

Portrait and Mask, Signifiers of the Face in Classical Antiquity

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One of the most common forms of facial representation in ancient Classical culture was the portrait. It is taken for granted by many scholars that some form of “realistic” portraiture existed during this period.¹ Since one of the central features that enables recognition of “realism” in a portrait is its likeness to the face, I would like to explore this aspect of “realism”. The portrait was not the only form of facial representation in Classical culture. We are also familiar with theater masks, mummy mask-portraits and other forms of depiction.² The specific questions this article will deal with will be concerned with the relation between the various representations of the face and their “original” model, i.e. the face itself. Knowledge of what the face was like is a crucial part of understanding a culture, since we tend to infer vital information from the face – this is true in modern and ancient times.³

The above aim may seem slightly paradoxical. How are we to examine the relationship between representation and original if the original is no longer available to us?⁴ I believe that this problem, as we shall see below, opens up a wider range of discussion.

We tend to take our own faces for granted yet they are revealed to us only through an interaction with otherness - human or mechanical. While other people’s faces may be generally familiar, on certain occasions or following different grooming they may seem strange to us. If the effects of the passage of time are taken into consideration the questions become more persistent. What were our faces like in the past? How can we know what people who lived before us looked like? These issues question the accessibility of recognition of likeness in the face, and the answers undoubtedly underscore the representations of the face as major elements in our dealings with what we

consider to be the original face. The questions posed here compromise two groups, with implications that will lead us back to the study of classical art:

1. The problem of the passage of time resulting in changes in the face is a constant of our daily life since our faces change from day to day and over the years. Consequently, the problem of the inaccessibility of the “original” face is not just a problem when considering ancient art. It is a problem we deal with every day.

2. The effect of human society on our lives and thoughts through language, suggests that just like the body, so too are our faces a product of society’s molding forces. Society manifests itself concretely through the gaze of another human. Since we are always in some *specific social situation* we are constantly obliged to adapt our faces to it, and thus the face seen is always already not the “original” because it is being determined by the gaze of another human.⁵ Even if we are alone, the fact that our own faces can be known to us only as a reflection means that we are unable even to perceive our own “original” faces.

These considerations raise a strong doubt concerning the “existence” of an original face or at least of our ability to know it. This has led me to a different hypothesis that I hope may better explain our perplexities concerning the face, and also locate the study of ancient representations in the main path of the study of the face. Rather than the ineffectual task of trying to consider the likeness of the representation to its original (both in everyday life and in ancient art), my hypothesis here is that the “original” of the face exists only through our constant recreation of it by means of representations. This should lead to an understanding of ancient representations as ancient society’s way of creating the faces of their times. The considerations are therefore not of the likeness between a portrait and an ancient “original” face but of two quite different issues:

What kind of relationship did different forms of ancient representations have with their contemporary faces? This question will be answered utilizing semiotic theory, as the ancient representations such as the portrait or the mask form specific types of signs.

What kind of relationship did ancient representations of the face form with each other? This is an important consideration since we may say that the “original” face was formed or existed only as a function of this interaction.⁶

Person, *prosopon*, *persona*

The consequences of the above considerations will eventually lead to speculation as to what it meant to have a face in the various stages of Classical

culture, which in turn will have an effect on our understanding of the various aspects of being a person in that culture. For the face, which in the present article is seen as the unattainable signified (of the mask and the portrait), may itself (and in its various forms of the mask and the portrait) become a signifier of the notion of the person. Such understanding of the face is supported in philological and anthropological studies of representations of the face in language: the Greek *prosopon*, and the Latin *persona*.

Marcel Mauss initiated this discussion by arguing for an evolutionary process in the concept of the person as a self-contained judicial and moral entity. He brings examples of several cultures that feature very close correspondence and even identity between mask, face and name. All three actually refer to the social role as an all-inclusive template that organizes and determines almost every aspect of what we would call an individual.⁷ Other anthropologists have seen this in other cultures. Geertz says this about Balinese culture,⁸ and Read about morality in the Gahuku-Gama.⁹ Mauss continued to sketch the way he thinks the ancient Roman conception of an individual as mask-role evolved into a conception of the unique individual defined as a legal and moral fact.¹⁰ A similar route is taken in Nédoncelle's study of the terms *prosopon* and *persona* although he stresses their practical meaning, which is a reference to the actual individual one would see walking down the street.¹¹ He points to a different starting point for these two terms. *Prosopon* is the Greek term referring to face, whereas the Latin *persona* has the meaning of mask.¹² Both terms evolved to mean something more – the entity that we may loosely call a person or an individual.¹³ This evolution takes them through the meaning of “role”, which is retained in them.¹⁴ The use of *prosopon* or *persona* signifying role for defining the concept of personality is also evident in philosophical discourse¹⁵ and helps to clarify the anthropological studies cited above in respect to Classical culture. It seems, according to all the studies cited, that en route to the definition of an individual in Classical society there was a consideration of his face or mask and his role in society. But we must also take notice of the different etymology of *prosopon* and *persona* – especially the stronger connection between face and mask in the Greek *prosopon* than in the Latin *persona*.

Castoriadis has stressed the Greek culture as the birthplace of “autonomy”.¹⁶ He specifically attaches this to the birth of philosophy as a being in a position to ask questions about what we ought to ask questions about. The visual correlate of personal autonomy is the ability to see for oneself. This ability manifests itself in a two-fold manner. On the one hand it entails a distancing of subject from object, an ability to see from the outside, an “objectivity”.¹⁷ On the

other hand it invites self- reflection as to the status of such a position.¹⁸ I am concerned here with the first and more apparent of these manifestations of autonomy. This positioning reveals itself in visual representation when the distancing of subject from object creates a certain kind of representation, which is dependant on an *actual* point of view. Although this is true as a general trend in Classical art, it is nonetheless only part of the story. It goes hand in hand with a trend towards systematization, which subjects the tendency to see for oneself, which could be interpreted in a completely personal and incommunicable way (a specular collapsing), to the creation of criteria for the agreement on what is seen. In fifth-century Athens we can see a balancing of these two forces. The visual correlate of personal autonomy – the ability to see for oneself, is balanced with the collective project, which consists in the ability to agree with others about what you “see”. This ability is achieved via an agreement on the correct representation of reality (what we see), and this is done through a social agreement on the same and the different. Greek society’s agreement on the categorization of reality (what is the same and what is different) was achieved not by referring to an extra social source of truth,¹⁹ but by creating institutions for the determination of a correct categorization of reality. In visual representations this means that one’s own vision is cultured by social agreement. This dichotomy of vision is reflected in the Greek stories and literature that deal with the problem of mimesis.²⁰ Greek representations of “face” during this period would certainly have been subject to this dichotomy. If we refer to the “face” as a reference to the actual presentness of an individual we must consider that the portrait and the “mask” temper this presentness. At this stage the portrait refers to a specific human being but not necessarily one actually seen by the artist.²¹ The mask in this context does not mean a hiding of the face but the realization that it has an existence only within the cultural agreements. My own formulation for this sort of mask is “the face as seen by the Other”.²² Phrasing this more strongly we could say that the quality of “existence” is given to something present only if it complies with cultural agreements of categorization. Thus even though there is a Greek project of autonomy, there is some similarity to “mask/role” cultures which stress the social persona as the locus of individuality. The similarity of wording for face and mask in Greece, in this view, is not coincidental, but part of a culture that sees face as existing only through social agreement on a categorization of reality. The representation will be like the face not if it will show its complete difference from other faces, but only if it will be like other faces that “exist” because they play a significant part in society.



Fig. 1: The *Pronomos vase* (after Wiles 2000: Pl. 11)

Mask and portrait in the fifth century – the symbolic mode of signification

The parallel workings of portrait and mask in the establishment of the face in this period can be seen in the “Pronomos vase” (Fig. 1). The differences between tragic masks and portraits have to do with the different societies they refer to. The Classical portrait refers to the imaginary society of the polis. Tragic masks directly refer to an imaginary society of myth and ritual that has a connection to the polis’ formulation of society.²³

The “Pronomos vase” shows Dionysus and Ariadne in the top row center, and around them the actors in a satyr play. The three adult players are in the top row with their respective masks held in their hands. The chorus is shown to their sides and in the lower row. It features young beardless men who hold their satyr masks in their hands, except for one who has donned his mask and is dancing. The Aulos player, Pronomos, is at bottom center. It is my contention that this form of depiction shows a correspondence between the roles available in mythic life, and those available in city life.

