A STUDY OF THE AESTHETICS OF ARCHAIC GREEK PEDIMENTAL SCULPTURE

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the important relationship between Greek architecture and pedimental sculpture while looking solely at the works of the Archaic period.

Chapter I calls attention to the remains of pedimental sculpture from the Archaic period beginning chronologically with the Temple of Artemis at Corfu, and ending with the Temple of Aphaia at Aegina.

Chapter II traces the development of pedimental sculpture during the Archaic period in terms of scale, composition, subject matter, treatment of the human body, and the transition from relief to fully rounded figures.

Chapter III discusses the aesthetic role of pedimental sculpture regarding its emotional, intellectual, and visual impact upon the viewer. In connection with this, the relationship between the sculpture and architecture is discussed.

The Conclusion ties the important role of pedimental sculpture to the larger realm of Greek art.

To the memory of Henry James, who wrote this of his hero, Christopher Newman, in The American: "He had looked out all the pictures to which an asterisk was affixed in those formidable pages of fine print in his Bädeker; his attention had been strained and eyes dazzled, and he had sat down with an aesthetic headache."

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INTRODUCTION

It is sometimes thought that the greatest sin of students of Greek art and Grecophiles in general is that they are often given to the spouting forth of lofty platitudes. We hear that this "cradle of civilization" produced "men who were clear and lucid thinkers." The "exultation of tragedy" was their peculiar bent, particularly during the "Golden Age" of Greek history. Such laud emphasizes the accomplishment but often obscures the act of achieving.

The Greeks, indeed, were clear and lucid thinkers, possessors of a sense of logic that de-mystified even the concept of the Divine. But, before they thought, they saw, and it is the clarity of that vision, the heightened sense of visual perception shared by artist and citizen alike, that regulated Greek art. Excess of decoration or anything that blurred the underlying structural essence of an object was abhorred because it distracted from the visual truth.

In painting, in sculpture, and in architecture, each part was always rendered in such a way that in its individual clarity, the clearest, most truthful reading of the whole would be obtained.

Particularly in architecture, where the forms are not initially drawn from nature (and therefore, closer to our

realm of visual experience), the artist was especially conscious of the need to provide for an accurate reading of the structure. It is from this a priori concern that the genius of Greek architecture stems, in its perfect balance of forces and clarity of composition. Architectural decoration was used sparingly in view of the total work, but even then it never obscured the structural relevancy.

Pedimental sculpture, far from being purely decorative, played an important role. Many scholars have noted the important relationship that existed between Greek architecture and pedimental sculpture without clarifying what that relationship was and how it functioned aesthetically. It is the purpose of this study to examine its aesthetic importance, taking into account various visual emotional, and intellectual factors. To allow for a manageable body of material, this study will be limited to the Archaic period in Greek history (600-480 B.C.). Although the evidence is fragmentary, enough remains and has been pieced together to indicate its importance already in these early years.

It is dangerous to view the history of Greek art, or Art History in general as an evolutionary process. By such an approach, Archaic Greek art is seen as somewhat immature, Classical art as fully developed, and Hellenistic art as in a state of decline. It is, perhaps, better to view each in terms of style, dependent upon its own historical and cultural context. It is true that the rendering of the human

body sculpturally, in three-dimensional form, did mature from the Archaic phase toward the more visually accurate, anatomically correct, classical figure. The static forms that we find in Archaic pedimental groups would gradually evolve toward the vibrant renderings of the Parthenon, but the aesthetic understanding of the relationship between architecture and sculpture, and the important service that pedimental sculpture offered toward the enhancement of the architectural structure as a whole, was already well understood.

CHAPTER I

THE EVIDENCE

The earliest evidence of pedimental decoration has been found in Corfu. The temple dedicated to Artemis at Geritsa is the oldest peripteral temple of stone built in the Greek mainland Doric style, dating from around 580 B.C. The temple was excavated in 1910-11 and the pedimental reliefs from the west side (Figure 1), carved from a yellowish limestone (the same material used for the temple proper), were found upside down where they had fallen.[1]

The central figure of the composition was a large (nine feet, three and a half inches) gorgon, Medusa, one of three once beautiful sisters who enraged Athena by bedding down with Poseidon in one of her temples. Athena punished them all by changing each of them into the awful monster that we witness at Corfu: a winged creature that strikes terror into men with its glaring eyes, fanged teeth, protruding tongue, and serpent locks (Figure 2).

Medusa is flanked at Corfu by two other participants in the story, her sons Pegasus, a winged horse, and Chrysaor, the warrior; both are offspring by her union with Poseidon. The grisly myth maintains that they were born from the stream of blood that gushed from their mother's neck at her

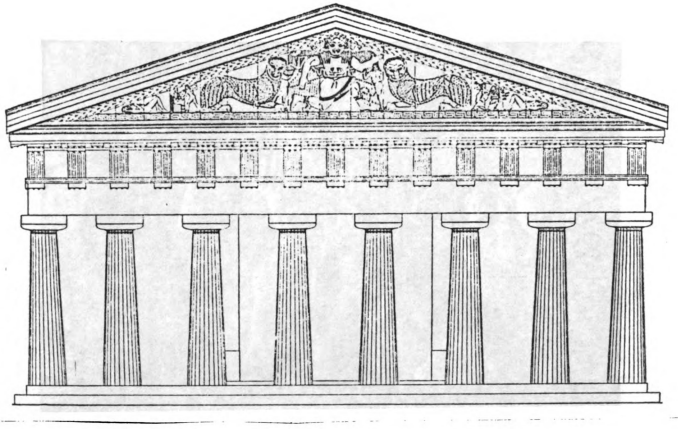

Figure 1. West facade of the Temple of Artemis, Corfu. Reconstruction after Rodenwaldt. (Lullies, Greek Sculpture, Illustration 1, p. 57)

Figure 2. Gorgon flanked by felines. West pediment, Temple of Artemis, Corfu. Museum, Corfu. (University Prints)

beheading by Perseus.

The story behind the central figures would have been obvious to the viewer of the day, but the narrative aspect of the relief was not the artist's main intent. Allied with her patroness Artemis as mistress of wild animals, Medusa performs an apotropaic service, inspiring awe in the viewer and, at the same time, warding off evil forces. Her posture, with one knee resting on the ground and the other bent at a right angle, in pinwheel fashion, employs the generally accepted Archaic device for symbolizing rapid running. Her extreme, bold frontality of face and upper torso make dramatic contact with the viewer; her arrested movement and gruesome attributes emphasize her power and purpose within the setting.

The threatening glances of the flanking felines further carry out the apotropaic intent of the artist. Often interpreted as panthers, Richter believes them to be lions, due to the incised indicators of manes and tail tufts.[2] Traditionally viewed as guardians, they aid in the protection of the cult image and her temple.

Tiny figures on either side complete the composition at Corfu. On the right, Zeus raises his thunderbolt against one giant who has fallen on one knee (Figure 3), while another giant has already collapsed in the angle space; on the left, in a scene drawn from the Trojan cycle, Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, is about to slay Priam

Figure 3. Zeus and giant. West pediment, Temple of Artemis, Corfu. Museum, Corfu. (Richter, The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks, Figure 96)

(Figure 4), behind whom a wounded or dead Trojan lies in repose (Figure 5).

Corfu was a Corinthian colony which prospered due to the interest of the tyrant Periander; the ambitious undertaking of the pedimental relief (which also adorned the east pediment but no longer remains) gives witness to that. The Corinthain artists who executed it capitalized on the engraving possibilities offered by the soft stone. As Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway points out:

> Incision reaches incredible complexity, and only close observation reveals the intricacies of the Gorgon's boot feathers, the scaly bodies of the snakes in her hair, the patterns of costumes and coiffures, the minute detailing of the panther's bodies.[3]

As part of the larger sculptural scene, the figures share characteristics with Archaic work at this time. Anatomical indications, in the human and animal figures, are primitive and inaccurate, shapes are four-sided, and profiles are mixed within a given figure; in their largeness and harshness of presentation they are related to the Kleobis and Biton Kouroi, as Richter points out.[4]

Seen as a pedimental grouping, the artist has only begun wrestling with the problems imposed upon him by the confines of the awkward triangular space. The resultant lack of unity seen in the subject matter, the scale of the figures, and the relationship of the various figures and

Figure 4. Priam. West pediment, Temple of Artemis, Corfu. Museum, Corfu. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 187.4)

Figure 5. Trojan. West pediment, Temple of Artemis, Corfu. Museum, Corfu. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 187.5)

groups to one another, as well as the problems posed by the rapidly diminishing height within the sculptural area have yet to be resolved.

Also from Corfu, and approximately contemporary with the famous temple at Garitsa, is a pedimental fragment showing a human leg, done in limestone for the Temple of Hera at Mon Repose, Corfu. In addition, terracotta fragments dating from the late sixth century are believed to have belonged to a Shrine of Artemis on Corfu. The only other substantial material from the area was recently discovered (1973) at a Temple of Dionysos on the island. The scene shows the god reclining on a bench, as if at a symposium, accompanied by a young boy. Underneath the couch a lion rests quietly and a dog stands behind the corner being filled by a large crater (Figure 6).

The Athenian Acropolis is the location of a large cache of archaic pedimental sculpture that spans many years and which adorned several different buildings. The pieces were found in various spots around the area. Some of them were lodged in the fortification walls of the Propylaia. The greater number of them were excavated from debris fills: one stemming from the intentional dismantling of existing structures (Tyrannenschutt) to clear the way for the Old Athena Temple, predecessor of the Parthenon, and the other, resulting from the destruction by the Persians (Perserschutt). Despite the confusion in the mixing of

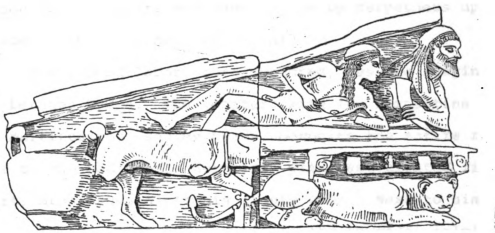

Figure 6. Dionysos with lad at a symposium. Temple of Dionysos, Corfu. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 207a)

remains, several distinct pedimental programs have been determined.

The earliest, which Richter believes may be as early as 590 B.C., comes from an unknown structure, and is referred to as the Hydra Pediment (Figure 7). By contrast to the Corfu pediment, there is a thematic unity of all the compositional elements. The narrative focuses on the hero Herakles, whose fame resulted from the successful completion of the twelve labors assigned to him by Eurystheus upon the advice of the Pythoness of Delphi.

The second labor, here depicted, was the slaying of the Lernaen Hydra. The monster, with its serpentine body and multitudinous snakey heads, occupies the entire right side of the pediment. Herakles, with feet planted firmly apart, brandishes aloft his trusty club. Next to him, his nephew Iolaus tends the chariot as the horse(s) calmly grazes. Space still remained in the corner of the left pediment, and the artist conveniently filled the gap with the crab sent by Hera to harass the hero.

This small limestone pediment is done in shallow (one inch) relief, which, as John Boardman points out, may indicate its early date, or perhaps, its use as a secondary, back pediment.[5] Not withstanding, the work is quite mature, exhibiting not only a thematic unity, as pointed out previously, but also a sensitivity to scale; Herakles is slightly larger than his nephew, but that only prefigures

Figure 7. Hydra Pediment. From an unknown structure on the Acropolis. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (Photo: University Prints; Drawing: Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 196)

the hero's divine status. The variety of lines distinguishes what otherwise might be obscured by the shallowness of the relief, and, in general, this work enforces ". . . the growing Athenian tendency to use sculptured pediments . . ."[6]

Another small pedimental grouping, again from an unknown Acropolis structure, also borrows its theme from the Herakles cycle. Richter and Boardman date this relief, known as the Introduction Pediment, as much as a half of a century later than the Hydra Pediment, but Ridgway feels that the two are contemporary.

