



LEARNING TO SEE AND DESCRIBE IN THE GLOBAL SURVEY

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OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

ARTH102: History of Western Art II

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Abstract

Syllabus for History of Western Art II, a chronological survey of major periods, styles, artists, and monuments of western visual arts, primarily painting, sculpture, and architecture beginning with the development of the arts from about 1300 to the present day.

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Common sticking points for the Global Survey**

■ CONTENT.

There's just too much! (Easy solution, cut cut cut.)

***Also, we could call the course an Introduction rather than a survey*

■ EXPERTISE. No person can realistically speak as an expert about everything. Fair.

Common sticking points for the Global Survey

■BIG ONE

Teaching objects within an Intro Course – and even a discipline – that was designed for the Western tradition distorts objects made outside that tradition.

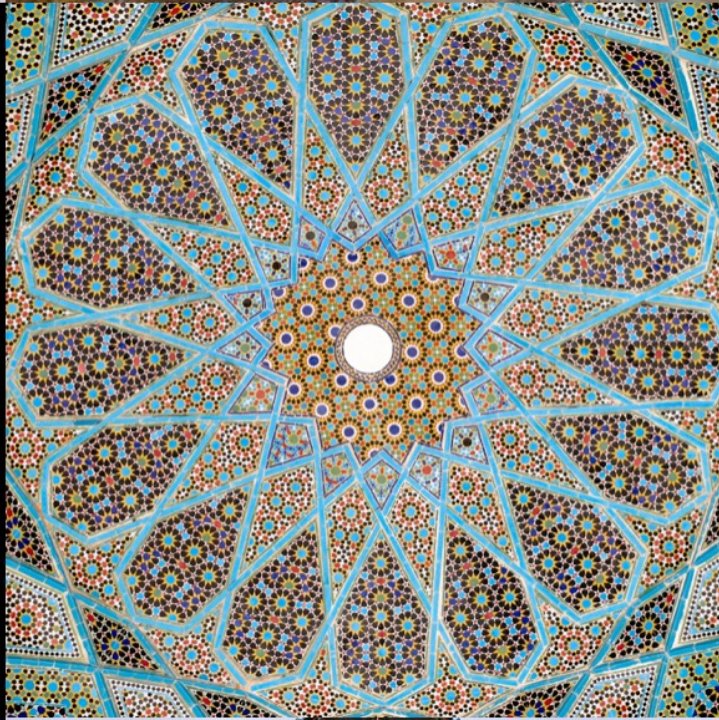
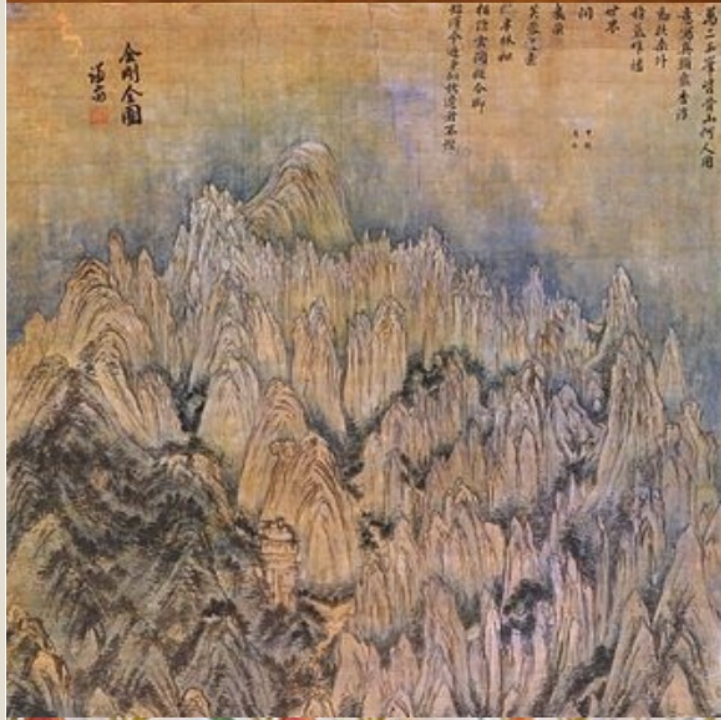
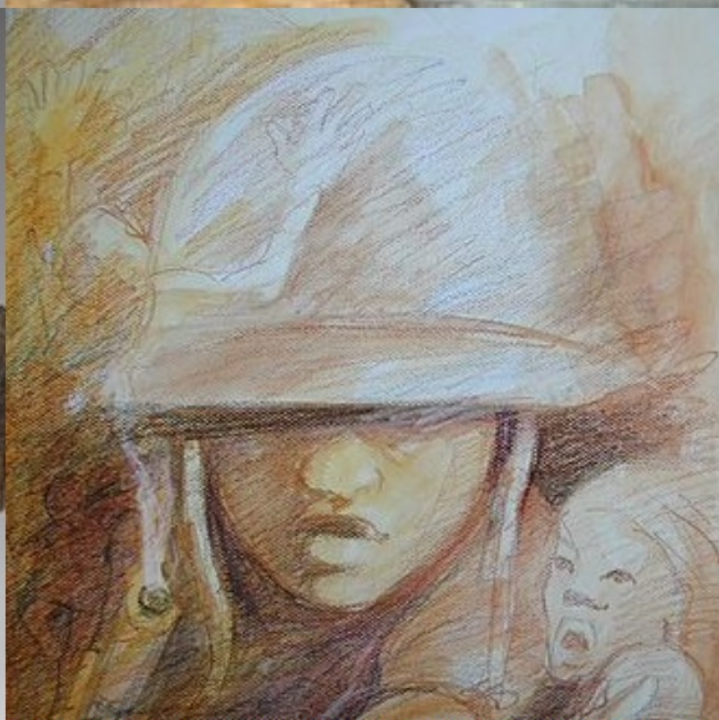
■Global Survey requires a fundamental ‘re-think’

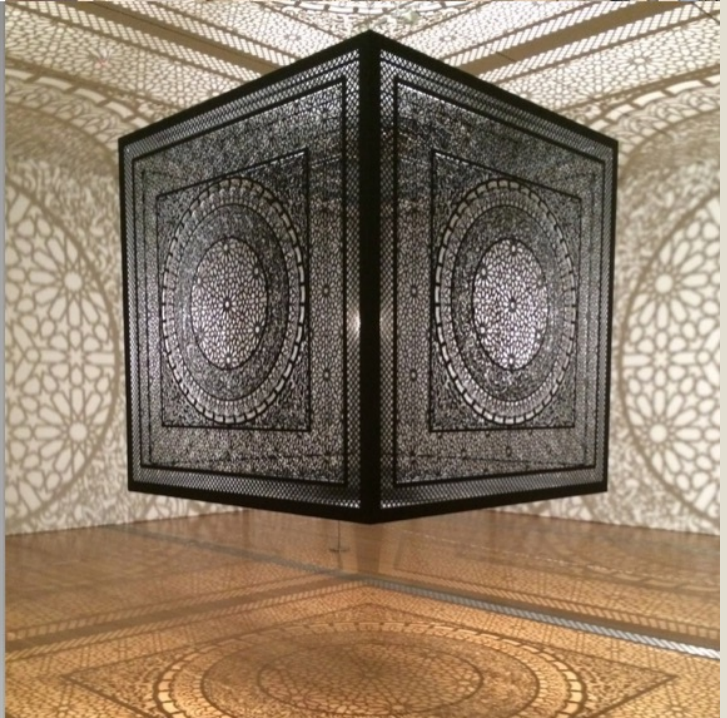
- **MATERIALS** – for instance, PAINT is not the primary medium in much of the world, but central to art history.
- The “**ART**” problem – How do we teach the history of art in cultures that do not acknowledge that category? Can we do this without distorting the objects?
- **METHODS** – techniques and vocabularies of analyzing art were largely developed with Greek/Roman sculpture and Renaissance/Baroque painting in mind.

