

Bearing the Impossible: The Caryatid in Britain, 1790-1914

Two Volumes: Volume 1

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Abstract

The classical caryatid has been a ubiquitous presence in the art and architecture of Europe from antiquity onwards. This was especially the case from the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries when interest in the motif was at its height and versions of the caryatid made an appearance on a myriad built structures and *objets d'art* throughout Europe, while its influence was also particularly evident in the work of numerous renowned sculptors and painters. Yet, despite its prevalence across the centuries, and its especial position in Europe's art and architecture in the long nineteenth century, the caryatid in the modern period remains relatively neglected in studies of art and architectural history.

This thesis addresses the lacuna in previous scholarship by examining the modern presence of the caryatid, with a focus on Britain from 1790 to 1914. It comprises two parts, beginning with a historiographical analysis of the caryatid in Europe from antiquity onwards, focusing on Britain from the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries, in order to disclose the motif's visual predominance and to analyse the relationship between its use and contemporary artistic and architectural discourse. This is followed by three case studies that investigate the motif's notable presence in the architectural designs of John Soane (1753-1837), the drawings and paintings of Frederic Leighton (1830-1896), and the sculptural output of Alfred Stevens (1817-1875) and Alfred Gilbert (1854-1934). These demonstrate the pioneering and exemplary manner in which these British individuals employed the caryatid across a variety of media in the period from 1790 to 1914, which exposes their use of the motif in the construction of artistic identities and as a means of projecting cultural authority, as well as displaying their attempts to align their work with theories of classical ideality and intermediality in art.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

INTRODUCTION

‘Would it be permissible to speak of a Caryatid?’¹

*‘you can see the caryatids speak; if you can unlock the silence of the stone, you can begin to see why they take the form they do, and what effect they might have’.*² Marina Warner

*‘Il faut donc voir dans la cariatide bien plus que l’élément décoratif d’une façade: elle délivre un message, elle est chargée d’une mission’.*³ Jacqueline Nebout

In 2015 the Fondazione Prada in Milan held an exhibition entitled *Serial Classic* that focused on notions of reproduction, imitation, originality, and authenticity in classical sculpture. These themes were explored through a collection of ancient and modern copies of well-known sculptures from antiquity, comprising works such as the renowned *Discobolus* (Fig. 1.1), the *Doryphoros* (Fig. 1.2), and the *Crouching Venus* (Fig. 1.3), sculptures which have been reproduced innumerable throughout history and are traditionally associated with the ‘canon’ of classical art due to their exemplary status and consideration as idealised types.⁴ The culmination of the exhibition, or its ‘denouement’, featured several modern copies of the caryatid sculptures from the Greek temple known as the Erechtheion, and these signified the Greek ‘originals’, Roman ‘copies’, and later reproductions of these statues (Fig. 1.4).⁵ The exhibition’s inclusion of caryatids - the ancient Greek sculpted females that functioned as architectural columns - indicates how engaged the motif has been, especially in forms that copied or adapted the Erechtheion figures (Fig. 1.5), in the ancient and modern trajectory of paradigmatic works of classical sculpture. Indeed, the Erechtheion caryatids are somewhat exceptional in this context as they offer an example in which the ‘Greek original, acting as a model for a series of copies, has reached the present day’ (Fig. 1.6).⁶

¹ Lord Elgin quoted in Philip Hunt and Arthur Hamilton Smith, ‘Lord Elgin and His Collection,’ *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 36 (1916): 234.

² Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Vintage, 1996), 37.

³ ‘Thus we must see in the caryatid more than a decorative element on a facade: she delivers a message, she has been given a mission’. Jacqueline Nebout, *Les Caryatides de Paris* (Paris: Éditions Hervas, 1992), 12.

⁴ <http://www.fondazioneprada.org/project/serial-classic/?lang=en> (accessed on 5 June 2017).

⁵ Rosalind McKeever, ‘Fondazione Prada Celebrates Thousands of Years of ‘Unoriginal’ Art,’ *Apollo* (June 2015). Available at <https://www.apollo-magazine.com/fondazione-prada-celebrates-thousands-of-years-of-unoriginal-art/>.

⁶ Lucia Franchi Viceré, ‘SIX ORIGINALS, INNUMERABLE COPIES,’ in *Serial / Portable Classic: The Greek Canon and its Mutations*, eds. Salvatore Settis, Anna Anguissola, and Davide Gasparotto (Milan: Fondazione Prada, 2015), 228.

Like their famous counterparts whose original Greek sculptures have been lost, such as the *Discobolus* or *Doryphoros*, the Erechtheion caryatids have been reproduced since antiquity in sculpted copies, as well as in drawn, printed, and painted works, to an extent that would appear to exceed the number of similar reproductions of more well-known works within the accepted canon of classical sculpture. Following antiquity, knowledge of the Erechtheion type of caryatids was maintained through surviving fragments and casts of Roman copies, variations of which were reproduced in sketches, drawings, and prints, and which exerted a significant influence on the appearance of sculpted and painted caryatids created from the Renaissance onwards. The notable characteristics of the Erechtheion figures also had an impact on ideas and associations connected to the caryatid motif over time, as related in the works of scholars, antiquarians, architects, and artists throughout the Renaissance and modern periods in Europe.

The interest in the Erechtheion caryatids that was demonstrated across the centuries appears to have reached its zenith in the years following 1790, lasting until the early twentieth century, and this thesis examines the caryatid in Britain in that period. The enthusiasm for the caryatid was expressed at this time in the myriad adaptations of the Erechtheion figures that were adopted on a multitude of built structures in Europe and, to a lesser extent, America, in the period. From John Soane's early experiments in London (Fig. 1.7) to the work of Theophil Hansen later in the century in Vienna (Fig. 1.8), or the turn-of-the-century sculptures of Augustus Saint-Gaudens in New York (Fig. 1.9), the Erechtheion caryatid type was a consistent and overt presence in classically-influenced architecture for over one hundred years. Furthermore, the Erechtheion caryatids were reproduced for the cast collections of museums and universities in the same period, which underlined their importance to a scholarly understanding of paradigmatic works of ancient sculpture, while the enthusiastic employment of replicas seems to have spurred a wider architectural movement, in which a whole host of different varieties of caryatids appeared in cities throughout Europe, and further afield. In addition, the influence of this caryatid obsession was reflected in the incorporation of the motif into

other media, such as countless pieces of furniture and *objets d'art* and, crucially for this study, the work of established painters and sculptors.

This mass diffusion of the caryatid in the visual culture of the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries was matched by its presence in a multitude of textual sources, in publications on art, architecture, and aesthetics, as well as in more popular or non-specialist forms of literature such as magazine articles, novels, and poetry, which attests to a broad knowledge of the caryatid outside of strictly antiquarian, architectural, or artistic circles. The caryatid was employed by numerous authors as a widely-recognisable symbol or metaphor, exemplified in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 1856 epic poem *Aurora Leigh*, in which the eponymous protagonist speaks of standing 'fixed [...] arms up, like the caryatid' or the elaborate description of the luxuriant decor of Louis XIV's apartment with its 'gold embroidered caryatides fifteen feet high' in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* of 1891.⁷ Certain writers and poets made caryatids the central subject of their compositions, such as Théodore de Banville's celebratory poem of 1889, *Les Cariatides*, or Rainer Marie Rilke's eulogy of Auguste Rodin's *Fallen Caryatid Carrying Her Stone*, written in 1902.⁸

As the *Serial Classic* exhibition exemplified, the caryatid continues to act as a motif that is ever present in today's Western visual culture, although ubiquitous knowledge of it has been significantly reduced since the nineteenth century. Throughout the last one hundred years or so, architects have continued to adopt and adapt the motif, as demonstrated in the two Erechtheion copies placed by Berthold Lubetkin at the entrance to his Highpoint Two design in London, completed in 1938 (Fig. 1.10), or, in a more recent context, Jerzy Juczkowicz's bronze sculptures for Badowski Budzyński Architects' 1996-2000 Supreme Court Building in Warsaw (Fig. 1.11). Numerous twentieth-century artists were also fascinated by the distinct replicable qualities of the caryatid, discernible in its

⁷ Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1857), 45; Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (London: Ward, Lock and Co, 1891), 206.

⁸ Théodore de Banville, *Les Cariatides* (Paris: Jules Tardieu, 1864), 1-3; Rainer Marie Rilke, *Auguste Rodin* (Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1922), 44-45.

repeated appearance in the work of Amedeo Modigliani (Fig. 1.12) or the sculptor Ivan Meštrović (Fig. 1.13). The motif's ability to evoke and embody antiquity, a central proposition of this study, was a key reason for its adoption by painters in the same period, reflected in its notable presence in the work of post-war British artists such as Robin Ironside (Fig. 1.14) and Frank Runacres (1.15).

More recently, the continuous historic replication of the female body in the form of a caryatid was a central theme of the filmmaker Agnès Varda's 1984 documentary *Les Dites Caryatides*.⁹ Indeed, in the last forty years or so, numerous artists have drawn on the caryatid, inspired by the distinguishing formal elements of its representation of the female body as a symbolic and non-individualised subject, as well as the semiotic connotations of its load-bearing function, exemplified in work from Francesca Woodman's 1980 series of images entitled *Caryatid* (Fig. 1.16) to Janine Antoni's *Caryatid (Terra Cotta Amphora)* of 2003 (Fig. 1.17). The caryatid's evocation of the classical past, and antiquarian scholarship, which, as we will see, was central to its use throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has continued in a contemporary artistic context, as witnessed in Emily Allchurch's *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi (after Piranesi)* (Fig. 1.18), Alexey Morozov's *Cantata iTunes* (Fig. 1.19), and MP5's *Millennials* (Fig. 1.20), all created in 2016.¹⁰ For similar reasons, it has also been quoted in more popular forms of visual culture, wittily exemplified in Walt Disney's 1997 animated film *Hercules* (Fig. 1.21) or a 2017-18 shop window display for the luxury fashion brand Gucci (Fig. 1.22).

Alongside its visual presence, and as it has been since Lord Elgin brought one of the Erechtheion caryatids from the Acropolis to Britain early in the nineteenth century, the caryatid is the subject of political debate today, demonstrated in the contested issue of the return of the Parthenon sculptures to Greece. This has included calls from the Greek state for the return of the British Museum's

⁹ *Les Dites Caryatides* is available online at: <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x481w2> (accessed 28 January 2018).

¹⁰ See <http://magazine.art21.org/2011/03/14/weekly-roundup-94/194-660/>; <http://www.emilyallchurch.com/gallery/architectural-capricci/#bwg8/51>; [http://www.morosovart.com/Cantata iTunes](http://www.morosovart.com/Cantata_iTunes); <http://www.mpcinque.com/portfolio/millennials/> (all accessed on 28 January 2018).

Erechtheion figure to Athens and this desire has taken on a new impetus with the opening of the city's New Acropolis Museum in 2009, where the missing caryatid is glaringly absent from the display of the five other figures that supported the porch of the Erechtheion (Fig. 1.23).¹¹ Elements of this debate continue a discourse of loss and abduction, in relation to the solitary Erechtheion caryatid taken by Elgin, which has been present since its removal, exemplified in local Athenian legends that spoke of the missing caryatid being mourned by her remaining sisters on a nightly basis.¹²

Yet, despite the prevalence of the caryatid in Western culture from antiquity to today, and its especial position in nineteenth-century Europe's visual culture when interest in the motif was at its height, it remains relatively neglected in studies of art and architectural history. This is specifically the case in relation to post-antique examples of the motif as significant research has taken place on caryatids, and, in particular, the Erechtheion sculptures, in an ancient context. Such studies have mainly been conducted within the fields of Classics, Classical Studies, or Archaeology. Caryatids are a consistent addition in surveys, or general histories, of Greek, Roman, or classical art, where the Erechtheion caryatids are often highlighted as 'exemplary', the 'most influential', or the 'most satisfying examples'.¹³ Alongside this, there is a relatively rich corpus of specialist studies by classicists on the function and meaning(s) of the Erechtheion caryatids in antiquity. The earliest surviving evidence for the term 'caryatid' can be found in the Roman writer Vitruvius' first-century architectural treatise,

¹¹ See Margaret M. Miles, 'The Debate about Cultural Property,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture*, ed. Clemente Marconi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 512; James M. Beresford, 'The Caryatids in the New Acropolis Museum: Out of Sight, Out of Light, Out of Mind,' *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies* 14 (July 2016), at <https://www.jcms-journal.com/articles/10.5334/jcms.130/> (accessed on 9 September 2017).

¹² See, for example, 'Report from the Select Committee on the Earl of Elgin's Sculptured Marbles,' *The Quarterly Review* 14, no. 28 (January 1816): 527.

¹³ John Griffiths Pedley, *Greek Art and Archaeology* (London: Laurence King, 2002), 165, 268, 275; Gordon Campbell, ed., *The Grove Encyclopedia of Classical Art and Architecture*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 262; Martin Robertson, *A History of Greek Art*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 346. Also see John Boardman, *The Oxford History of Classical Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 120; Ian Jenkins, *Greek Architecture and its Sculpture in the British Museum* (London: The British Museum Press, 2006), 125-27; John Boardman, *Greek Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2016), 160.

where it is defined as an architectural sculpture representing an enslaved woman.¹⁴ There is, however, no coherent evidence to show that the Erechtheion sculptures themselves were known as ‘caryatids’ by the ancients. Indeed, a surviving fifth-century BC building inscription, which describes the construction and cost of the Erechtheion temple, simply designates the figures using the ancient Greek term *Korai*. This is typically translated as ‘maidens’ and scholars have also applied it to a type of freestanding female figural sculpture dating to the Archaic period (eighth to early fifth century BC) in Greece, which, through formal similarities, it has been suggested that the Erechtheion caryatids originated in (Fig. 1.24).¹⁵ As the Erechtheion *Korai* do not appear to adhere comfortably to the Vitruvian caryatid tradition, the intended representation and significance of the maidens is unclear and this has resulted in several studies on the subject over the past forty years or so.

In a 1979 essay on the origin of the caryatid generally, Hugh Plommer wrote that the Erechtheion sculptures, as they were not known as caryatids by the ancients, were only identified as such in the eighteenth century and, therefore, do not represent the enslaved figures Vitruvius referred to.¹⁶ Michael Vickers’ landmark essay of some six years later, however, examined the potential origins and symbolism of formal traits present on the Erechtheion sculptures and ultimately aligned them with the Vitruvian definition of caryatids as enslaved women, a stance that Vickers maintained in a 2014 publication on the subject.¹⁷ In the interim period, the art historian George Hersey demonstrated how the Erechtheion statues may be interpreted in several ways that contradict the Vitruvian understanding. He rejected the association with slavery by claiming that, in appearance, the maidens do not resemble prisoners and he posited that they might represent the daughter or daughters of the

¹⁴ Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, *Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. I Rowland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 22 (1.5).

¹⁵ The description of the caryatids as *Korai* can be found on a stele dated to 409BC, and now in the British Museum’s collection, which contains a report detailing the construction of the Erechtheion (BM Inscriptions 35). For a translation of the inscription, see <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGI3/474> (accessed 25 July 2017).

¹⁶ Hugh Plommer, ‘Vitruvius and the Origin of Caryatids,’ *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 99 (1979): 101-2.

¹⁷ Michael Vickers, ‘Persepolis, Vitruvius and the Erechtheum Caryatids: The Iconography of Medism and Servitude,’ *Revue Archéologique* 1 (1985): 3-28; Michael Vickers, ‘The Caryatids on the Erechtheum at Athens. Questions of Chronology and Symbolism,’ *Miscellanea Anthropologica et Sociologica* 15 (2014): 119–33.

ancient Athenian king Erechtheus.¹⁸ John Onians, meanwhile, has offered partial support to Hersey's claim, while Joseph Rykwert and Ione Mylonas Shear have also proposed a variety of arguments against the application of Vitruvius' definition of the caryatid to the Erechtheion maidens.¹⁹

Mary Beard and John Henderson have addressed some of the consequences of the Roman act of replicating the Erechtheion caryatids, and their consequent display throughout the Roman Empire. In particular, they stress the Erechtheion type's specific ability to embody notions associated with classical Athens, which, as we will see, was an important characteristic for post-antique writers and commentators on the caryatid.²⁰ Moreover, substantial research has been conducted in relation to ancient Roman caryatids in non-anglophone scholarship. Examples of such work include Claudia Valeri's 2005 archaeological study of sculptural finds from Pozzuoli, which discusses Roman replicas of the Erechtheion figures in some detail, or the second volume of the catalogue of sculptures from the Villa Albani in Rome, which includes several important varieties of Roman caryatids.²¹

The studies thus far mentioned provide a small insight into the relatively extensive research that has been conducted by scholars on the Erechtheion caryatids, and Roman copies of them, in an ancient context. A more expansive study of the history, function, and meaning of the caryatid over a broader time span was published by Evamaria Schmidt in 1982 and it remains the most complete to this day.²²

However, its main focus is on examples of the motif from antiquity and, although later adaptations

¹⁸ George Hersey, *The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture: Speculations on Ornament from Vitruvius to Venturi* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1988), 72-74.

¹⁹ John Onians, 'The Greek Temple and the Greek Brain,' in *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relationship of Body and Architecture*, eds. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Mass; London: MIT Press, 2002), 61; Joseph Rykwert, *The Dancing Column: On Order in Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 1996); Ione Mylonas Shear, 'Maidens in Greek Architecture: The Origin of the <<Caryatids>>,' *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 123 (1999): 65-85. See also Dorothy King, 'Figured Supports: Vitruvius' Caryatids and Atlantes,' *Numismatica e Antichità Classiche* 27 (1998): 275-305.

²⁰ Mary Beard and John Henderson, *Classical Art: From Greece to Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 103-5, 169-70.

²¹ Claudia Valeri, *Marmora Phlegraea: Sculture dal Rione Terra di Pozzuoli* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2005), 102-11; Peter C. Bol, ed., *Forschungen zur Villa Albani, Katalog der antiken Bildwerke II* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1990).

²² Evamaria Schmidt, *Geschichte der Karyatide: Funktion und Bedeutung der menschlichen Träger- und Stützfigur in der Baukunst* (Würzburg: Konrad Triltsch, 1982).

are mentioned, this is solely in relation to architectural structures. Moreover, it does not include any in-depth investigation of the caryatid in the modern period. Alexandra Lesk has conducted a comprehensive and expansive study of the Erechtheion temple and its reception, of which the caryatids inevitably form an integral part, and this is an invaluable work for its collation of the assemblage of written evidence, which display the perceptions of travellers to Athens and the Erechtheion temple from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. This is, therefore, one of the few works which analyses the reception of the Erechtheion caryatids in a modern context, although its focus is archaeological, with the result that the written accounts of travellers to Greece are generally summarised and the bulk of attention is paid to the representation of the Erechtheion complex more generally, rather than a specialised study on attitudes towards, or reflections on, the caryatids.²³

It is, thus, in a post-antique, and, in particular, a post-Renaissance, context that a historical and theoretical understanding of the caryatid is most scant, and this is notably the case in anglophone scholarship.²⁴ The motif is relatively absent from modern art history and classical reception studies generally, although Anna Anguissola has provided a succinct and useful summary of its history following antiquity. Nonetheless, due to its placement within a collection of articles on the classical tradition, this is relatively short and cannot provide any significant level of detail.²⁵ In addition, in texts on the architecture and ornamentation of the Renaissance, the period in which the caryatid re-emerged as a dominant visual motif in Europe, it has tended to be treated in a rather incidental manner.²⁶ Kathleen W. Christian has, however, provided an excellent overview of the Renaissance

²³ Alexandra L. Lesk, *A Diachronic Examination of the Erechtheion and its Reception*, Ph.D. diss., (Cincinnati, Ohio: University of Cincinnati, 2004). Also see Alexandra L. Lesk, ‘“Caryatides probantur inter pauca operum”: Pliny, Vitruvius, and the Semiotics of the Erechtheion Maidens at Rome,’ *Arethusa* 40 (Winter 2007): 25-42.

²⁴ For research on the post-antique caryatid in a non-anglophone context, see Giulio Carotti, ‘Le caryatid nel Rinascimento e nei tempi moderni,’ *Arte Italiana decorativa e industriale* 12 (1903): 74-76, 79-83.

²⁵ Anna Anguissola, ‘Caryatid,’ in *The Classical Tradition*, eds. Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, and Salvatore Settis (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2010), 175.

²⁶ See, for example, Janet S. Byrne, *Renaissance Ornament Prints and Drawings* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1981), 68; Clare Lapraik Guest, *The Understanding of Ornament in the Italian Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

tradition of drawing and copying caryatids influenced by Roman copies of the Erechtheion type, especially in architectural texts, and this is extremely useful for understanding the post-antique practice of replicating the Erechtheion figures.²⁷

Although there is some limited treatment of the use of the caryatid motif in Europe in the centuries following the Renaissance, there is almost no literature in a British or anglophone context.²⁸ An important exception is provided by Howard Colvin's 'Herms, Terms and Caryatids in English Architecture'. Nonetheless, this essay is essentially a historical overview from the fifteenth century onwards, and it includes only a brief survey of the country's widespread interest in the motif from the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries.²⁹ Similarly, although caryatids are sometimes mentioned in publications examining nineteenth-century British art and architecture more generally, their ubiquity and predominance in the period's visual culture is not reflected. This is most clearly the case in publications focusing on the period's architecture where the caryatid is notably absent despite its popularity on the period's built structures.³⁰ In terms of sculpture studies, the motif is not so evidently ignored in a nineteenth-century context, although it has tended to be mentioned in a somewhat cursory fashion, and there has been no detailed analysis of individual practitioners' employment of it or how that might relate to a more widespread interest in the caryatid at the time.³¹ Moreover, in the case of specific architects and artists who made significant use of the motif, such as

²⁷ Kathleen W. Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius and Marcantonio Raimondi's *Caryatid Façade*,' in *Marcantonio Raimondi, Raphael and the Image Multiplied*, ed. E. H. Wouk (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 66-82.

²⁸ For a non-anglophone study of European caryatids, see Nebout, *Les Cariatides de Paris*.

²⁹ Howard Colvin, 'Herms, Terms and Caryatids in English Architecture' in *Essays in English Architectural History* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999), 95-135.

³⁰ This is the case in, for example, Nikolaus Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1975); Roger Dixon and Stefan Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978); John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Joseph Mordaunt Crook, *The Greek Revival: Neoclassical Attitudes in British Architecture 1760-1870* (London: John Murray, 1996); Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

³¹ See Benedict Read, *Victorian Sculpture* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1982); Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1983); Margaret Whitney, *Sculpture in Britain 1530 to 1830*, rev. John Physick (London: Penguin, 1988).

John Soane or Alfred Stevens, previous specialist studies or monographs on these individuals have tended not to observe this characteristic of their practice in detail, or at all, as we shall see.

This neglect of the caryatid, and specifically the impact of the Erechtheion caryatids, in art-historical and reception studies focused on the modern afterlife of ancient sculpture, is presumably, or at least partially, due to what Elizabeth Prettejohn describes as the ‘gendered hierarchy, already evident in Winckelmann’s *Reflections* of 1755 and still found in twentieth-century textbooks, that gave the male nude figure priority over the draped female’.³² In addition, the formal characteristics of the Erechtheion maidens complicate the accepted teleological chronology of ancient sculpture, which sees Greek sculpture of the Classical period (fifth and fourth centuries BC) as an apex in its history due to its increasingly accurate depiction of the human body and more naturalistic poses. However, while the Erechtheion caryatids date to the fifth-century BC, their more rigid postures, strong sense of frontality, and elements of their carved drapery are more akin to the Archaic *Korai*, from which they are thought to derive.

In a wider perspective, taking modern sculpture studies and architectural history into consideration, the caryatid once again presents a ‘problem’, both ontologically and categorically, as it exists somewhere between sculpture and architecture. As a sculpted statue which functions as an architectural column, it is a liminal form that hesitates between the boundaries of both art forms. The strongly-defined limits of these art forms are reflected in the manner in which ‘fine art’ sculptures created for display at exhibition, often in the form of single idealised human figures, have taken precedence over architectural sculpture generally in nineteenth-century sculpture studies, while much architectural history has essentially ignored architectural sculpture altogether. Thus, it is arguably due to their status as Classical draped female sculptures with certain anomalous ‘Archaic’ traits, and as examples of a motif that is neither strictly architectural or sculptural, that the afterlife and impact of

³² Elizabeth Prettejohn, *The Modernity of Ancient Sculpture* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 66.

the Erechtheion caryatids in modern Britain, and notably the British Museum's figure, has been given little treatment.

Due to this lacuna in previous research, this thesis will address the phenomenon of the caryatid, specifically in the context of Britain from 1790 to 1914, a period which is characterised by some scholars as the long nineteenth century, and I have adopted this designation for its convenience in describing the timeframe in which this study is focused.³³ The caryatid has been a consistent and dominant motif in Western visual culture from antiquity onwards, appearing in countless buildings, paintings, sculptures, drawings, engravings, and in a whole host of other media, across the centuries. Indeed, such is the prevalence of the motif in all areas of visual, as well as textual, culture that a study of the caryatid generally in the post-antique period is far beyond the scope of this thesis and its focus has thus been narrowed to the long nineteenth century, as described. This is a particularly important period in the history of the motif as, in tandem with Europe's wider embrace of 'neoclassicism' in various incarnations in its art and architecture, the caryatid re-emerged as a more dominant figure in visual culture at this point than, perhaps, at any other in its history. I posit that this widespread employment of caryatids was initiated with the work of Soane from 1790 onwards and that the sculptor Alfred Gilbert's Sam Wilson chimneypiece, which was completed around 1913, signals an end, especially in Britain, to the popular tradition of employing caryatids inspired by classical prototypes.

This study's focus is generally restricted to the impact of the caryatid in Britain within this timeframe as, akin to the chronological constraints, a wider geographical context would require a much larger work. In addition, Britain played a vital role in this 're-emergence' of the caryatid from the late eighteenth century onwards due to Soane's pioneering adoption of copies of the Erechtheion maidens.

³³ The chronological boundaries of this period are defined, for example, by the Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm in three historical volumes published between 1962 and 1987. For an explanation of its chronological boundaries, see, for example, Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2010), 6-12.

Furthermore, the only Erechtheion caryatid to leave Greece arrived in Britain specifically in the early nineteenth century and, as I have emphasised, Britain's role, in particular, in the period's employment of the caryatid, has suffered from neglect in scholarly research. In addition, studies in the fields of reception and nineteenth-century art have not dealt specifically with the influence of the Erechtheion caryatids in British painterly and artistic circles from the 1860s onwards, a phenomenon which is a key focus of this thesis.

This geographical ambit means that several important European artists and architects from the period who used caryatids, or discussed them in their writings, are not treated in this study, except when there is a specific relation to the British context. Notable absences include the influential German architect and architectural theorist Gottfried Semper who, in stark contrast to the contemporary condemnation of the motif in architecture, believed that it demonstrated the 'artistic courage and élan of the Greeks'.³⁴ Also absent is the renowned Prussian architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel, who incorporated caryatids into numerous designs (Fig. 1.25), an element of his practice continued by his student Theophil Hansen, whose work in Vienna employed a multitude of caryatids and evinces an intense admiration for the motif (Fig. 1.7). Indeed, nineteenth-century Vienna witnessed a proliferation of caryatids on its built structures that far exceeded that of Britain, but this phenomenon would require a study in its own right. This is also the case for several other major European cities where architects used a significantly greater number of caryatids than was ever the case in Britain, with one of the most notable examples being Paris, and its many nineteenth-century caryatids. This reflected a wider interest in the caryatid witnessed in France at the time, where the motif also made a innumerable appearances on the country's furniture, which led one mid-Victorian critic to claim that in 'the furniture of no other nation can be reckoned such a multitude of Caryatides'.³⁵ Indeed, caryatids were an extremely popular motif in nineteenth-century furniture, as well as the applied arts

³⁴ Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper: Architect of the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1996), 224.

³⁵ Joseph Beavington Atkinson, 'The Furniture of the Universal Exhibition,' *The Art Journal* 6, no. 354 (December 1867): 196.

more generally, but, for similar reasons to the chronological and geographical constraints outlined, the varieties of caryatids that adorned examples of such objects in Britain cannot be examined in this thesis, except in cases where they relate directly to the practitioners discussed throughout.

Thus, rather than attempting a survey of the myriad caryatids present in Britain during the long nineteenth century, with the motif's pervasive and wide-ranging presence in a host of media in the period, I have restricted this study to examining a relatively small number of important examples of the use of the motif. This enables me to focus in significant detail on several different case studies, either of a specific artist, architect, or object, in individual chapters. Bearing this in mind, the motivation for my choices of examples to be analysed throughout are governed by certain criteria. Firstly, I posit that the practice of the individuals I have selected displays particularly notable uses of the caryatid that are innovative, exceptional, idiosyncratic, or unorthodox for their context, and I demonstrate how this was manifested in my analyses in each chapter. Related to this, I argue that the majority of these case studies were highly influential in how the caryatid was adopted by contemporary or later practitioners. Furthermore, I propose that the practitioners I examine in Chapters 2 to 4 employed the caryatid specifically in the construction of artistic identities and as a means to project cultural authority, and, in each example, this element of their practice has been ignored or relegated in previous studies. Finally, and crucially, across this thesis, the uses of the caryatid highlighted display the motif's inherent intermediality, and its ability to as a unifying or problematic figure between and within different art forms. I suggest that this characteristic contributed to its interest for all the individuals examined.

The caryatid's status as neither architecture nor sculpture is particularly pertinent for the period in question, when the divisions between the arts were vigorously debated throughout Europe. One of the most important contributors to the discourse on the relative merits and hierarchisation of the arts in the nineteenth century was the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. In his lectures

on aesthetics, Hegel briefly mentioned the caryatid in relation to his ideas on architecture but, as will be shown, the Erechtheion maidens - the most famous examples of the caryatid from antiquity - do not adhere to his description, in its focus on the Vitruvian enslavement theory, or this categorisation as 'architecture' as they conform more accurately to his prescriptions regarding classical sculpture. The caryatid's consequential ambiguous position in this hierarchical division of the fine arts expounded by one of history's most important theorists on aesthetics, alongside its similarly problematic position in relation to its definition by the founding father of architectural history, Vitruvius, has arguably impacted on its neglected position today and affirms the necessity of this study. Nonetheless, this thesis echoes Hegel's division of art forms in the composition of its chapters, as the case studies of Chapters 2, 3, and 4 each focus on an individual art form. These are architecture, painting, and sculpture respectively, but I show that the caryatid complicates this division by obscuring the boundaries between architecture and sculpture or exposing the architectonic nature of paintings and sculptural works.

These case-study chapters follow a historical overview of the caryatid in Chapter 1, which positions the motif in Britain in relation to a broader historical and theoretical framework. This is achieved through a historiographical analysis of texts from antiquity to the nineteenth century, and especially architectural treatises and the writings of antiquarians. This establishes the roots of ideas and characteristics that became embedded in discourse on the motif, and, in particular, the Erechtheion type, beginning with Vitruvius' description of caryatids as slaves, a description that underlay their interpretation over the centuries. Mark Wilson Jones has claimed that the 'very existence of caryatids sustains the analogy between body and column' and I also examine the complex ways in which the motif embodied this analogy, or general notions of anthropomorphism within architecture, which has been a fundamental theoretical framework in European architectural practice since Vitruvius.³⁶ In

³⁶ Mark Wilson Jones, 'Doric Figuration,' in *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relationship of Body and Architecture*, eds. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Mass; London: MIT Press, 2002), 75.

doing so, I explore the manner in which architects and scholars, beginning in the Renaissance, engaged in a search for the ancient origins and understanding of architecture, which led them to replicate the Erechtheion caryatids as a specifically ‘Greek’ type of the motif.

Ultimately, I demonstrate how ideas of the caryatid from the Renaissance onwards heavily influenced nineteenth-century understandings of the motif, such as the paramountcy and exemplarity of the Erechtheion type and the lively discourse regarding the propriety of its use, particularly due to its relationship with slavery and its concomitant negative connotations. The latter half of this chapter also foregrounds the British contribution to theoretical considerations of the caryatid by presenting a detailed analysis of discourse on the caryatid in Great Britain throughout the long nineteenth century, and this lays the foundations for Chapters 2 to 4. Due to its focus on Britain, I do not analyse some important contemporary continental architectural theorists in detail, such as the influential French writer Quatremère de Quincy who provided one of the lengthiest descriptions of the caryatid in his *Dictionnaire Historique d’Architecture* but whose ideas largely conform to much of what was said by the British writers examined.³⁷

Soane is the focus of Chapter 2, owing to the sheer number of his architectural designs incorporating caryatids and his role as the instigator, from 1790, of British architects’ renewed use of caryatids that echoed the Erechtheion type in appearance and in their load-bearing function. Although he used a greater number of caryatids in other designs, I highlight Soane’s use of the motif at his homes at Lincoln’s Inn Fields and Pitzhanger Manor, both built in the early nineteenth century, as it demonstrates a unique and novel adaptation: on his houses Soane’s caryatids stand as individual figures without a supporting role and, no longer part of an architectural ensemble, they thus function as freestanding sculptures, the implications of which are examined. I argue that this particular use has

³⁷ Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique d’Architecture*, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie d’Adrien Le Clerc et Cie, 1832), 314-20.

to be understood within the wider context of the reception of the caryatid from the mid-seventeenth century onwards. The motif's status as a representation of a slave appears to have been highly problematic for commentators in this period, which presumably related to an awareness of the contemporary existence of slavery. I demonstrate Soane's own discomfort with this and I posit that his desire to reconcile his adoption of caryatids with their slavery connotations was expressed in the unique manner in which he used them. Alongside providing a means for an insightful examination of Soane, this chapter establishes how the caryatid, and its renewed use on built structures in Britain, was manifested in the first half of the nineteenth century, in line with the increased knowledge of the Erechtheion type.

Chapter 3 examines the presence of the caryatid in the paintings of Frederic Leighton. This is done predominantly through a visual analysis of a number of his painted compositions, which is combined with an examination of his sketches, preparatory drawings, and writings, as well as the responses of contemporary critics and works by ancient writers. Through an exploration of such evidence, I propose that certain works by the artist from the 1860s onwards display his interest in the architectural nature of the caryatid and the expressive potential of its formal characteristics through the painted female body. This chapter also examines the artist's probing of caryatids' other potential associations, particularly their links to figures associated with ritual in the ancient world, and their consequent pictorial materialisation. Overall, this chapter analyses the complex interplay between the female body, architecture, and ancient artefacts in Leighton's output to reveal the underlying presence of the caryatid as a means of exploring the dialogue between architecture and antique sculpture. An analysis of the Erechtheion caryatid in relation to Hegel's theories of aesthetics is particularly fruitful for understanding Leighton's use of the motif in his work and I argue that specific formal characteristics of the Erechtheion figure adhere to Hegel's concept of the 'ideal' of classical sculpture, as its physical embodiment is described in his lectures, and that these characteristics are reflected in Leighton's engagement with the caryatid.

The main focus of Chapter 4 is Stevens' c.1860s chimneypiece for Dorchester House which manifests, perhaps more than any other object preceding it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the associations between caryatids and slavery. This object represented a significant change in the types of caryatid appearing in Britain in the long nineteenth century. Caryatids proliferated on chimneypiece designs throughout Europe from the Renaissance onwards and a brief examination of such works displays how no examples, pre-dating Stevens' chimneypiece, integrated caryatids in this striking manner, with such an emphasis on their enslaved connotations. I suggest that Stevens' chimneypiece must, therefore, be understood through its relationship to specific Italian Renaissance architectural or sculptural forms, and particularly the work of Michelangelo, and I argue that Stevens' chimneypiece demonstrates his desire to align himself with, and surpass, his Renaissance forebear. Michelangelo was renowned for the versatility of his artistic abilities, an attribute which has also frequently been ascribed to Stevens, and I propose that, like Michelangelo's architectural and sculptural ensembles, the Dorchester House Chimneypiece evinces its creator's desire to display his intermedial abilities through its complex integration of sculpture and architecture.

Following this, I show how, in the decades after the chimneypiece's creation, the caryatid was used in a variety of radical new ways by architects, sculptors, and designers working in Britain, inspired by Stevens' creation. Chapter 4 concludes with an examination of the caryatid in Gilbert's early twentieth-century chimneypiece for Sam Wilson and I propose that this object displays how the caryatid had departed from the classical and Renaissance traditions while continuing to act as an expression of its maker's abilities across art forms.

In the variety of its chapters, no dominant methodology overrides this thesis. Instead, I have consulted material from across multiple disciplines, which I have found contributes to or helps to elucidate my propositions throughout. However, the work is essentially divided into two parts with two different methodological approaches. Chapter 1, forming a historiographical analysis of the caryatid, draws on

the work of scholars working in a wide array of fields and, as this chapter considers a broader geographical swathe than the case studies focused in Great Britain that follow, I have also consulted material from beyond the anglophone world. A textual analysis of primary sources from antiquity onwards, including architectural texts, antiquarian studies, and popular publications such as journals and newspapers, predominates in this chapter, in order to expose theoretical notions relating to the caryatid that are explicitly stated or underlie the texts. Equally, a visual analysis of a body of material in different media, from ancient sculptures to Renaissance prints, is adopted in order to assist in my formation of a historical theorisation of the caryatid.

My interpretation of these textual and visual sources is aided by secondary material produced by archaeologists, art historians, and cultural historians specialising in each of the periods I examine, as well as broader architectural history surveys or overviews, and namely those of Hanno-Walter Kruft, Evamaria Schmidt, and Howard Colvin.³⁸ For conceptions of anthropomorphism in architecture, which is central to the historical and theoretical considerations of the caryatid I illuminate, I have drawn on the work of architectural historians specialising in this area, such as Alina Payne and Joseph Rykwert.³⁹ In addition, to aid my identification of the caryatid as a signifier of ancient ideals, I am indebted to scholars working within reception theory, and specifically that relating to antiquity in the visual arts, including Prettejohn, Caroline Vout, Mary Beard, John Henderson, and Kathleen Christian, as well as the work of archaeologists such as Valeria Moesch and Claudia Valeri.⁴⁰

³⁸ Hanno-Walter Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory: From Vitruvius to the Present*, trans. Ronald Taylor, Elsie Callander, and Antony Wood (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994); Schmidt, *Geschichte der Karyatide*; Howard Colvin, *Essays in English Architectural History* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999).

³⁹ Alina Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance: Architectural Invention, Ornament, and Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Alina Payne, 'Reclining Bodies: Figural Ornament in Renaissance Architecture,' in *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relationship of Body and Architecture*, eds. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Mass; London: MIT Press, 2002), 94-113; Rykwert, *The Dancing Column*; Elizabeth J. Petcu, 'Anthropomorphizing the Orders: 'Terms' of Architectural Eloquence in the Northern Renaissance,' in *The Anthropomorphic Lens: Anthropomorphism, Microcosmism, and Analogy in Early Modern Thought and Visual Arts*, eds. Walter S. Melion, Bret Rothstein, and Michel Weemans (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 339-78.

⁴⁰ Prettejohn, *Modernity of Ancient Sculpture*; Caroline Vout, 'Hadrian, Hellenism, and the Social History of Art,' *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 18, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2010): 55-78; Beard and Henderson, *Classical Art*; Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius,' 66-82; Valeria Moesch, 'Caryatide,' in *Hadrien: Trésors d'une Ville Impériale*, eds. Jacques Charles-Gaffiot and Henri Lavagne (Milan: Electa, 1999), 188-89; Valeri, *Marmora Phlegraea*, 102-11.

The second part of this thesis comprises Chapters 2 to 4 with their specific case studies in a predominantly British context. Throughout these object-focused chapters, I conduct detailed visual analyses of the objects in question and this is combined with a reading of primary material relating to the practitioners, such as sketches and drawings, as well as their published writings. Each of these chapters is supported by the work of scholars working in the fields that are most relevant to the individual or object concerned. Thus, Chapter 2 relies on architectural history research focused on Soane and classicism, as well as studies of architecture's communicative abilities by scholars such as David Watkin and Caroline van Eck.⁴¹ My analysis of Leighton's use of the caryatid in Chapter 3 is supported by the studies of art historians specialising in Leighton and theories of quotation in art, including Mieke Bal's work in the field of 'cultural analysis'.⁴² Chapter 4 draws on general studies of Victorian sculpture, specifically those of Read and Beattie, as well as the work of Renaissance art historians and research on the reception of the Renaissance in the Victorian period, in particular, that of Lene Østermark-Johansen.⁴³ It is also supported by the work of specialists in Victorian sculpture, notably those who have conducted significant research on Gilbert's fireplace, and specifically Martina Droth and Richard Dorment.⁴⁴

Although each chapter functions in a manner akin to a singular study, certain theoretical frameworks allow connections to be made throughout. As we will see, these include theories of reception and aesthetics, and Hegelian theory, which has proven invaluable in relation to ideas of slavery and concepts of ideality in art, in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. However, findings of certain theoretical

⁴¹ David Watkin, *Sir John Soane: Enlightenment Thought and the Royal Academy Lectures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Caroline van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁴² Mieke Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

⁴³ Read, *Victorian Sculpture*; Beattie, *The New Sculpture*; Lene Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength: The Reception of Michelangelo in Late Victorian England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998).

⁴⁴ Martina Droth, 'Ornament as Sculpture: The Sam Wilson Chimney-piece in Leeds City Art Gallery,' *Henry Moore Institute Essays on Sculpture* 30 (2000); Richard Dorment, *Alfred Gilbert* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1985), 265-68; Richard Dorment, *Alfred Gilbert: Sculptor and Goldsmith* (London: Royal Academy of Arts in association with Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), 17-18, 25, 115, 208.

and philosophical approaches that are highly pertinent to the caryatid are not presented. Foremost among these, in the context of the replicated representation of a load-bearing female figure, would be a significant feminist analysis or gender-focused approach.

As this thesis is arguably the first detailed study focused on the caryatid in a post-antique context, its main function is to present the prevalence and consequences of a phenomenon that has largely been ignored in scholarship, and to demonstrate its specific importance to art and architectural practice in Britain in the long nineteenth century. Consequently, while I have consulted the work of feminist theorists, and I have used their findings where relevant, I have not attempted a detailed feminist analysis of, for example, the symbolic relation of the caryatid to the disenfranchised position of women in Britain throughout the period in question. This is a notable absence in light of the juxtaposition of strong sculpted female figures bearing weighty structures with the social and political status of women at the time. It inevitably relates to a wider phenomenon relating to figural sculpture that, in the West, represented powerful females that display, as Warner has shown, the ‘difference between the symbolic order, inhabited by ideal, allegorical figures, and the actual order [which] depends on the unlikelihood of women practising the concepts they represent’ in sculpted form.⁴⁵ The caryatid offers a particularly dynamic example of this in its weight-bearing capacity which has inevitable resonances with metaphorical ideas of ‘supporting’, ‘bearing’, or ‘sustaining’ values relating to various arenas, ranging from domestic life to consumer capitalism. Indeed, a telling statement in this context is the claim apparently made by Charles Jenner, the founder of Jenners department store in Edinburgh, that the exterior of his shop was adorned with caryatids ‘to show symbolically that women were the support of the house as well as his business’.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, xx.

⁴⁶ Stana Nenadic, ‘Charles Jenner (1810-1893),’ *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/61300> (accessed 30 January 2018).

In a related fashion, the caryatids that were replicated on household objects, including the figures on Stevens' Dorchester House Chimneypiece, offer a literalisation of ideologies relating to women's domestic role in the period as such caryatids portray women as literally a piece of household furniture. Furthermore, the consequences of such figures being bound, as well as the popular use of a motif with such clear enslavement connotations, behave a more in-depth investigation in relation to, for example, psychoanalytical, sociological, or slavery studies. Indeed, the ubiquitous prevalence of the caryatid historically and its relative neglect in scholarship warrants further research within a multitude of different disciplinary or theoretical approaches that are beyond the remit of the thesis. It is my hope, however, that the ideas I present, and the further research possibilities I hint at throughout this study, opens the motif up for incisive investigation in other fields. Although it is inherently interdisciplinary, this thesis predominantly fills a gap in current research within the fields of art and architectural history and reception studies specifically by affirming Britain's participation in, and intrinsic relation to, a fascinating yet relatively ignored Europe-wide phenomenon within the classical visual tradition. In observing the role of the caryatid, in the West's use of classical antiquity as a generative source for shaping modern thinking on art and aesthetics, it is my aim to elucidate the caryatid's unique position in, and thus add a vital and neglected layer to our understanding of, the 'multiple metamorphoses of the ancient that the modern feeds upon'.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Jacques Rancière, *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art*, trans. Zakir Paul (London; New York: Verso, 2013), xiv.

CHAPTER 1

A History and Theory of the Caryatid from Antiquity to 1914

'the whole Temple of the cari-something, where the Statues of the Women are'.⁴⁸ Mary Hamilton Bruce, Countess of Elgin

'that beautiful little model of ancient art might be transported wholly to England. Nothing can exceed the exquisite beauty and delicacy of all its details'.⁴⁹ Philip Hunt

'Unhappy is he for whom reminder of the artistic temperament fails to conjure up arresting visions of beauty in many forms. Correggio's Madonna of the Basket in our own National Gallery, the Caryatides who from beneath the porch they uphold look forth on the ruins of the Acropolis [...] To recall them is to understand that, by design of God, there is such a thing as the ministry of the beautiful'.⁵⁰ J.G. Stevenson

When the British Museum was established in 1753, based on the collection of the physician Sir Hans Sloane, it possessed few antiquities. This phenomenon continued until the opening decades of the nineteenth century, when 'outstanding collections arrived in rapid succession', which supplemented its displays with renowned artefacts from the ancient world.⁵¹ These included three major collections of classical antiquities: in 1805, the Graeco-Roman sculptures and artefacts that the gentleman collector Charles Townley had amassed; in 1806, the Bassai Sculptures from the ancient Greek Temple of Apollo Epikourios, which had been unearthed by the archaeologists and architects Carl Haller and Charles Cockerell; and, some ten years following, the most famous of these collections, Lord Elgin's Parthenon sculptures.

By being placed in the British state's 'National Museum', these renowned collections of classical antiquities played a crucial role in the conception and formation of British national identity in the

⁴⁸ Lady Elgin writing to her husband on 25 May 1802. Captain Lacy was Elgin's supervisor during the acquisition of the Parthenon Sculptures. Quoted in Efterpi Mitsi, 'Commodifying Antiquity in Mary Nisbet's Journey to the Ottoman Empire,' in *Travel, Discovery, Transformation: Culture & Civilisation* 6, ed. Gabriel R. Ricci (New Brunswick; London: Transaction Publishers, 2014), 54.

⁴⁹ Lord Elgin's chaplain Dr Hunt writing to him from Athens regarding the Erechtheion temple. Quoted in Hunt and Hamilton Smith, 'Lord Elgin and His Collection,' 196.

⁵⁰ J.G. Stevenson, 'The Artistic Temperament,' *The Quiver* 48, no. 7 (May 1913): 700.

⁵¹ Holger Hooek, 'The British State and the Anglo-French Wars over Antiquities, 1798-1858,' *The Historical Journal* 50, no. 1 (March 2007): 49.

early nineteenth century - a period in which conscious attempts at glorifying national culture were witnessed and the 'cultural ancestry of ancient Greece' played a key role in informing 'notions of Britishness'.⁵² This was especially the case with Elgin's sculptures, which became 'emblems of British national identity'.⁵³ Significantly, alongside the marbles from the Parthenon, this collection contained sculptural fragments from the Erechtheion temple and one of its caryatids, both of which were eulogised for their beauty by British commentators from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. Although not as famous as Elgin's figure, an ancient Roman caryatid could also be found in the Townley Collection and it was praised in a similar vein, albeit not as highly (Fig. 2.1). Thus, by the early part of the nineteenth century, two celebrated caryatids were prominent components of the assemblages of sculpture that largely formed the 'nucleus' of the British Museum's Graeco-Roman collection.⁵⁴

The Erechtheion Caryatid was taken by Elgin from the temple on the Athenian Acropolis that was home to undoubtedly the most famous examples of ancient caryatids. Built between 421 and 405 BC, the Ionic temple is situated opposite the Parthenon and the entablature of its south porch was originally supported by six marble statues of women in place of columns, figures which were frequently cited as paradigms in discourse on the use and significance of caryatids from the Roman era onwards.⁵⁵ As we have seen, the only surviving ancient description of these sculptures, however, calls them *Korai* and the process by which these figures were conflated with the term 'caryatid' forms a focus of this chapter.⁵⁶ Due to the *Korai* attribution, the structure which they supported has become widely known as the 'Porch of the Maidens' and all six of the maidens on this porch are highly similar

⁵² Debbie Challis, 'The Parthenon Sculptures: Emblems of British National Identity,' *The British Art Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 42.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁵⁴ Paula E. Findlen, 'Collecting,' in *The Classical Tradition*, 210.

⁵⁵ The caryatids that are currently found at the Erechtheion site are all fibreglass replicas as the other five sculptures have been moved to the Acropolis Museum in Athens.

⁵⁶ The description of the caryatids as *Korai* can be found on a stele dated to 409BC, now in the British Museum's collection (see BM Inscriptions 35). For a translation of the inscription, see <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGI3/474> (accessed 25 July 2017). Also see Vickers, 'Caryatids on the Erechtheum,' 125.

in appearance, with some minor variations of sculpted details between them. This is perhaps most visible in the composition of their legs, with the three figures that supported the left side of the porch sculpted with a weight-bearing right leg, while their left legs are bent at the knee, and this is mirrored on the opposing legs on the three figures that stood to the right. Each maiden is heavily-draped in a carved *peplos*, the typical attire of fifth-century BC Greek women, and none of their arms survive in full, which, as we shall see, it is thought originally clutched their drapery with one hand. They are surmounted by beed-and-reel and egg-and-dart capitals, above carved cushions placed on their elaborate coiffures, which supported the Ionic entablature of the porch.

The British Museum's sculpture is often designated as Caryatid #3 or Kore / Maiden C but, in order to distinguish it, and for the sake of clarity, I will simply use the capitalised term 'Erechtheion Caryatid' throughout this study (Fig. 1.6).⁵⁷ Today, she is the best preserved of the temple's caryatids and she most clearly displays their distinct characteristics. Appropriately for her role as a columnar support, she has a powerful physique and she stands in a rigid, vertical pose with both shoulders aligned. This verticality is broken by her left leg, which is bent at the knee, and the carved drapery here appears to cling to her thigh and reveal its rounded shape, while the opposing weight-bearing leg is covered in the heavy, deeply-cut folds of the sculpted *peplos*. Her arms are missing from the elbow downwards and she carries her capital, as well as the remains of an abacus, above her braided and curling hair, which, like that of her sisters, forms a thick band behind her head that would have offered further support to the load she once bore.

The caryatid from the Townley Collection dates to somewhere between 140 and 160 AD and she is one of a group of five surviving caryatids that are believed to have offered architectural support to a structure at an ancient Roman complex of buildings known as the 'Triopion'. These figures were

⁵⁷ On the 'Caryatid #3 or Kore / Maiden C' designation, see, for example, Beresford, 'The Caryatids in the New Acropolis Museum'; Valeri, *Marmora Phlegraea*, 102-11.

excavated from a site on the famous Via Appia, in the outskirts of Rome, and two of them, including that acquired by Charles Townley, were discovered during the late sixteenth-century reign of Pope Sixtus V, while the remaining three were found in 1766.⁵⁸ The surviving head of one of these figures is signed by two Athenian sculptors, Kriton and Nikolaos, and they have thus historically been considered the creators of all five sculptures.

The Tripion figures share formal similarities with the Erechtheion maidens. This is apparent in the Townley Caryatid as she also consists of an upright heavily-robed woman whose left hand lightly clasps her clothing, which falls in heavy vertical folds over the weight-bearing right leg, while her left leg is bent at the knee and is revealed through the diaphanous appearance of her drapery. Her right hand, meanwhile, is extended outwards from the elbow, perhaps in a pose with ritual significance, considering the context in which the statue was discovered. Surmounting the figure's elaborately-carved hair is a capital resembling a *modius*, or a ritual headdress, which is covered in anthemion, floral, and other vegetal motifs. The Townley figure was the earlier arrival in Britain, as it was purchased by the antiquarian Townley in 1786, and she was a 'celebrated piece', having been engraved by the artist Giovanni Battista Piranesi and discussed by the renowned antiquarian Johann Joachim Winckelmann. However, as we will see, it was undeniably the Erechtheion Caryatid which was the most visible form of the motif and which exerted the most influence on artists and architects working throughout the nineteenth century in Britain, and beyond.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Brian F. Cook, *The Townley Marbles* (London: British Museum, 1985), 38; Vicky Coltman, *Classical Sculpture and the Culture of Collecting in Britain since 1760* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 94. Also see Arthur Hamilton Smith, *A Catalogue of Sculpture in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum*, vol. 3 (London: British Museum, 1904), 99-101; Andrew Wilton and Ilaria Bignamini, *Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 1996), 226-29.

⁵⁹ Cook, *Townley Marbles*, 38; G. J. Hamilton and Arthur Hamilton Smith, 'Gavin Hamilton's Letters to Charles Townley,' *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 21 (1901): 306, note 3. For more on the Townley Caryatid, see the British Museum's online collection: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=459996&partId=1&people=94353&peoA=94353-3-18&page=1 (accessed 20 March 2018).

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witnessed an international race for collections of antiquities as European nations vied with each other to lay claim to their links to ancient Greece and Rome. Alongside the British Museum's sculptures, ancient caryatids were added to significant European collections, such as that of the Vatican, which acquired the Tripion caryatid that had been unearthed with Townley's figure in 1803 (Fig. 2.2), as well as a Hellenistic replica of the Erechtheion caryatids that was restored by the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen in the 1820s (Fig. 2.3).⁶⁰ Alongside such state-supported acquisition of antiquities by established museums and collections, other institutions such as universities and art schools, as well as newly-founded museums, acquired casts of the renowned classical sculptures that were being amassed in the major European collections.

Caryatids were a prominent presence in this phenomenon, with a cast of the Townley Caryatid, for example, present in the South Kensington, now the Victoria and Albert, Museum's collection by the 1870s (Fig. 2.4). However, casts of the Erechtheion caryatids were the most popular manifestation encountered in this context and plaster copies of them, and typically the British Museum's example, joined countless collections. These included Cambridge's Museum of Classical Archaeology (Fig. 2.5) and Oxford's Ashmolean Museum, which acquired casts in 1884 and 1890 respectively, the Slade School of Fine Art (Fig. 2.6), and collections found further afield such as the Akademisches Kunstmuseum in Bonn (Fig. 2.7), whose cast arrived in 1863, the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, whose collection by 1881 included casts of the Erechtheion figure, and the Danish Royal Cast Collection (Fig. 2.8).⁶¹ Ancient Roman copies of the Erechtheion caryatids were also acquired by

⁶⁰ Carlo Pietrangeli, 'The Vatican Museums,' in *The Vatican Collections: The Papacy and Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum, 1982), 20.

⁶¹ On the two casts in the Cambridge Museum's collection, see <http://museum.classics.cam.ac.uk/collections/casts/caryatid-erechtheum> and <http://museum.classics.cam.ac.uk/collections/casts/caryatid-erechtheum-0>; for the Ashmolean example, see <http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/Publications/ASP/shc.asp> (all accessed 20 March 2018). On the Akademisches Kunstmuseum example, see <http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/drupal/>; for the École des Beaux Arts casts, see *École Nationale et Spéciale des Beaux-Arts. Atelier du Moulage. Catalogue des Moulages* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1881), 1. I have yet to ascertain further acquisition details on the Slade School's figure. On other casts of the Erechtheion caryatids in global collections, see, for example, Jaanika Anderson, *Reception of Ancient Art: The Cast Collections of the University of Tartu Art Museum in the Historical, Ideological and Academic Context of Europe (1803-1918)* (PhD Dissertation, University of Tartu, 2015), 253.

some European museums throughout the nineteenth century, such as the figure found in Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, which was added to its collection in 1895.⁶²

Through such casts, as well as drawings and sketches of them, the Erechtheion caryatids became the most widely disseminated ancient example of the motif from at least the late eighteenth century onwards. Although the interest in them was largely a result of their ‘rediscovery’ by Western and Northern Europeans in the period, as well as the subsequent installation of the Erechtheion Caryatid in a ‘national’ museum, some knowledge of the Athenian maidens appears to have been maintained beyond the borders of Greece, and throughout Europe, from antiquity onwards and the characteristics that they display, and which architects and antiquarians admired in them, had been mentioned by writers on caryatids in earlier centuries. Indeed, a continuum in which certain formal and conceptual traits were consistently repeated in characterisations of the caryatid is discernible from the ancient to modern periods.

Therefore, a survey of discourse on the caryatid across the centuries will establish how certain notions became associated with it and how specific traits were considered the most appropriate in its outward appearance and use, all of which anticipated how the motif was theorised and employed in the long nineteenth century. In a related fashion, it will demonstrate how generations of scholars, architects, and antiquarians, from the Renaissance onwards, were engaged in a theoretical search for the original ‘Greek’ caryatid, which the Erechtheion maidens appear to have been the implicit underlying models for and eventual manifestations of, as they were some of the few surviving examples of caryatids from antiquity of which some knowledge was retained.

⁶² See <https://www.kulturarv.dk/mussam/VisGenstand.action?genstandId=7550973> (accessed 20 March 2018).

‘statuas marmoreas muliebres stolas’:⁶³ Discourse on the Caryatid from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century

Although caryatids had been used in ancient Greek architecture from at least the sixth century BC, the first surviving reference to them, in the Latin name for which they are known - *caryatides* - is found in Vitruvius’ first-century BC text *De architectura libri decem* (*Ten Books on Architecture*).⁶⁴ In the first book of this architectural treatise, its author declared that it was necessary for an architect to know a great deal of history in order to understand the application of, and justify the use of, certain architectural elements in his or her work. To illustrate this argument, he used the example of the caryatid and he wrote that if an architect wished to replace columns with caryatids, he or she would need to be aware of their historical significance in order to answer to those who may enquire about this choice.⁶⁵ It is at this point in the text that Vitruvius provided his famous aetiology of the motif, which was to prove paramount to all discourse on the caryatid in the centuries that followed.

The Roman author claimed that when the Peloponnesian city of Caryae (*Karyai*) sided with the enemy Persia, during the fifth-century BC Persian Wars, the Greeks declared war on its people. The victorious Greeks apparently captured Caryae, slaughtering the men and enslaving the women, and in order to commemorate this act of enslavement, the architects at the time incorporated images of these women into their buildings as load-bearing columns. These would act as an example and reminder of the punishment of the Caryate women for perpetuity.⁶⁶ Vitruvius followed this account with a description of the origins of the caryatid’s male equivalents, the Persians, who similarly represented a subjugated people: the defeated enemies of the Spartans, or Lacedaemonians.⁶⁷ These

⁶³ ‘Marble female statues wearing stolae’, a description of the caryatid in Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, *De architectura libri decem*, 1.5. http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/L/Roman/Texts/Vitruvius/1*.html#1.5 (accessed 27 March 2018).

⁶⁴ Some of the earliest known examples of caryatids include the late-Archaic (540BC - 480BC) figures at the Knidian and Siphnian treasuries at Delphi. See Jenkins, *Greek Architecture*, 126.

⁶⁵ Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, 22, (1.1.5).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 22, (1.1.5).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 22, (1.1.6).

were frequently mentioned in tandem with caryatids in architectural texts over the centuries but they never proved quite as popular as their female counterparts, especially in a British context, and a detailed analysis of them, as well as the related male supporting figures known as Atlantes and Telamones, remains beyond the scope of this study.⁶⁸

As Vitruvius is considered one of the founding fathers of Western architectural history and this historical account, or *historia*, of the caryatid is the sole place in which the motif is mentioned in his text, which itself has provided the basis for much architectural theory from the Renaissance onwards, it is perhaps unsurprising that his interpretation of the caryatid consistently recurred in commentary on the motif up to, and including, the twentieth century. Furthermore, other than the Vitruvian aetiology, there is little mention of caryatids, or their meanings, in classical literature, notwithstanding a few, less detailed, or more incidental, allusions to them.⁶⁹ These were sometimes cited in interpretations of the motif, beginning in the Renaissance, and they include the only ancient Greek reference, which is encountered in the third-century writer Athenaeus' text, the *Deipnosophists*. This relates how a certain Eucrates proclaimed, when feasting in a house in a shabby condition, that a 'man who sups here ought to hold up the house with his left hand like the Caryatides'.⁷⁰ As will be seen, this anecdote was later used as evidence for the existence of ancient Greek caryatids that bore their burden with the assistance of upraised arms. In addition, the Roman author Pliny the Elder, in his *Naturalis Historia* of 77-79 AD, wrote that the Pantheon in Rome 'was embellished by Diogenes of Athens; and among the supporting members of this temple [were] Caryatids', examples of the motif that were frequently mentioned, and eagerly sought, by antiquarians and scholars in later centuries.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Atlantes, or Atlas figures, and Telamones are essentially synonymous with Persians, although the former terms were generally used more frequently than 'Persians' for designating male figures from the Renaissance onwards. It also worth noting that some modern authors argued that 'caryatid' could be applied to both male and female examples of sculpted human figures functioning as architectural supports, regardless of sex. See, for example, Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique d'Architecture*, 314.

⁶⁹ Plommer, 'Vitruvius and the Origin of the Caryatids,' 98.

⁷⁰ Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists* in C.D. Yonge, trans., *The Deipnosophists or Banquet of the Learned of Athenaeus* (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854), 380 (6.39).

⁷¹ Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, 36.4

(<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:abo:phi,0978,001:36:4>, accessed 27 March 2018).

Following antiquity, there appears to be little evidence of caryatids being employed on built structures in Europe until their adoption in Italy during the Early Renaissance. Although elements of *De architectura* survived in manuscripts throughout the Middle Ages, the text had become distorted and fragmentary over time and its precepts did not necessarily translate into, or substantially influence, medieval building practice. Anthropomorphic figures were used as architectural supports in the period's architecture but their origins are unclear and they were, on the whole, relatively rare. Most importantly, however, for the purposes of this study, such figures did not appear to display a relation to classical, or antique, caryatids and it is difficult to ascertain a particular historical moment in which the caryatid, as an element of *classical* architectural ornament, 're-appeared'. The historian of Greek sculpture Charles Picard, however, maintains that this occurred in the thirteenth century, and he cites the work of Giovanni Pisano as an example. This reflects the use of sculpted freestanding female figures, with somewhat classicising appearances, in supporting roles on built structures in the years preceding the Renaissance, as exemplified in Nicola and Giovanni Pisano's *Fontana Maggiore* in Perugia, completed in 1278 (Fig. 2.9).⁷²

Evamaria Schmidt suggests that Picard's dating for the reappearance of the caryatid seems somewhat late considering the use of sculpted supporting figures in cathedrals from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century onwards.⁷³ However, such figures typically represent religious individuals or allegorical personifications and they share essentially no similarities with ancient caryatids in their appearance. Both genders were used freely and female figures appear to have comprised but one element of the panoply of human, as well as animal and vegetal, ornamental forms that were encountered in this context rather than a distinctive type with an origin in classical antiquity. In addition, they were frequently integrated into architectural structures in the form of sculptural relief,

⁷² Charles Picard, *Manuel d'Archéologie Grecque: La Sculpture*, vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions Auguste Picard, 1935), 398, note 2.

⁷³ Schmidt, *Geschichte der Karyatide*, 139.

and not as separate load-bearing elements.⁷⁴ Thus, both formally and functionally, they do not seem to display an originary relationship with ancient caryatids and scholars maintain that it is almost impossible to establish a direct connection between such figures and the caryatids of antiquity.⁷⁵ Moreover, an examination of any possible relationship of such medieval architectural supporting figures to classical caryatids would require a study with a different chronological focus to this one.

