



# Artifact and Artifice: Classical Archaeology and the Ancient Historian

*Jonathan M. Hall*

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## **Artifact and Artifice: Classical Archaeology and the Ancient Historian** Jonathan M. Hall

Is it possible to trace the footprints of the historical Sokrates in Athens? Was there really an individual named Romulus, and if so, when did he found Rome? Is the tomb beneath the high altar of St. Peter's Basilica home to the apostle Peter? To answer these questions, we need both dirt and words—that is, archaeology and history. Bringing the two fields into conversation, *Artifact and Artifice* offers an exciting excursion into the relationship between ancient history and archaeology and reveals the possibilities and limitations of using archaeological evidence in writing about the past.

Jonathan M. Hall employs a series of well-known cases to investigate how historians may ignore or minimize material evidence that contributes to our knowledge of antiquity unless it correlates with information gleaned from texts. Dismantling the myth that archaeological evidence cannot impart information on its own, he illuminates the methodological and political principles at stake in using such evidence and describes how the disciplines of history and classical archaeology may be enlisted to work together. He also provides a brief sketch of how the discipline of classical archaeology evolved and considers its present and future role in historical approaches to antiquity. Written in clear prose and packed with maps, photos, and drawings, *Artifact and Artifice* will be an essential book for undergraduates in the humanities.

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