THE MONUMENTAL IN SCULPTURE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

PAUL CYRIL MUICK, B. F. A., A. M.

The Ohio State University

1957

Approved by:

[Signature]

Department of Fine and Applied Arts
FRONTISPIECE

In Memoriam

Limestone

Height: 6 ft.

Diameter at the Base: 22 in.

Front View
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author expresses his gratitude to Professor Erwin F. Frey, his adviser; to Peter H. v. Blanckenhagen, Professor of Classical Archaeology, Department of Art, University of Chicago, for his many suggestions and criticisms; and Professors James W. Grimes, Lawrence F. Hill, Frank W. Ludden, William F. MacDonald, Frank J. Seiberling, and D. Alexander Severino for their assistance.

Acknowledgement is also made to Philip Adams, Director of the Cincinnati Art Museum; Francis P. Dowley, Professor, Department of Art, University of Chicago; John A. Wilson, Egyptologist, Oriental Institute, University of Chicago; W. S. Smith, Curator of Egyptian Antiquities, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and Paul Manship, sculptor.
"Be you the most heedless of men, the most unhappy or the vilest, a beggar or a banker, the stone phantom takes possession of you for a few minutes and commands you, in the name of the past, to think of things which are not of the earth.

Such is the divine role of sculpture."

Charles Baudelaire
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE CONCEPT OF MONUMENTALITY IN EGYPTIAN SCULPTURE</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE CONCEPT OF MONUMENTALITY IN ARCHAIC GREEK SCULPTURE</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE CONCEPT OF MONUMENTALITY IN TOLTEC-AZTEC SCULPTURE</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. A CONCEPT OF MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE FOR CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTOBIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frontispiece</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Memoriam, Front View</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plate</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Maternity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Model for a Portrait Statue to Robert M. Hutchins, former Chancellor of the University of Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Model for a Memorial to the Dead, Front View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Model for a Memorial to the Dead, Profile View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Model for a Memorial to the Dead, Front View of Head and Shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Working Sketch for the Model of a Proposed War Memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Model for a War Memorial, Front View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Model for a War Memorial, Profile View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Model for a War Memorial, Three-quarter Front View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Ecclesiastica, Front View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>Ecclesiastica, Profile View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLATE</td>
<td>Illustration Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII</td>
<td>Ecclesiastica, Front View of Head and Shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV</td>
<td>Christ in Bonds, Front View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV</td>
<td>Christ in Bonds, View of Head and Shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI</td>
<td>In Memoriam, Front View of Head and Shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII</td>
<td>In Memoriam, Right Profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII</td>
<td>In Memoriam, Left Profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX</td>
<td>In Memoriam, Rear View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breasted, Servant Statues</td>
<td>Breasted, J. H. Jr., Egyptian Servant Statues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buschor, Junglinge</td>
<td>Buschor, E., Fruhgriesche Junglinge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castro, Escultura Mexicana</td>
<td>Castro, A., Escultura Mexicana Antiqua.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAJ</td>
<td>College Art Journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drioton, Egyptian Art</td>
<td>Drioton, E., Egyptian Art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankfort, Movement</td>
<td>Frankfort, H. A. G., Arrest and Movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb, Bronzes</td>
<td>Lamb, W., Greek and Roman Bronzes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langer, Form</td>
<td>Langer, S. K., Feeling and Form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panofsky, Visual Arts</td>
<td>Panofsky, E., Meaning in the Visual Arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranke, Art of Egypt</td>
<td>Ranke, H., The Art of Ancient Egypt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richter, Kouroi</td>
<td>Richter, G. M., Kouroi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothschild, Sculpture</td>
<td>Rothschild, L., Sculpture Through the Ages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Egyptian Sculpture</td>
<td>Smith, W. S., A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steindorff, Kunst</td>
<td>Steindorff, G., Die Kunst der Agypten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wedeking, Grossplastik</td>
<td>Homann-Wedeking, E., Die Anfange der Griechischen Grossplastik.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Culture of Egypt</td>
<td>Wilson, J. A., The Culture of Ancient Egypt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history the desire of man to commemorate and perpetuate in enduring physical form individual concepts or events of significance to a culture has led to the development in the glyptic arts of particular styles of artistic expression to fulfill this function. It is the purpose of this paper to derive a clearer understanding of the phenomena of monumentality as manifest in three dimensional sculpture through a study of a selected number of monuments from ancient Egypt, archaic Greece and the Toltec-Aztec cultures from the valley of Mexico. It is the intent of the writer to relate as far as possible the study of the monumental qualities inherent in the sculpture considered from these three cultures with his efforts to

1 The writer is substantiated in his opinion that the term monumental has become an ambiguous term by H. Read in his recently published book, The Art of Sculpture (New York: American Book-Stratford Press, Inc., 1956), p. 24: [That unity which we call the monument is an ambiguous word that may sometimes mean architecture, and at other times sculpture.] "Its very ambiguity indicates that a distinction has been abolished, that in the dialectics of art thesis and antithesis have been reconciled in a new synthesis...... No synthesis is stable, however, unless it is based on a clear understanding of the terms involved."
create works of sculpture which in form and content will have spiritual and aesthetic meaning to contemporary man.

The treatment of this problem has been divided into six chapters, first, in the introduction a consideration of the concept of monumentality and the aesthetic qualities which constitute a monumental work of sculpture and a review of previous research. In the following three chapters, aesthetic qualities inherent in monumental sculpture from the three selected cultures are discussed; the

2The designation of the term monumental to a particular type of sculpture immediately places upon the writer the problem of explication of the term, which, in turn, poses a further involvement that may well be the ultimate dilemma faced in the choice of employing one of the two basic methods of approach to truth: if clarity and agreement is desired, at all costs, the price may be that of little justice to the complexity and depths of the subject; and, if adequacy to the complexity is sought, the price may be the loss of a high standard of clarity. The solution, of course, is to aim at a balance between the desire to be clear and the desire to be adequate to the richness of the theme.

3While the results of this investigation may not necessarily apply to our understanding of the phenomena of monumentality as manifest in sculpture from periods other than those considered in the study, it is the hope of the writer that the conclusions reached in this paper will serve as a basis for further investigations.

4Investigations of available art historical, archaeological and aesthetic primary sources has revealed that no comprehensive examination of the aesthetic qualities inherent in monumental works of sculpture have been made. However, references will be made, when pertinent, to studies more general in scope on sculpture from the periods considered in this paper. These sources, though not immediately concerned with the subject, none the less treat with problems of aesthetics directly related to this study.
fifth chapter is an enumeration and discussion of the sculpture created by the writer as possible solutions to the problem of monumentality in civic sculpture in contemporary society; and sixth, a conclusion which evaluates the results of these investigations.

From among the many periods of artistic development in which monumental art flourished, the Egyptian, Greek, and Toltec-Aztec cultures were selected because the formal qualities, that are commonly associated with monumentality, inherent in the monuments created by these civilizations evolved partially as a result of a demand for symbols to effectively serve primarily utilitarian purposes. To fulfill this function, carved images in Egyptian, Greek, Toltec, and Aztec temple and tomb complexes assumed symbolic proportions (infra, Chapter II, p. 20) to assert emotional confidence and security in common social factors which united the members of these social groups into communities.\(^5\) It is within this context, then, that the term monumental shall be considered as a symbol of commemoration in three dimensional sculpture.

While changes in peculiarities of style occur throughout the development of monumental sculpture created in each of these cultures, the concept of monumentality and

\(^5\)A point of view expressed by Professor John A. Wilson, Egyptologist at the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, in which the writer concurs.
the basic set of three dimensional forms common to the monumental sculpture of these cultures remains constant. Therefore, a stylistic and historical development is not germane to this study.

One approach to this thesis would have been a detailed analysis of all monumental works of sculpture known throughout the history of art. Independent investigation of the monumental works of sculpture produced in any one period would necessarily have entailed a complete examination of works of monumental sculpture from all other periods. It would also have presupposed an investigation of all available sources, archaeological, historical, and aesthetic. Strictly speaking, no previous research could have been accepted without verification. Such an investigation obviously being beyond the limits of this thesis, the salient problems of the present study are summarized as follows:

1. What does the term monumental signify?
2. What was the function of monumental sculpture in Egyptian, archaic Greek, and the Toltec-Aztec cultures?
3. What distinguishes monumental from non-monumental sculpture?
4. What are the differences between monumental sculpture and the colossal?
5. What essential factors are involved in a consideration of monumental sculpture to be placed in an architectural or landscape setting?
The concept of monumentality embodied in a work of sculpture, or for that matter in any of the arts, implies a spirit which transcends the cultural bonds of any one society. The monumental neither renders the merely trivial, i.e., genre, nor does it completely avoid actuality; it should not fluctuate between the symbolic statement and factually realistic representation, but rather of necessity should incorporate both the symbol and its factual statement within one creative achievement. ⁶

The phenomenon of monumentality has not occurred as a characteristic feature in the sculptural achievements of every period throughout the history of art, but seems to have appeared as a marked feature in the sculpture of those cultures where the primary function of the three dimensional image was to perpetuate the impermanent nature of man by emphasizing the lasting importance of his accomplishments.⁷

If we no longer wish to restrict the use of the term monumental to characterize those rare works of sculpture which, by their "set of forms" and associated spiritual meaning, create a tension between the actual event interpreted and the transcendent aspect of that event, the essence of a


⁷Frankfort, Movement, p. 22.
monumental work of sculpture, then the concept of the term monumental will have lost its traditional meaning. 8

The merit of maintaining the historical and traditional meaning of the term monumental lies in its usefulness as a precise tool of communication, one word which conveys an established concept universally understood and accepted. 9 If the meaning is changed to express a differing concept, the result is the loss of one useful term to describe a specific phenomenon of complex components.

The objection that times change and new phenomena appear which cannot be characterized specifically by the traditional term may best be answered by the admission and recognition that the phenomenon is new and differs from the old and that new terms must be employed to express this uniqueness. 10 However, let us not deprive ourselves of a means to express the phenomena that have arisen in the past.

8 Though mastery of form, suitability of design and perfection of technique are characteristics inherent in good sculpture, this does not eliminate the possibility that a work of sculpture may possess these qualities and yet not be monumental in view of the present discussion (supra, Chapter I, pp. 1-5). The writer therefore does not subscribe to the view that a great work of art with sufficient intensity is also monumental.


10 The writer does not elect the task of coining these new terms.
and endure to their present existence. Why blunt an effective tool of communication and understanding of our historical past?

The commemorative function of monumental sculpture necessarily promoted the development of a scale related to the human body. This is substantiated by an analysis of man's understanding of his universe which he relates to himself. The measurement of distance was developed in terms of human proportions. In like manner, man judges the greater or less importance of the phenomena of his universe, using himself as the measuring stick. In his wish to commemorate and perpetuate concepts and ideals esteemed greater than himself, man has materially effected his veneration in terms of sculpture in scale larger than man.

