



The Visual Cultures of Classical Greece

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Εθνικόν και Καποδιστριακόν
Πανεπιστήμιον Αθηνών
— ΙΔΡΥΘΕΝ ΤΟ 1837 —

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The Visual Cultures of Classical Greece

Assignments



Term paper: The Visual Cultures of Classical Greece

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Assignment info

Title:	Term paper: The Visual Cultures of Classical Greece
Description:	Please submit your term paper here in either Word or PDF format.
Max grade:	10
Grade Type:	Number
Start date:	today at 6:24 AM
Submission deadline:	Sunday, February 11, 2024 at 11:55 PM (left 72 days 17 hours 27 minutes)
Assignment type:	Individual submissions
Assign to:	To All Students



Assignment Dashboard

› Term paper: The Visual Cultures of Classical Greece

Upload Submission

The Visual Cultures of Classical Greece

- Introduction [3/10]
- What is “Greek” about Greek art [17/10]
- **Nemea – Olympia – Delphi field trip [20-21/10]**
- Narrativity and story-telling [24/10]
- Monumentality [25/10]
- The visual cultures of Greek pottery [31/10]
- **National Museum class [10/11]**
- **Midterms [14/11]**
- Materiality [21/11]
- Agency [28/11]
- *Mimesis* [5/12]
- Realism [12/12]
- **Acropolis Museum class [15/12; 15:00-17:00]**

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Mimesis

Reading:

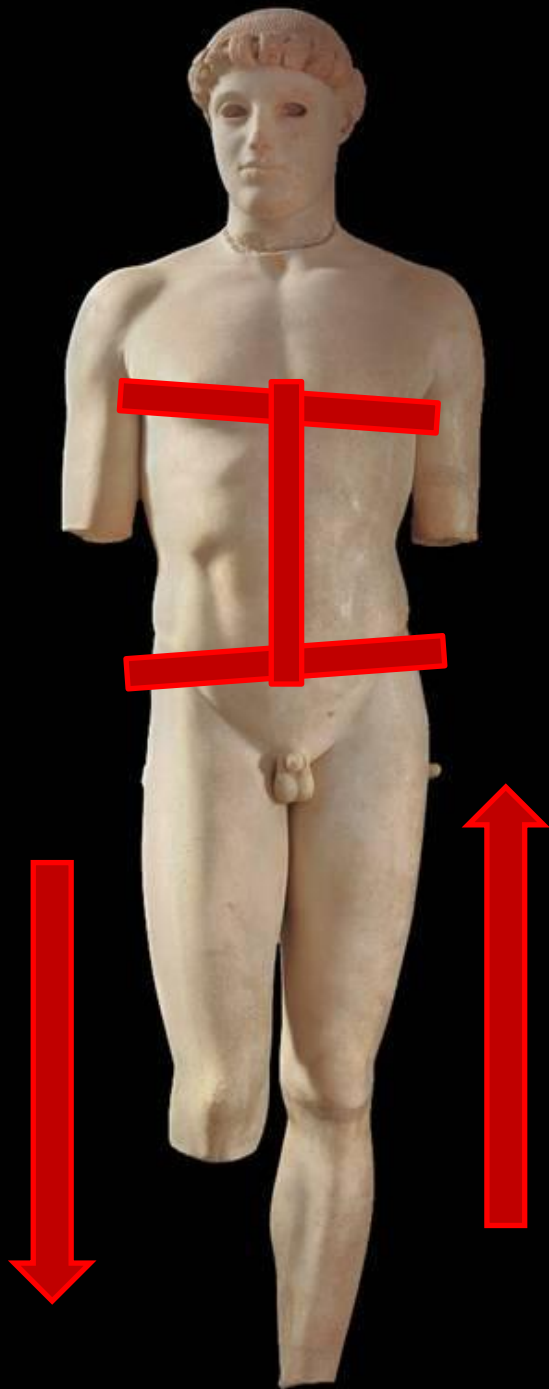
Plantzos 2016: 142-155; 171-179.

