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The Portrayals and Perceptions of Greek Beauty

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Abstract

In analyzing the artwork of a specific era, a society's view of beauty can be identified and shed light on the evolution of art and people's perceptions of it. The goal of this paper is to examine how the sculptures of the Ancient Greek Classical and Archaic periods portrayed feminine beauty and how it was perceived. These two eras were defined by very different styles, and each had noticeably different ways of treating beauty. In order to achieve a holistic analysis of this art and establish unifying principles about feminine beauty, a multi-level methodology was employed using quantitative data (comparing Waist-Hip-Ratio measurements (WHR) of the Archaic Korai statues versus the Aphrodite of Knidos, the epitome of Classical beauty), qualitative analysis (by both myself and art history professionals), and primary source documentation (Lucien's writings about the Aphrodite). Whether influenced by philosophy, history, politics, or social trends, beauty and the way we perceive it is constantly in flux, and this research provides insights into a time when that change was particularly noticeable. The fundamental conclusions about these two periods and their respective portrayals of beauty are that the Archaic figures are much more stylized while the Classical ones are far more naturalistic.

Literature Review

Standards and ideals of beauty as seen through art are often reflections of the cultures and times from which they come. The focus of this paper is how those ideals, particularly those of feminine beauty, have evolved over time, and the reasons for this change, with a

concentration on Greek Archaic and Classical sculpture. The analysis of feminine figures is especially important to understanding female roles in society and societies' views of them, as male-dominated civilizations have been the prevailing order for much of history. It also provides insight into the values of the people and of the women themselves. In order to understand these themes, Classical Greek art should itself be defined by identifying common characteristics of the works that comprise it, which is much of what this literature review seeks to accomplish. The archaic sculpture is typically recognized by the female *Korai*, which is another focus of this literature review. The Classical statuary can then be compared and contrasted with the Archaic Greek figures, who have noticeably different characteristics reflecting their influences, social trends, and attitudes towards women.

Approach

In order to discuss women in art and how they are portrayed and interpreted, one must first reconsider the approach to analysis to be a truly modern (and thus more knowledgeable) observer. This can be achieved through the use of a gendered viewing,[1] which is meant to view the work not only from the perspective of the conventional male voyeur but also to frame it from the perspective of contemporaneous women.[2] This is especially useful to understanding what other women considered ideal, and thus what they modeled themselves after while being familiar with the traditional male approach (which often in the past has treated sculptures of women like sexual objects) is also essential to understanding prevailing social and cultural beliefs and standpoints in those ancient societies. In addition to this, it is essential to understand the historical and cultural context of the works, as throughout history there has been a certain plasticity to defining gender, and many works reflect this (for example, the portrayal of Anglo-Saxon men as a more feminine "third sex").[3]

The Archaic

In order to compare and contrast perceptions of beauty, one must first identify how it was generally defined in each era. Recognizing key traits of beauty in male figures can often be extrapolated to female counterparts, albeit with the understanding of differences that comes with the gendered approach. Thus the literature reviewed herein is not limited to analyses of female sculptures (although that is the focus), but

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[1] Lindquist, Sherry C. M. "GENDER," 117.
[2] Kampen, Natalie Boymel. "Gauging the Gender Gap," 32.
[3] Lindquist, 116.

