FROM NATURE TO THE IDEAL:
A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY STUDY OF ANCIENT GREEK KAIROS, CIRCA 3000–146 BCE

A DISSERTATION
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To my intellectual DNA,
and to my biological DNA,
but especially to my son, Nicholas
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

ABSTRACT: The Greek language has an abstract noun that can be used to denote various kinds of timing in human action and natural phenomena. This noun is *kairos*. As common with many words, the connotations and definitions of *kairos* expanded and changed within the historical contexts it was used. As the story of this one word unfolds from approximately 3000-146 BCE, *kairos* moves from being a concept learned through the Greeks’ direct experiences with their natural environment to becoming technical vocabulary related to learning about political and civic discourse. The chapters of this dissertation have been designed to investigate some of these changes, which ultimately show *kairos* moving from the natural setting of ancient Greek life into a language-locked ideal, or definable concept. The problem with the defined concept of *kairos* is that the definitions reflect its nature as an ideal version of the word, and the word becomes static. Then when *kairos* is studied, it is that idealized version of it upon which contemporary scholarship has focused. The concept of the abstract noun *kairos* is anything but static, and while this study does not aim to argue any existing definition of the work, this study does aim to start a historic survey of this word and its dynamic state to provide a broader understanding of *kairos* beyond its static definitions. The best way to reinvigorate an all pervasive concept like *kairos* is by studying it through cross-disciplinary subjects, theories, and methodologies.

The ancient Greeks cultivated many cultural products. Their language was one of them, and the visual arts was another, both of which have been written about by ancient and modern writers extensively. Among the rich contours that have come to define each of those human agencies in ancient Greek culture, a pervasive concept used to denote various kinds of timing in human action and natural phenomena known as *kairos* can be found in both the written language and the visual artifacts of the ancient Greeks. Over time and under changing historic conditions, *kairos* has stayed in the Greek lexicon, its definitions shifting and expanding to represent different connotations and dimensions of its conceptual nature. Significant and historic changes in the Greeks’ usage of *kairos* becomes available to us only after the Greeks develop an alphabetic text (ca. 800 BCE). After this change in how the Greeks were expressing their thoughts, the contextual connotations of *kairos* become traceable through many primary ancient sources, especially from the fifth century BCE forward. From these fifth century sources, many dimensions of *kairos* can be parsed, especially in its usage related to political and civic discourse.
In contemporary scholarship, specifically concerning studies in rhetoric or the history of rhetoric, kairos has been categorized as a concept related to ancient rhetoric, even though ancient discussions about a disciplinary rhetoric do not begin until around 385/380 BCE when Plato coins the term ῥήτορική (ῥητορική) in his Gorgias.¹ I contend that if kairos is going to be understood by those interested in the history of rhetoric or the mindset of the ancient Greeks, there are at least two scholarly endeavors that should be undertaken, both of which I have attempted in this dissertation project. The first undertaking has been to write a prehistory of kairos, and the second has been to account for and examine kairos through cross-disciplinary perspectives. Writing a prehistory of kairos has required cross-disciplinary considerations because, again, prior to the Greeks’ use of an alphabetic text there is no textual evidence where kairos can be directly identified; fortunately, however, the Greeks were producing other artifacts thousands of years before they began writing. My prehistory of kairos begins within the Greeks’ expressions in the visual arts, followed by it chronological appearances later in ancient Greek history.

Ian Hacking and Edward Schiappa are two scholars whose perspectives on the importance and acts of defining words and events have influenced the direction of my inquiries about how kairos has been regarded historically. Hacking, in his book The Social Construction of What?, is concerned with the usefulness of considering “what” might be products of “social construction.” The idea of social construction can liberate meanings attached to words, especially if the aim is to raise consciousness about what the word represents.² However, the social construction analyses can also limit an object, idea, or word, if a definition is all one seeks

to find.³ Hacking says explicitly, “Don’t ask for the meaning, ask what’s the point.”⁴ Hacking reminds that certain kinds of words are “used to say something about the world, or what we say or think about the world.”⁵ Hacking’s perspective really precludes Schiappa’s because Schiappa uses Hacking to construct this formula—“X counts as Y in context C”—which he uses in his book *Defining Reality: Definition and the Politics of Meaning* to advocate for a method of defining.⁶ The method of using this formula recognizes that “no matter what we are trying to define, our definitions are linguistic propositions and as such are unavoidably historically situated and dependent on social interaction.”⁷ Furthermore, Schiappa says, “The beliefs that inform the definitions are human beliefs that are always subject to revision.”⁸ Because the beliefs and definitions are advanced by different sects of humanity at different times and places and demonstrate social attitudes, a cross-disciplinary research approach is necessary. Schiappa actually offers an expanded version of “X counts as Y in context C,” and explains that here, X, refers to the word being defined, but Schiappa will argue that instead of asking “What is X?”—the question to be posed is “How ought we use the word X?”⁹ He contends that the “sociopolitical and pragmatic questions of ‘ought’” provides more depth, perspective, and probability than simply questioning “what is.”¹⁰ Schiappa does not advocate for the destruction or “abandonment of the legitimate factual or empirical matters that acts of defining involve,”¹¹ just as I am not contesting any existing definitions of kairos. Instead, I am contending that there are more

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⁴ Ibid., 5.
⁵ Ibid., 22-23.
⁷ Schiappa, *Defining Reality*, xii.
⁸ Ibid.
⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰ Ibid., 3.
¹¹ Ibid.
perspectives on kairos to be studied, such as my constructed prehistory, that can further our understanding of its complexities. Hacking and Schiappa’s ideas have led me to construct my own “XYC” question about kairos—“kairos”(X) “ought” to be considered as “what”(Y) in various historic conditions of “ancient Greece” (C)? This question has brought considerable focus to the study of kairos in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, because it gave me a theoretical framework through which I could focus on interpreting what was significant about the ancient Greeks’ sense of timing and what its usages reflected about the changing historic conditions and the mindset of certain historic figures. For each chapter, I offer an answer to my “XYC” question about kairos.

Kairos is a word that has stayed in the Greek lexicon—from the ancient Greeks to the modern Greeks—but the definitions provided by Liddell and Scott’s *Greek-English Lexicon* show that in various grammatical forms and derivatives kairos had a range of meaning that had in common the aspects of human action, corporeal connotations, and the human relationship with the environment.12 The *LSJ* provides an historical range of socially constructed meanings that can be further explored; however, the reader is still responsible for understanding how Hesiod’s use of kairos differs or remains the same as Aristotle’s usage. In the study of classical rhetoric, kairos is generally introduced and defined briefly as the ancient Greek rhetorical concept of “opportune timing” or a “decisive moment,” or sometimes as just a type of Greek “timing.”13

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These definitions are apt to the study of rhetoric, if the reader is looking only for the meaning of kairos or καιρός, depending on which version is encountered. English speakers can find kairos in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, but all those usages are related to the even later connotation of kairos as related to Christianity.\(^\text{14}\) This is a word that does not have common or regular usage in the English language, because it is a foreign word. Simply put kairos is not καιρός. When καιρός is referenced in either an ancient Greek or a Modern Greek dictionary, the definitions will range from having to do with something happening at the right place and time, to a vital or critical place, or having to do with season, or sailing, or weather.\(^\text{15}\) The definitions do not reference Christianity or rhetoric. If you plug καιρός into the Google search engine, you will likely get your local weather report, and weather conditions in Greece. If you plug in kairos, a wide variety of ancient through contemporary definitions and subjects surface in the first ten results. Greek may be part of Indo-European family tree, but kairos and its full range of definitions and connotations has not descended readily into the twenty-first century English lexicon. Even though, the importance of timing in human affairs is universally ubiquitous, kairos/καιρός denotes the Greeks’ unique way of expressing one particular type of timing.

A rather special aspect of kairos is that the concept was deified and sculptural representations, as well as hymns and epigrams, were composed of Kairos as the god of opportune timing, or opportunity (fig. 1.1). The visual representations of Kairos, like the definitions, have changed over time as well.

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A quick comparison of the ancient representation of Kairos (fig. 1.1)\textsuperscript{16} to a chart outlining contemporary kairos in composition studies (fig. 1.2)\textsuperscript{17} to kairos, a reporting of current Greek weather (figs. 1.3-1.5)\textsuperscript{18} demonstrates some variations in the visual expression of kairos. The chart of contemporary kairos in composition studies (fig. 1.2) attempts to instruct “what kairos is,” but it does not demonstrate how kairos “ought” to be considered in writing compositions. That chart is an example of contemporary scholarship freezing a concept that by nature is elusive, unpredictable, and dynamic into a static formula for supposed usage by college-level writers. The figures representing καιρός related to Greek weather reports might come closer to “how kairos ought to be considered” now (figs. 1.3-1.5). However, the audience for this καιρός is exclusive to those who have an understanding of Modern Greek language and culture. Acknowledging the distinction in how kairos is represented with alphabetic text, however, marks an important difference between studying a cultural καιρός and the academic kairos. The importance rests in the transformation of the concept that takes place when its cultural identity is shaved off so that the concept can be studied academically. My dissertation project studies the academic kairos, but I have attempted, by tracking some of its usages chronologically, to understand the concept culturally.

Each definition and each textual or visual representation of kairos is important to understanding the concept and how it has been understood and used over time. But to interpret each textual appearance of kairos or to say why visual expressions of kairos represented a

\textsuperscript{16}Figure 1.1: Unidentified maker, \textit{Fragment of Kairos}, fourth/third century BCE, Trogir (Trau), Croatia, Monastery of St. Nicholas.

\textsuperscript{17}Figure 1.2: Susan K. Miller-Cochran and Rochelle L. Rodrigo, “Table 3.1, Kairos in the Rhetorical Situation,” in The Wadsworth Guide to Research, 2nd ed. (Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2009, 2011, 2014), 40.

\textsuperscript{18}Figure 1.3, accessed from: http://www.alithia.gr/kairos; Figure 1.4, accessed from https://www.iliaweb.gr/ilia-kalokeri-mexri-ke-tin-pempti-allazi-o-keros-apo-tin-paraskevi-apo-ton-thodori-kondili/, translation of “δείτε τον καιρό” is “watch the weather;” Figure 1.5, accessed from: https://difernews.gr/o-kairos-trelathike-chionias-alla-kai-ypsiles-thermokrasies-savvato/; headline: Ο καιρός τρελάθηκε!, translation: “The weather was crazy!”
particular meaning at a particular period of time requires considerations beyond its presence in ancient rhetoric, or its visualization in the plastic and poetic arts; however, these are the two subject areas I have focused on in this study. Kairos puts a person in a position of decision making, of overcoming opposites and thereby creating harmony between opposing choices at the moment kairos arrives. Kairos as word and its concept dimensions have existed for millennia in lives of the Greeks and have been expressed through many sociocultural endeavors, such as philosophy, rhetoric, music, athletics, sculpture, medicine, mythology, sailing, weather, and agriculture, just to name a few. The significance of kairos in more than one domain of Greek life tells us that it represented a particular mode of thinking, and a mode of thinking in different contexts, and that its presence in these various domains had an effect on its shifting definitions and connotations. My inquiries into how the ancient Greek society, culture, and natural environment affected the formation and development of the concept of kairos and how reflections of it expressed in text and image from the early Bronze Age into the Hellenistic period (3000-146 BCE) contribute to a broadened perspective on “what constituted the ancient Greek καιρός” and “how we ought to think about academic kairos throughout Greek history.”

Statement of Problem

The problem is kairos defined as “opportune moment” is much too simplified if one is attempting to understand its importance in the history of rhetoric. If the scholarship in the studies of the history of rhetoric continues to use simplified definitions of kairos as the foundation for the evidence they point to in text and image, the result will be a diminished version of the concept stripped of its cultural development and character. As demonstrated by the table pictured earlier (fig.1.2), this overly-condensed version of kairos as part of the rhetorical situation has

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already occurred in composition studies. Καιρός, as word representing a concept, was arrived at by an orally conscious culture, and it is easy for the academic kairos to lose its ancient connotations and flexibility outside of the Greek language as it has in contemporary composition studies for writing. To prevent this once multidimensional concept of timing from continued degeneration, paralysis, and potential misuse, the original and organic nature of the concept must be considered within its historic conditions, which I contend also includes the prehistory of literate Greece. There is plenty of scholarship on “what kairos is,” but not much on “how the kairos ought to be considered” in various eras of ancient Greek history. To reconcile “how the kairos ought to be considered” I have composed the following research questions:

1. If kairos was significant, and still is, in the development and teaching of rhetoric, what significance did this particular timing have in the ancient Greek society between 3000-600 BCE?
2. Given that the Greeks recognized other kinds of time besides kairos, what evidence supports the significance of this kind of timing in ancient Greek society between 800-400 BCE?
3. In what ways did kairos change in definition and praxis between 400-146 BC, and why?

My answers to these questions have recognized that in order to keep the definitions of kairos, and the study of ancient rhetoric dynamic, historical reconstruction of the context of its usage is crucial to finding its definitional contours, or conceptual dimensions, and interpreting them.20 Schiappa advocates for the usefulness of the interpretive approach of “historical reconstruction” for research versus the interpretive approach of “contemporary appropriation.”21 “Historical reconstruction” attempts to recapture the past and considers the unique and contemporaneous events of a culture’s history as a living history to be interpreted through their various cultural products; whereas, “contemporary appropriation” involves the modern

20 Edward Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos: A Study in Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric, 2nd ed. (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 64.
21 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 64.
application and extension of those cultural products by contemplating them as contemporaneous with contemporary theory and analysis.\textsuperscript{22} Oversimplified definitions of kairos and the contemporary appropriation of it will, as in composition studies, lead to finding kairos in every human endeavor with suggestions of how to make practical use of it. \textsuperscript{23} In addition to kairos in composition studies, the contemporary appropriation of kairos can be found in Hans Rämö’s “An Aristotelian Human Time-Space Manifold: From \textit{chronochora} to \textit{kairotos}” (1999), Scott Consigny’s \textit{Gorgias: Sophist and Artist} (2001), and Thomas Rickert’s chapter “Invention in the Wild: On Locating \textit{Kairos} in Space-Time” in his book \textit{Ambient Rhetoric: The Attunements of Rhetorical Being} (2013). Rämö is appropriating kairos; however his aim is not historical research. Rämö’s concern with notions of Greek time (\textit{chronos} and kairos) and what he calls their spatial counterparts (\textit{chora} and \textit{topos}) are conjoined with some of Aristotle’s notions of human action (\textit{theorialepis}, \textit{poiesis}, \textit{techne}, and \textit{praxisphronesis}), which he discusses in the “contemporary organization settings of time management and virtual organizations.”\textsuperscript{24} Consigny is doing historical research about Gorgias, and he is concerned with kairos as a “basis of Gorgias’s ethic, esthetic, and rhetoric.”\textsuperscript{25} Consigny is also concerned with defining the “\textit{kairotic} moment” in several parts of the book. Rickert claims rhetoric is ambient, which he initially accounts for based on a description of the meaning of \textit{terroir} and its relationship to the science of winemaking.\textsuperscript{26} Without explicating all of my concerns with these three studies in this dissertation, I want to note specifically that the works of Consigny and Rickert are both aimed at

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\item Schiappa, \textit{Protagoras and Logos}, 65-68.
\item Ibid., 68.
\item Scott Consigny, \textit{Gorgias: Sophist and Artist} (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 43.
\item Thomas Rickert, \textit{Ambient Rhetoric: The Attunements of Rhetorical Being} (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), ix-x.
\end{enumerate}
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the history and study of rhetoric; however, both books get underway with a certain amount of anachronisms, the recycling of certain dated kernels and claims of research on kairos (including some that have been disproven), and a bit of the “ol’ bait n’ switch.” Their book titles and the subjects listed in their indexes give the impression that information about those subjects is to be had in each book, but both seemed to use the ancient elements and characters of Greek rhetoric at the service of validating or disproving contemporary “ism” theories. I agree that there are different ways of coming to understanding ancient kairos, and I affirm that timing is crucial to human actions and events; however, I also contend that not all timely moments can be described by the Greek kairos. The works of Rämö, Consigny, and Rickert leave me wondering who they think makes up their readership, and to what degree that readership is familiar with kairos.

Ancient Greek kairos has a dexterous range of definitions that are connected to how humans grapple with the contingencies and exigencies of the mortal world. For this study of kairos, the scholars whose interpretive and analytic approach has been “contemporary appropriation” have not helped me answer questions about “how the kairos ought to be considered” in various historic conditions of ancient Greek history.

Cross-disciplinary study on rhetoric has been around since the early twentieth century, but none comprehensively answers my research questions. One example would be Charles Sears Baldwin’s *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic* (1924) and then in 1928 his *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400*. However Baldwin’s argument in *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic* is that “poetry and rhetoric were fundamentally different,” and not comparable.\(^{27}\) Nearly eighty years later, Jeffery Walker argues against Baldwin’s idea that rhetoric and poetry are not comparable, an argument he claims has been too well received for too long.\(^{28}\) Walker’s book *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), vii.


Antiquity (2000) aims to examine ancient Greek poetry as epideictic and aesthetic discourse by constructing a “sophist’s ‘history of rhetoric.’” Walker describes how his argument can be summed up by looking at a vase painting from the fifth century BCE (fig. 1.6).

The image shows Orpheus, singing to and charming a group of Thracian warriors. But it can be read as a paradigmatic image of poetic-epideictic eloquence that lies at the root of what came to be called the “rhetorical” tradition in antiquity…This is not simply an image of “music soothes the savage heart,” though it is partly that. It is also an image of variable responses to a psychagogic, “soul-guiding” eloquence that calls its audience to acts of judgment and ethical position…Further, it is an image of eloquence addressing power, of discourse (logos) addressing force (bia), of discursive art (logôn technê) as a counterweight to mere coercion, asserting a force and power of its own….This image is, in short, a version of rhetoric’s primal scene, and of poetry’s primal scene as well.

Walker does not attempt to define ‘what poetry is’ or ‘what rhetoric is’ because viewing them separately would not have led him to discussing epideictic-poetic eloquence. The purpose of cross-disciplinary studies is to examine the threads woven into the social fabric, which I believe is why Walker begins his study within the prehistory of the poetic and rhetorical disciplines.

Other scholarly works have attempted to shed light on the ancient rhetoric via other disciplines because “rhetoric, in multiple guises, has permeated a variety of academic disciplines.” For example, in The Present State of Scholarship in the History of Rhetoric: A Twenty-First Century Guide (2010), Walter Ong describes in the foreword how the study of rhetoric as an academic subject has recently been becoming “more vigorous and more protean

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29 Walker, Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity, ix.
30 Ibid. Figure 1.6: Orpheus Painter, Orpheus plays the lyre and sings among Thracian warriors with spears, Attic red-figure column krater, ca. 440, Staatlich Museen zu Berlin. Figure 1.6 is the frontispiece from Walker’s Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity, “Image © Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin 1998, Antikensammlung V.I. 3172; photo by Ute Jung (Staatlich Museen zu Berlin).
31 Ibid., viii-ix.
32 Krista Ratcliffe, “The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries,” in The Present State of Scholarship in the History of Rhetoric: A Twenty-First Century Guide, eds. Lynée Lewis Gaillet with Winifred Bryan Horner (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2010), 185. Ratcliffe lists the following academic disciplines: academic disciplines, such as advertising, anthropology, classics, communication, critical theory, economics, ethnic studies, law, literary studies, management, marketing, medicine, natural sciences, philosophy, psychology, rhetoric and composition, theater, theology, transnational politics, and women and gender studies (185).
than ever before.” Other recent examples of the study of rhetoric using cross-disciplinary approach would be David Sansone’s *Greek Drama and the Invention of Rhetoric* (2012), Wilfred E. Major’s *The Court of Comedy: Aristophanes, Rhetoric, and Democracy in Fifth-Century Athens* (2013), Rachel Ahern Knudsen’s *Homerica Speech and the Origins of Rhetoric* (2014), and *Logos without Rhetoric* (2017) edited by Robin Reams. Ratcliffe does not list the visual arts or archeology as disciplines into which rhetoric has diversified, but as a “canon of delivery” the realm of studying rhetoric and the realm of the visual have become known as visual rhetoric and archeological rhetoric. As far back as 1994, Sonja K. Foss published in *Communication Studies* “A Rhetorical Schema for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery,” which was then modified and included in the book *Defining Visual Rhetorics* (2004) edited by Charles A. Hill and Marguerite Helmers. In 2012, Richard L. Enos revises and expands his *Greek Rhetoric Before Aristotle* to include archeological rhetoric as his new method and mentality towards the study of rhetoric.

Closer to the heart of what I hope to accomplish is an older study by Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350-1450* (1971). In this book, Baxandall tries “to identify a linguistic component in visual taste: that is, to show that grammar and rhetoric of language may substantially affect our manner of describing and then, of attending to pictures and some other visual experiences.”

The questions asked in comparative studies and cross-disciplinary studies acknowledge the relevance of a cultural product like kairos, and therefore construct research questions that respond to questions like “how the kairos ought to be considered.” Even if my methodology


34 Ratcliffe, “The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries,” 209.

proves to be too experimental to destroy the historical disciplinary boundaries highly regarded in academic research, I hope it has demonstrated historic research originating more on inquiry than on contemporary theory.

George Kennedy’s arguments in *Comparative Rhetoric* contribute to the growing necessity of scholarship within the last decade to expand how we define and study rhetoric. Kennedy argues for a perspective on rhetoric in *Comparative Rhetoric: An Historical and Cross-Cultural Introduction* (1998), which pushes the definition of rhetoric past “an abstract concept of an art, skill or technique of composition to try to find a place for it in nature.” Kennedy asserts the very kind of scholarly perspective that opens the research in the history of rhetoric to wider interpretation. The general definitions of rhetoric Kennedy wishes to move beyond are succinctly defined as the “art of persuasion,” and a slightly extended version of the “art of effective expression.” Kennedy views a broader sense of rhetoric as “universal phenomenon” and a “conservative faculty,” which for him include animal communication, and non-literate cultures, as well as literate cultures outside of Greece and Rome. In these two capacities, rhetoric underscores elements of human action and experience. The fundamental nature of rhetoric means we must look at aspects of the Greeks’ natural environment and historic conditions for more information about the development of rhetoric, specifically its constituent elements like kairos. If ancient Greek rhetoric is one socially constructed organism from which kairos grows and becomes an integral part of Greek life, then an atrophy of this vital part would prevent understanding the theories and practices of rhetoric in the past, present, and future.

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37 Kennedy, *Comparative Rhetoric*, 3.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid., 3-4.
James Fredal is another scholar calling for an expansion in how ancient rhetoric is studied. In “Seeing Ancient Rhetoric, Easily at a Glance,” he discusses the problems with how current scholarship struggles with defining and theorizing rhetoric either too narrowly or too broadly, and how rhetoric as term and concept is studied without putting it in context of time and space. Fredal advocates for “a view of ancient Greek rhetoric that embraces multiple media and that emphasizes rhetorical interaction as a form of cultural reproduction through visual and spatial means.” He calls to broaden the scope of how scholarship defines rhetoric.

Rhetoric should refer broadly to the exchange of meaning within a social system through which meaning, culture, identity, knowledge and practice are produced and circulated—a definition broad enough to include non-linguistic and non-verbal symbolic acts and artifacts, but narrow enough to focus on culturally significant processes and products of persuasion.

Fredal supports an academic view of rhetoric that expands into “that set of practices through which a culture produces and reproduces itself, and the practical logic implicitly producing and produced by those practices.” Fredal, writing just a few years after Schiappa’s *Defining Reality* (2003), suggests scholarship ask the following:

We should ask not how a group theorized speaking well, but how they were constituted as a group of fellow citizens in the first place, through what symbolic means they came to see each other as consubstantial and worthy of engagement and symbolic exchange, how they were brought to engage in the types of rhetorical interaction which would allow them to assert and maintain their identities and their lifeways.

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42 Ibid., 183.
43 Ibid., 184.
In a way, Fredal is suggesting that we do anthropology with the Greeks, which echoes Marcel Detienne’s call for the same in “Doing Anthropology with the Greeks.” Detienne suggests comparative anthropology as an approach to studying the ancient Greeks because disciplinary anthropologists do not typically focus on ancient Greece, and the scholars of history have not been trained to use anthropological approaches. Detienne suggests smudging the boundaries of disciplinary methods and experiment in combining the intellectual activities of both historians and anthropologists. The value of a cross-disciplinary study within the Greek civilization, or any other, is that it allows for us “to understand as many of their cultural products as possible.”

As comparative anthropology, Detienne encourages scholars to move from one culture to another, and to ask transcultural questions, in order to make “conceptual elements” discovered more productive. Detienne asserts that scholarship should question “superficial assessments” about what is and is not comparable. Any comparative study requires intellectuality in more than one discipline for the researcher or the reader, which can prove difficult. In a recent Bryn Mawr Review of Ancient as Transformation: Concepts Describing Cultural Change, a collection of essays focused on the concept of “allelopoiesis, a reciprocal dependence between a receiving culture and a received culture,” the reviewer commented the “ideal reviewer of this collection would be someone who is a specialist in Assyriology, Classical Philology, Film Studies, Political

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46 Detienne, The Greeks and Us, 11.
47 Ibid.
48 Marcel Detienne, Comparing the Incomparable, translated by Janet Lloyd from the French Comparer l’incomparable © 2000, Cultural Memory in the Present series edited by Mieke Bal and Hent de Vries, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), ix. Detienne is moving against “the common French formula ‘One can only compare that which is comparable’ (on ne peut comparer ce qui est comparable)” (ix).
Sciences, History of Art, History of Science and History of Technology.”49 The reviewer admits that her own academic training is “only” in Classical Philology and the History of Art; therefore, she concedes to “simply” giving “an overview of these rich and demanding studies.”50 The study is demanding because of the breadth of perspectives and rich because the multiple and comparative perspectives attempt to provide the audience with a more complete view of the topic. While this dissertation project is not attempting a comparative study of kairos in the rhetorical arts and the visual arts exclusively, by at least stepping outside boundaries of the discipline of rhetoric to find what is comparable, kairos can be informed by other products of Greek culture (i.e., society, economics, religion, myth, philosophy, natural environment, art and architecture, military, seafaring, daily life, agriculture, weather, athletics, medicine, just to name a few).51 I believe this study cultivates valid inquiries about the fundamental nature of kairos that can be expanded on in future research. No aspect surrounding ancient Greek culture or a product of it then should be dismissed as unrelated to the development of disciplinary rhetoric and its constituent concepts such as kairos.

Purpose and Significance of Study

The general purpose of this dissertation has been to respond to my research questions by studying “how the kairos ought to be considered” in various eras of ancient Greek history. The intended purpose of those questions has been more specifically aimed at a better understanding of kairos before it was absorbed into the discipline of rhetoric. Through cross-disciplinary sources on the subject and historical reconstruction of the context of its usage, I have been able

50 Ibid.
51 Detienne, Comparing the Incomparable, ix-xv.
to see the concept of *kairos* expand out of the direct experiences Greeks had with their natural environment into a concept disciplined, defined, and idealized through language and the visual arts.

The significance of my study resides in my analytical approach to “how the *kairos* ought to be considered,” my use of cross-disciplinary sources and methodology, and my willingness to attempt a prehistory of *kairos*. My dissertation study overall can contribute to the scholarship on *kairos* and the history of rhetoric. I have responded to the call of scholarship to use media outside of rhetorical texts, media with embodied visual and rhetorical significance, and media that will help us today to understand the relationship between thought and speech in ancient Greece. My effort “to see” aspects of *kairos* in the artifacts and culture of ancient Greece that have been previously ignored or lost in praxis can contribute to the definitional contours and connotations already written for *kairos* by expanding the relationship of *kairos* to human will and practical wisdom.

The purpose and the significance of this study share the ability to reflect the cultural momentum of different periods in ancient Greek history that have negotiated and contributed various meanings to *kairos*. Schiappa says definitions constitute “rhetorically induced social knowledge,”52 and he reminds readers at the end of *Defining Reality* that “definitions are the result of a shared understanding of the world and are both the product of past persuasion and a resource for future persuasion.”53 *Kairos* represents a type of negotiation between humankind and its environment, and a better understanding of how the Greeks’ cultural situation contributed to the act of defining it is significant to understanding *kairos* and its relation to any discipline or

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52 Schiappa, *Defining Reality*, 3 and 167.
53 Ibid., 167.
subject. Looking ‘to see’ kairos in the visual arts is an exercise to elucidate its significance in the rhetorical arts.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The theoretical and methodological approaches I have used in this research on kairos were selected because they provided a way to frame my research questions with a cross-disciplinary focus. In order to answer my research questions, I needed a theoretical framework and a methodological approach that allowed me to look at the rhetorical and visual arts of ancient Greece in a way which reflected their historical context and sociocultural organizations and practices, while maintaining the integrity of each art as a representation of higher faculties of the mind.54

My theoretical approach, introduced earlier in this chapter, has been inspired by Hacking and Schiappa, and has provided a framework through which I could examine as “kairos”(X) “ought” to be considered as “what”(Y) in various historic conditions of “ancient Greece” (C).

The methodological approach to this study is the iconographical—iconological approach developed by Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), a prominent twentieth-century historian of art. Panofsky’s idea was to interpret works of art to show that they were “symbolic expressions of the cultures within which they had been produced.”55 But more than this, he was interested in answering the question: What kind of relationship between the mind and the world was being expressed in the art of different times and different periods? The human mind, for Panofsky, is both universal (it lies behind every cultural expression) and particular (that is, it is articulated in a particular way in a particular historical context).56 In order “to connect symbolic content of a

55 Hiatt and Klonk, Art History, 96.
56 Ibid.
work of art with the kind of mind-world relation being articulated in other spheres of the culture
and to set the whole process in relation to the fundamental structures of the human mind,” he
developed a theoretical framework and interpretive procedure.\(^\text{57}\)

Panofsky’s theoretical framework is based on a set of a priori principles for art,
composed of five pairs of oppositions.

1. *form* (circumscribed shapes) and *plentitude* (undifferentiated appearances)
2. *time* and *space*
3. *optic values* (represents free space) and *haptic values* (represents bodies/objects)
4. *depth* and *surface* (constitutes the figurative appearance of works of art)
5. *merging forms* and *division* \(^\text{58}\)

The first two, *form* and *plentitude*, make a polar axis along which a work of art will be situated,
and for Panofsky they represented the fundamental artistic problem.\(^\text{59}\) *Form* and *plentitude* are
paired against *time* and *space*, the two concepts for which Panofsky designates as the a priori
categories for the solution to the artistic problem:

They were the cognitive functions within which the antithesis between ‘plentitude’ and
‘form’ was resolved. An emphasis on plentitude, for example, presupposes the
preponderance of the concept of time, which rejects the division of elements imposed by
space.\(^\text{60}\)

From the fundamental pairs of ‘*form* and *plentitude*’ and ‘*time* and *space*,’ the three other pairs
represent concepts that further construct the basis of all art.\(^\text{61}\) Panofsky’s aim was to devise a
theory and system of interpretation that would “establish the universal possibilities of art, not its
actual instantiation,” create “categories with which the mind comprehends art,” enable the
detection of similarities and differences, and allow interpretation to go beyond the subjective and

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\(^{57}\) Hiatt and Klonk, *Art History*, 100 and 107.
\(^{58}\) Ibid., 102. Panofsky formulated his theory in the untranslated article: “*Idea*; *ein Beitrag zur Begriffsgeschichte
der älteren Kunsttheorie*, Leipzig: 1924 (Studien der Bibliothek Warburg 5).
\(^{59}\) Ibid.
\(^{60}\) Ibid.
\(^{61}\) Ibid.
Panofsky’s categories represent his beliefs about the “fundamental structures that are involved in any attempt by human beings to know the world.” Panofsky also believed that “empirical observations only show the solutions to artistic problems,” but not the actual problems. He believed that an artistic problem could be identified and interpreted from a knowledge of the a priori principles that provided a foundation for the art. Panofsky’s own theoretical approach fits the study of kairos as a symbol of cultural expression beginning with the ancient Greeks, which can then be studied or interpreted through his methodological approach.

Panofsky’s interpretive procedure which is composed of three actions in his synoptic table—pre-iconographical description, iconographical analysis, and iconological interpretation (fig. 1.7). The three acts of interpretation in Panofsky’s chart are intended to move the interpreter beyond the formal perception and identified subject-matter in the pre-iconographical act to cultural conventions grasped through iconographical analysis and interpretation. Deeper meaning is apprehended when the interpreter engages with these interpretive actions. Ultimately these actions provide the system for iconological studies, which is the interpreter’s “search for intrinsic meanings or content that the various humanistic disciplines meet on a common plane instead of serving as handmaidens to each other.” Panofsky explains the categories of the synoptic table and how interpreters should regard them as follows:

[W]e must bear in mind that the neatly differentiated categories, which in this synoptic table seem to indicate three independent spheres of meaning, refer in reality to aspects of one phenomenon, namely, the work of art as a whole. So that, in the actual work, the

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63 Ibid., 102.
64 Ibid., 103.
66 Hiatt and Klonk, 107.
methods of approach which here appear as three unrelated operations of research merge
with each other into one organic and indivisible process.\footnote{Panofsky, \textit{Studies in Iconology}, 16-17.}

Active at the same time, these categories of study in iconography characterize the nature of their
nomenclature. Iconography focuses on “images described” (cf. εἰκονο-γραφία), whereas
iconology synthesizes the iconographical findings and therefore focus on “images organized” (cf.
εἰκονο-λογία). The relationship Panofsky draws between “icon” and “logos” is a connection in
which the higher faculties of the mind organize and conceptualize the world they confront.\footnote{Hiatt and Klonk, 97 and 116.}

Because Panofsky’s iconographical-iconological approach is outside literary
methodologies, I would like to relate part of an example of his methodology from his chapter
“Father Time” in his own \textit{Studies in Iconology}. As a historian of art, the Italian Renaissance was
a primary focus of his scholarship. Naturally, then, he was interested in “the reintegration of
classical motifs and classical themes” in movements of the Renaissance.\footnote{Panofsky, \textit{Studies in Iconology}, 69.} Ultimately, Panofsky
was interested in how the elements of the classical world were reinterpreted as “a visual and
emotional synthesis between the pagan past and the Christian present.”\footnote{Ibid.} He calls this process
\textit{pseudomorphosis}, which meant “certain Renaissance figure became vested with meaning which,
for all their classicizing appearance, had not been present in their classical prototypes.”\footnote{Panofsky, \textit{Studies in Iconology}, 70-71. Panofsky’s words here specifically make me think of what has happened to
the definitions and connotation of kairos through the ages; I just have not found a way to express this clearly.}
Panofsky says Father Time is a typical case of \textit{pseudomorphosis}.\footnote{Ibid., 71.}

Panofsky’s analysis of Father Time begins a reference to an image of Father Time from a
Bowery Savings Bank advertisement (see fig. 1.8).\footnote{Bowery Savings Bank of New York City opened in Manhattan in 1834. Figure 1.8: Unidentified Maker, \textit{Father Time}, illustration from a Bowery Saving Bank Advertisement, from Panofsky, \textit{Studies in Iconology}, 69.} From this instance, he works
chronologically in reverse to trace the visual ancestors and attributes of a version of Father Time who is making an appearance in the United States in the early twentieth century CE. Using his own iconographical-iconological methodology he is looking into the “history of types” and this leads to a discussion of the Greek god Kairos and his attributes (fig. 1.9). Panofsky describes Kairos as follows:

Time as ‘Kairos,’ that is, the brief and decisive moment which marks a turning-point in the life of human beings or in the development of the universe. This concept was illustrated by the figure vulgarly known as Opportunity. Opportunity was shown as a man (originally nude) in fleeting movement, usually young and never very old, in spite of the fact Time is sometimes called πολιός (grey-headed) in Greek poetry. He was equipped with wings both at the shoulders and at the heels. His attributes were a pair of scales, originally balanced on the edge of a shaving knife, and, showed the proverbial forelock by which bald-headed Opportunity can be seized. It was because of this abstrusely allegorical character that the figure of Kairos or Opportunity appealed to the late antique and mediaeval mind. It survived up to the eleventh century and afterwards tended to merge with the figure of Fortune, this fusion being favoured by the fact that the Latin word for Kairos, ‘viz., occasio, is of the same gender as fortuna.

After his description of the ancient Greek Kairos, he will describe the “exact opposite” of the “Kairos idea” represented in ancient Iranian art as the concept of time called Aion, “that is the divine principle of eternal and inexhaustible creativeness.” Panofsky’s question is really about imagery produced in the Renaissance, but the iconographical-iconological methodology supports analysis over a continuum of historic time as an “indivisible” combination of the interpretive actions of iconographical description and analysis. His discussion of the Bowery Bank Father Time, Kairos, and Aion represent in his methodology the identification of secondary subject matter connected to the primary subject matter through themes and concepts. After Aion, he is going to launch into more interpretation of more primary media sources from various time

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75 Figure 1.9, Unidentified maker, Kairos, marble, ca. 350-330 BCE. Turin, Italy, Museum of Antiquities. Panofsky uses this image of the relief of Kairos in his Studies in Iconology, Plate XXI. This is the image most often used in studies in rhetoric on kairos.
76 Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, 71-72.
77 Ibid., 72.
periods and cultures, so that in the end he can postulate the intrinsic meaning, iconographical synthesis, essential tendencies of the mind, and cultural symptoms or symbols relevant to the Renaissance.

Panofsky’s methodological process for iconographical-iconological interpretation allowed me to research the concept and expressions of *kairos* in language and the visual arts beyond one academic discipline; and furthermore, his methodology encouraged me to “see the likeness” in different products of the same culture. I would not have been able to address my research questions by using theoretical and methodological approaches under other constructed terms such as: “archeological rhetoric,”78 or “visual rhetoric,”79 or a “hermeneutic spiral.”80 In the case of “archeological rhetoric,” it does not suggest a theoretical framework and does not offer a methodological approach. As for “visual rhetoric” and the “hermeneutic spiral,” while they are both offer stable theoretical approaches, the methodologies are too restrictive in the sense that they both have too many presupposed categories and procedures. Schiappa echoes Catherine Osborne’s position on interpreting ancient text fragments.81 Osborne suggests that we abandon the search for “original context” or “a single conclusive reading” and concentrate on exploring “the range of meaning.”82 While Panofsky’s iconographical-iconological approach is an experimental approach for the history of rhetorical studies, it is intended to “expand the range of meaning” and the current knowledge available on the concept of *kairos*.

Scope and Limitations

My examination of kairos fits into the chronological scope of the Bronze Age of the proto-Hellenic culture of Greece continuing through the Hellenistic period (ca. 3000–146 BCE). The establishment of Roman rule over the Greek city-states of the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor occurred from 148-146 BCE. How the Romans end up dealing with kairos in their rhetorical texts has an effect on later approaches to Western study of rhetoric, but I am not going to address here the Romans’ treatment of rhetoric.

One notable limitation is that a substantial amount of the scholarly material written on kairos in the early twentieth century was written by European classicists trained in not only the classical languages, but many modern languages in addition to their native language. Many of their texts are in German, French, and Italian, some Modern Greek, and very few of these have been translated into English.

Outline of Chapters

This introductory chapter introduces the aim of the remaining chapters, but also emphasizes that this is a cross-disciplinary study. Therefore, in order to clear some ground across the three discipline areas of study—Classics, rhetoric, and the visual arts—Chapter 2 is structured as a review of literature from those discipline areas. The content of the review covers some of the definitional contours of kairos in text and image and considers the different ways in which each discipline has dealt with scholarship on kairos. The time period for this review is restricted to primary and secondary sources that are from or refer to the Bronze Age through the Hellenistic period (ca. 3000–146 BCE).

83 Habinek, Ancient Rhetoric and Oratory, x.
In Chapter 3, I attempt a prehistory of kairos, which looks at the historic conditions in Greek history before the disciplinary period of rhetoric that provided a place of activity and growth of the concept of kairos. This study of kairos in this chapter addresses the first research question: If kairos was significant, and still is, in the development and teaching of rhetoric, what significance did this particular timing have in the ancient Greek society between 3000-600 BCE? I look, then, at ancient Greek textual and visual expressions from 3000-600 BCE as evidence for how the proto-Greeks experienced, perceived, observed, and reacted to “a moment in time.” The textual and visual evidence used in this chapter focuses on the dominance of orality, aurality, and visuality in their broadly nonliterate culture.

While in Chapter 3, kairos was indirectly recognized from examples of the proto-Greeks’ visual arts and poetry, Chapter 4 finds kairos in less oblique ways because there is more historic evidence available in the eras of this chapter, 800-400 BCE. But these eras also represent an expansion and changes in how the Greeks organized their expressions. In Chapter 4, the second research question is addressed: Given other kinds of time besides kairos, what visual and textual evidence supports the significance of this kind of timing in ancient Greek society between 800-400 BCE? This chapter follows kairos through rather transitional historical conditions of the ancient Greeks; therefore kairos was considered to be a transitory state, between its natural organic state as a “moments in time” to a narrowed sense of “opportune timing.”

Chapter 5 examines how the concept of kairos has moved from the realm of natural experiences to being language-locked into the technical terminology rhetoric and of the technē. The content of this chapter responded to my last research inquiry: In what ways did kairos change in definition and praxis between 400-146 BCE, and why? I respond by identifying some
key cultural concepts and constructs upon which the thinkers, poets, and artists’ established their ideological and educational aims.

Chapter 6 is a conclusion and recaps the overall aim of this dissertation project, and it provides a summary of each chapter, including important contributions made to the study of the history of rhetoric. Additionally, the contents of the concluding chapter include future research and growth for other projects that can be extended from this study.
CHAPTER 2

DENOTATIONS AND CONNOTATIONS OF ANCIENT KAIROS:
A REVIEW OF LITERATURE IN THREE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES

CHAPTER ABSTRACT: Because this is a cross-disciplinary study of kairos, some ground-clearing needs to take place on how each discipline has handled the subject. The review moves from denotations to connotations by first covering the lexical definitions of kairos, and then addressing examples of how kairos has been accounted for in Classical studies, studies in the history of rhetoric, and the studies in the visual arts. The review of literature in these three disciplines is crucial to understanding the breadth of dimensions implicit in the concept of kairos. This review also aids in demonstrating the broad spectrum of human agencies to which kairos has been connected in ancient Greek history.

The purpose of this chapter is to review the definitions and connotations that have contributed to an academic understanding of kairos. As a cross-disciplinary study of kairos in the Classical studies, studies in the history of rhetoric, and the study of visual arts some ground-clearing needs to take place regarding how each discipline has handled the subject. The lexical definitions will be covered by some philological information first. After this material, the review of literature from each discipline area will follow to provide some comprehension of how scholars have interpreted the broad span of dimensions implicit in the concept of kairos.

This literature review responds to my theoretical framework by investigating whether scholars have asked “what is kairos?” or have their investigations asked “how ought kairos to be considered in various contexts in ancient Greek history?” This literature review fits into my methodological approach because in order for me to contribute new perspectives on kairos in the context of various media and historic conditions, a “knowledge of literary sources” and a familiarity with specific themes and concepts” must be established; this manner of addressing the subject matter is part of Panofsky’s description of equipment for interpretation” (fig. 1.7).
Lexical Definitions, Philological Information, and Usage

Some of the scholars who commented on the history of *kairos* have tried to connect its etymological development to other words in the Greek lexicon, however in the recently published *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, the philological information on *kairos* resolves that its etymology is “uncertain.”

Liddell-Scott’s *A Greek-English Lexicon* (*LSJ*) defines the masculine noun *καιρός* as follows: *καιρό-, ὁ, due measure, proportion, fitness.*

*The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* defines the noun as follows: *καιρός, -ου ὁ, due measure, fitness, opportuneness.*

Beyond these basic definitions, its usage from these sources should be considered. Both the *LSJ* and *Brill* have cited the earliest occurrences of *kairos*, as a noun, in Hesiod’s proverb from *Works and Days* (694).

καιρός δ᾿ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος. — *Brill* translates this as “proportion is best in every case”

καιρός δ᾿ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος. — *LSJ* does not offer a translation only that it becomes a proverb.

Here are a couple of examples of how scholars have interpreted *kairos* within *Works and Days* (694). Both of these translations are publications of the The Loeb Classical Library as follows:

μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καιρός δ᾿ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος.

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84 Richard B. Onians’ discussion of kairos in *The Origins of European Thought: About the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time, and Fate* in which he suggests that the temporal kairos (καιρός) is etymologically connected to physical καίριος and that both are connect to κείρω (cut) or κρίνω (separate, part) (344 and 344 fn.1). His position has been perpetuated by other scholars such as the following: Debra Hawhee, *Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece* (2004); Thomas Rickert, *Ambient Rhetoric: The Attunements of Rhetorical Being* (2013). William H. Race, “The Word Καιρός in Greek Drama,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association* (1974), vol. 111 (1981), 197. Onians is not the only classicist to put forth ideas about the etymological history of kairos; I have chosen him as a brief example.


86 *LSJ*, s.v. “καιρός.”


88 Ibid.

89 *LSJ*, s.v. “καιρός.”
The translations are not so interesting divested from the entire text; it is how each translator chose to position this sentence within the Greek and the English translations, how decisions were made about punctuation, which manuscripts were used, and then subsequently how these lines were published. In Evelyn-White’s translation, this line ends a paragraph with advice about sailing and loading a wagon (WD 689-694).

μηδ᾽ ἐν νηυσὶν ἀπαντα βίον κούλησι τίθεσθαι: ἀλλὰ πλέω λείπειν, τὰ δὲ μείονα φορτίζεσθαι.

Do not put all your goods in hollow ships; leave the greater part behind, and put the lesser part on board.

ἀλλὰ πλέω λείπειν, τὰ δὲ μείονα φορτίζεσθαι. for it is a bad business to meet with disaster among the waves of the sea;

δεινὸν γὰρ πόντου μετὰ κύμαισι πήματι κύρσαι. as it is bad if you put too great a load on your wagon and break the axle,

δεινὸν δ᾽, εἰ κ’ ἐπί ἁμαζὰν ὑπέρβιον ἁχθὸς ἁείρας and your goods are spoiled.

ἀξόνα. καυάξις καὶ φορτία μαυρωθείῃ. Observe due measure: and proportion is best in all things.

μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καιρὸς δ᾽ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀριστός. Bear in mind measures; rightness is best in all things.

This translation has been used time and again to suggest that Hesiod is cautioning his audience not to overload a wagon and break the axle. Whereas Most moves the line to the start of the next paragraph in which Hesiod goes on to advise on the right age for marriage (WD 694-697).

μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καιρὸς δ᾽ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀριστός. Bear in mind measures; rightness is best in all things.

ἀραιὸς δὲ γυναῖκα τεὸν ποτὶ οἶκον ἀγεσθαί, Lead a wife to your house when you are in good season,

μήτε τριηκόντων ἐτέων μάλα πόλλ᾽ ἀπολείπων nor having added very many years short of thirty

μήτ᾽ ἐπιθεὶς μάλα πολλά· γάμος δὲ τοι ὁρίος οὕτος. nor having added very many: this is a marriage in good season for you.

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92 Ibid.
Most’s translation, different than others, proposes a translation by which the literature can be analyzed and interpreted differently. I will cover this differentiation in Hesiod further in Chapter 3; for now, however, Most’s translation offers the broadest contextual definition of kairos, one that aptly fits Hesiod’s intentions.

The Brill entries go on to provide examples of kairos into the twelfth century CE with the Archbishop Eustathius of Thessalonica, and Brill recognizes Kairos as a proper noun. Brill references Pythagorean use of Kairos to represent the number seven, and the mythological god Kairos is mentioned.93 LSJ does not provide as many derivative examples nor do they mention the personified form, and their latest examples are with the sophist Libanius in the fourth century CE and then in the Vetus Testamentum Graece Reddictum in the sixteenth century CE. Although these reference sources do not offer conclusive usages of kairos, they try to provide the earliest usage, prominent usage, and the latest relative usage. A view of the primary text sources in which kairos or derivatives of the noun were used demonstrates its usage as most prevalent with authors of the fifth and fourth century BCE. This is also evident in the kairos entry in Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik (Historical Dictionary of Rhetoric) where authors of the sixth, fifth and fourth centuries BCE dominate the entry; the entry begins with Homer and continues into the twentieth century. The definition provided in this entry stresses “the element of experience in kairos as opposed to speculative or theoretical,” which the author of the entry, James Kinneavy, notes “has important epistemological, rhetorical, and pedagogical implications,

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93 Montanari, The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek, s.v. “καιρὸς” (Boston, MA: Brill, 2015). The ancient references cited in Brill are Pausanias 5.14.9 for the personification Kairos, and Theolytus of Methymna, Lesbos, a no-date author, for the Pythagorean number reference (THEOL. 44). The connection between the number seven and kairos, and the deified form of kairos will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.
as the historical development of the concept shows." The experiential element is also commented on in Smyth’s *Greek Grammar*. In a section on the omission of the copulative verb εἶναι (infinitive of ‘to be’), Smyth considers instances where the language expresses necessity or duty. Smyth cites an example from Demosthenes’ *Philippic* (3 9.6): ἀνάγκη φυλάττεσθαι, *it is necessary to be on our guard*. Smyth also says this is the same with other Greek words, such as: ὥρα, καιρός, εἰκός, χρεών, δέον, verbs in –τέον...; Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* (2.1.28) θεραπευτέον τούς *we must serve the gods*. From Smythe, the semantic weight of kairos begins to surface but other words that may have similarities in usage do as well. Again, the context of kairos becomes important. The value of these lexical definitions, the philological information, and the use of kairos over historic periods is that beyond basic definitions, we gain insight into the development and dimensions of this abstract noun. For example, these reference sources alert the reader to fact that kairos is associated with poetry, rhetoric and oratory, philosophy, and medicine, just to name a few disciplines. This broad application and appearance of kairos in textual evidence suggest that it was part of habitual Greek thought. However, to understand how or in what ways it was part of the Greek mind, kairos really must be studied from more than one disciplinary perspective, such as the project I have proposed here in Classical studies, rhetorical studies, and studies in the visual arts. Because each disciplinary treatment of kairos is contributing a particular perspective, a broader understanding of kairos is to be gained by considering the interplay among those disciplines.

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96Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, entry 944-.944.a., page 261-2 in reprint.

97Ibid.
Studies in the Classics

Scholars of most disciplines recognize the following about the concept of kairos: it is a difficult concept to interpret; its definitions are multidimensional; its usage changes over time but can be categorized as having either temporal or non-temporal connotations; there are other Greek words related to its usage; and its use with the ancient authors had its heyday in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. The following Classics scholars in this section have been instrumental in defining some of the definitional contours of the ancient Greek concept of kairos for other scholars and academic audiences.

