ART HISTORY IN THE TEMPLE

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Like any field of knowledge, art history is involved in a continual quest to identify its own beginnings.[1] Just as classical antiquity has repeatedly served as a battleground for those debating the invention of "art" itself, so ancient art-writing has divided art historians searching for disciplinary origins. Should we echo Alma-Tadema's *A Picture Gallery* and tell a story of continuity, tracing a line through Winckelmann and Vasari back to Pliny the Elder?[2] Should we point, like P. O. Kristeller (and more recently L. Shiner), to a radical *difference* between ancient and modern conceptualizations of art and the artist—whether we date the rupture to the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, or some other strategically chosen epistemic shift?[3] Or should we look to alternative modes of comparison, as Jeremy Tanner suggests in this volume, by identifying important family

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1 It has been a great pleasure to have been involved in *The Art of Art History*, and I am most grateful to this volume's contributors, both for the lively 2009 APA/AIA session that first brought us together and for the stimulating articles that ensued. The editors of *Arethusa*, Martha Malamud and John Dugan, have provided us with an ideal forum within which to continue our conversation in published form, while Madeleine Kaufman has kept us all in line with great patience and care. Most crucially, my co-editor Michael Squire has been a constant source of inspiration and helpful feedback, particularly during the writing of this paper. A number of the examples here discussed are explored at greater length in chapters 3 and 4 of my forthcoming book, *Facing the Gods: Epiphany and Representation in Graeco-Roman Art, Literature, and Religion* (Cambridge University Press).

2 On Alma-Tadema's *A Picture Gallery,* see Squire's discussion in the Introduction to this volume. On Pliny and Vasari, see Becatti 1972 and Rubin 1995.147, with Barkan 2001.66–117 on Pliny's influence during the Renaissance; on Winckelmann, see Pommier 2003.

3 On the influence of Enlightenment theories of art's production and reception, see Kristeller 1990 and Shiner 2001 and 2009. On the Reformation as the moment of rupture between ancient and modern concepts of art, see, e.g., Belting 1994.

Arethusa 43 (2010) 197–213 © 2010 by The Johns Hopkins University Press

"resemblances" in institutions and practices that bridge the divide between ancient and modern forms of cultural activity to make the study of ancient art and art history possible?

The question itself of whether "art" and "art history" existed in any recognizable form in antiquity warns us against assimilating the cultures of Greece and Rome too easily to our own (and vice versa). At the same time, it risks imposing simple binarisms of similarity and difference. In the search for historical parallels, it is all too easy to isolate institutional and intellectual practices that look familiar to modernity, extracting them from the broader range of customs and contexts that gave them meaning in antiquity but which are incommensurable with the secular principles of the contemporary academy. In this sense, the prime site of contestation in the struggle to understand Greek and Roman attitudes to art is religion. "Primitivist" arguments in favor of a rupture between ancient and modern concepts of the art object, for example, look to a Lutheran reconceptualization of the image or an eighteenth-century secularization of its functions, both conceived in contrast to "pagan" traditions of idolatry.[4] By contrast, "modernists" seeking familiar patterns of image production and consumption in the classical past tend to look through a post-Marxist lens, prioritizing secular aspects of art and art-writing during antiquity itself, from the roles played by market forces and the social and political capital to be gained through patronage and display, to the development of elite cultural practices that encouraged connoisseurship and art criticism.[5]

Scholars have been relatively quick, however, to acknowledge the importance of sacred factors for the interpretation of *early* Greek images—the period before naturalism gave rise to visual practices that are visibly ancestral to European culture. When faced with an abundance of material from religious sanctuaries and a dearth of textual evidence, myth and ritual provide handy interpretative tools, particularly when seeking to explain sty-

4 On Lutheranism's rejection and reformulation of the image, see Koerner 2004 and Squire 2009.15–57. On secularizing concepts of sensibility in Enlightenment aesthetics and the display of art objects in non-religious institutions such as national museums, see Tanner in this volume, with Pomian 1990, McClellan 1999, Gaskell 2003 and 2006, and O'Neill 2005. On "primitive" and "modernist" attitudes to the nature of art history in antiquity, see Tanner 2006.12–19, with Squire's comments in the Introduction.

5 See, among recent publications, Smith 2002 (on patronage and market forces), Bergmann 1995 and Marvin 2008 (on elite practices of connoisseurship and display), and Kousser 2008 (on the development of a secular notion of classicism in Hellenistic and Roman culture).

listic divergences from normative Western tradition.[6] The development of connoisseurial practices such as collecting and the writing of art histories and sophisticated ekphrastic literature in the post-classical period, however, has been yoked to a narrative of increasing secularization. While Tanner steers a careful path between "modernist" and "primitivist" modes of analysis in *The Invention of Art History in Ancient Greece*, for example, he grounds the development of naturalism in the fifth century in ritual modes of viewing, but excludes religious factors altogether from his account of intellectualizing approaches to art and art history in the Hellenistic Mediterranean and imperial Rome (Tanner 2006.31–96, 205–76). The "rationalization" of art thus emerges from cultural and political institutions independent of the temple and sanctuary. In this sense, Tanner subscribes to a well-established narrative of Hellenistic decontextualization influenced by literary scholarship whereby poetic genres were untethered from the performative and ritual functions they once had within the traditional Greek polis in order to exist as written documents, stored within the great libraries of Alexandria and Pergamon, and circulated among learned elites clustered around the royal courts.[7] The invention of "art," therefore, mirrors the invention of "literature," in supposed isolation from cult. The foundation of scholarly institutions goes hand in hand with the accumulation and organization of knowledge, the compilation of catalogs, and the formation of canons—what Tanner calls "the development of specifically artistic competence" (2006.209). It is no coincidence, therefore, that Pliny's sources for the "art history" sections of the *Historia Naturalis*—the now lost works of authors such as Duris of Samos and Antigonos of Karystos—emerged from the same intellectual climate as Callimachus's *Pinakes* (see Kennedy 1989).