In this limestone carving, of which only the right side of the pediment partially remains, we witness the culmination of the apotheosis of Herakles (Figure 8). Having been transported to Olympian Heaven, Athena is about to present her protegé, Herakles, to her fellow gods and goddesses. Zeus, seated in profile in the apex, and Hera, facing outward, solemnly greet them. Behind Herakles, as he faces the king and queen of the gods, stands another figure, often identified as Iris.[7] On the left side of the pediment, a group of divine personages probably filed forward, with each flanking group balancing each other and converging toward the center.

Zeus, aided by the architectural solidity of his perch, is stately and august, prefiguring, as Charbonneaux suggests, the Phidian Zeus on the east pediment of the

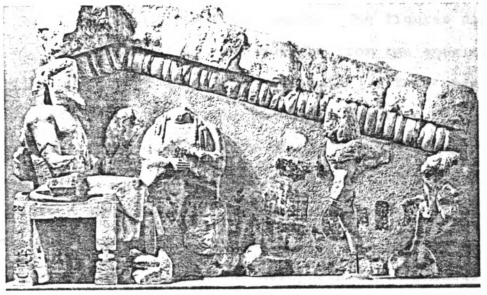

Figure 8. Introduction Pediment. From an unknown structure on the Acropolis. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 194)

Parthenon.[8] His strikingly patterned beard recalls to mind the hair of the approximately contemporary Rampin Rider. The artist further used his incising skill to pick out Hera's plump braids and the Nemean lion skin that Herakles wears atop his head.

As at Corfu, the artist has failed to resolve the problem posed by the slope of the gable. The figures diminish awkwardly in size as we move outward from the apex, creating an unpleasant difference in scale (if Zeus were to stand up, Herakles would barely reach his waist). As we shall discover, "The coordination of the central group with the diminishing other figures was a difficult problem that was not solved satisfactorily until later."[9]

The Olive Tree Pediment, which probably came from the east facade of a building on the Acropolis that Dinsmoor has designated "Temple A," dates from the middle of the sixth century (Figure 9). Its thematic interpretation has remained enigmatic. What is left of the ten inch deep limestone relief is a central building with a free-standing female figure (Figure 10), who appears to have carried something upon her head, ensconced in the shadow of the recessed doorway.[10] At least two other female figures were set upon the ledge in front of the building. A naked leg, carved in relief on the background wall, as well as an olive tree, incised and painted above it, complete the fragmentary evidence.

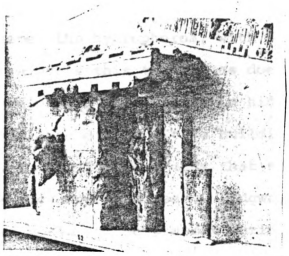

Figure 9. Olive Tree Pediment. East facade, "Temple A," Acropolis. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 198)

Figure 10. Water carrier from Olive Tree Pediment, "Temple A," Acropolis. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (Richter, Archaic Greek Art, Figure 104)

The Ambush of Troilos at the fountain house has been suggested as a theme; the hydrophoros, with hand raised to steady her load, supports this theory, as does a reading of the naked leg as belonging to Achilles in hiding. Dinsmoor disputes the resemblance of the little building to a fountain house, however, and Boardman adds that such a subject would require the presence of horses. Ridgway also notes that so many women would not be present during an ambush; in addition, there are no signs of terror or confusion.

Another theory suggests that this pediment shows an actual building on the Acropolis, perhaps a temple of Athena, with her sacred olive tree beside it, and ritual acts being carried out within its precinct. Such a veristic approach is not in keeping with Greek art, however. Ridgway grants the revolutionary character of such a "topographical intent" but shakily reinterprets the hydrophoros as a Karyatid, and then links this architectural reproduction with the nearby tomb of Kekrops, with its human columnar supports. Thematic disputes aside, the scene is <u>architecturally</u> important in its depiction of current building language, with its ". . . pseudo-isodomic coursing of the wall masonry, a mutular cornice, and a tiled hip roof. . ."[11]

A major group of pedimental pieces (and one of the more exhaustively studied of Archaic pedimental sculpture groups) has survived from the Hekatompedon--a temple on the Acropolis dedicated to Athena and, perhaps, Erectheus.[12]

It was probably erected to honor the establishment of the Panathenaic festival in 566 B.C.

The relief on the east side pediment (Figure 11), done in limestone to a depth of twenty-two inches, consisted of three major groups. The left side of the pediment was occupied by Herakles wrestling Triton, son of Poseidon, who had gotten in the hero's way in his quest for the golden apples of the Garden of Hesperides (Figure 12). The human torso of the creature is missing, but his long fish tail conveniently fills the rapidly diminishing space into the corner. The center group is missing, and two theories have been advanced to fill the gap: one envisions two Nereids running toward the right, perhaps spreading the news of Triton's defeat; the other, more generally supported theory, pictures a monumental grouping of two lions devouring a fallen bull.

A more difficult problem of interpretation focuses on the creature at the right of the pediment (Figure 13): a benevolent looking monster with triple human torso, wings, and a body that emerges from the waist downward as a bundle of twisted snakes, who is generally referred to as "Typhon" or "Bluebeard" (because of the remenants of blue paint on the beard). Propped up on their elbows, they each hold an object in their hands: (from left to right) a firebrand, a wave of water, and a bird.

Thalia Phillies Howe has examined the pedimental remains and, based on her interpretation, sees a definite

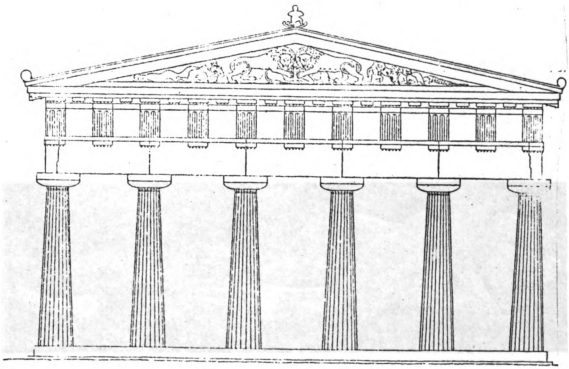

Figure 11. Hekatompedon. East facade, as restored by Schuchardt. (Dinsmoor, "The Hekatompedon on the Athenian Acropolis," Figure 2)

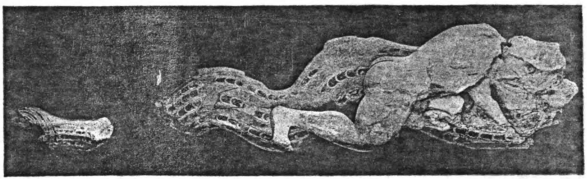

Figure 12. Herakles wrestling Triton. East facade, Hekatompedon. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (University Prints)

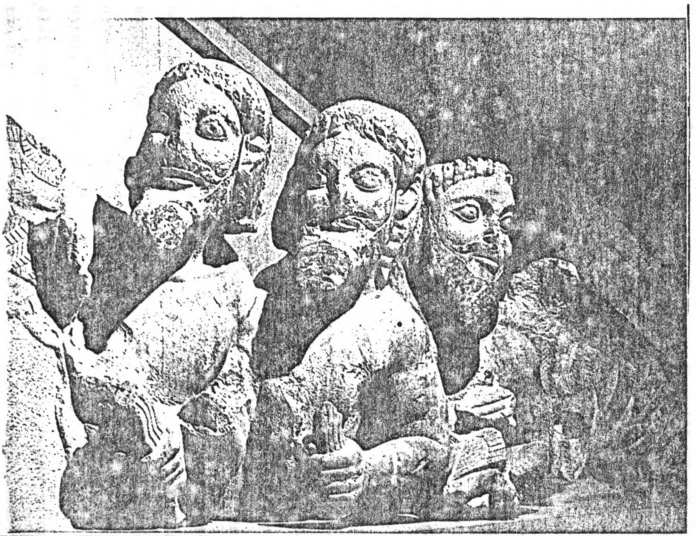

Figure 13. Typhon. East facade, Hekatompedon. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (Charbonneaux and others, Archaic Greek Art, Illustration 127)

thematic unity to the pieces:

> . . . each of these sculptures was deliberately conceived by the Athenians of the particular time and place of their making (the Akropolis of ca. 570-560 B.C.) to do honor to Athena Polias. In addition to constituting a sculptural entity, they seem to comprise a conceptual entity as well, one that would seem to be peculiarly suited to the first temple that marked Athena's rise to the domination of Athens. . .[13]

The thematic unity results not from a narrative cohesiveness, but, as Howe points out, from each group's "celebration" of ". . . the struggle of Athena to gain supremacy over the Akropolis and Attica itself against the contenders of Poseidon and Zeus."[14]

Years later, the Athenians would boldly proclaim Poseidon's defeat upon the west pediment of the Parthenon. But, according to Howe, the sixth century populace wished to approach the subject more cautiously, and therefore depicts the downfall of the sea god covertly in the Herakles/Triton theme. Howe refutes the interpretation of the three-headed monster as Nereus, the sea god who had the power of changing shape. Instead, she suggests its identity as Zeus Herkeios, a household god who embodied the elements of Air, Earth, and Water, and functioned apotropaically in the setting.[16] The slain bull is connected (by Howe) with the central ritual of the Dipoleia, a festival held in honor of Zeus Polieus, which involved a goodly amount of orgiastic hysteria. Howe notes

that ". . . though the bull had come to be regarded by the fifth century as the animal offered up in honor of Zeus Polieus, he was originally . . . regarded as the actual diety himself."[15] Such a duplicity of intent may have allowed for a (another) covert attestation to Athena's supremacy--here, over the more primitive aspects of early Attic religion. Howe is unable to account satisfactorily for the lions (notwithstanding the fact that they provide a means to depicting the slaughter of the bull) and finally assigns them an apotropaic role.

John Boardman, in a recent article entitled "Heracles, Peisistratos and Sons," makes a case for the subtle political overtones of this pedimental presentation. Boardman first reads the three symbols held by Typhon as a cornstalk, water wave, and a bird. He then matches these symbols with the three parties in Attica whose support guaranteed the tyrants' success (during the years that span most of the archaic building programs on the Acropolis): the party of the Plain, of the Seashore, and of the Hill.[17]

Some reconstructions of the Hekatompedon's east pediment place an additional figure between the central group and Typhon. A small poros owl found with the other pieces may have accompanied a figure of Athena, who is thought to have filled the space.

The two flanking groups easily fit into the triangular enclosure by virtue of their inherent horizontality.

Problems of scale are thus avoided. By contrast to the static regularity of other pedimental groups, whose figures are either frontal or in profile, the third head of Typhon is presented in three-quarter view. More importantly, he provides a psychological link between the spatial world of the pediment and that of the viewer below. Charbonneaux goes as far as to liken this dramatic touch with the role of the chorus in Greek tragedy.[18]

Despite the fact that the artist is still working in relief, the figures are robust, plastically modelled, and filled with an energy by virtue of their roundness, which aids the artist in depicting the muscular anatomy of Herakles and the Typhon's torsos. Not only is the action stopped at the climax, but the predominance of diagonal lines, carried through the bodies of Herakles, Triton, and Typhon, creates visual movement and excitement.

