

MESA REDONDA

ROUND TABLE

FACING BEAUTY IN THE MIDDLE AGES: THE PERSUADED AND THE SCEPTICS

Alejandro García Avilés: We would like you to discuss some of these questions, though not necessarily to follow them one by one:

1. What role did defenders of artistic beauty play in medieval societies?
2. Was the relationship between beauty and discursive efficacy unequivocal, that is, can we affirm that beauty was not only an artistic aspiration but also a means for achieving communicative efficacy?
3. How are we to interpret the relationship between ornament and *decorum*?
4. What have been the consequences for medieval art historiography of changing the focus from the functional responsibilities and instrumental justification of works of art to artistic excellence?

Jeffrey Hamburger: These are good and important questions. About the first, I think that we can look to a figure such as Abbot Suger, who felt it necessary to defend liturgical art in the face of critics such as Bernard of Clairvaux. That would be a *locus classicus* in terms of answering this question. But Theophilus would be another famous example in terms of the relationship between beauty and discursive efficacy. I don't think we can say that beauty was always efficacious, although there were certainly people who were worried that it was too efficacious: certainly anyone with iconoclastic tendencies or even anxiety about images was worried about its seductive power. But if what one is hoping to find is any kind of universal communicative efficacy, then I think it was never within reach, even within the most didactic programs.

As far as rhetoric and ornament and decor are concerned, a quick way to answer that question, although hardly definitive, would be to point to John Onians' book, *Bearers of Meaning*. That's one direction; perhaps more interesting with regard to the fourth question is what have been the consequences for medieval art historiography in changing the focus? I appreciate the optimism of putting this question in the past tense, because I don't think that the focus has

really changed. One of the things that is interesting about this gathering in Aguilar de Campoo in terms of current interests and methodology is that its focus is on iconophilia rather than iconoclasm, so it will be interesting to see how our colleagues respond to what it has been presented here once the papers are published. But I see many of the ideas introduced thus far as running rather against the grain.

The only other thing I will add is that many of the contributions have focused not on art but on words about art. I am not an architectural historian, but when it comes to medieval architecture, I think about incredibly sophisticated, nuanced, highly articulated systems of expression, let alone structure. Just think, for example, about gothic tracery and how incredibly flexible and varied it is. In the face of that kind of diversity and visual eloquence, it's wonderful and extremely useful to have the lexicon with which the speakers today provided us, Mary Carruthers and Paul Binski, amongst others. But just for the sake of argument, I would suggest that when comparing this lexicon to the eloquence of the buildings themselves, the vocabulary remains very impoverished and inadequate to the task of describing these buildings, whether in aesthetic terms (whatever we mean by that) or simply in taxonomic terms. I still think that it is a question that is perhaps impossible to answer, but why was the vocabulary, relatively speaking, so impoverished and why was it so topical?

So many of the terms that we mention—"magnificence," "light," "the beauty of services"—on the whole remain constant throughout much of the Middle Ages; the architecture changes over and over again very dramatically, and yet the topical vocabulary that is used to describe it remains the same. One can, of course, think of all kinds of reasons for that. I suppose that what I am saying is that, in the end, it is very important to talk about rhetoric, ekphrasis, and other genres that hold such important lessons for us as art historians but that do not substitute for analysing the works of art on their own terms in terms of their visual rhetoric. And so, Mary Carruthers, I will perhaps disagree with you a little bit in the context of tremendous appreciation for what you gave us. I'm not comfortable with thinking of buildings as oratorical performances. I think that is perhaps one way of framing them, but, in the end, I'm not comfortable with that characterization of anything so complex as a building. And I could elaborate, but I will leave it there.

Mary Carruthers: Well, Vitruvius certainly did. Vitruvius borrowed much of his vocabulary from rhetoric after all. I think rhetoric was in fact in Antiquity the only account of human aesthetic experiences that was available. (Plato's account of beauty was mathematical not aesthetic, that is, in terms of particular human sense-based, conscious experiences.) I agree with you in many ways Jeffrey, but I think that you are trying to think of rhetoric as a body of knowledge, and it is not. It is not a philosophy.

Jeffrey Hamburger: No, no. I agree, it is not.