In what follows, I examine a series of Hellenistic images and texts in order to show how practices of connoisseurship more commonly associated with secular intellectualism could exist in productive tension with sacred modes of viewing, and that the division between the two was necessarily far

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6 See Gordon 1979. Consider, for example, the work of Jean-Pierre Vernant, discussed in this volume by Richard Neer, in which conceptions of the divine and the afterlife provide a key for the interpretation of archaic objects such as the *kolossos*, while the birth of the "image" in the classical period is read through Platonic philosophy (Vernant 1983.305–20, 1991.141–92).

7 On the separation of text from performative context in Hellenistic literature, see, e.g., Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004.17–26. I. Petrovic 2007.124–77, however, reopens the question of ritual performance in relation to Callimachus's *Hymns*.

more ambiguous than modern critics have assumed. In doing so, I hope to complicate the model of Hellenistic change espoused by Tanner and others by demonstrating how scholarship and ritual, or connoisseurship and veneration, were by no means mutually exclusive but often deeply implicated in each other.[8] While the function and appearance of sacred images—what we might call their "visual theology"—exerted a profound influence upon Hellenistic ekphrastic literature, academic qualities conventionally associated with the library were also readily mobilized within the temple.[9] While the argument for decontextualization holds for some literary production (such as the rise of the literary epigram), it is questionable how far it applies to the visual sphere, mainly because of a strong, often self-conscious, continuity in the civic and religious infrastructures of the old Greek *poleis*.[10] Indeed, most of our evidence for Hellenistic art, when not dependent on Roman copies, comes from the same kinds of display contexts as objects dating to the archaic and classical periods—that is, the agora, the gymnasium, and the religious sanctuary.[11]

The instability, multiculturalism, and self-consciousness we see as typical of much Hellenistic culture have encouraged scholars to interpret its relics through the lens of modernity, identifying with an "age of anxiety" characterized by fragmentation and the disavowal of tradition.[12] Martin Robertson offers a representative example in his quest to attribute "What is Hellenistic about Hellenistic Art" to a rise in philosophic skepticism and the redundancy of traditional religion in the face of divinized kings and the overriding power of Fortune, despite abundant evidence for the continuity and even expansion of traditional cultic activity.[13] Yet although art history

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8 On the fallacy of distinguishing between the religious and aesthetic in any culture but the post-Enlightenment West, see also Gell 1998.97.

9 On the theological implications of Hellenistic ekphrastic epigrams about cult statues, for example, see Platt 2002b and forthcoming, chapter 4. On the sophisticated treatment of sacred images in the poems of Callimachus, see I. Petrovic 2006 and forthcoming.

10 On the shift from inscribed to literary epigram in the Hellenistic period, see Bing 1998, Gutzwiller 1998.47–114, A. Petrovic 2005, and Meyer 2007.

11 Note that even a seemingly decontextualized image such as the "Slipper-Slapper" statue group from the Delian House of the Poseidoniastes turns out to be a votive dedication (see Havelock 1995.55–58), while the quest for a Hellenistic context for the originals of "realist" statue types such as the "Drunken old woman" inevitably turns to ritual explanations (see Pollitt 1986.143, suggesting an association with the Alexandrian *Lagynophoria*).

12 On the Hellenistic period as an "age of anxiety," see, e.g., Pollitt 1986.1. In his history of Greek religion, Gilbert Murray outlines a collective "failure of nerve" during the Hellenistic and early imperial periods (2002.119–65, first published in 1912).

13 Robertson 1993.89–90. See also Pollitt 1986.1–3, 7–9.

may have emerged from the upheavals that shook the Mediterranean in the wake of Alexander, the key moment in which a connoisseurial approach to art became a recognizable cultural activity in antiquity might be less familiar than we like to admit. In the urge to identify Hellenistic practices according to post-Enlightenment traditions of scholarship and consumption, it is all too easy to strip them of cultural nuance, constructing artificial distinctions between a "sacred" past and a "secular" present, whether these distinctions are applied respectively to classical and Hellenistic Greece or, indeed, antiquity and modernity. It is worth remembering that the contemporary humanities owe their secular principles to the late nineteenth-century pursuit of modes of scholarship independent of theology: our urge to downplay the potential religiosity of ancient intellectual practices is itself a result of the modern academy's separation of library and church—a shift, one might say, from *Dominus Illuminatio Mea* (the motto of Oxford University, used since the sixteenth century, and the opening words of Psalm 27) to *Crescat Scientia; Vita Excolatur* (that of the University of Chicago, founded as a secular institution in 1890).[14] Yet just as we should be wary of applying secularizing notions of the "fine arts" or "aesthetic autonomy" derived from eighteenth-century aesthetics to antiquity, so we should also avoid constructing a model of ancient art history that adheres too closely to the institutional practices of the modern university or museum. In doing so, we risk over simplifying the myriad (and often contradictory) ways in which ancient viewers told stories about the production, display, and reception of the artifacts they privileged.

