Greek Sculpture and the Four Elements [full text, not including figures]

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Greek Sculpture and The Four Elements

By J.L. Benson

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About this book
This is one part of the first comprehensive study of the development of Greek sculpture and painting with the aim of enriching the usual stylistic-sociological approaches through a serious, disciplined consideration of the basic Greek scientific orientation to the world. This world view, known as the Four Elements Theory, came to specific formulation at the same time as the perfected contrapposto of Polykleitos and a concern with the four root colors in painting (Polygnotos). All these factors are found to be intimately intertwined, for, at this stage of human culture, the spheres of science and art were not so drastically differentiated as in our era.

The world of the four elements involved the concepts of polarity and complementarism at every level. One of the most important results of this approach, taken first mainly on the basis of an analysis of sculpture, is a deeper understanding of the conventional articulation of Greek art (and culture) into large characteristic periods. However, in order to understand the finer subdivisions of these periods, it was necessary to supplement the concern with the four elements as a dynamic system of macrocosmic-microcosmic relationships with a study of the Greek conception of the mind, on the basis both of hints in ancient literature, mythology and art and of certain aspects of modern psychology. The result of this is a different kind of understanding than hitherto suggested for the motivating forces behind our conventional sub-periods. Other laborers in this field have been Bruno Snell and J. J. Pollitt.

Essentially this book presents a new way of seeing Greek art through thought structures based on the work of the Greek natural philosophers themselves. Among these, Empedokles is at last accorded the commanding position he deserves to occupy for his contribution.

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HYMN TO THE FOUR ELEMENTS

Sirenen
Welch feuriges Wunder verklärt uns die Wellen,
Die gegeneinander sich funkelnd zerschellen?
So leuchtet's und schwanket und hellet hinan:
Die Körper, sie glühen auf nächtlicher Bahn,
Und ringsum ist alles vom Feuer umronnen;
So herrsche denn Eros, der alles begonnen!

Heil dem Meer! Heil den Wogen!
Von dem heiligen Feuer umzogen!
Heil dem Wasser! Heil dem Feuer!
Heil dem seltnen Abenteuer!

All-Alle
Heil den mildgewognen Lüften!
Heil geheimnisreichen Grützen!
Hoch gefeiert seid allhier,
Element’ ihr alle vier!

Sirens
The waves are transfigured with fire-laden wonder,
They glitter in impact, in flame leap asunder
Here’s shining and swaying, and spurring of light,
With forms all aglow in the track of the night,
And lapping of fire touches all things around:
Let Eros who wrought it be honoured and crowned!

Hail to the Ocean! Hail to the wave!
The flood with holy fire to lave!
Waters hail! All hail the fire!
The strange event hail we in choir!

All voices in concert
Hail light airs now floating free!
Hail earth’s caves of mystery!
Held in honour evermore
Be the elemental four!

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE
Faust II, Act 2, “Klassische Walpurgisnacht”

Translated by Philip Wayne
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Preface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List of figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List of schematic illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chapter I: Toward Defining the Ego: Greek and Modern Viewpoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Three Faculties of the Ego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Recapitulation and Interpretation of Dilthey’s “Structure of a World View”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Author’s Conception of How “The Structure of a World View” May Throw Light on Greek Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chapter II: Examples of Period-setting in Studies of Greek Art (or Greek Sculpture) in Modern Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chapter III: Human Consciousness and Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Justification of the Periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Cyclical Quality of Greek Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chapter IV: Form and Time: Reasoning about an Existential Basis for our Style Periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Setting the Archaic Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o When did the Archaic Period end?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Setting the Protoclassical Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Setting the Classical Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Picturing the cyclical stages in broadest terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contrapposto in the World of Four Elements philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• From dynamic ponderation to contrapposto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The “destiny” of contrapposto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Setting the Protohellenistic Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The larger problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The specific problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The walking position in sculpture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The new ponderation in relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Setting the Hellenistic Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chapter V: A Detailed Study of the Emergence and Significance of Contrapposto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Canon as Evolved Prototype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Development of Dynamic Ponderation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Abstracting the Elements of Dynamic Ponderation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Art as Science and Science as Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Abstracting the Elements of Dynamic Ponderation: Illustrations 2–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Longer Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Epilogue: On Philosophers and Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appendix A: Diagrams illustrating the progressive governance of the Four Elements Cycle by Each Element in Turn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appendix B: The Structure of a World View (as conceived by Wilhelm Dilthey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appendix C: Triadism in the History of 19th and Early 20th Century Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appendix D: Comments on the Question of Mineral Weight in the Canon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Abbreviations follow Select Bibliography except some explained within the List of Figures.

Half-tones

Fig. 1 Bronze statuette Metropolitan Museum, New York: Herakles (?) and Centaur. 8th century B.C.

Fig. 2 Bronze horse Antikenmuseum Berlin 8th century B.C. H.0.16.

Fig. 3a–b Bronze Statuette Museum of Fine Arts Boston: Apollo (votive of Mantiklos). H.0.20 Early 7th century B.C.

Fig. 4 Ivory panel of bed-head Baghdad(?) Figure grasping palmetto-tree. From Nimrud Later 8th century B.C. M. Mallowan, Nimrud and its Remains v. II (London 1966) fig. 391.

Fig. 5 Bronze statuette NM Delphi Mid-7th century B.C. H.0.20.

Fig. 6 Limestone statue NM Cairo: Ranufer Ca. 2500 B.C.

Fig. 7 Marble kouros Metropolitan Museum, New York, Ca. 620 B.C. G. Richter 1969, Fig. 54.

Fig. 8 Marble kore Pergamon Museum Berlin Ca. 580 B.C. G. Richter 1969, Fig. 66.

Fig. 9 Marble kouros NM Athens from Anavysos Ca. 530/525 B.C. G. Richter 1969, Fig. 85.

Fig. 10 Attic blackfigure amphora Vatican Museum: Achilles and Ajax. Ca. 530 B.C. E. Buschor, Die griechischen Vasen (Munich 1940) fig. 130.

Fig. 11 Opposite side of fig 10 with Return of the Dioskouroi. Ca. 570 B.C.

Fig. 12 Marble panel North frieze of Treasury of the Siphnians, Delphi: (detail, gods and giants). Ca. 525 B.C. H.0.64.

Fig. 13 Identification as fig.12.

Fig. 14 Marble statuary East pediment of Old Athena Temple, Acropolis: Athena and Giant. 520–510 B.C. H.2.0 G. Richter 1969, fig. 107.

Fig. 15 Marble panel (detail) NM Athens: base of athlete’s statue 510–500 B.C. H.0.317. G. Richter 1969, fig. 109.
Fig. 16  Attic redfigure kylix (detail) MnWagner Museum inv. 1479 Würzburg: comast and hetaira; attributed to the Brygos Painter. 500–480 B.C. pl. 154.

Fig. 17  Marble metope (no. 21) Treasury of the Athenians, Delphi 500–480 B.C. After de la Coste Messelière, Fouilles de Delphes IV, 4 (Paris 1957) pl. 60.

Fig. 18  Marble statuary Glyptothek Munich from Aphaia Temple, Aigina. 500–480 B.C. D. Ohly 1976, pl. 73.

Fig. 19  Attic redfigure kylix (detail) Staatliche Museen Berlin inv. 2309: satyrs cavorting; attributed to the Dokimasia Painter “perhaps 480”.

Fig. 20  Attic redfigure kantharos (detail) Musées Royaux de l’Archeologie et d’Historie, Brussels A718: Herakles and Amazons. 490/480 B.C.

Fig. 21  Attic redfigure belly amphora (detail) Staatliche Museen Berlin F 2159: scene of wrestling. Ca. 525–520.

Fig. 22  Marble kouros NM Athens from Ptoon (no. 20). 515–500 B.C. H.1.03. G. Richter 1970(2), fig. 450.

Fig. 23  Marble kouros NM Athens no. 3686 from Keos. 530–525 B.C. H. “overlife-size” G. Richter 1970(2), fig. 419.

Fig. 24  Back view of fig. 23. G. Richter 1970(2), fig. 422.

Fig. 25  Back view of fig. 22. G. Richter 1970(2), fig. 451.

Fig. 26  Marble kouros Acropolis Museum no. 692 from Athens. 500–480 B.C. H.0.87. G. Richter 1970(2), fig. 464.

Fig. 27  Back view of fig. 26. Richter 1970(2), fig. 465.

Fig. 28  Bronze statuette NM Athens no. 6445 from Athens. 500–480 B.C. H.0.273. G. Richter 1970(2), fig. 474.

Fig. 29  Back view of fig. 28. Richter 1970(2) fig. 475.

Fig. 30  Bronze kouros Louvre Paris from sea at Piombino. 500–480 B.C. (?). H.1.15. M. Collingnon I, p. 312.

Fig. 31  Marble kouros Acropolis Museum no. 698 (“Kritios Boy”). Ca. 480 B.C. H.0.86.

Fig. 32  Side view of fig. 31.

Fig. 33  Attic redfigure Panathenaic amphora (detail) MnWagner Museum Würzburg (from Vulci): Herakles; by the Berlin Painter. 500–490 B.C.
Fig. 34  Attic redfigure neck amphora (detail) Harrow School (England): satyr; by the Kleophrades Painter 500–490 B.C. J. Boardman 1975, fig. 140.

Fig. 35  Attic redfigure cup (detail) Berlin Staatliche Museen inv. 2269 from Chiusi; lovers; by the Kiss Painter. 500–480 B.C.

Fig. 36  Attic redfigure belly amphora (detail) MvWagner Museum Würzburg: warrior’s return; by the Kleophrades Painter. 500–490 B.C. Furtwängler-Reichhold. Griechische Vasenmalerei: Auswahl hervorragender Vasenbilder. (Munich 1909) pl. 113

Fig. 37  Another scene from the foregoing: revellers.

Fig. 38  Marble statue NM Naples: Roman copy of Doryphoros of Polykeitos. Original: Ca. 440 B.C. H.2.12.

Fig. 39  Repeats fig. 31

Fig. 40  Bronze statue NM Delphi: charioteer. 480–470 B.C. H.1.80.

Fig. 41  Marble statue NM Olympia: Oinomaos from east pediment. Ca. 470 B.C. H.2.95.

Fig. 42  Marble statue NM Olympia: Apollo from west pediment. Ca. 460 B.C. H.

Fig. 43  Marble metope NM Olympia Zeus Temple: Augean Stables. 470–460 B.C. H.1.60. Yalouris, Olympia, fig. 202.

Fig. 44  Marble metope NM Olympia Zeus Temple: Apples of the Hesperides. 470–460 B.C. H.1.60.

Fig. 45  Marble kouros NM Athens no. 45: Omphalos Apollo (Roman copy). Original: 460–450 B.C. H.1.77. M. Collingnon I, fig. 15.

Fig. 46  Bronze statue NM Reggio di Calabria: bearded man. 460–450 B.C.

Fig. 47  Repeats fig. 38.

Fig. 48  Marble metope British Museum London Parthenon no. 31: Lapith and centaur 450–440 B.C. H.1.48.

Fig. 49  Marble panel NM Athens: Eleusinian votive relief. 440–430 B.C. H.2.40. M. Collingnon I, fig. 68.

Fig. 50  Marble statue NM Athens: “Diadoumenos” (Roman copy). 420–410 B.C. H.1.86. E. von Mach, Greek Sculpture (Boston 1903) pl. XXII fig. 3

Fig. 51  Marble statues Erechtheion Athens: “Karyatids” 420–410 B.C. H.2.31.
Fig. 52  Marble panel British Museum London: from frieze of Apollo Temple at Phigaleia: Amazonomachy. 410–400 B.C. H.0.64.

Fig. 53  Marble grave relief NM Athens inv. 3624: Hegeso. 410–400 B.C. H.1.49. M. Collingnon I, pl. IV.

Fig. 54  Marble statue Staatliche Museen Munich: Eirene and Ploutos (Roman copy). Original: 380–370 B.C. H.1.99. W. R. Biers AG, fig. 9-9.

Fig. 55  Marble statue NM Olympia: Hermes and Dionysos. Ca. 350 B.C. H.2.13. W. R. Biers AG, fig. 9-20.

Fig. 56  Bronze statue NM Athens from Piraeus: Athena. Ca. 350 B.C.

Fig. 57  Marble panel British Museum London from Halikarnassos: Amazonomachy no. 1022 ascribed to Timotheos. Ca. 350 B.C. H.0.89.

Fig. 58  Marble grave stele NM Athens from Ilissos. 350–340 B.C. H.1.68. M. Collingnon (1911), fig. 82.

Fig. 59  Marble panel NM Athens from Mantinea: three muses. Ca. 375 B.C. M. Collingnon (1911), p. 192.

Fig. 60  Marble statue Metropolitan Museum, NY: wounded Amazon (Roman Copy, probably after Polykleitos) Ca. 440–430 B.C. G. Richter 1969, fig. 163.

Fig. 61  Bronze statue NM Athens from Cape Artemision: god with missile. 470–460 B.C. H.2.09.

Fig. 62  Marble statue Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden: Maenad after Skopas (Roman copy). 350–340 B.C.

Fig. 63  Marble statue Agora Museum Athens: akroterion from Stoa of Zeus. 410–400 B.C.

Fig. 64  Marble grave stele Kerameikos Museum Athens: Dexileos. Ca. 390 B.C. H.1.75. M. Collingnon I, fig. 89.

Fig. 65  Marble statue NM Delphi: Agias. 350–340 B.C. H.1.97.

Fig. 66  Marble statue Vatican Museum: Scraper by Lysippos (Roman copy). 340–330 B.C. H.2.05 E. von Mach, fig. 16 (opp. p. 290).

Fig. 67  Bronze statuette Louvre Paris: Alexander with the lance. 330–300 B.C.

Fig. 68  Marble statue Vatican Museum: Apollo Belvedere attributed to Leochares (Roman copy). Original: 330–300 B.C. H.2.24. M. Collingnon I, fig. 161.

Fig. 70  Wooden statue Egyptian Museum Cairo Ka’aPER from Sakkara. Ca. 2400 B.C. H.1.10. H. Schaefer and W. Andrae, Die Kunst des Alten Orients (1928) p. 239L.

Fig. 71  Gilded wooden statuette Egyptian Museum Cairo Tutankhamen as Horus from Sakkara. 1340 B.C. H.0.695.

Fig. 72  Bronze statuette Metropolitan Museum NY Herakles from Arkadia Ca. 530 B.C. H.0.12.

Fig. 73  Bronze statuette Staatliche Museen Berlin (West) Zeus from Dodona. Ca. 460 B.C. H.0.138.

Fig. 74  Limestone metope NM Delphi Cattle theft by heroes from monopteros of Sikyon. Ca. 560 B.C. H.0.58.

Fig. 75  Marble coffin NM Istanbul the “Alexander Sarcophagus” 320–300 B.C. G. Richter SSG, fig. 748.

Fig. 76  Marble statue Lateran Museum Rome Sophokles 335–330 B.C. M. Collingnon I, fig. 178.

Fig. 77  Marble statue Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek Copenhagen: Demosthenes (Roman Copy) 300–280 B.C. H.2.07. G. Richter SSG, fig. 757.

Fig. 78  Marble Statue NM Rome: Gaul and wife 230–200 B.C. H. 2.11. M. Collingnon I, fig. 258.

Fig. 79  Marble panel Pergamon Museum Berlin: Athena and Giants from Altar of Pergamon. 230–200 B.C. H.2.30. M. Collingnon I, fig. 272.

Fig. 80  Marble statue Capitoline Museum Rome: drunken woman. 2nd—1st century B.C. H.0.92.

Fig. 81  Marble statue Louvre Paris: “Borghese Warrior”. 2nd—1st century B.C. H.1.55. M. Bieber 1961, fig. 688.

Fig. 82  Marble statue Louvre Paris: Aphrodite of Melos 2nd—1st century B.C. H.2.04. M. Bieber 1961, fig. 674.

Fig. 83  Marble statue NM Naples: Orestes and Elektra. 2nd—1st century B.C. H.1.50. M. Collingnon I, fig. 347.
# LIST OF SCHEMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS

| Ill. 1 | Weight of air |
| Ill. 2 | Development of contrapposto in the three-dimensional figure |
| Ill. 3 | Development of contrapposto in relief composition |
| Ill. 3bis | Cross-balance between light and gravity |
| Ill. 4 | Macrocospic processes |
| Ill. 5 | Microcosmic processes |
CREDITS

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- Phaidon Press, London: 7–9, 14–15, 60
- Piper Verlag GmbH, Munich: 10
- Martin von Wagner Museum, Universitaet-Wuerzburg: 33
- Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich: 18
- Author’s sketches: 19, 35, 65, 67, 71
- British School at Athens Archives: 22–29
- Saskia Cultural Enterprises, Freeport (Maine): 31–32
- Keepers and Governers of Harrow School: 34
- Soprintendenza Archeologico delle Provinzie di Napoli e Caserta: 38
- American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Alison Frantz Collection: 41–44
- Soprintendenza Archeologico della Calabria Reggio Calabria: 46 (su concessione del Ministero Beni Attivitù Culturei)
- British Museum, London: 48, 52, 57
- Deutsches Archaeologisches Institut, Athens: 58
- Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden: 62
- American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Agora Excavations: 63
- Archaeological Museum, Istanbul: 75
- Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen: 77
- Archivio Fotografico dei Musei Capitolini: 60
- Musée du Louvre, Paris: 81–82

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My aim has not been to create yet another survey of Greek sculpture—there are enough excellent specimens of that already available—or indeed to be confined by the strictures of a survey at all. For this reason the criterion for the selection of works to be discussed could not be to illustrate regional schools or the careers of individual sculptors or the range of motifs in use. Rather my criterion was to show fundamental aspects of Four Elements thinking found to be incorporated in the ever-changing renderings of human form executed by a long-lasting race of gifted sculptors. My ultimate goal is to add another dimension to the style historical analysis generally practiced nowadays by art historians or, more specifically, by critics of Greek art. That analysis generally proceeds on an empirical basis and I saw the possibility of underpinning this with some factors arising out of a study of Greek philosophy. This in itself is no startling innovation, given the contemporary trend to multi-disciplinary studies in various fields.

However, in this particular case there might be very limited value in simply lining up in parallel columns the stock materials of two experts. I felt that the inherent dynamic quality of Greek achievement would have to be appreciated and commingled in one mind applying itself to more than one narrow subdiscipline of Classical studies. The vital clue arose in the realization—not itself original, of course, but experienced vividly—that early Greek philosophy is de facto Greek science also (and the beginning of science as we know it) and that Late Classical philosophy is also Greek psychology in so far as it can be said to have existed. This situation gave me the two poles which are discussed in the Introduction (Four Elements philosophy and faculty psychology); the resulting necessity to relate these poles to the artistic tradition led me to results that constantly confirmed my intuitions.

A preface is normally the place to express gratitude to specific people and institutions for support and assistance in carrying out the project being presented. This has already been done in the preface to Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements, the companion volume of this study, and I refer the reader to that and also to the credits in the present volume.
Since the “discovery” of Greek sculpture by Winckelmann, it has been customary to study that sculpture for influences going to and from it, for its stages of development, and for intentions ascribable to its creators. Starting with Winckelmann himself, connoisseurs and scholars have more or less continuously written interpretations of those factors, often in the form of histories, from a particular vantage point. My interpretation necessarily builds upon that tradition, using the results of analyses of technical problems connected with various sculptural creations, that being typically the focus of scholarly studies. However, my interest in the subject goes well beyond that. It is my belief that all Greeks, not merely sculptors, oriented themselves in the world by means of a deeply underlying mythos—a set of attitudes towards the outside world of nature and the inside world of thought and feeling—contained in one inspired system which was eventually organized in the so-called philosophy of the Four Elements. This constitutes the culmination of the work of the “Ionian School”.

By “mythos” here I am now referring to the factor that makes Greek sculpture the unique thing it is: the “Greekness” which is anterior to whatever influences may have impinged on it from the outside world, that is, from a revival of Bronze Age traditions or from Aegypto-Near East traditions. Important as influences are, the very selectivity of Greek artists in using them and, above all, the way they are transformed into something dynamically different, indicate that there is a mythos in operation. It remained for native philosophers eventually to give it verbal formulation.

In a companion volume entitled *Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements* I have presented in detail my conception of the Four Elements as a scientific hypothesis. It is not feasible to reintroduce that here (although some diagrams referred to in the present text are given in Appendix A). However, it is appropriate to give a few indications of my thinking. The key factor is the invaluable information—implied almost casually by a late commentator—that both Empedokles and Demokritos considered that each of the
four elements had its own color—out of a field of black, white, red and yellow. But which goes with which is not given. Using density of the elements as a criterion made it possible to assign the colors to their respective elements and then to compare the results with the ancient testimonia and color usage on objects with figural painting.

To a small extent the information about colors obtained in the way described can be applied to sculptured figures; in practice, however, that is difficult because color that may once have been applied to Greek sculpture has largely disappeared, leaving, as it were, pure form. Regrettably as this is for us, it may be some consolation that sculptors had to be independently oriented to the aesthetics of pure form while they “liberated” the figures they were envisioning from the marble or limestone block. And, since those figures were to a great extent the nude male body, generation after generation, they present the opportunity to think about stages of development. This has, of course, often been done but generally without reference to color and largely in anatomical terms. What now remains to do is to discover how changes in the conception of the body, especially of stance, are related to the central mythos of the four elements. That is, in essence, the theme of the present study.

It would not, however, be possible to connect the stages of development of sculpture with the elements without taking into account a factor which seems rarely even to be pointed out, or at least clearly explained, by historians of science. In the present context it must on the contrary be emphasized as the connecting link: fire, air, water and earth were conceived of in both a macrocosmic form (the world) and a microcosmic form (an organism). A compatible essence and structure in world and organisms is the basis of perfect symbiosis and a sure ground for cognition; this is similar in principle to the more advanced ecological thinking of our own century. Given the closeness to nature which was inevitable in the non-technological world, and the specific Greek tendency to pursue thought systematically—culminating in the formulation of the rules of logic by Aristotle—the macro/micro character of the fundamental Greek mythos should not be surprising.

Nevertheless, looking away from the principle of mythos and from the idea of stages of development to the actual functioning of those stages, that is, the way they progress, one is confronted with a rather complex situation. No commentator on Greek sculpture ever neglects stance; it would be impossible to overlook the slow progression from the Archaic static equilibrium to the creation of true contrapposto in mid-fifth century and the resulting experiments from it. However, the tendency has been to study that progression on the basis of anatomy and technique. Extraordinary acumen has been lavished from that angle on the statues and fragments now existing. For a few scholars, however, the psychological implications rather than the bodily mechanics of the various stances have seemed a burning issue. Yet the complications and difficulties in making that connection are so daunting that opinions or theories, if expressed at all in writing, have been cautious or even veiled in ambiguous terms. Thus, not much attention has been paid to this factor—quite understandably, given the sketchiness of such concepts and the temper of our age.

It has seemed to me that there must be a way to put this matter on a firm, or at least a discussable, basis. What is needed is a paradigm, most particularly one that does not impose the purely modern, materialistic view of human consciousness on the
progression. The appropriate paradigm should in some sense run parallel to impulses that would be discernible in the incipient, barely existent discipline of psychology that was forming in the minds of Plato and Aristotle (that phenomenon is discussed in Chapter I). My researches did discover such a modern paradigm, as given in Appendix B, even though it seems to be little more than a note for future reference never activated by its author, Wilhelm Dilthey. Yet it exists in his published writings and it sums up in a finished, balanced, rhythmical way the ideal functioning of the three basic faculties of the human ego; thinking, feeling and willing. That concept floated in the air, so to speak, of German Idealism and its aftermath. It is, I feel, the last afterglow of two millennia of a rational/religious view of reality before it was replaced by a rationalistic/mechanistic conception of the world.

From the latter conception emerged the popular view of the universe as a vast, indifferent mechanism and the human being as a fortuitous assemblage of chemicals. While that is not necessarily the view of every scientist who has contributed to the sum of knowledge and, indeed, in view of the staggering scientific discoveries of the later 20th century it has become increasingly suspect and even irrational to increasing numbers of contemporaries, including scientists, nevertheless its impact went deep into 20th century consciousness.

On that basis the question might readily arise: how is it possible that an apparently arbitrary (though certainly not illogical) rhythmical scheme of overlapping, repetitive psychic functions can be applied to works of Greek artists over some hundreds of years of unbroken creativity?

The answer may be twofold. First, it cannot be applied abstractly as an explanation of the behavior of Greek artists, but only in connection with their experiencing of a mythos (see above, Introduction, paragraph 2). Second, it can be considered on its own merits only apart from a widespread prejudicial conviction that history is totally untidy, a more or less chaotic series of unforeseeable events based on a mechanical cause-and-effect series too complicated to be knowable. It may readily be granted that this seems to explain, or at least fit, the world since about mid-19th century; however, it may be less appropriate for the pre-industrial world. One can trace an increasingly chaotic state of world events from the inception of an ever growing and finally completely uncontrollable technology that draws all life in its train. The tenor of life will have been quite different in earlier times when, for the most part, civilization consisted of farms and villages. In the case of ancient Greece it has been argued recently (V.D. Hanson, *The Other Greeks, passim*) that even in the most advanced polis (Athens) agriculture shaped and determined the pace and direction of political and economic development. Nowhere more than in agriculture are the principles of intuition and of rhythmical, repetitive processes determinative—with resulting conservative attitudes that value stability over rapid change. While the central town contrasts with the rural setting in some ways, it is noteworthy that the craft of ceramics in Athens can be characterized with the same words: intuition, rhythmical and repetitive processes and techniques, conservative in style, tenacious in use of motifs and themes. *Mutatis mutandis* these words also apply to Greek sculpture. In fact, an unsympathetic modern
observer might ask why it took so many decades and generations to go from A to B. Yet it is the remarkable stability of, and continuity of, Greek artistic concepts that made them models for later cultures.

On the foregoing basis, the intuitive scheme of Dilthey, offered to the world unconditionally in connection with his concept of Weltanschauung, may have the potential to contribute to our understanding of the way Greek art developed. However, I must make it clear that this study was not written to justify Dilthey’s theory. On the contrary, what appears in the following chapters was already to a considerable extent worked out in my courses and research without its application. Nevertheless, once that took place, I discovered—for myself at least—a hitherto unsuspected poignancy in the relation of form and content in Greek art. It seems, therefore, appropriate to suggest briefly the place of Dilthey in 19th century intellectual history.

Undeniably the fabric of present-day thinking is woven through with many strands from three enormously powerful influences: the work of Isaac Newton and his successors in physics, the ideas of Charles Darwin on the physical evolution of species, and the theories of Sigmund Freud as the discoverer of the realm of the subconscious.

In the interpretation of Greek art it is therefore not a question of bringing these particular influences to the forefront of our consciousness; they are already there and indeed have been used rather consciously in discussing such things as Greek science and Greek sexuality. Behind these influences implicitly and explicitly is the legacy of 19th century scientism with its professed ideals of neutrality and verifiability. In the 20th century it has become clear from life itself that these ideals leave much to individual, and all too frequently arbitrary, interpretation. A broadening of this frame of reference is, therefore, not unreasonable, if done carefully and with a specific purpose. Indeed, this is not only theoretically possible but also justifiable because, after all, the tenets and presuppositions of our secular, materialistic world were not—and could not have been—those of the ancient Greeks themselves.

The premise of this book, therefore, is to take into account another sphere of (human) consciousness which, in the late 19th and into the 20th century, was very much an important cultural factor and, in fact, one which has continued to be a powerful, if not always so obvious, force shaping the world’s destiny. I refer to what is called—not happily in every ramification—the Romantic Movement, in a broad interpretation of which I would include, on the one hand, such things as German idealism, the scientific work of Goethe, hermeticism, alchemy—itself a progeny of Four Elements philosophy—and Platonism, and then on the other hand such things as American transcendentalism, the arts and crafts movement, and the beginnings of ecological awareness opposing the ruthless exploitation of natural resources around the world. Painters like John J. Enneking and planners like Frederick Olmstead involved themselves in this aspect of the urbanization of Boston and can serve as examples of what I mean. A conflict of seemingly irreconcilable values arose and has continued to carry through into every phase of public
and private life, not stopping at the doors of humanistic scholarship. The actuality of the
Romantic Movement, just as of that of the tradition of scientism—both in innumerable
variations and adaptations—down to our present time is indisputable.

The Romantic thought stream carries on to a degree impulses of the Renaissance
that in their turn were derived from the traditions of the ancient world. This orientation
was, of course, increasingly pushed aside as a result of the Enlightenment and the
euphoria of a new scientific vision which, it was thought, would at last solve all the
persistent social and economic problems of the world. Much of this promise has indeed
been fulfilled—but at a cost—already foreseen by the Romantics—which now poses
serious threats to a secure future for the world.

Inevitable as this development may have been, there may be a gain at this very
point in attempting to complement methods (attitudes) that are indebted to Newton-
Darwin-Freud (among others) with some serious attention to insights characteristic of
the Romantic direction. The need for such a complementation arose for me out of an
interest that reaches as far back as my doctoral dissertation when I began considering
how periods of Greek artistic creativity can and should be named and divided—in short,
what are the principles underlying periodicity? The little that could be gleaned from the
few art historians who have given real thought to this problem was helpful but not
sufficient for me (see Ch. III) and it was not until I discovered a somewhat obscure
passage in the writings of Wilhelm Dilthey (see Appendix B) that a real breakthrough
became possible. Dilthey stands squarely in the stream of Romantic aesthetics
(hermeneutics) and philosophy; with his Lebensphilosophie he is part of the late
19th/early 20th century elite trend to organicism (particularly visible in artistic
movements, such as Art Nouveau, and organic architecture). He influenced several
important younger philosophers who stood outside mainstream positivism. To a
considerable extent parallel with Dilthey’s conception of the three functions of the ego in
the passage referred to above are the views of Rudolf Steiner, who, moreover, fits into
the Romantic stream in the additional sense that his world view is compatible with the
Four Elements philosophy of the Greeks, while at the same time in his ideas on scientific
matters he was greatly indebted to Goethe for inspiration.

How did these factors come together in my experience to inspire this book? When
I began to consider seriously the seemingly mysterious affinity of Greek artists and
philosophers for the specific colors: black, white, red and yellow, I could find no
satisfactory orientation until my own artistic efforts with watercolors led me to study
Goethe’s theory of colors. In connecting that with the Greek four color problem I was
compelled for the sake of clarity to involve myself deeply with the concept of the four
elements—out of which emerged the considerations brought forward in Appendix A.
These considerations enabled me to realize how Dilthey’s periodicity, if taken in
combination with the four elements concept, could become filled with the life-experience
(Erlebnis) quality he intended it to have, although in a field he was almost certainly not
acquainted with: Greek sculpture (Ch. IV) as well as Greek painting.

In order to explain the background of combining the factors just described, I
must refer to Dilthey’s two best-known concepts: Weltanschauung and Geistes-
Greek sculpture and the four elements. The former term is generally translated as world view (on that translation, see Chapter I, The Author’s Conception of How “The Structure of a World View” May Throw Light on Greek Art, paragraph 1) and has, as it were, conquered modern consciousness and become an everyday necessity in the vocabulary of our era. The latter term is more difficult to translate. W. Kleinbaum wrote: “A branch of the history of ideas, Geistesgeschichte might be rendered in English as “intellectual history” (or, even less accurately, as the “history of the human mind”).”

While it is true that the German word includes the notion of cultural activities in a collective sense, in the actual description of the structure of a world view excerpted here (in Appendix B) the phases involved arise clearly and specifically out of the progressive metamorphosis of the mental life of a single individual as model and prototype. Indeed, emphasis on individuality is the keystone of Dilthey’s thought. Yet in this one vital instance of psychic structure, Dilthey himself at once proceeded to its, of course, equally valid collective use, thereby leaving the impression that his structure really has significance only for global world views and intellectual history. His failure to do justice to the balancing polarity of individuality and collectivity is the basis of much of the later criticism of Dilthey, including the Marxist.

When, therefore, in this book I refer to history of the mind, instead of ideas, I am attempting in a small way to address this imbalance, for “mind” at least forces the reader to recall that “ideas” which are treated in a collective sense, generally, if not always, originate in individual minds and also operate at that level. Above all, this alternative translation allows me to pull attention back to one of the great insights of Dilthey—also apparently ignored by him after its “birth”—namely, microperiodicity, which will be applied in connection with Greek sculpture, passim. Again I emphasize that Dilthey did not concern himself with the visual arts but dealt only with large categories and types into which world views could be classified, viz., the religious, the poetical and the metaphysical (this latter again subdivided). His direct comments on the way Greek philosophy evolved are thus not of much assistance to my theme, since he did not suggest a context for Greek culture broad enough to encompass all his categories, that is, a context so deep and powerful that his own words (elsewhere) could apply to it: “Because no demonstration could ever call them (world views) into being, so no demonstration will ever be able to dissolve them.” Such an indemonstrable but also indissoluble world view is, in my experience, that of the philosophy of the Four Elements and its visualization in contrapposto (see Chapter V).

It is not part of my purpose to criticize Dilthey, for his legacy is greater than generally realized and can be built upon. My use of it is as follows. His concept of the continual and sequential processes: thinking, feeling and willing as the technical structure of a world view is combined with the concept of a Four Elements world (as elucidated above) in order to throw light on the problem of periodicity in Greek art. As I show in Chapter I, there is some—if only vaguely realized—parallel in Greek philosophy to Dilthey’s technical structure, while the actual articulation of the four elements concept is entirely a Greek contribution to world history. Therefore my method, while innovative, does not go beyond the presently existing western tradition. I know of no evidence that Dilthey was consciously dependent on the Greek parallel just mentioned, but he was, of
course, very well acquainted with Greek philosophy. In view of the importance of Dilthey’s ideas for the structure of my study, I have devoted considerable attention at the end of Chapter I to a careful explanation of how I interpret them and further, in Chapter II as an exercise intended to demonstrate the wide applicability (though not necessarily universality) of those ideas, worked out in that sense the history of the scholarship about Greek sculpture. This gives me an opportunity to be quite explicit in modern terms before the reader copes with Chapter IV, in which the problem of periodicity in Greek sculpture is dealt with.

Notwithstanding all that, since Dilthey is not well known to the present generation of lay readers—a category to which I myself belong—I have prepared for the benefit of any readers who care to go more deeply into the background of this book an explanation (Appendix C) of how I see his system in relation to the developments in 19th and early 20th century philosophy. This includes a few remarks on the relation of the subject of periodicity to the way Greeks experienced time, supplementing my treatment of that theme in Chapters III and IV.
I.

Toward Defining the Ego

Greek and Modern Viewpoints

The three faculties of the ego

Though taken over directly from the Latin language, the term ego has particular overtones for the modern ear that cannot have been present in ancient usage. The mere fact that, as a personal pronoun, it was normally omitted leads to the thought that, throughout Graeco-Roman antiquity, consciousness of self as something separate from nature (however conceived) was not an experience of people of that time. A feeling of such separation did not become intellectually acute, apparently, much before Kant and particularly J. G. Fichte, whose formulation of ego and non-ego continues to be a factor in modern philosophy. Nevertheless, some kind of consciousness of self did exist in ancient times because the pronoun existed and could be used for emphasis and self assertion (see note 1).

The concept of a distinct operative entity: “a consciously thinking subject” was (and is) emphasized in modern languages by the convention of saying “I” with every verb in the first person and it is surely this which eventually demanded recognition in philosophy of the 18th and 19th century. So at least I explain the adoption of the ancient pronoun as an abstraction capable of adjectival and nominal variations: egohood, egoity, egomania, egotism, egotistical, to mention some. As the prototypical symbol of man’s ability to reason and hence exist self-consciously and creatively in a sphere unattainable by animals, it refers to the highest member of the four member schema that Aristotle used. He designated this member as nous, usually translated as mind, reason, intellect, giving the adjective noetic. To this limited extent the system of Aristotle is still current. But modern philosophy, with perhaps rare exceptions, has no perception of a macrocosmic intelligence—or at least would relegate it to speculation or religious faith—whereas such a force was taken as a matter of course to be the active principle of the universe by ancient philosophers from Anaxagoras to Zeno and Plotinos.
One might conclude from this congeries of circumstances that human self-consciousness has increased so dramatically in modern times as to blind it—in the sense that glaring lights blind the eyes—to any such correlative higher consciousness that was still almost automatically evident to earlier thinkers. Such thinkers could be described as more balanced than we—at least not isolated and alienated like many modern thinkers, especially existentialists—and this is perhaps generally the emotional reaction we have to ancient thought and art. Yet at the same time we find these latter, by our standards, strangely incurious about the possibility of fully experiencing and exploiting the physicality of self and world.

