] of the constituent parts [of the body], such as that of finger to finger, of all the fingers to the palm and the wrist... and of everything to everything else, as it is written in the *Kanon* of Polykleitos’.²³⁶ For Polykleitos, bodily beauty

²³² Vit. 1.2.2 (trans. adapted from Schofield 2009, 13).

²³³ Vit. 1.2.4.

²³⁴ Vit. 1.3.2. The importance of *symmetria* for Vitruvius’ conception of architectural beauty is reaffirmed by his definition of *eurhythmia* (1.2.3): ‘*eurhythmia* is a beautiful appearance [*venusta species*] and an agreeable form derived from the composition of parts. This is achieved when the elements of a building are of a height suitable to their width, of a width suitable to their length, and, in a word, when everything has a commensurable correspondence [*omnia respondent suae symmetriae*].’

²³⁵ On Polykleitos’ *Kanon*, see Stewart 1978; Moon 1995.

²³⁶ Gal. *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 5.3.15-16. Cf. Gal. *De temperamentis* 1.566. Cf. Pl. *Phlb.* 64e; Pl. *Plt.* 284a-b. For Polykleitos on beauty and *symmetria*, see Pollitt 1974, 14-22; Pucci 2005; Konstan 2014, 106-8.

depends on the commensurate relationship between its different parts, just as architectural beauty depends on the commensurability of a building's constituent parts for Vitruvius. Vitruvius further echoes Polykleitos in stating that the 'commensurability' of the human body is paradigmatic for temples: relative distances between the body's various parts constitute a system of 'proportionate measurements, by which ancient painters and famous sculptors achieved great and lasting fame'.²³⁷ Since Polykleitos was the most famous of those sculptors in antiquity, there seems little doubt that Vitruvius had Polykleitos in mind.²³⁸ There are also suggestions that Polykleitos himself was influenced by architectural theory and practice: in particular, his mathematical approach to sculpture, illustrated in another excerpt from his *Kanon*; and his motivation to write the first Greek sculptural treatise, possibly inspired by the prose treatises of earlier Archaic architects like Theodoros, Chersiphron and Metagenes.²³⁹ Since these treatises do not survive, we cannot know whether Polykleitos' understanding of the relationship between commensurability and beauty was indebted to earlier architects, however pertinent it proved to Vitruvius.

²³⁷ Vitr. 3.1.2.

²³⁸ On the link between Polykleitos and Vitruvius, see Raven 1951; Pollitt 1995; Rykwert 1996, 97-110; McEwen 2003, 266-75.

²³⁹ On the Polykleitos' relationship with architectural theory, see Pollitt 1995. For his mathematical approach to sculpture, see the excerpt (Ph. *Syntaxis* 4.1.49): 'perfection [τό εὔ] arises from many numbers with a few exceptions [παρά μικρόν]'. On the contested meaning of *para mikron* here and its possible link with architectural theory, see Pollitt 1995, 21. On the treatises of Theodoros, Chersiphron and Metagenes, see n. 23 above.

On present literary evidence, moreover, it is hard to trace *symmetria* back further than the late sixth century.²⁴⁰ Of course, this does not mean that there were not other words which shared conceptual common ground with what *symmetria* would later express. *Taxis* is a notable example, instantiated in the prose writings of the philosopher Anaximander from the first half of the sixth century.²⁴¹ In denoting orderly arrangement, *taxis* is imbricated with another word with much older pedigree, which we have already identified as significant for early Archaic attitudes and aspirations to architectural beauty in the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia: *kosmos*. While *kosmos* also denotes beautifying ‘ornament’ and ‘decoration’, in phrases like εὖ κατὰ κόσμον, ‘all in good order’, it comes very close to *taxis*.²⁴² Anaximander referred to *taxis* and *kosmos* in his cosmological enquiries, providing among the earliest uses of *kosmos* to mean ‘universe’, ‘cosmos’.²⁴³ Ancient tradition held that Anaximander was tutored by Thales, and that both were active in the late seventh and first half of the sixth centuries in Ionia—one of the Archaic heartlands of Greek sacred architecture.²⁴⁴ Both philosophers appear to have been interested in architecture and in applying the architectural tools of geometry to

²⁴⁰ The importance of *symmetria* in Classical authors like Polykleitos, Plato and Aristotle is sometimes retrojected onto the Archaic period with little evidence to support the claim: e.g. Pollitt 1974, 15. Although the concept was apparently central to Pythagoras and his followers in the late sixth century, it is noteworthy that *symmetria* is not used in the extant words of any Archaic author.

²⁴¹ Anaximander A9 (DK) (Simpl. *In Phys.* 24.13). Cf. Diog. Laert. 2.1.5.

²⁴² E.g. Hom. *Il.* 10.472-3; 11.47-8; 12.85 etc.

²⁴³ E.g. Anaximander A9, A11 (DK) etc.

²⁴⁴ See Hippol. *Ref.* 1.6.7; Diog. Laert. 2.2; Simpl. *In Phys.* 24.13-14; Laks and Most 2016, 274-9.

articulate their cosmological views.²⁴⁵ Anaximander even likened the earth to ‘the drum of a column’ in his model of the cosmos.²⁴⁶

A line attributed to Thales makes a tantalising link between architecture and cosmology on the question of beauty. When asked, ‘what is the most beautiful thing’ (τί κάλλιστον;), Thales replied, ‘the cosmos; for everything is a part of this in order’ (κόσμος· πᾶν γὰρ τὸ κατὰ τάξιν τούτου μέρος ἐστί).²⁴⁷ Given his apparent interest in architecture and the importance of *taxis* in Greek architectural theory, it is tempting to hear in Thales’ answer an allusion to architecture, to the theory and practice of setting every part of a building ‘in order’ (κατὰ τάξιν). For Thales, the supreme beauty of the cosmos derives from its orderly arrangement of everything, a view to which Polykleitos and Vitruvius also subscribe in their attitudes to bodily and architectural beauty.²⁴⁸ Similarly, Xenophon, prompted by his observations of household wares, claims that ‘everything appears more beautiful [καλλίω] when arranged all in order [κατὰ κόσμον]’, while Aristotle roundly asserts that ‘the chief forms of the beautiful are order, commensurability and clear delineation’ (τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ μέγιστα εἶδη τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ τὸ ὠρισμένον).²⁴⁹

Diverse literary sources, from Thales’ cosmos to Xenophon’s household wares, testify to a persistent aesthetic taste for order and arrangement

²⁴⁵ See Apul. *Flor.* 18; Diog. Laert. 1.24-5; Procl. *In Eucl.* Prop. 26, theor. 17; Hahn 2001; Leonardis 2016, 92-3.

²⁴⁶ Anaximander A11 (DK) (Hippol. *Ref.* 1.6.3). On Anaximander and architecture, see McEwen 1993, 9-40; Hahn 2001.

²⁴⁷ Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 9.22; Mullach 1860, 227.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Pl. *Tim.* 28a-29b; *Phaedr.* 264c.

²⁴⁹ Xen. *Oec.* 8.20; Arist. *Metaph.* 1078a36-1078b1.

which casts light on the efforts of Archaic architects to align and order elements of the frieze and colonnade. It seems reasonable to suggest, therefore, that such efforts, which find a satisfying resolution in temples Y and C at Selinous, were motivated by a particular conception of architectural beauty: that the orderly and proportionate arrangement of a building's elements produced a pleasing aesthetic effect.²⁵⁰ This understanding of beauty is encapsulated by the semantic range of *kosmos*, in which physical 'order' and beautifying 'decoration' come together under the same conceptual wing. Indeed, the ingenuity of Thales' reply to, 'what is the most beautiful thing?', is that he evokes all the meanings of *kosmos* at once: the cosmos is the most beautiful thing because by definition *kosmos* beautifies and contains everything 'in order'.

²⁵⁰ The Archaic introduction of refinements—intentional deviations from straight lines and strict regularity—enriches this understanding of architectural beauty. Notable Archaic examples are the bulging columns of the Heraion at Poseidonia (c.550-520 BCE) (fig. 86), the curved stylobate of the Apollonion at Corinth (c.540 BCE), and the tilted columns and enlarged corner columns on the temple of Aphaia on Aigina (c.500 BCE). If order and proportionality were guiding principles of Archaic architects, the use of refinements suggests that architects were not bound to harmonic mathematical law (like Pythagoras and his followers). That is, they wanted to construct a temple with 'an appearance that was satisfying in fact rather than in theory' (Coulton 1977, 65). The goal of producing a satisfying appearance in fact not theory is another way of saying that *eurhythmia*, the subjective 'quality of being well-shaped', trumps strict adherence to objective 'commensurability' (*symmetria*), however dependent the former is on the latter according to Vitruvius (1.3.2); see Wilson Jones 2000, 43; Thomas 2015, 275. Vitruvius says that refinements corrected optical illusions that made regular forms appear irregular. And with an eye to architectural beauty: 'for vision follows gracious contours; and unless we flatter its pleasure by proportionate alterations of the modules... an uncouth and ungracious aspect will be presented to the spectators' (3.3.13. Cf. 3.4.5; 3.5.13; 4.4.3). Similarly, Philon of Byzantion says that 'by adding to points, by subtracting, by taperings, and by all kinds of experiment, they [architects] made them [the parts of the building] cohere with vision and what appeared well-shaped [εὐρυθμα φαινόμενα]' (Ph. *Bel.* 51.6-11). For both Philon and Vitruvius, refinements fall under the aesthetic rubric of *eurhythmia*. That Archaic refinements were motivated by similar aesthetic concerns is plausible but impossible to prove. On refinements, see Coulton 1977, 108-13; Haselberger 1999; Hellmann 2002, 185-91.

Like the ‘orderly arrangement’ (τάξις) of its frieze and columns, the colourful decoration of temple C was another important aspect of its beautifying *kosmos*. The limestone columns of temple C were stuccoed with white plaster to enhance their sheen, like the walls of Poseidon’s temple at Isthmia, and its triglyphs were likely painted blue and the taenia red (fig. 77).²⁵¹ Black and red was used for the geometric and floral ornaments of the temple’s terracotta roof system (figs. 78 and 107). Bands of Doric leaf, lotuses and palmettes, and double guilloche with central lotus designs were employed for the raking sima and geison on the gabled ends of the temple (fig. 79). An even more elaborate design, with additional bead-and-reel and meander patterns, for the horizontal geison on the ends of the temple (figs. 80-1). Sculpted lotuses and palmettes for the horizontal sima along the temple’s flanks (fig. 82). And massive, ornate ridge cover tiles painted with meanders and topped by palmettes along the spine of the roof (figs. 83-4).²⁵²

The architectural terracottas of temple C and its use of colour present a noteworthy contrast with the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia, which provides some of the earliest extant evidence for the colourful decoration of temples and their use of terracotta roof systems. Both of these features became common on Greek temples in the hundred years or so between the Isthmian temple and temple C at Selinous. While at Isthmia (and on the South temple at Kalapodi), colourful decoration was limited to the walls

²⁵¹ Lazzarini 2009, 140. The colour of the triglyphs and taenia is based on the polychromy of other temples at Selinous and other comparable Archaic Doric temples; see Lazzarini 2009. On the polychromy of Greek architecture, see Prater 2002; Hoepfner 2002; Winter 2002; Neils 2016, 166-7.

²⁵² See Gabrici 1933, pls. 19-30; Marconi 2007, 131.

of the temple, on temple C, like most sixth century temples, it is concentrated on and encompasses the entire entablature, drawing the eye up to emphasise the temple's towering height.²⁵³ What is more, the terracotta roof system has become an important focus of polychromy and decorative embellishment—a feature first realised, for example, in the elaborate roofs of the Apollonion at Thermon (c.630-620 BCE) and the Heraion at Mon Repos on Kerkyra (c.610 BCE).²⁵⁴ In distinctive west Greek style, the architectural terracottas of temple C present a profusion of geometric and floral ornament that embodies the aestheticised quality of *poikilia* in two ways.²⁵⁵

The adjective *poikilos* and its cognates belong to a versatile semantic family, encapsulated by the abstract noun *poikilia*, which appears in the Classical period.²⁵⁶ In one sense, they signify polychromy: something *poikilos* is 'multi-coloured', a *poikilma* is 'anything worked in many colours', and *poikillo* describes the process of their creation, like 'the many-garlanded earth adorned with colours [ποικίλλεται]'.²⁵⁷ Colour is not what matters most for *poikilia*, however, but the contrastive effect that the assemblage of colours produces.²⁵⁸ *Poikilos* can thus also mean 'intricate' or 'elaborate', where it is the contrastive effect of visual forms, rather than

²⁵³ See Marconi 2004, 214.

²⁵⁴ See n. 80 above.

²⁵⁵ On west Greek architectural terracottas, see Wikander 1986; Winter 1993, 273-303.

²⁵⁶ On the semantics of *poikilos*, see Rinaudo 2009. On *poikilia* generally, see Berardi et al. 2009; Grand-Clément 2015.

²⁵⁷ Sapph. fr. 168C (Campbell).

²⁵⁸ Grand-Clément 2015, 410.

colours, that is conveyed. Aphrodite's 'most beautiful necklaces' (ὄρμοι... περικαλλέες), for example, are 'intricately adorned [παμποίκιλοι]'.²⁵⁹ Like the roof of the Heraion at Poseidonia (c.550-520 BCE) (fig. 85), the architectural terracottas of temple C are *poikila* in both senses: the stark contrast between the red, black and terracotta allies with the intricate geometric and floral designs to exemplify the contrastive effect integral to Archaic perceptions of the beauty of *poikilia*.

Although elaborate roof designs were characteristic of sacred architecture in Sicily and South Italy, geometric and floral ornament was widely employed on temples across the Greek world, typically on the entablature. Capitals might also feature such ornaments, like the lotuses, rosettes and palmettes on the Heraion at Poseidonia (c.550-520 BCE) (fig. 86-8), or the lotuses on the Doric capitals of the temple of Apollo at Metropolis in Thessaly (c.550-540 BCE) (fig. 89-90), or the lotuses, palmettes and scrolls on the Ionic capitals of the second dipteral Heraion at Samos (c.530 onwards) (fig. 91).²⁶⁰ Built at roughly the same time, these three temples span the Greek world, from Poseidonia in South Italy, to Metropolis on the northern mainland, to Samos in the eastern Aegean. Each was clearly a product of local conditions and regional architectural traditions. And yet they share a decorative vocabulary: their floral patterns belong to a common language of ornament in sacred architecture across regional boundaries. In their intricacy and polychromy, such motifs

²⁵⁹ *Hom. Hy.* 5.88-90. Cf. *Il.* 6.294-5; 14.214-21; 18.466-7, 590-606; *Od.* 15.107-8; 18.292-3; Sapph. fr. 39; Pherekydes DK 7 B 2.14-16. On the beauty of *poikilia*, see Hunzinger 1994, 13-14; Grand-Clément 2015; see p. 186 above.

²⁶⁰ See n. 207 above; Intzesiloglou 2002; Gruben 1960; Wilson Jones 2014, 127-8.

enhanced the *poikilos kosmos* of temples. But was that the limit of their significance to contemporary Archaic ideas about beauty?

In his classic, *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856), Jones argued that ‘Greek ornament was wanting... in one of the great charms which should always accompany ornament, viz. Symbolism. It was meaningless, purely decorative, never representative, and can hardly said to be constructive’.²⁶¹ If the ornament of temples enhanced their beauty, then it was germane both to their religious purpose as pleasing gifts for gods and their political value in calibrating socio-political prestige. Jones’ characterisation of Greek ornament as ‘meaningless’ formalism will not stand therefore. How about the lack of symbolism? In Archaic poetry, nature abounds and beautifies itself in proximity with the gods.²⁶² Flowers in particular, thanks to their association with beauty and fecundity, have a special divine connection: they grow spontaneously in the presence of the gods, who adorn themselves with flowers, dance and delight in floral meadows, and take pleasure in the sight of mortal worshippers wearing floral garlands.²⁶³ Were floral motifs on temples therefore intentional symbols of the beauty and fecundity attendant upon the gods? That would be going too far, like Jean-Louis Viel de Saint-Maux’s impassioned claim that Greek temples

²⁶¹ Jones [1856] 2001, 90.

²⁶² See e.g. Hes. *Theog.* 194-5; Hom. *Il.* 14.346-51; *Od.* 5.59-74; *Hom. Hy.* 1.9-14; *Hy.* 3.135-9; *Hy.* 7.35-41; *Hy.* 19.25-6; Simon. 519 (fr. 32).

²⁶³ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 14.346-51; *Cypr.* fr. 6; *Hom. Hy.* 2.5-16; *Hy.* 19.19-26; Sapph. fr. 81.4-7. For more on floral beauty, see e.g. Hes. *Theog.* 576-7; *Op.* 73-5; Hom. *Il.* 17.46-60; *Od.* 5.72-3; *Hom. Hy.* 2.6-16; *Hy.* 10.3; *Cypr.* fr. 6; Archil. fr. 30; Tyr. fr. 10.28; Sapph. fr. 2.9-10; Sapph. frs. 81, 98, 122 etc.

were ‘poems to fecundity’.²⁶⁴ The presence of these motifs in Archaic vase-painting shows that they were part of a decorative visual repertoire that need have little to do with the gods.²⁶⁵ In any case, the common aestheticisation of flowers and fecund plants in Archaic poetry underlines how vegetal and floral motifs were part of the beautifying *kosmos* of Archaic temples, just as ‘garlands of blooming flowers’ are a ‘great ornament’ (μέγ[αν ἢ κ]όσμον) for one of Sappho’s girls.²⁶⁶

The metopes on the east facade of temple C contributed to its intricate and colourful decoration: some figures have traces of red and black paint, their backgrounds were red and their borders adorned with red meanders.²⁶⁷ The ten metopes from the frieze are variously preserved, though their original placement is now known thanks to Marconi’s thorough re-examination.²⁶⁸ The four metopes on the frieze’s lefthand side are very fragmentary: besides their frontal faces and the head of a male figure wearing a *pilos*, perhaps Odysseus or Hermes, little can be said of their subjects (fig. 92). Frontal horses appear in the fifth and sixth metopes in the middle of the frieze over the central intercolumniation. Only the hind legs of the horses survive from the fifth metope; by analogy with the sixth, it probably featured a frontal four horse chariot. All four horses survive on

²⁶⁴ Viel de Saint-Maux 1787, ix. In fact, Plutarch’s comments (*Per.* 13.3) about the Periclean buildings on the Athenian akropolis are not so different: ‘As for beauty [κάλλει], each of them was immediately venerable, and yet each looks even now as if it were just recently finished: thus each blooms with freshness, untouched by time, as though evergreen vitality and ageless spirit had been mingled into their creation.’

²⁶⁵ On ornamental borders in Greek art, see Hurwit 1977; 1992.

²⁶⁶ Sapph. fr. 98.2-9.

²⁶⁷ See Marconi 2007, 234-66.

²⁶⁸ Marconi 2007, 133-76.

the sixth metope, including the face of a male charioteer holding the reins in the centre and flanked by two figures, one of whom appears to hold a wreath (fig. 93). The latter detail, the male identity of the central figure and the presence of a third figure suggest that the metope represents Apollo, Artemis and Leto.²⁶⁹ That temple C was likely an Apollonion lends weight to this identification of the god appearing in prime position in the centre of the frieze. The seventh and eighth metopes depict Athena beside Perseus decapitating Medousa (fig. 94) and Herakles carrying off the Kerkopes on a pole (fig. 95). On the far right of the frieze, the subject of the ninth metope is unknown, while the tenth probably represents Orestes killing his mother Klytaimnestra, given iconographical parallels in Archaic art and the myth's popularity in literary sources (fig. 96-8).²⁷⁰

Like the metopes of temple Y at Selinous (c.560-550 BCE) and of the Heraion at Foce del Sele in Poseidonia (c.550-540 BCE), the metopes of temple C portrayed a series of episodes starring gods and heroes (fig. 99).²⁷¹ Any thematic coherence to the whole ensemble cannot be identified given its fragmentary condition. That genealogy mattered, however, is strongly suggested by the grouping on the righthand side of the frieze of the great Dorian heroes Perseus, Herakles and Orestes: their presence put the heroic Dorian ancestry and ethnic identity of the Selinuntines on

²⁶⁹ Studniczka 1926; Holloway 1984, 7; Marconi 2007, 140. Marconi 2007, 140-2 cites other less convincing identifications. Apollo, Artemis and Leto feature in an earlier small metope from Selinous, where Leto holds a wreath.

²⁷⁰ Marconi 2007, 161-8.

²⁷¹ On the metopes of temple Y and the Heraion at Foce del Sele, see Marconi 2007, 88-126; La Genière et al. 1997; 1999.

prominent display in the city's main urban sanctuary.²⁷² The metope of Apollo, Artemis and Leto had immediate local significance too: the frontal chariot represents Apollo's arrival, his epiphany in the sanctuary, to which the temple itself bears grand witness.²⁷³ In the centre of the eastern facade, Apollo appeared ever present to enjoy the rites conducted before the temple in his honour.

If the subjects of the metopes made sense in their immediate context, so too did their style, which appealed to contemporary ideas of beauty and wonder in its effort to invigorate the figures of the metopes with lifelike animation. From the earliest Greek literature, lifelikeness ranks as one of the highest aesthetic criteria for representational objects.²⁷⁴ In Archaic poetry, the lifelikeness of crafted objects pertains to two qualities in particular: movement and the semblance of sensory capacity. It is no coincidence that Aristotle would later define motion and sensation as the defining properties of living beings.²⁷⁵ This lifelike quality is what distinguishes Hephaistos' paradigmatic creations, like his tripods that 'move of their own accord' (αὐτόματοι), 'a wonder to behold' (θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι). And the shield he makes for Achilles, 'beautiful armour [τεύχεα καλά]', as Hephaistos says, 'such that any human will wonder at

²⁷² Marconi 2007, 199-205. According to Hes. *Cat.* fr. 193, Herakles was a direct descendant of Perseus. Herakles's cult is well attested at Selinous: e.g. the inscription from temple G (*IG* XIV 268) names Herakles third among the city's deities who secured victory for Selinous.

²⁷³ See Holloway 1991, 75; Marconi 2007, 189-94.

²⁷⁴ See Spivey 1995; 1997, 5-8.

²⁷⁵ Arist. *De anima* 403b25-27. Sokrates' argument for the immortality of the soul at Pl. *Phaedr.* 245c5-246a2 also rests on an inherent association between movement and life.

[θαυμάσσεται].²⁷⁶ In Hephaistos' own words, beauty and wonder characterise his work; no surprise, then, that his wife is Charis ('Beauty').²⁷⁷ Homer's ekphrasis of Achilles' shield reveals the visual and material properties that engender those defining characteristics: its radiant and precious metals, its intricate and skilful craftsmanship, and a panoply of illusionistic images.²⁷⁸ The images confound their material and static limitations in their movement and mimetic effects. In a farming scene, the soil turns black 'like real ploughed-land, even though it was made of gold; that was the wonder [θαῦμα] of his work'.²⁷⁹ In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus' 'shining brooch, an object of delight [ἄγαλμ']', is a similar marvel thanks to the animated image of a fawn struggling in the clutches of a hound—'and everyone wondered [θαυμάζεσκον] at it'.²⁸⁰

The beauty and wonder of lifelike animation characterise Hephaistos' works in the Hesiodic tradition too. In the *Theogony*, Hephaistos contributes to Pandora's 'adornment' (κόσμος) by making a golden headband:²⁸¹

τῇ δ' ἔνι δαίδαλα πολλὰ τετεύχματο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι,

²⁷⁶ Hom. *Il.* 18.376-7, 466-7. The same animism characterises the works of the legendary craftsman Daidalos: see Diod. 4.75.6-76.4; Morris 1992; Spivey 1995.

²⁷⁷ Hom. *Il.* 18.382. Cf. *Od.* 8.266ff; Hes. *Theog.* 945-6; Pseudo-Heraclitus, *Quaest. Hom.* 43.8. For more on the association of craft and beauty, see chapter 4 below. On the beauty and wonder of crafted objects of Archaic epic, see Hunzinger 1994, esp. 22; Neer 2010, 57-69.

²⁷⁸ See Hom. *Il.* 18.470-617. On Achilles' shield, see Marg 1971; Taplin 1980; Hunzinger 1994, 13-24; Scully 2003.

²⁷⁹ Hom. *Il.* 18.548-9. Cf. 18.599-602.

²⁸⁰ Hom. *Od.* 19.256-7, 226-31.

²⁸¹ Hes. *Theog.* 587.

κνώδαλ' ὅσ' ἥπειρος δεινὰ τρέφει ἡδὲ θάλασσα·

τῶν ὅ γε πόλλ' ἐνέθηκε, χάρις δ' ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄητο,

θαυμάσια, ζωοῖσιν ἐοικότα φωνήεσσιν.²⁸²

‘On this were fashioned many skilful designs, a wonder to behold, all the fearsome beasts that earth and sea nourishes; many of these he wrought on the headband, and beauty wafted over them all, wonderful beasts, like living beings with voices.’

In Aischylos’ *Isthmiastai*, the satyrs’ ‘beautifully-painted’ portraits ‘only lack a voice’.²⁸³ Here in the *Theogony*, Hephaistos’ work achieves that final measure of verisimilitude: his beautiful, wonderful beasts are ‘like living beings with voices’. In their movement and sensory animation, images of figures ‘as if alive’ (ὥς εἰ ζωοί) abound in the *Shield of Herakles*, attributed to Hesiod in antiquity but probably composed around 575-550 BCE, perhaps in Thebes, by a poet drawing on the Hesiodic and Homeric traditions.²⁸⁴ The *Shield* appears to have been very popular in the second half of the sixth century and widely known.²⁸⁵ One clue to its dissemination in Sicily is that Stesichoros, from Himera not far north of Selinous and active c.570-550 BCE, apparently commented on it.²⁸⁶ In any case, the

²⁸² Hes. *Theog.* 581-4.

²⁸³ Aesch. *Isthmiastai* 1-20.

²⁸⁴ E.g. Hes. [Sc.] 189, 194, 244. On the date and composition of the *Shield*, see Russo 1965; Andersen 1969; Janko 1986.

²⁸⁵ Vase-paintings suggest the poem was popular in Athens; see Shapiro 1984.

²⁸⁶ For Stesichoros’ comments on the *Shield*, see Janko 1986, 41-2. On his *floruit*, see West 1971; Bowie 2015, n. 20. Admittedly, Stesichoros could have first encountered the *Shield* on his travels outside Sicily e.g. in Athens. On Stesichoros, see Finglass and Kelly 2015.

Shield provides a valuable comparandum for understanding the imagery of temple C in the light of contemporary aesthetic tastes, values and expectations, not least, as it illustrates the continued fascination with lifelike imagery in the mid sixth century. From Hesiod and Homer in the late eighth and early seventh century, to the *Shield* in the mid sixth and Aischylos' satyrs in the early fifth century, lifelikeness is set on a high aesthetic pedestal. Above all, this quality is tied to beauty and wonder: the latter indicated by the repeated references to *thauma* at the sight of lifelike objects; the former by the consistent association of lifelike imagery with various terms in the rich semantic field of Archaic Greek beauty—*kalos*, *charis*, *kosmos*, and *agalma*.

The metopes of temple C display a number of representational strategies for endowing their figures with the lifelike qualities of motion and sensory animation. The emphasis on scenes of movement is an obvious example: the striding legs of Perseus, Medousa, Herakles and Orestes convey their motion in moments of intense action. Scenes of intense action were a familiar sight on Archaic temples, but the representation of movement does not necessarily produce the semblance of animation. Accordingly, sculptors and painters of Archaic temples developed various ways to intensify the sense of motion in their figures. An early example is the running figure of Perseus on a painted plaque from the Apollonion at Thermon (c.630-620 BCE) (fig. 100).²⁸⁷ Notice how his right leg transcends the border of rosettes, as if breaking the boundaries of the image in his sprint. Similarly, the head of a running Medousa overlaps the

²⁸⁷ On the Thermon paintings, see Bookidis 1967, 150ff.

upper border of the pediment on the Artemision at Kerkyra (c.580 BCE) (fig. 101). On temple Y at Selinous (c.560-550 BCE) (fig. 102), the horn, hoof and right leg of a bovine Zeus, whisking Europa away over the sea, transcends the borders of the metope.²⁸⁸ In each case, the effect is to give the moving figure a lifelike energy that the static frame appears unable to contain. The figures pop out and overstep their representational limits; like Hephaistos' beautiful *thaumata*, they appear to challenge the fact of their inanimateness.

By contrast, the figures on temple C stay within their metopal boundaries as they demonstrate an alternative means of evoking wonder by challenging their representational limits. The image of Perseus on the shield of Herakles suggests how:

ἐν δ' ἦν ἡυκόμου Δανάης τέκος, ἱππότη Περσεύς,
οὔτ' ἄρ' ἐπιψάυων σάκεος ποσὶν οὔθ' ἐκὰς αὐτοῦ,
θαῦμα μέγα φράσσασθ', ἐπεὶ οὐδαμῇ ἐστήρικτο.

τὼς γάρ μιν παλάμαις τεῦξεν κλυτὸς Ἀμφιγυήεις.²⁸⁹

'On it was the child of fair-haired Danae, the horseman Perseus,
neither touching the shield with his feet nor far from it, a great wonder
to observe, for nowhere was he attached to it. For that was how the
renowned Lane One crafted him'.

²⁸⁸ For more examples, see the fallen warrior in the corner of the east pediment of the temple of Aphaia at Aigina and metopes 6, 8, and 19 on the Athenian treasury at Delphi. On movement in pedimental sculpture, see Neer 2010, 92-9.

²⁸⁹ Hes. [Sc.] 216-19.

The ‘wonder’ of Hephaistos’ work is that the image of Perseus is in such high relief that he appears unattached to the shield, his feet neither touching nor far from it, just like Herakles and the central horses on temple C, their legs sculpted in the round, unattached to the background of their metopes (figs. 103-4). The deep relief of the figures on temple C is one of their defining traits, highlighted by comparison with their predecessors at Selinous, the so-called small metopes (*c.*560-550 BCE).²⁹⁰ One small metope depicts a frontal chariot, like the central metope of Apollo, Artemis and Leto on temple C (figs. 105-6). Executed in shallow relief, the front legs of the two central horses are attached to the background and their heads turned at right angles to their frontal bodies, which appear on the same flat plane as the rearing horses beside them. By contrast, the depth and three-dimensionality of the chariot metope from temple C are clear (figs. 93 and 103). The front legs of the horses are carved in the round, far from the background from which they emerge. The position of the horses’ heads—the middle two face on, those on the flanks turned out at an oblique angle—underscores the impression that they are bursting out of the frame in the rapid motion of the deities’ epiphany. Standing out in deep relief and moving as if unbound to their backgrounds, the animated figures on temple C appealed to the ‘wonder’ of beholders gazing up from below.

The frontal faces of the figures contributed to the same effect of vivid animation. Frontality characterises the figural decoration of Archaic

²⁹⁰ The small metopes are associated with temple Y but the attribution is problematic because they are not a consistent group: though all the metopes are about the same size, they display two different border designs, possibly indicating that they were from two separate temples. Alternatively, different borders may have been used for metopes on either end of the same temple. On the small metopes, see Marconi 2007, 88-126; Østby 2009.

temples: from akroteria and antefixes to metopes and pediments, the figures on Archaic temples often confront the viewer face on.²⁹¹ Almost all the preserved figures from temple C turn their heads to the viewer. The ubiquity of the technique, on both temple C and elsewhere, suggests that although frontality may produce different narrative effects in different scenes, its significance was tied to something bigger—some broader value applicable to figural imagery on temples in general.²⁹² The blanket term ‘frontality’ in fact obscures the crucial point.

Consider the central horses from the small metope (fig. 105). Although their bodies are frontal, the intensity of their engagement with the viewer is diminished because their heads are turned away. It is the face and eyes that we see most often on Archaic temples and which matter most for the image to create a direct relationship with the viewer: that the figure *looks at* the viewer, even if the body is turned away, as on the metopes of temple C. This direct engagement serves to bridge the gap between the representational world of the figure and that of the viewer.²⁹³ The figures are brought to life as they see and relate to the viewer ‘like living beings’ (ὥς ἐῖ ζωοί). For in Archaic and Classical Greece, sight and life bear a profound connection: ‘to be alive and to see the light of sun’ are

²⁹¹ On the frontality of Archaic temple imagery, see Osborne 2000, esp. 236 on temple C metopes; Marconi 2007, 218-22; Osborne 2009, esp. 6-8.

²⁹² Cf. Osborne 2009, 6-7.

²⁹³ Cf. Marconi 2007, 222; Osborne 2009, 8.

synonymous; to be deprived of sight, a euphemism for death.²⁹⁴ Thus in his description of the animated figures on Herakles' shield, the poet repeatedly emphasises their eyes, 'shining like fire', 'glaring terribly'.²⁹⁵ Turning their gaze on worshippers, the figures of temple C appear endowed with a defining mark of vitality, inviting viewers into their world as much as they become a part of the viewers'.

Such animation and direct engagement gave these gods and heroes of the Selinuntines a vivid presence in the metopes. The epiphany of Apollo and the exploits of their heroic ancestors appeared immediate and palpable. In Greek terms, they appeared *enargeis*, 'vivid', 'palpable', 'manifest'. This quality of *enargeia* ('vividness') defines the gods when they appear to mortals in Archaic poetry.²⁹⁶ It was not just, therefore, that the metopes represented an epiphany of the temple's deity and put the community's heroes on display. The style of the metopes intensified their epiphanic character. Thanks to their lifelike animation and direct engagement with worshippers, the figures of the metopes embodied prevailing standards of beauty and wonder in visual imagery and appeared vividly present (*enargeis*) in the manner of an epiphany. They therefore aspired to an aesthetic intensity characteristic of divine epiphanies in

²⁹⁴ Hom. *Od.* 4.540: ζῶειν καὶ ὀρᾶν φάος ἡελίοιο. Cf. 16.439; *Il.* 1.88. The etymology of Hades (Ἅιδης) as 'the Unseen' (privative ἀ + ἰδεῖν 'to see') was debated in antiquity: Pl. *Phd.* 80d; Pl. *Cra.* 403a. The etymology is presupposed at *Il.* 5.844-5, where Athena wears the 'cap of Hades' to make herself 'invisible' to Ares. Cf. Sapph. fr. 55. On the connection between sight, life and death, see Frontisi-Ducroux 1986, 208; Osborne 1988; Vernant 1991, 50-74, 95-110, 111-38, 141-50, 186-92; Bielfeldt 2016; Turner 2016. On sight in Graeco-Roman antiquity, see Squire 2016a. On the importance of the eyes in attributing life and agency to artworks, see Gell 1998, 116-20.

²⁹⁵ Hes. [*Sc.*] 145, 160, 236, 262, 390.

²⁹⁶ Hom. *Il.* 20.131; *Od.* 3.420; 7.201; 16.161. See p. 74 above. On *enargeia* in antiquity, see Manieri 1998; Plett 2012.

Archaic Greek literature. When gods reveal themselves and appear *enargeis*, beauty is often what mortals see and wonder what they feel.²⁹⁷ Just as the subjects of the metopes made sense in their immediate context, so did their stylistic appeal to contemporary notions of beauty, wonder and vividness. Such aesthetic values and effects were intrinsic to the temple's religious significance in framing an encounter with the deity housed within. The visual imagery of the temple might realise the intense aesthetic experience of epiphany envisaged by poets.

For temple C, the importance of contemporary Archaic ideas of beauty is registered in multiple aspects of its appearance and design, from its grandeur (μέγεθος) and the orderly arrangement (τάξις) of its architectural elements, to the intricacy and polychromy (ποικιλία) of its terracottas and the figural decoration of its metopes. There remains a glaring omission: for in the centre of the eastern pediment was the massive head of the Gorgon (figs. 77 and 107).²⁹⁸ The surviving fragments reveal parts of her hair, eyelid, nose and mouth in a grimace showing her tongue, teeth and fangs. From the many images of the Gorgon on Archaic temples in Sicily, not least in the metope on temple C, it is very likely that she had wide staring eyes, as in the reconstruction in Palermo (fig. 107).²⁹⁹ So does the 'grim-faced Gorgon' not contradict the view that temple C appealed to contemporary standards of beauty?³⁰⁰ From her

²⁹⁷ See pp. 55-77 above.

²⁹⁸ Fragments of another Gorgon of similar size have been found, perhaps adorning the west pediment of temple C; that it is stylistically later than the eastern Gorgon, however, suggests it may have been a later replacement; Marconi 2007, 132.

²⁹⁹ Gabrici 1933, pl. 32.

³⁰⁰ Hom. *Il.* 11.36-7: Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις.

earliest extant appearance on a Greek temple—the Apollonion at Thermon (c.630 BCE)—the Gorgon becomes one of the most common images on Archaic temples across the Greek world.³⁰¹ Her prevalence therefore gives this question a wider significance for the aesthetic character of Archaic sacred architecture: is her image not irreconcilable with beauty?

Fear defines the Gorgon in Archaic literature.³⁰² On Athena's aegis is 'the head of the Gorgon, that fearsome [δεινοῖο] monster, fearsome and terrifying [δεινή τε σμερδνή τε]'.³⁰³ At the thought of her face, 'pale fear' (χλωρὸν δέος) envelops Odysseus.³⁰⁴ On Herakles' shield, 'great terror [φόβος] rioted on the Gorgons' fearsome [δεινοῖσι] heads'.³⁰⁵ The idea that the Gorgon performed an apotropaic function on temples cannot be justified by Archaic sources, which simply emphasise her terrifying effect.³⁰⁶ Her image did not turn away evil spirits or anyone else. What the Gorgon did was present worshippers with an archetypal image of terror. For in Greek relations with the divine, fear held an important place.

The Homeric term 'god-fearing' (θεουδής) is a mark of civilised society: those who lack fear of the gods show no respect for sacred values like

³⁰¹ For the Gorgon in Archaic architecture, see Besig 1937; Belson 1981; Marconi 2004, 221-2; Marconi 2007, 214-22.

³⁰² See Vernant 1991, 111-38.

³⁰³ Hom. *Il.* 5.741-2.

³⁰⁴ Hom. *Od.* 11.633-4.

³⁰⁵ Hes. [*Sc.*] 236-7.

³⁰⁶ That Medousa petrified those who looked into her eyes does not appear in any Archaic texts. The apotropaic theory was introduced by Jahn 1855 and developed by Rodenwaldt 1939-40 (II), 138 (on the Artemision at Kerkyra). See Belson 1981; Faraone 1992, 37. For an important challenge to the apotropaic interpretation, see Marconi 2004, 221-2; 2007, 214-22.

xenia.³⁰⁷ Fear was thus a mark of due reverence for divine power: to have ‘piety in fear’ (φόβῳ εὐσέβειαν) was an ideal for Bias of Priene, one of the Seven Sages of Archaic Greece.³⁰⁸ Like wonder, fear was also a standard response to the manifestation of the gods: to demonstrate his power, Apollo filled Krisa with radiance and ‘struck great fear [δέος] into everyone’.³⁰⁹ The household of Keleos ‘tremble with fear [δείματι]’ as they propitiate Demeter after her epiphany in the house.³¹⁰ For as Hera says, ‘gods are dangerous [to mortals] when they make themselves manifest’ (χαλεποὶ δὲ θεοὶ φαίνεσθαι ἐναργεῖς).³¹¹

The Gorgon’s fearsome image was therefore suited to Archaic temples by invoking a sense of trepidation appropriate to an encounter with the divine. The same is true for the common images on Archaic temples of other mythical beasts and ferocious animals, like sphinxes and lions.³¹²

³⁰⁷ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 6.121; 8.576; 9.176; 13.202; 19.109, 364.

³⁰⁸ Diels and Kranz 1951, 63-6: Bias, 6.17.

³⁰⁹ Hom. *Hy.* 3.447.

³¹⁰ Hom. *Hy.* 2.293. Cf. *Hy.* 5.181-3.

³¹¹ Hom. *Il.* 20.131. Cf. *Od.* 16.181-5.

³¹² See Hes. *Theog.* 326: the ‘destructive Sphinx’. For her appearance in Archaic art, see Marconi 2007 *passim*. Recent finds from Poseidon’s sanctuary at Helike have revealed a temple (c.560-550 BCE) with a pedimental Gorgon flanked by sphinxes; see Kolia 2014. Lions and leopards appeared as antefixes and in the pediments of Archaic temples e.g. the Artemision at Kerkyra; temple H on the Athenian akropolis; the Alkmaionid temple of Apollo at Delphi (fig. 56). Cf. Hes. [Sc.] 426-32: in battle with Ares, Herakles is described as ‘glaring terribly with his eyes, like a lion that has come upon an animal and, ravenously rending the hide with his strong claws, deprives it as quickly as possible of its sweet spirit: his black heart is filled with strength; glaring terribly with his eyes, lashing his sides and shoulders with his tail, he scrapes the ground with his paws, and no one looking at him would dare go near or fight with him.’ The equivalence between this passage and the pedimental lions on Archaic temples is striking: the context of the passage and the force of the analogy strongly suggest that the significance of these pedimental lions was in their fearsome appearance. Cf. *Od.* 22.401-5: Odysseus looks like a lion spattered with blood, ‘fearful to behold’ (δεινὸς δ’ εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι); Hom. *Hy.* 7.47-8.

The discovery of fragments of a wing suggest that temple C may have had sphinxes as akroteria.³¹³ Like many other Archaic temples, lion heads appeared on the eaves (fig. 78). With their roaring mouths, the lion waterspouts on temple C, like so many Archaic temples, presented another fearsome image which fulfilled both the practical function of funnelling water and an aesthetic ideal of lifelike animation: like the ‘fearsome’ and ‘wonderful beasts’ on Pandora’s headband, they appeared ‘like living beings with voices’.³¹⁴ Visual imagery may be fearsome and wonderful, therefore, just like the manifestation of the gods: Metaneira experiences an intense affective cocktail of ‘reverence, awe and pale fear’ when she perceives Demeter’s divinity for a fleeting moment.³¹⁵

If Archaic texts illustrate the general importance of fear in human relations with the gods, the prevalence of the Gorgon and other fearsome beasts on Archaic temples is its material counterpart. Perhaps it is no great surprise, therefore, that the image of Fear in the *Shield* offers a striking parallel for the Gorgon on temple C:

έν μέσσῳ δ’ ἀδάμαντος ἔην Φόβος οὐ τι φατειός,
 ἔμπαλιν ὅσσοισιν πυρὶ λαμπομένοισι δεδορκώς·
 τοῦ καὶ ὀδόντων μὲν πλήτο στόμα λευκαθεόντων,
 δεινῶν, ἀπλήτων, ἐπὶ δὲ βλοσυροῖο μετώπου
 δεινὴ Ἴρις πεπότητο κορύσσουσα κλόνον ἀνδρῶν.³¹⁶

³¹³ Gabrici 1933, 198, pl. 33.

³¹⁴ Hes. *Theog.* 581-4. On Greek lion-fountains, see Blétry 2001. Cf. Pind. *Paeon* 8.70-85, where the temple’s golden akroteria sing; see pp. 270-1 below.

³¹⁵ *Hom. Hy.* 2.190: αἰδώς τε σέβας τε ἰδὲ χλωρὸν δέος.

³¹⁶ Hes. [*Sc.*] 144-8.

‘In the middle of the adamant was Fear, unspeakable, staring back with eyes shining like fire, his mouth filled with white teeth, fearsome, terrible, and over his hairy forehead hovered fearsome Strife, preparing for the battle-rout of men’.

The equivalence of this portrait to the Gorgon on temple C—the eyes staring back, the hairy forehead and mouth full of terrible teeth—underlines her association with fear. It is also noteworthy that Fear (Phobos) was a prominent deity in the Selinuntine pantheon. An inscription from temple G at Selinous, dated c.460-409 BCE, lists the deities responsible for a military victory of the Selinuntines, including Fear (Phobos).³¹⁷ The final part of the inscription states that the names of these deities were engraved on a golden shield deposited ‘in the Apollonion’, very likely temple C. Although fear was generally important for Greek conceptions of sacred experience, the fact that Phobos was worshipped at Selinous highlights its local pertinence. By the same token, although the Gorgon on temple C adhered to a common trend in Archaic temple decoration, it seems her fearsome image resonated all the more with local religious sensibilities and expectations.

The question, then, is whether this frightening image of the Gorgon interfered with the temple’s aspiration to beauty in its grandeur, orderly form, and intricate, colourful and animated decoration. Were the ferocious beasts and fearsome monsters on Archaic temples reconcilable with Archaic conceptions of beauty? Archaic texts show that they were: recall,

³¹⁷ *IG* XIV 268; Calder 1963. Phobos’ association with military victory is already attested in Homer: see *Lfgre* s.v. Phobos 4.

for example, how ‘beauty wafted over all’ the ‘fearsome beasts’ on Pandora’s headband.³¹⁸ But it is not simply that beauty and fear were compatible in Archaic aesthetic discourse. The important point is that their combination in the imagery of the temple was theologically appropriate and meaningful in the ritual context of the sanctuary. The image of the Gorgon ‘glaring terribly’ (δεινὸν δερκομένη) aimed to situate worshippers in an attitude of reverence and fear appropriate for an encounter with a god, which, as Archaic poetry shows, could be a terrifying experience.³¹⁹ The beauty of the gods in epiphanies could be terrifying too. Anchises ‘was frightened’ (τάρβησέν) and averted his eyes when he saw Aphrodite’s ‘immortal beauty’ (κάλλος... ἄμβροτον).³²⁰ So, too, Metaneira was paralysed, apoplectic with fear, when Demeter fully revealed her divinity and ‘beauty wafted all around her’ (περί τ’ ἀμφί τε κάλλος ἄητο).³²¹

If beauty, wonder and fear were common aspects of divine manifestation to mortals, it seems entirely fitting that the temple, which framed and anticipated an encounter with the god within, should try to evoke the same kind of experience by appealing to contemporary ideas and expectations of beauty, wonder and fear. The form and imagery of temple C, like many others, incorporated beautiful, wonderful and fearsome elements. Like Metaneira’s ‘reverence, awe and pale fear’ when

³¹⁸ Hes. *Theog.* 582-3. Cf. Aesch. *Isthmiastai* 1-21: the satyrs’ images are ‘beautifully-painted’ *kosmos* for Poseidon but also ‘a restrainer of travellers, who will stop visitors in their tracks with his fearsome (glare)’ (ἐμπόρων κωλύτορ[α, ὅ[ς γ’] ἐπισχήσει κελεύθου τοὺς ξένο[υς] φό[βον βλέπων).

³¹⁹ Hom. *Il.* 11.36-7.

³²⁰ Hom. *Hy.* 5. 174-5, 181-2.

³²¹ Hom. *Hy.* 2.276. Cf. Hom. *Od.* 16.178-9. See Petridou 2015, 37-8.

she first saw Demeter in her doorway, the temple aimed at an aesthetic and affective intensity—a ‘vividness’ (ἐναργεῖα) of form and feeling—suited to a meeting with the divine. The first chapter of this thesis showed how Archaic poets emphasise the effects gods have when they appear to mortals. In particular, gods use their beauty to affect humans in certain ways, drawing on the power of beauty to exercise their agency. It appears that the imagery of temple C, like many other Archaic temples, also placed the accent on affect. For as Archaic poets show, it is in those heightened moments of experience—in wonder, awe, desire, delight and fear—that mortals come closest to the gods.

Its size, form and decoration made temple C an outstanding focus of attention in the sanctuary, like the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia. Unlike the latter, however, temple C, and later temple D, were in the heart of the city, aligned on the east-west axis of the city’s southern street grid (fig. 58). Temples G, F and E on the eastern hill of Selinous later adopted the same parallel alignment. Similarly at Metapontion, temples A and B were oriented to adhere to the city’s street grid; so, too, the Apollonion and Athenaion at Syracuse.³²² Like these other examples, the correspondence shows how temple C was integrated into the urban system at Selinous, ratifying its ‘model of order’.³²³ On a civic level, therefore, temple C

³²² See Mertens 1996b, 328; Di Vita 1996, 279, 288-9.

³²³ Mertens 1996b, 328. Cf. Marconi 2007, 74.

embodied the concept of *kosmos* in two senses: at once an ‘ornament’ for the city and a grand affirmation of its ‘order’ with the gods at its centre.³²⁴

The size, aesthetic distinction and conspicuous location of temple C ensured it was ‘easily recognised’ (ἀρίγνωτος) in the visual landscape of Selinous. The political aesthetics of other Archaic temples would suggest that this was a source of pride and prestige for those responsible for temple C’s construction, whoever they were. Selinous was apparently ruled by tyrants in the sixth century and perhaps it was one of them; knowledge of the city’s political history is too fragmentary to be more specific.³²⁵ What seems clear, at least, is that the temple made a powerful political statement. On close inspection, the Doric order of the temple and its metopes of Perseus, Herakles and Orestes affirmed Selinous’ Dorian identity. Visible for miles from land and sea, moreover, temple C testified to the city’s piety, prosperity and divine blessings. ‘For’, as Stesichoros says, ‘a city is greatly en[hanced] when god bestows blessings upon it: there’s no prestige or attainment for mortals beyond divine allocation.’³²⁶ At the same time, the fact that the temple was ‘easily recognised’ in its urban environment—commensurate yet bigger and more beautiful than the vernacular buildings that surrounded it—made a powerful theological statement. Such visual and aesthetic distinction was both appropriate for a deity envisaged as bigger and more beautiful than humans and integral to the temple’s role as a pleasing gift, an object of *charis* for the god.

³²⁴ For the sanctuaries as *kosmos* for a city, see Pl. *Leg.* 6.761b-c; *Hesp. Suppl.* 15, no. 16.5-9, 14-18; *I. Eleusis* 93; *SEG* 25.226.40-2; Mikalson 2016, 260.

³²⁵ See Dunbabin 1948, 328ff; Marconi 2007, 66-9.

³²⁶ Stesichoros fr. 248 (Kelly/Finglass). Cf. Simon. fr. 526: οὔτις ἄνευ θεῶν ἰ ἀρετὰν λάβεν, οὐ πόλις, οὐ βροτός.

Beauty and the Archaic revolution in sacred architecture

The case-studies of this chapter have explored the aesthetic character of two temples in depth to build a clear picture of each and highlight their idiosyncrasies, owing to differences in historical context, physical environment and architectural traditions. If case-studies inform our understanding of architectural choices at particular times and places, the emergence in the Archaic period of common features in sacred architecture across local boundaries demands an explanation that transcends local boundaries. So what were these common features?

First, it is important to note that there were different levels of commonality in sacred architecture. At the most local level were distinctive architectural phenomena in a particular community, like the Corinthians' use of limestone for the seventh century temples at Temple Hill and Isthmia because of the stone's local abundance and the long Corinthian tradition of using it.³²⁷ Then there might be certain commonalities at a wider regional level, like the ornate terracotta roof systems of northwest Greek communities in Aitolia and Kerkyra at the end of the seventh and early sixth century. Or the frontal emphasis, long cellae and shallow adyta of Archaic temples in Sicily.³²⁸ Such regional styles were constantly changing, due to local innovations and the adoption and adaptation of architectural elements and technologies from elsewhere. For Archaic sacred architecture, the picture that emerges is an evolving patchwork of

³²⁷ See Brookes 1981; Rhodes 2003; Morgan 2017, 194-5.

³²⁸ On northwest roof systems, see Winter 1993, 117-33; Sapirstein 2012; Sapirstein 2016, 54-5. On west Greek architecture, see n. 208 above. On regionalism in Greek architecture, see Winter 1990; 1993.

local and regional architectural styles. In the early sixth century, the emergence of the Doric order and its adoption by far-flung Dorian communities adds to that picture a transregional architectural style defined by ethnicity.³²⁹

But it is also true that during the Archaic period, especially in the sixth century, certain features became common for Greek temples across regional and ethnic boundaries: the use of stone, terracotta roof tiles, large size, and colourful decoration with figures and architectural ornaments. In short, what is often dubbed the ‘monumentalisation’ of sacred architecture. To be sure, we must not efface the significant differences between temples that employed these features. But by the same token, it is important to scrutinise their commonalities, not just at the local and regional levels, but at a panhellenic level too. As a recent volume on material *koinai* emphasises, it is not enough to identify shared phenomena in a particular area of material culture and to pass on.³³⁰ What matters for understanding their cultural significance is interrogating how and why things became popular and to what effect.

The mobility of craftsmen was evidently essential for the emergence of common traits in temple architecture across local boundaries. Unlike other aspects of material culture, temples did not move; architectural knowledge, practices and styles could not spread without people, without

³²⁹ See n. 209 above.

³³⁰ Handberg and Gadoulou 2017b.

craftsmen travelling in search of work.³³¹ Faced with the task of building a colossal dipteral temple on marshy ground (c.560 BCE onwards), the Ephesians turned to someone who understood the challenges firsthand: Theodoros, architect of the first dipteral Heraion (c.575 BCE onwards) on neighbouring Samos.³³² Since a team of skilled craftsmen was also needed, it is reasonable to suppose that similarities between the Heraion and its close successors at Ephesos and Didyma—like their colossal size, dipteral peristyles and relative measurements of their stylobates—suggest that at least some of the same hands worked on each.³³³ Another example from the other side of the Greek world is the generation of Sicilian temples which clearly took the Apollonion at Syracuse as their blueprint.³³⁴ The material record of regional schools of architecture are the vestiges of regional networks of craftsmen. There were bigger networks too: it is likely, for example, that the Ionic style of the Athenaion in Syracuse and the correspondence between temple G at Selinous and the Apollonion at Didyma reflect the movement of craftsmen from one end of the Greek world to the other.³³⁵

³³¹ See Hom. *Od.* 17.382-6: carpenters (among others) are travelling *demiourgoi*, ‘public workers’. Different circuits of people may have affected the construction of temples in different ways, e.g. people who made and traded roof tiles, people who produced raw building materials, architects and masons who built the temples etc.

³³² See Senseney 2016, 65.

³³³ See n. 207 above.

³³⁴ E.g. the Olympieion at Syracuse; temple A at Megara Hyblaia; temple B at Gela; temples Y and C at Selinous. See Orsi 1918, 703-4; Mertens 1996b; Marconi 2016, 78. For travelling Corinthian craftsmen and the development of the Doric order, see Scahill 2017.

³³⁵ See Mertens 1996b, 327; Barletta 1983. For networks in the Greek world, see Malkin 2011; Taylor and Vlassopoulos 2015.

Wandering craftsmen help us understand the process by which architectural knowledge and practices spread and wider commonalities emerged. But they do not explain the values and desires behind the process: they show how but not why certain architectural phenomena became popular. That only certain craftsmen were available for a project, who only knew how to build a certain way, presumably played a part in the dissemination of common features. But this will not suffice as an explanation: it stands to reason that if aspects of temple design and decoration were not valued and considered suitable to the building's function, then they would fade out of use. Conversely, features which became common testify to their perceived value and suitability to function. So why was large size, use of stone, terracotta roof tiles, and colourful decoration perceived as valuable and suitable to the function of temples?

The increasing use of stone and roof tiles in the sixth century was no doubt indebted to their structural advantages over mudbrick and thatch—their strength, durability and greater resistance to fire.³³⁶ Stone was also used in vernacular architecture in parts of the Archaic Greek world. The durability of stone and roof tiles, however, made them particularly apposite for temples, both to protect structures of special significance for the community, and because of their dedication to the 'immortal' (ἀθάνατοι) gods. The permanence of the gods and their 'imperishable' homes in Archaic literature suggests that the growing preference for durable materials contained an element of theological propriety: that a temple was 'imperishable' (ἄφθιτος) in structure and appearance was entirely

³³⁶ See Barletta 2016, 35-7; Sapirstein 2016; pp. 174-6 above.

appropriate for its imperishable divine recipient. Roof tiles had an added decorative purpose, providing a focus of decorative embellishment on temples, while their interlocking forms embodied the structural and aesthetic standards of order (κόσμος) and arrangement (τάξις). Since they were almost exclusively employed on religious buildings, tile roofs became an important distinguishing feature between sacred and vernacular architecture during the Archaic period, contributing to the visual definition of temples as meaningful and different from other buildings. The perceived value and suitability of stone and roof tiles for temples appears to have been practical, theological and aesthetic. Suitability to the practical function of temples cannot explain, however, why large size and colourful decoration became common.

Archaic temples performed various functions in different sanctuaries: store-houses of offerings, homes of divine effigies, archives of civic documents, ritual dining halls and places for specific cult ceremonies.³³⁷ And yet temples were not essential for Greek worship of the gods: sanctuaries existed without them because all that was really needed was an altar. From a practical perspective, temples were largely superfluous—a remarkable fact given the time, labour and resources invested in their construction. Even in cases where a building was deemed necessary, say, to house a statue of the god or store offerings or whatever else, no practical function can explain why bigger and bigger temples were built

³³⁷ See e.g. Burkert 1988; Alcock and Osborne 1994; Miller 1996; Mazarakis Ainian 1997; Spawforth 2006; Leybold 2008, esp. 202-6; Wilson Jones 2014, 21-30.

during the Archaic period or why they were lavishly decorated. Rather, the value and suitability of these features depended on two things.³³⁸

First, the theological foundation on which all temples were built and which this chapter has emphasised: temples were gifts to the gods and therefore embedded in the framework of *charis* between gods and humans. Second, their political character: given their public role in the religious life of communities, the scale of their investment and their conspicuousness, Archaic temples were politically charged, whether as symbols of a community's identity, markers of its territory or vehicles for the pride and prestige of the community and individuals involved in their construction.

The political character of temples opened the door to competitive emulation through temple-building between different communities.³³⁹ As the colossal temples at Samos, Ephesos and Didyma suggest, the desire of communities to emulate or outdo their political rivals in the pious business of temple construction was indubitably a driving force behind the emergence of common architectural phenomena. Competition is not the whole story, however, for in some cases, temple decoration might have a unifying effect. Temple C (c.600-580 BCE) in the urban sanctuary of Metapontion, an Achaian colony in South Italy, was adorned with a terracotta frieze of a procession. Elements of the same frieze, perhaps even from the same mould, have been found at the nearby Achaian colonies of Siris and Sybaris. As well as the movement of craftsmen and materials, the finds are 'indicative of the extent to which the Hellenic cults

³³⁸ Cf. Wilson Jones 2014, 24-7

³³⁹ See pp. 206-7 above.

helped to bind and unify the western Greek world despite the complexity and extension of the existing native society'.³⁴⁰ To be sure, the peculiar demands of colonial existence gave this unifying capacity a special significance for these Greek communities in South Italy. But the point stands that the emergence of common features in temples could be motivated by competitive and/or collaborative designs: religious architecture helped define political identity, whether to stake claims to prestige, superiority or common bonds of cult and ethnicity.

From c.660 BCE, greater exposure to Egyptian architecture seems to have intensified Greek efforts at architectural grandeur, which were already well underway.³⁴¹ However practically unnecessary, the large size and elaborate decoration of a temple made it exceptional, both in appearance and in the time, labour and resources necessary to build it. Such exceptionality bolstered claims to political prestige and authority, both within the community and on a wider stage. What Archaic literature suggests is that the enlargement of temples and their decoration had aesthetic values at their core.

The importance of grandeur in Archaic representations of architectural beauty casts the Archaic revolution in the size of temples in an aesthetic light: the construction of temples on an ever bigger scale aimed at

³⁴⁰ Mertens 1996b, 319.

³⁴¹ The pharaoh Psammetichos I hired Greek mercenaries in c.660 BCE, which apparently marked the beginning of more intense contacts and exchange between Greeks and Egyptians. See Hdt. 2.152-4; cf. 4.152.1. Large eighth century temples preceded greater contact with Egypt. On the relation between Egyptian and early Greek architecture, see Coulton 1977, 32-53; Bietak 2001; Hahn 2001; Barletta 2016, 41-2.

exceptionality in size and beauty.³⁴² By transcending the expected limits of size, temples might equal the heights and beauties of the heroic past and become real ‘wonders to behold’. For as Greek literary and epigraphic sources show, the aesthetic value and judgement of temples were deemed vital to their efficacy in prestige politics. If a temple was ‘beautiful and big’ (καλός τε μέγας τε), it would stand out all the more, an object of admiration and an ‘easily recognised’ (ἀρίγνωτος) symbol of the pride and prestige of those associated with it. In modern discourse, the enlargement of temples in the Archaic period is a mark of their ‘monumentalisation’. According to Archaic attitudes to architecture, the enlargement of temples was a mark of their beautification for the mutual benefit of gods and humans: to inspire human wonder, admiration and prestige on the one hand, and divine pleasure on the other.

The aesthetic significance of grandeur intensified its value and suitability for the political and theological character of Archaic temples. As gifts to the gods, temples fell within the remit of *charis*, that social and aesthetic principle which shaped human relations with the divine and gave the ‘beauty’ (χάρις) of all kinds of offerings an inherent value in evoking divine ‘pleasure’ and ‘favour’ (χάρις). In this respect, temples were no different from musical performances for the gods, as Pindar recognised:

κεκρότηται χρυσέα κρηπίς ἱεραῖσιν ἀοιδαῖς·

εἶα τειχίζωμεν ἤδη ποικίλον

κόσμον αὐδάεντα λόγων.³⁴³

³⁴² See p. 189-95 above.

³⁴³ Pind. fr. 194.1-3.

‘The golden foundation is wrought for holy songs. Come now, let us build an intricate speaking ornament of words’.

Thousands of years before the German Romantics coined the idea that architecture is ‘frozen music’, Pindar here presents music as singing architecture.³⁴⁴ The architectonic analogy lies not just in the ‘foundation’ and song they ‘build’, but in its *poikilos kosmos*, its ‘intricate ornament’, characteristic of Archaic temples. The decoration of Archaic temples varied significantly and satisfied different cultic, political and genealogical demands in different contexts. On the other hand, common features emerged across the Greek world: the use of white stucco; polychromy; intricate geometric and floral ornaments; frontal figures; and the presence of the Gorgon, mythical beasts and ferocious animals. The aesthetic predilection for brightness and *poikilia* in Archaic literature suggests why the use of white stucco and the colourful decoration of architectural elements, ornaments and figural decoration became prolific. Their prevalence bears witness to the significance of contemporary ideas of beauty for the decoration of Archaic temples across the Greek world.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁴ Cf. Pind. *Paean* 8; *Ol.* 6.1-3. On architecture as frozen music in antiquity, see Porter 2010, 436-44. On the ‘frozen music’ of the German Romantics, see Saleh Pascha 2004. On the analogy between architecture and rhetoric, see Thomas 2014.

³⁴⁵ Radiance is also one of the most common qualities referred to in Sumerian ceremonial temple names. E.g. ‘House of the Radiance of Heaven’, a temple of Nuska at Nippur; ‘House Clad in Awesome Splendour and Radiance’, a temple of Ištar. See George 1993. Assyrian royal inscriptions suggest that, like Greek temples, aesthetic splendour aimed at divine pleasure: an inscription commemorating king Shalmaneser I’s (1274-1245 BCE) reconstruction of the Assur temple states, ‘[M]ay he (the god Assur) see the shining works of that temple and rejoice’ (Winter 2000, 28).

If such aesthetic aspirations were significant for the political value and dedicatory purpose of temples, they were also germane to their ritual role in framing encounters with the divine. Whether they housed divine effigies or not, it remains true that temples were in places where humans expected to come into close contact with the gods. In Archaic literature, beauty is a defining mark of the gods when they reveal themselves to mortals: as chapter one showed, the ever-lasting beauty of the gods visually manifests their ‘immortal and ageless’ nature. Their association with beauty is such that even on occasions when gods are not present, the experience of extraordinary beauty can provide humans with a medium for relating to the divine—Telemachos’ wonder, delight and awe at Menelaos’ palace brings to mind ‘the court of Olympian Zeus’.³⁴⁶ In their aesthetic character and development—in their grandeur (μέγεθος), colourful decoration (ποικιλία), visual order (κόσμος) and arrangement (τάξις)—it appears that Archaic temples sought to make the experience of architectural beauty a medium for engaging with the gods in the real world of ritual life. The beauty of a temple, which framed a ritual encounter with the divine, might echo the intense aesthetic experience of epiphany sung of by poets.

It is in this context of epiphany that the common appearance of the Gorgon and other beasts on Archaic temples makes sense: they inject into the imagery of Archaic temples an element of fear suited to divine encounters. In Greek terms, such images were *deinoi*, ‘fearsome’, ‘terrible’, ‘powerful’—like gods themselves.³⁴⁷ The frontal faces of Gorgons

³⁴⁶ See p. 184 above.

³⁴⁷ For *deinos* and the gods, see Hes. *Theog.* 138, 155, 759, 925 etc.; Hom. *Il.* 1.300; 2.321; 4.514; 5.439 etc.; *Od.* 7.41; 7.246; 10.136 etc.; Hom. *Hy.* 3.400-1; *Hy.* 7.47-8.; *Hy.* 11.2 etc.

and others beasts, ‘glaring terribly’ (δεινὸν δερκομένη), heightened the affective character of Archaic temples by confronting worshippers with the terrifying power of the gods.³⁴⁸ Frontality was also common for images of gods and heroes on Archaic temples: often they stare out, their presence palpable as they engage worshippers directly like living beings. The frontal figures of Archaic temples aspire to a vivid presence (ἐναργεῖα) which, like the integration of beautiful, wonderful and fearsome imagery, echoes the character of divine epiphanies in Archaic texts. The decoration of many Archaic temples therefore appealed to an aesthetic and affective intensity appropriate to their role in managing the ritual encounter between gods and humans. Like their large size and use of roof tiles, the decorative embellishment of Archaic temples set them apart, underlining their contrast with vernacular architecture and marking them out as culturally significant and politically prestigious in a manner appropriate to their divine recipients.

From the eighth century on, the concentration of communal attention and economic resources into public sanctuaries precipitated among the most significant changes to the visual landscapes of religious life in any period of Greek history.³⁴⁹ An essential effect was to sharpen the visual distinction between the landscapes of sanctuaries and the rest of society. Amid a variety of cultural, economic and political factors, the transformation of sacred architecture in the Archaic period, through changes in the size, form, materials and decoration of temples, was an evolving

³⁴⁸ See Hes. [Sc.] 160, 262, 426, 430, 445.

³⁴⁹ Snodgrass 1980, 54-65; Osborne 1996, 81-104; Mazarakis Ainian 1997; Spawforth 2006.

exercise in visual theology.³⁵⁰ In Archaic literature, superior height and physical beauty commonly distinguish gods from humans.³⁵¹ During the Archaic period, the architectural landscape of many sanctuaries came to mirror and reinforce that understanding of the relationship between human and divine. Just as in myth the superior height and beauty of the gods reflects and asserts their hierarchical relation to mortals, so in sacred architecture, beauty and grandeur performed a parallel function in visually defining, distinguishing and elevating the gods' homes above the rest of human society. Sacred architecture became 'outstanding' (ἐκπρεπής) and 'easily recognised' (ἀρίγνωτος) in a way that echoed and affirmed a popular conception of the gods as bigger and more beautiful than humans.

