CHAPTER 30

••

SEMIOTICS TO AGENCY

••

TONIO HÖLSCHER

INTRODUCTION

SCIENTIFIC exploration of works of (figurative) art focuses on the three principal questions of meaning, function, and agency: what images signify, how they are used, and what they bring about. The most traditional of these issues is meaning, to which a substantial body of theoretical reflection has been devoted since the beginning of art historical scholarship. Meaning in the visual arts is, in principle, expressed on five different levels:

- Factual meanings, or subject matter, in the sense of designation, of images or their elements: the goddess Athena (figure 30.1), the myth of Heracles killing the Nemean Lion (figure 30.2), the triumph procession of the Roman emperor Titus (figure 30.3).
- Conceptual meanings, in the sense of the implicit significance of images: Athena as an embodiment of warlike power and/or scientific knowledge; Heracles as an example of individual heroism, a protagonist of world conquest, a model of the exuberant joy of life or of controlled male virtue; the triumph of Titus as a manifestation of the emperor's *virtus* and *honos* and of Rome's claim to world dominion.
- Explicit historical messages of images, expressed and experienced in the frame of their functions and roles, in their (changing) context(s), situations, or locations *within the horizon of historical societies*: the statue of Athena Parthenos in the Parthenon as an expression of Athenian political identity and imperial claims in the time of Pericles; images of Heracles killing the lion as exemplary models of Alexander the Great; the glorification of the triumph of Titus on his honorary arch as a message of his brother and successor, Domitian, in order to strengthen his dynastic power.
- Implicit historical meanings of images, valuated in their significance *from the perspective and through the categories of modern historians*: the statue of Athena Parthenos as a high point of Athenian classicism; Heracles as an exponent of Greek body culture; the triumph relief of the Arch of Titus as a document of the "eternal" struggle between "East" and "West."

FIG. 30.1 Version of the Athena Parthenos by Phidias of 438 BCE ("Varvakeion statuette"), from Athens (Varvakeion School). First half of the third century CE. Marble. Height with base 1.05 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. 129.

(Photograph © Gianni Dagli Orti/The Art Archive at Art Resource, New York, AA389405.)

- Actualized meanings of images, *translated according to experiences and concepts of modern observers*: Athena as a model case of a virgin daughter related only to her father; Heracles as a prototype of predominant "maleness"; the triumph of Titus over the Jews as a manifestation of proto-anti-Semitism.

On each of these levels, specific methodologies were developed by modern scholarship within the general cultural and intellectual framework of their time.

HISTORY: FROM HERMENEUTICS TO VISUAL AGENCY

From Early Modern times on, the approach to ancient art was conditioned by two kinds of alienation. First, the images of antiquity were removed from their original contexts and seen as isolated testimonies of historical culture; second, they often were perceived

FIG. 30.2 Relief on a harness from the Treasure of Panagyurishte. Heracles and the Nemean Lion. Fourth century BCE. Silver. Sofia, Archaeological Museum.

(Photograph © Erich Lessing/Art Resource, New York, ART85662.)

without the specific ancient sense of visuality and interpreted with the categories of literary—that is, nonvisual—traditions. Both factors affect the meaning of art. The path of modern approaches can be described as a series of attempts to regain historical contexts and visuality.

From Baroque Antiquarianism to Positivist Hermeneutics

The reevaluation of ancient art during the Renaissance and Baroque periods led not only to a reappraisal of (Greek and) Roman art forms by artists, connoisseurs, and collectors but also to a new scholarly interest in the themes represented. Learned scholars called antiquarians assembled great quantities of documents from antiquity, both images and objects of material culture, explaining them mostly as testimonies of the Roman world (and thereby ignoring the fact that many themes of Roman art came from Greek traditions). They appreciated material testimonies because of their greater reliability compared with literary texts; their general aim was not so much to interpret the objects through critical methods but to integrate them into a comprehensive order of the
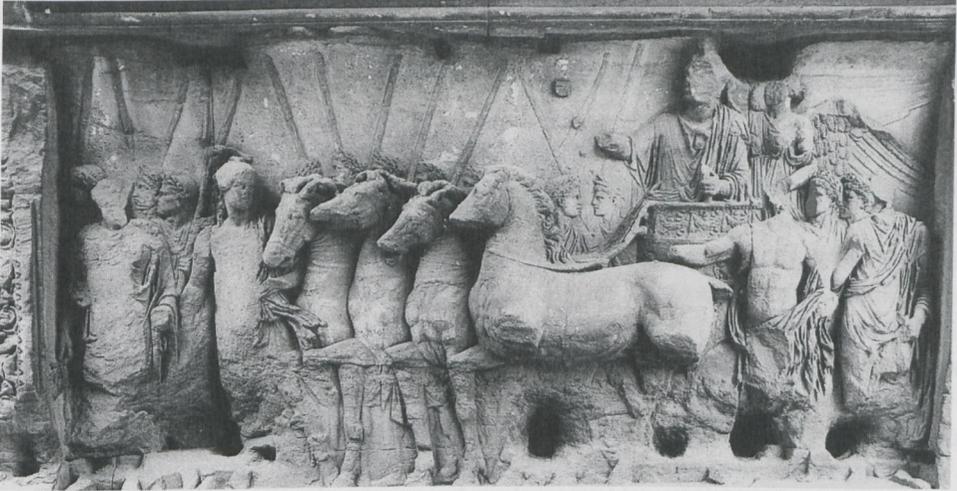
FIG. 30.3 Detail of the Arch of Titus on the Via Sacra in the Forum Romanum. Triumphal procession of the emperor Titus. 81 CE. Marble. Height of the arch 15.40 m.

(Photograph © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome.)

world. The most extensive project of this kind was Bernard de Montfaucon's *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures* (1719–1724), including forty thousand illustrations of images and objects, presented in a hierarchical sequence of the realms of the divine (*res divinae*: gods and heroes) and the sacred (*res sacrae*: religion), followed by the human spheres of social and military affairs (*res publicae/privatae* and *res militares*), and burial and afterlife. In many respects, the antiquarians laid the methodological foundations of archaeological research, not least regarding typology and iconography of works of art (Stark 1880; Momigliano 1950; Schnapp 1993 and 2008; see also chapters 18 and 19 above).

Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the founder of modern art history based on artistic style, was also influential through his methodology of hermeneutics, developed in particular in his *Monumenti antichi inediti* (1767). His insight that many works of Roman art represented Greek myths was based on the assumption that art is a kind of silent poetry, and therefore, as in poetry, the most sublime theme of art was Greek myth. In this sense, art is essentially seen as an illustration of myth which is an entity of its own separated from the reality of human life; the task of scholarship is to decipher the myths in art (Himmelmann 1971). Questions regarding artistic genres or functions are not posed. Instead, the meaning of Greek art is, on the one hand, deduced from its general historical circumstances: political freedom as the ideal condition of beauty in art, its suppression as a cause of art's decline. On the other hand, its values are derived from ideals of Winckelmann's own time: *edle Einfalt, stille Größe* ("noble simplicity and quiet grandeur").

The first systematic methodology of investigating the contents of Greek and Roman works of art is Carl Robert's *Archäologische Hermeneutik* (Robert 1919; see also chapter 25). His declared aim was to determine the factual themes represented in images, to identify figures, actions, and events. To this end, Robert explores, with a kind of philological methodology, images of various complexity, proceeding from single figures with their attributes, mimics, and gestures, to scenes with their narrative elements and compositional forms. In this process, understanding images is partly possible from the image itself, by recognizing its theme through acquaintance with the natural world of beings and objects; it is also partly achieved through the acquaintance with specific cultural circumstances, such as knowledge of myths, use of literary texts, comparison with other images, and consideration of contexts, local setting of works of art and configurations of themes in the frame of a monument. In principle, this is a positivist approach, highly efficient and fundamental to this day but of limited reach. Wider aspects of meaning of the works of art, such as ethical behavior and social values, the character of gods and heroes, the religious or political context of images, their genre and function, are in part considered but always in the service of concrete explanation, not for their own sake.