In particular the later 20th century seems to have lost consciousness of the fact that the conception of a microcosmic ego—best known in its Platonic form—was based on—or, as it were, consisted of—three soul faculties. These are distinguishable if not easily definable and they seem at least analogous to what 19th century philosophy regularized conceptually as thinking, feeling and willing. I have been unable to find a methodical history of that concept but it was in practical usage at least by the time of Descartes⁴. These faculties are still very much a part of popular usage⁵ but there is no longer a trace of them in academic psychology as a triadic interlocking soul-unity, and seemingly the last exposition of them as such was given by Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911) and Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) in the early part of this century. There has been, to my knowledge, no direct issue of Dilthey’s brief and almost mysteriously isolated and systematic exposition of the concept as an evolutionary process in the life of societies—hence, in its macrocosmic aspect (see “The Structure of a World View” below). Steiner, working on both the microcosmic and macrocosmic level, seems to be the only thinker to make a direct connection with Aristotle’s views on the subject (to which I shall return) and evidently with Plato, in that he located these functions anatomically, although not in the same way as Plato.⁶

In formulating these relationships I have not gone beyond the evidence but I am obliged to emphasize, if it is not clear already, that Greek “psychology” is much more fluid and, basically, seminal than Greek science, which was so firmly organized on the basis of the four elements. Even so, the question arises once again as to whether Platonic-Aristotelian soul triadism rationalizes some quite general, perhaps loose, conception that had been handed down. I believe that there is a case for a positive answer to be made, primarily, if not exclusively now, from the field of artistic convention.

A triadic division of human psychic functions is described by Plato in the *Timaeus*. These seem to correspond roughly to thinking, feeling and willing in this way: the activity of high reasoning is said to take place in the head; courageous manly feeling (*thumos*, also thought-penetrated feeling) has its seat in the breast; and desire for food, drink, etc. is considered to originate in the belly but can get out of hand and override rational control. There may be hints of this view in earlier literature, which remains to be investigated.⁷ Above all, however, the fact that Plato himself embodied the moral consequences of this
system in a striking pictorial image in the *Phaedrus* can perhaps suggest a course of investigation into iconography: a charioteer (generally equated with the reflective part of the soul: *logistikon*) is confronted with the task of controlling his steeds of whom one “is noble and good, and of good stock, while the other has the opposite character, and his stock is opposite” (Hackforth translation).\(^8\) We are almost, if not quite, compelled to suppose that the “spirited (*thumoeides*)” and “appetitive (*epithumetikon*)” souls are alluded to as the driver seeks to keep his winged steeds from grounding.

It is not a question of weighing this passage as proof of a doctrine but of seeing it as an artistic reflection of a fundamental orientation toward human behavior. It is not necessarily inconsistent of Plato to think at one point in terms of a bipartite nature and at another to imply a tripartite soul. In the framework of the four member system, the physical body, nutritive and sensitive souls would constitute a mortal part and the *nous* as a whole an immortal part,\(^9\) just as we speak in popular language of the body-mind split. In Aristotle, a similar dichotomy: rational-irrational is mentioned as a contemporary usage. But none of this prevents the same thinker, in another context, from looking at *nous* with a magnifying glass and finding it to consist in a tripartite structure. In the chariot myth *nous* is surely to be thought of as something intact in itself, whether incarnate and hence bound in with the lower members or discarnate, as it would be in a god. If we go to the *Timaeus* for Plato’s more clinical analysis of the *nous*, and obviously the one to be preferred, we find that only a part of it, the *logistikon*, is actually divine. It is quite understandable that Plato should approach such complicated matters with diffidence. He himself does not admit to confusion about them but he may have felt that to deal with them in sufficient depth was not right for his purposes or for the times, especially if his ultimate source was the Mysteries of which he was an initiate, so that great discretion was in order.

The poetic quality of the myth, which involves a description of how human beings incarnate and then find themselves faced with diverging or unharmonious forces, is heightened by the contrast with Zeus who as a discarnate deity has no such problems in driving, for (the chariots of the gods) “are well-balanced and readily guided; but for the others (men) it is hard, by reason of the heaviness of the steed of wickedness, which pulls down the driver with his weight, except that driver have schooled him well” (Hackforth). Surely the general idea for the picture must come from the story of Phaeton and Helios,\(^10\) for the basic parallel occurs there: Helios never had any trouble keeping his steeds on exactly the right course (they were well schooled), but Phaeton, as not fully divine, could not manage them and came to grief. I refer here only to artistic continuity, not continuity of content.

Out of his poetic consciousness Plato suggested a visual image of great power, one that can offer inner guidance. We know from Egyptian and Christian iconography that morally educative concepts could be conveyed in actual visual images supplied by written sources (Book of the Dead, Bible). In Minoan/Myceanaean Greece—a culture without such a (known) written source—there are iconographic elements that suggest similar educative concepts.\(^11\) *Faute de mieux* one may suggest that these were handed down verbally, perhaps leading to adaptations in literary form.\(^12\) Plato’s chariot imagery
seems to offer itself as a microcosmic moral lesson, but the collective application of the same idea, as the structural principle of the state given in the *Republic*, is so insistent that it has tempted some commentators to regard the military contingencies involved in activating it as the source of tripartition in Plato’s works. In the light of the chariot myth such an interpretation is altogether too simple a solution. Moreover, the parallel myth of moral choice, Herakles at the Crossroads, guarantees that Plato did not have to observe the state in order to achieve a concept of three factors: a conscious agent and a choice between good and bad.

Aristotle proceeded differently from Plato. Escewing poetic visions, he worked in the dispassionate manner of a scientist in dealing with the theme of the triadic ego. First he gives an account of the nutritive and sensitive souls and then, instead of referring directly to the *nous*, mentions three further soul members which at first sight have a strong resemblance to the system of Plato, viz., (at 433bl): “an intellective, a deliberative and now an appetitive part; for these are more different from one another than the faculties of desire and passion” (J. A. Smith translation). The latter comment is not entirely easy to understand, especially since Aristotle did not really explain his own version of the triadic *nous*, nor give its source. The passage has regularly been taken to be a rejection of Plato’s system. In this regard it may be noted that Aristotle uses the term *epithumetikon* (desirous) and *thumikon* (high-spirited) both in this passage and earlier in 432a22 and seems to have regarded them as subsumable—as two aspects of one faculty(?)—under other faculties. In the earlier of the passages he introduces the imaginative soul above the sensitive soul—incompatibly with the neat multi-partite list in 433bl. In any case, his main criticism is that he equates Plato’s *epithumetikon* and *thumikon* with his own *orektikon* and does not want to see the latter divided. He also has reservations about having appetite appear in all three faculties. In modern triadic theories (Dilthey and Steiner) such an admixture of soul qualities is regarded as natural and necessary, even though one quality is always recognizably dominant.

Out of all this complexity I believe that a few general conclusions can nevertheless be drawn. First, although Aristotle clearly did not approve of Plato’s terminology and what he thought it harbored, he was by no means specifically rejecting the whole idea of a triadic ego; in fact, the version of it he reports in 433bl seems to suggest that, if one were to pursue that line of investigation, one would have to use this particular frame of reference as a scientific starting point. He himself chose not to do so and we hear no more of it in a systematic sense. Perhaps the conception of *nous pathetikos* and *nous poetikos*, which he apparently originated, seemed a more promising way to investigate the human mind, even though again he did not discuss it very extensively and it remained for later philosophers, particularly in the Middle Ages, to raise a philosophical structure on it. In this realm we see Aristotle pretty much as a compiler of current ideas—and a tripartite ego must have been one of them.

The second conclusion is correlative. In the circumstances it is impossible to imagine that Plato did not know the concept of the three lower members. If he did take them for granted, then his triad in the *Timaeus* is indeed his version of the subdivisions of the *nous*. Furthermore, *pace* Aristotle, the sense of these subdivisions does not seem irreconcilable with the sense of Aristotle’s list at 433bl. And despite the more vague
poetic references elsewhere, Plato’s treatment of the triadic concept in the *Timaeus* shows the characteristic Classical consciousness of the human organism which is so dynamically revealed in the phenomenon of the contrapposto stance; for he locates his souls among the actual areas and organs of the physical body.

I should find it difficult to doubt that both philosophers were aware of a conception of the structure of the *nous* as three soul faculties which is as basic to the reality of the human being as the Four Elements theory is to the general cosmic structure. The souls-theory, if the artistic parallels are to be trusted, has a traditional aspect but seemingly very little an intellectual one—or at least this was not agreed on—and was therefore not something that could pass into the general consciousness in the same way as the Four Elements theory. Its brief appearance, as if by the raising and lowering of a curtain, in the Late Classical period nevertheless technically rounds off the achievements of Classical Greece as the prototype of all subsequent cultural development in Europe.

Aristotle, choosing to let the triadic ego as a theme for investigation drop, left it to continue a subterranean existence in artistic composition, which is yet to be properly investigated. In his investigation of thinking, however, and in his conviction that mind and nature comprise a unity, Aristotle kept his psychology within the Classical spiritual vision, although driving it to a point where it could no longer be understood even by his closest successors, as has been pointed out by a recent sympathetic critic. This is basically in accord with the view of Rudolf Steiner, which is worth quoting as a kind of summary of the ancient and a modern view of the triadic ego:

Many of the expressions used by Aristotle are no longer understood. However, they are reminders that there was a time when individual members of man’s soul being were known; not until Aristotle did they become abstractions. Franz Brentano (1838–1917, German professor of philosophy—ed.) made great efforts to understand these members of man’s soul precisely through that thinker of antiquity, Aristotle. It must be said, however, that it was just through Aristotle that their meaning began to fade from mankind’s historical evolution. Aristotle distinguishes in man the vegetative soul, by which he means approximately what we call ether body, then the *aesthetikon* or sensitive soul, which we call the sentient or astral body. Next he speaks of *orektikon* which corresponds to sentient soul, then comes *kinetikon* corresponding to the intellectual soul, and he uses the term *dianoetikon* for the consciousness soul. Aristotle was fully aware of the meaning of these concepts, but he lacked direct perception of their reality. This caused a certain unclarity and abstraction in his works, and that applies also to the book I mentioned by Franz Brentano. Nevertheless, real thinking holds sway in Brentano’s book. And when someone applies himself to the power of thinking the way he did, it is no longer possible to entertain the foolish notion that man’s soul and spirit are mere by-products arising from the physical-bodily nature. The concepts formulated by Brentano on the basis of Aristotle’s work were too substantial, so to speak, to allow him to succumb to the mischief of modern materialism.
RECAPITULATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DILTHEY’S “STRUCTURE OF A WORLD VIEW” (SEE APPENDIX A)

Dilthey discusses his “Structure of a World View” in terms of psychical processes (three phases of consciousness) which occur (and recur) in a fixed order, that is, over a period of time which is required for a development and its true fulfillment. The “structure” rests on a concept of reality which can be called a cosmic (thought) picture. On the basis of this, situations and objects are evaluated in sympathy and antipathy (feeling), thus fostering ultimately the formation and direction of the will. In this way Dilthey sees the formation and then the simultaneous operation of first one substratum, then two, with a new leading principle, until finally all three are intermingled in a whole (three-story) edifice: “indeed a structure, where eventually the permeating influence of the soul finds its expression”.

In another sentence he terms this “a structure of psychological life”. The successive steps are now more clearly defined: observation of occurrences within us and objects outside us; clarification of such observation by emphasizing fundamental relations of reality; depiction and classification of these in a world of ideas (essentially all this is the activity of thinking); in the second stage: becoming conscious of ourselves we enjoy the full measure of our existence; then we ascribe to objects and persons around us a certain effectual value; we then determine these values according to their prospective influence, useful or harmful, giving rise to a search for an absolute standard of measurement, a way to evaluate meaningfulness. (In short, at this level we are guided primarily by our life of feeling). The third is the highest stage, for here are the ideals, the highest good and the supreme principles. This stage also is experienced in three phases: momentary intent, striving and tendency; permanent aims directed toward the realization of a concept (relation between means and ends, choice between goals, selection of means of attainment); the final systematization of all aims into a highest order of our practical behavior—highest good, highest norm, highest personal and social ideal. (All this, if properly realized, amounts to transmutation, if not transfiguration, of our life of will).

In reviewing Dilthey’s formulations, we realize that the whole process includes nine phases in three groups of three, as follows:

- **Thinking** Cognitive activity dominates throughout.
  - feeling
  - willing
- **Feeling** Affective activity dominates throughout.
  - thinking
  - **Willing** Volitional activity dominates throughout.
  - feeling
  - willing
The Author’s Conception of How “The Structure of a World View” May Throw Light on Greek Art

First of all, I consider it necessary to find another term for the translation of “Weltanschauung” than (the usual) “world view”, for this latter seems less flexible in English than its equivalent in German. I suggest “understanding of life” in the sense of an active, as opposed to a contemplative, process. This has at least two advantages: it eliminates any overtones of political power struggles that may be present in the literal translation, and it calls attention to Dilthey’s real contribution, which is to insist that an emotional and a volitional factor are just as significant for a view of life as an intellectual one. For this is often ignored or suppressed in arguments by antagonists who imagine or pretend that they are acting purely out of principles arrived at only by rigorous intellectual analysis unadulterated by their own deep emotional prejudices and intentions.

Thus, if considered with an open mind, Dilthey’s analysis of human activity is so disarmingly simple and indisputably cogent as to seem an unexceptionable commonplace: any completed human endeavor must have had a beginning, reached a middle and then an end stage. But to explain this, the dynamic energy inherent in the endeavor has to be considered. It must have been planned (thought out) out of a physical and soul environment. Then the feeling life of the planner must have consented to execute the plan; and, finally, the will actually to achieve it—to whatever degree successfully—had to have been activated. It is clear that these phases are present whether the activity is quite private, or in a social context (affecting other people) or, indeed, carried out in cooperation with other people (in which case complexities in clearly differentiating the stages can easily be imagined).

But Dilthey goes further. He sees this threefold sequence as so fundamental that, in any long term endeavor, it is repeated as a necessary, inescapable technique of the human condition within each one of the stages. Thus the planning stage, the stage of primarily intellectual activity, goes through a subtle metamorphosis of feeling and willing—but always under the aegis of the intellectual, structural problem involved—in order to get successfully to the next major phase, in which the feelings are aroused to justify, judge, above all to feel joy or satisfaction (or even the opposite) in the creativity that is going on. But always, feeling is decisive for the carrying on of the project. It is not uncommon at this stage to say: I feel that the project cannot be carried out because the planning is insufficient, the enthusiasm of the co-workers has dissipated, the opposition is too great or the criticism too devastating, etc. Supposing that the second stage has in fact been successfully achieved, then the third phase is one of refining and honing the “product” for distribution, for wider use, for admiration, for influencing the course of things willfully. It is easy to see how this process might involve renewed intellectual consideration and judgmental activity to accommodate changing or unexpected conditions—but always with the now fully aroused volition in control.

I do not pretend to be a Dilthey specialist, but even with considerable effort I have not been able to discover any attempt by him or his followers to apply this
theoretical pattern of periodicity for the emergence of an “understanding of life” to the
life of a specific person or culture, though it seems to have a potential value in either
case. Obviously, real life comes upon us in such a complicated way that one may not
easily become aware of patterns of events. Moreover, in our age there can be an
underlying fear that any theory of patterns in human activity is incompatible with
freedom of action, particularly of artists. Such an objection seems to me to result from
comparing apples and oranges: the problem of freedom, in the sense intended, exists on
the level of morality and, above all, on the level of individuality. Our conception of these
levels is strongly affected by the materialistic, scientific civilization in which we live,
whereas earlier cultures had quite other conditions with their own special conception of
morality and of individual freedom—if they had any conception of the latter.

In any case, what Dilthey proposed has nothing to do with the problem of
freedom of action, which does not legitimately arise in this context. For his reasoning
concerns only the natural limitations which the sheer task of physically functioning on a
purposeful basis in a material environment imposes on any human being any time,
anywhere. The effectuation of any impulse in the plastic arts, for example, ultimately
involves a sequence of phases by an individual or a group of individuals. Character,
status, destiny itself are marked by the thousand-fold coping with the sequence over the
lifetime of an individual or—in the collective sense—throughout an era. This process
itself is not a case of “determinism”, for not the goals are what Dilthey had in mind but
the process by which, for better or for worse, they are achieved.

Accordingly, in my attempt in Chapter IV to make Dilthey’s insights fruitful in
understanding the emergence of Greek sculpture, it must be reiterated: the stages by
which it emerged reflect only the procedural solutions with which Greek sculptors
responded to felt needs. In this study, the philosophy of the four elements is treated as
the underlying “understanding of life” of the Greeks, that is, the driving force to which
expression is given by Greek art. The unceasing metamorphoses of this force have
emerged for me more clearly by taking into account Dilthey’s stages than would be the
case without them.

To try to clarify this in another way: the stages themselves have nothing to do
with the reasons of the Greeks for making sculpture, or the socio-religious-economic
conditions in which it emerged. All that exists on another level. The stages involved are
thus not “an understanding of life” but only the vehicle for one. It is perhaps doubtful
that such stages could emerge very clearly in the study of more recent, especially
contemporary, art, for we are too close to it. But the situation of Greek art is more
favorable. First, it has receded far enough from us in time that we can get a certain
perspective on it. Second, Greek culture in general as seen in this perspective was
extraordinarily homogeneous and original, regardless of the varied influences it
absorbed, or may have absorbed, and of internal interactions of Greek city states; and it
lasted over a long period of time, by any standards. However, with the increasing
complexity of Greek culture and its position in the world in the later 4th century and
especially in the Hellenistic period, it is much more difficult to discern the sub-phases
(Dilthey’s microperiods) than in the earlier periods. At the risk of being importunate, I
shall state again that his macro- and micro-periods have no existence whatsoever in
themselves. Only in conjunction with “an understanding of life” do they become operative. At that point, the question can be raised as to when and how they are effectuated. That is the question posited here in relation to Greek art.

My task will, therefore, be to evaluate the progress of Greek art from its beginnings in terms of the “understanding of life” behind it. This understanding I take to be the emergent, exploratory, not fully conscious goal-seeking which culminated conceptually in the Four Elements philosophy of Empedokles, but did not ever cease to be lived out. To achieve this I will assume that this “understanding of life” went forward in some semblance of the Diltheyan stages. Can these in fact be recognized? At this point a reader might have the impression that such an undertaking would not bring us closer to life—as Dilthey intended—but remain theoretical. Against this I must affirm that such was not my experience in actually creating Chapter IV (where the stages are worked out) and simultaneously ask for suspension of judgement until the entire chapter has been read. Moreover, as a kind of prelude to Chapter IV I have experimented with a project closer to our times. Is there an “understanding of life” which scholars who (have worked and) work on ancient art take for granted, and if so is this collective understanding and the work resulting from it susceptible of being articulated in the Diltheyan stages? These questions proved to have sufficient substance in their own right to justify a separate chapter (II), as well as being a “dry-run” for Chapter IV. Chapter III takes up an additional factor of importance to the results of Chapter II: the difference of the time-sense of the Greeks from our own time-sense.
II.

SURVEY OF EXAMPLES OF PERIOD-SETTING IN STUDIES OF GREEK ART (OR GREEK SCULPTURE) IN MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

INTRODUCTION

It has not been my intention to bring together an exhaustive collection of period sequences proposed by scholars in our age, but rather enough examples to illustrate my remarks in Chapter IV about the problems of articulating the specimens of Greek art that have survived. For the sake of completeness in understanding these problems, I preface the later systems with the famous style stages of J.J. Winckelmann, since all subsequent conceptions of Greek style are to some extent derivative from them—to the annoyance of some critics.1 The limits of acceptability of Winckelmann’s stages in relation to later criteria have, of course, been sharply drawn.2 New questions then naturally arose out of the revised criteria, e.g., on the basis of Heinrich Brunn’s history of artists.3 Further affecting all this was the flood of objects and artifacts and new information yielded by the unceasing excavations that began seriously in the third quarter of the nineteenth century and continues unabated: these give the possibility of striving for a more accurate picture statistically of the development of ancient art. On the other hand, this very possibility carried (carries) with it the danger of a totally objectified archaeology that shuns the effort of striving to understand the conditions of consciousness that the objects themselves reflect.

CONDITIONS FOR INCLUSION

Among the more or less comprehensive studies of Greek art (or specifically of Greek sculpture) available, some are more designed to deal with problems of categories, distribution and other special concerns than to reflect periodical development. These could not be considered here.4 The following survey begins with the last quarter of the
nineteenth century, when apparently such books began to be used for instruction, and continues chronologically, which allows for the possibility of seeing influence from theoretical scholarship on periodicity (Riegl, turn of the century; Wölfflin, early decades; Buschor and Focillon, thirties and forties). A few books that are concerned exclusively with Hellenistic art are included here because of the special challenge to period-setting inherent in that age. In regard to the two major innovations in nomenclature suggested by me, one (Protohellenistic: 340/330–300) concerns that period: Hellenistic. Only W.H. Schuchhardt seems to have largely anticipated my thinking on this, and even he did not suggest a name for this phase. In the circumstances it seems appropriate to cite the passage that presents his reasoning on the subject (see below for reference: his p. 428):

In terms of archaeology, particularly its art historical aspect, Hellenism should begin at the end of the fourth century, not with the death of Alexander the Great, where Droysen set it with full justification from the purely historical standpoint. For the last quarter of that century is a time of transition, in which the sublime Classical conceptions of Praxiteles and Leochares unfold their last flowers, but in which simultaneously a new, early Hellenistic art begins to take form. This is a time of transition, embodied in the work of the aged Lysippos. By the turn of the century, however, a generation of artists was arising with new ways of thinking and fashioning that are often in crass opposition to those of the expiring Classical period. By the same time, in the historical-political realm, the individual Diadochian states had become consolidated and a new political configuration of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern world was in place.

In regard to my second innovation: Protoclassical (525–480), Buschor and Schefold, followed by others, saw problems with calling the first two decades of the fifth century Archaic, and began the Classical period about 500. Thus in a certain sense this was a step in the direction of my reorganization of the work of the two generations before 480 as Protoclassical. In regard to the first of those generations, Martin Robertson referred to the redfigure style as a “revolution”, thus implying that it departed from Archaic standards. This concept has also gained adherents.

After these introductory remarks I can perhaps best introduce the subject of this chapter by recalling the stages of Greek sculpture proposed by J.J. Winckelmann. J. J. Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Altherthums* (Dresden 1764) 213–312:

- **The Earlier Style** (now called Archaic and Early Classical): characterized by the severe, powerful, angular line.
- **The Sublime Style** (now called High Classical and Ornate): the preceding style becomes more fluid, smooth, subdued without necessarily sacrificing monumentality (Pheidias and his followers).
CHAPTER II: SURVEY OF EXAMPLES OF PERIOD-SETTING

- **The Beautiful Style** (now called Late Classical and Transition to Hellenistic): characterized by the graceful, serpentine line (Praxiteles, Lysippos and Apelles). N.B. Winckelmann was severely deceived in assigning the Laocoon to this stage.
- **Style of the Imitators** (now called Hellenistic): characterized by the will to ornamentalize, improvise and revive earlier styles, often mixing these tendencies.

We can now address the question of how our era: the so-called modern age, which can be defined chronologically in various ways according to fields of interest, is related to the subject of periodicity. For that purpose it is indeed right to begin with Winckelmann.

Let us recall that stages of development in Dilthey’s sense have no significance except in the context of a particular understanding of life. Therefore, it is necessary to ask, in what context was Winckelmann finding the stages of his scheme? The intellectual milieu in which he moved was that of the Renaissance Neoplatonic tradition of humanism as that survived in the 18th century. Winckelmann transformed that tradition dramatically—and thereby introduced the era of modern art history—by penetrating the old tradition with a sense of the development that Greek culture went through, or must have gone through, in real—not ideal—terms. He studied Egyptian and Near Eastern cultures as a prelude and accompaniment of a completely different kind from the Greek development, which stood out from that background in stark contrast. While he could not have known anything about the Minoan-Mycenaean world as we have recovered it, his strong preoccupation with the Homeric poems gave him a sense of the unique native Greekness out of which the visual arts would emerge. Above all, in working out the several stages of cultural development he set the world on a totally new path of understanding and, in effect, anticipated unconsciously the very paradigm that Dilthey, digging deep in his own consciousness, managed to bring to light and formulate. That task of recognizing chronological stages and thereby bringing into new relationships the physical remains from the ancient world, had to be done intuitively. But the other task: defining the substance of the Greek world—in short its understanding of life—had to be a conscious activity, a deliberate re-ordering of 18th century curiosity about other cultures (for instance, the Chinese). And Winckelmann confirms this explicitly, as shown in the following passage quoted from the biography by W. Lippmann:8

“The History of Ancient Art that I intend to write,” he had already announced in the preface, “is no mere description of the sequence of its development and the changes it underwent; rather I take history in the broader meaning it possessed in Greek (information, tidings), and therefore propose to design a systematic doctrine.” The climate, which actuated and continued to nourish the Greek cult of beauty and fitness; a form of government that among other things gave birth to philosophy and rhetoric, disciplines which do not thrive under tyrants; the esteem in which the Greeks held their artists, who were credited with being wise as well as skilful, and were so honored that many of their names defied the passing of time; and the uses to which art was put by them (to reward outstanding athletes and other citizens as well as to venerate the gods) are cited among the causes of the superiority of Greek sculpture, painting, and architecture over those of other nations.
The heritage, therefore, that later writers on Greek art took over from Winckelmann was not simply the doctrine of the aesthetic achievements of Greek artists but a solidly grounded view of the culture behind these achievements; even if individual parts of the historical view might be questioned, it gave a firm point of departure.

Thus, Winckelmann achieved two separate but interrelated goals, the effect of which, when their import came to be fully realized much later, was to revolutionize the understanding of art. First, he saw that it is necessary to understand the historical background of artistic development in as deep a perspective as possible. Second, that it is necessary to find an internal order in the development of works of art which gives them meaning as links in a chain, as it were. This two-pronged approach is still incontrovertibly valid: it corresponds in a broad sense to the art historian’s preoccupation with absolute and relative chronology which explains and justifies the expression “history of art.” Constantly balancing these two factors, the art historian evolves an aesthetic interpretation. But the mighty deed of “The Father of Art History” does not quite stop with that, for—as I said above—the particular sequence he worked out by this method contained within it, unbeknownst to him, the seeds of an understanding of the periodical factor in aesthetics which started to bear fruit only in a much later period.

I have devoted considerable attention to Winckelmann’s work, partly because it has not been sufficiently appreciated by archaeologists, as Karl Schefold pointed out, and partly because—for my thesis—it was necessary to demonstrate that Winckelmann performed the initial hard intellectual work for the “understanding of life” (world-view) of modern art history. This is another remarkable instance of the historical phenomenon of the right man or woman turning up in the right place at the right time to bring a new direction to human affairs. Of course, the right time does not always mean that there is an immediate appreciation or follow-up of the impulse offered.

Winckelmann’s insight into the historical movement of Greek art is indeed a remarkable and admirable achievement in view of the limitations of his era: geographical and technical in particular. Yet his pioneering perceptions, formed in the absence of direct experience of the major sculpture to be found at Greek sites, and even in Magna Graecia, were doomed to remain merely aesthetic formulae—albeit the best available—for several generations, during which the study of Greek art proceeded in the spirit of the great philological tradition of German scholarship; among the best of this was the work of H. Brunn. In fact, not until Greece itself had attained independence and begun to sort out its treasures on the basis of western museology (itself not very advanced at that time), and the wave of excavations of the last third of the 19th century was underway, could there have been any reason to attempt an up-to-date survey of Greek sculpture on an art historical basis at all. But when this did take place, it may surely be said that the large picture which Winckelmann had sketched out began to prove its worth, whether there was much consciousness of it or gratitude for it or not. In fact, given the spirit of the scientific age just beginning at that time, there was almost necessarily more concern with descriptive analysis of the great stream of discoveries that were pouring into the museums and onto pages of scientific periodicals than with seeking in these materials great underlying thought structures. Constant improvement in grasping the absolute and
relative chronology of Greek art on a pragmatic basis obviously would have seemed more important than theoretical considerations of periodicity.

On the basis of the preceding summary I shall undertake a broad interpretation of the periodicity factor in the history of scholarship on Greek sculpture. It is, however, not feasible in the framework of this study to attempt this in great detail. I believe that a minimally adequate basis for it is a review of the chapter headings of the books I have been able to consult, since the structure of an author’s thought is generally encoded in these headings. It appears that the degree of elaboration—or the virtual absence of it—in the table of contents is likely to give a clue to the weight which an author attaches to the problem of periodicity.

The first generation of the type of book involved with this problem seems to begin in the early 1880’s and to last about two decades (1906 is my cut-off date) and it follows rather closely on the Winckelmann prototype.


- Archaic Greek Sculpture, ca. 600–450
- Age of Pheidias and Polykleitos, 450–400
- Age of Scopas, Praxiteles & Lysippos, 400–323
- Hellenistic Sculpture, 323–133

J. Overbeck, *Geschichte der griechischen Plastik* (Leipzig 1893)

- Älteste Zeit (bis zum 8. Jahrhundert)
- Alte Zeit (das 6. Jahrhundert)
- Die Zeit der ersten grossen Kunstblüte
- Die zweite Blütezeit der Kunst
- Die Zeit der Nachblüte der Kunst

Maxime Collignon, *Geschichte der griechischen Plastik* (Strassburg 1897)

- Die Anfänge
- Die früharchaische Kunst
- Der fortgeschrittene Archaismus
- Die grossen Meister des V. Jahrhunderts
- Einfluss der grossen Meister des V. Jahrhunderts
- Das Vierte Jahrhundert
- Die hellenistische Kunst
- Die griechische Kunst unter römischer Herrschaft

E. A. Gardner, *Greek Sculpture* (London 1898)

- Early Influences
- Rise of Greek Sculpture 600–480
- Fifth Century 480–400
• Fourth Century 400–320
• Hellenistic Age 320–100


• The Beginnings of Greek Art
• The Rise of Greek Sculpture 600–480
• Pheidias and His Contemporaries
• Greek Sculpture after Pheidias (includes the Hellenistic Age as a phase after Fourth Century sculpture)

It may, in fact, actually be surprising how closely Mitchell’s book does reflect Winckelmann’s approach. “Archaic Greek Sculpture” is comparable to “The Earlier Styles” with still no clear concept of Early Classical; “The Age of Pheidias and Polykleitos” is the “Sublime Style” and the “Age of Skopas, Praxiteles and Lysippos” is the “Beautiful Style”; “Hellenistic Sculpture” is “Age of the Imitators”. What appears modern is, of course, the substitution of terms we still use for 18th century terminology and the addition of rough limits of absolute chronology. And, indeed, apart from the overextension of the Archaic period, Mitchell’s scheme may still seem adequate for critics who choose to work with the most non-committal blocks of time possible. Despite the greater attention paid by Collignon and Walters—at the turn of the century—to defining the earlier stages, there are no clear gains in the articulation of the Classical period (a term not used by them) beyond the appreciation that 480 was an epochal date for the subject.

I have found almost no general studies of Greek sculpture that appeared in the first two decades of the 20th century (apart from the overlap of Walter’s book) and it is therefore not clear whether they should be added on to the “founders” generation or start the next stage. These were, of course, years of turmoil in contemporary artistic practice and theory and also art historical theory. In the latter category are the writings of E. Loewy, Alois Riegl, W. Pinder, F. Wyckoff, Max Dvorak among others, but above all of Heinrich Wölfflin. The practical result of all this, as I see it, was a new interest in the “typical” or even typological nature of stages in the history of artistic creation rather than with eras as the personal creation of particular artists. This must have been at least partially owing to the tremendous expansion of interest at this time to ages and cultures of which the artistic creations remain anonymous. This by definition excluded the biographical approach which had been so evident in Classical art scholarship—which in any case was now running into great skepticism about attributions. Thus, to define periods, Wölfflin looked for general tendencies which all artists shared.

In the light of this it is not surprising that the first intimation of that definitely microperiodic organization of the Classical period (the word “classical” was used) which we now take for granted, was proposed in the work of A. von Salis, himself an admirer of Wölfflin. Yet von Salis did not carry this principle through to other periods (the Hellenistic is for example divided into two parts). In fact, for the next 30 years, the same
tendency to see development in terms of three parts shares the stage with a tendency to subdivide into two parts.

- Die Kunst der Frühzeit
- Die Archaische Kunst
- Die klassische Kunst
  - Frühe
  - Reife
  - Auflockerung
- Die hellenistische Kunst
- Die Kunst der Spätzeit (Klassizismus)

F.B. Tarbell, *A History of Greek Art* (New York 1919) (Greek sculpture)
- The Archaic Period First Half 625(?)-550
- The Archaic Period Second Half 550–480
- The Transitional Period 480–450
- The Great Age First Half 450–400
- The Great Age Second Half 400–323
- The Hellenistic Period 323–146

- La Grèce Archaique
- Ecoles et Artistes de la Première Moitié du V.e Siècle
- Myron, Polyclète
- Pheidias et Son Temps
- Le Ve. Siècle Après Phidias
- Les Origines du IVe. Siècle
- Les Maîtres du IVe. Siècle
- La Sculpture Hellénistique

A.W. Lawrence, *Later Greek Sculpture* (London 1927) (Hellenistic)
- The First Hundred Years 334–240
- Ascendancy of Pergamon 240–140
- The Late Hellenistic 140–27

- Archaic Period
- Transitional Period
- Second Half of Fifth Century
GREEK SCULPTURE AND THE FOUR ELEMENTS

- Fourth Century
- Third to First Century

A.W. Lawrence, *Greek and Roman Sculpture* (London 1929)

- Beginnings of Greek Sculpture (Daedalic)
- Archaic Period 620–480
- Early Classical 480–430
- Middle Classical 430–370
- Late Classical 370–323
- Early Hellenistic 323–133
- Hellenistic Anticlimax and the Roman Republic 133–23

B.W. Byvanck, *De Kunst der Oudheid* (Leiden 1949) Tweede Deel

- Het onstaan van de Graekse Kunst
- De vroege Archaische Periode 600–525
- De late Archaische Periode 525–475
- De Praeklasieke Periode
- De Tijd van Phidias
- De Tijd van de Overgang van de Vijfde naar de Vierde
- Eeuw v. Ch.
- De tweede Klassieke Periode
- De hellenistische Tijd

A.W. Lawrence, for example, followed von Salis almost exactly in 1929; in fact, in a special treatment of Hellenistic art in 1927 he had already opted for a tripartite arrangement of that period. F.B. Tarbell divided the Archaic period into two parts but kept a tripartite division of Classical art under non-committal names (of the subdivisions). C. Picard reverted to artists’ names to define the stages. G. Richter in 1919 employed a tripartite division of Classical art—again under non-committal names. After the long interruption of the war Byvanck in 1949 was still dividing the Archaic period into two parts but he introduced a four-part division of the Classical phase, the first time that this occurred, apparently. Yet even without adequate terminology this innovation had much going for it and has become rather commonplace.

In the two decades from 1950 on, interest in periodic rhythms literally surged, so to speak, particularly but by no means exclusively among German scholars. A partial explanation for this phenomenon may be that during the interim between the two wars and even, perhaps, during the second one a new interest in the higher meaning of periodicity in its broadest form can be detected. One might include in this tendency, in a general way, already Oswald Spengler’s *Untergang des Abendlandes* (1918) but more specifically, in the German sphere, Paul Frankl’s *Das System der Kunstwissenschaft* (1938) and particularly Ernst Buschor’s *Vom Sinn der griechischen Standbilder* (1942) and—in the French sphere—H. Foçillon’s *La Vie des Formes* (1934). The latter study ensures that this trend was not merely a Germanic inspiration. There was at that time
obviously a strong feeling about the religious and philosophical implications of art sequences (this being particularly evident in G. Kantorowicz’ Vom Wesen der griechischen Kunst, even though this was not published until later), although to express this defied the general prohibition on bringing such aspects existentially into the supposedly objective sphere of scholarship.

I can hardly escape the conclusion that all this was in some way a preparation for the efflorescence of periodic thinking on Greek art that characterizes the years from about 1950–1970. These two decades seem to form a separate phase as a kind of culmination, well set off from a long beginning and, as we shall see, from what seems to be an ending.

G. Lippold, Die griechische Plastik Hdbh d. Arch. III, 1 (Munich 1950, p. 5)

Die Entstehung der griechischen Geschichte in eine archaische, klassische und hellenistische Epoche hat auch für die Plastik ihre Berechtigung. Richtig verstanden, lassen sich auf diese drei Perioden auch die Begriffe von Aufstieg, Blüte und Niedergang anwenden.

- **Archaische Zeit**
  - 1. Ältere bis um 580
  - 2. Jüngere 580–480
- **Klassische Periode**
  - 1. Strenger Stil 490–450
  - 5. Alexanderzeit 340–310
- **Hellenistische Periode**
  - 1. Diadochenzeit 320–280
  - 5. Anfänge des Klassizismus 150–80
  - 6. Übergang zur römischen Kunst 90–30

*Richard Haman, Geschichte der Kunst von der Vorgeschichte bis zur Spätantike* (Munich 1952)

- Geometrische Kunst (10.-8. Jhdt.)
- Orientalisierende und dädalische Kunst (7. Jhdt.)
- Archaische Kunst (6. Jhdt.)
- Klassische Kunst (5. Jhdt.)
- früh, hoch, spät
- Ermattung des Plastischen und Verinnerlichung (4. Jhdt.)
- Hellenismus (3.-1. Jhdt.)

