

CITIES AND SANCTUARIES, ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Roots in the past

In this chapter will be presented the main approaches that Classical archaeologists have made to the objects and features considered most worthy of their attention.

A HISTORY OF POTTERY STUDIES

Fired clay is durable. Pots turn up in extraordinary quantities on Classical sites. Some 'fine wares' have attracted considerable attention because they have been classified as art or near art, and because their styles are often so recognisable, making them ideal tools for bringing to order the chaos of debris from the past.

Consider the vessel in Figure 2.1. This can be used to illustrate some common approaches and methods of Classical archaeology. The shape and small size mark the pot as what is conventionally called an aryballos or perfumed oil jar (though they were probably called *lekythoi* in antiquity). It is one of those pots mentioned in Chapter 1. At present it is in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts.

With the size and shape, the hard, smooth and pale clay fabric indicate that the pot is Corinthian and of the seventh century BC. The character and subject matter of the painted and inscribed decoration confirms this identification. Specifically it is of the style or industry Protokorinthian. The boundaries and coherence of this 'industry' were definitively set and established by Johansen in his work *Les Vases Sicyoniens* of 1923. The German Adolf Furtwangler had brought a great deal of order to the different kinds of Greek pottery at the end of the nineteenth century, but this book was a work of such definitive systematisation that it is still used today for reference. Johansen gathered and coordinated pots of this shape and fabric, noted their occurrence in excavated deposits with other vessel forms, and defined a set of stylistic points which united them. He also proposed a chronological sequence to the shape of aryballoi - from early and 'paunchy*' to late and pointed or 'piriform' through middle of ovoid shape. Most of the pots that Johansen dealt with were from early Greek colonies in Italy, but he considered



Figure 2.1a Protokorinthian aryballos in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
(Source: K.F. Johansen, *Les Vases Sicyoniens*. Paris: Champion, 1923)



Figure 2.1b Detail of Figure 2.1a

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this coherent stylistic group to have been manufactured in the north-east Peloponnese of southern Greece, at Sicyon; hence the title of his book.

A British archaeologist, Humphry Payne, accepted Johansen's grouping and synthesis, but considered that the stylistic similarities with what was known to be later Corinthian pottery were too great to allow there to be different manufacturing centres. With many pottery styles there had been confusion over where they were made because most were found first in Italy (most Attic pots come from Etruscan tombs). The origin of Corinthian pots, however, had been fixed long ago by an antiquarian traveller, Edward Dodwell, who had bought a ceramic box (*pyxis*) in Corinth in 1805. So Payne took the animal friezes, decorative devices and distinctive fabric to be early Corinthian ware, or rather Protokorinthian. These aryballoi were made in Corinth.

So the handbooks of Johansen and Payne sketched the lineaments of Protokorinthian style. The work of traditional Classical archaeology has added little in the way of refinement of the sense, usually and largely intuitive, of this style. The earlier chronological schemes of its development (the change from fat to pointy pots) have been much debated, modified, made more complicated, even challenged. Such debate has been a major concern of specialists. The first reason for this is because chronological sequence is thought to be of primary importance in making sense of the cultural remains of the past. It also lends an appearance of historical substance to this archaeology concerned with classification - the passing of history, even if without any content or narrative, is marked by the changing fashions of pottery design. The second reason why specialists have been so concerned with the sequence of stylistic change was briefly mentioned in the first chapter. Aryballoi like this, and even if not so decorated, are easy to spot and so are the different phases. They turn up all over the Greek world and have been associated with the historical dates known for the founding of some Greek colonies in Italy. These pots have a clear relative chronology and can be attached to an absolute chronology. Aryballoi can be used to tell the time, or rather the date. (This can prove tricky though; it is not as straightforward as it seems - this will be taken up in Chapter 6.)

Ceramic art histories have recounted over and over again, and with more or less eloquence, the features and innovations of Corinthian pottery. Pots made in Corinth in the earlier eighth century were decorated in a linear and restrained Geometric canon. But there then occurred the birth of a new style, or rather a radical transformation of Geometric. It is called *Orientalising*. On some pots like that in Figure 2.1, the austerity of the Geometric is abandoned for swirling and animated designs, and with some features apparently borrowed from designs found in the east; hence the term Orientalising. These include floral decoration (lotus and palmette), some mythical creatures (such as a new form of sphinx), ways of drawing others (such as lions), certain 'stock' scenes? (the lion hunt, for example), and some Geometric traits (rays at the base of a pot).

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The account of the Orientalising movement, with its stylistic diffusion (supposed according to detailed comparison of artefacts from Greece and abroad) and the creative adaptation of Greek 'artists', is an exemplary aspect of Classical art history.

This aryballos is clearly in the Orientalising style, with its figures, animals and rays below. It is part of Payne's 'first black figure style', where detail is added to figures by scratching through the clay slip used to paint the figures. It is this Protokorinthian incised black figure decoration which was adopted by the potters of Attika to the north (the territory of Athens) and is used in the production of the very famous Attic black figure vases. With red figure vases, these form the heights of Classical Greek ceramic art; they are in every international art museum and have fetched high prices in the art market since the late eighteenth century.

So archaic Protokorinthian is, in the accounts of art history, a key style in the emergence of Classical Greek art, indeed in the development of representations of bodily form (drawings of people and animals before this Orientalising style are not reckoned to be of the same order). This aryballos in Boston is representative of its style which provides its artistic credentials. It is not just any old pot but fits into the story of the emergence of the Classical; hence many finer figured Protokorinthian pieces such as this appear around the world in art museums.

Narratives of art history like this have been a major feature of Classical archaeology and they involve the ascription of value. Artefacts are evaluated according to their judged place in stylistic development. There is a search for those pieces that mark the changes - great works, or works of creative innovation. They are the works of 'artists' - those who set the pace and sketch the character of stylistic growth.

TYOLOGY AND CLASSIFICATION

The illustration brings two interests to the fore. One in ordering and systematising objects, the other in the category of style. The conditioning interests are in chronologies and systematisation, classification and rationalisation. Much effort has been expended by Classical archaeologists on chronological and geographical frameworks, particularly for the art work.

Catalogues have long been a major form of publication in Classical archaeology. These are either of museum and private collections or of particular types of artefact, such as gemstones, Athenian lekythoi or Clazomenaean sarcophagi. A book such as Payne's *Necrocorinthia* (1931) defined a style, Korinthian, and set up a chronological framework. A work such as Coldstream's *Greek Geometric Pottery* (1968) is a handbook of this particular type of pottery, describing the different regional styles throughout Greece and proposing a chronological sequence based on where pots have been found, particularly comparing the associations of artefacts in different graves to

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establish a relative sequence. Books like this are considered invaluable for the job of the person who deals with finds from an excavation: they facilitate identification *and* classification.

John Boardman has produced over the years a set of handbooks which present a body of knowledge about the stylistic development of Greek art. The introduction to his *Greek Sculpture: the Archaic Period (1978)* describes the book as follows:

This little book attempts to present the evidence fairly, but also to propose a pattern by which the development may be better understood. If it did not, the undertaking would have proved as boring for the author as for the reader. Much is *unconventional*, but in places the manner of presentation is novel. The narrative concentrates on the history of style by period and region, *as the material dictates*, and it attempts to be as *comprehensive* as space allows rather than so selective as to exclude even the majority of *types, places and names* relevant to the subject. As in the companion handbooks to Athenian black figure and Archaic red figure vases, the illustrations are small but numerous, both *aides-memoires* to the familiar and *glimpse*; of the uncommon. [My emphases.]

Indeed, it does appear so uncontroversial and ordered. Another piece of sculpture may come along, but it can be expected to fit into the scheme of things; the 'controversial' debates usually only precipitate a slight alteration of the story, but no more. It is 'as the material dictates', to divide into period and region, Boardman tells the story plainly, with little reference to debate or controversy, and avoiding any possible sources of confusion, to help the book be useful. There are many such books, but it might be asked for whom they are useful - presumably those wishing to acquire a body of knowledge (hence the stress on lack of controversy and fairness - the story probably really was like this). Boardman's book is 'literate' but 'comprehensive'. Handbooks of particular classes of artefact are often far from little and go to quite extraordinary degrees to be comprehensive, both tracking down every last example of the artefact type in museums around the world and finding every reference in specialist literatures to each catalogued piece. This is the rigour of scholarship, and I am anticipating some of the points to be dealt with in Chapter 4.

