ASPECTS OF ART LECTURE

SOME NAMELESS SCULPTORS OF THE FIFTH CENTURY B.C.

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WHEN I was invited to deliver this lecture on Greek sculpture, it was suggested that the subject should be a central one, which I took to mean something in the fifth century B.C., and the nearer the time of Pheidias the better. The prospect was intimidating, for this field of study is strewn with dead hopes; the hopes of those who, seeing the apparently abundant evidence, had set out with high confidence—high but illusory—to attach the names of the famous artists of the period to the surviving sculptures. For this reason I chose a title which would absolve us from the necessity of proposing names, but would leave us free to consider the quality and the content of the works. We shall inevitably be dealing with sculptures that are well known: but I make no apology for this: one seldom looks at great sculpture, however familiar, without seeing something new in it.

Canova, when first confronted with the marbles of the Parthenon, uttered words that go far to atone for his own sculptures: 'Oh! that I had but to begin again, to unlearn all that I have learned—I now at once see what ought to form the real school of sculpture!' It is easy for us today, with our greater knowledge, to see how far astray he had gone in basing his style on copies made in Roman times from lost Greek originals: but looking back over the fluctuations of taste even in the last hundred years, I wonder whether perhaps we ourselves are not also still in error. Is our assessment of classical sculpture quite as accurate as we think?

In the latest number of *Antiquity* we have it on the authority of our own Secretary that the Parthenon (which we can agree to regard as the peak of classical achievement) showed in its sculptures 'an impersonal pageant of heroic but utterly extrovert mimes, impeccably wrought, chiselled (at their best) as marble may never be chiselled again, but with nothing whatever in their heads. Neither the building nor its decoration had any inner

life.'[1] This is not, I believe, another way of saying what an unknown wit said many years ago, that one cannot imagine any Greek statue carrying on an intelligent conversation. The pronouncement may include that, too, but it is something more serious than that, namely, that the figures on the Parthenon are not real persons but actors, that their gestures and expressions are assumed, not felt, and that their emotions do not come from within.

This is in a sense true of every work of art. Statues, or people in a picture, do not create themselves. They are, if you like to put it that way, mimes, who are given parts to play by their creator, the artist. They express his ideas, not their own. The artist must have understood so thoroughly the feelings he intends to express, must have felt them so deeply, must have observed and recognized their effects in the faces of himself and others so acutely, that he is able to convince the spectator that his creatures are actually feeling the emotions with which he has endowed them.

Thus, the criticism is, in effect, that none of the sculptors of the Parthenon was able, or, if able, willing, to carve figures that seemed to possess any genuine feelings, either intellectual or emotional. I do not agree with this judgement, but it has a certain plausibility. For it is true that about this time some Greek sculptors became so obsessed with the pursuit of the ideal, of the beauty that would submit to rational and even numerical analysis, that they tended to lose sight of the sentient human being whose body was their medium of research. Polycleitus, with his theory of beauty in number, his treatise on proportions, and his model statue which everyone studied, has a lot to answer for.

But is it true of the Parthenon? Before answering that question, to which I shall return later, I should like to ask and to answer—at some length—another which has a direct bearing on it. It is this. Was there, before the strength of the classic ideal overwhelmed it, a different, less impersonal, artistic current which, if it had had its full run, would have changed the whole course of Greek sculpture? Let us see what the textbooks tell us.

Now a textbook has to deal in periods, and the more sharply the periods can be defined the happier the author. From this point of view the destruction by the Persians in 480 of the early sculptures on the Acropolis at Athens was fortunate: doubly

[1] *Antiquity*, xxxvi (1962), p. 7.

fortunate in that it appeared to coincide with a change in the spirit of Greek sculpture, which, after the Persian invasion, is seen to be no longer what we call 'archaic' but what we call 'early classical'. So the textbook picture of this moment is a simple one. It is of a change from the archaic, with its gaiety, its delicacy, its love of pattern, and its limited number of sculptural types, to a sterner age which, using bolder and simpler forms, wrestles with new problems of sculptural composition, and passes, by an easy stage, to the perfection of the full classical period. This is commonly demonstrated by the display of suitably contrasting pieces from just before and just after the crucial time.

I would not lightly destroy this hypothesis, which most of us have used at one time or another in lectures or essays describing the broad developments of Greek art. Nor is it entirely false. But it ignores the existence in the archaic age of something which can be recognised as a classical attitude of mind, and it ignores the survival or sublimation of archaic qualities in the classical period.[1] And—especially relevant to our present inquiry—it ignores those efforts, at the beginning of the classical period, to express in sculpture the momentary feelings of people; often by touches so subtle, perhaps because tentative, that even by an observer without preconceptions they are apt to be overlooked.

I will begin, then, with a characteristic demonstration of this hypothesis in its boldest form. We are likely to be shown first this statue of about 500 B.C. from the Acropolis at Athens (Pl. I*a*).[2] It will be pointed out that for all its charm and tenderness it is inconsistent; some parts, for instance the lips and cheeks, having been studied with care and understanding, whilst elsewhere there is much that is conventional—merely repeated patterning, as for instance some of the hair and drapery; the implication being that this is about as far as the archaic can go, and that the whole scheme needs rethinking.

Then it is customary to show this (Pl. I*b*),[3] the statue dedicated

[1] For example Rhys Carpenter (*Greek Sculpture*, p. 85) claims that in the charioteer of Delphi we know 'that sculpture's archaic phase has been overpassed' because the drapery is no longer incised upon the bodily form and decorative pattern is not built up by precise repetition of a schematic unit. This may be true of the drapery, but it seems to me that the hair on the crown of the head comes perilously near to being incised on the bodily form, since it does not modify the shape of the skull at all, and the locks are hardly further away from being repetitions of a schematic unit than are those of, for instance, the Rayet head (Richter, *Kouroi*, no. 138) a generation earlier.

[2] Payne and Young, *Archaic marble sculpture*, no. 674, pls. 75–78.

[3] Idem, nos. 686, 609, pls. 84–88.

by Euthydikos perhaps ten or fifteen years later, which, with its uncompromising expression (as if in revolt against archaic prettiness) and its robust forms, and the strong geometrical structure which underlies them, does certainly mark a turning-point of some kind.

