Abacus. The Latin equivalent of the Greek abax or abakion, which are not used by writers in English (abakos in late Greek is a back-formation from the Latin). It means a flat rectangular slab, used in architecture as the name of the low square or rectangular (in the Ionic Order) block of stone which comes between the capital of a column and the main beam (architrave or epistle) above it. The same word was also used to describe a slab or board used to make calculations, with counters arranged in rows on top of it or sliding in grooves, an important item of equipment for tax collectors, merchants or money changers.

Abaton. ‘Not to be entered’, a word used in Greek to describe a place to which entry was forbidden or restricted, a ‘tabu house’ as it were. The best known example is a building at the healing sanctuary of Epidaurus which bore this name. Here pilgrims in poor health slept, awaiting a divinely inspired message from Aesculapius (cf. Adytum).

Abutment. The part of a structure on which the thrust of an arch or a vault is exerted.

Acanthus. A plant, the leaves of which inspired the ornamentation of the Corinthian and Composite capitals.

Accidental red. An unintentional red area appearing on a part of a vase which was intended to be black, as a result of incorrect preparation in the black or red figure techniques of vase decoration, or faulty stacking of vases in a kiln or of the entry of fresh air into a kiln at the wrong moment during the firing process.

Acrolithic/acrometallic. ‘With stone (or metal) extremities’. Some ancient Greek statues were made on a timber framework with sheets of various materials laid over it to simulate drapery, while the head, hands and feet were made in marble or in metal.

Acropolis. ‘High city, top of the city’. Many Greek cities grew up around a central high point, which in the earliest times might be fortified as a citadel. Later, as cities expanded and built fortification walls covering larger areas, it became customary to give the acropolis over to temples and other sacred buildings. The equivalent word in Latin, less frequently used, is arx. At Corinth the acropolis was called Acrocorinth.

Acroterium. An ornament, either purely decorative in form or representing a human or animal figure, which was placed at each corner of the gable of a building or on the ridge of a roof. Acroteria may in the earliest stages of ancient architecture have had a protective or apotropaic purpose.

Actor’s mask, see Mask.

Added colours. In black and red figure vase painting the principal colours were produced not by pigments but by a chemical process which depended for its successful outcome on the correct execution of a series of stages in the firing of the pottery. Subsidiary colours, however, were produced by the use of pigments, either before or after firing, and it is these which are said to be ‘added’.

Adjunct, see Attribute.

Adlocutio. ‘Address’, a word used by modern writers to describe a scene which is part of the repertoire of Roman Imperial art, showing an emperor addressing his troops. It is found frequently on relief sculpture and on coins. The pose and military costume of the free-standing statue of Augustus from Prima Porta suggests that it is intended to represent the emperor on an occasion of this kind.

Adventus. ‘Arrival’, the name used by modern writers to describe a scene in Roman Imperial art in which an emperor is shown arriving at a city, and being welcomed by its citizens and by its gods. It is found frequently on relief sculpture and on coins. The emperor may be represented on foot or mounted. The well
known ‘Province’ series of coins struck by Hadrian to commemorate his journeys shows the Adventus of Hadrian in each of the provinces which he visited.

Adytum. Like abaton, this word means ‘not to be entered’. It describes an inner room or shrine in a temple, access-ible only from the cela, of the sort to which entry would be refused except to priests or initiates (cf. Opisthodomus).

Aedes/aedicula. In Latin aedes means any kind of building, usually one of a monumental kind, and is frequently found as the name of a temple; thus aedes Cereris is the temple of Ceres. The diminutive form aedicula is used to describe a representation of the front of a temple-like building which was often placed upon a wall to frame a painting or a statue (particularly, in a Roman house, the shrine which held the Lares).

Aegina/Aigina. An island in the Saronic Gulf, not far from Athens, which was a centre for the production of bronze work, particularly in the late archaic and classical periods. It was also the home of a major sculptor who flourished c. 500 B.C., Onatas of Aegina, who may have been responsible for some of the work on its most famous monument, the temple of Aphaia. Aegina was also probably the first place in mainland Greece to mint coins, using silver imported from elsewhere, principally Siphnos. These coins were exported to many other places which lacked silver. The Aeginetan coin weight standard (drachma of 6.1g, stater of 12.2g) was used elsewhere, for instance in the Peloponnese, at Delphi and on Crete.