also includes prominent examples of male statuary to set the principles of beauty in the most general sense. Three-dimensional figure sculpture in the Archaic period was dominated by the male *Koroi* and female *Korai*. There is scholarly debate as to the origins of these statues (stylistically) – some argue that they are more based in the Daedalic movement and Asiatic art, with R. M. Cook postulating that they originated in Asia and Syria, which both had traditions of sculpture themselves, although this is not certain.[4] Others assert that they come from Egypt, which is largely supported by the proportioning of their bodies and rigidity.[5] The consensus is that the Greek sculptors likely had access to Egyptian art and varying degrees of knowledge about it, and some were particularly inspired by it (the New York Kouros, for example), though there is a significant amount of variety amongst the Korai statues and not all of them adhere to this model.[6] This is particularly relevant in explaining why the Korai look as they do, for understanding art is more than just asking questions of what but also why. Although this variety did exist among Kouroi, they typically are rigid, large figures seen stepping forward. The Korai display similar traits, though they differ from the Kouroi in ways that highlight what the Archaic Greeks found beautiful in the feminine. Occasionally outstretching a hand, with aligned legs as opposed to the stepping Kouroi and often wearing the Greek *chiton*, Korai stylistically mirrored their male counterparts in that they varied from workshop to workshop, but generally are recognizable as motionless, dramaless, rigid statues.[7] Regardless, the style of the Korai is visibly distinct from that of later Classical female figures, though the particulars of this are to be explored further in the methodology. Although variance does exist among the Korai, general patterns in their proportioning can be seen that define their standard form (the broader shoulders, rigidity, and lack of overt sexuality, etc.).[8] Always portraying young women, the Korai were probably often offerings to the gods or served funerary purposes,[9] though there is some scholarly debate over the subjects of certain statues.

Classical Sculpture

In order to establish what is "classically beautiful," however, one must define what Classical sculpture is in the first place, then delve into specific cases where the principles of classicism are most visible. The

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[4] Cook, 27.
[5] Guralnick, Eleanor. "The Proportions of Kouroi," 461.
[6] Guralnick, Eleanor. "Profiles of Kouroi", 401.
[7] Kane, Susan. "An Archaic Kore from Cyrene," 182-183.
[8] Guralnick, Eleanor. "Profiles of Korai," 175.
[9] Smt41@cam.ac.uk. "Peplos Kore."

classical sculpture is often misused as a term for all Greek and Roman sculpture – however, the enormous variety in Greco-Roman art over the course of centuries, as well as the variety of its subject matters, defies a single definition or name (other than calling it Greco-Roman sculpture).[10] Instead, Classical sculpture refers to a specific era and style (chronologically, the Classical Era of sculpture can be dated generally between the early 5th to late 4th centuries, to give a wide range, though some are narrower) in Greek art that established many of the defining characteristics of later art in the region, including that of the Romans. Often recognized by its perfect proportions (*symmetria*) and spacial harmony (*rhythmos*), its search for truth in form (*veritas*), and frequently counterbalanced figures (*contrapposto*),[11] the art of the Classical style differs distinctly from that of other Greek periods, such as the Archaic and Hellenistic. The characteristics of Classical sculpture were later appropriated by the Romans as can be seen through the many copies they produced of Greek works.[12] *Veritas* is a key part of Classical sculpture, which generally seeks to portray images of an ideal figure, yet ideal in its adherence to all the minute details of nature and anatomy; thus the statues are at once idealistic and naturalistic.[13] Stylistically, then, Classical sculpture can be defined as elevating the most purely real forms to the ideal of truth, the most balanced, heroic bodies the average citizen could strive for.

Discobolus and Other Examples

This definition of Classical beauty is supported by studies on particular statues and artists from the Classical as well as preceding and succeeding eras, as understanding the chronological context in which the Classical fits can enable a greater understanding of what exactly the Classical itself is (through comparison). There is a substantial amount of literature analyzing specific works of sculpture from one period or another (rather than more holistic studies of style like that which this paper attempts to achieve), and the observations of scholars often align with the general definition of Classical sculpture outlined above. Examining specific works helps to understand their artist, and the artists define the general stylistic trends of the period. In the works of Myron, for example, a sculptor of the earlier Classical era, there is obvious

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[10] Agard, Walter R. "What Is "Classical" Sculpture?" 341-342.

[11] Thliveri, Hara. "The Discobolos of Myron: Narrative Appeal and Three Dimensionality," 40.

[12] The Roman copies are referenced throughout many of the sources and are one of modernity's only windows into the sculpture of Classical Greece, as many of the original sculptures were lost but their copies preserved and records written identifying the original sculptor.

