COURSE DESCRIPTION
Institute of English and American Studies

THE (MULTI)MEDIALITY OF CULTURE

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MA LECTURES, RESUMES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Modern literary and cultural theory distinguishes two major 'turns' since the crystallization of the humanities as disciplines in the 19th century. These are the 'linguistic turn' which occured in the first half of the 20th century, primarily inspired by the concepts of Ferdinand de Saussure; and the 'pictorial or iconic turn' which emerged in the last quarter of the 20th century. The chief theoreticians of the latter are the American W. J. T. Mitchell and the German art historian, Hans Belting. It is quite obvious that Anglo-American culture cannot be examined without taking into consideration the above theoretical concerns which then have to be completed by case studies, applied to various media of cultural representations.

The course primarily relies on the methods and achievements of classical and postmodern iconology but also refers to semiotics and poststructuralist subject-theories on the one hand and traditional philology on the other. Topics include the multimediality of cultural representations, image-word relations throughout the centuries, the reconfiguring of the text into hypertext, aesthetic reception/production of visual arts (painting, photography, cinema), embodied experience of space, spectacularity, distinctions betweeen the unspeakable / unimaginable / unbelievable / impossible in a post-traumatic culture, and the move towards the 'corporeal turn' and the 'museum turn'.

The **learning outcome** should consist of 1/ an accumulation of theoretical and historical knowledge about the mediality of culture and the uses of different media for cultural representations in different periods; 2/ students of the English masters' programs should get familiarized in reading scholarly discourse representing semiotic, art historical and cultural historical problematization.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

1.
Introduction: History and Culture / Words and Images. Concepts and Definitions

2.
Concepts and Definitions [cont.]. *Ut Pictura Poesis*. Typology of Images
Discussion: from WJT Mitchell, "What Is an Image?" (reader).

3.
The Emblematic Way of Seeing (from the Antiquity to the Renaissance).
Discussion: Introduction of Ripa's *Iconologia* (reader); Gy. E. Szönyi, "The 'Emblematic' As A Way of Thinking and Seeing In Renaissance Culture". Check the full version! (reader)

4.
Modern Iconography and Iconology 1 (Aby Warburg – Cultural Archeology).
Discussion: Warburg, "Italian Art and International Astrology in the Schifanoia Palace, Ferrara." In Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*. (reader)

5.
Modern Iconography and Iconology 2 (Erwin Panofsky – the Structure of Understanding; Ernst Gombrich – Symbolic Images).
Discussion: Panofsky, "Iconography and Iconology." In Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. (reader); "Icones Symbolicae." In *Gombrich on the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1993). (reader)

6.
Modern emblem studies (Peter Daly, Bernhard Scholz, Daniel Russell).
Discussion: Russell, "Perceiving, Seeing and Meaning: Emblems and Some Approaches to Reading Early Modern Culture." In Daly, Manning ed. 1999, 77-92. (reader)

7.
Postmodern Iconology and the Politics of Images
Discussion: W. J. T. Mitchell; Belting, "Likeness and Presence" (reader); Belting, "Image, Medium, Body" (reader)

8.
Image – Medium – Body [continued]

9.
History and Representation in the Emblematic Theatre.
Discussion: Shakespeare: *Henry V*. (reader) The drama and the films of Lawrence Olivier and Kenneth Branagh. Read Szönyi, "Matching the 'Falles of Princes' and 'Machiavell'..." (reader)

10.
Modern Mediality: from Film to Hypertext
Discussion: Szönyi, "Hypertext" (reader)

11.
The Politics of Images: Memory – Museum – Trauma
Discussion (presentations): Marr, *Curiosity*, "Introduction" (reader); Levin, "Irish Museums" (reader); Garoian, "Museum Performance" (reader); Mitchell, "Terror" (reader).

12.
Modern semiotics: Umberto Eco. Conventionality, hermeneutics, poststructuralism (extra coding, overcoding).
Discussion: from Eco, *Kant and the Platypus*. (reader)

13.
Final conclusions.

ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, textbooks:
Grading is based on an examination (written, inquiring about the material of the lectures and assigned selected critical literature). In addition, PhD students are expected to submit a 5-7 pages' book review, treating one of the works from the reading list.

READING LIST

GENERAL COURSEBOOK (in Hungarian)

Szőnyi György Endre. 2004. *Pictura & Scriptura. Hagyományalapú kulturális reprezentációk 20. századi elméletei*. Szeged: JATEPress (Ikonológia és műértelmezés 10).

Poetical terms / concepts: familiarize yourselves with the terms and concepts of poetics and semiotics; use any encyclopedia of poetry and poetics or handbook of literature / semiotics you have access to.

RECOMMENDED & REFERENCES (including reader):

Bacsó Béla ed. 1997. *Kép, fenomén, valóság*. Budapest: Kijárat.

Bal, Mieke. 2004. "Figuration." *PMLA* 119.5: 1289-92.

Barthes, Roland. 1977. The Photographic Message." In Barthes, *Image–Music–Text*. New York: Hill and Wang, 15-31.

Belting, Hans. 1994."Introduction." In Belting, *Likeness and Presence. A History of the Image Before the Era of Art*. University of Chicago Press, 1-16. ❑ 2005. "Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology." *Critical Inquiry* 31: 232-319.

Daly, Peter M. 1993. *Teaching Shakespeare and the Emblem. A Lecture and Bibliography*. Wolfville: Acadia University ❑ 1998. *Literature in the Light of the Emblem* (1979). Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Eco, Umberto. 1979. *A Theory of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press; especially chapters 0.1 "Design for a semiotic theory", 0.3 "Communication and/or signification", 2.14 "Overcoding and undercoding", 3.4 "The problem of a typology of signs", 3.7 "The aesthetic text as invention", 3.8 "The rhetorical labour", 3.9 "Ideological code switching". ❑ Alternative: 1999. *Kant és a kacsacsőrű emlős*. Budapest: Európa, utolsó rész.

Foucault, Michel. 1970. "Las Meninas." In Foucault, *The Order of Things*. New York: Vintage, 3-16.

Garoian, Charles R. 2001. "Performing the Museum." *Studies in Art Education* 42.3: 234-48.

Gombrich, E.H. 1997. "'Icones symbolicæ': A szimbolikus kifejezés filozófiái és ezek hatása a művészetre". In Pál József 1997, 31-115.

Gombrich, E.H. 1960. *Art and Illusion*. London: Phaidon. ❑ 1981. "Image and Code: Scope and Limits of Conventionalism in Pictorial Representation." In Wendy Steiner ed., *Image and Code*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 11-42; ❑ 1985. "Aby Warburg emlékezete". In Gombrich, *Reneszánsz tanulmányok*. Budapest: Corvina (Művészet és elmélet), 103-12.

Hollander, John. 1995. *The Gazer's Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Horányi Özséb ed. 2003. *A sokarcú kép. Válogatott tanulmányok a képek logikájáról*. Budapest: Typotex.

Horányi Özséb & Szépe György eds. 1975. *A jel tudománya*. Budapest: Gondolat.

Jakobson, Roman. 1971. "Linguistics and Communication Theory" (1961). In Jakobson, *Selected Writings II*. The Hague: Mouton, 570-9. – 1973. *Main Trends in the Science of Language*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Jardine, Alice. 1994. "Intertextuality". In Thomas A. Sebeok (ed.). 1994. *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1: Supplement, 11-3.

Kapitány Ágnes & Kapitány Gábor eds. 1995. *"Jelbeszéd az életünk". A szimbolizáció története és*

kutatásának módszerei. Budapest: Osiris–Századvég.
Kibédi Varga Áron. 1997. “Szó-és-kép viszonyok leírásának ismérvei.” In Bacsó ed. 1997, 300-21.
Kiss Attila Atilla. 2007. *Protomodern – Posztmodern. Szemiográfiai vizsgálatok*. Szeged: JATEPress (Ikonológia és műértelmezés 12.)
Krieger, Murray. 1992. *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Landow, George P. 1992. *Hypertext. The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*. Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Levin, Amy K. 2005. "Irish Museums and the Rhetoric of Nation." *The Journal of the Midwestern Modern Language Association* 38.2: 78-92.
Marr, Alexander. 2006. "Introduction." In R. J. W. Evans and Marr ed. *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1-21.
McClelland, John. 1994. “Emblematology”. In Thomas A. Sebeok (ed.). *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1: 220-1.
Mirzoeff, Nicholas. 1998. "What Is Visual Culture?" Introduction to Mirzoeff ed. *The Visual Culture Reader*. London: Routledge, 3-13.
Mitchell, W.J.T. 1986. *Iconolgy. Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, “Introduction”, “The Idea of Imagery”, pp. 1-47. ❑ 1997. Mitchell, “Mi a kép?” in Bacsó ed. 1997, 338-70. ❑ 2005. "The Unspeakable and the Unimaginable: Word and Image in a Time of Terror." *English Literary History* 72.2: 291-308.
Morris, C.W. 1975. “A jelelmélet megalapozása”. In Horányi & Szépe 1975, 43-93.
Niedermüller Péter. 1995. “A ‘szimbolikus’ és a kulturális elemzés”. In Kapitány & Kapitány 1995, 198-211.
Nöth, Winfried. 1995. *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Orgel, Stephen. 1996. “Gendering the Crown”. In Margareta de Grazia et al. (eds.). *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 133-66.
Panofsky, Erwin. 1955. “Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art”. In Panofsky. 1993. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 51-82. ❑ In Hungarian: 1984. *Jelentés a vizuális művészetekben*. Budapest: Gondolat.
Pál József ed. 1986. *Az ikonológia elmélete*. Szeged: JATE (Ikonológia és műértelmezés 1; újrakiadva: Szeged, 1998).
Radnóti Sándor. 1986. “A pátosz és a démon. Aby Warburgról”. In Aby Warburg. *Pogány-antik jóslás Luther korból* (1920). Budapest: Helikon.
Sebeok, Thomas. 2001. *Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics*. University of Toronto Press. "The Basic Notions," 3-23.
Szőnyi György Endre. 1995a. “Ikonográfia és hermeneutika”. In Kapitány & Kapitány eds. 1995, 90-102; – 1995b. “Semiotics and Hermeneutics of Iconographical Systems”. *Semiotische Berichte* 95.1-4 (1996): 283-313. ❑ 2003. "Radical Continuities: Hypertextual Links to A Textual Past." *Semiotische Berichte* 2003.1-4: 227-42. ❑ "The Emblematic Way of Thinking and Seeing in Renaissance Culture." Manuscript. ❑ 2007. "Kacsa/nyúl? Shakespeare V. Henrikének két filmváltozata." *Apertúra* 2007 Nyár: <http://apertura.hu/2007/nyar/szonyi>.
Voigt Vilmos. 1995. “Jelek a kultúrában – a kultúra szemiotikája”. In Kapitány & Kapitány eds. 1995, 190-8.

1 INTRODUCTION: HISTORY AND CULTURE / WORDS AND IMAGES. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

1.1 WHAT IS CULTURE?

1.1.1 A Definition by CLIFFORD GEERTZ

"Culture is the ensemble of stories we tell ourselves about ourselves".

1/ "Stories": textuality, narrativity and fictionality.

2/ "Tell about ourselves": self-reflexivity and self-representation.

3/ "Tell [the stories] to ourselves": interpretive community.

Cultural representation is a social practice by which the interpretive community represents its own culture. – Culture is a social practice of multimedial, self-reflexive, and narrative representations by the help of which a community constructs, interprets, and operates its own identity.

Discourses of cultural representations: art, religion, customs, law, science, medicine, world picture, education – all of these have a historical dimension!

1.1.2 The Multimediality of Cultural Representations

How can we tell stories? – In words, pictures, gestures, music, dance, opera, film.

In words, pictures, gestures, music, dance, opera, film.

The concept of *Gesamtkunst* R. Wagner).

The concept of *ut pictura poesis*.

A classical multimedial gendre: *the emblem*.

The concepts of multimediality and intermediality.

1.1.3 The Study of Culture is Interdisciplinary

History, historiography; Anthropology; Religious Studies; Study of Cults; Theories of Rituals; Cultural/intellectual history; Art history; Linguistics (speech-acts); Communication; Semiotics.

1.2 WHAT IS A SYMBOL?

Charles Saunders Peirce, "Symbols represent their objects independently of any resemblance or any real connection, because dispositions or factitious habits of their interpreters insure their being so understood." – The most perfect symbolic system is the language: "TABLE".

Cultural symbols, however work in a more complex way than linguistic symbols. Cultural symbols carry additional meaning(s) which, according to Umberto Eco, require "overcoding".

The arm of a man.

The arm of a clock.

"He was the arm of the ruler with an iron fist."

"To take arms against a sea of troubles" (Hamlet).

Iconographic symbols: "presuppose a familiarity with specific themes or concepts as transmitted through literary sources, whether acquired by purposeful reading or by oral tradition." (Erwin Panofsky)

1.2.1 Representing Cultural Traditions

1.2.1.1 The Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian Traditions

Mars, Venus, Mercury. – Joyce, *Ulysses*. – Updike, *The Centaur*. – The Good Samaritan, the kerchief of Veronica.

1.2.1.2 Imagology

"Uncle Sam." – "Marianne." – The Hungarian "Puszta." – The ymbolic "Puli".

1.2.1.3 The Politics of Representation

Examples: the statues of Miklós Zrinyi and Sulieiman the Great in the "Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Park," near Szigetvár. – Lenin's subversive, but nevertheless removed statue in Mohács (by Imre Varga).

1.2.1.4 Seeing Is Believing

An example: New World people through the European gaze.

1.2.1.5 The Emblematic Way of Seeing

Example: the representation of "Iustitia".

1.2.1.6 The Emblematic Way of Seeing Survives!

Styles of handshakes; modern community and individual rituals (e.g. wedding ceremonies).

1.2.1.7 Images of History

The emblematic title page of Sir Walter Ralegh's *History of the World* (1614).

Good fame – bad fame. Experience – truth. Death – oblivion. Cultural memory versus history.

2 TYPOLOGY OF IMAGES. UT PICTURA POESIS. IMAGE/WORD RELATIONS

2.1 SOME GENERAL QUESTIONS

2.1.1 Are There Specifics of Cultural Representations?

➢ What is literature? What is poetry? – Text used for special literary (artistic) purposes by the interpretive community.