A fundamental new theoretical approach was developed by art historians Aby Warburg and Erwin Panofsky (see chapter 25). Panofsky's three-step model of interpretation, leading from the identification of "natural" subjects, to the recognition of culturally stamped themes, and ultimately to the deeper cultural content of art as an expression of basic cultural conceptualizations and attitudes of entire societies and epochs, is in some respects a predecessor of later semiotic theory (Panofsky 1939). The main weakness of this theoretical framework consists of the fact that "meaning" is basically confined to the factual themes of images and their conceptual, ethical, or religious significance, which can be adequately expressed through language, whereas the artistic form, the constituent feature of the visual arts, is much less present as an essential bearer of "meaning." On a higher philosophical level, Panofsky's system was criticized as being based on the assumption of an essential truth that is embodied in art and has to be recognized by the observer, leaving little space for the polyvalence and openness of works of art and for the dynamics of reception by viewers who interpret them according to their own cultural horizon and actual experiences.

Semiotics

The theory of semiotics has developed a conceptual framework of analyzing and understanding social and cultural practice on the basis of signs, as a process of signification. Pioneered by the British philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1834–1914; Peirce 1931) and the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913; Saussure 1916) and influentially further developed by Roland Barthes in France (1915–1980; Barthes 1964) and Umberto Eco in Italy (1932–; Eco 1968), the semiotic approach aims to offer a general concept of human culture and social practice. Human culture is seen as a dominion of signs, used to transport cultural meaning in social

interaction. Among the various systems of signs, language and script hold in practice a privileged position. Visual systems play a minor role and are often overshadowed by categories taken from linguistics. Nonetheless, semiotic theory was influentially introduced and adopted in the history of Greek and Roman art. Semiotics shares some categories with Panofsky's concept of iconography/iconology, but in general, the semiotic model is opposed to the iconological assumption of an essentialist reference between form and content, emphasizing instead the basically arbitrary character of signs in relation to their meaning. Specific societies develop and use their specific systems of signs in which there is no inherent, major or minor, "truth," and no development toward "superior" semantic systems; semiotics is fundamentally relativistic (for semiotics in Greek and Roman art, see Vernant and Bérard 1984; Schneider, Fehr, and Meyer 1979; for art history, see Bal and Bryson 1991).

Signs designate objects, notions, and ideas. Not only notions and ideas but also objects must be conceptualized in order to be signified: to make an image of a house, the author/artist has to create an imagined image of it, including what he or she considers essential for a house: doors and windows, colors, building materials, three-dimensionality, surroundings, inhabitants. And this imagined image again depends on which idea is behind the house: shelter, technique and style of architecture, home of a family. This concept of a house is the foundation of the image, in terms of semiotics: the "interpretant."

In general, the system of semiotics is conceived on three levels:

- *Semantics* means the relation between a sign and the real or ideal object to which it refers. Examples: the word "horse," the script h-o-r-s-e, a painted/sculpted horse in relation to a real horse and its cultural significance (see below).
- *Syntactics* means the interrelation between the signs in structural systems. Examples: the configuration of beings and things within a painting; the composition of words and phrases in a text or, macroscopic, the principles of configuration and composition in specific cultures of (e.g., Greek, Byzantine, Baroque) "art;" the grammar of specific languages.
- *Pragmatics* means the use and impact of signs in social interactions. Examples: the adoption of a national hymn at public events for creating collective identity, the use of a god's image in a community's civic procession, the dedication of votive offerings as an assertion of the dedicant's piety and/or social status, the erection of political monuments for creating and stabilizing political power among a mass public.

A general difference between language and figurative art is drawn in the representational function of signs: "conventional"/"arbitrary" versus "natural" or, in terms of computer language, "digital" versus "analogue." The signs of language, being essentially sequences of voices, have nothing in common with the designated objects; they are attributed to them by pure convention. The same is true of nonpictographic systems of script, where conventional signs refer to letters, syllables, or words.

In the realm of visuality, distinctions can be made between specific classes of signs. An *icon* is a sign that has a sufficient number of "natural" traits in common with the object it represents. In art, this definition applies to figurative images, in spite of the fact that images also have features of conventional rendering: a horse can be depicted on a sheet of paper by a simple outline; this is sufficient, although no horse possesses a black outline, nor has any horse a flat white body, as is conditioned by the outline's paper background. Conversely, a *symbol* is defined as a conventional sign that has nothing in common with the designated object or meaning, such as a wedding ring or traffic lights. Moreover, *index* refers to visual elements pointing to something that is not self-evident; in life, smoke is (normally) an index of fire; in art, gazes and gestures of figures can emphasize specific motifs within a painting.

On the level of semantics, a basic distinction is made between *denotation* and *connotation*. Denotation means the designation of an object as such—a horse or a scene of sacrifice—whereas connotation circumscribes the implied meaning(s) of this theme. A horse can be "connotated" or interpreted as a workforce of agriculture, a symbol of social nobility, or an embodiment of sexual lust, and so forth. Such meanings are not "naturally" inherent in these themes but are culturally ascribed to them; yet they are the primary motif of conveying to these figures cultural significance. Thus, as a rule, horses are thematized in art and literature not because of their "natural" existence but because of their cultural significance. In Roman art, scholarship has largely focused on connotated meaning in political monuments: on scenes of triumph as examples of *virtus* or rites of sacrifice as a demonstration of *pietas*. Correspondingly, in Greek art, naked bodies of young men express male "beauty and virtue" (*kalokagathia*), elegant maidens appear in garments and with gestures that demonstrate attraction (*charis*). Generally speaking, this is the level on which all essential questions of "meaning" in the visual arts are to be dealt with: from social values, their affirmation and subversion, to gender issues and psychoanalysis.

On the level of syntactics, a basic difference is emphasized between the notions of a general code and a specific message (in French, *langue* and *parole*). Code/*langue* defines an entire system of communicative signs, such as the grammar of a specific language or the formal principles of a specific society's figurative art, whereas message/*parole* means the specific work, text, or image that is produced by choosing and composing appropriate elements out of this system. In this sense, the general system of "Classical" Greek art forms of the fifth century BCE provides a general view of the world, implying a concept of beings and things as forces and counterforces and a reciprocal spatial interrelation between images and viewers; whereas the figure of Polyclitus's heroic lance bearer, the Doryphorus (figure 29.2), or the compositions of Athenian myths in the Parthenon pediments use this "system" in order to give this specific hero and these specific myths a specific dynamic form and complex meaning. Likewise, the classicism of art in the time of the emperor Augustus is a general style of shaping Roman *maiestas* and *dignitas*, whereas on the Augustan Ara Pacis (figure 15.2) this style is adopted for a specific ideological message of religiosity and peace (Zanker 1987). The visual code circumscribes the general generative rules and structures of depiction that make possible the production

of images for the specific functions of denotation and connotation, of representing specific themes, conveying their meaning and giving them power in social interaction.

On the level of pragmatics, a model of social communication was developed that conceives signs, such as texts or images, as messages between an expedient/sender and a receiver. Signs, in this sense, are not static things but events. The expedient/sender creates, on the basis of his or her cultural code, a message that is transmitted to an individual or collective receiver, who comprehends it by means of his or her own cultural code. This model has two major consequences. First, the message is not thought to be just passively perceived but to arouse an active reaction on the side of the receiver—and this reaction may turn back to the expedient or go further to other participants, who again are supposed to react, in a never-ending chain. Second, the model envisages the possibility that the cultural codes of the expedient and the receiver may either coincide or more or less diverge from each other; in the case of coincidence, the receiver will understand the message in the sense intended by the expedient, while in the case of divergence, a reinterpretation is to be expected according to the receiver's individual or collective cultural framework and life experiences. Both of these aspects constitute dynamic factors of the semiotic process.

