

STUDY ON PHIDIAS

The example of the sculptor

SUMMARY

This work is a study on Phidias, the Greek sculptor of the V century BCE. Through it we seek to know the historical context in which he lived, the events that influenced the city in which he lived, his career as an artist, his way of thinking and his works.

Although we have spent time on the broader context as well as on the compositional elements which make up Phidias, we have also reviewed the relationships which others established with the sculptor and his work. That is, we have looked into references from his contemporaries, from those who commissioned or influenced his works, and who subsequently discussed his way of working, and through which he became the model of the classical Hellenistic artist for those who cited him in order to explain their own thinking and philosophical developments.

Thus, we have noted the relationship between his spiritual inspiration and the intuitions about the Mind, with the nous of Anaxagoras. We have taken the discussions formulated by Plato about Beauty and where it lies, and we have seen the statue of Athena from the philosopher's view point.

Thanks to Aristotle who, instead of continuing with the example of the wood which the carpenter shapes as a chair - as he had been doing - began to illustrate his thought with the example of Phidias, and since this figure was also useful pedagogically for Silo to explain what has been called the Purpose and to distinguish each of the four disciplinary ways of entry to the Profound, we have had the opportunity to study more deeply someone who personifies classical Hellenism.

These references we have been hearing, with the example of the stone and the form that Phidias has in his head before sculpting it, have led us to approach his beautiful works, the extraordinary representations of the Olympian deities, the inspiring marble volumes that give rise to horses and centaurs, especially in the balanced architectural majesty of the Parthenon.

We present in three appendices photographs of those sculptures still traceable today, of the Facades, the Metopes and Friezes of the Parthenon and we also provide several illustrations of other architectural and sculptural work of Phidias.

Using an aesthetic language we have arrived to a synthesis of comprehensions that were historically associated with his name. We have made contact with the social and cultural landscape in which his ideas were formed, and analyzed the epochal contexts within which they were organized, along with the underlying tensions, habits and customs of the people of the time. Thanks to the artworks, sculpture, and

architecture of Phidias the mythological and philosophical weight at its base has appeared before our eyes, with all its dragging of beliefs, conflicts and mixtures with previous cultures that are synthesized in the Athens of V century BCE.

It is from Athens where the idea of a primary cause and a final cause was proposed, as well as the four possibilities acting upon phenomenon, four "threads" with respect to reality: the material, the formal, the energetic and the mental, which are the causes exemplified in the figure of the sculptor.

Phidias also puts us in a very particular historical moment, which happens to be an antecedent of the Morphological Discipline which sees the beauty of forms communicating their search for a primary reason, a conception of being, of the world, the cosmic order and abstractions that have to do with the development of consciousness. That is, thanks to this renowned sculptor, we have been able to find these inspiring contexts of the pre-attic world.

Pía Figueroa

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Parks of Study and Reflection Punta de Vacas

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1.- INTRODUCTION

This is a study on Phidias, the Greek sculptor of the V century BCE.

Our interest is to know the historical context in which he lived, the events that influenced the city in which he lived, his career as an artist, his way of thinking and his works.

We will review the larger context and also the compositional elements related to Phidias and of course we will review the field of relationships that others established with the sculptor and his work, that is, the references we have of those who were his contemporaries who commissioned or influenced his works, and who subsequently admired him. Those who referred to his way of working, and who converted him into the model of the classical Hellenistic artist, those who quoted him to explain their own way of thinking and philosophical developments, favouring an inspiring synthesis which has been referred to even in the present time.

Thus, our object of study is Phidias and we enter into the study of the sculptor and his works, guided by our interest to better understand all the contexts that lead to him being cited and put as example up to today.



Figure 1 ¹

2.- HISTORICAL CONTEXT

During the second half of the sixth century BCE, there was a significant amalgamation between two major ethnic groups, the Medes and Persians, who under the Achaemenid dynasty developed its ambitions to build an empire. During the reign of Cyrus the Great (559-530 BCE) and Darius I (522-486 BCE) the Persians advanced on Ionia. In 492 BCE. Darius and his forces attacked Greece and continued on for two years, guided by Hippias to the Bay of Marathon, located 42 miles north of Athens. There they were met by the Athenian infantry consisting of about 10,000 men, reinforced by a battalion from Plataea in Boacío. Despite the large numerical disparity (the Persians were about 90,000), the Greeks launched a surprise attack on the Persians, who had to retreat. According to the historian Herodotus, 6,400 Persians died at Marathon and only 192 Athenians, who were almost immediately recognized as heroes.²

But the Persians returned ten years later, led by Xerxes (who ruled from 486 to 465 BCE) with a force estimated at about 300,000 men who marched into Greece through Thrace, Macedonia and Thessaly. At a mountain pass just north of Delphi called Thermopylae, progress could be halted thanks to the Spartans and the heroism of Leonidas. But the Persians prevailed and the Athenians evacuated their city. In the autumn of 480 BCE Xerxes settled himself in the Acropolis, whose temples and shrines were desecrated by his troops. Later he fought the Greeks in the naval battle of Salamina and there he lost, and lost again in the land battle of Plataea, thus beginning his long decline.³

The victory over the Persians (448 BCE) brought external peace to the Greeks and allowed the development of "Classical" Greece. At the same time, it established the supremacy of Athens. But the wars between the cities were continuous and internal rivalries unceasing; only the age of Pericles is a period of relative peace until the Peloponnesian Wars are unleashed.

Classical Greece was based on a delicate balance of forces: the desire for freedom and independence versus the passion for supremacy and power, the equality of all, opposed with admiration for the "superior man," democracy versus oligarchy; submission to the law and service to the city versus individualism and the assertion that the protection of the individual is the ultimate goal of the city. When they combined harmoniously these tendencies achieved the "classical balance," the ideal of society. But above all, classical Greece is the city and is democracy.

The city is the centre of an independent state. Its territory - in which the people live - is small, and the total population is not very large. The city provides shelter in case of war and is the centre of all economic, social and political activity; there are markets, schools and gymnasia, the theatre and temples.

The Citizens' Assembly is sovereign; everyone can participate, in this way the representative system is ignored: the exercise of sovereignty is direct. Only the oligarchies, when successful, limit these rights.

However, the Greek city was based largely on the work of slaves, who were not mistreated but lacked all the rights of free citizens (who were only 25% of the population). Physical work was not highly regarded and it was not well looked upon to pursue a gainful activity, the Athenians preferred to live modestly and without frills. The city also provided a certain daily allowance for judges, the juries of the tribunals, soldiers and even - from the fourth century - all citizens on the days they participated in the Assembly. This explains why the city of Athens was dedicated mainly to public life. The house was for women, who lived marginalized. When the man of the house returned home, they often organized banquets with friends where they ate, drank, listened to music, and talked about politics and philosophy.

Athens was a seaport. It imposed its economy, its products, tastes and style throughout Greece. No wonder, then, that many foreigners came to it, many of whom settled there, coming to constitute almost one third of the population. They were excluded from political and property rights but were well received and were assimilated into all aspects of citizenry. They engaged in trade, small workshops or the arts. In fact, we can say that no scholar, artist or man of letters did not pass a period of his life in Athens.

These characteristics explain why Athens became the centre of philosophical thought. The conditions were favourable: democratic freedoms, a booming economy, contact with other cultures, foreign influx, and curiosity about everything. There arose ideal models of thought and there was time for philosophical discussion and theoretical research, but also for the great works of architecture and sculpture in which the theoretical values could be translated.

In this environment Phidias⁴ was born shortly after the battle of Marathon⁵, in 490 BCE and was not only a contemporary but also a close friend of Pericles, Aeschylus, Herodotus, Sophocles, and Euripides, as well as Anaxagoras, Empedocles, Gorgias, Protagoras, Democritus and Socrates.⁶

Son of Charmides, little is known about his personal life and almost nothing of his formation, although it is believed that he had experience as an engraver, painter and embosser. By some accounts he may have been trained by Calamis, Athenian bronze sculptor⁷ or by a disciple of Hegias and later in Argos, with Ageladas from whom he also learned the bronze techniques of Miron and Polyclitus. He was only 20 years of age when he began his sculptural works to which he devoted the rest of his life, materializing the images that Athens needed to assert its supremacy in the V century BCE. The sculptures of Phidias, designed and realized to be placed in the Parthenon and the main temples, consolidated classical Hellenism and became the benchmark

for his time. The excellence of his work and the accurate translation of the feeling of the epoch in his works, meant his name passed into history as the sublime artist.

The city-state of Athens was a confluence offering and demanding ideas and beliefs of the most diverse origins. There were beliefs rooted in the practices of Orphism, Pythagoreanism, the influence of the pre-Socratics, and the exchange with Egypt and the Orient. To the city state went the most prominent doctors, artists, and philosophers who regularly invoked their gods⁸. The fame and influence of Delphi was so great that all of Greece resorted to its oracle to consult on political, legal and personal behaviour and participated in celebrations and ceremonies in honour of Apollo and Dionysus, becoming a powerful centre for the consolidation of the Greek states⁹.

Athens governed by Pericles experienced one of the most luminous moments in its history. The city possessed all the conditions to become a great capital. Men flocked there from diverse backgrounds to create that rich mixture of cultures from which emerged the so-called "Greek Civilization"¹⁰ and that bears the fruit of the great accumulation of its process in the period known as the "Age of Pericles" and crowned by key events. Art reached its peak thanks to the architects Ictinus and Callicrates that built the Parthenon in marble as the peak of Doric refinement, Phidias directed the works and created the famous sculptures that decorated it, Sophocles presented his tragedies and Aristophanes his comedies.

Pericles, at just over 30 years of age, began to govern after having received an education which for that time was brilliant. His teachers were among others, the philosopher Anaxagoras¹¹ and Damon, who enjoyed a high profile among the Athenians. Later, already the leader of the state, he permanently maintained close relations with the most advanced and intelligent of his time: the sophist Protagoras, the historian Herodotus, the great artist Phidias. His contemporaries saw in Pericles a brave and energetic statesman, convinced of the ideas of democracy, an exceptional orator¹² and an independent person in his way of thinking¹³. During his government he significantly expanded the construction of buildings of character and social significance. He implemented the cherished dream of Themistocles: the city fortifications were joined by so called Long Walls, and linked with the port of Piraeus. Inside the city itself were built a number of fine buildings and beautiful statues. The first among them occupied by a wonder of the architectural art, the Parthenon, inside of which was a statue of the goddess Athena. In order to carry out this gigantic work there must have been a large number of sculptors on the Acropolis led by Phidias, who conceived the whole as the Citadel of the gods¹⁴. But also other buildings of the time of Pericles, such as the Odeon, for musical competitions, or the famous Propylaea, produce even today the admiration of human beings.¹⁵

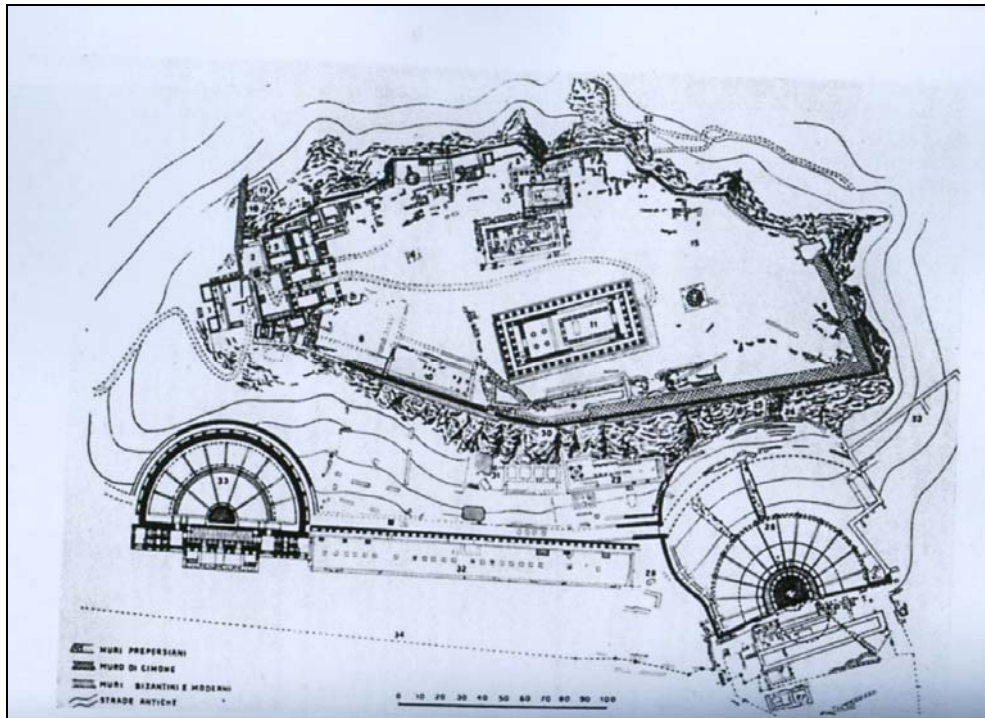


Figure 2 ¹⁶

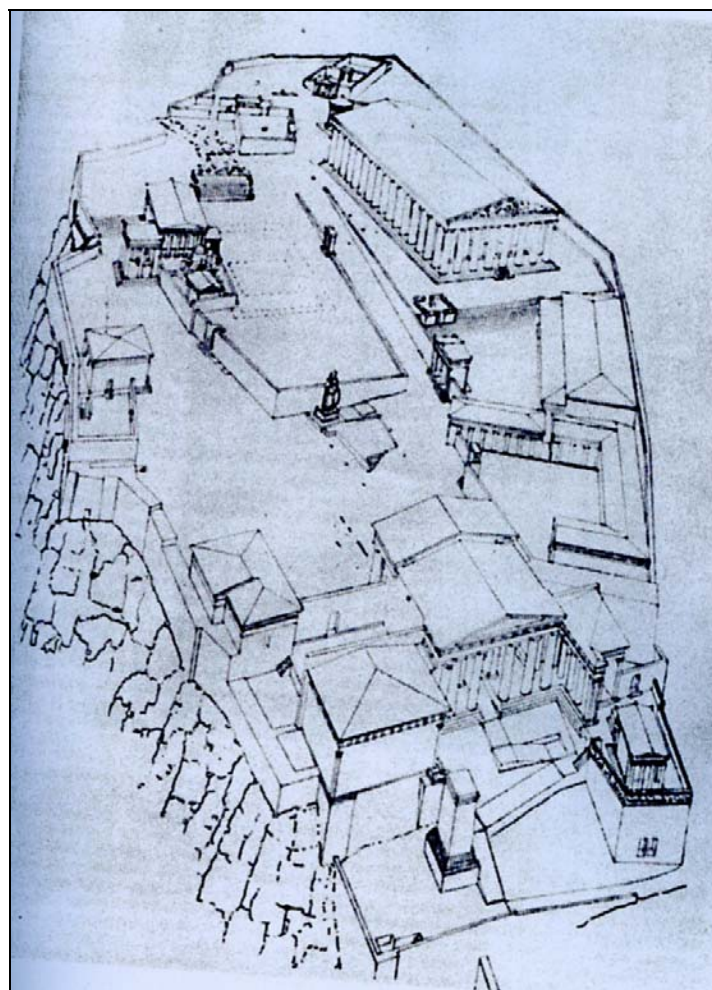


Figure 3 ¹⁷

3.- THE PARTHENON

At the time of the Persian withdrawal in 480, of the Acropolis in Athens there was not one stone standing. Before being defeated at Salamis and Plataea, Xerxes's troops razed the temples¹⁸, many of which were still unfinished, located at the top of the impressive stone "plateau" with its steep sides which had been fortified since ancient times, and which dominated the plain from its 80 meter altitude.