The caryatid became a ‘ubiquitous’ motif of Renaissance ornamentation, and the renewed interest in it during this period largely resulted from the ‘rediscovery’ of Vitruvius’ treatise.⁷⁶ From the mid-fourteenth century onwards, the Roman author’s text fully reentered the cultural realm and its re-appropriation by humanist scholars over the following decades, in tandem with the ‘widespread enterprise for the rebirth of ancient culture’, contributed to the revival of the caryatid in classically-inspired manifestations.⁷⁷ Elements of the caryatid described in Vitruvius’ text, as well as surviving fragments of ancient Roman examples derived from the Erechtheion maidens, influenced traits encountered on the more classicising forms that appeared at this time. Indeed, it would appear to have been in Quattrocento Italy specifically that caryatids, which clearly related to ancient examples of the motif, began to form part of the ‘established vocabulary’ of revived classical architecture.⁷⁸ They were employed as supporting figures in the period’s built structures and, as in the example of the fountain in the previous century, in contexts with no classical precedents, such as their use on chimneypieces and funerary monuments. Unsurprisingly, it was also in fifteenth-century Italy that the motif seems to have made an appearance in discourses on architecture for the first time since Vitruvius. Significantly, however, detailed discussion of its characteristics, or appropriate

⁷⁴ Colum P. Hourigane, ed., *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 554.

⁷⁵ Schmidt, *Geschichte der Karyatide*, 139.

⁷⁶ Byrne, *Renaissance Ornament*, 68. Also see Anguissola, ‘Caryatid,’ 175.

⁷⁷ Maria Beltrami, ‘Vitruvius and the Classical Orders,’ in *The Classical Tradition*, 970.

⁷⁸ Krufft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 39; Colvin, ‘Hermes, Terms and Caryatids,’ 95.

employment, was rare in the work of architectural writers at the time, a phenomenon which continued for several hundred years.

This silence was perhaps a result of a broader trend in which figural ornament was not typically treated in Renaissance architectural treatises.⁷⁹ The first printed treatise on architecture, for example, Leon Battista Alberti's mid fifteenth-century *De re aedificatoria*, made little mention of the use of the human figure in ornament generally. However, it is in this text that perhaps the first early modern reference to what appear to be caryatids, or possibly their male counterparts, or both, may be glimpsed when the Italian humanist wrote of the 'practice of [...] stationing huge statues of slaves at the door jambs [...] so that they support the lintel with their heads'.⁸⁰ With this description of sculpted human figures representing slaves and offering structural support, Alberti's is the first text to potentially, albeit implicitly, mention caryatids since antiquity and, in specifically calling them slaves, he also instigated the process of referring back to Vitruvius' *historia* when describing such figures.

Following Alberti's treatise, Renaissance publications on architecture essentially formed two strands: on the one hand, translations and exegeses of *De architectura* and, on the other, original theoretical works modelled on Vitruvius' text.⁸¹ A more direct Quattrocento reference to caryatids, than the potential allusion in Alberti's text, can be found in an example of the latter, Filarete's c.1464 *Libro architettonico*. In this work, the Florentine architect wrote of figures in the 'form of a man and a woman' that were used 'in place of columns' and represented people who were 'forced into subjugation', a description which presumably referred to Persians and caryatids.⁸² Like the implied mention in Alberti's treatise, this indicates a knowledge, on the author's part, of the caryatid's

⁷⁹ Payne, 'Reclining Bodies,' 95.

⁸⁰ Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1988), 293.

⁸¹ Beltramini, 'Vitruvius and the Classical Orders,' 970.

⁸² Filarete, *Filarete's Treatise on Architecture, being the Treatise by Antonio di Piero Averlino, Known as Filarete*, vol. 1, ed., trans. John R. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 249 (18, fol. 145r), 256–57 (18, fol. 150r).

Vitruvian origin, while defining the motif in relation to that origin. Meanwhile, the other great architectural treatise writer of the fifteenth century, Francesco di Giorgio Martini, did not mention the caryatid's Vitruvian aetiology in his architectural treatise, written around 1470.⁸³ However, the author added drawings to versions of his text, one of which potentially alluded to the motif in its illustration of Vitruvius' analogy of columns and human bodies.⁸⁴

In the fourth book of his treatise, Vitruvius described the development of the three classical orders of architecture in gendered terms by claiming that the ratios of the Doric order's column exhibited the 'proportion, soundness, and attractiveness of the male body', while that of the Ionic reflected a 'woman's slenderness'. He claimed that the ancient Greeks 'draped volutes on either side like curled locks' to function as the Ionic column's capital and that they added fluting to its shaft 'to mimic, in matronly manner, the folds of a *stola*', the traditional garment of ancient Roman women.⁸⁵ In the case of the Corinthian column, for Vitruvius it imitated the 'slenderness of a young girl', which reflected its supposed origins in a maiden from the Greek city of Corinth who had died in her youth. After her burial, her nurse apparently gathered objects, that the girl had been fond of in life, and placed them in a basket on the grave, which she covered with a roof tile. Unbeknownst to the nurse, the basket was placed on top of an acanthus root and over time the tendrils and leaves of the plant grew up around the basket. When this was noticed by the ancient Greek sculptor Callimachus, who happened to pass by, he was delighted by 'the nature and form of this novelty' and created columns for the Corinthians based on this model.⁸⁶

⁸³ Payne, *Architectural Treatise*, 103.

⁸⁴ As this treatise was never published, it survived in a series of manuscripts. For a list of these, see Payne, *Architectural Treatise*, 270, note 1.

⁸⁵ Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, 55 (4.1.7).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 55 (4.1.9 - 4.1.10).

To illustrate the Vitruvian origins of columns in human bodies, versions of di Giorgio's text included drawings of the Ionic column that depicted it as a naked 'sculptural' female, which showed a 'correspondence of form' between the human body and the column that was 'far more categorical than anything stated by Vitruvius or that could have been put into words' (Fig. 2.10).⁸⁷ Alina Payne defines such drawings as 'an unequivocal statement of the column-as-body-as-support equation' and di Giorgio's anthropomorphised, and armless, Ionic column has undeniable similarities to the caryatid, which, alongside its male equivalents, is arguably the most literal expression of this equation.⁸⁸ As we will see, the relationship discernible here, between the caryatid and the 'feminine' orders of architecture - the Corinthian and especially the Ionic - was continuously referred to in later centuries and it was an important characteristic of the motif in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century discourse. This drawing seems to be one of the earliest points in which this association was made, albeit it in an implicit visual format.

There is otherwise little textual evidence to show that the caryatid was associated with the feminine orders in Renaissance architectural theory, presumably as the motif was described in a completely separate section of Vitruvius' text to that describing the orders. Indeed, the purpose of the Roman author's caryatid aetiology was to stress the importance of an awareness of history for architects, with the result that caryatids, according to the text, were simply illustrative 'iconographical devices' and it is significant that his description of the motif, which was to prove so influential, was somewhat incidental.⁸⁹ In addition, the caryatid in the Vitruvian definition did not modify, or add to, the canon of the columnar orders; it may have replaced a 'feminine' order in certain applications but it was not considered a separate order until significantly later in its history.

⁸⁷ Payne, *Architectural Treatise*, 100.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 45.

The production of Quattrocento architectural treatises had been accompanied by a rapidly-increasing readership of Vitruvius' text, with the first, unillustrated, edition printed between 1486 and 1492.⁹⁰ This was followed by the publication of several new editions and translations in the sixteenth century, a period in which the emergence of forms of the caryatid that appeared to have been directly inspired by examples from antiquity, and specifically the Erechtheion figures, can be clearly witnessed. However, with the exception of the Vitruvian aetiology, the caryatid was notably absent from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century architectural discourse. Nonetheless, as it appears to have 'captured the Renaissance imagination', illustrated representations of the motif were repeatedly included in sixteenth-century editions of Vitruvius' treatise, and this enabled it to remain a consistent and prominent presence in theoretical considerations of architecture.⁹¹

The first version of Vitruvius' text to feature illustrations, the work of the architect and classical scholar Fra Giovanni Giocondo, was printed in 1511 and it included an engraving to accompany the Vitruvian aetiology (Fig. 2.11). Following this, there was probably not one later edition of Vitruvius that did not illustrate this 'essentially peripheral passage'.⁹² Indeed, as Hanno-Walter Kruft reminds us, were it not for the interest in this passage, and the illustrations of it in particular, the 'introduction of caryatids into Renaissance architecture would scarcely be explicable'.⁹³ Although, sixteenth-century textual sources shed little light on theoretical perceptions of the motif in the period, these illustrations provide evidence of how it was conceptualised, especially in relation to its association with the orders, which, while not discussed in an outright manner, was continuously implied.

⁹⁰ This was the work of the scholar Giovanni Sulpizio da Veroli. See Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius,' 70.

⁹¹ Payne, *Architectural Treatise*, 44.

⁹² Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius,' 71; Kruft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 67; Fra Giovanni Giocondo, *M. Vitruvius per Jocundum solito castigatior factus cum guris et tabula ut iam legi et intelligi possit* (Venice: G. da Tridentino, 1511).

⁹³ Kruft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 67.

The woodcut in Giocondo's work depicted Vitruvius' caryatids as three female figures bearing an entablature above Corinthian-like capitals, which indicates a perceived link to that order. They stand in an upright fashion, as befits their role as replacements for columns, and they are heavily-draped with much of their bodies enveloped in their long garments, presumably reflecting Vitruvius' characterisation of ancient caryatids as 'marble female statues wearing *stolae*'.⁹⁴ Consequently, the addition of drapery was a defining element mentioned in successive writings on caryatids across the centuries and it was frequently included in depictions of them from this point onwards. In Giocondo's engraving, the folds of the figures' garments fall in plumb lines that are reminiscent of a column's fluting and similarly strongly-defined vertical folds persisted in later illustrations of their clothing, which assuredly must have emulated the carved drapery of the lower half of the Erechtheion maidens as knowledge of these figures increased. However, although partial remains of Roman Erechtheion-inspired caryatids were known in Italy at the time, which possibly influenced the Giocondo woodcut, Renaissance scholars did not have direct access to the ancient Greek sculptures. Consequently, as Kathleen Christian notes, this characteristic may also have reflected Vitruvius' description of the origin of the Ionic column's fluting, thus evincing an underlying correspondence between that order and the caryatid.⁹⁵

Although showing some similarities in the treatment of drapery, Giocondo's caryatids clearly differ substantially from their ancient Greek counterparts or any known Roman copies of them, as was the case with other depictions of the caryatid in Cinquecento editions of Vitruvius. The painter and architect Cesare Cesariano's 1521 translation of the text, for example, included an illustration of four caryatids that bore essentially no resemblance to ancient sculptures in both their garb and postures but the vertical folds on the lower half of their bodies again appeared to mirror the fluting of columns

⁹⁴ Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 1.1.5. (http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/L/Roman/Texts/Vitruvius/1*.html#1.5, accessed 27 March 2018).

⁹⁵ Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius,' 72.

(Fig. 2.12).⁹⁶ Perhaps more significantly, these figures were accompanied by two, somewhat unusual, depictions of the caryatid that consisted of fluted columns surmounted by female heads. One of these is crowned with an Ionic volute, thus confirming the implied relationship between the caryatid and the Ionic order, while the other supports an egg-and-dart capital that is reminiscent of that encountered on the Erechtheion maidens, which may have been influenced by surviving fragments of Roman replicas.

Illustrations in later editions of Vitruvius often re-used, or were based on, those found in the work of Giocondo and Cesariano, as is the case with Giovanni Battista Caporali's 1536 translation, which included an engraving of a '*Caryatum Porticus*' that shows ten figures, each supporting the entablature above their heads with the assistance of their arms, a trait that may quote the Cesariano illustration and is also potentially influenced by the reference to caryatids with upraised arms in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists* (Fig. 2.13).⁹⁷ Moreover, the use of the term '*Porticus*' here offers an indication of some latent knowledge of the 'Porch of the Maidens'.

In 1556, Daniel Barbaro published his translation of Vitruvius and it included perhaps the most noteworthy caryatid engraving in a Cinquecento context. Drawn by the renowned architect Andrea Palladio, it depicts three heavily-draped caryatids, each of which is surmounted by a Corinthian-like capital (2.14).⁹⁸ Although their drapery does not have the same degree of accentuation in its vertical folds as earlier illustrations, it strongly resembles the *peploi* of the Erechtheion sculptures in its upper half, especially in the case of the middle and lefthand figures. Here, it seems to emulate the multitudinous, undulating folds of the drapery on the torsos of the ancient caryatids, which appear to gather together, as if bound, around the waist, and then fall in a gentle curve. Perhaps more importantly, the manner in which each caryatid grasps their drapery with one hand and stands with

⁹⁶ Cesare Cesariano, *Di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de architectura libri dece* (Como: G. da Ponte, 1521), fol. 15v.

⁹⁷ Giovanni Battista Caporali, *Architettura: con il suo cōmento et figure Vetruvio* (Perugia: Bigazzini, 1536), fol. 12v.

⁹⁸ Daniele Barbaro, *I Dieci Libri dell' Architettura di M. Vitruvio* (Venice: F. Marcolini, 1556), 13.

opposing bent and straight legs, as well as the two braids of hair that lie over the shoulders and chest of the central figure, recall the same characteristics of the Erechtheion maidens and confirm some knowledge of their appearance at this point.

As a result of the relative lack of commentary on the caryatid by fifteenth- and sixteenth-century architectural writers, it must be presumed that the classical traits that made an appearance in depictions of the motif were influenced by both Vitruvian theory and an awareness of surviving examples from antiquity, specifically Roman copies of the Erechtheion figures. Replicas of the maidens were incorporated into monuments at various sites in the ancient Roman world, such as the Forum of Augustus in Rome and the Roman Forum at Corinth (Fig. 2.15).⁹⁹ It is also thought that the examples which Pliny claimed were integrated into the Pantheon, in its now-lost first-century BC design by Marcus Agrippa, may have been quotations of the Forum sculptures, although, as no remains survive, this cannot be stated with certainty.¹⁰⁰ In addition, four marble copies of the Erechtheion caryatids were found at Hadrian's second-century villa at Tivoli and Pieter Broucke claims that the Roman Emperor repurposed the sculptures from the Pantheon for this use (Fig. 2.16).¹⁰¹

The Tivoli sculptures are particularly important as a result of their state of preservation, which surpasses that of other Roman replicas, as well as the original Greek sculptures themselves. They, therefore, provide an insight into how certain features of the Erechtheion caryatids, and especially their arms, were sculpted before they were lost.¹⁰² Although fragments of the Tivoli figures' hands

⁹⁹ Gregory Stevenson, *Power and Place: Temple and Identity in the Book of Revelation* (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2001), 65.

¹⁰⁰ Schmidt, *Geschichte der Karyatide*, 105-106.

¹⁰¹ Pieter Broucke, 'The First Pantheon: Architecture and Meaning,' in *The Pantheon in Rome: Contributions*, ed. Gerd Graßhoff, Michael Heinzelmann, and Markus Wäfler (Bern: Bern Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science, 2009), 28. Fragments of the caryatids from the Forum of Augustus were found in the 1930s, while those at Hadrian's Villa were brought to light in April 1952. See Rykwert, *The Dancing Column*, 444, note 64.

¹⁰² For more on these figures, see Moesch, 'Caryatide,' 188.

are missing, it is clear that each was carved with one hand holding folds of its *peplos* while the other carried an ancient ritual bowl (*phiale*), and it is presumed that this mirrored the hands of their Athenian precedents.¹⁰³ The depictions, in Renaissance editions of Vitruvius, of caryatids grasping their drapery with one hand must have been based on fragmentary remains of such Roman copies, as well as drawings, sketches, and casts of them.

Although we cannot know for sure what the intended symbolism of Roman Erechtheion caryatids was, according to Burkhardt Wesenberg, the sculptures used by Augustus at his Forum served as distinctly, and recognisably, ‘Greek’ or ‘Attic’ works of art, which, by emulating the sculptures from the Acropolis, proclaimed that the later monument was equal to, or exceeded, those of fifth-century BC Athens.¹⁰⁴ The Forum’s caryatids were placed in a highly conspicuous position in the attic storey of the porticoes that ran the length of the site, in colonnade-like rows of multiple figures that displayed ‘una straordinaria ieraticità’ (‘an extraordinary solemnity’).¹⁰⁵ The Forum has been interpreted as a crucial site for understanding the power of images in the Roman Empire and the use of copies of the Erechtheion caryatids in such a prominent fashion here arguably reflects their ability to function visually as a recognisable and quintessential embodiment of ‘Athenian classicism’, and its cultural connotations.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Valeria Moesch argues that, for Augustus, the Forum acted as a means of displaying a formal and cultural inheritance from Periclean Athens specifically to oppose the Alexandrian culture preferred by his rival Marc Anthony.¹⁰⁷ The display of multiple stately iterations of the Erechtheion caryatids clearly played a central role in this project.

¹⁰³ Viceré, ‘SIX ORIGINALS, INNUMERABLE COPIES,’ 228.

¹⁰⁴ Burkhardt Wesenberg, ‘Augustusforum und Akropolis,’ *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts in Rom* 99 (1984), 179-85. Also see Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 254-57. These figures have also been interpreted as symbols of the peoples the Emperor Augustus had subjected. See, for example, Viceré, ‘SIX ORIGINALS, INNUMERABLE COPIES’, 228.

¹⁰⁵ Lucrezia Ungaro and Marina Melilla (eds.), *I Luoghi del Consenso Imperiale: Il Foro di Augusto, Il Foro di Traiano* (Rome: Progetti Museali, 1995), 32.

¹⁰⁶ Beard and Henderson, *Classical Art*, 104, 166, 169.

¹⁰⁷ Moesch, ‘Caryatide,’ 188.

Hadrian, meanwhile, has been widely characterised as the most Philhellenic Roman Emperor and he probably had copies of the Erechtheion caryatids situated at his villa to act as a reminder of his ‘beloved Athens’.¹⁰⁸ These sculptures were arranged by the side of the pool known as the Canopus (Fig. 2.17) and they were accompanied by Greek ‘Sileni’ figures, which appear to have been based on certain sculpted decoration from the Athenian Theatre of Dionysus, as well as other replicas of Greek sculptures, such as a copy of the Athenian sculptor Pheidias’ fifth-century BC *Amazon*. When considered in this context, the caryatids appear to have comprised part of a sculptural programme that signified a connection to Greece. This contrasted with other sculptures situated by the pool that may have indicated different geographical regions, such as Asia Minor in the case of a sculptural group relating to the myth of Scylla, or the use of a crocodile as a representation of Egypt.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, within the ensemble of Greek sculptures specifically, the caryatids represented a cultural and artistic link to Athens directly, whereas the *Amazon*, for example, was probably associated with the Greek site of Ephesus.¹¹⁰

This Roman employment of sculptures derived from an Erechtheion caryatid ‘prototype’, recognisable in certain formal and architectonic traits, such as the powerful, upright columnar posture, vertically-carved drapery, and contrasting bent and straight legs, prefigured the caryatid’s reception and adoption following the ‘rediscovery’ of the original Athenian sculptures in the mid-eighteenth century. Similarly, from this later point, the caryatid was perceived to embody Greece, and more specifically ancient Athens and its cultural values. It is therefore worth bearing in mind what Vout states in relation to Hadrian’s use of Greek emblems: that we need ‘to ask how far the eighteenth century in particular was responsible’ for cementing the idea of Hadrian as the ultimate Philhellene,

¹⁰⁸ Harry C. Rutledge, *The Guernica Bull: Studies in the Classical Tradition in the Twentieth Century* (Athens, Georgia; London: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 107.

¹⁰⁹ Moesch, ‘Caryatide,’ 188.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 188. The Pheidias Amazon was dedicated to the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus according to Pliny. See Pliny, *Natural History*, 34.19 (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0137%3Abook%3D34%3Achapter%3D19>, accessed 27 March 2018).

and how the period may have used him and ‘new finds from his villa at Tivoli to underwrite its own obsession with classical culture’.¹¹¹ As it was specifically in the late eighteenth century that the Erechtheion prototype began to be adopted with a similar enthusiasm to that of ancient Rome, an inheritance of the ideas and sentiments that developed in relation to it at this point, and especially its potential to embody the cultural ideals of Athens, will potentially influence our understanding of how it was used by the ancients.

A reflexive relationship thus exists between the ancient and modern in interpretations of the caryatid, with post-antique readings of ancient sculpture, inherited from the eighteenth century, being implicated in our understanding of the intended symbolism of ancient Roman uses of the Erechtheion caryatid. Conversely, this Roman replication may illuminate some of the consequences of the renewed employment of the Erechtheion figure as a widely-reproduced prototype in modern Europe. Indeed, undeniable parallels can be made with ancient Rome in the direct replication of the Erechtheion sculptures from the later eighteenth century onwards, an act that had not been witnessed in Europe since the Roman period and certain examples of this later phenomenon continue a chain of replication by directly copying the Erechtheion prototype’s employment in the Roman world. This is evident, for example, in the work of Soane, in his attempts to emulate Hadrian, as is demonstrated in Chapter 2.

Regardless of the intended function of Augustus’ caryatids at the Forum or those of Hadrian at his villa, this reflexivity, by putting modern understandings of the caryatid and its use by the ancients in dialogue, is productive for interpretations of both. What is perhaps most important to recognise for the purposes of this study is that, from the age of Augustus onwards, a certain value was attached to the Erechtheion caryatid that resulted in it being used as a replicable prototype. This was then enthusiastically revived in the eighteenth century and, to some degree, it has continued up to the

¹¹¹ Vout, ‘Hadrian, Hellenism, and the Social History of Art,’ 56-57.

present day. Thus functioning as a prototype, the Erechtheion caryatid has been and continues to be dependent upon a ‘shared empathy with the artwork’ among its viewers, in whom it evokes ‘complex and multiple associations that remain inseparably tied’ to it. Throughout the long nineteenth century, for its spectators it assuredly functioned as a recognisable signifier of the glories of ancient Athens, a continuance of what was its likely symbolic capital for Roman viewers.¹¹²

The Erechtheion caryatid, as a prototype, was a particularly effective replicable symbol in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. This resulted from its ontological status specifically as a sculpted woman - with the non-individualised female body having a historic use in the West as the ‘perfect vessel’ for symbolic or abstract concepts – and one that was recognisably classical and inherently architectural and sculptural.¹¹³ It was thus ideally suited to embody and signify the cultural values and material products, both built and carved, of the ancient world. This occurred in a period in which discourses on Europe’s cultural and formal relationship with antiquity and the respective qualities of architecture and sculpture were at their height. In the remainder of this chapter, the variety of interconnected responses to the Erechtheion caryatid, as ‘le modèle absolu’ (‘the absolute model’) and the ‘tipo ideale’ (‘ideal type’), are examined in order to demonstrate how they prepared the ground for long nineteenth-century Britain’s rich scholarly and artistic engagement with the prototype.¹¹⁴ These were elicited from writers, scholars, artists, and architects from the sixteenth century onwards, when the first caryatids were sculpted that were undeniably influenced by the Erechtheion maidens.

In sixteenth-century Italy, fragmentary remains of Roman versions of the Erechtheion caryatid, or casts and drawings of them, such as a surviving 1561-65 sketch attributed to Giovanni Antonio Dosio, influenced sculpted versions of the motif that appeared at the time (2.18).¹¹⁵ This is evident, for

¹¹² Susanne Küchler, ‘The Prototype in 20th-Century Art,’ *Visual Communication* 9, no.3 (2010): 306.

¹¹³ Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, xxii.

¹¹⁴ Nebout, *Les Cariatides de Paris*, 15; Valeri, *Marmora Phlegraea*, 102.

¹¹⁵ This is now found in the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin. See the Warburg Institute’s Iconographic Database at https://iconographic.warburg.sas.ac.uk/vpc/VPC_search/record.php?record=38969 (accessed 27 March 2018).

example, in the thick deeply-cut drapery and the ornamentally-carved braiding of the hair on the figures supporting Giulio Romano's c.1529 tomb for Pietro Strozzi in the Basilica of Sant'Andrea (Fig. 2.19) and the façade of Pirro Ligorio's Casino for Pius IV of 1558-62 (Fig. 2.20). Alongside such sculpted figures, notable painted caryatids from the period evince the impact of Roman copies, such as the sculpture-like women with egg-and-dart capitals in Raphael's frescoes for the sequence of rooms known as the *Stanze di Raffaello* in the Vatican, completed in 1508-24 (Fig. 2.21). Indeed, as the caryatid was a 'signature motif' of Raphael's work, his studio appears to have played a key role in the sixteenth-century embrace of Erechtheion-inspired examples of the motif.¹¹⁶

Raphael and his studio produced many prints in collaboration with the engraver Marcantonio Raimondi, and an important c.1520 print by the latter figure, which was presumably a result of this collaboration, shows a fantastical architectural façade with two different types of classicising caryatid that display the influence of Roman Erechtheion copies (Fig. 2.22). Its four upright female figures are garbed in drapery with folds that recall the fluting of columns, and their relationship with the Ionic order is emphasised by the volutes on their heads and the entablature surmounting them. Like Roman replicas, the drapery's plumb folds cover a straight leg in each example, while the opposing leg is bent at the knee, and all four figures clasp their drapery with their hands. More significantly, however, the large central head in Raimondi's print emulates both the distinctive braiding of the Erechtheion prototype's hair and its capital. These details were undeniably influenced by Roman replicas, and presumably the remains of large busts that were modelled on the heads of the Erechtheion caryatids, which apparently survived in the Forum of Augustus and were 'sketched and admired by Renaissance antiquarians' (Fig. 2.23).¹¹⁷ The influence of these heads is also discernible in the somewhat more naturalistic caryatid bust atop a doorway in Raphael's *Stanze*.

¹¹⁶ Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius,' 71.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

Raimondi's print confirms the direct influence of Roman sculpted copies of the Erechtheion prototype in post-classical representations of caryatids from as early as the sixteenth century, as a result of that era's interest in reviving antique examples of the motif.¹¹⁸ Indeed, the formal impact of the Roman copies is especially apparent if Raimondi's print is compared with another engraving by the same artist of a design by Raphael, known as *La Cassolette* (Fig. 2.24). This shows two figures supporting an incense burner that bear essentially no resemblance to ancient caryatids. Indeed, in their graceful elongated forms, with long necks and small high breasts, as well as their more dynamic poses, they display the more typical Mannerist characteristics of the period's figural designs. By contrast, Raphael's architectural print, as well as his *Stanze*, appears to express the artist's desire for a formal return to an originary 'Greek' type of caryatid, equated with the Erechtheion prototype.¹¹⁹ However, as his figures were not copied directly from the original sources, and as the Roman copies that influenced them survived in a fragmentary state, such manifestations of the motif still differed substantially from the Athenian sculptures in their appearance and in the case of drawn, engraved, or painted figures, they evidently did not replicate their function.

It was in sixteenth-century France that sculpted caryatids which, in certain key aspects, more clearly reflected the Erechtheion prototype appeared, and where a pivotal moment in the motif's history was witnessed. The first French edition of Vitruvius, Jean Martin's text of 1547, played an important role in introducing Italian artistic ideas to France and it included a caryatid illustration by the sculptor Jean Goujon (Fig. 2.25).¹²⁰ This shows two draped figures that share the characteristics of Ionic volutes and Erechtheion-inspired hair that are found on the Raimondi print and, although she accepts that their origins remain a mystery, Christiane Aulanier posits that they were directly modelled on

¹¹⁸ The classicising caryatids in this print were disseminated through reproductions in other sixteenth-century publications on architecture, such as the Venetian architect Giovanni Antonio Rusconi's translation of Vitruvius. See Giovanni Antonio Rusconi, *Della architettura: con centosessanta figure dissegnate dal medesimo* (Venice: Appresso i Gioliti, 1590), 2.

¹¹⁹ Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius,' 71.

¹²⁰ Christiane Aulanier, *La Salle des Caryatides et Les Salles des Antiquités Grecques* (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1957), 15.

Roman copies of the Erechtheion caryatids.¹²¹ More importantly, however, was the structure that Goujon was to go on to design, which exerted a significant influence on the history of the caryatid, especially in its classicising forms, and was particularly important for nineteenth-century commentators on the caryatid who celebrated it as a masterpiece of sixteenth-century sculpture.¹²²

Goujon's c.1550 *Tribune des Caryatides* in the Louvre features four limestone sculptures that are a landmark in the caryatid's history, due to their stylistic rupture from preceding and contemporary examples and their more distinctly 'Greek' manner (Figs. 2.26 & 2.27). They offer the period's clearest genealogical connection to the Erechtheion maidens, in terms of both form *and* function. Indeed, the use of such figures, so unlike their contemporary counterparts throughout Europe, reflects the 'rebirth [in France] of a Classical subject that Italian Renaissance architecture did not possess in such monumental form' and, nearly 300 years following their creation, they were still considered 'une parfaite imitation du style des anciens' ('a perfect imitation of the style of the ancients').¹²³ In terms of sculpted caryatids, the figures on the *Tribune des Caryatides* emulate the Erechtheion prototype to a degree previously unseen in formal terms, as each stands in an upright columnar position with one foot stepping forward and, distinctively, they each have broken arms. In addition, they bear an Ionic entablature on their heads, thus also copying the ancient figures' load-bearing function, and they specifically do so on a porch-like structure in a columnar sequence in which the positions of their bent and straight legs mirror each other in a fashion akin to their ancient predecessors.

Like his contemporaries, Goujon could not have had direct knowledge of the Athenian figures meaning that their shared lack of complete arms was purely coincidental, and it was presumably

¹²¹ Ibid., 17-18.

¹²² Krufft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 70.

¹²³ Jarl Kremer, 'Jacques Androuet du Cerceau,' in *Architectural Theory: From the Renaissance to the Present* (Cologne: Taschen, 2003), 220; Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique d'Architecture*, 317.

intended to give the sculptures a more columnar appearance.¹²⁴ Goujon's caryatids also differ from the ancient sculptures in their more relaxed, and less columnar, contrapposto poses, which express a lighter ponderation. Furthermore, their drapery's overall diaphanous appearance, and the manner in which it seems to fall in soft, sweeping folds, offers a stark contrast to the deep carving and, in some cases, thick rigidity, of the carved folds of the Athenian maidens' *peploi*, while other decorative details, such as the sculpting of their hair and the ornamentation of their capitals display evident differences to the Erechtheion figures.

Nonetheless, the 'Greek' tone of Goujon's sculptures is particularly apparent when they are compared with the more Mannerist nature of the country's contemporary figural sculpture, exemplified by the figures on the *Monument du coeur d'Henri II* by France's other great sixteenth-century sculptor, Germain Pilon (Fig. 2.28). The trio of slender, long-limbed caryatids supporting a casket containing the heart of King Henri II echo those on Raphael's *Cassollette* in their forms. By comparison, Goujon's caryatids express an 'esprit classique' ('classical spirit') by providing the most clearly replicative iteration in the process of copying and adapting the Erechtheion prototype following antiquity up to that point.¹²⁵ The unique nature and impact of Goujon's Louvre sculptures is reflected in how frequently they were reproduced in French architectural treatises, as the ideal example of the caryatid, in the years following their creation, as demonstrated in the copperplate engraving produced for Jacques Androuet du Cerceau's 1576 *Le premier volume des plus excellent bastiments de France* (Fig. 2.29) and the illustration included in Claude Perrault's translation of Vitruvius almost 100 years later.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Yves Pauwels, *L'Architecture et le Livre en France à la Renaissance* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013), 166.

¹²⁵ Aulanier, *Salle des Caryatides*, 18.

¹²⁶ Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, *Le premier volume des plus excellent bastiments de France* (Paris: Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, 1576); Claude Perrault, *Les dix livres d'architecture de Vitruve* (Paris: Chez Jean Baptiste Coignard, 1673), 4.

In a wider European context, depictions of caryatids in sixteenth-century translations of Vitruvius displayed the influence of Raimondi's architectural print, such as the first German edition, Walther Hermann Ryff's *Vitruvius Teutsch* of 1548, which featured a surprising number of caryatid illustrations, including a reproduction of two of the caryatids with Ionic volutes and the Erechtheion-inspired head from Raimondi's design (Fig. 2.30). Notably, another Ryff illustration, attributed to the engraver Virgil Solis, depicts a collection of anthropomorphic supports, mixing both male and female figures, in the form of terms (Fig. 2.31).¹²⁷ Consisting of the upper body of a figural sculpture with a tapering architectural lower body, this classical motif was frequently amalgamated with the caryatid in Renaissance Italy. The origins of this mixed form are unclear and previous authors have argued that, as the term was exclusively male and it never had a supporting function in antiquity, it must have arisen in Renaissance Italy.¹²⁸ However, a female term dating to the Augustan period, which has a distinctly caryatid-like appearance, can currently be found in the Capitoline Museum in Rome, where it is designated as an 'Erma di Cariatide' ('caryatid herm') - 'herm' being essentially interchangeable with 'term' - and it would seem to indicate a more ancient origin (Fig.2.32).

Regardless of its roots, the caryatid-term proved to be a popular ornamental motif of the Cinquecento period, exemplified in numerous structures, such as Bartolomeo Ammannati's mid-sixteenth-century *Ninfeo* at the Villa Giulia (Fig. 2.33). Versions of it were illustrated in the century's architectural texts, from as early as 1537, the year in which the fourth book of Sebastiano Serlio's *Regole generali di architettura* was published, which contains two woodcuts depicting caryatid-terms on chimneypieces and an illustration of one on its frontispiece.¹²⁹ Serlio's text is of monumental importance to architectural history as, alongside Vitruvius' treatise and Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola's *Regola delle cinque ordini d'architettura*, its detailed treatment of the classical orders played a central role in the process of their canonisation and codification in Western architecture.

¹²⁷ Petcu, 'Anthropomorphizing the Orders,' 349.

¹²⁸ Colvin, 'Herms, Terms and Caryatids,' 97.

¹²⁹ Sebastiano Serlio, *Regole generali di architettura* (Venice: Francesco Marcolini, 1537), 1; fol. 46r; fol. 61r.

While the caryatid was not explicitly mentioned in this work, regarding a drawing in which a pair of caryatid-terms are depicted supporting the overmantel of a chimneypiece based on the Corinthian order, Serlio wrote that as ‘the Corinthian style took its origin from a Corinthian maiden, I wanted to represent this by setting her as a column’ (Fig. 2.34).¹³⁰

Such a column-female body analogy inevitably implies some relation to the caryatid. Otherwise, the caryatid does not appear to have been discussed in Cinquecento architectural texts, including, significantly, Vignola’s work on the orders, which was the most widely-used architectural treatise up to the nineteenth century.¹³¹ Books on architecture printed outside of Italy in this period were often copies and translations of those produced in that country and, consequently, they tended not to deal specifically with the motif, except in reiterating its Vitruvian origins.¹³² Likewise, caryatid-terms were seldom discussed in architectural theory and thus the origin of this hybrid form remains unclear.¹³³ Alongside strictly architectural structures, it appeared frequently in the period’s furniture and interior decoration, especially in a Northern European context. Indeed, taking on a myriad distortions that moved it further from the caryatids of antiquity, the term in Northern Europe became increasingly ‘grotesque’ in its appearance. Like examples of anthropomorphic supports on medieval religious buildings, it appeared, not as a separate type, but as a variant of the multitude of human and organic, or architectonic, forms that were popular in Mannerist ornament. Nonetheless, both male and female terms appear to have been considered as intrinsically related to caryatids as they were included in certain sixteenth-century texts focused on the motif, such as Jan Vredeman de Vries c.1565 work *Caryatidum* (Fig. 2.35), and it was in this form that the caryatid first appeared in Britain.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Sebastiano Serlio, *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture. Vol. 1, Books I – V of Tutte l’opere d’architettura et prospetiva*, trans. Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 363.

¹³¹ Krufft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 80.

¹³² On major non-Italian treatises discussing their Vitruvian origins, see, for example, Philbert de l’Orme, *Le Premier Tome de l’Architecture* (Paris: Chez Federic Morel, 1567), fol. 221v.

¹³³ Petcu, ‘Anthropomorphizing the Orders,’ 345-46.

¹³⁴ Jan Vredeman de Vries, *Caryatidum (Vulgus Termas Vocat) sive Athlantidum multiformium ad quemlibet Architecturae* (Antwerp, 1597).

Throughout the sixteenth century the caryatid-term was a common ornamental element in British architecture, used on funerary monuments and in interior decoration. Like their continental counterparts, especially when used as a form of household decoration, they frequently had the character of rather ‘grotesque’ figures with architectonic bodies, missing limbs, exposed breasts, and glaring faces, that were enmeshed within the elaborate wood or plaster carving and strapwork of the period’s interiors (Fig. 2.36). Intermingling male and female figures were common, often based on the engravings encountered in the design books of Netherlandish artists, such as de Vries.¹³⁵ They flourished in the interiors of the wealthy throughout the century, and into the early part of the seventeenth, to an extent that has led Colvin to claim that ‘an indiscriminate profusion’ of the figures was a key feature of Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture.¹³⁶ Although they were a dominant variant of the caryatid, and caryatid-terms were to be revived with some enthusiasm in nineteenth-century Britain, they differed distinctly from classicised types and a detailed examination of the history of such a prolific variant of the caryatid is beyond the remit of this thesis.

Despite their popularity, caryatids-terms were not discussed in the first English architectural treatise, John Shute’s *First and Chief Groundes of Architecture*, printed in 1563. However, like its predecessors, this work included important illustrations that implicitly referred to the relationship between caryatids and columns. Specifically, it featured a woodcut and a series of engravings that illustrated the Vitruvian analogy between the columns of the orders and human bodies by showing the figures from which the columns derived, including three females who are representative of the Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite orders.¹³⁷ Echoing di Giorgio’s drawing of the Ionic column’s origins from the previous century, each female figure is, in appearance, synonymous with a caryatid and thus demonstrates an underlying awareness on Shute’s part of the relationship between caryatids

¹³⁵ Colvin, ‘Herms, Terms and Caryatids,’ 113.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹³⁷ See John Shute, *The first and chief groundes of architecture: used in all the auncient and famous monymentes with a farther and more ample discourse upon the same, than hitherto has been set out by any other* (London: Gregg Press, 1974).

and the orders (Fig. 2.37). However, the drawings depart significantly from classical models of the motif and their appearance accords more clearly with contemporary Northern European depictions of the caryatid, which were endowed with a mass of ornamental details that showed little or no relationship with ancient examples.¹³⁸

Although depictions of caryatids flourished in sixteenth-century architectural texts, and the century witnessed the creation of a monumental and groundbreaking classicising caryatid structure seemingly inspired by the Erechtheion prototype, in the form of the *Tribune des Caryatides*, Alina Payne reminds us that, as a result of the orders in Renaissance treatises claiming ‘exclusive prominence’, the caryatid essentially received little or no commentary in the period.¹³⁹ This is evident in the work of the authors already mentioned and other significant architectural writers, including Palladio, perhaps the most important Renaissance architect in terms of his influence on later British architecture. He made no mention of the motif and his famous treatise included no illustrations of caryatids, with the exception of a pair of decorative term figures on its frontispiece.¹⁴⁰ However, the range of depictions of caryatids in the century’s architectural illustrations and prints evinces the underlying importance of the motif for architects and scholars, and allows us to trace the development of certain notions that were associated with it and proved fundamental to later interpretations.

The seventeenth century witnessed the production of the first detailed written descriptions of the caryatid in architectural texts, and this included explicit discussion of its relationship with the orders. However, as many of the century’s Italian architects were rather unconcerned with publishing works, that country’s Baroque movement in architecture was essentially given ‘no theoretical

¹³⁸ Also see the treatment of the Ionic and Corinthian orders, accompanied by variants of the ‘grotesque’ caryatid-term, in the illustrations for the German painter Wendel Dietterlin’s architectural treatise. Wendel Dietterlin, *Architectura von Auftheilung, Symmetria und Proportion der Fünff Seulen* (Nürnberg: Caymox, 1598).

¹³⁹ Payne, ‘Reclining Bodies,’ 95.

¹⁴⁰ Andrea Palladio, *I Quattro libri dell'architettura* (Venice: Appresso Dominico de Franceschi, 1570). For more on Palladio’s lack of commentary on figural sculpture, see Payne, ‘Reclining Bodies,’ 95-96.

formulation'.¹⁴¹ Consequently, as previously, Italy produced scant written discourse on the caryatid, despite the seeming wealth of examples of the motif, both sculpted and painted, in the century's architecture. Notably, they were frequently used in ecclesiastical structures in the period and a significant development of a variety of forms that were often un-classical and religious in nature is discernible. These reflected the inventive deviations that were characteristic of the country's Baroque architecture, exemplified in the unusual winged caryatid-terms, which presumably represent angels, on Francesco Borromini's c.1653-59 campanile for Sant'Andrea della Fratte (Fig. 2.38) or the pair of muscular bare-breasted caryatid-terms that emerge from the curlicues on the façade of Martino Longhi the Younger's church of Santi Vincenzo e Anastasio a Trevi (1646-50, Fig. 2.39).

The architect Guarino Guarini's treatise *Architecture civile*, posthumously published in 1737, provides an important exception to the seventeenth-century textual silence on the caryatid in Italy and it clarifies that the motif was considered a variant of the traditional classical orders by its placement in a section of the text focused on what the author termed the '*mancanti*' ('missing') and 'bastard' orders.¹⁴² However, the depiction Guarini used to illustrate the caryatid shows a figure completely unlike the Erechtheion type (Fig. 2.40). Notably, it is shown carrying a basket of fruit, which reflects a reference in the text to the caryatid's capital resembling a basket of fruit or flowers, a defining trait in descriptions of the motif that appears to have arisen in this century.

It was also in the seventeenth century that the cultural leadership of Europe passed from Italy to France and it is in the latter country's architectural writings that the first detailed discussion of the caryatid since Vitruvius can be found.¹⁴³ This is exemplified in the art and architectural theorist Ronald Fréart de Chambray's 1650 *Parallèle de l'architecture antique avec la moderne*, the most

¹⁴¹ Krufft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 103.

¹⁴² Guarino Guarini, *Architettura civile* (Turin: Appresso Gianfrancesco Mairesse all'Insegna di Santa Teresa di Gesù, 1737), 135-36.

¹⁴³ Paul Okkar Kristeller, 'The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (I),' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no.4 (October 1951): 521

popular handbook on the orders after Vignola's.¹⁴⁴ This text was fundamental in laying the groundwork for the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century's 'Greek Revival' movement in architecture as it provided one of the earliest examples of a call to architects to return to the core principles of ancient Greek architecture, and, in particular, the appropriate use of the Greek orders of Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian.¹⁴⁵

In relation to the caryatid, as with earlier architectural texts, the French writer cited its Vitruvian origins, but he also provided a detailed analysis of the motif that extended beyond the aetiology. Specifically in his chapter on the Ionic, he mentioned 'l'ordre Caryatide' and thus appears as one of the first authors to explicitly classify the motif as a separate order.¹⁴⁶ In addition, his work included a chapter focused solely on this caryatid order where he argued that, as it was a species of the Ionic, 'toute la difference consiste au seul changement de la colonne, qui est metamorphosée en une figure de femme' ('the only difference consists in the replacement of the column, which is transformed into the figure of a woman'). He developed this by claiming that the caryatid sometimes simply consisted of a column with a capital replaced by a woman's head, whose hair was sculpted like volutes and whose fluting mimicked the folds of drapery and, consequently, the relationship of the caryatid with the feminine columnar orders was emphasised.¹⁴⁷

Chambray's contemporary, André Félibien, also described an 'Ordre des Caryatides' and equally claimed that it was simply the Ionic order with its columns replaced by female figures, in his *Des principes de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture* of 1676.¹⁴⁸ Notably, Félibien's work

¹⁴⁴ Rykwert, *The Dancing Column*, 29.

¹⁴⁵ Christopher Drew Armstrong, 'French Architectural Thought and the Idea of Greece,' in *A Companion to Greek Architecture*, ed. Margaret M. Miles (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell: 2016), 488.

¹⁴⁶ Roland Fréart de Chambray, *Parallèle de l'Architecture Antique avec la Moderne* (Paris: De l'imprimerie d'Edme Martin, 1650), 34. This is in contrast to, for example, Hanno-Walter Kruft's statement that the eighteenth-century scholar Julien-David Le Roy identified a new 'Ordre Caryatide' in Kruft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 211.

¹⁴⁷ Chambray, *Parallèle de l'Architecture*, 52.

¹⁴⁸ André Félibien, *Des principes de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture, et des autres arts qui en dépendent* (Paris: Chez Jean Baptiste Coignard, 1676), 33, 36.

mentioned the remains of certain ancient Athenian examples of the motif that carried baskets on their heads, which presumably referred to the Erechtheion maidens.¹⁴⁹ He called these figures ‘Caniferae’ or ‘Cistiferae’ and this appears as one of the earliest occasions in which separate terms, similarly derived from ancient Greek, were used to describe the motif. Meaning ‘basket-bearer’ and ‘casket-bearer’ respectively, the former term, and its associated meanings, was of particular importance in later definitions of the caryatid and, as we have seen, Guarini also implied this relationship between caryatids and ‘basket-bearers’ in his treatise.¹⁵⁰

In François Blondel’s influential *Cours d’Architecture*, published in 1675, the architect and teacher related caryatids to the Corinthian order specifically and he cited the examples of the Pantheon and the ‘Piliers Tuteles’ in support of this, the latter being a Gallo-Roman monument in Bordeaux that survived at the time.¹⁵¹ Dating to the third century, it originally consisted of 24 Corinthian columns surmounted by caryatids carved in relief on an arcade storey. The remains of this structure were destroyed in 1677 so although it provided certain seventeenth-century French writers with more sculptures to add to the repertoire of ancient caryatids, and it provided evidence from antiquity for their association with the feminine orders, it appears to have had little impact on manifestations of the motif in the period.

The ‘Piliers Tuteles’ and other Roman examples of caryatids were also included in the first major French translation of Vitruvius following Martin’s sixteenth-century version, which was written by Claude Perrault around 1673 (Fig. 2.41).¹⁵² To accompany the passage of the text on the caryatid’s origins, this work included a depiction of Goujon’s *Tribune* and the use of these figures from the

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 34.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 513. Also see Augustin Charles d’Aviler, *Cours d’Architecture qui comprend Les Ordres de Vignole*, vol. 1 (Paris: Nicholas Langlois, 1691), 38; Augustin-Charles d’Aviler, *Explication des termes d’architecture* (Paris: Nicholas Langlois, 1691), 441.

¹⁵¹ François Blondel, *Cours d’Architecture enseigné dans l’Academie royale d’architecture* (Paris: De l’imprimerie de Lambert Roulland en la maison d’Antoine Vitré, 1675), 248.

¹⁵² Perrault, *Les dix livres d’architecture*, 3, note 4. Also see Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique d’Architecture*, 316.

previous century as exemplars was presumably a result of their exceptional ‘Greek’ character and their contrast to contemporary caryatids with their lack of adherence to Vitruvian prescriptions. An example of how far the caryatid in France had diverged from the columnar ‘Greek’ type, rooted in the orders, is provided by the work of one of the most important French sculptors of the seventeenth century, Jacques Sarazin. He designed what are perhaps the period’s finest examples of sculpted caryatids in 1638-41 (Fig. 2.42). Arranged in four pairs on the Louvre’s *Pavilion de l’Horloge*, with some figures sculpted in relief, they appear as pure ornamentation as they clearly do not function as load-bearing statues. Although the treatment of their drapery, in its weightier appearance, is somewhat more accurate in terms of classical precedents than that of Goujon, they nonetheless offer a more naturalistic and less architectonic rendering of the caryatid than the earlier work in the varying and relaxed arrangement of their poses, limbs, and hair. Indeed, they lie somewhere ‘between the cold rationalism of the purely classical [...] and the ecstasy of the Baroque’ and they thus contrast significantly with the more ‘purely classical’ columnar form of caryatid prescribed by Chambray and other contemporary writers on architecture.¹⁵³ Perhaps as a result of this, the nineteenth-century architectural theorist Quatremère de Quincy claimed that the positive reputation Sarazin’s sculptures retained rested more on their location than their character and composition.¹⁵⁴

Significantly, as well as providing the first detailed non-Vitruvian commentary of the caryatid, it is in seventeenth-century French architectural texts that seemingly the first conclusive evidence of the problematisation of the motif’s usage is displayed as result of its slavery connotations. Rather than demonstrating a discomfort with the depiction of enslavement generally, however, this seems to have largely resulted from the frequent use of the caryatid in the period’s religious buildings. Chambray, for example, claimed that, as a result of the motif’s origins, much discretion was required to make use of it in an appropriate manner and he stated that it was rarely used by contemporary architects

¹⁵³ Anthony Blunt, *Art and Architecture in France, 1500-1700*, rev. Richard Beresford (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999), 212.

¹⁵⁴ Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique d’Architecture*, 317.

judiciously, often appearing as an architectural ‘abuse’, while highlighting that it should not be adopted on religious buildings, ‘où la vengeance & la servitude ne doivent jamais paroître’ (‘where vengeance and servitude should never appear’).¹⁵⁵ His writings also display an aversion to the use of female sculptures specifically in this role as they were considered too ‘weak and delicate’ to act as supporting figures.¹⁵⁶ These sentiments were repeated in later seventeenth-century writing on architecture, and persisted in British ideas on the caryatid in the following century, and for many years beyond.

England’s most famous seventeenth-century architect Christopher Wren disputed the idea that the orders were related to the human body, which Colvin has claimed was part of a wider movement in which the concept of the orders being derived from male and female bodies was going out of fashion.¹⁵⁷ Accordingly, caryatids rarely appeared in seventeenth-century, as well as eighteenth-century, English architecture, with the exception of chimneypieces, where their appearance was particularly noteworthy, and funerary monuments. An especially imposing example of the latter is provided by the *Monument to Ludovic Stuart* by Hubert Le Sueur (Fig. 2.43).¹⁵⁸ Overall, like in France, negative sentiments regarding the employment of caryatids were witnessed in seventeenth-century English textual sources, although not necessarily as a result of their slavery connotations. This is apparent from as early as 1624, when Henry Wotton described them, in England’s first complete treatise on classical architecture, as ‘licentious inventions [...] which the author himselfe condemneth, being in his whole Book a professed enemy to *Fancies*’.¹⁵⁹ This provides one of the

¹⁵⁵ See Chambray, *Parallèle de l’Architecture*, 35, 52. On descriptions of their Vitruvian origins accompanied by cautions about their employment, and the dismissal of their use in churches, also see Blondel, *Cours d’architecture*, 160-1. Antoine Desgodets’ *Traité des Ordres de l’Architecture* was never published but survives in various manuscripts and a version dated to 1733 claims architects should be wary in using caryatids due to questions of taste and he especially warns against using them in religious buildings (Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la photographie, ms. HA-23(A), 333), <http://www.desgodets.net/ordres-o5#o5BodyFr02.14> (accessed 10 October 2017).

¹⁵⁶ Chambray, *Parallèle de l’Architecture*, 34.

¹⁵⁷ Christopher Wren, *Parentalia, or, Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens* (Fanborough: Gregg Press, 1965), 353; Colvin, ‘Herms, Terms and Caryatids,’ 124.

¹⁵⁸ Colvin, ‘Herms, Terms and Caryatids,’ 126.

¹⁵⁹ Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture, Collected by Henry Wotton Knight from the best Authors and Examples* (London: John Bill, 1624), 31.

earliest examples of such outright condemnation of the caryatid, which, as we will see, flourished in Britain for the following 300 years or so.

In the closing decades of the seventeenth century, Western European travellers and antiquarians began to visit Greece and document its ancient ruins, thus seeing firsthand the original Erechtheion maidens and it is from this point that they became the quintessential exemplars of the motif, as well as being regularly praised as ideal forms of Greek sculpture more generally. Thus, although seventeenth-century variants of the caryatid had departed yet further from the Erechtheion or ‘Greek’ prototype, and perhaps as a result of its multiple manifestations in a variety of contexts, especially in churches, commentators in the period began to consider the motif in an outright negative light, from the opening of the eighteenth century, discourse on the caryatid had an additional theoretical corpus alongside the work of writers on architecture: the accounts and studies of antiquarian travellers and scholars. This disseminated knowledge of the celebrated Erechtheion sculptures, which both augmented and complicated interpretations and understandings of the caryatid.

‘the object I wish for most, if I could compass the purchase is the finest of the two Cariatides’:¹⁶⁰

Eighteenth-Century Discourse on the Caryatid

Among the earliest scholarly travellers to Athens from Western Europe were the French archaeologist Jacob Spon and the English clergyman George Wheler. Travelling together, they eventually published two separate accounts of their experience between 1678 and 1682. Very little concrete information about ancient Greek built structures was available to Western and Northern Europeans before that point and, consequently, both scholars’ texts attest to their use of Pausanias’ *Description of Greece*, a second-century topographical guidebook to the country, to identify and describe ancient ruins. Both

¹⁶⁰ Charles Townley quoted in Gerard Vaughan, ‘Albacini and his English Patrons,’ *Journal of the History of Collections* 3, no. 2 (1991): 185.

also mentioned the Erechtheion temple and described its maidens simply as ‘quelques statuës de femmes enclavées dans un mur’ or ‘Statues of Women, in the Walls’, stating that they possibly represented the Graces, with no mention of caryatids being made.¹⁶¹

The Italian Cornelio Magni had travelled to Athens a year before Spon and Wheler and his description of the Erechtheion temple was published in his account of 1688. Significantly, he described the Erechtheion sculptures as ‘*Cariati*’ and, as Lesk notes, this appears to be the first time that the figures were directly identified as caryatids in a textual source.¹⁶² By this point, therefore, it was presumably possible to make a conclusive link between the Athenian sculptures and the remains of Roman copies. Thus, the identification of the Erechtheion maidens as caryatids would have allowed, for the first point in history, a direct genealogical connection to be made between them and the multitude of forms of the motif from the Roman period onwards that appeared as varying manifestations of this type.

Another two Italians, Giacomo Milhau Verneda and Francesco Fanelli, were based at the Acropolis during Venice’s occupation of it in 1687 and they did not identify the sculptures in the Erechtheion’s porch as caryatids but instead stated that they were representations of the Graces.¹⁶³ Nearer the end of the century, several other Italian travellers also identified them as representations of the daughters of Erechtheus, the mythological king of Athens.¹⁶⁴ In 1745, however, an English clergyman Richard

¹⁶¹ Their statements would appear to indicate that the caryatids were enveloped in a wall structure at this point. Jacob Spon, *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce et du Levant, Fait és années 1675 & 1676, par Jacob Spon Docteur Medecin Aggrégé à Lyon, & George Wheler, Gentilhomme Anglois*, vol. 2 (Lyon: Antoine Cellier, 1678), 160; George Wheler, *A Journey into Greece, by George Wheler Esq; In Company of Dr Spon of Lyons.*, book 5 (London: William Cademan, Robert Kettlewell and Awnsham Churchill, 1682), 365.

¹⁶² Cornelio Magni, *Relazione della Città d'Athene colle Provinzie dell' Attica, Focia, Boeozia, e Negroponte, ne' tempi che furono queste passeggiate da Cornelio Magni, Parmegiano, L'Anno 1674* (Parma, 1688), 56-7; Lesk, *Diachronic Examination of the Erechtheion*, 435.

¹⁶³ Giacomo Milhau Verneda, *Pianta del Castello d'Acropolis e Città d'Athene. Tavola delle cose più nottabili conteute [sic] nella Pianta del Castello*, 1687 and Francesco Fanelli, *Atene Attica Descritta da Suoi Principii sino all'acquisto fatto dall'Armi Venete nel 1687* (Blackmer 573), Venice, 1707. As quoted in Lesk, *Diachronic Examination of the Erechtheion*, 446-48.

¹⁶⁴ A. Locatelli, A. 1691. *Racconto storico della Veneta Guerra in Levante, Diretta dal Valore del Serenissimo Principe, Francesco Morosini. Opera postuma di Alessandro Locatelli* (Atabey 724), Colonia, 1691 and R. De la Rue, *Relatione d'alcune principali Antichità d'Atene. Del Sig. Rinaldo de la Rue. Trovandosi egli stesso all'acquisto della*

Pococke published a detailed description of the Erechtheion, in which he described the porch as a ‘colonade of caryatides’, thus confirming their identity as caryatids while conflating much of the previous knowledge of these figures by stating that they could possibly represent the Graces, Muses, or daughters of Erechtheus.¹⁶⁵ Pococke's account also included one of the first depictions in print of the Erechtheion temple, including the caryatid porch, which would have made knowledge of the physical appearance of the sculptures available to a yet wider public (Fig. 2.44).

Eighteenth-century architectural texts, meanwhile, consolidated many of the ideas relating to caryatids that had been presented in, or can be unearthed from, fifteenth- to seventeenth-century works, and they did so while providing an unprecedented level of detail in terms of their relation to the orders, appropriate use, and connotations. It was also in this century that, according to Kruff, ‘England’s contribution to architectural theory [...] acquired a position of virtual dominance in Europe’.¹⁶⁶ However, in the early part of the century, none of the country’s renowned architects, such as John Vranbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor, left any significant written material and, specifically in relation to the caryatid, several of the period’s well-known published works on architecture neither mentioned nor included illustrations of the motif.¹⁶⁷ As in the previous century, it was the role of French architectural writers to provide the most detailed discourse on the caryatid until a lengthy description of the motif in the mid-eighteenth century’s ‘most influential embodiment of architectural theory in England’, Isaac Ware’s *A Complete Body of Architecture*.¹⁶⁸

medesima città, nella campagna dell'anno 1687, in qualità di Bombista, 1687. As quoted in Lesk, *Diachronic Examination of the Erechtheion*, 448-49.

¹⁶⁵ Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East, and Some other Countries*, vol. 2, part 2 (London: W. Bowyer, 1745), 164. The caryatids were also described as ‘Graces’ by the English traveller Charles Perry. See Perry, *A view of the Levant, particularly of Constantinople, Syria, Egypt, and Greece : In which their Antiquities, Government, Politics, Maxims, Manners, and Customs (with many other Circumstances and Contingencies) are attempted to be Described and Treated on* (London: T. Woodward, C. Davis and J. Shuckburgh, 1743), 504.

¹⁶⁶ Kruff, *History of Architectural Theory*, 228.

¹⁶⁷ See, for example, Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus, or The British Architect*, vol. 1 (London, 1715), vol. 2 (London, 1717), and vol. 3 (London, 1725). Also see James Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture, Containing Designs of Buildings and Ornaments* (London, 1728), although this work does include illustrations of two chimneypiece with pairs of caryatid-terms (pl. 93, 96).

¹⁶⁸ Kruff, *History of Architectural Theory*, 244.

Following the cautionary tone of Chambray, and French architectural writers following him, eighteenth-century French authors expressed negative sentiments regarding the use of caryatids from the century's outset. Jean-Louis de Cordemoy, for example, described the use of the female body as an architectural support as an abuse that contradicted good sense, in his treatise of 1714. Presumably reflecting the myriad forms the motif had adopted in the country's Baroque architecture, he noted the caryatid's 'plusieurs d'attitudes différentes' ('multitude of different attitudes') and highlighted two distinct types that potentially cited Perrault and Félibien, as well as ancient sources: those which were related to Athenaeus' text and used one hand to assist in supporting the burden 'sous lequel elles sembloient gémir' ('under which they seem to groan'), and others that carried baskets, which, like earlier authors, he termed '*Canifera*' and '*Cistifere*'.¹⁶⁹

Sébastien Le Clerc's *Traité d'architecture* was published in the same year as Cordemoy's treatise and it provided a substantially more detailed analysis of the motif, while suggesting several new associations. Le Clerc claimed that, as representations of enslaved women were insulting and shameful, contemporary caryatids were instead adopted as ornaments with an allegorical character, a use that was to prove extremely popular for in the nineteenth century.¹⁷⁰ The allegorical nature of caryatids at this point can be witnessed on several seventeenth-century examples already discussed, such as Sarazin's Louvre sculptures, where their allegorical function is evinced by the two figures with exposed breasts, the single bare breast being a characteristic frequently associated with personifications of virtues.¹⁷¹ This trait is also encountered on the four bronze caryatids representing Hope, Truth, Charity, and Faith on Ludovic Stuart's monument.

¹⁶⁹ Jean-Louis de Cordemoy, *Nouveau traité de toute l'architecture ou l'Art de Bastir* (Paris: Chez Jean-Baptiste Coignard, 1714), 230-31.

¹⁷⁰ Sébastien Le Clerc, *Traité D'Architecture* (Paris: Chez Pierre Giffart, 1714), 106.

¹⁷¹ For more on this, see Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 267-93.

Le Clerc's text provided a series of prescriptions regarding the appropriate contexts for using the caryatid, and how it should appear in those contexts, from banqueting halls to religious buildings, and this reflected the myriad manifestations of the motif witnessed in the previous decades. Presumably reacting against the highly-varied appearance of such figures, the French artist emphasised caryatids' relationship with classical columns by stating that their bodies should be as erect and column-like as possible, while claiming that they could be used with Ionic and Corinthian entablatures. He cited the *Tribune des Caryatides* as an example of this relation to columns, and he maintained that the severed arms of the structure's sculptures emphasised their columnar postures.¹⁷²

Although caryatids were encountered on the exteriors of some British buildings, especially those designed in a more Baroque idiom in the early part of the century, such as Vanbrugh's Blenheim Palace of 1705-22 (Fig. 2.45), they were rare in the Palladian architecture that dominated Britain during most of the eighteenth century. A notable exception can be found in the figures employed to flank chimneypieces, a particularly common use of the caryatid in the homes of the wealthy, as we will see in Chapter 4. Despite their relative paucity on British buildings otherwise, the century witnessed the creation of two of the lengthiest, and most important, descriptions of caryatids produced in the country, Ware's *A Complete Body of Architecture* of 1756-57 and William Chambers' *A Treatise on Civil Architecture* of 1759. These were to prove particularly influential on nineteenth-century writings on the motif, and both texts argued, in contrast to most caryatids that made an appearance at the time, for a return to more classicising columnar figures.

Ware's understanding of caryatids was grounded in both the Vitruvian aetiology and their connection with the orders, and it was clearly influenced by the work of earlier French writers, such as Le Clerc. Ware claimed that caryatids were a completely separate architectural order derived from the feminine

¹⁷² Le Clerc, *Traité D'Architecture*, 105-10. See also Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique d'Architecture*, 319.

orders, which he called the ‘Caryatic Order’, and he wrote that this consisted originally of the ‘capitals and entablatures of one or other of the orders [...] supported by slaves, by women [...] in the place of columns’ but that it eventually extended to a ‘multitude of figures’ as ‘invention was let loose in a thousand other forms, and female figures of many other kinds were placed under entablatures: these were all called *Caryatid*’.¹⁷³ He thus appeared to express a somewhat condemnatory tone towards the numerous forms caryatids had adopted up to this point, which echoed the attitude of Le Clerc. He also indicated the negative connotations of their Vitruvian origins by arguing against contemporary caryatids that resembled slaves, stating that ‘the idea of slavery in women is so improper, at least in our civilised times’.¹⁷⁴

Like Le Clerc, Ware believed that caryatids should resemble columns insofar as was possible, ideally sculpted with their legs close together and their arms next to their bodies.¹⁷⁵ Indeed, following the French writer, he maintained that certain architects chose to depict these figures with their arms removed, which presumably referred to Goujon’s Louvre figures, in order to accentuate the caryatid’s relationship with columns.¹⁷⁶ Chambers also stated that caryatids should resemble ‘as much as possible the shape of columns’ with ‘little flutter in the drapery, which ought to fit pretty close to the body’, while their legs should be ‘close together’ and their arms ‘close to the body or head [...]’; their attitude should be as nearly perpendicular as it can conveniently be’.¹⁷⁷ Indeed, Chambers vocally advocated a return to more classical, ‘simple’ examples in contrast to contemporary figures, proclaiming that the caryatid should ‘avoid indecent attitudes, distorted features, and all kinds of

¹⁷³ Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture. Adorned with Plans and Elevations from Original Designs* (London: T. Osborne & J. Shipton, J. Hodges, L. Davis, J. Ward and R. Baldwin, 1756), 245-48.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 248.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁷⁷ William Chambers, *A Treatise on the Decorative Part of Civil Architecture with Illustrations, Notes, and An Examination of Grecian Architecture by Joseph Gwilt, Architect, F.S.A.*, ed. W.H. Leeds (London: The Proprietors of the “Building News”, 1862), 190-91.

monstrous or horrid productions, of which there are such frequent instances in the works of our northern predecessors'.¹⁷⁸

Chambers' work is considered one the most original English treatises on architecture and its nineteenth-century popularity is attested to by its many reprints in that period.¹⁷⁹ Like Ware and others before him, Chambers quoted Vitruvius' origin story but, significantly, he claimed that the introduction of anthropomorphic figures 'to support burthens in buildings or otherwise, had certainly an earlier origin'. He traced this to 'the remotest antiquity', which, as will be seen, may have been inspired by the work of the German philosopher, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing.¹⁸⁰ Chambers also noted how Goujon's 'celebrated' caryatids bore a resemblance to the Erechtheion figures, as the latter were depicted in the French architect Julien David Le Roy's 1758 *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce*, and he considered the Athenian maidens to be 'most excellent' element of the temple.¹⁸¹ Nonetheless, mainly as a result of their entablature, which he felt exhibited a 'monstrous excess', Chambers argued that Goujon's sculptures, as they were rendered in a less bulky and more delicate fashion, were a superior example of the motif.¹⁸²

In place of Le Clerc and Chambers' citation of the *Tribune des Caryatides* as the exemplary employment of the caryatid, Ware believed that the ancient Erechtheion provided a particularly 'beautiful instance'. Furthermore, the figure in the illustration used to depict the 'Caryatic Order' in his treatise bears a striking resemblance to the Erechtheion sculptures (Fig. 2.47). Nonetheless, while he expressed such admiration for these ancient examples, he described the caryatid generally in negative terms, such as 'lesser', 'false', and 'fanciful'.¹⁸³ Crucially, like so many writers on

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 190.

