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**Artigo**

## **REFLECTIONS FROM A GREEK VASE**

### REFLEXÕES A PARTIR DE UM VASO GREGO

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**ABSTRACT:** The theme proposed in this Article is: "Reflections from a greek vase". The development of this Article took place under the qualitative methodology with bibliographic, qualitative, referential, interpretative, descriptive and critical-dialectical methods. Reflecting on a Greek Vase is the main objective of this Article, considering the importance of Greek Vases: the legacy of the attic vases helped greatly in building the knowledge of athenian society. Topic 1 will deal with the Power of the Image; Topic 2 will deal with Greek Vases and the 3rd Topic will analyze a Greek Vase. Then, the Final Considerations. I hope the academic environment will receive a good contribution, both practical and theoretical, by conducting my analyzes.

**KEYWORDS:** Humanity, Image, Greek Vase, Tyrannicide, Pederasty.

**RESUMO:** O tema proposto neste artigo é: "Reflexões a partir de um vaso grego". O desenvolvimento deste artigo ocorreu sob a metodologia qualitativa com métodos bibliográfico, qualitativo, referencial, interpretativo, descritivo e crítico-dialético. Refletir sobre um Vaso Grego é o principal objetivo deste Artigo, considerando a importância dos Vasos Gregos: o legado dos vasos áticos ajudou muito na construção do conhecimento da sociedade ateniense. O Tópico 1 tratará do Poder da Imagem; O Tópico 2 tratará dos Vasos Gregos e o 3º Tópico analisará um Vaso Grego. Em seguida, as Considerações Finais. Espero que o ambiente



acadêmico receba um bom contributo, tanto prático quanto teórico, através da realização de minhas análises.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Humanidade, Imagem, Vaso Grego, Tiranocídio, Pederastia.



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## 1. Introduction

"A picture is worth a thousand words", Confucius said (Confúcio, 2020). Given this evidence, the aim of this article is to reflect on the Image of a Greek Vase. In this sense, I use the Qualitative and Referential Methodology for its development, which is developed in 3 Topics after this Introduction. Topic 1 will deal with the Power of the Image; Topic 2 will deal with the Greek vases; Topic 3 will analyze a Greek vase; and then I will weave the Final Considerations. A theoretical and practical contribution to the academic world is expected from the results of the analyzes carried out.

## 2. The Power of the Image

For Martine Joly (Joly, 2007), the reasons that were the meanings of the images must come through the process of connotation. In other words, the images do not reproduce, the images do not only inform us of direct or denoting data or information. The Rhetoric of Connotation consists of this: in which images have a stratification of meanings, that is, visual signs propose a complex structure of meanings, giving the possibility of more than one reading of the elements reproduced there. This leads us to the conclusion that the image is formed by powers that cause a second

