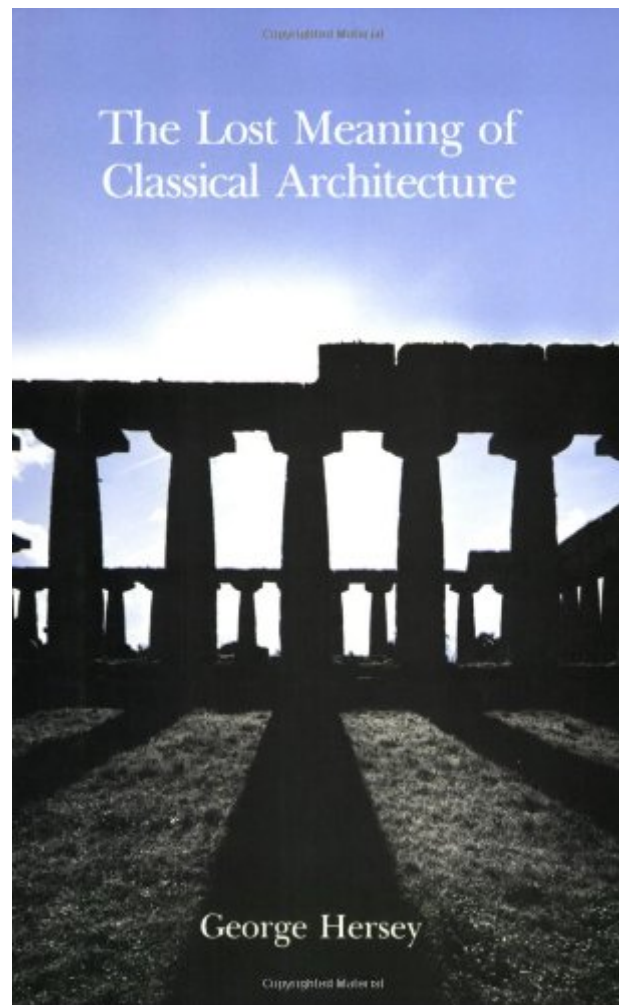


# The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture: Speculations on Ornament from Vitruvius to Venturi PDF



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The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture: Speculations on Ornament from Vitruvius to Venturi by George L. Hersey ISBN 0262580896

Why do architects still use the classical orders? Why use forms derived from ancient Greek temples when ancient Greek religion has been dead for centuries and when the way of life they expressed is extinct? And why decorate a contemporary courthouse with the bones, eggs, darts, claws, and garlands that an ancient Greek would recognize as the trappings of animal sacrifice? With these provocative questions George Hersey begins his recovery of the meaning of classical architecture. For the last four centuries, he shows, philology and formalism have drained

architecture of its poetry. By analyzing this poetry -- the tropes founded on the Greek terms for ornamental detail -- he reconstructs a classical theory about the origin and meaning of the orders, one that links them to ancient sacrificial ritual and myth.

In doing so, Hersey reinterprets key tales and taboos that were part of the cultural memory of the ancient Greeks. His touchstone is Vitruvius, author of the only surviving classical treatise on architecture, whose stories about Dorus, Ion, and the Corinthian maiden, and about the Caryaeen women and Persian soldiers, describe the orders as records or remembrances of sacrifice.

Hersey finds revivals of this consciousness in the Italian Renaissance and throws new light on the works of the architectural theorists Francesco di Giorgio and Ceasare Cesariano, and also on Raphael's Disputá, Michelangelo's tomb of Julius 11 and Medici Chapel, and Hugues Sambin's handbook on termini.

## **The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture: Speculations on Ornament from Vitruvius to Venturi Review**

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