

WINCKELMANN'S APOLLO AND THE PHYSIOGNOMY OF RACE

Lasse Hodne

ABSTRACT

The taste for classical art that induced museums in the West to acquire masterpieces from ancient Greece and Rome for their collections was stimulated largely by the writings of Johann Joachim Winckelmann. In the past decade, a number of articles have claimed that Winckelmann's glorification of marble statues representing the white, male body promotes notions of white supremacy. The present article challenges this view by examining theories prevalent in the eighteenth century (especially climate theory) that affected Winckelmann's views on race. Through an examination of different types of classicism, the article also seeks to demonstrate that Winckelmann's aesthetics were opposed to the eclectic use of ancient models typical of the fascist regimes of the twentieth century.

KEY WORDS

Winckelmann, Nietzsche, Greek Profile, Facial Angle, Physiognomy, Climate, Decolonisation, Race, Sculpture, Satyr, Ape.

DECOLONISING THE AESTHETIC CANON?

In an article in this journal from 2017, Nicholas Mirzoeff proposed extending the Rhodes Must Fall campaign, which decried monuments of white colonialism, to Western museums.¹ The campaign, which started with the removal of the Cecil Rhodes statue from the university campus in Cape Town in 2015, later spread to Oxford, where a statue of Rhodes is placed on the facade of Oriel College's Rhodes Building. Mirzoeff saw the appeal of removing symbols of white sovereignty in relation to the demands for decolonisation of the curriculum, which "is not simply a question of revising reading lists."² With reference to a famous phrase from the art critic John Berger, Mirzoeff called for a critical engagement with "ways of seeing" that could counter the aesthetics of white supremacy. This means that we must challenge the aesthetic canon that until now has dominated the major

museums in the West. As an example of such dominance, he mentioned New York's Metropolitan Museum, where "the white marble statues of Greece and Rome ... are placed in light, high-ceilinged rooms right next to the entrance. African objects, of which the Met has an amazing collection, appear in dark, gloomy spaces."³

In this article, I will discuss whether said canon is as oppressive as Mirzoeff asserts, or whether, as I believe, it was originally intended to represent positive values. But let us first look at some authors who, like Mirzoeff, have tried to analyse the Western taste for whiteness and purity, revealing a connection with oppression and colonialism. In her book *The History of White People*, Nell Irvin Painter claimed that this idea of beauty derives from Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), a German son of a cobbler who worked his way to the Papal court and the position of curator of one of Rome's most important private collections of ancient art, that of Cardinal Alessandro Albani. Winckelmann thought that art from the ancient Greek period was the finest of all times, and that modern artists could only attain perfection by learning through copying the works of the ancients. "Long after Winckelmann," Painter claimed, "museums all over the world copied classical art for purposes of education" using plaster, which they purposefully left unpainted.⁴

The problem with Winckelmann's studies, Painter stated, is that he only had access to Roman copies in marble of Greek originals that were often made in bronze. Painter claimed that not knowing that Greek statues were originally painted in bright colours, the aesthetics of Winckelmann was founded on ignorance of the original polychromy of ancient art.⁵ The idea held by ordinary people, as well as scientists, about bodily perfection was shaped by what they saw in museums, private collections, and books. Like Mirzoeff, Painter referred to Josiah Nott and George Gliddon's well-known *Types of Mankind*, from 1854, as an example of the use of Western ideals of human beauty in science⁶ (Fig. 1). To illustrate the idea that it is possible to judge the intellectual capacity of a race by the volume of the cranium, Nott and Gliddon's book used a chart that compared the head and skull of a chimpanzee with that of an African and a European-looking person. Or, to be precise, the European was not a real person, but a drawing of the head of the famous statue Apollo Belvedere—a Roman copy in marble of a lost Greek bronze original, probably executed sometime between 350 and 325 BC by the Greek sculptor Leochares (Fig. 2).

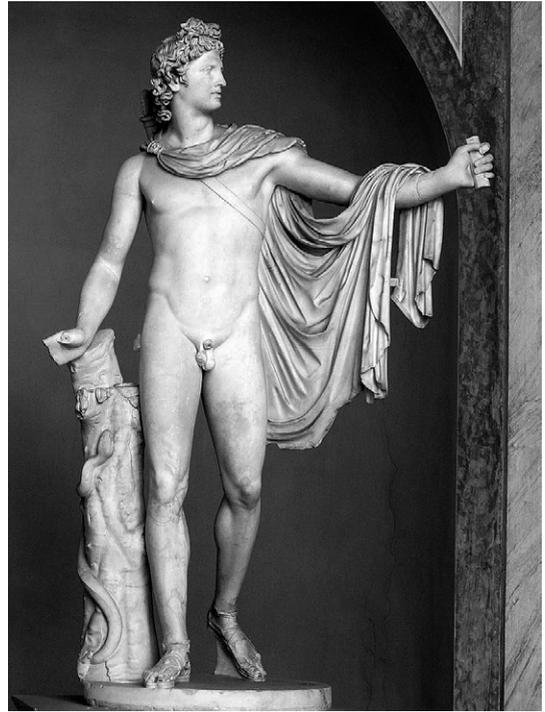
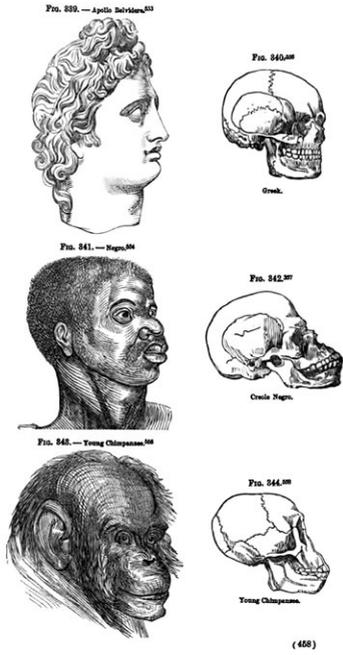


Fig. 1
 Illustration from J.C. Nott and G.R. Gliddon's *Indigenous Races of the Earth* (public domain).

Fig. 2
 Apollo Belvedere, Vatican Museums (public domain).

It is easy to see the racist assumptions behind an illustration that shows the portrait of a person of African origin midway between an ape and a classical bust. In the nineteenth century, illustrations like these were frequently used to demonstrate principles of racial supremacy. The race ideal promoted by Nott and Gliddon was inspired by the aesthetics of Winckelmann, as well as Dutch physician and anatomist Petrus Camper's (1722–1789) studies on human physiognomy. Painter says that Nott and Gliddon “went on reproducing his [Camper's] images as irrefutable proof of a white supremacy.”⁷

Even though Camper himself never embraced a racist view like that advocated by Nott and Gliddon, Painter maintained that his body ideal, inspired by Winckelmann's studies of Classical Antiquity, can be described as a “fetishization of white male beauty” that excludes non-European races from its aesthetic canon.⁸ For Camper, the Apollo Belvedere represented the embodiment of perfect human beauty, while the flat noses of Chinese and Kalmucks were defined as an offence against beauty.⁹

The connection between aesthetics and science that Painter denounced was also observed by Martial Guédron, who proposed that the raciological taxonomies of physical anthropology were based on aesthetic prejudices drawn from the *histoire de l'art archéologisante* that Winckelmann represented.¹⁰ Painter, Mirzoeff, and Guédron's critiques of the alleged racist implications of neoclassical aesthetics has a precursor in Eliza Marian Butler's influential *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* (1935). Butler saw Winckelmann as the key figure in a philhellenic movement that exposed German society to the influence of Ancient Greek literature and art in a way that inspired Nazi ideology's dream of the *Übermensch*. Butler's studies were followed up in the 1980s and '90s by scholars such as Martin Bernal (1937–2013) and George L. Mosse (1918–1999). According to Mosse, the ideas of a pure and powerful race, propagated by anthropological studies and quasi-scientific disciplines such as physiognomy and phrenology, were based on the transcendental beauty ideal of the Enlightenment period. Mosse said that the body stereotypes that emerged from Winckelmann's analyses of ancient art “have a direct bearing upon the appeal of racism, and upon its relation to nationalism ...” for “racism from its origin to modern times adopted a neoclassical male aesthetic, encouraged by anthropologists who liked to contrast natives and Europeans based on their resemblances to or differences from the idealized Greeks.”¹¹