ART AND JUDGEMENTS OF STYLE

Let me return now to the aryballos in Figure 2.1 and use it to illustrate some other approaches to artistic *style*.

Karl Schefold, a German art historian writes of it so in his book *Myth and Legend in Early Greek Art* (translated from the German 1966) (he has just identified the clothed male figure as Zeus, the mightiest of the gods):

The action is seen not merely as a fact or the assertion of a great individual, but as part of a connected whole, the inevitability and duration of which is expressed in the structure of the picture based, as it is, on firm axes and bounded surfaces. The lack of balance between different elements is not to be explained as a result of incompetence but, rather, as the result of the grand scale of the inner conception. The eagles around the tripod may indicate the power of Zeus, but the strange running figure of a sword-bearing daemon has still not been explained.

He then goes on to compare the scene with early literatures, the Homeric hymns of the seventh century, and particularly a scene describing the solemn entry of Apollo into Olympus:

On an amphora from Melos dating from c. 650 BC the same spirit pervades the portrayal of Apollo's arrival... The scene has the character of a monumental painting. The hymn tells how the island of Delos burst into flower for joy at the birth of the god and, here too, plants of every kind surround the fabulous splendour of the divine procession.

J.L. Benson is an expert on Protokorinthian pottery, a connoisseur of the style. He produced a list of its scene painters in 1953: *Die Geschichte der Korinthischen Vasen*, and another in 1989: *Earlier Corinthian Workshops: a Study of Corinthian Geometric and Protocorinthian Stylistic Groups*. He did much work for the catalogue of finds from the excavations in the 'Potters' Quarter' at ancient Corinth.

In the development of Protokorinthian pottery he stresses artists and workshops struggling with stylistic principles:

The torsional and curvilinear plant ornament of the Cumae and Toulouse Groups constitutes more than a particular theme (though it is one): it was the fundamental deeply felt experience through which Corinthian artists liberated themselves from Geometric habitude. By this I mean the change from a mentality engrossed in rectilinear abstract ornaments to the same mentality caught up in substantive curvilinear ornamentation. I see the first stirrings of this already in the running spiral of the Thapsos Class vases, and then in its implementation in Egyptian-derived plant and animal forms leading directly to the Cumae-Toulouse aesthetic in question.

Benson is writing about artistic and creative personalities and their relationship with 'style'. It is clear that these examples represent another kind of approach to artistic style. Here is needed an explanation of some ideas lying behind a mainly German tradition of art history.

Michael Podro, in his book *The Critical Historian of Art* (1982), distinguishes *archaeological* art history (the search for historical facts about works,

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focusing on sources, patronage, purposes, techniques, contemporaneous responses and ideals), from *critical* art history, which developed through the nineteenth century and which aims to see how the products of art sustain purposes and interests (timeless experiences or qualities) which are irreducible to their conditions of emergence and yet inextricable from them. He has written a detailed introduction to the work of these critical art historians.

Podro quotes Goethe (active at the time of the first development of critical art history at the turn of the eighteenth century):

When we would treat of an excellent work of art, we are almost obliged, as it were, to speak of art in general, for the whole of art is contained in it, and everyone may, as far as their abilities allow, by means of such a monument, develop whatever relates to art in general.

The question here, that of critical art history, is of how to regard the art of the past, its diversity, and how « is accessible or retrievable, as more than an object of archaeological interest (which simply explores the place of a work of art in its own time).

The point is one of the two-sided character of the work of art: it was made in the past and so is distant from us. But as an art work it escapes (according to this art history) its own time and communicates across the centuries: the art of the past is appreciated in later times and places. Critical art history thus seeks to justify the timeless qualities of art and explores the relationships between these timeless qualities (such as mystery, devotion) and their material, phenomenal, transient manifestations. For Whitley, in an article listed in the Bibliography, this is a Platonic and idealist agenda, with timeless art as a Platonic "form" finding its realisation in many material manifestations - works of art. This tradition of art history has strong philosophical roots and is much influenced by Kant and Hegel.

The extraction of a work of art from the social and cultural worlds which produced it does not result in a formalist history) simply tracing stylistic change through time. There is instead a concern with how particular historical and social circumstances are transformed by 'Art', that is how particular artists react to and interpret art and the stylistic histories and contexts within which they work.

The two central concerns of critical art history are to show the way in which art exhibited a freedom of mind, and to show how the art of alien cultures could become part of the present, through the understanding of art history, placing particular works in the context of changing art styles. Other general features include a historical account of change without reference to the function and purpose of works of art in the societies that produced them. This is an interest in formal change or transformation, with works seen only in the context of each other, as progressive modifications of each other and of certain 'ideal' or 'human' qualities, free from contextual meanings. The rationale or explanation of a particular work is to be found in its place in a

developmental sequence, with artistic creativity modifying antecedents and anticipating or carrying imitations of what is to come. Sometimes there is reference to craft traditions, with changes in form explained according to the translation of techniques from one craft tradition to another (for example, metalwork to clay). Sometimes craft tradition is interpreted in relation to the realisation of potentialities inherent in the medium.

Whitley makes the point that later twentieth-century art historians have tended to focus upon post-Renaissance and modern art - a breadth of concern to be found in nineteenth-century critical art historians and which involved an interest in ancient art has been lost. It was this scope of interest which led to the development of critical histories of Classical art.

In some critical histories are to be found Hegelian ideas (crudely speaking) of art as expressions of *Zeitgeist* - the spirit of the age. Alois Riegl, in his work *Stilfragen* (1893) considered the development of floral motifs (locus, acanthus and palmette) from Egypt onwards for many centuries. He considered that these were not motifs which can be explained as imitations of reality, but the changing depictions of these motifs formed a development with its own internal dynamic, an evolutionary dynamic analogous to those found in the natural world. This is vitalism. Heinrich Wölfflin considered style as a set of formal principles (for example, painterly *Une*).

Whitley presents a useful example of how critical art history has influenced Classical archaeology. The issue is the change from the Mycenaean world of the second millennium BC, with its 'palace' redistributive economies, collective burial and bronze-based technologies, to later Geometric Greece and its radically different material culture. Bernard Schweitzer, in his book *Greek Geometric Art* (English translation 1971), contrasted two amphorae, one Mycenaean, the other Protogeometric, and described the change as one from voluminosity to a sense of verticality which prefigures much of Greek art to come. For Whitley the specification of formal principles which characterise two epochs is the sort of analysis found in Wölfflin. Other characteristics of critical art history are the abstract qualities held to determine the particular form of artefacts, the expression and articulation of forms seen in particular works, the dynamic which leads Greek art from Geometric to Classical. The purpose is historical, the change from Mycenaean to Geometric, but there is no reference to social context. Understanding the relationship of individual art works to formal abstract principles, identified by the art historian, makes them intelligible to the present. This is held to be a rational account of the intrinsic aesthetic properties of a work and its style, and one which is universal, hence scientific.

In the short quote from Scheffold (see p. 27) it was clear that this approach can include literatures and other media. Hurwitt has produced a cultural history of early Greece to 480 BC: *Art and Culture of Early Greece 1100-480 BC* (1985). which, in its identification of abstract principles manifested by particular cultural works in various media, shows some influence of this

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philosophy of art history. Korinthian pottery, for example, is held to display the quality of *akribeia*- meticulousness and precision; Orientalising art is about cultural anxiety upon the meeting of two different cultural orders; the 'archaic' is generally considered as an impulse to pattern, representing an animation of the inorganic, explicitness and passivity, and a domination of surface and plane.

