

SYMBOLIC ARTICULATION

4

I M A G E

W O R D

A C T I O N

I M A G O

S E R M O

A C T I O

B I L D

W O R T

A K T I O N

Editors

Horst Bredekamp, David Freedberg,
Marion Lauschke, Sabine Marienberg,
and Jürgen Trabant

SYMBOLIC ARTICULATION

**IMAGE, WORD, AND THE BODY
BETWEEN ACTION AND SCHEMA**

Edited by Sabine Marienberg

DE GRUYTER

ISBN 978-3-11-055812-8

e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-056075-6

e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-055890-6

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie;
detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A CIP catalog record for this book has been applied for at the Library of Congress.

© 2017 Walter De Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston

Cover image: Hands, Cave of El Castillo, airbrush, about 40,000 years old.

Series Managing Editor: Marion Lauschke

Series design: Petra Florath, Berlin

Printing and bindung: Hubert & Co. GmbH Co. KG, Göttingen

Printed on acid-free paper

Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VII	Horst Bredekamp, Sabine Marienberg, and Jürgen Trabant
	Preface

ORIGINAL GESTURES

3	Horst Bredekamp
	Early Forms of Articulation
31	Sabine Marienberg
	Articulating Gestures
47	Jürgen Trabant
	Language and Image as Gesture and Articulation

ARTICULATING PROCESSES

73	Alva Noë
	The Writerly Attitude
89	Tullio Viola
	Habit and the Symbolic Process
109	Matthias Jung
	Articulating Embodied Reasons

SCHEMATA IN ACTION

- 131 Maria Luisa Catoni
Symbolic Articulation in Ancient Greece
Word, *Schema*, and Image
- 153 Anja Pawel
Ancient Articulation?
Antique *Schemata* in Modern Art and Dance
- 173 Yannis Hadjinicolaou
Blotches as Symbolic Articulation
- 205 Picture Credits

PREFACE

The present publication takes a stand against a particular form of barbarization portrayed by Giambattista Vico in his *Scienza Nuova* not as the product of a relapse into pre-civilized conditions, but rather as the unworldly overcultivation of concepts that have become empty in highly developed cultures. The tribute to be paid for this form of barbarous sophistication (*barbarie della riflessione*) is not just banishment of the poetic and lifeful character of language but also detachment from the palpable carriers that convey it: the body, the senses, the gestures, and the world of artefacts, whose repercussive effects on their creators are beyond their control.

All these concerns implicitly reverberate in debates on the *image act* as a specification of the *agens* inherent to the forms of the man-made world, as well as in the notion of *bodily knowledge* as a field of embodiment philosophy in its own right. In both realms, the term “articulation” is of central importance and at the same time has a significance of its own. It denotes the manifestation of meaning in a material that is formed and organized according to its own articulatory rules. This designation could be attributed to language alone and, within the realm of language, just to the speech sounds and letters that, as phonetic articulations, constitute the foundation of thinking. But the miraculous rise of meaning (Merleau-Ponty) also takes place beyond the phenomenon of the “double articulation” of language. Articulations are differentiating acts that, despite their schematizing potential, remain subject to the constraints of the material in which they are realized. In this sense, articulation is incompatible with any kind of dualism in which the relation between mind and matter, brain and body, individual and environment must be mediated by a third party. This in no way means harking back to a holism in which everything is related to everything. Rather, it lies in the nature of articulation, as a constant differentiation between the thinker and what is thought (Humboldt), that the components of a practically inseparable coalescence become theoretically recognizable and hence determinable. In this respect, articulation provides a form of specification

that systematically applies to all fields of speech, writing, gesture, dance, images, artefacts, and their mutual resonances.

