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Chapter 4: Form and time

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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

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.[1] 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[2]—where structural development must have been favored by contact with Minoan organicism— and, in a perhaps provincially exaggerated state, in the Mantiklos figurine[3] (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[4]; 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).[5] 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.[6] 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.[7] 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.*

a. warmed air rises   b. air weighted with water descends

III. 1
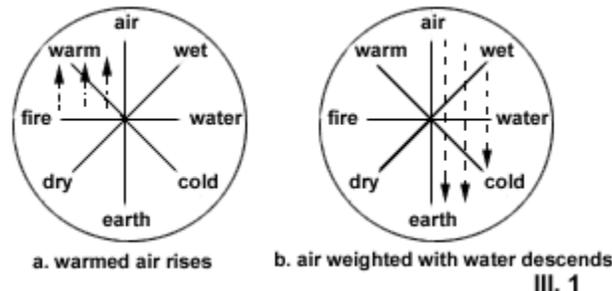
If fire moves to the circumference (outward and upward in relation to the earth's surface), then in a culture embedded in a rarified state of that element—in human (microcosmic) terms *nous*—we should not expect any particular interest in the depiction

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"[8] (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.[9] 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).[10] 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[12] 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".[13] 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.[14] 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 kouros (Figure 22 and Figure 25) the distinctly articulated skeletal and muscular systems of the Keos kouros 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[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, *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 *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 *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[16] 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[17]. 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.[18] 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 psycho-physical 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 Chapter V, *The Development of Dynamic Ponderation*, High Classical).

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[19] 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 Mantineia 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,[20] 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.[21] 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.[23] 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;

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

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.

Archaic   Exploration of the intellectual theorem: static ponderation of the human figure (kouros) in a world of unquestioned divine guidance.

Classical   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.

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 Lysippan style has been attempted with some success,[26] 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[28] of the Temple of Sesostris 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.[29] Yet when two figures[30] 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[31] 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.[32] 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),[33] 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.[34] 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.[35] 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 Paestum[36] 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.[39] 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),[40] Ganymede and the Eagle,[41] 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.[42] 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[43] 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,[44] 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.[45] 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[46] 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.

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).[47] 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[48] 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).

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

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."[49]

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.[50] 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.