Aegis/aigis. A shield or cloak which originally belonged to Zeus, but was sometimes borrowed by his daughter Athena. It had representations of Terror and Fear upon it, and when shaken it would put an enemy to flight. It is possible that the name was originally connected with a Greek word aix, meaning a whirlwind or hurricane, but the existence of another word aigos, ‘goat’, seems also to have affected the interpretation of it. In Greek art it is represented as a short cape, perhaps of goatskin, reaching almost to the elbows, decorated at the edge with protomes of snakes and with a gorgoneion at the front and in the centre. It had the power to protect as well as to terrify; hence the expression ‘under the aegis of...’. In Greek art it is most often worn by Athena and in Roman art by Minerva. Since, however, it is also an attribute of Zeus or Jupiter, Roman emperors occasionally wear it.

Aemilius Paullus, monument of. A monument set up at Delphi to commemorate the victory of the Roman Aemilius Paullus over the Macedonians at the battle of Pydna in 168 B.C. It consisted of a masonry base which supported an equestrian statue of the victorious general. Around the top of the base ran a frieze showing a battle between Roman and Macedonian soldiers. Only the lower part of the monument survives (the bronze equestrian statue has disappeared), but it is of interest because it provides us with an early example of the way in which the Romans, as patrons, encouraged the use of subjects of a historical rather than a mythological nature for commemorative works of this kind.

Aeolic. Part of the north-western area of Asia Minor is known as Aeolis, and some of the archaic column capitals decorated with volute or spiral forms which seem to have preceded the full development of the Ionic order have been found there. For this reason ‘Aeolic’ is sometimes used as an alternative to ‘Proto-Ionic’ as a name for column capitals of this kind, even when they are found elsewhere, e.g. at Delphi. The term has little merit (see Ionic).

Aerarium. The Roman name for a treasury, either in the sense of a building or of a large sum of money stored up (from the Latin aes, ‘bronze’). During the Roman Republic the central or principal treasury of the Roman state was located in the temple of Saturn on the edge of the Forum at the foot of the Capitoline Hill, a short distance from the mint where coins were prepared. It may have been moved to a building to the east of the Colosseum in the Flavian period, because the mint was certainly relocated to the bottom of the Caelian Hill.

Aes. The Latin word for copper or bronze, often used as a general word referring to money or coinage in any metal. It occurs regularly in a number of phrases, some of which are used by modern writers although not always in the same sense as in ancient texts. Aes rude means ‘crude, unworked bronze’, and is used to describe the lumps of cast bronze which are sometimes found in archaeological contexts of a kind which suggests that they were thought of as objects of value. Their value, of course, would depend on their
weight, and unlike coins, pieces of *aes rude* would have had to be weighed on every occasion on which there was a purchase or exchange. *Aes signatum* means ‘marked, stamped bronze’. In the Roman Republic the expression seems to have been used to indicate coinage (as opposed to ‘worked bronze’, *aes factum*, i.e. bronze which had been made into objects of one kind or another and *aes infectum*, ‘unworked bronze’). Modern writers often use the phrase, by convention rather than because it has any ancient authority, to describe the cast bronze bars, about five Roman pounds in weight, which preceded the more normal coinage in bronze and silver which began c. 300 B.C. *Aes grave*, ‘heavy bronze’ is another phrase which is regularly used by modern writers in a sense different from the one which it had in ancient times. It is now often used to describe any of the early Roman cast bronze coinage, and some of the earlier struck pieces, which were issued during the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. When the expression first began to be used, however, it seems in fact to have denoted bronze coins of a full libral standard, such as were struck before the weights of the bronze coinage began to be reduced, or to calculations made or fines or expenditures determined on the basis of this unit.

**Aetos.** ‘Eagle’, the Greek word which was sometimes used in poetic language to describe the pediment of a building. The image is perhaps inspired by the image of an eagle resting with its wings lowered towards the ground on each side.

**Agathodaemon.** ‘Good spirit’, the Greek name for an Egyptian deity who promoted the fertility of the earth. He was sometimes worshipped in human form, and sometimes in the form of a serpent.

**Agias.** A pancratiast (engaging in a mixture of boxing and wrestling) of the 5th century B.C. who was commemorated in the following century by one of his descendants. Statues of the famous victor were set up at his home town of Pharsalus in Thessaly, and at Delphi where he had won many of his victories. The marble base of the statue at Pharsalus (which was probably made in bronze) survives, and the inscription on it names Lysippus as the artist. A marble copy was discovered at Delphi; it is uncertain whether this is also the work of Lysippus, or whether it only reflects his style in a general way, with some features being attributable to the hand of a copyist.