This detail of the Pronomos vase shows two actors of a satyr play with masks (Fig. 2). Their faces show equality as members of the polis. The only difference between them is in the mythic roles they are playing. The one on the right is holding a mask of Silenus, the one on the left, a mask of Heracles. The youngsters, situated below, all exhibit similar likeness among themselves. They cannot even differentiate themselves in the satyr play. All play satyr parts and this may refer to their place in the society of the polis as those who are not yet differentiated. The elders have a possibility of differentiating themselves in mythic and in its corresponding political life through the roles they play. The youngsters are equal as young people of the polis who are not yet incorporated into adult society and are therefore “outsiders”, like the Satyr parts they play in the theater.²⁴



Fig. 2: Detail of the *Pronomos vase*
(after Boardman 1989: Fig.
323)

We may test this formulation of the correspondence between mask and portrait by looking at some of the portraits of the period. Although no original Greek portraits from the fifth century B.C. are extant, we can look at Roman replicas of such portraits.²⁵ These replicas, or maybe adaptations of replicas, exhibit a strange likeness to each other in their facial features. I believe that the reason for this, if we are to accept some sort of accuracy in Roman representations, was a reluctance on the part of the Greeks to portray the uniqueness of an actual person because this would have countered the standards of equality (*isonomia*) and sameness²⁶ that were upheld by the polis, and the equalizing view of the face which may have been their consequence. Formulation of the face in this period presents us with a person equal and like other persons.²⁷ The ability or permission to go beyond this equality is only permitted in service of the polis. A good example of this can be seen through comparison of the portraits of Pericles, Xanthippus and Anacreon (Fig. 3).

Anacreon the poet was probably positioned in the Agora next to Xanthippus (Pericles' father).²⁸ They all embody the model citizen of self-control, playing the part allotted to him by the society in which he lives, rather than the particular details and problematics of his personal life.²⁹ The ability to distinguish facially between Xanthippus and Anacreon is limited to their functions or roles in the



Pericles

Xanthippus?

Anacreon

Fig. 3: Left - Pericles as Strategos (after Richter I, 1965: Fig. 435). Center - Xanthippus? (after Richter I, 1965: Fig. 426). Right - Anacreon (after Richter I, 1965: Fig. 280)

city:³⁰ Anacreon wears the poet's or symposium participant's corona and Xanthippus has the Strategos' helmet. Regarding portraits, this indicates that while the polis would honor a person by setting up his statue in a public place, that statue would generally be a sign of the symbolic i.e. arbitrary type.³¹ In other words its recognition as meaningful does not depend on an iconic likeness to an "original" face, but on the play of likeness and difference within the sign system. Thus "Pericles" can be distinguished from another *strategos* (or perhaps they are the same?) only by his name³² and a slight change of posture. This again shows the correspondence of the portrait with the mask whose meaning is not determined by its likeness to a specific face, but by the differences established inside the system and which may be referred to as a "symbolic sign". The difference between mask and portrait manifests itself in the name. The portrait's name refers to a person existing in actual society while the mask's name refers to a mythic hero.

The two Roman copies of Miltiades and Themistokles, both of them *strategoi*, seem to employ a different strategy for the portrait than those of Pericles and Xanthippus. They differ from each other in a way that does not accord with my formulation of the portrait in fifth century Athens. But do they reflect Greek originals of the fifth or of the fourth century BC? Or maybe they are reflections of Roman taste? Richter thinks that they adhere to stylistic norms of the fifth century BC and that they are reflections of private dedications, not dedications of the polis, or that they were created outside of Athens where there were fewer

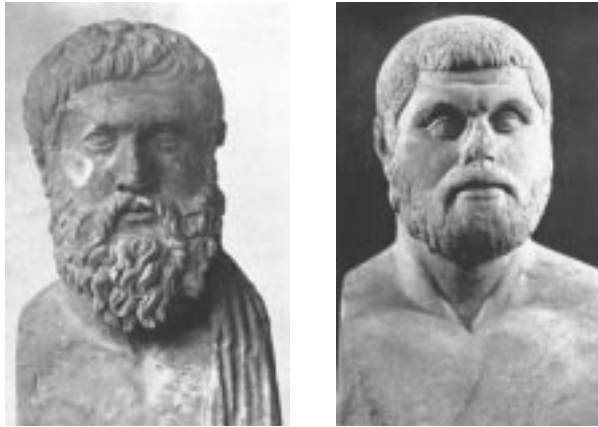


Fig. 4: Miltiades (after Richter I, 1965: Fig. 382) Themistokles (after Richter I, 1965: Fig. 405)

restrictions on private dedications in public places (Miltiades in Delphi and Themistokles in Argos) (Fig. 4).³³ It is possible that while the Athenian polis advocated a vision of *isonomia* in which the person is able to distinguish himself (as unique) only in the service of the polis, the rest of Greece opted for more show of enterprise and autonomy in the individual. However, the dating of the originals is problematic and Zanker thinks these are reflections of fourth century BC political imagery.³⁴ But even this interesting interpretation is not secure because of the uncertainty as to whether we are seeing a close reflection of originals or a later reworking of them.³⁵

Rather than relying on Roman replicas, however, we can instead utilize a known Greek original portrait about a century older, to demonstrate the interworkings of likeness and difference in regard to the face.³⁶ This is the portrait of Kroisos, especially as described and read by Stewart. In his analysis of sameness and difference that interact in the statue, he stresses not only its sameness as part of a group (the best – the *aristoi*) but also its sameness as a sign of presence countering the obvious absence of Kroisos himself, whom the monument says was killed in battle.³⁷ Since texts like this were read aloud in sixth-century Greece, Kroisos is evoked as present by voice and by memory.³⁸ His sameness is a function of this presence, as well as a marker of social equality within the group (Fig. 5).

In my terminology the function of the portrait at this stage is very similar to that of the mask. It operates as a conventional sign that does not have to comply with the dictates of likeness with an observed model. This “arbitrariness” is

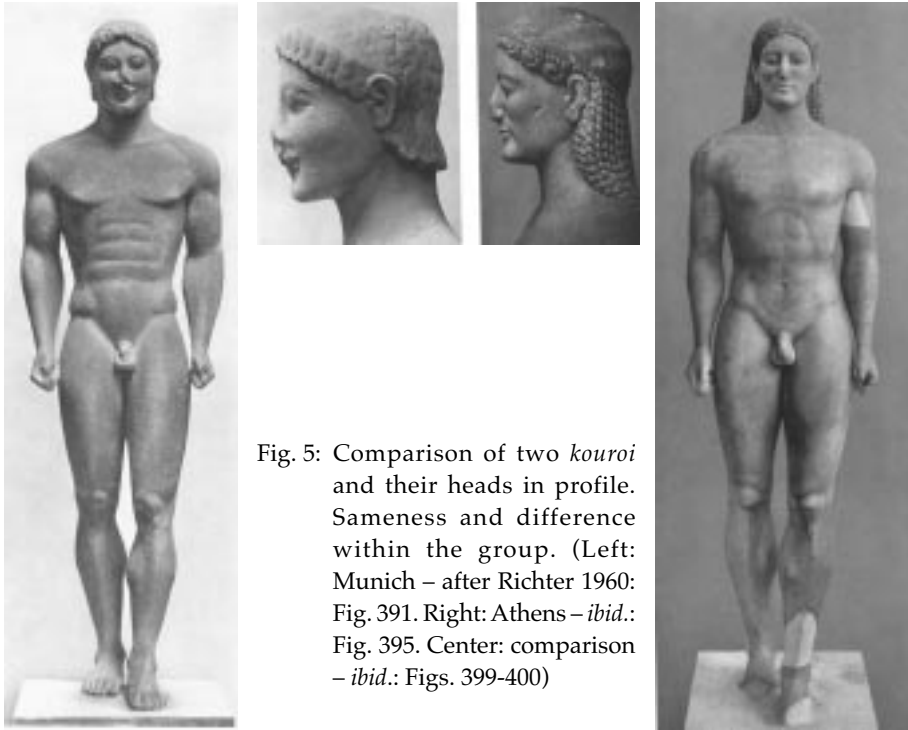


Fig. 5: Comparison of two *kouroi* and their heads in profile. Sameness and difference within the group. (Left: Munich – after Richter 1960: Fig. 391. Right: Athens – *ibid.*: Fig. 395. Center: comparison – *ibid.*: Figs. 399-400)

signified by the mask-like qualities of this type of portrait: its presence in the vicinity of many others that are like it;³⁹ the equal attention it attracts to both face and body;⁴⁰ and, like a mask, the portrait actually constructs the “actor” wearing it.⁴¹ It does not signify an “inner” sense of individuality, which somehow is conveyed to the face, but on the contrary it is the “face” as seen in society. We may even reverse the usual understanding of the portrait as more lifelike than the mask and say that a classical mask worn by an actor during a performance may have had more lifelike qualities than the portrait.⁴²