The rear, western pediment of the Hekatompedon is not as easy to reconstruct. Enough pieces have been found to indicate a generally poorer grade of craftsmanship. It appears that the diminishing angles of the setting each contained a huge snake rearing upwards. According to Ridgway,[19] one faced toward the center while the other looked outward toward the viewer--and as we noted with the Typhon figure, this device creates a very important psychological link between the viewer and the spatial world of sculpture.

Howe, in her article, tries to tie in these figures also with the "Supremacy of Athena" theme, as on the eastern pediment. An Athenian hearth deity, Zeus Kteisios, was worshiped in the form of a snake. Originally a guardian figure, his powers grew toward a more active force. Because of his local importance, Athena wished to claim Zeus' powers for herself and took on the name of Athena Ktesia at one point. Thus, "The goddess allows Zeus a place of honor on her temple as a way of indicating her assumption of his power."[20]

Another, more plausible, theory may stem from the myth of Erectheus, who, according to Rodenwaldt, shared the dedication of the Hekatompedon. Erectheus, an early mythical king of Athens, was associated with serpents. The ancient royal families of Athens claimed descent from him and often wore serpents as amulets. Herodotus tells of a "psychic" serpent that encouraged the Athenians to abandon their city as the Persian army was marching on Attica:

> The Athenians say that they have in their acropolis a huge serpent, which lives in the temple, and is the guardian of the whole place. Nor do they only say this, but, as if the serpent really dwelled there, every month they lay out its food, which consists of a honey-cake. Up to this time the honey-cake had always been consumed; but now it remained untouched. So the priestess told the people what had happened; whereupon they left Athens the more readily, since they believed that the goddess had already abandoned the citadel (Herodotus 8, 41).

It may be inferred then, that the serpents proclaimed, high above from the pediment, Athena's presence in her temple.

The greater part of the remaining pedimental area was occupied by more animal motifs: to the right of the center, a lioness devoured a calf; to the left, a sedate lion group completed the picture. The lion and bull theme, as we recall, was also presented on the opposite pediment. The motif is certainly a handy apotropaic device; but on another level, it may symbolize elemental forces whose primitive, explosive energies were ultimately subjugated to the urbanizing, civilizing authority of Athena.

The reconstruction of the west pediment was effected through a few scattered fragments and is still open to speculation. A recent theory places the group from the Introduction Pediment, usually thought to belong to a small, separate building, between the snake and the lion group on the right, and balances it with a Birth of Athena motif on the other side.

The last major structure on the Acropolis to yield pedimental remains is the Old Athena Temple, a peripteral temple begun by the tyrant Peisistratos and finished by his sons, Hippias and Hipparchos, around 525. The structure proper was constructed of limestone, but marble from the Aegean islands was used for the metopes, pediments, acroteria, raking cornice, simas, and inner frieze. Notably, this is the first instance of pedimental sculpture executed

in marble and cut completely in the round, rather than in relief. Dinsmoor suggests that this break of the figures with the background had, primarily, economic impetus, as ". . . it was cheaper to construct the tympanum background separately of limestone. . ."[21] Considering the extensive patronage of Peisistratos, it is doubtful whether the artist was pressed by a tight budget, however.

The Old Athena Temple carried the popular Gigantomochy theme upon its eastern pedimental ledge, a subject well chosen for pediments since it allows for a multitude of positions. Enough fragments of the central figure of Athena have been found to reconstruct the goddess (Figure 14). Wearing a long chiton, with a cloak flung over her right shoulder, she carries her aegis in her left hand; in her right, she raises her spear against a giant fallen at her feet, and gazes intently downward at him. She wears a helmet encircled by eighteen holes that held little bronze apotropaic symbols--snakes, perhaps. Her hair frames her forehead in a tight wave, and cascades out from under her helmet down her back and over her left shoulder. Three groups filled most of the space, with a fallen giant in each corner.[22]

The milky white translucent character of the Parian marble used for these pieces contrasts sharply with the rougher texture of the poros limestone reliefs seen previously. These fully rounded, three-dimensional forms,

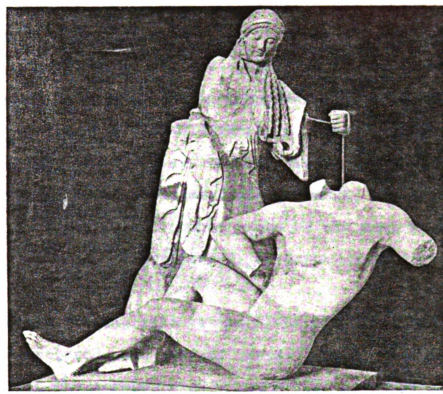

Figure 14. Athena and giant. Old Athena Temple, Acropolis. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (University Prints)

appearing for the first time on the pedimental ledge, must have enlivened and brought a fresh focus to the action high above the viewer. By contrast to the flat, static figures of the goddess on the earlier Introduction Pediment, how much more impressive this over life size Athena must have been, dominating the temple's tympanum area, making the viewer aware of the goddess' massive strength and her very real presence in her holy precinct. Like the famous Anavysos Kouros with which they are contemporary, these figures from the east pediment of the Old Temple of Athena, goddess and giants alike, are fleshier, warmer, rounder, and more physiognomically credible than most earlier work. Were the figures from the animal combat scene of the west pediment better preserved, we would find, no doubt, a similar treatment.

Before leaving this geographical area, we should examine a scattered, non-related group of pedimental pieces from around the Acropolis and from Athens in general. Two more poros reliefs, whose execution and material indicate an early date (around 560-550), were found in the Persian rubble. The Red Triton Pediment, as it is called, is the right half of a gable which shows Herakles grappling the sea monster about the neck; Triton, in turn, stretches out his arm, perhaps emploring for assistance (Figure 15). The present red color of the figures as well as the background, from which the work draws its label, was most likely caused

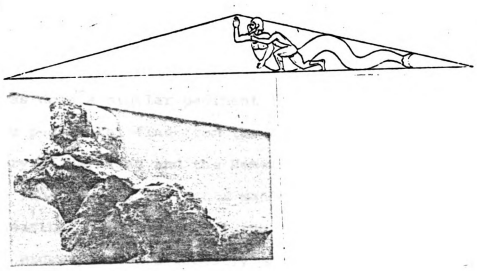

Figure 15. Red Triton Pediment, Acropolis. Acropolis Museum, Athens. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 197)

by an accident during or after its destruction. A very fragmentary grouping which shows a lion about to attack a boar may or may not have completed the Red Triton Pediment.

A well worn piece of limestone relief, dating from around 540, was found near the Theater in Athens. This gable is believed to have belonged to the Old Temple of Dionysos located nearby. The three figures which are preserved indicate a satyrs-and-women theme. A marble pediment from the area of the Olympieion borrows the lion and bull theme, as does a similar pediment from the Athenian Agora. A marble pedimental find from the Agora, probably following the story of Herakles and the Nemean lion, shows the paw of a large lion pressed against a man's head. Another poros lion unearthed belonged to a large temple northwest of the Agora. Ridgway notes a recently uncovered headless statue of a naked man, mortally wounded, who no doubt reclined in the left corner of a pediment. Although found in Athens, the style indicates that it was not made locally, but more closely resembles Aeginetan craftsmanship. This mystery remains unsolved.

Nestled at the foot of Mt. Parnassus, overlooking the valley of the Pleistos River, lies the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, spiritual center of the ancient Greek world. It was here that the two birds, dispatched by Zeus at either ends of the world to determine its center met, and thereafter Delphi was known as the omphalos, the "navel" of the

world. An area subject to earthquakes, rock slides, and vaporous fissures in the ground, it provided a majestic and dramatic setting for the frenzied, oracular utterances of Apollo's priestess, the Pythia. Kings and powers sought advice of the Oracle, and to help guarantee its favorable disposition lavished gifts and monies upon the sanctuary. To handle the influx of contributions and to further insure the goodwill of Apollo and his priestess, major powers built treasuries--small, single room, temple-like structures. These monuments were not only tokens of thankfulness, but testimonies to the success, wealth, and "ostentatious piety"[23] of the states amidst their rivals. The arts, of course, furnished a major part of the contributions and in view of the opulence and high quality of goods and craftsmanship extended for the glorification of the Oracle, it is no surprise that the oldest large sculpted pieces of Parian marble yet found on the Greek mainland, the Kleobis and Biton Kouroi, were unearthed here. It is also no surprise, then, that a major group of pedimental sculptures are to be studied here including pieces from as many as four treasuries and the second great Temple of Apollo.

Chronologically, the Treasury of the Knidians, built around 540, is the first to offer indication of pedimental decoration. A marble slab showing two running animals in high relief is tenuously assigned to this building by Ridgway.[24] As no other authority consulted speculates on

this issue, however, we will only make the point for the sake of consideration; likewise, information about the architectural sculpture of the Massiliot Treasury is somewhat obscure, but its pediment may have exhibited the first frontal horses and perhaps a chariot.[25]

The treasury built by the residents of the Cycladic island of Siphnos just before 525 B.C. has yielded a substantial piece of pedimental sculpture. The Siphnians prospered substantially from their gold and silver mines, and this little building, a tithe offering to Apollo, reflects that prosperity: the beautiful karyatid figures supporting the architecture, elaborate mouldings, bright paint, additions of metal weapons and jewelry, continuously sculpted frieze, and two pedimental groups (Figure 16). It must have bedazzled the visitor, and it surely has earned for itself the title "jewel box of Ionian art."

The story on the east pediment is again drawn from the Herakles cycle, here depicting the fight over the Delphic tripod. Always nursing a deep hatred for Herakles as her husband's bastard child, Hera, at one point, sets a madness upon the hero which causes him to mistake his wife and children for wild beasts and slay them. After coming to his senses and being overcome with guilt and grief, he seeks the advice of the Delphic Oracle on how to cleanse himself of the awful transgression. For some reason, the priestess refuses to answer him. Herakles decides to elicit his own

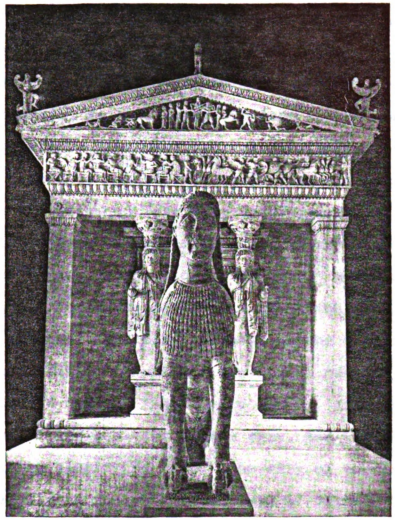

Figure 16. Treasury of the Sipnians, reconstruction. (University Prints)

oracular vision, and attempts to steal the tripod from atop which Pythia sits entranced, exhaling narcotic vapors, and sending forth her wild cries. Apollo tries to stop him until Zeus intervenes and ends the struggle.

The central figures in this tug-of-war are, left to right, Artemis, Apollo, Athena or Zeus in the apex, and Herakles (Figure 17). Earlier scholars interpreted the central figure as the goddess Athena, mainly because of the clothing and locks of long hair falling over the left shoulder of the deity. Athena's presence in this scene could be explained in her association as Herakles' guardian. Ridgway, however, disputes this explanation, and in an article entitled "The East Pediment of the Siphnian Treasury: A Reinterpretation"[26] makes a convincing case in favor of Zeus. If the central figure <u>were</u> Athena, Ridgway observes, by virtue of her position in the apex, the artist would be symbolically glorifying ". . . the ally of the thief--and a feminine ally at that--over the Lord of Delphi."[27] The long chiton with a himation thrown over both shoulders that the figure wears is often, but not exclusively, worn by women. The long curls, cascading over the chest, are appropriate to male and female divinities, Ridgway insists. In both of these instances, she cites similar renderings on the frieze of this treasury. In addition, the figure is quite flat-chested, and Ridgway even discerns subtle traces of a beard remaining from the headless character.