The Archaic revolution in sacred architecture aspired to and integrated the value of beauty into the fabric of its political, cultural and religious being. The perceived agency of beauty—its power to please, amaze and inspire admiration—underpinned its political and theological value. The question that follows is what impact this revolution in sacred architecture had on religious life. What effect, if any, did these profound architectural changes have on the character of religious experience in sanctuaries?

Although it is reasonable to suppose that radical changes in sacred architecture had profound effects, assessing the impact of architectural change is not easy. One problem, demonstrated by Plutarch's tour party in Delphi, whose different members react differently to certain dedications, is

³⁵⁰ On visual theology in Greek culture, see Osborne 2009; Platt 2011, 31-76; Gaifman 2016.

³⁵¹ See chapter 1 above.

that worshippers' responses to a given structure would have been as diverse as the people themselves.³⁵² If individual responses varied (and because we do not have access to the overwhelming majority of them), then what was affected by architectural change must be understood as that which individuals shared: the broader cultural values and expectations which conditioned the character of those individual responses and experiences.

Archaic texts provide an essential resource for understanding how these values and expectations changed over time and therefore what broad cultural and cognitive impact the Archaic revolution in sacred architecture might have had. This revolution did not happen over night; it was a process of architectural transformation which developed across the Hellenic world over centuries, from the late eighth to the early fifth century, whose effects would have evolved as well. The question, then, is whether we can discern in Archaic texts significant changes in how temples, sanctuaries and attitudes to them are represented, and whether these changes correspond with the archaeological record. To be sure, Archaic texts are not simple reflections of contemporary life. They are oblique witnesses to their times, reflecting, refracting and omitting aspects of their contemporary world according to their poetic character.³⁵³ It is the general trajectory of the representational habits of texts through time, and how this trajectory relates to contemporary historical conditions, that offers perhaps

³⁵² Plut. *Mor.* 384-438, esp. 399f-400d. Cf. Scott 2016, 141. On heuristic problems with 'the viewer' of sculpture, see Hölscher 2009; 2015, 678-9.

³⁵³ Cf. Lane Fox 2008, 46.

our best insight into how changes in Archaic sacred architecture affected cultural ideas and expectations of sacred experience in sanctuaries.

The earliest references to temples are in the epics of Hesiod and Homer, from the late eighth or early seventh century. In the work of both poets, the lack of aesthetic interest in temples is noteworthy. Hesiod mentions temples once when he tells how Aphrodite made Phaethon ‘the overseer in her holy temples’.³⁵⁴ In Homer, temples have various roles: divine residences; gifts for gods; places where offerings are dedicated and stored; and one of the foundations of a political community in one instance.³⁵⁵ It is their role as store-houses of offerings which explains their qualification as ‘rich’ (πίων). Eurylochos says that he and the rest of Odysseus’ crew will ‘build a rich temple [πίονα νηόν] for Hyperion, and fill it with many fine and delightful objects [ἀγάλματα πολλὰ καὶ ἐσθλά]’.³⁵⁶ The temple is a gift like the objects dedicated inside, but unlike them—whose description as ‘objects of delight’ (ἀγάλματα) suggests their aesthetic value—the temple is not aesthetically distinguished.³⁵⁷ Similarly in *Iliad* 6, Homer draws aesthetic attention to the ‘most beautiful’ (κάλλιστος) robe offered Athena by the Trojans, not to the temple in which they offer it, whose appearance remains unclear.³⁵⁸ Chryses calls on Apollo to grant his prayer if he has ‘ever roofed a pleasing shrine

³⁵⁴ Hes. *Theog.* 990-1: ζαθέοις ἐνὶ νηοῖς ἢ νηοπόλον.

³⁵⁵ See Hom. *Il.* 2.546-51; 5.445-8; 6.297-311; 7.81-3; *Od.* 6.7-10; 7.80-1. For more on Homeric temples, see Mazarakis Ainian 2011.

³⁵⁶ Hom. *Od.* 12.346-7.

³⁵⁷ On *agalmata* as gifts for gods, see 286-306 below.

³⁵⁸ Hom. *Il.* 6.293-311.

[χαρίεντ'... νηόν]' for the god.³⁵⁹ Something can be *charieis*—‘pleasing’, ‘attractive’—for any reason, and it is possible Chryses evokes the shrine’s ‘pleasing’ appearance.³⁶⁰ Yet it may also be a ‘pleasing shrine’ simply because Apollo likes receiving gifts. That the description is in a prayer, invoking Apollo’s favour (*charis*) in return for Chryses’ pleasing acts of piety, in fact makes the latter sense more likely.

Homer's lack of visual and aesthetic interest in temples is striking for several reasons. First, because everything from tableware to gods is aestheticised in his epics, and second, because other forms of architecture are too, like the palaces of Paris, Menelaos and Alkinoos.³⁶¹ Other aspects of sacred spaces are also aestheticised, like ‘the delightful [ἀγλαόν] grove of Athena’ and ‘the most beautiful [περικαλλής] altar of Zeus’.³⁶² Temples are conspicuous by their absence from this kind of attention. The reason is perhaps chronological. When the epics were probably composed around the end of the eighth or beginning of the seventh century, some large temples had been built, like those at Halieis, Eretria and Ano Mazaraki, but they were few and far between. The general picture is not one that, as yet, significantly distinguishes sacred structures

³⁵⁹ Hom. *Il.* 1.39.

³⁶⁰ For *charieis* as ‘aesthetically pleasing’, see Hom. *Il.* 6.90; 16.798; 18.24. Cf. Latacz 1966, 99; Beekes 2010, s.v. χαίρω; Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

³⁶¹ On Homeric beauty, see Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

³⁶² Hom. *Od.* 6.291; *Il.* 8.238, 249. On the aesthetic significance of ἀγλαός, see Day 2010, 91-4; Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

from vernacular architecture and makes them points of aesthetic focus.³⁶³ Early forerunners in this process were the Corinthian temples on Temple Hill and Isthmia, from the first half of the seventh century, perhaps its second quarter. Important changes in temple architecture were underway around the time and especially soon after the epics were composed. In Hesiod and Homer, the aesthetic character of natural phenomena, like ‘delightful’ groves and ‘beautiful-flowing’ springs and rivers, is portrayed as vital to their conception in religious terms.³⁶⁴ This is not the case for the way they represent temples. Insofar as Hesiod and Homer echo the cultural values and expectations of their times, what their poetry suggests is that temples in the late eighth and early seventh century were significant in political and religious life, but not characterised by their aesthetic appeal.³⁶⁵ This appears to have changed in the wake of developments in the second half of the seventh century and beginning of the sixth.

This was a period of efflorescence in Greek sacred architecture, exemplified by the Apollonion at Thermon (c.630-620 BCE), the Heraion at Mon Repos on Kerkyra (c.610 BCE) and the Heraion at Olympia (c.600 BCE).³⁶⁶ The size of temples expanded significantly during this period and

³⁶³ Indubitably reflecting his heroic theme and Mycenaean inheritance, Homer’s focus on palatial architecture may also have contemporary resonance: Alkinoos’ garden and palace seem to draw inspiration from the Mesopotamian palaces which Greeks encountered from the tenth century, with added frequency from the ninth and eighth centuries. See Cook 2004.

³⁶⁴ For beautiful springs and rivers, cf. Hes. *Theog.* 339; *Op.* 737-41; Hes. fr. 17.18; Hom. *Il.* 2.752; 12.33; 21. 352, 354, 361; 22.147; *Od.* 6.85; 10.107; 11.238-52; 17.206; *Hom. Hy.* 3.240-1, 300, 380-5; Archil. frs. 21-2; Alc. fr. 4a; Alc. fr. 45; Stesichorus S89.5; Anac. fr. 36b.1; Theogn. 1088 etc. For beautiful groves and trees, cf. Hes. *Theog.* 129-30; Hom. *Il.* 2.307; 2.506; *Od.* 6.291; *Hom. Hy.* 5.97, 264-72 etc.

³⁶⁵ Cf. Burkert 1987, 88.

³⁶⁶ See Mazarakis Ainian 2017.

their use of roof tiles spread widely, introducing new possibilities for the decoration of temples with elaborate antefixes and akroteria.³⁶⁷ The practice of lavishly decorating temples with colourful architectural ornaments and figural imagery became established. The basic forms of the Doric order took shape.³⁶⁸ As attested by the Apollonion at Syracuse (c.590-580 BCE), the Artemision at Kerkyra (c.580 BCE) and the Oikos of the Naxians on Delos (c.580 BCE), there were temples across the Hellenic world by the first quarter of the sixth century which were clearly distinguished from vernacular architecture by their size, form, materials and decoration.

The *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* provides a hitherto unrecognised clue to a crucial shift in attitudes precipitated by these profound architectural changes, which occurred during the period between the Homeric epics in the late eighth or early seventh century and the composition of the *Hymn* in the sixth. There is much debate about how and when the *Hymn* was composed, namely, whether it was composed of two originally separate parts—the first narrating Apollo’s birth on Delos, the second his establishment of the Delphic oracle—or composed as a unified whole from the beginning.³⁶⁹ What appears to be an oblique reference to the First Sacred War at the end of the *Hymn* suggests a *terminus post quem* of c.

³⁶⁷ On Archaic roof systems, see Winter 1993; Sapirstein 2008; 2016.

³⁶⁸ See Coulton 1977; Barletta 2001; Wilson Jones 2014.

³⁶⁹ On the *Hymn*’s composition and date, see Förstel 1979, 20-62; Janko 1982, 99-132; Clay 1989, 17-94; Burkert 2001, 189-97; Aloni 2009; Richardson 2009; Richardson 2010, 13-15; Faraone 2018.

585 BCE.³⁷⁰ Plausible evidence for a *terminus ante quem* of c.540-530 BCE is an Athenian neck-amphora, whose decoration implies knowledge of the *Hymn* by evoking its important elements in a single image: Apollo holds his lyre sitting on top of his oracular tripod, beneath which are his quiver and bow, and beside which are two dolphins and two female figures, most likely Artemis and Leto.³⁷¹ Though certainty is not possible, these and other sources make a date of composition for the *Hymn* c. 585-540 BCE the most attractive hypothesis.³⁷²

The latter half of the *Hymn* narrates how Apollo went ‘in search of a place for his oracle for humankind’.³⁷³ Eventually he comes to the spring Telphousa, to whom Apollo declares,

Τελφοῦς' ἐνθάδε δὴ φρονέω περικαλλέα νηὸν
 ἀνθρώπων τεύξαι χρηστήριον, ...
 Ὡς εἰπὼν διέθηκε θεμέλια Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 εὐρέα καὶ μάλα μακρὰ διηνεκές.³⁷⁴

³⁷⁰ See *Hom. Hy.* 3.540-3. As Richardson 2010, 15 points out, ‘Apollo’s journey from Olympus to Crisa via Thessaly, Euboea, and Boeotia corresponds quite closely... with the list of northern states of the Amphictionic League’, who took control of Delphi after Crisa’s mistreatment of pilgrims which precipitated the First Sacred War. On the First Sacred War, see Davies 1994.

³⁷¹ Louvre C 10619. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 3.131-2: ‘may the lyre be dear to me and the curved bow; and I will prophecy to humans the infallible will of Zeus’. Apollo’s epiphany as a dolphin is at 399ff. See Shapiro 1989, 58-9, pl. 29a-b; Clay 2009, 9.

³⁷² See Clay 2009, 5-10; Richardson 2009; 2010, 13-15.

³⁷³ *Hom. Hy.* 3.214-15.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 247-55.

“Telpousa, here I am minded to build a most beautiful temple as an oracle for humankind...”. So he spoke and Phoibos Apollo laid out the foundations in broad and very long unbroken lines’.

The beauty and bigness of Apollo’s temple are repeated elsewhere in the *Hymn* and mark an important difference from Homer’s lack of visual and aesthetic interest in temples—a difference indebted, it seems, to the profound changes in sacred architecture in the period between Homer and the *Hymn*.³⁷⁵

The effect these changes had on the character and expectations of sacred experience in sanctuaries is suggested by Telpousa’s response to Apollo. Disgruntled by Apollo’s imposition, the nymph inveigles him to go elsewhere on the grounds that,

πημανέει σ’ αἰεὶ κτύπος ἵππων ὠκείων
 ἀρδόμενοι τ’ οὐρήες ἐμῶν ἱερῶν ἀπὸ πηγέων·
 ἔνθα τις ἀνθρώπων βουλήσεται εἰσοράσθαι
 ἄρματά τ’ εὐποίητα καὶ ὠκυπόδων κτύπον ἵππων
 ἢ νηὸν τε μέγαν καὶ κτήματα πόλλ’ ἐνεόντα.³⁷⁶

‘you will always be bothered by the clatter of racehorses and mules watered in my holy springs; here mortals will want to gaze at the well-built chariots and the clatter of racehorses, rather than at your big temple and many possessions inside.’

³⁷⁵ See *Hom. Hy.* 3.258, 266, 287, 294-5. Cf. *Hy.* 2.270.

³⁷⁶ *Hom. Hy.* 3.262-6.

Telphousa's argument is that racehorses and chariots will distract worshippers' attention from what matters when they visit Apollo's sanctuary: that is, 'to gaze', 'look in admiration' (εἰσοπάσθαι) at his 'big temple and many possessions inside'.³⁷⁷ Marvelling at his temple and votives is presented as an expected and defining feature of visiting the god's sanctuary. More than that, it is an aspect of sacred experience which, in the narrative of the *Hymn*, is so important that it becomes the *raison d'être* for the location of Apollo's sanctuary at Delphi, rather than by Telphousa's streams.

In both the description of the temple and its role in sacred experience, the *Hymn* differs from earlier representations and signals an important change. If Apollo's 'big' and 'most beautiful' temple reflects the transformation of sacred architecture in the seventh and early sixth centuries, Telphousa's words point to a corresponding cognitive transformation. The sanctuary has become a place defined by the visual spectacle and aesthetic intensity of its man-made structures, where the affective experience of marvelling at architectural beauty has become integral to the experience of the sacred.³⁷⁸ Aesthetic interest in sacred topography already appears in Hesiod and Homer, though it pertains to natural phenomena.³⁷⁹ What this passage suggests is that the aesthetic character of sacred experience in sanctuaries was intensified by the development of sacred architecture from the early seventh century to the

³⁷⁷ See LSJ⁹ s.v. εἰσοπάω (2).

³⁷⁸ For Mesopotamian temples, the importance of admiration is well-attested from the third millennium BCE; see Garelli 1990; Winter 2000, esp. 27-33.

³⁷⁹ See n. 364 above. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 3.300.

early sixth. Telphousa's words betray a shift in expectations as to what defines the experience of relating to the gods in their sanctuaries. The aesthetic experience of marvelling at the god's temple now appears fundamental to proper engagement with the divine.³⁸⁰

This portrait of an aesthetic revolution in the character and expectations of sacred experience in major sanctuaries is reaffirmed in the early fifth century by Pindar's *Paean* 8 and Aischylos' *Isthmianstai*. In the former, Pindar describes the mythical third temple at Delphi, built by Hephaistos and Athena with 'bronze walls and bronze columns... and six golden Charmers sang above the gable'. These animate akroteria beguiled visitors to the sanctuary who 'were perishing away from their children and wives as they suspended their hearts on the honey-minded song'.³⁸¹ Pindar turns the visual experience of beholding the temple and its figural decoration into one of Siren-like aural allure. The impact of sacred architecture and its imagery, its power to captivate and amaze, gives the poet his cue.³⁸² While the *poikilos kosmos* of temples gives Pindar an analogy for poetic form in another song, here the accent is on the affective

³⁸⁰ This emphasis on the temple as a focus of aesthetic and sacral attention is confirmed later in the *Hymn* by the description of the first temple at Delphi: Apollo lays its foundations and Trophonios and Agamedes set down its 'stone threshold', a metonym for the temple and 'a subject of song forever' (ἀοίδιμον... αἰεῖ) (296-8). The earliest temple to Apollo at Delphi, to which certain roof tiles and stone blocks from the sanctuary have been attributed, is thought to date to c. 650-600 BCE; see Morgan 1990, 132-4. The temple burnt down in 548/7 BCE and was rebuilt by the Alkmaionidai in c.510 BCE. In singing of the latter temple, Pindar's *Pythian* 7 and Eur. *Ion* 184-218 fulfil the prophecy that Apollo's temple will be a 'subject of song forever'.

³⁸¹ Pind. *Paean* 8.68-79: χάλκεοι μὲν τοῖχοι χάλκ[εαί]... κίονες... χρύσειαι δ' ἔξ ὑπὲρ αἰετοῦ | ἄειδον Κηληδόνες... ξένοι ἔφ[θ]κλον | ἄτερθεν τεκέων | ἀλόχων τε μελ[ί]φ' ὄρονι αὐδ[ῶ]ν - I μὲν ἀνακρίμαντες. On Pindar's paians, see Rutherford 2001.

³⁸² Cf. Marconi 2004, 219-20.

experience that unites architecture and song. Of course, Pindar's temple is a mythical wonder. But the quality he chooses to emphasise and explore is indicative: as in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, the temple is characterised by its affective aesthetic intensity. A similar impression emerges from Aischylos' *Isthmianai*, where the satyrs' visual fascination with the images they fix on the temple is conveyed by a plethora of verbs to 'see', 'look' and 'gaze' in short succession (ὄράω, ἄθρέω, θεωρέω, σκοπέω, βλέπω).³⁸³ For Aischylos in the early fifth century, the temple's imagery is now a visual spectacle of the highest order.³⁸⁴

During the Archaic period, from Hesiod and Homer in the late eighth century to Aischylos and Pindar in the early fifth, there is a discernible shift in the representation of temples and their role in religious experience which corresponds with contemporary developments in sacred architecture. What this correspondence suggests is that the Archaic revolution in sacred architecture precipitated a revolutionary change in the character and expectations of sacred experience in major sanctuaries. The profound changes in sacred architecture and sanctuary spaces during the Archaic period transformed these special sites of access to the divine into places of unparalleled visual and aesthetic intensity. By the early Classical period, the intense aesthetic experience of the visual environment of sanctuaries—like gazing in wonder and delight at architectural beauty—had become an expected mode of interaction with the divine. It is not for nothing that by the Classical period, the Greek for 'viewing' and 'spectacle' was the same

³⁸³ Aesch. *Isthmianai* 1-21.

³⁸⁴ Cf. Marconi 2004, 220: 'the history of archaic temple decoration is also a history of the changing strategies in constructing such spectacle and of transforming its public'.

word for visiting a sanctuary: *theoria*.³⁸⁵ The architectural contribution to that spectacle is neatly illustrated by Euripides' *Ion* (c.414-12 BCE), when the chorus 'look', 'marvel', and 'gaze' at Apollo's temple during their visit to the god's sanctuary in Delphi.³⁸⁶ The aesthetic revolution in the visual and architectural landscapes of sanctuaries in the Archaic period set the course for centuries to come.³⁸⁷

The aesthetic revolution in Archaic sanctuaries, however, was owed to more than the transformation of sacred architecture. The objects that filled sanctuaries were also essential; as Telpousa recognises, it is Apollo's 'big temple and many possessions inside' that are the expected focus of aesthetic interest for worshippers in a sanctuary.³⁸⁸ The next chapter will turn to those 'many possessions inside' Archaic sanctuaries.

³⁸⁵ Cf. Marconi 2004. On *theoria*, see Rutherford 2013.

³⁸⁶ Eur. *Ion* 184-218. On ekphrasis and spectacle in *Ion*, see Zeitlin 1994, 147-56. The temple they marvel at is that funded by the Alkmaionidai. The chorus' excitement in the temple's sculpture may reflect circumstances peculiar to Athens at the time Euripides wrote the play (414-412 BCE): the Parthenon, with its unprecedented quantity of sculpture had been dedicated not long before in 432 BCE and the Hephaisteion in 416 BCE. The pattern of poetry echoing contemporary architectural conditions continues. On 'the drama of transformation' in Periklean architecture, see Rhodes 2016, 159-61.

³⁸⁷ Cf. Theocr. 15.78-86; Herod. *Mim.* 4.20-78; Plut. *De Pyth. or.*

³⁸⁸ *Hom. Hy.* 3.266; cf. *Hy.* 4.178-81.

CHAPTER FOUR

OBJECTS OF DELIGHT

In perhaps the first quarter of the seventh century, a man named Mantiklos dedicated this statuette of solid bronze to Apollo, possibly in a sanctuary in Thebes (figs. 108-10).¹ A hexameter inscription meanders over the thighs of the figure:

Μάντικλός μ' ἀνέθεκε φεκαβόλοι ἀργυροτόξοι

τᾶς {δ}δεκάτας· τὸ δέ, Φοῖβε, δίδοι χαρίετταν ἀμοιβ[άν].²

‘Mantiklos dedicated me to the far-shooter of the silver bow from a tithe; as for you, Phoibos, give something pleasing in return.’

The inscription records Mantiklos’ act of dedication to the archer god, Phoibos Apollo, and the general circumstances behind it: it was given ‘from a tithe’, a tenth share of some profit which Mantiklos enjoyed and for which he thanked Apollo with this statuette. While the first half of the inscription commemorates Mantiklos’ gratitude for this divine favour, the second half gives a present and future dimension to Mantiklos’ interaction with Apollo. By calling on the god directly to ‘give something pleasing in return’, the inscription, or rather, the reader or speaker of the inscription,

¹ The date is suggested by the use of solid cast bronze, the statuette’s style and the lettering of the inscription in Boiotian characters, the latter implying Theban provenance. See Kozloff and Mitten 1988, 52-7; Day 2000; Day 2010, *passim*, esp. 33-48.

² CEG 326.

makes a present request to the deity that extends this pleasing exchange between Mantiklos and Apollo indefinitely into the future.³ That the request in return for the statuette is for ‘something pleasing’ (χαρίφετταν) also implies that the statuette possesses that pleasure-bearing quality of *charis*. This is closely paralleled by the formula, ‘and so rejoice’, concluding many *Homeric Hymns*: the juxtaposition of the adverb ‘and so’ (οὕτω) with the imperative to the god, ‘rejoice’, ‘take pleasure’ (χαίρε), suggests that the preceding song is a worthy object of the deity’s pleasure and delight (χάρις), just like Mantiklos’ statuette.⁴

Mantiklos’ statuette sheds light on the motives and values behind a defining feature of Greek relations with the divine: the dedication of physical objects to the gods.⁵ Since temples were also gifts to the gods, this chapter’s enquiry into the significance of beauty for votive objects is continuous with the preceding discussion of Archaic sacred architecture. For all votive objects—whether temples, statues, ceramics, jewellery, armour, tools or anything else—shared a basic purpose which Mantiklos’ inscription highlights: to please their divine recipients and maintain harmonious relations with them. As Mantiklos’ record of his name and tithe suggests, votives also had an important social function in sanctuaries,

³ The present tense (δίδοι) makes the request open-ended, i.e. Apollo’s giving is not a one-off. Cf. *CEG* 334. Contrast use of aorist at e.g. *Hom. Il.* 1.41; 24.309. On the temporal significance of dedicatory epigrams, see Day 2010, esp. 232ff; Furley 2010.

⁴ *Hom. Hy.* 1(D)11; *Hy.* 3.545; *Hy.* 4.579; *Hy.* 9.7; *Hy.* 14.6; *Hy.* 16.5; *Hy.* 18.10; *Hy.* 19.48; *Hy.* 21.5; *Hy.* 26.11; *Hy.* 28.17. See chapter 2, 41-2.

⁵ On Greek votive offerings generally, see Rouse 1902; Van Straten 1981; Prêtre 2009; Patera 2012.

serving as physical records of their dedicators for the rest of society to see.

To investigate how important ideas and experiences of beauty were in the practice of dedicating votive objects goes against a deep-seated idea in modern aesthetic discourse: that the judgement of beauty is divorced from any concept of an object's function or use.⁶ According to this still influential view, the perception and value of a votive object's beauty would be independent from any taint of its socio-political, economic or religious functions.⁷ By contrast, this chapter aims to show how the significance of beauty for votive objects lay precisely in the nature of these functions, just as it did for Archaic temples. In other words, this chapter is about how Archaic Greeks did things with beauty in their dedication of objects to the gods, and what impact this had on Greek sanctuaries and the changing character of relations with the gods in Archaic Greece.

⁶ This is indebted foremost to Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, in which he argued that the 'pure' judgement of beauty, unlike the 'adherent' judgement of beauty, is independent from any notion of an object's practical purpose. See Kant [1790] 2000, esp. 111-16. While Kant has been its most influential proponent, the idea that aesthetic judgements are 'disinterested', 'for their own sake', unconnected to ethical or utilitarian concerns, is prefigured in the early eighteenth century by Joseph Addison and the Third Earl of Shaftesbury. See Stolnitz 1961-2; Abrams 1989, 62-4, 135-87; Prettejohn 2005.

⁷ E.g. Gell 1997 drove a wedge between the beauty and agency of artworks; see p. 216 n. 206 above. For the same attitude to the agency of Greek art and votives, see Whiteley 2012. On Gell's ideas for the study of classical antiquity, see Osborne and Tanner 2007a. Many scholars in the last thirty years have argued, as I do, against beauty's disinterestedness, e.g. Levinson 1998; Nehamas 2007, 35: 'beauty... is part of the everyday world of purpose and desire, history and contingency'; Parsons and Carlson 2008; Porter 2010a; Peponi 2012, 6-7.

The Mantiklos statuette, or how to please a god

To introduce and explore some of the chapter's central themes and questions, let us return to Mantiklos' statuette. Mantiklos' request for 'something pleasing in return' may suggest that the statuette possesses *charis*, but what gives it this quality? Why would Apollo delight in this object?⁸ The most basic reason, applicable to every votive offering, is that the statuette is a gift and therefore an honour to the god. Beyond this broad premise, how does Mantiklos' dedication seek to please its divine recipient? First, the inscription: with a trope ubiquitous in Greek and Near Eastern hymns, Apollo is named in three ways—'the far-shooter', 'lord of the silver bow' and 'Phoibos'—which evoke and praise aspects of his divinity.⁹ It was a commonplace idea that the very act of naming was pleasing to a deity: Demokritos, for instance, describes divine names as 'vocal objects of delight' for the gods (ἀγάλματα φωνήεντα).¹⁰ Likewise, Plato says that it is customary to call gods 'whatever and whenever they take pleasure [χαίρουσιν] in being named'.¹¹

Alongside multiple epithets to please the god, the use of hexameter and epic phraseology mark further points of connection between Mantiklos' inscription and epic poetry like Homer and the *Hymns*.¹² Such epic language, as the *Hymns* show, was a familiar medium of ritual

⁸ See Gaifman 2016, 249-55 on theological approaches to Mantiklos' statuette.

⁹ On Greek and Mesopotamian hymns, see Metcalf 2015.

¹⁰ Democr. 68B 142 = 2.170.9 DK.

¹¹ Pl. *Cra.* 400e. See Day 2010, 130-80.

¹² Cf. Hom. *Il.* 1.37-42; p. 154 above; *Od.* 3.58; *Hom. Hy.* 3.140; *DVA*, 794a-d.

communication with the gods, which perhaps explains its use in Mantiklos' inscription, whether or not it recalls words spoken at the rites presumably accompanying the statuette's dedication.¹³ In any case, the pervasive association of poetry with 'delight' (τέρπετ-) is significant in this votive context.¹⁴ Just as Apollo 'delighted as he listened' to the 'beautiful paian' of the Achaians in *Iliad* 1, so might Apollo take pleasure in the poetic language of song in Mantiklos' inscription.¹⁵ Far from simply informative or supplementary, therefore, the poetics of the inscription are intrinsic to the object's function as a delightful gift. What is more, Mantiklos' epigram appeals both to the ears and to the eyes. The discovery of seventh century abecedaria on votive objects from sanctuaries in Attika, Corinth and Samos suggests that at this time the novel technology of writing might itself be considered a pleasing gift to the gods.¹⁶

The value of the written word, the inscription's poetic form and its nomenclature of Apollo all contribute to the dedication's potential to please the god. That would still be true, however, if the inscription stood alone or were carved on some other object. Rather, the deictic pronoun—'Mantiklos dedicated *me*'—identifies this particular object, this particular representation of a male figure, as instrumental to Mantiklos' request for 'something

¹³ On dedicatory inscriptions and inaugural rites, see Raubitschek 1968; Day 1994; Day 2010. The problem is that there is so little evidence about inaugural rites.

¹⁴ E.g. Hes. *Theog.* 37, 51; Hes. [Sc.] 270-85; Hom. *Il.* 9.186; 18.526; *Od.* 1.347; 1.422; 8.45; etc.; Stesichoros 232; Pind. fr. 129. On pleasure and *mousike*, see chapter 2 above; Peponi 2012.

¹⁵ Hom. *Il.* 1.473-4: καλὸν... παίηονα... τέρπετ' ἀκούων. Cf. Hom. *Hy.* 3.146-55.

¹⁶ Lazzarini 1976, 56; Langdon 1976, 9-50.

pleasing in return'.¹⁷ So how might the visual appearance of the statuette enhance its *charis* and please Apollo?

To understand contemporary attitudes to visual *charis*, it is instructive to compare a passage from *Odyssey* 6, when Athena steps in as Odysseus' personal beautician after his supplication of Nausikaa:

τὸν μὲν Ἀθηναίη θῆκεν, Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα,
 μείζονά τ' εἰσιδέειν καὶ πάσσονα, καὶ δὲ κάρητος
 οὔλας ἦκε κόμας, ὑακινθίνῳ ἄνθει ὁμοίας.
 ὥς δ' ὅτε τις χρυσὸν περιχεύεται ἀργύρῳ ἀνὴρ
 Ἴδρις, ὃν Ἥφαιστος δέδασεν καὶ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη
 τέχνην παντοίην, χαρίεντα δὲ ἔργα τελείει,
 ὥς ἄρα τῷ κατέχευε χάριν κεφαλῇ τε καὶ ὤμοις.
 ἔζετ' ἔπειτ' ἀπάνευθε κιῶν ἐπὶ θῖνα θαλάσσης,
 κάλλει καὶ χάρισι στίλβων· θηεῖτο δὲ κούρη.¹⁸

'Athena, daughter of Zeus, made him bigger and stouter to behold, and sent his hair falling thick and curly from his head like flowers of hyacinth. As when a skilled man, whom Hephaistos and Pallas Athena have taught all kinds of craft, pours gold onto silver in the creation of pleasing works, so did she pour *charis* on his head and shoulders. Then moving away he sat down on the seashore, glistening with beauty and *charis*; and the maiden [Nausikaa] marvelled at him.'

¹⁷ On the comparative force of deixis in Greek epigrams, see Baumbach et al. 2010, 12-13.

¹⁸ Hom. *Od.* 6.229-37.

Athena makes Odysseus ‘bigger and stouter’ and his hair thick like flowers by pouring *charis* on his head and shoulders.¹⁹ The ‘pleasurable beauty’ of *charis* appears as a physical property that the goddess showers on Odysseus so that he looks radiant ‘with *kallos* and *charis*’—two Homeric terms for ‘beauty’ which together underscore the hero’s transformed appearance.²⁰ By benefitting Odysseus, Athena’s beautification also evokes the social sense of *charis*: the ‘beauty’ (χάρις) poured on him mirrors and materialises the divine ‘favour’ (χάρις) he enjoys. And thanks to this divine blessing of beauty, Odysseus, as Nausikaa says, ‘looks like the gods’ (θεοῖσιν ἔοικε).²¹ In other words, the hero’s glistening beauty demonstrates his special closeness to the gods not only because it is divinely endowed but because it makes him look godlike too. As a visual property possessed by people, *charis* has the power to mask the gap between human and divine.²²

It is not for nothing, therefore, that in this context of divine blessing and beautification, Homer compares Athena’s efforts to that of a craftsman who fashions χαρίεντα ἔργα, ‘pleasing works’. While apt for Athena as a patroness of craft, the choice of the analogy reflects two important perceptions. First, that the work of craftsmen is a special province of visual beauty. Hephaistos’ marriage to different goddesses of beauty in various mythical traditions—Charis in the *Iliad*, Aphrodite in the *Odyssey*, and

¹⁹ On Athena’s beautifications of Odysseus and his family, see pp. 77-80 above.

²⁰ On the relationship between *kallos* and *charis* as Homeric terms for ‘beauty’, see Shakeshaft (forthcoming); pp. 27-9 above.

²¹ Hom. *Od.* 6.243.

²² Cf. Hom. *Hy.* 3.146-55.

Aglaia, ‘the youngest of the Charites’, in the *Theogony*—testifies to the same perception that craft and beauty are intimately connected.²³ The second perception, directly related to the first, is that craftsmen are specially associated with the production of objects destined for the social exchange of *charis*. That is, objects like Mantiklos’ statuette which were instrumental in the reciprocal exchange of favours and pleasing gifts, whether between humans or between humans and gods.²⁴

As for the appearance of Mantiklos’ statuette, the passage reveals a catalogue of physical properties tied to the visual perception of *charis*. The ‘pleasing works’ of the craftsman in gold and silver illustrate the common association of precious metals with beauty.²⁵ That Athena beautifies Odysseus like gold added to silver underlines the former’s privileged aesthetic status, encapsulated by the epic formula ‘beautiful [and] golden’ (καλὸς χρυσεῖος).²⁶ The analogy between the craftsman’s use of ‘gold’ and Athena’s use of ‘beauty’ is echoed and emphasised by the alliteration of the words themselves—χρυσόν and χάριν. More broadly, the reference to gold and silver demonstrates a prolific feature of objects portrayed as beautiful in Archaic texts: precious materiality.²⁷ Though ranking below gold and silver, bronze artefacts certainly belong to this

²³ Hom. *Il.* 18.382-3; *Od.* 8.266-366; Hes. *Theog.* 945-6. The same association is suggested by the verb, τεύχω, ‘to build’, ‘craft’, ‘fashion’, in Pindar’s maxim (*Ol.* 1.30): Χάρις δ’, ἅπερ ἅπαντα τεύχει τὰ μέλιχα θνατοῖς.

²⁴ Cf. pp. 85-90 above.

²⁵ See e.g. Hom. *Il.* 3.330-1; 9.187; 11.18; 12.295; etc.; *Od.* 1.137; 4.130-2; 4.614-16; 10.315, 367; 21.7 etc.; Hes. *Theog.* 578-84; *Hom. Hy.* 5.88-9; *Hy.* 6.7-8; Alcman fr. 1.51-5; etc.

²⁶ See Hom. *Il.* 5.730-1; 11.632-3; 14.238 etc.; *Od.* 1.137; 4.53; 5.232; 7.173 etc.

²⁷ On the materiality of artworks in Archaic texts, see Porter 2010; Neer 2010; Steiner 2014.

category, like Achilles' 'beautiful armour of shining bronze'.²⁸ Like Achilles' armour, the beauty of gold, silver and bronze is repeatedly related to their radiance. The image of Odysseus 'glistening with *kallos* and *charis*' concretises that relationship by making beauty itself a form of radiance, and suggests that the use of shining bronze for Mantiklos' statuette amplified its aesthetic value.²⁹

That the craftsman is a 'skilled man', whom Hephaistos and Athena have taught 'all kinds of craft', shows that his ability to produce visually pleasing objects is not merely due to the inherent properties of his materials. It is also thanks to his technical skill and tuition by the gods of craft. His creation of beautiful objects therefore testifies to his divine instruction.³⁰ Just as Odysseus' divinely endowed *charis* makes him appear godlike, so the craftsman's *charienta erga*, his 'pleasing', 'charis-filled works', are tokens of divine favour and proximity. Like Hephaistos 'with his skilful knowledge', the craftsman's ability to fashion 'pleasing works' depends on his technical mastery, conveyed by various terms and phrases frequently applied to aestheticised objects: the epic formula, καλὸς δαιδάλεος, 'beautiful, cunningly wrought', is perhaps the most common.³¹ What something 'cunningly wrought' looks like may seem hopelessly subjective, but, in fact, this quality of skilful manufacture is often tied to intricate ornamentation and the inlaying of various materials,

²⁸ Hom. *Il.* 18.130-1. Cf. *Od.* 4.72-5; 22.113-14; Alc. fr. 140 (Campbell).

²⁹ The choice of the epithet 'lord of the silver bow' was perhaps purposefully evocative of the object's precious materiality.

³⁰ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 8.110-1.

³¹ See Hom. *Il.* 9.187; 11.32; 16.222; 18.390; 18.612; 22.314 etc. Cf. cognates of δαιδάλλω and the participle τετυγμένον: e.g. *Il.* 23.741-3; *Od.* 4.614-17; Bacchyl. 3.17-18 etc. On *daidalos*, see Morris 1992.

like the gold and silver works in the *Odyssey* passage.³² In these features, Mantiklos' dedication stands out from other comparable bronze statuettes from the end of the eighth century and early seventh. On most bronze male figurines of this period, detailed embellishment is limited to basic facial features, occasionally inlaid eyes and bands of a belt (figs. 111-14).³³ By contrast, the inlaid eyes of Mantiklos' statuette and perhaps his diadem, the diagonal incisions in each band of hair, the patterning on his fillet and across his upper chest, and the fine markings for his eyebrows and pubic hair demonstrate a measure of technical sophistication and attention to intricate detail with few parallels among his contemporary bronze counterparts.

The use of bronze, inlaying and intricate ornamentation on the Mantiklos statuette recall the common properties of beautiful, visually pleasing objects of craft in contemporary texts. The appearance of the statuette and its dedicatory inscription thus work together in an effort to please the eyes and ears of Apollo. But why was the representation of a male figure deemed a pleasing image for Apollo? His hair falling in thick locks marked by diagonal lines mirrors Odysseus' hair during his shower of *charis*, 'falling thick and curly from his head'. Further parallels suggest that Mantiklos' statuette embodied a contemporary ideal of the male

³² See examples in n. 31 above. Like δαιδάλεος, ποικίλος also contains a sense of skilful and intricate ornamentation and is applied above all to objects of metalwork, carpentry and embroidery. Cf. Hom. *Il.* 3.327-28; 6.289, 294; *Od.* 18.292-3. ποικίλος is most commonly applied to armour in Homer (τεύχεα ποικίλα, e.g. *Il.* 3.327; 4.432; 6.504; 10.75; etc.). It seems no coincidence that the most common adjective applied to armour (τεύχεα and ἔντεα) in Homer is καλός. On the relationship between δαιδάλεος and ποικίλος, see Frontisi-Ducroux 2000, 52-5.

³³ See Kunze 1944; Kozloff and Mitten 1988; Byrne 1991; Papalexandrou 2005, 99-148.

physique, like Odysseus when he squares up to Iros and reveals the physical assets underneath his beggar's disguise: 'his beautiful and big thighs, his broad shoulders and chest and strong arms' (μηρούς καλούς τε μεγάλους τε... εὐρέες ὦμοι | στήθεά τε στιβαροί τε βραχίονες).³⁴ The narrow waist of Mantiklos' statuette relative to the width of his shoulders and thighs accentuates precisely those features that mark out Odysseus' heroic physique and foretell the beating he will give Iros. In other words, these are features which identify Odysseus' body, like those of the Mantiklos statuette, as powerful and fit for action. If hymns and divine epithets, like Apollo the 'far-shooter', praise gods by depicting their powers, then perhaps the visual representation of Apollo with a body akin to how he later appears in his *Homeric Hymn*—'vigorous, strong and in the prime of life'—might please the god by evoking his power.³⁵

The problem here, however, is who the statuette represents. It is not clear what was originally attached to the holes on the top of his head and in his forehead, nor what he held in his left hand. Since it was commonplace for worshippers to give images of themselves to the gods, the statuette could be intended to portray Mantiklos or someone else. Or it could be Apollo; nothing about the figure's body identifies his humanity or divinity.³⁶ Divine anthropomorphism, as Archaic epic shows, makes recognising gods a challenging hermeneutic exercise for mortals.³⁷ Even if

³⁴ Hom. *Od.* 18.68-70.

³⁵ Hom. *Hy.* 3.449-50.

³⁶ Osborne 2011, 196.

³⁷ See pp. 55-77 above.

humans, like the sailors in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, read correctly the bodily clues of superior physique, deities still name themselves to be sure: ‘for I am the son of Zeus, I declare myself Apollo’.³⁸ In the same way, without the aid of identifying attributes, without the visual equivalent to the god’s explicit declaration, when confronted by figures like Mantiklos’ statuette we too are left guessing whether we see human or god. An idealised male figure could equally be godlike human or humanlike god.³⁹

Failure to distinguish between the image of a deity and a human votary is a familiar experience for scholars and has even been described as ‘perhaps the most important methodological problem affecting any study of votive sculpture’.⁴⁰ Distinguishing between human and god is here conceived as fundamental to understanding the image’s meaning. One argument of this chapter, to which we will return in our discussion of Archaic *korai*, is that perhaps the opposite is true: that the representational ambiguity between human and divine was desirable and meaningful in the votive context of soliciting divine favour (*charis*). Being ‘godlike in appearance’ (θεοειδής) visually conveyed a proximity with the gods which the social ideal of *charis* between gods and humans sought to achieve. By the same token, the anthropomorphism of the gods demonstrated a commensurability with humans which underpinned the potential for reciprocity between them. That beauty played a vital role in mediating this ideal relationship between human and divine is exemplified by the

³⁸ *Hom. Hy.* 3.480. Cf. *Hom. Od.* 13.299-300; *Hy.* 2.268; *Hy.* 7.56.

³⁹ Cf. *Hom. Od.* 7.199-202 where Alkinoos is unsure whether Odysseus, shortly after his shower of *charis* from Athena, is human or god.

⁴⁰ Keesling 2003, 99.

appearance of Odysseus, looking like a god in his beauty, after his blessing of *charis* from Athena.

Mantiklos' statuette aimed to please Apollo in multiple ways: from the fact of its dedication, nomenclature of Apollo and poetic form of its inscription, to the depiction of a godlike human or humanlike god, the physical properties of the object and its ornamentation. Since the latter recall qualities often aestheticised in contemporary texts, it seems Mantiklos sought to win Apollo's favour, in part, by delighting his eyes with an object of beauty, in the same way that Nestor gilds the horns of a sacrificial heifer for Athena 'in order that the goddess would take pleasure as she looked at the object of the delight' (ἵν' ἄγαλμα θεὰ κεχάροιτο ἰδοῦσα).⁴¹ Gilding the heifer's horns is a special measure inspired by special circumstances—Athena's epiphany. It is not necessary but underlines the significance of the occasion and enhances the sacrifice's power to please. As the participle 'looking' (ἰδοῦσα) implies, it adds a visually pleasing dimension to what is already a pleasing act of worship. The same is true for Mantiklos' statuette: its intended beauty enhanced its capacity to delight Apollo and secure 'something pleasing in return', but the statuette's value as a gift was not entirely dependent on it.

Broad-brush statements like, 'to be worthy of display [votive] objects had to be beautiful', or broader still, 'religious rites... and things given, offered, or used in them all aimed at producing an experience of *charis* ("delight") in response to "beauty"', fail to recognise the immense variety of votive objects and the logic behind their dedication.⁴² Practically any object

⁴¹ Hom. *Od.* 3.438. See Naiden 2013, 20; Mikalson 2016, 53-64; pp. 87-8 above.

⁴² Wilson Jones 2014, 20; Day 2010, 13.

could serve as a votive: from temples, altars and sculptures large and small, to plaques, pottery, jewellery, textiles, armour, tools, cult paraphernalia, and much else. Some votives, like ceramics, were common in almost all sanctuaries. Others, like building models in sanctuaries of Hera, were peculiar to certain deities.⁴³ While some votives, such as hero reliefs in Lakonia, were characteristic of particular regions, assemblages of votives from different sanctuaries in a single region often reflect differences in the character and concerns of respective cults.⁴⁴ The great variety of votives was matched by a diversity of reasons and occasions for making an offering: to fulfil a vow, for example, or record participation in religious rites, to thank a god for some benefit received, or to beseech a deity for some favour, whether general, like Mantiklos' request, or specific, like a safe voyage at sea.

Since almost anything might function as a votive, it seems clear at the outset that not all were related to contemporary ideas of beauty. One purpose of this chapter is to identify and interrogate some of the instances and types of objects in which demonstrable concerns with beauty came to the fore. So how can we steer a course through this morass of material to understand the significance of ideas and experiences of beauty for the people who made, used and viewed these dedications? The epigram carved on the thighs of Mantiklos' statuette is among the earliest Greek

⁴³ Schattner 1990.

⁴⁴ E.g. in the Corinthia, armour predominates at Poseidon's Isthmian sanctuary, female ornaments at the Heraion in Perachora, and terracotta plaques at Poseidon and Amphitrite's sanctuary at Penteskouphia. On Corinthian sanctuaries, see Bookidis 2003. On Lakonian hero reliefs, see Salapata 1993.

dedicatory inscriptions.⁴⁵ From the eighth to sixth centuries BCE, the practice of dedicating objects with inscriptions became widespread across the Greek world.⁴⁶ As Mantiklos' statuette shows, these inscriptions offer precious insights into the motives and values of worshippers when they gave objects to the gods. Our first port of call, therefore, is to explore how dedicatory inscriptions might shed light on the importance of beauty for votive objects.

Inscribing beauty: delightful and divine possessions

Archaic dedicatory inscriptions were carved on the objects themselves, on accompanying blocks or plinths, or painted on pottery. They range in length and complexity from single words, recording the dedicator's name or recipient deity's, to combinations of both in the prolific formula 'X dedicated to Y', to elaborate metrical compositions several lines long.⁴⁷ That the names of dedicators and recipient deities are the most common elements indicates two overriding concerns: to honour the god and commemorate the donor. Besides deictic markers like 'me' and 'this', various words are repeatedly used to describe votives: 'object of delight' (ἄγαλμα), 'first-fruits' (ἀπαρχή/ἀκροθίνιον), 'tithe' (δεκάτη), 'gift' (δῶρον), 'vow' (εὐχωλή), 'sacred thing' (ἱερόν), and 'memorial' (μνημα).⁴⁸ These terms are applied to many different kinds of

⁴⁵ See Day 2000; Baumbach et al. 2010, *passim*.

⁴⁶ For the geographical distribution of these inscriptions, see Lazzarini 1976, 56-7.

⁴⁷ Lazzarini 1976.

⁴⁸ Lazzarini 1976, 262-84; Patera 2012, 17-51.

objects. In other words, they do not denote exactly what the object is—a statue, cup, or whatever else—but indicate aspects of its function or circumstances behind its dedication.

As for the question of beauty, one of these terms requires attention: *agalma*.⁴⁹ *Agalma* first appears in the extant epigraphic record around the end of the seventh century on a bronze *aryballos* (fig. 115), apparently from Sparta, though the lettering suggests Argive manufacture:

Χαλκοδάμανς με ἀνέθεκε θιοῖν περικαλλές ἄγαλμα.⁵⁰

‘Chalkodamans dedicated me to the two gods, a very beautiful object of delight’.

If dedicated in Sparta, ‘the two gods’ are probably the Dioskouroi, to whom Chalkodamans dedicated this bronze perfume vase heralded as a *perikalles agalma*. From the adjective *perikalles*, ‘very beautiful’, it is clear that Chalkodamans intended his votive to be seen as an object of great beauty by other worshippers and the Dioskouroi. The literal meaning of his name points to one possible reason why he made this claim. If—admittedly, a big if—his name, ‘Worker-of-bronze’, indicates his profession as a bronze-smith, then it is plausible that Chalkodamans made the bronze *aryballos* himself. In which case, the adjective ‘very beautiful’ would be a credit to his professional skills, like the ‘skilled man’ taught by Hephaistos and Athena, who makes ‘pleasing works’. In any case, the

⁴⁹ On *agalmata* in Greek inscriptions, see Lazzarini 1976, 276-9; Day 2010, 85-129; Lanérés 2012.

⁵⁰ CEG 363. See Lang 1991, 72.

adjective *perikalles* underscores the inherent meaning of *agalma*, which describes not what the object is, but what it does: the term *agalma* points to the votive's function as an 'object of delight' for its divine recipients.⁵¹

When Chalkodamans dedicated his *aryballos*, the word *agalma* was perhaps novel in a dedicatory inscription. Since the word was already familiar in poetry, especially epic, it is no great surprise that Chalkodamans' dedication, which contains the earliest extant epigraphic use of *agalma*, testifies to this link with epic poetry:⁵² not only is the inscription hexametrical but the phrase *perikalles agalma* at the end of the hexameter also appears in Homer.⁵³ In fact, *agalma* appears almost exclusively in metrical inscriptions.⁵⁴ To understand the word's significance in dedicatory inscriptions, therefore, it is germane to examine and compare its use in poetry, especially Homer, where the word appears most in Archaic literature.

The first important point is that Archaic *agalmata* are diverse. In Archaic poetry, the word refers to an ivory cheekpiece for a horse, gold and woven goods, a gilded heifer, a horse, the Trojan horse, a necklace, a brooch, a Lydian headdress, a statue and plumed helmets. In Archaic dedicatory inscriptions, they are similarly varied, referring to statues, ceramic vessels, bronze vessels, votive reliefs, lustral basins, crowns and a terracotta

⁵¹ Day 2010, 86.

⁵² For *agalmata* in Archaic poetry, see Steiner 2001, *passim*; Day 2010, 89-93.

⁵³ Hom. *Od.* 18.300.

⁵⁴ Lazzarini 1976, 97.

plaque.⁵⁵ What an *agalma* does, however, remains consistent. As suggested by its derivation from ἀγάλλομαι, ‘to delight in’, ‘exult in’, ‘be proud of’, an *agalma* is an object that is a source of simultaneous pride, pleasure and delight for its owner.⁵⁶ In other words, *agalmata* are defined by their pleasing effects, which explains why for five of its eight Homeric appearances the noun describes gifts, both for humans and gods.⁵⁷ It is clear, moreover, that the pleasing effects of *agalmata* are inseparable from their beautiful visual properties.

Penelope, for example, put a brooch on Odysseus’ tunic ‘to be an *agalma* for him’.⁵⁸ The brooch possesses various physical properties repeatedly aestheticised in Homer: it is ‘golden’ and ‘cunningly wrought’ with the animated image of a ‘dappled fawn’.⁵⁹ That ‘everyone wondered at’ the brooch underlines its beauty by representing its aesthetic effects. A similar emphasis appears when Homer envisages a woman who ‘stains ivory with purple dye... to make a cheekpiece for horses; it is kept in a chamber, and many horsemen pray to wear it. But it is kept there as an *agalma* for the king, both an ornament [κόσμος] for the horse and an honour [κῶδος] for the rider’.⁶⁰ Again, the object’s status as an *agalma* is tied to physical properties—in this case, ivory and crimson dye—strongly

⁵⁵ Hom. *Il.* 4.144; *Od.* 3.274; 3.438; 4.602; 8.509; 12.347; 18.300; 19.257; *Hom. Hy.* 1.9; Alc. fr. 1.69; Alc. fr. 140 (Campbell); fr. 298.21; Stesichoros S88.10. Lazzarini 1976, 276-80; Day 2010, 124-5.

⁵⁶ For the etymology, see Beekes 2010, s.v. ἀγάλλομαι. Cf. *Lfgre* s.v. ἄγαλμα.

⁵⁷ Hom. *Od.* 3.274; 3.438; 8.509; 12.347; 19.257.

⁵⁸ Hom. *Od.* 19.257.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 226-31. On physical properties aestheticised in Homer, see Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

⁶⁰ Hom. *Il.* 4.141-5.

associated with beauty in Archaic poetry.⁶¹ The description of the cheekpiece as *kosmos* for the horse, an ‘ornament’ enhancing physical attractiveness, reaffirms the *agalma*’s beauty. Both passages also portray a social situation: everyone marvels at Odysseus’ brooch, while the admiration of the horsemen is implied by their desire to wear the ivory cheekpiece. Indeed, the ‘honour’ (κῦδος) that this *agalma* confers on the king is thanks to its beautiful appearance, which inspires admiration and social recognition for its owner.⁶²

These two passages highlight an important point about the nature of Archaic *agalmata* ignored in modern scholarship: an *agalma* is a *possession*.⁶³ Odysseus’ brooch sparks the aesthetic interest of everyone and yet it is specifically an *agalma* ‘for him’. It is evidently an object of beauty and visual delight for everyone, but it is not an *agalma* for them. Similarly, the ivory cheekpiece is ‘an *agalma* for the king’, not those who admire and wish to wear it. Without this notion of ownership, the *agalma* would be, as it is for the horse, simply an ‘ornament’ (κόσμος). In other words, an *agalma* is not just an object whose beautiful visual properties evoke delight. Crucially, what makes an object an *agalma* is its possession by someone, whether human or divine, who delights and takes pride in its appearance and ownership. This combined sense of delight and pride inheres in the word’s derivation from ἀγάλλομαι, ‘to delight in’, ‘take pride

⁶¹ On purple beauties, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 24.644-5; *Od.* 4.297-8; 6.306; 7.337; 10.352-3; 13.108; 19.241-2 etc.; Alc. fr. 1.64-5; Sapph. fr. 44.8-10; fr. 54; fr. 98a; fr. 101; Hom. *Hy.* 7.3-6; Anac. fr. 12.3 etc. For ivory’s beauty, see p. 325 below.

⁶² Cf. Alc. fr. 259(a).15.

⁶³ Admittedly, only a temporary possession in the case of a sacrificial animal; the sacrifice still belongs to the recipient deity, however.

in'. ('Object of delight' is perhaps the best English translation, but fails to capture this idea of pride in possession; 'my pride and joy' comes close but loses the sense of beauty.) As a common term in dedicatory inscriptions, *agalma* points to the votive as an object of beauty and visual delight which the deity may be proud to own. Like everyone marvelling at Odysseus' brooch or the horsemen praying to wear the cheekpiece, the aesthetic appreciation of the *agalma* by others—in the case of votives, by other worshippers—intensifies the honour and prestige conferred on its divine owner. The perception of their beauty, therefore, is instrumental to the agency of *agalmata* as delightful and divine possessions.

The adjectives applied to *agalmata* in inscriptions emphasise their inherent association with beauty: 'beautiful' (καλός), 'very beautiful' (περικαλλής), 'pleasing' (χαρίεις), 'without defect' (άμεμφής), 'true' (έτεός).⁶⁴ *Kalon agalma*, 'beautiful object of delight', is the most common expression, as on an inscribed plaque from the mid sixth century, which accompanied a votive to Apollo Ptoios in Boiotia:

καλφὸν ἄγαλμα φάνακτι φ[εκαβόλοι Ἀπόλονι :]

[...]ορίδας ποίρεσέ μ' Ἐχέστροτος· αὐτὰρ ἔπεμψαν :

[...]ον Πτοιῆφι :

τὸς τύ, φάναχς, φεφύλαχσο, δίδοι δ' ἄρ<ε>τάν [τε καὶ ὄλβον].⁶⁵

⁶⁴ See *CEG* 125; 205; 285; 291; 302; 303; 311; 334; 335; 363; 366; 367; 418; 422; 423; 425. Cf. Hdt. 5.60-1. See Lazzarini 1976, 98; Day 2010, 104.

⁶⁵ *CEG* 334.

‘A beautiful object of delight for lord (Apollo, the far-shooter)... oridas, Echestrotos made me; but they sent... to the Ptoion god, and you, lord, keep it safe, and grant [us] excellence (and good fortune).’

That the *agalma* is ‘beautiful’ and ‘for lord’ Apollo highlights the two nuances of the word which are vital to its significance in votive inscriptions: thanks to its beauty, the *agalma* is a source of delight and pride for its divine owner. The request for the god to ‘grant excellence (and good fortune)’ in return also suggests why the votive’s beauty was valued: to enhance the chances of pleasing the deity and winning his favour (*charis*). The intended efficacy of the *agalma* is founded on the affective power of its beauty, on its capacity to delight and please the god.⁶⁶ On a herm from the Athenian akropolis (c.500-480 BCE), an inscription reads,

ἡερμεῖ[αι : καλὸν] ἄγαλμα [: διδὸς] χάριν : ἐν[θάδε : ἔ]θεκεν :

Οἶν[...]ς : κέρυχς : μ[νεμ]οσύνες : ἡέ[νεκα].⁶⁷

‘For Hermes, Oin[...]s, the herald, set up (here) a (beautiful) object of delight (that gives) pleasure, for (the sake of) remembrance.’

The role of the *agalma* in evoking divine *charis* recalls the scene in *Odyssey* 3, when Nestor’s gilded heifer is an ‘agalma’ intended to ‘please’ (κεχάρποιτο) Athena’s eyes.⁶⁸ On a column supporting a bronze

⁶⁶ See Sourvinou-Inwood 1996, 143-4; Day 2010, 104.

⁶⁷ CEG 125. Cf. CEG 367. See Furley 2010, 166.

⁶⁸ Hom. *Od.* 3.438.

statue, Telesinos' inscription from the Athenian akropolis (c.500-480 BCE) encapsulates the relationship between divine *charis* and the *agalma*:

παρθένε ἐν ἀκροπόλει Τελεσῖνος ἄγαλμ' ἀνέθεκεν

Κέτιος, ᾧ χαίροσα διδοίεις ἄλο ἀναθῆναι.⁶⁹

'Virgin on the Akropolis, Telesinos of Kettos dedicated this object of delight; taking pleasure in it, may you grant that he dedicate another.'

The purpose of the *agalma* is explicit: to please Athena so that she may 'grant that he dedicate another'. That is, so that Athena may show Telesinos favour in return for this *agalma* and thus give him reason to offer another. The inscription makes a claim about the offering's aesthetic value—its status as an *agalma*, an 'object of delight' by virtue of its beauty—which is presented as instrumental to its religious purpose. By pleasing the goddess and prompting a response in kind, the votive's beauty has a communicative function: it provides a way to get through to the goddess and continue the reciprocal exchange of *charis* indefinitely into the future.⁷⁰

So what about the social function of *agalmata* to commemorate dedicators and promote their interests in society? On the Sacred Way between Miletos and Didyma, a mid sixth century marble statue of a seated man was inscribed (fig. 116),

Χαρής εἰμι ὁ Κλέσιος Τειχιόσης ἀρχός·

⁶⁹ CEG 227. See Day 2010, 1-4, 12-16, 24-5 etc.

⁷⁰ Cf. CEG 205; 312; 367.

ἄγαλμα τῷ Ἀπόλλωνος.⁷¹

‘I am Chares, son of Klesios, ruler of Teichoussa; Apollo’s object of delight.’

The opening words indicate that the statue depicts the local dignitary Chares, whose name unusually precedes the god’s. If this epigraphic feature, the statue’s large size and conspicuous location reflect Chares’ bold self-promotion, the statue’s description as ‘Apollo’s object of delight’ also demonstrates his piety. This statue is rare in defining itself as a votive portrait—a practice only attested epigraphically in the Archaic period at Didyma and the Heraion on Samos.⁷² What is common, however, is the mutual concern for piety and display. Take this inscription from the sanctuary of Apollo Ptoios in Boiotia (c.540 BCE):

(A) [Φοί]βο μέν εἰμ’ ἄγαλ[μα Λ]ατ[οί]δα καλ[ό]ν·

[ho δ’ Ἀ]λκμέονος θυῖς Ἀλκμεονίδες

(B) [h]ίποισι νικέ[σας] ἔ]θεκέ μ’ [ό]κέαις],

hὰς Κνοπ[ά]δα]ς ἔλαυν’ ho [...]

(C) hότ’ ἐν Ἀθάναις Παλάδος πανέ[γυρις].⁷³

‘On the one hand, I am the beautiful object of delight of (Phoi)bos, son of Leto; (on the other,) the son of Alkmeon, Alkmeonides, set me

⁷¹ DVA 952.

⁷² See Keesling 2003, 102-7.

⁷³ CEG 302. Cf. CEG 362; 374; 383; 391; 394; 403. On piety and display in votives, see Rouse 1902, 167-9; Doepner 2002, 148-73; Day 2010, 181-231.

up when he had won with his (swift) horses, whom Knopi(ada)s was driving, the ..., when there was a festival of Pallas in Athens.’

The epigram’s contrastive *men* and *de* structure highlights the votive’s dual purpose, to please Apollo and commemorate the athletic victory of Alkmeonides. The inscription is carved on three sides—A, B and C—of a column capital (fig. 117), which held a lost statue. The position of the inscription thereby encourages the viewer to walk around and observe Apollo’s ‘beautiful object of delight’ from multiple angles. The votive’s description as a *kalon agalma* and the form of its accompanying inscription invite the beholder’s aesthetic appreciation of the statue. Similarly at Olympia, a statue dedicated by an athletic victor is described in its inscription as εἰκόνα... βροτοῖς ἔσορᾶν, ‘a likeness for mortals to marvel at’.⁷⁴ If marvelling at such objects honours their divine owners, it is also a credit to their mortal dedicators. The beauty of Alkmeonides’ statue is presented as a fitting gift for Apollo, but it simultaneously underpins the effort to glorify his athletic victory, which occupies four of the inscription’s five lines. While the value of the votive’s beauty is explicitly religious, it serves the votive’s commemorative social function too.

This dual efficacy is especially pertinent for offerings made by dedicators themselves.⁷⁵ Inscriptions accompanying such votives often refer to their beauty and the dedicators’ technical skills. On a red-figure vase from the Athenian akropolis (c.500 BCE), the second line of an inscription is preserved:

⁷⁴ Cf. CEG 399. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 3.264-6.

⁷⁵ See Bowie 2010, 327; Furley 2010, 166.

ἄνδρες ἐποίησαν σοφαίαισιν καλὸν ἄγαλμα.⁷⁶

‘With their skills [these?] men made this beautiful object of delight.’

Likewise, the votive’s beauty is indebted to the craftsmen’s professional ‘skills’ in an inscription from Delos (c.550 BCE), which seems to have belonged with a statue of Nike for Artemis:

Μικκιά[δης τόδ’ ἄγ]αλμα καλὸν π[οίησε καὶ υἱὸς]

Ἄρχερμωσο[φ]ίεισιν ἡεκήβώ[λῳ ἰοχεαίρῃ]

[h]οὶ Χῖοι, Μέλαγρος πατρόϊων ἄσ[τυ νέμοντες].⁷⁷

‘Mikkiades and his son Archermos m(ade this) beautiful object of delight with their skills for the far-shooter (profuse of arrows), men of Chios, (living in the) city of their progenitor Melas.’

As in Archaic poetry, the beauty of the crafted object is tied to its skilful manufacture, which, in these cases, boasts the dedicators’ professional excellence. Like the ‘skilled man’ in *Odyssey* 6, whose ability to create ‘pleasing works’ is thanks to his divine tutors, Hephaistos and Athena, so may the beauty of these votives testify to their dedicators’ technical mastery and thus the divine favour they have enjoyed. Indeed, for Hephaistos and Athena—who create paradigmatically beautiful things and instruct humans how to do so too—there is an added resonance to

⁷⁶ CEG 291.

⁷⁷ CEG 425. See Bowie 2010, 343.

beautiful votives made by the dedicators themselves.⁷⁸ For craftsmen to make and dedicate beautiful votives to the gods of craft is to display a degree of proximity with their patron deities. A recurring feature of Greek theology, to which we will return, is the idea that gods favour those most like themselves: Athena favours crafty Odysseus; Aphrodite favours the seducer Paris; and so on.⁷⁹ The idea is also played out in ritual, as chapter two showed: the godlike human chorus, for example, delights its divine audience. The dedication of their beautiful wares by craftsmen, therefore, might enhance the chances of winning divine favour by demonstrating a measure of divine proximity. Besides the vase from the Athenian akropolis, another example is the gift to Athena of a statue by Euwandros from Halai in Opuntian Lokris (c.600-550 BCE).⁸⁰ The statue stood on a capital bearing this inscription:

Εὐφάνδρος μ' ἀνέθεκε [?τύ]πον περι[κ]αλέα πο[ι]φ[ό]ν

χερσὶ φίλαιοιν, ἔδο[κέ τ], Ἀθαναίαι πολιόχοι.⁸¹

‘Euwandros dedicated me, making my very beautiful (figure?) with his very own hands, and he gave me to Athena, protector of the city.’

If the inscription draws attention to Euwandros’ skills by referring to the statue’s beauty and the manufactural process ‘with his very own hands’,

⁷⁸ See Hom. *Il.* 18.463ff; *Od.* 4.614-18; 7.110-11; *Hom. Hy.* 5.8-15; *Hy.* 20; Pind. *Ol.* 7.50-3.

⁷⁹ See Furley 2010, 165-6.

⁸⁰ For dedications on the Athenian akropolis by banausic professionals (of which there are a disproportionately large number reflecting Athena’s status as patroness of craft), see Keesling 2003, 86.

⁸¹ *CEG* 348. Cf. *CEG* 230.

the inclusion of two verbs of donation—‘he dedicated’ and ‘he gave’—emphasises his pious benefaction to his patron deity, Athena.

To be sure, craftsmen had a vested interest in vaunting the skilful manufacture and beauty of votives they made and dedicated. But as discussed, these attributes served the interests of other dedicators too, both enhancing the votive’s value as a pleasing gift for the god(s) and as a prestigious memorial of the dedicator(s). The description of votives as *agalmata* presents them to the recipient deity and other worshippers as objects of aesthetic value and power, while their common adjectives, notably *kalos* and *perikalles*, underline this impression. Though Euwandros’ ‘most beautiful (figure)’ for Athena shows that beauty was not the prerogative of offerings labelled *agalmata*, it is a quality most often invoked in association with them.⁸²

It is important to note that in Archaic inscriptions most votives described as *agalmata* were materially valuable. The most common are bronze objects, like Chalkodamans’ *aryballos* for the Dioskouroi, and marble sculptures of elaborate workmanship, often large, like the *korai* statues which Cheramyas dedicated, each ‘an object of delight’ (ἄγαλμα) for Hera on Samos (figs. 118-20), or Lyson’s *kore* on the Athenian akropolis, ‘a pleasing object of delight’ (χαρίεν... ἄγαλμα) for Athena.⁸³ To put it the other way around, there are no extant cases of, say, small and simple terracotta figurines described as *agalmata*, even though many thousands

⁸² Cf. *CEG* 424; *SEG* XXXI 841; *DVA* 665. Day 2010, 104.

