Greater familiarity with these objects is either already expected of the reader or must be sought elsewhere, and yet one shrinks from suggesting any expansion to a text that is already so substantial. Hansen is clear from the outset that he is not setting himself up as a design historian. Yet one could repeat the views raised recently by Megan Brandow-Faller in her review of Elana Shapira's *Style and Seduction: Jewish Patrons, Architecture, and Design in Fin de Siècle Vienna* in this journal: as design history moves forward, we must find a way of synthesizing the depth of understanding found in contextualizing approaches like Hansen's with our more familiar object-centric histories.[5]

■

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1 Per H. Hansen, *Da danske møbler blev moderne: Historien om dansk møbeldesigns storhedstid* (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2006).

2 Kevin Davies, "'A Geographical Notion Turned into an Artistic Reality': Promoting Finland and Selling Finnish Design in Post-War Britain c. 1953–1965," *Journal of Design History* 15, no. 2 (2002): 101–16; Jørn Guldberg, "'Scandinavian Design' as Discourse: The Exhibition Design in Scandinavia, 1954–57," *Design Issues* 27, no. 2 (2011): 41–58; Erin Leary, "'The Total Absence of Foreign Subjects': The Racial Politics of US Interwar Exhibitions of Scandinavian Design," *Design and Culture* 7, no. 3 (2015): 283–312.

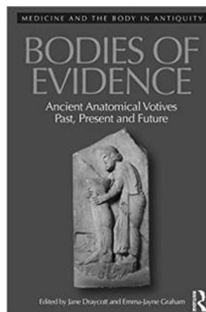
3 Petra Čeferin, *Constructing a Legend: The International Exhibitions of Finnish Architecture, 1957–1967* (Helsinki: SKS, 2003); Kjetil Fallan, *Designing Modern Norway: A History of Design Discourse* (London: Routledge, 2016), and K. Fallan, ed., *Scandinavian Design: Alternative Histories* (London: Berg, 2013); Helena Mattsson and Sven-Olov Wallenstein, eds., *Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption, and the Welfare State* (Dublin: Black Dog, 2010).

4 Charlotte Ashby, *Modernism in Scandinavia: Art, Architecture and Design* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

5 Megan Brandow-Faller, "Style and Seduction: Jewish Patrons, Architecture, and Design in Fin de Siècle Vienna," *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture* 24, no. 2 (2017): 264–68.

Bodies of Evidence: Ancient Anatomical Votives Past, Present and Future

Edited by Jane Draycott and Emma-Jayne Graham



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Votive Body Parts in Greek and Roman Religion

Jessica Hughes

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
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Cloth $99.99

ISBN 9781107157835

Human body parts, molded in terra-cotta, sculpted from wood, carved or incised in marble, or hammered from metal, were dedicated to the gods in sanctuaries across the Mediterranean in antiquity. Known as "anatomical ex-votos," these vestiges of devotion and desperation were most often motivated by a request for divine healing. They are the material manifestation of a contract with the divine, the tangible evidence of the gods' power to heal mortals

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carried out in expectation of a gift. The precise circumstances of most of these transactions with the gods are unknown; the body parts themselves are rarely inscribed, leaving us in the dark concerning the identity of the dedicator and the reason for the gift, and often about the divine recipient. Almost entirely absent from ancient literary sources, dedications of body parts present an interpretive challenge to the modern scholar. Despite the predominant silence in the textual record, however, the hundreds, if not thousands, of objects recovered from the larger sites testify to the central role of these gifts in relations with the divine. Ranging from crude representations in wood and terra-cotta to exquisite white marble reliefs, anatomical ex-votos, it would seem, were gifts that could be given at all levels of society.

These objects have remained largely outside the mainstream of scholarship on classical art, and have been collected, catalogued, and theorized mostly by historians of medicine and religion. Anthropological and other theoretical approaches have been more prevalent in recent years, especially given the enthusiasm for inquiries into material religion and the body. The two books under review here place themselves at the forefront of the field, assessing the geographical spread and meaningful variations of the phenomenon in one case, and expanding the range and depth of the study of anatomical votives in the other. The comparative method of studying votive dedications, adopted to great effect in the 2016 collection *Ex-Voto* (Weinryb), is here used to shine some light on the common aspects of, and the differences between, manifestations of anatomical giving.[1] Tacitly espoused by the editors of *Bodies of Evidence* in their choice of range and material, and explicitly highlighted by Hughes in the *Votive Body Parts* monograph, comparativism allows demanding questions to be asked of materials that share the display of the body but may differ in form and intention. These two scholarly endeavors work well when read alongside each other, in terms of both the material discussed and their methodology.

