

# Glossary of foreign expressions and words

acolyte (from Greek) – helper

*alter ego* (Latin, ‘second self’) – a person equated with someone else

anepigraphic (from Greek) – not containing any inscriptions

anthropoid (from Greek) – humanoid in shape

anthropomorphic (from Greek) – having human features (e.g. a god)

antithetic (from Greek) – contradictory

apotropaic (from Greek) – possessing magical properties, capable of expunging evil spirits

architrave (from Italian) – a horizontal beam resting on column heads, supporting the upper parts of a structure

basilophoric (from Greek) – containing a king’s name

bucranium (from Greek) – a decorative architectural element in the shape of a bull’s head or skull

*casus* (Latin) – ‘case’

cenotaph (from Greek/Latin) – a symbolic grave not containing a corpse

*chantier* (French, ‘place of work’) – an excavation site

chthonic (from Greek) – linked to the underground world

commemorative (from Latin) – honouring or preserving the memory of a person

cosmogony (Greek, ‘creation of the world’) – a set of mythological notions about the genesis and essence of the universe

cryptography (from Greek) – coded script

*damnatio memoriae* (Latin, ‘condemnation of memory’) – the erasing of a person from the memory of posterity, the removal of his images and name

*de facto* (Latin) – ‘in reality’

deification (from French) – making someone into a god

demiurge (from Greek) – creator of the world

*deus ex machina* (Latin, ‘god from a machine’) – an unexpected saviour, an apparition

diachronic (from Greek) – that which considers the succession of processes in time

didascaly (Greek, ‘teaching, explaining’) – an author’s explanations or notes contained in the text, referring to the way in which a play should be staged

ephemeral (from French/German) – short-lived, fleeting, temporary

exedra (from Greek) – a semi-circular niche with a bench running along the inner wall

*embarras de richesse* (French) – a problem resulting from superfluous abundance

- en face* (French) – from the front, opposite
- Eolic (from Greek/Latin) – created as a result of the wind's actions
- eschatology (from Greek) – a field of theology focused on the posthumous fate of humans and the end of the world
- euphemistic (from Greek/German) – not expressing (articulating) something directly, vague
- ex definitione* (Latin) – 'by definition'
- expressis verbis* (Latin) – clearly, emphatically, avoiding understatements
- hemicycle (from Greek/Latin) – a half circle or semi-circle
- hermitage (from Greek/Latin) – a settlement for monks leading a reclusive life
- hypostasis (from Greek) – an aspect of a deity that is usually a personification of his abstract traits
- holistic (from Greek) – comprehensive
- horror vacui* (Latin) – a fear of leaving an empty space in works of art; a tendency towards covering it completely with decorations
- hybrid (from Latin) – a composition made up of different elements, frequently not suited to each other
- iconoclast (from Greek) – a person who destroys religious images or opposes their veneration
- iconology (from Greek) – the study of the content of artistic works and their symbolism
- in spe* (Latin, 'in hope') – a term characterising something that is not yet present or existent but is expected
- interlocutor (from French) – someone with whom one is having a conversation
- khedive (from Ottoman-Turkish) – a title used by the rulers of Egypt at the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries
- koine* (Greek, *koine (dialektos)* – 'common tongue') – widespread Greek language that formed in the Hellenistic period, more generally – a culture merging elements from various civilisations
- lapidarium (from Latin) – a collection of stones or stone fragments of statues, buildings, etc
- lege artis* (Latin, 'according to the law of the art') – in accordance with law, legally
- lingua franca* (Italian, 'language of the Franks') – a language that is the means of communication between people who normally speak different languages (e.g. in contemporary times – English)
- madrasa (Arabic, 'place of study') – a Muslim school
- ménage à trois* (French) – a sexual arrangement involving three persons
- milieu* (French) – 'environment, sphere'
- monastic (from Greek/Latin) – concerning monasteries and life in them
- monochromy (from Greek) – a single colour
- monotheism (from Greek) – belief in a single god

- necropolis (from Greek) – a cemetery  
*novum* (Latin) – ‘something new’  
Oflag (from German) – a German prisoner of war camp for officers during the Second World War  
onomastics (from Greek) – a field of linguistics studying proper nouns, names  
onomatopoeic (from Greek) – imitating a sound  
*padre* (English from Italian/Spanish ‘father’) – a spiritual father; chaplain  
*panta rhei* (Greek ‘everything flows’) – everything in the world is constantly changing  
pantheon (from Greek) – all of the deities of a particular religion or religious centre  
*par excellence* (French) – quintessential; to the highest degree  
partage (from French) – resulting from a division (e.g. of objects after excavations)  
*per analogiam* (Latin) – ‘by analogy’  
Philhellenic (from Greek) – associated with a love for Greek culture  
phoneme (from Greek/French) – the smallest unit of a language’s system of sounds  
polychromy (from Greek) – multicoloured paintings decorating walls or ceilings in buildings; the paintings decorating a work of art  
portico (from Latin) – part of a buildings consisting of a row of columns supporting the vault  
*primum non nocere* (Latin) – ‘first, to do no harm’  
progeniture (Latin) – offspring  
prosopography (from Greek) – the study of a collective biography  
*rais* (Arabic) – the supervisor of labourers  
reconnaissance (from French) – a preliminary survey  
relief (French) – a sculpture on a flat surface  
risalit (from German/Italian) – part of a building’s façade protruding from the wall surface  
schism (from Greek/Latin) – division or disunion  
*signum temporis* (Latin) – ‘a sign of the times’  
*status quo* (Latin) – the existing state of affairs at a given moment  
stela (Latin ‘tomb pillar or stone’) – an upright stone plate, usually decorated with a bas-relief and inscription  
*tableau* (French) – a ‘painting’  
tambour (from French) – a drum  
theophoric (from Greek) – containing the name of a god  
theogamy (from Greek) – divine nuptials, marriage of gods  
toponym (from Greek) – the name of a place  
topos (Greek, ‘place’) – a permanent motif; element of culture

*wadi* (Arabic) – a dry desert valley, formed in the Pleistocene, which fills with water following seasonal downfalls  
zoophobia (from Greek) – fear of animals  
zoomorphic (from Greek) – in the shape of an animal