¹⁷⁹ Kruff, *History of Architectural Theory*, 252.

¹⁸⁰ Chambers, *Civil Architecture*, 184-87.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 188.

¹⁸² Ibid., 189.

¹⁸³ Ware, *Complete Body of Architecture*, 11, 245, 248.

architecture after him, he berated the Greeks for introducing such an order due to the ‘weakness of the sex [...] for women are too delicate for such an office’.¹⁸⁴

A French influence is evident in this general wariness, but not direct and outright condemnation, in Britain regarding the caryatid’s employment as a result of its slavery connotations, which appears to have been particularly problematic as it represented a *female* slave. Ware also mentioned the improper nature of their use in churches, which continued to be especially controversial in later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century discourse. Ultimately, reflecting the motif’s dominant use in the period, he implied that their employment supporting chimneypiece mantels was the most appropriate function by claiming that ‘nothing [...] is more delicate’.¹⁸⁵ The architect’s text thus provides one of the earliest instances in Britain of the seemingly contradictory attitude to the caryatid that persisted into the nineteenth century, in which a general condemnation of the motif existed alongside instructions on how contemporary architects could use them appropriately and an admiration for certain examples, and specifically the Erechtheion maidens.

Soon after the publication of Ware’s and Chambers’ treatises, the first volume of James ‘Athenian’ Stuart and Nicholas Revett’s famous *Antiquities of Athens* was published. Designed as both an archaeological record and an architectural treatise, it was perhaps the most influential book for the ‘Greek Revival’ movement in British architecture, which flourished in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Erechtheion temple was depicted in the second volume of *Antiquities*, published in 1787-89, but the authors provided little commentary on the structure’s caryatids.¹⁸⁶ Both volumes of *Antiquities* were preceded by Le Roy’s rival publication, *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments*, and this text provided more textual detail, which recounted the caryatid’s Vitruvian aetiology and described the motif as a separate development of the Ionic order. The French architect

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 249.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 249.

¹⁸⁶ James Stuart & Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens*, vol. 2 (London: John Nicols, 1787), 17.

reinforced the unique and separate status of ‘l’Ordre Caryatide’ by appointing it its own entablature and claiming that neither the ancients nor Vitruvius left any information on the established proportions to be adhered to when employing the order. Le Roy’s also book contained the first detailed illustration in print specifically focusing on the porch of the Erechtheion maidens, which he believed was the most beautiful characteristic of the temple (Fig. 2.48).¹⁸⁷ It is, however, somewhat inaccurate as it gives the sculptures a more elongated, less architectonic form, and it is surpassed by the superior drawings of the sculptures, from differing perspectives, found in the second volume of *Antiquities* (Figs. 2.49, 2.50, 2.51 & 2.52).

Publications such as those of Stuart and Revett and Le Roy fed into an increasing sense of the superiority of Greek architecture, which had been brewing from as early as 1650 with Chambray who, although having not seen ancient Greek architecture firsthand, nonetheless demonstrated an ‘abstract enthusiasm for Greece’ in his *Parallèle*.¹⁸⁸ Both Stuart and Revett’s and Le Roy’s works were the result of a ‘thirst for knowledge’ related to the intellectual and philosophical ideals of the Enlightenment, combined with a burgeoning interest in archaeology, and both publications had a considerable influence on the ‘neoclassical’ style that was witnessed in architectural structures from the mid-eighteenth century onwards.¹⁸⁹ Le Roy’s work is particularly significant as it provided ‘the first serious attempt by an architect to analyze the compositional principles employed in ancient Greek monuments’ and it helped to consolidate the idea that the architecture of fifth-century BC Athens ‘represented a highpoint in the history of human achievement’.¹⁹⁰ The Erechtheion, and its porch of caryatids, played a central role in this conception.

¹⁸⁷ Julien David Le Roy, *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce* (Paris: H.L. Guerin & L.F. Delatour & Jean-Luc Nyon; Amsterdam: Jean Neaulme, 1758), 19, pl. 21.

¹⁸⁸ Krufft, *History of Architectural Theory*, 208.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 208.

¹⁹⁰ Drew Armstrong, ‘French Architectural Thought’, 493, 498.

The influence of the period's Enlightenment thought, which promulgated a 'return to origins' in architectural theory at the time, is evident in both the work of Le Roy and Stuart and Revett. Marc-Antoine Laugier's *Essai sur l'architecture* of 1753 was of seminal importance in this context due to its impact on architectural discourse and Laugier urged the architect 'to seek truth [...] in a grasp of first principles as demonstrated in the architecture of the ancient world', claiming that architecture owes 'aux seuls Grecs tout ce qu'elle a de précieux & de solide' (all that is precious and solid to the Greeks alone).¹⁹¹ This approach to architecture focused on 'the fundamental properties of the orders, stressing that the column and entablature were to be used as structural elements' and not to be added merely as applied ornament or decoration.¹⁹² This perception was reflected in the growing movement towards structures that were perceived to have been built along Greek lines in their architectural purity and simplicity, exemplified, in a British context, in Stuart's 1758 'Temple of Theseus' at Hagley Hall, often considered the country's first 'Greek Revival' building (Fig. 2.53).

While Stuart and Revett, Le Roy, and Laugier extolled the beauty of Greek architecture, which, supported by an increased Western and Northern European knowledge of ancient Greek structures, provided 'an authoritative counter-model to the ruins of ancient Rome', the Italian artist and engraver Giovanni Battista Piranesi argued in favour of Roman architectural ornament over that of the Greeks in his *Della Magnificenza e d'Architettura De' Romani* of 1761.¹⁹³ One of his methods of doing so in the publication was to draw comparisons between Roman architectural forms and specific illustrations of Greek examples of the same forms taken from Le Roy's text, in order to highlight the 'Frenchman's erroneous ways'.¹⁹⁴ Caryatids were mentioned several times in Piranesi's text and he argued that it was foolish of the Greeks to perceive that a woman could withstand the burden of so

¹⁹¹ John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530 to 1830* (New Haven; London Yale University Press, 1993), 379; Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture* (Paris: Chez Duchesne, 1755), 62.

¹⁹² Drew Armstrong, 'French Architectural Thought', 488.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 487.

¹⁹⁴ John Wilton-Ely, 'Introduction,' in Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Observations on the Letter of Monsieur Mariette*, trans. Caroline Beamish and David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2002), 24.

great a weight as an entablature ‘con una faccia così allegra’ (‘with such a cheerful face’).¹⁹⁵ He instead advocated the use of sculptures that represented satyrs, sileni, or robust ‘*villani*’ (‘peasants’) as supporting figures.¹⁹⁶ Seemingly to highlight the foolishness in using female statues in such a role, he reproduced the engravings of the Erechtheion maidens from Le Roy’s text, alongside elements of the temple’s Ionic order, and placed them illusionistically among Roman variants of the order, which he maintained displayed the perceived superiority of the later work (Fig. 2.54).

Thus, like many of his contemporaries, Piranesi demonstrated a negative attitude towards the caryatid conceptually, which resulted from the apparent inappropriate placement of the female form beneath a weighty entablature. Nonetheless, he included caryatids in some of his famous architectural *capricci* and he made an important and original contribution to the motif’s history through his production of a plate in 1778 that depicted a reconstruction of the architectural setting for certain ancient caryatid figures, including the Townley sculpture (Fig. 2.55).¹⁹⁷ As we have seen, Townley’s figure was found, along with the remains of four others, at a site thought to be the Triopion. Specifically, this was the second-century estate of the Greek sophist Herodes Atticus and his Roman wife Regilla and this site included a temple to Demeter. Piranesi envisioned the five caryatids that had been excavated, along with the Vatican’s copy of the Erechtheion figure, acting as columnar supports in the portico of this temple. Although Piranesi’s construction was a conjecture of how the caryatids were used on the ancient structure, this drawing of a row of caryatids employed specifically on a porch recalls the Erechtheion prototype, as, inevitably, does the inclusion of a Roman copy of the Erechtheion caryatid.

The Triopion temple, dedicated to a Greek goddess, is thought to have served as a metaphor for the marriage of Herodes Atticus to his Roman wife, in its ‘complex architectural allusion to both Greek

¹⁹⁵ Giovanna Battista Piranesi, *Della Magnificenza e d’Architettura De’ Romani* (Rome, 1761), cix.

¹⁹⁶ Piranesi, *Della Magnificenza*, cix.

¹⁹⁷ Giovanna Battista Piranesi, *Vasi, candelabri, cippi, sarcofagi, tripodi, lucerne, ed ornamenti antichi* (Rome, 1778), pl. 12. Also see Bol, ed., *Forschungen zur Villa Albani*, 90-94.

and Roman models'.¹⁹⁸ As seen, the surviving caryatid figures that were integrated into the temple were apparently sculpted by Greek artists and they emulated certain characteristics of the Erechtheion caryatid, such as an upright columnar stance, the act of holding folds of drapery with one hand, and the manner in which the drapery falls in vertical folds over a weight-bearing leg, while the opposing leg is bent at the knee. However, as they were depicted dressed in a Roman fashion, these caryatids offered a distinct 'layering of Greek and Roman elements'.¹⁹⁹

Of these Roman caryatids, the first figures excavated - Townley's sculpture and that later acquired by the Vatican - were in the possession of the Villa Negroni in Rome until their sale in 1786, when Townley acquired his caryatid.²⁰⁰ Significantly, when the two Negroni sculptures were put up for sale, they were included at the top of a list of *desiderata* Townley sent to his dealer in Rome, Thomas Jenkins, and both figures were described as 'items of highest priority for acquisition'.²⁰¹ Townley also stated to Jenkins that 'the object I wish for most, if I could compass the purchase is the finest of the two Cariatides'.²⁰² The two ancient sculptures' inclusion in this list of *desiderata* and Townley's sentiments regarding them reflect the period's enthusiastic antiquarian interest in ancient examples of the caryatid, and, significantly, this existed alongside a contrasting condemnation of the motif's adoption by contemporary architects and architectural theorists. Notably, Townley also questioned whether the statue he purchased was in fact a caryatid due to his belief that its capital possibly did

¹⁹⁸ Maud Gleason, 'Making Space for Bicultural Identity: Herodes Atticus Commemorates Regilla', in *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World*, ed. Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 144.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 145.

²⁰⁰ Cook, *Townley Marbles*, 38. For more on these figures and Piranesi's reconstruction of their original setting, see Gerard Vaughan, 'Piranesi's Last Decade: A Reappraisal of the *Vasi*,' in *The Piranesi Effect*, ed. Kerriane Stone and Gerard Vaughan (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2015), 283.

²⁰¹ Ian Jenkins, 'The Vatican Caryatid,' in Wilton and Bignamini, *Grand Tour*, 228. Also see Anne-Marie Leander Touati, 'How to Choose Ancient Models. The Example of Johan Tobias Sergel (1740-1802),' in *The Rediscovery of Antiquity: The Role of the Artist*, ed. Jane Fejfer, Tobias Fischer-Hansen, and Annette Rathje (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2003), 173-75.

²⁰² Vaughan, 'Albacini and his English Patrons', 185. Also see

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=459996&partId=1&people=94353&peoA=94353-3-18&page=1 (accessed 20 March 2018).

not depict a basket, which demonstrates that the association between caryatids and basket-bearers was well-established at this point.²⁰³

In the second edition of Le Roy's *Les ruines*, published in 1770, the author referred to the Erechtheion maidens as 'statues', and not as 'caryatids', as he had done in 1758, with his final conclusion being that it was doubtful that these statues represented caryatids or 'des Canéphores'.²⁰⁴ This French term was derived from the ancient Greek *Kanēphoroi*, meaning 'basket bearer' and, as seen, varying transliterations of *Kanēphoroi* had been used in relation to caryatids in the seventeenth century, as well as associated terms such as 'Cistiferae', which means bearers of a *cista*, or a ritual container.²⁰⁵ Le Clerc and other earlier eighteenth-century French authors had also interpreted the capitals of some caryatids as representations of baskets, while Ware had written that the 'ancients used these figures frequently to support baskets of flowers'.²⁰⁶ In addition, in Louis de Jaucourt's entry on the basket (*panier*) in architecture in France's famous 1751-72 *Encyclopédie*, the scholar mentioned how caryatids carried baskets on their heads.²⁰⁷ The *Encyclopédie* had largely been inspired by Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopædia* of 1728, which also featured an entry on the caryatid, and this essentially repeated Le Clerc's description of the motif, including the association with 'Caniferae'.²⁰⁸

The *Kanēphoroi* were unmarried girls who led processions to sacrifice at festivals in the ancient Greek world and they were named after the ritual baskets they carried on their heads in this context. The

²⁰³ See

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=459996&partId=1&people=94353&peoA=94353-3-18&page=1 (accessed 20 March 2018).

²⁰⁴ Julien David Le Roy, *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce*, vol. 1 (Paris: Imprimerie de Louis-François Delatour, 1770), 52.

²⁰⁵ I have opted here for this transliteration of the Greek term *Κανηφόρος*, which is the form favoured by many scholars in the field of classics and classical studies. This is the case, for example, in the entry on *Kanēphoroi* in Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth and Esther Eidinow, ed., *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 784.

²⁰⁶ Ware, *Complete Body of Architecture*, 249.

²⁰⁷ Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, ed., *Encyclopédie*, vol. 11 (Neufchâtel: Samuel Faulche, 1765), 819. Available at <http://enccre.academie-sciences.fr/encyclopedie/article/v11-2518-5/> (accessed 10 October 2017).

²⁰⁸ Ephraim Chambers, *Cyclopædia, or, An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 1 (London: James and John Knapton et al.:1728), 165.

link between caryatids and these basket bearers was to become central to British nineteenth-century debates concerning these figures, a context in which the Erechtheion maidens' association with the *Kanēphoroi* that served in the cult of Athena Polias specifically was supported by archaeological evidence and, in particular, a section of the Parthenon's frieze that was part of Lord Elgin's collection. Although *Kanēphoroi* had been associated with the caryatid from as early as the latter half of the seventeenth century, Le Roy appears as one of the first scholars to have made this connection with the Erechtheion figures in an outright fashion when he wrote that: 'les chapiteaux qu'elles portent semblent représenter des paniers [...] ce qui peut faire soupçonner que ces Statues étoient la représentation des Canéphores: de ces Vierges consacrées au culte de Minerve Poliade' ('the capitals they support appear to represent baskets [...] which may lead one to suspect that these statues were representations of the *Kanēphoroi*: the virgins consecrated to the cult of Minerva Polias').²⁰⁹

Significantly, the caryatid's relation to basket bearers appears as a defining characteristic of the motif in the work of Winckelmann, the figure who is generally identified as the founder of the modern discipline of art history, as well as the eighteenth-century's 'leading exponent of the Hellenic ideal'.²¹⁰ Multiple examples of ancient female sculptures that bear basket-like objects on their heads, all of which Winckelmann called caryatids, or defined as being 'after the manner of the Caryatides', are encountered in the German antiquarian's *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* of 1764.²¹¹ Winckelmann's patron, the owner of the Villa Albani, Cardinal Alessandro Albani, was an influential arbiter of taste on antique sculpture at the time, known as the 'Hadrian of his century', and his

²⁰⁹ Le Roy, *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments* (1770), 12.

²¹⁰ Hugh Barr Nisbet, ed., *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller, Goethe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 3.

²¹¹ Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *The History of Ancient Art*, vol. 1, trans. Giles Henry Lodge (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1881), 191. See also Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *The History of Ancient Art*, vol. 2, trans. Giles Henry Lodge (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1881), 18, 23, 282.

possession of three of the caryatids from the Triopion, which were considered by some ‘the choicest gems’ in his collection, is significant.²¹²

Winckelmann highlighted four Roman caryatids in the Villa Albani, which were found at Frascati near Rome in 1762, several times in his *Geschichte*.²¹³ They were used by him as examples of classical dress and, in particular, how the ancient Greeks and Romans wore a girdle ‘for the purpose of making and keeping the waist slender, and [...] rendering its beauty of shape more conspicuous’.²¹⁴ In addition, he maintained that they exemplified how elements adapted from more ancient styles of Greek art could be imitated in sculptures of later periods, to ‘awaken greater reverence’ in the object and this imitation was apparently reflected in the stiffer and more severe form in which the caryatids were carved, which, for Winckelmann, was representative of a more Archaic manner of sculpting.²¹⁵

The two sculptures from the Villa Negroni, including the Townley figure, which Winckelmann described as ‘statues with baskets on their heads, or Caryatides’, were also cited in relation to the appearance of ancient dress in his *Geschichte*.²¹⁶ He noted how their cloaks were suspended from their shoulders, as well as the manner which their hair was carved.²¹⁷ The Townley Caryatid was singled out as one of ‘only two statues in marble known of which the ear-ornaments, which are round, have been formed from the marble itself’, and as a result of its decorative armlet.²¹⁸ He also mentioned the other three Triopion caryatids that were found in the Villa Albani’s collection, which he presumed

²¹² Vout, ‘Hadrian, Hellenism, and the Social History of Art’: 57; Nathaniel Parker Willis, *Summer Cruise in the Mediterranean* (London: T. Bosworth, 1853), 148.

²¹³ Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art* 2, 12, 127.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 125-26.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 18, 29.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

probably ‘embellished either the tomb of some wealthy Roman, - of which we have now no knowledge, - or his villas’, and he observed in their heads ‘a certain trivial sweetness’.²¹⁹

Winckelmann’s approach to Greek art contributed significantly towards the formation of the canon of classical sculpture and his study of the history of Greek sculpture, with his use of certain works as ‘models of perfection, meant to show what it is that makes Greek art so great’, can be considered a ‘canon-producing process’.²²⁰ Through his text, the ‘finer classical Greek and Roman remains as he conceived them’ offered ‘the modern art lover a series of exemplary ideal works’, and supplied antiquarian scholars with a ‘fund of iconographic motifs’, which were analysed ‘for what they revealed about how the style of ancient sculpture changed over time’ or the evolution of ancient art.²²¹

Winckelmann’s inclusion of the period’s best-known ancient caryatids, in the form of the Triopion figures, as well as four further examples, from Frascati, among works that were considered ‘the best statues in marble’ demonstrates that caryatids were present in this process. As seen, they were used as exemplars of how certain elements of female ornament and dress could be ideally sculpted or to demonstrate the practices of imitation, especially of an Archaic style of art, in the case of the Triopion and Frascati figures respectively.²²² This attests to the admiration its author had for antique examples of the motif and it, perhaps, helped secure the esteem that was retained for the Triopion examples, and especially the Townley figure, which presumably impacted Townley’s desire to acquire it and ensured its continued paradigmatic status in the nineteenth century through its acquisition by the British Museum.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 283.

²²⁰ Moshe Barasch, *Modern Theories of Art, 1: From Winckelmann to Baudelaire* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 109.

²²¹ Alex Potts, ‘Introduction,’ in Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *History of the Art of Antiquity*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2006), 3.

²²² Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art 2*, 282. For more on the Frascati caryatids, see Bol, ed., *Forschungen zur Villa Albani*, 260-67.

Winckelmann's text exerted an important influence on another renowned, and influential, eighteenth-century German scholar, Lessing, whose short account of the caryatid was of pivotal importance for all later interpretations of the motif. In this, Lessing quoted the Vitruvian *historia* and he cited Winckelmann's description of a sculpted supporting figure from the Farnese Palace in Rome.²²³ Winckelmann claimed that this sculpture, which was male and bore a basket on its head, was 'in all probability one of the Karyatides of Diogenes of Athens, which stood in the Pantheon'.²²⁴ Although Winckelmann recognised that male figures were 'properly termed Atlantes', this definition of caryatids, which allowed for the inclusion of male examples, prompted Lessing to doubt Vitruvius' origin story. He went on to propose that the *historia* seemed hard to believe, and he, furthermore, questioned how a small city such as Caryae could have made common cause with the Persians, whilst also noting that no other ancient historians mentioned the same aetiology. He consequently proposed an alternative origin for the caryatid and associated it with certain virgins who danced at festivals dedicated to the goddess Diana, or Artemis, at Caryae.²²⁵ Lessing was thus one of the first scholars to question the veracity of the Vitruvian aetiology of the motif, which presumably influenced Chambers and other eighteenth-century architects' contention that its origins preceded Vitruvius' account. The novel interpretation that Lessing provided, which associated the caryatid with the worship of Diana / Artemis, was to recur, and grow in importance, in nineteenth-century writings on the caryatid.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, the increase in Western European travellers to Greece resulted in several books which mentioned the Erechtheion maidens. Richard Chandler, an English antiquarian who accompanied Revett on a trip to explore the antiquities of Ionia and Greece in 1764 on behalf of the Society of Dilettanti, published an account of his travels in 1776 and he described

²²³ Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, 'Karyatiden,' in *Lessings Werke: Vollständige Ausgabe in fünfundzwanzig Teilen*, 17, ed. Alfred Schöne (Berlin: Deutsches Verlagshaus Bong & Co., 1925-35), 385-86.

²²⁴ Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art* 2, 294.

²²⁵ Lessing, 'Karyatiden', 385-6.

the Erechtheion figures as caryatids and associated them with the Vitruvian origin story.²²⁶ Later in the century, another Englishman, Thomas Watkins, travelled to Athens and in a collection of published letters, from 1792, he described the figures as ‘admirably finished’ and ‘extremely graceful’ caryatids, while claiming that they may be renderings of the queen of Halicarnassus, Artemisia. However, presumably following the thoughts of Lessing or Chambers, Watkins contested the Vitruvian origins of the figures when he stated that they cannot be from Caryae as their ‘Asiatic dress [...] will prove the contrary’.²²⁷

A text by an Italian traveller to Greece, Alessandro Bissani, published a year after Watkins’ account claimed that the Erechtheion figures were ‘*canephores*’, thus instead linking them with the ritual attendants of the cult of Minerva Polias, while that of another Italian, the Sicilian Saviero Scrofani, published in 1799, contains potentially the lengthiest description of the Erechtheion maidens up to that point.²²⁸ In this case, the text affirms the veracity of the Vitruvian aetiology and it also mentioned other interpretations of the figures, such as the possibility that they may represent the daughters of Erechtheus, the Graces, or the Muses.²²⁹ By the later eighteenth century, therefore, it is apparent that a rich variety of interpretations of the Erechtheion maidens was in existence, which resulted in differing notions regarding their origins and meanings, and this set the stage for discourse on the caryatid in a nineteenth-century British context.

Scrofani’s text is of particular interest as it described the Erechtheion sculptures in especially panegyric tones, typical of the era’s Romantic movement in the arts, and reminiscent of

²²⁶ Richard Chandler, *Travels in Greece: or an Account of a Tour made at the Expense of the Society of Dilettanti* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1776), 55.

²²⁷ Thomas Watkins, *Travels through Swisserland, Italy, Sicily, the Greek Islands, to Constantinople; through part of Greece, Ragusa, and the Dalmation Isles; In a Series of Letters to Pennoyre Watkins, Esq. from Thomas Watkins, A.M. In the Years 1787, 1788, 1789*, vol. 2 (London: T. Cadell, 1792), 287-88.

²²⁸ Alessandro Bissani, *A Picturesque Tour Through Part of Europe, Asia, and Africa: Containing Many New Remarks on the Present State of Society, Remains of Ancient Edifices, &c. With plates, after designs by James Stuart. Written by an Italian gentleman* (London: J. Davies, 1793), 68.

²²⁹ Saviero Scrofani, *Voyage en Grèce, de Xavier Scrofani, Sicilien, fait en 1794-1795; traduit de l'italien, par J.F.C. Blanvillain*, vol. 2 (Paris; Strasbourg: Treuttel et Würtz, 1801), 77.

Winckelmann's poetic descriptions, or *ekphrases*, of ancient sculptures. Scrofani described the figures at a length hitherto unseen and his text appears as a culmination of the growing fame and scholarly acclaim of the Erechtheion maidens, which had developed over the course of the eighteenth century. Through its tone and the sculptures' comparison with figures such as the *Medici Venus*, it appears to place the caryatids firmly within the canon of paradigmatic sculptures from antiquity:

Le front, les cheveux, les joues, la bouche, le menton, le sein, tout est rempli de graces [...]; Ces statues ont l'air d'être en mouvement : si vous les regardez, elles vous fixent et elles sont dangereuses, car elles ressemblent aux Graces, si ce ne sont les Graces même. Il y a une heure que je les considère et que je passe de l'une à l'autre, et je ne puis me rassasier de les admirer. J'éprouve même un certain embarras que je ne puis définir. Quoique ces statues ne soient point mon ouvrage, j'appréhende pour la première fois le délire de Pygmalion. O vous, à qui le sort dans sa faveur accorda le céleste don de la beauté ! [...] Dans ces Cariatides, comme dans la Vénus de Médicis et dans toutes les statues où l'on copia votre image, on voit combien l'art surpasse la nature. Il y a deux milles ans qu'elles continuent à nous surprendre, à nous séduire et à nous enchanter.²³⁰

(The forehead, hair, cheeks, mouth, chin, breast, everything is full of grace [...]; these statues seem to be moving: If you look at them, they stare at you and they are dangerous because they look like the Graces, if these are not the same Graces. I consider them for an hour, passing from one to the other, and I cannot satisfy myself admiring them. I even feel a certain embarrassment that I cannot define. Although these statues are not my work, I fear for the first time the frenzy of Pygmalion. O you, to whom fate in her favour granted the heavenly gift of beauty! [...] In these Caryatids, as in the Medici Venus and all the statues where your image is copied, we see how art surpasses nature. Two thousand years have passed and they continue to surprise us, to seduce us, and delight us.)

²³⁰ Scrofani, *Voyage en Grèce*, vol. 2, 78-79.

‘These, if you talk learnedly, you must call the Caryatides’:²³¹ **The Caryatid in Britain, 1790-1850**

Anna Anguissola claims that a new phase in the history of the caryatid was instigated in the early nineteenth century, following the arrival in London of the solitary figure which Lord Elgin had taken from the Erechtheion, and the consequent ‘new taste that was rapidly taking hold’.²³² Evidence shows that Elgin initially intended to take the whole Erechtheion temple before settling for one caryatid, as well as several other architectural fragments from the building, and the sculpture was on a ship bound for England by 1803.²³³ However, as we have seen, an increasing awareness of the original Athenian sculptures had already begun to spread in Britain throughout the eighteenth century, before Elgin’s figure was first seen in the country. This culminated in the incorporation of caryatid figures based on the maidens in the architecture of Soane, beginning with his re-design of Buckingham House in 1790-95 (Fig. 1.7). Thus, the final decade of the eighteenth century witnessed the first architectural use in Britain of caryatids that were directly modelled on the Erechtheion prototype. This was followed by the enthusiastic embrace of Erechtheion-inspired caryatids, as well as a plethora of other caryatid types throughout the country, and beyond, as the nineteenth century progressed. This renewed enthusiasm for the motif appears to have been initiated by a combination of Soane’s unique adoption of the caryatid and the subsequent arrival of an original Erechtheion sculpture.

The Erechtheion Caryatid was not, however, the first ancient example of the motif to be acquired by a British traveller to Greece in the early nineteenth century. In 1801, the Cambridge scholar Edward Daniel Clarke removed a sculpture from the site of Eleusis in Attica. Dating to c.50 BC, it consists of the badly-worn upper half of a female supporting figure with both arms missing and almost no

²³¹ John Bacon Sawrey Morritt of Rokeby, *The Letters of John B.S. Morritt of Rokeby, Descriptive of Journeys in Europe and Asia Minor in the Years 1794-1796*, ed. George Eden Marindin (London: John Murray, 1914), 176.

²³² Anguissola, ‘Caryatid,’ 175.

²³³ See Hunt and Hamilton Smith, ‘Lord Elgin and His Collection’ for reproductions of letters and other written material detailing the decision-making process of acquiring the marbles. For a history of the acquisition of the Elgin Marbles, see William St. Clair, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles: The Controversial History of the Parthenon Sculptures* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Brian F. Cook, *The Elgin Marbles* (London: British Museum Press, 1997).

details of the face remaining (Fig. 2.56). The carved drapery on one shoulder and gorgon in the centre of the figure's breast are still quite visible as are several other sculpted motifs, including *antheia*, on the *cista* on its head. Antique caryatids were thus represented in three major British collections of ancient sculpture in the opening years of the nineteenth century, most prominently those of Townley and Elgin that eventually constituted a significant part of the British Museum's collection. Clarke's collection, meanwhile, was donated to the University of Cambridge in 1803 and now forms one of the two main divisions of the Fitzwilliam Museum's collection of antiquities.

The presence of these ancient caryatids in three of the country's most important collections of antique sculpture in the early nineteenth century supports the hypothesis that the motif was considered an exemplary form within a, sometimes implicitly, recognisable 'canon' of classical sculpture. Nonetheless, the caryatid from Eleusis was clearly not as highly esteemed as the Townley and Elgin examples, as it was rarely cited or illustrated in British texts relating to the motif, unlike the latter two sculptures which were frequently reproduced in antiquarian and architectural literature throughout the nineteenth century. This may have been a result of the Eleusis figure's particularly fragmentary state but it was also probably due to its lack of those 'Greek' characteristics that, as we have seen, had been given prominence as the caryatid's defining elements in texts from the sixteenth century onwards, and which were then manifested in the Erechtheion maidens.

In an 1800 edition of *The Builder's Magazine* the caryatid was described as an 'order of columns [...] under the figures of women dressed in long robes', which 'as they do the office of columns [...] may as near as possible bear the figures of them'.²³⁴ Some ten years later, the fourth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* stated that *proper* caryatids were 'women dressed in long robes', a style which it defined as the 'Caryatic manner', and it claimed that they were specifically used to support

²³⁴ John Carter, *The Builder's Magazine; or, A Universal Dictionary*, vol. 1 (London: E. Newbery, Vernor and Hood, and H.D. Symonds, 1800), 99.

Ionic or Corinthian entablatures.²³⁵ The 1813 edition of another encyclopaedia, the *Pantologia* also included an entry on caryatids, in which they were defined as an ‘order of columns, or pilasters, under the figure of women, dressed in long robes’.²³⁶ Furthermore, in his *Outline of Architecture, Grecian, Roman, and Gothic*, published some three years later, William Hawkes Smith wrote that the motif should always be used with an Ionic or Corinthian entablature.²³⁷ These sources indicate that the Erechtheion caryatid type, with those historical and architectonic characteristics that had accrued across the centuries - upright, columnar posture, long classical drapery, load-bearing function beneath an entablature, and an association with the ‘feminine’ columnar orders - was widely understood to be *the* paradigmatic form of the motif by the opening years of the nineteenth century, despite its contrast with the types of caryatid that had hitherto been adopted in British architecture. Alongside the theories of architectural writers from the Renaissance onwards, as well as the work of eighteenth-century antiquarian scholars, this was inevitably a result of exposure to the Erechtheion prototype through the engravings in Stuart and Revett’s *Antiquities* and the arrival of Elgin’s figure, both of which displayed a materialisation of such ‘Caryatic’ characteristics and the ‘form and dimensions’ to be adhered to when employing the motif.²³⁸ As we shall see, in terms of sculpted caryatids, the popularity of this type is evinced by the appearance of many examples created in the opening decades of the century, which accompanied those of Soane.

This interest in the caryatid was also related to the period’s intellectual preoccupation with ancient Greece, the expression of which in contemporary architecture was witnessed in the ‘Greek Revival’ movement. Continuing the practice of eighteenth-century authors such as Le Roy and Stuart and Revett, architectural writers in early nineteenth-century Britain frequently celebrated Greek

²³⁵ ‘Of Persians, Caryatides, and Termini,’ in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Andrew Bell, 1810), 574.

²³⁶ ‘Caryatides,’ in *Pantologia. A New Cyclopaedia*, ed. John Mason Good, Olinthus Gregory, and Newton Bosworth (London: G. Kearsley et al.: 1813)

²³⁷ William Hawkes Smith, *An Outline of Architecture, Grecian, Roman, and Gothic* (Birmingham: W. Hawkes Smith, 1816), 11.

²³⁸ ‘Of Persians, Caryatides, and Termini,’ 574; William Chambers, *A Treatise on the Decorative Part of Civil Architecture*, ed. John B. Papworth (London: J. Taylor, 1826), 80.

architecture by contrasting it with that of the Romans, who were perceived to have derived their architecture from the Greeks but practised it ‘as imitators, further removed from the original model, and with less severity of taste’. In addition, the Romans apparently ‘formed a style of magnificence and luxury, always grand, but not infrequently licentious and incongruous’, in contrast to Greek architecture which displayed an ‘extreme simplicity’, with its ‘system of decoration [...] not separated from that of constructions, but [...] an essential part’ of it.²³⁹ Such claims, in relation to both Greek buildings and their decorative sculpture, were influenced by the archaeological discoveries made in the early part of the century, which were a result of the ‘race for collections of Classical Antiquities’ that European countries were engaged in.²⁴⁰ Such archaeological discoveries, and the export of ancient sculpture from the Mediterranean, ‘opened up the world of genuine Greek art’ to a Western and Northern European public, and this influenced theories relating to the superiority of the ancient Greek integration of architecture and sculpture.²⁴¹

One of the most important of these assemblages of antiquities was, of course, found in Britain, in the form of Elgin’s collection, and the widespread perception of its vital importance to the scholarly understanding of ancient Greek architectural sculpture more widely was evinced by the significant number of casts of the Parthenon sculptures, and the Erechtheion caryatid, that were created for museums throughout Britain and Europe. Furthermore, five years prior to the British state’s acquirement of the Parthenon sculptures, the architect Charles Robert Cockerell was part of a team that had found the sculpted marbles of Bassai and Aegina, the former of which, as we have seen, were sold to the British Museum in 1814, while the latter went to King Ludwig of Bavaria’s Glyptothek. Thus, from early in the century, British scholars and antiquarians had clear material evidence of the ‘judiciously careful’ manner in which the ancient Greeks perfectly integrated architecture and

²³⁹ Edmund Aikin, *Designs for Villas and Other Rural Buildings* (London: J. Taylor, 1808), 2-3.

²⁴⁰ Michael Shanks, *The Classical Archaeology of Greece: Experiences of the Discipline* (London: Routledge, 1996), 44.

²⁴¹ Stephen L. Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts: A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2006), 134.

sculpture so that ‘every ornament they used should always accord in character and situation with the order they applied it to’.²⁴² With this ‘beautiful simplicity’, ‘elegance of ornament’, and ‘harmony of proportion in an eminent degree’, the inhabitants of ancient Greece were perceived by many to have ‘excelled all other nations, no less in the beauty of their productions, than in their happy perception and adaptation of all the component and relative parts’ of their architecture and its sculpture.²⁴³

The sculptures from the Parthenon and Aegina were considered the two most important collections of Greek antiquities in the early nineteenth century and Prettejohn has shown how Hegel was probably the first systematic thinker to ‘accommodate both of the new sets [...] in a comprehensive historical scheme’, in his lectures on aesthetics delivered in the 1820s.²⁴⁴ Specifically, she has demonstrated that for Hegel, the Aegina Marbles became the ‘definitional example for the archaic style’ while Elgin’s collection exemplified the ‘fully achieved classical style’.²⁴⁵ In this context, it is significant that the Erechtheion Caryatid appears as a figure midway between the Archaic style and the later, more ‘classical’ work of the Parthenon sculptures.

In her somewhat static columnar stance and linear formality, sculpted as she is to be ‘as architectural as possible’, the Erechtheion Caryatid echoes the figures from the Aegina collection, such as its pedimental Athena (Fig. 2.57).²⁴⁶ In addition, the vertical ‘stiff parallel folds’ of her drapery adhere to the ‘more ancient’ style of Greek art, as it was described by Winckelmann.²⁴⁷ However, her sculpted clothing also largely consists of multiple undulating folds around her upper body and, in rounded areas, such as her prominent breasts and left thigh, it reveals the body’s curves and is more

²⁴² James Elmes, *Lectures on Architecture* (London: Priestley and Weale, 1823), 140.

²⁴³ Elmes, *Lectures on Architecture*, 141, 146; William Fox, *The Grecian, Roman, and Gothic Architecture* (London: John Hatchard, 1821), 6-7

²⁴⁴ Prettejohn, *Modernity of Ancient Sculpture*, 44.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 45, 50-51.

²⁴⁶ James Fergusson, *An Historical Inquiry into the True Principles of Beauty in Art, more especially with Reference to Architecture* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1849), 383-84.

²⁴⁷ Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art* 2, 125.

reminiscent of the seemingly diaphanous drapery of certain female figures from the Parthenon (Fig. 2.58). It is perhaps as a result of this that certain scholars claim the Erechtheion caryatids can be considered within the ‘Pheidian’ tradition, ‘Pheidian’ here alluding Pheidias, who is thought to have been responsible for the sculptural programme of the Parthenon.²⁴⁸

In comparing the qualities of Saint-Gaudens early twentieth-century caryatids (Fig. 1.9) with those of the Erechtheion figures they replicate, Susan Rather notes that the ancient sculptures were archaising in details due to their being based on Archaic Greek *Korai* sculptures. However, she also argues that the ‘Pheidian’ manner in which the Erechtheion maidens’ drapery was sculpted is the ‘element that most clearly indicated the late fifth-century date’ of their completion.²⁴⁹ The Erechtheion Caryatid thus presented a melding of archaic and classical qualities while, as a form of sculpture that was fundamentally architectonic, accentuated by its fluting-inspired drapery, its thickly sculpted hair, which functioned to add further support to its load-bearing role around the back and base of its head, and the details of its capital, it perfectly answered to the qualities of purity, severity, and simplicity, while displaying a harmonious integration of architectural, sculptural, and ornamental parts, all of which were admired in Greek architecture and its sculpture.

Although the Townley caryatid was a later creation of the Roman world, as it was thought to have been sculpted by Greek artists, and as it shared certain visual similarities with the Erechtheion prototype, in terms of posture and dress, it was perceived to ‘partake of the virginal grace of the [caryatids] of the Acropolis’.²⁵⁰ Consequently, although the Erechtheion caryatid was the dominant exemplar cited throughout the nineteenth century, the Townley sculpture, which was ‘universally admired’ and considered ‘highly dignified and impressive’, was also frequently illustrated for the

²⁴⁸ Jenkins, *Greek Architecture*, 126.

²⁴⁹ Susan Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paulanship* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 88.

²⁵⁰ William Kinnard in James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens*, ed. William Kinnard, vol. 2 (London: Priestley and Weale, 1825), 61, note d.

same purposes and could be considered a variation of the ‘Greek’ type.²⁵¹ In an age in which the caryatid generally was, often vehemently, condemned, it appeared both ancient figures’ display of the ‘chasteness of Grecian, and especially of Attic taste’ enabled their acceptability.²⁵² Indeed, for the classical enthusiast George Hamilton Gordon, the beauty of the Erechtheion maidens justified ‘what may perhaps be considered as a capricious deviation from established taste’, while the historian William Mitford described the Erechtheion’s use of the figures as an example of the ‘Caryatic order once, with *rare* felicity, executed [emphasis added]’.²⁵³

Mitford’s allusion to a ‘Caryatic order’ demonstrates that for some authors the caryatid, although related to the ‘feminine’ orders, continued to be understood as its own separate order throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. For example, in his *Architectural Dictionary* of 1819, Peter Nicholson, included an entry on the ‘Caryatic Order’, which defined it simply as ‘an order of architecture’, in which the ‘entablature is supported by female figures instead of columns’.²⁵⁴ Some thirty years later, the architectural historian James Fergusson also claimed that caryatids were a ‘form of an order’, although one ‘towards which the Greeks were tending in the age of decline’ in his *Historical Inquiry into the True Principles of Beauty in Art*.²⁵⁵ Indeed, throughout the first five decades of the nineteenth century, the caryatid appears to have been considered an essential component in descriptions of the Greek orders, and it continued to be associated with the Ionic or

²⁵¹ Thomas Dudley Fosbrooke, ‘Remarks upon the Townley Statues in the British Museum,’ *The Monthly Magazine* 2, no. 203 (1 September 1810): 101; *A Description of the Collection of Ancient Marbles in the British Museum*, Part 1 (London: W. Bulmer & Co., 1812), pl. 4.

²⁵² William Mitford, *Principles of Design in Architecture, traced in Observations on Buildings* (London: Rodwell and Martin, 1824), 58.

²⁵³ George Hamilton Gordon, *An Inquiry into the Principles of Beauty in Grecian Architecture* (London: J. Murray, 1822), 189; Mitford, *Principles of Design in Architecture*, 58. Also see ‘The Dilletanti Tourist - No. 111’, *The Monthly Magazine* 27, no. 182 (March 1809): 147.

²⁵⁴ Peter Nicholson, *An Architectural Dictionary*, vol. 1 (London: J. Barfield, 1819), 205. Other descriptions of a caryatid order, or ‘caryatic order’, include the entry for ‘Caryates’ and ‘Caryatic’ in George Crabb, *Universal Technological Dictionary* (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1823); ‘Leaves from My Pocket-Book’, 49; John Britton, *A Dictionary of the Architecture and Archaeology of the Middle Ages* (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1838), 55; ‘Walhalla,’ *Penny magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, 12 (14 January, 1843), 11; Fergusson, *Historical Inquiry*, 383.

²⁵⁵ Fergusson, *Historical Inquiry*, 383.

Corinthian orders specifically. Moreover, for some, the discovery of the Erechtheion temple, with its Ionic elements, provided conclusive evidence for the long-held belief that the motif had been used with that order in the ancient world.²⁵⁶

This concept of the caryatid as a separate order, or as an integral form within the canonical system of orders, is aptly exemplified in the architect George Wightwick's *Palace of Architecture* of 1840, a publication that acted as a survey of the history of world architecture, to 'promote the cultivation of architectural knowledge, among well-educated persons'.²⁵⁷ It included an illustration, and accompanying description, of a 'Greek Museum' that depicted the capitals and entablatures of the various Greek orders and, among this assortment, which was intended to show what was necessary to form an 'idea of Greek Architecture [...] prior to the adulterating influence of Rome', the Erechtheion caryatid is clearly visible, displayed as a key component in the ancient Greek architectural system (Fig. 2.59).²⁵⁸ Notably, Wightwick's 'Greek Museum' plate also includes a male supporting figure from the 'Incantada at Salonica', a Hellenistic structure with an upper storey of supporting male and female figures in relief, which had been illustrated in Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities*, and which appears to have been added to the repertoire of ancient caryatid structures mentioned by antiquarians and scholars at this point.²⁵⁹

While certain scholars and writers confirmed the caryatid's place among the order system, others raised questions and doubts on whether this should be the case, typically as a result of the burgeoning condemnatory attitude towards the motif. The French architect Charles Normand, for example, published a work comparing the classical orders in 1819, which was translated into English ten years

²⁵⁶ See, for example, Hawkes Smith, *Outline of Architecture*, 11.

²⁵⁷ 'Art. VI - *The Palace of Architecture: A Romance of Art and History*. By George Wightwick, Architect. London: Fraser, 1841,' *The Church of England Quarterly Review* 10 (London: William Edward Painter, 1841): 121.

²⁵⁸ George Wightwick, *The Palace of Architecture: A Romance of Art and History* (London: James Fraser, 1840), 76.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 75.

later, and he argued that the caryatid could not be considered its own order by asking ‘how shall we lay down rules for what are so fanciful?’²⁶⁰ Continuing this theme, George Cleghorn later wrote that caryatids could never be ‘reduced to rule, much less classed as new orders’, and such negative statements regarding their seemingly frivolous character reflect the increased hostility and criticism towards the motif that occurred alongside its enthusiastic adoption on built structures in Britain.²⁶¹

Criticism in this period even extended to the Erechtheion maidens, witnessed in the writing of William Gell. Gell was a member of the Society of Dilettanti who travelled throughout Greece in the early nineteenth century and, although he wrote extensively on the ruins and antiquities he encountered, and, completed several detailed drawings of the Erechtheion temple (Fig. 2.60), he wrote very little on its caryatids, except claiming that they are ‘not of the very first rate workmanship’, that their ‘form and posture is not much varied’, and that their drapery ends ‘very awkwardly at the bottom’.²⁶² Similarly Edward Dodwell, another English traveller to Athens early in the century, who painted a watercolour of the Erechtheion (Fig. 2.61), found the maidens to be placed in an ‘ungraceful attitude’, with the drapery ‘towards the base [...] made with a certain degree of straightness and formality, in order to approach to the appearance of fluted columns. This peculiarity is too marked to be accidental [and] not the most natural position for columnar statues which support so great a weight’.²⁶³

Dodwell therefore preferred the ‘Caryatides of great beauty in the villa Albani’ as they were ‘not so severe a style, not quite so large [...] but more elegant, and of admirable sculpture’.²⁶⁴ This

²⁶⁰ Charles Normand, *A New Parallel of the Orders of Architecture*, trans. Augustus Pugin (London: A. Pugin, 1829), 40.

²⁶¹ George Cleghorn, *Remarks on Ancient and Modern Art, in a Series of Essays* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons; London: T. Cadell, 1837), 16. See also George Cleghorn, *Ancient and Modern Art* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1848), 67.

²⁶² William Gell, *Diary of a Tour in Greece*. Manuscript. Gennadeion no. M 70.15, Athens, Original in the University of Bristol Library, (1801), 66-69. As quoted in Lesk, *Diachronic Examination of the Erechtheion*, 810-11.

²⁶³ Edward Dodwell, *A Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece, during the Years 1801, 1805, and 1806*, vol. 1 (London: Rodwell and Martin, 1819), 353.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 355-56.

presumably refers to the Villa's three Triopion caryatids that supported an entranceway to a garden in the villa at this time (Fig. 2.62). This aversion to the Erechtheion maidens, encountered in certain authors' works, continued throughout the first four decades of the nineteenth century and it was reflected in University College London's first Professor of Architecture, Thomas Leverton Donaldson's claim in 1842 that the 'Caryatides of the Athenian Acropolis have been condemned by more than one Critic of indisputable authority'.²⁶⁵

Although the Erechtheion caryatids were criticised for certain elements of their appearance, the most significant condemnation of the caryatid more generally resulted from its continued associations with slavery or, in a related fashion, to questions of the appropriateness of using female figures to bear a hefty burden. The belief that the Erechtheion maidens might represent slaves was confirmed for some due to their placement under a heavy entablature and this led certain authors to berate the Greeks for their use of the motif. The 1818 edition of the seventeenth-century philosopher Henry Aldrich's *Elementa Architecturae*, for example, claimed that 'Cariatic columns in any temple would have been ridiculous; as it would have been introducing monuments of vengeance into an asylum of mercy'.²⁶⁶ Some three years following this publication, the classical scholar Peter Edmund Laurent stated that the caryatid's Vitruvian history illustrated 'a barbarous and cruel revenge, unworthy of so refined a nation as the Athenians'.²⁶⁷ Moreover, he claimed that the 'Caryatides are an absurd invention, disgraceful to art; for what can be more ridiculous than to represent the tender frame of a woman supporting the crushing weight of a marble roof'.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ Thomas Leverton Donaldson, *Preliminary Discourse pronounced before the University College of London, upon the Commencement of a Series of Lectures on Architecture* (London: Taylor & Walton, 1842), 18-19, note 1.

²⁶⁶ Henry Aldrich, *The Elements of Civil Architecture*, trans. Philip Smyth (Oxford: W. Baxter, for J. Parker, 1818), 107.

²⁶⁷ Peter Edmund Laurent, *Recollections of a Classical Tour through Various Parts of Greece, Turkey, and Italy, made in the years 1818 & 1819* (London: G. and W.B. Whittaker, 1821), 108.

²⁶⁸ Laurent, *Recollections of a Classical Tour*, 108.

Sentiments regarding the weighty nature of the Erechtheion maidens' entablature are also encountered in Dodwell's 1819 recollection of his travels in Greece, in which the writer questioned Spon's description of the figures as representations of the Graces by stating that they 'figuratively represent the weight of slavery, and the severe forms of Caryan females'.²⁶⁹ For him, their status as symbols of slavery was especially due to the fact that 'rather than the light freedom and easy elegance of the daughters of Venus [...] the female figure cannot well be placed in a more ungraceful attitude' than that of the Erechtheion sculptures as they stand 'under the pressure of a ponderous mass of entablature!'²⁷⁰

In 1842, William Smith published the first edition of his *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* and its entry on the caryatid included the Vitruvian origin story and, notably, it cited the example of a bas-relief from Naples, which mentioned the 'conquest of the Caryatae'.²⁷¹ This refers to a Roman marble work, which dates to the Augustan period, and which depicts two caryatids on either side of a sculpted personification of the conquered Roman province of Pozzuoli (Fig. 2.63). The caryatids support a trabeation which includes an inscription that records the defeat of Caryae by the ancient Greeks.²⁷² This appears to indicate that the caryatid's symbolic associations with slavery, and, in particular, the enslaved victims of a defeated people, were adopted by the ancient Romans, which provided further support for nineteenth-century beliefs in the veracity of the Vitruvian origin story.

An article on the history of architecture in *The Saturday Magazine*, a periodical aimed at educating working-class readers, proves that, in the 1840s at least, the widespread idea that caryatids were problematic as they represented slaves, especially due to the heavy weight under which they were

²⁶⁹ Dodwell, *Classical and Topographical Tour*, 353.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 353.

²⁷¹ James Yates, 'Caryatis,' in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, ed. William Smith (London: Taylor and Walton, 1842), 201.

²⁷² For more on this relief, see Valeri, *Marmora Phlegraea*, 110-11.

depicted, was still present. It included a notably lengthy description of the negative associations of caryatids, which it claimed were

meant to celebrate the defeat of that people by the Athenians [and] the effect of these figures is in general unpleasant; they are represented as crouching beneath the ponderous weight above them. The human form is thus degraded, and the spectator is reminded of a degree of physical labour which interferes with the enjoyment of an architectural structure. The Greeks had a powerful motive for the adoption of these figures, which perhaps affords them an excuse for doing so [...] but there is a display of savage feeling in this device which we would willingly avoid.²⁷³

Like the unknown author of this article, many of the period's architects and architectural commentators argued against the contemporary use of caryatids as a result of these slavery connotations. In 1821, Peter Edmund Laurent argued that the caryatid demonstrated the manner in which his contemporaries introduced into their architecture 'all the faults of the ancients' while, over 20 years later, they were described as 'mere vagaries' and a 'misapplication of statuary' by the historian Edward Freeman. Fergusson, meanwhile, wrote that 'it requires all our fond faith in Grecian art to prevent our condemning at once so manifest an absurdity as employing statues, representing living figures, to do the duty of stone pillars' and, consequently, that they could be used as 'ornaments to windows, or doorways, or chimneypieces, in modern times [...] but never as they were used by the Greeks during the decay of art'.²⁷⁴

Such sentiments as these indicate that the employment of a female figure specifically as a heavily-burdened slave was problematic for commentators in the first fifty years of the nineteenth century, and this criticism of caryatids was to gain traction in its latter half. In practice, however, the motif

²⁷³ 'A Brief History of Architecture, No. 11,' *The Saturday Magazine* 16, no. 508 (31 May 1840): 211.

²⁷⁴ Laurent, *Recollections of a Classical Tour*, 108; Edward Freeman, *A History of Architecture* (London: Joseph Masters, 1849), 118-19; Fergusson, *Historical Inquiry*, 384.

continued to be adopted with relative enthusiasm in Britain, a phenomenon that endured into the twentieth century. Soane aptly epitomised the seeming contradiction that existed between architectural theory and practice as, despite the fact that he used caryatids in prominent locations in several of his designs, he frequently condemned the motif in a similar fashion to those authors thus far described, especially in his lectures at the Royal Academy of Arts from 1810 onwards.²⁷⁵

Concurrently, a wide diversity of opinions and theoretical notions regarding the caryatid were in circulation in the first half of the nineteenth century that moved beyond censure. In 1832, the unknown author of an article on caryatids noted how their beauty was ‘generally admitted’ while ‘the propriety of employing them was generally questioned’, due to their being ‘objectionable’, not ‘palpable’, and ‘at variance with good taste’.²⁷⁶ However, the author also noted how this dominant attitude reflected the ‘mere cavils of hypercriticism’, while claiming that if the ‘*commensenseness* of the matter’ was taken into account, it would be apparent that the caryatid clearly did not represent a living being and ‘if any one can carry his sensibility so far as to commiserate the figures so employed, he ought, in consistency, to feel similarly affected at beholding statues of any kind placed where it would be impossible for real persons to continue, - in a niche, for instance, or on acroteria and balustrades’.²⁷⁷

In addition, several authors questioned whether caryatids were ever intended to represent slaves at all, usually following Lessing’s description of the figures. William Kinnard, the editor of the 1825 edition of the second volume of Stuart and Revett’s *Antiquities* was forthright in his dismissal of the ‘reproachful origin’ of the caryatid provided by Vitruvius and he supported this with several sources of evidence. Firstly, he noted how the Erechtheion figures were called *Korai*, and not caryatids, in

²⁷⁵ John Soane, *The Royal Academy Lectures*, ed. David Watkin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 68-69.

²⁷⁶ ‘Leaves from my Pocket-Book. No. II,’ in *Library of the Fine Arts* 3 (London: M. Arnold, 1832), 48.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 48-49.

the surviving inscription in the British Museum. He also stated that Lessing had viewed the Vitruvian aetiology as a ‘historic fiction’ and he described how the human figure had been used in place of columns in the architecture of ancient Egypt, Nubia, and India, which predated that of Greece, and thus demonstrated an older origin for the motif than Vitruvius proposed. Moreover, he wrote that the figures have ‘no marks or characteristics of degradation in their composition’, which would be inevitable if they represented slaves.²⁷⁸

Like Kinnard, many authors doubted Vitruvius’ text by arguing that the caryatid seemed to predate the fifth-century BC context of the Vitruvian aetiology, and some debate arose on whether the motif originated in ancient Egypt or Asia.²⁷⁹ In 1821, the architect and archaeologist Joseph Gwilt printed a pamphlet dedicated to the question of the caryatid’s origins in which he dismissed the Vitruvian aetiology outright, on the basis that such a key historical event would have been mentioned by another ancient writer, and he claimed that the motif’s origins could be found in the columnar statues of Egypt or India.²⁸⁰ The production of this pamphlet, by one of the period’s major writers on architecture, demonstrates how central to architectural and antiquarian debates the mystery of the caryatid’s roots had become. Gwilt’s *Encyclopaedia of Architecture*, published some twenty years later, shows that this scepticism regarding the veracity of the Vitruvian *historia* endured, as it argued that the origin of the caryatids’ ‘application for architectural purposes is of far higher antiquity than the invasion of Greece by the Persians’ and that Vitruvius was not ‘corroborated by any other writer’.²⁸¹ Many authors followed Gwilt in arguing against Vitruvius’ account or attributed their doubts to Lessing, including the 1842 edition of William Smith’s *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, which

²⁷⁸ Kinnard in Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, 1825, 61–63, note d. On the use of Lessing’s theory, see also Robert Walpole, *Memoirs relating to European and Asiatic Turkey, and Other Countries of the East* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1818), 602.

²⁷⁹ See, for example, Nicholson, *Architectural Dictionary*, 206.

²⁸⁰ This pamphlet was not published but it was reproduced in Gwilt’s essay, which was added to a later publication of William Chambers’ treatise. See Joseph Gwilt ‘An Examination of the Elements of Beauty in Grecian Architecture, with a Brief Investigation of its Origin, Progress, and Perfection,’ in Chambers, *Civil Architecture*, 43–45.

²⁸¹ Joseph Gwilt, *An Encyclopaedia of Architecture* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1842), 70.

argued that it is ‘proper to observe that Lessing, and various writers after him, treat the [...] account as fabulous’.²⁸²

The association made between caryatids and ancient Egyptian columnar statues at this time presumably reflected the greater awareness of Egyptian architecture and sculpture that had resulted from recent archaeological discoveries, which, in particular, had increased following Napoleon’s military campaign in Egypt between 1798 and 1801. A number of French archaeologists accompanied this expedition and they explored the ancient temples and recorded elements of their decoration and design, events which significantly influenced a growing interest in ancient Egyptian art and architecture in early nineteenth-century France. This, in turn, instigated a fashion for Egyptian design in the arts in Britain, as artists ‘promoted England as the rightful heir to Egyptian antiquities and artistic styles’, a phenomenon that became associated with the Regency period.²⁸³ It is worth noting that this influence is evident on certain caryatid designs in Britain from the early part of the century, such as the oversized figures on the façade of the Egyptian Hall in London of 1812 (Fig. 2.64), designed by Peter Frederick Robinson, and the somewhat Egyptianised caryatid-terms by John Nash on one of his 1820s Regent’s Park terraces (Fig. 2.65). Full-length caryatids, which displayed a somewhat Egyptian character in their symmetrical tapering form, ornamental hair, and folded arms were also a common feature of the influential art collector and interior designer Thomas Hope’s designs for domestic furniture and ornamentation (Fig. 2.66).

For some scholars, however, and specifically Fergusson, the caryatid’s origins were not to be found in Egypt but in Asia. Fergusson argued that the motif originated in Assyria specifically as it is ‘so completely in the spirit of their art’ and, for him, this was further supported by the use of the Ionic at

²⁸² Kinnard in Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens* (1825), 61-62, note d; Yates in Smith, ed., *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (1842), 201. Also see ‘A Brief History of Architecture, No. 11,’ 211; ‘The Mercantile Value of the Fine Arts (No. III – Lamps, Candelabra, and Chandeliers),’ in *The Art-Union* 64 (April 1844): 80.

²⁸³ Lynn Parramore, *Reading the Sphinx: Ancient Egypt in Nineteenth-Century Literary Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 22.

the Erechtheion, which he claimed was clearly ‘Asiatic, and essentially opposed to anything African’.²⁸⁴ As writers and commentators situated the caryatid’s origins in ancient cultures that predated the Vitruvian aetiology, alternative theories were proposed, or adopted from what had only been implied in earlier sources, as to what caryatids, and specifically the Erechtheion maidens, may have been intended to represent, a question that concerns scholars to this day.

The British architect William Wilkins would have seen the remaining Erechtheion maidens in situ when he visited Athens between 1800 and 1804 and he later published an account of his travels that showed his admiration for the porch, which he described as a ‘stylagalmatic portico’.²⁸⁵ ‘Stylagalmatic’ is a term which appears to have been coined in the early nineteenth century and refers to a structure supported by figures functioning as columns, a neologism that further attests to the scholarly interest that had developed in relation to the caryatid.²⁸⁶ Wilkins also claimed that it was ‘impossible to attach a degree of credit’ to Vitruvius’ history of the Erechtheion figures due to the lack of evidence from other ancient writers and the similarity in their drapery to other Greek sculptures that were not representations of Caryan women or slaves.²⁸⁷ He therefore postulated that caryatids may originally have represented the ‘nymphs of Diana’ or ‘Canephorae’, thus repeating two interpretations of the figures, with the former continuing that which had been proposed by Lessing and the latter that which had been implied or stated by Winckelmann, Le Roy, and others in the eighteenth century, and earlier.²⁸⁸

In relation to the *Kanēphoroi* interpretation, several early nineteenth-century scholars maintained that evidence to corroborate this could be found in certain female figures sculpted on the eastern portion

²⁸⁴ Fergusson, *Historical Inquiry*, 383-84.

²⁸⁵ William Wilkins, *Atheniensiā or Remarks on the Topography and Buildings of Athens*, (London: John Murray, 1816), 137.

²⁸⁶ Gwilt also calls caryatids ‘stylagalmatic’ in Joseph Gwilt, *Rudiments of Architecture* (London: J. Taylor, 1834), 126.

²⁸⁷ Wilkins, *Atheniensiā*, 139-40.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 140-41.

of the Parthenon Frieze in the British Museum, which were linked with the Erechtheion maidens due to similarities of dress (Fig. 2.67).²⁸⁹ William Wilkins seems to have adhered to the belief that the caryatids and the frieze were related, indicated in his claim that the Erechtheion caryatids are probably ‘representative of the virgins, who assisted at the Panathenaea and were called Canephorae’.²⁹⁰ Kinnard also made this link apparent by writing that the Erechtheion caryatids ‘resemble the Canephorae, and the costume of the Attic virgins in the Panathenaic frieze, is similar to the Pandrosean statues’.²⁹¹ ‘Pandrosean’ here refers to the Pandrosium, another term used to describe the Erechtheion temple, and specifically that section where the caryatid porch stood, and this statement highlights the similarities in dress evident between the figures presumed to be *Kanēphoroi* on the Parthenon frieze and the Erechtheion caryatids. Other descriptions of these figures confirm their association with Athenian *Kanēphoroi* due to these similarities, including Joseph Gwilt’s *Encyclopaedia of Architecture* of 1842 and the writings of Henry Inwood.²⁹² However, it is worth noting that some writers disputed the theory that caryatids could represent *Kanēphoroi*. The unknown author of an 1809 article, for example, claimed that a British Museum catalogue’s description of the Townley Caryatid as a *Kanēphoros* that functioned as a caryatid, was a ‘manifest contradiction’ as the *Kanēphoroi* were apparently ‘never degraded to the *ignoble* situation of the Caryatides’.²⁹³

As has been shown, Lessing seems to have first mooted the other predominant caryatid interpretation, which associated the motif with the ancient Greek goddess Artemis. In the early nineteenth century, this association was often explained through the employment of an etymological history which

²⁸⁹ These include Kinnard in Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, 1825, 62, note d; Henry William Inwood, *The Erechtheion at Athens: Fragments of Athenian Architecture and a Few Remains in Attica Megara and Epirus* (London: James Carpenter & Son, Joseph Taylor, Priestley & Weale, 1827), 114.

²⁹⁰ Wilkins, *Atheniensiā*, 141.

²⁹¹ Kinnard in Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, 1825, 62, note d. The Pandroseion is a separate temple that functions as an appendage to the Erechtheion. See Jeffrey M. Hurwitt, *The Athenian Acropolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 204.

²⁹² Gwilt, *Encyclopaedia of Architecture* (1842), 71. Also see ‘Of Caryatides,’ in *The Mechanics’ Magazine, Museum, Register, Journal and Gazette* 15 (London: M. Salmon, 1831), 185; Inwood, *Erechtheion at Athens*, 114. Also see John Britton, *Dictionary of the Architecture and Archaeology of the Middle Ages*, 55.

