On Iconology, Intention, Imagos, and Myths of Meaning

In memory of Jan Biatostocki

The work of art [in Panofsky's view of iconology] should be interpreted first of all as a specific set of forms carrying some meaning, then as a composition of "stories," symbols, and allegories, and finally as a symptom of a situation in the history of culture and of ideas; in each case the interpretation should be based upon knowledge of the historical development... the history of tradition.

Needless to say, in practice iconology may stress one or the other idea [of conscious or unconscious symbolism]. But in its ideal, postulated form it is both the most unified and the most general and all-embracing method for the historical interpretation of art; it aims at as complete an understanding as possible of the artistic achievement of mankind.

Jan Biatostocki

Iconology

An ancient wisdom reads, As above, so below, as within, so without. The truth of these correspondences resounds in the words of Jan Biatostocki’s classic appraisal of Iconology. His study reflects the genial learning and generosity of a gifted humanist and the tradition of comprehensiveness and moderation that he championed and practiced, enriching the profession of art history. In effect, his view unites ideals of expression and objectivity developed over centuries of scientific and humanistic enquiry.

The word “iconology” indicates its comprehensiveness: “icon” (Gk. image, re-presentation) and “logos” (Gk. word, speech, reason)—in short, the lore and language of visualization.

This embracing sense of the term, inherited from Warburg, Saxl, Panofsky, Dvorak, Schlosser, Hoogewerff, Gombrich, Wind, Meiss, Stechow, Held, et al., as including all the meanings—explicit and implied, denotative and connotative—in images, has, of course, a long history in studies of explanation and interpretation. Hermeneutics, philological exegesis, explication of texts (and of acts), and, ultimately, legendary divination based upon dreams, plants, animals, gestures, and the very landscape and heavens—all prefigure iconology as ways to discover meaning.

In the arts, forerunners of iconology reach back from the studies of conscious symbolism by the archaeologists Bernoulli, Clarac, Visconti, Cavaceppi, Winckelmann, and Cayius to the works of Ripa and other Christian or Greco-Roman iconographers who transformed pagan mysteries and illusionism into a schematic dictionary of signs. Their iconography (a subspecies) has often been confused with iconology, which deals as well with more wide-ranging and deeper concerns.
The search for meaning not in narration or illusion but in the motor or visceral traces of making, which record preconscious feeling, as argued by Pacht and recognized by Bialostocki, is another realm of Iconology. However, as is now increasingly recognized in the West, in molecular as well as humanistic biology and medicine, the mind-body is a continuum; we no longer need to polarize cerebral understanding and the senses, such as vision and touch, which link brain and memory to the connective-tissue sources of feeling and sensation.

Intention

Even psychoanalysts, privy to both rational and unconscious fears and desires, concede that motivation is ultimately inaccessible to explanation. As Annibale Carracci mordantly demonstrated, the artist's work is its own best explanation; Socrates similarly characterized the teacher as his own lesson. The maker, like the anthropologist's informant, creates a history post hoc, formulating what is implicit in shared myths, all of which confounds (and enriches) the study of intention.

Jasper Johns gives a laconic description of the process, which we can affirm from experience:

Sometimes I see it and then paint it. Other times I paint it and then see it. Both are impure situations and I prefer neither.

Because meanings are affected by the perceiver, viewing and understanding are re-creative acts, akin to readings of Rorschach blots or Thematic Apperception Test illustrations. Infinite meanings dwell in all things (words included), like latent seeds waiting to flourish. Long before Einstein, Bohr, Heisenberg, and Gombrich discussed the viewer's share in distorting or making evidence, pre-modern writers, echoing older insight, knew that What Paul says of Peter says more of Paul than of Peter.