If we exclude those who mainly see Winckelmann as a forefather of modern art history as an academic discipline, it is striking how the perception of his contributions to the understanding of art and society changed in 200 years. Today's tendency to see his theories as "awkward"¹² marks a strong contrast to the far more positive influence he exercised on prominent persons of his own time, such as Goethe, Herder, Lessing, and Kant. At that time, many saw Winckelmann's studies of ancient art as a demonstration that works like the celebrated Apollo Belvedere were the natural product of a society where people enjoyed individual freedom. In fact, one of Winckelmann's basic assumptions was that great art could only arise in a free society. After the expulsion of the tyrants, Winckelmann said, the city of Athens adopted a democratic form of government in which the entire people had a share. It is freedom of the individual that caused the proliferation of good taste among the Greeks; a fact proven by the analogous situation in Florence much later, "where, after a long interval of darkness, the arts and sciences began, in modern times, to be relumined."¹³

Winckelmann was convinced that the glorious era of Greek art was a result of Athens's democratic constitution. More than anything else, it was this that convinced people at his time that a viable model for political reform could be found in ancient Greece. With reference to Winckelmann, Herder concluded that Pericles did more for the arts "than ten kings of Athens would have done"¹⁴ for statesmen in democracies need to please the public. Hence, there could be no better avenue "than such kinds of expense, as ... were calculated to gratify the eyes of the people, and afford subsistence to many."¹⁵

One of the problems with much of today's scholarship on Winckelmann is that it almost exclusively focuses on the intellectual horizon of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Germany, disregarding that of France. Winckelmann's major work, *The History of Art in Antiquity (Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums)*, one of the few German books at the time that became a classic of European literature, appeared in French translation only two years after its first publication in 1764. The French audience was also familiar with the basic ideas of Winckelmann's work through a number of reviews, such as the short synopsis given in the *Gazette littéraire de Europe* the same year (1764), which stated that Winckelmann had, in a very convincing way, demonstrated the superiority of the Greeks over other nations in most fields, and especially when it came to "la liberté politique."¹⁶ Even more telling is the description of Winckelmann's work by

the Enlightenment philosopher and art critic Denis Diderot (1713–1784), who, in a review of the *Paris Salon* of 1765, compared Winckelmann to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Diderot’s essay not only defined the lesson that the general audience could draw from Winckelmann’s view of Greek civilization but also demonstrated the fascination French intellectuals had for him as a scholar of antiquity.¹⁷

There is a conspicuous contrast between the Enlightenment thinkers’ perception of Winckelmann as an advocate for freedom and the image of him drawn by Butler, Mosse, Bernal, and others, who saw him as a forerunner of nineteenth-century racism. When we look at charts like that of Nott and Gliddons, it is easy to understand how classicism could be misused and “break bad.” However, it is important to note that this turn did not take place within neoclassical culture itself. Art theorists such as Winckelmann and pseudo-scientists like the Swiss physiognomist Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741–1801) were not interested in measuring skulls or calculating brain sizes. What interested them was the line of the face and shape of the head as an outward sign of a man’s moral dispositions. A civilized society was not one inhabited by particularly intelligent people, but by people who were able to act rationally because bodily passions were curbed by the mind. People who could control themselves would not have to be controlled by others. The ancient Greeks had this self-control and were therefore capable of governing themselves in a free society.

What is interesting is that Winckelmann thought that man’s capacity for controlling his bodily appetite would manifest in the body itself, particularly the face. The typical Greek face was, according to Winckelmann, characterised by a straight line that unites the forehead and the rim of the nose; what he called “the Greek profile.” My aim in this article is to show that there exists a democratic reading of Winckelmann that is in line with essential tenets of Enlightenment thinking that contrasts with the established perception of him as the one who paved the way for European racism and cultural supremacy. To do this, we have to realise that some of Winckelmann’s eager readers, such as Nietzsche, adopted and perpetuated important concepts from his theories, like the opposition between the Apollonian and Dionysian, only with opposite signs. In the philosophy of Nietzsche, Dionysus is transformed into a positive force.¹⁸ It is, therefore, necessary to ask what kind of idealised body, and what kind of values, inspired racist ideology? Was it the *Edle Einfalt*

that emanates from the face of Winckelmann's beloved Pythian Apollo, or was it, perhaps, the desires and ritual excesses of the Nietzschean Dionysus?

THE GREEK BODY AND CLIMATE THEORY

The reason why Greek artists were able to produce the most beautiful art ever seen was that they lived in a free society that allowed them to use their artistic creativity. Moreover, beauty was inevitably linked to the image of the human body. Some see Winckelmann's choice of the male nude as the true vehicle of beauty to be a reflection of his homosexuality.¹⁹ However, the main reason for Winckelmann's occupation with the body was the idea that the human spirit expressed itself by means of the body. The body would thus reveal the inner state of a person; his thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

This is also why the human body was so central to Greek art. To the ancient Greeks, art reflected the virtues of heroes and the deeds of the Olympian gods. Whereas Egyptians represented the god Isis in the shape of a cat, "the Greeks, on the contrary ... made use of no signs but such as had a true relation to the thing signified, or were most agreeable to the senses: all their deities they invested with human forms."²⁰ While architecture was particularly important to the Egyptians, among the various forms of artistic expression the Greeks appreciated sculpture the most, for "sculpture is the medium in which the spiritual visibly 'makes itself at home' in the sensuous shape of matter."²¹ Prevalent in classic Greek sculpture is the mimetic representation of humans and the human body as part of a polytheistic religion that worships gods in human guise. Art is the depiction of gods and heroes, but, as an idealisation of what is supposed to be found in human beings, it represents the concept of perfection and, thus, also virtue in a wide sense. Art is the exaltation, "above the pitch of material models," of certain ideas that are expressed by means of the body.²²

Paradoxically, Winckelmann's profoundly humanist exaltation of the body was turned into the opposite as a result of nineteenth- and twentieth-century nationalism. The explanation for this was obviously that he glorified the Greek body, particularly at the expense of the Kalmuck. However, there was a reason why Winckelmann elevated the Greeks to a special status, and it had to do with climate, for the special climatic conditions of the country—not too cold, not too warm—offered the prerequisites to develop a complex and well-balanced society. I will soon return to

the discussion of how climate affects the body, but let us first look at the part of the body that we use most when we communicate our inner state. For the most part, spiritual qualities are expressed through the face; thus, the head and face of gods and humans were particularly important. From Winckelmann's analysis of innumerable ancient statues, he deduced that the Greeks had arrived at a very precise formula apt to express the moral values of "their gods and heroes: the profile of the brow and nose of gods and goddesses ... is almost a straight line."²³ In other words, if you see the head from the side, it is possible to draw a straight line from the top of the forehead over the rim of the nose (Fig. 3). There is no depression between the forehead and the nose at the height of the eyebrows. This is what Winckelmann called the "Greek profile." Winckelmann gave a number of examples of this in ancient statuary; it exists in both male and female figures. The *Medicean Venus*—a Hellenistic marble statue of Aphrodite that was once in the Villa Medici in Rome (from which it takes its name)—comes fairly close, but the work that best embodies these sublime qualities is undoubtedly the Apollo Belvedere.