In the same place as the first city of Athens, where in Mycenaean and Homeric times there were civil, military and religious buildings, from the Archaic period the Acropolis included little more than Athenian shrines. Indeed, the upper part of the city, which was vacated by its inhabitants who preferred to live on the surrounding plains, had become a sacred place. There was built, on an artificial plateau of 175 meters by 300 meters, the temples of the goddess Athena who ruled the destiny of the city.

After the Persian destruction, the Athenians remained thirty-three years without reacting. Despite their victory, they did not know what to do about the ruins. The efforts of the Peisistratus to give the city a great group of monuments were sterile. It was necessary to wait for Pericles¹⁹ to be put in charge of the Athenian government to begin, in 447 BCE, the construction of the new Parthenon. The supervision of the work was entrusted to the sculptor Phidias and the architects Ictinus and Calícrates.²⁰

Relying on his team of artists and builders, Pericles conceived a grandiose project, enshrining the "great temple" of Athens to the glory of the goddess Athena Polias, protector of the city, exalting her character of Parthenos, a venerable virgin who had saved the Hellenes. And remodelled the whole "urbanism" of the Acropolis with its shrines and sacred places.²¹

That's how the Parthenon became and remained the most magnificent Doric temple ever built in the world.



Figure 4

The obvious place for the main sanctuary, for a building of such proportions, design and decoration of the greatest inspiration, giving expression to the feelings of gratitude to the goddess who brought victory over the Persians was on the platform of natural stone. The newly acquired ability to obtain Pentelic marble that was shipped from a mountain just ten miles away, helped with the construction.

The combination of all these events led to the decision to rebuild the Acropolis on a lavish scale, beginning in 447 BCE with the erection of a substructure of about 12 meters high along the south side, longer and narrower than its successor, about 76.8 meters long and 31 meters wide, forming a portion of the platform terrace on all four sides .

Pentelic marble was erected, the interior was the ancient temple of Athena, with the cella of 30 meters in length divided by a blank wall into two chambers of unequal size and surrounded on three sides by a Doric colonnade.



Figure 5

The larger chamber contained the chryselephantine²² statue of the goddess overlaid with gold and ivory, carved by Phidias in 438 BCE, whose total height including the base was 12 meters. The goddess was in the upright posture, with tunic and helmet and goatskin across her shoulders, carrying a spear in one hand and a figure of Nike (goddess of victory) in the other. At her feet was the shield with a complex decoration centred on Medusa, which is the only piece of this whole work which we have to this day.

An intense polychrome enhanced the formidable statue representing the Virgin Goddess, realized entirely in gold and ivory on a wood and metal frame, and placed in front of a large shallow pool, producing a shimmering effect thanks to its reflections .

Behind the cella was a square chamber supported by four Ionic pillars and used as a treasury for ornaments of worship. This was called the Parthenon, or House of the Virgin, but since the fourth century BCE it has been the term given to the entire temple. At the back of the chamber came the opisthodomos which was closed behind a grill of bronze between the columns.

In the cella, beside the great statue of Athena, there were many votive offerings and treasures that are mentioned in inventories (statuettes of gold, silver censers, ornaments, bowls, candlesticks, crowns, etc ...).

Figure 6 ²³

Among the abundance of carved decoration in the temple were twenty-four statues placed in the two triangular pediments²⁴, ninety-two metopes²⁵ carved in high relief on the exterior colonnade, representing the battle of the gods and giants²⁶, Greeks and amazons²⁷ and centaurs²⁸. The representations in the frontispiece alluded to the birth of Athena and her struggle with Poseidon for the possession of Attica. She triumphs and offers an olive branch, allegory of peace. In this case the tree recovered its meaning and became to be considered sacred. Also other mythological scenes appear as well as the magnificent heads of Theseus and Olympus.

Around the outer wall of the cella was an Ionic frieze (a low relief originally painted, with bronze reins and bridles on the horses), probably designed by Phidias in 440 BCE, representing the procession to the Acropolis and the Panathenaic celebrations held in the warmest part of summer.

After the Persian war, Pisistratus reformed the old traditional celebrations of the birth of the goddess with Panathenaic festivals. On the first three days sporting events were held, ending on the seventh day in the evening with a torchlight procession, games and sacrifices in the Acropolis.

In the frieze of the Parthenon, the procession was described in two parallel streams together starting with the southwest corner and moving in each direction towards the east, where they converged. The west frieze shows the preparations for the procession, there riders move northward along the temple with increasing speed in

an uproar accompanied by the elders, musicians and sacrificial animals led by a heifer. In the eastern frieze girls are carrying jugs, libation bowls and incense burners. Above the main east door of the Parthenon is represented the peplos, the new garment woven every four years to dress the statue of Athena, at the time of delivery to the priest by a boy, after being carried in procession climbing the citadel. The dressing of the goddess in the presence of the twelve Olympian gods, with Zeus in the centre, was indeed the highlight of the early Attic festival.²⁹

It is difficult to consider the frieze as a reproduction of a real procession, as a cavalcade of this kind could not have access to the Acropolis and its main temple. However, by the inscriptions in 335 BCE it is clear that there were two separate sacrifices in the Acropolis during the Panathenaics: a smaller, offered to Athena Hygieia on the ancient temple (ie, the Erechtheion), and the other a great slaughter of cattle, which was offered to both Athena Nike and Athena Polias at the great altar.

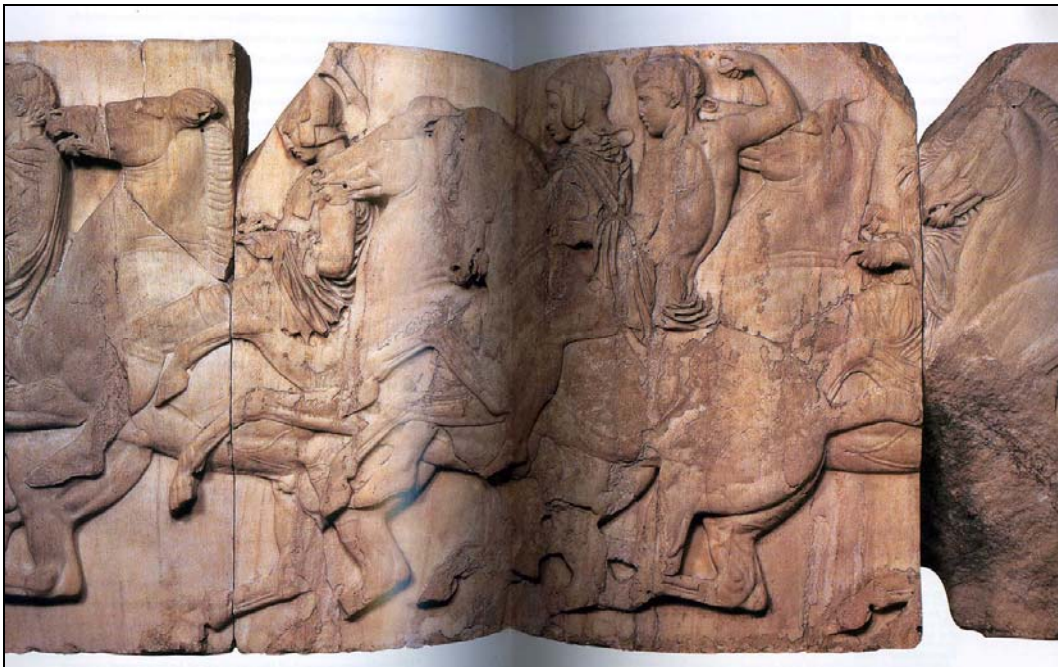


Figure 7 ³⁰

Deubner suggests that these two offerings can be distinguished in the frieze of the Parthenon in the four beasts and four sheep on the north side, representing those offered in the Erechtheion and a dozen in the south frieze, representing the largest slaughter and placed there because the sacrifice was celebrated in the Parthenon. In any case, the central highlight of the ritual was the act of dressing the statue of Athena, which seems to have been performed every four years.

For the Greeks of the time of Pericles, the goddess Athena was the most loved and admired, the highest expression of Olympian religion, the personification of the splendour and achievements of Athens, exemplified in the perfect form, design and colour of the art of Phidias.

Their victories in the battles against the gods, giants, Persians, Lapiths, centaurs and the power of Troy are represented around the Parthenon in metopes, which as its most renowned memory after the victory over the Persians, commemorated in detail what had been achieved.

Even when the Greek states and capital declined, and the Olympian gods were determined by the influence of Ionian philosophical abstractions, Athena Parthenos remained a vital force.³¹

Moreover, it is likely that the Panathenaic frieze forming the back to the cella of the temple, represents something of the victory of the Greeks over the Persians. Indeed, could it be that this procession is a sort of "response" to the frieze that lined the stairs of the Apadana of Persepolis? It could be that the two works are the two parts of one great diptych which appeared within an interval of half a century.

The Apadana of Persepolis with the staircases flanking the reception room of the nations, built by Darius around 500 BCE deployed bas-reliefs of the famous procession of bearers of offerings in three tiers. The twenty-three nations parade in front of the Great King to make donations of goods that symbolize the tributes paid to the empire. This immense procession of bearers of offerings took place in the Persian new year festival and exalted imperial unity.



Figure 8

The work commissioned by the Achaemenid king does not seek movement but order and rigor. In its aesthetics it imposes a certain stately quality that translates the organization of the empire. The treatment of the faces, hands, the head gear and the quality of the horses and wild animals all make this collection a stunning achievement. We know that very important artists and artisans from Ionia also took part in this work. We know also that Greek diplomats visited Persepolis. It is therefore impossible that the Athenians did not have any information about this remarkable work done in honour of the unification of the Persian kingdom.

Since then, to deal with the Achaemenid artistic "manifesto", Pericles, aware of the need to exalt a solid Greek character around the divine saviour that the goddess Athena Polias represented, decided to decorate the Parthenon with a frieze that would be clearly superior to that of Persepolis and which would end up eclipsing it.

The Panathenaic procession was carried out between 442 and 438 and commemorates a religious and civic celebration, expressing the unity of the four tribes of the city of Athens.

Looking at the figures in the procession of bearers of offerings in Persepolis on one hand and at that of the Panathenaic procession in Athens on the other, one gets the impression that the Greeks set out to challenge the Persians in everything. If in the Persepolis parade of nations there are included a total of 250 characters, about forty animals and some carriages, on the Acropolis, the Parthenon frieze gathers 360 characters - of which 143 are riders - and up to 220 animals and a dozen carriages.



Figure 9 ³²

The work of Phidias and his team of artist assistants surpassed in a broad sense the creation of Achaemenid. The latter is reduced to a parade, a sort of triumphal march, while that of the Greeks is a civic and religious festival. The strict order of immortals next to the disorder of the happy Greek riders, the rigorous perfection of the Achaemenid drapes in front of the flexibility of the loose clothing of Greek citizens: it is the antagonism, sculpturally expressed, between the strong centralized power of the Persian kingdom and the almost anarchic freedom of the Greeks in their

independent cities. The frieze of Phidias celebrates classical dynamism in all its fullness.

As with the tympanum and metopes with their colour highlighting, the frieze is an integral part of the architecture. All ornamentation is to serve the construction, which gives it its religious, social and political significance in the confrontation between East and West in the slow conquest of freedom promoted by the Greek city.

In this sense the Parthenon offers its triumphant majesty as if suspended between heaven and earth on top of the Acropolis. Its eight columned facades, powerful and airy, its forest of columns around its perimeter, its broad side perspective, repetitive but always variable - the distance between the axes of the columns is cut in the extremes and in the middle and higher ranges, in the fourth and seventh intervals from every angle on the south side - and its elegance, the evident result of a balance achieved through the laws of symmetry, are a reflection of perfection and beauty rarely achieved.³³

The dimensions of the columns were specially calculated to be viewed from a particular distance. Thanks to what is known as entasis, the columns were made wider in the middle so that they would not appear concave (by natural optical distortion). Also the centre was expanded; making them conical above and inclined inward. Thus, the refined construction gives the impression of perfect symmetry, a paragon of classical order and an apparent reference to the knowledge of geometry by Greek mathematicians and architects.

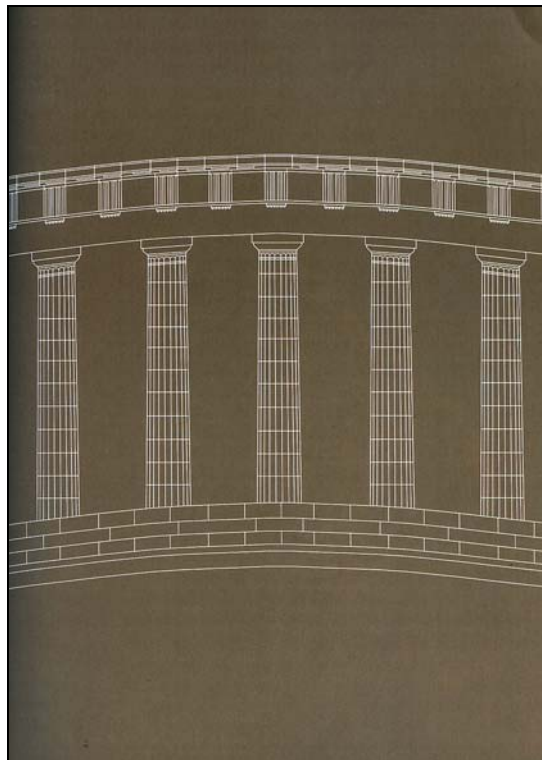


Figure 10 ³⁴

Even the proportions of the temple, all strictly bounded by the so-called Divine Proportion or Golden Section, which is shown in the rectangular temple and its various areas and elevations and on the facade itself, are very clear indicators of the architectural refinement of the time. Moreover, this proportion between segments with its so special aesthetics, was called by the Greek letter Phi in honour, precisely, of Phidias.

Later, apparently between 438 and 432, Mnesicles built the Propylaea, the monumental entrance to the Acropolis. Although the configuration of the door is asymmetrical, it achieves a special harmony thanks to its beautiful Doric and Ionic columns, the latter more slender and terminating in capitals with volutes. In the north wing of the Propylaea was installed a gallery equipped with divans. Also installed in the enclosure was a bronze statue of Athena Promachos 10 meters high, the work of Phidias, a series of monumental chariots, war trophies, formidable statues and votive offerings all of marble.

Another important shrine in the citadel was the Erechthion, built between 421 and 406 BCE in the Ionic style, adorned with the famous Caryatids, and which contained an olive wood sculpture depicting the goddess Athena.

The last of the classical temples, that of Athena Nike, also was built in Ionic style.

At the foot of the Acropolis stood the theatre of Dionysus - which presented the works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes - and the Odeon of Pericles ³⁵.

4.- ATHENA

For the ancient Greeks, Athena, one of the major Olympic goddesses, was the representation of knowledge and skill.

According to tradition, during the Gigantomachy Zeus joined with Metis, daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, who had hidden in her interior all the wisdom of the world. When Metis became pregnant, a prophecy said there will be born a woman who in turn will give birth to a son who would seize power from Zeus. The god, dominated by fear, swallowed Metis, but nine months later began to have intolerable headaches. Then he asked Hephaestus (according to other versions, Prometheus) to open his head with an axe. From his head came a young woman fully armed and uttering war cries. Immediately after the birth, the goddess took part in the Gigantomachy and significantly helped her father by killing the giants Pallas and Enceladus.

The birth of Athena from the head of Zeus and without maternal care, gave her masculine qualities. Her original character was bellicose, having come to life fully

armed and uttering war cries. Among her arms were a helmet, spear and the aegis (a kind of armour made of goatskin) that Amalthea, nurse of Zeus, had given the god and only Athena had the privilege to use. On the shield was placed the head of the Gorgon (Medusa) who turned to stone whoever looked at her. The same goddess, or Perseus with the help of Athena, had beheaded the Gorgon.