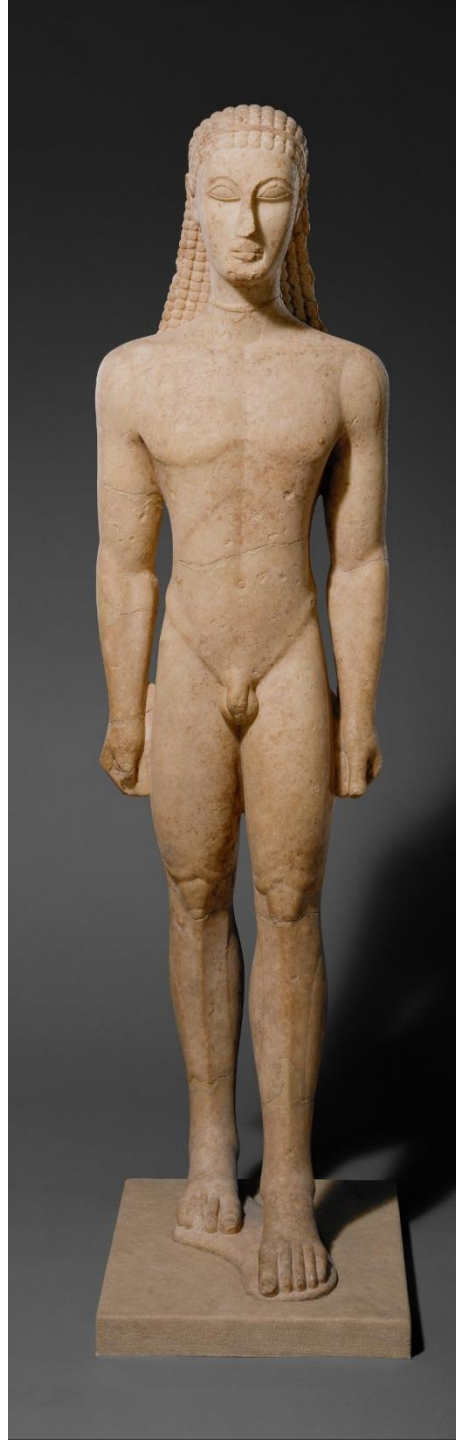
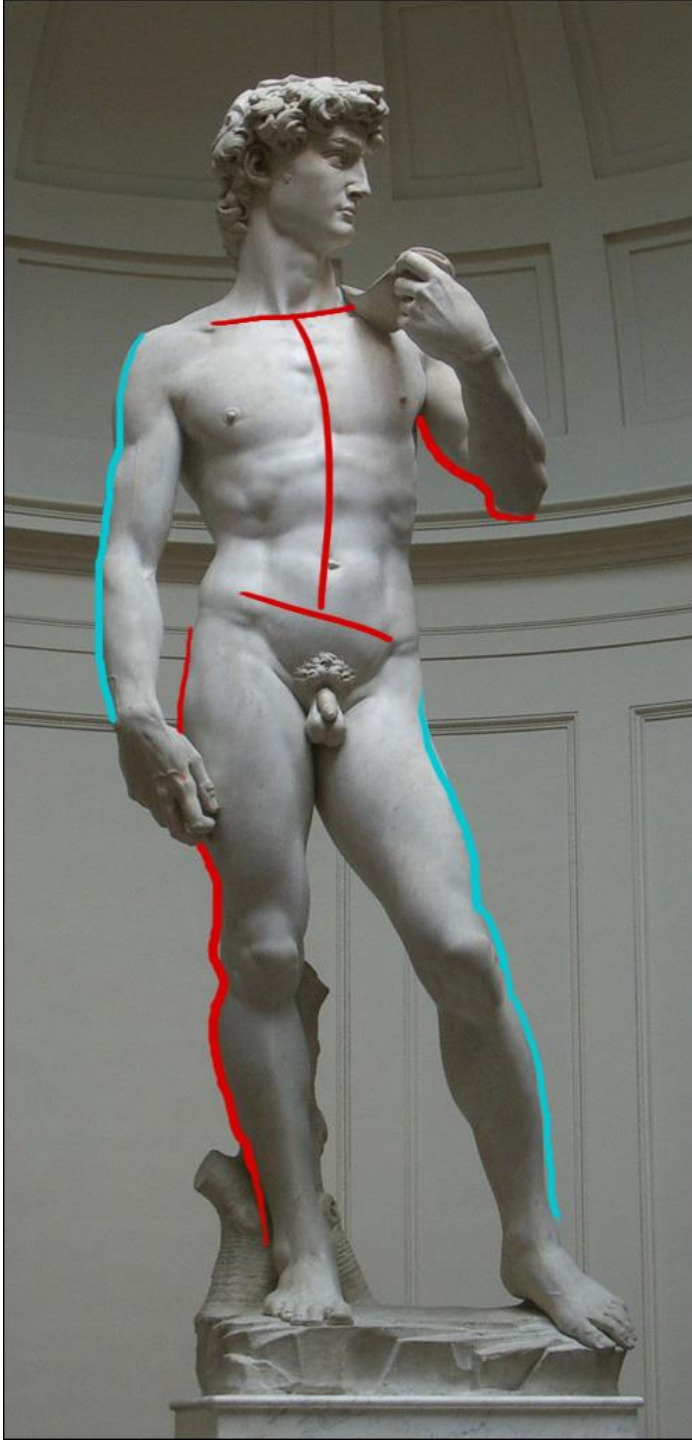
Plantzos 2018: ch. 5.