These considerations reinforce my formulation of the “face” at this stage as “the” man/woman as seen by the Other, or the human as constructed in society by forces other than himself – those of language and societal conventions.⁴³ This means that the mask and the portrait are not seen as radically different. They indicate existence in society, which is also moral existence. Masks refer to a mythical society, while portraits refer to the imaginary⁴⁴ society of the polis. The face that is constructed by them is the face as ethical character, which is conceived as a function of existence in the city or in myth. This face tends to conflate or to interconnect these two societies.

The face seen by the artist – the iconic and indexical modes of signification

The next stage of development is marked by a greater reference of masks to actual society, and a greater reference of portraits to actual individuals. This is especially evident in New Comedy masks. Wiles shows how these masks differ from the classical ones in several ways: 1. they depict people as they are and not as they should be, or worse than they are; 2. they allow a greater degree of characterization because they operate as a system that allows differences between specific masks in a play to formulate variations on a basic mask type; and 3. they start to exhibit an innerness, which is integrated with exteriority.⁴⁵ An illuminating instance of this may be seen in the Eros and tiger mosaic from the House of the Faun in Pompeii (Fig. 7) as it is interpreted by Wiles.⁴⁶ The structuring force of the “masks” illuminates the relationship mentioned earlier between mask and role in the etymology of the Greek word *prosopon* and the Latin word *persona*. Once the masks are set, the characters are set, the paths the story may develop are set and the ethics⁴⁷ of the story are set.

Yet the masks differ from portraits in that they convey universal truths (both in ancient Tragedy and Comedy),⁴⁸ while the portraits are more attuned to actuality. This growing gulf constructs “face” differently. *It is my contention that this difference is determined by the requirement from a portrait that it rely on an actual viewing of the model.*⁴⁹

This difference started to manifest itself in the fourth century B.C. Although masks began to show wider possibilities of expression and character – they were still constrained by the need to comply with, or to help to formulate the typification of society, which was essential to the workings of the polis. Portraits, on the other hand, may have had their origin not in collective thinking, but in the need to distinguish the unique, the different – the existing individual. It is therefore not strange that their driving force was in the post-Classical polis or in connection to powerful individuals – mostly rulers. The making present of an existing individual was achieved using different kinds of signs to those previously used: 1. The iconic sign, using actual sight, caters to the need to represent an actual human being – one that exists in the specificity of his actions in time or in history. Its measure of success lies in its likeness to the original or in the ability of vision to re-present an object in actual time and place. Post-classical art developed a method of representing an instance of time as part of a continuum, and a portion of space as part of a unified three-dimensional space.⁵⁰ This method of giving uniqueness to a moment was translated in the case of portraits to the uniqueness of the individual. 2. This type of iconicity has an added edge to it. It is also an indexical sign – it points to existence. The

portrait could not exist had the artist not seen the original (the face) in a specific point in actual time and space.⁵¹

There is literary evidence for this change in the mode of portrait making. Alexander's insistence on a certain person who was commissioned and allowed to represent him made clear the binding tie between the model and his actual observer – the artist. Lyssipus, Apelles and gem-maker Pyrgoteles were the ones chosen to depict Alexander in portraits.⁵² Pliny takes it for granted that portraiture requires this type of actual presence of the model in front of the artist.⁵³ Yet the reasons given for Alexander's insistence on certain artists are not concerned only with the exactitude of appearance achieved by these portraits, but by the similitude of character conveyed by them.⁵⁴ This implies that iconic resemblance is subject to assessments that take into account aspects of character. The way to understand this type of iconicity is through the approach that character is connected to bodily appearance.⁵⁵ Alexander's insistence on the portrayal of his character is another way of marking the uniqueness of the individual.

During this same period however, this approach also involves the earlier understanding of existence as *existence in society*, which tends to temper the exclusiveness of iconicity that is dependent on actual sight. This type of portrayal had more to do with the mask-like qualities of the portrait as it was now conceived. Mask-Role-Character-Ethics were linked with the conceptual help of physiognomy and philosophical discourse.⁵⁶ The portraits of philosophers, poets and some Hellenistic rulers show similarity to different masks, thus stipulating their interpretation in relation to the roles exemplified by masks. But we may also add that theater masks had a role in introducing uniqueness into the portraits by incorporating "characters" that were formerly considered marginal or base into the portraits, and thus allowing more personal tendencies to infiltrate the older portraits of the polis.⁵⁷ In this way, the masks themselves, incorporated into the portrait, played a dual role: reintegration of the individual into society and the possibility of uniqueness within that society, stated in society's terms.⁵⁸

The interaction between the various forms of signification utilizing the iconic, indexical and symbolic modes can be seen in the portraits of this period. The full statue of the Stoic philosopher Chrisyppus indicates the actual moment of sight recreated before us by exhibiting a momentary expression, disheveled hair, the twisting of the body as if "captured" in the midst of making an intense point (Fig. 6). These are signifiers of iconicity and of indexicality, and give the impression of the idiosyncrasies of actual observation, recreated as it took place.



Fig.6: Chrysippus, as reconstructed in the Louvre by Charbonneaux. (after Richter, II, 1965: Fig. 1144)

The compositional device of divergent directional dynamics, integrate the statue with actual space, as it is experienced by the viewer. The same devices of momentary time and unified space are incorporated even when the face is shown separately from the body. This type of composition makes Chrysippus into the hero of a drama, by making him the focal point of time and space. The drama bestows uniqueness upon him, using the ability of art to give an impression of the singularity of the moment, and its ability to recreate it over and over again for the viewer – as if he was present at the exact moment when this actual viewing (by the artist) took place.

Although Chrysippus' uniqueness is seen as "captured" in a specific moment, he is also a type: a philosopher and a rigorous thinker who "played a part" in the post-Classical polis and was iconographically connected to earlier philosophers.⁵⁹ He also compares with New Comedy characters or types as an old man not interested in the social niceties or money (an unkempt beard), and a slave with a crafty look achieved by the asymmetrical eyebrows.⁶⁰ Applying these characteristics to Chrysippus we might say that his philosophical outlook is incorporated into the portrait. He is allowed to look like a slave because he believes there are no differences between humans since they all share in a common natural rationality.⁶¹ Perhaps there is also a reference to Chrysippus' ability to think, especially the ability to see through philosophical impasses,

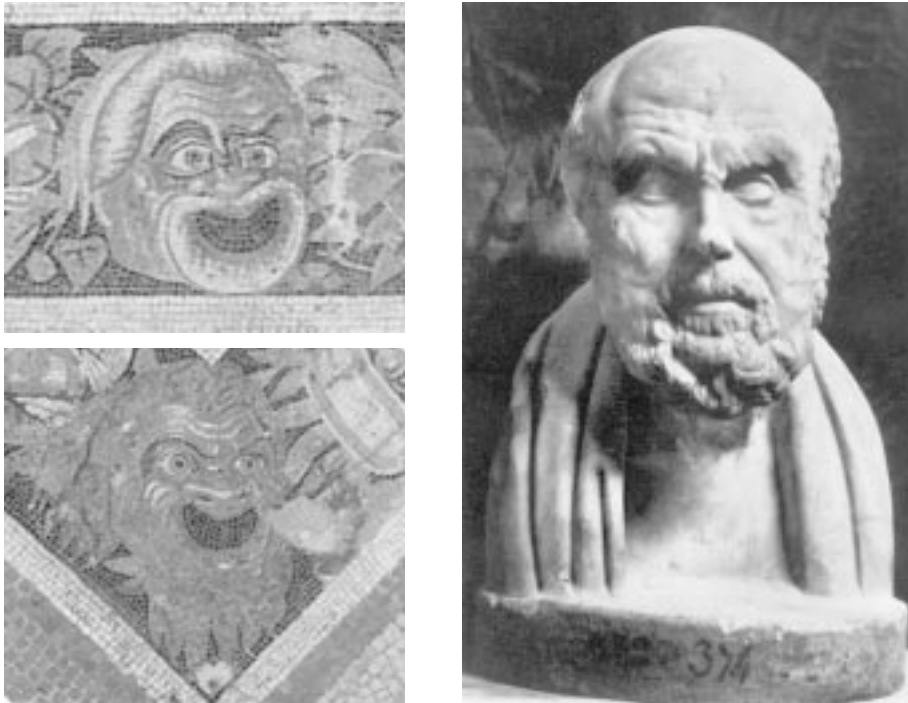


Fig. 7: Portrait of Chrysippus from Naples (after Smith and Bieber 1984: Fig. 69), compared with (top) a New Comedy slave mask and (bottom) a mask of an old man from the Eros and tiger mosaic in the House of the Faun in Pompey (after Lessing and Varone 1996: 134).