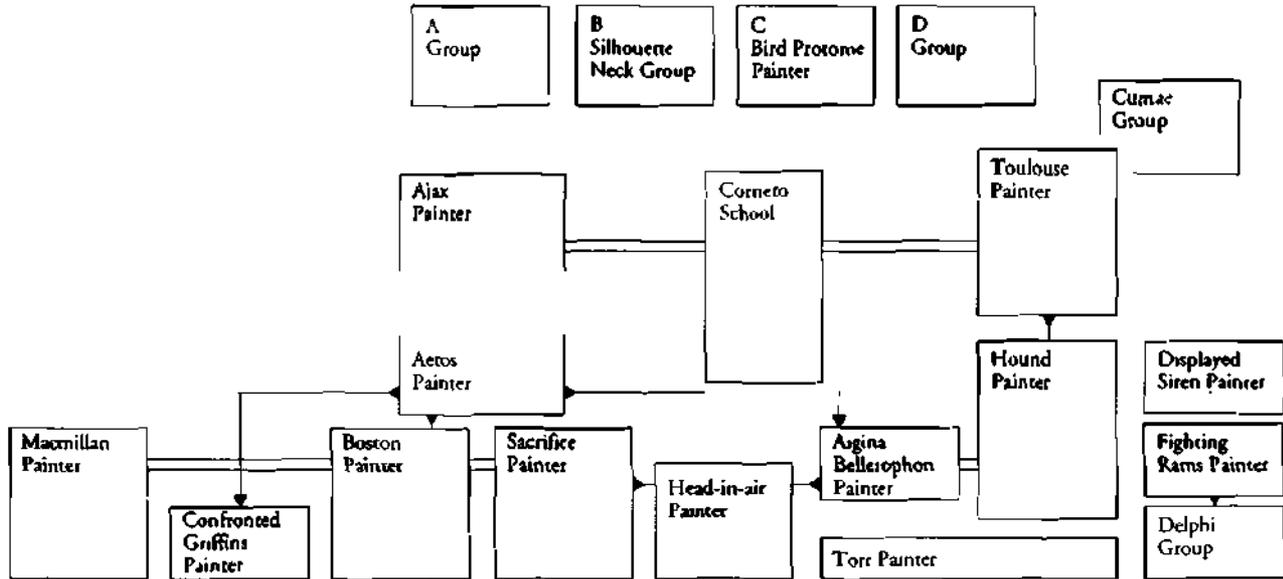
POTTERY AND THE CONNOISSEURS

There is a popular TV programme made by the BBC called *Antique* Roadshow*. The production team travel around Britain, announcing the setting of shows in advance. Members of the public take their antiques along to be scrutinised by one of the team of experts. Someone may have a tattered mantle clock which has been in the family for generations, so long that no one knows anything about it. The clock expert looks at it with his eyeglass and reveals that it is a rare work of a Bavarian master clocksmith of the seventeenth century. The audience hold their breath for the key question. For how much has the owner insured it; do they know its value?

John Beazley is a legend in Classical archaeology. Over a lifetime he got to know tens of thousands of Attic vases and attributed the painted designs, in a series of catalogues, to artists, schools of artists, artistic manners, circles and the like. It was a vast programme of ordering and systematising. But it was more than this, because here was a Classical archaeologist getting to the heart of style - the individual hand of the artist and the different relationships of influence between them. Not all of these artists have names known from antiquity, in which case Beazley supplied one. A favourite of his, for example, was the 'Berlin painter': vases had found their way from Greek and Italian findspots to collectors and museums around the world, including Berlin. Beazley kept himself out of the art market, but he could look at an Attic vase and tell you where there were ten others painted by the same 'artist'; he might even have been able to give you their name. Beazley was a connoisseur.

Beazley's work is a story of tremendous success, it seems complete: there is nothing more to be done with Attic vases, simply fill in the few gaps. Narratives have been attempted, for example by Boardman in his vase handbooks, and notably by Martin Robertson in his book *The Art of Vase Painting in Classical Athens*[^] published in 1992. Pseudo-biographical works have been produced: one, for example, is called *Papers on the Amasis Painter and his World*,

Beazley has been the model for much work on Protokorinthian figured pottery since Payne's book *Necrocorinthia* (1931); indeed Payne was a pupil of his at Oxford. Martin Robertson and Tom Dunbabin produced a list of Protokorinthian pot painters in 1953, as did Benson for all Korinthian pottery; publishing in German in the same year. Darryl A. Amyx capped his life's work on Korinthian pottery in 1988 with a three-volume catalogue of attributions and descriptions of Korinthian style.



Strong (workshop) association: =
 Influence: •

Figure 2.2 The connoisseur's choice: painters and workshops of Protokorinthian. Source: {based on T. Dunbabin and M. Robertson. 'Some Protokorinthian vase painters', *Annual of the British School at Athens* 48 (1953): 172-81}

These Classical art connoisseurs delve into the particularities of style, noting the rendering of figure detail, shapes, forms and subject matter, surmising that different artists, otherwise anonymous, can be distinguished on this basis. Behind the apparently dull but scholarly lists of pots and sherds are artists' hands, masters and pupils and schools traced in the evolution of style.

The aryballos of Figure 2.1 (a and b) has been attributed to the *Maler des Gesticulierenden Reiters* a name coined by Benson in 1953, or, as he or she is more usually known now, the 'Ajax painter'. The painter is named after another aryballos in Berlin, upon which is a figured scene which includes a man lying upon a sword which apparently runs through his body. This is taken to be Ajax, the epic hero, who committed suicide in such a way. The painted frieze upon die Berlin aryballos is not particularly accomplished and it is hard to make our the scene at all. Perhaps there is some (latent) wish for Protokorinthian pottery to aspire to the 'art' of Attic black figure: there is a very famous, dramatic and finely drawn scene of the death of Ajax on an amphora by Exekias, one of the potters whose name is known. The aryballois of the Ajax painter (four or more depending upon connoisseur) have common features such as cabling upon handles, neck ornament, and particularly figure form - quite full-bodied with distinctive long arms at an acute angle at the elbow, hairstyles and beards incised cross-wise (Figure 2.3).

Beazley never came clean about his method, but attribution proceeds as follows. The archaeologist, as connoisseur, gains familiarity with the minute and particular detail of as many pots within a stylistic category as possible: noting hairstyles, lions' paws, lotus petals, ears, and the way fingers hold swords - anything in fact. The task of attribution depends upon diagnostic traits, a symptomatic logic: particular stylistic traits are considered to be conscious or unconscious symptoms of a painterly hand. So a painter is identified by any little details that give their individuality away.

It is clear, however, that attention is more often paid to the subject matter of scenes: a different symptomatic logic. Consider the problems surrounding the separation of painter from a group or school (less tightly similar paintings?). The latter cannot be identified so consistently according to the idea of style being a symptom of die individual. For example, Amyx has identified a Chigi group as well as a Chigi painter, which confuses and eliminates the Macmillan painter of Dunbabin and Robertson, identified mainly, it would seem, on the grounds of subject matter. This is the sort of thing that connoisseurs debate.

To the concept of painterly hand die aryballos (back to Figure 2.1 again) is subordinated and referred. This aryballos is 'lucky' and a diagnosis can be made. But for many, indeed the majority of Protokorinthian pots, there are too few diagnostic stylistic traits and no attribution can be made. These pots seem somehow less than the aryballois of the Ajax painter; they have no hope of diagnosis; they contain no trace of that which would explain them, their originator or author. In having fewer stylistic traits they are less 'artistic'. Attribution, the work of the connoisseur, ascribes value.



Figure 2.3 Figures from pots by the so-called 'Ajax painter'

There are two sorts of value here: one, the value accorded to individuality, the other being the symbolic value of the cultured individual artist. So it might be noted that, without the aesthetic connotations, such a search for individuality through the identification of idiosyncrasy was proposed by Hill and others in the volume *The Individual in Prehistory* published in 1977. The devaluation of the anonymous is a lament for the loss of the individual in the past, or at least their mark. Attribution is a search for the autonomous individual who has escaped the passing of time. Value is accorded to the individual as an ego signifying itself in the artwork. This is a distinctive and modern (bourgeois) conception of the individual; anthropologists and historians have recorded other conceptions of what it is to be an individual. The 'I' which is valued and pursued by the connoisseur is that which struggles for identity (in a power struggle), for permanence (the individual against time). The devaluation of some pots is the fear of anonymity, the ego dispersed, fragmented, lost (in the flow of time, in the *mass* of ordinary people, of undistinguished, 'coarse' pottery),

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Concomitantly valued are signification and the signifier: the idiosyncratic detail signifies the artist; the attributed pot marks or signifies the individual and their art. This is all about *meaning*. The connoisseur pronounces on the meaning of detail, marking the signifier (significant squiggles) in this symptomatic logic of attribution. But this signifier, in fact, can be seen to return the connoisseur to himself, the cultured (artistic) individual. The mark of the artist, signifying individuality, etches order into the mass of detail, ineffable disorder. This signifier, and pronouncements upon it, represent the compulsion (we all now feel) to be an ego, a somebody.