²⁹³ ‘The Dilletanti Tourist - No. 111,’ 147. Quatremère de Quincy similarly claimed that the *Kanēphoroi* were never intended for such an ‘abusive’ use. See Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique d’Architecture*, 293.

displayed how the term ‘caryatid’ derived from the aspect of the goddess known as *Artemis Karyatis*. The origins of this epithet were explained by Joseph Gwilt, through his quotation of Pausanias in both his 1821 pamphlet and the 1842 edition of his *Encyclopaedia*, which stated that Caryae (*Karyai*) in Laconia was sacred to the goddess and it was for this reason that the epithet *Karyatis* developed. Gwilt posited that caryatids were initially used at temples to Artemis and that ‘instead of representing captives or persons in a state of ignominy, they were in fact representations of the virgins engaged in the worship of that goddess’.²⁹⁴ Several other nineteenth-century sources confirmed this link between Artemis and caryatids, including William Smith’s 1842 and 1848 editions of his *Dictionary*.²⁹⁵

In 1825, the writer Charles Frederick Partington noted the ‘very curious’ contradictions in the discourse of contemporary French architects in relation to the caryatid.²⁹⁶ This statement could equally have been applied to British debates on the caryatid in the first half of the nineteenth century. A broad range of opinions developed regarding the motif and a vigorous and unprecedented interest in its employment, in many structures related to the ‘Greek Revival’ movement, existed in tandem with much apprehension regarding its appropriate use, a trend that was set to last throughout the rest of the century. An unprecedented number of attempts at codifying the caryatid were witnessed as various British scholars, architects, and antiquarians attempted to resolve its most appropriate use and, influenced by recent acquisitions of ancient caryatids and other archaeological discoveries, they postulated a plethora of theories, which often contradicted each other, in relation to its architectural adoption, as well as its origins and its intended meaning or meanings.

Crucially, as has been shown, in the first half of the nineteenth century the caryatid was condemned in voices that were more vociferous than at earlier points in history and this often related to its status

²⁹⁴ Gwilt, *Encyclopaedia of Architecture* (1842), 70-71.

²⁹⁵ Yates in Smith, ed., *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (1842), 201; James Yates in William Smith, ed., *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (London: Taylor and Walton & John Murray, 1848), 243. Also see ‘A Brief History of Architecture, No. II,’ 211; John Britton, *Dictionary of the Architecture and Archaeology of the Middle Ages*, 55.

²⁹⁶ Partington, *The Builder's Complete Guide*, 319.

as a representation of a female slave. This clearly caused concern as a result of contemporary misogynistic attitudes towards women, and on the basis of their perceived physical weakness, but it was the caryatid's associations with slavery specifically that seems to have engendered the most discomfort. Indeed, Persian figures were often censured in equally harsh terms in the texts already mentioned and, thus, it is apparent that the caryatid's depiction of slavery specifically was highly problematic for contemporary commentators.

Elizabeth McGrath and Jean Michel Massing have stated that 'all images of enslaved men and women, however abstracted in allegory or antique nudity, derive force from an awareness of slavery as a social reality' and the concerns raised regarding the caryatid's slavery associations, which were witnessed in Britain from as early as the 1750s in the writings of Isaac Ware, may have resulted from the contemporary existence of slavery.²⁹⁷ Mass petitioning against slavery began in Britain in the 1770s yet it was not abolished in the British Empire until 1833 so a knowledge of its existence was inescapable in the early part of the nineteenth century and how this might have influenced the employment of caryatids, with their enslaved associations, is explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

'a notable instance of the union of sculpture and construction':²⁹⁸ The Caryatid in Britain, 1850-1914

When the 1851 Great Exhibition's Crystal Palace was rebuilt at Sydenham in 1854, it included thousands of plaster casts of sculptural objects and architectural fragments in its series of courts that sought to tell the history of world culture. The Palace's Greek Court included a cast of the Erechtheion Caryatid (Fig. 2.68), as well as casts of a pair of Triopion figures from the Villa Albani and the Roman

²⁹⁷ Elizabeth McGrath and Jean Michel Massing, eds., *The Slave in European Art: From Renaissance Trophy to Abolitionist Emblem* (London: The Warburg Institute; Turin: Nino Aragno Editore, 2012), ix

²⁹⁸ Walter Crane, 'On the Influence of Architectural Styles upon Design - I,' *The Magazine of Art* (January 1896): 133.

Pozzuoli caryatid relief.²⁹⁹ Although the guide to the court mentioned the Albani statues' similarities to the Townley Caryatid, and claimed that they collectively belonged in the same series, surprisingly, the Court did not appear to have included a cast of the Townley sculpture itself, as it was not mentioned in the guide.³⁰⁰ This may have been a result of the fact that the Greek and Roman Courts contained 'only a few specimens from the British Museum', as that institution was 'liberally open to the public', and the Palace's apparent principal aim was 'to afford a sight of those objects' which were 'more difficult of access'.³⁰¹

The entrance to the Palace's Renaissance Court, meanwhile, was flanked by two casts of Goujon's caryatids, which were considered 'a beautiful example of that ornamental branch of Art in which [Goujon] excelled' (Fig. 2.69).³⁰² The architect and designer Owen Jones was responsible for the Palace's decoration and layout, along with the architect Matthew Digby Wyatt. The latter figure designed the Renaissance Court and the selection of Goujon's caryatids here is unsurprising as he claimed they were some of the sculptor's 'best works' in Jones' influential *Grammar of Ornament* of 1856.³⁰³ Moreover, the 1854 guide to the Renaissance Court, also written by Wyatt, described the figures as having a 'majestic style' and being reckoned among Goujon's masterpieces 'to whom [...] may be ascribed the leadership of the French school of sculpture'.³⁰⁴

The use of Goujon's Renaissance caryatids in a prominent location intended to showcase some of history's finest art and the positive commentary they received may reflect certain changes that were

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 90

³⁰⁰ George Scharf, *The Greek Court erected in the Crystal Palace, by Owen Jones* (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1854), 63. It is also worth noting that the Erechtheion Caryatid is equally not mentioned in this guide but surviving photographs of the Greek Court show a cast of the sculpture in situ alongside casts of the other Parthenon sculptures.

³⁰¹ Ibid., vi.

³⁰² 'The Renaissance Court at the Sydenham Palace,' *The Athenaeum* 1381 (15 April 1854): 469.

³⁰³ Matthew Digby Wyatt, 'Italian Ornament,' in Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament* (London: Day and Son, 1856), 277.

³⁰⁴ Matthew Digby Wyatt and John Burley Waring, *The Renaissance Court in the Crystal Palace* (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1854), 65.

developing in Victorian Britain's reception of the art of the past. From the country's celebration of its 'industrial and imperial prowess' at the 1851 Exhibition to the beginning of the First World War, Britain 'underwent profound and intense transformations', which included a 'radical shift in the perception' of Renaissance architecture, especially during the years 1860 to 1910, when it influenced many structures erected at the time.³⁰⁵ In a wider context, from as early as the 1840s, Renaissance Italy had provided artists and art critics with an 'alternative and more accessible civilization than ancient Greece upon which to model themselves' and both trends affected the types of caryatid that were sculpted in Britain in the latter half of the nineteenth century.³⁰⁶ Following the dominance of more 'Greek' forms of caryatids, with their varying relations to the Erechtheion prototype, caryatids appeared in a significantly wider array of manifestations, many of which evinced Renaissance precedents. However, from a theoretical and critical perspective, there was a continuity in how the caryatid was conceptualised, with similar sentiments expressed to those that had earlier been espoused and, perhaps, in reaction to the broad diversity of contemporary caryatids, commentators and critics called for a return to more classical models and, as before, some completely condemned the use of the motif altogether.

Katherine Wheeler claims that, in Britain, two publications in particular signalled a 'new attitude toward the Renaissance' in the latter half of the nineteenth century: Walter Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) and John Addington Symonds' seven-volume *Renaissance in Italy* (1875-1886).³⁰⁷ Both of these texts followed the influential work *The Stones of Venice* by John Ruskin, which was published in three volumes in 1851-53 and focused on the Byzantine, Gothic, and Renaissance art and architecture of the Italian city. While neither Pater's nor Symonds' works appear to have made any mention of the caryatid directly, *Stones of Venice* briefly indicated the architectural

³⁰⁵ Katherine Wheeler, *Victorian Perceptions of Renaissance Architecture* (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Routledge, 2014), 1-2, 10.

³⁰⁶ Hilary Fraser, *The Victorians and Renaissance Italy* (Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992), 39.

³⁰⁷ Wheeler, *Victorian Perceptions of Renaissance Architecture*, 49.

ethics of using the motif in a section on shafts in architecture. Ruskin wrote that, in relation to sculptural ornamentation on a shaft, ‘barbarism begins wherever the sculpture is either so bossy, or so deeply cut, as to break the contour of the shaft, or compromise its solidity’, in which case it may lose its ‘dignity and definite function’.³⁰⁸ He argued that the ‘same rule would condemn the Caryatid: which I entirely agree with Mr. Fergusson in thinking [...] one of the chief errors of the Greek schools’.³⁰⁹ He is here referring to Fergusson’s censure of the human figure as a structural support in his *Historical Inquiry*, calling it an ‘asburdity’ developed during the Greek ‘decay of art’.³¹⁰

The importance of Fergusson’s thinking for British architectural history and theory is, perhaps, reflected in the multiple republications of his works throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Following his *Historical Inquiry*, he attempted a systematic survey of world architecture in his *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, published in 1855 and again in 1859. In both editions of the *Handbook*, the author continued to display his earlier disdain for caryatids whereas he claimed that the Erechtheion figures, which were illustrated by a depiction of the British Museum’s figure (Fig. 2.70), were

used with so much taste, and all the ornaments are so elegant, that it is difficult to criticise or find fault; but it is nevertheless certain that it was a mistake which even the art of the Greeks could hardly conceal. To use human figures to support a cornice is unpardonable, unless it is done as a mere secondary adjunct to a building. In the Erechtheium it is a little too prominent for this, though used with as much discretion as was perhaps possible under the circumstances.³¹¹

Although he maintained that the Townley Caryatid, which was the only other example of the motif depicted in the *Handbook* (Fig. 2.71), ‘by employing a taller cap, avoids some of the objections’ of

³⁰⁸ John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, Vol. 1 (London: George Allen, 1903), 356.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 356.

³¹⁰ Fergusson, *Historical Inquiry*, 384.

³¹¹ James Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1855), 274-75; James Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1859), 274-75.

the Erechtheion type, nonetheless, he wrote that ‘the figure itself [...] is less architectural and so errs on the other side’.³¹² According to Nikolaus Pevsner, Fergusson’s ‘most important’ book was his *A History of Modern Styles in Architecture* of 1862, which was published as a sequel to his *Handbook* and was combined with that work to form his three-volume *A History of Architecture in All Countries* of 1865.³¹³ This was then republished several times in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and all these editions simply repeated the same material in relation to the caryatid, with its negative sentiments, that are encountered in his *Handbook* of the 1850s.³¹⁴

The attitude of Ruskin and Fergusson reflected a wider trend in relation to how the caryatid was discussed among architects and architectural commentators in Britain in the latter half of the nineteenth century, a period in which, not only modern caryatids, but also the celebrated Erechtheion sculptures were sometimes the focus of hostile attack. In a lecture of 1858, the architect John Pollard Seddon used particularly harsh tones when he described the maidens as ‘a freak which it is certainly not desirable to imitate’, and which transgressed the ‘canon of *fitness*’.³¹⁵ Meanwhile, Robert Smirke, a leading architect of the ‘Greek Revival’ movement, claimed in the following year that ‘our great Greek masters have set us an example of this misapplication of the sculptor’s art in the caryatides, graceful and beautiful as the Athenian caryatides are. One cannot but wonder at the severe and learned Greek committing such a capriccio as this conversion of a virgin into a burthen bearing column’.³¹⁶

In order to explain what appeared to him as an anomaly in Greek architecture, Smirke attributed this ‘misapplication’ to the influence of Egyptian art and wrote that ‘art was then young, and it had not

³¹² Fergusson, *Illustrated Handbook* 1 (1855), 275; *Illustrated Handbook* 1 (1859), 275.

³¹³ Nikolaus Pevsner, *Some Architectural Writers of the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 238.

³¹⁴ James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1865), 236-37; James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1874), 258-59; James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries*, ed. R. Phené Spiers, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1893), 268.

³¹⁵ ‘Ancient and Modern Ornament Contrasted,’ (transcription of reading by Mr. J. P. Seddon at the Architectural Museum, Brompton, on Wednesday, the 27th), *The Builder* 16, no. 783 (1858): 70-71

³¹⁶ Robert Smirke, ‘Mr. Smirke’s Lectures at the Royal Academy,’ *The Builder* 17, no. 840 (1859): 191-2.

wholly emancipated itself from the archaisms of its Egyptian instructors'.³¹⁷ He thus appeared to use the more Archaic elements of the figures' appearance as evidence that they derived from ancient Egyptian sculpture.

In 1867, the 1832 treatise of the professor of architecture William Hosking was reprinted, and it described the caryatid as a 'solecism in architecture', while specifically referring to the Erechtheion porch as 'full of architectural beauties' but 'most injudiciously collocated'.³¹⁸ Over four decades later, the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* demonstrated that discomfort with the ancient figures had continued well into the twentieth century as it described the Erechtheion's 'Corae' as producing an effect that was 'not altogether happy'.³¹⁹ Thus, the general attitude to caryatids, both ancient and modern, was censorious and the motif's creation was considered by many to have been a deviation from good taste on the part of the ancient Greeks. Nonetheless, caryatids proliferated on contemporary built structures and, alongside Renaissance-inspired variants, examples based on the Erechtheion or 'Greek' prototype, often sculpted with attributes to indicate an allegorical status, continued to be used on prominent commercial, civic, and institutional buildings throughout the period in question.

Some notable examples of such allegorical uses of 'Greek' caryatids include the eight figures by Thomas Colley on William Bruce Gingell's 1864-67 Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Office in Bristol (Fig. 2.72), the imposing pair by William Wyon that flank the main doorway to the picture galleries of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (1875, Fig. 2.73), and John Mossman's colonnade of figures on James Sellars' 1877 St. Andrew's Hall in Glasgow (Fig. 2.74), as well as his variations in William Young's Glasgow City Chambers of 1882-88 (Fig. 2.75). In one of the few

³¹⁷ Ibid., 192.

³¹⁸ William Hosking, 'Treatise on Architecture,' in *Treatise on Architecture*, ed. Arthur Ashpitel (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1867), 45, 49.

³¹⁹ Percy Gardner, 'Greek Art,' in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 485.

published studies that specifically analyses some of the implications of the European nineteenth-century enthusiasm for caryatids, Elana Shapira posits that the use of Erechtheion-like caryatids on the homes of bourgeois Jewish families in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna was intended to display a ‘cultural authority that came with the classical Greek’ tradition.³²⁰ Arguably, it was due to the power of the same entrenched cultural connotation, which was widely recognisable and had its historical authority consolidated, as we have seen, across the centuries from the Roman era onwards, that the Erechtheion prototype continued to be employed by architects on buildings erected in Britain in the latter half of the nineteenth century despite the predominantly damning attitude toward the motif.

Alongside condemning the ancients for their use of the caryatid, architects and architectural writers continued to provide strict prescriptions regarding its appropriate use in a contemporary context. A contradictory attitude prevailed as, while the Erechtheion maidens were considered problematic by numerous architects, the employment of versions of the Erechtheion or ‘Greek’ type simultaneously appeared as the only means of mitigating the negative characteristics of the motif generally, in the period’s architectural practice. In 1850, for example, Peter Nicholson wrote that caryatids must *always* display ‘graceful attitudes and pleasant features’ and, although he allowed for some variance among groups of figures, they were nonetheless required to maintain ‘a general uniformity of shape’.³²¹ He also stated that, like the Athenian figures, they ‘should always be of moderate size, or they will appear monstrous, and destroy those sensations, for which representations of the fair sex ought to inspire’.³²²

Some twelve years later, the architectural critic William Henry Leeds declared that caryatids should be conceived with ‘an erect attitude’, as ‘decidedly *architectonic*’, and that they should ‘convey at

³²⁰ Elana Shapira, *Style and Seduction: Jewish Patrons, Architecture, and Design in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Waltham, Ma: Brandeis University Press, 2016), 32.

³²¹ Peter Nicholson, *Encyclopedia of Architecture*, vol. 1 (New York: Johnson, Fry & Co, 1850), 108.

³²² *Ibid.*, 108.

first sight the idea of perfect strength and stability’, with no figures apparently ‘so well suited for the purpose as those of females draped in long garments falling quite down to the feet’, which ‘render the whole of the lower part of the figure from the waist a solid mass of stone’.³²³ Evidence such as this, and that of numerous other authors, demonstrates that, although the idea of caryatids was disagreeable for most, the Erechtheion prototype was almost unanimously deemed the ideal model as it was apparently ‘produced in the happiest and most satisfactory manner’, and it displayed a ‘perfectly serene [...] countenance’ by bearing its burden ‘without betraying even the slightest degree of effort’.³²⁴ In this context, the Erechtheion, as well as the Townley, figures were, therefore, considered ‘*Caryatides proper* [emphasis added], or genuine statue-pillars’.³²⁵

This last comment was made by Leeds, who, perhaps responding to the admonishing tones of his contemporaries, noted that there was ‘no reason’ for prohibiting caryatids altogether, ‘which many, it seems, now would do, as little better than arrant absurdities, notwithstanding the classical authority for them’.³²⁶ Rather exceptionally amongst architects and architectural critics and theorists, he argued, quite logically, that

if there be absurdity in employing statues to perform an office which living persons could not, it is still absurd, though perhaps in a less degree, to put them in niches, or on the tops of buildings, where we should feel alarm at seeing any one standing. No one in his senses mistakes a stone figure for a living human being, more especially if it be larger than life and employed as an architectural member.³²⁷

This echoes the anonymous author of the 1832 article on caryatids mentioned earlier, as does Leeds’ use of new terms created for architectural supporting figures, specifically ‘*Anthropomorphic pillars*’

³²³ William Henry Leeds, *Rudimentary Architecture for the Use of Beginners and Students* (London: John Weale, 1859), 88-9; William Henry Leeds, ‘Notes on Caryatides, &c.,’ in Chambers, *Civil Architecture*, 194.

³²⁴ Leeds, *Rudimentary Architecture*, 89; Leeds, ‘Notes on Caryatides, &c.,’ 194.

³²⁵ Leeds, ‘Notes on Caryatides, &c.,’ 194.

³²⁶ Leeds, *Rudimentary Architecture*, 88.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

and ‘*Anthropostyles*, or statue-columns’, and this indicates that he was likely its author.³²⁸ Unlike most commentators, Leeds supported the use of caryatids and he wrote that, if the principles put forward by him, clearly reflecting the form of the ‘Greek’ caryatid, had not

frequently been strangely violated by modern architects and sculptors, it would scarcely be necessary to observe that in all anthropomorphic pillars, constrained postures and attitudes of action should be avoided. The expression should be tranquil and quiescent; there should be a certain degree of architectonic formality, but without stiffness, and the figures should appear, in military phrase, *to stand at ease*.³²⁹

This statement, in its condemnation of the work of modern architects and sculptors that transgressed the rules set forth by Leeds, reflects the variety of different forms of caryatids in more dynamic postures, diverging from the upright ‘Greek’ type, that were appearing at this time, many of which displayed the influence of Renaissance sculpture and this presumably fomented anti-caryatid sentiments.

Alongside the influence of Renaissance architecture, one of the most important movements that affected the period’s built structures was the Gothic Revival, which dominated much of the architecture produced in Britain during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Unsurprisingly, its major architects and proponents, such as Augustus Welby Pugin, George Gilbert Scott, and William Burges paid little attention to the caryatid, due to its inherent classicism. Ruskin, however, who was a proponent of Gothic architecture, appeared, somewhat surprisingly considering the sentiments expressed in *Stones of Venice*, to imply a positive attitude towards the motif in his *The Ethics of Dust*, a set of ten lectures in the form of Socratic dialogues between a lecturer and schoolgirls, which was

³²⁸ Leeds, *Rudimentary Architecture*, 87. Also see ‘Leaves from my Pocket-Book,’ 48.

³²⁹ Leeds, *Rudimentary Architecture*, 89. The only other example I have encountered of similar sentiments to Leeds is the earlier description of caryatids found in the architectural publisher John Weale’s *Dictionary*, which may have influenced Leeds. See John Weale, *Rudimentary Dictionary of Terms Used In Architecture* (London: J. Weale, 1849-50), 79.

published in 1866.³³⁰ The critic spent much time in the British Museum in the years prior to the book's publication, studying ancient art and antiquities, while 'endeavouring to make out how far Greeks and Egyptians knew God' and a surviving study by his hand of the Museum's Erechtheion caryatid, perhaps created during this period, demonstrates some interest in the form in its ancient Greek manifestation (Fig. 2.76).³³¹

In the eighth lecture of *Ethics*, entitled 'Crystal Caprice', the lecturer describes a dream he has in which St. Barbara, who he claims was the 'patroness of good architects', spoke with the Egyptian creator goddess Neith about the 'laws of architecture in Egypt and Greece'.³³² In this dialogue, St. Barbara appears to disapprove of certain elements of ancient architecture, such as the dimensions and measurements of the pyramids and the Parthenon but 'she was pleased when Neith told her of the temple of the dew, and of the Caryan maidens bearing its frieze', which here refers to the Erechtheion caryatids.³³³ For Ruskin, Neith was the equivalent of the goddesses Athena or Sophia, who was emblematic of 'a common force, known and revered by a plurality of ancient religions', and she was endowed with an 'orderly and harmonious' creative power.³³⁴ This passage would, consequently, appear to display some endorsement of the caryatid on Ruskin's part, at least in its famous ancient form.

³³⁰ Although I have encountered little written evidence to demonstrate Pugin's attitude towards the caryatid, it can be presumed he disliked them greatly considering his attitudes to, what he termed, 'Pagan', classical architecture and he surely, at least partially, referred to the structure's caryatids, when he described St Pancras New Church as a 'wretched compound of pagan and protestant architecture'. See Augustus Welby Pugin, *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1895), 23, note 18; Augustus Welby Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed Architecture* (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853), 4, 39-40, 53-54.

³³¹ John Ruskin writing to Henry Acland, as quoted in the introduction to John Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies, The Ethics of Dust, The Crown of Wild Olive, with letters on Public Affairs 1859-1866* (London: George Allen, 1905), xxxiv.

³³² Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*, 316.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 316-17.

³³⁴ Francis O'Gorman, "To See the Finger of God in the Dimensions of the Pyramid": A New Context for Ruskin's 'The Ethics of the Dust', *The Modern Language Review* 98, no. 3 (July 2003): 570.

Otherwise, the predominant tone of discourse on the caryatid was overtly negative and, over forty years after the publication of Ruskin's work, in noting that an unfavourable attitude towards the caryatid had persisted into the twentieth century, the architect William Richard Lethaby wrote that only 'a few years ago it was thought that the caryatid supports at the Erechtheum were a freak of design'.³³⁵ However, he argued against this contention by stating that the caryatid was 'in use in the sixth century, and probably had even then a history, for the farther we go back the near we get to a time when statues and pillars coalesce, and when the pillar itself was a sacred thing'.³³⁶ To support this argument, he used the example of sixth-century caryatids found at Delphi, referring to the figures from the Siphnian and Knidian Treasuries, fragments of which were unearthed in the closing decade of the nineteenth century. He also cited a caryatid with archaizing details found at the site of the Roman town of Tralles in Turkey (Fig. 2.77) and claimed that these apparently more ancient figures resemble the Erechtheion sculptures so 'all must have followed one general tradition'.³³⁷ Thus, for some, the Erechtheion caryatids were held in favour in the opening years of the twentieth century, partially due to an archaeological genealogy that was constructed for them, and which demonstrated their venerable ancestry. In contrast, however, two years following the publication of Lethaby's work, the architectural historian Geoffrey Scott, described the 'ancient, though *seldom felicitous* [emphasis added], habit of actually substituting caryatides [...] for the column'.³³⁸ He proclaimed that this resulted from the Greeks' desire to prove 'in concrete detail' the 'correspondence of architecture to the body' and, while he perceived this was 'true in abstract principle', for Scott the results of this desire on the part of the Greeks 'were necessarily sometimes trivial and childish'.³³⁹

³³⁵ William Richard Lethaby, *Architecture: An Introduction to the History and Theory of the Art of Building* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1912), 100.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 100.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 100-1.

³³⁸ Geoffrey Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism; A Study in the History of Taste* (Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 220.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 220-21.

Alongside the prevailing negative commentary on the caryatid, earlier theoretical ideas relating to the motif's history, architectural significance, and symbolic status appear to have persisted into the latter part of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth. These include its definition as an architectural order, which continued to be called the 'Caryatic Order', typically characterised as sculptures of women dressed in long robes in the place of columns, and this was linked with the 'feminine' orders.³⁴⁰ Regarding Vitruvius' *historia*, scepticism dominated and the motif continued to be historically associated with both Egypt and Asia while being etymologically linked to *Artemis Karyatis*, and consequentially connected with rituals pertaining to that goddess. The interpretation of the Erechtheion maidens as 'canephorae' engaged in the Panathenaic festival was maintained, as well as a more general consensus that the figures, despite the prevailing attitude towards caryatids were particularly, and often exceptionally, beautiful or paradigmatic examples.³⁴¹ Other original interpretations for these sculptures were also suggested such as the possibility that they represented the 'six daughters of Erechtheus, who, at a time of war, offered themselves for their country, and were said to have been elevated to heaven', a hypothesis proposed in an article published in *The Builder* by the German archaeologist Peter Wilhelm Forchhammer.³⁴²

Certain key publications appear to have been particularly influential as they were frequently republished throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, such as Chambers' treatise, Fergusson's works, as mentioned earlier, and Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities*, with the significant

³⁴⁰ See, for example, James Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1855), 274-75; James Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1859), 274-75, James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1865), 236-37; James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1874), 258-59; James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries*, ed. R. Phené Spiers, Vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1893), 268. Also see Peter Nicholson, *A Theoretical And Practical Treatise On the Five Orders of Architecture* (London: Thomas Kelly, 1853), 162.

³⁴¹ See, for example, George Godwin, *History in Ruins: A Series of Letters to a Lady, Embodying a Popular Sketch of the History of Architecture, and the Characteristics of the Various Styles which have Prevalled. A Handbook of Architecture for the Unlearned* (London: Chapman and Halls, 1853), 96-97; Samuel Clegg, 'Lectures on the History of Architecture,' *The Civil Engineer And Architect's Journal* 13 (1850): 243.

³⁴² Peter Wilhelm Forchhammer, 'Restoration of the Erechtheum at Athens,' *The Builder* 34, No. 1733 (23 September 1876): 932.

additions by Kinnard we have seen, which was released in new editions in 1858 and 1892. It can, therefore, be assumed that these texts contributed to the persistence of earlier theoretical notions relating to the caryatid more generally. Gwilt's *Encyclopaedia* was also reprinted several times in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and in the early part of the twentieth, and, reflecting contemporary archaeological finds, this used specific Egyptian and Indian architectural structures to corroborate the author's argument that the motif's origins preceded those ascribed to it by Vitruvius.³⁴³ In a separate section on post-classical uses of the caryatid, Gwilt claimed that there was no case in which the architectural support 'cannot be better accomplished by a solid support, such as a column', but that the 'variety in quest of which the eye is always in search [...] leads often to their necessary employment. The plain truth is, that they are admissible only as objects necessary for an extreme degree of decoration, and otherwise employed are not to be tolerated'.³⁴⁴

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Gwilt believed that the 'most successful application' of the motif were Goujon's 'celebrated' figures in the Louvre.³⁴⁵ Several illustrations of caryatids and Persians were included in this section 'for the use of those whose designs require their employment', and these included Renaissance examples alongside the 'Greek' types, such as Goujon's figures, as well as one of Artus Quellinus' striking seventeenth-century weeping sculptures from the Amsterdam Stadthuis (Fig. 2.78).³⁴⁶

The 1890 edition of William Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, meanwhile, provided a substantially more detailed analysis of the motif than that provided in earlier versions. It

³⁴³ Joseph Gwilt, *An Encyclopaedia of Architecture* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1854), 70. The *Encyclopaedia* was, for example, re-printed in 1867, 1872, 1876, 1881, 1888, 1889, and 1903. Also see 'Antique Art,' *The Art Journal* 57 (September 1859): 268.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 738.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 738-39. Also see Gwilt, *Encyclopaedia of Architecture* (1842), 902; Joseph Gwilt, *An Encyclopaedia of Architecture, Historical, Theoretical, and Practical*, ed. Wyatt Papworth (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1888), 902.

³⁴⁶ Gwilt, *Encyclopaedia of Architecture* (1854), 739.

repeated much of what was previously stated regarding the ‘traditional story’ of Vitruvius, as well as indicating possible connections to ‘maidens executing the dance in honour of Artemis Caryatis’, ‘Canephoroi, in the service of Artemis Caryatis’, and ‘Canephoroi [...] who held an honourable place in the Panathenaic procession’.³⁴⁷ The Erechtheion maidens were highlighted as the ‘representative specimens’, regarded as the ‘willing performers of an honourable task’, and not ‘vanquished enemies compelled to a laborious task’.³⁴⁸ A lack of struggle was apparently displayed by the omission of the frieze from the entablature, which appeared to lighten the Erechtheion maidens’ load, and the manner in which they were sculpted in an overall pose of ‘ease and firmness’. The columnar qualities of the figures were also noted, with the ‘swelling of the body at the hips’ thought to correspond to entasis, and the drapery’s similarity to fluting noted.³⁴⁹

The *Dictionary* linked the Erechtheion figures to *Kanēphoroi* due to their ‘basket-capitals’ and the ancient Greek figures known as *Arrhēphoroi* and *Hydriaphoroi* were also added to the retinue of object-bearers that caryatids could be conflated with in this period.³⁵⁰ Stuart and Revett had viewed the *Kanēphoroi* and *Arrhēphoroi* as synonymous and Kinnard claimed that both ‘take on their heads what the priestess gives them to carry, neither the priestess knowing what she gives, nor the virgins what they receive’.³⁵¹ This echoes a passage in Pausanias’ description of the ancient Athenian festival, the ‘Arrephoria’, in which he writes of two virgins who served in the cult of Athena Polias and carried mysterious sacred objects during certain rituals. The 1824 translation of Pausanias’ *Description of Greece* by Thomas Taylor also equated the *Kanēphoroi* and *Arrhēphoroi* by calling

³⁴⁷ Ernest A. Gardner, ‘Carya’tides,’ in William Smith, William Wayte and G.E. Marindin, ed., *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (London: John Murray, 1890), 368.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 368.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 368.

³⁵⁰ Also see Ernest Arthur Gardner, *A Handbook of Greek Sculpture* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1897), 30; Saglio in Charles Victor Daremberg and Edmond Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecque et Romaines* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1887), 877; Charles Chipiez in Daremberg and Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecque et Romaines*, 930.

³⁵¹ Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, 1787, 12-13; Kinnard in Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens* (1825), 51, note d.

the virgins who served in the Arrephoria ‘Canephorae’, while the 1898 translation of the same work, by James George Frazer, described the maidens who carried these sacred objects as ‘Arrephoroi’.³⁵² It would therefore appear that both terms were inter-changeable throughout the nineteenth century. The *Hydriaphorai*, meanwhile were, as their name indicates, women who carried pitchers of water or, according to Kinnard, ‘vessels of lustration’ and ‘vases of libation’, on their heads.³⁵³

In 1859, Ruskin gave a series of five lectures on art known as *The Two Paths* and, when commenting upon certain figurative sculptures from Chartres Cathedral, he noted how they appeared to sustain the building ‘not like the Greek caryatid, without effort - nor like the Renaissance caryatid, by painful or impossible effort’.³⁵⁴ This definition of two distinct types of caryatid reflects the change that was to take place in examples of the motif from the 1860s onwards, in which forms with clear Renaissance precedents, that often had the semblance of struggling beneath the weight of their burden, made an appearance in Britain following the domination of more austere and restrained ‘Greek’ forms that bore their load with seeming ease. The variety of caryatid types related to wider changes in British sculptural practice generally which, hitherto, had been ‘preponderantly neo-classical’ and was thus dominated by idealised and dignified white marble figures inspired by ancient Greek and Roman models.³⁵⁵ Sculpture displayed significantly more formal diversity in the later decades of the nineteenth century and this shift is clearly discernible in Stevens’ Dorchester House chimneypiece with its pair of Renaissance-inspired caryatids so unlike any forms of the motif that had been seen before.

Significantly, the transition in the types of caryatid adopted in late Victorian Britain may have also resulted from a change in attitudes regarding the relationship between architecture and sculpture.

³⁵² Pausanias, *The Description of Greece* in Thomas Taylor, trans., *The Description of Greece by Pausanias* (London: Richard Priestley, 1824), 71-72; Pausanias, *The Description of Greece* in James George Frazer, trans., *Pausanias’s Description of Greece* (London: Macmillan, 1898), Book 6, 40.

³⁵³ Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens* (1825), 51, note a.

³⁵⁴ John Ruskin, ‘The Two Paths,’ in *A Joy for Ever’ and The Two Paths, with letters on the Oxford Museum and Various Addresses 1856-60* (London: George Allen, 1905), 279.

³⁵⁵ Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 4.

Earlier caryatid figures, predominantly based on the Erechtheion prototype, were often mass produced as copies in artificial stone. Thus, many sculptures of a repeated type were applied to buildings without any regard for the design or context of the structure that they were to adorn. The later decades of the nineteenth century, however, witnessed the development of a new aesthetic of architectural sculpture partially resulting from the output of Stevens and his followers working on developments at the South Kensington Museum, in which architecture and sculpture were combined ‘in a total, integrated decorative philosophy’.³⁵⁶

Following this approach, a whole variety of caryatids appeared in late Victorian Britain that were adapted to suit the building in which they were used and which displayed a ‘more liberal attitude to formal handling’ in an attempt to express a ‘more satisfactory blending of plastic and structure’.³⁵⁷ This was reflected in the wide range of Renaissance-inspired term figures employed, such as those on the façade of Archer & Green’s Royal Arcade in London (1879, Fig. 2.79) and the figures, eventually sculpted by Joseph Edgar Boehm, on George Aitchison’s Royal Exchange Assurance Offices, also in London and dating to 1884-45 (Fig. 2.80), which offered a ‘pleasing contrast to much of [...] architectural sculpture’ of the period.³⁵⁸ These caryatid-terms seamlessly integrate into their façades and, in their architectonic state, appear perfectly suited for their purpose. This quality was also reflected in a multitude of other caryatids of less strictly architectural character than such term figures, such as William Birnie Rhind’s varied allegorical sculptures representing numerous countries that nonetheless collectively cohere in their incorporation as architectonic components, as they elegantly continue the double columniation on the decorative front of Jenners department store in Edinburgh, designed by William Hamilton Beattie in an early Renaissance style in 1893-35 (Fig. 2.81).

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 227-28.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 331.

³⁵⁸ ‘The Royal Exchange Assurance Offices,’ *The Builder* 49, no. 2219 (15 August 1885): 220.

Although a wide variety of caryatids were employed on countless buildings, the ‘Greek’ type, as we have seen, was considered the only appropriate form of the motif by many. However, it was also denounced by certain writers as it appeared as a ‘confusion of sculpture and architecture’, and it was perceived by some to be ‘contrary to the due relations between the two arts’.³⁵⁹ In this context, the ‘Renaissance’ caryatid, in the flexibility of its forms, may have been adopted with enthusiasm by certain teams of sculptors and architects in the period’s closing decades, and the early part of the following century, due to a more ideal embodiment of the relationship between sculpture and architecture.

Debates over the relative merits of the various arts and their hierarchisation developed from as early as the sixteenth century in Italy and by the Victorian era in Britain, the fine arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture were clearly defined and contrasted.³⁶⁰ Their individual qualities and relations to each other, as well as the role of applied arts such as architectural ornament, were discussed with vigour by writers on the visual arts. In addition, the growth in the country’s population and its cities, largely due to processes of industrialisation, resulted in an increased expansion in built structures, whether ‘industrial, ecclesiastical, municipal or private’, and this injected debates on the relation of architecture to sculpture specifically, as sculptural embellishment was considered necessary to give these new buildings a sense of identity.³⁶¹

Earlier in the century, the arts of architecture and sculpture had tended to be separate considerations in a building’s design, with the sculptural decoration often deemed secondary or a ‘purely decorative feature’ that was applied as an afterthought, as reflected in the repeated use of multiple copies of

³⁵⁹ Freeman, *History of Architecture*, 118-19.

³⁶⁰ For more on this, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, ‘The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (II),’ *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13, no.1 (January 1952): 20. Kristeller’s ‘system’ has, however, come under attack in recent years. See, for example, James I. Porter, ‘Is Art Modern? Kristeller’s ‘Modern System of the Arts’ Reconsidered,’ *British Journal of Aesthetics* 49, no. 1 (January 2009): 1-24.

³⁶¹ David Morse, *High Victorian Culture* (Hampshire; London: Macmillan, 1993), 395.

similar Erechtheion-inspired caryatids.³⁶² The consequences of this problematic relationship between the two arts were highlighted and actively discussed in popular architectural publications such as the weekly periodical *The Builder*, from the 1840s onwards. In an 1847 issue, for example, the painter George Robert Lewis wrote that the sculptor and the architect should have a common understanding of each other's practice, otherwise he claimed they would be, to a certain extent, 'defective in their own art'.³⁶³ In the following year, an article published in the same journal advocated that the treatment of architecture and sculpture should 'meet with the observance of the same principles which guided the artists of classic times', referring to the ancient Greeks' more ideal cohesion of architecture and sculpture.³⁶⁴ By 1852, an editorial in *The Builder*, which reported on a lecture given by Cockerell, stated that the 'cordial union of those two glorious arts [sculpture and architecture] had been in lamentable abeyance since their last admired co-operation was exhibited by George III', and it claimed that, as the country's 'collections of Grecian marbles' were a 'reproach' to the architects of the time, the latter must endeavour 'to understand, and to apply their principles' to 'modern use and purposes'.³⁶⁵ Moreover, it proposed that 'it is by the aid of sculpture only' that architecture 'can attain the beautiful, and reach the heart [...]. Sculpture is to architecture what the countenance and the gesture are to the human frame, imparting speech and expression [...]; the sublime and the beautiful, can only be obtained by the intimate union of the two'.³⁶⁶ This final statement reflected Cockerell's perception that architectural ornament was the means in which a building could communicate its message to the public, a key objective of architectural sculpture at the time.³⁶⁷

³⁶² 'On the Application of Sculpture and Sculptured Ornament to Architecture (Royal Institute of Architects),' *The Builder* 6, no. 279 (10 June 1848): 279.

³⁶³ George Robert Lewis, 'On the Due Cultivation of the Faculties of the Arts,' *The Builder* 5, no. 235 (7 August 1847): 371.

³⁶⁴ 'On the Application of Sculpture,' 279.

³⁶⁵ Editorial in *The Builder* 12, no. 604 (2 September 1854): 457.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 457.

³⁶⁷ For more on this, see Anne Bordeleau, 'Charles Robert Cockerell's Architecture and the Language of Ornaments,' *The Journal of Architecture* 14, no. 4 (2009): 465-91. DOI: [10.1080/13602360903119017](https://doi.org/10.1080/13602360903119017) (accessed 20 February 2018).

Notably, Cockerell was largely responsible for the interiors of one of the mid-nineteenth century's most acclaimed structures, St George's Hall in Liverpool (1841-54), after he was appointed to this role following the death of its original architect Harvey Lonsdale Elmes. It is significant that his design for the building's music hall incorporated a row of caryatids supporting its balcony seating that were apparently modelled by 'M. Joyon' and cast in an artificial material (Fig. 2.82).³⁶⁸ Although upright they display a typically 'neoclassical', rather than 'Greek', appearance, and they are akin to the figures hitherto frequently seen on fireplaces. Their use here reflects the popularity of caryatids in the interiors of Victorian and Edwardian musical venues and theatres but an analysis of such a prolific use would require a separate study to this one.

The apparent gulf that had existed between the arts of architecture and sculpture up to the 1860s was highlighted in 1861 with the publication of the essay 'British Sculpture: Its Condition and Prospects' by William Michael Rossetti, the brother of the renowned Pre-Raphaelite painter. Lamenting the state of contemporary sculpture generally, the author argued that foremost 'among the causes of depression of the sculptural art may be named the divorce which has taken place of sculpture from architecture', a trend which, like those before him, he compared to the more integrated architectural-sculptural work of the Greeks.³⁶⁹ Rossetti claimed that if not placed in the proper context, by which he meant on a building, sculpture could not be appreciated as it was an inherently monumental art and therefore lost much of its appeal when manifested as isolated figures displayed at exhibitions. He defined these examples as a 'mere specimen of fine art', which 'neither harmonizes with its surroundings, nor is elucidated by them', in opposition to figural groupings or masses working together on a building.³⁷⁰

It was in this climate, in which there was an active discourse on how to properly incorporate the two arts, that the field of architectural sculpture transformed and this extended to changing notions on the relations between the fine and applied arts more generally. Due to the establishment of design schools

³⁶⁸ Joseph Sharples, *Liverpool* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2004), 57.

³⁶⁹ William Rossetti, 'British Sculpture: Its Condition and Prospects,' *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 63 (1861): 495.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 496.

in the earlier part of the century, such as the Government School of Design where Stevens taught, decorative arts, such as architectural carving, and their practitioners, attained a 'higher status' and this was followed in 1871, by the establishment of a modelling school for architects at the Royal Academy during Leighton's presidency.³⁷¹ In addition, as an artist, Leighton made an especially important contribution to aesthetic considerations of sculpture more generally in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, through his influence on the period's 'New Sculpture' movement.

Following Leighton's exhibition of his *Athlete Wrestling with a Python* at the Royal Academy in 1877, a work which the critic Edmund Gosse later cited as the inaugural work of the New Sculpture movement, sculpture apparently emerged from its previously subordinate position to painting in the hierarchy of the fine arts.³⁷² As a partial consequence of this, and the factors already elucidated, some seven years after the *Athlete's* exhibition, the Art Workers' Guild was founded by the architect John Belcher and the sculptor Hamo Thornycroft, with one of its aims being the establishment of a renewed dialogue between sculpture and architecture. It was thought that rather than divorcing the two arts and their respective professions, a building's sculptural ornamentation should be considered jointly by the architect and sculptor. Belcher advocated the use of figurative work to provide unity and he wrote that sculpture must form 'an integral part of a composition [...] in due relation to the architecture' in order to achieve a 'thorough harmony of sculpture and architecture'.³⁷³ His ideas were manifested in the design for the Institute of Chartered Accountants in London, designed in 1888 with sculptural work by Thornycroft and Harry Bates. The integration of figural sculpture at the Institute is evident in its frieze and an Italian Renaissance influence is especially apparent in its two atlante figures functioning as corbels, as well as its series of winged female figures, which bear a resemblance to caryatid-terms (Fig. 2.83). Indeed, these latter figures were referred to as 'caryatides' in a

³⁷¹ Patricia Pulham, 'The Arts,' in *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Chris Williams (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 453.

³⁷² David J. Getsy, *Body Doubles: Sculpture in Britain, 1877 – 1905* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2004), 2; Edmund Gosse, 'The New Sculpture, 1879–1894,' *Art Journal* 56 (1894): 133–42, 199–203, 277–82, 306–11.

³⁷³ John Belcher, *Essentials in Architecture: An Analysis of the Principles and Qualities to be looked for in Buildings* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1907), 73.

photograph of 1893, the same year in which the building was declared ‘the most remarkable and successful instance of the combination of architecture and sculpture carried out in England this century’.³⁷⁴

In this context, high-profile sculptors, such as Thornycroft, worked in collaboration with architects on a variety of projects and, in contrast to an earlier lack of acknowledgment, the sculptors who contributed to a building’s decoration were often named. A letter published in *The British Architect* in 1897 noted the periodical’s ‘good work of attempting to educate the English public to an intelligent appreciation of the true and fine function of sculpture in its relation to architecture’ and it pointed to an article from the *Liverpool Mercury* on Henry Tanner’s 1894-99 General Post Office in Liverpool, which focused on the building’s sculpture and gave ‘honourable and just reference’ to the sculpture’s creator, Edward O. Griffith.³⁷⁵ In connection to this, the unknown writer stated that the building’s ‘most important’ figures were its ‘colossal caryatides’, whose ‘attitudes have a massive dignity in keeping with their structural character, and although, from an aesthetic point of view, caryatides, even the best of them, may be regarded as debatable elements of construction, these figures amply vindicate themselves by their imposing effect’.³⁷⁶ The four figures stood in two pairs, perhaps inspired by the various allegorical ‘Greek’ caryatids that had been added to the exterior of the Louvre to accompany those of Sarazin.³⁷⁷ Each personified one of the nations of the United Kingdom and, perhaps unsurprisingly based on the positive commentary they received as a result of their ‘dignity’, they appear to have been of the upright, columnar ‘Greek’ type.

³⁷⁴ Reginald Blomfield, ‘Some Recent Architectural Sculpture, and the Institute of Chartered Accountants; John Belcher, Architect,’ *The Magazine of Art* (January 1895): 187. For more on the history and sculptural programme of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, see Terry Friedman et al., *The Alliance of Sculpture and Architecture: Hamo Thornycroft, John Belcher and the Institute of Chartered Accountants Building* (Leeds: Henry Moore Centre for the Study of Sculpture, 1993).

³⁷⁵ ‘Architects and Sculpture,’ *The British Architect* 47 (31 December 1897): 493.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 493.

³⁷⁷ Pairs of caryatids by a variety of French sculptors, such as Georges Jacquot and Astyanax-Scaevola Bosio, were added to the exterior of the new wings of the Cour Napoléon, which were erected as part of the Louvre extensions in the mid-nineteenth century. These are notable for showing the progression in caryatid designs, reflecting those that occurred in Britain, if they are compared with Sarazin’s sculptures, as they display more upright, architectonic postures and the influence of the ‘Greek’ type. See <http://louvre.sculpturederue.fr/index.html> (accessed 27 March 2018).

The anonymous writer of the 1848 *Builder* article mentioned earlier claimed that an ‘important part of the subject of the application of sculpture to architecture is the employment of caryatides’ and the increased enthusiasm for their adoption in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, and early part of the twentieth, must have partially resulted from their integration of architectural and sculptural qualities.³⁷⁸ However, although the caryatid could function as an embodiment of the union between those arts, it is worth bearing in mind that, as Moshe Barasch reminds us, the nineteenth century, as opposed to any ‘universalizing trend, which strove to unify the various arts’, also ‘evinced a profound and lasting interest in the specific and unique nature of each art and the material medium in which it operated’.³⁷⁹ While there were calls for architects to work more closely with sculptors, it was still thought that ‘each form and each material or subdivision of fine art has its appropriate object and treatment’.³⁸⁰ Alongside its negative connotations regarding slavery, the condemnatory tone which dominated discussions of the caryatid throughout the century, and earlier, equally may have related to its unclear status as a form that hesitated between the arts of architecture and sculpture.

The lack of clarity regarding its ontological status surely influenced the variety of debates on the appropriateness of the caryatid and the manner of treating it. As we have seen, an employment of caryatids that ensured the display of their architectural qualities was a central consideration in discussions on the motif for centuries and, although Renaissance-inspired caryatids demonstrated more adaptability, for most commentators the ‘Greek’ caryatid was favoured as the more architecturally appropriate model. In an 1876 article on the influence of architecture ‘upon decorative design of all kinds’, the artist Walter Crane, who used multiple ‘Greek’ caryatids in his *Alcestis* wallpaper frieze of some twenty years earlier (Fig. 2.84), highlighted this in the context of the debates on the relationship between architecture and sculpture. He stated that, in contrast to the Parthenon sculptures, which were not essential to the structural integrity of the building, ‘we find an illustration

³⁷⁸ ‘On the Application of Sculpture,’ 279.

³⁷⁹ Barasch, *Modern Theories of Art*, 147.

³⁸⁰ Rossetti, ‘British Sculpture: Its Condition and Prospects,’ 493.

of the opposite principle, the sculptural emphasis thrown upon the constructive necessities, in the caryatid columns of the Erechtheum'.³⁸¹ He went on to describe the maidens as

a notable instance of the union of sculpture and construction, and it is evident that in the treatment of these figures the sculptor has strongly felt the necessity of architectural massiveness, simplicity, dignity, and reserve. They each support the cornice upon an abacus and cap, and the columnar vertical feeling is expressed by their erect attitude, slightly varied individually, and by the severe vertical lines of their draperies. The caryatid idea is no doubt a most difficult one to treat satisfactorily, and there is a sort of painful slavish suggestion about it, as of human beings condemned to support an intolerable burden [...] There is no suggestion of restlessness or pain about the originals, however. The idea constantly recurs in Renaissance work, though without the Greek simplicity and reserve which alone makes it tolerable.³⁸²

For Crane, therefore, the caryatid clearly had a unique role in his consideration of the relationship between architecture and sculpture, with its sculpted characteristics ideally reflecting its architectural function. This prompted him, and others as we have seen, to advocate those modelled on the Greek type, as they, in their upright form and vertical draperies, more clearly display the desired more architectonic 'union' of sculpture and architecture, whereas the Renaissance caryatid did not express this in such a 'tolerable' fashion.

By 1905, almost thirty years after Crane's article, at least one author could claim in a similar tone that, in relation to sculpture and architecture's union, there were 'such magnificent examples of the past to refer to, amongst others the wondrous Caryatides of the Erechtheion'.³⁸³ They were praised by the artist William Reynolds-Stephens due to the 'choice of type, with such a build of neck, the restraint from all suggestion of movement, the figures stand there as if they could never know fatigue,

³⁸¹ Crane, 'On the Influence of Architectural Styles upon Design - I,' 129, 133.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 133.

³⁸³ William Reynolds-Stephens in Thomas Stirling Lee and William Reynolds-Stephens, 'Sculpture in its Relation to Architecture,' *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architecture* 12, series 3 (1905): 505.

and yet as if they realise an important duty has been imposed upon them'.³⁸⁴ They were contrasted with 'crouching figures' that Reynolds-Stephens claimed were frequently seen in his time, struggling beneath a hefty weight, and which he described as 'a terrible selection of the unfit'.³⁸⁵ Nonetheless, he spared Stevens from his censorious commentary and he claimed that, in contrast to the 'falseness' of 'figure after figure acting as bracket corbels and the like, reaching out and pretending to carry a mass of material', Stevens 'obtained a great richness of light and shade, and yet he obeyed the limitation of the possible in posing his figures [...] when he employs crouching figures to do the carrying (as in the Dorchester House mantelpiece), the load carried is reasonable in bulk, and the weight is shared by some structural architecture'.³⁸⁶

These statements are somewhat surprising considering the actual appearance of the Dorchester House caryatids and the context of debates on the proper way to integrate sculpture and architecture. However, it reflects the laudatory reception of Stevens' Dorchester House caryatids in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and a host of sculpted figures inspired by his work appeared following the creation of his chimneypiece, as detailed in Chapter 4. The explosion of caryatid types that took place at this time is aptly reflected in an 1896 English edition of *A Handbook of Ornament* by the German professor of ornament Franz Sales Meyer and edited by the architect Hugh Stannus. By the time of the 1851 Great Exhibition, ornament had become central to discourse on 'design, society, industrialisation, economy and taste' and a building's sculpture was considered the 'main vehicle of architectural expression', which allowed the art of architecture to communicate its message to the passing public, by figures as varied as Pugin, Ruskin, Owen, and Cockerell.³⁸⁷ The *Handbook of Ornament* was described as a 'unique work of its kind', as 'no other book, published either in England

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 505.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 505.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 506.

³⁸⁷ Bordeleau, 'Charles Robert Cockerell's Architecture and the Language of Ornaments,' 466. DOI: [10.1080/13602360903119017](https://doi.org/10.1080/13602360903119017) (10 March 2018).

or abroad [could] compare with it, for the amount of illustration it contains'.³⁸⁸ Its editor Stannus had advocated the use of caryatids that were as architectural as possible by appearing 'somewhat *less than human*', which he believed could be achieved, for example, by carving them in the form of terms, having their arms removed, modifying the forms of their heads, and by their being produced in 'generalised' forms, which were never 'individualised'.³⁸⁹ Nonetheless, the volume he edited featured two plates depicting a wide variety of ancient and modern, Greek and Renaissance term, types of caryatid, which it described as the 'richest motive for supports' (Figs. 2.85 & 2.86).³⁹⁰ Although it did not include a depiction of the struggling 'Renaissance' caryatid, the number of examples contained within attests to the variety of designs and forms that were available at the time for use on a host of built structures, which could be selected for the context in which they were to be used to express the building's function and reflect a more ideal cohesion of sculpture and architecture.

Caryatids in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century predominantly appeared as variations of the Erechtheion or 'Greek' type and they were used with enthusiastic vigour. The Erechtheion and Townley examples appeared to cohere to descriptions of the ideal qualities of Greek architecture and its integration of sculpture, and they were thus often viewed as the only acceptable forms of caryatid in a period in which the motif was harshly criticised. This criticism continued into the latter half of the century, and the early part of the twentieth, during which the influence of the Erechtheion prototype extended to the work painters and sculptors working in Britain, and further afield, as described in Chapters 3 and 4. An extremely vibrant and varied discourse existed in this period, with a myriad ideas, propounded by architects, scholars, critics, and authors, clustered around the caryatid. These were often contradictory and evince the manner in which the caryatid developed as a vital site for discourse on architecture, sculpture, and aesthetics more generally. This period also witnessed a transition in caryatid types with the adoption of Renaissance-inspired caryatids, including term forms

³⁸⁸ Franz Sales Meyer, *A Handbook Of Ornament*, ed. Hugh Stannus (London: B. T. Batsford, 1896), v.

³⁸⁹ Hugh Stannus in Stirling Lee and Reynolds-Stephens, 'Sculpture in its Relation to Architecture,' 513.

³⁹⁰ Meyer, *Handbook Of Ornament*, 242.

and those that were distinguished by their semblance of struggling with their load. Despite the advice of most commentators, these were used with some enthusiasm, in a period in which debates on the relationship between sculpture and architecture were central and which witnessed a hitherto unparalleled variety and number of caryatids employed on built structures in Britain.

CHAPTER 2

John Soane and the Caryatid in British Architecture, 1790-1850

'Although propriety of application might not be offended, it was inflicting a very severe punishment on posterity, subjecting them to perpetual disgrace'.³⁹¹ John Soane

In 1822, the artist James Ward completed a painting depicting Soane's family dog 'Fanny' in a capriccio of overgrown vegetation and classical ruins (Fig. 3.1). Amid the array of detached capitals and collapsed columns, the porch of the Erechtheion can be detected in the background, with one of its caryatids. Alongside the depiction of this porch enveloped in verdure, Fanny is painted sitting atop a damaged architectural block decorated with egg-and-dart mouldings that possibly represents an Ionic capital with a detached volute from one of the Erechtheion's columns or one of the capitals that surmounted the temple's maidens. Fanny was the pet of Soane's beloved wife, who had died some seven years before Ward's portrait, and the architect was very fond of the dog that acted as his 'delight', 'solace', and 'faithful companion' in the years following her death.³⁹² Soane's affection for Fanny is reflected in a memorial stone to her that he had placed in his house at Lincoln's Inn Fields, as well as the existence of this portrait, which is currently found in the Breakfast Room of Sir John Soane's Museum.³⁹³ With its assemblage of architectural fragments, the canvas is 'unique amongst pet portraits in giving the pet the attributes of the master' and its inclusion of one of the Erechtheion caryatids in such a personalised context provides a revealing indication of the importance of this classical motif to the architect.³⁹⁴

³⁹¹ Extract from Soane's third Royal Academy lecture. Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 68-69.

³⁹² John Soane, *Description of the House and Museum on the North Side of Lincoln's Inn Fields* (London: Levey, Robson, and Franklyn, 1835), 27.

³⁹³ See *A New Description of Sir John Soane's Museum* (London: The Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum, 2007), 100.

³⁹⁴ Helen Dorey, 'Death and Memory: The Architecture of Legacy in Sir John Soane's Museum,' in *Death and Memory: The Architecture of Legacy in Sir John Soane's Museum* (London: Sir John Soane's Museum, 2015), 14.

Soane is distinct among his contemporaries, especially in Britain, for the unparalleled enthusiasm with which he used the caryatid, not only in terms of quantity, employing at least 54 versions of it in his architecture from the late eighteenth century onwards, but also as a result of his pioneering position as seemingly the first British architect to adopt examples of the motif that were directly modelled on their ancient Greek counterparts. As we have seen, following his use of figures based on the Erechtheion sculptures, caryatids in more restrained ‘Greek’ forms, with the Erechtheion prototype as the predominant underlying model, appeared on countless built structures throughout Britain, as well as further afield, and this renewed widespread interest in the caryatid endured into the twentieth century.

Yet Soane’s germinal figures remain an element of his architectural practice that has been somewhat neglected in scholarly research. No study thus far has addressed the implications of his unprecedented employment of caryatids at his projects at Buckingham House (Fig. 3.2), the Bank of England (Fig. 3.3), Pitzhanger Manor (Fig. 3.4), and 13 Lincoln’s Inn Fields (Fig. 3.5), a phenomenon that is particularly pertinent in light of his condemnation of caryatids in his Royal Academy lectures. In addition, previous studies have tended to treat his caryatids in a somewhat incidental or cursory manner, with few attempts to survey them collectively or to consider them as representative of the architect’s ‘outstanding originality’, akin to other stylistic hallmarks, such as his characteristic ‘sunk mouldings’.³⁹⁵ Moreover, the figures have been completely overlooked in some examinations of Soane’s buildings in which they function as a dominant component, and this is aptly exemplified in Nikolaus Pevsner’s statement that, with the exception of its incised Ionic columns, the façade of 13

³⁹⁵ Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, 462-66. On Soane’s ‘sunk mouldings’ see, for example, Oliver Bradbury, *Sir John Soane’s Influence on Architecture from 1791: A Continuing Legacy* (Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 13; David Watkin, ‘Soane, John,’ in Grafton, Most, and Settis, ed., *The Classical Tradition*, 895. Alison Kelly has provided a brief collective examination of Soane’s Coade caryatids, stating he used ‘more than three dozen’ examples of the figures, in Alison Kelly, ‘Coade Stone in Georgian Architecture,’ *Architectural History*, 28 (1985): 89. For details of the Coade factory orders, such as prices, see Alison Kelly, ‘Sir John Soane and Mrs Eleanor Coade: A Long-lasting Business Relationship,’ *Apollo* (April 1989): 247-53.

Lincoln's Inn Fields does not display one motif 'that has a Greek or Roman ancestry', despite its two prominently-placed caryatids which are clearly based on an ancient Greek prototype.³⁹⁶

Moreover, while some scholars have recognised Soane's interest in the Erechtheion maidens, the architect's pioneering use of copies of these sculptures requires attention, as well as clarification, as certain studies have claimed that his caryatids were based specifically on Elgin's sculpture.³⁹⁷ However, Soane's initial employment of caryatids preceded the arrival of Elgin's example by 17 years or so, thus negating this possibility. Addressing this, Alison Kelly states that it 'should be emphasized that Soane's taste for caryatids was formed long before Lord Elgin brought back his marbles' but it should be further stressed that such an early employment of caryatids also predates the acknowledged 'revival' of the motif from the early nineteenth century onwards.³⁹⁸

Soane's adoption of caryatids based directly on an ancient prototype represented a significant milestone in the history of the motif following antiquity. As we have seen, most post-antique examples of anthropomorphic supporting sculptures essentially bore no relationship with ancient caryatids until classicising forms of the motif emerged in the sixteenth century. Like Goujon's *Tribune des Caryatides*, Soane's sculptures were 'revolutionary' due to their stylistic rupture from preceding and contemporary examples of the motif and their more distinctly 'Greek' manner.³⁹⁹ Indeed, Goujon's figures provided the most clearly replicative iteration in the process of copying and adapting the Athenian caryatids following antiquity until Soane's adoption of figures that offered a much more direct imitation over two hundred years later.

³⁹⁶ Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture*, 374. Also see, for example, Eva Schumann-Bacia, *John Soane and the Bank of England* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991); Daniel M. Abramson, 'The Bank of England,' in *John Soane Architect: Master of Space and Light*, ed., Margaret Richardson and MaryAnne Stevens (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1999), 208-19.

³⁹⁷ Peter Inskip, 'Soane and the Grenvilles: Peter Inskip traces the story of Sir John Soane's work at Stowe, Buckingham House, Brasenose College, and Wotton House,' *Apollo* (April 2004): 20. Also see Hans van Lemmen, *Coade Stone* (Buckinghamshire: Shire Publications, 2006), 17; Gillian Darley, *John Soane: An Accidental Romantic* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999), 154, 211.

³⁹⁸ Kelly, 'Coade Stone,' 89.

³⁹⁹ Blunt, *Art and Architecture in France*, 47.

The caryatid was essentially absent from the exteriors of the, prevailingly Palladian, buildings that dominated British architecture in the decades preceding Soane's work at Buckingham House. However, the popularity of its employment on the period's fireplaces is reflected in a myriad designs by the neoclassical architect Robert Adam, several of which can be found in Soane's own collection, such as Adam's 1760 Kedleston Hall chimneypiece (Fig. 3.6) or his work for Harewood House, dating to 1777 (Fig. 3.7).⁴⁰⁰ Due to the less austere, more varied, and elegant characteristics of British caryatids in such designs, which mirrored European trends, the adoption of more architectural and restrained 'Greek' caryatids is generally understood to have been instigated by the arrival in London of the lone figure that Lord Elgin had taken from the Erechtheion, which was available for select visitors to view in a purpose-built shed from 1807, before being acquired by the British Museum.⁴⁰¹ However, we have seen that an awareness of the Erechtheion maidens' appearance and characteristics had already been disseminating in the country over the course of the eighteenth century, reaching its zenith with the publication of the second volume of Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* around 1787-89. Soane incorporated caryatid figures that appear to have been influenced by these illustrations into several architectural structures he designed from 1790 onwards, shortly after the appearance in print of the second volume of *Antiquities* and some time before Elgin's sculpture had arrived in the country. He thus appeared to inaugurate the renewed interest in classicising caryatids, which eventually developed into the widespread adoption of the motif in the decades following.

Almost all of the Erechtheion-inspired caryatids Soane employed were manufactured by the Coade stone factory. Coade stone was a type of artificial stoneware created around 1770 by Eleanor Coade for the production of statues and architectural ornament, and Soane made significant use of it for decorative elements on his buildings. Although the first edition of the Coade catalogue, published in

⁴⁰⁰ SM Adam volumes 22/203; 22/18.

⁴⁰¹ Anguissola, 'Caryatid,' 175; N. Thomson de Grummond (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 390; van Lemmen, *Coade Stone*, 17.

1784, included caryatids, they displayed typical eighteenth-century characteristics, and it featured no examples of the design adopted by Soane (Fig. 3.8).⁴⁰² This seems to have first appeared in the 1799 version of the catalogue, where it was described as a ‘*statue for holding a light* - modelled from STUART’S Athens, introduced as Cariatides for supporting the domes in the offices of the Bank of England; and also in the stair-case at the *Marquis of Buckingham’s* in London, by Mr. SOANE the Architect’.⁴⁰³ This statement confirms that Soane’s caryatids were based on the engravings in *Antiquities* and furthermore implies that the sculptures were initially created specifically for the architect himself.⁴⁰⁴ They were possibly modelled by one of the renowned sculptors associated with the factory, such as John Charles Felix Rossi, John Flaxman or John Bacon, thus they were endowed with a level of ‘artistic excellence in artificial stone’, which probably added to their appeal for Soane.⁴⁰⁵

The 1799 catalogue mentioned the caryatid’s two earliest uses by Soane, at Buckingham House and the Bank of England. The Bank of England sculptures were removed when the complex was demolished and redesigned by Hebert Baker in 1925-39 and they were re-used in the new building, with twelve of these figures currently on public display at the Bank’s museum (Fig. 3.9).⁴⁰⁶ Buckingham House, meanwhile, was demolished in 1908 and Alison Kelly argues that six of the sculptures used here are currently found in the gardens of Anglesey Abbey, as three have bases inscribed with ‘Coade Lambeth 1793’, the same manufacture date as the Buckingham House figures (Fig. 3.10).⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰² Kelly, ‘Coade Stone,’ 89.

⁴⁰³ *Coade’s Gallery or Exhibition in Artificial Stone Westminster-Bridge-Road, ...being Specimens from the Manufactory at Kings Arms Stairs Narrow Wall Lambeth, ...Coades Artificial Stone Manufactory* (Lambeth: S. Tibson, 1799), 17.