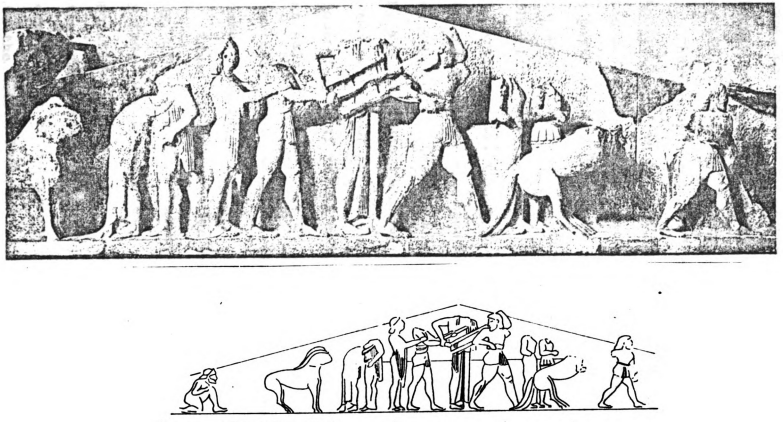

Figure 17. Herakles and the fight over the Delphic tripod. Treasury of the Siphnians, east facade. Museum, Delphi. (Photo: Richter, The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks, Figure 382; Drawing: Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 211)

Various readings of the action will construe different outcomes to the event. If the central figure is Athena, she obviously will decide the outcome in favor of her protegé--after all, the central figure does turn in Herakles' direction. Charbonneaux reckons that Zeus is deciding in favor of Apollo.[28] If we go back to the myth, Ridgway's interpretation makes the most sense: Zeus is equally restraining both participants. For each of the contestants gets his way: Apollo retrieves his tripod, and Herakles gets his oracle--from Zeus.

Artistically, this pedimental work is somewhat inferior to the frieze on the same building. Spyros Meletzis and Helen Papadakis attribute this to the fact that it was worked by sculptors who functioned in a subordinate capacity to the two masters of the frieze.[29] This may account for the curious mixture of relief and figures in the round. The lower half of the figures are engaged with a bench-like wall, while their upper halfs are rounded and set against a deeply recessed background.

Human figures with animals (horses?) flank the central group. They are often called "spectators," but, annoyingly, they face away from the action, dissipating any sense of compositional unity. The majority of the figures all stride in the same direction--a device suited to a continuous frieze but not to a pediment. The figures are static (despite the action inherent to the event) and show no variety

of poses; their immobility is further emphasized by their rigid, strictly vertical folds of the drapery. The problem posed by the rapidly sloping tympanum roof is unsatisfactorily met by reducing the height of the figures away from the center. The artist(s) was successful in handling a particular problem of visual symmetry--although there is an unequal number of persons flanking the central deity, the area filled by Apollo and his helpmate, Artemis, is balanced on the opposite by the strong, space-filling stride of Herakles. If the west pediment were preserved, it would be interesting to note if the two pedimental programs display as marked a difference from one another as do the two sections of the frieze.

One of the latest treasuries of the Archaic period (about 500) to be built at Delphi was that of the Athenians. This exquisite little Doric structure, now rebuilt on the site, has yielded some scant pedimental evidence, among which are a frontal Athena and chariots on one end, and a fight of sorts on the other.

The great Temple of Apollo dominated the sanctuary at Delphi, its vestibule inscribed with the maxims of the Seven Sages, including "Know Thyself" and "Nothing in Excess." This first temple, built in the middle of the seventh century, was destroyed by fire in 548. The Amphictyons, the council of Greek states responsible for overseeing the sanctuary, contracted to have it rebuilt. Foreign subscriptions

from as far away as Egypt arrived to aid in the repairs, and the Delphians ". . . went from city to city begging contributions . . ." (Herodotus 2, 180).

An exiled Athenian family, the Alkmaionids, aware of the current unrest at home under the harsh rule of Hippias, Peisistratos' son, and seeking to secure their own return by procuring the divine assistance of Apollo, decided to take advantage of the opportunity to show their civic minded magnanimity:

> They therefore resolved to shrink from no contrivance that might bring them success, and accordingly they contracted with the Amphictyons to build the temple which now stands at Delphi, but which in those days did not exist. Having done this, they proceeded, being men of great wealth and members of an ancient and distinguished family, to build the temple much more magnificently than the plan obliged them (Herodotus 5, 62).

Around 520, in an obvious attempt to outdo the Peisistratid temple in Athens which had been completed by now, the Alkmaionids set a precedent by facing the eastern facade of the structure in Parian marble, as well as sculpting the pedimental figures in the same material. The artist borrowed the Gigantomachy theme from the Athena Temple for the west pediment here. Little more than a figure of Zeus in a frontal chariot and a dynamic, striding Athena have survived. The west side story, sculpted in deep relief, using limestone covered with stucco, is probably earlier than the other side (Figure 18).

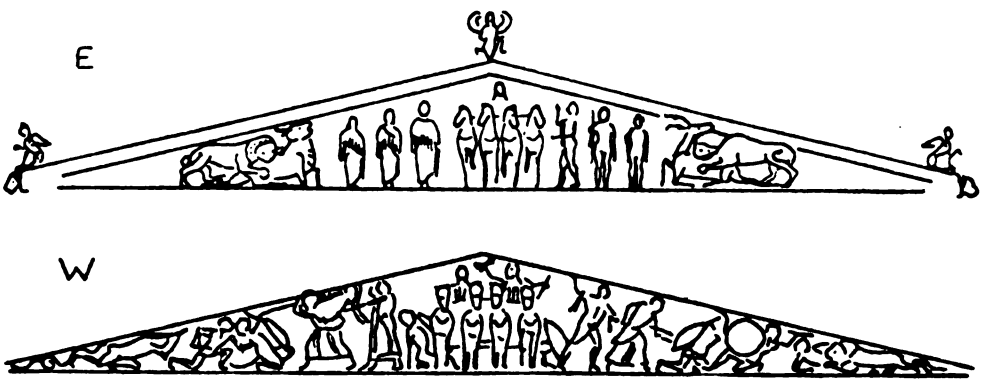

Figure 18. Pediments of Temple of Apollo, Delphi. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 203.1)

A large number of pieces from the main tympanum have been recovered and allow us to reconstruct the scene with confidence. By comparison with the western pediment and the energetic action indicated by the animated figure of the goddess, the eastern pediment is static in its composition even though the figures are fully rounded (Figure 19). The central theme focuses on the Epiphany of Apollo, mounted in a quadriga and glorified as a warrior. Leto and Artemis ride with him, and they are flanked by Charites and Curetes--three male and three female attendants. By contrast to this calm presentation, animals fight in the corners (Figure 20) --a deliberate carry over from the older temple, perhaps politically motivated by the Alkmaionids who wished to emphasize their loyalty to aristocratic traditions.

Located in western Arkadia, at the turbulent confluence of the Alpheus and Cladeus rivers, lies another important Greek sanctuary, that of Olympia. Primarily a religious center, the athletic contests held here in honor of the Olympian gods soon became more important than the religious ceremonies which created them. Like Delphi, this sanctuary was Panhellenic, and various states built treasuries here after the manner seen at Delphi.

The inhabitants of Megara erected a treasury here around 510, and its pedimental relief is the only substantial architectural sculpture remaining. This limestone carving depicted the Gigantomachy theme in high relief

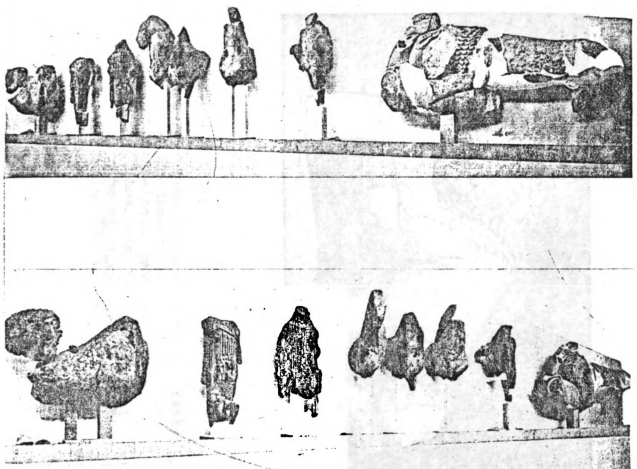

Figure 19. East pediment, Temple of Apollo, Delphi. Museum, Delphi. (Meletzis and Papadakis, Delphi, p. 65)

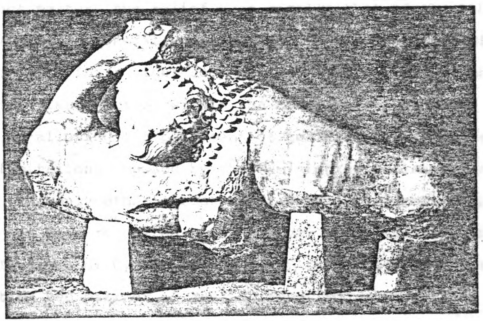

Figure 20. Lion fighting a hind. East pediment, Temple of Apollo, Delphi. Museum, Delphi. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 203.2)

(Figure 21). In the center, Zeus raises his hand against an enemy who has already fallen upon one knee.[30] Moving outward from the center, a broadly striding deity flanked them, bounded by a fallen opponent, a crouching deity, and a fallen enemy within each corner. In size and treatment of subject matter, the relief here recalls that of the Athenian Treasury. In general, uniformity of scale and unity of action make for a tight composition. The variety of poses creates visual action within the confines of the space as well as allowing for placement of human figures considering the limitations imposed by the diminishing pedimental angles.

The only other structure from which pedimental sculpture has been recovered here, however scant the remains, is the Treasury of Cyrene. A fragment shows the nymph Cyrene, one time bed partner of Apollo, wrestling a tiny lion.

From Euboea, the Temple of Apollo at Eretria, dating from the end of the sixth century, also provides material for study. The structure was destroyed by the Persians on their way to Marathon, but remnants from the west pediment allow us to reconstruct partially the Amazonomachy theme here. The apex was dominated by a frontal Athena, dressed in cloak and chiton, with long pipe curls draped over both shoulders (Figure 22). Armed with her aegis, she bore an apotropaic gorgon on her chest.

Theseus, the hero of the story, is seen carrying off the queen of the Amazons, Antiope (Figure 23). Holding the

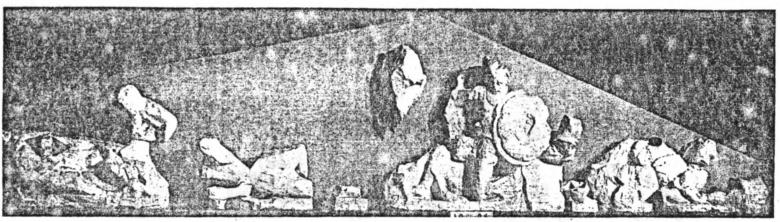

Figure 21. Pediment showing Gigantomachy. Megarian Treasury, Olympia. Olympia Museum. (Photo: Richter, The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks, Figure 383; Drawing: Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 215.1)

Figure 22. Athena. West pediment, Temple of Apollo, Eretria. Museum, Chalcis. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 205.3)

Figure 23. Theseus abducting Antiope. West pediment, Temple of Apollo, Eretria. Museum, Chalcis. (University Prints)

horses reins in his right hand, he is about to lift his prize into the chariot. The two figures are carved in the round from a single block of Parian marble, and, like all the figures, were attached to the background by means of dowels. Their faces seem to mirror the psychology of the event. Theseus is jubilant, radiant, anticipating a happy life with his new bride. Antiope seems more than resolved to her fate. In fact, one version of the myth relates that she betrayed one of her own cities in proof of the passion which she possessed for her captor--making this scene less of an abduction, more of a rendezvous.