In a schematic way, the semiotic model can be visualized as follows:

```
                        object – notion – idea



        code I                   sign/image                  code II



                        icon – index – symbol



                        denotion – connotation


  sender/author/"artist"          message          receiver/viewer
```
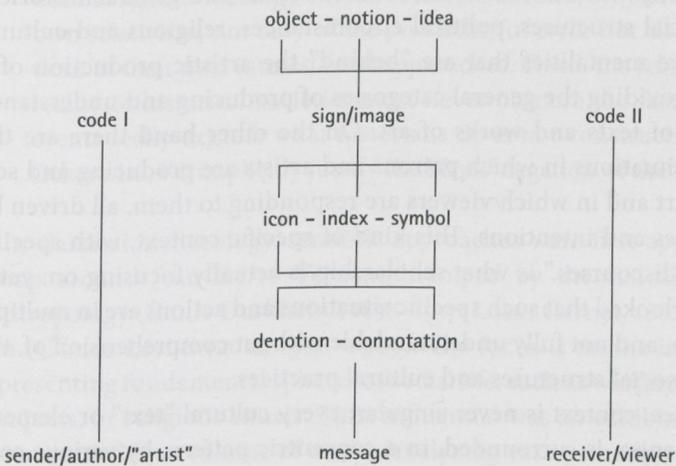
Within this theoretical framework, some basic general notions of the cultural field of the visual arts are defined in a new sense:

- The *sign*, and especially the work of art, is not understood as a given fact, embodying some essential truth, authoritatively expressed by the artist, and to be correctly recognized by "the" spectator through faithful observation. Its meaning is again and again actualized in acts of active appropriation; therefore, it is in many respects open to reinterpretations by a plurality of viewers.
- The *author*, that is, the artist and also the patron, is no longer conceived of as an autonomous creator and initiator but as a mediator in a communicative chain

between collective cultural concepts and anticipated audiences. By using the language and the visual conventions of their society and period, artists and patrons display their individual intentions within a firm structure of inherited collective modes of perception, thought, and expression. In this sense, Barthes heralded "The Death of the Author," intending thereby the notion of a creative genius as the highest authority of its meaning (Barthes 1984).

- The *receiver*, or viewer, on the other hand, is no longer seen as a passive observer but as an active viewer. After its production, it is only through the act of viewing that the work of art is engendered with meaning by the totality of viewers throughout time, and this chain of reception ends with the actual scholar and his or her narrative about the work. Receivers, too, are acting not just according to their individual experiences and character but on the basis of the cultural practice, repertoire, and concepts of their group or society.

- Finally, *context* plays a major role in semiotic theory. Senders articulate their messages/"texts," and receivers interpret them within the net of their social and cultural conditions/"contexts." Here, corresponding to the syntactic notions of code and message (see above), a distinction is to be made between general and specific contextuality. On the one side, context means the general historical frame, such as social structures, political circumstances, religious and cultural premises, collective mentalities that are "behind" the artistic production of a specific society, providing the general categories of producing and understanding the messages of texts and works of art. On the other hand there are the specific concrete situations in which patrons and artists are producing and setting up works of art and in which viewers are responding to them, all driven by specific experiences and intentions. This kind of specific context, with specific interactions and "discourses," is what scholarship is actually focusing on; yet it should not be overlooked that such specific situations and actions are in multiple ways embedded in, and not fully understandable without comprehension of, the wider contexts of social structures and cultural practices.

As a consequence, context is never singular: every cultural "text" or element, object or phenomenon, is surrounded, in a concentric pattern, by various contexts—social, political, religious, technical, artistic, and so forth. Moreover, contexts are reciprocal, changing their position depending on the specific scientific focus: "texts" can become "contexts," and vice versa.

The dynamic concept of semiotic communication implies that contexts, contrary to common assumptions, are never given facts and determining forces of the production and reception of works of art: for all "contextual," that is, social and cultural, circumstances are exposed to interpretation and modification by social agents; works of art, as factors of social agency between producers and receivers, can confirm and also contradict and modify the contextual conditions of their origin. Context, in this sense, is both a premise and a result of cultural practice, wherein works of art unfold their impact.

Last but not least, the investigating scholar is just the final link in the chain of reception; scientific narratives about art, too, are stamped by scholars' general cultural premises and their personal points of view. This applies above all to the choice of themes for investigation. Most scholarly interests are more or less clearly influenced by contemporary priorities: political representation or gender issues after 1968, "foreign" cultures in the period of postcolonialism, and so forth. In order to avoid the danger of anachronistic actualizations (by modern concepts of "political propaganda," contemporary "feminism," or "political correctness"), historical contextualization is helpful. But even historical contexts are not firm and objective frames of "uninvolved" research, for "contexts" are never given facts. They, too, are constituted by scholars through selection from the multiplicity of historical phenomena, according to the questions they are asking around cultural signs/works of art. Such scientific relativism is unavoidable in reasonable concepts of historical research, and insofar as it directs scholarship to deal with themes and aspects of relevance to present-time societies, it is a fruitful incentive, but only under three conditions. First, the present-time perspective on historical cultures should generate open *questions*, not pregiven *answers*; there must be a clear borderline against ideology-driven research. Second, scholars must be aware of their own relativism, not only of the possibility of error but also of the implicit limitations of their own interests and approaches. Third, the relativity of insight into the reality of historical societies must never obscure the fact that those people and events really existed; what historians do is not construction but reconstruction. Otherwise, we implicitly justify the Nazis' negation of the Holocaust.

In classical archaeology, semiotic approaches were first applied in a francophone group around Jean-Pierre Vernant, stamped by theoretical approaches of social anthropology (Èmile Durkheim, 1858–1917; Louis Gernet, 1882–1962) and structuralism (Claude Lévi-Strauss, 1908–2009). The focus is on the imagery of Greek vases, representing fundamental spheres of social life, such as warfare, hunting and athletics, banquets, or religious rituals. Most influential was an exhibition *La Cité des images*, accompanied by a volume of essays, analyzing vase paintings as visual creations of a conceptual social polis order (Vernant and Bérard 1984; see also chapters 25 and 28 above). The basic approach is constructivist: images are not seen as reproductions of social realities but as visual creations of social structures and concepts. At the same time, this approach is influenced by structuralist views, emphasizing conceptual polarities, such as culture vs. nature, polis vs. oikos, male vs. female, youth vs. adulthood, elite vs. lower classes, Greek vs. non-Greek. In principle, the ancient world is seen as a fundamentally "foreign" culture; yet, within this structural foreignness historical conditions and changes are considered more or less irrelevant (Vernant and Bérard 1984; Lissarrague 1990; Schmitt-Pantel 1992; Schnapp 1997 and 2008).

More emphasis was given to historical contexts in semiotic interpretations of political monuments in Germany (see in general Schneider, Fehr, and Meyer 1979). Along this line, the cult statue of Athena Parthenos was analyzed as a comprehensive ideological program of the democratic state of Athens (Fehr 1979b). In a wider sense, though less explicitly, most

scholarship of this period on public art was influenced by semiotic positions. Public monuments were investigated as manifestations of political power (Torelli 1982; Coarelli 1996). Greek and Roman portrait statues were no longer interpreted as representations of individuals but as bearers of messages about political and social values and rank (Brilliant 1963; Hölscher 1971; Zanker 1973; Giuliani 1986). The imagery of Roman state monuments was interpreted as a representation of ideological concepts: scenes of triumph as manifestations of military prowess (*virtus*), the acceptance by a Roman commander of the submission of enemies as demonstrations of clemency (*clementia*) and trustworthiness (*fides*), the performance of sacrifices as acts of piety (*pietas*) and foresight (*providentia*) (Hölscher 1980).