- Die Zeichen (10.-8 Jhdt.)
- Weltenschöpfung (700-erstes Viertel 7. Jhdt.)
- (Bd. II, 2, 1982)
  - Frühklassik
  - Hochklassik
  - Spät klassik
- (Bd. IV, 1957)
  - Frühhellenismus (1. Drittel 3. Jhdt. & zweites Drittel desselben)
  - Hochhellenismus: früh, reif, Uebergangsstufe
  - Späthellenismus: 1. und 2. Entwicklungsphasen; Endphase der Entwicklung

Karl Schefold, *Klassische Kunst in Basel* (Skulpturhalle) n.d. (1950’s)

- Geometrisch: Früh, streng, reif, reich, spät
- Archaisch
  - Früh: früh-, mittel-, spätprotokorinthisch
  - Reif: dreistufig
  - Spät: Vierstufig
- Klassisch: Früh, hoch,—reicher Stil- spät
- Hellenismus
  - Früh: dreistufig (330–300; 300–280; 280–230)
  - Hoch
  - Spät


- Sculpture:
  - Early Archaic Period 600–580
  - Middle Archaic Period 580–535
  - Late Archaic Period 540–480
  - Early Classical Period 480–450
  - Second half of Fifth Century
  - Fourth Century
  - Hellenistic ca. 330–100


- Die Kunst der Frühzeit
- Die archaische Kunst
- Die Kunst der Zeit Platons
- Die Kunst des Alexanderreiches
CHAPTER II: SURVEY OF EXAMPLES OF PERIOD-SETTING

John Boardman, *Greek Art* (1964)

- The Beginnings and Geometric Greece
- Greece and the Arts of the East and Egypt
- Archaic Greek Art
- Classical Sculpture and Architecture
- The Other Arts in Classical Greece
- Hellenistic Art

J. Boardman, J. Dörig, W. Fuchs, Hirmer, *Die griechische Kunst* (Munich 1966)

- Die bildenden Künste (Dörig)
  - Geometrische Kunst 1100–700
  - Urarchaische Plastik 700–650
  - Früharchaische Plastik 650–620
  - Strengarchaische Plastik 620–530
  - Reifarchaische Plastik 530–500
  - Frühklassik 500–450
  - Hochklassik 450–400
  - Spätklassik 400–323
  - Frühhellenistische Form 323–225 (Fuchs)
  - Hochhellenistische Form 225–160
  - Späthellenistische Form 100–31


- Geometric Sculpture
- Archaic Sculpture
- Classical Sculpture
- Late Classical Sculpture
- Hellenistic Sculpture


- L’Età del Ferro e la grande crisi Dorica
- L’esperienza orientalizzante
- L’arte delle poleis elleniche
- La forma severa
- Alla recerca dell’ assoluto
- Il dominio della Personalità artistica
- Atticismo e arcaismo nell’ età ellenistica
- Il ritorno dello stile classico

W. Fuchs, *Die Skulptur der Griechen* (Munich 1969)
• Geometrisch: früh- 900–800; hoch- 800–700; spät- 740–700
• Orientalisierender Stil: 720–650
• Archaistische Zeit: früh- 650–580; hoch- 580–530/520; spät- 520–500
• Klassik: früh- 500/490–460/450; hoch- 450–420; reicher Stil 420–400/390; spät- 400/390–323
• Hellenismus: früh- 320–250; hoch- 250–150/160; spät- 150–30

J. Charbonneau, R. Martin, F. Villard, *Das Archaische Griechenland* (Universum der Kunst)

• Die frühen Versuche 620–580
• Die Zeit des Reifens 580–525
• Die Vollendung 535–460

*Eidem, Das Klassische Griechenland* Munchen 1971)

• Der strenge Stil 480–450
• Die Entstehung des klassischen Idealtypus 450–420
• Der reiche Stil 420–370
• Der Beginn des Realismus 390–340

*Eidem, Das Hellenistische Griechenland*

• Malerei
  o Die Entstehung des Raumes 350–280
  o Licht und Farbe 280–150
  o Landschaft, Natur und Realismus
• Plastik
  o Der Wandel im 4. Jahrhundert
  o Die Kunst des 3. Jahrhunderts
  o Die Stilrichtungen des 2. Jahrhunderts

In these years the principle of seeing Greek sculpture as a whole in terms of a succession of three major stages is not only everywhere in evidence but it frequently carries with it elaboration into microperiodic triadism. This latter practice is, admittedly, rather selectively applied, especially since a four-stage microperiodic sequence (as already in Byvanck) is used in some instances (e.g., Schefold’s “Klassisch” and Fuchs’ “Klassik”). It is, nevertheless, rather astonishing how strong a triadic view of development prevailed, even though no single scholar quite reproduced Dilthey’s scheme (see Chapter I, *Recapitulation and Interpretation of Dilthey’s “Structure of a World View”*, paragraph 3) in its entirety—and even though it cannot really be supposed that anyone at that time was even aware of the existence of that scheme. Instead the triadism seems to have been taken as self-evident and not in need of defense or philosophical explanation as undertaken in this study. Therefore I take it that something in the mental climate of
that era was nudging in the direction of triadism as a technique of understanding artistic activity. How much consciousness was there that the expansive mood, the exciting vistas of new humanistic possibilities which accompanied the earlier postwar years of themselves favored a very ordered process in understanding and interpreting the art of the Greeks? Indeed, as I look back on that era, I sense that a kind of Greek fever, not unconnected with the liberation of Greece from the fascist and then the communist threat, and perhaps distantly reminiscent of the previous liberation of Greece from the Turks, swept through a relieved Western world.

There may have been also another factor involved in this. I propose a thought that is far from original, viz., that thinking, whether individual or collective, proceeds from the general to the specific, that is, from large generalizations to re-structurings on the basis of ever greater accumulation of knowledge and, finally, to quite detailed insights and ramifications. The generation of scholars I am discussing took, after the war, a fresh look at a large but not yet overwhelming heritage of scholarly research from the first half of the century (e.g., Schefold 1949, passim) and felt the need or challenge to give it a much firmer organization than had existed before. The enthusiasm of this period corresponds exactly to the requirements of Dilthey’s middle stage, when feeling—in this case of a positive kind—infuses the other faculties and, having found the game worth the candle, gets on with the task.

While the effect of this carried through the 60’s, as the structure of the books shows, that decade was notoriously a drastic turning point for the established criteria of society in general—a reflection of which I believe to have registered itself in the following decades which I shall consider to be the final stage in this periodic survey (final in the sense of being the end of a coherent development).


- Die Kunst des geometrischen Zeitalters (11.—8. Jhdt)
- Die archaische Kunst des 7. und 6. Jahrhunderts
- Die Kunst der ersten Klassik des 5. Jahrhunderts
- Die Kunst der zweiten Klassik des 4. Jahrhunderts
- Die Kunst des hellenistischen Zeitalters (3.—1. Jahrhunderts)


- Greek Beginnings and “Remembrance of the Heroic Age”
- Archaic Greek Art
- Greek Art 500–450
- Greek Classic Art
- Greek Art in its Second Classic Phase
- Hellenistic Art from Alexander to Actium
Martin Robertson, *A History of Greek Art* (Cambridge 1975)

- The Geometric and Orientalizing Periods
- The Early Archaic Period
- Ripe Archaic Art
- The Great Change: Late Archaic and Early Classical
- The Classical Moment
- Developments into the Fourth Century
- The Second Change: Classical to Hellenistic
- Hellenistic Art


- Protogeometric and Geometric Periods 1100–700
- Orientalizing Art and the Formation of the Archaic Style 700–600
- Archaic Period 600–480
- Early Classical Period 480–450
- Classical Period 450–330
- Hellenistic Art 330–146

R. Lullies, *Griechische Plastik* (Munchen 1979)

- Geometrische Kunst ca. 1100-ca. 700
- Archaische Plastik ca. 700-ca. 500
- Der strenge Stil ca. 500–450
- Die klassische Zeit ca. 450-ca. 310
- Hellenistische Epoche von ca. 310 bis Beginn der romischen Kaiserzeit.


- Geometric Period
- Orientalizing Period
- Archaic Period
- Fifth Century
- Fourth Century
- Hellenistic Age


- Iron Age: Geometric and Oriental
- Archaic 600–490
- Transitional 490-ca. 455
- Golden Age 455–400
- Fourth Century 400–320
- Hellenistic Age 320–30
CHAPTER II: SURVEY OF EXAMPLES OF PERIOD-SETTING

J.J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (New Haven 1986)

- Age of the Diadochi 325–275
- Age of the Hellenistic Kingdoms 275–150
- Graeco-Roman Phase 150–31

W. Hautumm, *Die Griechische Skulptur* (Cologne 1987)

- Das Geometrische Zeitalter
- Die Archaik
- Die Epoche des Strengen Stils
- Die Hochklassik
- Der Hellenismus

A. Stewart, *Greek Sculpture An Exploration* (New Haven 1990)

- Forerunners 900–600
- Road to Maturity 600–540
- Ripe Archaic 550–500
- From Archaic to Classic 500–470
- Early Classic 480–450
- High Classic 450–430
- Peloponnesian War and its Legacy 430–38
- Late Classical 370–330
- Age of Alexander 340–310
- Early Hellenistic 320–220
- High Hellenistic 220–150
- Late Hellenistic 150–20

In terms of this study it is not difficult to characterize what happened. The elaborate periodization schemes just described largely though not entirely disappear and it may not be an exaggeration to comment that any concern at all with triadism vanishes with them (but Pollitt and Stewart are the exceptions that prove the rule). The corollary to the generalizing process discussed above (see Chapter II, paragraph 20) sets in: that is, when thought structure becomes too elaborate, a reaction against it may occur in the direction of simplification—sometimes even radical simplification (which is not lacking in the above lists). The will asserts itself in a critical, possibly even truculent form (but not necessarily fully consciously). One might even expect, by Diltheyan standards, that at this point the proponents of Greek sculpture (and Greek art in general) as a pedagogical force would step forth with a stripped-down and even rather aggressive message, intending to conquer—in this case—the academic community. To some extent, perhaps, this did happen, though not so much by the efforts of ancient art historians as in the wake of the phenomenal success of Janson’s *History of Art* (of course this is an American phenomenon). Whether or not there were conscious imitations of Janson’s methods in the field of ancient art, we do find there not only the virtual disappearance
of microperiodicity, but a playing with terms like First and Second Classic Style or, more poignantly, the use of centuries (fifth, fourth, etc.) as a structuring principle—thus masking even the very limited habit of thought which still actually serves as a generally accepted orientation on the part of professionals, *viz.*, Archaic—Classical—Hellenistic.

Nevertheless, in the actual circumstances of the 70’s and 80’s, it seems highly doubtful that there ever could have been a chance of making the values of the Greek “understanding of life” as inherited from Winckelmann an article of faith in higher education. Such was doomed from two directions. First, by the general disillusionment resulting from the Vietnam war, the bitterness of the Cold War, the collapse of traditional morality, the rise of multiculturalism, the denigration of the political process even in democracies—to name just some of the disruptive problems plaguing society. The second direction was internal. The cumulative effects, deadening if not deadly, of modern technology on the “inner life” of all human beings are being felt not only in the spiritual but even in the economic sphere (thus constricting educational funding). In reality, Renaissance humanism as purveyed by Winckelmann is hardly any longer viable in a world culture now effectively defined by anthropological theory (“Darwinism”). I do not find it difficult to understand that now only “facts” seem safe, for these can not be challenged. But ancient Greek values are not much concerned with facts as such. Therefore, although the final phase defined above can be prolonged, if a new cycle is to begin, it must be on the basis of seeking the spiritual values of Greek art, however difficult and unpopular this may be. It is entirely appropriate, moreover, to point out that the feminist art movement arose exactly in this period (70’s and 80’s). Part of its agenda is that art historical studies need to take into account real human values.

At this point it may be appropriate to recapitulate and evaluate the contents of this chapter.

Around the middle of the 18th century a new discipline was born in Western Europe: the history of Greek sculpture. This was conceived and formulated in the mind of one man who also invented, as it were, the terms—in this case the chronological stages—on which that sculpture could be studied.

In due course the discipline attracted many minds in many countries through a number of generations. Despite tremendous diversity of attitude and method, partly dictated by national languages and styles, scholars posited the outlines of the subject and marked out steps of progress. The basis of this work was largely pragmatic with much reference to excavations and scientific analysis, but without ever totally losing sight of Winckelmann’s vision of how Greek sculpture came into existence and was developed according to certain values.

It may seem paradoxical that the combined work of the discipline’s members appears in retrospect to have taken place in stages somewhat similar to those just mentioned as pertaining to Greek sculpture, that is, in a sort of cycle in four large stages; the “founders”; the early triadic innovators; the microperiodic culminators; and the
eclectic successors, whereby the second, third and fourth roughly parallel Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic. Yet now in the “postmodern” 1990’s, the original substance or vision holding together these stages seems to have dissipated for many reasons. Fragmentation has become the tendency (i.e., specialist analysis rather than synthesis) and even new efforts at multidisciplinary approaches have greater factual accuracy as their focus.

It must be stressed that few if any of the practitioners of the discipline were or are aware of the structuring discovered here; rather they simply see themselves as part of a scholarly tradition. The last thing that could occur to them is that they were compelled by abstract laws of periodicity to take part in this time-structure and to act in the particular way they acted. I should like to emphasize that statement in relation to the idea of determinism, which is regularly brought up as an objection to periodical analysis.
III.

HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS AND TIME

JUSTIFICATION OF THE PERIODS

The rationale of defining periods in art history, including the Greek, seems not to be regarded as an important field of research, especially in recent decades. Despite one or two valiant attempts¹ to find principles, there has been no general discussion nor much interest in the matter. A conventional framework is either accepted silently or else this framework, behind which a certain wisdom can indeed be discerned, is—equally without discussion or justification—expanded or simplified at will; and this too is accepted without comment. It is almost axiomatic that not much significance is accorded to the structure of setting periods. This I believe to be a result of the modern conception of time. We perceive the flow of time as a continuum of events (in this case an object of art is an event in past time) that, particularly in earlier art, may not be well documented. In later art, where the documentation may be more plentiful, the continuum of events is not necessarily clear and uncontested. It is thus understandable that the concern with external documentation—given the vital necessity of it for ordering artistic events—should have become a disproportionately large content of art historical studies. “Disproportionate” because I believe that many in the profession today would agree that this concern should ideally be only ancillary to a search for a core of spiritual values that actually link past and present, researcher and the consciousness of the creator of the art researched—and nevertheless have to admit that the process of finding new information (or putting old information in a new context) takes precedence in the current academic milieu and leaves little time for the more contemplative activity mentioned above.² Even when very favorable conditions make this possible, re-interpretation is likely to be proscribed by academic custom within fairly narrow limits (I leave out of account here feminist art approaches with which I am insufficiently acquainted).

In an earlier generation somewhat different attitudes were feasible, as my survey of the history of scholarship revealed (Chapter II). Even then there was hardly much real
interest in a fundamental philosophy of periods in Greek art; but as a critical interest in
an accurate apprehension of relative chronology arose, it was realized—almost
instinctively, it might seem—that the flow of events in Greek art could best be grasped in
terms of the generations of artists who accomplish specific work in the development of
style; in other words, human beings themselves are the ultimate measure of time. The
work they did and the work we do (in grasping theirs) coalesce into one in our
consciousness. There is not only no place here for the idea of a disinterested spectator—
there is no possibility of it; it is an illusion. If we did not have a personal interest in Greek
art, we would be doing something else. And with that personal interest we bring our
particular talents, enthusiasm and shortcomings. A spiritual value therefore arises across
the ages, if we let it, when we concern ourselves with the work of a Greek master.
Difficult as this is in most areas of Greek art, owing to lack of information about artists’
lives, the great achievement of the 20th century has been the providing of a framework
for relative chronology on the basis of vase painters—representing the one medium
preserved in sufficient numbers to facilitate this. That this achievement is very much
dependent upon the work and fostering inspiration of one scholar, Sir John Beazley, thus
demonstrating the kind of spiritual relationship that is entirely dependent upon unique
human gifts across the ages, is, I believe, widely appreciated.4

Respect for, and concern with, the succession of generations of artists wherever
and however these can be established in any medium is therefore taken as a matter of
course in this study. Yet, interlocking with this, another criterion is available, viz., the
collective—perhaps one could say here, macrocosmic—unfolding of soul faculties of the
triadic ego in an internally logical order. The sequence proposed by W. Dilthey to explain
the rise and fall of Weltanschauungen (see Chapter I), something at least distantly
connected with the rise and fall of states, was not intended to explain the unfolding of
artistic styles. Yet if it has any validity it should also have some application to them in
that artists are an integral part of the “understanding of life” of any era, and in fact I have
already shown that it can be used in considering the unfolding of Attic Geometric
painting.5 The relatively closed geographical situation of the Greeks, combined with their
strong originality in a long continuity, makes them an ideal test case for the politico-
cultural sense intended by Dilthey. On the generalized level on which I intend to use his
insight, there can be no supposition that the manifold complexities of period-setting will
be exhaustively met; but one can hope that a never-before-realized human content in
Greek art may emerge from such an approach.

As a background, accordingly, to the discussion of other problems, I will present
a brief review of Greek art from the Archaic through the Hellenistic periods in this light.
It may emerge from this attempt why the Classical Greeks could not formally propose an
adequate philosophical framework for the triadic ego. They had first to experience all of
it; that is, it was their role, so to speak, to demonstrate it across the centuries of their
culture-making, although they can have had only a rudimentary consciousness that they
were doing this, as we have seen in Chapter I, and perhaps none at all of the diachronic
aspect of the triadic ego which emerges clearly enough in Dilthey’s system. The Classical
Greeks had not yet experienced the end (Hellenistic) phases of the collective triadic ego’s
development.
Finally, the justification for looking at Greek art (and culture) in this framework is as follows: just as the four elements were in existence and provided the frame of reference for human thought and behavior long before they began to be understood intellectually in the fifth century B.C., so also the three faculties of the human ego were in existence and to some extent being used long before they began to be understood intellectually, which may not have happened at all in antiquity and perhaps not before Descartes’ work. Moreover, since this is for historical reasons our modern frame of reference, all philosophical trends and fashions notwithstanding, we have been using it in conventional period-setting already, even if unconsciously and unsystematically (I will return to this). It is appropriate therefore to attempt to discuss it systematically. Nevertheless, this does not relieve us of the obligation of trying to understand how the Greeks did explain time-processes to themselves—in relation to the way modern man now attempts to explain time-processes theoretically. Here a truly formidable gulf opens up and it must not be ignored.

**THE CYCLICAL QUALITY OF GREEK ART**

In a purely external evaluation of the “geometricizing” era of Greek civilization (including the Protogeometric period) we could envisage the people involved facing the ruin of a culture (the Mycenaean) that had become well developed in a material sense, and reacting with demoralization, inaction, indifference or even indolence as measured by that predecessor. Not until the Geometric period ends is there much of an inkling that anything of importance might emerge and even this perhaps in only one or two places. There were no impressive artifacts, no substantial architecture and no writing. A parallel phenomenon was manifested in Egypt, where the people lived amidst the ruins of former greatness, although they never found a path back to the level of creativity of Bronze Age Egypt. In the Near East the same decline manifested but in certain areas was to an extent overcome, in the case of Assyria earlier than in Greece.

However one chooses to account for the apparent arrest of cultural development in all this, from the point of view of periodicity it seems better to let the geometricizing era float as a separate phenomenon with its own internal structure, neither altogether an end nor altogether a beginning, between two ages of immense material and cultural creativity. For it could have been—from an indifferent historical standpoint that sees only change in human affairs rather than evolution—simply the protracted death of Late Bronze Age culture; indeed this thought might actually apply to certain parts of Greece, such as the outlying regions (if not more) that had to be pulled into the new age. However, in terms of the evolution of consciousness I prefer to understand this process as a macrocosmic narrowing of consciousness, distantly comparable to the microcosmic requirement of sleep.

This frees us to regard the post-Geometric stage of Greek art as a really new beginning—a new cosmic “day”, even though its character was in some way pre-
determined by the geometricizing interlude. In other words, what is usually called the Archaic period begins again a process of intellectual exploration in the sense of a new artistic “understanding of life” (Weltanschauung). I say “again” because I have already shown in great detail (see note 5) that the Geometric period can also be seen as a separate “understanding of life” with its own stages of intellectual, emotional and volitional maturation. That fact, moreover, allows us to see the contours of that seemingly amorphous geometric interlude between the two phases of high culture much more sharply. Taken internally it was not a period of decay and inaction but of re-integration.

Furthermore, within the entire “geometricizing” era the Protogeometric phase seems to function as a minor (though not unimportant!) linkage between Late Bronze Age and Geometric experience with its own rationale that can probably also be viewed in the triadic framework. However, it is not a question of using this framework in a routine way. In some cases there may never be enough assured external certainty about chronology to justify it. At the very least, it is clear that the collective work done by the Protogeometric potters, our main evidence for life in those centuries, formed the point of departure for a whole new cycle, the Geometric, and that the collective work of the Geometric potters, coroplasts (modellers of terracotta) and metal workers formed the point of departure for yet another cycle of totally new and unpredictable content. Thus I extend the implications of the cyclic concept worked out by J.J. Pollitt (see Chapter IV, paragraphs 3–4). While it is undeniable that the problem of the opposition of appearances and ideality he works with can never have been far from the consciousness of Greek artists, the actual suprapersonal work (content) of each cycle with its internal stages has the greatest cognitive value for us in its cumulative sense. With a certain inevitability, archaeological practice (not theory!) has bequeathed and decreed the triadic schema: Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, which is likely to survive current tendencies to speak only of fifth century, fourth century, etc. developments. Useful in some contexts, these terms should not be allowed to obfuscate the profoundly cyclical character of Greek art as a whole.

This tripartite system (Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic), though explicable in terms of the philosophical concept of Dilthey, goes back at least as far as Winckelmann, in its essence, and can reasonably be said to have arisen spontaneously from the spiritual connection between the creative processes of the artists themselves, whose work was being studied, and the analytical intelligence of critics and researchers studying them rather than from any theoretical considerations. Triadic structuring is used also in other provinces of art, such as the Bronze Age and Egypt, where it coincided with purely historical differentiation.

In view of all this, why have scholars of the 20th century—most particularly those of its latter (“post-modern”) part—become reluctant to discuss the foundations of, or in some cases perhaps even to use, the concept of an internally meaningful system of articulation of periods bequeathed by earlier generations of scholars who, apart from a few hesitant theorists such as Wölflin, Buschor and Foçillon, hardly accorded them more than pragmatic value? While this is undoubtedly a complex question (see Chapter II), it should be sufficient for our purposes here to summarize the attitudes toward time-
processing as an historical problem which has not gone without some attention from—among others—representatives of the physical sciences, appropriately enough since it was the rise and flourishing of the physical sciences that have created the formidable gulf mentioned above (see Chapter III, *Justification of the Periods*, paragraph 5). I shall use the term *straight-line time* for the view resulting from that rise and now flourishing, and the term *organic time* for the previously existing, now displaced view. This latter view is essentially synonymous with Greek experience but more inclusive than merely that. Thus it must be stressed that organic time is actually more highly experiential than straight-line time—a condition not of diminished but of intensified consciousness which can be felt, for example in literary or musical masterpieces.

What I am calling straight-line time has been, in effect, defined by the physicist David Park using the designation *Time 1*, in the following way: This is the time of physical theory, what is represented in the equations of dynamics as $t$. It is what is registered by the clock.

What I am calling organic time has been defined by Park, using the designation *Time 2*, as follows: This is the time of human consciousness. It is related to time 1 but the relation is not obvious. It is the time that Eliot had in mind when he wrote “All time is eternally present....”

Straight-line time, therefore, is an abstraction of the scientific mind, based historically on the analogy of the planetary system with a clock. Yet the planetary system existed before clocks just as the human eye existed before cameras and the human mind before computers. When natural phenomena are habitually explained and experienced in terms of their mechanical derivatives, time starts to be experienced as a one-way track toward endless progress (or destruction?). Organic time, on the other hand, has been experienced historically to an overwhelming degree as the manifestation of a Divine world, constituting the substance of all religion and all philosophy and it often leads to a conception of what is called cyclical time. An example of this is given by the Divine Pymander of Hermes Trismegistus, a compilation of Egyptian teachings colored by Greek philosophical thought of the Hellenistic period. It recognizes five aspects of reality which have to do with organic time.

1. God contains Eternity.
2. Eternity contains the Cosmos.
3. The Cosmos contains Time.
4. Time contains (or is the basis of) generation.
5. Generation contains Death: “There cannot be generation without corruption; for corruption follows every generation in order that it may be generated again.”

The relation that Park referred to as present but not obvious is, I think, this: since the beginnings of modern science in the Renaissance the straight-line view of time has slowly but inevitably been laid like a new template over the old organic one, equally slowly altering older views of world reality without entirely suppressing them, so that much lives incongruously side by side. The increasingly intensive experience of mechanistic time has brought with it a feeling among our contemporaries that art must
be a kind of passive mirror reflecting the driving currents of the age. Doubtless, art is becoming, or has become, that. Thus, it is at precisely this point that the difference between the modern experience of time and that of cultures of the past that still experienced the earth as a living organism (whence “organic” time) must be kept firmly in mind. For in the “understanding of life” of these older cultures, art was not a mirror of life but the means by which a Divine world imparted to mankind appropriate values in the form of inspirations specifically acknowledged in literary works and, of course, in such things as cultic architecture and oracles. In the next chapter I shall make immediate use of the ideas presented here.
IV.

FORM AND TIME

REASONING ABOUT AN EXISTENTIAL BASIS FOR GREEK STYLE PERIODS

To experience the development of Greek art consciously as an expression of a people based in organic time will evidently have a different quality from observing it as a factual sequence of events—which is essentially the point of view imposed, consciously or not, by a culture based in straight-line time. The latter would claim objectivity for its view, a claim that is valid insofar as unrelenting differentiation clarifies the external data obtainable from ancient artifacts and documents. Yet this process offers neither pause nor guide for interpretation and articulation, whereupon these activities, basic to the human spirit, are left solely to individual inventiveness. There objectivity ends abruptly and relativism begins: anybody’s interpretation is as good as anybody else’s, since there can be no basis for agreed-on principles. Recognizing this, the New Archaeology has proposed that every hypothesis be accompanied by a set of procedures for its verification. While symptomatically interesting, this looks more like a purely procedural than substantive change. In fact, the lack of values, or any way of establishing them, inherent in the modern physical sciences with their ideal of neutrality, has also become endemic in the humanities and no change can reasonably be expected until elite thought again recognizes the primacy of organic time—in which, after all, we as organisms live, however uncomprehendingly (or disinterestedly).

It is one thing to propose such a change, another to attempt to find even a modest starting point for it. For to do so involves making statements that can easily be challenged as lacking documentary basis, even though they are clearly justified, even emphatically required, from the standpoint of cyclical time. For example, a theory documented at a certain time may be the tip of an iceberg, the bulk of which lies submerged in the preceding decades and centuries. Thus, the fact that in the fifth century B.C. at the latest, Greek thought rationalized the experience of human beings on their planet in terms of the scientific theory of the Four Elements leads me to believe that this is simply the culmination of an approach to reality that is visible also in the development of early Greek art. And to believe, moreover, that the richness of this development
cannot be fully experienced without seeing it as integrally linked with, perhaps at this time as the primary bearer of, the tendency of the Greek mind to see the world not only philosophically (and ultimately scientifically), but also artistically. Thus I propose a scientific side in the work of Greek artists, particularly of the Archaic period. Even in our age the fascination of science for artists is undisputed, although it could not be supposed that, in the second half of the 20th century, they are the co-workers of scientists.

At this point it is appropriate to recur to the conception of cycles in Greek art presented by J.J. Pollitt (see Chapter III, *The Cyclical Quality of Greek Art*, paragraph 4). First of all, he takes for granted the same view as the one presented above, namely, that in the case of certain ideas articulated formally by Classical Greeks, one can assume that their origins lie far back in time, his justification for this being that Greek thought seems to have had a strongly Platonic tendency from the beginning. Thus he finds evidence of Sokrates’ *eidos* and *phenomena* already operative in High Geometric art. Second, his demonstration that the opposition of these two concepts is a working principle in the development of Greek art compels me to postulate that this opposition must be an integral part of the Greek “understanding of life” (*Weltanschauung*). It stands alongside the Four Elements philosophy in what I conceive of as a catalyst or facilitator of the artistic exploration of each of the basic (four) elements in turn (that is, as each is dominant in turn: on this see Appendix A). If then our treatments of cycles appear to be quite different, that is because he emphasizes this catalytic factor, which was richly productive of intellectual and artistic content, while I emphasize the progressive discovery of a scientific/aesthetic conception of the human being by Greek artists.

But this difference must not obscure the fact that he too, without any reference to Dilthey and presumably on a pragmatic basis, found the opposition to take place in a three stage sequence that repeats itself; experimentation, re-integration and integration. These can be seen as corresponding *grosso modo* with the intellectual, emotional and volitional stages of Dilthey. No close comparison can be made because Pollitt’s treatment is much less detailed and complete in chronological terms than mine and does not take conscious account of microperiods. Nevertheless, (leaving aside the Geometric period which was not treated by him as a sequence), I can easily agree with 700–625 as an experimental and reintegrative period—except that the re-integrative phase seems to belong more to 625–575 (which he mysteriously omits to characterize)—and with 575–525 as an integrative period. This brings his next period of experimentation and re-integration to 525–450 (I would confine the re-integration to the latter part of this span: 480–450), with the period 450–400 as integration. The inclusion of the so-called late Archaic (beginning in many systems at 525) within the Classical dynamic agrees exactly with the results I obtained—a confirmation that is naturally welcome to me. As his intention was to emphasize exactly that cycle he does not proceed to the next one (after 400).

This discussion may strengthen my view that seeing Dilthey’s stages in the development of Greek art is not arbitrary. I believe it will become increasingly clear that the unfolding of Greek art is a unique and many-faceted phenomenon in world history and reflects as a whole the balanced forms which its practitioners so consistently strove
CHAPTER IV: FORM AND TIME

for. It cannot be without significance that I could discover an unmistakable reflection of
the stages worked out by the Greeks in the collective work of scholars who in fact
devote(d) their life to researching those stages. Some of those scholars were
contemporary with Dilthey himself, who in his turn was deeply cognizant of Greek
philosophy. Even though I have sensed a profound wisdom in the three stages of a
Weltanschauung, it is not my intention to claim that this conception of the functions of
the human ego can or should be applied everywhere and at all times in history. That is a
totally different problem from the specific one treated in this book.

SETTING THE ARCHAIC PERIOD

My thesis, then, is that the work of Greek artists, particularly sculptors, might have been
an important component in the development of the Four Elements theory. The
application of this to color in Greek art is dealt with in Greek Color Theory and the Four
Elements.

Mass and Structure in Three Dimensions

Since the basic problem of all early Greek philosophy was the nature of the universe in
terms of substance, it is appropriate to ask whether Greek artists had a view on this
subject that is discernible in their work. Given the categories of substance: earth, air, fire
and water, it is difficult to get a grip on this question until figural representation sets in.
In the most general terms, Geometric painters were concerned with manipulating
proportions and then ratios on the basis of what is usually called abstract designs, as I
have postulated elsewhere. Initially, it is not possible to connect such forms with a
specific element. Only when coroplasts and metal workers began representing the
human or animal body three-dimensionally did they orient themselves to earth materials
and, obviously, their laws—which include proportions and ratios insofar as shape is
involved. The medium here, however, is not the message. That variety of the earth’s
substance which is the human body was the focus of attention of artists, not primarily
the materials with which it was represented. Human flesh is the most obvious part of the
body and catching its mysterious essence became the lodestar of artistic striving by
sculptors from the very first. From whatever source apprehended, the fleshiest parts of
the body, thighs and buttocks, dominated the consciousness of Greek artists from the
beginning. Their results, however, cannot be called anatomically convincing because
structure and mass had not yet been differentiated. Generally flowing contours and a
balloon-like quality of human limbs and equine haunches in eighth century figurines
(Figure 1 and Figure 2) convey a feeling that the element air is prominently suffused
through heavier substance, lifting it up. A few exceptions to this general picture betray
dependence on exotic models. Obviously the prominence of the lower limbs simply
indicates mass to our eyes. But mass does not have to mean heaviness; clouds have mass.
To be sure, in creating metal figurines at all, Greek sculptors were taking the first step
toward understanding mass as heaviness. But the evidence of vase painting cannot be discounted, where similarly shaped figures were not really anchored to the ground (see note 8 below).

It is only when a first differentiation between mass and organic structure takes place that the promise of orderly thought inherent in Geometric patternization starts to be fulfilled on a broader level. When Greek artists recognized that the nature of the substance earth, even in the form of flesh, is to have some weight, they immediately started to concern themselves with the skeletal structure that supports the flesh, that is, to differentiate it rationally from the mass that fills out the contours of the body. The first indication of this is the setting of severely firm accents at crucial structural crosspoints of the body: neck, waist, legs, joints. Although firm dates are totally impossible to come by, it is possible to recognize this stage in a sphyrelaton statuette from Dreros—where structural development must have been favored by contact with Minoan organicism—and, in a perhaps provincially exaggerated state, in the Mantiklos figurine (Figure 3a, Figure 3b). These examples are interesting precisely because the structural intentionality I am speaking of permeates the whole and brings with it for the first time a sense of heaviness (of the aqueous type). Already in the second half of the 8th century some structural accents had been set, as in spear-throwing figurines in the Olympia and Athens museums; but their upward flowing contours enclose scant mass and by comparison with the Early Archaic figurines just mentioned they are still flat and light (weightless). In the earlier Archaic period progress in the structural/volumetric direction was fairly rapid, as in the Mantiklos statuette (Figure 3a, Figure 3b). Progress in this is fairly rapid, though hardly consistent because, in their desire to achieve the differentiation of shape and structure, artists had the motivation to seek out models from earlier cultures that already showed some evidence of it, viz., Near Eastern, Egyptian and Minoan (Figure 4).

A completely new era from the Geometric, then, is adumbrated when Greek artists realized that (living) weight cannot be rationally accounted for without an inner structure to carry it. That is their first and most significant step toward a culture of the earthly and away from a culture withdrawn in a mythic cocoon and outwardly backward, as in our initial appraisal (see Chapter III, The Cyclical Quality of Greek Art, paragraph 1). It is the step that brought the more progressive of the Greeks intellectually up to the level of the high cultures of the Late Bronze Age, for that is essentially what the models adopted reflect: contemporary works of the Near East and Egypt are heavily if not solely dependent on that earlier tradition. We could speak of this phenomenon from the Greek side as a re-orientation, Rip van Winkle style, after a long sleep. But in that sleep the Greeks had gathered the energy to propel them intellectually far beyond the rigidified models of the Near East and Egypt. Yet their undoubted contact with the most labile of the Late Bronze cultures, those of their own land (Minoan and Mycenaean), must have had a far more liberating effect in this extraordinary process than current thinking is willing to admit.

An analysis of what was achieved artistically in the Archaic period suggests that what had earlier been accomplished through a kind of pre-scientific intuition: the differentiation of body mass and body structure (on a static basis) was taken by the
Greeks as a proposition to be explored until it was totally understood. This analysis lends itself to grasping the Archaic period in its entirety as a triadically articulated progression. In the first—thinking—phase (Early Archaic) the work of several generations of artists resulted in separating flesh and skeleton arbitrarily and then re-joining them smoothly and flowingly. This progression, which took place in roughly the first two thirds of the seventh century, is illustrated by comparing the Mantiklos figurine (Figure 3a, Figure 3b) with a figurine in Delphi (Figure 5). The interest in vertical-horizontal structural tightness is conventionally referred to as Daedalic style, and its intellectual, almost engineering, aspect is foremost even though the Geometric heritage of fleshiness is never denied.

In the second—feeling—phase (High Archaic), lasting through the first quarter or third of the sixth century, the Daedalic passion for firmness was satisfied by the adoption of the Egyptian heroic scheme (Figure 6) in stone. This led the Greeks into the world of monumental sculpture (they went where their quest took them) and facilitated a high level of integration of skeletal details (knees, toes, finger-joints, clavicles, etc.) with controlled weighty mass—which, of course, was inherent in the medium itself. All this is evident from one of the early examples, the New York kouros (Figure 7). Yet the sternly controlled intensity of the kouros series is soon modified by the introduction of an indication of feeling, the Archaic smile (Figure 8), for example of the “Berlin Goddess.” This demonstration of intellectual discipline is thought-provoking; before any indication of inner life is offered, a thoroughly appropriate vehicle for it was prepared. Yet I disclaim any implication that the Greeks put feeling into an empty vessel mechanically: rather the extreme subtlety of this whole phenomenon suggests that something already inside, already inherent in the conception of the figure, was awakened. But I believe that the awakening occurred in a somewhat external way, viz., through the continuous exploration of the design potentialities inherent in the human countenance (and total figure), with its curves and correspondences.

In the final—willing—phase (Late Archaic), lasting until about the beginning of the last quarter of the sixth century, the scheme was refined by constant practice to the point that the figures approach organic appearance more closely than any of the exotic prototypes. Indeed, the proud vitality in the free-standing balance of such a figure as the Anavysos kouros (Figure 9) suggests an inner flexing of muscles. It is not difficult to imagine that the figure is showing an impulse of the will to take a step. That is, the sculptor has liberated from the block the living human being he conceived to be within it.