Details of hair and dress are cut sharply and crisply. Beneath the close-fitting leather jacket, customarily worn by the Amazons, Antiope wears a short chiton with small, exquisitely rendered tube-like folds indicated at her right hip. Her long hair is cut in tiny, individual waves at the front, drawn back to the nape of the neck from where it flows down, and decorated with a diadem. The close to the skull parallel waves running from the crown are identical to those of Theseus, where they terminate in round, individual curls. The figures are sculpturally powerful, yet sensuous and refined.

The frame was perhaps filled out by Theseus' friend, Peirithoos, and his team of horses. One of the Amazon archers, obviously carried off in antiquity, was discovered in 1888 at the Villa Ludovisi in Rome (Figure 24). It has

Figure 24. Amazon archer. West pediment, Temple of Apollo, Eretria. Conservatori Museum, Rome. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 205.1)

been noted that the style and subject matter here may suggest Athenian influence. The two cities were closely allied, and the glorification of two Athenian personages, Athena and Theseus, on the secondary pediment may acknowledge Athenian patronage as well.

At this point, we should also call attention to a few scant pedimental remains from two other Greek sanctuaries. At the sanctuary of Apollo in Boeotia, a male leg in poros was found that is believed to be pedimental, dating from the last quarter of the sixth century. Because of its size, it most likely adorned a treasury and not the large Temple of Apollo which was destroyed by the Macedonians in 325. Dating from around 570-560, the primary temple of the goddess at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta has yielded remnants of a limestone relief. A fragment showing the neck and mane of a lion probably points toward a lion and bull theme--an apotropaic device.

For the last comprehensive look at Archaic pedimental sculpture we must go to the island of Aegina. The Temple of Aphaia, begun around 500 and finished in 480, is ". . . the last example of archaic lyricism, abandoning for better or worse the sixth century conventions and looking forward to the earliest classical phase. . ."[31] Considering the fact that not much major building activity was going on at this time due to foreign threats (Persia in the East, Carthage and Etruria in the West) and the subsequent need to

channel energies into the protection of the Greek state, this magnificent temple, dedicated to a local divinity is ". . . an eloquent testimony to the prosperity of the island at that period. . ."[32]

The sculptures were unearthed in 1811, buried only a few feet below the surface and near the temple, by C. R. Cockerell, an English architect, and the Bavarian Baron Haller von Hallerstein. They were purchased by Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria in 1812 and restored by the Danish Sculptor Thorvaldsen, an exponent of Neo-Classicism, from 1815-1817. The pieces have thereafter been displayed at the Glyptothek in Munich; while there, the pieces underwent further restoration and modification by Furtwängler and Schrader.

The remains of three pediments have been uncovered. An older east pediment, dating from 510, was damaged soon after its completion, and was removed to stand on a pedestal next to the temple at ground level, perhaps as a memorial. The eastern pediment which we are familiar with did not take its place until 490. The western pediment, then, pre-dates its new eastern counterpart by about ten years.

The subject matter indicated in both gables is the Greek battles at Troy, an appropriate choice considering the prominent role which two Aeginetan sons, Ajax and Telamon played. In both pediments, Athena fills the apex; she does not participate directly in the melee, but her regal,

stately presence presides over the action, prefiguring Apollo's role on the west pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia.

The west pediment (Figure 25) contained thirteen figures, six on either side of the central goddess, divided into two groups of three each. In the groups directly flanking Athena, two combatants are engaged over a third who has sunk to the ground. In the outside groups, two warriors advance toward a third who is lying in the corner. Compositionally, this pediment presentation is not quite cohesive due to the fact that the ". . . groups of three do not interconnect, which gives the whole a staccato appearance."[33] On the other hand, Furtwängler points out an interesting psychological nuance in the treatment of the corner space: "In this reclining figure, and the shield and helmet at the end, the gradual abatement of the din of battle seems to be symbolically suggested. . ."[34] Despite the seeming disjointedness of the figure groups, the main line of movement flows smoothly from the central figure outward toward the corners.

The later, eastern pediment reduces the total number of figures by two, with five figures on either side of the goddess (Figure 26). The problem of compositional unity which Richter saw lacking on the western side is corrected now: "Here each side is occupied by one interconnected group of four warriors, one striding, one falling, one crouching, one kneeling; and then, in the corner, a wounded warrior, his

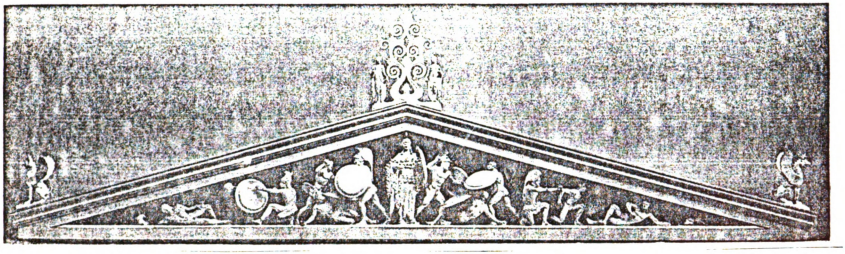

Figure 25. Western pediment, Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. Reconstruction after Furtwängler. (Richter, The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks, Figure 388)

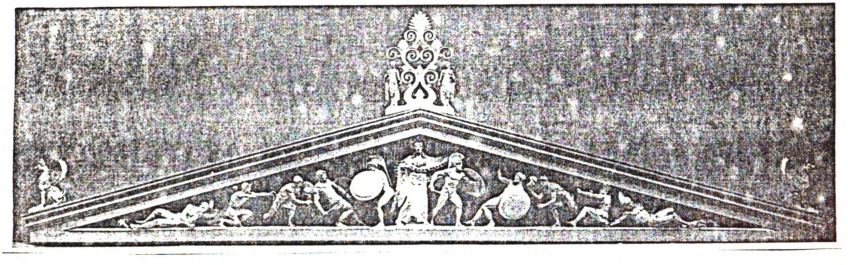

Figure 26. Eastern pediment, Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. Reconstruction after Furtwängler. (Richter, The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks, Figure 389)

back to the others, but turning toward them and therefore of them. . ."[35]

The figure most often singled out from this group is that of Herakles as archer, easily identified because of the Nemean lion head which he wears as a close-fitting cap (Figure 27). This figure is indicative of a new maturity in Greek sculpture, a growing expertise in the treatment of marble: note the realistic play of folds of the short chiton, the strong grid pattern of the cuirass and the way the "leather" flaps respond to the movement of the body underneath, and the muscles of the calf tensed against and counteracting the force of the drawn bow. The figure is at once tensed for action, yet at perfect equilibrium. The same tensed realism is seen in the figure of the striding Spearman (Figure 28), and the fallen Warrior (Figure 29) ". . . whose ebbing strength is suggested in the gradual closing of the eyes in a remarkably realistic manner."[36]

The pedimental sculpture from the Temple of Aphaia at Aegina might be viewed as the culmination of the Archaic pedimental tradition. They are delicately executed, yet solidly constructed. Unity of scale precedes the basic unity of the composition within its triangular frame. The new organic understanding anticipates the Classical sensitivity to the human body. A carefully contrived movement enlivens the eastern pediment, ". . . a rhythm of motions that runs through the whole, up the body of the fallen man

Figure 27. Herakles. East pediment, Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. Antikensammlung, Munich. (University Prints)

Figure 28. Striding spearman. East pediment, Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. Antikensammlung, Munich. (University Prints)

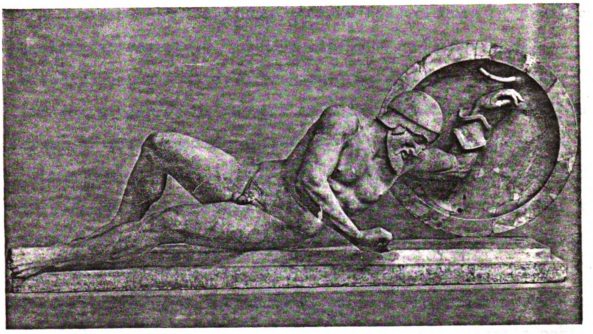

Figure 29. Fallen warrior. East pediment, Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. Antikensammlung, Munich. (University Prints)

on the right, down the body and leg of Herakles, up the squire again, down his master, echoed in his master's opponent, and finally brought to rest in the spear of Athena. . ."[37] The work is very much a product of the Archaic period, but the Classical is not far away.

Before completing our look at the evidence of Archaic pedimental sculpture, we must tie up a few loose ends, briefly noting scattered fragments which, while not allowing for a comprehensive look at a particular pedimental program, at least call attention to the wide spread practice of the phenomenon. At Eleusis, the figure of a running girl (Figure 30) as well as a female winged figure are thought to be pedimental decoration from a small structure which may have suffered damage at the hands of the Persians. The fluid treatment of the drapery, as it billows about caresses the body of the girl, assigns it to the later Archaic period, around 490. Pedimental fragments from Kopas in Boeotia and from Corinth, one of marble, the other of terracotta, suggest an Amazonomachy motif in these locations.

A late Archaic temple from Cyrene in North Africa has yielded fragments of a yellow limestone relief which indicates a scene of the nymph Cyrene (as on their treasury at Olympia) wrestling a lion as well as the godess Artemis in the act of shooting. Pieces from the gables of the temple at Athena and Poseidon at Asea in Arkadia, which was unearthed in 1910 and subsequently lost, were rediscovered in the

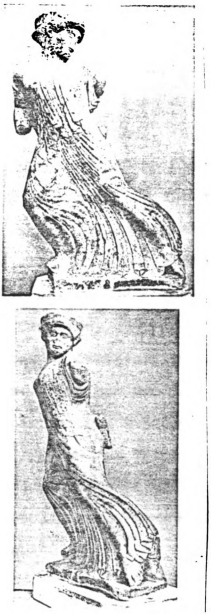

Figure 30. Running girl. From a pediment at Eleusis. Eleusis Museum. (Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, Illustration 202).

Tegea Museum. The figures of a lion and dolphin may have symbolically represented the two deities.[38] Information on the pedimental remains of the Archaic Temple of Apollo at Aegina is lacking, but, according to Ridgway, it was decorated with an Amazonomachy towards the end of the period.[39]

In Magna Grecia during the Archaic period, comprehensive pedimental programs are lacking. Instead, the preference seems to have been for gorgoneion plaques which hung in the center of the tympanum and filled the space, similar to the nine foot terracotta mask of Medusa attributed to Temple "C" at Selinus (Figure 31). Originally developed from ridge pole revetments, similar examples are known from Syracuse, Gela, Akragas, Himera, Camarina, and Hipponion.[40] In regard to the building practices in these outposts of the Greek world, R. M. Cook notes: "One curious idiosyncrasy is a liking for carving on the metopes but not in the pediments of Doric temples. . ."[41] However, Ridgway points out that ". . . canonical carved pediments began to occur in Sicily and South Italy after 480, presumably because of the renewed ties with Greece proper."[42]

Figure 31. Gorgon, Temple "C," Selinus. Restoration. (Lawrence, Greek Architecture, Figure 68)

CHAPTER I--NOTES

[1]This site was excavated and published by a German team under the direction of Wilhelm Dorpfeld.

[2]Gisela M. A. Richter, Animals in Greek Sculpture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 4.

