THE AESTHETICS OF EMPIRE IN ATHENS AND PERSIA

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is a comparative study of Persepolis and the Akropolis as monumental centres of empire. It considers the relationship between style and politics on the two sites, specifically, the extent to which stylistic variations can be explained by their capacity to promote different political effects. Starting from Gell's proposition that 'art is a system of action intended to change the world, rather than encode symbolic propositions about it,'[1] it examines the precise mechanisms, in particular the eliciting of cognitive or behavourial responses, by which the architecture and sculpture of the two sites have social consequences. It seeks to demonstrate a relationship between variations in the material traits of the sites and the political systems of the two states, defined both in terms of the autocratic/democratic distinction, but also the different structures of the two empires. The comparison of the two sites gives greater analytical security to the interpretation: they function as controls for each other.

Each of the five chapters considers a different material aspect of the sites. The first chapter considers the spatial layout of the two sites; the second considers the function of the architectural sculpture of the two sites as decorative art; the third examines the sculpture as human images; the fourth considers the relationship between the iconography of the reliefs and the practice on the sites; the fifth looks at the construction of memory and time. In conclusion, common themes running through the chapters, such as control and legibility, are noted, and the extent to which they form a deliberate political programme is discussed.

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[1] Gell 1998:6

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At the end of the sixth century BCE, Darius I, consolidating his hold over the recently established Achaemenid empire, which now stretched from the Indus to the Nile, commenced building works at Persepolis.[2] On a trilingual inscription in the south wall of the terrace, he proclaimed:

> 'I (am) Darius, the great king, king of kings, king of countries, king on this wide earth, son of Hystaspes, the Achaemenid… By the favour of Auramazda, this fortress, it was I who built it as Auramazda – all the gods (being) with him – wished it, namely that this fortress be built. And I built it, completed (it), beautified and made (it) solid, exactly as I determined.'[3]

Fifty years later in Athens, on the fringes of the Persian empire, the Athenian *demos*, consolidating its hegemony over the newly established *archê* within the Aegean with a series of naval victories and, perhaps, the peace of Kallias, commenced building works on the Akropolis.[4] Later in the century, Thucydides wrote:

> 'If Athens [were to become deserted and… only the temples and foundations of buildings remained] one would conjecture from what met the eye that the city had been twice as powerful as in fact it is.'[5]

This thesis is a comparison of the two sites (*figs* 0.1 and 0.2). It is concerned with the relationship between art and power, the relationship of the material characteristics of Persepolis and the Akropolis to the political circumstances under which they were built. It argues that a possible explanation for the formal, stylistic differences in their architecture and sculpture can be found in the different social and political effects that these formal qualities create. It models these monumental sites not just as a display of power, but as

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[2] Briant 2002[1996]:1-171. For the chronology of Persepolis Roaf 1983: reliefs 127-149, architecture 150-9; and esp. 129 for a table of datable inscriptions and coin deposits. He gives the probable date of the terrace platform as 515-5, and the Apadana foundation deposits as early C5.

[3] Kuhrt 2007:488.

[4] Kallet 2005: esp. 52-3 for the role of the *ekklesia* in authorizing the 'Periklean building program;' for the dating of the Akropolis buildings: Hurwit 1999:313-8.

[5] *Thuc.* 1.10.2 trans. Warner and Finley 1972 [1954]:41.

powerful tools for the construction of particular social realities,[6] designed to communicate with their differently composed audiences and, by influencing their experience of the sites in particular ways, to influence the political nature of the empires. It holds not so much that the sites function as concrete metaphors for the mechanisms of power within the states, but that they form a component part of its distribution. Interaction with these overtly political sites is an act of political engagement and, therefore, the form that this interaction takes shapes the actor's political identity.

The symbolic, iconographic meanings that the two sites both carry in their extensive sculptural programs form a part of this experience. The importance of monumental architecture as a form of external symbolic storage within a society has often been noted: not only is it a way in which ideas and ideologies can be broadly shared but, in societies in which monumental sculpture forms a significant percentage of the symbols and information to which people have access, there is a real sense in which the messages of such sites set limits to what is easily thinkable.[7] Both the Akropolis and Persepolis carry strong, positive, and highly political iconographic messages about their respective states. However, in looking at the differences between the two sites, I am primarily concerned not with these iconographic meanings, but with the behavioural responses and types of interaction that the architecture and sculpture promote. Sewell notes that a useful way of understanding 'the social' is 'to think of it in terms of the various *mediations* that place people into 'social' relations with one another.'[8] Gell's theory of art objects as objects that have 'a practical mediatory role in the social process' argues that such mediations are facilitated and extended by the material objects used in social situations.[9] In this thesis I am concerned with the way in which the architecture and sculpture of the two sites mediate different types of relationship with the political power of the two states by respectively encouraging those who visit them to interact with them in different ways.

Art and Politics

The relationship between politics and art, architecture, or material culture has been much discussed. Some sort of association between society and art is commonly

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[6] See Bourdieu 1977[1972]:165: 'The specifically symbolic power to impose the principles of the construction of reality - in particular social reality - is a major dimension of political power.'
[7] Watkins 2004:105; DeMarrais 1996:16.
[8] Sewell 2005:329.
[9] Gell 1998:6.

acknowledged in the concepts of both culturally specific and period styles, however the mechanism by which the two are connected has been modelled in a variety of ways. Art has been seen as a reflection of society, as fundamentally oppositional to society, or as autonomous from it, changing according to rhythms in its own formal characteristics with any relationship to social circumstances being purely co-incidental.[10]

A recent, and productive, alternative is to see art and society as highly integrated, with art playing an active role in social processes. This idea is expressed by Gell, who notes:

> 'Art is a system of action intended to change the world, rather than encode symbolic propositions about it.'[11]

In this model, art objects are seen not as merely reflecting society's values and preoccupations, but as playing a formative part in its processes; therefore, consonance between art and society can be understood in terms of the social consequences and effects that art objects have. This is useful in that it provides a strong causal connection between the two fields. In *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*, Panofsky draws attention to this need. He argues that close similarities arise between Gothic architecture and Scholastic intellectual practice, both generated from culturally shared principles and dispositions. For instance, as the principle of *manifestatio*, elucidation or clarification, in Scholastic writing demanded complete, self-sufficient and limited structures of thought, so in the architectural structures it appeared as the 'transparency' of the individual architectural components in the way in which they made up the complete building.[12] Panofsky notes:

> 'In contrast to mere parallelism, what I have in mind is a genuine cause-and-effect relation; but in contrast to an individual influence, this cause-and-effect relation comes about by diffusion rather than by direct impact. It comes about by the spreading of what may be called, for want of a better term, a mental habit.'[13]

The concept of a 'mental habit', broadly culturally shared, later elaborated by Bourdieu into the idea of 'habitus' is an useful tool for explaining the process by which similarities come

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[10] Bryson 1983; Adorno 1997:296 '[art] criticizes society by merely existing;' Wölfflin 1956[1929]; Rappaport 1999; Geertz 1973.
[11] Gell 1998:6.
[12] Panofsky 1951:30, 43.
[13] Panofsky 1951:20.

to be found in diverse human practices, such as art and politics.[14] However, beyond a loose association of all areas of human activity and a tendency to adapt principles from one to another, it does not fully explain why politics and art should be orientated in the same direction, except in cases such as Panofsky's where a 'monopoly in education' means that a direct influence can be traced.[15] By contrast, seeing art as a constitutive part of political process, and orientated towards social consequences, suggests that the two fields are closely connected.

Another advantage of this model is that, if art has social agency, its existence can ultimately be grounded in its importance as a socially adaptive tool, in Binford's terms, an 'extra-somatic means of adaptation.'[16] However, this does not mean that art necessarily develops purely responsively to social or political needs; instead art and society can be modelled as existing in a symbiotic relationship. Formal artistic considerations, constraints of technique or material, and the lingering effects of past artistic choices through the process of *bricolage* can all be motivating factors in artistic choices, with potential political effects.[17] Neer, for instance, argues that red-figure vase painting became popular in fifth century Athens, because it made possible a rich, pictorial, and above all ambiguous style, which was well fitted to the riddling games and fluid identities of the symposium, and, beyond these, the competing ideologies in Athens as it underwent major political change.[18] However, the converse is also true: the shift to red figure, arising perhaps from the exhaustion of black figure painting as a technique (seen in the sudden explosion of new ceramic styles in c.520), makes possible, and fixes in concrete form, these political thoughts of ambiguity and changing identity. In this account, neither art nor politics has precedence, but they are involved in a process of recursive elaboration of each other's potential and demands.

Style, Politics, and Gestalt Qualities

For Gell the defining feature of art objects is their social agency:

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[14] Bourdieu 1977[1972].
[15] Panofsky 1951:20.
[16] Binford 1962:218.
[17] Bryson 1983:xiii-iv and 133ff for art as base or superstructure.
[18] Neer 2002.

'I propose that 'art-like situations' can be discriminated as those in which the material 'index' (the visible, physical 'thing') permits a particular cognitive operation which I identify as *the abduction of agency*.'[19]

For this reason he considers that their efficacy exists primarily through their capacity to make that agency manifest. For instance, he considers that both Triobrand canoe prows and Bernini sculptures dazzle their viewers, and enhance the authority of their owners, not directly because of their visual effects, but because their technical virtuosity is interpreted as a demonstration of power (*figs* 0.3 and 0.4). He notes:

'It is the way an art object is construed as having come into the world which is the source of power such objects have over us.'[20]

He notes some of the visual effects that the canoe prows have, for instance 'eye-spots, like on butterfly wings, to which humans are almost certainly innately sensitive,' and 'peculiar optical sensations generated by leading the eye off in both directions,' but he argues that these function not through their direct effects, but because they suggest that the maker had access to a superior carving magic, and thus that the owner has access to magical power;[21] similarly Bernini's superior carving has power because of its homological relationship with Louis XIV's power to transform.[22]

In comparing the two sites I shift this focus to the specific visual effects and material qualities of the objects, and the way in which they themselves have social agency. I argue that the reason art is used in social mediation is because it has, and is designed to have, very strong affective properties, and these properties themselves magnify and transform the relations it is mediating. The canoe prows and the Bernini sculptures are not simply interchangeable as objects of technical virtuosity, but have different social potentials as a result of their different material characteristics. Or, in the case of Persepolis and the Akropolis, both sites create a sense of political power, but the variations in their stylistic qualities orient the sense of power to different political systems. This is essentially an extension of Gell's theory of 'distributed personhood.'[23] He argues that 'a soldier is not just

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[19] Gell 1998:13.
[20] Gell 1992:46.
[21] Gell 1992:44.
[22] Gell 1992:52.
[23] Gell 1998:20-21.

a man, but a man with a gun;[24] that is to say people's agency and identity is affected by the artefacts they have at their disposal and, therefore, objects have a certain type of agency in so far as they allow, or constrain, particular actions. Here we are concerned with the extent to which material characteristics of its central sites affects the agency and identity of a society: I argue that the different styles at Persepolis and the Akropolis shape the actions of individual agents within the sites, and thus influence the respective characters of Persian and Athenian society.

Gell also argues that there is a 'need for a methodological philistinism, parallel to methodological atheism.'[25] He rejects the concepts of aesthetic evaluation and specifically aesthetic response as suitable tools for the social analysis of art objects, on the grounds that they do not adequately explain the objects' social context: 'It may be interesting to know why, for example, the Yoruba evaluate one carving as aesthetically superior to another, but it does not tell us much about why the Yoruba carve to begin with.' He raises the additional objection that making aesthetic judgments at all can be culturally inaccurate: 'I am far from convinced that every 'culture' has a component of its ideational system which is comparable to our own aesthetics.'[26] Instead he focuses on 'the innumerable shades of social/emotional responses to artefacts (of terror, desire, awe, fascination etc),'[27] and the qualities that elicit these responses, for instance the 'mild visual disturbances' caused by the canoe prows.[28] These are often Gestalt qualities, cultural elaborations of immediate and innate human responses to particular visual stimulus.

As well as the points raised by Gell, a focus on such qualities is particularly useful for both the archaeological and the comparative aspects of our study. One of the recurrent problems of comparative study is finding cross-cultural terms of comparison which are equally appropriate to the different comparanda. An approach grounded in basic cognitive responses is a way of addressing this problem. Similarly, for past cultures, even more than for Gell's anthropological examples, it is often extremely difficult to establish whether, and if so, how their ideational systems conceptualized 'art objects.' In our case there is the additional problem that there is considerably more evidence for such concepts in Greece than in Persia: looking primarily at cognitive responses is therefore also a way of allowing a balanced comparison between the two. Clearly, nevertheless, culturally specific ideas of how art objects should and do function may also have affected both production and

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[24] Gell 1998:20.
[25] Gell 1992:42.
[26] Gell 1998:3.
[27] Gell 1998:6.
[28] Gell 1992:44.

response; to what extent the two societies are consciously eliciting cognitive responses and political effects is a question to which we will be returning.

Gell's approach is also useful for our purposes in that it is often easier to trace a relationship between political characteristics and diverse aesthetic qualities than with evaluative aesthetic judgments. Generally, therefore, I am concerned with whether a style is controlling, disorientating, legible, or malleable, and how this relates to political experience, rather than whether it is beautiful or not.

I apply the approach outlined above from a variety of angles: each of the five chapters considers a different material aspect of the sites. The first chapter considers the sites architecturally, particularly in terms of their manipulation of movement; the second considers the function of the extensive architectural sculpture of the two sites as decorative art; the third examines the sculpture as human images, eliciting different degrees of formality in behaviour; the fourth considers the relationship between the iconography of the reliefs and practice on the sites; the fifth looks at the construction of memory and time.

Each of these chapter has specific methodological concerns which are discussed separately, but there are some methodological issues which recur.

Omissions, Affordance, Causality, and Close Reading

An initial problem, common to almost all archaeological sites, is that the evidence is incomplete. After its destruction by Alexander the Great in 330, Persepolis remained largely undisturbed until its excavation in the twentieth century, apart from some early reuse of the south-west corner of the site, and some investigation and indeed graffiti from the early modern period onwards.[29] Its sculpture is therefore largely intact, although some of the reliefs are better preserved than others, notably the east frieze of the Apadana is better preserved than its mirror image on the north face. However, because many structural components of the architecture were wooden, in particular the columns and beams of the palaces, and were reduced to ash in the fire, the correct reconstruction of the architecture, above the ground plan, is debatable.[30]

The Akropolis, by contrast, has been in more or less continuous use since the fifth century, with considerable alterations made to individual buildings and to the site as a

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[29] For reuse of the south-western corner Tilia 1969; Tilia 1972; Tilia 1974; for subsequent visitors to the site: Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991.

[30] Krefter 1971 offers a reconstruction, subsequently further developed into the Persepolis 3d project www.persepolis3d.com; Huff 2005 for the possibility of an extensive upper storey.

whole, by its various occupiers from the Romans up to the end of the Ottoman occupation.[31] Most of these additions have been stripped away, and the contemporary site reconstructed as far as possible as a ruin of the Periklean program. Considerable research has also been done on the original architectural dispositions and, as a result, much of the architectural program is secure, although the precise location and form of some of the more minor shrines and enclosures is uncertain, as well as the height of the walls and the disposition of the entrance ramp, both of which have been considerably altered during the site's long use as a fortified stronghold. The majority of the site's architectural sculpture has also been lost or damaged: not only most of the Parthenon's pediments, many of its metopes and some of the frieze, although these can to some extent be reconstructed from Carrey's drawings, but also the Erechtheion frieze, which exists only in fragments, the pediments of the Temple of Athena Nike, and much of its parapet balustrade.[32] Korres also notes fixtures for another frieze in the *pronaos* of the Parthenon, also now lost, if it ever existed.[33]

Generally however enough information exists, or can be reconstructed, to support the, fairly broad-brush, differences I wish to draw between the two sites, and although doubtless knowledge of the full architecture or sculpture would change some of the nuances of my interpretation, I doubt they would radically alter it. I have, of course, stated when reconstructions are speculative or information is lacking.

Another notable lack is information about colour in the sculpture and architecture and 'soft furnishings:' furniture, votives, rugs, paintings and other such items. Some evidence does exist for both sites, enough to suggest considerable similarities between them, particularly in their extensive use of colour, but not discriminated enough for meaningful comparison to be possible.[34] For this reason I have not discussed these aspects, except when they contribute to a particular argument, important though they must have been to the total effect.

The other lack is of evidence for actual practice at the sites. There are some external sources for the customs and regulations that must have influenced practice at each, but many of the details of behaviour cannot be reconstructed. Of necessity, therefore, I

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[31] See Korres 1994b.

[32] Bowie 1971.

[33] Hurwit 1999 footnote 74 to p.179, citing Korres 1994a:33.

[34] For colour at Persepolis: Nagel forthcoming; the Achaemenid use of polychromy can also be seen in the ceramic tile reliefs from Susa. For colour in classical sculpture: Brinkmann 2007. For colour and attachments in the Parthenon metopes: Schwab 2005:160-1. For soft furnishings: Hurwit 2004:164 for lamps and paintings in the Erechtheion and Kuhrt 2007:489 for Diodorus Siculus' description of Persepolis: 'It was the richest [city] under the sun and the private houses had been fitted out very luxuriously over the years (*DioSic*: xvii, 70.2).'

have mainly confined the discussion to what behaviours the material remains of the sites suggest. This approach is based on Gibson's concept of *affordances*, defined as the 'action possibilities' latent in any given environment or object.[35] This concept is sometimes used to stress the extent to which an object can afford a variety of uses, but it can also include the extent to which objects suggest and constrain particular uses.[36] For instance, a chair can be used as a surface to write on and a table can be sat on, nevertheless someone in a room containing a table and a chair and wishing to sit down and write will usually sit on the chair at the table, not just because of convention, but because the objects afford that use. Similarly, the Parthenon has, over time, been used as a temple, a church, a mosque, and a gunpowder storehouse, but, on the other hand, renovations have frequently been made to the architecture to allow it more effectively to afford these new purposes.[37] My aim has not been to show that the architecture of either Persepolis or the fifth century Akropolis had to be used in a particular way, but at least that certain behaviours and responses would be significantly easier/harder at one site or the other.

The concept of affordance also emphasizes the need to differentiate between the various viewers on each site - citizens, metics, slaves, women, foreigners, subjects, court, and even the Persian king - and to consider the different possible interactions the sculpture and architecture afford for them. Considering interaction with the sites as a form of political participation raises the question of whether the engagement of the variously disenfranchised with the sites would have been inclusive, or alienating, or even subversive. We shall see that sometimes the extent to which a site deliberately affords or does not afford ambiguity and a variety of responses can have a political aspect.

There is also the inverse concern, that of discriminating between possible explanations for why the sites came to be the way they were. Multiple causality is often seen as a problem in interpretative archaeology, where it is discussed as equifinality, the issue being that there are often many factors that might have caused an object to be created as it was, so which in fact did so is uncertain.[38] Baxandall, however, has developed the concept of overdetermination in relation to this issue, arguing that many different factors can all coincide in a particular choice.[39] He suggests that, instead of being a problem thrown up by our lack of knowledge, a number of different causes converging on one

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[35] Gibson 1977.
[36] Norman 1988 for the addition of a sense of suggestion to the term; see DeNora 2000:43-44 for this tension between flexibility and determination as applied to music.
[37] See Korres 1994b
[38] E.g. Hodder 1987.
[39] Baxandall 1985.

result may correspond to the real process by which an object is created. My approach, therefore, has been to use political causal factors for the sites as a filter, to look at how far they can provide a good explanation for the material characteristics; this does not, however, deny that there may be other factors, such as functional, technical, conventional, or purely artistic motivating factors, operating concurrently and, doubtless, with interplay between them.

Because I am looking at art and architecture as socially adaptive tools, the type of explanation I am looking for is the group consequences that the sites have, rather than individual agencies involved in their creation; it is a recursive explanation through description of effects, rather than an attempt to define the creative process that lead to their construction. A quality may be seen as having a political effect in this sense without necessarily implying that the designer intended it to do so. Nevertheless, the question of how the sites were actually designed and the individual agency involved in the process is an interesting one on many levels: what social organisation was involved, how architectural planning was thought about in the absence of discursive writing on the topic and, of course, the influence of this intentional agency on the ultimate effects the sites create. The extent to which these political effects are deliberately planned is, therefore, a question to which we shall be returning.

Finally, my technique in all the chapters is to use close reading of the material to develop a persuasive account of the political effects of the sites. This method prevents the discussion from collapsing reductively into either politics or aesthetics, but rather follows the sustained tension between the two aspects in the same material. I have tried to push the argument as far as possible, and perhaps in some cases overstated the subtlety or politicisation of potential responses; however I have tried to show that various aspects of the architecture and sculpture have very immediate, often indeed subconscious, political effects on even the casual viewer, which may then be further elaborated by those viewers who engage more closely.

Monumental Sites

There are also issues which are raised specifically by monumental sites. Monumental sites are often seen as a particularly effective way of expressing centralised power. DeMarrais, notes:

'Monuments can be impressive, even overwhelming constructions that are experienced simultaneously by a large audience. They are effective and enduring means of communication, often expressing relatively unambiguous messages of power.'[40]

Monumental sites are often visible across a wide landscape; they make use of what is perhaps a basic cognitive tendency to read scale as indicative of importance; they also, as DeMarrais points out, require an enormous input of labour and resources, another, more indirect, way of indicating power.[41] Other aspects often emphasised are concerned with a site's place within the landscape: as a centre, it provides deep spatial principles of unity for groups;[42] as a landmark, it enhances a sense of group identity through an increased awareness of and loyalty to place;[43] it can also be aligned with other sites creating a linked system of connection and communication across an area.[44] This last principle can be seen in both the Athenian practice of building corresponding temples at territorial boundaries and in urban sanctuaries;[45] and the Persian practice of constructing buildings with architectural and sculptural similarities in various satrapies.[46]

However, there is a recurrent concern with this model: the apparent disjunction between lavish expenditure on the interiors, and restriction of access, which makes their social visibility and thus their direct effectiveness, relatively low.[47] This is particularly relevant here, because many of the differences we will be looking at between Persepolis and the Akropolis are in their internal characteristics. One possible solution to this problem is that the process by which information about the sites filters out, itself assists with their power effects: Trigger suggests that the deliberate exclusion from sites 'heightened the mystery of what was going on in such places and made it easier for the upper classes to emphasis the importance of their activities.'[48] This can be connected to Tuan's idea of mythical space, embracing both the 'fuzzy area of defective knowledge surrounding the empirically known' and the unreal, fantasy worlds that exist only in story

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[40] DeMarrais 1996.
[41] DeMarrais 1996:18-19.
[42] Summers 2003:131.
[43] Tuan 1977:159.
[44] Foucault 1998 [1982]:433 for territory, communication and speed as the crucial aspects of space as power
[45] de Polignac 1984; de Polignac 1994.
[46] Eg Erdogan 2007, with bibliography; Knauss, Gagoshidze et al. 2010.
[47] Baines 2006:262; Mukerji 1997:144.
[48] Trigger 2003:556; see Baines 2006:206, discussing Ancient Egypt: 'We sought to model the maintenance of elites through a common high culture that, although in principle communicative, subverts communication between elites and others.'

or myth.[49] Places that are known to exist, but rarely seen, may have a specific power precisely because they appeal to the imaginative, rather than perceptual, faculties. Mukerji, discussing Versailles, suggests that the artisans and merchants involved in supplying and arranging festivities, became, obliquely, part of the audience, extending the visibility beyond the narrow circle of the court at whom it was primarily directed and, by hearsay and rumour, out into the general populace of France, a process which might well have had precisely this mythologizing effect.[50]

There is also the possibility that the effects of the sites are aimed primarily at those who had access to them precisely because it was those people specifically whom they were intended to influence. Achaemenid Persia was a court society, with a powerful aristocracy, and there is evidence that mechanisms both for keeping the nobility at court and preventing them from accumulating too much individual or familial power were ingrained in the system.[51] It is therefore by no means implausible that similar concerns informed the design of Persepolis, and were considered at least as important as its impression on imperial subjects, who were relatively powerless.[52] It has also been argued that the Akropolis was not designed for an imperial audience, but rather for the satisfaction of Athenians themselves:

> 'The Parthenon was never intended as a monument to empire; it was instead a monument to military strength and alliance, and to religious solidarity, all predicated in turn upon the guiding cultural and ethical superiority of the Athenian people and the protection of the goddess who inspired them.'[53]

The intended audience can, to some extent, be deduced from the material itself, as we shall see in Chapter 4; however these considerations again suggest the importance of attention to multiple possible audiences, and the different levels at which the sites may simultaneously be having political effect.

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[49] Tuan 1977:86.
[50] Mukerji 1997:144.
[51] Briant 2002[1996]:324-7, for the obligation to be present at court: 326.
[52] Briant 2002[1996]:80-2, 351-2; 82: 'It was exclusively Persians who held the command and policy positions'; 350: 'The fact that local elites were recognised does not contradict this principle, since positions held by the local elites were limited, at least under the first kings, to posts without political influence'; 352: 'To direct the satrapies and lead the armies or even to command the garrisons… Darius and, later, Xerxes drew massively on representatives of the Persian aristocracy.'
[53] Castriota 1992:229.

The primary force of comparison, in this study, is to give greater analytical security to the interpretation of the material. Interpretative archaeology tends to be a problematic enterprise, prey to concerns of subjectivity. Renfrew suggests that a move should be made from 'empathetic' readings to one 'which aspires to deal with these matters in as scientific and objective a manner as possible.'[54] Comparison is one of the tools that can be used to achieve this. Each site contextualises the other, providing a contrast which illuminates unique aspects of either, and tests any explanation of a phenomenon by demanding it should be able to explain both sets of material.

Sewell notes that the underlying logic of comparative studies is that of hypothesis testing:

'If an historian attributes the appearance of phenomenon A in one society to the existence of condition B, he can check this hypothesis by trying to find other societies where A occurs without B or vice versa. If he finds no cases which contradict the hypothesis, his confidence in its validity will increase, the level of his confidence depending upon the number and variety of comparisons made. If he finds contradictory cases, he will either reject the hypothesis outright or reformulate and refine it.'[55]

Moreover, he notes that the obverse of this same logic can also be used to demonstrate the 'uniqueness' of a society or social group; the technique 'separates out those phenomena which are genuine peculiarities of the locality, phenomena which, of course, will have to be explained by local conditions.'[56] It is a version of this technique that I have used here: essentially I have sought to strengthen the hypothesis that various stylistic phenomena (A) at Persepolis have a causal (though recursive, rather than linear) relationship with various political phenomena (B) in Persia, by showing that opposing stylistic phenomena (anti-A), those on the Akropolis, occur in a state, Athens, which has opposing political circumstances (anti-B) to Persia, and vice versa. This argument does not, of course, depend on the bare opposition of the two data sets – there are any number of states throughout history that have had different art and politics to Persia for any number of reasons, so the

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[54] Renfrew 1998:2.
[55] Sewell 1967:208.
[56] Sewell 1967:211.

discussion of these reasons is crucial to the argument – but it provides a structure within which a potential relationship between art and politics can be described more rigorously than for either site alone.[57]

Eventually, this might contribute to a wider comparative project, as envisaged by Trigger;[58] however, for a limited study, the two sites provide particularly effective controls for each other. If the purpose of comparison is to bridge particularity and generalisation,[59] a dual study is here appropriate for my theoretical purposes.

Comparison also fulfils the need to make strange. In *An Apology to Thucydides* Sahlins argues for the advantages of exotopy as a way of getting an external vantage point on a culture and cites Bakhtin:

> 'To be sure, to enter in some measure into an alien culture and look at the world through its eyes, is a necessary moment in the process of its understanding; but if understanding were exhausted at this moment, it would have been no more than a single duplication, and would have brought nothing new or enriching… The chief matter of understanding is the *exotopy* of the one who does the understanding – in time, space, and culture – in relation to that which he wants to understand creatively… In the realm of culture, exotopy is the most powerful lever of understanding. It is only to the eyes of an *other* culture that the alien culture reveals itself more completely and more deeply (but never exhaustively, because there will come other cultures, that will see and understand even more).'[60]

However a disadvantage of exotopy has always been the tendency to warp the observed culture to your own; this is particularly the case for the classical cultures, which have been assimilated so far into western cultural identity that seeing them exotopically is difficult. Comparison is a way of getting a new exotopic fix, one from outside both the observer's culture and that of the observed.

In this way, comparison can be used not only to make interpretations more secure but also to formulate problems to be researched.[61] In choosing what aspects of Persepolis and the Akropolis to compare I have mainly been driven by the differences that appear

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[57] Sewell 1967:217: 'The comparative method is a method, a set of rules which can be methodically and systematically applied.. It does not supply us with explanations to be subjected to test: this is a task for the historical imagination.'
[58] Trigger 2003.
[59] Ragin 1987.
[60] Sahlins 2004:5 citing Todorov 1984:109-10.
[61] Sewell 1967:211 for this use of hypothesis testing.

between their material characteristics when they are placed next to each other, for which I have then sought political explanations, rather than any fixed idea of what stylistic aspects should be important in creating political effect or for what political differences I was looking. Although, of course, which aspects appeared salient to me, is itself to an extent unavoidably culturally preconditioned.

Persepolis and the Akropolis as Controls

Persepolis and the Akropolis are particularly good controls for each other. Their contemporary dates, geographical proximity, and broadly shared cultural heritage, and the continued cultural interaction within the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East during their existence fulfil 'the experimental condition of "all other things being equal",'[62] and diminish the typical comparative problem of finding legitimate shared terms in which to discuss different cultures.[63]

There are closer similarities as well. Politically, their 'basically similar imperialist situation,'[64] particularly the way in which each site is built shortly after the rapid expansion and subsequent consolidation of an empire, highlights the differences in the political systems, not only that of autocracy or democracy, but also differences in the nature of their empires. The homogenous or heterogeneous composition of their subjects, veiled or open use of imperial power, and their relative in/stability are all differences which can be seen to play out in the material characteristics of the sites. Materially, they are also closely similar in their physical qualities and functionality: they are both raised and fortified sites, containing treasuries, and accounting records, and either palaces or temples,[65] and using columned, rectilinear architecture combined with extensive anthropomorphic sculpture. Against these similarities stylistic details show up. The close similarities between the sites in other respects make a relationship between the stylistic and political differences that can be seen particularly plausible.

Sewell notes 'mere temporal and spatial proximity… does not assure similarity, and some societies which are very remote from one another are surely more alike, at least in ways that are crucial for some explanatory problems, than some neighbouring societies…

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[62] Sewell 1967:215.
[63] For shared Greek and Near Eastern cultural heritage: Hurwit 1985; Burkert 1992; Coldstream 2003; Burkert 2004; for cultural interaction between Greece and Persia: Miller 1997.
[64] Nylander 1979:346.
[65] For the common origins of temples and palaces: Trigger 2003:565; Mazarakis Ainian 1997.

we should use for comparison whatever social systems will be useful in determining the validity of our hypotheses.[66] As I have largely used comparison of the material to generate my hypotheses, there is a sense in which Sewell's requirement is self-fulfilling in this case: the aspects I look at I have chosen *because* they seem to be the salient differences against a background of similarity. Other controls could be used for both sites, comparison with which would interrogate different associations between politics and material culture. For instance there is a sense in which the obvious comparison for Persepolis, and very possibly the main one that the Achaemenids would have had in mind themselves, is with the palaces of the Assyrian kings;[67] there are also obvious possible comparisons between the Akropolis and the architecture of other Greek *poleis*, to consider the material effects of having versus not having an empire, or of democracy versus oligarchy. Nevertheless, the comparison of Persepolis and the Akropolis is interesting precisely because they are not culturally the closest controls for each other, it is the interplay of similarity and radical difference that allows them to illuminate each other's qualities.

Democracy, Autocracy, Empire

The political characteristics I am interested in are generally quite broad. I am not, for instance, counting the 192 dead at Marathon in the Parthenon frieze, or opposing the 4 tribes of Athens prior to Kleisthenes' reforms in its north face, to the 10 post-Kleisthenic tribes in the south.[68] Nevertheless, some things need to be said about the conceptualisation of political difference between the two states. Broadly speaking Persia is ruled by the king and Athens is a democracy, but what do those terms mean, and what do they mean for our purposes?

In *Logics of History*, Sewell argues that 'a useful way to get a conceptual handle on the social is to think of it in terms of the various *mediations* that place people into "social" relations with one another – mediations that... in one way or another, make them interdependent members of each others' worlds.'[69] He contrasts this with 'conventional conceptualizations of the social... which tend to begin with the various social units formed *by* mediations... groups, classes, social categories, or institutions.'[70] Sewell prefers the

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[66] Sewell 1967:215.
[67] Kuhrt 1995a: for the Achaemenid presence in the Assyrian heartlands.
[68] Boardman 1977; Boardman 1984; Harrison 1984.
[69] Sewell 2005:329.
[70] Sewell 2005:329.

former model on the grounds that it better describes both the fluidity of social groupings and the diversity of groups to which individuals may, temporarily or permanently, belong. For our purposes it is also useful in that it corresponds with Gell's concept of objects as having active agency: instead of simply being markers of a culture or cultural group, in this model, objects are crucial mediators, constantly both cementing and diversifying these social relations, and thus doing things in the world.

Sewell notes that his argument does not deny the importance of institutions, including, presumably, political institutions such as assemblies or councils, or other relatively fixed social groupings with a political dimension, such as classes, ethnicities, families, or arms of the military.[71] However, it shifts the emphasis of political identity from membership of such groups to the interactions that any individual experiences, both in relating to other members of such groups, and to members of other groups. Such interactions will of course also be fluid and individual, but there will often be recurrent and relatively fixed types of inter- and intra-group interaction characteristic within any society. It is these aspects of political identity, and the ways in which the sites mediate them, that I primarily focus on.

Sewell's model is in fact particularly useful for describing the Achaemenid political system. In Persia individual interaction with the king is the key political act.[72] It is fetishised in particular in the act of *polydôria*, in which gifts and services rendered to the king – often saving the king's life, or other military achievements, or advice in council, but even a handful of water brought by a peasant, in the absence of anything else, can count - are lavishly rewarded.[73] This transaction forms the fundamental basis of Persian society: the king gives and in return receives obligation and service.[74] The exchange is not equal: royal gifts place obligation on the recipient, but the king retains the right to decide whether to acknowledge services or not: reward depends entirely on the king's approval of the action and can, moreover, be subsequently withdrawn.[75] Rewards are made in gifts of money, land, and positions, and also in ornaments, clothes, a position near the king at banquets, and titles, many of which, such as cup-bearer, charioteer, or tablemate, imply being frequently in the king's presence: literal proximity to the king's person is a mark of

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[71] Sewell 2005:330: 'Groups, institutions, classes, ethnicities, professions, and the like do frequently manage to establish relatively clear boundaries and to police them effectively… Individuals do frequently establish solid identities that endure for long periods.'
[72] Briant 2002[1996]:302-23; Kuhrt 2007:620-65 a combination of which I follow here.
[73] For accounts of lavish rewards for the gift of water: Kuhrt 2007:658-9.
[74] Briant 2002[1996]: 316: 'The principle was simple: gifts were given by the king in return for services rendered. This was a reality expressed in all of the texts.'
[75] Briant 2002[1996]:316-23.

honour.[76] Moreover, Briant and Kuhrt both note that the relationship is between the individual and the king, not a family or other group loyalty, and that this is a way in which the power of the nobility is fragmented.[77]

In the Greek texts the key word for describing the relationship of his subjects to the king is *pistis*, faithfulness, which is generally believed to translate a Persian concept;[78] yet the Persian word *bandaka*, used frequently to describe the king's most trusted generals,[79] but also all his subjects, including indeed in the Behistun inscription those who aided the rebels against him,[80] seems to imply a greater degree of subservience. Briant notes that the Akkadian version of the Behistun inscription uses *qallu*, which 'comes from a vocabulary of slavery and dependence,' and that at least once a contemporary translator into Greek uses *doulos* as an equivalent.[81] It is at any rate clear that dependence on the king and a personal bond of loyalty is key. This model of loyal bondsmen is also repeated on a smaller scale in the aristocratic houses, and also in the satrapal courts throughout the empire.[82]

Kuhrt notes that while theoretically everyone occupied the same position, as *bandaka*, in practice Persian society seems to have been highly stratified and grouped in a variety of ways.[83] Amongst the Persians, both tribal and, despite efforts to control them, familial identities were significant.[84] Beyond this the demarcations of different strata are not totally clear.[85] The inscription at the Naqsh-e Rustam tombs distinguishes between the 'powerful' (*tunavant*) and the 'weak' (*skauthi*), however Briant also cites the forms of greeting recorded by Herodotus:

'When Persians meet in the street one can always tell by their mode of greeting whether or not they are of the same rank; for they do not speak but kiss – their equals upon the mouth, those somewhat superior on the cheeks. A man of greatly inferior rank prostrates himself in profound reference.'[86]

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[76] Briant 2002[1996]:311.
[77] Briant 2002[1996]: 325: 'It [the Achaemenid court system] tended to downplay family solidarity in favor of dynastic loyalty and to isolate the nobles in the one-to-one relationship that connected them to the king.' Kuhrt 2007:620: 'The result of Darius' actions was to demote them [the Persian nobility] from a peer-group to servants, dependent for their status and position on the king, like all others.'
[78] Briant 2002[1996]:324.
[79] Kuhrt 2007:620.
[80] Briant 2002[1996]:324.
[81] Briant 2002[1996]:324-5.
[82] Briant 2002[1996]:334-6; 345-7.
[83] Kuhrt 2007:621.
[84] Kuhrt 2007:621; Briant 2002[1996]:326-338.
[85] Briant 2002[1996]: for the difficulties in understanding the sociological implications of both Greek and Old Persian terms used in this context.
[86] *Herod.* I.134 (*trans.* de Sélincourt 1996[1954]).

He notes, if taken literally, this seems to suggest three, rather than two, social groups: roughly equivalent, he suggests, to nobility, gentry, and commoners.[87] For our purposes, more interesting than the precise social division is the fact that, if Herodotus is correct, specific formalized and hierarchical forms of interaction were established between different social groups.

Moreover, the act of relating to the king is often extended beyond the king's actual person, to the king's messengers, whose persons were inviolable, and indeed his messages, to the extent that it was at least recorded that the satrap Datames performed *proskynesis* before a royal letter.[88] The extension of interaction with the king to the king's buildings, therefore, seems a plausible one, particularly as the role of the king as a builder was also emphasised in Achaemenid ideology.[89]

In Athenian democracy group identity is, in one respect, very strongly demarcated: an inhabitant of Athens, or the *archê*, either is or is not an Athenian citizen.[90] Most political privileges, and also obligations, are dependent on this distinction: participation in the legislative, judiciary, executive, military spheres.[91] Moreover a number of fifth century decrees deal specifically with this boundary, whether in the extension of citizenship to the *thetes* in the reforms of Ephialtes, or the exclusions of those whose mother was not Athenian in the 451/0 citizenship decree. Although, of course, the need for the latter can be seen as an attempt to police the boundary in the fact of an underlying tendency to fluidity of grouping.[92]

Nevertheless, a key feature in Athenian democracy is the way in which whoever is currently classified as members of the *demos* interact with each other politically.[93] Raaflaub, discussing the democracy after the reforms of Ephialtes, notes:

'The two decisive characteristics of the Athenian political system at the time when it was explicitly called *dêmokratia* were that (a) regardless of property, political equality among all citizens was realized to the fullest extent possible, and (b) in the

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[87] Briant 2002[1996]:331, 334-5.

[88] Briant 2002[1996]:344-5, *Polyaenus* VII.21.5.

[89] Briant 2002[1996]:165-71.

[90] This is the case for Athenian men; see Raaflaub 1998:36 for the non-existence of citizenship lists for women and their consequent more circumstantial status.

[91] Though see Raaflaub 2007:125 for metics and even slaves serving as hoplites and in the navy, without political enfranchisement.

[92] For the citizenship decree as a response to increasing metic-citizen intermarriage Raaflaub 1998:35-6 and bibliography.

[93] Cartledge 2007:163-66 for the various possible views on when democracy strictly begins.

assembly and related institutions the demos not only made final decisions but was fully in charge, representing the actual government of the polis and controlling the entire political process.'[94]

It is the degree of active participation and political engagement, as well as the extent of suffrage, that is characteristic of Athenian democracy. Raaflaub estimates that at any time some ten thousand citizens, out of a total citizen population of at most fifty to sixty thousand, were 'deriving much of their livelihood from communal service,' while somewhere between one in five to one in two, served at least one year in the *Boulê* at some point in their lives. He comments that, looking at all the official functions together, Athens experienced 'an intensity of participation in communal life that is unparalleled certainly in the Greek world, probably in world history.'[95]

Cartledge, moreover, notes the quality of 'face-to-face-ness' in Athenian political life, both in the literal sense that the binding decisions of the community were taken by a majority vote of citizens (or a selection of them) in full view of each other, and also in the less direct sense that the regime was transparent: 'there was no State (including a government and a civil service bureaucracy) interposed between ordinary citizens and the making of final, universally binding decisions.'[96] The democracy was direct not representative. There was no separation of operational spheres, but rather the *demos* controlled the entire political process through the active participation of its constituent members.[97] In democratic Athens politics happens 'in the middle,' in the political space within which all the members of the *demos* interact. This is not to deny the importance of other groups within the *polis* such as the tribes, phratries, *gene*, and *hetaireiai*; indeed Cartledge notes that the concept of the individual in a modern liberal sense is anachronistic.[98] Particular individuals also sometimes came to exert disproportionate influence over extended periods of time. Nevertheless, there is an emphasis on exercise of power through the participation of equal individuals, which is relationally very different from the way in which Persian society is structured by interaction with the king.

The observation that 'the State' does not really exist in Athens has implications for the political dimension of the Akropolis. It gives it a sort of self-reflexive power

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[94] Raaflaub 2007:106.
[95] Raaflaub 1998:21; this system was made possible in part by the empire, revenues from which funded many of these positions, making it possible for rich and poor to occupy them on an equal footing (Raaflaub 2007:121-2).
[96] Cartledge 2007:161.
[97] Cartledge 2007:156-7.
[98] Cartledge 2007:157.

relationship with the *demos*; in so far as it shapes their political identity, it materializes their own power over themselves. It is not, however, clear that the Athenians would have thought about it this way: the Thucydides passage quoted above makes it clear that a connection between power and architecture was explicitly understood, but it is perhaps power over others that he means.

Here I have looked primarily at the political interactions of Persians and Athenian citizens within their respective societies, but those outside these privileged groups interact with the systems in related, but also highly differentiated, ways. The difference between Persians and non-Persians is highly marked: while the tribute paid by subjects to some extent fits into the model of obligation towards and subservience to the king, and foreign individuals can certainly receive largesse from the king, it is clear that non-Persians can never have the same status as Persians.[99] Similarly metics in Athens were presumably influenced by the 'total social phenomenon' of democracy, in the wider areas of which they could in many ways participate, but yet they were firmly excluded from its most characteristic interactions. Citizens of subject *poleis*, often democratic themselves, also might feel a much greater imposition of power.

Important differences also exist in the extent and compositions of the empires. In particular the fundamental cultural homogeneity of the Athenian *archê* contrasts strongly with the hugely culturally heterogeneous Achaemenid empire, a difference which I shall argue has numerous effects on the ways in which the sites operate politically. Distinctions in the way in which they are openly/covertly imperial, and even the in/stability of their political situations can also be related to the material characteristics of the sites, as we shall see.

Finally, a specific issue is the existence of other sites that have similar architecture, but different political systems. Sewell's hypothesis testing method suggests that this a problem, especially for the Akropolis, in that plenty of fifth century Greek cities were not democracies, but nevertheless had sanctuaries that shared many qualities with the Akropolis. This problem is not, however, insurmountable: it has often been suggested that underlying the rise of Athenian democracy is a much more widespread panhellenic phenomenon, the tendency to egalitarianism, usually termed *isonomia* or the strong principle of equality.[100] Therefore the Akropolis could be seen as a specifically democratic example of the generically egalitarian architectural trends. Although significant within the Hellenic

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[99] Briant 2002[1996]:68-9, 349-52; for tribute and gifts *to* the king: Briant 2002[1996]:394-7, the exact relationship between tribute and gift-giving is contentious see Chapter 4:147 below.

[100] Morris 1996:19; Raaflaub 1997; Cartledge 2007:161 notes 'face-to-face-ness' is not exclusively Athenian.

world, in the framework of comparison with Persepolis the political differences between the Greek *poleis* are arguably relatively minor. It would, of course, be interesting to see whether subsequent uses of classical architecture in more radically different societies, such as Rome or post-renaissance Europe, do pose a threat to the argument or whether they in fact show significant differences in their deployment of architecture and sculpture, beyond their common use of the iconic architectural 'brand.'

Hellenocentricity

Finally, any comparison of Greece and Persia, particularly one that discusses types of control and freedom, lays itself open to the charge of Orientalizing. As well as this, there is a constant pull to Hellenocentricity due to almost total reliance on Greek sources for written information, and the fact that, compared to the vast bibliography on the Akropolis, Persepolis has been academically neglected. The main exceptions are Root, whose leads and suggestions I have frequently followed, and Henri Frankfort. Frankfort is a not particularly prolific, and often highly critical, but nevertheless a very perceptive commentator on the site. A technique I have frequently used is to try to show that qualities that he dismisses negatively can in fact be seen as positive attributes if viewed in the right light.

I have tried to ameliorate this bias by discussing Persepolis first in each chapter; indeed a major agenda of this thesis is to establish an account that takes Persepolis' style seriously. One reason for choosing to write about its political aspects is that, it seems to me, much of the site makes more sense aesthetically if understood as having a strongly political purpose. I have also tried to limit the discussion to the archaeological material as far as possible, and, as Thucydides imagined, look only at the ruins left behind, although I have occasionally succumbed to quotation of classical sources when it seemed particularly relevant. However, the risk in this balancing act is then that the Akropolis may not be adequately addressed, as the account is not so closely structured to its salient characteristics. For instance, I have only discussed the religious aspect of the site, or indeed the statue of Athena Parthenos, in passing, despite their centrality to the Akropolis, because they have no real equivalent at Persepolis. Nevertheless, one of the major advantages of comparison, as well as bringing rigour, is to spark ideas, and I hope that by looking at the Akropolis through slightly Persianized eyes, things that are interesting about it, but rarely commented on because common in Greece, may have become apparent.

'THE ACROPOLIS AND PERSEPOLIS': PREVIOUS COMPARISONS

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As well as the considerations of comparative methodology discussed in the introduction, there is also an historical interest in the comparison of the two sites. This derives, to an extent, from the dramatic antagonism between the two cultures, which continues to be a *topos* in contemporary thought. The symmetry between the two sites has a symbolic resonance in the fluctuating balance of power between Greece and Persia: Alexander's destruction of Persepolis in 330 is often claimed as revenge for Xerxes' destruction of the Akropolis 150 years earlier, and the two campaigns were often linked in contemporary Greek rhetoric. As well as this, there has recently been an increasing interest in cultural interactions between the two empires, most intensively focused on zones of interaction, particularly in Western Asia Minor, but also referencing the cultural areas behind this contact zone (*fig.* 0.5).[101] Persepolis and the Akropolis have, of course, been compared before.

Previous scholarly comparisons have focused primarily on trying to trace possible influence from one to the other. This has been argued in both directions, Greek to Persia and Persian back to Greece. The two opinions have developed in very different political and intellectual climates, driven by different theoretical perspectives, and both suggestions are, to some extent, unsatisfactory.

The first article directly to compare the two, written in 1951 by T.E. Lawrence's youngest brother, actually covers, or at least touches on, most of the ways in which the two sites have subsequently been compared, up to and including my own. Initially he suggests a sociological comparative project in the hypothesis-testing sense:

'Two of the greatest monuments of the ancient world date from the fifth century B.C. and they embody respectively the ideals of the Persian and of the Athenian Empire… A comparison between the two schemes must reflect the divergence between the Persian and the Greek outlook but also reveal some elements in

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[101] Miller 1997; Darbandi and Zournatzi 2008.

common if only because of an inevitable resemblance in ways of thinking among contemporaries when confronted with rather similar problems.'[102]

He does not however develop this, but instead then argues that the similarities are largely due to direct Greek work at Persepolis, which was the prevalent view at the time he was writing.[103] He then argues that various 'anomalous' aspects of the Akropolis, notably its asymmetrical arrangement of buildings, the ground-level reliefs of the Athena Nike parapet and the 'illustration of a contemporary subject'[104] in the Parthenon frieze, may have been influenced by Persepolis and inspired partly by rivalry with Persia, a view which Root developed thirty years later.[105] Finally, in the last paragraph, he returns to the social aspect, concluding that what the comparison proves is 'Athenian superiority in artistry and society.'[106] From this it is clear that the article is both very fruitful and, in typically period style, very biased towards Greece.

The Archaeological History of Persepolis

A number of early western visitors to the site interpreted Persepolis in terms of Greek temples and, particularly through Xenophon's account of a Persian festival in the *Cyropaedia*.[107] Nevertheless its twentieth century excavators initially interpreted the site in the Near Eastern tradition. Iran did not receive the attention that other parts of Mesopotamia did, perhaps because of its distance from the biblical heartlands. Persepolis was excavated comparatively late and its excavators were primarily those who were working on other Near Eastern areas.[108]

Herzfeld, the first major excavator of Persepolis, working under the auspices of the Oriental Institute of Chicago, describes it as 'an old art, the very last phase of the Ancient East, with no future,'[109] and was later to argue strongly against the proposed Greek influence. Discussion mainly focused on the question of to which of the many component parts of the Near East Achaemenid Art should be traced, the main contenders being

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[102] Lawrence 1951:111.
[103] Lawrence 1951:111: 'But it must not be taken for granted that every parallel between them is fortuitous. There is reason to think that the sculptors employed at Persepolis were largely Greeks.'
[104] Lawrence 1951:118.
[105] Root 1985.
[106] Lawrence 1951:119.
[107] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991; Xenophon *Cyropaedia* (VII 3, 1-23).
[108] For summaries of the excavations: Nylander 1970; Abdi 2001.
[109] Herzfeld 1941:247.

Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Urartu, with all of which Achaemenid art shares motifs and subject matter.[110] The influence of Median culture was also discussed; this last was, and continues to be, particularly problematic in that, while it is inherently plausible that the Medes as the Persians' immediate forerunners, were a major influence, there is very little evidence for the nature of their own material culture. From the beginning, Persepolis was modelled as a composite art form.

The idea that Achaemenid work was significantly based on the Greek was already suggested by Dieulafoy in the late nineteenth century.[111] However it really comes into ascendancy with Frankfort and Richter's simultaneous publications in the 1946 *American Journal of Archaeology*, five years before Lawrence's article. Frankfort and Richter both set the Achaemenid work within the context of Near Eastern traditions, but claim a major role for Greece in its transformation:

'The sculptures from Susa and Persepolis embody the Greek concept of relief.'[112]

'Above all, the delicacy of the work and the lightness of touch in many of the Achaemenian products are typically Greek.'[113]

Their technique is to give formal analyses of the stylistic similarities, picking out parallels to Greek work:

'The carving of the profile eye in full front view, with both corners visible - the outer one in the form of an acute angle, the outer one shaped as a loop to indicate the canthus - occurs regularly also in late archaic Greek art.'[114]

What is striking about the analysis is how close its focus is: it is true that in a sense it is precisely at this level of detail that it is most possible to prove similarity, at least of technician, as Morelli's connoisseurship methods demonstrate, but the shift from the details they describe to the assumption that the overall plan is also Greek is problematic.

Richter was primarily a classical art historian, but Frankfort, who self-defines as an Orientalist, sees the same Greek influence.[115] These two articles both quote as one of their

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[110] Root 1979:131-308 discusses influences.
[111] Dieulafoy 1884-9.
[112] Frankfort 1946:9.
[113] Richter 1946:23.
[114] Richter 1946:17.

sources of inspiration Darius' building inscription from Susa, recording the various people who contributed to constructing the palaces of his empire, including 'the stone cutters who wrought the stone, those were Ionians and Sardians.'[116] The inscription had been published in 1929,[117] but was only just becoming widely known, a fact which both Frankfort and Richter comment on: it seems to have been a major factor on the model of Achaemenid art as a Greek regional variation.

In 1970, Nylander's *The Ionians at Pasargadae* claimed a different role for the Greeks, suggesting that the stone working techniques used in Achaemenid monumental building can be traced back to Greece and Lydia.[118] His argument is that certain techniques, notably tooling, anathyrosis, and clamping must have been introduced as package from elsewhere, because the techniques are already perfected and show 'a coherent whole of logically and functionally related procedures,'[119] and that, not only can precisely the same set of solutions be found in Greek and Lydian buildings, but their development through time can be traced in those regions. He does, however, introduce an ambiguity, noting that at least some of the techniques are also common in Syria and Uratu, and that masonry techniques are generally under studied so there may also be parallels elsewhere. However, his argument, as it stands, is that Greek and Lydian artisans were brought to the Persian heartlands and provided specific solutions to technical problems which the building projects presented. Nylander states that he would like to then read from the masonry to the 'elusive but essential' matters of creativity in the project as a whole,[120] but in fact he does not pursue this project in any more detail.

Subsequently the roles of both workers and designers on the Achaemenid building sites has been considered in more detail. While a number of examples of small-scale work, graffiti sketches and a plaque, all clearly stylistically Greek, and quarry inscriptions in late sixth-century Ionian script all testify to a Greek presence there,[121] the publication of Persepolis treasury tablets has provided a more nuanced approach to the Susa inscription. Work on the tablets suggests that the status of Greek workers, very possibly transported populations, was low and their influence, at least at a conceptual level, probably not great.[122]

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[115] Frankfort 1946:6.
[116] For the full text of the Susa foundation charter: Kuhrt 2007:492.
[117] Scheil 1929.
[118] Nylander 1970.
[119] Nylander 1970:47.
[120] Nylander 1970:72.
[121] Richter 1946:23; Boardman and Roaf 1980; Miller 1997:101-3 and bibliography.
[122] Cameron 1948; Miller 1997:102.

As well as this, the need to understand the Achaemenid project as a cohesive whole has been increasingly emphasized. It is a theme that occurs in the literature from very early on: Frankfort himself opines that 'The work as a whole and the spirit which pervaded it was Persian,'[123] and goes on to discuss the similarities with pre-Achaemenid applied arts as a possible source of the underlying principle. Lawrence also describes Achaemenid eclecticism as a positive and deliberate strategy of imperial unification, an interpretation Root later extended even to the masonry.[124] However the search for a coherent interpretation is more often raised as a theoretical project than realised in practical analysis. Root's *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art* is the first totalising political analysis, in which focusing primarily on iconography, although with some notes on style, she describes the reliefs at Persepolis as a coherent program, creating an 'abstract vision of empire and of imperial harmony.'[125] Both Roaf and Root have also discussed models for the design process, emphasising the probable role of the king and other high status individuals, rather than foreign workmen, in determining the overall plan.[126]

Work also continues to look at possible prototypes for the art and architecture, with a particular emphasis on Iranian models. This is not in conflict with Root's approach, indeed much of her work is concerned with comparing iconographic motifs at Persepolis to a wide range of prototypes, showing how they have been altered and transformed to create a new iconographic program. Instead it reflects a genuine characteristic of Achaemenid material culture – its swift emergence into a style which is simultaneously extremely distinctive and eclectically familiar.

Debate continues, continually vexed by the lack of evidence, on whether the Median culture might have been a forerunner to the Achaemenid.[127] Excavations at Ekbatana have so far, revealed little.[128] Particular interest focuses on the hypostyle halls, a crucial feature of Achaemenid architecture. There is a bibliography trying to connect them to the Teleusterion at Eleusis but they are scarcely characteristically Greek.[129] Huff alternatively traces this feature retrojectively from modern Persian building, back through the Qajar dynasty, the Safavid Hasht Behesht Palace in Esfahan, and the Sassanians, to Persepolis and beyond that to Godin Tepe 2, which he characterises as a 'Median Manor

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[123] Frankfort 1946:12.
[124] Lawrence 1951:111: who compares it to the way in which 'a British public building sometimes incorporates materials from all parts of the Commonwealth as a symbol of unity.' Root 1990:118.
[125] Root 1979:279.
[126] Roaf 1990; Root 1990.
[127] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1988; Genito 2005; Razmjou 2005.
[128] See Garrison 2000:119.
[129] Vallois and Poulsen 1909; Lawrence 1951:112.

House.'[130] He suggests that they all followed the principle of high reception halls below, supporting the, much more commodious, living rooms above. He also draws attention to features of the wall planning at a number of sites, including Persepolis, that, he argues, are anomalous unless their purpose is textensive upper floors. Huff sees this continuity as a practical response to environmental requirements, but some kind of cultural continuity is possible as well.

From this discussion it emerges that, although there are still quite a lot of gaps in the archaeological picture, it seems likely that a satisfactory explanation for Persepolis can be found in terms of broadly Near Eastern traditions synthesised by Achaemenid invention. And if, as seems probable, some Greek traditions and technical accomplishments were part of the synthesis, at a fairly low level, this is not really contentious or problematic.

The Influence of Persepolis on the Akropolis

The argument that Persepolis influenced the Akropolis is different. The idea was raised by Lawrence, and also in passing by Herzfeld, who suggested that the priority of some of the 'Greek' stylistic features should be given to Persepolis, and has appeared in various forms since.[131] However its main proponent is Root in her 1985 article 'The Parthenon Frieze and the Apadana Reliefs at Persepolis: Reassessing a Programmatic Relationship.' Her comparison focuses on the Parthenon frieze, which both in its placement and, particularly, its subject matter, has often been seen as anomalous within the evolution of Greek temple sculpture, 'something unique, something of a foreign body,' crying out for explanation from beyond the Greek world.[132] Root's argument is that 'significant similarities in narrative structure and thematic content' make the Apadana reliefs a likely model.[133] Her argument is fundamentally different from Lawrence's in that he sees the relationship between the two sites as competitive, and any borrowing as part of the Greek rhetoric of hostility, whereas Root sees it as emulative, and thereby a means to deconstruct such an opposition by showing an underlying sympathy between the two empires.[134]

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[130] Huff 2005:378.
[131] Herzfeld 1941:260; Root 1985:103 for further bibliography.
[132] Castriota 1992:185.
[133] Root 1985:103.
[134] Root 1985:104.

Root's argument coincides with an interest in deconstructing cultural monolithicism generally, the East-West opposition specifically and, even more specifically, with work highlighting the extent to which Eastern influence on Ancient Greek culture may have been suppressed, both contemporarily and through time, including the whole *Black Athena* debate, and clearly shares concerns and agendas with this intellectual climate.[135]

Root's argument is also problematic, though obviously highly intriguing. Castriota has discussed in detail possible prototypes for the various compositional elements of the Parthenon frieze, particularly in archaic East Greek friezes, as well as parallels with Etruria.[136] He notes particular parallels with the Siphnian Treasury, Building G at Xanthos, and the 'Kybele Shrine,' a stone model of a temple found under the synagogue at Sardis, which appears to reproduce a building with walls covered with continuous friezes, viewed through a colonnade. Although he finds no individual building that provides explanatory parallels for all of the significant elements of the Parthenon frieze together, he does show that, within the wider context of the Eastern Mediterranean, the frieze can plausibly be explained without reference to anything as controversial as Persia. The Parthenon is, within the Greek architectural tradition, a unique, extravagant, and highly innovative building. There are elements of its innovation, such as the combined use of the Doric and Ionic orders, the condensed eight-column facade, and the ubiquitous use of refinements, that cannot be anything to do with Persian influence. This makes innovation in the frieze without Persian interference seem plausible also.

Root is well aware of the existence of alternative explanations, and objects to the idea that just because both friezes can be explained in other terms, her view is invalid.[137] While this is true, it does create a lot of pressure to find similarities that are really pressing, comprehensive, or make a significantly better reading. Root argues that the resemblance 'embraces a net work of interlocking similarities.'[138] To summarize, these similarities are, compositionally:

> 'Two-pronged convergence towards a central scene (109)'
>
> 'Interplay of real and non real spatial definition (109)'
>
> 'Imminent convergence upwards (111)'

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[135] Said 1979; Bernal 1987; Burkert 1992; Morris 1992.
[136] Castriota 1992:202-26.
[137] Root 1985:108.
[138] Root 1985:108.

'Hand over wrist gesture (111)'

'Emphatic use of verticals to provide a transition in mood (111)'

And thematically:

'Idealised order (113)'

'Harmonious hierarchically defined relationships within a society (113)'

These, though interesting, are rather nebulous. The presence of the hand over wrist gesture does seem to be a close enough link to require some degree of explanation, although, as Root notes in *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art*, it is common across the Near East.[139] Given the degree of similarity inherently likely considering the shared background and shared circumstances, both functional and architectural, the similarities Root traces do not really seem to be enough to demonstrate a causal connection.