The warlike character of Athena differed from that of Ares, the god of war. Ares represented confrontation without tactics, the violence of war, while Athena taught men the techniques and norms of the intelligently organized battle. This is why ancient writers often present the two gods in conflict or clashing during the Trojan War. Ares, the savage, that had taken side with the Trojans, was wounded several times by Athena in her efforts to protect the Greeks.

Along with Hera, Athena courageously protected the Achaeans, for whom she felt particular sympathy. In critical moments she supported Menelaus, Diomedes, Achilles, Agamemnon and Odysseus (Ulysses to the Romans). It was she who instilled in the latter the idea of the Trojan horse and did not hesitate to provide it with her own attributes of wisdom and inventiveness that characterized the heroine. Along the arduous return journey of Odysseus to Ithaca, Athena stood by his side to help in every difficulty. The goddess also showed special affection for the descendants of Agamemnon because when Orestes killed his mother Clytemnestra to avenge the murder of his father Agamemnon, Athena defended him in court and saved him from the Erin (the Furies of the Romans) when he was persecuted for patricide. There are other heroes who enjoyed her protection: Perseus, the Argonauts, Bellerophon, Tydeus and her favourite Heracles. Thanks to the generous help offered not only men but also to the cities, the ancient Greeks worshiped her as the Saviour.

A ritual epithet of Athena is *Promachos* (who ranks in front in the struggle, and by extension, as the defender) and who is linked to the protection offered at the time of the battle. Even the Greeks thought that during the Medic Wars, in the early V century BCE it was the goddess who granted them victory, because of this they called her Athena Nike (of Nike = victory).

On the sacred rock of the Acropolis stood the enormous statue of Athena Promachos made by Phidias. It is said that the tip of the spear and the crest of the protective helmet of the goddess were visible from the sea near Cape Sounion, which suggests that the statue dominated throughout Attica.

With her warrior character she is linked also with the epithet of Athena Hippias, which she was often called. It was she who first taught men the art of taming horses, and gave Bellerophon a golden bridle for his winged horse, Pegasus.

Athena Hippias managed to tame the horse and for the Greeks acquired one more important quality, allegorizing the domestication of this close animal. She became the

goddess of wisdom and wit representing the idea of the superiority of the spirit and mind over physical force and the violence of war.

She was responsible for developing all the techniques that could facilitate peace among men. For this reason she acquired the ritual epithet of Athena Ergane. Architects, sculptors and painters considered her their protector, and musicians attributed to her the discovery of the flute and believed that it was she who first danced the war dance called Pyrrhic after the victory of the gods in Gigantomachy .

In addition, it was Athena who manufactured man's first weapons and instruments and taught the art of navigation (Argonauts), of ploughing with oxen, work with bronze, making clay and the potter's wheel for ceramics. The fact that she also dealt with the arts and crafts related with fire linked her to Hephaestus, and she was worshipped in his sanctuary, the Hefestion in the Agora of Athens.

Thus, the special figure of the daughter of Zeus, concentrated the allegories of the most important qualitative leaps recorded by mankind: the crafts of fire, ceramics, bronze, the domestication of plants (the plough) and animals such as the horse, besides sea travel and strategy in war.

Another of her inventions was the art of weaving. Throughout antiquity she was known for her special skills in weaving and the manufacture of fabrics which she gave to the gods and heroes. The technique of weaving she first taught to Pandora who then taught the women. The myth of Arachne developed because of this talent, a particularly skilled weaver who dared to compare herself to the goddess and challenged her to a contest. It was then that Athena converted her into an insect and condemned her to weave without ceasing, but always there was someone to destroy her fabrics.

The symbol of the peaceful nature of the goddess was the olive tree which she gave to the Athenians and taught them how to cultivate it. According to myth, Athena and Poseidon fought over which of them would take the city of Athens under their protection. The gods advised them that each would give the city a gift that would be the criterion for choosing the winner. After climbing the Acropolis, Poseidon struck the earth with his trident and sea water flowed. Athena, meanwhile, kicked the ground and an olive tree grew, the first in the world. Eventually the city was awarded to Athena and took its name from the goddess. The divine olive was always in the sacred rock, and when in 480 BCE it was burned by the Persians, it grew again immediately.

After the fight with Poseidon, Athena became forever the protector goddess of the city. It is even said that the first of their kings, Erechtheus, was raised by Athena and for this reason the king and the goddess were worshiped together in the great temple

of the Acropolis, the Erechtheion. Inside the temple was the famous wooden statue of the goddess, called Palladium, which according to myth, had fallen from the sky.

Athena also raised an ancient king of Athens Erichthonius, who was born of the sperm of Hephaestus who fertilized the land of Attica when the Goddess rejected his love and escaped his embrace. The goddess gave the king the blood of the Gorgon (Medusa) with which he could produce medicines to cure diseases, but also produce poisons.

Thus, in Athens the cult of Athena was of particular importance. The inhabitants of the city dedicated to its goddess the most splendid temple of all time, the Parthenon, which dominates to this day the Athenian scene. This majestic temple was dedicated to Athena Parthenos.

Athena was worshiped as Parteno (Greek parteno-a = virgin) because according to tradition she avoided the marriage bed and remained untouched by the desire of love. Because in essence the goddess did not have a mother as she was born from the head of Zeus, and she is not linked at all with love, marriage or motherhood, and therefore maintains her virginity. In this sense she is linked with the epithet Pallas, which expresses constant and flourishing youth and comes from the word pallax which in Greek means a woman or a young boy.



Figure 11 ³⁶

In honour of the patron goddess of Athens, the Athenians made the biggest celebration in the city, the Panathenaic, on whose last day all the people participated in a stately procession up to the Acropolis to give the statue of the goddess a new tunic woven and embroidered by Ergastinas, young girls who had been chosen to make it.



Figure 12 ³⁷

The procession began from the area of Ceramica, in whose patio was placed a portable boat. On the mast of the boat was placed a new Peplo decorated with scenes from the Gigantomachy. The ship, accompanied by all Athenians, passed the Agora and the Acropolis where the ceremony ended with the carrying out of sacrifices. The procession was an event so significant that Phidias represented it with exceptional art in the Ionic friezes of the Parthenon.³⁸

Phidias represented Athena three times in the Acropolis: a colossal form on the outside, armed, Athena Promachos with shield and spear, with a peak so high that could be seen by sailors approaching Cape Sounion; it was the goddess who represented the power of Athens, then he represented her without armour and with her helmet in hand, a thoughtful young goddess, the Athena Lemnia. This is the thinking Athena, the goddess constructor of knowledge and civilization. And then, thirdly, the jewel in gold and ivory adorned with precious stones that had to be kept in the wonderful cella of the Parthenon, the Athena Parthenos, creator of the well-being of the "polis." We do not know how the Promachos was, but we somehow reconstruct the sweetness and benevolence of the Parthenos through the replica in the Museum of Bologna, which shows how before coming to this conception of a

protective and serene goddess he wanted to express the divine image of Athena Lemnia in deep thought, almost in search for the origin of all things.³⁹



Figure 13 ⁴⁰

5.- THE TEMPLE OF ZEUS AT OLYMPIA

It was in the city of Olympia where the great temple of Zeus was built, with the chryselephantine statue by Phidias taking the place of honour. It was erected between 470 and 456 BCE, sparing no expense, situated in a sacred place on a high substructure which was accessed by three steps. Unfortunately nothing remains of the statue, only a few blocks of the walls of the cella having survived. However, the floor of the temple has been conserved, its solid platform surrounded by large drums of fallen pillars, blocks of the architraves; statue bases fill the terrace along with altars and votive offerings, ornaments and architectural features. Many of the remains of the sculptures are now in the Museum of Olympia, as well as busts of Zeus and his image on coins, which may have been inspired by the statue of Phidias.

The metopes represent the labours of Hercules, and a stone bench suggests that it was used for speeches of orators, philosophers and poets. On the eastern facade represented in twenty colossal figures the sacrifice to Zeus in the chariot race, and in the west pediment, the struggle of Lapiths and Centaurs. In the first half was Zeus and Apollo and in the second Apollo as the invisible referees of the combatant heroes although not reaching the perfection of the Parthenon sculptures.

In the spaces between the pillars of the colonnade there were bronze statues and votive offerings, while in the cella, over the seven Doric columns on each side of the nave, was a row of lighter columns with galleries over the lateral naves, which was reached by stairs on the corners, perhaps to allow viewing of the statue. In the antechamber, which extended to the second pillar, access to the image was separated by a barrier of porous stone. This unique image of Zeus, invested with attributes taken from Olympic, Platonic and Stoic conceptions of "father of gods and men" and the ideals of the philosopher-king, was one of the main attractions for the crowds who came to Olympia to compete in or watch the games, to venerate the statue and to sell or buy in the shops of the merchants. In fact, Olympia, as a spiritual, athletic and trade centre came to be frequented by all of the Greek-speaking world. Thus, in order to meet the requirements of the statue and its worship, the gallery was inserted into the temple, and its sanctuary was secured with bars of stone and bronze doors, with special priests for their care⁴¹.



Figure 14 ⁴²

It was precisely such a sculptural representation of Zeus which measured 12 meters high, which became part of the so-called "Seven Wonders of the Ancient World".⁴³

Exiled after being accused by opponents of Pericles of embezzling gold from the statue of Athena, Phidias died in the city of Olympia, one year after completing the sculpting of the Parthenon frieze in 431 BCE

6.- THE SCULPTURES

This multi-faceted artist initially worked in bronze, as was de rigueur then.



Figure 15 ⁴⁴



Figure 16

He then adopted with astonishing mastery and versatility materials such as marble, gold and ivory. But he acquired his reputation for the representation of the immeasurable greatness of the divinity, through the beauty and grandeur of the colossal statues that instilled in the viewer that approached them an unmistakable feeling of extraordinary and respectful encounter with the beauty of their god.

His main works are built on a wooden frame to which were attached fine carved ivory blocks, representing the body, and sheets of gold leaf to make the costumes, armour, hair and other details. In some cases, glass or glass paste, precious and semiprecious stones were used for details such as eyes, jewellery and weapons.

The construction was modular, so that part of the gold could be withdrawn and melted into coins or bullion in times of scarcity, to be replaced later when finances improved. For example, the figure of Nike which was in the right hand of Athena Parthenos was solid gold for this purpose. In fact, in times of prosperity six gold Nikes were cast, which served as "sacred treasure" and whose security was reinforced by the sanctity attributed to objects of worship, in addition to the presence of priests, priestesses, and maintenance personnel of the temple.

The statues were not only visually striking, but they also showed the wealth and cultural achievements of those who constructed them. The creation of a statue of this kind involves skills in sculpture, woodworking, jewellery and ivory carving. Once completed, they required constant maintenance. It is known that in Olympia qualified personnel were employed to ensure the maintenance of the statue of Zeus.

With his creations, Phidias marks the end of an austere period in the history of sculpture, and the inauguration of the classical period. Notable is the relief work of the metopes, which use the limited space well, and introduce what is known as attic relief, which combines high, medium and low relief in an attempt to give perspective and whose influence we shall see in sculptors of the Italian Renaissance.⁴⁵



Figure 17

The high relief sculpture of Phidias seems to be stuck to the metopes. Without atmosphere, studying the nude in depth and achieving a lot of movement, without falling in to the baroque. It is possible to see a gradual evolution towards a completely natural way, lavish, unitary, which will then be expressed in the friezes and pediments.

The characters are part of a world of serene beauty, of harmonious composition, of majestic expression and gesture, full of calm Olympic grandeur, technical perfection and a balance between naturalism and idealism.⁴⁶



Figure 18

Moreover, the masterly treatment of the fabrics, which cling to the body and draw contours, conveys the creative side of the distinctive style of Hellenistic classicism.

A process so homogeneous in the sculpting of the different metopes, of the relief figures in the friezes as well as three-dimensional statues which adorned the facade would not have been possible in such a short time without the presence of a master under whose direction worked a large number of assistants, ie of one that created a school, who designed the models, who made the clay maquettes, who physically corrected things. The unmistakable style of the Parthenon, with its ample relaxed forms, faces enriched by long hair and by thick curly beards, containing expressions of warmth and ethical serenity, was formed during the execution of the metopes by

the important figure of Phidias who exercised his fascination with his major collaborators, who in turn became teachers of others.

Having sketched the artist, let's look at his most human aspect, almost his weakness: the passion for horses, something that is not rare in great artists such as for example Leonardo, Donatello, Verrocchio and even Delacroix. However, none represented them so carefully, in such a variety of ways, no one thought to cover tens of meters of friezes with their figures in relief. The type of horses on the Panathenaic frieze is due to their design and the superb representation of the equine ideal, with firm and supple muscles in which the network of veins can be seen and whose marvellous heads emerge in a nervous quivering.⁴⁷

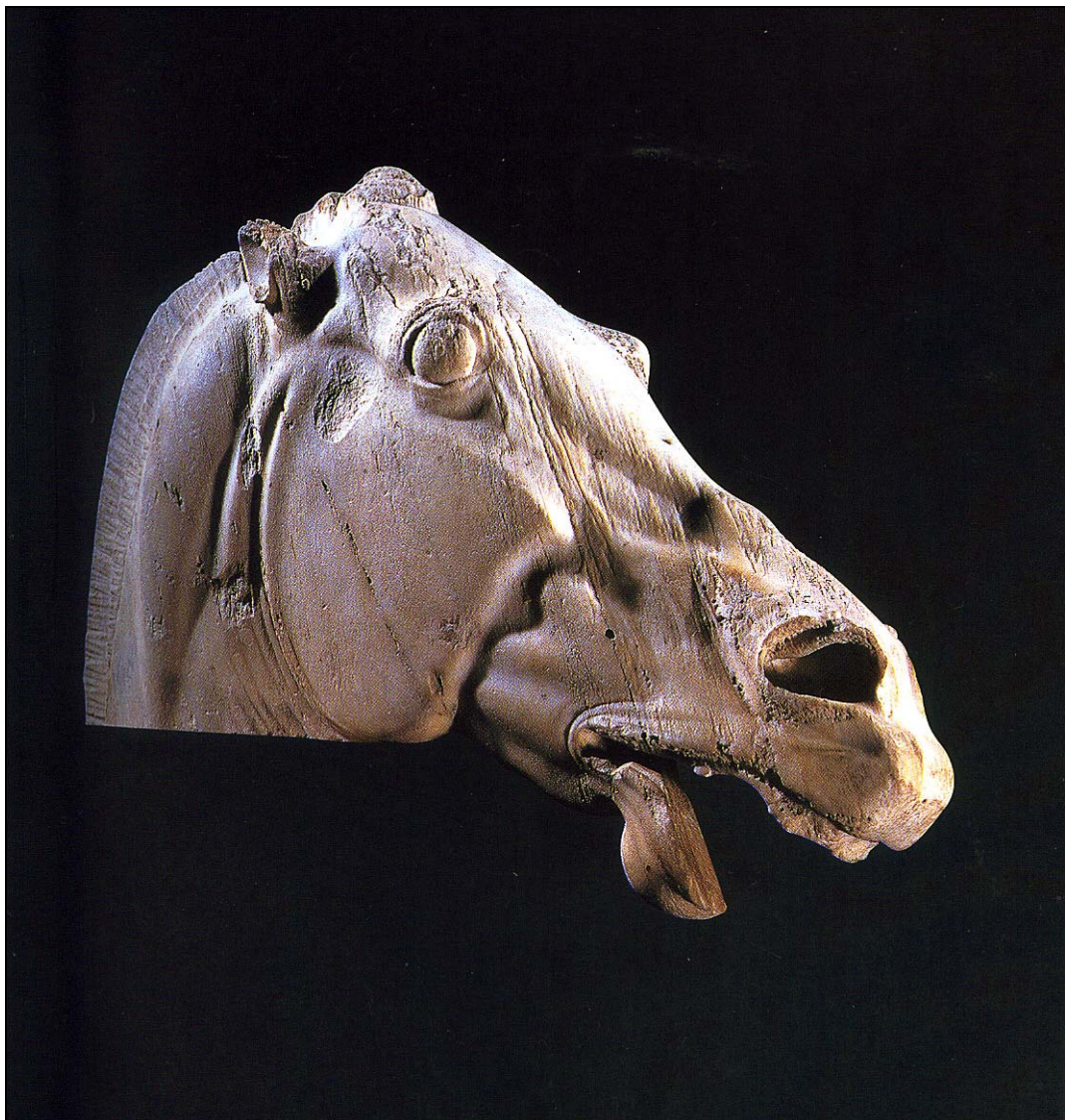


Figure 19 ⁴⁸

We will not go further here in the description of the many sculptures of our subject. Suffice to mention that his influence extended to both the painting of vases and sculpture in the following centuries, revolutionizing the way of sculpting by

breaking with the frontal and developing volume and fluidity of form, the great effects of light and shade, and achieving a characteristic balance and dynamism.