Mary Carruthers: You agree OK, there we are. Then I want to go at the topic a little bit differently. What I've said, or I was hoping to say anyway, was that what rhetorical rhetorical analysis of the responses to any kind of work of art, whether you are talking about poems, or

stones, or music, is to take each occasion in and of itself, and I think Paul's question about whether or not there was any abstract pan-aesthetics, should be taken very seriously indeed.

I go back to my lady *Glorieuse Achevissance*. She certainly invites discussion and, in the course of their discussion, people will undoubtedly bring in all kinds of other terms and bodies of knowledge. But, she does not give any answers. That should tell us something very important, it seems to me, about this approach to works of art. She provides the opportunity for a conversation, she invites a conversation, she invites a debate. And this brings me to something that I think is absolutely the core of a rhetorical kind of approach of the sort that I think people are talking about; and that is its sociability. Rhetoric is at its core social. It is not simply individual; it invites people to talk to one another and in the course of that talk, to persuade, to start a conversation. It's in the conversation that the community is built.

I think one of the problems actually with the title of the *Ars Mediaevalis 2019 colloquium* is putting the "and" in between persuasion and rhetoric. Because rhetoric is all about persuasion. Now, persuasion to what? Not necessarily to one thing. In a conversation certainly if you are trying to decide whether that rather extraordinary image is *belle ou laid*, the chances are very good that people are not going to agree. And it's in the give and take of the conversation that the community comes together or not, as people seek to persuade each other, to consider various positions and opinions, so there is necessarily no general correct conclusion. And obviously occasions and audiences are greatly different from one another, as the nature of the audiences' changes. In a rhetorical analysis, the audiences are not just passive recipients, but are active commentators (their word was "judges") about what's presented to them. This is very clear in Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*, where he discusses preaching. He was a master rhetorician, a teacher of rhetoric, not only an orator and theologian. In fact, I've always thought he was at his best, most persuasive, in that first role.

The medieval emphasis in aesthetic work very often is on art's enigma. Medieval artists, as well as philosophers, are very fond of puzzles, loved puzzles, and occasions of wonder and marvel. Whether you are talking about verbal art or you are talking about painting, whether you are talking about architecture or you are talking about music for that matter. Think about the form of a multilingual *motet*. How do you listen to this? And people do listen in very different ways. And it seems to me that that is the sort of thing that can be said about virtually any work of art. I didn't do it this time, but what have I done before with that remarkable image of *Glorieuse Achevissance* is to simply throw it open to the audience. Is she *belle ou laid*? And you would be surprised at the conversation that comes out of that point. Is there a decision? No. Is it instructive? Probably. You can find out an awful lot about people's ethics and their general approaches to things by throwing open a puzzle of that sort. It seems to me very much that is a moral occasion but necessarily without a single correct moral answer to it.

And we all learn and we can all grow through that kind of conversation.

Jeffrey Hamburger: Just very briefly. I think we are talking about nuances, not disagreement. But again, I'm a little bit uncomfortable with generalizing too much by suggesting that the reception of medieval art was rather like a classroom discussion, when it often was anything but that if you think of the social context for the reception and reading of some forms of medieval art. And I don't think that the reading of medieval art was always—I stress the *always*—so open-

ended. And that sometimes the persuasion—yes, rhetoric is all about persuasion—sometimes, as we all know, in the Middle Ages persuasion could be, for lack of a better word, very forceful.

Mary Carruthers: Quite so. It depends on what you are going to persuade people for and about, on the occasion (as it's termed in rhetoric). I would like to hear from Paul.

Paul Binski: I thought I would try to go over the questions in order; but I don't think I can answer number three without questions two and four, because they seem to me to have a significant point of continuity, which is that they are all related to questions of instrumentality. The first question: What role did defenders and advocates play in medieval societies? I find that question slightly—if I might say so—*mal posé* because the role that they played in society was not the same as writing a treatise. You must remember that that Abbot Suger's treatise is preserved in only one manuscript, read presumably within the society of the abbey of Saint Denis. But I can't think of many if any people who, like a modern aesthete, would propagandize aesthetics and the value of beauty in the twelfth or thirteenth century. Maybe they existed, but I can't think of them.

So, I'm not going to answer that question, because I don't actually understand it, but I would like to address two, three and four, because I think they all in a way circulate around the issue of function. Communicative efficacy in question two; beauty as an aspiration but also as a means of efficacy. Pretty clearly, when we read of the 'experience of beauty' we encounter a situation where beauty isn't simply instrumentalized: beauty is an end in itself. It has a sort of purpose as well as a function.

