

## Facing the Gods

This is the first history of epiphany as both a phenomenon and a cultural discourse within the Graeco-Roman world. It explores divine manifestations and their representations both in art and in literary, historical and epigraphic accounts. The cultural analysis of epiphany is set within a historical framework that examines its development from the archaic period to the Roman Empire. In particular, a surprisingly large number of the images that have survived from antiquity are not only religious but epiphanically charged. Verity Platt argues that the enduring potential for divine incursions into mortal experience provides a reliable cognitive structure that supports both ancient religion and mythology. At the same time, Graeco-Roman culture exhibits a sophisticated awareness of the difficulties in apprehending deity and representing divine presence, and of the potential for the man-made sign to lead the worshipper back to an unmediated epiphanic encounter.

VERITY PLATT is Associate Professor in the departments of Classics and Art History at Cornell University, having previously taught at the universities of Exeter and Chicago. Her research interests include attitudes to the sacred image in antiquity, ancient theories of representation, the relationship between image and text, and Roman wall-painting and funerary art. This is her first book.

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Verity Platt

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Art, Literature and Religion

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*To my parents,  
Jane and Richard Platt,  
with love and thanks.*

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Colours are all muddled up  
and the image is entangled  
with the thing  
and the eyes burn.

Saadi Youssef, *Poetry*

He believed that it was for the man of letters to record these  
epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves  
are the most delicate and evanescent of moments.

James Joyce, *Stephen Hero*

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## Note on the text

Faced with the classicist's familiar dilemma over dating and nomenclature, I have used BCE/CE rather than BC/AD for dates, and have retained the familiar Latin forms of Greek names, except in Chapter 8, where (with the exception of Selene), I have used the Roman rather than Greek names of deities portrayed in Roman funerary art. Any abbreviations in the main text that are not listed on pp. xvi–xviii employ the conventions of Liddell and Scott's *Greek–English Lexicon* (LSJ). Translations are my own, unless otherwise stated.

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## Abbreviations

AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
A&A	<i>Antike und Abendland. Beiträge zum Verständnis der Griechen und Römer und ihres Nachlebens</i>
AION	<i>Annali dell'Istituto universitario orientale di Napoli</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJPh	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
AntC	<i>L'Antiquité classique</i>
Anth. Pal.	<i>Anthologia Palatina</i>
Anth. Plan.	<i>Anthologia Planudea</i>
AntK	<i>Antike Kunst</i>
ArchEph	<i>Αρχαιολογική Ἐφημερίς</i>
ARV <sup>2</sup>	Beazley J. D. <i>Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters</i> . Oxford, 1963
ASR	<i>Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs</i> . Berlin
AthMitt	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i>
BABesch	<i>Bulletin Antieke Beschaving. Annual Papers on Classical Archaeology</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
BICS	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, University of London</i>
BMMA	<i>Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art</i>
BSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
Carm. Epigr.	Buecheler, F. and A. Riese (eds.). <i>Anthologia Latina sive Poesis Latinae Supplementum. Pars Posterior: Carmina Epigraphica. Fasciculus II</i> . Leipzig, 1897
Carm. Sep.	Kholodniak, I. I. (ed.). <i>Carmina Sepulcralia Latina</i> . St Petersburg, 1897
CEG	Hansen, P. A. <i>Carmina Epigraphica Graeca</i> . 2 vols. Berlin, 1983–9
CIA	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Atticarum</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
CJ	<i>Classical Journal</i>
ClAnt	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
CPh	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CRAI	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>



CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CW	<i>Classical World</i>
DK	Diels, H. (ed.). <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> . 6th edn. Rev. W. Kranz. 3 vols. Berlin, 1952
EA	<i>Epigraphica Anatolica</i>
EG	Kaibel, G. <i>Epigrammata Graeca</i> . Berlin, 1878
EL	<i>Études de lettres</i>
GP 1965	Gow, A. S. F. and D. L. Page. <i>The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams</i> . 2 vols. Cambridge, 1965
GP 1968	Gow, A. S. F. and D. L. Page. <i>The Greek Anthology. The Garland of Philip and Some Contemporary Epigrams</i> . 2 vols. Cambridge, 1968
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
FD	<i>Fouilles de Delphes</i>
FGrH	Jacoby, F. (ed.). <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Berlin and Leiden, 1923–62
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
I. Iasos	(IK 28.1–2) Blümel, W. <i>Die Inschriften von Iasos</i> . 2 vols. Bonn, 1985
I. Knidos	(IK 41) Blümel, W. <i>Die Inschriften von Knidos</i> . Bonn, 1992
I. Mylasa	(IK 34–5) Blümel, W. <i>Die Inschriften von Mylasa</i> . 2 vols. Bonn, 1987–8
I. Stratonikeia	(IK 21, 22.1, 22.2) Şahin, M. Ç. <i>Die Inschriften von Stratonikeia</i> . 3 vols. Bonn, 1981, 1982, 1990
ICS	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae. Consilio et Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Berolinensis et Brandenburgensis Editae</i> . Berlin, 1873–
IK	<i>Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien</i> . Bonn, 1972–
Inschr. Perg.	Fraenkel, M. <i>Die Inschriften von Pergamon</i> . <i>Altertümer von Pergamon</i> 8. 2 vols. Berlin, 1890–5
IOSPE	Latyshev, V. V. <i>Inscriptiones Antiquae Orae Septentrionalis Ponti Euxini</i> . St Petersburg, 1916
IstMitt	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen</i>
IvM	Kern, O. <i>Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander</i> . Berlin, 1900
JDAI	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRH	<i>Journal of Religious History</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
KA	Kassel, R. and C. Austin. <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> . Berlin, 1983–

KRS	Kirk, G. S., J. E. Raven and M. Schofield. <i>The Presocratic Philosophers. A Critical History with a Selection of Texts.</i> 2nd edn. Cambridge, 1983
LBW	Le Bas, P. and W.-H. Waddington. <i>Voyage archéologique en Grèce et en Asie Mineure.</i> 3 vols. Paris, 1851–70
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae.</i> Zurich, 1981–99
LSAM	Sokolowski, F. <i>Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure.</i> Paris, 1955
Mansi	Mansi, J. D. <i>Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio.</i> 31 vols. Florence and Venice, 1759–98
MD	<i>Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici</i>
MÉFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité</i>
MH	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OGIS	Dittenberger, W. <i>Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae. Supplementum Sylloges Inscriptionum Graecarum.</i> 2 vols. Leipzig, 1903–5
PCPS	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
PMG	Page, D. L. <i>Poetae Melici Graeci.</i> Oxford, 1962
PPM	<i>Pompei. Pitture e mosaici.</i> Rome, 1990–2003
QUCC	<i>Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica</i>
RA	<i>Revue archéologique</i>
RAC	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i>
RCCM	<i>Rivista di cultura classica e medioevale</i>
RE	Pauly, A., G. Wissowa <i>et al.</i> <i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft.</i> Stuttgart, 1894–1980
REA	<i>Revue des études anciennes</i>
RhM	<i>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</i>
RIA	<i>Rivista dell'Istituto nazionale d'archeologia e storia dell'arte</i>
RM	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung</i>
RRC	Crawford, M. H. <i>Roman Republican Coinage.</i> Cambridge, 1974
RSP	<i>Rivista di studi pompeiani</i>
Sammelbuch	<i>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten.</i> Strasburg
SB	Shackleton Bailey, D. R. <i>Anthologia Latina.</i> Stuttgart, 1982
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
Syll. <sup>3</sup>	Dittenberger, W. <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum.</i> 4 vols. 3rd edn. Leipzig, 1960
SyllClass	<i>Syllecta Classica</i>
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>