Ancient Mythological Images and Their Interpretation

When we try to make sense of pictures, what do we gain when we use a particular method – and what might we be missing or even losing? Empirical experimentation on three types of mythological imagery – a classical Greek pot, a frieze from Hellenistic Pergamon, and a second-century CE Roman sarcophagus – enables Katharina Lorenz to demonstrate how theoretical approaches to images (specifically, iconology, semiotics, and image studies) impact the meanings we elicit from Greek and Roman art. A guide to classical images of myth and also a critical history of classical archaeology’s attempts to give meaning to pictures, this book establishes a dialogue with the wider field of art history and proposes a new framework for the study of ancient visual culture. It will be essential reading not just for students of classical art history and archaeology, but for anyone interested in the possibilities – and the history – of studying visual culture.

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Ancient Mythological Images and Their Interpretation

An Introduction to Iconology, Semiotics, and Image Studies in Classical Art History

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In memory of my father, the scientist.
Table of contents

List of figures [ix]
Preface [xiii]

The experiment: methods – images – objects [1]

ICONOLOGY [17]

1 Introducing iconology [19]
   1) What is iconology? [20]
   2) Iconology: premises, positions, and problems [23]

2 Iconology in action [37]
   1) The Karlsruhe hydria: conflict, consolation, and Athens [37]
   2) The Pergamon frieze: culture, cosmos, and family politics [51]
   3) The Louvre sarcophagus: why a hunter needs a sword [71]

3 Narratives of object and meaning [89]
   1) Iconology as experiment: the results [89]
   2) Iconology and ancient art scholarship [92]
   3) Conclusions [99]

SEMIOTICS [101]

4 Introducing semiotics [103]
   1) What is semiotics? [104]
   2) Semiotics: premises, positions, and problems [106]

5 Semiotics in action [118]
   1) The Karlsruhe hydria: thresholds of desire, choice, and crisis [118]
   2) The Pergamon frieze: thresholds of being, dominance, and the past [129]
   3) The Louvre sarcophagus: thresholds of loyalty, conflict, and fate [140]

6 Narratives of sign and significations [152]
   1) Semiotics as experiment: the results [152]
   2) Semiotics and ancient art scholarship [157]
   3) Conclusions [165]
Table of contents

IMAGE STUDIES  [167]

7 Introducing image studies  [169]
  1) What is image studies?  [170]
  2) Image studies: premises, positions, and problems  [172]

8 Image studies in action  [184]
  1) The Karlsruhe hydria: the pot as spin doctor  [184]
  2) The Pergamon frieze: myth outside the box  [197]
  3) The Louvre sarcophagus: facing Atalanta  [210]

9 Narratives of space and perspective  [224]
  1) Image studies as experiment: the results  [224]
  2) Image studies and ancient art scholarship  [226]
  3) Conclusions  [234]

10 The study of mythological images as threesome – assessing the experiment  [236]
  1) The methods and their trajectories  [238]
  2) The objects through the methods  [239]
  3) Mythological images and iterative analysis: a conclusion  [244]

Bibliography  [246]
Index  [282]
Figures


0.2 The Pergamon altar (model), seen from the south-west corner. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [13]

0.3 The Louvre sarcophagus, MA 539. Photo courtesy of RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre) (Photo: Hervé Lewandowski). [15]

1.1 Erwin Panofsky’s three-step model of iconology (1932). Table: author; after Panofsky 2012, fig. 1. [21]

1.2a&b The Kulturwissenschat liche Bibliothek Warburg (K.B.W.) in Hamburg (1920s). Photos courtesy of the Warburg Institute Archive, London. [28]

2.1 Paris as a bearded, older male. Black-figure hydria by the Antimenes Painter, BS 434. Courtesy of Basel, Antikenmuseum und Sammlung Ludwig (Photo: Andreas F. Voegelin). [40]


2.4 A warrior in Oriental costume between two women in Greek dress. Red-figure pelike. Paris, Musée du Louvre CP 10830/CP 11164 (Courtesy of RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre), Photo: Stéphane Maréchalle). [50]

2.5 The Great Frieze, east: Zeus. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [52]

2.6 The Great Frieze, east: Athena. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [53]

2.7 The Great Frieze, east: Hecate. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [55]
List of figures

2.8 The hoplite giants of the sixth century. Fragment of a black-figure cup. Athens, National Museum, Acropolis Collection 1.1632. After Graef – Langlotz 1925, pl. 84. [56]

