Gods and Garments
Textiles in Greek Sanctuaries in the 7th to the 1st Centuries BC
By Cecilie Brøns

Key Features:
· Examines temple inventories in order to investigate the role of textiles and clothing accessories in Greek sanctuaries in terms of attire, identity and position of individuals within the ancient Greek religious system
· Explores the use of textiles to dress ancient cult images
· Examines evidence for the dress codes in the Greek sanctuaries through an investigation of the existence of particular attire for ritual personnel and visitors to the sanctuaries using archaeological, iconography and written sources

Textiles comprise a vast and wide category of material culture and constitute a crucial part of the ancient economy. Yet, studies of classical antiquity still often leave out this important category of material culture, partly due to the textiles themselves being only rarely preserved in the archaeological record. This neglect is also prevalent in scholarship on ancient Greek religion and ritual, although it is one of the most vibrant and rapidly developing branches of classical scholarship. The aim of the present enquiry is, therefore, to introduce textiles into the study of ancient Greek religion and thereby illuminate the roles textiles played in the performance of Greek ritual and their wider consequences.

Among the questions posed are how and where we can detect the use of textiles in the sanctuaries, and how they were used in rituals including their impact on the performance of these rituals and the people involved. Chapters centre on three themes: first, the dedication of textiles and clothing accessories in Greek sanctuaries is investigated through a thorough examination of the temple inventories. Second, the use of textiles to dress ancient cult images is explored. The examination of Hellenistic and Roman copies of ancient cult images from Asia Minor as well as depictions of cult images in vase-painting in collocation with written sources illustrates the existence of this particular ritual custom in ancient Greece. Third, the existence of dress codes in the Greek sanctuaries is addressed through an investigation of the existence of particular attire for ritual personnel as well as visitors to the sanctuaries with the help of iconography and written sources.

By merging the study of Greek religion and the study of textiles, the current study illustrates how textiles are, indeed, central materialisations of Greek cult, by reason of their capacity to accentuate and epitomize aspects of identity, spirituality, position in the religious system, by their forms as links between the maker, user, wearer, but also as key material agents in the performance of rituals and communication with the divine.
Silk
Trade and Exchange along the Silk Roads between Rome and China in Antiquity
Edited by Berit Hildebrandt

Key Features:
· Multi-disciplinary analyses by leading international scholars of silk as a commodity, gift, tribute and status symbol in Antiquity
· Examines varying cultural and chronological contexts between East and West, including technological aspects of silk production
· Many excellent colour images of silk textiles

Already in Greek and Roman antiquity a vibrant series of exchange relationships existed between the Mediterranean regions and China, including the Indian subcontinents along well-defined routes we call the Silk Roads. Among the many goods that found their way from East to West and vice versa were glass, wine, spices, metals like iron, precious stones as well as textile raw materials and fabrics and silk, a luxury item that was in great demand in the Roman Empire. These collected papers connect research from different areas and disciplines dealing with exchange along the Silk Roads. These historical, philological and archaeological contributions highlight silk as a commodity, gift and tribute, and as a status symbol in varying cultural and chronological contexts between East and West, including technological aspects of silk production. The main period concerns Rome and China in antiquity, ending in the late fifth century CE, with the Roman Empire being transformed into the Byzantine Empire, while the Chinese chronology covers the Han dynasty, the Three Kingdoms, the Western and Eastern Jin and Sixteen Kingdoms, ending in 420 CE. In addition, both earlier and later epochs are also considered in order to gather an understanding of developments and changes in long-distance and longer-term relations that involved silk.