⁸³ *CEG* 422-3; *DVA* 727-8; *CEG* 205. See Karakasi 2003, 13-34; Day 2010, 234-6.

of these have been excavated from Archaic sanctuaries.⁸⁴ The application of the term *agalma* in Archaic inscriptions therefore coheres with the representation of *agalmata* in Archaic poetry: they are objects marked out for their beauty, often as a product of their precious materiality and/or skilful and elaborate manufacture.⁸⁵ As noted earlier in this chapter, these are properties common not just to *agalmata* but all kinds of aestheticised objects in Archaic Greek poetry, like Menelaos' 'most beautiful and most valuable' treasure, 'a well-wrought mixing-bowl entirely of silver, its rim finished with gold, a work of Hephaistos'.⁸⁶

This presents a noteworthy similarity with how Sumerian texts depict crafted objects, especially those related to kings and gods in some way. A hymn to the goddess Lamma-saga, for example, sings her 'praises far and wide' by describing the deity's statue in the sacred precinct of Bau in Girsu. The hymn vividly evokes the statue's panoply of precious materials: 'the headband of lapis lazuli... Great vizier of mother Bau with lips of silver —The evenly proportioned upper lip... my Lamma-goddess, your appearance that cannot be matched... The skin of pure metal which has been made clean, fine and very excellent... adorned with jewels and precious stones... fingers of gold... my Lamma-goddess, let us say the praises far

⁸⁴ For Greek terracottas generally, see Besques 1963; Higgins 1967. Huysecom-Haxhi 2009 offers an in-depth study of a rich collection of Archaic terracottas from the Artemision of Thasos.

⁸⁵ For the precious materiality and skilful manufacture of artworks in Greek texts, see Porter 2010, esp. 132-7, 248-55; Steiner 2014. Cf. Eur. *Hec.* 558-61; *Andromeda* fr. 125.

⁸⁶ Hom. *Od.* 4.614-17: κάλλιστον καὶ τιμηέστατόν... κρητῆρα τετυγμένον· ἀργύρεος δὲ ἰ ἔστιν ἅπας, χρυσῷ δ' ἐπὶ χεῖλεα κεκράανται, ἰ ἔργον δ' Ἡφαίστοιο.

and wide of your statue'.⁸⁷ Praising the statue's appearance, resplendent materiality and fine craftsmanship aims to please the goddess Lamma-saga whom it embodies. From the Archaic Greek side, the gold and ivory statues from the Halos deposit in Delphi (figs. 121-2), probably depicting Apollo, Artemis and Leto, perhaps represent a comparable effort to revere and embody divinity by recruiting, as Maximus of Tyre said, 'whatever is most beautiful on earth, in raw materials, human shape and artistic precision' (τῶν ἐν γῇ τοῖς καλλίστοις, ὕλη μὲν καθαρᾷ, μορφῇ δὲ ἀνθρωπίνῃ, τέχνῃ δὲ ἀκριβεῖ).⁸⁸

Records of dedications and temples built by Sumerian kings betray a similar emphasis. One year in the reign of king Bur-Sîn of the Isin dynasty (1953-1717 BCE) was even named after one such dedication: 'Year Bur-Sîn the king made for Ninurta... a three-headed gold mace with heads of lapis-lazuli as a great emblem for Ninurta'.⁸⁹ A text of Ibbi-Su'en, a ruler of the Ur III dynasty (2112-2004 BCE), describes a 'gold šakan-vessel, a work (of) artful/ingenious construction, bearing wild bulls and serpents, its decoration of unending admiration'.⁹⁰ Like Greek descriptions of *agalmata* and other objects of beauty, the text highlights both the vessel's exceptional physical properties and its delightful aesthetic effects. As Winter points out, the famous vase of king Entemena, ruler of Lagash,

⁸⁷ Metcalf (forthcoming), 43-4, lines 9-29.

⁸⁸ Maximus of Tyre, *Orations* 2.3. On the statues, see Amandry 1991; Lapatin 2001.

⁸⁹ Cf. Year 'J' of Enlil-bani's reign: 'Year Enlil-bani the king fashioned a couch decorated with gold and silver, a work for the great sanctuary of (the god) Enki'. See Winter 2010b, 276.

⁹⁰ Winter 2010b, 281.

makes a notable comparandum with Ibbi-Su'en's text (fig. 123).⁹¹ The inscription on the vase's collar records that it was dedicated to the god Ningirsu. Made of silver and intricately decorated with wild animals and the lion-headed eagle Anzû, perhaps it too could be, like Ibbi-Su'en's vessel, a source of 'unending admiration' for its divine recipient.⁹² It appears, therefore, that the value of *agalmata* in relations with the gods in Archaic Greece had its counterparts in ancient Sumer. In both, the precious materiality and skilful manufacture of objects were closely related to the perception of their aesthetic value, which was germane to their votive function as pleasing gifts for the gods.⁹³

This raises a profound theological problem, however. If the beauty of votive objects was pleasing to the gods, as Archaic poems and inscriptions claim, and if their beauty, as Archaic poems and the epigraphic use of *agalma* indicate, was closely tied to properties which were materially valuable—like precious media, large size and elaborate manufacture—then were the wealthy specially placed to win the gods' favour with their beautiful and expensive offerings? Would the humble votives of poorer people struggle to delight their divine recipients? Did the value of beauty for votive objects contribute to a theological system which justified and sustained the privileges of the wealthy?

True to the diversity of Greek theological discourse, the answer in antiquity was both 'yes' and 'no'. A string of Greek authors were prompted

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² See Bahrani 2017, 68.

⁹³ For Sumerian examples, see Winter 2010b, 271-90. For Assyrian parallels, see Garelli 1990.

to explore these questions in light of the legendary offerings of the Kypselid tyrants of Corinth and of the Lydian king Kroisos, like the latter's dedication at Delphi of an enormous golden lion and gigantic gold and silver mixing-bowls.⁹⁴ The spectacular downfall of Kroisos' empire, despite the proverbial generosity of his offerings, set the question of piety, largesse and divine favour in sharp relief. In his third epinician, Bakchylides has Kroisos implore, 'where is the *charis* of the gods?', as he stands aloft a burning funeral pyre in the midst of his sufferings.⁹⁵ In swift response, Zeus puts out the fire and Apollo whisks Kroisos away to safety 'on account of his piety, for he had sent the greatest gifts of mortals to holy Pytho.'⁹⁶ Why Kroisos' empire falls and what this implies about divine *charis* is ignored by Bakchylides. Rather, the point is that Kroisos' miraculous rescue testifies to the divine *charis* he enjoys thanks to his 'greatest gifts'.

His story is therefore paradigmatic for Hieron of Syracuse, for whom the epinician was composed to commemorate his victory in the Olympic chariot race of 468 BCE.⁹⁷ Like Kroisos, Hieron is outstanding in his offerings, such as the golden tripods, recalled at the beginning of the ode, which he dedicated with his brother Gelon at Delphi: 'shining with its sparkles is the gold of highly-wrought tripods stationed before the

⁹⁴ Gagné 2016.

⁹⁵ Bacchyl. 3.38. See Gagné 2016, 81-4; Cairns and Howie 2010, 204-6.

⁹⁶ Bacchyl. 3.61-2.

⁹⁷ On Bakchylides' praise of Hieron, see Burnett 1985, 66-76; Fearn 2007, esp. 72-4. Cf. Cairns and Howie 2010, 201.

temple'.⁹⁸ As aesthetic and material value converge in Bakchylides' description of their golden radiance and superlative workmanship, these gifts serve as the perfect preface for the song's keynote: 'let us bestow *aglaia* on god, for this is the best of blessings' (θεό]ν τις ἰ ἀγλαϊζέθω γὰρ ἄριστος ὄλβων).⁹⁹ To bestow *aglaia* is not just 'to honour'; it is to glorify the god with 'splendour', 'beauty', 'magnificence'.¹⁰⁰ Hieron's gifts are prime examples, apt to bring blessings in return. If Kroisos' fate called this expectation of reciprocity into question, Bakchylides' retelling turns the story on its head to endorse the view—and gratify his wealthy patrons—that beautiful and expensive offerings put dedicators in the gods' good books.¹⁰¹ Author of the Hippocratic treatise, *Airs, Waters, Places*, takes a similar line to Bakchylides in stating that the wealthy ought to be healthier than the poor because of their richer offerings.¹⁰²

Moralists from the early Archaic period onwards took a different view, however, insisting that the value of offerings does not depend on qualities which would give the rich an unfair advantage.¹⁰³ 'Make offerings to the immortal gods', Hesiod urges, '*kad dunamin*', 'as best you can', or 'according to your means'—a phrase which crucially militates against the

⁹⁸ Bacchyl. 3.17-19: λάμπει δ' ὑπὸ μαρμαρυγαῖς ὁ χρυσός, ἰ ὑψιδαιδάλτων τριπόδων σταθέντων ἰ πάροιθε ναοῦ.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 21-2. Jebb 1994, 256.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Day 2010, 92-4. For *aglaia* as 'beauty', see Hom. *Il.* 6.506-11; *Od.* 18. 180; Shakeshaft (forthcoming).

¹⁰¹ Cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 1.92-4; Hdt. 1.29-33, 50-2, 86-91. See Kurke 1999, 130-74; Gagné 2016, 81-4.

¹⁰² Hippoc. *Aer.* 22.

¹⁰³ See Parker 1998, 118-20.

idea that the wealthy have greater chances of inspiring divine *charis*.¹⁰⁴ It is relative capability and largesse that matters; for Aristotle, ‘one who serves [the gods] as best he can [εἰς δύναμιν] is seen to be acting properly’, since no offering could truly equal the blessings gods give humans.¹⁰⁵

What is more, there is no guarantee how a god may respond to a votive. Archaic poetry relates many instances when gods take no pleasure in offerings, like Athena’s rejection of the Trojan ladies’ prayers to stay Diomedes’ rampage in *Iliad* 6.¹⁰⁶ The gift to Athena is Hekabe’s ‘most attractive’ (χαριέστατος) and ‘most beautiful’ (κάλλιστος) robe but it still fails to ease her enmity to the Trojans. What is at stake, therefore, is a particular relationship between gods and humans, which the latter may struggle to see clearly.¹⁰⁷ An offering’s beauty may intensify the *potential* for divine *charis* but it is no guarantee. Humans remain subject to the unknowable forces of divine desire and caprice.

Like the lavish dedications of Sumerian kings, *agalmata* in Archaic sanctuaries often put the wealth of dedicators on public display at the same time as vouching the idea that gods take pleasure in beautiful objects.¹⁰⁸ Cheaper votives could stake a claim to beauty too, however.

¹⁰⁴ Hes. *Op.* 336.

¹⁰⁵ Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1163b15-18. Cf. *CEG* 317; Hdt. 1.50.1; Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.3; 4.3.17; Pl. *Leg.* 955e; *Alc.* ii 148d-150b.

¹⁰⁶ See pp. 85-7 above. Cf. Hom. *Od.* 3.144-6; 14.406; Aesch. *Cho.* 42-8, 519-21. See Naiden 2013, 131-82.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Hdt. 1.13 and 91 where Kroisos’ downfall is owed to circumstances beyond his human comprehension—the crime committed by his ancestor Gyges. See Gagné 2016, 83.

¹⁰⁸ For divine aesthetic sensibilities, see Hom. *Od.* 5.73-6; Hes. [*Sc.*] 318-20; chapter 1.

Inside a ceramic cup from Boiotia (c.550 BCE) (figs. 124-5), with a wobbly rim and decorated with simple geometric patterns in black slip, an inscription proudly declares,

Ἐπίχε μ' ἐποίησε θεοῖς περικαλδεῖα δῶρα.¹⁰⁹

‘Epiches made me for the gods, very beautiful gifts’.

The appeal to beauty cut across the spectrum of votive offerings, from Epiches’ cup to elaborately decorated over life-size bronze and marble sculptures. Since Epiches made the cup himself, the claim that is ‘very beautiful’ shows off his artisanal skills while also underlining its value as a pleasing gift to the gods.¹¹⁰ Epiches’ cup therefore reiterates why beauty mattered to Greek worshippers when they gave objects to the gods, whether temples, gold and ivory statues, bronze vessels, or ceramic cups: by virtue of its power to please, attract attention and inspire admiration, beauty served the mutual interests of piety and display in dedicatory practice.

What impact did this understanding of beauty’s value in dedicatory practice have on the development of Archaic sanctuaries and human experience of the divine? The eighth century saw a rapid increase in the

¹⁰⁹ CEG 327. Maffre 1975; Wachter 2001, 11-12. The plural ‘gifts’ perhaps suggest that the cup was part of an ensemble.

¹¹⁰ For Archaic *perikallea dōra*, see Hom. *Od.* 8.420; 16.327; 18.303; Hom. *Hy.* 2.327.

number of objects dedicated to the gods.¹¹¹ Over the course of the next two centuries, sanctuaries were filled with thousands of dedications of increasing size and variety, which both recorded worshippers' interactions with the gods, and, like temples, became essential elements of the physical environment of worship.

The previous chapter argued that the Archaic period witnessed a revolution in the character and expectations of sacred experience in public sanctuaries thanks to changes in Archaic sacred architecture. It was an aesthetic revolution in the sense that the heightened aesthetic experience of the architectural environment of worship—like marvelling at the god's big and beautiful temple—became an expected mode of interaction with the divine in major sanctuaries. The objects that filled temples and sanctuaries also played a vital role: objects explicitly prized for their beauty became familiar sights in sanctuaries because they advanced the self-interests of dedicators on the one hand, and made pleasing gifts for the gods and ornaments for the sanctuary on the other. Indeed, one inscription from the Athenian agora describes an *agalma* for Demeter and Persephone as 'an ornament [κόσμον] for the front porch'. Another, from Halicarnassos, speaks of an *agalma* conferring 'beauty', 'splendour' (ἐπαγλαΐ[σας]) on Apollo's altar.¹¹² No wonder, then, that in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, it is the god's 'big temple and many possessions inside' which are the expected focus of worshippers' aesthetic

¹¹¹ See e.g. Hägg 1983; de Polignac 1984; Morgan 1990; Osborne 1996, 82-96; Coldstream 2003, 300-23.

¹¹² *CEG* 317; 429.

admiration.¹¹³ By the Classical period, it became common to describe a *temenos* as a κόσμος, an ‘ornament’ or ‘adornment’, like a jewel beautifying its local environment. This idea that sanctuaries were places distinguished by their aesthetic appeal evolved over time, inextricable from changes in their physical appearance as they accumulated objects whose perceived beauty lent themselves to the values and aspirations of divine worship, and which in turn profoundly altered the character and expectations of human interaction with the divine.

Although inscriptions show that beauty was a common desideratum for various votive objects, the fact remains that the vast majority of dedications were not accompanied by inscriptions. Some inscriptions appeared with relatively modest offerings, like Epiches’ cup, but most were with more expensive votives, especially those which refer to the dedication as an *agalma*. To understand the significance of beauty for votive objects generally, therefore, privileging epigraphic evidence inevitably promotes more expensive dedications and sidelines more humble offerings without inscriptions.¹¹⁴ It is in the latter category, however, that the overwhelming majority of Archaic votive objects and their present vestiges belong. The next section of this chapter attempts to redress this imbalance by investigating the entire assemblage of votives from a single sanctuary. While dedicatory inscriptions from across the Greek world reveal some general themes, albeit with evidentiary biases, a case study on votives from one sanctuary may permit a more precise understanding of whether,

¹¹³ *Hom. Hy.* 3.264-6. Cf. *Herod. Mim.* 4.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Patera 2012, 11-12.

how and why concerns with beauty manifested themselves in the cultic life of a particular sanctuary. The sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta has yielded one of the richest collections of Archaic votive objects, in quantity and diversity, of any Greek sanctuary. By happy coincidence, substantial fragments of two Spartan poets from the mid seventh to early sixth century also survive: Tyrtaios and Alkman. The wealth of the archaeological record, combined with rare evidence for local and time-bound attitudes to beauty illuminated by Tyrtaios and Alkman, therefore make the seventh and early sixth century votives from Orthia's sanctuary an ideal case study.¹¹⁵

Votives for Orthia: the good, the beautiful and the ugly

The cult of Orthia in Sparta, on the west bank of the river Eurotas, dates back to perhaps the first half of the ninth century.¹¹⁶ Inscriptions from the late seventh century onwards refer to her simply as 'Orthia'; only later did she become known as Artemis Orthia, the association perhaps developing during the sixth century.¹¹⁷ Like Artemis and her brother Apollo, who enjoyed such prominence in Spartan religion, the affairs of the young were among Orthia's chief concerns.¹¹⁸ This is amply attested by literary

¹¹⁵ Cf. Osborne 1996, 177-84.

¹¹⁶ The earliest pottery from the sanctuary offers only vague chronological parameters (c.950-750 BCE) for locating the cult's origins. For the chronology of the site, see Dawkins 1929b; Boardman 1963; Cartledge 2002, 308-12.

¹¹⁷ Rose 1929, 400. One clue is the new appearance and rapid popularity of deer figurines—a favourite animal of Artemis—among votives to Orthia in the sixth century; see Wace 1929, 282. For the inscriptions, see Woodward 1929.

¹¹⁸ On Spartan religion, see Parker 1989; Flower 2009; Richer 2012; Flower 2018.

sources from the Classical period on. Spartan ephebes, who were expected to steal food in daily life as part of their rigorous state education, were the centrepiece of the most famous rite at the sanctuary, in which they stole food from Orthia's altar at the risk of a whipping.¹¹⁹ If this ritual 'theft amid blows' put the rough skills of adolescent males on public display, references to choruses of maidens performing for Orthia suggest her worship was also pertinent to the maturation of their female counterparts.¹²⁰ Among votives from the sanctuary, the preponderance of female ornaments and objects related to female toilette further suggest that Orthia presided over the concerns of marriageable young women, like those who feature, decked out in their finery, in Alkman's maiden-songs.¹²¹

Aside from the young, the general popularity and importance of Orthia's cult in Sparta is well documented by the collection of over 100,000 votives recovered from the sanctuary.¹²² The earliest perhaps date to the ninth century, at the end of which, or perhaps early in the eighth century, the sanctuary was paved with river cobbles, a small temple built and a new altar too (fig. 126).¹²³ The late eighth and first half of the seventh century witnessed a rapid increase in the number of objects dedicated to Orthia. Images in various media—lead, bronze, terracotta, ivory, bone and

¹¹⁹ From this ritual emerged the notorious 'competition in endurance' of the Roman period, a gruesome tourist attraction in which boys were even whipped to death. See Xen. *Rep. Lac.* 2.7-9; Pl. *Leg.* 633b; Cic. *Tusculan Disputations* 2.6; Plut. *Aristid.* 17.10; Plut. *Inst. Lac.* 239c; Paus. 3.16.10-11.

¹²⁰ Plut. *Thes.* 31.2; Hyg. *Fab.* 79.

¹²¹ See pp. 124-41 above. On young women in Spartan religion, see Richer 2012, 320-4. For a critique of the idea that fertility was central to Orthia's cult, see Waugh 2009.

¹²² For the votives, see Dawkins 1929a.

¹²³ Boardman 1963; Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 166.

limestone—depicting Orthia, male and female votaries, and animals are common appearances. Most of the votives are small—large scale sculpture, for example, is almost entirely absent—but their variety is striking nonetheless: figurines, pottery, reliefs, masks, fibulae, pendants, combs, rings, earrings, pins, scarabs, flutes, iron spits and more. Perishable votives like textiles and wooden objects would no doubt have added even greater diversity. Some objects appear in other Lakonian sanctuaries, like the lead figurines, which are by far the most numerous votives in Orthia's sanctuary.¹²⁴ Others, like the terracotta masks, are peculiar to Orthia's cult. No other Greek sanctuary, neither in Lakonia nor anywhere else in the Greek world, has produced terracotta masks of this kind in comparable numbers (figs. 127-34).¹²⁵ So what do these masks, which are evidently linked to some special feature of Orthia's worship, have to do with beauty?

Among the fragments of masks, most discovered in and around the temple, the excavators counted 603 noses.¹²⁶ If that represents a minimum, the original number of masks deposited in the sanctuary was perhaps closer to a thousand. They first appear early in the seventh century, though the majority date to the end of that century and the sixth.¹²⁷ Dickins proposed a classificatory system of seven discrete types with subdivisions of each—'old women', 'youths', 'warriors', 'portraits',

¹²⁴ See Wace 1929; Cavanagh and Laxton 1984; Boss 2000; Gill and Vickers 2001.

¹²⁵ Isolated examples have been found in Samos, Cyprus, Thera and Tiryns; see Rosenberg 2015, 259-60.

¹²⁶ Dickins 1929, 177.

¹²⁷ Dickins 1929, 164.

‘satyrs’, ‘gorgons’, ‘caricatures’—which has generally been followed.¹²⁸ But it is far from clear, say, that the ‘old women’, ‘warriors’ and ‘gorgon’ masks represent these figures. Besides nomenclature, the rigid typology of the masks encounters serious problems, already implied by Dickins’ admission that the subdivisions of one type are ‘exceedingly complicated, as it contains so many varieties of subject’.¹²⁹ The great variety of the masks resists elaborate classification. Rigid typology might impose some (semblance of) order for modern interpreters when faced by these unusual and bemusing objects, but it also effaces an important feature of the masks which may itself be central to their original significance.

In general, the masks fall into two clearly distinguished types. First, there are those, comprised of Dickins’ ‘youths’ and ‘warriors’, most of which belong to the end of the seventh century and the sixth, which have smooth skin and symmetrical facial features of averaged proportions (figs. 133-4). Some have beards and some have what look like crowns, but their physiognomies present minimal deviations from a norm. In the second broad, and more numerous, category are all the other masks, which display the opposite (figs. 127-32): wrinkled or bumpy skin, disproportionate and asymmetrical faces, and exaggerated physiognomic traits. While masks in the first broad category tend to the generic, those in

¹²⁸ Dickins 1929, 166-9, 176-86. For various interpretations of the masks, see Carter 1987 and 1988; David 1989, 10-11; Parker 1989, 151-2; Vernant 1991, 226-43; Osborne 1996, 181-2; Rosenberg 2015.

¹²⁹ Dickins 1929, 169.

the second are far more diverse, tending to extreme individuation and facial anomalies.¹³⁰

The latter tendency recalls those rare portraits of ugly characters in Archaic poetry, above all, Thersites, ‘the ugliest [αἰσχιστος] man who came to Troy: he was bandy-legged, and lame in one foot, with both his shoulders humped and bent over his chest; and his head was pointed and his hair thin.’¹³¹ In contrast to the generic and often nondescript beauty of Homeric heroes, ‘in form like the immortals’, Thersites’ body is described in detail like no other in Homer, with its peculiar individuality and physical anomalies that mark him out as ‘the ugliness man’.¹³² Similarly, Hephaistos ‘with both feet crooked’ (ἀμφιγυῆεις) falls short of the generic standards of divine beauty and is the butt of the Olympians’ laughter as a result.¹³³ It seems, therefore, that the second broad category of Orthia masks—with their variety of wrinkled faces, gaping mouths and distorted features—bear the telltale signs of intentional ugliness. These ugly masks—for convenience, the *aischroi* type—stand in clear contradistinction to Dickins’ ‘warriors’ and ‘youths’—which might be termed, to convey the antithesis, the *kaloi* type. If nothing else, then, the *aischroi* masks from Orthia’s sanctuary challenge broad-brush assertions that ‘[votive] objects had to be beautiful’, or that ‘things given, offered, or used in [religious rites]

¹³⁰ Cf. Dillon 2010, 132 who argues that the generic appearance of Hellenistic female portrait statues is owed to the generic beauty they embody.

¹³¹ Hom. *Il.* 2.216-19.

¹³² See Pasquali 1942, 140-66; Garland 1995, 79-82.

¹³³ Hom. *Il.* 1.589-600. On Hephaistos’ ‘ambivalent’ divinity, see Bremmer 2010. See Hom. *Hy.* 5.218-38 for another case of divine antipathy for those who fall short of the gods’ aesthetic standards. Cf. Pl. *Symp.* 206d: ἀνάρμοστον δ’ ἐστὶ τὸ αἰσχρὸν παντὶ τῷ θεῷ, τὸ δὲ καλὸν ἀρμόττον.

all aimed at producing an experience of *charis* (“delight”) in response to “beauty”.¹³⁴

But if the beauty of offerings was pleasing to deities, as Archaic poems and inscriptions suggest, and if ugliness was ridiculed and detested by the gods, as Archaic poetry shows, then why were these masks considered appropriate gifts for Orthia? The most plausible explanation is that they are connected with rites performed in Orthia’s sanctuary. The logic behind their dedication, therefore, would be that they commemorate the dedicators’ participation in the rites. Since most the masks are smaller than life-size and many lack holes for the nose and mouth, most scholars agree that they were not worn, but are instead replicas of the masks worn.¹³⁵

Pollux (2nd century CE) and Hesychios (5th century CE) refer to Spartan dances for Artemis and Apollo in which worshippers—female according to Pollux, male according to Hesychios—donned ‘ugly female masks’ to be ridiculous and base.¹³⁶ Doubts over the reliability of these sources arise from their lateness, the confusion over the participants’ identity and the reference only to ‘ugly female masks’, an inadequate title for the totality of the *aischroi* masks. Nevertheless, Pollux and Hesychios at least reveal that ugly masks were used in Spartan ritual dances for two gods, Artemis and Apollo, who like Orthia, presided over the affairs of the young in particular. Tyrtaios’ poetry also provides valuable evidence for interpreting the masks: composed around the mid seventh century BCE,

¹³⁴ See p. 286 n. 42 above.

¹³⁵ See p. 312 n. 126 above; Carter 1987 thinks the terracottas were worn.

¹³⁶ Pollux 4.104; Hesychios s.v. βρυθαλίγα and βρυλλιχισταί.

his elegiacs have the virtue both of being contemporary with many of the masks and of illuminating Spartan attitudes to ugliness and beauty.

The poems in question are martial exhortations to ‘the young’ (νέοι).¹³⁷ As public poems addressed to young Spartan warriors, Tyrtaios’ exhortations may fairly be regarded as both representative of and influential on common Spartan values; that they readily achieved classic status in Sparta and were frequently recited reinforces this point.¹³⁸ As far as the interpretation of the masks is concerned, what is striking about Tyrtaios’ exhortations is that he too presents a sharp dichotomy between that which is *aischros*—‘ugly’, ‘disgraceful’, ‘shameful’—and that which is *kalos*—‘beautiful’, ‘noble’, ‘fine’. In fragment 10, he urges the young to fight selflessly in the front line by envisaging what is *aischros*: the sight of an older man fallen in battle in front of the young, his hair white and beard grey, holding his ‘bloodied genitals’—this, he says, is ‘shameful/ugly [αἰσχρά] and reproachable to see with one’s eyes’.¹³⁹ This image is *aischros* because it contravenes the civic and martial ideal that it should be the young who advance and die in the frontline so the older generations do not have to.¹⁴⁰ In this sense, it is ‘shameful’. The depiction of the old man’s white hair, grey beard and bloodied genitals also suggests that the sight itself is ‘ugly’ and visually displeasing, not just because it

¹³⁷ Tyrtaios frs. 10-12 (Gerber). See Prato 1968; Bowie 1990; Quattrocelli 2006.

¹³⁸ See Philochoros *FGrHist* 328 F 216; Lycurg. in *Leocr.* 106; Hor. *A.P.* 401-3; Ath. 14.630f; Plut. *Cleom.* 2.3.

¹³⁹ Tyrtaios fr. 10.21-6. Cf. the close parallel to Tyrtaios’ picture at Hom. *Il.* 22.66-76; West 2011b, 17, 35-6, 385.

¹⁴⁰ Accordingly, at fr. 11.17-20 the sight of a corpse face down with a spear in the back is also *aischros*: ‘shameful’ because the manner of death shows that the soldier turned and fled. See Vernant 1982.

transgresses a moral standard. The antithesis of this *aischros* spectacle is that of a young man who is *kalos* when he dies in the front ranks:

... νέοισι δὲ πάντ' ἐπέοικεν,
 ὄφρ' ἐρατῆς ἥβης ἀγλαὸν ἄνθος ἔχῃ,
 ἀνδράσι μὲν θηητὸς ἰδεῖν, ἐρατὸς δὲ γυναιξὶ
 ζωὸς ἐὼν, καλὸς δ' ἐν προμάχοισι πεσών.¹⁴¹

‘... but for the young everything looks right and proper: he possesses the delightful flower of desirable youth, both marvellous in the eyes of men and desirable in the eyes of women while he lives, and *kalos* when he falls in the front ranks.’

The emphasis on the man’s handsome appearance—youthful, ‘delightful’, ‘desirable’ and ‘marvellous’—strongly suggests that the ensuing *kalos* subsumes this visual aspect with an accompanying sense of virtuous action, that is, to die fighting in the front ranks. In other words, he is *kalos* when he dies both because he is physically beautiful and because he lives up to the martial ideal that the young should fight and die in the frontline for the fatherland. Unlike the young man mentioned earlier in the poem, who ‘disgraces his delightful looks’ when he deserts the battle, this man is *kalos* because he meets the moral expectations of his

¹⁴¹ Tyrtaios fr. 10.27-30. Cf. Hom. *Il.* 22.71-3. By contrast with the Homeric line that ‘everything is fair’ (πάντα... καλὰ) for a young man fallen battle, Tyrtaios offers a more elaborate and emphatic portrait of the young man’s beauty, ‘marvellous’ and ‘desirable’ to his compatriots. To praise and beautify the young warrior suits his exhortatory aim of inspiring the young to fight valiantly; for Priam, however, who wants to *stop* Hektor from fighting, extolling the beauty of the fallen warrior hardly suits his purpose.

physical beauty with his virtuous acts.¹⁴² Just as the sense of *aischros* in the portrait of the old man marries the ‘shameful’ and the ‘ugly’, so the sense of *kalos* here embraces both the ‘beautiful’ and the ‘noble’.¹⁴³

For Tyrtaios, beauty and ugliness appear intensely social: beautiful and ugly appearances are invested with moral and civic significance for the community at large. The sharp dichotomy between them, moreover, is illuminating. Tyrtaios portrays the *aischros* and the *kalos* as antithetical moral and aesthetic standards. This antithesis serves a pedagogic function: it is by presenting the young with polar images of what they should and should not do that Tyrtaios instructs and inculcates them with a burning sense of their martial and civic duties. Given Orthia’s association with the young and the clear contradistinction between the masks, it seems plausible that the masks worked in a similar fashion to Tyrtaios’ exhortations to the young about the *aischros* and the *kalos*. The civic importance of the shrine and Orthia’s connection to the young make adolescent male and female Spartiates perhaps the most likely candidates to have worn the masks whose terracotta replicas were subsequently dedicated in the sanctuary.¹⁴⁴ As Tyrtaios’ visceral portrait of the *aischros* aims to inspire the young to be *kalos*, by donning the *aischroi* masks and becoming ‘shameful’ and ‘ugly’, young Spartans would enact and

¹⁴² Tyrtaios fr. 10.9: κατὰ δ’ ἀγλαὸν εἶδος ἐλέγχει. Cf. Hes. *Op.* 714; Pind. *Ol.* 7.19; *Nem.* 3.19.

¹⁴³ Cf. Alc. fr. 400.

¹⁴⁴ Parker 1989, 152; Vernant 1991, 238-9. David 1989, 10-11 thinks that the helots were coerced wearers of the masks, arguing that such public baseness and ridicule would have been inappropriate for Spartiates. Public jesting between Spartiates was institutionalised, however, and girls even encouraged to shame and ridicule publicly boys struggling in their education—as David himself points out (1-6). Cf. Halliwell 1991 on laughter in Greek culture, including αἰσχρολογία.

experience precisely what they should not be. The reversal would thus inoculate them against such vices as they learnt its degradations firsthand, thereby gaining a clearer understanding, as in Tyrtaios, of what they should be by contrast. At times, the *kaloï* masks would be used to serve the same function but through positive, rather than negative, exemplarity. Under the auspices of Orthia, such ritual performances of beauty and ugliness would be rites of passage for the young, 'a stage in becoming a Spartiate' by experiencing in public what it is and emphatically what it is not.¹⁴⁵

Tyrtaios' exhortations have a direct bearing on another group of votives from the sanctuary: small lead figurines depicting his addressees, Spartan hoplites (fig. 135).¹⁴⁶ These warriors are one subject among many represented by the figurines: imitation jewellery, a winged Orthia, female votaries, musicians, mythical beasts, animals and other subjects are also common.¹⁴⁷ The figurines are a few centimetres in size, most thin and decorated on one side. Though found in most Lakonian sanctuaries, lead figurines appear first and are particularly numerous at Orthia's sanctuary, where they are by far the most common type of votive.¹⁴⁸ A few perhaps date back to the eighth century, but they become very popular thereafter, approximately 15,000 belonging to the seventh century and nearly 70,000 to the sixth. It is fair to say, then, that these popular and inexpensive

¹⁴⁵ Parker 1989, 152.

¹⁴⁶ Wace 1929, 262, 269, 274-6.

¹⁴⁷ Wace 1929.

¹⁴⁸ See Boss 2000; Gill and Vickers 2001.

figurines are votives of what Tyrtaios calls the δῆμου πλῆθος, ‘the multitude of the people’.¹⁴⁹

The hoplite figurines start appearing in Orthia’s sanctuary around the time that Tyrtaios was exhorting their real-life prototypes in the mid seventh century. Details vary but the formula is largely consistent: they depict a man in full hoplite armour with a crested helmet, round shield and spear, often wearing greaves with legs parted in a stride. They thus appear as Tyrtaios urges young warriors to be—ready for war. It is impossible to know for certain when and by whom the warrior figurines were dedicated; by young men when they joined the warrior class, or before or after a military campaign, are plausible but not exhaustive options. The discovery of hoplite figurines at the Menelaion shows they were not exclusive to Orthia’s cult, though their popularity and prior appearance at her sanctuary suggest, at least, that the values and concerns of Spartan warriors were pertinent to Orthia’s worship.¹⁵⁰ In providing privileged access to those values and concerns, Tyrtaios’ elegiacs reveal that ideas about beauty were at their core.

Tyrtaios distinguishes between a right and a wrong kind of beauty for young warriors. In fragment 12, Tyrtaios says that he would ‘not mention or take account of a man’ even if he possessed the size and strength of the Kyklopes, or was faster than the wind, or ‘was more attractive in form [φυὴν χαριέστερος] than Tithonos... nor if he was famed for everything

¹⁴⁹ Tyrtaios fr. 4.9.

¹⁵⁰ The hoplite figurines begin appearing at the Menelaion c.600 BCE; see Cavanagh and Laxton 1984.

except raging courage [θούριδος ἀλκῆς].¹⁵¹ Tithonos' paradigmatic beauty would mean nothing, Tyrtaios claims, unless allied with 'raging courage'. Such a man is like the soldier in fragment 10, who 'disgraces his delightful looks' when he deserts the battle. It is not that this soldier or the uncourageous man 'more attractive' than Tithonos are not beautiful in appearance. The point is that their beauty is nothing compared with that of the soldier whose attractive appearance is matched by courageous acts. It is what a young man does that matters most in determining whether he possesses the right or the wrong kind of beauty:

οὐ γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς γίνεται ἐν πολέμῳ
 εἰ μὴ τετλαίῃ μὲν ὀρώων φόνον αἱματόεντα,
 καὶ δηίων ὀρέγοιτ' ἐγγύθεν ιστάμενος.
 ἥδ' ἀρετὴ, τόδ' ἄεθλον ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἄριστον
 κάλλιστόν τε φέρειν γίνεται ἀνδρὶ νέῳ.
 ξυνὸν δ' ἐσθλὸν τοῦτο πόληί τε παντί τε δήμῳ.¹⁵²

'For no man is good in war unless he can endure the sight of bloody slaughter, stand at close range and hurl himself at the enemy. This is excellence, this the best prize among men and the most beautiful for a young man to win. This is a common good for the city and all the people'.

'Raging courage' instills endurance and drives the hoplite against the enemy. 'This', Tyrtaios declares, 'is excellence', the supreme ideal to

¹⁵¹ Tyrtaios fr. 12.1-9.

¹⁵² Tyrtaios fr. 12.10-15.

which young warriors should aspire, that which is ‘best’ and ‘most beautiful for a young man’. While the deserter ‘disgraces his delightful looks’, the warrior who fulfils this martial ideal embodies the summit of beauty for a young man. He meets the social expectations of his youthful and ‘marvellous’ looks and thus possesses the greatest beauty, which unites attractive appearance with courage.

The ideal to which the warrior figurines from Orthia’s sanctuary appeal—that of the hoplite ready for war—therefore bears a strong symbolic association with beauty in contemporary Spartan poetry and thought. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the hoplite figurines constitute by far the most common way in which men are represented among votives from Orthia’s sanctuary. With the exception of very few terracotta figurines, images of nude young men (*kouroi*) have not been found in the sanctuary—perhaps surprising, given the goddess’ care for Spartan ephebes.¹⁵³ Rather than the versatile ambiguity of *kouroi* preferred as votives in other parts of the Greek world, the Spartans favoured images of men engaged in the specific action of war at Orthia’s sanctuary: with their full hoplite gear and striding poses, they appear ready for battle, ready to fulfil the martial ideal which conferred supreme beauty on a young man in the eyes of his compatriots—‘a common good for the city and whole people’, echoed in the great popularity of the warrior figurines.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Dawkins 1929c, 152-3, pl. XXXVII, 1-6.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. the so-called ‘Leonidas’ statue, from a group of marble warrior statues (c. 490 BCE); see Prost 2018, 160-1. The sanctuary of Apollo Ptoios in Boiotia has produced the largest collection of *kouroi*; see Ducat 1971. On the *kouroi* generally, see Richter 1960; Guralnick 1978; Snodgrass 1983; Stewart 1986; Osborne 1997; Meyer and Brüggemann 2007; Neer 2010, 22-57.

For all that the warrior figurines embody an egalitarian Spartan ideal, another prominent class of votives from the sanctuary showcase the opposite: the collection of over two hundred ivory carvings.¹⁵⁵ Substantial collections of Archaic ivories have also been found in the Artemision at Ephesos and the sanctuaries of Hera at Perachora and Samos, but none in such quantity as at Orthia's shrine.¹⁵⁶ Dating from the late eighth century to the early sixth, the Orthia ivories are generally small and comprised of various objects, notably, animal figurines, relief plaques and fibulae (figs. 136-9). Since the raw material was an eastern import and its manufacture required specialist skills and techniques, it is very likely that the practice of ivory carving was introduced to Sparta by traders and craftsmen from Phoenicia and North Syria, where schools of ivory production were flourishing from the sixteenth to seventh centuries BCE.¹⁵⁷

The Orthia ivories readily betray their debt to North Syrian and Phoenician schools of ivory carving.¹⁵⁸ The form of many—a relief scene framed by a border, sometimes decorated—recalls that of the furniture panels and reliefs on pyxides which are well represented among the North Syrian and Phoenician ivories from Nimrud (compare figs. 137, 138, 140 and 141).¹⁵⁹ As these examples show, the subjects of North Syrian and

¹⁵⁵ Dawkins 1929d; Marangou 1969; Fitzhardinge 1980, 57-69.

¹⁵⁶ See Carter 1985; Litton 1992; Lapatin 2001.

¹⁵⁷ Fitzhardinge 1980, 57-8. On Syrian and Phoenician ivory carving, see Barnett 1957; Uberti 2001; Winter 2010a, 187-334, 381-432; Hermann 2017.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Dawkins 1929d, 245-8; Barnett 1948, esp. 13-14; Marangou 1968, 203-13; Gunter 2009, 95-105.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Barnett 1957, pls. XVI-XXVII, CXXXIII-CXL.

Phoenician ivories, like the mistress of animals and scenes of men fighting beasts, are also echoed among the Spartan ivories, as are finer details of patterning, like the tunics of the men in figs. 140 and 141.¹⁶⁰ The image of two young men facing each other, sometimes grasping the ornate plant between them, is familiar among Phoenician ivories (figs. 142-3).¹⁶¹ The plaque from Orthia's sanctuary in fig. 144 adapts the basic iconography into a new Spartan idiom (just as the Phoenicians adapted Egyptian models): grasping a central staff-like object are two facing figures who are now male and female, the latter wearing a *polos* and decorated dress, the former a short shirt, while their faces bear distinctively Lakonian features, like their large eyes and angular chins and noses.¹⁶²

As much as the Orthia ivories construct a local style, their raw material, forms and iconography reveal an intensive engagement with North Syrian and Phoenician schools of ivory carving and a desire to emulate them. It is very likely that the primary middlemen in this process were Phoenician traders and craftsmen, who in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, are famed as 'experts in crafts' (πολυδαίδαλοι) and 'exceedingly crafty' (πολυπαίπαλοι) traders across the Mediterranean.¹⁶³ In Homer, Phoenician wares are characterised as luxury objects of utmost beauty. The 'most attractive', 'biggest' and 'much the most dear' robe that Hekabe owns and gives Athena is one of 'the richly embroidered works of Sidonian women' which

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Dawkins 1929, pls. XCVIII, CI, CVI; Barnett 1957, pls. XVIII, XXII, XXIII.

¹⁶¹ For more examples, see Barnett 1957, pls. CXXXV-VI; Hermann 2017, 140. On the iconography, see Barnett 1957, 139-40.

¹⁶² On the Lakonian style of human representation in the seventh and sixth centuries, see Prost 2018, esp. 157-62.

¹⁶³ Hom. *Il.* 23.743; *Od.* 15.419. For Homer's Phoenicians, see Winter 2010a, 597-639. Cf. Gunter 2009, 61-9.

Paris brought to Troy.¹⁶⁴ From this store of luxurious imported textiles, she selects the one ‘most beautiful in its colourful embroideries’ (κάλλιστος... ποικίλμασιν).¹⁶⁵ A prize in the funeral games for Patroklos is similarly exquisite thanks to its size, materials and the emphatic quality of its Phoenician manufacture:

ἀργύρεον κρητῆρα τετυγμένον· ἔξ δ’ ἄρα μέτρα
 χάνδανεν, αὐτὰρ κάλλει ἐνίκα πᾶσαν ἐπ’ αἶαν
 πολλόν, ἐπεὶ Σιδόνες πολυδαίδαλοι εὖ ἥσκησαν.¹⁶⁶

‘A silver mixing bowl, well-wrought; it could hold six measures and surpassed in beauty any other on the whole earth, since Sidonians expert in crafts had fashioned it well.’

As well as supremely beautiful and well-made, this mixing bowl has a history of elite ownership: given by the Phoenicians to king Thoas, it came to Patroklos as ransom for Lykaon, son of Priam.¹⁶⁷ Likewise, Menelaos’ ‘most beautiful and most valuable’ treasure (κάλλιστον καὶ τιμυέστατον) is a ‘well-wrought’ gold and silver mixing bowl, given him by Phaidimos, ‘king of the Sidonians’, which Menelaos proposes to give Telemachos in turn.¹⁶⁸ In Homer, the expert manufacture and surpassing beauty of

¹⁶⁴ Hom. *Il.* 6.271-2, 289: χαριέστατος ἡδὲ μέγιστος... καὶ τοι πολὺ φίλτατος... παμποίκιλα ἔργα γυναικῶν | Σιδονίων. ‘Phoenicians’ and ‘Sidonians’ are synonymous in Homer.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 294. See pp. 85-7 above.

¹⁶⁶ Hom. *Il.* 23.741-3.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. 744-7. Winter 2010a, 598.

¹⁶⁸ Hom. *Od.* 4.614-18.

Phoenician works appear inseparable from their value as prestigious objects of elite ownership and exchange.

The evidence of Homer, which is near contemporary with the Orthia ivories, suggests that the emulation of Phoenician artefacts was not merely expedient but tied to the perception of their high aesthetic value. If this quality, as in Homer, was germane to their role as prestigious gifts—in this case, from dedicator to deity—then the rich aesthetic connotations of ivory only enhanced it. When Athena endows Penelope ‘with immortal beauty’ (κάλλει... ἀμβροσίῳ), she makes her ‘whiter than sawn ivory’ (λευκοτέρην... πριστοῦ ἐλέφαντος).¹⁶⁹ The resplendent whiteness of ivory was apparently the source of its peculiar fascination; the ‘flashing of bronze, gold, electrum, silver and ivory’ in Menelaos’ palace enthralls Telemachos.¹⁷⁰ Like Phoenician works, ivories are portrayed as an elite preserve: Odysseus’ palace, like Menelaos’, is furnished with luxurious objects worthy of his status, like a chair ‘adorned with ivory and silver’, and his bed, ‘cunningly embellished with gold, silver and ivory’.¹⁷¹ The beauty and social prestige associated with ivory are epitomised by the ivory cheekpiece in *Iliad* 4, both an ‘ornament’ (κόσμος) for the horse and an ‘honour’ (κῦδος) and ‘object of delight’ (ἄγαλμα) for its regal owner, basking in the admiration of others.¹⁷²

In Orthia’s sanctuary, the ivories would be the *agalmata* not of their human dedicators but their divine recipient, who might take pleasure in the

¹⁶⁹ Hom. *Od.* 18.192-6.

¹⁷⁰ Hom. *Od.* 4.72-5. Cf. Hes. [Sc.] 141-2; Pind. *Ol.* 1.27.

¹⁷¹ Hom. *Od.* 19.56; 23.200. Cf. 8.404; 21.7.

¹⁷² Hom. *Il.* 4.141-5.

sight of their raw material and the images that echo the virtuoso crafts of North Syria and Phoenicia. Thus the figurines of couchant animals (fig. 136), the most common type of ivory from the sanctuary, might act like Nestor's gilded heifer for Athena: the numerous ivory figurines of sheep are not simply substitutes for real sacrifice but might please Orthia's eyes thanks to ivory's aesthetic properties, just as gold beautifies the beast to delight Athena's eyes in *Odyssey* 3.¹⁷³ The same applies to images of sacrificial animals dedicated in many Greek sanctuaries, from a tiny bull of solid gold dedicated to Poseidon at Isthmia (fig. 145) to the life-size bull of hammered silver and gold plates from Delphi (fig. 146).

However apt to delight divine eyes, such votives were also potent displays of wealth. The importation of the raw material, the specialist skills necessary for its manufacture and ivory's association with elite ownership in Archaic texts would suggest that the Orthia ivories were dedicated principally by wealthy Spartans. From the mid seventh century, it was often large statues, like Isches' *kouros* for Hera on Samos (fig. 147), that wealthy Greeks favoured as their *modus operandi* for showing off their assets in sanctuaries.¹⁷⁴ If 'size matters' was the implicit tagline to such works, at Orthia's sanctuary the wealthy chose a different tack: not bigness but the imported luxury of ivory served to set their votives apart.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Hom. *Od.* 3.438.

¹⁷⁴ On Archaic monumental sculpture, see most recently Kokkorou-Alevras 2017.

¹⁷⁵ A parallel pattern is observable in Archaic Spartan sacred architecture, which shunned the penchant for grandeur elsewhere in Greece in favour of smaller temples adorned with precious materials; see Cavanagh 2018, 66-7. Note, too, that some votives represent the same subjects but in different media which stake different claims to wealth and beauty: e.g. the head of Orthia between two horses appears in ivory and in terracotta; see Dawkins 1929, pls. CLXXII and XXXII.

With its ivories and Phoenician connections, Archaic Sparta thus appears to have been part of a wider social phenomenon around the ancient Mediterranean which is well attested in the Bible. Ezekiel bears witness to this phenomenon when he accuses the Phoenician city of Tyre, ‘thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and thy merchandise’.¹⁷⁶ A salient example is the magnificent gold and ivory throne fashioned by Phoenician craftsmen for King Solomon in the first Book of Kings.¹⁷⁷ For Amos, the righteously indignant shepherd, ivory furniture of the kind that inspired the Orthia ivories epitomised social injustice and the exploitation of the poor by the rich, their ‘houses decorated with ivory’.¹⁷⁸

In seventh century Sparta, as in other parts of the Greek world, it was in a public sanctuary of great civic importance that the wealthy displayed their riches with their ivory offerings and where social inequalities—which the Spartan system of common messes and the title ‘similars’ (ὅμοιοι) for male citizens sought to veil—were manifested in service of the divine.¹⁷⁹ Spartan festivals provided ample opportunities for such forms of display.¹⁸⁰ This is clear, for example, in Alkman’s first maiden-song, in which the chorus of girls describe their rich ornaments, ‘an abundance of purple... an intricate snake-bracelet of solid gold... a Lydian *mitra*, the pride and joy

¹⁷⁶ Ezekiel 27:33. Ezekiel apparently lived c.625-550 BCE. See Barnett 1957, 60-1; Katzenstein 1973; Betts 2002, 187-8.

¹⁷⁷ 1 Kings 10:18-20.

¹⁷⁸ Amos 3:15. Amos was active in the mid eighth century BCE; see Hubbard 2009.

¹⁷⁹ On equality and inequality in Spartan society, see Hodkinson 1989; Hodkinson 2000; Powell 2018, 16-17; Van Wees 2018a; 2018b.

¹⁸⁰ Van Wees 2018a, 223-4.

[*agalma*] of dark-eyed girls'.¹⁸¹ The 'Lydian *mitra*' testifies to another class of imported eastern luxuries at Sparta—textiles—which has vanished from the archaeological record.¹⁸² Choral performance was a prime occasion for young women to flaunt such prestigious wares before the public gaze, as chapter two showed. Another possible fragment of a maiden-song, perhaps by Alkman given its content and Doric features, offers tantalising glimpses of what appears to be another lavish choral spectacle: 'purple... hair... hairbands... and beautiful... full of perfume... put tightly-woven willows on... ivory... adornments... maidens...'.¹⁸³ It is perhaps no great surprise, therefore, that many of the Orthia ivories are either female ornaments or directly related to female toilette.

Most the early ivory relief plaques from Orthia's sanctuary, from the first half of the seventh century, were originally attached to bronze fibulae. Evidently, they were personal ornaments, unlike their Near Eastern models which typically decorated practical objects like furniture and vessels. The circular *pyxis* lids from Nimrud, with bands of incised circles, stars and guilloche patterns, become extravagant brooches for human adornment in Orthia's sanctuary (figs. 148-50). The dedication by girls of personal ornaments to goddesses presiding over their maturation, like Artemis, Aphrodite and Hera, was a common phenomenon across the Greek world.¹⁸⁴ Many of the Orthia ivories probably fall into this category.

¹⁸¹ Alc. fr. 1.64-9. See pp. 124-41 above.

¹⁸² On textiles in Greek religion, see Brøns 2017; Brøns and Nosch 2017.

¹⁸³ Alc. fr. 162.1-8 (Campbell): φοινικεα... κόμ[ας ἀ]ναδήματα... καλ[ὰς] πηλείας μύρου... παρ πυκ[ινὰς] θέσαν ἰτέα[ς...ἐλε]φαντιν... ἀθ[ύρ]ματα... παρ[σενισκ[αί]. See Page 1959, 21.

¹⁸⁴ See e.g. Zeitlin 1970; Calame 1997; Dillon 2002; Baumbach 2004; Prêtre 2009; Crielaard 2017, 389-92.

Some, like the fibula plaques, were plausibly worn in choral performances in the sanctuary and dedicated thereafter. Others, like the collection of decorated ivory combs, echoed the concerns of personal adornment and beauty central to the status of young marriageable women, while also putting the wealth of their dedicators on show thanks to their precious material.¹⁸⁵

The Orthia ivories thus tap into the broader issue, for which the question of beauty is fundamental, of whether the material privileges of the wealthy enamoured them in divine eyes above poorer members of society. As previously noted, a rich vein of theological discourse from Hesiod onwards challenged that notion, though the theology of beauty in Alkman's first maiden-song, as chapter two argued, appears to endorse it.¹⁸⁶ The girls' expensive ornaments are suggestive of their aristocratic status, which the name of a leading member of the chorus, Agido, seems to confirm with its link to one of the Spartan royal families, the Agiadai.¹⁸⁷ The superior beauty of Agido and the chorus-leader, Hagesichora, enables them to please the goddess Aotis and ensure the success of the ritual they perform, which is significant for the whole community in its relations with the divine. If the poem's theology of beauty underpinned aristocratic self-assertion, perhaps the dedication of ivories at Orthia's sanctuary endeavoured to do the same: the beauty associated with their raw material and Levantine models might make their dedicators specially placed to please Orthia and at the same time put their riches on public display.

¹⁸⁵ Dawkins 1929d, 222-4; Dawkins 1929, pls. CXXVI-CXXXI.

¹⁸⁶ See pp. 140-1 and 303-5 above.

¹⁸⁷ Page 1959, 19-20; Calame 1977 (II), 140-41; Stehle 1997, 23-4.

Gold and silver jewellery from the sanctuary may have served a similar purpose (fig. 151), but what about those female ornaments in less precious media, like the bronze rings, pins and brooches (fig. 152), or the numerous lead imitations of jewellery (fig. 153)?¹⁸⁸ The common practice of offering female ornaments to goddesses like Artemis, Aphrodite and Hera shows that such objects were intimately connected to the values and concerns of young women in their transitions from childhood to married life. It is no coincidence that depictions of female beauty in Archaic literature focus on women's ornaments. When Hera prepares for her seduction of Zeus, what we see above all are her elaborate ornaments (κόσμος): her robe with 'many cunningly-wrought designs' fastened with 'golden pins', her tasselled girdle, her earrings 'from which great beauty shone', her 'beautiful veil, white like the sun', and her 'beautiful sandals'.¹⁸⁹ The irresistible beauty of Pandora is similarly constructed: her girdle, silver clothing, decorated veil, floral garland and golden headband occupy the narrator's, the gods' and all mankind's attention.¹⁹⁰ Before Aphrodite joins company with the immortals, the Horai beautify her with divine clothes, a golden diadem, golden earrings and golden necklaces.¹⁹¹ What these and other literary passages suggest is that female ornaments like jewellery

¹⁸⁸ For the gold and silver jewellery, see Dawkins 1929e, 381-4; Dawkins 1929a, pls. CCII-CCIII. For the bronze jewellery, see Droop 1929. For the lead imitation jewellery, see Wace 1929, 255-8, 265-7.

¹⁸⁹ Hom. *Il.* 14.176-85: δαίδαλα πολλά... χρυσεῖης δ' ἐνετῆσι... χάρις δ' ἀπελάμπετο πολλή. Ἰ κρηδέμνω... καλῶ... λευκὸν δ' ἦν ἡέλιος ὥς... καλὰ πέδιλα.

¹⁹⁰ Hes. *Theog.* 572-84. I say 'Pandora' for convenience as she is not named in *Theog.*; the name first appears at Hes. *Op.* 81.

¹⁹¹ Hom. *Hy.* 6.6-18. See p. 46 above.

were symbolically associated with the ideals of desirable female beauty.¹⁹² Such ideals were central to the status, concerns and aspirations of unmarried maidens. Like the warrior figurines, the many lead imitations of jewellery also symbolise an ideal of beauty: in this case, an ideal of beauty for young women whose development, like their male counterparts, Orthia oversaw.

Votives dedicated to Orthia in the seventh and early sixth centuries comprise a diverse collection of objects matched by a diversity of relations to contemporary ideas about beauty. There is no singular significance of beauty for the entire assemblage of votives. This is because the beauty of different things is tied to different qualities and is invested with different meanings, values and associations depending on the nature of those things. The significance of a beautiful hoplite, for example, is different from that of a beautiful unmarried maiden because hoplites and unmarried maidens are different in body, norms of behaviour and social expectations. Ideas and experiences of beauty, as Tyrtaios, Alkman and other Archaic poets show, permeated many aspects of life, from the civic and social ideals of young men and women, to the efforts of wealthy Spartans to display their social and material privileges. As one of Sparta's most important shrines, the votives from Orthia's sanctuary are an invaluable guide to some of Spartan society's core values and concerns. Whether it is the antitypical ugliness of the masks, the ivory carvings' appeal to aesthetic properties and ideals for crafted objects, or the symbolic

¹⁹² See pp. 335-40 below.

associations with beauty of the hoplite figurines and female ornaments, the many and various ways in which Orthia's votives relate to contemporary ideas about beauty highlight their importance and integration in some of Spartan society's core values and concerns.

It is also important to recognise that many votives from the sanctuary had nothing to do with beauty. Many objects, like the iron-spits or figurines of wreaths, owed their role as votives to their relevance to cult ritual; others no doubt owed theirs simply to whatever the dedicator happened to have at hand as a gift for Orthia. Beauty was not a value or ideal to which every votive appealed or aspired. Rather, it had particular pertinence for certain types and classes of votives among the total assemblage dedicated to Orthia. Among those types and classes, votives related to the young stand out: the masks, warrior figurines, many of the ivories, and female ornaments in various media. On the one hand, this preponderance reflects the peculiar character of Orthia's cult, which served the interests of the young in particular. On the other, it echoes a pervasive idea in Archaic Greek thought, that youth and beauty are profoundly connected; the very word for 'prime of life'—*ῥπα*—also came to mean 'youthful beauty'.¹⁹³ As chapter one showed, this connection is epitomised by the gods, a race of 'immortal and ageless' beings, eternally youthful and supremely beautiful. Tyrtaios and Alkman reveal that the general association between youth and beauty also pertained in seventh century Sparta. In their poetry, the association between youth and beauty is filtered through a local cultural lens to project a Spartan vision, like the contemporary votives from

¹⁹³ Cf. Pind. *Nem.* 10.18: "Ἡβᾶ... καλλίστα θεῶν. Cf. Mimn. 3.1; Aesch. *Supp.* 997; Pind. *Ol.* 10.103-4; Pl. *Resp.* 474d; Ar. *Av.* 1724; Aeschin. 1.134.

Orthia's sanctuary, of the centrality of ideas and experiences of beauty in the lives of young men and women.

The votives from Orthia's sanctuary demonstrate their relevance to contemporary ideas about beauty in two general ways. First, there are objects, like the masks, ivories and precious jewellery, that exhibit qualities—like material properties and visual forms—which are upheld for their beauty (or ugliness) in Archaic texts. Second, there are objects, like the lead warrior figurines and imitation jewellery, that represent subjects symbolically associated with beauty in contemporary thought. Some objects appeal to contemporary ideas of beauty in both ways, like the gold jewellery or the large ivory plaque depicting a young warrior in battle (fig. 139). Having explored the question of beauty through the lens of one particular sanctuary, the rest of this chapter will expand out to investigate one type of votive, common across Archaic Greece, which had a particularly strong symbolic association with beauty.

Korai: beauty, *charis* and the value of godlikeness

The title *korai*, 'young women', describes a type of image prolific in the Archaic Greek world, especially in sanctuaries: that of a clothed young woman, facing forwards, her legs close together, sometimes one slightly advanced (figs. 154-6).¹⁹⁴ They are often elaborately dressed, wearing multiple items of clothing and jewellery—earrings, bracelets, necklaces and headdresses. Some hold objects, like fruit or small animals, with their

¹⁹⁴ For general studies, see Richter 1968; Schneider 1975; Ridgway 1977, 85-120; Karakasi 2003; Stieber 2004; Meyer and Brüggemann 2007, 13-89.

arms bent forward at the elbow or with one across the chest, others have both arms by their sides (figs. 118-20). Scholars often use the title *korai* to refer specifically to marble statues, ranging from under a metre in height to over life-size.¹⁹⁵ The *kore* type, however, appeared in many different sizes, media and formats. A vast number of small terracotta *korai* have been excavated from sanctuaries and other contexts across the Greek world, as simple figurines, incense-burners and perfume bottles to name a few of their familiar guises (figs. 157-9). There are bronze *korai* and even some extant wooden statuettes, a largely lost but presumably common form in which the *kore* type appeared in antiquity (figs. 160-2). To apply the title exclusively, or even primarily, to marble statues is to divide a category of objects which belies the clear commonality of their representational schema. The polyvalence of the *kore* type, appearing in many different guises, often in votive contexts, is one of its defining features. So, too, is its connection with Archaic ideals of female beauty.¹⁹⁶

As in the passages recently cited, when Archaic poets depict paragons of female beauty in detail, what they focus on are their elaborate ornaments.¹⁹⁷ Although less detailed than in the *Theogony*, the way Hesiod represents Pandora's beauty in the *Works and Days* is telling. Hephaistos makes 'a beautiful, lovely form of a maiden, alike in face to the immortal goddesses' (ἀθανάτης δὲ θεῆς εἰς ὦπα εἰσκειν ἢ παρθενικῆς

¹⁹⁵ E.g. Karakasi 2003; Keesling 2003, 97; Stieber 2004.

¹⁹⁶ On the beauty of *korai*, see Schneider 1975, esp. 3-16; Osborne 1994, 90-1; Sourvinou-Inwood 1996, 229, 241-6; Karakasi 2003, *passim*; Stieber 2004, *passim*.

¹⁹⁷ See p. 330 above.

καλὸν εἶδος ἐπήρατον).¹⁹⁸ As well as her godlike looks, her material adornments again take centre stage in the divine fabrication of her beauty: Athena ‘gave her a girdle and ornaments’, the Charites and Peitho gave her ‘golden necklaces’ and the ‘beautiful-haired Horai garlanded her with spring flowers’.¹⁹⁹ If her ornaments are the visual focus of her beauty, the goddesses who adorn her embody its character and effects: Pandora’s youthful beauty is conveyed by the Horai, deities of human and vegetal ripeness and fertility, and her beauty’s power to please and persuade is reflected by their divine personifications, the Charites and Peitho. By the same token, the Charites often attend to Aphrodite’s toilette, dressing her with ‘lovely clothes, a wonder to behold’ in the *Odyssey*, and ‘beautiful clothes’ in her *Homeric Hymn*.²⁰⁰ That the Charites beautify their subjects with ‘ornaments’ (κόσμος) illustrates the latter’s vital role in Archaic conceptions of female beauty and its ‘pleasing’ (χαρίεντα) effects.

Rather than the body, it is jewellery, headgear and clothing which are the focus of literary portrayals of beautiful young women, just as these are the visual burden of *korai* in the archaeological record. Some early *korai*, like Nikandre’s over life-size marble statue dedicated to Artemis on Delos around the mid seventh century (fig. 163), might seem demure compared with later examples, like those dedicated on the Athenian akropolis in the late sixth century, whose tunics and mantles create layers of intricate folds

¹⁹⁸ Hes. *Op.* 62-3.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. 72-5.

²⁰⁰ Hom. *Od.* 8.366: εἵματα... ἐπήρατα, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι; Hom. *Hy.* 5.64: εἵματα καλὰ. Cf. *Il.* 5.338-9; *Cypria* frs. 5-6; Sapph. fr. 98.

and patterns (figs. 165, 166, 168, 171).²⁰¹ Recent analysis of Nikandre's statue under special light conditions, however, has revealed traces of red paint, stars and meanders on her tunic.²⁰² The resulting reconstruction gives a striking impression of her once colourful clothing, her patterned tunic, belt and cloak over the shoulders (fig. 164). Emphasis on their clothing's ornamentation, through polychromy, painted patterns and incisions, is a pervasive feature of *korai* in various media and sizes, from seventh century examples like Nikandre, the Lady of Auxerre (fig. 154) and a terracotta statuette from a sanctuary on Despotiko (fig. 167), to later examples like those from the Athenian akropolis, whose clothing still bears clear traces of painted decoration (figs. 165, 168, 171).²⁰³

The prominence of such ornamentation, as Donohue points out, suggests that their 'garments are involved in the production of a kind of beauty that results from the wearers' successful conformity to socially determined aesthetic norms'.²⁰⁴ Archaic texts provide abundant evidence of those aesthetic norms, namely, the association of female beauty with beautiful textiles: from common epic epithets for women—'of the beautiful girdle' (καλλιζωνος) and 'of the beautiful veil' (καλλικρήδεμνος)—to scenes of Aphrodite's toilette just cited, or Hekabe's robe for Athena, 'most beautiful in its colourful embroideries', or Antinous' 'very beautiful, many-coloured robe' for Penelope, or Alkman's girl 'wearing a beautiful summer

²⁰¹ On Nikandre's *kore*, see Pedley 1976, 15-37; Karakasi 2003, 67-78; Day 2010, 190-2; Kokkorou-Alevras 2017 and 2018. On *korai* from the Athenian akropolis, see Karakasi 2003, 115-41; Keesling 2003, 97-164.

²⁰² Kokkorou-Alevras 2018.

²⁰³ On the Despotiko terracotta, see Kourayos and Burns 2004, 153-6; Alexandridou 2018.

²⁰⁴ Donohue 2005, 220.

dress' and another with 'a Lydian headdress, the *agalma* of dark-eyed girls', or the dress that 'excites' Gongylla's 'desire' in one of Sappho's poems.²⁰⁵ The image of a young woman on a white-ground oinochoe from the early fifth century BCE neatly illustrates the association between female beauty and textiles (fig. 172).²⁰⁶ Her tunic and bordered mantle create a contrastive play of patterns and folds over body like that of many contemporary *korai* statues and figurines. If such garments, as Archaic poetry suggests, were involved in the production of a normative kind of female beauty, this woman both possesses such beauty thanks to her elaborate clothing and is herself involved in its production, as she spins wool with a distaff. No wonder, then, that an inscription proclaims her as 'the beautiful girl' (ΗΕ ΠΑΙΣ ΚΑΛΕ). The *korai* figures often wear multiple items of clothing—tunics, belts, mantles, cloaks and veils—with colourful and intricate decoration which appeal to and embody a pervasive Archaic ideal of female beauty.²⁰⁷

Reconstructions of the polychromy of marble *korai*, like that of Nikandre and *kore* 682 from the Athenian akropolis, underscore how their clothing and ornaments would have dominated their original visual effect (figs. 169-70).²⁰⁸ The body beneath the garments seems all the more obscure, the eye drawn instead to the bright and contrastive colours and patterns of their jewellery, clothing and headgear.²⁰⁹ This visual emphasis recalls the

²⁰⁵ Hom. *Od.* 8.366; Hom. *Hy.* 5.64; *Il.* 6.294; *Od.* 18.292; Alc. fr. 1.67-9; fr. 117 (Campbell); Sapph. fr. 22 (Campbell). Cf. fr. 95.

²⁰⁶ See Pedley 1993, 269; Oakley 2013, 118; Jenkins et al. 2015, 160.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Morizot 1974.

²⁰⁸ See Schmaltz 2018.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Eur. *Hel.* 260-3.

representation of Aphrodite when she appears to Anchises in her *Homeric Hymn*. The goddess stands ‘in front of him looking like an unmarried maiden in height and appearance’ (αὐτοῦ προπάροιθε... παρθένῳ ἀδμήτῃ μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ὁμοίη).²¹⁰ Facing Anchises in this guise, Aphrodite assumes the appearance of a *kore* image in stance, body and *kosmos*. And it is the latter which fascinates and charms the hero above all: he wonders at her ‘appearance, height and shining clothes’, her ‘robe brighter than the blaze of fire’, her ‘twisted bracelets and radiant ear-buds’, and her ‘exquisite necklaces, beautiful, golden and exceptionally ornate; they shone like the moon around her tender breasts, a wonder to behold’.²¹¹ The goddess’ ‘tender’ neck and breasts appear subsidiary to her radiant attire in the revelation of her beauty to Anchises.²¹² If at times their locks of hair subtly accentuate the ‘tender breasts’ of *korai* statues (figs. 156, 165, 166, 168), it is nonetheless true that, as with Aphrodite, the body takes back stage as their *kosmos* comes to the fore in the revelation of their beauty to the beholder.