So, wrapped up in this process of attribution of artefacts and artists is a series of distinctions:

art	anonymity
high culture	low culture
permanence	loss
signification	non-sense
order	disorder
ego	mass
identity	messy chaos
meaning	absurdity

It will be shown that these are far from neutral. In particular, it can be noted here that the distinctions between high and low culture, fine arts and other 'crafts' are very contentious ones.

As has been indicated, procedures of stylistic attribution are ill-defined; much is to do with intuition arising from long-term handling and reading around the material - it depends on becoming aware of the ineffable qualities of design and manufacture. The non-verbal component accounts for the near absence in listings of explanation for particular attributions; seeing the pots together is argument for their affiliation. The idea of visual rather than verbal argument is an attractive one, given the character of archaeological materials. But many criticisms have been made of attribution.

The esoteric expertise of the connoisseur, which is founded on the rare facility of being able to study a body of disparate and often obscure material over decades without any immediate return, is open to the charge of elitism and of being obscure to the point of mysticism (part of the Beazley legend perhaps). The connoisseur senses the essence of style on the basis of expertise and familiarity with the material; the rest of us have little ground for empirical disagreement. There is also the charge of ethnocentrism and cultural imperialism. The Classics connoisseur, pronouncing ego, roams the museum vaults and auction rooms of the 'cultured' world (sometimes literally), seeking the bearers of 'Style', but without reference to social, political or historical context, only that of his own academic evaluation. The conditions of this practice relate directly to a notion of art being timeless and universal, a transnational culture.

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Expertise and practical knowledge gained through familiarity ('pottery sense' as it is sometimes called in archaeology) are indeed valuable, as any excavation team knows. The lack of rigour, however, the role of intuition, the lack of quantification (statistical control of such large bodies of information), and the apparent absence of reflection on the theoretical and philosophical assumptions of stylistic attribution (such as the categories of style and artistic personality in relation to social and historical change) are disconcerting.

Some of the identifications of artists' hands do seem reasonable: the figure drawing and choice of design elements of the pots attributed to this Ajax painter seem to form a coherent unity (see Figure 2.2 and discussion above), but only of *four* pots (Dunbabin and Robertson do list more). However, for Protokorinthian pottery, it is clear that stylistic attribution just does not work,

I considered all the 164 attributions to painters' hands in a sample of 1951 Protokorinthian pots. Between the three main listings (those of Dunbabin and Robertson, Amyx and Benson's second of 1989), there is agreement on hardly more than one in four pots.

Full agreement on attribution	44 pots; 26.8%
Agreement between two lists	44 pots; 26.8%
Three separate attributions	76 pots; 46.4%

Given that the 164 pots in the sample are whole and well published, a considerable degree of agreement might have been expected. The figures are undoubtedly affected by there being new material available since Dunbabin and Robertson's list of 1953 (but not enough to invalidate the result), but the reason for the disagreement is quite clear: the connoisseurs are all doing different things, Benson, like many others now, is willing to consider Geometric decoration as well as figured (the others here are not); Dunbabin and Robertson were less cautious than Amyx, looking a great deal at subject matter; while Benson's basis for deciding attribution seems markedly different to the others. Benson is more conscious of the validity of a particular painter in relation to the evolution of style as a whole (the German tradition sketched above), and relies less on simple comparison of figure detail; the theoretical basis for his attributions does seem more formulated and explicit.

I have used Korinthian pottery as an example here, but is there any reason to think that the results are exceptional and incidental to the practices of attribution? Some disagreement is reasonable, but it might be asked: How expert are the experts? How refined are their sensibilities? And if stylistic attribution is such a subjective exercise, on what basis have these people been authorised the luxury of cultivating and pronouncing their expert opinion?

Other standard criticisms relate to the vague notions of schools and artists. Just what do the stylistic groupings represent? I have already anticipated this question somewhat in proposing that the desire is for personality, an ego self, whether this is explicitly acknowledged or not. I have indicated how some are

prepared to think of relationships between masters and apprentices or schools of followers (see Figure 2.2). However, the desire for the artist seems to efface consideration of motivation, in the following sense. That a design is somehow a symptom of an artist's identity assumes that the artist is a unitary and, crucially, expressing entity, unconsciously, or even consciously expressing *their view*, interpretation, reality. This may indeed be the case, but equally it may not. The artist may wish to experiment with styles and subject matters. I can see no objection to the Ajax painter' of this aryballos of Figure 2.1 being the anonymous painter of a plain Geometric cup the next day, and then experimenting with different shoulder garlands and animal scenes such as those that characterise the so-called 'Corneto painter' and 'school'. The painters' *motivation* (to express whatever) may change or be absent. The idea of self may be absent, as implied above. Such motivation, unconscious or not, can only be understood by relating concepts of the individual to wider social contexts, forces and structures. It may well be that there is social and economic pressure upon a contemporary craft or fine artist to express *i* distinctive 'style' and identity; this is not at all universal, but a function of a particular mode of production of artworks, particular market relations and values.

But its meaning does not really matter to the practice of artistic attribution. It is in many ways a *pragmatics*; - *intuition picks* up various ways of distinguishing one Attic scene or Protokorinthian frieze from another - twitches of a painter's brush (the paws of the 'Hound painter') to a supposed predilection for animals with a particular bearing (the 'Head-in-air painter' for example). Stylistic attribution has little bearing on anything other than the discourse of style to which it belongs. Beazley's painters and artists are just another set of classificatory taxa which mean very little, though they do have friendlier names as Morris puts it: Oikopheles sounds better than something like Late Helladic Iliia. Mary Beard has observed that nothing can be said about the so-called painters and potters that cannot be said of the pots themselves. So when Beazley did talk about production, potters and social contexts he relied on written sources. So there is only the appearance of a humanistic story and creative artists in the practices of attribution.

More seriously, the concepts of style and artist, at the root of such practices, can be criticised as idealist, in the following way. The hand or mark of the pot painter is meaningful only in relation to the art style to which it contributes. This idea of the primacy of art style has already been introduced. Many Classical art histories consider, define, and refine style; the social, physical, intellectual context of production of the pots is either omitted or relegated to a chapter on technology. In this it does not matter how they are conceived (as personalities or workshops), because they are abstract constructions. The style exists in relation to the artistic efforts of potters who commune with it through their struggling with form and decoration, concept and content in the figured scene. The overarching whole of style, beyond the

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mainly incidental act of the potter, allows *teleological* explanation (here explaining the past through the future, potential causes through effects): a painter or pot may be explained, evaluated or given significance by its contribution to the future, to what is to come stylistically. In this way style is largely detached from the social and political reality of people; though there is art history - its evolutionary momentum and *cycles*.

INTERLUDE: SHERLOCK HOLMES, THE DOCTOR WATSON AND JOHN BEAZLEY

'I can never bring you to realise the importance of sleeves, the suggestiveness of thumb-nails, or the great issues that may hang from a boot-lace...

Never trust to general impressions my boy, but concentrate yourself upon details. My first glance is always at a woman's sleeve. In a man it is better first to take the knee of the trouser. As you observe, this woman had plush upon her sleeves, which is a most useful material for showing traces. The double line a little above the wrist, where the typewritress presses against the table, was beautifully defined. The sewing-machine, of the hand type, leaves a similar mark, but only on the left arm, and on the side of it farthest from the thumb, instead of being right across the broadest part, as this was. I then glanced at her face, and, observing the dint of a pince-nez at either side of her nose, I ventured a remark upon short sight and typewriting, which seemed to surprise her...

I noticed, in passing, that she had written a note before leaving home but after being fully dressed. You observed that her right glove was torn at the forefinger, but you did not apparently see that both glove and finger were stained with violet ink. She had written in a hurry and dipped her pen too deep. It must have been this morning, or the mark would not remain clear upon the finger. All this is amusing, though rather elementary . . .'

(Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Golden Pince-Nez*)

Beazley's method was that of the Italian art historian Giovanni Morelli (died 1891), who developed the skill of distinguishing individual painters and originals from fakes on the basis of tiny details (overlooked by imitators more interested in larger, more conventionally stylised characteristics of a school or artist). So Morelli could distinguish Renaissance artists even though they did not sign their works. This involved no necessary concern with aesthetics, no need to judge artistic quality: it is a method with no necessary connection with art. Indeed, it has more to do with conceptions of disease and crime and semiotics, the science of signs.

For both Morelli and Beazley, an artist is given away by details of eyes, ears

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and knees, just as a criminal might be spotted by a fingerprint. The art connoisseur works as a detective who discovers the perpetrator of a crime on the basis of evidence that is imperceptible to most people. This is the connection with Sherlock Holmes, whose method is exemplified in the passage above: trifling details lead to deep insight. It is not that Holmes is a methodical scientist who calculates all possibilities, never guessing until the truth is clear. Sherlock Holmes in fact depends on inspired guesswork, and this is what makes him so fascinating: he observes, makes a guess on the basis of what he thinks is likely, then tests out the guess. The difference between ourselves and Holmes is that we don't guess as well as he does.

Beazley's method was described above as a symptomatic logic, according to which small details are treated as symptoms of the artist. The connoisseur makes a diagnosis like a physician; it is an exercise in semiotics. Details are noted and treated as signs of an underlying condition (diseases are not immediately visible in themselves). Freud's psychoanalysis is an analogous method of interpretation based upon discarded information, marginal data, which are revealing because they are instances when control of the self gives way to what lies beneath,

Conan Doyle was a practising physician until Holmes made him rich enough to give up his practice. His detective was modelled on Dr Joseph Bell at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary; Doyle, as a student, had been his outpatient clerk. Doyle followed Bell in extending the practice of diagnosis to the entire life and personality of the patient. As Bell put it; in every essential they resemble one another; only in trifles do they differ - and yet, by knowing these trifles well, you make your recognition or your diagnosis with ease. So it is with disease of mind or body or morals.' We are not far here from physiognomy, reading character and history from the features of a face, the relics of experience, characteristic features of a person.

How is a face to be read? How are traces, symptoms, clues, pictorial marks to be interpreted? How does the physician know what to treat as symptoms; how does the connoisseur know what gives away the artist? No answer can be given in advance. Testing a hypothesis concerning the identity of an artist or disease of a person through the collections of clues always involves a certain amount of guessing, hence the philosopher Charles Peirce calls it 'speculative modelling', a mixture of imagination and reality.

In this field of forensics, detection, crime, diagnosis and connoisseurship, Beazley is semiotician; the doctor becomes detective; Holmes a brilliant physician to the body politic whose disease is crime; and the art museum comes to resemble a rogue's gallery. It is a wonderfully fascinating mixture exploited so well by semiotician Umberto Eco in his novel *The Name of the Rose* (1983): his detective monk William of Baskerville traces clues through a wealth of misleading signs in the great library of a monastery peopled by all sorts of curious physiognomies. Detection is also a root metaphor of the archaeological project: reading the signs of the past.

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The historian Carlo Ginzburg has proposed that a conjectural model for the construction of knowledge emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century in the sphere of the social and human sciences. It is of the form which has just been outlined - using obscure or remote clues in a speculative manner.

The process of reasoning is one called abduction - rules are postulated to explain observed facts until causality is proved, that is, the hypothesis or 'guess' tested. Everything at the scene of a crime may be relevant: where is the detective to look? Consequently a cultural or experiential knowledge is required to codify this method: there needs to be a basis on which to postulate the rules or make the guesses. This is the field of experience of Holmes. This is where every good detective has a 'hunch'. Hence that term mentioned in connection with connoisseurship, 'pottery sense'. These are types of knowledge which are very difficult to codify effectively.

Everything at the scene of a crime could be relevant, as could anything in a painting. Into this chaos reason moves with careful observation and experience, allowing conjectures about the object of interest (crime, criminal or artist). A rule is postulated which will explain certain facts about the object, then the rule is checked out independently. Holmes, in the extract above, knows from experience to observe a woman's sleeve carefully. He notes certain features, makes a conjecture that these are the effect of a typewriter, tests this out against the signs of spectacles, requisite for close work, and further tests it out with a question. The connoisseur begins with a pot, supposes (from experience) that certain ears mark our this pot and its type (read painter), then checks out the supposition against other pots. Abduction is this process of reasoning backwards, studying tracks, and is rooted in all the senses and faculties. Every dimension of experience and memory may be helpful in making the imaginative conjecture. Abduction is the work of intuition, defined not as extra-sensory perception, but as a lightning recapitulation of rational processes. After all, anyone could do what Holmes does - it is elementary; only he does it so quickly.

Note should be made here that abduction does not include the substantive link proposed between idiosyncrasy and artistic personality, for example. All sorts of problems have been noted with this already. Abduction refers simply to the process of reasoning involved.

For Ginzburg, speculative modelling unites history, archaeology, geology, physical astronomy (i.e. not nuclear physics) and palaeontology, as well as medicine, forensic science and divination. The relationship with time is interesting: these are all diachronic disciplines using this conjectural or divinatory paradigm of reading signs. The logical structure of abduction is one of forecasting retrospectively. Divination reads signs in the present for the future. Medical semiotics deals with past, present and future in prognosis and diagnosis. Forensics and archaeology read present signs to reason about the past.

Abduction is a form of *scientific* reasoning which involves generalisation

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and testing, It is also creative and embodied, thoroughly rooted in subjective experience, not eschewing this for notions of pure logical reasoning. So it is interesting to contrast deduction, a form of reasoning championed by many archaeologists since the 1960s who have wished archaeology to be more scientific. A deductive project of stylistic analysis could take the following form:

- hypothesis: a rule associating details and a painter's individuality,
- test against data;
- confirmation or rejection of the hypothesis on the basis of results.

Deduction deals with generalisations. Meanwhile induction could look something like this:

- gathering of pots;
- scrutiny of pots for patterns;
- supposition of rules on the basis of the patterns.

The basic distinction becomes one between two fields of reason, two scientific fields. First there is mathematics and empirical method concerned with quantification and the repetition of phenomena. Then there is indirect and presumptive science, using repetition merely as an instrument to understand individual cases. Abduction tends to go with the latter. Ginzburg traces the distinction back to Galileo in the sixteenth century, and the establishment of a mathematical basis to science. This was a strategy which opposed anthropocentric and anthropomorphic reasoning and interests. Ginzburg contrasts the new physicist deaf to sounds, insensitive to tastes and odours, dealing in geometry and algebra, with the physician hazarding diagnoses by placing ear to wheezy chest, sniffing faeces and tasting urine. The latter has an individualistic focus, a scientific knowledge of the individual case. Physics makes its primary purpose the establishment of repetitive processes.

Whence the split? The tendency to obliterate the individual traits of an object is directly proportional to the *emotional* distance of the observer. A science of pottery may establish certain rules which govern its manufacture. Adherence to the rules brings success. This is the degree of involvement in making a pot according to a mathematically based or physical science. The craft of making a pot is based on another form of reasoning rooted in experience or know-how. To use another example, the ability to discern a hostile intention by a sudden change of expression is not something that can be easily learned from a book. Such knowledge is practical, rooted in experience which is not distanced but involved. This is, I believe, a crucial point because archaeology fascinates in its degree of involvement and immediacy: the presence of the past in the thumb-print on the pot. And it is more so with Classical archaeology because many have and do see the ancient Greeks as like themselves, ancestors of Europe. It may be held that all baboons look alike and we can experiment upon them retaining an emotional distance. But we are like the Greeks; this is our past. Beazley and the connoisseurs find themselves sensitive aesthetes.

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The fascination of the detective story or TV doctor series is that we too are the detective or hospital physician, living the case. We engage; we too follow the clues, appreciate the symptoms of the person. There is a potential here of a humanistic, socially and politically engaged scientific method. The use of generalisation in the service of understanding individual phenomena is opposed to grand systems and total explanations of phenomena. Here are connections with the aphoristic reasoning found in Nietzsche and Adorno, which will be discussed in the final chapter.