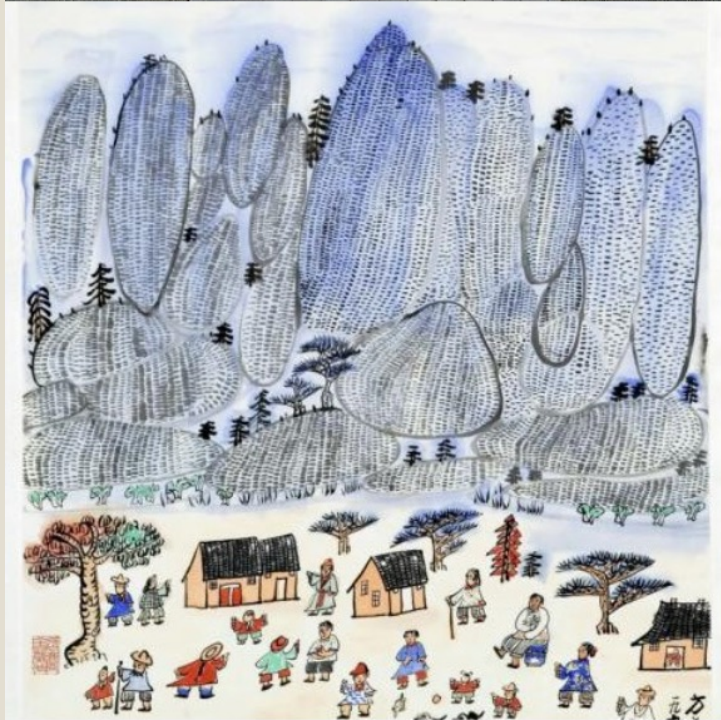
- **MATERIALS** – which materials do we prioritize?

For instance, PAINT is not the primary medium in much of the world.

How does my course prioritize paint, which implicitly prioritizes Western traditions?







- The “ART” problem

How do we teach the ‘history of art’ in cultures that do not acknowledge art as a category?

Can we do this without distorting the objects and cultures?



Inca, "Funerary Rock," c. 1400–1530, stone, Machu Picchu, Peru (photograph by the author)

Carolyn Dean

The Trouble with (the Term) Art

This essay was originally formulated as a paper delivered at the 2005 Annual Conference of the College Art Association, in a session entitled "Art History, Theory, and Ancient American Visual Culture" and organized by Dana Leibsohn and Bryan R. Just. I am grateful for the comments and suggestions offered by many of those who attended the session. My thanks also to Shelly Errington, Catherine M. Soussloff, Dana Leibsohn, Elisabeth L. Cameron, Steve Chiappari, and an anonymous reviewer who commented on early versions of the paper. Funds for manuscript preparation were generously provided by the Arts Research Institute at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Much of what is today called art was not made as art. This is the case not only with regard to early European artifacts and monuments, but also with regard to objects made outside the West in places where the concept of art traditionally has not been recognized. Not infrequently (although less frequently than in the past), many of the objects from outside the West that were not made as art are grouped together and called "primitive art." This is so despite the fact that art historians and anthropologists, among others, have been fussing about the term "primitive art" and its synonyms since the middle of the twentieth century.¹ In 1957, Adrian Gerbrands was one of the first to offer a thorough discussion of what he called "the problem of the name."² Yet his proposed substitute term—non-European art—was also criticized by those in the field. Suggested alternatives—exotic art; traditional art; the art of pre-industrial people; folk or popular art; tribal art; ethnic or ethno-art; ethnographical art; ethnological art; native art; indigenous art; pre-urban art; the art of precivilized people; non-Western art; the indigenous arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas—have all been proposed and critiqued.³ Despite decades of discussion, little has been resolved, as was seen in the array of commentary provoked in 1984 by William Rubin's "Primitivism" exhibition and its companion catalogue.⁴ What interests me in all of this is the fact that discussion, from the 1950s to the present, invariably focuses on the *adjective*—primitive, exotic, or what have you—rather than the *noun*, "art." This is the case even when the author acknowledges that "art" is also a difficult term without proper definition and agreed-upon usage.⁵ Thus, it may be time to focus specifically on the term "art" as currently used by scholars writing about the many and varied autochthonous visual cultures of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. Such a discussion matters not only to those studying long-ago or faraway places; it concerns all those who employ the term, for what art is seems to be at the very heart of the issue.

Carolyn Dean (2006) "The Trouble with
(the Term) Art," *Art Journal*, 65:2, 24-33.

DOI: [10.1080/00043249.2006.10791203](https://doi.org/10.1080/00043249.2006.10791203)



Ceremonial House Ceiling
Kwoma people
1970–1973

ROSS BOWDEN

What Is Wrong with an Art Forgery?: An Anthropological Perspective

Ross Bowden, “What is Wrong with an Art Forgery?: An Anthropological Perspective,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 1999, 333-43.

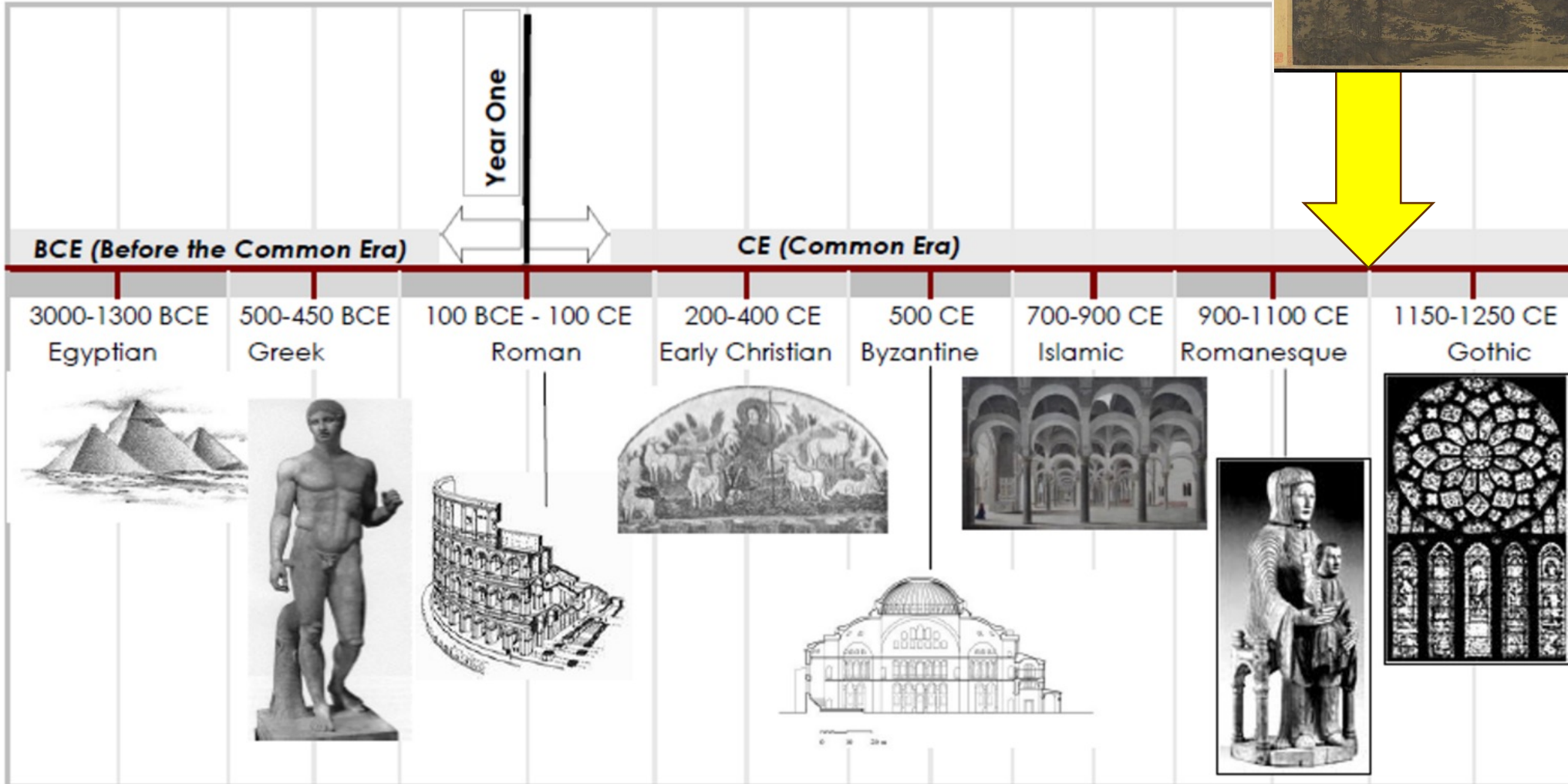
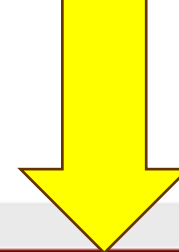
Art forgeries, together with a variety of other objects that come within the scope of this article,¹ such as high-quality commercial reproductions and works by minor artists mistakenly attributed to major artists, present both philosophers and historians of art with a singular and seemingly intractable problem. And that is, if the qualities that are admired in works of art are among their directly perceptible properties, as both Western folk models and the dominant theories in the philosophy of art suggest, why should a work that was once thought to be a masterpiece be dis-

ings, and in the thirteenth century with arc bronzes.⁵ In Kwoma society there is no commercial market in art among the people themselves, but people do routinely copy artworks all kinds: sculptures, paintings, buildings, so on. Kwoma artworks are made from readily perishable materials, principally wood and bone, and when an object decays and becomes too fragile to serve its social purpose (e.g., to be played ritually) a replica will be made and the original discarded. Before European contact in the late nineteenth century, the original w

BCE = Before the Common Era (the year 1)

CE = Common Era (after the year 1)

Ca. or c. = circa, meaning around of about, ca. 100 BCE



METHODS – techniques and vocabularies of analyzing art were largely developed with Greek/Roman sculpture and Renaissance/Baroque painting in mind.