The school of Greek sculpture of the V century BCE. allows this art to be considered the greatest of the plastic arts and since which sculpture will always be referred to the works of the Athenians. The grace contained in the figures of Phidias immortalizes the philosophical and spiritual feeling in the art of his time, whose main purpose was to capture the timeless and enduring aspects of human beauty, rather than the details inherent in a specific model.

Like all aesthetics, that of the century of Pericles captures the subtle tensions of the epoch and manages to translate them into the three-dimensionality of space in a way that fits perfectly with the sensibility of that time, and thanks to it, create an atmosphere where new tendencies and ideas can germinate and develop from these moments. Art anticipates theoretical formulations that will ensue, resulting in a sort of indicator of proposals, uses and customs that are about to come. As Kandinsky says, "every work of art is the daughter of its time, and often the mother of our feelings."⁴⁹

Thus, the Parthenon can be considered the ambit, the container, in which breaths the full luminosity of the V century. The sculptures complete inspiring forms, favouring the emergence of content later rationalized and able to engender the ideas of those who, like the great philosophers, were formed in that landscape.

As Zeus was for Athena, the V Century will be for the ordering formulations of Western thought, born as the fruit of the process of Athenian thinkers.

7.- RELATIONSHIP WITH ANAXAGORAS

To understand Phidias it is also necessary to attend to his spirituality, which sets him apart from his contemporaries in the search for a new form of religiosity to which he surely arrived thanks to the teachings of Anaxagoras.

The philosopher was described by the ancients as an atheist and certainly he was so in respect of the Olympian religion but not in regard to his feelings and spiritual aspirations. Rather he tried to recognize a cosmic order and to refer human affairs to that order. He affirmed the eternity of the Mind, of "nous", the supreme orderliness of the world.

Fr 12, Simplicius, Phys. (164, 24 and 156, 13): " All other things have a portion of everything, but Mind is infinite and self-ruled, and is mixed with nothing but is all alone by itself. Well, if it were not by itself, but, mixed with something else, it would participate in all others, because in everything there is a portion of everything, as I

said before: things mixed with it would prevent it being able to rule any of them alone by itself. It is indeed the subtlest and purest of all, has the knowledge over everything and maximum power. The Mind governs all things with life, both the largest and the smallest. The Mind also ruled over the whole rotation, so that it began to turn in the beginning. It began to turn first from a small area, now it turns over a larger one and it will turn over another even larger. It knows all about things mixed, separated and divided. The Mind ordered all things that would be, all that were and now are not, all that are now and how many will be, even this rotation that now involve the stars, the sun and the moon, air and ether being separated. This rotation made them separate. The dense is separated from the subtle, warmth from cold, brightness from darkness and the dry from the wet. There are many portions of many things, but none are completely separated or divided from the other except the Mind. The Mind is all alike, both in its larger parts as in the smallest, while nothing else is like any other, but each body is unique and has been more clearly that which it contains the most."

Fr 13, Simplicius, Phys. (300, 31): "And when the Mind started the movement, it was separated from everything that was moving and everything that the Mind moved was separate, while things were moving and were divided, rotation greatly increased its division process."⁵⁰

The concept of cosmic order of Anaxagoras can be seen in Phidias because he concludes his compositions several times between the images of the rising sun and the setting moon, images that surely had to be inserted with precise intentions in framing three scenes of great significance, all scenes of birth: Athena goddess of thought, Pandora, or the first mortal woman capable of creating a generation of men and of Aphrodite, goddess of the fruitful life, creator of all nature. The scenes of birth and his figures are no longer mythological representations but evident symbols that belong to philosophy, and the cosmic framing of the rising sun and the setting moon means nothing but the immutable order of the cosmos.

The theme of the circular motion of the stars was at the centre of Anaxagoras' thought and was picked up and translated by Phidias into artistic language. He represented the Olympian gods as unconcerned and inattentive on the east pediment of the Parthenon whilst Athena is born and engaged in conversation in the eastern frieze of the temple itself, when the sacred robe is delivered to the goddess.

We can see that Athena, the honoured goddess, was not preoccupied about what happens in the centre of the frieze and the mortals at the head of the Panathenian procession turn their backs to the immortal gods. Considering that they have human form but different dimensions, because whilst sitting they reach the height of mortals, and are not concerned with what happens around them, one can conclude that for Phidias the Olympian gods may exist, but as a kind of ornamentation of the cosmos.

The only gods, or rather allegories of his most abstract thought, were for him Zeus the supreme organizer and Athena, the goddess born of his mind, thought itself, become the protector of Athens as a way to represent the indissoluble union of the nous of Anaxagoras.⁵¹

Moreover, the inner circle of his friends was directly influenced by Anaxagoras, just as is the case of Pericles, the ruler who commissioned the work.

This is the historical moment in which pre-Attic philosophy was clearly showing its influence as the substrate, the landscape in which were formed not only artists and leaders but also philosophers such as Socrates and Plato, strongly influenced by the Pythagoreans.

The art of Phidias captures and embodies precisely this substrate in forms that fit perfectly the sensibility of the epoch. The beauty of his work communicates a new understanding of the being, of the world, of the cosmic order, in which appears the intuition of the eternal Mind and questions about it. Those questions, those searches that constitute the very atmosphere of V century BCE

In the pre-Socratics we can observe this interesting thread, from the influences of ancient Eastern schools whose teachings Pythagoras collects on his trip to Egypt, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor, and which are also traceable to Plato who, especially in his book "Timaeus" examines reality from the formal point of view.

For each of them forms constitute the essence of reality. The pre-Socratics are in search of a prime reason, a pure form, capable of explaining even phenomena so changeable as biological ones. All is explained by forms: triangles which can be transformed and giving rise to others, multiplying and growing living things are explained as forms in action, dynamic forms, not static forms. In that pre-attic environment, people were looking for elevated things that have to do with the development of consciousness.

That they search for the pure form requires a totally different mental effort and one begins to think and to be located differently, to have different experiences. Regardless of its truth or theories, in the search of the pure form there is a position that leads to another way of thinking and to other types of experiences.⁵²

We see all that acting in the epoch of our sculptor. We see the search for that primary reason, the nous, as Anaxagoras called it. This is a historic moment that is – because of all this – antecedent of the Morphological Discipline. An historic moment and a place in which the way of seeing reality and its relationship to forms are also displayed, with all its extraordinary beauty, in the arts, especially in architecture, sculpture and literature.

8.- PLATO

During classical antiquity it was said that no one could create, artistically, a world of beings more perfect and with better balance and expression than Phidias. His characters are the models that only rarely and imperfectly, can be seen among mortals. That is why his art is often compared to the world of ideas of Plato.

And Plato dealt with the discussion about the nature of beauty in one of his dialogues. As one character says, the sculptor Phidias is a great artist and his works are beautiful and perfect, but another questions that his statue of Athena is not entirely of gold. We can deduce that the latter believes that beauty is given by the wealth of the gold. The first character is Socrates seeking knowledge and virtue. The other is the sophist Hippias.

In the "Hippias Major", he argues that beauty is gold, that is, what prevails is the appearance of things and their material value. But Socrates (and through him Plato) does not accept that if something looks beautiful it means that it is. He argues that Beauty is what allows things to be beautiful: Beauty is an idea analogous to Truth and Goodness. This is the concept of beauty that Plato proposes in ancient Greece, which conceived the world as an ordered cosmos and, because of that, beautiful, where there was harmony between human and divine orders. Art should reflect that beauty through harmony and balance. For Plato measure and proportion are beauty and virtue, beauty, kindness and goodness have a common ideal nature.⁵³

Our sculptor is then the one who best embodies Platonic ideals, creating beauty out of stone, giving meaning to harmonic proportion, representing the inspirational figures of the gods to whom the city is dedicated.

But wherein lies beauty? Is it in the marble itself, in the ivory or the gold, as claimed by Hippias? Is it in the forms, proportions, in the lines and geometry of compositional balance? What is the essence that creates it?

The questions that underlie Plato's dialogue, the questions about the causes that underlie phenomena lead us to his disciple, Aristotle.

9.- ARISTOTLE

For this post Platonic philosopher, Phidias is a benchmark used to explain his thinking. Thus, about wisdom he says:

"Of the five habits of mind, it only remains to deal with wisdom, which is the current theme, and demonstrates that wisdom is the name for perfection, added to science and art, and proven by the common way of speaking, because we say that a painter

or sculptor is wise when their art is excellent. Finally, he concludes that wisdom is to understand well the principles of the most serious things, and what derives from them.

In the arts, then, we attribute wisdom to those who excel the most in them, and thus we say that Phidias is a wise sculptor and Polycleitus a wise engraver, through which we understand nothing of wisdom but the virtue and excellence each of them has had in their art. Also we judge others as being wise, commonly and generally and not in anything particular, as Homer writes of Margit:

The gods did not make him
 A wise man neither in digging nor cultivating the earth,
 Nor did they grant him any other knowledge;
 from which it follows that the most perfect science of all is wisdom.
 Therefore the wise should not only understand that which the principles infer,
 but that the very principles have to be very well understood, and the truth they have.
 So understanding and science together will make wisdom, and the science of the
 most precious things will be like the head of wisdom.”⁵⁴

The causes and principles of the being of things, from which something is established, Aristotle explained with the example of the sculptor.

He called Principle the starting point of something, from where movement and change may begin. Some principles are inherent in things, others are external, hence they can be first and final cause, since in many cases Goodness and Beauty are the principles of knowledge and movement.

Cause is that from which something is generated and remains inherent in it⁵⁵. For example, bronze is the cause of the statue, is its material cause. But also its form is a cause. Just as the movement to create the statue originates in the author who produces it, is a cause of the product. Ultimately there is also the end, or the final cause which may be beauty or goodness.

The cause of the statue is the sculptor, but so is the image that gives it shape and the substance from which is made and which allows the achievement of its final cause.

Form is for Aristotle that principle by which a thing becomes visible and shows what it is. Form is necessarily form of something. In the case of a sculpture, the form taken by the marble the artist decided to work on.

Matter is something determined by the limit of what we call form, and that leaves those limits to become something else. The chair becomes wood or ashes. All matter is material for a form.⁵⁶

These two principles - matter and form - explain the being (the constitution) of things, but do not explain how they become what they are, ie how they are generated.

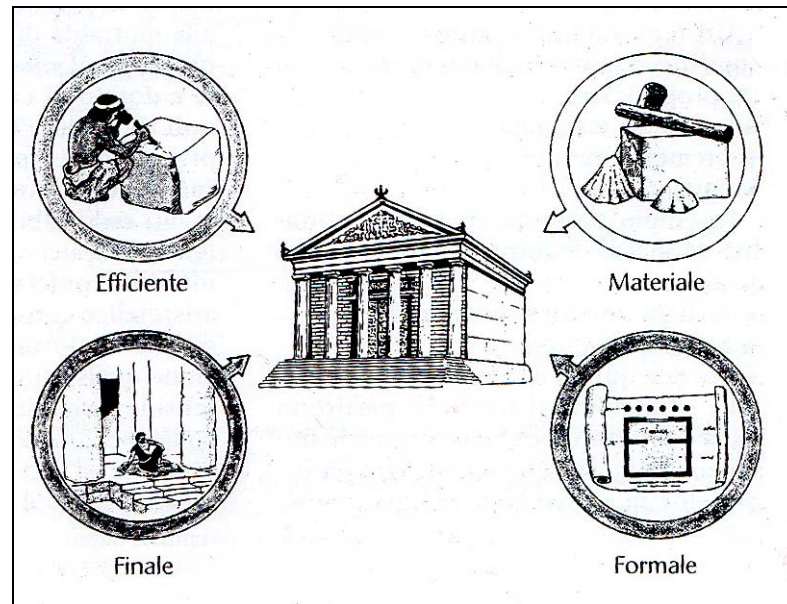
The fact that here there is a store of wood does not mean we will find after some time, ready-made chairs. There must be a craftsman - in this case a carpenter – who works the wood and sets in motion the form that becomes a chair. The craftsman is an agent or efficient cause, and this applies to all things that come to be: there is an agent of their being. The efficient cause. Why did the craftsman make the chair, and what is the chair for? The final cause is the fourth Aristotelian cause.

The famous four causes are the material, formal, efficient and final causes. The material cause is a question about the substance of which something is made. For example, a statue can be made of marble. The formal cause asks about the essence of something in the sense of what it is. Thus, this statue is the statue of Athena. The efficient cause asks who made it. Thus, it might be a statue by Phidias. The final cause questions its end, its function or what it is for. The statue of Athena may serve to show in the grandeur of the Acropolis, the goddess who protected the city of Athens.

In the example of a statue like the goddess Athena Parthenos sculpted by Phidias, commissioned by Pericles and worshiped by the Athenians the material cause is the marble and gold of which it is made, the formal cause is the shape of the statue that pre-existed in the spirit of the sculptor Phidias, when he designed the work, the efficient cause is the same sculptor who acted as agent and the final cause the worship that the city pays the patron goddess, worship for which the statue is meant (and determining both its enormous size, hieratic form and solemn demeanour of the figure of Athena made with the finest materials).

Summarizing the causes and principles of being and arriving to be (becoming) of all things existing in the world: a) the formal principle (form), which answers the question, what is it? b) the material principle, which responds to the question, what is it made of? c) the efficient cause or agent, that answers the question, who or what produced it? and d) the final cause, that answers the question, what for?

And the final cause is the reason something is done and all the other causes are put into action. It is the good of the thing. That is why Aristotle says that the final cause is the cause of all causes.⁵⁷

Figure 20 ⁵⁸

Art, for example, requires a material cause, "a cause sufficient to translate the work. You can not draw in water".

You need a "material cause" and a "formal cause". Phidias, the sculptor, hews the marble that has to coincide with his formal intent. His idea, his consciousness acts on the material and things "obey" his idea. The energy is the "efficient cause" of Phidias or his assistants. While all are necessary causes, we must differentiate between them. The energy required is psychophysical, is potential energy. In addition to all this is the process of Phidias, the process of his work, as his sculptures were not made in a single day.

Aristotle, with the four causes, thought with potency. Then he transfers it to Nature, but there are complicated variables. The uncreated but creating motor, an immobile thing still has the potential for movement. The immovable object has potential energy.

Phidias, who was a contemporary of Socrates and strongly influenced by Anaxagoras acquired such fame as a sculptor in the time when Plato and then Aristotle were living, and who was admired and whose work reflected Athenian values, constituted a reference that is set by them as an example and whose name used every time they wanted to explain how things arise.