[3]Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway, The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 195.

[4]Gisela M. A. Richter, Archaic Greek Art: Against Its Historical Background (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 15.

[5]John Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 155.

[6]William Bell Dinsmoor, The Architecture of Ancient Greece (London: B. T. Batsford, 1950; reprint ed., New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1975), p. 71.

[7]Ridgway (The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture) thinks this figure is male due to ". . . the short costume, heavy thighs, and masculine ('Parian') chest." p. 203.

[8]J. Charbonneaux, R. Martin, and F. Villard, Archaic Greek Art, trans. James Emmons and Robert Allen (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), p. 113.

[9]Richter, Archaic Greek Art: Against Its Historical Background, p. 68.

[10]This is the generally accepted placement of the figure. Other positions have been proposed. (Ridgway, The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture, p. 204.)

[11]Dinsmoor, The Architecture of Ancient Greece, p. 71.

[12]The Hekatompedon should not be confused with the "Old Athena Temple," the Peisistrid structure dating from 520 B.C. (which we will examine later). Ridgway (The Archaic

12 (cont'd.)

Style in Greek Sculpture) points out: "From an inscription which mentions both the Hekatompedon and the Old Temple of Athena we know that the two were mutually exclusive. . . ," p. 197. Most scholars agree that the Hekatompedon was the predecessor of the Parthenon.

[13]Thalia Phillies Howe, "Zeus Herkeios: Thematic Unity in the Hekatompedon Sculpture." American Journal of Archaeology 59 (1955): 287.

[14]Ibid., p. 288.

[15]Ibid., p. 297.

[16]This extrapolation seems doubtful. J. D. Beazley (Greek Sculpture and Painting, Cambridge, 1932) believes that Typhon ". . . with his genial well-liking faces and big wide-open eyes, is a wonderfully pleasant and attractive monster," pp. 19-20. Lullies (Greek Sculpture, New York, 1957) makes note of the ". . . gay vitality expressed by its faces," p. 64. Hardly an apotrapaic device.

[17]Boardman also makes a parallel between the Introduction of Herakles and an incident in Peisistratos' career when he ". . . tricked the people into giving him a guard of club bearers and seized the Acropolis, where he then lived," (Herakles, Pesisistratos and Sons, p. 61). The hero's struggle with Triton would allude to Peisistratos' amphibious expedition to Megara.

[18]Charbonneaux, p. 114.

[19]Ridgway, The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture, p. 199.

[20]Howe, p. 295. She also makes note here of another form of snake-worship popular at this time, that of Zeus Meilichios, an agricultural deity.

[21]Dinsmoor, The Architecture of Ancient Greece, p. 90.

[22]A recent theory suggests that a frontal quadriga may have occupied the center space.

[23]Boardman, Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period, p. 157.

[24]Ridgway, The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture, p. 211.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway, "The East Pediment of the Siphnian Treasury: A Reinterpretation," American Journal of Archaeology 69 (1965): 1-5.

[27]Ibid., p, 2.

[28]Charbonneaux, p. 164.

[29]Spyros Meletzis and Helen Papadakis, Delphi (Chicago: Argonaut Inc., 1967), p. XV.

[30]Ridgway proposes a different theme, that of a mythical battle from Megara's past. "My suggestion is prompted by the small hole in the chest of the kneeling figure next to 'Zeus.' From the position of the arms, the warrior looks as if he were trying to grab a spear planted in his body, presumably thrust there by his opponent. But Zeus traditionally fights with a thunderbolt. . . ." (The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture, p. 211.)

[31]Paul Mackendrick, The Greek Stones Speak (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1962; reprint ed., New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1966), p. 204.

[32]Gisela M. A. Richter, The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks, revised ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 7.

[33]Ibid., p. 123.

[34]A. Furtwängler and H. L. Urlicks, Greek and Roman Sculpture (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1914), p. 12.

[35]Richter, (The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks), p. 123.

[36]Gisela M. A. Richter, Three Critical Periods in Greek Sculpture (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 5.

[37]T. B. L. Webster, "The Temple of Aphaia at Aegina" The Journal of Hellenic Studies 51 (1931): 181-182.

[38]Ridgway (The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture), p. 212, note 35.

[39]Ibid., p. 212. She also points out that this site has been recently (1974) published by W. W. Wurster who makes no mention of sculptural decoration.

[40]Ibid., p. 214.

[41]R. M. Cook, Greek Art (Worcester and London: The Trinity Press, 1972), p. 108.

[42]Ridgway (The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture), p. 214.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEDIMENTAL SCULPTURE IN THE ARCHAIC PERIOD

As the previous chapter has shown, the use of pedimental sculpture during the Archaic period was certainly widespread. Anticipating the question of why it was not employed everywhere and on every major structure, we may begin with economic considerations. As. J. J. Coulton points out in his monograph entitled Ancient Greek Architects at Work: "It is difficult to estimate the annual budget of a normal Greek city at any period, but such evidence as there is suggests that it was small, particularly in the archaic period."[1] The employment of additional talent and purchase of materials for executing pedimental work necessitated expense above and beyond the already enormous layout needed for the building of the temple proper. Communities that did not enjoy the financial patronage of aristocratic families as the Alkmaionids or the Peisistratids, or who could not draw upon the wealth provided by local natural resources as on the island of Siphnos, might have been economically unable to provide such embellishments. As Dinsmoor notes, "It has been said

that behind and beyond any cause that we can specify for a development in art and civilization itself there is an economic one. . . ."[2]

Local preference sometimes opted for other treatments of the pedimental area as we already noted in Magna Graecia; some Asia Minor temples preferred to piece the tympanum screen with windows. In the case of the Temple of Hera Acraea in Perachora, the pediment was recessed three and three-quarter inches as if to receive sculpture, which was never applied. Perhaps internal or external complications, political unrest or foreign threat, halted the progress and development of some structures. In addition, since many Archaic monumental structures are but rubble today, it is impossible always to ascertain whether or not pedimental sculpture was employed.

In general, pedimental sculpture was basically restricted to Doric structures, although we have seen exceptions in the Ionic treasuries at Delphi. Several factors may account for this bias. To begin with, the Ionic order was inherently more ornate in its architectural embellishments, and the addition of pedimental sculpture, along with the frieze that was its earmark, would have been overwhelming (this is not necessarily the case on a small structure, such as a treasury). As Ridgway points out, a structural consideration in Ionic architecture ". . . prevents the placing of substantial weight on the cornice, which projects

considerably from the facade and even from the underlying details of the Asia Minor version of the Order. Recessing the tympanum wall, to distribute the weight of pedimental sculpture over the line of the architrave, would so increase the depth of the pediment as to make its decoration almost invisible from below."[3] From a practical and financial standpoint, the amount of sculptural decoration which would have been necessary to fill the pediments of the colossal Ionic dipteral temples of Ephesus, Samos, or Didyma would have been staggering.

A study of the development of pedimental sculpture during the Archaic period is more complicated than a study of the development of Greek sculpture in general, which is usually viewed only in terms of the treatment of the human body: anatomy, drapery, contrapposto. A comprehensive look at the development of pedimental sculpture must take so many other factors into consideration: composition, scale, and subject matter, to name just a few. S. C. Kaines Smith calls attention to the fact that ". . . decorative sculpture, being dependent for its existence upon the pre-existence of something to be decorated, obeys laws which are not primarily its own, but those of the object which it adorns,"[4] and thereby addresses the related issues of placement and the limitations imposed by the triangular frame.

The fully rounded forms of the Aeginetan pediments are the end product of a pedimental decorative tradition that

began with painting and passed through relief. As Rhys Carpenter observes, "It was not the open space under the sloping roof but the closing wall behind it, not the pedimental gable but the tympanon screen, which at first received decoration."[5] The remains of a small, early temple or treasury on the Acropolis, which Dinsmoor designates "Temple Aa,"[6] reveals that its pediment showed a painted animal composition. Because of the distance that separated the viewer and the gable, however, together with the fact that extreme changes of light occurred outdoors, making the reading of a flat surface very difficult from below, the technique was, no doubt, abandoned early in favor of relief.

Early relief work, as seen in the Herakles and the Hydra Pediment from the Acropolis, still shows a close affinity with the technique of Greek vase painting, where the design has been drawn on the surface and the details are made prominent by removing material from the background. As the relief deepens, the number of successive planes in depth increase, so that in the Introduction Pediment we are acutely aware that Hera is standing behind Zeus--somewhere in between the front plane, demarcated by the right side of the profile Zeus, and the back plane of the relief wall. What might be the artist's cautious steps into the world of fully rounded pedimental figures is seen in the gable of the Siphnian Treasury. From the waist down, the figures are engaged, relief-style, with the backwall; from the waist up,

they are free, but because of the restraint of the carving below they are still, aesthetically, somewhat flat.

Even in its fully rounded state, pedimental sculpture was always allied with its relief roots. The background, be it for relief or fully sculpted figures, was always painted deep blue or red to bring out shadow, and therefore, even for the free standing figures ". . . it gave the effect of high relief."[7]

The subject matter of pediments began with central gorgons and monsters dominating the field. When narrative began to share the space, it was relegated to the corners (Temple of Artemis, Corfu). Even in the Triton/Typhon Pediment, although the story figures fill almost the entire area of the angles, the central space is utilized for the apotropaic lion theme. Gradually, however, the subject matter within a gable became cohesive and a single mythological episode is depicted, uninterpreted by extraneous figures. The legends are usually (but not always) associated with the deity to whom the structure is dedicated, but the connection becomes somewhat obscure at times (as in the case of the Corfu pediment). As noted in regard to the Peisistratid structures on the Acropolis, subtle political motivations may have determined the choice of themes. Ridgway notes that Treasuries were more likely to make use of narrative arrangement ". . . because no deity or cult statue resided in them, or even because the decoration in being relatively nearer the viewer

was more easily understood."[8]

Closely allied with the development of subject matter in Archaic pedimental sculpture are compositional considerations: the way in which the figures are grouped, their relationship to one another. The chief problem, as we have noted many times, revolved around the awkward shape of the pedimental field. In many early pediments, monsters and animals dominated the scene as they were most adaptable to the rapidly diminishing slope of the gable: Hydras, Tritons, and serpents easily accommodated themselves. But monsters were soon on their way out as proper subjects for Greek art.

As human figures began to proliferate on the pedimental stage another problem was encountered, and not until later successfully solved, that of scale. The artist of the Megarian Treasury has diminished the scale of each human figure in relation to his space (or lack of it) in the triangular frame. In terms of subject matter, the figures all participate in the same event, but their disparate proportions disrupt the overall compositional cohesiveness of the work. Given the fact that aesthetic harmony could only be achieved through proportional unity, the Archaic artist began to search for themes that would allow him to depict human figures in the same scale. With such limitations imposed, the logical choice was the <u>battle</u>, where human beings could be contorted <u>logically</u> in varied positions.

The treatment of the human body in pedimental compositions traces a history like that of Greek sculpture in general, a history which illuminates the quest of the artist for a true representation of the human form. As the figure gradually moves free of the confines imposed by relief, an organic naturalistic entity is allowed to evolve, as witnessed in the pedimental figures from the Temple of Aphaia at Aegina. The figures have broken out of the strictly four-sided "block" of the earlier kouroi. Their orientations and poses are varied. Within the confines of Archaic convention, the statues are spirited, full of life, exhibiting ". . . an almost elastic rising and falling of limbs like the waves of the sea,"[9] observes Furtwängler.