The full intellectual proposition by which this amazing result has been achieved can now be conceptualized: the human body is an instrument of perfect balance of weight between the right and left sides, with the head and the genitals providing the middle vertical. With that observation we can at last characterize the work done by Archaic sculptors—in terms of physics—as the mastery of static balance around a pivot. Looking back again at the Mantiklos statuette (Figure 3a, Figure 3b) we can see this figure as the theorem, the Anavysos (Figure 9) as the solution (Q.E.D.). The structural principle has held firm; the form has changed in a way only time can bring about: organically. Along the way the artists learned to show many other things of importance,
such as the intimation of inner organs and subcutaneous muscles; moreover, it is
doubtful that any other art or period has so inspiringly (and unexpectedly) depicted the
human head as the pure, free agent of cosmic thought: a freshness of thought, in fact, as
demonstrated by Presocratic philosophy, that could happen only once in human
evolution. This governs and overrides the expression of feeling and willing which can be
detected in the head and body.

Summary: The Archaic period has now been defined as a cycle of three stages
between 700–525, that is, Early, High and Late. The first of these stages has been
analyzed as a microperiod (subcycle) with three stages in its own right. Each of the other
two periods can also be understood in this way; but for the sake of emphasizing only the
most important aspects of development in a clear line, I have refrained from following
this up. For the purpose of clarity it is generally better to emphasize the beginning stage,
which offers the interest of experimental attempts to define a new undertaking. While
such an undertaking may have many aspects, the critic's task is to isolate one which can
be traced objectively to its conclusion. I found this aspect to be the theorem defined
above, understandable in terms of physics, on the basis of which artists were learning to
recognize the element water in the human body—as will be made clear shortly—even
though their medium was stone (statues of men and gods). The same theorem is
undoubtedly reflected in other media such as clay (pottery shapes). A more complex
question is, how does it manifest in two dimensional representations?

Mass and structure in two dimensions: the end of a cycle
The question just posed could be fully answered only by taking into account color, which
should not be introduced into the discussion here, as it requires much preparation that is
provided in Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements. Nevertheless, certain
compositional factors can be extracted on the basis of light and dark alone. Rather than
create a parallel cyclical analysis of Archaic two dimensional art here, I have chosen to
offer a somewhat detailed analysis of one vitally important vase of approximately the
same date as the Anavysos kouros. This will provide concepts for a point of departure for
dealing with the period after 525, when the interaction of statues, reliefs and vase
painting becomes much more important to understand, complex as it is, than in the
preceding stage of Late Archaic “integration”. For in this next period we shall have to do
again with a cognitional stage (Dilthey) or experimental stage (Pollitt). How this fits into
a larger conception based on Dilthey will become clear in due course.

While the impression of burgeoning life in such a statue as the Anavysos kouros
carries us into aesthetic and, beyond that, spiritual realms that—for a brief moment at
least—leave us no option but to be receptive, we soon realize that we must bring our own
intellectual processes into harmony with the conception that could produce such effects.
But the two-dimensional work of art presents us with a slightly different problem: it is
removed already from the immediacy of the statue and thus compels us to take stock of
the devices that the artist has worked out to intimate that immediacy. I have chosen to
take for consideration one of the most famous of Greek vases: the great Vatican amphora
of Exekias.
The contour of this vase (Figure 11) tells us that it is resting heavily on its torus base while at the same time rising elegantly to its handles and spreading, flaring rim: it provides a transition from Exekias the sculpting potter to Exekias the painter who places his scenes on an amply curving surface in an area pinned down equally above and below by solid black, both lifted and stopped by an elegant floral border at the top of the friezes only. We do a certain violence to this work of art to treat it as if it were what our photograph makes it appear to be: a black and white flat composition. Its spatial wholeness thus eludes us—but, as that is inexpressible in words anyway, we are free to emphasize the abstract considerations by which the composition is held together.

In the scene of Achilles and Ajax playing draughts (Figure 10) the principal abstract consideration involved is the problem of compositional focality on the basis of static equity relationships, that is, focusing the entire composition on a motif in the center while maintaining exact formal balance of the two sides. The late Geometric origins of this problem have been described elsewhere. In the Vatican scene, focality is literally a function of physical balance: instead of a human being or god, a perfectly rectangular low box occupies center stage. Attention is attracted to it not only by its position but by diagonal spears propped against it, one pair forward, another pair behind it. From this beginning the artist has moved outward in widening antithetic segments: in disposing the various features of the scene he observes a meticulous left-right balance without resorting to rigidly mirrored repetitions. On a higher box on either side sits a figure whose supporting legs make a triangle, with curving torso so that the bearded face can be brought to gaze directly and intensely at the top surface of the center box—which the pointed fingers actually touch in a gesture of intense concentration. The will to win is as evident as in an actual duel. Behind them their shields stand against the edge of the picture plane curving in the opposite direction to their bodies. The artist displays his skill in a bold asymmetry: Achilles’ helmet is off his head to avoid overlapping that of Ajax and closing off the composition suffocatingly. But it is hung on his shield pointing outward so that its curve echoes that of the opposing helmet. It is this harmonious echoing that saves the otherwise seemingly static balance from implosion. Moreover, this feature lends a surge of dynamic will-activity to the figures comparable to the similar impression given by the Anavysos kouros. This observation can be tested by covering up even the secondary asymmetry of the plumes. Exekias is playing with the static equity principle like a juggler.

This consummate artist, Exekias, went on to balance the intensity of silent concentration on a game exhibited by two warriors—otherwise embroiled in the passions of a desperate military situation—with (on the other side of the amphora: Figure 11) a tension-relieving scene of the family joy released by the return to their parents of Kastor and Polydeukes. Here all is relaxed conversation and happy gestures: one son patting his dog, the horse nuzzling the father’s hand, the mother gesticulating to her son. Yet despite all this bonhomie, the scene is constructed in the same formal terms of focality, albeit more loosely, as is the Achilles-Ajax side. In the center, although slightly displaced to the right, stands a splendid horse; behind it is one of the twins, his body standing in the same direction as the horse. But this rightward tilt is strongly counteracted by the
turning of his head all the way to the left, so that his gaze connects directly with that of his mother standing immediately back of the horse. The psychic tension created by their preoccupation with each other is the precise counterpart of the intense gazes of the two warriors on the other side toward their checkerboard. Framing this central motif like balancing segments are the son with his dog on the left and the father on the right, preceded by a small servant-boy carrying stool and soap. In terms of the polarity dominating Exekias’ method the mobile excitement of the dog answers the stately arrest of the child who is absorbed in balancing a heavy stool on his head.

In this analysis I have purposely avoided issues of iconographical interpretation, which by definition has a subjective quality, in order to call attention to the uncanny ingenuity displayed by a great artist working within the confines of a collective vision of structural purity.

**Connection of the Mass-Structure Theorem with Four Elements Philosophy**

Thus far we have concerned ourselves with the emergence of Greek consciousness into an awareness of physical heaviness through artists’ imagining how organisms in the round or elements of composition can rest in static balance. Our world view, however, at first obscures the fact that heaviness can be only part of the problem involved. For, we might ask, of what then were the Greeks conscious before they studied weight? Being accustomed to experiencing the world in terms of polar opposites and polar correspondences, they could not have done without an active force to balance out heaviness, that is, lightness; and if heaviness falls (weighs down), then lightness rises (lifts up). In the Four Elements theory heaviness corresponds to Earth and lightness to Fire. In terms of that theory as it must have been understood in articulate times, “the implication is clearly that fire moves to the circumference and earth to the center, with air and water in between.” The use of colors in Archaic art bears this out. The very nature of the Four Elements theory as an explanation of planetary reality calls for a pictorial scheme for clarification of interrelationships. The one offered here has emerged from intense preoccupation with color theory; a detailed explanation of it is offered in *Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements*.

If fire moves to the circumference (outward and upward in relation to the earth’s surface), then in a culture embedded in a rarified state of that element—in human (microcosmic) terms *nous*—we should not expect any particular interest in the depiction
of physical objects. This is, in general, the case in the Geometric phase of Greek art (Protogeometric and Geometric periods). But at the end of this phase such an interest manifests itself. In our description of the human figures which that interest produced we noted that they generally have balloon-like limbs and, even if three-dimensional, are not very firmly grounded (in fact, these tend to be mere attachments). In two dimensions, the figures either do not touch the ground at all or do not weigh on it: the feet are mere points of contact for elongated bodies that seem to strive upward to an isometric head-line. Even wagons can float above the ground-line. Such figures have appropriately been called “schwebend” (hovering) and exceptions to this—if there really are any—point to the influence of exotic prototypes.

I propose that these Late Geometric artists lived in a powerful consciousness of the airy aspect of organic life—and even of the inorganic world, which hardly interested them per se. It may have been the younger generation of Late Geometric artists who began thinking strongly about the watery aspect of organic life which, added to the airy, produces a much denser physicality, so much so that for the first time one is justified in speaking of heaviness. But not yet of a heaviness that moves to the center (of the earth)—rather, we are concerned with that in-between sphere of water and air mentioned by O’Brien (see note 7) which rests on the ground firmly without weighing down on it—in fact, the sphere of static equity relationships. Even the apparently weighty shapes of Late Archaic Attic kouroi hover in perfect balance: for us the paradox can be explained only as an arbitrary choice on the artists’ part, unless we are willing to assume that they were working in a Four Elements context.

Looking back at Ajax and Achilles in this light, we find them perched lightly, almost precariously, on their boxes, as if they could easily be dislodged despite their massive thighs. In fact, in all fairness, we are obliged to see even the Anavysos kouros as statically balanced not only on the horizontal plane but also as regards verticality. The figure rises as much as it sinks; but it really does neither. It holds itself perfectly suspended between the periphery and the center of the earth. And this is a more accurate picture, in terms of substance, of the living organism than any previously existing in art, since in fact air and liquid constitute the bulk of the human body. Yet this is not the whole human body and the truth-goaded Greeks could not stop there, as had earlier ages, satisfied with a purely hierarchical view of reality. Only Minoan artists in a few mysterious instances had glimpsed the direction the Greeks were taking.

WHEN DID THE ARCHAIc PERIOD END?

It is evident that by around 530/525 Greek artists had advanced from a conception of living form as aerated to form as saturated, the latter producing sufficient heaviness that control by scales had constantly to be exercised if time-honored conventions (that is, those accepted by the entire earlier and contemporary world) were not to be flouted. These became increasingly hard to live by after this date, which thereby signalizes the
end of an epoch. But in view of the iron grip exercised by those conventions, the works of Greek artists in general, particularly of sculptors, do not appear to have broken radically with that epoch until just after the Persian Wars. It has therefore become our convention as well, never seriously challenged, to call the years between 525 and 480 Late Archaic (that is, at least to include them in the Late Archaic period).

Logically, however, there is nothing at all to recommend this practice. As we have seen, the Late Archaic phase in the triadic sense of a predominance of volitional forces culminates about 525 and could go no further; something new literally had to happen unless stagnation were to be tolerated, and no one has suggested that. In fact, the switch from blackfigure to redfigure technique of about this time announcing the arrival of completely new artistic intentions is an insistent signal that cannot be ignored. This cannot be taken into account here but the further fate of blackfigure illustrates that very stagnation just mentioned. Finally, since hardly anyone would deny that the rather bewildering art of those years has a strongly “transitional” character between two fairly well demarcated eras, archaeological precedent would support attaching it by nomenclature to the younger period it leads into, not the older one being left. Such a linkage existed as the Protogeometric period; again, Proto-Attic and Proto-Corinthian are not yet Attic and Corinthian but they are no longer Late-Late Geometric. Indeed, there is no way to give adequate recognition to the profoundly seminal quality of the almost half-century in question here except to call it Protoclassical. Although not yet Classical, what is new in it partakes of, and opens the way to, Classical art. What connects it with the older period, however charming, is deliquescent and has relatively little importance for the future.

Above all, in terms of the Four Elements paradigm employed here, a dynamic and radically new experiment can be seen forming about 525 and it would be unconscionable to bury this in the fin de siècle elegance of courtly ladies’ garments through a misnomer that seems to do justice to them alone. A period was commencing comparable as an artistic revolution to few others in world history—perhaps only to that of the years from about 1880–1925, which must surely be thought of more as “modern” than lingeringly 19th century.

**Setting the Protoclassical Period**

The next logical step for Greek sculptors to take was to include earth-weight, that is, the mineral components of the human body, in their calculations of style. How difficult a step this was to take is demonstrated by the hesitation and diffidence they showed about, as it were, tipping the scales. Obviously there must have been awareness of solid flesh and solid matter before this, but without any idea that an exploration, above all a systematic one, of its earthiest quality, scale-tipping heaviness, was desirable. The very reluctance to admit this should be a warrant for us that the Greek community of thinkers still had its attention riveted on a divine sphere of a more geometrical nature: even much later Plato could not conceive of the heaviest matter having any structure but triangles.
Again, the comparison with the period 1880–1925 may be helpful. Physicists began then thinking seriously of what appears to the naive eye as solid matter as consisting of atoms and molecules: in a certain sense this reverses the experience of the Greeks, for it has resulted in scientific experiments with weightlessness.

The result of the Greek experiments was, in contrast, to formulate in a certain sense the concept of gravity. We must recall that in the so-called period of physical philosophizing no thinker ventured to suggest anything so heavy as mineral matter as the primal substance. Fire, air, water, yes; but anything so gross as dust? World evolution left that to the savants of the 19th century. The Greeks’ difficulty with heaviness is baffling to the modern mind, which lives in the firm conviction that there is no other “law” more basic than that of gravity. To be oriented, as the Archaic and even later Greeks were, toward levity, traditionally and intellectually, just as strongly as we are oriented to gravity, seems incredible. Yet, the hesitating and tentative efforts to grasp unequal distribution of weight, as opposed to equilibrium, recorded in the art of these critical years must convince us. The changes in the kouros figure, though detectable, are extremely subtle; experiments in action figures are awkward and not necessarily convincing. The brunt of the development seems to have been borne by a brilliant coterie of designers of composition, whether in relief or purely two-dimensional media such as vase painting, and their work forms one of the most exciting legacies of world art.

One of the earliest certain indications that consciousness of flesh as fully material weight was starting to arise is given by the pose of several figures in the otherwise essentially Late Archaic north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians at Delphi. In the duel of Athena and a Giant (Figure 13), the latter has been driven to his knees and his torso has yielded so far backwards that it can no longer be supposed that he has control of his balance. Again, the lion drawing Cybele’s car has risen on his hind legs sufficiently to sink his claws into the chest and ribs of a hapless Giant before him (Figure 12). The latter’s body, now burdened with the lion’s weight, is very much in a diagonal position: that he is being dragged down to the ground is shown by strain in his leg muscles and by the position of his head well below the isocephalic level of all the combatants around him: by sheer animal force the equity principle is being defied. In the Athena duel the Giant is shown as on his way to the prone position. In both cases the process of Becoming, not a state of Being, has engaged the designer. The result is an entirely new dramatic quality that sets this frieze apart from traditional Archaic formality. With these experiments in disturbed equilibrium, come not only a new space-time relationship: from Sein to Da-Sein, but a new component in the constitution of mass, that is, to the understanding of what mass is. To the liquid and airy elements is added the earthy (mineral) which seeks the ground, that is, in terms of the Four Elements theory. I hasten to stress that, so far as we know, this was at this time an artistic, not a philosophical, insight. It is the first tender stirring in the direction of a problem which hardly became conceptualized before the Atomists. The grasping of the problem was the work of the artists in the period I am calling Protoclassical; the solution would consist of many facets, not all of them of interest to everybody. Only when these facets could be gathered
together into one comprehensive, fully operational solution (principle) was the resulting creation fully Classical in spirit.

Owing to a dearth of well-preserved monuments in mainland Greece of the last quarter of the 6th century it is uncertain exactly how much the bold two-dimensional innovations of the Siphnian frieze master may have affected three-dimensional composition. It seems clear at least that vertical elements in the form of teams of horses dominated the center of the east pediment of the Apollo Temple at Delphi while forward canted figures probably sprang from a similar team in the west pediment. This latter would be a fairly dynamic idea as implying both motion from the team and action against the opponents. The Peisistratid temple on the Acropolis has several action figures well enough preserved for reconstruction attempts and that of Schrader putting Athena over a sitting giant at the center allowed the conclusion that static centrality had been overcome at one stroke (Figure 14). That reconstruction has, however, been vigorously criticized (and down-dated to the last decade of the 6th century). This leaves us with at least a boldly striding Athena looking down which must have contributed to the idea of the (admittedly) more frontally oriented Athena at the apex of the pediment of the Aphaia Temple in Aigina: she literally moves away from the center—a final stage of Protoclassical figural dynamism that liberated itself from equilibrium in composition even in the difficult circumstances created by the narrow shelf of the pediment.

It is the impact of new impulses on old modalities that makes the relative chronology of the Protoclassical period somewhat disputed. Apart from the firmly placed Siphnian Treasury at the beginning—about 525 B.C.—there is considerable agreement that the Ballgame statue base (see below) in Athens belongs to the last decade of the 6th century, giving us thus a middle point, while the first two decades of the 5th century provide the culminating phase.

The problem that the sculptor of the Siphnian Treasury suggested to his colleagues: how to show convincingly an action figure released from the constraint of equilibrium, was being addressed with considerable sophistication by the designer of the athlete's base. Indeed it was already clear to the early pioneers of the new conception of earth-bound weight, that is, freely mobile weight, that a new grasp of the carrying frame was required—the skeleton to which the muscles and inner organs cling. The statue base tells us that it was not awareness of the organs—which had been there all along—but a sense of their design in relation to the active frame that the artist had to achieve. Almost in the sense of a draughting project based on time-stop photographs, the relief shows us (Figure 15) a figure with frontal torso and, strikingly, frontally shown right leg, bending to our left, then a figure with torso in a 3/4 view running to the right, and a completely side-view youth also running to the right. The crux of the composition is the decorative and functional seven-part design of the subthoracic basin; it would be a beautiful example of equilibrium except that it is curving to the left, drawn on by the shoulders and head. If this movement continued, the left leg would have to leave the ground and the figure would either fall or swing around to regain balance. The designer struggled valiantly with the sevenfold pattern in the other figures, but only in the left one does it look more functional than decorative. Yet there is considerable stability in this unusual
frieze because the artist has based it securely on the close repetition of the forward leg design in all cases.

To repeat: the designer of the athlete's reliefs was working on the problem of conveying the impression of a consciously functioning figure consisting of earth as well as air and water. The problem was, how is movement to be shown given this new equation? In this question lie the first beginnings of what, in its finished form as contrapposto, was called by Gertrude Kantorowicz 11 “einverleibte Bewegung”—which I have translated after much deliberation as “in-the-body-movement”. Thus, the movement striven for—if not entirely successfully—by the athletic base master is activated by an inner force awakening in the human figure and guiding its limbs. If this is the case, it can naturally be asked, how had movement been motivated in earlier figures; and the only logical answer is that the movement was brought from the outside by forces of which the designer was aware only on a ritualistic level, since formulaic patterns or schemes were the norm and artistic invention consisted in altering the details, not the principle, of these. This could be suggested by the term “to-the-body movement” as the Archaic system. Releasing himself from the spell of formal beauty inherent in that system, the artist gradually feels the freedom to choose any particular moment whatsoever of an athletic manoeuvre, seen from any angle. Ideally, this must still express the essence of, say, ball throwing or bouncing, but in fact some movement is depicted that shows how a boy's body is responding to the challenge of that activity. This very comment carries the implication of a new stage of consciousness characterized by opening of the senses to the ongoing processes of the physical world as such.

Putting it in this way may suggest a parallel in art with the concerns of contemporaneous philosophers who were confronting the problem of the one and multiplicity. Many movements go into an athletic manoeuvre and it becomes an artist's task to investigate them in order to find or even invent that one which most tellingly and lastingly represents the whole action. The old built-in schemata for this must have seemed far too wooden for the new sensibility; they had to be altered, if not re-invented. It is this struggle with the newly perceived physicality of the world that attests to the conscious activity of the fourth and highest member of fourfold man, namely the nous or, as we should say, the ego. Thus, the Protoclassical period designates essentially the gestation of this member; and the stirrings that accompanied it were most conspicuous in Athens. For the sense of individuality which is part of the ego experience can be the only possible force strong enough to have broken the authoritarian frame of reference in which political and social life had always taken place and to have allowed a totally new and potentially dangerous experiment to be tried, that is, the rule-by-vote aspect of the Cleisthenian constitution. What other possible value than the opportunity for a perhaps extremely limited but unmistakable exercise of freedom by the newly awakening ego could be proposed for the relative chaos and inefficiency of democracy—a question that still haunts the world today?
It is not until the final Protoclassical phase (ca. 500–480) that experiments with broken axes in vase painting became insistent: e.g., the Brygos Master’s Würzburg cup with girl and vomiting youth (Figure 16). These demonstrate that the liberation of the human skeletal frame from the fixed Archaic scheme had been virtually accomplished, that is, that “in-the-body movement” was near to achievement. Nevertheless, the most direct characterization of the whole Protoclassical period is provided by the solution, in this third phase, of the proposition put forward in the first phase by the designer of the Siphnian relief, namely, how to show victory occurring, rather than simply showing battle joined by two opponents and battle finished with the defeated prone on the ground. The solution is in fact given in the free fall of one of the figures backward, the action thereby being caught graphically. The invention of this motif, which I shall document shortly, by implication legitimizes the philosophical position that reality is Becoming and it is at the same time the first known statement of the principle of gravity, directly comparable with, though more richly suggestive than, Newton’s apple. Protoclassical artists insistently demonstrated that Greek thought by this time consciously understood that a physical weight released from, or denied, support falls toward (the center of) the earth. This is demonstrated, for example, by the Kyknos relief of the Athenian Treasury at Delphi, by the east pediment of Aphaia’s temple in Aigina and by the Pan Painter’s bell krater in Boston, among other things.

In the Kyknos relief (Figure 17) the axis of the composition tilts toward the (observer’s) left, thereby emphasizing the vulnerability of the losing warrior to his attacker. This comment is based on the pictorial laws proposed in Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements: the “passive” diagonal, from upper R to lower L had been used by the designers of fallen figures in the Siphnian frieze (Figure 13) and the Old Athena temple (Figure 14). Although they did thereby break the old static balance, in using the so-called harmonious axis they settled for a less shattering visual effect. In contrast, the “active” diagonal, from upper L to lower R, as in the Kyknos relief of the third Protoclassical stage, catches the overweening brute force of the attacker. The “disharmonious axis” shatters static balance so harshly that it calls attention to the defeat (and fall) of the vanquished, to his final re-joining of the horizontal earth. The Kyknos relief was transposed to three dimensions in the pediment of the Aphaia Temple—where I can illustrate only the mirroring group in the opposite direction (Figure 18). The structural problem was, of course, more acute in sculpture in the round and the designer provided a certain counterbalance to the falling figure with a warrior next to him, straining to the left (or right). This was sometimes done even by contemporary vase painters cited by D. Ohly in his study of the pediment. There are other later Protoclassical experiments with the falling motif in vase painting, e.g., Herakles toppling a son of Eurytos to the R on a cup by Onesimos and, in another mood, a satyr of the Dokimasia painter (Figure 19) dancing, reeling drunkenly and no longer paying attention to the friend who is perhaps urging him to have “one more” cup. His body is leaning so far back, while his outstretched left arm waves in a desperate effort to regain his balance, that he simultaneously seems to be eyeing a spot to land on if and when he goes down. The mood is one, easily reached in intoxication, of laughing at one’s own instability, or by children excessively tired from playing.
However, the most daring rendition of all is perhaps provided by a kylix of Douris (Figure 20). Herakles strides with formidable vigor from the right and with only slightly bent arm drives a dagger into the breast of an Amazon, whose elongated figure sinks gracefully toward the ground, her head turned to look at it. The angle is about 30 degrees. This depiction of a free fall is so unmitigated that we may feel that it encompasses all that Protoclassical artists had to say about the subject; and, indeed, the motif seems to be of relatively little interest to later artists. My examples could, of course, be multiplied and refined chronologically. Here I shall only emphasize that the joyful antics of satyrs could be, no less than the tragedies of mythical battles, a school for investigation of the physical laws of Nature’s four elements. This is totally consistent with the contemporary experimentation with drama, which was preparing to study the sphere of human motivation.

Obviously such an investigation of natural laws differed in principle from the way investigations have been conducted in later times—under the illusion that abstract physical forces are causative. A Greek might have pointed out that the motive force in Newton’s falling apple was the release of the tree’s grip on its ripened product. The motive force in these Greek scenes is always another being, god or man, who propels the opponent or playmate backward and down. And this in turn implies something about the agent: he must have both the requisite strength and a motive, both of which come from inside him. Thus, another whole field of investigation of the Protoclassical years is to be found in the treatment of figures who, instead of pushing, lift weight (Figure 21) or even with little or no outer motion involved, move weight around within themselves (the kouros, in whom the preconditions for Early Classical ponderation are almost imperceptibly worked out in the Protoclassical era).

Summary. I have sketched in large strokes the restless and innovative experiments in the representation of living forms with which Greek—particularly Athenian—artists (no less than Greek philosophers: see Epilogue) took leave of the age-old conventions of the world around them and entered into a dynamic state of consciousness with incalculable consequences for culture. The reader will not feel the full force of this fact without taking into account the realm of color. For the moment, however, a clarification is more urgent. The “discovery” of the fourth element, mineral weight, which motivated all this, did not mean that previous concerns with fire, air and water disappeared. Quite on the contrary, the immediate task was to reconsider these in the light of earth weight and integrate them with that new element. Thus, I have already introduced the idea that microcosmic fire (nous or ego) became more fully conscious (of itself) by being for the first time contained within a mineral body that gravitates to the ground; and I will shortly discuss aeration of the mineral body as creating an interest in depicting breathing.

So much for the Four Elements aspect of the Protoclassical period. In terms of periodicity, that period functions as an intensive and rather unruly introduction to the Classical period as such in that the preparation, the groundwork, was achieved for the great collective task that the artists of the Classical period took upon themselves: the creation of contrapposto. Yet “Protoclassical” stands by itself in the sense that it is no
longer Archaic and not yet Classical. That fact forces us to look closely again at Dilthey’s stages. It is true that in the Archaic period as I have defined it the intellectual parameters of Greek art were established: It was to be a scientific as much as an aesthetic quest—ergo, Dilthey’s first main stage with its appropriate subphases which I have pointed out. It is also true that the Classical period was marked by an emotional satisfaction with, and enthusiasm for, going on with the development of the start made by the Archaic predecessors—ergo, Dilthey’s second main stage. But this latter seemingly calm, serene development is not thinkable without the revolution that took place in the Protoclassical period—so, how does this period relate to the triadic system under scrutiny?

Clearly, the thingking-feeling-willing sequence cannot be applied mechanically to a long and complicated historical process, even one of unusual clarity in its nature; adjustments have to be made. But that in no way obscures the fact that even within the adjustment the logic of the larger system is not broken. The theme of Protoclassical form development: the deconstruction of static equity, grew out of what preceded it and led into what followed it, and further is understandable in terms of three subphases. All of this allows us to regard the Protoclassical period as an epicycle. With this metaphor we stay within the Greek concept of repetitive cycles, while modifying it to recognize an unusually significant break-up and re-casting of artistic norms. Another instance of this occurred earlier (Protogeometric) and yet another will be encountered after the Classical period.

**Picking up on aeration**

In the “water-phase” of Greek art (namely, Archaic), isocephaly became established as a formal principle in two-dimensional art. If this was to some extent traditional, it may nevertheless be pointed out that Greek artists did not choose to disturb it. Implicit in the isocephalic principle was isometric weighing of compositional factors—as on the Vatican amphora—and the total result is an emphasis on horizontality. In the Protoclassical period attention began to shift to the vertical axis owing to questioning of the need for isocephaly in the strictest sense, since it restricted dynamic effects. In terms of the four elements this can be expressed as follows: the leveling-out tendency of water became less interesting as the light-heavy polarity began to assert itself and assume its role in the contrast of air and earth, that is, in a basically vertical relationship.

Nevertheless the excitement of the discovery of external gravity (falling bodies) in the later Protoclassical period seems to have been premature and to have quietened because, as I assume, artists saw that the rising and falling of the human breast in breathing—an entirely internal kind of levity/gravity relationship—had to be the crux of any really new conception of the human figure. This physiological action was—I am convinced—the constantly triggering force in the development of dynamic ponderation and contrapposto. A rather conscious release of breath is the normal accompaniment to taking the ponderated position and, conversely, a rather conscious intake of breath is the normal accompaniment to drawing the body up again into the at-attention stance. It is for this reason that the breast and subthoracic rendering of a Classical and often of a Protoclassical figure has a dimension of naturalism not associated with the Archaic
mentality. We have already focussed attention on the artist’s rendering of this part of the anatomy regarding the Athletes’ base. Much more needs to be done in tracing its development. Taking this as a given, however, we find that certain facets of “body language” ultimately accompany the relaxation implicit in fully released breath, not only the diagonal placement of the pelvis and the shoulders, but also the almost involuntary sinking of the head to one side or the other.

With this finding we approach a previously unknown fullness in the experiencing of the four elements picture (ill. 1): up and down, forward and back, and right and left come fully into their own. But this could not have come about without the astonishing pioneer work of the later Protoclassical sculptors and vase painters, as part of what may be called the “Protoclassical revolution”. To call attention to the way in which each of these groups transformed in very significant details the heritage they received and thereby literally made possible the Classical conception of the human body, I shall now review some evidence on aeration in statues and on the differentiation of leg stance in redfigure painting.

For the first purpose the following analysis is attempted, even though at present I can do it only from Richter’s copious illustrations. The transition from the latest Late Archaic figures of the Anavysos-Ptoon 12 Group to the Protoclassical figures of the Ptoon 20 Group is discernible in the first place, according to the criteria established by Richter, in the reduction of three transverse divisions of the rectus abdominis above the navel to two. This simplification is accompanied by a surface smoothing of the area. Let us look at this more closely. In the Keos kouros (Figure 23) the fleshiness characteristic of the Late Archaic kouroi suggests a swelling out of forms, particularly of the breasts and the groin area. Even the shoulder blades (Figure 24) seem rounded in somewhat the same way as the breasts. However, in the Ptoon 20 kouroi (Figure 22 and Figure 25) the distinctly articulated skeletal and muscular systems of the Keos kouroi have been smoothed over in the whole figure, drawn in, integrated almost to the point that one might speak of dryness of form. In this sense, the “softer” water weight of the Archaic figure has actually “dried out” to incorporate (or better, to leave as residue) unmitigated earth substance in the conception. The process of drying referred to here metaphorically would, if thought of literally in four elements processuality, involve the action of air on water; it might seem too subjective at first sight to suggest that Ptoon 20 is sucking in air. But the modeling of Acropolis Museum no. 692 (Figure 26) does indeed seem to indicate that the artist was experimenting with that effect because of the prominence of the upper transverse division of the rectus abdominis. The back view (Figure 27) suggests that a slight inner movement is drawing the figure’s left buttock farther forward than would be customary. This motif—both front and rear—is repeated in the charming bronze statuette, Athens NM no. 6445 (Figure 28 and Figure 29).

Insofar as can be judged by profile views in Richter’s plates the outline of the thorax region below the breasts develops from a fairly straight vertical profile in the Anavysos Group—if anything even slightly concave—to a still basically vertical but more rhythmically undulating line in the Ptoon 20 Group (her figs. 450–559) and reaches a lovely climax in the Piraeus Apollo (Figure 30) with a single, slightly convex curve. This
work has been dated with some authority\textsuperscript{15} to c. 477 B.C. and it does indicate the direction of development. Is not the explanation for this tendency a dawning appreciation by the sculptor that the at-attention stance requires the breathing to take place via a slight lifting and dropping of the abdominal muscles (generalized by the Apollo Master)? In this latter and possibly some other figures there is a tendency to incline the head forward at the same time.

It will be useful at this point to define a word which from now on I intend to use technically, \textit{viz.}, ponderation, which will refer to artful, though not necessarily consciously contrived, distribution of weight on the human frame. As applied to the Archaic period, “weight” needs to be qualified as water-weight; density is a more natural word. Nevertheless, water does have measurable weight with the fundamental characteristic of seeking horizontal stability within whatever contains it (for example, the skin). Thus the term \textit{static ponderation} is appropriate to describe the artistic ideal of that period. This ideal was to a considerable extent “deconstructed” during the Protoclassical period—at its climax sometimes with violent enthusiasm, as in the case of figures deliberately pushing one another off balance.

What shall we call the type of ponderation that follows on static ponderation? I prefer the term \textit{dynamic}, first as the literal opposite of “static” and second, because it can describe in a neutral sense stances which are not yet fully developed contrapposto but are experiments working toward that concept. In other words, dynamic as a generic term includes contrapposto but more logically refers to pre-contrapposto stages in which experiments with unequal distribution of weight on the legs took place.

Obviously, the actual invention of the dynamically ponderated position from the foregoing very conservative Protoclassical modifications of the Archaic kouros scheme cannot be accounted for—unless some vital evidence is still to be excavated—without postulating some influence from another quarter. We have, to be sure, noted the boldness of movements in Protoclassical pedimental sculpture and relief; but quite another order of experimentation seems to be involved in the creation of the Kritios Boy (Figure 31 and Figure 32), who represents an immense leap from his kouros predecessors, even though the depiction of breathing was a most necessary precondition. That other order of experimentation involves the decision of the redfigure painters to show figures in the frontal position, something neither usual nor particularly feasible in the blackfigure style.

Blackfigure drawing clings almost exclusively to profile views, even after the invention of the redfigure style (the principal exception is the frontal rendering of teams of horses). Obviously, then, one of the liberating effects of the new style was to make direct frontal renderings of human bodies feasible. This did not usually include heads, but frontal heads were also attempted independently on three-quarter bodies. Frontality is yet another indication that Protoclassical is a more appropriate period title than Late Archaic at this stage for it testifies to an interest in depicting individual personality. Even though frontality did not become extremely common, it developed according to a quite definite insight that the position of the legs had to be differentiated as to whether the figure was thought of as moving (Figure 33) or as standing (Figure 34). This differentiation involved only one leg shown frontally, perhaps because the effect of ten
toes in a row might have been judged monotonous. But I suspect that the real reason was to lend a sense of structural firmness to the figure through the device of showing one of the legs in a side view, that is, at a 90-degree angle to its fellow. This constitutes an infinitely stronger differentiation of the two limbs than anything previously tried in drawing. Furthermore, Buschor’s thought about Greek sculpture is quite applicable here as well:

...In fact, these statues ask to be experienced not only with our mind and our senses but, in a certain way, with our feelings as well.

Indeed, his word choice fits exactly; if we take this 90-degree position with our own feet, we find it awkward to achieve and stressful to maintain very long. We soon want to let the heel of the turned-out foot rise and to put all our weight on the other leg. And, indeed, that is just what happened. In more graceful variants of the pose, as in tondos (Figure 35) the frontal leg is shown carrying the weight and only the ball of the foot of the bent leg makes contact (if at all) with the ground-line. Overall, it is plain that flexibility, moveability of the limbs, frontal or not, attracts the greatest efforts of Protoclassical redfigure painters—and, in the event frontality is involved, the bent leg may carry the weight, or seem to, as often as the straight leg (see below). The obvious implications for the distillation of the Early Classical scheme of ponderation were picked up in the Kritios Boy. Indeed, one may note that the scheme was virtually achieved by the Kleophrades Painter already on an early amphora: the warrior in 3/4 view (Figure 36) clearly has his weight on his left leg, while the right leg is bent in play and the right shoulder is depressed slightly in the direction of the markedly bent head.

Yet the still horizontal belt signals that the pose has not been consciously mastered. Moreover, on the reverse (Figure 37) a nude female frontal figure leans into the wind, as it were, on her left bent leg, the torso tilting with it, while the right leg is straight, frontal and not engaged. Examples within this range do not need to be multiplied but they make the point that experimentation with left and right, up and down, in the four-elements sense of weight and polarity of function were very much on the minds of the later Protoclassical painters, corresponding to the experiments in sculpture with gravity noted. But in the end it was the sculptor of kouroi who combined all this with his careful investigation of the effects of breathing in order to cross the threshold into an entirely new era.

**Setting the Classical Period**

At this point we have reached the crux of this chapter: how does the Classical period’s “understanding of life”, which I have implied is four-elements thinking distilled in the concept of contrapposto, intersect with the cyclical stages?

This large and all-important question can be approached either in very basic and simplified terms or in considerable detail—with the resultant complexities. I will address
myself to both approaches, fully realizing that some readers may expect in the one (Chapter IV) what is only offered in the latter (Chapter V), particularly in terms of analysis of specific pieces of sculpture. But I do not see how this risk can be avoided if I am to attempt to integrate the unfolding of thought in the two spheres (of art and philosophy). For example, the technical definition of contrapposto and the mechanics of its emergence presented in diagrammatic and chart form in Chapter V, and the interconnections of this with modern psychological discoveries, may be better appreciated after the systematic general discussion to be presented below. In short, the subject is worth this much trouble because of its vital importance to my total enterprise.