But of course, there is also a long tradition of seeing beauty precisely as an obstacle to communicative efficacy when it comes to that great tradition. We can all think of examples. There is Robert Holcot, the Dominican preacher, saying that a statue was believed in the fourteenth century by many, I think women mostly, only to become efficacious once it was sixty years old. In other words, it would need to be a bit "untidy". Some of the most powerful images in the *Dialogue of Miracles* of Caesarius of Heisterbach are ratty old images which were insulted for the humility of their material, typically wood, which is not simply a vital material, but a humble material (we've got Saint Augustine's authority for that). So, there is clearly an issue of function there: we can instrumentalize beauty, because it persuades, as can ugliness, as can fear. It seems to me that fear and pleasure can both be instrumentalized. You see, this idea of instrumentalization takes us on to how we should interpret the relation between ornament and *decorum*. That is a question that I started to talk about in discussing the set questions. *Ad usum*: what is appropriate? On what occasion, to what end do we use this particular thing? Easy in a sense - a question about function and purpose.

But I don't want to answer question three directly because I think in a way the one that provokes me the most is question four: What would be the consequences for medieval art historiography of changing the focus from functional responsibilities and instrumental justification to artistic excellence? In the first place, if we talk about the notion of *decorum*, that which is appropriate, that which is at *ad usum*, we are always in sense tying beauty in to what is functional, useful in a particular context. But I have gone through my anthropological phase and I've come out at the end of it as an ordinary art historian who despairs at the fact that people

don't look at art anymore when they write about it. There is a distinction in my mind (and I discuss this on another occasion), between seeing something as having a function and having a purpose: the 'final cause' in the Aristotelian scheme of causal relations. It astonishes me how much discussion of medieval altarpieces or medieval manuscript is essentially functional but without a sense of its purpose. Towards what *end* is it directed? Towards delight through beauty? Of course ethically, it could be directed towards a purpose of changing behaviour, changing conduct. There are all sorts of outcomes.

So, I see it this way: take a piano, look at the musical analogy. You can try the keys, you can see how they work, and how the strings are structured. You can tell in what context the piano is used, and consequently the material instrument. But once you have explained the function of the piano, you haven't said anything about the difference between Bach and Beethoven: that's a question about the outcome of an art form. Now I am more interested in the differences than the similarities. If I may say so, there is an issue in my mind about the flattening effect than functional discussion has had in certain forms of 'image anthropology.'

Jeffrey Hamburger: I don't disagree with that. But, I think it's important to know where we stand, and that is why I said that we are perhaps being somewhat optimistic and using the past tense. Because, I mean—we know what the landmarks are—when someone like Hans Belting wrote *Bild und Kult* and drew people's attention to function, he completely rejected texts as a useful source of information (he packed them all away in the appendix as if he banished them from his discourse). At that moment, given the context in which he was writing, his book was a tremendously illuminating contribution. I find it interesting that, despite all of the talk about materiality, a term that most people never define when they use it, that there hasn't been much interest in the kinds of things, Mary Carruthers, that you were talking about: precisely those materials effects.

Paul Binski: May I come back to that? So, we were talking about the aesthetics of surface. This does seem to me important because, in a way, the search for political and ideological meaning, anthropological meaning is a search for a certain kind of depth. And what I expect from the return to the rhetorical form is an examination of surface. I mean 'beauty is skin deep', as Mary Carruthers have said. We engage with works of art by considering their surfaces. The experience is integral to the encounter with the work of art. It's not something that outlasts that particular contact. And those things are realized socially. This goes back to the point that Mary Carruthers was making before: that there is always something considered, or at least rational, if not intellectual about this questioning of experiencing works of art. And I think that Jeffrey Hamburger was dead right on one thing, I very much like the puzzle. I think it's very liberating that we should see works of art as guiding, but not necessarily dictating outcome. But I wonder how far we can go in allowing absolute freedom of interpretation of the *simulacrum* type, where it becomes possible to project anything onto the work of art.