[13] William A. P. Childs. "The Classic as Realism in Greek Art," 10-13.

attention to the details of nature seen in his *pristae*.[14] His most enduring legacy, however, lies in the *Discobolus*. A piece capturing a single, fleeting moment in time, it is dramatic and tense, a snapshot of the second just before the figure releases the discus that employs all of the characteristics identifiable with the "Classical" (*rhythmos, symmetria*). The *Discobolus*, a work of the earlier years of what is now known as the Classical period (circa 460-450 BCE), the piece has roots in the Greek vase paintings of the Archaic, but it also has a 3-dimensionality often ignored by those who study it and treat it almost like a relief.[15] Thus the *Discobolus*, and by extension the Classical style as a whole, differs markedly from the aforementioned *Kouroi*, in drama, motion, symmetry, and many other attributes (explored further in the methodology). Just as Myron served to transition the Greeks from the Archaic *Kouros* to the heroic nudes of Classical sculpture, Lysippos, a later artist, was one of the masters of the late Classical period during the transition to what is today known as Hellenistic art in the late 4th century BCE. However, Lysippos continued the tradition of male-dominated statuary,[16] a trend that some of his contemporaries would deviate from with their nude female figures – through a complex viewing of these as well as the definition of Classical sculpture identified earlier, we can begin to understand how the Classical Greeks perceived the feminine ideal.

Many of the characteristics, broader principles, and stylistic trends of these eras, thus, can be established from studying the *Discobolus* and other examples of male statuary, but just as the Kouroi should be examined and compared with the (female) Korai, so too should Classical male figures be analyzed alongside the female ones, to gain a more complete understanding of what the general ideals were as well as those specific only to females (which is what concerns this paper). One such female figure is the *Aphrodite of Knidos* (by the sculptor Praxiteles); reproduced many times, its variants are sometimes called the *Medici Venus* or the *Capitoline Venus*. However, all concern the same subject: Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, is startled by someone after bathing and attempting to cover herself with her arms.[17] At first glance (and from the perspective of the male viewer) this can be interpreted as the ultimate female figure of the Classical Greeks: sensual, provocative, idealized yet in a common scene, embodying the principles of contrapposto and symmetria. While that is all true, it only conveys the perception of female beauty that half the population held, and the other half were the ones for which it truly mattered as they were the ones

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[14] Murray, A. S. "Myron's Pristae," 3.
[15] Thliveri, 12.
[16] Morgan, Charles H. "The Style of Lysippos," 229.
[17] Alexander, Christine. "A Statue of Aphrodite," 241.

modeling themselves after this figure. While the perspectives of men are important, especially in the context of their dominance of the social order, it is also important to address the female audience and their interdependence with men. For many women, this was likely a less overtly sexual monument: for them, Aphrodite remained a symbol of womanhood, but one to be respected and not objectified.[18] As a male-dominated field, art historical norms don't necessarily align with the views of women, who have to be accounted for to gain a full image of how art has been perceived throughout history. Ultimately however, the feminine ideal as seen by both male and female audiences, whether erotically or not, is aligned with the general ideal figure of the Greeks: perfectly proportioned, an idealization of nature, with certain characteristics (as outlined by famed art historian J. J. Winckelmann as a straight nose, a low forehead to convey a feeling of youth, as well as simply worn blond hair).[19]

Summary and Important Notes

So, what conclusions can be distilled from this literature: The Classical art style can be described as naturalistic and narrative-focused (which, as is later supported, extends to the standards of beauty), while the Archaic is far more stylized, with smaller differences in details between the two existing as well. Much of the literature concerning Classical sculpture is relatively old, referencing the movements of feminism and women's liberation that were new in the 1970s and 80s but today are more ingrained into our culture. This is relevant only because it means that new viewpoints have, in the past half-century, become available for the study of this art that was essentially ignored for the preceding two millennia. This enables the scholar to distance him or herself from even older literature that almost entirely follows the "male voyeur" model and instead to view the works from the lens of both men and women throughout history. These circumstances in turn provide a greater understanding of what societies as a whole perceived as the ideal and what they perceived as beautiful, and this applies to statues of male and female figures. Expanding our knowledge of this and its relation to societal and cultural gender norms in each period is a new way to examine art, an approach to art history defined by the objectivity afforded by modernity.