SACRED WISDOM, HUMAN SKILL

An oft-cited poster girl for the Hellenistic period's decontextualization of religious modes of viewing is the second-century B.C. marble version of Pheidias's Athena Parthenos now in Berlin (figure 4). The statue was discovered in a large room accessed through the north stoa of the Pergamene sanctuary of Athena Nikephoros, which has traditionally been identified as the reading room of the Attalids' famed library.[15] One of our earliest identifiable "copies" of a Greek cult statue, the Pergamene Athena

14 On the development of the university as a secular institution during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Reuben 1996 and Roberts and Turner 2000.

15 See Johnson 1984, Mielsch 1995, Hoepfner 1996, and Radt 1999.165–68.

has been interpreted as a desacralized *objet d'art*, harbinger of the replicatory practices so characteristic of Roman art, and a symbol of Pergamon's cultural, rather than religious, self-presentation.[16] Created in a different medium from the original Parthenos on the Athenian Acropolis, she is no longer the gleaming gold and ivory focus of sacred ritual, but stands instead as a personification of wisdom, an embodiment of the intellectual activity conducted in the building she adorns. The library offers a new context of display, driven by royal habits of collecting classical "masterpieces," and a visual analogy to art history's development as a literary genre. The implication of this secularizing model of cultural production is that any vestigial religiosity could be experienced only through the prism of human *technê*, resulting in a profound sense of distance from the divine (as if the Pergamene Parthenos were closer to its modern-day replica in Tennessee than the original in the Athenian Parthenon).

To emphasize the Pergamene statue's identity as an *objet d'art*, however, is to ignore both the context in which she was found and the persistent sanctity of Athena's form during antiquity. Recent reassessments of the archaeological evidence conclude that the statue did not preside over a scholarly reading room but a banqueting hall (or *hestiatorion*) designed for ritual feasting; although the location of the library itself is still uncertain, we can be sure that the Parthenos formed part of a rich collection of objects whose primary function was that of votive dedications to the city's patron goddess.[17] In this way, she invoked the authority of her Athenian model as a "living image" within the Greek cultural imagination, yoking

16 See, e.g., Pollitt 1986.167, 235, Robertson 1993.73–75 (who nevertheless acknowledges the significance of the sculpture's religious setting), and Kousser 2008.140–42 (who emphasizes its political implications). On replications of the Athena Parthenos, see Gaifman 2006 and Tanner 2006.229–30.

17 On the Pergamene statues' function as votive offerings, see Mielsch 1995. On the room as *hestiatorion*, see Strocka 2000, who argues that the podium running around three sides was not a support for bookcases but a bench for dining couches, similar to those discovered in contemporary Hellenistic sanctuaries such as that of Zeus at Cyrene. While the structure's identification as the Attalid library is by no means certain, Strocka does not, however, rule out the possibility that the three adjoining rooms were used for storing texts, or, indeed, that the large room functioned as a large *oikos,* akin to that described by Strabo in the Mouseion at Alexandria, where the scholars supposedly dined (17.1.8). We should not be too quick to identify libraries as secular institutions: the Alexandrian library was associated with a Mouseion (a sacred precinct of the Muses) and was presided over by a priest, while libraries formed part of temple complexes throughout the Mediterranean: see Fraser 1972.3.312–19, El-Abbadi 1990.84–90, and Delia 1992.1451–52.

cultural practices to civic cult through her dual role as both local deity and personification of wisdom.[18] By assuming the form of the Parthenos, the statue maintains a delicate balance between its status as an artistic object presented for connoisseurial viewing and an embodiment of Athena herself, suggesting that the immediacy of the divine is paradoxically to be accessed through the sacred models of the past: art history and religiosity are inextricable.

This combination of the sacred and the scholarly, whereby the authority of sacred objects was magnified by erudition, resonated throughout Hellenistic culture in a variety of contexts and literary genres. Striking juxtapositions of piety and *paideia* are not confined to royal commissions in the new Hellenistic capitals, but are equally to be found in traditional Greek *poleis*. In the Peloponnesian city of Messene, for example, a series of second-century B.C. civic decrees set up in honor of the local sculptor Damophon commemorate his activities as an *agalmatopoios*, "maker of cult statues," across the Greek world, paying particular attention to his *theosebeia*—his "reverent attitude towards the gods."[19] This is demonstrated by an *agalma* he made for the Kythnian sanctuary of Aphrodite (presumably of the goddess herself) that was "most excellently fashioned by his skill" (ἐ]τεχνωσέν τε κα[ὶ] ἄριστον) and set in place under his personal supervision.[20] Likewise, the people of Leukas praise Damophon for employing all the *technai* at his command to create an *agalma* of Aphrodite Limenarchis for her sanctuary that is "worthy of both goddess and polis" (τὸ ἄγαλμα] ἄξι|ον τᾶς τε θεοῦ καὶ τᾶ[ς πόλιος).[21] In both decrees, the language of artistic skill (*technê*) is

18 On the concept of the well-known cult image as a *lebende Statue*, see Schefold 1937.33 ("Das Kultbild ist der lebendige Gott selbst, und das Leben ist von göttlichen Kräften durchgestaltet") and 58–67, with Alroth 1992.10 and Platt forthcoming, chapter 2.