**Ager.** ‘Mound, rampart’, particularly a rampart around a Roman military camp, formed from soil excavated from the perimeter ditch, or *fossa* (see Vallum).

**Agonistic.** From the Greek *agon*, ‘contest’, meaning ‘connected with a contest’, either as a prize or in some other way. An agonistic urn is an urn given as a prize, and a scene of athletes or chariot races may be described as agonistic.

**Agora.** ‘Assembly’, the principal public area of a Greek city in which the citizens were most likely to meet in formal or informal assemblies. Although it might contain temples, it was principally devoted to administrative, political and commercial activities. It was the approximate equivalent of the Roman forum.

**Aion,** see Apotheosis.

**Aisle,** see Ala.

**Akakia.** This word appears in two forms in Byzantine texts, either as *akakia*, ‘not-evil’ or *alexikakia*, ‘averting evil’. It was the name of a bag containing dust (a symbol of the transitory nature of human life) held by the emperor. It is easily confused with the *mappa*, which it seems to have replaced as an item of the imperial regalia in the 7th century A.D.

**Ala.** ‘Wing’, a word used in Latin for a side room off the atrium of a Roman house, and then for each of the side passages in a church or basilica flanking the central nave. In English the word became confused with the word for an island, *ile* or *yle*, and when this began to be spelt with an *s* in the 18th century, the combined form ‘aisle’ became regular.

**Alabastos or Alabastron.** ‘Alabaster’; also a small vase of more or less tubular form, four to eight inches long, used for perfumes or ointments. It was not necessarily made from alabaster, although the name suggests this. Because of its form a Greek comic writer could use it as a synonym for ‘penis’.

**Alabastotheca.** Literally, a container for objects or ornaments in alabaster; more generally, a casket or box used for storing valuable objects of other kinds.
**Aldobrandini wedding.** A wall painting discovered at Rome in a building in the so-called Gardens of Maecenas, and once owned by the Aldobrandini family. It is now in the collections of the Vatican. It shows a wedding scene. The most likely subject is the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. It certainly belongs to the time of Augustus, and may have been inspired by a marriage in the imperial family.

**Alexander mosaic.** A floor mosaic found at Pompeii in an exedra in the House of the Faun. It represents a battle, probably the Battle of Issus in 333 B.C. at which Alexander the Great defeated King Darius of Persia. The composition is not well suited to the decoration of a floor, and the mosaic is best explained as a reproduction in this medium of a famous earlier painting. Several artists may be suggested as the creators of the original design c. 300 B.C. The mosaic copy at Pompeii is to be dated at the beginning of the 1st century B.C., quite early in the decorative history of the house in which it was found.

**Altar.** Altars in the ancient world took widely varying forms. The simplest was a small stone or terracotta base on which offerings could be placed or a small fire lit. At the other extreme there was the altar of Hiero(n) II at Syracuse, built between 241 and 215 B.C. This was a stone platform 200 metres in length and 23 metres in width, large enough for a hecatomb (a hundred oxen) to be sacrificed at once. Another notable altar was that of Zeus at Pergamum. The altar itself, built in the 2nd century B.C., was not of abnormally large size, but was distinguished by the podium and colonnade surrounding it. These were decorated with an external frieze showing a gigantomachy and an internal one showing events in the life of the hero Telephus. The Ara Pacis Augustae is another example of an altar which was surrounded by an enclosure decorated with sculpture (cf. Ara).

**Alto rilievo,** see High relief.

**Amazonomachy.** A battle between Greeks and Amazons, a mythical race of warrior women. In Greek art it may be supposed to represent either a battle which occurred as the Greeks went on their way to attack Troy, or a later attempt by the Amazons to invade Attica, when they were defeated by Theseus. Amazons are represented in Greek art as women wearing short chitons, usually armed, sometimes helmeted and sometimes riding. The fashion of representing them with one or both breasts bare led to (or was inspired by) the supposed derivation of their name from the Greek a-mazos, meaning ‘not-breast’; this was sometimes fancifully interpreted as meaning that each of them had cut off a breast so that it would not interfere with the drawing of a bow.