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[18] Kampen, 32.
[19] Romm, Sharom. "BEAUTY THROUGH HISTORY."

Methodology

This study will focus on the analysis of several pieces of art, applying the definitions established in the literature review to approach these works in a novel way. On a superficial and somewhat subjective level, the sculptures (which include the Aphrodite of Knidos, in this case using the bodily proportions of the copy housed in the Art Institute of Chicago, and multiple Archaic female statues, such as the Peplos Kore) are analyzed qualitatively, first by myself and then through a survey sent to professionals in the art history community. The analysis itself focuses on identifying compositional characteristics in the statues (such as contrapposto), as well as more general comparisons (such as narrative flow and 3-dimensionality) and examining facial features (a key part being the hair). This analysis expands on many of the conclusions drawn from previous studies, but it synthesizes many of their views more coherently and places the statues in the context of each other. The other component of this methodology is quantitative, a more objective comparison between the sculptures, specifically of their waist-hip ratios (WHRs), which, when at a certain number, reflect a greater perceived fertility and thus greater erotic attraction.[20]

A significant portion of the methodology is qualitative analysis, which consists of making observations of two statues (the Aphrodite of Knidos and the Peplos Kore) and comparing and contrasting why one would consider them to be beautiful. This beauty that the viewer strives to identify is in the context of the general definition of Classical style established in the literature review, and it strives to establish a clearer sense of what the Archaics found beautiful in women, something often lacking from academic study. Determining what was considered beautiful in Archaic sculpture relies on a comparison with depictions of Classical women just to further understand Classical beauty it is best seen alongside work from a different era. Comparisons foster a greater understanding of one thing or the other. A survey was created and sent to professionals in the art history community from universities as well as museums and other institutions. The goal of this was to gather a wider variety of views and observations to compare the two statues in a more objective, inclusive way that amalgamates multiple analyses (and my own) into a coherent and thorough summary. There are several limitations in this approach, however: it relies on modern viewers, who do not always account for what people living at the time of the statue would have thought; qualitative analyses are also inevitably less objective than quantitative ones. Possible solutions to these problems are

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[20] Furnham, Adrian, and Emma Reeves. "The Relative Influence of Facial Neoteny and Waist-to-hip Ratio on Judgements of Female Attractiveness and Fecundity."

addressed in the conclusion section. However, this approach is a necessary component of the paper that further delves into how beauty is portrayed in these statues and gives us a clearer idea of what this beauty was in writing. The survey contained several images of the Peplos Kore and variations on the Aphrodite of Knidos (later copies, as the original does not exist; a version commonly considered to be closer to the original is the Colonna Venus), followed by a series of questions on the two pieces. The first question was on the Aphrodite of Knidos: "Describe your observations about the Aphrodite of Knidos (form, balance, the face, proportions, anything else) (Question 1)." This was followed by "Describe your observations about the Peplos Kore (Question 2)." The two statues were then compared in the question "What similarities and differences do you see between the figures (Question 3)?" They were then presented with images of the two busts of the statues and asked, "What similarities do you see in the two faces? How are they different? (These could also include hair) (Question 4)." The final question was "Based on these two sculptures and your expertise, what generalizations about the relationship between these two artistic periods (how the styles compare) can you make (Question 5)?" The purpose of collecting professional observations on this topic was primarily to supplement my observations and synthesize all the varying views in academia that I first noticed in the earliest stages of research into more of a consensus. This qualitative study is found in the conclusion. One of the responses to the survey, for example, praised the naturalism of the Aphrodite of Knidos, also commenting that its narrative ambiguity enables the viewer to come up with a story of their own, which is part of the statue's allure. The Aphrodite is meant to occupy a 3-dimensional space, which is not true of the Peplos Kore, which faces directly forward and is generally "rectangular" in its approach to the human form, features of which it still idealizes. The Peplos Kore, however, is unique from many of its counterparts as a result of the traces of paint found on its body; based on these and its overall structure, it has been theorized (and now accepted by a large part of the academic community) that the sculpture itself portrays Artemis, goddess of the hunt. A keyword repeatedly used in this particular respondent's answers about the Kore was "schematic," which he often contrasted with the naturalism (and eroticism) of the Aphrodite. Regardless, these were just one set of observations, and serve only as an example; this, among the others, was synthesized into my final analysis in the conclusion.