Mary Carruthers: All I can say is that in poetry, you can't just project in any old way. People do, of course, but it is really evident when they stray far away from the actual words in a text. Words have circumscribed meanings— and mean in relation to other words. There is indeed

a verbal surface, but it's not like the surface of a painting. When somebody's interpretation departs greatly from the textual surface— what the verbal surfaces seem to mean lexically and syntactically— other people will challenge that. There's a move in literary studies to what's called "surface reading", to challenge exactly the kind of unmoored interpreting you are talking about. But it seems to me reading a poem is indeed different from looking at a painting.

Paul Binski: Yes.

Mary Carruthers: And we can indeed talk about textual interpretation in some general senses. But we can also talk about particular occasion in reading, about sociability, which it seems to me involves an aesthetic response.

Paul Binski: Yes, because the sociability lies in this business of the audience being a kind of arbitration that it requires ponderation, reflection, thought.

Mary Carruthers: I would like to come back to "the author" ("the painter", "the composer") a term which was raised here by colleagues. In a rhetorical analysis of the way in which a work of art works; "the author" is not "dead" but is present in the work through what is known as *concilium*, which is indeed the plan that "the author" has put into the work when making it. And then, the work's *ductus* guides us within it. *Ductus* is the articulation within a work of *concilium*. But the main thing is that the way is not single track nor authoritarian; like all paths, it allows for side-trips and has places to linger in. And it communicates not just through words, but also through the kinds of aesthetic responses that it invites. Including through puzzles and one thing or another. The features that draw an audience and viewers into the work of art to help make it a completed experience for this particular occasion. In this analysis, a work of art is only complete within the occasion in which it is experienced. So, it's not that the work's aesthetic meaning is wholly undetermined and a free for all, but it is often multiplex and nuanced. And if we worry about the responses of an individual in specific terms or about whether someone may misunderstand particular "messages" and so forth, I want to remind us of what is of the absolute importance within monastic meditation, and indeed is its goal, its purpose. Which is to know yourself, *nosce teipsum*. So you can't blame a work of art for making you think immoral and wandering, useless thoughts. You think them because of your own laziness (sloth) in not thinking through the puzzles that the work presents you, or indeed perhaps from a failing in your own moral character and judgement. Through the work you (and sometimes others) can see yourself. And that is how you can form your soul, so the monks said. It's a profound way of self-knowing, and aesthetic responses—desiring and reasoning—are key to it.

Paul Binski: May I just return to the point Jeffrey Hamburger made at the start that justifies scepticism?: one shouldn't see buildings as oratorical performances. I think that is right. I think that there is a question there, and one can't move too readily from medium to medium. But you also commented on the poverty of the vocabulary/lexicon relative poverty, in relation to the actual building.

Jeffrey Hamburger: In the context of great gratitude for your kind contribution.

Paul Binski: No, this is not a defensive remark, but it is simply to say that surely one reason that we look at rhetoric is that it actually enormously increases our vocabulary of concepts and words we can use to articulate this question. And so without getting into the ‘performative’ question, it (rhetoric) keeps one critically on one’s toes and gives one imaginative frameworks.

Jeffery Hamburger: It still leaves unanswered the question of why vocabulary does not change overtime as the buildings change and why, despite this tremendous utility, it is not in any way adequate to the formal complexity of what it seems to describe, and that’s a broad cultural question. There was not art theory as such in the Middle Ages.

Paul Binski: But Jeffrey, it depends on what you mean by change. You know, at the outset I said we were not considering the buildings in respect of their formal *minutiae* aspect, which is fetishized endlessly in discussion of architecture. The moulding, the cross section, the this, the that... when (as at Girona) you watch ordinary architects in their own language they are talking about gross effect. Of course, you have a point: but actually that does connect buildings from different periods.

Jeffrey Hamburger: But if someone had to draw a template to make that particular thing?

Paul Binski: Yes, but that is a secondary issue.

Alejandro Garcia Avilés: We should open the discussion to the rest of the audience.

Herbert Kessler: I like the encounters, but I want to come back to Jeffrey Hamburger’s first response to question number four, about optimism. I am sure that many of our colleagues will be very surprised to learn from Gerardo Boto this morning that Herbert Kessler promoted devoting a conference on beauty. In this regard, let me say that, first I’ve known Mary Carruthers’ book and read it several times; but it was reading Paul Binski’s “The Rhetorical Occasions of Gothic Sculpture” that provoked me to advance this topic because it pushes the boundaries of looking at works of art.