One aspect of the body, however—the hair—is prominent in most images of *korai*, and it is perhaps not surprising to find, given the aesthetic connotations of their clothing and ornaments, that the hair also plays a central role in literary portraits of female beauty. The goddesses and heroines of epic are often ‘beautiful-haired’ and have ‘beautiful locks’.²¹³ Hera’s ‘beautiful locks’ (πλοκάμους... καλούς) are almost all Homer

²¹⁰ *Hom. Hy.* 5.81-2.

²¹¹ *Hom. Hy.* 5.85-90. See pp. 62-3 above.

²¹² Cf. Osborne 2011, 187-8; Platt 2011, 68-9.

²¹³ See *Lfgre*, s.v. καλλίκομος; ἡύκομος; καλλιπλόκαμος; εὐπλόκαμος.

reveals of her body before her seduction of Zeus.²¹⁴ The ‘hair of Nanno’ ranks among the catalogue of assets, like purple clothes, headdresses and jewellery, that the maiden chorus parade before their audience in Alkman’s first maiden-song.²¹⁵ In another, ‘the moist beauty’ of Cyprian perfumed oil ‘sits on the hair of the maiden’ Astymeloisa who leads the rite.²¹⁶ In visual images of *korai*, the hair is emphasised in various ways: in painted zig-zag lines and tight curls around the forehead of the Despotiko figurine (fig. 167); in a thick mass marked by a pattern of squares on the Lady of Auxerre (fig. 154); in spiralling or braided locks framing the breasts of many sixth century *korai* in terracotta and marble (figs. 155, 159, 165, 166, 173, 175).

If ornate hair, clothing, jewellery and headgear are defining characteristics of the *kore* type, then it is fair to say that the type is defined by predominant ideals of female beauty in Archaic literature and thought. A common gesture of the *korai* appears suited to the same end. Many hold their garments with one hand, gathering the folds of their tunics to one side (figs. 174-5), or pulling and lifting them in a more ostentatious manner (figs. 165, 168-9). The gesture calls added attention to their clothing, a core symbol of their beauty, and all the more by creating creases and folds that articulate and enrich the form of their garments. The gesture recalls the way the chorus in Alkman’s first maiden-song direct the audience’s attention to their beauty: ‘the hair of Hagesichora [that] blooms like pure

²¹⁴ Hom. *Il.* 14.176-7.

²¹⁵ Alcm. fr. 1.70.

²¹⁶ Alcm. fr. 3.71-2: νοτία Κινύρα χ[άρ]ις | [ἐπὶ π]αρσενικᾶν χαίταισιν ἴσδει. Cf. Sapph. fr. 81.1-4; fr. 98.

gold', and the 'abundance of purple... intricate snake-bracelet of solid gold... Lydian headdress... and the hair of Nanno'.²¹⁷ The concluding formula of many *Homeric Hymns* serves a similar purpose: by calling on the god, 'and so be pleased' (οὕτω χαῖρε), the singer implies that the hymn possesses the pleasure-bearing power of *charis*.²¹⁸ Inscriptions describing votives as 'beautiful objects of delight' and images on vases as 'beautiful' perform the same self-referential expression of aesthetic appeal.²¹⁹ The *korai*'s gesture therefore exemplifies a trope common to many objects and forms of offering: by calling attention to their clothing, the gesture acts as a self-referential signal of their beauty, which in a votive context, as it does in hymns, enhances their value as pleasing gifts for the gods.

Another common aspect of the *korai* also seems to have a self-referential significance: the objects many hold, often fruit and small animals (figs. 120, 155, 157-9, 165, 173). As the kinds of things real young women might offer the gods, they make fitting attributes for images of young women who are themselves offerings to the gods; a pleasing act of worship for the god makes for a pleasing image for the god.²²⁰ Both the gesture of holding their clothing and the objects they carry therefore

²¹⁷ Alcman. 1.51-4, 64-70. See pp. 126-9 above.

²¹⁸ See pp. 143-4 and 274-5 above. Cf. Alcman. fr. 27; Pind. fr. 75.1-2. On the intersection between hymns and material votives, see Depew 2000; Day 2010, *passim*.

²¹⁹ See pp. 289-308 above.

²²⁰ Visual representations of worship is a common feature of votive objects, from sculptures of worshippers carrying offerings, to images of prayer, animal sacrifice and musical performance; see Van Straten 1981, 82-7. Osborne 1994 goes a step further seeing this gesture of the *korai* as emblematic of their role as commodities of exchange, like the marriageable young women whom they represent.

heighten the *kora*'s pleasure-bearing potential for their divine recipients: the first, by underscoring their beauty; the second, by complementing the pleasing effects of their beauty with those of pious reverence for the gods.

Interpreting the things they hold as offerings assumes that these *korai* represent worshippers.²²¹ As for their identity, the first point to note is the polyvalence of the *kore* type. Consider, for example, *korai* figures from the Heraion on Samos, which appear in many sizes, media and guises with and without various attributes. Two wooden statuettes from the seventh century display the same basic schema and wear the same clothes—tunic, belt and cloak (figs. 160-1). With an additional tall headdress (*polos*), however, fig. 160 is generally seen as representing Hera, while the identity of the other remains unclear; it could be Hera or a female votary who looks like Hera.²²² Cheramydes' three *korai* bear inscriptions labelling them 'objects of delight' (ἀγάλματα) for Hera (figs. 118-20).²²³ One holds a bird and the others have no surviving attributes which might identify them as Hera. If Cheramydes was keen that his *korai* be interpreted as specific women—like his daughters, for example—then it seems curious that their inscriptions do not identify them as such.²²⁴ And all the more so given that other *korai* in the sanctuary do just that: the two *korai* from the Geneleos Group have inscriptions identifying them as 'Philippe'

²²¹ For the *korai* as generic female worshippers, see Lechat 1890; Richter 1968; Schneider 1975; Sourvinou-Inwood 1996, 229, 241-6. As specific women, see Karakasi 2003, e.g. 28-30, 136; Stieber 2004.

²²² The *polos* does not necessarily affirm a divine identity, however; lead figurines from Orthia's sanctuary in Sparta, for example, depict the winged goddess and two female votaries all wearing *poloi* (Wace 1929, fig. 120).

²²³ See CEG 422-3; DVA 727-8; Karakasi 2003, 13-34.

²²⁴ Pace Karakasi 2003, 28-30.

and 'Ornithe', daughters of '[...]arches', depicted reclining on the right, who dedicated this family portrait to Hera (fig. 175-6). Some *korai* statues and figurines from the sanctuary identify themselves through inscriptions or additional attributes, while others give no clear indication who they are.

The important point, then, is that the type is ambiguous and versatile: it could represent a goddess, an unidentified young woman or a specific person. It is in the latter guise, for instance, that *korai* were used as grave-markers for dead women, like Phrasikleia's statue from Merenda in Attika.²²⁵ This ambiguity of the *korai* is acknowledged by Keesling as she argues that those from the Athenian akropolis could have been viewed as representations of Athena: 'the iconography of the generic Acropolis korai is at best equivocal when used as evidence for their identities. Their clothing, headgear, and jewelry can be read equally well as the kosmos of marriageable young women or as the attire of goddesses'.²²⁶ With a helmet or spear, *korai* from the Athenian akropolis could readily be seen as images of Athena. Without such attributes, it is hard to distinguish clearly, as it is for mortals in Archaic epic, whether we see godlike human or humanlike god—a situation Keesling sees as one of the greatest obstacles to understanding the images' significance.²²⁷ Far from being a problem, I would suggest that this ambiguity between human and divine was desirable and meaningful in the votive context of soliciting divine *charis*, and therefore fundamental to the popularity of the *korai*. This was

²²⁵ On funerary *korai*, see D'Onofrio 1982; Sourvinou-Inwood 1996, esp. 239-88. On Phrasikleia, see Mastrokostas 1972; Svenbro 1993; Karakasi 2003, 121-36.

²²⁶ Keesling 2003, 123.

²²⁷ Keesling 2003, 99. Cf. Muller 2009 on the question of who terracotta *protomes* represent.

not merely because their ambiguity was representationally versatile, as examples from the Samian Heraion show. It was because this ambiguity embodied an idea of vital theological significance.

To be godlike demonstrated a closeness to the divine which underpinned the potential for mutuality and reciprocity between gods and humans.²²⁸ This is clear in Homer on both a general and individual level. An outstanding feature of Homer's vision of the past is the proximity of gods and heroes: deities constantly intervene in heroes' affairs, some of whom are children of deities and possess godlike attributes as a result. Their physical similarity to the gods is a crucial facet of this divine proximity: heroes and heroines are repeatedly 'in form like the immortals'.²²⁹ While this closeness to the gods is a general feature of the heroic past, in every way bigger, better and more beautiful than the world 'nowadays', it is also played out on an individual level as gods are shown to favour those most like themselves. As the most beautiful woman, Helen has (or suffers) a peculiar intimacy with Aphrodite.²³⁰ Odysseus' resourcefulness enamours him to Athena, who assists him throughout his adventures. Athena shows him favour (*charis*) because of their likeness in character, but as the passage cited at the beginning of this chapter highlights, *charis* from the goddess can also make him *look* divine.²³¹ By pouring *charis* on Odysseus, Athena beautifies him and makes him 'look

²²⁸ Cf. Furley 2010, 162-6.

²²⁹ See pp. 48-50 above.

²³⁰ See Hom. *Il.* 3.413-17.

²³¹ Hom. *Od.* 6.229-37.

like the gods': his godlike beauty therefore manifests his special proximity with the goddess and the favour he enjoys as a result.

It is by the same logic that winners in beauty-contests were given privileged ritual roles, and why in Alkman's first maiden-song, Hagesichora and Agido, who are outstanding in beauty among their fellow choreuts, lead the rite that the song accompanies.²³² As chapter two argued, Apollo *kitharoidos* in all his beauty was paradigmatic for human kitharodes.²³³ Whether in myth or ritual, what these various examples show is that the beauty of humans was considered pleasing to the gods not just because gods take pleasure in beauty. It was also thanks to a pervasive and distinctive feature of Archaic Greek theology, that gods favour those most like themselves: beautiful humans might be especially pleasing to gods because they look the most godlike.²³⁴ The power of anthropomorphic beauty to bring divine and human together in worship is encapsulated in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*: a spectator of the Ionians worshipping Apollo on Delos 'would say they were immortal and ageless... for he would see the beauty [χάριν] of the whole scene, and delight in his heart as he looked at the men and women with their beautiful girdles'.²³⁵ The Ionians' beauty as they revere Apollo visually manifests their special closeness to the god by making them look like gods themselves.

²³² See Ath. 13. 565f; Paus. 9.22.1; 7.24.4; pp. 134-6 above. On Greek beauty contests, see Crowther 1985; Hawley 1998, 37-9; Gherchanoc 2016.

²³³ See pp. 110-15 above.

²³⁴ Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 5.200-1; Pl. *Phaedr.* 249c4-5: πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνοις ἀεὶ ἐστὶν μνήμη κατὰ δύναμιν, πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὢν θεϊὸς ἐστὶν. Cf. 252c4-253c6.

²³⁵ *Hom. Hy.* 3.146-54. See pp. 109-10 above.

This beauty (*charis*) that blurs the gap between human and divine is what the *korai* embody. As gifts for the gods, such figures perfectly suit their votive function by presenting the deity with an object embodying what it seeks to inspire—*charis*. It is in the same way that Hera enlists the help of Hypnos in her plan to deceive Zeus in *Iliad* 14. Her initial offer of a ‘beautiful, golden throne’ fails to persuade the god that Hera’s dangerous plan is worth his while.²³⁶ So Hera ups her game:

ἀλλ’ ἴθι, ἐγὼ δέ κέ τοι Χαρίτων μίαν ὀπλοτεράων

δώσω ὅπυιέμεναι καὶ σὴν κεκληῆσθαι ἄκοιτιν.²³⁷

‘Come then, I will give you one of the younger Charites to marry and be called your wife.’

Of course, this offer wins Hypnos over: ‘he delighted’, ‘experienced *charis*’ (χήρατο) at Hera’s promise of marriage to one of the Charites and so agrees to help her.²³⁸ What better way to win a deity’s *charis* than with one of the Charites?²³⁹ Votive *korai* echo the sentiment with images of marriageable young women whose godlike beauty demonstrates the potential for human closeness to the gods and *charis* between them. In Archaic wedding-songs, the bride and groom were often hailed as godlike

²³⁶ Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 2.325-7.

²³⁷ *Hom. Il.* 14.267-8.

²³⁸ *Ibid.* 269.

²³⁹ Cf. *Hom. Il.* 18.368-467 when Thetis requests Hephaistos make arms for Achilles in return for the previous favours she showed him. Hephaistos’ wife, Charis, embodies both the ‘beauty’ with which his crafts are associated and the social exchange of ‘favour’ which the scene depicts.

in their beauty and blessedness.²⁴⁰ If for real people such blessings of godlike beauty were transient, votive images of *korai* give more permanent form to the idea that beauty has the power to elide the differences between divine and human and to secure the bonds of mutuality between them.²⁴¹

That *korai* figures appeared in an array of sizes, media and formats shows that the theological value of their godlike beauty did not exclusively serve the interests of an aristocratic elite.²⁴² The scholarly concentration on marble *korai* statues has led to some distortions of the type's sociological significance. Tanner assumes that *kouroi* and *korai* statues were dedicated by aristocrats, arguing that they sustained the social privileges of aristocrats by displaying their proximity with the divine: 'viewing such statues of gods and goddesses reaffirmed the aristocrat's sense of being godlike... For the non-aristocratic viewer who is no part of the magic circle constituted by the exchange of *agalmata*, they mark his distance from the sacred.'²⁴³ One problem with this argument is that we do not know for certain that dedicators of *korai*, even big marble statues like those from the Athenian akropolis, were aristocrats.²⁴⁴ No doubt some were, but there is also epigraphic evidence for non-aristocratic dedicators: in fact, the largest surviving *kore* from the akropolis, Antenor's *kore* (fig.

²⁴⁰ Meister 2015, 24-84.

²⁴¹ Cf. the Hippocratic aphorism preserved in Lucian *Hermot.* 1: βραχὺς μὲν ὁ βίος, μακρὴ δὲ ἡ τέχνη.

²⁴² On *korai* serving the interests of aristocratic elites, see e.g. Schneider 1975, esp. 31-7; Karakasi 2003; Tanner 2006, 58-63; Franssen 2011.

²⁴³ Tanner 2006, 63.

²⁴⁴ See Keesling 2003, 77-93.

177), was dedicated by a potter. A fuller and a fisherman also name themselves as dedicators of *korai* on the akropolis.²⁴⁵ Sufficient wealth would have been needed to commission such large statues, but evidently this did not mean that they were an aristocratic preserve.

What is more, in symbolising proximity with the divine through their godlike beauty, large *korai* statues were no different from their smaller counterparts in cheap materials like wood and terracotta. To be sure, large size, elaborate decoration and expensive materials like marble and metal attachments made certain *korai* stand out, amplifying their dedicators' claims for social recognition and prestige. But the ideal symbolised by the *korai*, that of being beautiful and 'godlike in appearance' (θεοειδής), had a more egalitarian compass by virtue of the type's appearance in many different sizes, media and formats—as votive statues, figurines and on cult paraphernalia like lamps, incense burners and lustral basins (figs. 178-9). The prevalence of *korai* in sanctuaries adds further testimony to the importance of an idea in Archaic Greece, realised in the experience of different forms and contexts of worship, which this thesis has sought to demonstrate: that beauty has the power to bridge the gap between human and divine.

²⁴⁵ DAA 197; 49; 229.

CONCLUSION

VITAL BEAUTY

Μοῦσαι καὶ Χάριτες, κοῦραι Διός, αἵ ποτε Κάδμου

ἐς γάμον ἐλθοῦσαι καλὸν αἰεῖσατ' ἔπος,

ἔστι καλόν, φίλον ἐστὶ τὸ δ' οὐ καλὸν οὐ φίλον ἐστὶ,

τοῦτ' ἔπος ἀθανάτων ἦλθε διὰ στομάτων.¹

'Muses and Charites, daughters of Zeus, who once came to the wedding of Kadmos and sang a beautiful verse, "what is beautiful is dear; what is not beautiful is not dear". This is the verse that came through their immortal lips.'

In this passage from the Theognidea, the companionship of the Muses and Charites deifies the common association of *mousike* with 'beauty' (χάρις), underlining the latter's power, as chapter two showed, to inspire divine 'pleasure' and 'favour' (χάρις).² But above all it is the 'beautiful verse' they sing that reveals why beauty was vital in Greek relations with the gods in Archaic Greece.³ If 'what is beautiful is *philos*'—'dear', 'pleasing', 'welcome', 'loved'—then it becomes clear why beauty had broad communicative significance in human interaction with

¹ Thgn. 14-17. For commentary, see Van Groningen 1966, 15-17.

² Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 63-5; *Hom. Hy.* 3.189-203; *Hy.* 27.15; Sapph. fr. 128; fr. 103.8; Anac. fr. 346 (3); Ibyc. S 255; Stesichoros S 212; Thgn. 15; Pind. *Nem.* 4.1-8, 9.53-5, fr. 52f.3-6; Bacchyl. 19.3-6; etc. See pp. 102-7 above.

³ The conclusion's title—vital beauty—is a phrase borrowed from Ruskin [1873] 2000, 242; see Brouwer et al. 2012.

the divine.⁴ How to get through to the gods, rather than, say, whether they exist, appears high on the ladder of theological concerns in Archaic and Classical Greece.⁵ Beauty's power to make things 'dear', 'pleasing', 'welcome', 'loved'—that is, its power to pull things together—might therefore bridge the gap. If dear and pleasing to the gods, the beauty of offerings—musical, animal, architectural, material or whatever else—might underpin the bonds of mutuality between gods and humans.

In Archaic thought, the adjective *philos* also bears a sense of 'near and dear'; in Homer and other early poets, it often denotes possession, that which is 'one's own'.⁶ It is for this reason that what is *kalos* is especially *philos* for Greek gods, who as a race are marked out by their exceptional beauty. As this thesis has shown, especially the first chapter, beauty was woven into the fabric of Archaic conceptions of the gods, integral to their three defining characteristics—immortality, anthropomorphism and power—in early epic visions that profoundly affected attitudes to the divine from the Archaic period to late antiquity. Since deities were paradigms of anthropomorphic beauty, physical beauty had a peculiar visual power to express, reflect and mediate the relationship between gods and humans. Great beauty brought mortals closer to the gods, physically eliding the gulf between them. Beautiful humans might therefore be *philoī* to the gods, 'pleasing' not just because gods delight in beauty but because they were 'near and dear' in form to the gods themselves. Accordingly, it is fitting that

⁴ By the Classical period, the expression was proverbial; see Pl. *Lys.* 216c; Van Groningen 1966, 16. Cf. Hom. *Od.* 8.19-22.

⁵ See Parker 1998, esp. 114-18.

⁶ E.g. Hom. *Il.* 2.261; 3.31; 5.155; 9.555. See LSJ⁹ s.v. φίλος (2c).

the Muses and Charites sing their aesthetic maxim at the wedding of Kadmos, a mortal who, according to Hesiod, married the deity Harmonia, daughter of Ares and Aphrodite.⁷ What better place for a song celebrating beauty's power of communion than at an occasion of remarkable intimacy between human and divine?

And yet beauty could separate gods and humans too. In Archaic poetry, the superhuman beauty of the gods sets them apart from mortals, at times used by gods to reveal their divinity and demonstrate their irreconcilable difference from humans. For beauty defines the nature of deities, both as individual divine identities characterised by particular types of beauty, and as a race distinct from mortals. As a generic divine characteristic, the eternal beauty of the gods manifests their immortal and ageless nature. It can thus underscore their essential difference from mortals, whose vitality and beauty—however godlike—is a transient glory of youth, invariably followed by degeneration and old age, as Mimnermos memorably evokes.⁸ Perhaps the most poignant portrayal of that fact is Aphrodite's recollection of the fate of Tithonos, loved and immortalised by Dawn for his godlike beauty, then shunned when his beauty faded, locked away to a life of perennial ageing.⁹ In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle denies that gods and humans can be *philoî* because the differences between them are too great.¹⁰ With its capacity to illuminate the yawning chasm between them—

⁷ Hes. *Theog.* 937.

⁸ See Mimn. frs. 1-6.

⁹ *Hom. Hy.* 219-33. Cf. Mimn. fr. 4.

¹⁰ Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1158b33-1159a5. In *Eudemian Ethics*, however, he argues that the relationship between gods and humans is an example of 'unequal love' (*Eth. Eud.* 1238b26-30). On Aristotle's treatment of *philia* (or lack thereof) between gods and humans, see Osborne 1994, 155-7; Parker 1998, 122-3.

death—the representation of divine and human beauty in one sense supports Aristotle’s claim.¹¹ His view is far from standard, however, as Archaic epic readily shows: gods often love and have deep affection for mortals, especially those closest to themselves, whether through ties of kinship, character or piety. In another sense, therefore, the role of beauty in divine-human relations also refutes Aristotle’s claim: beauty physically assimilates humans to gods, making them alike in form if only for a moment. That moment was important and celebrated, for it underpinned the foundations of commensurability between them, marking the human potential for communion with gods on whom they depend.

If beauty was thus a double-edged sword, both uniting and dividing gods and humans, then the fate of Ganymede is the other side of the blade from Tithonos. Abducted by Zeus ‘for the sake of his beauty’ (κάλλεος εἵνεκα), Ganymede’s immortal and ageless existence among the gods bears mythic witness to beauty’s power to bring divine and human together, to make a mortal θεοφιλής, ‘dear to the gods’.¹² In Plato’s *Symposium*, Sokrates describes the ascent of a man from the appreciation of one beautiful body to ever more refined beauties, eventually realising the transcendent power of beauty to provide access to the absolute, imperishable, Form of Beauty itself.¹³ It is no coincidence that this man who achieves the ascent to the Form of Beauty is also ‘dear to the gods;

¹¹ For the yawning chasm of death, see *Hom. Hy.* 2.16-17.

¹² *Hom. Il.* 20.235. Cf. *Hom. Hy.* 5.202-6; Thgn. 1345-8. On the Homer’s Ganymede and his reception, see Hunter 2018, 50-5. For θεοφιλής, cf. Alcman fr. 10(b).10-11; Pind. *Isthm.* 6.66; Hdt. 1.87; Pl. *Resp.* 382e; *Phlb.* 39e; see Parker 1998, 123.

¹³ Pl. *Symp.* 210a-212a.

he, above all men, is immortal' (θεοφιλεῖ γενέσθαι, καὶ εἵπέρ τῳ ἄλλῳ ἀνθρώπων ἀθανάτῳ καὶ ἐκείνῳ).¹⁴

However high-flown Plato's theory seems, and however mythical Ganymede's fate, such ideas and expectations about the relationship between the beautiful and the divine were part of the texture of lived religion. One reason for this was their integration into the values, aspirations and experiences of worshippers in ritual, as in musical performances for the gods when myth came alive in the present, the beauty of the divine paradigm realised in human experience.¹⁵ Another reason was because the dialogue between the beautiful and the divine played a formative role in the development of Archaic sanctuaries, those physical environments of worship that conditioned human understanding of the divine and the nature of sacred experiences.

Around the 470s BCE, poised between the Archaic and Classical periods, a terracotta statue group of Zeus abducting Ganymede was made and dedicated in Zeus' sanctuary at Olympia (fig. 180).¹⁶ Zeus holds a staff and Ganymede carries a cockerel, a traditional love gift in homoerotic male relationships.¹⁷ The triangular base and grooves underneath suggest

¹⁴ Ibid. 212a.

¹⁵ On the mythic past brought to life in present ritual, see Kowalzig 2007.

¹⁶ A *terminus ante quem* of c.465-455 BCE is provided by the fact that part of the group was used as filling for the walls of the new stadium. See Kunze 1940; Moustaka 1993, 44; Neer 2012, 181-2; Spivey 2013, 35; Nicholson 2016, 132-4.

¹⁷ Dover 1978, 92; Pedley 2012, 243.

that it was an akroterion, placed on the apex of the roof of a treasury.¹⁸ It would therefore have contributed, in Pindar's words, to the *poikilos kosmos* of the treasury—its 'colourful decoration', 'intricate ornament'.¹⁹ As Aischylos' satyrs say when they place their portraits on Poseidon's temple at Isthmia, the statue group would have been 'an ornament for the god, a beautifully-painted vow' (κόσμον... τῷ θεῷ... καλλίγραπτον εὐχάν).²⁰

More than simply apt in portraying a story about Zeus in his sanctuary, the statue group therefore had a communicative theological value.²¹ Zeus abducted Ganymede on account of his godlike beauty; if beauty is what made him 'dear to the god', the sculptural group of Zeus and Ganymede served a similar purpose. As an ornament for its building and Zeus' sanctuary at large, it worked as a 'beautifully-painted vow' to inspire the pleasure and favour (*charis*) of Zeus and make its dedicator 'near and dear' in his divine eyes.²² No wonder, then, that it is the Charites in the Theognidea who say that 'what is beautiful is dear'.

¹⁸ Neer 2012, 182 suggests the Syracusan treasury, completed by Hieron in 475 BCE, commemorating victory over the Carthaginians. Underpinning this identification is Pind. *Ol.* 1.42-5, composed to celebrate Hieron's victory in the Olympic horse race of 476 BCE: it seems no coincidence that Pindar refers to Zeus' abduction of Ganymede (especially since it is superfluous to his main narrative). In another ode (*Ol.* 10.99-105), Pindar uses Ganymede as a paradigm for the beauty of the athlete Hagesidamos, victorious Olympic boxer in 476 BCE. On the Syracusan treasury, see Luraghi 1994, 314-8; Scott 2010, 168.

¹⁹ Pind. fr. 194.2-3. See p. 258 above.

²⁰ Aesch. *Isthmiastai* 11-12. See pp. 157-9 above.

²¹ For the politics of Ganymede's various Olympic appearances (in Pindar and the statue group), see Nicholson 2016, 123-40, esp. 132-4. On Zeus at Olympia, see Barringer 2010.

²² If not so intimately as Ganymede. Of course, the mythic couple are also a paradigm of another sort—lover and beloved (*erastes* and *eromenos*)—indicated by the traditional love gift of a cockerel that Ganymede holds. Cf. Thgn. 1345-8; Pedley 2012, 243; Hunter 2018, 50-1.

In Aischylos' *Isthmianstai*, the satyrs' fascination with their portraits lies in their visual verisimilitude, so lifelike that 'they only lack a voice'.²³ The passage's repetition of words for 'look', 'see', 'marvel' testify to the visual wonder associated with the lifelike imagery of the early Classical style in Aischylos' day.²⁴ Their wonder at the images serving as *kosmos* for Poseidon is a defining aspect of their ritual engagement with the god at his temple. In other words, their aesthetic fascination with lifelike imagery is bound to the religious context of its perception—an essential experiential ingredient of their interaction with the god in his sanctuary.²⁵ The statue group of Zeus and Ganymede provides a contemporary parallel from the material record, exemplifying the lifelike animation of figures in the early Classical style.

One detail is decisive. With his right heel lifted from the ground, Zeus' weight is shifted to his left leg as he springs forward whisking Ganymede away. In contrast to earlier Archaic figures who typically have their weight evenly distributed, Zeus' stance more closely mimics how real bodies move, his body language closing the divide between representation and reality just like the satyrs' portraits.²⁶ Such representational techniques made visual images of gods and heroes 'vividly present' (*enargeis*), bringing Zeus' escapades to life in a sanctuary where the expectation of

²³ Aesch. *Isthmianstai* 7.

²⁴ On wonder and the Classical style, see Neer 2010.

²⁵ See Elsner 1996; 2000; 2007, esp. 29-48.

²⁶ The Kritios Boy (c.480 BCE), in stance like an Archaic *kouros* but with his weight shifted to his left leg, is the usual poster-boy for this stylistic development. E.g. Boardman 1985, 20-1; Spivey 20-2; Pedley 2012, 175.

contact with the gods was at its greatest.²⁷ At the time the Zeus and Ganymede group was made, however, such visual and aesthetic intensity had already become characteristic of major sanctuaries like Olympia, thanks to changes in their material culture which exercised an enduring impact on the religious and aesthetic ideas, values and practices of later generations of antiquity—as Plutarch’s tour party at Delphi illustrates.²⁸

In chapter three, I argued that Homer’s emphasis on the beauty of the mythical past is vital to its heroic character and elevation above and beyond the world ‘nowadays’.²⁹ From the godlike beauty of heroes and heroines to their ‘beautiful and golden’ tableware, from their ‘beautiful and big’ buildings to the beauty of their armour and clothes, theirs is a world set apart by its beauty, adorned with a radiant patina that illuminates and underscores the difference between the world back then and the world today. Underlying this poetic technique is an understanding of beauty’s power to construct and express value: its power to mark things out as significant, meaningful, desirable, worthy of attention.³⁰ In the history of Archaic Greek sanctuaries, it appears that beauty played a comparable role.

The importance of beauty in the Archaic revolution in sacred architecture lay in its simultaneous theological and socio-political value: its affective agency to please the gods and underpin claims to prestige by inspiring admiration. The beauty of many votive objects was similarly two-

²⁷ Cf. Pind. *Paean* 8.68-79 where the animate akroteria of the mythical third temple at Delphi beguile visitors to the sanctuary; see pp. 270-1 above.

²⁸ See pp. 1-11 above.

²⁹ See pp. 164-7 above.

³⁰ On the value of aesthetic value in antiquity, see Porter 2012.

sided: objects prized for their aesthetic appeal found a common home in sanctuaries precisely because they satisfied the mutual concerns of piety and display in votive practice, providing worshippers with an affective medium for communicating with the gods, like the beauty of *mousike*. All this rested on an intuitive theological principle: that gods take pleasure in beautiful things as humans do. It is for this reason that in Plutarch's *De Pythiae oraculis*, Sarapion's comment about the potential gulf between divine and human aesthetic standards is so unsettling.³¹ Without the possibility of pleasure in common objects, the foundations of *charis* between gods and humans begin to crumble: how could humans please the gods on whom they depend without any comprehension of what pleases them? While such questions were characteristic of the inquisitive and diverse character of Greek theological discourse, the archaeological and textual records of Greek divine worship would suggest that the intuitive principle won the day. (No surprise, then, that Theon's explanation for the Pythia's bad verse, which rejects Sarapion's troubling suggestion, also won the day.)

The terminology of Greek sanctuaries as 'sacred places' (ἱερά) and 'precincts set apart' (τεμένη) conveyed their distinction in sacrality from their surrounding territory.³² The value set on beauty in gifts for the gods—whether temples, statues, ceramics, textiles or whatever else—had a decisive effect on the evolving character of these sacred places. Because

³¹ Plut. *De Pyth, or.* 396d.

³² The surrounding territory was ὄσιος, 'permitted', 'sanctioned'. As Parker 1996, 123 n. 9 puts it, 'ὄσια are "things which may be freely discussed or disposed off without offence to the gods"'. On the relationship between ἱερός and ὄσιος, see Parker 1983, 328-31; Connor 1988; Bremmer 1996.

beauty served the mutual purposes of divine pleasure and social admiration in the dedication of temples and other votives, sanctuaries increasingly became places defined by their heightened aesthetic interest and appeal—an ‘ornament’ (κόσμος) for the local environment and community in Classical and Hellenistic parlance.³³ This heightened aesthetic appeal thereby reinforced their distinction in sacrality as ‘precincts set apart’, elevated and marked out as significant in the same way that the aesthetic distinction of Homer’s mythical world sets it apart from the world ‘nowadays’. While the beautiful and the divine are inextricable from the earliest Greek literature, the history of Archaic sanctuaries shows that the value and experience of beauty became ever more prominent facets of how people related to the gods between the late eighth and early fifth centuries BCE. Perhaps there is some truth, then, in Plato’s comment that ‘the love of beautiful things has brought all kinds of benefits both to gods and humans’ (ἐκ τοῦ ἐρᾶν τῶν καλῶν πάντ’ ἀγαθὰ γέγονε καὶ θεοῖς καὶ ἀνθρώποις).³⁴

³³ See p. 8 above.

³⁴ Pl. *Symp.* 197b.

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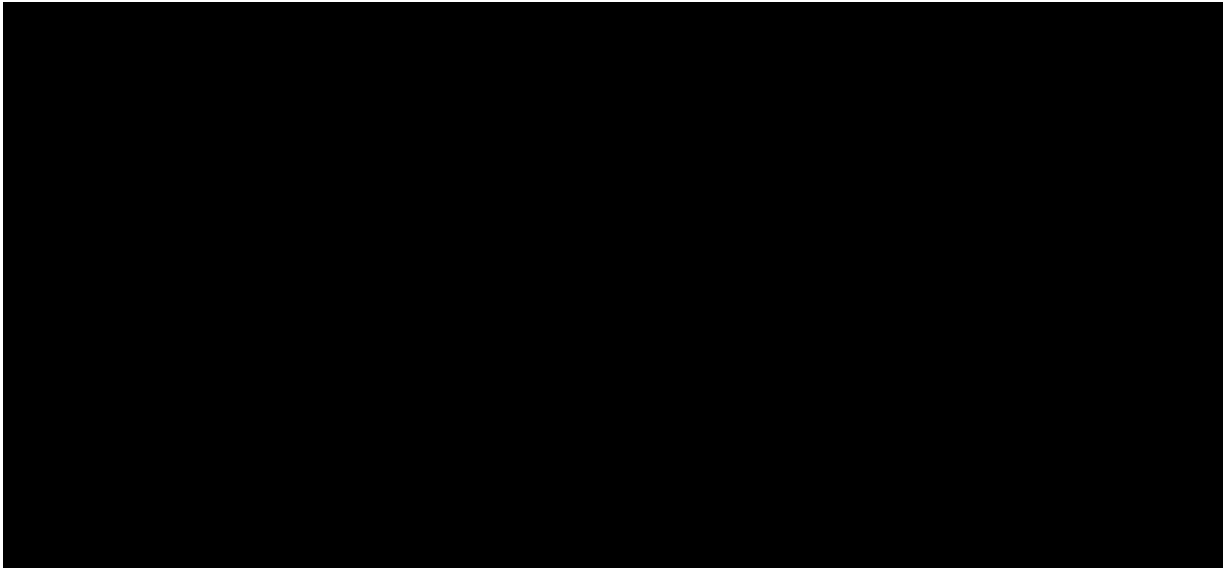


Fig. 1. Painted wooden plaque dedicated to the nymphs by three women who performed a private sacrifice to the nymphs. From Pitsa near Sikyon, c.540 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum.

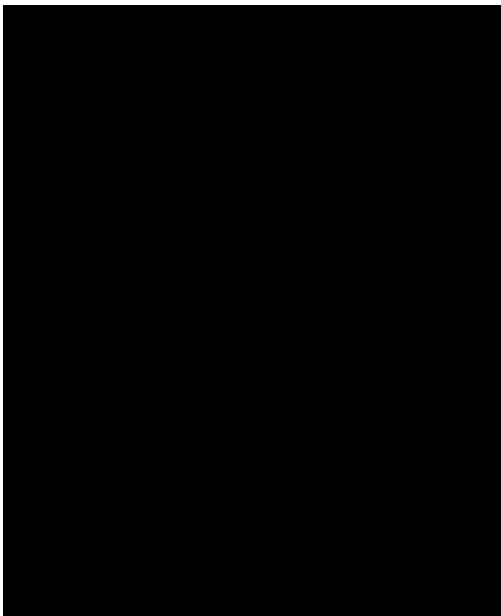


Fig. 2. Detail of Apollo and Hermes on the Sophilos dinos, Attic black-figure c.580 BCE. London, British Museum.

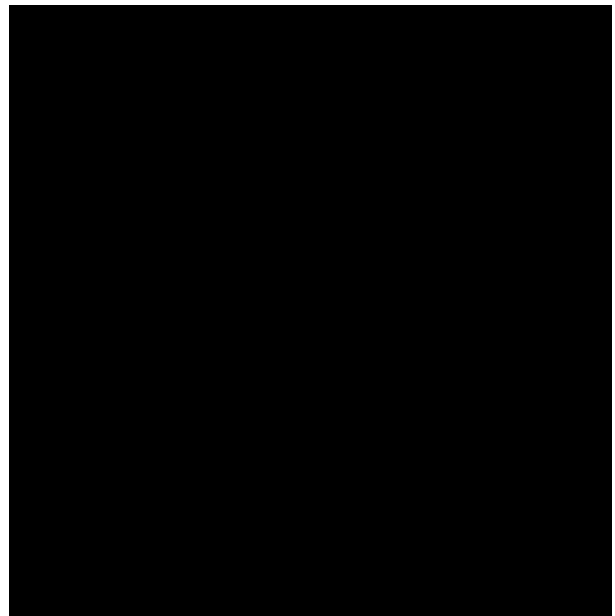
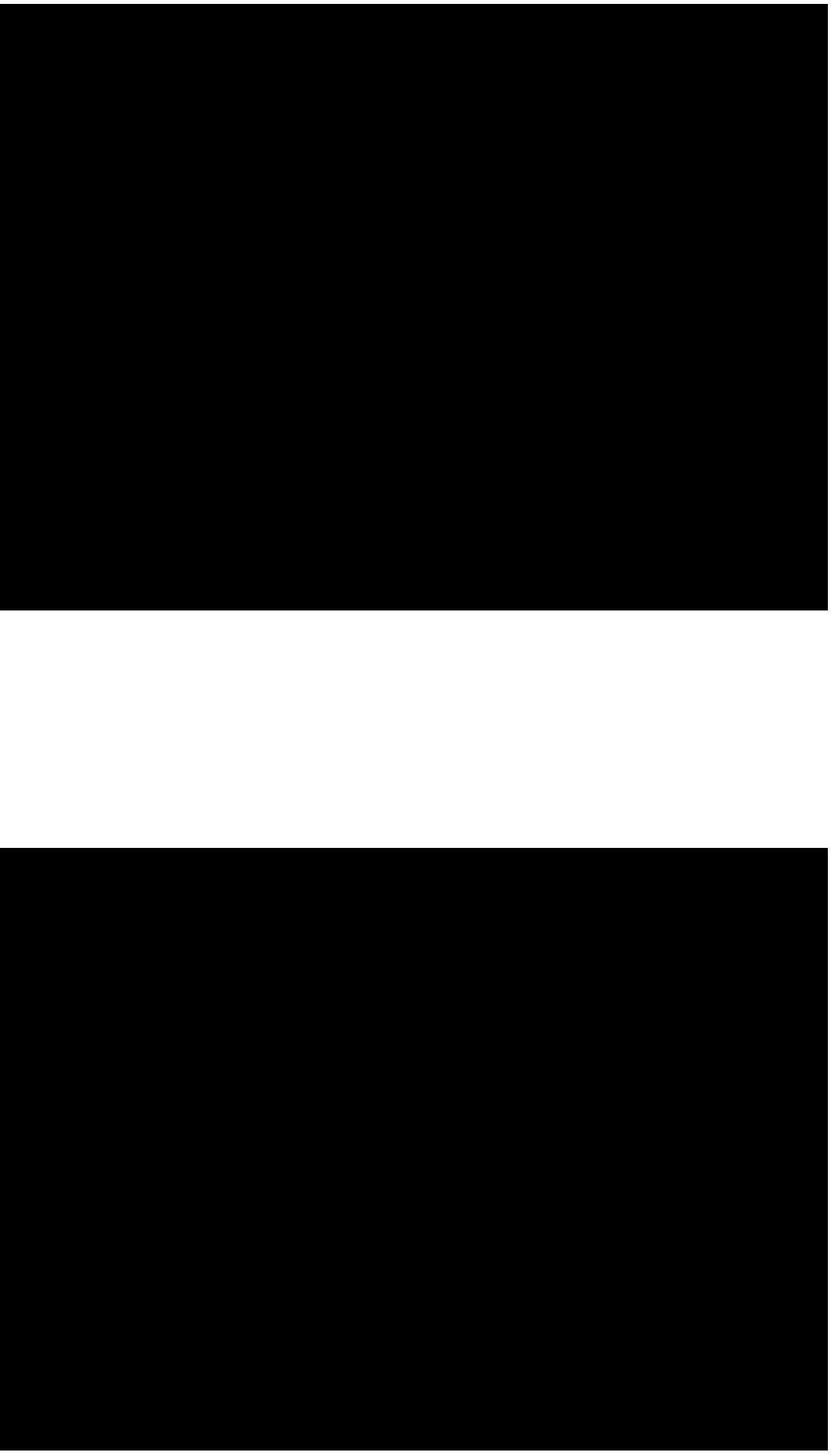


Fig. 3. Fragment of a pinax from the Athenian akropolis, c.580 BCE. Athens, National Museum, Acropolis 2523. Source: Graef and Langlotz 1925, pl. 104.



Figs. 4 (left) and 5 (right). Apollo and Artemis on an Attic black-figure neck-amphora, c.540 BCE, and a mortal kithara-player on the reverse. London, British Museum. Source: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=398934&partId=1

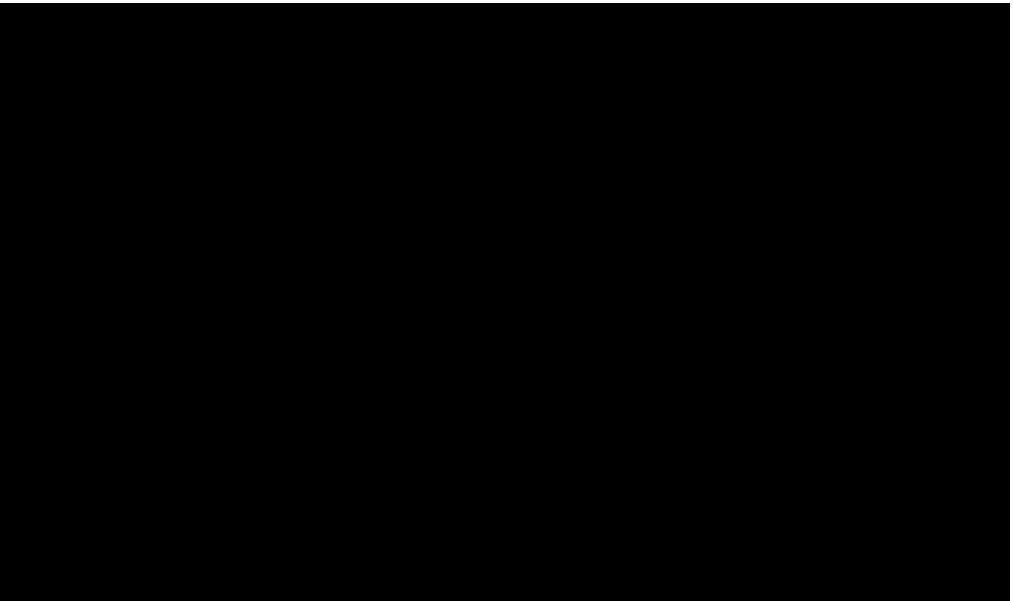
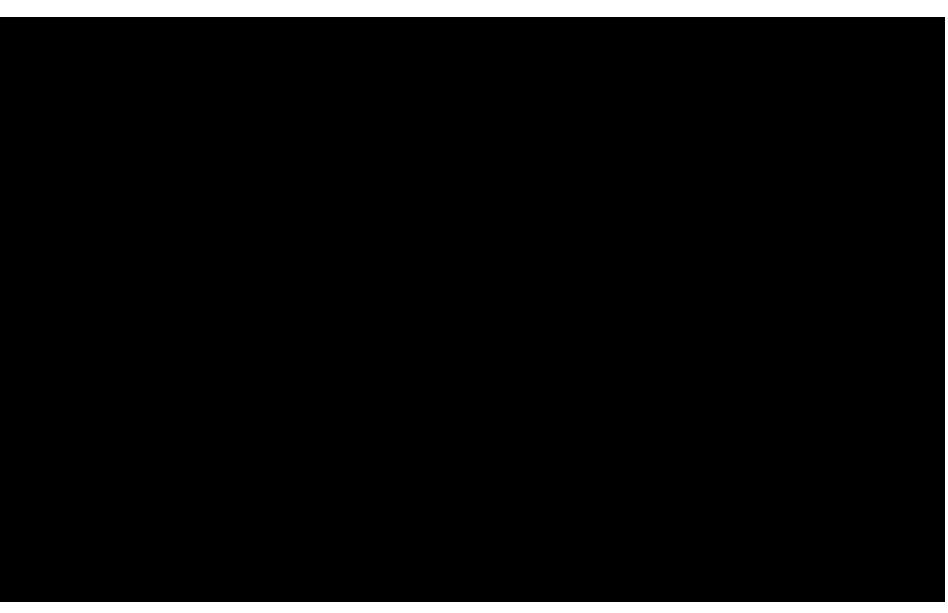
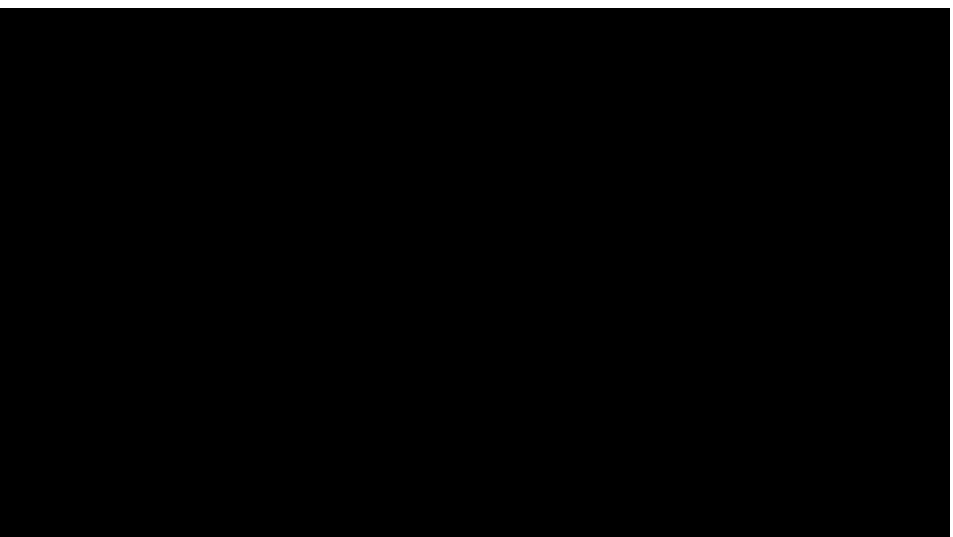
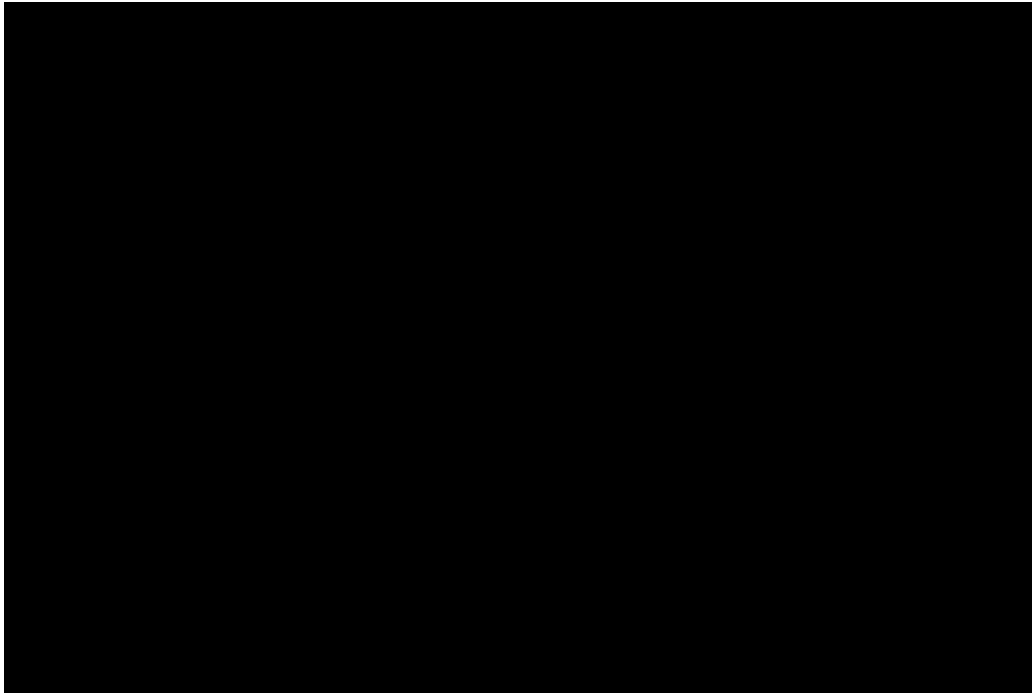


Fig. 6. A singing kitharode, red-figure neck-amphora attributed to the Brygos Painter, c.480 BCE. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. Source: <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/two-handed-jar-nolan-amphora-153620>.



Figs. 7 and 8. An aulete and a rhapsode on the reverse, red-figure neck-amphora attributed to the Kleophrades Painter, c.490 BCE. London, British Museum. Source: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=399287&partId=1&searchText=kleophrades+painter&page=1.



Figs. 9 (above) and 10 (below). A cow brought to sacrifice for Athena at an altar with Athena, and two kithara-players and two aulos-players accompanying the sacrifice on the reverse. Black-figure amphora, c.540 BCE, attributed to the Painter of Berlin 1686. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Source: <http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/xdb/ASP/recordDetails.asp?newwindow=true&id={49C90404-E02F-4CA6-9935-9FA96C821072}>.

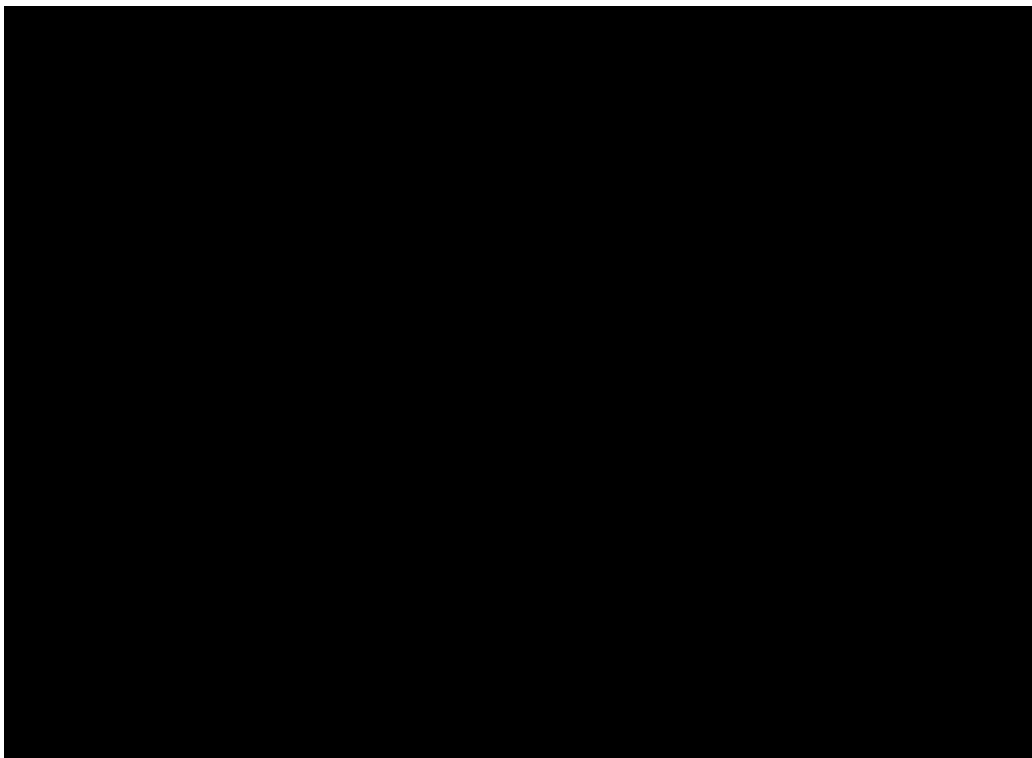


Fig. 11 (left).
Ivory figurine
from the
Heraion on
Samos, c.610
BCE. Vathy,
Vathy
Archaeological
Museum.

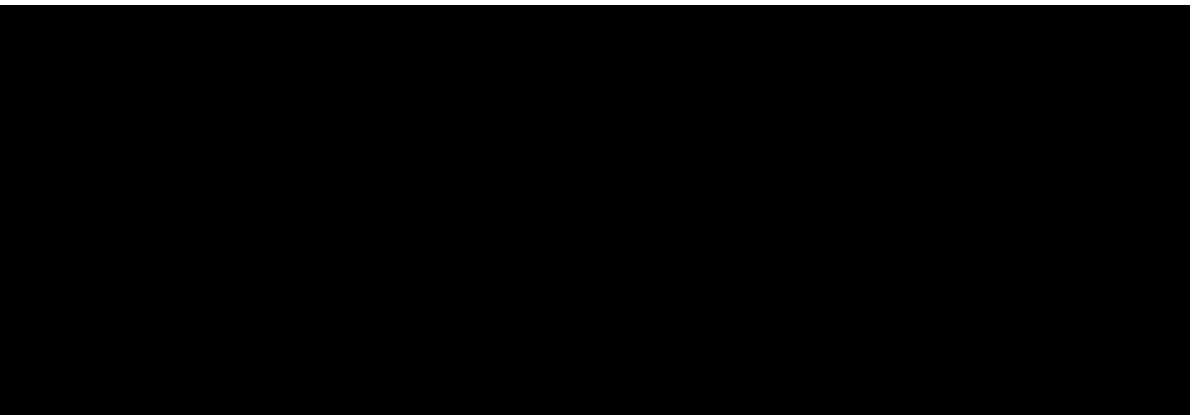
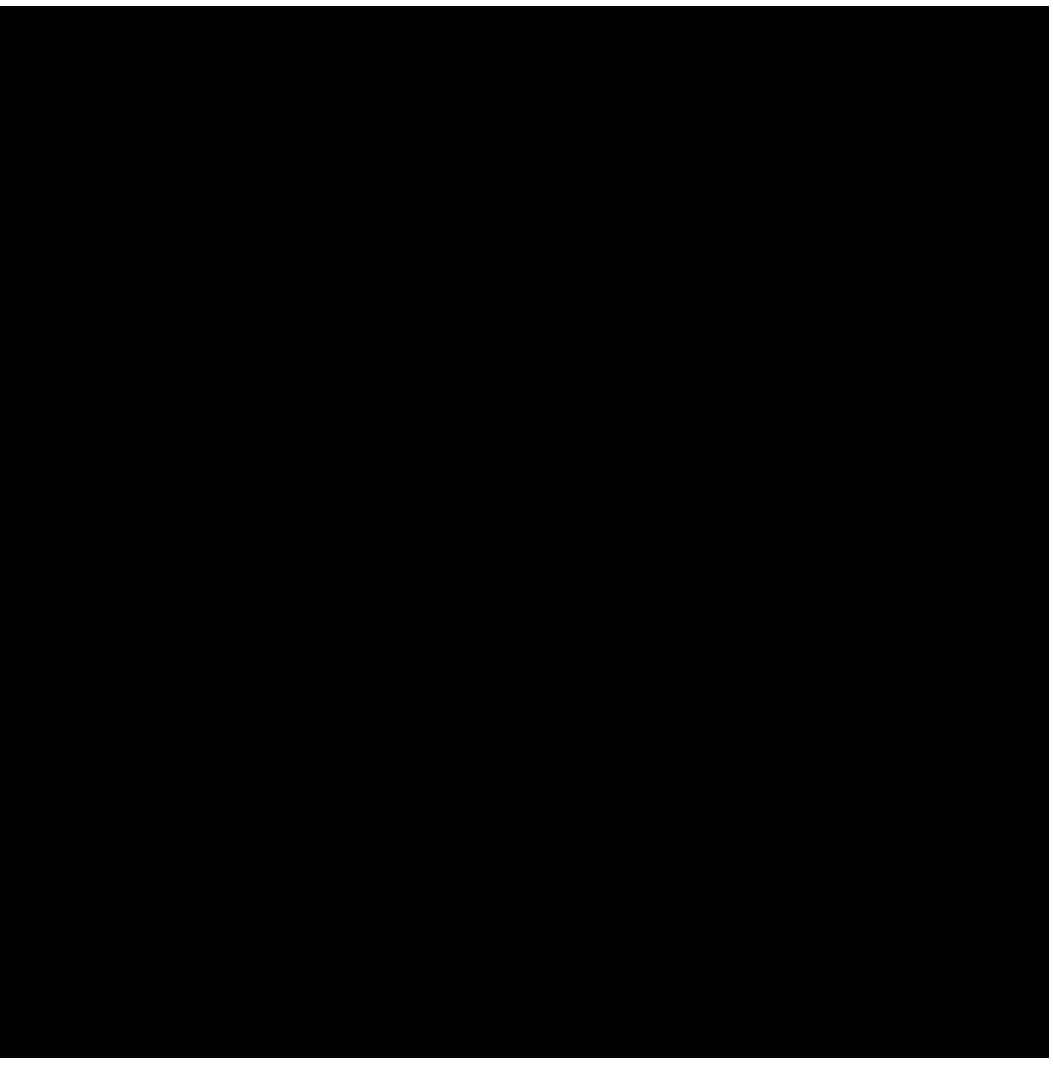


Fig. 12. Black-figure Attic cup from Rhodes attributed to the Painter of the Burgon Sianas, c.560-550 BCE. London, British Museum. Source: https://britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=50730001&objectid=399908



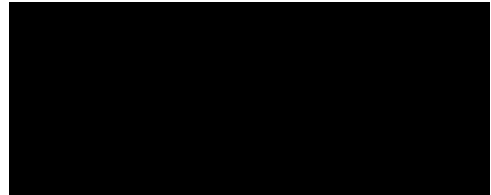


Fig. 13. Bronze snake-bracelet from Volantsa, *c.*600-550 BCE. Details of carving above. Olympia, Archaeological Museum of Olympia. Source: Philipp 1981, pl. 15.

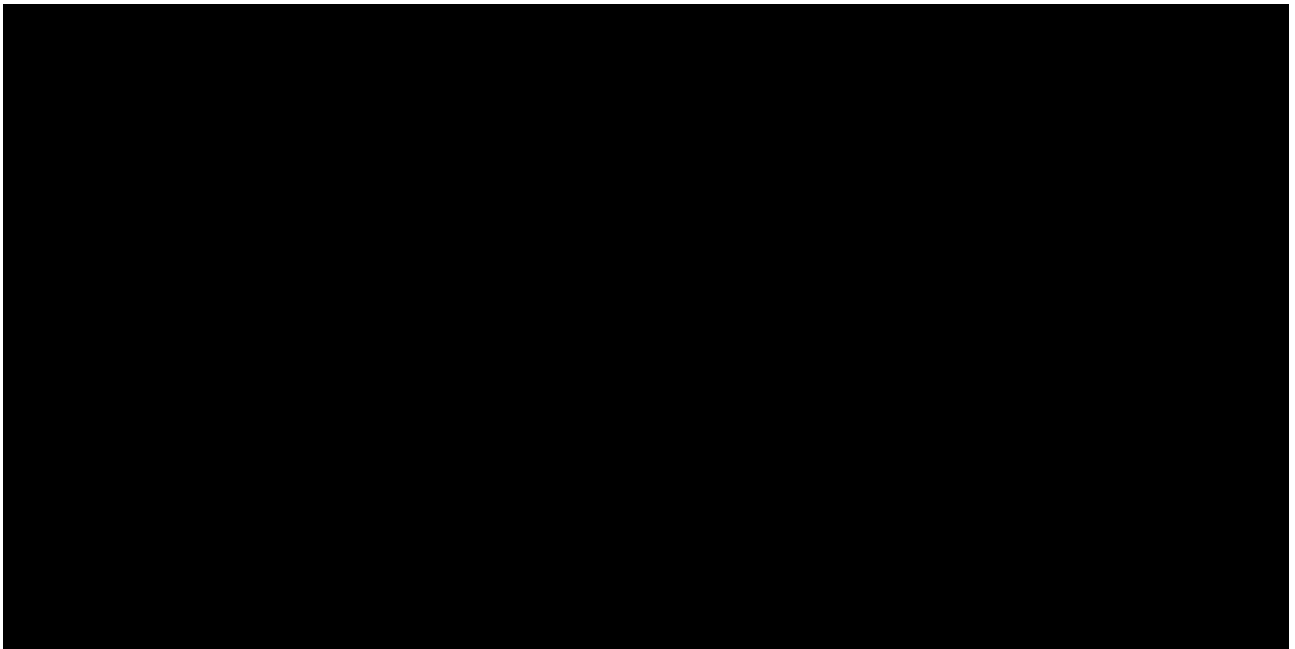


Fig. 14. Drawing of a wreath from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, Sparta, *c.* 650-600 BCE. The wire is silver, the leaves and berries gold. Sparta, Archaeological Museum of Sparta. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. CCIII.

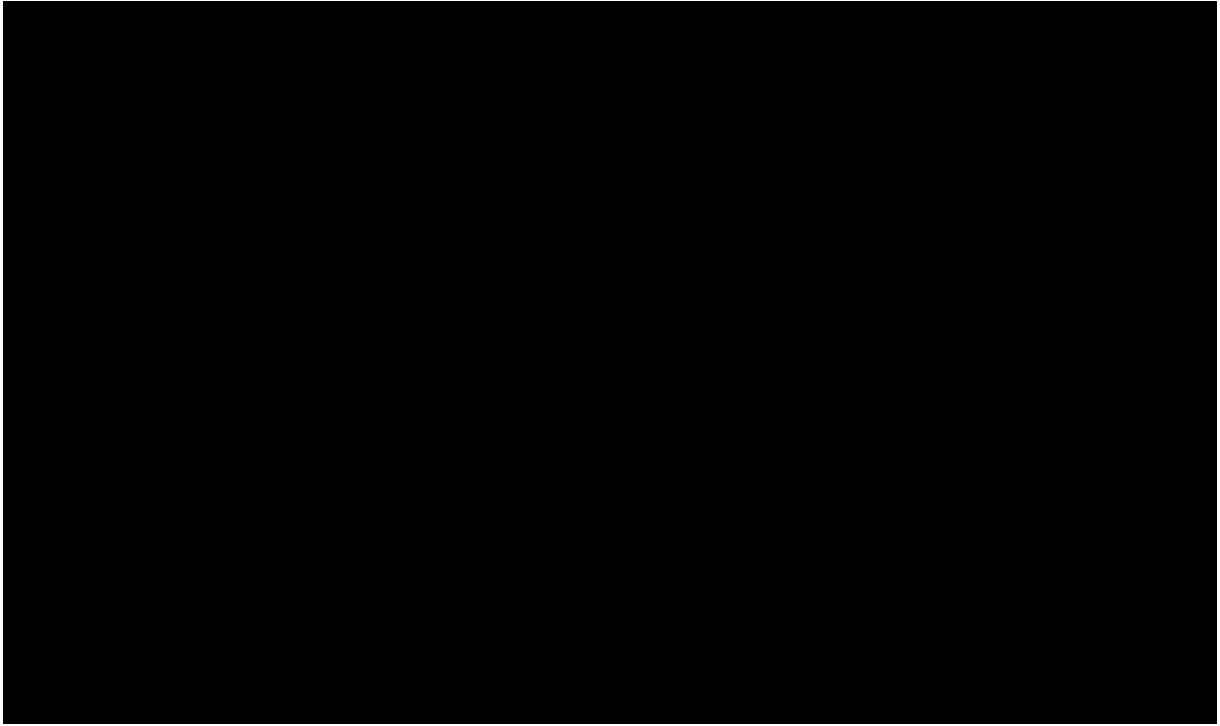


Fig. 15. Terracotta votive pinax depicting four women and a male aulos-player from the Athenian akropolis, c.520 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Graef and Langlotz 1925, pl. 108.

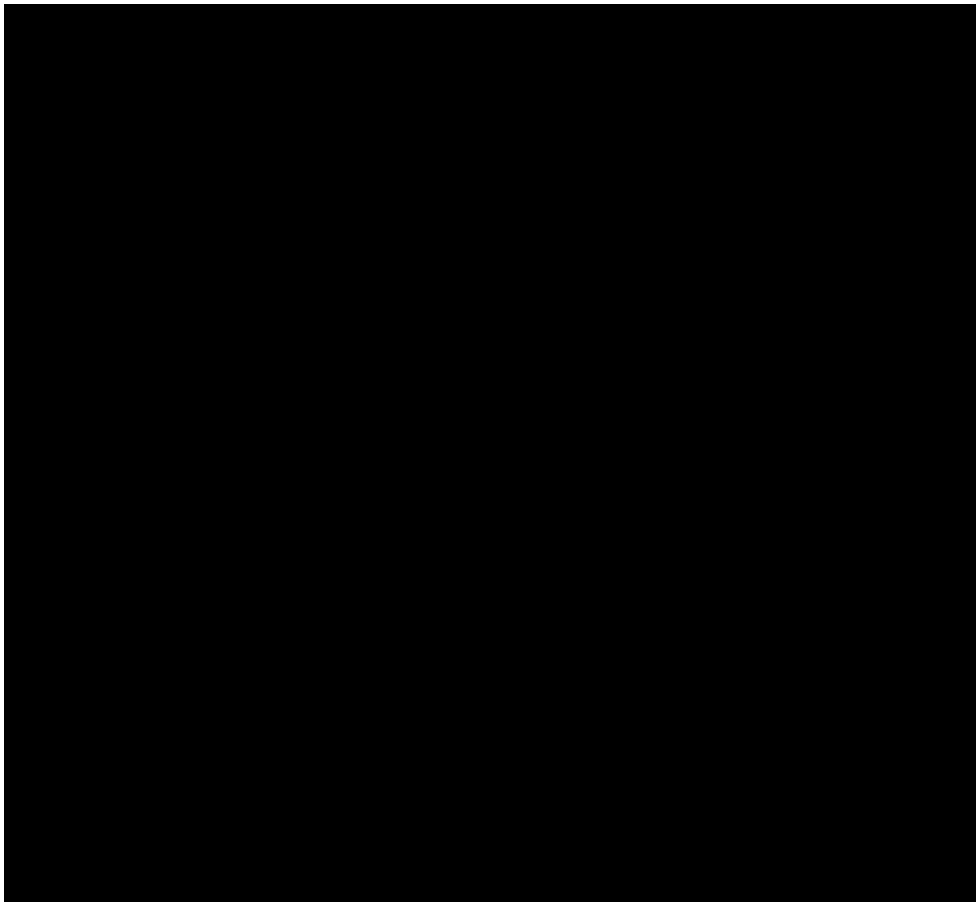


Fig. 16. Marble votive relief from the Athenian akropolis, c.510 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Pandermalis et al. 2014, 159.