A useful parallel can be drawn here with the Odeion, another building which has been claimed as a sign of Persian influence, as Miller discusses in *Athens and Persia in the fifth century BC: a study in cultural receptivity*.[140] It was built probably in the late 430s. Its reconstruction from the archaeology is not entirely straightforward (*fig.* 0.6).[141] However, it is clear that the Odeion was a hypostyle hall; nine columns by (probably) eight, possibly without enclosing walls and with a roof that was considered unusual by contemporaries, as a fragment from the comic poet Kratinos, comparing its roofline with Pericles' famously pointy skull, confirms:

'Here comes the squill-headed Zeus,

Perikles, wearing the Odeion on his head,

now that the ostrakon is past.'[142]

Plutarch says that the building was based on the tent of Xerxes,[143] however Miller suggests that it is more likely that it was based on the hypostyle halls of Achaemenid Persia. There are possible Greek prototypes for hypostyle architecture: the Teleusterion at Eleusis, dating from the second half of the sixth century, a fifth century building probably a bouleuterion,

[139] Root 1979:272-6.
[140] Miller 1997.
[141] Miller 1997:221-3, 227-32.
[142] Miller 1997:219: *PCG* IV *Thrattai* fr. 73=Plut. *Per.* 13.10.
[143] Miller 1997:221: *Per.* 13.9.11.

in Argos and, postdating the Odeion, the Thersileion at Megalopolis.[144] However it never became in any sense a mainstream building type, and indeed the Teleusterion's construction is considered notably unusual and probably due to cult requirements. Probably the Odeion was in some way a monument to the victory over Persia – when it is rebuilt in the Hellenistic period by Ariobarzanes, he is casting himself as a Greek general celebrating a victory over the Eastern threat, this time in the form of Mithridates – which would make a deliberate reference to Achaemenid architecture plausible.[145]

The point of this comparison is to suggest that if the Athenians were going to build a deliberately Persian building it would probably look like the Odeion, or at least as odd as it. Generally, as Miller notes, discussing the broader sweep of *perserie* in fifth century Athens, Greek cultural references to Persia are very Persianising and very staged: adaptations and appropriations are more common than straight imitations.[146] They are often not so much Persian as mock-Persian, or Persian to Greek eyes. This is as true for rhyta, which, while maintaining their ostentatiously exotic form, are transformed from serious ceremonial vessels to comedy donkey mugs, as it is for Pseudartabas the incomprehensible ambassador in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*.[147] Greek understanding of Persian conventions is sometimes, either intentionally or otherwise, superficial. Miller gives the example of a new fifth century ceramic depiction of the presentation of Silenos to Midas, in which the scene is transferred to a Persian court. Various details of the scene 'misunderstand' the original Persian image, which Miller suggests is due to detailed visual copying of something the artist did not analytically understand.[148] However, their integration and re[mis]use as 'Persian' within Greek culture, is both sophisticated and nuanced. Hall, discussing the way in which Euripides occasionally presents barbarians in a positive light, concludes that this inversion of the orthodoxy precisely presupposes not just the existence of the invented ethnocentric divisions in tragedy, but a sophisticated engagement with them by the audience.[149] In many ways the interesting thing is what is not claimed for Persian influence. It is never suggested that Persian art seriously changed the course of Greek art's development, just that it is being referenced or packaged into it at various points. The basic pattern is of a superficial understanding of the actual functioning

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[144] Miller 1997: 230-2, 234.
[145] Miller 1997:240.
[146] Miller 1997:152: 'Adaption was a much more common response than imitation, and in some ways more interesting as it allows greater insight into the prejudices of the Athenian mind.'
[147] Hoffmann 1961; Miller 1997:141-4, 260; Aristophanes *Ach.* 61-122.
[148] Miller 1988.
[149] Hall 1989:222.

of Persian imagery, combined with a highly developed use of 'Persianizing' in a Greek context, exactly the opposite of what is supposedly happening in the Parthenon frieze.

For all these reasons, Root's contention that the Parthenon frieze was influenced by the Apadana reliefs, seems to be unlikely.

Comparison beyond Influence

A common theme that emerges from these two discussions is that both the Akropolis and Persepolis can be adequately explained in terms of stylistic innovations of much more proximate traditions, and that this largely negates the project of trying to trace influence from one to another.

Discussions of possible influence have however established that, in so far as such a counterfactual can be asserted, there could have been significant influence between Athens and Persia. Both cultures had access to each other's art, through eyewitness visits to the sites, objects from each culture kept in the other's capitals and through interaction in the boundary zone of Asia Minor.[150] An absence of influence from one to the other is not, therefore based on ignorance of the other's artistic techniques, but on a more conscious decision not to make use of them. In one sense this is unsurprising: it has frequently been observed that cultural influence is not an inevitable result of proximity, but rather an active process, requiring specific reasons or circumstances for the uptake. However, it is intriguing, in that Persia was highly politically dominant, and Greece was developing new artistic techniques very fast, both conditions which can readily contribute to cultural influence. The question of why there was not more influence between Athens and Persia remains as relevant as the question of why there was so much.

Moreover, as Castriota, who draws the same conclusion, notes the absence of influence does not make the comparison of the two sites any less legitimate:

'In fact the analogy is all the more striking and meaningful if the Parthenon frieze and the Persian reliefs originated as parallel but independent idealizations of Athenian and Persian society respectively.'[151]

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[150] Miller 1997:29-133.
[151] Castriota 2000:470.

Castriota uses the comparison to discuss ideologies of monarchy and justice between the two sites, arguing that the idea of a just and divinely ordained order mediated through the king's rule, which is so pervasively expressed at Persepolis, was one that had existed in Bronze Age Greece and was still functional, albeit at a diminished level. He sees the East pediment of the Parthenon as corresponding in meaning, though transposed into a mythological setting, to Darius' tomb façade at Nasqh-i-Rustam, and similarly he reads the culminating scene of the Parthenon frieze as the Archon Basileus mediating between the Athenian community and their gods, just as Darius does on the tribute friezes at Persepolis. He sees kingship as present everywhere in the Parthenon sculptures, commenting:

> 'How sublimely ironic that the Athenians should summon up their mythic kings as icons of divinely sanctioned justice to celebrate their victory over the lawless monarchy and imperialism of Persia.'[152]

Whether the emphasis Castriota places on kingship in Athenian thought is correct, or whether through a gradual process of distancing and *bricolage* the old building blocks of myth have come to have new meanings, he demonstrates clearly that a comparative approach can yield results precisely by not focusing on influence, but independently on the art the two societies generate, rather as Lawrence originally suggested.

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[152] Castriota 2000:472.

CHAPTER ONE: CONSTRUCTED SPACE

Persepolis and the Akropolis both stand on platforms raised high above a city, from which they are separated by a single entrance (*Maps 1 and 2*). In each case the entrance is reached by a long, stepped approach, with an imposing gate placed at the moment of arrival on the platform; they are both surrounded by fortified walls, and contain massive, pillared architecture built in stone and elaborately decorated with sculpture.

Many of these characteristics have been identified as typical of monumental sites on a cross-cultural basis. Rapoport notes that across a variety of architectural styles, two qualities more or less universally signal importance: firstly, scale, and secondly, differentiation from surrounding buildings.[153] Summers and Trigger have also, in broad surveys of monumental sites, drawn attention to the widespread use of boundaries, elevation, and difficulty of access in articulating a site.[154] Both sites, then, make use of similar fundamental spatial principles to establish their importance as centres of power.

However, when the sites are examined in more detail they show a more complex pattern of similarity and difference, in both the spatial organisation of the buildings on the platform and the architecture of these buildings. This chapter aims, firstly, to describe these architectural characteristics, and, secondly, to suggest that the effects they create have political significance.

Previous architectural studies of the Akropolis and Persepolis share a primary focus on building techniques, and on possible systems of site planning. For the Akropolis, recurrent concerns are: innovations within the canon of Greek temple building,[155] the relationship between the buildings in terms of the co-ordination of scales and styles,[156] their refinements,[157] and also their relative positions on the site and the possible organisational principles behind this.[158] For Persepolis, which has been studied much less, the main foci are reconstructing the site from the archaeological evidence[159] and suggesting possible origins for both the architectural elements and the masonry techniques used to construct them.[160] Site planning has not been extensively discussed, although Lawrence notes 'it

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[153] Rapoport 1982:111-6.
[154] Summers 2003; Trigger 2003.
[155] See Spawforth 2006.
[156] Dinsmoor and Dinsmoor 2004; Hurwit 2004:156, 173; Shear 1999:124.
[157] Korres 1999; Haselberger 2005.
[158] Doxiadis 1972; Ito 2002.
[159] Schmidt 1953; Krefter 1971; Tilia 1972; Tilia 1978; Roaf 1983:150-9; Huff 2005.
[160] Tilia 1968; Nylander 1970.

would seem that the idea was to concentrate attention on the Apadana (audience hall), the largest and tallest building [which] extended over the central salient on the frontage'[161] and Frankfort argues that the site is unplanned, commenting:

'The oddities of the architecture - the scattering of buildings over platforms, the elongated columns, their number, the bizarre capitals - all of this betrays the direction of people foreign to the tradition, the practice, and the potentialities of Near Eastern architecture.'[162]

Some studies of the Akropolis, notably Scully's *The Earth, the Temple, and the Gods* and Rhodes' *Architecture and Meaning on the Athenian Akropolis*, have additionally considered the experiences that these plans and buildings create.[163] I follow this emphasis on experience, but focus on a particular aspect of it: architectural control of both movement and visibility across the sites. Unlike many other experiential qualities, this can be reconstructed reasonably securely from the archaeology. Moreover, the experience of movement and visibility on the sites involve power effects which give it a particularly strong socio-political quality.

Initially, I describe how the different degrees of visibility and legibility created by boundaries, gradients, sightlines, columns, and spatial configurations, affect navigation of the sites, creating a power dynamic with the visitor through the comprehension or disorientation that architecture promotes. I then consider how the architecture in each case affords particular types of encounter between different users of the site, creating characteristic spatial, and also social, experiences.

Social Space

In this chapter I make use of two interconnected concepts of space which have emerged from recent discussions of the subject. The first is that of space as a socially produced medium in which power is inherently exercised, and the second is that of space as embodied experience.

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[161] Lawrence 1951:116.
[162] Frankfort 1954:232.
[163] Scully 1962; Rhodes 1995.

The close relationship between space and society has often been commented on, perhaps most notably by Foucault and Lefebvre. Both note the universal importance of spatial effects in societies through time:

'Space is fundamental in any communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power.'[164]

'Every society… produces a space, its own space'.[165]

Central to the concept of space as a social phenomenon is the idea that it is the primary context in which social relations are actualized and take material form. Lefebvre notes:

'Social relations, which are concrete abstractions, have no real existence save in and through space. Their underpinning is spatial.'[166]

Summers makes a similar observation, primarily discussing monumental space:

'The making of places always entails the shaping of social relations. Place is the conditional basis for all the culturally specific situations in which groups and individuals 'know their place' within a social order, most usually a stratified order... Distinction by the division of places occurs in some way or another in all cultures, including modern democratic cultures.'[167]

Space is thought to have this particularly social quality for a number of reasons. Firstly, space, and its manipulation in architecture, has the capacity profoundly to transform our experience of reality. The built environment constructs a particular world, a kind of cultural microclimate, in which we live. As Watkins notes:

'To live in a built environment is to inhabit a symbolic world at multiple levels.'[168]

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[164] Foucault 1998 [1982]:437.
[165] Lefebvre 1991[1974]:31.
[166] Lefebvre 1991[1974]:404.
[167] Summers 2003:123.
[168] Watkins 2004:105; see Tuan 1977:164: 'If a piece of sculpture is an image of feeling, then a successful building is an entire functional realm made visible and tangible.'

Moreover, the version of reality it creates is communal, broadly shared by anyone who enters or inhabits it: it thus promotes a common social experience. It is also a reality in which segregation and hierarchy are inherent: a fundamental aspect of space is the creation of boundaries, with their distinction between inside and outside, and their capacity to restrict or include. Space is also deeply concerned with location, proximity, and distance, which again have an inherent tendency to create patterns of differentiation. Thus space is an ideal medium in which to express relational configurations. Moreover, these qualities do not exist only in the architecture, but also in the human interaction it governs: space is social because it involves actual human contact. Finally, space and architecture are particularly socially effective in that they are, usually, relatively permanent. They provide social continuity through time, inscribing patterns of social behaviour in the social memory.

Embodied Experience

However, the precise mechanisms by which social relations are realised in space are not straightforward. As Foucault notes, although it is possible for space to be laid out as a precise map or projection of a social hierarchy - the example he gives is that of a military camp - it is very rare.[169] Alternatively, some architecture gives material form to a cosmology or philosophy, which can itself be related to social order. The development from cruciform to square floor plans in Renaissance churches has been read as embodying the transition from a theocentric to a humanist universe.[170] Alles argues that the architecture of the Parthenon 'represent[s] the different patterns or configurations according to which Greeks… saw power as operating.'[171] However this too is exceptional, occurring primarily in ritual contexts, and by no means invariably in those.[172] Lévéque and Lefebvre have both argued that at occasional moments in history coded meaning has been extended to a whole city, their examples being, respectively, sixth century Athens and the Renaissance city states.[173] Nevertheless both also consider this to be unusual, occurring because of a deliberately constructed relationship between politics and architecture in these periods.

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[169] Foucault 1998 [1982]:438.
[170] Derrida 1996:146.
[171] Alles 1988:31, who continues (32-3): 'In the Parthenon… power… resides in visible volumes that participate in larger, manifest systems at the same time that their own, interior, organic nature is apparent.'
[172] Summers 2003:201.
[173] Lefebvre 1991[1974]:7, 17; Lévêque 1996[1964]:81.

There has been increasing agreement that such symbolic readings describe only a small part of our interaction with architecture. Lefebvre notes:

'Any attempts to use such codes as a means of deciphering social space must surely reduce that space itself to the status of a *message*, and the inhabiting of it to the status of a *reading*. This is to evade both history and practice.'[174]

The argument is that inhabiting space, or occupying, using or moving through it, are quite different types of activity from 'decoding' it; and that most of our actual experience and (in a broad sense of the term) understanding of space takes place in the former ways. This view starts from an opposition to the concept of space as a neutral geometry, visualised in abstract plans. It draws attention, instead, to the experiential qualities of architecture:[175]

'The user's space is lived – not represented (or conceived). When compared with the abstract space of the experts (architects, urbanists, planners) the space of the everyday activities of users is a concrete one, which is to say subjective.'[176]

'We do not live in a homogeneous and empty space, but on the contrary in a space thoroughly imbued with qualities.'[177]

Various accounts have been given of the nature of these qualities. Bachelard gives a detailed and nuanced account of the full range of emotional and imaginative responses evoked by space, outlining the extent and variety of our engagement with it, not only in our waking life but also in dreams and memory. This, for instance, is his account of the significant characteristics of corners, in which the physical and imaginative are woven closely together:

'Every corner in a house… is a symbol of solitude for the imagination; that is to say, it is the germ of a room, or of a house… The corner is a haven that ensures us one of the things we prize most highly – immobility… An imaginary room rises up

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[174] Lefebvre 1991[1974]:7.
[175] See Tilley 1994:8 for an extensive list of such oppositional qualities. Damiani 2003:19 argues, however, that it is ultimately impossible to escape the geometrical element in the materiality of a building.
[176] Lefebvre 1991[1974]:362.
[177] Foucault 1997[1967]:351.

around our bodies, which think we are well hidden when we take refuge in a corner.'[178]

Rapoport develops a 'nonverbal communication approach,'[179] in which architecture acts as a kind of social mnemonic, wherein we understand space in terms of learned cultural associations. White picket fences, for instance, are associated by people with the relevant cultural background with safety and small town homes.[180] He notes that this lies somewhere between embodied and semiotic meaning: people relax in the proximity of picket-fenced houses without necessarily realising why we are doing so. Bourdieu offers an account of Berber houses in which meaning is created through structuralist oppositions:

'Thus, the house is organized according to a set of homologous oppositions: fire: water; cooked: raw; high: low; light: shadow; day: night; male: female; nif: horma; fertilizing: able to be fertilized; culture: nature. But in fact the same oppositions exist between the house as a whole and the rest of the universe.'[181]

While such social meanings and oppositions are clearly potentially important in our experience of space, such aspects of architectural meaning are hard to reconstruct from the archaeology. This is a particular concern given the limited contemporary textual sources for attitudes to the two sites of the Akropolis and Persepolis.[182]

Other accounts emphasis the more directly physical or cognitive effects of architecture. Tilley and Tuan both note the importance of the body in response to space:

'The very physicality of the body imposes a schema on space through which it may be experienced and understood.'[183]

'The body responds… to such basic features of design as enclosure and exposure, verticality and horizontality, mass, volume, interior spaciousness, and light.'[184]

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[178] Bachelard 1994 [1958]:136-7.
[179] Rapoport 1982:35.
[180] Rapoport 1982:67.
[181] Bourdieu 1973:102.
[182] See Hurwit 1999:36-9 for the absence of descriptions of the Akropolis in fifth century Athenian literature, which he attributes to its relative familiarity to its audience. For the relative absence of Persepolis from the Greek sources, see Garrison 2000:145, footnote 68, with bibliography; Root 1980:5-13 discusses possible reasons for this absence. See Kuhrt 2007:488-501 for the sources on Persepolis, Susa, and Ekbatana, including esp. Achaemenid foundation charters and inscriptions; Allen 2005:39 for accounts of the king within his palaces.
[183] Tilley 1994:16.

These accounts stress universal aspects of response to space, variously culturally elaborated, but grounded in basic cognitive processes.

Movement and Visibility

Paramount amongst these cognitive qualities is the spatial control of movement. It is absolutely characteristic of architecture that it provides cues to move, or stay still, or hesitate, and encourages interaction with the environment, rather than simply observation of it. Lefebvre has argued that this is the fundamental spatial quality:

'Space commands bodies, prescribing or proscribing gestures, routes, and distances to be covered. It is produced with this in mind, this is its raison d'être.'[185]

Similarly, Hanson and Hillier see this as the primary difference between architecture and other artefacts:

'Buildings…appear to be physical artefacts…and to follow the same type of logic…but this is illusory…buildings are not just objects, but transformations of space.'[186]

The cues or commands that architecture gives can be of various natures. There are features that actively restrict movement, most obviously walls and boundaries, and the spaces in or through them. But there are also architectural features that suggest movement without compelling it: staircases and doorways, especially those opening onto wide or light areas, invite exploration; corners and landings suggest pause. Open spaces similarly invite use, but also make those who stray into the centre vulnerable. Such characteristics afford different uses depending on the intentions and activities of the people using the space. Nevertheless they create a relative constant in the experiences of different people present in a building or architectural feature, in addition to the varied emotional and associative

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[184] Tuan 1977:116.
[185] Lefebvre 1991[1974]:183.
[186] Hillier and Hanson 1984:1.

responses they may bring to their experience of the space, and different capacities for untangling the architecture's symbolic meanings.

Architecture also manipulates movement less obviously, but perhaps even more significantly, through its spatial configurations: the relationship of one space to another within a system.[187] A tool designed to describe the effects of these patterns is space syntax, a form of analysis developed by Hillier and Hanson.[188] Space syntax describes any space in terms of its integration or segregation (the extent to which a space can be accessed from other spaces, and conversely gives access onto them). It also distinguishes between distributed space, which forms part of a ring and can thus be accessed from more than one approach, and non-distributed space, which cannot.

These configurations affect individual movement through a site, determining which routes are most likely to be taken and which areas visited. This, cumulatively, affects interaction among those co-present on it: the most integrated areas will, all other things being equal, be the most crowded, and the most segregated left empty. Thus spatial configuration creates patterns of social segregation and contact. This chapter does not use a strict space syntactical analysis, however it is informed by many of the same concerns, particularly the spatial experiences created by the paths that exist through the sites, the specific ways in which encounters are constructed between the sites' users, and the differing experiences of visitors and inhabitants.

The characteristic spatial experience of a site is affected by the visual properties of the architecture as well as configurational properties. Osborne, for instance, notes that the central weight of a pediment creates a pull towards the central axis of a building,[189] while Choisy describes how viewers are drawn to points from which a view is well aligned, such that a series of these can create a path across a space.[190] Similarly, a door or gate is not merely a gap in a boundary, but has architectural characteristics which suggest or restrict movement through it to different degrees. A boundary itself may be variably permeable or dense. These qualities affect both movement choices and the subsequence experience of that movement. Additionally, space is defined not only by where you do move, but by your

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[187] Hillier and Hanson 1984:ix: 'By giving shape and form to our material world, architecture structures the system of space in which we live and move. In that it does so, it has a direct relation - rather than a merely symbolic one - to social life, since it provides the material preconditions for the patterns of movement, encounter and avoidance which are the material realisation - as well as sometimes the generator - of social relations. In this sense, architecture pervades our everyday experience far more than a preoccupation with its visual properties would suggest.'

[188] See Hillier and Hanson 1984:90-123 for a detailed description of the techniques of space syntax; Hillier and Hanson 1984:143-75 for its application to buildings; Hanson 1998:38 for problems in applying the techniques to monumental sites.

[189] Osborne 2000:230.

[190] Choisy 1865; Eisenstein and Bois 1989[1940].

awareness of where you could or could not potentially move: this is the reason that looking through a window into a space you cannot access is perceptually peculiar. Both Persepolis and the Akropolis create ambiguities by juxtaposing these two qualities and creating spatial illusions.

All of these factors create a relationship between the user and the architecture itself. Almost invariably in using space we try to navigate it: thus how legible it is, and the extent to which it frustrates or facilitates navigation, creates a power dynamic. The sense of control over space, or conversely of being controlled, of comprehension or of being disorientated, is characteristically architectural. This sense of dis/empowerment is enhanced by the power dynamic inherent in viewing. This generally occurs as an asymmetrical relationship in which the (viewing) subject is empowered at the expense of the (viewed) object, but architecture has the potential to invert this, decentring the viewer by creating spaces from which other people may be watching us, and thus, metaphorically itself looking back at us.[191] As Lacan notes:

> 'I can feel myself under the gaze of someone whose eyes I do not see, not even discern. All that is necessary is for something to signify to me that there may be others there.'[192]

This sensitivity to being watched, similar indeed to Bachelard's description of corners, has also been noted in the theory of 'prospect and refuge,' which argues that, for reasons of evolutionary survival, we feel most comfortable in situations where we can see without being seen.[193] Persepolis and the Akropolis both exploit this preference, but in different ways.

In this chapter, then, I concentrate primarily on these cognitive responses. One reason for choosing to focus on this is that cognitive responses are the qualities that can be reconstructed most reliably and least speculatively from the archaeology. Phenomenological approaches to archaeology are often criticized for their ungrounded, intuitive approach: a cognitive focus is a way of attempting to discuss experience whilst circumventing this problem. In addition, these qualities have strong social implications through their creation of power dynamics with the site and their manipulation of the encounters that take place between people co-present on it. Such an analysis therefore has

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[191] Bryson 1988 for the gaze and its potential decentring in the visual field.
[192] Lacan and Miller 1988:215.
[193] Appleton 1975; Orians 1992.

the potential to address the question of the practical mechanisms by which social relationships are realized in space.

Space at Persepolis

The architectural layout of Persepolis was relatively static from the mid-fifth century to its destruction by Alexander in 330.[194] Subsequent to this destruction it remained largely untouched until the excavations of the twentieth century. Schmidt's original excavation plan therefore corresponds well to the layout of Persepolis from 450 to 330, when it was at its fullest extent, and I have used here it (*Map* 2).[195] Some further discoveries have been published since the initial excavations, particularly concerning the southwest corner of the terrace.[196] Roaf summarizes the building sequence and provides versions of Schmidt's plan edited to incorporate these changes, and also to show the development of the site over time.[197] Persepolis was surrounded by a fortification wall,[198] although it probably did not run along most of the front (west) parapet.[199]

Several of the buildings on the platform are not referred to consistently: the names I have used in the text are given in the edited legend of Map 2.

Patterns of Public Space and Private Space

Frankfort describes the site as being divided into the more open public areas to the north and the more enclosed private areas to the south:

'These two square halls [the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall] effectively separate the northern part of the terrace, accessible to a restricted public, from the royal apartments situated behind them.'[200]

As we shall see, this analysis can be refined upon; nevertheless it is a useful initial distinction to make.

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[194] Roaf 1983:150-9 summarizes the building sequence, with figs 152-5 (*figs 5.31 a-d*).

[195] Schmidt 1953: fig. 21.

[196] Tilia 1972; Tilia 1978.

[197] Roaf 1983:150-9 and figs 152-5 (*figs 5.31a-f*).

[198] Schmidt 1953:61-63; Mousavi 1992.

[199] Schmidt 1953:62.

[200] Frankfort 1954:218.

The northern area is differentiated both by the scale of its structures and by its greater investment in open space: the areas in front of the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall are much larger than any other open spaces on the site. Entering the site from outside, the area is accessed by the massive double reverse staircase ascending from the plain (*fig*.1.1). This immediately establishes a power relationship. As Codella notes:

> 'Ascending these stairs immediately establishes both the spatial and hierarchical relationship of any visitor to the Achaemenid court. The subject is subordinate (below) and the king is superior (above). The journey to the level of the king is a slow one, reinforcing his relationship with each step.'[201]

At the top of the staircase stands the Gate of all the Nations, the comparatively narrow doorways of which emphasize the control exerted over the boundary, even when open.[202] However, beyond this, the site to some extent opens up. The south door opens onto the space in front of the Apadana, giving a view of the entire north façade and some visibility round to the east. Through the east door a long line of sight runs east-west across the entire width of the site. This line runs along a relatively narrow open air corridor, which then turns through the Unfinished Gate into the open space in front of the Hundred Column Hall.

Here again there is a full view of the north façade, as there is of the Apadana to the west. However these two imposing, large scale buildings are differently integrated into their surrounding space. The Apadana is additionally raised above the platform, thus continuing the experience of ascent. However the multiple (eight) staircases that achieve the transition also make it almost exaggeratedly integrated into the area immediately surrounding it. This configurational pattern, which makes it a very open building, invites entrance, but the staircases create a tension with this: anyone who does enter the building by this route experiences a degree of restriction. The Apadana is generally interpreted as an audience hall, and this spatial experience corresponds very well to that of audience: the visitor is invited into the presence of the King, but made to feel their subordination. The Hundred Column Hall has a much more limited northern approach. It is at a greater distance from the entrance, approached down a long corridor and an extra gate. The space in front of it is much more enclosed, and there are only two entrances leading into it. However those

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[201] Codella 2007:121.
[202] Kuhrt 2007:490 notes: 'We should probably envisage the door leaves as sheathed with bands of bronze, like the Balawat Gate of Shalmaneser III of Assyria (856-824), now in the British Museum.'

entrances are on the level. Here the experience is slightly different: more secluded, but also marginally less hierarchical. The exact function of the Hundred Column Hall is much debated.[203] These observations do not offer an immediate answer to the question, but it does already emphasis the nuanced ways in which Persepolis uses space to set up and shape encounters.

The buildings also differ in their use of another characteristic common across the site, that of blocking sightlines at moments of transition. In the Apadana this is achieved not only by the height differential, but also through the staircases set parallel to the buildings they access, such that there is no line of sight up the stairs from the front of the façade. The Hundred Column Hall, by contrast, uses the milder technique, though equally common on the site, of misaligning doorways across a courtyard: the single door of the Unfinished Gate does not align to the two doors of the north wall of the Hundred Column Hall. Both also use the deep doorways, again common across the site, but exaggerated here by the scale of the buildings.

The Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall have other similarities. Both make use of multiple paths. This is a fundamental characteristic of public buildings in Persepolis. As noted, the main staircase is a double structure, and the north and east façades of the Apadana each have a quadruple staircase. Similarly the north porticoes of the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall each have a double entrance. Moreover, these features lead to multiple paths through each building, which, however, are not really distinct routes, but replications that all lead to the same place. In the Hundred Column Hall eight possible routes run from the space to the north to the exit in the south, but there is no possibility of actually ending up anywhere else. Such redundancy can be explained as simply a marker of importance. However, the replication also creates a spatial experience, of a degree of confusion and perhaps of a sense of inevitability: there appear to be choices of path, but, in fact, they all lead to the same place. Root notes:

> 'The double-reversed stairway to the citadel divides the space into diverging streams, teasing time and distance with the slowness of delayed gratification, forcing temporary suspension of upward action at the landing plateau, and, finally, coaxing the inevitable convergence towards the unified center of the colossal gateway, which simultaneously channels visitors inside.'[204]

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[203] See Schmidt 1953:129 and Cahill 1985:389 for an interpretation of the Hundred Column Hall as a kind of 'museum' in which to display royal treasures, functionally and iconographically connected to the Treasury.
[204] Root 1990:118.

Both buildings are also hypostyle, another highly characteristic feature of Achaemenid architecture which features across the whole site, both in the groups of four columns in smaller rooms and gates and in the forests of multiple columns in the larger halls. Huff has traced the origins of this design in Median architecture.[205] Experientially, its effect is to make interiors denser than they would otherwise be (*figs* 1.2 and 1.3), and also greatly to restrict visibility. This puts anyone entering such a room at a disadvantage, particularly in respect of encounters within the space. If, as prospect and refuge theory suggests, humans feel most comfortable in a situation where they can see without being seen;[206] the effect hypostyle architecture creates is the precise inverse. Another striking aspect of hypostyle halls, perhaps curious in an audience chamber, is that they create no clear focus within the room. This again disorientates by creating directional confusion.

The Service Quarters, the Treasury, the Southwest Parapet and the Highest Platform

The southern area of Persepolis is distinct from the north in consisting of smaller buildings, with many more internal divisions. However, within the southern half of the platform, several different areas can be distinguished.

Firstly there is the area conventionally known as the 'Harem' of Xerxes and the 'service quarters' to its west and north (*fig.* 1.4).[207] This consists of repetitive sequences of multiple, very small rooms, set off long narrow corridors that twist and double-back, creating a highly uneven texture. There are also occasional staircases, which are also completely different from those in the north: they run straight up and down in a practical and direct fashion. This area is much less geometrically distinct than that to the north: not only do the different buildings run into each other, but the correspondence between external shape and interior plan is limited. Encounters within these areas are relatively unlikely, due to the confined spaces and multiple paths. They are also more or less entirely unstructured: the architecture does not set up a power differentiatial between users meeting there.

Next there is the Treasury (*fig.* 1.5). This is the most segregated area on the site. Not only is it situated in the south-east corner, at the deepest possible distance from the

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[205] Huff 2005:378.
[206] Appleton 1975; Orians 1992.
[207] The precise use of these buildings is not entirely clear, see Chapter 4 below.

entrance in terms of distance across the ground, and built on the lowest ground of the terrace, but it is carefully secluded from the buildings that surround it. Although its north wall is adjacent to the Hundred Column Hall, there is no direct access route between them.[208]

Evidence for the actual route to the Treasury is complex (*fig.* 1.6). In its two early building phases it was orientated east-west, and its entrance was from the west, lying under what later became the 'harem' area.[209] In c.480-70 it stabilised in its current north-south orientation, which seems to have had no western entrance;[210] instead entrances existed in the north and east. However a convoluted route still ran to these two entrances from the west: through the corridors of the 'harem,' and then through a small doorway in a corridor at the very back of the 'service quarters,' leading to an open passage, diverging into routes along either the west or south walls of the Treasury before entering the building from the north or east. This route seems to have remained extant throughout the site's subsequent history.

At this point (c. 480-70) building works were unfinished, and the Treasury was still openly accessible to the north. With the building of the Hundred Column Hall, the Treasury became more isolated. This may have made the western route the only route to the building. However, later excavations by the Iranian Archaeological Service have revealed a passage which seems potentially to have led from the open space to the north of the Hundred Column Hall to a northern extension of 'Garrison Street,' the street running along the east of the Treasury, and so named because it is bounded on the other side by a fortification wall.[211] The area of this possible northern extension itself has not been excavated, so the existence of a through route is uncertain; but if this is the case it would link the Treasury much more directly to the northern area of the site, although this is itself still quite an indirect route from the Apadana and the buildings in the west.

Additional uncertainty is introduced by Schmidt's discovery of a wall, of unknown date, just north of the eastern entrance,[212] and of a small outbuilding of 'secondary rooms'

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[208] Schmidt (1953:137) notes that Herzfeld's earlier plan of the site connects the two areas, but adds that this must be a mistake as there is a drop of 2.20m and no evidence of stairs. This perhaps highlights how marked and surprising the disconnection between the two is.

[209] Roaf 1983: figs 152-4 (*figs 5.31a-c*).

[210] Roaf reconstructs a door in the west, but Schmidt (1953:197) sees no evidence in the relevant rooms; so also Cahill 375: 'The western entrance to the Treasury was, however, later destroyed by Xerxes' "Harem," and in its later phases, the building was entered through doors on its northern and eastern sides.'

[211] Schmidt (1953:206) notes: 'The almost completely obliterated northern part of this defense wall may well have continued in the same direction.'

[212] Schmidt 1953: 170: 'About 2.70 m. north of the [east] entrance a test trench revealed part of a wall (70 cm. thick) which abuts the Treasury inclosure and apparently blocked the street at this point. The purpose and the time of construction of this wall are unknown at present.'

in the street to the west of the Treasury, which again block the route.[213] Neither of these obstacles fully block access to the Treasury by either the western or the hypothetical northern route. Nevertheless they highlight the ease with which the routes to the building could, and may have been, blocked by a simple wall or gate, or even guard: the space is designed to be easily made segregated even if it was not at all times. Generally, then, although exact access is uncertain, in all likely reconstructions, the spatial layout of the site thus considerably hinders anyone from entering this area.

Finally there is the southwest corner of the site (*fig.* 1.7). This area contains, firstly, the Palace of Darius, which stands on its own platform, and Palace H, opposite it, across a courtyard. The west side of this courtyard is a terrace above the plain, while the east is faced with a staircase leading up to a high rectangular platform. On this platform stands the Palace of Xerxes and opposite it, again across a courtyard, Palace G, the foundation platform of which remains although excavation has not revealed the ground plan.[214] These buildings all contained rooms larger than the rooms of the 'harem' (and Palace G may be presumed to have done so). They are also more geometrically distinct, and they feature double staircases: they have all the features of the buildings in the 'public' area to the north, but on a smaller scale.

Moreover, these buildings are at the highest point on the site. The platform of the Palace of Darius and the high platform on which the Palace of Xerxes stands both have a ground level approximately eighteen metres above the plain: six metres above that of the Gate of all Nations, and three metres above that of the Apadana, although their roof level, as suggested by Lawrence and reconstructed by Krefter, would have been lower than the Apadana's (*fig.* 1.8).[215] Palace G is additionally raised by its foundation platform, and is the highest area on the site.[216] Palace H is appreciably lower than these three buildings. The excavation data give the ground level on its platform varying from 15.12m to 16.21m

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[213] Schmidt 1953:263: 'It is difficult to find a reasonable explanation for the location of two rooms occupying the northern end of the street between the Harem and the Treasury and completely blocking circulation between "Harem Street" and the northern entrance to the royal storehouse. Originally we believed that these rooms were built after the destruction of the site. However, their contents – quantities of vessels closely resembling the Achaemenian pottery from the garrison quarters – combined with the absence of post-Achaemenian structures in the vicinity forced us to change our opinion. We are now inclined to consider the rooms an addition to the service quarters in the northern portion of the Harem complex.'

[214] Schmidt 1953: 724-5, esp. 724: 'As far as we known, except for a drain… nothing remains of the structure which once stood on the upper step of the foundation.' For the removal of the façade of Palace G to the site of Palace H in post-Achaemenid times: Roaf 1983:140, 158 and Chapter 5: 228-9 below. It seems possible that other architectural elements were removed at the same time.

[215] Lawrence 1951:116; Krefter 1971: for the Apadana: 45-54, for the Palace of Xerxes: 64-70, for the Palace of Darius: 73-6.

[216] Roaf (1983:158) notes this is a reason for thinking that, despite the lack of archaeological evidence, the area was probably in use throughout the site's history: 'The site of Palace H is, however, the highest on the terrace, and it is unlikely that neither Darius nor Xerxes made use of the area.'

above the plain,[217] making it roughly level to the courtyard to the east of the Palace of Xerxes and Palace G, and somewhere between one and two metres higher than the Apadana.

Looking at the site as a whole, difference in ground level seems to be an important organisational principle at Persepolis (*fig.* 1.9). The terrace is divided into four distinct levels. These buildings are the highest at c.18m above the plain; next the Apadana and Tripylon and the southwest courtyard, all around 14.5m; then the Hundred Column Hall, the Gate of All the Nations and the open space in the north clustered at 11.5-12m; and finally the 'harem' area at 9m and the Treasury about 0.5m lower.[218]

The fact that these buildings are the highest on the site seems to mark them as important. Moreover, an elaborate route of approach from the north of the site to the high rectangular platform on which the Palace of Xerxes and Palace G stand is structured through the north staircase of the Tripylon, the subsequent courtyard to the south,[219] and the staircase and gate leading onto the platform (*fig.* 1.10). These are both double reverse staircases, of the sort otherwise found only at the massive main entrance. This links the two transitions, and also marks them particularly strongly. It is an even stronger version of the principle in the Apadana: access is invited, but heavily controlled.[220] The southern area of the site is often thought of as containing the 'private residential palaces' of the King.[221] This seems to suggest a formal path into these palaces, and a second, more exclusive experience of audience within. Thus it seems that as the visitor gets closer to the King, the architecture exerts more control over them.

The north stairs of the Tripylon also has a slightly odd position in the site, in that it obtrudes remarkably little into the open public areas to the north, being partially obscured by the east façade of the Apadana. It is not entirely clear to what extent this is intentional: Roaf notes that the north stairs of the Apadana were a later addition to the building, and in a different stone, so it is possible that the original entrance was set further back.[222] Nevertheless its basic, and slightly obscured, position must have been the same. This too is an interesting contrast with the Apadana. The multiple staircases of the latter create a sense

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[217] Schmidt 1953: 276, fig. 20.
[218] Schmidt 1953: fig. 21.
[219] This courtyard also contained Palace D, which again is not reconstructable from the archaeology: [219] Schmidt 1953: 269: 'Any attempted reconstruction of the plan of Palace D could only claim to be a hypothetical sketch.'
[220] Codella 2007:117: 'The gates also, by restricting admittance, increased the status of the visitors who passed through them.'
[221] See Chapter 4:154-5 below for the debate.
[222] Roaf 1983:142-4 for dating of the various parts of the Tripylon (he dates the main building to the reign of Xerxes and the north stairs to Artaxerxes I); 143 for the use of 'black Majdabad stone,' and the possibility that further excavation might reveal the original plan.

of control, but also integrate the building very highly into the surrounding area, very strongly promoting entrance. The Tripylon controls even more strongly, and although it is architecturally very elaborate does not greatly advertise its existence. It therefore seems that this route is designed to exclude the casual visitor, while creating a strongly disempowering experience for those who purposely enter it.

The area on the other (west) side of the Palace of Xerxes platform reverts to double staircases, but not double reverse ones. This is an unusual part of the site and it is not entirely clear how it functioned. Unlike most of the rest of the site, it was the subject of renovations in the fourth century, when Artaxerxes III added the west staircase to the Palace of Darius (as well as the south façade to the unexcavated Palace G). A unique horned parapet was also added around Palace H at an unknown date (*fig.* 1.11);[223] it is the only area on the site to have been reused in post-Achaemenid times.

As well as being accessible through the Tripylon, this area is also accessible directly from the Apadana. There are paths leading from the Apadana's southern doors through the narrow, but traversable, passages of space between the Palace of Darius and its surrounding buildings. There was also probably more extensive access along the west parapet of the terrace (see *fig.* 1.10). The parapet west of the Apadana is bounded by two pavilions. The drop in height between the parapet and the area below makes it clear that the north pavilion was enclosed (*fig.* 1.12). Roaf reconstructs the southern pavilion symmetrically, as also being enclosed.[224] However, although it is true that symmetry is a strong principle at Persepolis, this may not necessarily have been the case. Schmidt notes that the archaeological evidence does not show the details of the pavilion's construction.[225] Moreover, not only is the ground level enough to allow passage, but the southern part of the parapet, that between the Palace of Darius and Palace H, was extended westwards when Palace H was rebuilt by Artaxerxes I[226] which would have made the access wider. The deployment of iconography in the area, particularly the iconography in these later constructions, also suggests that space was semi-public,[227] as does the fact that the west parapet of the terrace seems to have had no fortification wall, making both the southwest area and the west parapet of the Apadana relatively visible from the plain below.[228] It

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[223] Roaf 1983:158.
[224] Roaf 1983:154, fig. 155.
[225] Schmidt 1953:81: 'We conclude that the foundations concerned are the remnants of two hypostyle buildings – porches or pavilions – whose extent, plan, and structural details are unknown.'
[226] Tilia 1974:132-3; Roaf 1983:158, figs 154 and 155 (*figs 5.31c and d*).
[227] See Chapter 4:154-7 below.
[228] See Schmidt 1953:62 for absence of fortification walls on the west terrace parapet.

therefore seems likely that access was possible along the parapet, at least in the later part of the site's use.

If this is the case, the southwest area, and the high platform above it seem to have been accessible by two routes: one, more controlled, through the Tripylon, and one less so through the Apadana. It is not totally clear how the distinction between these routes should be read. Logically, the less controlling transitions should be read as parallel to those on the Apadana, and thus the route should be seen as more public. However it then seems confusing that it leads to exactly the same area, the high platform, as the more controlling route leads to. Another possibility is that the route through the Apadana is a less controlling route because it is for higher status individuals, but that seems confusing in view of its public character in other ways. It is also of course possible, particularly in view of the fact that this area underwent significant changes, that the architectural arrangement is not entirely consistent.

However this may be, the southwest area basically fits the pattern of highly differentiated areas within the site and highly structured access architecturally regulating encounters between individuals, and in particular increasing the sense of control as greater access is allowed.

Dead-End Sequences and Blind Paths: Dis/orientation and Obstruction

Despite its emphasis on restriction of access, there are in fact several rings of distributed space running through Persepolis, creating a network of connecting paths. A shallow ring links the Gate of All the Nations, the Hundred Column Hall, the Tripylon and the Apadana. A deeper ring runs, as we have seen, over the high platform of the Palace of Xerxes, and the deepest ring additionally passes through the palace structures in the south, along the front parapet of the platform (*figs* 1.13 and 1.14).

The properties of these paths are somewhat peculiar. As noted, multiple replicating routes run through the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall. To a lesser extent this is the case in the south of the site too: paths diverge and rejoin. However, particularly looking at the deepest ring through the 'harem' there is actually only one route that leads from the east to the west. Moreover, this route is concealed within a multiplicity of blind alleys that do not lead anywhere.

This use of dead-end sequences of rooms is most developed in the Treasury. As well as being very segregated within the site, it is also very segregated internally. Almost all

the rooms, including both the large halls and the narrow spaces around them, are laid out in long dead-end sequences, while the spaces clustered around the northernmost hall consist of multiple single dead-ends. This is an extreme example, but these long dead-end sequences of rooms are characteristic across the site. They can be seen in the towers of the Apadana, in the rooms opening off the Palaces of Xerxes and Darius and in the 'harem' structures. Experientially, their effect is to frustrate movement, forcing anyone who enters the sequence to back-track. The disorientating effects of this are particularly strong when the routes that lead to dead ends and those that do not, are not immediately distinguishable, unlike in the towers of the Apadana, for instance, where the dead-end is at least relatively predictable.[229] A particularly clear example of this can be seen in the southwest of the Tripylon, where a sequence of six rooms and passages leads to a dead end, while the outside passage running parallel with it leads to the Apadana (*fig.* 1.15). It also frequently occurs within the 'harem' areas.

The inability to distinguish between the actual route and the blind alleys, and the lack of a clear path, means that the buildings are very difficult to navigate, giving these areas of Persepolis a maze-like quality. Rooms which are geometrically next to each other can sometimes only be accessed by a circuitous path (*fig.* 1.16), making it difficult and time-consuming to move across the site. This particular principle is also used in the north of the site, as for instance in the corridor leading to the Hundred Column Hall and separating the courtyard in front of it from the area around the Apadana. Cahill notes that within the Treasury this 'difficulty of movement' must be deliberate, as a number of doors that would have facilitated movement are blocked (*fig.* 1.17).[230] For a Treasury this has obvious practical advantages; however it also has the effect of making comprehension, there and in other parts of the site, more unclear.

The rings through the private areas of the site are also not marked architecturally. For instance space z, is, in terms of paths, one of the most significant rooms on the site, being the point through which both the shallow and the deepest ring must pass. However it is tiny and unmarked (*figs* 1.18 and 1.19). There is no indication that it is the dividing point for these two different routes. Moreover further navigational confusion is introduced by the architectural markers that do exist, in that they are used repetitively across the site. Persepolis makes use of geometrically identical rooms and sequences of rooms, with varying orientations, throughout the southern area. These are punctuated by courtyards and

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[229] Although if Huff's (2005:374-8) supposition that the staircases in the towers led to an extensive upper storey is correct, the same confusion would apply here.
[230] Cahill 1985:378, footnote 30, and Ill.2 (*fig.* 1.17).

hypostyle halls, which also repeat each others' forms, giving no real fix on the landscape. Moreover these are surrounded by identical entrances and exits, but give no clear viewing point by which to orientate oneself with respect to the rest of the site. Interestingly, this makes the differentiation of ground level, one of the few ways in which the site is relatively legible, even more salient, thus inscribing hierarchies into the architecture even more clearly.

The main effect of this layout is to make Persepolis hard to navigate and extremely disorientating. A sense of disorientation and enclosed space works directly on the body, thus a sense of disempowerment is exerted even over those who actually have the knowledge to navigate the spaces. The architecture maintains a degree of control even over the courtly inhabitants. Nevertheless the difficulty of navigation works most strongly on those unfamiliar with the space, while it gives a definite advantage to those with prior knowledge. It is also a way of hindering visitors from entering the private areas of the site, and straying off the marked paths into encounters that might be less clearly structured.

Stage Doors

So far we have primarily considered inward movement from the north of the site. An interesting phenomena is also apparent if we consider movement outwards from these private areas, and particularly the difference between the two experiences.

As we have seen, there is a major dividing line between the north and south areas of the site. We have looked at two of the transitions across it: the Tripylon and the potential route along the west parapet. However it is also crossed by the two southern doorways in each of the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall.

These doorways have some very particular spatial qualities. Firstly, they involve a direct transition between the massive, ceremonial halls to the north and a network of narrow, enclosed, jumbled passages. In this they are unlike the Tripylon and the west parapet, both of which continue into relatively open areas with further formal architectural features. Secondly, the shallow ring of space which links the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall in the north continues through these southern doorways and links them by a narrow, twisting, but nevertheless fairly short route through the Tripylon (*fig.* 1.13). This route also links up to the formal transitional route through the Tripylon, and also indeed to the west parapet route, through a very narrow open passage behind the Palace of Darius. It also links by a steep, perpendicular, informal staircase to the back of Palace G.

Thus there exists a set of service passages linking these various public areas and allowing an inhabitant of the private areas of the site to move swiftly between them and emerge into them, but of which a visitor in the public areas is entirely unaware (*fig.* 1.20). In both the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall the symmetry of the buildings set up the expectation that the monumental scale continues on the other side, or at least does not give any indication of what else might be there. This use of false doors as a spatial illusion is particularly striking in the Hundred Column Hall, where all four doors in the west and south walls connect into one narrow corridor, while the two in the east wall both lead to a small space without an exit.[231] Another potential indication that these doors are 'false' is that, unlike those to the north, east, and west, they do not have post holes for fitting actual doors to the space (*figs* 1.21 and 1.22).

Root notes: 'The Persepolis citadel, like the ceremonial quarters of other capitals before and after, functioned as a stage.'[232] These are literally 'stage doors', allowing the inhabitant to emerge into the ceremonial stage of the public rooms from the dressing room corridors behind it.[233] Moreover, the hypostyle columns occlude visibility, making emergence into the space largely unseen and allowing for carefully orchestrated appearances.

The effect of this is again to set up a very particular type of encounter. In addition to the power effects already in play in the stairs and sightlines of the Apadana, the King, or anyone else emerging from the south, exercises another type of control through their elusiveness, their ability to appear and disappear, to give or withdraw their presence. It also suggests that this encounter was very much 'staged': the King's own experience of entrance into the room is not at all formal or ceremonial (*fig.* 1.23). This suggests that the effect on the visitor was carefully calculated, rather than simply being a by-product of the general formality surrounding the King's existence. This again strengthens the view that the other types of encounter that the site structures are deliberate.

Finally, returning to the Tripylon, it can actually be seen to follow something of the same principle. While the north stairs have the extremely highly controlled double reverse structure, the southern staircase is set perpendicular to the building, and, although not completely a service staircase due to its width and the formality of its surroundings, is

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[231] Allen 2005:43, discussing the iconography used in these doorways: 'These southern door jambs, without their approaching petitioner, do not give mass access to the other side of the terrace and the royal palaces. The massive doors are a symmetrical illusion and lead instead onto a narrow corridor leading only indirectly into more restricted areas.'
[232] Root 1990:134.
[233] See Hillier and Hanson 1984:182 for the spatial qualities of 'stage doors' more generally.

much less controlling. Thus there is a similar asymmetry in the approaches to the building from the north and south. However, unlike the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall a formal path for the visitor does exist through the building. Not only is the control and formality reasserted in the subsequent double-reverse staircase of the high platform, but the south staircase of the Tripylon is decorated with sculpture, one of the clearest markers of formal space on the site. (The implications of the sculptural decoration will be discussed in depth in the next chapter). Moreover, while the sculpted figures on the inside of this staircase are shown moving from the north to the south, the staircase also has, uniquely on the site, the figures on the outside of the stairs moving downwards, that is to say south-north through the building (see *figs* 2.35 and 2.36). This suggests very strongly that there is a visitor's path south through the building, as well as a less restricted inhabitants' path north through it. Thus the Tripylon has completely different effects when it is traversed in one direction than in the other..

The precise function of the Tripylon has often been debated. Codella suggests that 'the Tripylon is not so much a gate, but a reception hall.' [234] However this discussion suggests both that it does have very specialised transitional effects and that in many ways gates, or at least the transitional aspects of all sorts of buildings, are the most important architectural features on the site.

Space on the Akropolis

The layout of the Akropolis also varies through the fifth century, before stabilising in the fourth. There have been far more subsequent alterations to the site than at Persepolis; however the major buildings and enclosure have mainly been reconstructed fairly securely. I have used the 2nd century B.C. map from Travlos, adapted to show the site at the end of the fifth century, when the entire Periklean building program was in place (*Map* 1).[235]

Open Space and the Use of Steps and Columns

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[234] See Codella 2007:139.

[235] Travlos 1971:70-1, fig.91; adaptations following Boersma 1970 and Hurwit 1999: Appendix 3, 313-8. I have included the Chalkotheke, although it is possible it should be dated to the 380/70s rather than the Periklean building program.

In contrast to the continual divisions and boundaries of Persepolis, the main precinct of the Akropolis is a single, highly integrated space. Various buildings stand within this enclosure, all discreet units, and all comparatively, simple in shape. The most geometrically complex plan is that of asymmetric, multi-level Erechtheion (*figs* 1.24 and 1.25). Within the traditions of Greek architecture, it is highly innovative, and often explained by the requirements of the cults it housed.[236] Nevertheless, compared to the interlinked mass of buildings at Persepolis, the clear and distinct outlines of the buildings are striking. Moreover, there are also multiple sight lines across the site. These maintain a high degree of continuity of reference as the user moves around the area. The areas to the south of the Parthenon and the north of the Erechtheion are fairly secluded and to a certain extent in 'shadow,' but emerging on the other side you can still see the same buildings as when you entered it, just from a different angle, so there is no real navigational uncertainty. Similarly, in the enclosed area of the Sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia and the courtyard in front of the massive steps west of the Parthenon, the Parthenon is continually visible, creating continuity from the main precinct. Indeed the Parthenon functions as an orientating device for the whole site.

Moreover nearly all of the rooms in these buildings open directly, or at most at one remove, onto the main open space of the site. Not only this, but nearly all the rooms are accessed only from the main space of the site: either the buildings are single rooms, or, most characteristically, they consist of two rooms joined back to back without a connecting door, as for instance in the Parthenon.[237] It is very rare on the Akropolis to be able to enter a building through one door and exit through a different one. The exceptions, within the precinct, are the western half of the Erechtheion (although the building does have this disconnected characteristic between the north and south halves); the Chalkotheke, although here the three entrances in the north wall in a sense count as a triple door, as they always return you to the same place; and possibly the Sanctuary of Zeus Polias depending on how the (outdoor) enclosure is reconstructed.[238] Although these single rooms do mildly frustrate the most direct movement possible between two points they are not, unlike the dead-end sequences at Persepolis, disorientating, because it is immediately obvious that they do not lead anywhere. Their main effect, instead, is to make the site completely

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[236] Eg Travlos 1971:213: 'The architect faced a singularly difficult problem in designing a building to house pre-existing and established holy places.'
[237] Barletta 2005:78 notes that this particular arrangement is fairly rare in Greek architecture, but common on the Akropolis, having also occurred in the Archaic Temple of Athena Polias and the Older Parthenon.
[238] Stevens 1946b:12-5.

externally orientated: the absence of paths leading through the buildings sends the visitor back invariably to the main open area of the site.

The precise depth of the various rooms from the external space varies depending on whether the colonnades and steps are separately distinguished. The Erechtheion (as usually reconstructed) is the only building on the site to have a depth of two fully distinct enclosed rooms:[239] the western antechamber opens onto two rooms beyond it, as well as leading by a staircase up to the Karyatid porch. There is also a small side room in the precinct of Artemis Brauronia which is unusually distant from the main space, separated by a short staircase, the open enclosure, and a semi-open anteroom. However, many buildings have a colonnaded portico creating a semi-internal space in front of the actual room. This use of columns to create additional depth is particularly marked in the Parthenon, where a surrounding peripteral colonnade encloses a prostyle porch in front of both the *pronaos* and the *opisthodomos*.[240] The Parthenon is notable for its extravagance in other ways, including the octastyle façade, and the use of both frieze and metopes.[241] In a sense these qualities and the double depth of columns can all be seen as simply marking importance through redundancy and expense. Nevertheless they also create extra depth into the internal rooms, as do the other examples of columned porches on the site, or, in the Temple of Athena Nike, a row of columns in front of two pillars *in antis*.

However, the way in which they create this extra depth is somewhat ambivalent. The columns screen the entrance, diffuse the actual point of access among the apparent multiple entrances, and create stages of progression towards the inner room. But, at the same time, they open up the buildings. They create actual permeability: these porches and porticoes are areas which are both internal and open, extending the inner rooms, to which they are linked by the geometric unity of the building, into the open space of the site. They also, in veiling what are actually solid walls or narrow doors, create an illusion of permeability where it does not exist. In an inversion of the interior density created by hypostyle halls, here columns are used to create a sense of external openness. Persepolis also uses porticoes extensively, but their structure is different. They are invariably enclosed by walls on three sides, and are thus much more internal than those on the Akropolis, which stand out from the buildings, extending the structure into open space and allowing sightlines 'through' the building (*fig.* 1.26).

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[239] Travlos 1971:213: 'There is no definite evidence for the western cross-wall and the two interior rooms.'
[240] Barletta 2005:78-9 notes that prostyle porches, rather than columns set *in antis* are also characteristic of the Akropolis from the late Archaic onwards.
[241] Korres 1994: esp. 94-5 for cuttings for a possible additional frieze in the *pronaos*.

Thus on the Akropolis the use of columns does function as way of augmenting depth, but also as a way of diminishing the restriction of access necessarily involved in building walls. The columns and porticoes again increase the external orientation of these buildings, integrating the buildings into the space surrounding them.

A similar tension can be seen in the deployment of the steps which edge many of the buildings. On the one hand, the increase in height is a clear transitional marker indicating restriction of access and increase of status, as at Persepolis. Not only is this a basic cognitive principle, but there are signs that steps are deliberately used as a marker on the Akropolis. Some of the staircases on the Akropolis are narrow flights of stairs, such as those linking the Temple of Athena Nike to the external ramp; the stairs leading from the sacred way into the Sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia; those leading down into the terrace at the terrace at the very east of the site; or, indeed, the staircase of the Arrephoroi, leading down from the site in the north-east. These seem largely simply to negotiate the terrain; their gradient is determined by it and varies accordingly (*figs* 1.27 and 1.28). However, there are also more formally marked uses of steps. The massive rock cut steps west of the Parthenon seem to be deliberately designed to create an experience of approach to the building, particularly in their width, which mimics the unusual width of the Parthenon (*fig.* 1.29).[242] It is also notable that the buildings most strongly marked by sculpture, the Parthenon, the Temple of Athena Nike, and the Erechtheion, all also stand on stepped platforms, while the other buildings do not. Moreover, within the Erechtheion an internal flight of stairs leads up to the Karyatid porch, whereas there is no access to it from the south, where the entrance would be on a level. The precise function of this porch is unclear, but it is one of the most unusual architectural features on the site, and the complex and gradated route to it is likely to have been deliberate.

The steps used on the Akropolis are also very steep, again emphasising transition. This is true not only of the staircases that follow a steep gradient on the rock, such as that to the north of the Erechtheion, but also of the stepped platforms surrounding the temples, where the gradient is purely an architectural choice (*fig.* 1.30). Moreover Barletta notes that another extravagance of the Akropolis is the use of a two step base for the cella, instead of the usual use of a single course: a feature which was retained despite the fact that it narrowed the portico excessively, and had to be cut back closer to the cella wall.[243]

However, despite the clear power effects of the gradient, the way in which steps surround the *crepidoma* also opens up the buildings. Like the columns, they stand out from

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[242] For emphasis on width as a principle inside the Parthenon cella see also: Barletta 2005:86-7.
[243] Barletta 2005:79-80.

the building, integrating it into the surrounding area, and offering multiple paths up onto the platform. The Akropolis, then, uses both columns and steps to create a sense of restricted approach, a deliberate power dynamic between visitor and building, which is particularly strong in certain marked buildings. At the same time, though, the way in which columns and steps are deployed continues to emphasis the open space of the precinct, integrating the buildings into it and routing all movement through it.

That the Akropolis is fundamentally externally orientated has been noted before. Scully refers to 'the outdoor room between the Parthenon and the Erechtheion,'[244] while Alles notes:

> 'The Parthenon… is a visual frame for a ritual that occurs entirely outside the temple elsewhere on the Akropolis.'[245]

This is an important consideration. Greek sanctuaries are generally externally orientated, in the sense that their ritual is focused around the outdoor altar.[246] The Akropolis is no exception, indeed in terms of spatial layout the Altar of Athena is in many ways more emphasised than the major temples, as we shall see. This offers a functional and traditional explanation for the principles behind the layout. However one of its other effects is to make encounters between co-present users of the site frequent and inevitable. Moreover, most of these encounters take place within an open, unstructured space. The architectural structures of the Akropolis do promote formalized encounter with a strong power dynamic, but this is between visitor and the deities within the temples. The encounters between individuals outside, which is the area visitors are mainly directed to, are much more open and on a level. Thus the Akropolis promotes a sense of subordination to the architecture, and, by extension, the city and the gods, while promoting equality and interaction between individuals.

The Propylaia and the Sanctuary Outside the Gate

This quality of light-handed restriction can also be seen, to an extent, in the structure of the Propylaia, which presides over the transition into the precinct (*figs* 1.31 and 1.32).

The western approach to the site has been substantially rebuilt at various points in

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[244] Scully 1962:181.
[245] Alles 1988:20.
[246] Herington 1955:28-9.

the intervening centuries, and the Classical ascent has been more or less entirely obscured by subsequent fortifications and alterations. However in the fifth century the site was approached by a wide, straight ramp, roughly 80m in length and 12m in width.[247] Shear suggests that the change to this ramp from the previous circuitous path, which probably took place in the mid-sixth century,[248] was part of a transformation of the fundamental character of the site from a fortress to a shrine:

> 'In place of the circuitous path which originally passed along the base of the pyrgos, a broad, straight approach was introduced. This new approach… 'de-militarised' the Akropolis and changed it from a securely fortified area into a shrine housing the religious buildings of the city.'[249]

Another aspect of the fifth-century transformation was the realignment of the Propylaia. The previous Old Propylon had been set at a much more oblique angle to the fortification wall (*fig.* 1.33).[250] The new alignment of the Propylaia not only set it in parallel to the Parthenon,[251] but opened up a straight line of movement, and also of sight, from the ramp into the precinct (*fig.* 1.37b). On the far side, moreover, this line of access connects directly with the Athena Promachos, drawing the visitor into the interior experience of the site whilst still outside. Visibility would have been restricted by the steepness of the slope, with this continuous sightline only gradually opening up, and both the difference in height and the physical effort involved in the climb continue to mark a status difference. Nevertheless, the effect is very different from the ascent from the plain at Persepolis, where the sightline is blocked by the double reverse of the stairs.

The structure of the Propylaia itself also pushes the balance towards suggestion of access rather than its restriction. The building is inherently imposing because of its position at the top of a steep gradient, its architectural elaboration and complexity,[252] and the flanking wings - themselves an innovation[253] - surrounding the top of the ramp.

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[247] See Shear 1999 for the western approach, esp. 105-6 (with bibliography), and 112 for the Classical ramp.
[248] Shear 1999:105 notes that it can be dated by the masonry style and the pottery sherds in the presumed fill.
[249] Shear 1999:105; similarly Dinsmoor (2004:4) notes that the building is often erroneously likened to a fortified gate.
[250] Shear 1999:114, who notes: 'the rather peculiar orientation of the Old Propylon which lies at a strange, oblique angle to the fortification wall.'
[251] Dinsmoor and Dinsmoor 2004:45.
[252] The technical innovation of the Propylaia are many, including the ways in which it compensates for asymmetries: de Waele 1990; Dinsmoor and Dinsmoor 2004; Lucan 1985 notes that early reconstructions of the Propylaia render it symmetrically; Dinsmoor (2004:38) also notes that refinements proportionally stronger than in the Parthenon.
[253] Scully 1962:179.

Approaching the Propylaia involves moving into an intimidating enclosure. The use of different floor levels within the Propylaia emphasises the transitional nature of the building.[254] Nevertheless, the main section of the Propylaia is made permeable through the deployment of steps and columns in the same way as we have seen in the site's temples. The flanking wings, as well as enclosing the building, provide multiple paths up into it. Moreover, unlike the temple structures where the permeability of the colonnades is an illusion in front of a solid wall or a single entrance, the Propylaia is in fact punctuated by five horizontally aligned doors, gradated in width around the widest path through the centre. Of course, it is difficult to be sure which of these doors would have been open on a day to day basis, but, theoretically at least, the Propylaia was a highly permeable gateway.

Whilst creating this direct axis through its centre, the Propylaia also deflects attention into the side spaces that open up in around it, the 'Pinacoteca' and the precinct of Athena Nike. Both of these are small, high areas, integrated into the wings of the Propylaia, but, at least in the case of the Athena Nike precinct, extremely architecturally elaborate and eye-catching.[255] Although they are on the Akropolis platform, neither is accessed from the precinct itself. Mnesikles' full design, with two halls in the east, maintained this division,[256] which indeed follows the same logic of external orientation discussed above (*fig.* 1.34). Instead both are accessed through the steps of the Propylaia, or, in the case of the Athena Nike precinct, by an additional separate steep staircase leading up from the ramp. This layout maintains the importance of the central axis in that the visitor is ultimately returned to it. Stevens, moreover, notes that the windows and columns of the Pinacoteca are arranged asymmetrically, such that they align from a specific point viewing point on the central axis (*fig.* 1.35).[257] Nevertheless, the position of these two areas outside the primary transition to the site has the experiential effect of bringing some of the sanctuary outside the boundary. This again weakens the force of the transition the Propylaia presides over, and strengthens the link between inside and out. This is further strengthened, once the visitor is inside the site, by the close structural similarities often noted between the buildings of the Periklean program, particularly the Propylaia and the Parthenon.[258]

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[254] Dinsmoor and Dinsmoor 2004:37; Rhodes 1995:54.
[255] See Mark 1993 for the architectural history of the sanctuary.
[256] See Dinsmoor and Dinsmoor 2004:20-3 for the design of the east halls.
[257] Stevens 1946a:87-8, fig. 3.
[258] E.g. Dinsmoor and Dinsmoor 2004:9: 'It can hardly be mere coincidence that the north-south extent of the Propylaia, as finally worked out in Project B for the axes between the end walls of the east halls, is 67.273 m, while the distance between the axes of the corner columns of the Parthenon is 67.453m.' See Hurwit 1999:193 for further similarities between the two buildings.