**Amentum.** A strap or thong attached to the middle of a spear, which aided the throwing of it.

**Amphitheatres.** Round-about theatre’, a double theatre, i.e., a building in the form of two theatres joined together to make an elliptical seating area, with a flat space in the middle. We normally think of amphitheatres, which were so often used for gladiatorial contests and wild beast hunts, as being a part of Roman rather than of Greek civilisation, but the fact that the name is Greek reminds us that the earliest permanent amphitheatres of which we have knowledge belong to the southern part of Italy, where Greek was spoken; for instance, the amphitheatre of Pompeii was built a generation before the earliest stone amphitheatre at Rome (30 B.C.). The best known amphitheatre in the Roman world is the Flavian Amphitheatre at Rome, usually known as the Colosseum. In addition to the types of display mentioned above, the central area or arena (‘sand’) of an amphitheatre could sometimes be flooded so that mock sea battles could take place there (but cf. Naumachia). Badly educated people now use ‘amphitheatre’ in the sense of ‘outdoor theatre’, but this neglects the true meaning of the word.

**Amphora.** This is the Latin form of the Greek amphoreus. The word should be pronounced with the stress on the first syllable, not on the second syllable. The Greek word and its plural amphoreis are not used in English. The Latin plural amphorae and the English ‘amphoras’ are both acceptable. Amphorai, however, which is sometimes found in modern books, should be avoided because although it looks Greek it is not the correct plural form. The word is a contracted form of amphiphoreus, ‘double carrier’, meaning that it is a vase with two carrying handles. Modern writers give the name of amphora to a variety of storage or cartage containers which have two vertical handles, a neck narrower than the body and a body which is wider at the shoulders than at the foot. Some amphoras have peg feet, and can only remain...
upright if placed in a stand or dug into the ground, and others have flat bases. The amphorae are pointed at the bottom and used for the transport and storage of liquids or grains. They occur in a wide variety of shapes, and often it is possible to identify their place of origin from the form or from the stamps which were sometimes impressed upon them at the time of their making.

The amphora was a favourite shape with vase painters. There are many basic forms among those which were chosen for decoration. In the Geometric period some of the best examples of vase painting are found on large examples of the type known as a neck amphora, because its neck takes the form of a separate cylinder set upon the body. This is also common in the archaic and early classical periods. Amphorae with the neck and body forming one unit, the so-called ‘one-piece’ amphorae, were also popular. One Athenian potter, Nikosthenes, is particularly associated with a form of amphora characterised by a neck which has the form of a truncated cone rather than of a cylinder. The form of this ‘Nikosthenic amphora’ can be paralleled in Etruscan work, so it may have been designed to appeal to the Etruscan market. Another distinctive form stands on a base, but has a bottom above this which narrows down more than usual, almost to a point. Many amphorae of this kind are decorated with the figure of an armed Athena on one side, and athletes or a chariot on the other, and also bear an inscription which makes it clear that they were given as prizes at the Panathenaic games at Athens. We call these Panathenaic amphorae, or ‘amphoras of Panathenaic form’ if they are of this shape, but decorated with subjects which are not agonistic.

Anadyomene. ‘Rising’, a title given to Aphrodite in scenes which show her rising from the waves of the sea. This alludes to the myth that told of her birth from the sea of Paphos at the southern end of Cyprus (for which reason she is sometimes called the Cyprian or Paphian goddess). The Ludovisi throne may represent this myth, as may a marble Aphrodite statue in the Syracuse museum which shows her wearing drapery that billows around her legs in a shape reminiscent of a sea shell.

Anathyrosis. From thyra, a door, the name which is given to a technique of joining stones in which no mortar is used, and where it is desired to save work on the vertical joints. The vertical sides of the stones are dressed to fit exactly for a few inches around the edges only, the areas inside these edges being roughly pecked back with a punch so that they do not touch the neighbouring stones. The effect is perhaps slightly reminiscent of an open doorway. The same technique was also sometimes used on column drums.

Ancestral bust. During the later years of the Roman Republic, and during the early Empire, it was the practice among upper-class Romans to keep in their houses portrait busts of the more notable earlier male members of their families. The appearance of some of these portraits suggests that they may have been made after death, although this is true of only a small minority. The busts were occasionally displayed on ceremonial occasions. The practice falls short of ancestor-worship, because there is no suggestion that the Romans regarded their ancestors as divine; the living descendants simply acquired merit from their association with the great men of the past. The Roman interest in portraits of this kind may have been inspired by Etruscan precedents.

