

THE MASTER OF OLYMPIA—CREATIVE INTELLECTUAL?

ALAN GOWANS *

“ ‘The figures in the front gable are by Paionios . . . the figures in the back gable are by Alkamenes . . .’ Few statements of Pausanias have given rise to so much divergence of opinion as this. The views of archaeologists on the subject seem almost to exhaust the possibilities of difference . . .”¹ And since these lines were written, controversy over the identity of the Master of the sculptures of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia has become more, not less, complicated.² Unsolved and seemingly unsolvable, the problem still fascinates; for clearly these sculptures mark a turning point not only in the history of Greek art, but in the whole conception of art as a medium for expressing thought. Dogmatic solutions are out of the question; certainly this paper proposes none, nor does it pretend to offer definite proof for any thesis. Its purpose is simply to suggest another line of inquiry.

On one point at least there seems reasonable agreement: the Olympia sculptures were executed by a number of different hands,³ but guiding them was “the will, the imagination, and the passion of a single great master.”⁴ So profound and comprehensive was

* Department of Art.

¹ This essay touches on one specific aspect of a more universal problem which deserves a longer study—the problem of collaboration between artists and men of letters in the formulating of iconographic programs, particularly in Antiquity. In working on this present paper, I am grateful to Dr. and Mrs. Homer Thompson of the Institute for Advanced Study for their generous criticism and suggestions. Opinions expressed in the paper, of course, are the writer's own.

² J. G. Frazer, *Pausanias' Description of Greece, Commentary III* (London 1898) 512. (Commentary on Pausanias 5.10.8.)

³ Cf. bibliographical summary by Giovanni Becatti, *Il Maestro d'Olimpia* (Florence 1943).

⁴ Estimates of the number have ranged anywhere from the two mentioned by Pausanias (and commonly refuted) to the five proposed by E. Buschor, “Die Olympiameister,” *AM*, 51 (1926) 163-170.

⁵ G. Rodenwaldt, *Olympia* (New York 1936) 42. Or cf. Alan J. B. Wace, “Design and Execution,” *Annuario* 34-36 (1950) 113: “It stands to reason that the authorities of Olympia in deciding on the sculptural decoration of the temple

this mind that it is unthinkable no other traces on Greek life should have been left by it, or that such a man should have been totally forgotten. Yet among sculptors of the fifth century whose data fits the Olympia work, only one, Pheidias, seems of sufficient stature to be considered as the Olympia Master. A good case for Pheidias' participation on the Olympia sculptures can be made out,⁵ but one very serious difficulty stands in the way of proceeding to identify Pheidias as the Olympia Master: while there is no reason to suppose that the young Pheidias could not have been technically competent enough to execute the Olympia sculptures, it is not technical competence that made the Olympia Master great. We are apt to overlook how very *retardataire* the Olympia sculptures are in many ways, by the standards of the classic period,⁶ because for the last two or three generations we have come to appreciate primitivism in art, and our estimation of them has altered accordingly. But clearly, what made the Olympia sculptures so remarkable in the evolution of Greek art was not technical advance, but profound reflections on the universal problems of human life, embodied in an iconographic scheme of subtle complexity—and it is very difficult to imagine a man as young as Pheidias at this time being entrusted with such an elaborate program, let alone his being capable of formulating it. This considera-

would have entrusted the designing of it to one artist only. From both the architectural and sculptural aspect the temple is a unity, and to divide its sculptural decoration among two or more artists would have impaired that unity and consequently the artistic conception of the whole. . . . The masters discerned by Buschor are the carvers who executed the design of the matter-artist responsible for the composition of the whole sculptural decoration of the temple. . . ." I much appreciate Dr. Wace's elaboration of these points in conversation with me.

⁵ Cf. Charles H. Morgan, Jr., "Pheidias at Olympia," *Hesperia* 21 (1952).