This redefinition of the concept of articulation seeks to pursue a line of articulatory thinking that, more in the vein of a systematic exploration than of an in-depth historical study, stretches from Vico, Johann Gottfried Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Charles Sanders Peirce, Ernst Cassirer, Aby Warburg and Edgar Wind to Maurice Merleau-Ponty. What unites them is a transitory understanding of symbolic forms that takes into account the energies of the interplay between body and thought, as well as its reciprocal relation to all forms of *Gestaltung* and reality. For Humboldt, language was the activity of the distanced Eros, thus articulation within a highly energetic framework; for Peirce, it was the sketching hand that enabled him to conceive a form of articulation that links philosophy, geometry, the visual arts, and psychoanalysis to the motricity of the articulating body. Lastly, it was indeed Merleau-Ponty who most comprehensively reflected on the processes that transform an indistinct horizon into an objectively articulated world, desire into love, movements into gestures, and sound gestures into language – and thus anchored the articulatory process of humanization in the origins of its forms.

The contributions presented here are the outcome of three years of discussion during which the research group “Symbolic Articulation,” based at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, investigated the differences and similarities between image and language as the two fundamental symbolic means of articulation. Our starting point of the “friendship between language and image,” with all its cooperative and competitive implications, was accepted as a *fait accompli*, and the concept of *paragone*, one of the strongest themes in art philosophy, was enlarged to foster the idea of language and image as fellow campaigners. They differ in their specific forms of articulation but both nonetheless embrace an overarching process that encompasses bodily performance, pre-symbolic actions, and the autonomous interplay of forms, as well as symbolic reference and explicit reasoning.

On the basis of these assumptions, articulation was explored on both sides of the symbolic threshold that now no longer seems to be conclusively determinable. A pivotal notion that allowed us to grasp its continuous shifting was the one of gesture. Gesture is doubly operative: It surpasses the gap between image and language thanks to their common trait of movement, and it overcomes the dualism of mind and matter thanks to its synthetic nature. Gesturality is also the very hallmark of the earliest forms of symbolic articulations and thus questions the traditional dividing line between nature and culture. The provocative claim that a “writerly attitude” (Noë), understood as an inner image of what we do while speaking, painting, or dancing, continuously shapes the course of these activities proved to be no less illuminating: It reveals the image as being operative within language itself and at the same time mediates between the verbal and the visual. “Writerly” schemata, whose

formative potential makes them comparable to body schemata, not only ground articulation in implicit orientations, like body schemata do, but also effectively allow for corrective calibrations to be made on the fly.

This sketch of the results of our research cannot fully reflect the intensity of the dialogue within the group. It was, of course, fascinating and a great intellectual adventure to deal, as we did, with Vico, Humboldt, Cassirer, Warburg, Wind, Peirce, Merleau-Ponty, and others. But the highlights of our common endeavor were the discussions of our own papers, a somewhat painful exercise, which was however rewarded by the broad-mindedness, intellectual openness and curiosity of the members of the group. Furthermore, it was also very inspiring to be able to present preliminary versions of the present chapters to the public at the Warburg Institute in London, to which we feel particularly close. This opportunity for wider discussion contributed towards the consolidation and clarification of the texts. Indeed, the Warburgian architectural levels of Image, Word, Orientation, and Action are clearly present throughout this book – and they are also clearly challenged: We cannot allocate different places to Image and Word, as in the Warburg Institute Library that houses its collections on Image, Word, Orientation, and Action on different floors. For us, they are unequal twins that occupy the same floor, and philosophical orientation leads us to the very heart of research, into the action – *actus, energieia, Tätigkeit* – of the human being and the living human body.

Our project has been generously supported by the Volkswagen Foundation since 2014. Conducting joint research in a group consisting of members from the diverse fields of archeology and ancient philosophy, art history, language history and theory, and philosophy sometimes means taking the hard path of having to learn from scratch. But at the same time it engenders the joy of partaking in an intellectual movement that individual research does not inspire. We are very grateful for this experience – and we also wish to express our gratitude to Vera Szöllösi-Brenig, who followed and advocated the work of the project in a sympathetically constructive way. As with every book, this one would not have been possible without the help of many people. We express our heartfelt thanks to Mary Copple, Inga Nevermann-Ballandis, Christina Oberstebrink, and Ian Pepper for their invaluable help with translations, corrections of the English texts, and editorial work. And many thanks also go to our student assistants Hanna Fiegenbaum, Amelie Ochs, Frederik Wellmann, and Friederike Wode, whose commitment to the tedious part of editing was a pleasure to share.