In Plato's thinking there were those "pure essences," such "archetypes" that are called Ideas and from which they then derived things. Beauty in itself and in the art of Phidias reflects this. But Aristotle needed to explain things and is not referring only to the world of ideas.

Aristotle was already interested in the movement of things, interested in physical things, interested in the behaviour of objects. But, of course, he thought refuting those schemes that had begun to be organized before him, extremely important contributions for the building of science and Western thought in these Athenian thinkers. European thought was developing within these limits.

Some of the problems faced by these thinkers were, the problem of being, the problem of not being, the problem of movement, the problem of definition of objects, the problem of classification of objects. They obviously were trying to organize the world of ideas.

Another major concern was that about the causes that move things, things which give origin to phenomena. They thought that all things derive from others, there is always a cause and effect and there is no effect without cause, and whenever a phenomenon is produced it is due to another phenomenon, and what should be looked for, when a phenomenon arises, is where the phenomenon derives from. We must be able to trace the sources of this phenomenon. They were deeply preoccupied about the problem of causes and effects. Aristotle was not satisfied that things were in one way, he tried to explain where they came from, the causes that determined phenomena.

In the period immediately following the century of Pericles, they sought to express clearly the idea of cause and effect. Previously it had not been thought of in the way that Aristotle did. And he not only did that, but classified the various factors operating in a phenomenon, and said that in the production of a phenomenon there are always four causes. And he put the example of Phidias, the most noted sculptor of the time and said: for Phidias to produce a statue from a piece of marble, there must be at least four different causes.

Phidias, came to be the Aristotelian example, with his art and his name associated for posterity with the four causes and allowing us to easily understand them. He became a sort of mnemonic for that thought.

Thus, in his books "Physics" and "Metaphysics" Aristotle tells us that this statue can not arise if there is not a material cause, the material cause is the marble used. He says that there can be no statue if there is no efficient cause, if there is not something, some factor external to that material that works upon the material. That is the efficient cause, that is Phidias, that is the sculptor, that is the cause that is working on the material, taking it, transforming it. The statue can not occur unless there is a formal cause, if there is no form. If there is no form the statue could never be produced, but would continue to be that piece, that block of material. The block of material also has a form. But when everything is transformed from that block into a statue, it is because there has operated another form. There is always a material cause, if there is no material cause there can not be any material object, a formal

cause - if there is no form the material can not be expressed, one can imagine all kinds of things, but always they have some form, and must have an efficient cause, which acts on an object, which is not in the object, which is outside the object, which operates on the object and is able to transform it.

The efficient cause is justly that which the name of the sculptor represents, that which the philosopher illustrates with his example. Phidias, as efficient cause, it is easier to understand than the abstract concept. And so he is associated with that cause in Aristotelian thinking.

However, he also formulates a fourth cause. That which makes Phidias begin to hammer the marble, a cause that drives from the beginning but is placed in the purpose of his work. Everything is moving towards this cause which is not yet manifested, a cause that seems to be waiting for the object at the end of the road, toward which everything is moving and which when completed, the thing is finished.

Aristotle saw that there was always a final cause, a kind of plan at the end of the road of all being.

That was how his friend Phidias could make his statue thanks to involving these four causes, and the statue was the result of four different causes: a formal cause, a material, an efficient and a final cause and without these four causes it could not be explained what happened to things. So much depended on the causes and these causes might be different, but there could be no phenomenon without cause. It is an articulation of thought.

So Aristotle was concerned not only with definitions, not just with classifications, not only with problems of higher or lower amplitudes of being, but the problems of movement, the problem of causes and effects. Not only that, but he also structured a system of Logic and he was preoccupied with thinking, and said: How is it possible to think? And how does one think? and how is it when something is correctly or incorrectly thought? and how should one think correctly? and then he was preoccupied by the problems of ordering of the judgments, the problem of syllogisms or reasoning, and he was also concerned with methods.

So it is quite large, the contribution, the system of thought that this ancient Greek structured and from which we still receive influences. For example, it is universally accepted that thinking should follow a method. It is accepted that without a method there is disorder, it is accepted that everything moves following causes and effects, and so on. It is still accepted for our mental form.⁵⁹

10.- SILO

The Aristotelian synthesis has been commented upon by Silo, who also exemplified through the sculptor Phidias the various causes that operate in a phenomenon, and allow the illustration of what he calls the Purpose or final cause, that which precedes any cause and is acting subtly in a co-present way, bringing it towards an end. That prime cause moves towards what you want to achieve as a final cause, that prior disposition to achieve a certain effect. A disposition that is there before beginning.⁶⁰

The Purpose is the answer to the question of what one wants to achieve, it needs to have great resonance for oneself, something we want deeply and feel that can give meaning to one's life and perhaps beyond it. To be well built it will require time and the configuration of a style of life. Then it operates with its "magic" based on the mechanisms of copresence, and with a mechanic other than the will. And it does not act in the present, but acts in the future when it coincides with the image that was there before and which is enhanced and put into action. The key is the emotional charge. The strong desire to produce something is what produces this achievement. The more need there is, the more the affective charge it moves. The Purpose is the aspiration, the internal dimension to achieve.⁶¹

"We always put the final cause first. Of the four Aristotelian causes, the final cause is what we are going to produce, and which determines the direction. This is very important to us. If the intention is not formalized in the head, the desire to accomplish a certain thing, you will not get the result you want. The purpose, the final cause, the disposition.... it is interesting how one puts one's head, it is always better to put it into the finished work, to where it goes. The efficient cause is the one which operates on reality to change things. Phidias sculpted the marble to produce a horse, for example. And clearly it is connected with another cause, not the efficient, if he did not have the marble he would not be able to sculpt, this is the material cause. Also a formal cause is Phidias' head, when he is sculpting he is following what goes and what does not go in that work. But it is the final cause, that which still does not exist is what drives everything. Guiding the movements of Phidias, correcting things which do not match and so on.

It is this cause that determines all of the procedures. Intentions will determine everything. It is very interesting. So any story is acting copresently from there, from the base, from the background. Anything that is done. It is not just what you want to do. Important things need direction and that direction comes from the future ... "⁶²

On many occasions Silo used the image of Phidias as a good synthesis of the four Aristotelian causes, and with these four causes he exemplifies and settles the different ways of experiential work to produce the entry to profound spaces, these four ways that today we call the Four Disciplines. Each of the disciplines works in a different way but all four go in the same direction, they work differently and yet are

equivalent, as they are ordered with the same purpose. They then look like these causes, these four pathways that have the same final cause, the Purpose is previous to them and is what orientates them, it is the Alpha and the Omega of all activity.

"As for the Disciplines, there are four and they correspond to different ways that can be made to bring about change in the mental structure. There are four different approaches. Just as the four causes of Aristotle explained with the example of Phidias. The sculptor, to make a statue, needed four causes: the efficient cause, someone, or Phidias himself, the material cause, the marble, the formal cause, the *telos* (intention), and what we want to achieve, the final cause. Even before starting the sculpture it is in the head of Phidias. They are different ways of working in the same direction.

The Disciplines operate in this way, between the possibilities of the human being. A person is a physical construction, material, and is also a mental construction, with an energetic availability and a mental functioning that is placed in space and time, a mess of mental spaces and mental times.

These works come from ancient times and have inspired qualitative leaps in human development.

Where do you think that the whole structure of our ideas comes from? The space of representation is derived from the Formal Discipline. The translation of impulses and the theme of the plexuses from the Energetic Discipline. The inner works that hit on the body from the Material Discipline. The levels and states of consciousness come from the Mental Discipline. All these things are constructed starting with these disciplinary elements.

These are different looks at what happens in a person. Each of those ways makes you put your head in a different way to "enter" other profundities.

All this is very old and is found in widely scattered civilizations.⁶³

The development by Silo at the present time is completely unprecedented, not only because it happens to be the first time in human history in which in coincident times and spaces are displayed in these four paths, but also because of the easy and accessible way these works have been made available. As if the formidable experience from which they arise permitted each time bigger simplifications, producing a sort of "elegance" that refers to the essential in the explanations.

"The disciplines work with four elements that in reality are not very new ideas. They work with what is considered material, objects ..., they work with material.

They work with the mental because we do not confuse a cup that I perceive, that I touch, with the representation of the cup. When we work with the mental we are

working with representations, not with the cup. And of course these representations may become more and more internalized. Because if there is a representation, there is someone who imagines that representation. This representation is an act of consciousness and if there is an act of consciousness, it will refer to an object of consciousness that is the mental cup.

But what object is that which is mental? Can it be considered an object? Well, anyway...

And in this way we go to the theme of the mental discipline, and the material discipline and the energetic discipline.

We are considering in this energetic work psychophysical energy, not like those who... energy... What energy? Where is the plug? What ...? Psychophysical energy is what we must have a register of to know what we mean. This psychophysical energy that when I want to represent something, I see it... and it disappears! ... And I concentrate and it disappears something was badly done, the psychophysical energy is missing!

Psychophysical energy has many expressions, but one must have a register to know what we are talking about

Then that other discipline that works with the psychophysical energy takes us on very interesting pathways, energetic pathways of the psychophysical energy ...

And the morphological or formal discipline, which studies, not the material of the cup, not the mental acts that refer to a mental cup, not the effort I have to make to think of it, but the reduction of the cup to something that is not the cup itself but the forms of the cup.

You find yourself in a largely empty universe, with forms. Or the way those who were with the triangles and squares and who tried to establish laws of behaviour for these geometric bodies that did not exist anywhere, but which they then used through mathematics to understand things in the world, but that discipline working with forms, totally useless, but interesting.

And here we close this world of investigating certain aspects of reality from different angles. From different angles. How interesting! ".⁶⁴

The experience that is arranged as the Material Discipline, the Energetic Discipline, the Mental Discipline and the Morphological Discipline, even if they do not exhaust the ways of entrance to the Profound ultimately respond to four "looks", four different modes and are at the same time equivalent, that we have taken to make our process.

These four ways correspond to the very construction of the human being and are the four entries that Silo has systematized to begin the activities of the School. These are the ways through which pass those who orient their lives to the search for the Profound and the Unnameable.

11.- CONCLUSIONS

Thanks to Plato discussing in one of his dialogues the nature of beauty, looking for where it lies in examining the statue of Athena Parthenos, and to Aristotle, no longer, putting the example of the wood to which the carpenter gives shape to a chair - as he had been doing - but beginning to illustrate his thought with the example of Phidias, and since this figure was also useful to Silo to explain what has been called the Purpose and to distinguish each of the four disciplinary ways of entry into the Profound, we have had the opportunity to know the sculptor who epitomized classical Hellenism.

It is these references that we have heard, with the example of the stone and the form that Phidias has in his head before sculpting, which has led us to approach his beautiful works, the extraordinary representations of the Olympian deities, the inspiring marble volumes that give rise to horses and centaurs, especially in the balanced architectural majesty of the Parthenon.

From an aesthetic language we have also arrived to the synthesis of comprehensions that were historically associated with his name, made contact with the social and cultural landscape in which his ideas were formed, and analyzed the epochal contexts previous to those he organized: the underlying tensions, habits and customs of the people of the time. Thanks to the artistic, sculptural and architectural work of Phidias, there has appeared before our eyes the mythological and philosophical baggage that is at its base, with all its dragging of beliefs, conflicts and mixtures with previous cultures, which are synthesized in Athens of the V century BCE

Like all aesthetics, the century of Pericles captures the subtle tensions of the epoch and translates them in a way that fits perfectly with the sensibility of the time, creating an atmosphere thanks to it where new trends can emerge and ideas that develop since that time. Art anticipates theoretical formulations that are coming, resulting to be a sort of indicator of the proposals and customs to come.

We want to say that it is in the city of Pericles, where we have seen what goes from the archaic and severe in art, to classicism; which translates extraordinarily mathematical and geometrical knowledge into architecture, which goes from the Doric style to the later Ionic, from the pre-Attic in philosophy to the development of Greek thought, which in turn forms the basis of Western thought. And it is in these

roots of thought, in these fundamental definitions where we find associated the name of Phidias.

It is from Athens, that the idea of a primary and a final cause is proposed, as well as four possibilities of acting on phenomena, four "looks" at reality: the material, formal, energetic and mental, which are the causes exemplified by the figure of the sculptor.

The substrate where the idea of the four causes takes root brings us to the city of Athens, with its large temple on the Acropolis and the luminous figure of Athena which was possible to distinguish from Piraeus.

Phidias also puts us in a particular historical moment, which happens to be the antecedent of the Morphological Discipline and which sees the beauty of forms by communicating their search for a prime reason, a conception of being, the world, the cosmic order and abstractions that have to do with the development of consciousness. That is, thanks to the renowned sculptor, we have been able to find these inspiring contexts of the pre-attic environment.

Pía Figueroa

August 2010

Parks of Study and Reflection Punta de Vacas

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ENDNOTES

¹ Image from the British Museum - Parthenon metopes by Phidias

² Heródoto, "Los nueve libros de la Historia", Libro VI, 117, México (1980), Editorial Cumbre, p366.

³ Nigel Spivey, "Greek Art", London (2007): Phaidon Press Limited, p216.

⁴ Struve V.V., "Historia de la Antigua Grecia (I)", Madrid (1985): Editorial Sarpe, p8.

⁵ "In the battle of Marathon about six hundred and ninety-barbarians and two Athenians were killed, such is the number of those who fell on either side, "Herodotus, Book Six of "The nine books of history," Mexico (1980): Cumbre Publishing, p366.

⁶ Tejedor Campomanes César, "Historia de la Filosofía en su marco cultural", Madrid (1995): Ediciones SM, pps 10 to 16.

⁷ Pasquier Alain et Martinez Jean-Luc , "100 chefs-d'oeuvre de la sculpture grecque au Louvre", Paris (2007): Musée du Louvre Éditions, p63.

⁸ "Timaeus: Clearly, Socrates, at the point of departure for any enterprise, large or small, all men involved in common sense even if in small measure , always call a god. And we are going to talk about the universe, about how it was generated or if ungenerated, we need, if not completely diverted, to invoke gods and goddesses and beg them to say everything mainly to their satisfaction and secondly to our satisfaction. As for the gods, be these our invocations. As for us, we must invoke the gods that may easily understand me and that I discuss best on the proposed topic."

Plato, "Timaeus," Foreword, Colihue Publishers, Buenos Aires, Argentina (1995), p101.

⁹ Tejedor Campomanes César, "Historia de la Filosofía en su marco cultural", Madrid (1995): Ediciones SM, pps 14 & 15.

¹⁰ Montanelli Indro, "Historia de los Griegos", Santiago de Chile (2004): Random House Mondadori, pps 90 to 95.

¹¹ Plato, "Phaedrus": "All the great arts require discussion and high speculation about the truths of nature; hence come loftiness of thought and completeness of execution. And this, as I conceive, was the quality which, in addition to his natural gifts, Pericles acquired from his intercourse with Anaxagoras whom he happened to know. He was thus imbued with the higher philosophy, and attained the knowledge of Mind and the negative of Mind, which were favourite themes of Anaxagoras, and applied what suited his purpose to the art of speaking."

¹² "Soc. I conceive Pericles to have been the most accomplished of rhetoricians.

Phaedr. What of that?

Soc. All the great arts require discussion and high speculation about the truths of nature; hence come loftiness of thought and completeness of execution. And this, as I conceive, was the quality which, in addition to his natural gifts, Pericles acquired from his intercourse with Anaxagoras whom he happened to know. He was thus imbued with the higher philosophy, and attained the knowledge of Mind and the negative of Mind, which were favourite themes of Anaxagoras, and applied what suited his purpose to the art of speaking.