The second portion of the data collection focused on a more quantitative approach: comparing the proportions of the Korai with those of the Aphrodite of Knidos. A z-score analysis of many of the

Korai already exists, however, it's the proportions of those statues and the Classical ones have not before been directly compared in statistical analyses. As opposed to doing a z-score, which would be used in a comparison of the statues and the hypothetically "average" woman, I directly juxtaposed the WHR (Waist-Hip Ratio) of the Aphrodite of Knidos with those of several Korai. In order to achieve a more accurate reflection of the original Aphrodite of Knidos (which does not exist anymore, and all record of it lies in copies from later periods) the average of multiple copies was taken (including that housed in the Art Institute Chicago). This raises one of the challenges faced by this research, which is that the original Aphrodite of Knidos itself is lost, and thus any analysis of it relies on copies produced by later Greeks and the Romans. Despite the Romans holding distinct values of feminine beauty from those of the Greeks, however, by examining multiple versions of the work one can assemble its general narrative. The Aphrodite housed in the Art Institute of Chicago is the version used in the statistical analysis of this particular paper, and it's possible that a meta-analysis of all the versions of the Aphrodite of Knidos would be a useful reference. The average WHR for the Aphrodite statues is 0.79, which aligns with the range of WHR measurements associated with higher fertility. This average serves as a composite of several of the copies of the Aphrodite, as no original version exists. This is another potential limitation in the methodology itself, which has to do with the possibility of the statues themselves being infused with some of the Roman ideals of beauty (as they are often Roman copies) and thus not truly reflecting the nature of Greek art. However, they are all based on Praxiteles's model, so they are (even with small variations) representatives of the Classical tradition. Either way, the Aphrodite had a generally wider build proportionately speaking, while the other ones were more stylized in their appearance, with unnatural, proportions (with a WHR of .88). A significant limitation in my research has to do with access: as I could not find the measurements of these statues themselves on museums or databases (aside from the height), I am unable to have a truly accurate WHR. The only way I could gather this data was through the manual collection on a flat surface, which does not measure completely around the waste (it only measures the waste's width). So, while this data does support the conclusions made by myself and the art historians asked in my questionnaire (in that the proportions, being linked to fertility and thus sex appeal, point towards a more directly erotic kind of beauty, in contrast with the subtler form found in Korai statues), it would need to be repeated by researchers with more resources than my own to fully investigate the matter. While individual variety amongst the Korai statues means that some may fall into the .77-.79 range of increased fertility, on average they are far outside of this. The Peplos Kore itself, probably a

goddess figure, differs in some respects from other Korai. But essentially all Korai share a few common features, and so they are categorized as their distinct category. The Aphrodite of Knidos, on the other hand, does fall within this range. One other constraint could have been the small sample size of most of the research, as the most accurate data relies on a variety and a large number of sources. In future studies, the use of more statues would yield more trustworthy results. The sample of my survey (though I would rather call it a series of questions, in part because of the sample size) was caused by a lack of responses, though I feel that the two that were recorded provided thorough enough replies that they could both serve as counterpoints to each other and engage in the intellectual discussion and when consulting experts in a field in which some consensus already exists (as documented by previous articles, many of which are included in the literature review) it is not necessarily so essential that a larger group is surveyed.

Conclusions

The data collected through the methodology, both quantitative and qualitative, lead to several central ideas about how feminine beauty was portrayed in these periods, whilst generating new questions about how it has been perceived. The central question of this paper should be revisited: how did portrayals of feminine beauty change between the Archaic and Classical periods in ancient Greek artwork? The fundamentals of the findings are: the Aphrodite of Knidos has a more organic, in many ways realistic (though still idealistic) form, which through cross-examination with other Classical statues in the literature review (such as the Discobolus) can be reasonably generalized into the Classical portrayal of beauty. The Korai, on the other hand, is timeless and stylized.