Halliwell, S. 2002. *The Aesthetics of Mimesis. Ancient Texts and Modern Problems*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.



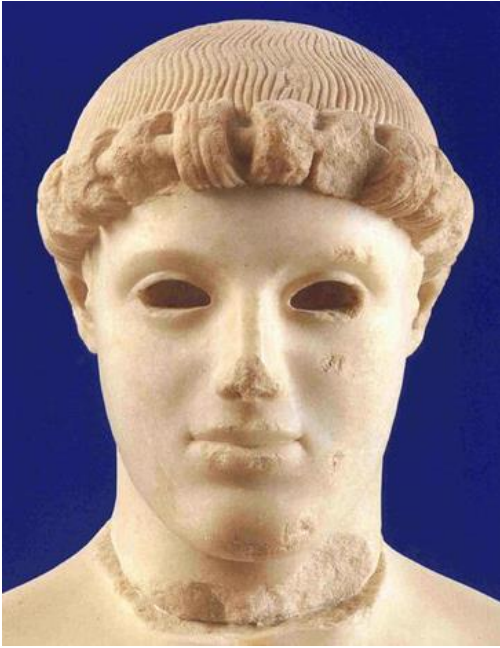






The Kritian boy.
c. 480 BCE





The Kritian boy.
c. 480 BCE





Aristogeiton

Harmodios

The Tyrannicides

c. 477 BCE



stylisation
naturalness

frontality
movement

symmetry
counterpose

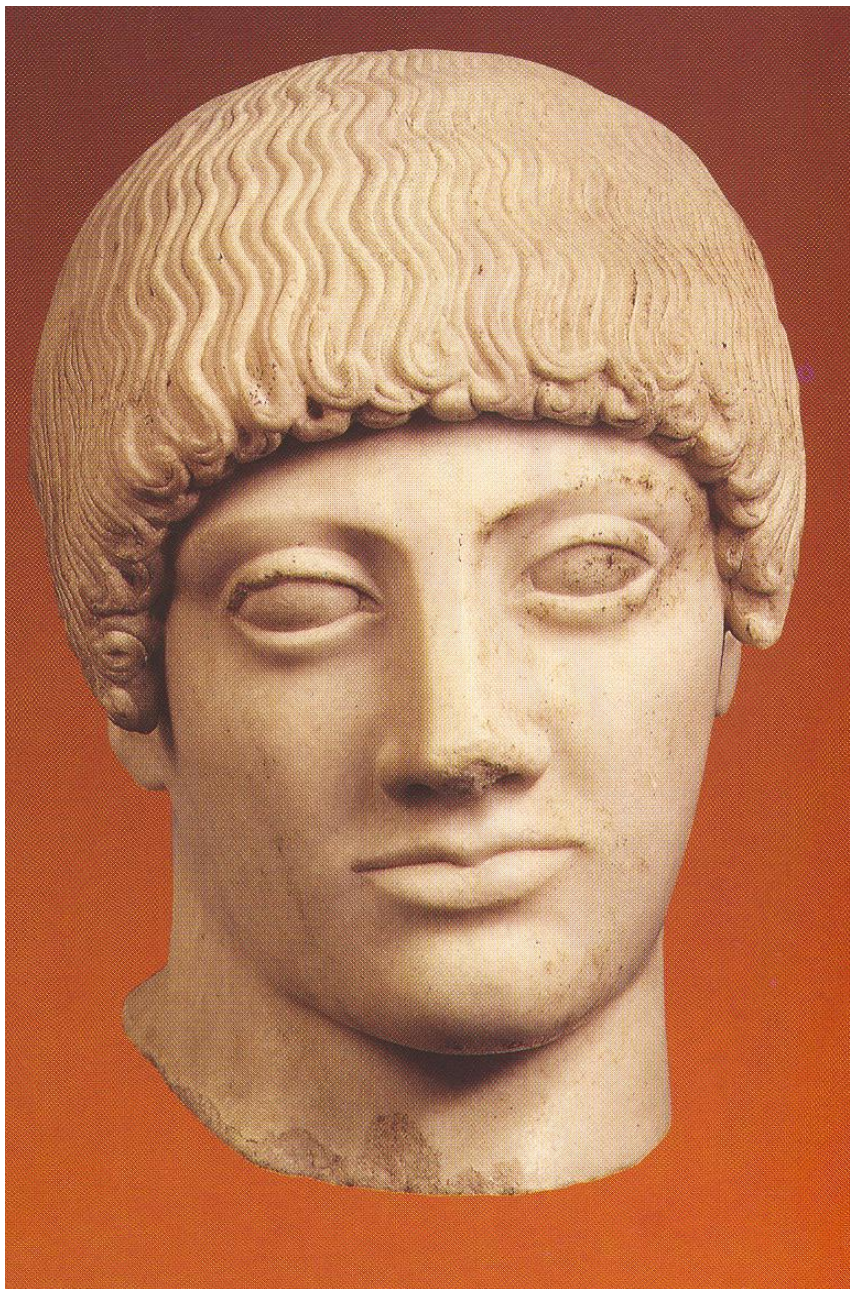
ornamentality
introspection

symbolism
representation



Lifelikeness:

- Cicero, Pliny, Quintilian: lifelikeness a prerequisite of excellence in art (and especially painting)
- Verisimilitude art's ultimate goal after mid-5th c. BC
- Representation and its potential: *mimesis*
- *Mimesis*: an elemental artistic faculty (representational rather than mimetic)
- Philostratos the Elder (c. AD 190-230): *mimesis* in art is equivalent to the pursuit of the truth
- Plato (*Republic* 10): art produces only “the appearance of things, but not the reality and the truth”; “good” art must be more than mere imitation and good art happens only when verisimilitude ceases to be an end in itself



The 'blond youth'.

c. 490-480 BCE



The 'blond youth' (reconstruction).