The act of commemoration has a necessary component in the observer who takes cognizance of that which is honored. Communication must be clearly effected. A work of sculpture will most effectively commemorate to its public if it is created in a scale appropriate to the public setting, i.e., over life-size, and contains a "set of forms" appropriate to its scale.

---


On the other hand, the sole factor of "bigness" in a work of sculpture will not exclusively impart to it a monumental character. It must also have an appropriate "set of forms" which articulate, clarify, and enhance the monument as a work of art.

A psychological consequence of increasing the scale of sculpture beyond that of man is a seeming expansion of the emotive power of the concepts embodied in monumental works of sculpture. Certain feelings and concepts demand a commensurate scale to express their intrinsic significance. On the other hand, subject matter of trivial consequence (genre) does not require a fixed scale in order that the maximum of their limited potentialities may be expressed.

A logical corollary which results from an adoption of large scale as a standard for public commemorative sculpture is the growth of an identification factor. Viewers are alerted unconsciously by monumental scale to a recognition of commemoration if they inherit an environment of familiarity with the monumental.

Actual monumentality seems to imply a size larger in scale than the human figure. However, since there are no

---


limits to the creations of true artists, it is not impossible to assume that non-commemorative works of sculpture in a scale under life size may actually be monumental if such works express with an intensity of feeling spiritual and social values contemporary with the times. Thus, the forms contained in a monumental work of sculpture must be simplified in order that the total shape of the monument will be visually perceived. Simple geometric forms are an element common to monumental sculpture created by the cultures considered in this paper. The constant regularity inherent in geometric forms determines their unalterable character manifest in broad simple surface planes basic to crystalline forms. These geometric forms in their infinity of relations are all symbols of common principles of structure and, as such, are analogous to organic growth. It is the opinion of the writer that the unchanging character of the simple geometric form contributes to the spiritual power inherent in monumental sculpture.

However, the pleasure derived from the contemplation of form itself does not completely explain the experience in examining a work of monumental sculpture. The evocation of enumerable psychological and associational responses is certainly conduced by the forms and partly accounts for the

---

15 Wilenski, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
significance and meaning of geometric form. The desire of many contemporary sculptors to create works of sculpture which in their basic shape reflect crystalline or cubic forms may be related to instinctive insight into the dynamics of life; the knowledge of the geometric structure of cellular division, its creative application and emergent organism; the awareness of the geometric order of the celestial bodies and the indescribable activity in nature among animals.

The essential "plainess" of the broad surface plane is of primary significance when incorporated into the total created form of monumental sculpture, which, by virtue of its characteristic scale, imposes successive problems of perception, conception, and integration of the forms into a related unit. Visual discernment is confined to perception of limited areas. A viewer must necessarily segment his observation when engaged in "seeing" a monument in its totality. The significance of the work of sculpture is revealed through a perceptive and intuitive understanding of its entirety.

It becomes mandatory that the individual forms relate to the total formal structure of the monumental work.

16Moore, op. cit., p. xxxiv.
of sculpture, that each component form echo the shape of its neighboring form, reflecting and defining the completeness of the unity to the viewer.\textsuperscript{18} Thus, the role of simplification and definition of vision falls most appropriately to the simple surface planes of geometric forms working together in large scale to produce an effectively comprehensible balance and harmony out of a network of complexity of forms to convey a significant and deeply emotive work of art.\textsuperscript{19}

At this point it seems appropriate to consider the role of broad surface planes as utilized in works of small scale composed of "sets of forms" basically geometric in character. These works exhibit the "quality" of being monumental. Through photographic devices it has been demonstrated that the component forms are comprised of essentially geometric shapes which retain their formal unity inasmuch as all detail which does not further clarify and enhance the total work has been eliminated.\textsuperscript{20} However, in reality many of these works are not actually monumental, although they have the formal quality of the monumental and may embody a depth of meaning and significance.


\textsuperscript{19}Valentiner, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 73.

\textsuperscript{20}Moore, \textit{op. cit.}, See list of plates.
The prime simplicity and unchanging character common to geometric forms seem best utilized when employed as a unifying device of vast surface areas in works of large scale. The geometric form may, of course, be employed as a unifying device in smaller works of sculpture, but its role is not as centrally important since the diversity and complexity of the forms of smaller works can be readily perceived by the eyes.

The significance of an appropriate "set of forms" commensurate to large scale (specifically the simplicity of the geometric as discussed above) lies in the facility of their perception and comprehension as a unit.

A monumental work of sculpture is a prime symbol in the sense that its meaning is untranslatable. The qualities inherent in a work of sculpture that is monumental are built into the totality of its forms. Therefore, the actual import and emotive power implicit in the work itself cannot be revealed or analyzed exclusively through a stylistic interpretation.

Although a monumental work may be analyzed in that its diverse elements may be distinguished and the articulation of parts detected, nevertheless it can never be constructed through a synthesis of elements because no

---

*A point of view expressed by Professor E. F. Frey, Sculptor in Residence, The Ohio State University, in which the writer concurs.*
such elements exist outside the work itself. They only exist within the total work of art. The vertical and horizontal elements of a monumental statue may be noted as characterizing its basic form, but the statue cannot be synthetically composed of the vertical and horizontal; there are no such factors before the statue exists. Properties of form permeate and inhere a work of art just as sensuous qualities do. Whatever the monumental expresses, it cannot be analyzed as something apart from its component forms.

22 In Egypt, as in the other cultures discussed in this paper, monumental sculpture was created with an ulterior motive, i.e., a utilitarian function extraneous to its artistic qualities. None the less, these works of sculpture possess immanent aesthetic properties without which they would not be works of art. The extent to which alien motives have influenced the origins and development of the indivisible unity existing in a work of monumental sculpture of its form and content must be established in order to fully understand the role of the work. Yet this is but a preliminary inquiry. It will then be necessary to abstract from this unity - whatever its non-artistic functions - its peculiarity as a work of monumental sculpture and hence as a work of art, which, therefore, must be a peculiarity of form. These peculiarities will not be discovered by any subjective interpretation of art or of the intentions of the artist who created the work. Their monumental and hence aesthetic qualities will only be established by a description of the actual, objectively controllable, stylistic qualities. It is conceded that religious and historical occurrences may form an essential part of the phenomena present in monumental sculpture and that its artistic qualities do not exclusively constitute its nature. Nevertheless, the writer wishes to acknowledge the formal character which a monumental work of sculpture possesses as a work of art by maintaining the necessity for formal analysis.
In this study, scale has been selected as a distinguishing characteristic of monumental sculpture, a conclusion which logically raises the question of whether there be limits to the largeness of scale. A resolution to the scale problem is best sought in re-examination of the factor of human proportion in reality. In nature, man exists within a human proportional norm, i.e., five to six feet in height. When his image is enlarged in sculpture beyond this norm, man's natural form must necessarily be changed and this change increases, it seems, in direct proportion to the increase in size.

Hence, as enlargement of human form to gigantic stature requires a like measure of alteration of human shape, a resultant difficulty arises: retaining the human identity of the forms. How would the viewer of a sculptural form about fifteen feet long recognize its intent to represent perhaps the foot of a human figure, especially when the shape of the foot would have to be simplified and generalized to fit within so large a scale? Again, the solution is based upon a recognition of the human element as the yardstick: man measures in terms of self. Thus, statues of size comparable to man can be related in human terms; works of sculpture of colossal proportions require another measuring standard. Architectural settings which perform this function become the norm to which colossal statues may be related and understood.
One of the determining factors which distinguishes monumental sculpture is its larger than life scale (all other characteristics being equal, i.e., aesthetic cohesiveness, public commemoration, etc., as discussed previously). Yet, the occurrence of large-scale sculpture created for a public commemorative purpose with deeply serious and significant thought motivating its fabrication and still failing to attain the stature of the truly monumental has arisen. This phenomena may best be explained in terms of the formal structure of these merely colossal works, which, most commonly are composed of forms unsuccessfully transformed or recreated to inhere within an organic relationship of large scale. This occurs partially as a result of the enlargement of small scale sculpture by mechanical processes without adjusting the forms to the scale intended.

As recognized earlier in the discussion of monumental scale, each individual form of a statue must relate to the adjacent forms as well as to the total shape of the work. Thus, the folds of drapery of a monumental figure cannot be a merely enlarged duplication of drapery from life, but must be reorganized with respect to a larger design, which means a necessary simplification in terms of broad surface planes so vital to the visual clarification demanded in large-scale sculpture.
Sculpture is frequently seen that has every appearance of being an afterthought or of having been introduced for a purely arbitrary reason without any relation to environmental surroundings, except that of physical fact.

The problems of designing a monumental work of sculpture in an architectural or landscape setting are many. The effectiveness of the work is often seriously impaired by the presence of unrelated elements and frequently in cemeteries and public parks, of other pieces of sculpture all around it.

A monumental work of sculpture when related to a building is not an architectural element in itself. The architectural setting must not merely dominate and override the work but must rather give it space, a personal domain. Size, proportion, texture, form, and adaptability to a site are the essentials of design which determine the monumental character of a statue in an architectural setting. The statue on the building site must act as an external expression of the inward function of the building, asserting a human dignity and purpose to its public.

For this reason, the writer believes that monumental sculpture can only inhabit strong architectural interiors, self-sufficient in dignity, unadorned by theatrical decoration. There is a greater sense of human dignity and purpose implied in those buildings which have as their focal point
a monumental statue. (The architectural elements and the monument must relate to one another.)

Points of view and the distance from which the monument is to be viewed, as well as topographic configurations, shrubbery, and tree groupings, and all other surrounding elements, must be considered when planning a monumental work of sculpture to be set in public squares and parks, along woodland walks, and in cemeteries. Particularly in monumental sculpture to be placed in an architectural or landscape setting, care must always be taken to prevent a feeling of disconnection of the figure from its base. The figure should never merely stand upon a hastily constructed "matchbox" base but upon specifically designed blocks, in proportional relationship to the masses of the statue; the base must always be considered as an integral part of the design and not merely as an adjunct.

In mid-twentieth century America, made depressingly monotonous by a narrow minded technological orientation, the role of monumental sculpture as one of the last refuges of the human and the personal must be defended against all attempts to relegate it to a purely decorative function. Sculpture, one of the most natural "languages" to man, is gradually losing its meaning. 23 Fewer and fewer works of

monumental sculpture are being commissioned for public squares and parks. Instead, what little fine sculpture still being created is kept in museums. Thus, the opportunity of being surrounded by great works of sculpture in public settings decreases day by day.

The function of sculpture as a necessary and vital media is to express the visions of contemporary man and the objects which make up his environment. The human figure when carved in stone or modeled in clay ought to be more than a mere figure reproduced in one of these media. It should represent a particular concept of man perpetuated in enduring three-dimensional form. Though a work of sculpture may have the plastic appeal of its sensuous charm, its primary function is to translate into plastic form those imaginative associations inherent in the image of man.