Thus it seems that not only is the Akropolis precinct a highly integrated space, but that the precinct and the city outside it are more integrated than they might at first appear. Whereas Persepolis maintains a very strong architectural distinction between visitor and inhabitant, the Akropolis tends to weaken it, diffusing boundaries and bringing elements of interior space outside.

Ascending Paths and Increasing Comprehension

However, despite its open, integrated nature, movement within the precinct is not entirely undifferentiated: the architectural layout encourages a distinctive spatial experience of progression across the site, following the ascent of the rock itself.

Beyond the Propylaia the line of sight which runs to the Athena Promachos hits the wall behind it, creating a horizontal block. The possibility of routes diverges, that to the north leading to the Erechtheion, and the other, broader, southern path through the centre of the site.[259] At this point the gradient of the rock is still steep. Nevertheless, rather than restricting movement up this slope, the Akropolis encourages it. Firstly, functionally, the Parthenon and the Erechtheion both have their main access from the East, the side furthest from the entrance. Rhodes, indeed, notes an 'increase in hieratic intensity across the site' from the store rooms of the Chalkotheke to the Altar of Athena.[260]

Moreover, the viewer is drawn down the central path, in particular by a sequence of viewing points. The conceptualisation of the Akropolis as a sequence of oblique views has a long history, due, in part, to an attempt to find a system which could account for the asymmetries of the site, which were seen as problematic in classical buildings. As early the mid-nineteenth century Pennefound wrote of the site:

'We shall perceive that all the roads and artificial platforms were so arranged by Art that, at every point where a complete view could be obtained of each design, the work was presented to the eye of the spectator so as to be seen only from an angular point of view.'[261]

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[259] Much of the surface of the rock would have been covered with dedications (see Keesling 2003). I have not included this in the analysis as equivalent 'soft furnishings' data from Persepolis does not exist, however this will have been a significant factor in creating and delimiting paths around the site.
[260] Rhodes 1995:88.
[261] Lucan 1985:52.

Similarly, Doxiadis finds a system of site planning based around a variety of angular viewpoints taken from the Propylaia,[262] and Ito considers that the site is best described in terms of axial, rather than polar co-ordinates, although also concludes that comprehensive site planning does not occur until the Hellenistic period.[263] However, the idea that these views create a path is most fully developed in Eisenstein's account of a quasi-cinematic 'montage' sequence across the site.[264]

In this account, the successive views of the Propylaia, the Athena Promachos, the Parthenon, and the Erechtheion each present a perfect framing of the building. Each view, moreover, comes into frame as the previous view is passed (*figs* 1.36 and 1.37a-d). This account is particularly plausible in that it helps to explain the unusual position of the Karyatid porch of the Erechtheion. Considered in plan form, it appears oddly huddled at one end of a blank wall. However from the 'picturesque' angle that Eisenstein suggests it expands to cover two-thirds of the wall, and its sculptural richness balances the columns of the west façade and the northwest porch. Eisenstein also emphasizes the importance of movement in this sequence:

'The length of these montage sequences is entirely in step with the rhythm of the building itself: the distance from point to point is long, and the time taken to move from one to the other is of a length in keeping with solemnity.'[265]

Eisenstein's description of this sequence finishes with the view of the Erechtheion. However, the path continues: it progresses along the side of the Parthenon, the huge bulk of which looms over the pathway and blocks the view to the south. It then emerges at the highest point of the ground, behind and to the north-east of the Parthenon. This is the area on which the shrine of Zeus Polias stood,[266] and, to the west and marginally lower (although probably raised by steps), the Great Altar of Athena. The positions of both seem to have remained constant from the archaic layout.[267]

Extrapolating from Eisenstein's montage sequence, this area also offers oblique views back, framing both the Parthenon and the Erechtheion, although there does not seem to be a perfect angle which captures them both (*fig.* 1.38). This suggests either that

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[262] Doxiadis 1972:5.
[263] Ito 2002:11, 26.
[264] Eisenstein and Bois 1989[1940], quoting Choisy 1865.
[265] Eisenstein and Bois 1989[1940]:121.
[266] Hurwit 1999:190: 'The area includes the highest point on the Acropolis rock (over 156m above sea level), a fitting location for the worship of Zeus, great lord of the sky.'
[267] Hurwit 1999:190-2, 192.

the oblique viewing angles are not in fact deliberately arranged along a path, or that, having ascended to the summit, such alignment cues are no longer considered necessary.

This is also the point at which the site is most comprehensible. The viewer can now look back over the ground covered from the Propylaia, and also into the area that opens up to the east of the Akropolis, where the ground again falls away. This is a wide area, the full extent of which is not immediately apparent from the entrance (*fig.* 1.39). It contains the traces of a building which is generally reconstructed as the *heroon* of Pandion, and a workshop, or *ergasterion*.[268] This latter reconstruction, supported by the large quantity of marble chips found in the area,[269] is particularly interesting in that it bears a distinct similarity to the spatial pattern at Persepolis, with the service areas at the back behind the ceremonial buildings. However, this is developed in a different ways: access to the *ergasterion* is unrestricted by any particular architectural features: its seclusion consists only of its position on lower ground. Moreover, at Persepolis the most segregated area is the Treasury, whereas on the Akropolis treasure was stored variously in the main ceremonial buildings,[270] and therefore, although not accessible to casual passers-by, it was nevertheless relatively conspicuous. This configures a similar relationship to economic power as it does to socio-political distinctions: at Persepolis it is extremely highly controlled, on the Akropolis, relatively visible to all.

This is not the only route across the site. Major additional paths run both to the north of the Erechtheion and to the south of the Parthenon. Both of these routes, however, emerge on to this same high ground. Scully notes that:

'The important experience of most sites, as again at Olympia and the Athenian Acropolis, come from walking through them and penetrating to their hearts.'[271]

On the Akropolis this path and its increasing elevation and spatial comprehension, and therefore sense of control, is almost inevitable in navigating the site.

Scully suggests that this increased comprehension extends also into the landscape now visible beyond the site, and that the architecture of the Akropolis is framed by the

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[268] Stevens 1946b:21-5.
[269] Hurwit 1999:189.
[270] Harris 1995:2: 'The inventory lists of the Treasurers of Athena describe the contents of the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, the Opisthodomos, and the Chalkotheke.'
[271] Scully 1962:5; Stevens 1946b: also notes the view of Mount Hymettos.

Lykavittos Hill and Mount Hymettos, and thus integrated into its geographical setting.[272] These hills were certainly clearly visible, and with them a general sense of external landscape. However in other ways the Akropolis does not seem especially to privilege views out from the site. There exact height of the contemporary precinct walls is uncertain, but it is clear that they were significant fortifications, rising considerably above the ground.[273] Presumably they restricted visibility, certainly down into the agora at the foot of the slopes and possibly considerably beyond. Moreover, views to the sea are blocked by the Parthenon from much of the precinct, a striking choice in a state dependent on naval prowess.[274] In many ways the site seems to be planned more as an enclosed precinct than in terms of the views from it. A strong alignment is, however, created from the Propylaia to the Pnyx: the latter is framed by the gate as descent from the Akropolis commences, whilst, viewed from the Pynx, all the major buildings of the sight come into view, massed together (*figs* 1.40-2). Thus the new alignment of the Propylaia forms a visual connection not just between the inside and outside of the site, but between the Akropolis and heart of Athenian democratic decision making.

The spatial layout of the Akropolis, then, promotes a sense of access, and an increasing sense of comprehension of, and thus control over, the precinct. Within this open area the visitor is encouraged to move along a variety of paths linked by continual open sightlines. The encounters that this spatial layout structures are thus both much more frequent and much less controlled than those at Persepolis.

Conclusion

The two sites are very similar in their use of the fundamental power techniques of monumental architecture. Both involve massive buildings, raised high above a city, exploiting the basic hierarchical quality inherent in height and size and the differentiation from the surrounding landscape that these entail. Both sites, moreover, are segregated from the city or plain below: separated in each case by a substantial wall, through which one main entrance affords access.

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[272] Scully 1962:183: 'From this point he is led to Athena's unchanging altar from which all the buildings and landscape shapes are wholly visible at last.'
[273] Mark 1993:58-9 (with bibliography) discusses evidence for the north and south Akropolis walls, although primarily with reference to block size not height. See also: Boersma 1970:162; Travlos 1971:53-4.
[274] Cf Pausanias Bk 1.xxii.4: 'From this point [the Temple of Athena Nike] the sea is visible,' implying it is not generally so.

After this similar power dynamic has been established, though, the two sites develop the experience in very different ways. Once inside the site, and anticipated in its initial gateway, the Akropolis opens up. A degree of disempowerment is maintained by the slope of the ascent and the Parthenon looming at the top of it, but the fundamental experience is that of moving upwards from a state of lesser to greater comprehension. The site itself is one open space, with very little differentiation in route or experiences. The choice of the main route across the site is suggested, but others are not highly restricted. At Persepolis, by contrast, a similar ascent is followed by increasing restriction. In the public areas the experience is also of ascent, but in this case into the disorientating opacity of the hypostyle halls. Further moments of controlled transition occur within the site, and the experience beyond the initial ascent to the public halls, in the private areas and ultimately in the treasury, is even denser and more disorientating: designed to hinder access and spatially arranged to mark status differentiations. Meetings between visitors to the Akropolis are frequent, and structured to take place across an equal, open interface. At Persepolis, by contrast, they are infrequent, except in the public areas, highly staged, highly hierarchical and very different for the different actors involved in them.

These distinctions correspond to the political interactions characteristic of the two states. The encounter-rich single space of the Akropolis, in which everyone is visible, maps very well to the practice of a direct democracy - it is a literal space 'in the middle' - whereas Persepolis promotes the separation of social groups, and creates only highly structured encounters between them, in which contexts the king and court are at a great advantage. Proximity to the king was the key source of power in Achaemenid Persia; here it is acted out in literal proximity. The king can grant and withdraw his presence, just as he can grant and withdraw favour. Not only, then, do these architectural characteristics correspond to political differences, but they shape social interactions, and therefore hierarchies, very directly.

The power dynamic between the architecture and the user enforces the same patterns. On the Akropolis the user is to some extent allowed to gain a sense of control over the site, whereas at Persepolis the balance of power always lies with the architecture, whose full extent is never revealed. At Persepolis, the degree of architectural control is increased as greater access is allowed: the most private areas are also the most disorientating, and the paths into them exert the strongest restriction. This suggests that Persepolis is concerned with exercising power over those close to the King, perhaps even more than it seeks to intimidate less significant visitors. The Akropolis, by contrast, creates

equality of experience. This equality was not extended, in legal or political terms, to all those who visited the site: both imperial subjects and many groups among the city's inhabitants were variously disenfranchised. Moreover a variety of social factors may have restricted who could or did in practice visit the Akropolis, and also influenced their reaction to the equality the site implied. Nevertheless, viewed purely architecturally, its experiential character is universally egalitarian, which may itself have had some influence on the cultural *habitus*.

In the interview recorded in 'Space, Knowledge, Power,' discussing liberty, Foucault emphasizes firstly that political qualities are practices, and can never be guaranteed by institutions, laws, or other indeed architecture. He then adds:

> 'I think that it [architecture] can and does produce positive effects when the liberating intentions of the architect coincide with the real practice of people in the exercise of their freedom.'[275]

Looking at the Akropolis and Persepolis, it is clear that the actual practices of the sites and the movement and actions of those using them were central to the effects they created. Nevertheless it is also clear that the architecture contributed considerably to the social effects of these practices. It would not merely be harder to engineer an audience with the king in a site designed on the principles of the Akropolis, but it would not be the same experience, and the social effects would be sensibly diminished. In this chapter I have described how the material qualities of the two sites influence the experiences that take place on them, thus affecting the political nature of that practice. Thus it seems plausible to see the architecture of Persepolis and the Akropolis as acting both as a social mnemonic and as a determining factor in their political natures.

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[275] Foucault 1998 [1982]:434.

CHAPTER TWO: DECORATIVE POLITICS

The buildings of both Persepolis and the Akropolis are abundantly decorated with sculpture. At Persepolis more than 3000 relief figures appear on staircases, doorways and, occasionally windows, as well as the four massive winged bulls on the Gate of Xerxes, and the bull and horned lions protome column capitals in the Apadana, the Hundred Column Hall, the Tripylon, and the Palace of Xerxes. In antiquity, the friezes, metopes, pediments, and akroteria of the Akropolis buildings amounted to several hundred figures, although many of these have since been lost or badly damaged. These sculptures form a dense locus of iconographic meaning, which, on both sites, has been a primary focus of attention, intensively studied as images of ritual, mythology, and political metaphor.[276] These aspects are important, and will be discussed in subsequent chapters; here, however, I want to consider the sculpture at another, much neglected but perhaps even more fundamental, level: its role as architectural decoration.

By this I mean that the architectural sculpture on both sites can profitably be considered as a particular example of the widespread, indeed cross culturally almost ubiquitous, phenomenon of ornament. It results from some of the same considerations that produce, for instance, painted pottery, weaving patterns, and picture frames. Ornament is a phenomenon which is most frequently discussed in anthropological or archaeological contexts. In art history it is often treated as a marginal footnote to representational art, becoming relatively important only in certain periods such as Art Nouveau and the Arts and Crafts Movement. However the characteristic decorative traits of repetition and variation are clearly apparent in the architectural sculpture of both Persepolis and the Akropolis, suggesting it as an appropriate frame through which to consider them.

Initially, I consider the visual and psychological mechanisms by which ornament produces its particular effects and its consequent social potential, particularly its immense importance in fixing the relationship between material culture and social life. Ridgway, discussing Greek architectural sculpture, has remarked that it was merely glorified moulding, elevated to great art by our craving for Greek originals and the Romanticization

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[276] Pope 1957; Root 1979 for Persepolis as religio-symbolic and political respectively; Hurwit 2004; Neils 2005 for summaries of interpretations of the Akropolis and the Parthenon sculpture respectively; Schwab 2005 for the multiple iconographic readings given of the Akropolis sculpture.

of ruins.[277] I concur with this view, but with the addendum that glorified mouldings, or indeed mouldings of any sort, are not trivial, but have significant aesthetic, and, moreover, social value.

Secondly, I consider the other defining aspect of ornament: its relationship to the objects it decorates, in this case the architecture of the sites, and the spaces and pathways that this creates. I discuss its manipulation of movement on both sites: the figures provide cues for paths and actions, but also emphasize restrictions on access. I then discuss how the architectural frames influence the experience of viewing the sculpture, in particular the extent to which the viewer interacts with, and is distanced from, the figures.

Finally, I argue that although both sites make use of these same techniques, with results which, indeed, include some extremely similar details, they use them in different ways, and that the overall effects produced are significantly different, in ways which reflect their different political pre-occupations and purposes.

Ornament

The term ornament, or decorative art, encompasses two meanings. Firstly such art decorates *something*: it is not discrete or self-sufficient. It is designed for a specific context, indeed a specific surface, which it complements, and by which it is at least to some extent constrained, such that it does not fully make sense out of that context. This quality can be seen, for instance, in an Achaemenid griffon rhyton from the Oxus Treasure (*fig.* 2.1). The griffon protome is linked to the cup element, both formally, in that the vessel continues the line of the creature's body, and functionally, in that the wine flows out from the container through a pair of holes in the animal's chest.

Secondly, decorative art typically makes use of a characteristic visual combination of repetition and variation to form some sort of pattern. At its simplest, this involves the strict repetition of a single shape or motif. This second quality, too, can be found in Achaemenid metal working, for example in a silver bowl, again from the Oxus Treasure (*fig.* 2.2), with crowned figures in applied gold repeated around the vessel in two rows, divided by rosettes, with a row of birds arranged in the other direction below them, around the nub of the bowl. This is a fairly simple use of decoration, although even here a number of effects are used: the counter-movement of the birds, the unity of the main rosette at the

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[277] Ridgway 1999:222.

base and the much smaller rosettes in the circles above, and the diminished number of figures in the lower row, emphasising the curvature of the basin.

It is possible for these two aspects of ornament to appear separately. However, there is an overwhelming tendency for the two aspects to occur together, and it is this combination of constraints of form and pattern which makes a typical piece of ornamental art.

Both of these aspects of decorative art can be opposed to the qualities of representational naturalism, the antithesis of such constraints. However the relationship between the two is not a strict dichotomy, but rather a progressive gradient. In practice, much decorative art has a representational element, which may be presented as naturalistic to a greater, or a lesser, extent.[278] Similarly, no naturalistic art is entirely free from spatial constraints, and hence issues of symmetry and patterning. Decoration is not absolutely distinct from naturalistic art, indeed it is not uncommon, in cultures where naturalism is highly developed, for the two modes to be used together. Nevertheless, it has its own particular considerations and effects.

Visual Effects

The attraction and ubiquity of decorative schemes has been grounded in accounts of visual perception, in particular the way in which decoration exploits and stimulates our inductive perceptual faculties. Fundamental to these accounts are the discoveries of Gestalt theory, developed in the early twentieth century, and demonstrated by a series of striking visual experiments. The theories of brain function originally developed to explain these discoveries have been criticised, however the empirical observations and the basic premise behind them has been predominantly upheld (and refined) by subsequent work.[279]

Gestalt theory holds that vision is a dynamic process, in which the mind organizes visual stimuli according to pre-existing principles. A classic example of this is the automatic drive to distinguish between figure and ground. This can be demonstrated by looking at examples where this distinction is ambiguous. In both the white circle/black triangle figure, or the candlesticks/faces (*figs* 2.3 and 2.4), the eye, unable to determine between the two possibilities, alternates back and forth between the two. Visual experiments also reveal the central tenet of the theory: the mind groups individual stimuli into whole figures,

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[278] Gombrich 1979:142.
[279] Gordon 2004:27, 39-51.

organising the component elements, not according to their individual characteristics, but by emergent principles of continuity, similarity, proximity, and symmetry (*fig.* 2.5).

Decorative art makes use of these visual principles. We see the central rosette of a Qom rug as a circle, at the same time as perceiving that it is made up of numerous small flowers and curlicues (*fig.* 2.6); similarly on the Achaemenid bowl, before we examine the individual figures, we note the rows that they form. Some decoration, indeed, is almost identical to the devices used in Gestalt experiments: the base of the Berlin Painter's name amphora flickers between black and red shapes in an exact figure/ground ambiguity pattern (*fig.* 2.7). Moreover, decorative art intensifies the use of these intuitive faculties, creating an exaggerated, hyper-Gestalt world, which conforms more closely to the mind's perceptual apparatus than the natural world does.

Also essential to this process is the idea that the mind both focuses selectively on the available stimuli and extrapolates from them. Gombrich has noted that the extent to which we do not see, or rather, do not attend to, stimuli is as important as the way in which we do, commenting that 'we rarely attend to the details of design, but if we did not see them at all, decoration would fail in its purpose.'[280] His argument is that our eyes run easily over continuities and repetitions, accepting the similarity of one motif to the next without examining it in detail, but focusing on the deviations and the unexpected breaks. He sees this as deriving from the need to obtain maximal information from the visual environment: the mind is always striving after selective useful meaning, rather than merely absorbing all possible data. Decorative art exploits this tendency, setting up a context in which the ease of continuity and the attention-catching quality of variation are played off against each other in a continual tension. Patterns alternate between restlessness and repose, creating a sense of harmony, which is however inexhaustible as never fully resolved. Gell describes the effect thus:

> 'In patterns we are defeated in our attempts to see simultaneously the individual figure and the ground, we mentally resign ourselves to *not quite understanding* the complex relationships, which causes a pleasurable frustration and hooks us.'[281]

Gell additionally emphasises the importance of movement in our perception, and the tendency to extrapolate it from the barest of stimuli.[282] Pattern plays on this faculty also.

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[280] Gombrich 1979:97.
[281] Gell 1998:80.
[282] Gell 1998:77.

Gell explains the sense of animation created in decorative art by the need to move attention from one motif to the next in order to compare their variation: this creates a 'non-mimetic appearance of animation.'[283] Many patterns enhance this effect by a specifically directional element, and/or by the use of interlaced lines, where the eye has to move to follow their path.

Play on these faculties can be used to create very diverse effects. As noted above, it is frequently used to create a sense of intriguing harmony. It can also be interpreted, in particular contexts, as having more specialized effects such as sense of infinity, or ephemerality.[284] However, it can also be deliberately disturbing. Gombrich discusses the 'systematic overloading' of our perceptual apparatus in op art, works which, in extreme versions, create an uncontrollable and disturbing flickering sensation as the eye tries to assimilate them (*fig.* 2.8).[285] Gell also notes 'mild visual disturbances' caused by the prows of Trobriand canoes, as the eye is simultaneously led off in two directions.[286]

Indeed, the same pattern can be both restful and frustrating depending on how it is looked at: the mind moves easily over decoration, but it can be very difficult to analyse how the effect is achieved.

Social Effects

This explanation of the particular visual appeal of ornament has implications for understanding the social function of decorative objects. A frequent explanation of the purpose of decoration lies in its ability to signal importance: by the outlay of money, time, and skill involved in making it.[287] It attracts attention to a particular object or building by its brilliance and elaboration, which indicate its importance, and 'makes it beautiful.'[288] Conversely, critics of the decorative style have censured ornament and its redundancies as empty luxuriant excess, pure conspicuous consumption.[289]

Gell, however, suggests that ornament is attention-fixing in a much more specific way, one in which the redundancy and repetition has a more precise purpose.[290] He

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[283] Gell 1998:77.
[284] Rogers 1974:211.
[285] Gombrich 1979:134-7.
[286] Gell 1992:44.
[287] Gell 1992:44; Bagley 1993:40.
[288] Bagley 1993:40.
[289] Gombrich 1979:17-32.
[290] Gell 1998:73-83.

suggests that the perpetually shifting attention and the inability ever to resolve the pattern has an adhesive effect, slowing down the process of viewing and prolonging interaction with the design: the pattern functions as a 'mind-hook', which causes the viewer to become attached to it, as to a sticky substance. He notes, moreover, that this creates a sense of 'unfinished business,' which continues to function inexhaustibly over time, just as the pattern itself is inexhaustible. This is an artistic parallel to the effects of gift exchange, a phenomenon whose on-going nature has been noted as important in the creation and maintenance of social bonds.[291] However in decorative art, the primary bond is between person and object. It is for this reason that the other aspect of decoration, the conformity between decoration and object, is important: the link is not just of the viewer to the pattern, but of the pattern, and therefore the viewer, to the particular object that it decorates. Attachment to the object, moreover, may also entail commitment to further 'social projects,'[292] both practical and philosophical. For instance, in gift exchange, attachment to the gifts themselves, as objects, may further strengthen the social bonds created by the act of giving. This is one of the ways in which, in Gell's wider model, an object can, by a process of 'abduction,' act as a social agent.[293] Thus for Gell, the specific qualities of ornament are used to produce social consequences.

Decorative schemes are also very commonly found in apotropaic contexts. They function as defensive devices both in actual warfare and in places or on occasions that are held to be particularly in need of protection. Gell argues that this is not the paradox it may appear: the same visual techniques are used both to attach and to repel; the difference is in the contextual perception of how it is directed. The same adhesive quality, which creates social attachment in a familiar context, when directed against enemies, causes them to become stuck, dazzled by the design and their attempts to unravel it, and therefore rendered harmless. Gell notes that 'apotropaic patterns are…, in effect, demon fly-paper,'[294] adding that in some cultures large numbers are deemed to have the same effect: their interminableness is equivalent to a pattern's irresolvable intricacy.

This adds another layer to the ambivalence of decoration. Not only can the same psychological/ physiological propensities be played on to create different visual effects, but the consequent social effects can vary according to the interpretation these visual appearances are given. It should also be noted that the apotropaic and attractive are not

[291] Mauss 1990[1950].
[292] Gell 1998:74.
[293] Gell 1998.
[294] Gell 1998:84.

necessarily incompatible in one object: a thing can be cherished by its owners precisely because it keeps away the demons. Similarly, the irresolvable quality that prevents an enemy from gaining power over an object may be a way for its possessor to assert control through it.

Finally, it should be noted that the actual visual response to a pattern also varies according to its strangeness or familiarity. The ease with which continuity can be ignored and the force with which the unknown demands attention is true within life experience as well as an individual object: familiarity with a particular style of decoration conditions us to respond to it with greater subtlety of cultural nuance, but the habituation also encourages us to ignore effects which would catch the attention of the unfamiliar eye.

Persepolis as Ornament

One of the most salient characteristics of the relief sculpture at Persepolis is the use of multiple repetitions. There is overwhelming replication of theme, motif and detail, within individual compositions and also from composition to composition and from building to building. A complete summary of these repetitions for the site is impossible: as noted above, one of primary qualities of multiple repetition is that it cannot be wholly analysed. Some generalizations must, therefore, suffice. The preferred types of repetition are the linear replication of the same motif, and reflective symmetry both within entire compositions and between two images placed opposite each other. The two are often used simultaneously. The former can be seen primarily in the staircases: identical figures progress across the facades, up the stairways, and along the balustrades. Reflective symmetry is invariably employed across the internal surfaces of doorways, frequently on both sides of the inner balustrade of a flight of stairs. It can also be seen in the colossal winged bulls of the Gate of Xerxes.

An example that contains all these elements is the north doors of the Hundred Column Hall. Looking at two rows of figures from the west jamb of the east of the two north doors, linear replications can be seen between the alternating figures in each row, also reflections across the central axis, and further replications between these two rows, which also exist with the other three stacked with them (*fig.* 2.9). The west jamb of the west door in the north wall is identical (*fig.* 2.10), and each of these is also a reflection of the east jamb of their respective doors (*fig.* 2.11). Reflection also is used on the staircase facades, which are invariably symmetrical around a central axis (*fig.* 2.12). The Apadana staircase

north and east facades are also, approximate, reflections of each other, reflected around the northeast corner of the building. Multiple exact replication also occurs in the animal protome capitals of the hypostyle halls (*fig.* 2.13). There is, in fact, no sculptural feature at Persepolis which is not at least duplicated, and most appear multiple times, in diverse places. Finally, the entire effect is woven together by the multiple rosettes framing and dividing the reliefs.

These repetitions are combined with variation. In some places there is extensive exact replication, in others a fundamental repetition is played off against variations in details: ascending the Tripylon staircase, the figures initially show a high degree of variation, which then flattens out to an entirely regular repetition on the landing parapet (*fig.* 2.14). The variation is always highly controlled, however. Roaf's analysis of the variation in the figures of the Apadana friezes, concludes that it is created by the differing combinations of a very small number of variable characteristics (eleven for the 'Persian' figures, with the additional choice of the presence or absence of a cloak for the 'Medes,') combined 'as if from a sample book'[295] (*fig.* 2.15). He also notes that the composition uses a combination of regularity and genuine disorder: the underlying alteration of Persian-Mede-Persian-Mede is followed strictly, and there seems to be some degree of order governing other characteristics, for instance a figure turning back is likely to be followed by one facing forwards; however, these latter rules are probabilities only, and there is no mathematical sequence ultimately governing the combinations. Another characteristic variation occurs as a result of the way in which symmetry is applied. Rather than a strict geometric reflection, symmetry is applied as though a real figure had been turned round. Thus, for instance, a shield remains on the left arm, moving behind or in front of a figure, depending on which way he is facing. Sometimes the difference created by this technique is significant, but only apparent under close observation. For instance in the images of the king enthroned at the top of the north doorways of the Hundred Column Hall the king holds the sceptre in his right hand in both images (*figs* 2.16 and 2.17). Sometimes it creates a difference in whole texture of a composition (*fig.* 2.18).

The close relationship of the sculpture to the architecture is also striking. Achaemenid sculpture is clustered around the overtly structural elements of the building: the doors, staircases, windows, gates, and column capitals, which are often specifically designed to accommodate it.[296] It is frequently overtly subordinated to those elements: an

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[295] Roaf 1983:104-5.
[296] See Schapiro 2006:68, 91 for the assumption that architecture invariably precedes and determines sculpture and examples where this is not the case.

extreme example occurs on the Tripylon staircase, where the figures vary in size in order to be accommodated between the variation of the steps and the enclosing frame above them (*fig.* 2.19). Additionally there are sculptural elements carved almost in the round and presented as having a structural role in the architecture: beams passed through the animal protome column capitals, such that they were supporting the weight of the building on their backs, and the huge winged-bulls of the Gate of Xerxes merge seamlessly into the walls themselves (*fig.* 2.20).

It is clear from this discussion that the principles of decorative art inform the reliefs at Persepolis. They make extremely cohesive and precise use of the ornamental and Gestalt qualities described above. These qualities have, indeed, attracted frequent comment. Curzon, describing the sculpture, remarked:

'It is all the same and the same again, and yet again.'[297]

Meanwhile Frankfort commented that:

'The predominance of decoration over representation which marks the painted pottery of the fifth millennium is also characteristic of Achaemenian sculpture of the fifth century B.C. and sets it apart from its Assyrian and Greek contemporaries.'[298]

However the precise function of these decorative effects has often been seen as puzzling. Roaf quotes a particularly baffled response to the multiple symmetries:

'It is a curious feature of the sculptures of Persepolis, unencountered elsewhere, that every relief has to have a counterpart showing the opposite sides of the same figures. Was it from a sort of frenzy of realism? Was it because in the world of Zoroastrian dualism, it was, perhaps, felt that the unseen sides, being in a sort of darkness, were prey to evil?'[299]

Robert Byron, by contrast, interpreted the multiplicity of figures as simply designed to show expense:

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[297] Curzon 1892 vol. II:195, quoted in Roaf 1990:105.
[298] Frankfort 1954:202.
[299] Barnett 1957:60, quoted in Roaf 1983:126.

'The new staircase is really wonderful – of course it isn't great art, no art that makes you wonder all the time how much it cost can be that.'[300]

In more recent studies, Root has defended the artistic integrity and importance of the reliefs, but by dismissing their decorative qualities:

'In fact the reliefs are not "merely" decorative. They convey explicit messages and actually enhance meaning.'[301]

Roaf, meanwhile, expresses overt uncertainty about why these effects are used,[302] suggesting as the purpose of this elaborately regulated irregularity only that:

'The cumulative effect of repetition may have been intended to give emphasis and significance to the composition.'[303]

Frankfort values the decorative qualities of the reliefs. He explicitly notes their relationship to Achaemenid applied arts, and their own decorative nature:

'For Achaemenian sculpture is a form of decoration, and it is in the nature of ornament to be subservient. When a design arrests us by its subject matter, or the exceptional vigour of its execution, it transgresses the limits set to decoration. The patterns and rhythms achieved by a repetition of figures or groups are, on the other hand, pre-eminently suitable for ornament.'[304]

However, like Roaf, he suggests that the function of the decoration is simply emphasis:

'The reliefs merely served to emphasize an important architectural feature of the terraced complex, the stairway entrance.'[305]

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[300] Byron 1991:212.
[301] Root 1979:122.
[302] Roaf 1983:126.
[303] Roaf 1983:105.
[304] Frankfort 1954:232.
[305] Frankfort 1954:231.

Indeed, although appreciative of their decorative character, he sees it as a predominantly negative characteristic: they are designed the way they are because they are not intended to be looked at in any detail:

'But we misconstrue the intentions of the Persian designers, if we put the Achaemenian reliefs on a line with those of Egypt and Mesopotamia. They were not intended to be scrutinized, and a comparison with Assyrian reliefs in particular is fallacious, because these fulfilled a different function…The reliefs merely served to emphasize an important architectural feature of the terraced complex, the stairway entrance.'[306]

Gombrich, as we have seen, also observes that decorative art is designed in part not to be looked at; however Gombrich suggests that this is an active quality: one part of the variation between close and subconscious attention that creates the specific effects of decorative art.

Boardman, however, notes that repetition can create an effect of power:

'There is of course value in repetition, in speech, writing, and art, and it can produce the sort of effect of relentless power that the Persians sought in their art… [Persepolis in its heyday] must have been, to foreign visitors, as stupendous as it was terrifying.'[307]

This interpretation of the reliefs gives a positive explanation to a phenomenon which otherwise has been described negatively. Moreover, Gell's account of how decoration functions allows the mechanisms and effects of this display of power to be considered in more detail.

Persepolis uses the decorative style, in this more developed sense, in a particular and virtuoso fashion. The fundamental effect is of rigorous and compelling order, epitomised by the guards of the Apadana frieze, arranged in strict rows and columns and divided into identical geometrical boxes by their spears, or by the subjects raising their arms in geometric patterns to support the king on the inner door reliefs of the Hundred Column Hall. Variation is woven into some areas of this regularity. Viewed at a distance, these variations create a change in texture: however, close up, they are complex: examining them creates Gell's sense of hooked frustration, exacerbated by the fact that fully to

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[306] Frankfort 1954:231.
[307] Boardman 2000:126-7.

perceive the variation requires closer attention than can be given to the area they cover. Moreover, in the areas of greatest variation, some sections of the Apadana and the internal Tripylon staircases, the variation is formally irresolvable, although the underlying order suggests that it should be. This creates a degree of systematic overloading of the analytical faculties, parallel to that of the visual faculties described by Gombrich in his analysis of op-art. The visual faculties, however, are themselves overloaded in that the entire effect is ungraspable both in its scale, and its multiple locations. The mirroring effect increases this, as does the, non exact, replication from one building to another: the total effect is deliberately overwhelming.

This effect could be seen as apotropaic: it follows Gell's stickiness model, or rather is an extension of it: the mind becomes aware that it cannot fully grasp the pattern and therefore slides off it, intimidated. There are certainly specifically apotropaic elements in the reliefs, notably the colossal winged bulls in the Gate of Xerxes and the 'king-hero' figures arranged to defend the doorways of the Palaces of Darius and Xerxes and the Hundred Column Hall. However the effects also have an adhesive element: their complexity and scale also demands recurrent attention, thus creating a 'mind-hook.' The pattern also binds very closely to the building, an effect enhanced by the low relief. As observed above, there is an inherent apotropaic/adhesive ambivalence in decoration: Persepolis appears to partake of both.

The Akropolis as Ornament

It is less immediately apparent that the architectural sculpture of the Akropolis is decorative; indeed, it is customary to compare the repetitions of Persepolis adversely with the variety, fluidity and imagination of Greek work.[308] Moreover, within Greek art, the transition from the archaic to the classical periods is often seen as involving a diminishing interest in surface patterning as three-dimensional volume and plasticity become more important.[309] However closer consideration suggests that, within the architectural sculpture of the Akropolis, the characteristics of classical sculpture are, nevertheless, combined with the considerations of decorative art, although applied less insistently than at Persepolis.

An initial point: even of the comparatively small proportion of the Akropolis architectural sculpture that has survived, little is still in place. As a result, firstly, the degree

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[308] Richter 1946; Boardman 1994.
[309] Elsner 2006:70.

of repetition in the material we have is considerably diminished: for instance, Simon estimates that of the fifty Nikai originally depicted on the parapet of the Temple of Athena Nike only a third survive, and of these most are too damaged to have retained significant visible characteristics.[310] Secondly, most of the sculpture is seen in museums or publications, where it is displayed as individual works of art, and viewed from close up. This detracts from the total impression that is an important visual aspect of a decorative scheme.

On the Akropolis buildings there is a pervasive interdependent relationship between the sculpture and the architecture.[311] The friezes wrap around the buildings, visually binding them together.[312] In the pediments, the figures are carefully arranged in diminishing poses to be accommodated exactly within the triangle of the roof, while the akroteria are posed on the ridges and limits of the roof. It is not clear that the architecture has precedence: it is itself designed to create spaces to accommodate the sculpture. However, the sculpture complements the architectural form, and it is unproblematic that it is, in this sense, decorative.

Additionally, an element of pattern exists in the sculpture. This can be seen, initially, by considering three sections of the Parthenon frieze (*figs* 2.21, 2.22, 2.23). In each a basic figure type is repeated in linear procession, such that the salient effect is that of replication, although there is also a degree of variation. In slab VIII of the east frieze, the linear repetition is very similar to that at Persepolis: figures in profile are lined up one behind the other. However even here there is a degree of variation between the figures - in the folds of cloth and the exact angles of the arms - that is not seen in the Achaemenid figures. This is even more pronounced in slab VI of the north frieze. Here again there are strong similarities between the figures: the first three *hydriaphoroi* each stand vertically with their weight on their left foot, the hydria supported on their left shoulder, with their head framed by their right arm bent back to support the vessel. However there are also significant differences. Their left arms are diversely disposed, two steady the hydria, while one holds his arm horizontal at his side, and there is additional variation in the drapery of the *himatia*, in the angles of the heads, and in the positions of the right arms. Moreover, the fourth figure is varied completely, bending to put down, or pick up, the vessel. Similar characteristics can be seen in the cavalcade section from the south frieze. Again there is a

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[310] Simon 1997.

[311] See Osborne 2000: esp. 229-30, discussing the architectural setting of Greek temple sculpture with reference to its effects on movement (see 100-2 below) and content (see also Chapter 4:175-9 below).

[312] Ridgway 1999:128, noting that the Greek *tainia* means both frieze and ribbon/band.

linear repetition of horses and riders, with variation in the individual poses and also here in the extent to which the figures overlap. This latter characteristic creates rippling, patterned variations in the texture of the frieze as a whole, particularly when seen over an extended length (*fig.* 2.24).

In all these slabs, the variation differs from that at Persepolis in that it consists of multiple minute changes, rather than a combination of defined variables. Consider, for instance the drapery over the right legs of the *hydriaphoroi*: the basic shape of a low triangle, with the drapery running in upwards folds from the calf, is maintained, however the details of the folds vary, and are obscured, to differing degrees by the cloth hanging down from the arm. Younger has discussed such repetitions, in particular the use of almost exact replication, known as dittography, as a time-saving device, employed by groups of sculptors in their specific work sections of the frieze.[313] However, as the principle of repetition is maintained in combination with much greater variation, such that it would not make the process of carving any easier, it seems more plausible to consider it an artistic choice.

Over the course of the frieze the degree of repetition varies: some blocks have almost no element of it, such as the composition of rearing horse and restraining rider on the west frieze (*fig.* 2.25), while some of the cavalry blocks use repetition so extensively that it can be difficult to disentangle the repeated elements. Some elements also occur throughout the frieze, notably the identical, anonymous faces, which punctuate the pattern,[314] while others are introduced only for sections, such as the bulls on the eastern end of the north frieze. The fundamental templates, creating an overarching continuity, are those of standing human, and horse and rider; the textures of drapery and flesh are also continually played off against each other.

Other striking examples of close repetition on the Akropolis can be seen in the Karyatids, six figures showing only slight variation in the folds of the drapery and hair arrangements (*fig.* 2.26), and in the Athena Nike parapet, which consisted of a horizontal band of Nikai figures.[315] The same theme appears to have been maintained consistently around the parapet, and the visual interest, therefore, seems to have arisen mainly from comparing the variations across it.

The patterned quality of the Akropolis sculpture was also often enhanced by its architectural context. The clearest example is the metopes of the Parthenon. The south metopes, for instance, show a Centauromachy, framed at both ends by a number of

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[313] Younger 2004:66.
[314] Osborne 1987:102 notes 'the uncanny uniformity of facial expression.'
[315] Stewart 1985:58.

different compositions of Lapith fighting centaur. Each metope is differently arranged, but viewed in sequence the repetitions behind the variation, particularly the silhouette of the centaur maintained from metope to metope become conspicuous (*figs* 2.27 and 2.28).[316] The pattern, moreover, consists not just of the (quasi-) repetitions from metope to metope, but the punctuation of the metopes with triglyphs. The two alternate in texture (originally they probably also alternated in colour)[317] over the frieze as a whole. This creates a strict, regular variation, underlying the more irregular continuity/variation in the metopes . This effect depends on the Gestalt principle of similarity, which organizes the blank triglyphs and the figured metopes into two interspersed groups, in which the metopes are the figure and the triglyphs the ground. Similar effects, although often with looser repetitions can be seen in the other metopes of the building.

Considerable use is also made of bilateral symmetry on the site. It is most tightly used in the Karyatid porch, where the main variation in the figures is a shift of weight from right to left across the central axis of the porch. In the rest of the site it is used more loosely and selectively. In both the Parthenon pediments the inherent focus on the axis of the triangle's symmetry,[318] and its increasing height towards this axis, is intensified by the fundamentally symmetrical composition of the figures within them (*fig.* 2.29). However, just as the linear repetition was not exact, here the reflective symmetry is not exact. Instead, it is an underlying structure within which the figures, and the details of their poses vary considerably. On the east façade, this symmetry has echoes in the composition of the metopes below: the fourth metope in on each side has three figures, rather than the usual two, the fifth in have chariots, both moving inwards, while the movement of both outer metopes is also inwards.[319] It is also closely followed in the east frieze, where the central image is framed in outwards bands by the seated gods, the eponymous heroes, and then the converging heads of the procession. However, unlike Persepolis, in which images invariably have a symmetrical reflection, elsewhere on the building it is used much more loosely. The figures in the north and south friezes of the Parthenon create approximate, but only approximate, reflections of each other across the building; the figures of the west frieze, however, do not participate in a symmetrical scheme.[320] The metopes are

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[316] Osborne 2000:230 notes that metopes inherently elicit comparison: 'Viewers on the ground will always have more than one metope in their line of vision, always be conscious that the one metope on which they are focusing is but part of a set and requires to be compared and contrasted.'
[317] Ridgway 1999:114.
[318] Gombrich 1979:126 for the way the eye is drawn to the axis of symmetry; Osborne 2000:230: 'the triangular format of a pediment draws the attention of any viewer to the centre.'
[319] Brommer 1977:22; Osborne 2000:238.
[320] Osborne 1987:100 for the frieze, discussed in terms of movement rather than strictly symmetry.

symmetrical in the loose sense that there are the same number of them on opposing sides. There also seems to have been some degree of bilateral symmetry in the south metopes, where inwardly moving Lapiths and outwardly moving centaurs on both ends of the sequence frame what seems to have been a distinct middle section; the west metopes, and those of the north façade, seem to have been more asymmetric.[321] A similar use of symmetry can be seen in the surviving sculpture of Temple of Athena Nike: the east frieze is arranged around a central axis of symmetry, while the others appear not to have been.

The application of the decorative style on the Akropolis is different from that at Persepolis. A wide variety of decorative principles are exploited; but rather than being applied to create an impression of rigorous and compelling order, they are employed intermittently. Both symmetrical reflection and linear repetition are used only partially: reflection is only employed on some surfaces of some buildings, and the repetition is incorporated into compositions which also make use of more naturalistic principles of arrangement.

Moreover, when they are used, the repetitions and reflections are not exact: there is no identical replication in the sculpture itself, but rather an approximate repetition, overlaid by both minor and major variations. It is thus even less possible on the Akropolis than it is at Persepolis to grasp a mathematical system underlying the variation in the reliefs. However, precisely because such resolution is so clearly unobtainable, the effect of this is not to increase the compulsion to resolve the pattern, but rather to lessen it. There is the same tendency to read similar figures quickly, paying reduced attention to their particular details, in what Gombrich calls 'the etcetera principle,'[322] there is also a tendency to make comparisons between the repetitive elements that do occur from figure to figure, between the angles of the horses' necks, or the folds of sleeves. However, the drive for total understanding of these patterns is diminished, as, correspondingly, is the sense of visual overload caused by not being able to achieve it.

Instead the effect of this looser use of pattern is to invite selective comparison from figure to figure, in a kind of endless fluctuation between Gombrich's restlessness and repose. The similarities create a framework, within which the eye lingers on variations, but the multiplicity of variations also becomes a sort of background, against which specifically similar details stand out. Osborne notes that the process of comparing different sections of the Parthenon frieze 'focuses the viewer's attention on those features which do not

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[321] Osborne 2000:for the metopes: 238-9.
[322] Gombrich 1960; Gombrich 1979:99.

change,'[323] notably the anonymous faces. He sees this as having iconographical significance: 'it presents the official view of the Athenian polis, in which individuals appear only in as far as they serve the polis.'[324] The same process of comparison can simultaneously be read as having the more directly visual purpose of fixing attention through the pattern, and creating the adhesive effect typical of decoration.

The endlessness of the process is partly due to the complexity of variation between individual figures. It is, however, enhanced by the degree of variation within and between whole compositions. Interaction with the reliefs is prolonged and, in Gellian terms, a sense of unfinished business created, by the combination of different image types, each repeated in various ways, around and between each building, and resultant predictions and uncertainties about what will be seen on a different façade or surface. For instance, horses, with their extremely distinctive shape, appear in a number of places on the Parthenon: in the frieze, in the east pediment, in the east and west metopes, and occasionally in the north, and also, transmuted into centaurs, in the south metopal sequence. Osborne notes the iconographic significance of their appearance in these different contexts.[325] They also have an effect simply as pattern, in which the varying densities of their use, and the variations in pose, rearing in the east pediment, and transformed to semi-human in the south metopes, created mind-hooks through variations in shape. A similar point can be made about the recurrence of both duelling figures, and figures standing still, on both the Parthenon and the Temple of Athena Nike - here the visual contrast is between the diagonal lines and the vertical. The appearance of sacrificial cattle in the eastern reaches of the north and south friezes of the Parthenon, and on the parapet frieze of the Athena Nike precinct creates a visual link between the two, and also a contrast between the flatter, more rectangular shape of the cattle compared to that of the horses.

The sculpture also binds closely to the buildings it decorates. This is partly achieved by the integration of the relief with the architectural features. The intermittent application of decorative techniques is also specifically used to heighten this effect: the increasing emphasis on symmetry towards the entrance of the Parthenon in the east articulates its functional structure, and thereby increases the adhesive effects of the decoration binding viewer to building.

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[323] Osborne 1987:103.
[324] Osborne 1987:103.
[325] Osborne 1994a:145-6.

Architectural Ornament

So far we have been concerned with the repetitive aspect of ornament. Its relationship to the objects it decorates, in this case the buildings of the two sites, is also relevant, and further elaborates the visual effects of these patterns.

Figured Ornament

The dual character, both representational and decorative, of much of the architectural sculpture on the sites is crucial to its function. Gombrich notes that 'order is dangerous precisely because it dazzles us and tempts the mind to submit without proper reflection.'[326] Similarly Gell considers that ornament functions as a technology of enchantment, securing the acquiescence of individuals to social projects that can only be understood at a collective level.[327] This effect is enhanced if the social project is encoded within the decoration itself in a decipherable form. This is not in conflict with the idea that decoration is not designed for full attention: it is precisely characteristic of decoration to work at two levels of focus; indeed this enhances its capacity for socialisation: the decorative patterns, accepted without close examination, create a commitment to the detailed messages that may subsequently be recognised.

The use of images of the body is particularly significant in that it enhances the attention-fixing qualities of the sculpture. It has been noted that humans are inherently responsive to human images, particularly faces, often seeing them in response to very limited stimuli.[328] This works in conjunction with the adhesive qualities of the decorative patterns.

The use of human images also has the effect of populating the architectural space. This adds an immediate social quality, which ultimately has a number of effects. The one closest to the decorative qualities of the reliefs is the way in which the figures move through the architecture.

Movement

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[326] Gombrich 1979:17.
[327] Gell 1992:43.
[328] Elkins 1997.

Gell notes that an effect of animation is frequently created by decorative art.[329] This may extend to a compulsion to move the object itself in order to follow the sense of movement: Osborne discusses how the curved strips on the body of an *aryballos* cause whoever holds it to interact with the vessel and run a hand over its surface (*fig.* 2.30).[330] Architectural decoration has the additional capacity to suggest the movement of the viewer themself, revealing and denying paths through and around buildings: it has a highly performative quality.

Both at Persepolis and on the Akropolis a sense of movement through or around the buildings is created. This movement partly involves the non-mimetic aspect discussed by Gell, whereby attention is transferred from motif to motif, causing the eye to move across the pattern.[331] However, on both sites it is greatly enhanced by the directionality of figures, themselves progressing across the surfaces of the buildings.

The reliefs at Persepolis are highly, and consistently manipulative of space. They are focused on thresholds, both doorways and staircases, cueing movement through them or heightening the sense of transgression in crossing them. Root has mapped the directional movement of the figures in the various buildings of the site (*fig.* 2.31).[332] Putting the buildings together we can see that there are two main patterns of movement on the site (*fig.* 2.32). Firstly, there is directional movement into a building, which is generally used on staircases, in which the figures accompany the visitor across the facades and up the steps. Secondly, there is directional movement outwards from the buildings, generally used in doorways, which restricts inward movement and therefore access. This content of these outward moving reliefs adds nuances to the effects. Some seem primarily to promote outward movement: the doorway reliefs of the Palace of Xerxes and the more internal doorway reliefs of the Palace of Darius show the king with attendants, seemingly preparing to go out (*fig.* 2.33).[333] Others put more emphasis on the restriction of inward movement: the images of the king-hero fighting various monsters, which occur in the more external doorways of the Palace of Darius, and also the east and west doors of the Hundred Column Hall, are consistently positioned so that anyone entering the building is confronted by the king-hero figure and his blade (*fig.* 2.34).[334] There is a spatial logic to this distinction:

[329] Gell 1998:77.
[330] Osborne 2007:185-6.
[331] See Chapter 3:129 below.
[332] Root 1979: passim.
[333] For the positions of these motifs: *fig.* 4.4.
[334] For the positions of these motifs: *fig.* 4.5. Root 1979:81 notes that the outwards facing position of the king-hero in the north door of the west wall of the main hall of the Palace of Darius suggests that the design must have included a western entrance long before the current staircase was added by Artaxerxes III.

the more confrontational images appear in the outer areas, thus restricting access where it is most likely to be attempted.

There is also a spatial logic to other aspects of the sculptural deployment patterns. There is a very high correspondence between the areas where sculpture is used and the areas which we saw in the last chapter were architecturally marked as 'visitor' paths through the site. Sculpture is used on the Apadana, the Hundred Column Hall, the Tripylon, the high platform, and in the southwest corner. Moreover, the directionalities used within these areas also correspond to and interact with the degrees of restriction that the architecture creates.

The Apadana, which is architecturally very highly integrated and invites access, only has the staircase model of inward movement: its doorways are unmarked. The more secluded Palaces of Darius and Xerxes and Palace H use a combination of inward movement cues on the staircases and outward, or restrictive, movement cues within. Interestingly, the only example of reliefs used not on one of the visitor paths is in the doorways of the main hall of the 'harem.' These follow the outward model of movement. Their existence in such a secluded area suggests that this outward movement pattern is associated with an even higher level of access restriction, and that the inner rooms of the southwest palaces may also have been purely private.

The Hundred Column Hall also seems to follow this model. It makes use more or less entirely of restrictive directions. As well as the king-hero motifs in the east and west doors, the stacked rows of figures in the south doors are all moving in a south-north direction, and even in the north doors, those nearest to the public entrance, the main rows of figures are moving symmetrically inward, in conflicting directions, while the image of the king enthroned above them faces against inward movement (*figs* 2.9-11). This use of restriction corresponds well to the building's position as a direct transition between the open space of the north and the very private spaces of the 'harem' areas directly behind it, unlike the Apadana which links to the 'semi-public' areas in the west.

The Tripylon makes particularly complex use of directionality. The north staircase cues movement from the public areas up the stairs, and to the centre of the parapet at the top, in the typical inward model. However, the inner reliefs of the south stairs, rather than restricting movement, continue movement upwards and into the site (*fig.* 2.35). Unlike any other use of steps, this is movement out of the building, marking the Tripylon as a particular access route to the private areas. This is particularly striking as the east door of the Tripylon, follows the usual model of restricting access to the more private areas.

Additionally these south stairs have figures on the outside, in this case progressing down into the Tripylon from the southern courtyard (*fig.* 2.36). The downward movement of figures is also unique, and seems to mark the importance of the route in both directions. Thus, sculpturally the Tripylon is marked as the main transitional point for the site.

It is also the point of the site with the greatest complexity of movement among the figures. This too varies considerably across the site. The inner walls of the Apadana staircases have a very simple pattern of one guard standing on each step (*fig.* 2.37); those of the Palaces of Darius and Xerxes also have one figure, whether servant or tribute-bearer, per step, but in this case a greater degree of movement is introduced as each figure is stepping up onto the next step (*fig.* 2.38). However the stairs of the Tripylon are far more complex (*figs* 2.14 and 2.19). Here the figures on the lower inner staircase are disposed extremely irregularly (for Persepolis), with different numbers of figures on each step, some instances of near dittography as figures are doubled, and figures turning back at uneven intervals; this settles briefly into a pattern of two figures per step, with one stepping up onto the next, but then becomes more disorderly until the wall of the upper parapet, where the ground line flattens out and the figures regulate again. This frenzy of movement additionally marks the Tripylon's transitional character.

It is thus apparent that the sculptural manipulation of movement at Persepolis has been carefully deployed through the site as a whole, in co-ordination with and elaborating its spatial principles.

The reliefs on the Akropolis also make virtuoso use of manipulation of movement, but in a different way. The most thorough use of directional movement is seen on the Parthenon (*fig.* 2.39), and the strongest movement is found in its frieze.[335] The movement of the frieze is convergent: Root draws a parallels with the 'imminent convergence upwards' in the Apadana façades.[336] In the case of the Parthenon, the convergence is towards the entrance of the building on the east side, co-ordinated, as we saw in discussing symmetry, in the pediments, metopes, and frieze. In the north and south friezes movement of the viewer inward into the site is mimicked by the relief figures, and, indeed, the motif of a figure glancing back occurs periodically (*figs* 2.40 and 2.41). This is very similar to the inward movement characteristic of staircases at Persepolis. However, beyond this the sculptural directionality of the building differs from the Persepolis reliefs.

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[335] Osborne 2000:243: 'Once away from the west, this frieze is single-minded in its directionality, driving on as no other frieze does.'
[336] Root 1985:111.

The west frieze of the Parthenon does not mimic the movement of the visitor into the site. Coming from the Propylaia, it instead opposes it: Osborne notes the viewer 'can apparently choose either to join the procession by moving with it, or to watch the procession pass by moving in the opposite direction to the figures on the frieze.'[337] However, its directionality cannot be read as simply restrictive, as above it the metopes are arranged to create movement from the north to the south, against that of the frieze.[338] Above this the west pediment itself elicits strong movement in both directions.[339] Thus the west façade of the Parthenon offers a variety of different movement cues, both creating the need for the viewer to make a decision about which way to go, and ensuring that whichever they choose they will be acting contrary to at least one of the promptings.

Osborne notes that regardless of which way you choose to follow the west frieze, you end up joining the procession towards the east on the north and south sides.[340] He also notes that here too the directionality is complicated by the interaction of the frieze with the metopes. The north metopes, along the main route of the site, strongly oppose the eastwards, inward movement of the frieze, while those on the south façade initially strengthen movement to the east and then, towards, the east end restrict, or at least complicate, it.[341] In both cases, Osborne notes, the sense of movement is elaborated by the content of the reliefs. Just as the viewer at Persepolis is confronted by the king-hero armed with a knife, so in north metope 24, the viewer progressing from west to east is confronted by Menelaos, with a drawn sword, attacking Helen, who takes sanctuary at the altar of Athena in metope 25 (*fig.* 2.42).[342] Moreover, as the narrative in the north metopes develops from east to west, viewed from west to east, they continue to align the viewer's viewpoint with the Trojans:

'The viewer begins by seeing the [Trojan] victims, not by following the progress of the Greek invaders, and the Greeks are traced back from the scene of their atrocities to their initial invasion.'[343]

In the south metopes the viewer initially moves against the centaurs, but at the east end of the frieze, finds the centaurs have changed direction and they must joined them.[344]

[337] Osborne 1987:100.
[338] Osborne 2000:238.
[339] Osborne 2000:230.
[340] Osborne 1987:100.
[341] Osborne 2000:238-9.
[342] Osborne 1994a:146-7.
[343] Osborne 1994a:148.

This is similar to the use of restrictive motifs at Persepolis, in that the visitor moving inwards into the site finds themself aligned with a monster, or, in the case of the Trojans, with the enemy. However it is different both in that, as Osborne notes, the centaurs and Trojans are presented as at least partly, and possibly very, sympathetically,[345] as the Persepolis monsters are not, and also in that at Persepolis these motifs seem to correspond to areas the visitor is genuinely not intended to enter, whereas on the Akropolis movement in this eastwards direction is strongly suggested both by the directionality of the frieze and by the spatial layout of the site. Indeed the viewer has to follow one of these routes to reach the east façade. Here the directionality becomes coherent and compelling and movement is directed towards the centre and the entrance to the temple, to stillness above it in the birth of Athena depicted in the pediment, and potentially to the view of the cult statue inside.[346]

This manipulation of movement is different from that at Persepolis in a number of ways. Firstly it introduces a degree of ambiguity and relaxation of control: the need for the viewer to make a proactive decision about which direction they will choose is very unlike the Persepolis reliefs. It also not just allows, but enforces contradictory movement. It also encourages the viewer to walk in different directions and experiment with the sculpture. This has the effect of prolonging their presence out in the open precinct, which we saw in the last chapter is a fundamental spatial principle of the site.

To some extent, similar manipulations of movement can be seen elsewhere on the site. The Temple of Athena Nike has a similar, though simpler, deployment of figures (*fig.* 2.43). Still vertical figures stand in the centre of the east frieze, with figures moving towards them at its edges, and more violent movement on the other façades.[347] Unfortunately, too little of the pedimental sculpture survives to give evidence for the movement taking place above the frieze,[348] however there is every reason to suppose they follow the emphasis on

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[344] Osborne 1994a:148; Osborne 2000:239.

[345] Osborne 1994a:148: 'The viewer is thus encouraged to view the Greek attack on Troy teleologically, and to ask whether the means employed justified the ends;' Osborne 2000:239 'All the faces of battle are shown, something reinforced by the great mixture of sympathetic and unsympathetic renderings of the Centaurs,' for which see also Osborne 1994b:72-5.

[346] Osborne 2000:235: 'Viewers are encouraged to move their gaze up and down rather than from side to side, to see Athena's birth here as but the crowning scene of the victorious Athena within.'

[347] Stewart 1985:65: 'What strikes one now - especially after looking at the battle scenes - is the stillness and frontality of the participants. Only the figures at the corners move, perhaps bringing news of victory from north and south;' for the friezes: Picard 1929:Plates 40 and 41.

[348] Mark 1993:74-5.

stillness in the east and movement in the west seen on the Parthenon, as this is a common feature of Greek temples.[349]

Unlike the Parthenon, the Temple of Athena Nike could be approached only from the east or north-east, through the Propylaia or the steps leading up from the Akropolis' entrance ramp. Thus the visitor primarily had a direct, close interface with the east façade only. The temple's north, south, and west façades could be accessed through the precinct, but not easily; on the other hand, they were highly visible from the ramp. These three façades depict very vivid movement, but not, it seems, in specific directions: the figures clash and oppose each other over short distances, but without an underlying movement trend (*fig.* 2.44 and 2.45). Arguably, this fits very well with the position of the friezes on the site: highly visible but not directly controlling any routes.

However, the Nike parapet frieze does seem to have shown strong directional movement, running west along the north and south sides and meeting in the centre of the west frieze.[350] This does not, as a whole, correspond to, or oppose, any possible movement by the visitor, as the west side of the frieze hangs in the air to the south of the entrance ramp. What it does do is to describe the shape of the parapet.

This is important because it suggests that there is an extent to which the deployment of sculpture on the Temple of Athena Nike, and indeed on the Parthenon, can also be understood as a way of articulating the structure of the architecture, rather than strictly aiming to govern movement on the site.[351] In support of this, the processional route on the Akropolis probably led to the Erechtheion, the cult centre, not the Parthenon.[352] Therefore, although there is some association between the procession depicted in the Parthenon frieze and the procession happening on the site, there is no direct correspondence between the path of the ritual and the path of the reliefs. This suggests at least that the directional movement in the sculpture is concerned with movement around the building, as a separate unit, rather than manipulating movement across the site as a whole, as Persepolis consistently does.

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[349] Osborne 2000:233: 'In both the Athena Polias temple at Athens and the temple at Delphi the frontality motif is much more insistently stressed to east than the west, and we will go on to see how regularly this is the case.'

[350] Stewart 1985:58: 'It is clear that on the north and south sides the array of Nikai moved towards seated Athenas at the west end of each, while on the west side itself, Athena was probably seated at the center with two streams of worshipping Nikai approaching her from either side.'

[351] See also Ridgway 1999:199-200: 'In an Ionic temple, the continuous frieze serves as a binding element surrounding the entire structure.'

[352] Herington 1955:28-34, though see Lewis 1979/80:28-9 for the suggestion that the peplos came to be offered to the Athena Parthenos.

The two are, of course, not entirely distinct: sculpture articulating the structure of the building almost inevitably affects movement, and vice versa. It is also possible that there was variation across the site: it seems highly plausible that a general interest in marking the structure and differentiating between the east and west entrances, was further elaborated in the Parthenon. It is unfortunate that little of the two friezes of the Erechtheion survive,[353] as with its multiple doorways and unusual ground plan, it would probably have shed light on the question (*fig.* 2.46). Nevertheless, on the evidence as it stands there does seem to be a difference from Persepolis, where sculpture is deployed more or less exclusively in places where movement is expected, and with the clear intention of manipulating it. On the Akropolis sculpture wraps around the buildings and is sometimes used to direct movement and sometimes not.

It is also notable in this respect that there is relatively little emphasis on thresholds on the Akropolis. Notably, the Propylaia itself is entirely without sculpture. It has been suggested that the Nikai on the Athena Nike parapet are leading the visitor up to the sanctuary, and even that the 'Sandal-binder' Nike removes her shoes as a cue to the visitor to do the same on entering the sanctuary.[354] This is true in the sense that the parapet anticipates that sculpture inside, all the more so if Stewart's idea that the parapet reliefs mimics the Parthenon frieze is correct.[355] However generally the transition into the site is strikingly unmarked.