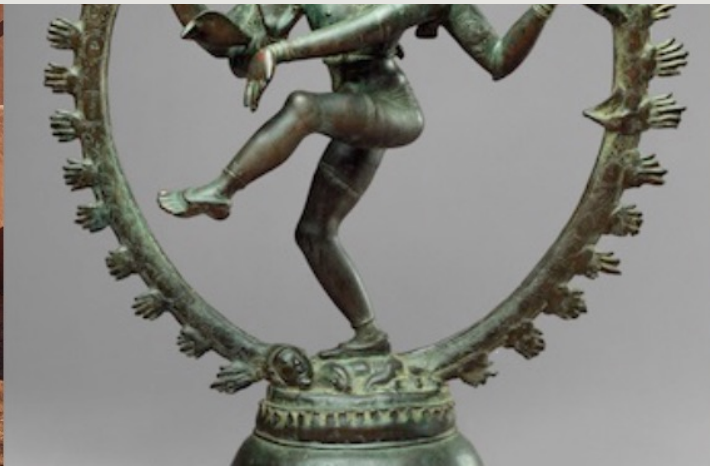
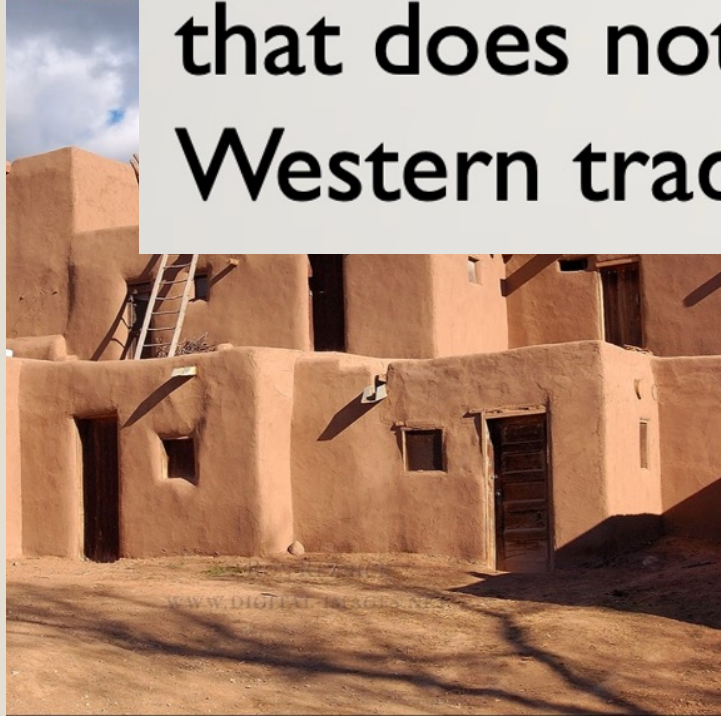


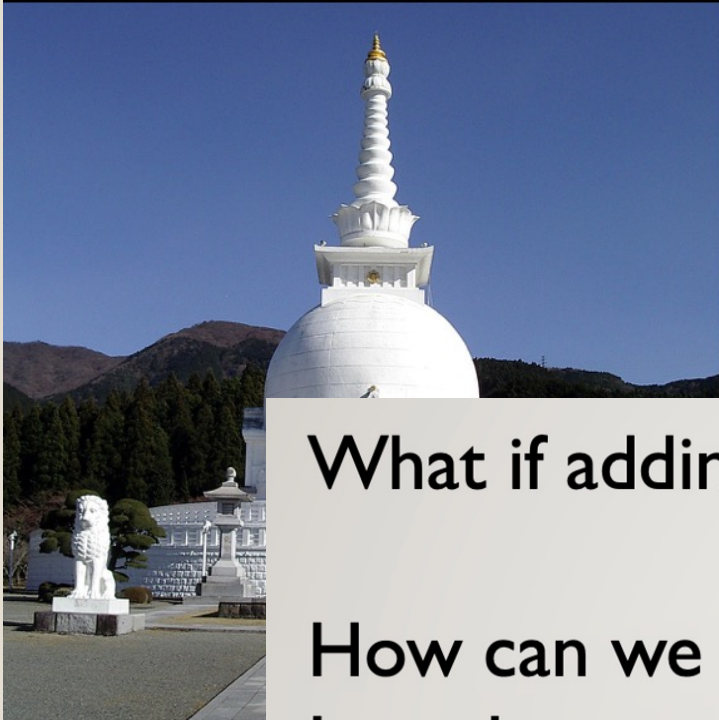
Winckelmann / Wölfflin





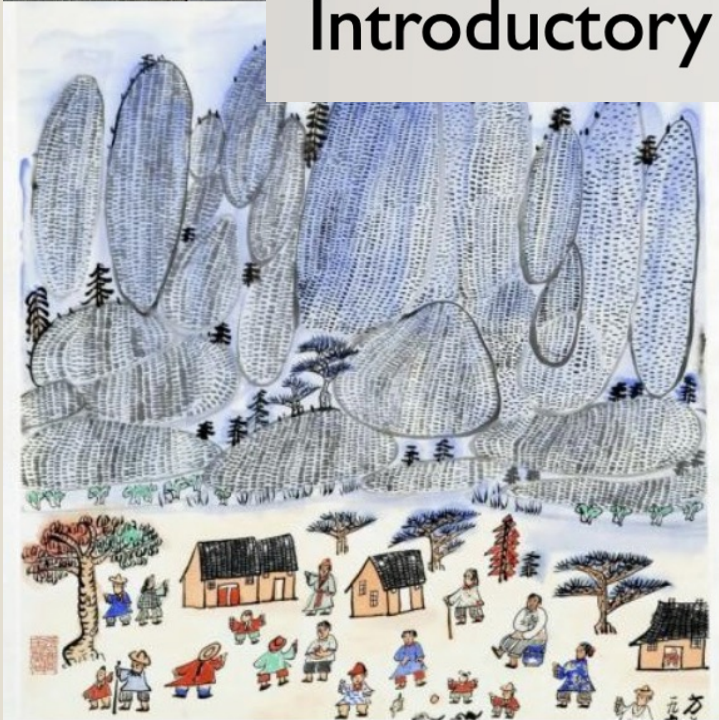
How do we design an Introductory course that does not implicitly revolve around the Western tradition?