Horst Bredekamp, Sabine Marienberg, and Jürgen Trabant

ORIGINAL GESTURES

EARLY FORMS OF ARTICULATION

I. THE ARTICULATED AND THE UNARTICULATED

The enigma of articulation is as insoluble as the mystery of language. It is mired in the question of origins. Up to now, no one has pinpointed the emergence of the capacity for speech, the capacity to communicate a coherent message, in a plausible way. The same is true for the capacity to express – to articulate – an utterance of life in a structured statement. In accordance with Emil Heinrich DuBois-Reymond's *ignorabimus*, there is little reason to expect one to emerge in the future.¹

It is, however, worth considering the possibility that the way in which the question has been posed may itself be responsible for the absence of an explanation. The search for an origin proceeds from the assumption that a situation once obtained to which the question would have applied: language, like articulation in the wider sense, is held to have emerged out of its own nonexistence. This line of thought follows the notion of an act of creation from nothingness, a *creatio ex nihilo*.² The basic approach is consequently dualistic. As in the opposition between zero and one, black and white, good and evil, the question of the origins of articulation arises from the notion that it was preceded by a condition from which this element was absent, one in which speechlessness and inarticulacy prevailed.

If, however, articulateness did not simply succeed inarticulacy, if instead both are held to have existed together as interdependent entities from the very beginning, then the question of origins is shifted into a zone of development within which the two are perceived as a unity in spite of their disparate characteristics. That such a conjecture is not unjustified is shown by a circumstance that echoes

1 Emil Heinrich Du Bois-Reymond: *Über die Grenzen der Naturerkenntnis*, Leipzig 1872, p. 33.

2 Gerhard May: *Schöpfung aus dem Nichts. Die Entstehung der Lehre von der Creatio ex Nihilo*, Berlin/New York 1978.

back onto a starting point of this kind. This circumstance is the following: the more differentiated the forms in which articulation presents itself, the more strongly they strive to return to the elementary power of the inarticulate – that which Jean-Jacques Rousseau strove to grasp as the *cri de la nature* (cry of nature).³ And the rougher the form of expression, the more determinative the desire to order it constructively, and to shape it artistically. The yearning of the articulate and the inarticulate to interact reciprocally clarifies their incessant, continually renewed, disparate unity.⁴ Franz Kafka gave this an immortal formulation in the character of *Josefine*, concerning whom there is uncertainty about whether she is producing articulate song or instead only whistling.⁵

The same basic tension holds also for the extremes of the origins and terminus of all languages. Regarding the origins of language, Johann Gottfried Herder has provided a captivating watchword. In his discussion of the origins of language, which dates from 1772, Herder invokes the sheep as an animal that – in contradistinction to the wolf or the lion – at least initially provokes no instinctive response from humans. It is simply there, and that is that; it elicits no defense and no skittishness: “Nothing impels him to draw closer to it.”⁶ In this regard, it is an image: “Let that lamb pass before him as an image.” It is nothing other than itself, its existence has no effect on our instincts: “White, soft, woolly ...” Through the sound made by the animal, however, the human being identifies a “characteristic mark”: “The sheep bleats!” Through its sound, more strongly than through sight or touch, the sheep reveals itself, and when it returns, and is seen and touched by a human, it bleats again.⁷ At this moment, its nature has been recognized. Through the repetition of the sound and the link between the bleating and the animal’s reappearance, the

3 Markus Wilczek: *Das Artikulierte und das Inartikulierte. Eine Archäologie strukturalistischen Denkens*, Berlin/Boston 2012, pp. 207 and 224, with reference to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: *L'Anti-Oedipe*, Paris 1972, p. 15. Cf. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: *Essai sur l'origine des langues* [1781], ed. by Charles Porset, Paris 1981.