⁴⁰⁴ Alison Kelly, *Mrs. Coade’s Stone* (Upton-upon-Severn: The Self Publishing Association, 1990), 86.

⁴⁰⁵ Caroline Stanford, ‘Revisiting the Origins of Coade Stone,’ *The Georgian Group Journal*, 24 (2016):105.

⁴⁰⁶ There is some dispute whether these twelve are the originals or copies. The Bank of England Museum’s curators maintain they are originals and, according to them, the other caryatids can now be found incorporated into domes in internal offices that are inaccessible to the public.

⁴⁰⁷ Kelly, *Mrs. Coade’s Stone*, 86. Several other Coade caryatids of the Erechtheion type, stamped with ‘Coade Lambeth 1793’ are currently kept at West Dean College. These examples, however, do not have capitals and I have yet to ascertain their origins and history.

The similarities of these Coade statues to the Erechtheion sculptures include their upright columnar stances and the deeply-carved rigid lines of the vertical folds of sculpted drapery on their weight-bearing legs, which is the left limb on each of the Coade examples. The corresponding leg is bent at the knee and the rounded thigh of each figure is made apparent beneath the drapery, in imitation of the Athenian prototype, while the carved decorative details, such as the sculpted lines of their hair, and the manner in which their braids fall around their shoulders, as well as the egg-and-dart capitals which surmount their heads, also mirror those same elements on the Erechtheion maidens. The Coade figures have full-length arms and the left hand of each grasps folds of sculpted drapery, a trait that, as previously mentioned, was historically associated with the Erechtheion caryatids. However, they also differ from the ancient figures in their less weighty appearance and more graceful poses, with a stronger sense of contrapposto evident in the curve of their hips.

The first of Soane's projects to use the Coade caryatids was Buckingham House (1790-5) and a surviving architectural drawing from Soane's office appears tantalisingly to record the moment the architect first entertained the possibility of adding caryatids to the building's stairwell (Fig. 3.11). The pen and ink drawing depicts a cross-section of the structure onto which three caryatid-like figures are lightly sketched over the upper storey, presumably in Soane's own hand.⁴⁰⁸ Other preparatory works show that he experimented with the number of figures that could be used here, as well as how best to accommodate them and these preliminary designs resulted in a semicircular sequence of four Coade caryatids being placed in each of the two apse-ends of the attic storey above the staircase landing (Fig. 3.2).⁴⁰⁹ Standing in front of a curved wall, they have the appearance of assisting in the support of a coved ceiling above them that terminated in a lantern.

⁴⁰⁸ V&A 3307:92. See Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, *Sir John Soane: Catalogue of Architectural Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1985), 72.

⁴⁰⁹ See SM 13/4/5 and SM volumes 62/62, 66/63, 60/70, 60/71, 60/72.

Soane's use of these sculptures at this site appears to be the earliest manifestation in British architecture of caryatids directly based on an ancient Greek prototype, and specifically the Erechtheion caryatid, in both their formal traits and architectonic function. The importance of the caryatids in Soane's overall plan for Buckingham House is indicated by their inclusion on this staircase, which was apparently its most striking and 'magnificent' internal feature.⁴¹⁰ As the second volume of Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities* was published around the time Soane commenced work at the house, it may be presumed that the appearance of highly-detailed engravings of the Erechtheion maidens inspired the architect's decision to incorporate replicas. The *Antiquities* illustrations were groundbreaking as they were drawn directly from the sculptures on the Acropolis, and they thus exhibited unprecedented verisimilitude. In addition, the caryatids were depicted from different angles and in a columnar row, as they stood on the Erechtheion porch, which provided Soane and the Coade factory with exceptionally-detailed visual material to enable the creation of accurate copies.

The largest concentration of Soane's caryatids was found at the Bank of England, where he was architect for some 45 years. He was first appointed to the role in 1788 and he began working on the bank's interiors by rebuilding the east wing of the complex in the 1790s. Caryatids featured in his designs for this section from the outset, being included in his Rotunda of 1794-96 and the Consols Transfer Office of 1797-99. In both these cases, he used sculptures from the same mould as those adopted at Buckingham House and, perhaps as a result of the success of his earlier experiment, he employed them in a similar manner - as groups of figures integrated into domes and lanterns in top-lit rooms. The twelve caryatids used in the Rotunda were arranged in a circular fashion surmounting the oculus of its dome, where they were engaged with piers between panes of glass that allowed light to enter the room, and they therefore provided secondary support to the round ceiling above their capitals (Fig. 3.3). A similar arrangement could be found at the Consols Transfer Office, where again a set of twelve caryatids were adopted but here they stood some distance in front of the piers and they

⁴¹⁰ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 198.

were also placed directly on the room's vaulting, and consequentially supported a wider ceiling structure (Fig. 3.12).

Some twenty years later, Soane re-designed the Bank's Four Per Cent Office, working on it between 1818 and 1823, and he again made use of caryatids that appeared to be Coade copies but which were apparently modelled by the mason Thomas Grundy (Fig. 3.13).⁴¹¹ The sixteen figures integrated here were placed in front of an octagonal lantern on cube-shaped pedestals and they were arranged in pairs, perhaps inspired by the Sarazin sculptures at the Louvre. All of these Bank of England figures, as well as the earlier Buckingham House sculptures, demonstrate that, alongside pioneering the use of caryatids that were directly modelled on the quintessential antique prototype, Soane seems to have been the first British architect to use them in their ancient columnar function as groups of multiple non-individualised and load-bearing figures beneath an architectural sheltering structure. This use of the motif is particularly surprising when some of the architect's statements on caryatids from his Royal Academy lectures are taken into account.

Soane delivered a series of twelve lectures at the Royal Academy from 1810 to 1820, during his time as the Academy's Professor of Architecture. He mentioned caryatids in several lectures but discussed them at length in his third, which was delivered early in 1810. Here Soane described the Erechtheion maidens as a 'fine specimen of caryatides', as well as calling the temple itself a 'beautiful example of Grecian art' and he illustrated this with a drawing depicting three figures based on Stuart and Revett's engravings (Fig. 3.14).⁴¹² He also stated that the ancients, in their use of the motif, 'made an excellent variety in their works, giving playfulness and richness of fancy to their architecture without offending propriety' but prefaced this description with an account of Vitruvius' aetiology.⁴¹³

⁴¹¹ The curators of the Bank of England Museum claim that the caryatids here were by Thomas Grundy. Also see Arthur T. Bolton, *The Works of Sir John Soane, RA* (London: Sir John Soane's Museum, 1924), 46, 62.

⁴¹² Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 67; SM 24/4/1.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, 67-8.

Although Soane maintained that the motif was adopted with a sense of propriety in the ancient world, he argued that, as a result of their Vitruvian origin, caryatids' traditional columnar role inflicted 'a very severe punishment on posterity, subjecting them to perpetual disgrace'. Admitting that the Greeks acted appropriately in relation to the treatment of their 'vanquished enemies', he queried how the architects of his day would 'justify a similar adoption?'⁴¹⁴ Soane believed that propriety in architecture entailed an understanding of the historical significance of certain elements used in architectural practice and he claimed that Vitruvius must always be referred to in seeking the 'origin of things'.⁴¹⁵ Bearing in mind Vitruvius' description, he cautioned his contemporaries regarding the use of the motif generally and, in his sixth lecture, he observed that contemporary examples of caryatids did not successfully imitate the Greeks as they displayed 'slaves of antiquity to support lamps, to sustain the roofs of verandas, to adorn the exterior of fashionable shops, and for other menial offices', which he described as 'absurdities'.⁴¹⁶ The architect seemed to find fault especially with the employment of caryatids beneath heavy entablatures, architraves, and cornices as this emphasised their enslaved status and he criticised the Erechtheion maidens due to the weighty appearance of their architectural burden. Furthermore, in a footnote to his third lecture, he wrote that Goujon's *Tribune des Caryatides* figures, presumably as they were placed beneath a hefty entablature, were 'an offence against the decorum and propriety of our days'.⁴¹⁷

In these statements, Soane echoed countless writers on architecture from the Renaissance onwards who, although concurring with their fitness of purpose in antiquity, problematised the use of caryatids in later architecture due to their enslaved origins, especially when they were placed beneath a structure that had the semblance of being particularly burdensome. This included his eighteenth-century precursors, such as Ware and Chambers, who, as we have seen, both advocated the use of

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 69.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 106.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 144.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 67, 69 (footnote 'h').

less weighty entablatures as a result of the motif's feminine status and its slavery connotations.⁴¹⁸ However, Soane's remarks in his lectures are particularly surprising as he enthusiastically adopted caryatids based on the Erechtheion maidens in a load-bearing role at Buckingham House and, repeatedly, at the Bank of England. Perhaps the reasons for their acceptability in both these contexts can be found in another assertion he made regarding sculpted supporting figures during his Academy lectures.

Although he provided no specific post-classical or modern examples of caryatids that he considered acceptable, Soane claimed that an agreeable use of their male equivalents, who shared their slavery connotations, could be found at the Vatican's Museo Pio Clementino and on a fountain at the Villa Albani.⁴¹⁹ While he did not specify why either example was permissible, in the latter case, it was surely due to the fountain's lack of weighty architectonic elements. A drawing by the eighteenth-century engraver Giuseppe Vasi depicts the villa's facade and a fountain that appears to have at least three weight-bearing figures integrated into it (Fig. 3.15). This is presumably the structure which Soane referred to and the figural sculptures here are supporting a bowl or basin for flowing water, an object with an evidently more lightweight appearance than an entablature. This probably made their use more acceptable to the architect and he inferred that, with the exception of these figures, most other examples of caryatids were 'merely the act of a copyist who introduces that which he has seen, not because it is characteristic, nor because it is proper'.⁴²⁰ What therefore seems to have been the overall implication on the part of Soane was that, while figures that had an appearance based on ancient prototypes were permissible, their *use* should not be fully copied from antique examples; that is, if a contemporary caryatid's function is to provide architectural support to a heavy entablature, it is a reminder of their slave origins and this was contrary to the architect's sense of propriety.

⁴¹⁸ Ware, *Complete Body of Architecture*, 248; Chambers, *Civil Architecture*, 189.

⁴¹⁹ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 69.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

The caryatids at Buckingham House and the Bank of England were heavily-based on the *Antiquities* illustrations of the Erechtheion maidens but they lack their historically-accurate entablatures and they were placed below structures which Soane may have felt had the appearance of being less ponderous. They were instead integrated into domed ceilings and lanterns that functioned as light sources and consisted of substantial amounts of glass, and thus exhibited a luminous and lightweight nature. Indeed, in the case of the Bank's Rotunda, Gillian Darley has argued that the lunettes and niches placed below it allowed the dome to 'float' and created the illusion of the 'lightness of the superstructure'.⁴²¹ Furthermore, Soane's caryatids at both Buckingham House and the Bank of England were placed in front of other supporting structures, such as walls or piers, and consequently they did not bear their loads unassisted.

In relation to Ware's negative comments on caryatids, Elizabeth McGrath reflects that such reactions 'from a gentleman of the dawning age of sensibility make a telling point: slavery images can be acceptable as long as they do not show slavery as painfully oppressive' or 'disturbingly close to reality'.⁴²² This statement may equally apply to Soane's use of the motif. By relieving this perceived symbol of enslavement of its hefty burden, the architect was possibly attempting to disentangle its relationship with slavery. This was perhaps of particular importance to him due to the contemporary existence of the slave trade, as well as his desire to prove himself a man of Enlightenment principles. It is also worth bearing in mind, however, that Soane's 'architectural style [...] was developed over a long period and was no more consistent than his lectures'.⁴²³ His Academy lectures provided plenty of examples of divergence between his theory and his practice and he used caryatids, for example, on a verandah-like structure at his home at Lincoln's Inn Fields, which arguably adheres to the 'menial'

⁴²¹ Darley, *John Soane: An Accidental Romantic*, 131. In his sixth RA lecture, Soane spoke positively of domes that had a lightweight appearance. See Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 141. Also see Christopher Woodward, 'Wall, Ceiling, Enclosure and Light: Soane's Designs for Domes,' in *John Soane Architect: Master of Space and Light*, ed., Margaret Richardson and MaryAnne Stevens (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1999), 65; Tim Knox, *Sir John Soane's Museum, London* (London; New York: Merrell, 2008), 23.

⁴²² McGrath and Massing, *Slave in European Art*, 8.

⁴²³ David Watkin in Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 15.

decorative uses that he classified as ‘absurdities’. It is, nonetheless, at his houses specifically that a deeper development of Soane’s attempts to negate the caryatid’s associations with slavery may be encountered. Soane stated that architects ‘must be intimately acquainted’ with the work of the ancients in order to learn from them while avoiding ‘servile imitation’. He especially felt that architects must not transpose ‘from the antique without regard to character and propriety’ and the unique application of caryatids at the architect’s homes evinces his attempts to reconcile his fondness for the motif with its negative semiotic status, in a unique use that lacked any ‘servile imitation’.⁴²⁴

The Coade caryatids that Soane employed on the façades of his houses at Pitzhanger Manor, which he worked on from 1800 until 1804, and 13 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, rebuilt in 1812-13, are almost exact replicas of those from his earlier projects. However, these figures were modelled without capitals as they were intended as freestanding ornaments and their new use evidently resulted in a change in their significations. The figures are prominently placed on both structures, surmounting the Ionic columns on the front of Pitzhanger Manor and bordering a belvedere-like structure on the second floor of the projecting façade of Lincoln’s Inn Fields. If, as Helen Dorey claims, the latter of Soane’s houses was ‘a visual version of his Royal Academy lectures’, how can the use of caryatids in such a prominent location here conform with his critical observations in the lectures?⁴²⁵ Moreover, Soane had free reign to design at his homes, unencumbered by client requests, meaning they could be especially expressive of his character and, as he believed in the ‘call for architecture to appeal to the spectator, to instruct and move (sic) him’, what sort of message did he wish to convey through the conspicuous placement of these figures on these highly personal projects?⁴²⁶

⁴²⁴ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 29, 94.

⁴²⁵ Helen Dorey, ‘Crude Hints,’ in *Visions of Ruin: Architectural Fantasies & Designs for Garden Follies* (London: Sir John Soane’s Museum, 1999), 59.

⁴²⁶ Watkin in Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 9.

The caryatids at Pitzhanger appear as somewhat more dominant features than those at Lincoln's Inn Fields as they number four in total and stand on an entablature above freestanding Ionic columns on its façade (Fig. 3.4). A preliminary sketch for his London home, however, shows that Soane initially intended to include the same number of figures on its front but instead settled on two, a potential reason for which will be provided below.⁴²⁷ This pair of sculptures are evidently conspicuous as a result of their elevated location but also due to their contrast with the somewhat stark house front, whose relative austerity is otherwise only interrupted by subtle incised ornamentation or unobtrusive decorative elements, such as its four small acroteria (Fig. 3.5). This juxtaposition reflects Soane's application of caryatids more widely, as they appear to have deviated from his practice of eschewing traditional ornamentation at the sites where they were employed, perhaps most clearly witnessed at the Bank of England, with its stylistic 'primitivism' and 'abstraction of the classical orders'.⁴²⁸

Indeed, these characteristics of Soane's designs have resulted in much discourse on the architect in the latter half of the twentieth century focusing on him as a type of 'proto-modernist' and the caryatids' anomalous character in this context may partially have contributed to their disregard in certain studies.⁴²⁹ Nonetheless, this divergence adheres to Soane's proposition, as Caroline van Eck describes it, that architects 'must order the parts of a building, give some prominence by making them stand out, and make others subordinate by hiding them in the shade, or make important parts of a building catch the eye through their prominent decoration, whereas the background is handled more discreetly through a uniform and inconspicuous handling of materials'.⁴³⁰ This juxtaposition would allow certain elements to draw the attention of the public, which the caryatids at his homes were presumably intended to do and thus they function like 'emblematic objects'. Adrienne Auslander

⁴²⁷ Peter Thornton and Helen Dorey, *A Miscellany of Objects from Sir John Soane's Museum* (London: Lauren King Publishing, 1992), 119.

⁴²⁸ John Summerson, *Sir John Soane: 1753-1837* (London: Art and Technics, 1952), 27; Daniel M. Abramson, *Building the Bank of England: Money, Architecture, Society, 1694-1942* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2005), 114.

⁴²⁹ Bradbury, *Sir John Soane's Influence*, 386-87.

⁴³⁰ Van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts*, 127.

Munich defines such objects as distinct or highlighted elements in an artwork that provide a deviation from the rest of the author's work and thus provide 'another kind of discourse'.⁴³¹ As they can express an alternative message to that directly imparted through the author's archetypal vocabulary, this symbolic discourse may prove particularly revelatory. Soane's houses provide a unique example of emblematic objects in the freestanding caryatids, which appear as significantly distinct elements on their façades intended to draw the spectator's attention (Figs. 3.16 & 3.17). These sculptures therefore assisted in giving 'a precise and definite character' to the buildings by rendering them a 'speaking art' through their symbolic expressive abilities.⁴³²

Although Soane left essentially no description of his caryatids generally, he provided some written evidence that may help us discern the potential intended significance for those on the façade of Lincoln's Inn Fields. The London sculptures are mentioned in Soane's *Description of the House and Museum on the North Side of Lincoln's Inn Fields*, which was printed for visitors to the house and essentially ignores the façade, except for the caryatids, in all three editions of 1830, 1832, and 1835. Here they are called 'canephorae' and Soane's choice of this term displays an awareness of contemporary scholarly discourse regarding the identity of ancient examples of the motif, as well as possibly indicating his desire to describe the sculptures without the slavery connotations that 'caryatid' inevitably implied.

In all three versions of the *Description*, Soane wrote that 'these statues are nearly opposite those of Machaon and Podlirius, in the front of the College of Surgeons'.⁴³³ This statement referred to the pair of sculpted figures that once appeared on the portico of the Royal College of Surgeons on the other side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, designed by Soane's mentor George Dance between 1806 and 1813. It

⁴³¹ Adrienne Auslander Munich, *Andromeda's Chains: Gender and Interpretation in Victorian Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 135.

⁴³² John Britton, *The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting* (London: John Britton, 1827), 8.

⁴³³ Soane, *Description of the House and Museum*, 1.

offers the most obvious potential means of interpreting the figures as Soane may have determined - that at his London townhouse they shared a similar function to the sculptures on Dance's building opposite. Indeed, Soane's statement in his *Description* implies that the Lincoln's Inn Fields caryatids were placed in some sort of dialogue with these sculptures and the clearest symbolic discourse which may illuminate their meaning at the house would be one that uses the College figures as a means of interpreting them.

Soane's decision to place a pair of caryatids specifically at his London home may have been a reaction to the College's figures, which were sculpted in 1811, the year before Soane started working on his façade. Carved by Rossi, the sculptural group depicted the aforementioned Machaon and Podlirius, two Ancient Greek mythological surgeons, supporting the institution's cartouche. In Soane's *Crude Hints Towards an History of My House in Lincoln's Inn Fields*, a fantastical manuscript in which Soane imagined his home as a future ruin, the architect wrote that the figures on Dance's building 'were intended...to attract notice [excited curiosity] and to direct the multitude to contemplate the beauties of that great [conspicuous] Work'.⁴³⁴ This indicates the role he perceived that classical pair had - that they were placed on the front of the College to catch the eye of passers-by and anchor their understanding of the building's function. This implies that the primary purpose of Soane's caryatids at his London townhouse was also to inform public viewers of its status and to indicate what lay within.

Dance's building housed the collection of physiological, pathological, and natural history specimens formed by the surgeon John Hunter and, as a 'repository of a large collection of anatomical specimens', it acted as a storage place for objects related to study and the acquirement of knowledge.⁴³⁵ It can therefore be presumed that Soane intended for his pair of sculptures to indicate

⁴³⁴ John Soane, 'Crude Hints towards an History of my House in L[incoln's] I[nn] Fields,' in *Visions of Ruin: Architectural fantasies & designs for garden follies* (London: Sir John Soane's Museum, 1999), 67.

⁴³⁵ Anthony Jackson, 'The Façade of Sir John Soane's Museum: A Study in Contextualism,' *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 51, No. 4 (December 1992): 422.

similarly that his building functioned as a place of study and a repository, or a museum, for a scholarly collection, instead comprised of artefacts relating to architecture, sculpture, and antiquity. Indeed, according to an article in *The European Magazine* of 1812, the façade of Soane's house was chosen to give the house 'a consequence commensurate to the scientific purpose to which it was devoted, and to the collection which it contained', and the caryatids emerge as the primary element on its exterior that indicated this.⁴³⁶

Soane saw the front of his earlier home at Pitzhanger 'as a picture, a sort of portrait', which, as Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey has argued, 'was of course one which depicted the artist-owner himself'.⁴³⁷ The architect was very critical of private houses due to their façades' lack of 'expressed character' so the fronts of both his houses, with their 'intensely autobiographical nature', were clearly intended to act as expressions of Soane's personal character and beliefs.⁴³⁸ Pitzhanger's façade was purportedly designed to advertise Soane's status as the architect of the Bank of England but, as his rural home could be considered the 'genesis' of his London townhouse, it functioned in a similar manner to Lincoln's Inn Fields.⁴³⁹ Pitzhanger likewise housed the architect's collection of antiquities, fragments, and plaster casts before he abandoned it in 1810 when he equipped his London home 'to receive all the treasures of Pitzhanger'.⁴⁴⁰ The four caryatids here thus appear as precursors to the Lincoln's Inn Fields figures and they were placed in a similarly prominent location on Pitzhanger's façade to indicate the collection that was held within.

⁴³⁶ 'Observations on the House of John Soane, Esq. Holborn-Row, Lincoln's Inn Fields,' *The European Magazine, and London Review*, 62 (November 1812): 382.

⁴³⁷ Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, *John Soane: The Making of an Architect* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 21.

⁴³⁸ Dorey, 'Crude Hints,' 57; Susan G. Feinberg, 'The Genesis of Sir John Soane's Museum Idea: 1801-1810,' *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 43, No. 3 (October 1984): 225.

⁴³⁹ Heather Ewing, 'Pitzhanger Manor,' in *John Soane Architect: Master of Space and Light*, ed., Margaret Richardson and MaryAnne Stevens (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1999), 142-44.

⁴⁴⁰ Helen Dorey, 'The Union of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting: Sir John Soane (1753-1837) as a Collector of Sculpture,' *Sculpture Journal* 12 (2004): 58; Summerson, *Sir John Soane: 1753-1837*, 44.

The powerful communicative capabilities of both buildings' façades are consistent with Soane's theories in relation to architecture's ability to speak to its viewers. As Van Eck affirms, Soane displayed a familiarity with the Picturesque aesthetic that had developed in Britain from the 1740s onwards.⁴⁴¹ Intrinsic to Picturesque theories of landscape gardens and architecture was the associationist view, which relates how the design of a building, or a landscape, could trigger emotional or aesthetic responses 'by the recollection or conception of other objects which are associated in our imagination with those before us'.⁴⁴² Thus, a building can affect its viewers by 'drawing on what we would now call cultural memory', which is shared between the architect and those who look upon the building.⁴⁴³ For Soane, this 'power of architecture to speak to the beholder because it can excite memories and associations in the spectator's mind' was especially important.⁴⁴⁴

Alongside connotations such as links to the cultural legacy of ancient Athens or slavery, the Coade caryatids used by Soane implicitly refer to the historical panoply of Erechtheion caryatid replicas, from those of Hadrian to Renaissance copies, and, through an associative link with these antiquities, they appear as repurposed versions of the renowned ancient sculptures. By the time of Pitzhanger's construction, knowledge of the Erechtheion originals would have been quite widespread, predominantly due to the publication of Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities*, and, in the case of Lincoln's Inn Fields, the passing public could have related the pair of caryatids to Elgin's figure. Jas Elsner has claimed that the eclectic nature of Soane's collection of artefacts worked to 'elide utterly any distinction between antiquities (whether genuine or imitation) and modern collectables', with the result that within his 'architectural presentation, modern and ancient are indissolubly mixed'.⁴⁴⁵ In

⁴⁴¹ Van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts*, 123.

⁴⁴² 'Art.I. *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*. By Archibald Alison', *The Edinburgh Review* 18, no. 35 (May 1811): 3. According to Van Eck, the anonymous author of this article was Francis Jeffrey. See Van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts*, 123.

⁴⁴³ Van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts*, 126.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁴⁴⁵ Jas Elsner, 'Architecture, Antiquarianism and Archaeology in Sir John Soane's Museum,' in *Appropriating Antiquity / Saisir l'Antique: Collections et collectionneurs d'antiques en Belgique et en Grande-Bretagne au XIXe siècle*, ed., Athena Tsingarida and Donna Kurtz (Brussels: Le Livre Timperman, 2002), 173-74.

this context, although they were artificially manufactured in the early nineteenth century, the Coade caryatids at Soane's houses, through their direct replication of ancient sculptures, may be understood as a form of symbolic *spolia*, which were used to proclaim the buildings' functions. This is reinforced at Lincoln's Inn Fields as the sculptures are engaged in a dialogic relationship with the four fourteenth-century corbels from Westminster Hall placed below them in 1825, which provide concrete examples of *spolia* that have been reused on the façade. Like Elgin's Erechtheion figure, these were detached from their original purpose as architectonic supporting elements and repurposed to a new use. Prettejohn argues, in relation to the Parthenon sculptures, that by being placed in a museum context, they 'changed their basic art-form. They are no longer integral parts of an architectural ensemble [...], they have become sculpture'.⁴⁴⁶ Similarly, Soane's use of the caryatid, as a form of *spolia* reused independently of its architectural or supporting function on his house façades, destabilised the motif's ontological status and its resulting significations.

Soane implied that one of propriety's meanings entailed the purpose of a building being conveyed through its characteristics and related this to the appropriate use of ornament, which should 'determine the character and destination of the edifice'.⁴⁴⁷ Understood as *spolia*, the caryatids materialise as fragments of antique or historic sculpture, which were removed from an architectural structure but which retained their architectural connotation. They were thus perfectly positioned to function synecdochically as signifiers of the 'intimate relation which has ever existed' between antique sculpture and architecture.⁴⁴⁸ The importance of the inter-relation of the arts to Soane is reflected in the title of the first published guide to his house-museum, *The Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting*, which indicates that one of the desired functions of his London home was

⁴⁴⁶ Prettejohn, *Modernity of Ancient Sculpture*, 41.

⁴⁴⁷ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 572.

⁴⁴⁸ Britton, *Union of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting*, 8.

to display an ‘imaginative and unparalleled union of painting, sculpture, and architecture’.⁴⁴⁹ For Soane, a building’s façade was like ‘the prologue to a play’ and the caryatids were arguably placed at his houses to act as both indications and examples of the wealth of classical sculpture, casts, architectural models, and other architectural fragments to be found within.⁴⁵⁰ Thus, although functioning in a similar manner to the allegorical sculptures on Dance’s College, the caryatids as a form of sculptural-architectural *spolia*, with strong associationist links to the ideals and material culture of the ancient world, surpassed them in their ability to indicate more powerfully the collection found in Soane’s homes by semiotically embodying it and themselves forming part of it.

Van Eck argues that cultural memory could be ‘activated through the use of iconic, figurative elements [...] used to represent character in building’ that related ‘in some way to the beliefs, convictions and memories of the viewer’.⁴⁵¹ This could suggest a ‘common ground between the built and man’, as well as, in the case of an architect and his or her home, aspects of his or her personality or beliefs.⁴⁵² The caryatids at Soane’s home were ideally suited to this task and arguably played an integral role in the architect’s self-fashioning project. Watkin describes this as the architect’s re-invention of himself as a ‘new person’, from the son of a bricklayer to a cultivated gentleman of the period and, through their historic architectural and sculptural associations, the caryatids proclaimed to all passers-by that the architect was engaged in the highbrow pursuit of collecting antique fragmentary remains.⁴⁵³ Soane stated that Pitzhanger was constructed to imitate an Italian villa with an ‘immense quantity’ of architectural and sculptural fragments, and consequently one of its most striking features was its fake picturesque ruins.⁴⁵⁴ Their classical appearance links the Ealing site to

⁴⁴⁹ Danielle S. Willkens, ‘Reading Words and Images in the *Description(s)* of Sir John Soane’s Museum,’ *Architectural Histories*, 4(1), 5 (2016). DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/ah.204> (accessed 15 May 2017).

⁴⁵⁰ Watkin, *Sir John Soane*, 419.

⁴⁵¹ Van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts*, 130-31.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 132.

⁴⁵³ Watkin, *Sir John Soane*, 8.

⁴⁵⁴ SM volume 161/2, fol. 170. Also see de la Ruffinière du Prey, *John Soane: The Making of an Architect*, 21-22.

Hadrian's Villa, which Soane visited during his two-year sojourn in Italy and spoke enthusiastically about, claiming that 'the studious artist will glean from those ruins very material information in his art, both as to convenience and the application of beautiful forms'.⁴⁵⁵

The second-century villa was constructed by the Roman emperor as a 'statement of intent' to showcase his collection of antique artworks and to display how he invested in the cultural values that the artefacts represented, resulting in the 'most spectacular display of cultivated taste'.⁴⁵⁶ Like the villa, Pitzhanger was intended as a rural retreat and, as Soane's collection of sculptural and architectural fragments was initially housed here, it seems to have shared a similar function to the ancient site. Notably, although they were not unearthed until the 1950s, Hadrian's Erechtheion copies were historically associated with the site, as we have seen, through surviving fragments and engravings.⁴⁵⁷ As at the Roman villa, the caryatids at Ealing expressed its owner's status as a learned collector and appear to expose a desire on Soane's part to align himself with the ancient Roman emperor, who he described in his ninth Academy lecture as 'eminent in literature, science, and the fine arts'.⁴⁵⁸ This affirms an interpretation of the caryatids on his houses as objects which not only reveal the collection within the interior of Soane's homes but also his own interior desires in relation to how he wished to be viewed by the world.

Watkin has provided a thorough description of Soane's 'convoluted process of intellectual speculation', which involved reading the writings of a variety of Enlightenment thinkers from the late eighteenth century onwards.⁴⁵⁹ Several of these writers and philosophers, whose works could be found in Soane's library, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Montesquieu, were critical of the

⁴⁵⁵ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 112.

⁴⁵⁶ Beard and Henderson, *Classical Art*, 102-4.

⁴⁵⁷ Christian, 'Raphael's Vitruvius,' 75.

⁴⁵⁸ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 218.

⁴⁵⁹ Watkin, *Sir John Soane*, 1.

existence of a contemporary phenomenon which the caryatids were inevitably associated with due to their Vitruvian origins - slavery.⁴⁶⁰ The eighteenth-century abolitionist debate, as well as the eventual banning of the slave trade, occurred in tandem with Soane's employment of caryatids and it is possible that Soane adapted the figures at his homes to a use that entailed no supporting function at all in order to 'liberate' them from their enslaved status. This would express his own anti-slavery sentiments and proclaim that, among his Enlightenment ideals, was his progressive stance as an abolitionist.

As shown, Soane's discussion of caryatids in his lectures indicated a discomfort with the concept of slavery and this is affirmed in other written evidence, such as his transcription in his lecture notes of Kames' definition of supporting sculptures representing black slaves as 'improprieties'.⁴⁶¹ Moreover, Soane had a miniature model of a monument to the Earl of Mansfield on display in his London home. Sculpted by Flaxman, the memorial monument was installed in Westminster Abbey in 1801 following Lord Mansfield's pioneering judgment of 1772, which ruled that English law did not recognise slavery. In doing so, Mansfield restricted slavery throughout Britain and launched the movement that would eventually eliminate the phenomenon throughout the British Empire.⁴⁶² This object formed part of a collection of models by Flaxman for public statues that held 'personal recollections' for Soane and its prominent placement on the south side of the colonnade in the architect's home may further indicate abolitionist sentiments.⁴⁶³ This is supported by the slave shackles found in the basement of the house, which are mentioned in Soane's *Description* of 1835 as 'implements of iron, to the honour of humanity no longer in use', a statement that clearly indicates his support of the banning of slavery.⁴⁶⁴ The basement may have been chosen for the display of these remnants of the

⁴⁶⁰ See, for example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourse* (London; Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1920), 1.4 (http://www.gutenberg.org/files/46333/46333-h/46333-h.htm#CHAPTER_IV, accessed 17 February 2018); Montesquieu, *The Complete Works of M. de Montesquieu*, vol. 1 (London: T. Evans, 1777), 15.1 - 15.18 (<http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/837>, accessed 17 February 2018).

⁴⁶¹ SM volume 161/2, fol. 62. Also, Henry Home of Kames, *Elements of Criticism*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Walker and Greig, 1817), 433.

⁴⁶² Peter P. Hinks, John R. McKivigan, R. Owen Williams, ed., *Encyclopedia of Antislavery and Abolition*, vol. 2 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2007), 643-44.

⁴⁶³ Dorey, 'Union of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting,' 68.

⁴⁶⁴ Soane, *Description of the House and Museum*, 41.

slave trade as it resembled catacombs, where primarily funereal objects were on display. In this context, the shackles could act as a reminder or *memento mori* of a trade that was considered dead, as other objects in the basement were reminders of the end of things, such as the Seti sarcophagus, and, indeed the monument to the deceased Lord Mansfield, which itself featured an allegorical personification of Death. When these other objects are taken into consideration, alongside Soane's own sentiments regarding caryatids' slavery connotations, an abolitionist statement, in line with Enlightenment principles, emerges as a key message of his freestanding caryatids.

A preparatory cartoon for Joseph Micheal Gandy's 1820 *A Selection of Buildings Erected From The Designs of J. Soane, Esq RA Between 1780 & 1815* shows four caryatids in its background forming a screen (Fig. 3.18).⁴⁶⁵ These were eventually replaced with Ionic columns in the finished watercolour (Fig. 3.19) but, like Ward's later portrait of Fanny, this picture provides a further demonstration in different media of Soane's almost obsessive interest in the motif, and the deeply personal resonance it clearly had for him. Gandy's artwork depicted all of Soane's buildings designed up to 1815 and included each of the sites in which his caryatids were employed, with the element or perspective chosen to represent each being that which integrated the figures. Soane stated that it 'is is in the well and correct placing' of such figures that the success of an architect's work depended and he maintained that statues were some of the 'highest decorations' that the architect could adopt.⁴⁶⁶ Thus, they were to be used in a considered manner and never incidentally, with proper deliberation on how they could be adopted with propriety for the use in question. Through the unique and innovative adaptation of his caryatids at each of these sites, Soane enunciated himself to a wider public, exposing his ideas on how he desired to be viewed and the messages he wished to communicate through his architecture, and this arguably activated the renewed interest in the caryatid in the years following.

⁴⁶⁵ A separate preparatory sketch by Gandy appears to show an even greater number of caryatids forming the screen (SM 69/5/1).

⁴⁶⁶ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 115.

‘not even an architect [...] and the half dozen old Phil-hellenists would find anything to admire in St Pancras Church’:⁴⁶⁷ The ‘Greek’ Caryatid after Soane

Following Soane’s introduction of the Erechtheion caryatid into British architecture, multiple ‘Greek’ types made an appearance on built structures throughout the country in the early decades of the nineteenth century. This is perhaps most obviously displayed at the Inwoods’ St Pancras New Church of 1819-22, with its two porches modelled on that of the Erechtheion (Figs. 3.20 & 3.21). Designed by a father and son team, the younger Inwood, Henry William, would have seen the Erechtheion caryatids in situ when he visited Greece in 1819.⁴⁶⁸ The porches function as entries to the building’s crypt on its north and south sides and they incorporate eight caryatids in total that strongly resemble the Erechtheion maidens and support an Ionic entablature. However, unlike the Athenian sculptures, the terracotta figures, which were designed by Rossi, have arms in which they carry urns and inverted torches, traditional Greek symbols associated with death, and this reflects their positioning at the entrances to the church’s crypt.

It is in a less well-known and earlier building, Charles Augustin Busby’s Commercial Rooms of 1809-11, that an example of caryatids that were a more direct result of Soane’s work can be found. Undeniably influenced by the architect’s use of the motif at the Bank of England, the interior of this Bristol building, originally intended as a merchants’ club, features a dome with a lantern supported by a circular colonnade of 12 identical Coade stone caryatids, which, for at least one contemporary commentator, created an effect of ‘singular beauty and elegance’ (Fig. 3.22).⁴⁶⁹ These were potentially designed by James George Bubb, who worked on the building’s other architectural sculpture and had earlier been employed by Rossi. The caryatids differ substantially from the

⁴⁶⁷ ‘Leaves from an Architect’s Diary. No. III.,’ *The Builder* 4, no. 181 (25 July 1846): 350.

⁴⁶⁸ Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, 489.

⁴⁶⁹ ‘Country News,’ *The Gentleman’s Magazine* (October 1811): 378.

Erechtheion sculptures but they nonetheless adhere to the ‘Greek’ type as they stand in a rigid, upright manner and their drapery is sculpted in folds that complement their verticality, while their columnar aspect is enhanced by their folded arms and the *modii* or *cistae* on their heads which function as capitals. Another example of a Soanean use of caryatids on an interior light well was provided by Thomas Hamilton’s Hopetoun Rooms of 1824 in Edinburgh (Fig. 3.23). The central chamber of this now-demolished suite of function rooms featured a cupola supported by fourteen ‘slender female figures’, which were relatively accurate plaster copies of the Townley caryatid.⁴⁷⁰ A Soanean lantern with caryatids was also proposed by Soane’s pupil, George Basevi, in his 1834 design for the ‘large Picture Gallery’ of the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Multiple copies of caryatids that were directly based on the Erechtheion prototype specifically were used on a number of structures, alongside St Pancras New Church, in the early part of the nineteenth century. These include the Nelson Monument in Great Yarmouth, which was designed by William Wilkins as a memorial to Admiral Nelson in 1815-19. A Doric column standing 144 feet, it is crowned with a figure of Britannia atop a globe supported by six Erechtheion-inspired figures, which were thought by some to represent sea nymphs (Fig. 3.24).⁴⁷¹ The original statues were cast in Coade Stone but these have since been replaced with replicas and each figure carries a palm branch and holds out a laurel or bay leaf, reflecting their adaptation as allegorical personifications of Victory.⁴⁷² Four Coade Erechtheion sculptures were also employed on the portico of Thomas Cundy’s tennis court at Hewell Grange of c.1820-1 (Fig. 3.25) and Francis Goodwin imagined a reconstruction of the ‘Porch

⁴⁷⁰ *The Scotsman* (25 February 1826): 1. Quoted in Bradbury, *Sir John Soane’s Influence*, 163.

⁴⁷¹ ‘Lines. Written in Seeing Nelson’s Column from Gornston Ferry,’ *The Literary Gazette : A Weekly Journal of Literature, Science, and the Fine Arts* 3, No. 134 (16 August 1819): 525, note 6.

⁴⁷² Those which support Britannia today are fibreglass replicas. See Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, *William Wilkins, 1778 – 1839* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 116. Two originals seem to have recently been discovered being used as garden ornaments at a Norfolk country house, according to the monument’s website, see www.nelsonmonument.org.uk (accessed 10 February 2018). For more on the history and construction of the Nelson Monument, see Alison Yarrington, *The Commemoration of the Hero, 1800-1864: Monuments to the British Victors of the Napoleonic Wars* (New York; London: Garland Publishing, 1988), 135-49.

of the Maidens', replete with its direct copies of its caryatids, forming a central part of his 1830 vision for a Grand National Cemetery (Fig. 3.26).

In addition, imaginative variations of the 'Greek' type could be found in the period's architectural designs, such as the eight gilded figures on the tower of Thomas Hardwick's Marylebone Parish Church of 1813-17 (Fig. 3.27). Like so many contemporary caryatids, these were designed by Rossi and cast as identical figures in artificial stone. They stand in a circular colonnade with the appearance of supporting the dome above them and they display the typically 'Greek' characteristics of vertical stance, drapery falling in plumb folds, which is grasped in one hand, and alternating bent and straight legs. However, they depart from this model through the addition of wings, indicating their angelic status, and the use of one upraised hand, supposedly to assist in the support of their load. Four 'Greek' caryatids were also employed on the loggia of the house at 3 Seymour Place in London, which belonged to Henry Phillip Hope, brother of Thomas Hope, as shown in a surviving watercolour and ink depiction dating to 1818 (Fig. 3.28). Between 1824 and 1828, meanwhile, Joseph Gandy submitted a series of designs for an imperial palace in London to the Royal Academy. One of these, which depicted an interior court of the palace, depicted an architectural structure teeming with elongated variations of the 'Greek' caryatid, above a corresponding colonnade of 'Persian' figures (Fig. 3.29).

A more dynamic interpretation of the 'Greek' type, which appears as a transitional figure, can be found in the example of the caryatids from Montpellier Walk in Cheltenham. This walk, designed around 1840 by William Hill Knight, features a row of shops interspersed with 32 caryatids and at least three of these, which were modelled by Rossi and produced in terracotta some years earlier, were then used as models for the remainder that were carved by a local sculptor known as 'W. G. Brown' (Fig. 3.30).⁴⁷³ Like the Erechtheion maidens, these figures do not have complete arms but in

⁴⁷³ David Verey, *Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980), 140.

contrast to the Athenian models, their clothing is designed so as to appear tightly-pressed against their bodies and diaphanous, with each figure's navel being apparent. This provides a somewhat more 'seductive' version of the caryatid on a row of commercial buildings, and, thus, an early example of the 'materials produced by antiquarianism' being 'appropriated to solicit trade in profitable goods and services'.⁴⁷⁴ In addition, as the design of details such as their hair, capitals, and drapery suggests, they are also based on Goujon's Louvre figures and this demonstrates the shift towards a Renaissance influence in caryatid designs that was to become more widespread in the later nineteenth century. This is also the case with the caryatids adopted by Philip Hardwick for the Soanean lantern used in his design of Seaford House in London, dating to 1842-45. These figures are again identical replications of each other and exhibit an upright columnar stance but they are in the form of Renaissance terms. They exhibit the upright architectonic solidity of 'Greek' types but they simultaneously pre-empt the freer, more elaborate, Renaissance-inspired caryatid-terms that would make an appearance as the century progressed.

Of these structures that incorporated 'Greek' caryatids in the first half of the nineteenth century, St Pancras New Church appeared to receive the most commentary, and this became overwhelmingly negative over the course of the century. In contrast to Soane's work, the caryatids on both porches of the church were placed below weighty entablatures and this aspect of their design may partially have triggered this reception. It was also undeniably related to the adoption of the motif specifically on a religious building, a use which had proved controversial since at least the mid-seventeenth century, but the responses of commentators especially attests to the perpetuation of the caryatid's deep-seated association with slavery. Indeed, other works at the time received censorious commentary as a result of this association, exemplified in the condemnation of Gandy's 1824-28 palace design for its apparent 'want of chasteness' and 'departure from the principles of good taste', in its employment of

⁴⁷⁴ Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, 'The Commodification of Civic Culture in Early Nineteenth-century London,' *The London Journal* 29, no. 2 (2004): 19. DOI: [10.1179/ldn.2004.29.2.17](https://doi.org/10.1179/ldn.2004.29.2.17) (accessed 10 February 2018).

‘statues, in the habit of captives’.⁴⁷⁵ Similarly, certain commentators maintained that the caryatids at St Pancras were ‘inelegant and defective’ on a building which had ‘nothing of the arrangement, which fitness [...] should have given to a parish church’.⁴⁷⁶ This criticism continued into the latter half of the century, when the caryatids were variously described as a ‘sad example of perverse imitation’, ‘frightfully out of place’, and a ‘very grave error of judgment’.⁴⁷⁷

Some brief remarks on the caryatid’s relationship with slavery in the early part of the nineteenth century may provide some insight into this condemnatory attitude towards Britain’s caryatids, as well as suggesting areas for further investigation on a phenomenon that was clearly central to discourse on the motif. As we have seen, the renewed use of caryatids by Soane and others was contemporary with vigorous debates on the ethics of slavery and its abolition in Europe. However, Vitruvius’ aetiology was much doubted and thus the perception of the caryatid’s continued relation to slavery cannot simply have been on this basis alone. Indeed, although the *historia* underlay the association, the motif’s enslaved status was also embedded through a series of loaded connotations that were presumably unavoidable as a result of the actual existence of slavery. Aside from its Vitruvian origins, the most discernible manifestation of this was the motif’s sense of being burdened, often beneath an entablature that was perceived to create the effect of ‘crushing the figure’.⁴⁷⁸ Moreover, there was also possibly some latent awareness of the implications of the architectural replication of the renowned single figure that Elgin had taken from the temple on the Acropolis.

⁴⁷⁵ ‘Fine Arts. Royal Academy,’ *The Literary Gazette : A Weekly Journal of Literature, Science, and the Fine Arts* 9 No. 439 (18 June 1825), 395.

⁴⁷⁶ William Hosking quoted in ‘Lecture on Architecture,’ *The Atheneum and Literary Chronicle*, No. 72 (11 March 1829): 157; ‘Pancras New Church,’ *The Observer*, No. 326 (13 May 1822): 1.

⁴⁷⁷ ‘The Mercantile Value of the Fine Arts’: 80; William Burges, ‘What Was Done by The Greeks and What is Done by The Present Classic (?) School,’ *The Builder* 20, no. 1010 (14 June 1862): 426; James Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture* (London: John Murray, 1862), 300; James Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture*, revised by Robert Kerr, vol. 2 (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1891), 73.

⁴⁷⁸ Fergusson, *Historical Inquiry*, 385.

Rhodri Windsor Liscombe claims that certain architectural design schemes in early nineteenth-century London depended upon an ‘understanding, or appreciation, of the historical object as source of various species of material and symbolic capital’.⁴⁷⁹ As we have seen, the caryatid’s symbolic capital in the period largely consisted of its ability to embody the antiquities and values of a lost golden age, and specifically that of classical Athens. However, the architecture of Regency Britain, in its adoption of a variety of styles alongside those now termed ‘Greek Revival’, such as Egyptian- and Indian-inspired edifices, epitomised the country’s ‘cultural, economic, and political opportunism’, and, in particular, its colonial expansion.⁴⁸⁰ In this context, Elgin’s removal of the Parthenon Sculptures was a related, and not completely uncontroversial act. Indeed, it was believed by certain individuals that the marbles should never have been removed from their native land and a denunciation of Elgin’s actions is perhaps most famously encountered in the poetry of Lord Byron, in his *Curse of Minerva* of 1807 or his *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, published between 1812 and 1818. In the latter poem, for example, Byron, in referring to Elgin and his removal of the sculptures, proclaimed

What! shall it e’er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena’s tears?
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe’s ears;
The ocean queen, the free Britannia, bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁹ Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, ‘From the Polar Seas to Australasia: Jane Austen, “English Culture” and Regency Orientalism,’ *Persuasions On-Line* 28, no.2 (Spring 2008). Available at <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol28no2/windsor-liscombe.htm> (accessed 10 February 2018).

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ Lord Byron, *The Works of the Right Hon. Lord Byron*, vol.1 (London: John Murray, 1815), 71.

Moreover, and separate to a disapproval of Elgin's actions, there was a sense among certain commentators that the removal of the Erechtheion Caryatid specifically was especially problematic, perhaps due to its more fundamental architectural role on the Erechtheion temple when compared to the Parthenon sculptures, and questions arose as to what could 'justify [emphasis added] the removal of one of the Caryatides [...]?'⁴⁸²

Michel Foucault reminds us that slavery relates to an 'appropriation of bodies' and it is possible that the caryatid's ineradicable link to slavery was intensified by its association with Elgin's removal of the Erechtheion Caryatid.⁴⁸³ This was clearly understood by some, such as Byron, as a literal 'seizure' of a body, which epitomised a contemporary 'appropriation' of ancient Greek culture by British travellers, through their removal of its material past. Indeed, some more recent scholarship regards the activity of early nineteenth-century British travellers in Greece as an 'ideological' colonisation of that country, driven by a 'marble fever' displayed by Elgin and others.⁴⁸⁴ Regardless of the ethical and political ramifications of such travellers' activities, the very act of removing a sculpted body, which 'at midnight the other five sisters [...] have been heard weeping for', and which itself was thought to potentially represent ancient abducted bodies, cannot have been without consequence. Indeed, some scholars argue that sculpture specifically was the closest visual art in the period to the slave economy's human trafficking through 'its marketing and [...] mobilization of objectified three-dimensional bodies'.⁴⁸⁵ This, perhaps, played a conscious or unconscious role in spectators'

⁴⁸² 'Art. VIII - Greece. Ancient and Modern,' *The British Review, and London Critical Journal* 17, no. 34 (June 1821): 289. For more on reactions to the removal of the Erechtheion caryatid, see Lesk, *Diachronic Examination of the Erechtheion*, 603-4.

⁴⁸³ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 137.

⁴⁸⁴ Yannis Hamilakis, 'Decolonizing Greek Archaeology: Indigenous Archaeologies, Modernist Archaeology and The Post-Colonial Critique,' in *A Singular Antiquity: Archaeology and Hellenic Identity in Twentieth-Century Greece*, ed. Dimitris Damaskos and Dimitris Plantzos, (Athens: Benaki Museum, 2008), 2.

⁴⁸⁵ Jason Edwards, 'Introduction: From the East India Company to the West Indies and Beyond: The World of British Sculpture, c. 1757-1947,' *Visual Culture in Britain* 11, no. 2 (2010): 152.

perception of the association with slavery that was attached to the multiple manifestations of the Erechtheion caryatid.⁴⁸⁶

It is not insignificant that the caryatid was thought to represent a *female* slave specifically. Some two years following Soane's first use of the caryatid, Mary Wollstonecraft published her *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, which compared women to slaves on several occasions.⁴⁸⁷ In addition, women's rights were discussed by several Enlightenment thinkers that were critical of slavery, such as Denis Diderot and the Marquis de Condorcet.⁴⁸⁸ This was clearly a result of the shared disenfranchised position of women historically and politically but also through their identification, like slaves, as being 'other' to the dominant male power. Conceptually, 'otherness' exists as a fundamental category of human subjectivity, as the human subject exists through opposition; that is, the subject establishes himself or herself as the norm, as *opposed* to the other. The existence of the other therefore defines the subject, as the other he or she is *not*: the 'constitutive outside'.⁴⁸⁹ The concept of the 'other' as a constituent element of self-consciousness was introduced by Hegel and a means of understanding how this 'otherness' relates to slavery is provided by his master-slave dialectic propounded early in the century.

In characterising the formation of human subjectivity, Hegel's theory demonstrates how the human subject is conceptually dependant upon another for human recognition, the 'other' which it 'does not see [...] as an essential being'.⁴⁹⁰ In order to become 'certain of *itself* as the essential being', the

⁴⁸⁶ 'Report from the Select Committee on the Earl of Elgin's Sculptured Marbles', 527.

⁴⁸⁷ See, for example, Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, intr. Mrs Henry Fawcett (London: Fisher Unwin, 1891), x, 84, 93, 126, 218, 250, 259, 280.

⁴⁸⁸ See Denis Diderot, *Sur les Femmes* (Paris: Léon Pichon, 1919); Marquis de Condorcet, *The First Essay on the Political Rights of Women*, trans. Alice Drysdale Vickery (Letchworth: Garden City Press, 1912).

⁴⁸⁹ This Derridean term is further discussed in Stuart Hall, 'Introduction: Who Needs Identity?,' in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, eds., *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage, 1996), 1-17.

⁴⁹⁰ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V Miller (New Delhi: Shri Jainendra Press, 1998), 111.

human subject must ‘proceed to supersede the *other* independent being’.⁴⁹¹ As both sides will desire this recognition from the other, a struggle follows which will lead to the death of one of the subjects. However, this is self-defeating, as the surviving subject requires the ‘other’ for recognition and the solution to this is slavery, in which one sacrifices their freedom and becomes ‘a consciousness which is not purely for itself but for another’.⁴⁹² Following this, there exists ‘two opposed shapes of consciousness; one is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simple to live or to be for another. The former is lord, the other is bondsman’.⁴⁹³

The lord then ‘achieves his recognition through another consciousness’, which is dependent.⁴⁹⁴ This has evident parallels with the historic position of women in Europe, as Simone de Beauvoir has shown when she stated that woman is the dependent consciousness, and she thus ‘seems to be the inessential [...] the absolute Other’.⁴⁹⁵ Unavoidably associated with abducted females and thus imbued with an ‘otherness’ in a Hegelian sense, the caryatid’s enslaved status is thus intensified. The multiple groups of ‘non-individualised’ and mass-produced caryatids that appeared in this period, through such associations, offered the potential for a particularly potent symbol of slavery. As we have seen, in whatever manner it was understood or articulated, this symbolic connection was vital to Soane’s dynamic and imaginative adaptation of the motif. However, his work displayed his attempts at negotiating these enslaved connotations with his desire to use caryatids and, in their ‘liberated’ state, they instead embodied other potential meanings for Soane. As well as displaying his key role as a pioneer in the historical project of adapting the Erechtheion prototype to new uses and meanings, the caryatid demonstrates Soane’s intention for this quintessential classical motif to be understood by contemporary and future viewers as significantly more than simply a ‘punishment on posterity’.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 111.

⁴⁹² Ibid., 115.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 115.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., 116.

⁴⁹⁵ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (London: Sage, 1996), 68, 149.

CHAPTER 3

Frederic Leighton and the Caryatid in British Painting, 1861-1895

*'a grand pictorial realisation of Greek sculpture [...] is also especially Leighton!'*⁴⁹⁶ George Frederic Watts

*'the infinite variety of his genius [...]. What an Architect he would have been, were Architecture as free from restraint and circumstance as either of her sister Arts!'*⁴⁹⁷ James Dudley Morgan

*'Leighton, who demonstrated again the old truth that 'The Art' is one: that material, be it bronze, marble, stone, or pigments, is obedient to the will of a real artist'.*⁴⁹⁸ William Blake Richmond

A sketchbook used by Leighton throughout the 1880s, and now kept at the Royal Academy of Arts, contains a description of Goujon's caryatids in the Louvre.⁴⁹⁹ Although seemingly the only surviving written statement regarding the caryatid by Leighton, as it comments upon the sixteenth-century sculptor's use of the motif, it offers an indication of the Victorian artist's particular interest in it. Scholars have previously hinted at such an interest by noting the resemblance of some of Leighton's painted women to caryatids, but, thus far, such comparisons have tended to be of a disparaging nature, mainly critical of the 'static' appearance of several of his female figures, with no attempt made at providing a detailed analysis of the presence of the motif in Leighton's work, or an examination of the implications of its employment by the artist.⁵⁰⁰

A thorough study of how the artist's enthusiasm for the caryatid was expressed in his preparatory sketches and drawings, alongside his finished paintings, may prove more enlightening than simply indicating a similarity. Such a study may also further our understanding of the role sculpture, and

⁴⁹⁶ George Frederic Watts quoted in Emilie Isabel Barrington, 'Lord Leighton's House, And What It Contains,' *The Magazine of Art* (January 1899): 531. Also see 'Fine-Art Gossip,' *The Athenaeum*, no. 3693 (6 August 1898): 202.

⁴⁹⁷ James Dudley Morgan, 'Frederic Lord Leighton President of the Royal Academy,' *Architecture* 1 (February 1896): 71.

⁴⁹⁸ William Blake Richmond, 'Lord Leighton and His Art,' *The Nineteenth Century* 39, no. 229 (March 1896): 472.

⁴⁹⁹ London, Royal Academy of Arts, Leighton Sketchbook Collection LEI/5.

⁵⁰⁰ See Leonée & Richard Louis Ormond, *Lord Leighton* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1975), 89; Christopher Newall, *The Art of Lord Leighton* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1990), 99; Richard Jenkyns, *Dignity and Decadence: Victorian Art and the Classical Inheritance* (London: HarperCollins, 1991), 210, 215; Rosemary Barrow, *The Use of Classical Art and Literature by Victorian Painters, 1860-1912: Creating Continuity with the Traditions of High Art* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 89.

specifically a form of architectural sculpture, played in the artist's formation and practice. Moreover, an examination of the caryatid in Leighton's work offers a particularly revealing insight into the manner in which the artist negotiated the classical motif's historic associations and conceptual connotations with its painted representation, and how these manifestations of the caryatid in his work appeared to cohere to Hegelian notions of classical ideality in art.

Significant scholarly attention has been paid to the impact of the Parthenon sculptures on the output of painters and sculptors working throughout the nineteenth century. The notable aesthetic influence of the sculptures is perhaps most clearly articulated in the manner in which the draperies worn by figures in paintings by Victorian artists such as Leighton, Watts, and Albert Moore seemed to represent 'a deliberate emulation of Pheidias (and thus 'pure Greek') sculpture'.⁵⁰¹ This emulation of Pheidias' sculptural style refers to the manner in which the depiction of drapery in the work of these painters displays the influence of the sculpted clothing worn by figures from the Parthenon. Watts provided an eloquent description of this 'Pheidias' quality when he claimed that the ancient sculptor 'intentionally cut up his drapery [...] with innumerable folds' and thus 'gave the idea of flexible material, covering, but not trammeling the wearer'.⁵⁰²

Previous research has assuredly established the influence of this distinctive sculpted drapery on Leighton's oeuvre, thus displaying a clear correlation between certain figures in his paintings and the Parthenon sculptures.⁵⁰³ However, the question as to whether the Erechtheion Caryatid, which evidently also formed part of Elgin's collection in the British Museum, equally inspired painters working in the period remains unanswered. Recent research conducted in the area of classical reception reminds us that 'it is not just any aspect of the Greco-Roman world that inspires and

⁵⁰¹ Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2007), 137.

⁵⁰² George Frederic Watts in M.S. Watts, *George Frederic Watts*, Vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1912), Watts, *George Frederic Watts*, 148-49.

⁵⁰³ See, for example, Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake*, 139.

influences, but, overwhelmingly, the special and the privileged – Homer’s *Iliad*, Plato’s dialogues, the ruined glories’ of Pheidias’ sculpture.⁵⁰⁴ Further investigation is therefore necessary to discern whether the Erechtheion Caryatid formed part of this ‘special and privileged’ collection of classical phenomena that was of such importance to nineteenth-century British artists.

Leighton’s work provides ample evidence of his interest in the expressive potential of the caryatid and the motif appears to underlie a number of his depictions of female figures in drawings and paintings from the 1860s to the 1890s. While, as we will see, Leighton’s engagement with the caryatid was manifested in a complex, intellectually-engaged manner, the figure painted by the artist that has most often been described as relating to, or deriving from, the motif has been interpreted as such through a purely formal similarity. Comparisons between the protagonist of *Clytemnestra From The Battlements Of Argos Watches For The Beacon Fires Which Are To Announce The Return of Agamemnon* (c.1874) and the Erechtheion Caryatid have been made by several scholars in recent decades based on the manner in which the Greek queen is painted (Fig. 4.1).⁵⁰⁵ These have tended to be particularly critical of her appearance and Richard Jenkyns’ description is the most detailed example of this. He claims that Clytemnestra is

patterned on the caryatids from the porch of the Erechtheum. But Leighton has surely been more Hellenic than sensible: the breadth of the caryatid figures, which is in any case less than that of his Clytemnestra, has an aesthetic function, being related to the fact that they have a load to bear on their heads. Leighton has removed the cornice from Clytemnestra’s head, but left her so posed that we feel its absence. No doubt she has a weight on her mind; it does not seem justification enough.⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰⁴ Michael Silk, Inge Gildenhard & Rosemary Barrow, *The Classical Tradition: Art, Literature, Thought* (Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 4.

⁵⁰⁵ See, for example, Ormond, *Lord Leighton*, 89.

⁵⁰⁶ Jenkyns, *Dignity and Decadence*, 215. Also see Barrow, *The Use of Classical Art*, 89.

Jenkyns thus affirms that the Erechtheion Caryatid was most likely the model for the figure but does not provide more detail as to how this is articulated, solely indicating this association through Clytemnestra's bearing.⁵⁰⁷ His criticism of the painting echoes a comment from the *Pall Mall Gazette*'s review of the 1874 Royal Academy exhibition in which the work appeared. This stated that the canvas 'presents a higher order of ambition with less success in the result'.⁵⁰⁸ Although, like Jenkyns, the author of this article felt that the painting was a failure in its attempt to emulate what is 'lovely in classic attitude', they did nonetheless note the 'higher order' to which the work appeared to strive.⁵⁰⁹ This accords with the positive reception of the painting by a significant number of Leighton's contemporaries, who perceived a 'grandeur', 'stateliness', and 'noble style' in the work's 'sculpturesque simplicity', and such qualities apparently called for the viewer's 'respectful admiration and intellectual appreciation'.⁵¹⁰

Several prototypes of the Clytemnestra figure can be found in one of Leighton's sketchbooks currently kept at the Royal Academy and, in revealing the artist's working process, these may help establish some of the intentions behind the 'higher order' of the canvas.⁵¹¹ Dating to the 1870s, these drawings comprise a series of firmly erect robust figures clasping their hands together in the folds of their voluminous drapery and gripping it tightly (Fig. 4.2). The appearance of the figures in these sketches, and in several more finished drawings found in Leighton House Museum's collection, reflects a note made by the artist in the sketchbook which details his desire for Clytemnestra to appear

⁵⁰⁷ In addition, the Erechtheion caryatid is claimed as an inspiration for Clytemnestra in the description of the figure on the website of Leighton House Museum:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=LH%2fP%2fOT%2f0372&pos=33> (accessed 19 September 2017).

⁵⁰⁸ 'The Royal Academy (Second Article),' *The Pall Mall Gazette*, no. 2877 (7 May 1874): 10.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁵¹⁰ 'The Royal Academy. (First Notice),' *The Athenaeum*, no. 2427 (2 May 1874): 601; 'The Royal Academy,' *The Saturday Review* 37, no. 967 (9 May 1874): 593; Emilia Francis Strong Pattison, 'Five Paintings by Frederick Leighton, R.A.,' *The Academy*, no. 99 (28 March 1874): 351. It is worth noting that, although generally praised, some Victorian critics found the work *too* stiff and sculptural. See, for example, W.G.H., 'Corporation Exhibition of Pictures,' *Liverpool Mercury*, no. 8329 (29 September 1874): 3.

⁵¹¹ London, Royal Academy of Arts, Leighton Sketchbook Collection LEI/15.

outwardly calm with her ‘internal trepidation’ and agitation expressed in the lines of her drapery (Fig. 4.3).⁵¹² Dramatic vertical folds of clothing are consequently indicated in the resulting drawings through each of the figures being overlaid with multitudinous plumb lines (Fig. 4.4). Like the finished painting, each quotes the Erechtheion Caryatid through certain characteristics that are reminiscent of the sculpture, namely their rigid upright postures, with arms held close to the body, and the abundant drapery that falls in heavy vertical folds, beneath which very little contrapposto is evident and which the figures grip with their hands.

It is apparent that unlike much fifth-century Greek, and especially Athenian, sculpture of human figures, the Erechtheion Caryatid does not display a strong, distinctive contrapposto pose, in which tense and relaxed forms balance each other, as it is famously encountered on the *Doryphoros*, whose taut right leg and loose right arm provide a counterweight to a more rigid left arm and left leg bent softly at the knee. In contrast, the Erechtheion Caryatid is a fixed, weighty sculpture, whose upper body appears to be completely immovable with both shoulders aligned, what remains of her arms flush to her sides, and her rigidity broken only by having one leg stepping forward slightly. This characteristic posture, with its heavy ponderation and strong sense of verticality, gives the caryatid an appropriately columnar appearance, which, as we have seen, was noted by numerous nineteenth-century commentators.

Akin to other sculptures in Elgin’s collection, the Erechtheion Caryatid wears striking ‘Pheidian’ drapery which consists of ‘deep-cut, vigorous folds’.⁵¹³ However, while most of the marble females that comprise the Parthenon sculptures are depicted with carved clothing that has a diaphanous quality by revealing the body beneath it, much of the Erechtheion Caryatid’s *peplos* appears heavy and it completely conceals the weight-bearing leg. We have seen that the column-like appearance of the

⁵¹² London, Royal Academy of Arts, Leighton Sketchbook Collection LEI/15.

⁵¹³ Pedley, *Greek Art and Archaeology*, 268.

sculpture is thus enhanced through a large portion of its form simply consisting of drapery sculpted as deep, thick, vertical folds, reminiscent of the fluting of columns (Fig. 4.5).