➢ How do we recognize that a text should be used for 'literary purposes'? Sometimes formal elements help (rhythm, rhyme, rhetorical tropes or poetical figures), sometimes there aren't such formal elements. Even in that case we are able to make certain distinctions: a love poem can be differentiated from a marriage proposal; a marriage proposal can be differentiated from a marriage proposal which is used as a poem. – No essential, inherent poetical/artistic ingredient/material can be found here, rather a poetical *function*, a relation between object and user, resulting that the reader suspends the usual conventions of communication and temporarily changes for another set: *code-switching*.

➢ What is the purpose of artistic code-switching? The usually mentioned functions: expressive, imitative and pragmatic, but what characterizes and legitimizes the artistic functions as opposed to regular communicative functions? (Artistic expression / emotional expression / madness; artistic description / photographic description / mapping; artistic persuasion / legal persuasion, etc.)

➢ A general hypothesis: against general belief, the purpose of communication is not direct, unambiguous information exchange. Human language is generically incapable of fulfilling that role (Wittgenstein's later realizations about the playfulness, inherent ambiguities of language), and artistic expression seems to be a social practice through which this playfulness, the consciously generated ambiguities have a special status and are used according to special conventions.

➢ Semiotics broadens the above horizon. If every artificial/conventional system of signs can be considered a language, then is this feature of ambiguity and playfulness inherent in every language? (Natural languages vs. artificial languages? Is ther word play in programming languages? Can you lie in binaric code?)

➢ What is the relationship among the various media of artistic expression? (Language, grammar, syntax, deep structure, etc. used metaphorically by art historians.)

2.2 TYPOLOGIES OF IMAGES

2.2.1 Images according to their source

IMAGE (likeness, resemblance, similitude)				
Optical mirrors projections	Perceptual sense data appearences	Mental dreams memories ideas	Verbal descriptions metaphors	Visual physically constructed designs

Natural (non intentional)		Man-made (intentional)
OBJECTIVE	SUBJECTIVE	
Physical	Virtual	Physical

2.2.2 Images according to the relationship between image and its 'original'

The semiotic typology (Peirce's semiotic typology):

1/ *icon* the image refers to its original by using the original (perfect identification, mellon on the roadside).

2/ *index* demonstrates the effect of the original on itself (a scar referring to the hurtin object, yellow leaves indexing the coming Fall, etc.).

3/ *symbol* refers to its original by some likeness or resemblance, needs an interpreting sign, the ground of comparison (speech act, traffic signs).

2.3 THE QUESTION OF UT PICTURA POESIS

The maxim, *ut pictura poesis* – an age-old debate: which of the two means of expression has primacy? or are they equal and/or interchangeable?

The thesis has two classical sources:

➢ HORACE, *Ars poetica* (2.361-5): "as is painting, so is poetry";

➢ PLUTARCH, *De gloria Atheniensum* (3.347a, ⇦ Simonides of Keos): "poetry is a speaking picture, painting is silent [mute] poetry".

The problem in historical poetics:

➢ ARISTOTLE in the *Poetics* (6.19-21) suggested that poetry and painting as arts of **imitation** should use the same principal elements of composition: *plot* in tragedy and *design* in pinting.

The plot, then is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: character holds the second place. A similar statement is true of painting. The most beautiful colos, laid on confusedly, will not give as much pleasure as a simple chalk outline of a portrait.

➢ From the Renaissance through the Baroque period a complicated polemic developed over the primacy between the two (which is the 'paragon' of arts) which was put an end with Classicism.

➢ SHAFTSBURY in *Plastics* (1712) claimed: "Comparisons and parallels between painting and poetry are almost ever absurd, lame and defective".

➢ LESSING in *Laokoon* (1766) categorically refuted the compatibility of the two and argued that poetry was superior because it included the dimension of time and could present the invisible and the imaginable.

➢ Lessing's was not the last word in the debate, it has been going on up to today, including recent theories focusing on **iconography**, **emblems** or the literary device, **ekphrasis** (cf. Hollander [*The Gazer's Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art*] 1995 and Krieger [*Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign*] 1992; cited by Jacobson 1997).

2.3.1 Summary of Relations between Words and Pictures

① *References to a code in another code* (visual representations of writing/reading, verbal description of painting).
② Combination of words and pictures having *explanatory* function (informative inscription on paintings, explanatory illustrations in books).
③ *Gesamtkunst*, organic combination of picture and text (heraldics, emblems, comics).
④ Mimetic pictures combined with mystical/emblematic text and/or pictorial elements (tombs; stained glass windows).
⑤ Picture and text having reverse functions (picture poems, pictopoesie).
⑥ Full identification of picture and text (pictograms, hieroglyphics, ideograms, pictures representing characters of the alphabet).

2.3.2 Summary

Questions: ➢ What if an image is identical with itself? (Iconic images: a pumpkin calling attention of pumpkins on sale; Warhol's 'Campbell Soup'). ➢ How do we differentiate between the artistic and non artistic function of graphic designs (a map-like painting and a real map)? ➢ What is the relationship between verbal and graphic images (ut pictura poesis).

The three orientations of this course: 1/ phenomenological and pragmatic questions of textual/verbal images (semiotics, image theory); 2/ the hermeneutics of images, undertanding and interpretation (iconography, iconology); 3/ Questioning and recognizing the function of images (cultural theory).

2.3.3 Power Point Presentation

Interplay of words and pictures in the visual arts.

3 TRADITION BASED CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS. THE EMBLEMATIC WAY OF SEEING AND THINKING

3.1 INTRODUCTORY FILM

Tradition based iconography: European Christianity.

3.2 THE EMBLEM

The emblem as a *genre* and as a *mode of expression* constitutes a central focal point in the relations between words and images. The following treatment: a/ definition of the emblem proper; b/ forerunners of the emblem; c/ extended emblems, emblematic expressions, emblematic structural principles in literature (PETER M. DALY).

3.2.1 Definitions

Loosely speaking, the emblem is a form of allegorical or symbolical expression, but its relation to allegory, symbolism, metaphor, and conceit is difficult to establish. The definition depends if we understand allegory and symbol as aesthetic, rhetorical, ontological, semantic, cultural, social, and/or linguistic categories. Another problem: emblem books are not a wholly homogeneous category: over 6000 from the 16th through the 18th centuries. Their origin is equally complicated and varied, so are the contemporary definitions offered in the emblem books themselves.

A suitable prototype: Andrea Alciati's *Emblematum liber* (1531). An emblem is composed of 3 parts: *inscriptio* (short motto), *pictura* (a picture of objects, persons, events or actions set against an imaginary or real background), *subscriptio* (a prose or verse quotation from some learned source or from the emblematist).

Peter Daly's questions before a synthetic definition of the emblem (1998, 7-8):

1/ What are the content and origin of the pictura; what is its relation to reality if any?

2/ What are the content, origin, and purpose of the inscriptio and subscriptio?

3/ What functional relationship exists between *pictura* and *scriptura*, i.e. between thing (pictured) and meaning (expressed in words)? How is the synhtesis effected?

4/ What is the overriding purpose of the emblem book?

For our purpose No.3 is the most important question and answers of emblem theorists range according to a wide spectrum: from "capricious", "accidental" to "didactic", "mystical", or "synthetic *Gesamtkunst*". Differing views about single signation (convergence of meaning) and plurisignation (divergence of meaning).

3.2.2 Forerunners of the emblem

➢ The *Greek epigram*. MARIO PRAZ: "Emblems are things (representations of objects) which illustrate a conceit; epigrams are words (a conceit) which illustrate objects (a work of art, a votive offering, a tomb)".

➢ *Classical mythology*: the fables typify particular, human experience, used for didactic purposes.

➢ General *allegories of life* (Tabula Cebetis).

➢ *Hieroglyphics*, supposing they were clear ideograms of Egyptian priests communicating divine wisdom. Mystical interpretations. HORAPOLLO [Horus Apollo], 4th century AD, a manuscript found in 1419, subsequent Renaissance editions and interpretations. Basically

allegorical in nature. ALBERTI on the hieroglyphics (quot Daly 1998, 22).

The Egyptians employed symbols in the following manner: they carved an eye, by which they understood God; a vulture for Nature; a bee for a King; a circle for Time; an ox for Peace, and the like. And their reason for expressing their sense by these symbols was, that words were understood only by the respective nations that talked the language, and therefore inscriptions in common characters must in a short time be lost: as it has actually happened to our Etruscan characters. [. . .] The Egyptians supposed, by symbols, they thought must always be understood by learned men of all nations.

➢ *Medieval nature symbolism*: allegoric bestiaries, lapidaries – PHYSIOLOGUS. Medieval exegesis: *sensus mysticus* or allegoricus, *sensus moralis* or tropologicus, and *sensus anagogicus*. The relationship of meaning to created thing was not taken as arbitrary. Each stone, plant, animal had a special allegorical and moral meaning, too. These meanings could be good or bad depending on the qualities involved. ➢ Biblical exegesis, *Biblia pauperum*, dance of death series.

➢ *Heraldry*. Special chivalric/feudal symbolism that developed in the later Middle Ages and its Renaissance Italian descendant: ➢ the *Impresas*. A picture and a motto: 'body' and 'soul'.

➢ *Commemorative medals*.

3.2.2.1 The importance of tradition

During the Renaissance the methods of empirical observation were only being introduced. Empiricism joined but did not wipe out 'Tradition'. Proverbial lore, Christian and Classical traditions established authority different from the scientific truths.

3.3 EMBLEMATIC EXPRESSIONS, EMBLEMATIC STRUCTURES

3.3.1 Emblem and 'emblematic'

This aspect opens up the whole of early modern visual and literary culture and the semiotics of this culture. Figuratively the term 'emblematic', of course, can be applied to a whole range of articulation, far beyond literary and visual artworks, including large areas of culturally coded conventional systems from dressing fashions to heraldics, from religious symbolism (e.g. the colours of the cloak of the Catholic priest according to the period of the ecclesiastical year) to socially codified individual- or mass actions such as gestures and body language, social rites and ceremonies (entries, funerals, tournaments, processions or even the coreography of executions or other types of public punishment); games and plays (including theatre, sports, popular spectacles). One of the most important manifestations was the so called 'emblematic theatre' which is understood in contrast to the photographic, or illusionistic boxed stage theatre as it developed from the 17th century.

3.3.1.1 The word-emblem

A poetical figure, between symbol, metaphor and allegory. ➢ Emblem books became sources of poetic imagery. ➢ The function of the word emblem: conceptual, not a mere decoration. ➢ The emblematic poem (especially in the Baroque period, the English metaphysicals, religious poetry). ➢ The pattern poem: HERBERT's 'Easter Wings' or 'The Altar'.

3.3.1.2 Emblematic drama/theatre

GLYNN WYCKHAM: Shakespeare's 'public theatre' preferred the figurative representation as opposed to naturalistic depiction. The great paradigm shift: from emblematic theatre to

perspectivic box-theatre (curtain, light effects, the public in a voyeur situation). The emblematic structures emphasized the macro and microcosmic correspondences, the hierarchies of the world, the proportions of mathematics, the allegory of the *Globe*. ➢ The importance of visual elements:

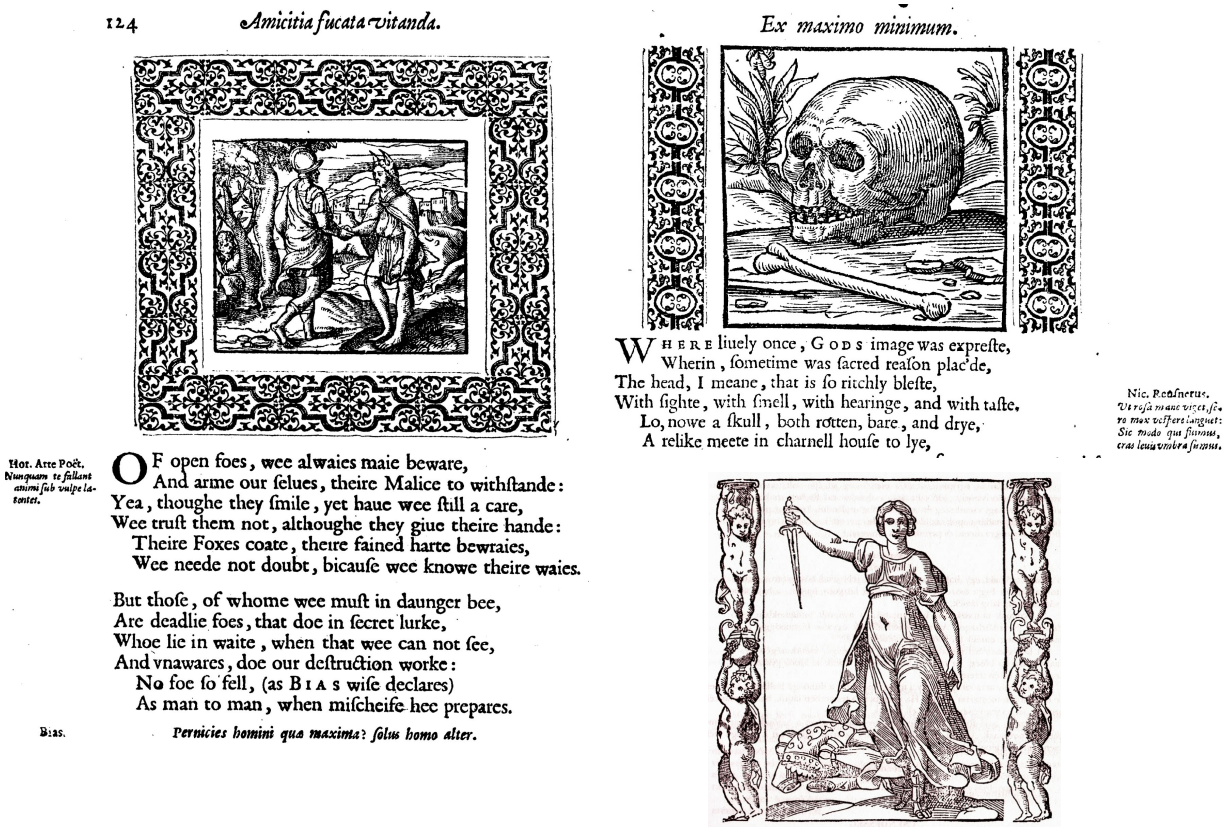
–*Othello* 3.3.485 [Othello & Jago] – Whitney 124: „False friend", a fox-skin coat.