4 Fundamental here is Wilczek: *Das Artikulierte und das Inartikulierte* (as fn. 3).

5 Franz Kafka: *Josefine the Singer, or the Mouse People*, in: id.: *Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, newly translated and with an introduction by Michael Hofmann, London/New York 2007, pp. 264–284. Cf. Martin Roussel: *Artikulation und Morphomata. Ein Vorwort*, in: id./Stefan Niklas (eds.): *Formen der Artikulation. Philosophische Beiträge zu einem kulturwissenschaftlichen Grundbegriff*, Munich 2013, pp. 7–13, pp. 7ff.; cf. Jürgen Trabant: *Was ist Sprache?*, Munich 2008, pp. 29–31, which refers to the groaning of Kundry in Richard Wagner’s *Parsifal*, which remains on the level of human expression only through the articulation of a single word: *dienen* (to serve).

6 Johann Gottfried Herder: *Treatise on the Origins of Language*, in: id.: *Philosophical Writings*, ed. by Michael N. Forster, Cambridge, MA 2002, pp. 65–166, p. 88 (trans. modified by Ian Pepper).

7 Ibid.

sheep shows itself as a sheep, because through its call, it has found a way into the soul of its human counterpart. Emerging through the interplay of perceived image, touched body, and in particular the repeated call is an articulation composed of various elements which speaks to the soul. Through the interplay of image, body, and inarticulate sound, the latter generating a connection between all three elements via repetition, Herder defines the beginnings of language. This genesis avoids every reductive search for an origin, one that leads to nothing but nothingness. Instead, it attests to the beginning as the abundance of interconnectedness.

The same is true of the opposite pole, the end of all articulation at the moment of the transition toward death. The return of the inarticulate upon entrance into the intermediate sphere between life and death has been formulated in a textual corpus that has not been drawn upon as yet because it appears opposed to philosophical argumentation: the Gospels of the New Testament. Nonetheless, it offers a decisive point of reference. These passages refer to Christ's departure from life. His final words alternate between a lament over his abandonment (Mt 27, 46 and Mr 15, 34) and the statement of fulfillment (John 19, 30). In Matthew and Mark, these variants between despair and fulfillment are followed by a "loud cry" as an extreme form of the inarticulate: "*clamans voce magna*" (Mt 27, 50) and "*emissa voce magna*" (Mr 15, 37). Both forms are united in Luke's report: Jesus neither whispers nor speaks his final prayer of faith, but instead calls it out loudly. The fact that here the prayer in its most highly charged form of articulation is accompanied by the expressive form of the inarticulate clarifies the renewed reference to crying out loudly (*clamans voce magna*) as well as to speaking (*dicens*) (Lk 23, 46).⁸ Joined together at the end of life are the inarticulate and the articulate – to endow with the weight of lived experience that which might appear at first glance merely as a linguistic or media-theoretical problem.

Common to Herder's origins situation and the final appearance of language in the New Testament is that they are incomprehensible without the accompanying image. In association with the body and the repetition of an inarticulate sound that causes the soul to vibrate is the image as an element of acroamatic articulation.⁹

In Herder's origins scene, visual image and physical body contribute to allowing an inarticulate sound to become language. On Golgotha, it is the image in the form of the Cross, the body as suffering, and language, through its reconnection

8 Herbert Fendrich: Bild und Wort: das Kreuz und die Evangelien, in: ex. cat.: Kreuz und Kruzifix. Zeichen und Bild, Diözesanmuseum Freising, Lindenberg 2005, Freising 2005, pp. 29–36, p. 33.