I am going to pull the age card here. When I was starting in Art History, there was a lot of work on individual works of art and something called “artistic excellence.” It was the world of connoisseurship, and it was widely accepted that there were people endowed with something called a “great eye.” They were the dictators who could tell whether something was Duccio or not and, therefore, by the virtue of this “great eye” whether something was worth 500.000 dollars or five dollars.

Jeffrey Hamburger: And they were completely disinterested.

Herbert Kessler: Yes, and so a new generation pushed back. It had a lot to do with structures, but also to do with market. We have to admit that when we talk about what art historians do, we are directly or indirectly involved with people who want to buy beautiful things.

Mary Carruthers: That is one of the big differences with literature and art. There is no market, thank God.

Jeffrey Hamburger: Unless someone wants first editions.

Mary Carruthers: Nah... the amounts are not comparable.

Herbert Kessler: I was just at a lecture by Philippe Cordez at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown Massachusetts where, during the question and answer session, someone shouted: "Without money there would be no Art History." The heckler, I later learned, was an artist. Maybe at dinner we could talk about who believes in the "great eye", but our discipline has been reacting to the market and to the connoisseurs who enable it.

Jeffrey Hamburger: I think the challenge, as you frame it, is how to return to the object or to the monument without making the kind of compromises that you described, that led to the rebellion represented by anthropological approaches to art history. My own problem with the various materialisms as well as with some of the anthropological approaches, which as an historian of devotional imagery of course interest me very deeply, is that I think they represent a kind of Neo-Romantic longing for presence when we live in an age of absence in every respect. *Vis à vis* the past, *vis à vis* the transcendental, the numinous; the list could go on and on. Also, probably *vis à vis* beauty, because we are jaundiced. We read Walter Benjamin and any number of other people who have, with good reason, made us jaundiced about these things. So, I think that it's a real challenge. This conference is courageous because the theme is a very iconoclastic one. If its project is to succeed, then it has to be approached with very open eyes so as not to fall back into some of the transcendentalisms and idealisms that so discredited some of these approaches in the past, and with good reason.

Paul Binski: Just a footnote on that materiality thing since Herbert Kessler raised it. Like you Jeffrey Hamburger, I'm sure as a student I was brought up first of all to study what things are made of, and why they were made of those things, and how we know they are made of what they are made of. Because after all, it's only modern scientific investigative techniques that have told us what something is made of. And that brings me to my point. I think that you are absolutely right about thinking about sculpture and material. What has concerned me is not theories of materiality as such because after all, an artist understands the "character" of material. Materials tend, wood tends, in a certain sort of way, is part of the *intentio* of the object. But it is very important that we remember that materials operate within competing networks of intentionality that involve thinking, feeling, subjects, who reason about materials, who bring

to those materials what I have called “the poetics of materials.” These networks are made by human beings. I have a slight concern that we might on occasion be creeping into a kind of neo-vitalist view about material having a kind of inherent or essential power.

Jeffrey Hamburger: Like me?

Paul Binski: I’m tiptoeing here Jeffrey Hamburger: I do think that there is a risk, because in my naïve and plodding way as a rationalist, I do think that materials are lent significance by people, whether they are the performative artists, whether they are the audience or whether they are the human traditions within which materials are operated on. I won’t say more than that.

Mary Carruthers: Well, I’m very grateful that literature deals with words because in fact they do have meanings. And they are conventional meanings very largely, and people get to discuss those conventions. Literature traditionally has, of course, been associated not just with grammar and logic and rhetoric but also with “creative thinking” and “analytical thinking” (as they are now called), which really begins at a very early age with analysis and making of sentences in order to communicate with and persuade other people. And that, very broadly considered, is the start of a so-called moral education, now called “socialization.”

I think that, in literature, the equivalent of the “eye” that you are talking about, was the vogue at about the same time amongst some literary critics who presented themselves as the arbiters of what was good and what was bad in literature. There wasn’t very much money involved in these opinions and they were immediately challenged, I think rather successfully, by a number of people. I mean, such critics did make some pocket money from writing columns in the popular press, but it wasn’t as damaging to literary study as indeed it was obviously, and still is in some quarters, to art history.

Herbert Kessler: What strikes to me about the “great eye” is that it is privileged, very few people have it and it can’t be trained.