Angel. From the Greek angelos, ‘messenger’, a word which has come to be used in the restricted sense of a messenger from God. In early Christian art the Victory or Victoria of classical art, a draped and winged female figure, was used as a model for these messengers. The Greek word is masculine (although it could be used of a female messenger), whereas most personifications such as Victory, are feminine (see Personifications). I there is any doubt as to the intended nature of a figure represented in art, it is only correct to classify it as an angel if it is appears to be male, or lacking in any clear sexual characteristics. In modern art, however, angels are sometimes represented as feminine.

Anta. In architecture, the decorated termination of a projecting wall, usually the side wall of a porch, which in the best buildings might receive the kind of decorations, mouldings and perhaps fluting, appropriate to an engaged column or a pilaster. When columns are placed between the antae in a porch, they are said to be in antis, ‘in the antae’.

Antefix. ‘Fixed before’, the name used to describe the stone or terracotta facing which covers the exposed outer edge of a roof tile along the line of a gutter. According to Vitruvius, it was desirable that in the best work they should lean very slightly outwards to avoid giving an impression of weakness when seen by a
viewer from below. (see Refinements). Antefixes were decorated either with an anthemion pattern or with human or animal heads, which may originally have had an apotropaic purpose.

**Anthemion.** ‘Flower, blossom’, a word occasionally used in Greek texts to describe a floral ornament on a work of architecture. The Greek texts do not give us enough information to make it clear what form these ornaments took. The word is sometimes used by writers in English as a name for a decorative band of palmettes, or of alternating lotuses and palmettes.

**Anthropomorphic.** ‘Human-shaped’, a term which is used to describe the practice, common in the art and literature of most countries, of representing divinities or abstract ideas in human form (cf. Personifications).

**Anvil die.** The die, set into a base or anvil, which set its impression on the lower side of a coin, or obverse, as opposed to the punch die, which struck it from above.

**Apex.** The small rod or spike, originally a twig, which projects from the top of the hat worn by some Roman priests (see Tutulus). The word later came to be used as a name for the whole hat.

**Aphlaston,** see Aplustre.

**Aphrodite.** A goddess worshipped throughout the Greek world. Greek mythology told of her birth near the island of Cyprus (see Anadyomene) and it may have been from that island that her cult spread; in Homer however, she is the daughter of Zeus and Dione. She is a goddess of fertility, usually human fertility, personifying the sexual instinct and the power of sexual love. In the archaic and early classical period she is represented in art in the same way as other goddesses, but with Praxiteles the tradition began of showing her nude, and as a result of this innovation there is a long series of nude Aphrodite types in Greek art, known to us for the most part through the medium of Roman copies. The most famous Aphrodite described in the literary sources was the Aphrodite made by Praxiteles for the people of Cnidus, which became a tourist attraction. Other well known Aphrodite or Venus types are the Aphrodite of Melos (the Venus de Milo), the Esquiline and Capitoline Venuses found in Rome and the Medici Venus which is now in Florence.

**Aplustre.** The Latin form of the Greek *aphlaston*, which might be translated ‘stern ornament’. It was a decorative extension of the stern post of a naval vessel, which in the simplest versions has the same form as the acrostolium at the prow (the words are sometimes confused). In its more mature form it is divided into several parts, and this gives it a more frond-like and spreading appearance. It was used in battle for displaying signals. It was usually supported by a vertical bar with a cross-piece. This bar was called a stylis, and the aplustre or aphlaston and the stylis occasionally appear in Greek and in Roman art as symbols of naval victory.

**Apollo.** A god worshipped throughout the Greek world and also later by the Romans. His cult had many aspects, the most important being those which associated him with the healing art of medicine, with music and with prophecy. Like his sister Artemis/Diana he is sometimes represented as a hunter and carries a bow (although this may also be interpreted as a symbol of plague, which he can send as well as cure). In art he is represented as a youthful male figure, usually nude, although when he appears as a musician he may wear a long robe and carry a lyre. His attributes as a god of prophecy are a tripod, or the omphalos or navel stone of Delphi, on which he sits. The name of ‘Apollo’ has often been applied to the early kouroi figures, but although some of them may have been intended to represent him, there is no justification for attaching it to them as a class.

**Apophyge.** ‘Fleeing away’, the imaginative name given to the curve at the base of an Ionic column where the flutes end and the column spreads out a little above the upper torus of the base.