Werner Jaeger in his three volume set *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* (1944) examines the intellectual history of Greece and attempts to explain the “social structure and function of Greek ideals of culture against their historic background.”98 As a culture Jaeger says the Greeks were in pursuit, consciously, of an ideal which “was derived from their new awareness of the position of the individual in the community.”99 The Greeks were trying to solve the problem of the individual’s place in the community.”100 Jaeger introduces *paideia* to readers as “the shaping of the Greek character.”101 The essence of *paideia* was an education of individuals aimed at shaping them into images of the community.102 Jaeger conveys that two main representatives of *paideia* in the fourth century BCE were philosophy and rhetoric, but suggests that the visual arts did not contribute to learning.103

[T]he true representatives of the *paideia* were not, the Greeks believed, the voiceless artists—sculptor, painter, architect— but the poets and musicians, orators (which means

99 Ibid.
102 Ibid., xxiv.
103 Ibid., xi.
statesmen) and philosophers. They felt that the legislator was in a certain respect more akin to the poet than was the plastic artist; for both the poet and the legislator had an educational mission. The legislator alone could claim the title of sculptor, for he alone shaped living men. Often as the Greeks compared the act of education with the work of the plastic artist, they themselves despite their artistic nature hardly ever thought that a man could be educated by looking at works of art...They considered that the only genuine forces which could form the soul were words and sounds, and—so far as they work through words or sounds or both—rhythm and harmony; for the decisive factor in all paideia is active energy, which is even more important in a culture of the mind than in the agon which exercise physical strength and agility.\(^\text{104}\)

Jaeger explains that rhetoric and philosophy were both key aspects to the Greek *paideia*, because they use words and sounds to communicate their idea. In fact, there were visual aspects of the Greeks’ environment and historic conditions that were instructive too, and I draw attention to those aspects in Chapter 3. Jaeger’s recognition of the concept of καιρός, which is related to both philosophy and rhetoric, does not appear as an indexed term until volume three, *The Conflict of Cultural Ideals in the Age of Plato*, which generally supports the heyday of kairos being in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. When kairos is mentioned, generally it is connected to rhythm and harmony in music, philosophy, rhetoric, athletics, and the plastic arts in later *technai* (plural of *technē*, art, skill, cunning of hand), and primarily with the works of Plato, Isocrates, and Demosthenes.

Jaeger’s scholarship helps place kairos into a general time period of its most prolific use in alphabetic text; and beyond this, through his connections of kairos to the subjects of the Greek *paideia*, he provides a perspective on the educational and epistemological connotations of kairos. And even though his work on *paideia* does not connect the plastic arts with the other modes of learning (*paideia*), he sees kairos as a commonality between all of those subjects that were modes of learning. Jaeger, in a way, relegates kairos to a historical place where it can only be accounted for because it can be located in alphabetic text. Kairos by Jaeger’s account is then a

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concept for the philosophers, the orators, and disciplinary rhetoric, which implies that kairos was always a concept language-locked into discipline specific subjects and *technai*; he affords it no pre-literate history.

The research of Mario Untersteiner has focused on the predisciplinary period of rhetoric and has contributed one of the more expanded perspectives on the connotations of kairos in *The Sophists* (1948, translated 1953). He provides focused discussion on kairos in his chapters about Gorgias of Leontini (483-375 BCE), a Sicilian philosopher and orator. Later in the book in a chapter on Antiphon (480-411 BCE) an Athenian orator, Untersteiner compares Antiphon’s views on kairos to those of Gorgias. However, the first mention of kairos in the book is with Protagoras of Abdera (483-375 BCE), the Thracian Sophist. Untersteiner notes that even though Protagoras does not speak of kairos, this was not due to a lack of his knowing about kairos. Instead, Untersteiner suggests that because Protagoras thinks “Man is the completion, therefore the master of experiences,” he “frees himself from καιρός, which he understood as insane strife.”

The earliest use of kairos on which Untersteiner comments is related to Pythagorean philosophy.

The philosophers of this school, if not Pythagoras himself, saw in καιρός one of the laws of the universe, which were thus valid in general as well as in particular. Καιρός and its allied concept δίκαιον ‘then found their application in the relations and communications between man and man, communications which are bound to vary according to age and office and kinship and state of mind’. This function of καιρός has its roots in Pythagorean doctrine of opposites, which, bound together by harmony, give life to the universe. The form impressed on logos or on its opposite is the work of καιρός and the result is precisely ἀπάτη.

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107 Ibid., 110-111.
Untersteiner recognizes here that kairos has “allied” concepts observed by the Pythagoreans. In just this one passage he draws attention to two, *apatē* (ἀπάτη, deception) and the concept of “right justice” (δίκαιον, related to persons, observant of custom and social rule, well-ordered, civilized, and later of things, even, well-balanced, from δίκη, dikē).\(^{108}\)

Other concepts Untersteiner discusses in alliance with kairos are μέτρον (measure, rule),\(^ {109}\) harmony (*harmonia, ἀρμονία*), *logos* (speech), and *prepon* (πρέπον, the appropriate or fitting). The connotations that resulted because of the Pythagorean’s treatment of them will influence many later Greek thinkers. By Untersteiner making these relationships apparent to his readership, he is uncovering and perpetuating some of the dimensional characteristics of kairos, such as the aesthetic, epistemological, and ethical. I see this as a result of his asking how “kairos ought to be considered in the context of Pythagorean philosophy.”

For them [the Pythagoreans] it was the manifestation of ἀρμονία which reduces the opposite qualities in the universe to a unity. That is, the wise man must know how to master the opposites, i.e. the ἀντικείνοι λόγοι [opposite-way logos], by overcoming their barren strife.\(^ {110}\)

“Overcoming barren strife” refers to the result of kairos arriving in the conceptual space between opposing *logoi* (ἀντικείνοι λόγοι, opposite thoughts, expressions, perceptions), or rather the “wise man’s” ability to know the occasion when it is appropriate to act. Untersteiner says, “Man cannot escape the antitheses,”\(^ {111}\) but kairos is the abstract place when a decision can be made that

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\(^{109}\) Ibid., 82. For the Pythagoreans, Untersteiner interprets the importance of the connection between μέτρον and καιρός, “A precept for life is therefore the mastery (μέτρα) over καιρός” (82). Also, according to Untersteiner, the model of usage for μέτρον as related to καιρός goes back to the poetry of Hesiod (fl. 750-650) and can also be found in Pindar (517-438 BCE).

\(^{110}\) Ibid., 82.

\(^{111}\) Ibid., 159.
can institute harmony between the opposites. Untersteiner interprets that “deception predisposes a choice, a decision expressed by the cognitive act made concrete by καιρός.”

From the connections drawn between kairos and harmonia, and from the relationship of kairos to logos and ἀπάτη (apatē, deception), Untersteiner highlights the ethical dimension of all the terms. His analysis points to kairos and apatē sharing the characteristic of ambivalence, versus logos which is not wholly ambivalent, because it has the capability of making either side of an opposition convincing—“logos can distinguish between the just and unjust.” This connection of kairos in the use of speech (logos) for deception or truth-seeking has long lasting effects on the reputation of Gorgias, other sophists, and rhētorikē. The ethical dimension of kairos surfacing in Untersteiner’s work reflects the Greeks’ concerns for the nature and character of the rhētor (ῥήτωρ, public speaker, statesman, politician, orator), learning to use speech in ways that could thwart justice. In the public arenas where the Greeks engaged in oral communication, the timing (kairos) of speech was also connected to the appropriateness (prepon) of the speech. Untersteiner draws a connection between kairos and another Greek concept, prepon (πρέπον, the appropriate or fitting), which draws out ethical and epistemological dimensions of kairos.

In πρέπον we have the formal element of epistemological reality expressed by καιρός …. A particular aspect of καιρός is afforded by πρέπον ‘the fitting’, the appropriateness of the expression to the subject’ …. πρέπον represents the formal aspects of the epistemological καιρός.

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112 Untersteiner, The Sophists, 159.
113 Ibid., 186.
114 Ibid., 108.
115 Ibid., 111, 112, and 121.
Untersteiner has interpreted an intimate connection between these two Greek words by describing *prepon* as an element of “epistemological reality.” This means that *prepon* holds within its meaning the conventions for social behavior and propriety, while *kairos* recognizes the rhythm of circumstances surrounding the situation. The connection between the *kairos* and *prepon*, as well as their differences, is another theme important to the study of the history of rhetoric, especially when the Romans begin to study Greek rhetoric. Cicero, for one, is going to acknowledge both in Greek rhetoric. As the Romans write their own treatises on rhetoric, *kairos* will fade away from the years following the development of rhetoric in the European world, not popping up again as an element of rhetoric and philosophy until the Renaissance. Cicero comments on the untranslatable nature of *kairos*, relating that there is no word in Latin with the same connotations. However, *prepon* will survive as *decorum* in Roman rhetoric.

According to Untersteiner, the concept of *kairos* was significant to Gorgias, so he spends several chapters examining Gorgias’ epistemology, ethic, aesthetic, and rhetoric. Untersteiner says that *kairos* was an important concept to Gorgias because it revealed a “world on which Man could count for the attainment of the truth.” Gorgias, as an orator and a philosopher, translated the “epistemological motif of καιρός” into terms of a rhetorical concept, demonstrating in part his tendency to apply a concept like *kairos* to all manifestations of the intellect. For Gorgias, καιρός “translated into rhetorical terms, becomes both capacity and precept.” Untersteiner explains that “καιρός as capacity” means the capacity to improvise speeches depending on the occasion. Kairos as precept functions like *prepon*. It is the speech

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118 Cicero, *Orator* 20.70 and *De officiis* 1.2.93.
120 Ibid.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid., 197.
123 Ibid.
that must be based on specific precepts, and by means of kairos the speech can succeed in penetrating the *doxa* (δόξα, true or false notion, opinion). On trying to establish these specific precepts, “Gorgias does not appear to dwell pedantically,” because kairos as an epistemological motif remains “always something living,” changing, not capable of being made into something static.

Through his study of Gorgias, Untersteiner is able to elucidate the non-temporal *kairos*. The non-temporal versus the temporal modes of kairos are important in understanding the various dimensions of a concept as it moves through Greek history with different connotations. As a predisciplinary figure, Gorgias provides ample ground for looking at the non-temporal kairos, before it turns temporal in the mid-fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Before Gorgias, Untersteiner writes about how influential the contribution of the Pythagoreans’ doctrine was to sophistic thinking. The Pythagorean perspective on kairos is not often included in discussions of academic kairos, outside of a passing reference. But with Untersteiner, the Pythagorean influence begins to unfold in the various dimensions of Gorgias’ work and teaching with kairos as an important concept. As a comparison to Gorgias, Untersteiner shows that his contemporary Antiphon was in favor a temporal καιρός, as a division of time, the right moment.

Untersteiner’s approach to reviewing kairos in various dimensions and the attention he draws to temporal and non-temporal modes of kairos not only demonstrates the complexity of this abstract term, but also how the connections he makes between kairos and other Greek concepts positions kairos as a representative of how the Greek mindset viewed the negotiation of exigent circumstances in thoughts and actions.

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125 Untersteiner, 197.
126 Ibid.
127 Ibid., 239.
Responding to Untersteiner’s interpretations of kairos and work of the sophists, William H. Race footnotes in his article “The Word Καιρός in Greek Drama,” (1981) that while Untersteiner “collects many examples of καιρός...his discussions often seem eccentric.”  

Race, however does not elaborate on exactly what strikes him as peculiar, odd, or eccentric in Untersteiner’s discussions. Race begins his article by providing a brief timeline of kairos, succinctly describing its connotative nature and characteristics.

One of the most interesting—and elusive—words in Greek is καιρός. Its first appearance (in adjectival form) is in the Iliad (4.185, 8.84, 326), where it denotes a vital or lethal place in the body. At the other end of its development, however, a temporal meaning predominates and καιρός eventually becomes a mere synonym of χρόνος [time, duration, period] or ὥρα [limited time, time of day, moment]. But in between from Hesiod well into the fourth century, καιρός was one of several important normative words, often with little or no temporal connotation, whose basic sense is propriety. Greek drama from Aeschylus to Menander provides an important corpus within which to study the full range of meaning of καιρός and it is the purpose of this article to trace the various shades of meaning of the word, in order to arrive at a more precise understanding of passages in which the word occurs.

Like Jaeger, Race is positioning kairos into particular historical periods of Greek history, establishing that between the mid-fifth to late fourth century BCE the temporal aspect of καιρός becomes increasingly dominant. Primarily he is interested in identifying and analyzing the spatial, non-temporal, and the temporal aspects of καιρός in Greek poetry and drama, and he does this by examining the various connotations ascribed to kairos over time. In some ways, Race is working in the same manner as Untersteiner, asking “how kairos ought to be considered

130 Ibid., 198n5. Race notes, “In the period between Aristophanes [b. 446 – d.? BCE, fl. 427-386 BCE] and Menander [342-291 BCE], καιρός becomes increasingly temporal and gradually loses it normative meanings. One sign of this is the more frequent use (especially in scholastic glosses) of εὖκαιρί [well-timed, good kairos]. By the time of Menander, it has almost completely lost the classical sense of appropriateness, as is shown by the need to add a qualifying word such as εὖ [well, good].”
131 Ibid., 198n4. Race clarifies that his attempt to determine which aspects of καιρός were predominate and when does not mean that other connotations were not also present.
in ancient Greek drama.” The importance to be underscored between the work of Untersteiner and Race is that there are not clear divisions, but there are dominate aspects or connotations of kairos that surface within the various contexts. Race’s inquiries on kairos are through yet another context, Greek drama—a genre that requires an audience. For his study, he concludes with an interpretation of kairos “that in the majority of cases in fifth-century drama the normative connotations [of kairos] are dominant.”\(^{132}\) Although, he confesses in his final footnote that in a certain Menander fragment (568.7-8), there is “one use of the word καιρός which completely baffles all attempts at interpretation” and for which he did not find any analogous information.\(^{133}\)

\[\text{kairos estin } \text{νόσος ψυχῆς: } \text{o plηγεὶς } \delta' \text{ εἰσεθ' } \text{tη τιτρώσκεται.}\]

These lines may translate as follows:

kairos/right-timing is a/the sickness/disorder of life/of the soul/the mind: the man who is struck will know as he is being wounded.\(^{135}\)

Other possible meanings of νόσος are ‘disease, plague; generally, distress, anguish; a disease of the mind caused by madness, passion, vice; mischief.’\(^{136}\) Race says, “It is hard to imagine just how καιρός could possibly be νόσος.”\(^{137}\) But from Untersteiner, we learned that Protagoras may have supported this view by considering kairos as “insane strife.” In fact the more that is learned about kairos in context with other Greek concepts, such as harmony (harmonia) and later in this chapter symmetria (commensurability of parts), the more the Menander fragment makes sense.

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\(^{132}\) Race, “The Word Καυρός in Greek Drama,” 213.

\(^{133}\) Ibid.

\(^{134}\) Ibid.

\(^{135}\) Ibid.

\(^{136}\) LSJ, s.v. “νόσος.”

\(^{137}\) Race, “The Word Καυρός in Greek Drama,” 213n49.
As Race puts it, just as his own article was going to press on kairos in Greek drama, so was John R. Wilson’s article “Kairos as ‘Due Measure,’” (1980). Of the various dimensions of kairos, Wilson is interested in the “due measure.” Wilson agrees that kairos is complex in nature, that it has multiple conceptual dimensions (i.e., ethical, aesthetic, etc.), but he has detected that “its very flexibility seems to have made it the victim of persistent misinterpretation.” Wilson tracks the spatial and temporal usage of kairos to authors prior to the fifth century BC, noting that this evidence is slim. Wilson contributes a good survey of Pindar’s use of kairos. He finds that within Pindar kairos connotations concern “either right behaviour in general or right behaviour in the poet, i.e. literary tact.” Wilson also contributes description, or summaries, of what constitutes kairos in different contexts in his own words.

Within his survey of Pindaric kairos, for example:

*Kairos* is the area between too much and too little, but in a commercial transaction this amounts to precise measurement with no margin for error.142

[O]ur survey of kairos in Pindar indicates that it is never exclusively temporal or temporally derived in meaning. On the contrary, it always maintains a broad flexibility in which temporal appropriateness may be included but is not usually prominent. Pindaric καιρὸς is always open ended, and the reader should be encouraged to give it the widest application.143

*Kairos* is that difficult trouble free region between extremes.144

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138 Race, “The Word Καιρός in Greek Drama,” 198n3. In the same year another article of Wilson’s was published on kairos: John R. Wilson, “Kairos as ‘Profit,’” *The Classical Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (1981), 418-420. In this article, Wilson briefly looks at some of the ways logographers considered kairos, claiming that they have ignored the connotation of kairos as ‘profit’ when citing the usage of kairos in ancient texts.

139 John R. Wilson, “Kairos as ‘Due Measure,’” *Glotta* 58, Bd., 3./4. Η. (1980), 177-178.

140 Wilson, “Kairos as ‘Due Measure,’” 178-180. He references primary sources from Hesiod to Plutarch.

141 Wilson, “Kairos as ‘Due Measure,’” 181.

142 Ibid., 186.

143 Ibid., 187.

144 Ibid.
In these descriptions, Wilson attempts his own lexical definitions. He recognizes the reader’s responsibility for understanding kairos beyond the usual lexical definitions, and he positions kairos in a conceptual space of Greek thought and decision making. His positioning of kairos in “that difficult trouble free region between extremes” harkens back to Untersteiner.

Another important connection Wilson draws attention to is the connection of kairos to music. Through Plato’s Socratic dialogue Politicus (307b1) Wilson explains that while Plato does not see the non-temporal kairos worthy of philosophical use, it does have an aesthetic context in music.145 This association with music puts kairos in alliance with other concepts related to music, such as rhythm, balance, proportion, and “the beautiful.”146 From Wilson, and the others mentioned so far in this chapter, clearly the denotation and connotation of kairos are best understood in an allied or intertwined context with other components of Greek thought. According to Wilson, Pindar and Isocrates consistently use kairos in ethical and aesthetic contexts.147 Plato’s acceptance of an aesthetic acceptance of kairos in music, again, simply emphasizes the need to consider “how kairos ought to be considered ‘as due measure’ in the context of ancient Greek thinkers.”148 Wilson and the others are showing that in lieu of “slim evidence” on kairos in particular eras of Greek history, historic conditions and context can be reconstructed in order to advance a broader academic understating of kairos.

“Slim evidence” on ancient kairos applies to more than Race’s analysis. In Victoria Jennings chapter “Ion’s Hymn to Kairos” (2007), she is writing about hymn to Kairos by of Ion

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145 Wilson, “Kairos as ‘Due Measure,’” 201.
146 Ancient Greek terms such as: ρυθμός (rhythmos, rhythm); συμμετρία (symmetria; proportion); καλός (kalos, “good, beautiful, noble”); εὖ (eû, “well, good”)
147 Wilson, “Kairos as ‘Due Measure,’” 199.
148 Ibid., 199.
of Chios (490/80-422/1 BCE). Only the title of this hymn remains.\textsuperscript{149} The hymn itself is lost, but the existence of the hymn has been recognized by other ancient authors. Pausanias (110-180 CE) reports in his \textit{Description of Greece} on the altis at Olympia, and claims he knows of a hymn to Kairos composed by Ion of Chios. Pausanias says the hymn by Ion names Kairos as the youngest child of Zeus (5.14.9). The aim of Jennings’ chapter is to find a deeper level of meaning in historical memories of Ion’s hymn or what she calls a “reimagined topography.”\textsuperscript{150} To accomplish this “reimagined topography,” she must reconstruct the historical conditions of Ion’s world through the use of a variety of primary and secondary resources related to the usage of kairos and appearances of the god Kairos in sculptures. On the available details of the denotations and connotations of kairos, Jennings does not present anything new; she does, however, ask the kind of questions that concern “how kairos ought to be considered in the world of Ion of Chios.”

But why Kairos? Is there something about \textit{kairos} that makes it—or him—particularly appropriate for a prominent corner in one of the most significant sites in the ancient world? What might \textit{kairos} signify to Ion and \textit{at Olympia}\textsuperscript{151}

Jennings does not contribute any conclusive answers, but this is in keeping with kairos being a difficult concept to grasp. Even the most reasonable attempt a expanding an academic understanding of this concept through fragments of textual and visual evidence potentially creates more questions than answers.

For this study the importance of her “reimagined topography” draws attention to the “conceptual and topographic ensemble of the Altar to Kairos, the Polyclitan Kairos, the South Italian “Olympian Kairos,” and the Hymn to Kairos. Allied with the growing theoretical

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\textsuperscript{150} Jennings, “Ion’s Hymn to Kairos,” 345.
\textsuperscript{151}Ibid., 335.
\end{flushleft}
attention paid to kairos—points towards an intriguing “mode of Greek thought” at work in the middle of the fifth century,”152 Jennings connects the development of kairos to many Greek subjects except sculpture.153 She mentions the possibility of there being a lost Kairos by Polyclitus, but she does not look further into his perspective on the concept of kairos in relation to his Canon (Kanon, a technē or a treatise setting out criterion for a system of proportion of the human form in sculpture). So more research on the ensemble she mentions, the time period, and especially the appearances of Kairos in southern Italy would not only tell more about the world of Ion, but also expand the academic understanding of kairos. Other observations of Jennings’ help to identify who the audience might have been for the kairos in usage and as a god. A few of her main inquiries are about the supposed altar to Kairos near the north east entrance of the stadium precinct at Olympia, which was used by the officials and competitors.154 She connects possible connotations of kairos with sophists, like Gorgias who was in Athens in 427,155 wondering if Ion may have been in Athens at the same time, or if Ion had been familiar with Peri Kairou (attributed to Gorgias and mentioned by later authors). She also considers the possibility that Ion and Gorgias met up on the “festival circuit.”156 She explains: “The great cycle of Games was a focus for intellectual display, with Olympia attracting the widest possible panhellenic audience.”157 Kairos may have been on display to all of these on-lookers and hearers, which adds

152Jennings, “Ion’s Hymn to Kairos,”345.
153 Ibid., 341-343.
154 Ibid., 332. Jennings uses the following passage from Pausanias, Description of Greece (5.14.9).
155 Ibid., 336.
157 Jennings, “Ion’s Hymn to Kairos,”338.
an interesting point to the historical conditions, and about who the ancient audience was, and how that contributed to its pervasive character in so many Greek sociocultural agencies.

Without any singular treatise existing from primary or secondary sources defining the fundamental characteristics and origins of Greek μῆτις (μῆτις, wisdom, skill, craft), Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant synthesized information about the aspects of the Greek language, thought, and culture to understand μῆτις as an important aspect of the Greeks’ system of values in Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society (1978). The aim and structure to their study of μῆτις is an important parallel scholarly model for my study of kairos. Detienne and Vernant “enquire into the place held by μῆτις in Greek civilization,” or rather the places. They ask “how μῆτις ought to be considered in ancient Greek civilization.” In their introduction, they recognize that their investigation may cause readers to wonder about which domain this study belongs or from which disciplines their methods are derived. Their response confirms that investigating an abstract concept, in this case representing a type of intelligence, “operates on many different levels” within a culture. And they assert how attempting “to define a major category of the mind at every stage in Greek culture” requires attention to the condition of time and place. They explain the demands of their investigation of μῆτις as follows:

Our enquiry thus encompasses the whole extent of the cultural world of the Greeks from its most ancient technical traditions to the structure of its pantheon. It operates at every level, probing it in all its many dimensions, constantly shifting from one area to another to seek out, by means of apparently heterogeneous evidence, a single attitude of mind, a single image relating to how the Greeks represented a particular type of intelligence at grips with objects which must be dominated by cunning if success is to be won in the most diverse fields of action. We have been obliged to find different methods of approach, to collate different viewpoints and perspectives, to suit the different cases

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159 Ibid., 2.
160 Ibid., 2.
161 Ibid.
Detienne and Vernant open the possibility of discussing heterogeneous material from ancient Greek culture as subcategories or division of a main category. Some of the various perspectives covered involve the semantic field of *mē̓tis*, the history of technology, skills of artisans, analysis of myth, and historical psychology.

The act of defining *mē̓tis* is a matter synthesizing the elements gathered from far-flung aspects of the cultural world of the ancient Greeks in order to suggest a Greek mindset. While their study of *mē̓tis* took Detienne and Vernant ten years to realize, their approach to research on ancient Greek concepts, such as *mē̓tis*, as a “mental category,” attempts to interpret the intrinsic meaning of the concept by examining it “at the heart of the Greek mental world.” They explain, “For the forms of wily intelligence, of effective, adaptable cunning…the Greeks brought into play in large sectors of their social and spiritual life, which they valued highly within their religious system.” They claim that as such an integral concept to Greek life “is not difficult to detect” in the heart of the Greek mental world…where its influence is sometimes all-pervasive. Their study of the “mental category” of *mē̓tis* is, as they point out, “affected by conditions of time and place,” which attempts “to define its structure and activity, the series of procedures by which it operates and the implicit rules of logic which it obeys.” Their act of defining *mē̓tis* within the context of Greek life is a polished example of what Hacking and Schiappa advocate for the act of defining, and their multifaceted methodological approach.

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162 Detienne and Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence*, 1.
163 Ibid.
164 Ibid., 2.
165 Ibid.
166 Ibid., 3.
167 Ibid.
168 Ibid., 2-3.
matches their inquiries about *mē̑tis* as an “all-pervasive” concept in Greek society.\(^{169}\) Just as *mē̑tis* is a category of the mind, so is kairos; therefore, *kairos* is another “all-pervasive” ancient Greek concept.

**Studies in the History of Rhetoric**

In the literature for studies in the history of rhetoric, in general, there is a lack of attention to the fact that kairos was an “all-pervasive” concept in the mental world of the ancient Greeks. After all, looking at kairos in the history of rhetoric is looking at the latest connotations of kairos with *rhētorikē* not being part of the historical conditions of the Greeks until 380/85 BCE. Denotations and connotations of kairos in rhetoric cannot be understood without addressing its presence in other Greek sociocultural agencies and its connection to other Greek concepts before the early fourth century BCE.

James Kinneavy and Catherine Eskin contributed an entry on kairos to the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, which covers “what kairos was to certain ancient figures from Homer to the twentieth century CE.” The entry accomplishes what most dictionary entries do. Specific to their kairos entry, it contains a selection of chronologically arranged information about which ancient authors used the term. This entry, while more extensive than others, does not respond to the question of “how kairos ought to be considered in ancient Greek rhetoric.” I bring up Kinneavy and Eskin’s entry because in a later article they wrote together, they concluded that one reason scholars have failed to address the necessity of kairos in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* is “due, in part, to its absence in reference dictionaries.”\(^ {170}\) However, they co-authored the entry in the *Historisches Wörterbuch der*

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\(^ {169}\) Detienne and Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence*, 3.

Rhetorik over a decade before they made their claim in “Kairos in Aristotle’s Rhetoric.” The problem is not the absence of kairos in dictionaries, encyclopedias, and concordances. The problem is that these are denotations of kairos, which cannot possibly do the work to make all its connotations in the world of the ancient Greeks clear.

The ultimate aim of Kinneavy’s chapter “Kairos: A Neglected Concept in Classical Rhetoric” in volume Rhetoric and Praxis: The Contribution of Classical Rhetoric to Practical Reasoning (1986) is to reassert the importance of kairos into contemporary theory of composition, which he sees as neglected. To assert the importance of kairos, Kinneavy provides an extended definition of the concept and examines several dimensions of kairos that were also dealt with in the ancient world: ethical, epistemological, aesthetic, theoretical, and civic educational. First, Kinneavy identifies and defines these dimensions through ancient textual sources, and then applies these dimensions to his contemporary views on college-level composition. Kinneavy’s dimensions of kairos are not unique, and many others have considered them. However, his discussion addresses the civic educational dimension of kairos and civic education (politikē paideia) without ambiguity. He sees kairos as “closely aligned to education” in ancient Greece and mentions the educational influences present in Hesiod, Solon (640-558 BCE), Pythagoras, and Gorgias.

For the Greeks, the importance of the city was a common bond of humanity that it afforded those living together and the strangers who visited them…Since freedom and the ability to persuade and be persuaded are the essence of the polis, it is not surprising to see the education to the life of the polis grounded in persuasion and to see this closely related to the notion of kairos.

173 Ibid., 92.
174 Ibid.
And then he goes further to connect kairos to the public education program, dominated by rhetoric, which prepared young men for citizenship with the symbolic representation of the god Kairos: “The usual representation of Kairos was an ephebe, a young man attending the two years of required civic and military education, at the end of which rite of passage he came into manhood.”\textsuperscript{175} The importance of Kinneavy’s focus on civic education and kairos is that this connection is demonstrated through rhetoric, the visual arts, and later ekphrastic poetry. For Kinneavy, kairos in rhetorical education was part of the social or civic endeavor—a civic discourse—that sought to shape the ideal citizen. Kinneavy’s approach to rhetoric in Greek education largely emphasizes how rhetoric contributed to Greek life in terms of speech as a mode of communication, not so much how it was a reflection of the Greek mind.

However Christopher Lyle Johnstone in his “Introduction: The Origins of the Rhetorical in Archaic Greece,” in \textit{Theory, Text, Context: Issues in Greek Rhetoric and Oratory} (1996), briefly surveys the fundamental “historical and intellectual conditions out of which Greek rhetoric emerged.”\textsuperscript{176} Johnstone relates how work of other scholars, specifically Thomas Cole’s \textit{The Origins of Rhetoric in Ancient Greece} (1991), and Edward Schiappa’s \textit{Protagogras and Logos} (first edition 1991), have inspired a view of Greek \textit{rhetoric} (\textit{rhētorikē})—“a concept and a systematic way of thinking about speech”—as an invention of the Classical period.\textsuperscript{177} And, because of this, they are interested in the “precursors to the art.”\textsuperscript{178} Cole refers to these centuries prior to the late fifth and fourth centuries BCE as protorhetorical and prerhetorical; Schiappa uses predisciplinary. These periods coincide with the philosophical domains of the Presocratics.
some of whom may be more aptly referred to as Sophists or sophists. Cole and Schiappa, as well other contemporary scholars featured in *Theory, Text, Context: Issues in Greek Rhetoric and Oratory* have identified in the predisciplinary period rhetorical impulses in the language and the culture of the Greeks that subsequently made the art of rhetoric possible.¹⁷⁹ Johnstone defines the rhetorical impulse in Greek language and culture as “the disposition to incite decision and action through eloquence of expression.”¹⁸⁰ These scholars are trying to interpret examples of viable rhetorical impulses in the human agencies of the Greeks. For example, Johnstone identifies a few formative factors in the predisciplinary period of rhetoric before the fourth century, such as political developments that gave rise to public speaking, and how “the advent of writing brought about an objectification of speech that eventually made possible an art of oral persuasion that could be studied and taught.”¹⁸¹ Johnstone echoes the perspectives of Eric A. Havelock when he suggests how the Greeks’ oral consciousness “shaped not only the process of composition, but also the activities of listening and thinking.”¹⁸² I would add seeing to these activities as well.

The objectification of speech is really the objectification of thought—an externalized expression of thought to language; the same can be said about the composition and production of the Greeks’ architecture, painting and sculpture. All of these activities were targeting audiences with the intention of obtaining a goal. Johnstone’s perspective on objectified speech, which again is not his alone, provides a context to look at definitional changes in words such as kairos and further supports its connection to the visual arts. In the same way speech becomes concrete through writing, so do Greek expressions in architecture, painting, and sculpture. The

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¹⁸⁰ Ibid.
¹⁸¹ Ibid., 5-6.
externalized ideals of Greek culture are no longer only heard but also seen. Johnstone also sees the Greeks’ “transition from mythos to logos (i.e., from a mythopoeic theogony to a naturalistic cosmology) as ways of understanding the world” important to the development of rhetoric.183

Rhetoric, as both an art of public argument and a theory of civic discourse, was made possible in the fourth century by the development during the Archaic Era of rational rather than mythopoeic uses of language. Essential to the theory and technique of rhetoric as these were conceived by Aristotle (whose treatise on the art is the first systematic account and the fullest expression of Classical theory) are argument, proof, and probability. These linguistic resources were generated and conditioned by the inquiries and speculation of the first Greek “proto-philosophers” who invented a rational world view and developed an abstract, analytical syntax and vocabulary.184

Johnstone says this shift from mythos to logos “marks one of the most profound changes in the intellectual history of the human race.”185 This shift then required the Greek language to be able to express abstract concepts, and this “reasoned discourse” is marked by “the use of impersonal nouns and verbs of attribution instead of action.”186 Johnstone says, “Analytic thinking and deductive reasoning—both essential aspects of rhetorical demonstration—require syntax in which mythopoeic verbs of action are replaced by the verb of analysis: to be (εἰναι). In the “was is and will be of the rationally ordered cosmos, verbs of becoming and dying away, of doing and acting and happening must be replaced by the timeless present of the verb to be.”187 Johnstone further notes how the Greeks’ cosmos is ordered by logos:

The language of theory and argument is not that of genealogy and description, but rather of abstraction, definition, and deductive inference. And this kind of language was not waiting ready-made for Plato and Aristotle, or even for the Sophists before them; it had to be invented. The invention of the idiom of theoretical explanation, as of the intellectual architecture of probabilistic argument, was one accomplishment of the presocratic thinkers.188

184 Ibid.
185 Ibid.
186 Ibid., 10-14.
187 Ibid., 13.
188 Ibid., 11.
Johnstone’s position advocates for looking at historic conditions before disciplinary rhētorikē, and its established technical vocabulary. However, like Detienne and Vernant, that scholarly inquiry requires plodding through what might seem like disparate, and even desolate terrain, of many academic disciplines. By desolate, I mean lacking sufficient evidence. However, through Johnstone’s discussion of the demands probabilistic thinking made on the Greek language, it seems natural to find, as Gorgias did, the non-temporal agency of kairos between probable outcomes. Prior to there being a word, like kairos, to express the abstract nature of the space between probable outcomes, there had always been the experience of carrying out a judgment or an action on a decision. In Chapter 3, I will examine aspects of Greek life in these early nonliterate, but very orally conscious, periods in order to proffer possibilities for what might have filled that conceptual space, and subsequently contributed to disciplinary terminology.

Stephen Usher’s “Kairos in Fourth-Century Greek Oratory,” which appears in the anthology, Oratory in Action (2004), briefly organizes instances in which he says kairos is fulfilling an oratorical role “as a deliberative and epideictic topos.”\(^{189}\) He refers to these instances as kairos topos, and he claims that “kairos topos are to be found whenever a speaker is urging his audience to act.”\(^{190}\) Even though Usher does succeed in providing primary examples of kairos in action, he says that his chapter falls short of fulfilling an implied challenge set out by W. Vollgraff in his L’oraison funèbre de Gorgias (1952), which is that “kairos deserves a monograph to itself,” but this “has not yet been taken up in a comprehensive form.”\(^ {191}\) While Usher’s examples of “kairos topos” in action would be useful to examine, I find his comment about a monograph on kairos which has yet manifested in scholarship interesting. I cannot tell


\(^{190}\) Ibid., 53.

\(^{191}\) Ibid.
for certain if it is Vollgraff or Usher who is claiming that a monograph on kairos has yet to be taken up. If it is Usher, I find this interesting because Oratory in Action was published in 2004 and Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory, and Praxis was published in 2002. Perhaps Usher was not aware of this anthology, or perhaps he discounts it because it is an anthology and not a monograph by one author. While this may seem like a minor point to make, ultimately I believe Usher shows how current scholarship is reacting to old challenges, instead of grounding new research with attempts to reconcile kairos in context and usage, or examining kairos as an “all-pervasive” Greek concept, or by confronting “how kairos ought to be considered in context of ancient Greece.” If it was Volgraff, his idea on the contents of the monograph would be interesting.

Carolyn R. Miller in her “Foreword” for Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory, and Praxis claims that the book is a response to Dilip Gaonkar’s essay “The Idea of Rhetoric in the Rhetoric of Science” in which Miller claims that Gaonkar challenges the “current renaissance of rhetorical studies” and “contemporary rhetoric.” Miller identifies three points in her extensive essay in which she seems to imply that the compilation of essays in Rhetoric and Kairos will prove Gaonkar wrong: 1) “ancient emphasis on practical production rather than theory and interpretation;” 2) “the accompanying ‘ideology of human agency’ that characterizes ancient rhetoric;” and 3) “the ‘thinness’ or abstract quality of ancient productionist vocabulary that can easily be applied to anything thus conveys little of real critical interest.” In general, Miller possibly overstates Gaonkar’s aim, which he clearly identifies in the first sentence of his essay as follows:

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192 I have not yet been able to access Vollgraff’s L’oraison funèbre de Gorgias.
194 Miller, “Foreword,” xi.
A striking but insufficiently examined feature of the current revival of interest in rhetoric is its positioning primarily as a hermeneutic metadiscourse rather than a substantive discourse practice.\textsuperscript{195}

Even our culture appears to promote this hermeneutic impulse in rhetoric. It is a habit of our time to invoke rhetoric, time and again, to make sense of a wide variety of discursive practices that beset and perplex us, and of discursive artifacts that annoy and entertain us, and of discursive formations that inscribe and subjugate us.\textsuperscript{196}

Miller’s tone toward Gaonkar in her foreword contends how the contents of \textit{Rhetoric and Kairos} will disprove his claims about the scholarship in contemporary rhetoric. However, I think her comments miss two important inquiries at the core of Gaonkar’s essay: 1) he is questioning the use of rhetoric as an “interpretive medium” or “rhetoric as hermeneutic;”\textsuperscript{197} and 2) he is considering the interpretive value of “historical reconstruction” versus “contemporary appropriation.”\textsuperscript{198} “Historical reconstruction” and “contemporary appropriation” are not used in Gaonkar’s essay, but they are used by Edward Schiappa in \textit{Protagoras and Logos: A Study in Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric} (2003) and in “Rhetorical Questions” (2010) by Edward Schiappa and Jim Hamm. Ultimately, Gaonkar is arguing or questioning what he identified as the “contemporary impulse to universalize rhetoric,”\textsuperscript{199} meaning “as academics, we are more interested in the rhetoric as interpretive theory than as culture practice.”\textsuperscript{200}

Gaonkar expresses exactly the opinion I have formed on Roger Thompson’s “Ralph Waldo Emerson and the American Kairos” in \textit{Rhetoric and Kairos}. Thompson’s essay is an

\textsuperscript{195} Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, “The Idea of Rhetoric in the Rhetoric of Science,” in \textit{Rhetorical Hermeneutics: Invention and Interpretation in the Age of Science}, eds. Alan G. Gross and William M. Keith, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 25. An important note by Gaonkar: “The core of this paper was initially written for a seminar on “The Rhetoric of Science: New Directions for the Nineties” organized by Alan Gross and John Layne at the 1991 SCA Annual Conventions and published in \textit{Southern Communication Journal} (Summer 1993).” It is important to note the original publication of his ideas extends back more than a decade before Miller’s claim that the 2002 publication of \textit{Rhetoric and Kairos} was responding to Gaonkar’s essay.


\textsuperscript{197} Ibid., 25-26.

\textsuperscript{198} Schiappa, \textit{Protagoras and Logos}, 64-69.


\textsuperscript{200} Ibid., 27.
example of both rhetoric being used as an interpretive medium and contemporary appropriation. There is no American *kairos*, but in his essay he uses *kairos* to describe, adjectively, the *kairotic* or *kairic* aspects of nineteenth century America. Thompson claims the literary and rhetorical texts of this period were invoking the concept of *kairos*. He says in particular that he uses “the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson as a central example of a broader cultural current that consistently relies on *kairos*,” and he argues Emerson’s “writings invoke a concept of *kairos* in order to enact social change.” He even claims that Emerson embodies *kairos*, which raises the following question about Thompson’s contemporary appropriation of *kairos*: If the voice of Emerson cannot confirm that he was invoking *kairos*, the Greek καιρὸς, then in what way does appropriating this ancient Greek concept onto Emerson contribute or expand the study of Emerson?

Thompson uses Kinneavy’s definition of *kairos*—right timing and due measure—to apply to Emerson, but where is the textual evidence confirming that Emerson was purposefully using the ancient Greek concept of καιρὸς or a version of academic *kairos*. And who is Emerson’s audience exactly? Americans? Which ones? Who is Thompson’s audience? Furthermore, in what way does appropriating καιρὸς onto Emerson reduce his authorial or artistic intentions, and assume who Emerson’s audience was? This is the “thinness” of ancient vocabulary to which Gaonkar is referring. As for Miller’s quotes from Gaonkar—the “ideology of human agency” and the “thinness” of ancient vocabulary, again, she does not provide a full view of Gaonkar’s perspectives. The questions, paradoxes, and problems that Ganokar allows to surface in his essay are important, because these are issues that have direct relevance to the

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202 Ibid., 188.
forward movement of studies on rhetoric and its history. These acts of defining that have become part of the appropriation of the ancient world into contemporary studies do not aim at enhancing the understanding of ancient Greece. How ancient concepts are defined, how they are appropriated, bears some gravity on their validity in the practical and productive activities of contemporary rhetoric discourse.

Other contemporary scholars studying the history of rhetoric such as Philip Sipiora and Deborah Hawhee have both recycled the usual examples of kairos in lexical resources to point to the earliest textual locations for kairos. Sipiora’s introduction to Rhetoric and Kairos begins a chronological defining of kairos in the subitled section “Defining Kairos:”

As far as it has been determined, kairos first appears in the Iliad, where it denotes a vital or lethal place in the body, one that is particularly susceptible to injury and therefore necessitates special protection; kairos thus, initially carries a spatial meaning. In Hesiod’s Works and Days, kairos takes on the sense of “due measure” or “proper proportion”; for example, Hesiod cites the overloading of a wagon, which can cause the axle to break.  

Sipiora tells his readers the earliest essence and usage of kairos “denotes” a vital or lethal spot, and that kairos “takes on a sense of ‘due measure’ or ‘proper proportion.’” However, the LSJ begins its entry on καιρός by stating the noun does not appear in Homer. For her part, Hawhee says, albeit anachronistically, in Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece (2004) the following about its early usage:

In its earliest occurrences, kairos functioned – at times directly and at times obliquely – to indicate limits of weight, volume, density, and porousness. In its first appearance in Hesiod’s Works and Days (694) kairos appears alongside advice against overloading a wagon: an overly heavy load will break the axle, delaying delivery and causing the goods to spoil. Hesiod’s oracular formulation, kairos d’epi pasin ariston, “kairos is best in all matters,” gives kairos what Wilson calls its ‘ethical-prudential associations’ (1980: 179)

203 Schiappa, Defining Reality, 3.
205 Here are the forms that appear in the Iliad: καριώ, adj sg dat (ll 4.185); καρίων, adj sg acc (ll 8.85 and 8.326); κατακαριώ, adj sg nom/acc (ll 11.439). These are the forms and locations in the Iliad. A closer look at the entire sentence would be needed to say for sure about the gender and case of each form.
In Homer, for example, the *kair-* root is used adjectivally (*kairios*) to indicate a critical, fatal spot on the body, e.g., “where the collarbone parts the neck and the chest” (Iliad 8.325), and “on the crown of the head where the first hairs of horses grow on the skull” (8.84).\(^{206}\)

In the case of Hawhee, she does say that Homer’s use is adjectival. Hawhee cites this notion of *kairos* as having originated as a fatal spot from Richard B. Onians’s discussion in *The Origins of European Thought*. As mentioned earlier, Onians suggests that καιρός and καίριος are related etymologically; καίριος is associated with weaving—a row of thrums in the loom to which thread of the warp are attached. *Brill’s* author concludes there is not enough textual evidence to suggest a relationship.\(^{207}\) And of course both Sipiora and Hawhee cite the early appearance of *kairos* in Hesiod, and they both lead the reader to believe that Hesiod’s encouragement “to mind the measure of all things” is related to the breaking of an axel on a wagon—a connection I have already questioned earlier in this chapter.

Hawhee describes the premise of her book as centered on the intersection of rhetoric and athletics in ancient Greece in *Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece* (2004):

> In Greece, the Archaic and Classical periods instead marked a time when training was broad, when arts were intricately interwoven, and when mind and body moved and thought together. As such, this book rests on a set of syncretic premises that draw together body and mind; learning and performing; classical studies and rhetorical studies.\(^{208}\)

Her use of “syncretic” here is not by definition aligned with its lexical description; Hawhee is describing more of a synthesis. The process of syncretism involves the bringing together or reconciling of different principles and practices between opposing groups as often demonstrated in religion; whereas, synthesizing suggests combining elements into a unified entity. Hawhee’s use of “syncretic” suggests that whatever conclusions she arrives at are going to be from


\(^{208}\) Hawhee, *Bodily Arts*, 66.
bringing together disparate or once disparate parts of ancient Greek culture and society to make sense of them for a modern audience. Greek rhetoric and athletics were two activities of the same culture; therefore, Hawhee’s approach to her study is not an exercise in syncretism, but synchronism. She claims the following about her methodology:

This study, by drawing together rhetoric and athletics, thus simultaneously draws together classics and rhetoric; learning and performing; mind and body. Such a syncretic approach shifts attention away from questions of rhetoric’s origin and development to questions of the conditions of rhetoric’s emergence, which was bound up in an interactive struggle for sociocultural forces. As such, it allows a perspective on rhetoric as an art that was deeply situated in Greek culture and entangled with other arts of subject production.209

The content of Hawhee’s chapters do “draw together” historical intersections of rhetoric and athletics, and she does synthesize the interplay of rhetoric and athletics in ancient Greek culture through examples of ancient texts, art, and architecture. However, her discussion of these examples results in a synthetic recognition or proof that rhetoric and athletics emerged from the same culture. She defines the places in their culture where rhetorical elements are found, but she does not attempt to resolve what the synthesis of these two arts, rhetoric and athletics, tells us about the ancient Greeks..

In Hawhee’s chapter “Karotic Bodies,” she continues a discussion from the preceding chapter on mē̑tis. She contends in the introductory chapter that these two chapters together “set the stage” for the remaining chapters of the book.210 Her approach to mē̑tis and kairos then defines for the reader why these concepts are applied through the book. She promises to investigate what “a particularly athletic notion of kairos might bring to a consideration of rhetorical kairos.”211 She answers this provisionally by saying that the “answers lie in concepts

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209 Hawhee, Bodily Arts, 13-14.
210 Ibid., 12.
211 Ibid.
of immanence, movement, embodiment, and the binding together of learning and performing.”

The chapter begins, under the subheading of “Metic Kairos,” with a brief retelling of the footrace from the *Iliad* when Athena hears the prayer of Odysseus and responds (23.768-777).

But when now they were running the last part of the course, immediately Odysseus made prayer in his heart to flashing-eyed Athene: “Here me, goddess, and come a good helper to my feet.” So he spoke in prayer, and Pallas Athene heard him, and made his limbs light, his feet and his hands above. But when they were just about to dart out to win the prize, then Aias slipped as he ran—for Athene hampered him—where was strewn the offal from the slaying of the loud-bellowing bulls that swift-footed Achilles has slain in honor of Patroclus; and with the offal of the bulls were his mouth and nostrils filled.

Hawhee uses this example to show “Athena deploying her mē̑tis with attention to time.” And, she explains, “Athena was attuned to the immanent circumstances of the race. This kind of time—time as timing—is referred to in ancient Greek as kairos.”

The problem with Hawhee attempting to claim that Athena—a goddess, who has no corporeal form—is afforded mē̑tic kairos as way of defining kairos runs contrary to her attempt to locate corporeality in mē̑tis and in kairos. Hawhee’s interpretation of this scene gives credit for successful action to Athena. As the daughter of two gods, Zeus and his first wife Mē̑tis, surely it is not surprising that Athena could respond to Odysseus’s prayer in a timely manner. If Hawhee is trying to prove the corporality of mē̑tis and kairos in the realm of humans, she should have awarded the recognition for immanent timing to Odysseus. He begins the race on his own and then makes the decision to pray to Athena a certain moment in the race. Odysseus as a Greek hero has the corporality of being human, even if his legendary roots are linked to being the great-grandson of Hermes or the son of Sisyphus. Her example from the *Iliad* doesn’t actually help define, describe, or explain the

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213 Ibid., 65. The footrace Hawhee cites as the *Iliad* 23.839-41 actually occurs 23.740-97.
214 Ibid.
215 Ibid.
216 Ibid., 46. In Chapter 2, “Sophistic Mē̑tis: An Intelligence of the Body,” she asserts her aim to explore mē̑tis as “a corporeal category, rather than a solely cognitive one” (46).
importance of métis or kairos. Hawhee claims that in the seminal study of métis by Detienne and Vernant, that they did not acknowledge the corporeality of métis.\footnote{Hawhee, \textit{Bodily Arts}, 47. Hawhee also claims they are asking, what is métis? And where is métis important? (46)} They did not explicitly state this aim in those exact words,\footnote{Ibid.} but their examples of métis in ancient literature are ripe with the corporeal details, which they identify and analyze for intrinsic meaning. I have already quoted their main question of inquiry which is more complex than Hawhee’s paraphrase. As Detienne and Vernant considered métis as a “category of the mind” then Hawhee should not have ignored their premise with an attempt to move beyond it, instead she should have built on it.

Kairos is a conceptual category of timing, which is best understood when it is studied as an “all-pervasive” concept present in many ancient Greek sociocultural agencies. While there has been some scholarship attempting research beyond lexical definitions into taxonomical crossovers with resulting connotations, not much of it has been helpful in answering my research questions. After initially asking where kairos is found in the activities of the ancient Greeks and identifying its presence in the subjects, art forms, and textual examples, most of the primary scholars on the history of rhetoric, who do not identify as “classicists,” do not ask “how kairos ought to be considered in various historic conditions.” Instead they define first and forget to establish what the significant points are.\footnote{Hacking, 5.} In this way, the scholarship in the studies of rhetoric seem to suppress and ignore the opportunities to analyze expressed concepts like kairos, or métis, as “the essential tendencies of the mind,”\footnote{See Figure 1.7 from Panofsky, \textit{Studies in Iconology}, 14-15.} with the result being a lack of identifying and discussing the \textit{intrinsic meaning} of kairos consistent with the ancient Greeks’ values.
As the connotations and usage of kairos changed in the rhetorical arts, parallel changes occurred in the production and reception of Greek art. However, the use of kairos in relation to sculpture, or *ekphrastic* poetry, does not always have the same concurrent connotations as in rhetoric. While *kairos* assumes an almost exclusively temporal connotation in rhetorical theory by the fourth century BCE, it becomes a subject for sculpture, *ekphrastic* poetry, and a major concept in the no longer extant Canon of Polykleitos. According to the ancient authors who relayed parts of the Canon in later texts, it seems that kairos maintains some of its non-temporal dimension which had been disappearing from rhetoric. The Canon explained how to achieve the ideal proportions of the citizen body or the body politic. As a concept, *kairos* would not likely register visually to the viewers of Polykleitos’s *Doryphoros* (fig. 2.1), or other sculptures, in the same way that *harmonia* and *symmetria* would have. However, without *kairos*, achieving *harmonia* and *symmetria* would not have been possible.