Winckelmann described this profile at length in his *Reflections*. "The form of real beauty," he said, "has no abrupt or broken parts. The ancients made this principle the basis of their youthful profile; which is neither linear nor whimsical, though seldom to be met with in nature ... It consists in the soft coalescence of the brow with the nose. This uniting line so indispensably [*sic*] accompanies beauty, that a person wanting it may appear handsome full-faced; but mean, nay even ugly, when taken in profile."²⁴

Emotions are expressed through the face, but Winckelmann's Greek profile is supposed to do exactly the opposite, for what characterises the Greeks and shows that they are a great nation is their ability to suppress feelings; in a way, it seems that virtue can manifest in the body only when feelings that excite the soul are held back. It is important to remember that the main aim of Winckelmann's definition of the Greek profile was to target the expressionism that characterised the Baroque art of the preceding period (the seventeenth century), especially that of Gian Lorenzo Bernini. "Bernini, that destroyer of art, despised this line,"²⁵ Winckelmann said. Instead, he recommended the restrained Neoclassicism of Nicolas Poussin and his good friend, the painter Anton Raphael Mengs.

As we see, this was not only a discussion of art, for issues related to aesthetics and ethics were tightly interwoven in Winckelmann's philosophy. There are also statements about race in his writings,



Fig. 3
Winckelmann's "Greek profile" (illustration by author).

as the discussions of the Chinese and Kalmuck show, but this was not as central to Winckelmann as it was to many others. The importance of Winckelmann's ideas and the centrality they had in his period and the following century is demonstrated by the frequent reappearance of the Apollo Belvedere in contexts with little or no relation to the history of art as such. The same applies to several nineteenth-century pseudo-scientific publications, such as Nott and Gliddon's *Types of Mankind*. Based on the theory of polygenism, their book included a number of illustrations to support the idea that humanity originates from different lineages (not all descend from Adam and Eve). Among these is the famous illustration that juxtaposes the head of a chimpanzee with those of an African person and of the Apollo Belvedere (Fig. 1). Similarly, Julien-Joseph Virey's *Histoire naturelle du genre humain* (1801) contains an illustration that compares an orangutan and an "Ibo African" (Igbo person) with an ancient bust of Zeus.

Today, it is natural to see such schemes as attempts to demonstrate that coloured people of African origin represent an intermediate step in an evolution that has the white man as its end point. The theory that man is a primate that descends from the apes was launched in the 1863 book *Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature* by Thomas H. Huxley and elaborated further by Charles Darwin in *The Descent of Man* (1871). In turn, the idea that man descended from the apes was based on the theory of evolution that Darwin had launched in *On the Origin of Species* from 1859. Obviously, Winckelmann, being born almost 100 years before Darwin, knew nothing about the theory of evolution. Although during his lifetime scientists had observed differences between species and variations in plants growing in different areas and climates, they lacked a theory of evolution by natural selection.

To find out what Winckelmann may have thought about the causes of variations among plants, animals, and humans belonging to different regions, we must look at the theories that dominated scientific research in his period. A great influence on Winckelmann and many others was the French lawyer and philosopher Baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755), known today mainly for his theory about separation of powers. In the eighteenth century he was also known for his meteorological climate theory, according to which the nature of man was influenced by climatic factors. Montesquieu thought that the hot temper typical of people living in warm countries was due to climate and that a temperate climate, like that of France, was ideal. Montesquieu may have derived his idea from the ancient Greek historian Herodotus who,

not surprisingly, saw his own country, Greece, as perfect when compared to the cold Scythia and the warm Egypt.

It is clear that climate was also important to Winckelmann in the first sentence of his *Reflections*, where he stated that we owe the production of good taste to the Greek climate.²⁶ It remains central in his second principal work, *The History of Art in Antiquity*, which is divided into three parts. “In the first,” Winckelmann said, “I shall speak, generally, of the shape with which art commenced; next, of the different materials upon which it worked; and lastly, of the influence of climate upon it.”²⁷

The old idea, described by Herodotus and other authors of Antiquity, that climate shaped the human body, as well as the society we live in, was revitalised in the sixteenth century by the French lawyer and philosopher Jean Bodin (1530–1596). A supporter of strong monarchy against papal dominance, Bodin wrote extensively on questions of politics, history, economics, religion, and natural philosophy. His best-known writing is *Les Six livres de la République* (1576)—a book on the best form of government that was written as an attempt to respond to the extensive religious contrasts that shook France at his time. Despite the many difficulties that French society was confronted with, Bodin took a positive view of the situation. The special French mentality (or “humor,” as Bodin would have said), would help these people in their task, for the French, living in a climate that was not too hot, not too cold, were of a well-tempered kind.²⁸ If they, like some races, had been subject to a very harsh climate, they would probably have developed an irascible character that hampered efficacious negotiations. Based on his study of the relation between climate and national character, Bodin even claimed that the most suitable form of government for France was the hereditary monarchy.

What is important here is that Bodin and Montesquieu thought that a well-governed society could only exist when inhabited by people with a special temperament, and this they found in the French people. Winckelmann thought analogously about the Greeks. Here, too, special climatic conditions had created a form of society that was superior to anything seen before: a city-state characterised by freedom of the individual.

For Winckelmann, the Apollo Belvedere was more than just an example of supreme beauty; it was an embodiment of the virtues that he believed to be the foundation of political freedom. Hence, when he described the Greek profile he sought to trace the contour of a certain anatomy or, rather, a physiognomy, which

he believed to be the material embodiment of specific spiritual qualities related to the “noble simplicity and quiet grandeur” (*edle Einfalt und stille Größe*) that typified the Greek people.²⁹ Many, including Winckelmann, believed that it was possible to make judgments about the moral quality of persons by analysing their facial traits (the shape of the nose, the measure of the forehead, the size of the chin, and so on). Key here is finding out exactly how Winckelmann believed climate affects man’s anatomy, facial features, and, consequently, moral dispositions. The advocates of climate theory believed that just as our skin is tanned and becomes darker when exposed to the rays of the sun, so too do temperature and humidity affect our body and cause physiological changes that are inherited through successive generations. Like the Medieval scholastic theologian Albertus Magnus had done before him, Bodin, from the observation that “plants and animals in general grow larger or smaller as they are moved from one climate to another” concluded that “if Ethiopians settled in the north their skins would become fair in a few generations.”³⁰ In his book *Von der verschiedenen Rassen der Menschen* (1777), Kant described a similar development for “the Laplanders, a subsidiary phylum of the Hungarian people, [who] already within a very few centuries [were] quite well adapted to the peculiarity of the cold region, even though they originated from a well-built people in the temperate zone.”³¹

Thus, Kant confirmed a common eighteenth-century idea that physiognomic characteristics typical of one specific human race are due to climatic influence, and that these factors can cause permanent physiological changes within a few hundred years (not hundreds of thousands of years, as the theory of evolution says). Admittedly, humans will not react to changes as quickly as plants. On this point, Kant agreed with the French theologian and historian, Jean-Baptiste (Abbé) Dubos (1670–1742), who emphasised that

... men do not respond to environment as quickly as do plants which suck their nourishment directly from the soil. But given time, men will become acclimatized, mentally and morally as well as physically, as happened to the Saxons Charlemagne transplanted to the Low Countries.³²

Dubos was the author of an important book on art, the *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* from 1719, in which he asserted that appreciation of art is elicited by emotional

response rather than rational reflection. He obtained much of his knowledge of art from Rome, where he studied the works of ancient and modern masters. Winckelmann knew Dubos and referred to his studies on a number of occasions in his *History of Art*, mainly polemically, such as when Winckelmann denounced Dubos' misinterpretation of a Roman sculpture group in the Villa Ludovisi.³³

Although Winckelmann would hardly admit any debt to Dubos, he willingly acknowledged influence from Montesquieu. Winckelmann's notebooks contain long excerpts from Montesquieu's *Del'Esprit des lois*.³⁴ Montesquieu and Winckelmann had a common interest in the writings of the ancients; while the former, as we have seen, was influenced by Herodotus, the latter cited Polybius' statement that "climate ... forms the manners, the shape, and the complexion of nations."³⁵ By influence of climate is meant "the manner in which the conformation of the inhabitants of different countries, not less than their modes of thought, is affected by their situation, and by the temperature and food peculiar to them."³⁶ Winckelmann emphasised that climate and other material conditions influence our body as well as our soul.