**Apoptygma,** see Chiton.

**Apotheosis.** From *theos*, ‘god’, a Greek word meaning the elevation of a person to the status of divinity. In Greek mythology this was the fate of a small number of persons, usually of semi-divine parentage in the first place (e.g. Hercules, the Dioscuri). In the Roman Empire it became the practice for the Senate to deify emperors after their deaths (although deification was refused to some unpopular emperors). The practice began with Julius Caesar, who became Divus Iulius, ‘the Divine Julius’, and continued until the
beginning of the 5th century A.D., even after the introduction of Christianity. In Roman Imperial art
apotheosis scenes show an emperor or empress being carried heavenward by an eagle, the bird of Jupiter
(the base of the column of Antoninus Pius varies this theme by introducing a male figure which is
probably intended to represent Aion (‘Time, Eternity’).

On coins the same message is often expressed by the representation of an altar, perhaps with an eagle
standing on it, or by the representation of a funeral pyre (see Ustrinum).

**Apoprotapic.** ‘Turning away’, a word used of some deities who were considered to be protectors from evil,
and of works of art or decorations on buildings which seem (perhaps because of their fierce or ugly
appearance) to be designed to keep away evil spirits.

**Apoxyomenos.** ‘Scraping off’, a word which is given in Pliny’s *Natural History* as the name of a statue
by Lysippus which was brought to Rome at the end of the 1st century B.C. by Marcus Agrippa. It was said
to have so attracted the emperor Tiberius that he took it for himself, until the Roman people demanded
that it should be displayed in public again. The action of ‘scraping off’ refers to the use of a strigil as a
cleaning instrument.

Marble copies survive of the figure of an athlete with the slim proportions and relatively small head
which are believed to be ‘Lysippian’, (but cf. Agias) in an attitude which implies that he is using a strigil.
These are believed to be copies of the Apoxyomenos of Lysippus. The best known of these is in the
Vatican. The athlete uses the strigil with his left hand; this implies that the statue was originally one of a
pair, one left-handed and the other right-handed, an arrangement which the Roman habit of using statues
for purely decorative, rather than commemorative or cult purposes would have made common. There is no
reason to suppose that Lysippus made two statues.

**Aqueduct.** From the Latin *aqua* (or in late Latin *aqua* ductus), meaning a channel of water; an artificial
canal or channel directing water from one point to another. Some cities in the Greek world developed
aqueduct systems, but it was the Romans who practised this branch of engineering with the greatest
success. The aqueduct system of ancient Rome, developed during the Republic and early Empire, gave it a
better supply of water than many modern cities. Water was directed along channels which might be at
ground level, following the contours of the landscape where necessary, might go along underground
tunnels or might travel on rows of arches above ground. Outside Rome the remains of many ancient
aqueducts survive in the provinces; the best known are those at Nîmes in the south of France and at
Merida in Spain.

**Aquila.** ‘Eagle’ (see Standard).

**Ara.** An altar (see Altar). The word is used in the names of a number of Roman altars, e.g. the Ara Pietatis
or Altar of Piety at Rome. The most famous of these is the Ara Pacis Augustae or Altar of Augustan
Peace, which was constructed during the reign of Augustus. Its decoration shows a careful mixing of
mythological and historical elements combining scenes from the traditional early history of Rome,
representations of Roman personifications and divinities and portraits of the imperial family in the setting
of a procession of senators. This combination of elements was repeated in many later works of Roman
Imperial art.

**Araeostyle.** ‘Widely spaced’, a term used by Vitruvius to describe buildings in which the columns are
more than three column diameters apart, an arrangement which demands timber rather than the heavier
stone architraves (cf. *-style*).

**Arcade.** A row of arches supported by columns or piers, either as a decorative feature on its own or
supporting a roof or an upper story. Where the columns support flat lintels rather than arches, it is more
correct to speak of a colonnade or a portico.