–Dagger (Shylock, Macbeth, Othello) – Ripa 576: „Tragedy".

–*Hamlet* [skull] – Whitney 98: „Sic transit gloria mundi".

–*Lear* 1.1.135-9 [Lear handles the crown to Albanynak & Cornwall]. The division of the kingdom – the crown is indivisible.

–*II. Richard* [Richárd sitting on the molehill – sic transit gloria mundi – emblematic tableau].



PETER DALY's typology of embematic theatrical/dramatic elements:

1/ Emblem as in emblem books – stage property [crown, throne, banner].

2/ Emblematic word – functions as an image, rhetorical figure, argument, exemplum [Macbeth's description of the dagger].

3/ Characters and personifications (Pericles = *constantia*).

4/ The stage itself [setting, properties, dumb shows, tableaux].

.....

5/ Emblematic theatre as *Gesamtkunst* (stage=pictura, text=scriptura)

3.3.2 Seeing Is Believing

See Daniel Russell, "Perceiving, Seeing and Meaning: Emblems and Some Approaches to Reading Early Modern Culture" (1999, 77-92).

His starting point: perception and seeing should not be mixed with each other. – Cf. Gombrich's article of 1981 ("Image and Code: Scope and Limits of Conventionalism in Pictorial Representation") in which the Warburgian art historian partially revoked his formerly

conventionalist conviction about the textual nature of images and suggested that conventional and 'natural' pictures might be differentiated from each other.

Russell agrees with the possibility that optical-biological perception can generate 'natural' images, he emphasizes, however, that we have no chance to 'see' these images in their naturalness, because our seeing – which is more than perception, it is a cognitive capability – works according to socially constructed rules. This general thesis is supported by many examples in Russell's study.

His first observation about 'natural' picture elements is, that the seemingly naturalistic background motifs in emblem pictures are in fact carry symbolic-allegorical meaning that help the interpretation of the foreground (op. cit., 78).

According to his second important observation, on emblem pictures the spatial relations appear different from what we would expect today. He explains this by referring to the orality studies of Marshal McLuhan and Walter J. Ong. As they suggested, the 'oral imagination' would not look at a picture in its entirety, rather, it would look for (or construct) a narrative line to scan the image-elements step by step. Following this linear procedure, the viewer then would use variable strategies to create connections among the elements, usually between two at a time (op. cit., 82). According to Russell we should call this technique 'quasi-literacy' and the structure of a picture produced by it resembles the structure of dialogues or orally presented riddles.
Consequently, "if we moderns find some other way of viewing the picture more 'natural' or compelling, and feel obliged to take account of these traits, there is no good reason to suppose that contemporaries did so too".

Due to this 'scanning technique,' the early modern viewer of images perceived pictures as mosaic-like and attributed much greater importance to details than to the whole. At this point we may remember Heinrich Wölfflin's famous juxtaposition of the Renaissance and Baroque pictorial styles, the former establishing coordination the latter subordination among its elements. According to Russell this logic of coordination can be found not only in painting, but in poetry – for example in the metaphoric imagery of Petrarchan love lyrics –, too.

All this does not fully explain the rise of naturalistic and realistic tendencies in Renaissance art, for example the discovery of the rules of perspective and their fast dissemination among the artists. Russell's conclusion is that early modern Europeans started reading 'the Book of Nature' less automatically and less 'well' than their medieval predecessors; at the same time symbolization as image-function became more and more contested by representation, just as discursive logic and scientific observation started subverting the whole concept of the Book of Nature (op. cit., 88). – Emblems seem to document the various stages of this complex procedure and are particularly useful to gain information about the way how early modern people actually *saw* nature and their own world. This research, however, must not treat emblems as a privileged, isolated genre, rather, they have to be looked at in the wider contexts of the representational logic and the general semiotics of the age.

3.4 CONCLUSION

The *'emblematic'* as a genre, and an artform, as a structure as well as a mode of thinking means the vastest and in many ways the most complex and interesting area when words and images mix and melt. The study of this area is important for the understanding of tradition as well as for aesthetical pleasure, often influencing modern works of art, too.

4 ICONOGRAPHY AND ICONOLOGY 1
WARBURG AND CULTURAL ARCHEOLOGY

4.1 ICONOGRAPHY AND ICONOLOGY

Images generated by the human subject form systems of signs so they can be exposed to semiotic analysis. Since created sign systems work on the basis of conventionality, they can function a/ either as regulated by unconscious automatism; b/ or by way of conscious interpretive acts which take ambiguities into consideration. In the latter case the employment of forms, themes and motives codfied by tradition play an important part. The images capitalizing on traditionally fixed themes and forms are the subject matter of *iconography* and *iconology*.

4.1.1 Historical background

The *Iconologia* of CESARE RIPA was conceived as a guide to the symbolism in emblem books and allegorical paintings. It was very influential in the 17th century and went through a number of editions. There were 9 Italian editions -1593, 1603, 1611, etc. and 8 non Italian editions in other languages.

Excerpts from his introduction [from McLean's Alchemy website].

Introduction to the Iconologia or Hieroglyphical figures of Cesare Ripa,
Where in general is treated of diverse forms of figures with their ground Rules.

The figures that are made to express a thing different from that which we behold with our eyes, have no surer nor more common rule to make than the imitation of the thoughts, and of those things which are found in books, medals, and carved marble stones. [...] Omitting then the figures which the Orator uses, and of which Aristotle treats in the 3rd book of the Art of Eloquence, I will only speak of those which belong to the Art of painting. Although the two have some likeness with each other, for as the painted figures by the eye persuade something, also moves the art of eloquence the mind by words.

The Art of painting takes notice of the likeness of things 1/ which are without a person, also it takes notice of those things 2/ which are in connection with man and which in reality are called Essentials.

In the first sense they are often used by the ancient, inventing many figures of the gods. Which are nothing else but dressings and clothings to cover that part of Philosophy which treats of procreation and putrefaction of natural things, of the form of the heavens and the influence of the stars, of the solidness of the Earth, and other such like things. Many eminent men have judged that it was well worth their labor to expound those things which they found hidden in these fables. Leaving unto us in writing, that by the figure of *Saturn*, they understood Time; which gave being unto years, months, and days, and who took them away; because he devoured and ate up his own young ones, which were his children. Also by the lightning *Jupiter*, they understood the most purest part of the Heavens from whence all high heavenly workings proceed. Also they understood by the figure of the *Beautiful Venus*, the appetite or desire of the first matter or stuff, to the form or figure which gives her perfectness, as the Philosophers call it. And for those who believed that the world was a moveable body and that all things came to pass by the government of the stars (according to what Mercurius Trismegistus relates in his Pimander), they invented the shepherd *Argus*, who with many eyes could see on all sides.

The second manner of figures concerns those things which are in man itself, or which have great communion with it. As by comparison, for strength we take a column or pillar: because the same in a building bears all the stones and timber which is built upon it, without

stirring or moving. Signifying, that such is the strength in men: to carry the ponderousness of all troubles and difficulties which may cause upon him. And by comparison, for the Art of Eloquence, we put a sword and a shield. For as these instruments defend the soldier's life and hurts his enemy; so the Orator, by his proofs or imperfect conclusions, maintains his good cause and puts back the contrary party. [...] And these two sorts of likeness, are the sinews and force of a well made figure.

To make then, the likeness and action, what in every object is fittest and becoming, we shall take notice of what the Rhetorici or orators warn us: vis, that by known things we must seek the high things -- by Laudible, the Illustrious; by despised, the foul or base; by commendable, the splendorous. From which things, every one will see such a multitude of imaginations increase in his understanding, if he be not too stupid.

Without knowledge of the name, we cannot open unto the knowledge of the signified thing; except if with ordinary and common figures, which by every one through use, at first sight, are commonly known.

4.2 ICONOGRAPHY/ICONOLOGY AS A MODERN HISTORICAL DISCIPLINE

Iconography and iconology were first extensively studied in the so called 'Warburg school' from the 1890s. The significance of this group of German-Jewish scholars (Warburg, Cassirer, Panofsky, Saxl, Kristeller) in English studies: fleeing from Nazi Germany they transplanted a method to Anglo-Saxon context (London, New York and the Princeton Institute of Advanced Studies). A most happy meeting of German conceptualism and English elegance, ease and pragmatism. A synhtesis of art history and intellectual history which also greately fertilized the study of literature.

4.2.1 Aby WARBURG (1866-1929)

Son of a well to do Jewish banker from Hamburg. Studied archeology and art history in Bonn, Strassburg, Florence (1888). Medical studies (1892), travels in New Mexico, researching the Pueblo Indians (1895/6). Again in Florence (1896), then in Hamburg (1902). A bibliophil, library and university founder. His cooperation and friendship with Fritz Saxl from 1911, in 1912 his greatest scholarly success: at the international art historical congress in Rome presents his deciphering of the iconographical program of the Palazzo Schifanoia frescoes in Ferrara.

During WW1 receives a nervous breakdown, a psychiatric patient (1918-24). 1920: the grounding of the University of Hamburg and the Warburg Library will be its research institute under the direction of Saxl. From 1922: public seminars and publications, cooperation with Ernst Cassirer and Erwin Panofsky.

1926/7: Warburg offers a seminar on Jakob Burckhardt at the University. Returning to scholarly work he starts constructing his picture album project: *Mnemosyne*, completing 70 plates till his death in 1929.

1933: the Library is transplanted to London and in 1944 becomes the research institute of the University of London. Its most famous director was Ernst Gombrich.

4.2.2 Erwin PANOFSKY (1892-1968)

Of German origin art historian who fled to the USA from fascism. He studied in Freiburg and Berlin, then from 1921 in Hamburg and used the Warburg Library. Cassirer's theoretical influence on him. In the USA he became a permanent member of the Princeton Institute of Advanced Study. In 1966, at the peak of his career when for the first time visited Germany lectured in English! ➢ He is the greatest theoretician and practicioner of art historical iconography and iconology, also influenced Structuralism in the 1960s.

His main works: a/ the German period: the analysis of Dürer's *Melancholia* (in cooperation with Fritz Saxllal); a monography on Romanesque German sculpture; studies in the survival of classical and medieval artistic and intellectual traditions (*Idea*, 1924; *Hercules am Scheidewege*), b/ the American period: *Studies in Iconology* (1939); *Albrecht Dürer* (1943); *Abbot Suger and the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis* (1946); *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (1951); *Early Netherlandish Painting* (1953); *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (1957); *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (1960); *Tomb Sculpture* (1964).

His theoretical system will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.2.3 Ernst H. GOMBRICH

Born in Vienna, English art historian. A champion of Panofsky's iconological school, who studied symbolic images as well as dealt with the psychological aspects of image reception. Developed Panofsky's system into a more pragmatic direction (what was the way of using symbolic images; when and among what circumstances it becomes possible to carry out iconographic analysis). In his later works he studied the theoretical questions of creating illusions.

His theoretical system will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.3 THE PHILOSOPHY OF SYMBOLIC FORMS

The philosophy of Ernst CASSIRER (1874-1945), which greatly influenced the intellectual historians of the Warburg school. Studies: Breslau – Marburg (neokantianism) – Berlin – Hamburg (Aby Warburg) – the USA. Interesting parallels with the life of Roman Jakobson (an anecdote about their common ship journey to the emigration).

His philosophy included the first systematic critique of the theory of imitation (mirroring). ➢ If we demolish the supposed identity between reality and their symbols, in the tension between the two will become apparent the meaning the form of the symbols carry. Symbolic expression begins when it takes off from reality. This can be seen if a typology of language:

> Mimetic utterances: onomatopoeia, children's language, the language of peoples near to nature (far from abstraction: African languages on ‘going’, Eskimo language on ‘snow’). The concept of the *lingua adamica* (16th and 17th century).
>
> Analogical expression: "natural sound-metaphors". In most languages *a,o,u* refer to far, *e,i* refer to near. Vowel-harmony in the Ural-Altaic languages.
>
> Symbolic expression: pure conventionality, built-in ambiguity. The latter forces language to move from concrete signification to abstract meaning.

Cassirer laid the philosophical foundations of conventionality and pragmatics parallel with Wittgenstein and Jakobson. In art history this was later on adapted by PANOFSKY, GOMBRICH, Nelson GOODMAN and Arthur DANTO.

Cassirer asserted that an essential property of humankind was the symbol through which man understood the world and at the same time represented the dimensions of his own world:

space and time, myth and religion, language, art, history, even science. These are all self-contained systems, they do not simply mirror the world but rather create a world of their own. So the comprehension of existence happens not through passive imitation, rather via these specially created active symbols. A consequence of this theory has become that the different symbolic systems all put forward their perspectivic claim for truth, thus Truth has become relativized according to the logic of the given system – or as today's cultural theory would formulate: according to the ideology of the user or interpretiv community.

His major works: *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen* (1923-29, English edition 1953); *An Essay on Man. An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture* (1944). The parts of *PhSF*: *I. Die Sprache; II. Das mythische Denken; III. Phäneomenologie der Erkenntnis*.

According to Vilmos Voigt, Cassirer interpreted man as a pansemiotic, symbol using animal (*animal symbolicum*). He treated symbols as totally independent from reality; symbols are the products of human epistemology.

The shortcomings of this philosophy: it was more structuralist than historical, this dimension was left out from its scope. And because of this it could not become a real pragmatics. It needed the emergence of hermeneutics (GADAMER, JAUSS, ISER) and the theory of discourse (BAKHTIN, FOUCAULT) to be able to develop into a complex semiotics of culture.

4.4 WARBURG AND CULTURAL ARCHEOLOGY

In the context of these lectures, our interest will not primarily be directed towards his discoveries in the interpretation of enigmatic art works, rather we have to look at the theoretical framework in which his iconographical method was formed.