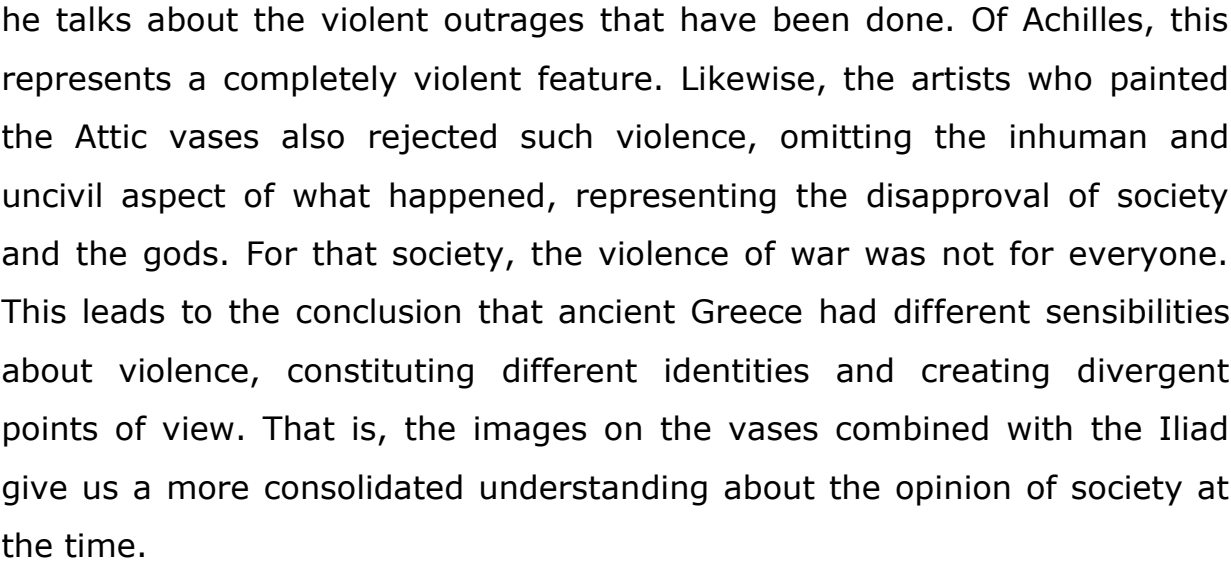


meaning from the first one. The first meaning is on the denotative level. The second meaning is at the connotative level. Thus, the images are imbued with gradual meanings that navigate through the denotative – signifier, concrete and visible side of the message, and go towards the signification that establishes the interpretation of the image.

According to José Grillo, in his article *Achilles' anger and sensitivities to violence in ancient Greece* (Grillo, 2008), image analysis of Greek vases has been reorienting itself over time. Although they cannot perfectly translate what the images convey, they do denote their main goals. On the one hand, it addresses the “evolution” of a theme or scene, related to textual traditions. On the other hand, there is an approach to the relationship between history and image, that is, there is a historical concern, where the image is seen as a monument, whose rules of order highlight its form of representation, giving the possibility of a more detailed examination of society, as shown in the image: here the image is not just a carrier of historical data or just a document.

José Grillo, in this article in question, talks about the painted vases that depict the scene of Hector's corpse being dragged away by Achilles. Such vessels, combined with the Iliad, give us a better understanding of the Greek way of thinking about Achilles' wrath. All the analyzed images: the common woman, the goddess Iris and, of course, the body of Hector, give us a sign that the artists were showing a violent character in Achilles' behavior, but mainly: they disapprove of his attitude. The way to contest Achilles' violence was to omit the marks of the aggressions on Achilles' body and even the body was omitted; besides having represented the disapproval of the gods and society, through the goddess Iris and the common woman.

By showing cases of outrages that were not carried out through the gods, Homer combats the absence of truly heroic values, values that he defended. He shows that revenge and anger are not worthy of honor when



Carolina Kesser (Dias, 2009), based on the Attic vases of black figures, presents in her Article *The organization of ceramic workshops in Athens*, reflections on ceramic workshops in archaic Athens; related to their respective geographic and local information, based on excavations carried out in the production sites and by literary and epigraphic information about painters and artists in that society. According to Kesser, studies on Attic vases began in the 18th century, with major dating problems, in addition to objects that were classified as Etruscans (since it was obvious that they were not Roman, Greek or Egyptian). From the thirties of the nineteenth century, publications about vases increased, developing discussions about their classifications, in a more scientific way, interpreting iconography. Thus the terms Attic, Geometric and Orientalizing were consolidated.

At the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, the artist's hand began to be analyzed, as some vases received his signature. In this way it was possible to build the attributive methodology, discover personalities and define stylistic relationships. The attribution methodology was guided by the signatures of painters and/or potters, helping especially



to understand the organization of ceramic workshops. Kesser (Dias 2009) explains – she did not mention the references – that precisely in the 20th century, John Beazley became the symbol of the science of attribution: his method was to analyze the graphics and styles of decoration of red and black figure vases, which were produced between the 6th and 4th centuries BC in Athens. He presented a set of collections of vases that were linked by their graphic characteristics to the images or part of them. Decorations and figures were also compared. All subsequent research used the Beazley method. The vocabulary used for these studies refer us to the influence of the Renaissance, which called pupils and masters within the art.