As well as appearing somewhat ponderous and imposing, and exhibiting a similarly upright rigid pose, each of Leighton's sketches for, and the finished painting of, Clytemnestra depict her garbed in draperies with similarly sharp vertical folds. They fall downwards in a 'weighty sweep' and, for Victorian observers, they appeared 'troubled' as they were perceived to have 'shared the agony of the woman' and to offer an external reflection of her internal turmoil and 'unshaken resolution'.⁵¹⁴ Clytemnestra's drapery was thus a key expressive component of the canvas, acting as a means of communicating the protagonist's inner thoughts and emotions to the viewer. For a contemporary spectator, this allusive drapery, intended to express Clytemnestra's emotional state, would have appeared especially 'weighty' because of its similarities to the carved marble *peplos* of the Erechtheion Caryatid.

The caryatid-like characteristics of the Clytemnestra figures contrast significantly with the Louvre sculptures mentioned by Leighton, which evidently display significantly more delicacy and embellishment. The artist criticised these figures for the 'license' demonstrated in the 'treatment of order' and their overly elaborate ornamentation, with the one aspect of the sculptures that he admired being the 'marvellously sharp' workmanship in the 'deep cutting' between the locks of their hair.⁵¹⁵ As has been emphasised, such deep carving is encountered on the Erechtheion Caryatid, in the folds of the sculpted drapery, and Leighton repeated this pictorially on the drawings and painting of Clytemnestra. Thus, the 'license' evident in Goujon's figures arguably refers to the delicate, highly decorative nature of their carving, their relaxed postures, and the manner in which the sculpted

⁵¹⁴ Emilia Francis Strong Pattison, 'Five Paintings by Frederick Leighton,' 351; 'Fine-Art Gossip,' *The Athenaeum*, no. 2412 (17 January 1874): 100; 'The Royal Academy,' *The Sporting Gazette*, no. 630 (6 June 1874): 510.

⁵¹⁵ London, Royal Academy of Arts, Leighton Sketchbook Collection LEI/5.

drapery does not have the deeply-cut plumb folds of the Erechtheion sculpture, which Leighton clearly admired for their expressive potential.

Contemporary commentators noted that Leighton had rendered Clytemnestra as ‘immobile and statuesque [...], firm and erect as a column’ and this reflects how the artist seems to have advocated certain characteristics in the depiction of caryatid figures, and specifically those which alluded to the Erechtheion sculpture and which are then materialised on Clytemnestra in both her sculptural character and columnar verticality.⁵¹⁶ A curious feature of the painting, and numerous other works by the artist, is Leighton’s apparent lack of concern in expressing narrative or dramatic incident, indicating that his interest often lies elsewhere. Leighton’s mental preoccupation here appears to be the use of a well-known classical female persona as a means of exploring the pictorial, anthropomorphic, and expressive possibilities of ancient caryatids, and, in particular, their exemplar - the Erechtheion Caryatid.

In 1874, the art editor of the *Academy* magazine, Emilia Dilke, argued that *Clytemnestra* ‘commands our respectful admiration and intellectual appreciation’ as a result of the ‘greater force of conscious will and mind’ that had gone into its production. In addition, Watts claimed that the work was ‘very fine; a grand pictorial realisation of Greek sculpture [...], very noble in form and expression, and singularly fine in the arrangement of drapery’.⁵¹⁷ Such comments reflect the contemporary perception that the painting revealed Leighton’s intellectual processes, and that these were indicated by the sculptural treatment of Clytemnestra, especially with regards to her drapery and her columnar bearing. These same traits relate her to the Erechtheion Caryatid and the canvas thus displays

⁵¹⁶ ‘The Royal Academy,’ *The Athenaeum*, no. 2427 (2 May 1874): 601. See also Francis Turner Palgrave, ‘Royal Academy Exhibition. (Second Notice),’ *The Academy*, no. 106 (16 May 1874): 554; ‘The Royal Academy. II,’ *The Saturday Review* 37, no. 967 (9 May 1874): 593.

⁵¹⁷ Pattison, ‘Five Paintings by Frederick Leighton, R.A.,’ 351; George Frederic Watts quoted in Emilie Isabel Barrington, ‘Lord Leighton’s House, And What It Contains,’ *The Magazine of Art* (January 1899): 531. Also see ‘Fine-Art Gossip’(6 August 1898): 202.

Leighton's inquiry into the communicative potential of the sculpture's distinctive formal characteristics. Those same elements for which Leighton's depiction of Clytemnestra has been criticised are consequentially key to understanding his intentions in the creation of the composition.⁵¹⁸

Numerous drawings of figures similar to the sketched iterations of Clytemnestra are encountered in the same 1870s Royal Academy sketchbook, with each displaying a firm upright stance and heavy drapery falling in vertical folds (Fig. 4.6).⁵¹⁹ Several drawings in other sketchbooks from the Academy's collection also demonstrate Leighton's interest in the verticality of columns, with some figures appearing accompanied by columns which echo their plumbness (Figs. 4.7 & 4.8).⁵²⁰ These acted as models for a number of Leighton's paintings of solitary females, who were often depicted in antique settings, with columns acting as dominant architectural features in the finished compositions, as in his *Bath of Psyche* of c.1890 (Fig. 4.9).

Although Psyche is here clearly modelled on the 1st- or 2nd-century BC *Venus Kallipygos* (Fig. 4.10), as Rosemary Barrow argues, she stands in a 'more rigid vertical [...] composition, accentuated by the vertical folds of drapery and fluted columns behind'.⁵²¹ She does not exhibit the fluidity of movement evident in the *Venus Kallipygos* and furthermore she lifts her arms upwards, which differs significantly from the *Venus* figure and increases the sense of verticality in Psyche's stance. Her statuesque pose is also emphasised by the vertical format of the whole painting and the erectness of the columns in the background. The plumb folds of the drapery she holds are reiterated in the fluting of these columns which frame her and, furthermore, the white columns with golden bases surmounted

⁵¹⁸ Alongside those mentioned, for a positive Victorian reception of *Clytemnestra*, as a result of its resemblance to antique sculpture and successful treatment of drapery, see, 'Fine-Art Gossip' (17 January 1874): 100; 'The Royal Academy Exhibition,' *The Illustrated London News* 64, no. 1811 (9 May 1874): 446; 'The Royal Academy Exhibition of 1874,' *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* 50, no. 5461 (13 May 1874): 6; 'The Royal Academy,' *The Illustrated Review* 1, no. 127 (May 1874): 339; 'The Royal Academy,' *The Art-Journal* 13 (July 1874): 198.

⁵¹⁹ London, Royal Academy of Arts, Leighton Sketchbook Collection LEI/15.

⁵²⁰ London, Royal Academy of Arts, Leighton Sketchbook Collection LEI/24; London, Royal Academy of Arts, 06/1783

⁵²¹ Barrow, *The Use of Classical Art*, 89.

by golden capitals reflect the pale body of Psyche with her crown of darker hair (and the hint of a gold hairband) as she stands on golden-hued robes. This interaction between Psyche and the columns is accentuated by Leighton's choice of frame for the painting, which was bordered by two fluted columns. Such a dialogue between the female form and columns finds obvious correspondence in the caryatid.

As we have seen, the caryatid was associated with the column orders throughout its history, with the consequence that authors from the eighteenth century onwards often advised that modern caryatids should resemble columns insofar as was possible. With their columnar poses, and accompanied by drapery falling in heavy vertical folds echoing the fluting of columns, it is apparent that Clytemnestra, Psyche, and similar painted women by Leighton, are clearly not intended to function as fully-realised, literal representations of women. Instead, they appear as painted articulations of the columnar and sculptural possibilities of the human body (Fig. 4.11). This ultimately seems to originate in Leighton's interest in both ancient sculpture and the Vitruvian definition of the column as a form that arises out of the human body. The Erechtheion Caryatid is the ideal underlying model for these works as the motif neatly embodies this interest in the triadic dynamic of sculpture, architecture, and the female body.

The Victorian art critic Claude Phillips wrote that *Psyche* represented Leighton's 'ever-growing inclination to treat painting mainly as a kind of coloured statuary [...] and to seek to obtain from humanity and from ancient Art nothing more than suggestions for rhythmically beautiful arrangements of line and drapery'.⁵²² He thus stressed the 'dehumanised' qualities of figures in Leighton's output and he claimed that *Psyche*'s composition indicated that the 'true inclination' of Leighton's art was 'towards sculpture rather than painting'.⁵²³ In the finished work, Psyche's

⁵²² Claude Phillips, 'The Summer Exhibitions at Home and Abroad,' *Art Journal* (June 1890): 162.

⁵²³ Claude Phillips, 'Fine Art. The Royal Academy,' *The Academy*, no. 940 (10 May 1890): 325.

sculptural nature is emphasised by her drapery, which not only reflects the fluting of the columns in the painting but which was also perceived to resemble marble to the extent that it was satirised by some nineteenth-century commentators.⁵²⁴ Psyche appears to emerge from this marble-like drapery and thus literally reenacts the origin of caryatids in columns. Furthermore, her symmetrically raised arms are reminiscent of the upraised arms found on several caryatids integrated into architectural structures in late Victorian Britain, such as Charles Henry Mabeys's 1878-79 caryatid-term sculpture at Middle Temple Lane, whose upper body is an almost mirror image of Psyche's arms and head, with arms reversed (Fig. 4.12). Keren Rosa Hammerschlag maintains that Psyche's drapery appears to visually cut her right arm at 'the point where the arms of classical sculptures were broken in a sustained reference to [...] the *Venus de Milo*' but another ancient sculpture existed with similarly broken arms, and this characteristic increased its columnar appearance: the Erechtheion Caryatid.⁵²⁵

Three other paintings by Leighton are notable for demonstrating the manner in which he continuously explored the relationship between the sculptural female body and columns from as early as the 1860s until the period leading up to his death. *Electra at the Tomb of Agamemnon* (c.1869, Fig. 4.13), *The Invocation* (c.1889, Fig. 4.14), and *Lachrymae* (1894-5, Fig. 4.15) all feature a solo female figure accompanied by a single column. The women in each of these paintings enact the body-column dynamic through their interactions with the objects and they share those caryatid-like characteristics discussed in relation to Clytemnestra and Psyche. The 'sculpturesque' nature of the figures was commented on by contemporary critics and all three stand in upright poses, while wearing drapery that falls in heavy vertical folds, mirroring the fluting of the columns that accompany them.⁵²⁶ This is especially pronounced in *Electra* and *Lachrymae* where the drapery envelops a large proportion of the women's bodies. In both *Electra* and *Invocation*, the protagonists stand with their hands raised in

⁵²⁴ See 'Voces Populi. At the Royal Academy,' *Punch* 98 (7 June 1890): 265.

⁵²⁵ Keren Rosa Hammerschlag, *Frederic Leighton: Death, Mortality, Resurrection* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), 133.

⁵²⁶ See, for example, Bernard Cracroft, 'The Academy of 1869,' *Fortnightly Review* (July 1869): 50; Marion Harry Spielmann, 'The Late Lord Leighton, P.R.A., D.C.L., LLD,' *The Magazine of Art* (January 1896): 214.

front of columns, a Doric column marking the tomb of Agamemnon in the former and an Ionic column with the feet of a golden statue, presumably a deity, surmounting it in the latter, a pose which serves to increase the sense of verticality evident in both figures.

The concept of the caryatid as an iteration of the Vitruvian column-body analogy is reflected in all three of these paintings, in the manner in which they draw attention to the relationship between the women's 'sculptural' bodies and the columns, through the physical proximity of both. This is especially emphasised in *Lachrymae* where it extends to actual touch. Here, the protagonist rests wearily against the Doric column which accompanies her, her arm draped over the column's capital where it supports her head. The relation between this figure and the capital is accentuated by her drapery which interconnects with the column as it hangs over the capital. It then appears to join to the cloth that it is entwined around the columnar shaft, producing the effect that the woman is bound to the column. The impression that the column and woman are interconnected is further enhanced by the manner in which the plum-coloured drapery is painted. Like the Erechtheion Caryatid, it engulfs much of the figure's body, appearing as an almost solid block completely covering her lower half, only broken by the appearance of her left hand. Its crisp vertical lines emulate folds which in number exceed those on the drapery of Leighton's figures thus far discussed, and which not only recall the fluting of the column accompanying her but appear, through their physical contact with it, as a continuation of that fluting. Furthermore, the woman's relationship with the column is again reflected in the frame Leighton selected for the canvas, which resembles a gilt doorway supported on either side by Ionic columns.

Lachrymae thus functions as a culmination of Leighton's exploration of the theoretical relationship between the sculpture, columns, and the female body and the woman's association with the caryatid in this painting is highlighted by another significant iconographic element. The column against which the woman leans is surmounted by a vessel which is a representation of a famous sixth-century BC

black-figure *hydria*, found in the British Museum's collection (Fig. 4.16). This depicts ancient Greek women bearing pitchers of water on their heads (Fig. 4.17) and, as we have seen, numerous Victorian antiquarians and architectural theorists believed caryatids originally represented women from antiquity who bore vessels of water on their heads, known as *Hydriaphoroi*.⁵²⁷ Perhaps more so than those elements of the painting already discussed, which disclose an association with the caryatid, the *hydria* in *Lachrymae* would have offered the clearest indication of the classical motif for contemporary viewers due to the deeply entrenched Victorian association between caryatids and the depiction of women with vessels on their heads.

Several paintings by Leighton depict the leitmotif of an upright woman bearing a vessel on her head, the earliest of which was painted around 1861 and is entitled *Lieder Ohne Worte* (Fig. 4.18). It shows two female figures in an indeterminate setting with certain architectural features, such as the large arch in the background, possibly indicating a classical location. The woman painted with her back to the viewer balances a pitcher, presumably filled with water from the fountain in the foreground, on her head and her columnar stance is emphasised by the vertical lines on the wall to her right. She is probably derived from a figure type which recurs to a surprising extent in Leighton's sketchbooks: a woman in swathes of drapery who often bears a basket, vase, pitcher, or some other object on her head.

A sketchbook from Leighton's 1868 trip to Egypt is particularly revealing in terms of the proliferation of such figures, all garbed in classical-looking robes and carrying vessels on their heads (Fig. 4.19).⁵²⁸ Like the sketches of columnar women, the obvious classical correlation for these figures is the caryatid, through its historic affiliation with *Hydriaphoroi* and *Kanēphoroi*. Moreover, a drawing by the artist, dated to about 1872, and now in the Leighton House Museum collection, provides an

⁵²⁷ Robyn Asleson describes this *hydria* and notes how it is emulated in the frieze-like composition of *Captive Andromache* in Robyn Asleson, 'On Translating Homer: Prehistory and the Limits of Classicism,' in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999), 77-78.

⁵²⁸ London, Royal Academy of Arts, Leighton Sketchbook Collection LEI/3

indication of this through its clear replication of the caryatid (Fig. 4.20). The figure appears to be a study for the artist's 1880 fresco *The Arts of Industry as Applied to Peace* and features all the characteristics of the caryatid thus far discussed, specifically the upright heavy columnar ponderation, the thick folds of drapery echoing the fluting of columns, and arms held close to the body. In addition, she bears some sort of casket on her head. Evidence for how these female figures supporting objects on their heads potentially signalled a caryatid for a Victorian viewer can be found in a nineteenth-century critic's observation of a work by a painter who was heavily-influenced by Leighton, Edward Poynter.

Poynter's *Offerings to Isis* of 1866 depicts a female figure in an Egyptian setting bearing a bowl on her head, which appears to contain ritual offerings in the form of dead birds (Fig. 4.21). Like several of Leighton's painted women, she is placed in an architectural setting in which columns dominate and echo her upright stance. Noting this setting, a writer in the *Art Journal* of 1871 described how the painting bore 'reference not only pictorially but also architecturally to the Egypt of the past. The offerings are borne in a basket on the head of a girl [...]. There may or may not have been a purpose in the cast of this figure. Why it suggests architecture is that it resembles a Caryatid, the basket on the head doing duty as a capital'.⁵²⁹

This statement neatly encompasses the inter-relationship between the painted woman bearing an object on her head, the architectural features, and specifically the columns that accompany her, and the caryatid, a pattern which, as we have seen, is witnessed in the Leighton paintings thus far described. Two different types of columns appear in Poynter's canvas and, although they may be invoking the golden sculptures resembling animals which surmount them, the figures in the background of the composition seem to be venerating the slender columns to the right. Such an association between the painting's figures and its columns is further emphasised by the shape of the

⁵²⁹ 'International Exhibition. The English Pictures,' *The Art-Journal* 10 (August 1871): 201.

basket the protagonist carries which, as the *Art Journal* critic claimed, bears a resemblance to a capital, and specifically that of the column to the left in the background.

A painting by the same artist from 1884, *Diadumenè*, again features a woman carrying an object on her head who appears to reference directly the figure from Leighton's *Lieder Ohne Worte* (Fig. 4.22). Likewise, she is a heavily-draped and she ascends a flight of steps with her back to the spectator, while carrying a vase on her head. She walks behind a horizontal curtain rail, which cuts across the lower part of this vase, appearing to slice the cushion and base of the vase from the uppermost part of the vessel, which gives the object on her head the semblance of a capital terminating at the curtain rail. In this manner, the painting quotes the woman from *Lieder Ohne Worte* yet further develops her resemblance to a caryatid through this clear architectural inference. This is mirrored by the dominance of the columns in the composition, which recall the upright stance of the figure and frame the central nude woman. This framing device, especially when considered with the painting's content and the central figure's pose, pre-empted *The Bath of Pysche* of some six years later. The painting therefore brings together the allusions to caryatids which are repeated throughout Leighton's work: the relationship between an upright sculpture-like woman and columns and an association with *Kanēphoroi*.

A *Kanēphoros*-like figure dominates Leighton's *A Girl with a Basket of Fruit* (c.1863), the first of his paintings to appear 'unequivocally 'Greek'' to Royal Academy critics (Fig. 4.23).⁵³⁰ This work largely consists of the depiction of the upper body of a young woman carrying a basket of fruit on her head, which she gently supports with her left hand. Her hair, curling and bound behind her neck, resembles that of the Erechtheion Caryatid while the basket she carries, placed on a cushion, emulates the form of the capital surmounting the ancient sculpture (Figs. 4.24 & 4.25). The work thus appears as an early example of Leighton's interest in the motif and, some three years later, evidence of how

⁵³⁰ Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake*, 135.

this interest developed can be witnessed in a painting which offers a highly complex investigation, on Leighton's part, of the relationship between caryatids and painted Greek women.

Syracusan Bride Leading Wild Beasts in Procession to the Temple of Diana (c.1866) depicts two female figures in antique drapery carrying vessels on their heads, one of whom appears to quote the protagonist of *Girl with a Basket of Fruit*, among a larger group of women that proceed along a stone dais in an idyllic Mediterranean setting (Fig. 4.26). The composition of the painting displays an obvious sculptural influence, with the line of draped women recalling an ancient Greek frieze, like that of the Parthenon. This effect is enhanced by the spectator being placed in a similar position to the group of figures in the foreground of the canvas who appear detached from the main action, standing in front of and below the platform, leaning against it or observing the figures moving in procession across it. The women are walking towards the temple mentioned in the title and are compositionally formed of two clusters of figures who are physically separate from each other on either side of a central figure who is highlighted by an open space of sky and landscape which surrounds her.

The two figures that bear objects on their heads occupy the left side of the painting and one is a literal depiction of a *Kanēphoros*, as indicated by the fact that she bears a basket in an ancient ritual context (Fig. 4.27). She stands in front of the painting's central figure and the shape and colour of the basket, as well as the effect of the leaves and fruit brimming over its rim, bear a strong similarity to that borne by the figure in *A Girl with a Basket of Fruit*. She is partially hidden in the picture, with a hooded woman in a tan-coloured robe standing in front of her, and consequently she does not appear to play an important role in the composition. However, a quotation which accompanied the painting's title, when it was first exhibited at the Royal Academy, complicates the question of the status of the various figures and their roles in the artwork.

The theme of the painting was suggested by a line from the second *Idyll* of the third-century BC Greek poet Theocritus. Prettejohn proposes that the translation of Theocritus' *Idyll* used by Leighton was that of J. Banks due to the similarity between the wording of the quotation as it appeared in the Royal Academy title and how it is translated in Banks' text.⁵³¹ The specific passage from the *Idyll* which inspired the painting appears in Banks' version as: 'Anaxo, the daughter of Eubulus, came to me, bearing a basket to the grove of Artemis: and for her in truth then many other wild beasts were going in procession round about, among them a lioness'.⁵³²

In a note to this line of the poem, Banks mentioned that 'bearing a basket' is a translation of *Καναφόρος*, or a 'basket-bearer, a maiden at Athens, who carried on her head a basket at the festivals of Demeter, Bacchus, and Athena'.⁵³³ It is apparent that the basket-bearing figure just mentioned is likely a depiction of the *Kanēphoros* here called Anaxo. The second clause of this line ('for her in truth then many other wild beasts were going in procession round about, among them a lioness') was the quotation added to the painting's title when it was shown at the Royal Academy, and Prettejohn notes how the figure referenced here, as 'her', is, surprisingly, not that of the Syracusan bride, whom the canvas is named after, but instead the somewhat obscure *Kanēphoros*.⁵³⁴ This indicates that the figure plays an important role in the painting and, due to the ubiquitous relation of *Kanēphoroi* to caryatids, she functions as a key allusion to the work's recurring caryatid theme.

It is not clear what the second figure with a vessel on her head in the picture is carrying (Fig. 4.28). As it is not a basket, she is not intended as a representation of a *Kanēphoros*, but she potentially offers a more direct formal reference to the Erechtheion Caryatid. She stands to the left of the *Kanēphoros* figure and she is highlighted in the painting by the size and prominence of the objects she balances

⁵³¹ Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Aestheticising History Painting,' in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity*, ed., Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999), 108, note 21.

⁵³² *The Idylls of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, and the War-Songs of Tyrtæus*, trans. J. Banks (London: Henry G. Bohn., 1853), 13.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 13, note 21.

⁵³⁴ Prettejohn, 'Aestheticising History Painting,' 97.

on her head, by appearing somewhat physically isolated from those around her, and by being clad in pale pink robes, which contrast with the darker-hued drapery of the figures that flank her. The object on her head appears to be a shallow black bowl, which is covered with a white cloth that is wrapped rather haphazardly around the bowl's rim and hangs loosely behind the woman's head. This hides the contents of the bowl, which are presumably 'the sacred vessels of the temple' that Victorian authors believed the *Kanēphoroi* and related figures carried during ancient rites.⁵³⁵ This dish, with its crimson cushioned support and cloth covering bears a strong similarity to the architectonic elements of the Erechtheion Caryatid's capital. Equally, this is divided into three sections with a base, presumed to represent a cushion, on which rests an egg-and-dart echinus resembling a basket, and an abacus surmounts both. The shape of the cushion and vessel borne on the head of the woman in *Syracusan Bride*, combined with the strong horizontal of the cloth covering the dish, echoes each of these elements, while her hair, bound and falling in curls behind her neck, also recalls the coiffured locks of the Athenian sculpture (Fig. 4.24).

Hammerschlag notes that examples of ancient architecture and sculpture are represented in *Syracusan Bride*.⁵³⁶ The latter comprises a depiction of the marble Roman copy of the fourth-century BC bronze known as Diana of Versailles (*Artémis à la biche*), and this indicates the goddess to whom the temple depicted is dedicated. The most dominant architectural structures, meanwhile, are the columns of the temple, which appear on the farthest left, and towards which all of the women on the dais are walking. These are cropped so that only their shafts are visible and the figure at the head of the procession, clad in brown drapery, appears to be leading the group into the portico they support (Fig. 4.29). As she does so, she raises her hands upwards in front of her and, while this is clearly an act of veneration and she is perhaps invoking the goddess, the manner in which her hands are painted is of particular interest. To the viewer, it is not clear if they have made contact with the columns before her and her

⁵³⁵ 'A Brief History of Architecture, No. II', 211.

⁵³⁶ Hammerschlag, *Frederic Leighton: Death, Mortality, Resurrection*, 33.

right hand, in particular, seems to touch the edge of one of the column's shafts. This allows for the suggestion that she is reaching out to support or hold up the column, acting like a buttress at the side of the building, thus literally enacting the structural role of the caryatid. However this is interpreted, by seeming to engage physically with the column as she does, this figure acts as a reminder of the relationship between the upright, draped female bodies and columns.

The manner in which the women in the canvas were painted instigated some criticism in contemporary reviews, which is encapsulated by one critic's statement that the 'one chief failing' of the work was the 'obvious repetition of the same type without the variety and accident that would give the scene more of nature's truth and reality'.⁵³⁷ This repetition is most clearly displayed in the seven heavily-draped figures on the left who are depicted in rather ponderous 'statuesque poses' with the result that more recent writers have described them as 'lugubrious' and 'static'.⁵³⁸ Those on the right, however, accompanied by wild animals, exhibit more gaiety, variety, and dynamism in their movements and the contrast between these two groups may signify a different status allotted to each.

The figures on the left, and the central figure, are draped in robes that have a particularly heavy appearance and most of them carry vessels or flowers, either on their heads or in their hands. They are thus depictions of the women, described by nineteenth-century writers and antiquarians, who carried ritual objects in ancient Greek religious processions. As we have seen, from at least the eighteenth century, caryatids were thought to have originated in representations of these ancient maidens, such as the *Hydriaphoroi* and *Kanēphoroi*, and specifically with those who participated in rites relating to the goddess Artemis or Diana. In a note added to the 1825 edition of the *Antiquities of Athens*, Kinnard mentioned this interpretation and he posited that the caryatid 'may [...] first have been introduced by artists accustomed to represent the *dancing* virgins [emphasis added] at the

⁵³⁷ 'The Royal Academy,' *The Art-Journal* 5 (June 1866): 164.

⁵³⁸ Ormond, *Lord Leighton*, 87; Jenkyns, *Dignity and Decadence*, 203.

festival of Diana Caryatis'.⁵³⁹ Although the canvas is inspired by a line from Theocritus' *Idyll*, Leighton was also apparently influenced by the Syracusan tradition of sending betrothed girls to the temple of Artemis, and this explains the activity depicted in it, as well as the painting's title.

When the caryatid's association with the goddess Artemis is borne in mind, the painting appears as a pictorial rendering of nineteenth-century scholarly interpretations of the historical trajectory of the motif. These chronologically begin with the figures' earliest perceived origins in the maidens who danced in worship of Artemis, who then later evolved into the *Kanēphoroi* and related ritual figures that surviving marble caryatids were thought to represent. In *Syracusan Bride*, the more ancient 'untamed' maidens appear to be depicted in the women accompanied by wild animals who exhibit more freedom of movement on the right side of the canvas, and these transition into the columnar, more formally ritualised, *Kanēphoroi* figures on the left side before their eventual subsumption by the marble columns on the picture's edge.

Captive Andromache of some twenty years later (c.1888) was considered by some of Leighton's contemporaries to be the artist's '*magnum opus*' (Fig. 4.30).⁵⁴⁰ It shares certain compositional similarities with *Syracusan Bride*, most obviously as it also features a line of ancient Greek women in a frieze-like format, and it provides a more expansive range of caryatid connotations than those encountered in the earlier painting. Alongside its compositional structure, *Captive Andromache* echoes *Syracusan Bride* in its use of draped female figures bearing objects on their heads and preparatory drawings for the work show that, following experiments of populating much of the canvas with such figures (Fig. 4.31), Leighton reduced it to two such examples, and one hinted at, all located

⁵³⁹ Kinnard in *Antiquities*, 62.

⁵⁴⁰ Marion Harry Spielmann, 'Current Art. The Royal Academy Exhibition,' *The Magazine of Art* (January 1888): 236. On *Captive Andromache* as Leighton's masterpiece, also see, for example, William Blake Richmond, 'Lord Leighton and His Art,' *The Nineteenth Century* 39, no. 229 (March 1896): 472.

to the left of the painting.⁵⁴¹ With their heavy ponderation, they exhibit the ‘static solidity of a caryatid’, a trait that is repeated on many of the figures in the artwork.⁵⁴²

As with *Syracusan Bride*, the rather sculptural manner in which the women in this painting are depicted has garnered some criticism, with Leonée and Richard Ormond, for example, claiming that the ‘chief weakness of the picture is the consciously statuesque treatment of the individual figures’.⁵⁴³ The most prominent of these sculpture-like figures bearing an object on her head is the woman depicted in striking blue drapery carrying a *hydria*, who has previously been identified with a caryatid due to her statuesque, upright gait (Fig. 4.32).⁵⁴⁴ Another woman, who is also clad in blue robes, balances a *hydria* on her head and stands to the left and behind the figure just described but this time her vessel is resting diagonally. To her right, and shielded by the ‘caryatid’ figure, a similar figure is hinted at by the sideways brown vase that is just visible.

These women carrying *hydriai* resting on their sides may recall a sight Leighton had witnessed while travelling in Egypt in 1868 (Fig. 4.33). In his diaries, he wrote of the pleasure he experienced in watching processions of women and girls coming down to the Nile to fetch water, with ‘pitchers [...] erect on their heads (when empty they carry them horizontally)’, and his painting *A Nile Woman* (c.1870) was a full-length depiction of a girl balancing an empty pitcher placed horizontally on her head.⁵⁴⁵ Robyn Asleson claims that this experience, as well as that of viewing several *hydriai* in the British Museum, was clearly an antecedent to Leighton’s depiction of figures in *Captive Andromache*, and specifically those mentioned with their vessels tilted diagonally or horizontally.⁵⁴⁶ Although this

⁵⁴¹ London, Royal Academy of Arts, 04/1154, 04/1155; London, The Leighton House Drawings Collection, LHO/D/0663

⁵⁴² Jenkyns, *Dignity and Decadence*, 210; Ormond, *Lord Leighton*, 127.

⁵⁴³ Ormond, *Lord Leighton*, 127.

⁵⁴⁴ Jenkyns, *Dignity and Decadence*, 210.

⁵⁴⁵ Emilie Isabel Barrington, *The Life, Letters and Work of Frederic Leighton* (London: George Allen, 1906), 169. *A Nile Woman* is now lost but is described in Ernest Rhys, *Frederic Lord Leighton* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1900), 28-29.

⁵⁴⁶ Asleson, ‘On Translating Homer,’ 77-78.

demonstrates the influence of what Leighton saw on his travels in Egypt, it is not unreasonable to believe that he had ancient Greek women on his mind while looking at the Egyptian women collecting water and surviving sketches for *A Nile Woman* show a figure in classical-looking drapery who resembles the sculpted ‘Kore of ancient Hellas’.⁵⁴⁷ Moreover, it was not unusual for British visitors to the Mediterranean to see in its contemporary peoples the familiar ancient Mediterraneans come to life and to project figures from the classical world onto those they encountered.⁵⁴⁸ Indeed, there are several entries in Leighton’s diary which provide evidence of this.⁵⁴⁹ It is, therefore, possible that Leighton was reminded of the *Kanēphoroi*, the related *Hydriaphoroi*, and consequently caryatids, when he witnessed robed women carrying water from the Nile.

Alongside the use of female figures bearing vessels on their heads indicating the underlying presence of the caryatid in this painting, the vases depicted are themselves significant. Previous research has examined how certain ancient artefacts may have inspired them and the *hydria* carried in the arms of the woman garbed in copper-hued robes, who stands to the right of Andromache on the steps leading up to the fountain, is the same that Leighton was later to use in *Lachrymae* (Fig. 4.34).⁵⁵⁰ As mentioned, this replicated the design from a black-figure *hydria* in the British Museum’s collection, and shows female figures drawing water from a spring, which is thought to be the most famous one found in ancient Athens, known as the *Kallirhoë*.

Jenkins speculates that Leighton possibly used illustrations or engravings of the *Kallirhoë* vase as his source, such as that which appeared in the 1858 *Griechische Vasenbilder*, rather than the actual object

⁵⁴⁷ Jongwoo Jeremy Kim, *Painted Men in Britain, 1868-1918: Royal Academicians and Masculinities* (Surrey & Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 29.

⁵⁴⁸ See John Pemble, *The Mediterranean Passion: Victorians and Edwardians in the South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 114-21.

⁵⁴⁹ Examples of this include his description of a poet he calls a “Rhapsodist” who he encounters in Algiers and claims that his recitation was ‘exactly what a recital of the Homeric poems must have been amongst the early Greeks’. See Barrington, *The Life, Letters and Work of Frederic Leighton*, 303.

⁵⁵⁰ Ian Jenkins, ‘Frederic Lord Leighton and Greek Vases,’ *The Burlington Magazine* 125, no. 967 (October 1983): 596-605; Asleson, ‘On Translating Homer’: 67-86.

itself (Fig. 4.35).⁵⁵¹ Regardless of whether it was the *hydria* or an illustration of it that provided inspiration, what is important here is the image found on the vase. It depicts a group of ancient Greek women standing in a line before the fountain and all of the figures except two bear upright *hydriai* on their heads. Of the remaining two, one is collecting water from the fountain and so has placed her vase below the flowing water, while the other carries her *hydria* sideways on her head, in a manner reminiscent of Leighton's description of the Egyptian women bearing water from the Nile. As Jenkins reminds us, this vase's 'fountain-house scene [...] may be thought to echo the theme of the painting' due to the similarity of the action taking place in both.⁵⁵² While it is certainly true that the vase scene and painting share several similarities, and consequently the vase may have served as inspiration for the artwork, it is also the case that the vase may have recommended itself to Leighton due to the figures portrayed on it suggesting a link to caryatids. Alongside caryatids' assimilation with *Hydriaphoroi*, with their erect poses and long curling hair bound behind their heads, which are surmounted by vessels placed on pads, the *Hydriaphoroi* on this vase bear a strong resemblance to the Erechtheion caryatids themselves. Moreover, they number six in total, the same number as the original sculptures which supported the porch of the Erechtheion. In Leighton's interpretation of this fountain scene, only four of these figures are visible but the use of this *hydria* in the painting offers an internal reference not only to its subject matter but also to a motif that appears to underlie the entire canvas - the caryatid.

The 'beauty and ingenuity' of *Captive Andromache*'s composition was noted by the renowned Victorian art critic Marion Harry Spielmann and it offers another indication of the manner in which Leighton probed the expressive possibilities of the caryatid in his paintings.⁵⁵³ As in *Syracusan Bride*, the draped females are crowded together on a raised stone platform and this, again, allows the viewer to adopt a position like the figures in the foreground who stand below or sit on the edge of the platform

⁵⁵¹ Jenkins, 'Frederic Lord Leighton and Greek Vases,' 598.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, 598.

⁵⁵³ Spielmann, 'Current Art,' 239.

and are therefore detached from the main activity, which serves to highlight the action taking place on the platform. The painting also has a processional format, reminiscent of the Parthenon frieze, and, as we have seen, several nineteenth-century sources maintained that certain female figures depicted on the eastern portion of this frieze were representations of *Kanēphoroi* (Fig. 2.66).⁵⁵⁴ The heavily-robed women are sculpted in relief in a linear sequence and, although several have lost their heads, it was presumed that they originally bore objects on them. This depiction of a procession of women swathed in drapery and bearing objects on their heads indicates that the frieze was also a source of inspiration for this painting, as well as *Syracusan Bride*. As it was presumed that the figures depicted in the frieze were *Kanēphoroi*, who were themselves equated with caryatids, this offers further evidence for the incorporation of caryatid iconography into both works.

In *Captive Andromache*, the protagonist, in the centre of the painting, features as a focal point for the viewer's attention (Fig. 4.36). This occurs through the perspectival elements, which draw the viewer's eye diagonally downwards from both upper corners of the canvas, towards the figure of Andromache in the centre. This is achieved by the blue-clad figure to the left of Andromache appearing distinct to the other figures surrounding her through her height and clothing, but also due to the *hydria* she carries, which appears to gleam in the sunlight while rising above the other women. The viewer's attention is therefore drawn to this object and then down along the line of the women's, and girls', heads, who in their descending order echo the top of the wall behind them as it recedes towards the centre of the painting and the figure of Andromache. Meanwhile, on the right side of the painting the eye is drawn upwards by the strong verticality of the wooden column and lintel post that supports the roof of the spring and is then drawn down diagonally along the group of women ascending the steps, and therefore descending in height towards the centre and Andromache, echoing the roof line of the buildings behind them. Andromache is thus a highlighted and isolated figure in the canvas, a characteristic which is reinforced by her black drapery and the spaces between her and the groups of

⁵⁵⁴ These include Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, 1825, 62., Inwood, *Erechtheion at Athens*, 114.

figures on either side. What is perhaps most interesting, however, is how, like the central figure in *Syracusan Bride*, she is made distinct by the expanse of open sky which frames her head and upper body. This is in contrast to the architectural structures around which the rest of the female figures on the platform are clustered, and which echo the lines of their heads, or the vases on their heads, as they descend diagonally towards Andromache.

This distinctive composition places importance on the architectural elements in the picture, with most of the figures in the painting gathered within the architectural structures on either side of the canvas and Andromache appearing separate to them by being partially surrounded by a landscape of mountains, trees, and sky. This enhances the painting's links to caryatids by continually drawing the viewer's attention to the architecture and the women's compositional relation to it. Although Andromache is separate from these figures, by being centrally placed and partially surrounded by an exterior landscape, she is nonetheless located so that her lower body lies within the architectural setting. She stands directly in front of a line of columns in the distance behind her and she appears column-like, acting as another vertical form in the columnar sequence. Unlike the other figures, she has placed her burden on the ground but she nonetheless stands erect and firm, enveloped in 'the ample folds of the garment of grief', folds which, like those of Clytemnestra, were thought to express the 'mind within' the protagonist.⁵⁵⁵ Due to Andromache's stance, these folds fall vertically and beneath them Andromache's arms have disappeared, which recalls the Erechtheion Caryatid's own loss of arms.⁵⁵⁶

As the title indicates, Andromache is here enslaved, an act which her husband Hector foresees in Homer's *Iliad*, and a passage from Hector's vision in the epic, translated by Barrett Browning,

⁵⁵⁵ 'The Royal Academy. (First Notice),' *The Athenaeum*, no. 2427 (2 May 1874): 601

⁵⁵⁶ Annie Williams, 'Expression in Drapery,' *The Magazine of Art* (January 1889): 61.

accompanied the painting when it was shown at the Royal Academy.⁵⁵⁷ The enslavement of the Trojan women by a host of ancient Greeks displays evident parallels with Vitruvius' description of the origin of caryatids as Caryan women who were similarly condemned to servitude during an ancient war. Although the veracity of this origin myth was doubted, as we have seen, the connotation persisted. In her role as a captive of war, Andromache appears as the most developed embodiment of the caryatid in Leighton's work; she is an enslaved *Hydriaphoros* who simultaneously manifests all of the features of the motif that Leighton explored in his drawings and paintings. Through her, the other *Hydriaphoroi*, and the recalling of the Erechtheion Caryatid in their stances and poses, as well as the depiction of the *Kallirhoë* vase and the painting's echoing of the Parthenon frieze, *Captive Andromache* displays a complex interplay of the various elements Leighton, and contemporary scholars, associated with caryatids.

In their multiple references and allusions, the paintings by Leighton described, and especially *Syracusan Bride* and *Captive Andromache*, appear to function as painted exegeses of contemporary discourse and scholarship related to the caryatid. As was the case with countless paintings from the Renaissance onward, these works also quote classical sculpture in their figural depictions. However, as Tim Barringer suggests, by abandoning narrative and by adopting an 'inherently modern' style, Leighton's output departs from the classical and Renaissance painting traditions.⁵⁵⁸ Although the visual form of the classical caryatid is quoted in the paintings, they demonstrate how the motif could also be denoted through 'eclectic strategies of quotation and visual paraphrase' that move beyond simple formal replication, and several of these result from Victorian conceptual interpretations of the caryatid.⁵⁵⁹ Indeed, Leighton's contemporary, the painter William Blake Richmond, argued that *Captive Andromache*, as well as another of Leighton's classical procession scenes, the *Daphnephoria*

⁵⁵⁷ See Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *The Complete Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, ed. Charlotte Porter and Helen A. Clarke, vol. 6 (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1900), 159-60; Homer, *The Iliad of Homer*, trans. Richmond Lattimore (London: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 165 (6.447-465).

⁵⁵⁸ Tim Barringer, 'Rethinking Delaroche/Recovering Leighton,' *Victorian Studies* 44, no. 1 (Autumn 2001): 20.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

of 1874-76, were ‘quite modern, for in no other age [...] could either picture have been painted’.⁵⁶⁰ The paintings discussed display such an innate relationship to modernity by manifesting Leighton’s intellectual preoccupation with a classical motif that contemporary authors and scholars had shown to be particularly rich in terms of historical associations and multivalence.

Evidently, it cannot be stated conclusively that Leighton intended for each of his paintings mentioned in this study to recall caryatids but, even if not the case, they can be understood as painted realisations of ‘mnestic traces’, or, embedded memories, conscious and unconscious, that form the ‘reserves of material from which the subject can draw and formulate their images’.⁵⁶¹ For Leighton, certain visual forms had lodged themselves in the ‘collective memory of the modern art world’, which made their associations available to ‘artist and spectator in visible immediacy, without the need consciously to cognize the connection’.⁵⁶² Akin to the associationist qualities of Soane’s caryatids earlier in the century, with their ability to trigger ‘cultural memory’, the columnar women and *Kanēphoroi* figures in the Leighton works discussed acted as particularly prominent iconic or figurative elements among masses of other classical references. While reflecting Leighton’s mental considerations, whether conscious or unconscious, of the caryatid, their pronounced and conspicuous characteristics endowed them with the potential to activate a ‘mnestic trace’ of entrenched Victorian notions associated with caryatids for contemporary viewers. Although written in relation to a work by a different painter, the 1871 *Art Journal* review of Poynter’s *Offerings to Isis* demonstrates how this might be the case in its claim that the painting’s protagonist immediately suggests a caryatid, regardless of whether not it had ‘been a purpose in the cast of this figure’.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶⁰ William Blake Richmond, ‘Lord Leighton and His Art,’ *The Nineteenth Century* 39, no. 229 (March 1896): 473.

⁵⁶¹ Julia Kristeva, ‘The Bounded Text,’ in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 55; Sylvie Gambaudo, *Kristeva, Psychoanalysis and Culture: Subjectivity in Crisis* (Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 84.

⁵⁶² Prettejohn, *Art for Art’s Sake*, 149.

⁵⁶³ Van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts*, 130; ‘International Exhibition. The English Pictures,’ *The Art-Journal* 10 (August 1871): 201.

As we have seen, Leighton's painted women do not necessarily quote the Erechtheion Caryatid in a completely literal or formal sense, unlike, for example, Albert Moore's *A Venus* which refers rather faithfully to the *Venus de Milo* (Fig. 4.37). Instead, in their expression of both visual characteristics and Victorian theoretical notions relating to the motif, these works enable the spectator to witness a visual materialisation of Leighton's mental negotiation of the expressive possibilities of a classical phenomenon that pervaded the antiquarian writing, architectural theory, and visual culture of nineteenth-century Britain. The paintings thus emerge as visual demonstrations of Leighton's intellectual grappling with, or 'thinking through', the inheritance of classicism.

The result of this was the particularly rich 'mosaic of quotations' encountered in Leighton's works, each of which, as we have seen, includes a matrix of significations for the viewer to interpret.⁵⁶⁴ In this manner, the paintings discussed can also be understood as 'theoretical objects', or objects which 'theorise' cultural history.⁵⁶⁵ By displaying Leighton's thought process, the works participated in contemporary 'cultural dialogue' in relation to the caryatid; they contributed to the questions raised by antiquarians, architectural theorists, philosophers, and other authors in scholarly and popular discourse on the motif, and, 'in this sense', Leighton's art 'thinks'.⁵⁶⁶ Whether intentionally or not, his works would have added another layer to discourse on the classical motif and affirmed or suggested connections in viewers' 'cultural memory'.

The question consequentially arises as to what Leighton was potentially striving to achieve with this complex engagement with the caryatid. Akin to the recurrence of the figure of the *Venus de Milo* in the work of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes as described by Prettejohn, the caryatid emerges in multiple variations in Leighton's work and these figures seem to be 'repetitions [and] inexplicit symbols of a

⁵⁶⁴ Julia Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue and Novel,' in *Desire in Language*, 66.

⁵⁶⁵ Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio*, 5-6.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

majestic ideal of silent grandeur'.⁵⁶⁷ It is apparent that, for Leighton, these caryatid-like women were intended to represent some idealised notion of classicism and, as we have seen, even when the figures were criticised by contemporary viewers, there was some implicit acceptance of the 'higher order' of the manner in which Leighton depicted them.

In relation to this idealism, Hammerschlag observes an important juxtaposition evident in both *Syracusan Bride* and *Captive Andromache* between the idealised nature of the female figures in the processions and the unidealised 'flesh and blood' admirers in the foreground of both works.⁵⁶⁸ She also highlights a drawing by Leighton, dating to 1880 and entitled *A Contrast*, which depicts an old man in tattered clothes who gazes upon a sculpture of a beautiful male nude, and this work shows the 'contrast between real bodies that age [...] and the sculpted form that remains forever young and beautiful' (Fig. 4.38).⁵⁶⁹ While, in this drawing, the ancient Greek male figure, representing an eternal classical ideal, is a youthful male in a relaxed contrapposto pose, it is significant that the pair of ancient Greek women depicted in the background are heavily-draped and appear as versions of both Leighton's columnar and *Kanēphoroi* types, as they enter a temple represented by columns.

Thus, it is arguably the case that for Leighton, while the male nude represented the idealism of the classical world, it was in the form of the caryatid, and specifically the Erechtheion sculpture, that a feminine classical ideal could be found. Victorian commentators noted how the artist's painted women were consistently depicted in a similar manner, with 'breadth of shoulder' and 'straightness of limb' which echoed the Erechtheion Caryatid, and they maintained that these female figures, such as Clytemnestra and Andromache, were consistently 'conceived with dignity'.⁵⁷⁰ In their imposing

⁵⁶⁷ Prettejohn, *Modernity of Ancient Sculpture*, 84.

⁵⁶⁸ Hammerschlag, *Frederic Leighton: Death, Mortality, Resurrection*, 32.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵⁷⁰ 'Lord Leighton,' *The Manchester Guardian* (27 January 1896): 5.

stillness, endowed with a sense of gravitas, they appeared to show an idealised form of ‘statuesque quiet’, derived from the Erechtheion sculpture.⁵⁷¹

Alongside the women’s poses and bearing, their idealised nature was a result of the treatment of drapery, which was much admired in its multiple parallel folds and, as we have seen, could indicate the perceived noble countenance or spirit of the figures. For one contemporary commentator, for example, the lower part of Clytemnestra’s drapery, so redolent of the vertically-falling *peplos* of the Erechtheion Caryatid, was ‘representative of the sternness of her soul’.⁵⁷² Furthermore, an 1896 article in the *Artist* periodical claimed, in relation to Leighton’s depiction of drapery generally, that when he ‘attacked parallel lines he did so with infinite taste and boldness’ and it went on to quote Ruskin by stating that the ‘rendering of folds in drapery are always signs of idealism’, an argument which was apparently supported by ‘the folds of the “Canephores” of the Parthenon’.⁵⁷³ This quotation reflects the notion of drapery having allusive potential and the relation of draped folds in parallel lines to idealism in art and the *Kanēphoroi*. Through this distinctive drapery, and the other caryatid-like characteristics, the women in the works discussed appear to embody a ‘majestic ideal’ of the ‘silent grandeur’ of antiquity. Further evidence for such a perception for those who viewed the works can be found in an entry in the journal of Leighton’s biographer Emilie Isabel Barrington that details her travels through Greece. Upon viewing the Erechtheion caryatids, she described them as ‘calm, dignified, and carrying with power the weight they bear [...]. All the figures are [...] beautiful, serene, and dominating. The work of Leighton [...] comes to mind’.⁵⁷⁴ Significantly, by reminding her of Leighton, the caryatids instigated Barrington’s thoughts of the artist’s ‘noble style, at achieving that beauty which [...] *elevates and ennobles*’ [emphasis added].⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷¹ Emilia Francis Strong Pattison, ‘Five Paintings by Frederick Leighton, R.A.’, 351.

⁵⁷² ‘The Royal Academy. (First Notice),’ *The Athenaeum*, no. 2427 (2 May 1874): 601

⁵⁷³ ‘A French View of English Art,’ *Artist: An Illustrated Monthly Record of Arts, Crafts and Industries* 19 (February 1897): 60.

⁵⁷⁴ Emilie Isabel Barrington, *Through Greece and Dalmatia* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912), 57.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 57-58.

The sense of an elevating classical ideality, which permeates the caryatid-inspired ancient Greek women painted by Leighton, reminds us of the scholar who has perhaps most famously written of the ideal in classical art, and similarly related it to depictions of drapery, Hegel. There is sufficient evidence to prove that Leighton was knowledgeable of the German philosopher's theories of aesthetics and an analysis of the Erechtheion Caryatid in relation to them may prove particularly salutary.⁵⁷⁶ As we have seen, the caryatid was mentioned once by Hegel in his lectures on aesthetics, where he described it as 'a misuse of the human form'. He defined this by claiming that in placing a load on the human body, 'the caryatids [...] have the character of being pressed down, and their costume indicates the slavery which is burdened with the carrying of such burdens'.⁵⁷⁷ This line of thought clearly followed the Vitruvian tradition and it is surprising in its characterisation of the motif as 'being pressed down', as well as its argument that its 'costume' indicated slavery, considering the fact that Hegel must have been aware of the most renowned exemplar of antique caryatids, the Erechtheion Caryatid, which does not display either of these characteristics. As previously mentioned, caryatids are particularly problematic for Hegel's hierarchical division of the fine arts due to their ontological status as a form that is both architectural and sculptural. This is especially the case when the Erechtheion Caryatid is considered in relation to Hegel's ideas as it appears to adhere more clearly with his concept of ideal sculpture rather than architecture.

For Hegel, the ideal is found in art when the artwork 'casts aside everything in appearance' that does not correspond with its inner spirit, and this spirit, in a Hegelian sense, relates to the concept of absolute freedom.⁵⁷⁸ The ideal thus occurs in art when the 'inner life' of a 'free and infinite' spirit appears in the external manifestation of the artwork.⁵⁷⁹ The classical art-form exemplified this as it

⁵⁷⁶ Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake*, 129-30.

⁵⁷⁷ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, Vol. 2, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 657.

⁵⁷⁸ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, Vol. 1, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 155.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 155-6.

‘achieves what true art is in its essential nature’ through its display of the ideal, and this is realised in classical art’s ability to form the perfect ‘sensuous’ expression of the inner freedom of spirit.⁵⁸⁰ That is, the classical artwork displays the ideal fusion of the spirit and the material in a ‘free and complete harmony’; it is ‘transformed by spirit’ and ‘directly acquires its meaning in itself and points no longer to the meaning as if it were something separated and different from the corporeal appearance’.⁵⁸¹ Classical art, therefore, does not simply function to indicate or act as a metaphor for a particular meaning but is in fact the ‘sensuous’, or visual and concrete, embodiment of divine and human freedom and therefore, for Hegel, is art in its true sense.

Hegel described the Parthenon sculptures as ‘marvellous memorials of Greek sculpture’ and ‘the supreme blossoming of Greek art’.⁵⁸² However, although he made it clear that he admired fifth-century BC Pheidias sculpture, Hegel failed to mention the Erechtheion Caryatid that equally appeared to partake of Pheidias elements in its carving. He claimed that sculpture specifically is the ‘art proper to the classical ideal [as] it is through sculpture that the Greek ideal attains its most adequate realization’.⁵⁸³ This is partially due to the human form alone, which occupied Greek sculpture, being ‘capable of revealing the spiritual in a sensuous way’.⁵⁸⁴ Consequently, Hegel believed certain ancient Greek figural sculptures reflected the ideal by embodying a unity of external expression with inner freedom of spirit.

This freedom is encountered when sculpted individuals display one of the fundamental characteristics of the ideal in art: a ‘coming to self, being self-aware and being determinately present to self’, or a sense of ‘serene peace and bliss’.⁵⁸⁵ According to Hegel, this was visible in sculptures of the Greek

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid., 427

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., 77, 432.

⁵⁸² Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 724.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., 708.

⁵⁸⁴ Hegel, *Aesthetics* 1, 433.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid., 157, 443.

gods as, in their representation, there is ‘no final seriousness in distress, in anger, in the interests involved in finite spheres and aims, and this positive withdrawal into themselves, along with the negation of everything particular, gives them the characteristic of serenity and tranquility’.⁵⁸⁶ As this blissful ideal was to be ‘elaborated through every particular aspect of external appearance’, with the result that ‘nothing empty and insignificant remains, but everything evinces itself as penetrated by that meaning’, Hegel maintained that the specific formal qualities found on ancient Greek sculpture worked in unity to express this, and he described in some detail what constituted these qualities.⁵⁸⁷

The foremost sculpted feature in this context was the face, where the ‘expression of spirit’ was most concentrated.⁵⁸⁸ Like the individual sculptures mentioned by Hegel in his lectures that provide examples of this, in its stern yet serene countenance, the Erechtheion Caryatid displays the ‘unchangeable peace [...] enthroned on the brow of the gods’, and, furthermore, her short forehead, ‘overgrown with hair’, reflects Hegel’s specific prescribed manner for expressing this in ‘charming and youthful female figures’ (Fig. 4.39).⁵⁸⁹ In addition, in her oval eyes, the Erechtheion Caryatid conforms to Hegel’s belief that eyes on ideal sculptures should be deeper set than real ones, with the result that the shadow in the eye’s orbits is strengthened in order to give a feeling of depth and ‘undistracted inner life, blindness to external things, and a withdrawal into the essence of individuality’.⁵⁹⁰ This allows the figure to express the sense of inward-looking, self-aware freedom that ideal classical sculpture should embody. The Erechtheion Caryatid also exhibits the ‘big, rounded chin’, as well as the prescribed oval face, which contributed to the ‘impression of satiety and repose’ that the ideal sculpted face should express.⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid. 157.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 173.

⁵⁸⁸ Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 727.

⁵⁸⁹ Hegel, *Aesthetics* 1, 483; Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 731.

⁵⁹⁰ Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 734.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., 737.

As we have seen, a distinctive feature of the Erechtheion Caryatid is her hair, which is ‘serpentine’ in appearance, and this was advocated by Hegel in ancient sculpture, in order to display ‘emphatic deepening between the locks’, which gave them ‘a variety of light and shade’.⁵⁹² Such an ‘emphatic deepening’ of carving is notably the only characteristic of the Louvre caryatids that Leighton admired, perhaps as a result of this Hegelian precept, and the Erechtheion figure’s hair is akin to that of the Athena sculpture described by Hegel, with the hair long and ‘tied at the back just beneath the head, and then hanging down in a series of curls’.⁵⁹³ In terms of the rest of the ideal Greek sculpture’s body, Hegel stated that a certain freedom of form should be evident to signify that the spirit has ‘effused over the whole figure’.⁵⁹⁴ In order for this to be the case, the figure should not stand up completely straight, with arms by its sides and legs close together as this ‘gives a disagreeable impression of stiffness [...] a stiffness which does not provide any evidence for the spirit within’.⁵⁹⁵ Although, as has been stressed throughout this study, the Erechtheion Caryatid exhibits a strong vertical rigidity to the degree that she can be conflated with a column, the figure’s appearance nonetheless coheres to the rest of the ideal sculpture’s pose. Hegel argued that this must express only the

beginning and preparation of an action [...]; movement therefore automatically disappears; what is presented is rather a standing or recumbent figure immersed in itself, something pregnant with possibilities but at this stage not proceeding to any definite action, and therefore not reducing its strength to a single moment [...]. We must be able to have the idea that the divine image will stand eternally so in that same position [...]; the peaceful ideality of sculpture.⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹² Ibid., 737.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., 755.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid., 738.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., 739.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 740-41.

The Erechtheion Caryatid certainly has this sense of being suspended, about to step forward with one leg, but simultaneously she gives the impression, perhaps more so than other figure in the Parthenon sculptures collection, that she will stand ‘eternally so in that same position’.

Significantly, the Erechtheion Caryatid’s drapery also accords with Hegel’s description of how the ideal sculpture should be clothed. He claimed that drapery reflects a ‘higher intellectual significance, an inner seriousness of the spirit’ and he thus emphasised its expressive abilities, which, as we have seen, were so important to Leighton’s art. In order to display these characteristics of the individual represented, it should hang ‘down freely in accordance with its own immanent weight’ or be ‘settled by the position of the body or the pose and movement of the limbs’, and this results in its form being ‘entirely regulated from within, and [...] adapted to precisely this pose of movement’.⁵⁹⁷ The distinctive drapery of the Erechtheion figure follows these principles, hanging in spontaneous folds around its upper body yet falling in the distinct vertical lines on its lower half, reflecting its columnar pose.

Central to Hegel’s conception of ideal classical sculpture was its depiction of individuals as ‘the beauty of the ideal consists precisely in its not being a purely universal norm but in essentially having individuality and therefore particularity and character’.⁵⁹⁸ Evidently the Erechtheion Caryatid was one of six figures originally, which displayed little variation between themselves, and she did not appear to represent a particular individual. This may have given the sculpture a more architectural character for Hegel as he argued that the ‘Memnon’ statues of ancient Egypt were more architectural than sculptural as they ‘occur in rows and [...] have their worth only in such a regular order and size’, a quality that is evidently encountered on the Erechtheion maidens.⁵⁹⁹ Yet the Erechtheion Caryatid

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., 745-47, Hegel, *Aesthetics* 1, 165.

⁵⁹⁸ Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 751.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 643.

clearly exhibits more movement and is less colossal than such figures, and she certainly represents sculpture that is not simply ‘treated purely architecturally’.⁶⁰⁰ Indeed, as we have seen, she appears to represent a midway point between the more geometric, or architectonic, forms of Archaic sculpture and a Pheidian classicism.

In her form, midway between archaic and Pheidian sculpture, and between architecture and sculpture generally, the Erechtheion Caryatid appears to represent the moment when architecture progresses into sculpture for Hegel, described by him as the moment when, in the ‘temple’, ‘the god enters himself as the lightning-flash of individuality striking and permeating the inner mass, and the infinite, and no longer merely symmetrical form of spirit itself gives shape to something corporeal’.⁶⁰¹ The Erechtheion Caryatid thus appears as a representative of Hegel’s ideal of classical sculpture, but one which retains its architectonic character. As we have seen, the Leighton paintings discussed use depictions of Greek women in ancient scenes, with columns as a dominant motif, to explore the relationship between the caryatid’s sculptural and architectural nature. Hegel maintained that ‘sculpture retains a permanent relation with spaces formed architecturally’ and Leighton’s painted women appear to express a dynamic and considered interest between the figural form and the architectural spaces, in works that were perceived to show an ‘ideality of treatment’.⁶⁰² Arguably, therefore, Leighton’s familiarity with Hegelian theory, and its embodiment of relations between classical sculpture and architecture, spurred the artist’s interest in the caryatid.

Leighton claimed that architecture was ‘enriched by the co-operation of Sculpture’ and he showed a strong interest in architecture throughout his Royal Academy addresses, given between 1879 and 1893. In one of these he referred to the Erechtheion temple directly by describing it as the ‘highest

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 638.

⁶⁰¹ Hegel, *Aesthetics* 1, 84.

⁶⁰² Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 703; Spielmann, ‘Current Art,’ 240.

beauty' of Ionic architecture.⁶⁰³ Numerous contemporary authors also commented on the architectural nature of Leighton's painted compositions, with the *Art Journal* of 1866, for example, claiming that his output could be characterised 'under the terms monumental [...] or architectonic'.⁶⁰⁴ In addition, in the year of Leighton's death, the editor of the short-lived *Architecture* journal proclaimed 'what a great Architect Leighton would have made' due to the architectural nature of *Captive Andromache* and his 'single figure pictures'.⁶⁰⁵ An article in the *British Architect* dating to the same year claimed that *Captive Andromache* displayed 'how nearly allied [Leighton's] artistic sympathies and much of his work were with the art of architecture'.⁶⁰⁶ Moreover, Spielmann argued that Leighton had such a 'comprehensive love' of all the arts 'that architecture and sculpture appealed to him as strongly, or nearly so, as painting itself'.⁶⁰⁷

As we have seen, the same works by Leighton that were considered 'architectonic' featured female figures that were consistently described as resembling sculpture or 'standing statue-like'.⁶⁰⁸ We have seen how these sculptural qualities are manifested and these reflect the idealised notions described by Hegel that are encountered on the Erechtheion Caryatid. Most prominently, this is evinced in their use of sculpture-like drapery that is employed as a means of displaying the inner spirit of the ancient Greek women depicted. The Leighton paintings discussed have also been criticised for the 'static' nature of the figures but his painted women appear to represent the form of action required for sculpture by Hegel. The Erechtheion Caryatid displays this but retains an architectural rigidity, whereas Leighton's painted expressions of the caryatid quote her intrinsic columnar form while

⁶⁰³ Frederic Leighton, *Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1897), 31, 84.

⁶⁰⁴ 'The Royal Academy,' *The Art-Journal* 5 (June 1866): 163.

⁶⁰⁵ Dudley Morgan, 'Frederic Lord Leighton,' 72-73.

⁶⁰⁶ 'The Late Lord Leighton, P.R.A.,' *The British Architect* (31 January 1896): 73.

⁶⁰⁷ Marion Harry Spielmann, 'The Late Lord Leighton,' 212.

⁶⁰⁸ 'Fine-Art Gossip,' *The Athenaeum*, no. 3118 (30 July 1887), 158. On the sculpture-like nature of the figures in *Captive Andromache*, see also, for example, 'The Royal Academy.-Winter Exhibition. Lord Leighton's Pictures,' *The Athenaeum*, no. 3617 (20 February 1897): 252; Harry Quilter, 'The Royal Academy,' *The Universal Review* 1, no. 1 (May 1888): 66.

endowing it with a Hegelian sense of action, as it appears suspended. It is not extreme or full of movement as the women are too absorbed in contemplation ‘to admit of the escape of any superfluous energy by the way of speech or gesture’.⁶⁰⁹ Indeed, as advocated by Hegel, the gesture of these figures ‘is contemplated [...] and suggestive’ and through their caryatid-like traits, the ‘truly classical temperament is revealed in all the purity of restraint, dignity, and perfect sincerity’.⁶¹⁰ Rather than display vigorous movement to express their thoughts or emotions, they have withdrawn into themselves with a self-knowing interiority and their drapery instead functions to communicate their self-aware and contemplative inner spirit. This reflects the qualities Hegel admired in Greek sculpture and which, as we have seen, could be found on the Erechtheion Caryatid.

Although the Erechtheion Caryatid did not strictly display the individuality required for Hegelian ideal sculpture, Leighton endowed her with an individual character in his works, in the form of Clytemnestra, Electra, or Andromache. Indeed, Hegel may potentially have influenced Leighton’s subject matter in the painting of Andromache as the philosopher highlighted the Trojan woman among his Homeric heroes who demonstrated a manifold sense of character, and he described Hector and Andromache’s parting scene as ‘one of the most beautiful things’ that epic poetry can provide, a point which he followed with a quotation describing the same scene painted by Leighton.⁶¹¹ Moreover, the specific individuality of sculpted works that Hegel prescribed was of a ‘universal’ type as he claimed that classical sculpture, as he perceived it, did not have the ‘flash of the eye’ of the individual, and it thus lacked the ‘point where the person appears as person’.⁶¹² Thus, the individuality inherent in ancient Greek sculptures was ‘not personal individuality but the substantive universal element in the spirit’.⁶¹³ We have seen that Leighton’s caryatid-inspired women were criticised for

⁶⁰⁹ Emilia Francis Strong Pattison, ‘Five Paintings by Frederick Leighton, R.A.,’ 351.

⁶¹⁰ William Blake Richmond, ‘Lord Leighton and His Art,’ *The Nineteenth Century* 39, no. 229 (March 1896): 471, 474.

⁶¹¹ Hegel, *Aesthetics* 1, 237; Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 1083.