Many eighteenth-century authors followed ancient authorities in thinking that the colour of the skin, facial traits, and bodily health are all results of climatic circumstances. According to Ptolemy, there were three climatic zones: warm, cold, and temperate.³⁷ The Greek (Ptolemy himself was of Greco-Roman origin, but he lived much of his life in Alexandria in Egypt) was fortunate to inhabit the best part, the temperate zone, which explained why he thought Greek people were more beautiful than others. The same view was held by Winckelmann, who, in his *History of Art*, said that "nature, after having passed step by step through cold and heat, established herself in Greece. Here, where a temperature prevails which is balanced between winter and summer, she chose her central point...."³⁸

Not all countries can offer the same convenient conditions for growth as Greece. Unsurprisingly, very low temperatures will hamper growth. Hence, "the small eyes of extreme northern and eastern nations," Winckelmann said, "make a part of the incompleteness of their growth, which is short and small."³⁹ In contrast, a warm and humid climate, as well as harsh salt air, or even violent anger, will prompt a person's lips to swell up. "But, in proportion as nature gradually draws nigher to her centre in a temperate climate, her [nature's] productions are marked by more regularity of shape...."⁴⁰

Among the many people during Winckelmann's time who were convinced that physiological differences between races could be explained by reference to climate was the Dutch physician and anatomist Petrus Camper. Camper, who was interested in painting and gave lectures on art to students in Amsterdam in 1770, knew the theories of Winckelmann, whose "excellent observations" he enjoyed the opportunity of consulting in 1768.⁴¹ Even though he took care to emphasise that his scientific theories had been developed before the encounter with Winckelmann's ideas, the central concept in Camper's physiognomy, "facial angle" (see below), doubtless recalls Winckelmann's "Greek profile."

As adjunct surgeon of justice in the Amsterdam morgue from 1755 to 1761, Camper had access to skulls from a number of persons of different ages, which he studied by sawing the crania perpendicularly down the middle.⁴² Almost all the deceased people in the morgue at the time were of European (Caucasian) origin, but on some occasions he also studied people from other races, such as when he publicly dissected an Angolan youth in Amsterdam in 1758. In addition to humans, Camper was interested in apes. The Collection of Natural History in Amsterdam owned no specimen of higher primates at the time, but through his former students Camper managed to obtain, "for a good sum of money," a well-preserved orangutan.⁴³

Analysing his material, Camper measured the skulls' "facial angle," which is the angle measured at the intersection between a horizontal line drawn from the earlobe to the tip of the nose, and an approximately vertical line from the top of the forehead to the advancing part of the upper jawbone (Fig. 4). Adopting this system, Camper measured various species of animals, apes, and humans from different races, finding that the "tailed monkey had a facial angle of 42°, the orang-utan 58°, and the Angolan and the Calmuck both had 70°. The European had a facial angle of 80°, the Roman statues ranged from 85° to 90°, and the Greek statue accumulated in 100°."⁴⁴

Influence from Winckelmann manifests in the fact that the ideal (100°) is found only in Greek sculpture; it does not exist in the real world. If it had been a real Greek person, it would be natural to label such a scheme, with non-European races placed as intermediate steps on a scale between the orangutan and the white European, as many of Camper's commentators have done: as outright racism. Yet, as Miriam Meijer emphasised in a book on the Dutch scientist, Camper's facial angle theory is not racist. Nor can it be interpreted as a variation of the ancient chain of

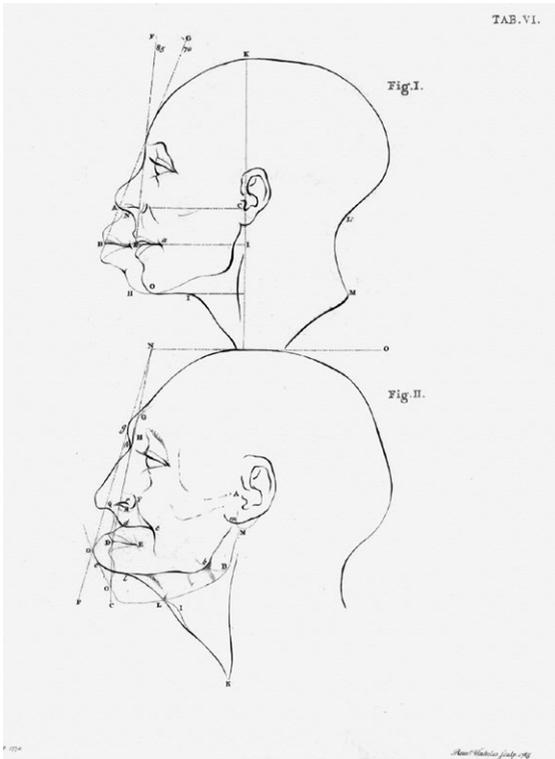


Fig. 4
Camper's "facial angle." Drawing by Camper's son, Adriaan Gilles Camper (public domain).

Fig. 5
Satyr and *callitrix* (from R. Barber, *Bestiary*).

being theory, according to which all beings are organised in a strict hierarchy that proceeds from God the Almighty at the top, through the angels, the stars and planets, to humans, animals, and plants on the lower steps. Camper, Meijer says, harboured no intentions of racial hierarchy. Rather, “the fact that he put the African skull next to the ape was intended to demonstrate the falsehood behind the consensus that these two resembled each other the most. Camper believed that their difference would offer overwhelming proof that the ape and the African were in fact unrelated.”⁴⁵

THE APOLLONIAN AND THE DIONYSIAN

Besides discussing likenesses and differences between the ape and the human, there was a second reason for comparing these species, namely the age-old notion of a relation between the ape and the satyr. The connection between apes and satyrs has been examined by at least two ancient works—Pliny’s *Naturalis Historia* and Solinus’ *De mirabilibus mundi*—both of which enumerate the *satyri* as one of five kinds of apes.⁴⁶ This idea was passed on to the medieval imagination as testified by the numerous Bestiaries, which almost always describe the two creatures—the ape and the satyr—together as variants of the same species. One example is the Bestiary in the Bodleian Library, which shows a satyr with a human face, beard, and tail and a staff, alongside a tailed *callitrix* (Fig. 5).