Beazley created a cadre of artists, as well as finding pupils. It was through his work that we can meet, today, approximately 400 red-figure painters and more than 200 black-figure painters. Studying such artists, it became possible to understand the Greek ceramic workshops, in addition to the classification of vases also through their clay, thus knowing their region of origin. Furthermore, the production sites of vases and ceramic kilns were also found in the excavations. Furnaces have been listed from the Minoan to the Hellenistic times. With the development of these studies, it was possible to better delineate the methodology that should be used. There is extensive documentation on the Attica region. Excavations in this region show that they were specialists in architectural material and tiles, seeming to distribute their production only to neighboring territories, that is, their market was secondary.

In the Athens region, we had excavations in the Agora area, in the area where the Athens necropolis was located (to the northwest, outside the city) and southwest of Athens. In the Agora, production points were found that operated from the 10th to the 7th century BC, stopping production at the beginning of the archaic period; but excavations show that craft points have spread to other parts of the city. Near the necropolis, production points were also found, starting with the protogeometric, in





addition to kilns and disposal, as well as fragments dating back to the second half of the 5th century BC. This northwest region was perfect for the production of ceramics: it was close to the Eridanos river, it had a clay bed in the Cefiso valley and was in a good location for sale in the Agora area, in addition to having access to the Port of Piraeus. It was through this port that Attic vases were exported. In the southwest there was also a clay bed, as well as dwellings combined with workshops, confirming the literature that affirms a domestic pottery activity, in which the artists were close to their homes and the sales market.

It is noticed that such production sites were chosen due to a set of factors, such as: raw material source, geographic location and points of sale. The production of these vases occurs due to their necessary use among a society, which needs them both in their rituals and in their daily lives. In this way, such production gradually increased; and for a large-scale production, a workforce that was expert in the subject is needed. The steps in creating a vase are as follows: finding the clay, preparing it, finding fuel, preparing the kilns, lathe, molding, drying, burning and painting. After that, all vases were stored and transported to be sold. Labor was also found by slaves, metecos and foreigners, in addition, of course, to artisan families.

Kesser (Dias, 2009) also explains that Plato, Aristotle and Aristophanes commented on the status of potters and artists – but she did not cite the references – despite literary documents not giving much importance to it. The observations of these thinkers, combined with inscriptions on the base of statues of the Acropolis of Athens, prove the high cultural and economic status of these artists in the late 6th century and beginning of the 5th century BC. Kesser (Dias, 2009) – without citing references – goes on explaining that Aristophanes even speaks of two politicians who were also artisans: One of them, Cephalos, according to Aristophanes, was a good politician but made bad vases. The other,



Hyperbolus, was a famous politician until he was ostracized – this one produced lamps. But despite this, ceramic artists did not achieve the same status as wall painters and sculptors. Aristotle and Plato generalize artisans in a marginalized way, in addition to the fact that free and dignified citizens generally did not have a craft activity as work.

The vases themselves are documents. Some have inscriptions that relate to their creator, such as the signature. Some even have two subscriptions. With them, we have a vast knowledge about the artists and their work. Furthermore, we can raise questions about the cooperation between them: in some cases a single artist was a painter and a potter, in other cases the painter stopped painting halfway through. Some functions in the workshop could also be recognized through signatures. Because of the hierarchy within them, it is possible to know more about their organization, such as the pitos workshops, which had: a servant for transport, one for organization and storage, another for the preparation of clay, one for turning, a sub-master and a master. All this information can be related to representations of their own work: they also portrayed themselves on the vases.

When Attic production reached its climax, the workshops kept pace with its growth, increasing their number of artists and all working as a team, with more than one lathe at the same time. According to the number of subscriptions, it is speculated that there were approximately one hundred artist-painters and more than five hundred workers in all other activities, all of them working together at the same time. Such numbers, of course, are speculative. Today we know more than 20,000 black figure vases and we hope to know more and more over time, coming from legal or illegal excavations. The production of such vases was great because there was a great demand: this enormous quantity of vases shows a substantial organization of labor and production, besides, of course, also teaching about the social and commercial context.




The Greeks used the vases both in funerary rituals (as an urn for corpses) and in their daily lives (as storage of liquids and food). And what is most special for us: the vases, in their decoration, carried information. The legacy of the Attic vases greatly helped in building the knowledge of Athenian society. The vases are faithful and true sources of data about potters and painters, as they are a primary documentation – they were decorated and produced by themselves. Their paintings and shapes provide us with the activities of a workshop, which gives us the possibility to raise reflections about their daily lives. These materials, combined with literature and epigraphy, in addition to being integrated into a local context, corroborate themselves as historical material documents, that is, they are much more than just a source of data.