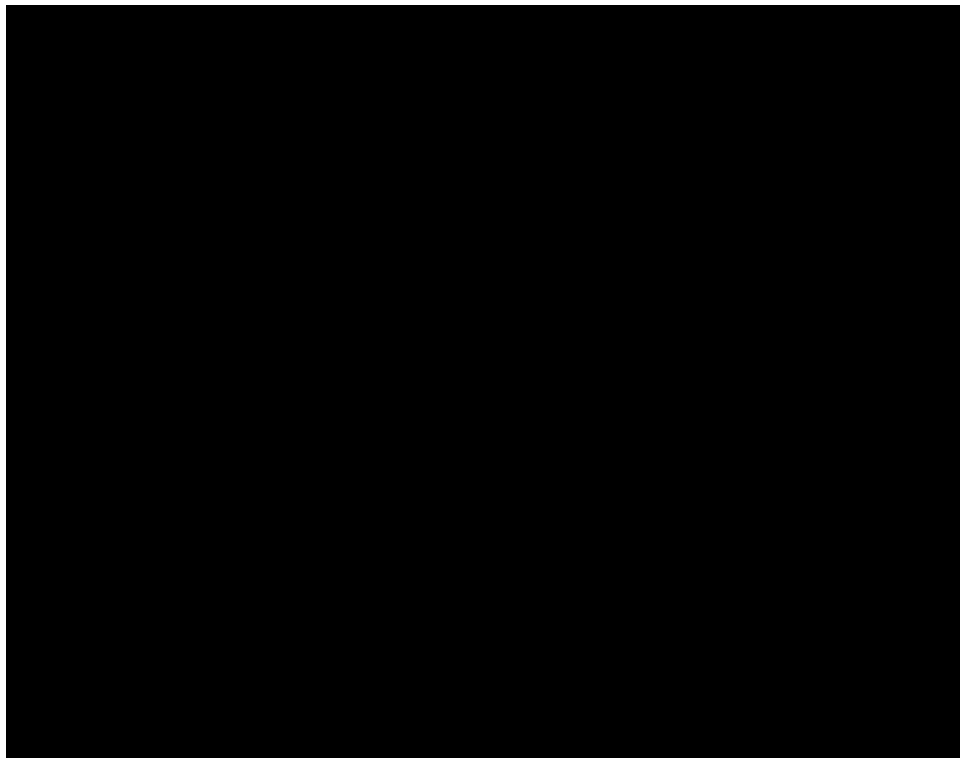


Fig. 17. Map of the eastern Corinthia. The dotted line represents the main road linking northern Greece to the Peloponnese. Source: Gebhard 2001.

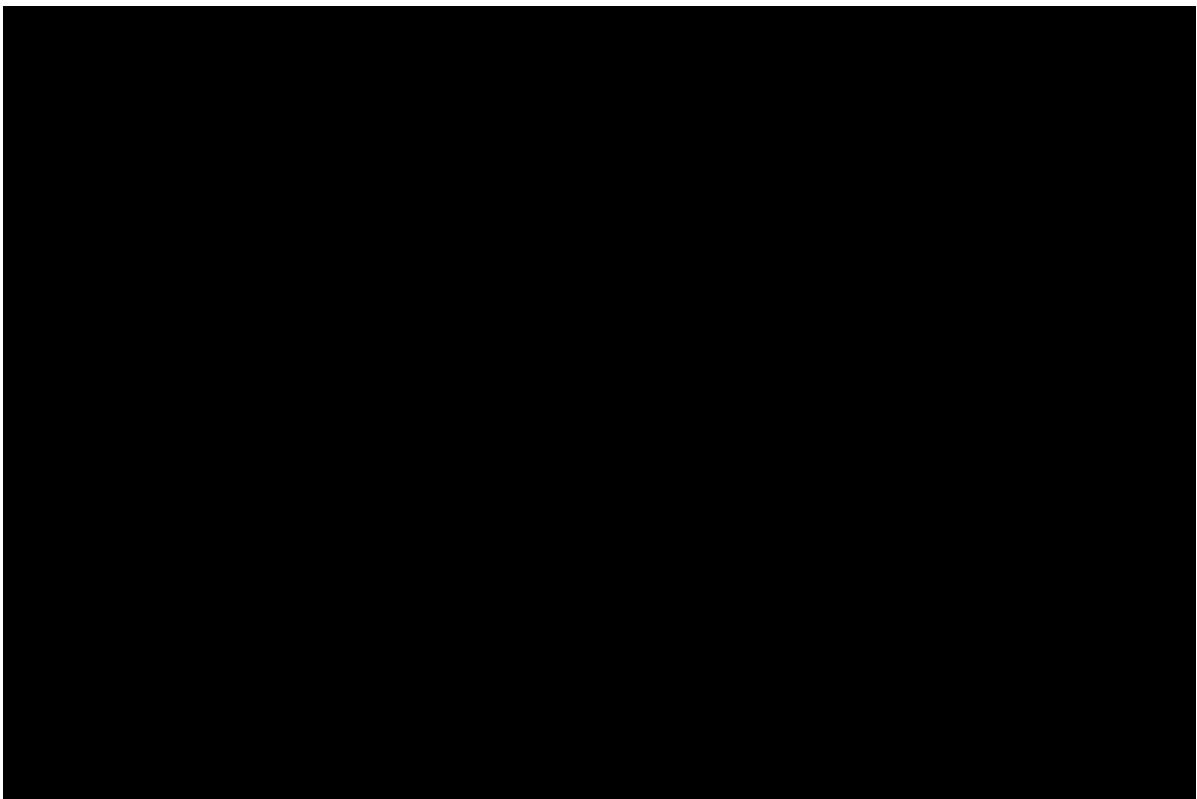


Fig. 18. View east towards the Saronic Gulf from the east end of the Temple of Poseidon, Isthmia.

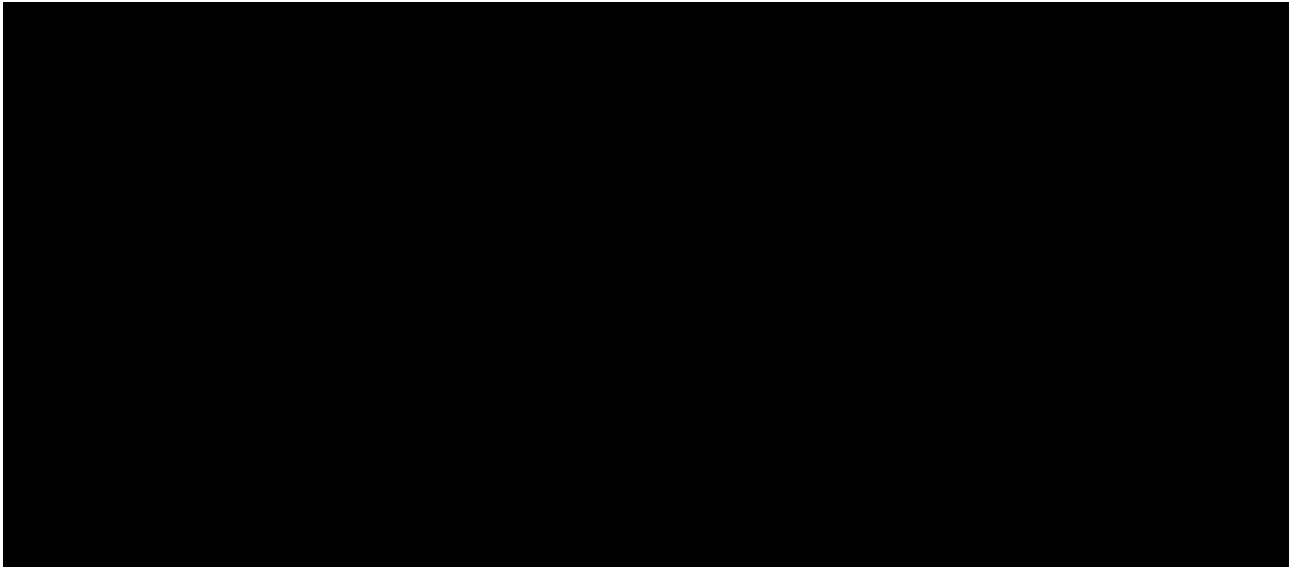


Fig. 19. Actual-state plan of the Archaic temple. The cross-hatched sections denote excavated areas of robbed-out foundations. Source: Hemans 2015, 41.

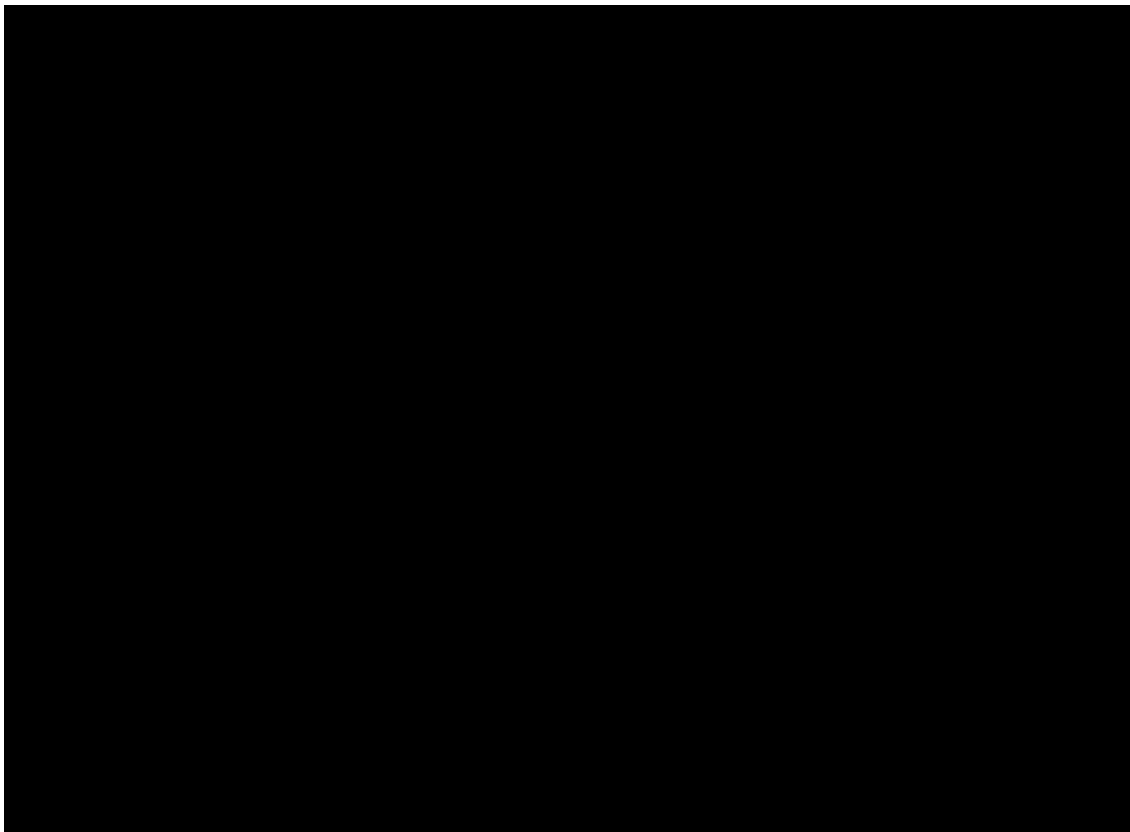


Fig. 20. The Protocorinthian tile system used for the seventh century Corinthian temples on Temple Hill and at Isthmia. The Isthmian roof has an additional small peak on the pan tiles; see fig. 26. Source: Sapirstein 2008, 58.

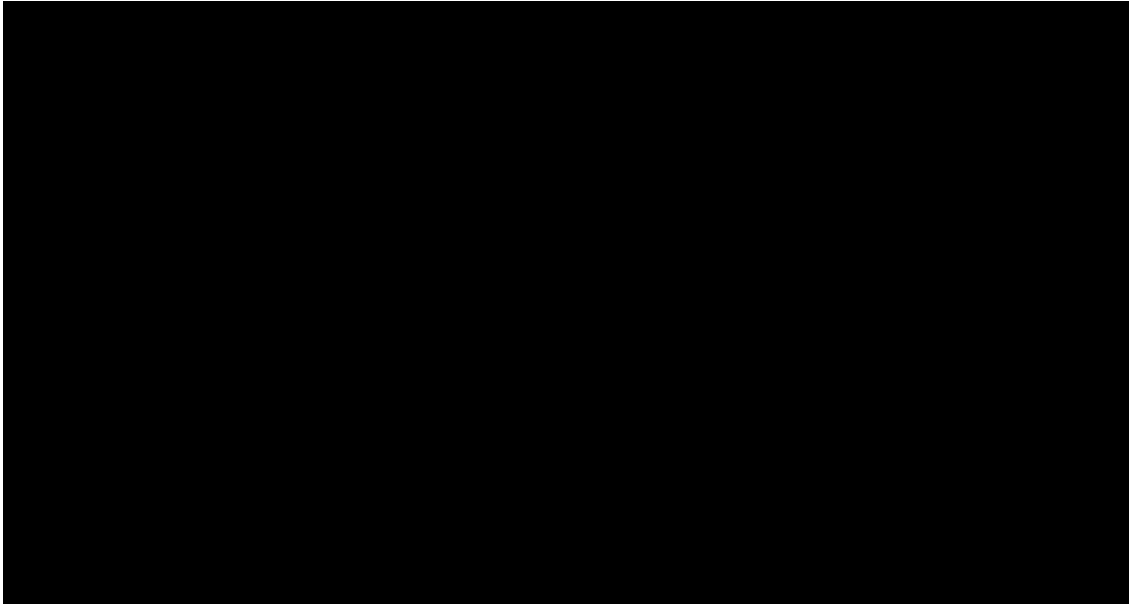


Fig. 21. Combination pan and cover tiles from the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia. Archaeological Museum of Isthmia, Isthmia.



Fig. 22. Reconstructing the process of manufacturing Protocorinthian tiles. Source: Hemans 2015, 61.

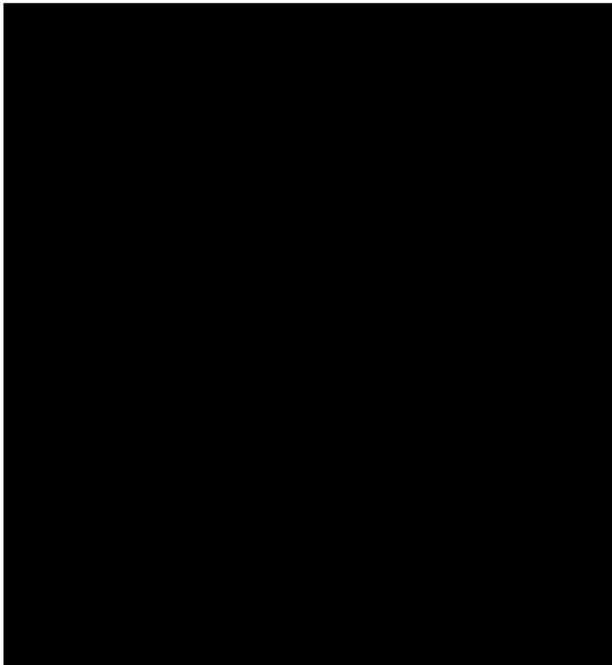


Fig. 23 (left). Terracotta roof model from the sanctuary of Poseidon at Helike, c.725-700 BCE. Source: Gadolou 2017, 213.

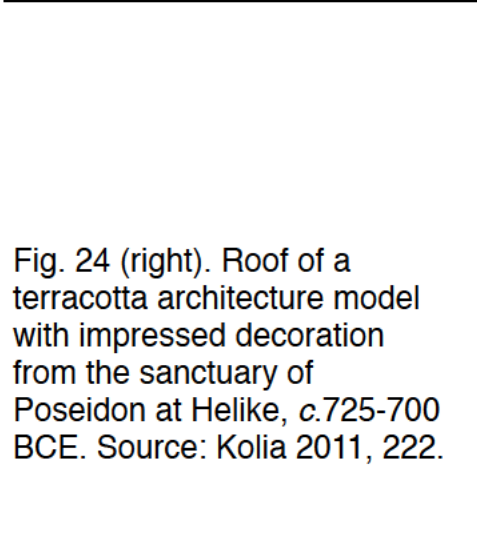


Fig. 24 (right). Roof of a terracotta architecture model with impressed decoration from the sanctuary of Poseidon at Helike, c.725-700 BCE. Source: Kolia 2011, 222.

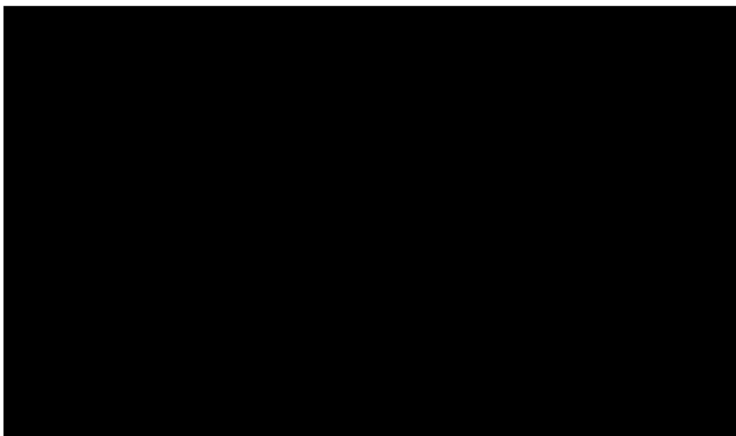


Fig. 25. Fragments of the roof of a terracotta house model from Aetos on Ithaka, c.725-650 BCE. Source: Schattner 1990, pl. 2.

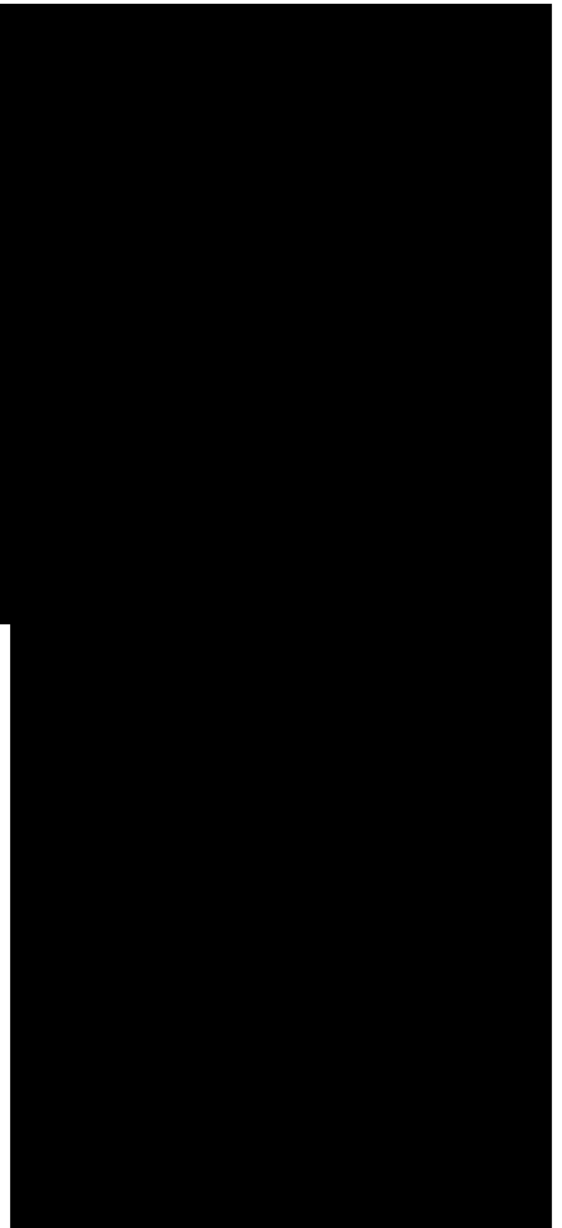


Fig. 26. Restoration of the corner of the Isthmian roof showing triangular peak on pan tiles. Source: Hemans 2015, 50.

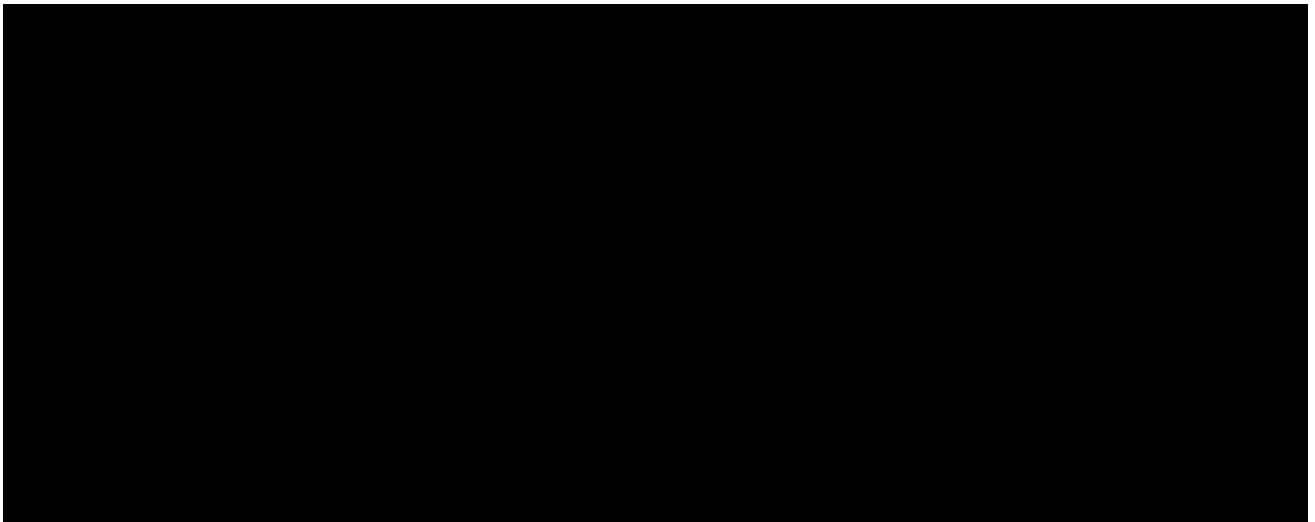


Fig. 27. Restored view and cross-section of the end of the Isthmian temple showing the alignment of the width of four roof tiles with the columns below. Source: Hemans 2015, 55.

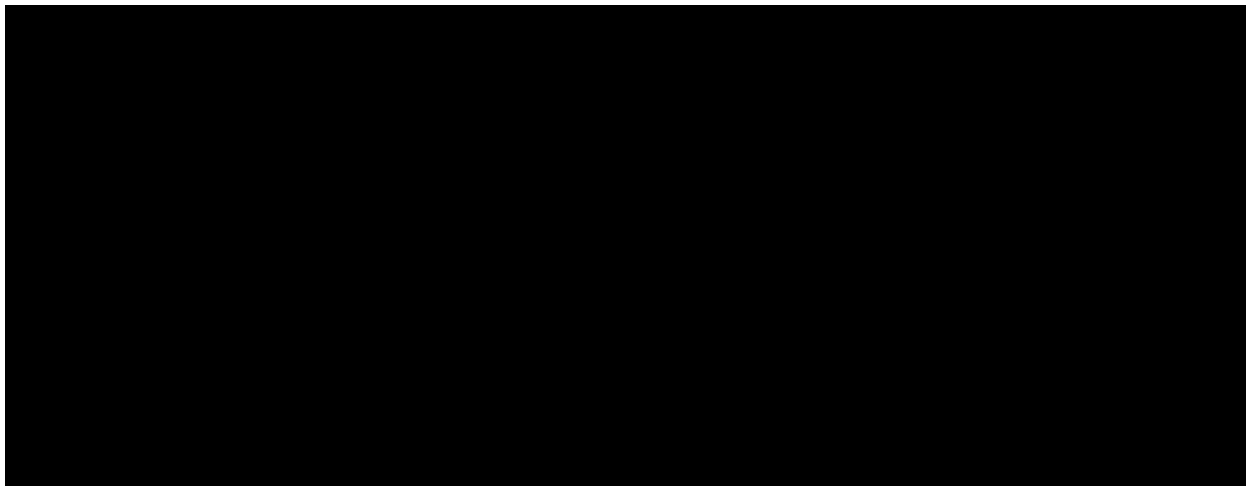


Fig. 28. Restored plan of the temple: 7 x 18 columns; pilasters along the south and north cella walls aligned with the columns; two entrances to the cella; central row of columns in pronaos and cella. Source: Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 32.

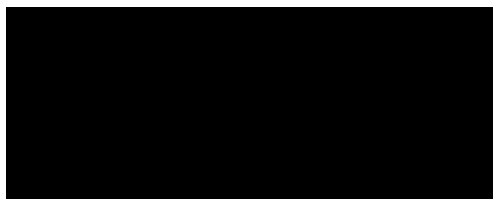


Fig. 29. Plan of the apsidal temple with peristyle for Artemis Aontia at Rakita, second half of the eighth century BCE. Source: Wilson Jones 2014, 40.

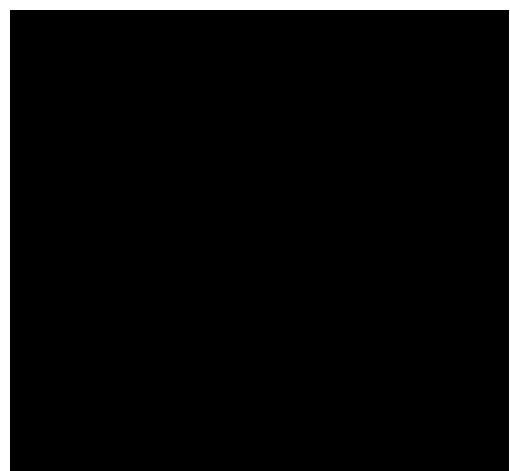


Fig. 30. Reconstruction of the apsidal temple with semi-circular column arrangement at Poseidon's sanctuary in Helike, end of the eighth to beginning of the seventh century BCE. Source: Kolia 2011, 229.

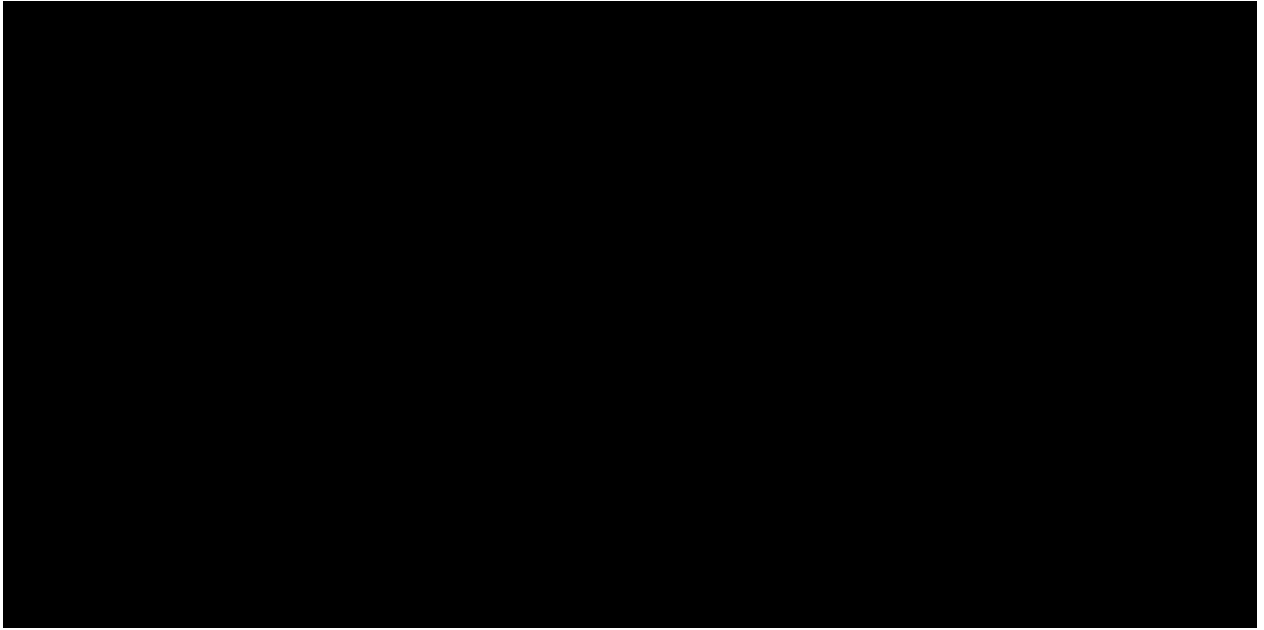


Fig. 31. Reconstructed cella wall using the limestone blocks from the Isthmian temple found on site.

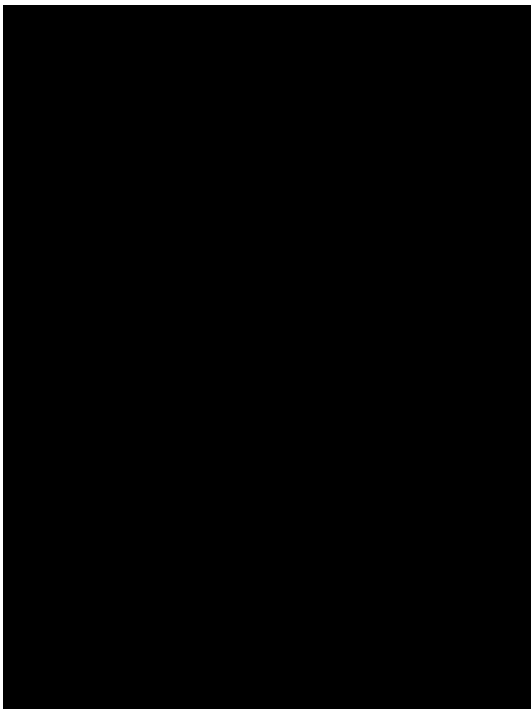


Fig. 32. External face of a limestone block from the cella wall preserving traces of white stucco, Isthmia.

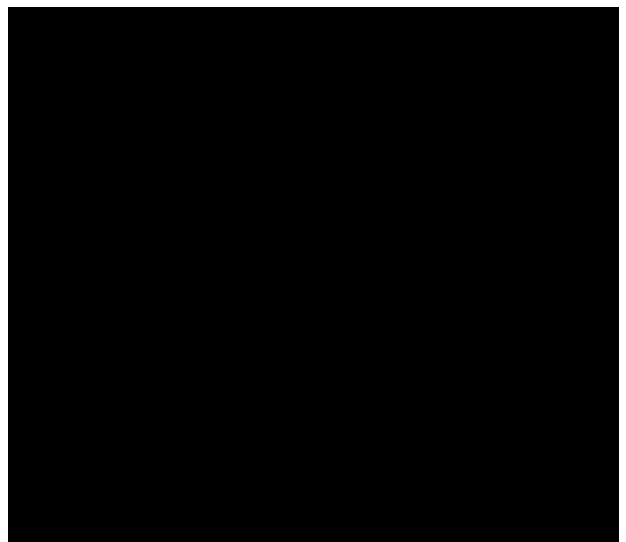
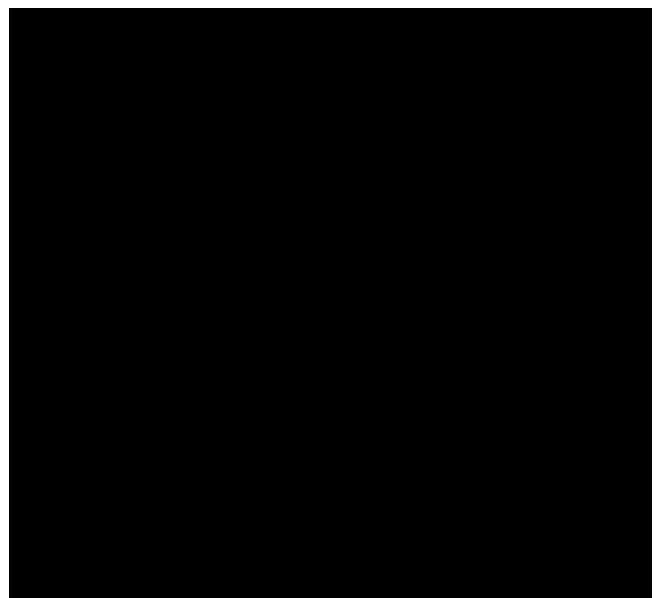
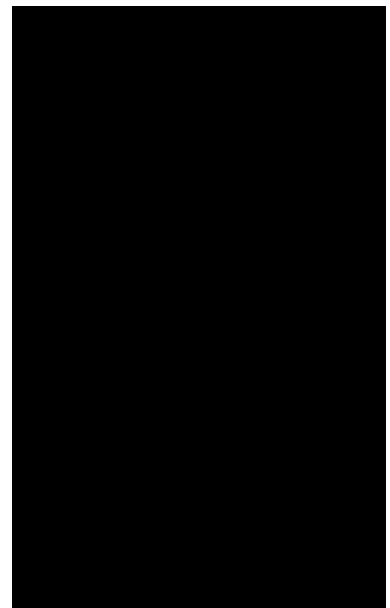


Fig. 33 (right). Fragment of wall-painting from the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia. Isthmia, Archaeological Museum of Isthmia. Source: Mugione and Benincasa 2012.



Figs. 34-7 (above). Fragments of wall-paintings from the temple of Poseidon. Isthmia, Isthmia Archaeological Museum.

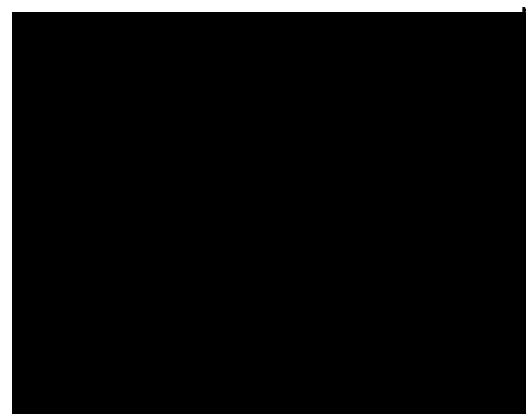
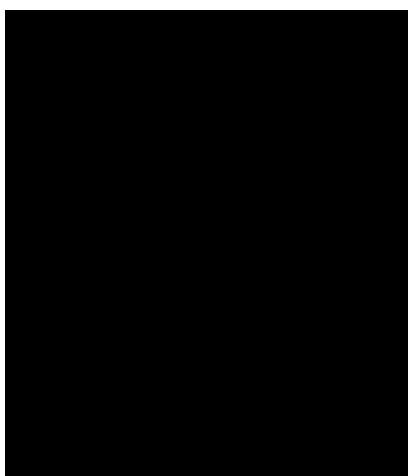


Fig. 38. Fragments of wall-paintings from the temple of Poseidon. Source: *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 1971, pl. c.

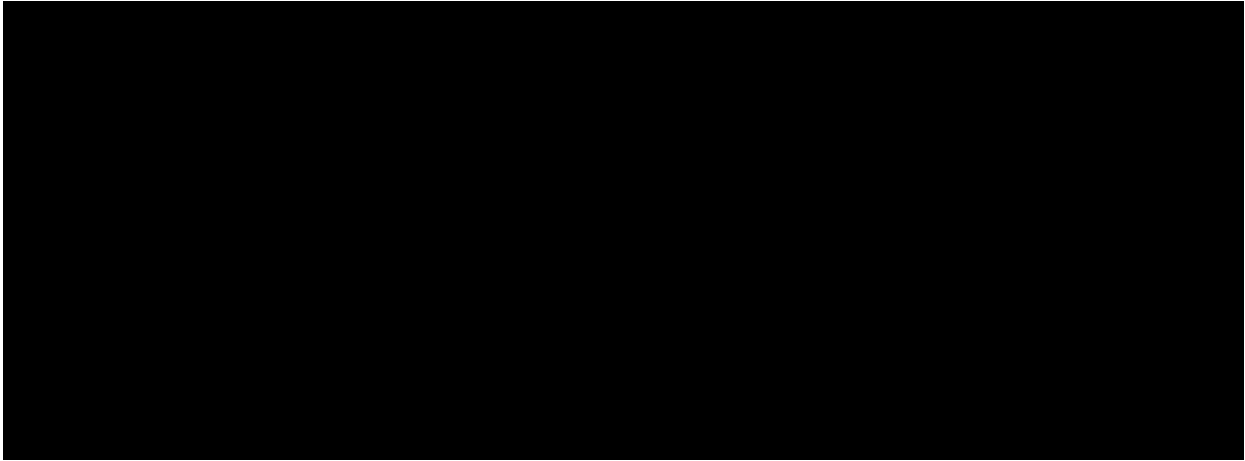


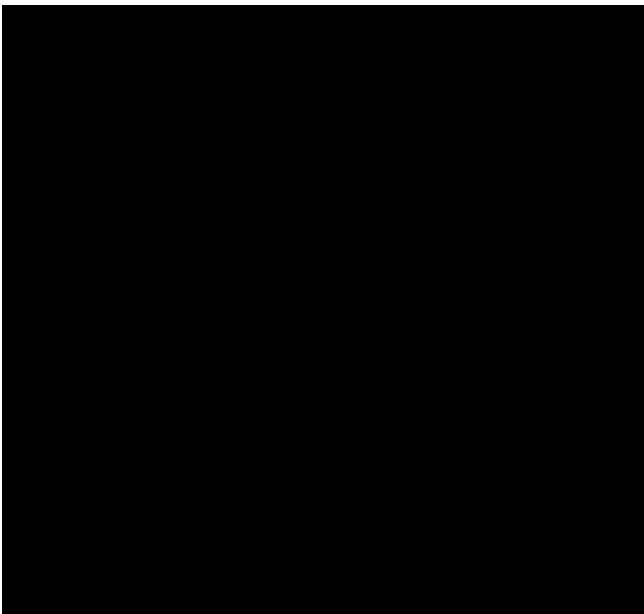
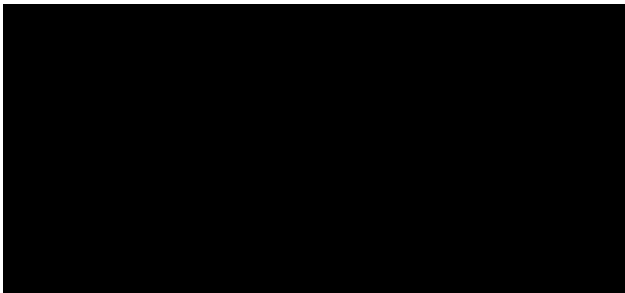
Fig. 39. Fragment of wall-painting from the temple of Poseidon depicting the mane of a horse. Isthmia, Archaeological Museum of Isthmia.



Fig. 40. Detail of the Chigi vase, by the Chigi Painter, showing a frieze of horsemen, c.650-640 BCE. Rome, National Etruscan Museum. Source: Mugione and Benincasa 2012, pl. 7.

Fig. 42 (below). Kotyle with a diagonal meander pattern, attributed to the Aigina Bellerophon Painter, c.640 BCE. Aigina, Archaeological Museum of Aigina. Source: Arafat 2015, 129.

Fig. 41 (below). Fragment of a wall-painting from the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia with a diagonal meander pattern. Isthmia, Archaeological Museum of Isthmia. Source: Broneer 1971, pl. A.



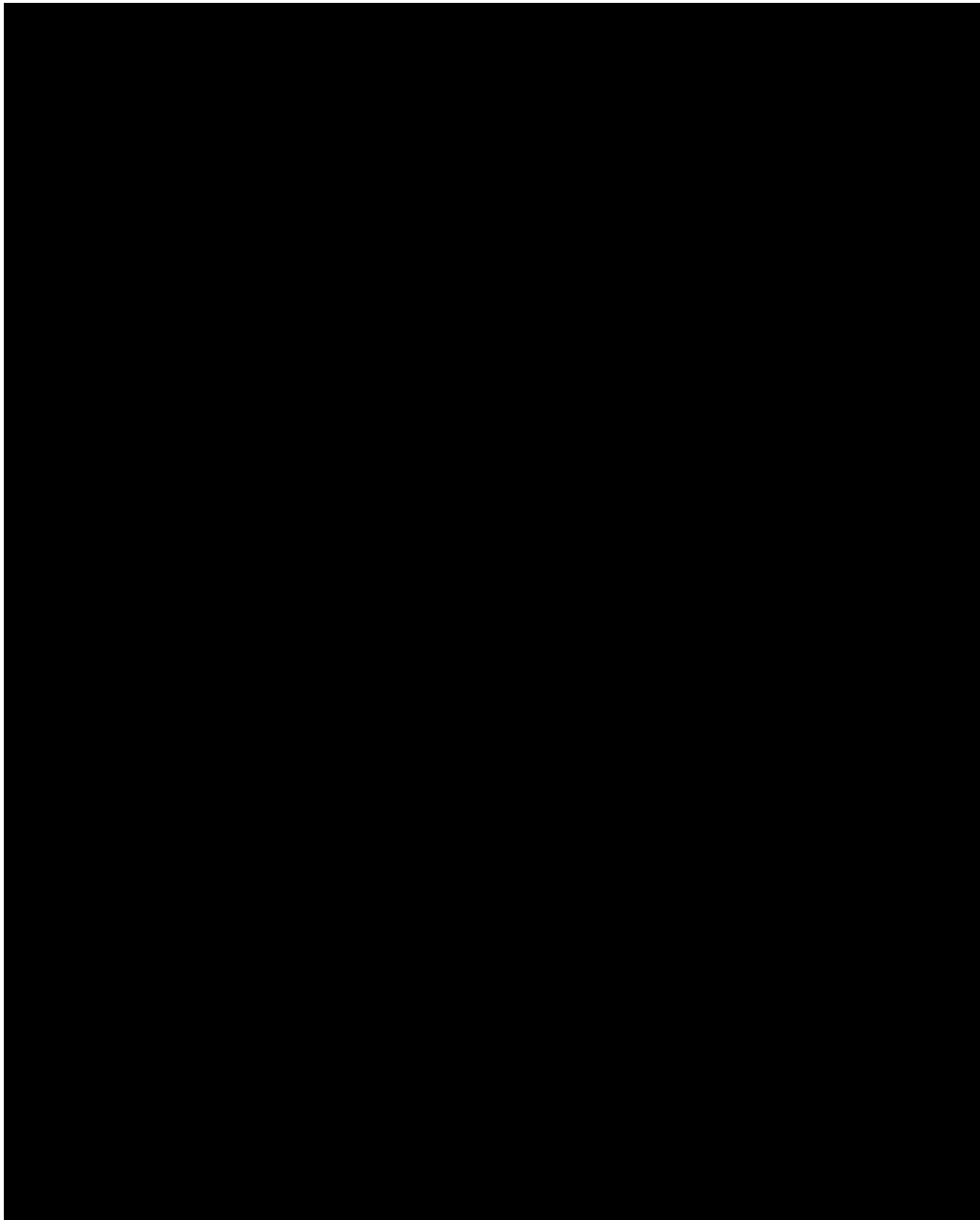


Fig. 43. Reconstruction of fragmentary wall-paintings (c.650 BCE), showing advancing warriors framed by meander and guilloche borders, from the South temple in the sanctuary of Apollo at Abai (Kalapodi). Source: Mugione and Benincasa 2012, pl. XIV.

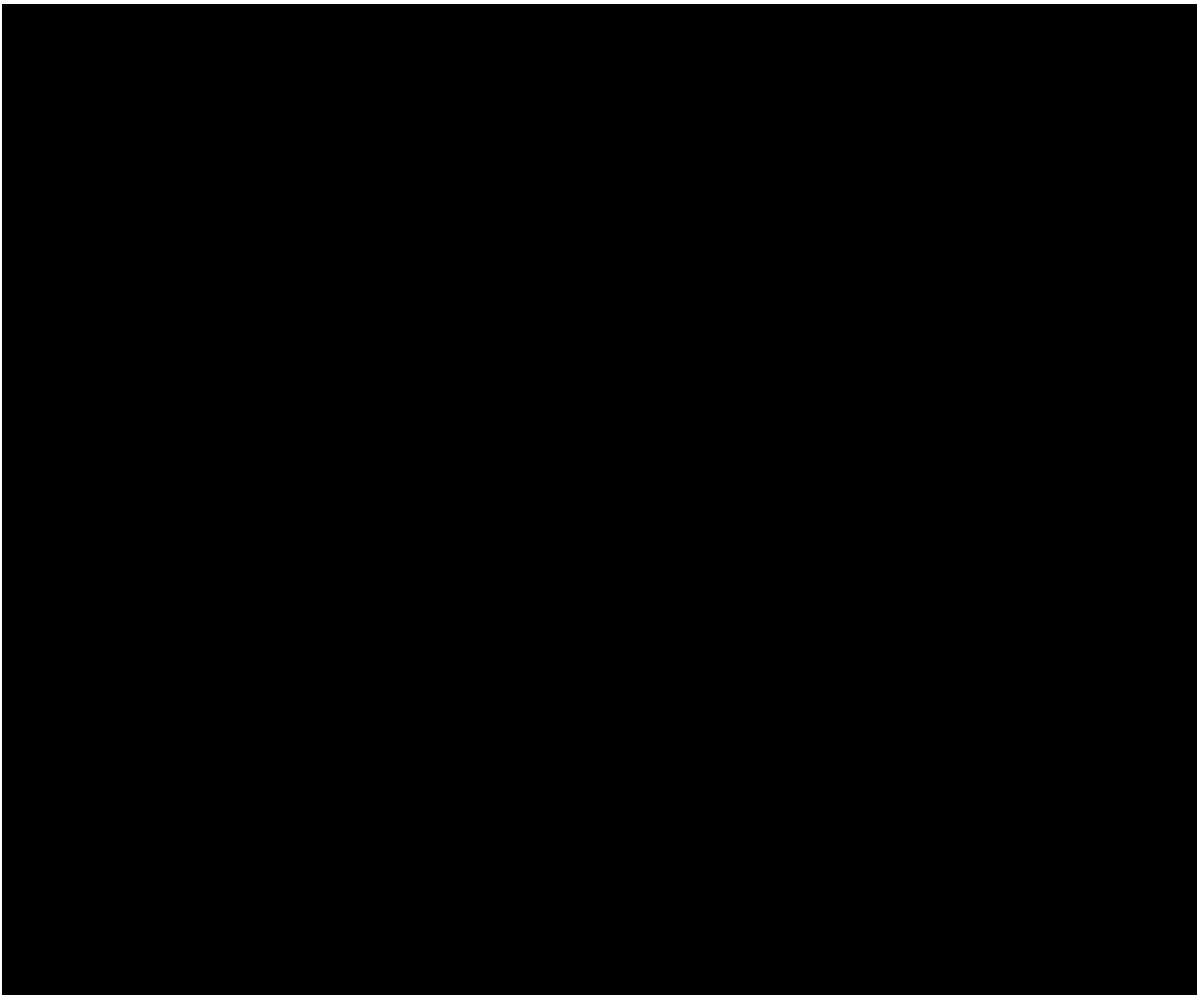


Fig. 44. Map of the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia c.650 BCE. Excavated portions of the temenos walls are marked in continuous lines and the proposed extension of the walls in dotted lines. Notice the Archaic road running adjacent to northern temenos wall. Source: Gebhard and Hemans 1992, 24.

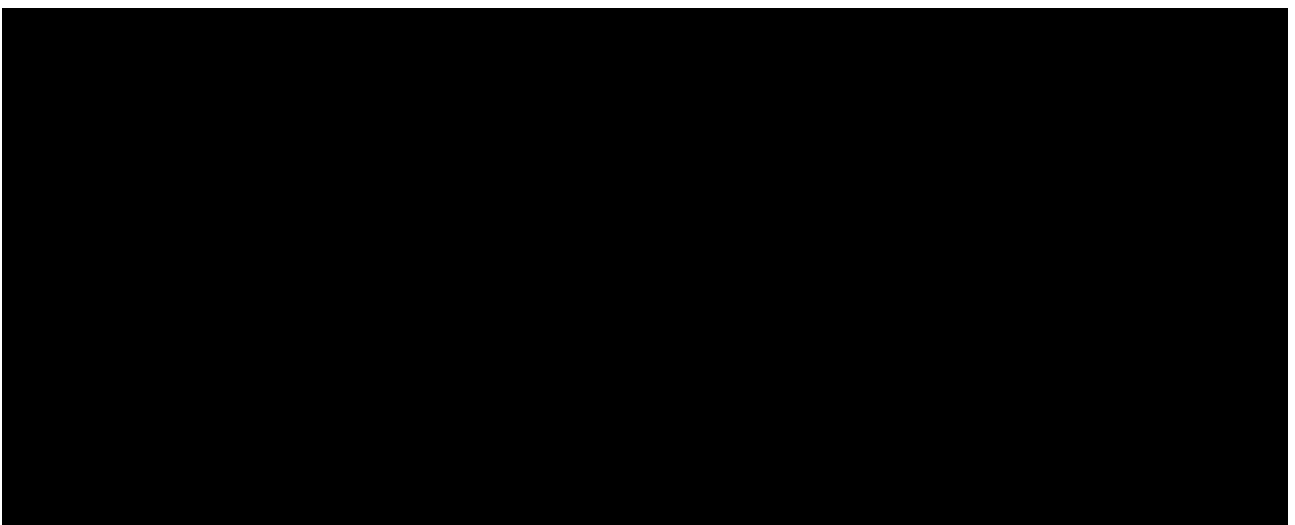


Fig. 45. Restored view of the temple of Poseidon from the southeast c.500 BCE. The temple, altar and temenos walls remain the same from c.650 BCE (the other structures including the building in the foreground and the stadium on the left are sixth century additions). Source: Hemans 2015, 40.

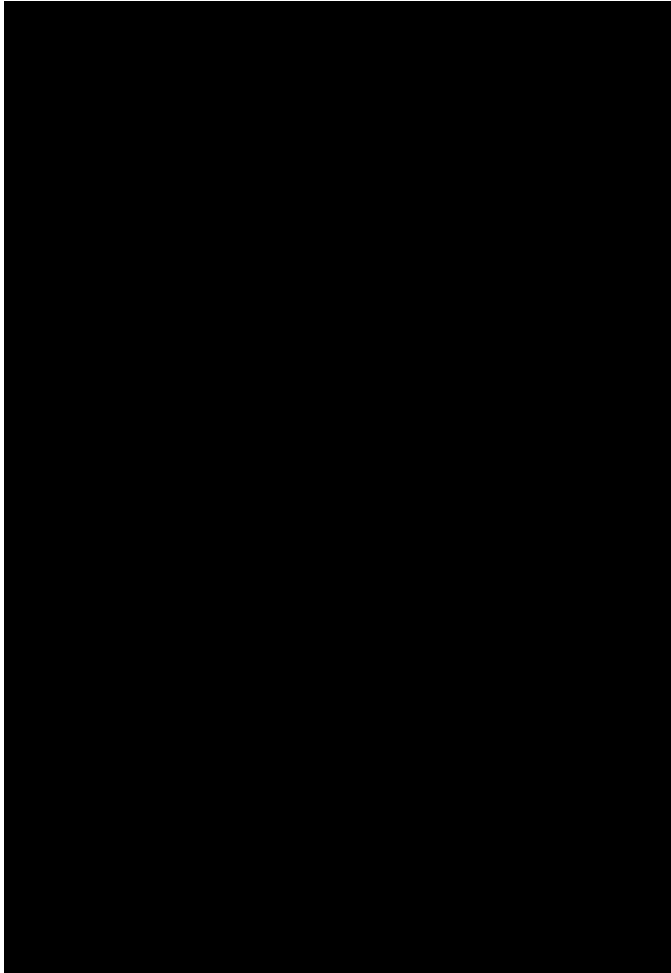


Fig. 46. Bronze Corinthian helmet from Isthmia, c.650-570 BCE. Isthmia, Archaeological Museum of Isthmia.



Figs. 47 (left). Restored view of seventh century Corinthian helmet attached to a post. Source: Jackson 1992, 67.

Fig. 48 (right). Restored view of Corinthian helmet, c.530-500 BCE, with loop in the neck for suspension. Source: Jackson 1992, 68.

Fig. 49. Restoration of sculpted column base with Kroisos' inscription below, temple of Artemis at Ephesos, c.560-530 BCE. Source: Murray 1896, 52.

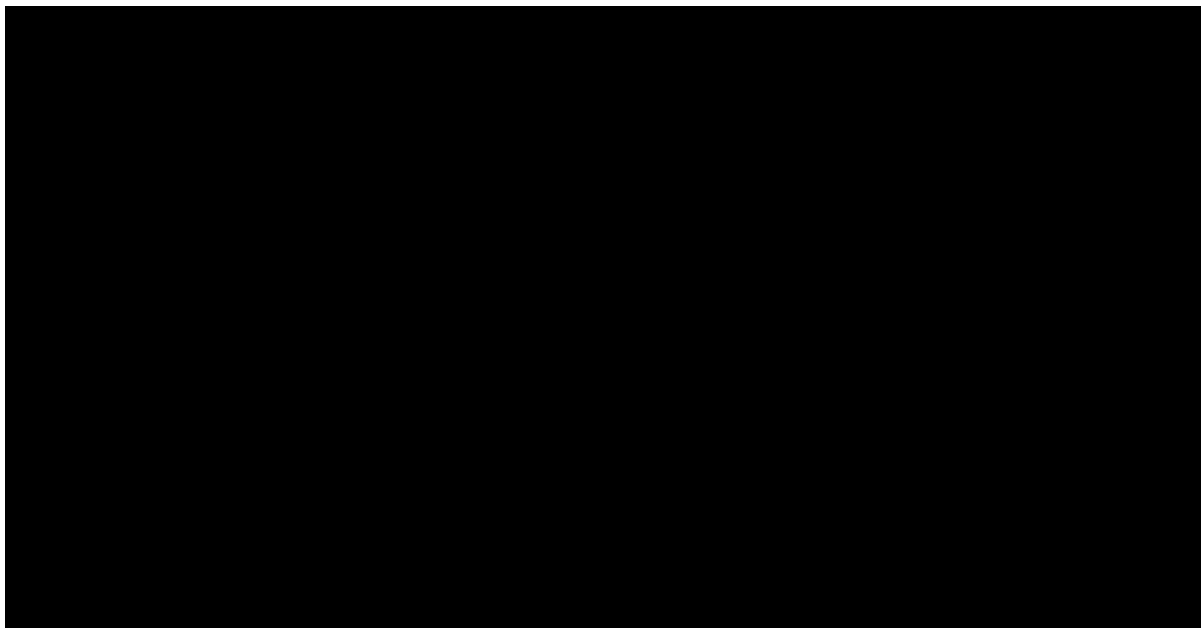
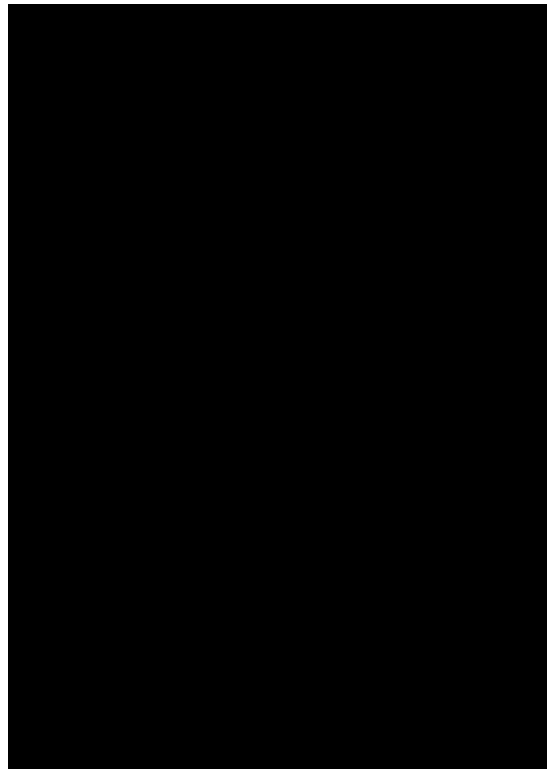


Fig. 50. The altar of the Chians at Delphi, c.500 BCE, viewed from the Sacred Way looking up towards the temple terrace. The inscription is along the external marble moulding which crowns the altar. Source: https://tourguidegirl.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/img_8548.jpg

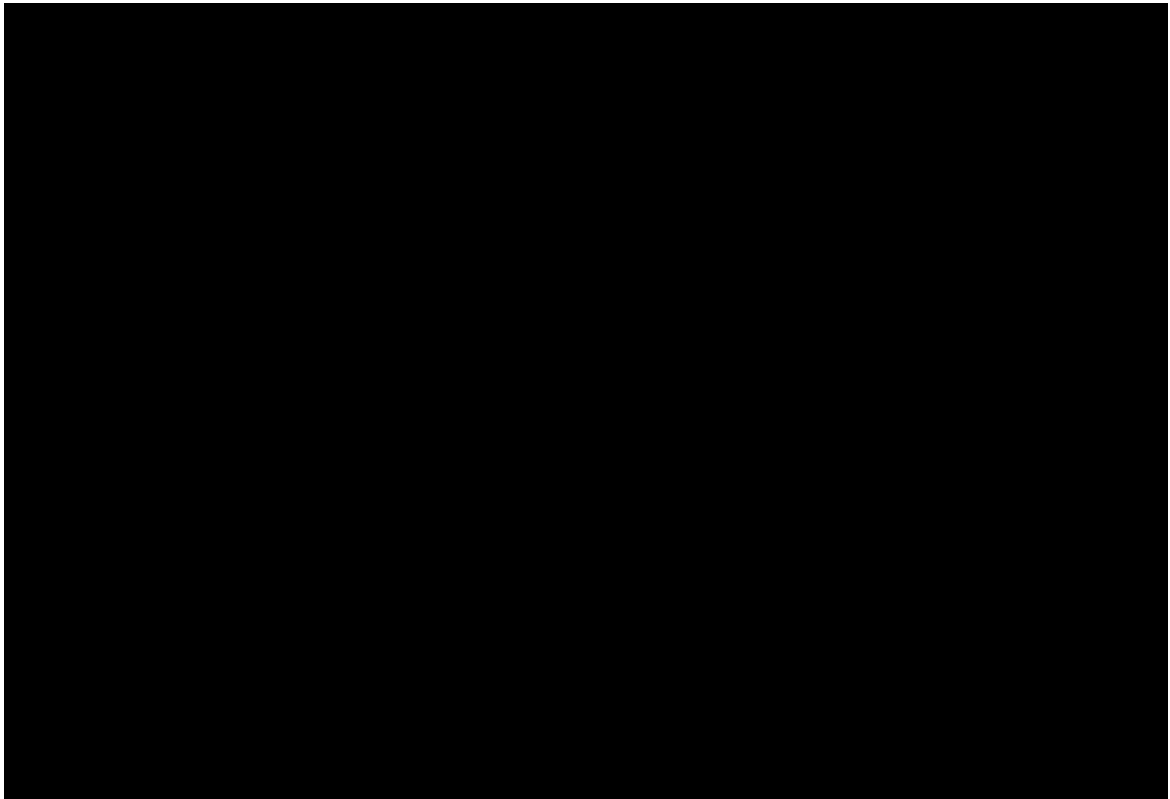


Fig. 51. The temple of Apollo in Syracuse, c.580 BCE. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Search&limit=500&offset=0&profile=default&search=temple+of+apollo+syracuse&searchToken=8p8qek6idi6jgwmvh1wpcd9k1#/media/File:Tempio_di_apollo.jpg

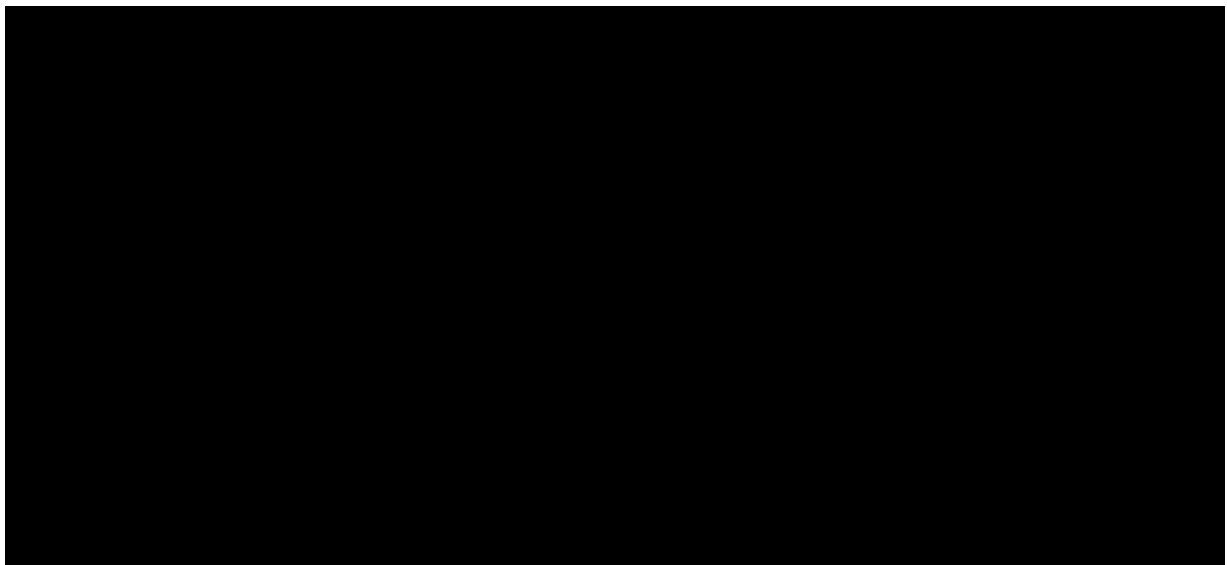


Fig. 52. Plan of the temple of Apollo, Syracuse. Source: Mertens 2006, 108.

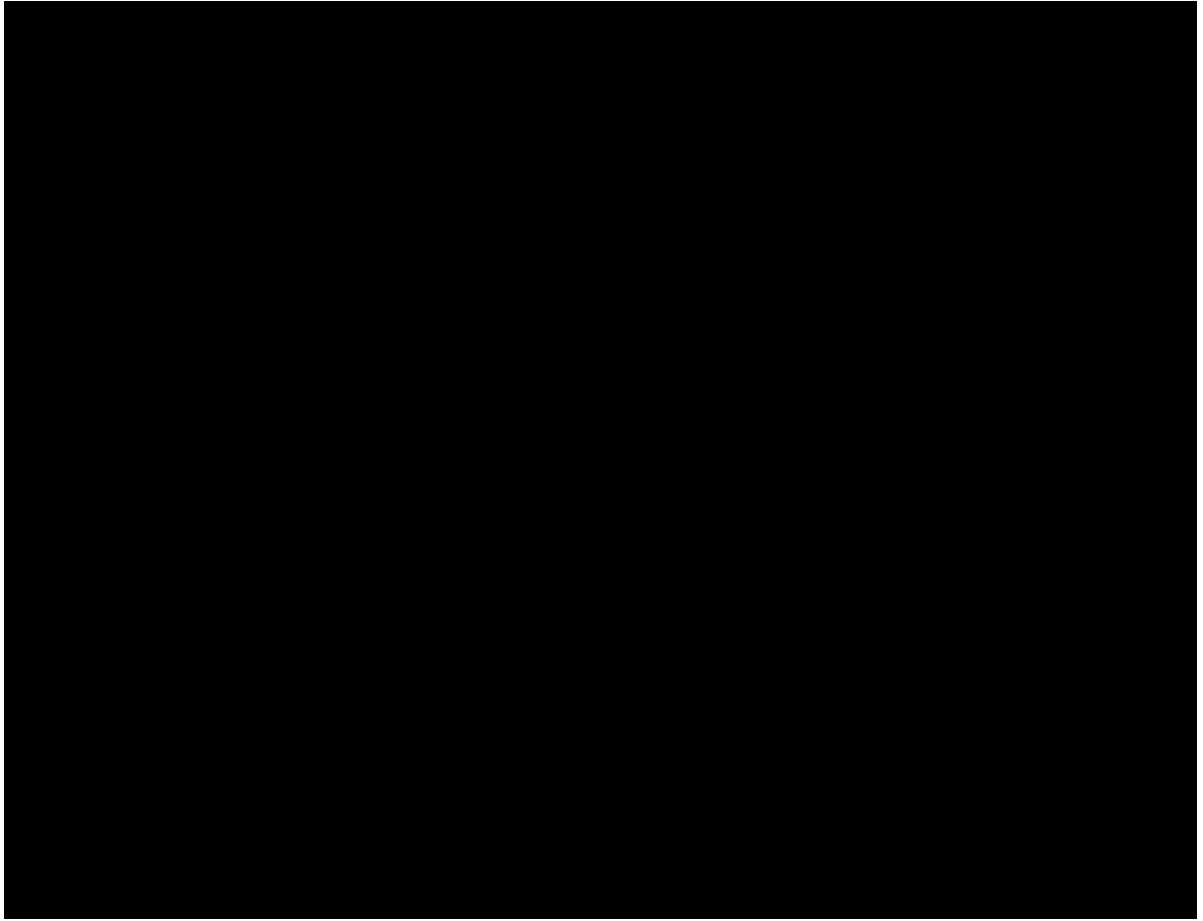
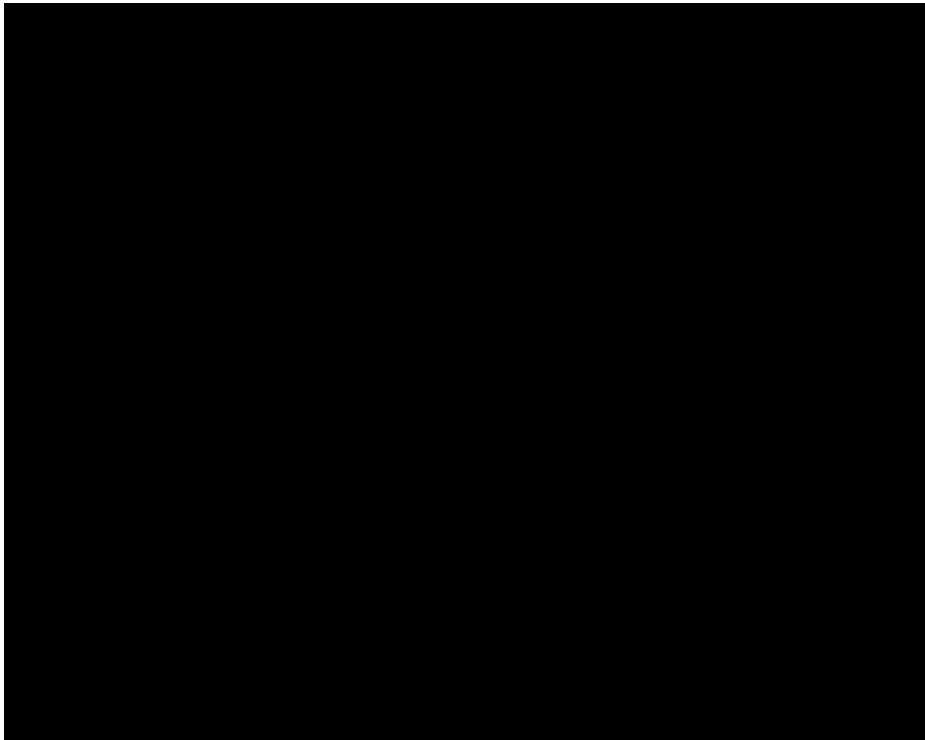


Fig. 53. Restoration of the east facade of the temple of Apollo, Syracuse. Notice the inscription on the left side of the top step of the crepidoma. Source: Mertens 2006, 109.