**Picturing the cyclical stages in broadest terms**

Recalling to mind “a previously unknown fullness in the experiencing of the Four Elements picture” as the final fruit of the Protoclassical revolution (see Chapter IV, *Setting the Protoclassical Period*, paragraph 18), we may set the beginning of the Classical period (Early Classical) at the point where internal moveability of a consciously four-membered human being was unequivocally postulated as a proposition to be worked on. We shall consider the climax of the period (High Classical) to be when full consciousness was achieved of how separate, lawfully governed tensions are balanced in the formal concept of contrapposto (the Canon); and the playing out of the period (Late Classical) to be when the separately conceived and articulated tensions of the Canon were smelted into a single torsional moment. Between the climax and the conclusion art historians have long detected a “mannered” phase in which artists simply kept on reacting to the magic of the climactic achievement, in itself unique in world history.

Just as in the Archaic period so also in the Classical period we can identify the proposition that was to be worked on collectively: here the task of creating perfect counterbalance in three dimensions. Clearly the first phase in achieving a full resolution of this was one of intellectual probing, the second, one of rare emotional resolution, and the third one of willful soul play. Yet the Classical period as a whole, as the second major phase of the historical Greek enterprise, offered to the world what has long been perceived in perspective, for example, by the Romans and later peoples, as a mood of dignified—almost removed—harmony, which can accurately be called emotional resolution of Greek art principles as a whole.

**A modest fleshing out of the above schema**

The period when a new ideal of ponderation that can be described as dynamic was realized is called by common consent Classical. The most reduced possible definition of this is the tilting upward on one side of the horizontal axis of the pelvis (regardless of what goes on in the rest of the body). It tilts up because the artist (*qua* person represented) has “broken” the equilibrium formerly existing (*time is part of this equation*) through energizing one leg to support the bodily frame and allowing the other leg to sag comfortably into half-duty. Thus in principle this new pose is, by the old standard, disharmonious, but had the advantage of opening up totally new expressive possibilities. At first these possibilities had to be explored—that is, the intellectual work
of establishing the parameters of the system had to be accomplished; this was done by
the generation of sculptors between 480 and 460/50 (see Figure 39, Figure 40, Figure
41, Figure 42, Figure 43 and Figure 44 and see analysis, Chapter V, *The Development of
Dynamic Ponderation*, Early Classical).

An obvious example of this is, of course, the Kritios Boy (Figure 39) but as that
statue has already been mentioned several times as an example of the earliest dynamic
ponderation, it may be more intriguing to turn to the much more conservative Charioteer
of Delphi (Figure 40), the creator of which was either not interested in or not willing to
use Athenian experiments, for he has preserved much of the earlier decorative flavor and
even equipoise in his figure. However, merely to see it in context with Early Classical
figures such as figs. 39–42 (Figure 39, Figure 40, Figure 41 and Figure 42) is to realize
that an altogether Classical dynamic has informed it. The quick and restless rhythm of
the sleeves contrasts sharply with, while at the same time miraculously blending with,
the actively graceful folds of the upper garment, which are designed in a V-shape that
continues into the anatomy of the neck. But the relative gracefulness of the upper
garment contrasts in turn with long columnar folds from the waist down that totally
conceal from us the limbs. Yet although the feet are flat on the ground with no hint of
imbalance, the twist of the arms and the neck to the right shows us that his torso is in the
act of turning at the waist to facilitate the intent gaze of the severely handsome
countenance. In other words, the entire body is involved in a stately, measured way in a
momentary impulse of the mind or emotions. That is Classical. Yet there is disharmony
between the upper and lower part of the garment—and by implication of the torso. That
is Early Classical.

Then several sculptors, perhaps the younger among those just mentioned above,
envisioned re-achieving the automatic or built-in harmony of the Archaic stage. This
could be done by disposing the energies of the body as expressed in the positioning of all
its four members and the head (five units) in such a way that a balance of (just
completed) movement would be made visible. If we substitute the Greek-derived word
dynamics for movement, we gain a more vivid picture of what Polykleitos achieved
between ca. 460–430 (which has often been called the High Classical Period) in creating
contrapposto as exemplified by the Doryphoros (Figure 38). This latter is certainly an
intellectual tour de force; but its appeal is not exhausted by that. It obviously had for the
sculptor’s contemporaries and many of his successors even in other ages a psychophysical
attraction that could perhaps be described as (a feeling of) satisfaction from the
vicarious achievement of perfect bodily and emotional control that eludes real life. High
Classical artists seemed capable of producing this satisfaction not only in the disposition
of the human body; but also in the disposition of any tensionable elements (e.g., relief
compositions: figs. 43–44). The change from the earlier phase is illustrated by figs.
45–49 (see Figure 45, Figure 46, Figure 47, Figure 48 and Figure 49 and see analyses

Since the achievement of the High Classical period in terms of statues will be
treated in detail in Chapter V, it is more suitable here to pick up the manifestation of the
contrapposto principle in the composition of reliefs (not figures within reliefs). In the
case of the Eleusis relief (Figure 49), the scene is literally framed by two facing female figures, whose erect bodies recall pilasters with capitals (the heads) of a naiskos. This already conveys a hieratic mood and we understand that they are personages of divine rank. Their heads are inclined toward a naked boy standing between them, facing and interacting with Demeter—his hand being raised to meet her hand. Her stance somewhat recalls that of the Delphi charioteer, in that the curving folds of her upper garment contrast with severe columnar folds below (but connect with her relaxed left leg). The folds of Persephone’s garment are much more graceful but nevertheless do have a suitably vertical effect.

While Demeter and Triptolemos are totally absorbed in each other, Persephone balances this by her gaze at him, her beneficent expression and the resting of her hand on his head. Where is the contrapposto in this? There is a physical emphasis on interlocking center and left, weighting that side, which is further stabilized by the almost vertical but partly hidden staff of Demeter, echoing her vertical folds. All this corresponds to the Standbein and is dynamically balanced by the softer body and benign expression of Persephone, physically re-enforced by her much larger and more prominent staff which descends at a slant toward the central ground. One becomes aware of an unceasing movement of limbs and gazes back and forth which decidedly and totally includes Persephone in the single moment of encounter which is being depicted.

The rare moments of such achievement that world history has provided on a grand scale were, of course, followed by the will to disturb; the greater the subtlety with which discord could be introduced, the more desirable the result will have seemed. This occurred in Greece during what could appropriately and directly be called the High Classical Reaction, from about 430–400 (see figs. 50–53 (Figure 50, Figure 51, Figure 52 and Figure 53 and see analysis Chapter V, The Development of Dynamic Ponderation, High Classical Reaction).

I have made a case in Chapter V for the extraordinary fascination of the creators of both statues and reliefs in the later decades of the fifth century with High Classical principles while at the same time they practiced deliberate exaggeration that considerably altered the emotional meaning of the earlier style. In this sense I would call attention here to the Hegeso stele (Figure 53), where the actual pilasters of the naiskos take the place of vertical strength in the figures in comparison with the Eleusis relief ladies, especially since Hegeso is seated. Thus both women in the stele are in soft, relaxed positions. It must be admitted that adaptation of the white ground lekythos motif, where the compositional problems are quite different, to a relief panel would have proved difficult for the High Classical aesthetic sense, for there is a built-in imbalance and dissonance in concentrating on a standing and a seated figure—in this case between the short, really truncated, servant-girl and the ample-torso-ed and long-legged body of Hegeso who, if she stood up, would tower over the girl and at least reach the acroterion. In fact, this thought makes her rather bulky figure seem to be uncomfortably compressed in a small space. But precisely such a discrepancy must have appealed to the High Classical Reaction feeling as a challenge: to create grace and harmony anyway, despite the obstacles.
This was achieved by exploiting the powerful curves of the *klismos* and inclining the heads toward the center in the High Classical way. But the *klismos* also required a crowding of legs in the lower left quadrant (leaving the lower right quadrant blank). The heads incline to gaze at a cynosure, a jewel in the hand of Hegeso; but her raised hand holding the jewel disrupts an otherwise High Classical flow of movement back and forth along the women’s arms, echoed by the curving back of the *klismos*; this movement is considerably complicated, though not quite disrupted, by the swing of the lower legs in the opposite direction.

It is the merit of the sculptor to have combined all these unruly materials into a composition, the overall Classical nature of which cannot be denied, but the effect is close to *trompe l’oeil*. The sculpture has allowed the material implications of the scene such prominence that any sense of the “other worldliness” often assumed in grave stelai may seem to derive only from the conventions borrowed from High Classical reliefs where a divine world was depicted.

The Late Classical period (until about 330) differs from the High Classical Reaction by regaining a more thoughtful grasp of the majestic ideal of dynamic ponderation with the intention of interiorizing it to a higher degree, so that even greater beauty might be achieved. This took the form of emphasizing the dynamics (the inner directed movement of a body rooted to the spot) resulting in the last serious variant of the ideal, namely, maximum twisting (torsion) on the pelvic structure compatible with dignity accompanied by maximum involution of the consciousness of the figure. Obviously, the latter factor steers the former, so that this variant shows the maximum participation of the arbitrary will forces in exploitation of the basic scheme. Several stages of this are illustrated in figs. 54–58 (Figure 54, Figure 55, Figure 56, Figure 57 and Figure 58) and see analyses Chapter V, *The Development of Dynamic Ponderation*, Late Classical).

Unfortunately, the Late Classical period really offers only the sketchiest original materials for reconstructing the course of contrapposto development, at least until the very end, when its dissolution can be understood from the Piraeus Athena (Figure 56) and the Ilissos stele (Figure 58). But for the most part we are dependent on Roman copies of statues—or controversial figures like the Hermes of Olympia; also high quality panel reliefs are not abundant and, in any case, may be deceptive—as in the case of the Mantineaia reliefs (Figure 59)—since painted enhancements may have disappeared. Nevertheless, given the starting point in the Diadoumenos of the High Classical Reaction and the ending points mentioned above, the direction is clear enough and we can depend on copies of works by Kephisodotos and Praxiteles to document that direction.

Thus the Eirene (Figure 54) still has Classical balance in the combination of graceful folds of the upper garment and lower columnar folds and she demonstrates Classical seriousness in her single-minded concentration on the child in her arms. But this fusion of two unequal beings into a single body, as it were, is an inwardization of a scope that affects the very body position, for to support a substantial child with one arm requires additional effort from one leg (in relation to the unencumbered contrapposto position), which is offset by a general twisting of the upper body and a more pronounced
bending of the opposite leg in its resting position. In fact, such a pose requires, as ordinary observation shows, a frequent shifting of the weight from one side of the body to the other to provide relaxation for the stressed limb. A new degree of dynamism results from the fact that this restless twisting of the pelvis is built into the idea of the pose. Moreover, while no mother-child sentimentality can be imputed to a goddess in this stance, the rapprochement to everyday banalities cannot be overlooked. To be sure, the sculptor forestalled the several dangers in this pose I have referred to by making the figure as dignified as possible in dress and countenance and by stabilizing the figure with a staff to lean on, if such can be correctly restored. But the implications of continuing experiments with the way mineral weight works in combination with conscious inner life must have become clearer year by year for sculptors of the Late Classical period.

This thought suggests that, having now taken some measure of the style development of the entire Classical period, it may be of value to turn to the philosophical aspects of contrapposto, the unique achievement of that period.

Contrapposto in the world of Four Elements philosophy

Light and heavy

The emergence of dynamic ponderation from the hesitant and multifarious experiments of the Protoclassical era is the signal that a new age had begun—and not only in art, but also in science. Although we are poorly informed about the predecessors of Demokritos in regard to their theories of weight—if any—it seems almost excluded that any formal speculation about the nature of weight could have occurred before the first half of the fifth century. For a framework for such speculation would have been essential; yet it seems that only the full-blown system of the four elements delineated by Empedokles could have made the weight question viable and a matter of interest to philosophers. Unfortunately, in the case of Demokritos himself we are completely dependent on other, later writers even for the knowledge that he addressed that question.

The fullest investigation of it, by D. O’Brien, suggests that it is risky, given the uncertainties of the tradition, to do more than state that, according to Aristotle and Theophrastos, the question of weight arose in connection with the (theoretical) direction of movement of the atoms. For us, it is quite natural to suppose that they must always be thought of as moving earthward; yet the real problem arises from the obvious reluctance of Greek thinkers to make such an assumption, whence the argument among them. For levity, or lightness, was doubtless still more familiar to their thinking than gravity, or heaviness. Lacking an authenticated formulation about this from Leukippos or Demokritos themselves, we nevertheless have the aesthetic one presented by Polykleitos, whose canon presupposes, or at least must be intellectually contemporary with, the canonical promulgation by Empedokles of the Four Elements theory. For the fully worked out system of his statues’ active response to right and left and rising and falling movement in a complex interlocking relationship is the aesthetic mirroring of the polar interlocking of earth and air, fire and water as this must be conceived of pictorially (see Illustration 1). In both instances the relation of light and heavy, of levity and gravity, is the key to understanding how the structure works. Therefore structure is not something
applicable to only one sphere. For the light-heavy relationship literally guarantees the commensurability of microcosmic contrapposto man and macrocosmic four-elements world.

Thus, the simultaneous posing of this issue in the sphere of aesthetics and in the sphere of what might be called natural philosophy can hardly be accidental. It is impossible to propose a temporal priority for one or the other and also hardly important to do so, for each of them must have been arrived at—as we certainly know the aesthetic one was—over and through a long tradition of careful, logical investigation. In the case of art it was the investigation of ponderation in the human body; in the case of philosophy it must have been, as already implied, the tradition of speculation about polarities in nature—such as hot and cold—behind the Four Elements theory, which, once actually formulated, suddenly made possible a kind of quantum jump into atomic speculation (weight). It is sufficient for our understanding that references in ancient authors to the philosophers and to the sculptors—particularly to Polykleitos, whose attributed works demonstrate concern with ponderation, allow us to postulate that both streams reached their intellectual crystallization about the middle of the fifth century and, therefore, at the heart of what has, at least since the days of Winckelmann, been considered the most truly classic moment in the forming of Greek culture. Indeed the Parthenon itself, as the supreme expression of this moment, shows the same sensitivity to the interaction of left and right in the opposing orientation of the beholder of the two pediments (left in one is right in the other, with the consequent subtle psychological change in dynamics)\(^{22}\), and of rising and falling in the gentle and subtle but unmistakable indication in the columns of the pressure of weight (entasis and inward sloping of corners). And again, this crystallization of the aesthetic potentiality of architectural orders to express the dynamic balance of a four-elements world had behind it generations of temple building.

**From Dynamic Ponderation to Contrapposto**

The philosophy resulting in an awareness of the four elements or four processes, as worked out by the Ionian School and synthesized by Empedokles, with his undoubted Pythagorean connections, proves to be reflected (by whatever means) in the consciousness of the sculptors and painters who achieved the Classical stage of representing the human figure in the contrapposto position. Yet the difference between the ponderated idea visible in the Kritios Boy (Figure 39) and the contrapposto ideal of Polykleitos (Figure 47) is the difference between the child and the man: the former, however much at an entirely new level, is still a reticent experiment while the Doryphoros is evolved contrapposto, an intellectual achievement of the highest order. Polykleitos does not part company with the (everyday) Possible (which is so charming in the Kritios Boy), but he arranges that Possible in the most cunningly rhythmic way to display a “temporary ideality.” With this oxymoronic expression I refer to an artistic faculty based on having grasped the *symmetria* and *rhythmos* inherent in the ideal schematic embodiment of the Four Elements theory (as in *Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements* Ill. 8); yet grasping this is one thing, while making a picture of it, as in my just-mentioned illustration and as Polykleitos actually did in the Doryphoros, really
involves a contradiction, since the four processes are dynamic, always in motion, and to “freeze” them into one position involves the faculty of abstraction. Thus, at the very heart of High Classical beauty lies a tiny canker of academicism.

This faculty of abstracting, though perhaps already vaguely latent in the Ionian School, first broke through with formidable impact in the thought of Leukippos-Demokritos, which apparently abandoned the rich sensuous level of the Four Elements theory—very possibly in reaction to it—and shot off into a previously unheard-of realm of abstract speculation. This could, of course, be seen as an ancient foreshadowing of modern atomic theory, though obviously only the attitude, not the substance of the two can be compared. On that score, the principle involved in both cases is ignoring perceived reality, at whatever cost in contradictions, in order to gain a simple conceptual model. Among other casualties in human values are cosmic morality (religion) and aesthetic priorities (art), which are left as optional solaces: as such the high-sounding precepts of Demokritos himself must have presented themselves to Plato.

Despite the limited attraction of atomistic world views to ancient peoples, the demonstration of how to think abstractly has to be counted as a distinct influence on Greek creative consciousness from this time forward, even, as I have suggested, in the case of the Canon. Obviously, because of the lack of documentation for relative chronology in the work of Empedokles, Demokritos and Polykleitos, one is reduced to internal considerations: the Four Elements theory seems to be presupposed by the other two (Demosthenes and Polykleitos) and the atomistic theory by the Canon. Still a third influence has to be factored into the latter. Polykleitos not only condensed his experience of dynamic polarities (forces, energy) in the human body into a presumably “teachable” model, but he did this in terms of quantification, that is, of numbers and ratios (of proportions). A possible source for this would be the Pythagorean stream, given his other leanings. It would be of great interest to know what he did with coloration, since his connection with Empedokles might well have brought him close to the physiologists (Hippokrates et alii) who had a definite color theory (see Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements).

The Destiny of Contrapposto

The creation of contrapposto in the High Classical period and of the Four Elements theory either then or slightly earlier must be called world achievements. In science, in art, even in religion, these achievements could not be, and have not been, ignored. They are built into the consciousness of the Western world and now, by osmosis, of the entire world—as underlying ideals sometimes brought to consciousness and imitated, however much or little understood, but in any case usually onesidedly. Thus the four elements became strongly associated with medical practice and chemistry (alchemy). Contrapposto became a hallmark of neoclassicism and renaissances. But the interrelationship of the two concepts can never have been so clear as it must have been in the mid-fifth century, B.C.

To return to the Greek situation specifically, it may be objected that the Empedoklean theory should, in the preceding discussion, have been called an
abstraction, just as the atomistic theory, since it combines the four elements in a system. That would, however, blur exactly the point I am trying to make, that Empedokles simply observed intuitively the sense-perceptible facts of nature in the light of the most irreducibly universal inner gestures of human nature: sympathy and antipathy. The interaction of all these factors is experienced all the time, everywhere, at various levels, even without experiments. In other words, he presented the world, in the artistic form of a poem, with a description of reality, much in the Goethean sense that phenomena are their own content, and that one should not look behind them for some explanation in another realm. But that is precisely what Demokritos was doing with his reduction of the world to void-plenum, a purely speculative thought-world. This is what must be characterized as abstract.

The Late Classical reaction to all this can be seen in Plato and Praxiteles. Plato put himself firmly on the side of Empedokles, but his world picture nevertheless parted ways drastically with the unique balance of earthly and divine forces which harmoniously—and unselfconsciously—interlock and interfuse in the *Peri Physeos*. Plato withdrew the divine forces to a supersensory realm and allowed what is normally felt to be sensuous reality to be no more than their reflection. In its most extreme statement, in the *Republic*, Plato’s world—if taken literally—seems like an antechamber to the pallid cosmos of Demokritos.

In the same way Kephisodotos and Praxiteles obviously drew on the Polykleitan prototype, modifying it to suit themselves. Following the lead of the later Polykleitos himself, their modifications took a direction away from balance between inner and outer towards torsion—which drove the consciousness of the figures down into themselves, while also inviting exaggerated positions of the members. This idea has already emerged in the analysis of the Eirene above and seems inherent also in the more serious works of Praxiteles, if one may take as evidence the Hermes of Olympia (Figure 55)—which, although now often believed to be a later copy of the famous cult statue,24 must as a cult statue itself at least fairly faithfully reproduce the stance of the original—and the Knidian Aphrodite which, again existing only in unsatisfying copies, may be reasonably well reflected in those copies. Both these figures seem rather withdrawn from earthly reality, despite their urbane air, and absorbed in their own thoughts—a tendency that takes a rather extreme form in a figure that is usually connected with the style of Skopas (Figure 62).25

**SETTING THE PROTOHELLENISTIC PERIOD**

**The Larger Problem**

The title of this section could raise several questions in the reader’s mind. First, since the “Protohellenistic” period is a concept not previously used in Greek archaeology, what is the justification for it? And then, how does it fit into the periodical system? In regard to the latter question, I have already referred to Protohellenistic as an epicycle like
Protoclassical (see Chapter IV, Setting the Protoclassical Period, paragraph 15). Why that is the case depends on the answer to the first question above; however, as a preliminary explanation, one could say that, in view of the central and unique importance of the Classical period in world art history as the “creator” of contrapposto, it should not be surprising that a special “ascent” to it and “descent” from it would take place.

For the moment let us leave aside the problem of a “descent” and simply characterize the Classical period from the standpoint of the larger regular cycle that followed it: the Hellenistic period.

To revert to the premise discussed in Chapter III that periodicity refers to the collective task performed by a group of creative workers over a period (of unspecified length including generational changes), we can now risk the formulation that the task of Greek culture vis-à-vis the materiality of its earth environment was to devise a cogent explanation of its parts and their functioning in a theoretical sense and to work out an effective visual demonstration of the same. That cogent explanation is, of course, the Four Elements theory and its visual manifestation is contrapposto: dynamic interaction of the four members (and their spiritual mentor, the head). It can accordingly be proposed that these tasks occupied the consciousness (or super-consciousness) of Greek thinkers and artists from the beginnings of protohistorical time through the Classical period. What comes after that is, from the point of view of the hitherto closed, inward growth of Greek consciousness, anticlimactical. In fact, in this light it can be described as a somewhat chaotic confrontation with new and difficult conditions without the stabilizing effect of those great tasks, the solution to which could now be taken for granted. But from the point of view of the non-Greek world, the barbaroi, there remained yet a great and daunting task, if there was to be any real continuation of Greek creativity. It was to demonstrate, at the highest possible volitional level, that these principles and solutions could be used effectively for multiple purposes in a pluralistic world situation. Indeed, Greek artists had, to a great extent, to leave their city-state cocoons and disperse into the wide world to adapt their knowledge and abilities to all kinds of new and perhaps alien problems. This would necessitate, in some instances, great compromises with totally different national mentalities: Roman and Egyptian, to mention two. This situation provides the background for some of the great difficulties encountered in setting microperiods in Hellenistic art.

With that generalized formulation of the actual events that took place we can now attempt to separate these events on the one hand in terms of the Greek “understanding of life” with which we have been concerned all along and, on the other hand, in terms of the periodical stages of Dilthey. It may not be surprising that in this late phase these two factors became densely intertwined. If the Archaic period laid the intellectual foundations for the Four Elements philosophy and the Classical period created it in an artistic/emotional format (Empedokles’ poem and Plato’s dialogues), the Hellenistic period—insofar as the Greek spirit survived in it—“lived it out”, put it into practical use, spread it through the world in a feat of will. This makes it understandable that a “descent” was necessary. Before such large scale (and certainly diluted) dissemination could take place, Greek culture had to be forcibly impregnated with a cosmopolitan will.
impulse (Alexander); a final and far-reaching systematization of concepts was needed (Aristotle); and a transition from dynamic but still stationary ponderation (contrapposto) to an all-purpose ponderation (late fourth century sculptors) had to be achieved.

All of these factors will be considered further and are not necessarily more complicated than previous aspects of this study. Unfortunately, however, there is one major complication in regard to the application of the Four Elements philosophy to an understanding of sculptural development. I believe that the easiest way to approach this is to refer to the chart given below. From this it will be seen that, with the completion of the Classical period, Greek sculptors had “finished” exploring the human figure in terms of a progressive emphasis on each of the four elements in turn;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Form Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geometric (earlier)</td>
<td>FIRE</td>
<td>Non-figural designs as experience in form-creating: e.g., extension, rhythm, balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometric (later)</td>
<td>AIR</td>
<td>First serious attempts at two- and three-dimensional figural representations still retaining weightless quality of non-figural designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaic</td>
<td>WATER</td>
<td>Figures achieve density. Static ponderation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protoclassical &amp; Classical</td>
<td>EARTH</td>
<td>Figures achieve (mineral) weight with inner direction (dynamic ponderation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protohellenistic &amp; Hellenistic</td>
<td>FIRE</td>
<td>Figures achieve extroverted attitudes (or the opposite) in all varieties of ponderation for multiple purposes in cosmopolitan situations, as required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the chart suggests: although Greek Classical sculptors had performed their given task, much still remained that could be done with the results of their work. Since in fact Greek sculpture did not stop, in what way can its continuation be regarded as occurring under the dominance of fire—beyond the fact that in Platonic theory cycles can go on repeating themselves, as Pollitt has shown.

Before expatiating on this as a sculptural problem, I will simply mention, without discussing, that Greek artists had a quite different relationship with the Four Elements in regard to color (a different starting point and a different order); I only mention it here
To point out that, in the Hellenistic period, both sculpture and painting became synchronized at the fire stage.

To return to the sculptural sequence: it seemed vital to me to assume that the almost figure-less interlude from Protogeometric to Late Geometric could not mean that Greeks of that period—progenitors of Pheidias and Polykleitos—were not at all interested in the human figure (exceptions like the Lefkadi centaur prove the rule)—but that their interest generally remained at a purely mental, and probably imaginative, level. This would be the nous (fire) stage in terms of a slow but thorough preparation for a great task, culminating in the highly formalized, partially mathematized figures of the later Geometric period. At the same time, to explain the accompanying impulse toward individuation in Greek literature we can equally postulate a vigorous nous factor, from the intensely human-centered Homeric epics on through lyric poetry, drama and dialogues. Individuation in sculpture culminated, of course, in contrapposto, where it was always restrained by other factors, until finally, in the Late Classical period, through inwardization it threatened to lose contact with reality. A final great awakening of the ego to the whole outer world counteracted that in the Protohellenistic/Hellenistic stage. This can be described as a renewal of the original concern with nous at a new level.

The Specific Problem

We have inferred that the development of Greek form in the sense of the four elements cycle came to a certain inner conclusion with the total conquest of contrapposto and that a beginning of something rather different followed. Does that mean, therefore, that the Hellenistic period began immediately after the Late Classical? This is the usual assumption, but the problem is that there is hardly a consensus as to when the Classical period ended. The work of a whole generation of sculptors, from ca. 340/330 to ca. 300 B.C. is in play like a bouncing ball and its relevance to the problem of periodization is handled as a matter of individual taste (see Chapter III).

To justify my view it seems appropriate first to review and summarize in very large terms the periodicity of the entire phenomenon of post-Geometric art from the standpoint of the criteria based on the triadic ego.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archaic</th>
<th>Exploration of the intellectual theorem: static ponderation of the human figure (kouros) in a world of unquestioned divine guidance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>Exploration of the emotional (subjective, involuted) potentialities inherent in dynamic ponderation in a world in which divine guidance was both questioned and deepened to a human frame of reference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hellenistic Application of earlier principles to express (willful) extroverted attitudes or their opposite in human figures of all types for multiple purposes in a world of philosophical and religious pluralism.

The periodic problem that presents itself out of this picture is, how do artists deeply immersed in the Late Classical attitudes make the transition to the quite different tasks and outlook of the Hellenistic age? This question is exactly parallel with the one already explored here in detail: how artists immersed in the Late Archaic attitude arrived at the Classical world view. In the case of such major shifts as these, surely human consciousness requires a shorter or longer period of adjustment, of transition, while new ideas are being formulated, tried out, accepted or discarded. It will therefore not be surprising that I find it essential for clarity to propose a period of transition. This episode, guided by the new descriptive psychology of Aristotle (e.g., De Anima) and of Lysippos (portraiture), is proleptic—looks forward, turns its back on the lost Classical world and is therefore related in terms of its seminal impulses so closely to the Hellenistic era that its name must imply that fact, just as in the case of Protoclassical.

If, then, Greek art was to become, like the Greek language itself, the world standard, it was actually necessary—given the cultural situation in the late fourth century—for that world first to be conquered politically and for all the tools of cultural expansion (including artistic ones) to be forged before Greek creativity could define itself under quite new circumstances. All this took time, about a generation; it was achieved by a peripheral branch of the Greek race, as if through a long prepared-for destiny which brought together Alexander and his generals, Aristotle and his pupils (see note 50), and Lysippos and his colleagues. Taking the latter as our point of departure we may attempt to characterize the Protohellenistic period.

Unfortunately for scholarship the gap between the literary tradition about late fourth century sculpture and the actual remains of that sculpture—a great deal in the form of Roman copies—is painfully large. It is quite aside from my purpose to argue attribution problems; my concern is what was done, not who did it, even though I share some common assumptions about certain pieces. I shall only make a few remarks about Lysippos in order to set the stage for a different approach that is germane to my theme.

Reconstruction of the origins of Lysippian style has been attempted with some success, but that need not concern us here. For our purposes we may start with the Agias (Figure 65), an extremely restrained figure by any fourth century standards; the scheme is perhaps mixed contrapposto (see Chapter V, The Development of Dynamic Ponderation, Late Classical, Summary for definition), with drastically reduced torsion and virtual elimination of the thrusting back of one leg. The figure seems held to the Late Classical style by a thread. These tendencies are heightened in the Apoxyomenos (Figure 66)—which we unfortunately have only in a Roman copy, perhaps not a contemporary
copy like the Agias. Because it is a copy we should perhaps not attempt too subtle an
analysis of the position; yet it is clear from the combined work recently of several
scholars that it is a subtle position. For example, the leg thrust back somewhat but more
noticeably to the side is a logical development from the Agias, making a distinct change
in the contrapposto tradition. And combined with these is an apparent shift in weight.
What I have been describing is, I believe, the very beginning of a new conception of
ponderation—the only one not yet explored systematically—which I shall call mobile
ponderation. This refers, in sculptural terms, to the depiction of the very act of (human)
walking. Since this has, to my knowledge, never been treated as a subject in itself, and
since it seems to be the major contribution of the Protoclassical period to free-standing
poses, I shall present it here, together with a full historical introduction, as my
characterization of the period. However, the reader will find this period also
characterized in considerable detail in a quite different way in my discussion of color
history. Unfortunately, there is no possibility of proposing microperiods of
Protohellenistic sculpture because, unlike the Protoclassical period with its wealth of
original Greek works which are to some extent datable in absolute and relative terms, the
later period offers us almost no original works of free-standing sculpture and very few
reliefs.

The Walking Position in Sculpture

In order to clarify more specifically my thinking about a “Protohellenistic” period, I offer
here what is seemingly an excursus but actually an attempt to isolate a principle—wholly
derivable from formal changes in style—which will characterize the real sculptural task of
later fourth century Greek artists. Out of choice and necessity I confine this to sculpture,
although—as certainly in the case of the Protoclassical period—an interaction of
sculptors and painters undoubtedly took place. To deal with that factor here would
involve conjectural issues, of which there are already a plethora in sculpture alone.

Having a consistent theory of how the walking position was expressed in ancient
sculpture has long seemed to me a key element in defining the development of that
sculpture. As a practical point of departure we may consider the difference between
normal walking and striding in human beings. In walking the spine is inclined slightly
forward, with the neck somewhat more noticeably inclined. In striding the neck and
spine tend to come together in a quite marked forward cant. At least this seems to be the
artistic perception worked out in the sense of modern dynamics by Alberto Giacometti
(Figure 69). This is an easy and natural formulation for modern sculptors, who are free
to ignore traditional schemata.

In contrast, the first artists to attempt monumental stone sculpture worked with
a prescribed format which I shall call the Egyptian stance: a formal, block-bound vertical
figure with weight disposed equally on the legs, the left foot thrust forward and the neck
following the vertical spine.27 Constantly repeated in stone in two and three dimensions,
this formula was also applied to free-standing wood figures such as Ka’aper (Figure 70),
which are more useful for our purposes here: the compulsion of the stone block is gone
but its constraint carries over. Is Ka’aper walking or standing? Visually we could opt for
either one. It is easier to decide when there is a clear context, as in relief. Servants bearing offerings in the reliefs of the Temple of Sesostri I are clearly moving in a procession, portrayed in the peculiar two-dimensional adaptation of the pose with its twist of the torso. There are instances in which we may not be sure whether motion is implied or not. Yet when two figures in the Tomb of Rekmira face each other in this pose with their toes touching as they tug on a rope, they are obviously standing—not walking. So we have a generalized, non-specific formula that can express rest or movement. It is echoed in various complicated poses such as the pharaoh leaning forward to deliver the coup de grace to an opponent: the head looks straight forward, not down at the opponent.

Egyptian artistic conventions became the norm during the entire Bronze Age and during the earlier Iron Age in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Greek artists of the 8th and 7th centuries knew them by tradition and by fresh contact with the Orient. Furthermore, Greek stone workers had the opportunity to learn the subtleties of these conventions viva voce from colleagues in Egyptian workshops, according to the suggestion of B. Ridgway. Thus, from every direction they were aware of the ambiguity of the Egyptian stance. What is unique about Greek sculptors is that they seem gradually to have narrowed this stance in free-standing figures to arrest. This cannot be understood as a dogma; at least until the end of the Protoclassical period there was no doubt some feeling of the potential of the scheme to suggest (outer) movement. But if there is any logic in the slow process of transforming the scheme into a receptacle for the study of inner movement (in its final form, contrapposto), rather than outer movement, the Archaic pose must already have tended to show the human figure at rest.

Egyptian and Greek sculptors did not have, of course, the grounding in structural mechanics of the human body that any good present-day art school can teach. Yet in all periods they sensed—apart from the schemata they used—something of the principles referred to above as the basis of depicting walking and striding. Thus a particular variant of the Egyptian stance was used to show a royal or aristocratic attacker of human, animal or avian victims (see note 31): the legs are spread wide apart, implying but not proving that he is striding (has stridden) fearlessly towards the prey. But when the attacker is on the bow of a small boat no actual motion can be meant. The possibility of advance is underlined by a figurine from the Tomb of Tutankhamen (Figure 71): the artist has put the weight of the right leg on the ball of the foot, with the heel high in the air and the neck, though not the spine, parallel with the right leg. This detail was probably meant to emphasize swift movement towards the hippopotamus. However, because of the verticality of the spine, the movement actually seems drastically decelerated—and we have just noted the same placement of the feet in a stopped position (note 34).

In the case of Greek three-dimensional sculpture, a true, incontrovertibly walking pose seems to be non-existent before the end of the Classical period. If I am correct in this, it supports the thesis that the Egyptian stance sufficed during the Archaic period to represent either movement or rest as required, and that the transmutation of this pose into contrapposto with its subsequent development was new and difficult enough to absorb the energies of sculptors. Just at the end of the Archaic period comes the small
bronze statuette of Herakles (Figure 72) which we may employ as a type. It reminds us of the Egyptian attacking pose and offers the same ambiguity: is the hero rushing to the attack or simply poised for it? There appears to be—as in the prototype—a uniform forward cant. In the Classical period this pose, too, gets “stopped” by the contrapposto idea, as in the god from Artemision (Figure 61) or the Zeus of Dodona (Figure 73), and becomes a study of inner dynamics in outer arrest: an inevitable conclusion from the right-angled relationship of the feet. There are many variants of the attack or lunging position in Greek sculpture and a fuller study of this matter might be helpful. Again, dogmatic certainly is hardly possible: some ambiguity may linger on.

Relief offered more scope to Greek artists. While the traditional Egyptian twisted side-view remained the norm, there are Archaic examples of experimentation with a true side-view of actual walking, as in the metope of cattle thieves from Sikyon (Figure 74), even giving a slight forward cant of the heads. If their legs are still quite wooden, one may cite the maidens from the Heraion metope of Paestum36 with a more natural knee movement (despite a less convincing side-view of the torso). And the superbly innovative designer of the north frieze of the Siphnian Treasury created a quite convincing striding in the figures of Apollo and Artemis pursuing a giant; their spines are appropriately canted. However, the development of running and striding poses in two dimensions is a divergence from my theme and a study of them would have to take vase painting into account.

The bias towards contrapposto in the Protoclassical and Classical periods seems to have affected the development of the walking pose (in relief) in the sense that even in real side-views (less used than three-quarter views) there is an implication of arrested movement: thus walking maidens of the Parthenon East frieze are positioned immediately in front of a stop-figure which makes actual movement in their case unrealistic. Moreover, the temptation to make use of a three-quarter view was strong, as in the case of the water carriers of the North frieze.37 This view has in it such strong connotations of contrapposto that a paratactic row of such figures gives the impression of their being stopped in their tracks. If the artist and his clients were contented with this, it may mean that something of the ambiguity of the ancestor of this pose still carried over, certainly with illogic, perhaps unconsciously. Yet its greater significance lies in obliging us to conclude that there was as little real interest in exploring the functional characteristics of true walking in the two-dimensional sphere as there was in three dimensions. And this very circumstance may define Classical aesthetics in the sense that it has been felt to have a self-limiting orientation to the world.38 There is a rational economy in this, for there are few cases in Classical composition in which true walking in free space is required, owing to the nature of the subjects preferred.

What I have tried to present as the Classical orientation to life was so pervasive in the destiny of the Greek people that it must have proved difficult to dislodge even when the conditions in which it flourished changed drastically. If one feels at times that “Hellenistic” art is merely a somewhat arbitrary continuation of Classical art, that is because it is that in some respects, and for good reasons. And yet, despite our despair of ever knowing just what happened when and where, new ways to understand it must constantly be sought. For example, we may assume that Greek sculptors knew their
business and, at the logical time, advanced to a fully functional understanding of true walking, giving the third and final metamorphosis of the venerable Egyptian stance.