Phaedr. Explain.

Soc. Rhetoric is like medicine.

Phaedr. How so?

Soc. Why, because medicine has to define the nature of the body and rhetoric of the soul-if we would proceed, not empirically but scientifically, in the one case to impart health and strength by giving

medicine and food in the other to implant the conviction or virtue which you desire, by the right application of words and training."

Plato, "Phaedrus", Buenos Aires (1960): Editorial Aguilar, pps 119 & 120

¹³ Struve V.V., "Historia de la Antigua Grecia (II)", Madrid (1986): Editorial Sarpe, p44.

¹⁴ Pasquier Alain et Martinez Jean-Luc, "100 chefs-d'oeuvre de la sculpture grecque au Louvre", Paris (2007): Musée du Louvre Éditions, p69.

¹⁵ Struve V.V., "Historia de la Antigua Grecia (II)", Madrid (1986): Editorial Sarpe, p51.

¹⁶ Laurenzi Luciano, "Umanità di Fidia", Roma (2006): Edizione L'Erma di Bretschneider, p39, Planta del Acrópolis de Atenas, de la Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica.

¹⁷ Laurenzi Luciano, "Umanità di Fidia", Roma (2006): Edizione L'Erma di Bretschneider, p40, Vista de la explanada del Acrópolis, de la Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica.

¹⁸ Heródoto, "Los nueve libros de la Historia", México (1980): Editorial Cumbre, Libro Octavo (Eighth book), pps 469 & 470.

¹⁹ "The second Agariste married Xanthippus son of Arifrón, and being pregnant had a dream: she thought that she gave birth to a lion, and soon after gave birth to Pericles, son of Xanthippe" Heródoto, Libro Sexto de "Los nueve libros de la Historia", México (1980): Editorial Cumbre, p371.

²⁰ Luis Ogg, "Crónica de la humanidad", Barcelona, España (1987): Plaza & Janés Editores, p119.

²¹ Henri Stierlin, "Grecia – de Micenas al Partenón", Madrid, España (2004): Taschen, Capítulo "La Acrópolis de Pericles", p183.

²² The term chryselephantine comes from the Greek, in which chrysos is gold and Elephantine is ivory.

²³ The exterior of the shield of Athena Parthenos had at the centre the head of Medusa and the battle between the Greeks and the Amazons, while inside was carved the battle between Gods and Giants. Photograph by Silvia Bercu (2010) of the piece of marble now preserved in the British Museum.

²⁴ See Appendix I

²⁵ See Appendix II

²⁶ On this confrontation, see Silo, Collected Works, Volume I, "Universal Root Myths," Chapter VIII, Greco-Roman myths, "The struggle of generations of immortals," Published by Latitude Press, 2003.

²⁷ Herodotus describes these warrior women "frequently hunting on horseback and wearing the same clothes as men, "living in a region bordering Scythia in Sarmatia. The Amazon queens were remarkable: Penthesilea, who participated in the Trojan War and her sister Hippolyta, whose belt was the subject of one of the twelve labours of Hercules and she was said to live in Pontus, forming an independent kingdom, without men .

²⁸ In Greek mythology, centaurs were a race of beings with human torso and head and the body of a horse living in the mountains of Thessaly. Their struggle with the Lapiths allegorizes the conflict between the visceral and irrational motivations and behaviours more appropriate for humans.

²⁹ See Appendix III

³⁰ Nigel Spivey, "Greek Art", London (1997): Phaidon Press Limited, p262, high reliefs of Horsemen of the north frieze of the Parthenon, now in the British Museum.

³¹ E.O. James, "El Templo – el espacio sagrado de la caverna a la catedral", Madrid (1966): Ediciones Guadarrama, Chapter VII, "Templos Griegos", pps 232 to 235.

³² Relief from the north frieze of the Parthenon, photograph Silvia Bercu (2010) of the marbles currently on display in the British Museum.

- ³³ Henri Stierlin, "Grecia – de Micenas al Partenón", Madrid, España (2004): Taschen, Capítulo "La Acrópolis de Pericles", pps 192 to 198.
- ³⁴ Nigel Spivey, "Greek Art", London (1997): Phaidon Press Limited, p249. The sophisticated architectural distortion is best understood if the temple is transferred to a two dimensional drawing like this.
- ³⁵ Luis Ogg, "Crónica de la humanidad", Barcelona, España (1987): Plaza & Janés Editores, pps 118 & 119.
- ³⁶ Spivey Nigel, "Greek Art", London (1997): Phaidon Press Limited, p245
- ³⁷ Pasquier Alain et Martinez Jean-Luc, "100 chefs-d'oeuvre de la sculpture grecque au Louvre", Paris (2007): Musée du Louvre Éditions, p71.
- ³⁸ María Mavromataki, "Mitología Griega", Atenas (1997): Ediciones Xaitali, p38 to 47.
- ³⁹ Luciano Laurenzi, "Umanità di Fidia", Roma (2006): Edizione Anastatica, p19.
- ⁴⁰ From the Athena Lemnia there only remain copies from Roman times; it is said that those currently in the Archaeological Museum of Bologna, Italy are more similar to the originals by Phidias.
- ⁴¹ E.O. James, "El Templo – el espacio sagrado de la caverna a la catedral" Madrid (1966): Ediciones Guadarrama, Capítulo VII, "Templos Griegos", pps 242 & 243.
- ⁴² Illustration from National Geographic, "Historia", Barcelona, España (2004): Jordi Estrada, Carlos Gómez Editores, #1, p63.
- ⁴³ The seven wonders of the ancient world were a set of architectural works that were considered worth visiting, being famous monuments of creation and human inventiveness. The classic list is based on a poem by Antipater of Sidon (125 BCE) that mentions the Pyramids of Giza, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, the tomb of king Mausolus at Halicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes, the statue of Zeus at Olympia and the Ishtar Gate in the walls of Babylon. Later accounts replace the latter with the Lighthouse of Alexandria.
- ⁴⁴ Nigel Spivey, "Greek Art", London (1997): Phaidon Press Limited, pps 235 and 236. Riace Bronzes attributed to Phidias, preserved in the Museo Nazionale of Reggio Calabria.
- ⁴⁵ Pasquier Alain et Martinez Jean-Luc, "100 chefs-d'oeuvre de la sculpture grecque au Louvre", Paris (2007): Musée du Louvre Éditions, p68. Tenth metope of the Parthenon: Centaur and Lapita woman.
- ⁴⁶ Pasquier Alain et Martinez Jean-Luc, "100 chefs-d'oeuvre de la sculpture grecque au Louvre", Paris (2007): Musée du Louvre Éditions, p75. Female head from the decorated pediment of the Parthenon. The perforated ear lobes indicate the presence of earrings, and holes in the braid that surrounds the hair loops and which reach to the neck, served to support a crown; they were metal ornamentation.
- ⁴⁷ Luciano Laurenzi, "Umanità di Fidia", Rome (2006): Edizione Anastatica, p22.
- ⁴⁸ Head of Selene's Horse in the east pediment of the Parthenon, marble, now in the British Museum, London. Photograph published by Nigel Spivey, "Greek Art", London (1997): Phaidon Press Limited, p251.
- ⁴⁹ Kandinsky, "De lo espiritual en el arte", Buenos Aires (2006): Paidos, p21.
- ⁵⁰ Mariana Uzielli, "Los Presocráticos", (2009) www.parquepuntadevacas.org, p33
- ⁵¹ Luciano Laurenzi, "Umanità di Fidia", Roma (2006): Edizione Anastatica, pps 20 & 21.
- ⁵² School Material, "The Four Disciplines," "Morphological Discipline" "Background" (2010) www.parquepuntadevacas.org
- ⁵³ SOCRATES: "But if I had asked you," he will say, "in the beginning what is beautiful and ugly, if you had replied as you now do, would you not have replied correctly? But do you still think that the

absolute beautiful, by the addition of which all other things are adorned and made to appear beautiful, when its form is added to any of them—do you think that is a maiden or a mare or a lyre?"

HIPPIAS: Well, certainly, Socrates, if that is what he is looking for, nothing is easier than to answer and tell him what the beautiful is, by which all other things are adorned and by the addition of which they are made to appear beautiful. So the fellow is very simple-minded and knows nothing about beautiful possessions. For if you reply to him: "This that you ask about, the beautiful, is nothing else but gold," he will be thrown into confusion and will not attempt to confute you. For we all know, I fancy, that wherever this is added, even what before appears ugly will appear beautiful when adorned with gold.

SOCRATES: You don't know the man, Hippias, what a wretch he is, and how certain not to accept anything easily.

HIPPIAS: What of that, then, Socrates? For he must perforce accept what is correct, or if he does not accept it, be ridiculous.

SOCRATES: This reply, my most excellent friend, he not only will certainly not accept, but he will even jeer at me grossly and will say: "You lunatic, do you think Phidias is a bad craftsman?" And I shall say, "Not in the least."

HIPPIAS: And you will be right, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Yes, to be sure. Consequently when I agree that Phidias is a good craftsman, "Well, then," he will say, "do you imagine that Phidias did not know this beautiful that you speak of?" "Why do you ask that?" I shall say. "Because," he will say, "he did not make the eyes of his Athena of gold, nor the rest of her face, nor her hands and feet, if, that is, they were sure to appear most beautiful provided only they were made of gold, but he made them of ivory: evidently he made this mistake through ignorance, not knowing that it is gold which makes everything beautiful to which it is added." When he says that, what reply shall we make to him, Hippias?

HIPPIAS: That is easy: for we shall say that Phidias did right: for ivory, I think, is beautiful.

SOCRATES: "Why, then," he will say, "did he not make the middle parts of the eyes also of ivory, but of stone, procuring stone as similar as possible to the ivory? Or is beautiful stone also beautiful?" Shall we say that it is, Hippias?

HIPPIAS: Surely we shall say so, that is, where it is appropriate.

SOCRATES: "But ugly when not appropriate?" Shall I agree, or not?

HIPPIAS: Agree, that is, when it is not appropriate.

SOCRATES: "What then? Do not gold and ivory," he will say, "when they are appropriate, make things beautiful, and when they are not appropriate, ugly?" Shall we deny that, or agree that what he says is correct?

HIPPIAS: We shall agree to this, at any rate, that whatever is appropriate to any particular thing makes that thing beautiful.

"Plato, "Hippias Major", Mexico (1945): National University of Mexico, pps 122, 123. (English version by Logos Virtual Library).

⁵⁴ Aristóteles, "Ética a Nicomaco", Madrid (2001): Alianza Editorial, chapter VII, p113.

⁵⁵ Aristóteles, "Metafísica", Buenos Aires (2004): Editorial Sudamericana, Chapter V, pps 261 & 262.

⁵⁶ "Form is the principle - in itself invisible - by which a thing becomes visible and shows what it is. But necessarily form is form of something. In the case of manufactured things,, which is more evident, the form of a chair, for example, is the form that matter has taken the matter that was available there,

i.e., the wood, or in the case of a sculpture, the form taken by the marble that the artist arranged for the work.

Let us observe the formal principle. To do this, let us return to the example we started with: we had on one hand, the various pieces of wood which the carpenter had chosen for each of their chairs. However, the form he gave to each chair is one and common to all: the form of a chair and nothing else. Let us talk then about multiple matter (the various pieces of wood or iron) and the unity of form. And we should not say that where, for example, there are two identical chairs, separated by a given space and perhaps by a time, there are two forms, but one and the same form, present in both. Something like this we say about the form that makes of a tree for example, a Plum tree: that is the same for all the plums trees that exist, existed and will exist, are and makes them what they are.

A principle like form is the essence of a multiplicity of things without abandoning itself, without losing any of itself. It's the same for all individuals, what is common and knowable in everything. "

Humberto Giannini, "Breve Historia de la Filosofía", Santiago de Chile (2005): Catalonia, pps 70 and 71.

⁵⁷ Humberto Giannini, "Breve Historia de la Filosofía", Santiago de Chile (2005): Catalonia, pps 69 to 74.

⁵⁸ Nicola Ubaldo, "Atlante illustrato di Filosofia", Prato, Italia (1999): Edit. Demetra, p117.

⁵⁹ Excerpt from a transcript of a talk given by Silo in Corfu, Greece, 1975.

⁶⁰ "Entrance to the profound states occurs from the suspension of the "I". From that suspension, significant registers of "lucid consciousness" and comprehension of one's own mental limitations are produced, which constitutes a great advance. Regarding this transit one should keep in mind some inescapable conditions: 1. that the practitioner has his or her Purpose clear—what they desire to achieve as the final objective of this work; 2. that he or she count on sufficient psychophysical energy to maintain the attention absorbed and concentrated on the suspension of the "I" and 3. that he or she can continue without interruption the continuous deepening of the state of suspension until the temporal and spatial references disappear.

With respect to the Purpose, it should be considered as the direction of the whole process, even though it does not occupy the attentional focus. We are saying that the Purpose must be "recorded" with sufficient emotional charge so that it is able to operate copresently while the attention is busy with the suspension of the "I" and in the subsequent steps. This preparation conditions all of the subsequent work. As for the psychophysical energy necessary to maintain the attention in an interesting level of concentration, the main impulse stems from the interest that forms part of the Purpose. On verifying a lack of potency and permanence, one should review the preparation of the Purpose.

Silo, "Psychology Notes" chapter "Psychology IV", Santiago (2010): Virtual editions pps 301 & 302. Translation: silo.net

⁶¹ School material "The Four Disciplines" (2010), www.parquepuntadevacas.org

⁶² Excerpt from a talk by Silo contained in the minutes of the meeting of School 7, 8 and 9 January 2010 Parks of Study and Reflection Punta de Vacas, Argentina.

⁶³ Notes from a conversation with Silo in Mendoza, November 20, 2004.

⁶⁴ Transcript of the talk by Silo, Centre of Studies, Parks of Study and Reflection: Punta de Vacas, November 21, 2009, during the preparatory meeting for the World March for Peace and Nonviolence.

APPENDIX I

THE PEDIMENTS

The Parthenon had in its two pediments three-dimensional statues carved to represent, on the east side, the birth of Athena and the west, her struggle with Poseidon for possession of Attica.

Also other mythological scenes appear as well as the magnificent heads of Theseus and Olympus.

East Pediment - suggestion based on the marble pieces that are now preserved in the British Museum



Figure 21



Figure 22

Pediment design complete, as it might have been in the V century BCE

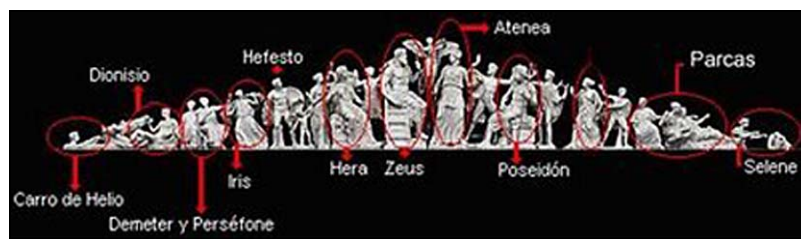


Figure 23



Figure 24



Figure 25



Figure 26

A young man is reclining naked on a rock covered with the skin of a feline animal. It is possibly Dionysus and in his missing right hand, he may have held a glass of wine.



Figure 27

Two female goddesses are seated on benches, probably Demeter (right) and Persephone. On their clothes can be seen the remains of colouring which was painted on the sculptures. A girl walks away quickly from the centre, her garments accentuating her movements. It is probably Iris, who brings news of the birth of Athena.



Figure 28



Figure 29

In the centre of the east pediment, where there were located - from left to right - after Iris, the figures of Hephaestus, Hera and Zeus, Athena and Poseidon (and other accompanying figures), this feminine image appears and precedes the group of the Fates.