Gregory Leftwich in his doctoral dissertation “Ancient Conceptions of the Body and the Canon of Polykleitos” (Princeton, 1987) investigates the Canon of Polykeitos (Greek sculptor, active ca. 450-ca. 415 BCE) “in the context of ancient empirical and theoretical discussion of the body.” He examines the corpus of literary testimonia concerning the Canon and provides anatomical analyses of seventeen Roman copies of Polykleitos’s *Doryphoros*. Leftwich is able see *kairos* in relation to historic movements and allied concepts (συμμετρία, ἁρμονία, το μέσον, and καιρός) consistent with philosophy and medicine in Polykleitos’ lifetime. Additionally,

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221 Figure 2.1: Polykleitos, *Doryphoros* (Spear Bearer), Roman marble copy from Pompeii, Italy, after a bronze original of ca. 450–440 BCE, Museo Nazionale, Naples.
Leftwich comments on the importance of the Pythagorean number theory on Polykleitos’ Canon. In general, Leftwich states that fifth century philosophical and medical ideas about the body guided the formulation of the Canon.\textsuperscript{224} Leftwich attributes Polykleitos’ “desire to write an explanatory treatise on art and the body evince his proximity to the contemporaneous developments in Presocratic philosophy and Hippocratic medicine.”\textsuperscript{225} Leftwich believes Polykleitos’ ideas are based on the polarity in ancient thoughts on cosmology and medicine that found their way into the Canon as a way of reconciling naturalism and idealism, or schematization.\textsuperscript{226} The most influential ideas probably came from Pythagoreanism, which has already surfaced as an influence to the development of art of speaking. Terminology, such as ἀρμονία and καιρός, and mathematical theory found in the testimonia of Polykleitos’ Canon offer some evidence of that connection. As discerned by the authors of the testimonia and supported by Leftwich, Polykleitos was concerned with the mean (τὸ μέσον) between extremes.\textsuperscript{227} According to Untersteiner’s interpretation of kairos in the realm of the sophists, this is the conceptual space to find kairos. Leftwich tries to prove that the paradigm created in the Canon for the Doryphoros was organized on the Pythagorean table of opposites, which he connects to the term to eu (the beautiful).\textsuperscript{228} Leftwich reminds us that over “seventeen centuries it is possible to witness various transmutations of the tradition of the Canon of Polykleitos,” and this tradition establishes “the constitution and realization of beauty in sculpture, and the precepts were embodied in an illustrative statue” known as the Doryphoros.\textsuperscript{229}

\textsuperscript{224} Ibid., 6-7.
\textsuperscript{225} Leftwich, “Ancient Conceptions of the Body and the Canon of Polykleitos,” 7.
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid., 7 and 12.
\textsuperscript{227} Ibid., 35. This has to do with the Pythagorean table of opposites preserved in Aristotle’s Metaphysics (986a22), translation by Hugh Tredennick (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1933); also to eu and to kalon are both connected to music as well.
\textsuperscript{228} Ibid., 36.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., 51.
Later, Lysippos, Greek sculptor (active ca. 370-300 BCE) creates a statue of Kairos, and it has been suggested by more than Leftwich that this statue embodied his own system of proportion directly inspired by Polykleitos’ Canon. But Leftwich notes that the “lack of an adequate modern translation for the concept καιρός has led to a variety of interpretations, some of which are in direct opposition to one another.”230 One scholar, Schulz, views καιρός “as an irrational uncanonical element in the Canon – the exercise of artistic genius which went beyond the strictures of a mathematical system of proportion.”231 Other scholars have criticized Schulz’s suggestion that kairos is “an uncalculated concomitant happening.”232 These opposing viewpoints are based on the connotations of καιρός in a passage from On Hearing (De recta ratione audiendi or Περὶ τοῦ ἀκούειν) in Plutarch’s Moralia (De Recta 45c).

Now in every piece of work, beauty is achieved through the congruence of numerous factors, so to speak, brought into union under the rule of a certain due proportion and harmony, whereas ugliness is ready to spring into being if only a single chance element be omitted or added out of place. (Trans. F.C Babbit, Loeb, 1927)

Now in every piece of work, beauty is a product of many numbers, so to speak, that come to a kairos through some system of proportion and harmony, whereas ugliness is ready to spring into being immediately if only one chance element is omitted or added out of place. (Trans. F.C Babbit, Loeb, slightly adapted by Leftwich)233

Leftwich adapts Babbit’s translation, but does not translate kairos. He summarizes the point of his adapted translation when he says, “the καιρός is the direct result of numbers organized through a system of harmonia and symmetria…The numbers are constituents (ἐκ πολλῶν ἀριθμῶν), symmetria the agent (ὑπὸ συμμετρίας τινὸς καὶ ἀρμονίας), while καιρός is the

231 Ibid., 56. Here the scholar and article are D. Schulz, “Zum Kanon Polyklets,” Hermes 83 (1955): 200-220.
232 Ibid., 56.
233 Ibid., 82.
result (ὡς ἐν ἔργῳ).”\(^{234}\) Leftwich cites Andrew Stewart’s meaning that “kairos is arrived at through the calculable.”\(^{235}\) And, Leftwich reports, Hiller’s interpretation in German: “das richtige Maß”, translated means, ‘the right measure.’\(^{236}\) Another has decided that “the right measure” is too narrow, but should be “καιρός is the decisive point in a matter or in a period of time;”\(^{237}\) more specifically, καιρός is not ‘the moment’ and “is not identical with right measure, but is rather something predicated on it.”\(^{238}\) After reviewing several scholars’ interpretations of Plutarch’s use of kairos, Leftwich provides a few historic accounts of kairos in ancient literature: Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Aeschylus, Xenophon, Euripides, Isocrates, Sophocles, and Plato.

Finally, by examining the ancient sources and the contemporary interpretations he arrives at the following explanation of καιρός in Plutarch’s Moralia (De Recta 45c):

[K]αιρός depends on and results from measure but is not identical with it…rather rightness of time, place, measure, etc. which is instrumental in bringing something to completion. In Plutarch’s’ Moralia this end is characterized by τὸ καλὸν [the beautiful].\(^{239}\)

Humans “bringing something to completion” expresses the temporal in καιρός, which again becomes the predominant connotation in the mid to late fifth century BCE, because it expresses “the point in time or space in which something is fulfilled, it can signify the fulfillment itself. In such an instance it is usually coupled with a genitive of the thing fulfilled.”\(^{240}\) Leftwich gives more attention to the interpretation of καιρός by Glenn Most. Leftwich quotes from Most’s doctoral dissertation “Pindar’s Truth: Unity and Occasionality in the Epinician Ode” (1980):

\(^{234}\) Leftwich, “Ancient Conceptions of the Body and the Canon of Polykleitos,” 56.
\(^{237}\) Ibid.
\(^{238}\) Ibid., 56-57.
\(^{239}\) Ibid., 58.
\(^{240}\) Ibid., 57.
Most has defined καιρός as “the objectively determined conditions of possibility for the realization of a subjective human intention.” The concept is rooted in the unpredictability of human success. Unlike the gods, men are viewed as intrinsically incapable of realizing their own intentions. Nevertheless, the fact remain that success, although capricious, can occur under the right circumstances. The isolation of a factor of success in human affairs is the essence behind the concept of καιρός. To aim at the καιρός requires the exact observance of a series of objectively determined criteria without which success is impossible. These include propitiousness of time, place and measure. Man can only meet conditions for success, however. Hitting the καιρός and transforming desire into fulfillment is a gift of the gods.241

Most’s assertion that the “isolation of a factor of success in human affairs is the essence behind the concept of kairos” touches on the same conceptual space found in Untersteiner’s and Wilson’s research that hosts the kairos. Most says that a “substantive καιρός” in Hesiod is designating the “transcendental conditions of possibility for the fulfillment of any intention,” as opposed to the “empirical condition of possibility for the fulfillment of a specific intention.”242 Leftwich interprets Most to be saying “in order to fulfill any wish I must observe the καιρός,” as opposed to “in order to kill this man I must strike him at the spot.”243 Then Leftwich, with Most’s definition and observations in mind, reevaluates Plutarch’s passage in *Moralia (De Recta 45c).*244 He suggests how Most’s perspective on kairos provides a better representation of its meaning for Polykleitos and the aim of his Canon, which was necessary for a successful sculpture to embody τὸ καλὸν or τὸ ἔὖ (the beautiful or the good).245 In other words, as a matter of consequence, following a series of prescriptions discussed in the Canon allowed “the artist to achieve the καιρός.”246

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241 Leftwich, “Ancient Conceptions of the Body and the Canon of Polykleitos,” 58-59. The author and dissertation: G. Most, “Pindar’s Truth: Unity and Occasionality in the Epinician Ode” (PhD diss., Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, 1980.) Leftwich also notes that Plato also held that καιρός was bestowed by the gods (Laws 4.709b).
242 Leftwich, “Ancient Conceptions of the Body and the Canon of Polykleitos,” 60.
243 Ibid.
244 Ibid.
245 Ibid., 60-61.
246 Ibid., 60-61.
Leftwich says that there is evidence of the Hesiodic connotation of καιρός through the fifth century and occasionally in the fourth century BCE, while later usages are rare and mostly use a temporal connotation. However, currently there is no scholarship that concentrates on the connection between the connotations and usage of Hesiod and Polykleitos. Notice, however, there is no discussion with Leftwich about overloading a wagon and breaking an axel. Most’s interpretation is especially interesting in light of his 2006 translation of Hesiod’s *Works and Days*. If as Leftwich asserts that καιρός is “a prerequisite for the beautiful (τὸ καλὸν)” and the “concept of καιρός involves definition and limit, then it is not difficult to buy into Andrew Stewart’s position that “καιρός must be the ideal canon.”

Andrew Stewart argues in his article “Lysippan Studies 1. The Only Creator of Beauty” that καιρός is the ideal canon in Polykleitan aesthetics. From the Plutarch passage, Stewart says this ideal canon is “exactly the right choice among various συμμετρίαι and ἁρμονία available in each particular case.” But for Lysippos, Stewart suggests the sculptor may have “interpreted this as a challenge” and his statue of Kairos is “both a polemic statement of his own ideas on the role of καιρός in sculpture and an acknowledgement of his debt to Polykleitos.”

Lysippos’s *Apoxyomenos* (fig. 2.2), as Stewart notes, builds on Polykleitos’s Doryphoros, which had achieved *symmetria* (συμμετρίαι), but did not give the impression of movement. The Apoxyomenos is a composition of both balance and movement. As the Doryphoros was the

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248 Andrew Stewart, “Lysippan Studies 1. The Only Creator of Beauty,” *American Journal of Archeology*, 82 (1978): 163. If as Leftwich asserts that καιρός is “a prerequisite for the beautiful (τὸ καλὸν)” and the “concept of καιρός involves definition and limit, then it is not difficult to buy into Andrew Stewart’s position that “καιρός must be the ideal canon” (Stewart, 165-166). I address Stewart’s argument in Chapter 5.
249 Ibid.
250 Ibid.
251 Figure 2.2: Lysippos, *Apoxyomenos* (*Scraper*), Roman marble copy after a bronze original of ca. 330 BCE, Vatican Museums, Rome.
embodiment of Polykleitos’\'s Canon, Stewart suggest something similar for Lysippos’\'s Kairos, an artistic point:\(^{252}\)

The imagery of the Kairos is to be seen as an extended metaphor for this artistic credo, and the statue itself as an embodiment of what Lysippos saw as the final solution to two of the three great problems of sculpture: proportion (συμμετρίαι) and movement (ρυθμός); its contribution to the third (ἀκριβεία [perfection]) goes without saying.\(^{253}\) Stewart relays evidence from other scholars indicating the possibility that Lysippos aimed to grasp “the momentary flash of the eternal in the temporal.”\(^{254}\) In the Late Classical period for Greek sculpture (ca. 400-323 BCE), kairos via Lysippos has become, according to Stewart, the “only creator of beauty” in non-temporal ways and at the same time kairos in rhetoric is being reduced to a temporal connotation. In the cases of Polykleitos’\'s Canon and Lysippos’\'s Kairos statue, the plastic arts are securing the semantic past, as will be argued in more depth in Chapter 5. Two sculptors aiming for the perfect beauty, which as Plutarch’s passage tells us is only possible as a result of πολλοὶ ἄριθμοὶ (many numbers) that comes to a καιρὸς “under the guidance of some system of συμμετρίαι (symmetria) and ἁρμονία (harmonia)...hence the canon.”\(^{255}\)

On the nature of the Canon, Stewart remarks: “The Canon...is at once both more rigid and more comprehensive than our twentieth-century preconceptions about artistic freedom will usually allow us to admit.”\(^{256}\) While Pythagorean ideas may have influenced Polykleitos’\'s placement of kairos in his Canon, Stewart says this is because our knowledge of the Pythagorean ideas about καιρὸς is “limited to ethics and community life, there is no way of proving this for...

\(^{252}\) Stewart, “The Only Creator of Beauty,” 164-165.

\(^{253}\) Ibid., 163.


\(^{255}\) Stewart, “The Only Creator of Beauty,” 165.

\(^{256}\) Ibid., 166.
sure.” Stewart, and some others, have suggested that Lysippos’s Kairos statue was an intentional and deliberate statement, “a manifesto in bronze,” about his abilities to do what his predecessors could not. However, for Stewart, there is no way of proving this either. In Kairos, and the Apoxyomenos, Lysippos combined without discord the proportions through *kairos* that gave it perfect beauty and movement.

J.J. Pollitt specifically addresses the overlap of rhetoric and visual arts in his book *The Ancient View of Greek Art: Criticism, History, and Terminology* (1974). He says that the aim of the text is an attempt to answer the question, What did the ancient Greeks think of their own art? As a way to answer this question, Pollitt devotes over half of the text to a glossary of critical terminology the Greeks used “to describe and evaluate sculpture, painting, and architecture.” He explains the importance of these terms and what to expect from their connotations as they intermingle in various usages.

[A] word or phrase characteristic of a particular discipline and having a precise and limited meaning agree upon and understood by those participating in or familiar with that discipline. The rigidity of the meaning of a particular term will, of course, vary with the degree of cohesiveness in the group which uses it. When a term like *symmetria* is used by a late antique rhetorician, one should probably not expect it to have the rigorous precision of meaning that it conveyed to a sculptor of the fifth century BC. In general, it may be expected that the technical value of a particular term—that is, the value which is dependent upon the special knowledge and training of a particular group—will diminish as the size of the group using the term increases.

Pollitt says that the “critical terms of ancient Greek art criticism might be described as semantic crystals solidified out of the molten material of Greek aesthetic experience. Each term introduces

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257 Stewart, “The Only Creator of Beauty,” 166.
258 Ibid., 167 and 171.
259 Ibid.
262 Ibid.
us to standards and interests that can be objectively demonstrated to some extent.” However, in his glossary of more than one hundred technical terms in Greek and Latin, καιρός is not one of them. But Pollitt has it correct, I think, about how a term diminishes. The intrinsic meaning of *kairos* is important in understanding how καιρός essentially disappears in the rhetorical arts and the visual arts of the ancient world, but then reappears in the Renaissance, and then again in the twentieth century studies of rhetoric. Only some visual attributes of the god Kairos resurface after Lysippos’ Kairos in the history of art.

The technical terms that crossed disciplines in the ancient world reflected habits of thought and were applied to doctrines of art (*technai*). The *technē* attributed to many different arts in the Greek world share common vocabulary. Pollitt points out the Greeks did not have a word for what we call “art,” nor did they make a distinction between fine art and craft.

Both were expressed by the Greek word *technē*, which might be translated as “organized knowledge and procedure applied for the purpose of producing a specific preconceived result,” or simply “rational production.” The end product of *technē* could be physical objects (e.g. sculpture, painting), an active performance (e.g. singing, dancing), or a certain condition in men (e.g. a state of health achieved through the practice of medicine) or in animals (e.g. horse training).

Again, the context of the *technē* is important, because there is overlap in the sociocultural agencies of the Greeks. Words in context provide a broader cross-disciplinary understanding of the terminology allotted to any one skill or craft, illustrating habits of Greek thinking, which in the case of *kairos* (and other Greek concepts) involve channeling a concept into language and the visual realm together.

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263 Ibid., 2.
264 Pollitt, *Ancient View of Greek Art*, 32.
Summary

Within this review of literature, which is not exhaustive, I found in classical studies the classicists look at *kairos* in alliance with other Greek concepts. Considering that classicists are trained in the language of the ancient Greeks, they have a more comprehensive view of the cultural connotations and the workings of the Greek mind. The classicists consider the historic conditions as part of methodological framework of interpretation. They do not approach the research of a concept like *kairos* as simply the technical term of a discipline or a *technē*, especially for the predisciplinary period. They have considered *kairos* as a habit of Greek thought and reflective of relative cultural symptoms.

In rhetorical studies, the focus of research has been on rhetorical education, *technē*, and speech as a mode of communication and civic discourse. Scholars in rhetoric have not been particularly successful at trying to parallel aspects of rhetoric with other disciplines. Their research is too often driven by assimilating and appropriating terminology and definitions onto other disciplinary subjects, which does not produce the intrinsic meaning or fundamental nature of *kairos* in the history of rhetoric. However, those studying the predisciplinary period of rhetoric seem to understand the demand of and need for connecting other activities in the Greek world with rhetoric.

In studies of the visual arts, there is again a willingness to look for deeper and philosophical meaning in the shared terms and taxonomy of the visual arts with other disciplines *through* both textual and visual evidence. These scholars look for evidence of technical terms in the works of art not in a dictionary, but continue the search for meaning beyond the art object. As a result, they are able to consider multiple dimensions of abstract concepts, such as the aesthetic or educational or ethical dimension of *kairos*. 
For all of the dimensions, denotations, and connotations of *kairos* recognized by the scholars in each academic discipline, not one particular disciplinary approach can answer my research questions. A cross-disciplinary approach is then necessary to answer them. Specifically, no attention has been contributed by any academic discipline to the visual dimension of kairos in the predisciplinary period of rhetoric; therefore, this is the focus of Chapter 3.
CHAPTER 3

TOWARDS A PREHISTORY OF ANCIENT GREEK KAIROS:
WHAT CONSTITUTED THE GREEKS’ UNDERSTANDING OF “A MOMENT IN TIME”
BETWEEN 3000-600 BCE?

CHAPTER ABSTRACT: The contents of this chapter ask, “How kairos ought to be considered in 3000-600 BCE?”, therefore, the content aims to look at ancient Greek textual and visual expressions from 3000-600 BCE as evidence of how the proto-Greeks experienced, perceived, observed, and reacted to “a moment in time.” Before kairos becomes language-locked into the vocabulary for various arts (technai) in ancient Greece in the fourth century BCE, it was a concept already present and dynamic in their society and culture.

These eras include evidence from the predisciplinary period of rhētorikē in ancient Greece (the time of the sophists) and the visual arts of the Bronze Age, which includes Minoan art from Crete, Mycenaean art from the mainland, then stretches into the Iron Age that includes the Geometric and Archaic stylistic periods, up to the development of a Greek alphabet (ca. 700 BCE). The textual and visual evidence used in this chapter focus on the dominance of orality, aurality, and visuality in their broadly nonliterate culture. All of the sociocultural aspects of the proto-Greeks reflect the “other-minded” or “public” nature of their consciousness versus “private and individual imagination” and thereby contributes to what constituted the early concept of kairos.

Using Panofsky’s methodological approach for iconographical-iconological interpretation, I have worked toward an intrinsic meaning of the “predisciplinary or prehistoric kairos” in order to answer, “How kairos ought to be considered in the context of ancient Greek society between 3000-600 BCE?” Through the interpretive tools chosen for this chapter, I believe that kairos ought to be considered as a dynamic force that the Greeks become aware of through their direct experiences with their environment; kairos is a “moment in time” that forces human decision—ones that result in success or failure, life or death, and honor or dishonor.

Before kairos becomes language-locked into the vocabulary for various arts (technai), kairos was alive in the minds and the daily lives of the proto-Greeks. Kairos was integrated naturally in their interactions with their environment and each other, and it demanded their human responses. By the start of the seventh century BCE, kairos had accumulated the following definitions: due measure or right measure, fitness, (right, decisive) point of time, (favorable opportunity), time of the year, and proportion. These definitional meanings assigned to kairos, reflect an idealized sense of the concept that will be written into future lexicons and glossaries and based primarily on ancient texts. Kairos as it was used in ancient

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265 LSJ and Montanari, The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek, s.v. “καιρός.”
writings is of course crucial to establishing any denotations, but this is a kairos language-
locked—shut in completely by written textual references. The Greeks’ usage of kairos could not
have begun at the moment they started composing in writing. Kairos was a present and dynamic
concept during the periods in which the Greeks were dominantly non-literate. As Eric A.
Havelock points out, “oral language does not fossilize,” because it is fleeting and ephemeral,
but also because it is direct and organic. According to Havelock, the “introduction of the Greek
letters into inscription somewhere about 700 B.C. was to alter the character of human culture,
placing a gulf between all alphabetic societies and their precursors.” This chapter, then, is
aimed at establishing a prehistory of kairos by considering its presence in the oral culture of the
proto-Greeks, the time preceding the disciplinary period of rhētorikē (ca. 385/380 BCE) and
before it becomes language-locked into technai. Havelock proposes that theoretical constructs
(i.e., atomism and the alphabet) were manifestations of the Greeks’ “capacity for abstract
analysis,” or rather “their ability to translate objects of perception into mental entities” as “one of
the hallmarks of the way the Greek mind worked;” therefore, the prehistory of kairos begins
with the understanding that the abstract noun kairos developed in the minds of the proto-Greeks.
The questions are, From what conglomeration of experiences did kairos grow in their minds?
And, How to establish an answer to that question without any textual evidence from 3000-600
BCE? Due to the slim amount of textual evidence, one task must be to establish some of the
historic conditions of this time period. Within certain historic conditions are events that mark

267 Havelock, The Literate Revolution in Greece, 82.
268 Ibid., 6. Because the historical timeframe of this chapter includes the lives of Homer and Hesiod, their poetry is
used as part of the interpretive evidence in this chapter, but the Iliad, Odyssey, or Works and Days are not in the
genre of Greek technai.
269 Ibid. 82.
“change in the means of communication between human beings.” The means of communication can manifest and be expressed in different media, which become the “objects available for inspection.”

Because alphabetic text does not come along for the Greeks until around 700 BCE, the chapter begins with examples from the visual arts. These examples have been chosen from the Bronze Age, which includes Minoan art from Crete, Mycenaean art from the mainland, and stretches into the Iron Age to include the Geometric and Archaic periods. As for the later textual evidence, I will use Homer (fl. 8th BCE) and Hesiod (fl. 700 BCE) to interpret an early kairos. The visual and textual evidence used in this chapter have been chosen because they demonstrate the dominance of orality, aurality, and visuality in the ancient Greeks’ broadly nonliterate sociocultural setting, but also because as evidence, they reflect an intimate and intellectual relationship early Greeks had with their natural environment. To fill in the gaps between the visual and textual evidence, I have turned to scholarship outside of the Classics, the history of rhetoric, and the visual arts.

Environmental and Historical Conditions

Geographical and environmental conditions, as naturally occurring wind, are integral to the cultural context and contribute to the interpretation of cultural objects. The proto-Greeks’ first lessons on “moments in time” were schooled from their natural environment. In a survey text about ancient Greece, we learn that a “history of the Greeks begins with the land, for the physical environment of a people—the landscape, the climate, and the natural resources—is a

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271 Ibid. Havelock is referring to language in this quote as “available for inspection.” I have included artifacts of the visual arts among the available objects to be interpreted.
272 I will cover artifacts from the Archaic period in Chapter 4. This sentence simply serves to explain what stylistic periods are covered from 3000-600 BCE.
major factor in determining the way people live and how they develop culturally and socially.”

Some understanding of which factors determined and directed the Greeks’ propensity for translating the natural world into mental substance must be considered. The mental substance of primary concern here is their translation of natural events into different kinds of timing. As Jones describes the ancient approach to timekeeping in *Time and the Cosmos in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, their primitive understanding of time manifests into either “time on a scale longer than days” or “measuring time on a scale shorter than days.” The former becomes the domain of calendars and the latter, of clocks. For all people of antiquity, the passage of time was basically the “succession of days and nights;” however, time, its flow, movement, and ability to bring about change was fundamental and inescapable considering they spent much of their lives outside. The daylight and the nighttime arranged their daily routines. The events of their days were observed and repeated, remembered and reflected upon. In the earliest stages of civilization, the human effort to survive was the concern of the day and night; therefore, actions taken by humans were meant to procure the most advantageous results for survival. The concept of the timely then was momentary (“moments in time”), and required a sort of patience, and memory.

The historical environment of the proto-Greeks begins in the Neolithic Age (c.7000-3000 BCE) when the inhabitants of caves, such as those in southern Greece of the Franchthi Cave made a transition from hunting and gathering food to producing it for themselves.

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275 Ibid.
276 Ibid.
277 Ibid.
Domesticating wild plants and wild animals made a settled life possible and ultimately led to a civilized ancient Greece.\textsuperscript{279} But at first their sense about when seeds could be sowed to produce plants, and the life cycle of animals, when they probably barely understood their own, took keen observation, a mental recording of human efforts and participation in these acts of nature, then the repetition of those observed practices. Significant factors shaping the cultural conditions of the proto-Greeks were climate and weather. In general, “the Mediterranean climate is semiarid, with long, hot, dry summers and short, cool, moist winters, when most of the rain falls.”\textsuperscript{280} “Water, the most precious natural resource, is scarce in Greece because there are very few rivers that flow year round, and few lakes, ponds, and springs,” which made irrigation on large scale impossible.\textsuperscript{281} Farming, therefore, “depended totally on the limited (and too often unreliable) annual rainfall.”\textsuperscript{282} The land, which the Greeks called Gaia, allowed the majority of the farmers a decent, though modest living. But Gaia, “Mother Earth,” offered no guarantees.\textsuperscript{283} Agricultural success and their livelihood depended on their attention to the patterns of the weather and the seasons. While some predictions could be made concerning the weather that brought drought, or floods, the exact beginning and end of those conditions could not have been known. But once they understood that they would have to make predictions based on past experiences, or that as conditions changed in front of their eyes they had to learn how to react, then certain “moments in time” would start to register to the Greeks as significant agents of change.

\textsuperscript{279} Pomeroy, et al., Ancient Greece, 12-13.
\textsuperscript{280} Ibid., 15. “This general pattern varies from region to region in Greece. Northern Greece has a more continental climate, with much colder and wetter winters than the south. More rain falls on the western side of the Greek mainland than on the eastern side, while the Aegean islands receive even less.” (Pomeroy, et al., 15)
\textsuperscript{281} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{282} Ibid. “Only about 30 percent of the land can be cultivated at all, and only about 20 percent is classified as good agricultural land.” (Pomeroy, et al., 14-15)
\textsuperscript{283} Ibid.
Historians have suggested that the ancient Greeks’ engagement with agriculture, as well as their relationship with the sea, “remained unchanged through Greek history.”

As many as 80 percent of the citizens of a city-state were engaged in agriculture. One of the major unifying forces within the Greek city-states was the citizen-farmers’ devotion to their small agricultural plain and its surrounding hillsides, and their willingness to die defending their “ancestral earth,” as the poet Homer called it.

The Greeks’ relationship with the sea is a significant aspect of the environment where they had to develop keen and flexible reactions to the naturally occurring and sometimes unpredictable changes. Sea travel was used “commercially, culturally, politically, and militarily.” “By far the easiest way to travel was by sea, especially in the islands and the southern mainland, where the coast is never more than 40 miles away.” The rough and craggy coastlines offer relatively few good harbors, but sailors were usually not too far from land, “where they could beach their boats for the night or find haven from a threatening storm.” Sailors can anticipate favorable winds on the sea, but the seas can also “just as suddenly boil up into ferocious storms” that were capable of sending the ships, cargo, and sailors to the sea bed. Drowning at sea, unburied, was a “hateful death for the Greeks.” The importance of these unpredictable situations, these “moments in time,” at sea then was how the Greeks reacted to them.

“Discovering the Intellect” qua Processing Direct Experiences

In a sense, one hundred percent of the ancient Greeks, either by land or sea, were socially

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284 Pomeroy, et al., *Ancient Greece*, 16.
285 Ibid., 16-17. Also, Jaeger, *Paideia*, vol. 1, 58: “In early times, Greece was predominately a land of farmers.”
286 Pomeroy, et al., *Ancient Greece*, 14-15. Another aspect of their historic conditions for which they would have considered “moments in time” included cultural exchanges “between Greece and older civilizations” which were “close, deep, and continuous.” (Pomeroy, et al., 14-15) Trade and exchanges with other civilizations would bring not only items from another geophysical realm, but also ideas, concepts, words, pictures, and practices for them to consider, appropriate, or choose to disregard.
287 Ibid., 14-15.
288 Ibid.
289 Ibid., 15-16.
290 Ibid.
enculturated to read and react to exigent “moments in time” through direct bodily experiences with their environment. Their consciousness of these direct bodily experiences were the epistemic conditions that formed their understanding of “moments in time” some of which will later be written down as kairos. As kairos moves from its natural state where the Greeks experience it through bodily experiences, to a mental concept, to a concrete written state, the Greeks become more and more self-aware through this process. Bruno Snell states in The Discovery of the Mind that “the existence of the intellect and the soul are dependent upon man’s awareness of himself.”291 Their consciousness of these direct bodily experiences also provided an answer to one of “the oldest philosophical problems”: What is real? How can we know what is real, if we can know it?292 Ancient Greek religion assumed the fate of humankind rested with the gods.293 Later ancient Greek philosophy will put forward that the human faculty of reason allowed for survival but also accomplishments of the mind and body.294 Cognitive science and some classicists agree that when humans make meaning in language or other forms of symbolic representations, it depends on the bodily engagement of humans with the world.295 The linguist and philosopher George Lakoff with the philosopher Mark Johnson refer to these kinds of interactions as direct realism, as opposed to cultural experiences. On meaning-making for the Greeks they acknowledge, “There was no split between ontology (what there is) and epistemology (what you could know), because the mind was in direct touch with the world.”

293 Lakoff and Johnson, Philosophy in the Flesh, 94.
294 Ibid. Eventually, or by the fifth and fourth centuries, this will be logos and techne (in the case of rhetoric...a conservative faculty, orders the world).
296 Lakoff and Johnson, Philosophy in the Flesh, 94. The title of the book reflects Lakoff and Johnson’s question about how cognitive science can reopen the study of philosophy: “What would happen if we started with these
The Greeks’ early epistemological understanding of time, and specifically “moments in time,” in general was direct; it was empirical.

*Kairos* is a species under the genus of time in general, and *kairos* is a part of the Greeks’ whole concept of time. The fundamental situation from which the concept of time emerges is grounded in a constant spatial experience with the physical environment, such as the experiences of sunrise and nightfall, growth and decay, or birth and death.\(^{297}\) Lakoff and Johnson claim that most of the “normal conceptual system” of the human mind is “metaphorically structured” and “most concepts are understood in terms of other concepts.”\(^{298}\) In terms of metaphor, this could include artifacts of material culture (i.e., text and the visual arts), and looking back at Chapter 2, studying *kairos* alongside other allied concepts brings greater light to its denotations and connotations. In this historical period of Greek history, the bodily experiences of the ancient Greeks were processed and expressed through the cultural conventions of their visual arts, their poetry, and oral and written compositions. According to Jerome A. Feldman, “no one knows the details of how words or sentences are processed in the brain, and there is no known methodology for finding out.” Feldman suggests two principles.

*Thought is structured neural activity.*  
*Language is extricable from thought and experience.*\(^{299}\)

Abstract thought then grows out of those experiences, which are both corporeal (bodily) and cerebral. As Feldman puts it, “[a]ll of our thought and language arises from our genetic

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\(^{297}\) Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 56-57.  
\(^{298}\) Ibid., 56. Snell says in *The Discovery of the Mind*, “We cannot speak about the mind or intellect at all without falling back on metaphor” (viii).  
endowment and from our experience.”³⁰⁰ Kairos represents the abstract thoughts of the ancient Greeks, which they gained through experience, and in certain cases, specifically the bodily experiences with their environment and each other. In the absence of any particular way of knowing how the ancient Greeks processed experiences, into thoughts, into language, then not only is cross-disciplinary study necessary in order to answer my research questions, but also the use of historic evidence outside of textual evidence. Feldman also suggests a broad spectrum of academic voices, “bridging theories” and “integrating current insights from many disciplines,” would help us understand how to formulate a coherent neural theory of language,³⁰¹ and yield a possible understanding of “how language is embodied in us.”³⁰²

By bridging a variety scholarly perspectives with a selection of Greek expressions in the visual arts, and later in poetry, we can “yield” a prehistory of kairos. While the concept of time, in general, is comprehensible across cultures, metaphoric associations to this Greek category of time, kairos, are going to be culturally constructed; these constructions can be seen or read through the artifacts (i.e., visual arts and poetry).³⁰³ Time as a concept cannot itself be observed, but human experiences with time can. Lakoff and Johnson claim that “time is not conceptualized on its own terms, but rather is conceptualized in significant part metaphorically and metonymically;” and, therefore, all of “our understandings of time are relative to other concepts such as motion, space, and events.”³⁰⁴ Lakoff and Johnson provide a list of the literal properties of their concept of time as the consequences of properties of events as follows:

Time is direction and irreversible because events are directional an irreversible; events cannot “unhappen.”

³⁰⁰ Feldman, From Molecule to Metaphor, 3.
³⁰¹ Ibid., xii-xiii. Jerome A. Feldman is a Professor Emeritus of Computer Science at University of California Berkeley.
³⁰² Ibid., xi. Feldman lists neuroscience, psychology, linguistics, philosophy, and artificial intelligence as fields of study that could “combine to yield even a preliminary understanding of how language is embodied in us.” (xi).
³⁰³ Lakoff and Johnson, Philosophy of the Flesh, 96.
³⁰⁴ Ibid., 137.
Time is continuous because we experience events as continuous. Time is segmentable because periodic events have beginnings and ends. Time can be measured because iterations of event can be counted.  

*Kairos*, as a category of time qualifies as such, but it does not seem to qualify as a metonymic or metaphorical device for conceptualizing time. Using the following piece of reasoning, *kairos*, like generic time, cannot be observed.

- *Time* (genus) itself cannot be observed; *kairos* (species) is a subcategory of time itself; therefore *kairos* cannot be observed.

However, look at what happens if “Time” is replaced with “*Kairos*” in Lakoff and Johnson’s properties.

- *Kairos* is directional and irreversible because events are directional and irreversible; events cannot “unhappen.”
- *Kairos* is continuous because we experience events as continuous.
- *Kairos* is segmentable because periodic events have beginnings and ends.
- *Kairos* can be measured because iterations of events can be counted.

It doesn’t work. These statements that are true about generic time are not true about *kairos*.

- The Greeks did not see *kairos* as directional or irreversible.
- *Kairos* is not continuous, because it is a moment of time on the broader spectrum of time; *kairos* describes time.
- *Kairos* does not have a beginning or an end, because knowing when the moment will begin or end is not humanly possible.
- This is the same for measuring *kairos*; it is not possible. To measure *kairos* is through the process of reflection, which must be preceded by experiences.

If “all of our understandings of time are relative to other concepts such as motion, space, and events” then why doesn’t this work? *Kairos* defies logic. This is the perennial problem the ancients struggled with concerning καιρός, and the one we struggle with now with the academic *kairos*.

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305 Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy of the Flesh*, 137.
Kairos is a descriptor of “a moment on the continuum of time.” Within Lakoff and Johnson’s container for time, kairos is a paradox and understandably a difficult concept to grasp. Eventually, the Greek lexicon will include kairos with prefixes as well as compounded with other Greek words, which demonstrates how the language desired to further describe this particular “moment in time.” The need to change or alter the lexicon was surely driven by the sociocultural setting. Havelock has suggested a way to understand those changes in the language of the Greeks or Greek literacy is to consider their usage in the context of “anthropological time rather than just classical time.” Kairos considered in “anthropological time” instead of “classical time” allows it to be examined from the point of view of nature, human experiences, and expressions. At least in its early beginnings, its prehistory, kairos is free from sophistic philosophy, rhētorikē, and technai in general. Kairos would not be free of some its allied concepts; however covering those relationships would be outside the scope of this project. In this chapter, the nature of kairos as experienced by the proto-Greeks is being deduced directly from visual artifacts first, then through its appearance in poetic compositions.

Landscape With Swallows: “Birds flying high, you know how I feel…”

The first artifact or object is a fresco painting from Bronze Age Thera (see fig. 3.1), which is most commonly known as the Spring Fresco. This fresco once lived in a house on the island of Santorini. The artisan or artisans who painted this room made decisions or followed directions on how to paint this enclosed interior room with an outdoor scene from floor to

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306 Compounds of kairos could include: εὐκαιρός (eukairos), ἄκιρος (akairos), κατά καιρός (kata kairos), κακά καιρός (kaka karios).
307 Havelock, The Literate Revolution in Greece, 5.
308 Anthony Newley and Leslie Bricusse, “Feeling Good” from the musical The Roar of the Greasepaint—The Smell of the Crowd, 1964. The use of a song title here is just for a bit of levity; however, I did make the connection as I was writing and reflecting.
309 Figure 3.1: Unidentified Maker, Landscape with swallows (Spring Fresco), ca. 1650 BCE, fresco, from room Delta 2, Akrotiri, Thera (Santorini), Greece, National Archeological Museum, Athens.
ceiling. The way the fresco fills the wall space does not emphasize the walls but rather invites viewers to connect with an actual landscape beyond the walls. In the history of art, floor to ceiling paintings like this landscape have generally represented the human desire to bring outside vista views inside. There is evidence in this landscape that the viewers and the artisans had a mutual understanding of the subject matter (e.g., rocky landscape, birds, plant life). The minimized lines, colors, and depth used to describe the representations of the terrain and the birds suggests that the humans looking at the walls or those executing the fresco were well acquainted with the actual natural environment of the island. They only needed enough visual information on the walls to get the general idea, then the inner eye could fill in the rest. The value of a well-painted landscape, such as this one, resides in its ability to promote thought and inspire the imagination of its viewers.

Trying to pinpoint exactly what the ancient viewers experienced when they were viewing the fresco is difficult because there is no textual voice from the Bronze Age to tell us. Almost 1000 years later, Hesiod will write in *Works and Days* (828) about augury, “distinguishing the birds” ὀρνιθας κρίνων. But this does not mean, and I am not concluding, that the birds painted in this fresco are meant to represent the depiction of an omen or claim that this was the human experience being represented. However, the presence of the birds indicates something, something with which the viewer has some understanding or familiarity. What can be safely assumed about this fresco landscape is that the painter, and most likely the patron, were interested in bringing known elements from outside, inside the dwelling. Those known elements were, for the persons who occupied this room, the natural elements they could see, hear, feel, and smell, such the birds, the plant life, the terrain, and the wind. Even if the birds, or the plants, the earth were
meant to represent something sacred, then these proto-Greeks were re-creating a spatial microcosm in the interior representing what they could actually experience daily on the exterior. Sinclair Hood has described this fresco as “sympathetic” in *The Arts in Prehistoric Greece*.

This, with its scenes of swallows and red lilies spring from a contorted rocky landscape, is among the best preserved and the most sympathetic of all the paintings recovered from the Akrotiri settlement to date.\(^{310}\) Hood does not elaborate on his use of “sympathetic,” so the contemporary reader/viewer is left to interpret Hood’s use of that word to describe this landscape scene. If the painting can be described as “sympathetic,” then there must be a mutual relationship represented here—a sympathetic visual translation of their environment. The rocky landscape, the swallows, and the lilies are not painted with realism, instead they are stylized. There is no actual event represented. However, the composition represents the “direct realism” of early Greek thought. Landscape painting may visually describe the surface of the earth, but a general definition for landscapes in the study of art suggests an interpretation the landscape will reveal more: “Landscapes are more than scenery or political units; they are systems of natural cultural contexts.”\(^{311}\)

While the depiction itself arrests the movement of the wind, there is at the same time a recognition in the painting that “moments in time” exist. The compositional elements of the fresco painting are visual evidence and a visual demonstration of later definitional descriptions of *kairos*. By looking at the flight of the birds, and the swaying of the saffron, viewers of this painted landscape are moved into a mental space of implied comparison, one in which they can reflect and remember their own experiences of the depicted elements—the colors, the birds flying, and


the wind blowing. The landscape is a whole composition of the representations that operate as a visual metaphor relaying experiential information, which cannot be verified through any linguistic equivalent during the Bronze Age. To get at the *intrinsic meaning* of “a moment in time” through this fresco requires some further interpretation of the subject matter depicted.

Works of art are not the sum total of their formal qualities, which are so often the focus of writers on art and archeology. Formal analysis answers the “what is it” question. Ernst Gombrich says “what we call ‘works of art’ are not the results of some mysterious activity, but objects made by human beings for human beings.”

Every work of art is the result of decisions by the human hand, “made for a definite occasion, and for a definite purpose which were in the artist’s mind.” And what was in the artist’s mind, as it reflected his sociocultural experiences as to the subject of the work of art’s *intrinsic meaning*. When the discovery of *intrinsic meaning* is not attempted, then the cultural artifact becomes a product divested of the once living society of people who created it. For example, Philip Betancourt in an *Introduction to Aegean Art*, describes the *Spring Fresco* as a “small and otherwise unpretentious room opening from a courtyard” in a house known as Block Delta. Without supplying the entire description here, he describes the formal qualities of the the *Spring Fresco* without uncovering the *intrinsic meaning*.

The Theran room manages to capture the sense of a breeze rippling through the sparse vegetation by its prepared use of gently curving lines and by the fact that the individual elements are not symmetrical.

The mood continues with the beautifully rendered swallows. The flying birds are carefully observed from nature, but they are painted with great economy of line. By reducing them to just a few strokes, this master artist manages to capture the essence of their movement without laboring over details of individual feathers…One swallow is seen from below in three-quarter view with the back wing in perspective and shown smaller as it angles away from the viewer, a detail of accurate observation, that is (so far as we know) the first three-quarter view of a bird in flight in the history of art….
birds are poised with their beaks together, but they are not kissing in mid-air (birds do not kiss)…\(^{315}\)

Betancourt’s words account, construct, and classify the fresco, but he ignores the question of why the humans living in that space and time would have been interested in interacting with the things depicted. He does not interpret or re-create the ecology of the work (i.e., the decision made by the artisans).\(^{316}\) Within this fresco, the painter captures “moments in the passage of time,” which may at first seem to be an observation that is too abstract or too oblique. This arrested moment and others are conscious decisions made by the artist that represent subject matter and motif that can be interpreted as reflections of the essential tendencies of the Greek mindset. Uncovering \textit{intrinsic meaning} does not mean finding and stating one conclusion, it means considering “what an arrested “moment in time” expresses about the Greeks living in that time period.” What was remarkable to them as they passed their time in their environment? The birds, the land, and the wind.

\textbf{The Winds of Change: “The answer my friend, is blowin’ in the wind…”}\(^{317}\)

A significant part of the lives of the ancient, as well as the modern, Greeks is wind. Islanders and mainlanders must all adapt, act, and react, to the uncontrollable presence of wind. Considering the wind as part of the ecology of representation in this fresco means exploring the proto-Greeks’ relationship and understanding of the wind. Arrested in this painting are moments in which the wind blows and the plant life responds to its presence. Islands, in general, are windy; however, the Greek islands have been subject to an annual cycle of seasonal winds noted


\(^{317}\) Bob Dylan, “Blowin’ in the Wind,” released as a single from this album \textit{The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan}, 1963. The use of a song title here is just for a bit of levity; however, I did make the connection as I was writing and reflecting.
upon by authors since antiquity. They are called the *etesian* winds and they blow in from the north/northwest into the area of the Aegean Sea and eastern Mediterranean Sea.\(^{318}\) These winds are dry and cool, but also duly notorious for changing from moderate to gale-force without warning, which has instant and arresting effects on sea travel.\(^{319}\) These annual ancient winds still appear and persist anytime between May and October; however, among modern Greeks and Turks, these annual winds are known as the *Meltemi* (μελτέμι; pl. *Meltemia*, μελτέμια).

One obvious characteristic of wind is that it is composed of the movement of air. For the modern mind, air is a mixture of oxygen, nitrogen and other gases, which composes the atmosphere. While the ancient Greeks were not naming the chemical compounds, they understood that air was not a solid. From Homer and Hesiod’s poetry, we know that when the poets used air (ἀήρ, ἀέρος; Hom. ἀήρ, ἡέρος), they were referring to it as a mist or a haze; not until fifth century BCE is ἀήρ used generally to mean “air” or “the lower atmosphere.”\(^{320}\) The significance is that, just as Havelock described, the Greek mind understood an object of perception such as moving air, in this case wind, as a mental entity. However, this particular entity forced the ancient Greeks to react to moments of unpredictable changes. The phenomenal presence and changes in the wind, which they understood were out the control of the human, were later in the tradition of Greek mythology assigned to four major gods: Boreas (north),


\(^{319}\) Based on the Beaufort Scale, wind force of 7-10, which is between 32-55 mph.

\(^{320}\) *LSJ*, s.v. “ἀήρ.”
Notos (south), Euros (east), and Zephyros (west). There were also some lesser wind gods. These gods, characterized in stories of Greek mythology, were endowed with abilities that included both fertility and destruction. Boreas is the wind that was thought to be able to fertilize, sire “wind-begotten mares,” provide a gust of wind to reincarnate dead ancestors in the form of children, but he could also bring death. Zephyros seemed to have represented an unbridled passion, and he too could bring life or death, as well as sire horses. From the ancient perspective, wind was a meteorological phenomenon with the power to move objects in its path, keep winged pestilence way, relieve discomfort from the heat, and alter the landscape, as well as the sea. All of these aspects affected those living anywhere on the mainland or on the islands.

The power and presence of the wind was inherent to their lives, and it becomes one subject in the Spring Fresco, if not the main one. We know the wind is there because it is bending the plant life and the swallows are lifted by it. In the fresco, the wind is arrested, but it symbolizes “moments of time” when it causes changes in the landscape and the bodily formation of the birds. As the painter recognizes this “moment” when the wind bends the plant, it functions as evidence of the Greeks’ awareness of “moments in time” when uncontrollable changes occurred in their lives and forced them to react. Even though the painter stylized the forms in the fresco, there was desire to express the unseen in action and bring it inside a dwelling space. The beauty in the composition stems from the painter’s ability to capture effectively these natural “moments in time” without separating the viewer from his or her direct experience with the

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321 Brian A. Sparks, ed. Greek Civilization: An Introduction (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998), 15. For the lesser winds see the octagonal Tower of Winds or Horologion of Andronikos Kyrkhrestes, 50 BCE, (a.k.a – Tower of the Winds), in the Roman Agora in Athens, Greece that functioned as a timepiece.
322 Sparks, ed. Greek Civilization, 15. For the lesser winds see the octagonal Tower of Winds or Horologion of Andronikos Kyrkhrestes, 50 BCE, (a.k.a – Tower of the Winds), in the Roman Agora in Athens, Greece that functioned as a timepiece.
324 Graves, The Greek Myths, s.v. “West Wind,” 15.b, 21.m, 48.a, 81.m passim.
landscape—feeling the wind, smelling the plant life, seeing the birds and plants sway, while
hearing the ambient sounds of environment. As Hood stated, this painting is “most sympathetic.”
The painter stages an aesthetic experience for the viewer creating a familiar rhythm by
syncopating parts of their natural environment in to a visual composition. Left to their own
devices, the Greeks are learning the concept of kairos by experiencing the wind. How each of the
Greeks responds to the situation presented by the course of nature will determine their successes
and failures; however, the more experiences they gather responding to their environmental
conditions, the more they become connected to the rhythm of nature’s pulse.

Octopus Vessels: “In an octopus’s garden…near a cave…we know we can’t be found...”

Nature’s pulse fuels human vitality. The proto-Greeks were constantly in the mode of
observing and adapting to changing rhythms of life—those relegated to the gods and those
relegated to humans, and those of the air, the land, and the sea. The visual arts from the time
period of this chapter are capable of communicating to what degree the Greeks observed the
rhythms of world around them, and to what degree those integrated rhythms were connected to
other themes or concepts. If the formal qualities of the artifacts are put aside to focus on the
aesthetic, the paintings on walls, objects, and pottery can help us get a better grasp on what they
were communicating through these artifacts. The aesthetic qualities of these two octopus vessels
(figs. 3.2 and 3.3) can tell about the mental vigor of the proto-Greeks and the “essential
tendencies” of their mindset and contribute to building a prehistory of kairos. The octopuses
represent a natural subject matter (artistic motifs). These motifs become part of, or can constitute

325 Richard Starkey (a.k.a., Ringo Star), “Octopus’s Garden” from The Beatles’ album Abbey Road, 1969. The use of
a song title here is just for a bit of levity; however, I did make the connection as I was writing and reflecting.
326 Figure 3.2: Unidentified Maker, Octopus jar (Marine style pilgrim flask), ca. 1500 BCE, from Palaikastro, Crete,
Greece, Heraklion Archaeological Museum, Crete. Figure 3.3: Unidentified Maker, Minoan Octopus Stirrup Jar, c.
1500 BCE, clay, Heraklion Archaeological Museum, Crete.

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a set of conventions the artists use to communicate with their cultural audience. The audience is
then positioned to react with the world of images and understand the symbolic value represented
by them. The task here then is to analyze what the octopuses symbolized for the ancient Greeks.
For the motifs and the vessel styles to be favorable with ancient audiences, then audience must
have been able to identify with the nature of the octopus and the actual function of the type of
vessel. At the end of this section I will not conclude by saying anything like “the octopus is a
symbol for kairos,” but I intend to demonstrate that the animal and its representation on these
vessels is connected not only to the proto-Greeks’ sense of timing, but also with their sense of
how creatures (e.g., human or octopus) of the world are endowed with certain abilities to react to
or manage exigent situations.  
As with the Spring Fresco, the painters of these octopuses have
arrested “a moment in time,” so again we can observe though the art their recognition of this
timing. The uninterrupted unison of the painted octopuses onto the bulbous forms is a
demonstration of artistic mastery, which creates the opportunity for the viewer to have an
aesthetic experience.

In “The Spirit of Folk Art,” the renowned folklorist Henry Glassie defines “aesthetic”
as simply the opposite of “anesthetic.” The aesthetic experience “enlivens the nerves.” Glassie
says when viewers are “agitated into attention,” they are able to “discover the artist’s
pleasure in the object and repeat it within themselves. The aesthetic mission of the object is
complete. It has communicated feeling.”