⁶ In this respect, it is well to remember how the Olympia work looked to a scholar of an older generation steeped in the mature classical spirit: "It is agreed that the whole effect, more especially of the Oenomaus group, is poor; that the drapery of the figures is rendered in a shallow and feeble manner; that the faults of execution are numberless. Indeed, an ordinary student of art will find, in an hour's study of these figures, faults which in our day an inferior sculptor would not commit. . . . The figures are . . . faulty . . . the heads have a heaviness which sometimes seems to amount to brutality, and are repellent, if not absolutely repulsive. . . . The artist who designed the Chariot-contest can scarcely be acquitted of jejeuneness and poverty, and he who designed the Combat of Centaurs sins quite as deeply in the direction of excess of strain and deficiency in sobriety. In fact, the composition as well as the execution is of provincial character . . . etc. . . ." (Percy Gardner, *New Chapters in Greek History* [New York and London 1892] 279-280.)

tion, while not weighing against Pheidias' execution of some of the Olympia sculptures, argues strongly against identifying him as the Olympia Master, and, there being no other candidates, would leave the problem as mystifying as ever. But it does suggest another possibility. If it was not technical advance, but speculative thought, which peculiarly distinguished the Olympia Master, then perhaps the reason this unique guiding mind cannot be identified among sculptors is that he was not a sculptor. It may be that the Olympia Master is to be looked for elsewhere.

Actually, on the question of how and by whom the iconographical programs of Greek monuments were determined, we have surprisingly little evidence.⁷ We take it for granted that they were devised by the same men who executed them, but our only real reason for doing so is a modern climate of opinion—an assumption that it is the function of a great artist to invent his own ideas as well as the means for their expression. This is the principle on which contemporary art is based; whether we are justified in assuming that the same principle was widely held in the past is quite another matter. Modern developments in art suggest that we are not. For in our experience, the artistic temperament normally and naturally concentrates on the means of expression rather than the ideas expressed; when subject-matter has been left to the discretion of artists, as in modern times, their tendency has been to ignore it altogether. The result has been the appearance of an art which it its own absolute, expression existing for its own sake. Now modern "absolute" art, whatever its merits, hardly represents the kind of activity we have called "art" in the past;⁸ the inference is clear enough, therefore, that artistic activity in the past must

⁷ The most recent discussion of this problem is by Wace, *op. cit.* His contention (p. 109): "There still seems to be too great a tendency to see in the execution of the marbles we possess the actual hand of the master-artist said to be their author. We thus find that writers on Greek sculpture see in the marbles of the Parthenon several different masters, in the Nike Balustrade six masters, in the Olympia pediments five masters. These masters should not be called masters, but carvers employed to carry out the designs of some master artist. . . . Our best example is the Erechtheion . . . behind it . . . there must have been a plan and a design conceived by some master artist, and the carvers merely entrusted with the work of translating that master's designs into marble. . . ."

⁸ Cf. André Malraux, *The Twilight of the Absolute* (New York 1950): "Our heritage has undergone the most elaborate metamorphosis that the world has ever known. . . ."

have involved an attitude to subject-matter much different from our present one. And modern scholarship, turned in this direction, has already provided impressive evidence that our modern conception of the artist completely free to invent ideas, or reject subject-matter altogether, is indeed a very recent development. It is an outgrowth of the Renaissance exaltation of the artist as a godlike creative personality, but only within recent generations; in the Renaissance itself even the greatest of artists still relied on outside sources for their ideas, their subject-matter. For instance, in the case of the Sistine Ceiling and the Stanza d'Eliodoro, surely two of the most "original" works of the whole Renaissance, a modern scholar finds:

I do not think it presumptuous to claim for [the Franciscan theologian Marco] Vigerio the authorship of both the programs presented to Michelangelo and to Raphael for execution. There is no more reason to suppose that they invented these programs themselves than there is to imagine that Giotto decided which scenes were to be represented on the walls of the Arena Chapel or that Pietro da Cortona worked out personally the complex allegories of the Salone Barberini. In the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Baroque period such programs were, as they still are today, decided by ecclesiastical authority. Little interested in theology, but fascinated by the new individualism of the Renaissance, most nineteenth-century scholars saw nothing strange in the spectacle of a Pope . . . giving the choice of the ideological program to be presented to the world in the papal courtrooms and the official chapel of the Curia—to laymen who had no theological training and in all probability could not even read Latin! This conception has placed a false emphasis on the *literary* originality of the artists. Its refutation by no means weakens the profoundly new and personal character of the images they created on the basis of the given iconographical material.⁹

It is always dangerous, of course, to cite later "precedents" for problems in classical art. Nevertheless, I think it is generally acknowledged that the evolution of art in Graeco-Roman antiquity follows a pattern similar in many ways to that of later art in the West, and that the Temple of Zeus at Olympia embodies an artistic

⁹ Frederick Hartt, "The Stanza d'Eliodoro and the Sistine Ceiling," *ArtB* 32 (1950) 214.

mentality roughly parallel to the fifteenth-century Renaissance in Italy.¹⁰ In following such an analogy, however, one important reservation should be kept in mind—so far as we know, there was in fifth-century Greece no tradition binding artists to follow closely any “canonical” recension or sacred text in handling religious (i. e., mythological) subject-matter, as there was in Christian art.¹¹ We are therefore justified in looking for a “literary” figure as the author of the Olympia sculptural program only if we suppose that his influence would be more or less indirect, in the form of suggestions to be freely dealt with by the artists, rather than prescriptions to be carried out to the letter.

For this kind of influence on the Olympia sculptures we have not far to look—it is the drama. Recently we have come to recognize that the influence of the drama on fifth-century Greek art in general was much more pervasive than hitherto supposed;¹²

¹⁰ Cf., e. g., the appendix to F. P. Chambers, *The History of Taste* (New York 1932). It should be noted, however, that this author still thinks of the Renaissance as a period of emancipated creativity; hence in his “cycle of antiquity” he finds in the fifth century (pp. 281-282) “an unfamiliar type of mind at work, a type which modern man can hardly understand in its depths.” If we would question the parallel drawn here, it is because our conception of the nature of artistic activity has changed, not as regards Antiquity, but as regards our own past.

¹¹ Cf. Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex* (Princeton 1947) esp. pp. 14-15. I should like to thank Professor Weitzmann for his stimulating discussion of this point with me.

¹² Particularly important in this connection was the appearance of L. Séchan, *Etudes sur la tragédie grecque dans ses rapports avec la céramique* (Paris 1926). E. g. (pp. 23, 28): “By the fact that it has no technical limitations, and that it does not have to conquer the same expressional problems, literature has always been ahead of the plastic arts. Painters and sculptors have succumbed to the attraction of this ideal world which literature evokes with such ease; they have borrowed their legendary themes from it and have often reflected its spirit. . . . It was reserved for tragedy to exert a sovereign influence.” (pp. 51-52) “The influence of drama becomes more and more probable the further one goes down into free style vases (460-400), and we can no longer accept the opinions of C. Robert and Vogel who reject influence of the drama on all fifth-century vase-painting. The decoration of this period, they say, did not depend on tragic themes because they had not yet penetrated to industrial levels. But it depended on major art, and Polygnotus and his circle [often cited as an influence on the Olympia sculptures] were impregnated with this complex.” As for major art, evidence for the influence of drama constantly accumulates; cf., e. g., H. A. Thompson, “The Altar of Pity in the Athenian Agora,” *Hesperia* 21 (1952) 74: “It is hard to avoid the feeling that the choice of themes in our parapet was somewhat influenced by Euripides’ *Herakles*. . . . The altar reliefs find their best parallels in the mature plays of Euripides. . . .”

but from the beginning, practically every commentator on Olympia has noted the prevalence of dramatic influence, and several intensive analyses have been made of it.¹³ And the influence of one dramatist in particular is clear, also—it is Aeschylus. So close is the parallel here, in fact, that passages of criticism on the spirit of Aeschylean drama could be applied bodily to the Olympia sculptures.¹⁴ All of which raises the possibility—could the Olympia Master have been none other than the great dramatist himself? It is a presumptuous speculation, and one for which, the writer hastens to say, no final proof can be offered. Nevertheless, in addition to the general indications already noted, there is considerable circumstantial evidence which may be brought forward in its support.