Extremely close in style to that, and possibly by the same sculptor, is this head of a horned god (Pl. II*a*).[1] He is perhaps Dionysos, perhaps the river Achelous, to whom, as a giver of fertility, the Greeks paid special honour; or even, possibly, as Professor Robertson has suggested, the god Pan: its date is probably in the decade 490 to 480, and it was found near Marathon, where, as you remember, Pan fought on the Athenian side and was honoured by his own express command. This is not a complete head, but one of those faces that were fastened to rocks or trees, thus linking the god—a god of fertility whatever his identity—with the living force of nature. It is perhaps the best example of that trend in the early classical period which we are apt to consider its most characteristic, in the breadth of its modelling, its starkness, and its almost contemptuous disregard for finish. In spirit it is sombre and aloof: one of the grandest, but at the same time one of the least human of sculptures.

There, then, is the change from archaic to classical expressed in the sharpest terms. It would be reasonable to assume—and indeed it is often assumed—that the progress from this kind of sculpture to the great cult-statues of the Pheidian period was direct and simple, that the classic ideal had now come to birth, and that there was little room for anything else.

But now look at this (Pl. II*b*).[2] It was carved ten or twenty years later than the last, yet it preserves much of the tenderness and intimacy, and even much of the formal idiom of the archaic. Where is that classical unconcern? Whether this be Aphrodite rising from the sea or Persephone from the earth, we cannot doubt the intensity of feeling expressed in the upward gaze and in the features, especially in the nostril (despite its mutilation) and in the lips. There are here, still, archaic conventions which violate anatomical possibility, for example, the turn of the head into complete profile, and its flattening out: but the emotional content is new, beyond the power of archaic sculptors to express, and yet, we are told, outside the purpose of the classical.

It may perhaps be claimed that the Ludovisi Throne, unique

[1] C. Blümel, *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Gr. Skulpt.* iii, K 2, pp. 2–4, pl. 2.

[2] Goddess from the Ludovisi Throne: E. Paribeni, *Mus. Naz. Romano. Scult. greche del V secolo*, no. 3, pl. 2.

as it is in quality, is unique also in this ability to express emotion, and that this is because—so the argument might run—it is the creation of a single uniquely gifted sculptor in a Greek colony of the far West, that it is outside the main stream of Greek art, and therefore not a fair example of its general trend. It always seems to me a risky assumption that a single piece of sculpture which has survived by chance from among the hundreds that have perished, is the best that was ever carved: but lest there should be some force in the objection, let us turn to the very centre of the Greek world, the temple of Zeus at Olympia, where the combination of Dorian tradition and athletic discipline would surely favour the most austere approach to art, with the smallest possible concession to human feelings.

The pained surprise with which our grandfathers first beheld the sculptures of Olympia might today be a source of amusement, were it not also a reminder that our own judgements may not be infallible. 'It is agreed', one leading authority wrote, 'that the whole effect is poor, and that the faults of execution are numberless. Indeed, an ordinary student of art will find, in an hour's study of these figures, faults which in our day an inferior sculptor would not commit. And what is still worse to a modern eye, the figures are not only faulty, but often displeasing, and the heads have a heaviness which sometimes seems to amount to brutality, and are repellent, if not absolutely repulsive.'[1] To such critics, who were accustomed to both the archaic and the classical conventions, for instance to the fact that an archaic warrior could fight with a smile on his face, or a classical warrior with a quite unnatural calm, these manifestations of feeling were inartistic, almost indecent.

I should like to look with you at a few of these figures from Olympia, in order to see exactly what is there, and to try to understand the intentions of the sculptors. But first a little arithmetic.

Today it takes a sculptor of marble about a year to carve a life-size statue by hand from start to finish, largely because of the sheer physical labour involved. Even if we assume that an ancient sculptor, from his greater opportunities for practice, had greater facility, we cannot diminish that time by much. Since there are twenty-one figures in each pediment at Olympia, all well over life-size, and some nearly twice the size of life (that is four times the surface area); and twelve metopes, each of them

[1] P. Gardner, *New Chapters in Greek History*, p. 279.

with two, or three, figures only just under life-size, there would have been, I calculate, enough work to occupy a single industrious sculptor, enjoying perfect health, about three working lives of forty-five years each. We are fairly certain that the temple was designed and erected within the fourteen years 470–456 B.C. We can, I think, therefore safely infer that there is room here for half a dozen nameless sculptors at least; and we ought to be a little cautious of saying—as writers on this subject often do—that a pediment was *by* this or that sculptor.

All else is conjecture; but perhaps the most likely procedure was something of this kind. We may suppose that one, or two, great artists prepared the designs, perhaps in the form of drawings or of small models in clay, or of both; that they supervised their execution on a large scale in marble, and, since they must have been sculptors, surely taking a hand themselves. Then there may have been several associates of high ability, pupils probably, who carved in the general style of the masters. Finally, a number of skilled craftsmen who could be trusted, under supervision, to rough out comparatively large areas, and even to take the less important parts down to, say, the penultimate stage. The style is so homogeneous and in most places so sensitive that we must assume that the masters or their closest associates completed the final stage, especially of the heads, in most of the figures; and of course they could have intervened at any time if things seemed to be going wrong or if there was some particularly difficult problem.

We will start with the west pediment, the fight between Lapiths and centaurs at the wedding feast of Peirithoos, and from it will take first the central figure of Apollo, then two of the fighting groups.

Begin with Apollo (Pl. III*a*): here we meet at its clearest that distinction made by Greek sculptors between the divine and the human, a distinction which we tend to overlook partly because it did in fact become less sharp as the classical style developed: partly because we form our judgements largely on cult-statues, or copies of them, which are ex hypothesi devoid of the ordinary feelings of mortals.

The size of the figure, the features—stern but unmoved—and the gesture—emphatic, but of no obvious practical assistance—are all intended to distinguish the god; and when you place the head beside that of the boy whose arm is being bitten by a centaur, you see that there is no real difference of style, simply

a difference of subject (Pl. III*b*). This is a mortal, not a highly intellectual type, and perhaps not at his best. The modelling is very broad, chiefly because of the scale, and the distance at which the figure was to be seen; but the essentials are there—the sudden yelp of pain and the contraction of the brow as the centaur's teeth are buried in his arm.