The speculative modelling of the human sciences also has origins in modernity. A need to classify the criminal elements (with the criminalisation of the class struggle, as Ginzburg puts it), accompanied social control and surveillance in the nineteenth century. This has been famously covered in Michel Foucault's study of the birth of the prison (*Discipline and Punish*, English translation 1977). The creation of a criminal class and concern with their identification led to Bertillon's anthropometrics in the late nineteenth century and the development of fingerprinting by Galton. The work of detective fiction and indeed policing arrived too.

Hence a problem with Beazley could well be that his method of bringing tens of thousands of pots to order according to a spurious humanism of painters' hands (disguising a general taxonomics) was more to do with the panoptic gaze of state surveillance and control of the abstract 'individual' (what lies behind the potters' names, after all?). Perhaps there is a lack of imagination here or an unwillingness to harness method to a humanistic purpose different to recognition and control. Beazley's catalogues are not to be read; they are boring, and, at the same time, fascinating monuments to a legend.

ICONOGRAPHERS AND ICONOLOGISTS

What are figured designs about? Classical iconographers compile examples of different kinds of figured subject matter, painted, modelled or sculpted. Iconologists attempt to make some sense of the subject matter, identifying figures, and reflecting upon the structuring of figures, for example in pictorial narratives. The latter has become a major topic. Let me illustrate these practices, again using Korinthian pottery and the aryballos in Figure 2.1.

There are studies of the iconography of Korinthian pottery which, like the connoisseurs of attribution, also display a concern with the fine particularities of the rendition of detail and figure. Johansen's defining work of 1923 included much description of the variety and type of things painted upon his proposed style (this has been followed by Payne and Amyx). Strictly speaking, iconography is merely descriptive, and need not be restricted to any one style: there are general studies, published as monographs or catalogues of the depiction of griffons, sphinxes, centaurs, lions and panthers, all of which are to be found within other styles of decoration as well as Protokorinthian. Types

are defined and classifications proposed, lines of development induced or deduced. The meaning of the things painted upon the pots is secondary to iconographic work.

And so to meaning. Something seems to be happening in the scene upon this aryballos from Boston in Figure 2.1. A man-animal or centaur is confronting a warrior who brandishes something which is not immediately recognisable. Behind the monster is a stand for a *krater* or *dinos* (a mixing bowl) with four birds of prey. Another animated swordsman and various 'decorative' devices complete the scene. Is **this** the depiction of some story or myth? This is a question posed of all figured scenes by conventional Classical art history. Meanings are often sought in the literatures of ancient Greece and indeed Rome. Something seems to be happening in the main frieze, so there is the potential of discovering sense; whereas the frieze of animals upon the shoulder of this aryballos seems more mundane, merely a frieze - what narrative can there be? Sense and meaning are thus contrasted with the decorative. For this particular aryballos there has been considerable discussion of possible myth represented. Much has been made of the object in the hand of the figure opposing the monster, whether it is a thunderbolt, the weapon of god Zeus, who is therefore facing some enemy of his - Kronos, or Typhon, or a giant. The trouble is that there are no mentions in ancient literature of Zeus battling with a creature that looks like this, so various attempts have been made to explain away the look of the 'centaur'. Others have abandoned the identification of the figure as Zeus, accepted the iconography of the centaur, and found an enemy for it - Herakles.

Such a specification of myth and narrative depends on attributing meaning to particular details. But in this case the object in the hand of the swordsman is rare *and* a mystery for its date. There seems little prospect in deciding a secure interpretation. The tortuous discussion surrounding the identities of the figures could be called indulgent; for what does it matter when discussion and identification are related to nothing other than narratives of the development of Greek pottery painting? (Although, significantly, colour and detail are added to the art history.)

Mythological attribution is again a pronouncement of meaning, following a search, a desire for the sign that means something. Klaus Fittschen's superlative and critical study *Untersuchungen zum Beginn der Sagen Darstellungen bei den Griechen* (1969) is defined by this desire to find out what the figures stand for. There has commenced a great encyclopaedic study of iconography and iconology - the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (1981-): a comprehensive dictionary. Searches such as these work through comparing scenes and representations; both iconography and mythological attribution use a comparative method whereby the meaning of a representation established in one context is transferred to another whose significance and meaning is in question. The strange weapon brandished by the figure upon the aryballos (Figure 2.1) may be interpreted as a thunderbolt in the hand of

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Zeus because thunderbolts later and elsewhere are depicted comparatively similarly. Such a method crucially depends upon the definition of a 'meaningful context' — the space within which it is legitimate to make comparisons. This is usually 'the Greek': artefacts and representations are compared across a broad spread of geography and time which is thought of as Greek, with due note taken of supposed influences exerted by one design upon another across space and through time. The meaningful unity of this context is assumed. It can be argued that this marginalises significant difference in the pursuit of similarity (and so meaning); or rather difference is understood within a supposed higher unity (the Greek).

There are indeed clear lines of development and continued use of some figures and representations. This is the starting point for the work of iconography: fighting figures and centaurs not only appear on Protokorinthian pots such as this aryballos, but also have extensive currency in Greek art. However, this unity of Greek art is not 'natural'; it needs interpreting. The unity (the idea of the Greek) is one that is certainly conceived and made by people. Note has been taken of the interplay between cultural regionalism in Greece (inhabitants of some parts of Greece consistently seeing themselves as different to other Greeks) and notions of common Greek cultural identity, particularly stemming from the construction of aristocratic pan-Hellenism with the rise of the great sanctuaries in the eighth and seventh centuries. Identity is not natural but the result of desire, a desire to be the same, to join in opposition to another. However, iconographic studies and these attributing mythological meaning make this unity natural and do not ask questions of it. Why, it should be asked, do these studies accept the unity? Is the context 'Greek' accepted as meaningful because Classical archaeologists are involved in constructing their object as a unity, or are party to giving their object of interest an identity?

The designation of a mythological meaning involves transferring a meaning associated with a figure from one context to another. A centaur looks more or less like this; Zeus looks more or less like that. (The 'more or less' is, of course, open to debate.) Criticism of this one-to-one equation of a figure or point of style with an identity and meaning, mythological or other, comes from those who favour Structuralist and Post-structuralist interpretation, which sets a particular cultural item in context, but in a structured logic of difference (in contrast to the similarity required of a comparative method). This form of approach will be illustrated in Chapter 6.

IMPERIAL COLLECTIONS AND THE **BIG DIGS**

The *Blue Guide to Greece* by Stuart Rossiter lists and describes interesting places to visit. There are 3re museums and archaeological ruins. A lot of the comem of the former comes from cemeteries. The latter falls into two distinct classes: ancient town centres, and temples with their sanctuaries.

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Classical archaeology has been dominated since the eighteenth century and before by a search for things to put in museums and by the excavation of the public buildings of city states and their sanctuaries.

The race for collections of Classical antiquities to be housed in the new national museums of European and American capitals took off in the nineteenth century. In 1811 a group of northern European aristocrats and architects, among whom was Charles Robert Cockerell, designer of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, found the sculpted marbles of the temples of Bassae and Aegina. The Aegina marbles went to adorn Ludwig of Bavaria's Munich, housed in Leo von Klenze's new museum in **Grecian** style, the Glyptothek. The Bassae marbles were sold to the British Museum in 1814, which, in the following year, purchased Elgin's Greek statues looted from the Parthenon in Athens.

The new designs, by Robert Smirke, for a British Museum in Grecian **style** were agreed in 1823; though it was not opened until 1852. Its interior clearly needed to vindicate the claims of its external appearance, a great Classical portico. So Charles **Fellows** was in Asia Minor in the 1840s collecting the marbles from Xanthus, which went to the British Museum. Charles T. Newton, later Director of **the** Museum, discovered and acquired various bits of the mausoleum at Bodrum, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. **This** is how he describes the eleven-tonne coping sculpture of the tomb:

While he had been lying grovelling on the earth we had never seen his face at all; so that, when we had set him on his base, and our eyes met for the first time his calm, majestic gaze, it seemed as if we had suddenly



Figure 2.4 Baron von Stackelberg, *Der Apollotempel zu Bassae in Arcadien* [The Temple of Apollo at Bassae in Arcadia]. Rome and Frankfurt am Main 1826. Plate 9



figure 2.5 Aegina. Pedimental sculpture. Von Klenze's Glyptotek, Munich

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roused him from his sleep of ages ... When I stood very near the lion, many things in the treatment appeared harsh and singular; but on retiring to the distance of about thirty yards, all that seemed exaggerated blended into one harmonious whole, which, lit up by an Asiatic sun, exhibited a chiaroscuro such as I have never seen in sculpture; nor was the effect of this colossal production of human genius at all impaired by the bold forms and desolate grandeur of the surrounding landscape. The lion seemed made for the scenery, and the scenery for the lion.