⁶¹² Hegel, *Aesthetics* 2, 706.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 705.

the lack of humanity or individual personality and, instead, they arguably express a Hegelian individuality, in which each character represents a universal ideality, relating to classical art, rather than a strictly subjective persona. Thus, Leighton's overall engagement with the caryatid, in its 'idealistic method', appears to demonstrate his adoption of the motif due to its ability to represent the classical ideal in art, in a Hegelian sense, and he displayed how this could embody both classical architecture and sculpture in the form of painted women.⁶¹⁴

No other painter in Britain throughout the long nineteenth century engaged with the caryatid to the same extent as Leighton. However, the 'Porch of the Maidens' was the central subject, or an important element of, numerous paintings throughout the period, ranging from Charles Lock Eastlake's canvas of 1821 (Fig. 4.40) or Robert Wilson's 1824 portrait of James Atkins (Fig. 4.41), to Nathaniel Hone the Younger's *Caryatids* of 1891-2 (Fig. 4.42). British painters also depicted ancient scenes with other, often completely fictive, variants of caryatids, exemplified in the background of Lawrence Alma-Tadema's *A Roman Flower Market* of 1868 (Fig. 4.43) or that of an 1884 work by John Whitehead Walton (Fig. 4.44). Indeed, the former artist's work provides a notable contrast with that of Leighton in its use, or lack thereof, of caryatids. Like Leighton, Alma-Tadema was renowned for his canvases representing ancient Greece and Rome, and he specifically painted large-scale scenes from antiquity populated with groups of women and the absence, from the work of Alma-Tadema, of the characteristics in Leighton's paintings that related to the caryatids, highlights the unique nature of this phenomenon in the latter artist's work.

It has previously been noted that Alma-Tadema's painting *A Private Celebration* (1871) adopts a similar frieze-like composition 'reminiscent of Leighton's processional paintings', such as *Syracusan Bride* (Fig. 4.45).⁶¹⁵ Also, like *Captive Andromache*, the painting references an antique vase, this time

⁶¹⁴ 'Royal Academy,' *Art-Journal* 5, 161.

⁶¹⁵ Rosemary Barrow, *Lawrence Alma-Tadema* (New York: Phaidon Press, 2001), 61.

a red-figure example by the Dinos Painter, with the depictions of figures from the vase being repeated on a wall painting in the background of the composition. The poses of the vase figures are echoed by the protagonists in the painting, who are engaged in the worship of Bacchus or Dionysus. In stark contrast to the rather solemn ritual attendants leading the procession in *Syracusan Bride*, this group of worshippers adopt a variety of poses, which indicate revelry, music, and dance. Their movements exhibit far more freedom than those exhibiting a Hegelian idealism in Leighton's canvas and even the more static figures within the composition, such as the two women leaning against the wall, playing an *aulos* and flute, adopt relaxed poses exhibiting contrapposto whilst their heads rest sideways. This is in stark contrast to the heavy, rigid caryatid-like poses of Leighton's figures.

Another work by Alma-Tadema set in ancient Greece, *The Women of Amphissa* (1887), depicts a group of *thyades*, priestesses in the service of Dionysus, awakening and being offered food and drink by the women of the city of Amphissa (Fig. 4.46). A group of robed women appear in the background of this painting, two of whom bear large vessels, one of which is being filled with liquid, to the left of the composition. Significantly, Alma-Tadema decided that neither of these figures, or any other in the painting, would be depicted bearing their vessels on their heads. It is instead in the work of painters working further afield, such as the French artist Dominique Papety, that a similar intent can be found (Fig. 4.48). In his paintings from the early 1840s a relationship between the columnar aspects of the female body, architecture, and water-bearers can be encountered, which may have inspired Leighton. In addition, beyond the chronological and geographical confines of this study, John Singer Sargent's work also assuredly displays the influence of Leighton's engagement with the caryatid in his *The Danaïdes* of 1922-5 (Fig. 4.48). It appears to derive elements from *Captive Andromache* and it displays the caryatid's persistence influence on painters, well into the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 4

Alfred Stevens and the Caryatid in British Sculpture, c.1860-1913

*'Poor heart mortal crushed beneath the weight
Of the harsh stone, with muscles strained and tense,
And limbs all wrenched and torn and dislocate,
Writhing beneath the stone load immense [...]
From thee we turn to those divinely fair
And marble-soulèd Caryatides,
Who bore great walls like garlands in their hair,
And smiled beaneath the carven temple-frieze'*⁶¹⁶ Eva Gore-Booth

In 1908, the influential art critic Julius Meier-Graefe wrote that the nineteenth century in England produced only one real sculptor, Alfred Stevens, and that the impression he had after seeing Stevens' Dorchester House Chimneypiece was 'one of the most remarkable', with its caryatids displaying a sculptural modelling that defied description.⁶¹⁷ This is a surprising statement from a critic who condemned Victorian art and was a proponent of Post-Impressionism, heavily influencing the modernist critical discourse of Roger Fry and his Formalist adherents.⁶¹⁸ The chimneypiece had been created by Stevens between 1863 and 1875 for the dining room of Dorchester House, a mansion on Park Lane in London and Meier-Graefe's comments reflects how esteemed and celebrated this object was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is now found in the Victoria and Albert Museum's Gamble Room cafe where its mantel continues to rest upon the shoulders of its two crouching marble caryatids (Fig. 5.1).

Although now somewhat lost in their current location, and therefore often overlooked by visitors to the museum, both figures were revolutionary for the context in which they were produced and they were celebrated by a multitude of commentators in the decades following their creation. Caryatids

⁶¹⁶ Eva Gore-Booth, 'Rodin's Caryatides' from Eva Gore-Booth, *The Agate Lamp* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912), 10.

⁶¹⁷ Julius Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art: Being a Contribution to a New System of Aesthetics*, vol. 2, trans. Florence Simmonds and George W. Chrystal (London: William Heinemann, 1908), 195.

⁶¹⁸ Mary Tompkins Lewis, 'The Critical History of Impressionism: An Overview,' *Critical Readings in Impressionism and Post-Impressionism: An Anthology*, ed. Mary Tompkins Lewis (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2007), 6.

proliferated on chimneypiece designs in Britain and Europe from the Renaissance onwards but no British examples, on chimneypieces or otherwise, which pre-date the Dorchester House figures, survive that depict them in a manner resembling how they are encountered here. Twisted and struggling beneath the seemingly immense weight of the overmantel they support, the pair of figures, through their sense of enslavement and abjection, differ greatly from the restrained and upright caryatid, which, as we have seen, was hitherto the most common type encountered in Britain.

Stevens' oeuvre has been relatively neglected in scholarly research and his output overall appears to have been little appreciated in his lifetime.⁶¹⁹ However, critical enthusiasm for the artist developed in the 1870s, intensifying after his death in 1875, and it continued into the opening of the twentieth century. Notably, this occurred in tandem with a vibrant critical reappraisal of the work of Michelangelo, much of which followed a lecture by John Ruskin in 1871, in which the Renaissance master was heavily criticised. Stevens was frequently compared with Michelangelo in this period and his most celebrated works, and those which were consistently compared to the masterpieces of Michelangelo, were two sculptural ensembles that were relatively contemporary to each other - his memorial to the Duke of Wellington (Fig. 5.2) and the Dorchester House Chimneypiece.

The fact that these two works, and especially the former, have been consistently cited in discussions of Stevens reflects the fact that the size of his output, in terms of completed sculpted works, was limited and he is known for a relatively small number. Unsurprisingly, the Wellington Monument, as Stevens' elaborate public memorial in St. Paul's Cathedral to one of the nineteenth century's most important military and politic figures, was met with acclaim, and it has received the most critical commentary of his oeuvre. The laudatory reception of his chimneypiece in the years following its creation, considering its status as a decorative object that is inherently domestic in nature, is perhaps

⁶¹⁹ For recent work on Stevens, see Jason Edwards in *Sculpture Victorious: Art in an Age of Invention, 1837 - 1901*, ed. Martina Droth, Jason Edwards, and Michael Hatt (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2014), 352-3; Michael Hatt in *Sculpture Victorious: Art in an Age of Invention, 1837 - 1901*, ed. Martina Droth, Jason Edwards, and Michael Hatt (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2014), 367.

more remarkable. However, following the brief outburst of praise for the fireplace in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it has received scant attention.

The relation of Stevens and his Dorchester House caryatids, as well as his other artworks, to Michelangelo is rooted in the Victorian and Renaissance artists' shared interests in works which blurred the margins between different art forms, perhaps most spectacularly displayed in Michelangelo's case by the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Consisting of a painted architectural object, the ceiling perfectly demonstrates how the Renaissance master negotiated the relationship between his painted forms, with their sculptural and architectural character, and the structure's physical architectural elements, on a surface where his painted or fictive architecture both highlights and obfuscates these elements. This work was highly influential on both the appearance of Stevens' caryatids and their own relationship with the structure they are integrated into as, like the caryatids, the chimneypiece itself is both sculptural and architectural in nature. Thus, an analysis of his caryatids' associations with Michelangelo, and how commentators in the period represented this, will illuminate why the caryatids were so esteemed and it will situate Stevens and his work as key participants in the discourse surrounding Michelangelo's reception in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, thus revealing the relevance of an artist currently absent from the literature on this topic.⁶²⁰

Susan Beattie claims that Stevens was 'the inspiration and fountain-head of a remarkable revival of sculpture' and the unique character of his chimneypiece caryatids was highly influential on the forms of the motif that followed them in Britain, as well as the output of the New Sculpture movement more generally.⁶²¹ The role of Stevens in germinating ideas relating to the New Sculpture movement has

⁶²⁰ Stevens is, notably, not mentioned in, for example, Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength*. Also see Caroline Arscott, 'Poynter and the Arty', *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England*, ed. Elizabeth Prettejohn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 138-42.

⁶²¹ Susan Beattie, *Alfred Stevens 1817-75* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1975), 4.

been previously recognised, although his seminal position is often under-rated, and his caryatids appear to have been especially influential on a new crouching type of the sculpted figures that emerged, predominantly in the architectural sculpture of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.⁶²² Indeed, the influence of his caryatids extended beyond the British confines of the movement and one notable continental work seems to owe its existence to Stevens' figures, whose relation to the Victorian artist's output has not yet been acknowledged, Auguste Rodin's *Fallen Caryatid Carrying Her Stone* (Fig. 5.3).

As one of the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century's most renowned sculptors, Rodin's relationship with modernism has perhaps allowed his engagement with classicism to be partially forgotten.⁶²³ However, his *Fallen Caryatid* is an innovative and dynamic interpretation of the caryatid motif and its debt to Stevens' Dorchester House figures, as a collapsed caryatid, is undeniable. Similarly, this caryatid was designed as part of a sculptural-architectural ensemble that purported to be a functional object - Rodin's *Gates of Hell*. This work in turn influenced the bizarre structure with which this thesis culminates, Gilbert's c.1908-1913 Sam Wilson Chimneypiece (Fig. 5.4).

'As ornaments to windows, or doorways, or chimneypieces, in modern times, they might be used with the best effect':⁶²⁴ The Caryatid Chimneypiece from the Renaissance to the mid nineteenth century.

A brief survey of chimneypiece design in the centuries preceding Stevens' chimneypiece will help demonstrate the especially innovative character of the object. As we have seen, the earliest post-

⁶²² Susan Beattie claimed, for example, that the New Sculpture's origins can be identified in the work of Stevens, and, in particular, the Wellington Monument figures, which she maintained are alluded to in Leighton's *Athlete Wrestling with a Python*. See Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, 3.

⁶²³ For recent scholarship addressing the relationship of Rodin to the art of antiquity, see, Abillard, Maéva Abillard et al., *Rodin: La Lumière de l'Antique* (Paris: Gallimard, 2013); Celeste Farge et al., *Rodin and the Art of Ancient Greece* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2018).

⁶²⁴ Fergusson, *Historical Inquiry*, 384.

antique use of the caryatid is evident in fifteenth-century Italy where it was employed in a several ways with no historic precedents, including its adaptation for fireplaces.⁶²⁵ From as early as the mid-fifteenth century, pairs of caryatid figures, or a single figure accompanied by a male equivalent, began to be used below chimneypiece mantels as replacements for their jambs, with one of the earliest examples being the structure in the *Sala della Jole* in the Ducal Palace at Urbino (Fig. 5.5).⁶²⁶ Although the female figure here does not appear to have a structural function, and clearly does not support the mantel, as a sculpted female in place of the supporting jamb, she nonetheless appears as synonymous with a caryatid. A myriad female supporting figures were placed below fireplace mantels, which they supported or, more often, simply *appeared* to support, on chimneypiece designs throughout Europe in the following centuries.

In a British context, caryatids first appeared in fireplaces in the sixteenth century, typically in the form of terms and a chimneypiece designed for Henry VIII by Hans Holbein the Younger, depicted in a surviving pen and ink drawing (c.1538-40), provides an early example of how this type of caryatid-term was employed, with two such figures apparent in its overmantel (Fig. 5.6). A dining room overmantel by Robert Lyminge at Blickling Hall, dating almost a hundred years after Holbein's design, shows a continuation of this use, through its integration of pairs of caryatid-terms in its overmantel (Fig. 5.7). Variants of these caryatid-terms were the dominant, and perhaps the only, form of the motif, used in chimneypiece design until the mid-seventeenth century, when they appear to have gone out of fashion.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁵ James Parker, 'Designed in the Most Elegant Manner, and Wrought in the Best Marbles: The Caryatid Chimney Piece from Chesterfield House,' *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 21 (February 1963): 204-6.

⁶²⁶ Parker dates this to the 1460s in Parker 'Designed in the Most Elegant Manner,' 204-6. The exact dating of this fireplace is, however, uncertain, as discussed in Pasquale Rotondi, *The Ducal Palace of Urbino: Its Architecture and Decoration* (London: Tiranti, 1969), 19-20.

⁶²⁷ Colvin, 'Herms, Terms and Caryatids,' 124.

The caryatid's appearance, dominant location, and apparent function shifted in the eighteenth century's embrace of classicism in interior design. The heavily-carved Italian marble chimneypiece was an 'almost mandatory indication of a high stature mid-Georgian dwelling' with the most expensive type being those which featured life-size caryatids, or the equivalent male figures.⁶²⁸ Consequently, caryatids were frequently found flanking fireplaces, and placed below their mantels, in country houses throughout the eighteenth century, with pairs of female supporting figures appearing more frequently than their male counterparts. Throughout the first decade of the century, two female caryatids often appeared as draped pairs terminating in consoles and William Kent, perhaps the most important architect and furniture designer of the period, produced numerous designs incorporating such figures, such as his 1726 design for a chimneypiece at Houghton Hall (Fig. 5.8). As we have seen, Ware was a particularly enthusiastic advocate of the caryatid on chimneypieces and, throughout the latter half of the century and in the early part of the nineteenth, many chimneypiece caryatids adhered to his, as well as Chamber's, prescriptions in terms of their graceful character and how their, usually fictive, supporting function below the mantel was manifested, presumably to vitiate their slavery connotations.⁶²⁹

Ware designed a chimneypiece for the Great Drawing Room of Chesterfield House (c.1748-50), now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which features two caryatids that provide a good example of the execution of his ideas, and it displays many of the characteristics that dominated the design of chimneypiece caryatids for almost a century (Fig. 5.9). In accordance with Ware's instructions, the mantel the figures bear is not heavily ornamented and does not appear to be a burden to either caryatid, both of whom support it directly on their heads with seeming ease. They each use one arm to aid them, the architect having recommended that the figures be carved with one upraised arm 'to assist

⁶²⁸ Matthew Craske, 'Conversations and Chimneypieces: the Imagery of the Hearth in Eighteenth-Century English Family Portraiture,' *British Art Studies*, Issue 2, Spring 2016, www.britishartstudies.ac.uk/issues/issue-index/issue-2/conversations-chimneypieces (accessed 11 February 2017).

⁶²⁹ Ware, *Complete Body of Architecture*, 249.

in the *imagined* support [emphasis added] of the mantle-piece'.⁶³⁰ They stand in an upright yet relaxed manner and, elegantly draped in classical robes, they are intended to represent idealised allegorical virtues. Caryatids on British chimneypieces from the 1740s onwards typically appeared in this restrained and graceful form, standing in pairs in an erect manner below the mantel, which seemed to rest directly on their heads but which they carried with the semblance of no strain. As we have seen, the most famous British interior designer of the latter half of the eighteenth century, Robert Adam, designed many chimneypieces that incorporated this type of caryatid and, in 1781, George Richardson included numerous examples of such figures, sometimes in the form of terms, in his *A New Collection of Chimney Pieces* (Fig. 5.10).⁶³¹

Although the caryatid was a key motif in the repertoire of the 'Greek Revival', it seems to have been less common on fireplaces in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁶³² Indeed, in the opening years of the nineteenth century chimneypieces became less decorative and more utilitarian, a phenomenon that apparently led to Rossi's complaint in 1815 regarding his meagre earnings from chimneypiece designs due to the plain nature of his clients' requests.⁶³³ There are, nonetheless, a significant number of examples of chimneypieces that incorporate caryatids and that show the impact of the wider 'Greek Revival' movement, including a 1790s marble chimneypiece by Richard Westmacott the Elder for the Music Room of Powderham Castle which features a Greek 'dancing-girl' in place of one of its jambs (Fig. 5.11).⁶³⁴ Although this figure displays more movement, dynamism, and personality than the earlier allegorical figures, she nonetheless stands in a relaxed but

⁶³⁰ Ware, *Complete Body of Architecture*, 573.

⁶³¹ See George Richardson, *A New Collection of Chimney Pieces, Ornamented in the Style of the Etruscan, Greek, and Roman Architecture* (London: George Richardson, 1781).

⁶³² As mentioned in Colvin, 'Herms, Terms and Caryatids,' 127.

⁶³³ Margaret Whinney and John Physick, *Sculpture in Britain 1530 to 1830* (London: Penguin, 1988), 367. Also see Gordon Campbell, ed., *The Grove Encyclopedia of Decorative Arts: Aalto to Kyoto Pottery*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 233.

⁶³⁴ Mark Girouard, 'Powderham Castle, Devon - III,' *Country Life* 134 (18 July 1963): 141. He also claims that this 'chimneypiece is certainly the work of the elder Richard Westmacott [...] and is a near twin of one he sculpted in 1778 (probably to Wyatt's designs) for the music-room of Cobham Hall, Kent. Also see John Hardy, 'The Powderham Dolphin Chairs,' *Furniture History* 29 (1993): 141. Here, the author states that 'Apollo, entertaining the Muses on Mount Parnassus, featured in the frieze of Richard Westmacott's statuary marble chimneypiece, its jambs comprised of life-sized caryatid figures of an Arcadian piping faun and a dancing nymph, playing a tambourine'.

upright fashion, and appears completely at ease beneath the weight of the mantel above her head. Indeed, in this case the fictive nature of the caryatid's supporting role is especially apparent as she does not appear to make any contact whatsoever with the mantel.

In tandem with the more columnar figures, which were being adopted elsewhere on 'Greek Revival' structures, some chimneypiece caryatids began to display even more severe rigid, erect, and columnar postures, as a c.1810 example from the Dining Room of 19 Grosvenor Square displays (Fig. 5.12). Both of the figures on this fireplace have legs that are firmly straight and held close together, with no bend in the knees, and which cause the body to taper to the extent that they resemble terms.⁶³⁵ This seems to have been a relatively popular Regency design, as several other examples from the same period attest.⁶³⁶ Alongside such 'Greek Revival' sculptures, caryatids on fireplaces in the opening decades of the nineteenth century continued to resemble eighteenth-century allegorical representations of graceful draped virtues, as the marble figures on the fireplace of the library at Belton House, attributed to Sir Richard Westmacott, testifies (Fig. 5.13).⁶³⁷

As the century progressed, caryatids on chimneypieces appear to have become less common due to the popularity of certain historicising styles, with fireplaces often modelled on Old English medieval or Tudor examples.⁶³⁸ Chimneypieces that continued to incorporate caryatids displayed greater variety in the design of the figures but similarities persisted in terms of their upright stature, and their elegant and unburdened appearance, with the mantelpiece continuing to rest easily on their heads.

⁶³⁵ I am grateful to Anthony Bridgman from *Westland London* for providing me with details regarding this chimneypiece.

⁶³⁶ <http://www.bonhams.com/auctions/16007/lot/175/> and <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/lot/a-regency-statuary-white-marble-chimneypiece-4017375-details.aspx?from=salesummery&intobjectid=4017375&sid=4c82c1be-1d09-468c-ab6e-03844ff85fbe> (both accessed 3 March 2017).

⁶³⁷ Pevsner claims the Belton House figures are by Sir Richard Westmacott but does not provide a date in Nikolaus Pevsner, John Harris, and Nicholas Antram, *Lincolnshire* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002), 138. Also see Historic England's listed buildings website at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1235523> (accessed 3 March 2017). For the Tregothnan fireplace, see Christopher Hussey, *English Country Houses: Late Georgian 1800-1840* (London: Country Life, 1958), 146.

⁶³⁸ Campbell, ed., *Grove Encyclopedia of Decorative Arts*, 233.

John Nash's fireplaces for the Picture Gallery of Buckingham Palace of 1825-30 offer such examples, each with two figures in place of its jambs, whose addition of wings gives them a novel mythological appearance, while they do not appear to be connected to the mantelpiece and thus do not even present the appearance of offering structural support (Fig. 5.14). An illustration of John Thomas' design for Somerleyton Hall of about 1844 shows that it included one male and one female figure, representing 'Winter' and 'Summer' respectively, in place of its jambs, and although both figures seem to be bearing a particularly heavy overmantel, the 'Summer' caryatid shows no evidence of any strain in her stance (Fig. 5.15). This is also the case for the caryatids on Giuseppe Nucci's mid nineteenth-century fireplace for the Red Drawing Room of Alnwick Castle, which replicated the eighteenth-century examples advocated by Ware and Chambers. In addition, a collection of drawings by Wightwick were bound in five volumes under the title *The Architectural Works of George Wightwick* between 1832 and 1850 and this included two caryatid fireplace designs, which incorporated copies of the Erechtheion sculptures (Figs. 5.16 & 5.17). Thus, what appears to dominate British chimney-piece caryatids from the early seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth century is the persistence of, sometimes columnar or architectonic, often relaxed and elegant, and always restrained and idealised figures, none of which have the appearance of struggling with the weight of the mantel they carry or exhibit any signs of 'slavery and servitude [...] injurious to the fair sex'.⁶³⁹ It was against this backdrop that Stevens designed his revolutionary fireplace.

***'this practically unique example of English art':*⁶⁴⁰ Alfred Stevens' Dorchester House Chimney-piece**

Around 1858 Alfred Stevens was commissioned to design elements of the interior of Dorchester House in London by its owner, the MP and art collector Robert Holford. The house itself, apparently

⁶³⁹ Chambers, *Civil Architecture*, 189.

⁶⁴⁰ Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 195.

inspired by the Villa Farnesina in Rome, had been designed by the architect Lewis Vulliamy and built several years earlier to house Holford's extensive collection.⁶⁴¹ Stevens was appointed specifically to create a chimneypiece for the house's saloon and the entire decorative scheme for the dining room. The saloon's chimneypiece, finished in 1869, was a Carrara marble structure with a heavily-ornamented overmantel, in which a portrait was centrally located (Fig. 5.18).⁶⁴² It resembled traditional fireplace design with its swollen pairs of consoles supporting its mantel, a common feature on eighteenth-century chimneypieces. It also featured several elements of figural sculpture, with a 'semi-circular decorative head, framing opposing monsters, half women, half beasts', which appears to have been situated in the upper section of its overmantel.⁶⁴³

Alongside this and Stevens' Dining Room design, the mansion featured two chimneypieces which integrated sculpted figures, in the Green and Red Drawing Rooms. In his article on Dorchester House for a 1928 issue of *Country Life*, Christopher Hussey claimed that the chimneypiece in the Red Drawing Room, by Richard Westmacott the Younger and dating to 1860, was 'typical of the ordinary sculpture of the time - the background against which Stevens' work [for Dorchester House] must be visualised' (Fig. 5.19).⁶⁴⁴ It is indeed typical in terms of its similarities to many of the chimneypieces thus far discussed, with its use of two sculpted idealised figures, one male and the other female, that stand in elegant poses on either side of the fireplace surround. Indeed, it bears a significant resemblance to Nash's earlier work at Buckingham Palace through its use of graceful draped figures that are winged, flank the fireplace surround, and reach across, or rest their arms upon, it. Moreover, like Nash's examples, neither of these figures was intended to have the appearance of a supporting

⁶⁴¹ Christopher Hussey, 'London Houses. Dorchester House_I. London, Formerly the Residence of Sir George Holford,' *Country Life* 63 (5 May 1928): 648.

⁶⁴² This was apparently designed to accommodate the portrait which, according to Kenneth Towndrow, was by Van Dyck. See Kenneth Romney Towndrow, *Alfred Stevens* (Liverpool: University Press of Liverpool, 1951), 26.

⁶⁴³ Towndrow, *Alfred Stevens*, 26.

⁶⁴⁴ Christopher Hussey, 'London Houses. Dorchester House_II. London, Formerly the Residence of Sir George Holford,' *Country Life* 63 (12 May 1928): 689.

role, and this is further emphasised by their location in front of the jambs, rather than replacing them or being carved in relief on them, as well as their height, which exceeds the mantel shelf.

The fireplace in the Green Drawing Room, however, featured a pair of figures that were more avowedly intended as caryatids through their semblance of supporting its mantel (Fig. 5.20). It is, therefore, perhaps more appropriately against this example that Stevens' work on the Dining Room chimneypiece 'must be visualised'. It appears to have had much in common with the caryatid fireplaces created earlier in the century, such as the c.1810 example from Grosvenor Square, through its adoption of classical, fully-draped, columnar figures that appear to taper towards their feet and support the narrow mantel on their heads with minimal effort.

In contrast to this model, Stevens conceived a chimneypiece for the Dining Room with an elaborate overmantel that conveys the impression of weighing heavily on the shoulders of its two supporting caryatids, which are themselves imbued with an overwhelming sense of struggle in their postures (Figs. 5.21 & 5.22). Each of these crouching nudes is carved in a contorted pose that implies that they can no longer remain upright beneath the immense weight of the overmantel while both, although not tied, appear to be bound to the fireplace, with their movement seemingly restricted by the fetters of cloth that haphazardly wrap around their heads, shoulders, and legs. They appear *enslaved* in their role, a characteristic of the motif that, as we have seen, was pointedly avoided by previous British designers of chimneypieces, as well as architects and sculptors of caryatids for centuries. The revolutionary nature of this fireplace was reflected in the myriad reactions by commentators and writers for half a century following its conception, which generally lauded this 'practically unique' artwork.⁶⁴⁵

Although caryatids preceding Stevens' sculptures had been designed in a manner that attempted to negate or obscure their associations with slavery, we have seen that these connotations were never quite forgotten throughout the nineteenth century, from the enslaved 'absurdities' denounced by

⁶⁴⁵ Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 195.

Soane in its early years to the 'vanquished enemies compelled to a laborious task' of William Smith's Dictionary of 1890, it was an ineluctable symbolic association.⁶⁴⁶ This connotation persisted into the early twentieth century with a 1912 text on chimneypieces, for example, describing the caryatid's 'condemnation in effigy to constant hard labour'.⁶⁴⁷ Nonetheless, despite the prevailing consensus of contemporary writers and critics, Stevens was in no way reticent in overtly displaying the enslaved nature of his caryatids, and they could not offer a more stark contrast to the graceful, unburdened, and typically 'neoclassical' figures adopted in Britain up to this point. Stevens' sculptures, by the conventions of the day should have been condemned but they, and the fireplace they were incorporated into, celebrated, and this was seemingly as a result of their relationship with Renaissance precedents, and, more specifically, Michelangelo.⁶⁴⁸

In a section dedicated to Stevens in his 1908 *Modern Art*, Meier-Graefe stated that the Victorian artist 'does not work in the style of the Renaissance, he is a Renaissance artist'.⁶⁴⁹ Although comparisons between Stevens and various Italian Renaissance masters, such as Raphael and Correggio, were common, it was with one in particular that he was most emphatically compared in a sustained fashion throughout the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and, indeed, continues to be today - Michelangelo.⁶⁵⁰ Stevens received his artistic training in Italy, where he studied for nine years, mainly in Florence and Rome, so he was clearly deeply familiar with the artistic output of the Italian Renaissance and it had an influence on much of his work. Yet, of all the references that have aligned Stevens with Michelangelo, very few have thus far elucidated specifically what characteristics in

⁶⁴⁶ Soane, *Royal Academy Lectures*, 144; Gardner in Smith, Wayte and Eden Marindin, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, 368.

⁶⁴⁷ Guy Cadogan Rothery, *Chimneypieces and Ingle Nooks: Their Design and Ornamentation* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1912), 72-73.

⁶⁴⁸ See Armstrong's claim that they were the 'finest things of their kind in Europe' in Walter Armstrong, 'Alfred Stevens,' *Portfolio: An Artistic Periodical* 21 (January 1890): 130.

⁶⁴⁹ Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 194. Also see 'The Late Mr. Stevens,' *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (5 May 1875): 3; 'Alfred Stevens and his Work,' *Times* (22 October 1891): 14; 'Mr. Mac Coll on Alfred Stevens,' *Times* (11 February 1905): 12; 'Alfred Stevens Memorial,' *Times* (16 November 1911): 6.

⁶⁵⁰ More recently, an exhibition of Stevens drawings at the Beaney House of Art and Knowledge in 2013 was entitled *England's Michelangelo*. See <https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/studio3gallery/2013/08/22/coming-soon-to-studio-3-gallery-alfred-drury/> (accessed 5 March 2017).

Stevens' artworks resembled those of Michelangelo and, notably, this is especially the case with the caryatids from the Dorchester House Chimneypiece, which were frequently associated with the Renaissance artist's work from the 1880s onwards.⁶⁵¹

Most of the comparisons from this period tended to be somewhat vague in nature and often described the sculptures' affinity with Michelangelo in allusive, rather than descriptive, terms, simply claiming they were 'Michelangelesque' or that 'the inspiration of the great Florentine lives in these figures'.⁶⁵² This was also true of statements which compared the artist himself to Michelangelo, such as Walter Armstrong's rather sweeping assertion that 'Stevens was no less completely an Italian than Michelangelo himself'.⁶⁵³ Most of these assessments consequently failed to specify what defined the 'Michelangelesque' in Stevens or his work, beyond a small number of visual similarities, which were generally implied. Following the 1920s, Stevens received little commentary by critics and scholars until the work of Beattie and Read in the 1970s and 1980s. Both authors refer to Michelangelo-like qualities in the sculptor's work but again this is not in an especially detailed manner, particularly in relation to the Dorchester House Chimneypiece.⁶⁵⁴ Perhaps by probing its association with Michelangelo further, we can understand more clearly the implications of Stevens' groundbreaking caryatid structure and what was at stake in Stevens' adoption of 'Michelangelesque' forms, in place of the traditional restrained type.

⁶⁵¹ See, for example, Eustace Balfour, 'Dorchester House,' *Magazine of Art* 6 (November 1882 – October 1883): 404; Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 195; 'The Alfred Stevens Exhibition,' *Times* (18 November 1911): 6; Charles Francis Keary, *The Pursuit of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 421; Selwyn Brinton, 'Alfred Stevens at Dorchester House,' *Architecture, A Magazine of Architecture and the Applied Arts and Crafts* 5 (April 1927): 348; Edwin Beresford Chancellor, 'Dorchester House and Alfred Stevens,' *Architectural Review* 62 (September 1927): 91; Hussey, 'London Houses. Dorchester House_II,' 688.

⁶⁵² Brinton, 'Alfred Stevens at Dorchester House': 348. See also 'Alfred Stevens at the "Old Masters",' *Pall Mall Gazette*, (23 January 1890): 3. In Britain, the term 'Michelangelesque' was first used by the painter and author James Barry in the early nineteenth century, according to the Oxford Dictionary's website, see <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/Michelangelesque> (accessed 15 February 2017).

⁶⁵³ Walter Armstrong, 'Stevens and the Wellington Memorial,' *Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review* 31 (May 1892): 865. Also see, for example, 'Sculpture at the Royal Academy,' *Pall Mall Gazette* (7 June 1876): 11; 'Alfred Stevens,' *Art Amateur* 4 (March 1881): 76; 'Review. Alfred Stevens,' *National Observer* (17 October 1891): 561; 'Fine Art Gossip,' *Athenaeum* (18 November 1911): 636; Hugh Stannus, 'Art. Alfred Stevens,' *Spectator* 107 (25 November 1911): 20; Beresford Chancellor, 'Dorchester House and Alfred Stevens,' 94; Hussey, 'London Houses. Dorchester House_II,' 684, 688-9.

⁶⁵⁴ Beattie, *Alfred Stevens*, 4, 7, 14; Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 227; Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, 1.

The anonymous author of an 1883 *Magazine of Art* article on the chimneypiece wrote that there is ‘something of grandeur and repose in the two figures which reminds you in some degree of the work of Michelangelo. It is of no use stopping to inquire whether such a use of the human figure is legitimate. In this particular case the answer comes at once - that it has succeeded’.⁶⁵⁵ This statement encapsulates the generalised nature of commentators’ comparisons of the fireplace with Michelangelo’s work and it reflects both the universal admiration that existed for these sculptures and the accompanying anxiety regarding the propriety of the use of caryatids more generally, indicated by the inference of the necessity to question their ‘legitimacy’. The writer implied that the quality that enabled the acceptability of these heavily-burdened and enslaved nudes, these caryatids that featured the very characteristics previous commentators condemned, was their similarity to the work of Michelangelo.

The question of the pair’s appropriateness in relation to traditional ideas of caryatids was still being debated in 1912 when Guy Cadogan Rothery declared that they

belong to the design, yet are doing very little absolute work. Possibly here the wonderful sense of harmony is gained by the splendid modelling of practically nude forms, with their evidence of vigour and great dormant strength. In this way [Stevens] has managed to utilise the undraped figure without any incongruity for so conspicuous a position in a room for general assembly – thus satisfying the demands made by both Ware and Sir William Chambers that the unnecessary freedom of the later Renaissance should be restrained.⁶⁵⁶

Rothery appeared to argue that the caryatids’ enslaved status is acceptable in the Dorchester House figures as they do not seem to be loaded down by the overmantel, they are apparently ‘doing very little absolute work’, which is arguably not the case in terms of the size of the marble structure they

⁶⁵⁵ Balfour, ‘Dorchester House’: 404.

⁶⁵⁶ Cadogan Rothery, *Chimneypieces and Ingle Nooks*, 79.

bear and, more importantly, their postures. These caryatids have collapsed beneath their burden, which is too weighty for their heads and must therefore rest upon their shoulders. Moreover, the author claims they are sculpted, with a ‘sense of harmony’, indicating that they meet the requirements of Ware and Chambers, yet neither of these figures adheres to either eighteenth-century architects’ precepts and, rather than offer a restrained version of the later Renaissance, the sculptures display the dynamism, vigour, and ‘allegory of domination’ that characterised much of Michelangelo’s painted and sculpted works.⁶⁵⁷

The sculptural ensemble by Stevens that has been shown to bear the influence of Michelangelo in the most sustained fashion is not his chimneypiece but instead his Wellington Monument, designed in 1856 and completed in 1912. Descriptions of this memorial offer the most detailed comparisons between the work of the Victorian and Renaissance artists and these focus on its two separate pairs of allegorical figures representing *Valour and Cowardice* and *Truth and Falsehood* (Figs. 5.23 & 5.24).⁶⁵⁸ Stevens was working on this monument around the same time as his Dorchester House commission, so perhaps unsurprisingly there are affinities between the female sculptures of *Valour* and *Truth* and his caryatids. This is evident in certain characteristics, which are also encountered in Michelangelo’s painted and sculpted figures, such as the muscularity of their respective forms and the dynamic torsion of their poses. The seated figures of *Valour* and *Truth* are, for example, highly reminiscent of the Sibyls from Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel ceiling of 1508-12, such as his Delphic Sibyl, with the above characteristics expressed in both, as well as shared similarities in the arrangement of limbs, counterpoise, headdress, and elaborate drapery (Fig. 5.25). Describing Stevens’ Wellington figures in 1876, a writer for the *Pall Mall Gazette* alleged that, if the ‘familiar and homely character of nearly all the sculpture’ that had hitherto been produced in the country was

⁶⁵⁷ Stephen J. Campbell and Micheal W. Cole, *A New History of Italian Renaissance Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2012), 421.

⁶⁵⁸ See, for example, ‘The Late A.G. Stevens and the Wellington Monument,’ *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (3 February 1876): 8. Also see Edwards in *Sculpture Victorious*, 352-53.

considered, it became ‘difficult to understand how Stevens so entirely escaped the prevailing influence as to rise to the dignity of this invention’.⁶⁵⁹ This assertion could equally apply to the Dorchester House caryatids, and perhaps they offer an even more striking contrast with their predecessors, when compared with the assuredly ‘familiar’ character of most British caryatids that came before them.

The impact of Michelangelo on Stevens is also apparent in some of his significantly earlier designs, created soon after his return to England from Italy in 1842, such as a red chalk sketch depicting struggling figures and dating to 1844, which echoes Michelangelo’s use of the same medium in his contorted figure studies for the Sistine ceiling (Fig. 5.26).⁶⁶⁰ In addition, a series of canvas panels Stevens created for the Drawing Room of 11 Kensington Palace Gardens, built in 1852-54, depicted heroines from Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*. These were considered some of his finest works by contemporary, and later, viewers but unfortunately the only surviving evidence for their appearance are the artist’s preliminary drawings and sketches. Here, the influence of Michelangelo is again discernible in the figures’ similarities with several of Michelangelo’s painted women from his Sistine vault, and specifically the Libyan Sibyl (Fig. 5.27). This is articulated through the figures’ bodies with their shared musculature, upraised arms, similar twist in the hips, and the use of one toe as a weight-bearing feature, as well as their drapery and the sculptural nature of their bodies (Fig. 5.28).

The only specific work by Michelangelo that the Dorchester House caryatids seem to have been compared to is his 1519-34 Medici Chapel in the church of San Lorenzo in Florence.⁶⁶¹ The most obvious model here is the figure of *Night* on the tomb of Giuliano de Medici who, like the caryatids,

⁶⁵⁹ An anonymous writer commenting on Stevens’ allegorical figure groups from the Wellington Memorial in ‘Sculpture at the Royal Academy,’ 11.

⁶⁶⁰ Hugo Chapman, *Michelangelo Drawings: Closer to the Master* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2005), 22.

⁶⁶¹ ‘Alfred Stevens,’ *Art Amateur*: 76. Also see the description of Alfred Stevens on the Henry Moore Institute’s website at http://liberty.henry-moore.org/henrymoore/sculptor/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=2584&from_list=true&x=0 (accessed 6 February 2017).

is sculpted in a crouching pose with accentuated musculature and a bowed head (Fig. 5.29). Notably, the figure displays a more exaggerated form of the counterpoise of the caryatid on the left side of the Stevens' chimneypiece, with both sculptures' right arms being bent at the elbow and pointing downwards to the opposing leg, which is bent at the knee.

Of Stevens' own designs, several offer themselves as possible antecedents for his caryatids alongside the Wellington Monument's allegorical figures, and many of these evince the influence of Michelangelo's works. The caryatids ultimately appear as a culmination of one of the artist's preoccupations, reflected by many designs for a variety of works - the architectural nature of the human body and how it could be integrated into objects. His sketches and drawings provide an illuminating insight into his exploration of this association and display an interest in caryatids more generally. Several red chalk studies survive of women depicted in caryatid-like poses with upraised arms and heads bowed beneath the weight of a burden, such as an c.1858-62 example, which being contemporary with his work at Dorchester House, arguably influenced his ideas of weight-bearing figures (Fig. 5.30). Similar drawings, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum's collection, show women carrying water vessels and this potentially relates them to caryatids through their association with *hydriaphoroi* (Fig. 5.31). More importantly, a striking drawing from the museum's collection provides evidence for Stevens' consideration of how the caryatid could be integrated into built structures, with its depiction of two figures, in upright poses supporting architectural forms, drawn in pencil over one of the artist's architectural designs in ink (Fig. 5.32).

The artist's interest in the inter-relationship of the human form and architecture is, however, most clearly displayed in his magnificent design for a certificate for the 'Honourable Mention Award' of the 1862 International Exhibition, which appears to have been especially influential on the Dorchester House chimneypiece (Fig. 5.33). All of the figures on this allegorical composition are integrated into its fictive architectural elements, either resting on them or making contact with them with their limbs,

to a degree that they seem inseparable from the architecture and thus resemble drawn architectural sculpture. Significantly, in this manner they also display the undeniable influence of Michelangelo and especially his Sistine ceiling (Fig. 5.34).⁶⁶²

Indeed, the layout of the whole ensemble, in its relation of figures to architecture is highly reminiscent of the Sistine vault. This is exemplified in the two outstretched figures on the lower plinth, whose recumbent bodies support the bottom corners of the central rectangular plaque. These appear to have been modelled on several bronze nudes that lie on the spandrels and pendentives of Michelangelo's Sistine design (Fig. 5.35). It is even more clearly discernible in the case of the two seated male figures atop the plinths that carry the central plaque. These pre-empt Stevens' chimneypiece caryatids with their bent knees, bowed heads, and the torsion of their crouching poses, as well as their semblance of being bound to the architectural structure by ribands of material entwined around their bodies. They bear a striking resemblance to Michelangelo's *Ignudi* - the twenty similarly muscular nude males depicted in a variety of complex and dynamic poses, sitting on painted architectural plinths, which are themselves resting on an illusionary cornice that runs the length of the Sistine ceiling (Fig. 5.36). These also act as pairs of supporting figures as they hold in place, by swathes of cloth, the ten painted bronze medallions which span the length of the ceiling. The characteristics of nudity, pronounced musculature, and contorted elaborate counterpoise are also encountered in the blindfolded allegorical female figure, representing Fortune in the uppermost section, whose weight-bearing toe is reminiscent of that of the Sistine's Libyan Sibyl.⁶⁶³

All of these male and female figure studies and completed drawings and designs by Stevens, with their varying traits that resemble Michelangelo's figural work, appear as forerunners of the artist's chimneypiece caryatids. Preliminary drawings for the sculptures show that the artist obsessively

⁶⁶² This design's similarity to the work of Michelangelo was noted in 'The International Exhibition,' *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (7 February 1863): 3; 'The International Exhibition,' *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (8 February 1863): 2.

⁶⁶³ See Hugh Stannus, *Alfred Stevens and his Work* (London: The Autotype Company, 1891), 25.

sketched a myriad different iterations of the figures, with sometimes countless examples appearing on a single page, as he attempted varying arrangements of their limbs, the twist of their bodies, and their interaction with the fetters of cloth to depict their 'highly aestheticized suffering' (Figs. 5.37 & 5.38).⁶⁶⁴ All of the sketches share similarities in design through their bowed heads, crouching and counterpoised postures, the composition of their bent limbs, and the cloth having the appearance of binding them or impeding their movement. In several of these drawings, Stevens also incorporated the architectural blocks or entablatures that were to rest upon the caryatids' shoulders, to examine how best they could be incorporated into the structure (Figs. 5.39). All of these works show that Stevens had decided from early on in the design process to adopt caryatids that differed greatly from earlier chimneypiece examples, and indeed all previous caryatid types seen in Britain, and instead settled on figures which displayed an emphasised corporeality through their musculature and torsion and which were, furthermore, imbued with a sense of suffering; figures which 'the great Michelangelo would have been proud to sign' (Fig. 5.40).⁶⁶⁵

In his 1871 essay on Michelangelo, Walter Pater provided a concise description of the 'Michelangelesque', characterising it as 'sweetness and strength, pleasure with surprise, an energy of conception which seems at every moment about to break through all the conditions of comely form, recovering, touch by touch, a loveliness found usually only in the simplest natural things - *ex forti dulcedo*'.⁶⁶⁶ A clarification of what Pater, and other nineteenth-century writers and artists, meant by the 'Michelangelesque', and by their general comparisons of Stevens with Michelangelo, may improve our understanding of Stevens' Renaissance-inspired caryatids. Østermark-Johansen has provided a thorough description of the reception and critical response to Michelangelo in the late Victorian period and her work shows that much of this commentary focused on his poetry or the man

⁶⁶⁴ Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength*, 133.

⁶⁶⁵ Beresford Chancellor, 'Dorchester House and Alfred Stevens,' 91.

⁶⁶⁶ Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (New York: Dover, 2005), 51.

himself, with less emphasis on his paintings, sculpture, and architecture, although a substantial amount of material survives regarding his drawings.⁶⁶⁷ To understand what the ‘Michelangelesque’ referred to in critics’ responses to the Dorchester House chimneypiece specifically it is therefore necessary to look in more detail solely at how aspects of Michelangelo’s visual art were described in the period from the fireplace’s creation onwards.

The later nineteenth- and early twentieth-century descriptions of Stevens’ ‘Michelangelesque’ work was a late development of the interest in Michelangelo’s painted and sculpted oeuvre that emerged at the end of the eighteenth century in Britain. Joshua Reynolds acted as a seminal figure in the development of this interest and he acclaimed the Renaissance master, calling him the ‘greatest of all authorities’, in the fifteen discourses he delivered between 1769 and 1790, during his time as President of the Royal Academy.⁶⁶⁸ In accordance with contemporary Romanticist theories, with their emphasis on the emotions and experience of the beholder, Reynolds focused on the nature of the sublime in the sixteenth-century artist’s work. In his highly influential eighteenth-century treatise on this concept, Edmund Burke identified ‘ideas of pain, danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible’ as sources of sublime effects as they produce the ‘strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling’.⁶⁶⁹ The sublime was therefore thought to move the viewer more profoundly than that which was simply considered beautiful, and it frequently does so by being threatening, immense, or magnificent, thus overwhelming and affecting the viewer intensely and viscerally. Reynolds subsequently recognised that Michelangelo’s ideas are ‘vast and sublime; his people are a superior order of beings; there is nothing about them, nothing in the air of their actions or their attitudes, or the style and cast of their very limbs or features, that puts one in mind of their belonging, to our own

⁶⁶⁷ See Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength*, 75-76.

⁶⁶⁸ Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses*, ed. Edward Gilpin Johnson (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Company, 1891), 112; Deborah Parker, *Michelangelo and the Art of Letter Writing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 26.

⁶⁶⁹ Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1757), 13.

species'.⁶⁷⁰ Through the intense, emotional impact of these 'vast' and 'superior' figural compositions, the beholder was considered raised 'to the level of these figures' and could 'participate in the sublime elevation of an ideal world'.⁶⁷¹

Following Reynolds, Henry Fuseli also contributed to the period's blossoming critical appraisal of Michelangelo, through several lectures at the Royal Academy from 1801, and he developed Reynolds' ideas on Michelangelo's sublimity by examining the relationship between Michelangelo's art and his own person. In particular, he reintroduced the concept of *terribilità*, a term used by the artist's Cinquecento contemporaries to describe his works and the man himself, which implies an emotional intensity of person combined with the sense of the sublime.⁶⁷² Fuseli thus emphasised the awe-inspiring and overwhelming aspects of the viewer's encounter with the 'awful presence' of Michelangelo's figures.⁶⁷³ The work of Reynolds and Fuseli instigated an international fascination with Michelangelo and their ideas of the sublime character of Michelangelo's work, with its relation to the grandeur of his figural designs and his *terribilità*, as well as their consequential intense impact on the beholder, were promulgated up to the later decades of the century.

Although focused on his poetry, Pater's essay offers one of the most original and important accounts of Michelangelo's artistic output during the Victorian period, and it was highly influential following its publication. Indeed, Rothery's significantly later description of Stevens' caryatids, in which he stated that they display 'great dormant strength', appears to borrow from Pater's commentary on Michelangelo, with his description of an 'energy [...] about to break through', thus implying an acknowledgment of the relationship between the Victorian and Renaissance artists.⁶⁷⁴ Pater indicated

⁶⁷⁰ Reynolds, *Discourses*, 132.

⁶⁷¹ Michael H. Duffy, 'Michelangelo and the Sublime in Romantic Art Criticism,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56, no. 2 (April 1995): 223.

⁶⁷² Duffy, 'Michelangelo and the Sublime,' 226.

⁶⁷³ Henry Fuseli, *The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli*, ed. John Knowles (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 167.

⁶⁷⁴ Cadogan Rothery, *Chimneypieces and Ingle Nooks*, 79.

that opposing forces underlined his understanding of Michelangelo's work, specifically a 'sweetness' that arises from a certain strength or a latent power that lies just below the surface of his figural forms. He described the characteristics of Michelangelo's art that distinguish it from the classical, such as 'the presence of a convulsive energy in it, becoming in lower hands merely monstrous and forbidding', as well as a certain grace, along with the 'sweetness'.⁶⁷⁵ He emphasised the artist's interest in the human form by claiming that the 'world of natural things has almost no existence for him' and that it 'belongs to the quality of his genius thus to concern itself almost exclusively with the making of man' in 'the creation of life itself in its supreme form [...] in the cold and lifeless stone'.⁶⁷⁶ For Pater, although he took a 'deep delight in carnal form', the sixteenth-century artist's figures also express inner thoughts and emotions, they have, for example, a 'brooding spirit' or 'faces charged with dreams', while the 'mysterious figure' of Adam on the Sistine ceiling is imbued with a 'passionate weeping'.⁶⁷⁷

Pater's poetic paean thus adapts earlier notions relating to the Renaissance artist, such as the emotionally-charged sublime nature of the 'brooding' and 'mysterious' figures, while developing the author's original interpretation. His ideas encapsulate much of what was later discussed in relation to Michelangelo's visual art: namely, his obsession with figural form combined with a sense of inner contemplation, turmoil, mystery, or life. In their 1892 work, Arthur Christopher Benson and Herbert Francis William Tatham displayed the influence of Pater by expressing similar sentiments in elegiac language when they claimed that Michelangelo's figures 'took shape from the vague broodings of a pent spirit [...]; they seemed oppressed by labouring thoughts too great for utterance, thoughts which, as Wordsworth said, lie too deep for tears; the mystery of man's identity, his short and passionate life, his blind, immense future - these are what underlie those brows charged with mystery, those

⁶⁷⁵ Pater, *Renaissance*, 51.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 53, 55-56.

deep-set, wondering eyes'.⁶⁷⁸ Although for Pater this sense of inner power could also be variously associated with the 'creation of life', the 'warmth and fulness of the world', or 'vague fancies, misgivings, presentiments', from the 1860s onwards it was typically connected to turmoil, torment, or sadness.

In an article written in 1868 based on his experience of looking at Old Master drawings in Florence, Algernon Charles Swinburne noted the 'brooding' nature of Michelangelo's figures by describing them in terms which emphasised their sadness, as well as the sense of sublime *terribilità* of which Fuseli spoke.⁶⁷⁹ Swinburne wrote that 'some grave and subtle sorrow' is latent in much of the artist's output and, according to several late nineteenth-century writers, this was especially noticeable in the figures for the Medici tomb. This is exemplified in Poynter's claim, in the 1870s, that 'sorrow and conflicting emotions [...] burn in the cold marble of those solemn figures in the Mausoleum of the Medici'.⁶⁸⁰ This comment was made in the artist's defence of Michelangelo following a lecture Ruskin had delivered at the University of Oxford in 1871, that heavily criticised the work of the Renaissance master.

Although Michelangelo was an important subject of discussion by artists and critics from the late eighteenth century onwards, a more pronounced critical engagement with the artist was witnessed from the 1870s, largely as a result of Ruskin's attack. Ruskin's overall attitude towards the artist in the text of his lecture is unremittingly condemnatory, particularly highlighting Michelangelo's lack of ability, vanity, and his seemingly corrupt depiction of the human body.⁶⁸¹ Amid the censorious commentary, certain aspects of the artist's style are highlighted, such as Michelangelo's

⁶⁷⁸ Arthur Christopher Benson and Herbert Francis William Tatham, *Men of Might: Studies of Great Characters* (London: Edward Arnold, 1921), 88.

⁶⁷⁹ See Algernon Charles Swinburne, 'Notes on Designs of the Old Masters at Florence,' *Essays and Studies* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1875): 314-57.

⁶⁸⁰ Swinburne, 'Notes on Designs of the Old Masters,' 318; Edward J. Poynter, *Ten Lectures on Art* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1880), 247.

⁶⁸¹ See John Ruskin, *The Relation between Micheal Angelo and Tintoret* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1872).

preoccupation with figural forms and Ruskin perceived that this did not display a full or correct understanding of the human body. Indeed, he believed it ultimately led to a neglect in the artist's depiction of faces, as well as the representation of the body in ugly contorted postures with 'labyrinths of limbs, and mountains of sides and shoulders' that are 'cast it into every conceivable attitude, often in violation of all natural probability'.⁶⁸² He also noted the artist's 'preference for pain', his common depiction of 'vice or agony' or 'writhed concretions of muscular pain', and the overall sense of looming and mystery in all 'that shadowing, storming, and coiling of his'.⁶⁸³

In 1870, the art collector John Charles Robinson had made reference to Michelangelo's distinct depiction of the human body by claiming that 'excessive muscular development [...] ultimately characterised Michel Angelo's productions' and this motif of emphasised or exaggerated muscularity was much discussed by Victorian commentators such as Ruskin, which appears as a development of Reynolds' description of the superhuman character of the artist's figures' actions, poses and limbs.⁶⁸⁴ Symonds, for example, described Michelangelo's human figures as 'Titanic', while Poynter reiterated Ruskin's description of them as colossal 'in magnitude', although he rebuked the art critic for claiming that this interfered with their 'sublimity'.⁶⁸⁵ In one of his lectures delivered to the Royal Academy between 1876 and 1882, meanwhile, the painter Edward Armitage recognised that while Michelangelo's 'departure from natural proportions', as well as his 'forced attitudes', offended certain contemporary artists, they should nonetheless be seen as evidence of the Renaissance artist as the 'great master [...] of style and drawing'.⁶⁸⁶ He noted how this is especially apparent, and the artist's reputation vindicated, through a viewing of his work in the Sistine Chapel.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸² Ruskin, *Micheal Angelo and Tintoret*, 17, 29.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, 17, 28, 37-9.

⁶⁸⁴ J.C. Robinson, *A Critical Account of the Drawings by Michel Angelo and Raffaello in the University Galleries, Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1870), 68.

⁶⁸⁵ John Addington Symonds and Margaret Symonds, *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1892), 235-6; Poynter, *Ten Lectures*, 226; Ruskin, *Micheal Angelo and Tintoret*, 37.

⁶⁸⁶ Edward Armitage, *Lectures on Painting* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1883), 159-60.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 160.

Like Ruskin, Poynter also observed that ‘writhed’ and ‘coiling’ forms are characteristic of Michelangelo’s work but the artist defended them by stating that they are placed in the ‘most likely positions’ for their specific contexts, whether reclining in repose or struggling with opposing forces, and that these poses were ultimately ‘expressed in the most beautiful manner’, a feat which he believed no other artist had attained since the ‘best Greek period’.⁶⁸⁸ For Symonds, the poses were simply reflective of Michelangelo’s ability to capture fleeting and passing moments that were ‘transitory phases of corporeal action’ referring to ‘the model in a posture lasting but a fraction of a second’, while for Swinburne these bodily forms were ‘serpentine’ in nature.⁶⁸⁹

This latter term relates to the Renaissance concept of the *figura serpentinata*, which John Shearman claims Michelangelo invented and which he describes, by quoting G.P. Lomazzo’s *Trattato* of 1584, as a ‘pyramidal form with [...] the twisting of a live snake in motion, which is also the form of a waving flame [...]. The figures should resemble the letter S’.⁶⁹⁰ More recently, Østermark-Johansen has examined the *serpentinata* nature of Michelangelo’s work in more detail and states that it implies ‘content struggling against form, spirit struggling against matter’.⁶⁹¹ Vernon Lee also commented on this aspect of Michelangelo’s depiction of human bodies while highlighting how the artist could ‘tie human beings into the finest knots, twist them into the most shapely brackets, frameworks, and keystones’.⁶⁹²

This last statement is a reminder that much of Michelangelo’s work displayed a relationship between his muscular and contorted figures and architectural structures, which, as shown, is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in the Sistine Chapel ceiling and this, along with the *Last Judgement* fresco,

⁶⁸⁸ Poynter, *Ten Lectures*, 226, 236-7.

⁶⁸⁹ Addington Symonds and Symonds, *Swiss Highlands*, 237; Swinburne, ‘Notes on Designs of the Old Masters,’ 318.

⁶⁹⁰ John Shearman, *Mannerism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 81.

⁶⁹¹ Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength*, 81.

⁶⁹² Vernon Lee, *Renaissance Fancies and Studies: Being a Sequel to Euphorion* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons; London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1896), 183.

was the focus of many nineteenth-century art critics' descriptions of Michelangelo's output. The Sistine ceiling itself is evidently an architectural structure within which are various physical spandrels and pendentives that the artist had to accommodate. Alongside these were the fictive architectural elements he painted onto the ceiling, such as the plinths and cornice already discussed, which the multitude of human figures interact with. Furthermore, the painted figures on this structure, through their varying degrees of realism and their relationship with the real and illusionary architecture, have the appearance of being painted representations of architectural and figural sculpture. The artist thus created a work that demonstrates a highly complex and innovative merging of figures and architecture, real and illusionary.

This aspect of the Sistine vault was noted by several nineteenth-century writers, such as Poynter when he commented upon the importance of design and 'beautiful arrangement' to the artist's work, and Symonds, in his description of the 'vast decorative architectural effects' in which there are 'Titanic forms suspended forever'.⁶⁹³ Indeed, Symonds perfectly summarised Michelangelo's integration of painted sculptural figural forms with the physical and painted architectural elements in his statement that the

architectural setting provided for the figures and pictures of the Sistine vault is so obviously conventional, every point of vantage has been so skilfully appropriated to plastic uses, every square inch of the ideal building becomes so naturally, and without confusion, a pedestal for the human form, that we are lost in wonder at the synthetic imagination which here for the first time combined the arts of architecture, sculpture, and painting in a single organism.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹³ Poynter, *Ten Lectures*, 243-5; Addington Symonds and Symonds, *Swiss Highlands*, 235-6; Benson and Tatham, *Men of Might*, 86.

⁶⁹⁴ John Addington Symonds, *The Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti*, vol. 1 (London: John C. Nimmo, 1893), 241.

This aspect of Michelangelo's work, in which the art forms of architecture, sculpture, and painting are combined, was particularly important for many nineteenth-century comparisons of Stevens with the Renaissance artist, as we shall see.

Østermark-Johansen reminds us that the 'depiction of pain in art and literature was a major issue in the cultural debate of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' and this is reflected in the variety of opinions taken by authors regarding Michelangelo's depiction of figures which appeared as oppressed or suffering.⁶⁹⁵ As seen, this was particularly problematic for Ruskin who censured the artist for his use of 'violent gesture', 'vice or agony as the subject of thought', and his 'dark carnality', and he ultimately claimed that he had 'no excuse [...] for the preference of pain'.⁶⁹⁶ Following Fuseli, nineteenth-century writers and critics often related this characteristic of the artist's work to his own emotional state, arguing that the passion innate in his work was a result of the 'very indignation with which Michael Angelo laboured', which 'lent a convulsive energy to his works which makes it more interesting than the work of almost any of his contemporaries', or that 'he must have felt within himself a wild throng of ideas, thoughts of majestic beauty always struggling to find utterance'.⁶⁹⁷

These statements link the figures' brooding characteristics to the artist himself and Østermark-Johansen shows how this influenced the critical response to his work by claiming that 'Michelangelo's *terribilità* was essentially a deeply disturbing power to' Ruskin, as well as the painter Edward Burne-Jones, as it was 'an expression of a whole range of passions which they probably both, on a subconscious level, could recognize in themselves'.⁶⁹⁸ As they emanated from the artist's tortured soul, this allowed the sculptures to express a particular emotional intensity and Charles Clément, who Poynter had referred to in his defence of the artist, eloquently described this in his 1861 biography of the artist. He wrote that for Michelangelo the marble 'n'exprimera plus seulement la beauté d'une manière abstraite et générale;

⁶⁹⁵ Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength*, 98.

⁶⁹⁶ Ruskin, *Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, 16-7, 28, 40.

⁶⁹⁷ Benson and Tatham, *Men of Might*, 89, 90.

⁶⁹⁸ Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength*, 137.

il traduira, taillé par une main puissante, les idées et les sentiments. “Le plus grand artiste ne saurait rien concevoir que le marbre ne renferme en son sein, mais il faut une main obéissante [...] pour l’en faire jaillir.” La main obéissante s’essaye déjà à faire dire à la pierre ce que jamais elle n’avait dit encore’ (‘will no longer simply express beauty in an abstract and general manner; carved by a powerful hand, it will show ideas and emotions. “The greatest artist cannot conceive anything that the marble does not contain within it, but it takes an obedient hand [...] to bring it forth.” The obedient hand tries to get the stone to say what it has not said before’).⁶⁹⁹ In this biography, Clément indicated that at the time of writing there was widespread opinion that Michelangelo could only express extreme emotions in violent poses but he countered this by claiming that these figures, such as those on the Sistine ceiling possess ‘les plus hautes qualités de l’art: invention, sublimité du style, largeur et science du dessin, justesse et convenance de la couleur [...] si frappant dans la voûte de la Sixtine (‘the highest qualities of art: invention, sublimity of style, breadth and science of drawing, the accuracy and appropriateness of colour [...] so striking in the vault of the Sistine Chapel’).⁷⁰⁰

It is apparent, therefore, that from as early as the 1860s a ‘complex cluster of ideas’ related certain characteristics to Michelangelo, offered by a multitude of writers and commentators, and that this was intensified following Ruskin’s 1871 lecture.⁷⁰¹ Alison Smith summarises the debate in Britain regarding Michelangelo’s sculptures during the 1870s and 1880s as being divided in two camps, ‘on one side the enthusiasts for whom Michelangelo’s nudes were dignified, spiritual beings; on the other those writers who found Michelangelo’s figures anguished and pained’, with certain critics being offended by his depiction of anguish and his obsession with the human body, while painters who supported the teaching of anatomy in particular, such as Poynter, came to Michelangelo’s defence.⁷⁰²

⁶⁹⁹ Charles Clément, *Michel-Ange, Léonard de Vinci, Raphaël* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1861), 63.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁷⁰¹ Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength*, 259.

⁷⁰² Alison Smith, *The Victorian Nude: Sexuality, Morality and Art* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1996), 182-84.

Regardless of the author's attitude towards the artist, Michelangelo's use of the human body, especially the nude, appears as an element of his work consistently mentioned by writers and critics from the late eighteenth century. From the 1860s onwards, and especially in the 1870s and 1880s, although an array of opinions considering the merits of his painted and sculpted figural depictions is apparent, certain traits were generally agreed upon such as the excessively muscular nature of the figures, their distinct contorted or serpentine postures, and their relation to architecture, as well as his painted figures' sculptural appearance. The figures' particular abilities to express interior thoughts and emotional states were equally important to almost all the commentators, and how this could affect the viewer through its grand character, its brooding spirit, its internal sweetness, or its inherent mystery. The artist's frequent depiction of pain and suffering also comprised their considerations of the 'Michelangelesque' and this could enhance the figures sublime *terribilità*, which could ultimately relate to the anguish of the artist himself.

Many of these qualities that encapsulated the character of Michelangelo's art for Victorian artists and critics are visible in Stevens preliminary sketches and drawings for, as well as the completed sculptures of, the Dorchester House caryatids, and his other figural designs that acted as models for the figures. The caryatids therefore emerge as key agents in the discourse of the 1870s and 1880s, offering an ideal embodiment of contemporary notions relating to Michelangelo's art. Both caryatids are striking nudes, with the muscularity of their semi-bare twisting limbs emphasising their corporeality, and they are far removed from the idealised bodies, that display calm or elegant repose, of earlier caryatids, being instead filled with vigour, movement, and life. Their bodies have that same 'strange interfusion of sweetness and strength' of which Pater spoke in relation to Michelangelo, with a 'sweetness' evident in the carving of their soft, plaintive, and pitiable faces, while there is a 'strength' coursing in their muscular limbs and shoulders that support such a heavy structure.⁷⁰³ The

⁷⁰³ Pater, *Renaissance*, 66.

sadness they display in their downcast faces and bent bodies is not overtly expressive but more ‘grave and subtle’, reminiscent of that described by Swinburne, and the result of the suffering of beings who are compelled to bear a weight on their shoulders for eternity (Figs. 5.41 & 5.42). They are crouching and twisting beneath their burden in an interpretation of the *figura serpentinata* and, like the Sistine figures, they are fully integrated into an architectural structure.