It is often said that classical sculptors are not interested in the young, and show them, when they must, as small adults. There is truth in this: but it is not always true, and not true here. At Olympia we have sympathetic studies of two adolescent girls, one in each of two somewhat similar groups which balance one another on the two sides of the west pediment. They are complicated three-figure groups, with a centaur attacking a girl and at the same time being attacked by a Greek. This (Pl. IV*a*) is on our right of the centre.

The difficulty of carving these great masses of marble in such a way as to convey the articulation of the bodies, and yet leave the block able to stand up unsupported, was evidently great, and there are some awkward passages: but despite these, the sculptor has expressed his view of adolescence with force and clarity. It is seen in the desperate turn of the head, in the slender, unmuscular fore-arms and hands which cannot loosen the monster's grip, in the ripening breast, and in the rather small, rather plump foot, with which the sculptor has contrasted the great, sinewy, heavily veined male hand (Pl. IV*b*, *c*).

The east pediment depicted a quiet moment, the line-up for the chariot-race between Pelops and Oenomaos: quiet but tense, as is the moment before the start of any race. It is a situation that many of those who looked up at the sculptures in ancient times must have known at first hand: they had themselves, a few hundred yards away in the hippodrome, or a few yards away in the stadium, suffered those moments of suspense which are unlike anything else in life. Here there was an added stress—the cruel conditions of the contest, by which it seemed that Oenomaos would inevitably destroy his daughter's suitor, and the double treachery by which Pelops circumvented them, first bribing, with promises, Oenomaos' charioteer to tamper with the lynch-pins, and then murdering him to avoid paying the shameful price. But it was not easy to convey this imminent tragedy in such a placid scene. The designer did so, partly, by letting us see it through the eyes of another spectator, one who already knew the outcome. He is a seer, probably Iamos, the founder of the great line of seers connected with Olympia (Pl. V*a*). He

foresees not only the result of the race that is just about to begin, but the whole chain of tragedies linked with it, which pervade so much of Greek literature: one need say no more than that the sons of Pelops were Thyestes and Atreus.

This feeling of foreboding is conveyed largely by the posture, by the inclination of the head, and by the hand supporting the chin. But within this framework the intent eyes, the furrowed forehead, the line from the nostril, and the open mouth; even the crisp carving of the opening of the nostril itself—all these play a part. And the minute observation and rendering of the effects of old age, which extend even to a slight sagging of the skin below the lower eyelids, are exactly consistent with the attempts to represent emotion (Pl. V*b*).[1]

It is possible to analyse all the figures in the pediments in this way, and to establish that the sculptor's intention throughout was to express both the character and the feelings of individuals. An obvious example is Oenomaos: his half-opened mouth marks him as the loser (Pl. V*c*).[2]

The metopes of Olympia are particularly suitable for our inquiry, partly because some of the heads are well preserved,

[1] I am quite at a loss to understand Rhys Carpenter's dictum on this figure in his admirable but often exasperatingly obscure *Greek Sculpture* (p. 229). 'The aged seer has individuality because mid-fifth century sculpture had begun to differentiate generic types within the generic formula of the *kouros*. Here the bald forehead, the heavier beard, the fleshy cheeks and the flabbily muscled torso distinguished the male of advanced middle age as a separate sculptural theme, without thought of any specific likeness to an actual person, the whole representation being based on legend.' *Kouros* means a young man, or, as an archaeological technical term, the statue of a young man, naked, standing, looking to the front, shoulders and hips level, symmetrical about a central vertical axis. In what respect can the seer possibly come within this 'generic formula'? It is none of these things. Moreover, although the forms of nature are here transmuted and simplified by the sculptor's sense of style and by his desire to render only essentials, Carpenter's implication that they were not observed in the first instance on a living person seems to me to remove his system of Greek aesthetics (by now almost Athanasian in its rigidity) even further than before from the world in which real sculptors live and work.

[2] This is based on an observation, already made in archaic times, of the human face in despair. You have it when Antaeus is in the grip of Heracles on Euphronios' crater in the Louvre (Pfuhl, *Malerei u. Zeichnung*, iii, pp. 125–6: M. Robertson, *Greek Painting*, p. 93), and when Memnon meets Achilles on the Berlin Painter's crater in the British Museum (Beazley, *Der Berliner Maler*, pl. 30; 2, 3): the winners fight with confidence and self-control, mouth firmly shut. For the mouth open in awe, see Beazley, *Amphora by the Berlin Painter* (*Antike Kunst*, 1961), p. 52.

partly because the events depicted are such as to allow variety of emotion. Above the inner porch at each end of the temple there were six metopes, and the choice of the twelve labours of Heracles to fill them was so happy that it now seems the only one possible. Heracles was the son of Zeus: he was the grandson of Pelops: he was closely connected with the Peloponnese, and performed many of his deeds there. He was everywhere the patron of athletes: and here was the greatest athletic centre of the Greek world which he himself had founded. And, on a higher plane, he was the type of struggling and suffering humanity, destined, in spite of every kind of obstacle throughout a life of toil, to be received by Zeus into Olympus.

To the designer of the metopes each labour is both a personal experience, and a practical problem of which the solution and the means of achieving it have been logically thought out. Heracles is a real person, not a changeless, invulnerable hero. A real person, but completely unlike either the roistering boon-companion or the muscle-bound athlete of later literature and art. He is young at first, then mature, finally ageing: and we are shown his feelings as he passes through these trials and triumphs—weariness, elation, intense effort, steady endurance, even, on one occasion—you can doubtless guess which—disgust. No less sensitive is the character-study of Athena, who is present on four occasions, including naturally the first labour and the last.

The order in which Pausanias saw the metopes when he visited Olympia in the second century A.D. is certain, not only from his description but from the find-spots of the fragments. There is a possibility that the original order was different, and that four of them were rearranged after an earthquake or a fire.[1] But for our present purpose—the search for traces of inner life—that is not important. From among the western metopes we shall look first at the labour which all agree was the first performed, that of the Nemean lion (Pl. VI*a*), then at that of the Stymphalian birds.