19 See Themelis 1994 and 1996.168–78, and *SEG* 39.380, 40.364, and 48.488: the decrees come from the cities of Lykosoura (*SEG* 41.332), Kythnos (*SEG* 49.423), Krane on Kephallenia (*IG* IX^2 1.4.1583, *SEG* 51.467), Leukas (*IG* IX^2 1.4.1475, *SEG* 51.466), Oiantheia (Themelis 2003), Melos (unpublished), and Gerenia (unpublished). On a posthumous date of c. 150 for the Messenian inscription, see Matthaiou's edition of *IG* IX^2 1.4.1475. On the phenomenon of *Ehrentafeln* (epigraphic monuments that collect multiple decrees in honor of an individual into one inscription), see Ma 2007.212. On the broader civic and religious significance of the decrees in honor of Damophon, see Platt forthcoming, chapter 3.

20 *SEG* 49.423, lines 106–07. Themelis 1996 interprets the decree to refer to a statue of Aphrodite, identified with fragments of a standing, semi-nude cult statue discovered close to her sanctuary on Kythnos.

21 *SEG* 51.466; *IG* IX^2 1.4.1475, lines 12–13.

explicitly related to Damophon's religious and civic sensibilities, implying that the stylistic synthesis he employed as an *agalmatopoios* satisfied ritual, political, and aesthetic expectations with particular success.

As surviving cult statues attributed to Damophon at Messene and the Arcadian sanctuary of Lykosoura make clear, the sculptor's combination of piety and *technê* was embodied in a classicizing style that applied Praxitelean plasticity and Hellenistic "Baroque" elements to solid Pheidian forms to create a monumentalizing, naturalistic effect (figures 5–7).[22] Entirely appropriate for images of the gods, Damophon's style derived venerability from traditional stylistic features whilst generating a sense of fresh encounter with the divine through dynamic new techniques. The display of inscriptions at Messene suggests that the sculptor's successful career in the Peloponnese and as far afield as the Ionian and Cycladic islands rested not only on this stylistic synthesis (he has been called the first "neo-classical" sculptor), but also upon the ability of viewer-worshippers to recognize and appreciate the visual references he employed—in short, to view as connoisseurs.[23] We see here the practical (and knowing) application of art-historical knowledge to the viewing of cult statues alongside the development of an epigraphic language through which to draw attention to both the person of the artist and the creative act itself, a cultural practice that echoes modes of aesthetic appreciation associated with elite urban trends. At Messene, however, this language is thoroughly intertwined with the language of the sacred. The references to both *technê* and *theosebeia* encourage the reader to combine his or her sense of an encounter with the deity depicted with an evaluative judgment of the artist's work in which sculptural skill, iconography, and presentation are dependent on a sense of what is appropriate for—or "worthy of"—the god. In this sense, the language of art criticism is not simply imported to lend a veneer of sophistication, but is closely bound to the ritual requirements of local cult.

If images and inscriptions established a mutually reinforcing relationship between sacred and art-historical modes of viewing in locales as

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22 On surviving sculptures attributed to Damophon, see Stewart 1990.94–96, Moreno 1994.504–18, Faulstich 1997.163–68, Damaskos 1999.58–71, and Kaltsas 2002.279–81; on evidence for Damophon's output elsewhere in the Peloponnese, see Themelis 1993, 1994, and 1996, Torelli 1998, Damaskos 1999.44–58, and Luraghi 2008.278–85, with bibliography.

23 On Damophon as a "neo-classicist," see Becatti 1940.45–46, Stewart 1979.57, and Pollitt 1986.165–66.

far afield as Pergamon and Messene, then what of those elite literary texts that modern scholars have deemed paradigmatic of Hellenistic approaches to the art object? Herodas's fourth *Mimiambus* and Theocritus's fifteenth *Idyll*, for example, are commonly cited as evidence for the development of a self-conscious poetics of viewing in which responses to images are placed center stage. As Simon Goldhill and others suggest, the vocabulary of art criticism is here deployed by uneducated housewives to the ironic amusement of a cultured audience associated with the Alexandrian library and royal court.[24] It is less commonly observed, however, that both poems are set within religious contexts—the temple of Asclepius on Kos and the festival of the *Adonaia* in Alexandria. While each poem functions as a decontextualized version of an urban mime—or "high" art masquerading as "low"—its mimeticism, and thus its humor, relies upon the use of convincing scenarios in which non-elite viewers encounter works of art.[25] In both temple and palace, such encounters occur not during "Ladies' Day at the Art Institute" (as the title of a recent article suggests), but in the context of ritual, whether the humble sacrifice of a cockerel in a healing sanctuary or the witnessing of a mythical tableau related to royal cult.[26]

The tension each mime generates between the aesthetic judgments of unsophisticated internal viewers and educated external readers rests, therefore, not only on differences of gender, class, and ethnicity, but also upon the complicated relationship between ritual and intellectualizing responses to human artistry. In both poems, the women comment on the uncanny naturalism and otherworldly skill exhibited by sacred objects: "Wouldn't you say that some Athena has carved these beautiful things?" Herodas's Phile asks, while Theocritus's Gorgo suggests that the royal tapestries are "the garments of the gods."[27] These responses, however, are combined with attempts at more learned commentary: Kokkale reads the inscribed attributions that accompany images within the Asclepian sanctuary

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24 The most influential piece on the "history of the formations of the viewing subject" (223) in Theocritus 15 and Herodas 4 has been Goldhill 1994; see also Hunter 1996.110–38, with Burton 1995, Skinner 2001, and Dubois 2007 (who focus on issues of gender, class, and ethnicity), and Zanker 2004.82–86 and Männlein-Robert 2007.261–307 (who focus on modes of viewing).