Syracuse. Source: Engelmann 1981, 93.



Fig. 55. Parian marble sculptures from the east pediment of the temple of Apollo at Delphi, c.510 BCE. Four central horses were flanked by *korai* on the left, *kouroi* on the right, and lions mauling animals in the corners. Delphi, Delphi Archaeological Museum.

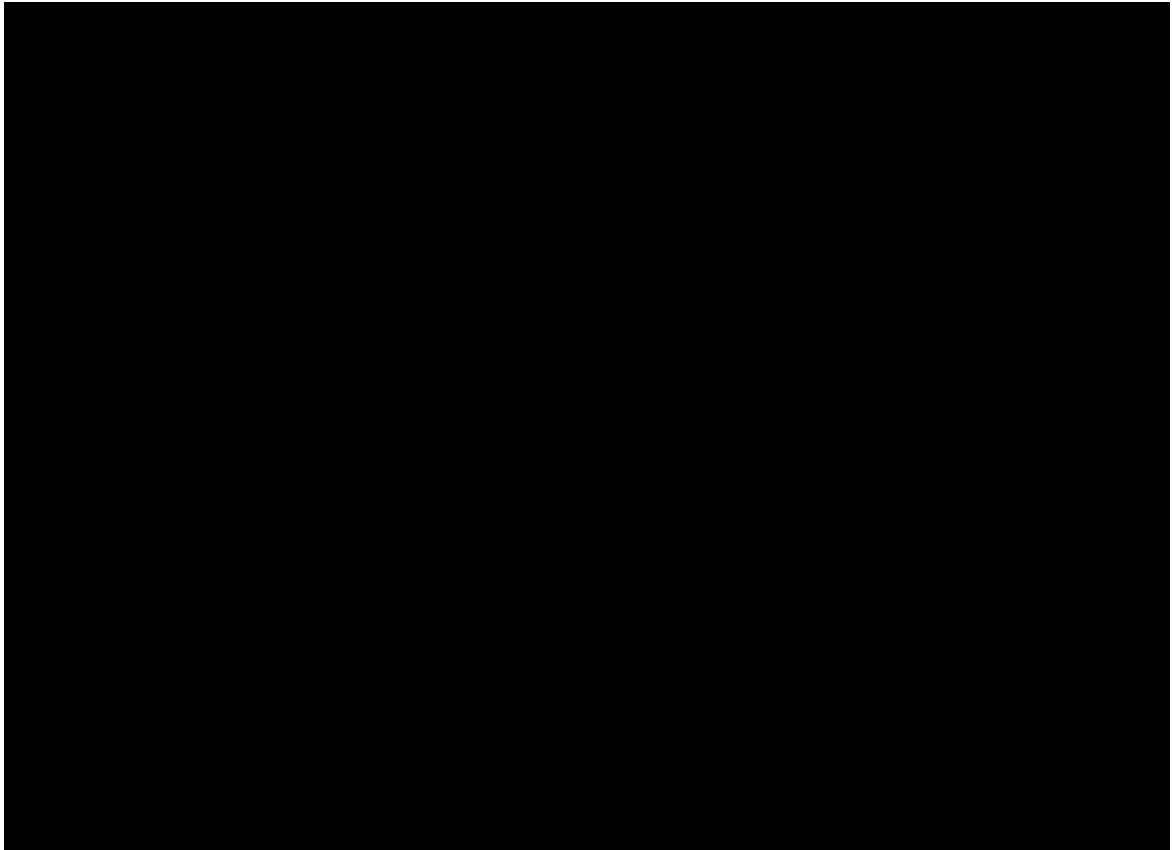


Fig. 56. Restoration of the east facade of the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Source: Lacoste 1920, pl. 12.

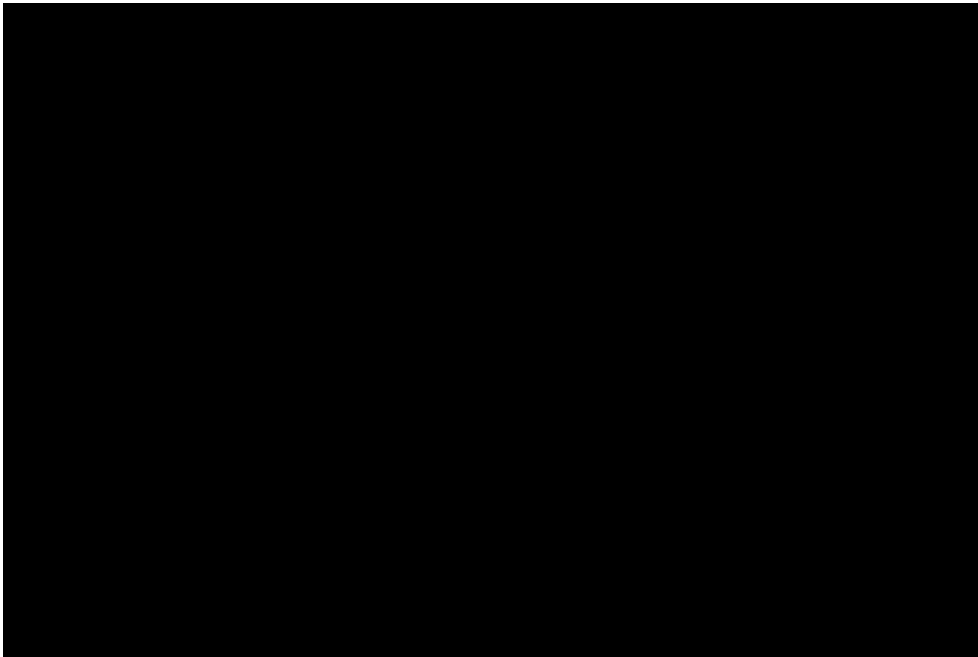


Fig. 57. Map of ancient Sicily.
Source:<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sicilia-antigua-es.png>
Category:Maps of ancient Sicily#

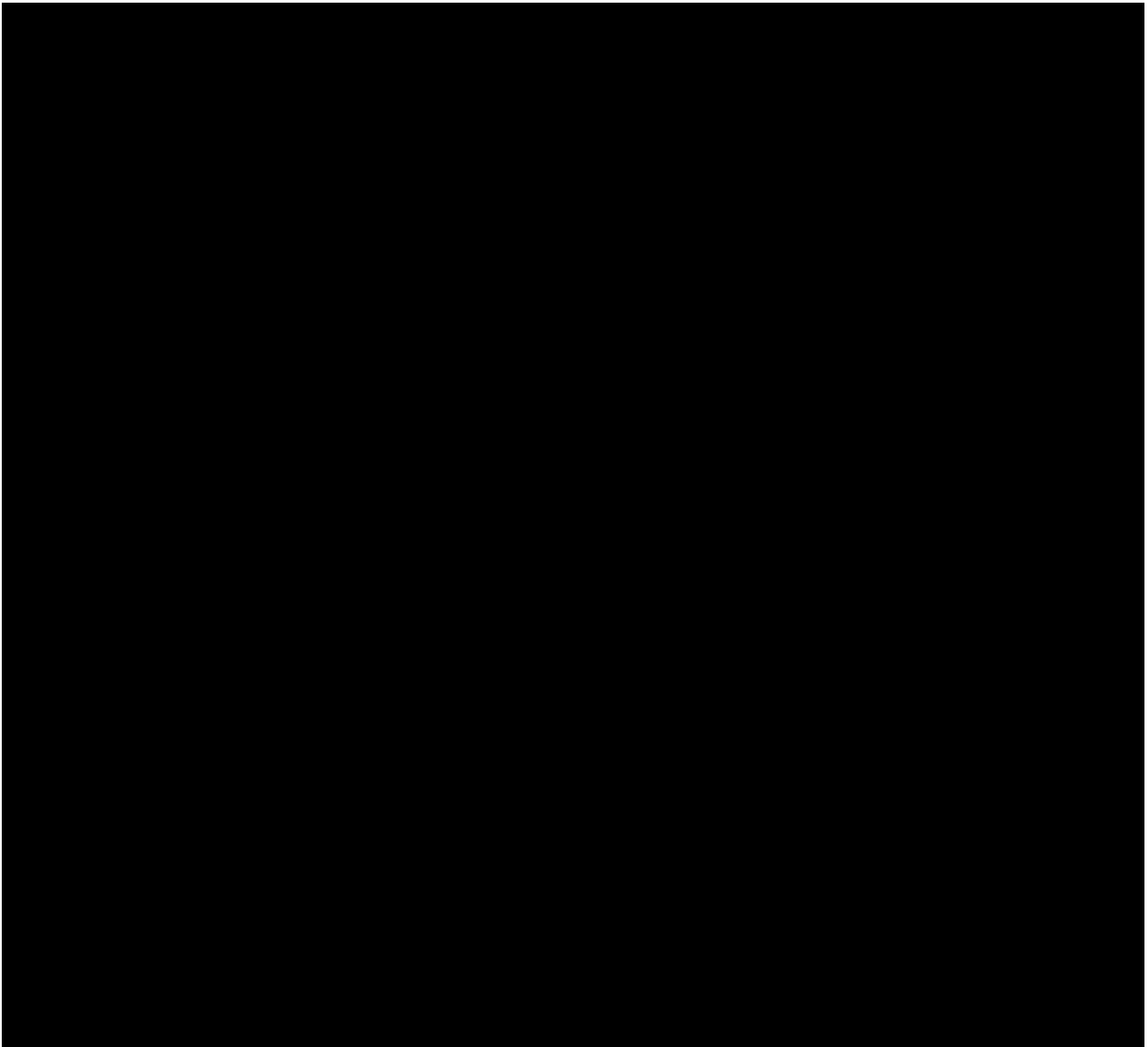


Fig. 58. Urban plan of Selinous. Temples and sanctuaries are marked in blue. The city's harbours were at the mouths of the rivers Selinous (modern Modione) to the west and Cotone to the east. Source: Mertens 2006, 174.

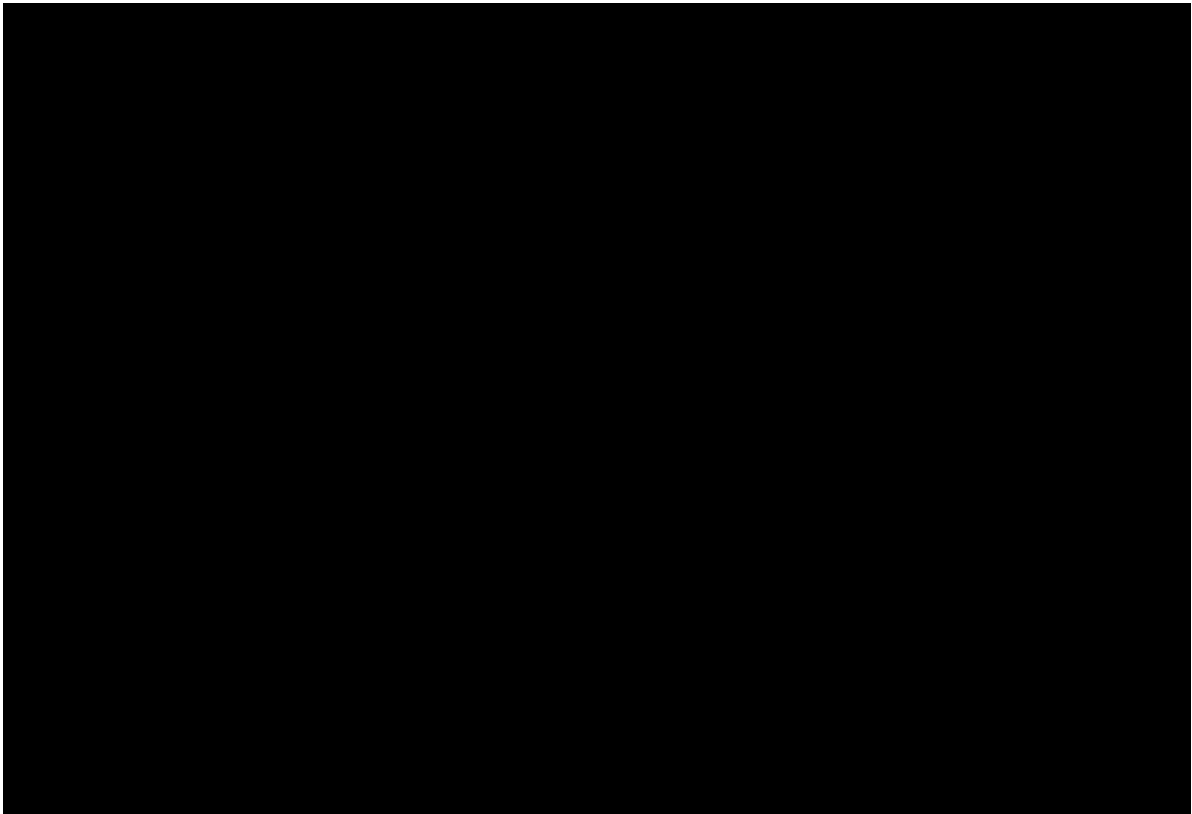


Fig. 59. The main urban sanctuary on the akropolis of Selinous, *c.*500 BCE. The structure between temple C and the stoa is the altar. An entrance to the sanctuary is in the south temenos wall, to the right of which is a complex of four rooms, and to the left a stepped structure known as the South Building. Source: Di Vita 1984, fig. 18.

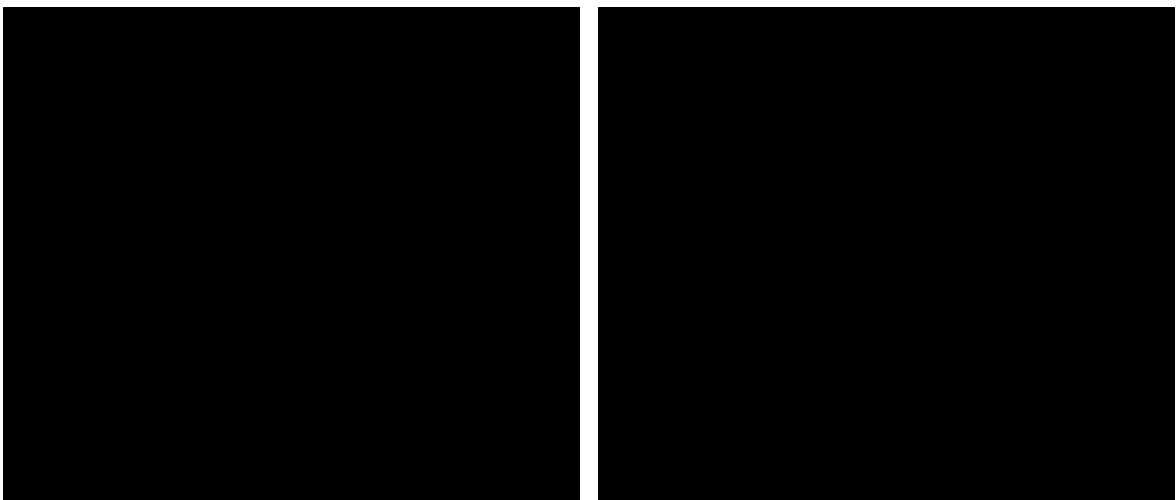


Fig. 60. View of the main urban sanctuary on the akropolis of Selinous looking north from its south west corner. The road on the left is the main north-south avenue through the city; the colonnade on the right belongs to temple C.



Fig. 61. View from the main sanctuary on the akropolis of Selinous, looking east. The beach visible is where the ancient harbour was at the mouth of the river Cotone.



Fig. 62. Retaining wall of the sanctuary on the akropolis, from the east.

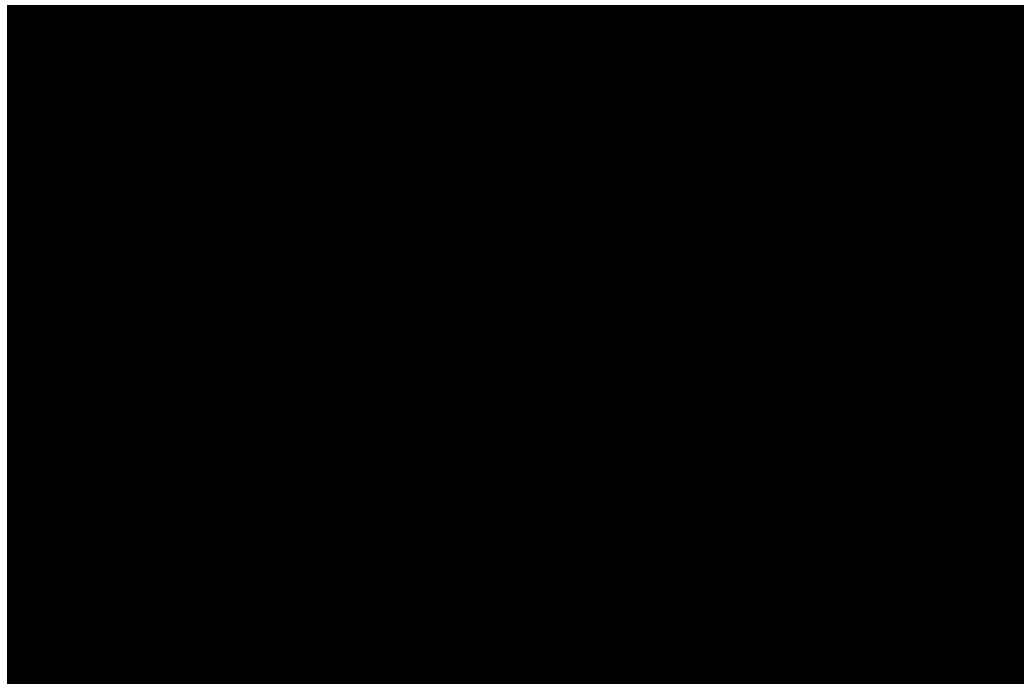


Fig. 63.
Retaining wall of the sanctuary from the north-east. Source: Mertens 2006, 185.



Fig. 64. View of the akropolis of Selinous, with the remaining colonnade of temple C and the retaining wall in front, seen from the eastern hill, where the major land route linking Selinous to its Greek neighbours led into the city.

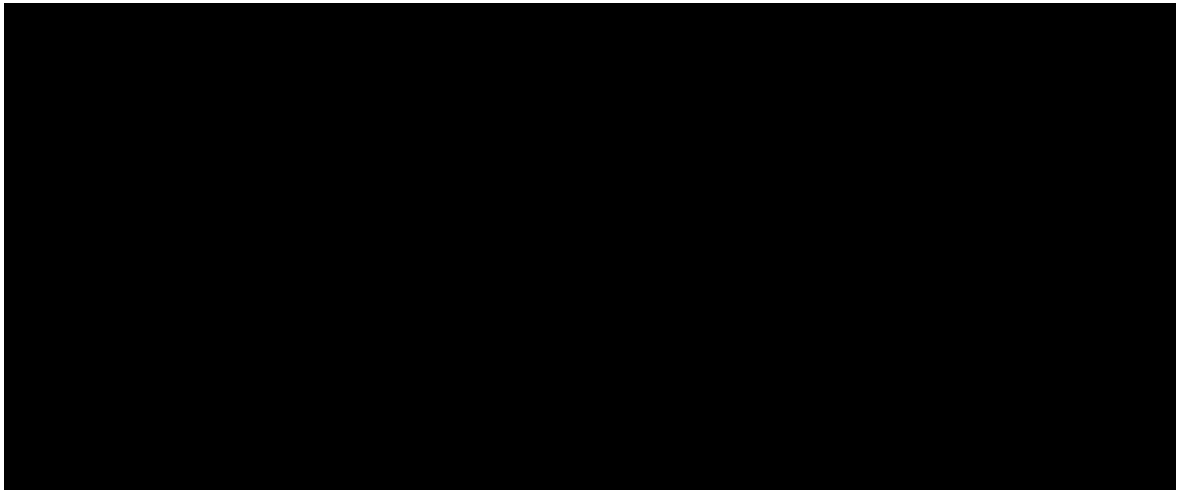


Fig. 65. View of the akropolis of Selinous and its retaining wall from the beach at the mouth of the river Cotone, one of the city's main ancient harbours and entrances to the city by sea.

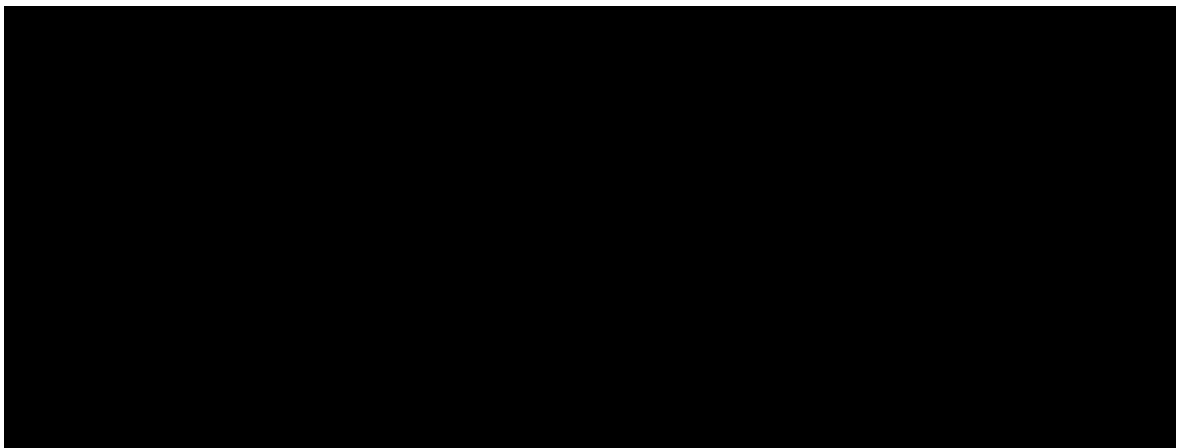


Fig. 66. Remains in situ of the altar in front of temple C.

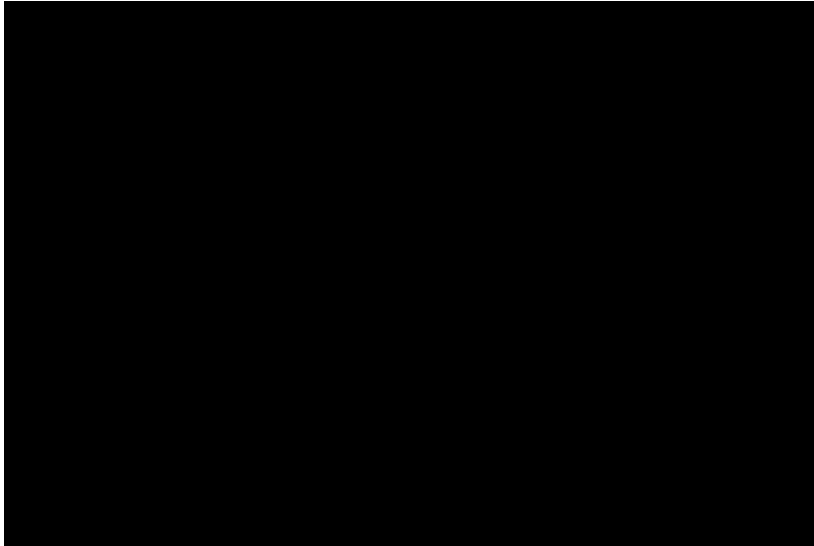


Fig. 67. Remains of the South Building adjacent to the south perimeter wall of the main akropolis sanctuary.

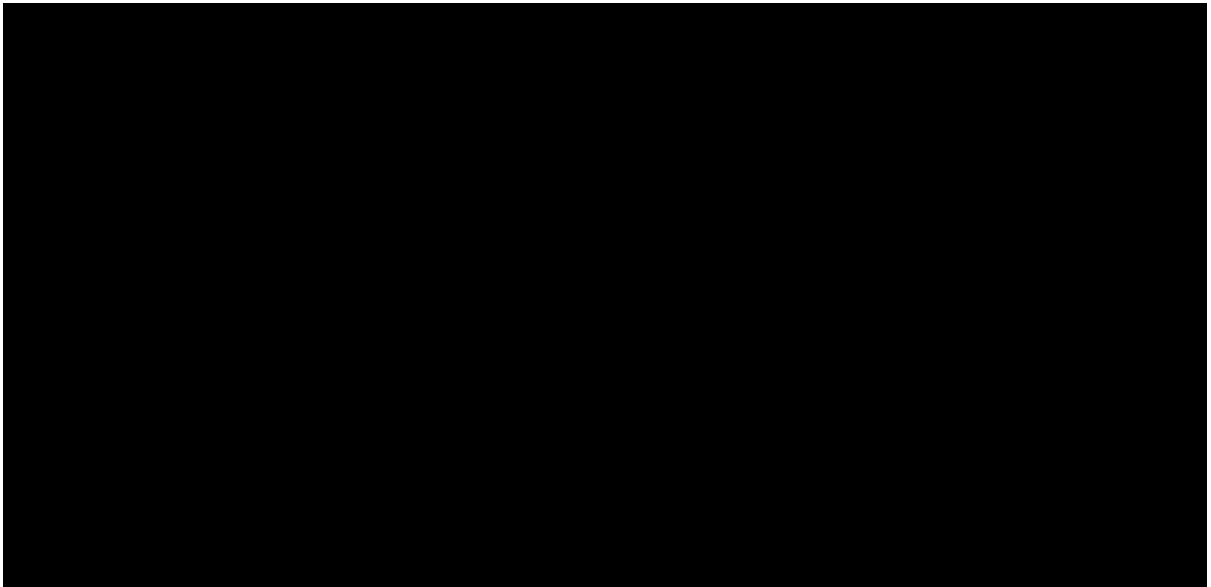


Fig. 68. Reconstructed view of the main akropolis sanctuary from the north-east. Temple C is on the left, temple D on the right. Source: Mertens 2006, 189.

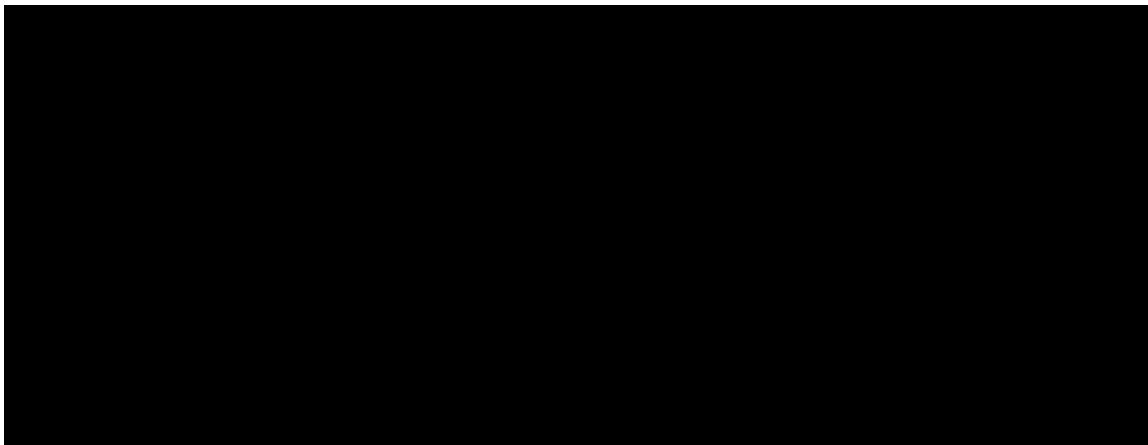


Fig. 69. Plan of temple C, Selinous. Source: Mertens 2006, 121.



Fig. 70. Restoration of the flank of the Apollonion at Syracuse, c.580 BCE. Source: Mertens 2006, 109.



Fig. 71 (above). Restored facade of temple Y at Selinous, c.560-550 BCE. Source: Gabrici 1956, fig. 13.

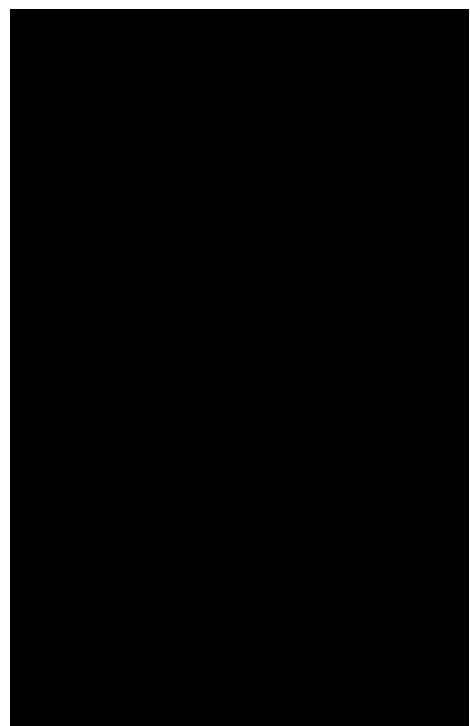
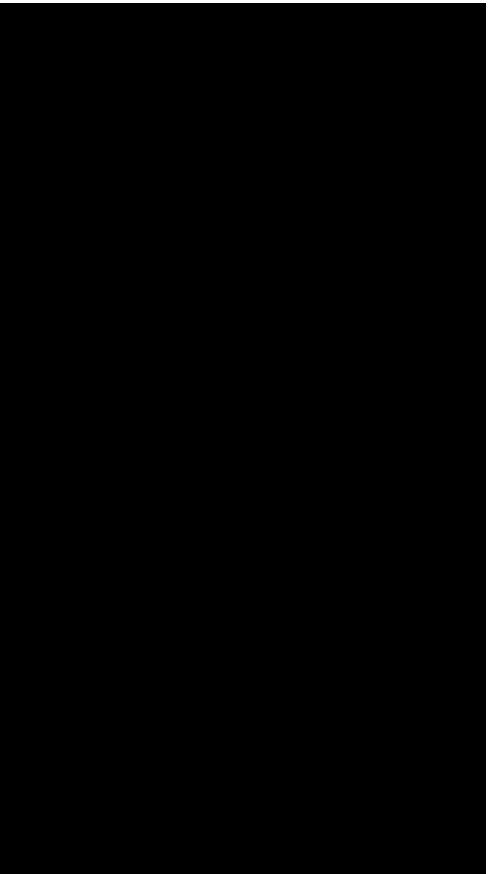


Fig. 72 (right). Reconstructed facade of temple Y at Selinous with projection showing the original polychromy and position of the figural metopes. Selinunte, Selinunte Archaeological Museum.



Figs. 73-4 (above and below). Reconstructed north colonnade of temple C at Selinous.

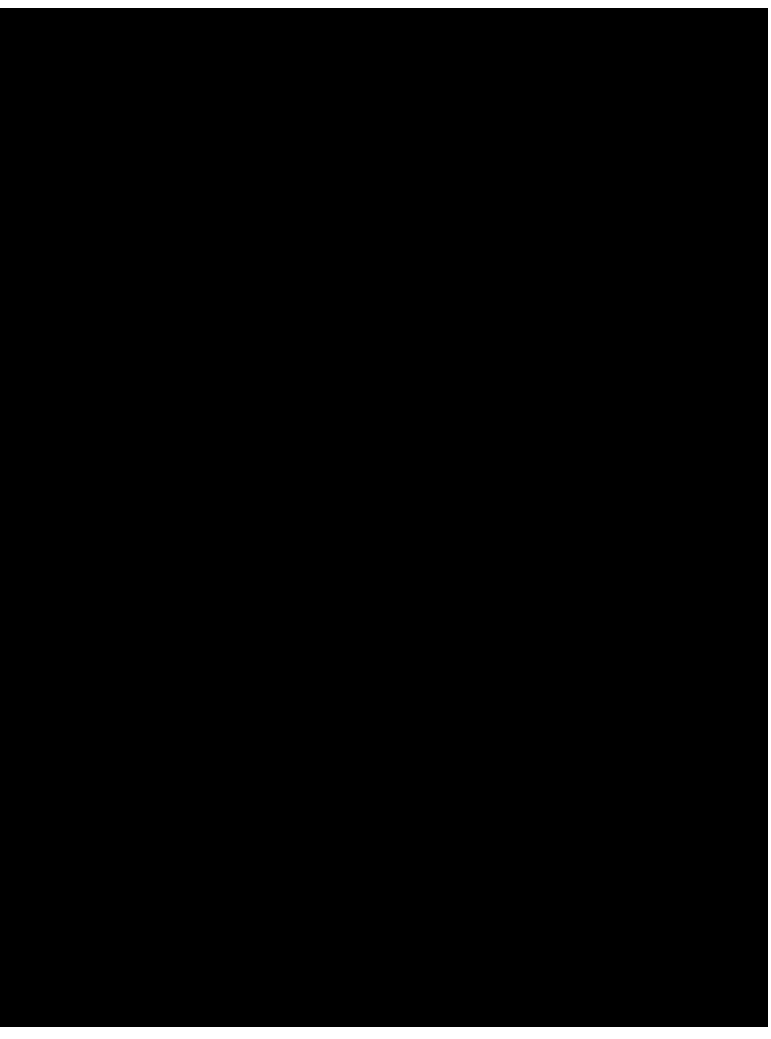
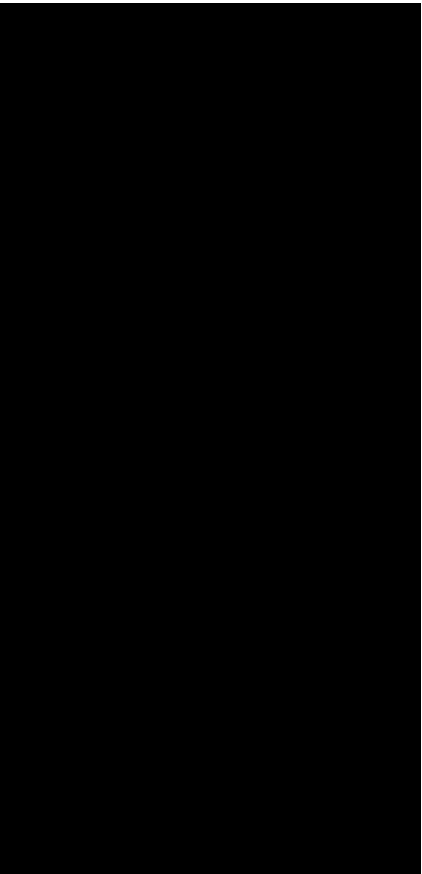


Fig. 75. Restored east facade of temple C at Selinous. Source: Marconi 2007, 129.



Fig. 76. Restored facade of the temple of Hera at Poseidonia *c.*550-520 BCE with proportional analysis by Mertens. Source: Mertens 2006, 143.)

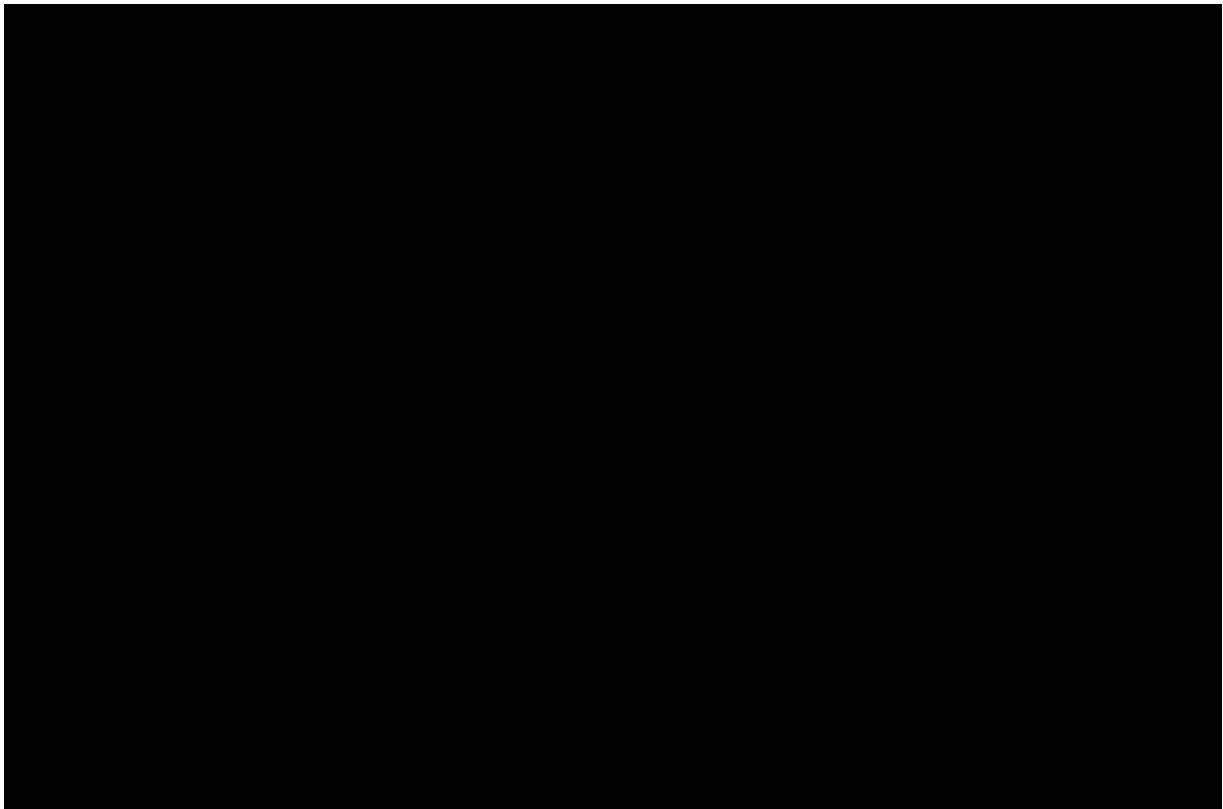


Fig. 77. Digital reconstruction of east facade of temple C. Source: University of Lecce, Progetto LAND-LAB.

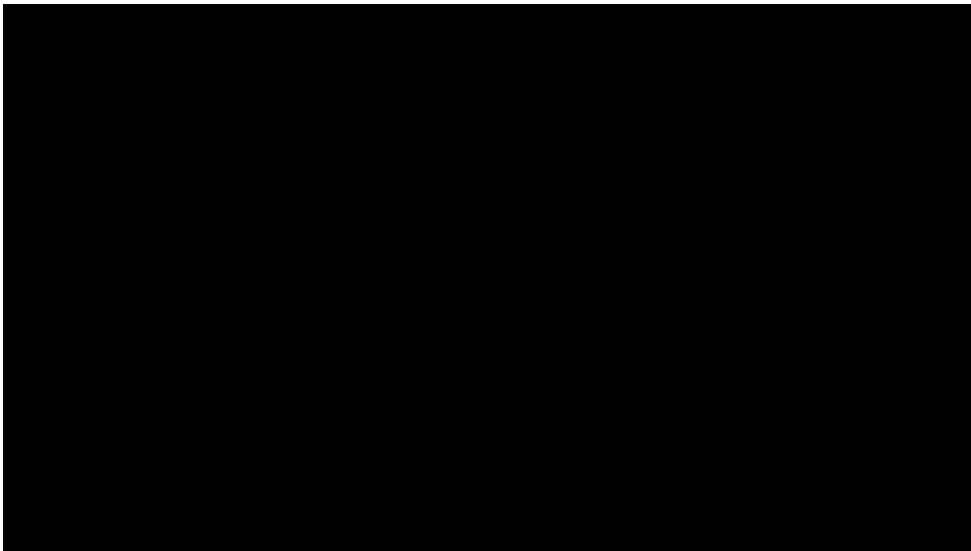


Fig. 78.
Reconstruction of
the corner of the
architectural
terracottas on the
ends of temple C
at Selinous.
Source: Gabrici
1933, pl. 25.

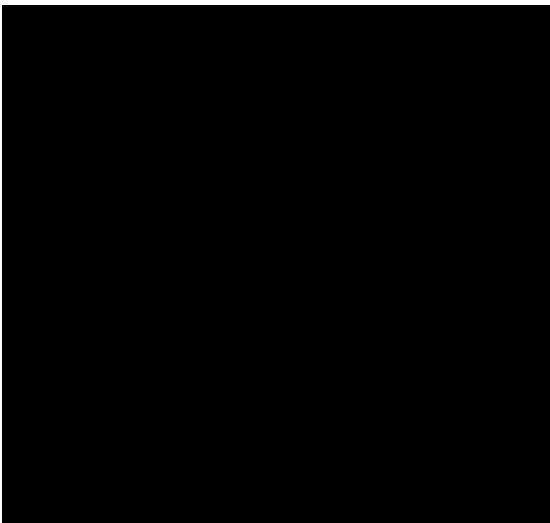


Fig. 79 (above). Restored raking
sima and geison revetment on the
ends of temple C. Source: Gabrici
1933, pl. 24.

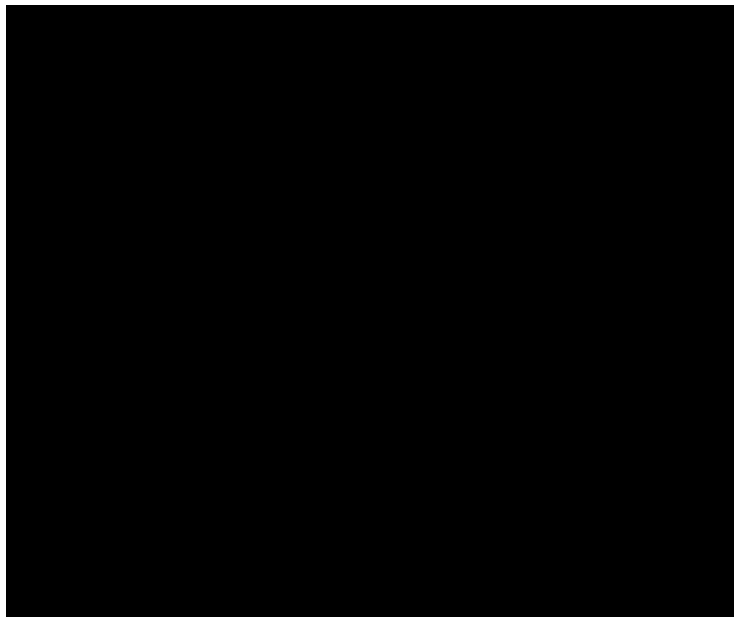


Fig. 81 (above). Fragment of horizontal geison
revetment from one of the ends of temple C.
Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological
Museum.

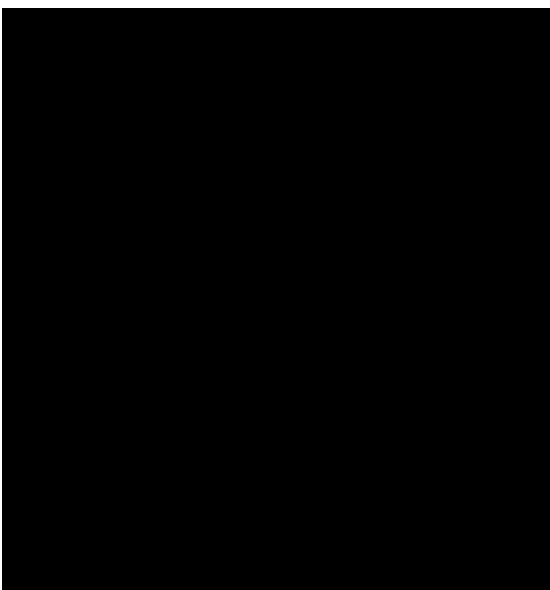


Fig. 80. Restored horizontal geison
revetment on the ends of temple C.
Source: Gabrici 1933, pl. 22.

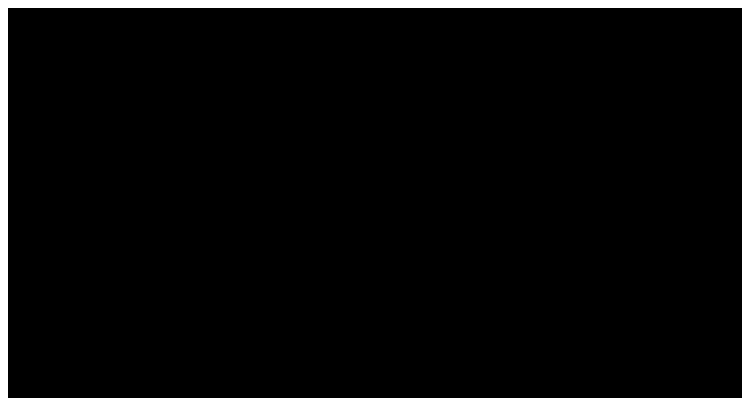


Fig. 82. Sculpted lotus and palmettes for the
horizontal sima on the flanks of temple C. Palermo,
Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

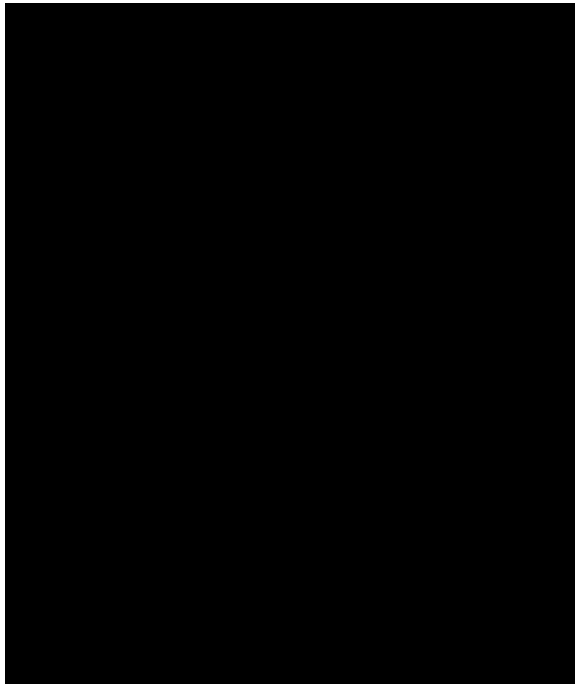


Fig. 83. Ridge cover tile along the spine of temple C. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

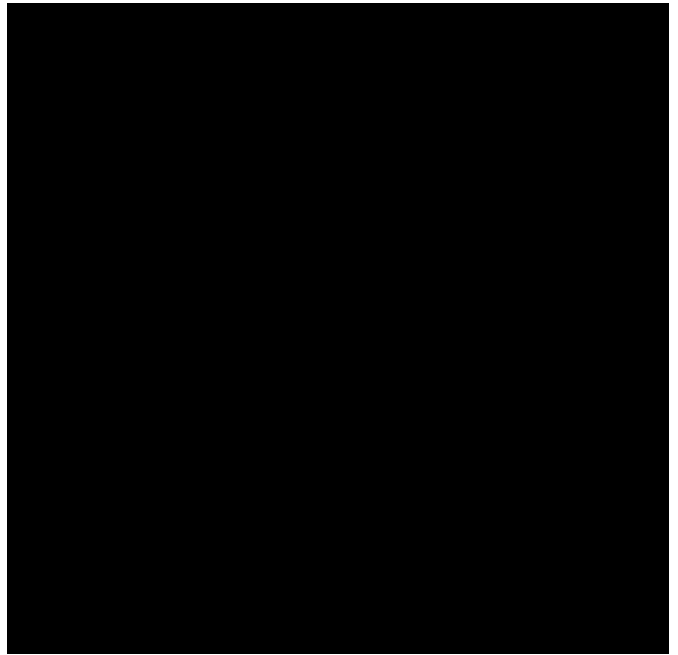


Fig. 84. Restored ridge cover tile from temple C. Source: Gabrici 1933, pl. 30.

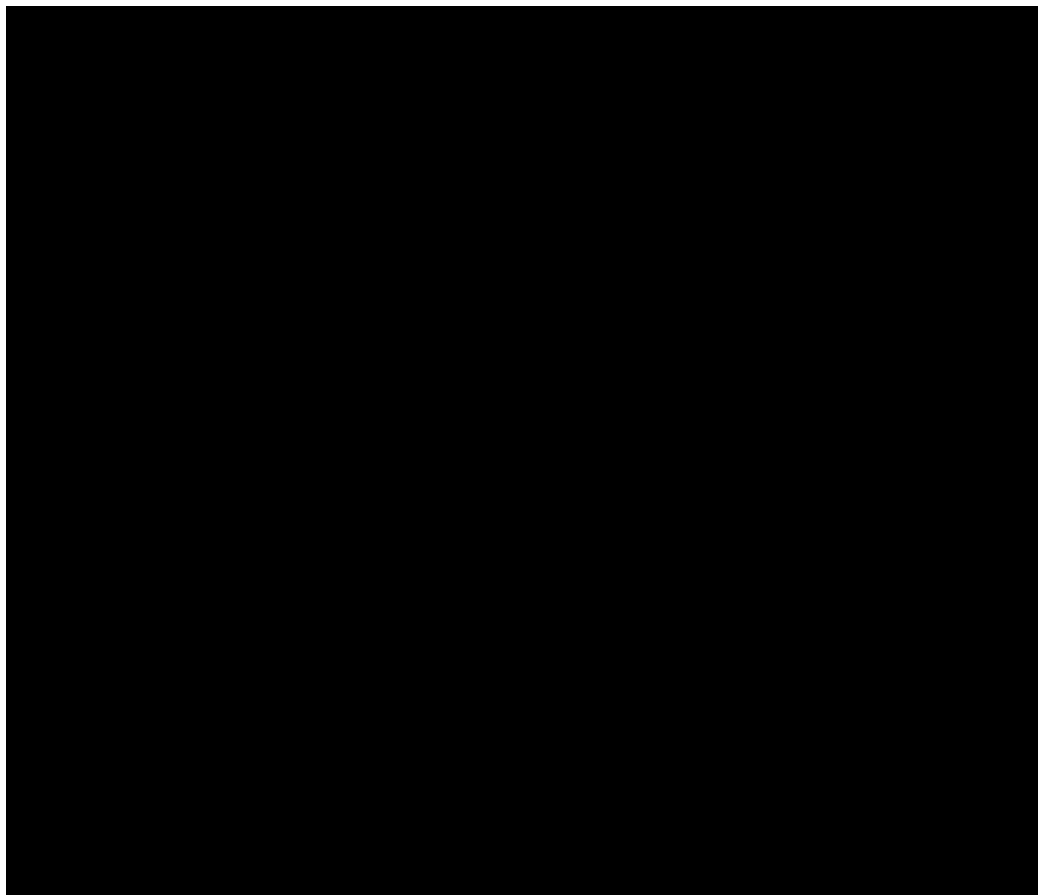


Fig. 85. Reconstruction of the roof corner of the Heraion at Poseidonia c.550-520 BCE. Source: Mertens 2006, 148.



Fig. 86. Temple of Hera at Poseidonia, c.550-520 BCE.

Figs. 87-8
(right). Details
of columns
from the
Heraion at
Poseidonia.
Source:
Mertens
2006, 146.

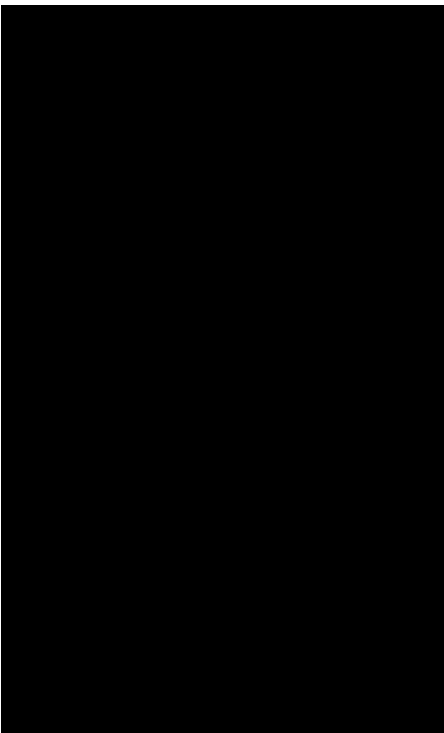
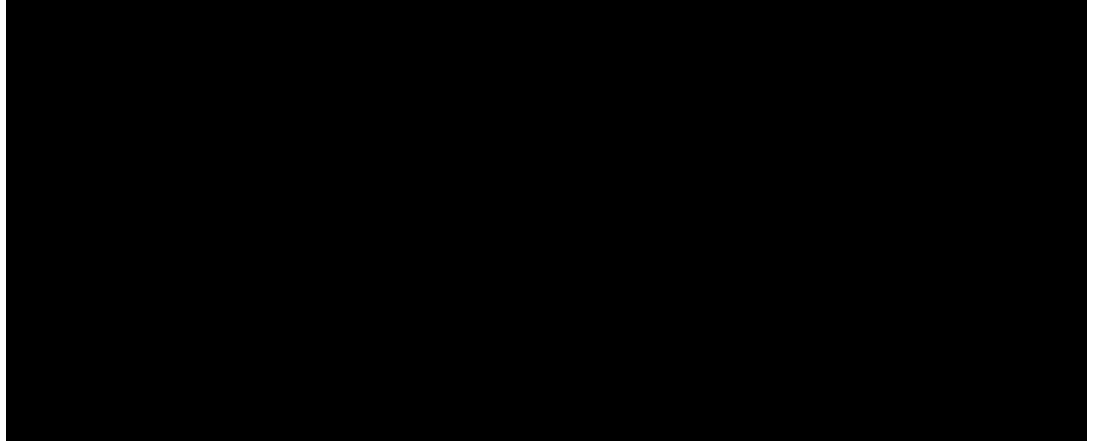


Fig. 89. Column from the
temple of Apollo at Metropolis
(c.550 BCE). Karditsa,
Archaeological Museum of
Karditsa.

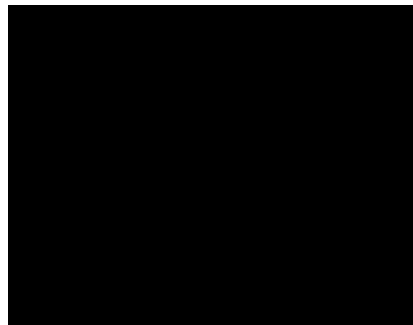


Fig. 90 (left). Drawing
clarifying design of
column capital from
Metropolis in fig. 89.
Source: Wilson Jones
2014, 167.

Fig. 91 (right).
Reconstruction of
capital from the
Heraion on Samos
(c.530 BCE),
showing front and
side. Source:
Gruben 1960.

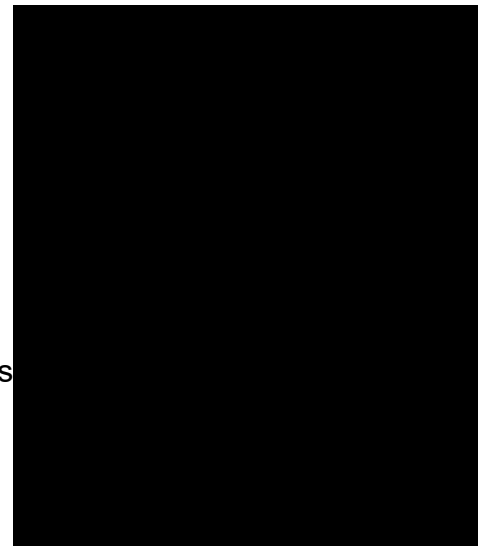




Fig. 92. Fragments of metopes from the left side of the eastern frieze of temple C. The figure in the centre wears a *pilos*. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.



Fig. 93. Metope east 6 from temple C depicting frontal four horse chariot. The head of the central figure, the left hand of the figure on the left and the headless body of the figure on the right are preserved. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

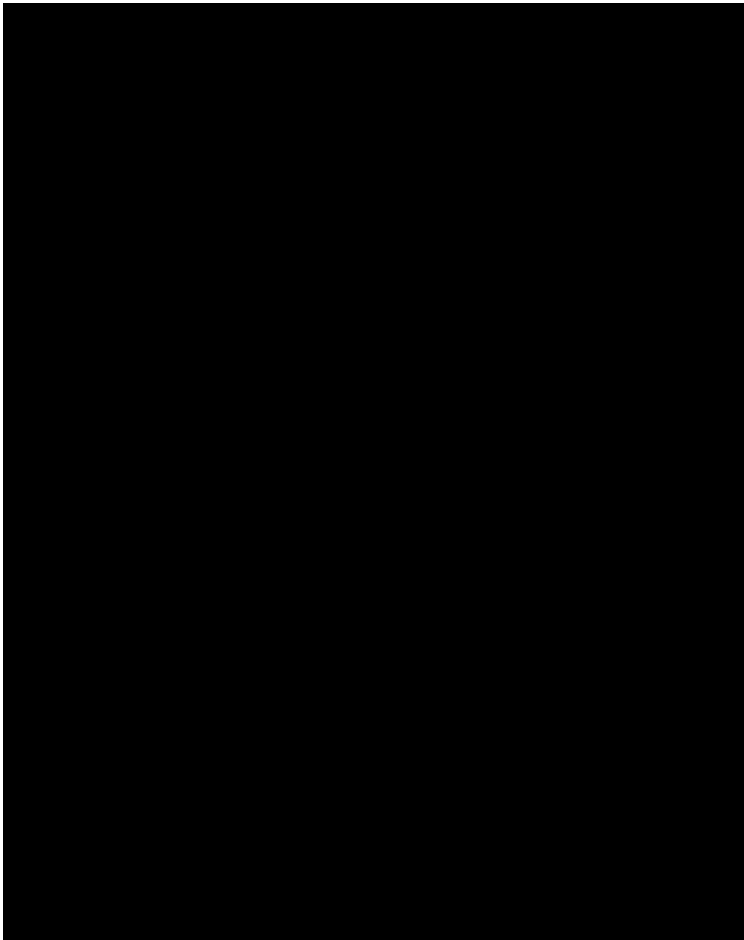


Fig. 94. Metope east 7 from temple C: Athena on the left, while Perseus decapitates Medousa, who clutches Pegasos. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

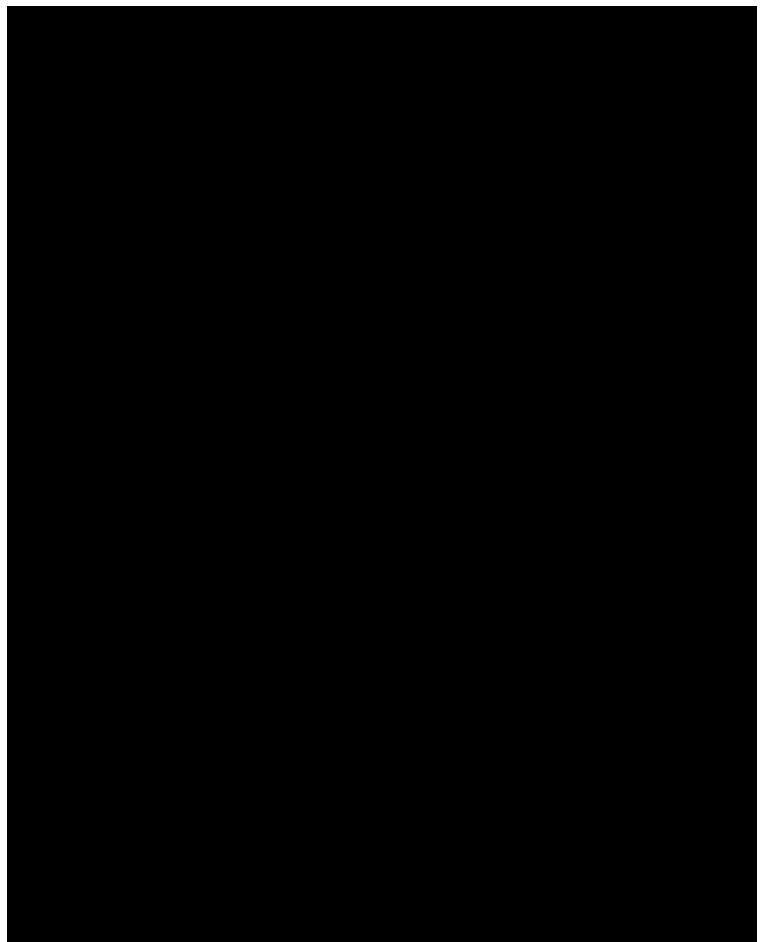


Fig. 95. Metope east 8 from temple C: Herakles and the Kerkopes. Notice the painted meander preserved on the upper border of the metope. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

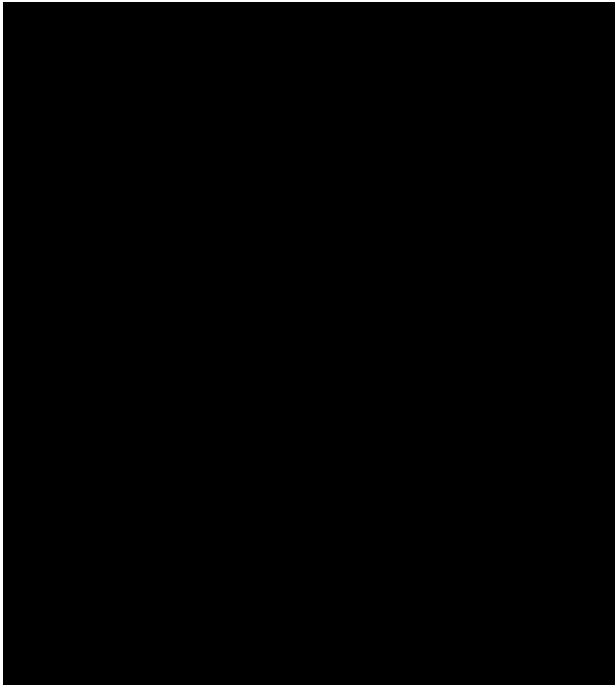


Fig. 96. Fragment of metope east 10 from temple C: profile figure whose neck is grasped by the left arm of another. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

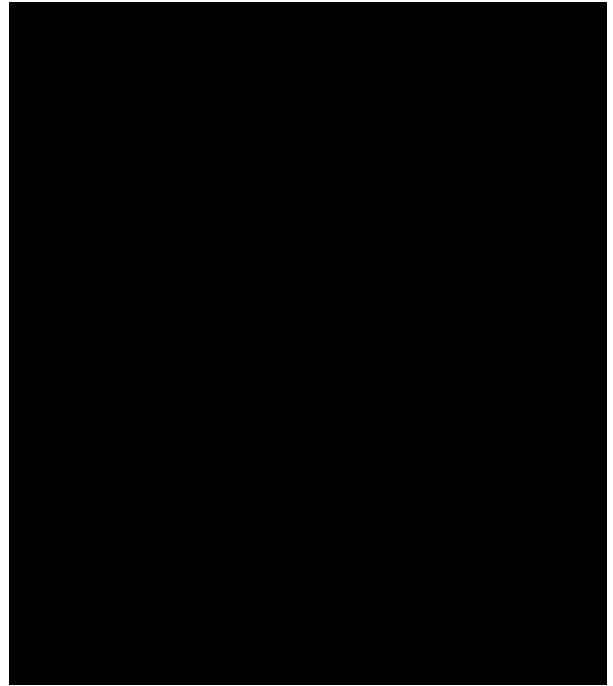


Fig. 97. Fragment of metope east 10 from temple C: profile right thigh and genitals of a figure. The under-side of his left thigh is just visible beneath his genitals. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

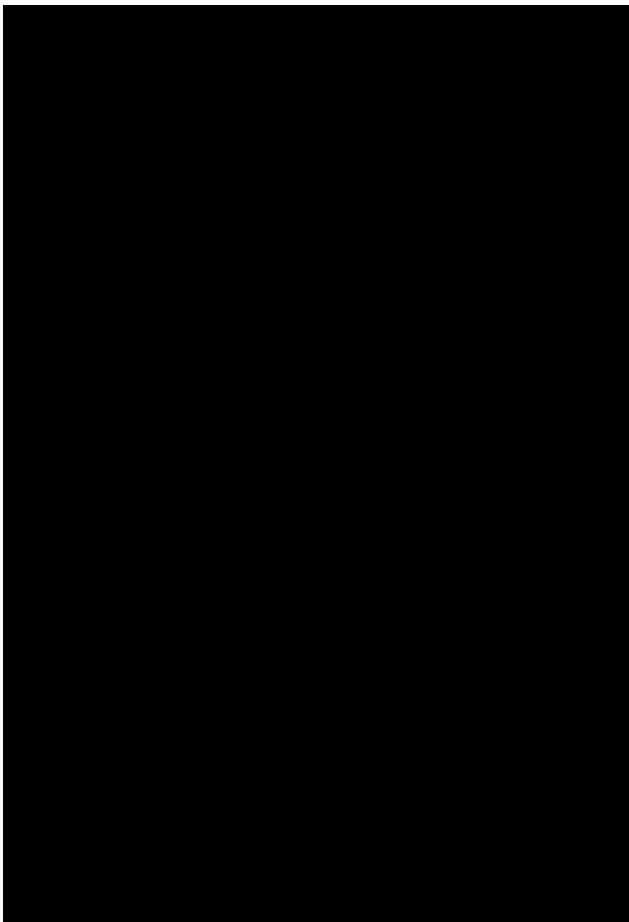


Fig. 98. Restoration of metope east 10: Orestes killing Klytaimestra. Source: Marconi 2007, 163.