Now although archaic vase-painters often show Athena as a bystander when Heracles is at work, they cannot show that she is also his stand-by: nor can they show what is in her mind, except by what she does. For example, on the black-figured cup of about 540 by Phrynos, in the British Museum, when she is sponsor for Heracles on his entry into Olympus, she grips him by the forearm, without any change of expression, and strides

[1] S. Stucchi, *Annuario*, xiv–xvi (1952–4), pp. 117–29.

briskly forward toward her father Zeus.[1] But here in the metopes at Olympia there is a consistent attempt to understand and portray the varied feelings of those present, not only by their actions and gestures but by their facial expressions. In this, the first of the labours, the young man's initiation into his tremendous undertaking, where a word of encouragement and advice is specially needed, Athena is there to give him moral support. Her expression is sympathetic, but perfectly firm (Pl. VI*b*).

It is a pity that the head of Heracles has suffered such mutilation, for I think we should have found that the sculptor had tried to express not only the exhaustion (by the attitude and by the lines on the forehead) but also the elation of victory. I believe that even now, in spite of the mutilation, one can see traces of this, if one turns the head upright, in the lively eyes and the faintest of smiles (Pl. VI*c*).

Ancient authors disagree on why the birds in the Stymphalian marshes had to be exterminated, and we need not discuss the possible reasons, but can accept the fact. Heracles frightened them out of the reeds with a rattle and then shot them. There is a delightful black-figured vase in the British Museum in which he is bringing them down with sling-stones,[2] and that, though not an easy subject, is one which, because of its lively action, an archaic artist would tend to choose. The designer of the metope at Olympia has chosen one still more difficult, because there is so little action (Pl. VII*a*). The birds are already destroyed, and Heracles has brought a brace of them as an offering to Athena. She is seated on a rock. An Athenian would no doubt say that it was the Acropolis rock at Athens. Anyhow, a citadel, whether existent or symbolic.[3] She is to be thought of as engaged in her duty of guarding it; that would be the meaning of her turning round as if from some occupation, and would explain this most unusual composition. One has seen a mother busy with her own affairs turn round in somewhat similar fashion to a child who has brought some trophy for approval. Dare I suggest too that the exceptionally heavy aegis, with its resemblance to a soldier's cloak, carries the same connotation, of someone who has to be on guard in all weathers? However that may be, we have a girlish

[1] Beazley, *Attic black-figure: a sketch*, pp. 6–7, pl. 1. See also his *Amphora by the Berlin Painter* (*Antike Kunst*, 1961) p. 55.

[2] B 163, Beazley, *ABV*, p. 134, no. 28: M. Robertson, *Greek Painting*, p. 73.

[3] For Athena and the Acropolis rock see P. Fehl, *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, xxiv (1961), pp. 29–33, and 39; for her origin and functions, Nilsson, *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*, ch. xv; C. J. Herington, *Athena Parthenos and Athena Polias*, pp. 43 ff.

figure extending a hand with an almost hesitating gesture and an almost tender expression—certainly as near tenderness as one could reasonably expect from a goddess of war (Pl. VII*b*). She seems a slightly younger woman than in the first metope, and a slightly different character, and if one were seeking to identify various sculptors one might say that in these two metopes there were two different minds at work: but the spirit and the general intention are much the same, namely not only to tell the story, but to show the emotional content of a particular situation.

And what of Heracles? He is still a young man, though now bearded, who knows in his heart that he has done well, and wants to display the proof of it to his patroness, hoping perhaps for a word of praise: but one seems to feel also, from his expression, that he is a little uncertain how it will be received (Pl. VII*c*).

We now come round to the east side of the building, and from this series we take the Augean stables, the fight with Geryon, the capture of Kerberos, and the last labour, the apples of the Hesperides.

The stables of Augeias, who had enormous herds of cattle, were never cleaned, and the accumulation of dung threatened to foul the whole country. He made a bargain that if Heracles could clear the stables by himself in one day he should be rewarded with a tenth of the cattle—or some other gift: accounts vary. Since Augeias was king of Elis, one might expect the representation of this at Olympia to be explicit. And so, at first sight, it is (Pl. VIII*a*). Heracles is usually thought to be vigorously removing the dung under Athena's direction. But there are several difficulties, and we may perhaps turn away from our main inquiry for a moment in order to discuss them. What exactly is Athena doing? Her arm is extended, and it might be maintained that her action is analogous to that of Apollo in the west pediment, who, without taking a physical part in the conflict, sways it with his gesture: but it is not an accurate analogy, because Athena is not making a symbolic gesture; she is holding a spear and pointing with it to a particular place near the lower corner of the metope. This is strange, for the Augean stables being what they were, it was hardly necessary to indicate where the trouble lay. It was ubiquitous.

Then there is the action of Heracles. Earlier scholars exercised their ingenuity in trying to decide what implement he was using to move the dung.[1] Only its shaft survives, and that in fragments. Three implements seemed possible—pitchfork, shovel, or broom.

[1] G. Treu, *Olympia*, Textband, iii, pp. 176–8.

A pitchfork cannot be used unless cattle are littered with straw, and Augeias was clearly not that kind of farmer. Besides, these were not covered stables, but what we should call a cattle-yard. There would be no litter. As for the shovel, even the long-shafted handleless Mediterranean instrument which never looks quite right to us, however it is used, can hardly be used in this way, left hand at the top and right hand a little way down the shaft, with the knuckles towards us—certainly not for shifting anything heavy: and it was a very rare tool in antiquity. The action is just possible for a broom of the besom type, but no one in their senses would attempt to move such an accumulation with a broom.

If, however, we examine first the story and then the sculpture the solution is obvious. The first author to mention the Augean labour is Pindar, who was living when the temple was built: but it is a mere mention. Diodorus, and the so-called Apollodorus, by which I mean the author of the *Bibliotheke*,[1]—both rather late: not before the first century B.C.—give us details. Both say that Heracles turned a river (the Alpheios, either by itself or with the Peneios) through the stables. It is often assumed that this story of the river is an alternative, and perhaps later, version, but I believe that it was the early and the only one. Apollodorus draws on early sources, and no ancient author, early or late, says that Heracles forked, shovelled, or swept the dung; or indeed touched it at all: and no ancient vase-painter depicts him doing so.[2] Moreover, that the task should be completed in one day *by hand* was obviously beyond the power even of Heracles, which was why Augeias thought he was safe in making the bargain. There must always have been some unexpected and ingenious solution.