Thus the sense of movement the Akropolis creates is complex. Its cues are rarely restrictive, and, despite a general prompt to eastwards movement, often ambiguous. Fundamentally, rather than promoting and restricting movement along prescribed routes, it encourages prolonged and varied route choices through the open space of the precinct.

Surfaces and Interaction

The interaction of figured architectural decoration with the viewer also varies according to the interface across which it operates. Summers notes that when an image is placed on a surface, as on the surface of a building, the surface itself is made to face an observer, and that in facing the viewer it becomes a space with which the viewer is

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[353] Paton 1927: Plates xl-xlvi.
[354] Simon 1997:133, echoing Carpenter 1929.
[355] Stewart 1985:58.

interacting.[356] He adds that placing images on surfaces can highlight their artificiality, and present them as existing in virtual space:

> 'Surfaces become the places where images might be put in relations analogous to the visual, in virtual spatial relations, to fashion representations of events, real, imagined, dreamed or simply arising from the sheer play of the virtual, bringing times and places not necessarily subject to the exigencies of real space and time into social space and time.'[357]

However, we have also seen that one of the functions of the reliefs, as decoration, is to bind the viewer to the real space and to the architecture. To what extent is there a difference in this viewer-surface interaction and the virtual or real nature of the reliefs on the two sites?

Viewing and Distance

A simple, but extremely significant, difference in viewing between Persepolis and the Akropolis lies in the distance at which the reliefs are held from the viewer. The Persepolis reliefs directly border the viewer's space of movement, whereas those on the Akropolis are held at a significant distance. Moreover, Root has noted that the images in the doorways at Persepolis are almost frameless, thus intruding directly into the space of anyone passing through the door;[358] while the position of the Akropolis reliefs in the air, as well as at a distance, adds an extra disjunction between them and the viewer. Summers' argument suggests that this may be a way of bringing virtual circumstances into real social space as much as a way of suspending or denying real present circumstances. It is also true that height is a basic marker of importance, perhaps giving these figures extra power. Nevertheless interaction at close range is specific to Persepolis, and gives the reliefs immediate and direct social effect.

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[356] Summers 2003:335.
[357] Summers 2003:337.
[358] Root 1979:288.

Differences in framing also occur. However, here it is less easy to draw a strong contrast between practices on the two sites. Hurwit discusses a variety of closed and open modes of framing.[359] These range from the fully enclosed modes, in which a border fully confines an image, to a fully open mode, in which there is no border. In between lie modes in which there is interference between image and limit, either through the image over lapping the border, or through the border obstructing the image. These different modes have a possible metaphorical value for ideas about limits and transgression thereof. They also influence the relationship between the viewer and the image. Hurwit notes:

> 'Enclosed images establish a controlled distance between image and observer – the border simultaneously contributes to that distance and is a vehicle for visual mediation over the artificial interval.'[360]

The midway modes, in which the tension between frame and image is stressed, seem to exacerbate this ambivalence: in transgressing the frame, they draw attention to it, thus increasing the distance between the viewer and the image, even as they seem to step out of the separating limit.

The reliefs both on the Akropolis and at Persepolis are predominantly closed within a frame: as noted above, both are very attentive to their architectural surroundings. Even the doorway reliefs that Root notes are framed by the shape of the door frame itself. In the larger surfaces of stairway facades at Persepolis, multiple frames are established, and emphasised with rosettes. Moreover frames are often created around the reliefs where they are not dictated by the architecture. This can be seen in the tripartite divisions on the Apadana facades, and again, still more strikingly, in the rosette borders enclosing the guards proceeding up the inner wall of the staircase, and separating them from the blank surface above (*fig.* 2.47 and 2.36-9). These frames draw attention to the surficial status of the reliefs, and their relationship to the site as a whole.

The Akropolis reliefs also have strong frames: the metope squares and the pediment triangles, in particular, each form highly defined spaces. It has been noted that, on the Parthenon, the reliefs transgress the borders in both of these cases. In the metopes

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[359] Hurwit 1977, following Wölfflin 1956[1929].
[360] Hurwit 1977:5.

the sculptures overlap the triglyphs (Hurwit notes that this is very unusual in Greek sculpture) and the figures stand directly on the epistyle, with their feet overlapping it also. The pedimental sculpture appears to have similarly overlapped its architectural frame. Of particular note is the horse's head surviving from the north corner of the east pediment, in which the border obstructs the image, such that only the head of the horse is shown, but the image simultaneously overlaps the border, with its jaw extending below the base line of the pediment (*fig.* 2.48).

Ridgway describes the total effect of these teams of horse as 'impressionistic', and clearly there is a sense in which the Parthenon sculptures are playing with their constraints. In the case of the horses at each corner of the pediment, it is interesting to note that as they represent the chariots of Helios and Selene, pulling the sun and moon respectively across the sky, they themselves frame the main image in time, making their interplay with the spatial frame particularly appropriate. It is also interesting to note that the horse from the chariot of Selene, that in the north corner, disrupts the symmetrical movement within the east pediment – it moves outwards, while the rest of the north half of the pediment moves inwards to the centre, mirroring the south half. It may also be relevant that it is opposite, across the building as a whole, the one figure turning back in the west frieze and disrupting its steady, although asymmetric movement across the site (*fig.* 2.24). All these factors demonstrate that the Parthenon likes to play with constraints and symmetries. However it seems excessive to suggest that it 'displays an effective and constant denial of all limits and constraints.'[361] The architectural sculpture of the Akropolis does overlap frames, this particular trait does not create a radical sense of freedom, either politically or architecturally. In fact, as noted above, play with the concept of limits, in a sense emphasises them. Both the Akropolis and Persepolis highlight frames to emphasis the relationship of the images to the building: the relationship between the viewer and the image takes place within a focus on the relationship between the viewer and the building, and, therefore, the place.

Planar space

At Persepolis the relief is very shallow; the figures are raised slightly out of the flat surface, and their relationship to the walls they stand on continually maintained. This

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[361] Hurwit 1977:13.

degree of surface dependence appears to be a deliberate choice, rather than due to technical considerations such as the quality of stone or tooling techniques: the protome column capitals and the winged bulls at the gates, which are carved in the round, nevertheless closely follow the line of the architecture.

On the Akropolis, the depth of relief varies. On the friezes the depth is shallow, sometimes as little as three inches on the Parthenon frieze; however, as many twelve layers may be included in that depth.[362] Elsewhere the figures are carved in high relief, or even effectively in the round. For Hurwit, this means that, as real space and represented space coincide, 'the image becomes formally and visually autonomous, a projecting solid referring not to a frame but to the observer's space and imagination.'[363] Rogers, however, notes the concept of the 'front plane' of a relief, linking all the highest points and surfaces, and usually identical with the front slab of the stone from which the relief was carved, which additionally forms a barrier between viewer and image. He notes, moreover, that there is rarely any movement from the back plane to the front, or on out from the surface. Instead action is transmitted in a horizontal direction. Thus even as the high relief brings the figures out from the surface, their sense of movement spreads them against it.

Nevertheless the reliefs are to some degree autonomous in the sense that they occupy space in front of the architectural surface, rather than as protuberances from it. This does seem, then, to be a difference between the two sites: both take care to keep the sense that the viewer is relating to the architecture and maintaining the interaction with the particular place. However at Persepolis the reliefs are very closely bound to the buildings, whereas those on the Akropolis introduce a little more autonomy, and therefore more space for a virtual world.

Conclusion

Aesthetic Effects

The first thing to note is how similar the two sites are from a decorative perspective. Both make use of repetitive figured relief processing along the surfaces of the buildings, combining the techniques of patterned decoration with representational human

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[362] Rogers 1974:31.
[363] Hurwit 1977:14.

images. Both also make use of more detailed techniques such as manipulation of movement, including variation in the speed of movement and self-referential interaction, and the use of frames, not always dictated by the architecture, to bind the reliefs to the building.

However, this palette of similar techniques is put to use in very different ways, and to create very different effects. Persepolis uses very strong and immediate, mildly disturbing, Gestalt effects, to create a highly visually compelling, but also at least partially repelling, effect; it also controls movement closely, and unambiguously, with a strong element of restriction; its viewing space is very close to the viewer, which again compels a response, but also makes it difficult to gain a hold over it, creating a sense of frustration and disempowerment. The total experience is highly controlled and very immediate: the visitor to the site is involuntarily acted upon by the decorative effects.

The Akropolis uses Gestalt techniques more elusively. Both the distance maintained from the viewer and the looser nature of the repetitions and variations themselves make engagement with them less pressing. It is typical of the site that elaborate games are played with the manipulation of movement, but that these only become clear to the viewer who goes to considerable effort to engage with them. The site requires more active participation from the viewer, however it also allows them a greater sense of control: the 'infinity effect' of the repetitions does not demand resolution, but invites the viewer to make selective comparisons and observations.

Political Implications

The particular role of architectural decoration lies in the many ways in which it creates interaction between the viewer and the monument, thus establishing a relationship between the two. This, particularly the 'adhesive effects' specific to decoration, creates a general commitment to the 'social projects'[364] of these political centres, including ideas which may not be expressed on the sites themselves. However the exact nature of the experience of the sites and the nuances of the interaction between the viewer and the decoration also have social and political implications.

Persepolis uses very strong and controlling visual effects, while the Akropolis requires more active input from visitors to engage with decoration. A possible explanation

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[364] Gell 1998:74.

for this is the type of viewer for whom they are intended. Visitors to the Akropolis, whether Athenian citizens, metics, or imperial subjects were overwhelmingly Greek, and brought with them experience of Greek art and thus were equipped with the prompts necessary to engage with its culturally specific effects. The Persian empire, by contrast, was made up of a heterogeneous collection of cultures, with their own specific artistic experiences. If the primary audience of the Persepolis reliefs were 'tribute-bearers', or at any rate representatives from the various nations, reliefs which act directly on innate visual principles would be an extremely effective method of engaging with them all. The artistic choices on the two sites, then, seem to be partially governed by the extent and composition of the empires for which they are a centre.

However the degree of control/freedom and empowerment/disempowerment are also consonant with distinctions in the political systems. Persia had a highly codified, highly hierarchical social system, particularly in the court around the king. The high degree of order and control in the decoration at Persepolis creates an experience in which this concept of a definite and highly ordered society is perpetuated. Moreover it is one in which the viewer is disempowered by being made aware of their inability to grasp the entire system both analytically, because it cannot be resolved, and visually because they are held close to the reliefs, and cannot command a full viewing angle. It is also an experience in which the viewer is invited to follow the figures processing up the stairs and into the buildings, and indeed also incorporated into the procession, but is also reminded, by the apotropaic figures in the doorways, that their access may be restricted, and they are potentially an enemy. These effects are relevant not only to subjects visiting from distant parts of the empire, but also to members of the court residing in the palace. Indeed the restrictive reliefs are used primarily in the more private areas: the sculpture, like the architecture, controls more as the visitor gets further into the site.

In Athens, democracy put more emphasis on the importance of individual engagement with and contribution to the affairs of the polis. However, the fifth century was also a period in which social hierarchies and structures, including, indeed political systems, were highly contested. The experience at Athens both gives a greater degree of power to the viewer in their engagement with the decoration, and also requires at greater degree of active participation. The Gestalt ornament effects create a series of similarities and differences to be explored, Moreover they are generally seen across a distance, which both makes interaction require more active effort, and also maintains the viewer's status as the viewing subject. Movement into the buildings is suggested, rather than compelled.

Additionally, the movement cues that do exist are largely positive: the decoration encourages participation, rather than suggesting hostility. The decorative effects set up a form of interaction in which individual viewing and negotiation are privileged, a type of interaction which then extends to the projects and imagery of the site.

CHAPTER THREE: STYLE AND THE BODY

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In the previous chapter, I considered the effects of style as decorative pattern. It was, however, becoming apparent that these effects were combined with, and not wholly dissociable from, the images within the design. In this chapter, therefore, I am still concerned with style, but with the stylistic variations in the sculpture of the two sites as images. Both on the Akropolis and at Persepolis, the overwhelming majority of images are of the human body; whether mortal, heroic, or divine. To a lesser extent, animals, monsters, and mythological creatures are also depicted; however, the primary sculptural emphasis of both sites is the repetitive use of images of humans. The importance of the conditioning and modification of the actual human body as a method of socialisation and identity formation has often been noted.[365] In this chapter I consider the functioning of the human images at Persepolis and on the Akropolis as part of this wider social process.

The suggestion that images are not merely closed iconographic systems, but participate in a wider visual culture is a significant trend in recent art theory. The argument is that the use images make of visual codes drawn from real social experience is an important way of integrating art into society and thus giving it a purchase on social concerns.[366] Such accounts have been used to explain the development of naturalistic traits, and also the functioning of more schematic styles.[367] This chapter starts from the premise that all images make use of the visual codes and perceptual practices involved in relating to the real world, and that, therefore, one way in which the stylistic variations in the depiction of the human body on the two sites can be understood is not as artistic convention, but as a way of playing on and elaborating the same natural propensities and perceptual faculties that are engaged in responding to the socialised body in reality.

The aspect of bodily socialisation I primarily make use of in this discussion is Douglas' proposition that there is close correlation between the degree of pressure in a social system or situation and the demand for physical control of the body.[368] This model is useful for my purposes in that it posits a direct relationship between variation in bodily style and variation in political structure. Douglas' analysis of bodily control as culturally encoded, but based on universal principles, also makes it particularly appropriate for

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[365] Mauss 1934; Bourdieu 1992[1990]; Douglas 1996[1970] esp:66-79.
[366] Baxandall 1972; Bryson 1983:68; Tanner 2010.
[367] Eg Nodelmann 1966.
[368] Douglas 1966; Douglas 1996[1970].

comparative analysis. Her discussion is concerned with the actual human body; I extend this to consider how the principle can function in images, and its effects in a specifically architectural context. The positioning of multiple figures on the surfaces of the buildings has the potential to create crowd effects and group dynamics and also to influence movement and rhythm, which are both, as we shall see, particularly effective ways of eliciting socialised behaviour.

I argue that the reliefs at Persepolis use the simultaneous restriction of representational information, movement, and emotion to elicit highly controlled and formal 'body techniques,' while the much greater degrees of movement, emotional range, and informational density on the Akropolis are combined to promote more informal and animated behavioural patterns. This account shifts attention from purely representational variations in style, which have often been privileged, particularly in the discussion of classical art, to other stylistic qualities. This follows a general trend towards the deconstruction of naturalism as a unified concept: applied to the Akropolis it highlights the specificity of the classical style and the political effects which it creates; applied to Persepolis it allows a positive appraisal of the stylistic choices which have previously been dismissed as 'monotonous' and 'deadly.'[369]

Politics, Representation, and Expression: Previous Approaches

The Classical Style, Winckelmann, and the 'Truth of Nature'

The standard narrative of the development of the classical style, of which the Parthenon sculptures are often considered the epitome, has, since Winckelmann, been closely concerned with both developments in the depiction of the body and their political significance within the fifth century Athenian state. Winckelmann traced a causal relationship between the rise of political freedom and enlightenment in Greece after the Persian wars, a consequent new conception of humanity, and new ways of depicting the body through which this conception was expressed.[370] In this model intuitive associations are found between the political qualities of Greece and the artistic style of its sculpture. Not only is a broad parallel drawn between the rise of Greek democratic freedom through

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[369] Curzon 1892, cited Boardman 2000:126; Frankfort 1946:11.
[370] Winckelmann 1764; summarised by Tanner 2006:3-5 which I follow here: 36-9; see Stewart 2008a:378.

the fifth century and its subsequent collapse under Macedon and Rome, and a corresponding high phase of Greek art, followed by its collapse into decadence; but particular aesthetic qualities are also linked to corresponding political characteristics, including an association between freedom of line and political freedom:

'When Greece attained its highest degree of refinement and freedom, art also became more unfettered and lofty.'[371]

This understanding of classical Greek art as a projection of political character through the depiction of the body has remained influential. Hölscher in 'Images and Political Identity: The Case of Athens' describes the classical style as a mentality expressed sympathetically in sculptural traits:

'All this goes with the basic feature of classical sculpture: the contraposition of active versus nonactive parts of the human body, indicating a change of the entire "system" and the whole concept of man and nature; it aimed primarily at showing explicitly the body's own forces, especially a figure's ability to stand upright and move by its own energy, and implied connotations like self-determination and responsibility. At the basis of this attitude stood the new mentality expressed by Xenophanes.'[372]

Similarly Stewart, controversially re-dating much of the supposed *Perserschutt* to after the Persian Wars, ascribes the development of the Severe style to a conception of character based in the conflict:

'Severe Style artists resolutely opted for selection and simplification, forcefully emphasizing some features and ruthlessly eliminating others… simplicity, rationality, pondered thought, and self-discipline - summed up in the keyword sophrosyne - were precisely the qualities that (allegedly) the defeated barbarian hordes and their capriciously despotic monarchs largely or completely lacked and the victorious, egalitarian-minded Greeks possessed to an extraordinary degree.'[373]

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[371] Winckelmann 1881: VIII.2.1, cited Tanner 2006:5.
[372] Hölscher 1998:181.
[373] Stewart 2008b:605-6.

Underlying Winckelmann's account, is also a normative and essentialist approach to naturalism, which has been common in the analysis of Greek art from Pliny onwards.[374] The development of naturalism is seen as a teleological progression towards 'the truth of nature,' understood in terms of mimetic accuracy.[375] This is tied into the, equally normative, political narrative: naturalism is the highest style of art, the peak of development, both because of its close relationship to visual 'truth' and because of its association with democracy; indeed it becomes a key factor linking democracy and rational thought in the 'grand narrative' of western enlightenment.[376] As a consequence of this account, with its emphasis on *mimêsis*, discussions of the development of the classical style have, historically, tended to focus on the increasing lifelikeness of the sculpture, rather than any other stylistic variable. All of this applies particularly strongly to the fifth-century Akropolis, as the acme, in this model, of political and artistic achievement.

Persepolis and Stylistic Independence

The style of the Persepolis sculpture has not been theorised so intensively, however some similarities of approach, and indeed direct influence from the Winckelmannian model, can be seen. The earliest stylistic analyses of the site not only formulate Achaemenid style as Greek talent operating within imposed Persian constraints, but specifically associate Greek style with freedom, and contrast it with the Persian:

> 'These Greeks, however, worked not in the spirit of freedom to which they were accustomed, but strictly in accordance with the wishes of the Persian king. They could not give free rein to their imagination but had to obey Persian instructions and adapt their imaginative Greek style to formalized Oriental conceptions.'[377]

It is archaic Greek art, rather than classical, that is viewed as an influence on, and compared favourably to, the Persian. Nevertheless these early accounts are still highly normative: classical naturalism may be the highest form, but archaic art, as its precursor, is also seen as exceptional. This can be seen in more detail in Frankfort's discussion of 'plastic renderings' in the Persepolis reliefs. He describes plasticity as one of the

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[374] Tanner 2006:36; Neer 2010:85.
[375] Winckelmann 1881: VIII.2.1 cited Tanner 2006:5.
[376] Tanner 2006:37.
[377] Richter 1946:27.

'achievements of Greek art,'[378] and the use of drapery folds common to archaic Greece and Persepolis as 'the solution of a problem which had preoccupied Greek sculptors since the seventh century.'[379] Of Persepolis he then notes:

> 'The Persian work shows the arms modelled through the clothes and the plastic value of the folds is fully understood.'[380]

Here the use of more plastic rendering is associated not just with Greece, but with understanding, linking back to the truth claims made for the classical style.

However, in his article Frankfort also compares Persepolis to Near Eastern art, and here too he judges it negatively:

> 'In two respects the Persian work is poorer than its predecessors. In Egypt and Mesopotamia, relief had been developed into an almost perfect vehicle for narrative. Even complex occurrences, like large-scale battles, could be adequately – even impressively – rendered. We find with other subjects, such as the mourning scenes in some Egyptian tombs or the hunting scenes of Assurnasirpal and Assurbanipal, another quality which Achaemenid relief totally lacks: power of expression. The Achaemenid reliefs are monotonous.'[381]

In an even more striking inversion, when Byron denigrates the style at Persepolis as 'fettered and devitalised,' rather than intending this as an opposition to Winckelmann's 'unfettered and lofty' classical art, he is contrasting it with earlier Assyrian work, and arguing that these negative characteristics are due to contact with the Hellenic world:

> 'I see only too well what Christopher meant when he said the sculptures were "unemotional without being intellectual"… Instead of mind and feeling, they exhale a soulless refinement, a veneer adopted by the Asiatic whose own artistic instinct has been fettered and devitalised by contact with the Mediterranean. To see what that instinct really was, and how it differs from this, one can look at the Assyrian reliefs in the British Museum.'[382]

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[378] Frankfort 1946:9.
[379] Frankfort 1946:11.
[380] Frankfort 1946:9.
[381] Frankfort 1946:11.
[382] Byron 1992[1937]:189.

From this it seems that the tendency to dismiss the stylistic qualities of Persepolis is not simply due to the normative classical tradition, but a wider propensity to consider it in terms of other traditions, rather than in its own right. This approach can still sometimes be seen, for instance in Boardman's recent description of Achaemenid style as having 'the sterility of a mixed ancestry.'[383] Both Frankfort and Richter do in fact note the distinctiveness of Achaemenid style,[384] but they then devote most of their discussions to external influences and never really develop an account of this individuality.

More recently, however, there have been more detailed positive appraisals of style at Persepolis. Warren comments:

> 'It seems to me that the art of the period reflects the style and character of its political and religious concepts. In both, we find the lucid and rational dominant. Clarity and reason are controlling ideals. The sculptural figures, clearly outlined, as you have seen in the Persepolis reliefs, express a dignity and humanity that contrasts with Assyrian reliefs, which by words and figures often exult in unspeakable brutalities.'[385]

Meanwhile Root, after developing an account of the iconography of the site which sees the figures as a expression of an idealised version of the empire, adds a coda on its style:

> 'The style of Achaemenid sculpture consistently functions as the handmaiden of its iconography. The canonical style elicits a sense of placidity, of refinement, of ordered control. These same qualities find expression also on the more direct level of imagery.'[386]

Both of these accounts suggest an independent stylistic agenda for Persepolis, and give a positive appraisal of the reliefs not as a dilute version of either Greek or Assyrian work, but as a coherent technique with its own deliberate style and stylistic meanings. Root's emphasis on 'control' is presented as part of a total vision of the style as ordered

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[383] Boardman 2000:127.
[384] Richter 1946:30: 'It was Achaemenian not because it was created by Achaemenian artists, but because it was produced for the Achaemenid kings by foreign artists, who under new conditions created a new style'; Frankfort 1946:12 'The work as a whole, and the spirit which pervaded it, was Persian.'
[385] Warren 1967:2995.
[386] Root 1979:311.

and peaceful, rather than an antithesis either to classical 'freedom,' or to Assyrian vigour; Warren compares the reliefs favourably to Assyrian work; he also describes the reliefs as 'rational,' which overlaps and indeed potentially conflicts with the central claim of classical rationality. Both of these accounts see the sculptural choices as a projection of political character, in this they share considerable ground with the Winckelmannian account; however by considering Persepolis independently, even if within a similar model, they are able to offer a more constructive account of Achaemenid style.

Both of these accounts are very brief. Root has subsequently noted the need for a more detailed analysis of Achaemenid style. She compares the types of analysis typical of Romanesque art to that so far made of Persepolis:

> 'In Romanesque art, we are accustomed to seeking meaning and expressive content in the abstraction of many forms and in the marriage of sculpture to its ecclesiastical architectural setting. The program at Persepolis has the potential for just this type of exploration. But we are *not* accustomed to thinking about Persepolis in these terms. We are not even accustomed to looking at the Persepolis reliefs carefully. We tend to ignore the possibility that the message might be imbedded in the style of this art.'[387]

In this chapter I follow this suggestion, looking carefully at the style of the Persepolis reliefs and developing an account of the message it conveys.

Expressive and Representational Qualities

But what aspects of the style should be looked at? Root also gives an example of such close analysis, a detailed stylistic description of one of the king-hero figures from the hundred column hall (*fig.* 3.1). In this latter discussion, she puts considerable emphasis on representational qualities:

> 'The elaborately overlapping and cascading folds of the hero's robe create a foil of expressive abstraction for the sensuously modelled musculature of his exposed arms and legs. This combination of abstraction and naturalism within the figure of

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[387] Root 1990:124.

the hero reverberates in the figure of the beast, where elaborately patterned fur foils

passages of swelling muscular volume on fore and rear legs.'[388]

This highlighting of abstraction, naturalism, musculature, and modelling is in distinct contrast to her earlier non-comparative analysis, and Warren's account, neither of which mention representational qualities among the various stylistic aspects they discuss. This is interesting because, although the reliefs at Persepolis can, clearly, be described in terms of its balance of schematic and naturalistic qualities, it raise the possibility that these are not their most salient stylistic charateristics.

Schapiro notes that there are qualities such as expression – the example he gives is Rembrandt's 'great tragic sensibility' – which are not adequately described purely in terms of their method of representation.[389] He adds that although it is not always clear which formal traits are really independent of representation; the existence of period style in, for instance Islamic art, which is primarily non-representational, suggests that stylistic development can be independent of representational values. From this it follows that, even in art where representation has a significant role, representational technique will not necessarily be the most important stylistic quality. Because representational technique changes very fast in Greek sculpture during the fifth century, it is difficult to give a plausible account of the classical style which does not pay significant attention to its representational qualities; this is not the case for Persepolis, where the innovations that make it distinctive, compared to Assyrian and prior Greek work, are primarily in expressive qualities.

Therefore in looking carefully at Achaemenid style and, moreover, in finding a basis on which it can be compared with style on the Akropolis, it is important fully to address variation in the types of expressive qualities that Root mentions in her earlier stylistic analysis, as well as the representational qualities that inform the latter. Moreover, such expressive qualities are also important to Greek sculpture, and have already been discussed in the literature. For instance in both Hölscher and Stewart, quoted above, the qualities of self-determination, responsibility, simplicity, self-discipline are fundamentally expressive, and though connected to changes in representation, not fully described by them.

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[388] Root 1990:124.
[389] Schapiro 1994:81.

The Viewer and Embodiment: More Recent Accounts of the Classical Style

Views on classical naturalism have, of course, developed considerably since Winckelmann. The tendency of a normative, teleological approach to naturalism not fully to appreciate other styles, which is apparent in its application to Persepolis, has also been raised with regard to the Greek tradition, resulting in a shift of attention to the achievements and intentions of pre and post-classical styles in their own right. As a result of these concerns the concept of Greek naturalism has been increasingly deconstructed, and reconfigured in a variety of ways. Elsner, for instance, notes:

'The Athenian contribution to visuality can be as much read as a series of losses as they can as a series of gains. The move to a three-dimensional concern with the imitation of realistic volumes comes at a loss of the wealth of interest in surface patterning.'[390]

Secondly, it has been argued that accounts of style as a reflection of political character, of the type used not only in early discussions of classical art but also in accounts of Persepolis, are unsatisfactory.[391] Fundamentally, as discussed in the introduction above, if art is modelled as having social effect rather than being merely reflective of society, explanations of stylistic choices and stylistic change can be much more strongly grounded.[392] In response to this, there has been a shift of emphasis to seeing style not as a way of projecting character, but of eliciting affect; the significance of the development of naturalism is then seen in terms of viewer response.[393]

Related to this emphasis on interaction with the viewer, there has also been an increasing interest in the sculpted body not as a symbol of a philosophical mentality but integrated into the use of the real socialised body, with a particular emphasis on the ubiquitous male nude in a society which valued male physical beauty for both military strength and sexual appreciation. Stewart and Elsner both emphasize the sexual dimension of classical sculpture within a homoerotic society and the 'obvious generation of desire in

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[390] Elsner 2006:70.
[391] See Schapiro 1994:85: 'The[se] attempts to derive style from thought are often too vague to yield more than suggestive *apercus*; the method breeds analogical speculations which do not hold up under detailed critical study.'
[392] Tanner 2006:12-20.
[393] Neer 2010:11: 'Emphasis on the beholder has been a major feature of Classical art history for well over a decade.'

the nude and openly displayed bodies of attractive youths;[394] Tanner suggests a connection between classical style and the military and athletic socialisation of the body:

> 'The rationalisation of bodily form, accomplished most prominently by Polykleitos amongst other classical sculptors, was designed to gear with this specific sensibility in generating affective attachment to a certain mode of valuing ones own body, as a resource for the city, and also prestige for those who most adequately embodied that disposition, as manifested through the services they had performed for the state.'[395]

Davidson similarly ties in naturalism to Athenian social practice, in this case to the age-class classificatory system, which, he argues, saturated Athenian society:[396]

> 'What provoked 'the discoveries which infused life... [Gombrich]?' Not narrative, I suggest, but staring. For the practices associated with the age-class system provide a social and political context for the cumulative development of an increasingly naturalistic and intense heliocritical gaze on the male body.'[397]

In *The Invention of Art History in Ancient Greece*, Tanner further integrates the real and sculpted body, arguing that the distinctive quality of classical naturalism is the particular way in which it creates its semiotic effects by engaging the viewer's sense of the real body, as developed through their biological and cultural experience.[398] He contrasts this with archaic sculpture which creates its semiotic effects to a greater extent through symbolic allusion and arbitrary signs. For instance, comparing statues of Aphrodite and Artemis in the two periods, he describes how in the classical period they are distinguished by physiological difference, whereas in the archaic period they are differentiated only by their attributes, such as the bow or dove that they carry.[399]

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[394] Elsner 2006:83; Stewart 1997:80: 'For the 'ideal' Athenian spectator - the mature citizen male - *any* image of a beardless youth would not only evoke all the hope and energy of "life's jewelled springtime" but potentially awaken his homoerotic desire as well.'
[395] Tanner 2000:190.
[396] Davidson 2006:53: 'The grading of bodies in Greek age-class systems is unusually prominent, precise and elaborated.'
[397] Davidson 2006:58.
[398] Tanner 2006:31-96.
[399] Tanner 2006:74.

This account is grounded in the concept of art as expressive symbolism, in which objects and acts 'stand for the feelings or attitude of one person towards another,'[400] and thus mediate affective interaction, using effects which originate in the 'capacities for sensuous expression that are built into the body as a biological organism.'[401] These effects are then elaborated both through the socialisation of the body, which adds a cultural element to natural response,[402] and also through purely cultural variations, which can introduce semiotics which have no basis in bodily response.[403]

In my comparison of Persepolis and the Akropolis I broadly follow this approach, particularly its model of how the real experience and expectations of the enculturated body can be used in an artistic context. Although the extent to which the reliefs of each site use arbitrary signs is relevant to the discussion, my primary emphasis is on the different senses of the body that the reliefs engage and their socio-cultural implications.

Embodied Style and Gestalt Psychology

Another aspect of the Winckelmannian model that has been problematised is the idea that there is a simple, transparent relationship between image and reality, in which increasing naturalism equates to increasing proximity to the real world. A variety of alternative approaches have been developed to explain the process involved in representation. The approach that I want to use in comparing style on the Akropolis and at Persepolis is that advanced by Gestalt psychology.

In *Art and Visual Perception* Arnheim suggests that the key concept involved in representation is not resemblance *per se*, but recognition. He argues that 'whenever we perceive shape, consciously or unconsciously we take it to represent something, and thereby to be the form of a content.'[404] Moreover, all the different shapes that we recognize as being the same object are not optically identical to each other:

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[400] Tanner 2006:20; for expressive symbolism Parsons 1951:384-427.
[401] Tanner 2006:21.
[402] Tanner 2006:83: 'Social experience, for example the corporeal discipline of being dressed in certain ways and the relationship to the body which that encourages, amplifies awareness of physiologically given distinctions and embodied responsiveness to them.'
[403] Tanner 2006:84: 'Of course, this body imagery and the responses to which it gave rise were inflected and elaborated by more arbitrary signs – attributes, hairstyles…'.
[404] Arnheim 1974[1954]:96.

'All shape… is semantic, merely by being seen it makes statements about kinds of subjects. In doing so, however, it does not simply present replicas of its subjects. Not all shapes recognized as rabbits are identical, and Dürer's picture of a rabbit is not strictly identical with any rabbit anybody has ever seen.'[405]

What exact conditions a visual form must meet for an image to be recognizable 'depends… not so much on its shape as such, as on its structural skeleton created by the shape.'[406] Its capacity to function as an image does not therefore depend on the exact mechanical replication of a percept - 'the illusionist doctrine' as Arnheim calls it - but rather on the image as constructed by the mind. The visual criteria which determine exactly what can and cannot be recognised are complex, and indeed vary from person to person, but they are invariably a reduced, simplified version of reality and a long way from illusionist resemblance: 'the principle at work here is that toward simplest structure, i.e., toward the most regular, symmetrical, geometrical shape attainable.'[407] Arnheim summarizes:

'Image-making, artistic or otherwise, does not simply derive from the optical projection of the object represented, but is an equivalent, rendered with the properties of a particular medium, of what is observed in the object.'[408]

In this model, equivalence can equally be created by a highly 'realistic' image or by a highly abstract one. Formal, stylistic properties at variance with optical realism, which Arnheim notes all works of art have to some extent or other,[409] are not deviations from the 'reality' of the object, but diverse ways of rendering its reality more closely. Arnheim suggests that, ideally at least, form disappears and the character of the object depicted remains.[410] For instance of Picasso's picture *The Schoolgirl* he notes:

'We see the elementary liveliness of the young creature, the girlish repose, the shyness of the face, the straightly combed hair, the burdensome tyranny of the big textbook. The strongly coloured, wildly overlapping geometrical shapes do not detract from the subject but carry its expression with such mastery that we no

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[405] Arnheim 1974[1954]:97.
[406] Arnheim 1974[1954]:98.
[407] Arnheim 1974[1954]:145.
[408] Arnheim 1974[1954]:98.
[409] Arnheim 1974[1954]:97.
[410] Arnheim 1974[1954]:139: 'Good form does not show.'

longer see them as mere shapes: they are consumed in the task of representation. In fact, it seems safe to assert that every successful work of art, no matter how stylized and remote from mechanical correctness, conveys the full natural flavour of the object it represents….'[411]

Moreover, form does not merely disappear, but itself contributes to the expressive effects of the image:

'I may seem to be suggesting that form does not matter. Nothing could be further from my intention… in a representational work of painting or sculpture, the shapes made by the artist and the pigment or metal or wood of the medium are transformed into visual action, which gives life to the subject matter.'[412]

Thus in this model the significance of stylistic variation is not how, or how effectively, it represents a real object, but rather how it affects the nature of the object it represents. Moreover, as Arnheim notes, 'since representing an object means showing some of its particular properties, one can often achieve the purpose best by deviating markedly from the 'photographic' appearance.'[413] A particularly clear example of this can be found in Kaschnitz' discussion of Egyptian sculpture. Here the style does not so much aim at describing a particular view of the human body, but is intent on sustaining existence in the afterlife:

'All traces of tectonic conflict, of the mutual striving and balancing out of weight and support within the mass, are eliminated… there reigns a simple equilibrium, passive and conflictless, in which the implication of possible action and change are rigorously excluded… any suggestion of real movement… would subvert the whole purpose of this funerary art.'[414]

In these circumstances, the aspects of the image that do not optically resemble a real body, are crucial to the sculpture's function. Moreover, they are themselves grounded in the

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[411] Arnheim 1974[1954]:137.
[412] Arnheim 1974[1954]:138-9.
[413] Arnheim 1974[1954]:159.
[414] Nodelmann 1966:99.

experience of the actual body, on which time and gravity operate, but inverted with a particular, in this case metaphysical, intention.

This Gestalt approach is useful for our purposes, in that it offers an account of representation in which schematic and naturalistic styles can make use of the codes drawn from enculturated experience of the real body equally effectively. It frames the stylistic differences between the reliefs at Persepolis and on the Akropolis not as a purely artistic phenomenon, but as a way of depicting differently socialised bodies and engaging different embodied propensities, and sees their variations from optical accuracy as ways of creating additional, in this case political, effect. Previous commentators on Persepolis have seen the style of the reliefs as unapproachable or incommunicative to the ordinary viewer. Frankfort discusses the smooth surfacing of the stone and the even distribution of details and modelling, and notes:

'The glass-like smoothness of the best-preserved sculptures at Persepolis seems to remove them from immediate contact and creates a feeling of unapproachability.'[415]

Boardman describes them as having 'a style of presentation to which ordinary humanity could not easily respond,' adding 'but then, ordinary humanity was not much exposed to it.'[416] The approach suggested here, by contrast, allows the stylistic qualities of the Persepolis reliefs, just as those on the Akropolis, to be interpreted as engaging responses based in embodied experience and social communication.

Finally, this emphasis on recognition and equivalence, rather than resemblance, is similar to Summers' observation that one of the principles behind sculpture is that of substitution or 'real metaphor,' which, he argues, exists in counterpoint with, or rather has primacy over, the idea of virtual, surficial space, as discussed in the last chapter.[417] A real metaphor 'is something that is able to take the place of something else, to make the absent in some sense actually present.'[418] It functions less by resemblance, than by placement: it literally 'stands' for something.[419] In this process of equivalence the spatial field is more significant than the visual, a real metaphor is not just an image, but makes present. Understanding the reliefs in this way additionally increases the purchase of the relationship between the reliefs and the viewer. As Nodelmann comments of Kaschnitz' analysis:

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[415] Frankfort 1954:158.
[416] Boardman 2000:127.
[417] Chapter 2:27-8 above.
[418] Summers 2003:258.
[419] Summers 2003:259.

'The primary field within which the work of art displays itself it not… the subjective, observer-orientated one of the visual field, but the objective one of *space*, which is common to both observer and work, and can thus permit the explication of the necessary relations between them. Space as the medium in which the observer concretely lives and moves, possesses moreover an existential dimension which is lacking in the more specialized and abstract concept of "visual field".'[420]

Natural Symbols and In/formality

Moreover, the stylistic differences between the reliefs on the two sites yield very well to an explanation grounded in their appeal to the socialised body. In *Natural Symbols* Douglas argues that there is a natural metaphor between the body and society, because of the mutual pressures and constraints that they exert upon each other:

'The physical experience of the body, always modified by the social categories through which it is known, sustains a particular view of society… the forms it adopts in movement and repose express social pressures in manifold ways.'[421]

She theorizes a drive to harmonious consonance of different layers of experience, resulting in a consistent relationship between the controls that a society exerts on the social roles and belief systems of its members and those it exerts on their bodies.[422]

In this approach, Douglas follows similar concerns to those in Mauss' discussion of body techniques and Bourdieu's of bodily hexis.[423] All of them emphasize that the socialization of the body is a highly effective technique for the formation of social identity; in that it is pervasive, apprehended practically and therefore unconsciously, deeply engrained and highly emotive, but also capable of taking on and inculcating meanings that

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[420] Nodelmann 1966:97.
[421] Douglas 1996[1970]:72.
[422] Douglas 1996[1970]:77: 'I have argued before that there are pressures to create consonance between the perception of social and physiological levels of experience.'
[423] Mauss 1934; Bourdieu 2007[1977]:87-95; Bourdieu 1992[1990]:66-79.

extend far beyond the physical.[424] The body is a medium in which the natural experience and cultural construct are brought close together:

> 'The body and its movements, matrices of universals that are subject to work of social construction, are neither completely determined in their significance… nor completely undetermined, so that the symbolism that is attached to them is both conventional and 'motivated', and therefore perceived as quasi-natural.'[425]

In this way, variations in the use of the body are a significant way in which different social systems are promoted and maintained.

Douglas additionally argues that a cross-cultural constant in these natural semiotics, this use of the body as a natural symbol as she terms it, is a correlation between degree of bodily control and degree of social formality:

> 'The organic system provides an analogy of the social system which, other things being equal, is used in the same way and understood in the same way all over the world... the more the social situation exerts pressure on persons involved, the more the social demand for conformity tends to be expressed by a demand for physical control.'[426]

This physical control of the body is manifest in a variety of ways. Primary is what Douglas calls 'the purity rule,' the more control is exerted on a social system or situation the more physiological processes will screened out:

> 'The easiest to recognize of these tendencies can be expressed as the rule of distance from physiological origin… Bodily processes are more ignored and more firmly set outside the social discourse, the more the latter is important. A natural way of investing a social occasion with dignity is to hide organic processes. Thus social distance tends to be expressed in distance from physiological origins and vice versa.'[427]

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[424] Bourdieu 2007[1977]:94: 'capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as "stand up straight" or "don't hold your knife in your left hand".'

[425] Bourdieu 2001:11.

[426] Douglas 1996[1970]:xxxiii, summarizing Douglas 1966.

[427] Douglas 1996[1970]:xxxiii.

Connected to this is what Douglas terms the smooth/shaggy distinction.[428] The primary example she gives is the association in contemporary western society of long, unkempt hair with professions that are less socially structured and short hair with those that are more so; but she extends the point to general sartorial in/discipline and also to behavioural abandonment or constraint:

> 'It seems that the freedom to be completely relaxed must be culturally controlled.'[429]

She also notes a correlation between in/formality and physical proximity,[430] and, finally, associated strong physical control and strong role structure:

> 'It seems not too bold to suggest that where role structure is strongly defined, formal behaviour will be valued… Formality signals social distance, well-defined, public, insulated roles. Informality is appropriate to role confusion, familiarity, intimacy. Bodily control will be appropriate where formality is valued, and most appropriate where the valuing of culture above nature is most emphasized.'[431]

As well as long term social organization, this is also situational: control is also associated with highly structured situations, in which correct behaviour is clearly demarcated.[432]

It is important to note that pressure can be exerted to abandon control as well as to enforce it. Douglas particularly discusses this with respect to Durkenheimian 'effervescent' religious ritual, of which she notes:

> 'Abandonment of bodily control in ritual responds to the requirements of a social experience which is being expressed.'[433]

However the point applies more generally: both behaviour and the presentation of the body can be inappropriate through being too formal as well as too informal.

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[428] Douglas 1996[1970]:81.
[429] Douglas 1996[1970]:81.
[430] Douglas 1996[1970]:80: 'Greater space means more formality, nearness means intimacy.'
[431] Douglas 1996[1970]:78.
[432] Douglas 1996[1970]:82.
[433] Douglas 1996[1970]:78.

Douglas' argument is concerned with the real body, however it integrates very easily into the kind of semiotic processes identified in Gestalt psychology. Here, I argue that at Persepolis the stylistic qualities of the reliefs combine to create just such an effect of bodily control, eliciting formal behaviour, and invoking a highly structured social system. Conversely the Akropolis sculptures elicit a much more informal response, greater bodily relaxation and less structured roles. Indeed, the schematic qualities of Persepolis can be read as an exaggerated way of screening out physiological processes; classical naturalism as a way of including them.

Douglas argues the association between bodily and social control is universal: this is important for our purposes in that it suggests the enculturated bodily responses elicited by the images will be broadly comprehensible to a wide audience; it also makes it an appropriate tool for comparison between the two sites. However, she also notes that this universal understanding is differently elaborated in different cultures:

'Here I seek to identify a natural tendency to express situations of a certain kind in an appropriate bodily style. In so far as it is unconscious, in so far as it is obeyed universally in all cultures, the tendency is natural. It is generated in response to a perceived social situation, but the latter must always come clothed in its local history and culture. Therefore the natural expression is culturally determined.'[434]

This suggests that, in applying this model to the two sites, care is needed to consider cultural variations generated from its basic principles. For instance, there is not, at Persepolis or on the Akropolis, the same correlation between whether hair is long and whether it is unkempt that Douglas sees in contemporary society. At Persepolis the figures primarily have not only what appears to be either very thick hair or long hair bundled up, but also beards. Both, however, are arranged in an extremely neat, orderly fashion. On the Akropolis, by contrast, we see clean-shaven figures with short hair, which nevertheless appears to be being ruffled about in the breeze (*figs* 3.2 and 3.3). Similarly, to consider another of Douglas' markers that of spatial distance, Root notes that one of the points of confusion for an Athenian viewer responding to Persepolis is that, in Greek artistic convention, spatial constraint is a hallmark of femininity, and therefore the Persian nobles appear effeminate to Greek eyes.[435] However I hope to show that on both sites a strong

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[434] Douglas 1996[1970]:76.
[435] Root 2008:204

cross-cultural natural meaning is operating in conjunction with these social and artistic cultural inflections.

Architecture, Rhythm, Socialisation

The architectural context of the reliefs is also important in eliciting a natural response. Bourdieu emphasises the importance of imitation in the acquisition of bodily skills, or rather, as he terms it, 'practical *mimesis*,' the distinction being that he sees these skills as being absorbed, and subsequently reproduced, at an unconscious level.[436] In his account people are responsive to the bodily behaviour of those around them, and also are driven to co-ordinate their own behaviour to it, particularly to group behaviour. Through repetition and familiarization this practical *mimesis* becomes learnt behaviour, reproduced independently, but the copying mechanism remains, often continually maintained by repeat experiences of a group's habitual behaviour, but also potentially reactivated in a new environment. Thus the social and crowd like quality of the figures as real metaphors among the architecture plays on this mechanism, and elicits a different type of response to that arising from an encounter with a single statue; one which exerts more, unconscious, pressure on the viewer to change their own behaviour.

Secondly the interaction of reliefs and architecture introduces sequential movement and rhythm to the effects of the sculpture.[437] Movement, particularly gait, has also been noted as an important aspect of body techniques,[438] and, moreover, can be understood as a behavioural aspect of Douglas' smooth/shaggy distinction. Denora has discussed the ways in which music itself has a strong potential to influence, not only bodily movement, but also mood and behaviour, and notes that these effects, particularly that of rhythm, take place at a very immediate, physical level, but also have more developed cultural effects.[439] The spacing and deployment of the figures through the architecture elicits similar rhythmic effects at a visual level.

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[436] Bourdieu 1992[1990]:72-4.
[437] Distinct from (Neer 2010:72): 'the celebrated *rhythmos* of the Classical statue, its chiastic interplay of flexed and relaxed, motion and stasis.'
[438] Mauss 1979 [1934]:99-102.
[439] DeNora 2000:125: 'It is perfectly reasonable to speak of music as a material of social organization, because styles of movement, emotional and social roles come to be associated with it and may issue from it.'

Persepolis

This use of embodied style at Persepolis can initially be seen by considering a single figure, in this case one of the guards from the East staircase of the Apadana (*fig.* 3.4). These figures are the simplest version of the most common figure type at Persepolis, found across the site.

The guard exemplifies the formal qualities that are characteristic of the reliefs more generally. Firstly, it makes use of strong linear clarity. This can be seen in the precise, slightly grooved outline of the figure, separating it discretely from the planar surface behind it, and in the clean folds of the garment, falling in straight lines and simple, regulated curves, divided by broad, shallow surfaces. It can also be seen in the details of the figure: the regular spirals of the beard and parallel lines of hair, the strongly defined eyebrows and rimmed eyelids, in the chiselled lips and even in the neat repeats of the shoe bindings. The entire figure is characterised by exact, ordered delineation.

Despite this attention to linear detail, the figure is not wholly flat; the relief is very shallow, but it is nevertheless moulded into gently curved surfaces. The curve increases sharply towards the outline, raising the figures out from the wall, but is also present within the figure, giving it shape and definition. This can be seen most clearly in the modelling of the upper arm, in the pull of the cloth against the calf muscles of the leg and, particularly, in the face, where the eyebrows and cheekbones are both highly moulded. Frankfort notes this 'very restrained yet effective modelling.'[440] He also notes that it is, in a Near Eastern context, highly innovative; his interpretation of this is that the plasticity of the reliefs is another sign of Greek influence.[441]

It is this combination of moulding and linearity that creates the balance of natural and abstract that Root comments on, where the sensuous muscularity of the figure is 'foiled' by the stylized patterns and folds of the drapery. The effect of this particular stylistic combination is to create a very formal presentation of the body, in Douglas' terms very smooth, indeed exaggeratedly so. A degree of moulding and musculature helps to evoke an embodied response, while the stylization inculcates a high degree of 'purity,' distance from physiological process, and augmented physical control. The stylization can be read as expressing how strong the physical control is; it intensifies the pressure on the

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[440] Frankfort 1954:156.
[441] Frankfort 1946:9: 'At Susa and Persepolis relief is conceived as a plastic rendering of bodies, and this conception is practically without precedent in the ancient Near East.'

viewer similarly to control and formalize their own body and behaviour, in a way that a more optically realistic style would not.

Another of the figure's salient formal qualities is its verticality and stasis. This is created initially through the upright pose of the body, evenly balanced over the feet, and enhanced by the strong vertical line of the spear and the folds of the garments, splaying out from a central vertical fall. In the sleeves the fall of the cloth plays against the strong horizontal of the arm from the elbow, but the rigidity of the fist grasping the spear closes the horizontal movement and returns the figure to stillness. A similar use of vertical and horizontal can be seen in the faces: the immobile profile creates forward movement through the horizontals of the mouth and eyes, but this is restrained by the strong vertical line of the face, which the nose only slightly interrupts. This again can be read in Douglas' terms: it exerts a strong degree of bodily control and denies the freedom to relax. The expression of the face is, moreover, one of stillness and neutrality: again its stylization can be read naturally, not as an absence of expression, but as expressing severity and restraint of emotion.

The total effect, then, of these formal characteristics is to elicit an embodied response: that of attenuation of emotion, physical restraint and ordered formality. These effects are not only grounded in natural propensities, but, due to the universality of the relationship between bodily and social constraint, are very widely legible.

Combat

The same principles can also be seen in the king-hero figures, for instance that of the king-hero slaying a bull from the eastern gate of the Hundred Column Hall (*fig.* 3.5). Here, indeed, they are even more striking because the subject they depict is inherently violent.

A similar balance of linearity and muscularity is maintained in the depiction of the bull: its muscles are created by a combination of moulding and linear detail, as can be seen particularly clearly in the hind legs on which it stands. Its tail and the ridge of hair running along its back and widening across its shoulders are depicted through neat, repetitive, whorls, similar to those used for the beard and hair of the king-hero. The formality, particularly striking in the depiction of a wild beast, is increased by the rosetted collar around its neck. Moreover, the depiction of conflict follows the same principles of restraint and stasis: the figures are balanced, both in terms of their own weight and their symmetry

with each other, and the directional movement is primarily vertical. Even the impact between the two figures is resolved upwards into the king-hero's forearm grasping the bull's horn. The king-hero is shown victorious, in the act of stabbing the bull, but the violence and physicality of the act is subsumed into the calm and stasis of the image.

There is, indeed, throughout the Persepolis reliefs a striking and sustained absence of a certain type of relationship with the body. The understating of the physical qualities of the body can also be seen in the supporting figures from the southern door jambs of the Hundred Column Hall (*fig.* 3.6). Here the weightlessness of the figures, or rather absence of response to weight, is similar to the stillness of the combat in the king-hero motifs. In both cases, in situations which inherently involve physical exertion, the depiction of that exertion is minimized. This attenuation of physicality can again be seen as screening out physiology, of making use of the purity rule to invoke formality and control.

Also, and in striking contrast with the sculpture of the Akropolis, throughout the multiple human figures on its walls sexualized or eroticized interaction is minimized. Some accounts have read such elements in the reliefs. Pope developed a richly elaborate interpretation of the symbolism of the site, in which all meaning is ultimately tied down to fertility and the cycle of the year. The crenulations are 'symbols of the sacred mountain,' and the protome capitals 'bespeak the intense vitality and the renowned reproductive power of the bull.'[442] More recently, Root has returned to the issue. She discusses the only female figure in the reliefs, the lioness brought as tribute by the Elamites (*fig.* 3.7), and argues that it introduces a compensating degree of femininity to the reliefs;[443] elsewhere she argues that 'the male organs on the lion and bull emblems on the palaces of Persepolis are highly visible reminders of sexual potency of the male and fecundity more encompassingly.'[444] However, the fact that she has to look to such minor details to find a sexual element, really emphasizes its absence from most of the reliefs. Root also, in an imaginative reconstruction of the possible response of Greek visitors to Persepolis argues that the combination of the display of luxury,[445] the flowers and pomegranates, both of which are feminine to Greek eyes,[446] and a hand-holding motif, primarily associated in Greece with bridal ritual,[447] on the Apadana invites a 'bristling gendered reaction' from a

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[442] Pope 1957:125, 128.
[443] Root 2003
[444] Root 2008:200.
[445] Root 2008:204.
[446] Root 2008:206.
[447] Root 2008:209.

Greek.[448] This is interesting in that the misinterpretation results in part from a Greek expectation of sexualised gender-differentiation in the sculpture, which the Persepolis reliefs do not really meet.

It is also interesting to compare this relief, with another version of the king-hero motif, based on Persepolitan imagery, but taken from the Qajar Naranjestan-e Ghavam in Shiraz (*fig.* 3.8). The later relief follows the original closely, and, moreover, has a similar level of naturalism/schematism to that at Persepolis. However, the stylisation has very different formal qualities, and with it different expressive effects. The verticality is less emphasised and the figures are less elongated; instead the two opponents lean towards each other and the forward movement, particularly that of the king-hero, is emphasised. The carving has less sharp lines and less elaboration of detail: three folds suffice for the cloak, and one for the vertical break in the skirt, while the bull's body is almost entirely without surface variation. The faces of the figures, moreover, although no more expressive than those at Persepolis, are softer, less resilient and less focused. Finally the elaborate volutes around the edge of the scene intrude into it, once again softening the outlines in comparison to the clarity of the Persepolis reliefs. The Qajar image does not recreate the formality and rigidity of the Persepolis carving, nor elicit the same carefully restricted embodied response. This emphasizes the extent to which, although representational qualities contribute to the total effect, expressive qualities are crucial to stylistic effect at Persepolis.

Multiple Figures

Additional effects, moreover, occur when the figures are considered in the multiple combinations in which they appear on the site. This can be seen by considering once again the East Apadana frieze, but in this case a section of it rather than an individual figure (*fig.* 3.9).

As previously noted, each figure is drawn with great linear clarity and also restraint: both expressive and representational qualities are deliberately limited, creating a 'pure' and formalized effect. Another part of this restrained style is the use of considerable repetition, both within each individual figure and from one to the next. When the figures are combined these qualities create an ease of reading which causes them almost to disappear:

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[448] Root 2008:211.

the clear, economical lines and repetitions become a background over which the eye moves easily; against this background the varying details of the figures, though in themselves unobtrusive and, like the rest of the relief, restrained, stand out. In the case of the courtiers these details consist of variation in dress and in gesture: the figures hold the hand or touch the shoulder of the figure in front of or behind them, or lay their hand on a bow case, or use it to hold a lotus flower. In the case of the tribute bearers also depicted on the Apadana these attributes take on even more importance in the composition: both the objects carried and the clothes worn are specific to, and appear to demarcate, each group (*fig.* 3.10). This emphasis on attributes and clothing can be read as a means of transferring the significance of the figures from their intimate physical nature as bodies to their external, public roles. In this way, it additionally screens out organic, bodily processes and also promotes a more structured, classificatory experience of the body: it emphasises the way in which clothes, objects and gesture are used to modify and socialise the body and to maintain divisions between different social groups. This combination of strong role structure and strong bodily control is exactly that which Douglas describes as typical of a very formal society or situation: the style at Persepolis focuses attention on these aspects of bodily experience and thus elicits formal and controlled behaviour from the viewer themselves. Ceramic tile reliefs survive from Susa which show the same figures of guards discussed at the beginning of this section (*fig.* 3.11). Here the colours and patterns, which in Persepolis were rendered in paint, survive: the ornate and elaborate patterning of the cloth additionally shifts the emphasis onto this cultural framing of the body and thus away from its physiological nature.

The figures, taken together, also create a very particular sense of rhythm. The figures, individually, show little movement. The majority follow the pattern of the single guard figure, standing still with the weight balanced evenly over the two feet, creating a strong and completely steady vertical. Even in those cases where a greater degree of movement is indicated, as for instance with the figures stepping up the treads of the Tripylon stairs, the balance and inherent stillness of the figure is maintained: the difference in height between the steps is accommodated by shortening one leg rather than by changing the disposition of the weight (see *fig.* 2.19). However, when these figures are placed next to each other, there emerges from them a very strong sense of movement: as discussed in Chapter Two the manipulation of movement through the positioning of the reliefs in the architecture is an important principle running through the site. This sense of movement is created more or less entirely through the directionality of the figures and their

sequential progression along the façade of a building, or up its stairs. The figures are arranged in exact profile, such that each face and body moves the eye on to the next along the long file of figures; occasionally this is varied by a figure looking back, but even here the feet always remain forwards, maintaining the underlying sense of forward movement. The spacing of the figures is also extremely even, contributing to a sense of stillness and order within this directional movement.

This combination of very strong directional movement created through figures which are themselves very still has unusual effects: the sense of movement is compelling and quite fast, as the eye is moved swiftly on over the figures, but the spacing and stillness of the figures makes the rhythm within it very smooth and static. The responsive behaviour that this elicits, or at least suggests, is, viewed in Douglas' terms, very 'smooth'; it is very strongly controlled, very still, very conformist – the opposite of abandoned, effervescent, individualistic behaviour. It is also interesting to note that in creating a sense of movement, the reliefs follow a similar principle of economy and restraint to the linear economy used to create the images to begin with: in both cases the sense of the body is invoked but also attenuated, the sense of movement is created through the body but invokes actual muscular movement as little as possible.

The Audience Scene

Finally, the same principles can be seen to be continued into the audience scene motifs, which occurs in abridged versions in the monumental doorways of the Hundred Column Hall, but in their fullest expression in the original central panels of the Apadana frieze (*fig.* 3.12).

This scene is unusual among the Persepolis reliefs. It forms the culmination of the tribute processions leading towards it. Thus it is not only the central panel of the scene, and the focus of attention, but also gives closure to all the anticipation surrounding it.[449] It is thus the closest to a narrative moment in the Apadana reliefs, and the decorative, repetitive principle yields to a certain extent to the depiction of an event.

Nevertheless, it is stylistically very similar to the reliefs that surround it. A slightly greater degree of variation is introduced in the poses of the figures. The enthroned king is the only seated figure at Persepolis, and he and the Crown Prince are further differentiated

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[449] Root 1990:121: 'A teasing relationship between space and time is created here by depicting delegates who are *about to be* led forward to offer their gifts.'

through their increased size and the raised plinth on which they stand, while the slight inclination of the official in front of the king is otherwise only seen in the Cilician(?) delegation of the frieze (*fig.* 3.13).[450] However, despite this the principle of deliberately limiting movement, expression, and physiology obtains. The identical faces, including that of the king are particularly striking, especially when contrasted with the different careful delineated hand gestures that are shown in the scene. Here again we see a transference from personal physicality to the formalized, social use and experience of the body.

Formal Behaviour and Bodily Control

As we have seen, the stylistic qualities of Persepolis involve linear clarity, of both outline and detail; broad, shallow, but carefully moulded surfaces; compositional balance and strong vertical lines. Read as appealing to semiotic processes grounded in the natural functioning of the body, these traits can be seen consistently to create a sense of the body as formal, controlled, and distanced from its physiological origins, which corresponds very closely to Douglas' analysis of the traits that occur cross-culturally in societies and situations where strong social pressure is exerted. As well as depicting such control, the multiple figures and the extension of the principles into movement both elicit similarly formal behaviour from the viewers themselves. The schematic nature of the reliefs is a contributing factor in this formality; it is one of the ways in which the body is distanced from physiology. Other expressive qualities are equally, if not more, important in creating the total effect of constraint, order, and formality; nevertheless, in this particular context, schematism is used actively to engage a particular sense of the body, more strongly than a more formally naturalistic style could do.

The Akropolis

Once again, on the Akropolis, the way in which the reliefs engage the responses of the socialised body can initially be seen by considering a single figure, in this case taken from the north frieze (*fig.* 3.14). Stylistically, this figure is very different from those at Persepolis. Although the outline is still fairly strong, the balance between linearity and modelling is completely different: there is far more emphasis on musculature, far fewer flat

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[450] Schmidt 1953:87 identifies the delegation tentatively as Cilician.

surfaces, the relief is deeper, indeed in the raised arm it is almost in the round. The lines, where they are present, are much more fluid; they are almost never straight, and they are also much less clearly defined. The hair is blocked in rather than created through ordered detail, and the folds of the cloak are not geometric like those of the Persepolis' guard's attire but irregular and softened. The figure also, instead of the verticality and stasis of the guard, is disposed chiastically; there is significant movement running through the figure, as it twists back and raises its arms. The background also is not a flat surface but composed of a variety of figures; this again makes the definition of the figure less sharp; instead of being a discrete shape it blends into the variations in the surface behind it.

All of these are qualities which are commonly observed in accounts of classical naturalism. For our purposes, it is interesting that they also correspond to the traits that Douglas associates with societies and situations in which much lighter social pressure is exerted. Considered in terms of the purity rule, rather thanscreening out physiology as the Persepolis reliefs do, in this figure the physical aspects of the body are emphasised. Similarly the lines and moulding are more disordered and 'shaggy,' again indicating a lower level of physical, and therefore social control, while the more active posture elicits more relaxed behaviour than the rigid stasis of the Persepolis reliefs.

The difference in style can also be seen in a figure also taken from the north side of the frieze, but much nearer to the east end of the procession (*fig.* 3.15). In many respects this figure is actually compositionally very close to the guard from the Apadana frieze (*fig.* 3.16). Both share a directional profile, with which the feet are aligned, and the same stillness, balance and vertical pose. In both cases also the figure is fully clothed in a single garment with a wide fanned sleeve and gathered folds falling to the ankle. On the Akropolis figure as well as that from Persepolis the cloth more or less entirely obscures the lines of the body underneath it. Indeed it is more fully obscured in the Akropolis figure, where the shape of the upper arm and back leg do not show through the cloth.

However, there are other stylistic qualities that this second figure shares with the first Akropolis figure, and which separate it from the Apadana guard. The moulding of the figure itself is not much deeper than that of the Persepolis relief, but it is composed much more irregularly: here too the folds of the cloth are not geometric, but much more disorderly and 'shaggy.' The outline of the figure is also less defined than at Persepolis, and its irregularities of line smudge into the background. The arm and gaze almost share the same horizontal movement; however in the Akropolis figure both are softened downwards, making the forward propulsion less strong, nor is there the vertical line of the spear to

enclose and resist it. Thus both the suggestion of movement forward and the strong stasis within the figure are less pronounced: it is more relaxed.