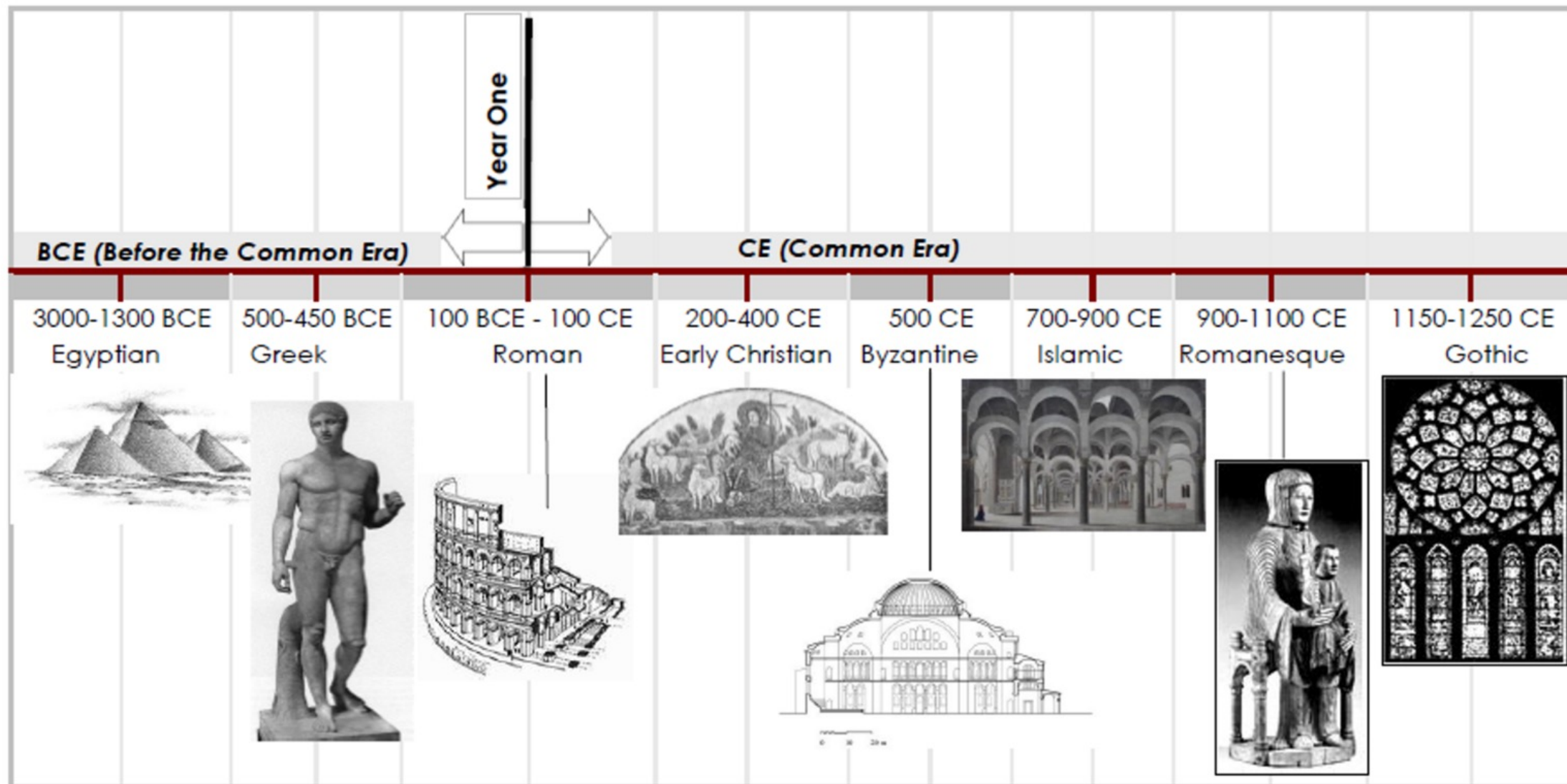


What if adding global content was the easy part?

How can we rethink the foundations of our Introductory courses to address global content?



What we call CHRONOLOGY is often CANON.



2 Million Years Ago:
First evidence of humans



1 Million Years Ago:
Evidence of tools



25,000 BCE:
Cave paintings



HISTORY:

Almost everything we will learn
about this semester



My old approach
to Pre-History:

The Stone Ages (Lithic = Stone)

PALEOLITHIC, MESOLITHIC, and NEOLITHIC

Paleo=Old / Meso=Middle / Neo=New

- Paleolithic: 40,000-10,000 BCE
(Ice Age ends between 20,000 and 10,000 BCE)
- Mesolithic: 10,000-8000 BCE
- Neolithic: 8,000-3,000 BCE

New approach requires an entire class on chronologies.

- What do we mean by “pre-history”?
- Does that idea apply and how across cultures?

What year is it?

- Current Hebrew year 5785
- Current Islamic year (**Hijri calendar**) 1446 AH
- Current Ethiopian calendar 2017

- Lunar / Solar calendars used in China, Korea, and more... Year of the Dragon

Dates are determined by cultures, religions, regions...

So where does 2024 come from?

Gregorian Calendar,

adopted by Pope Gregory of Rome in 1582

Adapted from the **Julian calendar,**

created during the reign of Julius Caesar in 45 BCE

We are living in an “Ancient/Renaissance”
timeline!



Sphinx of Hatshepsut, New Kingdom, ca. 1479–1458 B.C.



Sphinx of Taharqo, Kingdom of Kush, 680 BCE



Pyramids at Giza



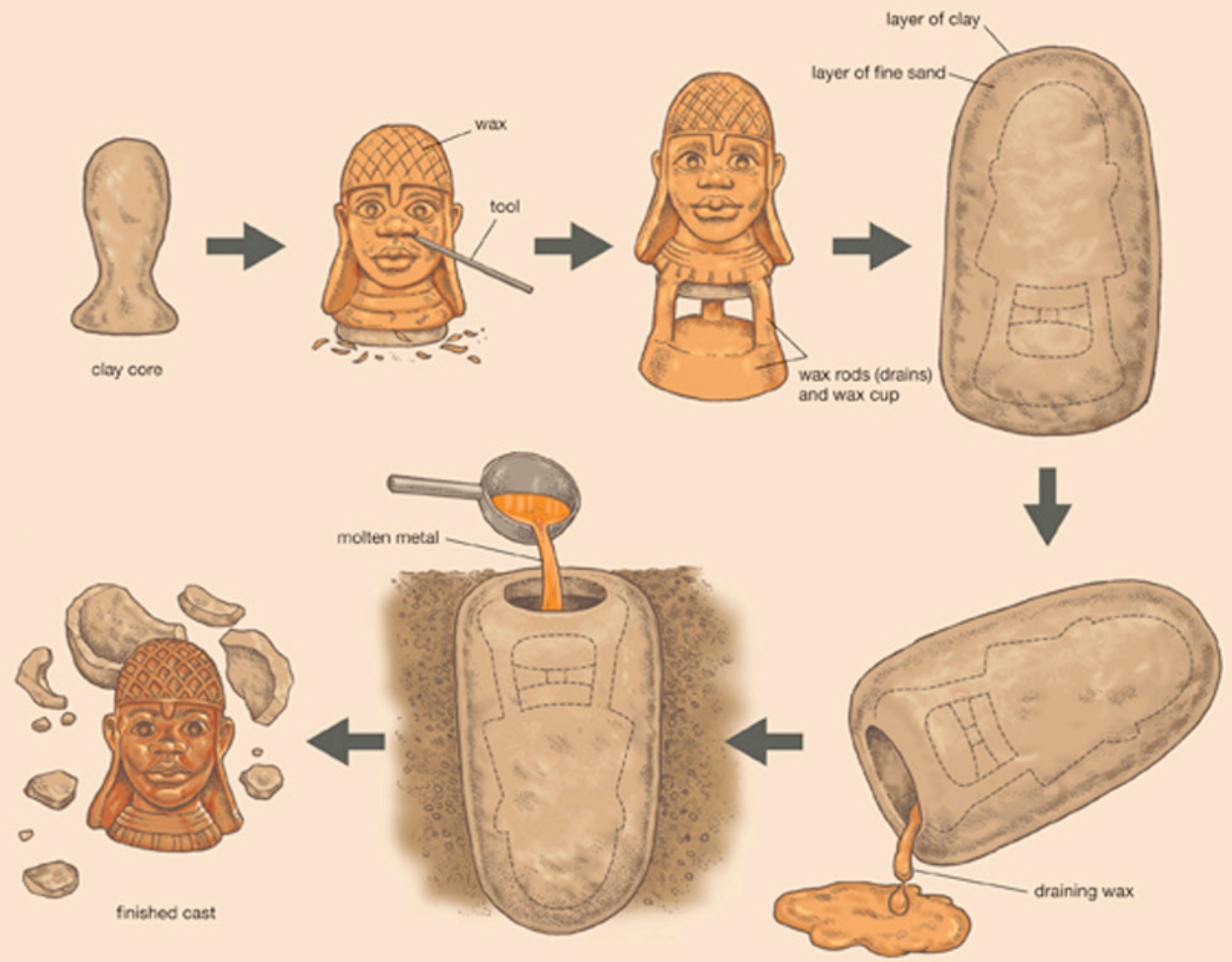
Pyramids of Meroë

**needs lots of scale figures to show size

Lost-Wax Casting



Memorial Head of an Oba (King). Benin, 16th century CE. Brass. height 9" (23 cm)



Concepts such as Permanence



Ceremonial House Ceiling
Kwoma people
1970–1973
80.4 feet, end-to-end



Pantheon dome (photo: [Steven Zucker](#), CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)



Student Question:

Is this contrapposto?