Of all the sculptures of Olympia, the East pediment, representing the chariot race between Pelops and Oenomaus, most clearly shows influence from the drama; evidently the case must centre here. It is true that this composition may be explained conveniently either as an artistic device to achieve a quiet scene for contrast with the

¹³ E. g., E. Petersen, *Attische Tragedie als Bild- und Bühnecunst* (Bonn 1915) 12 f.; F. Winter, "Parallelerscheinungen in der griechischen Dichtkunst und bildenden Kunst," in A. Gercke and E. Norden, *Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft* (Leipzig & Bonn 1910) 161 f., and esp. pp. 176-177.

¹⁴ Characteristic examples: "In the 'little myths and ridiculous diction' which lay before him Aeschylus found deeper values and a hidden majesty"; "It was the essence of his genius that he saw beyond all the trivialities and drunken antics of his raw material the essential mystery of Life and Death and the essential greatness of soul with which man, at his best, faces and conquers it." (Gilbert Murray, *Aeschylus* [Oxford 1940] 32, 159); "Almost all the heroes of Aeschylus are distinguished by a very marked individualism . . . their character indicated by a few deft touches, and developed subtly in the course of the drama, has the severe sort of beauty found in plastic creations of his time." (Séchan, *op. cit.* 6); "Aeschylus boldly addresses himself to no less a task than the reconciliation of timeless conflicting principles or duties: fate and freedom, justice and mercy, the individual and the universal order, suffering and happiness . . . The result of these daring undertakings is that Aeschylus purifies the conception of the Olympian gods, subordinating them to Zeus, who is or becomes all-wise and all-powerful, the embodiment of justice; his will is fused with Fate, which is now seen to be not only irresistible, but good. . . ." (William Chase Greene, *Moira* [Cambridge, Mass. 1944] 109-110); "Whereas in the dramas of Shakespeare the development of character constitutes the primary aim, to which he subordinates the underlying idea of the whole . . . in Aeschylus the collision between moral principles, whose harmonious action is essential to the moral order of the world, is set forth by personages, human and superhuman, whose characters are drawn in bold relief, without exhibiting that delicate shading . . . of the modern bard." (A. Swanwick, *The Dramas of Aeschylus* [London 1890] p. xlix.)

violent West pediment,¹⁵ or as depicting participants taking an oath of fair play before Zeus Horkios in the manner of historic Olympic contestants; but a strong possibility has long been recognized that the underlying conception may be that of a stage, actors assembled before a performance. Certainly this theory of the East pediment accounts best for the inclusion of certain figures—notably the “stableboy” and the so-called “Seers”—not identified by Pausanias and otherwise incongruous in their setting: they are foils, subsidiary personages who complement and therefore serve to bring out the main characters in a drama, a device familiar to all playgoers. Conceived in terms of the drama, the central theme of the East pediment is the differing reactions of its characters to the impending tragedy, because of their varying capacities for comprehending it—Zeus with divine omniscience; Pelops and Oenomaus with the false confidence of fallible human knowledge; the “Seers” with human intuition; the “stableboy” picking his toes and the girl attendant, too young to comprehend the issues; the river-gods, their vacant faces personifying the mechanical laws of nature, neutral in the affairs of men.