9 Jürgen Trabant: Herders Schaaf im Vorbeigehen und Entgegenkommen, in: Franz Engel/Sabine Marienberg (eds.): Das Entgegenkommende Denken. Verstehen zwischen Form und Empfindung (Actus et Imago 15), Berlin/Boston 2016, pp. 135–144.

with the inarticulate, that account in a no less paradigmatic way for the complexity of articulation. Emerging from these elements: language, body, and image, is a triad from which a redefinition of articulation can be undertaken.¹⁰ Opening up now are horizons in relation to which conventional boundary delimitations seem like the phantasms of dualistic systems of order.¹¹

In recent decades, and without to begin with envisioning an overarching model that would transcend the limits of the human, early history and prehistory, along with primate research, have generated breathtaking discoveries which suggest the possibility of undertaking such a redefinition.

2. THE QUESTION OF THE NATURAL BARRIER

It goes without saying that every organism depends upon exchanges with its environment. The form of this interdependence is structured meaningfully, and is in this sense articulated. For this reason, Wilhelm Dilthey equated articulation in the widest possible sense with the principle of life: “life articulates itself” (*das Leben artikuliert sich*).¹² Dilthey’s general definition of articulation as the structured expression of an organism that is motivated by meaningful action is held to be fully valid for both the animal and human worlds.¹³

This determination was joined by the conviction that humans can be attributed with second-degree forms of articulation that are detached from the environment. By virtue of their degree of abstraction and their autonomy, these can be referred to as symbolic.¹⁴ Ernst Cassirer, who pursued the question of articulation in the context of his comprehensive philosophy of symbols, believed in the existence of an impassable natural barrier between animal and human. It is as though humanity had been “expelled” from the “paradise of organic existence.”¹⁵

10 Cf. Jürgen Trabant’s reconstruction of language and image as “twins” which are associated with bodily gestures, in the present volume.

11 Horst Bredekamp: Vorwort zur Neufassung, in: id.: *Der Bildakt*. Frankfurter Adorno-Vorlesungen 2007, Neufassung, Berlin 2015, pp. 9–19.

12 Cf. Wilhelm Dilthey: *Grundlegung der Wissenschaft vom Menschen, der Gesellschaft und der Geschichte*. Ausarbeitungen zum zweiten Band der Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften [ca. 1870–1895], in: id.: *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. XIX, ed. by Helmuth Johach/ Frithjof Rodi, Göttingen 1982, p. 345.

13 Magnus Schlette/Matthias Jung: *Einleitende Bemerkungen zu einer Anthropologie der Artikulation*, in: id. (eds.): *Anthropologie der Artikulation*. Begriffliche Grundlagen und transdisziplinäre Perspektiven, Würzburg 2006, pp. 7–28.

14 Cf. Matthias Jung in the present volume.

15 Ernst Cassirer: *Das Symbolproblem als Grundproblem der philosophischen Anthropologie* [1928], in: id.: *Zur Metaphysik der symbolischen Formen* (Nachgelassene Manuskripte und

He was, however, contradicted by his student, the philosopher and art historian Edgar Wind. In the devices through which the human being extended his body, he too recognized the tendency to create a distanced, symbolic world¹⁶ but perceived this end point as a product of a series of imperceptible transitions whose origins were found in animal life. The medium of this act of bridging was held to be the muscle: "All expression through movement of muscles is metaphorical."¹⁷ With the term "metaphoric," Wind chooses an adjective that already attributes a capacity for abstraction to the musculature. This resolves the question of meaningful communication as articulation in a way that reveals the separation between the human and animal worlds – here, he takes up tentative proposals from Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Charles Sanders Peirce – as problematical on this generalized level.¹⁸ Wind's advance represents a still relevant contribution to the question of whether it is possible to distinguish between a form of articulation that encompasses the animal and human realms and a symbolic articulation that is ostensibly proper to humanity alone.