Pair of Diviner's Figures
Baule peoples
19th–mid-20th century



To the student, “contrapposto” felt like

neutral description

formal analysis

applying art historical vocabulary.

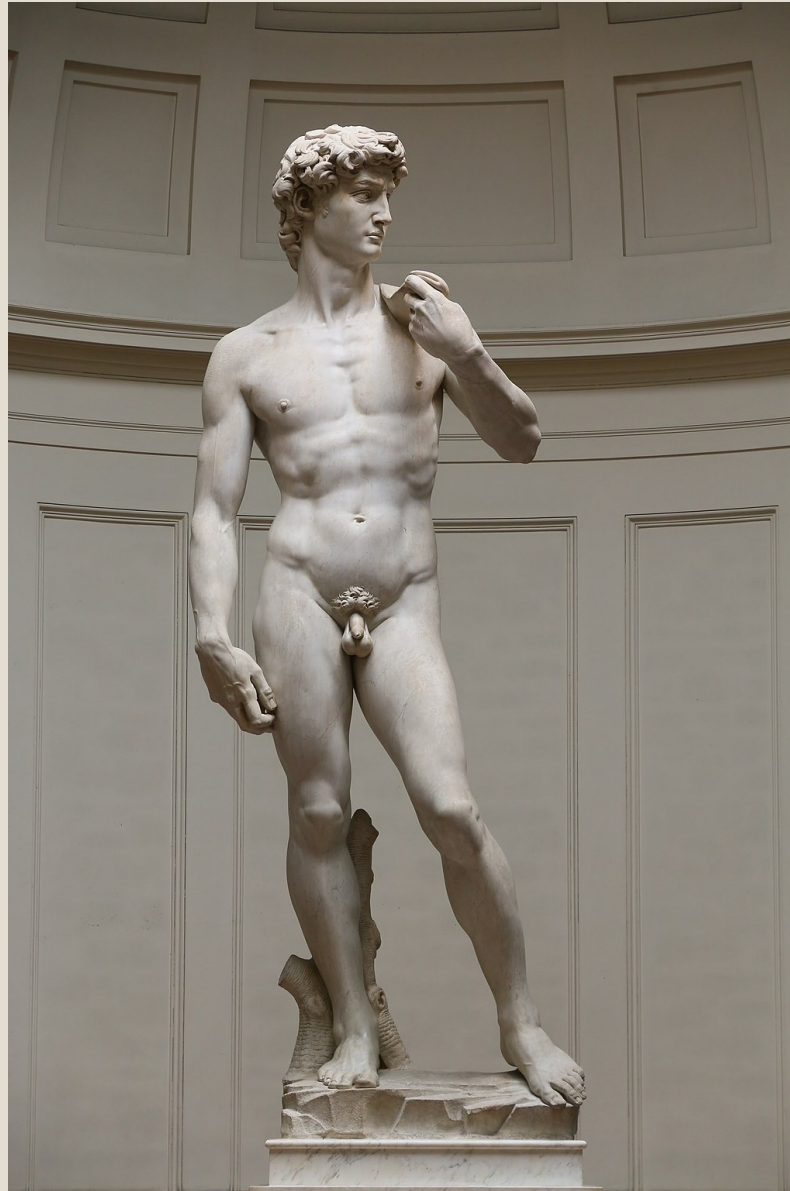
In other words,

I (implicitly) taught him

to ask this question.



Contrapposto does recur in the Western tradition.
On some level students are taught to spot it. Extra confusing.





Where do we go from here?

One beginning is to emphasize how **seeing itself is individual, contextual, and cultural.**



Paolo Veronese, *Allegory of Virtue and Vice* 1565. Erick Collection NYC

James Elkins and Erna Fiorentini,
Visual Worlds, 2020

“addresses the sum total of writing on the subject of vision, visibility, and visual practices...”

PART SIX. HOW DISCIPLINES LOOK AT IMAGES

Introduction

23. How the Military Looks at Images

- 23.1 Human Vision and Its Expanded Field
- 23.2 Thickets of Representation in Battlefield Visualization
- 23.3 Looking Back at the Military

24. How Doctors Look at Images

- 24.1 Images as Constructions and as Truth
- 24.2 Neuronavigation and Operational Images
- 24.3 Machine-Based Visual Analysis
- 24.4 Imaging in Medical Research

25. How Lawyers Look at Images

- 25.1 Case Examples
- 25.2 Philosophic Issues
- 25.3 The Professionalization of Legal Images

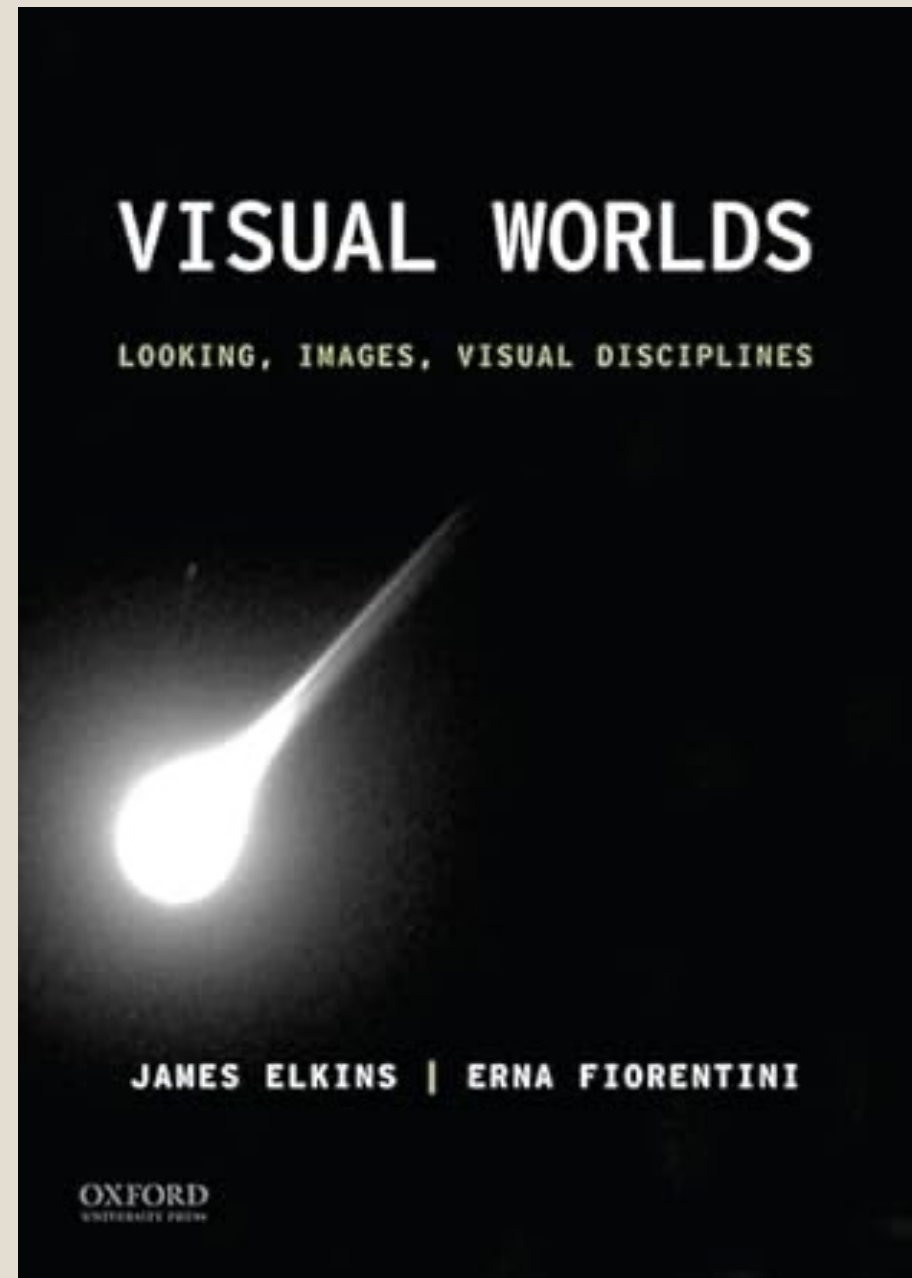
26. How Scientists Look at Images

- 26.1 Scientific Images as Containers for Information
- 26.2 Vampire Seeing
- 26.3 Scientific Images as Models

27. How Art Historians Look at Images

- 27.1 Senses of Formal Analysis
- 27.2 Practices of Formal Analysis
- 27.3 The Apparent Neutrality of Formal Analysis

Conclusion



Art history courses and programs emphasize visual analysis, but often separate it from contextual and cultural understanding.