In describing the creative act "as a mere artist," Duchamp, a dedicant of the life of intellectual contradiction (and instinct), rightly stated the case when he argued that, whatever the artist may say in explaining the intent of a work or its importance, viewers complete it, realize its meanings, and create the fame of the maker, whose production, in any case, can never fulfill the original aspirations for it. The work of art—that is, any product of will—only begins its overt life of meaning when performed. And even that performance is the product of a shifting, reflecting self, whose intent and execution vary. We all change through time, and express infinite possibilities. Each act, even breath, responds to an ambience and has consequences. As metaphysicians repeatedly discover, West and East, intention is ambiguous, evanescent—full and empty at its core. The observer, then, largely recreates the painting and its cosmos, just as we all must perforce continually remake the world, as it were. This situation is part of the tacitly shared human condition and a traditional, inherited arena of communications—as with words themselves.

Think only of the archetypal image of Laocoon [Fig. 1], whose attributed meanings, exalted or caricatured [Fig. 2], form an ever-growing anthology of perceptions in modern times. Indeed, the sub-history of responses to it or to any of our acclaimed masterpieces is as important as the objects themselves, inasmuch as these...
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2) Titian, Monkey Laocoon, c. 1545, woodcut by Niccolò Boldrini. A wry, playful, and possibly esoteric improvisation by the Venetian colorist, made shortly after visiting Rome for the first time and caricaturing a prime norm of its sculpturesque antiquarianism and Grand Style. Titian already owned a cast of Laocoon, whose poses and pathos appear in his Brescia altarpiece of 1520-22.

responses reflect states and changes not only of reputation but of understanding. Their stories grow but can never be complete. The Laocoön itself had a complex ancient history, now only partly preserved. The subject, probably originating in oral traditions that dealt with themes of heroic sacrifice and hubris, was refashioned by Homer, Sophocles, and Virgil, its presently assumed model. In addition, the figures apparently refer to earlier sculpture groups, most notably in the Telephos and Gigantomachy friezes at Pergamon, themselves images freighted with an ancestry that contributed to Laocoön’s functions in the baroque Imperial court of Nero [Fig. 3].

My own research in the history of restoration illustrates how ancient fragments, such as Laocoön, become vehicles for projection, liberating what the beholder wants to express. Like the suggestive hexagrams of the I Ching, oracular pronouncements, and astrological predictions (or indeed like placebos and holidays), the restoration of antiquities serves as a medium for fancy and execution that mirrors the maker’s taste, will, and creativity. The incompleteness or “open space” of the fragment offers us access to our dormant imagination, our generative capacities. Like other divine
tions, restorations give pattern to a chaos of possibilities, echoing
3) Telephos Threatening to Sacrifice Orestes at the Altar of Agamemnon, Telephos frieze, Great Altar of Zeus at Pergamon, c. 160 B.C., Berlin, Pergamon Museum. Royal epic-dynastic cult relief from the Great Altar court interior, with components analogous to Laocoon, as are the Giants defeated by Zeus and Athena in the more mythic-hieratic Great Altar Gigantomachy frieze.

the primordial artist-maker in Genesis. Each age, generation, person recreates Antiquity—or, indeed, Raphael, Manet, Apollo Belvedere, or Mona Lisa—partly or largely in his or its own image, and necessarily so, given the reflexive nature of thinking and perception.12

Take the bellwether fortunes of the Pasquino [Fig. 4] during the sixteenth century. Annually, this "found object" was restored in stucco and painted for the festival of St. Mark in the Piazza Navona, with a subject alluding to matters currently on everyone’s mind in Rome, and it was customarily accompanied by spirited pasquinades, didactic or critical epithets and commentaries adding word to image.13 Restorations—often involuntary confessions of taste, manifested by virtue of their fusions and juxtapositions of old and new—made the norms of Antiquity meaningful, beautiful, life-enhancing to the maker and his recreating ally, the patron or viewer.

4) Nicolaus Beatrizet attr., Pasquino, c. 1550 (from A. Lafréry, Speculum Romanæ Magnificentiae, Rome, 1550), engraving after a copy of the Pergamene baroque Menelaos and Patroclus. Contemporary illustration of the popular unrestored fragment on a corner of the Palazzo Braschi facing the Piazza Navona, accompanied by topical pasquinades.