c. 490-480 BCE



**Roman copy of a female statue
of c. 470 BCE**



| 283
Bronze figurine.
c. 460 BCE



470-450 BCE





**Red-figure cup depicting a foundry.
c. 490 BCE**



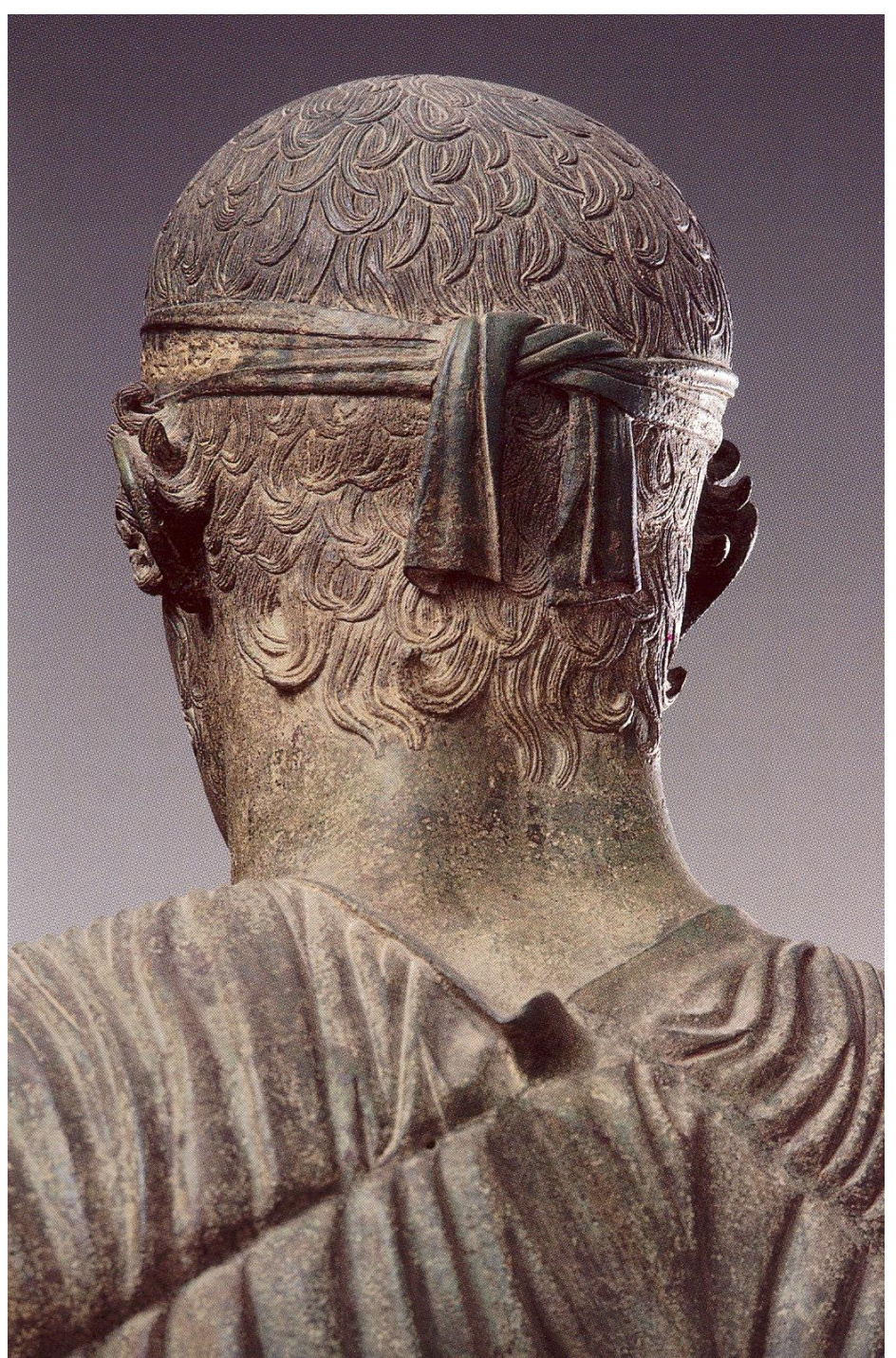
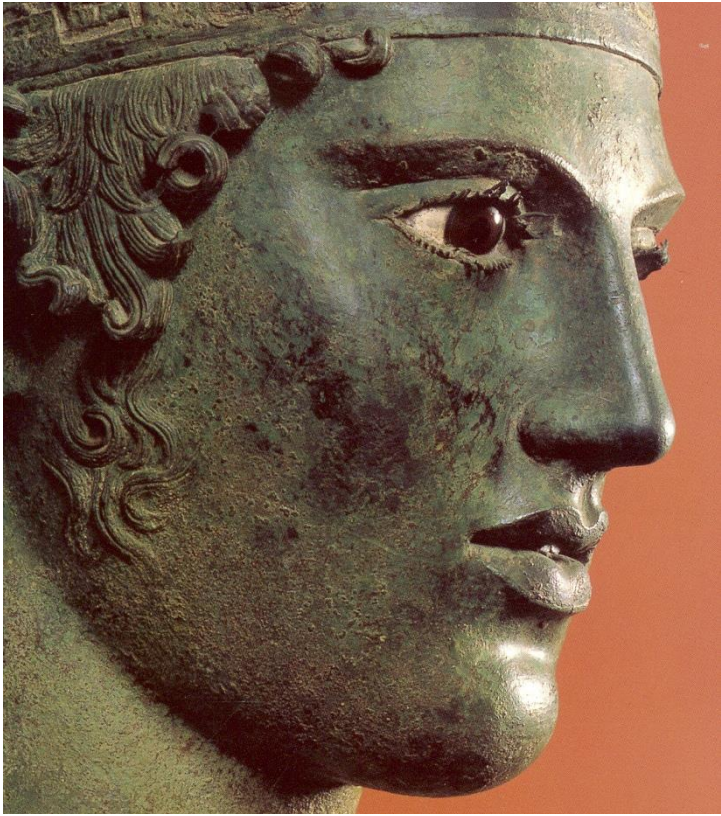
**Artemision Zeus.
c. 460-450 BCE**