The kind of theme in this East pediment—Fate and its workings—, the way it is brought out through type-characters, and the introduction of common personages, are all features typical of Aeschylus' plays.¹⁶ But insofar as a connection with Aeschylus is concerned, the key figures in this pediment are, I believe, the so-

¹⁵ This, of course, is often taken as evidence for the influence of Polygnotus on the Olympia Master. It may just as well be that both Polygnotus' paintings and the Olympia sculptures were composed under influence from the drama; cf. the discussion of this point by Petersen, *op. cit.* 12; Séchan, *op. cit.* 6: “Aeschylus has parallels to Polygnotus by the character of certain groups which he represents, and by the conception of trilogies corresponding to the great works of the master of Thasos . . .” (and esp. p. 31 f.); E. Loewy, *Polygnot* (Vienna 1929) 32-33: “In 458, the year the *Eumenides* was produced, Polygnotus like Aeschylus stood at the height of his powers. Nothing is more likely, than that the great poet would entrust the pictorial glorifications of his winning piece to the painter, so near him in spirit. . . .”

¹⁶ “Akin to this experiment (outlandish language for effect) is a much more daring one—the representation on the tragic stage of common or uneducated persons . . . Greek tragedy . . . never admitted comic scenes in a tragedy. Aeschylus has one pathetic and half-comic character, the old nurse of Orestes in the *Choe-phorae*, who comes on in floods of tears at the news of Orestes' death and talks in slightly ungrammatical language about the mishaps of his boyhood. This particular effect is not repeated in the extant specimens of Greek tragedy. . . .” (Murray, *op. cit.* 66.)

called "Seers." One of them is badly battered, but the other is well preserved, and has been the constant subject of scholarly speculation since its discovery (Pl. 1).

The head is alive. Bald forehead, protruding eyes, thick lips under an undivided moustache, beard in tightly massed ringlets, long curling hair, all make up a very personal type taken from nature. O. Rayet says perceptively, 'This rough and rugged old man must have been met in the street by the sculptor. He has fought . . . at Platea, served often as a hoplite; a heavy helmet has worn his head bald.' The man . . . is undoubtedly Myrtilos, one of the principal actors in the pending drama. . . .¹⁷

Clearly it is a figure delineated with unusual care, as if some definite personage were in mind. But who? Pausanias failed to identify it, perhaps through neglect, but more probably because the name had been forgotten, and was unknown to his guide. Identification as Myrtilos has found little favor, for various good reasons. Recent opinion has been all but unanimous in considering it a "Seer," and probably one of the Seers native to Olympia, Iamos or Klytios;¹⁸ this would be quite consonant with the explanation of the pediment in terms of drama. But there is a possibility that the figure may have had a much more precise designation—that it represented not merely a generalized type of elderly intellectual, with intuitive powers of perception into the deep implications of the tragedy, but one such intellectual in particular—Aeschylus.

Already in 1901 Bernoulli remarked on the striking resemblance between the Seer of Olympia and a bust in the Capitoline Museum in Rome traditionally held to represent the poet¹⁹ (Pl. 2).

¹⁷ M. Collignon, *Histoire de la Sculpture Grecque* I (Paris 1892) 441-2.

¹⁸ There is no certain evidence, it should be emphasized, to back up this identification. Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, "Iamos," 687.

¹⁹ J. J. Bernoulli, *Griechische Ikonographie* (Munich 1901) 102 f. This identification, like that of the playwright in the Naples mosaic (see below, note 21), appears to rest entirely on tradition, and most particularly on the tradition of Aeschylus' baldness. L. Laurenzi (*Ritratti greci* [Florence 1947] 99), although noting literary reference to this feature, considers the accepted portrait of Aeschylus in antiquity to be represented by a bust in the Museo Nazionale in Naples and several replicas, which show a somewhat younger man with abundant curly hair; he is followed in this by Karl Schefold, *Die Bildnisse der antiken Dichter, Redner, und Denker* (Basel 1943) 88, 207. Schefold continues, "In Pausanias' time