It ended up in the museum in London.

John Turtle Wood, railway engineer backed by the British Museum, discovered and spent ten years excavating the Temple of Artemis at Ephesos, another famous wonder of the ancient world with its 127 massive columns. 19 metres high. Excavations ended in the early 1870s after the removal of 132,221 cubic metres of deposit, according to Wood's own calculations. There were further excavations under Hogarth in 1904-5, and later by Austrians. After 1966 explorations of the temple site took place under Eichler and Bammer.

Ludwig Ross, a German, supervised clearance and excavation of the Athenian Acropolis from 1834, accompanied by Leo Klenze, a neo-Classical architect. The Parthenon, the temple of Athena on the Acropolis, was restored as far as possible for the capital of the new independent state.

The all-Greek archaeological society *Arkhaiologiki Etaireia* was founded in 1837. It dug the Tower of the Winds, the Thrasyllos Monument, Propylaea and Erechtheion in 1839-40 and the Theatre of Dionysos on the slopes of the Acropolis in 1840-1. After various financial and other crises, the society excavated every year in Athens from 1858-94. However, excavation in Greece in the nineteenth century and long afterwards was dominated by the foreign schools of archaeology, based in Athens, which had access to the financial power of the great colonialist and imperialist states of western Europe.

The French school was founded in 1846 as a spin-off from the mainly German-sponsored Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica in Rome (1829). It was conceived as an important political link between Greece and France. German influence in Greece did not decline with the toppling, in 1862, of Otto of Bavaria's rule in Greece and the institution of a Danish monarch. From 1874 they had the German Archaeological Institute in Athens.

Ernst Curtius, who had been one of the key figures in establishing the Institute, undertook the excavation of the home of yet another wonder of the ancient world, Olympia. The site given to German control was two square miles of the hill of Kronos and by the river Alpheos, much of it under 5 or 6 metres of mud. Curtius and Adler began in October 1875 with 450 labourers. After two months of digging the first of the sculptures from the temple of Zeus was unearthed. The agreement with the Greek government meant

they were to stay in Greece, though the Germans had sole rights for five years to any casts taken from them. Curtius, significantly, valued more the 400 inscriptions. Olympia was given over to careful but lavish publication, about which there will be more in Chapter 4,

Carl Humann, whose elder brother was Minister on the island of Samos, dealt with the restoration of the great Altar of Zeus built by Eumenes III in Hellenistic Pergamon. It was on display in Berlin in 1880. Though an amateur, Curtius had him made a Fellow of the German Institute.

The American School was digging by 1886, Its first project, under Waldstein from 1892—5, was investigation of the Sanctuary of Hera which had belonged to Argos — the Argive Heraion, This continued what was becoming a tradition in Greece of 'big digs', typified by the Germans at Olympia. These massive and expensive projects were only possible when undertaken by the foreign schools of the great world powers seeking their cultural roots.

The French, eager to restock the Louvre, had acquired the Venus de Milo in the 1820s, and became involved in a competition to dig at Delphi, foremost sanctuary of the ancient world. The Germans were claiming rights to dig on the basis of previous interest, as were the French. The 1,000 houses of the village of Kastri, which overlay the site, had to be moved at great expense. The Americans were tempted by the Greek Archaeological Society, and the price of the site went up from \$25,000 to \$80,000, but the French made trade concessions (over Korinthian raisins), voted a million francs to Greece, and received the right to excavate (from 1893). *'On fait de nous des chercheurs de truffes'* ('We are become truffle-hounds') complained a marquis in the Senate.

The Americans had founded their school in 1882. Britain followed in 1886, the Austrians in 1898, and the Italians in 1909. Private money played an important role in these, less directly attached to state interests. So prior to 1914 a geography of excavation had been set in place which has scarcely changed since; the French at Delphi and Delos, Thasos and Argos; the Germans at Olympia, Samos and in the Kerameikos of Athens; the Americans at Korinth and the Argive Heraion; the British in the Peloponnese, at Megalopolis and Sparta, also Crete and Knossos; the Italians at Gortyn, Ida and Phaistos on Crete; the Austrians pioneered exploration of Samothrace.

The time was appropriate in 1924 to excavate die Agora, the marker area and centre of ancient Athens. More and more people were moving to a growing modern Athens. It was going to be then or never. Various Greek territories had been surrendered to Turkey and immigrant; were arriving; there was a need for cultural integration, to be achieved perhaps by focusing attention on common roots and heritage. The Greek monarchy had been abolished by plebiscite and the government needed the prestige of a great cultural work. But the state had no money to buy out the 7,000 to 10,000 residents of the Agora. Then in 1927 an anonymous gift of \$250,000 from



Figure 2.6 Corinth in the snow, before the excavations. (Courtesy of the Museum of Classical Archaeology, Cambridge)

John D. Rockefeller allowed the Americans to win a concession to evict and dig. Between 1931 and 1939 another million came from Rockefeller. In total, 365 buildings were demolished, and 16 acres cleared of 250,000 tons of earth.

As might be expected, the excavations generated a wealth of material. This allowed Leslie Shear (Senior) to train a generation of excavators. It still keeps researchers busy. The momentum of the sheer weight of finds means that there is no time, space or indeed need for questioning approaches and priorities. The school from 1928 held a monopoly on excavation (all projects had to be approved) and exclusion from unpublished artefacts meant exclusion from the discipline. These points will be taken up more generally in Chapter 4, which deals with discourse.

Arguably the sanctuaries have not been well excavated or treated. Their stratification and contexts are very complex: the result of temple officials regularly clearing out material, and the long-term use of the sites. Much is often missing: rich items were taken away. What is more, the artefacts have been pre-ordered by the discipline; its art historical interests going back well before excavations started in the nineteenth century. Hence there are superb catalogues of isolated classes of artefacts from these great excavations, but contextual associations are often missing. Under architectural interests, individual buildings, even very fragmentary, have been measured, recorded and planned to an accurate degree, but there is still now little understanding of how a sanctuary worked. This is shown by Cathy Morgan's book on the

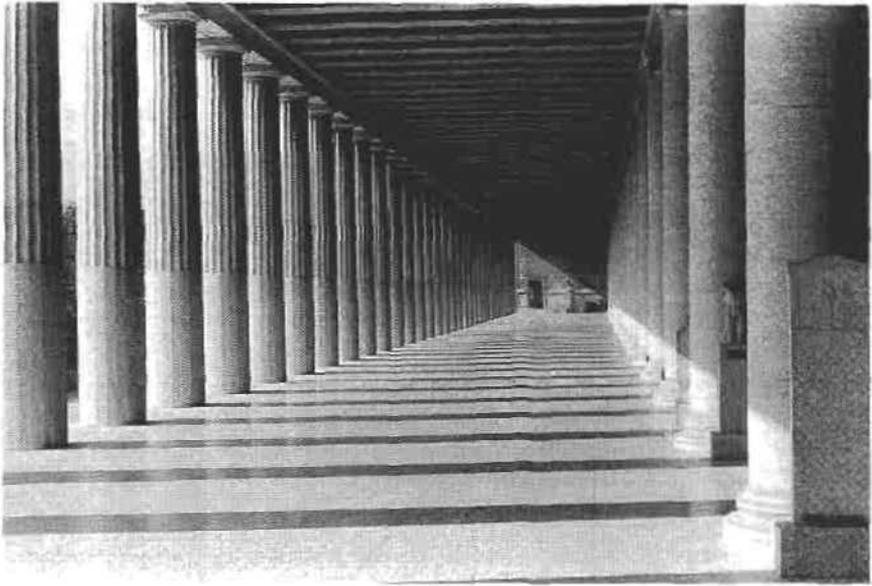


Figure 2.7 The Stoa of Attalos, Athens. Rebuilt with American money, mid-twentieth century

origins of the great Greek sanctuaries, *Athletes and Oracles: the Transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the Eighth Century BC* (1990); remarkably little of sound historical understanding arises from the century and more of large-scale excavation of Delphi and Olympia.