The formulaic running stance of the Medusa from Corfu loosens into the naturally fluid movement of the running girl from Eleusis. The rigidly vertical lines of the Megarian drapery becomes the soft, believable folds of Antiope's chiton at Eretria. The bizarre, Archaic lean of the third head of Typhon gives way to the humanistic, painful, self-control of the helmeted, dying warrior from Aphaia. The body of that same figure twists in the painful contortions of his ebbing strength; the falling giant from the Old Temple of Athena is much less convincing.

The ability to capture the natural essence of a figure was tied with the artist's ability to work the stone. In the glyptic manner, the artist gradually developed his

technique, at first working with softer limestone or terra-cotta, and finally mastering the harder, purer finish of marble. It was within this latter medium that the monumental forms of Greek art are most expressive, both singly and in a group, high atop the pedimental ledge.

As a microcosm of the larger world of Greek art, pedimental sculpture in the archaic period had begun to exemplify ". . . traits which will remain characteristically Greek even when the content and style of Greek art have changed profoundly."[10] Those traits are monumentality, seen in the large, expressive forms from the pediment of the old Athena Temple or the Temple of Apollo at Eretria; a tectonic sense of composition, expressed in balance and symmetry, both in an individual figure and in the larger composition; and a feeling for narrative, which was to flourish when problems of scale, subject matter, and composition were met head-on.

CHAPTER II--NOTES

[1]J. J. Coulton, Ancient Greek Architects at Work (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 20.

[2]William Bell Dinsmoor, The Architecture of Ancient Greece (London: B. T. Batsford, 1950; reprint ed., New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1975), p. 147.

[3]Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway, The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 190.

[4]S. C. Kaines Smith, Greek Art and National Life (London: James Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1914), p. 176.

[5]Rhys Carpenter, Greek Sculpture (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 110-111.

[6]Dinsmoor (The Architecture of Ancient Greece), p. 71.

[7]R. A. Tomlinson, Greek Sanctuaries (London: Elek Books Ltd., 1976), p. 36.

[8]Ridgway (The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture), p. 215.

[9]A. Furtwängler and H. L. Urlichs, Greek and Roman Sculpture (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1914), p. 12.

[10]John Boardman, Pre-Classical: From Crete to Early Greece (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1967; reprint ed., 1978), p. 64.

CHAPTER III

THE AESTHETIC ROLE

OF PEDIMENTAL SCULPTURE

> . . . any critique of ancient Greek art . . . must reconcile itself to accepting rather than explaining the 'Greek miracle.' Investigation and analysis may succeed in establishing the What, the When, and the How, but scarcely the Where and the Why, since final causes remain obscure to the point of seeming to be beyond the reach of reason.[1]

Final causes, in the study of Art History, or, in our particular case, the study of Archaic pedimental sculpture, indeed remain obscure. Especially since the Greeks worked from no formal aesthetic theory, either written or verbal, but rather from an innate sense of what is good, and right, and true, the student of art can only hope to apply an aesthetic theory externally, or after the fact. In other words, we accept the fact that the Greeks successfully harmonized sculpture and architecture. An aesthetic theory can only hope to ascertain the how and why.

Keeping in mind Carpenter's words that we not "go beyond the reach of reason," we might make a start of our quest with a very simple comparison. The successful integration of pedimental sculpture and architecture and the ensuing

aesthetic dynamics might be seen in terms of a good marriage, where both parties share enough in common to harmonize, yet possess disparate personalities and talents that enhance the potential of and make up the deficiencies in the other party.

In regard to similarities, both share the same medium, technical methods, tools, and material sources. Greek sculpture, as we have seen, had a tectonic, formulaic quality which allied it with architecture. Greek architecture shared with sculpture a plastic, organic value. As three-dimensional objects, sculpture and architecture are part of the same spatial world and, as such, we perceive them in the same way.

Since we receive all visual information as two-dimensional projections on the retina, it is the task of both sculpture and architecture to make the difficult "depth away" dimension most readily apprehendable. In his book, The Esthetic Basis of Greek Art of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C., Rhys Carpenter constructs an elaborate system on how Greek sculpture seeks to achieve an understanding, on the part of the viewer, of that third dimension. While it is not the task of this study to examine the visual apprehension of the sculpted figure, one of Carpenter's observations on Greek sculpture may suggest a similar consideration for the architect. Carpenter cites the importance of the intelligible pose, by which the broad contours of the sculpted figure allow us to understand immediately what we see, given the multiplicity of viewpoints available. Doxiadis, in his study

of the disposition of Greek buildings in space, lists first the following principle of the Greek builder: "Radii from the vantage point determined the position of three corners of each important building, so that a three-quarter view of each was visible."[2] As seen in the sanctuaries at Delphi and Aegina (Figures 32 and 33), the approach to the primary structure guaranteed that the viewer would first greet the temple obliquely, so that its total three-dimensionality might be comprehended, whereas in a "head on" approach, only one facade could be taken in, due to the massive size.

Carpenter outlines the visual perception of the sculptural image, but the greater understanding of the three-dimensionality of an object in space, particularly a figure, may be intellectual in the sense that we inherently comprehend our own physical three-dimensionality without the aid of visual recognition or stimuli. That same inherent empathy for the sculpted figure, when viewed on the pedimental platform, may have aided the viewer in the more difficult comprehension of the larger three-dimensional temple, since we construct intellectually, and not visually, the "depth away" dimension. In conjunction with this, just as sculpture in the round invites us to walk around it, so too, the pedimental figures, by the power of their suggestion, may have encouraged the visitor to explore the total building in its three-dimensionality.

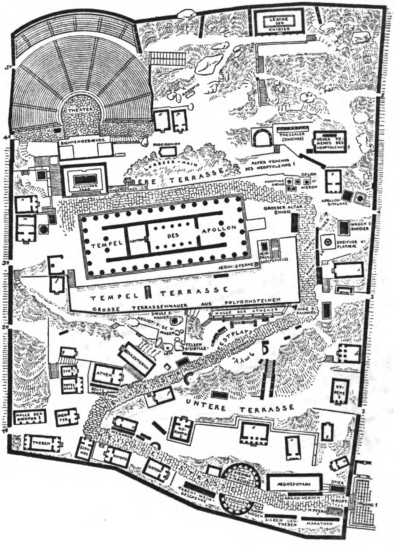

Figure 32. Plan of the sanctuary at Delphi. (University Prints)

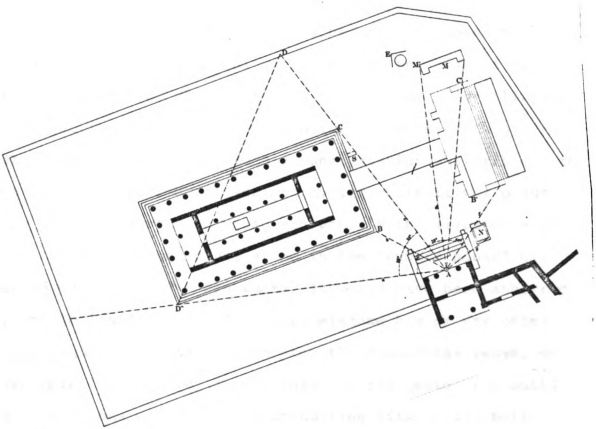

Figure 33. Sacred precinct of Aphaia at Aegina. (Doxiadis, Architectural Space in Ancient Greece, Illustration 19)

When we do perceive the sculpted figure we comprehend it more fully because the Greek artist ". . . embodies actual images of living things and else delights in showing forth the human body."[3] In the development of Archaic pedimental sculpture, and Greek sculpture generally, the artist sought to reproduce most truly the appearance of what he had seen. It is here that he walked a thin line, for in representing the appearances of the real world, he ran the risk of deceiving the viewer who might have mistook imitative illusion for objective reality, at which point, mimetic truth has taken the place of art. Such a consideration was critical to the artist of pedimental sculpture, for while it was plausible that a figure of a young athlete, in the illusionistic reality of a statue, might stand in the "public house" or sacred enclosure of a sanctuary, it would have been abhorred by the logically minded Greeks to mistake him or any other human figure for reality high atop the pedimental ledge, or, even more implausible, ". . . that, in the gable of a building, two lions were actually struggling with a live bull. . . ."[4]

The check against mere mimetic truth was provided by the quest for Idealism, the desire to pass beyond the temporary, chance appearances of Nature and capture the underlying essence and permanence. Nature provided the model, but it was the job of the artist to animate the borrowed form with a spirit far removed from whimsy. It was to young

manhood that the Classical artist looked to embody most convincingly the noble spirit when, "In the balance and relation of their limbs such figures express their whole character, mental as well as physical, and reveal their central beings, the radiant reality of youth, when for a few brief years its possessors resemble the gods."[5]

Architecture, on the other hand, has no prototypes to borrow, no visual forms to imitate other than those which it itself has created. In tune with our own bodies, we can, therefore, apprehend the sculpted version of it more easily. The noetic forms of architecture present a more difficult task because its static, formulaic, contrived monumentality is far removed from our realm of innate experience. The Greek artist, however, sought to establish a realm of architectural experience that would become a world of easily recognizable forms and objects, as familiar as a rock, or a horse, or a boy. Consider Rhys Carpenter's observations:

> The paucity of invention, the seemingly suicidal restraint of variety, are necessary because architecture is seeking to establish for itself a real world of recognized and recognizable objects. Painting has the seen world to draw upon: it does not have to create and establish its trees, rocks, streams, meadows, and animals, or waste effort in persuading us that they are things which we already know. But architecture has to invent its world of objects first, before it can use them . . . and these become its world of real objects which it imitates and represents . . . Greek architecture, indeed, is the outstanding instance of this practise of establishing an artificial language. . . ."[6]

It was the role of pedimental sculpture to assist the viewer in understanding this new world; it assisted the visitor in the transition, provided a bridge in his comprehension, between his own animate world and that of the inanimate world of architecture. Pedimental sculpture could function in such a way because its own understandable essence derived its power as an art form from both realms: its form was drawn from nature, from the very real world of the viewer, but its eternal, immutable spirit was more closely allied with architecture and its monumentality.

The visual parallels between the sculpture and the architecture are numerous. These parallels solidify not only the mutual dependence upon each other, but also the enhancement of concepts and properties inherent to architecture but more easily grasped in the sculpted figure by virture of its familiarity.

Even as early as the Temple of Artemis at Corfu, we are presented, in the majority of pedimental compositions, with figures caught in arrested motion. Although frozen in space, we are keenly aware of the action taking place: Medusa scurries along at Corfu (Figure 2), Herakles brandishes his club against the Hydra at Athens (Figure 7), Apollo and Herakles grapple for the tripod at Delphi (Figure 17), and Herakles draws back his bowstring at Aphaia (Figure 27). The forces are contained within the figure, but never diluted. Similarly, within the bold linearity of the Greek

temple, the strong horizontal and vertical forces check and balance each other: in the Doric structure, the massive, horizontal stylobate is broken by the upward movement of the columns; they, in turn, are capped off by the entablature which is pierced by the vertical striations of the triglyphs (Figure 11). As if to resolve the interplay of forces, the cornice incorporates them both in a pleasing denouement of the diagonal.

Both the sculpture and the architecture share this quest for the resolution, the equilibrium of contrary forces and tensions, which, as Robert Scranton observes, ". . . is not an inert balance in which the forces have lost their energy, but a resolution in which the forces remain alive and yet mutually absorbed."[7]

As the eye is swept rapidly upward by the bold, broad architectural forms, it is the pedimental sculpture that breaks the gaze and forces the eye to re-focus itself upon <u>details</u>. At first we apprehend the larger forms of animals and men. Then we notice incisions of hair and drapery, muscular notation, poses and attitudes. Once tuned in, the eye is at leisure to drift back downwards and take in the subleties of metope and frieze carving, or the quieter nuances of moldings, guttae, and necking rings. The Greek architect was well aware that the deeper appreciation of the <u>whole</u> would come through a careful perusal of the intricacies of the <u>parts</u>, and pedimental sculpture more than adequately

participated in this "fine tuning" process.