The discussion follows three aspects: 1/ the relationship between Cassirer's philosophy of symbolic forms and Warburg's interpretations; 2/ Warburg's concept of *mnémé* as a link toward *Rezeptionsaesthetik* and reader/viewer response criticism; and, finally, 3/ Warburg's theory of *pathosformeln* in the context of Darwin's psychology of expression and Jung's collective unconsciousness.

Warburg's theoretical basis can be coupled with Cassirer's philosophy. Neokantianism, a deep interest in the logic and system of sciences – especially *die Kulturwissenschaften*. ➢ Cassirer recognized that Warburg's library was not simply raw material for research, but that in it the information had a systematically ordered structure, converging towards a designated goal: the problems of the reception history of classical Antiquity.

Aby Warburg's concerns were akin with that of Cassirer in that that he was interested in certain structures of cultural symbolization, but at the same time his perception was essentially historical. As Gombrich has pointed out, he was not interested in the abstract processes of stylistic change, he was aware that art was made by people who were facing decisions and who turned for advice to the past as well as to their present.

The *leitmotif* of his work:"What was the meaning of the survival of Antiquity for the Western Man?". Through these investigations he discovered the double face of the classical heritage: the *rational* on the one hand and the *demonic* on the other. ➢ He also arrived at some crucial intuitions concerning cultural reception.

He realized that the twofold, ambivalent effect, that is the polarized interpretation of Antiquity could not result from the works themselves. The driving force of polarity was the *mnémé*, the cultural memory which assigned particular roles to the reemerging elements and motives of classical art. In his last project, the *Mnemosyné* atlas-album, he wanted to demonstrate the inharmonious reappearence of Antiquity through the *mnémé* in paradigmes such as astronomy vs. astrology, etc.

The roots of Warburg's intuitions concerning cultural reception. An important inspiration was, perhaps in connection with his medical studies, Charles Darwin's *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). In it the author argued that human gestures were the vague remnants of once practical and effective actions. On the analogy of this theory Warburg created the term *Pathosformeln*:

> the repertory of gestures and mimics in classical art was nothing else but repressed traces of barbaric rituals and orgiastic ceremonies. And the reception of these *Pathosformeln* in the Renaissance resulted in the formation of the humanistic conventions of symbolization.

The use of symbolization, according to Warburg's psychological theory, happens as a reconciliation of conflicting motivations, those that appear in Nietsche's dichotomy of Apollonian and Dionysian antiquity. These recur periodically in Warburg's investigations of the ambiguities of the classical heritage: the ideals of perfection as well as the magical and the demoniac. As EDGAR WIND pointed out: "in the course of the history of images their pre-existing expressive values undergo a polarization. It is only by means of this theory of polarity that the role of an image within a culture as a whole is to be determined..."

What was the link between the archaic deeds and the *Pathosformeln*? It was the mythologies which transferred the old religious meanings and offered them either for classicizing rationalization or for a demonic recreation. Warburg in fact presupposed a collective memory which, like a reservoir, would contain those culturally ready made patterns which offer the artists forms, motives, *sujets*. ➢ An obvious comparison of this notion of *collective memory* to Jung's *collective unconsciousness*. The common ground is that in both concepts one encounters that archetypal, inherited image-stock which manifests itself in myths, occult lore, or in dreams. These are the catalysts for *anamnesis*, the remembering. There is, however, a basic difference between the two approaches. Jung's ultimate search for the collective unconsciousness directed him to try to clear away everything that hid or covered it, so his exploration lead him from consciousness to the unconscious, a realm in which reason, logic, or decision had no role to play. Warburg, on the other hand, opted for reason, a deliberate self-realization of the human being. In spite of the imminent dangers of *mnémé*, and the act of remembering, his ideal was that the *Pathosformeln* and their demonic archetypes can be tamed, humanised through art. As opposed to Jung, for Warburg myths had no predetermined meaning. He was convinced that while the act of remembering always works on the myth, the result of this work is open: it can signify either liberation or degradation. And since meaning remains open, the work remains incomplete without the interpreting user, without the act of reception. Reception obviously happens on two levels in the intertextual space: everything Warburg examines is a reflected reception of some earlier memories, while his own examination is also an act of reception which parallels self-discovery and self-reflection.

Warburg's concept of collective memory thus performs the two basic mechanisms of reception: as *langue* it provides the grammar, the conventionality of culture, but in its pragmatics, as an actively used *parole* it also subverts tradition, appropriates the myths.

To sum up: through the never fully explained theory of *mnemosyné* his intuitions came near the modern theories of *reader/viewer response*-criticism and *Rezeptionsaesthetik*. In his interpretive approach to art- and cultural history, Warburg seems to have shared the precognition of what was to come known as cultural relativism, in fact he appears to be one of those 'inventors of modernism' who highlighted the crucial importance of pragmatics.

5 ICONOGRAPHY, ICONOLOGY 2

5.1 PANOFSKY's THEORIES AND SYSTEM

5.1.1 Theoretical foundations

His first achievment was the critique of Heinrich Wölfflin and Alois Riegel who had developed an art historical theory based on he study of artistic forms and stylistic change. (His article: "The problem of art historical style", 1915 – in Panofsky 1984, 7-14). According to Wölfflin artistic form should be separated from the contents because the development of forms is related to the changes of (physical) seeing. According to Panofsky the physiology of seeing is not changing, only the way of seeing (psycho-sociological aspect), consequently contents and form cannot be separated from each other. (The way of seeing is in connection with what one wants to see...) Expression is inseparable from its context (world picture, sociology). The concept of *Kunstwollen*: it is not simply the author's intention, rather the intertextual detemination of possible intentions and motivations. ➢ These speculations lead Panofsky to the problem of *meaning*.

5.1.2 Levels of meaning, acts of interpretation

Panofsky's method is well known: he related to each other the subject matter of interpretation and the act of interpretation, differentiating among three levels of the subject matters, each with a characteristic method of interpretation. This he illustrated with some famous examples: a man greeting somebody by lifting his hat. Leonardo's *Last Supper*.

1/ *primary, or natural subject matter – pre-iconographical description (sensibility)*
factual/expressional meaning – reaction/empathy
The hat-lifting man's gesture and emotions, mood. A group of excited persons about a dinner table.
The identification of pure forms, configurations of line and color, natural objects such as human beings, animals and plants; identification of their relations to each other – the world of artistic *motifs*.

2/ *secondary or conventional subject matter – iconographical analysis (intelligibility)*
Not only the world of objects and events,
but also the more than practical world of customs and *cultural traditions*
(the medieval roots of hat-lifting: remove the helmet to show your peaceful intentions).
Motifs recognized as carriers of a secondary or conventional meaning – *images*, stories, *allegories*.
A woman with a bandage over her eyes: + scale (Justitia), + wheel (Fortune).

3/ *intrinsic meaning, symbolical values – iconological interpretation (intuition)*
The salute contributes to the greeting man's 'personality', national, social, educational background, his previous history of life and his present sourroundings + as individual manner, his 'philosophy'. The *Last Supper* on this level is a document of Leonardo's personality and an expression of the Italian Renaissance.

The first two levels are *phenomenal* features while the third level constitutes the intrinsic or *essential* level. (This is *not* essentialism!)

ICONOGRAPHY [Gr. *graphein*]: a descriptive discipline. Collects, describes and classifies images and allegories (cf. ethnography). ICONOLOGY [Gr. *logos*]: whenever iconography is taken out of its isolation and integrated with whichever other method, historical, psychological or critical, we may attempt to use in solving "the riddle of the sphinx." "I conceive iconology as an iconography turned interpretive and thus becoming the integral part of the study of art instead of being confined to the role of a preliminary statistical survey" (Panofsky 1993, 58).

5.1.3 The subcejtive sources and correctional methods of interpretation

He also identified three sets of skills and methods which he called the "equipment for interpretation" and associated them with three "controlling principles" which relate to 'tradition,' as an objectified control system of subjective interpretations: "In whichever stratum we move, our identifications and interpretations will depend on our subjective equipment, and for this very reason will have to be supplemented and corrected by an insight into historical processes the sum total of which may be called tradition" (Panofsky 1993, 67).

1/ *practical experience – history of style*

We subject our practical experience to a corrective principle which may be called the history of style.

2/ *knowledge of literary sources – history of types*

A familiarity with specific themes or concepts as transmitted through literary sources, whether acquired by purposeful reading or by oral tradition. This familiarity does not guarantee correctness.

3/ *synthetic intuition – history of cultural symbols (tradition)*.

Synthetic intuition even more needs correction. The art historican will have to check what he thinks is the intrinsic meaning of the work to which he devotes his attention, against what he thinks is the intrinsic meaning of as many other documents of civilization historically related to that work as he can master.

Panofsky thus acknowledged the uncertainty resulting from the subjective act of interpretation to that extent, that at one point, referring to the intuitive moment, he paralleled iconography and iconology with astronomy and astrology. He nevertheless tried to avoid this danger of subjectivity; this is why he offered his corrective principles, he believed that the traditional history of styles and types can firmly support the establishment of meanings.

An important intention of Panofsky: he never separated rigidly the three levels from each other, rather asserted that they melt into each other both in the artwork as well as in the act of interpretation.

5.1.4 Panofsky's contribution to Warburg's intuitions

"What was the meaning of the survival of Antiquity for the Western Man?" Panofsky identified specific problems of Renaissance iconography. One important aspect was related to the very term and notion of the Renaissance.

The Renaissance had a concept of its own (Alberti, Vasari): classical art and culture perished at the beginning of the Christian Middle Ages and were revived only in their own age. However, it was only partially true. The classical tradition never totally disappeared in the Middle Ages, especially after the conscious efforts of its revitalization at the court of Charlemagne (see Panofsky's *Renaissance and Renascences*, 1960). The Renaissance still, without doubt, brought a new approach to the classical Antiquity.

5.1.4.1 The medieval attitude

Classical motives were used for depicting non classical themes, while classical themes were represented by non-classical motives. ➢ Some classical motives were used for Christian themes (Orpheus for representing David [a kind of typological symbolism]). ➢ Classical heroes were represented in medieval clothing and surroundings (scenes from the Trojan war, pagan gods and goddesses).

The reason for the split: separation of pictorial and textual traditions. Classical mythology survived in textual sources (‘prehumanism’: mythological readers, moralising interpretations, *Gesta romanorum*, Boccaccio's *Genealogia deorum*). Most of these texts were created in the North where there was no corresponding visual material. ➢ The

classical forms, on the other hand, survived in Provance and in Italy ('proto-Renaissance').

5.1.4.2 The Renaissance discovery of history

The Middle Ages had no philology and/or archeology. The classical antiquity as a separate unit of cultural history was only 'invented' in the Renaissance. A spearate unit which could be researched and reconstructed.

5.2 THE ICONOLOGY OF GOMBRICH

Gombrich further developed the iconology of Panofsky, first in an ontological direction (asking what was the source of symbolic images [*Icones symbolicae*, 1948]). According to him images had three sources:

Symbolic images according to their source

EXPERIENCE	TRADITION	EXPRESSION
representation of an object	representation of an idea	private symbolism
	allegory	(un)conscious visions of an artist

The first case unites representation and imitation: the image is a copy of something already existing, this is the product of sensation/experience. In the second two classes we find such images which are the products of intellect which transform the images of physical and mental sensation. ➢ According to their function, these images can be ascribed to three traditions (here Gombrich refers to the traditions of the producers as well as the users, referring thus to an hermeneutical act). As he says: "our attitude towards the image is bound up with our whole idea about the universe" (Gombrich 1972, 125).

Symbolic images acording to their function

DIDACTIC	REVELATIVE	MAGIC
metaphor	symbolic-intuitive	"powerful" esoteric sign
Aristotelian tradition	Platonic tradition	hermetic-occult tradition

The didactic metaphor is the *expression* of an idea, the product of intellectual activity, its function is decorative and entertaining, it has to enhance linguistic presentation, it possesses a certain explanatory, *illustrative* power. The Aristotelian-Ciceronian tradition followed this intention; the Renaissance emblems were considered as a special class of didactic expression in which words and pictures mutually enhanced the effective meaning of each other (FIGURE: Peacham, *Homo microcosmus*).

As opposed to this the Platonic tradition attributed different power to the symbolic image. For the platonist an image is the *revelation* of a higher idea, the condensed form of a metaphysical truth which cannot be comprehended through duscursive logic. The image, consequently, is not the product of rational thinking, rather a momentary illumination which intuitively enlightens the viewer. ➢ Cf. the technique of the Gnostic philosopher of whose truth Plotinus asserted: "It must not be thought that in the Intelligible World the gods and the blessed see propositions; everything expressed there is a beautiful image" (*Ennead* V,8). Such revelative images are the mandalas, or some of the revelative mystical diagrams of the Renaissance (FIGURE: Dee, MH).

Such images can be interpreted as efforts to retain the lost *lingua adamica*. The me-

chanism of the hermeneutical process in the two categories: *veritas filia temporis* – didactic images; *epiphany* – revelative images.

A special class of revelative images would be magic-esoterical pictures which not only enlighten but also have their own transcendent power. (Signs which command demons and spirits, raise the apparition of the dead, etc. FIGURE: John Dee and Kelly in the magic circle).

The system of Gombrich – just as well as that of Panofsky – capitalize on our everyday experiences and by emphasizing the importance of convention and tradition are suitable for deciphering artistic or other cultural semiotic messages. But their weaknesses are also similar (cf. the next lecture).

6 POSTMODERN ICONOLOGY

The development of the concepts of iconography and iconology show the same pattern as other branches of literary and cultural theory: from *essentialism* through *historicism* and *structuralism* to *pragmatism*.