The evidence for this is extremely and disconcertingly scant but incontrovertible. We may start with three genre figures: aged persons who perhaps trudge more than walk, yet do so on the assured basis of their inner intentionality, the best case for this motif. Unfortunately two of these are considered by Pollitt to be Roman copies and everyone would, I think, like him date them late in the Hellenistic series. To these can be added several other statues which are certainly Roman copies also but generally are ascribed to originals of the later fourth century: the Apollo Belvedere (Figure 68), Ganymede and the Eagle, the boy advancing even if being lifted off the earth, and a small figurine in bronze of Alexander (Figure 67). In theme and manner all in this group look earlier rather than late in the Hellenistic series and, on that basis, contrast with the figures of aged persons mentioned above in the sense of mythical/heroic versus individual/lower class. If that estimate has any value, it leaves a painful gap—for there appears to have been a real development between the two groups—of up to two centuries. That could perhaps be helped out by an instance of true walking in relief that would fall in the middle of that gap. This would, in effect, eliminate the possibility that the pose itself was invented in the Roman period—which would be unlikely, anyway.

An additional link in the puzzle may again be provided by a Roman copy, the Apoxyomenos of Lysippos (Figure 66). For, in order for the walking pose with its level pelvis and shoulders and adjustments of the neck and spine, to be created, Greek sculptors had literally to struggle free from the fascination of contrapposto (in the technical sense)—and the Apoxyomenos seems to me to be doing exactly that. The complications of the pose have engaged the attention of many scholars. Recently detailed autopsy by Ridgway has established that “from nowhere can a fully frontal view of the body be obtained,” and she notices torsion suggested by “movement of the arms towards the figure’s right, while the hips swivel in the opposite direction” (to the left). Yet this strong visual impression is not actually corroborated by a corresponding functionality of the muscles as described by A.E. Stewart, who concluded that two movements have been coalesced into this one pose. This accords with my own long-standing impression that the back view offers a figure deeply sunk in contrapposto rest, while from the front the figure seems to be thrusting forward into space, as if thinking of going off in the direction of his gaze. This non-sequitur is described by Stewart thus: “the torso, in other words, is already supported by the right leg, even though the leg itself is still totally relaxed. Since no muscle properly carries the weight it should, the impression is one of weightlessness, greater height and extreme elegance.”

Given such anomalies, it would be possible to draw conflicting conclusions. It could be thought that this is simply a virtuoso refinement on contrapposto. On the other hand, Stewart’s unsolicited reference to weightlessness and greater height signals to me that the sculptor had begun to reverse the fourth century emphasis on gravity in the contrapposto pose and, in fact, by letting levity start to play again into the position, to go back towards the archaic equipoise, which is close to true walking in the disposition of weight. On the basis of this I suggest now the term mobile ponderation as a terminus
technicus for the whole process of walking. Of course, the Apoxyomenos is not walking at all but the ambiguity of the pose must be faced: in life or in art, if one is to walk—out of the contrapposto position—the force of levity must straighten the spine, lift the chest and swing the pelvis to horizontality. This may be what Stewart meant when he referred to a gesture toward the future in this statue. In any case, with or without that, the pose seems to be unresolved between dynamic torsion and uncertain outer movement. Whether the particular Greek sculptor behind the original of this copy actually carried on beyond this point, we shall never know. But somebody did.

It would appear, then, that there was a battle to break out of the self-limiting quality of contrapposto, followed at some point by a cluster of figures that advance quite naturally into space, though none of them is actually concentrating on the advance—figures whose dates are individually indecisive but collectively connected with the late fourth century. At least the hypothesis that this was the period when the pose was worked out may be more consistent than any other, exactly because the pose dramatizes and expresses the process of release from Classicism and its continental confines, just as Alexander expressed this politically. On both levels, such a release is necessary to explain the various qualities of life that are customarily enumerated as the defining characteristics of Hellenistic art and life. In this case art and life seem to imitate each other. It is not without significance that a scholar who has recently analyzed these characteristics very carefully in the light of the handful of original monuments, mostly relief, that can be indubitably related to the last quarter of the fourth century, found them—particularly the extraordinary Alexander sarcophagus—to be a combination of Classical features with non-Classical features, more or less side by side. An art that has not yet tried to amalgamate these contrasts as for example in the Early Hellenistic figure of Demosthenes (Figure 77)—might reasonably be set off as Protohellenistic, if only for the sake of order in a long sequence of centuries that does not readily lend itself to periodization. In fact, such a separation has already been effected in principle in another rigorous examination of works datable to, or attributable as copies to, the later fourth century: B. Ridgway found it suitable to isolate what comes before 300 and evaluate it separately. Working pragmatically, she does not draw a conclusion from this, but the method itself seems to support my vision of an era in which pioneers introduce new principles into a fixed and settled tradition in all aspects of life.

Given the importance I have attached to the walking pose, it may well be asked, why are so relatively few examples of it known? Obviously, we do not know how many works may have disappeared. But there were powerful restraints on it as I have already suggested: the very success of Classical contrapposto, which became the hallmark of Greek style everywhere and always; and tandem to this the tenacity of themes, even of the compositional devices, which implied or represented Greek culture to the outside world. Moreover, the change from contrapposto to walking (which I am calling mobile ponderation) was not so drastic as the change from the Egyptian stance to contrapposto. Walking, however symptomatic for a slow-moving, deep transformation of Classical culture, did not eliminate anything as dead and gone, as had happened before. Rather it seems to have been added as an enrichment to the Greek repertoire, not as a replacement of contrapposto.
CHAPTER IV: FORM AND TIME

But I cannot leave this subject without pointing out that, seen philosophically, walking freely suggests exactly the opposite of contrapposto. The latter is arrest, internalization of consciousness; it is appropriate to pure thinking and feeling. Walking is, as anyone who has recovered from a motor disability knows, the quintessence of return to active life, to the free exercise of the will forces. It is, to an important degree, the indispensable agent of human intentionality. In this sense its “discovery”, its conscious mastery, is a prior necessity to the expansive, almost entrepreneurial spirit of Greek culture in the international mission its practitioners assumed in the Hellenistic age.

The New Ponderation in Relief

The concept of mobile ponderation in free-standing sculpture has been proposed on a theoretical and circumstantial basis faute de mieux. It would therefore be unconscionable of me not to confront the major original relief composition of the Protohellenistic period: the Alexander sarcophagus, with the question: is there here any comparable experimentation in compositional method? What, in fact, could we expect to correspond to the shifting of weight from the unequal tensions of contrapposto back to a level pelvis and to a re-connection of the upper body with the light (levity), that is to release—headily and briefly, perhaps—from the heavy (gravity)?

If there is such a correspondence it will inhere, in the Greek manner, in the poses of the figures themselves. In the tableau at the right side of the hunting scene (Figure 75) are two men dispatching an unfortunate stag. Their poses are more or less mirrored but the left-hand youth, being nude, is easier to study. The sculptor has, of course, adapted a well known pose going back to Protoclassical times (Figure 37) but arranged the limbs so that there is no question of being held to one spot by gravity. The right leg comes forward with flexed knee in a turning movement driven by the extended left leg. The youth is clearly still coming around the animal from behind as he drags back its head. The right-hand figure is turning about in the reverse direction to gain the optimum position to attack the throat of the struggling beast. That this is a variant of walking is clear from the horizontal pelvis of the naked youth. But it is more closely definable than that. The rising curve formed by the youth’s arms lifts his body upwards to a dancing position, the light-footedness of which is underlined by the cloth flying upward past his head. This is echoed by the upright arms of the opposite attacker and even the stag contributes to the rising movement by his upward gaze and forelegs hoisted up high in the air. In short the whole group is in an ever-shifting movement that rises more than it falls; it seems to float as the figures glide.

And the entire composition is bracketed by this dancing position of the two figures at opposite ends; the figure on the left side has his leg crossed with that of another figure rushing towards the center in an extreme variant of the basic pose. The main group of mounted hunters contributes to the floating movement by rising from each side towards the center, arms raised and clothes flying upward in the wind to heighten the excitement of the moment. We can now notice that despite the manifold activities of numerous participants in the frieze, there is actually much free space—or
rather air—around and especially under the figures; this is equally the case in one of the pediments (but not in the other). This feature might be considered a Classical reminiscence; yet the way it is used here as a cushion of supporting air has no equivalent in the earlier period. On the other hand, the dance rhythm in the midst of the dangerous business of hunting down wild beasts is a thoroughly Classical inspiration, as the brilliant analysis of G. Kantorowicz has shown.

## Setting the Hellenistic Period

If the final liberation of the once ambiguously posed Archaic kouros figure to walk freely and alertly on the earth’s surface took place during the Protohellenistic period, what was left to accomplish? Obviously, the “pioneer work” which the genius of the Greek sculptor had so patiently carried out to understand the dynamic functioning of the human body was now completed. In order, therefore, to characterize the achievement of the Hellenistic period it is necessary to shift the terms of analysis away from structuring per se—which has served so well up to now—and seek a more comprehensive frame of reference. This can be attempted by continuing and expanding the reasoning introduced in Chapter IV (see Setting the Protohellenistic Period, The specific problem, paragraph 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archaic</th>
<th>Unconditional Being</th>
<th>Only permanent aspects realized: body and psyche largely undifferentiated.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>Conditional Being</td>
<td>Permanent aspects questioned but still respected: body and psyche differentiated but kept in balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenistic</td>
<td>Conditional Being</td>
<td>Changing aspects stressed: body and psyche not only differentiated but the body now actually expresses the psychic variability of the inner self.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Retrospectively, then, we can postulate that the work of the Hellenistic period was to utilize the structural achievements of the preceding period to accomplish a degree of psychological differentiation that still stands as one of the most astounding achievements of world art—something totally unheard of in the evolution of mankind up to that point. Why, then, does this now seem so little appreciated? To account for this, we cannot take shelter in the fact that this sculpture is now so largely disjecta membra, its groupings often scattered and deprived of their architectural significance, much of it preserved only in copies, imperfectly documented, from an age of political volatility. Such conditions also apply to earlier periods and, in any case, even in antiquity, when
they were not so ubiquitous, there was also disparagement. Pliny asserted that there was no outstanding sculptor after Lysippos and his school. A recent commentator writes rather plaintively, “Surely it is time to recognize that Hellenistic art constitutes an enrichment and enlargement, not a degeneration, of earlier styles.”

It seems to me that there are two aspects to this problem. First, it is the very multiplicity of types, experiments, inventions which is confusing, even cloying, as opposed to the relatively straightforward onward march of earlier periods. In this respect Hellenism has been compared, inevitably if not always circumspectly, to the Baroque period. It is, of course, well known that contemporaries of that period had more sympathy for the latest phase of Greek art than our times—which in any case are rather likely to denigrate Baroque art as well. So there is a time-bound factor involved.

The second factor is that the profusion and complexity undeniably aggravate the difficulty of achieving real agreement on the relative chronology of the series and thereby make the setting of microperiods almost impossible or—at the least—make them seem very subjective. It is noteworthy that general discussions of Greek art usually reflect the progression of microperiods discernible in the earlier macroperiods (whether by name or not). But their treatment of Hellenistic art tends to be shorter, more general and without significant commitment to periodic factors. Yet such factors do lie hidden in the heap, as it were, if the comparisons to a better documented, comparable later period made so often have any indicative value. For, despite the great diversity and geographical spread of the Baroque Age (just as of the Hellenistic Age) it had microphases lived out in some way. Most recognizable is perhaps the latest phase, now called Rococo, the subtlest will-phase of a volitional era, succeeding an expansive “classical” era (much of the 17th century), in which inspiration was taken strongly from past art regarded as normative (cf. the Hellenistic phenomenon); and finally there is an earlier era, perhaps overlapping with and throwing off the affectations of the Mannerist stage to achieve a new dramatic gravitas (e.g., Carracci, Caravaggio, Bernini).

It is not my purpose to draw any wide conclusions from such an analysis, for quite different problems occasioned by a radically different stage in the history of consciousness (different from those of the ancient period) are involved, and indeed it has long been my opinion that many of the comparisons drawn between works of the two ages are far too facile and sometimes sin egregiously in the sense of anachronism. I intend the comparison simply as a reassurance that the triadic ego necessarily experienced its creativity in the progression of thinking to feeling to willing throughout the Greek era if artistic creativity was still being experienced in a similar way many centuries later.

In the spirit of these remarks and with considerable trepidation and no detailed defense, the following very brief sketch of a possible three-stage articulation of the Hellenistic period is offered. It is necessary to have such an hypothesis, if only to impede the impression that would otherwise be left (and is certainly abroad), that the Greek artistic character, always so tenacious of its task in manifest continuity, was somehow not up to its last and really most difficult challenge, that is, to make its heritage usable for the world at large. It is in fact the very real difficulty of this final unfolding and
maturation of the human body-soul-mind in self-awareness, both in terms of the Hellenistic artist and of his creations, that deserves our sympathetic participation, not our bored, *déjà vu* reaction. We could at least try to make allowances, from our knowledge of the Baroque era, for the unsettling effects of assumptions in a society stressed by political absolutism and a growing concern with a scientific explanation of phenomena (just as the Hellenistic period was the era of science in antiquity). I believe that this participation may be easier if we more consciously include the achievements of painting in this period, even though their remnants are even more fragmentary and/or compromised than those of sculpture. Here, too, the amalgamation of sculpture, architecture and painting on a scale and with an originality hitherto inhibited by totally different political, cultural and philosophical considerations must be taken into consideration. All this has been duly noted by many commentators and must be understood as standing in the background of my microperiods; it would overburden the train of thought that has brought us from the Geometric period to the troubled waters of Hellenism to repeat or expatiate on these matters.

In choosing the date for the beginning of the Classical period, one finds available an archaeological fix-point, the debris from the destruction of the Acropolis by the Persians, which also decidedly coincides with a stylistic change. Unfortunately, there is no such convenient turning-point available for setting the beginning of either the Protohellenistic or the Hellenistic period. It is rather arbitrary to choose the date of Philip’s descent on Athens (338) or Alexander’s death (323) to make the former, for these are purely political milestones. It seems more suitable to depend on stylistic dead-reckoning. The creation of the Socrates of Lysippos, which seems to mark the beginning of his mature style, can surely be placed in the decade 340/330. Since he is known to have lived a long and fruitful life, it is not unreasonable to suppose that his work and influence, coinciding with that of Leochares, lasted until about the end of the century. By then the new principle of mobile ponderation probably was established with new awareness that matter follows mind in an unending succession of constantly shifting (momentary) states. Only then could Greek artists begin the demanding job of exploring in detail the implications of these discoveries. This preparatory work corresponds roughly to the problem of organizing Alexander’s political legacy, which could not be attempted in detail until the fiction of a united empire was eliminated by the murder of Alexander’s son (306) and the defeat of Antigonus in 301. To some extent, then, a coincidence of known political events and the postulated end of an artistic generation suggest that the transitional period was over by the end of the fourth century.

In the light of this, Early Hellenistic can be used to describe the span of about 300–230/20 (for the latter date see High Hellenistic), wherein a mood quite different from that of the Protohellenistic prevailed: there is, above all, a conservative attitude to problems of space and ponderation, e.g., Demosthenes (Figure 77). Space is again closed and the forward movement reversed, not in order to go back to the Classic moment but
to create a contrast between outstreaming psyche and the physicality it controls in a restrictive way. This characterization may help us to approach the crux of the Hellenistic problem: to sift the plenitude of artistic modes and formulas for new and striking combinations and effects—not stopping short even of conscious archaizing. On the face of it this situation has to introduce a new era of intellectual concentration; never before had Greek artists had to sift through earlier works for their style principles (I am not talking about motifs)—work that could not fail to induce a greater degree of self-awareness also. The artists of this early phase had to make a start on this, forge the path.

I shall attempt to demonstrate this in more detail on the basis of the Demosthenes, which is unfortunately a copy but probably close to the original in pose—since several not very different copies exist. We may compare it with a portrait of similar type: the clothed, standing Sophokles, also existing in several Roman copies, the most impressive one perhaps that in the Lateran (Figure 76). I take this pose to belong to the earliest Protoclassical period. The attitude can be described as outgoing (in gaze), perhaps proudly so, and confident as shown by the thrust-back left arm resting on the hip. In response the whole body seems to swing forward and then rightward in a kind of convex arc, while the folds move harmoniously upward and around the torso. In such a format an Athens in dire jeopardy could look back on its “glory days”. In the Demosthenes precisely the opposite mood prevails, as a vision of dejected old age—surely not for its own sake alone but also as an inner response to the vassalage of Athens—has been perpetuated in stone. The head bows forward in a pained expression, perhaps exhausted by defiance. Flabby breasts are emphasized by a horizontal bunching of folds just under them. The arms, whether restored with passively folded hands or holding a small scroll, droop from the shoulder. The position of the feet, though like those of Sophokles revealing a contrapposto stance, does not imply thrusting forward in space so much as sinking back in a concave arc as if from lack of energy. The way the garment is worn implies indifference to stylish effect—in remarkable contrast to the case of Sophokles.

In both these cases we are confronted with the ability of Greek sculptors of the post-Classical age to create a powerful phantom, as it were, of a personality which can only be understood in relation to the imagined world of the sculptor himself—rather than (as in the Classical period) with the creation of an objective picture of the relationship between the (human) figure and the (divine) world that sustains it.

After the Early Hellenistic moving away from the more “exocentric” nonchalance of Protohellenistic portraits (Sophokles) and of Protohellenistic walking poses, new challenges to Greek sculptors were presented by the extraordinary flowering of the Pergamene state under Attalos I and Eumenes II. The deliberate monumentalization and Hellenization of Pergamon by these monarchs, centering especially about the Altar of Zeus (Figure 79), again offers a fortunate nexus of political events and artistic generations which can be used to justify the term High Hellenistic from about 230/20 to 165. At this time, and certainly not only in Pergamon, where the evidence is datable, artists reawakened to the potentialities of open form to express total awareness of man’s psychic life, including the approach of death, sleep and various abnormal states
(Figure 80), such as a hangover. Group compositions, hitherto sparingly used in three-dimensional form, became popular, sometimes composed in pyramidal form, e.g., Dying Gaul and wife (Figure 78).

To orient ourselves again in the categories of Four Elements philosophy and Diltheyan stages, in the High Hellenistic period we find the fire principle: the ego at the most expressive stage the Greeks experienced it, caught up in the macroperiodic era of expansive will forces at the microperiodic stage of the emotional-working-through (Auseinandersetzung) of those will forces. I have already referred to the intensive smelting together of the “understanding of life” and periodic rhythms in the Hellenistic period. A glance at the examples referred to (Figure 78, Figure 79 and Figure 80) in this light may reveal how this is meant. It is as if the human ego at this stage were subjected to unbearable pressures and cried out for release or relief. Above all, the airlessness of the Pergamene frieze conveys this fiery inferno of feeling-drenched willing to the spectator, and shows us at once how far we have come from the Alexander sarcophagus in this respect, although such an outcome seems predicted in one of the pediments (see Chapter IV, Setting the Protohellenistic Period, The new ponderation in relief, paragraph 3).

In fact, at this stage verbal descriptions of sculptural poses, which could still be attempted in the Early Hellenistic works because of their inwardization, become nearly irrelevant—at least on the basis of two-dimensional representations of them. Here, if anywhere in Greek art, one gains almost nothing without being able to walk around and experience the very space in which the figures are gasping and struggling. Until we have kinesthetically experienced the results of the sculptor’s imagination, as did the ancient spectators for whom the work was created, a judgment of it can have little force.

The late Hellenistic period, beginning perhaps about 165 B.C., is the most difficult to characterize, not only because of great differences about dating otherwise unassignable works, but also because at this time interaction of Greek artists and Rome increasingly diluted pure Greek intentions and reactions; it is not clear exactly when this tendency became so strong as to preclude further discussion of a Greek series as such; conventionally one may adopt a range of 100/50 B.C. Open form seems to continue to the degree of emphasizing a disunity of axes, as if figures were moving in every direction at once: the ultimate in volitional alertness as in the Borghese Warrior (Figure 81). Simultaneously there seems to have been a tendency to look back longingly to pre-Hellenistic models, with such works as the Aphrodite of Melos (Figure 82), or Orestes and Electra (Figure 83), by the so-called Neo-Attic school.

It may seem, in this latest phase with its overlapping of macro- and microperiodic will impulses, that to some extent the sheer motor dynamics of the previous era continued in a way that demonstrated virtuosity more than purposefulness (Figure 81). But there is also an aptitude for refined sensibility, as in the graceful Aphrodite of Melos or, in a more severe mode, in the Orestes-Elektra group. And this stylish refinement was, of course, both easy to understand and available to culture-seeking Romans. From the formal point of view, this situation has an ironical echo in the development of the decorative arts in France when the Romanizing First Empire style grew out of the graceful rococo-tinged Neoclassicism of the later 18th century.
In a final attempt to grasp the essence of Hellenistic sculpture in terms of the theme of this study, the human figure in its environment of the four elements, we may now postulate that the ideal hovering before its artistic vision seems to have been the absolutely free movement of the individual in any direction suggested by necessity or whim. Ultimately this conforms to the legendary expansion of the geographic horizon of the oikumene period; while it may not have been customary to travel so far east as had Alexander (although some traders must have), nor so far north as the Shetland Islands (even Iceland?) discovered by Pytheas of Massila, nor so far south as the Indian Ocean, yet now even the average man was embedded in a world in which the political powers of Rome were beginning to imagine such frontiers as part of the real world.

Corresponding to this outer fluidity was the ideal of absolutely free rendition of any inner state from mystic ecstasy to bisexual reverie to drunken stupor in terms of its exact physical consequences. While the general existence of such states was not a discovery, the physical awareness of how they are experienced carried their materialization, in an age of utmost technical virtuosity, to an entirely new level of expressivity, ugliness included. Yet the very nature of the artistic, cultural and spiritual heritage out of which these materializations emerged guaranteed that the results would always be moderated by a certain generalizing rationality and a certain insistence that a divine component is a natural part of the human equation. These factors separate them from the differently constituted art of the Romans and made them appropriate to express the content of Byzantine Christian theology.
V.

A DETAILED STUDY OF THE EMERGENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTRAPPOSTO

INTRODUCTION

My views on the origin, emergence and meaning of contrapposto have been presented in a general way and in discursive fashion in Chapter IV. In Chapter V my intention is first to concentrate more narrowly on the “motor” aspects of the development of contrapposto statues and the reflection of this in relief, on the one hand, and, on the other, to widen and broaden the concept of the interlocking of contrapposto and Four Elements philosophy.

The first of these aims is addressed by presenting in chart form a characterization of each of the major steps involved in the development of dynamic ponderation in the Classical period. This is achieved by analyzing in a brief technical fashion, with frequent summaries, the selection of free-standing and relief sculpture presented in figures 40–58. Some of these have already been discussed in a somewhat different way in Chapter IV. In addition to the charts, I have prepared schematic colored sketches of the same sculptures, as presented in Illustrations 2 and 3. This condensation allows one to see on one page the entire series of metamorphoses of the free-standing figure (Ill. 2) and again on one page the corresponding metamorphoses in relief sculpture (Ill. 3). As to the use of these materials, my suggestion is that the reader work through the charts first before turning to Illustrations 2–3. However, even prior to studying the charts, the reader is requested to read the following discussion of the Canon, to which all else is “keyed”.
THE CANON¹ AS EVOLVED PROTOTYPE

In order to give the middle reference point on which my analysis of Early to Late Classical statues hinges, I proceed here to a description and interpretation of the Doryphoros (Figure 38 and Figure 47):

- The energetic leg: R and forward, crossed by the energetic L arm with shoulder up and back.
- The relaxed leg: L and back, crossed by relaxed R arm with shoulder down and forward.

This arrangement produces perfect cross-balance, but obviously not in the static sense of the Archaic kouros, whose head as fifth unit is placed absolutely frontally between L and R. In contrapposto, by contrast, all the parts to be unified must imply movement, including the head. In the Doryphoros, the upper torso bends slightly to the R and forward in sympathy with the exhalation of the breath and consequent settling of the members. This might pull the head to the right but that is not the only factor. While the general effect of the pose is to emphasize R and forward, implying consistently a harmony of activity, the turn of the head in that direction denotes its own special kind of activity, which may here be described as alertness.

From the earliest evidence to Aristotle (at least) the Greeks valued R and forward as noble and positive, auspicious—and L and back as inferior and negative, unlucky.² Thus in the most concrete, physical way imaginable the Canon embodies not only artistic harmony on the dynamic level but also, on the active level, the exemplary moral/social qualities as these were understood by the culture that generated them.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DYNAMIC PONDERATION

Early Classical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kritios Boy (Athens NM 698) (Figure 39)</td>
<td>Energetic L leg back; head R Relaxed R leg forward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comment

No crossing. Carried over from kouros scheme: shoulders level and frontal, arms at side, one leg forward. The head R with energetic L leg emphasizes the weaker side discordantly but detachment is the viewer’s primary impression of the figure’s mood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statue</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charioteer (Delphi Museum) (Figure 40)</td>
<td>Pelvis apparently horizontal but torso twisted R, head R following energetic arms R.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V: A DETAILED STUDY OF CONTRAPPOSTO

Comment
The artist broke with Archaic tradition only by twisting the torso, implied under the garment. Orientation to R suits the pose by emphasizing alertness and strength.

Statue
Oinomaus (Zeus temple E.) (Figure 41)
Description
Energetic R leg back, crossing energetic L arm.
Relaxed L leg forward; somewhat relaxed R arm.
Head slightly L(?).

Comment
Crossing is attempted but not carried through systematically. It is not clear how much the head turns L. Shoulders still level and frontal. Most important innovation is making R leg energetic but it is still back.

Statue
Apollo (Zeus temple W.) (Figure 42)
Description
Energetic R leg back, head R. Relaxed L leg forward.

Comment
Shoulders are still level and frontal and both arms are to some extent energetic, so no clear-cut crossing results. But a strong emphasis on R leg, arm and head to R gives the pose an extraordinarily dynamic directionality.

Summary: the Archaic-Protoclassical convention of setting one leg forward is continued and applied to the relaxed leg. In earlier times the forward leg was consistently the L, suggesting a tension between the two sides, even though not a difference in weight. The designation of the L leg as relaxed and forward is the most usual Early Classical practice and shows a grasp of the fact that there is more force to the R side (which may therefore already be implied in the pre-Classical scheme). The positioning of the limbs in this period is nevertheless quite experimental, particularly if one takes into account the god of Artemision (Figure 61), who parallels Apollo’s imperious stance, although reversing it to the L (presumably because the god is R-handed) and achieving to some extent a cross, so that the figure itself is neither standing in the conventional sense nor striding, as sometimes averred, but balancing for the pitch.

Relief
Herakles & Athena in Augean stables (Zeus temple) (Figure 43)
Description
Herakles, frontal L, wields the shovel. Athena, frontal, head L. With her R arm she forms a harmonious axis with Herakles’ movement.

Comment
There is a dynamically ponderated tension between the two sides of the picture plane—Herakles very energetic but Athena more relaxed (in contrast to Herakles and the bull with two crossing energized figures).
Relief

Apples of the Hesperides
(Zeus temple) (Figure 44)

Description
Athena, frontal, head R; Herakles lateral R, head down. Atlas lateral L, extends arms L with apples.

Comment
Athena and Herakles form one immobile unit absorbed in supporting the burden. A greater space separates them from Atlas, who advances to place the apples under Herakles' gaze, providing thus a dramatic focus.

Summary: these two metopes reflect the compositional principles of the East and West pediments of their temple: the Apples metope is almost completely paratactic, while the Augean metope enlivens this arrangement with a diagonal element.

High Classical

Statue
Omphalos Apollo
(Athens NM 45)
(Figure 45)

Description
Energetic R leg back, crossing energetic L arm back (?); head R. Relaxed L leg forward, crossing relaxed (?) R arm.

Comment
Although retaining the leg positions of the Oinomaus, the artist has achieved a provisional contrapposto: there is apparently a very slight upper body twist R; yet aesthetically the pose is awkward because of the thrust forward left leg which interferes with the obvious intention to energize the figure’s R side. The original of this is now illuminated by the almost identical pose of the Riace bronze warriors (whose twisting is more palpable). All must belong to an early stage of High Classical (460–450): cf. J. Boardman 1985(1), 53 (here Figure 46).

Statue
Doryphoros (Roman Copy Naples NM)
(Figure 47)

Description
See Chapter V, The Canon as Evolved Prototype, paragraph 1

Comment
The forward shift of the energetic leg and backward thrust of the relaxed leg corrects the imbalance of the Omphalos Apollo (and of the contemporary Riace figures). Since this implicates also a slight turn of the upper body, it achieves total contrapposto. Technically the Canon has nothing to do with a walking position. The L raised heel is simply a reflex caused by decisively sinking the body’s weight on the opposite leg. From such a position one would not be walking but rather lurching comically. Other figures in this pose demonstrate the emphasis on static positioning (Mattei-type Amazon: Figure 60). This is not to deny that from the front view the Canon vaguely suggests walking; in relief, figures in contrapposto position (side or three-quarter view) sometimes seem to be moving but movement is not absolutely required by the
sense. It seems that the double potentiality of the original kouros motif was not consciously resolved until later (p. 113).

**Relief**

**Parthenon metope no.30 (Figure 48)**

**Description**
Centaur rearing on hind feet L, grasping Lapith R by throat and locking in his forelegs the Lapith’s R leg, leaving him to balance precariously on L leg. Lapith strikes a probably ineffectual blow on Centaur’s face.

**Comment**
The centaur occupies at least 2/3 of the space and drives steadily from L to R (the favorable direction for him) against his hapless opponent. A tremendous concentration of limbs of both opponents creates tension to R of center.

**Relief**

**Eleusis relief (NM at Athens) (Figure 49)**

**Description**
Two facing stately goddesses in profile frame the rectangle. Between them, closer to the R goddess, a short boy in profile looking L receives an object from the L goddess.

**Comment**
There is a sense of very quiet movement to the L; a space separates the boy and R goddess from the L goddess; yet the tension of the action culminates in the area of the hands of the L goddess and the boy.

**Summary:** in the High Classical period the range from nearly static figures in parataxis to violent confrontations is possible; in all cases the dynamic balance of the composition is highly dependent on carefully calculated spatial separations (proportionalities) of the various figures.

**High Classical Reaction**

**Statue**

**Diadoumenos (Figure 50)**

**Description**
Athletic victor in position of Doryphoros tying the fillet. The L hand is well above the shoulder and pulled back, the R hand well below the shoulder and forward, the head distinctly down.

**Comment**
In exaggerating every feature of the Doryphoros the sculptor swings the statue into a self-absorbed consciousness typified by the head turned down to concentrate on the fillet. The effect is of an inner, not an outer alertness which closes the work off from the observer, as if the figure were talking (or dreaming?) to himself. Finally, making both arms energetic technically destroys pure contrapposto.
**Statue**

Karyatids: from porch of Erechtheion (Figure 51)

**Description**

These are arranged in two groups: those on R have R leg advanced and relaxed, while those on L have L leg advanced and relaxed. Given their task, these ladies must have level shoulders, so the implication of bodily swing is achieved by a heavy curve of the overfold. On their attributes, see J. Boardman, 1985(1), 161 (fig. 125).

**Comment**

By their function these figures must be, or seem to be, conservative in their stance, with all of them harking back to the Early Classical trait of advanced relaxed leg. Yet the conjunction of two relaxed legs at the center of the composition is structurally discordant. The support they must give to the roof justifies level shoulders and frontal torso but at the same time gives the opportunity to compensate for this by creating stout figures with heavy garments, the three-dimensional overfolds of which arc around their torsos suggesting torsion and fall away on the side of the relaxed leg. Especially this feature agrees with other works of the period, like the Nike of Paionios, that cut the vertical flow of garments by various stylistic devices.

**Relief**

Amazonomachy frieze (temple at Bassai) (Figure 52)

**Description**

Herakles and Amazon cross legs frontally—his R over her L. A fallen horse with dead rider on R is balanced by a rearing horse on L whose rider attacks a fallen Greek at Herakles' foot. This figure is balanced by an active Greek on R dealing with corpse above the dead horse.

**Comment**

This seems to be an extraordinary case of sustained true contrapposto in composition. Since it is based on the west pediment of the Parthenon in principle but shows the victor on the observer's R, it suggests that Pheidias may have been composing his composition from the inside out (as he would individual figures), so that, in effect, the victorious side (Athena) is reversed from that seen by the spectator. The anti-classical note at Bassai may be the adaptation of a peaceable scene to one of deadly battle.

**Relief**

Hegeso stele (Athens NM) (Figure 53)

**Description**

Maid L hands jewel box to seated matron R who occupies 3/4 of the relief space.

**Comment**

The composition retains but reverses the proportionality of the Parthenon metope no.30. Despite the apparent movement from L to R, compositional focality is concentrated on the L, thus recalling the Eleusis motif. But the great relaxation of the figures and sinking of heads, recalling the Diadoumenos, contribute to a general
softening and swinging of the composition that goes beyond the High Classical to reach a somewhat dreamy modification of alertness appropriate to the mortuary theme.

Summary: the examples chosen illustrate the tight continuity of the High Classical Reaction with the preceding periods while at the same time every feature is subtly re-interpreted to produce a delayed reaction, as it were. This direction leads also to more extreme flaunting of High Classical standards, as in the ornate female figure (Aphrodite?) from the Agora as an akroterion on the Stoa of Zeus in Athens (Figure 63).

Late Classical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hermes of Praxiteles</td>
<td>Energetic R leg forward crossing energetic L arm; head L toward baby. Relaxed L leg; energetic R arm. Unfortunately the more complicated poses of freestanding sculpture in this era are preserved only in copies (see Chapter IV, Setting the Classical Period, Picturing the cyclical stages in broadest terms, paragraph 12) whether as cult or even votive statues, these are likely to be reasonably faithful to the original motif. To supplement these, nevertheless I offer here simultaneously the boy from Marathon (cs. G. Richter, 1969, fig. 196), an original bronze statue with strong Praxitelean overtones which may be considerably earlier in the fourth century and not so fully worked out in regard to torsion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Olympia Museum)</td>
<td>(Figure 55)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Figure 55)</td>
<td>(Figure 54)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comment
From the diagram this figure is seen to be a further modification of the Diadoumenos, actually a quite harmonious one in that it brings the head tilt into conformity with the extreme relaxation (S curve) for which Praxiteles is noted. The head on the relaxed side doubles the effect of self-absorption, but here (as in the Eirene) this has a new object which also has consciousness and strives upward. This converts the independent figure into a composition which has a dynamic focus, as in relief. This composition is more logically, or at least compactly, structured in the Eirene of Kephisodotos (Figure 54), since the baby is carried on the energetic L leg. By putting the baby’s weight on the relaxed leg Praxiteles was virtually forced on the basis of visual and probably even real statics to provide a pillar of support. The fact that he was willing to accept this surely not altogether desirable complication shows his determination to confront the mythic theme with human (earthly, mineral) reality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Athena</td>
<td>R leg and arm energetic; head R. L leg relaxed and back; L arm relaxed. The figure is thus cleanly split into an active side and a relaxed side and has the head in alert position. The figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Piraeus: in Athens NM)</td>
<td>(Figure 64)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(Figure 56) seems thereby to be striding toward us.

Comment
The fact that the goddess slightly turns but does not sink her head, and keeps her shoulders approximately level lends her an old-fashioned dignity appropriate to deity. At the same time her mild expression and outstretched hand seem to suggest that she is not only not unapproachable, as the Athena Parthenos might have been, because so far above mortals, but that she actually is undertaking to invite human contact.

Summary: Figures of this period are much indebted to the Diadoumenos model in which Polykleitos himself modified true contrapposto to what may be called perhaps mixed contrapposto: one cross of similars, one cross of opposites. This is then extended to what may be called anti-contrapposto in which two sets of opposites are crossed, thereby effectively splitting the body into two equal sides like the kouros but now dynamic. All of this implies increasing torsion and further modifies the exquisite balance of the canon, while at the same time facilitating psychic modifications of same. The ultimate exploitation of these possibilities may have occurred in the work of Skopas, but in the absence of originals it is not possible to be sure of this through analysis (cf. e.g., Pothos and Raving Bacchante: Figure 62).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relief</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mausoleum frieze</td>
<td>Two facing Greek warriors lean forward in a triangular composition to rain their deadly blows on an Amazon fallen between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slab 1022</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halikarnassos.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Figure 57)</td>
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</table>

Comment
This is an exact inversion of the central group of the Bassai scene examined above (see diagram), except that the passive element has now been placed midway below the executioners, lowering with it the focus of activity. The application of active force from both L and R, compressing or destroying the passive element, also destroys the contrapposto of the original source; it becomes a dynamic, but collapsing equilibrium. As a formula for mindless violence this recurs in the Stag Hunt from Pella in the Hellenistic period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relief</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ilissos Relief</td>
<td>At L side youth looking directly forward, his body nearly frontal but slightly turning to his L, half sitting on a plinth, with small child sleeping (weeping?) at his feet on steps of plinth, along with a dog. After a distinct cleavage an old man on R side of composition seen laterally supporting self on staff stares L at youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Athens NM) (fig 58)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comment
The artist has explicitly created an active versus a passive structure in the placement and positions of the figures (sitting, standing). The beginning of cleft composition may perhaps be seen in the Dexilios relief (Figure 64), where the cleavage is diagonal, at the start of the Late Classical period.