Precisely on the basis of this resemblance, Bernoulli defended the authenticity and early date of the portrait-head. That he went no further in identifying the two is probably due to the climate of opinion prevailing when he wrote; today, with an enlarged realization of the extent of dramatic influence on fifth-century Greek art, and of the relationship between personal expression and predetermined subject-matter for the classic mind in art, it will not seem so preposterous. There are fifth-century examples of a playwright depicted among a cast of players,²⁰ and a later mosaic in Naples has often been considered to represent Aeschylus himself in this role²¹ (Plate 3). That no known play by Aeschylus specifically deals with the subject of the East gable of Olympia is by no means an argument against his appearance there; it must be emphasized again that fifth-century Greek art made no practice of illustrating specific texts, and Aeschylus' role at Olympia, if he were indeed the Olympia master, would be only to suggest the main outlines of their themes to the sculptors.²² And in this connection, attribu-

there was to be seen in . . . Athens a 'portrait' of Aeschylus among the combattants of the battle of Marathon. But although his painting dated from Aeschylus' lifetime, it is hardly to be supposed that it showed individual characteristics, but rather characteristic features. . . . The sculptor of the late classical period would hardly have worked from an earlier model. . . ." Laurenzi and Schefold consider that the Naples bust, and its replicas, have as archetype one of the figures in the group of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides set up by Lycurgus in the theatre of Athens around 340 B. C.

In their studies, however, both authors give examples (e. g., Euripides) of cases where there were two portrait types for the same person; it would not be unreasonable to suppose that Aeschylus may have been one such; further, that baldness may have been considered a characteristic enough attribute in the mid-fifth century to establish a portrait type, which may then have been followed in later times alongside the more famous type established by Lycurgus' idealized group.

²⁰ Best-known is the Pronomos vase in Naples, ca. 400. Cf. Frank Brommer, *Satyrspiele* (Berlin 1944) 8-10 and fig. 1; M. Bieber, *History of the Greek and Roman Theatre* (Princeton 1939) fig. 20.

²¹ The most conspicuous feature making for identification as Aeschylus is the bald head (which is, of course, remarkable in the "Seer" of Olympia). According to tradition, the poet in his later years was bald, as the story of his death recalls. Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, "Aeschylus," 1068; U.v.Wilamovitz-Moellendorf, *Aischylos* (Berlin 1914) 234.

²² Yet it is perhaps worth noting that Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy was completed in 458, i. e., about the same time as the East pediment of Olympia. And it is the *Oresteia* which in spirit most closely parallels the Olympia sculptures—the history of the Pelops family, the introduction of common characters (the watchman in *Agamemnon*, the nurse in *Choephorae*), the workings of Fate, the violation of

tion of the Olympia program to Aeschylus would strengthen the theory that Pheidias worked there—it would provide explanations both for Pheidias' presence at Olympia (brought along by his fellow-Athenian Aeschylus), and for his later ability to plan the complex iconography of the Parthenon of his own (tutelage under the great dramatist).

Mention of Pheidias, in turn, brings to mind a possible clue to the identity of the second "Seer" (Pl. 4-A). On the shield of Athena Parthenos, Plutarch recorded, there appeared figures of Pheidias as a bald grey-bearded man, and of his patron Perikles—that is, of the man who designed the iconography of statue and temple (*not* the artisan who executed it),²³ and of the man whose patronage was responsible for these works.²⁴ Now, if the first "Seer" of Olympia was the man who planned the iconographical program of the temple, it may well be that the "second Seer" was similarly its patron. Who might this patron be? The most likely supposition is that it was Hiero, ruler of Gela (485-467) and King of Syracuse (478-467). Hiero was both a patron of Aeschylus himself,²⁵ and of the Olympia sanctuary.²⁶ His appearance on the East pediment would be particularly appropriate, because he was not only inordinately proud of his Olympic victories in chariot-racing,²⁷ but also claimed Pelops as a quasi-ancestor.²⁸ And if

hospitality (*Agamemnon*: "Paris to Argos came . . . God's altar he brought to shame, Robbing the hand that fed him. . ."[Murray, *op. cit.* 102])

²³ Bernoulli, *op. cit.* 105, comments on how unusual it would be for a sculptor to be so represented, suggesting that Pheidias' representation commemorated his other than sculptural (i. e., artisan) achievements.