**Arch,** see Vousoir, Corbel.

**Archaic.** The Greek words *archaios* and *archaios*, which mean no more than ‘old, old-fashioned’, were
used by writers of the classical and later periods to describe the art and architecture of earlier times.
Modern writers use the word ‘archaic’ in a more precise sense, to describe Greek art of the period c. 700
B.C. to 480 B.C., the latter date being that of the second Persian invasion of Greece, which is a convenient
point at which to divide artistic periods, although it did not in itself cause any change in style (in fact, in some parts of the Greek world, work in an ‘archaic’ style continued to be produced until the middle of the 5th century B.C. The principal characteristic of the archaic style is its gradual progression from a linear and geometric rendering of forms towards the more plastic and naturalistic style of the classical period (cf. Classical, Hellenistic). Work of the earlier part of the Roman Republic is also sometimes described as archaic, but the word is not so common in this context. The terms ‘archaising’ or ‘archaistic’ are also used to describe work which was deliberately produced in later periods in a style imitating the archaic. This is rare in purely Greek art, but objects of this kind were sometimes produced for Roman patrons who enjoyed this style or thought it appropriate in some decorative schemes, particularly in the 1st century B.C. and the 1st century A.D.

Architrave. ‘Principal beam’ (the Latin architrabs, cf. Trabeated), the member of a building which stretches across the columns, and supports any superstructure above. The alternative name ‘epistyle’, from the Greek epistylyon (cf. -Style) is less common.

Archon. ‘Leader, ruler’, the title of a principal magistrate in a number of Greek cities. At Athens the most important archon was called the eponymous archon (from the Greek onoma, ‘name’), who gave his name to the year in which he held office. This provided a system of dating which was used by many cities in the Greek world, just as the Romans used a system of dating years by the names of their consuls. Some late Panathenaic vases bear the names of eponymous archons on them, and can therefore be dated exactly. Many inscriptions can also be dated by the names of the archons mentioned in them.

Arena, see Amphitheatre.

Arretine ware, see Terra Sigillata.

Arris. A sharp edge formed by two flat or curved surfaces meeting at an angle. The word is most commonly used of the ridge formed where flutes meet in the Doric order (as opposed to the fillets of the Ionic order).

Artemision. A shrine or temple to Artemis. The most famous of these was at Ephesus. Here a temple to Artemis was erected in the middle of the 6th century B.C. (often called the Croesus temple). It was later destroyed, and was replaced by another in the 4th century. Other well known Artemisia were on the island of Delos and at the northern tip of the island of Euboea; the latter gave its name to the sea battle which was fought in the neighbouring waters during the second Persian invasion in 480 B.C.

Arx. A citadel (the Latin equivalent of the Greek acropolis).

Aryballos. The name now used to describe a small narrow-mouthed vase with a single handle or two handles at the neck, which is found in the Archaic period and later as a development from the small globular oinochoe which first appears in the Geometric period. There is no ancient authority for this, and the name may originally have referred to a small jug, but the convention of using the word in the way defined above is now well established. The first aryballoi appear among early Protocorinthian pottery and are round in form. Thereafter the shape becomes piriform or ovoid, and then round again. It was used as a container for perfumed oil, and in art is often shown as a part of the equipment of athletes, who would use it, together with a strigil, to anoint and scrape themselves after exercise.

As. In Latin this word meant a unit of anything, or the whole of a unit, as opposed to its fractions (it may be derived from a dialect form of the Greek word for ‘one’, heis). There is no connection with the word aes meaning ‘bronze’. It was used as the name of the first Roman bronze coins, which weighed one pound, because the pound was the basic unit of measurement, and it continued to be used thereafter as the name of the basic unit of bronze currency, even when as a result of many reductions in weight this came to weigh no more than half an ounce. A Roman as of the 3rd century B.C. may therefore weigh as much as 270g, but by the 3rd century A.D., when the as went out of production, its weight had dropped to such an extent that it sometimes weighed as little as 10g. During the Republic accounts were kept in asses until the middle of the 2nd century B.C. After that time the sestertius usually replaced the as as the standard unit of reckoning. In the Greek world an alternative form of the Latin word, assarion, was used in some cities as the name of a bronze coin. This was not necessarily of the same value as the Roman as, and was not
intended to be exchanged against it, since bronze coins did not normally have any official value outside the areas in which they were issued.

**Asclepieum/Asklepieion.** A shrine or temple of Aesculapius or Asklepios the god of healing (in Greek Asklepieion). The most important centres of his cult were at Epidaurus in the Peloponnese and at Athens, at Pergamum and on the island of Cos (cf. Abaton).

**Ashlar.** A rectangular block of stone; ashlar masonry is masonry made up of such blocks.

**Astragalus.** ‘Knuckle-bone’, which might be used in a children’s game just as in more modern times. There was also a kind of fortune-telling using knucklebones which was called astragalomancy. In architecture the name is given to a moulding of semi-circular profile which is decorated with alternate beads or berries and disk-like shapes which have reminded some of the shape of a cotton-reel; it is therefore also sometimes called bead-and-reel. An astragalus moulding or astragal is regularly placed at the top of the shaft of an Ionic column, and is also sometimes found in the Doric order.