25 On the influence of mime and New Comedy here, see Hunter 1996.110–38.

26 Skinner 2001. On the anachronistic projection of post-Enlightenment cultural institutions onto antiquity by modern scholars, see below.

27 Herodas 4.57–58: ταῦτ' ἐρεῖς Ἀθηναίην / γλύψαι τὰ καλά; Theocritus 15.79: θεῶν περονάματα φασεῖς.

(the "sons of Praxiteles") and remarks upon the mimetic skill of Apelles, while Gorgo describes the Alexandrian tapestries in the language of Callimachean poetics, as "delicate and charming" (λεπτὰ καὶ ὡς χαρίεντα).[28] In each case, responses to the lifelike qualities of the objects encountered are combined with comments on human *technê*: "Sometimes men give life even to stones"; "What a clever thing is man!"[29] While this shuttling from slack-jawed wonder to faux sophistication produces a humorous effect as the language of connoisseurship is distorted in the mouths of those lacking the audience's *paideia*, it also hints at the complex range of responses demanded by sacred images. Both pairs of women move between moments of ritual absorption (in which they respond emotionally to the content of the scenes they view and the charged atmosphere of sanctuary and festival) and more detached connoisseurship (in which they identify artists' hands and comment upon style, medium, and workmanship). Their shifting responses derive humor from the complexities of naturalistic art—in Richard Wollheim's formulation, the tension between "seeing as" and "seeing in"—but also point to a tension between the image's function as the focus of ritual and its status as the product of human *technê*.[30] Indeed, Theocritus's use of the language of *charis* points to the way in which these aspects of the art object are fundamentally related: the notion of "grace" suggests both sacred principles of reciprocity between gods and humans and the delightful qualities of material objects wrought by mortal skill: the qualities that prompt erudite commentary from each object's viewers are the very same qualities that allow it to fulfill its religious function.[31]

It is important, then, that although each poem is decontextualized from its conditions of performance, the visual encounters it simulates are not. It is telling that the women of Theocritus's mime respond in a similar fashion to both the tableau in the royal palace and the hymn that is performed as part of the *Adonaia*, echoing contemporary literary values in their

28 Herodas 4.23–25, Theocritus 15.79.

29 Herodas 4.33–34: μᾶ, χρόνωι κοτ᾽ ὤνθρωποι / κὴς τοὺς λίθους ἔξουσι τὴν ζοὴν θεῖναι; Theocritus 15.83: σοφόν τοι χρῆμ᾽ ἄνθρωπος.

30 Wollheim 1980.205–29, applied to Greek art by Neer 1995 and Steiner 2001.19–22. A similar tension in responses to naturalistic painting in Philostratus's *Imagines* is discussed by Newby 2009 in terms of a contrast between "absorption" and "erudition." On the fraught relationship between "ritual" and "intellectual" modes of viewing in antiquity, see Elsner 1996, esp. 515–17, 529–30, and Elsner 2000.

31 On the religious significance of *charis* and notions of reciprocity, see MacLachlan 1993 and Parker 1998.

comments upon the "cleverness" of female artistry (τὸ χρῆμα σοφώτατον ἀθήλεια) and the "sweetness" of the singer's voice (ὡς γλυκὺ φωνεῖ), before addressing their farewells directly to "darling Adonis" himself (χαῖρε Ἄδων ἀγαπατέ) in a gesture of ritual absorption.[32] Whether we are meant to meditate upon the shared *sophia* of art and poetry or laugh knowingly at Theocritus's "womanish" distortion of connoisseurial modes of discourse, we should also recognize that the poem's internal performance serves to recontextualize the hymn not merely as a "text-within-a-text" but as a sacred genre in a ritual *mise en abyme* that necessarily complicates the responses of both internal viewer-worshippers and the poem's external audience.

Although Theocritus's mime is, as Richard Hunter comments (1996.125), "explicitly concerned with standards of aesthetic judgement," like Herodas's poem, it reveals how Hellenistic practices of viewing, appreciating, and discussing art and literature in aesthetic terms were not always easy to tease apart from the ritual events and sacred spaces in which they were often encountered. We might compare Callimachus's sixth *Iambus*, in which an unidentified speaker describes Pheidias's chryselephantine statue of Zeus to a traveler about to embark on a trip to Olympia.[33] Unable to convey the epiphanic *thauma* produced by the image, he must resort to dry learning, reciting a numerical summary of its dimensions. On the one hand, his response mocks viewers (and, by implication, literary critics) who can only value great size, isolating the quality of *megethos* from the complex array of factors employed by human craftsmen to convey divine presence and magnificence.[34] On the other hand, the comic insufficiency of the speaker's description intimates something more serious, expressing both the frustrations of ekphrasis (which must always fall short in its attempts

32 Theocritus 15.145–49. On parallels between the women's responses to visual and literary experience in the poem, see Burton 1995.118–19, and on the fraught question of the hymn's status as a literary parody, Hunter 1996.123–38. On the quality of "sweetness" in Theocritus's poetry and its programmatic use in the first *Idyll*, see Hunter 1983.92–98, 1999.70–71, and Cairns 1984.105.