²⁴ Pauly-Wissowa, "Pheidias," 1928.

²⁵ Aeschylus was twice feted at Hiero's court—once about 476, when the poet wrote *The Women of Aetna* to commemorate Hiero's founding of that town, and again in 472, when the *Persae*, produced in that year at Athens, was repeated by the poet at Syracuse at Hiero's request. Aeschylus maintained his connections with Sicily after Hiero's death in 467, spending the last years before his death in 456 there.

²⁶ At least three statues of Hiero at Olympia attested to his close connection with the sanctuary (Paus. 6.15.6). In addition to commemorations of Olympic athletic victories, Hiero dedicated there part of the spoils of the battle of Cumae in 474 (Paus. 6.12.1). It is also possible that he was dedicator of the Treasury of Gela at Olympia, enlarged in the first half of the fifth century, probably by Sicilian architects (Cf. Frazer, *Pausanias* 6.19.14).

²⁷ He won victories at Olympia in the single-racehorse event in 476 and 472, and in 468 won the major horse-racing event, the four-horse chariot race. The latter was commemorated by a sculptural group, dedicated after Hiero's death by his son Dinomenes, the work of Onatas the Aeginetan (Paus. 6.12.1).

²⁸ "Since Hiero's city and family were too recent to be connected with . . .

Hiero were the patron, that would explain the stylistic connections of the Olympia sculpture with Sicily, so often commented upon.²⁹

Attractive as such a speculation may be, little proof beyond abstract logic can be offered for it, unfortunately. Even if the Olympia figure were not too fragmentary for positive identification of the face type (Plate 4(B)), we possess no sure portrait of Hiero.³⁰ Therefore the hypothesis that the two "Seers" of Olympia actually represent Aeschylus and Hiero—the Olympia Master and his patron—must remain hypothesis only, until the discovery of collateral material (literary records, for instance), which at present lies either undiscovered or unrecognized in this connection.³¹

One further point might be raised, however—if Aeschylus was the Olympia Master, and in fact was depicted in the East gable of the temple itself, how could his connection with Olympia ever have been forgotten? Two main reasons suggest themselves. The first is that the connection was necessarily loose and general, the Olympia sculptors following no precise text by Aeschylus which might have been preserved and brought to the attention of later chroniclers, but merely his broad suggestions. The second and stronger one, I think, is inherent in parallel questions—why was

myths, for his first Olympic ode (Pindar's ode commemorating Hiero's victory in 476) the Poet chose the story of Pelops, the chief hero at Olympia where the crown was won and who gave his name to the Peloponnesus, from which came the founders of Syracuse. . . ." (T. D. Seymour, *Selected Odes of Pindar* [Boston 1882] p. xv.) Perhaps it is also significant in this connection to cite the coin issue of Himera in 472, commemorating the victory by a citizen of Himera in the chariot-race of that year at Olympia; the type of horse represented here is very similar to those on the East pediment of Olympia, and the name "Pelops" is inscribed on the reverse. (C. A. Robinson, Jr., "The Master of Olympia," *AJA* 46 [1942] 73-76.)

²⁹ Cf., e. g., R. Kekulé, "Ueber einige mit den Skulpturen von Olympia verwandte Werke," *AA* 41 (1883) 229-248; Heinz Kähler, *Das Griechische Metopenbild* (Munich 1949) 61; C. A. Robinson, Jr., *op. cit.*

³⁰ The so-called portrait of Hiero in the Capitoline Museum in Rome has long been recognized as a Roman Hercules, its inscription probably added by Pirro Ligorio. Cf. H. Stuart Jones, *Catalogue of Sculpture in the Museo Capitolino* (1912) 225, n. 17; B. Pace, *Arte e Civiltà della Sicilia Antica* III (Genoa 1945) p. 8. But visitors to Olympia would have been familiar with his features from the three statues of him there (cf. note 26).