Market response, reputation, and influence similarly reveal the latent meaningfulness of compatible or otherwise nourishing imagery that effects revolutionary changes in value. Witness the rise and fall of Rembrandt, or his various "periods," in art commerce and in scholarship.14 Their merits notwithstanding, late quartettes of Beethoven, like late prints of Dürer, darlings of an elite set, are neither always for every-
one, nor for anyone all of the time. The notion of the “classic,” a universal that survives all change in time and place, is as much a snare and illusion as is the idea of complete objectivity. Whatever is life-enhancing and gives some promise of immortality to the mystic, magician, or aesthete has value and becomes cultural capital. The ethos that survives and thrives makes history and establishes, temporarily, reputation or value for the community and the self, even though, as the Baptists’ song cautions, *You must cross the lonesome valley by yourself*.

Attempts to divine intention may be vain; nonetheless they are rewarding exercises in discernment for the work-a-day world. Historians, trusted explorer-emissaries into a dimmed past, function as dedicants with our values—now ostensibly including objectivity. By ritual immersion they retrieve for us, with an allied vision, what has meaning for a constituency now, in the only time there is. As successive waves of publications show, each age, like a conqueror-survivor, remakes the past in terms of its own image and interests, as well as inheritance.

In the East, character and destiny are charted in horoscopes drafted at birth, implying that we are then and afterward, as the part to the whole, at one with the universe, which as a continuum projects backward and forward in time. How much in that infinite and expanding cosmos can we retrieve, predict, or change by will? How much is altered by our acts of observation, our absorption, and our attempts at objectivity?

Nothing is more instructive concerning the complex, fragile, and reciprocal nuances of meaning and intention than the life of *Mona Lisa*, which Leonardo, its enlightened and insatiable student, continually changed and remade over the years. For contemporaries and
7) Man Ray, Rrose Sélavy, 1921, photograph. Marcel Duchamp dressed and projected as his libidinous, witty, raunchy, seductive female alterego Rrose Sélavy; retouched by Duchamp to enhance its feminine aspects.

for succeeding ages, this potent image generated formulae that affected developing traditions and renaissances, which in turn contributed to its position as the most famous painting in the world by the end of the last century [Fig. 5]. Then, Leonardo was popularly celebrated as a singular model of individualist achievement and genius, an unrivaled master of science and humanistic study—the Renaissance man. After the death of Apollinaire, who had been threatened with prison for publicizing the scandalous theft of the Mona Lisa from the Louvre, the poet-critic’s friend and fellow-iconoclast Marcel Duchamp (who aspired to be a new Leonardo) dese-


crafted a cheap “readymade” color reproduction of the sacred cow with witty and elegant Franco-American graffiti that had recondite
and popular implications: handlebar moustaches, a pudendum-like goatee, and a cryptic, multivalent inscription, “L.H.O.O.Q.” [Fig. 6]. Pronounced like a school-boy taunt, “Elle a chaud au cul” (She has a hot ass), it exposes the erotic sources of her power; pronounced “LOOK,” it indicates the means by which her powers are transmitted, through seeing, by viewer and viewed. His punning Freudian defacement, a joke on La Joconde, ignited new meanings for the old icon, not originally evident to or initially appreciated by Duchamp, who had in effect transvestized it and equated it with Leonardo and his own nature by visual and psychological inversions. This event immediately prefigured the creation of Duchamp’s own animistic surrogate, the smutty alter-ego Rrose Sélavy [Fig. 7], publicized by him as a precise and libertine “oculist” (and implicitly “auculist”-“occultist”). Her uninhibited Dionysian nature complemented his Cartesian intellectualism, rendering the artist an alchemical rebus-androgyne, with access to the life-giving lower chakras—celebrated in his reading of the inscription, “There is fire down below.” His multivalent life force Rrose (eros, air rose, art rose, arrose, etc.) specialized in the primordial, Tantric kundalini energy of Leonardo’s “femme fatale” and archetypal “mother-lover,” with her unforgettable knowing and enigmatic Archaic smile (a projected childhood memory?). Duchamp’s injunction “LOOK” essentially lays bare our acts of seeing-knowing, in that she, who saw Leonardo, sees you, who sees her, and so on, in an endless round referring reflexively to a realm of meaning that can only be described one or more times removed from the thing-in-itself. Though a practised geometer, Duchamp seems to have made little of its compositional matrixes—overlapping squares in the Leonardo design (note, however, the location of the goatee), and a near Golden-Section Pythagorean rectangle in his own additions—compositions whose fixed and irrational proportions Leonardo explored in routine and esoteric studies of architecture and the human figure [Fig. 8]. Duchamp and his circle made many variations upon his readymade variant. Add to these now-famous transforming perceptions the thousands of other images that daily improvise upon and exploit Mona Lisa, which make it an instantly recognized sign-symbol, like the Latin cross or Laocoon, called up for meanings at once fixed by traditional associations and altered by context. Such proliferating seeds of past flowerings now quickly germinate, flourish, and fade for viewers, who contribute to their fleeting life.