2.9 ‘Wild’ giants dressed in shaggy fleeces and hurling stones appear from the fifth century BCE. Red-figure cup by Onesimos; from Orvieto. London, British Museum 1894,0314.1. (Photo courtesy of The British Museum). [57]

2.10 Giants with snake legs appear from the fourth century BCE. Red-figure lekythus by the Workshop of the Painter of Capua (or: Foundling Painter). Paris, Musée du Louvre K509 (Photo courtesy of RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre), Photo: René-Gabriel Ojéda). [58]


2.12 Ge watches the demise of her son. Red-figure cup by the Aristophanes Painter; from Vulci. Berlin, Staatliche Museen F2531. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [60]

2.13 The Great Frieze, north projection: Oceanus and Doris. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [64]

2.14 The Great Frieze, north projection: Triton and his opponents. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [65]

2.15 The Great Frieze, north: Aphrodite and her opponent. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [66]


2.17 Meleager with a sword at the gates of Pleuron. Rome, Villa Doria Pamphili. Photo courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute Rome, neg. no. 08336 (Photo: Faraglia). [73]

2.18 Lion hunt sarcophagus. Reims, Musée de Saint Remi 932, 14. Photo courtesy of www.arachne.uni-koeln.de, neg. no. Fitt68-31-0 (Photo: G. Fittschen-Badura). [77]

2.19 Meleager and Atalanta. Pompeii, Casa delle Danzatrici (VI 2,22). Photo courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute Rome, neg. no. 56.1214 (Photo: Faraglia). [78]
List of figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>Meleager and Atalanta. Tripolis, Museum, from Leptis Magna, Villa del Nilo. Photo courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute Rome, neg. no. 61.1872 (Photo: Koppermann). [79]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.21</td>
<td><em>Conclamatio</em>: parents seated around the deathbed of their child. Paris, Musée du Louvre MA 319. Photo courtesy of Musée du Louvre, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Les frères Chuzeville. [80]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>Althaea at the altar. The Louvre sarcophagus. Paris, Musée du Louvre MA 539 (Photo: author). [82]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>The semiotic triangulation (Drawing: author). [105]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>The decorative branding of the Meidian circle. Red-figure hydria by the Meidias Painter. London, British Museum E224 (Photo courtesy of the British Museum). [123]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>The Great Frieze, north: Poseidon with his animal satellites. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [132]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>The hair of one of the female demons on the Louvre sarcophagus. Paris, Musée du Louvre MA 539. Photo courtesy of <a href="http://www.arachne.uni-koeln.de">www.arachne.uni-koeln.de</a>, neg. no. Fitt71-25-5 (Photo: G. Fittschen-Badura). [141]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8a&amp;b</td>
<td>Meleager on the Louvre sarcophagus. Paris, Musée du Louvre MA 539 (Photo: author). [142]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>The dead uncle and the boar hide on the Louvre sarcophagus. Paris, Musée du Louvre MA 539 (Photo: author). [144]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Aphrodite in the centre of the Judgement of Paris. Red-figure hydria by the Cadmus Painter; from Vulci. 420/410 BCE.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of figures

8.2 The Judgement with extended entourage. Red-figure hydria by the Nicias Painter; from Suessula. Once Cancellio. 420/410 BCE. After von Duhn 1887: pl. 12. [195]

8.3 The Great Frieze, north projection: the two giants on the stairs. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [198]

8.4 The Great Frieze, south projection: Bronteas on the stairs. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [199]


8.6a, b, c The Great Frieze, south. Courtesy of Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Photo: Johannes Laurentius). [205]

8.7 The viewers’ perspective: the giant next to Phoibe on the Great Frieze, south. Berlin, Staatliche Museen (Photo: author). [208]

8.8 The earliest depiction of Meleager on his deathbed on Roman sarcophagi. Ostia, Museo Archeologico 101; from Ostia. 160 CE. Photo courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute Rome, neg. no. 1967.1068 (Photo: Singer). [214]

8.9 Meleager on his deathbed in combination with Althaea and the demons of fate. Rome, Museo Capitolino 623. Photo courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute Rome, neg. no. 03160. [214]

8.10 Exploring myth and the everyday: Meleager and Atalanta in the Casa della Venere in Conchiglia in Pompeii (II 3,3). Photo courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute Rome, neg. no. 57.879 (Photo: Bartl). [220]

Preface

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Preface

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