#### 4. Analysis of a Greek Vase

We analyze the following Greek vase using the Martine Joly method:

Table 1 – Referent, Plastic sign, Anchorage, Figurative Sign.

 <p>Figure 1 Tyrancide of Hipparchus Source: Universität Würzburg, 2020.</p>	<b>Referent</b>	<b>Localization:</b> Martin Von Wagner Museum, Universität Würzburg. <b>Inventory:</b> Uninformed. <b>Provenance:</b> Athens, Attica. <b>Social role:</b> Stamnos was generally used socially to mix and store liquids. <b>Date:</b> around 470 BC. <b>Painter:</b> Not informed by the Museum.
	<b>Plastic sign</b>	<b>Form:</b> Stamnos. <b>Style/color:</b> Red figure. Rounded with lid and has two slightly high stumps on its sides. <b>Size:</b> Uninformed. <b>Volume:</b> Uninformed.
	<b>Anchorage</b>	It was not informed if it has a subscription.
	<b>Figurative Sign</b>	Tyrancide: Hipparchus being murdered with the sword by Aristogiton and Armodius.





Source: Made by me.

Table 2 – Iconic signifier, First level meaning, First level connotation 1 and 2.

Iconic signifier	First level meaning	First level connotation 1	First level connotation 2
Artifact: Stamnos	Greek pottery – red figures.	Used for liquids.	It's much more than just an amphora of squatters.
Center: A man murdered by two men.	Victim is looking to the right as he doesn't see who hits him.	His attention is turned to the boy on the right, his eyes are directed towards him.	The victim is the tyrant Hipparchus, who has desired the favor of the handsome teenager Harmodius, so his eyes are on him.
Right: One of the assassins with the sword high distracting the victim.	He has no beard.	He is an ephebus, a young man, he is still in puberty. It's a teenager.	The ephebus is Harmodius, who, to avenge his sister's honor, murdered Hipparchus.
Left: One of the assassins killing the victim.	He has a beard.	He is the protector and friend of the young man.	This eldest assassin is Aristogiton, who aided Harmodius in his revenge.

Source: Made by me.

Today, the concept of tyranny is directly linked to the character of injustice and cruelty of a sovereign who places his own will above justice and laws. It so happens that initially this was not how tyrants were seen. The word *túrannos* (tyrants) is not of Greek origin, and does not necessarily have a connotation of oppression or cruelty. According to Peter Jones (Jones, 1997), they were usurpers, but at the same time they mixed the roles of popular leaders (*demagogos*) and generals, gaining their personal powers with the fact that they were able to dominate military power and dissatisfaction of the people. As they wanted to be participants in power, they usurped it. In this way, the government is no longer in the hands of the aristocracy and is now in the hands of a tyrant. But modern historiography defends the thesis that they were not usurpers, as they had the support of the *demos*. According to Neyde Theml:



In the case of Tyranny (561/510 BC), in Athens, the regime was a kind of transition or socio-political resource in the face of social conflicts produced by the socioeconomic measures of the oligarchic government and the economic growth of Athens and political groups democratic (Theml, 1988, p. 48 - My translation).

Pisistratus, one of Attica's nobles, military hero, usurped power in 561-60 BC, remaining in it until his death in 528-527 BC. Athens flourished during Pisistratus' rule: Festival of the Great Panatees was remade, great building projects were carried out, the number of poets increased due to financial support, in addition to the beautiful Athenian ceramics such as the one we are studying in this paper. In other words, the Athenians were very happy with the tyrant who only helped in the cultural and material growth of the city. Pisistratus left power to his sons Hippias and Hipparchus, who did not have the same popularity as their father:

These, born tyrants – if we can say so – were unable to overcome the vicissitudes that had presided over their father's rise to power. Furthermore, fond of personal power, they found themselves tempted to exercise it in a more authoritarian and, above all, more 'principle' way (Mossé, 1997, p. 20 - My translation)

A large part of the aristocracy fought for the highest positions: they wanted to have power within their reach, it is clear that the aristocratic families hated having lost power. But they only took action after the murder of Hipparchus. Hipparchus was frustrated because he had been rejected by Harmodius, a handsome young man whom he wished favors – pederasty was common in Athens. Hipparchus chose Aristogiton to be his protector. Pride wounded by rejection, the tyrant Hipparchus humiliated Harmodius' sister: he invited her to carry the opening torch of the Pan-Athenian Games and then publicly, at the time of the parade, expelled her from there on the grounds that she was no longer a virgin, a requirement for her to play such a role in the ceremony.