The kinship between the two species is revealed in the face. When seen in profile, the satyr is depicted with a snub nose and a pronounced depression between the forehead and the nose. These features are practically the opposite of the Greek profile as described by Winckelmann, and, bearing in mind that the satyr is a mythological creature, the contrast between it and ideal, facial beauty, as represented by the Apollo Belvedere, was no doubt construed to suggest that the character traits typically associated with the rustic, woodland-dwelling satyr were the opposite of those belonging to civilised human beings. In fact, the faun, which Winckelmann said is a young satyr, lacks the “grandeur [which] is produced by straightness and fullness” and is typical of “ideal heads.”⁴⁷ According to Winckelmann, the reason why the Greeks represented fauns with a depressed nose was that, because of their savage nature, the sculptors aimed “less at facial beauty.”⁴⁸

The profile of the satyr’s head recalls the mask that was used in the ancient satyr play, a burlesque type of drama of which two are known to us in substantial form, the *Ichneutai* of Sophocles and *Cyclops* of Euripides. The satyrs are described as drinking to

excess, acting with cowardice, playing, dancing, and bothering nymphs; most crucially, they “are the companions and henchmen of the great god Dionysos.”⁴⁹

Plays were performed with masks, and the mask of the satyrs had a marked depression between the forehead and the nose of the type that Winckelmann considered ugly in humans. The Greek profile, characterised by an unbroken line from the top of the forehead through the rim of the nose, is the opposite of this. While the shape of the mask represents the untamed and brutish aspects of man, in the Grecian nose one could—according to Hegel, who on this point was strongly influenced by Winckelmann’s theory—discern

... the essential cipher of rational humanity. If the Greek face is the most beautiful of all faces, if it sets the very standard of beauty, this is because it makes visible the privilege of the human as such. ... The seamless continuity between corporeal nose and theoretical forehead demonstrates the triumph of cognition over appetite and thus establishes spirit’s uninterrupted supremacy over carnal nature.⁵⁰

This has nothing to do with phrenology or any of the quasi-scientific theories of the nineteenth century. What interested Hegel and Winckelmann was not human intelligence *per se*. If the size of the brain had been a mark of beauty, the most beautiful portraits would have been those with a large and prominent forehead. But in his *Essay on the Beautiful in Art* from 1763, Winckelmann argued quite the opposite, stating: “the forehead, to be beautiful, must be low.”⁵¹ What Hegel and Winckelmann had in mind was not the size of the brain, but the relationship between cognition (forehead) and appetite (mouth/jaw). The straight line is made possible by a quite small mouth and contracted maxilla, which means that the lower part of the face, representing appetite and passion, is controlled by the rational mind.

From this, it is clear that Winckelmann’s aesthetic ideal proceeded from considerations of ethical character. It is no surprise that satyrs, representing nature’s untamed and brutish force, have a facial profile that is almost the opposite of that of Apollo. The deep recess in the satyr’s face at the level of the eyebrow, the snub nose, and the protruding mouth, is a sign of their lack of control over bodily desires.

Since the satyr was traditionally seen as a kind of ape, what was true of the satyr would also be true of the ape. In fact, this

characteristic is reflected in the name of the ape itself, for, according to some medieval bestiaries, the word for monkey, *simia* (in Italian *scimmia*, usually thought to mean “similar”) is a Greek word meaning “with squashed nostrils. Hence, we call monkeys this because they have turned-up noses.”⁵²

Consequently, the same excesses and lack of control over bodily desires that the Greek attributed to satyrs could, according to the anatomists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, also be found in apes. According to Pliny, the “satyrs got their name from ... the *membrum virile*, because they were always prone to lust.”⁵³ Likewise, it was believed that monkeys fell in love with women and tried to seduce them. Nicolaes Tulp, the Amsterdam physician who is immortalised in one of Rembrandt’s most famous paintings, the *Anatomy Lesson* from 1632, once revealed that he “had heard from a relative of his, a Dutch East Indian Company merchant in Borneo, that orang-utans had strong desires for women.”⁵⁴

Another feature that connects the apes with satyrs, attendants of Dionysus, is the staff that often accompanies both of them in ancient depictions. In ancient works of art, such as Greek vases, Dionysus himself, as well as his fellows, the satyrs and the maenads, are often represented with a so-called *thyrsos*; a staff covered with leaves of ivy and vine, which had a phallic meaning in rituals. In Camper and Winckelmann’s time, belief in mythological creatures such as satyrs was waning, but, strangely, the result of the disappearance of the satyr was that the ape inherited its attributes. In fact, the oldest depiction of an anthropoid ape that we know of, reproduced in Bernhard von Breydenbach’s *Travels in the Holy Land* from 1486, shows a tailed baboon with a staff in his hand. Several later scientists—Konrad Gesner in Switzerland, Ulisse Aldrovandi in Italy, and Carl von Linné in Sweden—all copied their illustrations from Breydenbach. For a period, the staff was almost compulsory whenever an ape was depicted. Even a chimpanzee drawn by William Cowper in 1699 from a real (albeit deceased) specimen was equipped with a stick.⁵⁵

Underlying the comparison between ape and satyr was the idea that similar physiognomy was an indication of similar habits and character. Representing the untamed, brutish, lustful, and uncivilised in nature, the ape and satyr are the exact opposite of the simplicity and quiet grandeur typical of Winckelmann’s Apollonian ideal. The central part of Winckelmann’s *History of Art* is introduced by a long chapter on supreme beauty, where the

distinction between sensual and ideal beauty from his *Reflections* is developed further on the dichotomy between Apollonian and Dionysian elements in culture. However, the relationship between these two opposites is not symmetrical, for it is only the Apollonian that represents the *edle Einfalt und stille Größe*. Winckelmann never had any doubt that the mentioned Apollo Belvedere was the work of antiquity that best embodied this ideal, so he was astonished when he heard that the art collector Philipp von Stosch (1691–1757), owner of one of Europe’s finest collections of cameos, intaglios, and antique glass pastes, claimed that the Vatican masterpiece was inferior in quality to a number of other antique works of art, mentioning the *Sleeping Faun* of the Barberini Collection (now in the Glyptothek, Munich), the two old satyrs in the Capitoline Collection, and even the *Centaur* in the Villa Borghese (now in the Louvre), all of which Winckelmann felt were far from any standard of beauty.⁵⁶

The attentive reader will have noticed that the above examples—all of which Winckelmann considered to be inferior in aesthetic quality with respect to the Apollo Belvedere—are beings that, to the Greek imagination, represented the brutish and uncivilised forces of nature. According to Winckelmann, the opposite of Apollonian grandeur was *parenthyrsis*, a rhetorical concept that denotes excessive, vehement passion (*heftige Leidenschaft*) and is characterised by exaggerated *pathos*, empty ostentation, and bombastic speech.⁵⁷ Actually, *parenthyrsis* (or *parenthyrsos*) is not a common word in classical rhetoric. Max Baeumer suggested that Winckelmann took it from *thyrsos*, which was a wand or staff covered with leaves of ivy and vine.⁵⁸ As we have seen, this staff, a symbol of fertility and pleasure that originally belonged to the cult of Dionysus and its orgies that featured masked dances and animal sacrifices, was also associated with the ape—an animal found on various continents, but not in Europe. It is worth noting that, during Winckelmann’s time, the Dionysian cult was believed to have originated in Asia, whereas that of Apollo was endemic to Europe.