Because these two figures are compositionally so similar, their comparison highlights the extent to which representational difference contributes to the different levels of formality on the two sites. However, the similarities between the two figures also show that it is important not to exaggerate the extent to which the Akropolis figures are informal. The cloaked figure shows quite a lot of formal traits, in its calm stance and veiling of the body; moreover, returning to the first Akropolis figure, the idealisation of the physical body, which is central to the classical style, is in a sense a kind of physiological distancing, a version of the purity rule. The degree of physical control the reliefs elicit is significantly less than that at Persepolis but it is not entirely absent. It is also interesting to note that within the Parthenon frieze the figures conform more to Douglas' rules of formality as they get nearer to the head of the procession. This supports the idea that the principle of physical control is operating in the sculpture. It also elicits a different understanding of bodily control. The very great range of in/formality on the Akropolis suggests that it is considered circumstantial: formal behaviour is appropriate in a particular place, and for a particular activity, and not elsewhere. At Persepolis, by contrast, formality is ubiquitous, an underlying social norm, which may be slightly relaxed in some areas, but is fundamentally maintained.

Violence and Eroticism

The violence and eroticism which are so strikingly muted at Persepolis are strikingly vivid on the Akropolis. The violence included in the reliefs can be clearly seen by considering metope 31 from the south side of the Parthenon. It depicts a Lapith and a centaur in combat (*fig.* 3.17); like the king-hero relief from Persepolis this shows two figures in combat, constrained within a rectilinear space. However, in this case they do not occupy a vertical stance within the space: the primary movement is moreover horizontal and inwards, culminating in the elaborate twining of their interlocking legs in the centre of the image. Moreover, in this case, the violence of the conflict is apparent through the entire bodies of the two figures: their whole musculature is implicated. The left calf of the Lapith tenses under his unequal weight, and his knee bends, while his right wrist twists at the centaur's ear; the centaur's hind legs buckle and his entire left arm and chest strain to

throttle the Lapith's throat. Violent emotion is also apparent in both the faces, particularly in the centaur's wide eyes and exaggerated frown lines.

Rather than presenting the body in terms of regulated, formal behaviour, the reliefs of the Akropolis invoke violent movement and dramatic, even brutal, visceral behaviour in the heart of the site. This is not to suggest that the reliefs invite direct mimicry and invite actual violent behaviour within the sanctuary, but the presence of these images loosens the sense of physical constraint.

As with the degree of informality, the degree of violence in the Akropolis sculpture is not as constant as the insistent physical restraint evoked in the Persepolis reliefs. The adjacent metope 30, although again depicting combat, is considerably calmer, and shows the restraint and sensitivity that is often seen as characteristic of classical depictions of violence.[451] Osborne notes:

'The face of this centaur is completely human, the brow slightly furrowed in serious concern, the eyes sympathetically observing the plight of the Lapith victim.'[452]

Both of these responses to violence are different from the emotionless calm of the Persepolis version, indeed it is typical of the relaxation of control on the Akropolis that a number of different emotions are presented and explored. Moreover, the vigour of much of the sculptural program is balanced by the stillness of the Karyatids and the east façades of both the Parthenon and the Temple of Athena Nike. Taken as a whole, compared to Persepolis, the difference is still striking, but nevertheless the response the reliefs elicit is not unbridled license, but a mixture of timely violence and timely restraint. Indeed it seems possible that the control under which the sacrificial victims are increasingly brought, in the frieze, invokes a similar mixture of calmness and violence in the actual practice of the site.

Similarly, and again unlike Persepolis, many of the reliefs on the Akropolis have an erotic aspect. The precise relationship between male nudity and sexualisation in Greek art has been much debated.[453] Stewart's argument that this trait is deliberately and extensively cultivated in the Parthenon frieze may be extreme:

'The incipient homoerotic relationship between the spectator and the youthened demos is intensified by the frieze's remarkable imbalance between naked youths

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[451] Osborne 1994b:73-5.
[452] Osborne 1994b:74.
[453] See Osborne 1998:88.

and clothed ones... furthermore, the sculptor often spuriously explains their lack of clothing by creating 'accidents' - a gust of wind that whips away a rider's chalmys... witty come-ons deftly inserted to engage and arouse the citizen spectator.'[454]

However, compared to the figures at Persepolis, the greater potential for erotic response in the Akropolis figures is clear. Stewart also extends his discussion to the Frieze from the Parapet of the Temple of Athena Nike (*fig.* 3.18), arguing that here we see an increasing sexualisation of the female body also; as the increasingly dire military circumstances in Athens in the late fifth century, make the image of victory as a desirable female body particularly appealing:

> 'It allows the male spectator to possess Victory visually, to slake at least temporarily his desire to make her his own forever.'[455]

In both cases the informality of the site is increased through the type of bodily involvement the sculpture engages from the viewer.

Multiple Figures

On the Akropolis too, additional effects emerge when the figures are considered in multiple combinations. Compared to Persepolis, the variation in stance, attire, and movement between the different figures is striking (*fig.* 3.19). Discussing the Parthenon frieze, Osborne notes:

> 'The… incredible diversity apparent in the… features of the frieze, where no two poses are the same, no two horses are in the same attitude, successive riders are differently clothed, with or without cloaks, with or without helmets, and so on.'[456]

One effect of this diversity not just of attributes but of pose, is to disperse attention through the entirety of the reliefs; instead of being drawn to objects and hand gestures, the eye has more encouragement to follow the variations of line and moulding within each

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[454] Stewart 1997:82.
[455] Stewart 1997:148.
[456] Osborne 1987:103.

figure, and from one to the next. This again increases the emphasis on the physical nature of the body, rather than its external, socialised nature.

It also means the role structures are much less clearly defined in the figures on the Akropolis than at Persepolis. The Parthenon frieze, like the Apadana reliefs, depicts a procession, which consists of various groups, many of which are in some way demarcated by the clothes they are wearing or the objects they are carrying. For instance the pedestrian figures at the east end of the north frieze (including reconstructions from Carrey's drawings) are grouped into eight figures leading cattle, four leading sheep, then three youths carrying *skaphai*, four carrying *hydriai*, four playing flutes, and four the kithara, and then finally sixteen elders. However these groupings are much less rigidly applied than at Persepolis: for instance, within the group of *hydriai* carriers the first and third have their *himation* draped over their shoulder, while the second has it open to the waist, and the fourth has ducked down and is almost out of sight behind a flautist. The style of the reliefs also makes the identity of each group less prominent: the moulding and variations, and complex overlap of figures mean that the objects carried or clothing worn is often subsumed by other aspects of the relief. This can be seen even more clearly in the riders themselves. Harrison has shown that the horsemen of the southern frieze are divided into six groups of ten riders, each group of which is dressed in identical clothing.[457] Unlike the Apadana, however, where the different delegations are one of the most salient features of the reliefs, these groupings are not immediately obvious. This is partly due to the poor preservation of the marble, but it is also due to the style and composition of the reliefs: the overlapping figures, the different poses, and particularly the intertwined and varied legs of the horses claim attention before the details of attire.

Osborne argues that against all this variation the 'incredible conformity of the heads'[458] becomes particularly prominent. He sees this as egalitarian, in the sense that it is an opportunity for *hoi polloi* to participate in the aristocratic ideal:

'The Parthenon frieze presents…the very aristocratic imagery of Athenian democracy at its most elitist, where all citizens are not just soldiers but the quintessential soldier, the young man in the cavalry… In presenting this image, the frieze also promotes it, for in showing all the heads without individualization, the frieze shows a citizen body where distinctions are abolished and all are equal, and

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[457] Harrison 1984:230.
[458] Osborne 1987:103.

where, despite widely varying personal circumstances, all may aspire to the same rôle.'[459]

If this is the case, this is the reverse of Persepolis: instead of the similarity between the figures making the differences of detail stand out, here the variation between figures causes similarity to emerge from it. This emphasis on similarity then further minimises role structure, or, rather, emphasizes the single role of citizen, while diminishing the importance of other types of social differentiation and grouping.

The rhythm created by the figures in sequence is also very different to that at Persepolis. Considerable movement is created in the individual movement of the figures, while sequential movement is more intermittent. It is relatively strong in the Parthenon frieze, less so in the metopes and pediments, and the sculpture of the Athena Nike precinct. It is certainly not as relentless as the directionality that emerges from the Persepolis reliefs. The result is that the 'beats' of the individual figures are strong but the overall rhythm is less controlling, and also less regulated; more syncopated in fact. This too encourages less formal behaviour, and more individual, relaxed movement.

Finally, there is a much greater degree of overlap in the figures on the Akropolis. This is particularly striking in the multiply layered horses of the Parthenon frieze, but it also occurs elsewhere: a degree of overlap is maintained even in the composition of the pediments, where the figures were carved in the round, separately, or at most in small groups. Douglas notes that maintenance of distance is another typical quality of formal situations and physical proximity of informal ones. At Persepolis each figure is composed within its own discrete space, hence suggesting a very formal degree of physical distance; the overlaps in the Akropolis sculpture, on the other hand, suggest informality.

Informality

As at Persepolis, the Akropolis figures elicit a strong embodied response. Viewed in Douglas' terms, this response is much more informal. Although there are some elements of formality in the reliefs, and variation in formality between the figures, generally the figures are much less 'pure' and 'smooth' than at Persepolis; this can be seen in the more fluid, less precise lines, deeper and more irregular modelling, and the greater emphasis on the body

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[459] Osborne 1987:104.

itself, which diminishes the degree of physiological distancing and physical control. Role structures are also less strong and the much greater degree of movement and behavioural range in the figures additionally encourages more relaxed behaviour from the viewer. In this account, the effect of the reliefs' naturalistic qualities is not to make the figures more lifelike, but, by increasing physiological detail, to loosen social control, in line with other expressive traits of the sculpture.

The Embodied Experience of Social Control

In this chapter I have suggested that style both at Persepolis and on the Akropolis can be read as appealing to the kind of semiotics grounded in real experience which Gestalt psychology identifies, in order to elicit particular types of socialised behaviour. The differences in their styles can be interpreted as creating a different degree of formality in the way in which the body is used. At Persepolis greater physical control is exerted on the body, and thus greater social control on the situation, while on the Akropolis the more relaxed and informal presentation of the body elicits more relaxed and informal behaviour. I have additionally suggested that because the primary effect at Persepolis is that of formality, schematism can be exploited to engage particularly strongly the semiotics of bodily experience needed to relate to a heterogeneous audience. This suggests that one of the reasons the Achaemenids did not adopt classical naturalism or invent a similar style themselves was that a more schematic style suited their particular political purposes very well.

There is a sense in which, in this account, we have not come very far from Winckelmann. In both cases the argument associates the classical style with political freedom through the 'freer' lines of the bodies it depicts. However, because my account is grounded in an anthropological account of the socialised body, it suggests a mechanism by which the qualities of the sculpture create political effects. Rather than seeing the style as a projection of political character, it can be seen as a way of influencing behaviour: this gives the account social purchase. Indeed, because this influence takes place through bodily experience, it is particularly effective. Bourdieu notes that because the shaping of bodily behaviour 'tend[s] to take place below the level of consciousness, expression, and the

reflexive distance which these presuppose'[460] it is a particularly effective way of eliciting complicity and compliance: 'the body believes what it plays at: it weeps if it mimes grief.'[461]

Finally, it is interesting to speculate to what extent these distinctions in formality were additionally maintained through real experience of the body on the two sites. Allen notes the importance of clothing and apparel in Greek stories about the Persian court, while Briant notes a number of, again Greek, sources for the use of make up and false hair in Persian society; on the other hand it is generally thought that the state of undress common in the Akropolis reliefs did not reflect actual practice on the site.[462] Indubitably the behavioural codes enforced or expected at the two sites would also have had significant social effect. Trying to resurrect them is beyond our immediate scope, but it is interesting to note Herodotus' observation on Persian dining customs:

> 'They are very fond of wine, and no one is allowed to vomit or urinate in the presence of another person'[463]

By implication, this is in contrast with Greek practice, suggesting that, at least in Herodotus' construction of their cultural differences, the same restriction of physiological process can be found in Greek and Persian socialised behaviour as in their sculpture.

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[460] Bourdieu 1992[1990]:73.
[461] Bourdieu 1992[1990]:73.
[462] Allen 2002:139; Briant 2002[1996]:226-7; Osborne 1998: esp. 82-3.
[463] Herodotus *Histories* 1.133.

CHAPTER FOUR: KINGLY RITUAL AND RELIGIOUS MYTH

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Na Ruz and the Panathenaea

One of the most discussed aspects of Persepolis is the extent to which the architectural reliefs reflect actual practice at the site. For a long time the prevalent view was that Persepolis was a ritual capital, the setting for a celebration of the Persian New Year, or Na Ruz, and that the reliefs were a literal depiction of this festival.[464] This perspective reached its fullest expression in Pope and Ghirshman's interpretations, independently published in 1957, both of which see the images as a translation into stone of actual ceremonies practised at the site.[465] Pope sees the depiction of these ceremonies as part of an interpretation of a site rich in sacred symbolism, in which meaning is ultimately tied down to fertility and the cycle of the year. Ghirshman, with less emphasis on the symbolic, sees the reliefs as depicting the four phases of a New Year ceremony performed in different parts of the complex and culminating in the presentation of gifts in the hundred column hall. Variations on this Na Ruz interpretation have been elaborated by a number of scholars and also in popular accounts of the site.[466]

More recently this theory has come under attack from two different angles. The first is historiographic. Both Nylander and Calmeyer have noted the absence of any attestation at all of an Achaemenid New Year celebration in textual sources, let alone one at Persepolis.[467] Nylander notes that the nearest sources for Na Ruz celebrations in the region are late Sasanian and Islamic, or, conversely, accounts of the earlier Babylonian _zagmukku_ festival.[468] Although it is possible that these might contain survivals/antecedents of Achaemenid New Year ceremonies, if such existed, they are not in themselves evidence for it. Moreover, Sancisi-Weerdenburg has traced the origins of the Na Ruz interpretation in the responses of the European travellers who visited the site from the seventeenth century onwards.[469] She notes that there are two main external influences shaping these responses. Learned visitors to the site tended to interpret the images in terms of a number

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[464] Briant 2002[1996]:197-201 summarizes the debate; 910 for bibliography.
[465] Ghirshman 1957; Pope 1957, esp. 129: 'In those superb friezes we have a representation of the actual ceremonies for which Persepolis was the tremendous stage.'
[466] See Erdmann 1960; Krefter 1971; Fennelly 1980 for subsequent scholarly elaborations of this view.
[467] Nylander 1974:140; Calmeyer 1980:55. For the debate on when the King was at Persepolis see Briant 2002[1996]:186-7; for the association of Persepolis with alternative festivals see Calmeyer 1980:55-6 with bibliography.
[468] Nylander 1974:140.
[469] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991.

of classical texts, most notably Xenophon's description of a Persian parade in the *Cyropaedia* (VII 3, 1-23); the various artists who documented the site were more influenced by the visual similarities of the reliefs to the contemporary Persian Na Ruz ceremonies that they witnessed.[470] This latter view, first mentioned by de Bruijn in 1711, and further developed by Ker Porter in 1821, seems to have become prevalent.[471] This strongly suggests that the Na Ruz hypothesis originates not in submerged memories of Achaemenid festivals, but in the observation of much more recent practice.

Secondly, an alternative account of the reliefs has been developed, primarily by Root. In this interpretation the images are seen not as a depiction of a ceremony at all, but rather as a metaphor for the conceptual nature of empire that the Persians kings wished to project:

> 'It is, thus, perhaps more likely that the Apadana relief was intended to represent (albeit in concrete terms) a certain abstract vision of empire and of imperial harmony rather than an *illustration* of an *actual* No Ruz ceremony.'[472]

Root supports this interpretation by demonstrating a coherent, programmatic presentation of harmonious kingship underlying and unifying the different iconographic themes of the site.[473] She also argues that little of the imagery yields well to a literal interpretation. In this she agrees with Calmeyer who had separately noted some fundamental problems: neither the reliefs of monsters being slain by the king-hero in the Palace of Darius, nor the figures carrying sheep through the windows of the Palace of Xerxes are likely to depict actual court practice, and, moreover, that the trees dividing the various delegations on the Apadana, if read literally, suggest that the ceremony is taking place outdoors, rather than on the Persepolis platform.[474] Root argues that such problems also support a conceptual rather than an actual subject.

Nevertheless, the idea that the reliefs depict an imperial festival organised around the gift-giving of different states, even if not necessarily Na Ruz, has remained

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[470] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991: esp. 195. She also notes (175) that although Herzfeld compared the reliefs with scenes of contemporary Persians bringing gifts to the governor of Shiraz, he did not, as is commonly suggested, connect this to Nowruz.
[471] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991:184-5, 186-9.
[472] Root 1979:279.
[473] Root 1979:33: 'The ultimate aim of this study is to show the validity of viewing Achaemenid art as such a programme [a coherent and intentional vision behind it]… I shall draw together the information gleaned from the iconographical essays in order to suggest a plausible understanding of the total vision to kingship and empire which was intended consistently to be projected through Achaemenid iconography.'
[474] Calmeyer 1980:56.

influential.[475] The currently prevalent view seems to be that the imagery lies somewhere between metaphor and literal depiction of reality, presenting an abstraction, formalized into stone, of actual practice.[476] Debate then centres on whether this practice should be considered as taxation or more informal gift-giving, both of which are independently attested as important mechanisms within Achaemenid society,[477] and on whether it refers to a specific ceremonial occasion, taking place either at Persepolis, or possibly elsewhere, or a more informal and continuous gift-giving process wherever the king went.[478]

The continued acceptance of a relatively literal interpretation is partly due to the existence of independent sources both for Achaemenid processions and for the importance of gift-giving within the empire and the political prestige associated with it.[479] However it is also largely due to the reliefs themselves: the multiple figures, placed at ground level in the stairs and doorways, give a very strong impression of the site as populated space with its stone inhabitants moving within it.

The relationship between image and practice has also been discussed with reference to the Akropolis. The most notable example is of course the Parthenon frieze. The interpretation of the frieze as the Panathenaic procession also goes back to an eighteenth century account; it is first suggested in Stuart and Revett's 1787 *Antiquities of Athens*.[480] This proposition has frequently been attacked. Recurrent concerns are the lack of precedent for a contemporary, non-mythological scene in temple sculpture, and the discrepancies between the figures in the frieze and the features of the festival as deduced from other sources.[481] Alternative mythological or historical readings have been suggested. Nevertheless, it has become the orthodoxy that the frieze represents some form of variant on the Panathenaia, possibly a generic rather than strictly contemporary version of the

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[475] Briant 2002[1996]:910: 'We must remain open to the hypothesis of an imperial festival'; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991:200: 'I think that it is likely that something took place on the terrace, even if we cannot reconstruct its precise movements from the reliefs.'

[476] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991:197-201 discusses the options; this idea is indeed to some extent anticipated in Root 1979 eg (161): 'Perhaps we shall never be able to determine absolutely whether the Achaemenid reliefs should be read as a pure metaphor of royal power or as a metaphorical description of an actual ceremonial display of imperial might.'

[477] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991 as above, see also Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1989; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1998 where she argues that a valid distinction cannot be drawn between the two, which are both covered by the Persian term *bāji*.

[478] Calmeyer 1980:57: 'Presumably that happened always and everywhere'; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1991:199: 'We could also envisage yearly celebrations which took place wherever the king happened to be, but were immortalized in stone only at Persepolis'; Cahill 1985:387 notes a similarity between objects in the Treasury and those depicted in the reliefs which would tend towards the theory that the events depicted did take place on the site.

[479] Briant 2002[1996] for classical sources: 184-5 for festivals, 394-406 for gifts and tribute; Kuhrt 2007:633-63 for gifts given by the King, 669-727 for tribute, taxes, and gifts to the King.

[480] Stuart and Revett 1787:12; cited Connelly 1996:53.

[481] Hurwit 1999:222-8 with bibliography summarizes the debate.

event, and one which may incorporate historical or mythological elements. Even the weakest form of this position, the suggestion that the frieze represents 'a religious festival,' rather than the Panathenaia specifically and was therefore appropriate for all festivals celebrated on the Akropolis, posits a relatively close relationship between image and practice.[482]

Similar arguments have been made linking individual sculptural elements to specific rites elsewhere on the site. Simon argues that the Nike sandal-binder from the parapet of the temple of Athena Nike cues the visitor to remove their footwear to enter the sanctuary;[483] Robertson suggests that the objects on the heads of the Karyatids are the water jars used in the Plynteria and Kallynteria cleaning festivals;[484] Barringer connects the rituals of the *Arrhephoroi* with the many female figures present in the sculpture.[485]

Nevertheless, this type of interpretation is considerably less pervasive than at Persepolis. These instances are exceptions: most of the sculpture straightforwardly depicts mythological narrative, which is connected to the site or to the rituals of the site in a variety of ways, most obviously through geographical and mythological links with Athens and Athena, but cannot be read literally as practice. This mythological dimension prevails across most of the site. Interestingly, Jameson has analyzed the sacrificial imagery on the parapet of the Temple of Athena Nike, which at first glance appears a likely candidate for the depiction of the rituals of the site, and shown that the type of slaughter is appropriate to sacrifice on the battlefield, rather than in a sanctuary.[486] The sacrifice is not only performed by mythological Nikai, but is taking place in a very different context to the Akropolis. This observation possibly militates against the more literal interpretations discussed above, including that of the Parthenon frieze. Moreover, even if the frieze does represent a contemporary Panathenaia, it is only a small percentage of the site's sculpture that has this potential close relationship to practice.

As noted, one of the problems in discussing the relationship between ritual and practice at Persepolis has always been that there is very little independent evidence for what

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[482] This is Hurwit's final view (1999:226-8); see also Neils 2005:200: 'It is generally agreed that the Parthenon frieze represents a religious procession because most of the standard elements are included: sacrificial animals, musicians, humans on foot with ritual equipment (water jars, baskets, *phialai* or libation bowls, jugs, incense burners),' although she eventually concludes that it does represent the Panathenaia.
[483] Simon 1997:133.
[484] Robertson 1966:34.
[485] Barringer 2008:107.
[486] Jameson 1994.

practice at the site actually was; even for the Akropolis the evidence is far from complete.[487] In this chapter my concern is not, primarily, to attempt to trace precise relationships between image and practice. It is rather to consider the respective effects of architectural sculpture that so strongly suggests practice, whether accurately or not, and that of reliefs whose iconographic concerns are tied to the architectural structures in less concrete ways.

I argue that the use of images related so directly to the site at Persepolis is, firstly, highly legible: it allows broad comprehension across the culturally heterogeneous empire. However it also sets an iconographic agenda which is initially easily assimilated but ultimately frustrates prolonged interrogation. By contrast, the more narrative, mythological iconography of the Akropolis is designed for the more culturally cohesive Athenian empire, and uses this shared background of cultural knowledge to create images which facilitate more extended interaction. The iconography of both sites extravagantly and unequivocally glorifies their respective states; nevertheless, the types of interaction the iconography promotes create different political experiences.

Cultural Coherence and Cultural Practice

Persepolis and the Akropolis are both centres of empire; consequently both, although to differing extents, have broad geographical and cultural audiences. In the previous chapters I have been concerned with cognitive effects, ways in which the architecture and reliefs of the sites could affect visitors regardless of the cultural or artistic skills and experience they brought with them. However in considering the reliefs as iconography, such cultural knowledge and expectations are, by contrast, crucial. It is necessary, therefore, to consider how the different viewers could relate to the imagery of the two sites, or, more generally, how such systems of iconography have meaning within society.

In 'The Concept(s) of Culture' Sewell develops the concept of thin coherence.[488] He argues that, rather than being a tight, highly integrated, monolithic system, culture should be understood as loosely integrated, contested, and frequently contradictory. Not only do cultural systems have weak boundaries, overlapping and interconnecting with a variety of inter- and intra-societal groups, but they are also unstable, constantly susceptible

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[487] Hurwit 1999:35-63 discusses who would have visited the Akropolis both on normal days and festivals, noting (35): 'The evidence, such as it is, is scanty and piecemeal.' See also Parker 2005:253-269 for the Panathenaea specifically.
[488] Sewell 2005:152-174 reprinting Sewell 1999.

to change, negotiation, and transformation. This model is broadly deconstructionist; nevertheless, Sewell argues, some degree of coherence, and therefore communication, is possible: culture is a semiotic system, albeit one that is open and labile rather than fixed and closed.[489]

The concept of thin coherence is often used to deconstruct standard ethnographies and reveal the multiple and contradictory cultures contained within a 'cultural zone,' with a particular focus on sub-societal groups and cross-cultural contact.[490] However it is also relevant to centralizing cultural projects within such zones, such as the Akropolis and Persepolis. Sewell indeed notes that 'studies of culture need to pay at least as much attention to… sites of concentrated cultural practice as to… dispersed sites of resistance.'[491]

In such cases, thin coherence provides a model for how diverse groups across a potentially wide cultural area relate to these broad-reaching cultural structures. It emphasizes the extent to which groups and, indeed, individuals appropriate such structures, incorporating them into their own cultural understanding, and contesting and negotiating their meaning. However it also stresses the extent to which such structures stabilize meaning. Sewell notes that these two processes are not in contradiction: dominant institutions frequently function not just by normalizing and homogenizing, but also by organizing difference, while the act of contesting dominant meanings itself implies a recognition of them. The two processes are not distinct, but mutually implicated:

'Dominant and oppositional groups interact constantly, each undertaking its initiatives with the other in mind. Even when they attempt to overcome or undermine each other, they are mutually shaped by their dialectical dance.'[492]

Sewell's focus is largely on contestation of power; however, it is important to note that the responses of sub-societal groups are not invariably oppositional; another possible form of appropriation is actively conforming to or affirming dominant cultural projects on a sub-societal level. As Ober, in his application of Sewell's theories to the Greek *polis*, notes:

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[489] Sewell 2005:166: 'If meaning is to exist at all, there must be systematic relations among signs and a group of people who recognize those relations.'

[490] E.g. Dougherty and Kurke 2003 *The Cultures within Greek Culture*, which concludes (241): 'That is *not* to say that umbrella descriptions of extensive cultural zones are analytically meaningless. But it *is* to say that coarse-grained description can offer only very limited purchase.'

[491] Sewell 2005:172; he also notes: 'It is important to remember that much cultural practice is concentrated in and around powerful institutional nodes – including religions, communications media, business corporations, and, most spectacularly, states.'

[492] Sewell 2005:173.

'Ancient and modern history alike provide numerous examples of people enthusiastically *supporting* the coherence claims of societal cultures structured as states.'[493]

Thus my discussion of Persepolis and the Akropolis focuses on how the sites elicit and enable support for their centralizing social projects as much as on ways in which they may attempt to suppress sub-societal dissent.

Sewell also stresses that thin coherence exists not through the semiotic qualities of culture alone, but also through its integration into other systems:

'If a given symbol system is taken by its users to be unambiguous and highly constraining, this fact cannot be accounted for by the system's semiotic qualities alone, but must result from the way semiotic structures are interlocked in practice with other structures - economic, social, political, spatial, etc'[494]

This does not, however, mean that the semiotic qualities have no role in the system's degree of ambiguity or constraint. My concern is to analyze the role of the physical aspects of Persepolis and the Akropolis within this complex and recursive system, looking at the ways in which the material qualities of the sites create the potential for ambiguity or constraint of the meaning that is negotiated through them. This approach, although in a different medium, follows Neer's observation that the material, formal properties of Athenian vase painting made possible certain forms of political thought:

'In other words, the slippery, uncertain aspect of vase painting is at once a formal and an ideological property. Pictorial ambiguity was "good to think with": it provided vase-painters and their audiences with a uniquely supple matrix in which to work out new conceptions of Athenian civic identity.'[495]

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[493] Ober 2003:240.
[494] Sewell 2005:167; also 173: 'Cultural coherence, to the extent that it exists, is as much the product of power and struggles for power as it is of semiotic logic.'
[495] Neer 2002:2.

Here I argue that the formal iconographic choices at Persepolis and on the Akropolis are not so much good, or bad, to think with, but facilitate different types of thought, and, moreover, different types of interaction.

Another of the implications of a thinly coherent, constantly unstable, model of culture is that use of the semiotic code involves not just comprehension, but also use and manipulation:

> 'To engage in cultural practice is to make use of a semiotic code to do something in the world. People who are members of a semiotic community are capable not only of recognizing statements made in a semiotic code... but of using the code as well, of putting it into practice… It also means having the ability to elaborate it, to modify or adapt its rules to novel circumstances.'[496]

Engagement with culture involves constant renewing and reshaping of meaning within the system. This active cultural agency puts a particular emphasis on the process of interaction between the members of a semiotic community and the material they engage with; a process which is shaped partly by the agent's expectations and intentions, but also by the material itself. I argue that the difference in political effect between the iconography of Persepolis and the Akropolis lies not so much in the 'statements' that the images make, but in the nature of the interaction that they promote. And, as we shall see, one of the major factors in this interaction is the impression of practice that the reliefs do or do not give.

Persepolis

The nature of the Persepolis' audience has been debated. Due primarily to its low profile in Greek sources it has sometimes been considered a secret, ritual site, a view which has now largely been dismissed;[497] conversely, the prominence of the tribute-bearers on the Apadana has led to its discussion as a ritual imperial centre, with the primary focus on the delegations from all the lands. More recently, study of the Persepolis Fortification Archive and survey in the Marvdasht plain have revealed the site as an important administrative centre in a significantly populated area, with an audience of locals and officials.[498] In what follows I argue that the iconographical scheme is specifically designed to negotiate these

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[496] Sewell 2005:167.
[497] Garrison 2000:145, footnote 68, with bibliography.
[498] Garrison 2000:145; for settlement in the plain: Sumner 1986; Bourcharlat 2003.

diverse audiences: to imperial subjects it presents a superficially legible, yet ultimately disorientating face, while more specific iconographic readings are latent in the reliefs for viewers more integrated into the Achaemenid cultural world.

Procession

Perhaps the most prevalent iconographic theme in the reliefs at Persepolis is that of procession. Processing figures, of one sort and another, run across the north and east façades, up the staircases, and along the parapets of the Apadana. They step in more condensed and varied measures up the stairs of the north double reverse staircase of the Tripylon, and down the straight staircase to its south. They continue up the east and west staircases of the Palace of Xerxes, which lead up to the high central platform, and are repeated on the façade of the Palace of Artaxerxes III, (removed to Palace H in post-Achaemenid times). They also climb the south and west staircases of the Palace of Darius. As well as these long lines of figures, the reliefs of the 'king on high' in the north and south doorways of the Hundred Column Hall consist of linear sequences of figures stacked vertically beneath the image of the king, while small processions of two or three, usually the king and attendants, feature in many of the internal doorways of the palaces. There is a real sense in which the primary narrative of Persepolis is the movement of figures through the buildings. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter Two, this movement is very closely co-ordinated to the architecture: the relief figures mimic the movement of real people moving through the site, accompanying them on their paths through the buildings. This is a participatory narrative to which any visitor to the site can immediately relate: it transcends iconography and requires no culturally specific skills.

The composition of these processions varies through the site. The most prominent, or at least most discussed, theme is that of the tribute procession: delegations from the various lands, each led by a Persian usher, bringing gifts to the king (*figs* 4.1a and 4.1b).[499] This appears on both facades of the Apadana, built in the earliest Darius-Xerxes phase of the site, as well as on the Xerxes-Artaxerxes façade of Palace H, and the much later west

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[499] Root 1979:227-84 for discussion. Whether the objects should be considered as tribute or encomium gifts, and the relationship of this distinction to the Old Persian term *bāji,* is much debated see Briant 2002[1996]:439-41, Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1989 and esp. Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1998, who concludes (33): 'OP *bāji-* is best regarded as a general term covering all dues the king was entitled to.'

staircase of the Palace of Darius, added by Artaxerxes III.[500] All of these are areas of the site which spatial analysis suggests may have had significant public access (*fig.* 4.1).[501]

Secondly, there are sequences of courtiers or officials. These also appear on the Apadana façades, standing behind the king while the delegations are arranged in front of him.[502] These figures can be divided into three types: directly behind the king stand the 'Susian' guards (*figs* 4.2a and see *fig.* 3.11), so called because they are identical with the ceramic tile figures found at Susa. Behind them stand figures in alternating dress (*fig.* 4.2b). These are conventionally referred to as 'Medes' and 'Persians,' although more recently Root has argued that their attire represents riding and court clothes, and they are thus the Persian nobility in its military and civilian aspects.[503]

These court figures, particularly the alternating Medes and Persians, and the Persians on their own (*fig.* 4.2c), with occasional variations in stance and attributes, occur through much of the site (*fig.* 4.2). The alternating figures occur on the west staircase of the Palace of Darius, the external wings of the Tripylon, and beneath the image of the king in the North doors of the Hundred Column Hall; they were also chosen for the replacement panels of the Apadana, after the reliefs of the king enthroned were removed to the Treasury.[504] Processions of the Persian figures alone are found on the south staircase of the Palace of Darius, and both staircases of the Palace of Xerxes, as well as the internal staircases of the Apadana, and the staircase that originally fronted the Palace of Artaxerxes III (Palace G) on the central terrace.

The most complex configuration of these court figures occurs on the Tripylon (*fig.* 4.9, *fig.* 4.9a). Here the external wall shows alternating, Persian/Median figures. The panel between the two flights of steps shows Persians on their own, and as you progress up the stairs Median figures accompany you on the external wall, Persians on the internal. At the top, the parapet where the two files join is decorated with Persian figures, of which the first twenty on each side carry shields. These court figures, then, appear throughout the site, mediating between the more public and more private areas, and particularly concentrated in the Tripylon, an area of marked transition between the two.

Another set of figures occurs on the south staircase of the Tripylon and also on both staircases of the Palace of Darius and both staircases of the Palace of Xerxes and also

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[500] Tilia 1977:74-5 for the staircase of Xerxes-Artaxerxes and its tentative reconstruction; Roaf 1983:157-8 summarizes the dating of the various buildings and the problems concerning it.
[501] See Chapter 1:61-2 above, including the debate regarding access to this southwest area.
[502] Root 1979:240 for whether the officials should be considered as actually behind the King or waiting to be transposed into the receiving line.
[503] Root 1979:281-2.
[504] Roaf 1983:144-5; Tilia 1972:175-208; Tilia 1974:127-9.

on the original Xerxes-Artaxerxes façade of Palace H: these are still major structures, but mainly within the more private areas of the site (*fig.* 4.3). These figures are distinguished by their headdresses which wrap around the neck and cover the chin; they alternate between a longer version, with incised folds, and a shorter, plainer one (*figs* 4.3b and 4.3c). These figures carry vessels, leather containers, which are probably either wine- or water-skins, and (live) lambs and kids (*fig.* 4.3a).[505] They have conventionally been interpreted as servants, carrying provisions for a royal banquet; however Sancisi-Weerdenburg argues that they are western Iranians, locals from the Fars area, and that they too should be interpreted as bringing *bāji* to the King.[506] In either case, there is a spatial distinction between these figures, found in the more private areas of the site, and the delegations from all the lands on the more public facades. Sancisi-Weerdenburg connects this differentiation with the king's distinct roles as proclaimed in inscriptions: as king in Parsa (*xāšyaθiya Pārsaiy*) and king of the empire or of the nations (*xšāyaθiya dahyuanām*), although if the figures are servants this differentiation could indicate the more domestic areas of the site.[507]

Even more secluded areas of the site are decorated with images of the king with attendants, or attendants alone: they process through the inner door frames of the Palaces of Darius and Xerxes, and the 'harem,' and also the inner doorjambs of the Tripylon (*fig.* 4.4). These attendants are predominantly dressed as Persians (*fig.* 4.4a); however figures in servant/western Iranian dress feature on the inner faces of the windows of the Palace of Xerxes, carrying utensils or leading wild goats (*fig.* 4.4b). The non-processional motif of the king-hero fighting monsters also appears in the inner doorways of the Palace of Darius, and those of the harem (*fig.* 4.5a). This too seems to be reserved for the most secluded areas of the palace system (*fig.* 4.5).

Finally, there is the ubiquitous lion-bull motif, which occurs on staircases throughout the site (*fig.* 4.6 and *fig.* 4.6a): on the Apadana, the Tripylon, both staircases of the Palace of Darius and also those of the Palace of Xerxes, as well as that of Artaxerxes I

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[505] Schmidt 1953:121.

[506] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1998:29-30, initially on the grounds that a literal reading of the reliefs would then be problematic: 'It is unlikely that the living animals carried by these persons were to serve as ingredients for a royal banquet in the palace where they decorated the entrances. A barbecue within the ceremonial halls is hard to imagine.' If a less literal reading is allowed, then this becomes less pressing; however her theory that the two tribute groups are subsequently merged for political reasons (see below) seems to me convincing. If 'servants' is expanded to mean 'members of the imperial household' there is no reason the two ideas could not be combined.

[507] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1998:30. The servant/Iranian debate is related to whether the southern half of the site is seen as being used primarily for domestic, ceremonial, or administrative purposes. Tilia (1977:74) notes a Palace built by Xerxes below the terrace as possibly being the domestic residence of the king. It is possible further excavation in the plain will shed further light on the question.

(Palace H). This motif does not fit into the processional model; its role in the iconography is a question to which we will be returning.

This spatial distribution of the iconography is established in the reigns of Darius and Xerxes. Subsequently, during a new phase of construction under Artaxerxes I, it becomes somewhat less straightforward. One part of this later program was the addition of the north, and probably the south, staircases of the Tripylon.[508] As we have seen, these fit the model perfectly: the Median and Persian figures preside over the transition into the building from the north, while to the south the western Iranians accompany the visitor up into the private area. However, another part of the new phase of construction, the façade of the Palace of Artaxerxes I, combined delegations from the lands with the western Iranians. This model was later followed when Artaxerxes III added the west staircase to the Palace of Darius. As well as these additions, Artaxerxes I's building program involved a number of alterations to the site, including the removal of the central Apadana audience panels to the Treasury. Sancisi-Weerdenburg suggests that both this and the new combination of delegations with locals demonstrate a change in the idea of kingship at this period.[509] The status of the king was increasingly elevated and separated from the aristocracy, thus his image was removed from the accessible exterior of the building, while the privileged iconographic position of the western Iranians was reduced, and they could be combined with the other imperial subjects in the reliefs.

Whether it is for this or other reasons that the two processions are mixed together on these two later staircases, this change seems to be developing rather than contradicting the previous spatial logic of the iconography. Both of these combination staircases stand in the south-west of the site, on the north and south sides of a courtyard which, to the west, is bounded by the platform's parapet wall (*fig.* 4.8). It is clear that this area is special in some way: the asymmetrical ground plan of Palace H is unique to the site; the addition of the west staircase to the Palace of Darius is one of the few changes to be made to the site in the late Achaemenid period; it was also the only area to be reinhabited in post-Achaemenid times; and the parapet wall is, again uniquely, marked with double 'horns.' Moreover, it seems to have had a semi-public character; it is accessible through the Apadana and visible from the plain below. Its iconographic use of a mixture of both 'public' and 'private' processions can therefore be explained as an elaboration of the previous pattern. It is notable also that the façade of the Palace of Artaxerxes III, which stands mirroring the Palace of Xerxes on the central, high, and more private platform,

[508] Roaf 1983:158,157.
[509] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1998:31-3.

despite its late date, did not use this combined procession motif, but rather one of Persian guards.[510] This supports the view that location, rather than just date, is a factor in iconographic choice.

However, the Hundred Column Hall, also finished under Artaxerxes, is more problematic. Its east and west doors make use of the king-hero motif, which otherwise only appears in extremely secluded areas of the site (*fig.* 4.5). Its iconographic scheme is in fact unusual in a number of ways. Its south doorways use images of the subject nations raising the king on high (*fig.* 4.7, *fig.* 4.7a), the only place on the platform to do this is the east door of the Tripylon; otherwise, the theme is confined to the royal tombs. The vertical stacks of Persians and Medes arranged below the king in the north doors also only occur in this form here, although they are a variant on the alternating figures from the Apadana. Moreover these two motifs are, from our point of view, the wrong way round: you would expect to find the subject peoples in the more public north doors and the Medes and Persians in the south. There are possible explanations for these anomalies. The king-hero motif, in contrast to the rest of the reliefs, is always orientated against movement into the building; it therefore appears to have an apotropaic function, and it is possible here that function overrode its private character. Similarly it is possible that some association of the king on high theme in connection with its use on the royal tombs made it more appropriate for this more private position in the south. Nevertheless the building's iconography appears to be, for reasons unknown, following idiosyncratic patterns at variance with the rest of the site.

Despite these caveats, it is apparent that there is a high degree of co-ordination between choice of image and location on the site. Moreover, this choice is informed by a basic relationship between the reliefs and the actual practice of the site. The participants in the reliefs are, broadly, those present at Persepolis: the King, the court, and the imperial subjects, possibly including local Iranians, and there is a plausible correspondence between the positions of figures within the architecture and the areas with which their real life counterparts may be presumed to have been associated: the imperial subjects appear in the external areas, the King and his attendants within the Palaces, and the courtiers or guards moving everywhere among them. As Root comments: 'The peoples from the lands of the

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[510] This relief was removed to Palace H, where it now stands, in post-Achaemenid times. The existence of a previous façade for Palace G has been deduced from marks in the bed-rock, however its date and subject are unclear (Roaf 1983:158, citing Schmidt 1953:274).

empire were, in effect, part of the program as well as part of the audience. So was the King.'[511]

Moreover, the figures are engaging, broadly, in the formal roles enacted on the site: the imperial subjects progress towards the king who receives them, while the courtiers look on and assist: a scene of audience which indubitably was played out at Persepolis, as well as elsewhere on the king's travels. As with the narrative of movement, the fundamental content of the images is immediately legible in terms of practice: all the cultural knowledge that visitors to the site from across the empire need to decode the basic premise of the reliefs is their own experience in visiting Persepolis.

Kingship

In *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art* Root argues that the fundamental theme of Persepolis, and indeed of all Achaemenid iconography, is that of the king presiding over a harmonious empire.[512] In this model it is not the king himself, but the concept of kingship and its role in structuring the empire which is crucial;[513] moreover the scenes depicted are not seen as literal practice, but conceptual metaphors for order and unity:

> 'Imperial power is described through elaborate metaphors of the harmonious ecumenical interactions of the subject peoples in cooperative praise and support of the King of Kings.'[514]

Root sees this theme as running throughout the site. The tribute procession shows 'an idealized vision of the conceptual structure of the empire'[515] which is 'participated in voluntarily by dignified delegations of the subject nations' (*figs* 4.1a and 4.1b).[516] A similar theme is presented in the images of the king on high in the doorways of the Apadana: the king is shown lifted above his imperial domain by 'a cooperative effort of voluntary

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[511] Root 1990:134

[512] Root 1979:3: '3: Finally I shall… suggest a plausible understanding of the total vision of kingship and empire which was intended consistently to be projected through Achaemenid iconography.'

[513] Root 1979:300: 'We must consider these representations as relating directly to *kingship* - if not necessarily also to the king himself in a personal and historically specific sense.'

[514] Root 1979:311.

[515] Root 1979:282.

[516] Root 1979:283.

support' (*fig.* 4.7a).[517] This metaphor for the empire is complemented by the motifs of the king in state, accompanied by attendants, which 'project a clear and simple statement of the monarch's magnificence' (*fig.* 4.4a),[518] and that of the king-hero in which the king 'protects his domain from creatures who symbolize any and all hostile forces' (*fig.* 4.5a).[519] Together these motifs present a unified vision of a harmonious empire, at the heart of which lies the majestic nature of the king. As well as offering a coherent explanation of the iconography which is not too dependent on a problematically literal interpretations this account is supported by the central importance of kingship in Achaemenid ideology, attested in a variety of other sources.[520]

However, this conceptual interpretation does not contradict the theme of movement and procession. Rather the two can be seen to operate simultaneously: the narrative of procession, which is closely co-ordinated with the viewer's own experience, is combined with an abstract vision of kingship. As a result, instead of merely observing this abstract vision, the viewer enacts it as they move around the site. For instance, as the visitor walks across the façade of the Apadana, their movement, and to some extent their role on the site, is closely mimicked by the relief figures, the actions of stone and real figure run in parallel and thus, whether or not they are themself specifically bringing tribute at that moment, the visitor's experience is transformed by the stone images and incorporated into the idealized structure of the empire. Ideal metaphor and real experience are brought close together, allowing the former compellingly to mould the latter, thus the procession motif both makes legible the abstract message and facilitates its absorption.

Dress, Gesture, Attributes

As well as being legible, the expression of the ideology of kingship through images of multiple figures in a microcosm of the empire sets up a clear agenda for interaction with the reliefs. As Root observes, discussing the probable reaction of a hypothetical Athenian visitor to the site, and, in particular, to the delegation of the Ionians, or as denoted in the terminology of Achaemenid inscriptions 'of the Yauna,' in the Apadana frieze, 'it is hard to imagine our Athenian being *un*interested in how the Yauna were portrayed.'[521] The same

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[517] Root 1979:131.
[518] Root 1979:286.
[519] Root 1979:307.
[520] Kuhrt 1995b:676-682; Briant 2002[1996]:204-254.
[521] Root 2007:179.

applies to other ethnicities from across the empire, and also to members and officials of the court, even perhaps to the king himself.[522] The reliefs invite curiosity about, and identification of, the image that most closely resembles you. They also invite speculation about who the other groups and figure types are. Root notes that as well as speculation they invite commentary:

> 'Especially *because* the Apadana delegate groups have no captions, they invite oral commentary – with visitors pointing out representations of peoples, musing about their intended identities and the meanings of their gifts.'

This emphasis on categorizing and differentiating between ethnic and social groups echoes very closely Sewell's principle of 'organising difference' as a centralizing cultural strategy. The reliefs encourage the viewer to identify the different peoples and officials, and, perhaps even more importantly, themselves in terms of their place in the system around the king. As Root points out, this will not necessarily elicit a straightforward reaction. She notes that an Athenian might bridle at being illustrated as 'just another Yauna,' a term which the Persians used, and the Athenians were aware that the Persians used, to denote all of the Greeks, including the East Greeks and the Greek diaspora.[523] Visitors might also, indeed in the case of the Athenians very probably would, object more generally to their inclusion in a depiction of the Persian empire, however harmonious. Nevertheless the reliefs not only present an image of an ordered and differentiated empire, but also strongly promote some degree of interaction with the concept, whether approving or oppositional. As Sewell notes, contesting a structure also involves recognition of it.

As noted in the previous chapter this emphasis on categorisation is assisted by the stylistic qualities of the reliefs, which focus attention on the gestures, attributes and specifics of dress that define the different ethnicities and social groups. However, when we look more closely at these iconographic details, the question becomes more complicated. In particular, it is not clear that, despite the attention they elicit, these details are meant to be fully legible to all visitors to the site.

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[522] See Root 1979:1-2: 'The image of the patron and his empire which is presented in his commissioned art must reflect the image of kingship which he himself wished to be surrounded by and to identify with, as well as the image with which he wished to be identified by others.'
[523] Root 2007:179: 'It is clear from Aeschylus' *Persians* that Athenians understood that Persians called all Greeks "Ionians" (Hall 1989;Tuplin 1996:134).'

In Root's analysis of the Yauna delegation on the Apadana frieze, she reaches the surprising conclusion that an Athenian would not have recognised the clothes of the delegation as particularly Greek (*figs* 4.10a and 4.10b). She starts from the footwear:

'This is a version of the Greek travelling boot… Our Athenian would recognize the object (despite its somewhat un-Athenian form) but might be startled at the clothing with which it is associated. For, instead of other travelling gear, such as the broad-brimmed hat (*petasos*) or travelling cloak (*chlamys*), the delegates wear long, elaborately draped robes. These garments are interesting in their own right. All delegates wear a crinkly undergarment (*chiton*) with a generously-sized overgarment (*himation*) draped on top… In the classical period, Athenian men went about the city wearing only a *himation*, usually revealing much of the upper body.'[524]

She then speculates about the possible Athenian response, noting that most likely reactions involve some degree of hostility or unease. The fully clad bodies might be seen as 'an insulting feminisation of the Greek male,'[525] who would usually be depicted in Greek art as naked or semi-clad. There is an additional potential frisson of feminization due to a taste for Persianizing costume in Athens after the Persian Wars, which was, however, worn exclusively by women and children. It might also be seen as a deliberately dismissive 'flagrant Persian ignorance about contemporary Greek fashion and custom.'[526]

It is difficult to be sure what the Achaemenid intention was here. Firstly the mid-fifth century Athenian, whose reaction Root speculates about, was not their obvious target audience. Root notes that the two part costume the delegation wear on the Apadana recalls the sartorial customs of east Greece and Hellenized western Anatolia in the archaic period; the late archaic east Greeks are probably whom the designers of the Apadana frieze would have meant by the Yauna. Moreover, the analysis of clothing among the tribute bearing delegations is generally problematic: the identification of many of the groups is not secure, and there appears to be some fluidity in the groupings from one representation or text to another.[527] Even the identification of this delegation as the Yauna is not straightforward: it

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[524] Root 2007:181-2.
[525] Root 2007:182.
[526] Root 2007:182.
[527] For debate on the identifications see Schmidt 1953:85-90 for the original publication of the Apadana figures; 1970:108-110, figs 39-52 for the tomb reliefs; 145-163 for a reassessment of the Apadana reliefs in the light of the tomb reliefs. See also Junge 1941; Walser 1966b.

has also been argued that these figures are Lydian or partially Lydian.[528] Schmidt identifies them as Yauna on the persuasive but not wholly secure basis that they follow directly behind the Lydian delegation, which is their usual position in inscriptions and that both here and on the tomb reliefs the two ethnicities are very similar in dress.[529] However the dress that they both wear on the tomb reliefs, where they are identified by inscription, is very different to that which they both wear on the Apadana: on the tombs they in fact wear the *petasos* and *chlamys*, which Root finds lacking from the Apadana group, over a garment which Schmidt interprets as a *chiton* (*fig.* 4.11).[530] Schmidt explains the difference as a contrast between martial dress on the tombs, where the throne-bearers all carry weapons, and formal attire on the Apadana.[531] If this is the case, it is difficult to exclude the possibility that the garments were in fact intended to be legible, and that the disconcerting lack of likeness Root describes was the result of variation in fashion over time and across Greece, exacerbated by deliberately hostile appropriation by an Athenian with their own stereotypes about the Persians.[532]

However, it is also possible that the discrepancy was non-accidental. This idea is supported by consideration of the objects the delegations carry. Root notes that the gifts the Yauna bring consist of two types of vessel, folded textiles, and 'rounded objects,' the appearance of the last differing between the north and east façades (*figs* 4.10a and 4.10b). The textiles appear to be folded versions of the garments the delegation is wearing, the over garment being identified by a tassel, while the identity of the rounded objects is uncertain. Root suggests that they may be balls of wool, ostrich eggs or cakes, balls, slingshots or beehives. However, the vessels are extremely identifiable. They are two beakers and four bowls, all distinctively Achaemenid in type; moreover, they are 'pure Achaemenid' in style, not a regional variation.[533] Root comments:

'They are a bizarre choice to represent the hallmark Greek culture of any region, and all the more so because they cluster the Yauna with a very improbable set of peoples. In addition to the Yauna, deep bowls or cylindrical beakers are brought by six Iranian peoples: Medes, Armenians , Areians, Arachosians, Parthians, and Bactrians. Of these, four also bring a splendid camel and would be notably exotic

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[528] Root 2007:212.
[529] Schmidt 1970:152-3.
[530] Schmidt 1970:108 and fig.49; note that the Ionians not only wear the *petasos*, but are specifically identified as the *petasos*-wearing Ionians [yaunā takabarā].
[531] Schmidt 1970:153.
[532] Root 2007:211.
[533] Root 2007:186.

to a Greek eye. Additionally the bowls or beakers are brought by three peoples west of the Iranian heartland: Babylonians, Lydians, and Cilicians.'[534]

As a solution to this distribution, Root suggests that 'Achaemenid bowls appear in the hands of so many delegate-groups because the aim is to depict *not* the uniqueness of discrete peoples but the existence of an *international* type.' Their political message is thus the cultural homogeneity produced by the empire, rather than the cultural distinctiveness of its constituent parts.[535] This agrees with Sancisi-Weerdenburg's observation that an absence of correspondence between delegations and gifts runs through the frieze:

> 'There seems to be general agreement nowadays that the articles do not represent tribute and are not symbolic representations of the taxes from one particular region (Walser 1966b:12). In a number of cases it is clear that the gifts are definitely *not* representative of the country that sends them to the king.'[536]

Root also notes variation between the gifts brought by the same delegations on the north and east friezes of the Apadana,[537] which again suggests that it is the depiction of the empire as a whole, rather than individual objects and individual identities which is paramount in these reliefs. If the iconography of the objects is designed to present a Persian model of the empire, it is possible that the clothes too are chosen with the specific intention that the subjects of the empire should see themselves portrayed in an unsettlingly Persian fashion.

If this is the case, the total effect is that the viewer is initially drawn to the clarity of the frieze's structure and led to identify their own image in it, but, when they do, it turns out, disconcertingly, not closely to resemble their self-image, but to incorporate alien elements. The iconography is carefully balanced so that it is comprehensible enough to keep the attention, but yet constantly slightly unsettling. This is similar to the effects described in Chapter Two: just as the decorative patterns of the sculpture draw attention and promise resolution, which they do not deliver, so the iconographic content of the images suggests a comprehension which it ultimately denies. However, in this case there is an added political dimension: the viewer looks to the reliefs for an image affirming their

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[534] Root 2007:187.
[535] Root 2007:187, citing Calmeyer 1993:160.
[536] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1989:136, citing Walser 1966b:12.
[537] Root 1979:279.

individual ethnic identity and instead finds that it is their role in the Achaemenid empire that is depicted.

A related mechanism can also be seen in the images of Persians and officials. Root has argued that the gestures these figures use were intended to 'create the impression of animated interaction of the figures in this procession, and to suggest a mood of courtly intimacy among them.'[538] But they also give the impression of specific meanings, which, however, the visitor to Persepolis probably does not know, or at least they are not familiar or comfortable with the full nuances. This is true of the gesture of *proskynesis* at the centre of the Apadana frieze (*fig.* 4.12), but also of the diverse gestures used between the 'Median,' 'Persian,' and 'Susian' figures in the background (*fig.* 4.13). Similarly the differences in attire and attributes between the different officials, in their variations and repetitions, give the impression of significance, but their precise meaning is not obvious. We can imagine our hypothetical Athenian, or any other visually sophisticated ethnicity, experienced in their own culture's iconography, suspecting that there is a code and being frustrated by their inability to understand it. Indeed the iconography seems deliberately designed to tantalise and suggest a complex system which the uninitiated viewer feels compelled to resolve, but from which they are ultimately excluded.

The question then arises whether this is the case for everyone, or whether there are viewers who have the key to these meanings and can cross the iconographic threshold. Are the gestures and garments decipherable to anyone, or are they simply intended to suggest a meaning which does not in fact exist? This is particularly important in that it sheds light on whether this tantalizing effect is deliberately directed at the subject peoples or whether the reliefs are simply designed for a Persian audience, and in depicting the empire according to Persian eyes, inadvertently create a tantalizing effect for everyone else.

In support of the view that these gestures have no specific meaning, the choice of garments and gesture often seems to be following aesthetic considerations: they are used to create rhythmic patterns. The most pervasive example of this is the alternation of the 'Median' and 'Persian' costumes, the shorter, smooth garment, interlaced with the falling swallow-tail folds (*fig.* 4.14a). It is particularly notable that the same alternation of garments is also used among the 'servants' or 'western Iranians' in the south part of the site, although with different, still alternating, headdresses (*fig.* 4.14b). Is it plausible to suppose that there is a specific iconographic meaning which is appropriate in both cases? Similar, more elaborate patterns can be seen in the objects carried by the figures, and the gestures that

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[538] Root 1979:277.

they make. This, for instance, is Schmidt's description of the 'servants' from the Palace of Xerxes:

'Medes and Persians alternate, and the equidistant Persian bearers of wine-skins - usually preceded or followed by Median animal-carriers - divide the processions into groups of four, including arbitrarily distributed vessel-carriers.'[539]

As discussed in Chapter Two, these clearly have an important function simply as pattern, which suggests that they may not have an additional iconographic meaning.

Root has argued also that the relationship between actual protocol and the gestures shown in the reliefs is slight. She suggests that Achaemenid protocol may well have been based on Assyrian models, and notes that there are gestures, such as kissing the king's feet, which feature prominently in both Assyrian and Achaemenid texts but do not appear in the Persepolis reliefs.[540] On this basis she suggests that the reliefs 'convey a particular impression… which was not necessarily predicated upon the replication of actuality.'[541] If this is correct, then the meaning of the details was not transmitted through actual gestures and garments in use by the court; however it is a fairly tentative argument, so the possibility cannot be excluded. That there was some overlap between reality and the reliefs is clear from the distinctive Achaemenid vessels carried by the delegations. It is possible that this overlap was more extensive than can currently be demonstrated.[542]

The evidence of iconography in other media is also somewhat ambivalent. There is very little direct iconographic overlap between the Persepolis images and those in other Achaemenid contexts. Indeed in their publication of the seals from the Persepolis fortification archive, the most extensive data for Achaemenid non-monumental imagery, Garrison and Root note:

'From the entire known repertoire of official Achaemenid sculpture depicting a human-form protagonist, the hero motif is the only one that is also a quantitatively significant theme on seals of the period.'[543]

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[539] Schmidt 1953:241.

[540] Root 1979:264-7.

[541] Root 1979:267.

[542] Henkelman 2002, discussing texts from the Persepolis fortification archive, notes (30): 'texts on lancemen reveal a strong connection to the king and the royal domain,' compare with the prevalence of lancemen in the reliefs. Though not in itself conclusive, it suggests such texts as a possible further source for links between protocol and image.

[543] Garrison and Root 2001:56.

This initially suggests that the reliefs did not derive a precise meaning from a broader iconographic tradition either. However, although whole scenes are not shared with the glyptic, correspondence of individual figures and motifs can be found. Garrison, for instance, comments on the 'richness and diversity' of imagery associated with the archer found in seal imagery, and also its importance on Achaemenid coinage, adding that 'the archer image must have resonated on multiple levels for the Persian aristocracy' (*fig.* 4.15a).[544] The theme of the archer is also, as he notes, a sub-text on much Achaemenid monumental sculpture (*fig.* 4.15b). This includes Persepolis, where officials carrying a bow and quiver appear on the south stairs of the Palace of Darius, the Tripylon, the north doors of the Hundred Column Hall and the Apadana, including the central audience panel. Garrison also notes a seal of a figure carrying an animal to sacrifice which 'interfaces with monumental relief at Persepolis in those scenes where individuals carry and lead animals.'[545] These observations we start to build up a picture of a developed elite iconography, into which the Persepolis reliefs play.

Garrison in fact argues for a very strong relationship between these seal images and the Persepolis reliefs:

> 'This audience [the administrative officials at Persepolis] also would have been exceptionally tuned to nuances of text and image from the very fact that their administrative activity involved them daily with an artifact, the sealed administrative document, that combined text and image... Indeed it is not too far-fetched to see the use of relief and inscription on Persepolitan architecture as directly related to that on Persepolitan administrative texts. I am suggesting here that we envision the architecture at Persepolis as administrative tablets, where text and images come together to validate, authorize and secure a transaction… The Apadana itself may be seen as an administrative tablet writ large, the rectangular strips of relief representing applications of cylinder seals, the lion and bull combats representing stamp seal, applied on the "edges" of the "document".'[546]

The visual correspondence between a rolled cylindrical seal and the repeating figures of the Apadana is striking, as is the combination of text and image. If Garrison is correct about

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[544] Garrison 2000:135.
[545] Garrison 2000:142.
[546] Garrison 2000:145.

the importance of this administrative audience, and the interface between sealing images and reliefs, it seems likely that the iconography does have an inner meaning, legible to the cognoscenti.

However, it is striking that the reliefs are still strongly orientated towards broad legibility beyond such an elite: the 'richness and diversity' of archer images in the glyptic at Persepolis is simplified to a single quiver-carrying figure type, which, as well as any more complex cultural associations it may have had, conveys a basic message of military power. This is consistent with the use of highly legible motifs on the site. Moreover, the fact that that so much of the imagery at Persepolis seems to have been designed as site-specific and to have remained so, not being incorporated into the more diverse and elaborated glyptic traditions, also suggests some degree of separation between it and the iconography in use among the elite.[547] If this is the case, it would mean that the reliefs are deliberately playing a double game, intended to appeal to both local and wider audiences. To the wider, imperial audience they are superficially highly legible, yet slightly disconcerting in their hidden meaning. To the inner circle they are also highly legible, precisely because these hidden meanings are integrated, if somewhat loosely, into the iconography of objects with which they have a close personal association. The fundamental message of the images is the power and structure of the Achaemenid empire, but it is communicated to these diverse audiences in different ways, which also reflect the relationship of these audiences to the empire.

Religion and Secularism

A similar principle seems to be in place if we look at the use of religion and mythology in the reliefs. The iconography of kingship at the site is, for the most part, strikingly secular. In Persian religion the king was not a god, but he had a privileged relationship to divinity, through his 'role in defending the god-given order,' which intertwined king, god(s), and empire.[548] This relationship is constantly reiterated in

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[547] It is probable that the Persepolis iconography was shared with other monumental sites, but the evidence is limited. Garrison 2000:119: 'Ekbatana is almost a complete blank to us. For Babylon the documentation is slightly better, but the material cultural evidence is slight for the Achaemenid period. The sprawling site at Susa, the most well-known of the Persian capitals to the Greek writers, has grudgingly yielded several architectural complexes of the Persian period, but little by way of visual images (with the striking exceptions of the famous statue of Darius the Great and the glazed brick Susian guards)... We have a glimpse of the wall decoration from Pasargadae, but the wall reliefs preserved from Palaces S and P are very fragmentary.'
[548] Kuhrt 2007:473. For Achaemenid religion see also Malandra 1983.

Achaemenid inscriptions, including that of the Persepolis terrace.[549] It is also prominent in the reliefs of the rock-cut royal tombs. There the primary image shows the king standing on raised ground opposite a fire altar, with the winged disc, usually identified as Ahura Mazda, hovering between them (*fig.* 4.16).[550] Root sees this image of 'the King before Ahura Mazda' as central to the 'abstracted vision' of Achaemenid iconography: it contains the themes of kingship and harmonious empire, but from an overtly religious angle. However, the motif does not appear on the Persepolis terrace. From this it appears that the repertoire of kingship iconography in Achaemenid monumental sculpture includes religious imagery, which Persepolis selects not to use.