There is a seated woman who looks ready to stand up, as if the events happening on her right called her to participate.

It lacks the head, but looked towards the right, toward the centre of the pediment. She is dressed in a robe of delicate cloth, fine, lightweight and has placed a heavy mantle on her knees. Perhaps it is Hestia, the goddess of the home.

This photograph of the marbles that are preserved in the British Museum allows us to see the size of the sculptures of the pediments, thanks to the proportion of the human head that appears just behind them.



Figure 30

The group of female figures known as the Fates in the angle of the east pediment of the Parthenon, corresponds to the personification of destiny and have in their hands the thread of life of every mortal, from birth until death and beyond. Even gods like Zeus and the immortals were subject to their whims.

The Fates are represented with Zeus, in the pediment of the Parthenon, and also in the temples of Zeus at Olympia, in Megara and in Corinth and Sparta, as well as the sanctuary of Temis, outside the gate of Thebes.



Figure 31

The head of the horse of Selene, the moon goddess, completes the pediment and compliments the group of horses of Helios located at the other end.



Figure 32

West Pediment - the design of the pediment as it may have been previously and where the struggle between Athena and Poseidon can be observed.



Figure 33

Pieces of the marble West pediment which are now preserved in the British Museum



Figure 34



Figure 35



Figure 36

It is assumed that this figure represented the messenger god Hermes, who drove the chariot of Athena at the Acropolis. The reclining figure above could correspond to the Athenian river Ilissos.



Figure 37

The torso of Poseidon, god of the sea, was located in the centre of the West pediment and the whole scene represented the battle for Athens that the god had with Athena and after which she ends up becoming the patron of the city.

The strength of this torso, even fragmented, is immense.

Other pieces of the figure of Poseidon, crumbling, are preserved in the Museum of Athens.



Figure 38

Iris, messenger goddess, symmetrical in her function and location with Hermes (who appears in the centre left of the pediment).

She was winged and in her dress we can see the attempt to show the effect of wind blowing against her body while in flight.



Figure 39

The sculptures that have been preserved until now and that form part of the west pediment of the Parthenon, are completed with the torso of Amphitrite.

She was an ancient sea goddess who became the consort of Poseidon and whose chariot he was driving. As the goddess of the sea, she was represented with a snake.¹

¹ The photographs of the marbles in the British Museum are by Silvia Bercu (2010).

APPENDIX II

THE METOPES OF THE PARTHENON

To have a clearer idea of the location of the metopes on the Parthenon, here we illustrate with an elevation (which also shows the proportion between human beings and the columns of the temple) the place where the ninety-two rectangular metopes of carved marble, in high-relief, depicting the battle of the gods and giants, Greeks and Amazons and Greeks and centaurs were placed on the exterior

On the east and west side of the temple they were arranged immediately under the triangular pediments, and continued all around above the columns on the North and South sides of the Parthenon, of which some parts are currently better preserved.

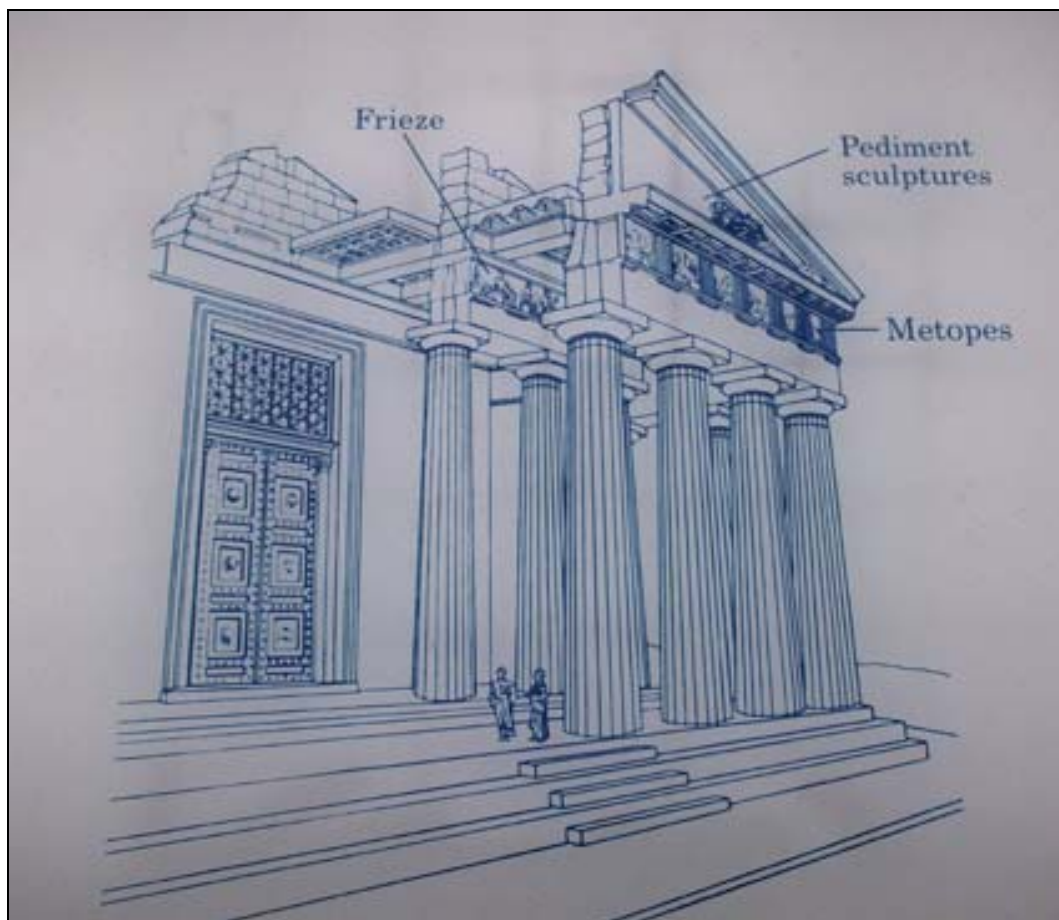


Figure 40 ¹

Elevation made for the collection of metopes currently displayed in the British Museum, London.

¹ Elevation made for the collection of metopes currently displayed in the British Museum, London.

SOUTH METOPE II

The battle between the Lapiths (a tribe of Thessaly, who made leather from horse hides), and the Centaurs, is the main theme of the metopes on the south side of the Temple. ¹

Centaurs are mythical creatures with a human head and torso, but with the body of a horse from the waist down. Their character is as mixed as their bodies. Usually very kind and wise, skilled in arts as diverse as music and medicine, brave warriors, they fought in battles that are an important part of Greek mythology, such as this against the Lapiths. ²

The human Lapith forces his opponent, the centaur, downward holding tightly to the throat and the beard and dominating him. The line of the body of the Lapith crosses the animal body of the centaur diagonally. This compositional structure was widely used in Greek art to represent the fight scenes.



Figure 41 ³

¹ Cotterell and others (2004), "Enciclopedia de Mitología Universal", Barcelona, España: Parragon. p61.

² Wilkinson Philip (1999), "Enciclopedia Ilustrada de Mitología: héroes, heroínas, dioses y diosas de todo el mundo", Buenos Aires: El Ateneo, p66.

³ Photos by Silvia Bercu (2010) of the marbles now preserved in the British Museum, London.

SOUTH METOPE III

Here the centaur is caught from behind and turns his human torso in a circle. His head - missing - must have looked into the face of his attacker. He defends himself from the Lapith with his left arm wrapped in animal skin. The holes that the torso of the Lapith suggests that he was wearing a sword belt or strap crossed from the shoulder to the opposite side of the waist to hold the sword or dagger and which is now lost.



Figure 42

SOUTH METOPE IV

The centaur empties the water from his bowl over his opponent, who has left his defence open despite holding a shield. The composition itself makes the centaur triumphant. The missing heads of the two figures are currently held in Copenhagen.



Figure 43

SOUTH METOPE V

The Lapith was sculpted in deep relief, completely overhanging the metopes, and broke off and was lost, while the head of the centaur who carried it, is now preserved in Wurzburg.



Figure 44

SOUTH METOPE VI

The Lapith thrusts at the centaur with his left hand as he prepares to strike with the right.

The composition based on a diagonal cross gives strong dynamism. The heads of both are currently kept in Athens.



Figure 45

SOUTH METOPE VIII

Lapith and centaur struggle body to body, drawing the foot of the human into a real tangle of folds, the same as the knee of the centaur.

The upper part of the relief was destroyed by an explosion in 1687.



Figure 46

SOUTH METOPE XXVI

The Centaur rises up to beat his opponent, who keeps him away by the force of hand and foot. The carving of this piece seems incomplete or worn; the cloak of the Lapith is missing between the leg and arm. But the holes in the upper left arm may have served to introduce some metal pieces which must have matched the missing piece of the cloak, which was being waved in front of the figure.



Figure 47

SOUTH METOPE XXVII

From the standpoint of composition, this is one of the most striking of the metopes. The centaur, pressing on the wound in his back, trying to escape while being restrained by the victorious Lapith who is preparing to give the final blow. The cloak of the human opens thereby producing a large background, adding drama to the scene.



Figure 48

SOUTH METOPE XXVIII

A centaur covered by the skin of a panther stands over a fallen and defeated Lapith. In his right hand the centaur brandishes a bowl, now lost. The contrast between the states of both figures, reinforced by the composition, makes this to be considered one of the metopes with the best achieved expression: it is the indisputable triumph of the centaur.



Figure 49

SOUTH METOPE XXIX

A centaur with pointed ears gallops away with a girl held up by her arm. The violence of his action does not match his calm expression.



Figure 50

SOUTH METOPE XXX

The centaur trampling upon a defeated human. He takes his victim by the hair as he prepares to fight again. In the composition the Lapith moves toward the lower right corner. Therein lies his last hope: a stone he is picking up from the floor.



Figure 51

SOUTH METOPE XXXI

The centaur and the Lapith are locked in the struggle of rivals. The composition raises the former in the diagonal and the other in the vertical. The centaur holds his opponent by the throat, while the human tries to bring him down with a fist and a blow to the knee.

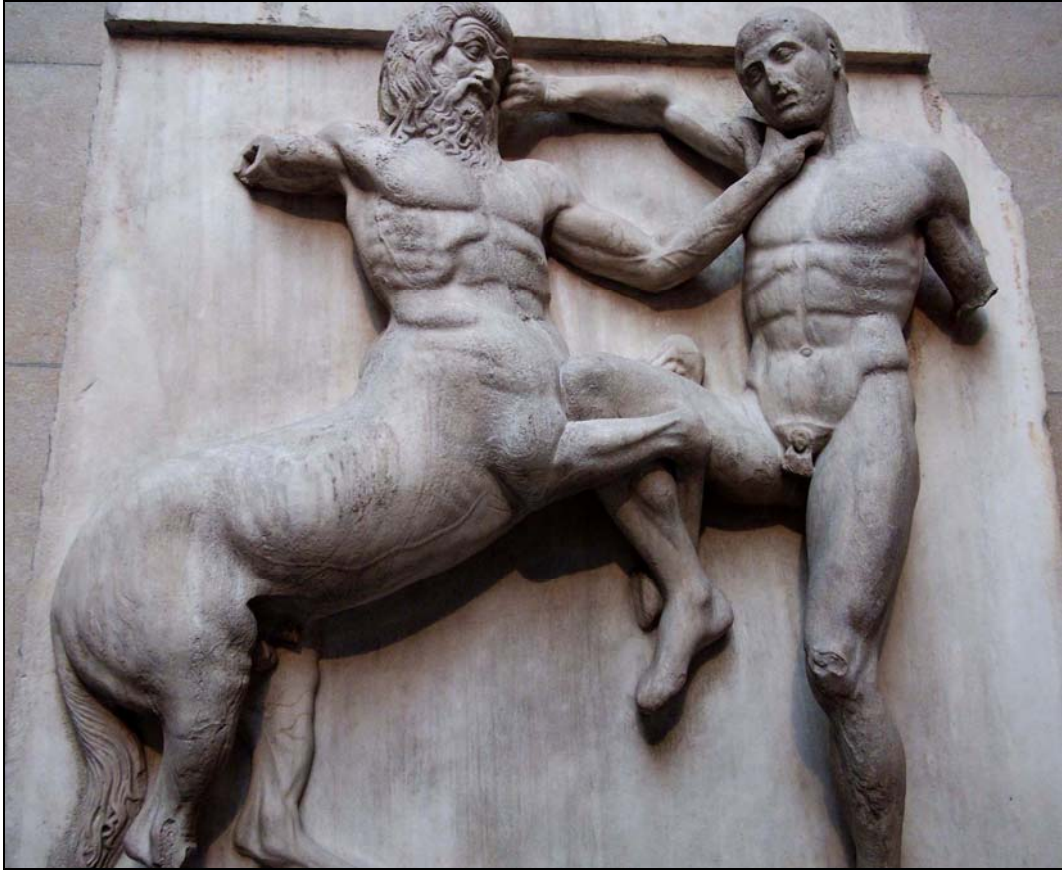


Figure 52

SOUTH METOPE XXXII

In the temple this metope was placed in the south-eastern corner of the building. The right arm (now missing) of the centaur high in the air above his opponent, while with the left he prepares to fight again.



Figure 53

SOUTH METOPE X

This metope is currently held in the Louvre and shows a bearded centaur sliding his foot under the tunic of a woman who defends herself. The bodies protrude from the base almost completely, by significant amounts.



Figure 54

APPENDIX III

THE PARTHENON FRIEZE

The friezes, unlike the metopes, were placed on the second colonnade of the temple, set externally as a continuous decoration in high relief and represent - as we have seen - the Panathenaic.

Starting from the west end with the preparations and unfolding on both sides - North and South - first with riders, then with the chariots moving towards the eastern end, preceded by the ancients, the musicians, the carriers of vessels and jars and of sacrificial animals, until arriving at the head of the procession with girls bringing the new Peplo for Athena.

Here we can see a reconstruction by the British Museum that shows the continuity of the sculpted frieze.



Figure 55

THE RIDERS



Figure 56



Figure 57



Figure 58



Figure 59



Figure 60



Figure 61



Figure 62



Figure 63



Figure 64



Figure 65



Figure 66



Figure 67



Figure 68

THE ANIMALS



Figure 69



Figure 70



Figure 71

THE VESSELS

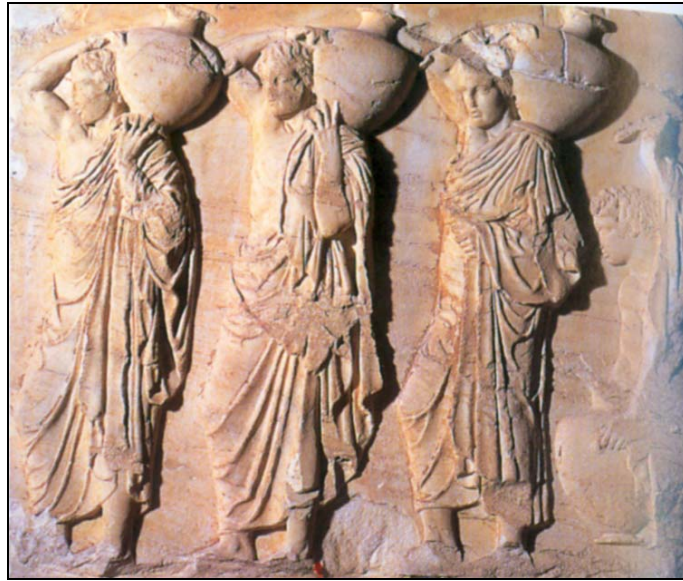


Figure 72

The procession on the occasion of the Panathenaic continued on each side of the temple, on the frieze that surrounds the edge of the second colonnade, beginning with the riders, the animal carriers and women carrying offerings.