Pratt Institute – Themes in Art and Culture (Survey 1), Fall 2021

Learning Objectives

Can these 2 objectives be separated?



- To identify, and classify key monuments of architecture, sculpture, and painting in early non-Western art, and from Prehistoric through Gothic periods in Western art.
- To identify and analyze important visual elements (line, shape, value, texture, color, space) and design principles (balance, contrast, movement, economy, unity), using proper terminology (verbally and in writing) when referring to works of art.
- To interpret and evaluate the historical context of works of art.
- To effectively communicate and analyze, compare and contrast (verbally and in writing) works of art.
- To demonstrate awareness of different perspectives and cultures by identifying and analyzing key contributions from Western and non-Western sources.

[Home](#) > [Academics](#) > [Student Learning Outcomes](#) > [Undergraduate Majors and Certificates](#) > [Art History, B.A.](#)

Art History, B.A.

- > [Art History, B.A. Program Page](#)
- > [Art History, B.A. Four-Year Degree Map for Bulletin Year 2018-2019](#)
- > [Art History, B.A. Four-Year Degree Map for Bulletin Year 2019-2020](#)
- > [Art History, B.A. Four-Year Degree Map for Bulletin Year 2020-2021](#)
- > [Art History, B.A. Four-Year Degree Map for Bulletin Year 2021-2022](#)

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Visual Literacy – Identify unique characteristics of several artistic traditions and recognize/analyze differences among the major periods, artists genres and theories of art.
2. Critical Thinking – Use terms of art historical analysis correctly and be able to apply them to unfamiliar works.
3. Writing Proficiency – Write clearly and analytically, with papers including precise thesis statements, well-constructed arguments and thoughtful conclusions.
4. Cultural Awareness – Have the ability to identify and distinguish between forms of art based on their culture of origin and to understand culturally-specific meanings and interpretations.
5. Visual Literacy – Students should be able to apply basic art historical concepts to artworks they are viewing in a museum (either with a professor or on their own).

Can these 2 objectives be separated?



Pedagogical guides to visual analysis
have the same “separation problem”



The J. Paul Getty Museum

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Elements of Art

The elements of art are components or parts of a work of art that can be isolated and defined. They are the building blocks used to create a work of art.

The list below describes each element of art. [Learn about the principles of design here.](#)

[Download a student handout containing a list of the elements of art and their definitions. \(PDF, 168KB\)](#)

- Line
- Shape and form
- Space
- Color
- Texture

Line

A line is an identifiable path created by a point moving in space. It is one-dimensional and can vary in width, direction, and length. Lines often define the edges of a form. Lines can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal, straight or curved, thick or thin. They lead your eye around the composition and can communicate information through their character and direction.

[Download a worksheet that introduces students to the concept of line. \(PDF, 398KB\)](#)

Contents

- Elements of Art
- Principles of Design
- Student Handout: Elements of Art (PDF, 191KB)
- Student Handout: Introducing Line (PDF, 554KB)
- Student Handout: Introducing Shape (PDF, 504KB)
- Student Handout: Principles of Design (PDF, 213KB)

“The elements of art are components or parts of a work of art that can be **isolated and defined.**”

https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/formal_analysis.html


How to do visual (formal) analysis

by DR. BETH HARRIS and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



How to do visual (formal) analysis in art history



Watch on  YouTube

With Giovanni Bellini, *Madonna of the Meadow*, c. 1500, oil and egg on synthetic panel, transferred from wood, 67.3 x 86.4 cm (The National Gallery). Speakers: Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris.