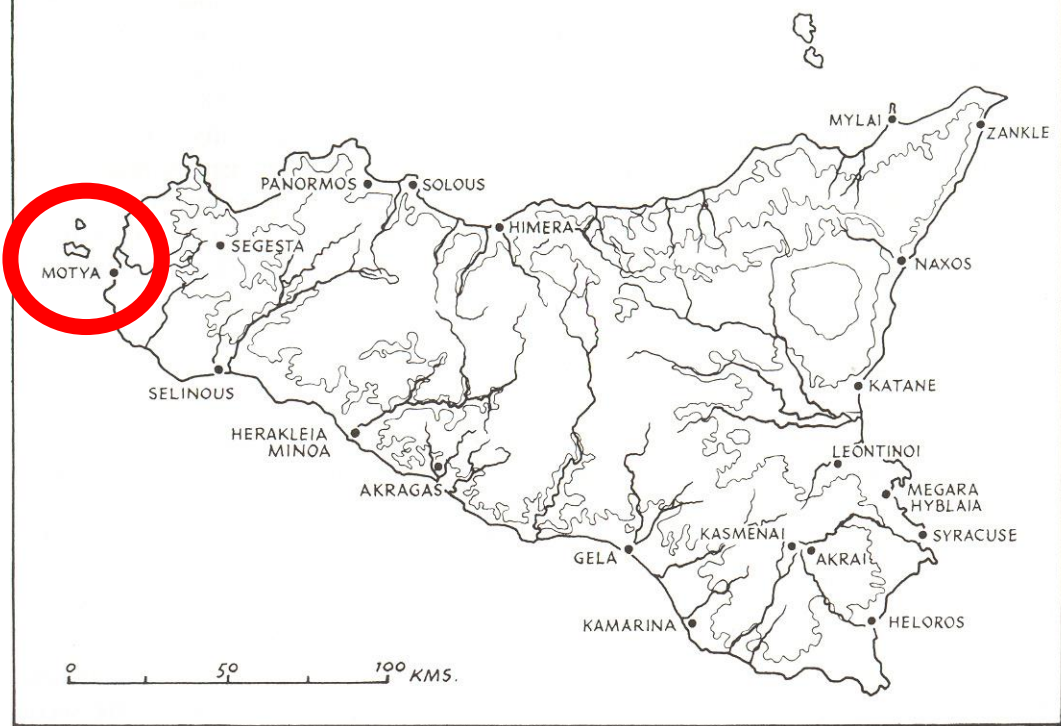


**Delphi Charioteer.
c. 478-474 BCE**



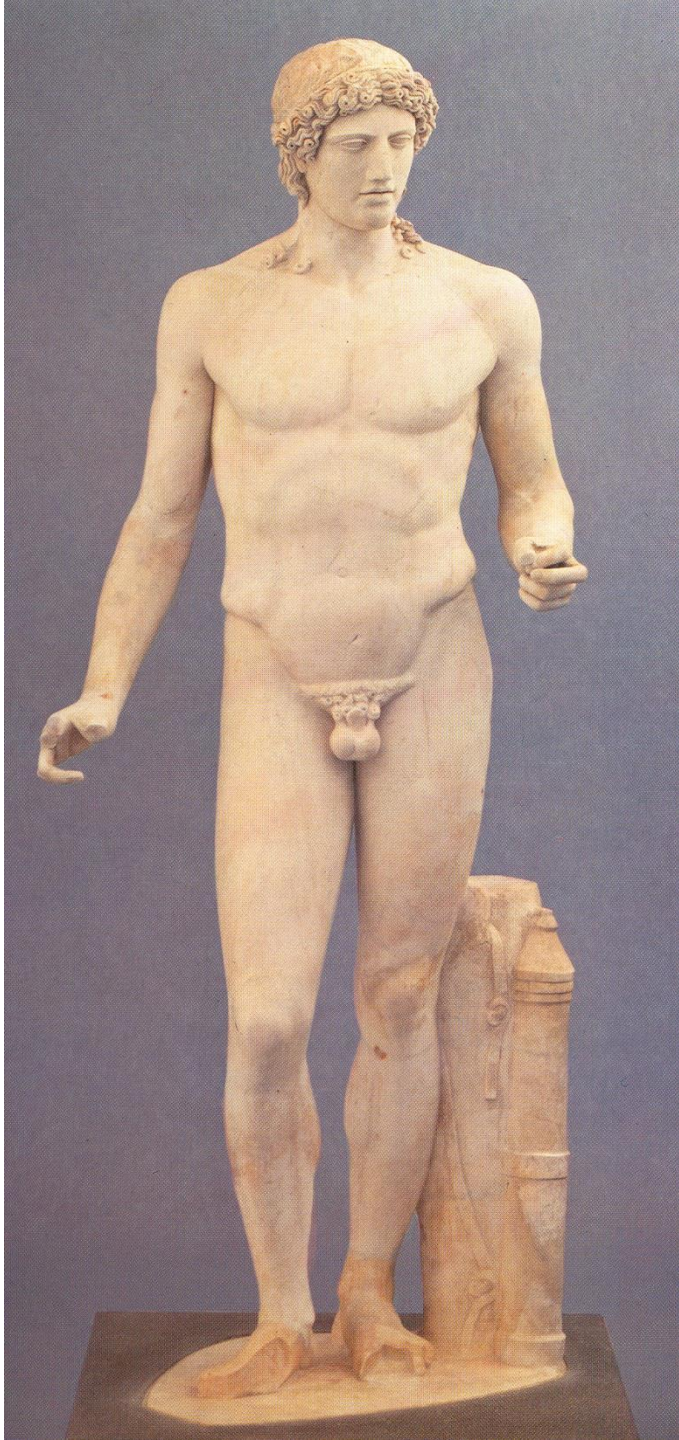






The «Motya Youth».