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327 The ability to react and the success of those reactions will eventually be tied to the character of a person and their ability to grasp kairos.
328 Greek art of this period does not usually fall under the category or classification of “folk art” but the core of Glassie’s essay is about the sociocultural significance of making and experiencing art.
330 Glassie, The Spirit of Folk Art, 63-64.
331 Ibid.
principle of their design that aids in their form inciting an aesthetic experience. The rhythm also relates to timing, more specifically an element of “a moment in time” in this case arrested in early Greek art. Rhythm marks a particular point in time (or “a moment in time”), and rhythm can be made through repetition by nature or the artist. Whether rhythm is naturally occurring or mimicked, humans are attracted to hearing and seeing it as well as moving to it. Rhythm brings together the sensory and motor systems of the human physiology, and we become attracted to the various rhythms around us. The professional percussionist Mickey Hart says humans like rhythm, “because we are part of nature, it is likely that we are entrained with the larger planetary and universal rhythms that surround us.”

Rhythm is anything that repeats itself in time: the moon cycling around the earth, the sap rising in the spring, the pulsing of arteries in the body.

Science knows one big thing about rhythm, something it calls entrainment. Discovered by the Dutch scientist Christian Huygens in 1665, the law of entrainment holds that if two rhythms are nearly the same and their sources are in close proximity, they will always lock up, fall into synchrony, entrain. Why? The best theory is that nature is efficient and it takes less energy to pulse together than in opposition.

Entrainment then is like having a sympathetic human response to the rhythms of natural environment, which again includes everything from the sounds made by nature to the sounds made by humans. The proto-Greeks mimic nature’s rhythms through the representations of the octopuses on these ceramic vessels. The way that the painters could mimic the octopuses extended the experiences of the humans. The painters were attracted to the interesting contours and curved rhythmic lines of the octopus, and they translated their experience with nature onto stationary surfaces where the lines and contours create a visual dynamic experience in nature. Nature is not static and neither is the progression of time. But the art object itself is static, and

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333 Hart, Leiberman, and Sonneborn, Planet Drum, 17.
334 Ibid., 17.
the images represented on it can arrest time; however, the art object can also create a continual connection between the observer of the object and the realm of human experiences expressed through it. If it is the case that humans are to be “entrained” to the pulses around us, then this would include the rhythms of the octopus as well as other animals.

As a source of food and a source of mystery, this animal offered so much to the ancient viewers. Glassie says we can “think of works of art as a kind of philosophical treatise,” because in some societies, art does the work of philosophy, opening enduring problems to contemplation, posing solutions, and countersolutions, arguing over the nature of the universe.”

Art varies with cultural integration. The more integrated the culture, the more that creativity is part of daily life and daily life is a philosophical process, the less is the need to define art as a separate entity—precisely because it is art’s job to fuse feeling and thought….For its makers and its perceivers, art moves the senses to open the mind.

The way in which these vessels “moved their ancient senses” or “opened their ancient minds” might be slightly different for each viewer depending on their set of life experiences. These vessels fit into a category of Minoan pottery called marine style which depicted an array of plants and animals from the sea—various shells, argonauts, tritons, seaweed, rocks, fish, and starfish—on a variety of different types of pottery. This same marine theme can be found on wall paintings and stone works as well. The octopus depicted on the vessel pictured in the left image has been described as “a realistic writhing octopus” (figs. 3.2 and 3.3). While an octopus is capable of writhing, writhe is a word that suggests a body in discomfort, squirming to get away with violent effort. I disagree that this octopus is “realistic” in terms of realism in art, or

335 Glassie, 86.
336 Ibid.
338 Sakellarakis, Herakleion Museum, 43-45.
“writhing.” These octopuses are staring straight at the viewer, confronting the viewer’s gaze. The octopuses in both images are painted with stylization to accommodate the medium and the conventions of the time. While one function of art is aesthetic, it must also “touch the body—and make an offering to the mind.” Works of art are not useful as mirrors of nature; but they are useful for getting at the context of the culture in which they are made. The manner in which the octopuses are painted on these vessel types does represent the artistic conventions of the Minoans, but also what is beyond the conventions “a culture’s own energy, at once its mode of apprehension and its force for self-realization.” Minoan painters did not avoid complicated subjects, and they most likely understood that octopuses are more complex and mysterious than humans. An octopus would be very difficult to represent in painted form. There was no reason for the proto-Greeks to imitate living organisms on stationary objects if they were satisfied with simply sharing an environment with the living things themselves. Their minds were stimulated by the octopus and its home in the sea.

The ancient Greeks did not have scientific information we have now on these mollusks. Certainly, the ancient Greeks understood the cunning and predatory nature of the octopus, but they didn’t have the science to explain how an octopus could camouflage itself with nearly any color or texture surrounding it in the natural environment of the sea. The complexity and mysteriousness of this creature continues to intrigue humans even now (in and out of the science community, albeit for different reasons.) Octopuses were not hidden from the daily lives of the ancients. Octopuses are by nature shy and reclusive creatures, but a common marine animal

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340 Glassie, 82.
341 Ibid., 68.
342 See recent trade books such as: Sy Montgomery, The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness (2015); Peter Godfrey-Smith, Other Minds: The Octopus, the Sea and the Deep Origins of Consciousness (2017).
found in the craggy coves of Greek shorelines. Imagine the surprised diver or fisherman, who thought they saw a rock or a shaggy piece of plant life on the sea floor, to suddenly see two eyes open, stare, and rocket away in a cloud of ink or sea sediment. Some of the ancient viewers may have seen this animal alive in the sea, or dead after being caught or washed up on shore. This animal assumes one shape and volume in the water, but outside the water the thing becomes a flattened, and frankly a bit more like the octopus forms represented on the vessels. Maybe the painters looked at dead octopuses washed ashore and mingled in with some seaweeds when they decided how to paint the creatures. Maybe they had encountered the creature in the sea, looked it straight in eyes and the thing looked back. Maybe both. The painters, nevertheless, describe the dynamic contours these creatures and from the surface of the vessels, they stare back at the viewers. Later on the mainland, the octopus would be represented on Mycenaean pottery (1600-1100 BCE) representing a changing set of conventions (fig. 3.4). And then from the Odyssey (5.425-5.439), in an event when Odysseus has been tossed around the sea and beat against rocks by Poseidon, he is eventually belched onto shore from the swell of the sea. The poet makes a comparison of Odysseus’s experience of struggling with the undertow, or rip tide, to that of an octopus being ripped from its home.

Thus then did he escape this wave, but in its backward flow it once more rushed upon him and smote him, and flung him far out in the sea. And just as, when a cuttlefish is dragged from its hole, many pebbles cling to its suckers, even so from his strong hands were bits of skin stripped off against the rocks; and the great wave covered him.  

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343 Figure 3.4 – Unidentified Maker, Terracotta stirrup jar with octopus, Late Helladic IIIC, ca. 1200–1100 B.C., terracotta, Helladic, Mycenaean. Purchase, Louise Eldridge McBurney Gift, 1953, 53.11.6, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

344 Homer, The Odyssey 5.430-5.435.
The translator uses cuttlefish, but it is an octopus. Cuttlefish do not live in reclusive holes, and are not known for their strength. Octopuses do live in reclusive holes and are notoriously strong. The character of Odysseus is also one of great strength, courage, and cunning. The octopus was unpredictable, mutable, and cunning, and was free—governed by no other force but its own, the master of its own domain, but within the larger cosmos. The octopus, like Odysseus, represents “self-realization” and vitality.

The Greek interest in this creature and the character traits it shares with humans will extend beyond the time period of this chapter and the whole scope of the dissertation to the second century CE with Oppian’s treatise On Fishing (Τὰ Ἀλιευτικά). On the character of the octopus (Poulpes), Oppian records the following:

No one, I think, is ignorant of the craft of the Poulpes, which make themselves like in appearance to the rocks, even whatsoever rock they embrace and entwine with their tentacles. By their deceits they easily mislead and escape fishers alike and stronger fishes. When a weaker fish meets them near at hand, straightway they leap forth from their stony form and appear as veritable Poulpes and fishes, and by their craft contrive food and escape destruction. But in winter, they say, the Poulpes never travel over the waters of the sea; for they fear the fierce storms. But sitting down in their hollow chambers they cower, and devour their own feet as if they were alien flesh. These feet, when they have glutted their owners, grow again; this gift, I ween, Poseidon has given them.345

Mḗtis, an allied concept to kairos meaning “wisdom, skill, craft,” which was described in Chapter 2 and discussed by Detienne and Vernant is viewed as informing prudence (phrόnēsis, a type of practical intelligence or wisdom), and a god or man endowed with mḗtis means they have the ability to see the unseen and win struggles for power with cunning tricks instead of by force.346 “Mḗtis is swift, as prompt as the opportunity that it must seize on the wing, not allowing it to pass.”347 Kairos enables mḗtis to act according to its plan; it is mḗtis which,

346 Detienne and Vernant, Cunning Intelligence, 13 and 27.
347 Ibid., 15.
overtaking the *kairos*, however fleeting it may be, catches it by surprise. It can ‘seize’ the opportunity in as much as, not being ‘light’ [“acting lightly,” *lepte*], it has been able to foresee how an event will turn out and to prepare itself for this well in advance.\(^{348}\) The “mastery over the *kairos*” will be characterized by the Pindar in the fifth century BCE.\(^{349}\) *Kairos* is conjoined to a concept like *mē̑tis* and while there may be a struggle between the two, both operate or seek application in “the world of movement, of multiplicity and of ambiguity…In order to seize upon the fleeting *kairos*, *mē̑tis* had to make itself even swifter than the latter.”\(^{350}\) These concepts are widely connected to the realm of gods, humans, and all creatures great and small. How the ancients experienced these concepts and how we have come to know about them in the present is largely by being educated through their expressions in the visual arts, but also through other human activities, such as athletics, labor, and poetry.

**A Communal Process of Education on Timing in Athletics, Labor, and Poetry**

Ancient Greek education from most historical eras has the hallmark of integrating the training of the body and mind without division. We can learn about this integration of body and mind and how it can reflect the admired characteristics of human and animals through objects like the octopus vessels, but also in other works of art, where the subject matter depicted includes forms of “objects and events.” Before the Olympic Games began in 776 BCE, which served to highlight ideal athletic prowess, the purpose of sport for civilizations like the Minoans was to entertain at public religious festivals and ceremonies.\(^{351}\) The Minoans were particularly interested in tumbling and demonstrating dexterous body movements in the so-called “leaping

\(^{348}\) Detienne and Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence*, 16.

\(^{349}\) Ibid.

\(^{350}\) Ibid., 20.

dance,” which is believed to have developed into the sport of bull-leaping. The painted fresco from a wall in the Palace of Knossos depicts part of the performance (fig. 3.5). The action represented in the fresco, as well as the repeated motif framing the action, arrests “a moment” in the performance, and at the same time preserves the rhythm and energy. Bull-leaping was dangerous and required the leaper to have a familiarity with the ways of the animal and acquire a technique. Techniques involved in this intricate athletic performance of a human leaping over a running bull demanded that the leaper have great physical agility, mental preparedness, and a program of lengthy practices. Within those athletic practices, the concepts of mē̑tis and kairos would be in constant motion. In bull-leaping, it is the human who suffers with the disadvantage of being weaker than the bull; therefore the leaper must use be prepared with mē̑tis so the crucial moments of the leaping exercise can be grasped with success—not by brute force, but through adaptability and agility.

Based on numerous representations of bull-leaping from Minoan Crete, various stages of the activity have been suggested (fig. 3.6). “For a successful performance the athlete would have to be well acquainted with the actions of the beast and be able to time his own movements to the second, in order to keep both his and the beast’s movement perfectly synchronized.” At least two other athletes participated in the performance to be sure the somersaulting bull-leaper could make a safe landing, which would have required, yet again, attention to “moments in time”

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353 Figure 3.5: Unidentified Maker, Bull-leaping, ca. 1450–1400 BCE, fresco, from the palace at Knossos, Crete, Greece, Heraklion Archaeological Museum, Crete.
355 Ibid., 14 and 16.
356 Figure 3.6: K. Iliakis, Illustrated reconstruction of the various stages of bull-leaping, in The Olympic Games in Ancient Greece: Ancient Olympia and the Olympic Games, ed. Nikólaos Gialouúris (Athens, GR: Ekdotike Athenon, 1976), 17.
unfolding in front of them. Meanwhile spectators watched safely from the outside of the large
gated enclosure where the performance was taking place.358

The importance of this performance was not only a display of agility and adaptability, it
is believed to have been linked to a religious festival.359 For many ancient civilizations, the bull
was a sacred animal, as it is believed to have been to the Minoans. The repetition of acrobatics
and bull-leaping on frescos, pottery, gold signet rings, and stone seals tells us that the
performance and the animal symbolized something significant. Evangelos Kyriakidis, professor
of archeology, suggests that “identifying ritual patterns of common denominators” does provide
information about the past, even if the evidence cannot reveal exactly why certain ritual
performances were conducted.360 He addresses the importance of recognizing that there is a
disjunction between ritual practice and belief. 361 Kyriakidis says that while there may be a
“relationship between ritual (a certain type of action) and belief is singular; the association of
identical rituals with identical beliefs should not be taken for granted. The continuity of religious
practice may be indicative of, but does not in itself prove, the continuity of religious belief.”362
Whatever the beliefs were around bull-leaping, we can see from the physical evidence that the
learning and exacting of this performance were absolutely dependent on the leaper and other
athletes being aware and adaptable to a very mutable situation, which was at the very least a
customary way of learning by experience. 363

358 Sakellarakis, “Athletics in Crete and Mycenae,” 19. An enclosure was uncovered northwest of the palace at
Malia, Crete.
359 Ibid.
Kyriakidis, Cotsen Advanced Seminar 3 (Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Cotsen Institute of
Archaeology, 2007), 15.
362 Ibid.
363 Glassie, 110.
Another place in the proto-Greeks’ sociocultural environment where they were expressing arrested “moments in time” and synchronizing those moments with daily life would be in representations of labor or agricultural work, which could be extended to include ritual procession. An example of this is on the *Harvester Vase* (figs. 3.7 and 3.8)\(^{364}\) from Crete, a small ostrich-egg-shaped rhyton found in the archeological remains of the palace setting at Hagia Triada. There is a possibility, based on other vessels of similar stone media, with shallow carving, and within the general vicinity that the now black shiny surface may have been covered in gold leaf.\(^{365}\) In the history of art the use of gold as a medium indicated value and importance, which set the object outside of use in daily life. There are about twenty-seven human figures depicted, though some scholars have counted only twenty-six.\(^{366}\) There are have also been disagreements between scholars as to what is going on in this scene. Some believe it depicts a procession related to a sowing festival,\(^{367}\) others say the processional is related to a harvest festival.\(^{368}\) The interpretation of the scene being related to a festival processional has largely to do with the one figure wearing a fringed garment and carved a bit larger in scale than the other figures in the scene. The fringed garment is a piece of costuming customarily worn by cult priests. Regardless of exactly what type of event is depicted in this scene or how many figures appear in the register (the band encircling the vessel), the artisan’s ability to synthesize the

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\(^{364}\) Figure 3.7: Unidentified Maker, *Harvester Vase*, ca. 1500 BCE, steatite or serpentine, from Hagia Triada, Crete, Greece, Heraklion Archeological Museum, Crete; the view is of the figure with the greatest scale and wearing the fringed garment.

Figure 3.8: Detail of *Harvester Vase*; the view is of the figure holding the sistrum.

Note: Only the top portion of this vessel (rhyton) is original, beyond the register to the bottom of the vessel is a modern reconstruction.


\(^{366}\) Higgins, 154.

\(^{367}\) Ibid.

\(^{368}\) Betancourt, 3.
rhythmic nature of human figures in action, as individuals and as a group, with their physical
environment is clear.

The scene has been described as “a lifelike rendering,” 369 which means the
representation responded to “time and place” in such a way as to show the figures appearing in
the compositional register as the human eye would see them in the natural environment.
Enclosed between the top and the bottom of this register is an arrangement of human figures
depicted in an outdoor scene, overlapping and receding into the background, which creates a
natural replication of visual depth or three-dimensional space. There is foreground and a
background, and in between there is rhythm and gesture of the people walking together. There is
unity in this procession despite one of the men who may have fallen out of step or tripped (fig.
3.9). 370 The fallen man’s “moment” of falling out of line has been captured for as long as this
vase will remain in existence. The procession keeps moving in spite his fall. Because of the
rhythmic interaction of the people and the setting, the scene is animated or “lifelike.” The bodies
are examples of the composite view, which is a combination of frontal and profile views used to
compose a figure. Stylization was used by the artisan; naturalism was not wholly attempted,
because the figures are intended to represent participants in the scene, not exact portraits. The
rhythm translated into this scene is primarily from human beings. Humans have lungs,
diaphragms, stomachs, and we use them all, at different paces, to breathe in and out. Below the
singer’s rib cage, his diaphragm is depicted (fig. 3.8). During a deep breath the diaphragm
moves down, the stomach expands out, all of which gives the lungs room to expand. By

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369 Betancourt, 3.
64. Figure 3.9 - Detail of the Harvester Vase; the view is of the fallen man, from an “unrolled” digital image of the
carvings on the Harvester Vase, image from Monica Bowen, Alberti’s Window: An Art History Blog, “Harvester Vase
content/uploads/2017/05/Harvester-Vase-unrolled.jpg.
representing on the plastic form what had directly been experienced in life, the artisan demonstrated an understanding of what the body was doing physiologically when breathing and singing out. The artisan has captured the visual rhythm of the human form, but also the auditory rhythm which every figure in the scene can hear, even if the viewer of the composition cannot. The value of preserving the events of this scene are difficult to decipher; however, the character, or musician, making noise with the sistrum in hand is an important subject which tells us more about the timing represented in the register on this rhyton.

Musicologists agree that music and “[m]usicians are and always have been essential to society. In one role, like the sistrum shaker, they created rhythms to help individuals work as a team.”371 Because observers of this compositional scene can no longer hear the voices, the feet moving, or the rattle, then the presence of this figure, committed to this physical plane must have symbolized something deeper for the original audience. The word sistrum is derived from the Greek seistron meaning “thing shaken;”372 however, the rattle was not an invention of the Greeks. Instead, the sistrum was important in ancient Egypt and was associated with Isis.373 “The sacred sistrum is most often played by women in ritual devotion to the mother goddess called Isis, Hathor, Bast, or Astarte” (Egypt, 2133-730 BCE).374 Percussionist and musicologist James Blades (1901-1999) says “the most important instruments with the Greeks were lyres, pipes, and trumpets, with little emphasis on the use of percussion instruments, particularly the drum (tympanon), which seems to have had little place in any form of music, including, surprisingly,

372 James Blades, Percussion Instruments and Their History (Boston, MA: Faber and Faber Limited, 1970, 1974, 1980), 161; see also sistra entry, pp. 161-164; and on Greece and Rome, pp. 177-182.
373 Montagu, 19.
374 Hart and Lieberman, 33.
military music.”375 Based on their regular appearance on works of art, certain instruments were thought to be part of everyday life, which included the Greeks’ use of castanets, clappers, cymbals, sistra, and drums;376 however, “the greater part of the rhythm of Greek music was…founded upon their poetry. Sung poetry was reinforced by means of the pitch of accompanying music, hence, presumably the predominance of lyres and pipes.”377 Another musicologist acknowledges that the Greeks put vocal arrangement over instrumental arrangement, so even though he says the figures on the Harvester Vase are “marching gaily to the rhythm of an Egyptian sistrum,” the function of the rattle would have been to keep the vocal song on beat.378 He and his rattle had cultural value, as each rhythmic “moment in time” is announced with both his voice and his rattle. The role of a percussionist in any type of band is to maintain a dynamic and reliable rhythm to keep the band on tempo—they control the timing. “It is the rhythm that has always been played in the village to mark particular points in time – to honor the gods, to celebrate community, to insure a good harvest, to commune with the larger pulse.”379 The figure holding the sistrum is also keeping time. The other figures on the vessel respond to the sistrum shaker, and as viewers, we also respond because we are entrained to the depicted rhythm. We cannot hear the rhythm, we can see it and feel it through the compositional design. We are all beholden to him for part of the aesthetic experience. This carved scene attests to yet another degree to which the proto-Greeks were paying attention to “moments in time” and recognizing how these “moments in time” are integrated into the domain of human activity.

375 Blades, Percussion Instruments and Their History, 177.
376 Ibid.
377 Ibid. On the Greeks importing their music, see also Curt Sachs, The History of Musical Instruments (1940), page 128 from the chapter “Greece, Rome, and Etruria.”
After alphabetic writing enters the historic scene of ancient Greece (ca. 700 BCE), written compositions in poetry are available as objects of evidence to account for “moments in time.” Homeric poetry, for example, uses written language to provide a record of the composition of aesthetic experiences presented to listening audiences. Of course, this is literally a record, a version only, of what may have been sung to real audiences. An example of this vivid language from the *Iliad* centers on the shield of Achilles being wrought. Hephaestus answers the request of Thetis for the armor of Achilles to be replaced (*Il. 18.388-467*). First, he makes the shield, upon which Hephaestus depicts “with cunning skill” the *cosmos* of the Bronze Age Greeks. Using “visually powerful, and vivid description” (*enargia*), the poet redirects the audience to the activities of two cities from the battlefield of the Trojan War. On the shield of Achilles, the poet describes this wedding scene in a city with such detail the audience must have been moved to imagining both the sights and sounds of the scene (*Il. 18.490-496*). Keeping in mind that reading it in prose form eradicates the all-important rhythm employed by the singer; the choice of verses here mentions the sounds of instruments.

> On it he made also two fair cities of mortal men. In the one there were marriages and feastings, and by the light of the blazing torches they were leading the brides from their rooms through the city, and loud rose the bridal song. And young men were whirling in the dance, and with them flutes and lyres [οὐλοὶ φόρμιγγές] sounded continually; and the women stood each at her door and marveled.

There are other verses in the description of the shield of Achilles in which human action is accompanied by musical sounds. The two herdsmen, following sheep and cattle, are playing on shepherd’s pipes (pl. οὐρνήξιδες/syrinxes), also known as panpipes or pan flutes (*Il. 18.525-526*).  

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383 See also the myth of Pan and Syrinx.
In the midst of a harvesting scene, maidens and youths were carrying baskets of fruit and “in their midst a boy made pleasant music with a clear-toned lyre [κιθάριζε, he played the kithara], and to it sang sweetly the Linus song with his delicate voice; and they beating the earth in accompaniment followed on with skipping feet and dance and shouting” (II. 18.569-572).

A passage from the *Odyssey* tells us that the role of the bard was “to keep alive among posterity, ‘the deeds of men and gods’” (*Od. 1.338*). The deeds of men and gods included successes and failures that depended on the character of the person or god, and their ability to grasp opportune or advantageous “moments in time,” and now in addition to the visual arts, we have proof that they learned this from poetry. Jaeger says, “The Greeks always felt that a poet was in the broadest and deepest sense the educator of his people. Homer was only the noblest example, as it were the classic instance, of that general conception.”384 Jaeger claims that Homer’s poetry could educate because it expressed “all the aesthetic and moral potentialities of mankind.”385 Homer’s heroic poetry was aimed “at the creation and perpetuation of a heroic ideal. Its educational aim and influence are far greater than that of all other types of poetry, because it gives an objective picture of life, and portrays men at hand-grips with destiny, struggling to win a noble prize.”386 The struggle will include the participants’ ability to grasp the *kairos*, because “[e]very action has its roots in character,”387 which the audience is learning through Homer—“the first and greatest creator and shaper of Greek life and the Greek character.”388 Homer may have been the first to shape the ideal character in Greek life, but the

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384 Jaeger, *Paideia*, vol.1, 35.
385 Ibid., 36.
386 Ibid., 43.
387 Ibid., 51.
388 Ibid., 36.
Minoan artists with their representations of the octopus may have been the first to translate what becomes admirable and noble in Greek character into paint on a vessel.

Even though Homer concentrated on an ideal character, the life of the majority was not forgotten as evidenced by the imagery described on the shield of Achilles (Il.18.483-608). Homer’s poetic description of the world described on the shield is one that harmonizes man and nature.\(^{389}\) The shield embodies the *cosmos* of the Heroic age. Hephaestus does not render the composition in a simple succession of events.\(^{390}\) The *Iliad* as a whole is a composition of synthesized vignettes. These vignettes that make up the shield of Achilles are like the *Spring Fresco*, the bull-leaper fresco, the octopus vessels, and the *Harvester Vase*, “moments in time” arrested in the form of visual and verbal compositions. These works of art are successful as educational tools because they can move the audience beyond the aesthetic experience; they have the power to move the mind, the soul, and therefore inspire the audience to reach for the moral and intellectual ideal. This power to move the soul was called *psychagogia* (*ψυχαγωγέω*, to lead, win, or entrain souls) by the Greeks—a skill admired greatly in the epic poetry of Homer, but later disparaged by Plato in the use of language related to *rhētorikē*. Jaeger also contends that “poetry cannot really be educative unless it is rooted in the depth of the human soul, unless it embodies a moral belief, a high ardour of the spirit, a broad and compelling ideal of humanity. And the greatest of Greek poetry does more than show a cross-section of life taken at random.”\(^{391}\) Both epic poems of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, just as other artifacts covered in this chapter, harness the aspects of timing for the gods and for mortal life. These poems demonstrate the human desire to organize, understand, connect, and communicate with the world around

\(^{389}\) Jaeger, *Paideia*, vol.1, 50.

\(^{390}\) Ibid., 51.

\(^{391}\) Ibid., 36.
them. Havelock says a preliterate culture uses the epic poem for purposes beyond entertainment, beyond the aesthetic, but to purport an ideal through the deeds of great heroes, and the epic poems functioned as a way of “repeating and recommending the mores of contemporary society.” 392 More than one Greek concept is fundamental to these folkways, conventions, or practices, but for this study, it is kairos that is woven into the fabric of Greek prehistory.

Written language makes visible what the mind is experiencing through the senses, while at the same time arrests moments of sights and sounds. The proto-Greeks’ way of living is reflected in the instructional work of the poet known as Hesiod. Homer’s poetic perspective is different from Hesiod’s Works and Days. Jaeger describes Works and Days as “a vivid record of the life of the peasantry in mainland Greece about the end of the eighth century” and as “an indispensable complement to Homer’s few glimpses of the life of the common people in early Ionia.” 393 Homer educates on the aristocratic ideal, whereas Hesiod addresses the ideal of justice, 394 which means Hesiod will not be shy in expressing his opinion about acts related to the building of good character. In Homer, the ideal character can be developed through duels with enemies, but in Hesiod the same valuable character can emerge from battles against the natural elements of the earth. 395 According to Glenn W. Most, Hesiod was born in Ascra, Boeotia, his father a poor emigrant from Asia Minor. Hesiod was raised as a shepherd, but his father made his living as a mercantile seaman. 396 Hesiod, “without having had any training by human teachers,”

393 Jaeger, vol. 1. 57.
394 Ibid., 62.
395 Ibid., 57.
believed that his sudden ability to produce poetry was due to a “mystical experience in which the Muses themselves initiated” upon him. 397

Hesiod’s Works and Days provides an exhortation, addressed to his brother Perses, to revere justice and to work hard, and indicates how success in agriculture, sailing, and other forms of economic, social and religious behavior can be achieved by observing certain rules, including the right and wrong days for various activities. 398

Most concludes from Hesiod’s perspective, for the Iron Race of humans, that “a defining mark of our human condition seems to be that, for us, justice and work are inextricably intertwined.” 399 In the first part of Works and Days, Hesiod weaves the necessity for human work with mythological figures, while the remainder of the poem demonstrates how to go about the work assigned to humans by the gods. 400 Hesiod’s mission is to teach how to read the messages conveyed by nature. 401

The farmer’s and sailor’s calendars semioticize the year in its cyclical course as a series of signals and responses; then the list of auspicious and inauspicious days with the which the poem ends carves a different section out of the flow of time, this time in terms of single month rather than of the whole year, demonstrating that there is a meaningful and potentially beneficial logic in this narrower temporal dimension as well. 402

Hesiod observed for himself or became aware through oral transmission the natural convergences of nature and human. Hesiod’s text is replete with examples of “direct realism” through the examples he uses and the sensory language he uses to describe them. Passing these events on to his brother in writing, he composes in his examples, lessons that recognize the benefits of good timing, which will lead successfully to an ethically and morally civic life. He reminds Perses and instructs countless future readers as follows: “Their hands will be justice, and

397 Most, “Introduction,” xii.
398 ibid. xxxvi.
399 Most, “Introduction,” xxxix.
400 ibid., xlii.
401 ibid.
402 ibid.
one man will destroy the other’s city.” (WD, 189) Hesiod’s passages are replete with language describing a human using all natural senses to navigate and cultivate the environment, by reading the cues of nature through his human senses. The payoff for Perses, if he can manage to read the cues of nature, is that the timing of his actions will appease the gods, and that he will be self-sufficient and not begging his neighbors for help. However, Hesiod’s words do not serve as how-to manual for agriculture, just as the bull-leaping fresco does not teach one how to perform the task. Instead, Hesiod is attempting to appeal to his brother’s moral and ethical convictions through the use of vivid language—just like Homer, only a using different subject matter.

The following pages from Works and Days demonstrate how Hesiod’s language emphasized various kinds of environmental elements through vivid description that took into account the importance of timing or “moments in time” in human actions. These examples emphasize Hesiod’s visual language, as well as his emphatic language such as: “take notice,” “bear everything in mind well,”” and “when.” “When” is especially interesting because “when” the hearers or readers take notice of whatever he is telling him, then they know that it is ”the moment” to act.

When the Atlas-born Pleiades rise, they start the harvest—the plowing, when they set. They are concealed for forty nights and days, but when the year has revolved they appear once more, when the iron is being sharpened. This is the rule for the plains, and for those who dwell near the sea and those far from the selling sea in the valleys, and glens, fertile land: sow naked, and low naked, and harvest naked, if you want to bring in all of Demeter’s works in due season, so that each crop may grow for you in its season, lest bring in need later you go as a beggar to other people’s houses and achieve nothing—just now as you have come to me. (383-396)

When the strength of the sharp sun ceases from its sweaty heat, as mighty Zeus sends the autumn rain, and a mortal’s skin changes with great relief—for that is when the star Sirius goes during the day only briefly above the heads of death-nurtured human beings

403 Hesiod, Works and Days, ed. and trans. Glenn Most, 14n, “In the first half of May.”
404 Ibid., 15n, “In late October or early November.”
405 Ibid., 16n, “From the end of March until the beginning of May.”
and takes a greater share of the night—at that time, wood that is cut with the iron is least bitten by worms, and its leave fall to the ground and it ceases putting forth shoots. So at that time be mindful and cut wood, a seasonable work: cut a mortar three feet long, and a pestle three cubits long, and an axle seven feet long: for this way things will fit together very well. (414-424)

Acquire two oxen, nine years old, male, that have reached the measure of puberty, for their strength has not been drained away yet: they are best at working. They will not break the plow by contending with one another in the furrow, leaving the work futile right there. Together with these, a strong forty-year-old man should follow with the plow after he has breakfasted on a four-piece, eight-part loaf; someone who puts care into his work and will drive a strait furrow, no longer gaping after his age-mates, but keeping his mind on this work. And another man, not a bit younger than him, is better for scattering the seeds and avoid over seeding: for a younger man is all a flutter for his age-mates.

Take notice, when you hear the voice of the crane every year calling from above out of the clouds: she brings the sign for plowing and indicates the season of winter rain, and this gnaws the heart of the man without oxen. (436-452)

After the plowing and the sowing by man with the implements of man: “In this way the ears of corn will bend towards the ground in their ripeness, if afterwards the Olympian himself grants them a fine result; you will drive the spiderwebs away from the storage-vessels, and I anticipate that you will rejoice as you draw on the means of life that are indoors. You will arrive at bright spring in good shape and will not gape at other people; but some other man will stand in need of you. (473-478)

If you plow the divine earth first at the winter solstice, you will harvest sitting down, covered in dust, grasping on a little with your hand and tying it together in opposite direction, not at all pleased, and you will carry it off in a basket; few will admire you… If you do plow late, this will be a remedy for you: when the cuckoo in the leaves of the oak tree first calls and gives pleasure to mortals on the boundless earth, if at that time Zeus rains for three days without ceasing, neither exceeding the hoof-print of an ox with the early plower. Bear everything well in mind: mark well the bright spring when it comes, and the rain in good season. (479-492)

When Zeus has completed sixty wintery days after the solstice, the star Arcturus is first seen rising, shining brightly just at dusk, leaving behind the holy stream of Oceanus. After this, Pandion’s daughter, the dawn-lamenting swallow, rises into the light for human beings, and the spring begins anew. Forestall her, prune the vines first: for that way is better.

But when the house-carrier climbs up from the ground on the plants, fleeing the Pleiades, there is no longer any digging for vines: sharpen the scythes and rouse your

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406 Ibid., 17n, “In late September and early October.”
408 Ibid., 23n, “About 20 December.”
409 Ibid., 32n, “The second half of February.”
410 Ibid., 34n, “In mid-May.”
slaves. Avoid shadowy seats and sleeping until dawn in the harvest season, when the sun withers the skin: make haste at the time and carry home the crops, getting up at sunrise, so that your means of life will be sufficient. (564-577)

When the golden thistle blooms and the chirping cicada, sitting in a tree, incessantly ours out its clear-sounding song from under its wings in the season of toilsome summer, at that time goats are fattest, and wine is best, and women are most lascivious—men are weakest, for Sirius parches their head and knees, and their skin is dry form the heat. (582-588)

When Orion and Sirius come into the middle of the sky, and rosy-fingered Dawn sees Arcturus, then, Perses, pluck off all the grapes and take them home. Set them out in the sun for ten days and ten night, then cover them up in the shade for five, and on the sixth draw out the give of much-cheering Dionysus into storage-vessels. (609-614)

And in this next cited passage, Hesiod makes use of the word kairos (καιρὸς).

Bear in mind; rightness is the best in all things. (694)

μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καιρὸς δ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος.413

He seems to sum up all the events he wrote about into one maxim which involves the kairos as endowed to humans; kairos is a “conservative faculty” of the successful human, not the only one but certainly an important one. This is the earliest written evidence showing the usage of kairos in real-time of the proto-Greeks, and the work done previously in this chapter makes Hesiod’s advice make sense.

In the last passage of Works and Days, Hesiod talks about randomness, or rather acknowledges it, and we learn why “kairos is best in all things.” Hesiod recognizes that there are good days and bad, and that there is a randomness to mortal life. But he also instructs throughout the poem that there is a way learning and knowing how to live in that randomness that guides one on how to act, even if few know. With the recognition of ‘randomness’ in the lives of mortals coupled with knowing, the human actors are obligated to pay attention to cause and

411 Ibid., 35n, “In mid-July.”
412 Hesiod, Works and Days, ed. and trans. Glenn Most, 39n, “In mid-September.”
414 Kennedy, Comparative Rhetoric, 4.
effect in their days of living and advised to reflect on the effects. Hesiod’s final words are as follows:

These days are a great boon for those on the earth. But the others are random, doomless, they bring nothing. One man praises one kind of day, another another; but few are the ones who know. One time one of these days is a mother-in-law, another time a mother. Happy and blessed is he who know all these things and does his work without giving offense to the immortals, distinguishing the birds and avoiding trespasses. (822-828)

Hesiod’s examples bear the mark of humans living in a mutable world. Not only does Hesiod instruct, his poetry reflects the lessons provided by Mother Earth, ones that suggest mortals must meld to the mutability of nature and the desires of the gods in order to survive. Hesiod was expressing the visual world consciously, but not on only for the purpose of documentation. If his brother were to adhere to all these noticeable “moments in time,” Perses will bring sustenance to himself, he will appease the gods, and he will earn commendable civic honor. Hesiod, a shepherd turned poet, spent his life observing and reflecting on the experiences he had with his natural environment. From these direct experiences, through his poetry, a complex and useful understanding of the benefit of wise actions transcended.

Conclusion and a Summary of the Intrinsic Meaning of Kairos in Proto-Greek History

The period of total orality or nonliteracy for the Greeks will last until approximately 1100 BCE. Oral communication and cognition were dependent on expressions of speech travelling through the air into the ears of another. Jaeger notes that in “early Greek thought there was no separation between ethics and aesthetics.” After the introduction of a Greek alphabet occurred, expressed speech that had once consisted of sounds in the air and was wholly dependent on the laws and habits of hearing was shifting to the laws and habits of vision, which means works

415 Havelock, “From Homer to Plato,” in The Greek Concept of Justice, 9.
416 Havelock, The Greek Concept of Justice, 224.
417 Jaeger, Paideia, vol.1, 35.
418 Havelock, “From Homer to Plato,” in The Greek Concept of Justice, 9 and 224.
from the production of visual art were vitally important educational tools. Havelock makes several points regarding the “laws (or habits)” of the ear and the eye in the development of literacy for the ancient Greeks. He says that habits of vision with regard to alphabetic text “supplement those of the ear, both in cognition and creation,” and the “significant effects of this change register themselves in the management of language as it is used for storage purposes.”

But vision, unemployable for linguistic purposes in preliterate society, still had a storage function to perform, supplying the memory with the shapes of artifacts used and reused by the culture—artifacts which by repeating themselves in the course of successive manufacture supplied continuity and structure to behavior also.

Alphabetic text contributes significant changes to the Greeks’ historic conditions and manner in which they will express their perceptions and reflections of their world, which is why the study of objects before they adopt an alphabet is important material for interpretation of a prehistoric kairos. As previously stated in Chapter 2, kairos does not have a known etymological background, but the concept was alive and present. A dynamic component in the preliterate and predisciplinary eras of ancient Greek history that instead of being called kairos, I have referred to as “moments in time.” Part of investigating kairos in a time period like the Bronze Age where the physical evidence is not always abundant and the textual evidence is almost completely lacking, requires the help of art and archeological history, cognitive scientific and, again, anthropological approaches to parlay a philosophical discussion on the possibilities of “How is kairos to be considered in 3000-600 BCE?” Through the interpretive tools chosen for this chapter, I believe that kairos ought to be considered as a dynamic force that the Greeks become aware of through

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419 Havelock, “The Spoken and Written Word,” in The Greek Concept of Justice, 224-225. The architectural or physical compositions expected by the Greeks goes beyond hand-held objects or painting on walls to include the spaces in which those visual arts were experienced by an audience. Spaces that were sacred and secular, public and private, inside and outside, and formal and informal (i.e., streets, courtyards, meeting places, doorways, roofs, rooms, hearths, temples, performance locations, harbors, docks).

420 Ibid.
their direct experiences with their environment; kairos is a “moment in time” that forces human
decision—ones that result in success or failure, life or death, and honor or dishonor.

A summary of the “intrinsic meaning” of kairos in its prehistorical setting begins with it
growing out of the “direct experiences” the proto-Greeks had with their geographical
environment. Their environment provided the place where they were forced to understand
“moments in time” and “timing” in relationship to exigent situations, on land and at sea, upon
which their survival was predicated. They had to be aware of the how to act and when to act in
order to survive. Through these “historical conditions,” kairos ought to be understood as a
concept of time that operates in the conceptual space between the microcosm of humans and
their worldly cosmos. Works of visual art, and later, poetry, provide proof of their intellectual
processing of these “moments of time” by providing an aesthetic experience through which we
can focus on their capacity as humans to feel and express their own cultural energy. Within this
time period kairos exists organically, moving between realms of the gods, humans, and animals,
however, kairos is most usefully understood as part of the process human self-realization. Kairos
is only part of this process, but it is a concept intricately woven into the decisions that decide
outcomes of success or failure, life or death, and honor or dishonor. Kairos, or rather the ability
to grasp it, is a “conservative faculty.”

Within humans and animal agencies, and in
conjunction with other Greek concepts, the ability to grasp the kairos conserves and confirms
results of decisive action. By grasping the appropriate or opportune “moment in time,” kairos
offers the possibility of success, livelihood, or the demonstration of excellent and noble
character. The one caveat to the nature of kairos, and this is important, is that its life-persevering
power defies logic. The Greeks in prehistory are recognizing this through the visual arts and

421 Kennedy, Comparative Rhetoric, 4.
poetry, and the future Greeks will become even more aware of the nature and scope of timing human actions.
CHAPTER ABSTRACT: In Chapter 3, kairos is indirectly recognized in the visual arts and poetry which reflected the experiences the proto-Greeks had with their natural environment. In this chapter, the concept of kairos will also be identified in oblique ways through visual and textual evidence from this time period of 800-400 BCE. The contents of this chapter also further recognize shifts in ancient Greeks’ literacy, because there is more textual evidence available in the eras of this chapter. The sociocultural conditions of the ancient Greeks have been considered by historians as a time of expansion, transition, and organization. Kairos as an element of the sociocultural conditions is also in a transitory state. Kairos is found in this span of time to be between its broad and natural organic state as “a moment in time” to a narrowed state of “opportune timing.”

The eras included in this chapter overlap some from the previous chapter because making strict divisions of time does not change the fact some historical conditions span from one referential division to another. The textual and visual evidence used in this chapter focus on changes in the dominance of orality, the expansion of the Greek sociocultural landscape, and their desire to organize the nature of their consciousness, which ultimately reverberates in the developing nature of kairos. The time period of this chapter is after Bronze Age collapse (ca. 1050 BCE) and firmly in the Iron Age (ca. eleventh-first centuries BCE). As for the history of the rhetoric, this chapter includes the start of the time when the sophists were active in the Greek world (ca. 460-380 BCE); as for the visual arts, the artistic styles found in this time span are Geometric, Archaic and Early Classical.

Following the structure of Chapter 3, this chapter also aims to consider “how kairos ought to be considered in 800-400 BCE?” As with the previous chapter, Panofsky’s methodological approach for iconographical-iconological interpretation will be used to locate and describe the intrinsic meaning of kairos in this transitional period of ancient Greek history. Through the interpretive tools chosen for this chapter, I believe that kairos ought to be considered a continuing dynamic element, which the Greeks have recognized as part of establishing _harmonia_ (harmony) in the activities of sociocultural agencies; kairos is especially measurable in the individual lives of Greek males.

Significant events that took place between 3000-600 BCE in Greek history, such as the Trojan War (1250-1225 BCE) and the collapse of the Mycenaean palace systems (1200-1050 BCE), contribute to defining the sociocultural movements and the character of the Greeks.

Following the fall of the Mycenaean palace systems, ancient Greece history enters into a period

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422 The stylistic movements in art in this chapter are Geometric (ca. 900-700 BCE), Archaic (ca. 700-480 BCE), Early Classical or Period of Transition (ca. 480-450 BCE). The dates here have been derived from the Pedley’s _Greek Art and Archaeology_ (2007), and The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s “Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, Ancient Greece, 1000 B.C.-1 A.D,” accessed November 10, 2018, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/04/eusb.html.
commonly referred to as the Dark Age (ca. 1150-750 BCE). The historical description of these approximate four centuries refers to minimal extant material culture. Within the time span of this chapter (800-400 BCE), the Greeks begin to ascend out of the Dark Age with population growth (ca. 800 BCE) and political developments such as the formation city-states (poleis) (ca. 700-750 BCE) in Greece proper. Also, tribes of ancient Greeks begin migrating as groups to both the east and the west of Greece. A new period of the visual arts begins after the Dark Age with the movement of Geometric styles (ca. 900-700 BCE) emerging as markedly different from Minoan and Mycenaean art. The succeeding movements after the Geometric included in this chapter are the Archaic (ca. 700-480 BCE) and the Early Classical (ca. 480-450 BCE). The Early Classical period is sometimes referred to as a “period of transition,” before the High Classical period (ca. 450-400). Writing in the Dark Age is lost until the poetic traditions of Homer and Hesiod; however, neither the Homeric epics—composed in the sometime in the eighth century BCE, but reflecting Bronze Age culture—nor the two long poems by Hesiod show any concern with the Dark Age of Greece. The subject matter Homer’s and Hesiod’s poetry fits their works into the previous chapter; however, their social, spiritual, and intellectual influences are nearly never ending. Havelock says of the Homeric poems that even before they were ever written down the poetic narratives served as “encyclopedias of conduct.” In Hesiod too, the “communal ethos” and a “recommendation to abide by it” was expressed. Homer and Hesiod represent the ancient Greek sense of kairos in the mythic-poetic tradition; whereas in this chapter

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423 The movements of styles in Greek art between the Geometric and the Archaic include a period often referred to as the Orientalizing Period (ca. 700-600), because ideas and designs from the East (and from Egypt) have an impact on the Greeks’ motifs, techniques, and sense of proportion.  
the evidence examined will represent kairos in transition toward the humanistic-rational. Homer and Hesiod will not be left behind, but instead provide part of the context from which many social and cultural traditions expand. As the Greek world moves east and west, the language and the traditions of the Greeks will keep their tribes connected culturally as Hellenes.427

As the Greeks move forward out of the Dark Age and begin to expand their geographical, and therefore sociocultural settings, the more textual and visual evidence is available for interpretation. In Chapter 3, the definitional essence of kairos can be found growing from the proto-Greeks’ direct experiences with their natural environment. In the previous chapter, I noted that at the start of the seventh century BCE, kairos had accumulated the following definitions: due measure or right measure, proportion, fitness (right, decisive) point of time, (favorable opportunity), time of the year, season, and the critical time.428 For this chapter, kairos carries the same connotations with the addition of Pythagorean philosophy adding the assignment of the number “seven” as representing kairos.429 After Homer and Hesiod, there are enough authors using kairos in various types of texts, we can see the concept expand with more denotations and connotations, but we can also see patterns in its usage. In the time period of this chapter, there are also patterns that emerge from the ways in which the Greeks start organizing their expressions in the visual arts, poetry, and philosophical writings of the sophists. The patterns are

427 In short, it is not certain who the early settlers of the Cycladic Islands were. Most likely, they were comprised of a large influx of peoples migrating from the east. Around 2600 BCE, there was a migration of people from Asia Minor who saw the beginning of the Minoan civilization. It seems that at some point the Minoans had some contact with the Cycladic Islands (ca. 2600 BCE) and on the mainland, as evidenced from archeological finds. From ca. 1500 BCE, the Mycenaean on the Greek mainland began to have an influence over the Minoans, although they were not necessarily responsible for their demise. The Mycenaean were the first speakers of Greek. Outside of the Minoans and the Mycenaeans, it was a mixed stock of settlers. Four major tribes existed on the mainland and islands: Achaeans, Aeoilans, Dorian, and Ionians. Mycenaean culture declines in ca. 1200 BCE and the Greeks or Hellenes emerge as a product of Aegean peoples and Indo-European invaders.

428 LSJ and Montanari, The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek, s.v. “καιρός.”

429 Ibid. Ancient sources repeating Pythagorean number symbols: [Iamblichus], Theologumena Arithmeticae (Theol.Ar.), 44. Iamblichus, Syrian (c. 245-325 CE), biographer of Pythagoras.
in one sense motifs, and in another a manner of structuring, organizing, or framing the subject matter for an audience. With the entrance and usage of alphabetic text growing, they can organize their pattern and frame the content in new ways for old and new audiences. The content of this chapter begins again with some of the historical conditions relevant to the changes during this time period, including some background on the Greeks’ shift away from being a dominantly oral culture. Examples of artifacts, discussed in chronological order, will be examined as examples of how these shifts expanded and organized their visual and textual expressions, and the nature and significance of kairos.

Historic and Environmental Conditions, Kairos by Sea and by Land

In the ninth and eighth centuries BCE, Greek society changed quickly. These changes included the development of political society and cultural identity. Archaic Greece is an important period in the history of the Greeks, because they demonstrate through their social structures and cultural agencies their ability to synthesize and organize the world around them to the advantage of their own progress. From a “socially low level of organization, poverty, and material culture,” the “small communities of men and women scattered over the mainland Greece” begin to lay the socio-political cultural foundations that will bear significance in the fourth and fifth centuries. Not recognizing this historic Dark Age, the Greeks were in a position to “invent themselves” socially, culturally, and politically. One demonstration was the invention of their own alphabet, and another would be their cultural identity as Hellenes. A shared identity did not keep them from fighting with one another through the centuries. One historian on this period, says the situation in Greece in the late eighth and early seventh centuries

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430 Osborne, Greece in the Making, 3.
431 Ibid.
432 Ibid., 51.
can be described in one word: war. There were wars, but there were also other circumstances requiring the Greeks’ attention like drought in the late eighth century.

Drought along with population growth, land shortages, famine, and “the oligarchical systems of land tenure” moved the Greeks toward a period of expansion. Before and during the eighth century, various groups of Greeks were establishing colonies abroad. They were motivated by those conditions listed above, but also they were looking for resources in metal. Osborne says there are multiple reasons why the Greeks decided to move east and west. Some may have been pushed by “poverty, unpopularity, crime, or scandal,” some were possibly just in search of “a new life free of some irksome relatives.” Eventually the desire to seek out settling abroad moves beyond the “political events for cities organizing an expedition, but instead were organized by individual Greeks who were restless and ambitious. As Sir John Boardman points out, “The Greeks were not empire-builders. The Greeks had no such vision, and spent much of their time trying to foil each other,” or transform themselves in the spirit of competition and rivalry. They were contentious and continually after their own advantage. From our historical perspective, the Greek world at this time is striving to find, organize, and

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433 Panos Valavanis, *Games and Sanctuaries in Ancient Greece* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Publications, 2004), 45. Secular political entities instituted a “sacred truce” during the Olympiads and declared Olympia a place of peace during that time (Valavanis, 44-45).

434 John McK. Camp II, “A Drought in the Late Eighth Century B.C.,” *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 48, no. 4 (Oct. - Dec., 1979), pp. 397-411. During the Archaic Period (750-480 BCE) the military events that occurred are as follows according to Pomeroy, et al : 730-700 BCE, First Messenian War, the Lelantine War, 700-650 BCE evolution of hoplite armor and tactics; 669 BCE Battle of Hysiae, 650 BCE Second Messenian War; 499 BCE Ionian Greeks rebel from Persian empire; 494 Defeat of Argos by Peloponnesian League in the Battle of Sepea ; 490 BCE Battle of Marathon; 480-479 BCE, Battle of Thermopylae, Artemisium, Salamis, Plataea, Mycale; Xerxes driven from Greece. (Pomeroy, et al., *Ancient Greece*).

435 Pedley, *Greek Art and Archeology*, 123.


437 Ibid.


articulate social and political order.\textsuperscript{440} The expansion of the Greek communities directly impacts both their verbal and visual literacy resulting in many sociocultural shifts.\textsuperscript{441} The dominance of orality is shifting, their relationship to the gods is shifting, their identity is shifting, and the definition of kairos is shifting from that Homeric description of a “fatal spot” to representing the “opportune timing” of human activities.