With such humiliation, Harmodius, together with his protector Aristogiton, planned the death of Hipparchus and Hippias. They managed to assassinate Hipparchus but Hippias managed to escape. Such tyrannicide took place on the day of the Pan-Athenian festival. Harmodius was killed by the guards and Aristogiton was arrested and tortured until he too died. Tyranny did not end because of the murder of Hipparchus, but it was a trigger: 4 years after the tyrannicide, Hippias was expelled from Athens. In other words, the end of tyranny is directly linked to a pederast relationship. Athenian democracy turned Harmodius and Aristogiton into heroes, like martyrs to freedom.

Peter Jones (Jones, 1997) and Eva Cantarella (Cantarella, 1994), when dealing with the Greek pederastic relationship, wrongly called it a homosexual relationship. The word homosexuality is not appropriate for dealing with same-sex relationships in antiquity: such a word did not appear until the second half of the nineteenth century. Classical Athenians did not feel a group apart for practicing pederasty (as happens a lot with homosexuals). Pederasty encompassed power, morals and status. And it is necessary to emphasize that we can study pederasty only in a partial way, as the records we have today are of educated men, philosophers, that is, an elite of antiquity. We do not know the opinions of women, the poor and slaves, that is, we do not know what everyone at that time thought about pederasty.

But even though there is a scarcity of sources, it is essential to try to understand this concept. (Sousa 2008). Pederasty consisted of a method of social formation of the young man into a man. Athenians did not have a sexuality divided between people of the same sex or different sexes. The word pederasty comes from the Greek *paiderastia*, which is the union of *paîs* (child) and *erân* (to love). It had a pedagogical character (Rant, 2020) for the future citizens of Athens, that is, the Eupatrids (those from noble families). The protagonists of pederast relations were the eromeno (the



young man) and the erasta (the eldest, master of the young). The erasta was certainly someone over 30 years old, while the eromenos ranged between 12 and 18 years old.

Leslie Kurke emphasizes that the category of *paîs* (young men) shares some of the ideological ambiguities of *hetaira*, he explains that the relationship between erastas and eromenos was totally asymmetric (Kurke, 1997). Initially, Athenian boys received a basic education (*efebia*): gymnastics, arithmetic, music and reading. After this basic education, they should receive notions of political and sexual self-control, citizenship, philosophy, politics, morals: such notions are the responsibility of the erasta. The first contact between the erasta and the eromenos took place in classes or gyms. During sports practice, the eromenos were naked and were thus observed by the erastas, who began the procession. The Eromeno should play a little game of difficulty, as he could not easily yield: if he did, he would not be seen as someone able to behave like a good citizen.

And the eromenos should also not behave towards someone from a lower social level, such as women, metecos or slaves. So he should not be effeminate, should not prostitute himself, and, for some authors, not even allow himself to be penetrated by the erasta. The eromen could bestow favors on his erasta, like letting him rub his cock against his thighs or anus, for example, but never be penetrated. The citizen's body was public property. Furthermore, the body was, for the Athenians, the manifestation of the divine, hence their concern with the beauty of their worked bodies. The penis itself was a lucky charm. The act of penetrating was an act of power. For this reason, some scholars defend the non-penetration in pederast relationships, as there was a relationship there whose objective was pedagogical, to teach power and domination for the full exercise of citizenship.



Plato, in his work "Lysis" (Platão, 1995), describes an encounter between Socrates and Hippotales. Hippotales asks Socrates what he must do to conquer his beloved Eromeno. Socrates then goes with him to a class the boys were taking, and Socrates begins to ask the young men what they believed to be *philia* (friendship). Plato also states that there must be an inequality for friendship to occur, that is, he is corroborating a fundamental principle of pederasty, which is the inequality between the eromenus and the erasta. The young inexperienced and ignorant of full knowledge will only acquire them with the wise and mature erasta.