The heroic concept of man is no longer present in modern man's consciousness of himself. Moreover, our industrial civilization has tended to destroy man's awareness of his spiritual image, thus creating an unhappy state among the arts, the primary function of which is to express man's inner self. Only by creating sculpture which reflects the "Zeitgeist" will contemporary spiritual and social values be expressed. These concepts if treated correctly in civic monumental sculpture will have meaning to the public.

\[24\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 56.}\]
CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPT OF MONUMENTALITY IN EGYPTIAN SCULPTURE

Monumental sculpture has not existed throughout all ages of human development, nor all over the world. It is self-evident that a certain level in civilization had to be reached before mankind was able to erect sculpture life size or even larger. There seem to have been long periods of prehistory when monumental sculpture did not appear. Furthermore, it seems that a certain state of mind apparently was required to provide the impulse and the taste for monumental sculpture. Such a state of mind existed in Malta at a time when civilization was still so little developed that it must be called pre-historic,¹ but on the other hand, was lacking in Minoan Crete where an astonishingly high level of civilization had developed.²

Around the Third Millenium, B. C. in Egypt the human figure seems to have been sculptured in the round for a


monumental purpose. The emergence of monumental sculpture in Egypt seems to have arisen as but one aspect - a manifestation in the artistic sphere - of that general unfolding of culture which found political expression in the unification of the country under the First Dynasty.  

One of the reasons why the concept of monumentality evolved in Egyptian sculpture was the result of the desire to sustain the undying divinity of the king through the

---

3 Kaschnitz-Weinberg, *Von der Zweifachen statuarischen Form*, p. 183.

4 Predynastic carvings are characterized by inarticulate, oval, and cylindrical shapes. These carvings differ from later predynastic figurines in that they are composed of forms which convey bold plastic movement through lifted arms and massive projecting lower limbs; arms and legs seem flattened, as if to stress the self-containment of the plastic unit by an unruffled surface. J. H. Breasted, Jr., *Egyptian Servant Statues* (New York: L. F. White Co., 1948), PIs. 31, a, 82; H. Ranke, *The Art of Ancient Egypt* (Vienna: Phaidon Press, 1936), Figs. 40-42, 45, 46; Smith, *Egyptian Sculpture*, p. 1, Fig. 1, p. 2, Figs. 2-3, p. 3, Fig. 4.

creation of idealized portrait statues in his honor. The monumental effect of divine majesty which permeates the images of the Pharaohs from the Old Kingdom is asserted primarily in the heads of these statues which seem to express the individuality rather than the physical peculiarities of the subject. In expression, they appear to look forward to the future rather than back to the past. They reveal nothing of human emotions, of fears, hopes, and sufferings, but rather state the serene optimism of an assured eternity. Thus, the function of the official state portraits was a utilitarian one, serving as a lasting repository for a supernatural force infused with a divine power. After physical death the spiritual essence of man would be able to inhabit the material of the stone statue in the realization of a timeless eternity.

Though the statues of the Pharaohs placed in the tomb chambers were hidden from the eyes of men, other statues in a similar style were carved to be placed as essential parts of an architectural setting. These statues which were to be seen primarily in relation to an

---

6 Frankfort, Kingship, p. 5.
7 Smith, Egyptian Sculpture, Pls. 12, a-e, 17, a, 20, a-d.
8 Wilson, Culture of Egypt, p. 54.
architectural setting served as commemorative symbols of the omnipotent power of the ruler.  

An outstanding general characteristic separating pre-Greek sculpture from that which has been subject to the influence of Greek sculpture since the fifth century was the representation of the human figure ideoplastically, i.e., with reference to an ideal geometric formula combined with a mechanical principle of unity. In contrast, even in the archaic period, the Greek conception of the human figure was based on an organic whole in which the parts were functionally important. It is of the utmost importance to understand this basic difference in the representation of the human body in order to comprehend the phenomena of the monumental in Egyptian and Greek sculpture since geometric formulas do not so much underlie all individual works of Egyptian sculpture as represent the ideal limits to which each work tends to conform as closely as its actual content, its subject, may permit.

9Ibid., p. 53.


11G. Richter, Kouroi (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), Pls. VI-VII, Figs. 19-20, XX, Fig. 67. Although the unifying scheme of this early figure of a Greek kouros is basically geometric in structure, the rendering of the clavicles, chest muscles, elbows, knee caps, and ankles indicate an awareness for anatomical structure wherein the component parts function with an organic and formal unity.
Analysis of unfinished works of sculpture from the Old Kingdom reveals that the final form was determined by an underlying geometric plan.\textsuperscript{12} It appears that the sculptor attacked the block by working away the surplus mass of stone, starting at the corners, carving inwards, rather than progressing in a continuous circular direction around the block. Thus, the forms of the statue were defined by a series of planes meeting at right angles and joined by slanting surfaces. The sharply defined edges of the planes which resulted from this procedure were then removed.\textsuperscript{13}

Throughout Egyptian sculpture, the seated figure seems to have been a predominate motif,\textsuperscript{14} ideally suited to a tectonic and cubistic treatment. The significance of the cubism in Egyptian sculpture lies in the harmony which it is able to achieve between material and form in stone sculpture; it lends itself admirably to the impenetrability, weight, massiveness, and resistant character of the lithic. A second quality of cubism is the harmonious contrast which it affords between organic and inorganic forms. The

\textsuperscript{12}Panofsky, \textit{Visual Arts}, pp. 58-62, 64-65, Fig. 1.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., Pl. 17.

\textsuperscript{14}Smith, \textit{Egyptian Sculpture}, p. xiii. Although the seated figure, with its pose innately suited to the perpetuation of the static, has been chosen as the prime archetype for monumental Egyptian sculpture, this selection in itself does not imply that the standing figure did not assume monumental proportions.
resolution of this dichotomy is best incorporated in the seated figure where a clarity and strength of contrast exists between an inorganic conventionalized throne and an organic figure.

The countless and ever changing aspects of a natural object confronted the artist with a chaos of forms. Definition, clearness, and harmony are most commonly achieved by bold simplifications which approximate, in a varying degree, the ultimate limit of purely geometrical shapes. Throughout the history of art, naturalism, the practice of closely imitating nature rather than translating it into artistic form, is frequently to be found as a late growth, carrying with it the beginnings of decay, a departure from the original, forceful rendering of nature in non-natural forms, a gradual yielding to the attraction of imitating the physical peculiarities of the objects.

It is a misconception to assume that all geometric forms in art are an outcome of a process of conventionalization. The starting point of artistic creation is frequently assumed to be a "faithful" rendering of natural objects, from which the artist moves farther and farther away, simplifying, abbreviating, or, as is often the case, merely bungling the original design until his models become unrecognizable.
Obviously, such processes often do occur and some geometrical designs have evolved from increasing conventionalization, but it should be apparent that this explanation may be applied automatically to geometric designs whenever they appear. The essence of the process of conventionalization would more probably appear to be a waning of the artistic impulse. It is therefore inept to attribute the influence of conventionalization whenever an artistic expression of great vigor or even of new beginning is confronted.

The sculptures discussed in this chapter are a case in point. A fresh outbreak of creativeness often assumes the form of a vigorous stylization and for this reason is often called spontaneous.

In Egypt, the return to a naturalistic position was reached three times, and in each of these periods in which this phenomenon of naturalism occurred, there resulted in a loss of that timeless quality of the monumental so sublimely expressed in the statues of the Pharoahs of the Old Kingdom. Toward the end of the Old Kingdom, the monumental plastic forms achieved in the statues of the Pharoahs in Dynasties III and IV were dissolved and destroyed. The excessive differentiation of the surface, caused in part by a gradual overemphasis on the physical qualities of various
parts of the body was introduced into the works of sculptors who had observed similar forms in nature.¹⁵

Toward the end of the Middle Kingdom, the same naturalistic tendency prevailed, coupled with a desire to treat the face as a mirror of physical peculiarities in which the features have a more relaxed expression. Here there is little attempt to depict Pharoah as an omnipotent being aloof from human forces. In these heads, the Old Kingdom concept of statuary as a repository of superhuman powers is changed to incorporate a concept of statuary as an embodiment of human personality.¹⁶ Toward the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty at Tell-al-Amarna, a similar phenomenon, though more pronounced than in the preceding period, reoccurred.¹⁷ It is necessary to observe how Egyptian art three times achieved a rejuvenation by reverting to the more abstract formal character which had been perfected as a solution to the problem of monumental sculpture during the period of the first three dynasties. It will be apparent that an approximation to geometrical forms with a subsequent attainment of the monumental again dominated the organization of sculpture at the beginning of

¹⁵Ranke, Art of Egypt, Pls. 66-67, 71-76; Breasted, Servant Statues, Pls. 15-20, 45.

¹⁶Ranke, Art of Egypt, Pls. 94, 96-104.

of the Middle Kingdom, beginning of the New Kingdom -
the reigns of Ahmes I through Queen Hatshepsut - and
at the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty.

It is not the writer's opinion that the art of these
periods of rebirth consciously reflected the archaising
tendency such as that which possessed the art of the Twenty-
Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Dynasties. It has been the pur-
pose of this discussion to demonstrate awareness of the
particular contribution of the Egyptians to the perfection
of a monumental form of sculpture. Three times in the
stylistic and historical development of Egyptian sculpture,
a period of great achievement ended with the appearance of
"naturalism" and each time a subsequent revival occurred
with a reversion to a more abstract, geometric formal
vocabulary. This fact would appear to support the writer's
view that an underlying geometric formula is the basis of
Egyptian monumental sculpture.

The realization of a fully mature style of monu-
mental sculpture in Egypt was not an isolated occurrence

18C. Aldred, Middle Kingdom Art in Ancient Egypt
(London: Alec Tirenti, Ltd., 1956), Pls. 10-13, 23-28,
35-37, 40-47.

19Ranke, Art of Egypt, Pl. 92; L. Rothschild,
Sculpture Through the Ages (New York: Whittlesey House,
1942), Pl. V.

20Ranke, Art of Egypt, Pls. 16-21, 140-141.
21Ibid., Pls. 165-172.
independent of precursory examples. A fuller and more incisive understanding of the concept of monumentality in Egyptian sculpture will be possible if precursory examples of sculpture are considered which embody an intimation of that monumental style so sublimely perfected in the diorite statue of King Kephren (infra, Chapter II, pp. 32-34).

A striking example of a Pre-Dynastic precursor is the ape figure bearing the name of King Narmer. Although it embodies an expression of realistic observation, it displays plastic articulation and coherence in its sensitive treatment of the transitions of planes and main plastic shapes with masterful skill evinced in the bony structure of the head. The inherent monumentality attained partially through the restraint and subtlety which characterizes the translation of shapes of the ape into essential geometric forms creates an image of directness and simplicity which conveys a special quality of vitality, expressive of the inner life of the beast.

A predynastic male figure reflects the departure from a naturalistic, imitative representation and translation

---

22 H. Schäffer, "Die Kunst Des Alten Orients," Propyläen Kunst Geschichte, Vol. II, p. 27, Figs. 182; cf., other animal carvings similar in style to the ape in Fig. 183, Nos. 2-3.