With regard to Winckelmann’s analysis of the said works in Roman collections, we must remember that fauns, satyrs, and centaurs were fellows of Dionysus and that his assessment of the quality of these works of art is based on a dichotomy between Apollonian and Dionysian tendencies; a contrast that he believed was fundamental to ancient Greek culture. Among the German intellectuals who picked up the thread from Winckelmann in the following century, the most famous was Friedrich Nietzsche.⁵⁹

According to Nietzsche, to fully understand this opposition we must realise that the origin and essence of the Greek tragedy can be found precisely in the synthesis of the two artistic impulses that we call the Apollonian and the Dionysian.⁶⁰ Nietzsche claimed that the history of Western civilisation is characterised by a preference for reason and clarity, represented by Socrates in philosophy and in art by the figure of Apollo. Challenging this hierarchy, which puts self-control before delight, Nietzsche introduced the Dionysian, “a symbol of the ecstatic, primitive, inebriated and savage,” as a counterpart to classicism.⁶¹

Nietzsche was not the first to challenge the Apollonian dominance in German intellectual life. A move away from the Olympian gods can be found already in Heinrich Heine’s (1797-1856) *The Gods in Exile* from 1854—a story inspired by medieval lore about what happened to the Greek and Roman gods that were overthrown by Christianity. According to Butler, Heine saw Dionysus as “the denial of serenity and repose, the very antithesis of that rigidity and lifelessness with which ... Goethe had endowed Greek art and mythology.”⁶²

However, as Steinhauer said in a review of Butler’s book: “even if Heine did anticipate Nietzsche in viewing Greek civilisation as ruled by the spirit of Dionysos rather than that of Apollo, nevertheless it was through Nietzsche’s powerful stimulus, not Heine’s, that the Dionysian cult has spread over the contemporary world.”⁶³ Nietzsche claimed that his predecessors had not sufficiently allowed for the role of irrational, emotional, and mythical elements in ancient Greek society. In his *Twilight of the Idols* (1889) he specifically condemned Winckelmann and Goethe for their inability to comprehend the Greeks, and for having constructed the concept “Greek” for themselves. Is it really true, he asked, that one in Hellenism could recognise only perfection and sublime simplicity [*hohe Einfalt*]?⁶⁴

There is no doubt that Nietzsche was influenced by the idealism of German eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century philosophy, despite his attempts to distance himself from it. His idea of the Dionysian as a cultural element that defies Apollonian control was designed to contradict the ideas of Winckelmann. Indeed, Winckelmann and Nietzsche evaluated the role of the Apollonian element in Western society in totally different ways. For Winckelmann, the facial line characteristic of Greek physiognomy was evidence that the upper part of the head, associated with reason, controls the lower part (the mouth), associated with appetite. Nietzsche, putting the Dionysian on

equal foot with the Apollonian, reminds us that man is not reason alone, but also will, desire, and emotions.

The contrast between Nietzsche and Winckelmann reminds us that there has been more than one form of classicism in the history of Europe. There are at least two, and if these include the Apollonian and the Dionysian, we must return to George L. Mosse's claim that that twentieth-century nationalism adopted a neoclassical male aesthetic that was sponsored by pseudosciences that compared Europeans with indigenous groups "based on their resemblances to or differences from the idealized Greeks."⁶⁵ It is true that the classic heritage was a favourite theme of authoritarian regimes of the twentieth century, such as Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. The importance given to aesthetics in Germany is made clear by the fact that the architect Albert Speer, designer of Hitler's New Reich Chancellery and responsible for the plans for *Germania*, the projected renewal of Berlin, was one of the Führer's closest allies and minister of armaments. Speer's buildings were infused with a neoclassical taste, as was the sculptural work of Arno Breker (1900-1991). Breker's two statues for the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin (*Zehnkämpfer*, Ill. 6, and *Die Siegerin*), and Leni Riefenstahl's (1902-2003) documentary film *Olympia* of the same event, were both important in promoting an "Aryan" body ideal.

Yet, having seen that there is more than one "classicism," it is by no means evident that it was the Apollonian version of it that inspired the Nazi rulers. It could just as well have been Nietzsche's Dionysian mysticism. An important link between Nietzsche and Nazi ideology was the philosopher Alfred Bäumler (1887-1968), who, in 1933, after Hitler's rise to power, moved from Dresden to an important position as professor in Berlin. His main philosophical work from 1931, *Nietzsche, der Philosoph und Politiker*—characterised by Thomas Mann as a Hitler prophecy—was a systematic attempt to promote Nietzsche as the core figure in the development of a new Nazi ideology.⁶⁶ According to Bäumler's interpretation of Nietzsche, life is a continuous struggle between master and slave without any hope of solution or peace. "This view of life is captured by Nietzsche's expression 'will to power'—a phrase that illumines his entire thought and serves as the basic metaphysical truth for the world around."⁶⁷

Nietzsche, who died in 1900, was not a Nazi, and his popularity among the Nazis is largely due to the promotion activity of his sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, who assumed the role as editor of his *Nachlass* following the philosopher's breakdown in



Fig. 6
Arno Breker, *Zehnkämpfer* (public domain).

1889, and her husband, Bernhard Förster, a leading German anti-Semite. Still, some key Nietzschean concepts, like *Übermensch* and “blond beast,” were far more useful to Nazi ideology than were the ideals of Apollonian restraint promoted by Winckelmann. Nietzsche’s emphasis on “will” paved the way for a re-evaluation of man’s irrational nature in a way that was useful for the Nazis. Hitler considered “will” and “power” as

... more important to a leader in directing the masses than appealing to objective intelligence. The great leader must be a “psychologist,” not a “theoretician,” a “man of little scientific education but physically healthy, with a good, firm character, imbued with the joy of determination and will-power” rather than a “clever weakling.” Intellectual appeals to objective truth and fairness have little effect in swaying the masses when compared to the art of propaganda, which incites emotion and stirs conviction through the constant repetition of its half-truths.⁶⁸

A philosophy that considers “will” as more important than “intellect” is often referred to as “voluntarism.” Important representatives of this movement include Nietzsche himself and the philosopher who probably inspired him most, Arthur Schopenhauer. Nietzsche’s idea of “will,” a central concept in his *Also sprach Zarathustra* from 1883 to 1885, must be seen in light of his critique of the Socratic reason that dominated Greek art and intellectual life. The introduction of Socratic rationalism in the Greek tragedy, said Nietzsche, came from Euripides, whose appeal to ethical standards overturned the subtle balance of the Dionysian and Apollonian that characterised the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles. According to Nietzsche, this version of Greek philosophy, represented by the Socratic repression of emotion and myth and continued by modern philosophers such as Kant and Hegel, was Apollonian, decadent, and unhealthy.

From this, we may conclude that there was a neoclassic trend, stemming from Winckelmann, that emphasised the significance of the Apollonian element in European art and history, and a romantic trend from Nietzsche that sought to promote Dionysus as, at least, equally important. The idea that there are two quite distinct currents of classicism in European history was also shared by Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Brian Holmes. In an interesting article titled “The Nazi Myth” these three authors distinguished between a French variant

(the “neoclassic”) and a German, deriving from psychosis and schizophrenia (the malady that seems “always to have menaced Germany is schizophrenia, to which so many German artists would appear to have succumbed”).⁶⁹ At the dawn of romanticism and speculative idealism, the three authors said, German poets and philosophers discovered that “Greece, in reality, had been double.”⁷⁰ On one hand was the reign of Apollo, characterised by light, clarity, beauty, law, and civilisation; on the other, the nocturnal, sombre, archaic, and savage Greece of religious rituals and sacrifices, intoxications and mysticism (in short: the Greece described by Nietzsche).

In addition to this divide comes that between *logos* and *mythos*. It is well known that Plato excluded poets, artists, and *mimesis* from his ideal state. To create a harmonic society, education had to be free from the negative influence of fantasy, storytelling, and myth, which, according to Plato, had the effect of inducing unacceptable behaviour. Conversely, one must believe that the political leader of a people that lacked a common identity (the situation of the Germans during most of the 1800s) who wanted to create a state very different from the Platonic utopia would find myth useful as a tool to construct elements such as national unity. The myth-making activity of some German Romantics (including Schlegel (1772-1829), originator of the modern concept of “Aryan”) is opposed to the rationality and abstract universality of the *logos* that characterised eighteenth-century Enlightenment thought.