Jeffrey Hamburger: Yes, and it is interesting that if you go back and read an essay by Bernard Berenson like *The Friends of Santo*, which I recently read with some students, one discovers that he wrote a long essay about an artist that never existed.

Alejandro García Avilés: Any other comment or question?

Aden Kumler: This is for Mary Carruthers primarily: I’m really struck with your last comment. The tenor of this round table and some of the papers evokes conversations happening in literary studies around surface reading and distant reading (i.e., Franco Moretti) right now. I don’t think your surface is the surface that, some of the people in literary studies (e.g., Sharon Marcus and Stephen Best), are calling for. Which, I think, responds to a perceived over-

emphasis on hermeneutics and certain other modes of criticism. I ask because sometimes Art History and Literary Studies meet around terms and impulses and sometimes they are ships passing in the night; and in this case I am not sure what state we are in. I am interested in your perspective..

Mary Carruthers: Well, I haven't actually paid a whole lot of attention to that particular "surface reading" debate, in part because I thought I knew what the phrase meant initially. In other words, I understood it to be "close reading." Close reading, as taught to me in the 1950's, was predicated on hard linguistic knowledge of the language, of the grammar, of the structure, where words came from, what they meant, how they operated socially within a convention and, indeed, within historical and moral situations, in the largest sense of Latin *mores*. That rigorous linguistic requirement is gone even from doctoral programs. And because this important knowledge base is missing from the education of many American literature students now, I think that is one reason that you may feel that particular American discussion of "surface reading" is rather superficial and unmoored. I do too. So far as I know a hefty linguistic base is still required in European graduate programs.

Jeffrey Hamburger: As you probably know, there is an historical discourse going back to the Middle Ages and antiquity about depth and surface. And it originates in Aristotle and Horace and it becomes translated into art theory in the Renaissance with the distinction between *disegno* and *colorito*. So *colorito*, colour, Venetian painting, it's all about fleshpots and surface, and Florentine painting, *disegno*, is all about depth. Not only perspective but also intellectual.

Mary Carruthers: But that is very Renaissance it seems.

Jeffrey Hamburger: Yes, but you find it touched on in some places during the Middle Ages.

Mary Carruthers: But in medieval exegesis, where this other comes from, the *littera* is the actual lexical and grammatical structure of the words themselves. And then onto that is built the hermeneutic stuff, but *littera* has always been the rock-solid basis. And without that agreed linguistic basis, that grammar, as they also said the verbal interpretations collapse. And I think one of the problems possibly, possibly, in art is because your materials by and large are not articulate in the way words are.

Aden Kumler: Good: "in the way words are."

Mary Carruthers: That is why I said "articulate."

Alejandro García Avilés. And the last comment by Tom Nickson.

Tom Nickson: My guess is that at the Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo the round table discussions will concern the global Middle Ages. So, my question is, how does the study of rhetoric and beauty intersect with the study of a global Middle Ages. We've been relying on texts, at least, today, whether they are from an Arabic tradition or a Latin tradition. But can we think about beauty and rhetoric in the context of cultures, where we don't have that same textual tradition?

Mary Carruthers: Many people working on rhetoric have been working on exactly this problem. And they're finding that a lot of the basic concepts in western rhetoric, though not usually the specific tropes and figures, work also in other cultures. In other cultures, literature has its conventions, its own tropes, and its own canonical stories, oral and written; non-western literatures have strong traditions of sociability and community-building through literature and other arts, and seek to persuade. So, it has been really interesting in fact that people who have been working with other cultures are finding rhetorical analogies. So, in that sense, it seems like one can talk about rhetoric not only in the classical western terms but expand those principles and find some parallels and analogies elsewhere.

Jeffrey Hamburger: Yes, but this is, I think, precisely one of the areas in which we have to be so careful about imposing universal concepts that we admit, as Paul Binski has stressed, are socially constructed in other cultures and other traditions. Or even, I would say, among other audiences or social groups within the culture in which we are interested. And so much of what we have been talking today was largely addressed to a highly Latinate learned culture, and these people, they were not co-terminous with the patrons of these buildings, but there was some overlap. But we need to be careful also about assuming that these perfectly valid expressions, receptions, whatever we want to call them, were universally valid in the Latin Middle Ages. They weren't.

Mary Carruthers: True enough, but persuasion is a pretty basic human thing. Also communication and story-telling.