Evident today in both anthropology and early human history, as well as in biology, is a tendency to conceive of the boundaries between the general articulation of life and symbolic articulation – i. e. the exclusive province of human beings – as

Texte, vol. 1), ed. by John Michael Krois, Hamburg 1995, pp. 3–109, p. 43. Cf. also id.: *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, vol. 1: *Language*, trans. by Ralph Manheim, New Haven 1955, pp. 3–6, and id.: *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*. Erster Teil. *Sprache* (Gesammelte Werke, vol. 11), ed. by Birgit Recki, Hamburg 2004, p. 49. See also: John Michael Krois: Ernst Cassirer's Philosophy of Biology, in: *Sign System Studies* 1,2/32 (2004), pp. 277–205, p. 286, fn. 15, and Birgit Recki: Symbolische Form als „Verkörperung“? Ernst Cassirers Versuch einer Überwindung des Leib-Seele-Dualismus, in: Horst Bredekamp/Marion Lauschke/Alex Arteaga (eds.): *Bodies in Action and Symbolic Forms*. Zwei Seiten der Verkörperungstheorie (Actus et Imago 9), Berlin 2012, pp. 3–13.

16 Edgar Wind: Warburg's Concept of *Kulturwissenschaft* and its Meaning for Aesthetics, in: id.: *The Eloquence of Symbols: Studies in Humanist Art*, ed. by Jaynie Anderson, Oxford 1993, pp. 21–36, p. 32.

17 Ibid., p. 31. On the transition from the animal state, see p. 30. Cf. John Michael Krois: Universalität der Pathosformel. Der Leib als Symbolmedium, in: Hans Belting/Dietmar Kamper/Martin Schulz (eds.): *Quel Corps? Eine Frage der Repräsentation*, Munich 2002, pp. 295–307, p. 296.

18 On Peirce's role for Wind: Tullio Viola: Peirce and Iconology: Habitus, Embodiment, and the Analogy between Philosophy and Architecture, in: *European Journal for Pragmatism and American Philosophy* 4/1 (2012), pp. 6–31. Cf. Tullio Viola in the present volume. On Peirce: Frederik Stjernfelt: *Natural Propositions. The Actuality of Peirce's Theory of Dicisigns*, Boston 2014.

being permeable in Wind's sense.¹⁹ To begin with, this calls for a revision of the concept of articulation, one that is capable of accounting for all of the spheres that are involved here.

3. THE ADDENDUM AS AN IMPULSE TOWARD ARTICULATION

Recent research has drastically shifted backwards the timeframe during which modern humans are assumed to have coexisted with Neanderthals.²⁰ In particular, and this issue will be considered systematically in the following, these findings indicate that Immanuel Kant's definition of the term articulation, one that has been decisive for its modern understanding, must be transformed.²¹ For Kant, articulation is the idea of a whole which is determined by its extent and subdivided through its internal elements. No individual member can be added to or subtracted from this ensemble of elements, since their purposes are fully and exhaustively coordinated with and dependent upon one another: the whole is "articulated (*articulatio*) and not accumulated (*coacervatio*)." The interdependent ties of this interplay can be strengthened in their reciprocal utilization in such a way that the formation as a whole can grow from within (*per intus susceptionem*) but not through the accretion of parts from the outside (*per appositionem*).²² This definition is based on the self-contained character of what is determined as a whole. Kant's paradigm is