which may be comparable to the cleverness or craftiness characteristic of the slave mask (Fig. 7).⁶²

The meaning of this is that, in addition to the new tendency to show the individual as unique or singular, he is also shown as connected to society through his role and even through the specifics of his thinking in that society. But in contrast to the portraits of the previous century, the specific life of the person portrayed and its problematics and contradictions are now taken into account, not only his existence as a general role.⁶³

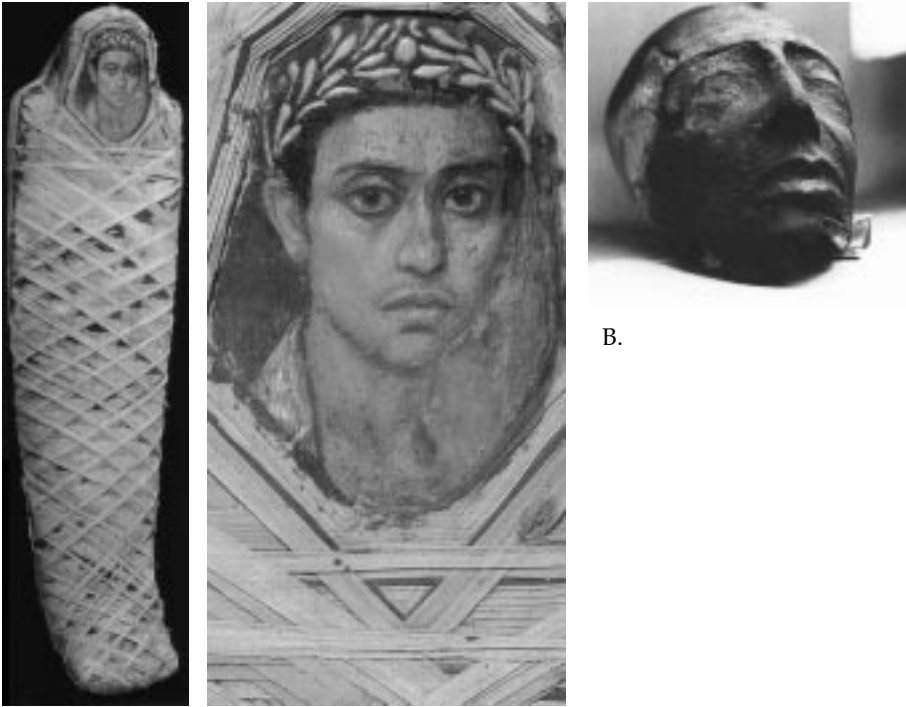
The interaction of these factors caused a change in the semiotic status of the portrait. Its iconic status is seen as referring to a relationship between model and representation, which may be judged in terms of the like and the unlike as it is seen. In addition the portrait is seen as indexical in the sense that it could not exist had the person not existed. But this indexicality is not a strong one because of the convention of composing a sighting – *as if* it had been sighted.

The portrait may not have actually had to be produced from a viewing, but it assumes that the origin of the portrait lay in such a viewing. Although these two modes are conditioned by societal conventions (what it is to be like) – they deny those conventions and claim “naturalness”. Nonetheless, these modes do not obliterate the portrait’s still-relevant reference to the face as mask, which forms itself as a system mainly by reference to other signifiers (masks) and not by direct reference to the model (actual face). It is this type of signification that I described as “the face seen by the other”, which takes into account the conventionality of constructing the face. Perhaps it is the specific interaction of these modes and the way they temper each other that makes it impossible to see a complete dependency on just one of them. Indexicality is conditioned by sight, actual sighting may be replaced by an as-if, and the mask or role tends to bring into account the person’s actual role. These modes seem to be integrated or to reveal a desire for integration and this hints at the possibility of a split between the unique individual as he is experienced, and between the role he is playing. In the portraits and in the masks of this period this split is held at bay because both the iconic-indexical mode and the symbolic mode assume vision as coming *from without* so that the individual “as he is experienced” and the individual as he is “seen by the other” may conflate, and this allows an integrated vision of “face”. Its counterpart in thought and language may be seen in the usage of the terms *prosopon* and *persona* while attempting to integrate between divergent aspects of personality - the human capacity for rational and moral agency, each person’s distinct nature and talents, and the social roles we all play.⁶⁴ The understanding of uniqueness – not as a function of outward sight but as a function of “inner” sight or inner contemplation,⁶⁵ may put this entire project into an insoluble tension. The tension between “as seen by the other” and “as looking within” will not allow this form of integration and a new vision of “face” will have to be produced – but that lies beyond the scope of this article.⁶⁶

However, I would like to mention one other form of portrait, which shows a unique type of integration between iconic, indexical and symbolic modes of signification. This type utilizes the mask not in the symbolic mode as “the face seen by the other”, but in the indexical mode – *as that which is actually on the face*.

The uncanny mummy portraits of Roman Egypt

Masks have been dealt with so far only from their external side, whereas they have a more uncanny side, the inner side. The mask’s “other” side is the side



A.

Fig. 8A: Mummy from Hawara; detail of the portrait-mask (after Walker 2000: Pl. 9)

Fig. 8B: Old kingdom mummy mask: Plaster soaked linen wrappings molded over the face (after Ikram and Dodson 1998: Fig. 192)

that forms the strongest kind of signifying relationship. It establishes an indexical bond with the face that is not dependant on sight but on the actual presence of the face in the underside of the mask. This understanding may help explain the strange character of the Fayum portrait-masks.

Egypt shows continuous evidence of the indigenous custom of funerary masks placed on the sarcophagus of the mummy. This makes the argument that the Roman portraits of Egypt had a strong connection with the indigenous Egyptian practice of burial, very plausible.⁶⁷

An ancient Egyptian mummy “mask” (Fig. 8B) shows that the Roman Egyptian portrait (Fig. 8A) had its origin in the Egyptian concern with preserving the face. ‘The earliest external ornamentation of mummies took the form of the moulding of the body contours into plaster soaked linen wrappings’.⁶⁸ This custom continuously changed form in the course of Egyptian



A.

Fig. 9A: Egyptian mummy mask, Eighteenth dynasty (after Ikram and Dodson 1998: Fig. 197)



B.