Findings

From a purely stylistic point of view, naturalism became regarded as the new height of beauty in the Classical Era, and in this sense, more value was placed on 3-dimensionality. The Aphrodite of Knidos occupies a real space, and the viewer is encouraged to look at her from every angle; she is both distant, as a goddess, and intimate in the way she is presented. This dichotomy is a good reflection of the way the Greeks balance idealism and naturalism so adeptly. In the series of questions I posed (one to an expert on Classical art (Professor Verity Platt, Cornell University) and the other to an art historian whose specialty was a different period and place (Professor Jessica Patterson, USD)), both agreed that the statue also had greater narrative appeal than the Kore, as

it represents a moment in time from which the viewer can construct a story. The utter rigidity of the Korai and their lack of movement causes them to be devoid of any real motion, or of a narrative that the audience can see. This relates to their emotional expression as well – most Korai sport what is commonly known as the "Archaic Smile" which is not meant to represent joy or their true feelings but is a sign of serenity and timelessness. From an interpretive point of view, then, and in a purely qualitative sense, the beauty of the Korai, as a result of its motionlessness in every sense, has an ageless quality. Considering that they served a more iconic role (the Peplos Kore, for example, is thought to portray the goddess Artemis, and many of the others served as funerary statues), this timelessness makes sense, and their role as goddesses and elites means that these likely represent the contemporary ideals of beauty. Compared to that which emerged later, in the Classical period, this is a more modest kind of beauty as well, and in that way more subtle. As was stated by Professor Verity Platt (in the survey questions), professor of art history at Cornell University specializing in the Classical and Archaic, the Peplos Kore "deny us an eroticized engagement with the subject."

The Classical statues, with the Aphrodite of Knidos as their representative, have a very different approach to beauty. Central to their image is the conversation they initiate with the audience viewing them. Where the Korai is forlorn and almost transcendent, the Aphrodite of Knidos is very much there. One comes across her naked, bathing, amid an action as opposed to static and timeless, relating to the fundamental tenet of Classical artwork (*rhythmos*). The Aphrodite, in doing so, directly draws the viewer into her story, and we can construct movement and narrative around this. The work is thus a more engaged, natural kind of beauty than that of her Archaic counterparts, and this is why many male scholars often speak of the work from an erotic standpoint. This perspective is valid (and much of this paper has been devoted to supporting it, particularly through the WHR comparisons), though it is not the only one. As was mentioned in the literature review, many art historians today approach the work from the lens of a contemporaneous woman, who might have viewed it more as a model of what her beauty could achieve than as an object of attention (its role for the man). Undeniably (though the goal of this paper is not simply to confirm what has been said before by old art historians) the erotic perspective plays a large role in the beauty of the Aphrodite of Knidos, and by extension Classical beauty as a whole. She is, despite her deity status, strikingly intimate; she draws the viewer into her story, luring and capturing the imagination. The reasons for this change, however, are difficult to place.

Returning to the survey, both art historians, whether in this particular specialty or not, corroborate my take on the statues. The fact that Professor Jessica Patterson comes from another specialty helps my paper's objectivity, as her input is still that of an educated art historian but it is not affected by preexisting notions of things she should be looking for. Thus, the overlap between the observations of the two is the most universal and probably most correlated with the actual intention and audience experience of the works. The rigidity of the Kore is visible to anyone, though some subtler features, such as the smile, go unnoticed by those who are not looking for it. The eroticism, intimacy, and state of flux of Aphrodite is another point of agreement. Physical observations remain the same as well, which concern her body, proportions, and hair (which fit the Grecian ideal and is a commonality with most Korai).