While semiotic theory has brought fundamental insights into cultural history, it implies some basic problems when applied to the visual arts.

A general problem in the semiotic approach to figurative art is its inherent concept of the sign as a bearer of meaning different from the sign itself. This is most apparent in the Saussurean branch of semiotics, which emphasizes the arbitrariness and conventionality of signs, according to the model of language. Like words and texts that are essentially *not* what they signify, the essence of images is seen in those features that differ from reality, such as the black outline of a horse on a white sheet of paper. More adequate to the communicative system of images is the Peircean concept where—beside *symbols*, defined as purely arbitrary signs of objects and notions, and *indexes*, as hints to contents different from the sign—*icons* are included as signs that share some visual qualities with the real object; but there, too, the definition as a sign is based on the conventional features of images. In this sense, the semiotic approach to art carries on a divide between form and content that was inherent in most earlier approaches of archaeological hermeneutics: visual forms become secondary with regard to the messages that are conceived according to the model of linguistic notions. It is true that images *can* transport more or less ideal notions and abstract meanings that can be more or less precisely expressed in words: the *aretē* of naked youths, the *charis* of young maidens. The essential character of images, however, implies that they visually and concretely embody, and in this sense *are*, what they mean. A grave statue of a young man or a public image of a Roman emperor, a statue of Zeus hurling the thunderbolt or of Aphrodite displaying her sensuous beauty, *are* those individuals and deities. The concept of a constructed sign fails to grasp the concrete presence and the immediate physical impact of images.

"The basic tenet of semiotics... is anti-realist" (Bal and Bryson 1991, 174), whereas figurative art is basically mimetic. Art represents reality—through its specific means, and in specific aspects, but still in reference to some experienced or imagined (in the case of myths) reality. Thus, images are, it is true, to some degree productions of human creativity, differing from the "real" world, but to some other degree, they are re-productions of pregiven reality. Semiotics focuses on the first while neglecting the second of these aspects. Yet the distinctive feature of figurative art consists not in those aspects that differ from reality but in those that coincide with the beings and things of the real world. Only on the premise of a basic reference of figurative art to reality can the deviances of technique, style, and formal concepts be dealt with.

The difficulties of adopting semiotic categories developed in linguistics for figurative art lie in some fundamental structural differences between those media. Language

is based on the distinct units of words—"boy," "youth," and "man," "thin" and "thick," "fighting" and "defeating." Literary description can achieve some differentiation but is necessarily bound to fail in describing the multiplicity of individual reality. In contrast, images dispose of infinite transitions between boyhood and old age, slim and fat bodies, and of innumerable ways of depicting the attitudes, movements, and actions of fighting. The same is true on the level of connotated meanings. Notions of language cover only some very general qualities of the images—*aretē* for naked youths, *charis* for young maiden—whereas there are hundreds of different *visual* youths and maidens, embodying multiple variants of *aretē* and *charis*. And it is this specificity of the visual form that constitutes the meaning of an image.

On the level of pragmatics, a weakness of semiotics is the fact that the sign/message appears as a mere projection of the intention of the producing sender and the interests of the comprehending receiver. Recent cultural theory, however, tends to give the sign itself a kind of (relative) autonomy: images, along with other meaningful objects in social practice, have some life of their own which transcends the intentions and interests of senders and receivers (see below).

This does not mean that semiotic theory is in principle inadequate for figurative art; without doubt, it contains many helpful concepts for art history. Yet it has to be basically freed from its specifically linguistic constraints. An approach is required—whether or not under the label of "semiotics"—that seriously considers and exploits the mimetic visuality of ancient figurative art as a producer of meaning in a social context.

From Visual Significance to Social Agency

In reaction against the traditional methodology of iconographic hermeneutics, scholars of the "Vienna School," Franz Wickhoff and Alois Riegl, followed by the art historian Heinrich Wölfflin, developed a concept of pure art history around 1900, focusing on basic formal structures, such as space and surface, pictorial and linear, optic and haptic qualities, which are characteristic of specific historical epochs (Wickhoff 1895; Riegl 1901–1923; Wölfflin 1915; see also chapter 24 above). This methodology, which soon became influential in Greek and Roman archaeology, was a fruitful turn, for it opened the path for an understanding of visual forms as an autonomous medium of meaning (Krahmer 1931; Kaschnitz-Weinberg 1965; Schweitzer 1969). On the other hand, it entailed problematic consequences. In the German branch of *Strukturforschung*, such formal systems were combined with ethnic entities, bringing them—often unwillingly—close to racist ideologies. More in general, the analysis of forms became increasingly detached from the themes and functions of art, ending in an aesthetic interplay of artistic styles lacking any connection with social practice. A critical assessment of such theoretical positions was presented by Otto Brendel in *Prolegomena to a Book on Roman Art*, where he pleaded for a concept of a plurality of styles in Roman art, dissolving the traditional nexus between art forms and the innate character of their producers (Brendel 1953).

Starting in the 1960s and 1970s, new approaches were developed through which images of Greek and Roman art were taken as visual products in their own right, as concepts that had meaning in themselves, constructing visual messages of social and political relevance. For Roman art, Italian scholar Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli and his school introduced a distinction between an *arte aulica*, oriented toward Greek models and used in particular in imperial and elite monuments, and an *arte plebea*, stemming from indigenous Italic roots, which was more in favor among the rising middle classes (Bianchi Bandinelli 1966 and 1969). The French approach to images as constructions of social anthropology, built on semiotic premises, was increasingly developed into a concept of figurative art as a visual system of autonomous character (see above).

In a similar vein, human figures in Greek and Roman sculpture were interpreted according to social practice and values of the body. Postures, gestures, and mimicking of votive statues, sepulchral images, and especially public portrait statues, of politicians, poets, and philosophers, are seen as expressions of social roles and models of behavior that exert power on their viewers (Hölscher 1971; Schneider 1975; Giuliani 1986; Zanker 1995); "light" and "heavy" movements are understood as social habits (Fehr 1979a); the nude male body is seen as a basic element of social activity and impact in Greek culture (for diverging views, see Himmelmann 1990; Hurwit 2007; for Roman bodies, see Hallett 2005); a powerful focus is laid on the erotic aspect of male and female bodies in the context of social practice in ancient Greece (Stewart 1997). The visual significance of bodies is emphasized in distinctions between athletes' bodies; citizens', noncitizens', and foreigners' bodies; heroes' and gods' bodies; but also between bodies in different genres, such as vase painting and grave reliefs (Osborne 2011). In this sense, many features that previously were interpreted as aesthetic forms of style are now conceived of as elements of social and cultural content. This does not mean that style no longer matters; on the contrary, social and cultural life has its style, too. If art refers to reality, reality has affinities to art (see below).

In this context, artistic styles as such are analyzed as an expression of semantic meaning. In Greek art, in particular, the change from the Archaic to the Classical style is interpreted as a far-reaching cultural process, implying the changing interrelation between images and viewers in addition to the changing perception of the world as part of a change of social structure and behavior (Tanner 2006; Neer 2010; the concept of "naturalism" needs further discussion). Roman art is now conceived as a "semantic system" of various styles, mostly derived from Greek prototypes, that are adopted one beside the other for different themes and values (Hölscher 1987).