Now if the story of the river was current at the time when the Olympian metopes were carved, it could hardly be ignored in a building which stood almost on the banks of the Alpheios. I do not think that it was ignored. I think that Athena is not lending either physical or moral support to Heracles in shifting the dung: she is giving practical advice: she is pointing to the place where by breaching the wall he could let the river in: and Heracles is in fact breaching it. The instrument is a mochlos,

[1] Pindar, *Ol.* X, 28–30; Diodorus IV, 13, 3; Apollodorus II, v. 5. I have had the benefit of Professor Eduard Fraenkel's advice on the problems of 'Apollodorus'.

[2] Sir John Beazley points out what may be a picture of this labour on the fragment of a red-figured vase in the British Museum: E 812[4] (Cecil Smith, *Cat. of Greek Vases*, iii (1896), p. 384).

a crowbar: most elemental and most powerful of the five primary forces at man's disposal:[1] his action is one of thrusting and levering: that is, thrusting the crowbar into the crevices, with the intention of levering the stones out; and he holds it in the way one normally does for this purpose. His action looks left-handed because the raised arm—here the left—gives the main thrust, the lowered arm acting chiefly as a fulcrum; but although I do not know that any ancient author says so, naturally Heracles was ambidextrous. The inventor of the pancration must have been.[2] Why is Athena pointing to such a low part of the wall? Apollodorus tells us: τῆς τε αὐλῆς τὸν θεμέλιον διεῖλε, καὶ τὸν 'Αλφειὸν καὶ τὸν Πηνειὸν . . . . ἐπήγαγεν 'he broke through the *foundation* of the cattle-yard and . . . brought in the Alpheios and the Peneios'. Either because if you want to destroy a wall you attack the footings, or because the river would naturally come in at a fairly low level. One last point. On the ordinary interpretation of the scene Heracles was too close to the triglyph which frames the metope to allow any room for the dung: this now presents no difficulty, for although the triglyph could hardly do duty for a heap of dung, it could easily stand for the wall of the stable.

In the head of Heracles (Pl. VIII*b*) I do not think we can be mistaken in detecting an expression of disgust at his nauseous surroundings.

The fight with the three-bodied fully-armed Geryon was one of the most terrifying of the labours, and a touch of desperation seems to enter into the expression of Heracles as he raises his club for a supreme effort (Pl. VIII*c*). You see it in the set mouth and—a feature which is extremely rare, if not unknown, until a century later than this—eyes in which the upper lids tend to

[1] L. Nix and W. Schmidt *Heronis Alexandrini opera*, ii. 1, p. 98, 2. I suspect that the instrument used by Heracles on the gem 9595 in Berlin (Treu, *Olympia*, Textband, iii, fig. 208) is also a crowbar: the presence of the river is shown by the reeds. For the various explanations of this metope see G. Beckel, *Gotterbeistand in der Bildüberlieferung griechischer Heldensagen*, 62, notes 542–6. Professor Martin Robertson compares the action of Epeios in the Iliupersis of Polygnotus in Delphi (Pausanias x. 26, 2): he was shown γυμνὸς καταβάλλων ἐς ἔδαφος τῶν Τρώων τὸ τεῖχος. Robert in his reconstruction gives him a trident for the purpose (*Die Iliupersis von Polygnot*: Hallisches Winckelmanns-programm, 1895).

[2] And Sir Maurice Bowra aptly cites Pindar on the baby Heracles killing the two snakes in his cradle (Nem. i, 43 ff.):

. . . πειρᾶτο δὲ πρῶτον μάχας
δισσαῖσι δοιοὺς αὐχένων
μάρψαις ἀφύκτοις χερσὶν ἑαῖς ὄφιας.

be hidden by the lowering eyebrows, and the lower lids rise steeply at the outer corners and meet the upper ones at a sharp angle. This is a natural corollary of furious anger, and must have been closely studied from life.

One of the last labours is the capture of Kerberos, the terrible three-headed dog who guarded the gate of Hell; one of the last because it seems to be a relic of an older story in which Heracles fought and overcame Hades himself and thus won his immortality.[1] Archaic artists tend to take Kerberos a little lightheartedly, partly because of his decorative possibilities; and there is one frankly comic version on a Caeretan hydria.[2] It is characteristic of the designer of the Olympian metope that he treats the story seriously (Pl. IX*a*). For him this was a real exploit, posing several practical problems. For him the journey to the mouth of Hell was daunting and difficult, demanding the aid of Hermes, who was present here, as one foot, the trace of a leg, and the head of the kerykeion prove: Hermes, escort of the dead, alone knows, or knows better than anyone else, how to find the entrance to the underworld. The contest is a real one too. It is in a sense a tug-of-war, and as such calls for unflagging strength. But it calls for courage too, and for skill, for it is a tug-of-war that at any moment may turn into something else, if the animal that is crouching and resisting should suddenly decide to leap at its opponent's throat instead. Hence the carefully controlled pull on the rope: Heracles is playing the animal, not just trying to snatch it. There is a concentrated, wary expression on his face, an expression we have all seen on the faces of those who are confronted with a hostile dog and are uncertain about its next move (Pl. IX*b*). Surely no pretence about this, but genuine feeling.

The apples of the Hesperides were the golden apples of the tree of life, symbols of that immortality which Heracles is now to attain. The giant Atlas, who, in North Africa, still supports the sky, knew where the gardens of the Hesperides lay, and he was induced to go and fetch the apples by the promise that Heracles would meanwhile carry the great burden for him. Thus it was both the last and, for sheer strength and endurance, the most formidable of the labours. The interchange must have been made with Athena's help and by the use of a cushion, the purpose of which was not, or not primarily, to distribute the weight, but to give extra height. The designer had a logical mind:

[1] H. J. Rose, *Handbook of Greek Mythology*, p. 215.

[2] Pfuhl, *Malerei u. Zeichnung*, iii, fig. 154.