Beside such plural meanings accrued and explored in famous works, there is an ancient and venerable realm of hidden or cryptic meanings latent in grotesque art whose field and figures continually alternate, evoking unconscious as well as obvious images. This genre, now widely cultivated in Surrealist production as well as for subliminal suggestion in advertisement, exploits layers of meaning in images that seduce the willing and unwitting [Fig. 9]. Beyond this, as noted, the profound arena of the structure or manner in which the work is made “speaks loudly” for preverbal meaning, intellectual and emotional [Fig. 10]. Here, relation, medium, and execution (rather than narrative content and illusionism) become vehicles of message, as in architecture and other abstract, decorating, or nonfigurative arts.

Imagos (Psychomorphs)

“Imago,” rooted in archeological and psychological usage, is an apt word to describe the seed- or chrysalis-like nature of art works. The term for Republican ancestor portraits; Fig. 11) signifies the projected embodiment or primordial image of the parent form, idea, or action whose existence brings a thing, thought, or life into being. “Psychomorph”, a neologism, similarly can help to define works as fusions of “psyche” (anima, soul, spirit, mind, and breath) and “morph” (body, form, mass, configuration, and structure). Both imago and psychomorph refer to what visually preserves human understanding and acts of will. Investigating how the imago-psychomorph manifests the awakened mind-body of the maker and recreator reveals the structure and business of iconology in its
attempt to discern the comprehensive meanings of a work. In Aristotelian times, the works of man, the poet, were contrasted with nature.\textsuperscript{25} Greek imagery, based on \textit{phantasia} (the imagination or enlightenings of \textit{psyche}) and \textit{techne} (the mastery of materials and mimesis) springs from a culture with an incomparably inflected language that had no single word for art (Latin \textit{ars}, making) unless we use, significantly enough, \textit{poesis} (making).\textsuperscript{26} Art history, as an integrated study traveling the high road of iconology and epistomology, examines the \textit{phantasia} and \textit{techne} of things in and through time.

\textbf{Myths of Meaning}

\begin{quote}
\textit{What does not teach? From whom can you not learn? What is without meaning?}
\end{quote}

Since antiquity, Eastern and Western sages have recognized that everything can have meaning in the eye of the beholder—consider the eloquence of paleolithic found objects and industrial ready-mades. Brahmins still bow to all things and beings.

To Philistines, myths are the fantasies of "others." But poetically these parables and histories give form and meaning to all that is. Since the time of Thucydides, the historian, as such, has given a "modern" secular-philosophical pattern and meaning to events of moment for his people. That work preserves oral (and visual) traditions of religious storytellers, who described the trials and rites of passage in everyday life with instructive myth. Myths, like fables, are lyric metaphors for understanding, and all are true in this light. They reflect a lust for knowing linked to survival, ruled by the brain and now virtually innate patterns of casual thought, which eventually prompts isolation, concomitant guilt, and, ultimately, a complementary letting go. However, the seeming chaos of "random" events,
mathematicians would now argue, may conceal unexpected patterns of organic contingency. Starting from square one, an embryonic and expandible nowness, without the memory of a cultivated style, generates the most fruitful production, whose truths reward the artist's and viewer's attention and empathy.