ETHICS AND BODILY HUMOURS

I believe that the three authors (Lacoue-Labarthe et al.) were wrong when they indicated a place for Winckelmann among the German romantics. German romanticism was in its embryonic phase during his time, and his aesthetic preferences are clearly more akin to the tastes of the French champions of neoclassicism, such as Nicolas Poussin, than the romantic painters of the nineteenth century. Moreover, if nineteenth-century romanticism radically transformed the idealistic view of Greece typical of Winckelmann’s generation, there could hardly be a direct line from Winckelmann to modern race theory. But what, then, are we to make of affirmations like the one in the *History of Art* where he compares “the projecting, swollen mouth” of an African person with “the monkey of his land?”⁷¹ As strange as it may seem, there is no racism behind this observation. As mentioned, Winckelmann had no idea of evolution, so the statement that a similarity exists did not imply any thoughts about genetic relationship. Instead,

the resemblance can perhaps be explained by reference to climate. Since the African and the ape live on the same continent, they are affected by the same climatic conditions—humidity and high temperatures. When the body is exposed to very high temperatures, “external heat ... draws out the moisture of the body, and with that the ‘spiritus’ or breath of life that courses with the blood through the veins.”⁷² Here, Winckelmann was in line with common opinion about Africans in the eighteenth century. In his essay *Von der verschiedenen Rassen*, Kant stated that “the extreme, humid heat of warm climate caused the spongy parts of the body [of the Negro] to increase ... This growth produced a thick, turned up nose and thick, fatty lips.”⁷³

As heat and humidity can cause parts of the body to swell and increase in size, they also affect man’s personality. Kant argued that the “humid warmth [that] generally promotes the strong growth of animals” and makes people “strong, fleshy, and agile” also makes them “lazy, soft, and dallying.”⁷⁴ At this point, it is important to remember that humidity and temperature are important components in the classic doctrine of humours. According to Bodin, writing some 200 years before Kant, temperature and humidity were assumed to be the most fundamental properties of place, for these “are also the fundamental properties of the four elements of which the body is composed.”⁷⁵ All four elements, Bodin said, are present in all living bodies, as are the four bodily fluids: blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm. This idea clearly refers to the classic medicine of Hippocrates and, especially, Galen, who explained how different personalities—sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic—arise from the admixture of the four abovementioned bodily fluids. A person who is perceived as irascible probably suffers from an abundance of yellow bile, whereas a melancholic person has too much black bile.

Although all personality types (sanguine, choleric, etc.) will be found in all regions and on all continents, there are national character types. Winckelmann’s definition of Egyptians as a melancholic nation was in agreement with a common view at the time that among the inhabitants of the southern (African) regions there would be a predominance of melancholic personalities. In contrast, the peoples of the far north were said to exhibit the opposite qualities, being fair and slow-moving—signs of a phlegmatic complexion.

The perfect habitat for human beings is offered by the temperate zones. At this point we may reflect on the etymology of the word “temperate,” which derives from Latin *temperare* (“to moderate,

regulate”) and in Italian can mean “mix” or “water down.” A person who is “temperate” is moderate and self-restrained, and well suited to occupy important positions in society. For this reason, “temperance” is seen as one of the cardinal virtues, which, not surprisingly, are four in number. In art, the allegorical figure of Temperance is often depicted as a female person who pours a fluid from one cup or container into another.

Thus, “temperate” is an adjective that applies to climate as well as to human temper. To the advocates of classic climate theory, it was evident that temperate regions offered better conditions for life and social coexistence than did the extremes of the far north and the far south. “In the less rigorous climate of the temperate regions,” said Bodin, “where the temperature was such as to conserve the heat of the body without preventing the evaporation of surplus moisture, occurred the better-balanced, choleric, and sanguine types.”⁷⁶

Therefore, political freedom first occurred in Greece due to climatic influences. It was quite natural that democracy was born here, where people thrived on a well-balanced mixture of warm and cold winds. In contrast, the willingness of Egyptians to let themselves be governed by severe laws, and their inability to exist without a king, was, according to Winckelmann, a result of their temper of mind.⁷⁷ Similarly, Bodin said that “the black bile of the melancholic temperament predisposes southerners to contemplation, religion and the occult sciences.”⁷⁸

Just as there were said to be four bodily fluids and four tempers, the human races were posited to essentially be divided into four groups; according to Linné, these were the *Americanus*, *Europaicus*, *Asiaticus*, and *Afer*. The African could be distinguished not only by his outward appearance (black skin, dark, curly hair, flat nose, and thick lips), but even by a “phlegmatic, lazy, sly, and inapprehensive” character.⁷⁹ Similarly, Kant said that

one is only compelled to assume four races of the human species in order to be able to derive from these all the easily distinguishable and self-perpetuating differences, They are 1) the race of the whites, 2) the Negro race, 3) the Hunnish (Mongolian or Kalmuckian) race, 4) the Hindu or Hindustani race.⁸⁰

According to Kant, the best conditions were offered between 31- and 52-degrees latitude in the “Old World.” Kant’s hometown, Königsberg in Prussia, was slightly north of this area. All of

Greece is well within this zone, and Winckelmann was never in doubt that people in this region of Europe had a well-balanced personality that distinguished them from people in other parts of the world.

Considering what was commonly accepted in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century regarding race and environment, we also understand why climate theory was so important to Winckelmann. In it, he found a correspondence between the personality type that characterised people in the northern part of the Mediterranean, and that “noble simplicity and quiet grandeur” that was so emblematic to ancient Greek statues. When he described ancient art, Winckelmann looked for precisely the old masters’ eagerness to avoid excessive display of emotions. Even when they depict a subject of utmost drama, they show moderation. One instance is the story of Niobe, queen of Thebes, who challenged Leto, Zeus’ lover, and was punished by Apollo and Artemis, who slaughtered all of her 14 children. In a sculpture group of *Niobe and her Daughters*, now in the Uffizi, the “indescribable anguish” that they must have felt before the “approach of inevitable death” is transformed in the statue into an instance of highest beauty.⁸¹

In the famous marble group that represents a similarly dramatic event—the story of *Laocoön*, priest of Poseidon, who is killed along with his two sons by serpents—the signs of suffering are more palpable. The reason for this, according to Winckelmann, is that it is from a later period; yet, even if muscles, sinews, and veins reveal anguish, the artist avoided “audible manifestations of pain.”⁸² This restraint is visible when we look at Laocoön’s mouth, which is almost closed, suggesting a whisper rather than a loud cry.

In the case of *Laocoön*, as in the *Niobe*, the artist did not permit any expression of feeling that would contrast and make impossible art’s main purpose: the pursuit of beauty. What we see is a marked contrast between the poetic narration of a story and the depiction of it in visual art.⁸³ Winckelmann maintained that painters and sculptors had less license than did poets, for in their pursuit of beauty, the visual artists had to subdue the expression of passions in order to “not conflict with the physical beauty of the figure which he models.”⁸⁴

It is the close relationship between ethics and aesthetics, combined with the physiognomic conviction that moral qualities are made visually manifest in a person’s facial traits, that guided Winckelmann’s search for signs of nobility in the human anatomy. This he found in the Greek profile, as well as in the restraint

that characterises much of ancient art. For the same reason, he condemned “the mixture of new kinds of expression typified by excessive passion—*Raserei* and *Leidenschaften*”—reflected in the faces of Bernini.⁸⁵ Winckelmann’s defence of Poussin and criticism of Bernini was modelled on the opposition between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. He endorsed what he believed to be Apollonian virtues, contrasting these with the Dionysian. In this, he had a totally different view of Greek antiquity than did Nietzsche. When we assess the role that the glorification of classical antiquity played in Winckelmann’s contribution to thoughts on race, we must remember that there were two contradictory views on classical heritage in Germany. Winckelmann believed that climate shaped people mentally and physically, and that the straightness and fullness of the Greek profile was a sign of moral strength. Inspired by humanist tradition, Winckelmann envisioned his Apollo as a model of civilised life and ethical conduct, an inhabitant of the well-organised state of Socrates and Plato, an adversary of Dionysus. It is by no means evident that modern racism was based on this view—rather, the contrary seems more plausible.