33 On this text and the accompanying seventh *Iambus* (on the aniconic statue of Hermes Perpheraios), see Manakidou 1993.238–42, Kerkhecker 1999.147–96, Acosta-Hughes 2002.265–300, and I. Petrovic 2006 and forthcoming.

34 For a metapoetic interpretation of the sixth *Iambus* as an allegory of responses to Homeric epic (in which the speaker is equivalent to the Telchines of the *Aitia* prologue), see I. Petrovic 2006. On the role of beauty and size (*kallos kai megethos*) in hymnic scenes of epiphany and their influence on the chryselephantine temple statues of Pheidias and his successors, see Steiner 2001.95–104 and Platt forthcoming, chapters 1 and 2.

to translate visual experience into verbal description) and the impossibility of conveying divine encounters in human terms. Like the language of *charis* in Theocritus's fifteenth *Idyll*, such insufficiency has both aesthetic and religious implications, allowing Callimachus to comment on both his poetic enterprise and the complex ontology of the cult statue. In picking at the fault lines between ritual and connoisseurial modes of viewing, such poems demonstrate the degree to which the production and consumption of the visual arts in Hellenistic culture was theorized in relation to the divine and the ways in which emerging modes of learned viewing were rationalized in relation to sacred, as well as secular, institutions.

CATALOGING THE SACRED

While literary texts juxtapose the language of library and temple in service of their own (meta)poetic agendas, surviving epigraphic evidence testifies to a thorough integration of the scholarly and the sacred in a number of high-profile Hellenistic inscriptions. Our most striking example is the so-called "Lindian Chronicle," a catalog of votive offerings and divine epiphanies set up in 99 B.C. within the sanctuary of Athena Lindia on Rhodes, which had been enhanced with a new temple and two grand stoas during the third century following a destructive fire in 392/1.[35] The decree inscribed across the top of the stele (section A) claims that, as "the most archaic and the most venerable / in existence," Athena's sanctuary "has been adorned with many beautiful offerings from the earliest times on account of the visible presence (*epiphaneia*) of the goddess."[36] Because most of these *anathemata* have been "destroyed by time," it stipulates that two local authors—Tharsagoras and Timakhidas—should "inscribe from the / letters and from the public records and from the other evidence" whatever should prove a fitting source of evidence for Athena's epiphanies and

35 *Syll*^{3} 725 (*FGrH* 532, Blinkenberg 1915 and 1941, no. 2, Chaniotis 1988, T 13). On the sanctuary, see Dyggve 1960, vol. 1 and Higbie 2001. On Hellenistic Rhodes, see Gabrielen et al. 1999 and Wiemer 2001 and 2002.

36 A.2–3: ἐπεὶ τὸ ἱερὸ]ν τᾶς Ἀθάνας τᾶς Λινδίας ἀρχαιότατον τε καὶ ἐντιμό[τα]|τον ὑπάρχον πολλοῖς κ[αὶ καλοῖς ἀναθέμασι ἐκ παλαιοτ]άτων χρόνων κεκόσμηται διὰ τὰν τᾶς θεοῦ ἐπιφάνειαν . . . Text (based on Blinkenberg 1941, no. 2, with some modifications) and translation from Higbie 2003.

the votives dedicated in her honor.[37] Displayed in the *temenos* on a stele 2.37m. tall, the inscription would have been visible to anyone visiting the temple, thus functioning as an important framing device for those viewing the sanctuary and its treasures.[38]

The inscription's juxtaposition of a votive catalog with a series of narratives recounting divine manifestations (a genre we might call "epiphanography") has led to considerable confusion over its epigraphic category. The long list of dedications, with details of quantity, medium, and category of object, echoes the fourth-century temple inventories that survive from Delos and the Athenian Acropolis, placing the stele in a tradition of sacred epigraphy that has its roots in pre-Hellenistic documentary traditions.[39] The list of epiphanies, meanwhile, looks to third- and second-century B.C. epigraphic habits related to local cults and festivals such as a Chersonese decree commemorating a work on "the epiphanies of the Parthenos" by a local historian named Syriskos, or the corpus of inscriptions celebrating the manifestation of Artemis Leucophryene at Magnesia-on-the-Maeander.[40] Despite their different origins, however, both genres of inscription have their roots in practices of dedication and commemoration focused upon specific deities and, in this sense, have a clear religious function. While the Lindian epiphany narratives direct the visitor's attention away from material

37 On the inscription's authorship, see Blinkenberg 1912.32, Richards 1929, and Higbie 2003.62–63. On the destruction of dedications, see Higbie 2003.256–57 and Bresson 2006.543–44, who comments that the first 34 votives listed (75 percent) all predate the fire of 392/1. Those that postdate 392/1 (nos. 35–42) were theoretically still visible in the sanctuary, as suggested by a change in tense from ἐπεγέγραπτο ("had been inscribed") to ἐπιγέγραπται ("has been inscribed") and a smaller number of citations.