Recording events, judging their importance, and discussing their meaning have become moral enterprises undertaken by three professionals with overlapping interests: The Chronicler, an impersonal recorder of selected data or denovative facts—the ideal journalist. The Critic, an advocate, assessing things with the informed prejudice of a valued sensibility—the editorialist. The Historian, ideally an absorbed yet objective spokesman of middle-class or middle-way humanistic traditions, working on behalf of hard-won reason (as well as the constant of emotion) and the promise of prediction, as in scientific enquiry—a narrator waiking the razor's edge, a keeper of light in the heart of darkness. He essentially mediates syntonically, like the autonomous self, between the extremes of critical instinct and chronicling anonymity. To be sure, denotation, explicit reference, the hard evidence of chronicling and the iconography of images and documentation using objects and writings brought to light by historical investigation, remains vital, even when meanings formulated through inference, inspiration, and interpretation fade. Tellingly, Polycleitos, the paradigmatic artist's artist, stated that the perfection—and, by extension, the beauty—he achieved arose through minute calculations involving many details, a desideratum akin to the descriptive-analytic and factual detailing praised and practiced by Freud, Panofsky, and others in a tradition pursuing ideals of truth, beauty, and justice—the good—promoted in ancient aesthetics.

As problem solvers, we develop preferred theories and mount them as a hobby-horses of explanation. In art historical enquiry, the wide-ranging overview of iconology often gives way piece-meal to fashionable concerns reflecting special interests and their myths: social, political, historical, religious, biological, economic, biographic, psychological, technical, and literary aspects of the study of art, each with its special (sometimes tyrannical) vocabulary and pathway of explanation—often a case of new bottles for old wine. Think of the spectrum of new absolutes, cosmic and particular, in Freudian, Jungian, Lacanian, Marxist, Darwinian, Gestalt, semiotic, deconstructionist, and gender studies, critical theory, and What Next?, in an accelerating array of explanations, each with spokesmen-heroes and a coterie of zealots possessing the truth-revealing apparatus. In a venerable Hellenic scheme, each generation (say now, rather, "interest group") of self-separating, parent-displacing heirs, in the name of "progress," frames a new myth of salvation and explanation by which to understand and explain away matters of moment. Despite all the fertilizing power of fresh contexts afforded by other
disciplines, few of them deal with the special means of preverbal imagery in art objects. Each sharpens but also burdens enquiry by defining, hence limiting, the infinitive possibilities of meaning: Even the most satisfying gestalt is a short-lived closure.

By definition, Iconology remains the single best integrating study of the visual arts, since it embraces all subdiscipline cults, as noted in its comprehensive characterization and implementation by Jan Biatostocki.


3 O. Pacht, Panofsky's Early Netherlandish Painting, review, Burlington Magazine, 98, 1956, 110-116, cited in Biatostocki n1, 781, who also cites other problems in traditional iconological studies as concerns the origins, transmission, transformation, and contamination of images, an indifference to quality by commentators, their idiosyncratic readings, overinterpretation, etc.—clearly the tool is only as good as the practitioner.


When I recently began to paint again, I was amused and gratified to learn through first-hand interviews at West Coast and Japanese exhibitions how widely responses to the narrowly perceived content in my strongly reductive works differed: and, on the other hand, how much in their thematic meanings could be discerned and freshly revealed by viewers before titles were provided. On layers or resonances of meaning in arts, see, further, W. Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity, London, 1947, and S. Howard, I.R.I.S.: The Artist's Intent and Proliferation of Meanings, Art Criticism, 9, 1994, 1-8.