c. 480-470 BCE

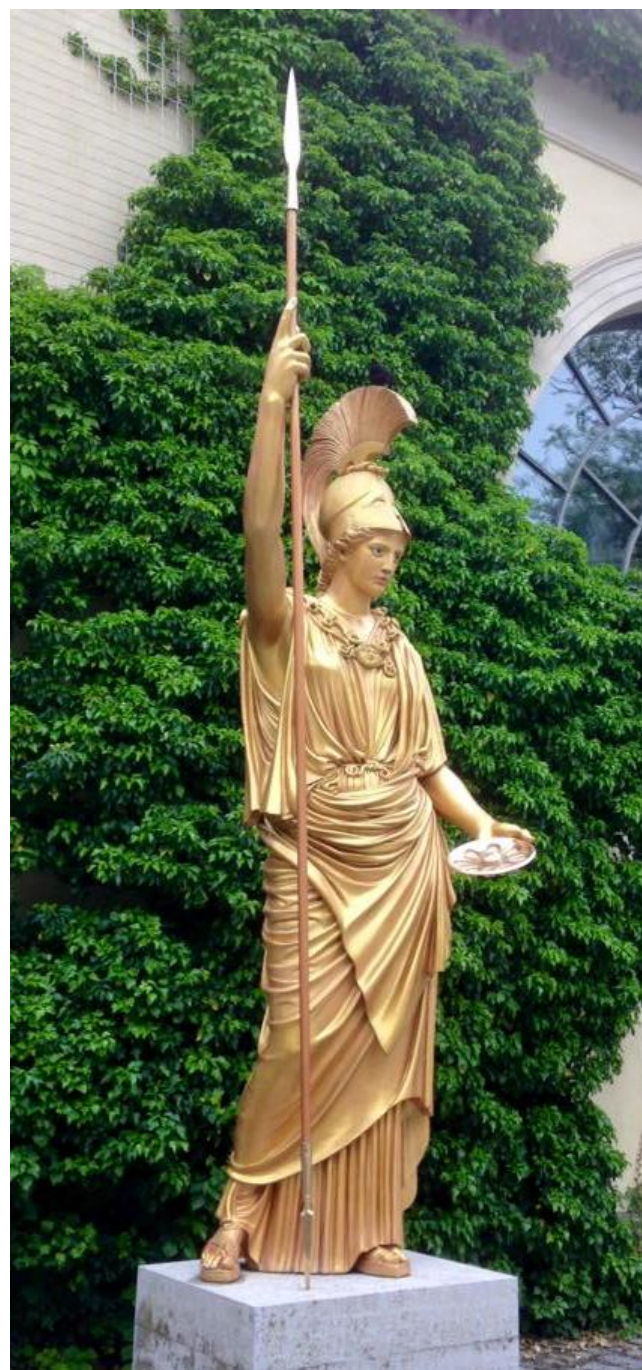


**Apollo Parnopios.
Roman copy of a 450 BCE original.**





**Athena Veletri.
Roman copy of a 430 BCE original.**



presentification

- Jean-Pierre Vernant : This pivotal moment was marked by the theory of *mimesis* as outlined and explored by Plato and Xenophon, when “in Greek culture the turn is completed that leads from the ‘presentification’, the making present, of the invisible to the imitation of appearance.”

What is “agency”?

- Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency* (1998)
- ‘what lies behind the seductive power of Art’ is
 - neither its aesthetic deftness
 - nor its ability to act as a highly sophisticated, and profoundly suggestive, language
- Art not a matter ‘of meaning and communication’...
- Instead: ‘about *doing*’
- Agency: artifacts (including *objets d’art*) function as material entities which interact with their viewers and users by motivating their response.



Statue:

- an imposing three-dimensional presence affecting the viewer through the force of the materials it is made of
- *totem*: a sacred object endowed with its own materiality, which enables communication between the world of the spirits and the world of humans
- totems recognized by animistic religions as distributors of spiritual power and human reverence
- triangular relation between man, spirit and the mediator between the two
- entangled agents of cultural interaction





How does Greek visuality work:

- statues ‘imbued with agency’
- within a framework of ocular exchange between the statue and the viewer
- the viewer releases the agency inanimate objects are emanating through the psychodynamic process the later Greeks came to theorize as *mimesis*.
- agency is therefore a relational manifestation, ‘a process of becoming’ rather than a state of being – or having been made.