✗ iconography / symbolism

✗ commission / patron

✗ political / social /
economic context

what we can see

✓ scale

✓ composition

✓ pictorial space

✓ form

✓ line

✓ color

✓ light

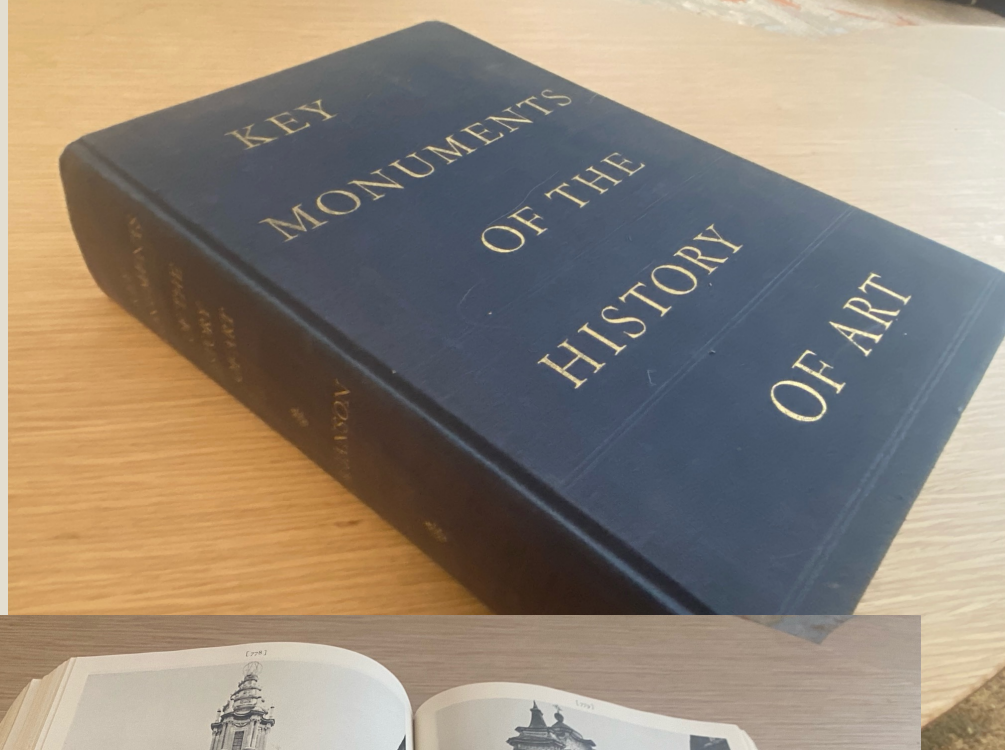
✓ tone

✓ texture

✓ pattern



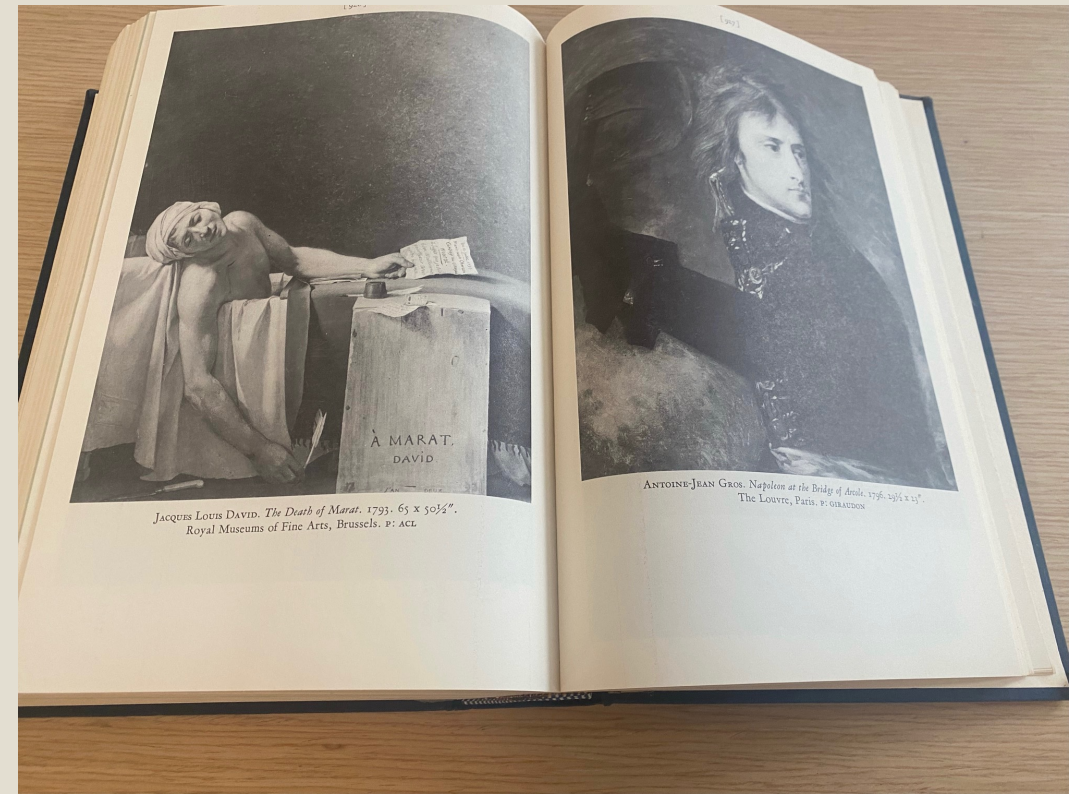
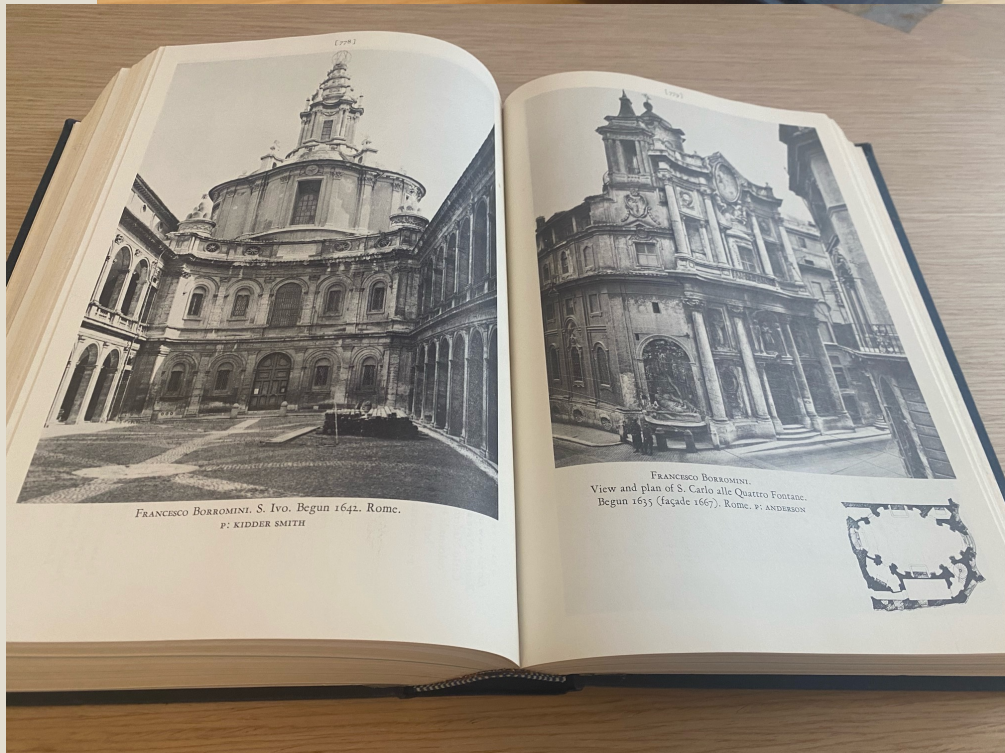
[https://smarthistory.org/
visual-analysis/](https://smarthistory.org/visual-analysis/)



H.W. Janson, *Key Monuments of the History of Art: A Visual Survey*, Abrams, 1959.

*over 1200 reproductions

(Janson's *History of Art* was first published in 1962.)





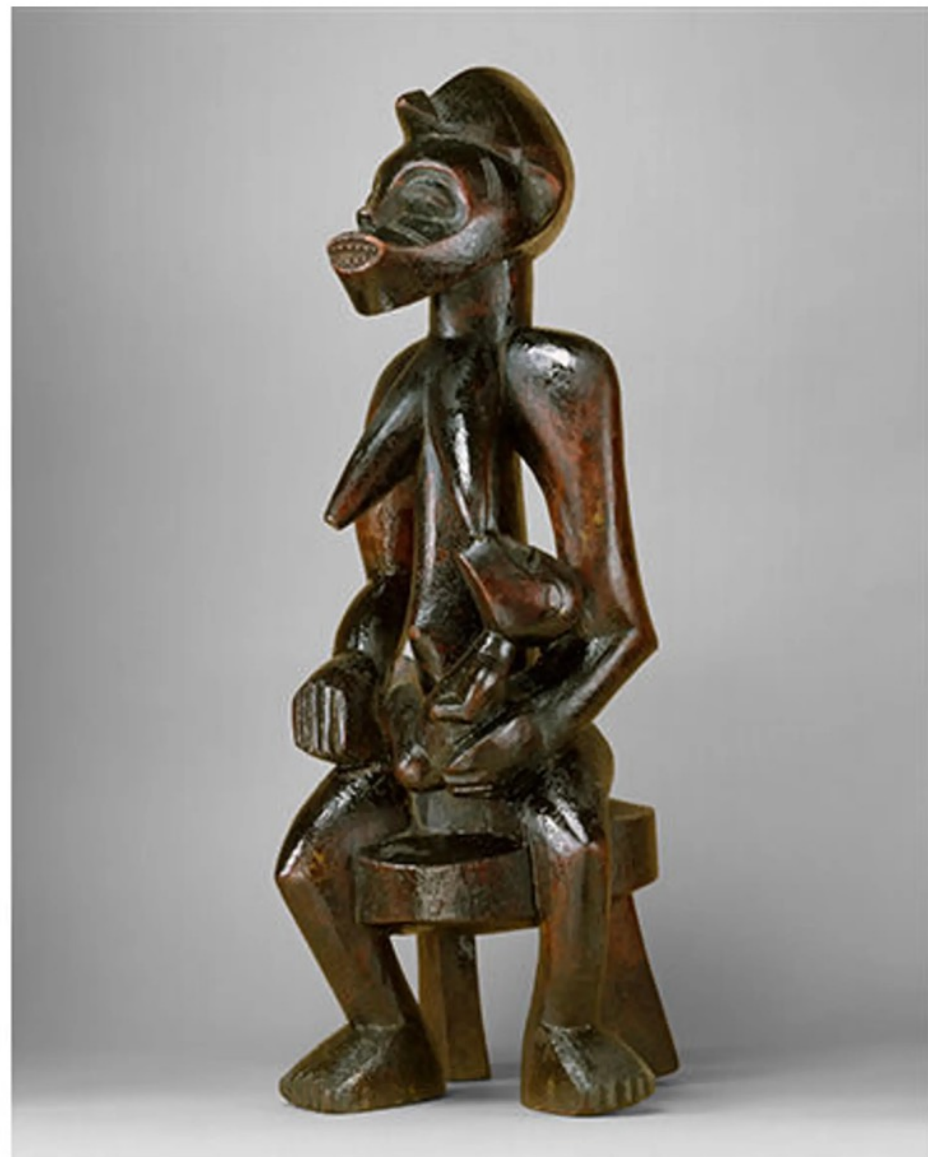
Left: The King's Acquaintances Memi and Sabu, ca. 2575-2465 B.C. Egyptian (48.111)



Right: Seated Couple, 18th–early 19th century. Dogon artist; Mali (1977.394.15)



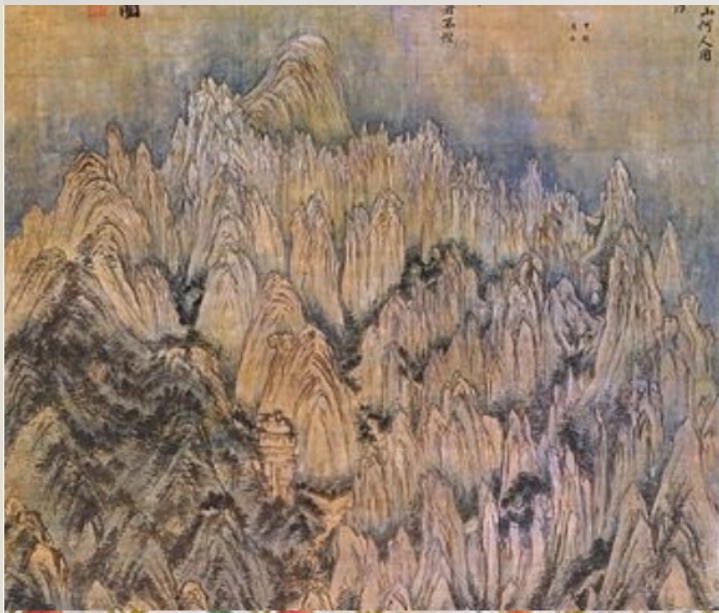
Left: The Goddess Isis and her Son Horus, 332–30 B.C. Egyptian (55.121.5)



Right: Tyekpa Maternity Figure, late 19th–mid 20th century. Senufo artist; Côte d'Ivoire (1981.397)



Like other 'underpinnings' of Intro courses, such as chronology, visual analysis requires context.