**Atlas.** In Greek mythology Atlas was a Titan who was punished for attempting to overthrow Zeus by being made to carry the sky on his shoulders. He was then located at the western end of the Mediterranean. One of the last labours of Hercules was to obtain the golden apples which grew on a tree guarded by a fierce dragon in the same place, and he changed places with Atlas briefly while the Titan performed this dangerous task for him. In architecture a male figure supporting an architrave or console is sometimes called an Atlas figure (cf. Telamon).

**Atrium.** A large open space in a Roman house, normally roofed. The traditional derivation of the word, from *ater*, ‘black’ is explained as referring to its smoke-blackened walls (chimneys were not known in houses in the ancient world). Other rooms opened off it, and in most arrangements there was an entrance to the house at one side of it, and access to the rear parts of the house at the other. The atrium is an Italian feature of houses as opposed to the peristyle, which was adopted from the Greek world. Vitruvius gives us names for various kinds of atrium (which he calls *cavum aedium*, the ‘hollow of the house’). One type, the Testudinate (from *testudo*, tortoise), was entirely roofed over, while the others had an opening in the centre of the roof to admit rain water (a compluvium), which was collected in a basin set in the floor below (an impluvium) and was then led into an underground cistern where it was stored for household purposes. For small houses the simplest arrangement of this kind was the Tuscan, in which the roof beams stretched all the way across the atrium without any support in the middle. A Tetrastyle atrium, on the other hand, had four columns supporting the compluvium in the middle, and a Corinthian atrium had the same arrangement, but with more than four columns. Finally Vitruvius gives the name of Displuviate or ‘rain-shedding’ to an atrium which had a compluvium and impluvium, but had a roof which sloped towards the outside walls of the house. The name of Atrium was also given to some public buildings at Rome, e.g. the Atrium Vestae (of Vesta) and the Atrium Libertatis (of the personification of Liberty, to whom a cult was established).

**Attic.** Attica is the part of Greece which includes the city of Athens. Although Athens, rather than the countryside, is more likely to have inspired any developments which took place, it has nevertheless always been the standard practice, both in ancient and in modern times, to call the dialect of Athens Attic, its pottery Attic and the form of Ionic column base which is particularly associated with Athenian architecture of the 5th century B.C. an Attic base. The same word is also used with a quite different meaning, in the sense of an upper story, when we speak of the attic, or upper part, of a Roman monumental arch.

**Attic helmet,** see Helmet.

**Attribute.** Anything worn, carried by or attached to a figure which helps to identify it. So Hercules carries his club, or wears the skin of the Nemean lion which he slew, and Athena wears her aegis. It should be distinguished from an adjunct, which appears in the vicinity of the figure but is not attached to it. Often it is only by the attribute or adjunct associated with a mythological or divine figure, or a personification, that it can be identified. An object which is found as the attribute of a figure may also appear alone. In that case it is often possible that it is intended to be a symbol of that figure (see Symbol).
Augur. One of a college of Roman priests who practised a specialised form of divination which was concerned with predicting the success or failure of actions; for example, it was customary to ‘take the auguries’ before a battle. The traditional derivation of the word from the Latin *ausī*, ‘bird’, is probably not correct, but nevertheless the most common way of taking the auspices, as they were called, was to study the behaviour of wild or domesticated birds. The particular mark of the augur was a short staff with the end curving round into a flat spiral. This staff was called a lituus. When it appears on Roman coins it alludes to the holding of the augurate by the person in whose name the coin was issued, and in other works of art it may have the same meaning, or allude more generally to religious functions or offices.

Aulos. The Greek name (Latin *tibia*) for a musical instrument. The word is often rendered in English as ‘flute’, but since the aulos seems to have had a double reed mouthpiece, a nearer modern equivalent would be the oboe. Sometimes two auloi were joined together to make a double instrument which could produce a greater range of sounds. It could be equipped with a strap which went round the back of the neck of the player, and helped to keep it in place.

Auxerre goddess. A 7th century statuette of a kore, 65cm high, now in the museum at Auxerre in France, carved in the style which is sometimes called ‘Daedalic’, i.e. belonging to the earliest phase of archaic Greek art.