7 Peter and Paul: see Gal. 2 (holier-than-thou Paul assails Peter's conservative values—discussed with Professor Paul Castelfranco). The English 14th-century saying of unknown origin, rob Peter to pay Paul, preceded by French and Latin versions (Tanquam si quis crucifigeret Paulum ut redimeret Petrum: As it were that one would crucify Paul in order to redeem Peter, cited in C. E. Funk, A Hog on Ice and Other Curious Expressions, New York, 1948, 90f.), seems to preserve something of a more ancient insight.

8 Expressed and not intended, intended and not expressed: The Creative Act, in Salt Seller: The Writings of Marcel Duchamp (Marchand du Sel), eds. M. Sanouillet and E. Peterson, New York, 1973, 138-140:

All in all, the creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deci-
phering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act. This becomes even more obvious when postrally gives its final verdict and sometimes rehabilitates forgotten artists (concluding paragraph).

Duchamp names the discrepancy between the artist's aspirations and the appreciated work its art coefficient. In a session directed by J. Bialetstocki, I introduced the model of generative seed for the creator and recreators of art works (Covert References in the Dresden Venus and Its Kin: Observations on the Mutation and Retrieval of Types, in España Entre el Mediterraneo y el Atlanticco: Actas del XXIII Congreso Internacional de Historia del Arte, Granada, 1973, Granada, 1978, III, 533-551, reissued as The Dresden Venus and Its Kin: Mutation and Retrieval of Types, Art Quarterly, 2/1, 1979, 90-111). For arenas of intention, see also M. Baxandall, Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures, New Haven, 1985, and Howard n6 (bibliography).


7 C. C. Van Essen, La decouverte du Laocoon, Mededeelingen van het Nederl. Historisch Instituut te Rome, 18/12, 1955, 291-308 (Golden House of Nero as site of discovery); S. Howard, Laocoön Rerestored, American Journal of Archeology, 93, 1989, 417-422 (royal baroque function, Pergamene prototypes, and flexibilities in composition and in context); idem, Antiquity Restored, Vienna, 1990, 50-62, Figs. 74, 75.

8 Howard, Antiquity Restored, 12-27, title essay.

9 Latent serendipity in oracular sources: See for example, C. G. Jung, foreword to The I Ching or Book of Changes, tr. R. Wilhelm, Princeton, 1967, xxxi-xxxix (esp. synchronicity).

10 The well-known monographs on artists published by Rizzoli of Milan, Classici dell'arte, now routinely include a chronologcal—historiographic selection of critical responses to each master, of a revealing sort once contemplated by U. Middeldorf for a biography compiled of critical responses to Raphael (cf. his Raphael's Drawings, New York, 1945).


18 Duchamp interview in H. Crehan, Dada, Evidence, 3, 1961, 38-38, thence Schwarz nn17, 477:

I had the idea that a painting cannot, must not be looked at too much. It becomes desecrated by the very act of being seen too much. It reaches a point of exhaustion. In 1919, when Dada was in full blast, and we were demolishing many things, the Mona Lisa became a prime victim. I put a moustache and a goatee on her face simply with the idea of desecrating it... In reference to the Mona Lisa I also added a sentence or initials on the bottom of that reproduction — L.H.O.O.Q. A loose translation of them would be There is fire down below...

Freud's point of view was to demonstrate the homosexuality of the personality of Leonardo, meaning not that he was necessarily an active homosexual, but that as far as medical science could determine he displayed the characteristics of one. The curious thing about that moustache and goatee is that when you look at it the Mona Lisa becomes a man. It is not a woman disguised as a man; it is a real man, and that was my discovery, without realizing it at the time.

P. Cabanne, Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp (1967), tr. R. Padgett, New York, 1971, 63:

Cabanne: Do the Letters L.H.O.O.Q. have a significance other than pure humor? Duchamp: No, the only meaning was to read them phonetically. Cabanne: It was just a phonetic game? Duchamp: Exactly. I really like this kind of game, because I find that you can do a lot of them. By simply reading the letters in French, even in any language, some astonishing things happen. Reading the letters is very amusing [my emphasis]

M. Duchamp, Die Schriften, ed. S. Staufer, Zurich, 1981, I, no. 92:

Staufer: L.H.O.O.Q.; est-ce une invention de vous ou s'agit-il d'un de ces jeux de mots qui ne doivent pas être peu frequents chez les ecclers francais? Duchamp: Je crois avoir invente ce jeu de mots; mais est on jamais sur dans ce genre d’exercice?