Summary: the examples chosen display, in the one case, continuity with the formal compositional unity based on Pheidian frieze contrapposto and, in the other, the experimentation with variants of single figure contrapposto as applied to stele composition: in the Ilissos relief an exact correspondence with the anti-contrapposto of the Piraeus Athena splitting the scene into two separate parts plus an outgoing gesture (here indicated purely on the psychic level by the youth’s stare). Although the scene has subtle complications, we may feel that active and relaxed halves are reversed here (from the statue mentioned): the deceased on the spectator’s L passive, the standing old man on the spectator’s R active.

ABSTRACTING THE ESSENTIALS OF DYNAMIC PONDERATION: ILLS. 2–3.
This presentation in the form of colored, abstract sketches of the sculpture analyzed in the foregoing chart proved to be more than a mechanical task. In fact, the inclusion of colors forced me to make choices based on what seem to be legitimate, if complex, factors in the relationship between work of art and viewer. The technical factors discussed below in an elucidation of the method employed render more specific and conscious certain concepts (wording) in the chart which the reader may not have noticed as being unusual or requiring comment. An interfacing of the figures in Illustrations 2–3 and comments in the charts may be helpful in penetrating deeper into the “secrets”, as it were, of contrapposto which in effect are the secrets of our own bodies and consciousness. It was, in the end, these sketches which enabled me to find what I hope is an enlightening reduction of the five stages of dynamic ponderation to two-word descriptions (experimental ponderation, provisional contrapposto, pure contrapposto, mixed contrapposto and anti-contrapposto).

Elucidation of the Method
To some extent the overview of Classical figure development presented in Chapter IV (see Setting the Classical Period) can be clarified in a schematic way (Ill. 2) using red to indicate what I shall refer to as the energetic member: principal supporting leg (Standbein) and arm holding something or making a gesture; and blue to indicate relaxed members: (Spielbein), unengaged arm. The individual sketches can emphasize only the structural problem as adjunct to the actual illustrations and verbal descriptions, since we are dealing with three-dimensional factors.
It is necessary to be more explicit than usual about left-right relationships. In the case of freestanding figures logic obliges me to adopt the figure’s standpoint, not the observer’s, since the statue does not simply mirror a three-dimensional human being, it reproduces one, and the sensitive artist could only be inside it, as it were, in creating its implied functionality. Even if statues are grouped together in a composition, this point of view is a prior necessity in order to grasp the contrapposto experience of the figure represented.

In regard to group compositions and reliefs (Ill. 3) the situation is somewhat more complex. I believe that the spiritual impulses out of which the four elements/contrapposto approach emerged would have penetrated everything. But not every medium can show this so straightforwardly as the just mentioned macrocosmic/microcosmic prototypes—philosophy and statues (see below: Art as Science). Just as Archaic composition stayed with the principle of static balance, Classical composition left that behind and became increasingly adept at maintaining balance without sacrificing movement of dynamically motivated bodies. Yet in reliefs we are dealing with pictures and picture planes and, as moderns, we tend to take the observer’s standpoint as normative.

It is difficult enough to grasp that the sculptor subjectified himself in the statue; can he not have at least objectified his view of the world in two-dimensional composition, since the picture-plane has an independent life, as Kandinsky pointed out (see Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements Chapter II)? I fear that this is moot; I have already had occasion elsewhere to point out that we should not apply our strict standards of subject-object to the Greeks. However there is evidence (ad Figure 52) that they did at least sometimes subjectify composition. My decision has been to compromise by adjusting the terms and methods of analysis towards objectivity, while leaving the question of appropriateness quite open (I think there is less probability of confusion this way): in the case of reliefs, red will simply indicate the dominant motive force and blue the recipient of this, even though this recipient may also show a certain activity. Just as in contrapposto, the proportions of space occupied by the two factors just mentioned are vital to the dynamic (visual) balance.
CHAPTER V: A DETAILED STUDY OF CONTRAPPOSTO

The Development of Contrapposto in the 3-Dimensional Figure

EARLY CLASSICAL
Experimental
Ponderation

Kritios Boy  Charioteer  Oinomaus  Apollo

Ephialtes Apollo  Riace statue B

The Canon

Diadoumenos Delos  Karyatids Erechtheion

HIGHER CLASSICAL
(provisional contrapposto)
Harmonious alertness
(left leg forward)

HIGHER CLASSICAL (later)
Pure contrapposto
Harmonious alertness
(right leg forward)

HIGHER CLASSICAL REACTION
Mixed contrapposto
Involuting consciousness

LATE CLASSICAL
Mixed contrapposto
(intensified)
Anti-contrapposto

Eirene  Marathon boy  Athena Piraeus

ILL. 2
The holistic quality of Empedokles’ theory has not, I feel, been sufficiently appreciated either by classicists or by historians of science. This may be owing to the fact that no properly rationalized “picture” of it has previously been worked out. Not only is it artistic
as well as dynamically scientific simply because it can be “seen” as a perfectly balanced interacting “picture” (diagram), but also because that picture is concealed, as it were, in a poem, of which unfortunately only fragments remain. This latter fact cannot be dismissed as merely a convention of the age, because that convention itself characterized the age as artistic.

The word “balance” in reference to the Four Elements theory suggests polarity but not in the lateral sense of Aristotle’s virtues and their opposites. Rather what is involved here are sensory polarities (hot-cold, etc.) related chiastically to the four elements, themselves perhaps best described as psycho-physical forces of a living being (see also Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements Introduction). What is behind this becomes ever more specific as we approach the similar dynamism in the Canon of Polykleitos, which again has not been sufficiently appreciated for its holistic quality: its physical polarities are firmly equatable with moral/social values, cross-balanced in a functioning organism, the inner motive force of which is, to be sure, operative throughout its members. Yet this force has a concentrated effect in the action and expression of the head as a kind of culmination of the scheme. If a correspondence with the head were to be sought in the Empedoklean system, it might be the fifth element, Heaven, where the gods, particularly Aphrodite, expressively participate in the affairs of the world.

Even if this suggestion of macrocosmic/microcosmic functionality has merit, one might ask whether it has any connection with our 20th century selves. Within the last generation—even more recently than that—psychological research has brought forth a very similar picture of the human being, if not of the cosmos. I refer to the concept of the R and L brains as directing forces, a functionally unified duality, as it were, though each has its separate value to the individual’s consciousness, with cross-sensory control of the opposite half of the body. Furthermore, unless the more logical functioning of the L brain is balanced by the more intuitive functioning of the R brain, there is little probability that the behavior of the individual will constitute a benign influence on society and much probability that it will generate various kinds of socially useless, if not destructive, influences. Indeed, at least one explicator of the complex research on this subject has pleaded for a radical reconstitution of the goals of education, which previously have been to develop at any price and at the earliest possible moment the L brain’s verbalizing faculties to the neglect of the R brain’s artistic and intuitive faculties. This has only to be compared with the Greek system of paideia to clarify what is meant in this study as the holistic human being; the ironic result of the modern obsession with the L brain is to have produced computers which exceed in various ways the capacities of that brain but are essentially helpless in regard to R brain functions. By cloning itself the L brain makes itself superfluous and the R brain has been allowed to atrophy—one result of this being perhaps the plethora of senseless violence among youths. The concept of balance between the two halves of the brain is further clouded by the increasing dependency on computers without simultaneous attention to compensatory artistic activities on the part of their users. That dependency has already brought about severe economic and social dislocation, felt not least among scholars and teachers and their aspiring successors. Thus, modern man can no longer afford to miss the chance of learning from the past; it offers inspiration for correcting a dubious orientation.
THE LONGER PERSPECTIVE

The theoretical achievement of the High Classical period has been described as the understanding of dynamic balance in nature (four elements) and in human consciousness (contrapposto). The question of proportions has been broached, but not sufficiently aired as an important link between these two realms. The old-fashioned scales with sliding iron weights may be a helpful picture for this purpose. The weights are moved along a measured arm until they come into equilibrium; the weight can then be read but it could also be interpreted as a ratio relationship of the two weighted pieces. In terms of the Four Elements theory the whole question of ratio in Greek art—which as I have elsewhere shown was raised pragmatically and artistically, not as a matter of mathematics, as early as the Late Geometric period—has to do simply with the problem of light and heavy (levity and gravity). The first tender dawning that gravity exists produced the first interest in ratios which then continued and deepened through the phases of static balance to dynamic balance: this concern with weight has to have been the first purpose of Polykleitan proportions, even though rarefied aesthetic and mathematical aspects need not be excluded from them (see further discussion of this in Appendix D). Thus, both the elements theory and contrapposto mark the exact moment in world history when the awareness of both light—the time-honored frame of reference—and heavy—the new concept of mineral weight—came into exact balance. Thereafter the latter factor gained ground at the expense of the former, as an analysis of later sculpture shows and also the increasing concern of Aristotle to explain more in earthly (rational) than in spiritual (divine) terms how things work. But the radical elimination of levity as a concept had to await the powerful mechanical world picture of Isaac Newton. In this world picture gravity is thought out as a mathematical formula, not experienced as a bodily phenomenon.

If there is a master plan to world destiny, it must surely accord a key position to Newton, for he exercised equal power also on the development of color theory. To understand this we must recall that most natural philosophers in the fifth century B.C. considered the origin of colors to lie in the mixture of black and white (that is, dark and light), in terms of proportionality, although the first extensive evidence of that occurs in Plato, followed by Aristotle. Thereafter, however, the role of dark in color began to be called into question, even its existence doubted (Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements). This may foreshadow in some way Augustine’s conclusion that evil was merely the absence of good. At least, that is in the same mold. Again, however, it was the questionable merit of Newton to have concentrated all color reality in light at the expense of dark, which was relegated to the status of a non-entity in intellectual terms. Few have dared to question his authority.

Thus, in the formation of the intellectual convictions of the Western world a powerful, but one-sided and inconsistent, element of cross-balance can be detected, starting already in the fourth century, B.C. In terms of levity-gravity only the heavy has survived as real; in terms of light and dark, only the light has prevailed as real:
Yet dark (black) in the Four Color theory (see Ill. 1) embodies the heavy (matter) and its subnatural forces, whereas light (white) embodies all that can be connected with levity (upward pulling, warmth). Thus, Newtonian materialism must be described as a dynamic contradiction: to be consistent it should have embraced the dark along with the heavy, or else the light along with levity. But in either case it would exclude half of fifth century holism. We can call this tendency to exclude whatever is inconvenient to simple explanations reductionism and then see this as the lineal ancestor of the most radical (and yet highly influential) offspring of modern psychology, behaviorism, which solved “the problem of consciousness and its place in nature” by simply denying “that consciousness exists at all.”
EPILOGUE

ON PHILOSOPHERS AND ARTISTS

The very conception of polarities, so basic to Greek experience and thought, suggests that individuals could have quite opposite viewpoints and still be addressing the same root problem. The corollary of this is that individuals of creative talent in various fields shared in a common pursuit—and certainly much more homogeneously than would be conceivable in our fragmented times. Therefore, the tale in this book is of artists who explored—nonverbally—scientific theorems and, by mention at least, of philosophers who explored scientific theorems \textit{verbally} with more or less poetic flare. The parallelism of their efforts, presumably undertaken with little or only general awareness of each other by the two groups, is more striking than might be suspected. I shall turn, therefore, to a post factum review of the evolutionary aspect of the Four Elements theory (see Chapter IV, \textit{Setting the Protohellenistic Period}, The larger problem, paragraphs 4–5).

The intentions of artists in this light can obviously be studied much earlier than those of philosophers (although the writings of Homer and Hesiod\textsuperscript{1} are sometimes viewed as a substitute). Let us begin with Thales, whose \textit{floruit} in the earlier part of the 6th century puts him squarely in the developed Archaic period. The fact that he and his successors to the end of the third quarter of the century can be called physical philosophers, interested almost exclusively in the macrocosmos, recalls that the work of their sculptor-contemporaries proved also to be best analyzable from this standpoint (see Appendix A). It is quite appropriate, then, to note the following convergences:

\textbf{a.} the sculptors of the kouros form were deeply involved in grasping what I have called aqueous man (water-man). Thales saw the cosmos and everything in it as composed of water.

\textbf{b.} the criterion of artistic composition in the Archaic period was unyielding, imperturbable balance of stasis (in the horizontal plane). Not only is this the ultimate
characteristic of water, but it shares with the apeiron theory of Anaximander, slightly younger contemporary of Thales, the quality of fixity and timelessness in the infinitely recurring, exact reproduction of the world-state out of the unchanging apeiron.

c. the discovery of the kouroi masters from about 530/525 that the mastery of corporeal details and even slight hints of sentience (the smile) were not enough to replicate human consciousness, but that breathing would have to be indicated, has to be seen alongside the slightly earlier theorem of Anaximenes, who died ca. 528–525, that air is the monistic principle of all reality. It was, as we have determined, the gradual transformation of water-man into aerated mineral-man, which took place in the fifty years following 530/525 (the Protoclassical period), that toppled the Archaic aesthetic and opened the way for the completely differently constituted Classical period.

If we now turn our attention to the two great philosophers who flourished in exactly the critical Protoclassical years, we find the emergence of a subjectivism that spelled the death sentence for one-sided macrocosmic speculation as a norm.

Although Herakleitos introduced fire as the underlying key to reality, fire happens to be the least comprehensible of the elements as a physical entity and was also equated by him with another essence, the Logos, which accentuates the supraphysical (psychic) dimension of fire as one of the four elements. Henceforth philosophy could be carried on at both the macrocosmic and microcosmic level. This corresponds not only to the infusion of shallow breathing (emitting warmth) into kouroi figures but more particularly to the deconstruction of Archaic tectonic structure from within by psychic forces that pressed toward dynamic ponderation. Perhaps even more telling is the fusion, at this point, of the microcosmic stream of color development in painting with the macrocosmic stream of form development in sculpture: the relation of breathing (air) to red and fire (nous) to white becomes palpable in artistic practice.

That the new flexibility of outlook demanded (literally and imperiously, it would seem) by Herakleitos took so long to achieve is understandable not only on the basis of the unheard-of dimensions of change from traditional ways involved, but by the inevitable polaric reaction, represented in this case by the philosophy of Parmenides. By digging in, so to speak, with an equally imperious doctrine of unchangeable Being as the only true value, he established a holding position that could serve as a criterion and steady force through the post-Archaic era. Yet even he could not be totally unmoved by the “winds of change” and he had to let the phenomenal world stand as an inferior, inexplicable shadow-side of human experience, quite in keeping with the immanent Greek concept of the krasis of light and darkness—in both philosophy and color theory.

In a less clear and definable sense, the shadow of Pythagoras also falls on the Protoclassical and earlier Classical world. Among other things his ideas on color, or those of his immediate successors, seem inextricably involved in the matter of the colors of the four elements, affecting in some not quite definable way the views of Empedocles (Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements).

If, nonetheless, the religious and esoteric side of that philosopher seems more attuned to Pythagoreanism, the philosophical, natural-scientific side of Empedocles is
closely linked with Parmenides and in a certain sense expands and transforms the latter’s work into the dynamically balanced theory of the four elements—which, as I believe, is the foundation of the High Classical outlook. What has not been sufficiently emphasized in my study is the totally rhythmical, that is, periodical, cyclical aspect of the Four Elements theory as philosophy: the “Ewige Wiederkehr des Gleichen” (unceasing reversion to the same state) of Anaximander raised to a new level of consciousness. This aspect has been unpalatable to some critics both ancient and modern by reason of its supposed purposelessness.

To deal with this in context, one is obliged to ask whether High Classical thought (and achievement as such—sculpture, architecture, drama, etc.) really has a purpose? It is a momentary phenomenon, a perfect embodiment of self-levitating balance that would deny itself if it went definitively to the right or left, up or down, forward or backward.\(^2\) And as such it is actually a miraculous phenomenon (despite the emotions the use of this word in relation to Classical Art now arouses), sustained by no self-conscious effort (if one trusts the effect it makes). Successors could have had no choice but to tip this balance in whatever way, thus destroying its perfect message—just as Plato and Aristotle actually did. Even conscientious imitators down the ages could not conceal the shadow of this dilemma, however much they may have provided another momentary balance and elegance to their time and setting.

Thus the High Classical Four Elements theory, with concomitant contrapposto and colors, epitomizes the pre-Christian world’s experience of cyclical time: ascending, circling, descending, circling, again ascending and circling, evermore: its power to attract and to repel seems to reflect the Love and Hate which Empedocles took in to activate his cycles.
APPENDIX A.

DIAGRAMS ILLUSTRATING THE PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS-CYCLE BY EACH ELEMENT IN TURN

The following paradigms are excerpted from Chapter II of *Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements*. They are intended to clarify the relationship of the four elements together with their colors) among themselves in respect to their shifting dynamic functions. The positioning of the diagrams in sequence demonstrates—although this was only later realized—the statement of Empedokles about the temporal quality of the elements:

These elements and forces are to be understood as equally strong and coeval, yet each of them has a different function, each has its own characteristic and *in the rounds of time they take their turn being dominant*.

![Diagrams](image)

*Notes to Illustration 4*

Fire is the creative principle in (B), (C), (D), hence white; it materializes only in A, hence red (physical).

Air expands in (A), (B), hence yellow and increases its efforts to do so in (D) hence really a deeper yellow; it loses this quality by taking on weight in (C), hence red (immobility).

Water is the least stable in color. In (A) it is white (diminishingly physical). In (B) water signifies (retains) liquidity even in distillation (oxygen) hence red, yet it also becomes gaseous (hydrogen) thus tending toward yellow; in (C) it achieves maximum movement (yellow) and in (D) it tends toward immobility (red).

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Earth is always stable to the extent that it remains the darker part in any condition. In principle, yellow is the color of dispersal, black of concentration, red of intensity or arrested movement and white of non-physicality or minimal physicality.

In all cases the colors share the tendency of the elements to mix themselves constantly and must therefore be taken as in constant gradation from one to the other.

It must be emphasized that the foregoing schemata and chart relate to the macrocosmos, that is, more precisely, the universal, external and objective—as it were—basis of physical/physiological processes. Whatever echoes or premonitions of such considerations may be discernible in the ancient literary tradition (probably even including the medical writings) seem to be related to the macrocosmic sphere. However, Goethe’s great pioneering work on the psychological and mental/moral aspects of color implicates another dimension to this problem, namely, the microcosmic or individuated realm. Therefore, it would be unconscionable for the modern investigator not to attempt to understand the implications of elements and colors on the specific level of the human being, whose form and being—physical, physiological, psychological and mental/moral—constantly interact with the macrocosmos.

In structuring the macrocosmic pictures, I employed, as explained above, the hierarchical evolutionary principle of organization: fire, air, water and earth (as solid matter, the finished product of evolution). By contrast, since the psychological and mental/moral effects of interaction can only be realized by an individual consciousness, the microcosmic series (Ill. 5) is therefore organized according to the biographical principle, wherein the order is exactly reversed: the human being begins with earth (physicality) at birth and rises in the end (ideally) to mental/moral ripeness.

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Notes to Illustration 5

Earth is implicit in life processes at all stages providing physicality or its shadow, hence always black.

Water is more subject to movement in (F)-(G), hence yellow but more balanced and stable in (E) and (H), hence red.

Air is more subject to movement in (E) and (H), hence yellow but more stable and dense in (F) and (G), hence red.

Fire is the invisible presupposition of all processes, hence white throughout.

A comparison of the two sets of figures shows that only the color of earth (matter) remains constant in all cases. Further, only the picture for the dominance of water...
accords both macrocosmically and microcosmically with the original table that served as the point of departure for the study of variations. That original table was obtained from an analysis of the characteristic colors of Archaic ceramics. Yet, quite apart from color altogether, it had appeared from the analysis of sculptural form that Greeks of the Archaic period were at a stage of development that took for its concern the aqueous constitution of man (water-man).

Correspondence of the color series occurs at the earth stage as well as at the water stage of the two systems. Logically this is to be expected, since an individual human being is, as far as physical/physiological aspects are concerned, identical materially and constitutionally with the surrounding macrocosmic environment. As far as the air stage is concerned, the air-being (soul) corresponds to the color arrangement of the macrocosmic water stage, whereas the individual fire-being (mind) is in accord with the colors of the macrocosmic air stage. This amounts to a chiastic relationship. Tentatively one might argue that individual souls are necessarily limited by a common parameter emotionally, that is, by a certain given range of possible human emotions, whereas individual minds (I-beings) have—theoretically—unlimited freedom to transcend cultural parameters into the sphere of uniquely original creativity. If there is an intelligible pattern in this, it must be stressed that the working out of the tables took place at a comparatively early stage of this study with sole concentration on the separate processual conditions; patterns and implications like those just discussed were not noticed until later.
Normally when world views undertake to resolve the enigma of life, they conform to identical structures. A structure is invariably a compound of thoughts; in it and on the basis of a cosmic picture questions of the importance and significance of the universe are decided, and from it are derived life’s ideals, its highest good, and supreme principles of conduct. This structure is determined by an inherent psychical order according to which the concept of reality in the course of life is the basis for the evaluation of situations and objects in delight and disgust, in pleasure and dislike, and in approval and disapproval. In turn, this appraisal of life is the basis of the determination of the will. In our lives we pass through these three phases of consciousness (from cosmic picture to valuation and on to the formation of the will), and in that process we behold the unique nature of psychological existence, namely that in such interaction the substratum remains operative: relationships (already contained in our attitude) made us form our judgment of objects, determine our pleasure, and direct us to aim at fulfillment, and these relationships determine the building up of different levels and hence constitute the whole edifice, indeed a structure, where eventually the permeating influence of the soul finds its expression. This complex appears in its simplest form in the lyric poem. It is a situation, a sequence of feelings and, often resulting from them, a desire, a striving or an action. Each relationship tends toward a form in which recurring attitudes are structurally combined. By the same token world views tend towards uniformities in which the structure of psychological life is expressed. The foundation is invariably a cosmic picture: it originates from our perceptive behavior which itself follows immutable laws of phases of cognition. First we had observed occurrences within us and objects outside of us. Next, however, we clarify such observations by emphasizing fundamental relations of reality with the help of the elementary operations of thinking. Once these observations have receded, we depict and classify them in our world of ideas which lifts them above fortuitousness. In these preliminary phases the spirit gained in stability and
freedom, but it completes its dominion over reality in the region of judgments and concepts, where finally the relatedness and true being of reality are adequately and uniformly comprehended. When a world view evolves fully, the process regularly begins in these phases of the cognition of reality. On the basis of a typified cognition there rests another typical behavior, and this, too, follows analogous phases according to immutable laws. Becoming conscious of our self, we enjoy the full measure of our existence; we ascribe to objects and persons around us a certain effectual value because our existence was enhanced and broadened by them. These values are then determined by us according to their prospective influence, useful or harmful; and while we measure them, we are seeking an absolute standard of measurement. Thus conditions, persons, and objects assume their importance in relation to the whole of reality, and this whole itself is stamped with meaningfulness. While we pass through all these psychological phases, a second layer, as it were, is built in the structure of the world view; the cosmic picture becomes the foundation for a full valuation of life and for a comprehension of the world. In the same way that psychological life followed certain laws, the valuation of life and the comprehension of the universe lead to an upper level of our consciousness, another layer, if we will: here we find the ideals, the highest good, and the supreme principles, in all of which the world view finally receives its practical energy—as it were, the sharpness with which it penetrates our life, the outer world and our very soul. At this stage the world view becomes creative, formative, indeed reforming. But even this highest layer of the world view is subject to change through various phases. From momentary intent, striving, and tendency there develop permanent aims which are directed toward the realization of a concept; here also is determined the relation between means and ends, the choice between goals, the selection of means of attainment, and the final systematization of all aims into a highest order of our practical behavior—a comprehensive plan of life, a highest good, the highest norms of action, an ideal of shaping one’s personal life as well as that of society.

Such then is the structure of a world view. What was dark and confused in the enigma of life, appearing there as a bundle of tasks to be performed, will here be sublimated into a conscious and necessary relationship of problems and solutions; this progress goes through uniform phases, themselves circumscribed by inward laws: consequently every world view has a development of its own and thereby reaches true fulfillment. Thus, but only in time, does a world view receive and acquire permanence, firmness, and power. It is a product of History.
A brief introductory comment: in the sense of natural philosophy the Four Elements theory defines not only the constituents but also the quality of the physical sphere. Since constituents and quality must always be changing through becoming mixed together (krasis)—with both immediate and long-term effects—it is not surprising that, from the proper perspective, certain large chronological formations seem to emerge: that is, certain elements seem to predominate at certain times. But the chronological value of the theory is almost a side-effect of that ongoing flux of constituents and quality which provides an initial basis for an objective (scientific) investigation of the world.

At the other pole, in psychology, which barely surfaces in conceptual form in Plato and Aristotle, a functional triadism can be discerned. It is not explicit in the same sense as Empedokles’ quadripartite world structure but it functions implicitly as inner pattern of the least physical of the four elements: fire/nous. However, this triadism was never given any canonical formulation; indeed, the separate versions of Plato and Aristotle were never reconciled, for the following age took no interest in the matter. Nevertheless, the principle that the nous had three functions, or consisted of three functions (thinking, feeling and willing), with a sequential aspect (important for relative chronology) serves as the formal link between four elements science and periodicity. This link is, in fact, virtually explicit in Plato and Aristotle (see Chapter I, The Three Faculties of the Ego, paragraph 11) but at the same time easily overlooked or undervalued.

While the circumstances so far discussed might be sufficient to orient the reader about the nature of this book, the idea of a three-tiered ego is both unfamiliar enough at the present time and yet significant enough to justify my giving a brief account of its emergence as a psychological concept in modern times. I mention first that certain
philosophers and psychologists of the later 19th and earlier 20th centuries pondered the nature and functions of the ego, thus renewing, after a couple of generations, the quest after the foundation of human existence which had been pursued by Kant, Fichte and Hegel. But if the latter had made the ego the cornerstone of grand philosophical systems, their diadochian successors were more concerned with the concept of the “I” in terms of self-experience—virtually self-preoccupation—and it is not difficult to see how this kind of self-analysis could lead, on the one hand, to existentialism and, on the other, to psychoanalysis. For, whereas the philosophers of German idealism had still assumed a real spiritual world as the ultimate locus of the ego with its inner structure, the triumph of materialistic science in the intervening decades of the 19th century left the later thinkers stranded without a credible spiritual world to support them (see again Introduction, note 5). Thus, they had no alternative but to dissect their own ego consciousness as a closed-off phenomenon. What is of extreme interest is the way they did this, as I hope to show next.

It does not lie in my competence to write a history of the conception that cognition, sensibility (sensory life) and intentionality are the three interlocking faculties by which human consciousness orients and propels itself in the world. If I knew of such a history, I should certainly have consulted it. Here I can offer—obviously from a layman’s perspective—only a few basic observations to supplement the considerations brought forward in the text.

In a recent study E. T. Brann has shown that the difficult concept of the imagination and its role in philosophy drove the creators of the “grand modern systems”: Kant, J. G. Fichte and Hegel to an inwardizing analysis of the cognizing faculties. Kant, in the Critique of Pure Reason, did that in a thought structure based on cognition, sensibility and the ineluctible self: “an active subject....possessing a prudent reason—in fact, the will”. Neither Kant nor Brann recognizes these terms as being more than a tool (almost a convention) of philosophical reasoning nor did they pause over the fact that the concepts form a trio. Nevertheless, this framework—extraordinarily complex in its ramifications and bafflingly abstract to the non-specialist—in some way testifies to a bias towards triadic organization in western thought. In the same era J. G. Fichte produced another powerful system; his definition of the ego and non-ego as a way of giving Kantian thought a real focus has become the very ground of modern existence. Equally important was Hegel’s system of triadic processes in dialectical reasoning. With these systems the state at which Classical Greece entrusted philosophy to the world had been re-gained on a new and much more comprehensive basis which could serve as a springboard to a completely new era. My own intimation (above) that, instead of advance, there was a hiatus at this point is specifically confirmed by Brann (107) who speaks of a “philosophic eclipse” in the middle of the 19th century (in terms of her interest in imagination).

Although the impetus of the grand systems as such was lost or dissipated during the “eclipse”, certain parts of them proved to be very fruitful in modern life. It seems possible to speak of a clarification of Kant’s three modalities as they would exist in a Fichtean ego, but an ego now very much thrown back on itself, as I suggested above. These three Kantian modalities (cognition, sensibility, and will) reappear in a “mini-
APPENDIX C: TRIADISM IN THE HISTORY OF 19TH AND EARLY 20TH C. PHILOSOPHY

system” describing the stages of world-views: namely, the so-called “Structure of a World View” (see Appendix B) by Wilhelm Dilthey, who must have actually observed the system in his own “lived experience” (as Erlebnis is translated by Brann), since he was not given to depending on what he (sc. his ego) could not actually experience. In fact, it is well known that Dilthey, professor of philosophy at Berlin, desired to supplement the Kantian system by producing a structural system in mental life based on “lived experience”.5 His triadic threefold system ((see Chapter I, Recapitulation and Interpretation of Dilthey's “Structure of a World View”, paragraph 3) as such seems not to have gained adherents in its entirety, but in general Dilthey was influential among the coterie of thinkers who produced important movements in the early 20th century, especially phenomenology and existentialism. Brann (110) stated that he was read and respected by both Husserl and Heidigger. And whether or not it is owing specifically to Dilthey, it is remarkable that so many intellectuals of his time reasoned in a triadic framework of the ego—even if they referred to it as “soul” or did not specifically use the words thinking, feeling and willing. For example, Edmund Husserl, who like Fichte had an almost obsessive preoccupation with the “I”, wrote of “the human ego who experiences (feels?), thinks and acts naturally in the world.”6 A critic of George Simmel (an almost exact contemporary of Husserl) summarizes:

Experience, however, is not all of a piece. We experience in different modes. It is one thing to know an object, another to appreciate it as beautiful, and still another to revere it as an object of worship. In Simmel’s view the contents experienced in each of these three cases may be the same although they are not the same in experience.7

The similarity to Dilthey’s system cannot be overlooked. Again, Rudolf Steiner, coming from a quite different direction, Goethe’s world view, nevertheless in 1917 defined these same three functions (thinking, feeling and willing) in such a way that their orderly progression in human life could be made the basis of his practical suggestions in various fields of human endeavor.8 Even Sigmund Freud worked within a framework of three levels of consciousness represented by the terms ego, superego and id.9 Did Freud intend to distance himself from philosophical stereotypes by turning the terms on their head or was he a creature of his era? It does not seem far-fetched to see the ego in this case as the thinking agent, the superego—often compared to conscience—as the ultimate instance of the will as it decides what is permissible behavior,10 and the id as unmitigated, emotional response to the world. In art historical reasoning also, feeling, thinking and willing appear (Riegl).11

What strikes me about all this is that it confronts us with a transmutation of a Greek insight, however one may imagine this to have occurred (it is worth remarking that Dilthey must have been quite familiar with the works of Plato). Thus, in the very era in which the history of Greek art was being organized in modern terms (1880–1930) there was a philosophic mode of inquiry into ego-consciousness that was similar to, if not in fact ultimately derived from, ancient Greek philosophy and hence humanistic in its core. However, such a study as the present one could not have rested on a secure archeological foundation in the fifty years mentioned above. But enough factual
knowledge about Greek art has accumulated since then that it may not be out of place now.

My attempt to study Greek art holistically thus builds upon the categories established by the last humanistic generation before the fragmentation of the later 20th century obscured its heritage, namely, content and structural functionality of human consciousness. In this study the Four Elements theory provides the content of each large era of Greek art, which was actually working on a different aspect of the same root idea, thus illustrating Simmel’s insight that the same content can be experienced quite differently at different times. Simultaneously Dilthey’s concept of triadic processes, working in effect cyclically but more in Hegel’s sense than in the specific ideation of the Greeks, explains how human consciousness shifts unceasingly from one aspect of content to another.

There is one more basic problem in dealing with the art of the Greeks: the difference in their conception of time from ours. I am not speaking of the fact that they articulated years, for example, by Olympiads nor of the reverse counting in B.C. dates. There is a more profound difference grounded in the perception of most ancient peoples (the Hebrews excepted) that time is a matter of recurring cycles. Even the Judaeo-Christian tradition, with its view of cumulative events leading to the last judgment, shared with the endless-cycles peoples the concept of a divine origin of the cosmos.

In the second half of the 19th century, the Bible-based conception of cosmic time as beginning in 4004 B.C. was swept away by the work of various scientists who inferred a chain of physico-chemical events stretching back indefinitely with no secure theory of organic inception, particularly of consciousness. The impersonality of this view of time facilitated a totally detached observation of natural phenomena, which then spread from the physical to the social sciences and beyond—to all aspects of conscious life. My intention in Chapters III-V is to step out of this customary, impersonal frame of reference and to participate as directly as possible in the (necessarily) quite different time-experience recoverable from Greek philosophy and art. I have attempted to do this through a consideration of the quality of historical consciousness preceding the shift from a cyclical time frame into a straight-line time frame (for an explanation see Chapter III, The Cyclical Quality of Greek Art, paragraphs 5–9).
**APPENDIX D.**

**ON THE QUESTION OF MINERAL WEIGHT IN THE CANON**

Barring the unlikely discovery of the text of the *Canon* our conception of that vital document will always be theoretical and inferential. However, at least a new point of departure is given by my demonstration that contrapposto is as much a scientific problem in terms of weight and gravity (a recent analyst of Polykleitan biomechanics on the basis of copies did not hesitate to use the word gravity: Leftwich 179, 246) as it is an aesthetic one. This leads me to some further reasoning about the famous ratios of the master. It seems that the ratios envisaged by most students of the *Canon* are abstractly two-dimensional, whereas in a human figure qua statue the three dimensional ratio of part to part, that is, the flesh-volume of the total form, is equally vital. A forearm, for example, might be in perfect two-dimensional proportion to its hand, but if that forearm is decidedly fat or skinny, beauty will not result. And how much more even might this be the case in reference to thighs and buttocks? A curvaceous amplitude of this part of the anatomy in conjunction with male nudity is a notable feature of Greek sculpture from Geometric figurines to Hellenistic Hermaphrodites. In fact, the very inevitability of this feature—which eventually had a qualified effect on female figures—makes it an integral part of the Greek view of the human being.

The inference I draw from all this is that Polykleitos must have made some provision for the appropriate amount of weight for the various parts of the body—because otherwise the formula for a normative figure would have been severely incomplete for the teaching purposes the book served.

Moreover, the proposition that mineral weight was a conscious factor in fifth century Greek thought and continuing into later periods can be demonstrated by several passages which were assembled by Leftwich in his study on the ancient conception of the body.
**Xenophon, Memorabilia III. 6–7 (fourth century B.C.)**

Socrates’ description of the stance of a contrapposto statue is the closest in date to Polykleitos and makes it absolutely clear that the role of gravity in the pose was consciously understood: “Then is it not by accurately representing with the poses of the figures *those things which draw up and pull down* in the body and compress and expand and extend and contract that you make them look more like real members and more convincing” (translation Loeb). The words I have italicized could not be a more precise definition of levity and gravity working through the muscles. This should warn us that the Greeks did not think exclusively in terms of gravity as in modern times. Did Xenophon take these words directly from the *Canon*? Compression and expansion, extension and contraction are also processual concepts relatable to the four elements model (Ills. 4–5). I should like to note here that Gertrud Kantorowicz (1992, 25) saw the significance of this passage already in the early decades of this century.

**Philo Mechanicus IV 1, 49.20 (third century B.C.)**

Discussing factors in constructing weapons of the same size but with different performance capabilities, Philo includes weight as a matter of course and refers these factors directly to Polykleitos: “That the good is εὖ comes about *para mikron* through many numbers.” Thus numbers involving weight must have been included in the εὖ. We should recall that fifth century Athenians were very conscious of and concerned with measures of weight: see, e.g., M. Lang & M. Crosby, *Weights, Measures and Tokens* Athenian Agora X (Princeton 1964). On weighing see also G.E.R. Lloyd, 1987, 247.

**Galen Ars Medica 1.342.3 (Kuhn): second century A.D.**

In an article entitled “Nuggets: Mining the Data Again” (*AJA* 102, 1998, 273–278), Andrew Stewart has sifted through some undervalued sources and come to the conclusion that the *Canon* of Polykleitos cannot have made any allowance for artistic license in the light of that author’s obsession with exactitude in “measurement, commensurability between the parts of the body, and the gauging of the Mean”, as these factors are “repeatedly underscored in Galen’s and Lucian’s paraphrases of the *Canon*.” It must, then, be pointed out that numbers by themselves cannot possibly produce anything but soulless abstractions and that this manual must have resembled instructions for pointing and copying a statue which a real sculptor with artistic license has produced. That would be the reason for the existence of the Doryphoros, which would have provided the content not communicable in written equations. Yet such an interpretation seems to me not entirely probable. It might work to describe a body in the at-attention position with the numbers alone, since the various interrelationships are (momentarily) static; but the Doryphoros is in contrapposto in which the attraction of the pose is dynamically altered relationships of muscles, flesh, weight and hence curves. It is difficult even to imagine how Polykleitos might have dealt with such factors. Despite Stewart’s valiant and partly irrefutable effort to reconstruct the literary version of the famous statue, that version remains elusive and enigmatic to me.
Preliminary Comment: Of the large bibliography on Hippocratic medicine items pertaining to possible influences on Polykleitos are cited in Leftwich’s dissertation and it has not seemed necessary for me to repeat those here, especially as that subject plays a relatively minor role in my arguments. However, several recent additions to Polykleitan studies that I have consulted are as follows: P. Bol, Polyklet als Bildhauer der griechischen Klassik (Frankfurt-a-M 1990) and D. Kraikenbom, Bildwerke des Polyklet (Berlin 1990); further a catalog of a recent exhibition: Entwurf Bildhauerkanon in der Antike und Neuzeit (Basel 1992). I have not seen the catalog of another exhibition held in Madison, Wisconsin.