About the Author:
Berit Hildebrandt is a researcher at the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Textile Research at Copenhagen University, Denmark, where she specialises in the study of ancient silks and the silk trade. She is currently involved in a major project exploring changes in the costume of the Roman emperor, his family and his court from Augustus to the emperor Honorius (1st century BCE-5th century CE).
Ancient Historiography on War and Empire
Edited by Timothy Howe, Sabine Müller and Richard Stoneman

Key Features:
· Combines historial and literary evidence to explore context of history-writing in the ancient world and its focus on war and empire
· Takes key events from the Achaemenid Persian, Athenian, Macedonian and Roman 'empires' to analyse the way events and the accounts of those events interact
· Examines how leaders in the ancient Greek-speaking world balanced the reporting of facts on past events and warfare with shaping and guiding their contemporary political interests and behaviours

In the ancient Greek-speaking world, writing about the past meant balancing the reporting of facts with shaping and guiding the political interests and behaviours of the present. Ancient Historiography on War and Empire shows the ways in which the literary genre of writing history developed to guide empires through their wars. Taking key events from the Achaemenid Persian, Athenian, Macedonian and Roman 'empires', the 17 essays collected here analyse the way events and the accounts of those events interact.

Subjects include: how Greek historians assign nearly divine honours to the Persian King; the role of the tomb cult of Cyrus the Founder in historical narratives of conquest and empire from Herodotus to the Alexander historians; warfare and financial innovation in the age of Philip II and his son, Alexander the Great; the murders of Philip II, his last and seventh wife Kleopatra, and her guardian, Attalos; Alexander the Great's combat use of eagle symbolism and divination; Plutarch's juxtaposition of character in the Alexander-Caesar pairing as a commentary on political legitimacy and military prowess, and Roman Imperial historians using historical examples of good and bad rule to make meaningful challenges to current Roman authority. In some cases, the balance shifts more towards the 'literary' and in others more towards the 'historical', but what all of the essays have in common is both a critical attention to the genre and context of history-writing in the ancient world and its focus on war and empire.

About the Author:
Timothy Howe is Associate Professor of History and Ancient Studies at St. Olaf College (USA). His main research interests are in Alexander the Great, ancient Mediterranean warfare, agriculture, law, religion, trade, and, Greek and Latin epigraphy.

Sabine Müller is Professor of Ancient History at Marburg University (Germany) where she specialises in ancient Near East, Greece, Macedonia and Rome including iconography and the study of ancient writers in relation to archaeological evidence. Richard Stoneman is Honorary Visiting Professor at the University of Exeter (UK) with particular research interest in the continuity of the Greek world and Greek tradition up to the present day and in Alexander the Great, especially in later legend.
Archaeology the Homeric Epic
Edited by Susan Sherratt and John Bennet

The relationship between the Homeric epics and archaeology has long suffered mixed fortunes, swinging between 'fundamentalist' attempts to use archaeology in order to demonstrate the essential historicity of the epics and their background, and outright rejection of the idea that archaeology is capable of contributing anything at all to our understanding and appreciation of the epics. Archaeology and the Homeric Epic concentrates less on historicity in favour of exploring a variety of other, perhaps sometimes more oblique, ways in which we can use a multi-disciplinary approach – archaeology, philology, anthropology and social history – to help offer insights into the epics, the contexts of their possibly prolonged creation, aspects of their 'prehistory', and what they may have stood for at various times in their long oral and written history.

The effects of the Homeric epics on the history and popular reception of archaeology, especially in the particular context of modern Germany, is also a theme that is explored here. Contributors explore a variety of issues including the relationships between visual and verbal imagery, the social contexts of epic (or sub-epic) creation or re-creation, the roles of bards and their relationships to different types of patrons and audiences, the construction and uses of 'history' as traceable through both epic and archaeology and the relationship between 'prehistoric' (oral) and 'historical' (recorded in writing) periods. Throughout, the emphasis is on context and its relevance to the creation, transmission, re-creation and manipulation of epic in the present (or near-present) as well as in the ancient Greek past.

About the Author:
John Bennet is Director of the British School at Athens (London) and Professor of Aegean Archaeology at the University of Sheffield. His main research interests include the archaeology of complex societies (particularly the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures of the Bronze Age Aegean); the archaeology and history of Crete; early writing and administrative systems (especially Linear B) and Ottoman Greece.

Susan Sherratt is Reader in Mediterranean Archaeology at the University of Sheffield. Her research interests are in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages of the Aegean, Cyprus and the wider eastern Mediterranean, particularly in all aspects of trade and interaction within and beyond these regions and in exploring the ways in which the Homeric epics and the archaeological record can most usefully be combined.