The Greeks were particularly busy exploring the seas in the eighth century BCE. Osborne describes the scale of Greek settlements forming abroad in Sicily and south Italy (about every other year) in the late eighth century as “startling.”\textsuperscript{442} Osborne points to the importance of the mobility of these ambitious Greeks, which ultimately relates to their sense of timing. Specifically, in the ninth and eighth centuries, Greeks from the island of Euboea are known to have sailed to the east and the west coasts of the Mediterranean as well as North Africa.\textsuperscript{443} To the east in the early ninth century BCE, they were present at a trading post location, known as the archeological site of Al Mina on the Mediterranean coast of northern Syria at the mouth of the Orontes River. To the west, they sailed to an island off the coast of Italy which they named Pithekoussai (modern Ischia)—the location where pottery painted in the proto-Geometric style was excavated (see figs. 4.1-4.3). Pithekoussai was the “earliest long-lasting Greek settlement in Italy.”\textsuperscript{444} The Greeks were not alone in the east or the west. In the east, they were “trading with Cypriots and others” at Al-Mina and other sites in Cilicia, eastern objects (i.e., materials, motifs, techniques in metalworking, ivory-carving), ideas, and other alphabets were channeling into

\textsuperscript{440} Pedley, \textit{Greek Art and Archeology}, 119.
\textsuperscript{441} Osborne, \textit{Greece in the Making}, 29.
\textsuperscript{442} Ibid., 122. “Such a movement of people from all over southern Greece is incomprehensible unless seen against a background where mobility was easy, and even normal, and where large numbers of ships and people were continuously and familiarly moving around the Mediterranean” (Osborne, \textit{Greece in the Making}, 123).
\textsuperscript{443} Pedley, \textit{Greek Art and Archeology}, 122. See also, Boardman, \textit{The Greeks in Asia}, 9; Pomeroy, et al., \textit{Ancient Greece}, the Ionian migration, 56-57. Osborne reminds that the Euboeans were not the only ones forming communities abroad (Osborne, \textit{Greece in the Making}, 122).
\textsuperscript{444} Ibid., 122.
Greek societies and their consciousness. On the island of Pithekoussai, the Greeks became familiar with Egyptian faience objects, Syrian flasks, and pottery inscribed with Aramaic and Phoenician scripts. Various groups of people who were searching for iron were attracted to this island, among other their other interests in finding new places for farming and fishing. The Etruscans were already mining for iron on the northern island of Elba; however, Ischia may have been the closest the Greeks and others could get. The result of the Euboeans and other Greek tribes settling in South Italy and Sicily was the spread of their own Hellenic culture and the establishment of an area which would become known as Magna Graecia—the place where the endeavors of philosophy and rhetoric are believed to have been rooted, the concept of kairos being an element of both.

As they moved away from the Greek mainland and the Greek islands known to them, their entrance into new territory required them to heed exigent moments with vigilance. In this period of Greek history, kairos as the agent to address exigent circumstances, continues to have relevance to human activities at sea and on land. The Greeks’ “constant and close reliance on the sea and on the ships that sailed it, could not have failed to influence the language of the Greeks, the metaphors and pictures in which their ideas were expressed.” The historic conditions of navigating the sea or battling on the sea are, again, a place to interpret the connotations of kairos. Sailing and the sea “provide an extremely rich fund of imagery” to be interpreted. The sea, and the land alike, are at the same time domestic and political spaces—each space abounding

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445 Pedley, Greek Art and Archeology, 123.
446 Ibid., 122.
447 Ibid. Archeological excavations have found slag, bellows, and blooms, which is evidence of early ironworking.
448 Ibid.
450 Osborne, Greece in the Making, 179.
Representations of the Greek seascapes and landscapes express certain events and geophysical attributes that ultimately reflect how each one has “its own ecological character and economic relation to civilized life.” The Greeks have continued the intimate and “sympathetic” relationship with the environment established in the previous chapter. Because the geographical boundaries of their relative environment expand, we get more visual and literate information on the subjects such as with sailing. The hazards of sailing and warfare at sea were known to the Greeks before it was written about or represented with paint on pottery (figs. 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3). Shipwrecks are mentioned in the *Odyssey* (7.249-52), and Hesiod gave his advice on the best season for sailing. Hesiod cautions Perses about the right time to sail and the importance of adhering to those times, fifty days in July and August (*WD* II. 618-645, 663-694). Dealing with all sorts of imposing and opposite forces, the Greeks were conscious of the importance of successful decisions.

Distinctive to sailing, and connected to the nature of *kairos*, are the many concerns of sailors and ship crews involving steering and rowing. Tacking is an example of how the Greeks on a ship were required to directly and immediately respond to their environment. Whether it was one person fishing from a dinghy, or more than one person travelling from one destination to another on a cargo ship, or battling at sea in a warship, they were conscious of making the right maneuvers at the right time. In representations of oared ships dating from the Bronze Age, there are commonalities between the boats depicted, such as the use of oars, sails, rams on warships.

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Figure 4.3: Drawing of Late Geometric krater with shipwreck scene, clay, ca. 725-700 BCE, from necropolis site, Valle di S. Montano (Lacco Ameno), Museo Archeologico di Pithecusae, Ischia, Italy.
masts, and a clear differentiation between the bow and stern (as opposed to a hollowed-out log that can be navigated from either end). The coordination of all these parts of the ship via the humans on board was intended to keep the boat on an even keel, which is precisely an achievement of harmony. No harmony, and the ship will wreck, or in the case of warships not accomplish the required task. There is also a harmony in shipbuilding itself, which would have been a goal for the craftsmen who were guided by the physics of the natural world. Then there is also a harmony that must be achieved amongst the crew on the ship, who must be trained and experienced in order to steer and power the ship. For example, the Homeric archos had to be able to judge if his fleet triereis was faster than the opponent’s fleet; he made this judgement based on the following pieces of oral communication and visual observations:

1. Intelligence, possible before reaching the scene of battle, about
   (a) the time elapsed since the opposing fleet had been dried out
   (b) the quality and training of the opposing crews,
   (c) whether the opposing crews were likely to be fresh or tired.
2. Directly observing
   (a) the enemy’s oarsmanship during preliminary manoeuvres
   (b) the waterline of enemy ships particularly by noting tell-tale features like rams and rudders.

The first part of the list was the intel and therefore known ahead of the battle; however, the second part of the list would be judgements made on site, and following those judgements would come “moments in time” when decisions had to be made. The ship was like a microcosm, and one decision affected the overall functioning of that floating world; chief decision-makers had to have an overall sense of all the rhythms driving the pulse of this microcosm. There was a rhythm to the communication between key members of the crew and the oarsmen. On warships, there

454 Later, the archos was called nauarchos, the captain or admiral of the ship, and the one commanding a trireme was a trierarchos (Morrison and Coates, The Athenian Trireme, 233).
455 Morrison and Coates, The Athenian Trireme, 233. Boats made of permeable woods like fir or beech would soak up the water. The extra weight of the water in the wood slowed the vessel (Morrison and Cotes, Athenian Trireme, 233).
were members of the crew who contributed the rhythms of the ship; they were the helmsman (kubernetes), the boatswain (keleutes), the bow officer (prorates), and the pipeman (auletes), although sometimes the boatswain and the pipeman were one and the same person. The helmsman was in charge of the navigation from the stern and he was assisted by the bow officer from the bow; the helmsman gave orders to the boatswain who managed the oarsmen. On the Cleimachos black-figure hydria (fig. 4.4) rendered inside a framing device, or decorative border, and resting on the shoulder of the vessel, there is a twenty-oared boat depicting (from left to right) the helmsman on the stern, the boatswain in the middle, and the bow officer at the bow of the ship. Even though the auletes is not painted into this scene, he would have sat at the base of the mast, which would have been the general location of the boatswain and “likely set the rhythm for the oar-beat on a long pull, increasing or decreasing the rate of striking as the helmsman required.”

The pursuit of speed and agility through lightness of construction resulted in an oar-machine packed tightly below deck with oarsmen and with little room for anything else. Strict discipline had to be observed to avoid physical clashes, and in handling…a boatswain [keleutes] was needed who had the knack of getting men to work cheerfully together.

On the early ships, the keleutes and the auletes would have been on deck, again near the mast. But as ships became larger, such as a trireme, they would been below deck with the oarsmen. The keleutes and the auletes, like the sistrum shaker from the Harvester Vase in Chapter 3, appealed to the need of a communal rhythm within the work environment, keeping things

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456 Figure 4.4: Cleimachos, potter, Hydria with black figures, ca. 560 - 550 BCE, Athens. Campana Collection, 1861, Department of Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities, Louvre, Paris. On the shoulder: boat; on the belly: fight between hoplites.

457 Morrison and Coates, The Athenian Trireme, 112.

458 Ibid., 133.

organized and functional. The same needs for rhythm and order were present on the oared ship, and there was also one who would keep the beat for all, create a rhythm to which his shipmates were entrained. The “moment in time” when of the *keleutes* is calling to the oarsman is arrested in the painting on the vase, but the representation of his presence fills an important part of the overall composition of an operational warship. Ships did not move without the oarsman coordinating a precise rhythmic movement, and the sensitivity of the *keleutes* to the potential of their oarsmen at any given moment was the difference of victory or defeat, and life or death.\(^{460}\)

The necessity of Greeks taking to the sea for activities related to daily living, cultural expansion, and preservation have made kairos a prominent element for people navigating the seas. If the single fisherman by himself, or if any member of a crew misinterprets the weather and reacts poorly to the mutability of the weather (the “moment in time”), or misses a command on an oared ship, all harmony is lost for everyone involved.

Kairos on land during the historic conditions of the time period of this chapter can be correlated to the development and governance of the city-states. Much as timing and rhythms at sea can keep conjoined parts operating as a whole, so does bringing people together on land as a city-state. The formation of these city-states sometimes meant moving these ancient peoples beyond their *demos* and *ethnos* trappings.\(^{461}\) Forming a *polis* in the eighth century came “to designate a political community. This community, like its own microcosm, was composed of a principal city or town and its surrounding countryside, which together formed a self-governing entity, the city-state” that had some sort of “republican government, whether oligarchic or

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\(^{460}\) Hart and Lieberman, *Planet Drum*, 55. “The Romans will call the *keleutes horator*, but both had the same unique position in the hierarchy of the ships personnel” (55).

\(^{461}\) Pomeroy, et al., *Ancient Greece*, 513-515, *demos* is defined as a territory of land and the people who live in that territory. They define *ethnos* as a large group of people who share a common identity and territory, but were not politically united, preferring local self-government.
democratic.” The formation of city-states (poleis) in Greece occurs between 700-400 BCE. During this formative period, Solon (ca. 648-558 BCE) is one historic figure whose legislation in the 590s, archonship (ca. 594 BCE), and poetry (justifying his reforms) provides an example of the concept of kairos active on land. Solon was “an aristocrat with a reputation for wisdom,” and he is commissioned to address the problems Athens was facing at the start of the sixth century BCE. Due to the nature of land in Attica and a rising population there, the Athenians as a whole citizen group were not able to keep themselves fed. This crisis caused the Athenians to seek grain from abroad by way of bartering the agricultural and commercial goods that they could produce, such as olives, olive oil, vining fruit, wine, figs, barley, pottery, and silver from the Laurium mines in southeast Attica, as well as marble from Mount Pentelicum in the northeast. The Athens of 600 BCE had potential for economic development but there was a serious gap between the citizens who were prospering and those who were not. Solon’s reforms were intended to alleviate many sufferings, and he was empowered to help “the poor majority without entirely destroying the privileges of the rich minority.” Solon initiates political and social reforms in Athens that “broke the link between aristocratic birth and holding office, and based offices on merit (wealth) rather than family,” and in economic terms he abolished debt slavery. One of his aims was “to strengthen the fragile agricultural base of the

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462 Pomeroy, et al., Ancient Greece, 520.
463 Ibid., 101.
464 Ibid., 185-186. 594 BCE is a disputed date, “some scholars would put it some twenty years later.” (Pomeroy, et al., 186).
465 Ibid., 186.
466 Ibid., 185.
467 Ibid., 185-186.
468 Ibid., 186.
469 Ibid.
471 Pomeroy, et al., Ancient Greece, 186.
Athenian economy by grafting onto it a thriving commerce. While Solon’s reforms are many, the following lines of his poetry demonstrate his awareness of the “transience of riches” and in general an “emphasis on the mutability of human affairs,” which in turn can be interpreted as kairos on land.

Many base men are rich and many good men poor:
but we will not take their wealth in exchange for
virtue, since this is always secure, while wealth belongs
now to one man, now to another.

Solon understood that mortal life was subject to change, and he understood that financial wealth by birth did not equate to good character or good judgment. There is evidence in other lines of his poetry that in his role as an early lawgiver (not a writer of laws), he brought ideas of justice to the Athenians that connected a civil state of obedience or “the condition of the polis,” with the “condition of each person’s psyche (soul).” In Solon’s Hymn to the City as preserved in Demosthenes (19.254f.):

The citizens themselves by their foolishness desire
to destroy the great city, persuaded by material goods,
and the leader of the people has an unbalanced mind, by which
they are about to suffer many pains from great hubris. (Solon 4.5-8)

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472 Pomeroy, et al., Ancient Greece, 185.
473 Ibid., 186.
474 Plutarch in his Life of Solon (Sol. 3.2). That Solon reckoned himself among the poor rather than the rich, is shown by these lines:

ὅτι δ’ αὐτόν ἐν τῇ τῶν μεριδίων μᾶλλον ἢ τῇ τῶν πλουσίων ἔταττε δηλον ἐστιν ἐκ τούτων:
πολλοὶ γὰρ πλουτοῦσι κακοὶ, ἄγαθοί δὲ πένονται:
ἀλλ’ ἡμεῖς τούτους οὗ διαμειψόμεθα
τῆς ἁρετῆς τῶν πλούτων, ἐπει τὸ μὲν ἐμπεδον ἀεί,
χρήματα δ’ ἀνθρώπων ἄλλοτε ἄλλος ἔχει.

That he reckoned himself among the poor rather than the rich, is shown by these lines:

Many bad men are rich, many good men poor; but we, we will not exchange virtue for these men’s wealth; for the one endureth whereas the other belongeth now to this man and now to that.

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475 Lewis, Early Greek Lawgivers, 70.
476 Ibid., 69-70.
Solon aims in this period to organize the Athenians and harmonize their ideas, their beliefs, and to establish a basis of components of good citizenship through the body politic. The concept of kairos was not directly commuted through any laws or through words of his poetry. However, Solon’s recognition that each citizen played a part in healthy polis suggests he understood that his role was to impart to them the importance of making timely decisions. He was after all a poet, like Homer and Hesiod; therefore, he used this paideutic role to impart civic wisdom through his poetic expressions. The kairos of Hesiod is used in the cautionary address to his brother with the lofty goal of appeasing the gods and not being a nuisance to his community, and while his usage could be considered kairos by land, Hesiod was not a statesman or in the position of archon. The historic conditions in this case see Solon in a position that may have had earlier equivalents under different Greek names, but his audience was not the same as those of Homer and Hesiod. Solon’s audience included all levels of social class, which recognizes a shift in audience—the audience to which his use of language was aimed. The shift in who is making timely and ethical decisions and to what end is not entirely separate from the conditions of kairos by sea, they both provide examples of its importance as an essential element in governing the microcosm of oneself as well as for a group of individuals.

Sociocultural Conditions: Shifts in Literacy and Expressions, and Moving Toward the Ideal in Poetry and Pottery

In both the craft of sailing or city-state governance, the expressions related to the awareness of timing in human actions were oral, even if they are represented in the pictures of works of art. In the late eighth century BCE with the development of an alphabet, the Greeks’ experiences with language changed—pushing a nonliterate culture into one of literacy. The change was, like many experiences with their natural environment, physiological with psychological effects. Havelock describes the effect of the Iliad and the Odyssey being
“committed to writing” as “something like a thunderclap in human history.”\textsuperscript{477} He admits this may seem to be “an extreme way of putting it,” but he is trying to relate a turning point in Greek history where viewing “the alphabetization of Homer” as process by which the dominance of orality in the Greek culture began to erode.\textsuperscript{478} Havelock connects the erosion of orality beyond just a change in technology or a change in communication styles. He believes the orality of the ancient Greek culture in their preliterate history, specifically through the form of orally recited poetry, was the way in which they conserved their cultural identity, social consciousness and social mores, all formed through social consensus.\textsuperscript{479} Havelock says, “Literate societies do this by documentation; preliterate ones achieve the same result by the composition of poetic narratives which serve also as encyclopedias of conduct.”\textsuperscript{480} The poetry of Homer, Hesiod, and Solon are examples of poetry that expressed “communal ethos” and recommendations “to abide by it.”\textsuperscript{481} He says the “sound-sequence of the poets” was connected to the alphabetic set of symbols “possessed of a unique phonetic efficiency.”\textsuperscript{482}

An automatic marriage occurred between the two [symbols]; or, to change the metaphor, upon a body of liquid contained in a vessel was dropped a substance which crystallized the contents and precipitated a deposit at the bottom.\textsuperscript{483}

Havelock does not follow his metaphor with any further explanation; however, I interpret his metaphor to equate the liquid in the container as oral expression, and the “substance” as the alphabet which is dropped in, and the written words recording oral expression become the crystallized deposit. The deposit has condensed abruptly “from sound to sight,”\textsuperscript{484} and has fallen

\textsuperscript{477} Havelock, “The Alphabetization of Homer,” 3.
\textsuperscript{478} Ibid., 4.
\textsuperscript{479} Ibid. Solon addressing a different audience makeup is a significant change as well.
\textsuperscript{480} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{481} Ibid. Havelock is speaking of Homer, but I am trying to nail down if it is safe to assume Hesiod was a bard as well.
\textsuperscript{482} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{483} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{484} Ibid.
down to the bottom of this container. The container seems to represent the *cosmos*, and the bottom is the ground, the place of mortals and where they can see the deposit.\textsuperscript{485} The result for the Greeks, after the crystallization is a “phonetic efficiency,” which Havelock says “removes the ambiguity of recognition,” which begins to change the expectations of the audience.\textsuperscript{486} Once upon a time, the organic and ephemeral nature of the human voice sufficed as a form of expression; but once it became written down, the composers as well as the audience came to expect certain rhythms and patterns connected to identifiable subject matter. The poets will use to establish conventions like the ring-composition, and other framing devices, to meet both the needs of their own composing practices and the audiences. The crystalized forms of expression presented through artistic conventions work generally towards an ideal in language, but work specifically towards the ideal in poetry, the visual arts, political governance, and the Hellenic identity.

The alphabetization of Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, somewhere between 700 and 550 BCE, represent both the first piece of written European literature, and “non-literature” because it considered a record of orality which provided “a statement of how civilized man governed his life and thought during several centuries when he was entirely innocent of the art (or arts) of reading.”\textsuperscript{487} The written word was a new technology and the alphabetized Homer “made available the first complete report of an undocumented culture.”\textsuperscript{488} But more than this, the alphabetic writing system provided “a power to document the oral report fluently and exhaustively” in a language they created by themselves, and for themselves. Havelock says this

\textsuperscript{485} I find Havelock’s description fascinating, because it reminds me of the chart I made when I was first considering this project. My chart began at the top with kairos descending from an arch that represented the firmament of the cosmos into the physical realm of humans.
\textsuperscript{486} Havelock, “The Alphabetization of Homer,” 4.
\textsuperscript{487} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{488} Ibid., 10.
invention of their language allowed them to “match and mate sign and sound” with immediate and instinctive immediacy.\textsuperscript{489} Havelock’s position here on the creation of their language supports the argument that Greek expressions are reflections of the direct experiences they had with their environment. Now, in this chapter with the crystallized deposit of alphabetic language present, this lack of ambiguity has a parallel in the stylistic movements of the visual arts. The work of Homer firmly establishes the “use of traditional motifs to an architectonic end,”\textsuperscript{490} which is also reflected in the Geometric period of visual arts. As succinctly put by Whitman, “In the Geometric period, there is less ambiguity.”\textsuperscript{491} Between Homer, Hesiod, Solon, and the upcoming examples of painted pottery, there is a chance to interpret what happens when old forms of the Greeks’ oral communication are committed to old forms of artistic compositions (poetry and pottery) via the new technology of alphabetic text, and then speculate on the nature of kairos. Whitman says, “Transformation of actualities into communicative conventions is the basic function of all art, and one of the difficulties of Homeric scholarship has been to reconstruct the actualities from the convention.”\textsuperscript{492} In the case of my study, it is within the establishment and expression of theses conventions that there is the possibility of interpreting the intrinsic meaning of kairos. During these few hundred years of Greek history the structure and organization of the parts of different organisms and microcosms in the life of the Greeks were viewed as a triumph in establishing harmony through the rational control of those elements.\textsuperscript{493} An early example showing the Greeks’ experimentation with old and new forms of expression is the \textit{Dipylon Oinochoe} descriptively titled as such because it was found in a tomb near the Athenian Dipylon

\textsuperscript{489} Havelock, “The Alphabetization of Homer,” 10.  
\textsuperscript{491} Whitman, \textit{Homer and the Heroic Tradition}, 90.  
\textsuperscript{492} Ibid., 93.  
\textsuperscript{493} Ibid., 96.
Gate, and because the style of the vessel is called *oinochoe*—a jug for wine (figs. 4.5 and 4.6). Generally, the use of pottery as grave markers had stopped around 730 BCE, whereas there was a growth in the production of pottery for use in daily life. Whether or not this vessel marked a grave is not of major interest to historians and archeologists, the interest is focused on the inscription. Binek recently commented on the translation of the inscription: “There is general consensus about the reading of the *oinochoe*’s first 35 signs as letters that together form a perfect hexameter: ὃς νῦν ὀρχηστὸν πάντων ἀταλώτατα παίζει (“whoever of all the dancers now frolics most friskily/delicately”). Of the forty-seven signs, the first thirty-five are decipherable enough for a consensus on the meaning to be formed. The vessel has been described as “self-referential.” This means the object exhibits the artisan’s self-conscious awareness of the process and technology being used, pointing also to the importance of the formation of a hexameter that represents both organized language and rhythm, as a mimic of oral expression. Wine and frisky dancing are conjoined here through the text without there being any representation of dancing on the neck of the vessel. Wine is not depicted either because the type of vessel suggests “wine” to the ancient observer. Instead there is a deer standing with its neck bent to the ground, grazing. There is no evidence to support that the owner, or anyone else who encountered it, could read the inscription, and scholars believe the “retrograde graffito” was incised after the firing process. However, the symbolic nature of the alphabetic characters

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496 Ibid.

497 Osborne, *Archaic and Classical Greek Art*, 35.

standing in for oral speech is not any different than the geometricized symbol of a deer standing in for a real deer. These symbols need only to suggest the referent, not be the referent. Again, take into account the change of the symbol which represented the Minoan octopuses compared to the Mycenaean, and now this little geometricized deer. The deer has been reduced to shapes that allow the human eye to recognize its subject and action, but with more economy of line and less ambiguity.

Whatever the arrested “moments in time” from their oral and visual experiences meant to the ancient Greeks, these experiences were now portable. The subject of an inscription could talk or represent talking to the viewer wherever that viewer was located. Specifically, in this period of Greek history, as the Greeks start moving about more geographically, they also take their culturally defined objects and ideas with them to the east and to the west. For example, the small cup called Nestor’s Cup, believed to have been produced on the island of Rhodes, was found in a grave at Pithekoussai (one of the earliest Greek settlement settlements of Magna Graecia on the island of Ischia in the Bay of Naples),⁴⁹⁹ (figs. 4.7 and 4.8).⁵⁰⁰ The inscription on Nestor’s Cup is also metrical and interpreted as follows by Havelock:


The cup is afforded a voice and therefore can call forth to the viewer. The viewer may have known the reference to Nestor’s cup in the Iliad (11.632-637), or the inscriber did. According to

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⁴⁹⁹ Osborne, Archaic and Classical Greek Art, 37.
⁵⁰⁰ Figures 4.7 and 4.8 - Nestor’s Cup (4.7) and graffito from the cup (4.8), Kotyle importata da Rodi con iscrizione graffita in versi, nota come “Coppa di Nestore.” ca. 725 BCE, Dalla necropoli, Valle di S. Montano (Lacco Ameno), Tomba 168.
Havelock, the longest habitual users of the alphabet were craftsmen and traders, and it is possible that the owner of the cup and the observers were not able to read the inscription.\textsuperscript{502} Havelock says that the upper-class may have picked up some acquaintance with the alphabetic forms, but they had no real motivation to do so until the mid-fifth century BCE.\textsuperscript{503} Even then, those being educated were not reading texts; they were memorizing poetry, improvising and delivering verse orally, delivering prose-style rhetoric, performing on musical instruments, and singing and dancing.\textsuperscript{504} Additionally, Havelock considers that the upper-class delayed their education until adolescence, whereas the child of a craftsperson could gain familiarity with the letters before the age of adolescence.\textsuperscript{505} The child of the craftsperson was learning these alphabetic forms from a visual experience, not exclusively by oral transmission and repetition. The facility with metrical language, Havelock says, for an oral culture was “part of the day’s work.”\textsuperscript{506} However, translating oral culture into script onto small compositional surfaces (which were often curved) was new to the Greeks. Havelock contends that in order to make these painted surfaces meet the Greek audience’s standard of familiarity with the visual realm the artisans displaced the acoustic, which he suggests can be seen “in the retention of the so-called boustrophedon style of writing;” Greek letters could be written from right to left or left to right (the Phoenician way).\textsuperscript{507}

Both directions of writing could be combined in a single inscription, as well as letters written vertically, then allowed to meander in accordance with the surface of the media. In the case of this Nestor’s Cup, Havelock comes around to the interpretation that “the inscription

\textsuperscript{503} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{504} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{505} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{506} Ibid., 189.
\textsuperscript{507} Ibid., 191.
bespeaks the idiom of communication orally conceived and expressed before it is inscribed.”

The cup then becomes a container of mobile cultural memory because the verse was memorable and repeatable, not because the arrival of the alphabet meant the Greeks had shifted completely away from being an orally dominate society. However, the shift is happening and can be traced in the Greeks’ acts of adaptation, experimentation, and self-realization. Those Greeks, now embroiled in the experience of producing text on pottery—mobile cultural memory—are experiencing, perhaps at an earlier age than before, a blend of real experiences and traditional tales as arrested, mimicked experiences. The examples used in this section represent how the Greeks were negotiating and experimenting with the shifts in literacy. Alphabetic text, the “crystalized form” of language, stimulates new forms of expression and artistic conventions, which ultimately represent new tendencies of the Greek mindset. The conventions of Greek literary and artistic expressions that can reveal the patterns and framing devices evidenced in the poetry and the visual arts are part of the tendencies of the Greek mind which are moving toward idealizing versions of the themes and concepts defining their Hellenistic culture. The themes and concepts could derive from narratives and images related to the sea. Other themes and concepts could derive from the narratives of myth, ritual, and epic poetry. The denotations and connotations of kairos fit into their movement towards an ideal, because this is where we can see the concept being used. In the acts of the Greeks that contribute to defining ancient kairos, the extent of its boundaries must be realized in context of the original language. In chapter 3, this context is reimagined, but kairos does not move directly from a broad concept to a narrow one, it transitions. The places in the Greeks’ culture where it could have been an integrated concept in visuals or text make-up the examples thus far in the chapter and as it continues.

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Ring-Composition: A Conventional Structure in Poetry Paralleled in the Visual Arts

From this act of visual integration, they are learning about an integrated arrangement of oral and visual compositional motifs, which are becoming more organized, repeatable, and expected by composers and audiences. Havelock says as words become “frozen into immobility,” they are “imprisoned in an order no longer acoustic but visible,” tangible, and “now preserved outside the individual memories of those who inscribe and gather them.”\textsuperscript{509} The temporal relationship between the human and language changes, and the human consciousness is relaxed because the ear has been superseded in dominance by the eye, which allows for the once recited parts to be visually contemplated as a whole.\textsuperscript{510} The temporal sequence of ephemeral events experienced orally, and aurally, are translated and organized onto a medium which is visual; the visual is superimposed upon the acoustic exposing “an architecture of language.”\textsuperscript{511} This sociocultural condition is a change of setting for kairos because now kairos can be recognized in the visual literary tradition of alphabetic text and organized into a discourse where it is going to be conserved later as technical terminology,\textsuperscript{512} and even later as academic kairos.

“Preserved discourse” conserves the hand or voice of the composer, craftsperson, or singer (in the case of ancient poetry), and the patterns and structure of the work itself. A parallel structure preserved in both poetry and pottery is the ring-composition. This ring-composition has been “identified as a functional mnemonic device for the oral poet, and as an aesthetic structuring principle. It is a contrastive device; an enclosing, framing device, focusing attention

\textsuperscript{509} Havelock, “The Alphabetization of Homer,” 181.
\textsuperscript{510} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{511} Ibid., 182.
\textsuperscript{512} Ibid.
on a central element.” An element that was no doubt in place in the preliterate culture of ancient Greece, but now made visible by alphabetic text and by the work of pottery painters.

“Athenian black-figure vase-painting in the sixth century BC constitutes a self-standing visual tradition that is in many ways parallel to the early Greek oral (i.e. oral-derived) tradition in the way meaning is constructed in a narrative context.” Mackay has put a considerable amount thought into the relationship of the structural devices present in vase painting and poetic ring-composition.

As past studies have shown, comparisons drawn between the richly diachronic evidence presented by the vase-painting tradition as it develops through the sixth century and the Homeric evidence, which one might say fossilizes a particular state (and, as most would agree, a late one) in the evolution of the oral poetic tradition, have the potential to inform scholarship in both fields.

Mackay says “fossilizes” and Havelock says “crystalized.” Mackay refers to the process of something becoming more concrete, whereas Havelock’s action is complete. Mackay uses fossilize in a metaphorical way; however, fossilize, or rather fossilization, is a term used in linguistic studies to describe words that have lost their original grammatical function, or have become inflexible. I think the shifts or changes I am recognizing about kairos during this time in Greek history are closer to what the study of linguistics describes as grammaticalization.

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513 Anne Mackay, Deirdre Harrison, and Samantha Masters, “The Bystander at the Ringside: Ring-Composition in Early Greek Poetry and Athenian Black-Figure Vase-Painting” in Signs of Orality: The Oral Tradition and Its Influence in the Greek and Roman World edited by E. Anne Mackay (Boston, MA: Brill, 1998), 115.
515 Ibid., 116. Havelock and Whitman have also put considerable effort into connecting Homeric structure with Geometric art. In Whitman’s chapter, he also says that “many studies exist on this subject;” however they are all in German, except one, which I was unable to attain.
516 Ibid., 115-116.
517 Trask, The Dictionary of Historical and Comparative Linguistics (Chicago, IL: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2000.), s.v. “fossilization.” According to Trask, fossilization (also degrammaticalization) can have several meanings. It is a label “occasionally applied to the conversion of discourse strategies into syntax and morphology by grammaticalization. I think “academic kairos” is an example of the linguistic fossilization, but I think the shifts in language at this time in Greek history are grammaticalization.
518 Trask, The Dictionary of Historical and Comparative Linguistics, s.v. “grammaticalization.”
A generic label for any process by which a construction, a word or a form becomes more grammatical in nature than it formally was. In such a development, the linguistic item being affected undergoes loss in one or more of pragmatic significance, semantic complexity, syntactic freedom, morphological structure, and phonetic substance. For example, a discourse strategy may become a syntactic construction, a syntactic construction may become a single word-form, a lexical item may become a grammatical word, or a grammatical word may become a bound affix.\textsuperscript{519}

Kairos will lose the freedom it was afforded without being locked into alphabetic text—the kairos of Chapter 3. Thinking back to the Minoan Marine style octopus vessels from Chapter 3 (fig. 3.2), the placement of the animal is organic and exclusively follows the shape of the vessel. Compare the Octopus Vessel with another object from the Minoan styles, a beaked jug painted in the Floral style with grasses (ca. 1600-1500 BCE), (fig. 4.9; \textit{cf.} fig. 3.2).\textsuperscript{520}

The way in which these vessels were painted is almost like viewing an optical illusion. As for these two Minoan vessels, which stands out more, the vessel shape or the painted subjects? Neither, because the focal point changes or shifts depending on where the eye focuses. The viewer has a choice with these two vessels, every line, stroke, or daub is intricately connected to the overall impression of the vessel, so the eye is inclined to move dynamically around the entire form. They are more satisfying to the eye when all the parts are taken in as a whole. These two vessels lack consistent framing devices; they are composed non-hierarchically, which actually reflects the visual field for humans interacting with their environment. Focusing on either shape or the painting forces the viewer to lose sight of the other. Neither the ear nor the eye is a discriminating human sense, so the task of looking at the vessel and the subjects painted on them separately is a visual challenge. But the challenge itself proves that the surface of the forms and the paintings are fused as one; one does not impede the other. The eye registers the

\textsuperscript{519}Trask, \textit{The Dictionary of Historical and Comparative Linguistics}, s.v. “grammaticalization.”

\textsuperscript{520}Figure 4.9: Unidentified Maker, \textit{Floral style jug with grass}, ca. 1600 BC to 1450 BCE, Heraklion Archaeological Museum, Crete.
relationship as complete and harmonious. Somewhere between focusing on the subject depicted and the vessel form itself, a perfected beauty can be recognized; however, the work of the eye is different when observing these vessels than when looking at pottery from the Geometric and Archaic periods.

In the periods between 800-400 BCE, the composers of both poetry and painted pottery demonstrate an effort to create framed focal points for the eye and the ear; these compositions then are structured hierarchically and are aimed at exhibiting rational and logical thought. An example of the framed focal point is found on this eighth century vessel (ca. 750 BCE) attributed to the Dipylon Master (fig. 4.10). The whole vessel is replete with repeated patterns, but located on the bulge below the shoulder of the pot and in the middle between the two handles is the main event—consciously positioned on the body of the vessel that protrudes outward and closest to the viewer. Mackay suggests that the repetition and symmetry depicted here are two categories carried over from earlier Greek art, both of which dominate the way in which the prosthesis, or ekphora scenes (funeral processions), on funerary vessels like this one are composed. She describes how repetition and symmetry were used as parataxis, “one next to another, with little or no overlap.” Mackay suggests that while parataxis is a defining characteristic of early Greek epic poetry as evidence of oral composition, the term can be used to describe the arrangement of motifs on Greek vases, because in both poetry and pottery decoration, structure or pattern emerges. In the visual arts, Mackay explains that parataxis is

521 Figure 4.10: Unidentified Maker, Geometric amphora, c. 750 BCE, from Dipylon cemetery, Athens, National Museum, Athens.
523 Ibid., 117.
524 Ibid., 117. According to Richard Lanham’s A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms, Havelock argues in The Liberal Temper of Greek Politics (1957) that “parataxis is essentially an oral syntax, as opposed to the literate balance and subordination of hypotaxis.” (citation) Lanham defines parataxis as “[c]lauses or phrases arranged independently (a coordinate, rather than a subordinate, construction), sometimes, as here, without the customary connectives: “I
“structured by creating symmetrical arrangements through repetition of recognizably like
elements in a recognisable pattern,” which she calls visual symmetry.\footnote{Mackay, Harrison, and Masters, “The Bystander at the Ringside,” 117.} For poetry she refers to
the arrangement of a verbal ring-composition, which she says may have an A-B-C-X-C-B-A
pattern.\footnote{\textit{ibid.}} She asserts that the similar patterns that can be compared between visual and verbal
traditions, “may offer insight into the range of function of this type of structure.”\footnote{\textit{ibid.}} Mackay is
referring to symmetry under its modern definition which refers to compositional constituents that
are balanced around a central focal point or element.\footnote{\textit{ibid.}} In the case of the Geometric vessel (fig.
4.10), the central element is the funeral pyre centered in the register and spanning across the
vessel from handle to handle. The scene is X, which is parallel to the central element in the
poetic ring-composition. This appropriation of symmetry is not exactly the same as the ancient
\textit{symmetria}, which meant the commensurability of parts. The motif patterns she refers to in poetry
and visual art can also achieve \textit{symmetria}, but there is an importance to recognizing the
\textit{symmetria} as opposed to the symmetry. \textit{Symmetria} leaves room for kairos whereas visual
symmetry does not. \textit{Symmetry} is developed because a certain visual or verbal narrative is
established by way of traditional motifs and conventions, whereas \textit{symmetria} will not follow a
predetermined pattern. \textit{Symmetria} is about the commensurability of parts, not the repeated
arrangement of ordered motifs. The Minoan \textit{Floral Style Jug} (fig. 4.9) and the \textit{Octopus Jar} (fig.
3.2) are closer examples to the concept of \textit{symmetria}, and already they are more aligned with the
nature of human experience which are ever changing. I will elaborate more in Chapter 5 on the
relationship of kairos to \textit{symmetria} in sculpture. In this chapter the important aspect to consider

\textit{came, I saw, I conquered.”} Opposite of \textit{hypotaxis.”} Lanham defines \textit{hypotaxis} as “an arrangement of clauses or
phrases in a dependent or subordinate relationship.”

\footnote{Mackay is exercising formal art analysis.}
is that in these eras, as language and the visual arts are transitioning towards the ideal in sociocultural expressions, kairos does not have as much of a place because it cannot operate as a tool of measure that fits a prescriptive pattern, only as one that functions at undetermined times and places. Kairos is difficult to fit into a discussion of Geometric pottery painting. For vases in the seventh century BCE and forward, Mackay refers to the framing as symmetrical enclosure, which she concludes is “a natural way of structuring an otherwise paratactical group of elements” and the symmetrical enclosure can mirror the structure of the ring-composition.\footnote{Mackay, Harrison, and Masters, “The Bystander at the Ringside,” 120.} Homer’s poetry dedicated to the description of the \textit{Shield of Achilles} is an example of a complex verbal and conceptual patterning.\footnote{Ibid., 125.} At the close of her chapter Mackay suggests that these common patterns between the verbal and the visual were not so much a mnemonic or aesthetic strategy as “a natural way of thinking” and the substance of traditions.\footnote{Ibid., 141.} The “natural way of thinking” is shifting, and again, the textual and visual artifacts in this chapter are meant to reflect this state of transition for the Greeks. Translating Mackay’s ideas to kairos, the “natural way of thinking” about kairos was changing. If the desire to structure their expressions in turn reflects the dynamic of changes in their historical and sociocultural conditions, compositional structure like the ring-composition is a precursor to the concept of the \textit{techne}, or at the very least a rigorous exercise that sets them on the path to further logically and rationally organize many of their philosophical and artistic endeavors. The act of defining, attempts to control the boundaries of a word, just as artistic conventions accepted and expected by an audience, control the compositional techniques and practices of the poets and visual artists.
The Archaic Period: Artistic Conventions and the Imagery of Control

Works of art from the Archaic period (ca. 600-480 BCE) have been described as using the “imagery of control.” Artistic conventions, as well as alphabetic text, control the narrative.

Writing is extensively used on the pots to identify mythological characters, though the iconography is normally very explicit and few Greek viewers can have needed to read to identify the scene. In fact, many labels on these amphorae are incomprehensible, jumbles of letters which do not form words at all: clearly the status of the label did not depend on its being readable.

An example from the Archaic period highlighting the ancient Greeks’ attention to compositional structures is this amphora attributed to the Nessos Painter. The amphora is a transitional piece blending Geometric motifs, the black-figure technique, alphabetic text, and traditional oral subject matter. The subject matter on this Athenian black-figure amphora carries over, primarily from the oral traditional tales of myth and poetry. The depictions on this vase of the Nessos painter (figs. 4.11-4.13) systematically illustrate a combination of motifs while exploring the relationships between humans, gods, and other beings who are not human, which become more popular in the Archaic period. This amphora (probably a grave marker) combines Geometric-style meander borders, floral and animal decorations, black-figures, and alphabetic text; they are visually divided by their placement on various body parts of the vessel and by the banded registers. The lowest register begins with a band of directional rays pointing up to the body area. Above the rays is a band of the spiral wave motif under the register of dolphins leaping from right to left. The large register in the middle of the body that extends up and a bit

532 Osborne, Archaic and Classical Greek Art, 65.
533 Ibid., 95.
534 Figure 4.11 Nessos Painter, Athenian black-figure amphora, ca. 725-700 BCE, Dipylon Cemetery Athens, National Museum, Athens. Figure: 4.12: Detail of Nessos Painter, Athenian black-figure amphora, central vignette scene on neck with ‘Herakles’ attacking ‘Netos.’ Figure 4.13: Detail of Nessos Painter, Athenian black-figure amphora, below the shoulder, from a three-quarter view, of the headless gorgon.
535 Osborne, Archaic and Classical Greek Art, 65.
over the shoulders contains Gorgons running in the opposite direction from the leaping dolphins. The figures of the running Gorgons are painted in a composite-view (legs in profile, torso frontal), and the headless figure of Medusa seems to be following them, but also sinking toward the groundline (fig. 4.13) while a bird swoops into the register.

Above the Gorgons, in the band between the handles, the braided lines and alternating spirals form a row of connected quatrefoil shapes that connect the top of the Gorgon figures to the bottom of the scene on the neck featuring centaur Netos (Nessos) and the hero Herakles. While the depictions on this vase convey parts of stories from Greek mythology, one involving Perseus and Deianeira (the target of Nessos’ act of rape, who is being punished on the vase by Herakles), neither character is present because it was not a goal of the painter to tell an entire story, but to “exploit” it.536 “This vase puts death in the context not of the life lived but the constant human struggle with unseen powers.”537

Pots which choose dramatic moments and pots which smother themselves with writing encourage the viewer to think that looking at a picture is like reading a text. Where there is writing, it provides the nouns and figure drawing supplies the verbs: together they make up a story. Where there is no writing, the inclusion of distinctive individuals, whether monstrous or human, or peculiar objects serves to identify the nouns, and the composition again supplies the verbs.538

Not that all artists were putting words on their pots, some did so sparingly or left them off completely which left the viewers to sort out who was who and what was going on in the composition.539 Amasis was one of these painters who did not clutter the compositional space with words (figs. 4.14 and 4.15);540 his approach raised questions for the viewers. He asked the

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537 Ibid.
538 Ibid., 100-101.
539 Ibid., 101.
540 Figure 4.14: Detail of *Athenian amphora*, attributed to the Amasis Painter, ca. 550-540 BCE, Louvre, Paris, view of side depicting winged youth (Zethos?), wearing winged boots, a *chitoniskos*, and a *taenia*, advancing to the right; a bearded warrior, wearing *chitoniskos* and *pilos*, armed with spear and shield, advancing to the right,
viewer to contemplate the scene rather to understand with a fleeting look.\textsuperscript{541} There is no accepted or “correct” story identified for either side of the vase, nor is there anything concrete to suggest that the two images can or should be combined into a related story.\textsuperscript{542} But there are obvious framing devices, focusing the eye of the viewer to stay positioned on the interactions of the human and nonhuman figures depicted. During this period, the vase painters created links from the “conventional and familiar to an unfamiliar, unknowable, and uncontrollable world,”\textsuperscript{543} superimposing the visual onto the oral tradition of mythological tales and epic poetry.

**Organizing Subjects of the Human Mind through Thought and Language and the Transmission of Ideas**

Some poets and painters were expressing the uncontrollable, mutable nature of the world through the integration of new and old forms of verbal communication and artistic compositions, and the sophistic thinkers were busy doing the same. The sophists were studying, investigating, speculating, conversing, and writing about the principles of human behavior, morality, and ethics, as well as the principles governing the material universe, physical phenomena, and natural science. They were interested in all subjects available to the human mind through inquiry and argument, as opposed to things or knowledge revealed by the divine. Later in Greek history, the title of sophist refers to the itinerant professors who were teaching various subjects in exchange for money.\textsuperscript{544} I have chosen the sophists and poets who either dealt with the concept of kairos, or

\begin{itemize}
  \item turning his head profile to the left. Figure 4.15: Detail of Athenian amphora, attributed to the Amasis Painter, view of side depicting two bearded men, with a dog, approaching two youths.
  \item Osborne, *Archaic and Classical Greek Art*, 103.
  \item Ibid.
  \item Ibid., 65.
  \item \textsuperscript{544} The Greek word sophistēs, formed from the noun sophia, ‘wisdom’ or ‘learning’, has the general sense ‘one who exercises wisdom or learning’. As sophia could designate specific types of expertise as well as general sagacity in the conduct of life and the higher kinds of insight associated with seers and poets, the word originally meant ‘sage’ or ‘expert’. In the course of the fifth century BCE the term, while retaining its original unspecific sense, came in addition to be applied specifically to a new type of intellectuals, professional educators who toured the Greek world offering instruction in a wide range of subjects, with particular emphasis on skill in public speaking and the successful conduct of life. The emergence of this new profession, which was an extension to new areas of the
\end{itemize}
used the concept in their written compositions, as well as geographical locations connected to the visual representations of kairos deified as Kairos. The sophists and poets consciously shift back and forth in their inquiries, expressions, and acts of adaptation to grapple with an understanding of the ephemeral, spiritual, and conceptual versus the eternal, physical, and real. Early geometry and mathematics were not committed exclusively to numerical expressions of quantity; therefore, when Pythagoras attaches things from the physical and spiritual world known to him to numbers (as symbols), his process becomes a way of accounting for what would otherwise remain in the realm of the conceptual. Zero, for example represents nothing, and while this was not such a problem with the Babylonians or the Egyptians, the nothingness of zero was puzzling to the Greeks. During the time span of this chapter, the Eleatic philosophers were considering the concept of nothingness and how, or if, nothingness represented anything, or could be represented by something. Out of the Dark Age, the Greeks are emerging with the desire to confront these problems, and language that once lived only in the oral and ephemeral realm are descending into forms that are not as flexible. They are moving toward idealized human thoughts, actions, and expressions, but more specifically the idealized Hellene.545

545 The Getty Research Institute, Art & Architecture Thesaurus® Online, s.v. “stylization,” accessed November 10, 2018, http://www.getty.edu/vow/AATFullDisplay?find=stylization&logic=AND&note=&english=N&prev_page=1&subjectid=300055836, defined as the “representation of natural forms in a simplified or exaggerated manner. More broadly, the representation of appearances, sounds, motions, shapes, speech, or gestures in accordance with conventions of a particular style rather than with observation of individual examples; see also s.v. “idealization,” as “the representation of persons, natural forms, or scenes in a way that highlights their best features, minimizes imperfect features, or alters features to conform with what is considered most perfect or most beautiful.”
One of the first writers to express through poetry the ideal characteristics of a Hellene (or a Megarian) was Theognis of Megara (6th century/570-485); and one example is Theognis comparing men to the traditional subject of the octopus. He was an aristocrat living in Megara “during a period of political turmoil when class distinctions were breaking down.”\textsuperscript{546} He may have gone into exile, but his \textit{floruit} dates 544/41; and except for Homer, Hesiod, and the Homeric Hymns, his elegies represent “the earliest poems to have been preserved in manuscripts of their own.”\textsuperscript{547} In many of the verses in the compilation known as the \textit{Theognidea}, he expresses the concerns of the living Megarian elite in terms of violence, turmoil, deception, and their fear of losing landed property and the loyalty of friends and kin alike.\textsuperscript{548} Theognis’ verses are bulging with metaphors where people and situations are compared to animals and the natural environment.\textsuperscript{549} Theognis uses comparisons of humans to animals or to the natural environment as a way to confirm the severity of situations; he creates through language bold visuals in the mind that make the situation seem more dire and dangerous, or fruitless. The tropes Theognis uses would be lost on an audience who had not experienced their natural environment directly. Osborne summarizes the candor of the Theognis verses after the four short invocations of the \textit{Theognidea}.

\begin{center}
Competition within the élite is intense, and those who are on the winning side have to be urged to moderation and warned that the consequences of pursuing their superiority by outraging and dishonouring others will be open civil strife, leading to seizure of power by an individual who will dishonor all (39-52, 1081-1082b). Justice, straight actions, and the virtues of listening to the wise can all be appealed to (27-8, 543-6, 563-6, 753-6, 805-10), both as ideals, and to get one’s own way (337-50), but the wisdom needed for survival encompasses cunning intelligence, the intelligence of the octopus ‘which appear to the
\end{center}


\textsuperscript{547} Gerber, Theognis in \textit{Greek Elegiac Poetry}, 7 and 8. Gerber notes that the elegies are not all the work of Theognis, and he recommends that the compilation in the Loeb edition should be referred to as \textit{Theognidea}, but he acquiesces to use Theognis throughout.

\textsuperscript{548} Osborne, \textit{Greece in the Making}, 178-179.

\textsuperscript{549} Gerber, Theognis, lines 202-112, 113-114. Tropes related to the sea and the dangers of bad harbors.
sight like whatever rock it clings to’ (215-16). Individuals are pulled between loyalty and the need to adapt to the way the wind blows; few enemies can find himself betrayed (575-6).  

In the previous chapter, I suggested that the Greeks may have been inspired by the free will of the octopus to self-consciously control itself for its own advantage, Theognis comes to this conclusion as well. While the passage from Theognis does not use the word kairos, Theognis is reflecting an idea of mutability, cunning, and the persuadable and shifty nature of some men.  

Walker has interpreted the same meaning here and in other verses (1259-1262) where Theognis is comparing the ethos of an addressee to that of a “quick-wheeling kite” who is persuaded by the words of other men.” Walker connects Theognis’ octopus to the need for humans to have the advantageous “skillfulness” of an octopus, and that humans must have sophia. Human success depends on having abilities, like the octopus, to alter oneself to meet circumstances, “which is the very opposite of atropia.” Humans also need convictions, which they going to be able to model from the character of an octopus. The octopus is beholden to no one but itself, which is not the exact message Theognis is trying to convey. Walker offers Bruno Gentili’s proposition about the octopus’s relationship to the nobleman, but also to the poet.

Theognis’s octopus can be seen, on the one hand, as an emblem of a code of savoir faire for the noble who need to exercise “adroitness” in the management of his public life and, on the other hand, as an emblem of sixth-century poet’s relations with different

550 Osborne, *Greece in the Making*, 179. Gerber says in his Loeb introduction after the invocations in the Theognis verses, the lines 19-254 “may represent in large part the earliest collection of his poetry.” (8).

551 Gerber’s translation in *Greek Elegiac Poetry*, the lines pertaining to one taking on the guise of an octopus are as follows (215-18):

θη προσσουλήσσῃ τοῦς ἰδεῖν εὔφανη.
νῦν μὲν τῆς ἐφέσου, τότε δ᾽ ἀλλόιος χρόα γίνου.
κρέσσων τοι σοφίη γίνεται ἄτροπης.

Adapt the mood of the cunning octopus which seems to resemble the rock to which it clings. Now follow along in this direction now take on a different complexion. Cleverness is in truth superior to inflexibility.


554 Ibid., 142.
audiences, including the “friends’ and patrons with whom he associates and for who he performs. Either way, the octopus signifies what we can call the rhetoricity of both the poet’s and the noble’s need to adapt their discourse and their self-presentation to the exigencies, opportunities, and limits afforded by the situations in which they must present themselves.  