23 Ibid., Plt. 180.
of functional shapes into a simple stereometric system of cylindrical forms; it is highly indicative of the gropings toward the creation of an idol-like commemorative form, an early intimation of the desire for a monumental archetype to express an idealized concept of man. The forms of the figure are related on a geometric basis rather than organically. The bullet shaped head, with its mask-like face whose area is defined by an incised circle, is linked to the torso by the elongated abstraction of a pointed beard. The demarcations of the eyes, eyebrows and eye sockets repeat the incised circle outlining the face. The cylindrical shape is perpetuated by the slim torso which flows down to the slender tubular hips and thighs. The reed-shaped arms are affixed to the sides of the torso in repetition of the geometric symmetry. Thus, the total effect of this mode of representation contributed, though imperfectly, to the realization of an early archetype.

Suggestions of that ripe and mature style evinced in the Kephren statue are revealed in five seated figures which have been dated in style to Dynasties III and IV. 26

24 Kaschnitz-Weinberg, Von der Zweifachen statuarischen Form, p. 181.
26 Smith, Egyptian Sculpture, Pls. 3, a-d; G. Steindorff, Die Kunst der Ägypten (Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1928), Fig. 172.
The pose of these squat seated figures, with all unnecessary details eliminated, is simple. In each of these examples the rigid frontal position (the prime pose of all representations of Egyptian monumental sculpture) prevails but for the movement of the left arm across the body beneath the breast (a pose similar to that of the Zoser statue except that it is the right arm which diagonally crosses the body), while the right hand rests on the right thigh, a gesture which anticipates the clinched fist of the right hand, a feature common to monumental portrait statues of Dynasty IV. The modeling of the legs and thighs under the tightly drawn garments contributes to the general reduction in the forms of these figures to a series of abstract geometric shapes. Within the rectangular system of simple stereometric shapes common to all these statues, anatomical delineations of the feet, shins, knees, and hands are finely modeled, while the torso and arms are composed of simplified geometric forms.

The statue of Zoser represents a crucial moment in the development of monumental Egyptian sculpture, for it assumes a quality of static definition. Weightiness is definitely asserted in the masses of the forms of the head, trunk, arms, legs, and feet which reflect the underlying

---

27 Krahmer, *Figur und Raum*, pp. 35-36.
cubic framework of organization. The mass of the cap-like headcovering articulates the volumes of the head and in this massiveness advances a suggestion of the majesty of the headdress of the Kephren statue. The simple pose of the seated figure of the Zoser statue asserts a definite quality of equilibrium although this balance is jarred by the horizontal position of the left arm over the chest. Not only is the balance disrupted as a resultant concentration of mass on the right side of the body, but the volume of the torso is hidden by the crossing of the arm. The deeper merging body of the king into the seat of the simple, block-like throne detracts from the differentiation of the figure from the seat. Nevertheless, in spite of its imperfections, the statue of King Zoser presages in near approximation the delicately balanced assertiveness of that monumental style so sublimely stated in the Kephren statue.

The stylistic qualities in the precursory examples discussed above are indicative of the ideoplastic conception of form and development of an ideal geometric formula. This underlying ideoplastic conception was occasionally utilized to the fullest realization of its plastic value unmitigated by surface detail, while on other occasions it was cluttered by a profusion of realistic detail. Although as yet not fully attained in these examples, however, their geometric structure retained its importance
from an evolutionary point of view as the basis of monumental sculpture in Egypt. These statues reflect the unresolved conflict between elements proper to life and those associated with deification. The adherence to naturalism generally remains at variance with the intention of monumentality. On the one hand, a simple austerity reflected in a restrained style shorn of detail and a bold arrangement of rectilinearly organized masses produces a tension when mingled with realistic representations of individual faces, particularized concepts, and personal relationships of man. An almost incongruous joining of an impersonal pose with a figure placed upon a throne-like seat, with eyes that gaze into space in a god-like trance, but holding a common implement associated with his personal life and possessing particularized traits of an individual anticipates elements of monumentality but does not attain the sublime repose embodied in the Kephren statue.

The mastery of form and perfection of technique attained in the examples discussed (supra, Chapter II, pp. 28-31) herald the monumental style so nobly achieved in the diorite statue of King Kephren.29 The simple pose of the hands - the left hand flat on the thigh, the right one clenched - has established a balance which is without

29Rothschild, Sculpture, Pls. I-II; Steindorff, Kunst, Figs. 179-180.
conflict. The high backed throne, surmounted by a protecting falcon with outstretched wings, flanking the head of Pharoah, is a seat divested of realistic detail, appearing severely bare (with the exception of the front view of the seat where an intricate play of contrasts exists between the sculptured lines which form the legs of the throne and the comparatively gigantic figure of the king). The square block of the throne creates a contrast with the animate form of the figure it supports and provides a link with the architectural setting in which the statue was originally placed.

Here the human figure has been ruthlessly reduced to a series of abstract plastic forms. Yet it seems that the translation of the everchanging world of appearance into the stable forms of sculpture were achieved only by a bold grasp of essential shapes so shorn of accidentals that they closely approach geometrical forms. Thus, the cube and rectangular block provided the determinative underlying structure in monumental Egyptian sculpture. The main planes of the body and limbs are disposed at right angles or in parallels, so as to suggest the squareness of a block. The finished statue does not appear imperfectly freed from its original mass of stone. On the contrary, its very cubism stresses the three-dimensionality of the statue by a clearer elaboration of its coordinates and thus the statue is
emphatically constituted as a self-contained object in space, complete in its plastic corporeality.

The most characteristic aspects of the seated figure have here been brought to artistic significance. The frontal planes of the statue have been clearly articulated by the rectangular contrast of direction between chest, thighs, shins, and feet. Within this structural system the limbs have no separate function; as the arms are stiffly arranged, they appear incapable of gestures. The legs are not tense with muscular power, but appear rather as a diagonal prop.

In the statue of Kephren, as well as in later portrait images, the desire for clarity of form and to a large extent, of composition, led to an avoidance of gradual transitions between surface planes. The abruptness of the joining of the constituent parts of the body will be seen in profile and front view. The cylindrical arms and conical kilt are joined but not merged with the truncated body. Yet the whole of these sharply articulated masses is harmonious, not only as the result of a well balanced composition, but also because the shapes themselves are all of the same abstract order. Here no attempt is made to imitate nature; rather, nature is translated into a monumental art form.

The essential static quality of Egyptian sculpture lies in the immobility of its characteristic cubic structure,
a form reduceable to a simple system of coordinates. The human figure is not rendered as a living potentially mobile organism with a series of relationships to be perceived in a circular movement which encompasses the entire range of its functions. This inorganic or even anti-organic rendering of the figure lends to it the qualities of the permanent and the sublime, characteristic of the eternal monumentality of Egyptian sculpture.

A peculiarity common to monumental Egyptian portrait statuary is the life likeness of the face which, though expressionless in that they suggest neither character nor mood, yet suggest individuality (supra, Chapter II, p. 21). It is here that formal analysis proves inadequate because it leaves untouched the mystery of the personal presence of the god-king which these faces convey and it leaves equally untouched the problem of why such a head and a static formalized body were combined into a unit. Thus, there developed in the sculptured portraits of the Pharoahs a tensional harmony of opposites which existed in the play between the alert and alive individualized head connected to a body devoid of all potential movement. However, the two elements have been combined with a masterful skill which almost hides the paradox. In Egyptian sculpture, human portraiture has a monumental character perpetuated by the associated setting of the temple-tomb complex. Only a tomb
might be an appropriate setting and justification for an art form which attempted to combine the ephemeral and time­less.

In these monumental tomb portraits, an impressive power is achieved through an inward concentration of forms. This effect is partially attained by leading the eye of the viewer away from the surfaces of the frontal and side planes to focus upon an inner force in a search for balance, and is not distracted by an outward oriented treatment of plastic elements. Thus, in monumental Egyptian sculpture there is rarely an attempt to express movement, the desire of which would mean alteration of its basic aims. It is by this balance and adjustment of masses and forces that Egyptian sculpture - as befits its monumental character - becomes static but by no means devitalized.

After the foregoing analysis of those stylistic features which inhere the Kephren statue as a work of monumental sculpture and as an archetype for later generations to base their efforts on, it seems almost superfluous to discuss the stylistic variations of later royal statuary. There can be no doubt that in all later representations of Pharaoh and royal hierarchy, the ideal geometric formula established in the Kephren statue reiterates the immortality of the king. The intimate relationships existing among these stone images and the qualities which constitute their monumentality will become more apparent if a brief consideration
is given to contrasting statuettes which in style often reflect an underlying spirit of vulgar and vital exuberance, characteristics which frequently permeate genre art. Divergences, of course, appear throughout the hordes of tomb servant statuettes though it seems plausible to assume that the tradition of craftsmanship was very strong as a character of adequacy and simplicity is often detectable in the most mediocre of these works.

These statuettes are composed of forms which not only represent differences in style but often reflect complete contrasts with the geometric structure basic to royal portrait statuary. Instead of a clear and contrasting composition of sharply articulated masses, gradual transitions and fluid forms prevail; instead of a severe reduction of natural forms to geometric shapes, detailed rendering of the physical peculiarities of the subject predominate. Collar bones and nipples are often indicated. The individual nuances of the shapes of the forehead, nose, cheeks, and lips are expressed. The rigid law of frontality is broken as heads turn sideways and arms are uplifted. The method of modeling differs completely from the metallic tautness of surfaces achieved in the royal statuary. These servant statuettes show little attempt to translate organic body forms into geometric shapes; they all reflect a

30 Breasted, Servant Statues, Pls. 14-32, 41-45, 51-63, and many others throughout the book.
fascination for physical traits. As a result, in the best of these statuettes, the dissolution of the abstract plastic form inherent in the monumental portrait statues of the Old Kingdom is counterbalanced by a sensitive adaptation of the material to reflect distinguishing physical features.

In the colossi the significance of the unchanging geometric form lies in its use as a unifying element to combine vast surface areas of the figure (supra, Chapter I, p. 11). Thus, the shapes of the figure are organized primarily in terms of a rectangular system wherein the members of the body are understood not as anatomical parts closely related in form and function to one another but rather in terms of simple geometric shapes. The significance of the use of the rectangular system - organized to refer to a pivotal axis around which masses are symmetrically arranged - is that it exemplifies permanence and stability. Such a fixed imaginary line serves as an unchanging anchor of vision and is the center of a static framework of space in which the controlled movement - achieved visually by the clearly apparent direct lines of the geometric form of the colossi - takes place. The psychological impact of this static framework which extends to gigantic expansion in the colossi is far more powerful than the changes which occur within its limit (supra, Chapter I, pp. 8-9). The forms these shapes assume is more often governed by the desire to stress the massiveness, heaviness, and impenetrability of the
of the material than naturalistic authenticity. The adoption of simple stereometric features brings to the fore a system by which arbitrary mass, i.e., unorganized mass, can be measured and intellectually understood.