³¹ Evidence from ancient authors for collaboration between artists and men of letters seems to be almost completely lacking, at the moment, but the possibility that research concentrated in this direction might well produce results should not be discounted.

the author of the Sistine ceiling iconography forgotten? or the author of the Chartres Cathedral program? In all of these cases the answer lies in the tendency of succeeding ages to glorify their artists as completely independent creators, too freely interpreting their past in terms of their present, so as to forget how vitally art in past ages was integrated with other kinds of intellectual activity. Certainly this has been true in Western art, and we are just beginning to rectify judgments mistaken on that account.

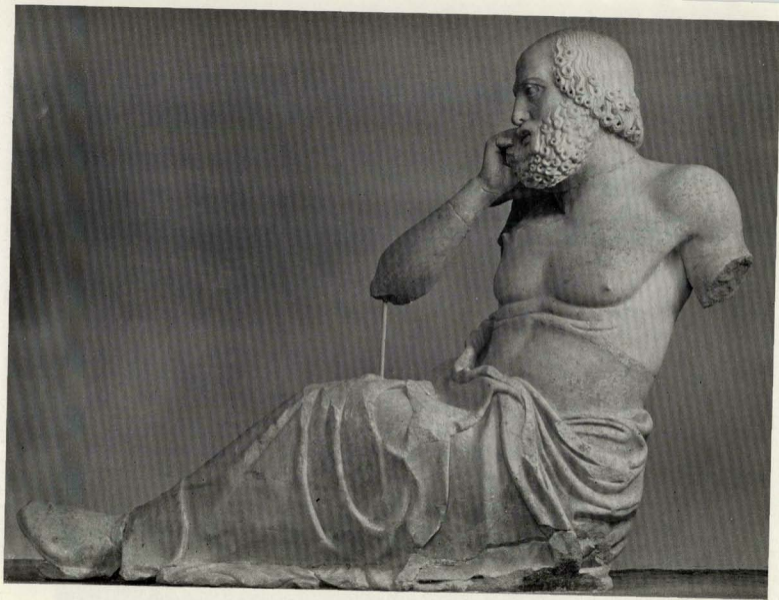


PLATE 1

So-called "Seer," from the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus. Olympia, Museum. (Walter Hege)

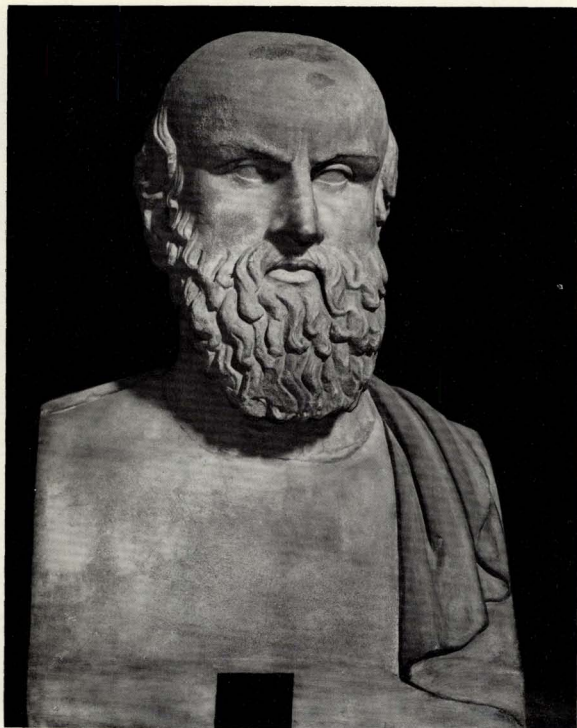


PLATE 2

Bust, traditionally held to represent Aeschylus. Rome, Capitoline Museum. (*Alinari*)



PLATE 3

Chorus Teacher and Satyr Chorus. Mosaic from Pompeii. Naples, National Museum.

(Alinari)



PLATE 4A

Second so-called "Seer," from the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus.
Olympia, Museum. (Walter Hege)



PLATE 4B

The same, original state.