This in itself might be due to requirements of cult or context, for example the different requirements of tomb and palatial imagery.[551] However, the winged disc itself does appear in the reliefs on the Persepolis platform, and its role is interesting. It appears in an abbreviated version, without the figure inside the disc, above the central panel of the Apadana, in a separate box also containing two sphinxes and a repeating foliage device, and demarcated from the main scene by a row of rosettes (*fig.* 4.17a). It appears, although this time with the figure, holding a ring, above the inscription of the west staircase of the Palace of Xerxes (*fig.* 4.17b), and its appearance can be deduced on the east staircase and both staircases of the Palace of Darius, by the edge of the tail feathers, which are still visible although the rest of the panels have been lost. It also appears at the top of the doorways of the Tripylon (*fig.* 4.17c), and of the south and north doorways of the Hundred Column Hall, in this case with two small versions below it (*fig.* 4.17d).

These locations are relatively prominent. The space above the central Apadana panels, in particular, is one of the most visible on the entire site. Nevertheless, the way in which the image is presented is discrete. It is separated from the main scenes, relatively small in scale and incorporated into the surrounding floral motifs. Thus it is simultaneously distinctly in evidence, but deliberately played down. This again suggests a double audience: the motif is present, indeed central, for those who understand it and its religious significance, but whose who do not recognise its full meaning are still entirely able to interact with the reliefs on a non-religious, non-culturally specific level. Root also notes that motif of the king before Ahura Mazda is, unlike all the other motifs at Persepolis,

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[549] Kuhrt 2007:488.

[550] For 'The King before Ahura Mazda' see Root 1979:162-181. The identification of the winged disc with Ahuramazda is still debated: Kuhrt 1995b:677: 'It is not certain that the figure in the disc is Ahuramazda, but its intimate relationship to the king echoes the text so perfectly that many scholars believe that we see here the king and his god.' See also Kuhrt 2007:556 and Kaim 1991.

[551] The image does appear on the tombs of Artaxerxes II and III, which are cut into the mountain above the platform of Persepolis, but still encircled by its walls.

specifically Iranian: it has no discernible prototype in Near Eastern art.[552] This again suggests that its low profile at Persepolis may be due its inability to communicate to a broad, culturally mixed audience.

Moreover, the absence of the motif is part of a general absence of overtly religious imagery on the site. Root argues that the reliefs consistently make use of imagery which draws on religious Near Eastern prototypes but converts them into politicised, non-religious contexts. Thus the mood of the originals, the 'aura of sacred covenant'[553] between the king and his subjects, is maintained, while the specifics of the religious background to the image are erased:

> 'The symbolic language of its sculptural representation was the product of a creative process of informed selection and adaption of very specific traditional ideas and formal prototypes for the portrayal in monumental terms of a new vision of hierarchical order and kingship-on-earth: a vision which was discreetly, but deliberately, couched in an aura of religiosity.'[554]

Root argues that Achaemenid iconography uses this adaption of motifs to create a new concept of kingship, in which the relationship between king and subjects is voluntary and co-operative rather than imposed or violent. The presentation of the subjects to the king is depicted as the dignified entrance of a worshipper into the sphere of a deity, rather than a humiliating ritual of subjugation.

Some of the prototypes that Root suggests are specific, however most are fairly wide spread. The 'hand over wrist gesture,' for instance, employed on the Apadana by the ushers bringing the delegations into the presence of the king, appears in 'Elamite and Mesopotamian' traditions for a priest bringing a worshipper into the presence of a god.[555] Similarly Root notes that although the 'atlas pose' used by the subjects supporting the king on high, may have a specific origin in the atlas struts of the thrones of Mesopotamian deities, the pose also has a more general ritual/cosmic use across Egypt and Mesopotamia.[556] It is also notable that nearly all of the Persepolis motifs, as well as any adapted meaning, make use of simple, cross-culturally recognisable signifiers of importance: the king is depicted as raised on high, as larger than his fellow men, as the

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[552] Root 1979:164.
[553] Root 1979:131.
[554] Root 1979:161. See also 152, 181, 275.
[555] Root 1979:275.
[556] Root 1979:152.

object of (usually bidirectional) movement. In this case the reliefs seem to be addressing not two, but multiple audiences: all viewers can understand the basic message of harmonious hierarchy, while those viewers who recognise some or all of the prototypes will also engage with it at these additional levels. However, as with the Ahura Mazda motif, this suggests that the designers of Persepolis had access to religious imagery, which they chose to adapt to the secular in order to make it more widely legible.

There have been interpretations of the reliefs as religious ceremonies. As well as the Na Ruz interpretation, Razmjou has recently suggested that the 'servants' or 'western Iranian' figures in the south staircases of the site should be seen as magi, participating in the *lan* ceremony, a ritual sacrifice mentioned many times in the tablets of the Persepolis fortification archives.[557] His theory, as it stands, does not seem to me entirely persuasive. He identifies the figures as priests on the basis of their headgear, which is similar to that worn in Achaemenid images in other media, which depict sacrifice (*figs* 4.18a and 4.18b). However, in these sacrifice images, the wrap is pulled up to cover the mouth, an action which is also attributed to the Persians by Strabo,[558] while the figures at Persepolis are not covering their mouths. Moreover the Median delegation on the Apadana and the figure standing behind the crown prince on the central Apadana audience panel, wear the two versions of this headdress, again not pulled over the mouth: are they also engaged in the *lan* ritual (*figs* 4.19a and 4.19b)? It seems equally likely that, if the headgear has a specific meaning, it is a marker of ethnicity or some other grouping and appears in both contexts as such, rather than as a marker specifically of engagement in religious rites.[559]

Nevertheless, the current understanding of Achaemenid religion, as well as that of the meaning of gestures in Achaemenid art, is limited,[560] so it is difficult entirely to dismiss the possibility of some sort of religious content. However, if there is such content, it is, as with the images of Ahura Mazda, and Mesopotamian prototypes, employed discreetly, such that the basic processional motif remains legible for those who are not aware of the religious meaning.

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[557] Razmjou 2004:111-4.

[558] Strabo XV 3.14, Kuhrt 2007:474, 551.

[559] There are other problems: the figures do not seem to be particularly distinctive of the ceremony, in particular they do not carry the *barsom*, the 'wand' typically shown in Persian sacrifice scenes (Kuhrt 2007:552-4, figs 11.41-3 with notes); a text from the Persepolis Fortification Archive (NN 2259, ll.5-6) has the *lan* ceremony taking place in the *paradeisos* at Persepolis (Kuhrt 2007:558), not on the platform, where there is also no evidence for altars, whereas the only plausibly identified Achaemenid shrine shows evidence of three (Kuhrt 2007:550, fig. 11.40); the theory would also contradict Sancisi-Weerdenburg's argument about the integration of the two tribute processions.

[560] Kuhrt 2007:475: 'the uncertainties in delineating the belief system of the Achaemenid rulers continue to loom large;' 549: 'It remains the case that no certainly identifiable Achaemenid shrine has so far been found.'

There are two exceptions to this. The first is the king-hero motif. This has possible mythological overtones,[561] and is, moreover, the only human image from the site to appear significantly in Achaemenid glyptic images (*fig.* 4.20).[562] However it is more or less exclusively confined to the most private areas of the terrace (*fig.* 4.5). Its seclusion in fact strengthens the argument that there is a deliberate avoidance of non-secular images in the more public areas of the site. The other is the ubiquitous lion-bull motif. This is prominent throughout the site, interrupting the processional quality of the reliefs, and giving the impression of an enigmatic 'symbol for something very important.'[563] Both Root and Garrison have noted the similarity of its use to that of 'a royal seal on an important document,' and the image also appears on actual seals.[564] In this quality it appeals to the administrative and courtly audience, the users of seals; however it also seems likely that it is intended to remind the audience of imperial subjects that, ultimately, despite the ease with which they can relate to much of the sculptural program, this is an Achaemenid building, and part of a system they are not intended fully to comprehend.

Appropriation and Conformity

As we have seen, the iconography of Persepolis closely shapes real experience. The fundamental narrative is the viewer's narrative, their presence on, and progress through, the site, which takes place temporally in the here and now. The combination of this with the iconography of kingship merges the abstract and the real, promoting easy absorption of the vision of empire that the sculptural program projects; an idealized vision, but yet, to its wider audience, somewhat intimidating.

This does not mean that Persepolis is not liable to cultural appropriation: one of the tenets of thin coherence is that no material object can entirely control the responses it elicits. This is vividly illustrated in Root's analysis of a possible Athenian response to the reliefs as a whole. In this she considers hypothetical reactions not just to the depiction of the Yauna delegation, but to the Apadana frieze as a whole. She suggests that their fully-clothed, spatially restrained bodies, hand holding, with flowers and pomegranates, all in

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[561] Though see Root 1979:303-7 for the identity of the 'king-hero.' She notes (304) that: 'Instead of the strapless shoes worn in Achaemenid sculpture only by royalty, the hero wears the strapped shoes common to all other figures in Persian dress,' and suggests that the figure is meant to represent the king as 'a Persian man,' an appellation Darius uses in his tomb inscription. Thus, although the figure is often shown stabbing unreal creatures, he should probably not be seen as strictly mythological.

[562] Garrison and Root 2001:56.

[563] Nylander 1974:145-6.

[564] Garrison 2000:150-1.

Athenian iconography connected with women, might, in combination with Greek preconceptions and prejudices about the Persians, have elicited a 'bristling, gendered reaction:'[565]

> 'Our Athenian *might* encounter the Apadana and see his worst nightmare carved in stone: a scene out of an Aristophanes comedy of reversal – where his gender-controlled world had been turned upside down; where he had entered a 'city of women'; where he sees himself… cast in the role of a subservient female led around by the hand with his nuptial treasures, like an anxious bride.'[566]

We may imagine that similarly complex and culturally specific responses would be possible from other ethnicities. As Root notes, this illustrates the gap which invariably exists between intended and actual reception, and which becomes particularly extreme and unpredictable when the audience is as diverse as that at Persepolis.

Nevertheless, I have suggested that Persepolis was designed with the intention of overcoming this problem as far as possible. Its sculptural program attempts to prevent such cultural (mis)interpretations, by developing a highly legible iconography, which sets particular parameters for engagement. The interaction it elicits encourages, as far as possible, a culturally various audience to align their sympathies with an Achaemenid vision of their empire, while simultaneously subtly reminding them of their own subordinate role in it. Root's Aristophanic vision is, for the designer, a worst-case scenario, but we can also imagine that the reliefs may often have been much more successful in eliciting an enthusiastic, conformist response.

The Akropolis

The potential audience for the Periklean building program has a very different cultural composition to that at Persepolis. While there is some evidence for non-Greek visitors to Athens, including indeed ambassadors from Persia,[567] the overwhelming majority of viewers were from within the, broadly defined, Hellenic world. These include, firstly, Athenian citizens themselves; also the various more peripheral, non-citizen groups resident in Athens – women, metics, slaves; also imperial subjects, representatives of whom were

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[565] Root 2008:211.
[566] Root 2008:214.
[567] Miller 1997:89-91.

required to attend the Panathenaia,[568] among other possible reasons for their being in Athens; also members of non-allied communities, in Athens for reasons of travel, trade, politics, or work.[569] The precise cultural background and knowledge of these viewers would vary, however the program is based on the assumption that its audience is integrated into some version of the Greek cultural and religious world. I consider firstly how the Akropolis uses this broadly shared background to elicit a very different type of interaction between viewer and reliefs to that at Persepolis, and secondly to what extent the sculptural program is in fact adapted to communicate with different groups within the Hellenic umbrella.

Myth

The sculptural program of the Akropolis, in contrast to Persepolis, is largely mythological and religious. The pediments of the Parthenon respectively depict the birth of Athena and the contest between Athena and Poseidon, the metopes the fall of Troy, and a Gigantomachy, an Amazonomachy, and a Centauromachy.[570] These last three themes also appeared on the shield and sandals of the Athena Parthenos, while the base of the statue depicted the birth of Pandora.[571] The pediments of the Temple of Athena Nike are thought to have also contained a Gigantomachy and an Amazonomachy.[572] The frieze of the temple of Athena Nike is less straightforwardly mythological. On the east frieze various divinities are gathered around a central group of Athena, Poseidon and Zeus, but the south frieze shows the battle of Marathon, and the west and north friezes show scenes which have been variously interpreted as mythological battles or contemporary scenes from the Peloponnesian War.[573] Hurwit notes that Marathon had by the end of the fifth century

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[568] Parker 1996:142.

[569] Antonaccio 2003:58: 'The circulation of culture took place by means of the circulation of persons… physicians, painters, sculptors, architects, lyric poets, and rhapsodes (and athletes, we might add) were in constant motion.'

[570] For the pediments: Hurwit 2004:128-33; for the metopes: Hurwit 2004:124-8. The badly damaged state of the sculpture means that the details of the compositions are often debated. The east pediment is particularly problematic, as the central figures were destroyed when the building was converted into a church, long before they could be drawn by Carrey. See Mostratos 2004 for a discussion of different reconstructions. The identification of the Amazonomachy in the west metopes has also sometimes been questioned, with the 'Amazons' being read instead as Persians. Schwab 2005:179 discusses this, citing Brommer 1967:191-5 and Wesenberg 1983:203-8, but disagrees.

[571] Hurwit 1999:187-8.

[572] Stewart 1985:56.

[573] Hurwit 1999:212; for the identification of the south frieze as Marathon see Harrison 1972:353.

acquired a legendary status, so it would not be out of place among mythological scenes.[574] If, on the other hand, they are contemporary battles, they still require Greek, or perhaps specifically Athenian, cultural knowledge fully to relate to. The clusters of Nikai on the parapet and in the akroteria of the temple are also mythological figures, whose significance is only understood though cultural recognition.

The pediments of the Erechtheion were empty, while the frieze does not survive sufficiently well for its subject to be reconstructed. Unfortunately, the Erechtheum accounts refer to the figures as 'the youth beside the breastplate,' or 'the woman embraced by the girl,' rather than making specific identifications.[575] Nevertheless there is little reason to doubt that they had a mythological content. Glowacki identifies a figure of Athena seated with her armour at her side, and although Hurwit notes that the quiet poses of most of the figures make identification particular difficult, he affirms that the content is 'undoubtedly mythological.'[576] The identification of the Karyatids is also problematic. They have sometimes been interpreted as the women of Karyae, enslaved after the city Medized; this interpretation, however originates with Vitruvius and presents a number of difficulties.[577] A plausible alternative is that they are pouring libations over Kekrops' tomb, in which case they too have a mythological connection.[578]

Finally there is the Parthenon frieze. This is usually interpreted as a non-mythological scene; it is also the element of the sculptural program which is most frequently compared with Persepolis. There is therefore a clear similarity to the use of the processional motif on, particularly, the Apadana. Viewed as part of the total program of the Akropolis, the similarities are somewhat weakened. The frieze prominently includes the Olympian gods, and possibly the eponymous heroes;[579] it also includes a wealth of religious paraphernalia and civic personnel.[580] It is thus integrated into the wider mythical-religious themes of the Akropolis' sculpture and, to a significant extent, shares their need for cultural knowledge in order to become legible. The frieze generally been read, through its relationship to the Panathenaic procession, as a model of Athenian society or the Athenian empire. Here again the relationship is looser than that at Persepolis. The allies do not

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[574] Hurwit 1999:212.
[575] Hurwit 2004:178; see Caskey 1927:387-9 for the text of the inscription mentioning these figures in the 408/7 accounts.
[576] Hurwit 2004:177; Glowacki 1995.
[577] Vickers 1985; Hersey 1988:74 for recent versions of this explanation; Ridgway 1999:146 for the origin of this myth in Vitruvius, and its lack of correspondence to the sculpture; Hurwit 2004:72 for the Karyatids as libation pourers.
[578] Hurwit 2004:72.
[579] Hurwit 1999:186.
[580] Hurwit 1999:182-6; Maurizio 1998: 302-3 compares with literary sources.

overtly appear anywhere in it,[581] and even taken as a model of Athenian society, it is far less overtly systematically structured. Osborne also comments on the uniformity, rather than the differences, between the figures:

> 'The Parthenon frieze presents neither a record of some reality, nor the creation of some remote ideal; it presents the very aristocratic image of Athenian democracy at its most élitist, where all citizens are not just soldiers but the quintessential soldier, the young man in the cavalry whom public inspection requires to be a model of physical fitness.'[582]

The model of society the frieze presents does have the same highly organised agenda as that at Persepolis. Thus although the frieze does have definite similarities with the Apadana, it does not have quite the same emphasis on a literal and highly legible depiction of practice and social divisions.[583]

From this brief survey it is clear that, unlike at Persepolis, there is no consistent attempt to use either the processional motif or an absence of religious imagery to make the sculpture of the Akropolis legible to the culturally inexperienced eye. Instead, it uses the expectation that its audience will be able to read the mythological, ritual and, perhaps, historical iconographic content to create an extended, involved experience of interaction with the reliefs, in which the viewer is enabled to manipulate and elaborate meaning to a far greater extent than at Persepolis.

Narrative

This can be seen initially in the development of narrative in the sculpture. Let us start by considering the Parthenon metopes, some of the least badly damaged sculpture of the Akropolis. Their position within the architecture, and divided by the triglyphs, means that each metope exists as an individual unit; however they are linked to the other metopes in a variety of different ways. Starting with the west metopes, which are the first to be seen from the approach to the site, the recurrent two-figure duel scenes invite comparison with each other, all the more so because patterns emerge between them (*fig.* 4.21).They alternate

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[581] Castriota 1992:188-90.
[582] Osborne 1987:104.
[583] Castriota 1992:188-90 notes a number of other structural and compositional dissimilarities.

between two figures on foot, in which the Greek figure seems to be gaining the upper hand, and a mounted Amazon attacking a fallen Greek. Like the alternating Median and Persian dress at Persepolis this has a patterning effect, however here it also introduces narrative tension, raising the question of who is winning.[584] Schwab notes that the exceptions to this rule are West 1 which shows a single mounted Amazon riding in the direction of the battle and West 11 in which the Greek figure is lying on the ground, dead, or at least definitively defeated.[585] Does this mean Amazon reinforcements are arriving? Or possibly that the Amazons are winning? The Greek viewer, of course, knows what the ultimate outcome of the myth is, but they are drawn in to considering the events taking place and the possible outcomes and alternatives.

Duelling figures also appear on the east metopes, here the gods battling with the Giants, and on the south metopes, where centaurs fighting with Lapiths frame the central sequence of the reliefs. Here too comparison is invited between the different frames of each façade. In the case of the east metopes the repetitions are varied by the different deity in each metope, with Athena and Herakles given particularly important positions in East 4 and East 11, the only three-figure metopes, and symmetrically balanced within the sequence, emphasising their roles in the battle (*fig.* 4.22).[586] The concluding figure of Helios restoring the day in the last metope, East 14, neatly wraps up the events, defining an end to the narrative. The repetitions in the south metopes more closely resemble the Amazonomachy; each contains a Lapith on foot and a centaur figure, and again the outcome of the battle seems far from resolved (*fig.* 4.23). In this longer sequence, the narrative is deepened by a central sequence of nine metopes. Unfortunately these were badly damaged in the explosion of 1687, so their precise subject matter is unclear. Suggestions include the wedding of Perithoos and Hippodameia, in which case the entire series would depict one event, or the story of Ixion, the father of Perithoos and grandfather of the centaurs, in which case they would depict the back-story of the combat.[587] In either case, they function as an extension, whether etiological or otherwise, of the fighting, expanding its narrative depth in the associations possible between the two sequences.

The Iliupersis in the north metopes seems to have been depicted with even more narrative content than the other metope sequences: rather than repetitive duels, the north

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[584] Osborne 1994a:145: 'The result of the war with the Amazons would not be in question for any viewer, but in the metopes the battle honours are even.'
[585] Schwab 2005:179.
[586] Schwab 2005:169-70.
[587] Castriota 1992:152-162 summarizes the debate.

façade shows a number of differently composed scenes, although still with interactions between them (*fig.* 4.24). Helios rising in North 1 and Selene setting in North 29 frame the narrative. In North 2 a boat arrives, or possibly departs; North 24 and 25 form the most legible of the episodes as Menelaos rushes with his sword drawn to attack Helen as she takes shelter at a statue, probably that of Athena.[588] As only thirteen of the original thirty-two north metopes survive it is difficult to comment with certainty on their composition, however an increase in narrative density on this side of the Parthenon, which ran along the sacred way and could therefore expect the most traffic, would suggest the viewer's potential engagement with the narrative was deliberately planned.

As well as within each metope group, intertexts are also created between the different sequences. Visual links can be found beyond the recurrent theme of duelling figures. Schwab notes similarities between specific poses in the south and east metopes, and suggests that they were developed from a 'core group of combat poses.'[589] Some of the same gods also recur on the different sides: Athena, Aphrodite, Eros, Hera, and Zeus all feature in the Gigantomachy and have also been identified in the surviving metopes of the Iliupersis.[590] Also, the last metope of the east sequence and the first of the north both depict Helios' chariot (*fig.* 4.25). Their position at the corner of the building means they are next to each other. This is important as a reminder that the positioning of the sculpture on the buildings and the buildings within the site means that, unlike at Persepolis, the different sculptural elements can often be seen at the same time. This too encourages intertextual readings between them. Another connection, also dependent on the corner angle, that Schwab notes is that the Amazonomachy and the Iliupersis are simultaneously visible as the viewer approaches the Parthenon along the Panathenaic Way. She suggests that:

> 'A subtle visual link was thus established between these two battles, reminding visitors that the Amazons fought on the side of the Trojans against the Greeks.'[591]

As far as we know, the Amazons were not actually depicted in the north metopes, so in this case it is particularly true that the connection requires the viewer's previous cultural knowledge.

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[588] Schwab 2005:183-5; Hurwit 1999:170.
[589] Schwab 2005:169.
[590] Schwab 2005:168-173; 183-190, with bibliography for identifications.
[591] Schwab 2005:189.

Perhaps even more important than these visual links are the thematic connections that can be traced between the four metope sequences. The most generally accepted of these is the idea that the various mythological episodes are systematic analogies for the Persian Wars, rendering the Parthenon a victory monument as much as a celebration of Athens and Athena.[592] Hurwit indeed remarks that it is a 'truism' that the mythological battles were 'analogues or allegories for the historical victory over the evil Eastern empire.'[593] However, other connecting themes have also been found. Schwab indicates the wider possible reference of the battles in the metopes, noting simply that they 'are all about war;'[594] other specific opponents have also been read into them, for instance the Greek ancestry of the centaurs has led to the south metopes being interpreted as allegories for internal Greek conflicts.[595] Another theme that is often noted is the role of women;[596] Delivorrias, for instance, picks up the theme of marriage in the Centauromachy and sees it and its (dis)harmonious effects on the community as a thread running through the program: the Trojan war is caused by the breaking of marriage vows; the Amazons are the antithesis of virtuous married women; in the Gigantomachy there is a 'symmetrical placing of male and female deities.'[597]

The battle between Greeks and Persians has indeed been expanded to include a wide variety of antitheses:

> 'That piety will defeat impiety, that justice will triumph over injustice, that order will overcome chaos, that rationality will defeat bestial violence, that the west will triumph over the east and that the male will overcome the female'[598]

It has also been read as the relationship between self and a variety of 'others.' Schwab notes:

> 'The Parthenon metopes seem to contain layers of meaning that could be interpreted as not just a foreign enemy… but also a psychological or political enemy within.'[599]

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[592] Cf Castriota 1992:134-8.
[593] Hurwit 2004:223-4.
[594] Schwab 2005:167.
[595] Castriota 1992:163, with bibliography.
[596] Cf Hurwit 1999:235-45.
[597] Delivorrias 1994:124.
[598] Hurwit 1999:232.
[599] Schwab 2005:168.

The point is not so much whether one, or any, of these interpretations is 'correct', but rather that all of these connections and themes, as well as doubtless many others, can found or read into the reliefs. The content of the sculpture triggers these various thoughts and narratives, allowing the viewer to relate to the reliefs in an extended and varied ways. This process can also be extended to comparisons between the metopes and other elements of the sculptural program. Obvious possible connections exist between the different sculptural elements on the Parthenon, between the different representations of the same myth around the site, and indeed themes that can be traced across the site as a whole, such as Hurwit's observation that victory is ubiquitous on the Akropolis.[600] The extent of this involvement is particularly amplified by the richness of the Akropolis' sculptural program, as compared to other Greek sites. This is particularly notable in the Parthenon's ninety-two metopes, in addition to the frieze, compared to only twelve metopes on the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. It is also true of the temple of Athena Nike, which Hurwit describes as having 'pound for pound, the richest sculptural program of the Classical Acropolis.'[601]

Ethos

The comparison of one sculptural element with another is not, in itself, dissimilar to Persepolis, where there is also the compulsion to compare delegation with delegation, official with official, staircase with staircase, and frieze with frieze. However, where the Akropolis differs is that the interaction of the viewer with the reliefs, whether viewed individually or, particularly, together is extended in both time and depth. This is partly due simply to the greater variation. However the mythological, narrative character of the reliefs is also central, contributing, in Sewell's terms, to the much greater potential to 'elaborate, modify and adapt' response to the material on the Akropolis than that at Persepolis.

In particular, the use of myth and narrative allows the possibility, to a much greater extent, of what might loosely be called 'ethical' interaction, in the sense in which Castriota uses the word in *Myth, Ethos and Actuality*. There he argues that in the metopes of the Parthenon, as well as in a number of other monumental works of fifth century Athens, the essential link which creates an analogy between the mythological narratives and the

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[600] Hurwit 2004:240.
[601] Hurwit 1999:211.

contemporary contest with Persia, is that of the ethical character and motivation of the participants in the combat, with Greek *sophrosyne* pitted against Persian *hybris*:

> 'In this sense such works operated as visual exempla whose usage was consciously meant to parallel the didactic and teleological strategies of contemporary poetry and rhetoric… the force of such imagery, its very rationale, must have turned largely on the issue of human character as determining factor in the struggles of the Greeks against their enemies in ancient and recent history. For the works of this period, *ethos* was the essential variable in the equation or analogy between myth and actuality.'[602]

Castriota discusses how the myths depicted in the metopes were chosen to fit this theme. In each case it is not merely that Greeks or Greek gods are opposed to an 'other,' outsiders or enemies, but that the (im)moral character of that other is stressed. The Gigantomachy is 'the ultimate mythic paradigm for the defense of law and *sophrosyne* and the punishment of *hybris*, in which the gods themselves suppressed the presumptuous and irreverent affront to their authority.'[603] In the Amazonomachy 'the Amazon's unlimited and reckless appetite for domination, their imperialism, was branded a female, even a bestial trait.'[604] The centaurs are 'unnatural and criminal' in ancestry, an ancestry which is foregrounded if the reading of the central metopes as the story of Ixion is correct, and their behaviour is a mixture of 'overt violence and impiety.'[605] Even more strikingly, Castriota argues that the traditional iconography of the Iliupersis was carefully adapted to the context, with the acts of Greek impiety, such as the murder of Priam at the altar of Zeus, or the rape of Cassandra in Athena's temple, which feature in Attic red-figure, deliberately omitted, and acts of Greek aggression downplayed; the role of the gods is also emphasised, framing the metopal sequence. This argument is not entirely conclusive as the majority of the metopes are missing and their contents unknown; however, if correct, the Greeks are presented as 'unquestionable executants of the divine retribution incurred by an insolent, Asiatic foe,'[606] and the myth neatly adapted to the general ethical theme of the metopes.

The other themes discussed in the Akropolis reliefs, while not necessarily fitting precisely into this particular unified reading, share this ethical quality in their preoccupation

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[602] Castriota 1992:12, for *sophrosyne* and *hybris*:17-32.
[603] Castriota 1992:139.
[604] Castriota 1992:151.
[605] Castriota 1992:163, 164.
[606] Castriota 1992:174.

with social questions and in their exploration of these through what is broadly Castriota's concept of *ethos*. Two themes that recur in the discussions are the place of women in the *polis*, and the line of inclusion or exclusion from society through the bounds of civilized, social behaviour. Osborne notes that the significance of the centaurs in the program, as elsewhere in fifth century Greek sculpture, is precisely that they are part-human, not merely monsters. The centaur is 'a creature… whose capability for highly cultured behaviour is always finally compromised by conflict,'[607] and whose problematic relationship with community and authority makes the Centauromachy a good narrative for thinking through the implications of these qualities for the human community of Athens. Osborne sees the program as a meditation on violence, community, and responsible decision making and notes that the narrative's ethical significance is crucial:

> 'Relations with others, other individuals, other communities, are an immediate issue, and in each case the moral difficulties of deciding how to relate and defending that decision once taken are real and uncomfortable.'[608]

The myth is thus used to explore community structures in terms of character traits.

Interpretations of the presentation of women on the Akropolis are highly varied. Barringer argues that the repeated presence of women in the images and rituals of the Akropolis 'emphasize[s] the importance of females, female sexuality, and marriage to the city.'[609] Hurwit similarly notes that 'it is undeniable… that the women on the Parthenon frieze share in the same broad civic idealization as the men,'[610] but also that the myths in which women appear on the site all have strong possible patriarchal readings. In particular the theme of female sexuality as dangerous recurs: in the myth of Pandora on the base of the statue of the Athena Parthenos, in the Amazonomachy, and in the appearance of Helen, the trigger for the Trojan war, in the north metopes.

Castriota moreover argues that through the alignment of the Amazons and their 'insatiable, hybristic female appetite' with the Persians, external and internal enemies are equated, and the 'ceaseless efforts of the just, autochthonous men of Attika to suppress and punish lawlessness and excess' invoked.[611] He also comments on the relationship between these west metopes and the west pediment above them (*fig.* 4.26). While the later

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[607] Osborne 1994b:54.
[608] Osborne 1994b:83.
[609] Barringer 2008:107.
[610] Hurwit 1999:244-5.
[611] Castriota 1992:151.

immediately appears to depict the victory of the female deity Athena over Poseidon; according to Varro, Poseidon's consequent anger led to women being disenfranchised and the institution of patrilinear names, closely connected with the institution of marriage.[612] Castriota thus argues that, particularly taken in conjunction with the Amazonomachy below, this most prominent of the Akropolis sculptures also offers a rationalisation of male control. Hurwit, however, discussing the application of the same version of the myth to the pediments, sees it rather as potentially raising political awareness among women: 'That this story… exists at all suggests that sexual politics could be read in, or into, some of the most prominent images of the Classical Acropolis.' Osborne has also suggested that the reliefs, in this case the north metopes, could potentially elicit a sort of proto-feminist consciousness 'Helen's quest for sanctuary at the statue of Athene puts women at the centre of Athene's city. To the question "are all wars really wars against women?" Helen offers a particular answer.'[613] Also playing across these interpretations is the presentation of women in the parapet frieze of the temple of Athena Nike which, Stewart suggests, is again showcasing female sexuality,[614] but this time in a highly desirable light, not only as a potential reward for victory, but also sacrificing on behalf of Athens, so here entirely aligned with the interests of the *polis*.

Our concern here, again, is not which, if any, of these interpretations is correct, but the type of possible response that the sculpture elicits: these accounts are all concerned with the ways in which character traits and emotional states related to the structures of society, and they encourage responses which think about Athens in those terms.

Castriota actually argues elsewhere that there is a strong similarity between the value systems displayed in Persian and Athenian monumental sculpture.[615] He argues that in each case the monuments 'disclose virtually the same claims to justice, valour, and piety,'[616] and that in each case this involves a relationship between divinity and mortal which is mediated through kingship. On the Akropolis, or more specifically the Parthenon, to which Castriota confines his argument, this kingship is manifested through the hero-kings who occur intermittently through the reliefs: Herakles in the east pediment, Kekrops in the west, Theseus in the west and south metopes, the Greek kings from the Trojan war in the north, and, finally, the figure that he identifies as the Archon Basileus in the central

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[612] Castriota 1992:150.
[613] Osborne 1994a:147.
[614] Stewart 1997:148.
[615] Castriota 2000.
[616] Castriota 2000:444.

panel of the east frieze, whose office is 'a vestige of the sacral function of the *basileus.*' He concludes:

> 'No less than the Greeks, the Persians too claimed to be lovers and defenders of justice. Conversely, beneath their antimonarchic rhetoric, the Greeks could not conceive of maintaining a just political order without bringing the mediating figure of a king into the equation in some way.'[617]

This argument is interesting, particularly for its support of the view that there are deep underlying similarities between the structures of Persepolis and the Akropolis. However, despite a similarity in their claims to justice and piety, there is a difference in the manner in which these virtues are presented. At Persepolis justice and piety are equated with harmony and order, and, essentially, with a place in the social structure surrounding the king. Although the inscriptions leave no doubt that the Achaemenid kings saw these values as underpinning their rule,[618] it is the order around the king that the reliefs themselves primarily showcase. On the Akropolis by contrast, im/piety and in/justice and their effects on social structures are vividly illustrated in narrative form, with an emphasis on motivations and states of mind. A particularly clear example of this is the moment in the north metopes where king Menelaos' rage at Helen turns, by the intervention of Aphrodite, to desire: although the metopes are badly damaged much of it can be reconstructed with the help of numerous representations of the scene on vases (*fig.* 4.27a-d).[619] Such emotions are simply not relevant to the Persepolis program. Indeed, it is striking that in Root's account of a hypothetical Athenian response to Persepolis, much of the (mis)interpretation of the reliefs is due to the Athenian expectation of a gendered, sexualised, ethical content, which is not in fact there. There is overlap between the iconographic content of the two sites, both are concerned with social structure and also with military prowess, but the Akropolis uses character, emotion, desire, and excess to engage a different level of response. These psychological aspects are further developed by the juxtaposition of the myths, which encourages the elaboration of critical thought about

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[617] Castriota 2000:473.
[618] E.g. in the Bisitun inscription narrating Darius' account of his seizure of the throne: Kuhrt 2007:148-9 §63: 'Darius the king proclaims: For this reason Auramazda helped me, and the other gods who are: because I was not disloyal, I was not a follower of the Lie, I was not an evil-doer – neither I nor my family. I acted according to righteousness. Neither to the powerless nor to the powerful did I do wrong. Him who strove for my house, him I treated well, him who did harm, I punished well.'
[619] Schwab 2005:184-6.

ethical questions shared between them, the function of *sophrosyne* or *hybris* more generally, rather than simply its role in a particular story.

The ethical quality of the Akropolis reliefs also makes them more ambiguous than those at Persepolis. We have already seen that the presentation of women in the sculpture yields to multiple interpretations, and that its presentation of the 'other' also has potential degrees of ambiguity. Osborne also notes that the moral circumstances, particularly those surrounding conflict, depicted in the narratives are often far from straightforward.

'An Athene financed by the spoils of war, the sacking of cities, the enslavement of women, and an empire crucially founded upon the barbarising of the enemy. The monument built to house this statue does not conceal such issues, it, like the tragedies, and above all the tragedies of Euripides, and like the works of Herodotus and Thucydides, keeps them on the agenda.'[620]

There might seem to be a conflict between such doubts, even perhaps subversions, and the extremely self-glorifying and patriotic quality that has also often been noted on the Akropolis:

'To say the Athenians built the Parthenon to worship themselves would be an exaggeration, but not a great one.'[621]

However this is not necessarily a contradiction. Providing space within the program for such dissent, potentially diffuses criticism and incorporates it back into the fundamentally pro-Athenian structure of the site as a whole: it creates space for the recognition and negotiation of the city's social pressures in a controlled iconographic environment, which ultimately asserts the glory of Athens as paramount.

Integration

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[620] Osborne 1994a:149.

[621] Lewis 1992:139. See also Osborne 1994b:76: 'The Parthenon is an exuberant and confident monument: the pediments celebrate the uniqueness of Attica, fought over by the gods, and the uniqueness of Athena's birth... But for all that the sculptures do not suppress questioning. The virtual omnipresence of conflict in the metopes provides a running commentary upon the more celebratory aspects of pedimental and frieze sculptures.'

Extended and elaborated engagement with the sculpture is also increased by the extension of its themes and motifs beyond the site. We have noted the possibility that at Persepolis officials and courtiers might have experienced the reliefs as part of a system integrated into their wider lives; however this is true to a far greater and more pervasive extent for the Akropolis' Athenian audience. It is this web of cultural intertext which made the sculpture legible; it also means that the viewer relates to the images in a highly integrated way. As Castriota notes:

> 'The unifying network of attitudes, concepts, and opinions that informed all media of expression was part of the fabric of Athenian life and consciousness, and interplay among the various media was a vital factor in the making and operation of all forms of public imagery.'[622]

Much of the iconography used on the Akropolis was already familiar to an Athenian audience from its appearance on the earlier Athenian public monuments, particularly those associated with Kimon. The Centauromachy and the Amazonomachy both appeared in the wall-paintings of the Theseion, while the *Stoa Poikile* paintings showed an Amazonomachy and an Iliupersis, as well as the battle of Marathon.[623] As a result of this, as Castriota notes:

> 'By the 440s the Athenian public was thoroughly familiar with the systematic display of Centaur, Amazon, and Trojan as a fixed set of mythic analogues for the Persian.'[624]

The Gigantomachy was an addition to this established thematic set. However it too was familiar in a public context to the Athenians having been the subject of the late archaic pediment on the Old temple of Athena and the subject traditionally embroidered on the *peplos* presented in the Panathenaia.[625]

The Akropolis myths had also occurred in forms more or less closely related to the scenes on the Akropolis in more private contexts, notably on pottery. Hurwit notes that the birth of Athena probably appeared in sculpture for the first time in the east pediment,

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[622] Castriota 1992:14-5.
[623] Castriota 1992:33-63 for the Theseion; 76-89 for the *Stoa Poikile*; Harrison 1972 for the battle of Marathon in the *Stoa Poikile* .
[624] Castriota 1992:138.
[625] Castriota 1992:139.

but was a common theme in Athenian vase-painting.[626] Schwab and Castriota both note a number of examples of the various Parthenon metope themes in ceramics, some pre- and some post-dating the Akropolis building program.[627] Schwab in particular notes a variety of instances in which there is a close similarity between a pose in one of the Parthenon reliefs and that on a pot, as for instance in the distinctive, foreshortened pose in West 13 which also occurs in a mid-fifth century red-figure volute krater attributed to the Painter of the Woolly Satyrs (*fig.* 4.28).[628] She notes that it is hard to be certain whether there is direct influence from the one to the other, or whether both are copying the pose from another source, such as one of the earlier wall-paintings, now lost. However numerous such examples demonstrate the interplay that existed in one form or another between the Akropolis sculptures and iconographic traditions in other media.

The relationship between monumental and demotic form is not consistent. Stewart, for instance, looking at the Beazley archive, notes that the number of Amazon scenes in Attic vase-painting doubled around the mid-fifth century, while the number of scenes of the sack of Troy fell by about eighty per cent during the same period, despite the use of both in both Kimonian and Periklean monumental imagery. He attributes this interest in the Amazons to the immigration crisis which precipitated Pericles' citizenship decree of 451, specifically these images were a way of exploring 'Athenian anxieties about the unprecedented influx of foreign girls into the and its consequences [for the Athenian marriage market.]'[629] The reason for the fall in popularity of the Iliupersis is uncertain, although one suggestion is that the discrepancies between the canonical ceramic version and those created in the monumental art of the fifth century were too great to be overcome.[630] Castriota documents the resurgence of the theme, in a new form, towards the end of the fifth century, which he attributes to 'a new wave of anti-Persian sentiment in Athens.'[631] From this it appears that the relationship between public and private art was governed by a number of factors, both artistic and social. Nevertheless it is clear that the imagery of the public monuments overlaps considerably with the demotic forms, with the result that a visitor to the Akropolis would respond to the imagery not just as it appeared its context on the site, but bringing to bear a whole host of associations and meanings from their use of these myths and images in the material culture of their day to day life.

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[626] Hurwit 2004:132.
[627] Schwab 2005:169, 171, 177, 179, 181, 185; Castriota 1992 discusses how vase-painting can be used to reconstruct the themes in lost wall-paintings: 37-58, 83-4; 96-118.
[628] Schwab 2005:179-181.
[629] Stewart 1995:589.
[630] Castriota 1992, citing Moret 1975:59.
[631] Castriota 1992:179.

Indeed almost more important than close similarities of pose and theme are the examples of more loosely related imagery which allows the Akropolis reliefs to be tied into the entire city of images, not only mythological and religious, but also social and domestic that Bérard et al. have documented.[632] A particularly highly developed example of this can be seen in Stewart's discussion of the Amazons. He connects the myth to the citizenship decree through a discussion of the Amazons as *parthenoi*, unmarried women, with a sexually ambivalent, both threatening and attractive, and socially liminal status. This in turn is understood through its place in Athenian views on adolescent girls more generally, a connection illustrated through an amphora by the 'Andokides' painter, which shows Amazons arming on the one side, and adolescent girls exercising and swimming on the other (*fig.* 4.29).[633] Thus the Amazonomachy of the Parthenon metopes is intricately connected, through the thought structures of Athenian life generally, and demotic images particularly, to the immediate concerns of the Athenian families.

To take another example, a series of terracotta votive plaques from the Akropolis seem to show Athena spinning wool (*fig.* 4.30).[634] This sets up a network of connections between Athena in her many forms on the Akropolis, the peplos, depicted in the Parthenon frieze, and the mundane task of spinning carried out by nearly all Athenian women. Here again we see the integration of the public sculpture into much more personal aspects of life. In his discussion of Athenian religion, Parker notes: 'A general distinction between 'public' or 'private' religion cannot be maintained:'[635]private individuals sacrifice at public shrines, while the household cults were 'most emphatically among the 'gods whom the city recognises'.'[636] In a similar way, Athenian imagery, much of which anyway has a religious aspect,[637] does not divide easily into public and private: differences can be found in theme and medium, but there is a fluid relationship between the two, such that familiarity with each influences response to the other.

As well as these more marginal examples, this is true of the major themes of the Akropolis. Schwab's observation that the metopes are 'all about war,'[638] or Hurwit's that victory is ubiquitous on the site,[639] are pressing and personal issues in a society with a

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632 Bérard, Bron et al. 1989.
633 Stewart 1995:580.
634 Hurwit 2004:33.
635 Parker 1996:5.
636 Parker 1996:6.
637 Cf Parker 2005: 452:'Religion is very important, because it impinges on everything. Religion is very unimportant, because it is so much a part of the life of the city that it has no independent position, no ground from which to assert distinct imperatives of its own.'
638 Schwab 2005:167.
639 Hurwit 2004:240.

participatory military. The metopes elicit thought not just about the Persian wars, but about wars that the viewer, or their immediate family, may have fought or be about to fight in. This analogy too is facilitated by the intertexts created in ceramic images. Lissarrague notes that in pottery 'scenes showing the phalanx, the compact group of hoplites are quite rare. The artists prefer a duel of heroes to the anonymous combat of masses of warrior.'[640] This is the same strategy that we see on the Akropolis, there is thus a similarity in the way in which war is thought about in both monumental sculpture and household ceramics. He adds that the most common images of warriors do not show fighting at all, but rather 'the various rituals that organise the relationship between the warrior and the member of the family group, women or old men. Thus one may find various scenes marking the departure of the warrior – arming, offerings, divination – or the return of the hero' (*fig.* 4.31).[641] This is a class of images that does not appear in the surviving images of the Akropolis, which prefer the heat of action. However, Lissarrague notes the existence of an amphora which shows Hector arming himself, flanked by his parents (*fig.* 4.32).[642] Thus we find a scene which connects these domestic images to the mythological battles of the public sculpture, creating the intertextual web that facilitates a personal relationship with the public monuments. Of course, not all Athenians would be familiar with the image on that particular amphora: but it is an example of the manifold ways in which potential connections existed between different areas of visual culture, and in which Athenians would be conditioned to think about their own lives in terms of mythological episodes.

Concomitant with this extension into personal lives is that different sectors, and indeed individuals, within Athenian society would have responded in diverse and personal ways to the images, determined by their occupations, priorities, and the particular objects of visual culture with which they had come in contact. Response to Persepolis would, of course, also have been diverse and personal, indeed in some ways more so, due to the greater variation in its audience's cultural background. However the distinction is that, because of the integration of the Akropolis' imagery into the images pervading the city, it could elicit from its Athenian audience an interaction which was both personal and sustained, it allows the [Athenian] viewer to elaborate their response, to use, renew, and reshape the Akropolis images according to their own preoccupations and their personal lives. Although it is possible for the viewers at Persepolis to do the same, the material does not facilitate such active engagement to the same extent.

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[640] Lissarrague 1989:44.
[641] Lissarrague 1989:44.
[642] Lissarrague 1989:46.

I have here only discussed images, however these points could be extended to other areas of Athenian cultural life, including literature, rhetoric, and also, doubtless, areas of religious practice and indeed daily conversation of which no record survives.[643]

Non-Athenian Response

So far we have been considering the interaction of an Athenian audience with the reliefs. However the question also arises of how dis/similar the interaction of a Greek, but non-Athenian audience, would be and with it the issue of whether the iconographic program was to any extent designed with an imperial audience in mind. The existence of pre-existing widely recognised Greek iconographic traditions makes this latter question more difficult to answer than it is at Persepolis, as the actual legibility of the imagery cannot be used to prove intention. Indeed it is very probable that the designers of the Akropolis did not themselves have to formulate the question of their audience, and their audience's cultural experience, as consciously as their Persian counterparts seem to have done. Nevertheless it is possible to make some hypotheses.

The initial question is to what extent the iconography used on the Akropolis would have been legible to those not engaged with the iconography of Athenian public and private life on a daily basis, familiar with their own local ceramic, literary, and religious traditions rather than those of the Athenians. This depends largely on to what extent the Greeks shared an homogenous culture. In *Hybridity and the Cultures within Greek Cultures*, Antonaccio, discussing the Hellenic world in the light of thin coherence, concludes that there, nevertheless, existed 'a "connective tissue" that embraced all the Greek world and guaranteed what Cassola calls a reciprocal comprehension, instead of a homogeneity of culture.'[644] One of the factors in this 'connective tissue,' she argues, were the panhellenic sanctuaries, nodes in which travellers of various sorts from the different communities met, maintaining reciprocal communication between widely dispersed *poleis*.

The Akropolis makes use of some themes which appear in panhellenic sanctuaries: the Centauromachy, the Iliupersis, and the Gigantomachy all appear in the monumental sculpture and wall-paintings of Olympia and Delphi. Similarly, the Marathon monument at Delphi referenced, although it did not depict, the battle; moreover, one of the statues it

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[643] Eg Castriota 1992: *passim* for literary parallels for the Kimonian and Periklean programs.
[644] Antonaccio 2003:58-9.

comprised was that of Erechtheus. [645] This would not provide a close iconographic model with which visitors to the Akropolis who had previously visited the panhellenic sites might read the imagery of the Temple of Athena Nike and, probably, that of the Erechtheion. However, it does presuppose some degree of panhellenic comprehension of the themes. It seems then, that much of the Akropolis iconography was, at least in subject matter, broadly recognisable across the Greek world. Nevertheless, the Akropolis also gives great pride of place, in the pediments of the Parthenon, to purely Athenian themes. The birth of Athena and the contest between Athena and Poseidon are both highly Athenocentric, moreover there is no evidence they had appeared in sculpture before; indeed, the west pediment is the earliest known representation of the contest in any medium.[646] Osborne notes:

> 'Representing this story [the contest of Athena and Poseidon] in this position makes clear that this monument... was a celebration of Athens and not simply a celebration of generalised Greek traditions.'[647]

More than that, it is not obviously the case that all visitors to the Akropolis would even be familiar with the myth. Even the more widely used subject of the Amazonomachy is presented in the Athenian version.[648] Although the general subject would have been familiar to most Greeks, it is less clear that the details of the Athenian version of the myth would have been.

Another mechanism for the 'connective tissue' between Greek communities was trade, and particularly for iconography, the trade in painted pottery. This is important in this case in that the pre-eminence of Athenian red-figure means that it could potentially have familiarised Athenian imperial subjects with the Akropolis iconography and drawn them into the web of the city's images.[649] The evidence for whether this in fact happened is not entirely certain. The great majority of surviving Athenian red-figure has been found in Etrurian chamber tombs, and most analyses of iconographic choices for export are concerned with these western destinations. However, in Beazley's catalogue of Attic Red-figure vases there are no examples of either the birth of Athena or the contest of Athena and Poseidon with provenances in the Athenian empire. It should be noted that the

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[645] Castriota 1992:81.
[646] Osborne 1994b:64-5; Hurwit 2004:42, 132.
[647] Osborne 1994a:144.
[648] Hurwit 1999:169.
[649] Boardman 2001:78: 'None of these non-Athenian wares survived much into the fifth century, and to most Greeks or Greek customers figure-decorated pottery in the Greek style simply came to mean Athenian red figure.'

numbers involved are very small, with only one example of the contest, from the Athenian Akropolis,[650] and six of the birth of Athena, of which five are from Southern Italy, and one is unprovenanced.[651] Nevertheless, these provenances do suggest, as indeed does the general fact that these subjects feature so little in the ceramic iconography at all (compared, for instance, with thirty-four examples of the Gigantomachy), that the spread of Akropolis related iconography through the empire in the form of ceramics was comparatively low. Osborne also notes a dearth of monumental building, and with it architectural sculpture, within the empire.[652] He argues that this is not a specifically imperial phenomenon;[653] however, what we do not see is any Athenian attempt to create greater cultural homogeneity by expanding their iconographic reach in this way. Parker reaches a similar conclusion in his discussion of Athenian religion: he notes that while the Athenians required their subject states to participate in the major festivals at Athens, it is less clear that Athenian cults were propagated outwards.[654] The picture that seems to emerge, on balance, is that just as the Athenians did not specifically choose subjects for the Akropolis that would be legible to the allies, so they made no particular effort to disperse Athenian iconography through the empire.

It has been suggested that the Ionic aspects of the Akropolis architecture, and with them the Parthenon frieze, were chosen specifically to appeal to an Ionian audience.[655] Castriota notes:

'East Greek precedent furnished almost ready-made the basic format and many of the specific motifs needed to depict the festival and its events.'[656]

Castriota gives numerous examples of models for the frieze in East Greek temple sculpture, and clearly it is possible that at least some Ionian viewers responded to it and the use of the Ionic order more generally, as a positive connection between Athens and Ionian. However, given the strong Athenocentricity of the pediments in particular, it is less clear that this was the specific intention of the designers. Either we have to postulate that there was a degree of incoherence in the intended appeal of the design, which is possible, or, as

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[650] Beazley 1963: 1341.
[651] Beazley 1963: 29, 136, 251, 286, 494, 1112.
[652] Osborne 2008:214.
[653] Osborne 2008:219: 'One could not predict whether or not a city belonged to the Athenian empire by whether or not it engaged in monumental building.'
[654] Parker 1996:142-4.
[655] Castriota 1992:226-9, citing Pollitt 1972:79.
[656] Castriota 1992:213.

seems perhaps more likely, both the iconography of Athena and the reference to the Ionian extent of the empire could have been chosen as a way of glorifying Athens, with the Athenian citizens their main intended audience.

The content of the frieze is similarly ambivalent in this respect. The allies are not overtly depicted anywhere on it. On the evidence of mid-fifth-century Athenian decrees, some of the figures leading cows in the north and south friezes of the Parthenon could be assumed to depict the allied delegations making the required offering in the Grand Panathenaia, although they could also be read as Athenians (*fig.* 4.33). Castriota suggests that this is a deliberate ambiguity, finessing the distinction between Athenian and subject; an act of propagandistic legerdemain which he suggests is in contemporary decrees:

> 'The ambiguous treatment of the figures with the cows is therefore no accident. Athenian citizens, cleruchs, or allies could all have recognized themselves in this portion of the frieze'[657]

However, the alternative is also possible that the allies were not included in the frieze simply because the fundamental theme of the Akropolis was the Athenians.

Taken together, then, the picture seems to be that the Akropolis was fundamentally Athenocentric and designed with an Athenian viewer in mind, but that, nevertheless, a non-Athenian, but Greek, viewer would have been able to interact with much of it, a fact of which the designers were doubtless aware, whether or not they consciously formulated the design with that audience in mind. While each viewer's experience is different, it is probably fair to generalise that non-Athenian residents would have felt a slightly greater degree of alienation from the reliefs in the details, or possibly even whole subjects that they did not immediately grasp. Some viewers might not recognise the contest of Athena and Poseidon, many more might not recognise the local river deities in the corners of the West pediment, if that is what they were,[658] and certainly they would not have received the additional frisson of the fact that they were local and familiar (*fig.* 4.34). However the degree of alienation or incomprehension is far less significant than that at Persepolis: rather than presenting a system which cannot be decoded, the Akropolis iconography shows largely comprehensible myths, of which some of the details may be unclear.

Therefore many of the observations about extended ethical and critical interaction remain true for such a viewer. Indeed the possibilities created for sustained critical, or

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[657] Castriota 1992:201.
[658] Hurwit 1999:176-7.

subversive, interaction gain a particular edge if the audience has political reasons to be hostile to the pro-Athenian program. Consider, for instance, possible responses to the north metopes by any Aeginetan visitors to the Akropolis. Aegina had been defeated by Athens in 457/6, its walls and fleet destroyed, and tribute imposed.[659] One possible response would be for them to sympathise with the Trojans and the sack of their city and deliberately reject the portrayal of the Greeks as arbitrators of justice. However the pediments of the Aeginetan temple of Aphaia also depicted the Trojan wars, with an emphasis on the Aeginetan heroes (*fig.* 4.35). Would an Aeginetan have meditated on the irony of this appeal to the same myth by both sides in the conflict? Or would they, perhaps, have continued to view themselves as the Greeks and engaged in a revenge fantasy in which citadel of the metopes was aligned with the Akropolis, and the Athenians themselves were forced into the role of Trojans?[660] This is a similar process of hostile appropriation to that Root hypothesizes for an Athenian at Persepolis; however here too, as with Athenian interaction with the sculpture, there is more possibility for sustained engagement and elaboration of previous iconographic knowledge than at Persepolis.

Conclusion

The two sites present, respectively, extremely pro-Persian and pro-Athenian iconography, through which they both elicit support for the power of the state. At Persepolis this is done through a deliberately limited iconography, which uses a strong suggestion of practice as a way of communicating its political message by closely shaping real experience. On the Akropolis, by contrast, the message is expressed primarily through myth and analogy, with a greater distance maintained between the imagery and the implied practice of the site.

In both cases the iconographic choices are chosen to be legible to their intended audiences. At Persepolis it is clear that this is specifically the wider imperial subjects, although concessions are also made to a more elite audience of court and officials. On the Akropolis the pre-existence of a panhellenic iconography makes it harder to determine the intention of the designers; however it seems to be primarily designed for Athenian eyes, although doubtless with the assumption that non-Athenian audiences would be able to engage with the iconography to a substantial extent.

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[659] Rhodes 1992:50; Thucydides 1.108.4.
[660] Cf Osborne 1994a:147 for the parallel between Helen taking refuge at the statue of Athena in the north metopes and the Akropolis as the sanctuary of Athena.

This is also reflected in the content of the imagery. Persepolis uses the strategy of 'organising difference' and stresses the diverse structure of the empire, while on the Akropolis the focus is more on the achievements of Athens than the empire itself.

However the political effects of the iconography are not just about the statements the iconography makes, but about the process of engagement it elicts. The images of the two sites encourage very different types of interaction. That on the Akropolis is much more extended, both in actual experience and its infiltration into the wider lives of the viewer, encouraging sustained, and sometimes critical, individual engagement with ethical, social, and political concerns and, crucially, promoting active engagement in which the viewer is encouraged to participate in shaping the narrative. There is a real sense in which engaging in this way with the sculpture not only corresponds to, but also constitutes democratic activity.

Persepolis, by contrast, tends deliberately to constrain engagement with the iconography. It sets a very clear agenda for interaction, through a very practice-based, site-specific iconography, which it is much harder to manipulate or develop beyond its message of harmonious order. It is possible to do so, but the material does not facilitate it in the way that that on the Akropolis does. So the interaction with the iconography at Persepolis too elicits the enactment of autocratic political structure, and in that way constitutes a political act.

The distinction is similar to that drawn about the decorative qualities of the sculpture in Chapter Two; however the additional political content of the reliefs on both sites draws the relationship between art and politics even closer. In fundamentally pre-literate states, where images are a hugely influential form of information storage, there is a real sense in which the nature of public monumental art constrains or facilitates critical thought and engagement. This occurs not only through interaction with the site itself, but also through the subsequent influence of that experience on mental habit. Conversely, interaction with the iconography of the sites is also shaped by prior experience of imagery in other media. As we have seen in both cases the integration, or otherwise, of the monumental sculpture into more demotic art forms is influential, both in terms of the sculptural choices available, but also in the expectations for interaction that the viewer brings to the site. An Athenian viewer's more 'democratic' interaction with the Akropolis iconography is not due simply to its material form, but also due to its integration into the ceramic traditions and the 'democratic' interaction they too entail.

However, the relationship between political system and iconographic experience is not straightforward. The sense in which interaction is a democratic activity becomes more complex when the viewer is not in fact a participating member of the Athenian democracy. This is true for non-Athenian visitors to the Akropolis, and also true for residents of Athens who might be fully familiar with the iconography but not fully entitled to participate in the political process of the city, such as metics, women, or slaves. Here we return to Sewell's point that semiotic structures are interlocked with other economic, social, political structures. Access to the iconography of the Akropolis would not in itself ensure access to other political rights. Indeed, given Sewell's observation that social and political factors constrain engagement with the semiotic system, it seems likely that metics, women, or slaves, who did not engage in the political aspects of democracy, might also not have interacted so fully with the Akropolis sculptures. However, if the engaged interaction the Akropolis iconography elicits cannot be called 'democratic,' in the sense that it is not co-extensive with political democratic practice, it is at any rate one of the factors that made up the total quality of the democracy at Athens. Similarly for Persepolis, the deliberately limiting iconography makes up part of the nature of the autocracy; it is one of the ways in which the King's power exists.

We have also seen that the iconographic choices at the two sites have explanations both in terms of legibility and political effect. Persepolis does not use myth because it would not be legible to its intended audience; it also does not use it in order to constrain possible thought. The existence of these two explanations is not problematic: Baxandall notes that overdetermination, rather than being an interpretative problem, often reflects reality.[661] However it also raises the possibility that there is a causal relationship between these two factors. It could be that a highly integrated homogenous culture is a factor in the development of democratic process, whereas a wider culturally heterogeneous empire tends towards hierarchy and division.

Finally, in this chapter we have been concerned with the impression of practice that the iconography creates; the play of actual practice against the reliefs doubtless had further effects.[662] Initially we might suspect that it increased the distinctions found in the iconography: the indications are that the Akropolis involved participatory sacrifice and, often personal, votive offerings, and Persepolis a highly structured, hierarchical, and secular experience of audience. However, this is beyond the scope of this chapter.

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[661] Baxandall 1985.
[662] See Tschumi 1996:121: 'There is no architecture without action, no architecture without events, no architecture without program.'

CHAPTER FIVE: THE TIMELESS EMPIRE AND THE MOMENT OF VICTORY

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In *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art* Root describes 'the Achaemenid representational tradition as we have come to recognize it – characterized as it is by non-narrative, timeless images of power.'[663] She sees the quintessential expression of this timelessness in the tribute processions of the Apadana frieze, of which she notes:

> 'The Apadana relief does not convey the impression of a particular king receiving homage on a particular day from specific dignitaries of the lands represented. Rather it conveys the impression of an often repeated ritual. It is an expression, abstracted from time, of a concept of the unity of empire.'[664]

She connects the 'conceptual timelessness'[665] created here with other images from the site's repertoire. The king-hero reliefs in the door jambs of the Palace of Darius, the 'harem' and the Hundred Column Hall, in which 'the threatening forces represented by the beasts…have already been stabbed or wrestled into submission,'[666] show an absence of 'historical suspense;'[667] the images of the king and attendants in the Palace of Darius and the Tripylon 'portray the ruler in his stately aspect of simply being the king, removed from any distancing temporal or narrative context.'[668]

Subsequent commentators on the site have mentioned the same phenomenon. Collon observes:

> 'Even the scenes of combat - the king fighting lions or monsters, or lions attacking bulls - are static royal icons, frozen in time.'[669]

Codella, primarily discussing the development of architectural forms on the site, comments:

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[663] Root 1979:193.
[664] Root 1979:193, see also 279.
[665] Root 1979:192.
[666] Root 1979:310-1.
[667] Root 1979:310-10.
[668] Root 1979:286.
[669] Collon 1995:179.

'The static nature of decorative reliefs... is indeed remarkable. It was the ability of Achaemenid planners to impart to their monuments specific elements while at the same time giving an overall sense of continuity and timelessness that was the essence of their genius.'[670]

There is general agreement that the Persepolis reliefs have a distinctive temporality, which can broadly be characterized as timelessness.

Commentators on the Akropolis also discuss a sense of time on the site, which however in many respects, varies greatly from that at Persepolis. Brommer discusses the Parthenon frieze in terms which are strikingly close to Root's analysis of the Apadana reliefs:

'The intention was to give a timeless representation of a particular event, not to record the event in one particular year.'[671]

However, when Castriota suggests that the sculptural program of the Parthenon, following a pattern in fifth century officially sponsored Athenian art, uses mythological themes to integrate the Persian wars into an eternal cosmic system as 'only the most recent chapter in a timeless, heroic struggle to maintain the law and order established by the gods,'[672] the temporality he describes is different from that at Persepolis. An appeal is similarly made to the authority of time beyond the present, however instead of being timeless in the sense of abstracted from time, the mode would perhaps better be described as eternal, connecting the present to an endless past. Other ways in which historical time is emphasised on the site have also been noted: Hurwit, in particular, discusses the ways in which the Akropolis showcases its own historical, and architectural, past.[673] Moreover, narrative time is also crucial to the Akropolis reliefs and the stories they relate. Developments in narrative are, more generally, seen as highly significant in classical art, and indeed contrasted with the 'timeless present' of the archaic period,[674] and the Akropolis is no exception. Images of conflict, in particular, are central to the sculpture and, as Hurwitt notes,

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[670] Codella 2007:115.
[671] Brommer 1979:33-4 cited Osborne 1987: footnote 21 (p. 102).
[672] Castriota 1992:32.
[673] Hurwit 2004:49-86 'Landscape of Memory: The Past on the Classical Acropolis.'
[674] Gombrich 1960:110 for the argument that narrative is the motivating force for naturalism; Csapo and Miller 1998:104 for the proliferations of narrative strategies during the classical period: 97-100 for the 'timeless present' as the dominant temporality of the archaic period.