Socrates did not say the meaning of *philia*, but he demonstrated how to seduce and conquer boys with the aim of making them his friends, that is, he taught Hippoteles how to make the court to snatch the heart of an Eromeno. This concept of friendship (*philia*) by Plato has an eroticism, so it is different from our concept of friendship. It is a love that goes beyond fraternal love, it is finding the complement of one's own soul in the other, and Plato talks more about this in "The Banquet" (Platão, 2009). Plato says nothing about anal intercourse: anal intercourse was never portrayed on the vases between adults and young men – which suggests to some people that anal intercourse was reserved for adults only. I take the opposite view: I agree with Eva Cantarella (Cantarella, 1994). Like her, I also believe that anal sex was normal in pederasty.:

But the most significant confirmation of the hypothesis we are seeking to verify comes from the graffiti of Thera. More than once in these graffiti we read specific references to anal intercourse. In the inscription that we already looked at, for example, Krimon, the lover, to describe his intercourse with his beloved uses the verb *oipein*. This verb occurs five times in the inscriptions, and in the Dorian dialect (as shown by its meaning in the code of Gortyn) it means the male sexual act performed either on a male partner or on a female partner: which inevitably means that when used with reference to homosexual intercourse, it indicates anal penetration. In the light of this consideration it really becomes very difficult to imagine that a custom of such antiquity and with such major traditions (even though, over the centuries, the memory of its





institutional value was lost) could not only have been lost but have become an infamous practice (Cantarella, 1994, p. 25-26).

Cantarella argues that the simple fact that in iconography the penis appears only between the thighs is no reason to believe that anal sex was prohibited. Cantarella defends the idea that iconography wants to represent, above all, the affective character of pederasty, in contrast to the purely physical sex. What corroborates this hypothesis is the fact that the iconographies of heterosexual relationships do not represent the carnal conjunction, that is, penetration in the cases of women in the family, that is, sex with their wives was not represented; but sex with courtesans. This is not to say that they didn't have sex with their wives: they just wanted to differentiate between a purely physical character and an affective character.

I agree with Cantarella and argue in this research that anal sex, that is, penetration, was perfectly normal in the relationship between *erasta* and *eromenos*, that is, in pederasty. In fact, two verbs often appear to refer to the moment of the pederast union: *hypourhein* and *hyperetein*, that is, "provision of service" and "serve as a subordinate". Such verbs are highly significant, since the pederast ethics itself envisages anal sex as the only form of satisfaction for the *erasta*. I believe that it was perfectly normal throughout Greek history for a young man to surrender to his lover, that is, for him to have anal sex with him, without his honor being lost by it. Of course, he should keep his honor, but it would only be lost if he broke the rules regarding what can be taxed of a procedural nature. Such rules he already followed during the courtship, at the time of "flirting".

Pederasty was not invented by Athenian democracy, but pederasty was a guarantee of permanence in power for the Eupatrids, as it was a refined type of education intended only for them. Only the Eupatrids received monopolized philosophical and political knowledge. Such



knowledge was transmitted through the pederastic methodology, that is, only the eromenos could become full citizens. It was through pederasty that the democratic regime was preserved. Athenian democratic political morality was similar to pederastism: anyone who could not have sexual self-control would not be able to behave well in the Assembly.

It is self-control for the benefit of the collective: the Eromenian should dominate his passions for the sake of the common good. Political power was sustained by pederasty in the hands of the Eupatrids. They had a succinct knowledge of political institutions, guaranteed by their exclusive access to education. The Eupatrid was shaped by pederasty according to the standards of his society. Furthermore, only they could apply these acquired knowledge. In other words, pederasty was a monopolization of knowledge that guaranteed the privilege of citizenship and political power only among the Eupatrids.

And archaic Athens' economic imbalance is responsible for the poor neighborhoods of Athens today. Unfortunately the Athenian democratic regime did not avoid this imbalance: it only benefited the ruling class, the limited group of Eupatrids. Ancient Athens never balanced the socio-economic situation of its city. It did not bring housing problems to a satisfactory conclusion, it did not reduce population growth, for example. All the poor, those outside the law, were not only in poverty, they were in a "social void". They didn't have a status, they didn't have a real reality in that society in which they were inserted, they didn't belong to any class, not even the popular class, because to belong to some class in antiquity was to have financial security.