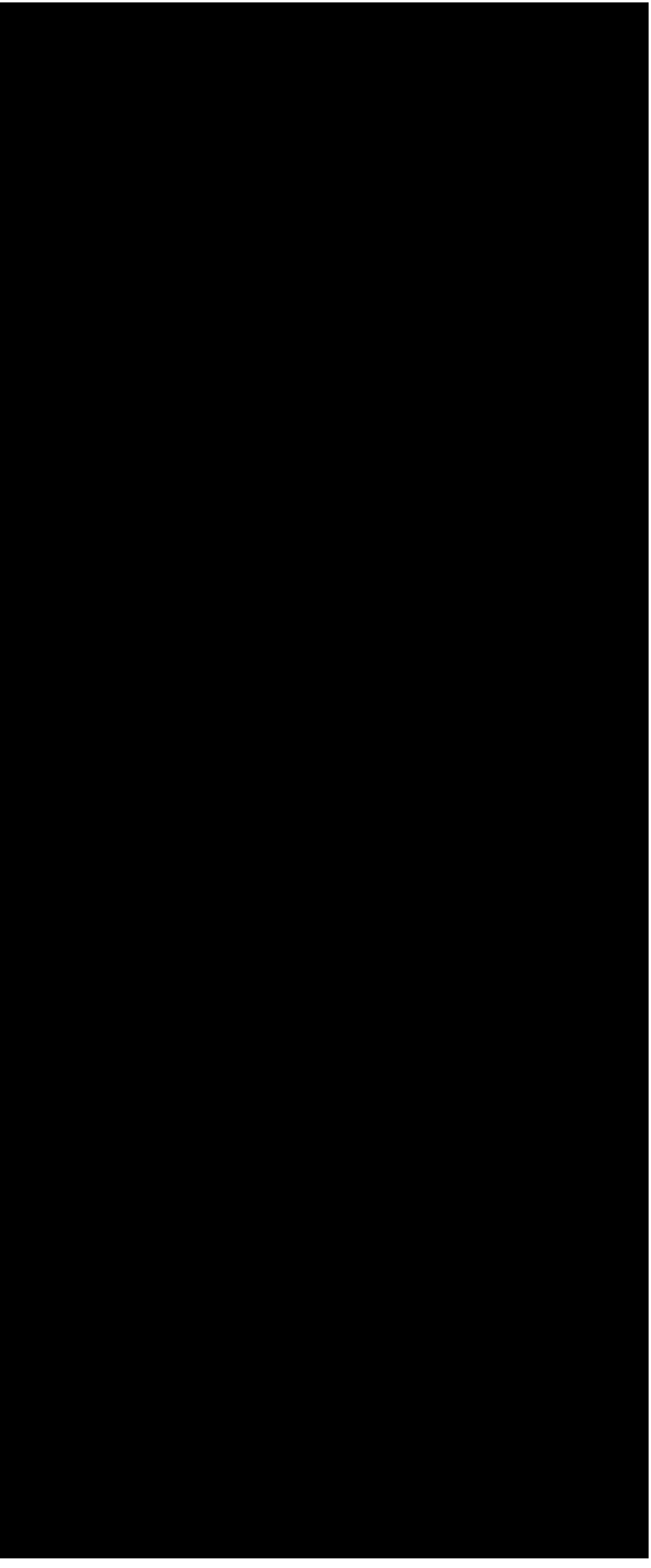


Fig. 99. Metopes east 6, 7 and 8 in their original placement in the east frieze of temple C. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.



Fig. 100. Painted plaque of Perseus running with the Medousa's head under his arm, temple of Apollo at Thermon (c.630-620 BCE). Athens, National Archaeological Museum.

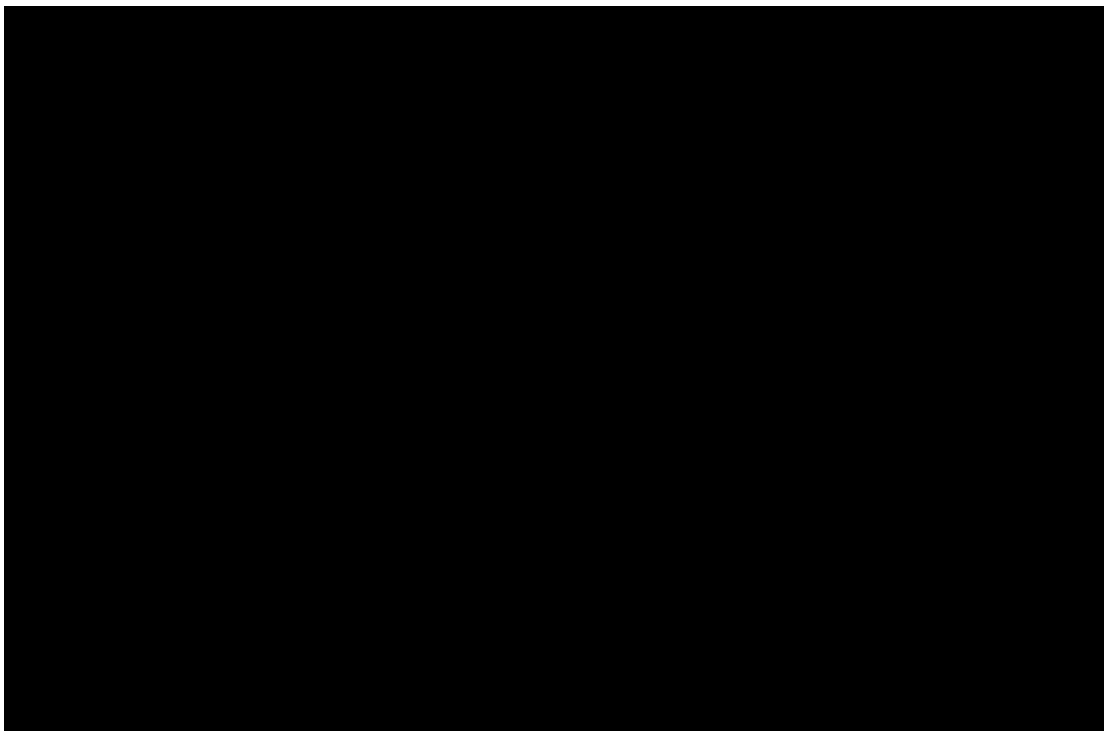


Fig. 101. Medousa on the west pediment of the temple of Artemis, Kerkyra (c.580 BCE). Corfu, Archaeological Museum of Corfu. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=temple+of+artemis+corfu&title=Special:Search&go=Go&searchToken=1w93us7849kx167rfdzdc0e2k#/media/File:West_facade_of_Temple_of_Artemis,_Gorgoneion,_580_BC,_AM_Corfu,_Krfm10.jpg

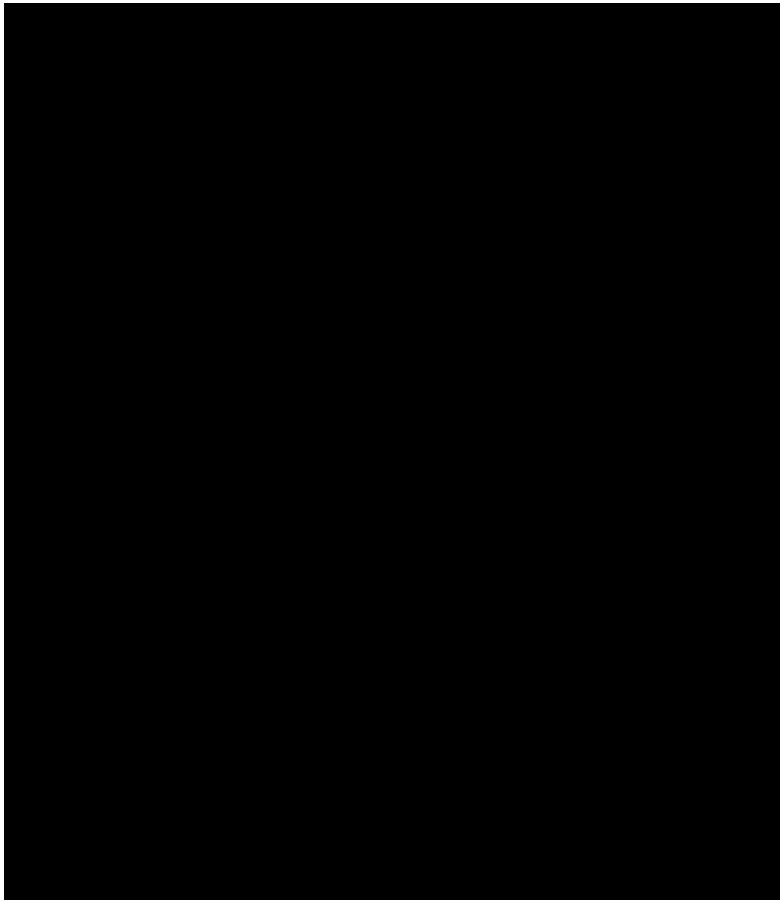


Fig. 102. Zeus and Europa on one of the so-called small metopes associated with temple Y at Selinous (c.560-550 BCE). Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

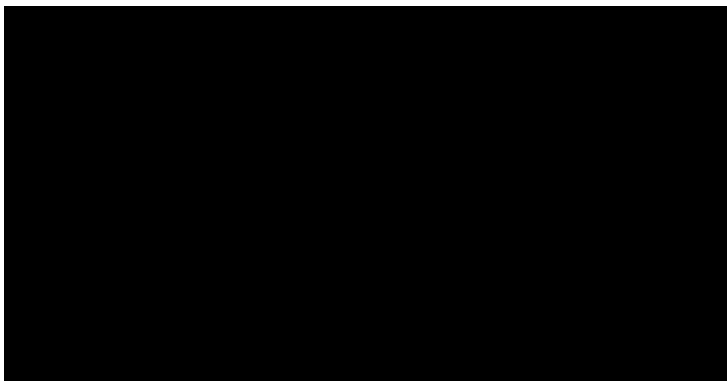


Fig. 103 (above). Detail of the horses legs in metope east 6 from temple C (see fig. 93).

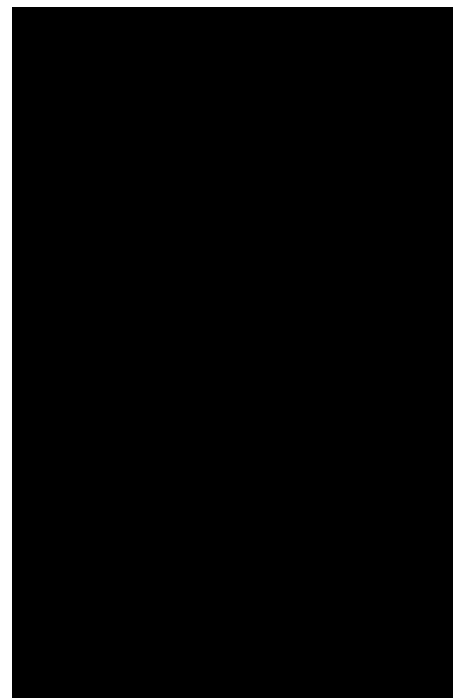


Fig. 104. Detail of Herakles from metope east 8 from temple C (see fig. 95).

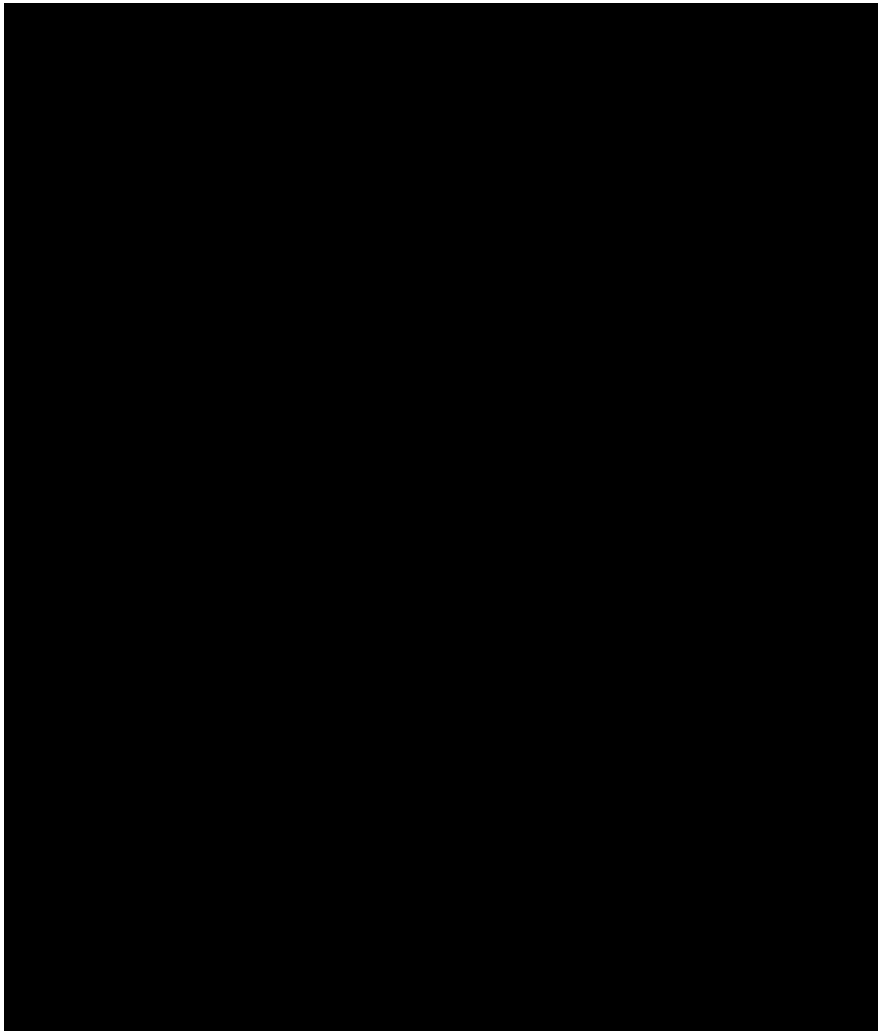


Fig. 105. Frontal chariot and two drivers on one of the so-called small metopes associated with temple Y at Selinous (c.560-550 BCE). Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.

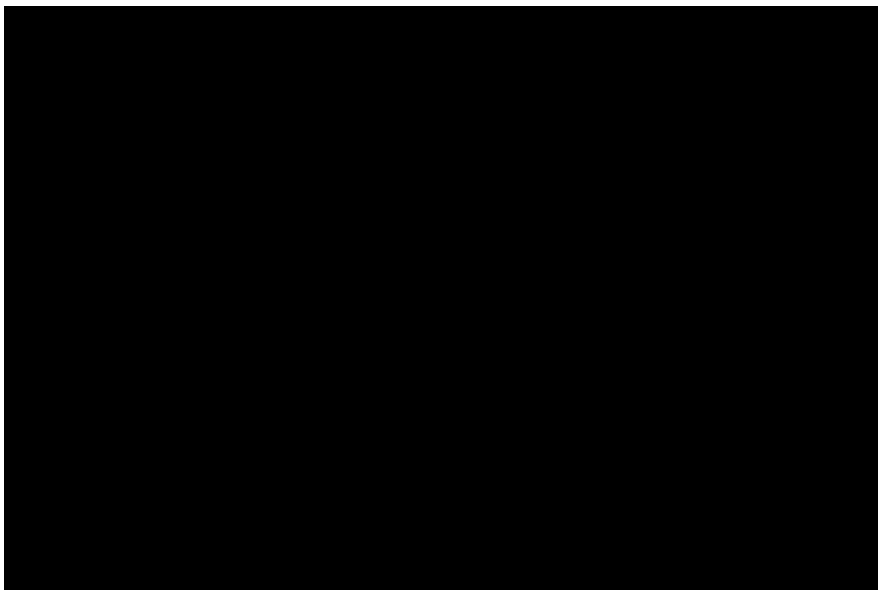


Fig. 106. Detail of the legs of the horses in fig. 104.

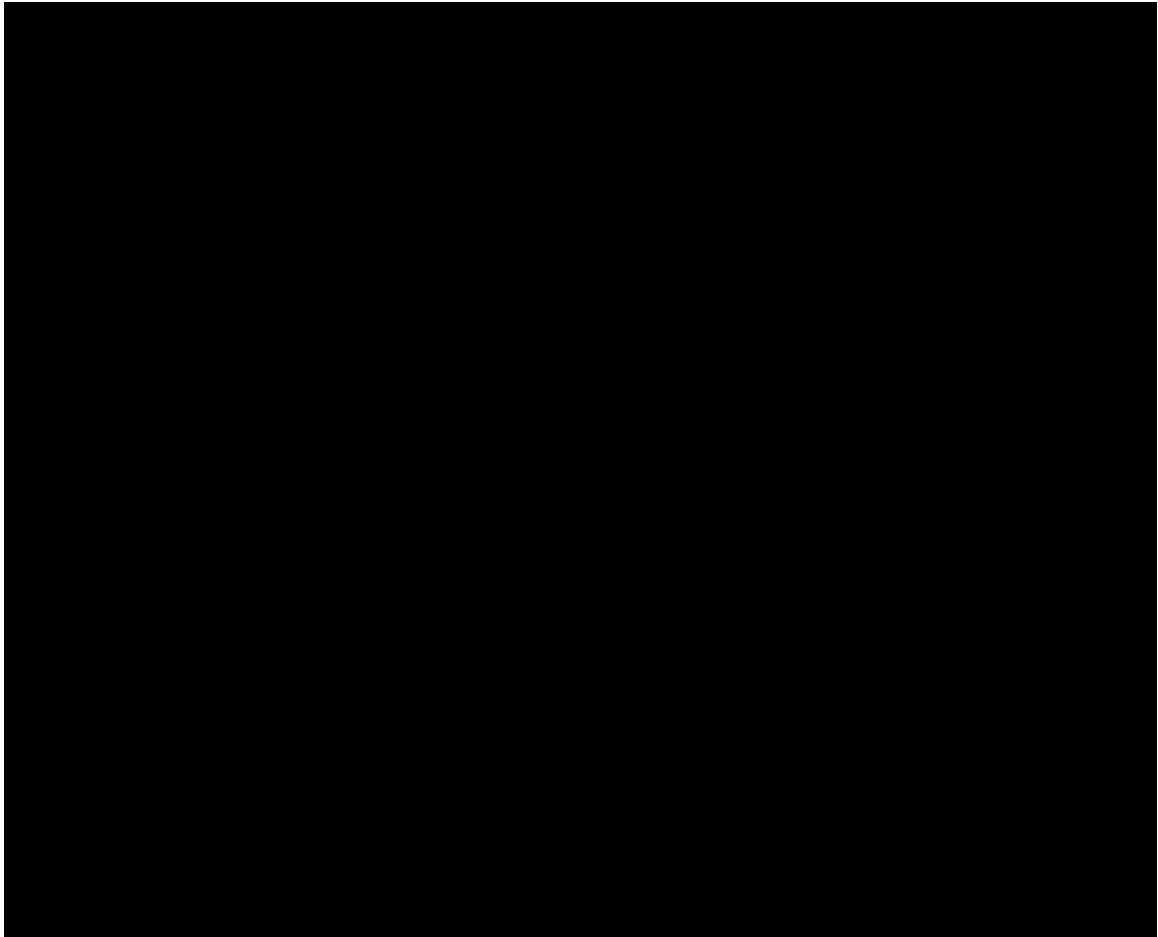
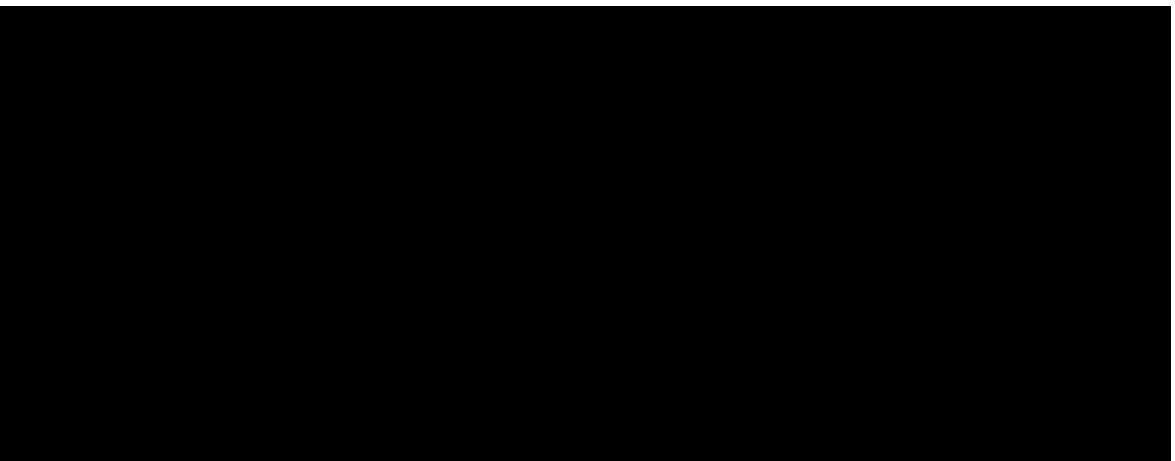
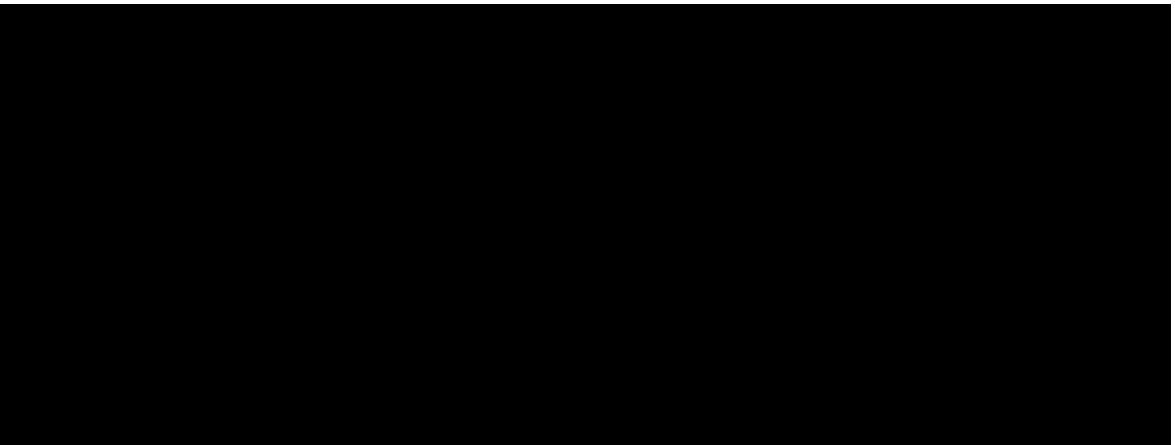
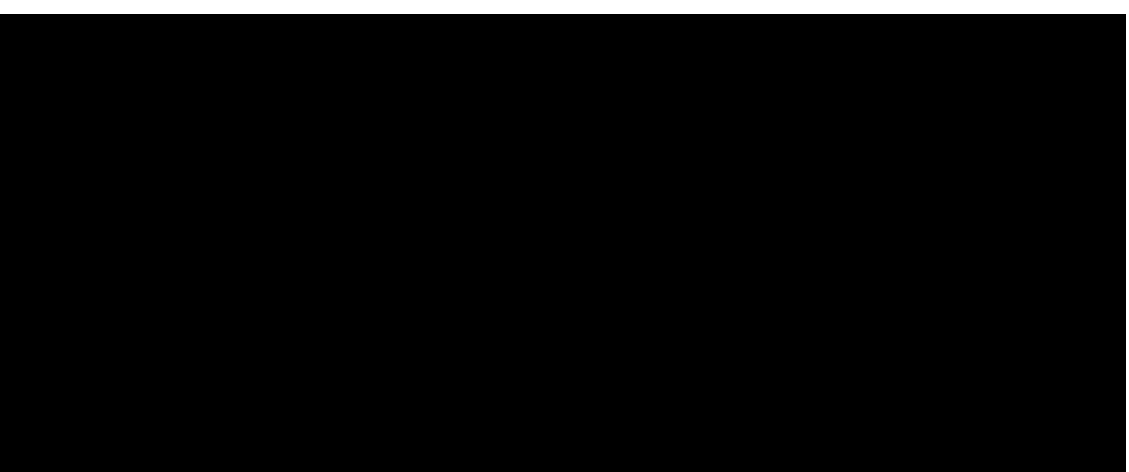
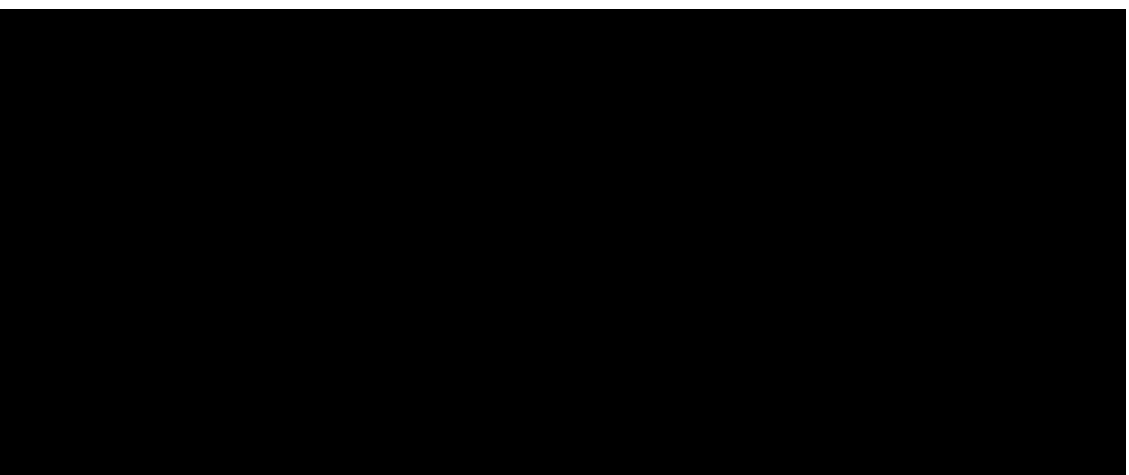
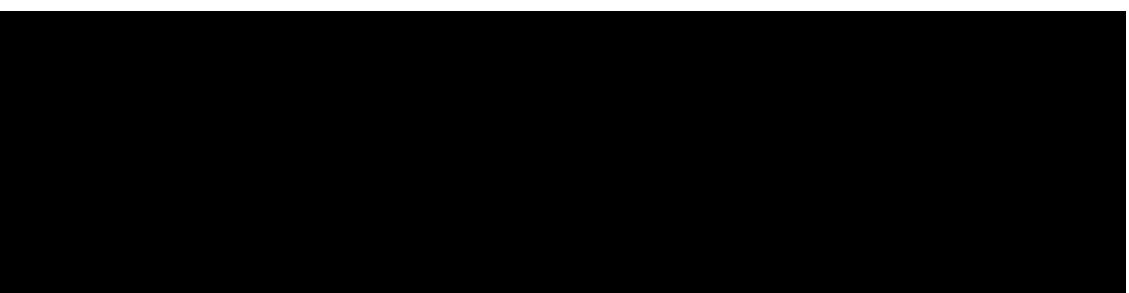
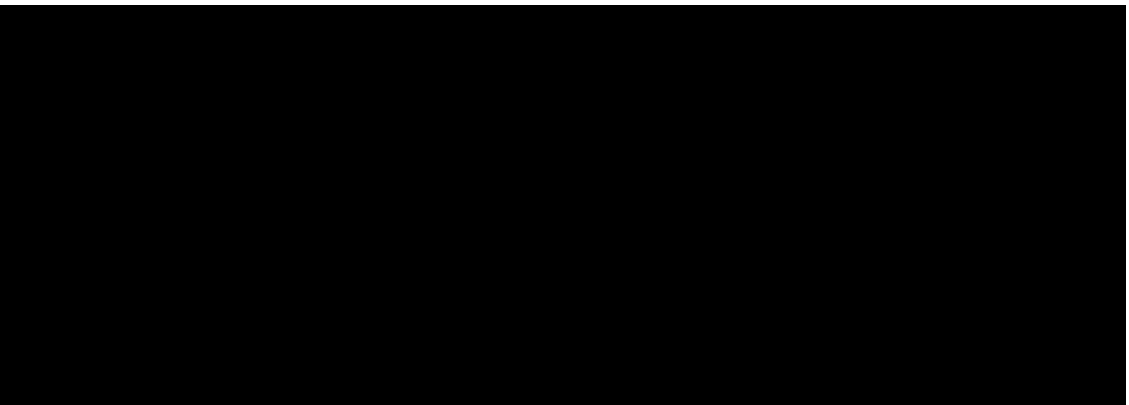


Fig. 107. East pediment of temple C reconstructed from the fragments of its architectural terracottas. Palermo, Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum.



Figs. 108-10. Mantiklos statuette, c.700-675 BCE. Bronze. Boston, MFA. Source: <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/mantiklos-apollo-152660>



Figs. 111-14 (left to right). Bronze warrior figurines from the late eighth to early seventh centuries BCE. Olympia, Archaeological Museum of Olympia. Source: Papalexandrou 2005, 233-4 (figs. 113 and 114).



Fig. 115. Bronze aryballos, c.625-600 BCE, possibly from Sparta. Paris, Louvre. Source: <https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/aryballos>

Fig. 116. Marble statue of Chares, c.5 BCE, from Didyma. The inscription is right leg of the chair. London, British Museum. Source: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=459754&partId=1

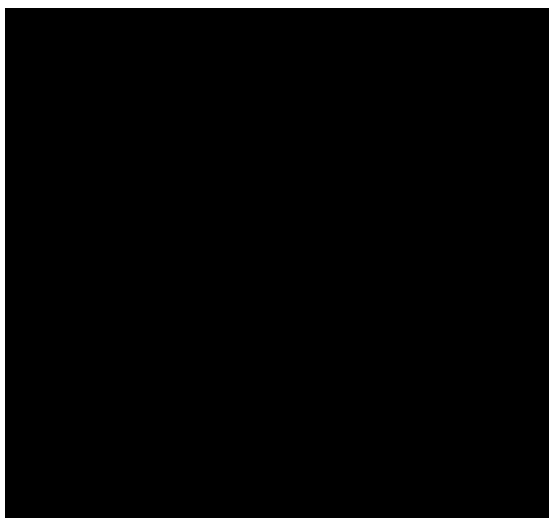
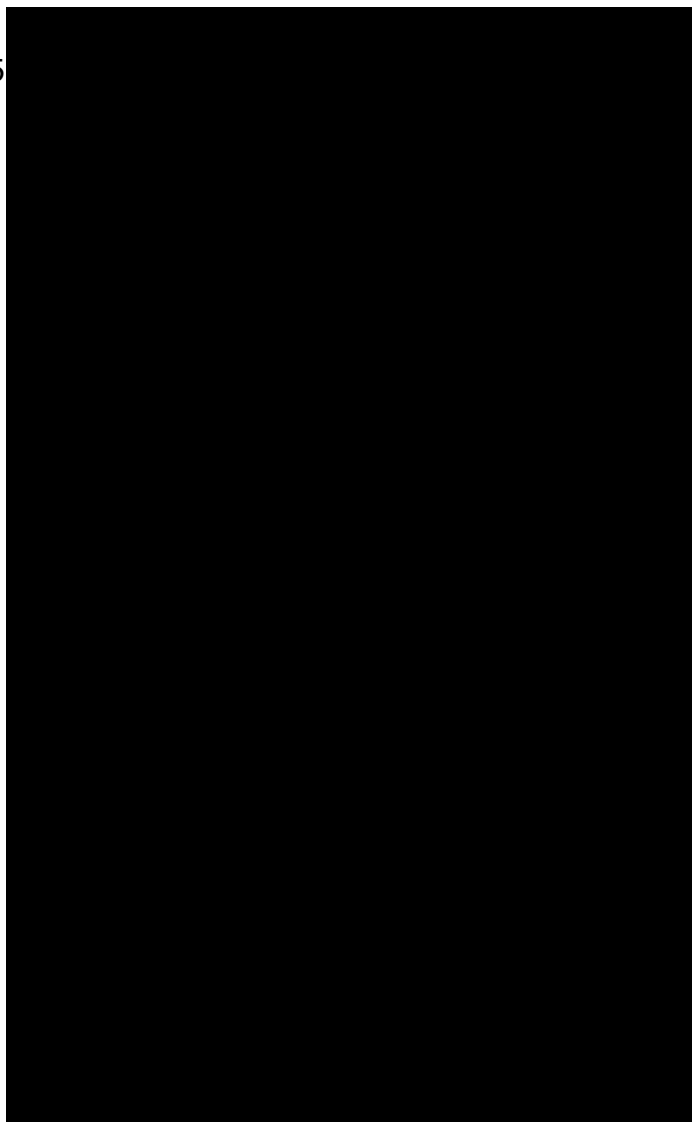
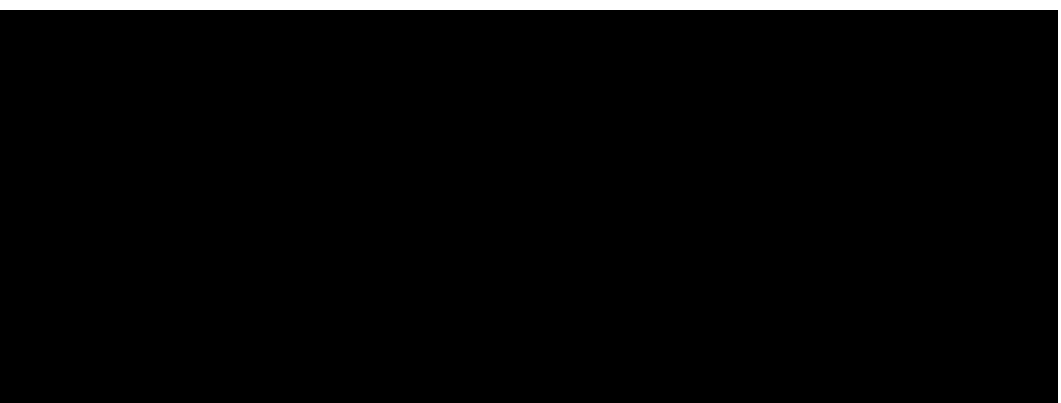
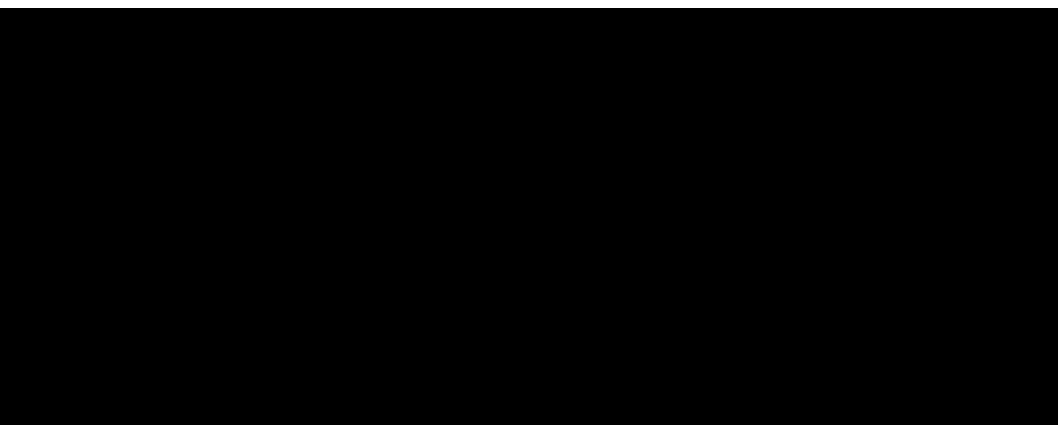
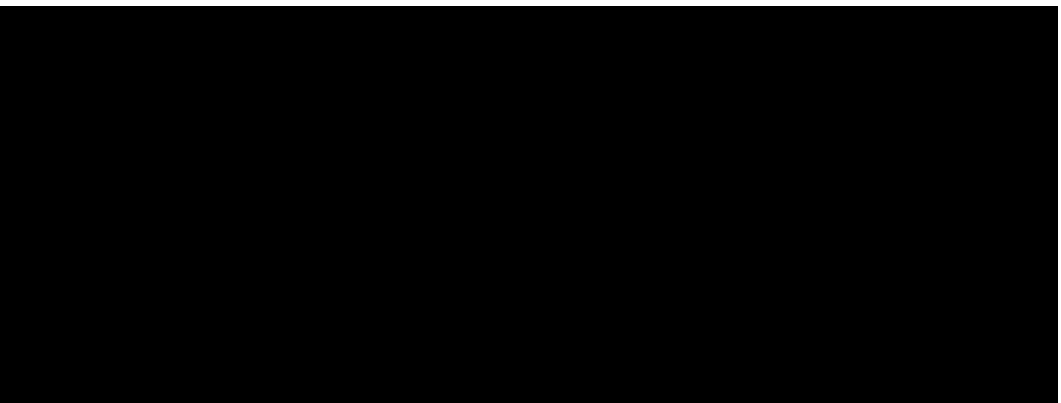
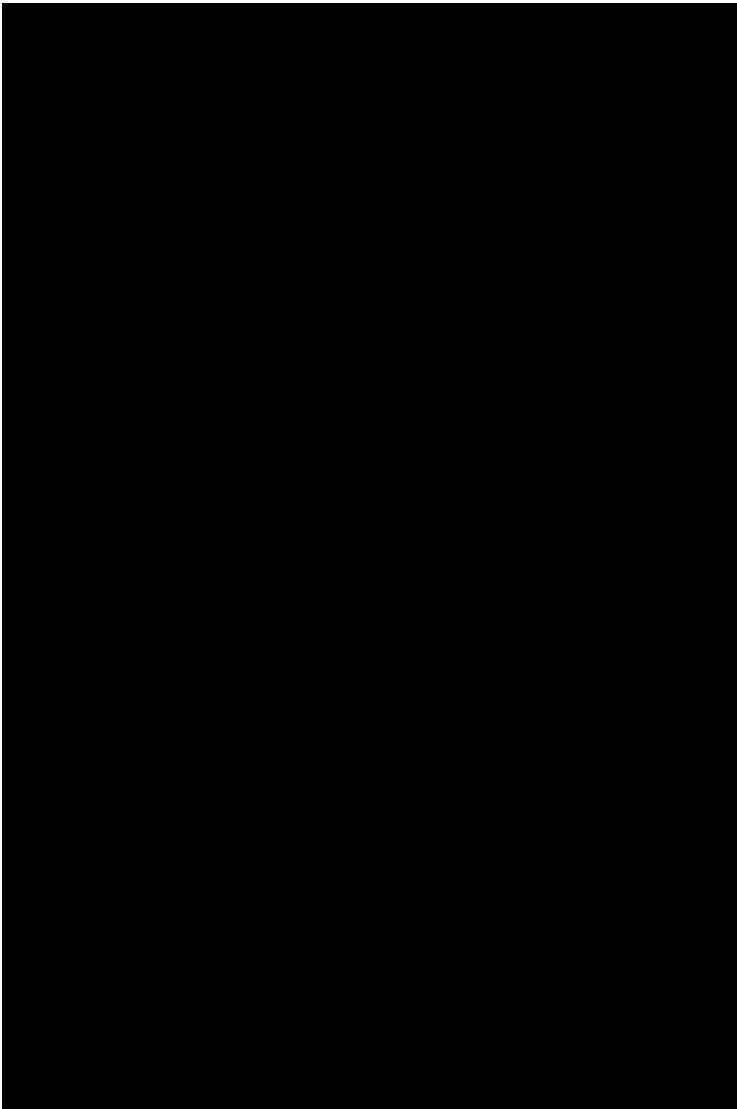


Fig. 117. Diagram showing arrangement of *CEG* 302 on column capital.



Figs. 118-20 (left to right). Three marble *korai* statues dedicated by Cheramyes to Hera on Samos, c.580-570 BCE. Vathy, Archaeological Museum of Vathy (figs. 118 and 120); Paris, Louvre (fig. 119). Source: <https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/kore-cheramyes-group>; Karakasi 2003, pl. 8.



Figs. 121-2 (left and below).
Gold and ivory statues from the
Halos deposit in Delphi, *c.*
540-510 BCE. Delphi,
Archaeological Museum of
Delphi. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=gold%2C+ivory+delphi&title=Special:Search&go=Go&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1&searchToken=7a0iauuuycc6wbqbyj6i3wcoi8#%2Fmedia%2FFile%3AArtemis%2C_torso_of_cult_statue%2C_ivory%2C_gold%2C_550_BC%2C_AM_Delphi%2C_060071.jpg
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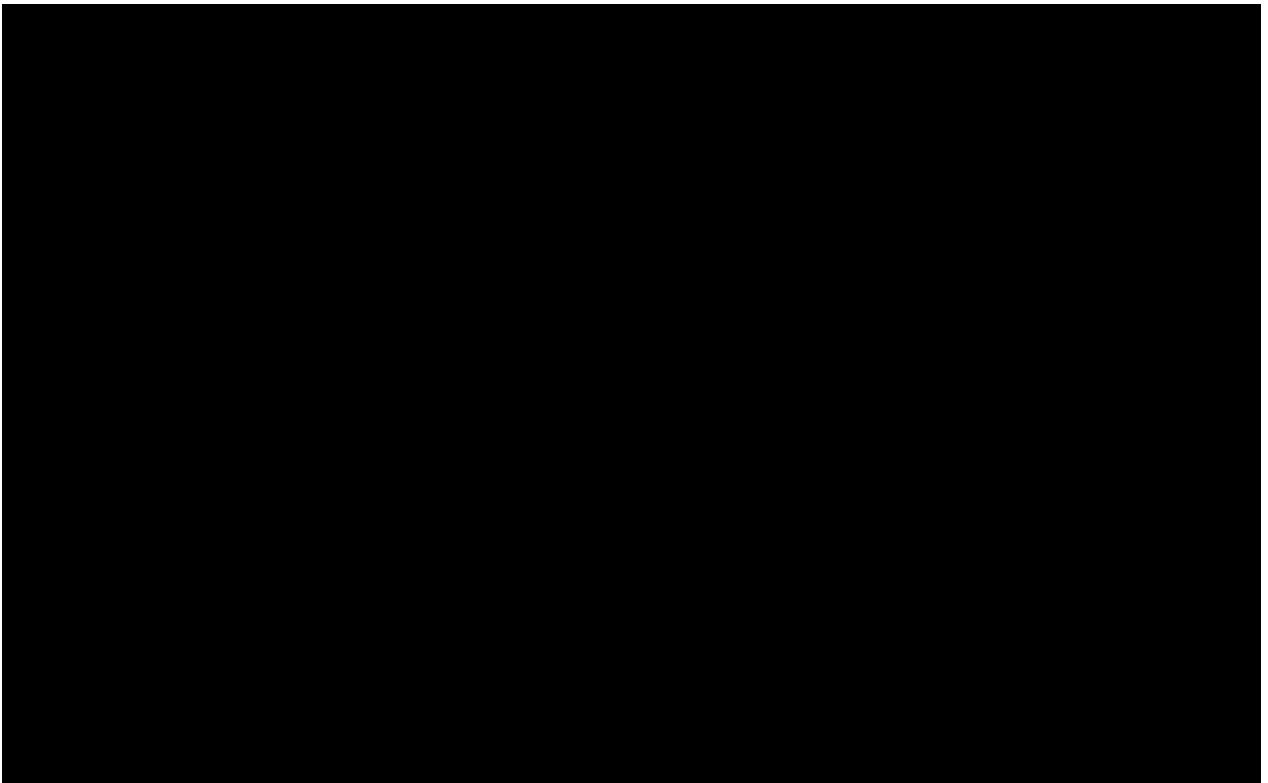
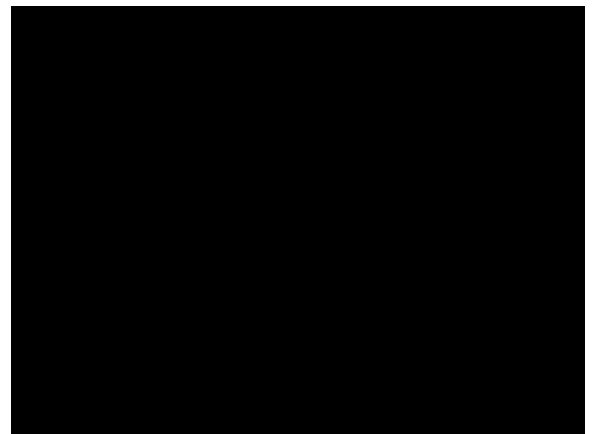
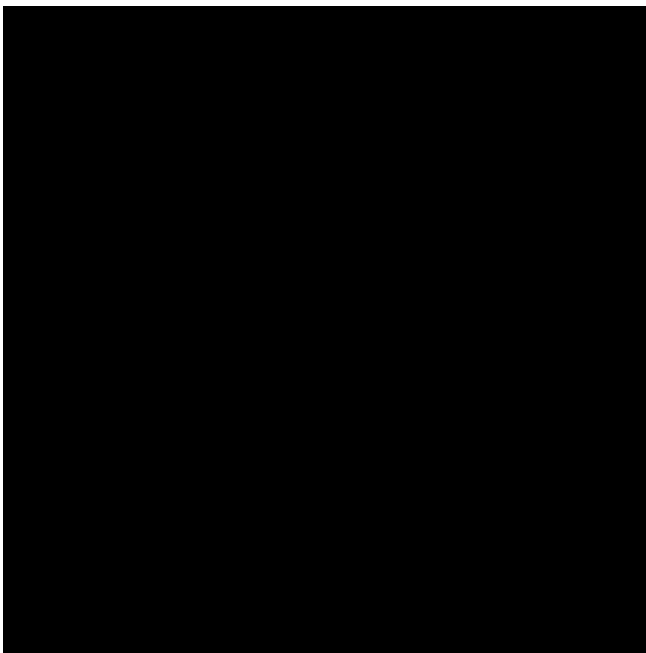
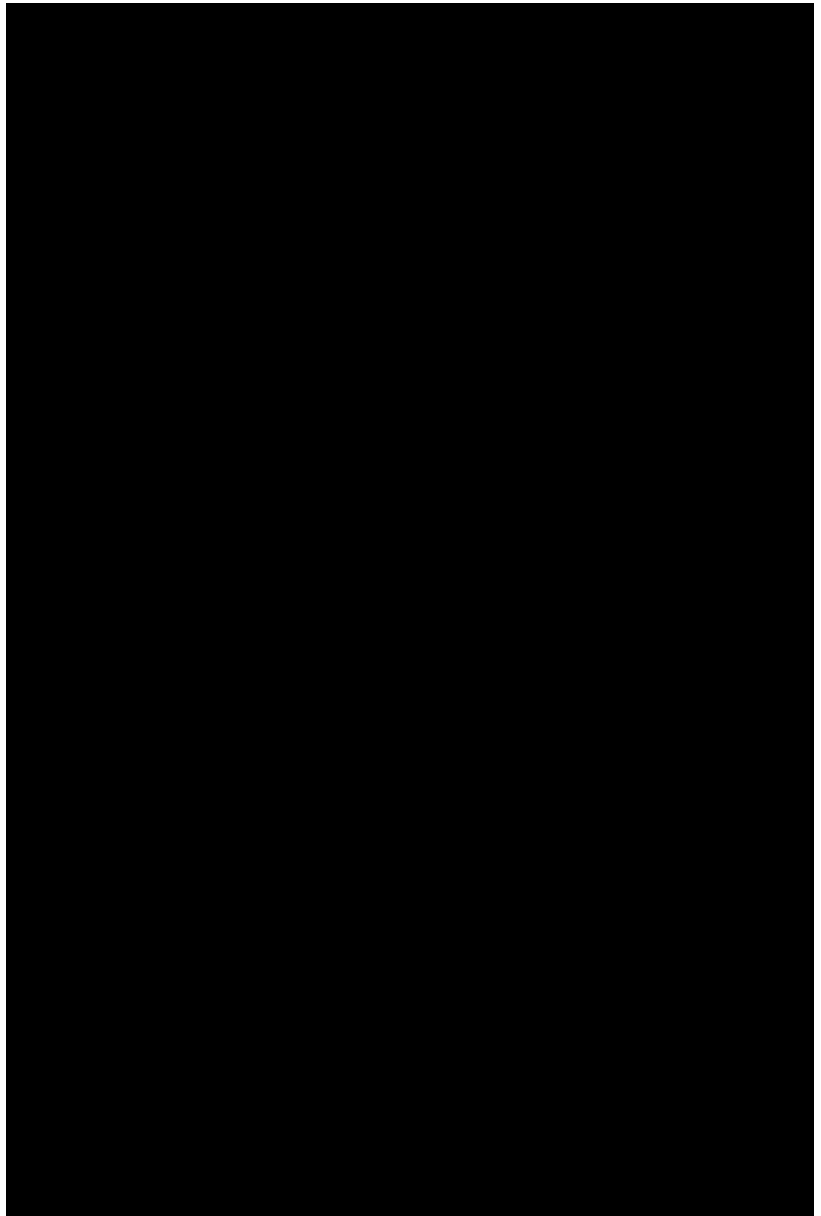


Fig 123. Silver vase of Entemena with copper base, found at Tello, c.2400 BCE. Paris, Louvre. Source:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vase_of_Entemena#/media/File:Vase_Entemena_Louvre_AO2674.jpg



Figs. 124-5. Boiotian ceramic cup, c. 550 BCE. Private collection. Source: Maffre 1975, 417.

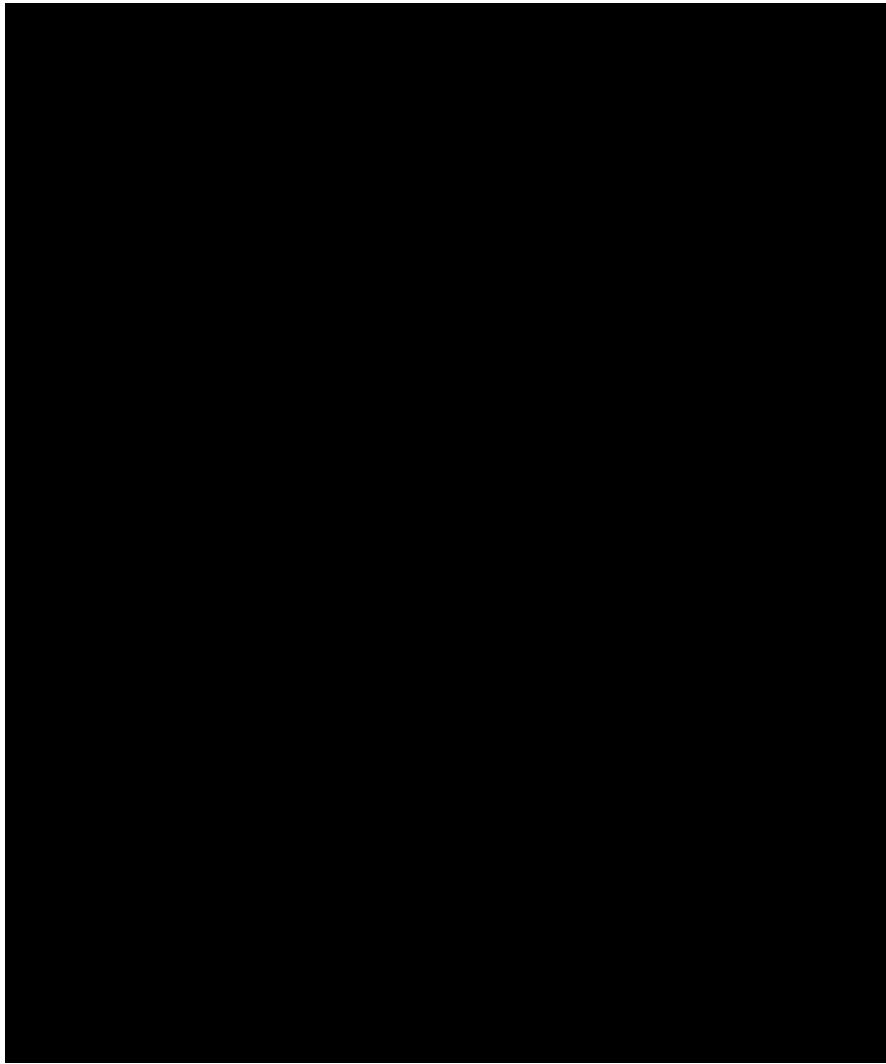
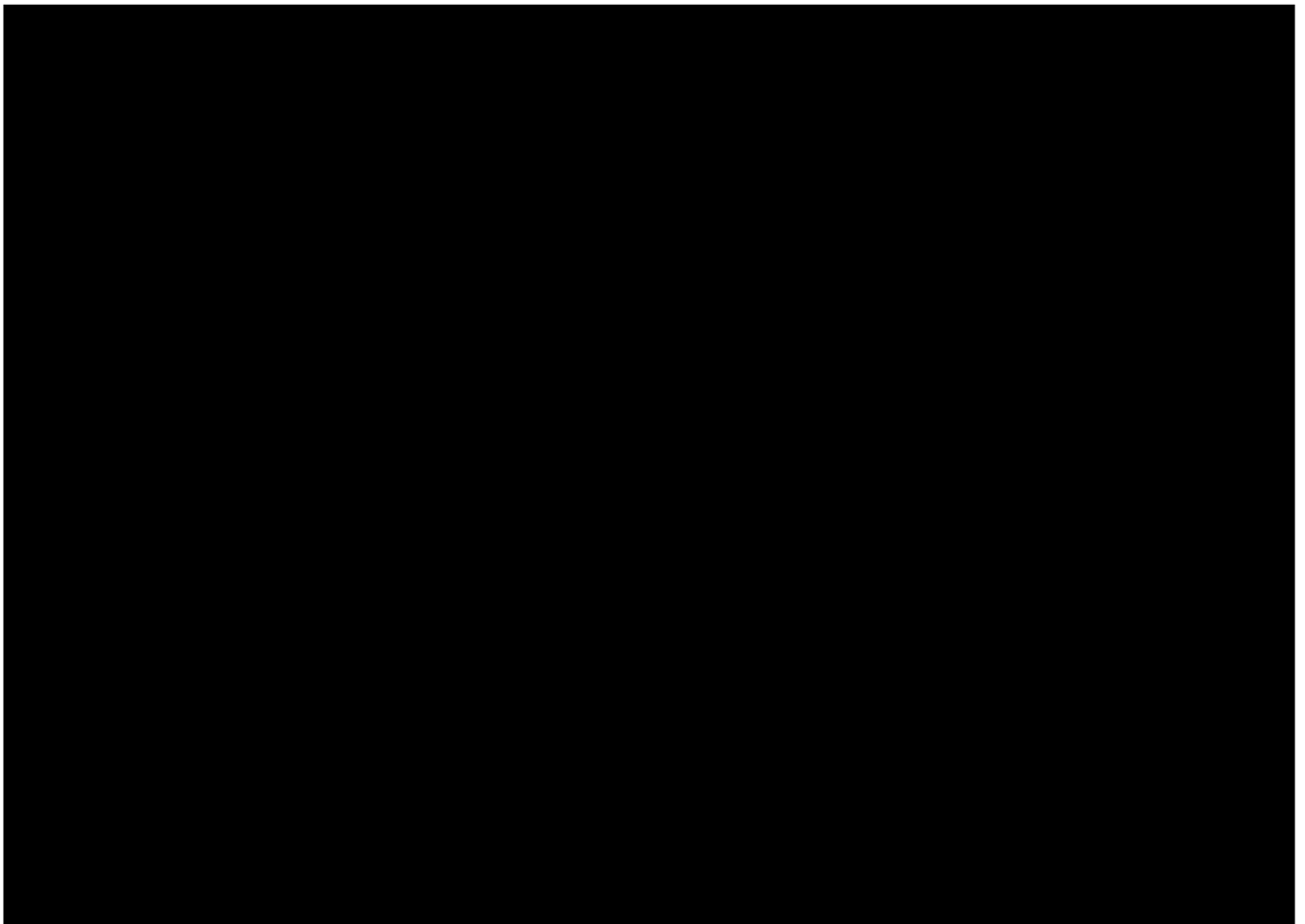
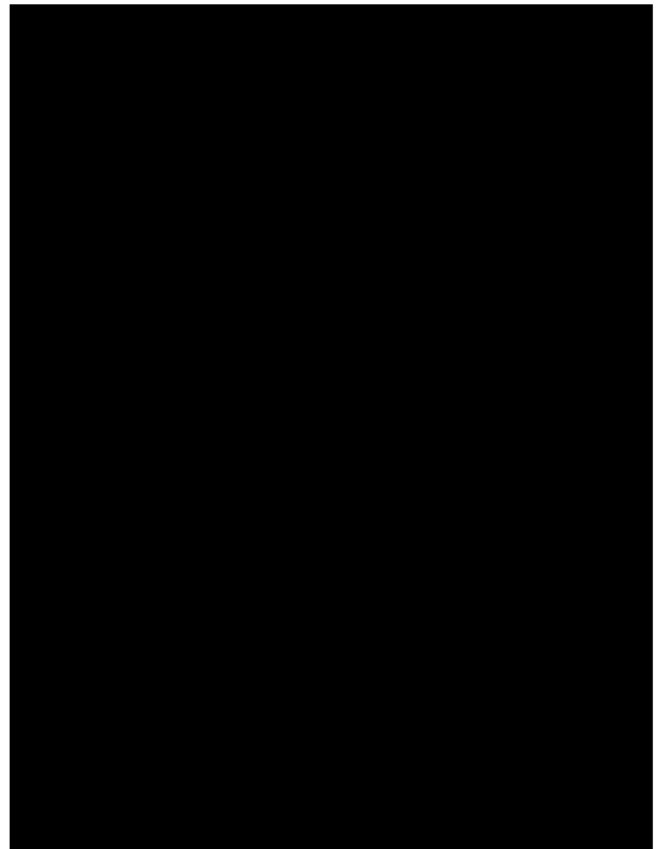
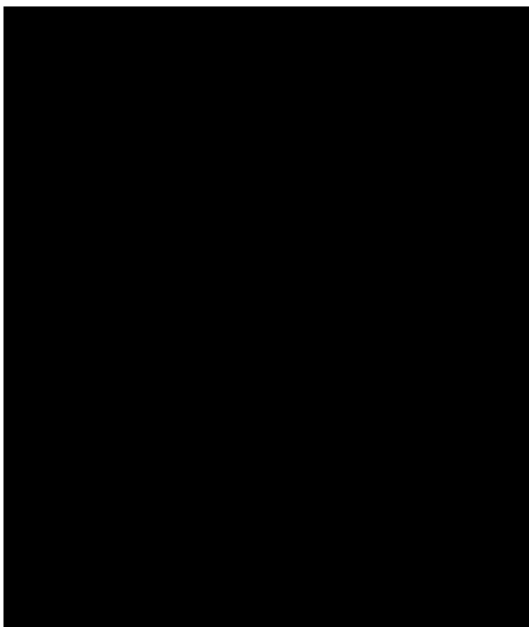
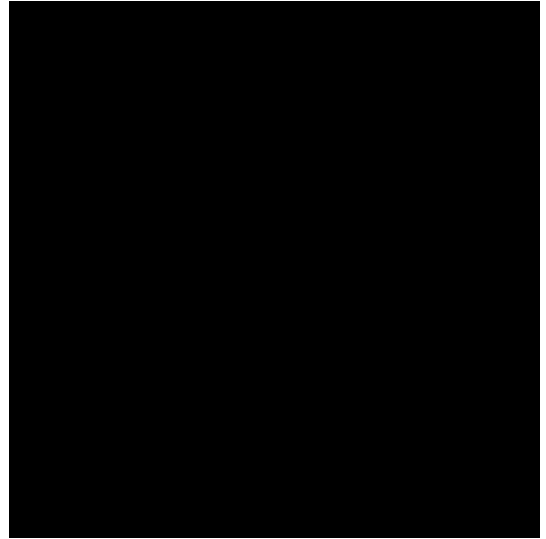


Fig. 126. Plan of the sanctuary of Orthia in Sparta in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE. Source: Mazarakis Ainian 1997, fig. 275.



Figs. 127-32. Terracotta masks from the sanctuary of Orthia, c.650-550 BCE. Sparta, Archaeological Museum of Sparta. Source: Dawkins 1929, pls. XLVII-LVIII.





Figs. 133-4. Terracotta masks from the sanctuary of Orthia, c.600-550 BCE. Dickins' 'warriors' and 'youths'. Sparta, Archaeological Museum of Sparta. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. L-LII.

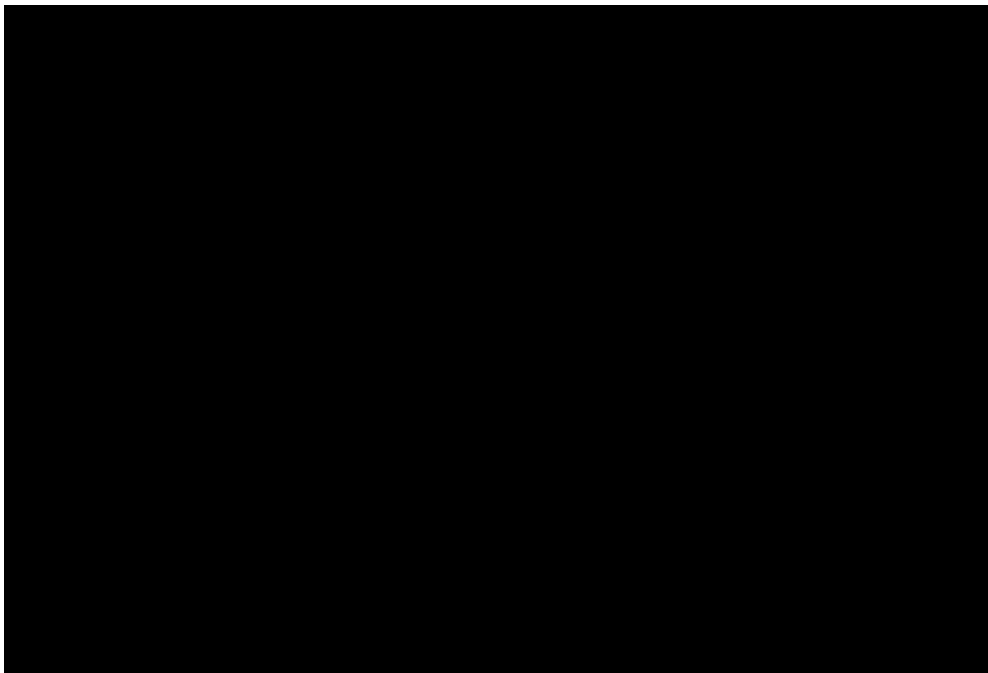


Fig. 135. Lead figurines of warriors from the sanctuary of Orthia, c.650-600 BCE. Sparta, Archaeological Museum of Sparta. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. CLXXXIII.

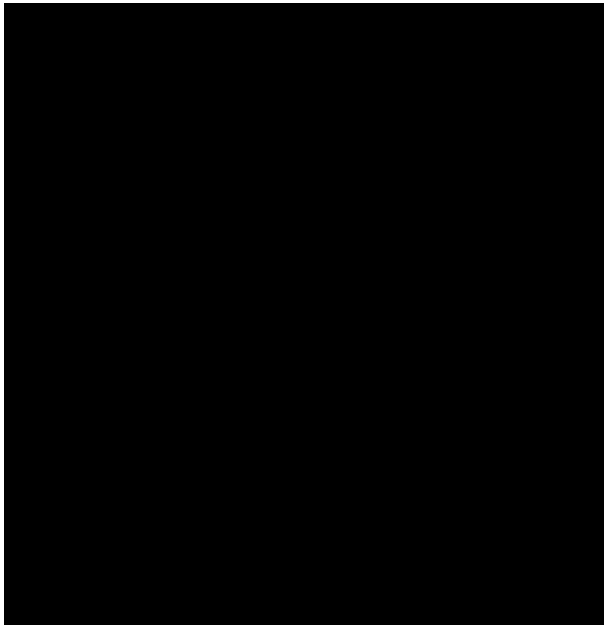


Fig. 136. Ivory figurines of couchant animals, c.700-600 BCE. Sparta, Archaeological Museum of Sparta. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. CXLVIII.

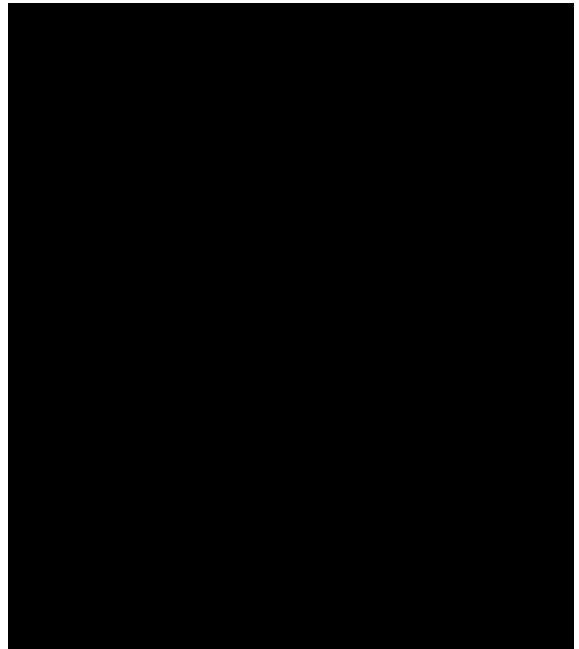


Fig. 137. Ivory relief plaque with male and female figures, c.625-600 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum.



Fig. 138. Two ivory relief fibula plaques depicting a winged Orthia holding birds by the neck, and bronze fibulae, c.700-675 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. XCI.

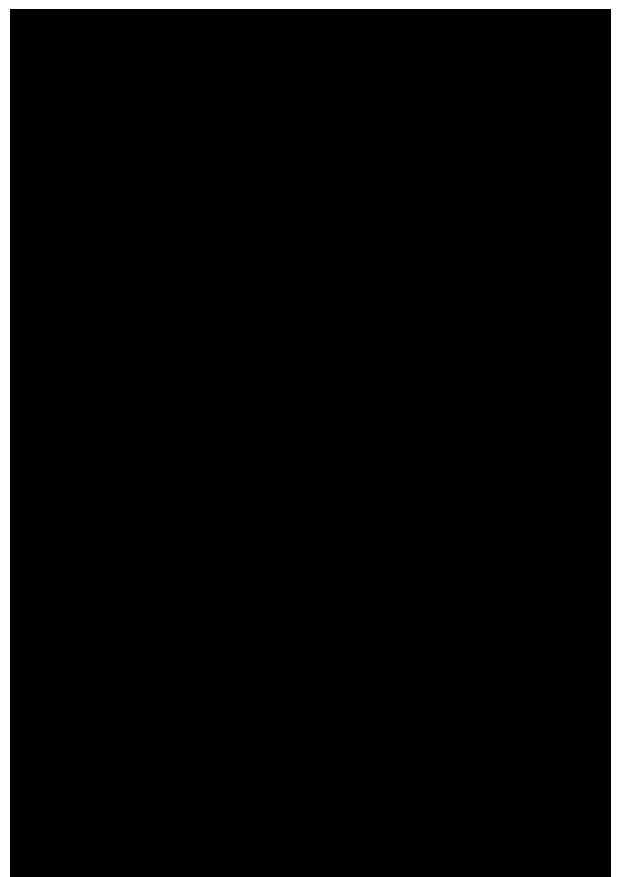


Fig. 139. Ivory relief plaque of warrior, c. 650-600 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. CVIII.