Fig. 9B: Roman Egyptian mummy portrait from 160-170 A.D. (*ibid.*: Pl. xxii)

history,⁶⁹ but the Roman-Egyptian custom of painting the dead man's face on the shroud or inserting a portrait in the shroud is completely in line with this tradition. The differences lie in the techniques and in the implications of the different techniques, but not in the theme of preserving an imperishable face over the exact place of the dead man's face.⁷⁰

My argument here is that the placement of the portrait on the body, on top of the actual place of the face, puts these portraits in a complex semiotic relationship with their model. On the one hand they form an indexical relationship with the face, pointing to its presence by their existence. In doing so they utilize the other side of the mask (the one we usually forget), which points to the face inserted into it as a negative. On the other hand, on their positive side, they utilize Hellenic forms of representation based on mimesis or on the iconic relationship discussed earlier in this article. This relationship is based on an actual viewing of the model by the artist, and a reenactment of that viewing by the spectator.⁷¹ Both significations indicate the presence of the model but they do so in different ways, which may reflect upon the coalescence of different cultures.⁷²

The differences between a mask and a representation in painting of the face can be seen in a comparison between an Egyptian mummy mask (Fig. 9A), and the mummy portrait of a lady from el-Rubayyat (Fig. 9B). The actual viewing that served as the act of origin for this portrait is apparent in the painting. This viewing is incorporated into the painted portrait by the use of light and shade, which indicates a certain moment of viewing and by the relationship between viewer and viewed incorporated into the painting. The artist looks upon the head from a certain angle, which is the one the viewer will also see the head from. This viewing position seems to cause a response in the person depicted and she is shown turning her head towards the viewer. Sometimes there is also a hint of an expression indicating momentary emotions or attitudes as in some portraits.^{72a} In some of these figures we can see a technique by which the hair is shown as a large mass with inner differentiation of color and with the use of some highlights. The overall rendering is of the visual effect of the hair rather than of its material and details and this also indicates a specific position involving distance between viewer and viewed. The artist is transmitting the object *as seen from a distance*, which makes it appear as a mass rather than as minute detail; distance is thus transmitted through the consequent blurring of sight. It even incorporates time - a short interval of viewing - an instance that does not give the artist the time needed for minute scrutinizing. This is true even if this is a "style" chosen by the artist because it is a style that incorporates into itself the effects of actual viewing. The meaning of this is that a condition of dependency (a functional relationship) is a prerequisite of this type of style and it forms the conditions for its existence.

The different forms of signification reflect different attitudes towards individuality and their syncretism in this culture suggests a unique attempt at cultural integration. The Roman-Hellenistic attitude, which incorporated actual viewing and mimesis, was the result of seeing a major part of human existence as existence in this world.⁷³ The iconic form of signification allows the interplay of the various forms of this-worldly existence to come into play. On the one hand it takes into account the idiosyncrasies of everyday existence, the mood, the actual sighting of a person, which is understood as uniqueness. On the other hand it is rooted in social agreement. It is as if the artist and model form a pact, which includes an agreement on the categorization of reality into what it is to be like and what it is to be different. This agreement, when it is based on actual sight, includes a systematization of reality, which takes the form of a sequential view of time and space, which means the construction of a continuum of moments and of three-dimensional space. This project is basically a project

of transcendence, which means the belief in a possibility of seeing the whole, or systemizing knowledge by seeing from without.⁷⁴ But this transcendental vision, when translated into visual terms as the ability to see from without, has a strong this-worldly orientation⁷⁵ because it is not an attempt to withdraw from the world but rather to understand it better.⁷⁶

In contrast to this, the Egyptian view does not stress transcendence as an ability to form an objective point of view by *seeing from without*, but rather it stresses homology, which means a “fluidity” of material among, organic, non organic, humans, gods, nature, universe, viewer and viewed.⁷⁷ It does not allow the detachment that is needed in order to systemize, does not form a functional (dependant) relationship between viewer and viewed, and does not stress time and space as a continuum. The type of “homology” described here is reflected in Egyptian art as a tendency to separate every moment as if it were severed from the next one, or as if it were the only moment. Egyptian art seems timeless not because it does not consider time, but because it is only interested in the fullness and totality of the present. The same holds true for its view of space. In Greek art the relational aspect of space as a continuum, which stems from a functional relationship (a dependency) of viewer and viewed, is evident as a distance (it is termed perspective in Renaissance art). This is of course subsequently denied and naturalized. In Egyptian art this relative relationship is not even denied because it is never even imagined. Instead, the Egyptians opt for what Brunner-Taut calls “Aspective”, which is a non-distance, an ever-hereness. Space is seen as successive planes, which have no distance or depth from each other or from the viewer, as if the viewer were in the same plane as the viewed, perhaps not even opposite him.⁷⁸

The Egyptian mummy is equipped for eternity with a mask that forms a direct contact with the features underneath it. It thus forms an indexical sign, which can not be doubted since it does not rely on the contingencies of actual sighting (which is a dependence) or on the testimony of another human being, but on a direct impression from the original. The Hellenic form of mimesis may at first glance bring us even closer to the person, but this is steeped in an uncertainty because it is the person *as looked upon*. We must, before accepting this representation as valid, agree in advance to the following: 1. the human ability to doubt, which takes the form of the ability to see for oneself (autonomy);⁷⁹ 2. the systematization of time and space, which makes this sighting reliable, and which is the result of a belief in the ability to distance oneself and thus form an “objective” view. This involves in addition a subsequent forgetting that this is in fact a relation of dependency; and 3. the

categorization of what it is to be like and different in this society. So, although at first sight the Hellenic form seems to present us with a more life-like image, we must understand that this appearance is steeped in uncertainties and contingencies that form the very foundations or conditions of its existence.

The mummy mask suggests an uncanny role precisely because it is fitted to a face, which turns its interior into an indexical sign. The Hellenic-Roman attitude grafts on this form of signification a second one, in the iconic mode. This contributes to an ambivalent understanding of these portrait-masks. The ambivalence lies in the assumptions of continuous presence embodied by the form of indexical signification, and the transience implied by the iconic-mimetic mode. Perhaps in Roman Egypt this mixture of signification modes may have offered a way to show the deceased already in the afterworld, in an ever-lasting presence, as has been suggested by E. Friesländer.⁸⁰ This was done by using the age-old Egyptian indexical mode together with the Hellenistic iconic mode. But this was an iconic mode that had been stripped of many of its methods of showing doubt, since all the portraits assume the same pose, and the same unified background.⁸¹ This form of integration created an Egyptian ever-presentness stated in Hellenic terms, or a Hellenic Transcendence (ability to objectify) taken in another direction – not the transcendence of society and its ability to formulate itself, but perhaps a more personal transcendence in the direction of other-worldly existence. This mixture was thus not “Egyptian”, because it had an element of doubt in it as to the validity of a complete ever-presentness (or ever-regeneration, which is another form of it). It also was not Hellenic because it used the indexical mode to signify the disavowal of transience, and it modified the Hellenic iconic mode in its own direction of the disavowal of objectivity. It was, rather, a new creation that perhaps reflected a transcendence, which manifested itself in the direction of a belief in an existence beyond this world. The face that was created was perhaps the face as we would experience it if we were also in that blessed mode of existence.

Conclusion

Facial here-ness as an indicator of presence is one of the issues that seem “natural” and are therefore all the more suspect of hiding a metaphysical system. The many paradoxes inherent in the concept of the face lead to my hypothesis that the actual face may be a signified, which is forever illusive in the present, yet always already there. This illusiveness manifested itself in ancient Classical culture as various forms of representations, which formed different kinds of relationships with each other and with the face, and thus

reconstructed it. The representations dealt with in this article - the portrait and the mask - were constituted using various forms of significations, which interact between themselves to create complex concepts of the "face".

The description of the theater mask, as the "face seen by the Other" seems a useful definition for understanding the function of the mask in the formulation of the face in the fifth century BC. The portraits of this period partake in these mask-like qualities of representation and form symbolic signs by virtue of a relation of signifier to signifier, while maintaining an arbitrary relationship (in regard to likeness) with their model. The portrait's name and attributes of societal role perform the function of pointing to a specific person. The face of this period is constructed by conflating mythical masks and societal portraits. The post-Classical period is different in its new insistence on actual viewing as the originating point of the portrait. This puts the portrait in an iconic and indexical relationship with its model, which stresses his uniqueness. Theater masks in the New Comedy form a new classification or typology of society that helps in the construction of character and ethics. The face that masks and portraits construct is a face of integration between individuality and uniqueness on the one hand, and the roles one plays and one's moral possibilities, on the other. This integration is facilitated by an understanding of vision as seeing from a distance, one of its aspects being the uniqueness of such a sight and the other, its systemizing and unifying nature.

A unique mode of integration was seen in Roman Egypt. Here, the indexical mode of signification stresses the ever here-ness of the face. The Hellenic iconic mode, which is grafted on it, takes this ever here-ness in a specific direction. By casting doubt on the possibility of an everlasting moment or an everlasting regeneration in the Egyptian mode, it hints at the possibility of escaping transience in the direction of a transcendence of otherworldly nature. It shows the face as the possibility of a personalized and unique existence beyond this world and this time. Further developments, such as the Roman *imagines*, social changes, the understanding of vision as directed inward, would eventually change these forms of representation and formulate new conceptions of the face.