Attica was full of the demands of peasants and artisans, enraged by misery. Historians find it very difficult to bring out the history of the marginalized, as their place was guaranteed in the shadows. Ordinary women, the poor, metecos, slaves, prostitutes: they were the scum of that society. The Greeks rarely bothered to highlight their lives. Those who left



us a documentary legacy, that is, the elite, never cared about the underworld of their city, with the health issue of the poor, that is, the elite never really cared about social problems. The elite didn't allude to the poor, only the rich. The elite forgot that it's pleasure was only possible thanks to the exploited and miserable poor who flocked to the thousands more and more. The ideal of humanism consists precisely in the instrumentalization of humanity itself, since it denies it. It is a world in which man can only be sublimated to the detriment of others: the contradiction between poverty and wealth, violence and pleasure (Salles, 1987).

#### **4. Final Considerations**

Martine Joly helps us to better understand how the image conveys messages and communicates. We are a civilization of images. However, this statement constitutes a burden on our future. Nowadays, as we are already at the stage of virtual images, it seems that the more images we see, the more we are deluded, as they offer us illusory worlds and at the same time visible, within which we can move without leaving our own rooms. As we manufacture and look at images, our daily lives are nourished by their use, decipherment and interpretation; causing these procedures to become more and more general. We live in a contradiction: while reading images seems to be a normal act, which does not require any training, we also live with the feeling that we are suffering an unconscious influence from the manipulators who have knowledge of them.

Neither situation is justified. If we have an initiation to the analysis of images, we can free ourselves from this state of passivity, we can realize that reading an active image within us is culture, history and conventions that are within us. We are created by the same mass of the image: this is why it sounds so familiar and why we are not as naive as we seem. Joly's work allows us to explore the way we ourselves are, culturally and



intrinsically, through understanding the image. We will be understanding and analyzing one of the dominant instruments of communication, when we are able to recognize some stages of this learning process. Joly, first, defines the object of analysis, defines what is said when talking about the image, with different definitions; besides which theoretical mechanism makes a connection between them and if there is even a connection.

Joly teaches that semiotics and its theoretical approach give us the possibility of making a reconciliation between the uses of the word image, in addition to approaching its nature, between convention, sign and imitation. It is necessary to analyze only one image in order to approach more complex images, such as animated or still. After defining the object of analysis, Joly explains the implications of such analysis, what her desire and refusal mean, the preliminary care it requires, the contextualization of its appearance and the expectations it creates. It also takes into account the different functions of the analysis and how their respective objectives define the approach methodology. Joly, notably, complements language and image, she shows that the opposition between language and image is false, as language is not only part of the construction of the visual message but also transmits it, complementing it, in a simultaneous way, cyclical and creative.

In other words, Joly, without being tiresome or offering “recipes” for interpretation, offers us an argumentative approach to the image. In this way, it helps in greater clarity both in the manufacture of messages and in their understanding. Through the work of Martine Joly, we can see that image is a form of communication and expression that connects us to the most uplifting and ancient traditions of our and other cultures. Reading an image causes a memory to remain in us that only needs to be stimulated with the aim of achieving greater independence and autonomy, instead of subservience and passivity.



It teaches us that the understanding of the image, above all, needs to take into account the historicity of its interpretation, the contextualization of its communication and its cultural specificities. The act of reading an image is built by the effort of an analysis. Reading an image is, above all, a rich moment for the activity of a critical scientific spirit, who, aware and aware of the relativity in which the image and its history are inscribed, is capable of extracting the energy necessary for a creative interpretation. To be interested in an image is also to be interested in the whole of history, whether it is about the various modes of present-day representations or ancient mythologies. The act of reducing an image to new technologies or the media image is contradictory to the magnificence of the approach. New technologies and media images are only the most current or latest formats of the visual icons that follow us, just as they followed the entire history of man.





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## Image List

Figure 1 – Tyrancide of Hipparchus.



Source: Universität Würzburg (2020).