38 The stele is 2.37m. high, 0.85m. wide, and 0.32m. deep: see Shaya 2002.65–67, 212–13, and Higbie 2003.155–57, who each describe the text's structure and organization in detail. The stele was discovered in the Byzantine church of Aghios Stephanos, where it had been used (face up, alas) as a paving stone. Its original position within the sanctuary is unknown.

39 See, e.g., Richards 1929.76, who entitles the inscription "A Historical Inventory of the Temple Treasures." Parallels with inventories from Delos, Didyma, and the Athenian Asclepieion and sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia are discussed by Shaya 2002.128–37; see also Higbie 2003.260–62. On temple inventories in general, see Linders 1972, 1988, and 1992, Aleshire 1989, Harris 1995, Hamilton 2000, and Dignas 2002.

40 Magnesia-on-the-Maeander: *IvM* 16 = *Syll.*³ 557, revised by Ebert 1982, Rigsby 1996, no. 66 (with commentary), and Slater and Summa 2006; see, amid a vast bibliography, Dunand 1978, Gehrke 2001, Parker 2004, and Platt forthcoming, chapter 3. Chersonesus: *IOSPE* I² 344 = *FGrH* 807, TI and Chaniotis 1988, E7; see Rostovtzeff 1920.203–06, Higbie 2003.275–76, Petridou 2006.124–28, Bresson 2006.534–35, Clarke 2008.344–45, and Platt forthcoming, chapter 3.

objects towards the transcendent form of Athena (as she manifests herself to prominent citizens and her priests), the votive offerings listed in the catalog direct the reader back to physical markers of the goddess's authority. In this way, the visible and invisible are brought into a mutually reinforcing relationship that both intensifies the sanctity of the Lindian temple and preserves its fragile history.

Yet while the Lindian text can be read as the logical outcome of epigraphic genres typical of local cult, its votive catalog and epiphanography also echo practices that are typical of Hellenistic scholarship, constructing a definitive archive (or "canon") of objects, events, and texts supported by full documentation. The sequence of epiphanies, for example, parallels the broader encyclopedic and paradoxographical interests of Hellenistic scholars such as Istros of Alexandria (who published works listing the epiphanies of Apollo and Heracles) and Phylarchos (who is listed in the *Suda* as the author of a work "On the Epiphanies of Zeus").[41] Likewise, the chronological structure, identification of dedicators, transcribing of inscriptions, and detailed scholarly apparatus emulate formal historiography—hence the title of *Anagraphê* ("Chronicle") chosen by the stele's excavator Christian Blinkenberg (1912). In this sense, the stele offers an epigraphic parallel to Callimachus's *Pinakes* and the Hellenistic art histories whose traces can be glimpsed in Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*, providing the reader with a chronological catalog of objects accompanied by connoisseurial observations related to style, medium, date, iconography, and provenance, together with supporting documentation.

In response to these striking parallels with Hellenistic scholarly practices, Josephine Shaya has recently argued that the Lindian Chronicle constructs the temple as a form of "community museum" in which the symbolic display of treasured objects helped to forge local identity, constructing and representing memory through the highly manipulated organization of

41 For Istros, see *FGrH* 334, F50–53; on Phylarchos, see *FGrH* 81, T1 and Kroymann *RE* Suppl. 8, 1956.475. The *Suda* also lists a work Περὶ θείων ἐναργειῶν ("On Divine Appearances") by the second-century A.D. author Aelian. Epiphanies of local deities are also recounted by the second-century B.C. author Leon of Samos (*FGrH* 540, T1, on Hera): see Chaniotis 1988.53–54, 145–46, 308–09, and Petridou 2006.7. On epigraphic evidence for regional sacred histories, including catalogs of epiphanies, see Chaniotis 1988, Boffo 1988, Isager 1998, Lloyd-Jones 1999, Wiemer 2001.27–32, Shaya 2002.26–35, Higbie 2003.273–88, Dillery 2005, and Clarke 2008. On Hellenistic paradoxography, see Giannini 1966, Gabba 1981, Schepens and Delcroix 1996, and Hansen 1996 and 1998.

knowledge.[42] Certainly, the museum provides a helpful model for considering how institutions privilege certain objects in their efforts both to preserve the past and to shape the telling of history in line with specific ideologies. At the same time, however, the secular concept of the museum—with its close ties to the rise of the modern nation-state—projects anachronistic notions of ownership, display, and reception onto antiquity; indeed, as Tanner points out in this volume, museums were explicitly founded as institutions *autonomous from* the religious settings for which many of their holdings were originally produced.[43] The art historian Ivan Gaskell comments (2006) that museums have the power to "transfigure" and even "mystify" the objects they display (and, indeed, we cannot ignore the etymology of the Mouseion: modern museums may be metaphorical "temples of the arts," but their ancient equivalents were shrines in a rather more literal sense). Yet as Gaskell points out, the process of transfiguration is not one of consecration, "for it concerns the numinous not in the sense of dedication to a religious person or association with an object of worship, but in the sense of the civic, the historical, and the aesthetic" (Gaskell 2006). All these factors are relevant to the "Lindian Chronicle," in which the organization of privileged objects works to construct a local history that celebrates Lindian autonomy in the face of Persian invasion, self-aggrandizing kings, and (implicitly) the lengthening shadow of Rome.[44] Even so, the objects listed on the stele only have meaning by virtue of their ongoing status as dedications to Athena and their symbiotic relationship with her visible presence at Lindos. The list of votives, for example, lists "a torque and a Persian cap and armlets and a Persian curved short sword and trousers," all dedicated by "the general of the king of the Persians, Darius" (C 65–74), while the first epiphany relates how, after Athena saved the Lindians with a sudden thunderstorm during their siege by a Persian admiral, "the enemy was astounded at the *epiphaneia* of the goddess and took off his own accoutrements covering his body," dedicating his mantle, torque, armlets, Persian cap, and curved sword to Athena Lindia (D 33–38). The name of the admiral is damaged and has been identified as Datis, Ataphernes, or Ataxerxes, yet the correspondence between

42 Shaya 2005; see also Shaya 2002 for a more extensive discussion of the inscription's museological significance, together with a translation and commentary.