INTRODUCTION

1. F. Rodi 1965, 33 characterized this result as “die in grossen vor uns ausgebreiteten Formen des anti-lebendigen, anti-romantischen, anti-organischen Affektes”, (the large patterns of the anti-life, anti-romantic and anti-organic emotions that lie spread out before us). As far as elite academic thought in the sciences and what is affected by them are concerned, things have not changed much since those words were written, although orthodoxy is increasingly under attack.

2. Cf. Rodi 1965, 19: “Es wird die Hauptaufgabe dieser Untersuchung sein, Ausmass und Grenzen dieses morphologischen Zuges innerhalb der Aesthetik Diltheys zu bestimmen, das Verhältnis dieses Zuges zum eigentlich hermeneutischen Ansatz, der sich gleichfalls innerhalb der Aesthetik herausbildete, zu untersuchen und damit das Fortleben der romantischen Tradition im Werk Diltheys, zugleich aber auch das Einsetzen einer neuen, über Dilthey weit hinaus in die Gegenwart wirkenden Bewegung zu verfolgen.” (The main task of this investigation will be to determine the extent and the parameters of this morphological aspect within Dilthey’s aesthetics, as well as the relation of this aspect to the actual hermeneutic stance which equally found its expression in the aesthetics. This is, in effect, the survival of the Romantic tradition in Dilthey’s work which calls for tracing of the onset of a new movement that goes far beyond Dilthey and continues into the present time.)


It should be noted that Rudolf Steiner struggled constantly to find a balance between the macrocosmic and microcosmic aspects of the same three faculties with which Dilthey was concerning himself.

In *Rätseln der Philosophie* (Stuttgart 1955) 567–576, originally published in 1914–15, R. Steiner categorized Wilhelm Dilthey and Rudolf Eucken as demonstrating that a serious ego-philosophy must concern itself with the (visible and invisible) world outside the ego (that is, the non-ego). But he regretted (611) that these thinkers nevertheless confined reality to the body and what it apprehends through the senses: hence what they called the spiritual world (*die geistige Welt*) was for them merely the sum of the (ongoing) cultural activities of the human race.


### CHAPTER I

1. Lexicographers seem to be unanimous in crediting the borrowing to Latin even though the same word exists in Greek. G.E.R. Lloyd 1987, 59 discusses some of the specific cases in which Greeks were motivated to use the first person pronoun.


3. I am not prepared to explain the relation of *daimon*, already used by Empedokles, to *nous*, except to point out that one soul of the latter, according to Plato, was already in the divine sphere.

4. Descartes formally studied the processes of thinking (reason) in his *Principles of Philosophy* (1644) and then the whole range of feelings in *Passions of the Soul* (1645–46)—although his use of passion is rather complicated; under Article XVI he briefly discusses will. Although he does not formalize will in the same way, various comments in his other works make it quite clear that he regarded it as a separate faculty co-equal with thinking: *The Philosophical Works of Descartes* rendered into English by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross Vol. II (Cambridge 1968): Objections II p.43; Objections V, p.179 and Axioms VII, p.56 I am grateful to Prof. Gareth B. Matthews for calling my attention to Descartes.

5. Cf., for example, Martin Green, *Mountain of Truth* (Tufts University Press 1986):

   In his first essay in *Die Tat*, Laban promised to create community by means of eurhythmics. In a truly eurhythmic presentation, will, feeling, and thought will unite. (222)
For me, dancer means that new man who does not create his consciousness out of the brutality of (mere) thinking, feeling, or willing... we want instead to fill this world with the dance of the re-harmonized body-soul-spirit. (223)

This latter quotation makes it evident that those who recognize the triadic ego also think in terms of a triadic conception of the human being (body-mind-spirit).

Cf., also M. Roskill and D. Carrier, *Truth and Falsehood in Visual Images* (Amherst 1983) 55. The reason for the disappearance of the earlier, more unified triadic conception is given, for example, by Hans Goppert, *Das Ich Grundlagen der psychoanalytischen Ich Lehre* (Munich 1968) 87: “Die Beschreibung der Ichreifung stößt auf die Schwierigkeit, dass es eine allgemein verbindliche Definition des Ich nicht gibt” (Describing the ego-maturation faces the difficulty that there is no generally agreed on definition of the ego). In any case, Bernard Landis, *Ego Boubdaries* (New York, 1970) 40 says that psychoanalysis recognizes macrocosmos and microcosmos in terms of ego and non-ego and its concern is only the permeability of the boundary between the two.


7. Cf., e.g., Cornford 1937, 284 re Homeric precedents for thumos. The fact that Plato does not include sexuality in this context at all suggests how differently that factor was judged in comparison to our post-Freudian attention to it.


9. See on this T.M. Robinson 1970, 126 and particularly 127, middle paragraph; also 121 n.4.

10. Plato had already summarized this myth in the *Timaeus* (22c), calling it a fable, and must have been familiar with it from Hesiod and Aeschylus. Other suggestions: Hackforth (note 27) 77. See also P.F.M. Fontaine 1986 (2), 135–136.

11. See my summary of a still unfinished, large-scale study on Late Bronze Age iconography in *AJA* 63 (1959) 186.

12. If there is an underlying continuity of fundamental ideas in the structure of Hellenic society, a manifestation of the triadic ego might—first in purely iconic form—in the Bronze Age be the deity on a seal controlling heraldic peaceable griffins while rampaging griffins are shown on an adjacent facet, then in an intellectually understandable, if poetic, form in the Classical period (Plato) and, finally, dramatically and subtly dealt with in allegorical form in the Hellenistic period. I have wondered about a superimposed or even inherent esoteric content in hunting imagery of the period, especially in the stag motif (e.g., Pella mosaic).

13. Cf., Chapter I note 20; Robinson 1970, 120–121 also weighs this idea but it is not entirely clear whether he accepts it exclusively.


17. F.M. Cornford 1937, 285 defines thumos—apparently in relation to Homer—as “the stuff of all consciousness, including thought, which was not yet differentiated from feeling.” In any case, it would be difficult to suppose that Plato was not differentiating thought and feeling.

18. Cf. dianoetikos in Eth. 1, 13, 20 which Steiner apparently takes as equivalent to bouleutikon and again kinetikon which he equates (?) with noetikon: see below.

19. Plato’s epithumetikon and Aristotle’s orektikon are parallel in the sense that both can easily be distinguished from aesthetikon (sensitive soul). Plato’s thumikon suggests feeling that, when aroused to action, by (Aristotle’s!) noetikon, could set itself against mischievous appetite.


The basis of all Steiner’s work was considered by himself to be the early series of epistemological treatises culminating in Die Philosophie der Freiheit (1894) (translated as the Philosophy of Freedom or The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity). Of his later works several are deeply concerned with philosophical problems, as Die Rätsel der Philosophie (1900) and Von Seelenrätseln (1917) see Appendix C, n.9. In the former work Steiner criticizes other aspects of Dilthey’s ideas but does not mention periodicity. The academic philosopher who most closely approached the viewpoint of the present study is Nicolai Hartmann (1882–1951). His paper “Die Anfänge des Schichtungsgedankens in der alten Philosophie” (The Origins of the Idea of Structuring in Levels in Ancient Philosophy) in Kleinere Schriften II (Berlin 1957) 164–191 not only gives a perceptive account of the relation of Plato and Aristotle to the idea of four members of the human being but also explains why modern philosophy (sc. also psychology and anthropology) is largely unaware of these members as a system (that is, an explanation of human reality).

This situation has, of course, arisen from the following circumstance. The historian of philosophy can recognize in his array of materials from texts nur solche Einsichten wieder erkennen kann (my italics), die er zuvor einmal selbst im systematisch-philosophischen Sinne erfasst hat. Den Deutern und Darstellern im 19. Jahrhundert, d. h., denjenigen, die das heutige Bild des Aristoteles geschaffen haben, fehlte es am systematischen Können, und zwar am allermeisten gerade im Hinblick auf die für alle Beurteilung der Alten massgebende ontologische Problematik.

This situation has, of course, arisen from the following circumstance. The historian of philosophy can recognize in his array of materials from texts only those insights that he has himself already worked out in the sense of a systematic philosophy. The nineteenth century interpreters and compilers who created the modern view of Aristotle lacked the
sustained ability to do this—and most particularly in regard to the question of ontology, which plays a fundamental role in any evaluation of ancient thought.

22. I refer here exclusively to the macro/microcosmic, tripartite aspect of Dilthey’s reasoning—not, of course, to the general influence of his Geistesgeschichte or in particular to the concept of a unified Weltanschauung as the essence of cultural eras. On the widespread interest in these latter aspects in terms of art history, see a convenient summary in W.E. Kleinbauer’s Modern Perspectives in Art History (Holt, Rinehart & Winston 1971) 94–99.

CHAPTER II


3. Die Geschichte der griechischen Künstler: I (Braunschweig 1853; II (Stuttgart 1859).

4. In this presentation, which is not meant to be a comprehensive treatment of Greek sculpture, I cannot take account of the interconnections among works of various regional schools—a subject which is difficult and speculative but nevertheless important and fascinating. Yet the arguments I am putting forward might possibly be helpful in determining a difference between sculptors who pursued on the whole aesthetic gratification and those who unerringly concentrated on progress toward as yet unrealized and even unknown goals in the sense of their own particular region, while perhaps often looking over their shoulders at the products of other regions. An example of this is the well known East Greek tendency to prefer fleshy figures without a very strong sense of underlying skeletal structure, as in the reclining figure of the Genelaos monument from Samos (Stewart 1990, fig. 98) who incorporates aqueous weight almost like a filled wine-bag. Attic sculptors were geographically and, apparently, temperamentally installed between admiration for the expansiveness of such works and the Doric tendency to give allegiance to a much drier, tauter conception of the body, as in somewhat comparable, if a little earlier poses from the Corfu pediment (Stewart 1990, figs. 62 and 63). Obviously this is a complicated subject not lending itself to simplified generalizations.

5. On this cf. R. Bichler, “Hellenismus” Geschichte und Problematik eines Epochenbegriffs (Darmstadt 1983) esp. 197—an egregious example of positivistic relativism.
6. It is not so unusual to begin the Hellenistic period as such at 330 without any particular emphasis on the generations of artists from 330–300 (an exception is K. Schefold, who regards this generation as the first stage of a three-stage Early Hellenistic period).

7. Cf., e.g., J.M. Hurwit 1985, 273; see also Ch.IV, note 13.


9. Schefold 1969, 3–23. I have gained much from his treatment of this subject.


11. That author’s views on periodicity, particularly in relation to Ernst Grombich’s ideas on the subject, are discussed in “Criteria of Periodization in the History of European Art” in *New Literary History: A journal of Theory and Interpretation*, Vol. I No. 2 (1970) 115–122. It is not difficult to suppose that Janson’s handling of this aspect accounts at least partly for the popularity of his book.

**CHAPTER III**

1. Since Foçillon’s *La Vie des Formes* the only general work known to me is George Kubler’s *The Shape of Time* (New Haven 1962).

2. The exposition “The Spiritual in Art Abstract Painting 1890–1985” with its sumptuous and fascinating catalog (ed. Maurice Tuchman, Abbeville 1986) is a hopeful departure from the norm, although it essentially attempts only to demonstrate the influence of non-mainstream thought on the great artists of the period in question.


The triadic sequence thinking, feeling and willing formulated by Dilthey as a tool for understanding the appearance and disappearance of *Weltanschauungen* is useful in pursuing the history of the human mind collectively since it defines the technique of human creativity in both the macrocosmic sense of Dilthey and the microcosmic sense of individual initiatives.
It must be emphatically emphasized that this refers to a sequence of activity generated by the human mind; it must be kept separate from the stages in the maturation of the human organism. For in that process, the ripening of the faculties is reversed: willing, feeling, then thinking—an independent insight that Rudolf Steiner made the basis of Waldorf educational practice. What I am presenting here should not be confused with so-called biological determinism.


7. The “Orientalizing” Period, a designation inserted by some scholars between Geometric and Archaic, is not an independent entity like the Geometric period but simply equivalent to the early phase of the Archaic period (Early Archaic). This usage is a good illustration of the third sentence at the beginning of this chapter.

8. Pollitt 1985; 96–111. This is a very valuable, also to my knowledge, first, attempt to see the progression of Greek art in a way that reflects the cyclical character of ancient thought itself. Pollitt recognizes cycles defined by the recurring conflict between appearances and ideality. Admirable, welcome and useful as this is, (see Chapter IV: Form and Time: Reasoning about an Existential Basis for Greek Style Periods, paragraph 3, see Chapter IV: Form and Time: Reasoning about an Existential Basis for Greek Style Periods, Setting the Archaic Period: Mass and structure in two dimensions, paragraph 2) my investigation will concern itself not only (to some extent) with what the Greeks thought they were doing but, from a more comprehensive viewpoint available to our times, with what position they occupied in the history of consciousness.

9. Image of Eternity (Univ. of Massachusetts Press 1980) 100. Park proposes (103) that Plato had a vague inkling of Time 1, although formulation of any laws by which it could be grasped lay two millennia after his date. Clearly, Plato could not have imagined living in a universe held to be anorganic, nor could he have understood how modern scientists can reconcile being living organisms themselves with such a view. I believe Park to be referring (with Time 1) to what in the sciences is called linear time, but, for reasons of his own, to have chosen an entirely neutral designation. My term (straight-line time) includes linear time but is more comprehensive. I find Park’s designations clumsy to use since they are in no way descriptive. For many years I have pursued historical, philosophical and esoteric aspects of the vast and complex subject of time and am attempting here a drastic simplification on the basis of descriptive terms.

That fact makes it incumbent on me—for readers’ peace of mind—to suggest how I reason on at least one or two important issues. It is, for example, a commonplace observation that the Jewish tradition, with its teleological orientation to the Messiah, is an exception to the general embeddedness of ancient cultures in cyclical time conceptions. However, it should not be forgotten that the Hebraic creation myth has important cyclical features. For the emergence of the world in a series of six stages (“days” were interpreted already by St. Augustine, Civitas Dei, Book XII, 7 as being in a not easily understood relation to “ordinary” days) implies, with the references to morning and evening, partial creation followed by a pause, then the same, and the same
again, etc. Finally came a very long pause: the seventh day. Moreover, after that, on the eighth day, the creation continued with the constituting of human beings.

All this fits well enough with mythologies of other peoples as a cyclical conception; moreover, the creation applied to all peoples, not just the Jewish people—considered to have a special destiny which, among other things, introduced with its teleology the first model for straight-line time. Of course, its content was very different from that of what I am calling straight-line time in my text.

It is deducible, therefore, from all this that the cosmos in Hebraic thought has a temporal beginning but a not very clear ultimate conclusion. That ambivalence is carried over into Christianity which inherited the Old Testament and the idea of a messiah. Indeed, St. Augustine framed the question sharply in an extremely brief consideration of the problem of time (that in itself demonstrates a new depth in human consciousness). In order to refute opinions that time existed before the creation of the world he set up a distinction between eternity and time (Civitas Dei, XI, 6) and correlated the creation of time with the creation of space (sc. substance). The latter provides, as it were, a means of measuring changes not available in eternity and thus makes possible the very concept of time. Augustine’s distinction is crucial—although I prefer the term duration as more neutral than eternity—for understanding cyclical time in its deepest reaches as: successive alternations between duration and time, whereby the resulting time-eras are always qualitatively different since—as Herakleitos knew—time changes everything.

However, Augustine dropped the problem after making the distinction mentioned above—apart from a mere passing reference (XI, 4) which implies that, after a temporal beginning, the world will never have a temporal ending. Indeed, that conclusion is virtually mandated by the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body of every believer. If that was originally understood as an article of unquestioning faith, it became increasingly hard to reconcile with a growing number of scientific concepts. Moreover, opposition to the given world as inferior and even evil plagued, from an early point onward, Christian experience. Nor is the opposite view, held by at least one Christian sect, of a coming earthly paradise, any less trouble-free.

My purpose in this discussion is not to criticize any religious belief per se but rather to elucidate one historical facet of the distinction I am making between cyclical and straight-line time. In this respect, could one not weigh the possibility that the quasi-teleological ideal of perfectibility inherent in modern scientific straight-line time thinking is a transmogrification of the teleological imperative of salvation inherent in the tradition of Christian theology? The former would be firmly located in a material setting, the latter uncertainly located in a material-cum-spiritual setting. Or, the modern notion of perfectibility may be a misapplication of the image of the (unrecognized) world of the ideal and eternal to the only recognized reality: the material and transient world. Such perfectibility would be a construct of materialist thinking, as suggested by J.A. Burton.

10. Published by the Shrine of Wisdom, Fintry Brook, Nr. Godalming Surrey, 1923 and later editions. Subtitle: An Endeavor to Systematize and Elucidate the Corpus Hermeticum.
11. The form that the older views referred to here took can be called pan-psychism (see Charlotte Douglas, “Beyond Reason: Malevich, Matiushin and Their Circles” in M. Tuchman 1986, 187). This thought stream has been inundated by the system of thought instituted by Descartes, Galileo and Newton.

12. Cf, for example, the statement of Tiffany Bell in a brochure on an exhibition of paintings by Larry Brown (Carlo LaMagna Gallery, New York City, October 1–31, 1987): “His paintings maintain a forceful presence yet they are full of contradiction and ambiguity. They reflect a culture in which the distinctions between the real and the unreal, the natural and the artificial, have become blurred and obscured.”

CHAPTER IV

On the title of the chapter: my title is reminiscent of that of Chapter 5 of Henri Foçillon’s The Life of Forms in Art (1934): “Forms in the Realm of Time”. The great value of Foçillon’s method is that he devotes himself totally, and even poetically, to the problem of how art becomes rather than to what it has become (in Goethe’s poetical words, “das Was bedenke, mehr bedenke Wie”: Faust II, Act 2, 6992). Foçillon’s concern is the living imagination of those who in and through time create art rather than the discrete artifacts they created as ends in themselves. Nor does he focus so much on the individual artist as an artistic absolute as on the great processes of art over long periods of time.


2. See Stewart 1990, 105 for a summary of recent scholarship on this figure. If the present suggested date of ca. 700 (e.g., also J. Boardman 1978 to fig. 16) remains viable, then Crete emerges as a leading station in early sculptural development.

3. This statuette is still routinely dated in the first quarter of the 7th century but a reader drew my attention to the possibility that some of the early looking features may be merely provincial.

4. These two figurines are conveniently illustrated together by Fuchs 1969, figs 1 and 2. Regional ascription, difficult at best, would influence dating. The Olympia figurine is dated by Boardman 1978 at fig. 3 to ca. 750; the figurine in Athens is excellently illustrated in an exhibition catalog: The Human Figure in Early Greek Art Washington, D.C. 1988, 68–69 and dated to the third quarter of the 8th century.

5. On the chronology of the Sounion kouroi series see E.B. Harrison 1965, 16.


8. By Karl Schefold in class lectures at Basel University; cf. his similar use of the word in relation to Geometric figurines: Griechische Plastik I (1949) 9.

10. Klaus Stähler, “Gigantomachiegiebel von der Akropolis” in Antike und Universalgeschichte Festschrift H.E. Stier (Münster 1972) 88–112. The principal criterion for disagreement with Schrader is the lack of parallels and prototypes in contemporary pedimental design for the positioning of action figures at the center; Stähler suggests a solution along the lines of the Delphi pediments. He arrived at a very interesting observation in attempting to date the pediment (p. 104): “Der Kopf Rayet steht damit in seiner Gestaltungart deutlich in der archaischen Kunst, der Kopf der Athene mutet ihm gegenüber nicht nur verschieden an, wie die Leistungen zweier gleichzeitiger Bildhauer verschieden sein konnten, vielmehr scheint in ihm die typische Kunstübung des archaischen Stils aufgebrochen und von einer noch unbestimmt vordrängenden Kraft zu plastischer Ausgestaltung bereits abgelöst worden zu sein (italics mine)” (Thus, the articulation of the Rayet head clearly belongs to the realm of Archaic art, while in comparison the head of the Athene seems not merely different in the sense that the work of two contemporary sculptors might be different, but rather it seems to display a breakup of the typical Archaic artistic mentality and to be already freed up by a still undefined force surging forward to (new) sculptural articulation). I am satisfied with this as an unintended endorsement of my conception of a Protoclassical period. In this same direction one could cite the “sitting” giant who actually seems more to be suspended between falling and landing on his posterior. At the very least, even if I am reading too much of an element of “present moment” into the pose, it is no longer a conventional Archaic one.


12. Ohly, 1976, 30–32, Onesimos and Dokimasia Painter. The Dokimasia cup seems to me still Protoclassical but it could be slightly later.

13. The term “revolution” in this connection was used (for the first time?) by E.H. Gombrich in The Story of Art and has an obvious potential to characterize a vital historical process. Although his approach to chronology is descriptive rather than based on period terms, the vase painting to which he applies “revolution” shows that he is thinking of what I call the Protoclassical Period. Martin Robertson in A Shorter History of Greek Art (1981) used the same term more formally to characterize the era of earlier redfigure vase painting, again, that is, the Protoclassical Period. But he blurs the concept by applying it also to the Early Classical Period in discussing Polygnotan art. In the first place, the revolution was not originally confined to vase painting but, as has been pointed out here, spread through contemporaneous art (sculpture and no doubt wall-painting, though that has vanished), politics, etc. Revolutions are logically provisional phenomena; the result of the Protoclassical Revolution was the Classical civilization which was no longer a revolution but a quite stable new order destined to be influential indefinitely into the future. Using the term Protoclassical directly connects the powerful changes introduced during the roughly 50 years before 480 to the brilliant cultural hegemony of Greece, particularly Athens, in the fateful 50 years after 480 (pentekontaetia: cf. J.V.A. Fine, The Ancient Greeks, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1983,
By attaching these powerful changes to the rapidly vanishing traces of Archaic culture, Classical art historians have subconsciously devalued them and left the phenomenon of Classical art without a satisfying antecedent.


16. The translation given here differs slightly from my published translation (Buschor 1980, II).


18. Richter 1970 (1), 162 noticed the continuity in Classical sculpture with the beauty of patterns in Archaic (sc. Protoclassical) work. Pattern need not imply abstraction in either case.


20. O’Brien, 1981: a full and careful analysis of the criticism by Aristotle of the theories of the atomists in comparison with his own conviction that there is an absolute heavy and light, not a relative one: cf. esp. pp.16 and 38–39.

21. O’Brien, 1981, 382 demonstrates that, in the older view, “weight is no different from hot and cold: like them it is associated with, or even in some sense reducible to, density”. He states that the question of why this view prevailed first “veers off into larger questions of ontology”. In terms of the history of consciousness this is another confirmation that views first exist side by side—or rather rest within one another—before they are differentiated; for, as he continues, “at the same time (i.e., the earlier fifth century) light and heavy are associated with the behavior of things: with their movement and with their position.” The actual differentiation is not made until Aristotle, although still accepting the validity of both (light and heavy), made the second factor the foremost and essential one and thereby brought philosophical-scientific consciousness away from an extremely generalized view of cosmic reality to “a world that is single and eternal (where) centre and circumference are the more able to act as a permanent reference for and therefore are sufficient explanation of, the nature of the substances that habitually find themselves located there” (383). With that, the final (Hellenistic) phase of Greek science began, in which—at least dimly adumbrating modern propensities—a more pragmatic and experimental attitude toward the phenomena of the world is set in place. One might summarize the change by proposing that the Classical mind-set centered movement in a so-called “ideal” sphere, whereas the Hellenistic mind-set contemplated movement in a real (physical) space.

22. To judge by the Carey drawings, the East pediment shows movement surging out to the sides, while the West pediment has movement surging toward the center, itself dominated by an action group. The latter feature would be a further contrast if the traditional reconstruction of the East pediment with Zeus seated at the center has any validity, that is, a dynamic versus a static center.
23. O’Brien 1981, 336, would imply that this speculation still does not correspond to our modern distinction between “material and abstract or spiritual forms of existence”, which he sees as introduced at the earliest by Plato and Aristotle. With all due regard for the paucity of information about the actual works of Demokritos, if that philosopher conceived of his atoms as entities which could not actually be seen in nature by the human eye, what else can we call this but an abstract way of thinking?

24. A number of features have been questioned as unlikely for a fourth century statue. See, for example, S. Adam, The Technique of Greek Sculpture (Oxford 1966) 128 and K.D. Morrow, Greek Footware and the Dating of Sculpture (Madison 1985) 83–84.


26. For example, E. Sjöqvist, Lysippus Lectures in Memory of Louise Taft Semple, University of Cincinnati, 1966; P. Moreno, Vita e Arte di Lisippo (Milano 1987).


28. W.S. Smith 1958, pl. 64 a; Aldred 1980, fig. 111.

29. For example, free-standing wooden figures of infantry soldiers from Asjut appear to be marching but they could also be stationary, displaying their arms: W. Wolf, Die Welt der Aegypter (Stuttgart 1982) pl. 43.

30. EWA IV, pl. 371 (upper).

31. EWA IV, pl. 344: Menuhotep in the temple at Deir el Bahari.


33. The problem involved here is somewhat complicated by, but perhaps also clarified by, the terms used by Ilse Kleeman 1984, 11–12. She has taught us through minute observation of Archaic forms—heads in particular—to see an asymmetrical element in the organization of decoration and even structure. Usually this has been associated with later periods (as in my study on the “Menander” head in Expedition 1, 1959, 12–18). No doubt all of us have “seen” what she presents in fine detail without registering it. It must, of course, also be kept in mind that there are other kinds of dynamics as well in the development of Archaic composition, esp. two-dimensional, ranging from what I called “incremental modulation” (AJA 73, 1969, 110) to the intricate “juggler-patterns” of Exekias at the culmination of Attic blackfigure (see Chapter IV, Setting the Archaic Period, Mass and structure in two dimensions, paragraph 4), at which stage these were about to bring on the collapse of the “static equipoise” (called by her Frontalität). What I am referring to here as inner movement is dynamic ponderation. It appears that Kleeman calls this “natürliche Bewegung”, though I do not know whether she would
subdivide this as I do. Her “composite movement principle” is a name for a factor not hitherto isolated clearly in Archaic aesthetics and is a welcome new tool. However, what I am referring to as outer movement does not—so far at least—figure in her argumentation, that is, true walking or striding as opposed to descriptive reference to this by means of an ambiguous traditional schema. The sharpening of concepts necessitated by her ideas and mine makes it all the more necessary to make a priori, logical definitions and demarcations of periods as attempted in my study.

34. Aldred 1980, fig. 124.

35. What is at least a very important factor in this must be the Early Classical concept of rhythmos, the effect of which has been convincingly worked out by J.J. Pollitt 1972, 54–60 and 1974, 224–25).


37. Fuchs 1969, fig. 505.


39. These are illustrated in convenient proximity by J.J. Pollitt 1986, figs. 152, 153 and 156. I have recently examined the Old Market Woman statue in the New York Metropolitan Museum. Her neck and spine are uniformly and strongly canted forward from the hips. She is obviously moving forward but under a severe restraint from the heavy load she is carrying. The artist has chosen to emphasize this by showing both feet flat on the ground (the left foot is partially concealed but must be flat). The total effect is of dragging herself forward by shuffling, which undoubtedly enhances the picturesque quality of this under-lifesize statue. It is considered by B. Ridgway 1981, 230–231 to be a Roman pastiche (in contrast to Pollitt who treats it as Hellenistic). This may be too drastic a solution to the anomalies she sees in the statue.

40. For a discussion of the problems connected with this work see B. Ridgway 1990, 93–94. She points out that some factors of attire seem to fit a later period. Disturbing as this is, this—in a copy—can hardly weigh against the lingering strong impression of fourth century sculptural values.

41. M. Bieber 1961, fig. 198.

42. K.B. Stähler, Das Unklassische im Telephosfries (Munster 1968) fig. 23b; also probably 3b and perhaps others. Unfortunately the relief is badly damaged but the pose appears to be true walking. I leave out of account archaistic figures (e.g., Pollitt 1986, fig. 184), dancing figures and winged figures.

43. Ridgway 1990, 74–75.

44. Stewart 1978 (2), 170.

45. Pollitt 1986, 18–19.

46. Ridgway 1990, Ch. I-IV.


49. C.M. Havelock 1981, 17. Whether one approaches this problem from the philosophical side, as does P.E.M. Lafontaine 1986(1), 36 or the psychosomatic side (paleopsychology) as J. Jaynes 1976, 288f (“The Invention of the Soul”), the path leads to Pythagoreanism in the late 6th century. At this time the emergence of an interlocking psyche and soma as opposing polar concepts seems to have taken place (in contrast to the psyche’s being latent and passive in the soma and leaving at death, Lafontaine 1986 (1), 237). The immense importance of this step further justifies recognizing the last quarter of the 6th century by the special term Protoclassical. It then became the task of the Classical period first to explore this interaction and then to start differentiating between psyche and nous; Plato began this but it was not accomplished (and then not emphasized) until Aristotle (see Chapter I). He did not change the earlier perception that the cosmic nous is the more potent thinking force which the human nous simply participates in (cf. Lafontaine 1986 (1), 96). The course of philosophy after Aristotle illustrates the particularity of the Greek three-stage development. One might expect this differentiation to have become a main motif. While in a general way it did continue within the framework of the macrocosmic Four Elements theory, Hellenistic philosophers were mostly concerned with volitional problems and techniques: how to live right (or well) rather than with the niceties of thinking—which the Skeptics even distrusted. Surely here begins that lack of interest in keeping thinking and feeling distinct, which allows “psychic” to refer to mental as well as emotional phenomena; in short, this disposes towards the body-soul rather than the body-soul-mind paradigm. I have allowed this to be reflected in the scheme in Chapter IV, Setting the Hellenistic Period by using psyche throughout (where nous is required by the Four Elements theory for the Hellenistic stage). This problem is one of the reasons why that period is so complex and confusing.

50. A proliferation of minor philosophical schools and variants is the accompaniment and background of the artistic pluralism and helps to illuminate the ubiquity of will-currents in the consciousness of this era. Nevertheless, it was exactly the strong influence of Aristotle’s comprehensive thought that gave a certain definition to the period as a whole. On his key position in opening the field in numerous ways for Hellenistic attitudes, see Onians 1979, 26–30.

CHAPTER V

1. I use “Canon” and “Doryphoros” interchangeably, although there is no positive evidence that they refer to exactly the same thing (cf. A. Furtwängler, Fifty Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture, Chicago 1964, 139). The most detailed and dynamic description of
this figure of which I am aware is that of Gertrud Kantorowicz 1992, Ch. I. She does not, however, take any note of developmental aspects of the pose. For a careful description of the physical adjustments in the body required by the Doryphoros stance, see B. Ridgway 1981, 203. The possible contents of the Canon are thoroughly discussed by J.J. Pollitt 1974, 14–22. On the career of Polykleitos in general, see C. Vermeule, Polykleitos (a picture book), MFA Boston, 1969. See further discussion of the Canon in my Appendix D.

2. G.E.R. Lloyd 1962, 65. It is true that this rule also included “up” in the positive category and hence “down” in the negative—and to a certain degree the lower body sags down on the L leg. But this is counterbalanced by a slightly upward thrust of the L breast and shoulder, so that any movement is cancelled out. Still, this is a further aspect of meticulous overall balance. A reader has called my attention to an extended study of the word quadratus used by Pliny in reference to the works of Polykleitos: S. Ferri, “Nuovi Contributi Esegetici al ‘Canone’ della Scultura Greca” in Rivista del Reale Istituto d’Archeologia e Storia dell’Arte, XVII (Rome 1938) 117–152. Whereas the term had generally been interpreted by modern critics of Greek sculpture in a purely physical sense (e.g., “robust”) Ferri showed that it is a technical term from literary criticism—the vocabulary of which was also used in ancient Greek art criticism—applied to a counterpoint arrangement of four elements in a sentence and, furthermore, that it was on occasion used to contrast good and bad conduct (119). Ferri did not pursue that aspect in regard to Polykleitos since his purpose was to demonstrate that quadratus (tetragonos) was indeed used to refer to contrapposto in sculpture. However, the inference is that, just as in Latin literature there were implications of quality as well as of form in the term, these implications should apply also to the Polykleitan stance. This should not surprise us since similar terms in some modern languages also have metaphorical overtones (e.g., foursquare, standhaft) and this applies to the ancient “tetragonos” as well, which could be used for “perfect” (Liddell-Scott s.v.). In Greek thought “perfect” would not have to mean without fault but could mean harmonizing all aspects of reality. On this term see also J.J. Pollitt 1974, 266–69, who points out that there is no textual confirmation of the use of tetragonos in the metaphorical sense in the visual arts. This may well be owing to chance. It seems unlikely in the circumstances I am describing that Polykeitos was not aware of the metaphorical implication in connection with his Canon.


4. Fr. Hiebel 1953, 178 uses this expression.

5. Thomas R. Blakeslee, The Right Brain: A New Understanding of the Unconscious Mind and its Creative Powers (New York 1980) Ch. IV. It may be of interest that ongoing research on this subject distinguished an additional functionality within the limbus between the two halves of the brain (Paul MacLean, The Triune Brain, New York, 1990) and even, in a more programmatic vein, divides the two halves of the brain again, so that four quadrants are depicted within a circle (Ned Herrman, The Creative Brain,
Lake Lure, N.C. 1988). This reproduces unintentionally (?) a faithful copy of the chiasmus in Polykleitan contrapposto, without, of course, a specific reference to the moral significance the Greeks attached to left and right.


EPILOGUE

1. For example, J. Blusch, Formen und Inhalt von Hesiods Individuellem Denken (Bonn 1970): Abh. zur Kunst-, Musik- und Literaturwiss. Bd. 98 discovered in Hesoid a considerable use of the antithetical principle in verbal usage and in thought-configuration, establishing that principle at the very least as an important pre-philosophical intellectual tool.

2. A passage in Plato’s Timaeus (43A) testifies to the fascination with spatial polarities on the part of Classical thinkers, whether these concepts were being experimented with in tangible sculpture or in more imaginative contexts, such as the following description of the incarnation of the soul in the body: “And into this body, subject to the flow of growth and decay, they fastened the orbits of the immortal soul. Plunged into this strong stream, the orbits were unable to control it, nor were they controlled by it, and because of the consequent violent conflict the motions of the whole creature were irregular, fortuitous, and irrational. It was subject to all six motions, and so strayed in all six directions, backwards and forwards, left and right, up and down.” (Trans. H.D.P. Lee)

APPENDIX C


2. A simplified explanation—from the East German point of view—of Fichte’s Wissenschaftslehre is given by H. Schoffenauer in Johann Gottlieb Fichte (Leipzig/Cologne 1985) 49–53.

3. Evidence of the impact this eclipse had on the cultural life of America can be seen perhaps in the Transcendentalist Movement if we recognize this as a reactive attempt to correct a spiritual deficiency in mainstream thinking of that age. J. Ortega y Gasset, Kant, Hegel and Dilthey (Madrid 1965) 212 refers to “la ruina de la metafisica” which he saw as the result of a split around 1870 between positivistic and transcendental (Neo-Kantian) cognitive theory. But surely the ruin was in place before that date.

4. This found expression in artistic form in such things as the poetry of Walt Whitman.


9. For a discussion of the complete tripartite system worked out by Freud over a period of years, see Reuben Fine, *Freud, A Critical Evaluation of his Thesis* (New York 1962) 167–183. The rather pragmatic way in which his system came about eliminates the possibility that he arbitrarily imposed a tripartite system on his ideas at any point.

10. This view is specifically suggested by M.J. Vansina, *Het Super-Ego Oorsprong en Ontwikkeling van S. Freud’s Opvattingen over het normatieve en het morele in den mens* (Antwerp 1968) 277–278. Vansina demonstrates that Freud only gradually came to realize the necessity of postulating the superego as the “third instance in the personality structure”. The superego is an amalgamation (made around 1920) of two previous concepts: the conscience and the ego ideal. Again, this seems to demonstrate an unconscious imperative at that time to recognize three soul faculties in human life. E.E. Sampson, *Ego at the Threshold* (Delta 1975) 199, recognizes the triadism in Freud as important but gives a seemingly imprecise characterization of the faculties: “Our ego is a construction, a social product, partly conscious, partly unconscious. Our ego’s world encompasses the Freudian trilogy of an impulse-laden id, a conscience-laden superego and a reality-focussed ego.” Here the ego is obviously cognitive, the superego the arbiter of will, but the id can be called impulse-laden only in a reactive sense.


12. Despite the obvious teleological aspect of this tradition, the Book of Genesis seems to include a cyclical component.