Thus, the power of the colossi lies in the fact that they have been created as an abstraction, a symbol, the bearer of an idea. The geometric organization is employed only to make the forms of the colossi clearly apparent to vision. The forms of the individual figures have been freed from their common uses of solely delineating anatomical relationships of the human figure to be put to a new purpose: to act as a symbol expressive of feeling. This fact gives Egyptian sculpture some of its inherent and spiritual permanence.

It is indeed true that a work of monumental sculpture related in scale to the human figure will retain its monumental qualities regardless of the setting in which it is placed. However, if such a statue or group is placed in an appropriate architectural or landscape setting, its monumental character will be enhanced. With regard to colossal sculpture, the proportional relationships inherent in the human figure will be difficult to comprehend as such unless the forms of the figure are related in height, width, and depth to an architectural or landscape setting (supra, Chapter I, pp. 14-17).
The seated colossi of Ramses II at Abu Simbel,\textsuperscript{31} the standing colossi of Ramses II in the Court of Ramses II in the Temple of Luxor near Karnak,\textsuperscript{32} and the seated Menon at Kurna near Medinet Habu\textsuperscript{33} are all arranged in an axially organized pattern. In all of these examples the members of the figures, feet, shins, thighs, torso, arms, head, and their component parts have been simplified and reduced in shape to cubic forms to escape ridiculous distortion.

In the colossi of Menon near Medinet Habu, a rectangular system is utilized to refer to a pivotal axis, presumably the entrance to the temple of Amenophis III which has since disappeared. The colossi are all that remain of the temple complex. They seem to stand as sentinels before pylons which have vanished with time. A simple stereometric system of rectangular shapes defines and clarifies the masses of the colossi. Although the architectural setting no longer exists and although the ravages of time have marred the surfaces of these figures, an inner essence of life still pervades the work, "radiating" through the remaining forms.

\textsuperscript{31} Ranke, \textit{Art of Egypt}, PIs. 16-21; Schaffer, \textit{Kunst}, Fig. 326, nos. 1-2, Pl. XI.

\textsuperscript{32} Drioton, \textit{Egyptian Art}, PIs. 93-95; Schaffer, \textit{Kunst}, Fig. 324.

\textsuperscript{33} Drioton, \textit{Egyptian Art}, Pl. 64.
The seated colossi of Ramses II at Abu Simbel are also organized in a rectangular system arranged symmetrically around an axial pivot. The background setting of the figures carved into the rock at the side of the cliff forms a rectangular setting when viewed frontally. The rectangular frame thus created repeats and unites the rectangular shapes of individual parts of the seated figures. The profile view of the figures and background reveals the angularity of the shapes which repeatedly echo a right angle formed by the back surface of the cliff and the ground, by the erect trunk of each seated figure with the thigh, by the thigh and lower leg at the knee, and by the lower leg and the foot at the base. The significance of this geometric arrangement of gigantic proportions lies in its suitability to visually clarify the large masses of the figures and simultaneously present a controlled visual movement within a stable framework. The power of this unity is clearly felt because of the geometric organization: the sharply defined lines of the forms impart a movement, controlled by their incorporation into the symmetrical arrangement.

Thus, the forms of all Egyptian colossi exemplify permanence and make the permanence of the material more clearly apparent. This is probably what was intended when the pharaohs erected these monuments: perpetuation of power through eternity.
CHAPTER III

THE CONCEPT OF MONUMENTALITY IN ARCHAIC GREEK SCULPTURE

Commemoration of man as a mortal being motivated archaic Greek sculptors to create plastic semblances which were not only a representational image of man but one that mirrored the organic function of the human being. The driving incentive that prompted the Greek artist derived its power from the core of Greek society, anthropomorphic polytheism. The Greek gods were fashioned in the image of man.\(^1\) The worship of deities of such an order with its derivative veneration of traits associated with these gods—specifically human traits—fostered the idealized entities embodied in the sculpture.

The visual stimulations of the world of experience appears to have evoked deliberate motor responses in the Greek sculptors which they incarnated in marble. The warm sunny climate of Greece, the participation and interest in athletics provided ideal opportunities for observing youthful, nude forms of the male body. The forms and masses of


\(^2\) loc. cit.
archaic Greek sculptures present a plastic image of immediacy to vision, and a first step in the process of its appreciation lies in the visual contemplation of what is actually there. In this sense, it seems futile to discuss the monumental quality of the sculpture. The specific effect of shape and mass are precisely what they are and as they are seen. No translation into words can be adequate, for the full effects of sculpture are incommunicable in terms of language. At best, the impact of sculpture can only be indicated indirectly. The whole complex of subtle variations and nuances lies within the visual realm and in the intrinsic power of sculpture to evoke a sense of touch and motion through the motor responses of the observer. Not only was the human body the primary theme and subject matter of Greek sculpture with its transformation into plastic forms of sensuous charm and of moral attitudes, but the Greek statues were creations arresting by their associations of heroic dignity, youthful grace and masculine strength. The selective ideal of human grandeur, the mind and spirit of Greek man, is embodied within and inseparable from the works of sculpture.

The archaic Greek sculptors reduced the material content of the human figure to simple animate visual terms which were further limited in range to conform to the shape and size of the block. No visual conception was
acceptable for stone carving unless it was appropriate to such an art. The erect figure of man was amenable to the special arrangement within the confines of the rectangular block as a balanced composition of mass and volume with ordered lines and surfaces. The kouroi figures not only reflected an idealized spiritual concept of man, but possessed artistic significance in their embodiment of artistic form and power to evoke emotion. An inherent harmony pervades these youthful figures in the balance of shapes between the rectangular block and the erect verticality of the standing figure combined in effective contrast between the parallel surface planes of the one and the changing profile lines of the other.

Monumental archaic Greek sculpture served to intensify, clarify, and interpret a concept of man. Sculptors, in order to achieve success, exploited their peculiar material and specific technical resources. Apart from the fact that sculpture is the plastic embodiment of the human figure and its imaginative possibilities of expression, its particular preoccupation is with the presentation of three-dimensionality. The combination of harmonious successions of expressive contours into a simple statue whose forms would be immediately understood from every viewpoint was a fundamental problem of archaic Greek monumental sculpture. In as much as the cubic shape and position
in space of objects are inferred from their changing appearances from varying points of view, sculptural form presents a more complete and direct visual image of solid objects as such. It is a geometric impossibility to see all around a solid object and yet sculptural form makes the viewer clearly aware of the surfaces on the invisible side of the object. Through simplicity of pose, established planes of composition and the use of modeled lines, the three-dimensionality of the statue is distinctly articulated.

Not only must the statue be apprehended as a solid but as a human figure with animate forces and qualities portrayed sculpturally with immediacy and directness so that the spiritual values appear to emanate from within the work. The means by which sculpture appears to achieve this may be disclosed in part by formal consideration. The use of line, surface, and balance of mass, to which the figure of man is made to conform - devices in themselves abstract, geometric, and of little strength to rouse emotion - assert their artistic power when integrated and fused with the representational matter.

Man and beast appear to be the prime subject matter of monumental archaic Greek sculpture of which the mode of depiction was rigidly limited to two basic poses. The human figure is portrayed standing quietly or stiffly seated, the latter position being much rarer. The beast, generally the lion and panther and occasionally the bull,
was represented in essentially static poses: lying or quietly seated, or simply standing.

The depiction of overt motion seems not to have been the intent of monumental archaic Greek sculpture, and in this respect, it is related to Egyptian art (supra, Chapter II). However, even a superficial examination of archaic sculpture will at once reveal the spiritual and emotional differences between the Egyptian and Greek.

Standing at the beginning of a development, the New York kouros\(^3\) represents the earliest achievement in large scale stone sculpture toward mastery of the human form and is above all the expression of an idealized concept of youthful manhood in which body and soul are conceived as inseparable. Not marred by an awkward arrangement of forms, this statue is an accomplished work of skill, adequately expressive of the spiritual concepts and ideals of its time. The compact harmonious structure in which only the essential shapes of the figure are emphasized and generalized into a geometric pattern reflects a simplified conception of the human body.

This work resembles Egyptian statues in its static pose with the arms hanging closely by its sides with

\(^3\)Richter, Kouroi, p. 63 ff., Pls. VI-VIII, Figs. 19-26, XIII, Fig. 42, XX, Fig. 67, CXXXII, Figs. 48-50; E. Buschor, Frühgriechische Junglinge (Munich: R. Piper & Co. Verlag, 1950), pp. 17-22, Figs. 15-21.
fists clinched, the legs parted, the left slightly advanced, in itself not indicative of forward movement, but rather of firmer stance. As a whole, the statue is four sided. Seen from in front, the New York kouros exhibits a pattern of line and surface. The frontality and dimensional pattern of linear decoration on the geometric surface planes of this figure are so striking that when viewed from in front, it is very difficult to see the statue as a solid. It seems flat, in one plane. The contour of the statue has assumed prime importance and the front plane has been so emphasized that the dimension of depth does not seem to have a necessary function.

The transition from the side view to the front view is quite abrupt. The figure retains a feeling of the cubic character of the block from which it was carved. Anatomical details are indicated on the surface planes by grooves and ridges carved with a sense of the composition as a whole. Volumes of the limbs, shoulders, chest, buttocks, thighs, calves, and feet form undulating contours which in their rectangular and cylindrical massiveness assert the ponderous character of this tensely alive youthful figure of man. The muscles and bones suggest rather than represent natural forms. The linear geometric style of the tenth through the eighth centuries in Greek
art and the massive monumental sculpture of Egypt is reflected in the rendering of cubic forms and anatomical details of this figure. Though line and mass are of prime significance in the development of this work, its forms and their integral relationships constitute no mere abstraction. While the underlying geometric scheme of the past predominates this figure, it anticipates a new concept for rendering the human body as an organic whole in which the parts are functionally related.

The beauty of this figure is intrinsic. In spite of the primitiveness of conception, there is something of the divine in this youthful image of man. The vitality of its inherent virility is striking and inexplicable in a vocabulary detached from the actual language of threedimensional forms.

A marble kore from the Acropolis in Athens reflects a similar and yet completely contrasting development in archaic sculpture.⁴ Like the male kouros, her forms have a simple geometric order, but, unlike the male figures with their inherent rectangular order, her body seems to have been organized within a cylindrical matrix. What is most interesting is the fact that the articulation of the garments has been so rendered as to suggest body forms

beneath. Especially is this true of the thighs and legs where modeling is lacking, and yet the skirt has been molded around the cylindrical core with just a hint of the lower limbs by a slight depression between them. The drapery and body forms have been fashioned with extreme simplicity but all in harmony within a subtle design.

The total effect is one of simple charm exuded from the figure of a young maiden who seems to pulsate with life under her clinging garments. The statue embodies a feminine figure with a completely individual character at once simplified and given significance in its relation with the universal identity with maidenhood. It is an expression of a Greek ideal of beauty, one of monumental character in its unity of the particular and universal aspects of womanhood.