In the following examples from Theognis, kairos is used:

\[
\begin{align*}
\chiρ\text{(}\text{h}μα & \text{ δ}´ \text{ μ}ὲ\text{ν } \text{ Διόθ}εν \text{ καὶ } \text{ σ}ὺν \text{ δ}ίκη \text{ ἀνδρὶ } \\
& \text{ γενήται } \\
& \text{ καὶ } \text{ καθαρῷς, } \text{ αἰ}ekyllον \text{ παρέχει } \text{ τελέθει}. \\
\text{ei }& \text{ δ}´ \text{ ἀδίκως } \text{ παρὰ } \text{ καιρόν } \text{ ἀνήρ } \text{ φιλοκερδεῖ } \text{ θυμῷ } \\
& \text{ κτηστεῖ, } \text{ εἰθ}´ \text{ ὅρκῳ } \text{ πάρ } \text{ τὸ } \text{ δίκαιον } \text{ ἐλών,} \\
& \text{ αὐτικα } \text{ μὲν } \text{ τι } \text{ φέρειν } \text{ κέρδος } \text{ δοκεῖ, } \text{ ἐξ } \text{ δὲ } \text{ τελευτην} \\
& \text{ αὕτη } \text{ ἔγεντο } \text{ κακόν, } \text{ θεώ } \text{ ν } \text{ δ}´ \text{ ύπερέσχε } \nuός. \\
\text{άλλα }& \text{ τάδ}´ \text{ ἀνθρώποιν } \text{ ἀπατῆ } \nuόν: \text{ οὐ } \gammaάρ \text{ ἐπ}´ \\
& \text{ αὐτοῦ } \\
& \text{ τίνοτε } \text{ μάκαρες } \text{ πρήγματος } \text{ ὑπαμβάκιας,} \\
& \text{ ἀλλ}´ \text{ } \text{ ὁ } \text{ μὲν } \text{ αὐτὸς } \text{ ἔτεισε } \text{ κακόν } \text{ χρέος, } \text{ οὐδὲ } \\
& \text{ φιλοίσιν } \\
& \text{ ἀτη } \text{ ἔξοπισώ } \text{ πασίν } \text{ ἐπεκρέμασεν:} \\
& \text{ ἀλλον } \text{ δ}´ \text{ οὐ } \text{ κατέμαρψε } \text{ δίκη; } \text{ θάνατος } \text{ γάρ } \\
& \text{ ἀναιδής } \\
& \text{ πρόσθεν } \text{ ἐπὶ } \text{ βλεφάροις } \text{ ἐξετο } \text{ κῆρα } \text{ φέρων. } \text{(197-208)}
\end{align*}
\]

Whatever possession that comes from Zeus and is obtained with justice and without stain, is forever lasting. But if a man acquires it unjustly, inopportune, and with a greedy heart or seizes it wrongly by a false oath, for the moment he thinks he’s wining profit, but in the end it turns out badly and the will of the gods prevails. The minds of men, however, are misled, since the blessed gods do not punish sin at the time of the very act, but on man pays his evil debt himself and doesn’t cause doom to hang over his dear progeny later, while another is not overtaken by justice; before that ruthless death settles on his eyelids, bringing doom.  

Here, Theognis is not offering advice. Like Hesiod, he is judging the manner in which a man may come to possess the things he desires. And in these verses (401-406), Theognis uses kairos

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556 Gerber, Theognis in *Greek Elegiac Poetry*, 189.
by repeating Hesiod’s maxim and then he makes an argument as to why “proper measure is best in all men’s actions.”

μηδὲν ἄγαν σπεύδειν: καὶρὸς δ’ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν
ἀριστος
ἐργισιν ἄνθρωπων. (401-402)

Don’t show too much zeal. Proper measure is best in all men’s action. Often a man is zealous of merit, seeking gain, a man whom divinity on purpose leads astray into great wickedness, and easily makes what is bad seem to him to be good, and what is worthwhile seem to be bad.

Kairos in this context is connected to the good sense of noble character, which Theognis wants to uphold by informing his audience that “good sense” cannot be “made and placed in a man,” and if it could “there would never be a base son of a noble father, since he would heed words of wisdom;” therefore “you will never make a base man noble through teaching” (435-438).

Kairos is not only connected through the noble character of men, but also passed down through them. As the Greek language changed or even moved about the Greek world, kairos moved with it. And in what ways the transmission of the concept was conducted is another aspect in the history of this concept where the textual and visual evidence is important in interpreting its connotations.

Being able to behave with “proper measure” as passed down through noblemen was one method of transmission, but so was sailing, and many other activities available to more than the aristocratic class. However, without more research, these activities in which we know kairos to be related are in the daily lives of men, not women. Two activities that involved certain ancient Greek males for which they were expected to exhibit certain conduct were the symposia and in

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557 Hesiod (WD, 694) μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καὶρὸς δ’ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀριστος. Glenn W. Most’s 2006 translation: “Bear in mind measures; rightness is the best in all things.”
558 Gerber, Theognis in Greek Elegiac Poetry, 231. A reflection of Hesiod’s WD, now a maxim.
559 Ibid., 237
military warfare. Both activities come together on this red-figure kylix depicting a hoplite warrior on the surface (figs. 4.16 and 4.17). The ancient Greek symposia were gatherings where aristocratic males reveled in intellectual conversation, music, poetry—all stoked by drinking, conviviality, and competitiveness (the spirit of ἀγονία). The symposium has been described as a “tightly choreographed social gathering,” and by the sixth century BCE these gatherings used “an established repertoire” of vessels. The kylix being an example of one. The “well-conducted” cadence of the symposia were expressed by its participants through poetry, music, games, and conversation filled with jokes and gossip. For the aristocrat, these were events that freed them from daily turmoil, but at the same time upheld and conveyed their values. The ideology expressed by Theognis about the conveyance or transmission of “proper measure” is represented not only by the presence of the octopus on the shield of the warrior, but because it is depicted on a vessel associated with the social conventions of a symposium.

The warrior depicted here is a hoplítēs, (see fig. 4.16) a citizen soldier, was a “heavy-armed soldier…armed for hand-to-hand combat, protected by armour and a large shield,” which becomes an iconic figure in Greek culture and popular subject in art, literature, political

560 Figure 4.16: Phintias Painter, Red-figure kylix depicting a warrior preparing for battle, ca. 500 BC, National Archeological Museum, Athens. Figure 4.17: Illustration of a kylix (drinking cup). In general, the kylix is an ancient Greek drinking vessel with a broad shallow bowl on a pedestal and two handles curving upwards; the kylix and its various types were popular from the end of the sixth through the fourth century BCE. According to the Perseus Encyclopedia Online, s.v. “kylix” Term: Of the many Greek words for cups, four are now most commonly used: skyphos, kotyle, kylix, and kantharos. There is no ancient authority for limiting these names to a particular shape of cup, but the word "kylix" appears as an inscription on a vessel of a particular shape, and literary evidence mentions the kylix as a drinking cup; on this basis, the name kylix has been applied to the shape.
562 Ibid.
563 Ibid.
discourse, and historical writing. The hoplite militia was “far from being a solid middle-class body,” but they were “polarised between the leisure-class and the working-class soldiers.”

This distinction would have indicated the degree to which these soldiers were prepared or “equipped” (the literal meaning of ὀπλίτης, hoplítēs). Typically the working-class hoplítēs, the independent farmers, craftsmen, and shepherds, were campaigning side-by-side with the wealthy men of leisure. However, there would have been a difference in their training for military battle and to what degree they were armed. The working-class men were physically healthy from their strenuous outdoor activities, but “the model hoplite was not the working man whose fitness for war derived from hard labour, but the man of leisure who owed his fitness to dedicated physical and mental training…and this type of soldier was no figment of political theory, but an idealized version of the leisure-class hoplites who formed a large part of the militia everywhere in Greece.” When looking amongst their own ranks, the members of the hoplite militia could tell each other apart socially. Whether it was from training maneuvers to the soldier’s armor, just by looking and observing each other, they understood each other. They applied the same visual strategy when scoping out the enemy. The “[a]rmour was meant not only to protect the wearer and display his wealth, but also intimidate the enemy by projecting a terrifying image.” Many parts of the hoplite armor were fashioned with types of threatening imagery.

Some bore fear-some frontal images of Gorgons staring out at the enemy, fangs bared. Most common, judging by representation in art, were images of animals signaling the soldier’s fighting prowess – lion, bull, and boar, ram – and deadliness – snake, scorpion,

564 Hans van Wees, Greek Warfare: Myths and Realities (London, UK: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 2004), 47. The singular and plural of hoplítēs (singular ὀπλίτης) here is derived from French(?).
565 Van Wees, Greek Warfare, 47.
566 Ibid., 48.
567 Ibid., 55 and 57. See also Arist. Pol. 1321a-13-14)
568 Van Wees, Greek Warfare, 53.
569 Ibid.
birds of prey. Less directly intimidating emblems emphasized other qualities: a hare, speed, an anchor, steadfastness in action; a fighting-cock, courage; a tripod (the ancient equivalent of a gold medal), ambition. Also common were pictures of a human eye, a symbol thought to ward off danger.570

The warrior with an octopus on his shield might have been understood to behave like an octopus—to come from nowhere, maneuver with extreme agility, and may employ surprise tactics. The Greeks, as the sociocultural group, understood the character of the octopus as a symbol for certain kinds of men.

Modern neuroscience can add to the association of ancient military prowess and to the nature of the octopus. Any study of octopuses will highlight their physical strength, their intellect as problem solvers, their ability to camouflage themselves with their surroundings, and their secret weapon—squirt a cloud of ink under duress—into which they can disappear quickly. Superimposing the natural strengths of the octopus onto the human form would give many advantages to a hoplite on the battlefield. A major difference between the physiological makeup of the human and octopus is the way the eyes of an octopus are structured to operate. We have blind spots, and octopuses do not. Each human eye has a natural blind spot (scotoma), whereas cephalopods, such as the octopus, do not have blind spots571 (fig. 4.18).572 Although there are many similarities between the human eye and the octopus eye, the differences result from how

570 Ibid., 53-54. “A man could choose a blazon to suit his own taste and personality, which produced devices ranging from the wittily understated – a tiny, actual size image of fly, playing on the notion that the fly is the bravest of animals because it keeps coming back however often it is brushed aside by a man many times its size – to the outrageously flamboyant – the thunderbolt-wielding Eros on a gold shield (‘not a traditional emblem’, we are helpfully informed which advertised Alcibiades’ fable sexual prowess.” (Van Wees, 54).
572 Figure 4.18: Illustration of the cross-section of the human eye and octopus eye: The example on the left is the image of an eye of a vertebrate. On the right, that of an octopus. 1: Retina; 2: Nerve fibers; 3: Optic nerve; 4: Blind spot; source author Caerbannog, created 1 September 2008 and based on Image: Evolution_eye.png created by Jerry Crimson Mann 07:07, 2 August 2005 UTC (itself under GFDL), accessed December 13, 2018, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Evolution_eye.svg.
the eye of each developed.\textsuperscript{573} “[I]nvertebrate eyes develop from the skin, whereas vertebrate eyes, including human eyes, are outgrowths from the brain and apparently reversal was embryologically impossible.”\textsuperscript{574} Octopuses see everything in front of them, but not the way humans see. The octopus’s eyes, as intimately connected to its skin, can sense the world around it in a manner superior to humans. Humans are more than aware of the lack of visual sensations in the world behind our heads. Our reactions to circumstance are based on our perceptions in front of us, just as the signal to the hoplite to advance to battle was “simply the sight of the enemy, up to a mile away across a plain, beginning to advance.”\textsuperscript{575} Of course the ancient Greeks did not have this physiological information, but from what they did understand of the octopus’s character they superimposed or translated into their social, artistic, textual, and militaristic organisms, which indicates that not only did they study and come to know the behaviors of octopuses in the wild, they admired them. Whether or not a hoplite was wealthy or not, or had specialist training, the participants in the militia were going to have many shared experiences, such as ambushes, surprise attacks from an enemy, or even ambushing and stealing from each other in order to survive. As for the symposia, the gatherings may not have posed any threat to life, but both the symposia and the battlefield contained an agonistic spirit and protocols. Adhering to the social-cultural protocols meant making the right decisions at the “right” “moment in time.”

A sophist from this period who was not operating under any social protocols was Pythagoras of Samos (570-495 BCE), who journeyed to Egypt, as did Thales of Miletus (624-546 BCE, another sophist from the east). But upon his return to Samos, Pythagoras decides to

\textsuperscript{573} Gregory and Cavanagh, ”The Blind Spot.”
\textsuperscript{574} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{575} Van Wees, Greek Warfare, 134-135.
migrate to Magna Graecia, to the Achaean outpost of Crotona in Southern Italy. Both eastern locations are considered more Ionian than Greek. Crotona had been settled by migrating Greeks as early as the eighth century. Pythagoras gathered pupils, and began lecturing to citizens there around 530 BCE, and established himself as a “moral authority whose influence stretched not only to his own pupils but as far as the whole society of the city of Croton.”

Pythagoras left no writings, so he is known through his followers who ranged across the social stratification varying in age, rank, and gender, but not in class. His followers were the elites. From Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, we learn that the Pythagoreans “considered numbers the principles of existing things,” and specifically kairos is connected to the number seven (1.985b-986a).

… they fancied that they could detect in numbers, to a greater extent than in fire and earth and water, many analogues of what is and comes into being—such and such a property of number being justice, [30] and such and such soul or mind, another opportunity [καιρός], and similarly, more or less, with all the rest—and since they saw further that the properties and ratios of the musical scales are based on numbers, and since it seemed clear that all other things have their whole nature modelled upon numbers, and that numbers are the ultimate things in the whole physical universe.

Numbers for the Pythagoreans represented a transition between the realms of the spiritual or conceptual and the dynamic lives of humans. They were “accustomed to visualize numbers by

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576 Founded by the Achaeans in ca. 708 BCE.
577 Being more Ionian than Greek could have an impact on the direction of future research on the history of kairos.
578 Philip Wheelwright, ed., *The Presocratics* (New York, NY: The Odyssey Press, Inc., 1966), 200. Wheelwright glosses *kairos*: καιρός: *opportune moment*, the right or propitious moment. Human time, as distinguished from the abstract concept of time, is not homogeneous but is marked by moments of greater or less significance both experientially and practically.
581 Riedweg, *Pythagoras*, 16. And, Pomeroy, *Pythagorean Women*, “At least we can be certain that Pythagoreans were members of the elite…” (xviii).
584 Terpstra, 139-40.
means of counting pebbles (psêphoi) means of counting pebbles (psêphoi)(585) (fig. 4.19). “Fourthness” (tetraktýs) was “of central importance for the Pythagoreans and “stood as a numerical paradigm of whole systems.” (587) The tetraktýs consists of the first four counting, or natural, numbers (e.g., 1, 2, 3, and 4). (588) And furthermore, these points were arranged to reveal the essence of the number, in this case four points (one point-unit per corner of the square) (589) (fig. 4.20). (590) This composition of a circle inside a square represents the essence of “fourthness” as “the source and root of ever-flowing nature” and later in the early Classical period of the “navel of the world.” (591) The tetraktýs is composed of ten points arranged in four rows to create an equilateral triangle, the “perfect” number ten in “its deployment” in the form of the tetraktýs (fig. 4.21). (592) The tetraktýs was considered by the Pythagoreans to represent “the Kosmos (world-order), Ouranos (heaven), and Pan (the All) woven together through mathematical harmonia. (593) The “fourthness” was also associated with harmonia in music by the Pythagoreans, such as the perfect intervals of an octave, a fifth, and fourth (fig. 4.22). (594) The intervals illustrated are expressed by small numeric ratios, such as 1:1 (unison), 4:3 (perfect fourth), 3:2 (perfect fifth), and 2:1 (octave). The musical

585 Riedweg, Pythagoras, 86.
586 Figure 4.19: Illustration of four dots in the place of the four corners of a square.
588 Riedweg, Pythagoras, 82.
590 Figure 4.20: Illustration of a circle inside a square.
591 Riedweg, Pythagoras, 82. The combination of the circle in square will be a major motif in later movements of art and architecture, beginning with the Romans.
592 Walter Burkert, Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism, Edwin L. Minar, Jr., trans. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 427. Figure 4.21: Illustration of the tetraktýs.
intervals represent an example of the Pythagorean position that all things liken to numbers, and numbers “in some sense explain or control things.”

The Pythagorean position on the relationship of numbers to music was sorted out through the monochord (kanón), a valuable instrument with practical and theoretical uses. The origin of the monochord is obscure, but in ancient Greece the instrument was called a kanón; it had other names in other cultures; however, the monochord provides a visual for the way in which the Pythagorean numerical proportions demonstrate dynamic symmetria and harmonia, two concepts related to the concept of kairos (as established in chapter 2). The monochord is essentially a tool for measuring musical intervals and intonation, and in its simplest form, there is one string stretched between two bridges on a plank or suitable sound box with a movable bridge placed under the string, which is calibrated. The positions of the moveable bridge mark the placement of frets, which demonstrate the numerical foundations of consonant and dissonant musical intervals. As a practical device, the monochord was a tool for measuring musical intervals. The intervals were created by dividing the string into an arithmetic number of equal sized units, a technique called the arithmetic proportion. The sculptor Polykleitos (fifth century BCE) is thought to have used chords (one for height and one for width) with knots based on the distal phalange of the little finger “as a basic module” for his system of determining proportions for the


596 LSJ, s.v. “κανών.” Kanón holds the following definitions: shuttle or spool by which the thread of the woof was drawn through the threads of the warp, handles on the interior of shield grasped by the left hand, rod, bar, weaving-staff [distaff], rule, ruler, level, precept, law, model, standard, district.


598 Ibid.

599 Ibid.

600 Ibid., 144.
human figure.\textsuperscript{601} Polykleitos used a measurement that existed in nature, which uses as a mathematical measurement, creating an approach “complemented by, and not subjected, to the rigid requirements of geometric laws.”\textsuperscript{602} The sculptor himself determined the ideal form of the human figure, which embraced “the entire body and all its parts, down to the initial shape of the phalange of the little finger.”\textsuperscript{603} Polykleitos would for his end result be guided by his own creative judgment, and “by eye.”\textsuperscript{604} The Pythagorean monochord and Polykleitos’ approach to composition informed the framework of compositions for which the musicians and sculptors would have aimed for symmetria.

As for its theoretical uses, the monochord was prized by the ancients as a “source of scientific-philosophical speculation,”\textsuperscript{605}

The stretched string stood for the universe, with the various pitches representing the planets in the solar system (\textit{musica mundana}), the Muses, and the parts of the human body. The string was often pictured being tuned by the hand of god. Music, mathematics, and astronomy were inexorably linked in the monochord. The universe was thought to obey musical laws; therefore, the study of the monochord yielded information considered relevant to the other sciences, the humanities, and religion…. [as well as] the meaning of harmony, the relations between the One and the Multiplicity, the powers and the properties of numbers, the deeper meanings of justice and reciprocity, and the cosmogenesis of patterns of order in nature.\textsuperscript{606}

In music, Terpstra says that the “element or roots” of simple prime numbers (1, 2, 3, and 5) create “offspring by marriages with themselves and each other.”\textsuperscript{607}

Many of these numbers were associated with the calendar and the measurement of time cycles in general. This is understandable, since the measurement of time is at the heart of all procedures in Harmonics, whether it be the relatively fast cycle of the vibrating string,

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\textsuperscript{602} Tobin, “The Canon of Polykleitos,”313.
\textsuperscript{603} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{604} Ibid., 313 and 317.
\textsuperscript{605} Terpstra, “An Introduction to the Monochord,” 138.
\textsuperscript{606} Ibid., 139-40.
\textsuperscript{607} Ibid., 152-3.
or the relatively slow cycles of planetary movement. Over time the seven visible planets were coupled with the seven notes of most scales [ABCDEFG].

Etymologically, harmony, *harmonia*, represents a personified mythical figure and the Pythagorean number 3, but also it means joining or fastening elements together, and not all the elements are alike. We know this to be true because *harmonia* has definitional references to not only music, but anatomy, psychology, framework of the universe, civic order, a medical remedy, intonation of voice in rhetoric, and the arrangement of words for poetry set to music. Something like understanding that all-natural numbers are whole numbers, but not all whole numbers are natural. Not all of the individual elements that make up each of those distinctions are alike, but some are. Through their investigative analysis of the world around them, the sophists of this time in Magna Graecia, including Pythagoras, were using language different from Homer and Hesiod to “describe the phenomena of the environment,” not to please but to organize thought and instruct.

Havelock sees the sophists of the Archaic into the High Classical period as “poised between literacy and nonliteracy,” trying to mediate between the ear and the eye and in pursuit of a new vocabulary.

The *tetraktys* and the Pythagorean observations regarding other numbers become more than quantitative signs, they become symbols of “qualitative, archetypal essences, possessing a distinct, living personality.” Terpstra says, “If the number 1 is understood as omnipresent, then the numbers 2, 3, and 5 are the trinity of the three greatest gods present in many cultures, and as the musical harmony 2,3 5, for the 4:5:6 triad. As for the Olympian gods of ancient Greece, Zeus

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609 *LSJ*, s.v. “ἁρμονία.”
(the later professed father of the deified concept of kairos) is definitely a member of the trinity.\textsuperscript{613} The Pythagoreans identified the following five elements as numbers: fire (1), earth (2), air (3), water (5), and aether (7). The archetypal manifestations are directly intuited in arithmetic (the number itself), geometry (the number in space, and harmonics (the number in time)).\textsuperscript{614} The \textit{tetraktýs} represents the nature of change, righteousness, Hercules, and holding the key of nature.\textsuperscript{615} The Heptad (7) represents The Forager (epithet of Athena), Athena, citadel (\textit{akropolis}), reaper, hard to subdue defense, due measure (\textit{kairos}), virgin (\textit{parthenos}), revered seven (\textit{septas} + \textit{sebomai} = \textit{heptas}), bring to completion (\textit{telesphorus}), fortune, fate, and preserving \textsuperscript{616} (fig. 4. 23).\textsuperscript{617} Philolaus of Croton (470-358 BCE), a Pythagorean, calls the prime number seven “motherless.”\textsuperscript{618} According to Pausanius (5.14.4-10, not exact), Ion of Chios (ca. 490-420) in his \textit{Hymn to Kairos} “makes Kairos the youngest child of Zeus” but no mother is ever mentioned.

Kairos has roots in Pythagorean ideas. While this section may not quite yet accomplish the task of locating its exact position and significance in Pythagorean thinking, kairos was a force that was seen in relationship to the broader aim of bringing harmony to any situation.

\textbf{Shifting Media: Sculpture and Epinician Poetry}

A principle Greek colony in southern Italy, Hyele (Ὑέλη, Elea) is situated on the Lucanian coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea\textsuperscript{619} (fig. 4.24 and 4.25).\textsuperscript{620} Writers later refer to the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{613} Guthrie, \textit{The Pythagorean Sourcebook}, 321.
  \item \textsuperscript{614} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{615} Ibid., 322.
  \item \textsuperscript{616} Ibid., 323.
  \item \textsuperscript{617} Figure 4.23: Illustration of a heptad inside a circle.
  \item \textsuperscript{618} Terpstra, “An Introduction to the Monochord,” 154.
  \item \textsuperscript{620} Figure 4.24: A map of Southern Italy, Elea (Latin Velia) indicated by a red dot. Map from Margaret Guido, \textit{Southern Italy: An Archaeological Guide} (London, UK: Faber and Faber Limited, 1972), Figure 1. Figure 4.25: The map on the right is a legend for the archaeological park in Velia. Map from Bartolomeo Ruggiero, \textit{Il Parco Archeologico di Elea-Velia} (Sarno, IT: Edizioni dell’Ippogrifo, 2015), 32-33.
\end{itemize}
settlement as Ἐλέα, but coins provide its earlier designation as ΥΕΛΗ and ΥΕΛΗΤΩΝ. The name is believed to come from Greek and meaning “a marshy place.” Elea was founded around 540 BCE by the Ionian city of Phocaea. The city has been described as “not one of the largest and richest Ionian cities, but it was second to none in producing daring sailors.” The ancient city of Elea, now an archeological site, provided the fertile ground for the Eleatic school of philosophy from three sophists, Parmenides (the founder, fl. late 6th/early 5th century BCE), Zeno (c. 490-430 BCE), and Melissus from Samos (fl. 5th century BCE). Elea also happens to be one place where the god Kairos was revered. For the site at Olympia, there is textual evidence, eye-witness accounts from Pausanias that a figurative statue was dedicated to Kairos.

At Elea there is archeological evidence, not of a statue, but a stele (cippo). A stele made of local sandstone for the temenos for Olympios Kairos.

Inscribed on the stone is Ὀλυμπίω Καιρὸς; the text is oriented vertically (downward).

The stone dedicated to Olympios Kairos would look something like this one dedicated to

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622 Catherine Osborne, Oxford Classical Dictionary, 4th ed., s.v. “Eleatic school,” “The characteristic marks of Eleatic doctrine are (a) monism, the claim that there is only one being in reality; (b) the denial of all generation, destruction, movement and change; (c) a strong distinction between the truths of reason and the appearances of the senses.”
Poseidon Asphaleios (the protector of navigation) found in an area of many sacred terraces along the walls of the ancient city. The location of the Olympios Kairos stele was found located in sacred area 8 on the legend, (fig. 4.27 and 4.28).

Immediately following, the widest of the sacred areas (number 8) found along the ridge and the so-called Zeus Terrace, there the surviving structures can be dated between the end of the fourth century BCE and the beginning of the third century BCE, with further interventions during the third and second centuries BCE. The presence of a large retaining wall of sandstone blocks stands out, supporting the terrace, which has a narrow access stairway on the south side. Segments of channels with remains of terracotta pipes are documented in various points of the esplanade in the central part of which was for the stone quarrying. At the eastern extremity major evidence is still visible of a long rectangular altar (25 by 7 meters) in squared blocks and well-preserved sandstone, arranged in three rows; a small stela enclosure where three stones were found with the dedication to Zeus Ourios (of the favorable wind or tailwind), Olympios Kairos (the Olympian favorable occasion), Pompaioi (the guide), for whose epigraphic characteristics are attributable to the second half of the fifth century BCE. The inscriptions discovered and attributed to a terrace for Zeus, are evidence of the sacredness of the area before the classical age.

According to label in the modern museum housed in small medieval church, Santa Maria, on the acropolis, archeological evidence suggest that cult worship was present in Elea from sixth century forward (fig. 4.29). Olympios Kairos was present there in the fifth century BCE.

Finding archeological evidence of kairos or Kairos represents not only a switch in media, before only presumably oral and textual, it adds the medium of stone (stele) to the subject of kairos, the deified nature of the concept is added as well.

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624 Ruggiero, Il Parco Archeologico di Elea-Velia, 98.
625 Figure 4.26: Unidentified Maker, Stone stele dedicated to Poseidon Asphaleios, fourth century BCE, Velia, Antiquarium della Cappella Palatina, in Ruggiero, Il Parco Archeologico di Elea-Velia, 96. Figure 4.27: Legend of the geographical ridge of the Archaeological Park of Elea-Velia indicating its sacred areas, in Ruggiero, Il Parco Archeologico di Elea-Velia, 95. Figure 4.28 Photo with a view of sacred area 8, Terrace of Zeus, in the Archaeological Park of Elea-Velia, in Ruggiero, Il Parco Archeologico di Elea-Velia, 97.
626 Ruggiero, Il Parco Archeologico di Elea-Velia, 98. This large quote has been translated from the Italian by the author from Ruggiero’s text which is not available in English.
627 Figure 4.29: Photo of a museum display label in the Antiquarium della Cappella Palatina with a timeline indicating the cults of Elea in the late Archaic and Classical periods, photo of author.
The reason *Olympios Kairos* was revered there can only be assessed by pulling together all the cultural conditions across the entire Greek world, even then the interpretation would be difficult. There are no ancient texts in which an author attempts to reason why Kairos was revered next to *Zeus Ourios* and *Pompaioi*, but then there are no contemporary texts either. *Pompaioi* is another title for Hermes, who Kairos is also paired with at Olympia, only there it is *Hermes Agônios* as the “one presiding over contests.” In the Greek settlements, like the ones in southern Italy, we know that even while living abroad from their mother city, they continued many traditions from that city such as the dialect, dress, religion, architectural and art styles, they “participated in athletic and poetic contests at Olympia and suchlike sites of Greece” and seemed to be aware of trends in the visual arts and literature.628 If this is the case, all of the evidence on kairos and Kairos stem from sophists from Ionia. Kairos is discussed by the Pythagoreans, who presumably developed their ideology from Pythagoras of Samos (an eastern Aegean island) who dates around 570-495 BCE. Then, we know that Ion of Chios (an Ionian island not far from Samos) dates from 490-420 BCE, and he wrote a *Hymn to Kairos* denoting him as the youngest son of Zeus. Also present in the fifth century BCE, a version of Kairos (*Olympios Kairos*) that is revered at the Phocaean settlement of Elea—the mother city, being from the Ionian east and not far from the islands of Chios or Samos. The relationship of the Ionian Greek sophists to the concept of kairos raises the question about what influences from Ionia or farther east affected these thinkers. This brief timeline review shows kairos and Kairos the god making appearances through mixed media—oral transmission (Pythagorean lectures or any other discussions), the hymn, and a stele—as a demonstration of how the expansion of the Greeks into new territories afforded their expressions related to kairos to expand or shift to new media.

Another example of new expressions that involve the concept of kairos would be epinician poetry, specifically the poems of Pindar. The epinician poetry of Simonides of Ceos (556-468 BCE), Pindar of Thebes (517-438 BCE) and Bacchylides of Ceos? (518-451 BCE) provided information about the contests and contestants in the late-sixth to fifth centuries. Epinician poems are choral odes that were written by professional poets to celebrate agonistic victories; the poets were commissioned by the victor or his family. The encomiastic aims of epinician poetry usually included references to previous victories of the athlete or his relatives.629 Contests of athletic prowess and celebrations for the winner were age-old for the Greeks, but after the famous games were inaugurated at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia toward the end of the eighth century, more panhellenic games became popular with the Greeks in the sixth century,630 and more literature, art, and architecture began to be commissioned for the circuit of events. The games in each location were given religious status because of their association with a god or hero, and because the games were conducted during the festivals scheduled throughout the year to honor the gods and heroes—Apollo at Delphi (the Pythian Games), Poseidon at Isthmia (Isthmian Games), and Zeus again at Nemea (the games founded by Herakles in honor of his father). All of these events were panhellenic, only Greek speakers and worshippers of the Olympian pantheon were participating. There were other festivals and games that will be conducted as non-panhellenic, such as the Great Panathenaia founded in Athens in 566/565 BCE in honor of the goddess Athena.

630 Valavanis says in Games and Sanctuaries 776 BCE was the date ‘fabricated’ by the Eleian sophist Hippias; however recent archeological findings precludes any athletic activity before 700 BCE (39). The traditional date is 776 and 700 is the date according to archeological record (43). There were athletic events in the form of military exercises or performance taking place in cult of Zeus at Olympia before the eighth century with the primary goal of entertaining a ruling class (48). Pelops is put forth as the figure who founded these games at Olympia, and at Olympia there was both hero and god worship (40).
Again, because of these festivals and games, there was a rise in the accumulation of offerings to the victors and competitors of poetry, drama, and eventually, oratory, as well as prizes for the winners. In terms of the production of material culture in the form of speech or visual artifacts, the timing of this festival circuit promoted a continuity in the production of cultural products, physical training and preparation, the building of architecture, and subject matter for poetry and the visual arts from the eighth century BCE through the fourth century CE. Over one millennium of the duration of the Olympiad alone demonstrates how “deeply rooted in the consciousness of the ancient Greeks” the contests were. The Olympic games become an institution that shaped and influenced their social lives, their identity, the character of men, education, celebrations, politics, religion, all the arts, and even intercontinental travel and pilgrimages. Even though of the utmost importance to the victors was the prestige they secured for themselves, those winners believed their victories were achieved not only through their own abilities, but also because they had divine favor.

Nielsen declares the value of epinician poetry as evidence, but also warns about the problems with epinician poetry as indisputable source.

[The picture it provides of the athletic landscape of Greece can be only a vague glimpse. One problem is that it covers only the period from the middle of the sixth century, when the epinician ode emerges, to the middle of the fifth century, when it disappears again: Athletic festivals founded only after the heyday of epinician poetry cannot of course, be reflected in it….A much more serious problem is the fact that the evidence provided by epinician poetry is essentially prosopographic in nature, since it testifies only to festivals at which commissioners of epinician poetry had been victorious. Such commissioners, however, surely belonged to a very select circle of upper-strata, internationally well-connected and politically and economically power families…]

632 Valavanis, Games and Sanctuaries, 23.
633 Ibid.
634 Thomas Heine Nielsen, Two Studies in the History of Ancient Greek Athletics, Scientia Danica, Series H, Humanistica 8, 16 (Copenhagen, DK: The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2018), 55-56. Lanham’s A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms, s.v. “Prosopographia,” A type of enargia which vividly describes the appearance of a
Nielsen says the commission of an epinician ode was not an obligatory practice. 635 Again, however, the concept of kairos is in the arena of the wealthy. “Pindar’s poetry expresses the conservative, so-called “archaic,” mores of the sixth and early fifth century. His thought is ethically cautionary and contains frequent reminders of man’s limitation, his dependence on the gods and nature, and the brevity of life’s joys. He espouses moderation (μέτρον, καιρός), and the aristocratic (“Doric”) values of civic order (εὐνομία) and peaceful concord (ἡσυχία) and reverence for the gods (εὐσέβεια).” 636 The achievements of Pindar’s victors are measured against those of the past in myth and the nature of their family or tribal lineage. “The geographical dispersion of the victors celebrated by Pindar indicates how broadly his reputation and association had spread.” 637 Kairos, then, and variations of this concept, would have been understood by those in the expansive geographic area of his victors. Goold has suggested that because there is no evidence to explain how Pindar was contracted by his patrons, except for a couple of instances where he states he saw the victory, there is no actual proof that he was literally present at all these events. 638 His absence from these events reveals how the language he chose was understood and expected by his audience. Instead of recording a “moment in time” when the athlete was victorious and had achieved his goal, Pindar orders the aesthetic aspects of the event and character of the athlete. Pindar, like the Archaic vase painter, did not aim to tell an entire story, but instead they provide, or exploited the event, for its best and most ideal elements. Pindar, then, will not provide the arrested moment when kairos is captured; he will highlight the abilities of the athlete to recognize the kairos-moment, or even those other competitors who do

person, imaginary or real, quick or dead; and s.v. “Enargia,” A generic term for visually powerful, vivid description which recreates something or someone, as several theorists say, “before your very eyes;” vivid characterization.
635 Nielsen, Two Studies in the History of Ancient Greek Athletics, 56.
637 Ibid., 9.
638 Ibid., 10
not. Goold says “the epinikia are occasional poems that invoke the shared social values to praise victors and offer them immortality in verse,” and this verse used recurring elements to ensure “a fundamental understanding of any ode.” The structural elements are parts like identifying the victor’s name, father, city, the game and event of the victory, as well as an invocation to the divine. “Pindar often refers to his poems as hymns, and there is a not a single ode without some reference to divinity.”

Various forms of kairos appear at least once in Pindar’s Olympian, Pythian, Nemean and Isthmian odes. Pindar applied the temporal and ethical moment of kairos to characters in his poetry, but he also includes the element of advantage the victor had through the favor of the gods. In general, kairos was regarded as a means of transferring timelessness to the human circumstances of historical time, but not without the favor of the gods or good character.

Olympian 8.19-25, ΑΛΚΙΜΕΔΟΝΤΙ ΑΙΓΙΝΗΤΗ, ΠΑΙΔΙ ΠΑΛΑΙΣΤΗ/For Alkimedon of Aigina, Winner, Boys’ Wrestling, 460 BCE

His was beautiful to behold, in action he did not discredit his looks, and by winning in the wrestling match he proclaimed long-oared Aigina as his fatherland, where Themis, the saving goddess enthroned beside Zeus, respecter or strangers is venerated most among men, for when much hangs in the balance with many ways to go, deciding with correct judgment while avoiding impropriety is a difficult problem to wrestle with.

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639 Race, “Introduction,” in Pindar, 16.
640 Ibid.
641 Ibid., 17.
642 Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik, s.v. “Kairos.”
But men become brave and wise as divinity determines: for how else could Herakles have brandished his club in his hand against the trident, when Poseidon stood before Pylos and pressed him hard and Phoebus pressed him while battling with this silver bow, nor did Hades keep still his staff, with which he leads down to his hollow abode the mortal bodies of those who die? But cast that story away from me, my mouth! for reviling the gods is a hateful skill, and boasting inappropriately sounds a note of madness.

For that man [Damophilos], a youth among boys, but in counsels an elder who has attained a life of one hundred years, deprives a malicious tongue of its shining voice and has learned to hate the person who is violent, not starving against the noble nor delaying an accomplishment, since opportunity in men’s affairs has a brief span.
For Sogenes of Aigina, Winner, Boys’ Pentathlon

οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν, τίνι τοῦτο Μοῖρα τέλος ἔμπεδον ὄρεξε. Θεαρίων, τίνι δ’ έοικότα καιρὸν ὄλβου δίδωσι, τόλμαν τε καλὸν ἀρομένῳ σύνεσιν οὐκ ἀποβλάπτει φρενῶν.

I cannot name any to whom Fate has given such a prize that lasts. But Thearion [the victor’s father], to you [Aphrodite] gives fitting measure of prosperity, and although you have won boldness for noble deeds, she does not harm your mind’s understanding.

For Xenokrates of Akragas, Winner, Chariot Race

τάν Νικόμαχος κατὰ καιρὸν νεῖμ’ ἀπάσαις ἀνίαις: ὅν τε καὶ κάρυκες ὡς ρᾶν ἀνέγνων, σπονδοφόροι Κρονίδα Ζηνὸς Ἀλείοι,

Nikomachos applied fittingly to all the reins and whom the heralds of the seasons also recognized the Eleian truce-bearers Kronos’ son Zeus,

In examples from the Olympian Odes, both usages of παρὰ καιρὸν, instead of καιρὸς alone, seem to indicate there is a negative result when one does not have the favor of the gods. As if kairos in the hands of men may have an undesired result. Also in the first passage from Olympian 8, Pindar vividly describes how “when much hangs in the balance with many ways to go, deciding with correct judgment while avoiding impropriety is a difficult problem to wrestle with.” His imagery of weighing decisions, as if by a scale, and how that forces one to come up with the right decisions, brings to mind the later statue of Kairos by Lysippus in the fourth century BCE and the ekphrasitic poem about Kairos by Poseidippus in the third century BCE. 643 The point is that for all of Pindar’s references to major and minor gods, either Pindar was not aware of the

643 Scales of Zeus.
concept of kairos being deified, or he was not a believer. Otherwise why not use the deified concept in the poem? In the passage from the Nemean Odes καιρὸς is provided by Aphrodite. And from the Pythian and Isthmian Odes, the use of kairos (καιρὸς and κατὰ καιρὸν) are positioned squarely in human activity. Pindar’s poetry offers some valuable evidence to the historical conditions of kairos, because through the textual evidence we can not only see variations of it usages, but its context seems different from its place in Pythagoreanism. However, the kairos or in its deified state in Elea and Olympia shape the concept of kairos as “a moment in time” to be grasped by humans.

Conclusion and Summary of Intrinsic Meaning of Kairos from 800-400 BCE

In the late eighth century, thousands of Greeks travelled the Mediterranean, trading east and west, and settling numerous sites in Italy and Sicily. This migration not only brought about a massive increase in Greek knowledge of a wider world,644 but by expanding geographical possibilities, their thoughts and expressions changed. In the time period of this chapter, the Greeks are becoming more self-aware and conscious of their presence in the world and what possibilities that represents. The sophists thinking about all observable phenomena “make the first attempts to assemble the conceptual tools with which one might begin to answer the question, How did the world, the order, the arrangement of things which we see and of which we are part come into being?”645 “This is the problem of being and becoming, of permanence and mutability, and, some would say, of eternity and time,” these topics raise further questions.646 Sorting through the possibilities of these questions meant organizing their thoughts beyond aesthetic expressions, sometimes through the use of the new medium of alphabetic text. This new

644 Osborne, Archaic and Classical Greek Art, 67.
646 Danielson, The Book of the Cosmos, 12.
medium brought on a shift in using their ears to focus on communicating with the eye; it was a process whereby they were experiencing transitions, while superimposing old and new technology with old and new media. All the elements of all agencies of life were beginning to be examined so that they could sort out how all the elements of anything come together to create harmonia. Theses shifts are controlled by visual and textual conventions which begin to push towards an ideal. Archaic Greece is an important period in Greek history where they demonstrate through their social structures and cultural agencies their ability to synthesize and organize the world around them to the advantage of their own progress. There is more media to interpret during the time period of this chapter, which allow us to see more dimensions of kairos begin surface. Moving chronologically through Greek history, the various dimensions of kairos have surfaced from its natural state as they experienced in their environment; a time when the Greeks have an innate ability to understand the time to act is when the “moment in time” presents itself. Hesiod provides plenty of examples of this natural state of kairos timing in the environment around him. Pottery also keeps us informed on the natural conditions that keep humans aware that timing is important. There seems to be always be a lingering essence of ethics and morality as linked to civic character for capturing the right “moment in time,” whether it has to do with sailing, military battle, proportionality, music, athletic competitions, politics, or sophistic thinking. The concept is growing and shifting in its connotative nature, moving back and forth from the oral-aural sphere to the physical world of alphabetic text on a number of different surfaces. Through the interpretive tools chosen for this chapter, I believe that kairos ought to be considered a continuing dynamic element, which the Greeks have recognized as part of establishing harmonia (harmony) in the activities of sociocultural agencies; kairos is especially measurable in the individual lives of Greek males.
Due to the historical conditions, kairos is in transition along with the Hellenes themselves. It maintains most of its previous connotations and it is still deeply connected to the conceptual realm of thought; however, alphabetic text written onto pottery and stela provided evidence in the changes and shifts in the Greek mindset. The concrete nature of the alphabetic text on various media demonstrates their curiosities about the possibilities of reducing the ambiguity of the conceptual realm for groups of individuals, but also for one individual at a time. Sailing and philosophical thinking would be human activities where either a group of individuals were impacted by kairos or just an individual. Athletes, like those winners of Pindar’s poetry, were individuals who were revered for their ability to capitalize on the opportune moments. Only these individuals needed the favor of the gods for the kairos to be advantageous, and likely the good character passed down through aristocratic bloodlines. Due to the presence of textual evidence, kairos as related to certain sociocultural agencies begins to expand and take the shape in the arenas for the wealthy upper-class, educated elite Greeks of wealthy who had the opportunities to participate in the military, as athletes, or as followers of Pythagoras. With exception of a few female Pythagoreans, kairos in the context of the historical conditions of this chapter is connected to the good sense of noble character, but only the noble character of men. Kairos is becoming less representative of a “natural way of thinking” and more conventional, distinct, measurable, and aimed at living personalities, while becoming a godly personality (Kairos the god of opportunity).
CHAPTER 5
FROM NATURE TO HUMANKIND:
FRAMING THE CONVENTIONAL AND IDEAL KAIROS, 400-146 BCE

ABSTRACT: Due to many aspects of the Greeks’ historic conditions, kairos shifts with other aspects of their culture from being a fluid concept in the Greeks’ “natural way of thinking” to being “crystalized” into alphabetic text and into the technical vocabulary of the technai. Another way to consider the shift of kairos is that the concept went from a broadly applicable, general, concept to one of individuation, taking on an existence of its own and applied specifically by specific people who were practitioners of different arts. The contents of this chapter then attempts to identify some key cultural concepts and constructs upon which the thinkers, poets, and artists were establishing their ideological and educational aims.

The eras included in this chapter include the disciplinary period of rhētorikē and the development of language into technai. In the visual arts, these eras cover the Classical periods (480-323 BCE) to the start of the Hellenistic period (323-31 BCE).647

Following the structure of both Chapters 3 and 4, this chapter continues to aim for an answer to “how kairos ought to be considered in the time period of 400-146 BCE?” As with the previous chapters, Panofsky’s methodological approach will be used to arrive at the intrinsic meaning of kairos in sociocultural context of the ancient Greeks. Through the interpretive tools chosen for this chapter, I believe that kairos ought to be considered, or rather recognized, as to be considered as a pervasive and perennial and a paradoxically static element within the conventions of human agencies and disciplines.

Some of the ancient Greek sophists of the Archaic period and into the Classical period came to believe that each human was its own little world, a microcosm,648 or a part of the larger cosmos, or macrocosm. In the previous chapter, the sophists, the poets, and the artists were investigating, studying, and assembling “the conceptual tools” with which they could answer questions like how the world, its order, and its arrangement had come into being.649 They used mathematics, science, religion, politics, music, athletics, alphabetic text, poetry, and visual arts media to organize and express their expanding knowledge and understanding of “all observable

647 The stylistic movements in art in this chapter are the Classical (ca. 480-323 BCE)—subdivided into Early Classical (ca. 480-450 BCE), High Classical (ca. 450-400 BCE), Late Classical (ca. 400-300 BCE), and Hellenistic (ca. 323-31 BC). The dates here have been derived from the Pedley’s Greek Art and Archaeology (2007), and The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s “Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, Ancient Greece, 1000 B.C.-1 A.D.,” accessed November 10, 2018, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/04/eusb.html.
648 Danielson, The Book of the Cosmos, 4. Sophists such as Heraclitus (c. 535-475 BCE), Parmenides (c. 514 BCE/6th to 5th Century BCE), and Democritus of Abdera (c. 460-370 BCE).
649 Ibid.
phenomena⁶⁵⁰ as well as the mutable nature of that phenomena. In this new period of historical conditions, kairos will no longer be just a reflection of a “moment in time” in their natural environment as in Chapter 3, or viewed as a force growing out of the cosmos of “nature” and into the cosmos of human activities where kairos becomes connected to human character as in Chapter 4. Kairos will continue to carry those connotations, but the concept will also be placed in the service of the arts (technai). The eras covered in this chapter offer more material culture to interpret that have a direct relationship to kairos, but also the concept is exposed in different contexts and shifts to different media. The more kairos is exposed through the alphabetic text of poetry, prose, drama, and visual media, the more its definitional connotations can grow, but also congeal—becoming fixed as part of the idealized expressions of compositional conventions. Kairos will become a related concept for the technical language of various disciplinary arts, which are now being taught by the sophists, another word in the Greek lexicon that begins to take on new connotations. In the mid-fifth century BCE, “sophist” began to take on narrower and more technical meanings.⁶⁵¹

[O]ne characteristic of most intellectual disciplines is that they tend toward increasing specialization and reduction of their subject into specific concepts, rules, and practices. It is not surprising, then, that holistic fifth-century concepts such as kairos were deemphasized once rhetoric became disciplinized. As Kennedy notes: “Kairos as a rhetorical term is largely restricted to the classical period…. The subject is, of course, one that by nature cannot be reduced to rules, which is one of the reasons it did not receive great attention in the handbooks.”⁶⁵²

The sophists flourishing during the time period of the previous chapter “introduced topics that would later become disciplines,”⁶⁵³ and Schiappa suggests this forced a different way of thinking.

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⁶⁵¹ Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 4.
⁶⁵² Ibid., 200; see also George A. Kennedy, Art of Persuasion in Greece (1967), 9.
⁶⁵³ Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 56.
about topics and changes in style, conventions. The examples of poetry, prose, visual arts, and historic figures in this chapter are representatives of the changes in styles and conventions.

As with the previous two chapters I will first set a limited environmental scene to provide some historic conditions for disciplinary movements in Greek culture. Following the environmental conditions is a broad discussion on the how the use of frames and borders in vase painting is correlated to other Greek sociopolitical and intellectual endeavors, and the development and role of techne. The technai become representative of the humanism brought to logos. Because each techne is defined by the nature of the task at hand, there are many historic figures whose works can be examined for their perspective on its role in the composition of new work and in education. Therefore, I am including, after the discussion of the techne, a section on education. The point of looking at the way the practitioners of the different arts were framing and organizing their elements of the craft is to be able to interpret their aim, or what they intended to accomplish in the civic realm with their perspective or approach and use of the techne. The remainder of the chapter will focus on some thinkers, poets, and visual artists whose works represent the convention of framing, either in a techne or through other works, and in what way they advocated a position on how to pass along the core of their teaching to others, while considering any correlations to the nature of kairos.

Historic and Environmental Conditions: Sociocultural and Geopolitical

The Greeks during the time period of this chapter are reckoning with their sociocultural conditions, as well as geopolitical conditions. Arguably, they may be one in the same, but their battles for geophysical space are also political battles between each other and foreigners. These historic situations move the Greeks’ expressions in text and arts to reflect an ideal that ultimately

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654 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 56.
reflects the ideal civic character. Many wars begin during the fifth century BCE. In 499 BCE the Ionian Greeks rebel from the Persians, in 490 the Battle of Marathon, and from 480-479, there are the Battles of Thermopylae, Artemisium, Salamis, Plataea, and Mycale with the result of halting the Persians invasion and forcing them to withdraw.\[^{655}\] In the aftermath, the consortium of money from “the Greek poleis allied against Persia,” known as the Delian League was set up in 477 BCE in a treasury on the island of Delos. Expected donations to the League were either money or ships; however, Athens begins encouraging money instead of ships because they desired to build and man the ships themselves. In the 460s the League’s supported operations were successful against the Persians at the mouth of the river Eurymedon.\[^{656}\] Despite this success, the Athenians’ claimed that the Delian League treasury was not secure on the island and moved it to Athens in 454 BCE. This meant that one-sixteenth of all the monies contributed went to Athena herself.\[^{657}\] This appropriation of funds created an imbalance in the sense of justice.\[^{658}\] Athens becomes a “star in the ascendant” from building projects to a continued movement towards democracy.\[^{659}\]

This attitude of the Athenians sparked hostility in other Greek poleis. Sparta and their allies retaliated by waging land campaigns against Athens, which begin the first of the Peloponnesian Wars around 460 BCE, and waged on until 445 BCE. The Thirty Years’ Peace was made between the Athenians and the Spartans in 445, but it did not last even fifteen years, because a second civil war begins in 431 BCE and lasts until 404 BCE.\[^{660}\] This second round of wars between the Greeks is known as the declared Peloponnesian War. These civil wars

\[^{655}\] Pedley, 211; and Pomeroy, et al., xix.
\[^{656}\] Pedley, 212.
\[^{657}\] Ibid.
\[^{658}\] Ibid.
\[^{659}\] Ibid.
\[^{660}\] Pomeroy, et al., 235, 237 and 274.
accomplished nothing, except for the far-reaching effects civil wars usually create. The Greek world continued to widely experience social tensions, which exacerbated civic, economic, and political strife. Concerns that left them questioning and less confident that they lived in the best of all possible worlds. The intellectual and artistic developments in this period then search out different forms of expressions, such as the fourth-century thinkers developing the philosophical dialogue and treatise (technē). The expanded nature of the Greek world under these postwar conditions seems to have created a social paradox. On the one hand, they were passionately for living without certain political boundaries and the constraints of imposed laws of one human onto another, but on the other hand they seem acutely productive at creating frameworks to understand their relationships between each other, natural phenomena, and their general sociocultural circumstances. These frameworks are both real and conceptual, but the examples of each addressed in this chapter aim for in ideal. Geophysical boundaries may be real, and in the visual arts framing devices used can be seen. In the literature being composed, so too can the conventions of framing be seen, especially in the new genre of the technē. But other frameworks are forming that may have had some visual components, but were largely culturally conceptual, such as ideologies that re-framed how the Greeks saw themselves and others.