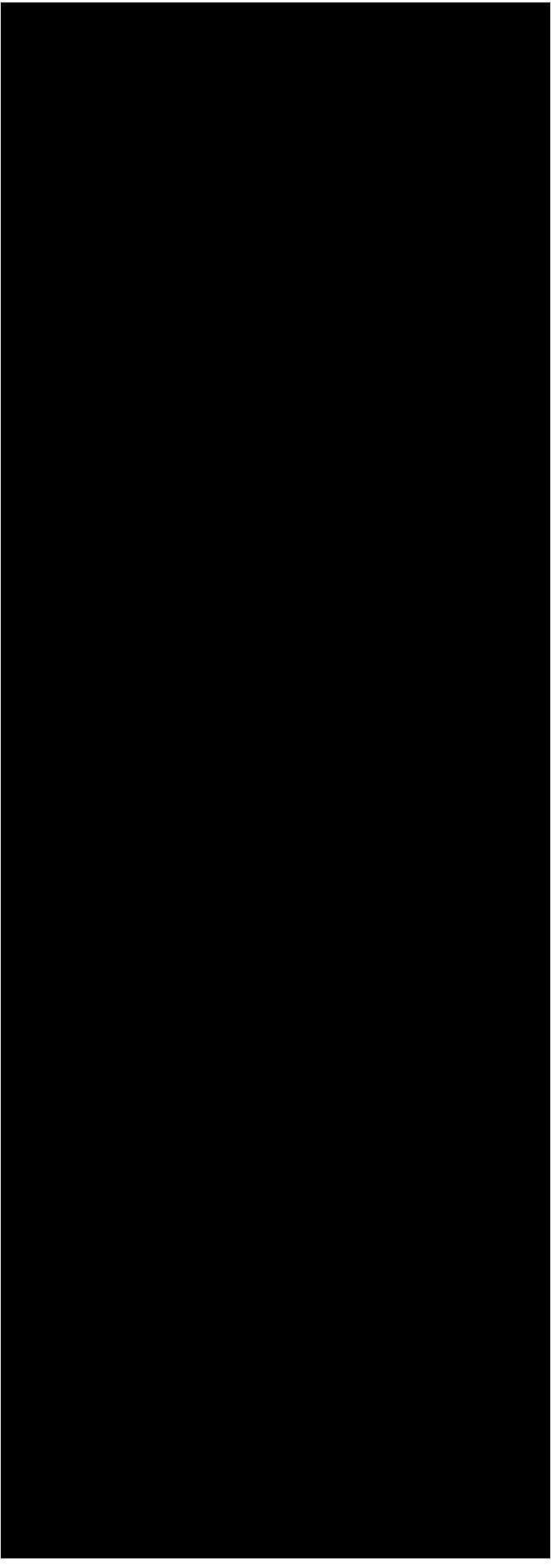


Fig. 140 (above). Fragments of an ivory *pyxis* in Syrian style from the South-East Palace, Nimrud: on the left, a mistress of beasts; on the right, a man stabbing a lion. Ninth to eighth centuries BCE. London, British Museum. Source: Barnett 1957, pl. XXVI.

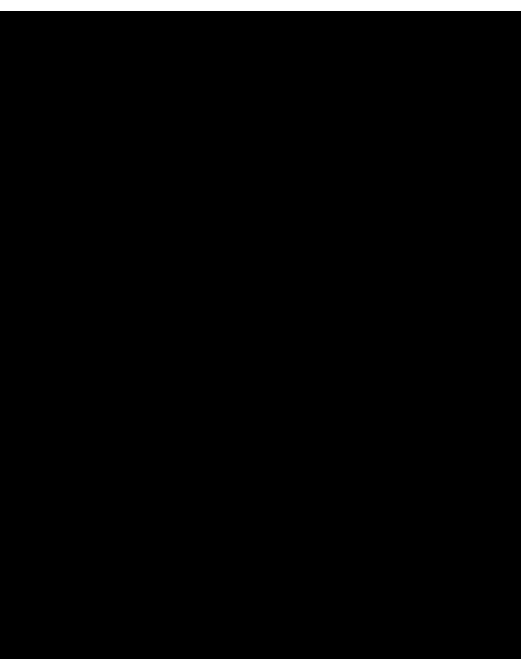
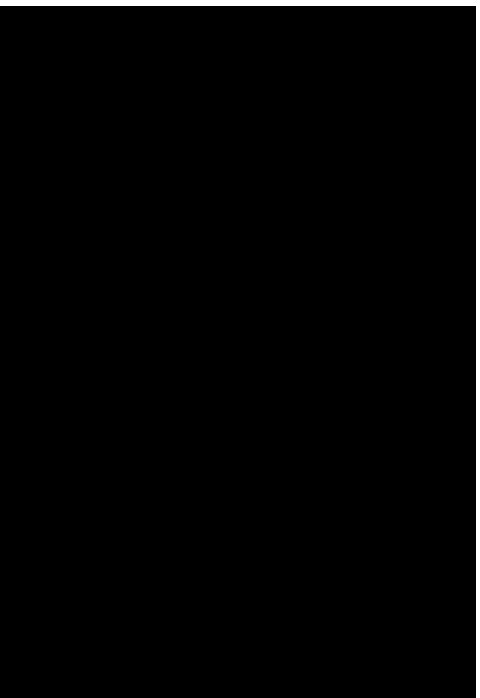
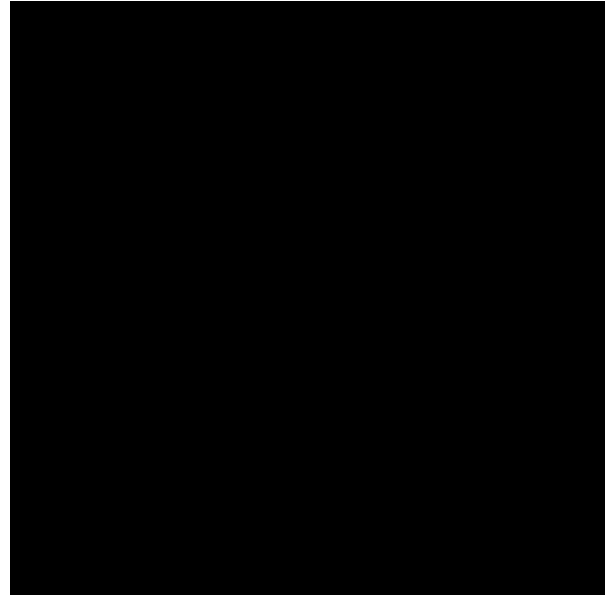
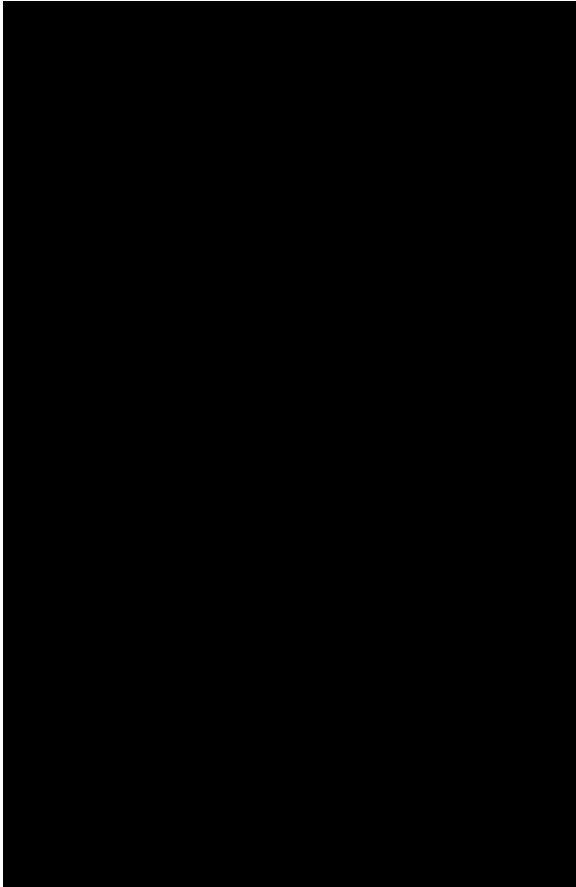


Fig. 141. Ivory relief plaque depicting a man fighting beasts, from the sanctuary of Orthia, c.650-600 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. CV.



Figs. 142-3. Phoenician ivory relief panels from Nimrud showing youths on either side of a stylised plant. Ninth to eighth centuries BCE. Baghdad, National Museum of Iraq; London, British Museum. Source: Hermann 2017, 140; Barnett 1957, pl. 3.



Fig. 144. Ivory relief plaque fibula from the sanctuary of Orthia, c.675-650 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Source: Dawkins 1929, pl. XCII.

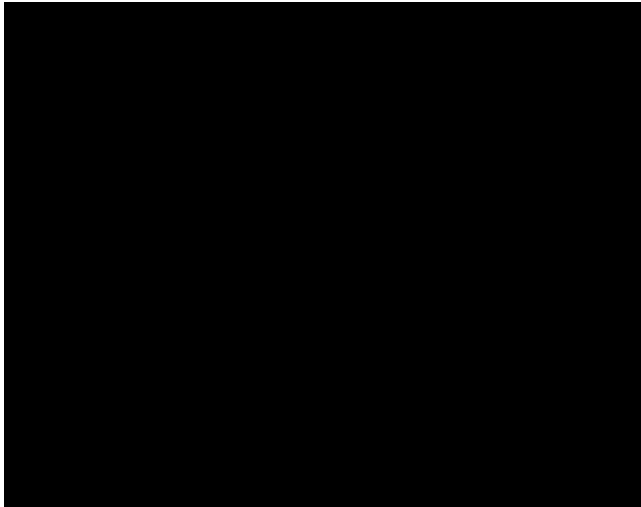


Fig. 145. Miniature gold bull from the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, sixth century BCE. Isthmia, Archaeological Museum of Isthmia.

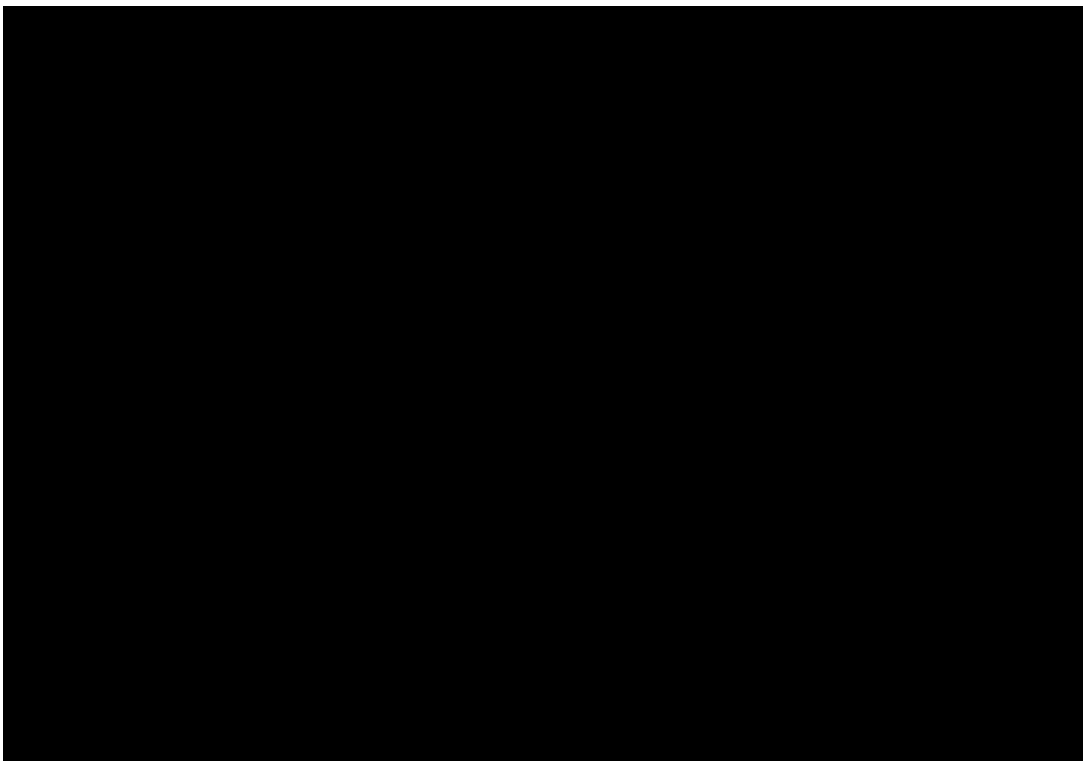


Fig. 146. Life-size silver and gold bull from sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, sixth century BCE. Delphi, Archaeological Museum of Delphi. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silver_Bull_of_Delphi#/media/File:GR-delphi-stier.jpg.

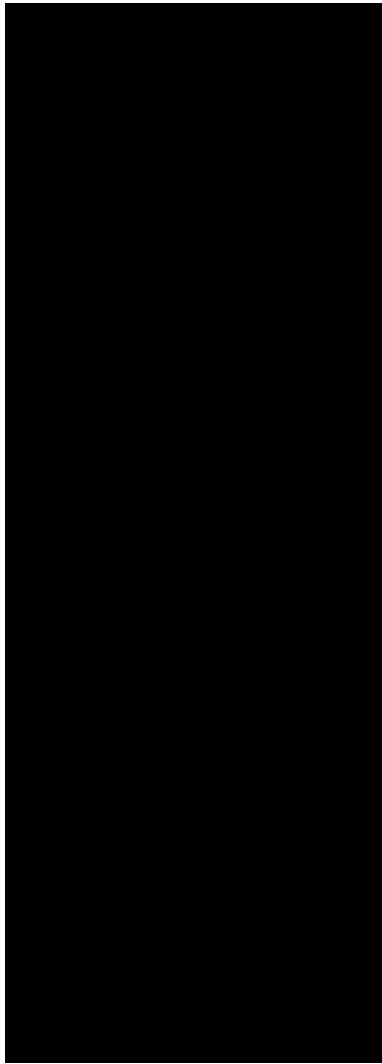


Fig. 147 (left). Marble *kouros* dedicated by Isches to Hera on Samos, c.580 BCE. Its original height was around 4.75 m. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum.

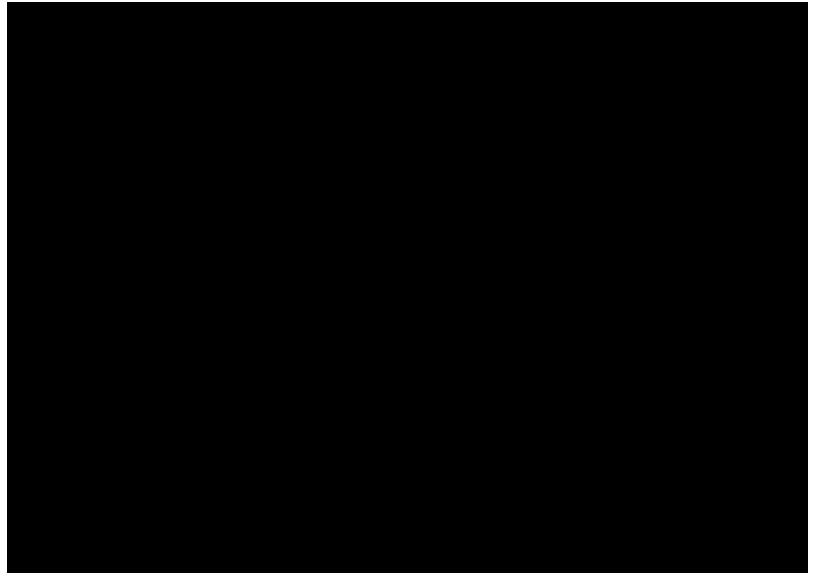
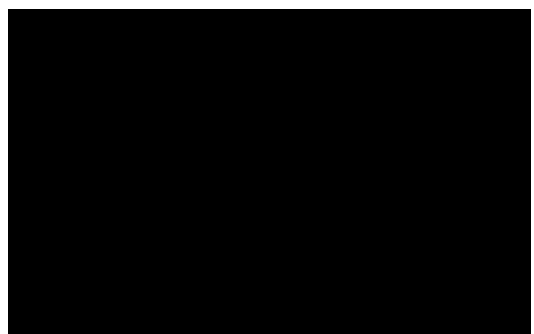
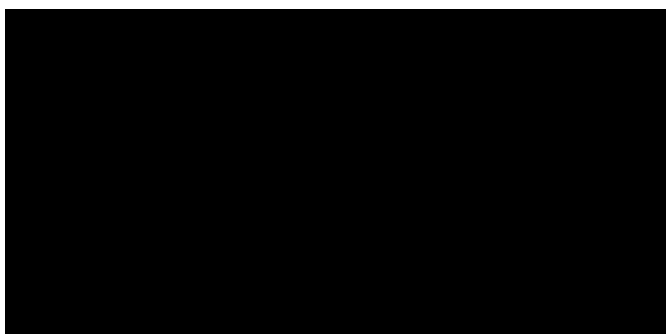
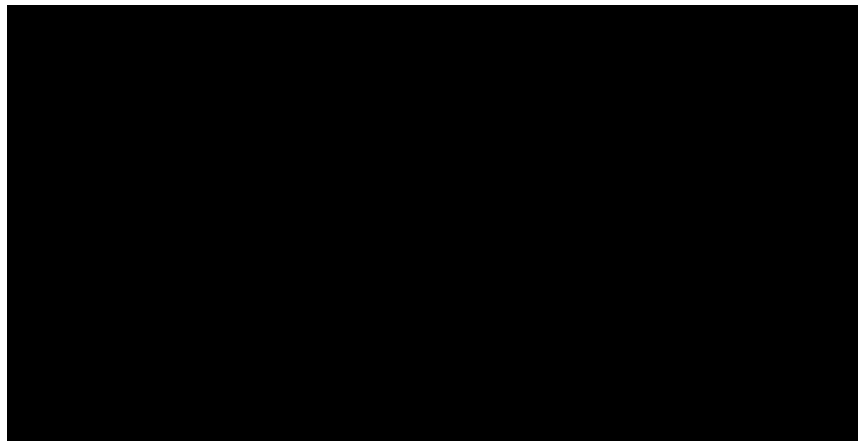


Fig. 148 (above). Ivory pyxis lids from Nimrud, c. 900-700 BCE. London, British Museum. Source: Barnett 1957, pl. XXIX.

Figs. 149-50 (right and below). Ivory fibula plaques from the sanctuary of Orthia, c.700 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Source: Dawkins 1929a, pls. CXXXII-III.



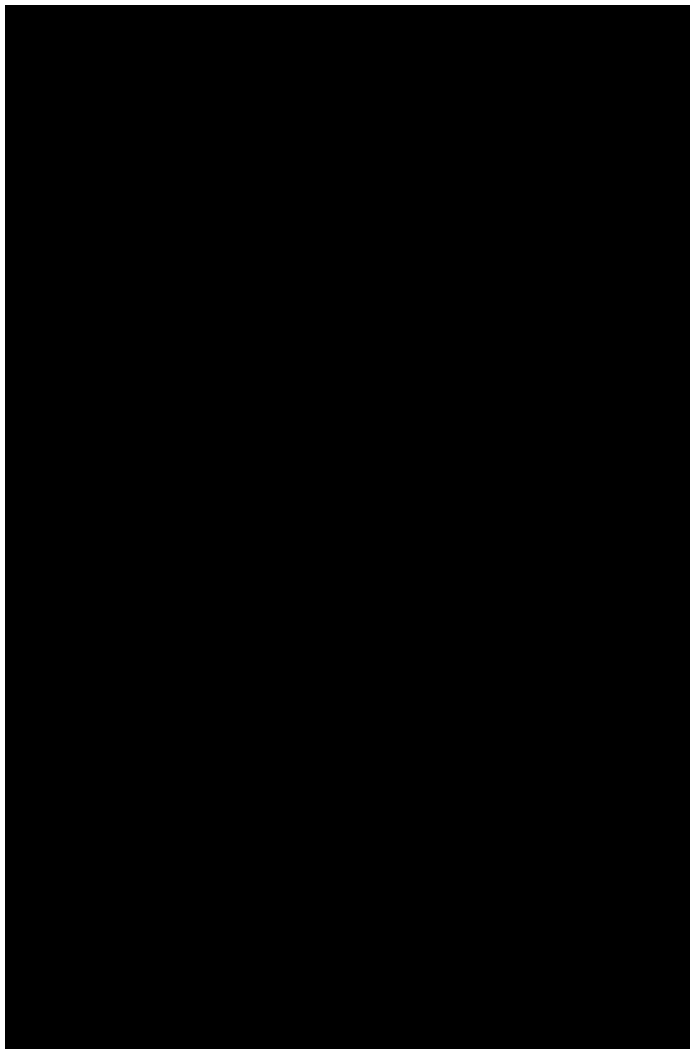


Fig. 151. Gold and silver jewellery from the sanctuary of Orthia, seventh century BCE. Source: Dawkins 1929a, pl. CCIII.

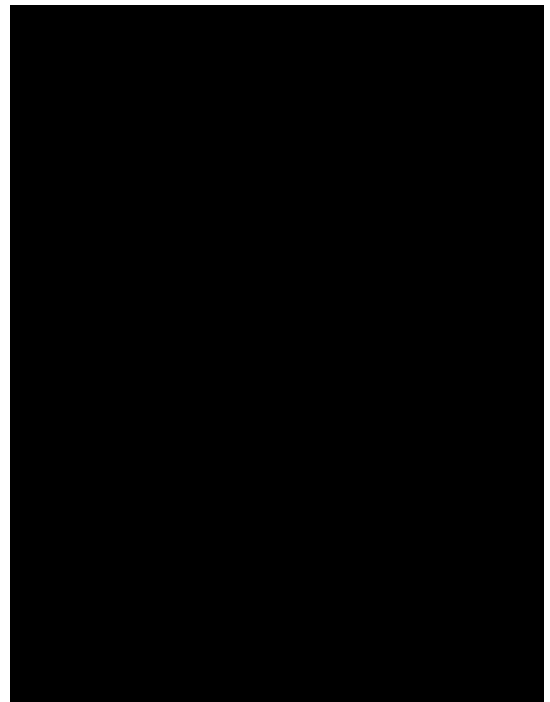


Fig. 152. Bronze pins from the sanctuary of Orthia, seventh century BCE. Source: Dawkins 1929a, pl. LXXXVI.

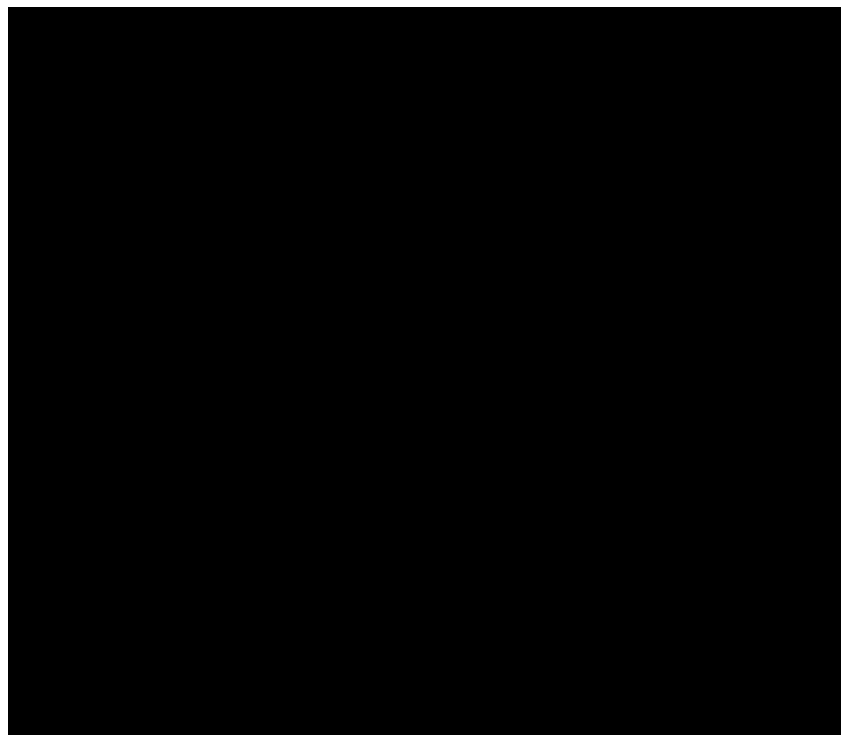


Fig. 153. Lead imitation jewellery from the sanctuary of Orthia, eighth to seventh centuries BCE. Source: Dawkins 1929a, pl. CLXXIX.

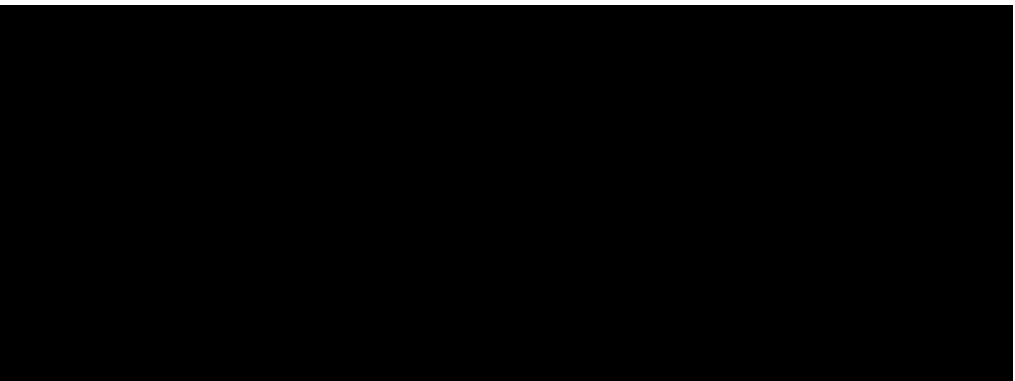


Fig. 154. The 'Lady of Auxerre', marble statuette, c.640-630 BCE. Paris, Louvre. Source: <https://www.louvre.fr/oeuvre-notices/statuette-feminine-dite-dame-d-auxerre>.

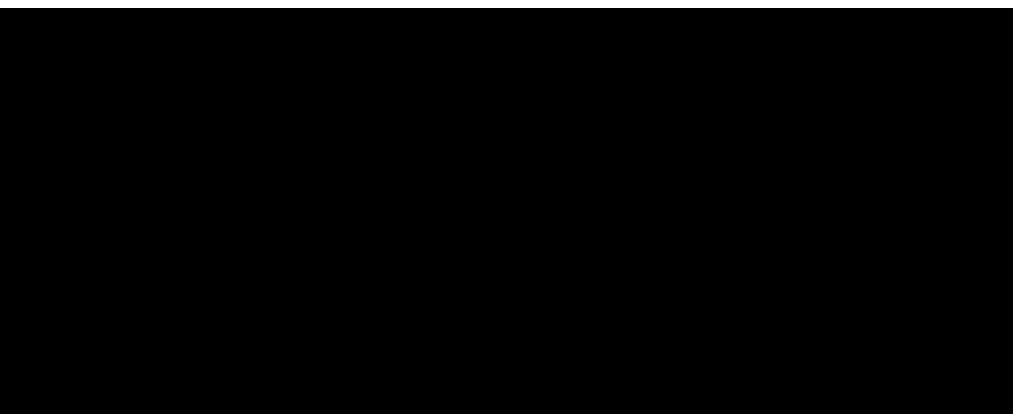


Fig. 155. Marble *kore* statue from the Athenian akropolis, c. 560 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Karakasi 2003, pl. 238.



Fig. 156. Marble *kore* statue from Delos, c.510 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Source: Karakasi 2003, pl. 226.

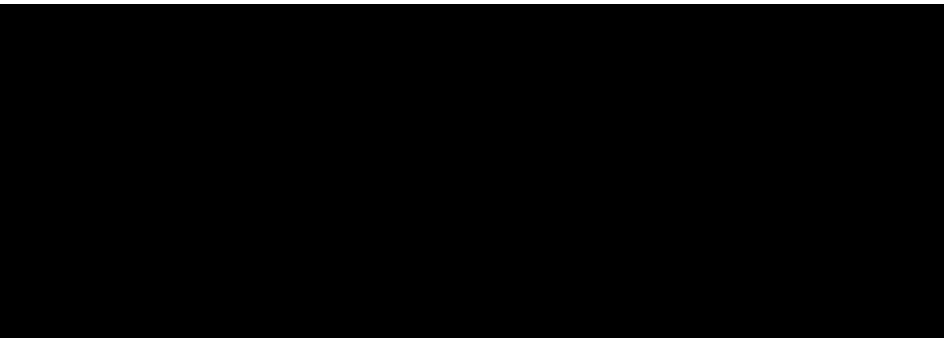


Fig. 157. Terracotta *kore* perfume bottle from the Heraion on Samos, c.550-500 BCE. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum.

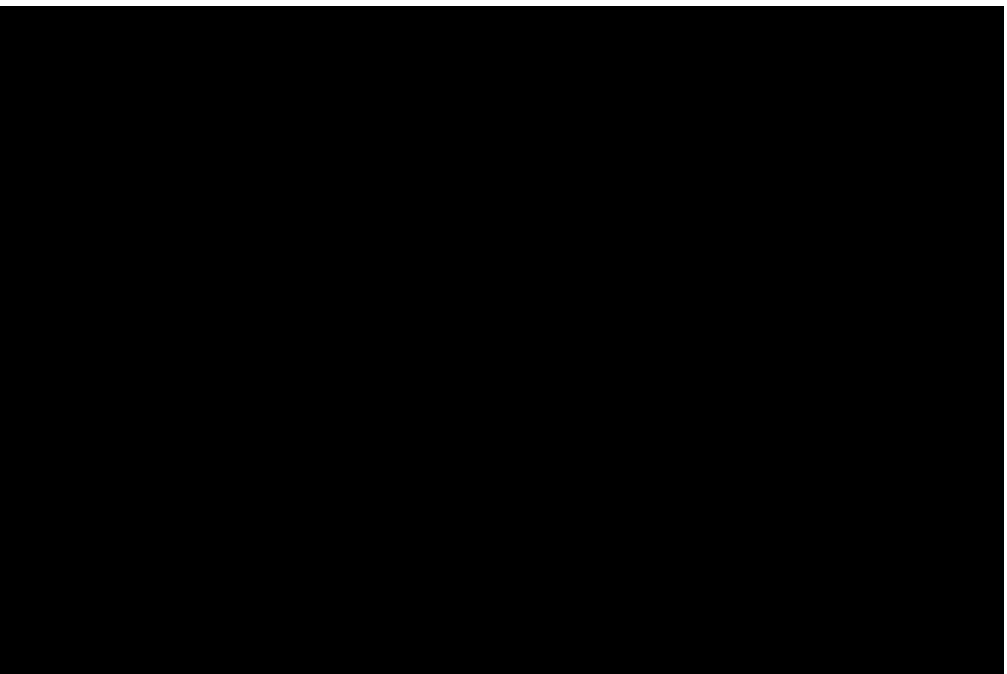


Fig. 158. Two terracotta *korai* incense burners from the sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone in Selinous, c.550-500 BCE. Palermo, Regional Archaeological Museum Antonio Salinas.

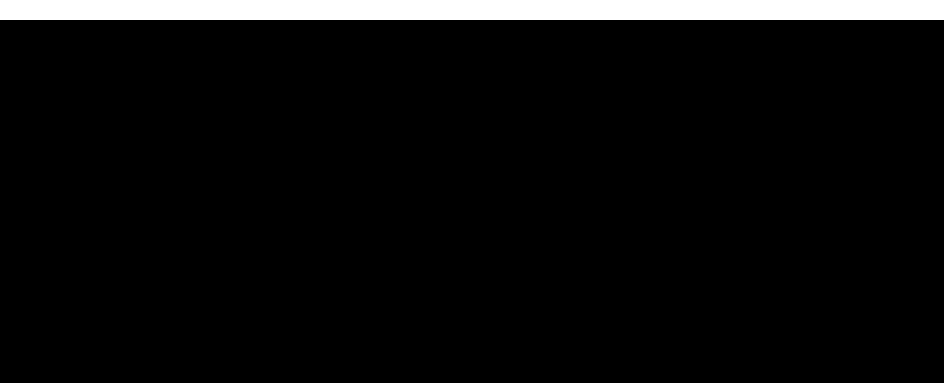


Fig. 159. Terracotta *kore* figurine from the sanctuary of Demeter in Samos, c.530-480 BCE. Pythagorion, Archaeological Museum of Pythagorion.

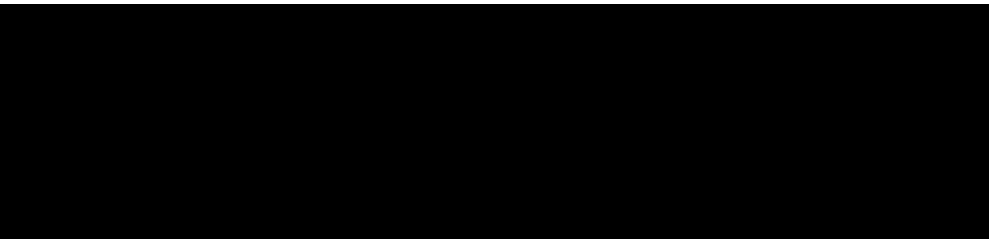


Fig. 160. Wooden statuette from the Heraion on Samos, c. 640 BCE. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum. Source: Osborne 1998, 48.

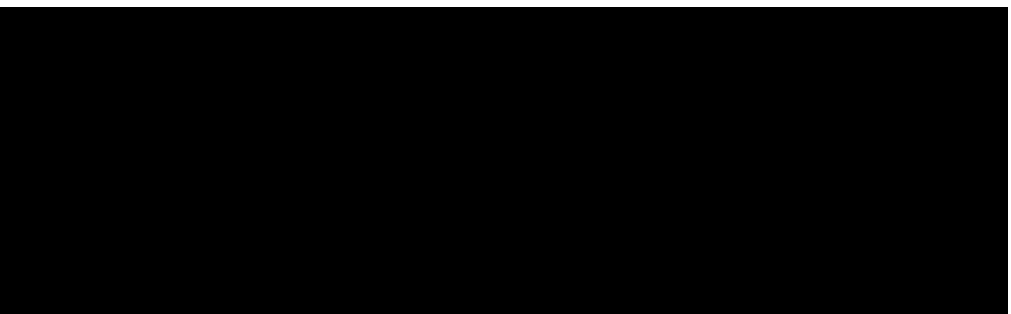


Fig. 161. Wooden statuette from the Heraion on Samos, c. 630-600 BCE. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum.

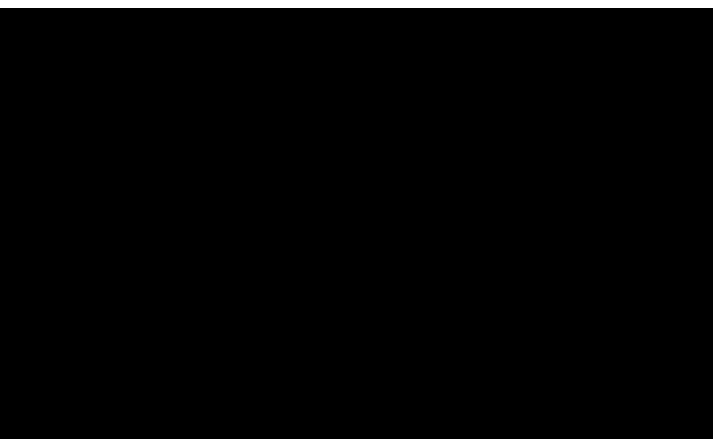


Fig. 162. Fragment of a wooden statuette from the Heraion on Samos, c. 640-600 BCE. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum.

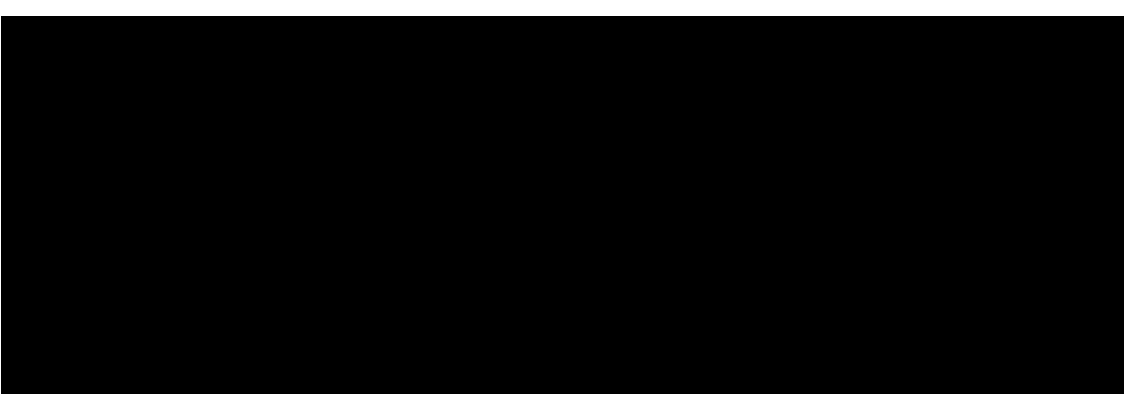


Fig. 163. Marble statue dedicated by Nikandre to Artemis on Delos, c.640 BCE. Athens, National Archaeological Museum.

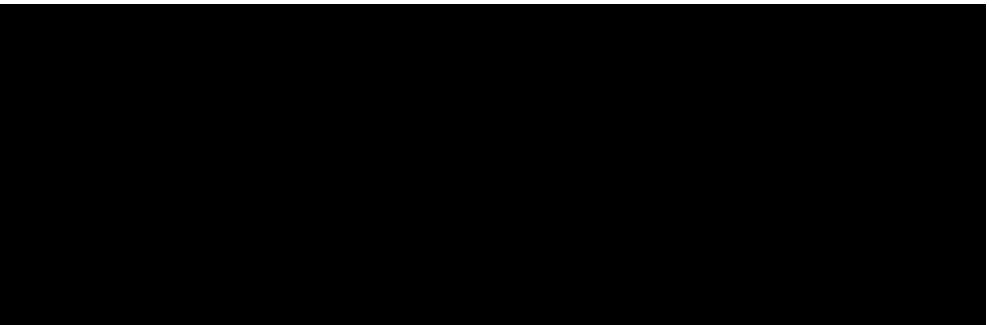


Fig. 164. Colour reconstruction of Nikandre's statue. Source: Kokkorou-Alevras 2017, 27.

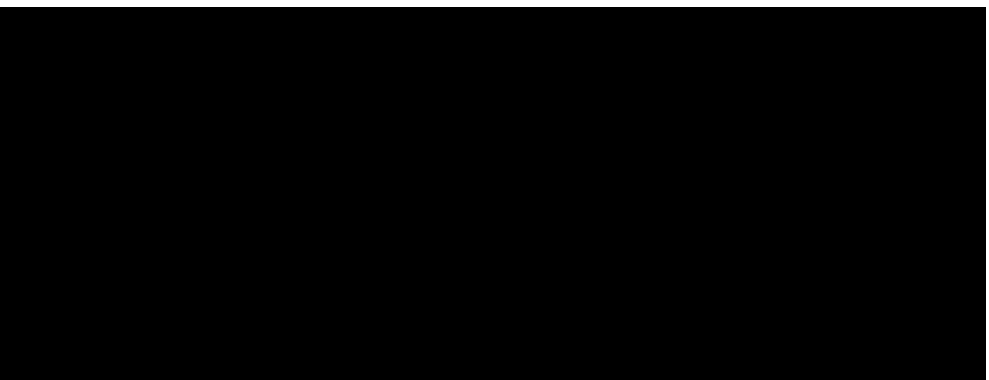


Fig. 165. Kore 680 from the Athenian akropolis, marble, c.530-520 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Karakasi 2003, pl. 248.

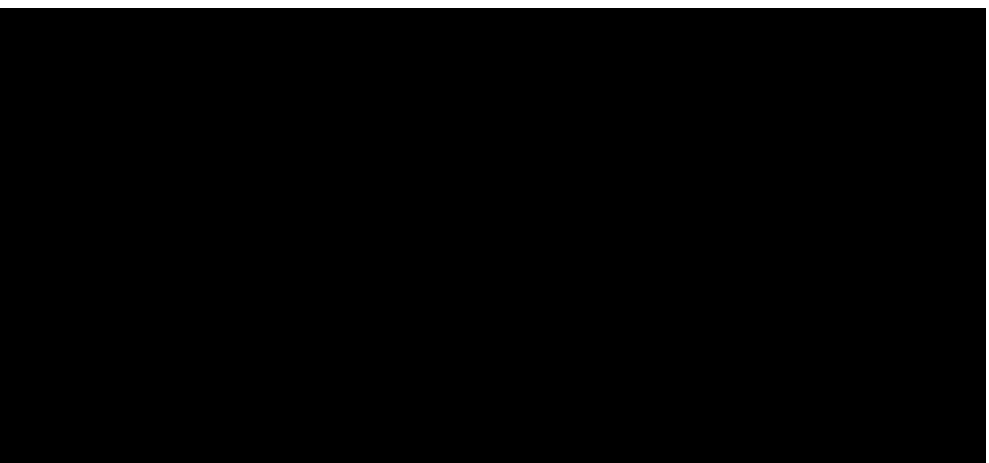


Fig. 166. Kore 615 from the Athenian akropolis, marble, c. 500 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Karakasi 2003, pl. 277.

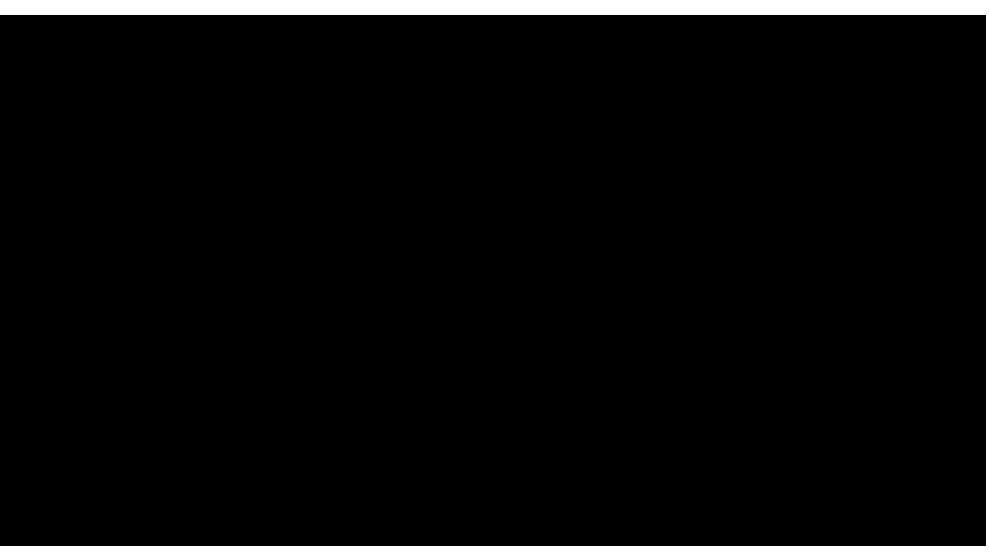


Fig. 167. Terracotta statuette from the sanctuary on Despotiko, c.650 BCE. Paros, Paros Archaeological Museum. Source: Alexandridou 2018, 89.

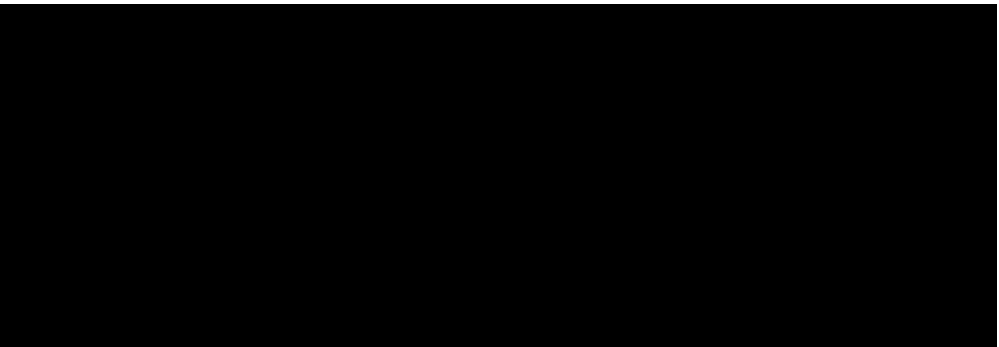
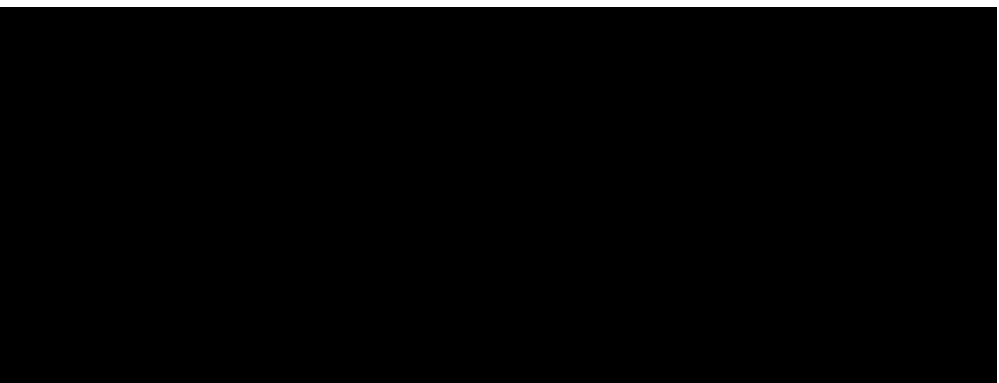


Fig. 168. Kore 682 from the Athenian akropolis, marble, c.525 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Karakasi 2003, pl. 252.



Figs. 169-70. Colour reconstructions of kore 682. Source: Schmaltz 2018, 138-9.

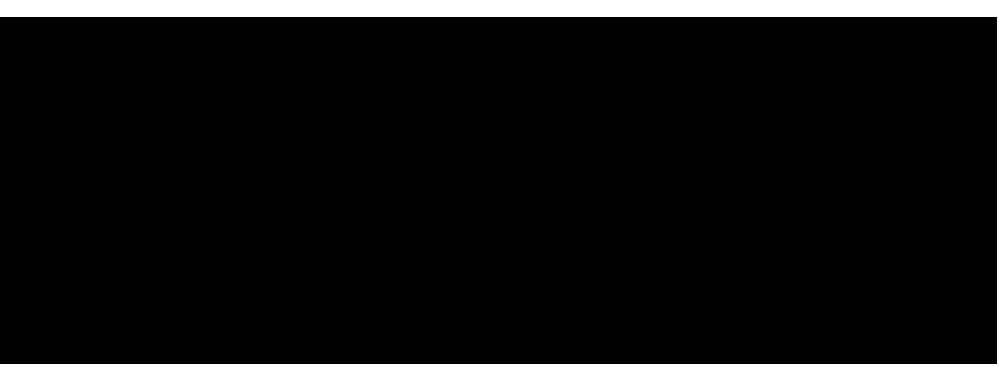
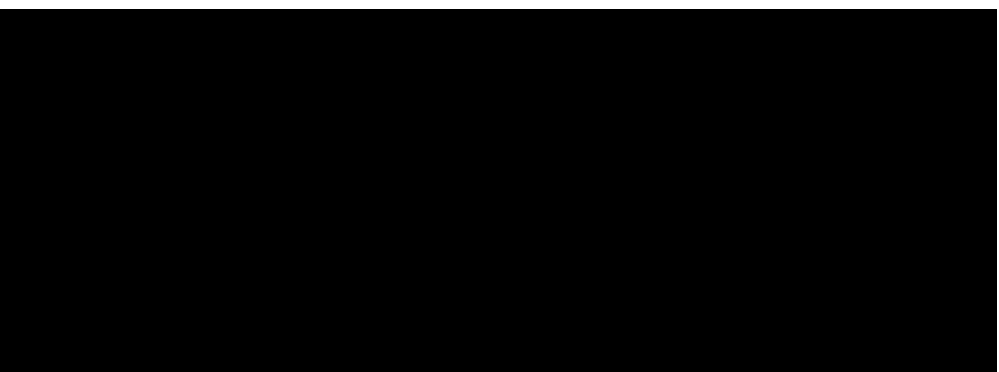


Fig. 171. Terracotta *kore* figurine from the Athenian akropolis, c.520-480 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Pandermalis et al. 2015, 167.

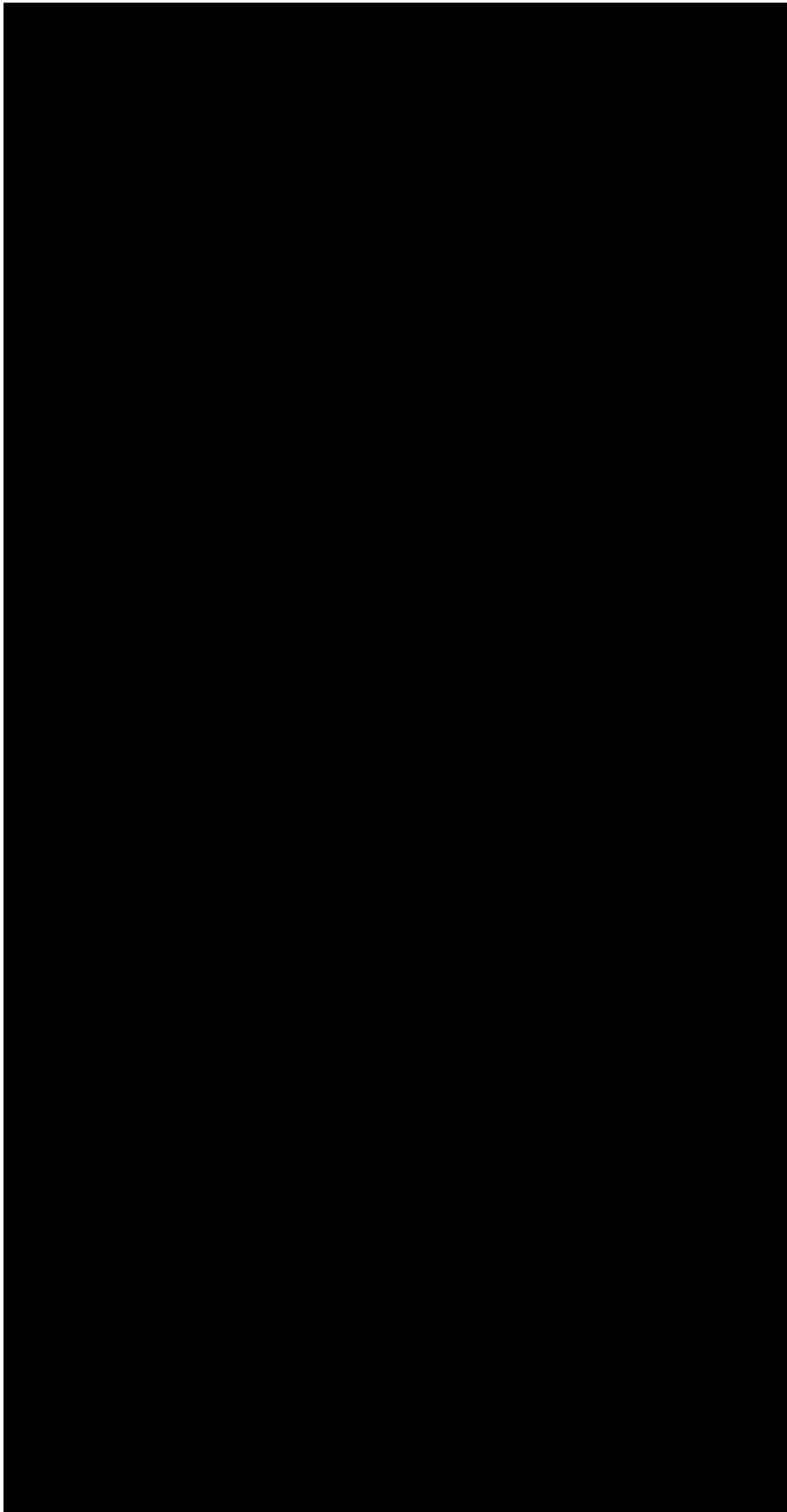


Fig. 172. White-ground oinochoe attributed to the Brygos Painter, c.490-470 BCE, said to be from Locri, Calabria. London, British Museum. Source: Jenkins et al. 2015, 160.

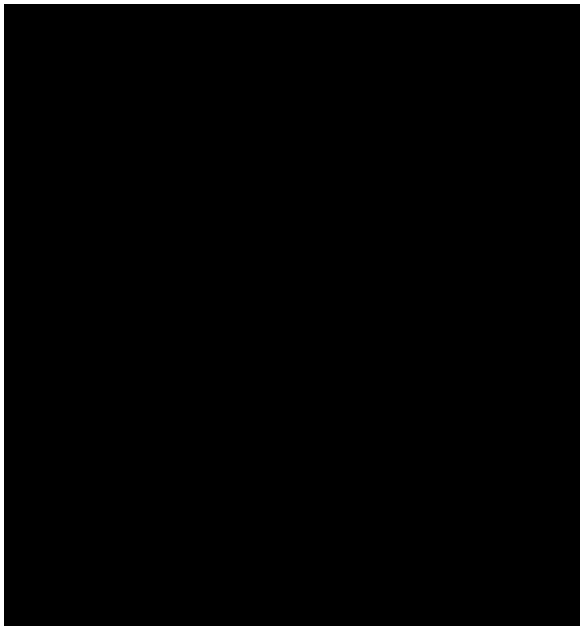


Fig. 173. Terracotta *kore* figurine from the sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Selinous, c.550-500 BCE. Palermo, Regional Archaeological Museum Antonio Salinas.

Fig. 174 (right). Bronze *kore* figurine from the Heraion on Samos, c.560 BCE. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum.

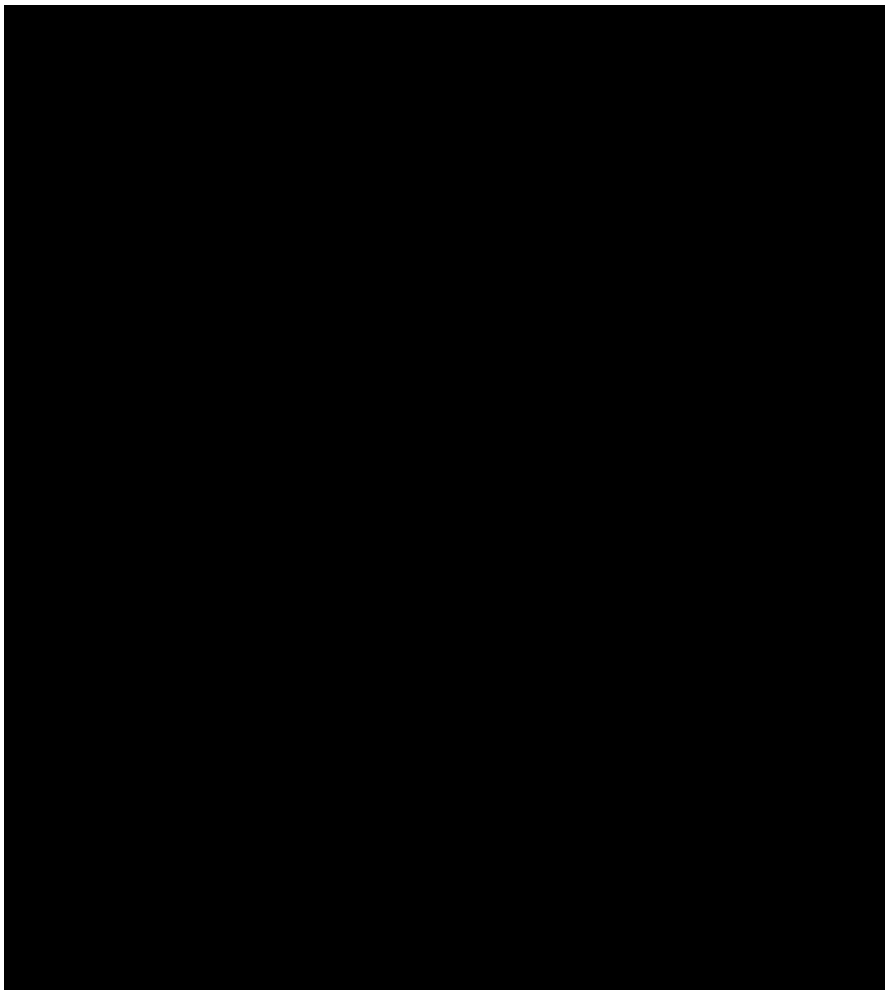
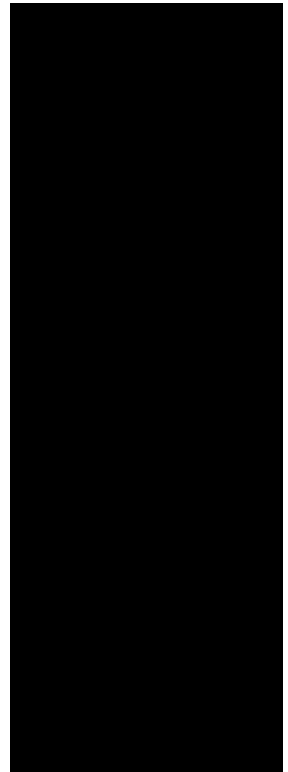


Fig. 175. Two marble *korai* from the Geneleos Group, dedicated to Hera on Samos, c. 560 BCE. The figure on the left is inscribed 'Philippe', the figure on the right 'Ornithe'. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum.

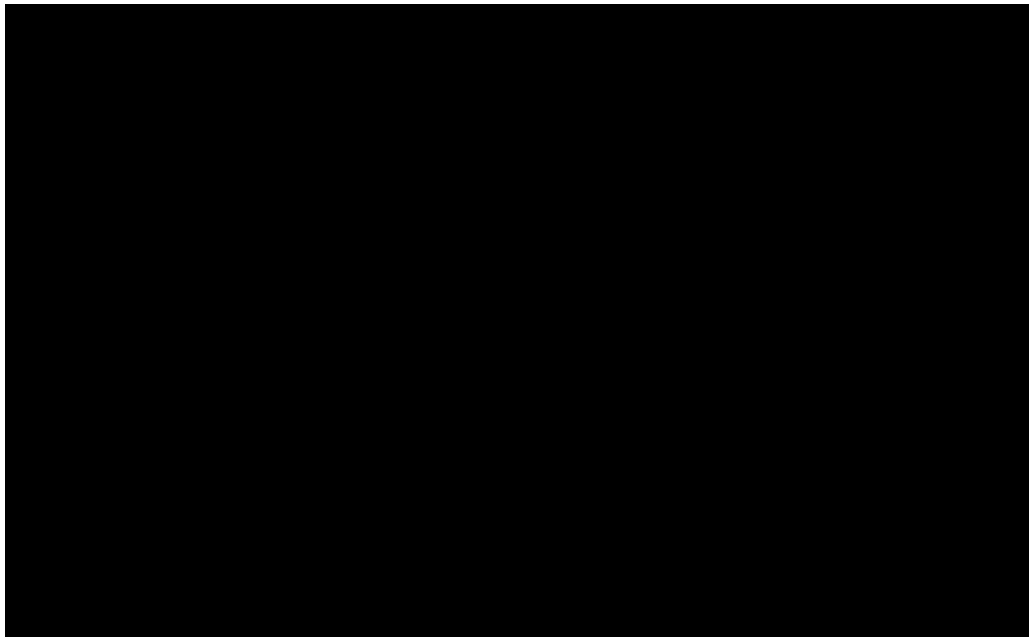


Fig. 176. The Geneleos Group from the Heraion on Samos, c.560 BCE. Vathy, Vathy Archaeological Museum.

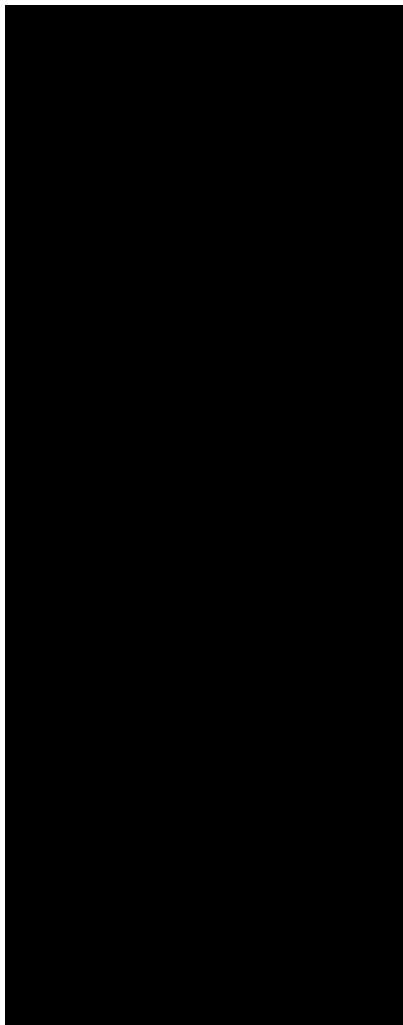


Fig. 177. Kore 618, Antenor's *kore*, from the Athenian akropolis, c.530 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Karakasi 2003, pl. 254.

Fig. 178 (right). Marble lustral basin from Delphi with *korai* supports, c.600-575 BCE. Delphi, Delphi Archaeological Museum.

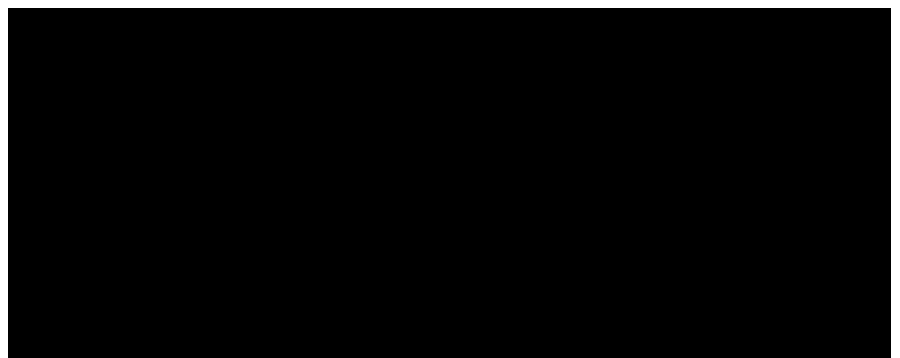


Fig. 179. Fragmentary base and proposed reconstruction of a marble lustral basin from the Athenian akropolis with encircling *korai*, c.580-570 BCE. Athens, Acropolis Museum. Source: Pandermalis et al. 2014, 113.

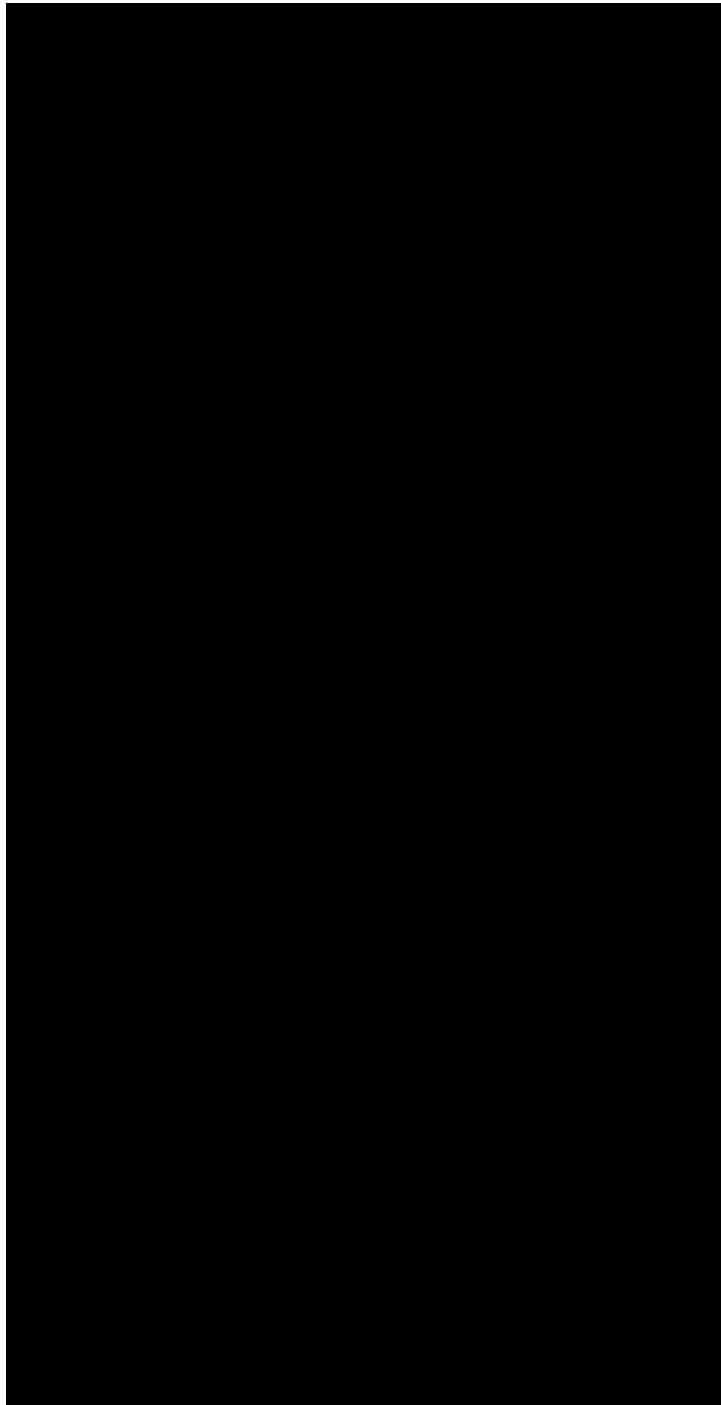


Fig. 180. Terracotta statue group of Zeus abducting Ganymede, about half life-size, c. 480-470 BCE, from the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia. Olympia, Archaeological Museum of Olympia.