6.1 DANGERS AND CAVEATS IN ICONOGRAPHY AND EMBLEMATICS

As PANOFSKY defined, iconography "presupposes a familiarity with specific themes or concepts as transmitted through literary sources, whether acquired by purposeful reading or by oral tradition" (*Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 1993, 61). It would imply that formal emblems as well as other iconographical imagery (including figurative language) rely on a shared knowledge and have culturally fixed meaning. Earlier interpreters referred to this shared knowledge as the unchanging footing in the Classical and the Judeo-Christian traditions of European culture, and looked at iconographical imagery as decoders of the meanings of motifs in various contexts; they even used emblem books as dictionaries to translate meaning and clarify use. Again, in Panofsky's definition:

> *Iconography, is, therefore, a description and classification of images: it is limited and, as it were, ancillary study which informs us as to when and where specific themes were visualized by which specific motifs. [...] In doing all this, iconography is [...] the necessary basis for all further interpretation. It does not, however, attempt to work out this interpretation for itself (Panofsky 1993, 57).*

Caveats already within the essentialist camp: the traps of iconographic interpretations lead to abuses; the analogy of the dictionary can be very misleading. ➢ Everybody should know from personal experience that a beginner learner of a foreign language can misuse a dictionary *ad absurdum*, being mislead by synonyms and homonyms, not mentioning context-sensitive meanings. ➢ These observations lead the later WITTGENSTEIN to his theoretical conversion, finally designating **pragmatics** as the cornerstone of linguistics.

The problem applies not only to language but to other sign-systems, too. Any semiotic structure, including iconographically coded messages accommodate elements of multiple meanings in two ways:

1/ Classical and early modern tradition itself was ambiguous, since it programmatically assigned positive and negative significance to all symbolic components – as the ancients called it – *in bonam partem / malam partem*.

2/ If we accept that meaning is constituted through the hermeneutical process, then the horizon of expectations (differing among individual interpreters and interpreting communities) also contributes to generating ambiguous meanings from messages (approximations and appropriations).

6.2 POST-STRUCTURALIST CONCERNS

6.2.1 The multiplicity of meaning & theories of conventionalism

A fuller understanding of this complicated operation was boosted by post-structuralist theory, the influence of which can be felt on the following remark of the well-known emblem scholar, PETER DALY:

> *Emblematic and iconographic codes do not convey single signations, but po-*

tentially pluri-signations. [Emblems], like dictionaries, can be used or abused. Seeing is believing, but what we see is in a sense a function of what we believe, or what we know. What we see also depends in some measure on what we are looking for, and capable of finding" (1993, 20).

This statement echoes Gombrich's conventionalist axiom: "our attitude towards the image is bound up with our whole idea about the universe" (cf. above).

Inspired by post-structuralism, such warnings have been expanded to broad theoretical generalizations about the multiplicity of meaning of emblems, previously thought to have fixed reference. STEPHEN ORGEL in one of his recent studies claims:

How do we know how to read a Renaissance image? In the simplest cases, we have Renaissance guides to interpretation, in the form of iconologies and handbooks of symbolism. Yet such cases immediately become less simple when we observe that reading imagery through them depends on reading texts, and therefore shares in all the interpretive ambiguity of that process. [...] Interpretation depends, moreover, on what texts we select as relevant, and even on what we are willing to treat as text (1996, 133).

With such theoretical preoccupation Orgel comes to demonstrate the fundamental ambiguities of seemingly fixed Renaissance meanings, such as the emblematic pelican of *caritas*. The conventional Renaissance meaning: *typus Christi*, or *caritas*, selflessly nourishing her young with her heart's blood. ➢ The image is ambiguously gendered: the female (mother) image stands for Christ. ➢ Applications of the built-in ambiguities in Shakespeare:

1/ Laertes over the dead body of his father, Polonius:

To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms,
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,
Repast them with my blood (4.5.145-7).

The life-giving blood of the pelican is turned to be the metaphor of killing; maternal love, familiar piety generates vengeance.

2/ John of Gount to Richard II:

O, spare me not, my brother Edward's son, [...]
That blood already, like the pelican,
Has thou tapped out and drunkenly caroused (2.1.124-6).

Richard has taken his parent's blood: while the mother pelican (= Christ) is self-sacrifying, the next generation of pelicans are "a race of cannibals – the only way to have the topos is to have it both ways" (Orgel 1996, 134).

3/ King Lear speaking about "pelican daughters" (3.4.77). Maternal caritas is referencing to filial ingratitude.

Although there is no Renaissance handbook to suggest the pelican as a topos for inhumanity, according to Orgel this is no impediment to such interpretations. Especially in a literary context, such as Shakespeare, where topical subversion is very common (anything can be its opposite). His conclusion:

... the breath of interpretive possibility often seems both endless and, for modern readers looking for a key to Renaissance symbolism, distressingly arbitrary. Renaissance iconographies and mythographies are in this respect the most postmodern of texts, in which no meaning is conceived to be inherent, all signification is constructed or applied; the fluidity and ambivalence of the

image are of the essence (1996, 136).

To sum up the central aim of iconography: it is the presentation of thoughts or stories through visual or verbal images which are to be interpreted on the basis of conventionally codified meanings (i.e. cultural codes). This conventionalism in art history and iconology was most strongly emphasized by ERNST GOMBRICH (1960). Referring to this, OMAR CALABRESE considered him "a true 'bridge' between iconology and semiotics" (1994, 331) in the sense that – according to Gombrich – each figurative operation is ruled by conventions, by schematic articulations of what we already know, by reference to an encyclopedia. Through conventionalism images perform a *coding act*, which eliminates the concept of an innocent vision of experiences. (➪ The evidence of *Gestalt psychology* and a psychology of perception: the perceived whole is never the sum of the elemental perceptions, the details do not explain the whole. The forms of the past experiences are very important here.)

6.3 MITCHELL's CRITIQUE OF ICONOLOGY

One of the most imaginative post-structuralist critics of iconology is W. J. THOMAS MITCHELL (*Iconology*, 1986). He on the one hand followed Gombrich's conventionalism, on the other hand called attention to a neglected area: the politics of imagery and iconology.

6.3.1 Mitchell's critique of Gombrich

For post-structuralists the greatest problem seems how to apply the principle of historicity without reductionist reconstructionism which, in the garment of objectivity, in fact enforces the ideology of the interpreter on the subject matter. Mitchell proved this technique upon Gombrich, especially in his later works. ➢ Although Gombrich always stressed the importance of convention in artistic pictures, by the 1980s he seems to have changed his mind and became favoring naturalistic imitative images. A comparison of quotations from his *Art and Illusion* (1956) and "Image and Code" (1981) highlights his modified opinion. As Mitchell (1986, 80) notes, Gombrich has been one of the chief proponents of the view that pictorial signs are riddled with convention:

> *The way the language of art refers to the visible world is both so obvious and so mysterious that it is still largely unknown except to artists themselves who can use it as we use all languages – without needing to know its grammar and semantics (Gombrich 1956; quot. Mitchell 1986: 80).*

Fifteen years later he made a sharp distinction between pictures and words as if showing a sharp contrast between the naturalness of images and the conventionality of language: "images are naturally recognizable because they are imitations and words are based on conventions" (Gombrich 1981, 11).

This distinction – pictures are natural and words conventional – goes back to Plato who in his *Cratylus* examined various aspects of this question. At one moment Cratylus suggests, "Representation by likeness, Socrates, is infinitely better than representation by any chance sign" (*Cratylus* 434a). This appears a clear stand in favor of imitation, but later on Socrates proves on him that custom and convention are still needed, even if names bear a certain likeness to the things signified:

> *Custom and convention must be supposed to contribute to the indication of our thoughts. [...] I quite agree with you that words should as far as possible resemble things, but I fear that this dragging in of resemblance, as Hermogenes says, is a shabby thing, which has to be supplemented by the mechanical aid*

of convention with a view to correctness (435b-c, ed.cit. 469).

In addition to this, Socrates also points out that imitative or natural names (= pictures) are no more perfect than words since, if pictures could represent perfect likeness, they would be doubles rather than signifyers and "no one would be able to determine which were the names and which were the realities" (432d). Cf. Peirce's *index*es! With this we are led to the other cluster of arguments: which is superior, likeness or conventional signification? This in fact is an epistemological question, asking if we can know things better by studying their conventional names or by examining the things themselves. The obvious answer should be in favour of the direct study of things if one could be sure that reality is conveyed faithfully and objectively by the human sensation. But this is seriously questioned by modern theory, and the post-structuralists receive important backing from Socrates: "How real existence is to be studied or discovered is, I suspect, beyond you and me" (439b).

It is in respect of this uncertainty that Mitchell criticizes Gombrich's postulate of a natural and direct way of seeing the world as opposed to the conventional sign systems. In fact, Gombrich claims that the discovery of perspectivic representation in European painting was an important step toward this natural way of seeing, and the ultimate stage of this development for him is the appearance of photographic objectivity generated by the camera lenses. As if he suggested that the degree of artistic illusion-making can be measured within the coordinates of so-called 'reality' or verisimilitude.

Mitchell's passionately claim: 'realism' (i.e. imitation and verisimilitude), is but one of the many conventional systems of representation. They should not enjoy any theoretical distinction, even if one sees that European tradition in different periods tended to favor this mode. To ask about the motivation behind this preference may be an important task but it also leads to uncertain ground, the subjective terrain of ideologies.

The 'nature' implicit in Gombrich's theory of the image is, it should be clear, far from universal, but is a particular historical formation, an ideology associated with the rise of modern science and the emergence of capitalist economies in Western Europe in the last four hundred years. It is the nature found in Hobbes and Darwin, nature as antagonist, as evolutionary competition for survival, as object for aggression and domination. The predatory character of Gombrich's image is the figure of production without labor [= something to be easily understood through photographic illusion-making], the unlimited consumption of reality, the fantasy of instantaneous, unmediated appropriation (1986, 90).

6.3.2 The politics of iconology

In this world one can observe the ruthless struggle of tradition and subversion where iconology will not simply mean the study of images, rather their politics and psychology. A typology of 'political' attitudes to images:

–iconophobia,
–iconophilia and fetishism
–iconoclasm,
–idolatry.

[The dialectic of iconoclasm]: One might argue that iconoclasm is the obverse of idolatry, that is nothing more than idolatry turned outward toward the images of a rival, threatening tribe. The iconoclast prefers to think that he worships no images of any sort, but when pressed, he is generally content with the rather different claim that his images are purer or truer than those of mere idolaters (1986, 198).

Another interesting point of Mitchell is his observation that in the history of European culture images have been constantly played off against words. The image is seen as the site of a special power that must be either contained or exploited. Critics show tendencies of iconophobia or iconophilia thus generating values and revealing power and interests.

Mitchell suggests the following possible directions of study along these lines: The study of critics and aestheticians who have tried to legislate the boundaries between the arts, especially the border between image and text. ➢ The study of artistic practice: how is this struggle manifested in the formal characteristics of texts and images that are designed to confirm or violate the boundaries between space and time, nature and convention, eye and ear, the iconic and the symbolic? ➢ The study of these questions in 'composite arts' (film, drama, cartoons, narrative cycles, book illustrations) that combine symbolic models. ➢ A drift from the theories of images to the practice: what people do with images and texts in practice. ➢ His personal observation: transgressions of text-image boundaries are the rule rather than the exception.

6.4 HANS BELTING ON THE BIRTH OF ART

6.4.1 Definition

Image: representation of personal likeness – *imago*. ➢ The image seems to possess personality. ➢ Thus the image becomes the object of religious practice, rituals. ➢ Part of a *cult*.

A cult image — represents — divinity

A "historical" (narrative image) — narrates of

Art: presupposes the crisis of "the old image" and its reconsideration in the Renaissance (artistic autonomy and vision). The "old images" were destroyed by the iconoclasts (Reformation) and new images were produced for the new artistic collectors.

Pragmatic approach: "art" is not an eternal category – funcionality of pictures – interpretive community practices.

6.4.2 The Power of Images and the Limitations of Theologians

Theologians always tried to strip images of their power in the church. It was never easy to control them with words because they always engaged deeper levels of experience and fulfilled certain desires theologians were not able to address. – Theologians were satisfied only when they could "explain" images.

Attitudes / symbolic practices about images: displayed, venerated, desecrated, destroyed, banned.

6.4.2.1 How To Discuss Images?

Possible discourses:

➢Art history – deficient. Sacred images are of interest only because they have been collected as paintings and used to formulate or illustrate rules governing art. "When battles of faith were waged over images, the views of art critics were not sought."

➢Theology – deficient. They discuss past theologians' treatments of images, not the images themselves.

➢History – deficient. Historians prefer to deal with texts and political or economic facts, not the deeper levels of experience that images probe.

➢Religious history as embedded in general history – "holy images" were never the affair of religion alone, but also alsways of society, which expressed itself in and through religion. Rligion was far too central a reality to be, as in our day, merely a personal matter or the affair of the churches. The role of religious images (*for a long time, there were no other kinds of images* [may be disputed!]) thus cannot be understood solely in terms of theological content.

➢Philosophy and anthropology as auxiliaries (anthropology would study the basic features of human response to an image [p. 9]).

6.4.2.2 Functions of Holy Images

Local cult, local institution. – Testimony by tradition. – Legends of supernatural origin (something fell from heaven; the God's lving body impressed it). – Legends of visions and of miracles. – Kissings and veneration ➢ *cult images*. Iconoclastic controversies paradigmatically treated these images as superstitious and condemned them. (In Byzantine churches these were removed from the low sites and only "those images placed in higher locations" were left, which narrated the history of salvation.)

Powerful images: a/ if they represented a transcendental "archetype" that was venerated in the copy; b/ represented the dual divine/human nature of Christ.

The origin of these images: the Greco-Roman tradition and its polytheirtic graven images. This influence moved Chtistianity from the purely textual/verbal representational logic of Judaism. – God had to be invisible; the Torah scrolls were venerated like cult images. – Christian symbols replacing the image of the Emparor on Roman coins.

6.4.3 Portrait and Memory

Difficulties in evaluating the significance of the image in European culture: in the MA we are obstructed by texts, in the modern period we are obstructed by art ("art history simply declared everything to be art in order to bring everything within its domain").

6.4.3.1 'Memoria' and 'historia'

Gregory the Great: "painting, like writing, induces remembrance." 'To call back to memory' is the task of the Scriptures, with the image able to play only a supporting role. – The picture represent only a person, not a narrative. Images contain moments from a narrative, but it will be comprehensible only through being recognized from the Scriptures. It reminds us of what the Scriptures narrate and secondarily makes possible a cult of the person and of memory.

Saints' pictures: combining portrait and narrative legend. In iconophilia it is always the *imago* (the portrait) is ranked higher than the narrative image (hagiographic *historia*).