Atlas was a giant, Heracles was not; yet the sky had to be kept at the same level (Pl. X*a*). Atlas has now returned with the apples in his hands, and there is an awkward moment when the transfer of weight from one pair of shoulders to the other has again to be made. At this moment Athena steps in. She is not, as some say, helping Heracles to uphold the sky. She is doing what she alone, as daughter of Zeus, god of the sky, is qualified to do. She places one of her hands under the load and is about to raise it, or at least to take the whole weight for a few seconds, in order that Heracles can free himself without disaster.[1] I do not show a detail of the head of Athena because the nose is broken in such an unsightly fashion: but the other two heads serve very well to show this sculptor's understanding, and ability to express his ideas. He has not made his hero a spectacularly strong man: Heracles is well developed but by no means over-developed, and the weight is almost too much for him: and this gives much more point to the situation (Pl. IX*c*).

When the head is seen more closely (Pl. X*b*) there is something distinctly moving about it: rather drawn, ageing a little by now, the nostril furrowed, the lips parted and the teeth set with the intense effort. Yet there is the gleam of a smile. We seem to feel that the hero is strained to the limit, yet confident that he can just make it, and that, having done so, his final goal is won.

The head of Atlas is a foil to this (Pl. X*c*). The forms are simplified to the utmost, with that quiet mastery which is to become the hallmark of classical art, that subtle and deceptive simplicity into which so much knowledge has gone. This head, like Athena's, is larger than that of Heracles: the hair and beard are longer: it would be interesting to know whether, when the original colouring still remained they were, as I suspect, white. Here you have the immemorially old mountain-god, serene but unsmiling, not friendly but not hostile—passionless—who has seen all the generations of human joys and sorrows pass. In feeling it comes fairly near to that bearded face from Marathon which I showed at the beginning of my lecture, and the reason is evident—in both the intention is to suggest a superhuman detachment.

You may think that all this is somewhat subjective, and that more has been read into the features of the heads at Olympia than is actually there. There is a simple test of this. Show any reasonably sensitive person these six heads of Heracles from the metopes, and ask him to assign each one to the labour to which it belongs. It is difficult to believe that he would go wrong.

[1] This was observed by Miss S. Mills, *J.H.S.* liv (1934), p. 78.

So much then for the early classical period, and surely the answer to our question whether there was a phase in which sculptors were interested not only in ideal forms but in expressing the characters of people and their feelings, must be 'Yes'.

We pass now to the second qestion 'Do the gods and human beings represented on the Parthenon—a generation later than Olympia—no longer seem to be feeling genuine emotion, but to be acting in a pageant?' In other words, was there a profound change between Olympia and the Parthenon? This is much more difficult, chiefly because three-quarters of the evidence on which one would naturally base a judgement are destroyed, and what has survived is not quite a fair sample.

There were three kinds of sculpture on the building—metopes, pediments, frieze. There were ninety-two metopes, and it so happens that the ten or twelve which have survived in tolerable condition come from the least interesting subject, the battle of Lapiths and centaurs. Even these few vary much in quality. We can guess why.

Compared with Olympia the Parthenon had at least twice the amount of sculptural decoration. Many more sculptors must have been employed: they must indeed have been attracted from all over the Greek world. The metopes were the first sculptures to be started; and it does look as if the team had not yet been properly sifted or trained. There are several ineffective compositions and clumsy details, and traces of alterations, additions and contemporary repairs, as if the exceedingly high relief on this scale—they are a little smaller than Olympia, but more salient—sometimes presented too difficult a problem. For example, a metope such as this (Pl. XI*a*) looks inferior to any of the metopes at Olympia. The faces are sometimes comparatively empty of feeling—that of the centaur here is almost grotesque (Pl. XI*b*)—and the compositions, based on the standard holds in the wrestling-school, often recall, as Sir Mortimer has implied, actors artificially posed. Yet even among the Lapith-centaur metopes there are some of great sensibility, as this head shows (Pl. XI*c*); and among the other subjects one or two of the highest quality; but there no heads have survived. There is, in short, no reason to suppose that, in subjects which demanded greater subtlety of feeling, subtlety of feeling was not expressed. But it is guesswork one way or the other, simply because the evidence has gone: about a dozen heads now exist from the hundred and fifty or so that there were on the metopes, and none is perfectly preserved.

The pediments were the most important sculptural element on the Parthenon, and it would be natural to use them as our prime criterion. There were more than thirty heads in the two pediments, all over life size. The bodies, as we know from the surviving fragments, were in general of the highest quality. Of those heads, into which the leading sculptors must have put all they knew, not one survives in such a condition that we can pass any judgement on its detail. Only two, the Laborde head in the Louvre and the head of the so-called Theseus in the British Museum, even approach being complete heads: the one is grossly mutilated and misleadingly restored: the other much battered and weathered. It is sad that we shall never know, except by inference, how high the quality of the pedimental heads was: and both sad and strange that so few people ever did know: it comes down to only the sculptors themselves and their assistants, and the few Athenians (probably preoccupied with the war, the plague and the other troubles of those days) who happened to have access to the sculptures in the last stage of the work. Then, some time about 430, all those great statues, fruit of years of the highest sculptural skill ever attained, were hoisted into the pediments and set there in such a way that no one could ever again see the exquisite carving of the backs, and no one could see even the fronts at close quarters, except the odd workman repairing or cleaning the building, or renewing the paint. Everyone else saw the pediments from at least fifty feet away, certainly too far for the subtleties of detail to be visible.

I said two heads had survived. There is of course also the head of one of the horses of Selene, in which the sculptor has come as near expressing the spirit of the essential horse as any artist ever has, and has in addition observed and most subtly indicated the effects of tiredness. It could be maintained that a sculptor of this calibre must have shown equal understanding of men and women, but we in England know that this does not necessarily follow. We are therefore driven back on the frieze. Since the heads here are small, ranging from five to seven inches high, even slight damage or weathering—even the loss of the sculptor's final touches, which none do in fact retain—may impair them in some essential. Nevertheless we must do our best with the very few that have not suffered seriously, and I propose to take six samples—a young Athenian, a young foreigner, two elderly Athenians, and two gods.

Among those taking part in the Panathenaic procession were four young men carrying silver or bronze hydriae with water for

the ceremonial. On this slab they are starting off again after a moment's rest, adjusting and steadying the water-pots on their shoulders: the last is just lifting his from the ground. In spite of weathering and mutilation still a wonderful study of movement in arms and hands and legs (Pl. XII*a*). What should their feelings be? What would one look for beyond an intentness of purpose and a seriousness consonant with the solemn occasion? (Pl. XII*b*).