Notes

1. A few examples. Richter 1965, I: 18 explains the portraits as partaking in a dichotomy between realism and idealism. The portraits in the late fifth century BC were

progressively realistic, “each is a real likeness”. Toynbee 1973: 9, ‘For the purposes of this book a Roman historical portrait is defined as the true, individual, realistic likeness of an identifiable, specific personage...’ See also Kleiner 1992: 31; Breckenridge 1968: 82-84.

2. For theater masks in general, see Bieber 1961; Wiles 1991 with further bibliography, Wiles 2000; Marshal 1999. There were other forms of facial representations such as the masks of the elders - the *imagines maiorum* in Rome, but these will not be dealt with in this paper. See Polybius 6. 53-54; Pliny, *Naturalis Historiae* 35. 4-14. See also Flower 1996: 10-15, 23-26, 32-33, 59.
3. Since we tend to read a lot of information about the person from the face, it seems that representations of the face also play a major role in these considerations. On the variety of information we can learn from the face, see Roth I. and V. Bruce, *Perception and Representation*, Buckingham 1995: 138-193 (facial recognition and identification); Ekman, P., W. Friesen, *Unmasking the Face*, Englewood Cliffs, 1975; Ekman P. (ed.), *Emotions in the Human Face*, Cambridge, 1982 (emotions); Berry, D., and J. L. Finch Wero, “Accuracy in Face perception: A view from Ecological Psychology”, *Journal of Personality*, 61 n. 4 (1993), 497-520 (character and personality with further bibliography); Bull, R., N. Rumsey, *The Social Psychology of Facial Appearance*, New York, 1988 (connections between face and person evaluation). In ancient culture the connection between facial appearance and person evaluation was even more pronounced in the science of Physiognomy, which made a definite connection between bodily and facial appearance and between traits of character; see for instance, Evans 1969.
4. Breckenridge 1968: 5 poses this key question; still on 82-84 he uses the same terminology. At first glance it may seem possible in Classical studies to actually compare the original face to the representation in the study of mummy portraits – especially those from Roman Egypt. The direction hinted at here is the one taken by several contemporary studies that try to determine the relationship between a recoverable “original” face and its representation. These are important studies, but contrary to one might expect they do not clarify the matter once and for all, but open up new problems. For instance, Filer 1997: 121-122, reports on earlier studies in which sometimes there is a match between age and gender of the mummy and sometimes complete disagreement. His own C.A.T. scanning of eight mummies from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods reveal an agreement between sex and age findings from the scan with those suggested by the mummy portraits (122-125). Other studies have tried to “reconstruct” the face using the mummies as evidence, see Walker 2000: 46-47, catalogue no. 9. But here the argument seems circular since there is no way of knowing how the faces actually looked without agreeing in advance with our own culture’s definition of likeness and our way of representing it. In addition, current reconstruction artists establish the way a face could have looked based on knowledge of average skin and fat thickness. This is statistical knowledge and I am not quite sure how exact it could be in regard to ancient Egypt. In addition, ‘averages can never match the delicate topographic features of a given individual’, Enlow 1996: 122. Perhaps the ancient artist who saw the actual and specific model is more reliable regarding the particular face. The reason that this

line of study is only minutely relevant for this article is, as I am trying to establish, not a lack of the facts (if we only knew the facts of the face we could establish its connection to the representation...) but a more fundamental lack. This lack bars us from "originality" because of our existence in society, in language and in a specific situation, which is always different from another situation. The bare facts of the face can never be known or rather they are accessible only through their representations. A more fruitful direction is suggested in the article by Ovadia and Frieslaender 2000, which looks at the mimetic conventions used in these portraits. My study will go further in this direction and suggest other forms of sign making which operate in the process of producing and viewing the portraits from Roman Egypt and other classical portraits.

5. Gombrich 1972 discusses the art-historical aspects of this. He reflects on the two problems noted here: namely, the changes in the face because of the passage of time and the different situation that we are constantly in, which he refers to as the application of the mask to the face, see Gombrich 1972: 3-17. The triad of face mask and portrait will have a major role in my study, but I will try to put them in a systematic relationship to each other, which is not fully explored in Gombrich's article.
6. I utilize semiotic theory based on Saussurian linguistics. Jameson summarizes Derrida's position on this issue (1972: 173-176): The classical conception of the sign as a necessary relationship between Thing and Name must be replaced by a conception which doubts the "Metaphysics of Presence" – The idea that we could come face to face once and for all with objects. Instead, Derrida, following Levinas, introduces the concept of the trace. Contrary to the present-ness it seems to evoke – the signifier as a trace is the impossible, but actual, belief in a past that was never a present, see also Jameson 1972: 186-187. The acoustic, or in our case visual images, are the ones that create the notion of a presence. But this is not via some mystical connection with an original meaning or object, but through their mutual interaction as acoustic or visual images. Yet the notion of the trace does not abandon the belief in an origin (because then the whole notion of the sign would be meaningless), rather it points out (the perplexing fact) that the origin is reciprocally an origin only by virtue of the non-origin. To have a "meaning", in our case a face, is already to take into account a past in which this face existed, yet that past was never actual - an always already absent present. Derrida 1982: 11-13, and P. Spivak, *Introduction to Derrida* 1976: xvii-xviii, with relevant quotes from Derrida.
7. Mauss 1985: 4-12.
8. 'The immediate point is that in both their structure and their mode of operation, the terminological systems conduce to a view of the human person as an appropriate representative of a generic type, not a unique creature with a private fate.' Geertz 1984: 129.
9. The moral obligations of a person shift between types of individuals, such as between his own tribe and people of other tribal groups or people of other statuses. In opposition to Christian ethics which delegate an intrinsic worth to an individual life, in the Gahuku-Gama 'it is clear that the value of an individual life is primarily

- dependant on these social criteria' (a social tie or membership in a particular social group), Read 1967: 192-202; quotation from 202.
10. Mauss 1985: 14-19.
 11. Nédoncelle 1948: 299.
 12. Nédoncelle 1948: 284-285. *Prosopon*'s first meaning is face, but very early it also came to mean mask, *ibid.* 279.
 13. For the term *prosopon* see Nédoncelle 1948: 278-281. For *persona*, *ibid.* 296-298.
 14. Nédoncelle 1948: 281; 296-298.
 15. See Cicero's *personae* theory following Panaetius' *prosopon* theory, Gill 1988: 173-176, 179-182, 187-196. See also text to n. 64.
 16. Castoriadis 1991: 20-21.
 17. See Frankfort 1949: 12-14 for a formulation of this in reference to the question of what is meant by knowledge.
 18. See Jay 1994: 25, 30-32, who formulates this distinction as between a distancing of subject from object and a self-reflecting mirroring of the same.
 19. Castoriadis 1991: 20. I diverge here slightly from Castoriadis' presentation of the autonomy achieved in Greece. He sees the striving towards a personal and a collective autonomy as two facets of the same tendency, which manifests itself in philosophy and in politics respectively. I stress rather the founding of institutions for reaching agreement.
 20. For instance, the two stories about the painter Zeuxis: one, that in order to form the image of the beautiful Helen for the people of Kroton, he used five virgins as models, and then made a composite image of them. The other story tells that his imitation of grapes was so perfect that it deceived the birds that flew to them. (The story continues that Parrhasios later surpassed him), Pollitt 1990: 150-151. I am formulating this as a dichotomy between an autonomy of vision as an experience in actuality (the distinct individual, the actual grapes) and the realization that representation is dependant on an agreement about the categorization of reality (the same and the different), without which there would be no demarcation, and same and different would have no meaning.
 21. See Brilliant 1991: 7, who presents Gadamar's view that in order for a portrait to be considered as one, it must establish a relationship between a specific existent person and his representation. The problem of course lies in – what does it mean to exist? At this stage I am suggesting that Existence is closely connected to some form of communality. This means that there can be a portrait of Homer because "Homer" exists in the community's thoughts. The demand that the proof of existence in portraits should be mediated by actual sight is a later development, as I will elaborate below. Even this was never practiced in its extreme form in Classical culture; namely, the demand that the portrait be actually done in the presence of the model.
 22. See Fink 1995: 3-5. I use "Other" here in the Lacanian sense of that which we are born into and has the power to formulate our lives and our thoughts. It allows communication, but it does so by first alienating us from our prior existence and then by naturalizing that alienation. See also n. 42 below.
 23. This is clearest in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, see Wiles 2000: 19, 58-59.