Among them is a young woman who adjusts her sandal.

Then comes the Ergastinas, girls selected from among the youth of the city in solemn attitude, bringing the Peplo for the goddess.

Finally there are the figures of the gods who attend, sitting, at the delivery of the new clothing for Athena. Among them we can distinguish Poseidon, Apollo and Artemis.

With the delivery of a new Peplo for Athena, the Athenian celebrations conclude.

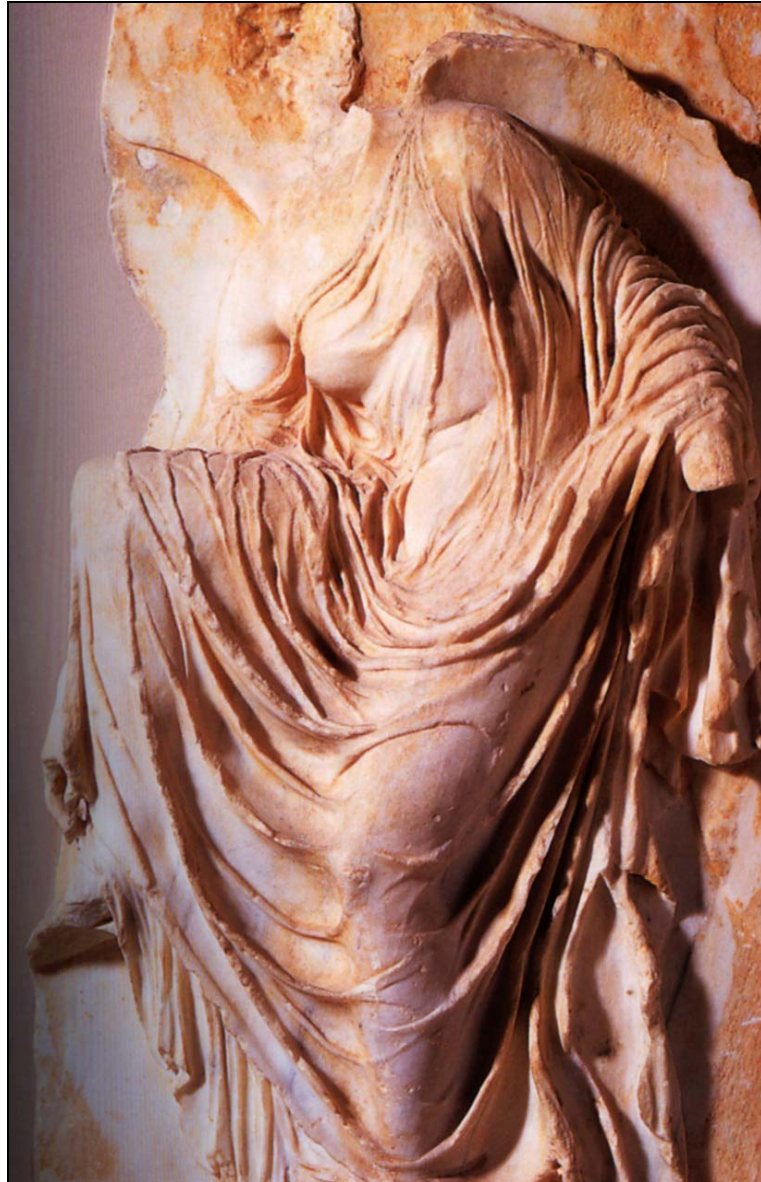


Figure 73

THE ERGASTINAS



Figure 74

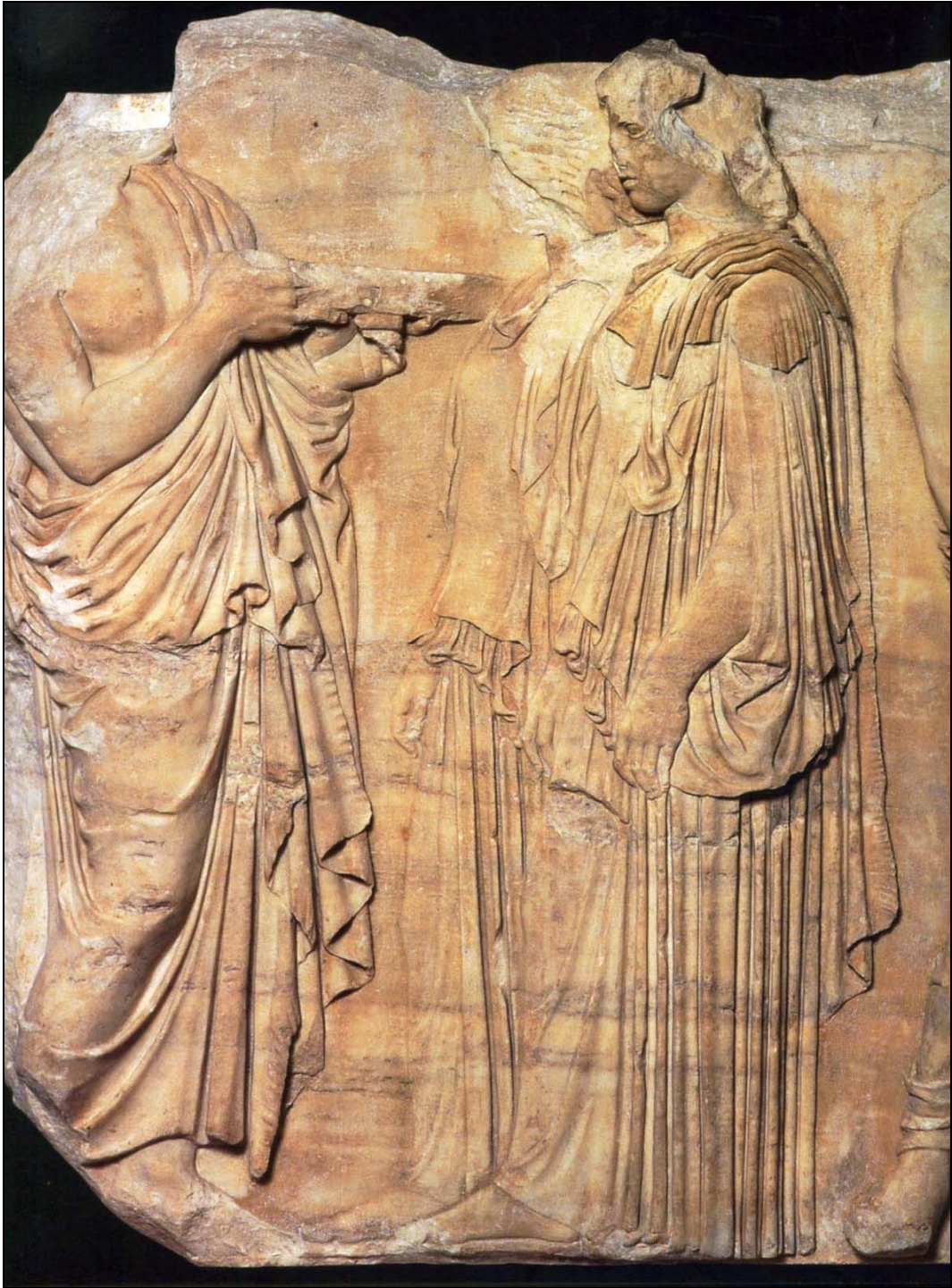


Figure 75

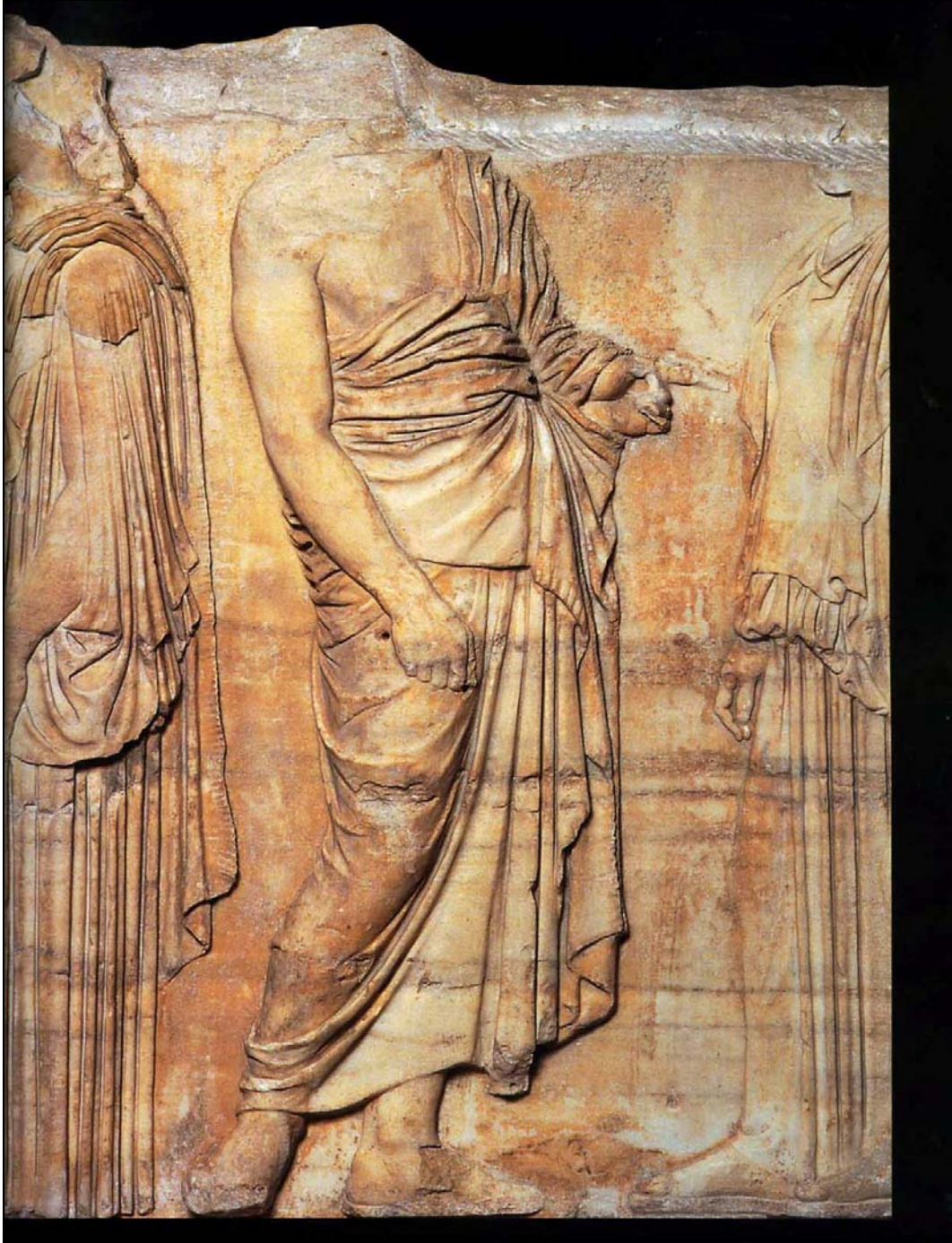
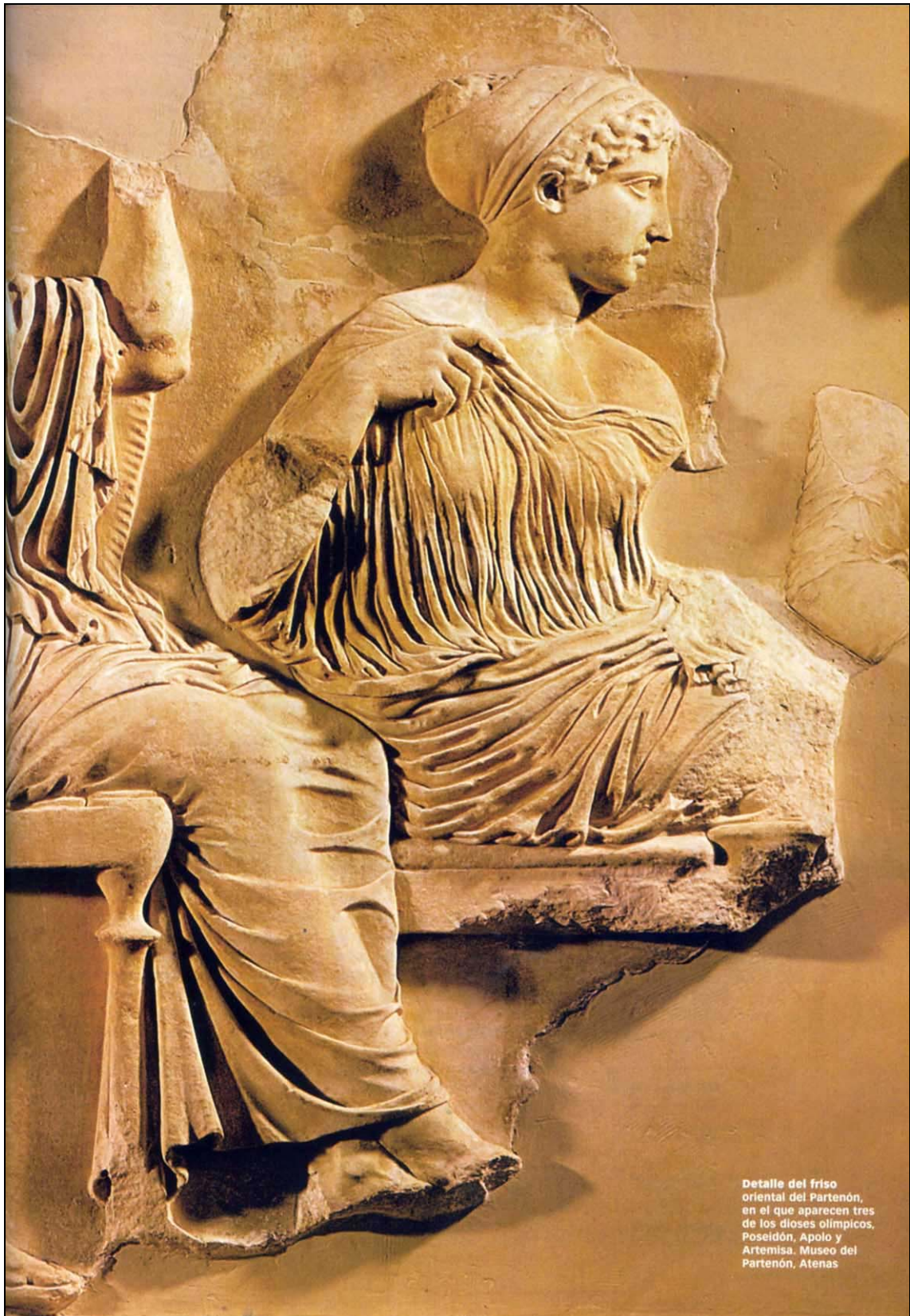


Figure 76



Figure 77



Detalle del friso
oriental del Partenón,
en el que aparecen tres
de los dioses olímpicos,
Poseidón, Apolo y
Artemisa. Museo del
Partenón, Atenas

Figure 78



Figure 79

Figure 80 ¹

¹ Photographs of the marbles that are preserved in the British Museum were taken by Silvia Bercu (2010).

The marbles of the Ergastinas, are preserved in the Louvre (Alain Pasquier et Jean-Luc Martinez (2007), "100 chefs-d'oeuvre de la sculpture grecque au Louvre", Paris: Musée du Louvre Éditions, pps 71. to 73).

Other marbles illustrated here are preserved in the Museum of the Parthenon in Athens (National Geographic (2004), "History", Barcelona, Spain: Jordi Estrada, Carlos Gomez Publishers, No. 13, pps 52 and 53.)