Man Ray's Rose Sélay photograph: Schwarz n17, no. 275, and, further, no. 271.

20 Fire below: n18, Crehan interview; cf. alchemical matrix and inversions in the furnace and leaves (below) and coal bags (above) in Duchamp's gallery design for the International Surrealist Exposition (Schwarz n17, no. 304, Paris, 1938). For erogenous implications, see S. Howard, Duchamp, Dali, Tzara, and Dadaist Coprophilia, Source, 10, 1990, 26-35, and n17, above.

Duchamp, alchemy, and esotericism: Duchamp n19, 26ff., nos. 47-166, esp. 104, Large Glass, and 251-255; Schwarz n17, in sum et passim; M.


Cathexis on geometry, evident in Duchamp’s Chocolate Grinder (Schwarz), Cathexis on geometry, evident in Duchamp’s Chocolate Grinder (Schwarz, n17, no. 197, Neuilly, 1913) and Large Glass (no. 279, New York, 1915-1923), is featured especially in his Unhappy Readymade (no. 260, Buenos Aires, 1919), a geometry book exposed to the elements, a wedding gift to his sister and Doppelgänger Suzanne, another esoteric and onetime Section d’Or painter. See also comparisons in Reff n17, figs. 1-2, 9-10, 15-18, and discussions and diagrams in Art and Geometry, ed. S. Howard, esp. 19-22, Leonardo.


Aristotle Metaphysics 7.7-9; Physics 2.1.3 (products of technē).


Square one: See Trungpa n15, tapes, and First Thought Best Thought, New York, 1983.

I deal briefly with the historian’s role as mediator (ego) between the rule-bound chronicler (superego) and the impulsive critic (id) in Winckelmann’s Daemon: The Scholar as Critic, Chronicler, and Historian, in Antiquity Restored, n10, 162-174, esp. 171f., 282 n 29.

As usual, the Greek roots are informative, Chronos logos: of time, its lore, dated; kritikos: able to argue, discriminate, judge; historia: learning, knowing by inquiry.

The extent of a historian’s investment and absorption is revealed by a disarming anecdote told by Prof. Alain Renoir (grandson of and subject for the Impressionist painter): in his first visit to England he spoke of workaday matters, unself-consciously, in book-learned and familiar-to-him Chaucerian English, to the delight of suddenly charmed and trust-filled fellow medievalists.

On evidence and inference: Recall, too, the unlettered and unswayed skeptic’s query, Was you there, Charley? and, further, habitually differing views, perspectives, and descriptions of the same phenomena in the films Rashomon, and by witnesses generally.

Polykleitos and para mikron: Pollitt n26, 15, 88f. n. 6, citing Philo Mechanicus Syntaxis 4.1.49 and Galen De Placitis Hippocrates et Platonis 5.425, in discussions of symmetry, commensurability, number, nuance, and articulating the good (Plato Timaeus 53); See also Plutarch Questions Conivivialae 2.3.2 (Polykleitos on the difficulties of finish); Pliny Nat. Hist. 34.53 (Polykleitos judged most praiseworthy in mutual contest by Phidias, Kresilas, et. al.).

On discoveries and truths resulting from minute description and detail, see Freud n16, e.g., XVII, 3ff., introduction to From the History of an Infantile Neurosis; further, The Concordance to the Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. S. A. Guttman et. al., Boston, 1980, IV, 91-99 (description, c. 1600 entries), 109-111 (detail, c. 600 entries). See also Panofsky n1, 1953, 33-39 (from pre-iconographic description to iconological saturation in as many historically related documents as can be mastered).