24. See Wiles 2000: 128-130.
25. See Zanker 1995: 11-14 for the problems in interpretation of these copies or adaptations.
26. Vernant 1982: 60-61, sees the basis of the equality (*isonomia*) in the feeling of likeness: 'All those who shared in the state were defined as *homoioi* – men who were alike – and later more abstractly as *isoï*, or equals'.
27. According to Breckenridge, there is a heroicizing tendency in these portraits, see Breckenridge 1968: 87-93. I might add that this may be a function of the parallelism between myth and the imaginary city.
28. See Richter 1965, I: 75 for the position of the statues.
29. The poet Anacreon distinguishes himself as a model citizen showing restraint in speaking in public, but his problematic biography as a friend of the tyrants (the Peisistratids) and an indulger in an Ionic "soft" way of life is not brought into consideration, see Zanker 1995: 24-31. Pericles' life story and the personal struggles he encountered are not reflected in his portrait either. The juxtaposition of Xanthippus and Anacreon in the Athenian agora celebrates the ability to distinguish oneself in respect to the roles or possibilities offered by the polis.
30. See Pollitt 1986: 59-62.
31. See Hawks 1977: 25-26, 129. The foremost example of this type of sign is language.
32. This herm of Pericles is inscribed with his name. Although it is of a Roman date, there is evidence for the actual base in Athens, which was inscribed. Richter 1965, I: 104. But, as we can see in the following story, sometimes even names were not allowed. See Aeschines, III, 186 (*Against Ctesiphon*), about the refusal of Miltiades' request that his name be inscribed in the *stoa poikile*. Breckenridge understands this as referring to Miltiades' request that his name be inscribed on the painting of the battle of Marathon so that his likeness could be recognized. Eventually, the only way he could be recognized was following permission to depict him at the head of his men, Breckenridge 1968: 88.
33. Richter, 1965, I: 95, 99.
34. Zanker 1995: 57-58; 63-65. The patriotic renewal of Athens by Lycurgus had its eyes on the past. It showed the great Athenians of the past as exemplary citizens. Even Miltiades the victor of Marathon, later convicted of treason, was conceived of as a moderate citizen with a mantle, who had returned to ordinary life, not as a *strategos* with a helmet.
35. Zanker 1995: 63-64.
36. Vernant 1982: 61-62 sees the equality of the polis as rooted in earlier aristocratic equality among members of the same group. It may therefore be justified to compare these earlier portraits with the status of the face in fifth century Athens since they both shared the ideal of sameness and equality among a certain class. Fifth century democracy broadened that class to all male citizens, not just the *aristoi*.
37. Stewart 1997: 65-70. Stewart counters this with the play of difference. He sees these forces as forming the type of the *kouros*, and criticizes conceptions that see the type's historical evolution as a function of forces of "realism" or "naturalism". See Stewart 1997: 65, 68. This fits well with my criticism of the view of "face" as a fixed entity whose naturalness can be recognized and other products compared to it.

38. Stewart 1997: 66.
39. See Stewart 1997: 63-64 for the large number of *kouroi*. See also above for the vicinity of Xanthippus and Anacreon.
40. Wiles says that the tragic theater mask of the fifth century BC exhibits the characteristic of drawing equal attention to face and body, Wiles 1997: 77.
41. 'There could be no sense of uniqueness of the individual once the actor donned his tragic mask, in accordance with the principal that classical art should deal in universal truths', Wiles 1991: 69.
42. Marshall 1999: 188-189, the actors were able to give the mask multiple expressions.
43. This is against Marshall 1999: 190, point 8 and nn. 21-23. Otherness should be understood in the case of the mask as Otherness coming from within society and language. See n. 22 above. It is not meant to alienate the audience at this stage because this type of Otherness is the one society aims to naturalize. Its Otherness is forgotten. The construction of the "face" as achieved by the mask and portrait as this stage naturalizes this conception of the face within the city. This may seem to counter authors such as Vernant and Frontisi-Ducroux, who see the mask as having a function of "Otherness" or of dethreading or reversing the centrality with which we tend to view ourselves as subjects by making us the object of the look, see Frontisi-Ducroux 1989:151-153; Vernant 1991: 111-112. What I contend, therefore, is that the mask functions not as a signifier of Otherness, which reverses cultural norms, but as a way in which society, utilizing masks, works to naturalize Otherness. Perhaps we could say that the mask I refer to operates within the realm of Otherness, which is the realm of laws, regulations and the steering of the individual into ready-made forms. The otherness that is defined from "across the borders" (the demon or the god, Dionysus, Gorgon, Satyrs), or outside and before language may be the vision of complete enjoyment that decenters our vision of ourselves as those who are constituted in language, see Fink 1995: 107. The Otherness that works inside society has the tricky job of simultaneously estranging us from existence and making us forget that estrangement, so that we can recognize the existents (objects and faces). This is what I mean by categorization which allows us to recognize the similar and the different by making us forget that it can only do so by first splitting us from the impossible multifariousness and meaninglessness of that existence.
- Perhaps the difference between these two notions of Otherness is signified in the mask of the god as frontality, while Otherness that comes from within society is naturalized by its reference to the whole head. Frontality may only be experienced in two-dimensional representations or reliefs and perhaps this is a characteristic of the masks referred to by Vernant and Frontisi-Ducroux. The tragic masks I am referring to operate within a society in which to be a person is a function of role. Athenian Democratic society takes that function of the tragic mask and instills it in the actual democratic face.
44. I use the word "imaginary" in the sense of something that is imagined and subsequently imaged. It is not opposed to "real", but may actually conduce reality and partake in it.
45. Wiles 1991: 68-69, 71, 87. The ability of the character to expose an "inside" which is different from the "mask" is virtually impossible in Classical masks. This seems to

have started to change in New Comedy, which deals with “people as they are”. Pollux’s catalogue of New Comedy masks is far more extensive than masks of the Classical period and allows an interaction between types of masks to create new meanings for every specific play, Wiles 1991: 71, 87. Some masks may be asymmetrical, and this allows some form of double-entendre, Wiles 1991: 82; 166-167. The masks may be seen acting in the play and at the same time addressing a different message to each other or to the audience.

46. See Wiles 1991: 83-85.
47. Ethics may be understood here as *a judgment of character* - what is a good character to have or what is human excellence and how does it lead to human fulfillment. This form of Ethics has been termed “virtue ethics”, Statman 1997: 7-8; 17-18; Taylor 1991: 6. It seems that this is the main question for writers about ethics in Antiquity. The consequences of this for the tale may be a finding out of the true character (and hence the ability for fulfillment), as revealed by a certain action. For the Stoic formulation of personal excellence as a function of the role one is allotted to play in life, see Taylor 1991:48-49, more elaborately worked out by Gill 1988. For Aristotle’s concept of virtue ethics as striving to fulfill the main function of a man (to be an excellent man) by perfecting the intellectual virtue – reason, see Taylor 1991: 59-71. The ancient virtue ethics position is opposed to what is generally named “duty ethics” which stresses what one ought to do based on some universal principles and understands moral reasoning as a matter of applying these principles, while the agent’s well-being is given no positive moral value, Statman 1997: 3-8.
48. Wiles 1991: 85.
49. The consequences of this are a functional relationship between artist and model – which means a relationship of dependency or contingency. This is never fully realized in antiquity and it comes to the fore only in modern painting, perhaps starting with Velasquez, see M. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, New York, 1973, 3-16.
50. For elaboration, see the text below referring to the full-length statue of Chrysippus, see also Brunner-Traut 1986: 425-426, 433, and text to n. 78.
51. On these types of signs, see Hawks 1977: 25-26; 128-129; that portraits form an indexical mode of signification is suggested by Steiner 1977: 112, following Pierce. I emphasize the difference between indexicality that relies on the actual observation of the model and the earlier mode of pointing that utilizes the name of the “model”, but does not insist on the verification of his existence using vision.
52. Pliny, *Naturalis Historiae*, 7.125.
53. Pliny, *Naturalis Historiae*, 35.79-97; Pollitt 1990: 160. Pliny tells the story of Alexander’s coming to Apelles’ studio and discoursing on various aspects of painting. He explains this as a function of having decreed that the only one to paint his portrait would be Apelles.
54. See Stewart, 1993: 343, from Plutarch, *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute, Moralia*, 335A-B.
55. The conceptual framework for this is worked out in philosophy and in the ancient science of physiognomy, see Breckenridge 1968: 123; Evans 1969: 5.
56. The connections are elaborated by Wiles 1991. New Comedy’s system of masks