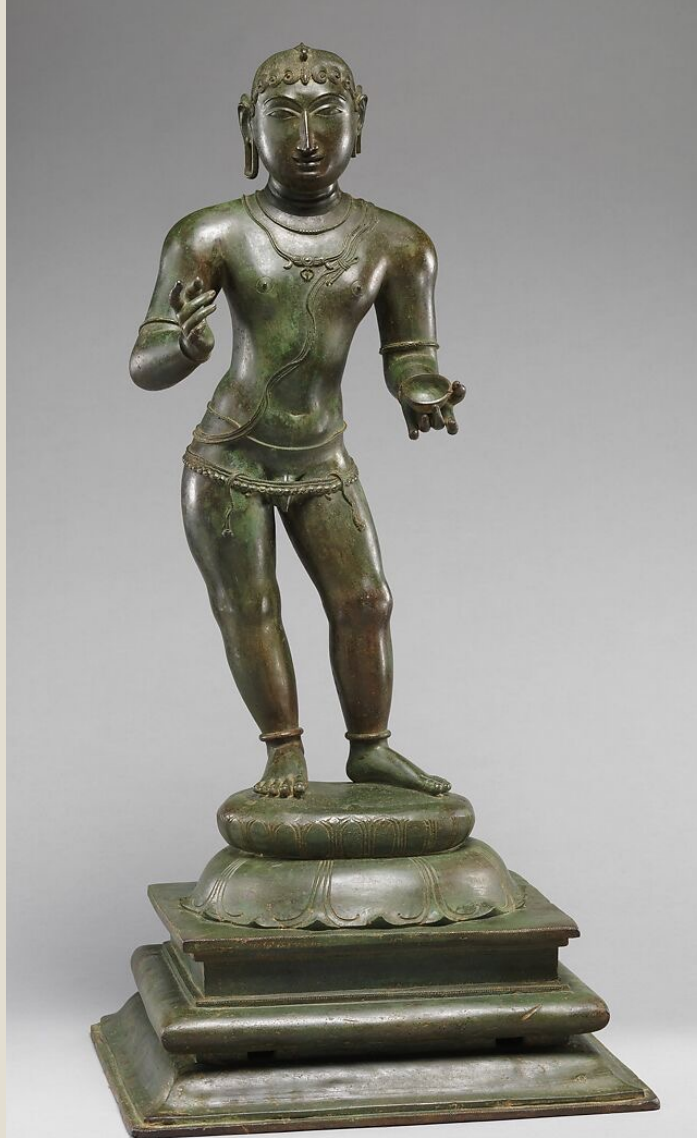
Student Question:

Is this contrapposto?

Pair of Diviner's Figures
Baule peoples
19th–mid-20th century

How does each pose express liveliness?
Do these show "real" bodies" or an ideal?

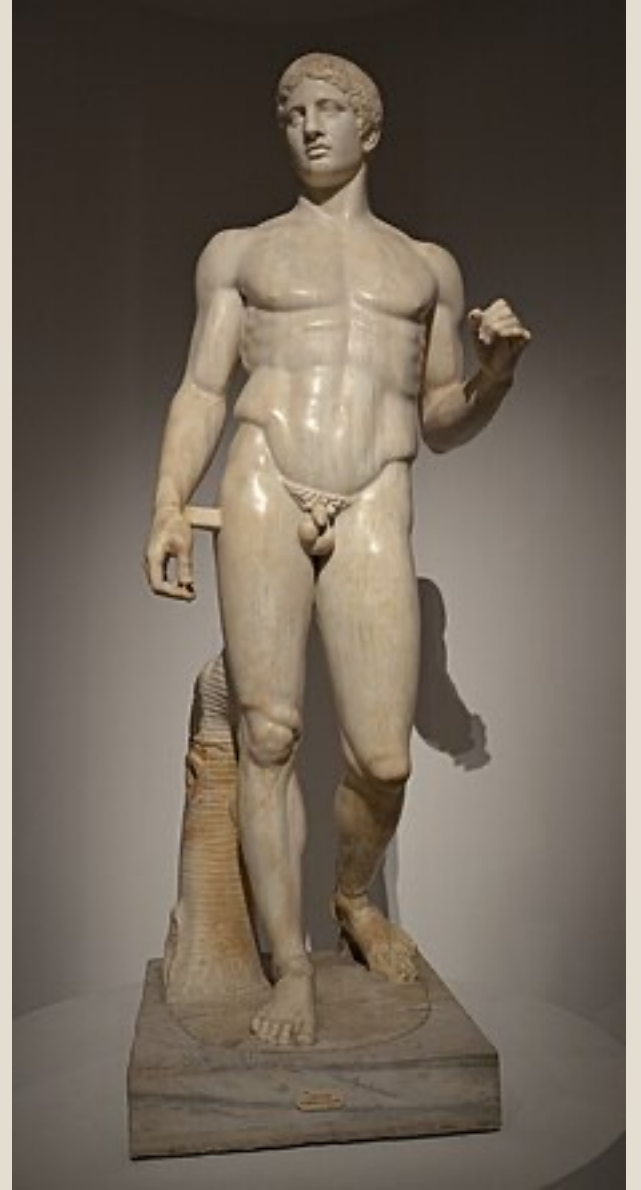
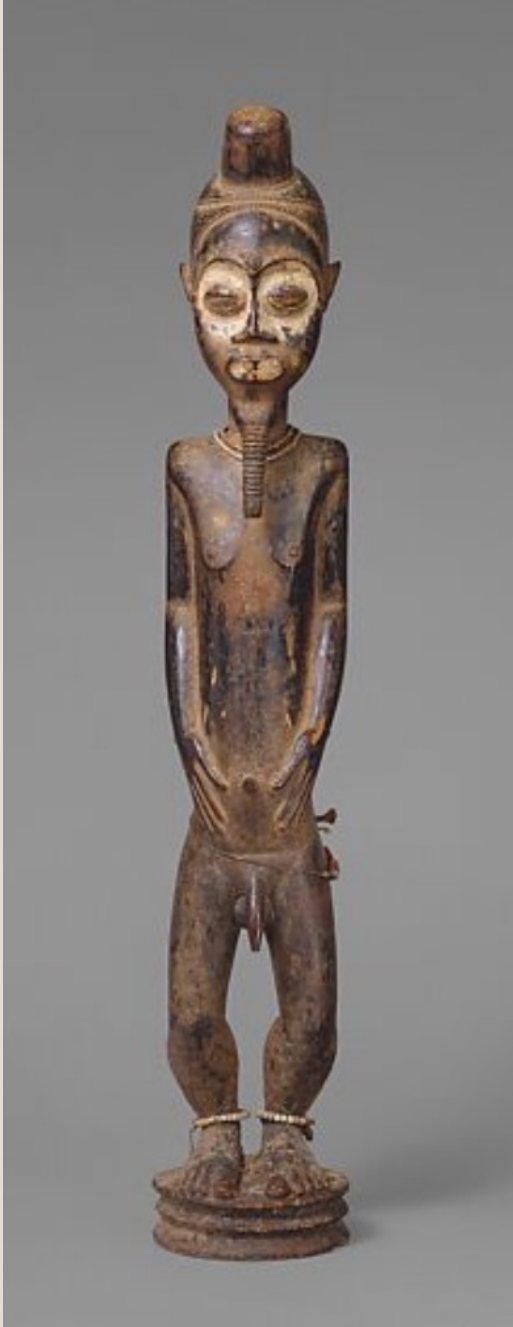
Tribhanga



Child Saint Sambandar
India, Tamil Nadu
late 11th century



Contrapposto





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