One cultural framing device that developed out of this cultural time period is the ideology of panhellenism, which seemed most appealing in the face of a common enemy—but outside of safety the tribal units seemed fickle to the idea of being panhellenic. Even though the idea of

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661 Pomeroy, et al., 361.
662 Ibid.
663 Ibid. Questions posed by the authors Pomeroy, et al. were as follows: What was the purpose of civic life? Why had people come together in communities in the first place? Were the laws of the polis in accord with nature or in conflict with it? Why were some people free and others slaves? How were the Greeks different from non-Greeks? Should Greeks war with other Greeks and enslave them when victorious? ....Why should some have so much more than others? Was warfare worth the sacrifices it entailed?
panhellenism existed in Homer (II. II.530, Πανέλληνας), Homer refers to groups of people by their tribal designation. Being a Hellene, as opposed to any other tribal designation may have afforded the Greeks alliances, security, a deeply heroic history full of traditions and ritual, and cultural patrimony; however, in their real-time, the commitment to being a Hellene instead of an Achaean, a Phocian, a Cretan, or a Lacedaemonian may have been asking them to give up too much. If each tribe allowed the identity of Hellene to be superimposed on their tribal identity, what was at stake? This question kept the Greeks in a constant struggle for personal and civic independence. After the pivotal Battle at Chaeroneia in Boeotia 338 BCE, Philip II of Macedon becomes the ruler of Greece, and the Greeks become framed into the boundaries of the Kingdom of Macedon. There is resistance from the Greeks’ to identify as Hellenes under Philip II or in general under the concept of panhellenism. However, as reflected in their works of art, after Macedon absorbs and unifies the poleis under a kingship, there is turning point from the old Archaic and High Classical idealization. This idealization of their ethnic identity confirmed the former communal ethos to a new one that would appeal to the pathos of the audience and would take into account the personality of individual characters, outside of their ethnicity or education.

Framing Conventions in the Visual, in Technai, and in Education

In vase painting from the sixth century BCE forward, the convention of framing is prevalent. Marconi argues for the significance of conventional or formalist use of frames and borders in Greek vase painting. They are not just supplemental, but integral “constituents of the visual and spatial field” and demonstrate “the ways in which painters articulate the relationship between the pictures and the boundaries,” which have “a particular relevance at the

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semantic level, with those formal solutions significantly contributing to an images meaning. “

Marconi’s study focuses on the relationship between the pictures and their boundaries on Attic Archaic and Classical black- and red-figure pots. The framing devices on the pottery painting mediates the space between the viewer and the painted forms as they have been applied to the surface of the pot (figs. 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3). The borders are created as surfaces on which Ganymede, Zeus, or the revelers can stand upon. They visually ground those figural images for the viewer, so the subject of the painting, the representation of their physical form, and the skill of the painter can be focused upon. On the amphora with the revelers, the borders are more visually dynamic. The decorations from the foot of the vase, up to the shoulders and neck, including the handles, serve to direct the movement and focus of the eyes on the representation of the revelers—all decorative borders on the vase visually lead back to the main event framed on the most bulbous part of the form. These are formal or conventional decisions by both painters to focus the viewers’ attention in a more controlled way. Marconi is correct that these arrangements and usage of framing conventions should not be ignored or treated like the ornamental frames around ease-paintings. Osborne reminds that one of the most important aspects about Greek art “lies not in the continuities of imagery but in the continuities of issue. Greek art is not important for what it represents, but the way it represents it.” From the previous chapter, we know that artists were appealing to a contemplative audience, now we see the artists asserting more control or consciousness of their observers. The audience

666 Figure 5.1: Berlin Painter, Attic red-figure krater, ca. 500-490 BCE, Louvre, Paris, with a view of Ganymede rolling a hoop and bearing aloft a cockerel, a love-gift, from Zeus who is pictured in pursuit of Ganymede on the obverse of the krater. Figure 5.2 Berlin Painter, Attic red-figure krater, ca. 500-490 BCE, Louvre, Paris with a view of Zeus in pursuit of Ganymede. Figure 5.3 Euthymides, Athenian red-figure amphora (Three Revelers), ca. 510 BCE, Staatliche Antikensammlungen, Munich.
668 Osborne, Archaic and Classical Greek Art, 241.
commissioning and viewing figural representations like those of the Berlin Painter and Euthymides were attracted to the beauty of the forms, but those figural elements on those forms of media “enabled or promoted certain attitudes, both political and moral.” The conventions used in these examples of vase painting represent the overarching goal of the painter to bring together constituent parts (symmetria) in order to achieve harmonia. By way of gaining more control over constituent parts, the aim of harmony (harmonia) is the concept which can be paralleled in many of the Greeks’ creative, intellectual, political, and civic endeavors; technai, for instance, could relate to more than one subject (i.e., logôn techne, art of speech), politikê techne (art of politics), rhêtorikê technê (art of the orator). Inspiration may have still been considered to be god-given, but the development of technique is solidly in the hands of human activity.

Again, the technai are defined by the nature of the tasks at hand. Schiappa has pointed out a problem with the way in which modern scholarship has interpreted the presence of the fifth century BCE technai as “how-to” books, “manuals” filled with content for people who were trying to prepare for legal litigations. Like the words sophist and kairos, and countless others in Greek lexicon, the meaning of techne continues to develop after its first appearance in Homer. In the Iliad (3.61) and the Odyssey (3.433), the usage of techne denotes the skill of craftsmen,

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609 Osborne, Archaic and Classical Greek Art, 241.
610 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 46; see also Plato, Phaedrus 266d-273c.
611 Ibid., 48. See also Plato, Gorgias 521d 6-8.
612 Ibid., 50.
613 W.K.C. Guthrie, A History of Greek Philosophy, vol. III, The Fifth-Century Enlightenment (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 115. Plato would disagree with my position or at least his discussion in Sophist (265, 266) on the subject of various kinds of technai being in the domain of the divine or human would suggest; however, I am not willing to change my position based on Plato’s passages on the topic.
614 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 51. Schiappa provides some evidence in contemporary scholarship that has supported this position on technai.
such as a carpenter or a blacksmith—skills learned through observation, practice, and mimic, and that are practical. Also in Homer (Odyssey 8.297) and in Sophocles (Antigone 367), techne was associated with a person using techne to achieve both good and bad aims. After Homer, the connection of technē with “practical occupations is weakened, and the word acquires a connotation of inventiveness.” Reinhardt says “technē is seen as a quintessentially human province and a measure of the human ability to survive without divine support in a hostile environment.” Technē is a term of that competes with tychē (chance), and it can be viewed as influencing human life, both communal and individual.

Techne is methodical and rational (a pervasive theme, for instance in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes), and it is instrumental to self-assertion. Techne in this sense is amenable to being conveyed through teaching in that its procedures can be objectified to the point where they can be communicated. Moreover, since techne is instrumental to the self-assertion of human beings as organised in functioning communities, there is a rapprochement between techne and virtue (arête); behavior in accordance with techne becomes moral in virtue of its being directed at and beneficial to the community.

Generally, in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, techne ought to be considered more as a treatise—a formal and systematic exposition of the constituent parts of a subject learned in an education setting with a teacher. Not until the Rhetoric to Alexander in the fourth century BCE do we have an example of a techne that was intended to be contemplated by the reader alone like a how-to manual. An inter-intellectual discussion ensues between many ancient authors as to nature of the techne and its usefulness in teaching the “art” of any subject, which brings to question whether or not kairos can be taught alongside the other concepts making up any

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677 Ibid.
678 Ibid.
679 Ibid. Reinhardt uses Euripides, Alcestis (785-786) as an example.
680 Ibid.
Keeping in mind that from whichever ancient intellectual’s position on *techne*, or any other concept, the “real target” by the fifth and fourth centuries BCE “was the relationship, between education, society, and democracy,” a consciously pursued ideal. The word generally used in academic analysis is *paideia* (*παιδεία*); its early connotations were regarded as “childrearing;” however in the fourth century, the connotation changed.

[Paideia] was now for the first time connected with the highest *arête* possible to man: it was used to denote the sum-total of all ideal perfection of mind and body—complete *kalo-kagathia*, a concept which was now consciously taken to include a genuine intellectual and spiritual culture. This new comprehensive conception of the cultural ideal was firmly established by the time of Isocrates and Plato.

Ideas about educating the youth of Greece were changing along with the intellectual environment. In the early fifth century BCE, education had probably consisted largely of a mix of subjects that taught particular skills and morals such as *mousike paideia* (learning to recite poetry, to sing and play the lyre), *gymnastike paideia* (physical training), and later *grammatike paideia* (learning to read and write). A formal education was voluntary and for those who could pay for it, so those who were educated were not the majority; however, they were also not only from old aristocratic families. The problem presented then is the difference between being educated as from birthright and being trained because you could pay for it. If more than the old aristocracy desired to rise to the perceived ideal “aristocratic καλὸς κἀγαθός,” how was it going to be managed? On the sociocultural front, the older generation aristocrats were of the opinion that learning the skills and training of a vocation, trade, or profession “could not replace the

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681 Kairos will be a concept related to certain *technai* (i.e., Hippocrates’s *On Ancient Medicine and On the Art*, Polycleitus’s *Kanon*).
683 Jaeger, vol. 1, xviii.
684 Ibid., 286.
685 Ibid.
physical and spiritual education of the whole personality as practised by the aristocratic καλὸς κἀγαθὸς,” 687 which was patterned on an ideal that combined the highest qualities of the body and soul, qualities that until now had been believed to be passed down as arête (virtue) through noble blood. In place of inheriting arête from divine ancestors or bloodlines, and therefore entitled to the ideal καλὸς κἀγαθὸς, the aristocratic principle of privileged education could be superimposed onto anyone who could afford it, through the application of logical reasoning. 688

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the remainder of the chapter will focus on the thinkers, poets, and visual artists whose works represent the conventions of framing, either in a techne or through other works, and if they advocated a position on how to pass along the core of their teaching to others. These historical figures and their works, and in one case the document of an unknown author (Dissoi Logoi), will demonstrate the shifts in Greek culture from mythos to logos through their compositions, and I will draw out the position of kairos in each example. I have organized this section of examples in chronological order. Rhetoric, rhētorikē, will not enter until Plato’s Gorgias around 380-385 BCE, which I am using as a marker for the recognition of what we now think of as disciplinary rhetoric.

Protagoras of Abdera, Thrace (c. 490-420 BCE)

Protagoras is said to have been the first teacher to provide instruction on the possibility of arguing for or against any proposition whatsoever, 689 and possibly the first to offer to teach for money. 690 Protagoras’s educational aim was particularly focused on “the phenomenon of man as

687 Jaeger, vol. 1, 287.
688 Ibid.
690 Marrou, A History of Education in Antiquity, 49.
a member of his polis and what it required of him.” Practical wisdom was one such requirement that in itself required “the skillful and persuasive use of speech.” His method, and probably others, is represented in the later text known as the Dissoi Logoi (literally, two arguments), written by an anonymous author not long after the Peloponnesian War of 431-404 BCE.

Protagoras’ “weaker/stronger” statement is best understood as companion to his “two-logoi” thesis. Influenced by Heraclitus’ “unity of opposites” thesis, Protagoras claimed that concerning every “thing (pragma) there are two logoi in opposition. The same “thing” could be experienced in “opposite” ways…What Protagoras meant by making one logos stronger than its opposite was the substitution of a preferred (but weaker) logos for a less preferable (but temporarily dominant) logos of the same experiences.

Protagoras influenced a method that would “force any question into an aporia by pointing out that each side was true within terms that it had chosen to develop the argument;” however, the aim was not to discover a “real” truth. Instead, a two-sided argument will allow the one in the position to argue to arbitrate or mediate the possibilities, and at the right moment, harmonize the opposite views. A practical “procedure when dealing with an uncertain world.”

While there is doubt that Protagoras ever wrote a technē, there are significant fragments, some through other ancient authors, from which scholars have interpreted his position on many pressing topics in his lifetime. The major fragments are as follows: Two-Logo; “Stronger and Weaker” Logoi; “Human-Measure;” “Impossible to Contradict”; and “Concerning the Gods.”

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695 Lanham, A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms, s.v. “dissoi logoi.”
696 Ibid.
697 Ibid.
698 Schiappa, The Beginnings of Rhetorical Theory in Classical Greece, 158.
699 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 87-154. Schiappa provides analyses of all Protagoras’ major fragments.
From fragments we can learn he was working through ideas about “man is the measure of all things,” “all matter being flux,” “there are intelligible principles inherent in the matter of every phenomenon,” and “as for the gods” he says he has “no way of knowing either that they exist or that they do not exist.”

Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are; and of the things that are not, that they are not.

Protagoras recognized ambiguities in the realm of the gods as well as the relative situations among humans. In his comprehensive study of Protagoras, Schiappa interprets the “human-measure” lines as follows: the two are “bound,” “things” can be “measured” by people in contrasting ways (logoi), and a dominant experience (logos) of a thing is potentially alterable as an interchange or swapping of opposites. Protagoras has an anthropocentric view of the “human capacity” for understanding and organizing things. Protagoras’s interest in “relativism, the notion of ortho logos, and the practical administration of justice (DK 80 A10)” made him of interest and influence to leading politicians like Pericles.

A fragment from Pericles’ funeral oration of 440/39 BCE (during Protagoras’ acme) contains passages that echo Protagoras’ human-measure and “concerning the gods” fragments. A variety of passages in fifth-century drama suggest mutual influence between Pericles and Protagoras. The design of the sculpture on part of the Parthenon suggests the influence of Protagoras’ new anthropocentric explanation of the gods.

The importance of kairos to public speaking seems obvious if not overt in the textual evidence surrounding Protagoras or Gorgias. We cannot say kairos was foundational to their teaching.

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701 Schiappa, *Protagoras and Logos*, 118, and 188n4). Schiappa provides a discussion on the interpretation of “Man” from the Greek; Protagoras actually uses ἄνθρωπος, “which can refer to individual human being or to humanity as a whole (women included). There is no evidence to suggest that Protagoras was any less sexist than other mid-fifth century males; but there is no compelling reason to continue the use of the generic “man,” while there are good reasons to use more inclusive language in our scholarship” (188n4).
702 Ibid., 130.
703 Ibid., 148.
704 Ibid., 179.
705 Ibid., 179.
aims; but Schiappa says, what we can say is that within the context of their educational goals and
the relationship of those goals to bettering civic interactions, kairos as “the opportune moment”
“represents a genuine conceptual development by the Sophists toward the fifth-century theory of
logos.”706 “Protagoras proclaimed himself as better than many at helping men become noble and
excellent (kaloi k’agathoi).”707

Gorgias of Leontini (ca. 485-380 BCE)

Gorgias of Leontini, Sicily has been described as responsible for the first attempts at theorizing about how language can be crafted fluently and to suit an occasion.708 Gorgias will
prosper financially “by teaching his students to speak persuasively,” and he was known to have
been invited to speak at the Olympic Games, and also spoke in Athens. Two of his most famous
students, Isocrates (c. 436-338 BCE) and Alcidamas (fl. fourth century BCE), will further
develop his theory and practice of logos and legein.709 His most complete extant texts are the
Defense of Palamedes, the Encomium to Helen, and On not-being or On nature. Palamedes and
Helen are model speeches of defense, albeit fictional, for two characters of mythology. Gorgias,
like the vase painters and sculptors of his time, was superimposing old subjects onto new media
(an epideictic speech written in prose), which actually was “modelling” the old dominant form of
oral communication. Palamedes and Helen are structured the same, according to Untersteiner,
by the same exact arrangement of parts that create a structural harmony; additionally, both
speeches are identical in the use of the method of apagogic proof (from apagoreuo, to

706 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 79.
707 Ibid., 181.
708 Bons, Gorgias the Sophist and Early Rhetoric,” 37.
709 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 41.
dissuade),

Gorgias’s uses logos to design a cause and effect discourse, and the matching formats of Palamedes and Helen suggest his conscious awareness of framing the argument through a conventional style. His thesis in Helen (11) is that as individuals, humans are “all at the mercy of opinion and the truth is for each of us whatever we can be persuaded to believe, because there is not permanent and stable truth to be known. He cast his perspective on impermanence into the form of a challenge to the Eleatics’ assertion of a single changeless being grasped by an infallible reason as opposed to the changing world of appearance, or opinion, which was unreal. His On not-being is described now as a philosophical work in which he argues that “nothing exists,”

which is the opposite of the Eleatic Parmenides (c. 500 BCE) thesis in On nature or On what is (meaning “reality”).

Later, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century BCE), Gorgias was the first to write about the necessity of a speaker to have a sense of the occasion, and improvisation, in which there were decisions to make about action; nevertheless, a technē for kairos was never written by Gorgias or anyone else. Schiappa says there is no textual evidence from the fifth-century sophists to support that kairos or to prepon were consciously held theoretical concepts that were explicitly part of any theories of discourse. However, Schiappa has also recognized that both kairos and to prepon were “appropriate terms to describe choices made by sophistic speakers in practice.”

Untersteiner, The Sophists, 95. See also Bons, “Gorgias the Sophist and Early Rhetoric,” 40-41.
Christopher Lyle Johnstone, Listening to the Logos: Speech and the Coming of Wisdom in Ancient Greece, (Columbia, SC: The university of South Carolina Press, 2009.), 107.
OED, s.v. “apogoge,” A demonstration which does not prove a thing directly, but shows the absurdity or impossibility of denying it. See also Bons, 41.
Bons, “Gorgias the Sophist and Early Rhetoric,” 37.
Ibid., 272. Dionysus of Halicarnassus, De comp. verb. 12 (Gorg. fr. 13) and in Philostratus I.I (A la).
Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 73-74, and 200.
Ibid., 74.
Whether in conversation, in political speeches or in the oratory of the law-courts, they made constant use of a great variety of general terms, especially terms descriptive of the ethical ideas—justice, temperance, courage, arête and so forth. Yet at the same time it was being asserted by Sophists and other that such concepts had no basis in reality. They were not god-given virtues, but only ‘by convention’, varying from place to place and age to age. Serious thought about the laws of human behavior had begun with a radical skepticism, which taught that it rested on fixed principles but each decision must be made empirically and ad hoc, based on the expediency of the immediate situation (kairos). From this theoretical soil grew the pride of youthful rhetoric in its ability to sway men to or from any course of action by master of the persuasive use of words.\textsuperscript{718}

Gorgias was a teacher, and his aim was to impart upon his students how to be always right in any kind of circumstances.\textsuperscript{719} Protagoras and Gorgias’s practical judgement and virtue are connected in civic affairs or communal life.\textsuperscript{720} Both he and Protagoras are going to “set in motion a number of ideas, some of them their own, some derived from others…but strictly speaking they were not thinkers or seekers of truth…they were professional men for whom teaching was an occupation whose commercial success bore witness to its intrinsic value and its social utility.”\textsuperscript{721}

Again, neither Protagoras nor Gorgias are thought to have written technai, but the word comes up in course of their work. Their success also influenced later discussions about technai that had later authors defending the value of their professional work as a techne (primarily against the hostility of Plato),\textsuperscript{722} and some made attempts to define the concept. Without operating on the notion that any of these sophists were purposefully constructing something they would call a techne, they were definitely operating on the instinct that an organized system was

\textsuperscript{718} Guthrie, A History of Greek Philosophy, vol. 3, 430-431.
\textsuperscript{719} Marrou, A History of Education in Antiquity, 51.
\textsuperscript{720} Johnstone, Listening to Logos, 143.
\textsuperscript{721} Marrou, 48-49. Marrou says, “Protagoras got his from Heraclitus, for example, and Gorgias his from the Eleatics or Empedocles” (48).
more use than chaos and seeking “uniformity in the multiplicity of phenomena,” which led to the guesswork, \textit{a priori} assumptions, that allowed them to accumulate practical theories.\footnote{W.H.S. Jones, trans. and “Introduction,” in \textit{Hippocrates}, vol. 1, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923, 1939, 1957, 1962), ix, xi, xii. Jones makes a couple of points which I have no time to follow up on but I will mention them here: 1.) The Pythagoreans had some influence on the Hippocratic school, especially on the issue concerning the balancing of “opposites” (xi); and, 2.) Jones refers to a pre-Hippocratic book in the Corpus, a treatise that may be in Latin and Arabic, the Greek having mostly perished, on the number seven (xii): The Treatise on Seven, marked with Pythagorean characteristics—seven was the symbol for many things, including \textit{kairos}.}

\textbf{Hippocrates of Kos, Dodecanese Island, Southeast Aegean Sea (c. 460-370 BCE)}

In the case of Hippocrates and the Hippocratic school,\footnote{According to Catherine R. Eskin in “Hippocrates, Kairos, and Writing in the Sciences,” in \textit{Rhetoric and Kairos}, Hippocrates and what is generally called the “Corpus Hippocraticum” are connected but there is disagreement about it; he existed and left innovative ideas, and the Hippocratic Collection gathered c. 300 BCE by Alexandrian Medical School are the texts that have come to represent Hippocrates and Hippocratic medicine. (97)} the concern or task at hand was medicine and the phenomena of human health and death. Hippocrates of Kos was one professional practitioner who specifically defined and defended medical \textit{technai}. There is a Hippocratic text called \textit{The Art} (περὶ τέχνης) that aimed not only to defend the profession against Plato, but also superstitions, quackery, and charlatanism that was associated with the temple of Asclepius.\footnote{Jones, “Introduction,” in \textit{Hippocrates}, xxxvii.} Jones describes how the study of medicine had separated off “from all other branches of learning” (i.e., rhetoric, philosophy) “so that it could be developed on its own lines, unhampered by extraneous influences and unscientific practices and beliefs.”\footnote{Ibid., xl.} Jones also says that the components of thought about Greek medicine towards the end of the fifth century BCE can be described as including religious (“generally discarded”), philosophical (postulating, reasoning, arguing), and rational elements (“accurate observations,” “accumulated experiences”).\footnote{Jones, “Introduction,” in \textit{Hippocrates}, vol. 1, xiii and xiv.} From \textit{The Art (De arte)}, the writer opens the treatise with the following (\textit{De arte} 1.1-24):

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}
Some there are who have made an art of vilifying the arts, though they consider, not that they are accomplishing the object I mention, but that they are making a display of their own knowledge. In my opinion, however, to discover what was unknown before, when the discovery of it is better than a state of ignorance, is the ambition and task of intelligence, and so is to bring to completion what was already accomplished in part. On the other hand, to be eager to bring shame through the art of abuse upon the discoveries of others, improving nothing but disparaging before those who do not know the discoveries of those who do, seems to me to be not the ambition and work of intelligence, but the sign of a nasty nature, or of want of art. Indeed it becomes only those who are without art to act in this manner, with the ambition, though not the power, to indulge their malevolence by disparaging what is right in their neighbours’ works and by caviling at what is amiss. Now as for the attacks of this kind that are made on the other arts, let them be repelled by those who care to do so and can, and with regard to those points about which they care; the present discussion will oppose those who thus invade the art of medicine, and it is emboldened by the nature of those it blames, well equipped through the art it defends, and powerful through the wisdom in which it has been educated.\footnote{Jones, translation of Hippocrates, \textit{De arte} I 1-24.}

A powerful introduction to the defense of the art of medicine, but also other works that may be classified as arts. The selection here capitalizes on the value of a \textit{techne} as culmination of discovery, which ought to be respected over the state of ignorance. Practitioners of arts were not afraid of the obscure nature of things or the ambiguity presented by the environment in which they lived.

Without doubt no man who sees only with his eyes can know anything of what has been here described. It is for this reason that I have called them (i.e., afflictions inside the body or out that you cannot see but may cause harm) obscure, even as they have been judged to be by the art. Their obscurity, however, does not mean that they are our masters, but as far as is possible they have been master, a possibility limited only by the capacity of the sick to be examined and of researchers to conduct research.\footnote{Ibid., \textit{De arte} XI 1-9.} (\textit{De arte} XI 1-9)

Instead of living lost in chaos and ambiguity, they were eager to experience and observe things, and then explain what they witnessed, and form generalizations “framed with a view to unification,”\footnote{Jones, “Introduction,” in \textit{Hippocrates}, vol. 1, xvii.} or harmony (\textit{harmonia}). The art (techne) gave the practitioner the power or the possibility to “treat incurables” (\textit{De arte} XII. 3-4).

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\textsuperscript{728} Jones, translation of Hippocrates, \textit{De arte} I 1-24.  
\textsuperscript{729} Ibid., \textit{De arte} XI 1-9.  
Jones summarizes the doctrine of three treatises in six points (Prognostic, Regimen in Acute Diseases, and Epidemics I and III), and the one related to this study is as follows: There are “critical” days at fixed dates, when the battle between nature and disease reaches a crisis.\(^{731}\)

The “critical” days refer to kairos in his work, and generally the recognition of time as a variable phenomenon.\(^{732}\) Two Hippocratic instructional texts, Precepts (Praeceptiones) and Aphorisms (Aphorismata), open with a nod to kairos.

Time \([\chi\rho\omicron\omicron\omicron\varsigma]\) is that wherein there is opportunity \([\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma]\), and opportunity \([\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma]\), is that wherein there is no great time. Healing is a matter of time \([\chi\rho\omicron\omicron\omicron\varsigma]\), but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity \([\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma]\). However, knowing this, one must attend in medical practice not primarily to plausible theories, but to experience combined with reason \([\lambda\omicron\omicron\omicron]\). (Praec. I.1-5)\(^{733}\)

Life is short, the Art \([(\tau\tau\epsilon\chi\nu\nu)]\) is long, opportunity \([(\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma)]\) fleeting, experiment treacherous, judgment \([(\kappa\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma\varsigma)]\) difficult. The physician must be ready, not only to do his duty himself, but also to secure the co-operation of the patient, of the attendants and of externals. (Aph. I.1-3)\(^{734}\)

On the lines from Precepts, Eskin says, “Kairos is clearly aligned with experimentation, with experience, with incident, with phenomena.”\(^{735}\) Never mind that kairos is never “clearly” anything, what Esksin does not interpret from this passage is that kairos offers a chance but also a challenge to the human willingness to experiment, to human preparedness, and to the recognition by humans that the world is in flux, mutable, full of variables. Eskin, like many others, wants to “prove the importance of kairos in the overall outlook of Hippocrates.” Framing kairos as “the overall outlook, which I understand to mean “theory,” cuts kairos off from the larger program of Greek culture and society, from logos, and away from a practitioner learning or valuing the importance of practical wisdom. On kairos in Aphorisms, Eskin says she is using

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\(^{732}\) Eskin, “Hippocrates, Kairos, and Writing in the Sciences,” 97.

\(^{733}\) Jones translation in Loeb Hippocrates, vol. 1.

\(^{734}\) Ibid.

\(^{735}\) Eskin, “Hippocrates, Kairos, and Writing in the Sciences,” 99.
Jones’ translation, but in his translation “kairos (opportunity)” is “fleeting,” and the word that might be defined as crisis is κρίσις; Jones translates κρίσις as judgment.736 The judgement cannot be fleeting, because whatever the doctor decides will stick.

The physician must learn its character and role with respect to the particular patient and disease with which he is concerned. The wise physician will know when to try to aid…and when to let it alone. The situation differs in different organisms; the physician cannot work by strict rule, but must watch for “the opportune moment” (kairos) when the situation is exactly right for this exercise. There comes at some point the “crisis” (krίsis), the moment at which the balance is really to be tipped either way…737

The doctor must assess all of the factors, past and present, governing the situation for the patient knowing that a kairos-moment will arrive on the scene unannounced, and if possible the doctor must pass a judgment.

On the Hippocratic use of kairos in both Hippocratic texts, Eskin says, “Kairos, as a term denoting a particular context and a time dependent upon situational determinants, was necessarily the best word available to Hippocrates to express his ideas.” I am not convinced by her explanation. I do believe that the Hippocratic writer was choosing the words carefully; writing in alphabetic script was still new technology. However, I also believe that the author could have chosen other words from their lexicon to express “a time dependent upon situational determinants.” I think that kairos was a word that the audience would understand as a warning, at least in the Hippocratic verses such a connotation is present—the kairos-moment is fleeting within the passage of chronos-time. Human beings do not have any control over the kairos-moment-in-time and they cannot create the kairos-moment, they can only be prepared for it. As

736 Eskin cites Jones translation, but it doesn’t match his translation. She writes: “Life is short, the Art long” (Jones IV.99). But the rest is omitted: “the crisis fleeting; experience perilous and decisions difficult.” The Greek word translated above as “crisis” is kairos (which Littre translates as “l’occasion fugitive” [Littré 4.461], a transient or fleeting occasion); that for “experience I peira (as in empirical); that for “decisions is krisis. All three terms emphasize the situational context of the medical decision.” (99)

737 Wheelwright, The Presocratics, 263.
for the art of medicine, the techne could withstand the duration of chronos-time. In the practice of medicine, the ideal was not found in the writing of technei; it was found in the practice itself while observing, reflecting, and resolving whatever was afflicting the patient.

**Polykleitos of Argos or Sikyon, Northern Peloponnesus (fl. c.450-c.425 BCE)**

Polykleitos is another historic figure who like Hippocrates was dealing with the human body. He was a sculptor, distinctive from other sculptors at this time for writing a techne. His Canon came “to be conceived as a techne that was characterized by an understanding of the relationship of the parts of the body to each other and to the whole.” Prior to learning from a technei, techniques were passed from master to pupil, and from other cultures such as Egypt. There is belief among scholars that Greek sculptors “adopted and adapted an Egyptian canon of proportions;” the art and architecture of the Egyptians and earlier Greek sculptors demonstrate their concern with the proportion and measure as significant aesthetic considerations. Among the other influences that would have shaped Polykleitos’s Canon are mid-sixth century BCE written commentaries on architecture by Archaic architects Theodoros and Rhoikos on the Temple of Hera at Samos, and by Chersiphrion and Metagenes on the Temple of Artemis at Ephesos. These commentaries established a tradition continued in the fifth century BCE with Iktinos and Karpion (Kalikrates?) on the Parthenon, and then into the fourth century and Hellenistic period. All of these works are lost, but through later writers, we know these

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741 Ibid. Vitruvius, *De Architectura* (section 12), "Vitruvius provides a bibliography of earlier writers on architecture which suggests, in fact, that such treatises constituted one of the earliest genres of prose, and perhaps the most long-lived one, in the history of Greek literature."
architectural commentaries were focused on the proportions of sacred buildings. The Archaic commentaries would have provided for Polykleitos, among the discussion of practical problems in building construction, the “importance that they attached to symmetria, the commensurability of one part to another and of all the parts to the whole, in an artistic design.”744 While the building projects were planned with a “meticulous and rigorous use of geometry, the architects also allowed themselves intuitive “jumps” that altered and supplemented, but were not dictated by, their otherwise faithful adherence to the sequential demands of geometric calculation.”745 The “intuitive jumps” inside an otherwise planned procedure are important to the architects and sculptors in the same way those intuitive feelings were to the physician, and will be to the politician or orator. The organization of elements and observations in a technē did not obligate the professional practitioner to the established system; at any time they could transcend these “self-imposed rules” whenever their aesthetics or judgements demanded it.746 They could make decisions and refinements outside the techne without destroying the ideal outcome.

For Polykleitos the ideal outcome in sculpture was a harmony in all elements that resulted in an idealized beauty. This principles of his design ideal was expressed in the Canon as being composed “from many numbers” (παρὰ μικρόν). The enigmatic saying attributed to Polykleitos is “Perfection (τὸ εὖ) arises from many numbers (παρὰ μικρόν).”747 Polykleitos’ interest in numbers in relation to the achievement of an ideal may have been influenced by Pythagorean ideas, especially as described by Pollitt in the following:

All discrete phenomena arose from the imposition of “numbers” on an infinite continuum, in the same way that music was created by defining proportional relationships within the otherwise unbroken continuum of sonic vibration. Numerical relationships,

744 Ibid., 21.
745 Ibid., 20.
746 Ibid., 21.
747 Ibid. Pollitt discusses how the meaning of παρὰ μικρόν has argued over in scholarship.
like the harmonic relationships within a musical scale, thus gave definition to the cosmos, and each entity in the universe was thought to have a characteristic number, the composite of a series of unit-point-atoms.\(^{748}\)

How much of the Pythagorean doctrine would have been available or would have appealed to Polykleitos, Pollitt says, is uncertain.\(^{749}\) However, his technē was the Canon—the Greek term for the monochord, which I discussed in Chapter 4. The overall purpose of the Canon was not to philosophize or theorize on the nature of sculpture, it was “to promulgate solutions to problems of design that had long preoccupied sculptors.”\(^{750}\) However practical the treatise was, this does not mean that Polykleitos did not see sculpture as something that could incite contemplation.\(^{751}\)

The culmination of the elements and numbers in the Canon are thought to be demonstrated in the composition of Polykleitos’ *Doryphoros* (*Spear Bearer*) sculpture (fig. 2.1). Leftwich emphasizes that the expression of the *Kanon* in the *Doryphoros* was not only based on the “commensurability of unequal anatomical lengths,” but also concerned with a “system of proportions – 1:1 ratio of opposites,” and a “use of binary opposition in the body” that was parallel with Hippocratic medicine.\(^{752}\) “Both the Canon and the Hippokratic texts make use of such concepts such as *symmetria*, *harmonia*, *to meson*, and kairos.”\(^{753}\) Leftwich proposes that the *Doryphoros* “utilizes a system of oppositions to illustrate the fundamental principles of biomechanical movement.”\(^{754}\) On an anatomical level, Polykleitos is expressing specifically through the Canon and the Doryphoros how the human body can be broken down into “a series of opposites for the purposes of schemata and clear exposition”—as in comparing and

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\(^{748}\) Pollitt, “The Canon of Polykleitos and Other Canons,” 22.

\(^{749}\) Ibid.

\(^{750}\) Ibid.

\(^{751}\) Ibid.

\(^{752}\) Leftwich, “Polykleitos and Hippokratic Medicine,” 38.

\(^{753}\) Ibid., 41.

\(^{754}\) Ibid., 47.
contrasting the bilateral symmetry of the body in terms of “left/right, bent/straight, moving/nonmoving, active/passive, and contracted/relaxed.” Polykleitos identifies these elements through close empirical study of the motor functions of the human body. The Doryphoros does not imitate a specific moment, but it embodies all the principles necessary for the human body to move, organized in one naturalistic form—an innovative naturalistic form that will be reused throughout the history of art to express ideal beauty (kalokagathia, and to eu).

In the Hippocratic text The Art, the author discusses in one of the sections the power of the art and the demands that are made from practicing the art of medicine on the practitioner are like “no other craft that has been discovered.” (De arte XII.4-5) The writer cites one of the main differences between the art of medicine and the arts that work materials is the speed at which decisions or judgments have to be made.

[…] the articles wrought, I say, through these arts and with these substances are easily shaped aright, and yet are wrought not so much with a view to speed as to correctness. Nor are they wrought in a casual manner, but functioning ceases if any instrument be lacking. Yet in these arts too slowness is contrary to their interests; in spite of this it is preferred. (De arte XII.11-17)

In medical arts, the point of judgment is where kairos infiltrates the physician’s activities and the speed of the judgements; however in the plastic arts, the Hippocratic text is sort of eliminating the presence of a kairos-moment. The writer is not saying that kairos is not a constituent element, but that the moment of judgment lacks the same serious implications of life and death. The speed of the sculptor’s decision making does not change the function of sculpture to express the cultural Greek ideal, which is also discussed in Xenophon’s Memorabilia (Book 3). In the form of a

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755 Leftwich, “Polykleitos and Hippokratic Medicine,” 47.
756 Ibid.
757 Ibid., 49-50.
Socratic dialogue about sculpture and its social function, Xenophon asserts that through a thorough knowledge of the schemata (σχήματα) of the human body, a sculptor can convey socially useful *ethos* and *pathos*.\(^{759}\)

**Xenophon of Erchia, outlying deme of Athens (c. 430- c. 354 BCE)**

The writings of Xenophon, the son of a knightly family and friend of Socrates, have been described as covering the intellectual ground of philosophers and historians, as well as practical essays on life as a soldier and a farmer.\(^{760}\) Of Xenophon’s many works, for this chapter I am interested in his *Cyropaedia* (*The Education of Cyrus*, written around 370 BCE) for his use of kairos, and because Xenophon superimposes the idealized Greek character onto the Persians. In *Cynegeticus*, Xenophon writes on the subject of hunting with dogs, in which he provides a view into some “idealized account of education” as part of and at the benefit of the ideal state.\(^{761}\) The scope of *Cyropaedia* “includes the whole life and career” of Cyrus the Elder (600-530 BCE); however, as noted by Miller, the composition is really a piece of “historical fiction” with Xenophon taking many liberties with and even “actual violence” to historical facts.\(^{762}\) Miller asserts there is no reality to the historical conditions portrayed by Xenophon about the Persians; he crafts a picture of the East with splashes of local color;\(^{763}\) he superimposes Greek characteristics. Miller says that Xenophon’s Cyrus, the hero, “is an idealistic composite portrait of Socrates, the younger Cyrus, Clearchus, Agesilaus, and Xenophon himself.”\(^{764}\) Like a

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\(^{763}\) Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, intro. and trans. Walter Miller, viii and xi.

\(^{764}\) Ibid.
sculptor, Xenophon creates an ideal representative on the socio-political aspects of Greek life (i.e., laws, justice, education, virtue). So when Cyrus, through Socratic dialogue, answers questions about ruling and government, he is expressing an idealized Greek—“Cyrus is a pattern of the ideal Greek character – *kalokagathia* – and his whole character provides an example to be imitated.” Xenophon’s use of kairos in *Cyropaedia* might suggest then that he saw the ability to capture the opportune moment as part of an ideal education.

A cursory glance at *LSJ* shows kairos making many appearances in Xenophon’s *Symposium, Cyropaedia, Hellenica,* and *Anabasis,* but not in *Cynegicus,* which is supposed to be a practical text on the art of hunting with a subtext commenting the ideal education. With a closer reading of *Cyropaedia,* the goal would be to understand the context in which kairos was used throughout the text (which I do not have room to explore at this time). A very skimming glance reveals kairos in the province of decision makers from Cyrus, other kings, and military officers to cupbearers. Further work on Xenophon’s usage of kairos would include discovering if his usages were at all connected to his belief in the gods, a persistent expression in Xenophon’s work. Meaning, can it be inferred in the dialogue how each character comes to know when the opportune moment has arrived, and for what task was the moment related to? As Johnstone puts it, “The mythopoetic mindset did not disappear from Greek culture with the advent of positivistic, protoscientific thought,” then channeling Guthrie says, “…the mythical mentality did not die a sudden death.”

A caveat to further interpreting Xenophon’s usage of one word stems from his own position on who instructs others and the importance of words versus thoughts or maxims in *Cynegicus (On hunting).*

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express myself in the language of a sophist; in fact that is not my object: my object is rather to give utterance to wholesome thought that will meet the needs of readers well educated in virtue. For words will not educate, but maxims, if well found. Many others besides myself blame the sophist of our generation—philosophers I will not call them—because the wisdom they profess consists of words and not of thoughts.\textsuperscript{766} (xiii. 4-6)

Xenophon’s position on words versus thoughts or maxims gives the impression that he values the context of the words, and that he understands that while a maxim is just a combination of words, they are well known because of who said them orally. Words as representations of thoughts can be expressed orally, but the thoughts are created internally by the character; Xenophon attaches the thoughts of the character to a virtuous idealized personality, and from this personality, one can learn properly. Xenophon has not been discussed much in the academic realm of kairos, but his interest in the context of learning, albeit aimed at aristocrats, echoes a point I want to make with my study—\textit{kairos} divested from its original setting in the various stages of ancient Greek history is just a word. Kairos in the context of Xenophon’s narratives seems to be the mark of success for the character of an ideal Greek.

\textbf{Isocrates of Athens (436-338 BCE)}

Isocrates was the most famous student of Gorgias.\textsuperscript{767} Isocrates’ work, like Xenophon’s, puts an emphasis on themes of education and politics, and therefore “shared paideutic” aspirations.\textsuperscript{768} They differ of course in their professions, Xenophon was not a teacher with a school focused on guiding pupils in the art of discourse. Most of Isocrates’ educational ideas are

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\textsuperscript{766} Miller, trans. \textit{Cyropaedia}, Xenophon, Loeb.
\textsuperscript{767} Guthrie, \textit{A History of Greek Philosophy}, vol. 3, 273.
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present in *Against the Sophists* and the *Antidosis*. Also in both texts, Isocrates uses kairos to emphasize the importance of being able to recognize the circumstances to act using speech.

For I hold that to obtain a knowledge of the elements out of which we make and compose all discourses is not so very difficult if anyone entrusts himself, not to those who make rash promises, but to those who have some knowledge of these things. But to choose from these elements those which should be employed for each subject, to join them together, to arrange them properly, and also, not to miss what *the occasion* (καιρόν) demands but appropriately to adorn the whole speech with striking thoughts and to clothe it in flowing and melodious phrase—these things, I hold, require much study and are the task of a vigorous and imaginative (δοξαστικός) mind: for this, the student must not only have the requisite aptitude but he must learn the different kinds of discourse and practice himself in their use; and the teacher, for his part, must so expound the principles of the art with the utmost possible exactness as to leave out nothing that can be taught, and, for the rest, he must in himself set such an example of oratory…(*Against the Sophists* 13.16-17)\(^{770}\)

Papillon says that Isocrates is claiming here that “the good student can react to the moment *(kairos)*, attends to issues of style and has a mind that uses reasoned experiences *(doxa).*”\(^{771}\)

Education “enables the student to recognize a moment *(kairos)* and take advantage of it through reasoned experience *(doxa)* (*Antidosis* 15. 271).”\(^{772}\) In both speeches *Against the Sophists* and *Antidosis*, Isocrates’ “triad of ability, teaching, and practice are a unified whole, but not an equally balanced whole” can be detected.\(^{773}\) For example, in *Against the Sophists*, he focuses more on what the teacher can do to assist the student;\(^{774}\) whereas in the *Antidosis*, he “focuses on the natural ability and dedication of the student.”\(^{775}\)

Then, when they have made them familiar and thoroughly conversant with these lessons, they set them at exercises, habituate them to work, and require them to combine in practice the particular things which they have learned, in order that they may grasp them

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\(^{769}\) Terry Papillon, “Isocrates,” in *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, edited by Ian Worthington, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2010), 60.


\(^{771}\) Papillon, “Isocrates,” 60.

\(^{772}\) Ibid., 61.

\(^{773}\) Ibid.

\(^{774}\) Ibid., 60.

\(^{775}\) Ibid., 61.
more firmly and bring their theories into closer touch with the *occasions* (καιρῶν) or applying them (*Antidosis* 15.184)\textsuperscript{776}

He says in the *Antidosis* (15.189), “the greatest power in the education of an orator I should answer that natural ability is paramount and comes before all else.”

All of Isocrates’ teaching and learning is aimed at the importance of doing good work for the *polis*, and his “ideas of political leadership and his role as a teacher of such leadership” are found in his *Panegyricus*.\textsuperscript{777} Based on Isocrates’ educational aims, the students attracted to his school were the elite, who “probably had political ambitions.”\textsuperscript{778} Ober and Jaeger both point out a shift in the training in oratory that had moved away from the fifth century focus on judicial speeches. In the fourth century, Jaeger says the need for more epideictic and deliberative oratory was “nourished by the energies of great and living political disputes” by men training for “the highest posts in public life, as statesmen and monarchs.”\textsuperscript{779} Isocrates was also pushing for the ideal *kalokagathia* in the men that fill these posts (*Antidosis* 15.220). As to whether *kalokagathia* was the “old Greek ideal” for him, I am not prepared to say at this time; however, he uses the words (καλοὶ κἀγαθοὶ) without any particular correction, and they appear in his defense of his teaching. Walker describes Isocratean education as cultivated “through the critical study and practice of various kinds of discourse, and enhanced *phronēsis* or “intelligence” and “most especially and importantly as *euboulia*, “good judgment” or “good counsel”.”\textsuperscript{780}

The cultivation of *phronēsis*/*euboulia* requires a *logôn paideia*, as Isocrates argues, because *logos* is not only the faculty by which we persuade other and conduct transactions but also that by which we deliberate matter in our own minds. Discourse is


\textsuperscript{777} Papillon, “Isocrates,” 64- 65.


\textsuperscript{780} Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*, 29.
constitutive of intelligence and is its embodiment. As Isocrates declares, one’s speaking is the “great sign” of one’s *phronêsis*: discourse that is “true and lawful and just” is the “image” of a “good and trustworthy soul” (*Against the Sophists* 14-15; *Antidosis* 181-182, 255-257).781 The emphasis Isocrates places on the virtue and propriety of one’s speaking is not his own invention, just as the “moralities are not an artificial invention of the poet.”782 The values he sought to be part of a *logôn paideia* were a reflection of what had been in the Greek’s “cultural storage of nomos-ethos” since the Bronze Age.783 The Greeks adopted a *lingua franca*, and through that common language they could cross out of the boundaries of their cities for trade, travel, or exploration and be understood by other Greeks and protected by their shared mythology and religious traditions.784 But outside of these shared cultural aspects, the importance of a meeting between people still relied mostly on oral communication. In the politically charged days of Isocrates, the crossing of geographic or class boundaries to negotiate peace or general terms of living, is primarily oral. Written laws may have existed in the setting of individual *poleis*, but there wasn’t “an international authority or court of appeal,” so being able to speak well at home and abroad was important,785 which is why Isocrates sought to cultivate practical wisdom produced and demonstrated through ethical civic discourse.786

Havelock suggests the Greeks responded to the expansion and the newly created diaspora from the eighth century forward by inventing the polis which could maintain “tradition, the continuity of law, custom,” and language. Language, dominantly oral language, was the

783 Havelock, *The Greek Concept of Justice*, 177.
784 ibid.
785 ibid.
“essential vehicle of continuity.” In Isocrates’ time, writing becomes an apparatus for making oral communication transmissible, the learning and practicing the art of oratory was making use of both. Homer is still the “tribal encyclopedia for all the Hellenes,” and still, even in the time of Isocrates, the “moralities” set forth by Homer are more significant than legalities. The Homeric code of conduct is surely still framing some of the pedagogical aims in the society of the late-fifth and fourth century. Jaeger suggests that Isocrates adopts a panhellenic ideal to absolve the problem of “rhetoric” being accused of being an instrument of immoral means, and that panhellenism was an ideal that could be translated in to practical political action. Jaeger says, “This ideal was new moral code for Greece.” I find his position to be sentimentalized or too idealized in itself. I think Isocrates was using the old cultural ideal in the new situations respective to his time, which happened to allow for various types of oral discourse, speech writing, and letter writing. Just as the transmission of the Homer shifts from only oral to both alphabetic text and orality, communication between individuals had shifted further into properly prepared speeches (a different kind of discourse), and also letter writing. “Letters were manifestly an important discursive form in classical antiquity and were used for a wide variety of public and private communicative purposes.” Letters therefore were important as “composition and rhetorical” devices in antiquity. As for Isocrates’ letters or epistles, “he refers to each of the letters as an epistolē,” which Sullivan describes as “self-consciously written products, in no way are they speeches;” however the letters were written to perform a

787 Havelock, Preface to Plato, 119.
788 Havelock, The Greek Concept of Justice, 177.
790 Ibid.
791 Ibid.
Isocrates letters to Philip II ranged from urging the monarch to adopt panhellenism and his own anti-Persian political agenda to finding fault with Philip’s rashness in battle. Isocrates must have had the confidence in his logôn paideia as a way for men to communicate in the realm of politics, or he might not have ever written to Philip II. One of the letters to Philip II (To Philip) was a plea to Philip to unite the Greeks, and bring a political harmony to the city-states (cf. Panegyricus 4.15, To Philip 5.9 and 5.16). Through the medium of letter writing, a perspective on Isocrates’ usage of kairos as well as his perspective on kairos and writing can be found. His choice in words presents an interesting paradox, or at the very least a distinction, between epistles and letters. He is writing letters and speeches, and he makes a distinction between using ἐπιστολή (anything sent by messenger, verbal or written) and γράμμα (thing drawn). Perhaps because epistolē could refer to something verbal or written, he chooses the one that has only a physical connotation. His usage of either would be another topic for research, because no doubt their connotations changed over Greek history. We know he believes the ability to know the “fitness for the occasion” is an essential element for the success of “good oratory” (13.13, 4.9, and 10.11); however in Against the Sophists he does not feel the same about its application to letters.

But the greatest proof of the difference between these two arts is that oratory is good only if it has the qualities of fitness for the occasion (καιρῶν), propriety of style (πρεπόντως), and originality of treatment, while in the case of letters (γράμμασιν) here is no such need whatsoever. So that those who make use of such analogies ought more justly to pay out than to accept fees, since they attempt to teach others when they are themselves in great need of instruction. (13.13)

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795 Ibid.
796 Isocrates, Against the Sophists, George Norlin trans., Perseus Digital Library.
797 Ibid.
He seems to be saying here when it comes to knowing “letters,” the ability to recognize the occasion (kairos) will not be of any use. Kairos in the context of Isocrates’ extant work is definitely part of the oral tradition of discourse.

Plato of Athens (429-347 BCE)

As this study of kairos enters the intellectual world of Classical Greece, and with previous historical understanding of the concept and its cultural breadth, the usage of kairos in Plato (and then Aristotle) as connoting the importance of timing in human acts of speech should not be at all surprising. In fact, if kairos were not present from Isocrates forward, this would be surprising. Still there is the matter of how kairos was positioned into their intellectual works. With Plato, we finally reach the point in the history of rhetoric when kairos can be accurately, and without anachronism, associated with modern and contemporary scholarship on disciplinary rhetoric. Rhetorical discourse becomes formalized; Schiappa says Plato’s contributions are “part of the disciplining of logos;” therefore, kairos can now become a “term of art.” Just a few passages into the Socratic dialogue of Plato’s Gorgias, he makes the distinction of one, Polus, having had “more practice in what is called rhētorikē (ῥητορική) than discussion” (448d-e, ῥητορικής, 449a).