However, the most important, far-reaching impulse of such approaches is a concept that regards art not only as an expression of social values but as an agent in social interaction: the question is not only what images mean but how they are "used," and what they "do." This means to investigate not only the images as such but the social practices of erecting and "using" images. The imagery of Greek vases is investigated with regard of the vessels' function in the symposion or in funeral rites (Giuliani

1995); Greek and Roman portrait statues are interpreted as factors in a public process of negotiating political and social power (Tanner 2006). In particular, viewing as a response to the formal effects of Greek sculpture is conceived of as a practice of social relevance (Neer 2010). Ultimately, this may lead to a shift from aesthetic to social qualities of art, from "creating" and "viewing" to "agency" and to "living with art" (Hölscher 2012).

PRODUCING, UNDERSTANDING, AND LIVING WITH IMAGES

Premises

Functions and Ontological Status of Images

Images are not signs of something fundamentally different from themselves, but they embody those beings or things that they re-present. The image of a horse has the significance of a horse. Images make beings and things "present," here and now, over time and space. In Greek and Roman antiquity, the ontological status of an image was not to refer the viewer to some transcendent significance beyond the image; its function was "to be there" within the spaces of social life and to make the being or thing represented a part of the social world. As far as there is significance, it is embodied meaning (for the ontological status of images in Greek and Roman culture, see Vernant 1990; Squire 2011).

Images were central elements in what can be termed "iconic culture." There were no "museums" in the modern sense of detached spaces of aesthetic pleasure or erudite study; images were integrated into the spaces and practices of life. They had functions in social practice: as cult statues of gods and goddesses in temples, votive offerings in sanctuaries, images of the deceased on tombs, honorary statues of famous persons in public spaces, meaningful adornment of architecture, authoritative emblems of coins and seals, appropriate decoration of pottery and utensils for various functions in public and private life, such as religious rituals or festive occasions. Images had their meaning within these contexts of social spaces and situations and, vice versa, contributed through their meaning to the character of those spatial and situational contexts. In the frame of such contexts, images became objects of social practice and discourse (Tanner 2006; Hölscher 2012).

Images and Reality

Images are "re-presentations" of beings or things that have a real or imagined existence and on which the image, to some degree, depends. In this sense, an image is a human creation but not a "free" construction. Every image combines "natural" with conventional and arbitrary elements. Archaic kouroi, although they appear to modern eyes highly stylized according to cultural conventions, are full of realistic observations;

conversely, Roman portraits, looking like realistic representations of individual persons, are worked in specific culturally determined forms of mimics, hairstyle and physiognomic types that convey powerful intentional expressions. "Natural" elements serve in identification; "cultural" features enhance meaning.

However, the relationship between "reality" and its representation in images is not one between a meaningless "given" substratum and its sublimation to meaning through art. For "reality" itself is full of meaning, which appears on three levels of cultural practice, both collective and individual. The first level is *perception*. Human beings perceive the real world, its beings, objects, and events, through the lens of their cultural attitudes: mountains and rivers, animals and plants, men and women, and so forth, are not neutral objects but meaningful constituents of an "interpreted" world. The second level is *formation*. Men shape the real world according to their cultural needs and wishes: cities and landscapes, architecture, clothes, pieces of equipment, and so on. The third level is (*inter-*)*action*: Men act and interact in the real world in culturally meaningful ways, such as rituals and forms of behavior.

In this sense, the "real" world, too, is a construct of meanings. Insofar as human beings give the real world visual meaning, through perception, formation, and (inter)action in visual forms, "reality" is a kind of "image." The world of "reality" and the world of images are two media, both potentially loaded with meaning and exerting a comparable visual impact on the participants of these worlds. Because of their different "materials" and conditions of social "use"—"real" beings and objects and targeted activities on the one hand, conventional "artifacts" produced by expressive techniques on the other—the ontological status of the bearer of meaning and the practices of producing and receiving its meaning are not identical. Reality, on the one side, possesses the physical dimensions of life, of active moving, enjoying and suffering, living and dying, all of which are closed to an image. Art, on the other side, includes much greater possibilities of expressive shaping. Nevertheless, both media are in many respects analogous, and the borderline between reality and art is in many respects permeable: a young man fell in love with the statue of Aphrodite by Praxiteles, while a Macedonian general used to tremble in fear of Alexander the Great when looking at his portraits, even long after the king's death.

One of the basic problems of scientific dealings with art lies in the fact that scientific discourse is necessarily bound to communication through language. For, although in principle direct social communication is possible through visual signs, such as through mimics or gestures, complex arguments and discourses on objects outside the involved partners are only possible in the medium of language. Thus, on all levels of scientific analysis and interpretation of visual art, actions of translation from the sphere of visuality to that of language are unavoidable. Even art historical terminology is stamped by this domination of the sister medium: "language" of art and "reading" or even "deciphering" art are widely used terms, without good alternatives at hand. It is all the more essential to keep in mind that the phenomena of art are basically visual and that their visuality must not get lost in the necessarily linguistic operations of scientific discourse.

Factual and Conceptual Meaning

Factual Meaning

As far as the first task of art history is to explore the intended meaning and the actual perception of works of art within historical societies, the precise identification of their factual themes, their subject matter, must be a main focus of research. On the level of factual significance, in semiotic terms, of denotation, the concept of "meaning" is unequivocal: if the artist represents the goddess Athena, or a priest, or a horse, the ancient viewer and also the modern interpreter are supposed to recognize Athena, a priest, or a horse. Doing otherwise was in antiquity and is today not a legitimate act of reception but a mistake.

Recognition of factual themes in works of art is based on previous knowledge on two levels. For concrete "natural" subjects, such as a horse or an old man, visual acquaintance with the real world is required. Themes of cultural practice, however, require specific knowledge—which can only be provided through language. For recognizing that a group of men (and women) lying on beds is neither a hospital nor a collective sleeping room, one must know that the Greeks used to recline on klinai during the symposion. The same applies to specific stories, such as the battle of Alexander against the Persian king Darius, or to the whole range of myths. The battle of Alexander against Darius, the legend of Theseus and the Minotaur, and even the story of the nativity of Jesus Christ can only be narrated in texts and recognized on the basis of verbal narrations: none of these events could be narrated by or recognized from an image alone.

Conceptual Meaning

Beyond their identifiable subjects, images possess conceptual significance. This has long been explored in Roman state art, where victorious battle scenes are interpreted as manifestations of military *virtus*, generals receiving the submission of enemies as models of *clementia*, public sacrifices as examples of *pietas*, and so forth. Roman coins combining images and inscribed legends provide a firm methodological basis for the investigation of conceptual meanings. Likewise, in Greek art, fighting warriors potentially represent heroic prowess, citizens in ordered clothes may show exemplary civic modesty and countenance, while nude male bodies can incorporate the ideal valor and beauty of manliness. Moreover, the realm of myths, a favorite repertoire of Greek and Roman art, is a conceptual world of the highest religious and social relevance. Heracles can be understood as a model of man's physical and ethical excellence, Aeneas and Romulus as protagonists of Roman religious piety and warlike valor, the Trojan war as a venue of archetypal concepts of human behavior and values.

The decisive feature of conceptual meaning in the visual arts is that visuality has its own autonomous power of expression, which is on principle different from other forms of communication. The essence of an image of an athlete or a depiction of the sack of

Troy lies in "figuration" and "configuration," in the physical build of the figures, in their attitudes and movements, actions and interactions, and in their relation to the viewer (see below). This implies that figures of athletes represent not simply *aretē* but infinite forms of powerful athletic bodies in which a beholder might see a spectrum of qualities that he or she subsumes under the term *aretē*. It is specific of Greek and Roman art that images (almost) never become fixed ciphers of fixed meanings. Linguistic terms, therefore, are essentially insufficient for defining the multiplicity of visual meanings, but on the other hand, they are unavoidable for communicating *about* visual meaning. Again, we must be aware of the fact that language is never an equivalent to visual forms but can only *point to* the phenomena of visual art.