Taking her prompt from Georges Didi-Huberman, Hughes pushes against the idea that anatomical forms of votive gift "have practically never evolved" (4). *Votive Body Parts in Greek and Roman Religion* travels simultaneously in space and time, progressing chronologically as the chapters focus in turn on different areas of the Graeco-Roman world. The result is a "moving picture" that stresses the new forms that anatomical votives take in each of the contexts where they occur (4). "Fragmentation"—the meaning of the body in pieces—is at the crux of the introduction and the four main chapters. These deal in turn with classical Greece, republican Italy, Roman Gaul, and imperial-age Lydia and Phrygia (modern Turkey).

The result is a survey that covers important spaces but focuses on the period of the origin of the practice in its major form. Mainland Greece is discussed only in passing, after the fourth century BC, and Gaul after the first century AD also falls outside the remit (although there was no cessation of votive practice). The advantages of this streamlined format, which allows a narrative to develop through the works, are many. In each chapter the evidence is laid out and is always followed by discussion and analysis. The restless spotlight of Hughes's gaze does, however, prevent an assessment of changes within the regions analyzed. While differences between the Greek and Italian material are discussed, and the changes wrought on the Italian practice when brought to Gaul are then unpacked, the chronological ranges selected (e.g., classical Greece, fifth–fourth centuries BC; republican Italy, fourth–first centuries BC) are treated monolithically. In this structure there is less room to analyze diachronic change within a single region. Furthermore, Olivier de Cazanove, in the second volume under review, highlights that some types of anatomical votive are found in Greece and Gaul but not in Italy (74)—a connection that finds no place in Hughes's movement from Greece to Italy and then from Italy to Gaul. That said, Hughes's structure throws the similarities and differences between each regional manifestation of the practice into high relief. Our understanding of the dedication of anatomical votives is much improved by a consistent approach applied by a single author to the majority of the material commonly discussed. The conclusions drawn seek to push the "meaning" of the dedicated objects beyond a need to signpost the damaged portion of the body, to go past the "localization" argument (4). The desire to develop our understanding of these objects is timely, but the evidence is not always forthcoming.

Fragmentation, the key issue for Hughes, is perhaps a concept that has broken loose from its evidential moorings. Anatomical votives can be described in

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modern English as fragments of a body, but they can also be called parts, pieces, or selections. In Greek and Latin, however, they were most likely referred to by terms which emphasized their status as gifts to the gods (*anathēma* and *donaria*, respectively). In material terms, these gifts were not fragments; they were intentionally crafted to be a bounded portion of the human body and were not, it seems, repurposed sections of statue molds normally used to make complete bodies. The absence of terms for fragmentation or reintegration in ancient sources, although they are plentiful in modern accounts of illness, counts against Hughes's theories. Miracle tales that prove the power of the god Asklepios often end with a formula that emphasizes not "reintegration," "completeness," or another such term, but rather that the patient (even in one case a broken cup) has been made "healthy" (*hygie*). The fascinating linkages and commonalities between the votives from different regions, marshaled by the author with due attention paid to the differences, need not be bolstered by a universal interpretive paradigm of this kind.

Grappling with these silent objects also presents the greatest challenge to the contributors to *Bodies of Evidence*—an edited volume with eleven chapters, an introduction by the editors (Jane Draycott and Emma-Jayne Graham), and an afterword by the author of the other monograph, Jessica Hughes. The format of the work precludes discussion here of each contribution individually, yet this is one of the strengths of the volume. The monographic chapter structure gives variety, depth, and focus to the work, allowing for the analysis of corporeal representations that have traditionally fallen outside the definition of the anatomical ex-voto (such as hair and the so-called confession stelai), while also permitting continued interest in the more commonly discussed but equally problematic dedications (for example, Italian terra-cotta wombs). The core of the volume comes from the papers presented at a conference at the British School at Rome in 2012, *Bodies of Evidence: Re-Defining Approaches to the Anatomical Votive*, and is supplemented by further contributions.