'What is interesting about these battles, however, is that the issue is often yet to be decided. Acropolis monuments typically commemorate not the triumph but the conflict.'[675]

Considering again the parallel between the king-hero reliefs at Persepolis and the Lapith/centaur metopes of the Parthenon, the Akropolis conflicts show a completely different temporality, in which although the myth is well known and the outcome certain, narrative, or historical, suspense is nevertheless crucial to the image (*figs* 5.1 and 5.2).

In this chapter, my initial concern is further to consider these different temporalities on the two sites. Specifically, I am concerned with the ways in which the sites as a whole create different temporal experiences: there is an emphasis therefore both on the interaction between sculpture and architecture, and on the sites as places with a complex historical and architectural context.

To do this, I, firstly, apply discussions of the ways in which narrative images organise time, notably the sequence of distinctions developed by Csapo and Miller - iconic/monoscenic, synoptic/progressive, cyclic/phased - to the architectural sculpture of both sites.[676] I next consider the ways in which the sites exploit and shape a more explicitly historical or ahistorical sense of time through the extent to which they promote a sense of memory and the past. I then look at the way in which the viewer's own experience of time on the sites is shaped through their interaction with architecture and the reliefs. The importance of the contemporary time, the viewer's time, in relation to the reliefs, has been noted on both sites, particularly with respect to the processions of the Apadana and Parthenon friezes;[677] here I develop this, attempting to differentiate between the present experience that each site creates.

Finally I consider the extent to which these different temporal considerations create, on each site, a unified effect and argue that this difference in temporal strategies has a political dimension.

Time, Politics, and Monumentality

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[675] Hurwit 2004:243.

[676] Csapo and Miller 1998:104-9.

[677] Eg Root 1985:111: 'The [Apadana] relief was certainly meant to work with the architecture, drawing the viewing participant up and inward;' Osborne 1987:100-1: 'The procession that is enacted is the procession of the viewer. The procession can only be contemporary, but contemporary not with the sculpting but with the viewing.'

Monumental construction, politics and time are frequently seen as linked. Monuments, especially those made in stone or other durable materials, have a permanence and immutability beyond the human life span. Lefebvre sees this transcendence of death as an aesthetic quality:

'The most beautiful monuments are imposing in their durability. A cyclopean wall achieves monumental beauty because it seems eternal, because it seems to have escaped time. Monumentality transcends death, and hence also what is sometimes called the "death instinct".'[678]

However this escape from time has an inherent political potential. Firstly it establishes a strong continuity within a society from one generation to the next. The monumental landscape provides a continuous background for living and a framework or location for the repetition of events through time: it makes the transient enduring. This is particularly the case when combined with continuity of practice, however the permanence of monumentality can outlast any given society and indeed provide a sense of continuity between otherwise heterogeneous groups inhabiting the same place through time. DeMarrais notes:

'In contrast to events, which are regularly repeated and can be adapted to changing circumstances, monuments are more permanent expressions of the ideology that links a group to its territory… Long after a ruler has died or a polity has disintegrated, monuments such as Stonehenge or the pyramids of Egypt remain evoking the history of a place, defying time, and giving ancient societies the aura of permanence and transcendence.'[679]

Secondly, this permanence has a more symbolic value: at any given moment it asserts the power of the particular social group which can lay claim to it, both forward into the future and, often, backwards into the past. In a sense it asserts their power over time. These are qualities which are common to all monumental sites, and shared by Persepolis and the Akropolis.

However, within this shared framework, different temporalities may be developed and indeed the nature of monumental permanence may be nuanced. In 'Democracy,

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[678] Lefebvre 1991[1974]:122.
[679] DeMarrais 1996:19.

Empire, and Art: 'Toward a Politics of Time and Narrative,' Csapo and Miller argue that there are inter-, and indeed intra-, societal variations in the conceptualisation of time, and, moreover, that these different conceptions have a political dimension in that they underlie varying ideas of causality and, in particular, the possibility of human driven change. The context in which they discuss this is classical Athens, where they identify two competing temporalities: the aristocratic and the democratic. In the former, to summarize, time is structured upon the family; it privileges the past, but a mythological past, whose real role is to glorify the present. It emphasises cyclical and repetitive patterns, and even reverse causation, in which ancestors are glorified by the actions of their descendants. Explanation is sought in aetiology, in which the explanatory *arche* and the present phenomena to be explained are brought close together. Indeed the sense of the past and present merge to the point that this temporality is sometimes described as a timeless present.[680] The latter, democratic time, is, by contrast, historical, linear and dynamic. It privileges the present, a present which is, moreover, freed from the determining influence of the past and capable of being shaped by human control. It is 'a consciousness of time predicated upon a faith in the ability of humans to master their destiny through the political process'[681] Explanation, meanwhile, is constructed from empirical data worked on by logic and focused towards the immediate future; the past is important in so far as it can be used to comprehend and manipulate the present, but it is the present moment of opportunity and decision that is vital.[682]

Csapo and Miller argue, moreover, that these two opposed conceptions of time and causality operate in various spheres of thought and art. Importantly, for our purposes, one of these is the narrative strategies employed by images. Aristocratic time prefers analeptic or proleptic narrative, in which events are presented out of sequence, such that the end point is presented as predetermined. Democratic time prefers a chronological ordering in which the ending is left open, thus privileging narrative suspense and the immediacy of the present.[683] In this way, the use of different narrative techniques in art can be seen to condition attitudes to time and causality, with resultant political effect. This is a principle which can be applied beyond classical Athens; it can indeed, arguably, be applied to any societal group which uses narrative art in the broadest possible sense. Its force is, however,

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[680] Csapo and Miller 1998:97-100.
[681] Csapo and Miller 1998:95.
[682] Csapo and Miller 1998:100-4.
[683] Csapo and Miller 1998:118.

strengthened when the images represent humans engaged in directly or metaphorically political activity, as is the case on the Akropolis and at Persepolis.

In this chapter my approach is, therefore, to apply this connection of art and political causality through conceptions of time to the two sites. However, in considering the functioning of this connection on these monumental sites, I extend the analysis from just the narrative strategies in images, to the understanding of time promoted through the temporal experience of the site as a whole.

This extension of the argument from images into architecture starts from the proposition that architecture fundamentally takes place in time: a building or complex is experienced as a narrative sequence rather than as a discreet object. This is a concept discussed in Tschumi's essay *Spaces and Events* where he notes of the development of such a theory in the twentieth century:

> 'Architecture ceases to be a backdrop for actions, becoming the action itself… with the dramatic sense that pervades much of the work, cinematic devices replace conventional description. Architecture becomes the discourse of events as much as the discourse of spaces.'[684]

Indeed, returning to the concerns of the first chapter, Eisenstein's description of the Akropolis as a montage sequence understands the site as an architectural narrative, in this case structured around particular freeze-frames. In *Sequences* Tschumi adds that architecture can influence and vary the narrative experience, through the juxtaposition of different types of space, using repetitions, distortions, and progressions to create a variety of rhythms.[685] He discusses, for instance, the possibilities of variation in the extension of spaces and the gaps between them:

> '*Contracted* sequences fragment individual spaces and actions into discrete segments. In this manner, we might see the beginning of a use in space followed immediately by the beginning of another in further space… The *expanded* sequence makes a solid of the gap between spaces. The gap thus becomes a space of its own, a corridor, threshold or doorstep, a proper symbol inserted between each

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[684] Tschumi 1996:149.
[685] Tschumi 1996:165-8.

event…Combinations of expanded and contracted sequences can form special series, either coordinated or rhythmical.'[686]

He discussed the possibility of forms of notation for such rhythms, referring to architecture in terms of choreography.[687]

Architectural sculpture adds an extra dimension to this architectural narrative, and a potential set of techniques for manipulating it further. Firstly, its placement on buildings functions as architectural decoration. This phenomenon was previously noted in the discussion of the sculpture as ornament, however here it is the temporal dimension that is relevant: sculpture essentially suggests more extended interaction, thus slowing the rhythm in the areas in which it is placed. Additional syncopations can be added by its placement to emphasize architectural elements that are either associated with movement or stasis. Applied to Tschumi's discussion, the gaps and spaces can themselves be expanded or contracted by the placement of sculpture within the sequence.

However, in the case of figurative sculpture, the architectural rhythm is also affected by the narrative of the image that the sculpture presents. If the narrative speeds up or slows down so does the implied sympathetic movement of the viewer, a phenomenon which Osborne has discussed with reference to the Parthenon frieze:

'When the viewer comes to the east front of the temple his or her progress is slowed. The views between the columns at the east end offer more satisfactory compositions and more stability… Nevertheless the viewer will not be allowed entirely to lose momentum until s/he comes to the central scene above the doorway into the cella, where the two strands of the procession meet.'[688]

Repetitions and progressions within the image, and the directional movement of the figures, all also interplay with the movement of the viewer through the architecture; additional effects may also be created by co-ordination or disjunction between the narratives of the architecture and the sculpture.[689] This also, inversely, influences the distinctions drawn by Csapo and Miller in the narrative types of images: the sequence of the narrative, as determined by architectural placement, may intensify or diminish the

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[686] Tschumi 1996:165.
[687] Tschumi 1996:162.
[688] Osborne 1987:100.
[689] Root 1979:286 mentions this issue, noting 'a comprehensive discussion of Achaemenid sculpture in its function as architectural decoration…deserves more attention.'

internal logic of the image. For instance, a progressive sequence of images set along a corridor has a chronological dimension synchronised with that of the architecture; the same set of images set over a doorway does not. It can thus be seen that monumental sites with figured sculpture have the potential to create a particularly complicated, and performative, temporal experience.

However more needs to be said about what it really means for time to be extended or contracted. In *The Anthropology of Time*, Gell argues strongly for the demystification of time, and against the possibility for real variation in experience of it:

> 'There is no fairyland in where people experience time in a way that is markedly unlike the way in which we do ourselves, where there is no past, present and future, where time stands still, or chases its own tail, or swings back and forth like a pendulum. All these possibilities have been seriously touted in the literature on the anthropology of time… but they are all travesties.'[690]

In explaining how beliefs in such alternative experiences of time have come to be accepted, Gell draws a distinction between actual experience of time, which he argues is universal and invariably linear, and time cognition, or the analytical frameworks a society may use to discuss or organise or measure time. The latter, may indeed be highly varied, but they cannot create variation in temporal experience. Rather time cognition is 'a function of the beliefs we hold about the world,'[691] and an expression of 'the manifold ways in which time becomes salient in human affairs.'[692] Time itself is 'always one and the same.'[693]

However, Gell does allow for a degree of temporal subjectivity, in particular in our perceived duration of time. He notes that our organic sense of the duration of time is relatively unreliable, as compared to time as measured by the clock.[694] Moreover, he suggests that variation in our perception of the duration of time is dependent on the difficulty and informational content of the task in which we are engaged:

> 'Ornstein's (1969) influential study of the psychology of durational judgements suggests very strongly that the estimated duration of experimental tasks assigned to subjects in the laboratory is a function of the processing load imposed by each task

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[690] Gell 1996 [1992]:315.
[691] Gell 1996 [1992]:95.
[692] Gell 1996 [1992]:315.
[693] Gell 1996 [1992]:315.
[694] Gell 1996 [1992]:94.

individually, i.e. the greater the amount of information processing per unit of clock time, the greater the estimated duration of the task relative to the estimated durations of other tasks demanding less processing. Because in real-world situations tasks vary randomly in the amount of central information processing they require, we can legitimately assume that estimated durations in real world situations vary randomly, within limits, relative to clock time.'[695]

This suggests a psychological basis for the observation that architectural features can create the experience of extended or contracted time. The multiplication and emphasis of 'gaps' between spaces expands time because it complicates the narrative, making the same amount of time, as measured by the clock, seem to pass slower. The addition of sculpture, similarly, and perhaps to an even greater extent, adds informational content and thus, at a perceptual level, 'slows time.'

The distinction between, in Gells' term, time cognition and temporal experience is also important in considering how such architectural narrative relates to the issues of politicised causality discussed by Csapo and Miller. The narrative strategies that Csapo and Miller identify are modes of time cognition, analytical frameworks for thinking about time. They can, therefore, present events in a disorderly fashion, with temporal sequences distorted or even reversed. Gell indeed notes that aberrant time structures are sometimes acted out in rituals, for instance 'models of life processes which may be modified or even inverted,' [696] and the point may be extended to images. Both however function only rhetorically or symbolically, they are not modifying time in any metaphysical sense, and it is for this reason they can present such extravagant alterations. It is this capacity that, in Csapo and Miller's argument, allows narrative strategies to present highly differentiated views of causality. The mild variations in temporal duration in architectural narrative are, however, genuinely experiential and do not, indeed cannot, therefore, involve this disruption of temporal sequence: there is no direct parallel to the commentary on causality to be found in some non-architectural narrative images. I shall, however, argue that the architectural narrative, and its use of time, influences the causal relationship of the viewer to the sculpture in a way which complements the causality in the narrative and contributes to the total politicised effect of time on the sites.

Finally, monumental sites are also experienced through time in the historical sense. It is from this that their quality of permanence, as previously noted, derives. However it

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[695] Gell 1996 [1992]:95; Ornstein 1969.
[696] Gell 1996 [1992]:326, with reference also to 'Time-reversal in Umeda Ritual:' 37-53.

also means that they have a tendency to the accumulation of the past, both in terms of residual architecture and associations with past events, people, or even, in the long term, societies. In 'Of Other Spaces' Foucault describes a particular type of heterotopia, that of libraries and museums, which are a manifestation of:

'The idea of accumulating everything, of establishing a sort of general archive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time and inaccessible to its ravages, the project of organizing in this way a sort of perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in an immobile place.'[697]

Foucault discusses this, and especially the general character of the knowledge enclosed, as a particular characteristic of modernity; however all monumental sites have, to an extent, the potential to play the role of a localized and immobile archive to the society in which they exist. This potential can be exploited in various ways and played off against the inherent permanence of a monumental site to create a subtle understanding of, or feeling for, historical time; and adds another, directly political, dimension to the experience of time created though the narratives of the images and the architecture.

Narrative

In their more detailed discussion of narrative types in the visual arts, Csapo and Miller categorise archaic and classical Greek images into six modes of organising time in the spatial field: iconic, monoscenic, synoptic, progressive, cyclic, and phased.[698] They discuss these as a logical progression of increasing temporalization, which however has two axes: increased emphasis on causality and increased temporal organisation (*fig.* 5.3). The least temporalized are *iconic* images, single images, epitomised by the kouros statue type, which have a 'zero degree of temporality' and eternalize the moment; next *monoscenic* images, which are again single images, but images in which previous and subsequent action are implicit, as for instance the Diskobolos. Next come 'complex' groups, which bring more than one temporal moment into one image. Of these the less causal is the *synoptic* which 'brings two or more moments into the same spatial field, conflating essential

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[697] Foucault 1997[1967]:355.
[698] Csapo and Miller 1998:104-10 for the categorisation, summarised in this paragraph.

elements of a story without representation of sequence or cause.'[699] The example they give is the Boston Circe cup in which Circe offers the potion to a man who has already been transformed, while Odysseus reacts to the news at the same time as Eurolychus runs to give it to him (*fig.* 5.4). The more causal is the *progressive* which also presents different moments of the story in a single field, but orders the temporal sequence as linear sequence. Finally there are polyscenic images, consisting of a number of separate scenes. Of these, the less causal, the *cyclic* shows a series of discrete scenes, typically episodes in the life of a single character, but without narrative sequence; the more causal *phased* images show scenes which are discrete but causally linked, such that, combined, they tell a complete story.

The chapter in which Csapo and Miller discuss this is concerned with the politics of time and narrative in all branches of the Athenian arts: their range is broad, and their categorisation is, therefore, brief, and some aspects of it are not fully developed.[700] A first point is that further temporal nuances are possible within these narrative types. An example of this occurs in Himmelmann's account of 'closed composition.'[701] By this he means roughly what Csapo and Miller mean by a synoptic temporality, and, like them, he notes that this is a characteristic strategy of archaic art. Figures and objects in these narratives, he argues, take on 'hieroglyphic qualities' which refer beyond the closed, unified composition of the image and often seem to contradict a dominate narrative within it. Sometimes, as in the Circe cup, an example he also discusses, this occurs to the extent that it is difficult to define a 'basic situation': an entire and temporally disparate myth is enclosed in one unified image. Sometimes it occurs more as a complementary feature in a dominant narrative moment: he gives the example of Archaic representations of the Judgement of Paris, which show him in the context of a young shepherd boy, but depict him as a bearded king, thus referring outside the context to his essential nature.[702] However, Himmelmann additionally argues that there is a continuity of this closed composition and its 'multilayered nature'[703] into the classical era, as the narrative is gradually condensed into a single moment. He notes:

> 'The assumption often made nowadays, that the Classical mythological representation, in contrast to the archaic, possesses a temporal and spatial unity

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[699] Csapo and Miller 1998:105.
[700] See Hornblower's 1999 review, which is highly positive but notes both the ambition of the argument's scope and some resultant queries about its application.
[701] Himmelmann 1998:67-102: 'Narrative and Figure in Archaic Art.'
[702] Himmelmann 1998:73.
[703] Himmelmann 1998:76.

determined by the situation, proves to be only partially true when examined more closely from this point of view... even in scenes that appear to be unified, a closer look will reveal that the image has been conceived not so much in terms of the situation as, rather, the narrative meaning of the individual figure.'[704]

These classical closed images are not strictly synoptic: they do not reconcile diverse moments, but rather are a single moment, and therefore logically fall into the category of monoscenic. Nevertheless, their temporal composition and priorities are different from an image in which temporal and spatial unity are fully determined by the situation, a true 'snapshot' composition, which privileges one momentary situation or action and indeed often specialises in circumstantial detail.

This is, in fact, part of a wider issue which is not fully developed in the discussion. Csapo and Miller largely differentiate between the images' approach to causality in terms of narrative sequence, the question of how many moments in a story are depicted and what principle orders them in space.[705] On the former basis they distinguish between single, complex and polyscenic images, on the latter between each of the pairs synoptic/progressive and cyclical/phased. However when they differentiate between iconic and monoscenic images, both of which deal only with one moment, this distinction in narrative sequence does not exist. Instead, the basis on which they distinguish is the extent to which the image implies a story backwards or forwards in time. In the case of the Diskobolos this location in time is created through uncompleted movement, which strongly implies both the propulsion used to reach this point and the continued movement beyond it; in the case of the kouros no such past or future action is implied. The issue, therefore, is not narrative sequence, but what might be termed narrative suspense, or narrative drama. It relates to the type of moment depicted, rather than the order in which the moments appear. This is, moreover, a distinction which can be applied to the other narrative categories: synoptic, progressive, cyclical or phased narratives may all use different types of narrative moment, even, potentially, in the case of polyscenic images, different types of narrative moment may be used from one episode to another.

Moreover, types of narrative moment are not restricted to the kouros/diskobolos distinction. Himmelmann's condensed image is, in a sense, a monoscenic image in which the image is so integrated into backwards and forwards time that it does not merely imply

[704] Himmelmann 1998:85.
[705] Csapo and Miller 1998:110: summarizing their discussion: 'In other words the shift from Archaic to classical narrative is characterized by an increased emphasis on linear and causal sequence.'

but also incorporates it. Other possible variations include images pitched just in anticipation of an event, at its height, or at its resolution;[706] images that imply that a future event is inevitable, or that it is a possibility, that an outcome is decided, or still in the balance. It appears, then, that the logical extension of Csapo and Miller's argument is that any image has two temporal variables, narrative sequence (itself, as they argue, composed of both spatialization and development of causal sequence) and type of narrative moment. Both of these potentially have causal implications.

Csapo and Miller's discussion of the explicitly democratic or aristocratic causal implications of narrative types, summarized earlier, occurs separately in their chapter from this account of the six categories of narrative. It is, moreover, intended to apply to tragedy and history as well as to visual culture. It is perhaps for this reason that in it they discuss the political implications of narrative sequence, which is common to all these art forms, rather than types of narrative moment, which is an exclusively visual concern. They also, however, in the political discussion, distinguish primarily between narratives that involve out of sequence events and reverse causality, and those that do not. This is different from their discussion of visual narrative where the primary concern is the degree and logic of linear progression rather than its possible inversions. There is therefore something of a gap between their practical analysis of visual narrative types, and their discussion of the potential political implications of narrative. It is not within the scope of this chapter to offer a generalising theory to cover this gap; but rather to suggest possible interpretations in the context of both Persepolis and the Akropolis individually.

Despite these issues, however, the basic structure of Csapo and Miller's argument and its capacity to relate images to time and causation makes it is a useful heuristic tool to discuss the ways in which these categories are varied. I use it therefore, firstly, to analyse the narrative techniques used on the Akropolis and, secondly, to consider how the distinctive temporality of Persepolis relates to categories primarily designed to discuss the distinctions between aristocratic and democratic time within Greece.

The Akropolis

The primary conclusion that Csapo and Miller in fact draw from their discussion of visual art is that its most distinctive characteristic, in the fifth century, is not the use or

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[706] See Neils 2004:58, who discusses the Greek preference for representing the time before or after a sacrifice rather than the moment itself, ascribing this to a sense of danger pertaining to the moment itself.

development of any one particular narrative technique, but rather the problematization of time and therefore the proliferation of narrative techniques (*fig.* 5.5).[707] They note, in particular, experimentation with more complex temporalities, simultaneous with the continued occurrence of simpler, single scene images.

This is, indeed, an accurate description of the architectural sculpture of the Akropolis. The Karyatids are the only iconic element (*fig.* 5.6). A narrative context has sometimes been argued for them, as the women of Karyae, enslaved after the city Medised; this interpretation, however, has no real basis in the attributes of the figures themselves, and the difficulties this interpretation presents ultimately militate in favour of seeing them as iconic.[708] The pediments of the Erechtheion were left empty,[709] and too little of the Erechtheion frieze survives for its temporality to be examined in any detail (*fig.* 5.7). The larger scale of the frieze on the north porch,[710] suggests a composite of different scenes, but the impossibility of determining the subject matter prevents speculation on how they were thematically or temporally linked.[711] The Parthenon Frieze is famously progressive, developing from the early preparations on the west frieze, through the fast moving horsemen on the north and south, to the final orderly procession at the east.[712] Most recently Neils notes:

> 'It is clear that the frieze utilizes a unique time-space continuum highlighting specific selected episodes of a grand event that took place over an expanse of distance and time...We are dealing with an event that was spread over a kilometer and lasted nearly an entire day.'[713]

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[707] Csapo and Miller 1998:110.

[708] Vickers 1985; Hersey 1988:74 for recent versions of this explanation; Ridgway 1999:146 for the origin of this myth in Vitruvius, and its lack of correspondence to the sculpture; Hurwit 2004:72 for an 'iconic' interpretation of them as libation pourers.

[709] Hurwit 1999:206, who also notes that there is no evidence for akroteria.

[710] Hurwit 1999:270.

[711] Paton 1927:plates xl-xlvi; Fowler 1927:239-276 for the original publication. Unfortunately, the Erechtheion accounts refer to the figures as 'the youth beside the breastplate,' or 'the woman embraced by the girl,' rather than making an identification (Hurwit 2004:178). See also Caskey 1927:387-9 for the text of the inscription mentioning these figures in the 408/7 accounts, who comments (ibid:415): 'The inscriptions throw no more light than do the extant figures on the scenes depicted. Probably… separate scenes from a cycle – or several cycles – of myths were represented.' Hurwit 2004:177 further notes: 'Most of the figures are posed fairly quietly, and there is not much that helps identify the undoubtedly mythological content of the frieze'; Glowacki 1995 identifies a figure of Athena seated with her armour at her side.

[712] Cited as a quintessential progressive image, Csapo and Miller 1998:106 with bibliography. Glowacki 1995 identifies a figure of Athena seated with her armour at her side.

[713] Neils 2004:44.

A number of scholars have commented on the 'intermittent' and 'quasi-metopal' views it offers through the colonnade (*fig.* 5.8).[714] The suggestion that, experientially, it has a degree of phased narrative is interesting, although, as Osborne notes, these phased views are fluid depending on the viewer's movement. Each is 'only one of an infinite number of possible views,'[715] so, even viewed in this way , it does not really have the structured, episodic divisions of a fully phased narrative.

The temporality of the Parthenon metopes is debatable. This is largely due to the damage they have suffered; however, it seems it may also partly be due to inconsistencies in their original narrative structure. The most obvious interpretation would be to see them as either cyclical or phased, each side consisting of thematically linked episodes from the Amazonomachy, Centauromachy, Gigantomachy, and the Trojan war respectively (see *figs* 4.21-4.24). However, at least in the south metopes, the only sequence which has survived reasonably intact, the overwhelming majority of the metopes simply show a centaur and a lapith fighting. The poses vary considerably, but, not only does there seem to be no temporal progression, as there would be in a phased narrative, there is no evidence either of the divided, though not sequenced, temporality of a cyclical narrative. Hanfmann, indeed, sees each set of metopes as a unified scene of a single moment, onto which the division of the triglyphs has been imposed:

> 'The metopes of the Parthenon break away from the traditional array of separate scenes in which each metope represented a self-contained unit. Here Phidias seems to have worked toward the concept of one visually unified scene in which the metopes act not as individual pictures but as windows opening on one continuous frieze of simultaneous actions.'[716]

However, it is not clear that the metopes can be considered entirely as monoscenic. The images of Lapith-centaur conflict appear to the left and right of the southern metope sequence. However, in the centre were placed eight or nine metopes, which survive now only in fragments and in the drawings of Jacques Carrey. The subject matter of these metopes is uncertain, however they do not obviously seem to be part of the surrounding battle. Hurwit suggests that they represent the story of Ixion, father of Peirithoos and

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[714] Ridgway 1999:81-2, citing Stillwell 1969 and Wesenberg 1995. The latter gives a 'fractional reading' in which the frieze shows not one, but several different festivals.
[715] Osborne 1987:99.
[716] Hanfmann 1957:76.

grandfather of the centaurs, and thus constitute a mythological 'flashback'.[717] Even if this is not the case, they seem to be a separate episode set into the wider Centauromachy. Another metope 'group' can be seen in the Trojan war sequence, where Menelaos in one metope rushes towards Helen in the next, with Aphrodite standing between them (*fig.* 5.9 and 5.9a);[718] it seems probable that could the metopes be fully reconstructed they would include other such examples. Meanwhile, the north metopes also include an overt temporal indication, given by the chariot of Helios rising in metope 1 and that of Selenus descending in metope 29 (*fig.* 5.9b).[719] They do not, however enclose the full sequence of 32 metopes on the side, which possibly indicates a deliberate temporal bracketing of the last three metopes. Generally it is apparent that the Parthenon metopes are experimental in their temporal sequences, though how far this is part of a developed system is unclear.

There are similarly serious problems in reconstructing the Parthenon pediments; however they both seem to be monoscenic compositions, centred around the birth of Athena and the contest of Athena and Poseidon respectively (*fig.* 5.10). Hurwit notes that the reclining figures in the angles of the west pediment are often identified as local river-deities, and that, if this is the case, their presence in a scene primarily taking place on the summit of the Akropolis involves a degree of 'topographical compression.'[720] It may be that scenes similarly made use of the principles of Himmelmann's condensed or hieroglyphic images in their temporal composition, referring to the extent of Olympus and Athens as a whole, rather than being entirely focused on the single moment. However the east pediment is, again, framed by the chariots of Helios and Selene, which does seem to bring the focus to a particular moment, dawn, at which the scene takes place.

The pediments of the Temple of Athena Nike do not survive.[721] The friezes below are fundamentally monoscenic (*fig.* 5.11),[722] although Stewart notes a slightly phased element in the figures at the corners of the east frieze. He suggests that their strong movement, in contrast to the still vertical of the rest of the divine assembly, may show they are bringing the news of victory from the other sides.[723] The parapet of the temple of Athena Nike has an unusual temporality (*fig.* 5.12a-c). Each of the three sides appears to have consisted of a figure of Athena Nike, near the centre of the west side, and at the

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[717] Hurwit 1999:173.
[718] North 24 and 25, Hurwit 1999:170.
[719] Hurwit 1999:170.
[720] Hurwit 1999:177.
[721] Stewart 1985:56.
[722] Osborne 1987:99: 'The battle scenes of the frieze of the temple of Athena Nike depend upon the viewer being able to see the whole of one side at a time.'
[723] Stewart 1985:65.

westernmost end of the north and south sides, accompanied by flocks of Nikai engaged in setting up trophies and leading cattle to be sacrificed. It is thus approximately cyclical: it consists of three episodes related by the presence of the same figure. It has been suggested that the trophies on each side originally referred recognisably to three different victories, which would enhance the sense of three separate episodes.[724] Nevertheless, this is not necessarily correct, and, even if so, the narrative divisions between the three sides seem markedly weak. Indeed in some ways it functions compositionally as a single scene: Stewart argues that it is a miniature version of the Parthenon frieze, transposed into allegorical mode, observing:

'It is clear that on the north and south sides the array of Nikai moved towards seated Athenas at the west end of each, while on the west side itself, Athena was probably seated at the center with two streams of worshipping Nikai approaching her from either side.'[725]

It does not, however, even viewed as one scene, have the same progressive temporality as the Parthenon frieze, instead the flocks of iterated Nikai figures give it a curiously narrativeless quality, almost an element of the iconic in a multiply-figured scene.

Finally Nike akroteria were positioned on the roofs of both the Parthenon and the Temple of Athena Nike (*fig.* 5.13).[726] Given their winged nature, their context alone would give them a sense of movement, thus rendering them monoscenic in the manner of the Diskobolos, implying movement, if not narrative, beyond their immediate scope.

From this discussion it is clear that the Akropolis has a tendency to use a wide variety of single, complex, and polyscenic images. Moreover its use of these temporal structures is often complicated by variations and play within the compositional arrangements. It therefore follows the fifth century interest in temporal innovations that Csapo and Miller discuss. It is also notable that there is almost no use of the synoptic or analeptic, which Csapo and Miller associate with archaic art and subsequent aristocratic conceptions of temporality, and little of the iconic. However, perhaps surprisingly, there

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[724] Hurwit 1999:213 notes that the spoils on the trophies differ and, in particular, that Persian spoils seem to be confined to the South side, suggesting a correlation with the image of the battle of Marathon on the south temple frieze above.

[725] Stewart 1985:58, who also notes that it is almost exactly the same height, one quarter the length, and rotated 180 degrees.

[726] Hurwit 2004:240; Schultz 2001:18-38 (with bibliography) discusses possible reconstructions of the akroteria of the Nike temple, concluding a central trophy, or tripod, or possibly Nikai group, with further Nikai at the corners; for Nikai akroteria on the Parthenon: Korres 1991:fig. 3; Korres 1994:61-4, fig. 8.

also does not seem to be a particularly strong interest in what Csapo and Miller consider to be the typically democratic trait: the ordering of images chronologically. With the exception of the Parthenon frieze, the linear sequences of events do not seem to be a particular preoccupation. As far as can be reconstructed, the cyclic or monoscenic seems to be preferred over strongly phased or progressive narrative; even the cyclical structure of the Parthenon metopes and the Nike parapet appear to incorporate monoscenic elements.

The effect of this choice of temporality is to focus attention not so much on a sequence of events as on the particular moment, a present tense poised between the continuous events before and after it; implied, but not narrated. This does, in fact, at a broader level, follow Csapo and Miller's model for causality in democratic time: it privileges the vital importance of the present, and with it the possibility of human change and mastery of causality. Indeed in many ways this simple present tense puts a more extreme emphasis on the vividness and significance of the moment than linear sequence does.

This focus on the moment in the sequential temporality is, moreover, enhanced by the qualities of narrative drama/suspense in the images. As discussed in Chapter Three, the sculpture has a tendency to strong movement and propulsion. This can be seen in the north, south, and west friezes of the Temple of Athena Nike, and to a lesser extent in the parapet frieze and in the west pediment of the Parthenon. It also appears in many of the metopes and in the more western sections of the Parthenon frieze. It is even implied contextually in the winged nike akroteria posed in the moment of alighting, whatever their actual pose was. Viewed from a temporal perspective, this emphasis on movement carries the same quality which Csapo and Miller discuss with reference to the Diskobolos, that of being suspended in mid-action between an immediately changing past and future. In these more complex, multi-figured scenes, not just past and future movement is implied, but also prior and subsequent events, causes and consequences, all dependent on the present active moment.

Hurwit notes that the theme of victory and conflict is ubiquitous on the site: in the multiple images of Nike personified, the victory monuments dedicated over the site, and the prevalence of battles in the sculptural program.[727] This raises the important point that the causality presented on the Akropolis is, largely, specifically the causality of conflict. Stewart and Pollitt see the significance of the depiction of victory, particularly on the Temple of Athena Nike, built in the latter stages of the Peloponnesian war, in its potential

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[727] Hurwit 2004:240.

elusiveness. Pollitt describes the 'swirling' style of the temple's sculpture as 'Refuge in gesture. Escapist wish fulfilment.'[728] Stewart notes:

> 'Victory, victory, victory: it allows the male spectator to possess Victory visually, to slake at least temporarily his desire to make her his own forever.'[729]

In this interpretation the iteration of Nikai images is an acknowledgement of the instability of Athenian power. It is tempting to see the emphasis on moment as expressing a similar concern: events hang in the balance of a single moment which may or may not succeed. Hurwit does indeed note the outcome of a battle often appears to be unresolved: many of the centaurs appear to be defeating Lapiths, many of the Greeks appear to be losing to the Amazons.[730] However this is made problematic by the fact that the outcome of the contests is already known to the Greek viewer.[731] There is no real ambiguity as to the result; indeed Castriota, as noted in the introduction, sees the results of the conflicts as not merely decided but playing out a cosmic pattern, backed by the gods. In fact, Hurwit's interpretation is not that the outcome is uncertain, but rather that the depiction of conflict is a reminder of the darker side of victory:

> 'If the iconography of the Acropolis constitutes a paean to Nike, it is not simple-minded exultation or gloating: Athenians and Greeks will win the battles and the wars but not without struggle and not without loss.'[732]

However Csapo and Miller's model of democratic causality, suggests an alternative: that, rather than being an acknowledgement of weakness, this construction of moment is a declaration of strength. It is about the possibility that comes from the present moment, the opportunity for human/Athenian advancement. The exaggerated emphasis on the present, over and above that which Csapo and Miller see in democratic temporalities more generally, would be driven by a sense that battle is a scene in which human effort can be used to particular effect.

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[728] Pollitt 1972:125.
[729] Stewart 1997:148.
[730] Hurwit 2004:243.
[731] This is at least the case for the mythological battles. It is possible that the unidentified Greek versus Greek battles of the Athena Nike temple frieze depicted anonymous battles with no known result, but given the Amazonomachy, Centauromachy, and Battle of Marathon that form the rest of the sculpture program, the balance seems to be against it.
[732] Hurwit 2004:243.

This is not to deny that the images have within them the latent possibility for a more vulnerable, perhaps even more ironic, reading, which, perhaps, became more apparent towards the end of the fifth century. It is very possible that, as Hurwit suggests:

'The Acropolis' "victory text" was read quite differently in 403, in the bitterness of defeat… than in 431… when its array of victories must have seemed programmatic and reassuring… The Akropolis was subject to different readings at different times in the shifting lights of history'[733]

Nevertheless, the narrative causality of the Akropolis seems to be designed primarily to express the significance of a present in which human action is politically crucial.

Persepolis

The sculpture at Persepolis, as Root notes, is fundamentally non-narrative. Described in Csapo and Miller's terms it avoids complex or polyscenic images. A considerable quantity of the architectural sculpture is straightforwardly iconic: the lamassu gate guardians and column capital protomes fall into this category (*figs* 5.14 and 5.15). As well as being iconic these are non-human images; perhaps for both these reasons, they have often escaped study, but they contribute significantly to the total sculptural ambience of the site, providing a background of 'timeless' repetition. The rest of the, predominantly human, reliefs are, approximately, monoscenic.

However this absence of polytemporal narrative sequences does not fully explain the timeless, non-narrative quality that Root comments on. To do this it is necessary to consider again the type of narrative drama or suspense used in the images, the different temporal nuances that can fall under the broad category of monoscenic.

In fact, many of the human scenes on the site seem to be occurring somewhere between what Csapo and Miller would classify as the iconic and the monoscenic. This can perhaps best be seen by looking at an example, for instance the image of the king on high from the south doorways of the Hundred Column Hall (*fig.* 5.16). Firstly, there is a distinct absence of the kind of suspended motion that Csapo and Miller observe in the Diskobolos. This is particularly striking in that most of the figures are engaged in an action requiring

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[733] Hurwit 2004:245.

muscular effort: their arms are raised above their heads, to support the king on his throne. The 'weightlessness' of this composition has previously been noted, however it also has a temporal aspect: neither the action of raising the king, nor subsequent rest are implied, the stance exists in an isolated moment. Root notes that, more generally Achaemenid art has no place for 'stylistic vigor and the dynamism of ephemeral encounters.'[734] This can be seen here in the balanced symmetry and the steady verticals and resultant stasis, all averse to propulsion or change.

Just as the image does not imply further movement, so it does not imply further narrative. It is not a moment snatched mid-story, as for instance in the Parthenon metopes, nor is it a condensed image, of the type described by Himmelmann. Neither causes nor consequences are implied, or 'hieroglyphic' references from outside the time frame interpolated. It is understood as a single, detached, moment. Another aspect of this is that the images imply neither anticipation nor resolution, but are pitched at the precise centre of the narrative, or, perhaps, rather the narratives consist only of the central moment.

This is perhaps even more apparent in the images of the king-hero in combat with a monster (see *fig.* 5.1). Here a very slight external narrative is implied, in so far as the stabbing logically implies a preceding conflict and subsequent death. However the stillness of the image hones this away to the bare minimum, creating their curious quality wherein an image of the dramatic moment of victory conveys almost no drama. This is particularly apparent in comparison with the centaur/lapith reliefs of the Parthenon metopes, in which propulsion and narrative tension are crucial.

This temporality has certain similarities with Csapo and Miller's characterisation of Greek archaic art: both could be described as taking place in a timeless present. However, where it differs is that it is not interested in merging the past with the present, instead it does not reference the past at all, or the future. There is no use of the synoptic or analeptic temporalities: it expresses not so much a inverse of time or causality as a denial of them. The closest archaic parallel is the kouros' temporality, but extended into multi-figured compositions, a concept well-described by Root's term 'emblematic.'[735]

The Apadana reliefs, however, are more temporally complicated than these door-frame images (*fig.* 5.17). Root notes that the Apadana frieze does, in fact, include an element of anticipation:

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[734] Root 1979:310.
[735] Root 1979:188.

'A teasing relationship between space and time is created here by depicting delegates who are *about to be* led forward to offer their gifts.'[736]

She focuses, in particular, on the tension created by the use of the 'hand-holding motif' which is found in scenes of presentation to divinities in Mesopotamia and Egypt (*fig.* 5.18). However the sense of anticipation is also structural, in the convergence of several long streams of delegations on the central audience scene, such that the figures are represented in the moment just prior to their presentation.[737] Nevertheless, the image in many ways conforms to the 'emblematic' rules described above. It is fundamentally monoscenic. Despite its extension in space there are none of the temporal markers, as for instance on the Parthenon frieze, which would suggest that the scene should be seen as progressive. Indeed Root has argued that the reliefs should not be understood as a single procession, but rather:

'It is as if we were meant intellectually to transpose each individual tribute group, one at a time, from its position in a sort of suspended animation… to an actualized position immediately behind the grand marshall, within the "real" spatial confines of the royal baldacchino.'[738]

Moreover, this sense of anticipation is resolved within the frieze by the inclusion, indeed centrality, of the audience scene itself. This is, again, unlike the Parthenon frieze, where, depending on interpretation, the ending is left open, or at least unstressed.[739] In this way the Apadana reliefs, despite introducing an element of anticipation, partially conform to the rule that it is the moment at the centre of the narrative that is depicted.

In addition to non-narrative timelessness, the images have another temporal quality: a present tense that is both transient and immediate. Root, discussing the images of the king and his attendants in the private palaces of the site, notes that the attendants and the objects they carry are appropriate to the function of the doorway through which they are depicted as moving: parasols are exclusively shown in doorways that lead outside,

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[736] Root 1990:121.

[737] In this discussion I consider the original presentation of the Apadana reliefs, in which the central panel was an audience scene. This was subsequently removed, for reasons which remain largely unclear (see Tilia 1972:127-9) and replaced with an image of eight figures in alternating dress arranged facing each other symmetrically. This alteration, if anything, increases the sense of anticipation, in that its culmination is moved from the audience relief to the actual audience ceremony inside the Apadana.

[738] Root 1979:238.

[739] For the possibility of an additional frieze inside the pronaos, possibly an 'epilogue' to the main frieze: Korres 1983:668-9; Korres 1994:33.

beardless attendants, presumably eunuchs, only occur in the doorways of inner rooms (*fig.* 5.19 and 5.20).[740] She notes:

> 'It would seem that these reliefs were meant to convey an impression of the king, in the company of his attendant(s), passing through the doorways in which he is depicted; he is not merely posing emblematically. The motif may then be understood to depict a group of figures captured sculpturally in the moment of transition from one particular royal room to another.'[741]

The present tense, in this sense, occurs throughout the site. As noted in Chapter Two the reliefs are concentrated on the stairways and doors and mimic the viewer's movement through the buildings in their own present. There is thus a sense in which the site as a whole uses a progressive narrative sequence; however it is not an independent progression, but rather reflects the time of the viewer. A co-ordination of architectural and narrative movement has also been noted on the Akropolis.[742] However, temporally, the co-ordination there is very much weaker, primarily because the reliefs occupy their own temporal sequences. This is the case even for the frieze, the time frame of which extends far beyond the time it takes the viewer to progress along its distance. On Persepolis, by contrast, there is a real coalescence of experienced and narrative time, or rather the absence of an independent narrative allows contemporary time to be asserted. This creates a strong sense of an immediate present in the reliefs.

These two temporalities at Persepolis, the timeless and the immediate, are not, however, in contradiction. The king-hero and king on high reliefs also trace the viewer's movement through the site. Root notes that the king-hero images are always placed so that the king is moving from the more internal to the more external room, thus hindering the progression of an outsider. Meanwhile the figures in the king on high reliefs prepare the viewer for an audience in the Hundred Column Hall. Conversely, the figures progressing up staircases and across the Apadana façade largely share the qualities of stability which create a sense of timelessness. This can be seen, for example, in the figures of the inner balustrade of the south staircase of the Palace of Darius (*fig.* 5.21). These are depicted in the act of stepping between one step and another, and thus have the greatest degree of implied movement, in the Diskobolos sense, of any of the figures on the site. Nevertheless

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[740] Root 1979:287.
[741] Root 1979:288.
[742] See Chapter 2:99-103 above.

they are shown balanced between one foot and the other, with a strong vertical posture and as little movement implied as possible.

Thus we see that the two qualities are used simultaneously throughout the site, and it is their combination that creates the site's specific temporality. From this it is also apparent that Persepolis has a highly unified narrative strategy.[743] Instead of problematising time through multiple narrative techniques, as on the Akropolis, Persepolis presents it as completely coherent.

Moreover, this temporality, as on the Akropolis, is additionally politicised by the subject of the reliefs. At Persepolis the subject is, as Root notes, 'an abstract vision of empire and of imperial harmony.'[744] In this context, a timeless temporality effectively asserts the immutable status of the empire: it denies the possibility of change. In particular, it asserts the uselessness of any human agent's attempts to change it: action is isolated from the past and future, it has no effect. Nodelmann makes a similar comment about Egyptian funerary sculpture, which he notes can be in many ways highly naturalistic, but always avoids the depiction of movement. He sees the explanation as being that:

> 'Real action would necessarily introduce time and change, and with them inevitably death into the system; and the entire function of Egyptian monumental art is to exclude death.'[745]

At Persepolis the concern is less metaphysical than this; the sphere in which it aims to have effect is not the afterlife, but the political present.

Root argues that the reliefs have this timeless temporality because they are abstract or conceptual: the vision they present of the empire is not intended to be real and is therefore outside time. However, the 'immediate' aspect of the temporality suggests another possibility: that this timelessness is precisely intended to be experienced as real. It is the combination of the timeless and the immediate that makes the reliefs politically effective: an unchanging political present is linked to a strong experience of the present in the here and now, such that the visitor to the site acts out the [absence of] causality and the impossibility of change.

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[743] The point may in fact be extended to Achaemenid Court Style in general; in particular Root comments on the application of these principles to the Behistun relief, a unique example of Achaemenid art depicting a specific historical event (Root 1979:182-93). However that is not our immediate concern here.

[744] Root 1979:279.

[745] Nodelmann 1966:99, summarizing Kaschnitz 1933, translated and reprinted as Kaschnitz 2000[1933].

From this we see that both the Akropolis and Persepolis use a strong present tense; however the conception of the present they enforce is completely different. On the Akropolis it is a present moment in which human action is crucial to events; it is moreover an observed present, separated from the viewer's own time. At Persepolis the present tense in which the reliefs take place is unchanging, timeless, and insusceptible to causal action, but also a present in which the viewer is strongly implicated.

History and Memory

These two different temporalities are enhanced by the sites' presentation of historical events. The permanence of monumental sites gives them a natural potential for preserving historical memory. Summers notes:

> 'Once established, places are persistent and often have multiple stratigraphies… Most major places are more or less complex accumulations and accommodations of layered and interlocking usages and meanings.'[746]

However, the two sites exploit this potential very differently. Essentially, the Akropolis emphasises history and historical process, whereas Persepolis is removed from a sense of historical time, indeed almost denies its existence, maintaining the sense of a timeless present.

Imagery

This can initially be seen in the imagery. The Akropolis does not merely display images of victory and conflict: it references particular victories and conflicts in the Greek and Athenian historical and mythological past; events which, moreover, are carefully selected or adapted to contemporary Athenian concerns. Many of these are straightforwardly mythological; however, it has been argued that some of the reliefs depict recent or contemporary events. Most famously, although there is still some disagreement on the point, the interpretation of the Parthenon frieze as the contemporary Panathenaic

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[746] Summers 2003:119-20.

procession is widely accepted.[747] It has been argued, moreover, that the north and west friezes of the Temple of Athena Nike, both of which appear to show Athenians fighting with other Greeks, represent battles from the Peloponnesian War. This is controversial in that no other scenes of contemporary, or recently past, battles are known in Greek temple sculpture. It is also somewhat problematic in that, although Stewart notes that details such as war trophies suggest that these were specific, identifiable battles, no secure contemporary identification has been made.[748] However no clear mythological identification has been made either.[749] Moreover, the south frieze of the temple shows the battle of Marathon.[750] Hurwit notes that Marathon, a subject that was also depicted in the *Stoa Poikile*, had by the end of the fifth century acquired an almost legendary status, such that it would not be incongruous among mythical battles.[751] Nevertheless the presence of one securely identified historical battle, suggests that the presence of other contemporary conflicts would not, at least, be entirely anomalous.[752]

Stewart additionally argues that the Parthenon sculptural program involves a temporal progression from protohistory (the pediments) to prehistory and history (the metopes) to the present (the frieze),[753] and that, in a similar and possibly parallel arrangement,[754] the pediments, friezes, and parapet of the Temple of Athena Nike represent victory at mythological, historical and allegorical levels.[755]

This suggestion, if correct, integrates the mythical scenes into a linear, historical sequence. This is particularly interesting because, as previously observed, linearity, although stressed by Csapo and Miller as a democratic phenomenon, is largely absent from the narrative sequences of the Akropolis. If none of the reliefs of the Akropolis are contemporary, the use of myth seems close to Csapo and Miller's description of aristocratic time: recent conflicts, such as the Persian wars, are understood, and played out, in terms of a mythic past. An element of this logic remains if, as seems likely, contemporary scenes are depicted, in that these present conflicts are glorified by analogy with the past. However an

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[747] Neils c.1996 and bibliography; pace Connelly 1996 who argues for a mythological reading.
[748] Stewart 1985:56.
[749] Hurwit 1999:212 notes that one suggestion is that they represent the Athenians recovering the bodies of the Seven against Thebes and then joining battle against the Argive king Eurystheus, and thus play out contemporary Athenian conflicts in mythological terms, however this is not proven.
[750] Harrison 1972:353.
[751] Hurwit 1999:212.
[752] Csapo and Miller 1998:117 note that historical and contemporary references increase in a variety of other media in the wake of the Persian Wars.
[753] Stewart 1997:145, see also Psarra 2009:35: 'The sculptural ensemble as a whole had a temporal orientation, from a remote beginning to a distant past and an immediate present.'
[754] Stewart 1985:58 for the Temple of Athena Nike deliberately mimicking the composition of the Parthenon.
[755] Stewart 1985:60.

element of linearity is introduced. Indeed essentially the mythological becomes an extension back into time of the historical, as Stewart terms it 'protohistory'. In some ways, the absence of linear progression in particular mythological episodes serves to emphasise this historical linearity.

Whichever of these is the case, however, it is completely different from the representation of history at Persepolis. Root notes that scenes in Achaemenid art depicting any explicitly historical event are extremely rare: there are none at Persepolis, indeed the only sculptural exception is the Behistun relief (*fig.* 5.22).[756] Moreover, scenes depicting any specific mythological event are also more or less completely absent from the sculptural program at Persepolis. The possible exceptions to this are the bull-lion images and the king-hero reliefs, both of which have sometimes been argued to have a mythological dimension. Specifically, it is suggested that they are associated with a New Year's ritual at Persepolis, and represent cosmic forces of natural chaos being brought under control (*fig.* 5.23).[757] Considerable doubt has been cast on this interpretation, particularly by Nylander who argues that there is little correspondence in other respects between later accounts of Persian Na Ruz festivals, which do seem to have included some form of ritual combat, and the reliefs at Persepolis.[758] At any rate, even under that interpretation, they do not depict a specific mythological event, but rather a cosmic principle. Root concludes that they are best understood respectively as 'a sort of insignia of royal power' and as having a 'generalized apotropaic significance.'[759]

At Persepolis, then, there is no depiction of a past, whether mythological or real. The imagery is rather of ceremony, which occurs in the present. Moreover, even within this present tense, historical markers are diminished. The central figure of the reliefs, the King, is depicted generically, rather than as any identifiable individual. Root notes:

'On the Achaemenid reliefs, one is hardpressed to find any significant stylistic or iconographic feature specifically intended to distinguish the representation of one king from another… this aspect of Achaemenid art may have had its roots in a

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[756] Root 1979:182. The Behistun reliefs depict Darius' success in putting down the rebellions following his accession, showing him with his left foot on the body of one of the rebels. Root however argues (193) that, despite this, at a conceptual level they share the emblematic quality of the Persepolis reliefs. Kuhrt 2007:473 notes that the possibility that decorative schemes of battles and royal victory, common in Assyrian palaces, existed in the soft furnishings of the palace cannot be dismissed: 'hangings and frescoes, irrevocably destroyed, *could* have depicted battles.' However if their absence forms part of a consistently ahistorical effect, the probability is diminished.
[757] Root 1979:236, 307 for respective bibliographies, citing esp. Pope 1957:128 and Eliade 1954:37-8.
[758] Nylander 1974.
[759] Root 1979:236, 307.

preoccupation with the values of stability and the perpetuation of a constant hierarchical order.'[760]

The effect of this is to further diminish a sense of historical time. Moreover it ensures that a sense of the site's past will not emerge in the future: as there is no visual indication of particular Kings, the reliefs visually maintain an ahistorical present even through successive reigns.

Memory

There is also a strong a/historical distinction in the ways in which the histories of the sites prior to the building programs are presented; the degree to which they develop a sense of place in terms of memory. The Akropolis had an extensive history: the earliest traces of inhabitation are from the middle Neolithic, with significant historical events having taken place there within the oral and indeed living memory of the fifth century Athenians.[761] Moreover, the destruction of the site by the Persians added a specifically architectural dimension to its history. The terrace platform at Persepolis, was, by contrast, newly created for the construction of the site. However, the area around Persepolis was not without historical significance. The populous inhabitation of the plain prior to Darius is attested both by ground survey of the area and by references in Babylonian sources, during the reign of Cambyses, to the city of Matezzish, which seems to subsequently have been incorporated into the city surrounding Persepolis.[762] Moreover, this same Matezzish (in Elamite; Old Persian Huvadaiciya; Babylonian Hum/badešu) is referred to in the Behistun inscription as the place in which Darius had Vahyazdata, one of the chief rebels of the succession revolt, executed.[763] Persepolis also, then, had witnessed historical events; moreover the destruction of the Akropolis in 480 left it something of a blank canvas.[764]

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[760] Root 1979:310, see also Root 1989:46. von Gall 1974 argues that the different kings can be identified by the type of crown they are wearing; see Root 1979:92-3 and Roaf 1983:131-3 for discussion of this theory.
[761] Hurwit 1999:67.
[762] For survey evidence of inhabitation Kuhrt 2007:155, with bibliography in footnote 94 (p.155-6); Briant 2002[1996]:86 also notes pre-Darius palaces and monumental gates in the style of Pasagardae in the area. For references in Babylonian texts: Kuhrt 2007:470 and footnote 1 (p.476); Briant 2002[1996]:72, 86-8.
[763] Kuhrt 2007:147 §43; discussed Briant 2002[1996]:88; Kuhrt 2007:footnote 1 (p.476).
[764] Though see Hurwit 2004:53-4 (with bibliography) for architectural and sculptural activity on the Akropolis between the Persian destruction and the Periklean building program. Stewart (2008a; 2008b), meanwhile, reviews the Akropolis excavation reports, to argue that many pieces of sculpture showing early elements of the Severe style which are usually classed as part of the *Perserschutt*, in fact are plausibly dated post-480, and,

Thus the comparison between the historical and architectural potential of the two sites is closer than it might at first seem.

Nevertheless, the way in which the sites exploit their histories is very different. The Akropolis consistently showcases its own history. This has been discussed in detail by Hurwit, who refers to the Periklean site as 'a landscape, or a marblescape, of memory.'[765] To summarize, Hurwit notes firstly that all of the major Periklean buildings are replacing previous structures, and frequently reusing their materials. He also notes that the positions of shrines are carefully maintained. This can be seen in the simple continuation and reuse of areas such as the sanctuary of Zeus Polieus and the Great Altar of Athena, which seem to have changed little from the archaic layout.[766] However there are also examples where the structure of new buildings was considerably adapted to accommodate older features. An obvious example is the Erechtheion, the highly unusual design of which is indeed often attributed to this requirement. In particular, in the north porch a skylight in the ceiling above a cluster of marks in the rock below suggests some kind of vertical connection maintained between the rock and the sky (*fig.* 5.24).[767] He also notes that the Karyatid porch stands directly on top of the tomb of Kekrops, and suggests the possibility that the figures are supposed to be pouring libations onto the tomb from the bronze bowls they once held at their sides.[768] However this tendency can also be seen in the *naiskos*, dating probably from the mid-sixth century, preserved in the northern colonnade of the Parthenon: this is not integrated into the building, but rather preserved as an interruption of the structure (*fig.* 5.25).[769] All of these demonstrate the care taken to respect precise place in cult practice.

Moreover, Hurwit notes a number of ways in which the historical and architectural past of the site is deliberately displayed. Perhaps the most striking example is in the new bastion of Athena Nike. This was built encasing the old Mycenaean tower, and the niches of the old double shrine were recreated in the new stone; moreover a polygonal hole was created, at eye-level, in the orthogonal masonry of the new bastion, so that anyone ascending the Propylaia ramp would have their attention drawn to it, and through it to the

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thus, that the Severe style is a purely post-480 phenomenon, responsive to the Persian Wars. This argues that abrupt discontinuity from previous styles was a possible option after the destruction.

[765] Hurwit 2004:86; from Hurwit 2004:49-86, 'Landscape of Memory: The Past on the Classical Acropolis,' summarized below.

[766] Hurwit 1999:190-2,192.

[767] Hurwit 2004:170.

[768] Hurwit 2004:72.

[769] Hurwit 2004:74-6.

Mycenaean stonework (*fig.* 5.26).[770] Hurwit calls it 'a Periclean window upon the bronze age past.'[771] Another conspicuous display of the past was the incorporation of triglyphs and metopes from the old temple of Athena Polias and unfluted column drums of the Old Parthenon into the north citadel wall, highly visible from all over the city (*fig.* 5.27). Other more subtle preservations include the south-east corner of the Propylaia, bevelled to fit snugly against the remains of the Cyclopean wall, again overtly displaying a contrast between old and new; and the old Mycenaean palace terrace retained as the central terrace of the Akropolis (*figs* 5.28 and 5.29).

One of the effects of these conspicuous preservations is to invoke 'the legitimacy of the ancient.'[772] However the Akropolis does not merely maintain continuity with the past; it deliberately contrasts old and new, and cites particular moments, most notably, of course, the Persian destruction of the site. In this it adds a sense of linear time to the evocation of memory on the site: it emphasises the effects of past moments on the present. Hurwit also notes the possibility that the 'opisthodomos,' referred to in various epigraphic and literary sources from 434/3 to 353/2, was in fact the west chamber of the old temple of Athena Polias, continuing in use.[773] If this is the case, a fire damaged temple was preserved in the centre of the site, directly referencing the destruction that the new construction alluded to.[774] This would intensify the preservation of a particular moment of change in the past, as, in any case, would the free standing Archaic statues still blackened by Persian flames described by Pausanias.[775]

Persepolis, by contrast, makes no reference to previous history. Not only was a new site chosen, but, no reference to historical reasons for choosing that site is overtly made in the way in which the terrace and its architecture construct a sense of place.[776] There is, in a sense, an emphasis on change, that of the construction of an imposing palace on an empty site, but it is the act of creation through the power of the King, rather than the events leading up to this that is emphasised. The Elamite version of the inscription on the south wall of the Persepolis terrace specifically comments on the newness of the site (*fig.* 5.30): 'And King Darius proclaims: On this platform where this fortress has been built,

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[770] Hurwit 2004: Temple of Athena Nike bastion 64-5; triglyphs, metopes and column drums 70; bevelled wall of the Propylaia 62; Mycenaean palace terrace 63.

[771] Hurwit 2004:65.

[772] Hurwit 2004:61.

[773] Hurwit 1999:249; Hurwit 2004:76-8.

[774] Castriota 1992:135: 'The very idea of rebuilding the sanctuary of the Akropolis would have been inseparable from the circumstances of its destruction.'

[775] Pausanias. *Description of Greece.* 1.27.6; Hurwit 2004:78.

[776] The possibility that such reference was made through, for instance, sightlines from the terrace, or monuments in the plain, cannot be entirely excluded, but the tendency of the site seems against it.

previously no fortress had been built there.'[777] Elsewhere, particularly in inscriptions, Darius does focus on the chaos preceding his reign, however always as a prelude to the re-establishment of order, which forms the main message.[778]

Instead of creating a sense of place through history, Persepolis, which stood in the heartlands of the empire, does so in terms of imperial harmony, particularly in the form of geographical extension. Kuhrt notes the importance of territorial space in Achaemenid ideology, and, in particular, the trilingual texts inscribed twice on gold and twice on silver tablets in the foundation deposits from the Apadana at Persepolis in which 'the king looks out from the centre towards the edges of the empire. In words, he draws lines, running north-east to south-west, south-east to north-west, which intersect at the imperial core.'[779] This concern is also apparent in the recurrent theme of the tribute bearers and throne carriers in the sculptural program. There is considerable debate as to the principle by which these figures are ordered, and in fact no obvious geographical sequence has been detected.[780] Root notes that the lack of correspondence with the geographical ordering in Achaemenid texts listing the peoples of the empire has led to the suggestion the ordering corresponds to ceremonial, rather than administrative, practice.[781] However this really only defers the problem. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the general effect is that of unity through the lands of the empire.[782] At any rate, the delegations do not seem to be arranged in terms of a chronology of conquest.[783] Roaf indeed notes that the correspondence between delegations depicted and the actual extent of the empire at the time a particular relief was created is far from consistent, particularly in the later reliefs.[784] It seems that, at least in the later Achaemenid period, the image of the tribute procession had become a visual short-hand for imperial harmony, rather than a strict catalogue of the lands.

Here again the historical background to the creation of the Persian empire, and thus Persepolis, is sidelined in favour of the continuous present, which primarily showcases

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[777] Kuhrt 2007:488 §2
[778] Root 1990:119 citing Kent 1950:120, 142.
[779] Kuhrt 2007:469; 476-7 and fig 11.1.
[780] Root 1979:135-6, (with bibliography). There are many issues here, including whether the Apadana tribute procession should be read horizontally or vertically and the relationship to the tomb reliefs, the inscriptions of which are the primary method of identification for the delegations.
[781] Walser 1966a.
[782] Root 1990:121: 'These delegates bring not only themselves, but also the accumulated wealth of reestablished wholeness.'
[783] Contrast with the Behistun reliefs, where the rebels, in the image, are arranged in chronological order, although, geographically in the text: Root 1979:191. Root also notes a possible Assyrian precedent, in the shift from chronological to geographical ordering from Sargon onwards (footnote 22, p.191).
[784] Roaf 1983:128: 'Why did Artaxerxes III only copy the central and end delegations from the Palace of Artaxerxes I when he added the West stairs to Darius' Palace? Had he forgotten the Armenians, Lydians, Egyptians, and Indians were part of the empire? And conversely why were the Egyptians, Libyans, and Nubians carved on all the tombs even though they were outside the empire from 405 to 343 B.C.?'

geographical unity. Root, indeed, sees this as the pervasive concern of the site, extending it even to the masonry techniques of the terrace.[785] In this way Persepolis attenuates the sense of its own history. The act of the king as builder is acknowledged, but the historical events on which this depended are largely played down; the place of Persepolis in the empire is considered in terms of its geographical centrality, rather than its historical foundation.