- 19 "An anthropology that takes the concept of articulation as a basic term is structurally anti-essential and anti-dualistic. The concept [...] emphasizes [...] the continuity between these forms of communication and expression found in the higher organized mammals and those of human beings." Schlette/Jung: *Einleitende Bemerkungen* (as fn. 13), p. 16.
- 20 Aylwyn Scally/Richard Durbin: *Revising the Human Mutation Rate: Implications for Understanding Human Evolution*, in: *Nature Reviews/Genetics* 13 (2012), pp. 745–753.
- 21 The following incorporates portions of the number of articles: Horst Bredekamp: *Der Muschel-mensch. Vom endlosen Anfang der Bilder*, in: Wolfram Högbe (ed.): *Transzendenzen des Realen. Mit Laudationes zu den Autoren von Wolfram Högbe, Günter Abel und Mathias Schmoekel*, Göttingen 2013, pp. 13–74; id.: *Höhlenausgänge*, in: Hermann Parzinger/Stefan Aue/Günter Stock (eds.): *ArteFakte: Wissen ist Kunst – Kunst ist Wissen. Reflexionen und Praktiken wissenschaftlich-künstlerischer Begegnungen*, Bielefeld 2014, pp. 37–56; id.: *Pre-käre Vorbilder: Fossilien*, in: Sandra Abend/Hans Körner (eds.): *VOR-BILDER. Ikonen der Kunstgeschichte. Vom Faustkeil über Boticellis Venus bis John Wayne*, Munich 2015, pp. 11–25; id.: *Der Faustkeil und die ikonische Differenz*, in: Engel/Marienberg: *Das Entgegenkom-mende Denken* (as fn. 9), pp. 105–118; id.: *Bildaktive Gestaltungsformen von Tier und Mensch*, in: ex. cat.: *+ultra. gestaltung schafft wissen*, ed. by Nikola Doll/Horst Bredekamp/Wolfgang Schäffner, Martin Gropius Bau Berlin, Leipzig 2016, pp. 17–25.
- 22 Immanuel Kant: *Critique of Pure Reason, Unified Edition* (with all variants from the 1781 and 1787 editions), trans. by Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis 1996, B 861, p. 756.



Fig. 1 Procession of predators, Chauvet Cave, wall painting, 32,000–35,000 years old.

the animal body, which grows according to the requirements of its internal proportions but without the addition of new members. Hence, articulation and accumulation, internal reciprocity and supplementation constitute oppositions.²³

The self-contained whole, defined by Kant as the precondition for the internal articulation to unfold, must now, in the light of recent discoveries, be conceived of as an open dynamic entity, one defined by its capacity to exceed its own limits and to integrate elements from the outside. These new perspectives are particularly fruitful for the question of articulation because they define accumulation, *coacervatio*, not as an antonym of *articulatio* but instead as its propellant.

In Kant's juxtaposition of structuration and accumulation, *coacervatio* emerges as a tensionless *addendum*, as incapable of inspiring the energy of the elements of the whole. Cave paintings like those at Chauvet, in the Ardèche River Valley, discovered in December of 1994, contradict this definition of terms because again and again, they appear as additions without sacrificing their potential for excitation. Found on the walls of the Chauvet Cave are more than 400 images; executed between 32,000 to 35,000 years ago, they represent the earliest known paintings to display such high quality.²⁴ In this cave, the depicted animals not only appear in a state of movement, i. e. the hunting predators, but also in sequences of superimposed "snapshots" that are reminiscent of Futurism (Fig. 1); latent movement, then, is present

23 Ibid.

24 Jean Clottes: Chauvet Cave: The Art of Earliest Times, Salt Lake City 2003.



Fig. 2 Researcher in front of a palimpsest of wild horses, Chauvet Cave, wall painting, 32,000–35,000 years old, still from the documentary film *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (2010).

even in the static image. The film director Werner Herzog found this aspect so striking that he devoted a film to the site in which he engages in a kind of historical dialogue with his own intervention.²⁵ The film shows how these paintings were superimposed upon one another and altered as a palimpsest over a period of thousands of years, as though possessing a sempiternal presence and actuality (Fig. 2). After extended periods of time, previously executed paintings become templates for new investments, so that the belly of a bison that is turned toward the right is transmuted into the head of a rhinoceros that twists toward the left, only to be superimposed by a group of four wild horses.²⁶ The paintings added subsequently after extensive periods of time do not have a paratactic character, for example; instead, they react to the pre-existing material, and hence, as *addenda*, enact that field of tension between interrelated elements that is essential for articulation.