Certain key themes recur throughout the volume and serve to bind together the chronologically and spatially disparate material. For example, should all dedications of parts of the body be interpreted as requests or thanks for healing? "Alternative meanings," linked to the significance of a body part, can be proposed in certain cases: eyes could have been understood as representations of seeing, and feet or footprints as indications of movement and presence. At a more fundamental level, this volume underlines the centrality of the figural and tangible representation of the human body in transactions with the divine. While these objects are often crude and roughly made, in most cases a human, or a part of one, is very clearly being displayed. Anatomical votives, regardless of their material, were a tangible marker of the bodily presence of the dedicator in the sanctuary, a reminder of the activity of the gods in the world of mortals, and evidence of the contractual and reciprocal obligations between the divine and the human members of a community. Emma-Jayne Graham contributes a helpful yet terminologically dense theoretical framework for statements of this kind in "Partible Humans and Permeable Gods: Anatomical Votives and Personhood in the Sanctuaries of Central Italy."

These objects were the visible markers of a plethora of ephemeral acts, including pilgrimage, prayer, and sacrifice (even if only in the form of a libation). The simple terra-cotta forms in a central Italian sanctuary were charged with emotion, sacrality, and (moderate) expense. Objects, once dedicated, remained the property of the god and could not be removed from the sanctuary. Dedications remained visible for generations, and so the public and social dimension of such practices must be considered. Gifts were displayed in and around temples not only to jog the memory of the gods, but also to impress the donors' fellow citizens. A display of piety, say, hair dedicated in the sanctuary, was furthered by the visible absence of hair on the dedicator's head. The analysis of these objects in terms of social anthropology allows the relations among donors, viewers, and gods to be fully explored—all were actors within the same community.

Rebecca Flemming's "Wombs for the Gods" engages meaningfully with the visual evidence, leading to a convincing argument about some of the most interesting Italian material; it is perhaps no surprise that this chapter is better illustrated than others. In the absence of textual evidence, and indeed archaeological contexts, for many of these objects, it is a shame that more was not made of the visual evidence. On this point, both volumes suffer from often inferior black-and-white illustrations. In many

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cases the images and objects act as illustrations only in the worst sense of the word—page decoration rather than the burning core which fuels the argument. Despite claims to the contrary, this gives the impression that the anatomical votives are important or indeed interesting not as individual objects, but only as relics of attitudes to the body which can be deduced without detailed analysis.

Bodies of Evidence and *Votive Body Parts* contribute greatly to this relatively understudied field. They ask questions, demand answers, and have expanded the range of material available to be assessed as anatomical votives. The dedication of representations of the body was without a doubt of utmost importance in the ancient world; could the body undivided (victor statues, votive portraits) also be considered alongside "anatomical" votives? In these contributions to the field, the many authors and editors have brought anthropology, social theory, and a host of modern methods to bear on ancient material. What is debatable, however, is whether some of these authors have gone too far—whether these objects, made by craftsmen likely for patrons of all levels of education, have been overly intellectualized. In these volumes, the most successful applications of theory and text to these uninscribed relics have considered the contexts of dedication and display, or the material itself, through visual analysis. That a terra-cotta arm might have replicated the size, approximate weight, and tanned color of a human arm would probably have been far more immediate to an ancient viewer than an understanding grounded in medical theory. In the interpretation of silent objects, restraint may be the better part of valor.

■

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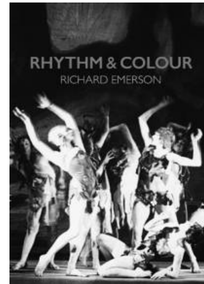
1 Ittai Weinryb, ed., *Ex Voto: Votive Giving Across Cultures* (New York: Bard Graduate Center, 2016).

Rhythm & Colour: Hélène Vanel, Loïs Hutton & Margaret Morris

Richard Emerson



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On the evening of Friday, June 20, 1924, Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes premiered *Le train bleu* at Le Théâtre des Champs Elysées. Earlier that day two dancers, one English and the other French, presented the fifty-fifth *Vendredi de la dance* (Friday of dance) in the theater's smaller auditorium. These weekly matinee dance recitals (held at 3:30 p.m.) had been introduced by Jacques Hébertot to allow dancers from all over Europe the opportunity to present their work in a high-profile, modern Parisian theater. The performance by Loïs Hutton and Hélène Vanel of the Margaret Morris Theatre, London, was to be a key event in the careers of these two dancers.

Among those who reviewed their performance was the Russian-born critic André Levinson. Although not a supporter of "intuitive dances," Levinson found Hutton to have "a dancer's beauty" and to be "an artist who is harmonious, albeit within an excessively limited range" (188). Vanel, however, he described as "the embodiment of the mental jack-of-all-trades, of intelligent but futile amateurism. Tall, well defined, with long hands, she more or less improvises dances which are jerky and violently stylised, with angular arm movements" (188–90). The

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