Lucien's Writing

Another important source that can be used in a holistic approach to understanding these sculptures are documents written by ancient scholars. Some of these indicate precisely how the original statue may have appeared, particularly Pliny's account, and these can be consulted in constructing the truest image of statues which now only exist in the form of copies. Again, however, it must be taken into account that the authors of most of these sources were male viewers, and thus the perceptions of feminine beauty being observed are the male ones, which do not always align with those of the female population (of which many on the island of Knidos were worshippers of the goddess not just as a symbol of beauty but also fertility (one could argue that the two terms should be equated) in its temple). Lucian wrote of the statue, saying:

> "We entered the temple. In the midst thereof sits the goddess – she's a most beautiful statue of Parian marble – arrogantly smiling a little as a grin parts her lips. Draped by no garment, all her beauty is uncovered and revealed, except in so far as she unobtrusively uses one hand to hide her private parts. So great was the power of the craftsman's art that the hard unyielding marble did justice to every limb....The temple had a door on both sides for the benefit of those also who wish to have a good view of the goddess from behind so that no part of her be left unadmired. It's easy therefore for people to enter by the other door and survey the beauty of her back."

Sources such as Lucian's are essential to understanding contemporaneous perspectives (or at least those of scholars from

antiquity) and thus shed light on general perceptions of beauty at the time. The problem with these documents, however, is that they do not account for the female view of these statues that have been discussed before. However, it is essential to understanding the context in which the statute was seen (its location in the temple) and also the nature of ancient scholars' analyses. Lucien establishes some characteristics that are similar to those of the Korai (such as the smile he speaks of at the beginning), though his general description highlights much of the commentary of the art historians surveyed in this paper. He importantly references the 3-dimensionality of the piece, explaining how it could originally be viewed from multiple points of view. This shapes how we as modern viewers should appreciate the work to better understand what the ancients saw. These records likely formed the basis for later documentation, and reviewing them sheds light on many previously unnoticed aspects of the two statues.

Further Questions

Several broader questions remain unaddressed, even after analysis of this data. To begin with, why does this research, and what is novel in its approach or findings? To answer the first part of this question, one must first consider the point of studying art history and aesthetics. Art is a uniquely visual medium in which the personal ideas of the artist or ideas of society as a whole are reflected. Thus, in studying the beauty of pieces of art from a certain period, society's ideals and values are partially revealed, and this is relevant to our understanding of history. Greek art in particular forms the basis of much of Western art (just as much of Western philosophy stems from that of the Greeks). Furthermore, Greek knowledge of the values held by the Greeks sheds insight into our values and opens up new research possibilities. For example, comparing contemporary standards of beauty with those of the Classical Greeks remains an intriguing and open area of study. Also, of interest is how the styles of artists such as Praxiteles evolved such unique styles that differed from their Archaic predecessors. Regardless, the purpose of this research has been established: to further understand the art of this ancient society and how it changed, and in doing so gain some insight into how their values as an entire culture changed or remained constant (or even if not directly pointing to this, opening the field to scholarly conjecture). As to the second part of my question (the novelty of its findings), the answer is that while there has been extensive research on both the Korai, the Aphrodite of Knidos, and even occasionally the two in conjunction, never (or not at least with these statues) has a quantitative analysis such as my own been performed. In that respect, a more objective data collection method is adding to the already substantial oeuvre of research

on this topic. As was discussed at the end of the methodology, there are shortcomings in my research methods (as a result of my limited resources), but I am confident that the validity of my ideas and probably the accuracy of my results would be supported upon replication but with greater access to statues' measurements. Fundamentally, the findings would likely stay the same at least in their support of the qualitative observations I made and collected from the two participants in my survey.

Final Notes

Ultimately, my paper set out to answer questions about how the Classical and Archaic Greeks portrayed and perceived feminine beauty compare. And it provides decisive answers to these: The Classical female form is naturalistic and creates a narrative that opens a window for the direct engagement of the viewer, which in the case of beauty is typical of an erotic form (though it was different for women). Archaic beauty, however, is mild and subtler, stylized and surreal. Both convey an ideal that viewers could aspire towards in one way or another, and both are outlets for views and ideas that had entered those societies at the time. Links have been established, for example, between the Korai and Egyptian statues (see literature review). Regardless of all societal norms, influences of our own biology (as far as signs of fertility being found attractive), and other factors, the proverb rings as true today as it would have then: beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder.

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