revealed to the audience a preset tendency in the participants' *ethos* (character), Wiles 1991: 3-4. This is only a tendency and it is refined in dialectic between the words and the mask. This is because a mask of the New Comedy had multiple features which could be understood fully only in relation to other masks and to the action of the play, *ibid.*, 71, 87. The association of mask (*prosopon* or *persona*) with character and hence with ethics was understood as the revelation of virtue through the choices of characteristics or habits made by a person. Physiognomical theorizing was used to form the relationship between a person's appearance and his character, *ibid.*, 86-88. Philosophical theorizing as to the unity of a person, allowed a vision of the connections of "internal" and "external" characteristics (moral life and physical appearance respectively), *ibid.*, 69; 85. Stoic philosophical theorizing in this area linked the concepts of *prosopon* and *persona* with a person's uniqueness, his social role and his moral obligations. This was first worked out by the Greek philosopher Panaetius and later taken up by Cicero, see nn. 15 above, and 64 below.

57. I am assuming an influence of masks on portraits, but it may be argued that the influence was also the other way around. The example I will bring is from Chrysippus' portrait, which I claim was influenced by masks invented for Menander's plays a generation earlier. Since actual archaeological evidence from the time itself (the actual masks or Chrysippus' "original" portrait) is lacking, I offer a hypothesis and try to show its plausibility from the existing evidence. The examples themselves may be from Pompeii or Lipari, while the portraits are of a Roman date.
58. Wiles sees in the period following Aristotle a change in the conception of the person as dependent on the polis. The question the comedies answer is: Are you foremost a member of the polis or a member of humanity? see Wiles 1991: 30. Yet Wiles warns against using the modern sense of autonomy for ancient Hellenic culture, which always endorsed a view of interconnections of person and society, *ibid.*, 186-187. Swain maintains that contrary to accepted opinions, the city remained the locus of identity in Hellenistic and Imperial times, see Swain 1998: 108-109. See the following references for the working out of the interconnection between individual and community in post-Classical and Hellenistic Philosophies, and the distinctions between ancient conceptions of individuality and ethics and modern enlightenment concepts: MacIntyre 1985: 54-55; 155-156; 194-196; 220-221; Long 1983: 184-191; Gill 1988: 172-176; 179-182; Gill 1996: 15-16; 61-69.
59. Zanker 1995: 38-39 (Socrates), 94-95 (Zeno), 96-102 (Chrysippus).
60. See Zanker 1995: 110-113, who compares Chrysippus with marginal types such as a fisherman seen in portraits. See Wiles 1991: 83-85 for interpretation of the masks.
61. Arnold 1911: 274-279, Long 1996: xiii, 141-143, Zanker 1995: 112.
62. See Zanker 1995: 98-99. Chrysippus was described as 'The knife that cuts through the Academic's knots'.
63. In the case of ruler portraits, individual sighting is combined with the mask of the hero or of the God. According to Smith, this mode is in conflict with the civic portrait, which forefronts the tension between soul and body, Smith 1988: 110-111.
64. See Panaetius and Epictetus' theories and their reflection in Cicero, Gill 1988: 173-

- 174, 188-193.
65. Later on in the history of art it might change into as “experienced by myself” or as “subjective feeling”.
 66. I hope to deal with this in future publications. The first stage of this development may be seen in Plato, but its vivid manifestation starts with Plotinus. See Alliez and Feher 1989, 47-63, esp. 62-63, in reference to the myth of Narcissus. This may be the beginning of a new formulation of the face in which looking from without may be a hindrance, not an asset. It is coupled with a new formulation of the subject as centered on the soul, which has a connection to divinity. But the later modernist experience of the uniquely felt and independent self, with its accompanying questioning of the value of representation due to the relation of dependency it is based upon and the inherited nature of its materials and formulas, is only hinted at in antiquity.
 67. The conception that Roman Egyptian portrait masks are a continuation of Egyptian funerary traditions seems accepted by many scholars now. For the opinion that these were mystical Egyptian beliefs in Romanized form, see Corcoran 1997: 47-51; that they form continuity with Egyptian funerary forms, see Shore 1972, 25-26; Corcoran 1995: 3, quoting Root, *Faces of Immortality*. Corcoran 1997: 51.
 68. Quoted from Ikram and Dodson 1998: Fig. 192. See also Taylor 2000: 10.
 69. For an overview, see Taylor 2000: 9-13.
 70. In fact there was even a custom in the Middle Kingdom of portraying the dead in an every-day outfit on the mummy-board. Ikram and Dodson 1998: 171 and Fig. 226. So even the Roman custom of depicting the deceased in everyday clothing was not new.
 71. There is an ongoing debate as to when the portraits were actually made. See Frieslaender 2000: 89-90, nn. 4, 5, 6 for the varying points of view. Frieslaender concludes that in view of the iconography, composition, and details of expression the portraits were conceived only after death, *ibid.*, 97. This may not fit well with my own views on the iconic mode of these portraits, which seems to have involved a viewing of the model while alive. Montserrat 1997: 37 believes these portraits were painted after death, and argues for the conventionality or social realities of these portraits, not their naturalistic ones. Corcoran 1997: 50 holds that the portraits may have been done during lifetime for cultic purposes, but even she believes that this is a portrait only in the “symbolic” sense; Corcoran 1997: 51 quotes D. Thompson, *Mummy Portraits in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, 1982, 15. So even scholars, who see a possibility for the portrait during life, are inclined to view it as conventional. In my view this “conventionality” or reflection of social realities is never absent from Classical art and I referred to it as the “mask” – the face as seen by the “Other” of society, that which is reflected in theater masks and which is always represented in Classical portraits. This does not exclude the assumption of a new form of signification that relies, not on the conventionality of the mask (the relationship of mask to mask), but on a new iconic relationship, which creates a three-way interaction between model, artist and spectator. This may not have to actually be produced in a viewing but it assumes the origin of the portrait is in

- such a viewing. See below for the signs of such a viewing in the mummy paintings.
72. Walker 2000: 25: 'A remarkable coexistence of a Greek cultural heritage, a Roman domination of the political and social order, and a faith in the only religious system to offer a coherent vision of the afterlife thus survived in some centers into the fourth century AD. Throughout the three centuries of mummy portraiture there is no evidence of any break in continuity or of any conflict between the disparate elements of this delicately balanced way of life'.
 - 72a. Walker 2000: Figs. 30, 39, 40, and 64.
 73. Eisenstadt 1986: 29.
 74. This may also be formulated as the ability to form "second order" thinking – a thinking about thinking, see Elkana 1986: 48-58. See also Frankfort 1949: 13-14, 20-21 – on the differences between objective and subjective in Classical and pre-Classical societies of Egypt and Mesopotamia.
 75. I utilize Eisenstadt's general reference to the exploration of the cosmos and of the social and political order as 'a strong this-worldly orientation of this transcendental vision', for the specific area of vision, Eisenstadt 1986: 29.
 76. In Hellenic society this took the form of a systematization of knowledge in philosophy and science and a constant reconstruction of the political and social order, see Eisenstadt 1986: 2-3, 5-6, 29-31.
 77. For the formulation of this concept of "homology", see Wilson 1949: 71-75. I utilize this concept in the area of art and vision.
 78. Brunner Taut aptly comments on Egyptian space and time: 'They have no dynamism, only form'. The description of Egyptian attitudes to space and time is based on Brunner-Traut 1986: 429-445, esp. 430, 437, 441. I am aware that there are divergences from this mode in Egyptian art, but I refer to the typical forms.
 79. This project was of course never fully realized in Antiquity, because autonomy was conflated with religion and with societal conventions, and that gave rise to the varying and often conflicting views of mimesis during that age. The exposition of sign referring to the face, which was taken up in this article, is an instance of the juxtaposition of these various views.
 80. Friesländer 2000: 91-94.
 81. Friesländer 2000: 91-92.

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