Change

Finally, this distinction can be seen in the way the two sites change over the course of the building programs under consideration. Here too, Persepolis avoids the overt display of change. This follows a pattern noted in Achaemenid ideology more generally. Kuhrt comments:

> 'The images and messages of Achaemenid kingship, as we first see them being formulated in Darius I's reign, set a norm for later rulers. And that vision of monarchic power was driven home by reiteration, verbal and visual. While there are hints of change over time, these are so subtle that it is impossible to pin down their significance.'[786]

The architectural history of Persepolis is in fact fairly complex and has been analysed in detail by Roaf (*figs* 5.31a-f).[787] The main phase of building takes place continuously through the reigns of Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes.[788] Later additions and alterations are made a century later under Artaxerxes III (358-338).[789] However, there is evidence that even within the main building phase the plan of the site underwent significant changes and adaptations. Rather than being a unified plan from the start, the layout of the site seems to have shifted during its construction. For example:

The plan of the treasury has three different phases: the second was an expansion, but the third involved the destruction of the west section, to accommodate the new

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[785] Root 1990:118: 'Perhaps the massive irregular stones, perfectly bonded without mortar, expressed the idea of smoothly joined geopolitical parts of the great empire.'
[786] Kuhrt 2007:469.
[787] Roaf 1983:150-59; see also Tilia 1972; Tilia 1978; Schmidt 1953 for the excavation reports.
[788] Roaf 1983:150-8 and figs 152-5 (*figs 31 a-d*) for this continuous phase of building. Roaf notes that the dates of many of these buildings are uncertain, and the plans are therefore approximate.
[789] Roaf 1983:158, fig. 156; the south-west corner of the site was also re-occupied in the post Achaemenid period:158 and fig. 157 (*fig. 31f*).

'harem.'[790] Drainage systems were found only in the southern, original part of the building, confirming that the later phases were not initially planned.[791] Roaf, moreover, suggests that the odd shape in the north-west corner of the second phase of the treasury was probably due to an earlier building, otherwise unknown.[792]

The dressing of the east wall of the Apadana continues behind the adjoining wall of the Tripylon, suggesting that the latter was not yet planned when the former was built.[793] Moreover, the highly decorated north staircase of the Tripylon was probably a later addition to the central hall.[794] As well as discussing stylistic qualities, Roaf notes that the staircase is made from local grey limestone rather than the black majdabad stone making up the rest of the building, which was particularly favoured by Xerxes.[795]

The central relief panel of the Apadana, showing the king enthroned, was carefully removed and set up in a courtyard of the Treasury complex.[796] It was replaced by an alternative relief consisting of figures in alternating Median and Persian dress (*figs* 5.32 and 5.33). Neither the date nor the reason for this change are entirely certain; however it usually dated to the reign of Artaxerxes I and associated with the construction of the Hundred Column Hall. Cahill notes a series of changes at Persepolis at this time, including the cessation of gifts to the treasury, and the construction of Palace H (below) and argues that these may be associated.[797]

Finally, there are a number of issues surrounding the southwest corner of the platform, in particular the building referred to as Palace H.[798] This building has a complex history. It was occupied by a building probably dating to the reign of Darius, which was then completely destroyed and replaced by a larger building, started under Xerxes and finished under Artaxerxes I. This building, moreover, had an extremely unusual asymmetric plan, and a staircase, which, as well as the two lateral flights of steps common to the external staircases of the site, had a central direct flight of stairs, at right angles to the facade (*fig.* 5.34). This new building seems to have coincided with an extension of the platform itself, which provided access from the Apadana.[799] Indeed, this whole south-western area of the terrace appears to have been particularly marked out by later

[790] Roaf 1983:157.
[791] Schmidt 1953; Cahill 1985:157-62.
[792] Roaf 1983:157.
[793] Roaf 1983:142-4.
[794] Ibid. See also Nicholls and Roaf 1977.
[795] Roaf 1983:143, 138.
[796] Roaf 1983:144-5; Tilia 1972:175-208; Tilia 1974:127-9.
[797] Cahill 1985:388.
[798] Root 1979:108-10.
[799] Tilia 1974:132-3.

developments. The parapet wall was ornamented with stone horns.[800] The addition of the western stairs to Darius' Palace was one of Artaxerxes III's main innovations; the original southern entrance to the entire site was also blocked in at some point, again the date is uncertain, although Tilia argues for a late Achaemenid date from the 'crude' quality of the stonework.[801] Finally, at some point in the post-Achaemenid period, this area of the site was reoccupied, and the façade of Palace H was removed and replaced with that from Palace G.[802]

However, these changes and adaptations are not immediately apparent in the architectural experience of the site; indeed they seem to have been deliberately played down. The west staircase of the Palace of Darius, for instance, looks like a truncated replica of the south staircase, although built approximately 150 years later (*figs* 5.35 and 5.36). The Thirty-two Column Hall, built under Artaxerxes III, reads like an excerpt from the Apadana. The newer buildings integrate seamlessly into the old. Palace H is a possible exception to this; unfortunately the reasons for its unusual design are unknown, though presumably related in some way to the practice of the site. However, as an anomaly in a unified system, it does not read as either newer or older than the surrounding buildings. The absence of stylistic sequence at Persepolis means that even a degree of aberration is incorporated into the 'timeless' style, rather than having a temporal dimension.

Several studies have also differentiated stylistically between different phases of the sculpture.[803] However, the distinctions that can be drawn prove to be slight variations either in the proportions of the body or in very precise details. Farkas, for instance, distinguishes between the figures on the north stairs of the Apadana, constructed in Darius' reign or early in Xerxes', which are 'short and stocky' and have large heads in relation to their bodies, and those on the east stairs, built later in Xerxes' reign, which 'are more uniformly proportioned, and they have a certain grace and elegance, perhaps produced by the elongated contours of their bodies and headdresses, and even their hands and feet' (*figs* 5.37 and 5.38).[804] She then continues:

'The Persian ushers on the north stair and the Persian guards of the Tripylon stair wear crowns whose feathers rise up to form a flat line at the top of the headdress. On the east stair, the Persian nobles and guards wear a feather crown more graceful

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[800] Tilia 1969; Roaf (1983:158) dates this late, although he notes that this is uncertain.
[801] Tilia 1978:11-8, 27; Roaf 1990:151,158.
[802] Roaf 1983:140, 158.
[803] Olmstead 1936; Farkas 1974; Roaf 1983:127-49.
[804] Farkas 1974:70-1.

in shape; the feathers curve slightly outward, and the upper contour is a gentle convex arc.'[805]

Roaf notes other comments on variation in proportion, and catalogues a variety of such Morellian distinctions, including eyebrow shape, single or double beard curls, and the extent to which the fly whisk extends over the King's head (*fig.* 5.39).[806] However, his conclusion is that the designs and styles remain fundamentally constant: the differences are discernible, and sufficient to be used to date different reliefs; however they are not marked, and it is unlikely they would have had been apparent to any but the closest observer.[807] As a striking proof of this, it was not noticed by archaeologists that the central panels of the Apadana frieze were a replacement, until the original panels were discovered in the Treasury. Roaf comments that this is remarkable, but in many ways it epitomizes the consistency of style on the site.[808] Moreover, the variations that can be detected are not constant; there was, for instance, debate as to whether the sculptural characteristics of the north stairs of the Tripylon, in particular the large size of head relative to the body, should date them before or after the Apadana reliefs (*fig.* 5.40).[809] It is more a matter of identifying temporary variations in styles, or hands, than long term artistic trends. As with the architecture, the fundamental focus is on consistency.

The result of this is, once again, to dislocate Persepolis from any sense of historical change. As noted above of the generic, rather than individualised, portrayals of the King, it has the effect of maintaining the site continually in the present. It deliberately avoids the accumulation and accommodation of past meanings, which, as Summers notes, is extremely unusual for a monumental site. There is something of a tension between this and the inscriptions on the palaces, which name very precisely which King, or combination of Kings, were responsible for the work. [810] The most likely resolution seems to be that further building works are seen as an act of renewal, rather than change. Allen comments:

'Later sponsors of building projects, such as Artaxerxes II and III, pointedly maintained the illusion of consistency in their selective additions at Persepolis, Susa

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[805] Farkas 1974:70.
[806] Roaf 1983:141, 140, 139.
[807] Roaf 1983:127: 'From the earliest reliefs at Persepolis to the latest, there is no major modification either of the subject matter or of the style and techniques of the carving.'
[808] Roaf 1983:145.
[809] Roaf 1983:144.
[810] Roaf 1983:138-41.

and Hamadan, in order to highlight their genealogical inheritance and to demonstrate their ability to revive and maintain the royal environment.'[811]

This is, moreover, very different from the changes in style and the innovationism in use on the Akropolis. Here the preservation of different styles of building and sculpture from the past is continued into the Periklean building program. There is some debate as to the dates at which the later buildings in the program were planned and constructed. Though inscribed accounts make clear that the Erechtheion was completed in 409-406/5, it is not certain whether the project was initiated in the 430s, as part of the Periklean building program, or later c.421.[812] Similarly, although the Temple of Athena Nike itself is dated to the 420s, there is debate as to whether the first phase of the remodelling of the bastion should be dated much earlier, possibly even to the 440s.[813] Schultz has also recently argued that the parapet of the temple should be dated pre 421, rather than the usual dating of 415 or even later.[814] These questions depend partly on epigraphical evidence, and partly on similarities and alignments with other buildings of the Periklean program, notably the Propylaia. However, in a sense, if they are seen as part of the original program, the fact that a unified program accommodated such diversity makes the commitment to change even clearer.

The basic architectural shift in style on the fifth century Akropolis is the increasing use of the Ionic (*fig.* 5.41). This style appears on the Akropolis in votive capitals as early as the end of the sixth century,[815] and is then incorporated into monumental architecture in the mixed order Parthenon and Propylaia, and finally appears in pure form in the Ionic Erechtheion and Temple of Athena Nike. This is often seen as reflecting increasing political ties with the Ionian League, although McGowan attributes its transition into the mainstream to the development of a distinctively Athenian version.[816] Either way, the juxtaposition of the styles on the Akropolis is striking. While the Temple of Athena Nike has a conventional rectilinear outline, the Erechtheion is highly architecturally original. Hurwit notes:

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[811] Allen 2005:45.

[812] Hurwit 1999:205-6. The debate centres on the significance of the absence of any reference to the building in the Kallias Decrees of 434/3 and Plutarch's list of Periklean building projects.

[813] Hurwit 1999:160-1, 209-11; Mark 1993, who dates the temple 42/3-418; Travlos 1971:148-57 dates it 427-424.

[814] Schultz 2002.

[815] McGowan 1997:210, 218.

[816] McGowan 1997:230; 231 footnote 99 for the political dimension, with bibliography.

'It may seem remarkable that temples as different as the Ionic Erechtheion and the (mostly) Doric Parthenon could stand just 40 meters apart on the summit of the Acropolis. Indeed, for some, the Erechtheion has seemed in some measure an eccentric, even critical, response to the Periclean building.'[817]

Additionally, the frieze of the Erechtheion was also highly technically innovative: it used 'a technique that was never again attempted,'[818] the attachment of separately carved marble figures in high relief onto a background of dark blue Eleusian limestone. Although it is not entirely clear how obvious this technique would have been to the viewer, in comparison to the painted backgrounds more normally used, the interest in artistic experimentation is clear.

Strong changes in sculptural style are also apparent. In addition to the juxtaposition of archaic and classical sculpture noted above, the sculpture of the Erechtheion and Temple of Athena Nike was markedly different from that of the Parthenon (*figs* 5.42 and 5.43). This trend also has been explained in political terms, as seen in Stewart and Pollitt's suggestion that the more frivolous, sexualised, curlicues of drapery on the Athena Nike parapet reflect an escapism from an increasingly dire political situation in late fifth century Athens.[819] This argument is affected by the exact dating of the parapet, and its consequent relation to the ups and downs of Athenian political fortunes; however, the general principle that trends in the sculpture of the Akropolis were highly noticeable, seems clear.

The main building program on the Akropolis ended in the late fifth century, or perhaps, if the Chalkotheke is dated late, in the early fourth.[820] However the site continued to be modified by dedications right down to Alexander's dedication of spoils from Granikos and beyond.[821] This means it continued to showcase subsequent events, both personal and political, and changing sculptural styles. No similar practice of personal dedication is known at Persepolis. However, interesting comparative material can be found in the contents of the Treasury. This was looted by Alexander prior to the burning of the site. Cahill, analysing the remains, notes that the contents seem to have been all foreign goods, and of symbolic rather redistributable economic value.[822] He concludes that the

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[817] Hurwit 2004:179.
[818] Hurwit 2004:175.
[819] Pollitt 1972:125; Stewart 1997:148.
[820] Hurwit 1999:215, who also notes 249 that if the *opisthodomos* was part of the archaic temple, it is usually thought to have been demolished c.353/2.
[821] Hurwit 1999:246-82, spoils from Granikos 254.
[822] Cahill 1985:380. For the relationship between tribute and encomium gifts see Root 1979; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1989; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1998.

Treasury was used as a storehouse, not for tribute, but rather for gifts: stone, metal, and glass vessels, jewellery, sculpture, traces of cloth, and a large number of ritual objects made of green chert. Indeed, he notes that the kinds of objects found bear a strong similarity to those depicted on the Apadana. However, all of the goods seem to date to pre-436, with no evidence that further objects were added in the second century of occupation of the site.[823] The impact of this on the experience of the site is unclear: it has been suggested that the Hundred Column Hall was used as a display room for these objects,[824] however it is also possible that the non-architectural elements of the rest of the site did continue to change through the fourth century, and it was merely the stockpile in the Treasury that was unchanging. Nevertheless, it is interesting that the only surviving evidence for the 'soft furnishings' of the site also conforms to the pattern of geographical rather than temporal variation.

Many of the arguments here are dependent on issues of both restoration and dating which are not fully proven; the caveat that non-architectural features may have considerably altered the experience of the site is also important. Some general conclusions can, nevertheless, be drawn.

Both sites appeal to a sense of permanence, but they do it in very different ways. The Akropolis follows the model of multiple stratigraphies, accumulation and accommodation of the past discussed by Summers. The legitimacy it claims is the authority of continuity from the past; however this is modified by a strong sense of linear development, which not only extends back into the past, but is constantly changing in the present and on into the future. The combination of this with the narrative emphasis on the human action in a vivid present creates a version of history in which change is promoted as a development of the past. Persepolis is the inverse of this: it is presented as created by fiat, with no history, and subsequently unchanging through time. Its appeal to permanence is to the impossibility of change: time is limited to an immediate present, in which a sense of past, and therefore potentially future, is never allowed to develop. The narrativeless sculpture thus gains an [a]historical dimension. The visitor has no purchase on historical events, and is isolated from the possibility of change. In both cases the presentation of history adds an overtly political dimension to the sites, which respectively promote and deny the possibility of real, historical change and events.

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[823] Cahill 1985:380, 385.
[824] Cahill 1985:389, citing Schmidt 1953:129-32.

Finally we return to the temporal experience of the architecture itself. We have already observed that it was possible for architecture, particularly when augmented with architectural sculpture, to create variations in the perception of the lapse of time. However, Gell also notes that 'the fact that different tasks produce different subjective estimates of elapsed duration is only scientifically interesting (or interesting at all) because the expansions and contractions of time so produced are illusions, and known to be so by those who experience them.'[825] These expansions and contractions are recognized because they can be compared with time objectively measured by the clock. However, for our purposes, this creates a problem. Even subsequent to the invention of accurate timepieces, few people experiencing architecture divide their progress into regular intervals and compare the perceived lapse of time from one to the next. However, without this comparison with measured time, what is the actual experience created by these contractions and expansions? What does it then mean for time to be 'fast' or 'slow'?

In addressing this question, it is helpful to consider Barthes' observations on slow and fast reading. In *The Pleasure of the Text* he notes that we do not read a text at a constant speed, and, moreover, that we vary rarely read all of it. Indeed he argues that part of the pleasure of a narrative is the texture derived from passages alternatively skipped and passages savoured:

> 'We do not read everything with the same intensity of reading; a rhythm is established, casual, unconcerned with the *integrity* of the text; our very avidity for knowledge impels us to skim or skip certain passages… it is the very rhythm of what is read and what is not read that creates the pleasure of the great narratives: has anyone ever read Proust, Balzac, *War and Peace*, word for word?... what I enjoy in a narrative is not directly its content or even its structure, but rather the abrasions I impose upon the fine surface.'[826]

Moreover, he argues not merely that it is possible to read the same text with different rhythms, but that some texts promote fast reading, and some slow:

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[825] Gell 1996 [1992]:316.
[826] Barthes 1975[1973]:10-11.

'Whence two systems of reading: one goes straight to the articulations of the anecdote, it considers the extent of the text, ignores the play of language (if I read Jules Verne, I go fast: I lose discourse, and yet my reading is not hampered by any verbal loss…); the other reading skips nothing; it weighs, it sticks to the text… this second, applied reading is the one suited to the modern text, the limit-text. Read slowly, read *all* of a novel by Zola, and the book will drop from your hands; read fast, in snatches, some modern text, and it becomes opaque, inaccessible to your pleasure: you want something to happen and nothing does, for what happens to the language does not happen to the discourse.'

Applied to our problem we can see that this distinction roughly corresponds to contracted and expanded sequence; in each case, variation in informational density correlates to variation in the speed of the experience, a densely textured novel and a densely articulated architectural sequence are both experienced slowly, a contracted sequence or a loosely written text are both read fast. However, the difference is not felt so much as an estimate of time but rather as a variation in the texture of the experience.

Moreover, Barthes associates these two forms of reading with different types of interaction between text and reader. He distinguishes between *readerly* texts, which are made for swift consumption, using traditional conventions to create a predetermined paradigm, and *writerly* texts which compel close engagement as the reader engages in producing their own meaning or meanings.[827] Here again, although it is possible to read any given text either way, (indeed Barthes considers that social forces have a role in controlling and conditioning this),[828] some texts promote one type of reading and some the other. The idea, translated to an architectural context, would be that different arrangements of architecture and sculpture invite or preclude proactive engagement to differing extents.

It is this concept that introduces a causal element to the relationship of reader and text, or, in our case, viewer and architecture. As we have seen, the constructions of narrative and history on the sites promote different conceptions of causality, in Gell's terms different time cognitions, different analytical frameworks for thinking about time; here the viewer has a varying causal relationship with the shaping of the site, depending on

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[827] Barthes 1974:4-5: 'The reader [of the readerly text] is thereby plunged into a kind of idleness – he is intransitive… he is left with no more than the poor freedom to accept or reject the text… the writerly text *is ourselves writing*, before the infinite play of the world (the world as function) is traversed, intersected, stopped, plasticized by some singular system.'
[828] Barthes 1974:4: 'Our literature is characterized by the pitiless divorce which the literary institution maintains between the producer of the text and its user.'

the extent to which the architecture and sculpture promote fast or slow reading. The cognitive and the experiential are thus co-ordinated through a shared temporal-causal axis.

Although this approach is grounded in literary theory, it also builds on and elaborates considerations that have already been discussed on both sites, notably the unfolding of the architecture in the real time of the viewer, and their active participation in its construction. [829] This has primarily been discussed with reference to the Parthenon frieze, most notably by Osborne, who considers the role of architectural placement in shaping the viewer's active engagement with the sculpture:

> 'Constantly the viewer must gaze upon scenes whose antecedents or results s/he cannot see, and must supply provisional answers to these problems before being able to see the resolution offered by the sculptures themselves. The viewer is thus involved in the creation of the frieze in a way that s/he would not be if the frieze were not so 'perversely' placed.'[830]

He also notes the implications of the location of this engagement in the viewer's present tense:

> 'Discussion of the subject of the frieze has focused on a debate as to 'whether it could display a contemporary occasion'… What has been ignored in this debate is that the procession that is enacted is the procession of the viewer. The procession can only be contemporary, but contemporary not with the sculpting but with the viewing.'[831]

However similar concerns also occur intermittently in Root's discussion of Persepolis, notably in the observation that the viewer mentally transfers the different delegations to the central panel of the Apadana,[832] and her discussion of the interaction of the movement of the viewer with that of the reliefs.[833]

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[829] Barthes' potential application to architecture has also been noted by Tschumi, who cites his theories, although not making this particular point, in a number of essays including *The Pleasure of Architecture* and *Sequences* (Tschumi 1996:83, 155).

[830] Osborne 1987:100.

[831] Osborne 1987:100-1. See Neils 2004:46: 'The bulk of the Parthenon represents the present as it is reenacted by the viewer in walking along the long flanks of the building,' and Hanfmann 1957:76: 'The frieze of the Parthenon calls upon the spectator to experience the time-sequence of the various episodes in a "mimetic" fashion, as the spectator advances along a path parallel to that of the Panathenaic procession.'

[832] Root 1979:238.

[833] Chapter 2:97 above.

Nevertheless, the translation of this argument from literary theory to architecture is not entirely straightforward. Just as in Barthes it is not, ultimately, simply density of information, or even complexity, which distinguishes between the two types of text, so in architecture too a variety of subtle features come into play, which can perhaps best be fully explored in relation to the particular sites. As we shall see, neither Persepolis nor the Akropolis conforms entirely to one model or the other. In this discussion we revisit many of the concerns of the previous chapter, but considering their temporal dimension.

Persepolis

In Chapter Two I argued that the decorative patterns in the sculpture at Persepolis are designed, in a sense, 'not to be looked at:' the irresolvable qualities of its repetition reject the gaze; in Chapter Three I argued that the linear, outlined, calm style of the figures also causes the eye to move swiftly over the surface, picking out details and gestures here and there, against the orderly background. Essentially, these stylistic qualities of the reliefs encourage skim reading. The interaction they promote is skipping over them in snatches, rather than sustained engagement; indeed, as Barthes observes of Zola, the reliefs tend to reject close engagement, becoming opaque and confusing, slipping out of the viewer's comprehension.

This effect is enhanced by the absence of both independent narrative and historical background (Chapter Four and above): the primary narrative essentially is the viewer's movement, mimicked by the figures in the reliefs, thus there is little purchase or abrasion, between the viewer and the figures.[834] Through most of the site they move seamlessly together; the reliefs mimic and facilitate movement, again creating a sense of fast reading. The architectural framing of the reliefs also has a role here. As noted (again in Chapter Two) the sculpture at Persepolis is highly attentive to architectural structure, however it makes very little use of artificial frames or divisions; the eye therefore moves faster over the unbroken surface. Moreover, when divisions are used, as on the Apadana frieze, they are horizontal, rather than vertical, and therefore do not break the viewer's own movement (*fig.* 5.44). In fact, characteristic of the site are the long processions of figures, moving the eye easily forward.

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[834] It is interesting to note that the possible example of this, the central Apadana relief, which Root argues allowed the viewer to mentally transfer delegations across the façade, was removed relatively early in the site's history and replaced with an image which does not have this potential, and conforms instead to the converging movement of the staircase.

However, architecturally, the story is rather different. Here Persepolis seems rather to slow down time. Of the entrance to the site, Root notes (see *fig.* 1.1):

'The double-reversed stairway to the citadel divides the space into diverging streams, teasing time and distance with the slowness of delayed gratification, forcing temporary suspension of upward action at the landing plateau, and, finally, coaxing the inevitable convergence towards the unified center of the colossal gateway, which simultaneously channels visitors inside.'[835]

These comments, on a smaller scale, are true of the multiple double-staircases across the site; these are all set sideways to the buildings they approach, thus adding emphasis to the transition. In Tschumi's terms they insert a symbol between spatial events, thus expanding the sequence. Moreover, this is only one of a number of ways in which thresholds are exaggerated. The site has various significant gates, mostly notably the Gate of all the Nations (*fig.* 5.45), but also the Unfinished Gate, and the Tripylon. More minor doorways are also extremely thick, which again 'makes solid the gap' between spaces (*fig.* 5.46-7).

Additionally, the placement of the reliefs is more or less entirely in liminal areas.[836] One of the effects of placing sculpture at thresholds is further to encourage skim reading, as you can only engage with it as you move past it. This is particular noticeable in the sculpture extensively placed on the insides of doorways. However, architecturally speaking, this would again seem to create an expanded sequence: even moving past, it increases the texture of the experience and thus extends the perceived length of the interaction. From this it is apparent that, architecturally, perception of movement through the site is frequently slowed by the architecture; there is a syncopation of rhythms between the architecture which slows the progression and the sculpture which speeds it up. Moreover, progression through the site is strongly marked; the emphasis on thresholds creates an awareness of movement, and with it an awareness of time.

However, the site does not suggest a linear progression; no single path is accentuated.[837] Repetitions are pervasive. This can be seen not only in the doubled staircases, but also in the multiple doors in a single wall, the four-fold geometry that forms

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[835] Root 1990:118.
[836] See Root 1990:122: 'The building parts selected for sculpture are all zones that express liminality, the physical and psychological transition from one point and state to another.'
[837] See Tschumi 1996:161 on the tension between the inevitable linearity of movement through architecture and the sometimes non-linear nature of the architecture itself. He refers to 'scrambled structures where meaning is derived from the order of experience rather than the order of composition.'

the basis of many of the buildings; in the repetition of basic building structures, and, a minor, but characteristic feature, the dead-end sequences repeated across the site.[838] These effects are enhanced by the sculpture repeating within the architectural repetitions. These 'flashbacks' come close to playing with temporal sequence. Gell's caveat that all time is in fact experienced as linear has been noted. Nevertheless a path that leads at intervals through recurrently identical features gives at least a frisson of the disruption of linear time. These multiple paths through the site again create a sense of skim reading, or perhaps partial reading: there is very little abrasion on the total surface of the site, and much of the texture of the experience is created by what is not seen.

The total effect of the site, then, is to promote a fast reading, in which the viewer skims over the surface without much abrasion of, or purchase on, the text; moreover it is a reading in which the experience of movement and thus progression is strongly emphasised, but yet the narrative sequence never really progresses, again diminishing a sense of engagement. Thus the causal relationship of the viewer over the site is very weak. This, moreover, co-ordinates very strongly with the experiential absence of time and causality created by the avoidance of narrative and history. There is an obvious parallel between the de-emphasis on linear progression in the architectural sequence, and its absence from the narrative and historical presentation of the sites. However this is also present in the sense of causality elicited: just as the site is not susceptible to historical change, so it is not susceptible to change through the viewer's shaping of it. Moreover, the architectural marking of movement combined with an inability to gain a purchase on the material, echoes the combination of the timeless and the immediate that we observed in the use of narrative. The architectural sequence again leads the viewer physically to act out, in a strong present tense, the absence of causality and the impossibility of change.

The Akropolis

The Akropolis also makes use of expanded architectural sequence. The steep approach, topped with a marked boundary at the entrance, forms a classic time-slowing device. Moreover, within the precinct, techniques of spatial expansion are used. The columns across temple entrances create a hesitation between architectural events; a similar effect is created by the stepped bases of the temples. A more extended version of this is

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[838] Chapter 1:62-4 above.

also used in the great west staircase leading to the Parthenon from the sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia and also in the external ascent to the Temple of Athena Nike (see *figs 1.29 and 1.27*). Thus in a variety of ways the architectural sequence is expanded.

Nevertheless, this is much less the case than at Persepolis. The architectural path approaches up the wide perpendicular ramp, and runs straight through the Propylaia, the transparency of which provides views into the wide open precinct which then opens up to the viewer. Moreover, although the open precinct offers a variety of paths, the combination of the slope, which creates an automatic narrative progression towards the summit, and the sequence of architectural flash-frames arranged across it,[839] extends this linear path straight into the heart of the site. As well as creating a strongly linear progression, this smooth progress, the antithesis of segmented division, contracts the sequence, making the architectural experience faster. Additionally, it allows the viewer to grasp the site in its entirety, rather than dipping in and out of the text.

Moreover the sculpture is not positioned in thresholds. Its total absence from the Propylaia, alone of all the major buildings of the program, is particularly striking. The effect of this is to give less texture or purchase in these areas, therefore again the gaps are less 'solidified,' but rather made fluid, again contracting the sequence. However this also means that much of the sculpture is positioned to remain in view for extended periods of time. This is particularly true of the west pediment of the Parthenon, which dominates the ascent from the Propylaia, and the parapet of the Temple of Athena Nike, which is in view throughout the ascent to the Propylaia. In the latter case it follows the sequence that Tschumi refers to as 'close up and dissolve,' as the viewer is brought level with it and then moves on.[840] In both cases the sculpture functions as a fixed point towards which the viewer moves: rather than highlighting gaps, as at Persepolis, it highlights stasis and, to speak cinematically, continuous, long takes. This long exposure to the viewer also promotes sustained engagement, and gives time for potential close reading.

The directional movement of the sculpture is also, in other ways, less co-ordinated with the viewer than at Persepolis. As noted in Chapter Two, the movement of the figures is not always sympathetic to the viewer, indeed sometimes it is contrary to them, which again slows the reading. Moreover a characteristic type of movement promoted on the site is indecisive movement backwards and forwards. Osborne notes this with reference to the imposing west pediment, where he argues that the triangular shape of the pediment pulls

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[839] Chapter 1: 73-5 above. Cf Tschumi 1996:162: 'Like snapshots at key moments in the making of architecture, whether in the procedure or real space. Like a series of frozen frames.'
[840] Tschumi 1996:165.

the viewer to the centre of the building, as do 'the rearing horses of the flanking chariots,' while the struggle between Athena and Poseidon at the centre of the pedimental group, and the onlooking peripheral figures, cause the viewer to move away from that central position (see *fig.* 2.29).[841] This leads the viewer fully to explore the possibilities of the metopes below. He makes a similar point with reference to the frieze, arguing that because of its position inside the peristyle the viewer must move in order fully to interact with the images (see *fig. 5.8*):

> 'At the same time the viewer must also recreate what s/he is seeing, for s/he does not and cannot see the frieze as a continuous band: s/he sees two sections of the frieze on either side of a column before seeing what joins them, as s/he moves to reveal what the column has obscured.'[842]

The effect of such vacillating, interrogating movement, is to extend interaction with the sculpture, and, as Osborne notes, to increase the viewer's causal power over it.[843]

Unlike much of the rest of the sculpture, the frieze is, apart from the ambiguities in the western side, famously directional. However the variation in speed along the sides again creates friction with the viewer's own movement: unlike at Persepolis, the sympathetic movement actually abrades the viewer's experience. Moreover, as Osborne notes, and again unlike at Persepolis, the horizontal movement is broken by the divisions of the pillars. This is also true of the metopes, which are divided not only by the interposition of the triglyphs, but also often by the discontinuous narrative sequence between them.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the use of mythology on the site creates narrative density more generally, and thus allows slower, more developed engagement, as does the showcasing of historical development discussed above. Similarly, stylistically, as discussed in Chapters Two and Three, the non-exact repetitions and variations, and the moulded lines of the sculpture draw the eye in and cause it to linger. This too extends interaction.

Fundamentally, then, the Akropolis promotes slow reading. The viewer is able both fully to grasp the entirety of the site, but also is encouraged to engage with it closely and carefully, shaping their own experience and understanding of the reliefs. Thus the viewer's causal engagement with the site is strong. Moreover, although choice is also promoted in

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[841] Osborne 2000:230, 235.
[842] Osborne 1987:100-1.
[843] Osborne 1987:100: 'It is the viewer who is master of what s/he surveys.'

paths around the open precinct, the site is fundamentally structured around a strong linear architectural narrative. As at Persepolis, the architectural sequence co-ordinates with, and enacts, the narrative and historical commentary on causality: human action is crucial to shaping a fundamentally linear sequence.

Thus we have seen that the inherently temporal, narrative quality of architecture is exploited on both sites to create different experiences of time, and with it causality. These experiences are in many ways opposed: time is deliberately kept shallow at Persepolis, whereas temporal depth is extended on the Akropolis. However it should be noted that in each case the creation of political effect is subtle and complex. For Barthes, the term 'readerly text' is a criticism, there is a normative value to making the reader a producer, rather than a consumer of the text.[844] However we see here that creating an architectural narrative that promotes fast reading can also be a complex artistic achievement.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how a variety of temporal strategies are used on the two sites, creating at Persepolis the characteristic sense of 'timelessness' and on the Akropolis a sense of action and linear progress. We have also noted that these temporalities have a political dimension in that they promote, and enact, different conceptions of causality and of the possibility of human-driven change. It remains to see how these temporalities can be associated with the nature of the two empires.

Firstly, there is clearly a correspondence here with the democratic/autocratic distinction. As we have seen, the Akropolis basically follows Csapo and Miller's description of democratic time as 'a consciousness of time predicated upon a faith in the ability of humans to master their destiny through the political process.'[845] Persepolis is entirely the opposite: it creates a consciousness of time in which architectural, and by implication political, destiny is shaped entirely by the constructions of the King, over which the individual has as little mastery as possible.

However it is also striking that these presentations of time also correspond to the actual political experiences of the two empires. The history of the Athenian empire is one of reversals, sudden successes and uncertain victories, whereas that of Persian is that of extremely successful expansion combined with sustained peace. This is not to suggest that

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[844] Barthes 1974:4.
[845] Csapo and Miller 1998:95.

the temporalities are purely responsive to historical events, but rather to consider Gell's observation that 'ritual representations of time do not provide a 'world-view' but a series of special-purpose commentaries on a world.'[846] In this case, there seems to be a sense in which Persepolis and the Akropolis are special commentaries on the ideological idea of empire (which may, of course, have a reflexive relationship with actual experience).

Iconographically, this aspect of the sites has been discussed, notably in Root's observation that the Persepolis reliefs show 'an expression, abstracted from time, of a concept of the unity of empire,' and Hurwit's reference to the Akropolis as a 'victory text.' [847] However this has a temporal dimension. The Akropolis essentially creates an historical, imperfect, changeable time, in which experimentation and exertion towards victory are both paramount. Persepolis is a utopia: static because it is supposed to be perfect. Moreover, it is the experiential nature of the sites that renders them particularly effective. On Persepolis the abstract conception of empire, is experienced very strongly in the present, but a present on which you cannot have, and no one ever has had, any impact. On the Akropolis, by contrast the present tense is experienced as active response to change and fluctuation.

Finally, the use of time as a central co-ordinating principle on the sites, has interesting possible implications for theories of artistic change. The contrast between the changing styles of Greek sculpture, and the stasis of Persian art has often been noted, as for instance by Roaf:

'From the earliest reliefs at Persepolis to the latest, there is no major modification either of the subject matter or of the style and techniques the carving. There are no innovations such as those occuring in Greece, where precisely during this period the "Greek Revolution" in the naturalistic representation of the human form reached its culmination.'[848]

Explanations for change are often sought in models of social interaction, such as peer polity, or intra-societal competition.[849] However, this contrasting co-ordination of time and

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[846] Gell 1996 [1992]:326. He continues: 'The interesting feature of rituals which seem to evoke, at will, aberrant time by showing aberrant processes, is the dialectical relation they bear to mundane temporality... Because ritual collective representations of time only cohere in the light of their implicit relation with the practical, they cannot be singled out as constituting the unique, culturally valid representations of time operated by members of a particular society.'

[847] Root 1979:245; Hurwit 2004.

[848] Roaf 1983:127.

[849] Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Dougherty and Kurke 2003

politics on both sites suggests at the least the possibility that the conception of time could be a causal factor in the markedly different speeds of change in Greek and Persian material culture in the fifth century.

PERSEPOLIS AND THE AKROPOLIS: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In these five chapters, I have described the political effects elicited by various architectural and sculptural aspects of Persepolis and the Akropolis. I have shown that a wide variety of formal characteristics on both sites can plausibly be understood as mediating and shaping social relationships by eliciting particular interactions and behavioural patterns from visitors to the site. These descriptions are further secured by the fact that in each case there have been oppositions between the stylistic/social connections on one site/state and the other. This reinforces the idea that the stylistic traits are socially adaptive, tools for constructing the particular social reality of each state. It remains to consider the total experience of each of the sites, the extent to which, in each case, common principles co-ordinate the different material characteristics, and, finally, what this can tell us about the political and artistic priorities of the two states.

Persepolis and Subordination to the King

Persepolis makes very sophisticated use of the combination of architecture and sculpture. The architecture on its own already creates a distinctive experience: the maze-like configuration of space is disorientating, an effect which is enhanced by the many architectural repetitions. Within this the false symmetries and stage doors between the northern and southern areas of the site and unmarked, circuitous, but yet significant, routes, such as that to the Treasury, create further navigational confusion. Sightlines are systematically blocked, by the close distance at which the viewer is held to the enclosing architecture, by the dense hypostyle interiors, and, especially, at moments of transition: the double reverse stairs set parallel to the walls and the thickened doorways not only restrict the line of sight, but also intensify the sense of control over movement. Persepolis is difficult to navigate, and the restrictions on space and movement are accentuated.

However it is the addition of sculpture that really perfects this experience. The repeating patterns echo the configuration of space: in both cases there is a tension between the natural drive to master the pattern and the impossibility of doing so. The mirror images and repetitions, with slight variation, that are inherent in the architecture, proliferate in the

sculpture. Like Gell's 'demon fly-paper' it both catches the attention of the viewer and rejects it.

Moreover, iconographically Persepolis operates on a similar system. Although the practice-based reliefs are immediately legible, and thus engage attention, beyond this, the tantalizing gestures within them seem to have specific meanings, but in fact (probably) do not. Thus they have a frustrating irresolvability of iconography similar to that of their decorative qualities. This sense that the interior meaning is hidden is also similar to the visually frustrating architecture, which continually hints at the space through and beyond elaborate doorways and stairs, but blocks any direct view of it. In this hyper-gestalt and overwhelming world, operating on multiple coinciding levels, comprehension is continually incited, and then evaded. The result is to create a diminished sense of agency: the viewer's engagement with the site is intensified, but their subordination to the architecture, and its control over their movements and responses are constantly emphasized. Not only is this psychologically very clever, a kind of manipulatively 'conceptual' work of art, but the concept it sustains is political. There is a consonance between these architectural effects and the subject-king relationship within the Achaemenid political system: individual interaction with the king is crucial, but always involves subordination, and the limitation of agency to the king's desires.

This power dynamic is also enhanced through the human interactions and behaviour that the site promotes. As well as being hard to navigate, the spatial configurations have high segregation values: the architecture tends to restrict meetings, except for those that practice deliberately stages. This facilitates spatial differentiation and hierarchies, and, in particular, makes encounter with, and physical proximity to, the king, when it does occur, even more overtly exclusive and significant. Movement is additionally controlled by the sculpture. In the more public areas the long lines of figures suggest movement up the staircases, while in the private palaces the reliefs restrict inward movement. As well these directional cues, a strong, but also very smooth and static rhythm emerges from the figures, creating a formality of movement. This, in turns corresponds to other formal qualities in the figures' presentation: linearity and stylization are used to diminish the physiological aspects of the body and instead play up their clothes, attributes and gestures. As well as eliciting mirrored formal behaviour from the viewer, these sculptural qualities emphasize role structures and social differentiations similar to those the architecture enforces.

The use of figured sculpture within the architecture to create these effects is significant in that it augments the sense of inhabitation inherent in architecture and populates the space. These crowd-effects increase the social purchase of Persepolis' effects, while the embodied experience and physical enaction that the figures elicit increases complicity with the site's program. Space for independent action is reduced and conformity to the social reality that the site presents is intensified. This is increased by the iconography these figures constitute: its depiction of practice creates a close relationship to the here and now, which sets a clear agenda with little space for manipulation or elaboration. As we have seen, this also has a temporal aspect, which again influences the experience of agency/causality at an immediate, physical level. Persepolis closely shapes real experience into a continual present tense, tying the visitor's experience of disempowerment to the site's ahistorical changelessness, and thus directly to a political agenda.

In all these ways the architecture and sculpture create an atmosphere which is highly restricted and controlled, continually disorientating, and not a little intimidating. Through this runs the unifying principle of disempowerment, promoted through a cluster of social dispositions, of formality, segregation, control, and stability, which correspond to, and promote, the relational and behavioural system around the king extremely effectively.

From this it is apparent that Persepolis is stylistically programmatic, and coherently so. Moreover, style is not just used as a 'handmaiden' to the iconography.[850] Instead it is almost the other way round: the iconography's depiction of a stable and ordered empire reinforces a point made primarily by the architecture and sculpture. Giving full weight to the stylistic and architectural impact in this way also somewhat shifts the nuances of the site. Root's iconographical analysis emphasizes the 'placidity, refinement, and ordered control'[851] in the Persepolis reliefs: 'the world is at peace on the walls of Persepolis as it never was in actuality.'[852] This stylistic account agrees with this, but stresses the imposing, even intimidating, nature of that control and stability. Persepolis may enlist the sympathies of its viewers to an harmonious imperial project, but it never ceases to remind them of their subordination within it.

It is interesting to note that the previous tendency to dismiss Achaemenid style can thus be seen to be partly due to its inherent qualities, viewed out of context. Because the reliefs are focused so closely and coherently on creating political effect, when the site is experienced as a ruin rather than as an imperial centre, the picture is only partially visible.

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[850] Root 1979:311.
[851] Root 1979:311.
[852] Root 1979:311.

For instance, Frankfort's opinion that the reliefs are monotonous is in a sense correct, but the monotonous repetitions are being used creatively, and in co-ordination with other aspects of the site, to a particular political purpose.[853] In some ways the negative responses actually show how effective the site still is: it makes no concessions to the viewer.

It is also interesting to note that the site seems to be structured primarily towards imperial subjects as an audience, rather than the Persian nobility. This can be seen not only in the iconographic choices, but also in the consistent use of cognitive and gestalt qualities rather than those which require cultural knowledge. The extent to which the court would have had a different experience of the site is debatable. There seems to be some degree of differentiation of audience, as can be seen both in the architecturally different areas of the site, and in the suggestion that the iconography appeals on more than one level; it is also true that some of the disorientation effects reduce with familiarity with the site. Nevertheless, even with these differences, the fundamental experience of disempowerment operates regardless of audience. This too is consonant with the political structure: everyone is a subject of the king.

The Akropolis and Democratic Engagement

The spatial layout of the Akropolis is far more comprehensible than that of Persepolis. The buildings are, comparatively, simple in plan. They are individual units whose geometry is easily understood; their internal rooms also open directly onto the precinct, eliminating any internal navigational complexity. The site is fundamentally orientated to the open space of the area, in which the visitor is encouraged to wander. Moreover the basic experience the site encourages is that of gaining visual comprehension, and with it a sense of power, as the viewer ascends from the Propylaea to the Great Altar. Architecturally, the Akropolis emphasizes visual clarity and ease of navigation, increasing the visitor's sense of agency in multiple ways.

These spatial qualities are combined with a sculptural program that affords sustained, active engagement. This is created partly through its positioning on the buildings: the Akropolis reliefs are visible from a distance and over extended periods of time as the viewer follows the paths across the site. It is also influenced by the iconographic choices. The use of myths, with their narrative and polyvalent qualities,

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[853] Frankfort 1946:11.

encourages critical interaction with and elaboration of the ethical, and social concerns they negotiate. Contrasts and connections between the different sculptural sequences on the site amplify this, while the existence of intertexts with other Athenian media integrates the viewer's experience of the site into other dimensions of their lives. This gives the site greater purchase on the viewer, but also gives the viewer greater scope for modifying and adapting its meanings to their own concerns. The decorative, patterning effects, looser and more intermittent than those at Persepolis, also encourage more active engagement. They invite selective comparison, without demanding resolution, which again shifts the balance of power to the viewer.

This consistent encouragement of sustained, active engagement, in an architectural setting which emphasizes the viewer's agency, can be seen to correspond to the political structure of the state, in which citizens are empowered and individual participation is crucial. The integration of the site's mythology with the viewers' lives can also be seen as similar to the extent of their committed political involvement. In this way, by promoting such interactions, experience of the site shapes citizen identity and dispositions.

Moreover the open space and permeability of the site creates a 'face-to-faceness' and transparency similar to that noted in the Athenian democratic system, in which power is distributed through the citizen population. The Akropolis is a literal enactment of the space 'in the middle.' This is not merely a practical metaphor, but can be seen in the behavioural patterns the site promotes. The external orientation of the buildings within an open space makes the site very highly integrated, affording continual meetings and interactions between visitors co-present on it.

Movement is relatively free: there are multiple paths across the site, augmented by the continual visual lines the open space creates, and thresholds are relatively unmarked. Even in the Propylaia transition is de-stressed: its triple doors give it a degree of permeability, its lack of sculpture promotes swift movement through it, and some of the sanctuary is brought outside its entrance, blurring the precinct boundary. The movement that the sculpture invites is also much more ambiguous than that at Persepolis: different sculptural elements sometimes suggest movement simultaneously in different directions. Moreover the cues generally promote, rather than restricting, directional movement, emphasizing possibility rather than constraint. This is combined with a much greater informality of movement among the sculptural figures: the rhythms are relaxed and various, and physical control over the body is diminished.

Thus the Akropolis not only promotes increased interaction, but also mediates its nature. The viewer's highly engaged and comparatively informal interaction with the reliefs, immediately shapes their interaction with other people they may met on the site. The architectural environment of engagement and agency also plays out in human encounters within it. Both of these things have further effects, shaping *habitus* and relationship to the state more broadly, beyond immediate experience.

This sense of increased agency is also played out in the sites' temporal qualities: the Akropolis uses narrative and architectural sequences that emphasise an urgent present tense, poised between past and future, in which action is experienced as not just possible but crucial. It also consistently showcases its own history, tying this temporal sense to the Athenian past, and, by extension, future, and thus adding an overtly political aspect to these mediations.

Some previous iconographical analyses have seen the Periklean program as imperially focused, making deliberate concessions to the allies and, particularly its use of imagery referencing the Persian Wars, specifically intended to legitimate Athenian hegemony among them.[854] Others have emphasized the extent to which it glorifies specifically Athena and the Athenians.[855] This stylistic analysis, on the whole supports the latter view: there is little evidence that the formal qualities of the Akropolis particularly accommodate an imperial audience, and much to suggest they have political effects within the Athenian *demos*. Nevertheless, as noted in Chapter Four, the relative cultural homogeneity of the *archê* means that the site is still highly legible to a non-Athenian audience. Moreover, in a sense this emphasis corresponds to the political structure of the empire: Athens exercised hegemony rather than actual sovereignty,[856] which is exactly the relationship with subjects that an impressive, elaborate, and extremely Athenocentric site creates.

Broadly speaking, then, the distinction we have seen between the two sites, is that of the increase of architectural, and by extension 'state,' control over and disempowerment of the viewer at Persepolis and, on the Akropolis, the increase of the viewer's agency and the diminishment of the 'state.' However, on the Akropolis, as at Persepolis, the effects are not simply in terms of degree of agency, but affect a whole palette of behaviours and

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[854] Hölscher 1998:182: 'Since most Athenian political monuments seem to have been stimulated less by democracy than by empire, the need for legitimation must have been particularly strong in the latter sphere;' Castriota 1992: esp. 137 and footnote 15 (282) for bibliography on the Persian Wars with reference to the Parthenon metopes, where it is most discussed, and 228 for the incorporation of East Greek motifs into the frieze as a way of 'placating' the subject cities.
[855] Eg Castriota 1992:229; Lewis 1992:139; Osborne 1994b:76.
[856] Sahlins 2004:7.

interactions, which coincide with the two states' political dispositions. There is a sense in which the Akropolis is just as socially constraining as Persepolis, it is just that the social system it constrains is one in which individual participation and agency is demanded. Similarly, Persepolis could be described not so much as reducing agency *per se*, but shaping the subjects' agency into forms agreeable and subordinate to the king. It is also interesting to note that this sociological explanation suggests a possible reason why the two cultures influenced each other so little artistically: appropriation is resisted not just due to hostility, but because their artistic techniques, grounded in their different social systems, are not useful for each others political-aesthetic purposes.

Intention, Design, and Textures of Thought

In each case we have seen that the material characteristics of the sites seem to shape a fairly coherent set of interactions, with political effect. The question arises to what extent these characteristics are the result of intentionally politicized design, and, if so, at what level their underlying principles and logic were thought out. One of the implications of a socially adaptive and recursive model of material culture is that its characteristics may have social effects and, in an adaptive sense, have been selected for these social effects, without the agents consciously formulating this outcome. However it has also been noted that how designers, and indeed societies, conceptualize material culture has considerable influence on its ultimate appearance and interacts with the more adaptive factors in its selection in a variety of ways.[857]

Direct evidence for the process of design on each site is limited. Vitruvius says that Iktinos and Karpion wrote a treatise on the Parthenon; this is complicated by the fact that other sources name Iktinos and Kallikrates as the architects, but in any case it does not survive.[858] Studies have looked at the development of solutions to structural problems in Greek buildings over the fifth century, and also the position of the architect and architectural commissions within Greek society, however these questions do not have a direct bearing on the question of the social effects of the architecture's style.[859] For Achaemenid Persia the evidence is similarly scant: various inscriptions present the king as a builder and also as a rebuilder of ruins, but do not engage in theoretical discourse on the

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[857] Cf Tanner 2006: esp. 21-9 applying Weber's theories of rationalization to material culture.
[858] *Vitruvius* 7 praef. 12; Barletta 2005:88.
[859] Ashmole 1972; Coulton 1977.

nature of architecture.[860] Indeed, as we have seen, attempts to use the Susa fortification tablets to demonstrate the composite nature of Achaemenid architecture have proved problematic. Both Root and Roaf have looked at the question of design and the mechanisms of creative process at Persepolis, concluding that the primary onus of design was probably on the king or his immediate circle rather than the stone masons.[861] Root suggests 'a coordinated effort of ideologically motivated planners and aesthetically/technically astute practitioners,'[862] and draws a illuminating parallel with the art produced under the patronage of the Mughal emperor Akbar in the sixteenth century, which similarly seems to have appeared full-blown without a preliminary stage.[863] However this too is concerned with the actors involved in design, rather than its content. For the latter, therefore, we have to consider the evidence of the sites. This is a fairly speculative enterprise, but some conclusions can be drawn. Moreover, it is interesting precisely because there is so little textual evidence for how architecture was thought about in Athens or Persia, or indeed, more generally, how architectural design and theory was conceptualized prior to extensive discursive writing on the subject. Foucault notes that architectural planning as a specifically political discipline first occurs in the eighteenth century, but that in 'the reflections of architects upon architecture' it may go back much further, even, he says, to Greece and Rome.[864] The question of in what terms such architects thought about architecture remains open.

Looking first at Persepolis, the characteristics we have seen seem strongly to suggest that the site is deliberately and programmatically orientated towards creating political effect. There are a number of reasons for thinking this:

Initially, intentionality is perhaps most clearly seen in the iconographic choices. Not only are the practice-based motifs and scenes at Persepolis highly legible to a cross-cultural imperial audience, but also there are concessions within the iconography to a more elite audience, such as the subtle inclusion of Persian religious motifs, and, perhaps, the use of the king-hero motif, the only relief in the site's sculpture that also appears significantly on seals, in the more private areas of the site.[865] This strongly suggests that these audiences have been differentiated, and attention paid to how to communicate to them. Moreover, the very strong sculptural manipulation of movement on the site, again differentiated in

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[860] Briant 2002[1996]:165-6.
[861] Roaf 1990; Root 1990.
[862] Root 1990:128.
[863] Root 1979:21.
[864] Foucault 1998 [1982]:430-1.
[865] Garrison and Root 2001:56.

different areas, and used in conjunction with architecturally marked paths, additionally shows that the use of architecture and sculpture in concert to affect the visitor at an interactive level has been clearly conceptualized. Images can, of course, be understood as having a variety of purposes: this makes it clear that at least one way in which the designers of Persepolis understood its sculpture was as having very direct effects on the behaviour of its viewers.

That the principle underlying these effects was political is suggested by the highly coherent co-ordination of architectural, stylistic, and iconographic traits to create a sense of timelessness and powerlessness. The maze-effects, the pervasively and elusively repetitive patterning, the images that simultaneously suggest and deny meaning, the lack of purchase, and the encouragement of skim reading all work together to the same end. Moreover, it is important to note that the ways in which these qualities create political effects are often quite circuitous or oblique: the use of pattern to disorientate is not overtly political in the way that an image of the king enthroned is. This, and the consistent use of cognitive/ Gestalt qualities to enhance cross-cultural legibility, again suggests that these effects do not arise simply from a reflection of society or as a result of a shared *habitus*, but from the intentional and sophisticated conceptualization of stylistic characteristics as a way of creating political effect.

Finally there is the point that Persepolis is extremely distinctive and, for architectural sculpture, innovative in its repetitive, static, linear, non-narrative style. Once the idea that this is simply due to lack of talent is dismissed, it becomes increasingly plausible to think that it was comprehensively thought out in some way. Seeing the site as deliberately orientated to political effect offers a good explanation for a group of stylistic traits that have previously been apologized for, and found hard to explain.

In some ways, the stylistic traits of the Akropolis also seem to be intentional in their political effects. If the Persian wars are a significant concern in the sculptural program, this shows that the site's iconography was, as at Persepolis, deliberately political in nature. A number of plausible interpretations of the Parthenon frieze also suggest that this had a direct, contemporary political theme. Moreover, the manipulation of the viewer by the site can be seen in the sense of movement elicited by the sculpture. Similar deployments of sculpture have been used in Greek temples before. The extent to which this is intended strictly to control movement and the extent to which it describes the buildings is not totally clear. Nevertheless, at least in the case of the Parthenon it does seem to be designed to influence the viewer's own movements. It thus seems that the

behavioural effects of the architectural sculptural on the viewer were conceptualised on the Akropolis too. However, although we have seen that this does have political effects, in keeping the viewer in the open precinct and in prompting them to engage proactively with the reliefs, it is not so overtly politicized as Persepolis sculptural control of movements and meetings.

Eisenstein's description of a 'montage sequence' across the site suggests that the experience of movement into the heart of the site is also deliberately planned. However, this only really becomes political in the context of the open precinct, which is common to Greek sanctuaries, and the rising ground, which was a predetermined characteristic of the site; indeed the Periklean program flattened the platform, rather than exaggerating the rise.[866] So here again the degree of specifically political intention is ambiguous.

One of the recurrent reasons why the characteristics of the Akropolis seem less pressingly political in intention than those at Persepolis is that there are so many other salient possible factors: wider Greeks traditions, echoes from reuse of the site, similar traits in other media, alternative explanations such as the religious or aesthetic. For instance, the looser use of repetitions is striking, compared to Persepolis, but is, of course, common on other Greek media, so it is not clear how far the political effects of this quality has been thought through. A similar point can be made about naturalism. Its ubiquity in the fifth century Greek world in many ways makes its ability to elicit informality more socially effective precisely because of its pervasiveness, but it also make it less clear that the designers of the Akropolis chose the style specifically because of its ability to create this effect. The degree of intention behind the more proactive iconography is also somewhat unclear: the characteristics which make it elicit more extended engagement - narrative, mythology, and cross-reference within a single object -are common in the traditions of Greek iconography which it follows. Alternative explanations exist for more minor matters too. For instance, the absence of sculpture on the Propylaia 'contracts the sequence' and seems to suggest a de-stress on thresholds, but Ridgway notes that sculptural decoration is primarily associated with religious buildings, at least until the Hellenistic period, which suggests an alternative explanation.[867]

One possibility is that this is merely a distinction in the evidence. It is possible that the designers of the Akropolis were adapting and combining suitable existing traits in order

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[866] Travlos 1971:53: 'Very solid retaining walls were among the first works to be carried out on the Acropolis; they were built to hold in the heavy earth fillings which were brought in to level out the uneven surface and, more important, to enlarge the area of the Acropolis.'

[867] Ridgway 1999:7-8.

to create a site with a coherent political effect, but that this intention has been obscured by the cultural background within which we read it. It is also true that there is perhaps a temptation to overstate the political explanations for Persepolis because of gaps in the archaeological evidence for other factors. It is possible that if more were known about Median culture, and Achaemenid cultural attitudes generally, this would provide alternative explanations.

But equally it is possible that the evidence reflects a genuine difference in the circumstances in which the two sites were created and the consequent ways in which their designers conceptualized them. We saw in Chapter Four that the designers of the Akropolis did not have so consciously to formulate the question of legibility due to the broadly culturally homogenous nature of the *archê*, and the point can be extended to other aspects of the site: the experience of democratic hegemony is easily created through Athenocentric design, within, or expanding on, previous Greek traditions, themselves developed within, broadly, *isonomic* states. The Persians, by contrast, not only had few direct antecedents or prototypes for their design of Persepolis, but also ruled over a newly formed and highly heterogeneous empire, of an extent previously unparalleled. They therefore had pressing reasons to prioritize innovative ways of engaging political potential in their use of artistic techniques.

It is important to avoid the comparative trap of polarization, and it has been argued that 'the sheer quantity and ambitious scale of artistic achievements'[868] in Athens makes it unlikely that the Athenians were unaware of the political uses of art. Particularly, Athenian imperial building does differ from earlier Greek sites in its exaggeration and amplification of their traits: the eight column façade of the Parthenon, the extra frieze, the general excess of sculpture throughout the site, all follow this, very politically effective, principle. Indeed some commentators have seen Athens as specifically using spectacle as an imperial technique, creating 'an empire of signs,' intended to enforce hegemony and extract wealth without exerting more direct forms of sovereignty.[869]

Nevertheless, the material evidence does seem to suggest that the Athenians did not conceptualize the detailed political effects of style in such a coherent, or even relentless, way as the Persians did. Unlike Persepolis, where style and politics are deliberately and insistently connected, many of the Akropolis' political characteristics are much more easily explicable within a recursive adaptive model, in which many of their

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[868] Hölscher 1998:183, who continues: 'Clearly the citizens of Athens, more than those of other cities, felt an unprecedented need to create political identity by way of public monuments.'
[869] Sahlins 2004:105-8, citing Kallet 2001 for the archê as primarily revenue-generating.

social effects arise without being consciously formulated. It is also interesting to note that the Athenians seem to have put a lot of effort into the refinements of the Akropolis buildings and the use of similar lengths and proportions between them. These distinctive architectural features seem to follow the principle of making the site more extravagant, but otherwise do not have obvious political effects.

If this distinction is correct, it raises the interesting possibility that the differences between the two sites are due not only to differences in the Persian and Athenian political systems, but also to the different ways in which the Achaemenids and the Athenians thought about the relationship between art and politics. Bourdieu argues that a significant difference between different societies is their different textures, the extent to which different 'fields' of operation are or are not autonomous.[870] The evidence here would suggest that in Persia the artistic field was extremely closely connected, and subordinated, to the political world, and that the Athenians connected the two more loosely. This is not to suggest that Athens had a fully autonomous 'field of cultural production' in the Bourdieu sense, a development he sees as being one of modernity, merely that their art was not so directly conceptualized as a political tool. Speculatively, it is perhaps more likely that art and politics were at a distance because they were linked through religion, which, as Parker notes, was pervasive in Athens and often concomitant with other types of thought, and Tanner argues was intimately connected with art throughout the fifth century.[871]

This does not fully answer the question of how these politicized architectural theories were formulated. We saw in Chapter Five that the sense of causality that Persepolis elicits can also be described as a sense of temporality, which is also a sense of the nature of empire. Through exactly which of these philosophical structures the designers thought about the program is unclear, but the conceptualization of sculptural and architectural style as a psychologically manipulative political tool does seem to be a particularly Persian phenomenon.

The Aesthetics of Power and the Power of Aesthetics

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[870] Bourdieu 1993; Murray 1991 for the separation of 'the political' within the Greek *polis*.
[871] Parker 2005:452: 'Religion is very important, because it impinges on everything. Religion is very unimportant, because it is so much a part of the life of the city that it has no independent position, no ground from which to assert distinct imperatives of its own;' Tanner 2006: 40-55, esp. 54: 'I shall argue that the Greek revolution was not a differentiation of art from religion but a differentiation of the aesthetic expressive dimension of Greek religion.'

In considering the two sites I have been selective in the stylistic qualities I looked at. I have limited my focus to formal characteristics which could be read clearly from the archaeology and related to social practice through relatively simple psychological mechanisms. The disadvantage of this is that they describe the experience of the sites, and the political systems, selectively, even reductively. In both cases there is the possibility that more complex and culturally specific forms of experience were influential on the site's visitors, and their political response to the architecture. It is hard not to agree with Schapiro's observation, on the relationship of style and society more generally, that:

> 'A theory of style adequate to the psychological and historical problems has still to be created. It waits for a deeper knowledge of the principles of form construction and expression and for a unified theory of the processes of social life in which the practical means of life as well as emotional behaviour are comprised.'[872]

Nevertheless, these particular social-aesthetic qualities demonstrably do have considerable significance on the both sites. The fact that stylistic differences match the political differences so well, conforms to Gell's account, in which the defining feature of art objects is their social agency. So too do the underlying similarities we have seen between the two sites: the monumental grandeur, decorative adhesion, the social purchase of the crowds of sculptural figures. In this model, power is the dominant aesthetic principle, and the capacity effectively to transform and configure power in particular ways the artistic aim. Described in these terms, a comparison of the two sites yields quite different results to the usual denigration of Achaemenid style. Appraised in terms of their ability to create 'terror, desire, awe, and fascination,'[873] Persepolis is at least as successful as the Akropolis.

Finally, it is interesting to speculate how much political effect the sites actually had within the two states. My original aim was to show that political effect could offer an explanation for why the two sites were stylistically different, not specifically to demonstrate that monumental architecture was an important factor in political formation in either state. Nevertheless, given that they make up a disproportionately large part of the evidence that has survived, and even more so of the impression of Persia or, particularly, Greece in the modern consciousness, it is interesting to speculate on how influential they were on their contemporary audiences.

[872] Schapiro 1994:100.
[873] Gell 1998:6.

Positively, it is notable that the Achaemenid empire existed for significantly longer and was in many ways much more successful than the Athenian. It is tempting to see the fact that Achaemenid architecture was far more politically and imperially focused as a factor in this, although of course there is also the possibility that different degrees of political success and architectural focus were in each case the common results of different attitudes to empire. On the negative side, here we have been looking very much at what Bourdieu would call symbolic violence, force by other means, but, as Sahlins argues, it is important not to underestimate the political effects, both direct and symbolic, of actual violence: 'force too is a sign of force.'[874] It is therefore interesting to note Hurwit's estimation that the total cost of the Parthenon, the Athena Parthenos statue and the Propylaia together is less than the figure Thucydides gives for the siege of Potidaia, itself only a single two-year campaign.[875] It is possible that the political effects of architectural, as opposed to military, accomplishments were similarly proportionate.

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[874] Bourdieu 1977[1972]:196; Sahlins 2004:106.
[875] Hurwit 2004:97.

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