43 See also Tanner 2005.192–95, with Duncan and Wallach 1980 and Tomlinson 1997.

44 The socio-political implications of the inscription's "constructed history" are explored at length in Higbie 2003.

the two entries and the sources they cite (such as Eudemos's *Lindian Topics*, Timokritos's *Annalistic Account* Book 4, Hieron's *About Rhodes* Book 1) suggest to the careful reader that ritual responses to Athena's epiphany mirror precisely the practices of dedication in her sanctuary, reinforcing the aetiological relationship between the goddess's presence and her material treasures.[45] By implication, any of the votives listed on the stele can thus be read as a witness to her manifest efficacy.

Crucially, most of these dedications no longer existed at the time of the inscription's composition, having been destroyed by time or the fire of 392/1. Like all art history, the catalog of votives is an ekphrastic exercise—an attempt to preserve, examine, and celebrate in words what cannot necessarily be seen.[46] This physical intangibility, however, is necessarily matched by that of the goddess herself. The epiphanic demonstrations of Athena's power balance and reinforce the record of objects testifying to her efficacy throughout Lindian history, from the epochs of Lindos, Heracles, Helen, and Menelaus, to those of Alexander and Ptolemy I. In turn, these lost material signs of Athena's authority are substituted by the inscription, which functions as a textual and physical marker of both the dedications' former presence and the elusive presence of the goddess.[47] The epigraphic avalanche of objects, texts, names, and events thus constitutes a response to the problem of absence—whether divine transcendence or material decay. Together, textual citation and physical inscription act to re-materialize both votives and epiphanies for the reader within the sanctuary. In this sense, the scholarly or museological aspects of the inscription have a specific religious force, and the juxtaposition of inventory and epiphany offers an important reminder of the theological—as well as cultural and political—implications of displaying, cataloging, and accounting for objects within sacred space.

CONCLUSION

The inscriptions from Messene and Lindos both demonstrate how verbal responses to images in religious contexts share important impulses with contemporary scholarly practice. Neither could be described as "art

45 On the identification of the Persian dedicator, see Higbie 2003.121–26 and Bresson 2006.529. Ataphernes was suggested by Blinkenberg 1912.379 and 1941, cols. 194–98; Datis by Richards 1929.77, 82, and Heltzer 1989; Ataxerxes by Baslez 1985.140–41.

46 On art history as a form of ekphrasis, see Elsner 2010.

47 On this point, see also Koch Piettre 2005.102, who suggests that the stele is "une relique de reliques, une relique au carré."

history" in a formal sense, but both draw upon a range of connoisseurial and documentary strategies that intersect with other cultural discourses in their attempt to enhance and preserve the sanctity of the objects to which they refer. At Messene, this entails a celebration of the artist and an emphasis upon his skill and piety—his *technê* and *theosebeia*; at Lindos, the names of makers are suppressed in order to concentrate upon famous dedicators, precious materials, and historical significance. Despite their epigraphic rather than literary status, both texts are concerned with problems familiar to art history in that they attempt to rationalize the visual and material power of privileged objects in verbal form, whilst simultaneously asserting the text's importance as a guide to—or even a substitution for—the viewing of such objects. In this sense, they also share much with Hellenistic ekphrastic poetry, which exhibits a nigh obsessive awareness of the problem of absence and the difficulties of accounting for images in words. While the frustrations of ekphrasis are often explored in relation to discourses of power and gender, it is clear from the texts discussed above that the special qualities attributed to images encountered in sacred contexts were also a key factor in Hellenistic negotiations of the visual. Traditions of votive dedication, ritual viewing, and epigraphic commemoration should not, then, be excluded from our accounts of "the birth of art history" but are a fundamental part of the story. Indeed, the subtle theology at work in these examples might serve to remind us how it is by no means straightforward to separate the practice of art history from a broader impulse to document the sacred aura around certain objects—to preserve, classify, or explain their privileged status in verbal form. Whether it is construed as a sign of divine presence (as in the Greek temple) or an expression of aesthetic autonomy (as in Enlightenment aesthetics), the power of the art object to yoke together the material and the abstract, the present and the past, is one that continues to provoke and inspire. In our urge to identify intellectual and museological trends that are ancestral to our own cultural practices, however, we risk oversimplifying the complex relationships between the sacred and the scholarly, the ritual and the aesthetic, that were at work within antiquity. The impulse to demystify scholarship of its religiosity and reconfigure intellectual practice without reference to the divine can, paradoxically, obfuscate the very cultural complexities we seek to uncover if the relationship between library and temple—both for the ancients and ourselves—is not itself carefully historicized.

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