The theme of the portrait and remembrance cannot be encompassed either by Warburg's "mnemosyne" or by Jung's "archetypes". Usually the historical person fulfills a preexisting ideal of the saint (the Neapolitan doctor, St. Giuseppe Moscati). Sometimes there was a reverse process (the ceremonial images of St. Francis of Assisi were replaced by new ones to fit the order's new ideals). – *Physical portrait* of the likeness surrounded by the *ethical portrait* of the biography. – Ceremonial display. – Feast days, rituals. – *Cult, a complexand multimedial cultural representation*.

6.4.3.2 Location

Place, origin. – Copies made and distributed for veneration (the Black madonna of Czestochowa).

6.4.4 The Images' Loss of Power and their New Role as Art

The effect of the Reformation. The toleration of images, whose function formal theology had repeatedly rationalized, now ended. The main causes:

➢The previous doctrine of justification by works was replaced by faith alone and pictures (votive images, donations) were considered as works.

➢ In the Guttenberg era the divine word was made available to everyone, God's word became constantly accessible.

➢Against the authoritative text the image lacked force.

➢The medieval unity of inner and outer experience breaks down into a rigorous dualism of spirit and matter; subject and world. "The eye no longer discovers evidence for the presence of God in images or in the physical world; God reveals himself only through his word."

The old image appears as a symbol of an archaic mentality and "into its place steps *art*, which inserts a new level of meaning between the visual appearance of the image and theunderstanding of the beholder." This is aesthetic mediation which brings about a different use of images. – The image surrenders to the beholder. – Thebeholder becomes an art collector. – The emergence of humanistic themes and the focus on beauty of representation.

"The interplay of perception and interpretation that is pursued in the visual arts, as in literature, demands the expert, or connoisseur, someone who knows the rules of the game."

7 IMAGE, MEDIUM, BODY (HANS BELTING)

7.1 WHY ICONOLOGY

Belting's concept of iconology is different from that of Mitchell, but complementary. Mitchell: *image – text – ideology*; Belting: *image – medium – body*. Medium and body and non-iconic determinants: agents of transmission and performing/perceiving.

Images are neither on the wall, nor in the head alone. They do not exist but *happen* in transmission and reception. Belting's anthropological approach: internal/external representations, mental/physical images, dreams/icons are inseparable and they constitute the politics of images (what the french call, the *imaginaire* of a given society).

7.2 MEDIUM AND IMAGE

No vivible image reaches us unmediated by a medium. Visibility rests on mediality. The medium controls the perception and creates the viere's attention.

We distinguish a canvas from the image – we dissolve their factual "symbiosis" by means of our analytical perception. – Visual media compete with the images: they dissimulate themselves or push themselves into foreground. Visual media can even become self-referential.

Mediality is more than materiality and is also not equal with technology. – The politics of images needs a medium to turn an image into a picture.

7.3 MEDIUM AND BODY

7.3.1 Visual Media

Visual media plays a central role in the interchange between image and body. Reception is a bodily experience. But images also live in our bodies (dreams, mental images). Memory: 1/ archive of images; 2/ recollection of images. We own and produce images. Brain/body functions with images: perceive, project, remember, censor, transform.

7.3.2 Verbal Media

The mediality of images reaches beyond the visual realm: language transmits verbal imagery. – They can be turned into mental images.

Language / writing. Both in the acts of viewing and reading we can distinguish between the medium and the content, though we are usually unaware of these mechanisms.

7.3.3 Aural Media

Our ear can also participate in the appropriation of content/images. Listening to a song determines the perception of its text. ackground music can modify the perception of pictures. Sound film in a complex way links sound and sight together.

7.3.4 Perception / Animation

The sensation that we live in a body is a precondition for the inventing of media: artificial bodies designed for substituting bodies via a symbolic procedure. Images live in their media as we live in our bodies. – Huan efforts of old to communicate with images as with living bodies, and also to accept them in the place of bodies

Animation: the medium is the object, the image the goal of animation. Animation describes the use of images better than perception. The latter is valid for our visual activity in general. Visual artifacts, however, depend on a specific kind of perception – of a symbolic kind. The desire for images preceded the invention of their respective media.

7.4 IMAGE AND DEATH

A possible archaic origin of the image: the cult of the dead and the cult of gods. Both lived in another world and the image re-presented them. Such experience of images was also linked to rituals. – Images, on behalf of the missing body, occupied the place deserted by the person who had died. – But images needed embodiment to be present, this is how visual media were invented. (The role of the dead body: reanimated skulls, mummies, imitations of the body with status symbols as well as with individual characteristics.)

The dialectics of image – medium – body:

IMAGE (a living image instead of the missing body)
MEDIUM (the artificial body of the image)
BODY (the looking body, the "animator")
➢all tese interact to create an iconic presence against bodily presence

7.5 ICONOCLASM

Iconoclasm highlights the connection between physical and mental images. The iconoclasts want to eliminate images in the collective imagination, but they have access only to their media. – The violence against physical images served to extinguish mental images. – Control over the public media was a guiding principle in the prohibition of images.

7.5.1 Today's Iconoclasm

Subtle methods in the Western World. – More drastic examples from elsewhere: the destruction of Soviet and Iraqui monuments.

7.6 DIGITAL SHADOWS

Technology has replaced the former admiration for artistic skill. In both cases the point of admiration was te *mimesis of life*. Archetypal natural images: mirror and shadow. – Visual media not only act as the body's prothesis but also serve as the body's reflection, which lends itself to the body's self-inspection.

7.6.1 The Loss of the Body

Digital media reintroduces the body analogy via denial. – The loss of the body evoked mirror fantasies in Romanticism, when the doppelgänger no longer obeyed the spectator but abandoned the mimesis of the reflecting body. – Digital images cross the borderline between visual images and virtual images; images *seen* and images *projected*. Digital technology pursues the mimesis of our own imagination. – External and internal representations are encouraged to merge.

7.6.2 Analytic Perception and Synthetic Perception

Analytic with regard of thechnology and synthatic with regard to the mental image that results our perception.

Image and medium do not allow the same kind of narrative in describing their history. A history applies only to visual thechnologies (history of "styles" – Wölfflin); images resemble nomads in the sense that they take residence in one medium after another (Warburg – cultural archeology – politics of images).

RÉGIS DEBRAY's concept of *transmettre*: *transmission* is more faithful than *communication*, because there is always somebody who wants to exert power and to control the circulation of images.

7.7 A LIVING MEDIUM

Perception alone does not explain the interaction of body and medium in the transmission of images. Images *happen*, are *negotiated* between bodies and media. Bodies censor the flux of images via projection, memory, attention, or neglect.

Private and individual bodies become public and collective bodies. Our bodies always carry a collective identity in that they represent a given culture as a result of ethnicity, education, and a particular visual environment.

Bodies *perform* images as well as they *perceive* images.

7.7.1 Performing Body as Medium

Bodies partake in style and fashion (clothing, jewellery, tattoo). They can carry conventional signs of power relations (shaven head of priests or convicts; regalia; uniform).

7.8 ICONIC PRESENCE

Images traditionally live from the *body's absence*, which is either temporary (spatial), or final (death). – They replace the body's absence with a different kind of presence. *Iconic presence* still maintains a body's absence and turns it into *visible absence*. Images live from the paradox that they perform *the presence of an absence*. – When absent bodies become visible in images, they use a vicarious [substitutive] visibility.

The ambivalence of absence and presence invades the constellation of image and medium. We could rephrase *the presence of an absence* (which still is the most elementary definition of images), in the following way: *images are present in their media, but they perform an absence, which they make visible*.

7.8.1 Another Kind of Absence

X-rays, telescopes and microscopes produce images which undermine the control of the relation between an image and its model. We therefore entertain more confidence in visual machines than we trust our own eyes. – Media appears less as a go-between than as self-referential systems, which seem to marginalize us at the receiving end. The tramsmission is more spactacular than it transmits. – The spectacle forces its audience to learn new techniques of perception and thereby to master new techniques of representation.

7.8.2 "Traditional" and Innovative Images

But t he body remains resistant to these quick changes: those images which we invest

with personal significance, are different from the many ones that we only consume and immediately forget. It especially deserves attention that we feel addressed even by very old images that reside in obsolete media (an old postcard collection – Bill Christian's lecture). – We often watch the silent images of the past with a gaze of nostalgia. Certain types of representations return, or get recycled. – The return of religious icons after the Renaissance.

The early modern picture, together with the perspective it offered, was an exclusively Western invention. It invested the new self-conscious human subject with a means of self-reflexivity. – The photograph, in which the body is mechanically recorded, in the beginning was welcomed as a *medium of the body*. The body created its own trace without relying on the observing gaze of a painter! By today we do not believe in photographs as unmediated, "natural images," however the temptation/desire is always there. (Remember the Gombrich–Mitchell debate, as well as Bill Christian's religious postcards.)

7.8.3 Interim Summary

The *medium* offers the easiest identification and is for this reason favored by contemporary theories.

The *body* comes next – but it needs a new emphasis as living media, able to percieve, to remember, to project images. The body, as *owner* and *addressee* of images, administered media as extensions of its own visual capacities. Bodies receive images by perceiving them, while media transmit them to bodies. – With the help of masks, tattooing, clothing, and performance, bodies also produce images of themselves (or representing others [actors]) in which case they act as media. – Bodies are the archetype of all visual media!

The *image* is most difficult to define because of their physical/mental duality, because of their mimetic representation and expression of our thinking. Furthermore, some images are of cognition, others of imagination/emotions and these categories function differently from each other.

7.9 THE COLONIZATION OF IMAGES

7.9.1 Cross-Ccultural Contexts

The media are international (TV, film), but the images remain within a local tradition (Marchal McLuhan's film shown to African natives). – Current image theories, despite their claims to universal validity, usually represent Western traditions of thinking. Non Western views have not yet entered our academic territories, except in ethnography. And yet, non-Western images have left their traces in Western culture for a long time.

7.9.1.1 Primitivism

Primitivism was the longing for an alien and even superior art where art, in the Western sense, had never existed. The formal appropriation of African masks and fetishes resulted in a perception that separated image and medium. Gauguin, Picasso, Henry Moore and others transferred "primitive" forms to Western media (oil painting, bronze). – They did not care about the significance the images had for the indigenous people, but abstracted from those images what they interpreted as style. – The Western audience did not only misunderstand what it saw; it also invested the imported works with mental images of its own.

7.9.1.2 Mexican Images

SERGE GRUZINSKI has analyzed the colonization of indigenous images by the Spanish conquerors. 1/ There was a clash between incompatible system: images and religions. 2/ The

politics of importation of Spanish images to the natives: to introduce the foreign "icons" into the "dreams" of the indigenous, a mental colonization was needed. Heavenly visions were enforced on selected Aztecs to guarantee the appropriation of the imported images. – The Aztec artifacts brought to Spain later became depoliticized and neutralized, i. e. *artworks*. Even today the art market constantly neutralizes art.

7.10 CONCLUSION

Old iconology was restricted to art history alone. Today's new iconology has to draw a link between art and images in general *but* also to reintroduce the body, which has either been marginalized by our fascination with media or defamiliarized as a stranger in our world.

8 THEATER, FILM, HISTORY

8.1 THEATER AND FILM AS MEDIA OF CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS

Theater and film are cultural representations (either artistic, or not); they offer a threefold reconstruction of the world: vision, movement (time), sound. – Difference in media: theater = reenactment; film = reenactment mechanically reproduced. – Theater: human presence, ritualistic or mimetic; film: the illusion of human presence with enhanced symbolism combined with hyper realism. – Five tracks: image, dialogue, noise, music, written materials. – SUSAN SONTAG: there is an imtimate dialogue between theater and cinema that emerges from cinema's emancipation "from theatrical models."

THEATER	FILM
fixed audience position	movable viewpoints, 360° view
global, unified perspective	multiple, changing perspective
total, no close-ups	shifting totals and close-ups

8.1.1 Origins of Film

A long history of representing action unfolding in time (friezes, panoramic paintings, serial pictures, shadow theater). – Technical evolution: camera obscura, dioramas, laterna magica, stroboscope, Edison's kinetophonograph, the Lumière brothers' cinématograph. – Technical parallel: photography.

8.1.2 Photography

SUSAN SONTAG: "Photography affects us like a phenomenon in nature. [...] The photographic image is the object itself, the object freed from the conditions of time and space that govern it. [...] Photography does not create eternity, as art does, it embalms time, rescuing itfrom its proper corruption." – The resemblance complex: a challenge to modern art. – WALTER BENJAMIN: Photography and film are the results of technological development in "the age of mechanical reproduction," but they are also works of art.

8.1.3 Some Keywords for Film

Film (material base, moving pictures); cinema (the aesthetics and structure of this art); movies (economic commodities as being produced and consumed).

Film moves toward a total and complete representation of reality.

Special effects: total and close-up, soft focus, types of sots, multiple exposures. Editing: montage, cutting, retouching. Sound: dubbing, voice-over, post-synch, etc.

8.1.4 The Filmic Language

ALBERT LAFFAY: cinema is based on narrative because it is the only way to "make reality legible on the screen". *Narrative* is the key: it is the logic around which a story gets organized; gives meaning to the represented world. – *Point of view*: focalization and narrator. – The question of *adaptation* (of a literary narrative). – *Translatability* (fidelity and transformation). – *Intertextual dialogism* (BAKHTIN).

8.1.5 Film and History

8.1.5.1 Relevance

1/ The relationship between historical films and an emerging or changing understanding of national identity. 2/ The links between historical films and other forms of organized remembering. 3/ The historical film as a vehicle of artistic ambition and studio prestige.

8.1.5.2 Genres

Feature films (mainstream drama: war films, epics, biographical, topical, metahistorical, "costume films"), experimental films, documentary films.

8.1.5.3 Opinions

➢*The secret to film is that it's an illusion. (GEORGE LUCAS)*
➢*Photography is truth. The cinema is truth twenty-four times per second. (JEAN-LUC GODARD)*
➢*We make a particular film about a particular time from our point of view. – What is history? Some people say it's a bunch of gossip made up by soldiers who passed it around the camp fire.(OLIVER STONE)*

8.2 SHAKESPEARE ON FILM

Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V* (1989) was a turning point in the history of Sh film adaptations. From "artfilms" (Olivier, Kozincev, Kurosawa) to "Shakespeare-pop" (*Much Ado About Nothing* – Branagh, 1993; *Hamlet* – Zeffirelli, Mel Gibson, 1990), *Othello* (Oliver parker, 1995); *Romeo + Juliet* (Baz Luhrman, Leonardo di Caprio, 1996); *Titus Andronicus* (Julie Taymor, Anthony Hopkins, Jessica Lange, 1999); *Merchant of Venice* (Michael Radford, Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons, 2004).