There were also, in the procession, young men carrying, on their left shoulders, trays with offerings. Here is the head of one of them looking over his tray (Pl. XII*c*). We know that these skaphephoroi were not Athenian citizens but metics—that is, non-Athenian Greeks resident in Athens: but in the ideal world of the Parthenon frieze, all Greeks, whether Athenian or not, have the same regularity of feature, the same calm bearing and serious expression. And that is perhaps the criticism. That is perhaps what is happening. The classical ideal is coming to be dominant, and hereafter for half a century everyone conforms to it—calm and handsome whatever they are doing, and whatever is going on around them. In a fight, victor and vanquished no longer, as in archaic times, smile affably, but both are still equally unperturbed, and show no traces of anger, fear or pain. No inner feelings, in short. Once more, there is some truth in this, but it is not quite true; variety of character and variety of expression are to be found if one looks for them.

In the Panathenaic procession the last of those on foot were a group of men who from the position of their fingers were holding some thin stiff object. These must be the thallophoroi, the old men who carried twigs of olive in honour of Athena and her tree. According to Xenophon they were dignified elders, worthy, though aged, to represent old and young alike. Aristophanes suggests that they may not have been quite as perfect as that: they naturally did a good deal of jury-service, and the epithet he puts into the mouth of bystanders has not an altogether pleasant tone: ἀντωμοσιῶν κελύφη—bags of affidavits. These are the heads of two of them on a fragment now in Vienna (Pl. XII*d*). Although neither is distinguished by any obvious amiability, they are subtly differentiated. In one—on the left—you have something of the disillusionment of old age; in the other something of its weariness. The first has been making a remark—not, I think, a genial one. The other listens, with that slightly bemused look one sometimes sees in the old—or more often in the old.

The assembly of the gods on Mount Olympus is a commonplace in literature: it could be evoked in a few words. In art it

is less common, because unexciting and laborious: and when it is depicted must always have the air of a set-piece. Perhaps that is why the designer of this part of the frieze has enlivened it with a touch if not of satire at least of that affectionate irony with which a man records the moods, the mannerisms, and the little weaknesses of his friends. Aphrodite must have a parasol to guard that important asset, her complexion; Dionysus a cushion to mitigate the hardness of his seat. Iris pats her hair into position and straightens her dress as she returns to Olympus after a flight to report the progress of the ceremony. Ares shifts restlessly at such a bloodless display. These are mimes in the sense that they are behaving in a way appropriate to their accepted character and functions.

Only one slab is well enough preserved for the faces to be studied, that with Artemis, Apollo, and Poseidon. Before we look at it in detail we may take a glance at a parallel often cited, the treasury of the Siphnians at Delphi, because it illustrates well what art has gained—and lost—in the course of a century.

The treasury was erected about 525 B.C., when rich mines of gold and silver had been discovered on Siphnos. Herodotus tells the circumstances of its building:[1] and it must have been a familiar sight, not far from the entrance to the precinct at Delphi: we may assume that the designer of the frieze of the Parthenon had studied it. Two scenes, running the length of the east side, are based on an incident which is also recounted in the *Iliad*. Thetis comes to demand justice for her son Achilles, and what would today be called the repercussions of this—on the divine and the human levels—are displayed. Whilst a combat over a fallen hero is taking place on the plains of Troy, Thetis is in audience with Zeus on Olympus (Pl. XIII*a*). The appeal provokes a lively discussion. On the right Athena turns round to two companions. On the extreme left Ares sits somewhat aloof. Let us look at the group in front of him: probably Apollo and Artemis, and their mother Leto. The sculptor, an Ionian from his style, has to show a vigorous argument in progress. The only way he can do so is not by facial expression, but by action: these lively gestures and the turning heads convey well the stir and chatter of any Hellenic gathering (Pl. XIII*b*).

By contrast—admittedly the occasion is quieter—the conversation between Apollo and Poseidon seems almost languid (Pl. XIII*c*).[2]

[1] III. 57–58.

[2] Here the left arms are raised not in order to gesticulate but because the hand was holding something; Poseidon's a trident, Apollo's possibly a lyre.

A certain air of depression pervades the figure of Poseidon. He seems to be sitting slightly sunk, and inertly, on his stool, and staring with a glum expression straight in front of him. He has no cause for jubilation. The scene on which he would be looking down—if he were not being careful not to look—is taking place on the very spot where he had been discomfited in his contest with Athena for the allegiance of the people of Athens, when Athena had produced the winning olive-tree. All he had to show there on the Acropolis was a trident-mark and a precarious shrine. This is that most difficult of all subjects, a conversation-piece: how difficult, the so-called conversation-pictures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries demonstrate: very few of them depict people actually speaking. But here Apollo has turned round to make a remark—to condole perhaps, for Poseidon and Apollo had often been comrades (Pl. XIV*a*). I always feel that we ought to know what that remark was; and that perhaps a Greek of the time would have known it. We may perhaps say of it what Sir Thomas Browne said of the problem: 'What song the Syrens sang', that 'it is puzzling, but not beyond all conjecture'.

We looked just now at a work carved nearly a hundred years earlier: I should like to conclude by looking at one made almost at the same time as the Parthenon, because it too brings out a certain contrast of spirit, and may suggest that this part of the frieze does savour of pageantry rather than real feeling (Pl. XIV*b*). This is the right-hand end of the assembly of gods on the east frieze, and it is a patchwork of fragments. However, we can make out the main lines of the composition. The last of the gods on the right was Eros, leaning against his mother's knee and holding in his left hand the shaft of her parasol. Her arm is stretched out and passes between his neck and his wings: the forefinger is pointing to something in the distance, some incident in the procession. The action is that of a mother with a growing child. Eros is shown as a young boy, alert but commonplace, with no suggestion of his power or latent passion. It is almost a conventional picture, almost an official portrait.[1]

Compare it with this (Pl. XIV*c*).[2] This is a small thing, only four or five inches high, and reproduces a metal object which no longer exists. Fortunately someone in antiquity esteemed it

[1] We know the head only in a cast made by Fauvel, the accuracy of which—the original having disappeared—there is now no means of testing.