No less sensational was the discovery in the Swabian Alps of a trove of small sculptures, some as old as 45,000 years. In their fully sculptural three-dimensionality, they display an astounding mixture of mimesis and abstraction.²⁷ Discovered in the Hohle Fels Cave in the course of excavations was an ivory statuette measuring

25 See *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (USA et al. 2010, Werner Herzog). On the filmic scenarization of the cave paintings: Marc Azéma: *L'Art des cavernes en action*, 2 vols., Paris 2009.

26 Clottes: *Chauvet Cave* (as fn. 24) p. 116f.

27 Ex. cat.: *Eiszeit. Kunst und Kultur*, Archäologisches Landesmuseum Konstanz, Ostfildern 2009.



Fig. 3 So-called *Venus*, Hohle Fels, mammoth ivory, about 35,000 years old.

6 cm in height (Fig. 3), which has been dated to 35,000 years and hence approximately 5,000 years prior to the best-known figure to date, the Venus of Willendorf.²⁸ On its front, the figure from the Swabian Alps displays a pair of enormous, protruding breasts, beneath which the two hands, with their fingers, have been engraved. Visible between the two stubby legs are the private parts, along with the deeply scored vulva. Rising in place of the head is a small eyelet that would have allowed the figure to serve as a hanging charm, so that the head of the sculpture's wearer would have appeared as its extension.²⁹

28 Luc Moreau: Die Zeit der starken Frauen. Das Gravettien, in: ex. cat.: Eiszeit (as fn. 27), pp. 96–99, p. 97.

29 Nicholas J. Conard: Die erste Venus, in: ex. cat.: Eiszeit (as fn. 27), pp. 268–271. Cf. Sibylle Wolf: Schmuckstücke. Die Elfenbeinbearbeitung im Schwäbischen Aurignacien, Tübingen 2015, pp. 284–286.

In this way, body and image interlock to form a disparate unity that consists of two entities which differ in scale and materiality: the one organic, the other artificial. The two refer to one another as corporeal-artistic articulations. The sculpture that associates with the body is part of a complex determination for which examples have been discovered in considerable numbers in various regions of Europe. Some of these female figures were worn head down, others with the head pointed upward.³⁰ Both elements – the body and the sculpture – consisted of organic materials, but the ivory was transported into the artificiality of the work of art. Both the paintings at Chauvet as well as the roughly contemporary sculptures from the Swabian Alps clarify a mode of *Gestaltung* that allows each of the traits Kant excluded from the scope of articulation to become its essence. The supplement, as painting on painting, or as sculpture added to the body, functions as a qualitative leap of articulation.

4. SEMANTIC INCISIONS

Most of the figures found in the Swabian Alps represent animals and were carved from ivory. Among these is a mammoth whose three-dimensional modeling emphasizes the bulges on the surface of the massive torso, beneath which the shoulder blades are as visible as the hips (Fig. 4). The back and belly are overlaid with rows of X-shaped incisions that take the form of so-called St. Andrew's crosses.³¹ Among these figures is the head of a now-extinct Cave lion found at Vogelherd, which displays a marvelous fluctuation between individual characterization and abstraction (Fig. 5). Similar scored crosses are visible at the base of its neck.³²

Such figures are capable of modifying our image of early history in the realm of sculpture in such enduring ways that they are able to trigger a genuine revision in our image of early human development as a whole. Strictly speaking, these figures could also be read as conveying purely visual meanings in summary ways, for example wrinkles or indentations in skin. In this case, however, and in view of the finesse with which the parts of the body are shaped in their contexts, they would still display a conspicuous degree of abstraction. It is, however, more likely that these are independent forms which are suggestive of script, which points toward the circumstance that the development of language need not necessarily emerge solely from sound, as Wilhelm von Humboldt formulated it in one of his most marvelous

30 Wolf: Schmuckstücke (as fn. 29), p. 286f.

31 Ex. cat.: Eiszeit (as fn. 27), p. 249.

32 Joachim Hahn: Kraft und Aggression. Die Botschaft der Eiszeitkunst im Aurignacien Süddeutschlands?, Tübingen 1986, pp. 106–109.