Excavation techniques have, of course, changed immensely for the good in recent years. Note can be made of the development of field survey, about which there is more in Chapter 6. This has involved a re-evaluation of the priorities of archaeological research. The pressure from urban development is, however, considerable, and much effort in Greek archaeology now goes simply into mitigating its effects with rescue or salvage excavation.

ANCIENT HISTORY, THE HISTORICAL EVENT AND DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE

En voyageant dans la Grèce, il faudrait avoir Pausanias à la main pour trouver les choses remarquables, parce qu'il a fait autrefois ce voyage par la même curiosité; prendre les vues de Tempien Thessalie, du Parnasse, du temple de Delphes et des ruines d'Athènes; rapporter le plus d'inscriptions qui se pourra.

[In travelling round Greece have a copy of Pausanias with you to help find the most **significant** things, because he made the journey with the

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same interest; take a look at Tempe in Thessaly, Parnassus, the temple of Delphi, and the **ruins** of Athens; bring back as many inscriptions as possible.]

(Minister Colbert to M. Galland 1679)

As one goes up to Korinth (from the Isthmus) are tombs, and by the gate is buried Diogenes of Sinope, whom the Greeks surname the Dog (the 'Cynic' philosopher). Before the city is a grove of cypresses called Kraneion. Here are a precinct of Bellerophon, a temple of Melaenis and the grave of Lais, upon which is set a lioness holding a ram in her fore-paws . . . The things worthy of mention in the city include the extant remains of antiquity, but the greater number of them belong to the period of its second ascendancy. On the market place, where most of the sanctuaries are, stand Artemis, surnamed **Ephesian** and wooden statues of Dionysos, which are covered with gold with the exception of their faces; these are ornamented with red paint . . .

(Pausanias, *Guide to Greece*)

Why this interest in sanctuaries and town centres? There is a simple answer. The Classical archaeologists who established this pattern in the discipline were guided above all by Pausanias and his detailed descriptions of the remains of the city centres and sanctuaries of Greece in Roman times. More generally the blueprint has been supplied by ancient literatures. Archaeology

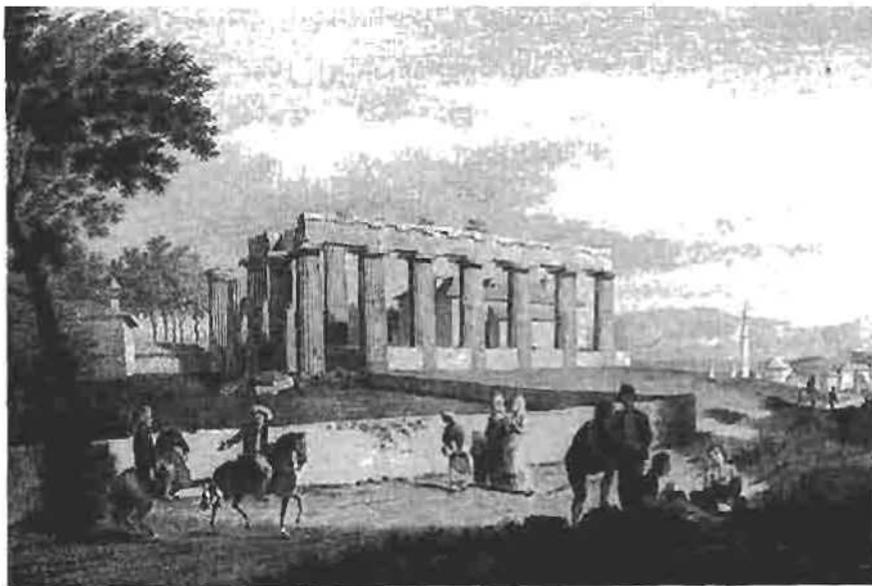


Figure 2.8 Stuart and Revett. *The Antiquities of Athens*, Volume 3. London 1787. Chapter 6, Plate 1. Corinth

has often been seen as an illustrative addendum, or parallel art history, to 'real' history - archaeological materials fleshing out the main features of ancient times found through scrutiny of written accounts. The amount of effort expended into establishing fine-grained archaeological chronologies, often for no sake other than chronological control, can be mentioned here (and is discussed above). Criticism may be raised that this interest is only in the construction of what David Clarke called 'counterfeit history books', that is an interest which does not heed the character of archaeological materials and the sort of interests appropriate to them.

There are all kinds of tricky issues hereabout relationships between history and archaeology, and many are dealt with throughout this book, but the idea that archaeology is merely an illustrative addendum to history remains.

The point is made clearly in an article by Paul Cartledge summarising archaeology in Greece in a book entitled *Greece Old and New* (ed. T. Winnifrith and P. Murray, 1983). He provides a historical background of travellers to Greece and Hellenists, and then picks out several recent archaeological finds he regards as important. The choice is very revealing. Under some paving stones of the sacred way at Delphi, excavations mounted by the French School found in 1939 some fragments of three chryselephantine statues and a lifesize bull. They are now on display in the museum at Delphi. Chryselephantine statues were the composite constructions of precious metals and ivory which so characterised the ancient sanctuaries. They are an artistic medium about which much has been conjectured. So few have survived because they were dismantled and plundered in antiquity. Hence Cartledge marks out these finds.

Between 1954 and 1958 the Germans at Olympia found debris from the construction of one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the chryselephantine statue of Zeus made by Pheidias, the sculptor of the famous pedimental marbles of both Olympia and the Parthenon. Pausanias had been used to guide the excavators to the site of the workshop of Pheidias. To the south was found ivory and bone, obsidian, rock crystal, amber, tools, clay matrices for hammering out the gold dress 'and even moulds for making glass ornaments not mentioned by Pausanias'. What clinched it all for Cartledge was a pot inscribed with 'I belong to Pheidias'. Other pots allow the debris to be dated after 435 BC. The chryselephantine Athena in the Parthenon, also by Pheidias, was completed by 438. 'So his Athena set the standard he had to surpass at Olympia to produce a "Wonder" of the ancient world'. Here Cartledge is continuing an interest long established in historical personages, artists, and written roots of the archaeological. It will be argued later that this is a wholly inadequate way of conceiving of archaeological materials.

Michael Grant has considered the relationship between archaeological materials and ancient history in his book *The Visible Past: Greek and Roman History from Archaeology 1960-1990* (1990). He recognises the difference

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between archaeology and historical studies, but the book is all about archaeology contributing to a *story* of the past which is how, basically, he conceives of history- Hence the title: history *from* archaeology.

Contacts are being sought here with political-military narratives or historical narratives more generally. Archaeological materials are frequently thus considered as passive mirrors of a social reality known from literatures, needing no explanation in terms of social action. This point will be developed through Chapters 5 and 6.

To temper this criticism, mention should be made of the social and economic histories produced particularly under the influence of Moses Finley's Marxism. There are also French anthropologies of Classical antiquity, and new art histories. Classical studies generally is setting new agendas which have done much in the way of reassessing the relationship between archaeological and written sources. But here I am anticipating following chapters.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the last 200 years *v/* Classical archaeology there has been a consistency in the questions asked and answers sought from certain accepted classes of evidence. It has been the purpose of this chapter to give some idea of these. Things are changing though; there is a considerable broadening of outlook - an aspect that will feature in the discussions of later chapters. But the raw materials with which these new archaeologies work remain largely the product of excavations and collection strategies whose principles and values were established in the nineteenth century. So, for example, upon deciding to consider the design of artefacts made in Korinth at that time of change in the seventh century BC, *I* was drawn into 200 years of connoisseurship simply to get to the perfume jars in which *I* was interested. And with the aryballoi come all sorts of underlying attitudes, cultural outlooks and ideologies. It is the purpose of the next chapter to consider these further.