8.3 REPRESENTING HISTORY

A type of cultural representation; related to an interpretive community; ideology-bound, it has an *agenda*. (Cf. New Historicism.) ➢ When history is represented in an artwork, the filters between original happenings and the *imago* will be especially complex and multiple. ➢ The case of Shakespeare.

➢ Sh was no witness to the historical events he wrote about. His sources were chronicles or artistic representations (legends, romances, plays).
➢ Sh himself contributed to the historical stories either ideologically presenting them, or artistically shaping the story into plot (no chronological order, fictitious characters and scenes).
➢ Sh is further interpreted by the directors who stage his plays (Ljubisa Ristic; Warsaw R3).
➢ On the filmscreen special filmic visual effects are added (no fixed focalization, 360^0 view).

8.4 SHAKESPEARE AND HISTORY

It is certain that Sh's sources were not neutral historical accounts, but it is also without doubt that he himself had an agenda while representing English history. Scholars, however, are not unanimous about identifying this agenda. ➢ In Renaissance England there were two strong concepts relating to "logic" of history:

1/ the Protestant view rooted in the Middle Ages: history demonstrates the workings of

divine providence;
2/ the Renaissance humanist (Italian) view: history is governed by unpredictable chance (*fortuna*) but can be influenced by individual greatness (*virtú*).

8.4.1 The Tudor Myth

These two views were intertwined in Renaissance England and formed the "Tudor Myth".
➢ First promoted by Henry VII and maintained till the end of Elizabeth I (when Sh wrote his history plays). The myth had two pillars:
1/ the Earl of Richmond (=H7) was sent by God to save England, defeat R3 and unite the York and Lancaster houses.
2/ the Tudors symbolize the ancient British dynasty (Arthur's line) which was broken by the less legitimate Lancasters – H4 dethroned and killed R2 (York), which was the "original sin".

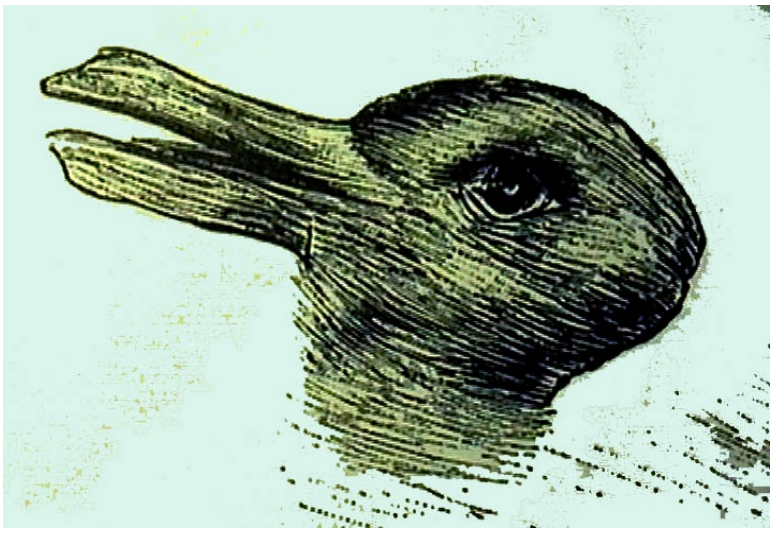
8.4.1.1 The Historical Sources

➢ Polydore Virgil's chronicle (H7)
➢ Edward Hall's chronicle (H8, 1542)
➢ Thomas More's *Ricardus Tertius* (H8, very negative about Richard)
➢ Holinshed's *Chronicles* (E1) – providentialist and nationalist.

Sh knew all these sources but added to these his own philosophy about the right ruler: 1/ s/he should be legitimate (providentialism); 2/ s/he should be able, efficient (humanism, Machiavelli).

<table>
<tr><th>KINGS</th><th colspan="2">SH's HISTORIES</th></tr>
<tr><td>John (1199-1216) (Plantagenet)</td><td colspan="2">King John</td></tr>
<tr><td>Richard II (1377-99) (Plantagenet)</td><td>R2</td><td rowspan="3">second tetralogy, 23 years, coherent, significant characters</td></tr>
<tr><td>Henry IV (1399-1413) (Lancaster)</td><td>1-2 H4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Henry V (1413-22) (Lancaster)</td><td>H5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Henry VI (1422-61; 1470-71) (Lancaster)</td><td rowspan="2">1-3 H6</td><td rowspan="6">first teralogy, 63 years, loose structure, secular morality</td></tr>
<tr><td>Edward IV (1461-70; 1471-83) (York)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Edward V (1483) (York)</td><td rowspan="3">R3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Richard III (1483-85) (York)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Henry VII (1485-1509) (Tudor)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Henry VIII (1509-47) (Tudor)</td><td colspan="2">H8</td></tr>
</table>

For a long time Sh was seen as somebody who promoted the Tudor myth. But the situation is more complicated. In the two tetralogies there are only two rulers who qualify as good according to Sh: H5 and H7. The second tetralogy is more "realistic" about politics, this diminishes H7's providential, "savior" role from the first tetralogy.
More interesting is H5 who has been interpreted in two mutually exclusive ways:



1/ ideal ruler at the end of a Bildungsroman – national hero – emphasis on the Crispian speech;
2/ a Machiavellist and militant player whose end is satirized in the marriage farce at the end of the play. – Emphasis on the scene when he orders the murder of all the surviving French. The historical context strengthens this interpretation: the begining of the war is little justified by the Salic Law (*lex salica*) and the remaining rule of H5 was much less glorious than his victory at Agincourt and his son, H6 drew the country into civil war..

Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crown'd King
Of France and England, did this king succeed;
Whose state so many had the managing,
That they lost France and made his England bleed:
Which oft our stage hath shown; and, for their sake,
In your fair minds let this acceptance take.

According to Norman Rabkin, this play is like the duck/rabbit – shows two perfect alternating pictures.

8.5 THE HENRY V FILMS

It seems that the two films follow the above sketched two interpretations of H5. One needs answer two questions: 1/ what is the directors' agenda to follow one or the other line of interpretation? 2/ What filmic means are used to achieve those goals?

8.5.1 The Historical Contexts of the Two Films

8.5.1.1 Olivier

Olivier: 1944, Britain is under attack and fights against the evil aggressor. Nationalistic encouragement is needed. The film is characterized by a fairy tale atmosphere. We enter the Globe theatre from a painted landscape (**0:01:04, 0:11:36**), the performance becomes a ritualistic remembering (**0:05:23**). The climax is the Crispian-speech (**1:27:24**) and the presentation of the military victory (**1:34:47**). The closing marriage scene is back in the theatre and establishes a contact with the romantic comedies of Sh (**2:07:41**). For his agenda, Olivier cut the pessimistic final lines:

Small time, but in that small most greatly lived
This star of England:

In your fair minds let this acceptance take.

8.5.1.2 Branagh

Branagh's film follows the more sceptical and pessimistic reading. – The Britain of the 1980s, the Thatcher-era, the Falkland war. – This film does not present legends, and is not ritualistic.

The initial chorus does not invite into the theatre, rather, through a back door we enter reality (**0:01:42**). The first pictures do not have scenery, we see the faces of ruthless politicians with microscopic details (**0:03:33**). Henry does not look glorious an hopeful, rather desperate. This is underlined by the hanging of Bardolph (**0:58:42**). – Branagh's colors are dark and grey (cells, corridors, rain, muddy roads – **0:55:16**). Falstaff appears in an even more cruel light than in Olivier (**0:18:57**).

The Crispian speech brings about a change: the film starts oscillating between the two images (**1:26:38**). The battle is devastating, the representation is naturalistic (**1:32:49**). Henry's characterization at the same time follows the providentialist reading. All references to God remain in the film (**1:31:26**). The last scene is middle of the road. No romanticism, rather self-evident love.

9 THE PROBLEMS OF HYPERTEXT

The question of multimedia application of text and image leads us to a curious phenomenon: the hypertext. There are two aspects of textual/verbal combinations in hypertext: 1/ the insertion of images in the text in a new, mobile way; 2/ the concept of the text as a 3D spacial object as well as a time sequential process. In both cases one can detect the roots of an age-old dissatisfaction with the linearity of text and desiring to subvert its rigid time-space structures.

I am concentrating on this latter aspect, together with its ideological and political implications (based on LANDOW 1992: "The convergence of contemporary critical theory and technology").

9.1 RECONFIGURING THE TEXT

9.1.1 From Text to Hypertext

The basic foundations of hypertext are old and conventional, already appeared in book technology: combination of text and image, switching from one unit to another (running heads, pointers; encyclopedias, referenced Bible editions). ➢ The first step: quantitative change on a mega scale. Electronically linking multiple parallel texts/images; electronic links to map a text's internal and external allusions and references – intertextuality in a graphic layout. ➢ The second step: the way of hypertextual reading becomes a natural habit which will have far reaching consequences on cognitive techniques, epistemological classifications, finally on our general world picture (parallel: the shift from MS to printing ➢ 'MTV-type' information flow; fragmentation; 'zapping').

9.1.2 The Organization of the Text

Argumentation, organization and rhetoric. 'Zapping' needs a different rhetoric. ➢ The questions of the beginnings and endings in the 'open text'. ➢ The boundaries of the hypertext are increasingly difficult to establish. The hypertext is decentered (philosophical implications: Derrida, Rorty: "edifying philosophy: to keep the conversation going rather than to find an objective truth").

9.2 THE STATUS OF THE AUTHOR

Erosion of the self. The urge for rewriting. ➢ The changing of the writing process, the author's struggle for self-identification. (The question is more complex: other technologies have also contributed to change: the computer itself, the xerox machine, etc.). ➢ Virtual presence of all the authors who contribute to this material. ➢ Collaborative writing, collaborative authorship.

9.3 RECONFIGURING NARRATIVE

Hypertext and the Aristotelian conception of plot: "a whole is that which has beginning, middle, and end" (*Poetics*, Ch. 13: 50b[27]). ➢ Cyclical and random sequences in plots now institutionalized and made mechanical. *Finnegan's Wake*; B.S. Johnson's boxed novel; Ferenc Temesi's encyclopedia novel (*Por*); Milorad Pavic's *Khazar Dictionary*. ➢ The reader's experience as author! "The hypertextual space is now multidimensional and theoretically infinite, with an equally infinite set of possible network linkages, either programmed, fixed, or variable,

or random, or both" (Robert Coover, quoted by Landow 1992, 105).

9.4 THE POLITICS OF HYPERTEXT

Hypertext is basically democratic. Models the rise of the ‘conversational society’. Hypertext has a built-in bias against ‘hypostatisation’ and against privileged descriptions. (C.f. again Rorty's propositions.)

9.4.1 Reconfiguring Literary Education

Traditional ways of reading are gradually replaced by ‘zapping’, fragmented, multimedia experiences. The psychology of reading has changed, education must follow these changes. ➢ Reconfiguring the instructor and the students. ➢ Reconfiguring the time of learning and the types of assignements. ➢ Reconcieving canon and curriculum.

9.4.2 Who Controls the Text?

"At 14th-century universities private silent reading was forbidden in the classroom" (Paul Saenger quoted by Landow 1992, 163). A general humanistic fear of new technologies. ➢ Technology always empowers someone. Those who possess it, who make use of it, who have access to it. (The situation in late socialism and the rise of computers and satellite dishes.)

9.4.3 Hypertext and Critical Theory

The convergence of literary theoretical paradigm shift (post-structuralism) and hypertext theories. Derrida, Barthes, Foucault: we must abandon conceptual systems founded upon ideas of centre, margin, hierarchy and linearity – as opposed to multilinearity, nodes, links, and networks. The ideas of intertextuality, multivocality and de-centeredness formed an important line of argument. ➢ The emphasis on the politics of expression (text and images).

10 MEMORY, MUSEUM, TRAUMA

11 SEEING AND CONVENTION; ICONS AND HYPOICONS

Let us return to the 'Cratylus-question,' to the debate of Gombrich and Mitchell about 'natural,' versus conventional ways of seeing. Mitchell considered Gombrich's later distinction between 'natural'/imitative pictures (photography) and conventional words as a betrayal of the 'iconoclastic' standpoint. The debate has been reconsidered since the 1990s, and recently UMBERTO ECO has returned to this question in his book: *Kant and the Platypus* (1997, in Hungarian 1999).

11.1 ECO, *KANT AND THE PLATYPUS*

11.1.1 Preface

Semiotics has failed to address a great number of questions, among others the problems of iconicity, truth, sensation; a particularly interesting sphere is the semiotic 'lower threshold,' the minimum level of sign-production.

Another line of investigation in the *Platypus* is a reconsiderations of the limits of interpretation. Where are those limits? Only in tradition, convention, and in the text? Or also somewhere else? "What exists, limits my freedom of speech [interpretation]."

The lower threshold of semiosis connects to Peirce's concept:

dynamic object – representamen – interpretant

Although semiosis is unending, there is an infinite chain of objects, representaments and interpretants, the process starts with the moment when a subject – in case of new and unknown information – tries to understand his primary sensation. The chain of interpretants will be formed through a process of *trial and error*. This is already semiosis, but has an ambiguous relation to convention, the new information often subverts received cultural patterns.

An as yet little explored field: cognitive semiotics. Questions: the production of meaning, the role of our cognitive schemes, and the mechanisms of reference/referencing. Cognitive semiotics proves, that no matter how important are cultural conventions, *there is a segment in the continuum of experience that limits interpretation* (7-9).

11.1.2 Existence

What is that something that motivates us to produce signs? Peirce's answer: some dynamic object urges us to produce a *representamen* that generates in the mind a *direct object*. The latter can be expressed in an infinite number of interpretants.

We produce signs because something 'wants to be uttered.' This is the sphere of pre/protosemiotics. The sphere of deixis, becoming aware of something – that exists.