[2] Rodenwaldt, *Jahrb. d. I.* XLI (1926), p. 191: D. Thompson, *Hesperia* VIII (1939), p. 309.

highly enough to make a mould of it, apparently when it was already worn and damaged. From this mould casts were made, also in antiquity: two of them survive: the mould itself has vanished. We can guess from the shape what the metal object was: it was one of the cheekpieces of a helmet from some magnificent suit of armour. The shield of Alcibiades, as Plutarch tells us, had as its blazon Eros with a thunderbolt, and it has been suggested that one could not imagine cheekpieces more appropriate than this to go with it: but that is only a guess. The figure of Aphrodite is based on a statue in the round which is usually attributed to Pheidias, and the original cheekpiece must have been made by some master-goldsmith of the circle of Pheidias, probably one who worked not on the Parthenon but on the colossal gold and ivory statue of Athena that stood inside it. Certainly the quality is masterly. It is much the same subject as the last, but with an extraordinary difference of feeling. Aphrodite leans, passionately tender, with one elbow on a column, and holds aside her veil to gaze down at her son, who nestles close to her and looks up lovingly. Her arm again passes between his neck and his wings, but the hand hangs down softly, and Eros bends his arm and lays his own hand on the wrist. The design is compact, and in feeling is knitted even more closely by this action and by the meeting of the eyes.

Some of these beings created by Pheidias and his pupils may sometimes look as if they have little in their heads: perhaps it may be granted that some have much in their hearts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pl. I *a*, *b* by courtesy of G. Mackworth-Young; Pl. II *b*, Alinari; Pl. III, IV, V *a*, *b*, Pl. VIII *a*, Pl. IX, X, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg; Pl. V *c*, VII *c*, VIII *b*, *c*, after Curtius and Adler, *Olympia*; Pl. VI *a*, *c*, XII *a*, W. Hege; Pl. VII *b*, Giraudon: Pl. XI *c*, Director of the National Museum, Copenhagen; Pl. XII *c*, Direzione, Musei e Gallerie Pontificie; Pl. XII *d*, after *Jahrbuch d. Kunsthist. Sammlungen in Wien*, 1920; Pl. XIII *a*, *c*, XIV *a*, Hirmer Verlag, München; Pl. XIV *b*, after A. H. Smith, *Sculptures of the Parthenon*; Pl. XIV *c*, after G. Rodenwaldt, *Die Kunst der Antike* (phot. E. Schuchhardt).

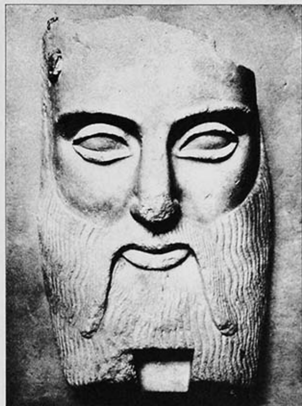
PLATES I–XIV

a

b

a. Statue of a woman no. 674. *Acropolis Museum, Athens.*

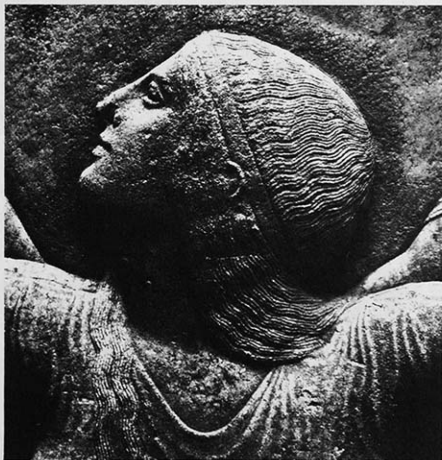
b. Statue of a woman no. 686. *Acropolis Museum, Athens.*



a

a. Head of a god. *Berlin.*

b. Head of a goddess on the Ludovisi Throne. *Museo Nazionale, Rome.*



b

a. Apollo, west pediment, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

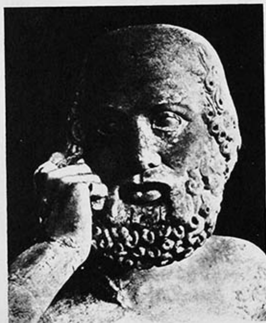
b. Youth and centaur, west pediment, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

a. Lapiths and centaur, west pediment, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

b. Detail of group in *a. Olympia.*

c. Detail of group in *a. Olympia.*

a. Old man, east pediment, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*



b. Head of the same.

c. Head of Oenomaus, east pediment, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

a. Metope, Nemean lion, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

b. Athena on the same metope. *Olympia.*

c. Heracles on the same metope. *Olympia.*

PLATE VII

a. Metope, Stymphalian birds, temple of Zeus. *Louvre and Olympia.*

b. Athena, same metope. *Louvre.*

c. Heracles, same metope. *Louvre.*

a. Metope, Augean stables, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

b. Head of Heracles, same metope. *Olympia.*

c. Head of Heracles, on metope of Geryon, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

PLATE IX

a. Metope, Kerberos, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

b. Heracles, same metope. *Olympia.*

c. Heracles, metope of the Apples of the Hesperides, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

a. Metope, the Apples of the Hesperides, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

b. Head of Heracles, on the same metope, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

c. Head of Atlas, on the same metope, temple of Zeus. *Olympia.*

PLATE XI

a. Metope of the Parthenon, Lapith and centaur. *British Museum.*

b. Centaur, same metope. *British Museum.*

c. Centaur, metope of Parthenon. *Copenhagen.*

a. Slab from north frieze of the Parthenon. *Acropolis Museum, Athens.*

b. Head on the same slab. *Acropolis Museum, Athens.*

c. Head from north frieze of Parthenon. *Museo del Vaticano.*

d. Heads from north frieze of Parthenon. *Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.*

a. Part of east frieze, Siphnian treasury. *Delphi.*

b. Detail of the same. *Delphi.*

c. Slab from east frieze of Parthenon. *Acropolis Museum, Athens.*

a. Detail of slab from Parthenon. *Acropolis Museum, Athens.*

b. Fragments of east frieze of Parthenon. (Casts, *British Museum*).

c. Cast of a cheekpiece. *Berlin*