It is perhaps worth noting at this point that Michelangelo had included several caryatid figures in his Sistine ceiling, with the plinths the *Ignudi* rest upon being supported by pairs of putti, each featuring one female figure. Several more caryatid putti are also encountered holding aloft the plaques with the names of the various Sibyls, as well as the Prophets, that inhabit it, thus offering a further possible relation to Stevens’ sculptures but displaying a different version of the motif with Stevens’ caryatids expressing a much deeper relationship with Michelangelo’s ‘Titanic’ bodies. Alongside the figures from the Sistine vault, and the allegory of *Night* in the Medici Chapel, there is, however, yet another set of figural designs by Michelangelo which seem to have provided important inspiration for Stevens’ caryatids, their association being both visual and semiotic, and which intensify the relationship of Stevens’ work with that of the Renaissance master.

In 1505, Michelangelo was commissioned by Pope Julius II, who also ordered the painting of the Sistine Chapel, to design his tomb, which the artist intermittently worked on until its completion in 1545 in a manifestation that differed significantly from his original designs (Fig. 5.43). Over this period of several decades, Michelangelo made various designs for the project and a study for a 1513 version of the tomb, which survives in a better-preserved sixteenth-century copy by Giacomo Rocchetti, shows that he intended for it to feature a series of caryatid-terms with a bound male nude chained to each (Fig. 5.44).⁷⁰⁴ According to Symonds, who called these naked figures both ‘prisoners’

⁷⁰⁴ It is not completely clear from this design if these figures are male or female. Chapman calls them caryatids in Chapman, *Michelangelo Drawings*, 135, as does an 1875 article from *The Builder*. See ‘Professor E.M. Barry’s Lectures at the Royal Academy. No.3,’ *The Builder* 33 (13 March 1875): 230. Several nineteenth-century accounts

and ‘captives’, they represented the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture and demonstrated that ‘all the talents had been taken captive by death, together with Pope Julius, since never would they find another patron to cherish and encourage them as he had done’.⁷⁰⁵ In Giorgio Vasari’s sixteenth-century account, the bound ‘prisoners’ also represented virtues, the sciences, and provinces that the pope had conquered, alongside the Liberal Arts.⁷⁰⁶ Whatever their intended allegorical status, they have been known as *Slaves* since at least the seventeenth century and, in their original intended position, bound to the caryatid-terms behind them, they would have literally enacted that motif’s association with slavery.⁷⁰⁷

Two of these figures were sculpted to a relatively finished state by Michelangelo and are now found in the Louvre’s collection. They are individually known as the *Dying Slave* and the *Rebellious Slave* and they offer striking antecedents for Stevens’ caryatid designs (Figs. 5.45 & 5.46). They resemble Michelangelo’s painted Sistine figures as they are carved, like the Dorchester caryatids, with muscular bodies in distinctive contorted, struggling poses. They notably have the bandeaux of cloth that appears to ensnare or impede them as it entwines across their chests, necks, and lower bodies, and this is echoed in the ribands that appear to bind the lower body of one of Stevens’ caryatids and the shoulders of both. Of these two sculptures, the *Dying Slave* was the most admired by nineteenth-century observers, being designated ‘l’une des oeuvres les plus accomplies de la statuaire’ (‘one of the most accomplished works in statuary’) and the ‘most fascinating creation of the master’s

simply describe them as terms, presumably after Vasari and Condivi. See Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artist*, trans. Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 433; Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl, ed. Hellmut Wohl (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 33.

⁷⁰⁵ Addington Symonds, *Michelangelo Buonarroti* 1, 132, 138. This is probably based on Condivi’s statement, in which only the Liberal Arts are mentioned and he highlighted that they represented painting, sculpture, and architecture, in particular in Condivi, *Life of Michelangelo*, 33. Howard Hibbard claims that this was the intended allegorical status of enslaved figures that featured on the 1505 project for the tomb but it is not clear if this was still the case for those figures designed in 1513. However, he states that certain visual elements indicate they may represent the ‘Liberal Arts’ in Howard Hibbard, *Michelangelo* (London: The Folio Society, 2007), 119.

⁷⁰⁶ See Vasari, *Lives of the Artist*, 433.

⁷⁰⁷ Although these figures were known as *prigionieri* in Michelangelo’s lifetime, according to Charles Robertson, they have been referred to as ‘slaves’ since the seventeenth century. See Charles Robertson, ‘Allegory and Ambiguity in Michelangelo’s Slaves,’ in McGrath and Massing, *Slave in European Art*, 40.

genius'.⁷⁰⁸ A distinctive feature of this figure is his upward twisting arm, fettered at the wrist and expressing the figure's struggle to free himself, and this arrangement is also encountered on both of Stevens' figures, as well as being repeated on other examples of slave figures by Michelangelo.

Four more such figures, sculpted as male nudes, survive in varying states of completion from a later design for the tomb, and are now found in the Academia in Florence, and these again appear to have influenced Stevens' figures (Figs. 5.47, 5.48 & 5.49).⁷⁰⁹ The relationship of these *Slaves* to caryatids generally is more pronounced than the earlier examples, as they literally enact the burdened state of the motif, being sculpted, like Atlantes or Telamones, to support a section of the tomb. Indeed, Howard Hibbard has described these as 'much more architectural than the earlier figures [...], as carriers of real weight rather than as ornamental symbols posed in front of an architectural background'.⁷¹⁰ Notably, this statement could equally describe Stevens' caryatids when compared with earlier chimneypiece designs using the motif. Furthermore, Hibbard has claimed that the term 'prigione', which was applied to these sculptures in the Cinquecento, encompassed 'caryatid' or 'atlas figure' among its meanings, and one of these figures, whose load-bearing role is emphasised by his carved shoulders and upper body being bent over at a right angle, is now known simply as *Atlas* (Fig. 5.47).⁷¹¹

The figures called the *Bearded Slave* and the *Young Slave*, meanwhile, both feature the bent upward-pointing arm that echoes that of the *Dying Slave*, and which is repeated on the Dorchester caryatids, alongside bowed heads and the appearance that the weight they bear rests on their shoulders. The correlation between both the Renaissance and Victorian artists' sculptures is emphasised in Stevens' working models, through the writhing bodies, upwards twisting arms, and bowed heads, but also due

⁷⁰⁸ Clément, *Michel-Ange*, 93; Symonds, *Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti 2*: 132, 138.

⁷⁰⁹ Hibbard claims this may date to a 1516 version of the project in Hibbard, *Michelangelo*, 133.

⁷¹⁰ Hibbard, *Michelangelo*, 134-35.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, 135.

to the seemingly purposeful unfinished and fragmentary state of the figures, an aspect of the *Slave* sculptures that accentuates their sense of struggle as it seems to express the desire of the figural form to free itself from the marble block (Figs. 5.50 & 5.51).

Stevens' adoption of Michelangelo's renowned *Slaves* as models not only broke with traditional attempts to negate the caryatid's enslaved status, it further emphasised this status, and did so in a manner thus far not seen in sculptures explicitly representing female slaves. This is perhaps most clearly evident when the caryatids are compared with the nineteenth-century's most famous sculpture of an enslaved woman, Hiram Powers' *Greek Slave* of 1845 (Fig. 5.52). Here the figure, although shackled, stands in a dignified pose and it was 'hailed for its purity [...] because the afflicted girl was presented unashamed by her nudity'.⁷¹² The contrast between Powers' and Stevens' figures is immediately obvious in their forms and role, the *Greek Slave* being a freestanding upright 'ideal' sculpture, while, in the case of Stevens' caryatids, their nudity appears to enhance their sense of dejection and subjugation, as it enhances the display of their struggling bodies.⁷¹³ The similarities, both visual and symbolic, between these figures and Michelangelo's *Slaves* show that the Tomb for Julius II, or at least the tomb as it was envisioned, was a key object in the development of the Dorchester House Chimneypiece. In fact, the chimneypiece can arguably be seen as Stevens' attempt at a contemporary rendering of the tomb, thus offering the ultimate expression of his alignment with Michelangelo. Indeed, this may be what Meier-Graefe had in mind when he wrote that, with the chimneypiece, we 'are reminded of the tombs of the Cinquecento'.⁷¹⁴

Although the Sistine vault was considered Michelangelo's masterpiece by many nineteenth-century commentators, it was also acknowledged by his biographers, such as Vasari and Ascanio Condivi,

⁷¹² Smith, *The Victorian Nude*, 84.

⁷¹³ Elizabeth McGrath has noted that Michelangelo's *Slaves* encouraged Renaissance artists to make nudity the attribute of slavery in Elizabeth McGrath, 'Caryatids, Page Boys, and African Fetters. Themes of Slavery in European Art,' in McGrath and Massing, *Slave in European Art*, 6.

⁷¹⁴ Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 195.

that he was initially reluctant to work on it and would have preferred to have completed his work on the tomb.⁷¹⁵ Indeed, it has been claimed that had the latter structure been realised as intended, Michelangelo would have ‘prevailed over any artist, however highly regarded’ and the fact that the artist’s vision was not fulfilled has been described as the ‘tragedy of the tomb’.⁷¹⁶ What is more important, however, in terms of the similarities of both artists as they are expressed in the two sculptural ensembles, was the consideration of their respective geniuses being based upon their abilities to work across art forms.

Since Vasari’s seminal sixteenth-century account of Michelangelo, in which his godlike status was related to his ability to ‘demonstrate in every art [...] the meaning of perfection’, the artist’s renown has been connected to his work as a sculptor, painter, and architect while Stevens’ fame, especially after his death, largely rested on his integration of architecture and sculpture, as well as his skills as a painter and, in particular, his exceptional designs for decorative objects.⁷¹⁷ Stevens’ consciously promoted his ability to work with varying media, taking as his motto ‘I know but one art’ to demonstrate his equal mastery of the various art forms. According to a multitude of commentators, this was adopted by Stevens, and it was first used during his submission to the Wellington Memorial competition after a similar expression by Michelangelo.⁷¹⁸ This is evinced in several nineteenth-century accounts of the artist, such as the architect Arthur Beresford Pite’s use of the ‘well-known dictum that he knew but one art’ in defence of the ‘architectural structure and decorative character of Michael Angelo’s painting and sculpture, as well as the sculpturesque and decorative qualities of his works in Architecture’.⁷¹⁹ It, and variations of the expression were also quoted frequently in articles

⁷¹⁵ Vasari, *Lives of the Artist*, 414; Condivi, *Life of Michelangelo*, 39.

⁷¹⁶ Condivi, *Life of Michelangelo*, 33, 77; Addington Symonds, *Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti*, vol. 1, 199.

⁷¹⁷ Vasari, *Lives of the Artist*, 414.

⁷¹⁸ See, for example, ‘The Late A.G. Stevens and the Wellington Monument,’ 8; Armstrong, ‘Alfred Stevens,’ 127; ‘Review. Alfred Stevens,’ 561; Stannus, ‘Art. Alfred Stevens,’ 21. This is ‘One Art Only’ in ‘Alfred Stevens Memorial,’ 6. Also he is defined as ‘universal in genius’ in ‘Alfred Stevens,’ *Pall Mall Gazette* (16 March 1899): 3.

⁷¹⁹ Arthur Beresford Pite, ‘The Architecture of Michael Angelo’s Art,’ *The Architectural Review: For the Artist and Craftsman* 4 (June - November 1898): 226.

dedicated to Stevens following his death, such as a memorial published in *The Magazine of Art* in 1892, which uses the phrase ‘I know of but one Art’ in its title.⁷²⁰ For both the Victorian and Renaissance artists, this expression of the unity of the arts, reflected their own exceptional omniscience and, while Michelangelo made use of his Sistine-inspired *Slaves*, which themselves were considered allegorical representations of various art forms, to display this, for Stevens the caryatid, as for several artists before him, offered the ideal embodiment of the intermedial nature of his work and abilities.

As this study has stressed, the caryatid is intrinsically both sculptural and architectural, and in its adoption on a chimneypiece for a domestic use, it was, furthermore, possibly the highest form of Stevens’ decorative or applied work, which was itself much celebrated by critics.⁷²¹ For Michelangelo, his figures displayed a ‘conception of the body as perfect architecture, which through the continued variation of poses is complete, complex, dynamic, and expressive’ and their integration with architectural elements, whether real or illusionary, indicates the ‘highest degree of complexity and articulation’ in the ‘powerful individualization of the parts’ as part of an ‘extreme organic unity’.⁷²² As has been shown, conceptions of the caryatid’s body were inseparable from architectural considerations as the motif functioned as the ultimate expression of the body-architecture relationship, and in Stevens’ figures this is combined with a ‘Michelangelesque’ individualisation in the novel and complex arrangement of their muscular limbs and sculpted bodies, the presence of suffering, anguish, and an ‘organic unity’ in their seamless integration into the architectural-sculptural-ornamental form of the chimneypiece. Pierluigi De Vecchi has noted that the ‘integration of architectural framework and painted or sculpted figures is a constant in the middle years of

⁷²⁰ Cosmo Monkhouse, ‘Alfred Stevens,’ *Magazine of Art* (January 1892): 303.

⁷²¹ This was especially the case for that shown at the 1851 Exhibition, which was considered unsurpassed by any other similar work. See, for example, ‘The Late A.G. Stevens,’ *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (2 October 1875): 3; ‘Sculpture at the Royal Academy’: 11.

⁷²² De Vecchi, ‘The Syntax of Form and Posture,’ 231.

Michelangelo's artistic career' and Stevens' caryatids appear as a further development of a variety of Michelangelo's figural forms from this period.⁷²³

Michelangelo's *Slaves* may be considered the apex of the artist's experimentation with architectural bodies and they then acted as direct forerunners to Stevens' figures, embodying varying art forms, being tasked with bearing a weight, and, furthermore, through their intended physical location being bound to caryatid-terms. Thus, Stevens' caryatids may function as Victorian manifestations of these figures, justifying his explicit depiction of slaves and offering a compelling subsumption of those characteristics of Michelangelo's masterpieces of the human form, which embody the intermedial genius of the artist. In this way, it is once again due to its ability to diffuse the boundaries between art forms, and to represent simultaneously those forms within its architectural-sculptural body, that the caryatid was embraced and developed by an artist who 'displays a greater number of the various qualities which go to make a complete artist' and who was considered by some the 'greatest among English artists of his time'.⁷²⁴

Alongside the similarities in their artistic output, there were shared characteristics evident in Victorian writers' perceptions of both Michelangelo and Stevens' personas, and it is just possible that Stevens cultivated these characteristics in emulation of his Renaissance forebear. The *terribilità* of Michelangelo's work was thought to reflect his emotional and passionate temperament and it was claimed that he was prone to anger, which interrupted his ability to complete projects.⁷²⁵ Several commentaries on Stevens also mentioned his irrational and romantic nature, and stated that he was 'most impracticable', which meant his projects took a lengthy time to complete, and that 'a certain

⁷²³ Ibid., 231.

⁷²⁴ Walter Armstrong, *Alfred Stevens: A Biographical Study* (London: Remington & Co., 1881), 45; 'Alfred Stevens,' *Pall Mall Gazette*: 3.

⁷²⁵ Hibbard, *Michelangelo*, 72.

amount of procrastination [...] was a feature of Stevens's make-up'. Moreover, it was claimed that he was 'insanely' devoted to his art and that his life was one of 'storm and stress'.⁷²⁶

Stevens, therefore, did not simply emulate the art of Michelangelo, he appeared to embody the Renaissance artist. Although there was some debate regarding the merits of the influence of Michelangelo in his artworks, writers from the later nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries recognised that he was 'very far from being a mere imitator', with the *National Observer* of 1891 stating that he was not 'a conscious and deliberate imitator. So steeped was he in the knowledge of Italian art, so sympathetic were the great masters to his own temperament, that he saw the world through their eyes. But the world he saw was his, not theirs; and his performance more than repaid the debt'.⁷²⁷

Stevens' 'imitation' would therefore appear to be, to use Prettejohn's description, 'a different kind of imitation, one that is based not on subservience to a model, but rather on the intimacy of a friend'.⁷²⁸ In contrast to those modern artists who used ancient art as a model and accepted its 'inimitability', thus creating works of striking originality, in Stevens' 'imitation', although it likewise displayed similar ingenuity, as has been shown, there appeared an acknowledgement, and even an emphasis, of its debt to Michelangelo.⁷²⁹ Through its incorporation of various 'Michelangelesque' models and traits in a revolutionary design, the Dorchester Chimney-piece arguably shows that Stevens had the 'intimacy of a friend' and that he was not simply imitating Michelangelo but was felt to be, and considered himself, a sort of Michelangelo reborn in Victorian Britain. Indeed, this is reflected in

⁷²⁶ 'The Late Mr. Stevens,' 3; 'Alfred Stevens Memorial,' 6.

⁷²⁷ 'Sculpture at the Royal Academy,' 11; 'Review. Alfred Stevens,' 561. Also see Armstrong, 'Alfred Stevens,' 127; Charles Francis Keary in Keary, *The Pursuit of Reason*, 421, for example, states that the 'practice of Michelangelo has exercised a great fascination on sculptors of originality and genius, as on Alfred Stevens and on M. Rodin. I do not hold their following his fashion for mere imitation or plagiarism: but that the practice appeals to anyone who really understands the nature of his art'. For contrast, see 'Art Books,' *Illustrated London News* (26 November 1881): 527.

⁷²⁸ Prettejohn, *Modernity of Ancient Sculpture*, 26.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, 26-27.

Hugh Stannus' 1911 claim that he was 'the last of the great Italians'.⁷³⁰ In this context, the chimneypiece appears as Stevens' attempt to complete a masterpiece that vies with that of Michelangelo, which was never realised as intended - his tomb for Pope Julius II. Ironically, as a result of Stevens' own 'Michelangelesque' temperament, which delayed much of his work, although the chimneypiece was installed in Dorchester House in 1869, the caryatids were finished at a later date, following his death, by his assistant James Gamble.⁷³¹

Although many late nineteenth-century articles called the Wellington Monument Stevens' masterpiece, the chimneypiece's status as a contender for this accolade is evident in certain specialist art publications. In, for example, *The Art Amateur* of 1881, it was claimed that Stevens

certainly left behind him nothing finer than the fireplace in Dorchester House [...]. Sculpture to him was as intimately related to architecture as was his own flesh to his own bones; and so we find that his noblest sculpture works - the life-sized marble figures in Dorchester House, and the bronze figures of the Wellington Memorial - are, like the best sculpture of which the world knows, integral and essential parts of architectural compositions. Since Michael Angelo made the monument to Lorenzo de Medici, no stronger or more vigorous work has been made in marble than these Dorchester House figures. The pose of them, the manner in which the heads and shoulders are related to the cornice over them, the modelling of the flesh - all speak of an artist greater than our modern scale of measurement can by any possibility gauge.⁷³²

Furthermore, when a memorial committee was formed to honour the artist in 1910, whose objective was to 'secure that the pre-eminent place of Alfred Stevens among English sculptors should be more fully recognised', it was decided that a plaster reproduction of his Dorchester Chimneypiece would

⁷³⁰ Stannus, 'Art. Alfred Stevens,' 20.

⁷³¹ Diane Bilbey and Marjorie Trusted, *British Sculpture 1470 to 2000: A Concise Catalogue of the Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: V&A Publications, 2002), 390.

⁷³² 'Alfred Stevens,' *Art Amateur*, 76.

be given to the National Gallery of British Art, now Tate Britain, and the importance attached to the caryatids was emphasised through the decision to cast it in plaster as ‘the white marble caryatides would lose much by being reproduced in bronze’.⁷³³ This chimneypiece was then a central object in an exhibition of Stevens’ work at the National Gallery of British Art in 1911-12 and the Stevens Room that was created there to showcase his work.

The Dorchester Chimneypiece functioned to proclaim the genius of Stevens through his absorption of Michelangesque forms in the caryatids and their integration into an architectural-sculptural structure that was related to decorative art. It thus demonstrates Stevens’ goal to embody and, perhaps, even to surpass Michelangelo, as a Victorian Renaissance man. Through Stevens’ use of Michelangelo-inspired caryatids on a chimneypiece, he altered the status of a chimneypiece as a work of art. As items of private domestic decoration, chimneypieces were not typically found in galleries or museums but the reproduction of Stevens’ work in Tate Britain, and the consequent placement of the original in the V&A transformed the chimneypiece as an object. However, it is now placed in the V&A’s cafe, in an area of decorative profusion, and this, perhaps, has allowed it to be somewhat overlooked in comparison to the allegorical groups from the Wellington Monument, models for which are isolated and on prominent display in the museum’s sculpture galleries. The importance of this chimneypiece in the history of the caryatid, however, cannot be overlooked due to its far-reaching influence. The Dorchester House caryatids broke the pattern of the type of motif possible in Britain, and sculpture in Europe more widely. Following the centuries of ‘neoclassical’ caryatids, and the decades of ‘Greek’ figures inspired by ancient examples, especially the Erechtheion prototype, the caryatid took on a multitude of novel forms in the hands of British sculptors working from the 1890s onwards, many of which eschewed the appearance of the motif which since the seventeenth century had predominantly expressed a state of ‘repose and stillness’.⁷³⁴

⁷³³ An undated ‘Alfred Stevens Memorial Committee’ leaflet quoted by Hatt in *Sculpture Victorious*, 367; ‘Alfred Stevens Memorial,’ *Athenaeum* (23 July 1910): 105.

⁷³⁴ Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art* 1, 358.

***‘How different are the couple of crouching figures one frequently sees nowadays struggling under a load’:*⁷³⁵ Sculptors and the Caryatid after Stevens (1890-1909)**

*‘Und dann die Karyatide. Nichtmehr die aufrechte Figur, die leicht oder schwer das Tragen eines Steines erträgt, unter den sie sich doch nur gestellt hat [...] Auf jedem kleinsten Teile dieses Leibes liegt der ganze Stein wie ein Wille, der größer war, älter und mächtiger, und doch hat seines Tragens Schicksal nicht aufgehört. Er trägt, wie man im Traum das Unmögliche trägt, und findet keinen Ausweg. Und sein Zusammengesunkensein und Versagen ist immer noch Tragen geblieben, und wenn die nächste Müdigkeit kommt und den Körper ganz niederzwingt ins Liegen, so wird auch das Liegen noch Tragen sein, Tragen ohne Ende. So ist die Karyatide’.*⁷³⁶ Rainer Marie Rilke

(And then there is the caryatid. No longer the upright figure, which, light or heavy, bears the weight of a stone under which it has stood [...]. On the smallest part of this body the whole stone lies like a will, which is greater, older and more powerful, which is the fate of this figure to bear. It bears, as one bears the impossible in a dream, and finds no escape. And its collapsing and falling has still been sustained, and when the next fatigue comes, and the body is forced to lie down, so in lying will it still bear, bearing without end. So it is with the caryatid.)

In 1894, *Punch* published a satirical poem criticising the popularity in women’s fashion of the ‘leg o’ mutton’ sleeve, which consisted of a large gathering of material around the shoulder and upper arm that tapered towards the elbow. Reflecting a ‘terrible rumour’ that the fashion’s ‘enormous and preposterous shoulders’ could cause an enlargement in the muscular development of the ‘graceful, polished, well-shaped shoulder of the English maiden’, the poem warned

Beware, rash girl, the hypertrophic size
Of thews that have with fifty-pound dumb-bell toyed,
Nor rival Caryatid, pillar-wise,
In pouring Atlas-weights with massy deltoid!⁷³⁷

⁷³⁵ Reynolds-Stephens in Stirling Lee and Reynolds-Stephens, ‘Sculpture in its Relation to Architecture’: 505.

⁷³⁶ Rilke, *Auguste Rodin*, 44-45.

⁷³⁷ ‘To the Girl of To-Day (A Screed by an Anatomical Poet.),’ *Punch, or the London Charivari* (24 March 1894): 133.

This reference to caryatids bearing weight on their shoulder muscles reflects the overt change that occurred in the types of figures sculpted in the closing decades of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. Alongside the general proliferation of a diversity of new forms of caryatids, including, as we have seen, an increasing use of Renaissance-inspired term figures, the period witnessed the notable appearance of bulkier sculptures, sometimes nude, in crouching positions that bore their hefty weight on their shoulders. The *Punch* poem declared ‘Return, I pray, to costume *à la Grecque* - No more with fardels strain your teres minor!’ and this could be read as a covert message to sculptors and architects to adopt the ‘Greek’ columnar type of caryatid alone, reflecting the continued widespread condemnation of figures that seemed enslaved or burdened.⁷³⁸

The shift from the absolute dominance of the restrained columnar figures that carried their burden with no visible effort on their heads, was clearly a result of Stevens’ development of an innovative new form on his chimneypiece, in tandem with the broader influence of Renaissance architectural sculpture and debates on the relationship between architecture and sculpture, as discussed in Chapter 1. The direct influence of Stevens’ sculptures is immediately apparent in a crouching figure on the facade of 82 Mortimer Street in London (Fig. 5.53).⁷³⁹ Built in 1893-96, this structure features a pair of atlante and caryatid figures that support the pediment surmounting the second floor window, which were designed by the modeller T.A. Slater and the sculptor Thomas Tyrell, based on a drawing by the building’s architect, Beresford Pite. It was declared that, with this pair of ‘exceedingly effective’ figures, the architect ‘brought Michelangelo to the streets of London’, a statement which evidently refers to the form of the figures, which owes much to Stevens’ ‘Michelangelesque’ caryatids.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁸ Ibid., 133.

⁷³⁹ Beattie also noted the relationship between these figures and the Dorchester House caryatids. See Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, 80.

⁷⁴⁰ Blomfield, ‘Some Recent Architectural Sculpture,’ 187.

Variations of this type can be found flanking the main entrance to the West Ham Technical Institute, in London (1898-1900, Figs. 5.54 & 5.55), and a dynamic pair of similar figures by Albert Hemstock Hodge appears on either side of a first-floor window on Caledonian Chambers in Glasgow (1901-3), whilst Henry C. Fehr designed another variation of this type for Victoria Station around 1910, but with a piscine appearance as its lower body is transformed into a mermaid's tail (Fig. 5.56). Pairs of figures that are almost exact replicas of the Mortimer Street caryatid can also be encountered supporting the second-floor balconies of the Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Building in Leeds of 1909 (Fig. 5.57). Designed by the sculptor and stone mason Joseph Thewlis, their concave bodies, bent limbs, bowed heads, and semi-nude state, as well as their swathes of drapery and the use of their upraised arms in imagined support of the balcony, all evince a late development of Stevens' figures. Moreover, the enduring appeal of this crouching form more widely is evident in Eric Gill's 1910 design for his first figural sculpture. Entitled *Estin Thalassa*, it consists of a carved crouching female figure in relief supporting a plaque with Greek lettering on her shoulders and upper back. The counterpoise of this figure's elbow as it points towards the opposing knee repeats the pose of the caryatid on the lefthand side of the Dorchester Chimneypiece, echoing Michelangelo's *Night*, and this is particularly clear in one of the sculptor's drawings (Fig. 5.58).

Although the sculptures described date from the 1890s onwards, an earlier work which displays a more immediate influence from Stevens can be found beyond Britain's borders, in Rodin's *Fallen Caryatid Carrying Her Stone* (Fig. 5.3). The French sculptor admired the work of Stevens' and like the latter artist's figures, his caryatid was conceived as part of a larger sculptural ensemble, the well-known *Gates of Hell*.⁷⁴¹ Consisting of a monumental doorway covered in sculpted works, the *Gates* were commissioned in 1880 for a planned Museum of Decorative Arts, which was never built. However, Rodin continued to work on the *Gates* until his death in 1917, although the complete sculpture was never cast in bronze, as intended, during his lifetime (Fig. 5.59).

⁷⁴¹ Edwards in *Sculpture Victorious*, 352.

The striking ensemble depicts a scene from Dante's *Inferno* and features countless figural sculptures, with a host of allegorical meanings. The first conception of the *Fallen Caryatid* was a crouching woman sculpted for the top of the left pilaster of the doorway. Various figures and reliefs from the *Gates* were shaped in plaster by Rodin, and several of these were then altered and developed into individual works in the round, which were then cast in bronze or carved in marble. Around 1881, Rodin enlarged the crouching figure from the doorway and added the stone that it bears, thus fully realising the figure as a caryatid. The figure is reminiscent of Stevens' caryatids in its posture, crouching with limbs that are bent in a complex arrangement, and she similarly bears her weight on her shoulders above a bowed head.

Catherine Lampert has indicated the influence of Stevens in this work by claiming that 'Rodin's interest in a 'fallen caryatid' conforms to the general principles of Carpeaux, updated by Jules Dalou, Alfred Stevens and other contemporaries who imposed the metaphor for eternal suffering on the appealing vision of a woman on bended knee, helpless and fundamentally simple, and thus to be pitied'.⁷⁴² This implies a chain of influences, presumably from Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux's *Fontaine de l'Observatoire* of 1867-74 (Fig. 5.60), which depicts the continents of Africa, America, Asia, and Europe as caryatids supporting a globe, or perhaps his *Eve après la faute* of 1871 (Fig. 5.61), to Jules Dalou's caryatids of 1867 (Fig. 5.62) and finally to Stevens' examples. This, however, does not quite make chronological sense as Stevens' caryatids were conceived earlier than those of his French counterparts and thus any trajectory of influence should surely start with him. Moreover, although indications of subjection and enslavement are clearly indicated in Carpeaux's figures, especially in the striking representation of a chained Africa, physically all of the French examples are represented in upright poses without a strong indication of struggle. It is only Stevens' figures that offer this characteristic, which is clearly repeated in Rodin's widely-reproduced sculpture. His *Gates of Hell*

⁷⁴² Catherine Lampert, *Rodin: Sculpture & Drawings* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1986), 57.

itself in turn appears to have influenced the work of one of Britain's most important sculptors of the early twentieth century, Gilbert.

'pure invention':⁷⁴³ Alfred Gilbert's Sam Wilson Chimneypiece

When the Leeds-based art collector Sam Wilson commissioned Gilbert to undertake the ornament of a chimneypiece for his dining-room, Wilson allowed the artist to choose the object's subject and, according to his early biographer Isabel McAllister, Gilbert then 'determined to tell his own history in a series of allegories, knit together into a complex ensemble'.⁷⁴⁴ The project later progressed into the design of an entire chimneypiece, which is now found in Leeds Art Gallery (Fig. 5.4).⁷⁴⁵ Executed between 1908 and 1913, Gilbert explained, in a letter to Wilson's wife, that the bronze work symbolised a 'Dream of Joy during a Sleep of Sorrow'.⁷⁴⁶ The meaning of this title can be found in the centre of the chimneypiece, in a bas-relief just above the mantel (Fig. 5.63), which depicts a

great couch upon which a man's agonised body lies, neither sleeping temporarily nor for all Eternity, only indifferent to all passing around. At his head one of the couch-posts has been torn away and is being carried off by a draped spectral figure, while from behind the lower end of the couch appears a woman bearing a symbol of Peace and Victory [...]. This apparition has failed to attract the attention or interrupt the sport of a pair of Apes, intent upon a mysterious and sinister game on the floor [...]. The bas-relief [...] symbolises the dual nature of man, without which life would be ill-balanced through the lack of contrasts, by which the relative positions of 'good' and 'ill' are determined. Thus 'The Sleep of Sorrow' has its contrast in 'The Dream of Joy', and the supporting groups typify the sanguine and the despondent dispositions.⁷⁴⁷

⁷⁴³ Gilbert on the Sam Wilson Chimneypiece, as quoted in Isabel McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert* (London: A & C Black, 1929), 193.

⁷⁴⁴ McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, 188-89.

⁷⁴⁵ Dorment claims it was commissioned late in 1908 in Dorment, *Alfred Gilbert*, 266.

⁷⁴⁶ As quoted in McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, 192.

⁷⁴⁷ As quoted in McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, 192.

This description indicates the strange and mysterious nature of the fireplace, as well as its relation to states of consciousness and its somnolent, oneiric, and ominous mood. Gilbert described the hearth as ‘the most sacred and imposing spot in a home [...], the ‘Holy of Holies’ in domestic life’ yet an overall foreboding character is encountered in the decorative scheme of the whole object.⁷⁴⁸

The bronze ensemble is infested with macabre sculptural elements throughout, reinforcing its morose quality to such an extent that Richard Dorment claims that to ‘compare it to the cool clarity of *Perseus Arming* (1881-82) or *Icarus* (1882-84) is to measure the extent to which Gilbert’s art turned from dream to nightmare’.⁷⁴⁹ Alongside the bas-relief, which appears to depict Gilbert in a death-like sleep, the unnerving quality of the structure is emphasised by the sheer excess of morbid ornament and sculptural detail and, perhaps most especially, the character of its caryatids. All of these elements combine to give the impression of a piece of sculpture that has been described as ‘repulsive’, ‘hard to like’, and ‘a confused jumble’.⁷⁵⁰ This has perhaps allowed it to be somewhat overlooked in studies of Gilbert’s works. However, its complexity, bizarre nature, and its eclectic use of historical citations, particularly the excessive use of caryatids, behove a closer examination of this ‘nightmare vision [...] decorated with images of death and mortality’.⁷⁵¹

Droth argues that the chimneypiece does not align itself with historical traditions in terms of fireplace design.⁷⁵² She demonstrates this by emphasising how earlier fireplaces were modelled on architectural structures through their use of elements such as pediments, classical columns, and caryatids, in comparison with Gilbert’s work, which avoids this architectonic tradition and instead acts ‘not so much as a structural embellishment as a work of art’.⁷⁵³ Gilbert’s structure clearly

⁷⁴⁸ McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, 190.

⁷⁴⁹ Dorment, *Alfred Gilbert: Sculptor and Goldsmith*, 17-18.

⁷⁵⁰ Dorment, *Alfred Gilbert*, 160.

⁷⁵¹ Droth, ‘Ornament as Sculpture,’ 11.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*, 10.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

diverges from the architectural nature of traditional fireplace design but, in its employment of teeming examples of the caryatid, it arguably distorts rather than avoids the use of an inherently architectonic device. Indeed, Lavinia Handley-Read noted that, while the caryatids ‘derive a unity from their brilliant modelling’, the chimneypiece as a whole lacks a structural integrity due to the ‘architectural rather than sculptural’ problems of the work, which, she claims, accounts for certain features such as its ‘curious proportions’.⁷⁵⁴ Droth has also shown how ‘none amalgamated sculpture and ornament to such an extreme’ as Gilbert and, due to this excessive fusion of sculpture and ornament, it is initially difficult to discern the individual representations on the chimneypiece.⁷⁵⁵ However, close inspection shows that it is populated by a mass of figural forms and human heads, that are ‘not only integrated into the structure [but] make up its fabric’, and these seem to emerge organically from the curvilinear, undulating decorative scheme of the piece.⁷⁵⁶ Among this mass, although they lack a structural function, several types of caryatids are evident on different tiers throughout.

The most prominent examples are those which might be described as the most ‘grotesque’. In terms of their placement - directly below the mantel and abutting it with their heads - these quote traditional chimneypiece versions of the motif (Fig. 5.64). However, in their quantity, running almost the entire length of the mantel, they far exceed the pairs of figures which are typically encountered in this context. They are in the form of terms, the lower part of their bodies dissolving into tapering pilaster-like forms and they wear crowns which are surmounted by a variation of Ionic volutes, recalling the same elements on caryatids incorporated into some of the earliest British examples of caryatid-term chimneypieces, such as Robert Lyminge’s seventeenth-century design for Blickling Hall (Fig. 5.7). However, unlike the majority of historic caryatid-terms, or indeed relatively contemporary historicising examples, such as the elegant 1914 figures by Charles Robert Ashbee for World’s End

⁷⁵⁴ Lavinia Handley-Read, ‘The Wilson Chimneypiece at Leeds: An Allegory in Bronze by Alfred Gilbert,’ *Leeds Arts Calendar* 59 (1966): 13-14.

⁷⁵⁵ Droth, ‘Ornament as Sculpture,’ 4.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

House in London (Fig. 5.65) or those by John Loughborough Pearson at Two Temple Place (Fig. 5.66), these figures are ‘ghastly female spectres with sagging breasts which contribute much to the sheer repelance of the piece’.⁷⁵⁷ Instead of the austere fireplaces we have seen, which gave the ‘impression [...] of a classical building’ in their use of architectonic components such as caryatids, Gilbert’s figures clearly originate in the caryatid-terms that were popular in Elizabethan and Jacobean interiors.⁷⁵⁸ However, in Gilbert’s example they adopt a particularly morbid character. This is emphasised by their most striking feature - their heads, which are in fact skulls, the skull being a motif that is repeated in several places throughout the chimneypiece. These ‘death’s-head’ figures therefore refer to one of the most common types of caryatid encountered historically on fireplaces whilst inverting such figures by their ‘sheer repelance’.

Below these figures is another level of caryatids, two on either side of each of the terminating pilasters which form the lower half of the death’s-head figures’ bodies (Fig. 5.67). They also appear to be terms as their bodily features below their heads taper but, in this case, they are almost indistinguishable from the fireplace. They consist solely of undulating masses with emerging heads and they furthermore wear auricle-like hoods which meld into the seemingly molten fabric of the chimneypiece. A third set of caryatids can be found above the mantelpiece, on the pillars that support the top of the structure and which are found on either side of the portrait in the centre of the overmantel. These figures are more clearly delineated and they take the form of female nudes with girdle-like decorative body jewellery just below their breasts (Fig. 5.68). They bear a resemblance to the representation of the female Eros found in the righthand panel on Gilbert’s *Mors Janua Vitae* of 1905-9 (Fig. 5.69), which may indicate a possible status as allegories of love or eroticism.

⁷⁵⁷ Dormant, *Alfred Gilbert*, 268.

⁷⁵⁸ Droth, ‘Ornament as Sculpture,’ 10.

The relation of these figures to Eros is reinforced by their resemblance to several Ancient Greek terracota sculptures, in particular a *Winged Eros* integrated into a vessel, which was made in Athens in about 350 BC and acquired by the British Museum in 1884 (Fig. 5.70). The similarities are especially apparent in maquettes Gilbert prepared for these caryatids, expressed in the auricular hoods that cover the ears of both the ancient and Gilbert's sculptures, and the shared fluid contrapposto of their stances (Fig. 5.71). The lack of arms on the Gilbert examples is potentially intended to echo the Erechtheion maidens, although this was also a relatively common phenomenon on caryatids, especially term figures.

Two more caryatid-terms appear beneath the portrait, almost indistinguishable from the bronze decorative surface into which they merge (Fig. 5.72). These figures are both winged, their wings seemingly outstretched to support the picture. Once again they appear to have classical antecedents, in the so-called 'caryatid mirrors', an example of which can be found in the British Museum but as it was acquired in 1974, it cannot have inspired Gilbert's work. Nonetheless, it provides a typical example of these type of mirrors and it consists of a Greek bronze object from about 400 BC, which features a handle in the form of a draped winged figure, assumed to represent *Nike* or 'Victory' (Fig. 5.73). Notably, a statuette entitled *Victory* and designed by Gilbert for the Queen Victoria Jubilee Memorial in Winchester Castle of 1887 featured similar winged caryatid figures on its base. This indicates that Gilbert was exploring possible representations of caryatids before his chimneypiece and these winged figures are also encountered in an 1884-86 bronze cast of Gilbert's *Offering to Hymen* in the Victoria and Albert Museum's collection, where they are once again encountered on its base (Fig. 5.74). In this example, the main sculpted figure itself echoes the caryatid in its rigid, columnar stance and Getsy, in quoting Gosse, refers to its 'almost archaic' appearance. He claims that it is reminiscent of an ancient *Kouros* figure but argues that it is significantly more columnar, qualities which indicate a possible caryatid origin.⁷⁵⁹

⁷⁵⁹ Getsy, *Body Doubles*, 94.

More evidence for Gilbert's interest in caryatids can be found in his *Epergne* created for Queen Victoria in 1889-90, which incorporates three supporting figures into its elaborate structure, one of which is in the form of a mermaid, holding the uppermost shell-like bowl and terminating in a double fish tail echoing a caryatid-term (Fig. 5.75). This reflects the use of piscine caryatids, which was a relatively common phenomenon in British architecture during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an example of which we have seen on Victoria Station. Overall, therefore, the caryatids on Gilbert's fireplace exhibit a host of possible precedents in relatively contemporary caryatid figures, sources from antiquity, and the artist's own experiments with the form. Both the Eros-inspired caryatids and the winged figures evince a citation of classical sources, in which Gilbert seems to have adapted the figures for his sculpted works whilst developing certain associations between their attributes and abstract concepts, with the soft, fluid body type wearing an unusual headdress representing forms of love, and the winged examples, like those in the ancient world, are symbolic of 'victory'. They thus adumbrate the highly-complex, abstract symbolic repertoire of the whole chimneypiece.

The dominant form of caryatid Gilbert employed on his chimneypiece was the caryatid-term, and this was arguably due to its prevalence in traditional fireplace designs from the Renaissance. Gilbert's chimneypiece displays strong similarities with English Renaissance examples, in its decorative profusion and the use of caryatid-terms below and above the mantel. This is evident in a comparison with Holbein's design for Henry VIII (Fig. 5.6), through, not only its use of caryatids on its overmantel, but also their shared mass of decorative details, size, and magnificence. The similarities are unsurprising as Gilbert's work seems to have found inspiration in the 'monumental style' of High Renaissance and Mannerist sculpture.

Shearman describes Mannerism as a style which exceeds ‘the norm in respect of refinement, grace, complexity, demonstrative accomplishment or caprice’, in which style may triumph over function.⁷⁶⁰ Like Holbein’s example, Gilbert’s chimneypiece is clearly excessive in terms of the characteristics of style and complexity, while an excess of elaborate ornament is evident on both structures, in which figural form is integrated to the degree that it is difficult to distinguish in the ornamental mass. Furthermore, Gilbert’s fireplace may provide an example of the downgrading of function due to it being cast in bronze, with Droth claiming that this is an unorthodox choice which means it ‘does not quite ‘work’ as a chimneypiece’, while Adrian Bury states that he could not think ‘of any house where such a piece of interior decoration would be appropriate, either practically or aesthetically’.⁷⁶¹ Shearman also claims that in sixteenth-century Northern Europe the fireplace in particular was a site for particular excess in terms of decorative design with degrees of ‘fantasy and sophistication’, qualities which are also evident in Gilbert’s chimneypiece in the myriad symbolic figures elaborately-integrated into the whole ensemble so as to seem inseparable from it.⁷⁶² However, like the Holbein chimneypiece, upon closer inspection, Gilbert’s work also displays defined compartments, such as the bas relief and the portrait that is centrally-located in the overmantel and bordered by caryatids.

The Sam Wilson Chimneypiece thus has clear antecedents in a wide array of objects from varying chronological periods, ranging from Ancient Greek artefacts to English Renaissance fireplaces. Yet, overall, the idiom which appears to dominate the decorative scheme is not a historicist one and instead an amalgamation of *fin-de-siècle* art movements originating in continental Europe, such as Art Nouveau and Symbolism.⁷⁶³ The swirling, undulating curves, decorative excessiveness, and the organic emergence of figural forms from the material of the fireplace have much in common with

⁷⁶⁰ Shearman, *Mannerism*, 70.

⁷⁶¹ Droth, ‘Ornament as Sculpture,’ 10; Adrian Bury, *Shadow of Eros* (London: MacDonald & Evans Ltd, 1954), 57-58.

⁷⁶² Shearman, *Mannerism*, 121.

⁷⁶³ The influence of Art Nouveau is noted, for example, in Handley-Read, ‘The Wilson Chimneypiece,’ 14.

contemporary fireplaces designed in an Art Nouveau style, such as the glazed stoneware creation (c.1900) attributed to Jean-Désiré Muller and currently found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 5.76).⁷⁶⁴ Like Gilbert's sculpture, this fireplace has an unsettling character with its somewhat expressionless human face surrounded by a mass of sculpted waving hair and a rather lurid colour scheme, all qualities which appear as strange stylistic choices for an object destined for a domestic interior.

The use of a profusion of caryatids also relates Gilbert's fireplace to trends popular in Art Nouveau sculpture where 'women appeared on almost everything in low, high or full relief [...] variously melancholic, ethereal, or somnambulistic', a description which could be aptly applied to the female figural forms on Gilbert's work.⁷⁶⁵ As Alastair Duncan states, these figures had their origins in the Symbolist movement where 'woman conjured up images of death-ridden chimeras, sorcery and the current cult for hallucinatory drug-taking'.⁷⁶⁶ The caryatids on Gilbert's chimneypiece, emerging in varying levels of detail and relief, are clearly related to such figures and the whole mood of the structure echoes much Symbolist work.

One of Symbolism's most famous proponents, Gustave Moreau, had included caryatid-terms in the background of his canvas *The Daughters of Thespius*, painted in 1853 and enlarged in 1882 (Fig. 5.77). These figures are clearly associated with Artemis, being modelled on the multi-breasted Ephesian Artemis of antiquity, and, like Gilbert's sculptures, they offer a fantastical and unsettling rendering of the caryatid-term. Susan Beattie has also demonstrated an association between Gilbert's fireplace and the Symbolist movement by arguing that intimations 'of death and ecstasy lie just beneath the surface of all symbolist imagery', while convincingly comparing the object to Klimt's

⁷⁶⁴ It is worth noting that Gilbert himself rejected any association of his work with Art Nouveau, as stated in Getsy, *Body Doubles*, 115.

⁷⁶⁵ Alastair Duncan, *Art Nouveau Sculpture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1978), 9.

⁷⁶⁶ Duncan, *Art Nouveau Sculpture*, 9.

Death and Life of 1908-1916, which similarly features a huddled mass of undulating figural forms, a disturbing skeletal figure and a mood redolent of sleep and dreams (Fig. 5.78).⁷⁶⁷ Symbolism was not concerned with reality, it ‘opposed Naturalism and advocated that works of art suggest ideas rather than describe appearance’, with its artists seeking to ‘clothe ideas in perceptible forms, while believing that art should direct viewers toward immaterial entities and metaphysical truths’.⁷⁶⁸ Gilbert’s chimneypiece offers such a dreamlike Symbolist vision. Indeed, the title which Gilbert gave it infers such. This is also apparent in the caryatids as they represented abstract concepts such as ‘love’, ‘desire’, and ‘victory’.

Rodin is perhaps the most famous sculptor associated with the Symbolist movement, and the work often used to exemplify his association with Symbolism – the *Gates of Hell* - also has parallels with Gilbert’s chimneypiece.⁷⁶⁹ Like the fireplace, it is filled with figural sculptures of different sizes (227 in all) and, furthermore, the figures are somewhat difficult to identify in the ‘crowd of anonymous spectres which instead of remaining in their allotted place invade the structure to the extent sometimes of replacing the architectural elements’ (Fig. 5.59).⁷⁷⁰ Both the chimneypiece and the *Gates of Hell*, are ‘functional’ objects that have become pure sculpture: Rodin claimed that it would be impossible to open his doorway and the question as to whether Gilbert’s chimneypiece could be used remains unanswered.⁷⁷¹ Like Gilbert, Rodin was influenced by Renaissance sculpture and here has taken Lorenzo Ghiberti’s 1425-52 *Gates of Paradise* as his inspiration (Fig. 5.79). He has, however, inverted it to create a nightmarish vision of humanity, not dissimilar to that which Gilbert creates on his chimneypiece and both works use a mass of allegorical figural forms to display complex narratives

⁷⁶⁷ Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, 236.

⁷⁶⁸ Michelle Facos, *Symbolist Art in Context* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2009), 9-13.

⁷⁶⁹ Rodin’s *Gates of Hell* is the most important piece of sculpture discussed in, for example, Rodolphe Rapetti, *Symbolism*, trans. Deke Dusinberre (Paris: Flammarion; London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), 203-4. Martina Droth has noted this similarity in Droth, ‘Ornament as Sculpture,’ 11.

⁷⁷⁰ Antoinette le Normand-Romain, *Rodin: The Gates of Hell* (Paris: Musée Rodin, 2002), 11-12.

⁷⁷¹ As quoted in le Normand-Romain, *Rodin*, 28.

relating to human existence. They adopt and quote historic antecedents but by being created in a contemporary Symbolist style, their morbid nature is ensured.

Thematically, like the Sam Wilson Chimneypeice, the *Gates* is focused on a narrative that is ultimately related to death and it is funerary in nature. These same associations are potentially embedded in Gilbert's caryatids through another frequent historical use of the motif. Since the Renaissance, the funerary monument was a key site for the use of caryatid-terms throughout Europe. Indeed, Colvin claims that it 'was for the tombs of the great Tudor courtiers that what are probably the earliest surviving examples in England of sculptured terms were made [...] in a country where there was so little church-building in the century after the Reformation, almost all the terms or caryatids in English churches formed part of funerary monuments'.⁷⁷²

Terms had become quite common by the early seventeenth century due to their 'special place in the iconography of death' and a memorial function in antiquity.⁷⁷³ Colvin reinforces this connection by illuminating the linguistic relationship between *terminus*, meaning the end, i.e. death, and the origin of the name used for these types of supporting figures.⁷⁷⁴ There are countless examples of Italian Renaissance tombs which feature either caryatid or male terms, including, of course, Michelangelo's original design for the tomb for Pope Julius II. Relatively contemporary with this work are several tombs in England in which small caryatid-terms were incorporated into the decorative scheme, such as the 1550s tomb for William Paulet, 1st Marquess of Winchester. Significantly, this features several terms topped with bearded heads and skulls who 'gaze poignantly at one another in a form of *memento mori* apparently unique in Renaissance art, English or European'.⁷⁷⁵ Here the association between the

⁷⁷² Colvin, 'Herms, Terms and Caryatids,' 105.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁷⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 105-8.

caryatid-term and death is reinforced by its head being replaced with a skull, a trait forcibly encountered on the caryatid-terms on Gilbert's chimneypiece.

The naked caryatids on either side of the portrait on the fireplace also indicate a funerary context through their similarity to the figure of Eros from Gilbert's *Mors Janua Vitae*, which was itself a funerary monument for a Manchester doctor. Furthermore, the figure of Gilbert as he is depicted on the bas-relief in the centre of the chimneypiece resembles a monumental effigy of a deceased man, examples of which are to be found on tombs across England from the thirteenth century and throughout the Renaissance and, like Pope Julius II on Michelangelo's tomb, he is depicted in a recumbent pose.

Collectively, through its myriad figural forms, and especially its caryatids, Gilbert's chimneypiece embodies a series of abstract or metaphysical concepts, including love, desire, and victory, as well as states of consciousness, such as death and sleep, in a work that is suffused with a dreamlike or nightmarish mood. It also displays a relation to time in a complex manner, incorporating references to historical objects, contemporary artworks, and presaging the future through its depiction of Gilbert as a corpse. Yet, it is not clear if he is indeed dead in this representation as he is 'neither sleeping temporarily nor for all Eternity'.⁷⁷⁶ As has been mentioned, and as this statement indicates, this object thus relates to oneiric and potentially unconscious states, which seem to point beyond the bounds of our own material reality and chronological time. Gilbert's work appears ultimately to betray an exploration on the artist's part of metaphysical concepts of being and time.

According to Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, an 'artwork is made [...] at some moment, but it also points away from that moment, backward to a remote ancestral origin, perhaps, or to a

⁷⁷⁶ As quoted in McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, 192.

prior artifact, or to an origin outside of time, in divinity'.⁷⁷⁷ This description aptly applies to Gilbert's chimneypiece which, upon close examination, appears to indicate several associations with artworks and artefacts from varying chronological pinpoints yet, with no obvious or dominant originary object and, as a result of its strange unorthodox appearance, and its augury of an indeterminate future state, it also appears to indicate a potential origin outside of historical time. Moreover, it presages the passage of time, and its own inevitable decay through the use of bronze which will clearly display its own ageing and the artist apparently used a process of 'artificial oxidisation' on the lower caryatids to reinforce this.⁷⁷⁸ Alongside its non-linear relationship to chronology, the caryatids on the chimneypiece reinforce its relationship with metaphysical states as none of them appears fully awake, conscious, or indeed related to living beings. They are vacant of humanity, functioning as purely symbolic forms and signifiers of abstract concepts and otherworldly states, epitomising 'the allegorical body as a perfect vessel, a container of fixed meanings, in contrast to an actual woman's [...] body'.⁷⁷⁹

From early in the century, Gilbert had been living in considerable poverty in exile in Bruges and accusations of professional misconduct led to him being asked to resign from the Royal Academy. It is in this context that he decided to create what may be considered a funerary monument to his own life, yet one created while he still lived. He therefore conceived a structure that re-negotiated the boundaries of chronological time through the broad reach of its historical referents and their intermingling with contemporary design, especially the Symbolist movement, which was itself primarily concerned with conceptual ideas relating to dreams and consciousness. The *unheimlich* nature of the work, recognisable as it is through its shape, an inversion of other chimneypieces, and its unsettling caryatids must be emphatically purposeful - it enables the work to arrest and unsettle the viewer and perhaps to elicit contemplative existential thoughts relating to being and time.

⁷⁷⁷ *Anachronic Renaissance*, 9.

⁷⁷⁸ Handley-Read, 'Wilson Chimneypiece,' 14.

⁷⁷⁹ Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, xxii.

Conceived while Gilbert was still alive but looking back on his own life, the artist has potentially created an epitaph which expresses his wrestling with his ‘sanguine and [...] despondent dispositions’ and with questions of his own existence, the ‘decay’ of his career that had followed his exile, and perhaps ultimately his legacy.⁷⁸⁰ The object in its use of ‘fluid qualities of molten metal’ blends its multiple qualities in a structure which appears to be solid yet potentially immaterial.⁷⁸¹ Its complex nature allows it to be ‘ancient and new, ruinous and yet proleptic’ as it consistently cites past and present objects yet looks ahead to future viewers who will look upon the object after Gilbert’s death, thus pointing ‘forward to all its future recipients who will activate and reactivate it as a meaningful event’.⁷⁸² It is, thus, not simply an ‘unintegrated amalgamation of grotesque symbols’ or the ‘last convulsive fantasies of the symbolist movement in art’.⁷⁸³

As we have seen, Stevens’ Dorchester House Chimneypiece also relates to funerary sculpture, being inspired by Pope Julius II’s tomb, and it can potentially be read as a memorial to the Victorian artist. Gilbert’s chimneypiece, in a more conscious fashion on the artist’s part, also appears to enact this. The two objects are therefore inter-related, through their ontological status as fireplaces, their innovative adaptation of caryatids, and their display of their respective artist’s engagement with the past, as well as concerns regarding their future legacy. They both appear as sculptural ensembles that act as monuments or tombs to the lives of their respective artists. Indeed, Gilbert has been recognised as a successor or Stevens and an inevitable relation between them was noted by several writers and critics. This is exemplified in an article from a 1929 issue of the *Times Literary Supplement* which claimed that Gilbert, alongside Stevens, ‘represents the highest development in this country of the Renaissance tradition of sculpture’.⁷⁸⁴ As Stevens was considered a modern-day Michelangelo,

⁷⁸⁰ As quoted in McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, 192.

⁷⁸¹ Getsy, *Body Doubles*, 88.

⁷⁸² *Anachronic Renaissance*, 9, 309.

⁷⁸³ Dormont, *Alfred Gilbert: Sculptor and Goldsmith*, 17-18; Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, 236.

⁷⁸⁴ Charles Marriott, ‘An English Sculptor,’ *Times Literary Supplement* (16 May 1929): 396. Also see Cosmo Monkhouse, ‘Alfred Gilbert, A.R.A.-II,’ *The Magazine of Art* 12 (November 1888 - October 1889): 38-39.

Gilbert was often compared to Benvenuto Cellini.⁷⁸⁵ The sixteenth-century artist was a goldsmith, alongside being a sculptor, and he was well known for his work in the decorative arts and his abilities to incorporate various metals and materials, evinced in his Salt Cellar or *Saliera*, of ivory, gold, and enamel (Fig. 5.80). Gilbert equally worked across art forms, shifting his attention from statuary to ornamentation and goldsmithing in the 1890s. According to Getsy, the latter allowed Gilbert to work in free design ‘unconstrained by the established format of the figural statue’.⁷⁸⁶ This freedom is expressed in his *Epergne* for Queen Victoria, which like Cellini’s *Saliera*, incorporates various materials, including silver-gilt, rock crystal, abalone, ebony, and marble, and incorporates figural forms into a table sculpture.⁷⁸⁷

It is notable that Gilbert’s *Epergne* incorporates a caryatid, a motif which is then used profusely on his chimneypiece, and which, as was the case with Stevens, indicates the artist’s abilities across art forms. Alongside the architectural and sculptural elements, the fireplace includes a painting in its centre, which is one of the very few paintings completed by Gilbert. It is thus a ‘uniquely harmonious’ structure, which displays his skills in varying art forms and, by ‘tackling the three major arts together, Gilbert defied those who failed to understand him’.⁷⁸⁸ Indeed, the painted portrait was always a central element of the fireplace as it was intended to represent Sam Wilson’s wife, with the consequence that the chimneypiece was to act as a ‘shrine-like surrounding rather than a mere framing’.⁷⁸⁹ When it was finally executed in 1921, Gilbert instead painted his second wife Stéphanie, which confirms the autobiographical nature of the work.

⁷⁸⁵ ‘The Royal Academy,’ *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* (17 May 1902): 6; ‘Mr. Spielmann On British Sculpture,’ *Times*, (19 January 1904): 10; ‘Alfred Gilbert,’ *Times* (17 May 1929): 19; M.H. Spielmann, ‘Alfred Gilbert’s Statue,’ *Times*, (7 August 1923): 13; ‘Art Exhibition,’ *Times* (10 June 1932): 12; ‘Sir Alfred Gilbert, R.A.,’ *Times* (7 Nov. 1934): 21; ‘Art Exhibition,’ *Times* (21 March 1935): 12.

⁷⁸⁶ Getsy, *Body Doubles*, 105.

⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁷⁸⁸ Handley-Read, ‘Wilson Chimneypiece,’ 13; Alys Eyre Macklin, ‘Alfred Gilbert at Bruges,’ *Studio* 48 (1910): 110.

⁷⁸⁹ Gilbert quoted in McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, 190.

Like Stevens, Gilbert was considered ‘more versatile than most’ and he used the caryatid on an object that signified his omnicompetent abilities on a monument to his life and work.⁷⁹⁰ The chimneypiece’s importance to Gilbert is indicated by the artist’s desire that it would recount the story of his life and this was also reflected to a degree in its reception. Sam Wilson left a significant array of artworks to Leeds City Art Gallery following his death and the chimneypiece was considered the most important piece of sculpture in this collection, ‘full of elaborate symbolism and enclosing in the upper part one of the very rare paintings by this distinguished artist’.⁷⁹¹ Gilbert’s chimneypiece therefore appears as ultimately related to that of Stevens, as it also integrates caryatids in a unique and innovative manner, indicating their respective artists’ intermedial genius and allowing the objects to function as tombs or memorials to their artists, as well as their final masterpieces. Indeed, it appears at the end of a direct and uninterrupted tradition of using the caryatid as a motif that represented the intermedial abilities or interests of its practitioners. The caryatid chimneypiece, a somewhat neglected but dominant phenomenon in the sculptural output of the long nineteenth century, thus emerges as an object worthy of significant consideration as the ‘great field [...] for the proper use of sculpture’.⁷⁹²

⁷⁹⁰ Monkhouse, ‘Alfred Gilbert, A.R.A.-II.,’ 40.

⁷⁹¹ ‘Art In Leeds,’ *Times* (13 October 1925): 7.

⁷⁹² Stirling Lee and Reynolds-Stephens, ‘Sculpture in its Relation to Architecture,’ 509.

CONCLUSION

*'proud like the witness of an immortal history'*⁷⁹³

In September 2017, *The Art Newspaper* published an article highlighting the forthcoming opening of the Louvre Abu Dhabi. This was accompanied by a computer-generated image of the future gallery, which showed a temple-like, light-filled space almost completely devoid of artworks (Fig. 6.1). Indeed, the sole indication for the reader that this image represented a museum was its inclusion of small, somewhat indistinct reproductions of ancient sculpture. The most identifiable of these, which offered the clearest signifier of the museum depicted, was an image of an Erechtheion caryatid. Thus, as it has been throughout its history, the motif was chosen as a recognisable, and synecdochical, representative of the art and artefacts of the classical world, which, in this case, would comprise the museum's display. This use of the motif in such a recent context demonstrates its continued power to communicate to its viewers, in an immediate fashion, the inheritance of antiquity and its art and architecture.

Throughout this thesis, I have illuminated this semiotic power by demonstrating the manner in which the caryatid has evoked notions relating to the classical world in its spectators, as well as its general prevalence in the Western visual tradition, in order to 'recover' the motif from its neglect in art and architectural history and to understand the consequences of its employment. Alongside its perceived embodiment of the material and culture values of the ancient world, as we have seen, the caryatid has borne a complex multivalency in its metamorphoses across the centuries. Indeed, it has been invested with a myriad meanings, in its innumerable uses in an international context across a wide swathe of history, with the result that, as the title of this study indicates, the totality of its meanings and purposes is 'impossible' to quantify. Consequentially, I have examined what is possible within the limits of

⁷⁹³ Translation of 'Fier comme le témoin d'une immortelle histoire' from Théodore de Banville, 'Les Cariatides,' in De Banville, *Les Cariatides*, 1.

this thesis, with my focus on the specific context of Britain in the long nineteenth century. Through this, I have provided a distilled and microcosmic examination of certain fundamental ideas that appear to have been central to discourse on the caryatid throughout its history, particularly in Europe.

Most clearly, these ideas relate to its replicability and visual ubiquity, and the Erechtheion type's paradigmatic role as a 'canonical' sculpture that survives from antiquity, which has resulted in the caryatid's consistent inclusion in Western architectural and antiquarian discourse. Specifically, I have shown the power of this prototype, originating in ancient sculptures that exemplify those 'stubbornly concrete' artistic objects, as described by Camille Paglia, which persist and permeate across the ages, despite societal changes and upheavals, due to their intangible 'marriage of the ideal and the real'.⁷⁹⁴ We have seen how in the West, as a female sculpture embodying notions relating to the classical world, the Erechtheion type has continuously been appropriated by individuals, polities, and nations from the Roman period onwards due to its perceived connotations and visual power.

We have also seen the caryatid's particular predominance in long nineteenth-century Britain, and the country's important international contribution to the motif's history through the revolutionary adaptations by Soane and Stevens. Through the examples discussed, I have provided an inkling of its countless transformations in Britain in the period and, crucially, I have shown how the caryatid disrupted the (hierarchical) relationship between architecture, sculpture, and painting, which was of such importance to artistic and aesthetic discourse throughout the long nineteenth century. This contributed to the motif's appeal to figures as varied as Soane, Leighton, Stevens, and Gilbert. In this British context, I have also displayed the key role the caryatid played in the work of a number of renowned British architects and artists and how it offers a revealing insight into their use of historical sources, interest in theories of art and aesthetics, and ideas of self-identification. In doing so, I have

⁷⁹⁴ Camille Paglia, *Glittering Images: A Journey through Art from Egypt to Star Wars* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), xi.

attempted to shift the motif's liminal status in more recent times, partially a result of its architectural-sculptural nature, to one of centrality.

Ultimately, my study of the caryatid has examined a vital but ignored part of Britain's artistic and cultural past, and one which is inherently related to European traditions. The employment of the caryatid in the period examined was a Europe-wide phenomenon and this work thus contributes to our understanding of Britain's engagement with the wider classical tradition in Europe. Indeed, as I have but scratched the surface of this area of interest, the relation of the caryatid in Britain to continental ideas, practices, and movements is an area that is especially ripe for future study. As we have seen, Britain's role was particularly significant as artists and architects working in the country introduced new ways of thinking about the caryatid, both in how it was conceptualised and materialised and we have seen how this could affect its Europe-wide reception. Its employment further afield, has yet to be examined in more detail, as has its continued presence in the practice of several contemporary artists. Much scope remains for such studies, which may further enable us to hear the caryatids 'speak' and to understand the fascinating insights they might reveal.

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