How do we speak about existence? Existence appears to us in language, in linguistic expression, as signs of a symbolic system. ➢ Our image of the world results from interpretation, the important question is how can we create an interpretive paradigm which is convincing enough for the whole community. This is always the result of a complicated process of *negotiations* (64).

The resistance of existence against interpretation: existence limits the hermeneutical speculations. This uncertainty justifies human investigations; if we were sure to be able to tell everything and anything, there would be no point of speaking (67). The inherent ambiguity of our semiosis is the challenge to pursue it.

11.1.3 Perception and Judgement

How do we approach an unknown phenomenon? We do not see 'innocently,' we always try to apply an existing part of our knowledge, encyclopedia. (Marco Polo and the rhinoceros: a special type of *unicorn*. The case of the *platypus*: it was interpreted as a bird as well as a mammal.) ➢ It is obvious that when encountering known things, a regular process of semiosis takes place. But what happens while trying to understand unknown phenomena? *What did Marco Polo think between catching sight of the rhino and uttering the word 'unicorn'?* The process seems to have the following steps:

schematic perception – looking for meaning (presuppositions) – correcting the presuppositions

Once again Peirce: dymanic object – representamen – direct object. Where is the ground of semiosis? The importance of *connotation* (79).

perceptum – ground (connotation) – hypotesis, judgement (thirdness)

Firstness: I acknowledge that something exists. **Secondness**: I relate that existing thing to myself, as perceptor, agent. **Thirdness**: I develop a hypotesis about that existing thing, try to understand it, thus generating the direct object. So perception is born in the obscure territory between firstness, secondness, and thirdness (144). ➢ While perception is experimental and personal, the *direct object* is public and communal, because it can be interpreted. Here emerges the role of the interpretive community. This, with its system of established conventions and received traditions will modify, eventually hinder the perception of new things.

11.1.4 Cognitive Type, Nuclear Contents, Molar Contents

The *cognitive type* (CT) is a prototype, a scheme, a generative rule, a procedure which helps recognition. The CT replaces the 'notion' and unites a variety of views. ➢ The debate of 'iconophiles' and 'iconophobes': a/ cognition is iconic, works through mental images; b/ mental images are secondary, generated through digital processes (the question of *line* – an abstraction only). The concept of *cognitive type*, with its manifoldedness helps to reconcile the two opinions. The CT can be iconic, propositional, or narrative (203).

The following important concept is the *nuclear contents*. It is the sum of interpretants (the totality of meaning). The CT is private, individual, the NC is public and communal. The CT belongs to the semiosis of perception, the NC represents conventional meaning through negotiation. Our proof for the existence of CT is the possibility of successful referencing, while the NC can be seen through the interpretants, through the 'dictionary of signs.' ➢ The NC contains instructions for identification and interpretation (usually in the combination of words and images – cf. an encyclopedia article about 'muse,' 275-6). ➢ As the CT becomes public when interpreted as NC, the NC can also contribute to the generation of Kts. The interpretive community helps (and urges) us to coordinate our Kts with those of the others (276).

Yet another concept is the *molar contents*. It is the matrix of complex and professional knowledge about something. It is constantly changing, developing and can be very different between different interpretive communities (the MC of the 'lightening' of an electro-physicist, a meteorologist, an anthropologist, and a tribal magician).

11.1.5 The Question of the Platypus

The story of the platypus shows the dialectics of perception and abstraction. Empirical facts can never immediately finalize their meaning, individual and communal interpretation proceeds through hypotheses and corrections (315). ➢ Observations can shake categories, and

the result is that we try to correct our categories, however the categories also influence how we interpret our observations (those who take the platypus as a mammal, would not look for eggs, 311). ➢ The story of the platypus is the story of long negotiations, nevertheless it has some iconic foundations: whoever saw it, used an individual CT to identify it, which could not have been anything (duck or beaver, but not cat or sparrow [312]; Othello can be a tragedy of love, jealousy, revenge, but not self sacrifice).

Theories and propositions are often imagined as if giving form, system, to an amorf continuum of experiences. The question is, if there are observations independent of any propositional system. Even if we do not believe in this, we can say, that there are propositions nearer to an hypotetical unmediated level of observations while others are much farther in the direction of theories. It is easier to understand the warning "Mind your steps!" than the theory of relativity and the empirical basis of the first proposition is also much more obvious (319). ➢ One should acknowledge that the continuum of experiences is not entirely amorf, it has certain features that determine perception to develop interpretation in certain directions. (Compare how could perceive Galilei, Kepler and Newton the Sun and the Moon: all of them saw them shining and round, no matter how different concepts they had about their position, movements, weight, distance, etc.).

This could be called 'primitive,' non systematic semiosis (320).

One has to realize that the cognitive types, the nuclear contents, and the molar contents are all generated through communal (and cultural/ideological) negotiations. They are not static, rather dynamically changing – that is why one cannot imagine a perfect language which would exclude negotiations (337).

The semiotic system, of course, is not homogeneous, it has layer which behave differently from each other. The meaning of words ('dictionary') and the meaning of the text ('encyclopedia') are not on the same level (338). The dictionary denotes, but the text is organized according to connotations and associations, allowing a wide scale of interpretations. ➢ The principle of *goodwill* – crucial in interpretation, involves the intention of the negotiating partners to come to some agreement about the meaning.

11.1.6 Referencing as negotiation

Referencing is a speech-act, which can be seen as a negotiation based on goodwill. ➢ Referencing cannot be fully interpreted through a structural analysis because it is connected to the intention of the speaker, thus it is a phenomenon of *pragmatics* (359).

11.1.7 Iconicity and hypoicons

The iconicity-debate (1974-5) concentrated on the following problems: a/ the iconic nature of perception; b/ the iconic nature of cognition; c/ the nature of iconic sign, or *hypoicons*. ➢ There were two opponents: 1/ the 'iconoclasts,' who denied the existence of 'similitudo' (physical similarity) in the case of hypoicons, they explained the recognition of similarity as a result of conventional cultural codes (once again, the question of the perception of a 'line'); and 2/ on the other side the followers of the view that perception is primarily iconic ('natural seeing'). ➢ In fact, there was not an absolute divide between the fronts, the 'iconoclasts' admitted that the recognition of similarity plays an important part in everyday life (the recognition of people; or words in oral communication [different pronounciations, dialects]), and the 'iconophiles' would not entirely deny the importance of graphic and representational conventions in the production of hypoicons (424). ➢ The connection between the two groups are shown by Gombrich's 'betrayal,' when he testified to the iconic nature of perception while being the founding father of 'iconoclasm.' ➢ According to Eco this debate was primarily of political nature, it was very difficult to legitimize the theory of conventionalism against the conservative defenders of

objective 'truth' and 'reality.' After these decades (and the voctory of poststructuralism) it is high time to return to the questions of iconicity and examine them with a fresh, less biased eye.

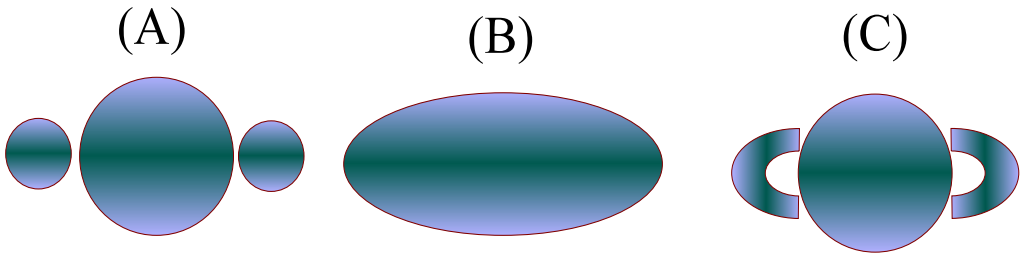
An interesting question concerns the nature of line and contours. According to (the iconoclast) Gomrich, in nature there are no contour-lines, these are abstractions, the seeing of which has to be learnt. As Eco reminds, according to the newest psychological schools, contours represent perception-substitutes that indicate discontinuity when perceiving movement (434).

A *perception-substitute* stimulates the same receptors that true impulses (birds follow the whistle of a man, or tried to pick Zeuxis' grapes, 441). The functioning of reception-substitutes, however, remains a very complex and almost incomprehensible mechanism. ➢ The example of Diderot: he praised the painting of Chardin as something showing perfect similitudo – but only from a certain distance. From a different point of view one notices the coat of paint, the blurred contours (442). It seems that perception works from any distance while perception-substitutes function only among special circumstances, hypoicons are, in fact, unnatural. ➢ Perception-substitutes work in such a way, that we accept somebody else to have seen instead of us. BUT what is the situation with Andy Warhol's *Campbell Soup*? Here the hypoicon is identical with the object itself but we suspend our natural perception and (conventionally) treat it as an artwork.

Some interesting cases of perception-substitution. Galileo's drawings of the planet Saturn and its ring – the hypoicon of Saturn. The simple order of things:

Saturn as dynamic object – the image of Saturn in the telescope –
Galileo's CT (direct object) – Galileo's drawing (the hypoicon of Saturn)

The problem is, that Galileo did not understand what he saw in the telescope, so he tried to give various interpretations (various *cognitive types*): a/ a bigger ball between two smallers; b/ an ellypsis; c/ a ball with two 'ears' – similar to reality, but wrongly interpreted. He did not simply create the hypoicon of Saturn on the basis of conventional knowledge, rather in a series of trial and error, fusing perception and conventional expectations (446-7).



Galileo's Drawings of Saturn

A similar dichotomy of pre-semiotic perception and convention-based interpretation can be seen in theatre. Semiosis takes place in a twofold set of procedures: before interpreting the scenic elements of vision and the whole spectacle, we perceive the constituents of the spectacle as 'real' objects and characters. (Before identifying Ophelia as a *persona*, we recognize that she is a woman [467].) ➢ This suggests that semiosis has a phase, during which we treat a representamen not as a sign, but as an object. (In language: Jakobson's 'poetical function.') The perception and interpretation of hypoicons takes place in a similar way (468-9). As if we would separate the figurative and plastic elements of the *pictura* (cf. Panofsky's layers of meaning).

11.1.8 The Act of Recognition

Perception as proto-semiosis always precedes higher semiotic interpretation. If we have a complicated colored card catalogue, before understanding the system, we shall be able to select all the red cards. *Perception – interpretation.* ➢ The perception of phonemes. Before we understand speech, we have to separate phonemes from the continuum of natural sounds. Peirce: to be able to recognize phonemes, we have to enter thirdness (not secondness). To be able to recognize speech, we have to realize that it is speech and not just noise: *interpretation – perception – interpretation*. ➢ It is not the same kind of perception that leads to the recognition of the picture of a dog and to the recognition of the word 'dog.' The regognition of the picture happens without much or any interpretation (we do not interpret the picture as a picture before recognizing the dog), while the language-based semiosis requires the recognition of the code itself (474).

11.1.9 Alpha and Beta Modality

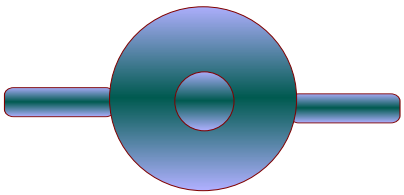
The above dichotomy lead Eco to differentiate between two types of basic semiosis: *alpha modality*, i.e. semiosis directly based on perception (hypoicon, picture); and *beta modality*, i.e. semiosis filtered through culture- and negotiation-based cognitive types (CT). In the second case the semiosis depends on the recognition that the sign was intentionally produced as a sign (the smoke of a natural fire as opposed to a smoke-signal).

Alpha modality: a perception-substitute – hypoicon – representamen – CT, code – direct object – interpretant.

Beta modality: expectation/hypotesis, CT, code – perception – representamen – direct object – interpretant.

In both cases we perceive the substance of the expression, however in *alpha modality* the substance is perceived as form and later it is identified as the form of an expression. In *beta modality* the substance is immediately perceived as the form of an expression (476-7).

Seemingly we encounter here two entirely different paradigms: *non ut pictura poesis*. The fact is, however, that the two modalities always blend with each other, often inseparably. Even the most perfectly symbolic system (language) has elements of primary iconism (onomatopoeia, metaphors, figures), while even the recognition of hypoicons is not absolutely free from cultural conditioning. The divide between alpha and beta modalities may change from person to person according to criteria that cannot be determined as a set of rules. An unpredictable complex of conditions and circumstances is active here. Examples: a/ the letter combinations of BACH and CAGE are perceived in a variety of ways, depending on the cultural foundations of the interpreter; b/ the image of the cycling Mexican, which can also be interpreted as 'Cyrano and Pinocchio are sitting under an umbrella,' or 'Greek warrior behind his shield, holding a spear'.



'Cycling Mexican'

11.2 CONCLUSION

Since the 1970s semiotics and poststructuralism have concentrated on the understanding of beta modality (conventionalism, iconoclasm). The alpha modality has been neglected. Although in most cases the two inseparably blend, it is also important to be able to identify the divide – in relation to the circumstances, the physical and cultural capabilities of the interpreting subject as well as the interpretive community. This is the way towards a better understanding of the *ut pictura poesis* principle and this is the way how semiotics and iconology can proceed towards new investigations and understandings. A final example:

12 FINAL CONCLUSION

Mitchell's initial question:

What is an image? What is the difference between images and words? What is at stake in marking off or erasing the differences between images and words? What are the systems of power and canons of value – that is, the ideologies – that inform the answers to these questions and make them matters of polemical dispute rather than purely theoretical interest? (1986, 1).

These are questions so far little examined in iconology and, perhaps even less, in semiotics. I hope that my effort to highlight these problems in the present lecture series have facilitated the cooperation between the study of generically conventional sign systems (*semiotics*), on the one hand, and overcoded conventional systems of images (*iconology*), on the other hand, those which consist of culturally fixed representations and narratives.

The introduction to the debates and polemics taking place within iconology might urge semiotics – which has grown from a static and descriptive program of structuralism – to supplement the study of sign systems with the historical study of the love, hatred, cult or suppression of signs, too. This needs to be done, even if it might lead to the uncomfortable situation once mentioned by Erwin Panofsky (1972: 83): "it is the scholar rather than the naive observer who finds interpretation difficult."