Moreover, conceptual meaning is not essentially inherent in an image but is intentionally ascribed to it. Artists represent concrete beings, an athletic body or a well-clothed citizen, leaving it to the spectator to take them as representations of *aretē* or civic countenance. In doing this, they will more or less agree with or respond to the social values of their time, and they may use the specific possibilities of stylistic forms of their time for conveying these messages' visual power. Yet conceptual meaning is never unequivocal.

It is on this level that the artwork's openness and the viewer's freedom of reception come in. Thus, on the level of collective cultural attitudes, nude bodies are valued in different ways by ancient Greek, Roman, and Christian societies; while on the level of individual judgement and taste, viewers can agree or disagree with the values of their society or group.

Openness to interpretation is often taken as a *passe-partout* for far-reaching interpretive license; historical viewers are imagined as being in possession of an unlimited potential of responding and reacting to works of art (which have no weapons of defense against unwanted "scientific harassment"). Yet every society has its specific structures and boundaries of cultural concepts. Interpretation of conceptual meaning has not only to explore open possibilities of viewers' reactions but has also to demonstrate that the suggested interpretation lies within the specific society's cultural spectrum.

The ancient viewers of Greek and Roman art have disappeared, mostly without leaving documents about their impressions. Reconstructing how they might have experienced works of art is a highly conjectural matter. Individual reactions may have widely diverged, from congruence with the intentions of artist and patron to totally deviating perceptions. Such individual positions, however, are normally not traceable through scientific methods. An example of highly personal views about art can be found in the dialogues of Plato, whose understanding of images, stamped by his philosophical premises, is often wrongly assumed to be valid for ancient Greece or even antiquity as a whole. As a rule, what can be investigated are not individual interpretations of any supposed idiosyncratic viewer but only the collective cultural horizon within which "normal" viewers can and will have perceived, understood, and reacted to specific images. This must not mean a totally uniform normative reception within a given society. From literary sources, we know, for example, of two ambitious paintings dedicated by Alcibiades that provoked sharply controversial reactions among his

fellow Athenian citizens: rejection from the elder, enthusiasm from the younger. In this sense, the reception of images by different social groups may be reconstructed, along such axes as between youth and old age, between male and female, between elite and middle class or slaves, and between citizens and foreigners. A major challenge in such enterprises is not to start from general assumptions about what male and female, elite and lower-class, and so on, views "essentially" have to be; even the assumption of antithetical views as such—for example, of male and female viewers—needs verification in every single society. What is meant to be "universal" is mostly a projection of one's own cultural premises. The quest for the viewer needs particularly good documentation and circumspect analysis (for examples, see Elsner 1995 and 2007; Marconi 2004; Sojc 2005).

A major role in determining the possible meanings of an image or object of art is constituted by contexts. The same type of image, such as the statue of an Archaic youth (kouros) or maiden (kore), if dedicated in a sanctuary, means an anonymous representative of the young generation; if erected on a grave, an image of the prematurely deceased; if reexposed in a Roman villa garden, a reminiscence of Greek sacred festivity. Especially instructive are differences of meaning between Greek myths in vase painting, where they primarily refer to exemplary social values, and in the relief decoration of Greek sacred architecture, where they often aim to create patriotic identity (Marconi 2007). Still much debated is the question of how far Greek vases, which in great part were found in graves, were painted for prior use in social life or for being given immediately to the dead and how far this affects their interpretation (Graepler 1997).

A particular challenge for the interpretation from the perspective of changing viewers is the export of Greek (objects decorated with) images to regions of more or less divergent culture, such as South Italy and Sicily, Etruria, or the Black Sea region. In the trade with Greek vases, a wide range of possibilities for mediating between the cultural milieu of production and reception becomes evident: while the producers seem rarely to have designed vases especially for the foreign market, some general selections must have been made by intermediate traders and special choices by the final buyers. The imagery of the vases was of Greek origin, but part of it was common cultural property of Mediterranean elites, such as warfare, hunting, or the symposion; other themes, especially the rich repertoire of Greek myths, were obviously received and adapted with some conceptualizing effort, raising the question of how the images were reinterpreted in terms of those foreign cultures (Marconi 2004; Schmidt and Stähli 2012).

Visual Elements of Meaning: Bodies and Actions, in Reality and Art

The specific capacity of images to represent meaning lies in their visual form. The visual appearance of human or divine figures and also of events of social life and myth is based on three kinds of factors: *figuration, configuration,* and *presentation*. Figuration implies

the physical build of bodies, their equipment, with clothes and attributes, and their dynamic extension through mimics and gestures, attitudes, and actions. Configuration means the concrete interaction with other figures and the general constellation of figures, objects, and the surrounding world. Presentation includes the way in which the image refers to the viewer. All of these factors are effective not only in images but also in social practice. They serve to express meaning in real-life practice and also in art; in principle, the muscular body of an athlete or the solemn performance of a ritual of sacrifice in real life possesses a power of demonstrating athletic valor or religious piety, not identical with but analogous to a visual depiction of these themes in art. In Greek and Roman art, human and divine beings constitute, more than objects and phenomena of the surrounding world, the main themes of depiction. In this sense, the human body ascends to being a "conceptual object" of culture in general and of art in particular (Holmes 2010).

In general, the body, with its qualities, capacities, and activities, presents a rich spectrum of expression: the physical build, clothing and nudity, attributes, postures and attitudes, gestures and mimics, actions and interactions. A systematic exposition of these elements and their application in social practice and in art is a most promising field of future research (Catoni 2005). Most of these features are determined by specific cultural conventions, constituting a web of social signification and communication. They are basic visual elements in the cultural conceptualization of the *Lebenswelt* and also in the production of meaningful works of art. The power of *art*, in comparison with *social practice*, lies in its capacity to shape and compose these elements beyond their natural form and to present them in specific forms to the viewers.

Forms and Themes: Visual and Textual

However, the emphasis on visuality as a sphere of expression and perception of significance, with its own capacities and rules, should not lead to a fundamentalist concept of autonomous visual aesthetics. Recent criticism of "logocentric" approaches to art sometimes tends to limit the interpretation of works of art to purely visual phenomena by rejecting "philological" analysis of content as it is transmitted in verbal form. Even iconographic analysis, focusing on "picture language" of physical traits, attributes, clothes, and so forth, is often dismissed as an oblique "philological" approach to visual art. This, however, is a relapse to the fruitless dead end of autonomous description of form and style, entailing two essential shortfalls of understanding works of art.

On a first level, visual forms are not fully understood without a precise knowledge of what the image represents. Bodies, actions, and interactions as such have meaning only in a very general and imprecise sense. Their significance and their impact in social practice consist of their quality of being bodies of specific subjects, either general subjects such as athletes, intellectuals, or citizens or individuals such as Heracles, Achilles, or Alexander the

Great. The basic assumption of art history that themes in art get their meaning and their power only through their visual form has its complement in the insight that forms get their significance only through the subjects they represent. The power of images, their capacity to exert their impact on social life, is based on both, subject and form, not as two separate aspects but as interdependent factors, subject in its specific form, form of a specific subject.