Pedimental sculpture also served visually to break up the strong, regular rhythm of the temple structure. The repetitive succession of columns, triglyphs and metopes, mutules and regulae, was pleasantly balanced by the irregularities of the pedimental pieces, where only the curves and movements of animals and men could provide the necessary variation. On the other hand, the resultant symmetry of the facade was never compromised, for the artist of the pediment always tried to balance off one side of the triangular area against the other, if not with like numbers of participants (Figures 25 and 26), at least with similar amounts of mass and weight (Figures 11 and 21).

In terms of visual texture, the Greek temple facade must have presented an exciting profile under the brilliant light of the Aegean sun, for the interplay of light and shadow, open and closed surface, created a movement that kept the eye forever fascinated. It was in this regard that structural details became very important as they served to soften, to interrupt what might have been an overpowering mass of stone. So too, they articulated, clarified the parts and members which otherwise might have been obscured by the massive expanse of the structure. The fluting of the columns, the necking rings below the echinus, the taenia separating the frieze from the architrave--all helped to clarify the structural members, delineating their individual roles.

Pedimental sculpture defined and articulated the cornice area, echoing the play of light and shadow just as below (Figure 16), and providing weight and substance to the large triangular space. Given the multiplicity of nuance and movement below, this area would have appeared stark and lifeless without the aid of the pedimental decoration.

One of the most important functions of pedimental sculpture, from a visual standpoint, was that it provided an easily comprehensible scale by which to grasp and appreciate the total structure. Rudolf Arnheim astutely points out that:

> If human beings are to interact with a building functionally, they must be united with it by visual continuity. Huge though a building may be as a whole, it can make contact with the visitor by providing a range of sizes, some small enough to be directly relatable to the human body. These human-sized architectural elements serve as connecting links between the organic inhabitant and the inorganic habitation.[8]

In a structure such as the Peisistratid temple from the Acropolis, the columns were over five feet wide at the base and more than twenty-four feet high, while the entablature measured more than eleven feet in height. Presented with such massive dimensions, the viewer needed some point of reference with which to reconcile his own relationship to the structure. Pedimental sculpture, with its easily recognizable forms and closer-to-human-scale, provided that empathetic transition between the "organic inhabitant" and the

"inorganic habitation." The size of the building may have been most imposing, but the pedimental sculpture always invited the visitor to linger and feel "at home," in tune with beings like himself.

Just as in Greek sculpture where the natural, the organic, must be tempered by the eternal, the permanent, before it achieves its position as a work of art, the geometric rationality of Greek architecture needed to be animated, relieved from its mechanical dullness. Pedimental sculpture helped to enliven the structure, allowing the viewer to perceive it as an organic entity like himself.

There was no such thing as "Art for Art's sake" in the Greek world. Man was the measure of all things for the Greek artist, and the overriding concern for human proportion, human perspective, and human perception is evidenced everywhere in the builder's approach to his craft.

C. A. Doxiadis has studied the disposition of Greek buildings in space, their relationship to each other and to the viewer and concludes that ". . . man himself was the center and point of reference in the formation of architectural space."[9] He goes on to add, "Aesthetic form was created by man to give pleasure to man. Pains were taken to place each structure and each group of structures to the utmost perfection so that they could be enjoyed from every viewpoint."[10] The human perspective never had to compete with the religious intent of the Greek temple--they both had equal

consideration.

Throughout the centuries, the Christian Church edifice has modified itself extensively in response to the changing liturgical needs of its interior. The Greek temple, however, only served one purpose, had one function that never changed, and that was to house the cult statue. Since all cult activities took place outside before the altar, the size of the temple was only an indication of local prosperity, never the fervor of the local "congregation." The modifications that took place from the squat, Archaic temple of Hera at Paestum to the elastic, refined perfection of the Parthenon further indicate the preoccupation of the artist with external visual perception.

The softer, rounded forms inherent to the sculpted human body were useful in balancing off the straight, rigid lines of architecture. "The sculptures thereby served to blur the buildings' directional lines, which would otherwise point too insistently. . ."[11] Particularly on the Doric structure, austere and formulaic with its structural details, pedimental sculpture lent organic spirit to what might only have been mathematical rigidity. The great Classical sculptor, Polykleitos, stated it well when he said, "Perfection is very nearly engendered out of many numbers," realizing that symmetry and regularity provide a sane framework, order in the midst of chaos, but irregularity and nuance . . . give life and warmth to mathematical exactitude."[12]

By the same token that pedimental sculpture provided a visual transition from the animate world of the viewer to the inanimate realm of the temple and its architecture, it may also have served to provide an intellectual, spiritual transition from the secular to the spiritual. The eighteenth century American artist and critic, Horatio Greenough, in reflective admiration, observed about Greek pedimental sculptural pieces that ". . . they took possession of the worshiper as he approached, lifed him out of every day life, and prepared him for the presence of the divinity within."[13] At first apotropaic gorgons, animals, and monsters proclaimed the fearful sanctity of the temple. Later, exploits of heroes and the presence of the god or goddess themselves, high atop the pedimental ledge, spoke of the other-worldly, supernatural essence of the precinct. The recurring figure of Herakles amidst pedimental compositions conveniently, whether intentionally or not, supports the "transitional" role of pedimental sculpture, for as a demi-god, he was both human and divine.

Another very basic aesthetic function of the sculpted gable was to give the building identity, designating its local significance and intent of a particular deity, and distinguishing it from its other very similar, counterparts throughout the Greek world. While the basic temple form remained unchanged, pedimental sculpture reflected the growing sophistication that adorned its own role to grow in

importance:

> As with temples, the tendency was for repetion and order, the individual genius of the sculptor finding its outlet in nuances, not radical innovation. The tendency, fortunately, never became an iron law; sculptures were not frozen in the psychology of archaism, or of fifth-century classicism; they moved, often by imperceptible steps, to meet the challenge of new conceptions and of changing demands.[14]

It is a maxim of Hellenic art that, ". . . Greek buildings always express their purpose and the mechanics of their construction."[15] Columns rest firmly upon the stylobate, bulging at the middle as they receive the massive weight of the architrave above, the pressure channeled downward through abacus and echinus. The post and lintel system was always the choice of the Greeks over the arch because it most clearly indicated, in a straightforward manner, the play of forces involved. The quest for optical clarity is evident everywhere in Greek construction and not any less so than in the sophisticated refinements worked out for the Parthenon.

Decoration, where it was used, never obscured the structural relevancy of the building. Metopes, friezes,[16] and decorative moldings enhanced and beautified the temple, but did not garble its constructional or structural language. Pedimental sculpture, playing so much more than a decorative role, echoed the clarity of the structure itself in its bold forms and straightforward themes, and at the same time,

visually and intellectually aided in a clearer reading of the temple.

CHAPTER III--NOTES

[1]Rhys Carpenter, Greek Art: A Study of the Formal Evolution of Style (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), p. 15.

[2]C. A. Doxiadis, Architectural Space in Ancient Greece, trans. Jaqueline Tyrwhitt (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1972), p. 5.

[3]Rhys Carpenter, The Esthetic Basis of Greek Art of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), p. 68.

[4]S. C. Kaines Smith, Greek Art and National Life (London: James Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1914), p. 176.

[5]C. M. Bowra, The Greek Experience (New York: The World Publishing Company; reprint ed., New York: The New American Library, 1957), p. 161.

[6]Rhys Carpenter, (The Esthetic Basis of Greek Art of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.), pp. 118-119.

[7]Robert L. Scranton, Aesthetic Aspects of Ancient Art (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 253.

[8]Rudolf Arnheim, The Dynamics of Architectural Form (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 133.

[9]Doxiadis, p. 20.

[10]Ibid., p. 22.

[11]A. W. Lawrence, Greek Architecture, 2nd, ed. (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1967), p. 110.

[12]Rhys Carpenter, Greek Sculpture (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 101.

[13]Horatio Greenough, Form and Function, with an Introduction by Erle Loran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 123.

[14]M. I. Finley, The Ancient Greeks (Great Britain: Chatto and Windus, 1963; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1977), p. 164.

[15]Rhys Carpenter (The Esthetic Basis of Greek Art of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.), p. 101.

[16]This paper has not dealt with friezes or metopes. Although they are also sculpted decoration, their size and shallowness of relief does not afford them the same aesthetic role of the monumental forms of pedimental work.

CONCLUSION

Art in the Greek world was never fostered by or for a select group of artistically minded elite. The state, acting at the request of the community and its individual members, was the patron and impetus behind monumental works of sculpture and architecture. Individual artistic genius, while certainly recognized, applauded, and prized, was probably never viewed with the curious detachment it is in the modern world. For art was a natural part of daily living in the ancient Greek world, ". . . not set apart for occasional leisure--time or for the special enjoyment of rich collectors and aesthetes."[1]

During the one hundred years of the Archaic period, we witness the solidification of a world view and life-style which was characteristic of the Greeks throughout their history but which reached its pinnacle of perfection and refinement during the fifth century. "The Golden Age of Greece" and "Classical Humanism" are catch phrases that attempt to capture the unique spirit of the age, an age where art was conceived and viewed as a delicate balance between what the eye saw, what the heart felt, and what the mind understood. The most famous articulation of this theorem is witnessed in the Parhenon whose graceful refinements and

harmonious proportions, together with a scientific knowledge of optical effects and mathematics make it an "example of that rational spirit which combined art and science."[2]

The antefixes on the roof, the grooved triglyphs of the frieze, the fluting on the columns, the undercutting of the steps, the mutules and guttae--none of these were structurally necessary to the solidity of the Greek temple. Rather, their role was one of articulation and aesthetic enlivenment. For, every bit as important as how the building was actually put together, was how it appeared. Beyond its independent existence as a formal design, a building ". . . reveals its full meaning only by embracing the presence of man."[3]

Pedimental sculpture participated actively in that outreach, presenting the viewer with his forms and his personages, drawn from his mental and physical realm of reality. Within its setting, it harmonized architectural and plastic values both for itself and the structure proper, allowing the viewer to understand and appreciate more easily the architectural vista as well as the sacred nature of the precinct.

George Kubler reminds us that, "Our signals from the past are very weak, and our means for recovering their meaning still are most imperfect."[4] Luckily for us, the legacy of the Greek architects and sculptors has survived the passing of twenty-five hundred years. Even in their ruined

state, the message of the Greek temple is clear in its presentation, noble in its magnificence, and each generation delights in the discovery and the re-discovery of its articulated forms. The subtleties are numerous, and this paper attempts to underscore only one of them. The large, bold lines speak loudly, but the nuances whisper, opening our eyes ever wider to the charm, for the intricacies of the Greek temple reveal its most profound secrets. As we study, our wonder increases apace with our knowledge, for those intricacies are ". . . like the subleties of language which make the magic of great poetry: we must know the language amazingly well, or we shall wholly miss the magic."[5]

CONCLUSION--NOTES

[1]M. I. Finley, The Ancient Greeks (Great Britain: Chatto and Windus, 1963; Harmonsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1977), p. 152.

[2]Victor Ehrenberg, From Solon to Socrates, 2nd. ed. (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1975), p. 249.

[3]Rudolph Arnheim, The Dynamics of Architectural Form (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 217.

[4]George Kubler, The Shape of Time (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 17.

[5]Rhys Carpenter, The Esthetic Basis of Greek Art of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), p. 119.

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