The clothed seated figure was not a common subject in Greek archaic sculpture which favored the nude erect standing figure with its suitability as an attitude to convey movement in its tensed muscles and flexed limbs. The particular contribution of the Greeks to monumental sculpture was their creation of the image of movement without sacrificing emphasis upon sculptural volume and mass, a principal quality of the monumental.

The Branchidai figures sit rigidly on throne-like seats, with their arms close to their bodies and their
hands on their knees. Their heavy garments emphasize the broad proportions of the body and conform to the accentuation of mass to which the seated pose more readily lends itself. The attitude of relaxation is more readily conveyed by a clothed seated figure. The treatment of a cubic stress upon mass places the Branchidai figures in close relation to the monumental style of the Egyptians with a built-in feeling of strength and power in the forms of these seated statues. An inner spirit of dignity and power is conveyed through the articulation of the sculptural volume and mass.

The treatment of the frontal planes of the Branchidai figures distinguishes them from the monumental seated statuary from Egypt which was clearly articulated by a sharp rectangular contrast of direction between chest, thighs, shins, and feet. For the most part, the broad masses of the heavy garments of the Branchidai figures tend to obscure sharp distinction of body forms and creates a frontal plane more gentle and even in its movement sloping downward.

The Cleobis statue combines a simplified image of the human mass with the mobility potential to the

---

The first part of this combination relates it to the Egyptian; the second is new and uniquely represents that which is particularly Greek.

The general structure of the Cleobis figure is four sided. This appears most markedly in the torso, head, and thighs, whereas the arms and lower legs are more rounded. The connecting links between the respective parts of the body, i.e., the ankles, knees, groin, neck, wrists, elbows, and shoulders were rendered with particular care and precision. The attention given to the delineation of the joints imparts a visual effect of partial movement to the standing figure. The concavity and convexity of the swelling muscles of calves, abdomen, chest, and arms convey a feeling of strength and vigour. These factors combine to create an image of a strong youth who can leap into action if called upon. The two arms, slightly bent at the elbows, touching the body only at the thighs with clinched fists, seem especially to produce the feeling of potential movement of the figure, whose actual pose is not one of action but whose image is one of organic flexibility.

The restraint shown in the controlled movement of the figure is in harmony with the monumental simplicity of the artistic concept that retains its direct and close relation to the three-dimensional, as is most clearly seen in the rectangularity of the base. Each of the four sides of the figure corresponds to the respective surface of the base. The Cleobis figure possesses a vitality all its own impossible to adequately define in words but immediately recognizable.

Archaic Greek representations of ferocious beasts were limited primarily to the lion, panther, and bull. The mode of depiction seems to have been determined by a similar principle of conception of the rectangular and cubic block utilized in statues of human figures. Like the portrayals of man, beasts were shown in essentially simple static poses: lying or sitting quietly or just standing. Overt motion was not shown.

The dangerous cat with its versatility and functional flexibility occurs in nature in a wide range of physical sizes and displays a body sleek and supple in form. Admirably suited in its simplicity, the anatomy of the cat lends itself to a convincing translation into monumental sculptural form. One of the most ferocious beasts known in archaic Greek sculpture, the funeral lion from Corfu incorporates this principle to its highest
attainment. Upon first glance, the huge cat appears at rest, but the turn of its head provides a forward thrust of concentrated ferocity. The compact nature of its pose, appropriately conveys and emphasizes the heaviness and massiveness of the dangerous beast, but still allows careful articulation of the body. The haunched hind legs, the abruptly forward turn of the shoulders and head combine to portray a figure embodied with potential energy. The impression of three-dimensionality of this image expresses the tense power of the watchful guardian of the tomb.

The predeliction for portrayals of monsters and beasts of prey among the early archaic Greek sculptors reflected the spiritual outlook of the time. These monumental representations of creatures from the realm of Greek imagination were impressive and convincing without the need of mythological explanation and served neither as merely decorative nor religious symbols. However, the static delineations of sculptural volumes in the simplicity and clarity of depiction is combined with a concentrated vitality which conveys a deep awareness of a mysterious spiritual world.

8 Ibid., p. 9.
Consideration of several selected statuettes from the eighth century, B.C. is of interest because they display early intimations of that monumental style inherent in the large scale stone sculpture which made its appearance towards the end of the seventh century. An ivory figurine from Athens reveals a kindred relation to the kouros figure in its deliberate symmetry of pose; the erect head faces forward; the arms hang close to the body with both hands pressed closely to the thighs; the legs stand straight and appear close together. The physique receives due attention. The torso has a delicate moulded roundness with the separation at the waist between the bust and hips clearly articulated. This feeling for the volumes of human form is carried to similar refinement of plastic mass in a bronze statuette from Delphi. Here, as in the ivory statuette, the essentially geometric character of the general structure of the figure facilitates the conveyance of body mass. Compactness and concentration of volumes seem an important function in the creation of an image of corporeality.

---


10 Buschor, *Junglinge*, pp. 5-6, Fig. 1.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12, Fig. 8; Wedeking, *Grossplastik*, pp. 40-41.
Here, the pose of the figure more closely presages that of the archaic kouroi. The arms seem to bend slightly with the clinched hands appearing to rest quietly at the thighs; the straight but well modeled legs stand less rigidly together with the left foot slightly advanced. The attitude is one of anticipation of potential movement. The directness of the fully open gaze of the eyes focuses the interest to the face which expresses the inherent human spirit of the work. The subtle restraint of static definition expressed in these two figures contrasts markedly with two bronze statuettes from Athens which reflect a preponderance upon movement, shown in the preoccupation with the limbs of the figures to the extent that the torso seems neglected.

The statuettes appear to be composed primarily of arms and legs merely appended to meager formless torsos. In these figures and similar examples, the movement of the "match-stick" limbs appears spastic in character; the thin arms move outward from the body; the spindly legs rest uneasily in their unbalanced stance.

---

12 W. Lamb, Greek and Roman Bronzes (London: Methuen & Co., 1929), Pl. XX, a; Buschor, Junglinge, p. 6, Fig. 2.
A bronze figure from Olympia\textsuperscript{13} is closely related to these figures in its similarity of "match-stick" thinness of limbs and perfunctory modeling of body masses. The arms still move away from the body. However, this statuette is noteworthy because of the pose of the legs: straight with the left foot slightly advanced. The attitude of the stance seems to be an early advance toward balance and exhibits a degree of intimation of the controlled movement displayed in the kouroi figures.

The character of the concept of monumentality in archaic Greek sculpture may be ultimately analyzed in terms of the balanced combination of elements of reality and ideality which it embodied and signified, always with reference to man. Thus, a statue of a human figure simultaneously presented a realistic representation of man as an individual, with clarity and simplicity, and a portrayal of man as an individual, with clarity and simplicity, and a portrayal of man as the incarnation of idealized and universal manhood.

\textsuperscript{13}Lamb, \textit{Bronzes}, Pl. XV, b.
CHAPTER IV

CONCEPT OF MONUMENTALITY IN TOLTEC- AZTEC SCULPTURE

A feeling of the sublime which was not that of the beautiful permeated the spirit of the monumental sculpture created by the Toltec-Aztec cultures of ancient Middle America. To create an impression of grandeur and power, they perfected in stone sculpture forms of monumental proportions characterized by angular lines, vertical rhythms, and horizontal elements. A monstrous symbolism dominated the spirit of monumentality of the colossal sculpture. The impact of the image presented by the impressive dimensions and hardness of material of this monumental stone sculpture evokes feelings of awe and fear.

The inventiveness and richness of forms comprising these stone idols reflect the sensibility and vitality of an art saturated with symbolism and magic. Cosmological and historical events were commemorated by the monumental statuary of the Toltec-Aztec civilizations.1 The religious worship of these people entailed offering sacrifices, uttering prayers, and performing symbolic acts to monumental idols carved in stone that they might bring their divine

---

powers to operate for the benefit of all. The forceful energy expressed in the blunt cubic forms common to these colossal images presents a vivid contrast to the plastic refinement of the sculptural forms of the Mayan monuments. Symbols of barbaric imagery which is frequently a result of religious influence often detracts from the clean lines and sharp contours of the basic proportions of the total work.

Simple cubic and rectangular forms within which minutiae of detail was frequently transposed into geometric surface patterns imparted an architectonic quality to Toltec-Aztec sculpture. When integrated into the total structure of the work, these details create a dramatic impact which presented an objective visual image embodying fear and terror attendant to their grotesque and awesome gods.

Within the development of the concept of monumentality, the deep and vital need for supernatural support was undoubtedly a motivating force activating the Toltec-Aztec peoples who felt the bonds which tied them to their source of life, both physically and spiritually. In their search for an idea of self and concepts of deity, they created plastic images in stone to give permanence to their gods and to possess the semblances of their deities in

---

\[\text{Ibid., p. 168.}\]
concrete form which they could see, touch, and walk around. In the process of giving their emotions a form, transposed in the hardness of stone carved into simplified masses and lines of rectangular composition, the Toltec-Aztec peoples transformed the chaos of their intense fears and terrors into a controlled order. Even though a variety of barbaric and disquieting separate elements were incorporated into these images, the sculpture reveals a unity and consistency of the whole which seems to have served the function of objectifying emotional anxieties, for half of the problem of conquering fears is the ability to "see" them.

The reduction and transformation of representational forms to their basic simplicity characterizes Toltec colossal temple sculpture which exhibits a major preoccupation with the general contour of three-dimensional forms. Each shape is made to conform to a rectangular geometric pattern and integrated within a rigid frontal system. The statue remains bound to the stone block upon whose surfaces delineations of forms have been merely carved. The proportions of these works and others created in the same spirit reflect adherence to an architectural orientation in sculpture.

D. F. R. de la Borbolla, Mexico: Monumentos Historicos Y Arqueologicos (Mexico: D. F.: Instituto Panamericano de Geografia e Historica, 1953), p. 128, Fig. 23, p. 122, Figs. 408-409, p. 423, Fig. 410, p. 424, Fig. 411.
More than colossal in size, these figures possess a grandeur and nobility of conception embodied in an imposing image of stone. Component forms do not merely reflect a polished naturalism of body forms, but are translations into architectural embellishment. Body forms are recreated elements within an architectonic framework; garments are stylized to blend into and strengthen the rectangularity of the work.

Often distinguished by elements of the macabre and strangeness, Aztec sculpture has a density and powerful simplicity. The unique character of innate monumentality of Aztec sculpture may be understood and immediately sensed in the sculptural power of the Coatlique. Profound dread and terror of the powerful Mother of the Gods has been transmuted into the great monumental stone figure which presents an image of hypnotic expression in summation of all the horrors of life and death. The aggregate of human, animal, and reptilian forms has been fused into a dramatic creation, dreadful to a modern observer. Two coiled serpents comprise the head of the figure; human hands and hearts form her necklace; claws spring from the hands and feet; and writhing serpents weave the pattern for the skirt of this terrible goddess. The meshed pattern of blended

forms and deep undercuts around the neck and mouth with the resultant dramatic play of varying shades of light and dark further contributes to the barbarous character of this unique profile en face form. The same treatment of the face is repeated on the reverse side but with slight variations in the proportions of the skull and other salient details.