Schiappa and Major warn that even though at this point in the history of rhetoric there is the possibility of identifying rhetorical pedagogy, “it is not entirely clear when rhetorical pedagogy was recognized and labeled as such, or when it became distinct from pedagogy aimed

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798 Schiappa, The Beginnings of Rhetorical Theory in Classical Greece, 27.
799 Timmerman and Schiappa, Classical Rhetorical Theory and Disciplining of Discourse, 1. Schiappa and Timmerman are not specifically referring to kairos, but in this book they explain that by “terms of art,” they mean “simply any words or phrases that take on reasonably specialized denotive functions within a particular language community” (1).
in general at producing active and able citizens. They further contend that a pedagogy centered on *logos* should not be “reducible to rhetorical pedagogy,” but that the introduction of the word *rhētorikē* in the early fourth century BCE did change “the manner in which pedagogy and theories of discourse were understood.” While Plato’s *Gorgias* was written purposefully to extend “an explicit description and account of rhetoric,” his aim was not to promote the art, but “to perfect it.” Plato hopes for his educational mission and for political progress rested in philosophy, which he understood needed rhetoric if they had chance of succeeding. All of his dialogues are written to advance his own views on political discourse, and his own philosophical and educational agendas. In *Gorgias*, Plato calls for a “true rhetoric,” (517a) or the type of discourse purveyed by a virtuous expert of the techne for political discourse who instructs instead of flatters. Plato’s idea of a *techne* was as a “framework for understanding how knowledge of objective reality could reliably be brought to bear in the human world, and it was in the domain of the expert; *techne* was “a practical task carried out by the systematic application of scientifically verifiable knowledge,” which could be used to carry out the highest level of excellence in a task.

Plato provides his position on *techne* through his dialogues, and he never writes a treatise on the art of public discourse or any other topic. Kinneavy and Eskin claim that in Plato’s

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802 Ibid.
804 Yunis, “Plato’s Rhetoric,” 75. Preference for the guidance of philosophy, see *Republic* 473c-d, 499b, 540d; *Laws* 711d, 712a, 713e; implied in *Phaedrus* 252, *Political* 293C; contradicted in *Euthydemus* 306b. Plato’s Sophist “broke the preliterate concept of Sophist “as wise one” into two concepts, and in the Gorgias he sought to contrast the ideas art of logos with the art of rhētorikē” — “the agon between the life of the philosopher and life of the orator.” (Schiappa, *Protagoras and Logos*, 47-48).
805 Yunis, “Plato’s Rhetoric,” 77.
806 Ibid.
Phaedrus, he writes into the dialogue his notion of the “theoria-praxis distinction” as “mediated by kairos.” And in the Historische Wörterbuch of Rhetorik, the assertion by the contributors (Kinneavy and Eskin) is that based on the following passages in Phaedrus (271d-272b), Plato shows the primary position he gives kairos in his rhetorical system. They further claim, “It [Kairos] is the keystone that gives the entire substructure of the rhetorical art its significance.” Kinneavy and Eskin’s position is not convincing. Following their line of thinking, if the keystone (kairos) of the rhetorical situation is removed, then rhetorical art had no significance. This is a distorted and foregone conclusion based on one text (Phaedrus), which ultimately perpetuates a possibly inflated importance of the word kairos. Plato used forms of the word kairos in many of his works. Working off the premises offered by Yunis, if Plato was well aware of his need for rhetoric, then Kinneavy and Eskin are creating a fallacy. I think their conclusion is derived from the academic perception that Plato was against rhetoric. More work on Plato’s overall usage of kairos would tell more about the kairos-moment in context of Plato. Additionally, in order to interpret what kairos meant in Plato’s writing, his position on the sophists would have to be established alongside their usage of kairos. Plato could have done it in Phaedrus; however, he did not seem to have worked the topic of “bad timing/good timing” into his “philosophical pairs” that make part of his dialogue (i.e., “appearance/reality, opinion/knowledge, sensible knowledge/rational knowledge, body/soul, becoming/immutability, plurality/unity, and

808 Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik, s.v. “kairos.” Translated from the German: “In dieser Passage zeigt Platon, welch vorrangige Stellung er dem Kairos in seinem rhetorischen System einräumt.”
809 Ibid. Translated from the German: “Es ist der Schlußstein, der der gesamten Substruktur der rhetorischen Kunst ihre Bedeutung verleiht.”
810 Within the lines 272a of the Phaedrus Plato uses kairos three times: καιρούς, εὐκαιρίαν, ἀκαιρίαν; Kinneavy and Eskin does not discuss his usage Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik or “Kairos in Aristotle’s Rhetoric.”
811 Yunis, “Plato’s Rhetoric,” 75.
human/divine"). According to Schiappa, the second term in each pair was preferred by Plato. Again if Kinneavy and Eskin are going to assert that Phaedrus is the one dialogue through which we learn about Plato’s views on rhetoric, then perhaps there should be some interest in why he does not address the concept that is supposedly foundational to him. Plato’s interest in developing a strong politike techne would have lead him to be more concerned with good and bad logos (the knowledge applied at the kairos-moment) than he was with good and bad kairos. Also, to really get at a sense of Plato’s perspective on kairos, would it not have to be imagined in his theory of Forms, “according to which the world we know through the senses is only an imitation of the pure, eternal, and unchanging world of the Forms?”

Kairos is not an object in the world, but making the “right decision” at the “opportune moment” occurs in everyday life every day and can have a moral or ethical dimension. So like Justice, Goodness, Beauty, Love, or Piety that have moral qualities, can kairos fit into this sort of Platonic thinking? Would Plato ask, Can kairos be seen in the mind? Can a universal definition be composed for kairos inside the ethical sphere thereby suggesting or presupposing there is an unchangeable essence to kairos that can become the object of reason?

Aristotle of Stagiros, Chalcidice, Northeast Greece (384-322 BCE)

Aristotle was a student of Plato but did not subscribe to Plato’s theory of Forms, or attempt to “set up a special philosophical rhetoric.” Guthrie says that Aristotle “retained from Plato the idea of phronesis as the indispensable basis of morality, but modified its significance to

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812 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 6. See also Plato, Phaedrus 247e, 248b.
813 Ibid. 7.
815 Marrou, 211.
suit his more practical ethic.”816 By the time of Aristotle, Plato has stabilized rhētorikē in the language of Gorgias; Schiappa says “rhetoric had become a defined discipline.”817 Aristotle, in On Rhetoric, “unhesitantly regards rhetoric as an art (1.1.2/1354a).818 In his Nicomachean Ethics, he defines art as “a rational quality, concerned with making, that reasons truly…and admits of variations” (VI.iv.6).819

All Art deals with bringing some thing into existence; and to pursue an art means to study how to bring into existence a thing which may either exist or not, and the efficient cause of which lies in the maker and not in the thing made; for Art does not deal with things that exist or come into existence of necessity, or according to nature, since these have their efficient cause in themselves. But as doing and making are distinct, it follows that Art, being concerned with making, is not concerned with doing. And in a sense Art deals with the same objects as chance, as Agathon says: “Chance is beloved of Art, and Art of Chance.” (VI.iv.4–5).820

The lack of art is also a “rational quality, concerned with making, that reasons falsely” (VI.iv.6.).821

In the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle also works out the concept of phronesis. Schiappa says, “The cornerstone of Aristotle’s political and ethical theory was the concept of practical wisdom, or phronesis,” which he viewed as an “adult power of insight into practical matters, the outcome of an initial aptitude cultivated and developed by experience.” 822 Aristotle says there are five characteristics of the intellectual part of the soul: τέχνη, ἐπιστήμη, φρόνησις, σοφία, and νοῦς (Nic.Eth. VI.iii.1/1139b). From Aristotle’s list, we understand that he sees each characteristic as separate, and he goes on to explain characteristics of each one and how they are

817 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 53.
820 Ibid.
821 Ibid.
822 Schiappa, Protagoras and Logos, 193.
different from each other; for example, *phroneis* is not the same as *wisdom* (*sophia*) (*Nic.Eth.* 1141b and 1142a). Phronesis is concerned with human affairs and “with things that can be the object of deliberations.”823 (*Nic.Eth. VI.iii.6*) *Phronesis* is about knowing both “general and particular” facts (*Nic.Eth. VI.vii.7*), “particular facts” would be those derived from experience.” (*Nic.Eth. VI.vii.7*). Arete, the ideal, cannot exist without phronesis (*Nic.Eth. VI.xiii.3-5*); virtue (*orthos logon*) is regulated by phronesis (*Nic.Eth. VI.xiii.5, cf. VI.xiii.7*). *Phronesis* is the sort of *sophia* needed to live the good life and to lead the state successfully… [and] was similar to the sophistic notion of *orthos logos* (correct reasoning.)824

In addition to classifying the intellectual part of the soul in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, within this work (Book VI) and in another work, *Metaphysics* (Book VI), Aristotle outlines his “map of learning.”825 Aristotle was “the first person to give serious consideration to drawing a map of learning and to defining the relationship between the various disciplines of the arts and sciences, which were emerging as separate studies for the first time in the fourth century B.C.E.”826 Aristotle frames rhetoric as an art, which, as previously mentioned, he has defined elsewhere in his work. Aristotle’s view of rhetoric was that it was a mixture (*Rhet. 1.2.7.*) of “a method (like dialectic) with no special subject of its own, but partly a practical art derived from ethics and politics on the basis of its conventional uses”827—“a theory of civic discourse.” 828

826 George Kennedy, *Aristotle, On Rhetoric*, 16
827 Ibid.
An aspect of Rhetoric important to this study is Aristotle’s recognition of “spatial visualization and actualization.” Kennedy says that in *Poetics*, these are differentiated as *enargeia*, or “visual clarity,” and its counterpart, *energeia*, or “actualization.” Aristotle’s definition of rhetoric remarks on it as being “an ability or faculty of seeing the available means of persuasion in each case” (Rhet. 1.2.1). Kennedy explains his translation as follows:

The word I translate “seeing” is *theôresai*, often rendered “observing,” which rather mutes the image, and of course it is related to *theòria*, English “theory,” a word that occurs in Plato but which Aristotle perhaps first made basic in philosophical speculation. The noun *theôros*, “the spectator or the one who sees,” is one of the two categories of an audience in the third chapter of the Rhetoric, where it is applied especially to the audience of epideictic as “spectator” rather than “judge.” The practitioner of rhetoric is also a *theôros*, a spectator of the available means of persuasion.

Just as in Chapter 3 and 4, the Greeks were spectators of the things they directly experienced which affected their visual and oral expressions. Aristotle claims that sight is superior to all the other senses. Now the rhetorical situation calls upon their long cultural history of learning from visual and aural experiences, as well as their oral exchanges in “civic spaces.” The second concept in *Rhetoric* that enacts the visual is *topos*, “the place where topics are to be found that provide the strategies for persuasive reasoning.” Aristotle thinks of thoughts and arguments as things one “sees” or “grasps,” and are then deployed orally in “civic spaces,” such as the open space of an agora, the theatre for civic discourse. Inside the “civic space” is

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830 Ibid.
831 Kennedy cites Plato’s *Philebus* 38b and *Republic* 6.486a.
832 Kennedy is referring to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* 1.3.1.
834 Ibid. Opening lines of *Metaphysics* and *On Sense Perception* 437a.
835 Ibid., 170-171.
836 Ibid., 170. See also, Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 2.23.1-29.
837 Ibid., 171.
838 Ibid. Kennedy uses to neurolinguistics programing research by Richard Bandler and John Grinder to support his argument regarding the visuality of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* (171-172).
where kairos becomes a disciplinary concept of rhetoric, the moment to put practical wisdom into play. The concept kairos in Aristotle should be considered from a perspective of its usefulness in civic discourse, because kairos was a construction of culture not the discipline of rhetoric.

*Rhetoric to Alexander, Anaximenes of Lampsacus*[^839] (c. 380-320 BCE)

In addition to the Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, the *Rhetoric to Alexander* by Anaximenes is another treatise preserved from the fourth century; however, the *Rhetoric to Alexander* was written as a manual for practicing orators and widely distributed[^840] (unlike Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* which was not published). Unlike Plato’s *Gorgias* or *Phaedrus*, or Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, the *Rhetoric to Alexander* did not attempt to define rhetoric or justify the function of rhetoric in its contemporary society[^841]. Because of the structure of the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, the text frames a view of “orators’ most ancient practices” in the form of a practical sophistic handbook from the late fourth century BCE[^842]. Walker says that between Isocrates and Anaximenes, a picture of the sophistic, pre- (or non-) Aristotelian notion of the enthymeme, as a notion that will subsequently be pervasive in Hellenistic rhetorical tradition[^843]. This picture is composed of similarities and difference between Isocrates and Anaximenes. A differences between their approach to the orator’s use of the enthymeme includes Isocrates’ emphasis on the “kairotic aspect of enthymemes[^844] as being used most effectively at a moment when it will surprise the audience

[^839]: Lampsacus is an ancient Greek city on the Asiatic shore of the Hellespont, colonized in 654 BCE by Ionian Phocaea (the same group to settle Elea-Velia, Italy). Anaximenes was a “one of Alexander’s tutors and companions” (Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*, 48).


[^844]: Ibid. Isocrates expressed in his *Evagoras* (10-11): But as it is, their conduct resembles that of an athlete who, although pretending to be the best of all athletes, enters a contest in which no one would condescend to meet
and will “stand apart from or go beyond what precedes them;” whereas, Anaximenes considers its usage in a more “mechanistic,” and pithy summary.

The target audience for the *Rhetoric to Alexander* and the context in which they would have employed the manual’s instructions reveals an important turning point in the history of kairos. The manual was focused primarily on the methods of civic and bureaucratic speechmaking (*logos politikos*, 1402a) that represented the orator as a leader of the people, and was concerned with policy making and justice in law courts, assemblies, debates, and private conversations. Lawsuits in a court present a space full of procedural constraints that would have limited many of the previous oratorical possibilities, such as the timing of speech. The format of the *Rhetoric to Alexander* is aimed at an individual who could secure a copy and read and contemplate it. Walker also describes the *Rhetoric to Alexander* as “a more generalized *logon techne*” that was “trimmed down and rearranged to suit the purposes of an audience or clientele” who was interested in “the basic methods of pragmatic discourse,” especially with him. For what sensible man would undertake to praise misfortunes? No, it is obvious that they take refuge in such topics because of weakness. Such compositions follow one set road and this road is neither difficult to find, nor to learn, nor to imitate. On the other hand, discourses that are of general import, those that are trustworthy, and all of similar nature, are devised and expressed through the medium of a variety of forms and occasions of discourse whose opportune use is hard to learn, and their composition is more difficult as it is more arduous to practise dignity than buffoonery and seriousness than levity.” Isocrates. Isocrates with an English Translation in three volumes, by George Norlin, Ph.D., LL.D. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1980.

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845 Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*, 179. It’s more complex than this.
846 Ibid.
848 Ibid., 89. This section, include: *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *De inventione*, as they reflect mainstream Hellenistic rhetorical instruction at the end of the second century BCE (Walker, 48) and then important to closing in on the idea of kairos becoming a completely static state of being is SOMEWHERE in Philostratus, “Heliodorus asked for his speaking time after being dragged into Caracalla’s court, the actual term used is kairos hydatos, “portion (or moment) of water,” a conventional metaphor for a time allotment measured by water clock.” (Walker, rhet/Poet, 89). Water clock, *klepsydra*—an object of time keeping, different than a metaphorical treatment, but still kairos is becoming objectified into something static or concrete.
lawsuits. Lawsuits represent the stakes of individuals, not necessarily an entire civic community (the polis).

**Lysippos of Sikyon, Northern Peleponnese, (390-300 BCE)**

Of the three major sculptors of the fourth century BCE, Praxiteles, Skopos, and Lysippos, Lysippos is the one of major interest to this study, although all have been described as being influenced by Polykleitos but pushing the “boundaries of idealism and realism.” These sculptors are part of the last phase of Greek art, the Late Classical period from about 400-323 BCE, which is followed by the Hellenistic period of art from 323-31 BCE. The art of the Late Classical period has been described as reflecting the “world of the individual.” The precedent was the art of the High Classical period which is believed to have expressed the “group experience,” the “attainments of an entire culture,” and “the community and its values” that happen to include the belief that as human beings they could create perfection and the ideal in the environment in which they lived. After the Peloponnesian War ends, as mentioned previously in the chapter, there is “a feeling of disillusionment” and the art in this “new state of mind” tends to increasingly “reflect the experiences and values of man as an individual rather than a man as participant community.”

Specifically, Lysippos is said to have “directly challenged the conventional four-sided approach” to sculptures of athletes—a structured classical frontality starts to represent three-dimensional movement. His sculptures seemed to support his own initiative to contrive a new

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850 Pedley, 292
853 Ibid., 137.
854 Pedley, 311.
canon of proportions or at least expand the system of symmetria put forth in Polykleitos’s Kanon,\(^\text{855}\) by trimming down or slimming the bodies of his figures, and making the heads smaller.\(^\text{856}\) These aspects of Lysippos’s style are evident in works like the Apoxyomenos (fig. 2.2, cf. fig. 2.1). The change in proportions he made to the figure of the Apoxyomenos not only cultivated his identifiable style, the changes cultivated a new optical experience for the viewers because of how he handled the compositional space.\(^\text{857}\) The Apoxyomenos, with all of the bodily refinements, and slight twists and turns, thrusts his arm forward to scrape the oil off with his strigil; compositional details such as these broke the sculptural form out of the contained cubical spaces that were previously holding its figural form inside (i.e., Doryphoros).\(^\text{858}\) Lysippos’s approach to the compositional space confronted the viewer and created an optical experience more like an encounter than a viewing.\(^\text{859}\) Now, the viewer has to move through the space and explore many angles of the sculpture to fully understand it.\(^\text{860}\) This was a technical innovation; Lysippos knew this and capitalized upon it. So while he was making new variations of old established types of sculptural forms and themes, he singled himself out from others by focusing on the character of the sculptural model, giving the viewer insight to that person’s character.\(^\text{861}\)

Lysippos’s most famous examples of this objective are found in his portraits of Alexander the Great.\(^\text{862}\) Lyssipos was the court sculptor to Alexander; many of the remaining

\(^{855}\) Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece*, 106.

\(^{856}\) Pedley, 311. Pliny, *Natural History* XXXiv.56 comments on these stylistic differences: “He is considered to have contributed very greatly to the art of statuary by expressing the details of the hair, and by making the head smaller than had been done by the ancients, and the body more graceful and less bulky, a method by which his statues were made to appear taller. The Latin language has no appropriate name for that “symmetry,” which he so attentively observed in his new and hitherto untried method of modifying the squareness observable in the ancient statues.” Lysippos is also mention in Pausanias and by Xenocrates.

\(^{857}\) Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece*, 176.

\(^{858}\) Ibid.

\(^{859}\) Ibid.

\(^{860}\) Ibid.

\(^{861}\) Ibid., 176 and 178.

\(^{862}\) Ibid., 180.
portraits of Alexander in marble are attributed to Lysippos or copies after Lysippos.\(^{863}\)

Lysippos’s primary medium was bronze, none of which are extant.\(^{864}\) Pollitt describes the importance of his Alexander portraits as follows:

Lysippos…seems to have tipped the balance in Greek portraiture more toward the personality than the role. He did this not only by heeding the personal demands of his subject but also by forcing the viewer to dwell more on the subject’s temperament. It was, after all, the temperament of the Hellenistic ruler which was crucial. His personality could be imposed on an entire civilization.\(^{865}\)

Alexander’s individual personality was known to be heroic and Herculean in his aspirations, but also impetuous and unpredictable with “latent anger”\(^{866}\) (fig. 5.4).\(^{867}\) An emphasis on physiognomic features has Lysippos’s creating a new ideal. On the one hand his approach to the personality portrait of Alexander creates a kind of royal iconographical ideal, hinting at heroes and Herculean strength and cunning; but on the other hand, the other personality traits described above could apply to anyone, which meant that anyone viewing it could identify with the spirit of feeling impetuous, unpredictable, or suppressing anger. The world of the Greeks was becoming cosmopolitan, especially after the death of Alexander, and the artists were in a position of appealing to this cosmopolitan audience, which was eventually polarized into “men of learning” and the “ill-informed masses.”\(^{868}\) By ill-informed, Pollitt, is referring to those people making up a large population of the Hellenistic centers like Alexandria and Pergamum, who were from a variety of nationalities and cultural traditions, not Greeks and having no common background.\(^{869}\) Artists then could not take for granted that these new populations of “ill-

\(^{863}\) Pedley, 311. The Natural History. Pliny the Elder. John Bostock, M.D., F.R.S. H.T. Riley, Esq., B.A. London. Taylor and Francis, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street. 1855.)

\(^{864}\) Pedley, 311

\(^{865}\) Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece* 180.

\(^{866}\) Ibid.

\(^{867}\) Figure 5.4: Portrait of Alexander the Great (356-323 BC), 3rd -1st centuries BCE, called "Hermes Azara,” a marble copy of the head of a work from 330 BCE attributed to Lysippos, Louvre.


\(^{869}\) Ibid., 184.
informed” would understand, for example, Greek mythology, the formal and established sculptural gestures of athletes, orators, philosophers, and other men of power. However, no common background is required to understand human emotions experienced by all.

Lysippos’s solution to appealing to the tastes of both groups seems to have been didactic art (allegorical figures\textsuperscript{870}), as a way to “satisfy the learned man sensitized to complex allusions, indulge his love of learning, and at the same time ‘inform’ others.”\textsuperscript{871} His most famous piece of didactic sculpture is of the young god Kairos, a bronze statue mentioned and described by several ancient writers.\textsuperscript{872} (fig. 1.9) However, none of these ancient authors’ descriptions or references to the statue attempt to explain why Lysippos would have chosen to sculpt the particular nature or character of Kairos, the deity. Stewart, previously mentioned in the review of literature (Chapter 2), refers to Lysippos’s 	extit{Kairos} as “the only creator of beauty.”\textsuperscript{873} Stewart means that Lysippos was exerting his own statement about the role of kairos in the composition and production of sculpture. Primarily, Stewart thinks that Lysippos’s 	extit{Kairos} embodied the ideal canon, because it represented the exact right choice among compositional elements such as 	extit{symmetria}, 	extit{rythmos}, and 	extit{polloi arithmoi} (many numbers):\textsuperscript{874} “Kairos is therefore the state in which all of the elements that form a work of art are perfectly balanced to create beauty.”\textsuperscript{875} There is no textual evidence from the lifetime of Lysippos to support Stewart and Bassett’s interpretation of Lysippos’s choice of subject matter. Stewart’s argument is based on a

\textsuperscript{870} Audrey Griffin, \textit{Sikyon} (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982), 139.
\textsuperscript{872} See Franklin P. Johnson’s \textit{Lysippas} (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1927).
\textsuperscript{873} Stewart, “Lysippan Studies,” passim.
\textsuperscript{874} Ibid., 166 and 169.
description of the statue by Callistratus writing in the third or fourth century CE; he wrote on fourteen ancient statues including the Kairos statue at Sicyon.

…and as to his youthful beauty, that beauty is always opportune and the Opportunity is the only artificer of beauty… (Descriptions, 6)

Stewart’s interpretation of Lysippos’s use of Kairos seems over-interpreted. Following the footnote to the translation, these lines might be better understood as “beauty is always in season and seasonableness is the only artificer of beauty.” This footnote to the translations throws a different light on the lines, but does not convincingly suggest that this was Lysippos’s intent. Their positions on Lysippos’s Kairos is an example of an attempt to find the “static” in kairos. Instead Lysippos was more likely to have been interested in its mutable characteristic that constantly challenges humans coming together with the concept of kairos-time—human ability and the opportunities presented to humans on the continuum of time. Lysippos and other artists in the Late Classical period were aware of the reality that the Greek world was changing course, and he was aware enough of his own freedom to initiate new ways of composing art; therefore, there is not much to support why he would have been so tightly bound to old ideals. Lysippos’s Kairos expresses an acknowledgment that the kairos is present in all aspects of conscious human activity, and therefore the lesson of being prepared for the kairos-moment is meant for everyone, the learned and the ill-informed.

Poseidippos of Pella, Greek Epigrammatic Poet (ca. 310- ca. 240 BCE)

One of the most reliable ancient descriptions of the statue of Kairos comes from the Greek epigrammatic poet Poseidippos, who was writing within a couple of decades of

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Lysippos’s death,\textsuperscript{879} and possibly saw the work “not long after it was made.”\textsuperscript{880} The epigram is in the form of a dialogue between a person asking questions with the statue responding.

Εἰς ἀγαλμα τοῦ Καιροῦ
On a statue of Time

Questioner- Τίς πόθεν ὁ πλάστης;
‘Who is the sculptor and where was he from?’
Statue - Σικυώνιος.
‘He was a Sikyonian.’
Q. - Οὗνομα δὴ τίς;
‘And what was his name?’
S. - Λύσιππος.
‘Lysippos.’
Q. - Σὺ δὲ τίς;
‘And who are you?’
S. - Καιρὸς ὁ πανδαμάτωρ.
‘Opporununity, the all conqueor.’
Q. - Τίτπτε δ’ ἐπ’ ἀκρα βέβηκας;
‘Why do you stride on the tips of your toes?’
S. - Ἀεὶ τροχάω.
‘I am always running.’
Q. - Τί δὲ ταρσοῦς ποσσὶν ἔχεις δυφεῖς;
‘Why do you have pairs of wings on your feet?’
S. - Ἱπταμ’ ὑπηνέμιος.
‘I fly like the wind.’
Q. - Χειρὶ δὲ δεξιτερῇ τί φέρεις ξυρόν;
‘Why do you carry a razor in your right hand?’
S. - Ανδράσι δἐγμα, ὡς ἀκμῆς πάσης ὄξυτερος τελέθω.
‘As a sign to men that my appearance is more abrupt than any blade [is sharp].’
Q. - Ἡ δὲ κόμη, τί κατ’ ὄψιν;
‘And your hair, why does it hang down over your face?’
S. - Ὑπαντάσασαι λαβέσθαι.
‘So that he who encounters me may grab it.’
Q. - Νὴ Δία, ταξόπθεν δ’ εἰς τί φαλακρὰ πέλει;
‘By Zeus, and why is the back of your head bald?’
S. - Τὸν γὰρ ἀπαξ πτηνότις παραθρέξαντά με ποσσὶν οὕτις ἔθ’ ἵμείρων δράξεται ἐξόπθεν.
‘Because nobody, one I have run past him with my winged feet can ever catch me from behind, even though he yearns to.’
Q. - Τούνεξ’ ὀ τεχνίτης σε διέπλασεν;
‘For what reason did the artist fashion you?’

\textsuperscript{879} Johnson, Lysippos, 164.
\textsuperscript{880} Translation from Pollitt, Art in the Hellenistic Age, 53.
Poseidippos’s epigram provides one thorough visual description of the concept of kairos deified as Kairos, but also his poem fits with Lysippos’s aim of didacticism to anyone passing by. The poem ends with a clear warning. Prauscello says that the fictionalized viewer in this poem is there to point out the details of the sculpture but also “to understand their embodied meaning” and correctly interpret them. Within the Greeks’ long history, the sensory act of viewing is inseparable from the “intellectual process of decoding and interpreting what lies beneath the surface of a sculpted body.” Poseidippos brings the physicality of Lysippos’s warning into the language that expresses, again to any person passing by, the universality of the importance of timing, or “timely conduct,” in everyday life. By the fifth century BCE, we can see that kairos, in certain contexts, is losing its “aristocratic value-laden meaning” related to one’s ability to know what is appropriate and when, and to one’s social position. Through Lysippos, the Late Classical sculptor, and now through the Hellenistic Poseidippus, we can see a more generic, “less ideologically charged notion” of the right or opportune time.

Conclusion and a Summary of the Intrinsic Meaning of Kairos from 400-146 BCE

With the growing importance of the writing and usages of the technai, we see kairos as an indispensable consideration of the elements that make up an art and sometimes the final expression of the arranged and summarized parts as a whole speech, act of medical judgement,

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881 Translation from Pollitt, Art in the Hellenistic Age, 53-54. Pollitt notes that the picture of Kairos supplied by Poseidippos is “supplemented by later and longer descriptions by the late antique rhetoricians Kallistratos and Himerios,” both of the fourth century CE” (54).
883 Ibid., 513 Other have discussed the dramatization of the act of looking as the act of interpreting and the construction of seeing a subject; see fn. 10.
884 Ibid., 516.
885 Ibid., 518.
886 Ibid., 518.
or in the form of a sculpture or epigram. Through the interpretive tools chosen for this chapter, I believe that kairos ought to be considered, or rather recognized, as to be considered as a pervasive and perennial and a paradoxically static element within the conventions of human agencies and disciplines. Moving swiftly through the intellectual characters of the fifth century into the late fourth and early third centuries BCE, kairos does, as previously mentioned, take on an importance beyond the male aristocratic orators and politicians of Chapter 4. In Protagoras and Gorgias, kairos is a favorable moment, one that can be grasped to the advantage of speaker. This talent must be acquired through the appropriate lines of education. In Hippocratic thinking, kairos helps express a greater sensitivity to timing, life or death, which can only be learned through observation, reflection, and practice. Through the sculptor Polykleitos, we come to know through the composition and production of sculpture that kairos is a constituent element that to enact properly requires the practitioner to make an “intuitive jump.” I think this is an aspect of kairos we have always known to be there, but not until we get to Polykleitos, does the scholarship support this idea.

In both the practice of the medical and sculptural arts, we see that the most useful version of kairos expresses the ideal end to the task at hand. Ideals can be different between cultures, but the conventions asserted by the practitioners are ones that can suggest cultural unity, which we know in the fourth century were not very solidly unified. In Xenophon and Isocrates being able to grasp the “right” moment is a most needed practical capability for those participating, and who wish to be effective, in the world of oral discourse. For each, the context of kairos was important. I think perhaps Isocrates, and later with Lysippos and Poseidippos, kairos is a practical agent of change, even if it is a challenge to grasp. From Plato, Aristotle, and Rhetoric to Alexander, I think receive an academic kairos, which bears little warning of importance because it has been
congealed as part of a technical vocabulary. Kairos becomes a static word with definitions to understand, not necessarily the connotations of the concept which are to be grappled with in historical context. Then finally, with Lysippos and Poseidippos, we see expressions of kairos in two different media capitalizing on the precarious and mutable nature of human existence. Contemplating the concept of kairos in these last two historical figures, kairos can be understood as a topic from which one learns about life, not just an academic subject to be mastered.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

Summary of My Argument

My primary claim initiating the research for this dissertation has been that the ancient Greek concept of kairos became a static element in the history of rhetoric because too many investigations of the concept look for “what it was?” from the perspective a modern academic discipline, instead of thinking about “how ought kairos be considered?” in its ancient socio-cultural context in various stages of Greek history. My question, “How kairos ought to be considered in various contexts of ancient Greece?” is an inquiry into the nature of kairos in ancient Greek culture, which seeks to interpret an intrinsic meaning of kairos from its sociocultural environment, not exclusively from the discipline of rhetoric.

My primary aim in this dissertation has been to locate and identify the intrinsic meaning of kairos through a certain amount of historical reconstruction. By using Panofsky’s iconographical-iconological methodology for studying art, my method matches my aim. I have approached this study on the concept of ancient Greek kairos by considering the Greeks’ sociocultural context from approximately 3000–146 BCE. I used a cross-disciplinary mix of primary and secondary sources, objects, and events as the interpretive tools from which I could derive the intrinsic meaning of kairos as it changed through time. Through these sources, objects and events, specific themes and concepts, insight into their cultural symptoms, and the essential tendencies of the Greek mind were locatable, and answers to the questions, “How kairos ought to be considered in various contexts of ancient Greece?”, could be attempted for Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Through the interpretive tools chosen for each chapter, I arrived at the following answers:

- In Chapter 3, kairos ought to be considered as a dynamic force that the Greeks become aware of through their direct experiences with their environment; kairos is a “moment in
time” that forces human decision—ones that result in success or failure, life or death, and honor or dishonor.

- In Chapter 4, kairos ought to be considered a continuing dynamic element, which the Greeks have recognized as part of establishing *harmonia* (harmony) in the activities of sociocultural agencies; kairos is especially measurable in the individual lives of Greek males.
- In Chapter 5, kairos ought to be considered, or rather recognized, as a pervasive and perennial concept, but also as a paradoxical element within the conventions of human agencies and disciplines.

My inquiries and methodology have allowed me to see how the concept of kairos grew out the Greeks’ experiences with their natural environment into a concept defined and idealized through language and the visual arts.

Beginning in the Bronze Age, I have constructed a prehistory of the concept of kairos, after which I followed the usage and manifestations of kairos until approximately the second century BCE. The study of kairos over this timespan shows how the concept develops in the mind as a type of timing that is embodied in naturally occurring and direct experiences of living. The placement of kairos in the Greek mind in the early stages of Greek history where it was experienced in a natural setting of daily life seems akin to the expansion of natural numbers and numerical expressions (fig. 6.1). Just as kairos was experienced through direct experiences of living, natural numbers (sometimes called the counting numbers,) are those numbers corresponding with something physically or bodily in the natural world.

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887 Figure 6.1: Penna Sparrow, Venn diagram of real numbers, “Real Numbers, What are Real Numbers?” Answer 4 U, accessed December 12, 2018, https://www.ianswer4u.com/2011/05/what-are-real-numbers.html.
As the “growth” of numbers expands farther and farther away from the central nugget of natural
counting numbers the more abstract and conceptual they become. Just as kairos moves into the
realm of language and concrete expressions, it too becomes more abstract, but also paradoxically
more static; whereas, mathematical expression, even though they become more abstract, they
actually have more dynamic flexibility.

Chapter 2 is organized as a rather straightforward literature review, covering a cross-
section of primary and secondary sources on kairos that have been segregated into the academic
disciplines of Classical, Rhetorical, and Art Historical Studies. The function of this literature
review is foundational to my study of kairos. Until I reconstructed a mini-history of academic
perspectives on kairos (albeit not yet exhaustive) and concluded how each discipline area has
treated the subject of kairos, the concept maintained a certain obscurity in each separate
discipline, because while the classicists and some of the art historians use historical
reconstruction to study kairos, scholars in studies on rhetoric rely on modern and contemporary
concepts and themes onto which kairos is appropriated. Importantly, the review allowed me to
see how rich the study of the concept could be if it were viewed from multiple academic
disciplines, how much study there is still left to do on kairos, which scholarly studies contribute
to the discovery of “how kairos ought to be considered,” and where this study fits in academic
scholarship. This study of kairos, as it is now and as it continues to expand past this project,
would fit within the class of “Language and Literature” per the Library of Congress, checking
off a few of the subclasses, which include “Communication,” “Rhetoric,” and “Language,” for a
start.\(^{888}\) Chapter 2 concludes that the fullest understanding kairos is going to be derived from
academic studies that consider kairos with factors of historical reconstruction, context of time,

\(^{888}\) Library of Congress Classification Outline, Class P-Language and Literature, accessed December 14, 2018,
place, or other related Greek concepts. With this approach, kairos represents a mode of thinking in the ancient Greeks, not just a word defined. The research questions presented in Chapter 1 direct each chapter, after Chapter 2.

From the work in Chapter 2, I was also able to see the ways each discipline has approached and studied the subject of kairos. The Classicists considered kairos as contextualized into the tendencies of the Greek mind and as a habit of Greek thought and reflective of thinkers and cultural elements. The scholars in rhetorical studies focus on kairos in rhetorical education and its presence in *technai* and speech (both oral and written) as a mode of communication in civic discourse. Their research is often driven by assimilating and appropriating terminology and definitions onto other disciplinary subjects and themes. They see the word and define it, but they do not attempt to interpret the context, which shaves off the cultural construction and connotations of meaning. Perpetuating only the denotations of a term that once represented the dynamic flux of events in time further “crystalizes,” “fossilizes,” or calcifies the terms into a static concept. Due to the nature of ancient Greek sophistic education prior to the fourth century BCE, scholars studying the predisciplinary period of rhetoric seem to value a connection between connecting other activities in the Greek world with civic discourse. Kinneavy was on the right path to identifying the various dimensions of kairos in ancient Greek literature, and his attempts seemed to be extending the work of Untersteiner on the sophists, but he does not contextualize or comment on the dimensional categories he constructs (i.e., ethical, epistemological, aesthetic, rhetorical, civic educational). Studies of the visual arts have not taken up a historic study of kairos or Kairos as a monograph; however, the few sources reviewed, acknowledge deeper philosophical meanings in the shared taxonomy of the visual arts with other disciplines. These scholars (who are really Classicists and have focused on the history of art in
antiquity) look for evidence of technical terms in the actual works of art, not necessarily in extant ancient texts. As a result, they are able to consider multiple dimensions of abstract concepts, such as the aesthetic or educational or ethical dimension of kairos. The cross-disciplinary approach to this study as way of a contributing a broader understanding of ancient kairos has built on the contributions of all three academic disciplines, while sometimes touching on others (e.g., philosophy, linguistics, neuroscience, music).

In Chapter 3, I addressed the first of my research questions—what significance did this particular timing have in the ancient Greek society between 3000-600 BCE?—by starting what I would like to call a prehistory of kairos.\footnote{In place of an abundance of textual evidence and physical evidence, I used research in the areas of art and archeological history, cognitive scientific and, again, anthropological approaches to parlay a philosophical discussion on the possibilities of what a prehistory of kairos might entail. If Jeffery Walker can propose to consider what the Techn of Isocrates might have contained and describes his endeavor as “admittedly speculative” and “an exercise in probabilistic conjecture,” then writing a prehistory of kairos is just as viable. See Jeffery Walker, \textit{The Genuine Teachers of this Art: Rhetorical Education in Antiquity} (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2011), 91.} Kairos ought to be understood as operational in the conceptual space between the microcosm of humans and of their worldly cosmos. In this conceptual space, the human ability to grasp the kairos is part of the process of human self-realization. Their lifestyle would have demanded that they were in constant action and reflection about how to time their actions. The concept of kairos grew out of “direct experiences” the proto-Greeks had with their geographical environment, and it is a concept intricately woven into the decisions for which the outcomes result in success or failure, life or death, and honor or dishonor. Kairos, which later becomes a term associated with rhetoric, fits into Kennedy’s assertion that “rhetoric is thus a conservative faculty.”\footnote{Kennedy, \textit{Comparative Rhetoric}, 4.} Within the agency of humans to grasp the kairos, the kairos-moment then preserves success in human endeavors, life, or character. Even though no etymological background has been established on kairos, though a few scholars...
have offered suggestions, the environmental setting which the Greeks experienced daily is the place where they learned directly and dynamically about timing in nature and in human activities.

In Chapter 4, I addressed the second research question—what evidence supports the significance of this kind of timing in ancient Greek society between 800-400 BCE? In this period, by examining kairos, we see that the historical conditions of a Greek world expanded geographically which brought about changes in thought and expression. The Greeks are becoming more self-aware and conscious of their presence in the world and what possibilities were represented. The evidence of kairos is located in this chapter through more expressions of visual art and alphabetic text which demonstrated the sensory shifts for the Greeks who superimposed old expressions onto new technology. These shifts were controlled by visual and textual conventions which begin to push towards an ideal.

Archaic Greece is an important period in Greek history where they demonstrate through their social structures and cultural agencies their ability to synthesize and organize the world around them to the advantage of their own progress. Whether kairos is associated with sailing, military battle, proportionality, music, athletic competitions, politics, or sophistic thinking, the concept is growing and shifting in this chapter from its most natural state, moving back and forth from the oral-aural sphere, to the physical and concrete world of alphabetic text on a number of different surfaces. Kairos becomes less representative of a “natural way of thinking,” becoming more conventional, distinct, measurable, and aimed at living personalities, albeit none of them women, while becoming a personality (Kairos the god of opportunity) all its own.

In Chapter 5, I addressed the third research question—in what ways did kairos change in definition and praxis between 320-146 BC, and why? With the growing importance of writing
and then appearances of kairos via alphabetic text, the concept of kairos becomes part of the elements that make up some technai, and merging into the education of the ideal Greek character, and civic discourse (especially politics and law). This study covered some major intellectual characters of the fifth century into the late fourth and early third centuries BCE, where kairos represented a favorable moment, one that can be grasped to the advantage of speaker, a greater sensitivity to timing, life or death for the doctor, and a constituent element that to be enacted properly required the sculptor to make an “intuitive jump.” Kairos became the conceptual element of the technai that kept those sourcebooks both philosophical and pragmatic, instead of only pragmatic. Success with kairos was to be acquired through the appropriate lines of education about kairos, for both practitioners and in daily life, sometime with the aid of a techne, and it expressed the ideal end to the task at hand—a practical agent of change, even if it is a challenge to grasp.

From Plato, Aristotle, and Rhetoric to Alexander, academic kairos developed, which then, and now, bears little more that a warning of importance to the reading audience because it has congealed into the technical vocabulary of rhetoric. Kairos becomes defined, and idealized, into the definitions now compiled into various dictionaries with possibilities such as “right time,” “opportunity,” “opportune timing,” “critical moment,” “due measure,” “due proportion,” “season,” or mistakenly equated to “situational context.”

None of these, however, tell a whole story for the ancients who constructed the word kairos to represent a type of timing that reflected their ability to react to situations and occasions they were directly experiencing in their environment, the kairos-moment was dynamic, elusive, surprising, perplexing, and inescapable.

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To the ancients Greeks who desired to learn rhetoric, kairos was a force with which they had to reckon. For the contemporary academic, kairos has become a static thing to locate in the ancient text and images, or attempt to reconstruct. Rather the concept of kairos exists in a theoretical space where the cognitive process of mediating thought and action occurs; furthermore, it is one concept among other Greek concepts that participate in the process of mediation and not only applicable to rhetoric, but to other subjects as well.

Thinking back to Protagoras’ comment that “kairos was insane strife,” he was not wrong. I imagine trying to build an entire philosophy or approach to education about the concept of kairos. While I believe that endeavor is possible, the problem inherent in kairos is how to teach it. Writing a pedagogical approach for students to learn kairos would be maddening, and likely so over-organized that the purpose would be defeated. Kairos cannot be organized, or planned. Only the person in the situation can learn to react to situations. This is where the prehistory of kairos, embodied into the Greeks’ direct experiences with their environment is important.

My survey of kairos in the historic conditions of ancient Greece from 3000-146 BCE has reaffirmed several beliefs I have held from my initial interest in the appearance of kairos in rhetoric and my interest in Kairos, the god, visualized in the history of art. Starting with a belief that is broadly based, it is that works of art are representative of our humanity. And, learning about a certain group of humans through works of art that were produced in their culture not only reveals the particulars about that culture, but also the universal aspects we all share as humans. From the few remaining images of the ancient Greek god Kairos, I knew that I could work, in a sense, backwards from the object to the cultural and historic conditions. Through this process, I knew I would find its idiosyncrasies and conventions in the language and sociocultural agencies of the Greeks. What I did not expect, but welcomed, was how the study of one rhetorical concept
like kairos can reaffirm what scholars like George Kennedy have asserted that “rhetoric is a form of energy that drives and is imparted to communication,” but not only for the Greeks. For every cultural group (he even includes animals), rhetoric is “a conservative faculty.” For me, this makes the study of the subject of rhetoric, especially the history of rhetoric, as important as the study of works of art. Both reflect how all the things around us, conceptual or concrete, are consciously made by us for us and therefore have the capability of communicating our fundamental thoughts. One discovery I made about kairos, in Chapter 4, that I found interesting, but which also disappointed me, was that the kairos as defined in dictionaries, encyclopedias, concordances, and generally all the literature (primary and secondary sources) related to kairos is about men and the sociocultural agencies that were dominated by men. However this makes the work in chapter 3 even more important because it looks at kairos as an essential tendency of the Greek mind in the prehistory of the Greeks, which with more work could speculate on kairos in the realm of women.

Two other primary beliefs about this dissertation project are more specific to the outcomes of this study. Despite the dictionary definitions of kairos presenting a static version of it, I have believed that it was a dynamic force in the historic sociocultural conditions of ancient Greek life and that the Greeks’ direct experiences with the environment around them affected the ways in which the concept developed. The prehistory in Chapter 3 confirmed my belief, but also left room for more interpretation through other works of art. Another welcome surprise in this portion of the study was the connection of kairos-timing and the rhythms produced by and around the Greeks. Rhythm is dynamic, and whatever embodies rhythm is alive with movement and measure, again reaffirming the effective potential of rhetoric as expression of human thought.

892 Kennedy, Comparative Rhetoric, 215.
and communications. The idea that kairos is akin to measure in some of its connotations is one of the most difficult aspects of kairos to understand, because it requires the mind to switch thinking of kairos in the abstract and think of it in the particular.

The other belief about the nature of kairos in the history of rhetoric that I have held is that as the conditions of life changed for the ancient Greeks, so did the usage and definition of the concept. In general, the dictionaries like *LSJ* can provide those denotations that point to the changes in its connotations through time. The investigation of the connotations attached to the usages reveals that the essential nature of kairos in ancient Greek culture was critical, pervasive, and active in daily life, as well as in the art of rhetoric (or any other art).

**Limitations**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, a substantial amount of the scholarly material written on kairos in the early twentieth century and before was written by European classicists who were not publishing in English. The language barrier is not an insurmountable obstacle, but translating takes time and some publications are rare and would be difficult to secure as a copy without correspondence with certain universities and libraries. Aside from encountering multiple languages on the subject of kairos, a more thorough understanding of kairos would require the undertaking of many other perspectives. The weakness of my project is that the scope of such an historical survey is large and I am only one person with a limited amount of time; however, the strength of my dissertation is that it suggests the possibility of a better understanding of ancient kairos coming from a cross-disciplinary approach, bringing multiple voices into action together. The survey of time I tried to cover was really too much; however, if I had not attempted this span of time, I would not made certain discoveries. And, I would not have been able to see future
research projects that can grow from this dissertation project—the ones I can attempt and the ones that would be better left to another scholarly voice.

**Significance and Contribution of My Study**

My study of ancient Greek kairos begins in Greece’s prehistory, where kairos is found in the naturally occurring direct experiences the Greeks’ had with their environment. In the beginning the dynamic concept of kairos represents how humans reckon with the timing of their actions and reactions. In the middle of this study kairos maintains its dynamic force but due to the shifts in the modes of how the Greeks communicated, kairos becomes in its alphabetic and textual forms distinct and measurable by the expressions of living persons. At the end of this study, kairos is firmly associated with technical training, education, civic discourse, and the noble character because the concept represents a practical agent of change. In this capacity as a practical agent of change, the concept is still interesting and appealing to contemporary studies in rhetoric—but in its static form of academic kairos is generally divested from its historically naturally and dynamic beginnings.

My study contributes the following to the discipline of study for the history of rhetoric:

1. a unique study, but parallels the research of other scholars;
2. answers the current call from academic studies on the history of rhetoric for more cross-disciplinary studies;
3. reshapes how the discipline of rhetoric and others perceive the ancient concept of kairos;
4. enables future studies to be conducted by myself and others.

**Future Research Projects**

Some further projects better suited for other scholars would be the translation of the non-English studies on kairos in German, French, and Italian. Also, I would be interested in an investigation of what happens to kairos within the eras that occur between the fall of the Roman Empire and the beginning of the Italian Renaissance where kairos picks up a Christian
connotation. Further contributions need to be made on understanding kairos of the sophists and “right logos” not “rhētorikē.” After this study, and especially Chapter 4, I can see there is a gap in the scholarship leading up to the Classical period of Greek history. Also, there is a need for more historical research on kairos and the Pythagoreans. There were far-reaching effects of Pythagorean thinking on the sophists who seemed more accepting of the dynamic nature of kairos.

Discovering what kairos meant to the ancient Greeks has offered an aesthetic experience for me as the researcher of this study. The aesthetic experience to which I refer is how the study of ancient kairos has alerted and awakened me to the differences between ancient καιρός and academic kairos, and the need for future research on both aspects of kairos in the history of rhetoric to be imparted consciously. And, finally, the experience has sparked the universal concern all humans have with the timing of their words and actions. These moments of concern are pervasive and inescapable regardless of whether that “moment in time” is called kairos or not. If I am able to continue in the academic profession by participating in conferences and through published research, I want to aim clearly at audiences new to the study of the history of rhetoric, ancient world enthusiasts, and those who value object-based teaching and learning and cross-disciplinary studies.

As for my future academic contributions on kairos, I would like to expand Chapter 3, the prehistory of kairos. I am interested in bringing in more intersections between perspectives on the development of language and the art of prehistory. I would like to extend the prehistory to the Archaic period, which is technically prehistoric Greece even if it was also preliterate, since no ancient author ever wrote about it. I would especially be interested in the development of kairos in sailing; and it would be my privilege to work more on the octopus vessels. As previously
mentioned, the kairos that we have all come to know is the kairos of the male world. I would like to explore, as part of an expanded prehistory of kairos, the possibility of reconstructing kairos in the female microcosm. There is research on the few female Pythagoreans who were known to exist that could offer some insight here and help fill in the gap. I would like to do more work on Hellenistic kairos/Kairos. Finally, I would like to pick up with the next appearances of Kairos in the Italian Renaissance, another opportunity to work through an object; there is more than one appearance of Kairos in the art of the Renaissance and this would also connect to the study of rhetoric and civic discourse in that period.

To push the timeless relevance and importance of the kairos-moment, I would like examine the places in American culture and/or American education where experiential timing affects success in life. Learning-from-experience and visual learning has been well researched. However, I do not mean to locate kairos in early American culture, it won’t be found. Instead, I mean to find where this kind of timing, or the usefulness of being cunning, played a crucial role in defining agencies of sociocultural America. Also, I would like to consider how contemporary academic education is performing an exercise in fitting kairos, like a square peg into the round hole of academic kairos, and what sort of reshaping of ancient Greek Καιρός must take place for it to become contemporary academic kairos.

And finally, I would be very interested in looking into more about visuality in the history of rhetoric, especially concerning concepts of enargia, energia, and ekphrasis.

Concluding Thoughts

As I said in Chapter 1, this dissertation project was not about redefining kairos or arguing against any of its connotations, nor has it been about providing a definitive history on the development the concept. This study has been a survey on the history of kairos in the ancient
Greek sociocultural conditions of 3000-146BCE, which has taken into account several disciplinary perspectives on the concept as a way of filling in some gaps between its denotations and connotations, and proving that there is still more historic context to research to enrich the meanings of kairos.

Much of the information I have written about in this study related to kairos is recycled from other disciplinary studies; however, as a cross-disciplinary study on ancient kairos that focused on the nature of kairos reflecting the tendencies of the ancient Greek mind over certain eras, the underlying connotations and intrinsic meaning has started to emerge beyond the dictionary definitions. Eventually, I believe my work could be in proximity, not parallel or juxtaposed, just near and aspiring toward the work of scholars in many fields of like George A. Kennedy, Eric A. Havelock, Edward Schiappa, Thomas A. Cole, Michael Baxandall, Earnst Gombrich, Henri Glassie, Marcel Detienne, Evangelos Moutsopoulos, Sarah B. Pomeroy, Mary Beard, Mark Johnson, and Erich S. Gruen. With optimism, this study contributes not only to an historic understanding of ancient kairos, but also contributes to a broader understanding of the academic kairos that lives with us now in the study of rhetoric and beyond.
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