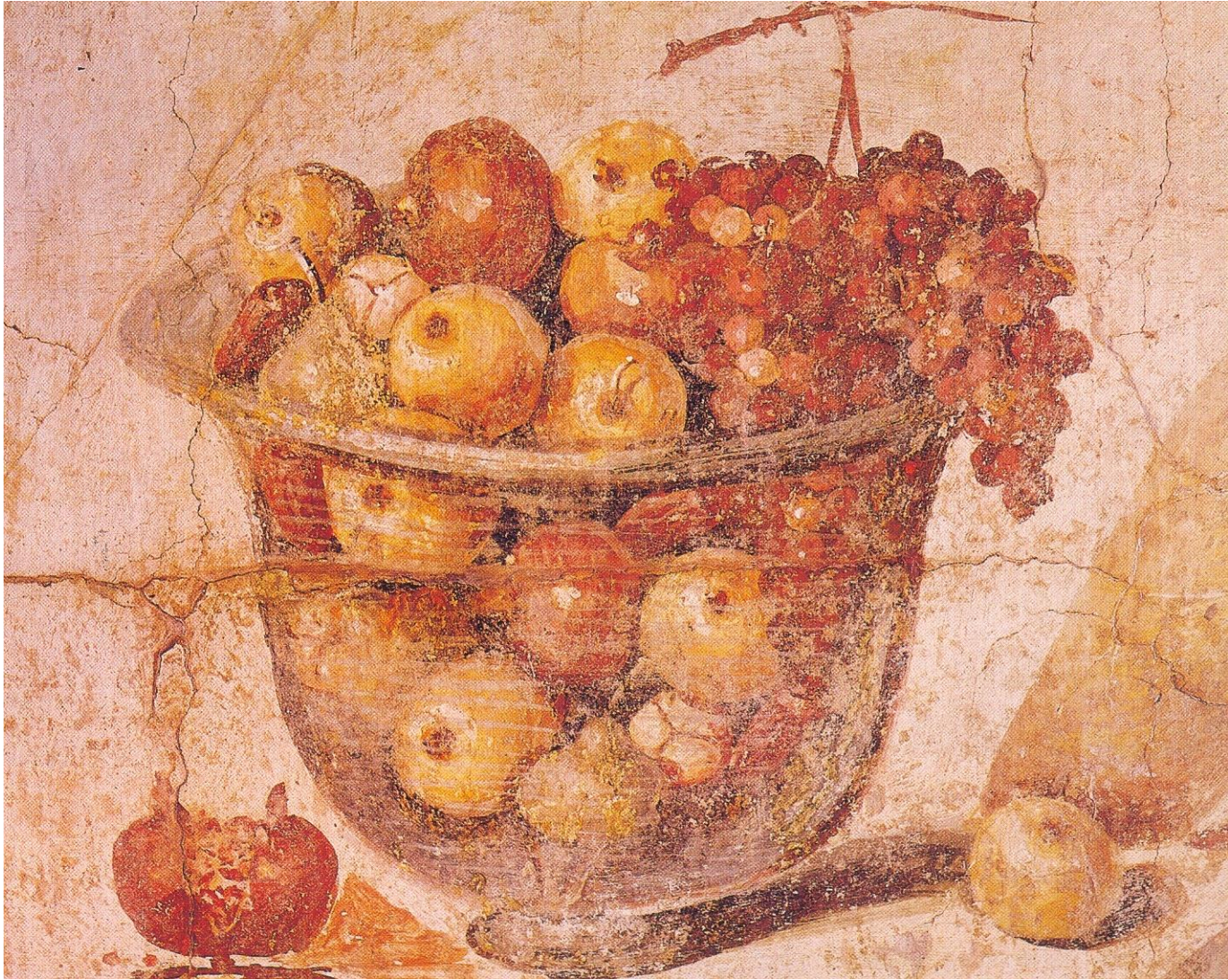
“Greek revolution”:

- the reason why the Greeks turned to naturalism was none other than the narrative qualities inherent in their art – or rather their own audience’s expectation of an art that would be able to sustain narrativity.

Skiagraphia:







Skenographia:





Illusionism

- When we gaze from one end down the whole length of a colonnade, though its structure is perfectly symmetrical and it is made throughout by pillars of equal height, it does seem to diminish little by little in a narrowing cone that draws roof to floor and left to right till it unites them in the imperceptible apex of the cone.

Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 4.426-431

Realism

Reading:

Plantzos 2016: 202-214; 241-267.

Kaltsas 2007: 359-445.