Reciprocal movement in space flows from the to and fro directional relation of the position of the limbs: the arms come forward in contrast to the clawed feet which turn backward. The technique of undercutting covers the surface planes producing a rich play of light and shade on the rough porous volcanic stone imparting an assured and determined appearance to the work.

However, the strong feeling for contour of the total figure pervades the work. Control of the diversity of individual forms is regulated through the strength of the abstract rectangular and frontal orientation, thereby endowing a strong sense of dynamic stability to the work. Thus, the figure of Coatlique bears witness to the highly sophisticated treatment of sculptural forms in stone which the Aztecs were able to achieve, though a savage vitality of presentation and imagination is particularly here distinguished, as is true in many of these creations.
In the Coatlique, as in similar pieces of inherently monumental sculpture, it seems evident that the power of design and feeling for material is so contagious that no additional data is required to achieve a basic appreciation of the innate monumental spirit which is built into the forms of the total work.

Reflecting the true beauty of jade and other hard stones, a series of amulets and masks bring out in miniature all the consummate design of the large scale stone sculpture created by the Toltec-Aztec cultures. These small idols illustrate that element of monumentality which the better examples of sculpture possess. The forms of these idols exhibit a capacity to be almost indefinitely enlarged or reduced. The harmonious balance of the formal elements involved in their composition are neither distorted by enlargement or diminished in inherent dignity when reduced in scale.

The disposition and subordination of details of eyes, nose, mouth, and ears on the masks are unified through their incorporation into a formal scheme of geometric regularity. In many of these masks there is a feeling for

---

breadth and simplicity; a simplicity of proportions establishes a clearly felt unity between rounded contours and surface planes.

In many of these masks, as in the large scale sculpture in the round, the geometric principle serves as an organizing system within whose limits the sensibility to the complexity of natural forms was expressed. The equilibrium of subject depicted and the sculptural portrayal results in the creation of works of vitality with a moving sense of inner life felt in the internal tension of the work.

If details are disregarded, the same principle of plastic composition is seen to underlie the figures smaller in scale than the colossal temple sculpture.\(^6\) In almost all of these sculptures, the interest seems to center in the face which embodies daemonic or divine personality. Photographs of these idols seem to reveal no indication of their original scale (supra, Chapter IV, p. 52).

The same tendency to rounded rectangular forms and strongly controlled simplification of planes prevail in both styles. The most realistic of these sculptures find their

\(^6\) Basler and Brummer, L'Art Précolombien, pp. 74, b, 75, a-b, 79, 86, 98, a-b, 99, a, 100, b, 102; Castro, Escultura Mexicana, pp. 5, 13-11, 12-13, 15, 19, 23, 46-47, 50-51, 55, 82-83, 84, 87.
unity in approximation to the geometric formula which underlies all Toltec-Aztec sculpture. Though there is an extraordinary refinement and differentiation of surface treatment, the underlying geometric structure never lost its significance as the foundation of a monumental sculptural achievement.
CHAPTER V

A CONCEPT OF MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE FOR CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Monumental sculpture, which held a predominant place in the cultures of antiquity and in Medieval and Renaissance Europe, fell to a position of relative unimportance after the seventeenth century. This decline of monumental sculpture as a vital art form to express the common spiritual and social values of man is more or less true today, although there seem to be encouraging signs that monumental sculpture is beginning again to assume a less subsidiary role, despite its disadvantages.

Throughout the history of sculpture, it is well to remember that the basic preoccupation of the great sculptors during the most significant epochs of artistic development has been with the creation of an image of artistic form embodying unanalyzable spiritual qualities. It is perhaps this feature more than any other that most of the great sculptors of the twentieth century have in common.

In contemporary society the principal and unique function of monumental sculpture, as opposed to decorative, non-objective sculpture, is to serve as a symbol of remembrance, to keep alive and ever before the public that which is commemorated. A particular spirit is usually remembered
with a particular sentiment, and it is this spirit which customarily provides the subject, and to a considerable extent, the emotional character of monumental sculpture. Thus, considered within the context of a memorial, monumental sculpture is dedicated to a spiritual purpose which is perhaps the finest expression of the national life and character of a culture.

By its essence, a monumental work of sculpture presumes that it possess the qualities of a great work of art and that a commemorative function be fulfilled (supra, Chapter I, pp. 1-2). In its commemorative role, it thus exhibits sensible form which contains truth, a truth which interprets human experience, and, in this respect, monumental sculpture must communicate its truth to as wide an ideal public as possible. Such meaning will be of greatest depth when framed in terms of the context of human experience since man is the center of the universe.

There is a universal desire in man to assert his individuality and at the same time a need for an image for self and his role in relation to the rest of mankind. In contemporary society with its emphasis on goods and production, disassociation and impersonalization of man from his work, increased pace of living with more complex and conflicting demands upon time, interests, loyalties, and emotional responses, this self-recognition becomes most
difficult to achieve. The impersonality of the technologi-
cal world which is man made and a result of the rational
material self-interest of man, has permeated the entire
social structure and intensified this deeper irrational
sense of loneliness, detachment, and psychological confu-
sion. The extent of this emotional ill-ease is reflected
in the narcotic character of the extremes displayed in the
leisure pursuits of a large segment of contemporary society.
Alarming effects of certain recreational activities serve
to dull the emotions by the excesses to which they are
carried - hyperstimulation to blunt the senses rather than
the restful repose of meaningful recreation enjoyed with
conscious awareness.

Formerly the image of self was presented by religion
and the spiritual and physical ties of man with his source
of living. In modern man these bonds have been submerged
and the segment of his life which transcends his material
self-interest has often been misdirected toward the inhuman
and senseless goals of technology, strength and power for
their own sake. These have become substitutes for a faith
in the idea of man.

The reaffirmation of the bonds of humanity does not
mean the creation of a superhuman deity, nor does it imply
that the improvement of material conditions of life or the
emphasis on the purely rational life of man alone serve to
increase the happiness of man. The idea of man presumes the human element as it exists in actual reality, a reality of the physical material world and the world of the human spirit. Thus, in the world of today, a concept that embraces the whole of man must be formed and must include the elements of man's highly advanced rational powers. There can be no retreat into an irrationality, but, rather, the path of man's belief in himself in an atomic age must progress in the direction of more rationality enlightened by a body of comprehensive knowledge. The control of his world and development of man becomes possible when he can direct his knowledge. Human knowledge comes into existence exactly as diffuse experiences are unified into a coherent totality. An orientation of the whole facilitates a recognition of the essential from the trivial.

Throughout his existence, man has sought and groped for an idea of himself, of his individual nature, and his position in the universe. In the technological society of the present, man's intrinsic value seems to be buried and hidden, but a true picture of man must show him in the wholeness of his existence. Human significance is no longer separate from matter.

More than ever, monumental sculpture in the image of man can have an important function. Human dignity must be reasserted in terms expressive of contemporary existence and
essence. New attainments in forms and surfaces incorporated into plastic composition can be demonstrative of a coherence of clarity, order, and captive of the intrinsic value which permeates the essence of man. The inner world of man, his emotional and intuitive responses, random impulses, is more than often chaotic and aimless. Any transformation of a given chaos into a desired order, the imposition of form to shapeless material or direction to guide aimless movement, necessitates a unifying force as a prerequisite. Sculpture contains a logic and unity of its own, for its internal coherence is exercised in an autonomous discipline. This self-determining character is not bound by faithful obedience to practical purpose; it has freedom from ulterior motive.

Just as the refinement of feeling and thought is the aim of most moral systems, in themselves directed to the senses, it is to the refinement of sensuous experience that monumental sculpture (as all other arts) addresses itself. Great monumental sculpture provides an implicit moral lesson by its insistence that the means themselves should have something of the character of the ends. Moralities have asserted that people be treated as ends, not means to an end. Monumental sculpture avoids the confusing and merely decorative; it relates its message with directness and simplicity. Everything which comprises its elements is important and is
part of the unity of its creation, surely a concrete exemplification of the moral ideal of wholeness and harmony.

In a certain sense, in its perfection monumental sculpture frees itself from the limitations of everyday reality and provides a realm where the sculptor can function freely over tractable materials. The means of achievement may be difficult but they have solutions which may be arresting and inspiring to contemplation. The capturing of interest which becomes absorbed in the contemplation of the image presented by monumental sculpture may be termed as a kind of detachment. It is a detachment in that the observer becomes released from his normal habits and involvement in the amorphous elements of his actual environment and peruses the monumental work of sculpture in and for itself and becomes absorbed in the perfection of the artistic reality embodied in its plastic forms. The universal significance intrinsic in the unity of a work of monumental sculpture is presented with intensity and clarity to its public.

A vivid and revealing rendition of the world is portrayed to a beholder whose vision is that of a human being who brings with him the vast influences of his interests and emotions. In a monumental work of sculpture, feelings have been profoundly clarified through a deliberate and explicit pattern of sculptural forms. The life inherent in a statue of monumental significance has been given
a sequence and logic controlled and disciplined to a development which transcends man's existence in practical life.

Even as the sculptor of monumental works employs with justification realistic human forms which aesthetically serve to arrest the attention of his public - man, who naturally is concerned and familiar with human form - the sculptor makes man aware of his idealization of life in the permanent order and changeless integration inherent in a monumental statue. This idealization functions as a focusing image of the world and reveals by calculating devices that which is potentially possible in life to be seen, felt, and thought. A monumental work of sculpture suggests the goal which man's experience may achieve: a coherent unity of man's inner life with his existence in a material world. Monumental sculpture may furnish a picture of a new world of peace and vital equilibrium with the essential worth and dignity of man as the all important focus.

In his sculpture, the writer has always considered the human organic element to be of fundamental importance. Thus, the human character and personality of each theme depicted controlled the design and formal qualities of the works as they developed. In the opinion of the writer, it is not enough that the three-dimensional image of the statue be merely apprehended as a solid object, nor that the solid of the statue be comprehended as a human figure. More than
that, the animate and animating forces and qualities must be comprehended. These forces are apprehended not by an intellectual inference nor by a mere sympathetic understanding; in sculptural contemplation, these vital forces are perceived still more immediately: they are felt directly, as it were, from within the three-dimensional image.

Though the mechanism by which this awareness of the inner emotions and impulses lying deep within the work itself is accomplished by purely formal means in that it consists of devices such as line, surface, and balance of solid masses to which the image depicted is made to conform, these devices are in themselves abstract, geometric, and little evocative of emotion. They assert their spiritual power only when they are correctly fused with the representational matter. It is the fusion of the suggestions of vitality and intensity of feelings acquired from an artistically satisfactory use of these formal devices which raises sculpture out of the category of a merely imitative craft to that of an art capable of arousing human emotions.