- 1 Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Empty the Museum, Decolonize the Curriculum, Open Theory," *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*, No. 53 (2017): 6-22.
- 2 Mirzoeff, "Empty the Museum," 13.
- 3 Mirzoeff, "Empty the Museum," 14.
- 4 Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York and London: Norton (Kindle edition), 2010), loc. 1059.
- 5 Painter, *White People*, loc. 1030.
- 6 Mirzoeff, "Empty the Museum," 14; Painter, *White People*, loc. 1137.
- 7 Painter, *White People*, loc. 1134.
- 8 Painter, *White People*, loc. 1034.
- 9 The Kalmuck (or Kalmyk) are a people of Mongolian origin who primarily live in the Caucasian region in today's Russia.
- 10 Martial Guédon, "Nature, idéal et caricature. La perception des types physiques chez les premiers anthropologues," *Les actes de colloques du musée du quai Branly Jacques Chirac : Histoire de l'art et anthropologie*, No. 1 (2009): 1.
- 11 George L. Mosse, "Racism and Nationalism," *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 1, no. 2 (1995): 165-166.
- 12 The word used by Mary Beard to describe him in the BBC series *Civilizations* that was launched in 2018.
- 13 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *The History of Ancient Art*, Vol. 1, (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1856), 236.
- 14 Jennifer Tolbert Roberts, *Athens on Trial: The Antidemocratic Tradition in Western Thought* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1994), 210.
- 15 Roberts, *Athens on Trial*, 210.
- 16 Édouard Pommier, *Winckelmann, inventeur de l'histoire de l'art* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003), 10.
- 17 Pommier, *Winckelmann*, 12.
- 18 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Birth of Tragedy," in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. by W. Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 1992).
- 19 Painter, *White People*, loc. 1034.
- 20 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks with Instructions for the Connoisseurs and an Essay on Grace in Works of Art*, trans. by Henry Fuselli. 2nd ed. (London: Millar & Cadell, 1767), 196.
- 21 Cited in Rebecca Comay, "Defaced Statues: Idealism and Iconoclasm in Hegel's Aesthetics," *October*, No. 149 (2014): 127.
- 22 Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 13.
- 23 Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 13.
- 24 Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 260.
- 25 Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 260.
- 26 Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 1.
- 27 Winckelmann, *History*, 1:192-3.
- 28 Marian J. Tooley, "Bodin and the Mediaeval Theory of Climate," *Speculum*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1953): 64-83.
- 29 Winckelmann's famous maxim, sometimes translated as "noble simplicity and sedate grandeur," appears a number of times in his *Reflections on the Painting and the Sculpture of the Greeks*.
- 30 Tooley, "Bodin and the Mediaeval Theory of Climate," 76.
- 31 Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology, History, and Education*, Vol. 11 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 88.
- 32 Tooley, "Bodin and the Medieval Theory," 77.
- 33 Winckelmann, *History*, 1:152.
- 34 Élisabeth Décultot, "Anthropologie et ethnologie de l'histoire de l'art au XVIIIe siècle. Winckelmann et le tableau des peuples antiques," *Etudes Germaniques*, No. 4 (2009): 826.
- 35 Winckelmann, *History*, 1:225.
- 36 Winckelmann, *History*, 1:225.
- 37 Tooley, "Bodin and the Medieval Theory," 68.
- 38 Winckelmann, *History*, 2:5.
- 39 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *The History of Ancient Art*, Vol. 2 (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1856), 38-9.
- 40 Winckelmann, *History*, 2:38-9.
- 41 Steven Decaroli, "The Greek Profile: Hegel's Aesthetics and the Implications of a Pseudo Science," *Paper presented at the The Philosophical Forum*, Vol. 37. No. 2 (2006): 138.
- 42 Miriam Claude Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics in the Anthropology of Petrus Camper (1722-1789): Studies in the History of Ideas in the Low Countries No. 4* (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1999), 105.
- 43 Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics*, 34.
- 44 Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics*, 108.
- 45 Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics*, 144.
- 46 Amy Wygant, "D'Aubignac, Demonologist, I: Monkeys and Monsters," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2001): 156.
- 47 Winckelmann, *History*, 2:198.
- 48 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Il bello nell'arte, la natura, gli antichi, la modernità* (Turin: Einaudi, 2008), loc. 3284-3294. "Di grado inferiore quanto all'ideale sono i fauni, o siano satiri giovani, nel cui disegno miravano gli scultori greci meno alla bellezza del volto, ..."
- 49 Wygant, "D'Aubignac," 155.
- 50 Comay, "Defaced Statues," 139.
- 51 Winckelmann, *Il bello nell'arte*, loc. 3547.
- 52 Terence Hanbury White, *The Book of Beasts: Being a Translation from a Latin Bestiary of the Twelfth Century* (New York: Dover, 1984), 35.
- 53 White, *The Book of Beasts*, 36.
- 54 Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics*, 124-125.
- 55 Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics*, 35.
- 56 Winckelmann, *Il bello nell'arte*, loc. 1504-1512.
- 57 Luca Renzi, "Winckelmann and Nietzsche on the Apollonian and the Dionysian," *New Nietzsche Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1/2 (2000): 133.
- 58 Max L. Baeumer, "Winckelmanns Formulierung der Klassischen Schönheit," *Monatshefte*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (1973): 64.
- 59 Baeumer, "Winckelmanns Formulierung," 72.
- 60 Cf. Nietzsche, *The Birth in Basic Writings*.
- 61 Renzi, "Winckelmann and Nietzsche," 135.
- 62 E. M. Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany: A Study of the Influence Exercised by Greek Art and Poetry over the Great German Writers of the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Boston: Beacon, 1958), 296.
- 63 H. Steinhauer, "German Hellenism," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (1938): 270.

-
- 64 Renzi, "Winckelmann and Nietzsche," 128.
- 65 Mosse, "Racism," 165–166.
- 66 Stephen Strehle, "The Nazis and the German Metaphysical Tradition of Voluntarism," *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (2011): 130.
- 67 Strehle, "The Nazis," 131.
- 68 Cited in Strehle, "The Nazis," 126.
- 69 Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Brian Holmes, "The Nazi Myth," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1990): 300.
- 70 Lacoue-Labarthe, "The Nazi Myth," 301.
- 71 Winckelmann, *History*, 2:38–39.
- 72 Tooley, "Bodin and the Medieval Theory," 72.
- 73 Kant, cited in Jon M. Mikkelsen, ed., *Kant and the Concept of Race: Late Eighteenth-Century Writings* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2013), 67.
- 74 Mikkelsen, *Kant and the Concept*, 67.
- 75 Tooley, "Bodin and the Medieval Theory," 72.
- 76 Tooley, "Bodin and the Medieval Theory," 73.
- 77 Winckelmann, *History*, 1:247.
- 78 Tooley, "Bodin and the Medieval Theory," 75.
- 79 H James Birx, *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, Vol. 1 (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2006), 1491–1492; Jonathan Marks, "Systematics in Anthropology Where Science Confronts the Humanities (and Consistently Loses)," in *Conceptual Issues in Modern Human Origins Research*, eds. G. A. Clark and C. M Willermet (New York: De Gruyter, 1997), 46.
- 80 Kant, *Anthropology*, 87.
- 81 Winckelmann, *History*, 2:121–122.
- 82 Winckelmann, *History*, 2:122.
- 83 As is well known, the respective roles of word and image in relation to the *Laocoön* group was the main issue in the polemic between Winckelmann and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. Cf. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoön: An Essay Upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (Mineola: Dover Books, 2005).
- 84 Winckelmann, *History*, 2:121.
- 85 Renzi, "Winckelmann and Nietzsche," 131.