This implies, without escape, "philological" methodology. For factual subject matters and themes of historical cultures are to a high degree transmitted and preserved in the medium of language; their recognition is based on iconography. Purely visual perception allows the viewer to recognize beings and things that are known to him or her from the experience of his or her own world: human beings, animals, plants, sun, and moon. All culture-specific subjects, however, are inaccessible by pure visual perception. This applies on the one hand to general themes, to social groups such as magistrates, priests, or slaves or to practices such as sacrifices or athletic contests, and on the other hand, to specific subjects, individual persons such as Zeus, Heracles, and Alexander the Great (figure 30.4), or to events such as the episodes of the Trojan War, the victory of Alexander the Great, or the festival of the Panathenaia. Information about such themes can only be provided by language. Neither the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur nor
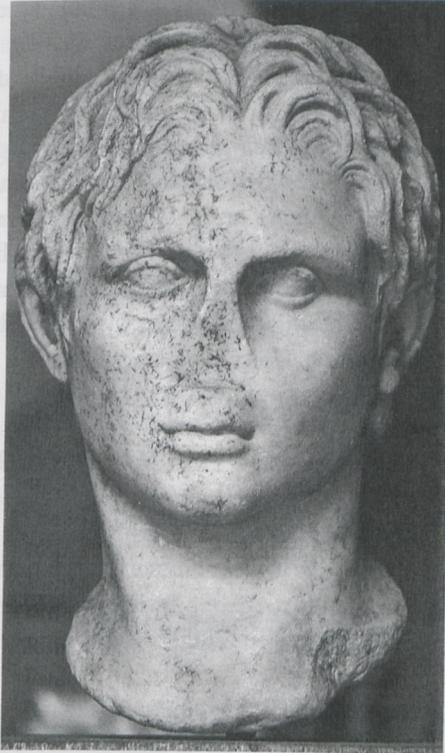

FIG. 30.4 The "Alexander Schwarzenberg." Roman copy of a portrait of Alexander the Great, reportedly from Tivoli. Original of ca. 330 BCE. Marble. Height 35.5 cm. Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlung und Glyptothek, inv. GL 559.

(Photograph by Clemente Marconi.)

the story of the nativity of Jesus Christ would be understandable from an image alone. Images can efficiently preserve the memory of persons and events if once they are known within a society, but they cannot produce the knowledge of them. Viewing and understanding images of culture-specific themes always implies knowledge based on verbal information. Discrimination of "philological reading" of images—which, in fact, means traditional iconographic analysis—is missing the point: "philological" identification of subject matter is indispensable.

On a second level, the conceptual meaning(s) of images are not only visually perceived by viewers but also interpreted and discussed in social discourses. Since social communication on matters of some complexity is only possible in the medium of language, such discourses necessarily entail the translation of visual phenomena and perceptions into language. This fact not only implies searching for verbal "equivalents" to visual impressions, but it leads moreover to interpretations and conceptualizations in categories that belong essentially to the realm of nonvisual, intellectual notions. At this point, semiotic approaches get their full efficiency: the more an image is loaded with significance that transcends its visual appearance, the more it can be dealt with as a "sign" in the sense of semiotics. In any case, no matter how much such discourses become estranged from the images' visual essence, they are an essential part of the images' social life. Scientific analysis is just the ultimate consequence of this necessarily linguistic approach to art.

This by no means implies a subordination of the medium of images in relation to language. For on the other hand, all texts imply aspects of visuality. As Orhan Pamuk, quoted by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, puts it: "Reading a novel is visualizing images which an author has triggered by his words." More fundamentally, every linguistic reference to the world of concrete reality, whether a literary text or an everyday phrase, evokes a more or less clear "imagin"-ation. We cannot think the world without imagining it. Without entering into this complex matter, it is clear that in the experience of art and also in the practice of life, language and images, with all their fundamental differences, are inextricably interwoven. There is no hierarchy.

THE MEANING OF ART FORMS

Nevertheless, the most intriguing question of any serious attempt at understanding historical art regards the visual forms as such: of bodies and objects, attitudes and actions, compositions and style. *Iconography* is to a high degree independent of specific artistic forms: Athena/Minerva with armor and owl is iconographically similar in all styles from Greek Archaic to Late Roman and even to Fascist classicism. The same is true of the *iconology* and the *semiotics* of meanings, as long as they do not fully comprehend the visual aspects: a Roman scene of sacrifice can be seen as a manifestation of *pietas*, whether it is represented in extended or abbreviated form, in the style of the Augustan or the Severan period. Both approaches focus on iconography, on *what* is represented in

an image, not *how* it is depicted. In both cases, the essence of the interpretation can be described without any loss of meaning through language: Athena, *pietas*. This does not speak against the methodologies of iconography, iconology, and semiotics, all of which have led to important results and insights, but it makes clear that essential aspects of the artistic product are neglected by these approaches.

This leads to the underlying general principles of artistic form and composition in various periods of Greek and Roman art. Changes in art regarding concepts of the body and of action in time and space can be connected with basic concepts of social practice, of cognitive capacities, and of fundamental views of the world. In Archaic Greek art, bodies are entities of characteristic elements without reciprocal interaction of their parts. They are endowed with qualities, such as a strong chest; capacities, such as agile joints; and values, such as beautiful hair, juxtaposed one beside the other, without any need for organic integration. In the Classical period, bodies are physical systems of active and passive parts reacting to each other through tensions and relaxations. Each element is defined in its capacities by its place within the whole configuration. In the Hellenistic period, bodies are defined by their material physical qualities. The dynamics of potential or actual activity and the sensuous impression of the surface become the artist's predominant aim. In simplifying terms: Archaic bodies *have* strength and beauty, Classical bodies *are* examples of strength and beauty, Hellenistic bodies *demonstrate* physical qualities and beauty. On a more general basis, Greek and Roman concepts of the body have been opposed to each other through a comparison between linguistic definition and visual representation (Fabricius 2003).

The most obvious example of far-reaching interference between art forms and other subsystems of human culture is the "Canon" of the Classical Greek sculptor Polyclitus, perhaps realized in his statue of a lance bearer (the Doryphorus) (figure 29.2); his concept of ideal beauty and valor of the human body is based on philosophical notions of harmony and connected with analogous concepts of good political order and medical theories on physical health (Borbein 1996; see in general Bol 1990; Tanner 2006; Neer 2010; Osborne 2011).

The body, with its qualities and capacities, is a particularly fruitful focus for understanding Greek and Roman art because of its fundamental importance within those societies. Moreover, the body as a "social element" opens manifold perspectives toward various fields of social practice and theory. A particularly prolific concept is the notion of social roles in which the body, with its intentional appearance and formalized actions, is of crucial relevance (Bell and Hansen 2008). More generally, if the body's postures, forms of action, and ways of behavior, in "reality" and in art, are conceived of as expressions of social "habits," a bridge can be built to cultural theory. For bodily "habit" or *hexis* is clearly, in a cultural sense, a part of the general notion of the cultural "habitus" of societies and their subgroups, developed by Pierre Bourdieu as a fundamental concept of historical sociology (Bourdieu 1979).

References

Bal, M., and N. Bryson. 1991. "Semiotics and Art History." *Art Bulletin* 73: 174–208.

Barthes, R. 1964. "Éléments de sémiologie." *Communications* 4: 91–135.

——. 1984. *Le bruissement de la langue.* Paris: Seuil.

Bell, S., and I. L. Hansen. 2008. *Role Models in the Roman World: Identity and Assimilation.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Bianchi Bandinelli, R., ed. 1966. *Sculture municipali dell'area sabellica tra l'età di Cesare e quella di Nerone.* Studi Miscellanei: Seminario di archeologia e storia dell'arte greca e romana dell'Università di Roma 10. Rome: De Luca.

Bianchi Bandinelli, R. 1969. *L'arte romana nel centro del potere.* Milan: Rizzoli.

Bol, P. C., ed. 1990. *Polyklet: Der Bildhauer der griechischen Klassik.* Exhibition catalog, Frankfurt am Main, Liebieghaus. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern.

Borbein, A. H. 1996. "Polykleitos." In *Personal Styles in Greek Sculpture,* edited by O. Palagia and J. J. Pollitt, 66–90. Yale Classical Studies 30. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1979. *La distinction: Critique sociale du jugement.* Paris: Éditions de Minuit.