It is not the intent here to enter into a detailed analysis of the formal execution of the individual works created by the writer. Rather, it is desirable that the works be considered as individual aspects expressive of the central theme of which they are but one possible image: the broader, common intrinsic worth of humanity. The unity of the common bonds of man as a physical and spiritual
whole persisting throughout his development in civilization has been the driving impetus and has provided the aspiring goal toward which each of the writer's works strives.

The writer recognizes that the attainment of these goals has not been achieved with the same degree of intensity in each of the works he has created. The perfection of technique, suitability of design, mastery of form, and intensity of characterization and feeling expressed in the writer's works progress from a partial fulfillment in his earliest creations, "Maternity," Pl. I, "Model for a Portrait Statue to R. M. Hutchins, former Chancellor of the University of Chicago," Pl. II, and "Agriculture," Pl. III, to a maturer statement in his latest works: "Model for a Memorial to the Dead," Pls. IV-VI, "Working Sketch for the Model of a Proposed War Memorial," Pl. VII, "Model for a War Memorial," Pls. VIII-X, "Ecclesiastica," Pls. XI-XIII, "Christ in Bonds," Pls. XIV-XV, and a figure carved in limestone entitled "In Memorium," Pls. XVI-XX, (designed after the "Model for a Memorial to the Dead," see Pls. IV-VI).
In this thesis the writer has attempted to make a study of the concept of the monumental in the plastic arts through a consideration of the phenomenon as manifest in the monumental sculpture of those civilizations discussed in this paper. It is natural that the artistic creations of these cultures should evoke a wide and intense interest, and it is unfortunate that there have been few attempts made to understand the artistic qualities which distinguish monumental sculpture from the decorative.

The varieties of artistic form and expression within the realm of such an art are many. They will never be readily describable in precise terms, for their interrelations are subtle and complex. There are perhaps many approaches that could be devised for attacking this problem. Much might be said for and against a stylistic and historical development of the monumental sculpture created by a civilization. Certainly such a systematic study of the manner in which the stylistic peculiarities developed would lead to a clearer understanding of the functions of monumental sculpture and the artistic problems involved in its creation within a culture.
The writer is aware of the immediacy and vividness experienced in viewing actual works of sculpture and recognizes the disadvantages attendant in appreciating the three-dimensionality of sculptural forms which must be conveyed photographically, itself a two-dimensional device. Demands of practicality and physical limitations necessarily preclude immediate examination of the works considered which cannot be substituted by works known to the writer because of their particular significance in the development of the monumental style in the respective periods considered in this paper.

Other approaches may include intensive and exhaustive analysis of a limited number of works of sculpture in an attempt to define the artistic peculiarities inherent in a monumental style. This study, however, employs methods that are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive.

It begins with an attempt to define and discuss the particular artistic and emotional qualities involved in a consideration of the phenomenon of monumentality in sculpture. Examples of monumental sculpture from Egypt, archaic Greece, and the Toltec-Aztec cultures have been reviewed in relation to these qualities: simple geometric shapes, scale larger than life, and the factor of commemoration were the primary qualities upon which the sculpture was considered. As the investigation proceeded, however, these factors
became of less significance than the total work as an image of vital form, embodying unanalyzable emotional qualities.

Direct conclusions and dramatic results should not be expected from a study concerning the phenomena of artistic presentation. Whatever it may suggest is tentative and must be correlated with other types of interpretation. Perhaps the most significant thing it can do is to clarify some of the problems involved and suggest avenues of approach for future studies.

It has already been noted that an essential artistic quality which the cubism of Egyptian statuary possesses is its self-sufficiency, self-containedness, its complete plastic corporeality, and its independence as an object in space, clearly constituted by the elaboration of its coordinates from the block of stone (supra, Chapter II, p. 33). These qualities are present to a marked degree in the monumental sculpture of early archaic Greece and the Toltec-Aztec cultures. The same sense of proportions and harmonious treatment of gigantic masses and planes, so evident in the monumental sculpture of Egypt (supra, Chapter II, pp. 36, 38-41) contributed significantly toward the monumental quality in the sculpture of archaic Greece and the Toltec-Aztec civilizations. In these two cultures, the statues are characteristically symmetrical, frontal, and four-sided. The same bias towards a rectangular system of simple
stereometric shapes pervades the monumental sculpture of these civilizations as it does in Egyptian sculpture.

The monumental sculpture of the three periods considered in this investigation share an important universal significance in their role as individual expressions of a civilization. They are true monuments that served the needs of men of the past and embody images that may evoke feelings of melancholy to a modern observer who can never quite appreciate the full meaning the works had to the people who created them, for ours is a time when sculpture seems to be divorced from the daily life of the whole people. Sculpture in each of these civilizations was integrated into the social, moral, and practical life and portrayed a universe with form, unity, and significance. The conversance with the vocabulary of three-dimensional forms enabled these cultures to derive the satisfaction from a plastically depicted universe of vitality, charm, and spiritual value.

The presence of a myriad of complex, overt, and intangible forces served to mold and influence the individual character of the monumental sculpture created. In Egypt the function of monumental sculpture was to perpetuate the concept of immortality of Pharoah who was a god. In Greece the dominant concern was the perfection of an ideal concept of man. In Toltec-Aztec civilizations sculpture was tied to the religious worship of zoomorphic gods.
However, the vibrant vitality of spirit which permeates the monumental works of sculpture of all of these periods is the essential characteristic of interest to this study. The works of these periods revealed a world wholly significant and were creations of form totally expressive of that unity. Reality was symbolically represented by a single concrete instance expressed through a sensuous and vital image.

The essential truths of reality were clearly apparent to the people of these more closely knit, more simple societies wherein the basic religious, social, and political values were comprehended and evoked the adherence of all of the members of the group. The spiritual and physical bonds connected man with his source of existence with a depth and immediacy no longer possible in our complex and diversified world which separates man from his elemental ties. Monumental works of art were created by sculptors who could build into their works the meaning, knowledge, and purposes derived from their immediate roots with a world synthesized and not removed from its own sensuous and pictorial sphere.

The concrete objectifications of sculptural form reflect a diversity of mental and spiritual outlooks and patterns of visualization which is at once apparent and mysterious. A sensory training may equip us to understand the plastic forms which communicate directly to the visual and tactile faculties of apprehension, but one must admit of inadequacy
to translate this sensuous expression, in essence intangible and indefinable, in its full import and impact through the secondary medium of language.

The sensuous experience of plastic forms is one aspect of total human experience. Life devoid of this means of expressiveness is incomplete by the absence of a medium potentially vital to the fullness of man's experience. Especially in the thinness and lack of richness attending the emotional and spiritual life of today's technological world, can the import and significance of monumental sculpture fill an important need. The common bonds of humanity can once again be asserted through meaningful sculptural forms. The writer sincerely believes that monumental sculpture may contribute to fill the spiritual vacuum created by the separation of man from his fellow man and the universe. His work, buildings, and structure of society has reduced man's immediate contacts with his source of life. Religion no longer provides the full measure of spiritual fulfillment it once served. It is the writer's belief that monumental sculpture conceived in terms of human form can be created to express a meaningful emotional spiritual image.

Archaeologists and frequently art historians tend to limit their observations to techniques or to motifs expressed and are wary of falling into subjective attitudes in attempting to take up consideration of artistic factors.
In the opinion of the writer, it would be a mistake to attempt to reduce the study of the problems of monumentality in sculpture to a strictly objective discipline. Rigid definitions and attempts to form classifications of art forms on the basis of precisely defined physical similarities may only impede the discovery of those distinctions which are significant to the development of monumental sculpture in a given period. In initial attempts to treat a subject so fundamental yet so little understood as the phenomenon of monumentality in sculpture, or, for that matter in any of the visual arts, it is best perhaps to follow any lead that offers a possible avenue to further discovery.

In exploring new approaches, standards of scholarship, precision, and objectivity should assume a subsidiary role to the formulation of ideas which would enable the scholar to discuss a work of monumental sculpture and to relate it to other works of a similar or different style, not as a form, but as a medium capable of conveying particular expressions and emotions.
PLATES

ILLUSTRATING SCULPTURE

DESIGNED

BY

THE AUTHOR
PLATE I
Maternity Plaster
Height: 3 ft.
PLATE II

Model for a Portrait Statue to Robert M. Hutchins, former Chancellor of the University of Chicago

Plaster

Height: 3 ft.
PLATE III

Agriculture

Plaster

Height: 3 ft.
PLATE IV

Model for a Memorial to the Dead

Plaster

Height: 3 ft.

Front View
PLATE V

Model for a Memorial to the Dead

Profile View
PLATE VI

Model for a Memorial to the Dead

Front View of Head and Shoulders
PLATE VII

Working Sketch for the Model of A Proposed War Memorial

Plasticene

Height: 10\frac{3}{4} in.
PLATE VIII
Model for a War Memorial
Plaster
Height: 2 ft. 4 in.
Width at base: 14 in.
Front View
PLATE IX

Model for a War Memorial

Profile View
PLATE X

Model for a War Memorial

Three-quarter Front View
PLATE XI

Ecclesiastica

Plaster

Height: 3 ft.

Front View
PLATE XII
Ecclesiastica
Profile View
PLATE XIII

Ecclesiastica

View of Head and Shoulders
PLATE XIV

Christ in Bonds

Plaster

Height: 3 ft.

Front View
PLATE XV

Christ in Bonds

View of Head and Shoulders
PLATE XVI

In Memoriam

Limestone

Height: 6 ft.

Diameter at the Base: 22 in.

Front View of Head and Shoulders
PLATE XVII

In Memoriam

Right Profile
PLATE XVIII

In Memoriam

Left Profile
PLATE XIX

In Memoriam

Rear View
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I, Paul Cyril Muick, was born in Cleveland, Ohio, July 7, 1931. I received my secondary education in the public schools of Cleveland, Ohio. While at Collinwood High School, I attended night classes at the Cleveland Institute of Art in sculpture from October, 1947, until May, 1948. In October, 1948, I enrolled in the life drawing classes held at night in the John Huntington Polytechnic Institute in Cleveland, where I continued to study until May, 1950, summers excluded.

In September, 1950, I entered the Ohio State University in a program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree with a major in the History of Art and a minor in sculpture. In March, 1953, I graduated cum laude.

From the University of Chicago, I received the Master of Arts Degree in September, 1955. While a student there, I received a scholarship for study in Graeco-Roman Art and archaeology for the academic year, 1954-1955. My Master's Thesis consisted of a stylistic and historical study of the development of the gorgoneion in archaic Greek vase painting and other forms of archaic Greek art. The catalog is of primary importance in this thesis; I have listed all representations of the gorgonesia in Attic vase
painting known to me at the time of its completion in August, 1955.

In September, 1955, I returned to the Ohio State University as a student in a program leading to the Ph. D. Degree in Fine Arts with a major in sculpture.