Brendel, O. J. 1953. "Prolegomena to a Book on Roman Art." *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 21: 9–73.

Brilliant, R. 1963. *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art.* New Haven, CT: Academy.

Catoni, M. L. 2005. Schemata: *Comunicazione non verbale nella Grecia antica.* Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore.

Coarelli, F. 1996. Revixit ars: *Arte e ideologia a Roma, dai modelli ellenistici alla tradizione repubblicana.* Rome: Quasar.

Eco, U. 1968. *La struttura assente: Introduzione alla ricerca semiologica.* Milan: Bompiani.

Elsner, J. 1995. *Art and the Roman Viewer.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

——. 2007. *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Fabricius, J. 2003. *Soma/corpus: Körperbilder und Körperkonzepte in der griechischen und römischen Kultur.* Göttingen: Habilitationsschrift.

Fehr, B. 1979a. *Bewegungsweisen und Verhaltensideale.* Bad Bramstedt: Moreland Editions.

——. 1979b. "Zur religionspolitischen Funktion der Athena Parthenos im Rahmen des delisch-attischen Seebundes, 1." *Hephaistos* 1: 71–91.

Giuliani, L. 1986. *Bildnis und Botschaft.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Giuliani, L. 1995. Tragik, *Trauer und Trost: Bildervasen für eine apulische Totenfeier.* Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Graepler, D. 1997. *Tonfiguren im Grab: Fundkontexte hellenistischer Terrakotten aus der Nekropole von Tarent.* Munich: Biering and Brinkmann.

Hallett, C. H. 2005. *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary 200 BC–AD 300.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Himmelmann, N. 1971. *Winckelmanns Hermeneutik.* Mainz: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur; Wiesbaden: F. Steiner.

——. 1990. *Ideale Nacktheit in der griechischen Kunst.* Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter.

Hölscher, T. 1971. *Ideal und Wirklichkeit in den Bildnissen Alexanders des Grossen.* Heidelberg: C. Winter.

——. 1980. "Die Geschichtsauffassung in der römischen Repräsentationskunst." *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 95: 265–321.

——. 1987. *Römische Bildsprache als semantisches System*. Heidelberg: C. Winter. Translated by A. Snodgrass and A. Künzl-Snodgrass as *The Language of Images in Roman Art*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

——.2012. "Bilderwelt, Lebensordnung und die Rolle des Betrachters im antiken Griechenland." In *Bild, Raum, Handlung. Perspektiven der Archäologie*, edited by O. Dally, S. Moraw and H. Ziemssen, 19–44. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Holmes, B. 2010. *The Symptom and the Subject: The Emergence of the Physical Body in Ancient Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hurwit, J. M. 2007. "The Problem with Dexileos: Heroic and Other Nudities in Greek Art." *American Journal of Archaeology* 111: 35–60.

Kaschnitz-Weinberg, G. von. 1965. *Ausgewählte Schriften*, Vol. 1: *Kleine Schriften zur Struktur*. Berlin: Gebr. Mann.

Krahmer, G. 1931. *Figur und Raum in der ägyptischen und griechisch-archaischen Kunst*. Halle: Niemeyer.

Lissarrague, F. 1990. *L'autre guerrier: Archers, peltastes, cavaliers dans l'imagerie attique*. Paris: La Decouverte; Rome: École Française de Rome.

Marconi, C. 2004. "Images of a Warrior: On a Group of Athenian Vases and Their Public." In *Greek Vases: Images, Contexts, and Controversies*, edited by C. Marconi, 27–40. Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition 25. Leiden: Brill.

——. 2007. *Temple Decoration and Cultural Identity in the Archaic Greek World: The Metopes of Selinus*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Momigliano, A. 1950. "Ancient History and the Antiquarian." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 13: 285–315.

Montfaucon, B. de. 1719–1724. *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, 10 vols. Paris: Delaulne.

Neer, R. T. 2010. *The Emergence of the Classical Style in Greek Sculpture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Osborne, R. 2011. *The History Written on the Classical Greek Body*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Panofsky, E. 1939. *Studies in Iconology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Peirce, C. S. 1931. *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, Vol. 1: *Principles of Philosophy*, edited by C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Riegl, A. 1901–1923. *Die spätrömische Kunst-Industrie: Nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn*. Vienna: Österreich. Staatsdruckerei. Translated by R. Winkes as *Late Roman Art Industry*. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 1995.

Robert, C. 1919. *Archaeologische Hermeneutik: Anleitung zur Deutung klassischer Bildwerke*. Berlin: Weidmann.

Saussure, F. de. 1916. *Cours de linguistique générale*. Paris: Payot.

Schmidt, S., and A. Stähli, eds. 2012. *Vasenbilder im Kulturtransfer: Zirkulation und Rezeption griechischer Keramik im Mittelmeerraum*. Munich: C. H. Beck.

Schmitt-Pantel, P. 1992. *La cité au banquet: Histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques*. Rome: École Française de Rome.

Schnapp, A. 1993. *La conquête du passé: Aux origines de l'archéologie*. Paris: Editions Carré. Translated by I. Kinnes and G. Varndell as *The Discovery of the Past: The Origins of Archaeology*. New York: H. N. Abrams, 1997.

——. 1997. *Le chasseur et la cité: Chasse et érotique en Grèce ancienne*. Paris: A. Michel.

——. 2008. "Between Antiquarians and Archaeologists: Continuities and Disruptures." In *Histories of Archaeology*, edited by T. Murray and C. Evans, 392–405. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Schneider, L. 1975. *Zur sozialen Bedeutung der archaischen Korenstatuen*. Hamburg: Buske.

Schneider, L., B. Fehr, and K. H. Meyer. 1979. "Zeichen, Kommunikation, Interaktion: Zur Bedeutung von Zeichen-, Kommunikations- und Interaktionstheorie für die klassische Archäologie." *Hephaistos* 1: 7–41.

Schweitzer, B. 1969. "Das Problem der Form in der Kunst des Altertums." In *Allgemeine Grundlagen der Archäologie*, edited by U. Hausmann, 163–203. Handbuch der Archäologie. Munich: C. H. Beck.

Sojc, N. 2005. *Trauer auf attischen Grabreliefs: Frauendarstellungen zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit*. Berlin: Reimer.

Squire, M. 2011. *The Art of the Body: Antiquity and Its Legacy*. London and New York: Oxford University Press.

Stark, K. B. 1880. *Handbuch der Archäologie der Kunst*. Leipzig: W. Engelmann.

Stewart, A. 1997. *Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tanner, J. J. 2006. *The Invention of Art History in Ancient Greece*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Torelli, M. 1982. *Typology and Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Vernant, J.-P. 1990. *Figures, Idoles, Masques*. Paris: Julliard.

Vernant, J.-P., and C. Bérard. 1984. *La cité des images*. Lausanne and Paris: F. Nathan. Translated by D. Lyons as *A City of Images: Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Wickhoff, F. 1895. *Die Wiener Genesis*. Vienna: F. Tempsky.

Winckelmann, J. J. 1767. *Monumenti antichi inediti*. Rome.

Wölfflin, H. 1915. *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Munich: F. Bruckmann. Translated by M. D. Hottinger as *Principles of Art History*. New York: Holt, 1932.

Zanker, P. 1973. *Studien zu den Augustus-Porträts I: Der Actium-Typus*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht.

——. 1987. *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder*. Munich: C. H. Beck. Translated by A. Shapiro as *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988.

——. 1995. *Die Maske des Sokrates*. Munich: C. H. Beck. Translated by A. Shapiro as *The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity*. Sather Classical Lectures 59. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.